



# CITY OF BELLEVUE Comprehensive Plan



**BELLEVUE** 2044  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Building A Livable City for All



## Acknowledgements

The Comprehensive Plan is built on the foresight and planning of City Councils since Bellevue's founding in 1953. The continued development of the plan benefits from the contributions of the Bellevue community and the insights of the boards and commissions, particularly the Planning Commission, charged with stewarding updates to the Plan.

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# Introduction and Vision

Bellevue’s Comprehensive Plan is the city’s foundational policy document that guides growth and development for the 20-year period after adoption. Bellevue is known as a community with beautiful natural areas, vibrant commercial areas, a strong economy, some of the nation’s best schools and healthy neighborhoods. Bellevue’s success today stems from decades of community work, foresight and planning. This plan continues to enhance those qualities that make Bellevue a “City in a Park.” Bellevue welcomes the world, and residents and visitors recognize it is a special place.

Bellevue is a growing, dynamic city, the fourth largest in Washington. It lies at the crossroads of major highways and is served by high-capacity transit service. The city is situated in an idyllic environment— bounded by lakes, mountains and forests. Each neighborhood contains a unique mix of people, businesses and institutions that contribute to the diversity that makes Bellevue a great place to live. Bellevue is a thriving and dynamic business center, anchored by Downtown, BelRed and the Wilburton Transit-Oriented

Development Area (TOD), with additional centers in Factoria, Eastgate and Crossroads. Bellevue is home to international businesses and renowned institutions. The leafy, wooded character found throughout Bellevue is cherished by residents, businesses and visitors alike. The Bellevue community holds its history close and embraces the future.

The vision of the Comprehensive Plan describes a future state, the community’s desire for how the city should develop to continue to be a place people want to be in 2044. The vision is ambitious, yet achievable. It creates a dynamic tension that will challenge the community to continue to work to improve the qualities of the city.

The vision ties directly to each of the the plan’s elements that provide the city’s long-range policy direction. These policies serve as the basis for city regulations, capital investments, programs and other actions. Together, the vision and the policies help ensure that the work of the city is coordinated and focused on helping the community achieve its potential.

## VISION

**Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength.  
We embrace the future while respecting our past.**

Bellevue’s Vision for the future: In 2044 Bellevue is a vibrant international center for innovation and commerce with safe, diverse and attractive neighborhoods that feature some of America’s finest schools. The city’s neighborhoods, from metropolitan Downtown to bucolic Cougar Mountain, epitomize Bellevue’s reputation as a “City in a Park” with visually breathtaking vistas, viewpoints and recreation areas. Downtown is an employment and residential hub. New business and residential centers are located in BelRed and Wilburton. Crossroads, Eastgate and Factoria feature their own unique cultural amenities and urban landscapes. These centers are home to world-renowned technology companies and tomorrow’s industry leaders. Local shopping centers throughout the city allow people to easily meet their daily needs close to home. Through

the city’s growth, residents are connected to one another. All neighborhoods have diverse housing choices, gathering spaces and local and regional commercial services. Bellevue’s people—its ultimate strength—define both the city and their neighborhoods.

This Comprehensive Plan vision will be realized by the entire city organization, in concert with the Bellevue community and regional partners. The Comprehensive Plan provides city policy direction on a range of issues, from the city’s growth strategy to environmental protection, to provision of utilities, parks and other services. Further detail is found in the vision statement for each element of the plan, occurring at the beginning of each chapter.

The Vision is based on the City Council Vision.





### **Bellevue is a city of diverse and connected neighborhoods.**

Our inclusive residential communities are safe, friendly and welcoming, with gathering places that connect neighbors to each other. Housing options abound, with many choices in a range of affordability levels.



### **Bellevue is a great place for business.**

Businesses choose Bellevue. We compete with the world, and collaborate with local and global business partners to help them achieve success. We value our talented workforce. Entrepreneurs turn their vision into reality through access to human, intellectual and monetary capital. We welcome and support our businesses, from small mom-and-pop shops to world headquarters.



### **Education is a core value.**

We are well-educated, well-trained and prepared for life in the 21st century, where we create the future. Students of all abilities are prepared and supported for success in their future, and we continuously strive for improvement.



### **We celebrate all aspects of our culture.**

We embrace our many diverse cultures through arts, history, business, entertainment, food, community gatherings and nightlife. Cross-cultural connections enrich our community and sense of belonging.



### **We are a “City in a Park.”**

We value our abundant open space—whether it be the tranquility of a wooded trail or a paddle through the Mercer Slough. Everyone has access to activities and amenities, be they people-watching in an urban plaza, enjoying our trails, playing a favorite sport or gazing at the shimmering sun on a bright blue lake.



### **Bellevue is an equitable community.**

Bellevue is diverse and welcoming, and everyone, from newborn babies to people with decades of life experience, feels a sense of belonging, with opportunities to engage and thrive. Equity is a core value, and we actively work to build an inclusive community, free from racism, hate or bias.



### **Innovation is an integral part of our community.**

We embrace and support innovation in all aspects of our community—systems, institutions, businesses, schools and government. This innovative spirit is crucial to Bellevue’s success.



### **Environmental sustainability drives our long- and short-term actions.**

Our natural environment is an integral part of our sense of place, and its preservation is paramount. We focus on reducing our environmental impacts in order to support the health, wellbeing, and resilience of individuals, our community and the region.



## PLANNING FRAMEWORK

A city's comprehensive plan is vital in preparing for future growth and emerging challenges such as traffic congestion, housing needs and environmental stewardship. People need a safe and secure place to live, an economy that provides jobs, ways to get around, schools and colleges and recreational opportunities. It is the city government's responsibility to provide public services and facilities, develop policies and adopt regulations to guide growth that meets the needs of its people. The Bellevue Comprehensive Plan captures community goals and establishes specific policies that directly influence how our city will grow and change over time.

The Comprehensive Plan is the city's foundational policy document. It is the one place where various city plans and programs come together to work towards a single community vision for the future. As an "umbrella" document, the plan's policies guide other city plans, neighborhood area plans, spending on capital projects, development of regulations and other programs and services, all of which affect the community in both large and small ways.

## BELLEVUE SNAPSHOT

Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Washington State Office of Financial Management, Puget Sound Regional Council and other sources, the Community Development Department forms a snapshot of Bellevue's population:

- The city's population was 154,600 in 2023 with an estimated employment of around 154,400 in 2022.<sup>1</sup>
- Bellevue is an increasingly diverse city, with more than 40% of its population identifying as nonwhite in 2021.<sup>2</sup>
- As of 2021, Bellevue had an estimated 61,440 households with an average of 2.41 persons per household. The most common household types at that time were married couples without children (about 30%) and single-person households (about 28%).<sup>3</sup>
- The under-18 population comprised just over one fifth (20%) of Bellevue's population in 2021.<sup>4</sup>
- An increasing proportion of Bellevue residents commute to work by means other than driving alone: 62% in 2021, up from 26% in 2000.<sup>5</sup>
- About 7.5% of Bellevue's residents were in households whose incomes fell below the Federal Poverty Line in 2021.<sup>6</sup>
- Just over 70% of Bellevue's population aged 25 or older had a bachelor's degree or higher in 2021.<sup>7</sup>
- About 70% of Bellevue's employed residents worked in management, professional, or related occupations in 2021.<sup>8</sup>

## WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A comprehensive plan is a broad statement of community goals and policies that direct the orderly and coordinated physical development of a city into the future. A comprehensive plan anticipates change and provides specific guidance for future legislative and administrative actions. It reflects the results of citizen involvement, technical analysis and the judgment of decision-makers. The maps, goals and policies of the plan provide the basis for the adoption of regulations, programs and services which implement the plan. The plan serves as a guide for zoning, infrastructure development and developing community services. Because Bellevue has been remarkably successful in achieving consistency between the Comprehensive Plan, regulations and actual development, the present physical design and function of the city has evolved in an orderly fashion that is aligned with community expectations.

### What's in this plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is designed to guide Bellevue's future development and fulfill the city's regional responsibilities in growth management. This plan is organized into two volumes.

- Volume 1 contains the city's vision in the introduction, followed by the General Element chapters that contain goals and policies for each subject.
- Volume 2 contains goals and policies of the Neighborhood Area (formerly known as Subarea) Plans.

In Volume 1, each element is organized into three basic components: (1) an individual vision statement; (2) a narrative that describes the background and context for the element; and (3) a goal and list of policies that, when implemented, will help achieve the city's vision. Volume 1 also contains the Future Land Use Map and a glossary of key terms.

## How is the plan implemented?

Adopting a plan is the first step toward shaping the city's future. Bellevue's implementation of the Comprehensive Plan comprises a combination of short-term and long-term actions. Some of the actions will be guided by functional plans. Other actions will be taken by the city when required or as resources become available.

### FUNCTIONAL PLANS

Bellevue has several plans that provide details and implementation specifics for policy areas in the Comprehensive Plan. These functional plans are updated more frequently than the Comprehensive Plan. The plans listed below are plans that the City maintains. The Shoreline Master Program is adopted as an element of the Comprehensive Plan. There are other plans that impact the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan maintained by other agencies such as King County and the Bellevue School District.

- Affordable Housing Strategy
- Diversity Advantage Plan
- Economic Development Plan
- Environmental Stewardship Plan
- Fire Department Strategic Plan
- Human Services Needs Update
- Mobility Implementation Plan
- Parks and Open Space System Plan
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan
- Police Department Strategic Plan
- Recreation Program Plan
- Storm and Surface Water System Plan
- Transit Master Plan
- Transportation Facilities Plan
- Wastewater System Plan
- Water System Plan
- Watershed Management Plan





## MOMENTS IN BELLEVUE'S HISTORY

Highlights from Bellevue's history and past planning efforts provide context about Bellevue today.

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Pre-1800s</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Duwamish maintain multiple outposts and villages in the area that would become Bellevue.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>1800s</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Coal discovered in the Newcastle area.</li> <li>■ Homesteaders make land claims and first schools and churches established.</li> <li>■ Alien Land Laws prevent new immigrants from China &amp; Japan from owning the farm land they work.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>1920s</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Road network and ferries connect Bellevue to the region.</li> <li>■ Japanese farmers and truck farms provide the region with fruits and produce.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>1940s</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lacey V. Murrow Bridge completed across Lake Washington.</li> <li>■ WWII and the internment of Japanese Americans.</li> <li>■ Bellevue Square opens in 1946.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>1950s</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Bellevue incorporates in 1953 with a population of 5,950.</li> <li>■ Ordinance No. 1 establishes the Planning Commission.</li> <li>■ The city adopts Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan.</li> <li>■ Landscaping requirement in commercial districts lays the foundation for Bellevue's park-like setting.</li> <li>■ Lake Hills, a planned community east of Bellevue, brings opportunity for homeownership to thousands of families.</li> </ul>                      |
| <b>1960s</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Second bridge across Lake Washington—the 520 Bridge—constructed.</li> <li>■ Annexation nearly quadruples the city's land area and population.</li> <li>■ Countywide Forward Thrust and local bond funds allow major parkland acquisitions that set the stage for "City in a Park."</li> </ul>  |
| <b>1970s</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 100-member Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee works on major plan revision.</li> <li>■ Rapid growth in the 1960s focuses attention on preserving and protecting single-family neighborhoods by focusing commercial and multifamily growth in designated areas.</li> <li>■ Bellevue creates one of the nation's first open drainage systems in an urbanizing area to carry storm water runoff and to protect wildlife habitat and spawning streams.</li> </ul> |

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- 1980s**
- Bellevue sets a course to create a mixed-use, people-friendly, urban place in the Downtown.
  - The Sensitive Areas Ordinance protects wetlands, streams and steep slopes.
  - City’s image as a “City in a Park” is enhanced with acquisition of more parkland and development of the Downtown Park, the Lake Hills Greenbelt and portions of the Lake-to-Lake trail system.
  - Urban Design Element is adopted to create a distinctive, people-oriented and aesthetically appealing city.
  - Bellevue develops leading edge Transportation Demand Management programs to reduce auto dependence.
  - City funds a variety of neighborhood safety and enhancement programs such as Neighborhood Enhancement Program and Neighborhood Traffic Control Program.
  - City’s role in human services expands to include needs assessment, funding and support of regional efforts to address human service issues.

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- 1990s**
- Bellevue works with other Eastside jurisdictions to form the regional housing coalition—ARCH, taking a major stride to increase affordable housing.
  - To reduce urban sprawl, Countywide Planning Policies concentrate growth in Urban Centers, with Downtown Bellevue becoming the leading urban center for King County outside of Seattle.
  - Bellevue expands significantly south of I-90 with a series of annexations in the Newport Hills and Lakemont areas.

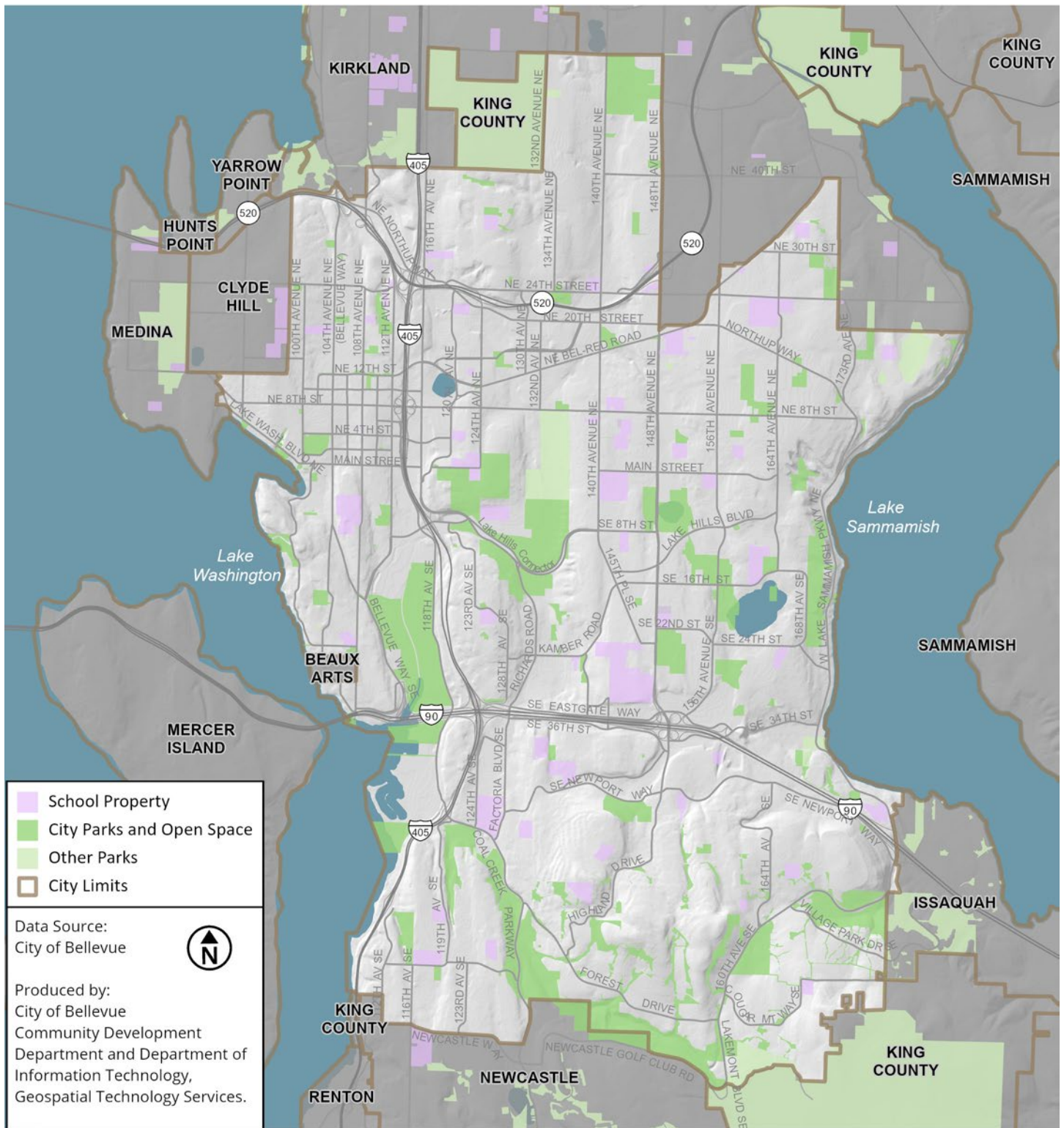
- 
- 2000s**
- City adopts Critical Areas regulations to ensure protections meet the “Best Available Science” standard.
  - City acquires park and open space land throughout the city, continuing Bellevue’s reputation as a “City in a Park.”
  - City launches its Environmental Stewardship Initiative and signs on to the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.
  - Vision 2040, the regional growth strategy, lays out a plan to coordinate regional infrastructure to support growth in centers.
  - The BelRed Subarea Plan is adopted creating the opportunity for dramatic redevelopment coordinated with regional transit.

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- 2010s**
- Annexation of Eastgate and other neighborhoods completes annexation of nearly all remaining lands within the city’s Potential Annexation Area.
  - Adoption of the Affordable Housing Strategy, charting a path to make housing more available in Bellevue.
  - Adoption of the Economic Development Plan laying a foundation for economic strategies.
  - The city’s Diversity Initiative recognizes and identifies how the city can respond to the community’s increasing diversity.

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- 2020s**
- After a decades long growth in the city’s immigrant population, the majority of Bellevue’s population identifies as nonwhite.
  - Bellevue’s population and employment level each surpass 150,000 people
  - Opening of East Link light rail service.
  - Adoption of the Environmental Stewardship Plan, setting the stage for the holistic management of the city’s environmental resources.
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## Map IV-1. Bellevue City Boundaries and Surrounding Jurisdictions

This map shows the City of Bellevue boundary and names the jurisdictions that border the city, including King County.



## Citations

- 1 Washington State Office of Financial Management. 2023. April 1 Official Population Estimates; Puget Sound Regional Council. 2022. Covered Employment by City.
- 2 U.S. Census Bureau. 2021. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (Table DP05).
- 3 U.S. Census Bureau. 2021. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (Tables B11001, DP02, & S2501). Washington State Office of Financial Management. 2023. April 1 Housing Estimates.
- 4 U.S. Census Bureau. 2021. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (Table DP05).
- 5 U.S. Census Bureau. 2021. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (Table DP03); U.S. Census Bureau. 2000. Decennial Census (Table DP3).
- 6 U.S. Census Bureau. 2021. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (Table DP03).
- 7 U.S. Census Bureau. 2021. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (Table DP02).
- 8 U.S. Census Bureau. 2021. American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (Table DP03).



# Community Engagement

## VISION

**Bellevue's actively engaged community shapes the city's future.**

Bellevue has a strong social fabric, where community groups, businesses and city government work together to address our needs. The city makes engagement with the people who live, work and play in Bellevue today a high priority and carefully considers their needs when developing Comprehensive Plan policies. Community members know that their local government listens and responds to them.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SCOPE

The Community Engagement element focuses on how the city interacts with the community to share information and solicit feedback on plans and activities.

## INTRODUCTION

The Bellevue community is engaged in a wide array of civic activities, such as volunteering at parks, serving on boards and commissions, participating in the city's flagship engagement class (Bellevue Essentials), hosting community gatherings and volunteering as mediators, among many other activities. City staff actively seek community input through a wide variety of inclusive, innovative and proven outreach methods to educate the public about issues and incorporate community ideas into plans, projects and budgets. When the needs and interest of all community members are considered, the city makes more sustainable, actionable, and community-informed decisions. This commitment to inclusive and effective community engagement promotes transparency, accessibility and greater trust between the city government and the Bellevue community.



## TODAY'S CONDITIONS AND TOMORROW'S PROJECTIONS

### Community Engagement Today and Tomorrow

Bellevue has a long tradition of engaging diverse communities in planning the future of their city. Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan has evolved with extensive and ongoing community involvement that represents a diverse range of viewpoints, areas of expertise and interests. The city also regularly incorporates community engagement into more specific planning efforts, such as community advisory committees, open houses, focus groups, surveys and other outreach methods. This tradition of active and inclusive engagement requires the city to constantly innovate and evolve its approach to how it engages a changing community. Bellevue continues to grow in size and diversity, prompting expanded understanding the city to adopt an expanded and more inclusive understanding of community. This includes residents, employees, business owners, and visitors, with a particular focus on those most directly impacted by plans and policies, especially when overlapped with historically marginalized or underserved communities. The city is also committed to the meaningful, regular and ongoing coordination with Tribes on all policies and actions with Tribal implications. Altogether, Bellevue is committed to engaging the entire community to ensure all voices are being heard now and in the future.

### Opportunities and Challenges

#### Inclusive Engagement in a Diverse Community

Promoting inclusive engagement in Bellevue's diverse community requires a variety of innovative outreach strategies to identify the most impacted communities, develop equity-driven public engagement goals and outcomes, establish meaningful relationships, implement culturally relevant engagement opportunities and remove barriers to participation. City staff seek

## DIVERSITY ADVANTAGE PLAN

The plan provides tools, strategies and resources to help the community and the city work hand-in-hand to promote diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, leading to an improved quality of life for all residents.

to engage Bellevue’s entire community in civic life and cannot assume that all people are equally comfortable or familiar with activities such as volunteering with city programs or participating in public meetings. Some communities may be cautious of public participation due to negative prior experiences with government, language barriers or cultural differences. The city can take numerous steps to better engage Bellevue’s many diverse communities and ensure all voices are being heard. Strategies include meeting community members where they are, partnering with and mentoring community leaders to build long-term relationships and community capacity to participate in engagement processes, planning accessible meetings and events that reduce schedule, mobility and language barriers, translating outreach materials into multiple languages, providing multiple and varied ways to participate and reporting back to communities following engagement efforts to facilitate ongoing two-way communication.

### New Technologies and Innovative Methods

Web and social media-based platforms have become increasingly popular avenues for public outreach to reduce barriers to participation and reach additional segments of the Bellevue community. For younger generations, social media has become the default means for interacting with organizations and individuals. For busy professionals, especially those with families, traditional in-person public engagement methods such as public hearings or open houses scheduled during business hours can be inaccessible. By using web and social media-based tools, the city

can make participation easier, more accessible and consistent with community expectations.

Using the web and social media is also changing how cities inform community members—allowing instant dissemination of complex information to anyone with an internet connection. It has also transformed interactions with community members and how cities collect input. The city now has a mobile app for smart phones, communicates via a variety of social media platforms, and offers a “paperless” permit application option available entirely online. While these changes facilitate public engagement, they also raise potential problems, such as identity verification, maintaining civil discourse in online forums, navigating misunderstandings, respecting individual privacy concerns, staying current with ever-changing media platforms, and addressing accessibility issues for those who lack access to these technologies.

Beyond harnessing new technologies, there is also an opportunity for the city to implement additional innovative outreach methods to reduce barriers to public participation and promote inclusive engagement. Specific examples include: providing childcare and/or food during public meetings and events; providing stipends to compensate participants for their time when providing expertise or lived knowledge to the city; offering engagement opportunities at a variety of times and in multiple formats and collaborating with communities to develop culturally relevant engagement methods.

### More Complex Public Projects

Complex, challenging planning projects are on the horizon, such as: ongoing development of light rail; growth of the city’s employment centers; work to address affordable housing and programs to enhance the distinct physical amenities of Bellevue’s diverse neighborhoods as they continue to evolve. All of these changes require the city to engage community members, especially the most impacted, in new ways and in conversations that are very different from the conversations the city had 20 years ago. The city’s community

engagement needs to be adept at presenting increasingly technical information, being responsive to public concerns, facilitating public conversations where a diversity of viewpoints can be expressed through thoughtful dialogue, welcoming people with little to no experience with civic engagement and integrating diverse viewpoints into planning solutions.

## Community Engagement Policy Summary

Bellevue's policies establish clear guidance for the city's community engagement efforts and are organized around the following themes:

### Building Community Capacity

Successful community engagement requires building the necessary pathways to include and uplift diverse community voices in planning and decision-making processes. To ensure all communities have the information and means to participate, Bellevue must support long-term relationships between the city, neighborhood groups and diverse community-based organizations, and provide educational opportunities to support engagement and thoughtful dialogue surrounding complex projects and technical information.

### Planning for Engagement

Bellevue acknowledges that planning and decision-making processes have excluded or deterred most impacted, which frequently overlaps with historically marginalized or underserved communities. To ensure all voices are heard, regardless of race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or any other characteristics that can lead to marginalization, Bellevue must identify where and who is most impacted by decision-making, prioritize equitable representation of viewpoints, collaborate with impacted communities to understand how the city can best meet community needs and encourage participation, and regularly seek any missing voices through ongoing research and analysis.

## Engaging the Community

Bellevue recognizes that a diverse toolkit of engagement methods is needed to ensure all voices are heard in planning and decision-making processes. Traditional outreach methods, such as open houses, public hearings, and online surveys, may only reach a subset of the community. To expand beyond this reach and ensure representative and inclusive outreach of the entire Bellevue community, the city must reduce barriers to participation, provide multiple and varied engagement opportunities, commit to investing additional time and resources in engaging historically marginalized or underserved communities, utilize a variety of innovative technologies and approaches, set measurable metrics to track engagement, and conduct regular community report-outs following engagement efforts to encourage open and ongoing communication.

## Supporting Good Relationships Between City and Community

Bellevue understands that successful community engagement does not and should not end with a single project or plan. Establishing meaningful, long-term relationships builds community trust and ensures that all voices can be heard within future planning and decision-making. To support good relationships between the city, its residents and the broader community, Bellevue must continue to provide equitable access and accommodations to city programs, services and events seek out periodic feedback on how the city can better reach its many diverse communities; and invest in culturally relevant training of city staff and representatives.





## GOAL & POLICIES

### Goal

To ensure that the public has on-going opportunities to participate in all planning efforts.

### Building Community Capacity

- CE-1.** Build relationships and coordinate engagement between the city and diverse cultural groups across the city and region through programs and partnerships such as a cultural liaison program or grants to community-based organizations to increase community engagement.
- CE-2.** Support identification and mentoring of potential community leaders, particularly those that support a diverse and representative leadership pool, to increase community capacity to participate in engagement processes.
- CE-3.** Provide issue and policy education opportunities related to projects as part of an overall community engagement plan to support informed and thoughtful dialogue.

### Planning for Engagement

- CE-4.** Conduct detailed and community-informed stakeholder analyses to identify what neighborhoods and segments of the community will be impacted by city projects, land use, and policy decisions, with particular attention given to historically underserved communities.
- CE-5.** Prepare a robust, transparent and user-friendly community involvement program that is tailored to effectively, efficiently and equitably involve the public at the appropriate level of engagement on city projects and policy-making. Utilize a combination of innovative and proven outreach methods to educate the public about the substance of issues and include viewpoints representative of the entire community.
- CE-6.** Identify opportunities for community influence and engagement on city projects and policy-making. Establish clear roles, responsibilities and expectations for community groups that may be informed, consulted, involved, collaborated with or empowered on particular issues as part of a public participation plan.
- CE-7.** Collaborate with communities affected by city projects and policies to identify planning approaches and engagement methods that are culturally relevant, meet community needs, and provide community members the opportunity to engage at appropriate levels throughout the process.
- CE-8.** Monitor and compare demographics of potentially impacted communities to those taking part in community engagement efforts to identify any missing voices and perspectives. Use additional, innovative engagement methods to target gaps in representative engagement. Conduct research and analysis to emphasize prioritized community interests and inform decision-making.

## Engaging the Community

- CE-9.** Encourage the use of plain language writing and design within public-facing engagement materials to ensure information is concise, inclusive and easy to understand. Periodically review materials to ensure content remains accessible.
- CE-10.** Encourage and support engagement with the entire community, including residents, employees, business owners and visitors to the city or area of the city under consideration.
- CE-11.** Cultivate constructive community dialogs for mutual understanding and sharing of diverse perspectives, ideas, experiences and expertise to support community engagement beyond the minimum required.
- CE-12.** Encourage and emphasize open and ongoing communication between developers and residents, businesses and other segments of the community impacted by development projects.
- CE-13.** Reduce barriers to community engagement by considering the needs of specific groups, especially marginalized populations.
- CE-14.** Provide equitable opportunities for engagement that invests additional resources and time in engaging historically marginalized or underserved populations.
- CE-15.** Use innovative technologies and approaches for community engagement to target unique needs and explore outreach opportunities, in addition to boards and commissions, that are effective, equitable and efficient at enhancing public understanding and participation. When successful, incorporate these approaches into other citywide engagement processes.
- CE-16.** Set metrics for equitable and comprehensive engagement and monitor progress toward meeting these metrics throughout a project.
- CE-17.** Following community engagement efforts, report back to the engaged community on the issues raised in the engagement process, how that engagement was utilized and the rationale used to make decisions. Leverage completed engagement efforts in an ongoing manner to inform future work.

## Supporting Good Relationships Between City and Community

- CE-18.** Establish meaningful, regular and ongoing coordination and exchange of information with Tribes to recognize mutual benefits and the potential for impacts on all policies, actions, and decisions of mutual concern.
- CE-19.** Provide equitable access to the city's programs, services, and events — including accommodation for youth, older adults, persons living with a disability, communities with limited English language ability, people of all genders, gender expressions and sexual orientations and people from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds.

See also Neighborhoods policies related to communication with the community, [NH-7](#) and [NH-8](#).

- CE-20.** Seek out periodic feedback from community members and city staff on the impact and success of city services to support effective two-way communication, identify areas of improvement and enhance future participation.
- CE-21.** Invest in training for city officials, boards, commissions and staff to ensure effective, appropriate and culturally relevant communication and engagement with diverse communities.



# Land Use

## VISION

**Growth of residents and businesses in Bellevue enhances the livability of the city.**

Growth in Bellevue, when implemented strategically, maintains the city's outstanding natural environment. Business growth is focused in denser mixed-use areas like Downtown, BelRed and the Wilburton Commercial Area, with additional growth around transit in Crossroads, Eastgate and Factoria. Bellevue supports many types of healthy and vital neighborhoods that serve the needs of the diverse population.

### LAND USE SCOPE

The Land Use element is about how the city decides where to allow different activities and the buildings for those activities, such as housing, restaurants and retail, services, offices, manufacturing and other commercial or industrial uses.

## INTRODUCTION

The Land Use element addresses the general pattern of land use within the city and provides a framework to guide Bellevue's overall physical growth and development. It ensures that the mix of land uses support the city's vision for the future. Land use planning helps protect environmentally sensitive areas, enhances the environment for the future and ensures that the city can evolve to meet the changing needs of the community.

## TODAY'S CONDITIONS AND TOMORROW'S PROJECTIONS

### Land Use Today and Tomorrow

Bellevue is a major regional job center, with more people working in the city than living in it. Bellevue has been the state's fifth largest city since 1970, when the population increased due to annexation, exceeding Everett. Between 1953 and 1990 growth occurred primarily through annexation, with



the development of single-family subdivisions and community shopping areas. Bellevue is now bordered by Lake Washington, Lake Sammamish, State and King County parkland, Newcastle, Issaquah, Redmond, Kirkland and the Points Communities, and has little additional land that can be annexed. Since 1990, the city has primarily grown through people choosing to move here from other places, especially from abroad.

In the early 20th century, the natural environment within Bellevue was changed by the conversion of upland forest and wetland habitats into agricultural uses and urban development. Today, the city is home to urban forests, wetlands, lakes and more than 50 miles of free-running streams, some of which are salmon-bearing. Centrally located on the Eastside, Bellevue is connected to the region by three major freeways, light rail and bus rapid transit. The combination of geographic location, transportation access and a beautiful natural setting continue to be central assets of Bellevue.

Recent population and employment growth has built on these assets. Growth has largely been focused in Downtown and BelRed, areas with many transportation options, investments in the parks system and environmental enhancements to support this growth. Even as the city has grown, the region as a whole has not produced enough housing to support the expanding population. The city's vision of the future includes making room for additional housing while continuing to maintain the park-like setting that sets the city apart.

The Puget Sound Regional Council projects the region will grow by more than 1.5 million people between 2020 and 2050 and that the economy will generate more than 1.1 million additional jobs between 2020 and 2050. Within this regional context, Bellevue established housing and job growth targets to do its part to manage that growth. Bellevue is planning for 35,000 housing units and 70,000 jobs by 2044, bringing the total housing units and jobs in 2044 to 98,200 housing units and 227,800 jobs.

**Figure LU-1. Growth Targets**

Year	Population	Housing Units	Jobs
2019	148,100	63,200	157,800
2044	232,100	98,200	227,800
Growth	84,000	35,000	70,000

The housing unit and job targets for Bellevue are developed with guidance from the Washington State Growth Management Act county projections (developed by the Office of Financial Management) and with additional direction from Puget Sound Regional Council. The specific targets are determined through collaboration between Bellevue, King County and other cities in the county. The targets have been adopted as part of the 2021 King County Countywide Planning Policies.

## KING COUNTY URBAN GROWTH CAPACITY REPORT

In 2021, King County completed a periodic update to the Countywide Planning Policies. These policies include housing unit and job targets for all cities in the county. The 2020 Urban Growth Capacity Report showed there was a limited supply of land available for development in Bellevue, and much of the vacant land remaining is constrained by environmentally sensitive areas, steep slopes and other factors that limit development potential. The report showed that the majority of Bellevue's capacity for growth is through redevelopment of previously developed lands. While the report showed there was enough capacity to accommodate the job target, more capacity was needed to accommodate the 35,000 housing units and to meet state requirements for affordable housing and middle housing.

## Challenges and Opportunities

Bellevue seeks to meet the challenge of achieving the community's land use vision, accommodating future growth and preserving what community members love about Bellevue. Challenges and opportunities include:

- Coordinating Capital Investments with Growth.** Residents will continue to expect what Bellevue is known for: excellent services and great parks, schools and amenities. Without quality services and amenities, people would choose to live and work elsewhere, which could undermine Bellevue's growth strategy and impact the city's economic development. Funding the required infrastructure and amenities may be a challenge.
- Aging Commercial Areas.** In some older residential areas, neighborhood shopping centers are experiencing high vacancies and struggling to meet changing market conditions. In today's retail market, more shoppers are choosing regional destinations, larger stores and online offerings. The land use mix and urban form may need to be updated for smaller shopping centers to keep them healthy and attracting private investment. In some areas, it may be appropriate to support a wider mix of uses to help fill gaps where there is less demand for traditional retail.
- Integration of Land Use and Transportation.** Integrated land use and transportation planning is about choice. Integrating housing and employment with a range of transportation options makes it easier to get around. Having shopping and recreation nearby encourages walking and biking, reduces congestion on the streets and supports vibrant and healthy

communities. Higher densities and a mix of uses encourage walking and transit use. Understanding future land uses also helps the city design and build transportation facilities that continue to work as the city grows.

## LAND USE POLICY SUMMARY

### Land Use Strategy

Bellevue's land use policies support a strategy for managing growth and development in a manner that is consistent with the regional strategy, and supports the city's vision of the future.

The growth strategy for Bellevue:

- Directs most of the city's growth to the City's Mixed Use Centers (Downtown, BelRed, Wilburton/East Main, Crossroads, Factoria and Eastgate). These areas are served by a full range of transportation options, major commercial centers and the focus of future residential growth.
- Supports the health and vitality of residential areas by planning for Neighborhood Centers: neighborhood-serving commercial and mixed use areas.
- Allows for a wider range of housing types across the city to support people in many different households at all stages of life.

### Growth Management

Bellevue works to meet the requirements under the state Growth Management Act. Bellevue's leadership as the major center for jobs, commerce, transportation and the arts on the Eastside ensures coordinated and consistent planning in the region.

### Residential Areas

Bellevue's distinct residential areas developed over many decades and range from higher density areas with apartments and condominiums to middle-density and low-density equestrian lots in the northern part of the city. The city works to ensure that residential areas have adequate pedestrian and bicycle paths to allow people to move around them safely. The city plans for compatible uses and scale transitions between residential areas and other types of areas in the city.

### Neighborhood Centers

Neighborhood Centers are commercial and mixed use development located in areas that are otherwise primarily residential, such as Northtowne Shopping Center and surrounding area, Lake Hills Village and surrounding area and Newport Hills Shopping Center and surrounding area. These centers provide goods and services to local residents and serve as important focal points and gathering spaces for the community.

Neighborhood Centers range from commercial centers anchored by a grocery store, library or

**Figure LU-2. Growth by Neighborhood (2019-2044)**

Neighborhood	Jobs	Housing Units
Neighborhoods with Mixed Use Centers	66,300	32,600
BelRed	14,200	7,900
Crossroads	900	700
Downtown	37,600	14,500
Eastgate & Factoria	2,500	4,600
Wilburton	11,100	4,900
All other Neighborhoods	3,700	2,400
Total	70,000	35,000



Photo by Marcus R. Donner

other major community asset, to collections of a few small businesses. The goal of Neighborhood Centers is to meet some of the daily needs of those in close proximity. Larger centers, such as those anchored by grocery stores, may serve the needs of a wider community.

Bellevue supports continued engagement and investment to maintain the health of these important centers and allows Neighborhood Centers to become mixed use with some higher density residential alongside the commercial uses. Future development in and around Neighborhood Centers will include planning for pedestrian and bicycle connections. As the city grows, neighborhood stakeholders may identify opportunities for new Neighborhood Centers.

### Mixed Use Centers

Mixed Use Centers are centers of economic and social activity anchored by major transportation hubs. Downtown Bellevue is the regional growth center of the Eastside, home to regional shopping

destinations, office buildings and is one of the city's largest residential neighborhoods. BelRed is anchored by two light rail stations. It continues to see the expansion of medical uses, and the introduction of more retail shops, office buildings and residential developments. Wilburton is also anchored by a light rail station and is poised to change significantly due to its strategic location between Downtown and BelRed and its proximity to transportation options. The Crossroads Mixed Use Center is home to substantial residential development and is expected to continue to see residential and commercial growth. Factoria is Factoria is a notable employment center. Its proximity to a future light rail stop makes it an attractive location for commercial and residential development. Eastgate is anchored by the Eastgate Park and Ride, which may also become a light rail station, and Bellevue College. It is surrounded by significant commercial and mixed-use development as it is at the crossroads of major transportation routes into and through Bellevue.



At the heart of Mixed Use Centers are Countywide Centers (see Map LU-3), areas designated by King County in the Countywide Planning Policies. These areas have been identified as centers of future investment in transportation. In most cases, each center is entirely within one of the 16 Neighborhood Areas. The policies of the Mixed Use Centers also apply to Countywide Centers as they overlap.

### Land Use Compatibility

One of the roles of land use planning is to ensure that neighboring uses are compatible with one another. Bellevue does this by encouraging master planned new developments to consider adjacent properties and the local environment in their development plans. Bellevue allows existing uses to continue until the property is redeveloped, and encourages the preservation of light industrial in some parts of the city.

### Transit-oriented Development

Transit-oriented development policies are intended for the immediate areas around light rail and bus rapid transit stations. These areas are compact, walkable places with many retail, restaurant and other commercial uses on the

ground floor, adjacent to the sidewalk. Residential and office uses tend to be on upper floors of buildings in these areas. The area supports a wide variety of transportation options.

### Citywide Policies

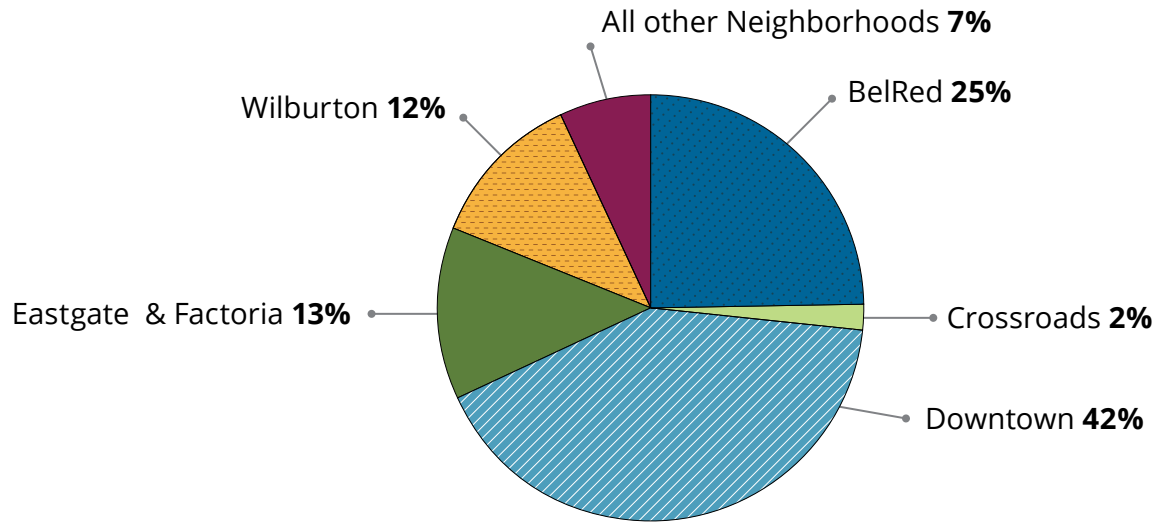
Across the city, Bellevue supports the continued development of the distinct flavor and identity of the different neighborhoods and works to support arts and cultural opportunities. The preservation of open space is a central activity, and the development of parks and restoration of environmental features in areas with lower access to parks and open space is a priority. The City promotes community-building uses and features such as childcare, walking and biking access, and community-serving amenities, services and facilities throughout the city.

### Annexation

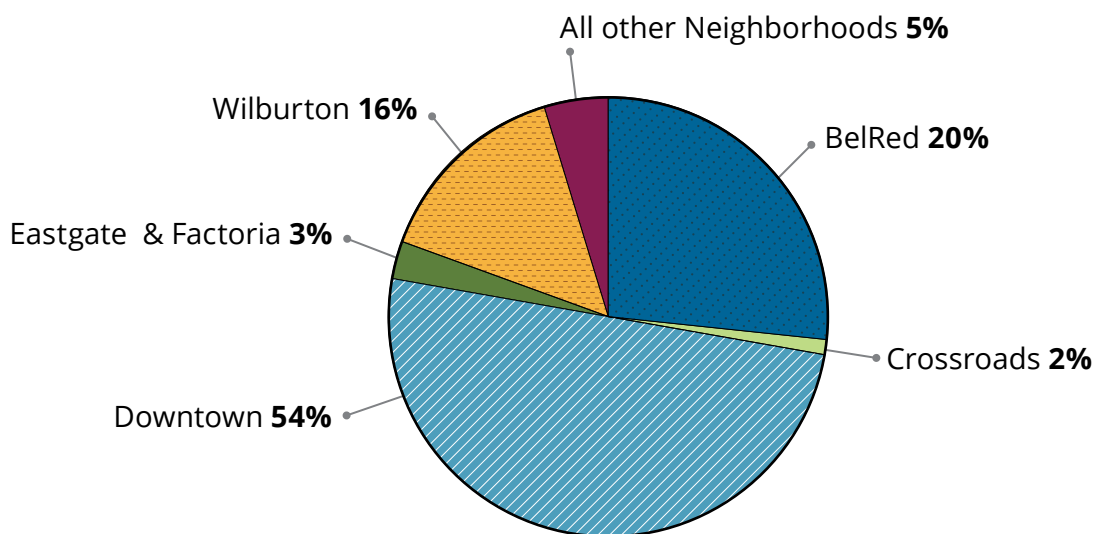
Bellevue has annexed almost all adjacent unincorporated land within the Urban Growth Boundary. There is a small part of unincorporated King County that is assigned to Bellevue as a Potential Annexation Area. The city's policies ensure a predictable process when the time comes for annexation.



**Figure LU-3. Housing Growth by Geographic Area 2019-2044**



**Figure LU-4. Job Growth by Geographic Area 2019-2044**



## Map LU-1. Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map and Map Key

The Future Land Use Map shows the vision for future development in Bellevue. It is available as a static PDF at [BellevueWA.gov/comprehensive-plan](https://BellevueWA.gov/comprehensive-plan) and dynamically online through GIS software.

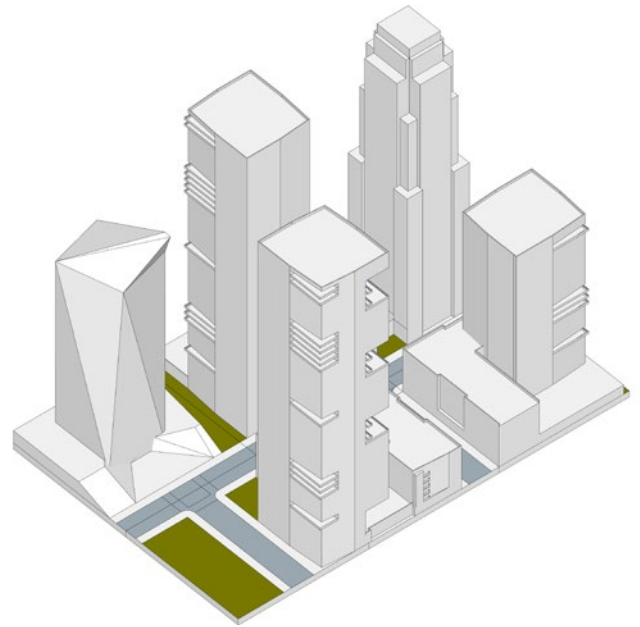
See separate Future Land Use Map

# Future Land Use Map Key

## MIXED USE

### Downtown

The purpose is to provide an area for a mix of housing, retail, service, office and complementary uses at the **highest scale and density** (see illustration). The scale and density may be reduced by overlay districts.



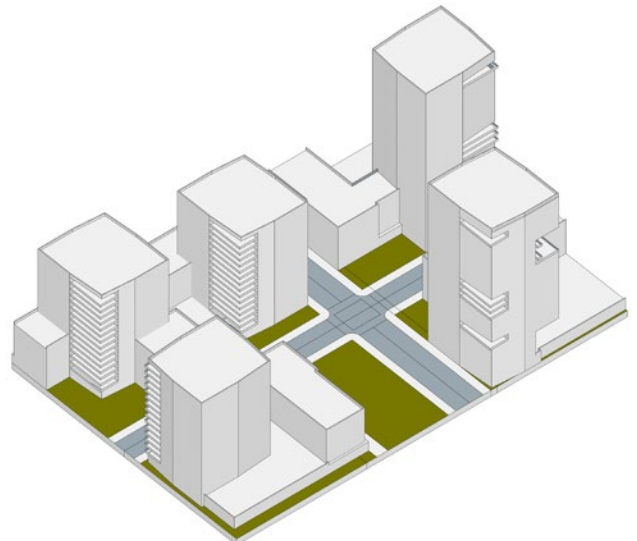
**Highest scale and density**

### Urban Core

The purpose is to provide an area for a mix of housing, retail, service, office and complementary uses at the **highest scale and density** (see illustration), close to Downtown and light rail stations.

### Highrise Mixed Use

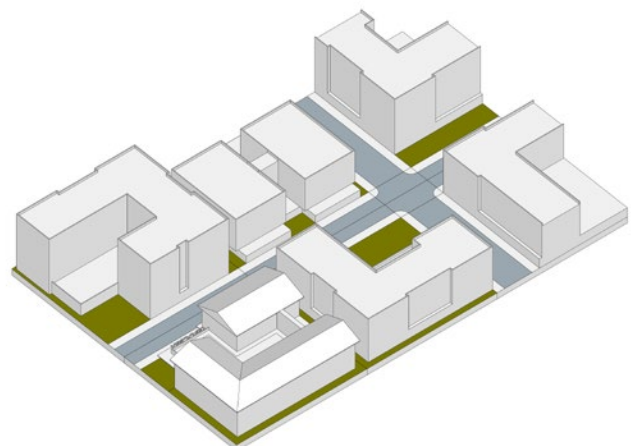
The purpose is to provide an area for a mix of housing, retail, service, office and complementary uses at a **high scale and density** (see illustration).



**High scale and density**

### Midrise Mixed Use

The purpose is to provide an area for a mix of housing, retail, service, office and complementary uses at a **middle scale and density** (see illustration).



**Middle scale and density**

### Lowrise 2 Mixed Use

The purpose is to provide an area for a mix of housing, retail, service, office and complementary uses at the higher end of a **low scale and density** (see illustration).

### Lowrise 1 Mixed Use

The purpose is to provide an area for a mix of housing, retail, service, office and complementary uses at the lower end of a **low scale and density** (see illustration).

### Highrise Office Mixed Use

The purpose is to provide a mix of office, housing, retail, service and complementary uses with a focus on office uses at **high scale and density** (see illustration).

### Midrise Office Mixed Use

The purpose is to provide a mix of housing, retail, service, office and complementary uses with a focus on office uses at **middle scale and density** (see illustration).

### Lowrise Office Mixed Use

The purpose is to provide a mix of office, housing, retail, service and complementary uses with a focus on office uses at **low scale and density** (see illustration).

### Highrise Medical Mixed Use

The purpose is to provide a mix of laboratories, office, housing, retail, service, and complementary uses with a focus on medical uses at **high scale and density** (see illustration).

### Midrise Medical Mixed Use

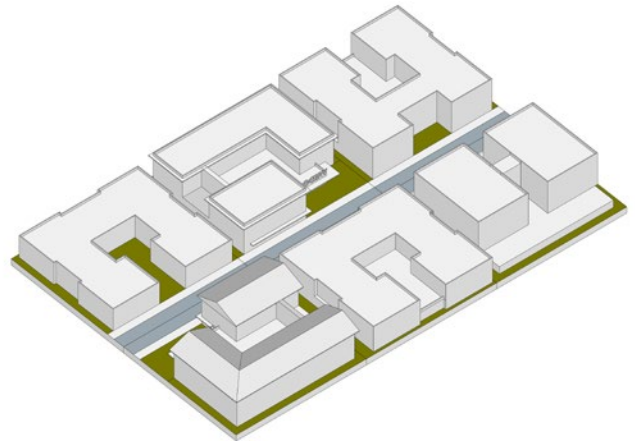
The purpose is to provide a mix of laboratories, office, housing, retail, service and complementary uses with a focus on medical uses at a **middle scale and density** (see illustration).

### Highrise Residential Mixed Use

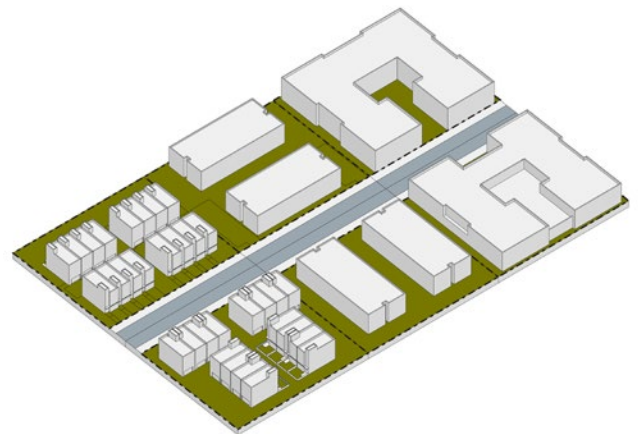
The purpose is to provide primarily housing with a mix of retail, service, office and uses that compliment with a focus on housing at a **high scale and density** (see illustration).

### Midrise Residential Mixed Use

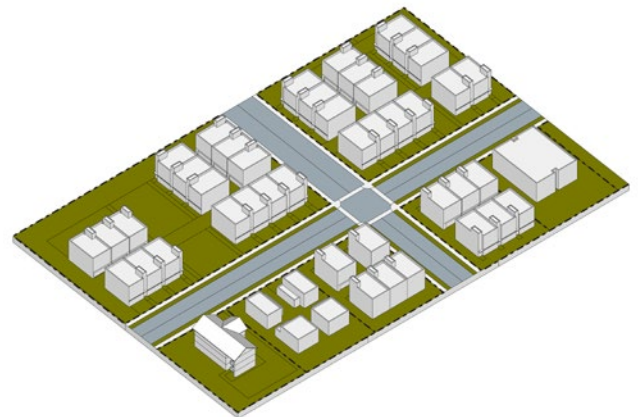
The purpose is to provide primarily housing with a mix of retail, service, office and uses that compliment with a focus on housing at **middle scale and density** (see illustration).



**Low scale and density**

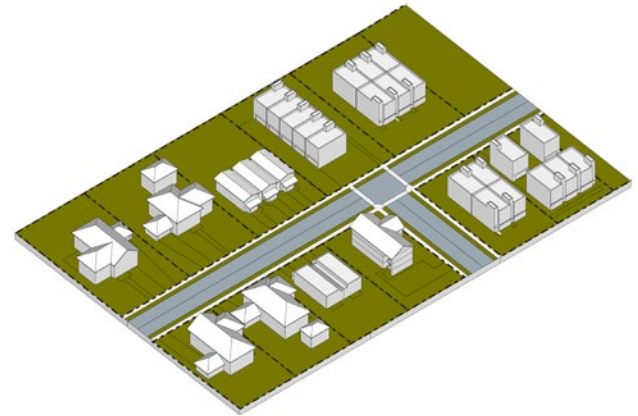


**Middle urban residential scale and density**



**Lower urban residential scale and density**

**Lowrise Residential Mixed Use**  
 The purpose is to provide primarily housing with a mix of retail, service, office and complimentary uses with a focus on housing at **low scale and density** (see illustration).



**Typical suburban scale and density**

## RESIDENTIAL

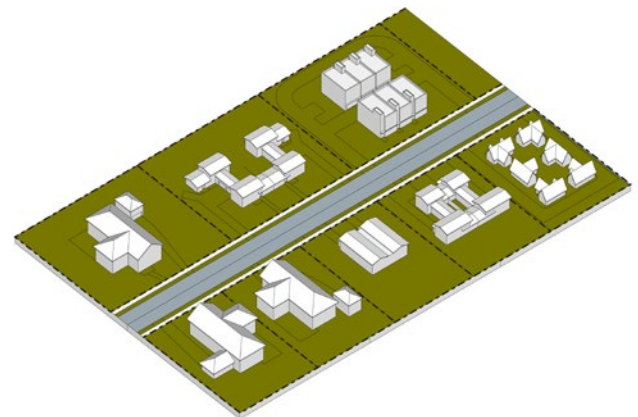
**High Density Residential**  
 The purpose is to provide for residential and complementary uses at a **low scale and density** (see illustration), similar to lowrise mixed use.

**Medium Density Residential**  
 The purpose is to provide for residential and complementary uses at a **middle urban residential scale and density** (see illustration).

**Low Density Residential**  
 The purpose is to provide for residential and complementary uses at a **lower urban residential scale and density** (see illustration).

**Suburban Residential**  
 The purpose is to provide for residential and complementary uses at a **typical suburban scale and density** (see illustration).

**Large Lot Residential**  
 The purpose is to provide for residential and complementary uses on large lots at a **spacious scale and density** (see illustration).



**Spacious scale and density**

## OTHER USES

**General Commercial**  
 The purpose of this district is to provide primarily office, retail and service uses.

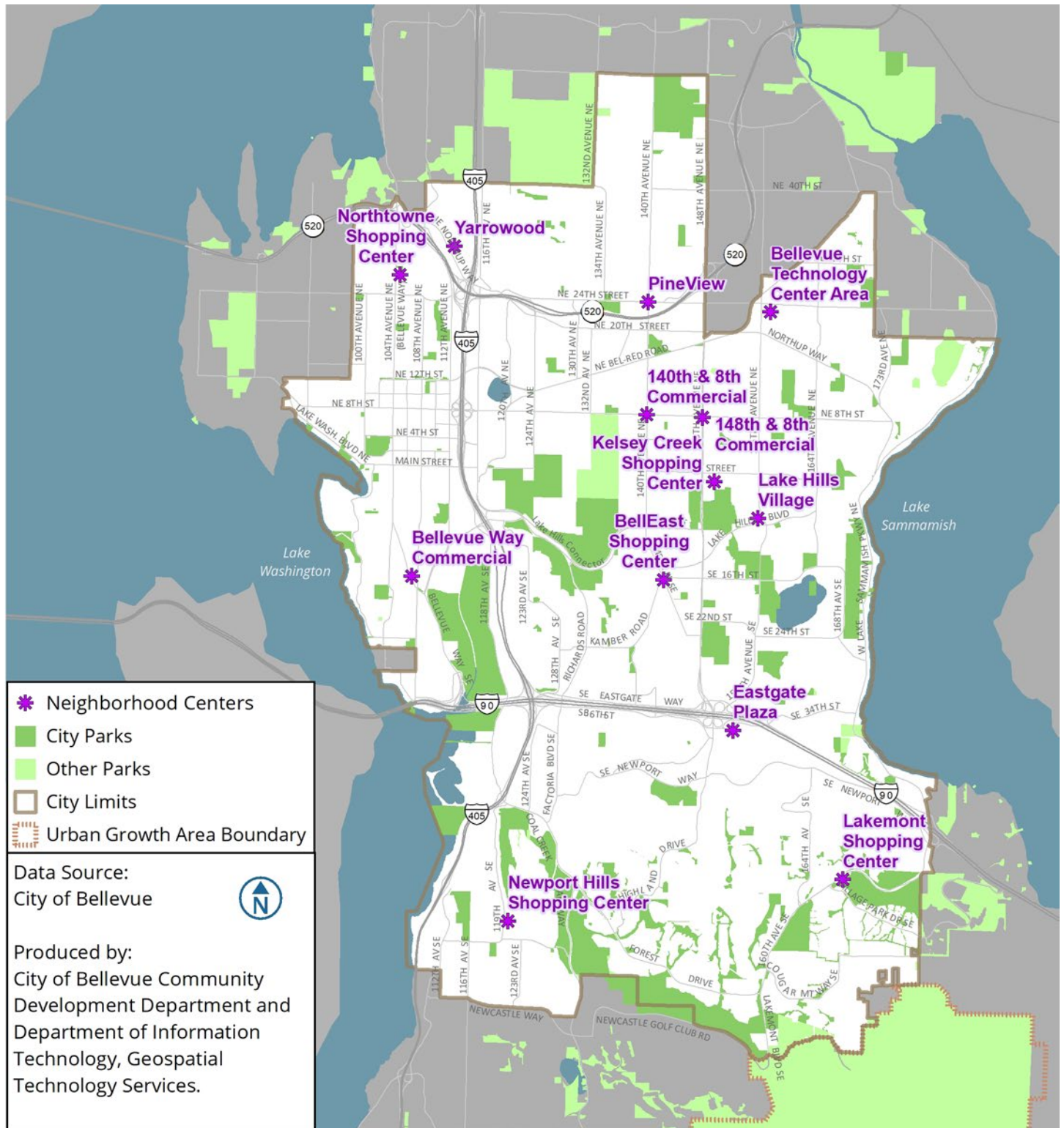
**Light Industrial**  
 The purpose is to provide light industrial uses.

**Institutional**  
 The purpose of this district is to provide for institutional uses like colleges.

**Hospital Institutions**  
 The purpose is to provide Hospital uses and building styles.

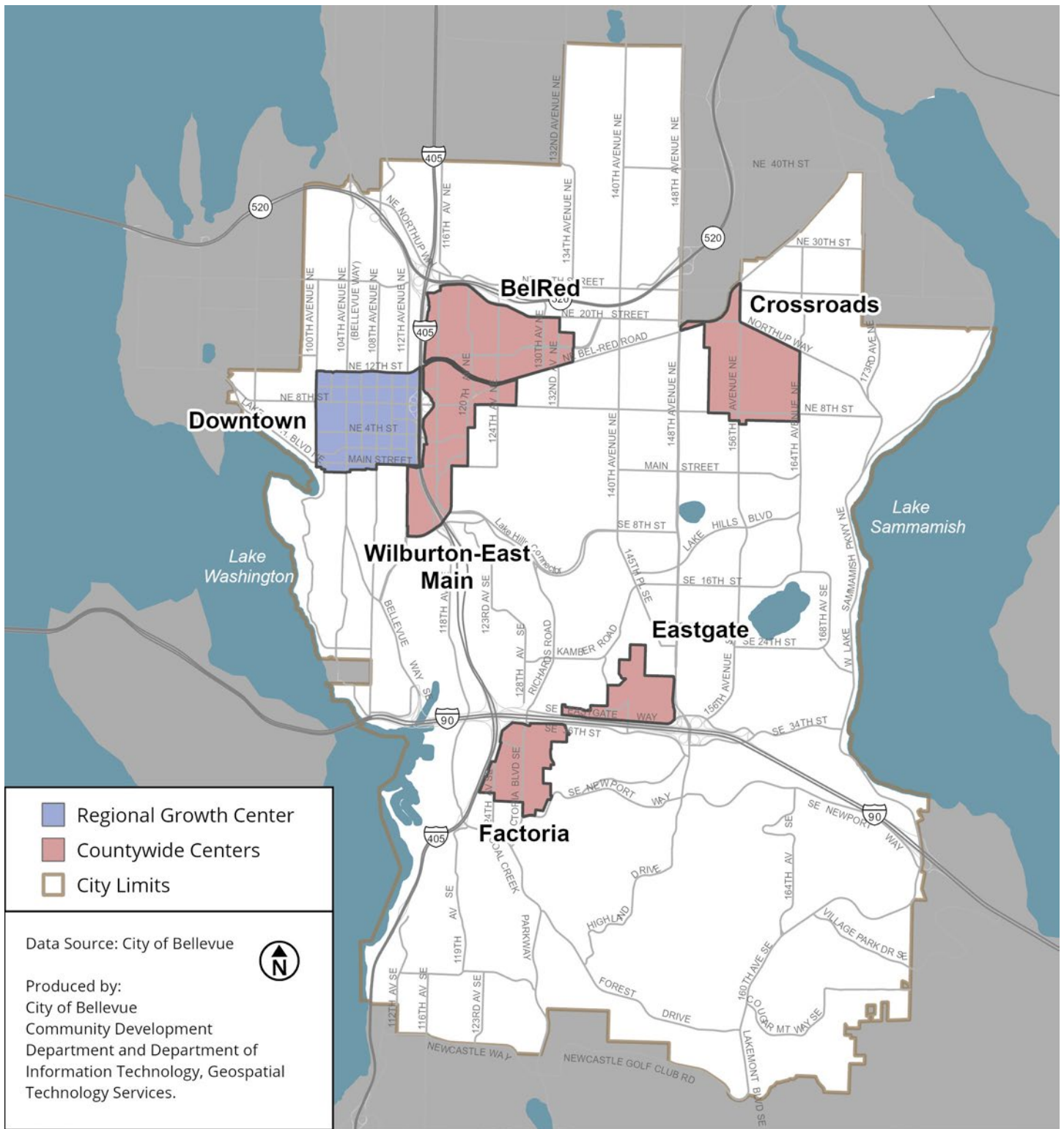
## Map LU-2. Neighborhood Centers

Neighborhood Centers are commercial or mixed use areas in places that are otherwise primarily residential. They serve some of the daily needs of people living in the area.



## Map LU-3. Regional Growth Center and Candidate Countywide Centers

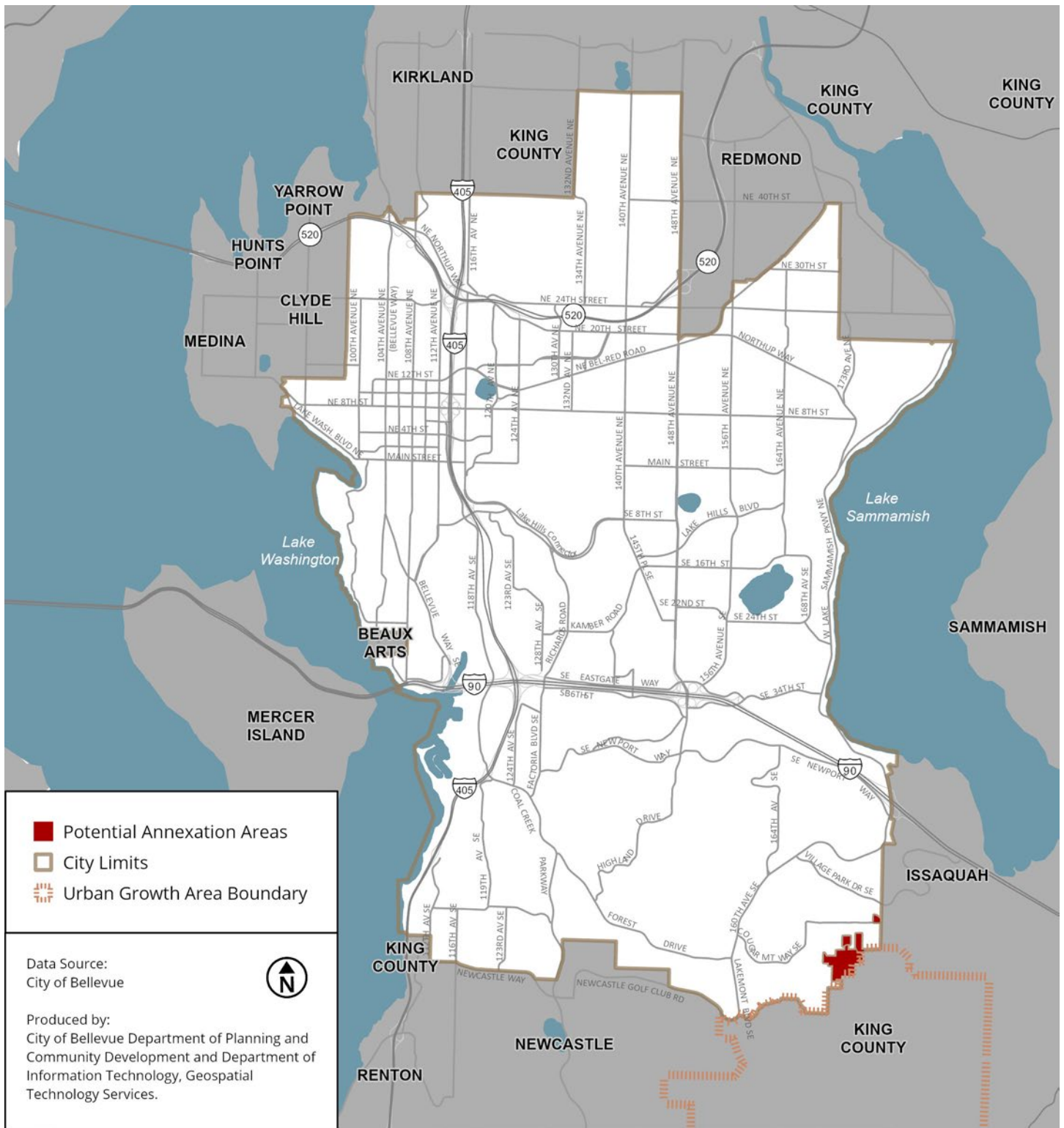
Regional Growth Centers are designated by PSRC and Countywide Centers are designated by King County. Both are focus areas for future transportation investments.





## Map LU-4. Potential Annexation Areas

The Potential Annexation Area is the unincorporated area inside the Urban Growth Boundary designated by King County in the Countywide Planning Policies to be annexed by Bellevue in the future.



## GOAL & POLICIES

### Goal

To develop and maintain a land use pattern that protects natural systems and retains trees and open space; maintains and strengthens the vitality, quality and character of Bellevue's neighborhoods; and focuses development activity in Downtown and other Mixed Use and Neighborhood centers.

### Policies

#### Land Use Strategy

- LU-1.** Focus the city's growth and development as follows:
1. Direct most of the city's growth to the Downtown Regional Growth Center, other Countywide Centers (see [Map LU-3](#)) and to other areas designated for compact, mixed use development served by a full range of transportation options.
  2. Plan for housing growth with a broad range of housing choices to meet the changing needs of the community.
  3. Enhance the health and vitality of existing single-family, multi-family and mixed use residential neighborhoods.
  4. Provide for commercial uses and development that serve community needs.
- LU-2.** Retain the city's park-like character through the acquisition, preservation and enhancement of parks, open space and tree canopy throughout the city.
- LU-3.** Prioritize the redevelopment of under-developed land over vacant land, open space and environmentally sensitive areas.
- LU-4.** Promote a land use pattern integrated with a multimodal transportation system.
- LU-5.** Maintain a critical mass of light industrial land in the Richards Valley area and other appropriate areas to serve local needs.

#### Growth Management

- LU-6.** Support a land use vision that is consistent with the GMA goals, the regional Vision 2050, and the King County Countywide Planning Policies.
- LU-7.** Accommodate adopted growth targets of 35,000 additional housing units and 70,000 additional jobs for the 2019-2044 period and plan for the additional growth anticipated by 2044.
- LU-8.** Encourage new residential development to achieve a substantial portion of the maximum density allowed on the net buildable acreage.
- LU-9.** Evaluate household and employment forecasts on a periodic basis to ensure that land use policies based on previous assumptions are current.

- LU-10.** Work toward a land use pattern that makes it possible for people to live closer to where they work regardless of household income.
- LU-11.** Support school districts' efforts to identify and plan for future school facility siting that meets community needs.

## Residential Areas

- LU-12.** Invest in programs and facilities that maintain the stability and improve the vitality of neighborhoods.
- LU-13.** Apply contextually appropriate design techniques and development regulations to transition between low density and high density areas, particularly in residential areas.
- LU-14.** Assess the compatibility of commercial uses and other more intense uses when located in mixed use and predominantly residential areas.
- LU-15.** Provide for safe, accessible pedestrian connections from residential areas to nearby neighborhood services and transit in all residential site development.

## Neighborhood Centers

- LU-16.** Enhance existing Neighborhood Centers (see Map LU-2) designed to serve neighborhoods, recognizing their multiple roles: serving residents' needs, acting as community gathering places and helping to establish neighborhood identity.
- LU-17.** Establish new Neighborhood Centers through a process that utilizes inclusive outreach, identifies and seeks to fulfill gaps in locations providing neighborhood services, contributing to local economic vitality and encourages multimodal access to Neighborhood Centers across the city.
- LU-18.** Encourage new retail and services alongside residential in Neighborhood Centers, ensuring easy pedestrian access and enhancing the livability of the neighborhood.

See also Neighborhoods policies related to neighborhood area planning, [NH-17](#) to [NH-19](#).

## Mixed Use Centers and Countywide Centers

- LU-19.** Sustain Downtown's designation as a Regional Growth Center, with the density, mix of uses and amenities and infrastructure that maintain it as the financial, retail, transportation and business hub of the Eastside.
- LU-20.** Support development of compact, livable and walkable mixed use centers in BelRed, Eastgate, Factoria, Wilburton, East Main and Crossroads.
- LU-21.** Monitor trends in Bellevue's Mixed Use Centers and other job centers and amend policies and regulations as needed, to maintain the vitality of these centers.

- LU-22.** Establish Countywide Centers (see Map LU-3) as focal points for local and county planning and investment to support a concentration of jobs, housing, shopping, transportation mobility options and recreational opportunities.
- LU-23.** Plan for Countywide Centers as part of the Neighborhood Area Planning process, including an assessment of housing need and tools to provide affordable housing, an assessment of historic and cultural assets, an assessment of the risks for displacement of residents and businesses, and support for local access that promotes active transportation.

## Land Use Compatibility

- LU-24.** Allow existing uses to continue in areas with a change in future land use until the parcel is redeveloped.
- LU-25.** Encourage private developers of adjacent or nearby properties to execute agreements to provide joint use and funding of shared parking facilities.
- LU-26.** Encourage the master planning of multi-building and multi-parcel developments and large institutions to integrate with its surroundings.
- LU-27.** Locate new community facilities near major transit routes and in areas convenient to pedestrians and bicyclists.

## Transit Oriented Development

- LU-28.** Provide for a mix of housing, office, service and retail uses in a compact walkable development pattern that optimizes the benefits of transit investment in Bellevue's mixed use areas.
- LU-29.** Provide walking and bicycle routes in and to light rail and bus rapid transit station areas that are accessible, safe and convenient, and that connect to destinations, transit and surrounding bicycle and pedestrian networks.
- LU-30.** Ensure that transit-oriented land use and development is responsive to the type of transit facilities and services provided and the context of surrounding area.
- LU-31.** Consider the following criteria, at a minimum, when evaluating land use changes near high-capacity transit stations:
  1. Transit may support more intense development around some stations;
  2. Transit supportive design and orientation may be implemented without changes to land use intensity; and
  3. Land use plan map changes would be precluded in environmentally sensitive areas
- LU-32.** Encourage reducing parking requirements in areas with good access to transit and active transportation facilities and prioritize parking options to serve the community with special needs.

See also Transportation policies related to transit, [TR-60](#) to [TR-92](#).

## Citywide Policies

- LU-33.** Help communities to maintain a distinctive local character while recognizing that neighborhoods evolve over time to meet community needs.
- LU-34.** Changes in zoning must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map, including changes in zoning within the same future land use designation.
- LU-35.** Recognize the placemaking value of arts and cultural facilities and work to site them throughout the city as a means to enhance neighborhoods.
- LU-36.** Employ land use incentive systems that offers additional development capacity or flexibility in exchange for commensurate public benefits that address identified needs of that area.
- LU-37.** Strengthen and expand the City of Bellevue's mechanisms to support cultural uses and amenities.
- LU-38.** Encourage development of amenities, services and facilities, including utility corridors and facilities, waste management facilities, transportation facilities, recreation facilities and stormwater management facilities to support employment centers and all types of households throughout the city.
- LU-39.** Preserve open space and key natural features through a variety of techniques, such as sensitive site planning, conservation easements, transferring density, land use incentives and open space taxation.
- LU-40.** Provide equitable access to parks, safe pedestrian and bicycle routes and other public amenities for all neighborhoods, prioritizing improvements for those areas with fewer public amenities.
- LU-41.** Provide opportunities for increased density and height to accommodate clustering, efficient site planning and significant preservation of trees and open space on parcels over 10 acres.
- LU-42.** Support provision of child care equitably throughout the city:
  1. Allow family child care homes in residences in all single family land use districts through a discretionary review process, unless otherwise required by state law or regulation.
  2. Permit child care centers in all non-single family land use districts and allow child care centers as part of a community facility as long as the center has been identified as part of any discretionary review permit.
  3. Consider measures to protect child care centers from air pollution exposure and encourage increased mitigation in such situations.
  4. Encourage major employers and the developers of major employment facilities to provide child care opportunities on site or nearby.

- LU-43.** Conserve, monitor, and protect groundwater resources, consistent with state law.
- LU-44.** Promote measures to protect sensitive uses from risks of exposure to air and noise pollution by locating them away from pollution sources, where possible, or by use of feasible, effective building and site design measures to mitigate exposure.
- LU-45.** Design new development and encourage the retrofit existing buildings to improve indoor air quality and reduce resident exposure to air pollution.
- LU-46.** Consult with historically impacted low-income communities and communities of color as well as experts in the field of development to prevent, mitigate and remediate harmful environmental pollutants and hazards, including light, air, soil and structural hazards, where they have contributed to racially disparate environmental and health impacts, and to increase environmental resiliency in low-income communities.
- LU-47.** Implement land use patterns that promote walking, bicycling, or other active transportation modes in order to increase public health.
- LU-48.** Reduce and mitigate the risk to lives and property posed by wildfires by using land use planning tools, including the Wildland Urban Interface Code and protecting human development in wildfire prone areas.

See also Climate and Environment policies related to water resources, [CL-34](#) to [CL-43](#).

## Annexation

- LU-49.** Support the comprehensive annexation of the city's remaining Potential Annexation Area.
- LU-50.** Require owners of land annexing to the city to be subject to their proportionate share of the city's bonded indebtedness.
- LU-51.** Make every effort to ensure that land within Bellevue's Potential Annexation Area develops according to Bellevue Comprehensive Plan policies and development standards.
- LU-52.** After annexation, transfer all review authority for all land currently undergoing development review in King County to the City of Bellevue.

See also Utilities policies related to annexation, [UT-14](#) to [UT-19](#).



# Neighborhoods

## VISION

**Bellevue is a community of diverse, vibrant, and resilient neighborhoods.**

Bellevue's neighborhoods are well known for their distinctiveness, high-performing schools, safety, natural beauty amenities and opportunities that provide a high quality of life. Housing options abound, with many choices in ranges of affordability. Residents appreciate their neighborhoods for the strong connections among neighbors that contribute to making Bellevue home.

## NEIGHBORHOODS ELEMENT SCOPE

The Neighborhoods element is about how the city supports safe and inclusive interactions between people in Bellevue.

## INTRODUCTION

Bellevue is a city of diverse neighborhoods, each with distinct characteristics reflecting a range of development types and scales – from smaller homes to the growing vertical neighborhoods of Downtown and BelRed. Each neighborhood has a rich history and community traditions while also being dynamic and responsive to the changing needs of its residents. Bellevue’s neighborhoods are home to a diverse and well-connected community of neighbors with local connections to schools, stores, parks, trails and the natural beauty that defines the Pacific Northwest. The city’s role is to ensure that all neighborhoods enjoy a high-quality environment that facilitates a safe, welcoming and accessible community, promote strong community connections, are adaptable to changing needs and conditions and support a unique sense of place.

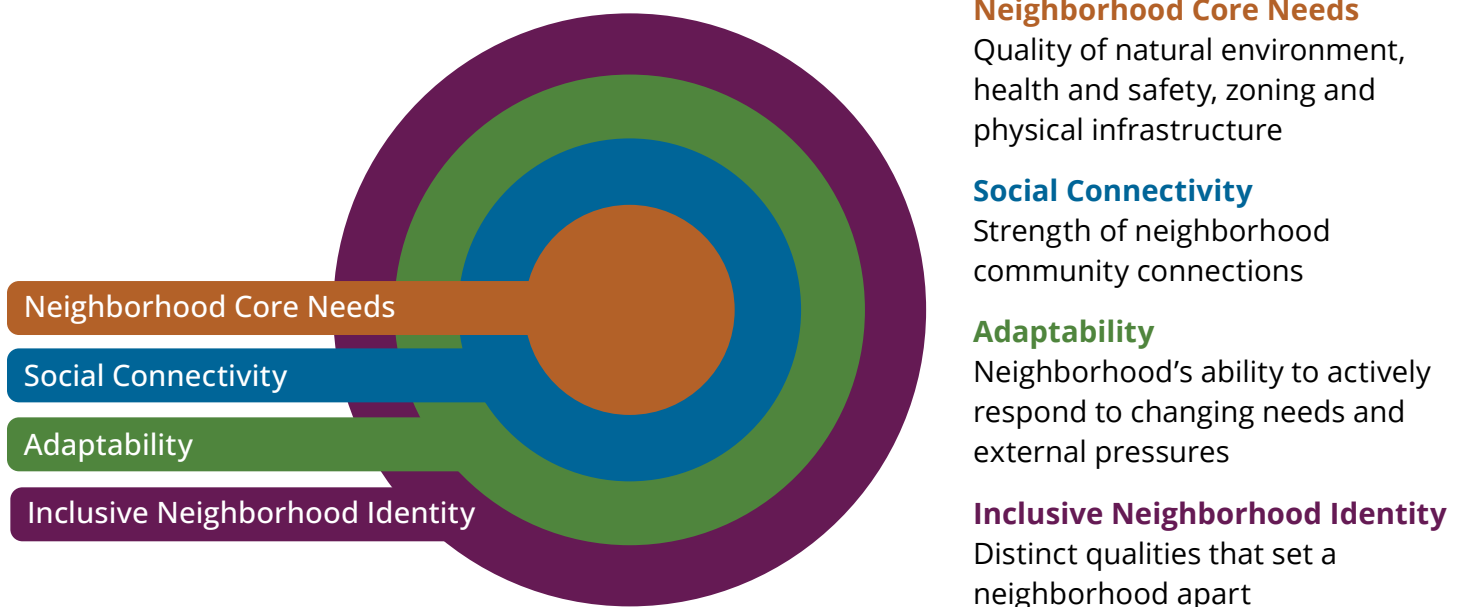
Policies to support Bellevue neighborhoods’ health and vitality are integrated throughout the Comprehensive Plan. The Neighborhoods element provides an additional framework to consider issues that go beyond a neighborhood’s

basic needs. The Neighborhoods element also establishes policies for maintaining and updating the city’s Neighborhood Area (Subarea) plans, as defined by the state Growth Management Act.

## ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBORHOOD

As depicted in Figure NH-1, four factors shape neighborhood quality: Neighborhood Core Needs, Social Connectivity, Adaptability and Inclusive Neighborhood Identity. In the center is Neighborhood Core Needs: the natural environment, services and physical infrastructure that provide for basic needs. Surrounding that core are the people and the social connections that make up the heart of the community. Adaptability is the ability of that local community to respond to changes (both internal and external) that impact its health and development. Inclusive neighborhood identity comprises the distinct physical amenities and artistic, cultural or natural qualities that set each neighborhood apart and provide a ‘sense of place.’

**Figure NH-1. Key Elements of a Successful Neighborhood**





## Neighborhood Core Needs

All Bellevue neighborhoods share a common core of basic needs. Basic needs include a quality built environment that facilitates a safe, welcoming and accessible community; housing options to meet a range of community needs; and neighborhood centers, local businesses, schools, community centers and other “third places” for neighbors to meet. Connectivity within and among neighborhoods is necessary to provide access to schools, parks, businesses and trails. Neighborhoods depend on core city services to safeguard the health and safety of the community, provide appropriate zoning and regulations, steward natural resources and maintain vital infrastructure.

## Social Connectivity

Neighborhoods are made up of people. The strength of connectedness among neighbors contributes to residents’ quality of life. Social connectivity determines a neighborhood’s ability to resolve disputes, prepare for emergencies and climate-related hazards, deter crime, care for aging or vulnerable residents and have a collective voice to shape the amenities, planning and future of the community. Social connectivity helps the community bounce back from natural disasters or unforeseen tragic incidents. It is the social fabric that provides residents with a strong “sense of community” and place of belonging.

## Adaptability

Bellevue is a growing, international world-class city. Bellevue’s neighborhoods reflect its past, present and future. Bellevue’s neighborhoods are not static. They are dynamic communities that will continue to adapt and change while seeking to preserve what residents value most. They will grow with new schools, businesses, parks and amenities. They will reflect the market forces that respond to changing housing needs for Bellevue’s diverse community. Adaptable neighborhoods play an active role in responding to the changing needs and external pressures that impact their community.

## WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

- Community members share safe, welcome and well maintained neighborhoods with convenient access to parks, trails, schools, local businesses, transit and a healthy natural environment.
- Neighbors enjoy a sense of belonging through participation in local neighborhood associations, community clubs, community centers, school organizations cultural and art-oriented organizations, and other organizations that support community connections.
- The city works with neighborhoods to respond to emerging concerns and changing conditions.
- New neighborhood plans equitably engage local communities to reflect area specific values, needs and priorities.

## Inclusive Neighborhood Identity

Bellevue values the distinct physical amenities and artistic, cultural or natural qualities of the city’s diverse neighborhoods, whether it is the vibrancy of Downtown, Crossroads and BelRed neighborhoods, the shoreline communities of West Lake Sammamish and Lake Washington, the hilltop neighborhoods of Cougar Mountain, Somerset and Newport Hills, the historic neighborhoods of Wilburton, Northtowne, Lake Hills and Woodridge, or the wooded neighborhoods of Enatai and Bridle Trails. Bellevue has sixteen neighborhood areas, including the changing areas of Downtown, BelRed and Eastgate. Each area is home to many smaller neighborhoods. The diversity of Bellevue’s neighborhoods is a city treasure—the unique look and feel of each neighborhood depends on its location, history and natural and built environment. At the same time, Bellevue prioritizes



inclusivity and equity and seeks to ensure neighborhoods remain accessible to residents of diverse backgrounds, abilities and incomes.

The city encourages and coordinates neighborhood participation in projects to enhance unique neighborhood identity. Neighborhood groups can partner with the city on features such as landscape plantings, signage, artwork and special paving on streets or sidewalks. Neighborhood engagement with the city shapes city planning and decision making on neighborhood improvements and determines how to enhance distinct neighborhood identities across the city.

## BELLEVUE'S 16 NEIGHBORHOODS

Bellevue has 16 neighborhood areas (Map NH-1), each containing a few to many smaller neighborhoods that cover the full extent of the city. Some of the neighborhood areas, like Downtown, are very urban with exclusively multi-family housing units and a lot of commercial and office space. Other neighborhoods, like Newport, are primarily residential with mostly one unit per lot and a small amount of commercial space that serves the needs of the local population. There are many neighborhoods in between with a mix of housing types and commercial areas. Each neighborhood area has a distinct identity that has evolved over time and continues to evolve as the people living and working in the area change and their needs shift.



## TODAY'S CONDITIONS AND TOMORROW'S PROJECTIONS

### Neighborhoods Today and Tomorrow

Each of Bellevue's 16 neighborhood areas is home to many smaller neighborhoods, reflecting a diversity of development types and scales. Bellevue has shown its commitment to neighborhoods by providing planning and services that have made these highly desirable places to live.

Factors that will affect the future of neighborhoods include:

- Bellevue's population is expected to grow significantly over the planning horizon of the Comprehensive Plan. This growth could mean changes to neighborhoods throughout the city.
- Neighborhoods want to enhance their unique identity, which is shaped by location and history.
- Bellevue's population will have changing needs, such as smaller households and older adults who want to stay in their neighborhood.
- A large portion of the city's future housing capacity is in Bellevue's multi-family and mixed use districts; however, statewide requirements will also enable more housing opportunities throughout the city.
- As Bellevue becomes denser, residents will continue to want safe, quality neighborhoods and access to schools, parks, trails, local stores and recreation.
- Future infrastructure investments will increase mobility options across Bellevue.
- Bellevue continues to grow more diverse, increasing the need for investments in social cohesion, community connections and creating a sense of belonging for all community members.

### Challenges and Opportunities

#### Cycles of Private Investment

During upturns in the housing market, neighborhoods face increased private development and construction projects, redevelopment of single-family homes, increases in investment properties, group homes and rentals and increases in traffic. On the flip side, during economic downturns neighborhoods may face foreclosures, vacant properties, substandard maintenance and stalled commercial development. During all points in the economic cycle, city policies and planning help to protect and mitigate negative impacts of changing market conditions and provide benefits from new opportunities and amenities.

#### Maintaining Safe and Welcoming Environments

Maintaining a high level of neighborhood safety depends on the strength of partnership between the city and local community members. This includes on-going attention to residential crime prevention, emergency preparedness, public safety services, walkability, lighting, social cohesiveness and celebration of difference.

#### Increasing Diversity

Bellevue's residents are increasingly diverse, enhancing the cultural fabric of the city while also adding layers of complexity to the community life of Bellevue's neighborhoods. This diversity provides opportunities for residents to engage cross-culturally in community life. Bellevue's neighborhoods need to provide places for local connection and cultural practices and the city needs to encourage neighborhood social cohesiveness by supporting the neighborhood associations, community clubs, faith communities, park and community services, schools, cultural and art-oriented organizations, non-profits and businesses that invest in Bellevue's community and build a sense of belonging.

## Capacity for Problem-Solving

Neighborhood capacity to collectively address changing needs and external stresses depends on the organization of community groups, neighborhood associations and local leaders. Neighborhoods with active associations that are familiar with city processes and decision making are in a stronger position to solve problems. By providing clear channels of communication with neighborhoods, the city safeguards against unnecessary turmoil and gains local insight for planning and creative solution-making.

## Maintaining Inclusive Neighborhood Identity

As Bellevue continues to grow, the variety of expression, history and physical amenities in its neighborhoods will enrich the quality of life for the entire community. A balanced and nuanced approach will be necessary to accommodate expected growth and development while preserving neighborhood identity. Success will require balancing the needs of the whole city while avoiding a “one size fits all” approach to neighborhood planning that undermines neighborhood distinctiveness.



## Neighborhoods Policy Summary

Bellevue’s neighborhood policies establish clear guidance for how the City can promote successful neighborhoods and are organized around the following six themes:

### Neighborhood Core Needs

Successful neighborhoods are accessible to all, aesthetically cohesive, welcoming, safe and resilient against natural and climate hazards. To fulfill each neighborhood’s basic needs, the city must encourage a diverse mix of uses, provide a range of housing types at various affordability levels and increase neighborhood-scale resilience against climate hazards.

### Community Safety

Public safety for all community members is a top priority for Bellevue. To provide citywide community safety, the city must ensure safety services respond to growth, meet community needs and provide the necessary education and training to allow the community to be active participants in public safety.

### Social Connectivity

Bellevue understands that the success of its many diverse neighborhoods is largely due to the strong and vibrant communities within them. To support the social fabric of neighborhoods, the city must continue to support inclusive community connections that build a sense of belonging and community cohesion.

### Adaptability

Bellevue continues to grow and diversify. To meet the needs of a changing community, the City must support the resiliency and capacity of neighborhoods to enable equitable solutions to localized issues and respond to evolving needs and conditions at both neighborhood and citywide scales.

### Inclusive Neighborhood Identity

Part of what makes Bellevue unique are its many diverse neighborhoods. Each of Bellevue’s neighborhoods have unique

physical amenities, natural environments, art and distinctive characteristics. To encourage inclusive neighborhood identities and sense of place, the city must support community-driven neighborhood enhancement projects, art and culture, park and open space improvements and physical elements that enhance each neighborhood's distinct sense of place for everyone to enjoy.

### Neighborhood Area Planning

Bellevue plans for neighborhood areas through neighborhood area (subarea) plans. These plans have been an important tool for addressing the changing needs and conditions of specific parts of the city. Neighborhood areas include changes to subarea boundaries to better reflect today's neighborhood areas, and to facilitate long-range planning.

The Neighborhoods element provides policies to periodically update the neighborhood area (subarea) plans as conditions warrant. The city understands that not every neighborhood-specific concern is a citywide issue: some matters are best approached at a neighborhood-area scale, with awareness of a wider city context.



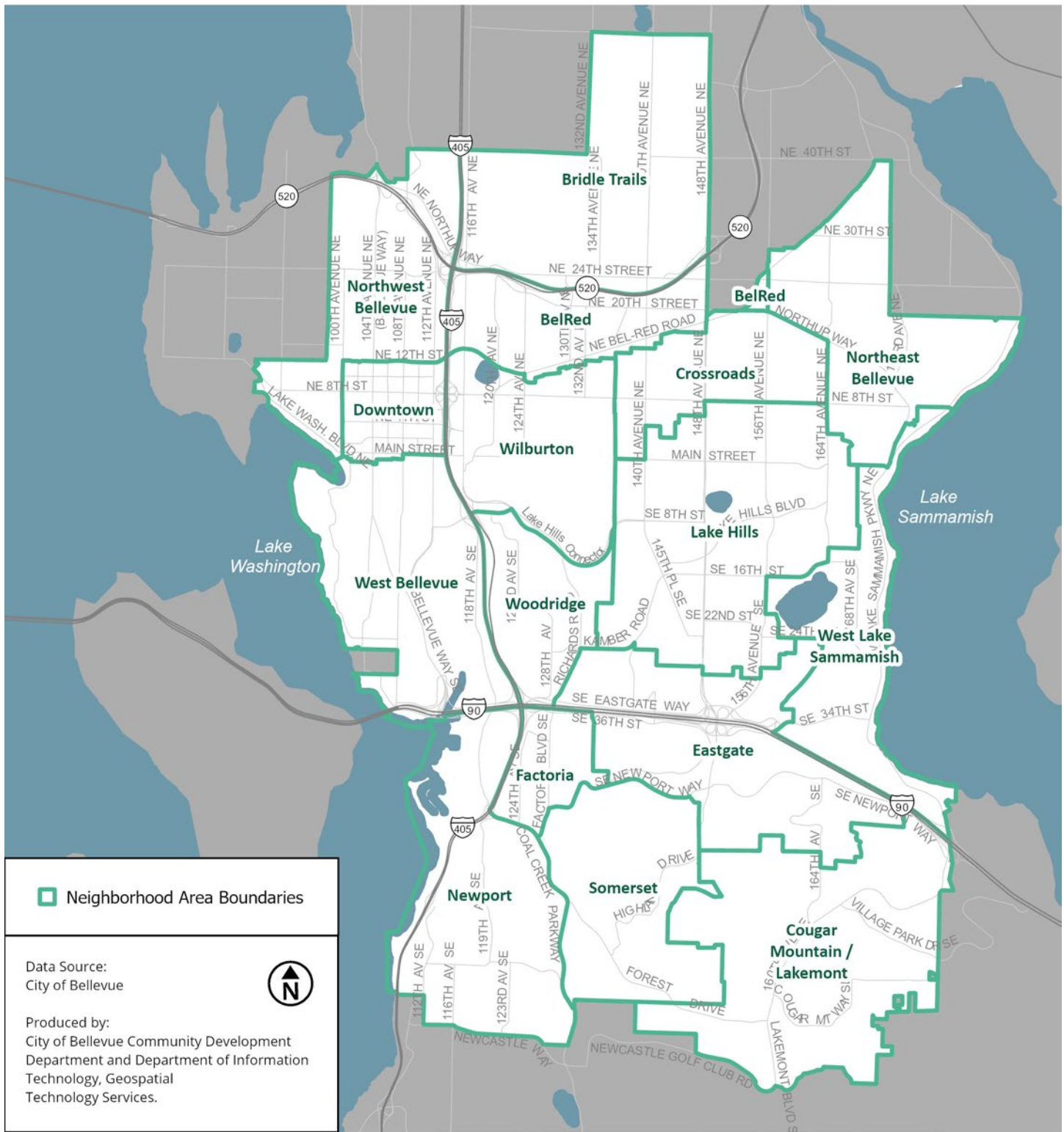
## HOW DO NEIGHBORHOOD AREA (SUBAREA) PLANS RELATE TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

Neighborhood area plans make up Volume 2 of the Comprehensive Plan. A neighborhood area plan articulates a vision—consistent with the citywide vision and policies in Volume 1—sets priorities and identifies future actions to realize the community's vision at the neighborhood level. The neighborhood area planning process seeks to equitably engage local communities to define specific values and policies. This planning process is also used to implement citywide policies at the neighborhood level.



## Map NH-1. Neighborhood Area Boundaries

Neighborhood Areas are used for planning and project administration. The Subarea Plan boundaries are updated to align with these boundaries as the plans are updated.



## GOAL & POLICIES

### Goal

To maintain and enhance the high quality of life in Bellevue's distinctive neighborhoods.

### Policies

The neighborhood policies below build from and add to the many neighborhood-directed policies found throughout the Comprehensive Plan. Policy direction found elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan, while critical to neighborhoods, is not repeated here. See "Policy Connections" for extensive references.

### Neighborhood Core Needs

- NH-1.** Maintain all neighborhoods as safe, welcoming and accessible environments for all to enjoy.
- NH-2.** Support the creation of a variety of land uses to fulfill each neighborhood's basic needs, including:
  1. A range of housing types at various affordability levels;
  2. Access to basic needs such as groceries, pharmacies, child care and other essential services;
  3. Natural areas and open spaces; and
  4. Public places to gather like community centers and parks and private places to gather like churches and country clubs.
- NH-3.** Plan and prepare for the response, recovery and mitigation of potential disasters and hazards. Factor climate impacts into neighborhood emergency preparedness and enhance local capacity to respond to climate-related hazards.
- NH-4.** Incorporate equitable access to healthy food in all neighborhood areas by encouraging the location of healthy food purveyors, such as grocery stores, farmers markets and community food gardens in proximity to residential uses and transit facilities.

### Social Connectivity

- NH-5.** Promote inclusive community connections that strengthen the social fabric of neighborhoods, including support for organizations that foster community cohesion and sense of belonging.
- NH-6.** Support citywide initiatives to involve communities of color in identifying and promoting policies and projects to increase equity, inclusion and a sense of belonging within the city.

### Adaptability

- NH-7.** Provide multiple venues for two-way communication with community members to listen to and respond to emerging neighborhood opportunities and concerns.

- NH-8.** Support the capacity of local neighborhood communities to actively engage and respond to changing community needs and conditions at both neighborhood and citywide scales.
- NH-9.** Regularly track changes in demographics and neighborhood indicators to improve city responsiveness to changing conditions and community needs across all neighborhoods.

See also Community Engagement policies related to supporting good relationships, [CE-18](#) to [CE-21](#).

## Community Safety

- NH-10.** Ensure police, fire and emergency services provide high levels of public safety that respond to growth and changing community needs.
- NH-11.** Equip residents, businesses and community service providers through education and training to be active participants in public safety (including, but not limited to, emergency preparedness, crime prevention, first aid, fire prevention and climate-related hazards).
- NH-12.** Increase firearm safety through communications, education, partnerships and law enforcement outreach with the aim to reduce firearm violence.
- NH-13.** Involve the community in creating supportive systems for deterring racism and hate crimes.

## Inclusive Neighborhood Identity

- NH-14.** Support efforts to enhance the distinct physical amenities and neighborhood elements that bring artistic, cultural or natural qualities to life across Bellevue's diverse neighborhoods.
- NH-15.** Provide programs and support for community members to make a difference in local neighborhood improvements. This includes ways to direct neighborhood enhancement projects, neighborhood identity signage, gateways, park enhancements, neighborhood art and maintenance of public right-of-ways.
- NH-16.** Enable neighborhood-tailored, equitable solutions to localized issues while ensuring they meet citywide responsibilities.

## Neighborhood Area Planning

- NH-17.** Use the neighborhood area planning process to implement citywide policies adopted within the comprehensive plan.
- NH-18.** Periodically update neighborhood area plans consistent with the planning boundaries shown in Map N-1. For any given site, the 2014 subarea plan policies remain in effect until and unless they have been superseded by new planning area boundaries and policies.
- NH-19.** Use the neighborhood area planning process to equitably engage local communities to define neighborhood area specific values and policies.

See also Land Use policies related to Neighborhood Centers, [LU-16](#) to [LU-18](#).





# Housing

## VISION

Bellevue meets the housing needs of its diverse population, strengthening neighborhoods and communities.

Bellevue works with its partners to meet the community's housing needs through a range of housing types and affordabilities. Bellevue employs a wide range of strategies to meet its share of the regional housing need. The city has been an effective participant in the region's work that has largely eliminated homelessness.

### HOUSING ELEMENT SCOPE

The Housing element is about how the City makes sure housing is available and affordable to meet the needs of all sizes and types of households.

## INTRODUCTION

Bellevue’s Housing element describes the community’s vision for the future of housing in Bellevue while meeting the goals and requirements of the state Growth Management Act and the King County Countywide Planning Policies. Information in the Housing element is supplemented by the 2022 City of Bellevue Housing Needs Assessment, which can be found on the City of Bellevue website. The Housing Needs Assessment identifies existing and future housing needs based on socioeconomic characteristics of current and future Bellevue residents and workers and serves as a foundation for policy recommendations. Additionally, the 2017 City of Bellevue Affordable Housing Strategy, 2023 Racially Disparate Impacts Analysis, public input, Bellevue City Council priorities and Puget Sound Regional Council’s Vision 2050 guide contribute to Bellevue’s housing actions.

Through its adopted plans and policies, the city pursues opportunities to:

- Promote housing equity
- Provide additional housing supply and a diversity of housing types
- Meet the affordable housing need
- Attend to the special housing needs of individuals and families
- Prevent displacement of individuals and families from their homes and neighborhoods
- Prevent homelessness

The Housing element works in conjunction with Land Use, Transportation, Human Services, Economic Development and other community objectives addressed in this Comprehensive Plan. For instance, locating denser housing in mixed use areas supports the city’s land use objectives. Increasing the supply of housing available to the city’s diverse workforce supports economic development objectives.



## TODAY’S CONDITIONS AND TOMORROW’S PROJECTIONS

### Housing Today and Tomorrow: Trends and Key Findings

The City of Bellevue Housing Needs Assessment highlights key trends and findings. Below are select findings from the 2022 Housing Needs Assessment.

- Bellevue’s demographic trends highlight that the community needs a range of housing types to accommodate its population. Housing is needed for young adults (20-44 years), which are Bellevue’s most prevalent age group, as well as families with children and seniors—both of which have almost doubled since 1990.

- Bellevue’s commuting trends suggest that many of the city’s workers either may not be able to afford suitable housing inside the community or the available housing may not meet their needs or preferences. Bellevue has high rates of commuting both to and from the city and the city’s workforce largely lives outside of Bellevue (89%).
- Bellevue’s current housing stock is not aligned well with its population in terms of unit size. 53% of the housing units have three or more bedrooms, yet nearly 61% of the households have only one or two members. This may indicate that some larger housing units are underoccupied by small households who prefer a larger home or some larger households may be constrained by affordability to live in smaller units.
- Rising regional prices have increased housing costs in Bellevue, resulting in high levels of household cost burden.<sup>1</sup> Housing cost burden disproportionately affects lower income and renter households. About 27% of all of Bellevue’s households are cost burdened. Those most cost-burdened are moderate to low-income renters, seniors living alone and Black and Hispanic households.
- Bellevue has a deficit in the number of units affordable to households earning less than 50% of the area median income (AMI).
- Homeownership is out of reach for a growing proportion of residents, with the lowest homeownership rates for Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino households. Single-parent and nonfamily households are also less likely to own their home.
- Over the past two decades, Bellevue has almost exclusively produced multifamily housing and, therefore, mostly rental housing. More than 80% of multifamily occupied housing units are renter-occupied, versus 19% of single family occupied housing units. This may limit housing choices for current and future Bellevue residents.

## HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

An inventory of existing and projected housing need across Bellevue.

### Planning for Future Housing Needs

The state Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that each county and city plans to accommodate the growth projected over the next 20 years. The GMA also requires that the city plans for and accommodates housing that is affordable to all economic segments of the population. Permanent housing needs in Figure HO-1 include both permanent supportive housing (PSH) and non-permanent supportive housing (non-PSH).

Bellevue is planning for sufficient capacity to accommodate the 35,000 units projected to be built by 2044. This includes capacity for housing in all income groups and for emergency housing and emergency shelter housing. See details in Figures HO-2 and HO-3.

**Figure HO-1. King County Allocation of Future Housing Need**

Affordability Level		Number of Units
0-30% AMI*	Non-PSH	11,925
	PSH	6,270
30-50% AMI		8,780
50-80% AMI		2,671
80-100% AMI		703
100-120% AMI		798
>120% AMI		3,853
<b>Total Permanent Housing Need</b>		<b>35,000</b>
Emergency Housing Need		6,688

\*The Area Median Income (AMI) for the Seattle-Bellevue Metropolitan Area as published on an annual basis by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

**Figure HO-2. Residential Capacity by Income Served**

Income Served	Zone Category	Capacity (Units)
Above 120% AMI	Low Density Residential	0
80 to 120% AMI	Moderate Density Residential	32,039
0 to 80% AMI	Low-Rise Mixed Use	6,401
0 to 80% AMI	Mid-Rise Mixed Use	33,605
Above 120% AMI	High-Rise Mixed Use	21,660
Affordable Housing Capacity (0 to 80% AMI)		40,006
Total Residential Capacity		93,705

**Figure HO-3. Emergency Housing and Emergency Shelter Capacity**

Use Type	Regulated As	Land Capacity (Units/Beds)
Emergency Housing – Nontransient	Supportive Housing	44,394
Emergency Housing – Transient and Overnight Shelter	Homeless Services Uses	2,358
Total Emergency Shelter & Emergency Housing Capacity <sup>2</sup>		46,752

Details on the calculations to estimate capacity in Figure HO-2 and Figure HO-3 can be found in the FEIS.



## HOUSING POLICY SUMMARY

Bellevue's housing ranges from low-density detached homes on large lots to high-rise apartments and condominiums, with a variety of housing types in between. Consistent with the vision of this chapter, the city seeks to promote housing equity, increase the overall housing diversity and supply, create affordable housing, attend to the unique housing needs of individuals and prevent displacement and homelessness.

### Housing Equity

Bellevue acknowledges past and present housing discrimination, inequity and injustice and works to promote housing equity for all moving forward. The land that is now Bellevue is the traditional lands of the Coast Salish peoples, who ceded the land amidst significant power imbalances and poor translation of the treaties granting the land to the U.S. Government. Through the treaties many native people were displaced from the Bellevue area to reservations elsewhere in the region. Beginning in the late-1800s, the State of Washington adopted an "Alien Land Law" preventing immigrants, mainly Chinese and Japanese, from owning and then subsequently leasing land. The targeting of Japanese Americans continued through World War II, at which time approximately 300 families were forcibly removed from their homes in Bellevue and detained in internment camps. Racial covenants were also

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY

Bellevue's Affordable Housing Strategy (AHS) is intended to substantially increase the city's affordable housing stock over the next ten years. The primary purpose of the AHS is to improve affordable housing opportunities throughout the city consistent with City Council Priorities, Comprehensive Plan guidance and Economic Development Plan Strategies.



## Challenges and Opportunities

According to King County's allocation of housing need, the City of Bellevue must plan for more than half of its future housing need (more than 18,000 units) to be affordable for extremely low-income households—those earning at or below 30% AMI. One-third of the future need is allocated to low- or very low-income households—those earning between 30% and 80% AMI. Meeting these targets would represent a major increase in production of below-market-rate units in Bellevue and would require significant public subsidy and other tools and incentives to realize.

Barriers to meeting affordable housing needs at low- and extremely low-incomes households include development regulations, process obstacles, limited land availability and funding gaps. Documentation of the existing barriers to affordable housing can be found in Appendix L of the FEIS for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. The City of Bellevue is working to implement strategies to address these barriers through the implementation of this element and the city's functional plans.

common in Bellevue prior to the practice being struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1945, with at least 624 parcels subject to restrictions on occupancy and ownership based on race, ethnicity, or religion.

While formalized discrimination based on factors such as race, ethnicity, religion and gender were outlawed through the Fair Housing Act, adopted in 1968, less explicit forms of discrimination have continued to occur to the present day. Many of these more subtle forms of discrimination can be found in housing practices, whether that is through realtors steering prospective buyers away from specific neighborhoods or through land use laws. Examples of land use laws that often have discriminatory impacts, on the basis of class or race, are:

- Requirements for large lots, which increase housing prices
- Only allowing for the siting of multifamily units along major roadways, which subjects residents to environmental hazards.

The policies in this element work not only to create a Bellevue which provides housing opportunities for all current and future residents, but also to undo harms of the past.

### **Housing Supply and Diversity**

As Bellevue and the Puget Sound Region continue to grow, and as Bellevue continues to be a desirable community to live in, the city will need to accommodate new residents through the supply of additional housing units. This Comprehensive Plan sets a goal of 35,000 additional housing units within the city by 2044. An analysis of housing capacity by income is in Appendices Q and R of the FEIS for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

The Land Use element describes the manner in which the city will grow and identifies locations proposed for growth. This element builds upon the Land Use element by adopting policies to promote the provision of additional housing in Bellevue. Generally, the policies encourage housing supply by streamlining development

## **HOUSING EQUITY**

Housing equity is when an individual's race, ethnicity, immigration status, sexual orientation, ability or income does not impact their ability to access housing in the neighborhood of their choice.

## **RACIALLY DISPARATE IMPACT ANALYSIS**

A report on policies and regulations may be having disparate impacts on particular racial or economic groups.

regulations, incentivizing development and allowing for additional housing density within the city.

Public input has shown support for diversifying Bellevue's housing stock to allow for a greater mix of housing types throughout the city. A diversity of housing options, including accessory dwelling units, cottage housing, townhomes and multi-unit buildings, allow individuals and families to choose the housing that best suits their needs. Housing diversity also allows for various housing arrangements to meet social and cultural needs, such as multi-generational households, as well as aging-in-place as individuals' needs change over time. Additionally, updates to Washington State law, notably House Bill 1110, require that the city allow for additional middle-scale housing types and units on the majority of residential lots. The policies contained in this element work to encourage a diverse housing stock, especially encouraging middle-scale housing typologies.

### **Affordable Housing**

Housing affordability remains a challenge in Bellevue. According to the City of Bellevue Housing Needs Assessment, 27% of all households are cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of their

income on housing. Lower income households are significantly more likely to be cost-burdened, with 74% of households earning at or below 50% of area median income and spending more than 30% of their income on housing. As estimated by the King County allocation of affordable housing needs, Bellevue will have to add approximately 29,000 housing units affordable to those earning 80% or less of the area median income by 2044. The policies in this element aim to meet this need by providing funding, working with regional and statewide partners, providing incentives and creating regulations that encourage or require the creation of affordable housing.

Coupled with lack of affordability is a risk of displacement, especially for low-income populations. Displacement risk increases as housing costs rise and as naturally-occurring affordable housing is lost through redevelopment or change of ownership. Action or inaction from the city can exacerbate displacement risk. Land use code changes that increase property values or allow for new uses can encourage redevelopment of properties, leading to the loss of affordable housing as well as the social connections of residents. Policies in this chapter aim at preserving existing affordable housing, increasing affordable housing, providing assistance to persons to minimize risks of displacement and assisting those who have been displaced.

### Housing for Unique Needs

Bellevue residents with differing needs may require housing accommodation or assistance. In general, populations in need of these housing types are those who require some assistance in their day-to-day living due to disability, health, age or other circumstances. Family living situations, residential programs, human services programs and assisted housing all serve a portion of the need. The city offers support and incentives for the development of housing for people in need of targeted housing.



### Preventing Homelessness

Based on the 2022 King County Point-in-Time Count, a count of individuals experiencing homelessness on a single night, there are approximately 13,300 individuals experiencing homelessness on any given night in King County. The King County Regional Homelessness Authority also estimates that just under 41,000 people experienced homelessness at some point in 2020. In collaboration with regional partners, Bellevue strives, in collaboration with regional partners, to prevent homelessness and ensure appropriate, secure and affordable housing. This element recognizes that individuals experiencing homelessness may need additional assistance in the form of transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, job services, healthcare and provision of basic needs, among others. This subsection is closely tied with the subsection on affordable housing and the Human Services element.

## GOAL & POLICIES

### Goal

To meet the housing needs of the entire community by promoting housing equity, increasing the overall housing diversity and supply, creating affordable housing, attending to individuals' unique housing needs, and preventing displacement and homelessness.

### Policies

#### Housing Equity

- HO-1.** Encourage investment in areas with historically lower investment and where private investment patterns are not accomplishing this objective to encourage housing affordability and stability while providing amenities for the community.
- HO-2.** Ensure that current and proposed regulations, policies and procedures do not lead to disproportionate impact on, or displacement of, marginalized populations.
- HO-3.** To ensure progress toward reducing housing disparities, collaborate with those disproportionately impacted by housing cost in creating and implementing city housing policies, practices and regulations.
- HO-4.** Lower barriers and encourage homeownership opportunities at all income levels, especially for populations that have historically been denied access to property ownership.
- HO-5.** Acknowledge and document Bellevue's role in historical events and actions that have led to housing disparities and discrimination and ensure equitable outcomes in housing in all city processes, procedures and regulations while working to undo past harms.
- HO-6.** Minimize residents' exposure to both natural and manmade environmental hazards and ensure that the city's housing policies and regulations do not perpetuate historical patterns of environmental racism.
- HO-7.** Employ effective strategies that support and enforce the Fair Housing Act and affirmatively further fair housing.
- HO-8.** Enact policies which proactively prevent displacement of marginalized populations due to economic factors or large-scale planning or capital improvement projects.
- HO-9.** Provide additional support to historically underserved communities and marginalized communities to connect them to housing and home ownership opportunities.
- HO-10.** Work to identify and eliminate current city policies, practices and regulations that perpetuate housing disparities and discrimination.
- HO-11.** Ensure a diverse housing stock, including affordable housing, throughout the city to meet the needs of all individuals and families of differing incomes, sizes, arrangements and cultural backgrounds.



## Housing Supply and Diversity

- HO-12.** Collaborate with diverse partners on the provision of resources and programs to meet the city's housing need.
- HO-13.** Provide incentives to encourage residential development for a wide range of household types and income levels in mixed use areas throughout the city.
- HO-14.** Ensure there are zoning ordinances and building policies in place that allow and encourage an increase in the housing supply attainable to households along the full range of income levels.
- HO-15.** Streamline permitting processes and create objective development regulations that encourage housing development throughout the city.
- HO-16.** Evaluate the housing cost and supply implications of proposed regulations, policies and procedures and ensure that new regulations, policies and procedures promote affordability and housing diversity within the city.
- HO-17.** Allow attached and detached accessory dwelling units in residential and mixed-use areas with the ability to be rented or sold individually.
- HO-18.** Promote housing density, choice and affordability in areas served by the frequent transit network, businesses serving the community's day-to-day needs and significant nodes of employment.
- HO-19.** Ensure that policies and regulations allow for middle scale housing, such as duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, small apartment buildings, cottage housing and courtyard apartments.
- HO-20.** Encourage units of sizes and types that accommodate multi-generational households and families with children in a variety of areas across the city, including both denser mixed use areas and low-density residential areas.
- HO-21.** Monitor and assess the housing production in the city to track the city's progress toward meeting the projected jurisdictional housing needs across the entire income spectrum, consistent with state law and Countywide Planning Policies and take additional steps if needed.
- HO-22.** Allow innovative housing types and demonstration projects that could serve as a model for new housing choices currently not being built in Bellevue.
- HO-23.** Evaluate the impact of short-term rentals on the cost and supply of housing.
- HO-24.** Use the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process to allow site planning strategies that can provide a variety of housing types and maximize the amount of buildable housing on development sites.
- HO-25.** Promote climate-friendly housing that minimizes energy and resource use throughout the construction and life of the structure, and that is adaptable to a changing climate, including heat, flooding, air pollution and wildfire events.
- HO-26.** Partner with non-profit and for-profit housing developers to help create a variety of housing types in the community.

- HO-27.** Allow properties in residential designated areas on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan map to reclassify to higher density residential designations when they meet all the following criteria:
1. one hundred percent of the housing being developed will be permanently affordable housing; and
  2. the property is owned or controlled by a religious organization; and
  3. the property is located near high capacity transportation infrastructure and services; and
  4. the property is located near other multifamily residential or commercial use districts.
- HO-28.** Encourage development of appropriate amenities for families with children throughout the city through investments, development regulations and incentives.
- HO-29.** Work cooperatively with the Washington State Department of Commerce, Puget Sound Regional Council, King County, subregional collaborations and other entities that provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions to support the development, implementation and monitoring of strategies that achieve the goals of the city.

## Affordable Housing

- HO-30.** Substantially expand funding sources for affordable housing.
- HO-31.** Work with educational institutions, including Bellevue College, and private developers to provide attainable housing.
- HO-32.** Develop strategies to minimize displacement of marginalized populations, such as rental, eviction and foreclosure assistance programs.
- HO-33.** Address the need for housing affordable to extremely low-, very low-, low- and moderate-income households, through funding, regulations, policies, procedures and other mechanisms.
- HO-34.** Explore the creation of a funding mechanism to assist extremely low-, very low- and low-income households with property tax payments to prevent displacement.
- HO-35.** Create opportunities to require or incentivize affordable housing when increases to development capacity are made.
- HO-36.** Involve state and regional housing partners, developers and housing providers in the development of affordable housing incentives or requirements.
- HO-37.** Ensure continuity of housing and minimize displacement of people with lower incomes by preserving existing affordable housing and encouraging its maintenance and improvement.
- HO-38.** Monitor the city's stock of both subsidized and naturally occurring affordable housing and work to preserve it as permanent income-restricted housing.

- HO-39.** Create a funding mechanism to purchase affordable housing units which become available or are likely to not remain affordable to both preserve affordable housing stock and prevent displacement.
- HO-40.** Anticipate the future maintenance and restoration needs of older and more affordable neighborhoods through a periodic survey of housing conditions. Report results of such surveys to residents.
- HO-41.** Provide financial assistance to households with extremely low-, very low-, low- and moderate incomes for maintaining or repairing the health and safety features of their homes.
- HO-42.** Provide assistance to households with extremely low-, very low-, low- and moderate incomes to weatherize and increase the energy efficiency of their homes to reduce housing costs.
- HO-43.** Recognize the connection between housing cost burden and mobility cost, and work to provide affordable housing in areas served by the frequent transit network.
- HO-44.** Ensure affordable housing opportunities are available throughout the city at a range of affordability levels.
- HO-45.** Ensure that all affordable housing created in the city with public funds or by regulation remains affordable for the longest possible term.
- HO-46.** Create financial incentives to encourage affordable housing. Explore opportunities to utilize multiple programs simultaneously to attain deeper affordability or otherwise meet unique needs.
- HO-47.** Encourage and prioritize the development of affordable housing through incentives, regulations, funding, policies, procedures and other tools.
- HO-48.** Implement the bonuses and incentives for qualifying properties to encourage affordability and housing diversity and to prevent displacement of marginalized populations.
- HO-49.** Provide incentives and work with diverse partners, including philanthropic organizations, to build permanent affordable housing and meet housing need, especially in areas of highest need.
- HO-50.** Ensure that regulations and standards support the effectiveness of bonuses and incentives to increase permanently affordable housing on any qualifying property owned by faith-based or non-profit housing entities, or on surplus property owned by public entities.
- HO-51.** Inform and educate religious organizations about the opportunity to develop affordable housing.
- HO-52.** Prioritize suitable surplus city land for development of affordable housing, including affordable homeownership.

- HO-53.** Explore co-locating affordable housing in the development of new city-owned capital facilities.
- HO-54.** Explore the creation of a land bank to acquire land for future affordable housing needs as opportunities arise.
- HO-55.** Explore shared equity homeownership models to create permanently affordable homeownership throughout the city.
- HO-56.** Analyze major cost and regulatory barriers to the construction of affordable housing and minimize these barriers where they exist.
- HO-57.** Provide funding to ensure housing needs are met, especially for special needs housing, extremely low-, very low- and low-income households. Assess housing fund guidelines on a regular basis to ensure they are consistent with changing community needs.
- HO-58.** Pursue available federal, state and local programs and private options for financing the creation and preservation of affordable housing in the city.
- HO-59.** Participate in relocation assistance to ensure a stable transition for lower income households facing displacement.
- HO-60.** Work cooperatively with King County, A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) and other regional and statewide organizations and other jurisdictions to assess the need for, and to create, affordable housing.
- HO-61.** Support programs and adopt policies that promote housing stability for renters.
- HO-62.** Implement bonuses and incentives for qualifying properties to encourage affordability and housing diversity and to prevent displacement of vulnerable populations.

## Housing for Unique Needs

- HO-63.** Encourage a range of housing types for older adults affordable at a variety of income levels to minimize displacement and ensure older adults can reside in the area of their choosing as their needs change over time.
- HO-64.** Encourage and support the creation of housing to support those with unique needs throughout the city, including youth, persons with disabilities or in need of mental and physical health assistance, victims of domestic violence and refugees.
- HO-65.** Promote the use of Universal Design methods that increase housing accessibility.
- HO-66.** Support the development of housing options and related services for older adults and people living with disabilities, such as adult family homes and other housing for unique needs throughout the city.
- HO-67.** Support and plan for assisted housing using federal or state aid and private resources.

## Preventing Homelessness

- HO-68.** Support the development of housing for people exiting homelessness in all areas of the city.
- HO-69.** Work to co-locate services and housing to prevent occurrences of homelessness and to support residents' transition into stable and permanent housing.
- HO-70.** Collaborate with other jurisdictions and human service organizations to assure availability of emergency shelters and day centers that support those at-risk of or experiencing homelessness.
- HO-71.** Perform outreach to populations at risk of losing their housing as well as those who are currently or have recently experienced homelessness to inform them of available services and assist them in utilizing those services.
- HO-72.** Provide opportunities for community education regarding homelessness in order to foster meaningful dialogue.
- HO-73.** Work to prevent homelessness and make homelessness rare, brief and one time when it occurs.
- HO-74.** Provide a range of emergency and affordable housing options and collaborate on housing and human services efforts to support persons and families experiencing homelessness in moving towards housing stability.
- HO-75.** Support the provision of transitional and supportive housing to prevent homelessness.
- HO-76.** Encourage the provision of human services to support the development and operations of emergency and supportive housing and shelters.
- HO-77.** Support efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of people experiencing homelessness.

See also Human Services policies related to homelessness, [HS-23](#) and [HS-24](#).

## Citations

- 1 Cost burdened households are those that spend more than 30% of their income on housing expenses, including taxes and utilities, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This leaves limited funds for other essential needs such as food, healthcare, education and transportation.
- 2 Combined capacity for all emergency housing types exceeds the allocated need. Specifically, the City has surplus capacity for Emergency Housing – Non-transient, which is regulated as Supportive Housing, without any changes to current regulations. However, the City’s combined capacity for Emergency Housing – Transient, which is regulated as a Homeless Services Use, is less than the King County identified need for this type of housing based on current regulations.



# Capital Facilities

## VISION

Bellevue has exceptional community facilities that efficiently serve the needs of an evolving city while addressing greenhouse gas reductions and climate resiliency.

Bellevue has adequate financial resources to build and maintain parks, streetscapes, community facilities and other essential public facilities to address the city's growth and evolving needs. Public buildings and municipal operations address energy efficiency and climate resiliency while allowing for a flexible, healthy and productive environment for those who live, work and play in Bellevue. Community facilities address multiple objectives, such as creating new open space and enhancing livability, even as they meet basic functional requirements.

### CAPITAL FACILITIES SCOPE

The Capital Facilities element is about how the city plans for, acquires and maintains public land, facilities, buildings and other public property.



## INTRODUCTION

Ensuring that public facilities are available when growth occurs is critical. The implementation of a well-defined capital facilities program will help realize the community's vision for outstanding capital facilities as well as the vision and goals of the Land Use element. Outstanding facilities are not only technically high-performance, in terms of facility- and equipment-specific measures, but also contribute to community and environmental health and resilience. The construction and modernization processes of outstanding facilities are guided by high standards, including industry best practices and innovations as well as third-party certifications.

This element is Bellevue's plan for the provision and maintenance of capital facilities. It acts as a reference for all other capital facility plans, comprehensive plans, capital improvement and investment programs, inventories and studies that together represent the planning and financing mechanisms necessary to serve the capital facility needs of Bellevue. Figure CF-1 contains a list of other relevant plans.

## WHY CAPITAL FACILITY PLANNING?

The Growth Management Act gives jurisdictions specific direction on capital facilities through its Public Facilities and Services Goal:

"Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards."

Bellevue owns and manages a variety of capital facilities including roads, parks, water and sewer lines, police and fire facilities, administrative buildings and training and maintenance facilities. In addition to facilities owned and managed by Bellevue, there are publicly owned capital facilities



managed by other entities which meet some of Bellevue's capital facility needs. These include but are not limited to schools, libraries, water supply, sewage treatment, public transit and publicly owned park-and-ride facilities.

The governing bodies responsible for each public facility make planning decisions about their facilities, such as when to construct new facilities, improve existing facilities, increase the level of service provided by those facilities and how to fund and maintain needed facilities. Planning decisions address the evolving and adaptive role of technology in the provision of capital facilities.

## TODAY'S CONDITIONS AND TOMORROW'S PROJECTIONS

### Capital Facilities Today and Tomorrow

Capital investment recommendations are drawn primarily from functional plans specific to each capital facility service or city department. Utilities such as water, sewer and stormwater have specific requirements according to state and federal law. Each city department or responsible agent forecasts needed improvements for at least a twenty-year time horizon and, in some cases, through ultimate system build-out, based on the city's land use plan. The plans contain inventories of the system and forecasts of system demand and capacity based on population and regulatory mandates. The functional plans identify capital investments required to meet future demand and to replace or maintain existing facilities for continued service. The plans also define customer service levels and system-specific operating policies.

Each system plan is updated every six to ten years depending on need and regulatory requirements. These system plans are the best resource for comprehensive inventories and facility location information, as well as existing capacity and forecasted needs.

## LEVEL OF SERVICE

Level of Service (LOS) is the adopted standard of service adequacy. For capital facilities planning, the LOS measure for each facility type provides guidance as to whether facilities are adequate to meet service needs and what new capital facilities may be needed. LOS standards for each capital facility are provided in the corresponding functional plan. The standards can range from a precise measurement, such as the amount of time it takes for a fire truck to reach the scene of a fire, to a general, qualitative measurement, such as a community's perception of how much and what type of open space is needed.

LOS standards are created through an ongoing iterative process that considers the community's population, economics and fiscal resources. Population figures tell who, how many and where people need services, and the economics determines the amount of funding available to meet those service needs.

The performance of a capital facility can be measured once an LOS standard has been established. A capital facility operating at or above the established LOS indicates no need for improvements or new facilities. A facility operating below the established LOS is an indication that there may be a need for improvements, new facilities or a re-evaluation of the LOS standard. However, if funding is not available to bring service up to the established level, then the LOS is reexamined to determine if it is appropriate.



Bellevue's Capital Investment Program (CIP) is the city's seven-year financing and implementation plan. The objective of the CIP is to identify capital facility needs and funding mechanisms to finance the construction, reconstruction and acquisition of assets needed due to population growth, aging of existing infrastructure, changing needs or Bellevue's desire to improve the city's capital investments. Updated every two years, the CIP consolidates the planned infrastructure and facilities improvements identified in the system plans. The CIP prioritizes projects, identifies project order and assigns funding.

## CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAM (CIP)

This is the city's seven-year financing and implementation plan for needed capital improvements to the city's public facilities and infrastructure. The plan is updated in odd years.

The CIP uses many revenue sources to fund the capital investment projects identified in the plan, including sales tax, business and occupation tax, utility rates, state revenues, bonds and grants. Impact fees and other specific revenues allowed under the Growth Management Act also offer potential funding sources. Similar to city-managed capital facilities, non-city-managed capital facilities improvements are funded through bonds and other mechanisms.

The Growth Management Act requires that capital improvement planning be coordinated with the city's larger land use planning framework. The city is responsible for monitoring the status of development relative to planned conditions and for reviewing and revising plans as necessary. In particular, the city must ensure that adequate capital facilities are available when they are needed to serve development. If limited funding or other circumstances would prevent the city from providing adequate facilities and services, the Growth Management Act requires the city to re-evaluate the Land Use element and make sure that capital facilities plans and land use plans are consistent.

## Capital Facilities Inventory

The City of Bellevue owns and maintains a variety of public services infrastructure, including drinking water, wastewater and stormwater systems; parks and open space; police and fire facilities; municipal buildings; public roads and transportation infrastructure.

The city departments responsible for each of these services conduct ongoing facilities planning. Larger systems, such as utilities, have specific functional plans. In addition to these topic-specific plans, planning for the construction and maintenance of capital facilities takes place every two years through the Capital Improvement Program Plan. Capital facilities belonging to privately owned utilities serving Bellevue (electrical, natural gas, pipelines and telecommunication) are addressed in the Utilities element of the plan.

Bellevue Utilities owns, operates and maintains infrastructure to provide drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater and surface water services to Bellevue residents and businesses as well as some areas outside of the city limits. Continued investment in this infrastructure is necessary for continued delivery of utility services that are critical for human health and safety economic development, as well as supporting a sustainable, healthy environment. Capital facility investment helps to ensure that Bellevue can continue to deliver the high-quality municipal utility services customers expect. The goals and policies for city-owned and non-city-owned utilities can be found in the Utilities element.

In addition to utilities, the city owns and manages a collection of recreational facilities, including parkland, trails, athletic facilities, swimming pool, playgrounds and community centers. A detailed inventory and discussion of goals and policies for these recreational facilities are included in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space element.

Other facilities managed by the city include fire stations, a central police station, substations, a 9-1-1 communications center and associated

## PLANS FOR CAPITAL FACILITIES NOT OWNED BY THE CITY

The following plans include inventories and plans for facilities not owned by the city.

### School facilities

- Bellevue School District 5-Year Strategic Plan
- Renton School District 6-year Capital Facilities Plan
- Lake Washington School District 6-year Capital Facilities Plan
- Issaquah School District 6-year Capital Facilities Plan

### Utility facilities

- King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan
- Puget Sound Energy Integrated Resource Plan
- Redmond Water System Plan

### Transportation facilities

- Roads Services Division of the King County Capital Investment Program Plan
- Puget Sound Regional Council Regional Transportation Plan
- Washington Transportation Plan

equipment and assets (fire engines, police cars, ambulances, hazardous materials response equipment, etc.). The city also manages buildings and facilities necessary to conduct day-to-day operations, such as City Hall and public works facilities.

Public capital facilities located in Bellevue but owned or operated by other agencies include state and federal transportation infrastructure, a King County solid waste transfer station, King

County libraries and various schools owned by the Bellevue, Lake Washington, Issaquah, and Renton School districts. Similar to city-managed systems, each of these providers conducts its own capital planning processes to ensure its ability to meet demand.

Most city-owned capital facility systems are governed by a dedicated functional plan. These

plans contain detailed inventories of existing facilities and infrastructure, as well as planned improvements. In addition to the facilities covered by functional plans, the City of Bellevue maintains and uses a number of other facilities to perform city administrative functions. Figure CF-1 contains a list and description of both types of facilities.

**Figure CF-1. Inventory of City-owned Capital Facilities and Related Functional Plans**

Facility Type	Description	Functional Plan with Detailed Inventory Information
Bellevue City Hall	City departments, council chambers, police headquarters, and a police custody facility.	N/A
Bellevue District Court (King County)	Prosecution and probation services for adult misdemeanor cases.	N/A
Bellevue Services Center	Maintenance services, operation services, and the maintenance vehicle fleet.	N/A
Fire	Fire stations and emergency services facilities.	Fire Department Strategic Plan
Parks	Parks and community facilities, including more than 2,700 acres of park land, over 98 miles of trails, and four community centers.	Parks and Open Space System Plan
Wastewater	Facilities that convey wastewater to the Metro regional treatment system.	Wastewater System Plan
Stormwater	Infrastructure that conveys and manages storm and surface water.	Storm and Surface Water System Plan
Transportation	Street, sidewalks and other transportation infrastructure.	Transportation Facilities Plan
Water	Infrastructure for providing potable and fire response water, including water storage tanks.	Water System Plan
Other properties	Old Fire Station #3 (148th & Bel-Red Road); Lincoln Center (NE 4th & 116th).	N/A



A complete list of capital facility improvements planned in the next seven years is included in the city's Capital Investment Program Plan.

### Future Needs

The provision of capital facilities contributes to Bellevue's quality of life. Parks, utilities, fire stations and other community and regional facilities are a physical reflection of Bellevue's vision for the community.

Bellevue is an urbanized community with little vacant land and a full array of urban services. Projected growth in housing units and jobs over the next 20 years will be accommodated mainly through redevelopment of existing property. Therefore, planning for needed capital facilities will focus on maintaining and improving levels of service as redevelopment occurs rather than extending the network geographically.

Bellevue's 20-year planning targets include 35,000 additional housing units and 70,000 additional jobs. These planning targets drive Bellevue's capital facilities planning to ensure that Bellevue plans for and is able to fund needed capital facilities. These facilities are needed to consistently implement the Land Use element, which focuses most growth in mixed use areas. Providing adequate capital facilities in Bellevue also implements the Urban Growth Goal of the Growth Management Act, encouraging development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.

Bellevue maintains performance measures and thresholds for all capital facilities to evaluate performance and needs. Quantitative and qualitative capital facility needs are established by adopted levels of service, operating criteria, or performance standards. These measurement tools are listed in each capital facility functional plan. Each functional plan also contains a list of capital facility needs and planned improvements. Performance should address emerging challenges and opportunities, such as the impacts of climate change, as well as long-established challenges and opportunities.

## Challenges and Opportunities

While there are unique challenges to specific capital facility services, several issues apply broadly in Bellevue:

**Accommodating Increased Demand.** Increased demand will require investment for building and maintaining facilities for services like water, wastewater, stormwater, parks, fire, police, transportation and municipal buildings. Non-city providers, such as school districts, libraries and solid waste processors, will also experience increased demand for services and will need to plan for new or improved facilities.

**Aging Infrastructure.** Some of Bellevue's capital facilities are aging and will require repairs and replacement over the next twenty years. The costs of replacing utility infrastructure and roads are substantial and take years of planning and implementation. Likewise, facilities such as parks and municipal buildings require ongoing maintenance, improvements or replacement. City departments maintain plans and strategies for funding and building necessary improvements, which are scheduled and assigned funding in the city's seven-year Capital Investment Program.

**Service Provider Coordination.** Capital facilities in Bellevue are a collection of infrastructure managed by the city as well as a variety of non-city providers. For example, the surface water drainage system is a combination of private and public systems. These systems, over half of which

are private, work together to convey stormwater, control flooding, and protect water quality. Other non-city facilities include schools, public libraries, transit stations, the electrical grid and solid waste transfer stations. The city is responsible for ensuring that adequate services are provided for all community members.

#### **Compliance with New Laws and Regulations.**

Changing state and federal mandates governing capital facilities systems require the city to monitor and review its systems to ensure compliance. For example, compliance with the city's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Stormwater Permit, a Federal Clean Water Act mandate that affects programs citywide, requires periodic updates to meet evolving requirements, which can have impacts on the way the city does business, on city expenses and on private development costs.

**Sustainable Facilities.** Generally, capital facility function is guided by the purpose to deliver services that contribute to community and environmental welfare, health and resilience. Bellevue's construction and modernization processes are guided by industry best practices and innovations as well as green certification standards.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction and Resilience to Climate Impacts.** Our climate is changing. Bellevue will increasingly experience extreme heat, wildfire, smoke, extreme precipitation, drought and flooding. Overburdened communities and vulnerable community members are disproportionately at risk. The City of Bellevue has committed our community to a climate-safe future supported by Washington state law. Capital Facilities are part of the solution: increasing energy efficiency, electrifying systems that formerly used fossil fuels, providing environmental and human disaster preparedness and delivering emergency services that promote community resilience to withstand and recover from disruptions to daily life.

If these challenges are managed effectively, many will become opportunities—to save

energy, reduce costs, free-up funding for other investments, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fight climate change, raise levels of service, improve public trust, modernize facilities to be disaster-resilient and more.

## **Capital Facilities Policy Summary**

Bellevue's policies establish clear guidance for the planning, design, construction and maintenance of the city's capital facilities. The Capital Facilities policies are organized into the following four sections:

### **Capital Planning**

These policies intend to promote technically sound and effectively coordinated capital planning processes in line with the Capital Facilities Vision and existing agreements and requirements.

### **High Performance Facilities**

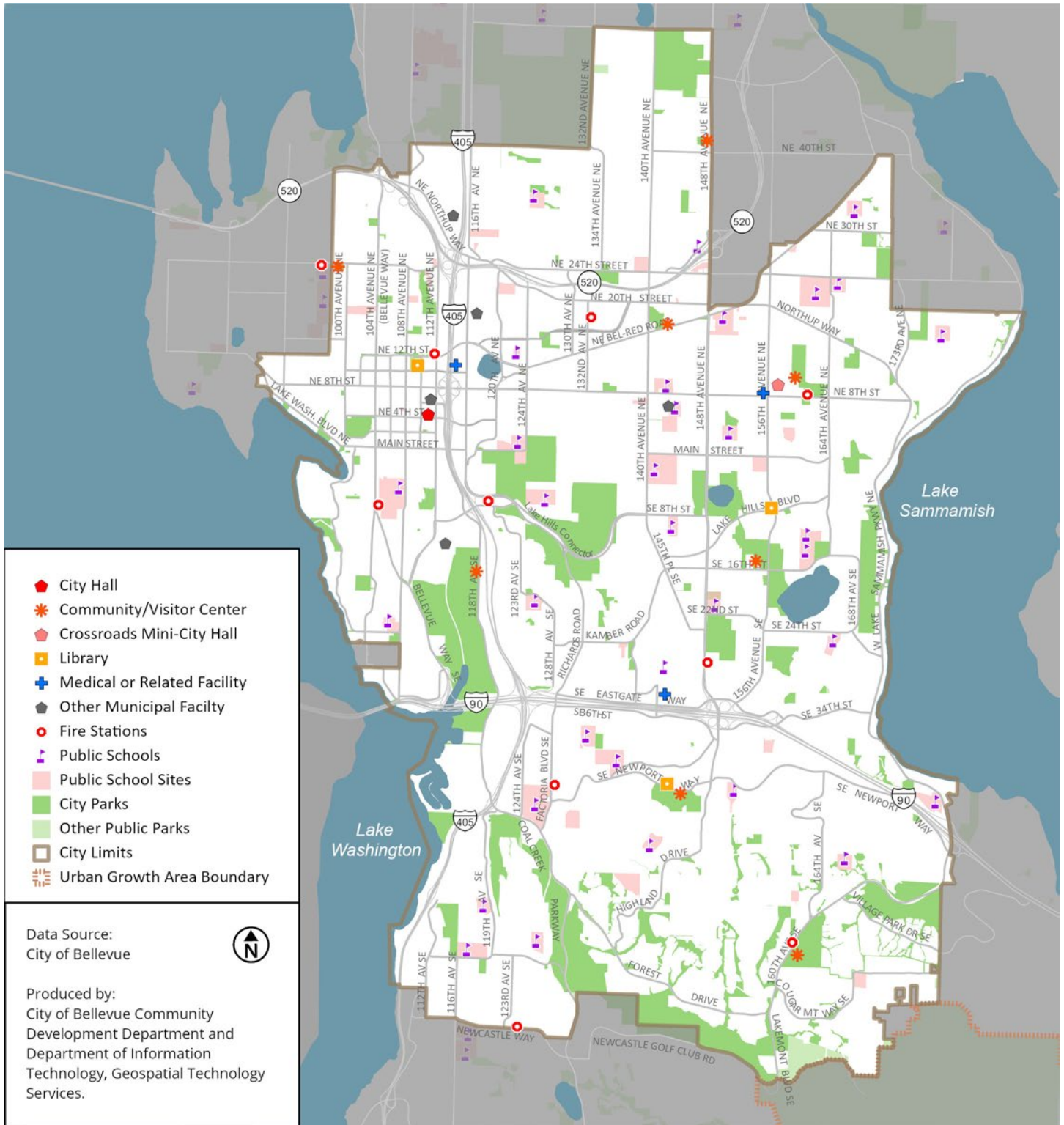
These policies intend to deliver excellent capital facilities that meet high facility-specific service standards, meet or exceed green certification standards, and support other community priorities, such as equity, health, financial stewardship, and environmental sustainability. These policies direct staff to manage capital facilities to go beyond basic functional requirements to serve community more holistically through industry best practices and innovations, including certifications. These policies relate to the development, operation, maintenance and deconstruction of capital facilities.

### **Essential Public Facilities**

These policies deal with facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, state education facilities and state or regional transportation facilities as defined in RCW 47.06.140. These policies intend to improve coordination, decisions and outcomes for the siting and management of these facilities.

# Map CF-1. Municipal and Other Public Facilities

This map shows the locations of existing municipal and other public facilities in Bellevue.



## GOAL & POLICIES

### Goal

To efficiently serve the community's growth at planned levels of service through fiscal prioritization, innovation and attention to the city's character and quality.

### Policies

#### Capital Planning

- CF-1.** Ensure that capital facilities necessary to meet level of service standards are provided within a reasonable amount of time.
- CF-2.** Provide affordable and equitable access to capital facilities and public services to all communities, especially the historically underserved. Prioritize investments to address disparities.
- CF-3.** Plan for the long-term retrofit or replacement of aging capital facilities as needed to comply with green facility requirements and meet performance standards.
- CF-4.** Develop and implement a Long-Range Capital Facilities Master Plan which addresses strategic site and facilities acquisition for municipal services to support level of service standards to serve the growing community.
- CF-5.** Use the city's Capital Investment Program, as amended periodically, to prioritize the financing of capital facilities within projected funding capacities.
- CF-6.** Align long-range capital facilities plans with needs, financing and level of service to be consistent with land use development and anticipated growth.
- CF-7.** Use facility system plans to identify and plan for the long-range facility needs for individual city services, taking into account the condition of the facility, its compliance with city standards and expected population growth. See also the Utilities element.
- CF-8.** Use adopted Level of Service, operating criteria or performance standards to evaluate capital facilities' needs.
- CF-9.** Coordinate planned capital investments including operations and maintenance across departments.
- CF-10.** Coordinate with non-city-managed capital facilities providers consistent with Bellevue's Comprehensive Plan.
- CF-11.** Consider levying impact fees on development in the portion of Bellevue served by a school district upon the request of the district, presentation of its adopted Capital Facilities Plan, and demonstration that such facilities are needed to accommodate projected growth in the district.
- CF-12.** Support consolidation (by mutual agreement) of those portions of special purpose service districts and King County Flood Control Districts with the city where the service district is providing service within the city's corporate boundary.



- CF-13.** Provide public services and/or utilities within the corporate limits of adjoining cities when there is a service agreement in effect or when such temporary service is necessary because of an emergency.
- CF-14.** Recognize existing utility agreements with adjacent cities, towns, and districts, and acknowledge the continuation of such agreements. Ensure that these agreements contain conditions that have the necessary development review authority in order to maintain acceptable service levels to those municipalities.

## High Performance Facilities

- CF-15.** Construct and operate new city facilities to exceed required development standards and code requirements in order to conserve energy, water and environmental resources.
- CF-16.** Maintain the post-disaster Response and Recovery Plan, including clear staff roles and responsibilities, to ensure the city's capability to prepare for, withstand and rapidly recover from climate impacts and other disasters.
- CF-17.** Plan capital investments to prepare for, withstand, rapidly recover from, and promote community resiliency against climate impacts, including extreme heat, wildfire, smoke, extreme precipitation, drought, flooding and other disasters.
- CF-18.** Plan capital investments to support efficient, equitable and environmentally sustainable outcomes through facility condition assessments, including consideration for climate resilience, risks and the present cost of non-investment.
- CF-19.** Plan capital investments to engage relevant communities to identify, promote and preserve objects and sites of cultural, historical, artistic and aesthetic importance.
- CF-20.** Reduce solid waste at capital facilities through a comprehensive program and purchasing policies that promote processing and recovery of recyclable materials, compostable food and yard waste and disposable items to promote a circular economy.
- CF-21.** Incorporate Low Impact Design (LID) standards and operational strategies into all relevant capital projects and ongoing maintenance.
- CF-22.** Reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in municipal operations and facilities through building design and by supporting renewable energy, electrification, and energy conservation measures.
- CF-23.** Require all capital projects to meet or exceed green certification standards for capital facilities unless determined infeasible by interdepartmental review.
- CF-24.** Ensure that all electric vehicle charging infrastructure sited on city property is designed to charge a wide array of vehicles and is equitably distributed throughout Bellevue.

See also Climate and Environment policy related to leading environmental sustainability by example, [CL-15](#).

## Essential Public Facilities

- CF-25.** Define essential public facilities, consistent with the Growth Management Act.
- CF-26.** Site and design essential public facilities according to city standards to minimize potential impacts from the design, construction, operations and end-of-life stages to the community, while recognizing the public importance and difficult-to-site nature of such facilities.
- CF-27.** Participate in inter-jurisdictional efforts to site countywide or statewide essential public facilities. Pursue agreements among jurisdictions to mitigate against the disproportionate burden that may fall on the jurisdiction which becomes the site of a facility.
- CF-28.** Impose conditions of approval or other measures within the scope of the city's authority to mitigate environmental, compatibility, public safety or other impacts of the essential public facility.
- CF-29.** Work to site or expand essential public facilities through equitable processes that balance social, environmental, economic and historic impacts to achieve citywide and regional planning objectives.
- CF-30.** Locate Secure Community Transition Facilities, as defined by RCW 71.09.020 now or as hereafter amended, outside of residential districts. Provide a separation between Secure Community Transition Facilities and residentially developed property in other land use districts.
- CF-31.** Consider climate change, economic, equity and health impacts when siting and building essential public services and facilities.



# Utilities

## VISION

Bellevue has the public and private utilities that meet the needs of a growing city.

Public and private utilities are building the systems to support a 21st century community. These services are resilient and efficient, creating a safe and consistent environment for all residents and businesses to thrive. Utilities are sited, designed and operated with consideration for the visual, social and environmental impacts.

### UTILITIES SCOPE

The Utilities element is about how the city manages public water, wastewater, surface and stormwater systems as well as access to private utilities like electricity, internet, and gas.

## INTRODUCTION

Utilities are the basic building blocks of urban living. Services such as clean drinking water, wastewater and stormwater management, electricity, natural gas, telephone and internet are essential to the health of city residents and the environment.

This element works in concert with the Land Use element to ensure that Bellevue will have adequate utilities to serve both existing development and future growth. Policies also address environmental impacts, facilities siting and construction, economics and aesthetics in design and landscaping.

In Bellevue, as in many cities, utilities are provided by a combination of city-managed and non-city-managed providers, as shown in Figure UT-1. Depending on the service, these providers are state regulated, federally licensed or municipally franchised providers. The provision of utilities is central to the Growth Management Act. The GMA encourages development in areas served by urban services and infrastructure such as the sewer system and public water and power systems, and

## FUNCTIONAL PLANS

- **Water System Plan.** This plan provides a basis for capital improvement planning for six years and forecasts anticipated needs to a 20-year planning horizon.
- **Storm and Surface Water System Plan.** This plan establishes the city’s storm and surface water policy.
- **Wastewater System Plan.** This plan provides a basis for capital improvement planning for the next 6 years and forecasts anticipated needs for the next 20 years and ultimately, for system build-out.
- **Watershed Management Plan.** This plan contains actions the city and community can use to improve watershed health.

ensures that planning for future development occurs to maintain the standard of service across the service area.

**Figure UT-1. City-Managed and Non City-Managed Utilities**

City-Managed Utilities	Provider	Website
Water	City of Bellevue	<a href="http://BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/utilities">BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/utilities</a>
Sewer	City of Bellevue	<a href="http://BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/utilities">BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/utilities</a>
Storm and surface water	City of Bellevue	<a href="http://BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/utilities">BellevueWA.gov/city-government/departments/utilities</a>
Solid waste	Republic Services	<a href="http://republicservices.com/municipality/bellevue-wa">republicservices.com/municipality/bellevue-wa</a>

Non City-Managed Utilities	Provider	Website
Electricity	Puget Sound Energy	<a href="http://pse.com">pse.com</a>
Natural gas	Puget Sound Energy	<a href="http://pse.com">pse.com</a>
Other petroleum gas	Various providers	
Telephone	Community Phone	<a href="http://communityphone.org/landline">communityphone.org/landline</a>
Wireless services	T-Mobile	<a href="http://t-mobile.com">t-mobile.com</a>
	Verizon	<a href="http://verizon.com">verizon.com</a>
	AT&T	<a href="http://att.com">att.com</a>
Coaxial and fiber optic cable	Zipty Fiber	<a href="http://ziptyfiber.com">ziptyfiber.com</a>
	Centurylink	<a href="http://centurylink.com">centurylink.com</a>
	Xfinity	<a href="http://xfinity.com">xfinity.com</a>

# TODAY'S CONDITIONS AND TOMORROW'S PROJECTIONS

## Utilities Today and Tomorrow

The Utilities element establishes the City's approach to providing safe, high-quality, and reliable utility services for residents and businesses. It guides all functional city-managed utility system plans and creates the framework for our collaboration with providers of other utilities. Each utility is governed by a detailed functional plan managed by the City or a strategic plan managed by the outside provider that provides policy guidance for that specific system. The Utilities element provides guidance for all utilities in Bellevue.

The City of Bellevue manages the wastewater, water, and storm and surface water utilities, as well as solid waste management activities. The wastewater and water utilities serve the city and several jurisdictions outside the city limits and are self-supporting enterprise operations, separate from the city General Fund. The wastewater collection system discharges into larger pipes owned and operated by the King County Wastewater Treatment Division that transports the sewage for treatment and eventual discharge into Puget Sound. The wastewater utility serves about 35,000 customers across 37 square miles, including Medina, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Yarrow Point, and Beaux Arts and includes approximately 524 miles of mainline pipes, 130 miles of service stubs, and 46 pump and lift stations. Bellevue owns 15 miles of submerged wastewater pipeline



## OTHER ORGANIZATION PLANS

- **King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan.** This plan presents proposed strategies for managing King County's solid waste over a six-year period.
- **Puget Sound Energy Integrated Resource Plan.** A 20-plus year view of PSE's energy resource needs, developed through a planning process that evaluates how a range of potential future outcomes could affect PSE's ability to meet electric and natural gas supply needs.
- **Redmond Water System Plan.** The Redmond water utility serves a small portion of Bellevue in the Overlake area.

in Lake Washington and 4 miles of submerged wastewater pipeline in Lake Sammamish. Management of the lake lines is critical to maintaining and protecting water quality in Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish.

Bellevue purchases water from the Cascade Water Alliance, a regional supplier to several cities and special purpose districts and serves over 37,000 customers over 37 square miles, including the adjacent communities of Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Medina, Yarrow Point, and portions of the cities of Issaquah and Kirkland with 620 miles of water main pipes. Bellevue works with Cascade Water Alliance to promote the efficient use of the public water supply to customers through education, technical assistance and incentive programs.

Bellevue's storm and surface water operations include stormwater runoff and flood control, protection of surface water quality, support of fish and wildlife habitats, protection of the environment, and public education. Bellevue provides storm and surface water utility service to all properties within the city. There are 26 drainage basins in the city, most with year-round



streams, over 19,000 public storm drains, 400 miles of pipes, and over 1,200 city- and privately-owned detention facilities.

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) serves Bellevue with electrical power and natural gas. The city maintains a list and schematic system map (Map UT-7) of necessary electrical transmission, distribution, and substation facilities and administers policies that guide provision of adequate electrical power to serve the community. The city also has environmental review and permitting authority over the activities of the utility within the city's boundaries. PSE imports electrical energy from generation sources in Canada, on the Columbia River, and from other generation sites inside and outside of Puget Sound Energy's service territory.

Puget Sound Energy also builds, operates, and maintains the natural gas distribution system serving Bellevue. In 2024, Puget Sound Energy served more than 34,000 natural gas customers within Bellevue.

The Pacific Northwest receives natural gas from various regions of the United States and Canada. Natural gas is transported throughout the states of Washington, Oregon and Idaho via a network of interstate transmission pipelines owned and operated by Northwest Pipeline Corporation. Puget Sound Energy takes delivery of natural gas from Northwest's Williams Pipeline east

of Lake Sammamish and distributes the gas to customers via Puget Sound Energy's distribution system. The distribution system serving Bellevue consists of both high pressure and intermediate pressure mains.

As of 2024, Puget Sound Energy's natural gas distribution system has sufficient capacity to serve existing demand for gas service in Bellevue. However, system capacity enhancements may be required to provide service to new development.

Telecommunications is the transmission of information in the form of electronic signals or other similar means. Telecommunications services generally include the following categories:

- **Landline Telephone** – In 2019, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued order 19-72 that changed the 1996 Telecommunications Act so that telecommunication companies are no longer required to maintain the traditional copper loop telephone infrastructure. While this technology is still in use, telephone customers are increasingly switching to Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) and wireless/cellular technology. Telecommunication companies are expected to continue to upgrade their infrastructure to serve these newer technologies and slowly phase out the copper loop infrastructure.
- **Wireless Communications** – A wide variety of cellular communications and wireless data services are available in Bellevue. Currently, these services rely on ground-based antennae located on towers or buildings. This element recognizes that providing wireless service involves adapting to changing technologies, which may make current forms of receivers obsolete.
- **Television and Broadband Internet** – Multiple cable operators provide services in Bellevue. This service provides broadcasting via a network of overhead and underground coaxial and fiber optic cables and includes internet and telephone service.

Bellevue's central location and significant employment concentration will continue to attract new and evolving technologies in the field of telecommunications. The city supports increasing the availability of improved telecommunications services throughout the city, balancing health and safety, aesthetics, the environment and the economy.

Bellevue facilitates the development and maintenance of all utilities at the appropriate levels of service to accommodate the city's project growth. Bellevue facilitates the provision of reliable utility service in a way that balances the public's interest in safety and health, consumers' interest in paying no more than a fair and reasonable price for the utility's product, the natural environment, and the community's desire that utility projects be aesthetically compatible with surrounding land uses. The City of Bellevue processes permits and approvals for utility facilities in a fair and timely manner and in accord with development regulations that encourage predictability. Bellevue encourages new technology that improves utility services and reliability while balancing health and safety, economic, aesthetics, and environmental factors. Bellevue provides policy guidance for each utility facility system specific to its city-managed or non-city-managed utility system status.

## Challenges and Opportunities

### Internet Connectivity

Virtually all of Bellevue can connect to the internet through broadband technology, however, fiber optic is not universally available. New technology offers new opportunities to bring high speed internet access to more of the city. Ensuring that quality, affordable internet connectivity is available will further the city's goal of economic growth and competitiveness. As the telecommunication system is upgraded, the city will work to ensure that the benefits and burdens of the deployment of this utility are equitably distributed. A balanced permitting process will help encourage maintenance and upgrading of telecommunications infrastructure contributes to the livability of all parts of Bellevue.



### Condition of Utility Infrastructure

Some of Bellevue's utilities infrastructure is aging and will require repairs and replacement over the next twenty years. The costs of replacing utility infrastructure are substantial and take years for planning and implementation. Each city-managed utility has strategies and plans for funding and building the necessary improvements, which are scheduled and assigned funding in the city's seven-year Capital Investment Program (CIP).

For example, infrastructure for both drinking water and wastewater is aging, with most of the systems well past midlife. Slightly more than 40% of the city's water mains are made of asbestos cement pipe, generally the oldest pipe in Bellevue's water system and the type that wears out the fastest. Replacing asbestos cement pipe is the focus of Bellevue's water pipe replacement programs. For wastewater utility programs, the cost to repair or replace aging sewer mains, especially in-lake submerged wastewater pipes, will be substantial. The utility's asset management program is planning for timely replacement of pipes and other facilities to maintain reliable service and protect the environment.

### Accommodating Future Demand

The City plans to meet changes in demand through the regularly updated functional plans, including the Water System Plan, the Storm and Surface Water Plan and the Wastewater System Plan. These plans take into account past growth trends and future targets. Incremental upgrading

of facilities is managed through these plans. Non-city utility providers will also experience increased demand for services and will need to plan for new or improved facilities. The city will continue to coordinate with the other service providers to ensure they have the information they need to plan for the future system.

Early planning is critical for transparency in the coordination of the location and visual and physical integration of future utility facilities. Map UT-7 identifies planned electrical facilities anticipated by Puget Sound Energy's system plan. Such sensitivity factors as proximity to residential neighborhoods, visual access, and expansion within or beyond an existing facility border were considered in identifying potential incompatibilities. Future facilities will be subject to the required regulatory siting process that includes community feedback.

## Utilities Policy Summary

### General Utility System

Bellevue strives to serve the community with reliable, sustainable, quality service through the management of city-owned utilities and cooperation with regional partners and utility providers. The city uses a system of plans to detail a system inventory, system management and operational policies and level of service standards for each utility. For non-city managed utilities, the city works with the providers to ensure consistent and quality service.

### Utility Coordination

Providing reliable utility service requires cooperation of many organizations. Service area boundaries are determined in cooperation with King County and other service providers and the extension of services like water and wastewater needs to be done in a systematic manner to unserved areas such as Bellevue's Potential Annexation Area.

### Hazardous Waste & Solid Waste

Bellevue promotes the safe disposal of hazardous and solid waste in accordance with the King



## WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste management activities include solid waste planning, promotion, and monitoring the performance of private contractors who carry out collection of solid waste, recyclables, organics, and litter. These services are financed through garbage rates that are set by the City Council. There are over 30,000 residential customer accounts and 1,600 commercial accounts in Bellevue.

County Solid Waste Disposal Plan. The separation of waste streams and the use of recycling where possible is Bellevue's preferred disposal strategy to provide a convenient, cost-effective system that is environmentally friendly and visually unobtrusive. The city continues to coordinate with King County on the location of facilities to equitably distribute the benefits and burdens of waste disposal.

### Wastewater Utility

Bellevue strives to provide a wastewater disposal system that protects the environment and prioritizes the health and safety of the Bellevue community. Bellevue strives to connect all homeowners to the wastewater system and encourages homeowners with septic systems to connect to the wastewater system where it is available.



## Storm and Surface Water

Bellevue maintains the storm and surface water system to control damage from storms, protect water quality and support fish and wildlife habitat. The city educates the public about water quality issues and promotes or requires measures to protect and enhance the environment, such as low impact development.

## Water

High quality drinking water that is cost-effective and secure is a priority for Bellevue. The city manages the system to proactively mitigate vulnerabilities and meet all federal and state standards. Bellevue promotes the conservation and wise, efficient use of water and strives to serve as a model for the community in the efficient use of water.

## General Non City-managed Utilities

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) regulates the services and defines the costs that a utility can recover, to ensure that the utility acts prudently and responsibly. With the adoption of the Growth Management Act, both the WUTC and the City of Bellevue have jurisdiction over the activities of electric, gas, and telephone utilities within Bellevue's city limits.

Bellevue has the authority to regulate land use and, under Growth Management Act, is required to consider the location of existing and proposed utilities and potential utility corridors in land use planning. The city must also plan for the adequate provision of utilities consistent with the goals and objectives of its Comprehensive Plan, taking into consideration the public service obligation of the utility involved.

Bellevue is entitled to reasonable compensation for use of its rights-of-way and leases of city-owned property, structures and conduits. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 established new responsibilities for the FCC in licensing of wireless communication providers. The licenses allow the right to use a block or blocks of the radio frequency spectrum to provide

wireless services. Section 704(a)(7) of the Act recognizes the authority of state and local governments over decisions regarding siting of wireless communication facilities, subject to certain limitations.

## Power Utility

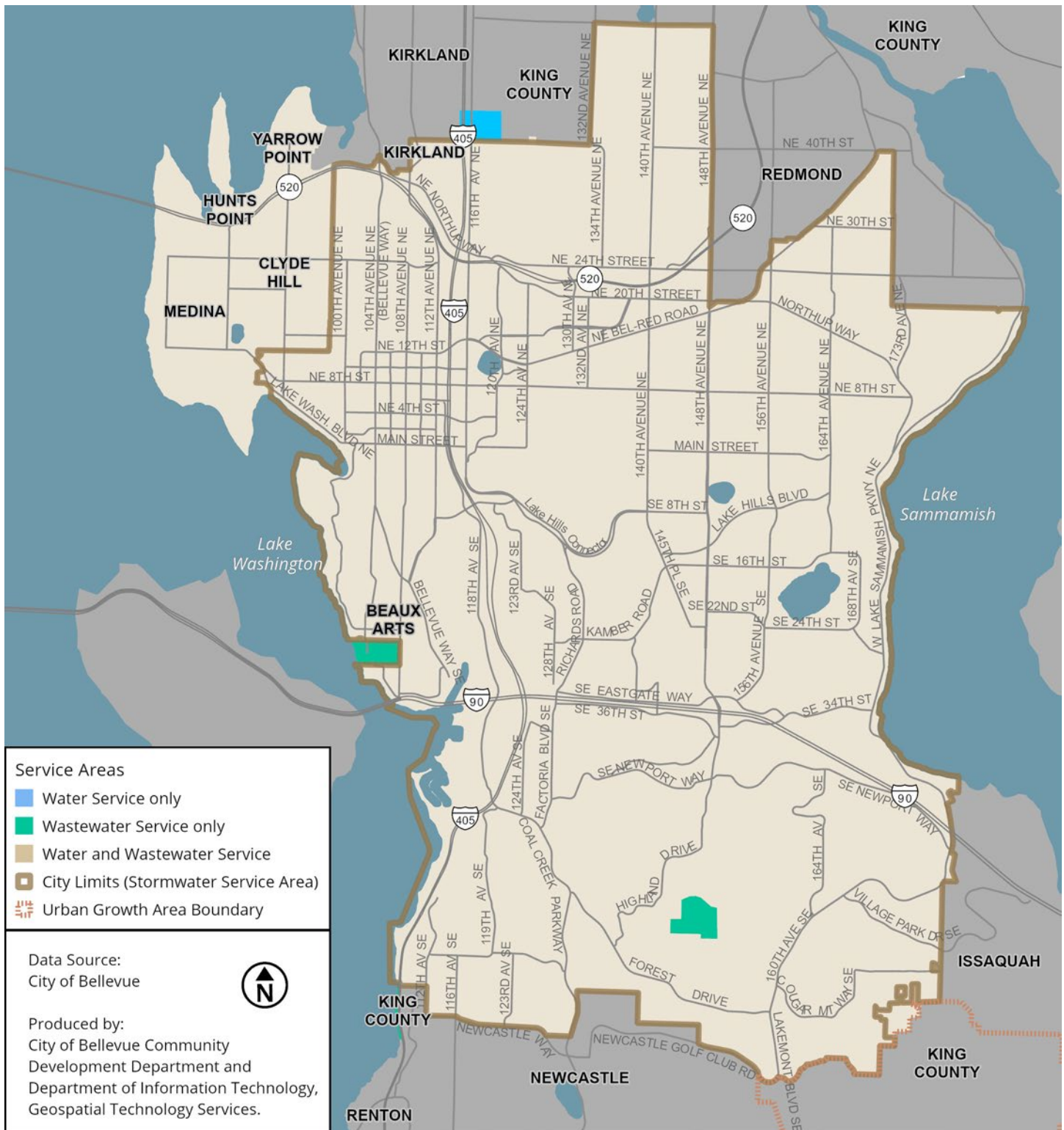
PSE builds, operates, and maintains the electrical utility system serving Bellevue. Bellevue endeavors to work with PSE to provide highly reliable service for Bellevue residents and businesses. Bellevue works with PSE to plan for investments to ensure sufficient grid capacity for electrification and decarbonization. The city encourages or requires the undergrounding of new lines and co-location of utilities whenever possible to reduce visual clutter and facilitate greater reliability.

## Telecommunication Services

Bellevue encourages affordable high-speed internet access throughout the city. The policies in this subsection address current technology recognizing that new technologies are constantly emerging. The city encourages new technology that is consistent with an equitable balancing of the costs and benefits. In most cases, telecommunications services will use existing utility corridors, public rights-of-way and other city-owned properties, and will be able to provide services to all parts of the city. Bellevue encourages the shared use of space consistent with the city's service mission for telecommunication infrastructure projects within the street right-of-way and for telecommunication infrastructure opportunities on other city property. Bellevue's infrastructure investment and aesthetic quality should be protected from unnecessary degradation caused by the construction of telecommunications infrastructure.

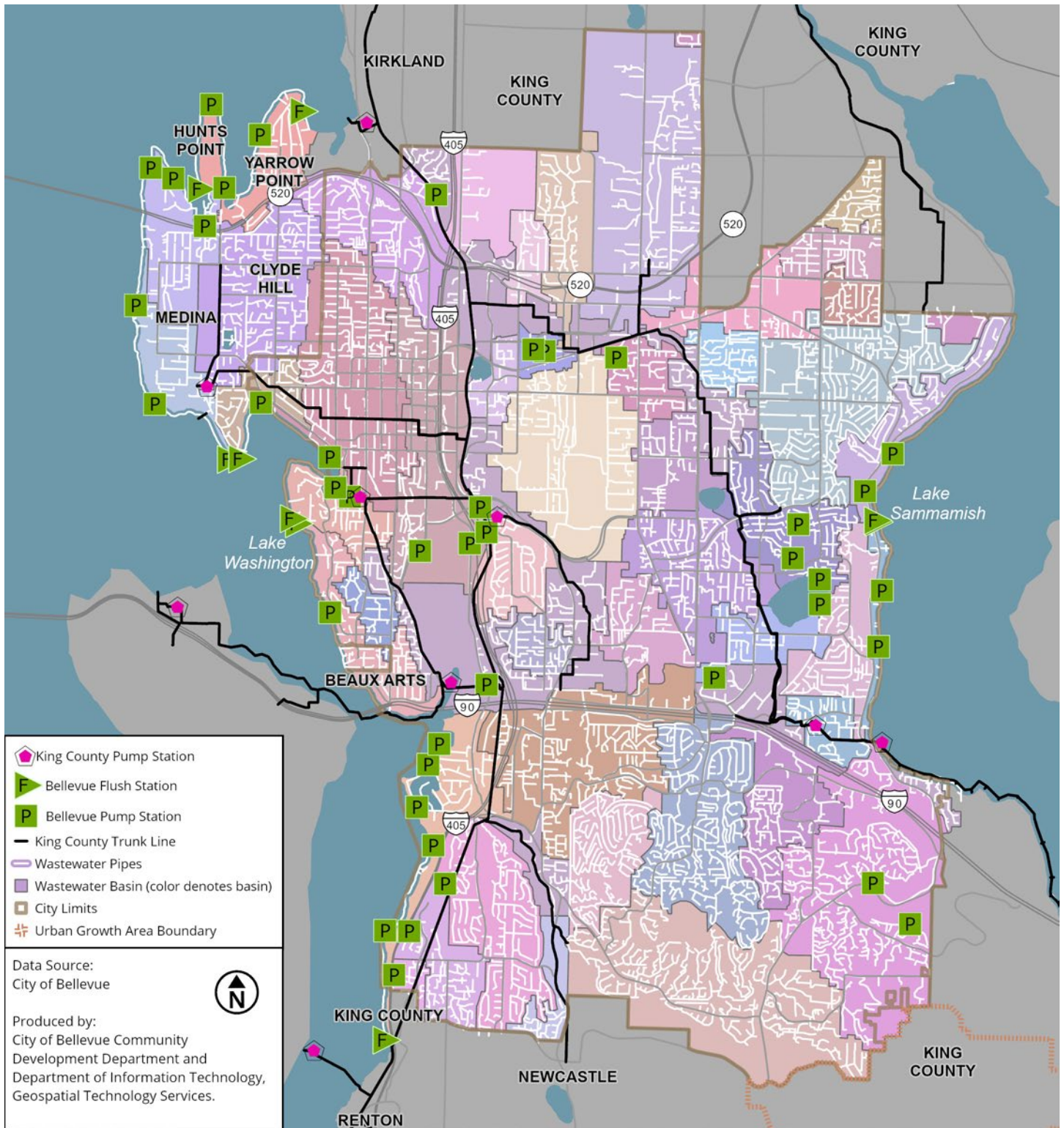
## Map UT-1. Utility Service Areas

The City of Bellevue provides water, wastewater and stormwater services to all areas within Bellevue except in the Hilltop subdivision where water service is provided by Water District 117. The City also provides water and/or wastewater services to areas outside of Bellevue.



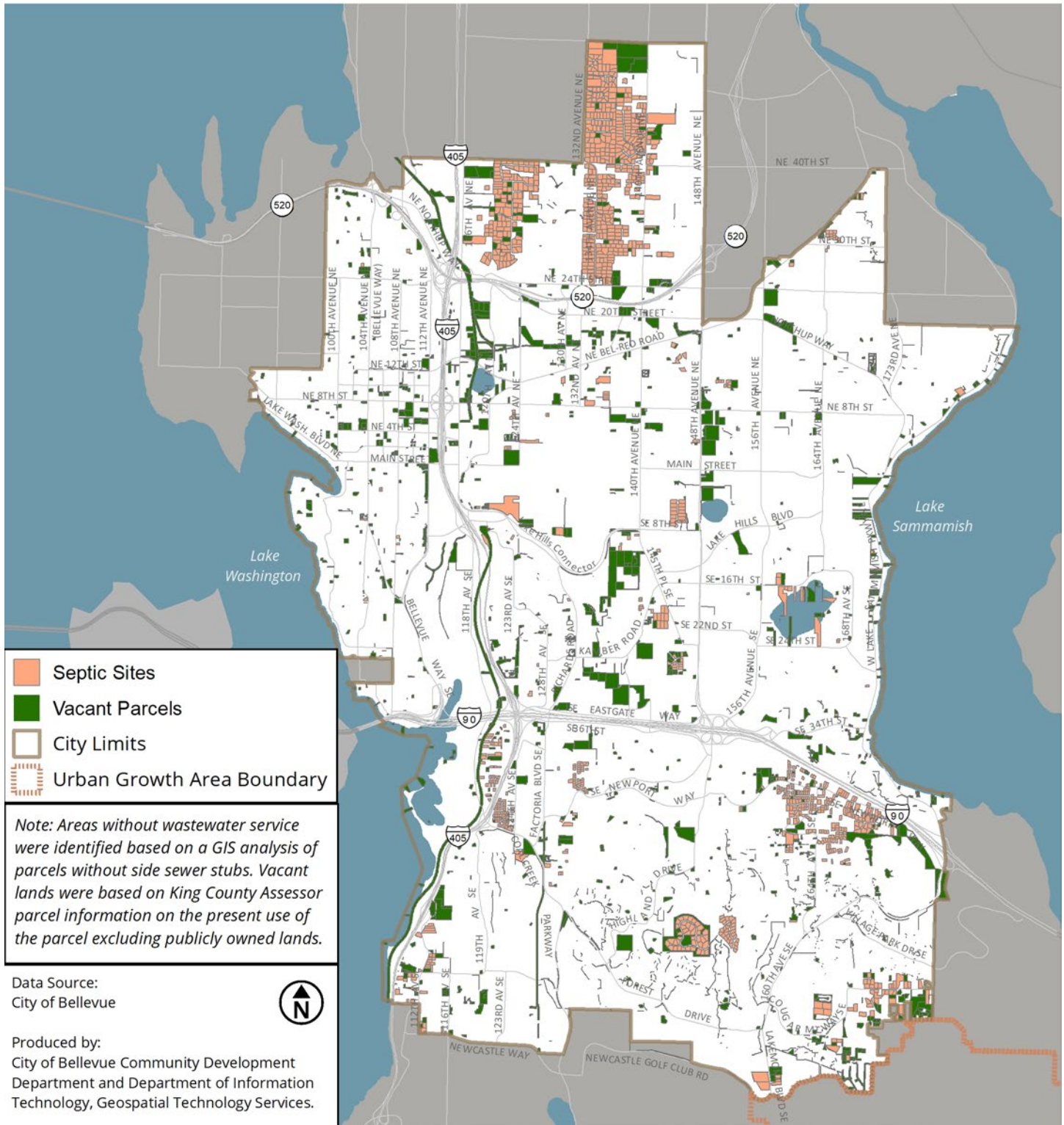
## Map UT-2. Wastewater Collection System Facilities

Wastewater flows through city-owned and maintained pipes into King County's regional trunk lines where it is conveyed to Renton or Brightwater Wastewater Treatment Plants for treatment.



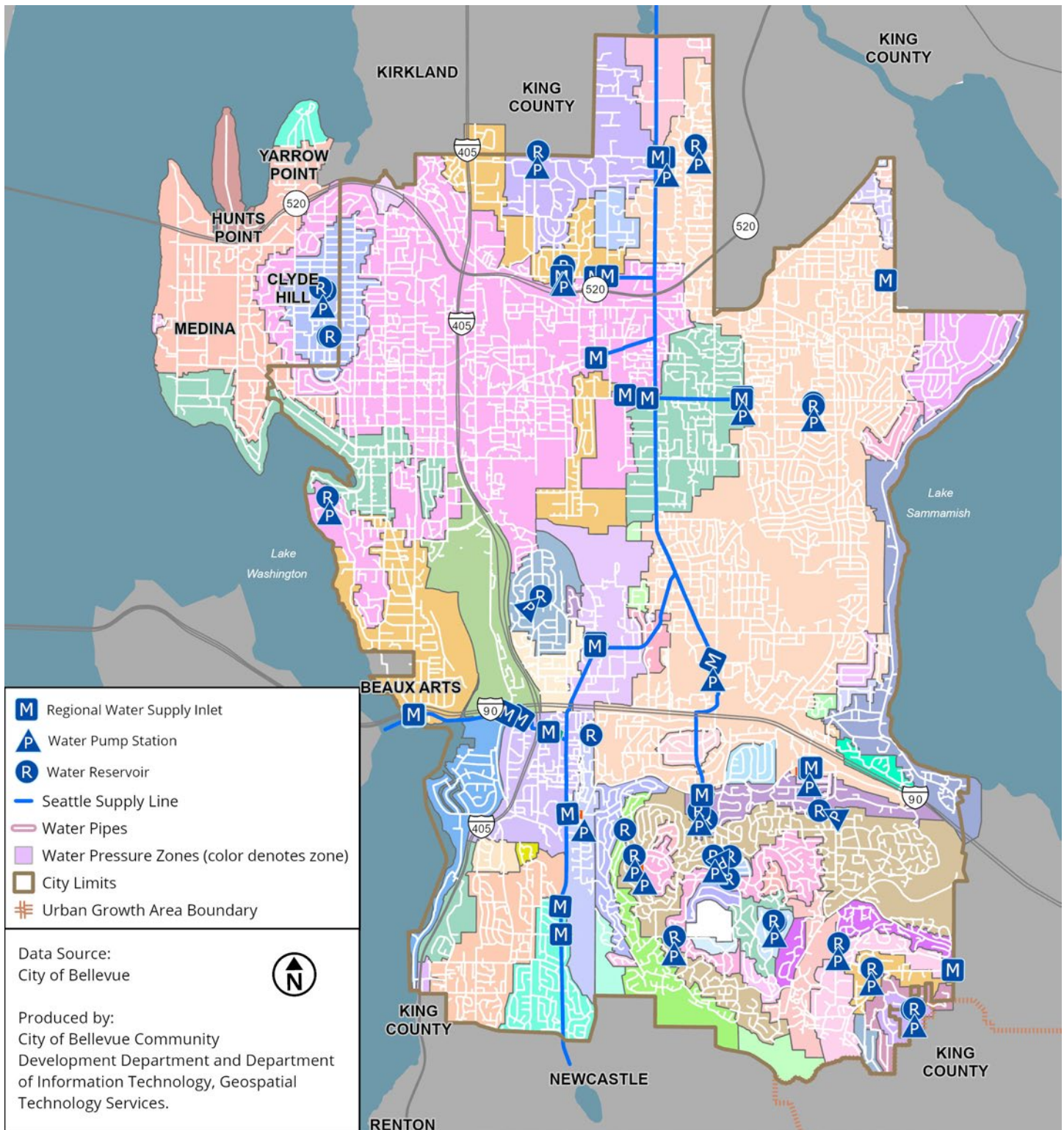
## Map UT-3. Property Without Wastewater Service

Non-sewered areas rely on septic tanks for wastewater treatment. The King County Health Department regulates the use of septic systems in King County, including Bellevue.



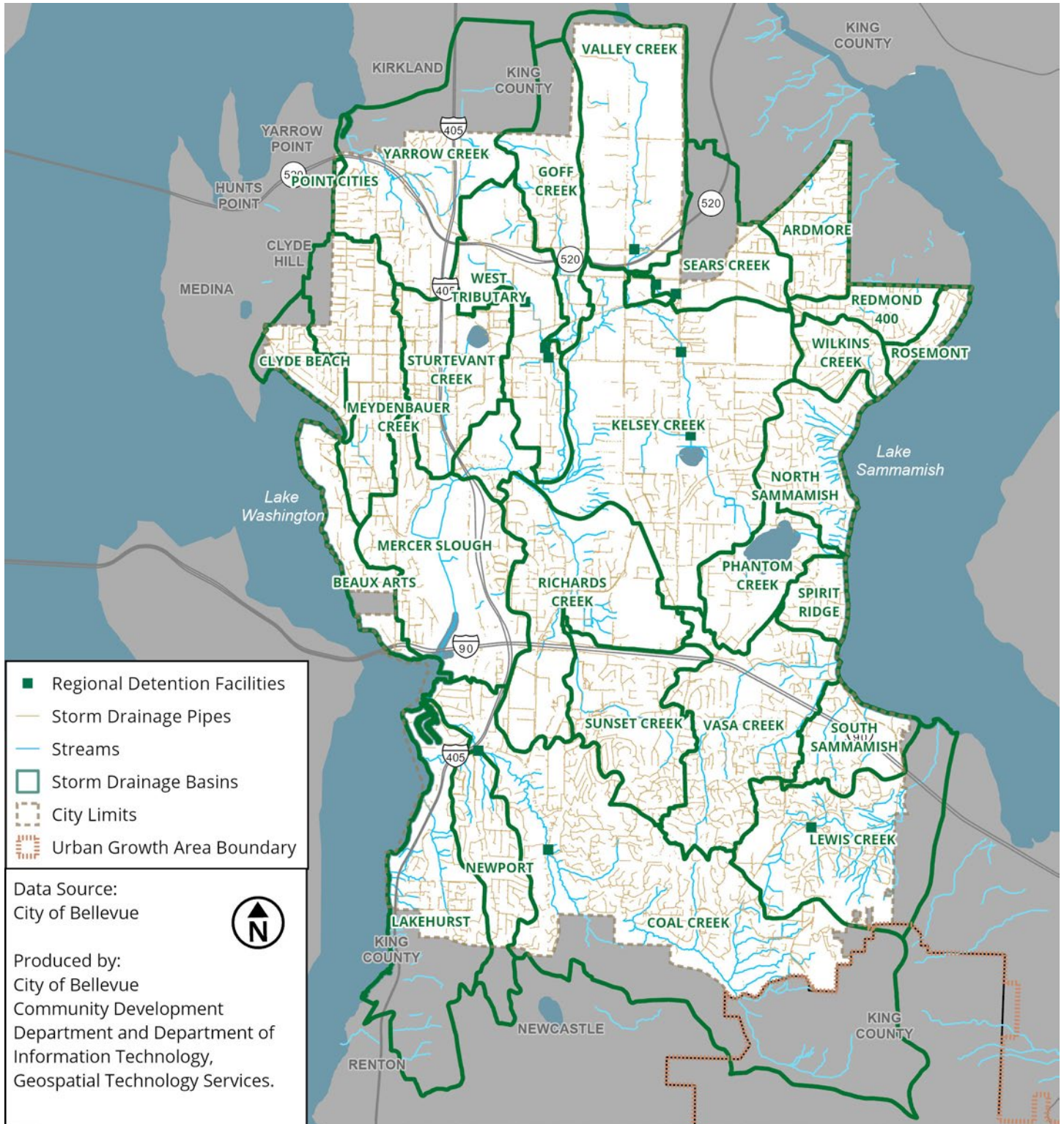
## Map UT-4. Major Water Facilities

Bellevue's drinking water is acquired through the Cascade Water Alliance. Bellevue is responsible for the local water distribution system, which includes water reservoirs, pump stations, and supply inlet meters along with the main supply line and water pipes.



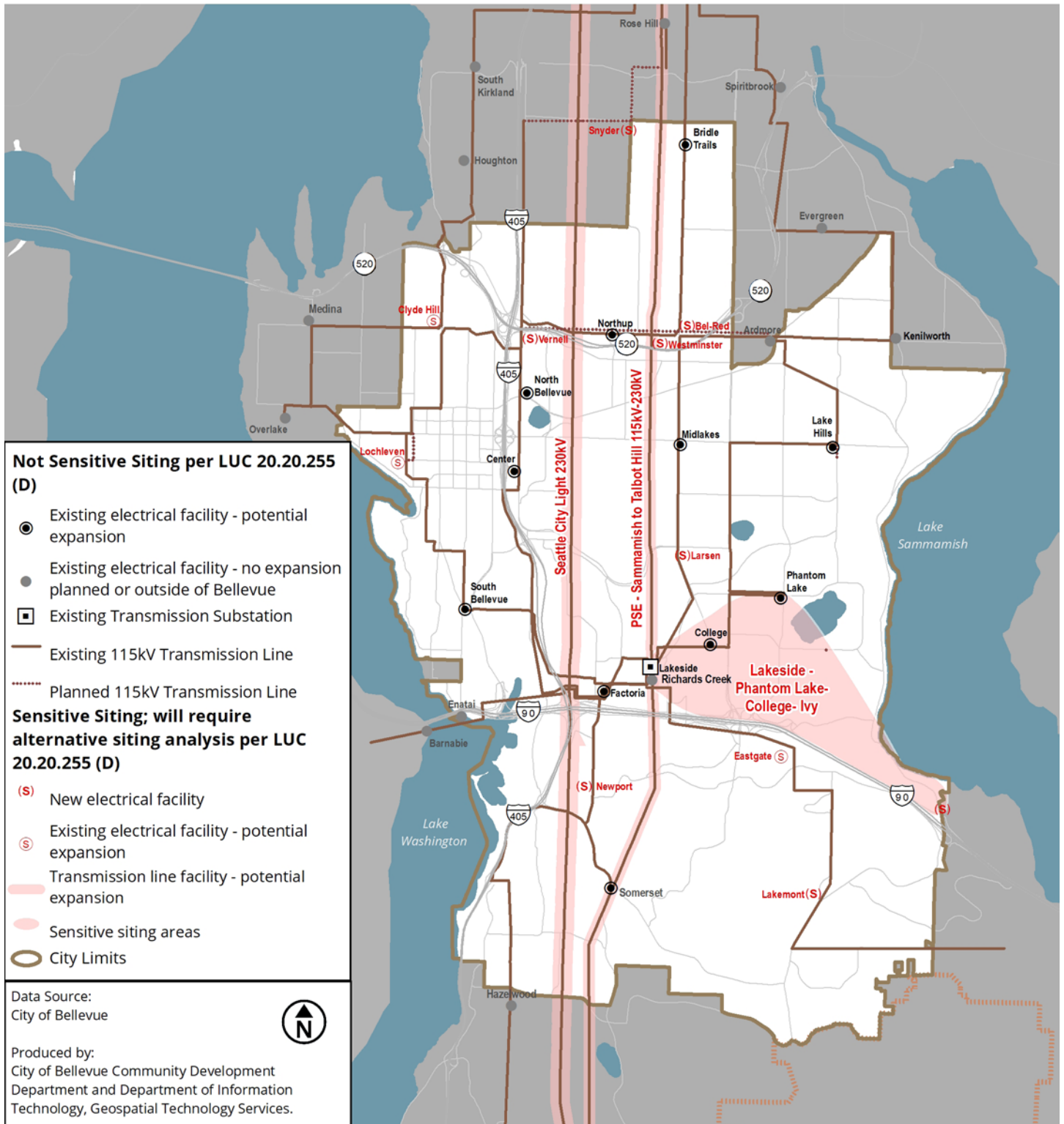
## Map UT-5. Storm and Surface Water Facilities

The stormwater system in Bellevue is a combination of public and private streams, lakes, wetlands, pipes, catch basins and flood control sites that drain into Lake Washington or Lake Sammamish.



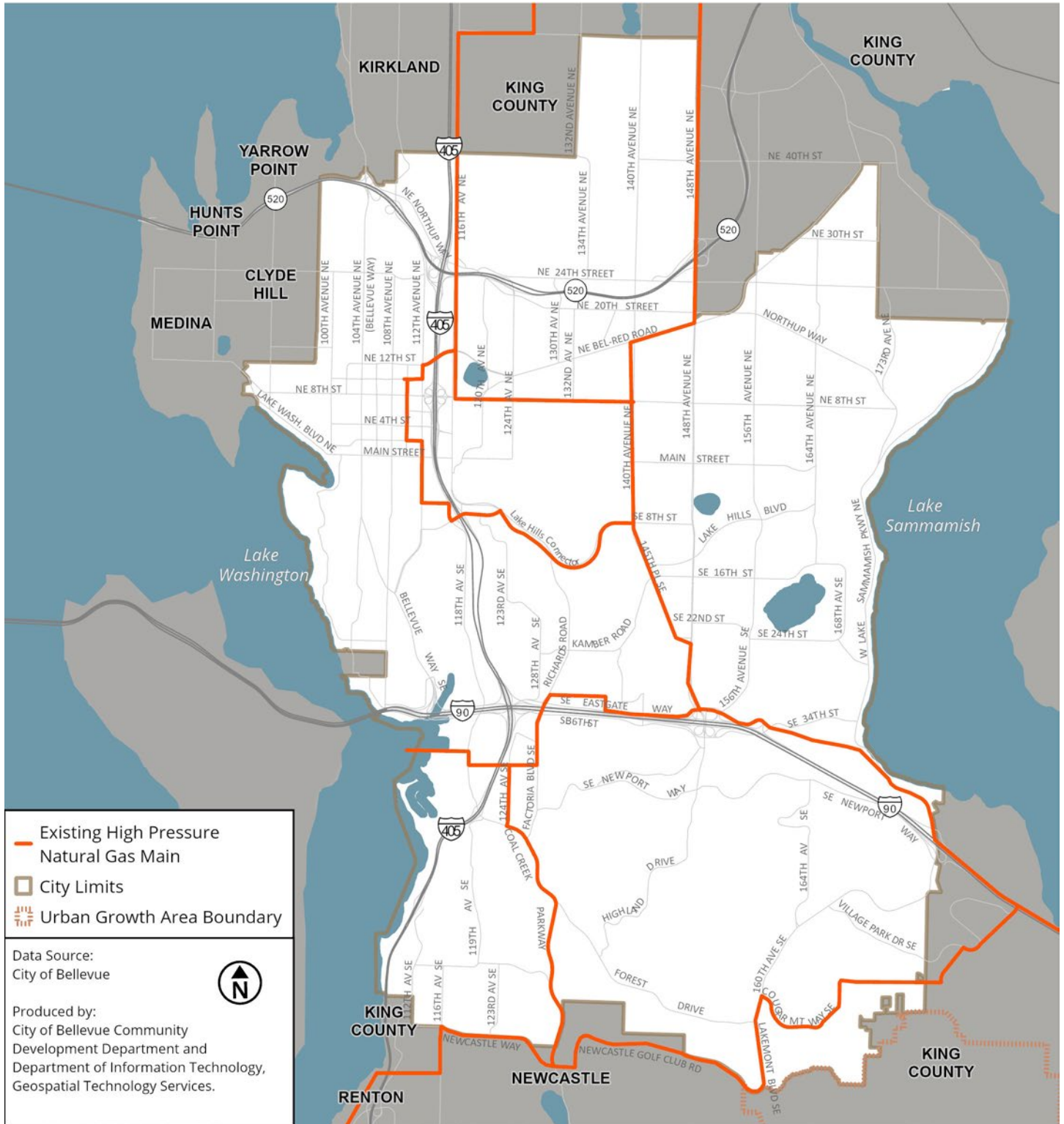
## Map UT-6. Existing and Planned Electrical Facilities

Electrical facilities are provided by Puget Sound Energy. Facilities include transmission lines, and substations that move energy to Bellevue residents and businesses. Electrical facilities are planned to meet future demand in Bellevue and regionally.



## Map UT-7. Puget Sound Energy Natural Gas Mains

PSE provides natural gas to Bellevue customers through high-pressure natural gas lines that also serve PSE customers regionally.





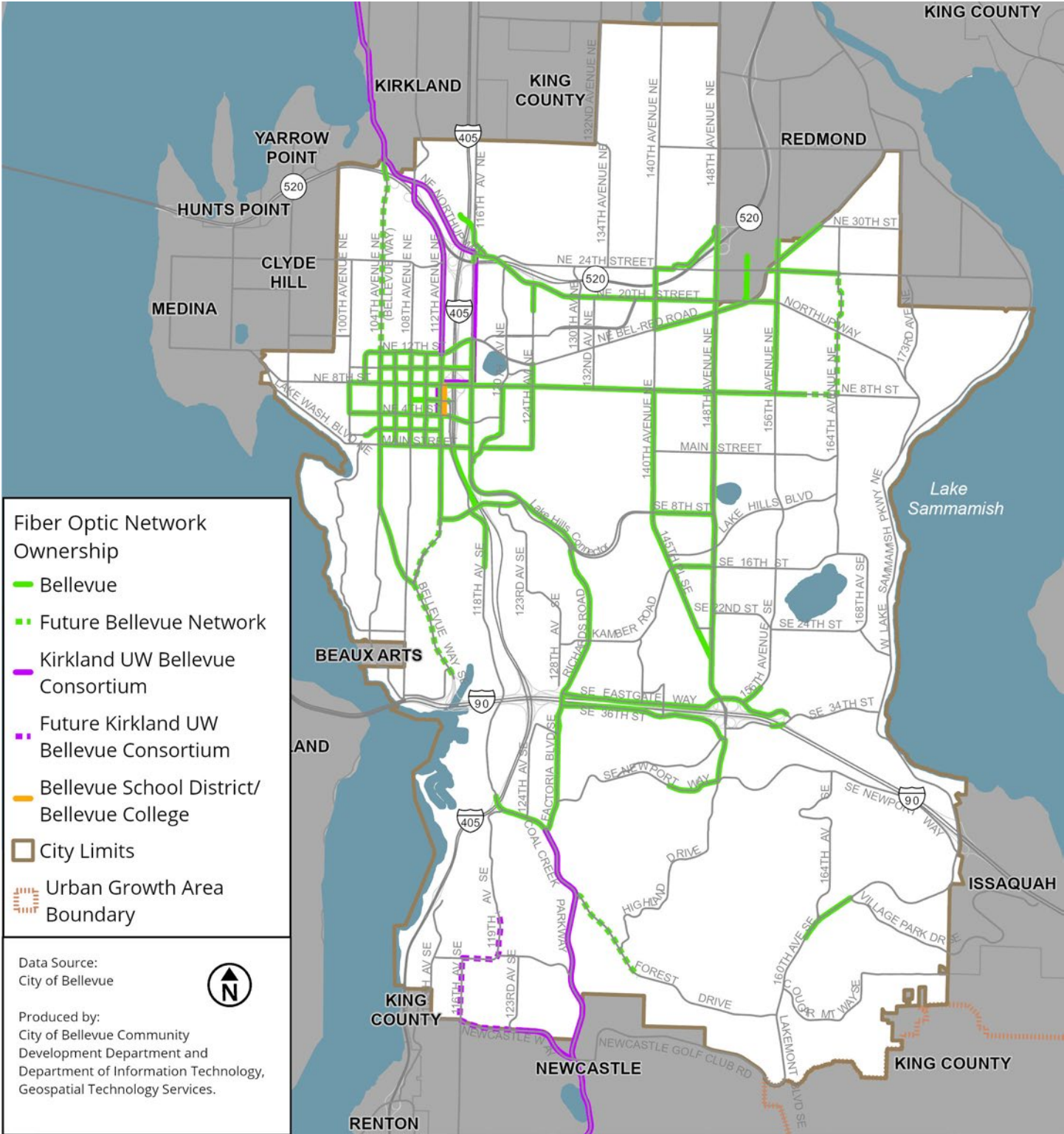
## Map UT-8. Olympic Pipeline Company Transmission Pipeline

The Olympic Pipeline Company's liquid petroleum transmission pipelines run through the middle of Bellevue impacting many neighborhoods.



# Map UT-9. Fiber Optic Network

The fiber optic network is expanding in Bellevue. It is provided through several partnerships.



## GOAL & POLICIES

### Goal

To develop and maintain all utilities at the appropriate levels of service to accommodate the city's projected growth, encourage predictability and implement new technology to improve utility services and their reliability.

### Policies

#### General Utility System

- UT-1.** Manage utility systems effectively in order to provide reliable, sustainable, quality service and to mitigate service disruptions.
- UT-2.** Build and manage city-owned utility infrastructure assets to reduce service disruption and risks to public safety, economic vitality, property and the environment due to asset failure.
- UT-3.** Use design and construction standards that are environmentally sensitive, safe, cost-effective and appropriate.
- UT-4.** Encourage public-private partnerships to take advantage of the city's fiber optic network to facilitate innovation, service delivery and competition for broadband deployment throughout the city.
- UT-5.** Encourage new and cost-effective emerging information, telecommunications and energy technologies that would benefit city utility users and improve utility service and efficient water and energy use.
- UT-6.** Ensure that the location, type and size of all public facilities is determined and/or approved by the city.
- UT-7.** Base the extension and sizing of system components on existing and future demand. System capacity will not determine land use.
- UT-8.** Design, construct and maintain facilities to minimize their impact on surrounding neighborhoods.
- UT-9.** Encourage the joint use of public facilities such as the development of a storm and surface water detention area as passive recreation.
- UT-10.** Emphasize cost effective management of city utility systems over their lifetime, including planning for their renewal and replacement, balancing risk and maintaining desired service levels. Forecast future capital and maintenance costs and manage rates so that customer rate revenue funds the cost of ownership equitably across generations.
- UT-11.** Work with utility providers to educate and inform the public about the costs and benefits of emerging technologies.
- UT-12.** Develop and periodically update functional utility system plans that forecast system capacity and needs for at least a 20 year planning horizon.

- UT-13.** Require Low Impact Development principles to minimize impervious surfaces and native vegetation loss on all infrastructure improvement projects.

See also Climate and Environment policies on low impact development, [CL-63](#) to [CL-65](#).

## Utility Coordination

- UT-14.** Maintain the city's utility service areas so they include all the Potential Annexation Area.
- UT-15.** Expand the service area boundaries in cooperation with King County and neighboring jurisdictions. In unincorporated areas, expand the service area only if the land is part of the Potential Annexation Area.
- UT-16.** Utilities may be extended outside the city within the service area if the annexation process has begun, through a pre-annexation agreement if immediate annexation cannot be required or is not reasonable, or through an interlocal agreement.
- UT-17.** Extend water and wastewater utility service to unserved areas of the utility service area, including extensions into potential annexation areas, if the city's costs are reimbursed.
- UT-18.** Coordinate with other jurisdictions and governmental entities in the planning and implementation of multi-jurisdictional utility facility additions and improvements.
- UT-19.** Coordinate with the appropriate jurisdictions to ensure that utility facilities that are to be constructed in potential annexation areas are designed and built in accord with City of Bellevue standards.
- UT-20.** Coordinate emergency preparedness and response with local and regional utility partners.

See also Land Use policies related to annexation, [LU-46](#) to [LU-49](#).

## Hazardous Waste

- UT-21.** Cooperate with other private and public agencies in the region to manage and control hazardous waste and moderate risk waste, including medical wastes and hazardous household substances.
- UT-22.** Educate the public in the proper handling and disposal of hazardous household waste and on the use of alternative products or practices which result in reducing the use and storage of hazardous materials in homes and businesses.
- UT-23.** Provide for the safe and convenient disposal of hazardous household waste through a permanent and conveniently located collection facility for Bellevue residents.

See also Climate and Environment policies related to waste management, [CL-28](#) to [CL-33](#).

## Solid Waste

- UT-24.** Promote the recycling of solid waste materials by providing opportunities for convenient recycling and by developing educational materials on recycling, composting and other waste reduction methods.
- UT-25.** Encourage and actively seek an effective regional approach to solid waste management.
- UT-26.** Use a public review process in the selection and approval of sites for any disposal facility, to study and consider sensitivity to aesthetics, equitable distribution of burdens and benefits, health effects and the environment.
- UT-27.** Maintain a safe, cost-effective and responsive solid waste collection system that provides convenient, efficient, environmentally-friendly and visually unobtrusive components and services.
- UT-28.** Manage solid waste collection to minimize litter and neighborhood disruption.
- UT-29.** Work with King County to maintain a geographically balanced system of solid waste transfer and disposal facilities and avoid disproportionate impacts to any individual community.
- UT-30.** Explore transfer and disposal options for the period after the city's current contract with King County terminates in mid-2028.

## Wastewater Utility

- UT-31.** Provide a wastewater disposal system that ensures public health and safety, and protects the environment.
- UT-32.** Require wastewater connections for all new development, including single family plats, unless otherwise allowed by state or county regulations.
- UT-33.** Encourage homeowners with septic systems to connect to wastewater systems where available. Allow existing single family homes with septic systems to continue to use septic systems, provided they remain in compliance with Seattle-King County Public Health requirements. If existing septic systems fail to maintain compliance with Seattle-King County Public Health standards and cannot be brought into compliance, homeowners are required to connect to the wastewater system where available.

## Storm and Surface Water Utility

- UT-34.** Provide and maintain a storm and surface water system that controls damage from storms, protects surface water quality, provides for safety and enjoyment, supports fish and wildlife habitat and protects the environment.
- UT-35.** Participate in regional watershed based efforts with the goals of achieving local drainage basin health and addressing Endangered Species Act issues. Manage the storm and surface water system within a system wide, watershed based context.

- UT-36.** Design context-appropriate stormwater management facilities.
- UT-37.** Educate the public about water quality issues.
- UT-38.** Require the use of low impact development and stormwater best management practices where feasible to manage stormwater runoff, which may result in smaller facilities constructed on- and off-site for flow control, conveyance, and water quality.

See also Climate and Environment policies related to low impact development, [CL-63](#) to [CL-65](#).

## Water Utility

- UT-39.** Provide a cost-effective supply of safe, secure, high quality drinking water that meets the community's water needs in an environmentally responsible manner.
- UT-40.** Provide a water supply that meets all federal and state drinking water quality standards.
- UT-41.** Provide reliable water service for domestic use and fire flow protection under normal operations. Proactively mitigate system vulnerabilities to improve performance and service restoration during and after emergencies.
- UT-42.** Promote conservation and the wise and efficient use of the public water supply and discourage the waste of this valuable resource.
- UT-43.** Improve the quality and quantity of the water supply of well water users by allowing access to the city water system as contained in the Water System Functional Plan, and provided that at least the fair share costs are paid by the benefiting parties.

## Non City-Managed Utilities

### General Non City-Managed Utilities

- UT-44.** Coordinate with non-city utility providers to ensure planning for system growth consistent with the city's Comprehensive Plan and growth forecasts.
- UT-45.** Support new and emerging technologies that would benefit utility service delivery by being sustainable, efficient and viable.
- UT-46.** Defer to the serving utility the implementation sequence of utility plan components.
- UT-47.** Coordinate with the appropriate jurisdictions and governmental entities in the planning and implementation of multi-jurisdictional utility facility additions and improvements. Consider regional distribution networks and the efficiency of meeting regional demand.
- UT-48.** Require effective and timely coordination of all public and private utility activities including trenching and culvert replacements.

See also Economic Development policies related to infrastructure, [ED-37](#) to [ED-39](#).

- UT-49.** Inform companies providing utilities such as telecommunications, electricity and natural gas about the schedule for capital projects and opportunities to install infrastructure.
- UT-50.** Require notification to the city prior to a utility's maintenance or removal of vegetation in city right-of-way.
- UT-51.** When implementing street projects, determine whether the relocation of distribution facilities underground is required and the means of financing the relocation.
- UT-52.** Work with Puget Sound Energy, telecom providers, state regulatory agencies and other responsible parties to develop funding tools that enable mitigation of impacts to vegetation and aesthetics of deploying electrical and telecommunications infrastructure.
- UT-53.** Require the reasonable screening and/or architecturally compatible integration of all new utility and telecommunication facilities, including equipment support facilities.
- UT-54.** Encourage directional pruning of trees and phased replacement of unsafe or improperly located vegetation in the right-of-way. Perform pruning and trimming of trees according to professional arboricultural specifications and standards and in recognition of utility clearance standards.
- UT-55.** Encourage consolidation on existing facilities where reasonably feasible and where such consolidation leads to fewer impacts than construction of separate facilities. Examples of facilities which could be shared are towers, electrical, telephone and light poles, antenna, substation sites, trenches and easements.
- UT-56.** Coordinate with utility companies for the acquisition, use and enhancement of utility corridors for pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian trails and for wildlife corridors and habitat.
- UT-57.** Avoid, when reasonably possible, locating overhead lines in greenbelt and open spaces as identified in the Parks and Open Space System Plan.
- UT-58.** Facilitate the conversion away from fossil fuels to cost-effective and environmentally sensitive technologies and energy sources.
- UT-59.** Facilitate and encourage conservation of resources.
- UT-60.** Encourage communication among the city, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) and utilities regulated by the WUTC about the distribution of costs for existing and proposed utility facilities; especially requirements for the undergrounding of transmission, distribution, and communication lines exceeding statewide norms.
- UT-61.** Encourage system practices intended to minimize the number and duration of interruptions to customer service.
- UT-62.** Prior to seeking city approval for facilities, encourage utilities service providers to solicit community input and consider the distribution of benefits and burdens to different community groups on the siting of proposed facilities

- UT-63.** Encourage utility providers to erect limited on-site signage on all sites purchased for future major utility facilities to indicate the utility's intended use of the site.
- UT-64.** Support federal or state actions that would preserve local government authority to regulate time, manner and place of construction in the right-of-way.
- UT-65.** Require timely removal of abandoned facilities that are visually intrusive whenever facilities are replaced or upgraded.

## Power Utility

- UT-66.** Work with Puget Sound Energy to provide highly reliable service for Bellevue customers through the planning, siting, building and maintenance of an electrical system that meets the needs of existing and future development.
- UT-67.** Encourage the public to conserve electrical energy through public education.
- UT-68.** Require the undergrounding of new permanent electrical distribution lines in coordination with the city and other utilities.
- UT-69.** Require the undergrounding of existing electrical distribution lines, where feasible and in coordination with the city and other utilities, when a change in use or intensification of an existing use occurs that requires a change in distribution infrastructure.
- UT-70.** Support neighborhood efforts to form financial arrangements, such as local improvement districts, to cover the non-utility share of project costs for undergrounding electrical lines.
- UT-71.** Encourage city and utility involvement with regional or statewide agencies when and if they are developing policies regarding exposure to electric and magnetic fields (EMF) or other utility issues.
- UT-72.** Review new accepted scientific research of potential health impacts associated with electrical and telecommunications facilities and make changes to policies if the situation warrants.
- UT-73.** Require in the planning, siting, and construction of all electrical facilities, systems, lines, and substations that the electrical utility strike a reasonable balance between potential health effects and the cost and impacts of mitigating those effects by taking reasonable cost-effective steps.
- UT-74.** Work with Puget Sound Energy to implement the electrical service system serving Bellevue in such a manner that new and expanded transmission and substation facilities minimize the visual impact to the community. Where feasible, electrical facilities should be located away from residential areas when the location will not impact the provision of adequate and reliable service.
- UT-75.** Require siting analysis through the development review process for new and expanded facilities in residential areas, including a consideration of alternative sites and co-location.



- UT-76.** Avoid, minimize, and mitigate the visual impacts of new or expanded electrical facilities through the use of land use regulation and performance standards that address siting considerations, architectural design, site screening, landscaping, maintenance, available technologies, aesthetics and other appropriate measures.
- UT-77.** Discourage new aerial facilities within corridors that have no existing aerial facilities.
- UT-78.** Encourage the prioritization of restoring electrical service to water and wastewater utility facilities following power outages.
- UT-79.** Update utility agreements, engage partnerships, and develop policy to encourage timely planning and investments to ensure sufficient grid capacity for electrification and decarbonization.
- UT-80.** Administer applicable regulations and franchise agreement authority over the Seattle City Light and Olympic Pipeline infrastructure located in Bellevue.
- UT-81.** Work with Puget Sound Energy to improve the safety and reliability of power infrastructure vulnerable to climate change.

## Telecommunications Utility

- UT-82.** Encourage widespread, affordable, high-speed internet access, including access to competing telecommunications services and new forms of technology to provide the community with choice and to facilitate innovation.
- UT-83.** Assess the coverage and quality of residential and business access to internet and telecommunication services and explore opportunities to enhance service to areas of need.
- UT-84.** Ensure a permitting process for telecommunications infrastructure that considers all impacts to the surrounding area.
- UT-85.** Limit the amount of disturbance to city infrastructure by encouraging co-location of telecommunications conduit in the public right-of-way.
- UT-86.** Allow new aerial telecommunication lines on existing systems provided that they shall be designed to address visual impacts and are required to be placed underground at the time of undergrounding electrical distribution lines.
- UT-87.** Require visual integration and screening of telecommunication infrastructure.
- UT-88.** Minimize visual impacts of wireless communication facilities by encouraging deployment in land use districts in the following preferred and descending order when possible, considering the provider's coverage needs:
  1. Nonresidential land use districts, except Transition Areas, and
  2. Park and open space areas,
  3. Residential and park and open space areas.

- UT-89.** Minimize visual impacts of wireless communication facilities by encouraging system designs in the following preferred and descending order:
1. Attached to public facility structures, building mounted, or integrated with utility poles, and light standards;
  2. Co-located on utility poles and light standards; and
  3. Free standing towers.
- UT-90.** Require applicants for wireless communication facility permits to minimize visual and aesthetic impacts to the extent feasible and consistent with telecommunication customer needs.
- UT-91.** Require wireless equipment constructed in public rights of way in residential areas to be as small as possible and visually unobtrusive.
- UT-92.** Encourage wireless equipment to be installed in a manner compatible with other utility functions.
- UT-93.** For infrastructure opportunities on city property, other than street rights-of-way, encourage the use of appropriate city owned properties for lease to install wireless communications equipment that is compatible with existing city uses of the sites and consistent with land use requirements.
- UT-94.** Encourage the co-location of telecommunications equipment on city-owned sites to reduce the visual and aesthetic impact of antennas on the community.
- UT-95.** Periodically review and update wireless facility regulations to respond to changes in technology and community conditions to balance impacts with the need for service.



# Transportation

## VISION

Moving into, around and through Bellevue is safe, reliable and predictable.

Bellevue is connected to the region, enabling local and regional access for businesses and neighborhoods. Safe and reliable mobility options, including active transportation (walking and biking), transit and car, give people options to get where they need to go. The city's transportation system integrates leading technology that promotes safety and efficiency.

### TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT SCOPE

The Transportation element is about how people get around the city from walking and biking to cars, buses and light rail.

## INTRODUCTION

The Transportation element provides policy direction to guide programs, priorities, design and investments that support local and regional mobility. Mobility in Bellevue means providing people with an assortment of mobility infrastructure and service options that help people get where they need to go. Not only does the transportation system support this fundamental mobility function, it contributes to a quality of life that Bellevue residents expect and that attracts employers and businesses.

The Comprehensive Plan integrates transportation planning and investments to support land use planning. It emphasizes that the transportation system supports the city's land use vision and livability by providing options for people to get to the city as well as to travel within the city. The city maintains Downtown Bellevue as a regional Urban Growth Center and identifies mixed use areas in Wilburton, BelRed, Crossroads, Factoria and Eastgate as Countywide Centers. The Mobility Implementation Plan (MIP) describes a complete and connected transportation network that is designed to meet the future travel demand and to reflect or enhance the character of the community. Performance Targets in the MIP for

each mode and priorities for mobility along right-of-way corridors, reflect the intensity and mix of land uses and the expectations for safety, access and livability. Mobility options consider and accommodate the needs of populations that may have mobility challenges, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, the young and low-income households.

### MOBILITY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (MIP)

The MIP describes the city's approach to multimodal concurrency. This plan provides Performance Metrics and Performance Targets for each mode, as well as Performance Management Areas and Priority Vehicle Corridors. A mobility strategy is designed to address more than one "mode" or method of transportation for people to get to, from and within Bellevue. The city's multimodal mobility strategy incorporates policies for all mobility options, including walking, bicycling, riding transit and driving.



## TODAY'S CONDITIONS AND TOMORROW'S PROJECTIONS

### Transportation Today and Tomorrow

As population and employment in Bellevue have grown, traffic volume on many of Bellevue's arterial streets has held relatively steady. This intended outcome has been accomplished through a transportation strategy that emphasizes walking, bicycling and transit, coupled with growth focused in mixed use, transit-rich, walkable neighborhoods. More people are choosing to live closer to where they work and are using a variety of options to get around. Bellevue emphasizes active transportation and transit use as essential components of mobility in a livable city, while providing streets that operate efficiently. Transit service, including bus rapid transit and light rail, provides mobility options while supporting compact, mixed-use development near transit stations. Bellevue supports transit use by prioritizing capital investments and service enhancements on a frequent transit network described in the city's Transit Master Plan.

To ensure that getting around Bellevue on foot is easy and safe, and that bicycling facilities accommodate riders of all ages and abilities, Bellevue implements and maintains a network illustrated and described in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan. This plan includes policies, design standards and a comprehensive and prioritized project list. The Mobility Implementation Plan defines Performance Targets for each mode that describes the intended user experience and serves to identify and prioritize needed investments.

### Implementing the Mobility Vision

Multimodal mobility in Bellevue implements a vision for a community where people can get around by the mode of their choice: walking, bicycling, riding transit or driving. Bellevue continually invests in infrastructure and technology to serve the evolving mobility needs of Bellevue residents, employees and visitors.



### PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan articulates a shared vision for walking and bicycling in Bellevue. The plan identifies more than 400 projects that, when funded, would make biking and walking in Bellevue safer and easier.

### WHAT IS TRANSPORTATION CONCURRENCY?

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires cities to ensure that transportation programs, projects and services needed to serve growth are regionally coordinated and are in place either when new development occurs or within six years. This is done to ensure the city provides a supply of transportation facility improvements for all modes that are needed to meet the demand from new development.

## Mobility Goals, Performance Metrics and Performance Targets

To create a community where people can easily move about using a variety of travel modes, the city has established goals and policies in this Comprehensive Plan, and Performance Metrics and Performance Targets in the MIP. The city will continue to measure mobility for people traveling on foot, by bicycle, in a private vehicle and on transit, and will document progress toward building a complete and connected multimodal transportation network.

### Expanded Transit

East Link light rail has six stations in Bellevue, plus the Overlake Village station in Redmond, that serve nearby neighborhoods and provide connections within Bellevue and to the region. Station area plans will ensure good local access and appropriate nearby land uses. As Bellevue gets to know East Link, the city will plan for future high capacity transit service connecting to regional destinations and will make decisions in support of local transit service to meet rapidly increasing demand.

### Mobility Options

Transportation planning and investments will expand options for people to travel within neighborhoods, along corridors and to regional destinations. Transportation network investments will address vehicle congestion and will build projects for all modes that incorporate design for safety, accessibility, connectivity and neighborhood character.

### Maintaining What We Build

A sidewalk is usable by everyone only when it is free from barriers like root heaves. Bicycle lanes provide dedicated space for bicycle riders only when they are free of debris. Roadways are best for cars, trucks and buses only when there are not potholes. Bellevue will continue to invest in preventative maintenance and responsive repairs to ensure the transportation system serves everyone.

## TRANSIT MASTER PLAN

Transit Master Plan articulates a vision for “Abundant Access”, which aims to “support planned growth and development with a bold transit vision that provides efficient, useful, attractive service for most people, to most destinations, most of the time, serving maximum ridership.” The Transit Master Plan summarizes all aspects of the two-year planning process and contains policies that are the guiding framework for transit that is convenient, frequent, efficient, simple, direct and regionally connected. It presents route-level recommendations and details how the City can positively affect transit within Bellevue.

## TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES PLAN (TFP)

Typically updated every two to three years, the TFP is a “financially constrained” plan meaning the identified cost of the projects in the TFP must be balanced with the city’s transportation revenue projections for the 12-year plan period. Some projects listed in the TFP include funding allocations for initial development or partial implementation only.

# TRANSPORTATION POLICY SUMMARY

## Transportation and Land Use

Bellevue implements a multimodal transportation system that supports the city's land use. The city directs investments and services to Regional Centers (as identified by PSRC), Countywide Centers (as identified by King County) and Neighborhood Centers (as identified by Bellevue). Development in Bellevue supports the transportation system by including design features that reinforce the multimodal transportation system.

## Transportation Demand Management

Through implementation of transportation demand management (TDM) strategies, the city helps people make choices that can reduce the number of driving trips they take alone and the miles they travel in a private vehicle (single-occupant vehicle (SOV) trips). TDM tools help manage growth in congestion, reduce spending on roadway capacity and parking, lessen environmental and neighborhood impacts of transportation, and meet drive-alone rate mode share targets. TDM policies include three components, used most effectively in combination:

- **Influencing mode choice.** Regulations for new development address site design features that reduce auto dependency. Regulations for large employers focus on worksite actions, consistent with the Commute Trip Reduction Act.
- **Marketing.** Efforts to inform people about mobility options and promote changes in mode choice toward non-SOV options.
- **Improving services and facilities.** Bellevue's investments in pedestrian and bicycle facilities promote the use of those modes, while partnerships with others in the region can extend regional trail connections, expand the high-occupancy vehicle lane system and improve transit service.

Carpools, vanpools and employer shuttles are attractive and convenient options for many commuters and can work where public transit service is lacking or inconvenient. Sustaining a successful ridesharing program requires both the public and private sectors to participate. The public sector can build infrastructure to support walking, bicycling and ridesharing, while cooperation between public and private groups, employers and residents can create an environment conducive to non-SOV travel.

Regional coordination enhances the effectiveness and equity of TDM actions. Bellevue coordinates with other Eastside jurisdictions and transit service providers in developing and implementing compatible TDM programs.

## Mobility Management and Technology

Bellevue seeks to implement a multimodal transportation network that accommodates the mobility needs of everyone, with special attention to underserved populations. The city seeks to maximize the performance of all modes of transportation in accordance with the

### COMMUTE TRIP REDUCTION

Under Washington's Clean Air Act, Bellevue is required to have a Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) plan to improve air quality, reduce energy consumption and reduce traffic congestion. Under the city's CTR program, employers with 100 full-time employees or more must establish their own CTR programs to encourage employees to use alternatives to single-occupant vehicle commuting.

Examples of employer measures include organizing office carpools, offering subsidized transit passes and allowing employees to work part of the week from home. The city helps affected employers develop their CTR programs through information and training.

performance targets articulated in the MIP. The city engages the community in the evaluation and modification of the MIP in concert with each update of the Comprehensive Plan. Transportation improvement projects are identified through an evaluation of the performance of all modes of transportation and engagement with the community through the TFP.

### Regional Transportation Coordination

Streets, multipurpose trails and transit routes may cross jurisdictional lines and may be the responsibility of different agencies. Effective regional relationships are required to support regional mobility. Bellevue is an active partner with our municipal neighbors and with the federal, state and county governments and transit service providers that are responsible for the regional transportation facilities that serve the city.

Within Bellevue, I-90, I-405 and SR-520 provide regional mobility and serve as the backbone of the bus transit system and freight network. The I-90 and SR 520 corridors accommodate east-west regional trails, while the Eastrail, parallel to I-405, provides an important north-south connection. Bellevue advocates for a highway system that keeps pace with population growth and economic activity by incorporating technology, demand management and infrastructure improvements. Key mobility principles include safety, interconnectivity, accessibility, speed and reliability.

A resilient transportation system is achieved through design that is multimodal and redundant, together with maintenance that protects the community's investments. Coordinated disaster response plans on the regional and local level help ensure effective emergency response and mobility for business and personal needs.







## Streets

The street system accommodates travel by private vehicles, transit and rideshare vehicles, freight trucks, active transportation such as bicycling and walking. Daily vehicle trips have plateaued or declined on many Bellevue arterials. In an era of growth, this suggests people are choosing other mobility options for some trips. Bellevue considers the movement, comfort and safety of people using all modes of travel. However, for the foreseeable future, private vehicles will account for the majority of daily trips within Bellevue, and the city will monitor vehicle congestion at System Intersections and the travel speed along designated Priority Vehicle Corridors. A street network that operates safely and efficiently for everyone is one element of a multimodal transportation system. In the MIP, Bellevue recognizes that arterial corridors provide multiple mobility functions with facility types and priorities that may vary between Performance Management Areas.

## COMPLETE STREETS

Complete streets are arterial streets that provide context-appropriate facilities for people of all abilities to travel using their choice of mode, including vehicles, active transportation modes and transit, while promoting safe operation for all users.

**Roadway Users and Modes.** Designed for people of all ages and abilities walking, bicycling and using public transit, and for those driving private vehicles, freight and delivery vehicles and emergency vehicles.

**Projects and Phases.** Applies on the public right-of-way and easements for all project phases including scoping, planning, designing, implementing, operating and maintaining the transportation system.

**Clear, Accountable Exceptions.** The conditions for granting exceptions are specific and require approval from the Transportation Director.

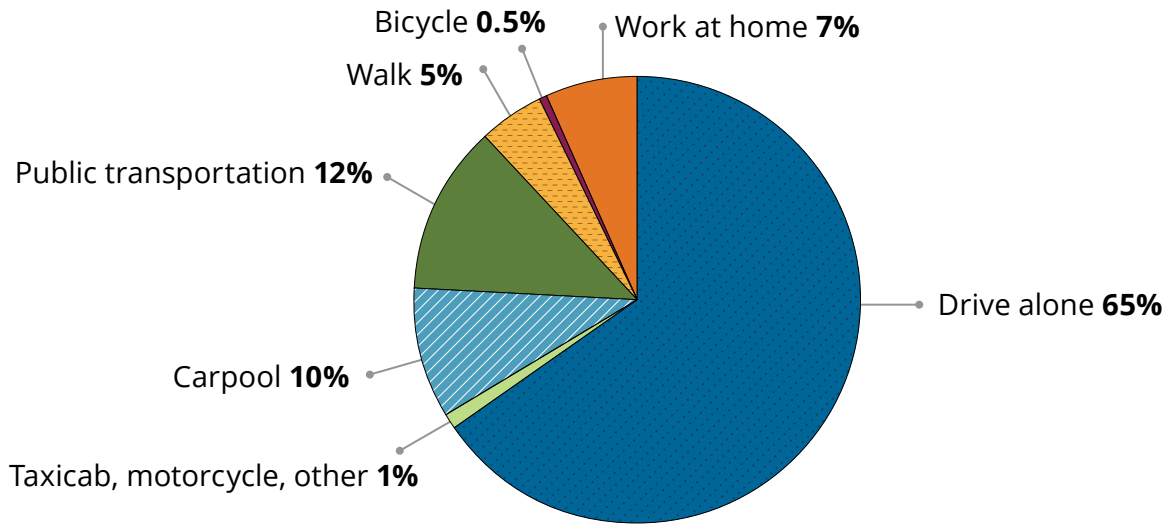
**Network Connectivity.** Promotes a comprehensive, integrated and connected network for all modes.

**Design.** Use a best practices approach and incorporate balance and flexibility to accommodate the needs of all roadway users.

**Community Context.** Complement the context of the corridor and surrounding community.

**Performance Measures.** Performance is measured against adopted Performance Targets in the MIP, and mode-specific plans, including the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan and the Transit Master Plan.

### Figure TR-1. Mode Used by Bellevue Residents to Commute to Work



Source: US Census Bureau, 2018-2022. American Community Survey (5-year estimates).

### Figure TR-2. Commute Trip Drive-Along Mode Share Targets

Worker population	2020 Existing	2044 Target
Citywide Residents	47%	40%
Citywide Workers	63%	45%
Downtown Workers	66% (2014 Existing)	30%

Source: 2020 Existing: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2022 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. 2014 Existing: US Census Bureau. 2014 Census Transportation Planning Package based on 2012-2016 American Community Survey.

2044 Target: Rounded values, derived from the City of Bellevue travel demand model’s forecast for average daily commute trips by motorized modes, with adjustment to include nonmotorized and work from home modes (proportions for these modes were assumed to be the same as in existing surveys).



## VISION ZERO STRATEGIC PLAN

The purpose of the Vision Zero Strategic Plan is to coordinate existing efforts and new ideas, evaluate crash data, consider public concerns and identify strategies that will reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries to zero by 2030. The plan provides a coordinated approach across city departments, ensuring that transportation engineers, first responders and other key staff work together. Bellevue City Council Resolution No. 9035 (December 7, 2015) endorsed Vision Zero, recognizing that death and serious injury on city streets is unacceptable and preventable. Policies related to Vision Zero support implementing context-appropriate traffic safety measures for all travel modes to protect the most vulnerable users.

## Transit

Bellevue's Transit Master Plan describes a transit system that serves residents, employees and businesses within the city and connects to the region, with a partnership between the city and the transit service providers. Up-to-date transit routes, schedules and trip-planning tools can be found at the King County Metro and Sound Transit web sites and mobile apps. Policies acknowledge the need to maintain and enhance transit facilities and service for Bellevue and to advocate for additional high-capacity transit service.

Recommendations in the Transit Master Plan address the priorities for future transit service and the capital facilities that support those services. The Transit Master Plan calls for a transit system that provides abundant access, establishes a frequent transit network, implements speed and reliability enhancements and improves pedestrian and bicycle access to transit stops and stations. The MIP describes Performance Targets for transit that operates between activity centers and also focuses on active transportation access to and from bus stops and stations.

Especially for commuter trips and increasingly throughout the day, high-capacity transit (HCT) is an important part of the transportation system. HCT in Bellevue may include light rail, express bus services and facilities or other transit technologies that operate within a fixed guideway, dedicated right-of-way or freeway/express facility.

East Link light rail serves Bellevue with six stations in the city, plus the nearby Overlake Village Station in Redmond. A Sound Transit Long Range Plan provides for planning and designing transit system expansion to supplement projects that are operational or under construction. Bellevue participates with Sound Transit in planning for high-capacity transit to serve the city. Priorities include detailed system design, preservation of right-of-way, station access and station area planning.

## Active Transportation

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are vital components of Bellevue's transportation system. An integrated, complete, connected and safe pedestrian and bicycle system provides convenient access to schools, work, transit and parks. Performance Targets for each mode are established in the MIP.

By constructing and maintaining pedestrian and bicycle facilities, the city increases mobility options for everyone. This approach to pedestrian and bicycle transportation is consistent with the Puget Sound Regional Council's vision for a region-wide non-motorized transportation system, as articulated in Transportation 2050, the adopted 30-year action plan for transportation in the central Puget Sound region.



## State and Federal Highways and Corridors

Bellevue works with state and federal governments to enhance freeway access to Bellevue, especially in major commercial centers of Downtown, Wilburton, BelRed, Eastgate and Factoria. The city advocates for improved freeway to freeway access and supports the completion of the Regional High Occupancy Vehicle system. Bellevue also works with state agencies to minimize impacts to areas abutting the freeways and coordinate signaling and traffic management at freeway interchanges. Bellevue supports the work of transit agencies in developing transit facilities on the freeways to accommodate anticipated growth and collaborates on facilities for active transportation access to those facilities.

## Freight Mobility

The regional and local transportation system allows for the movement of goods as well as people. This function supports economic vitality and meets the needs of residents and businesses. Bellevue designs and manages the local transportation network to provide for the efficient movement of goods along specified corridors. Large-scale freight handling is primarily an off-street function and the curbside is increasingly used to accommodate small-scale parcel pick-up and delivery as described in the Curb Management Plan.

## Transportation Finance

The Comprehensive Plan requires investments in all modes, with the objective of providing mobility options and meeting adopted Performance Targets.

Funding for improvements is derived from multiple sources: businesses and residents (the city's general fund and local business taxes), pass-through users (gas and motor vehicle taxes), new development (impact fees) and outside resources including grants. Joint funding and partnerships are options for projects that involve Washington state, King County, transit service providers or adjacent jurisdictions.

To ensure that funding and improvements keep pace with demand and meet long-term system requirements, the city has a TFP that identifies long-range needs and cost estimates. Detailed transportation revenues and expenditures are balanced every two years in the city's Capital Investment Program (CIP). At every update of the CIP, transportation facility cost estimates are completed and available revenues are reassessed. New transportation needs are prioritized based on the Transportation Facilities Plan, as well as emerging high-priority, short-term needs.

## Environmental Considerations

Whether considering runoff from streets into streams, tailpipe emissions into the air or noise from tires and engines, the transportation network has the potential to affect the quality of the environment. Environmental policies include proactive efforts in Bellevue to reduce the adverse impacts of transportation. The Transportation element works in conjunction with the Climate and Environment element to reduce environmental impacts. Targets for emissions reductions and per capita vehicle miles traveled are documented in the Environmental Stewardship Plan.

## Residential Safety and Livability

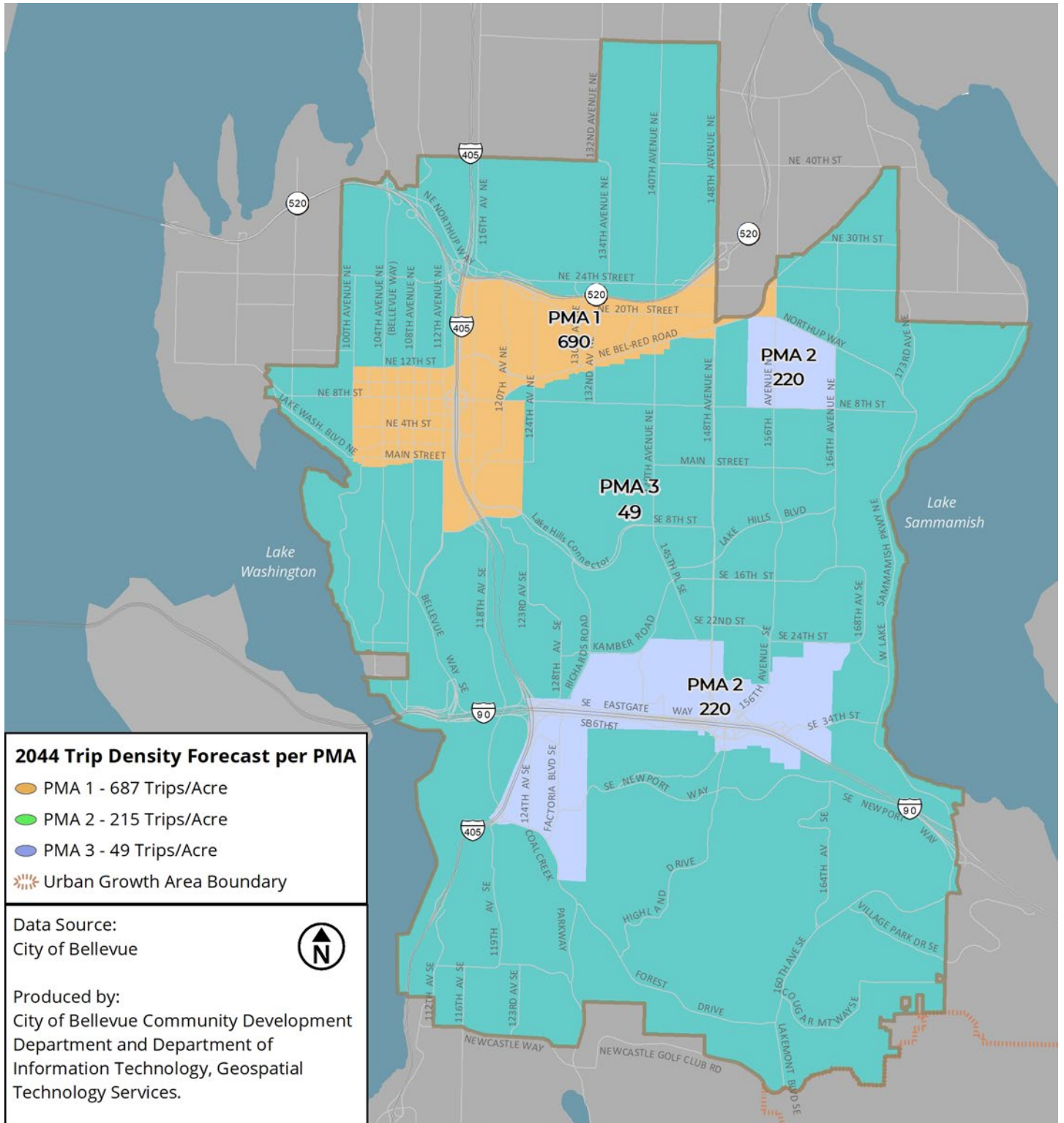
Two types of transportation network impacts are of special concern to neighborhood quality of life:

- Noise and safety issues arising from cut-through traffic (traffic on a residential street that has neither an origin nor a destination within the neighborhood) and non-residential parking on residential streets.
- Street and transit projects in and near residential areas that may affect neighborhood livability.

Employing transportation system management tools and implementing a traffic safety program maintains mobility and minimizes traffic impacts on neighborhoods. Approaches may include appropriately scaled and designed street improvements, traffic safety measures and prioritized mobility modes along corridors that are compatible with neighborhood character and quality of life.

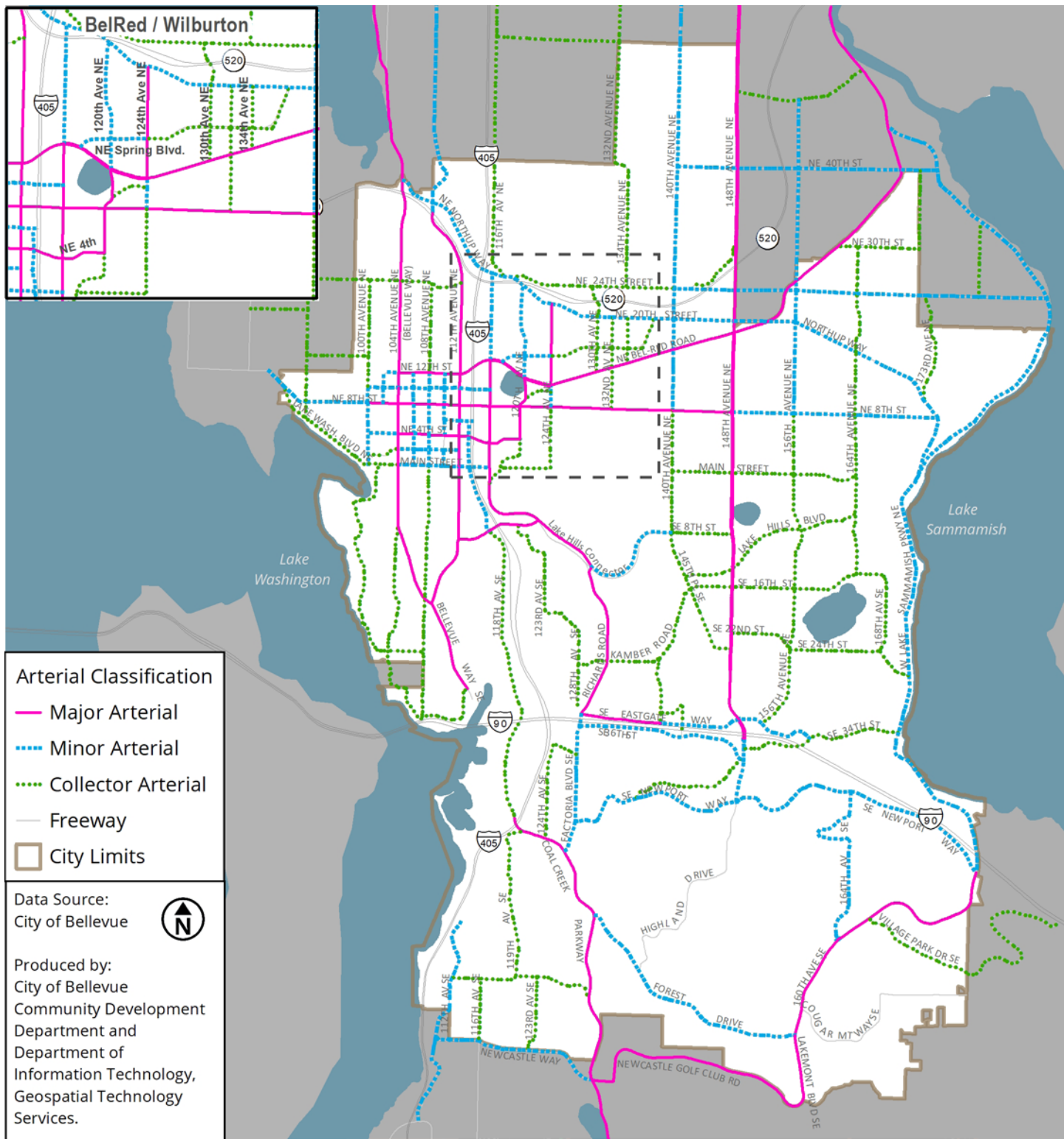
## Map TR-1 Trip Density Forecast for 2035

Trip density is the number of daily person-trips per acre within a Performance Management Area. This is a forecast for 2044 to provide information on the timing, location and capacity needs of future growth.



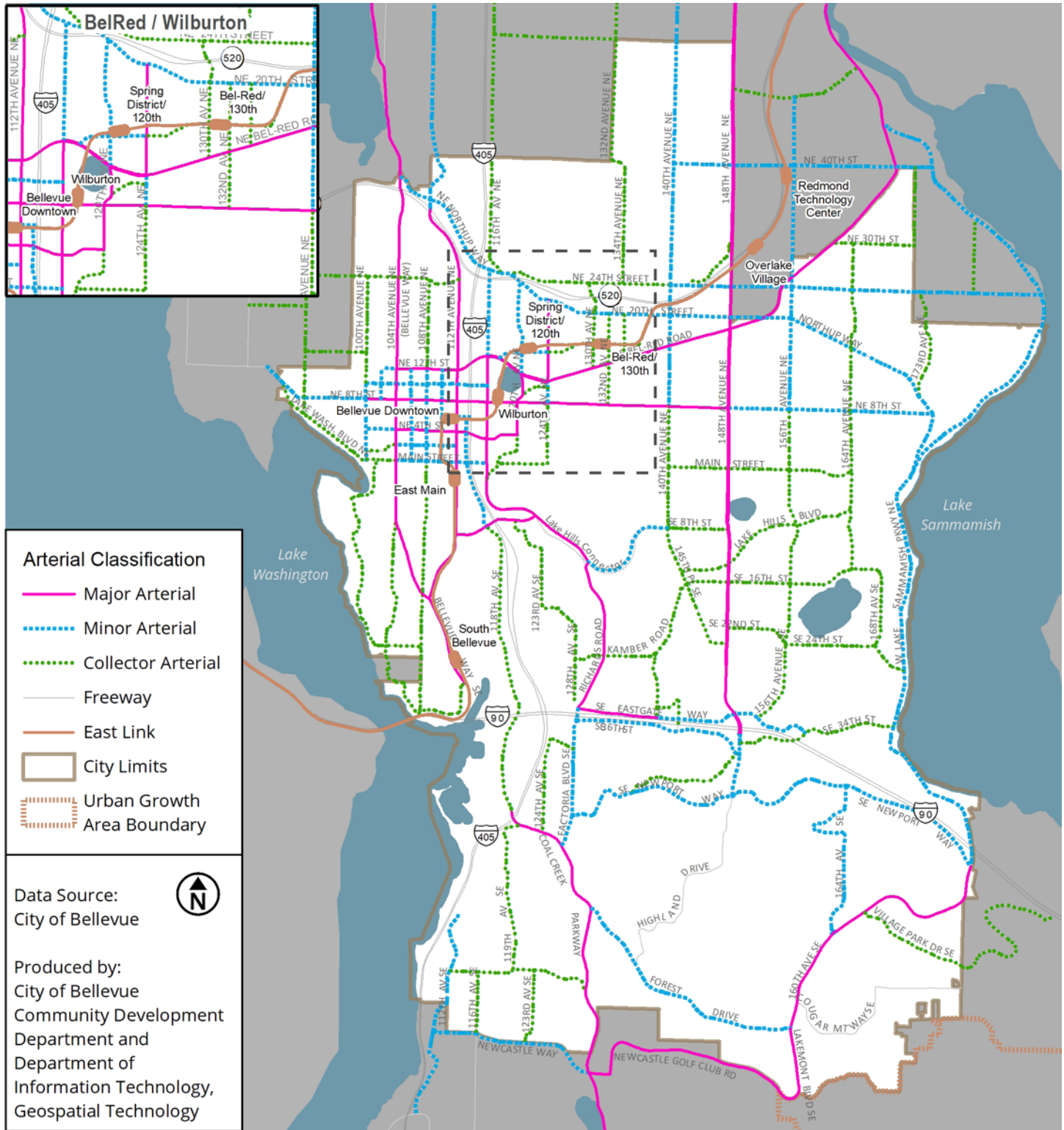
## Map TR-2. Arterial Functional Classifications – Existing and Planned Arterials

This map shows the functional classifications of the arterial-street system in Bellevue. Refer to the Glossary for Functional Classification definitions.



## Map TR-3. Transit Facilities

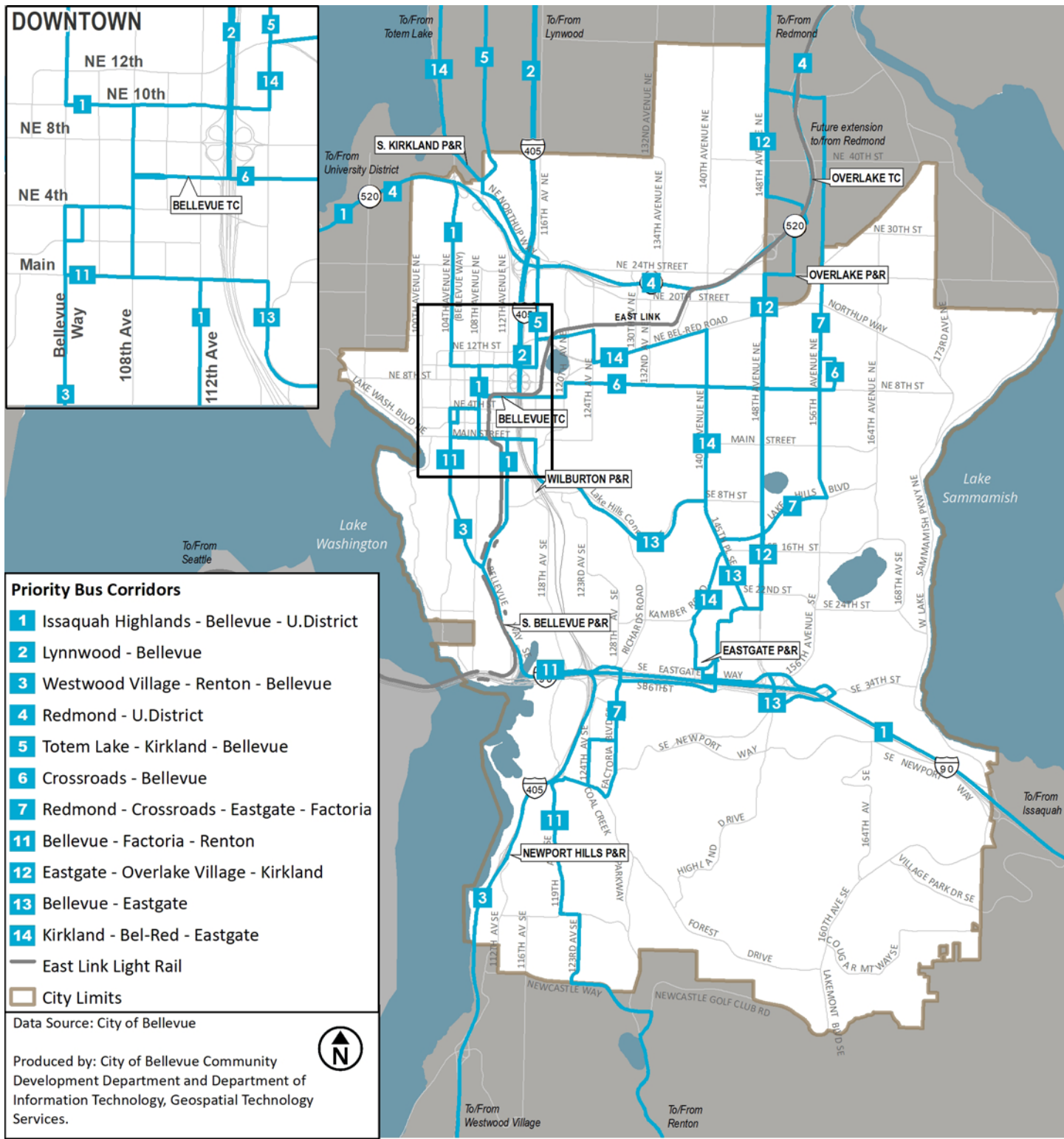
The map shows existing transit centers, publicly-owned park and rides, bus bases, direct access ramps, and high occupancy vehicle lanes. Existing transit routes and schedules can be found at the King County Metro and Sound Transit web sites. Park-and-ride lots on leased property are not shown.





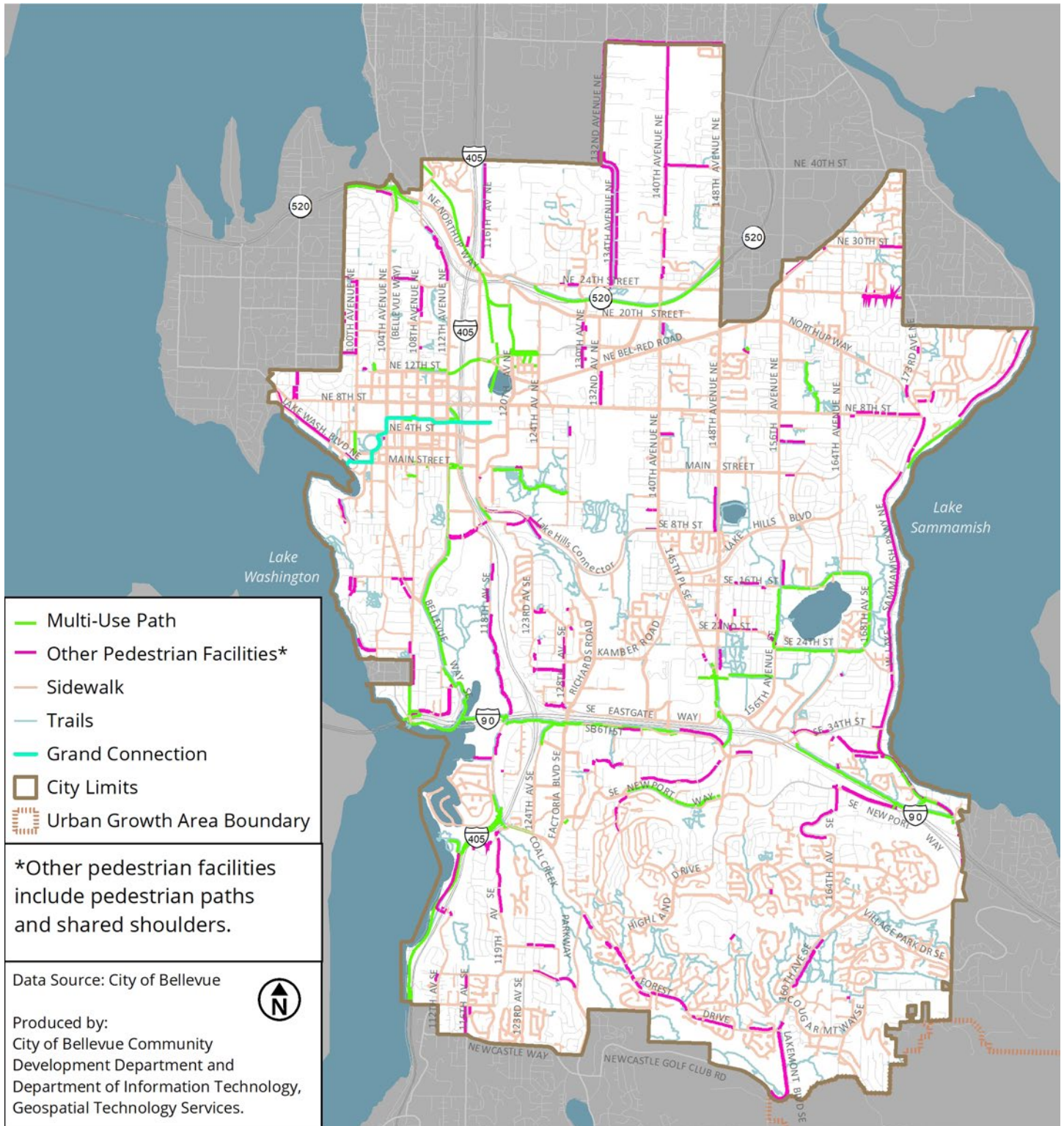
# Map TR-4. Frequent Transit Network

This map shows the network of frequent transit service routes that would exist under the 2030 Growing Resources Scenario as described in the Bellevue 2014 Transit Master Plan.



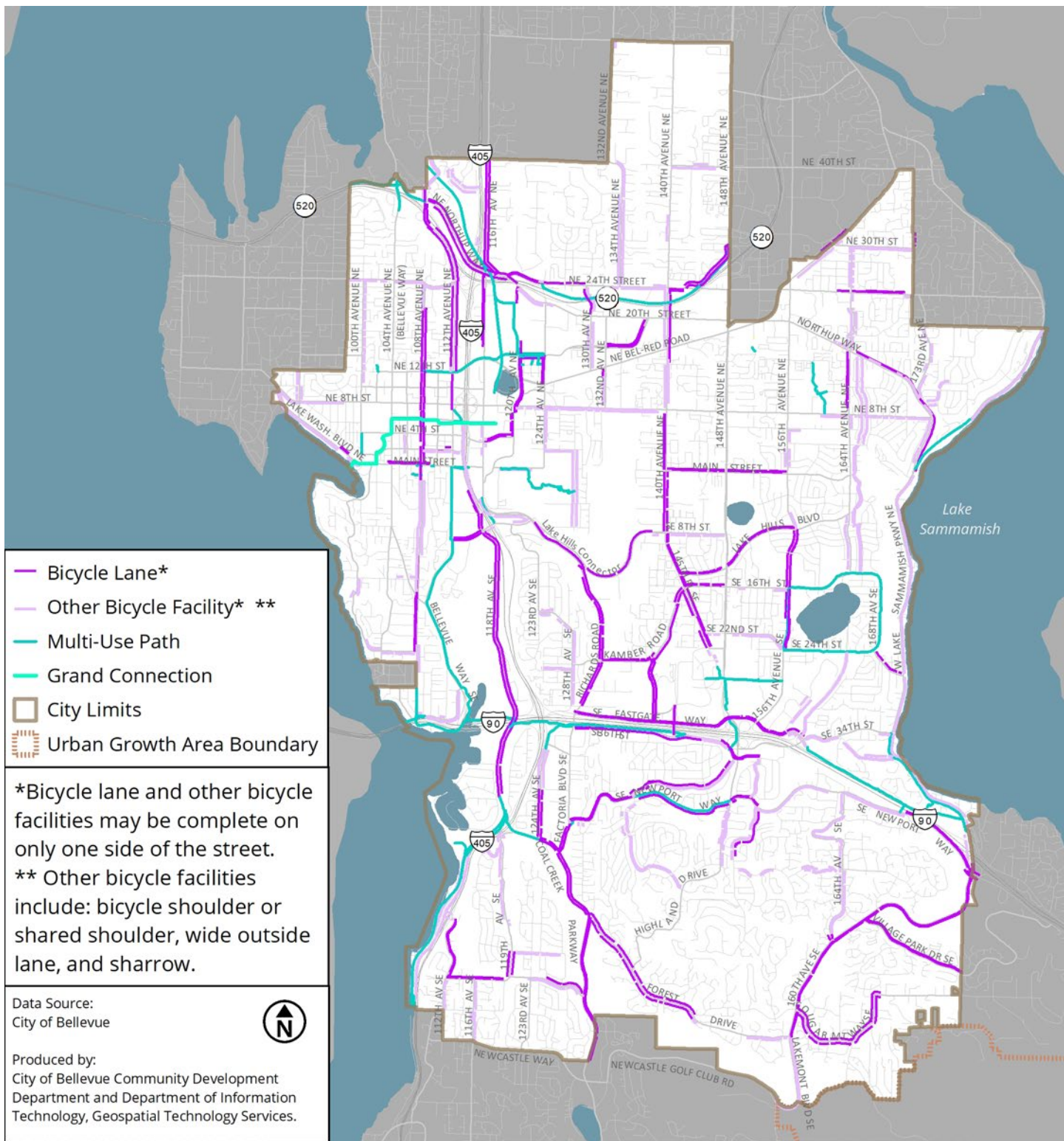
## Map TR-5. Pedestrian Facilities

This map shows existing sidewalks, multi-purpose paths and trails that comprise the existing pedestrian network in Bellevue. Please refer to the Bellevue Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan for projects that would add to existing facilities.



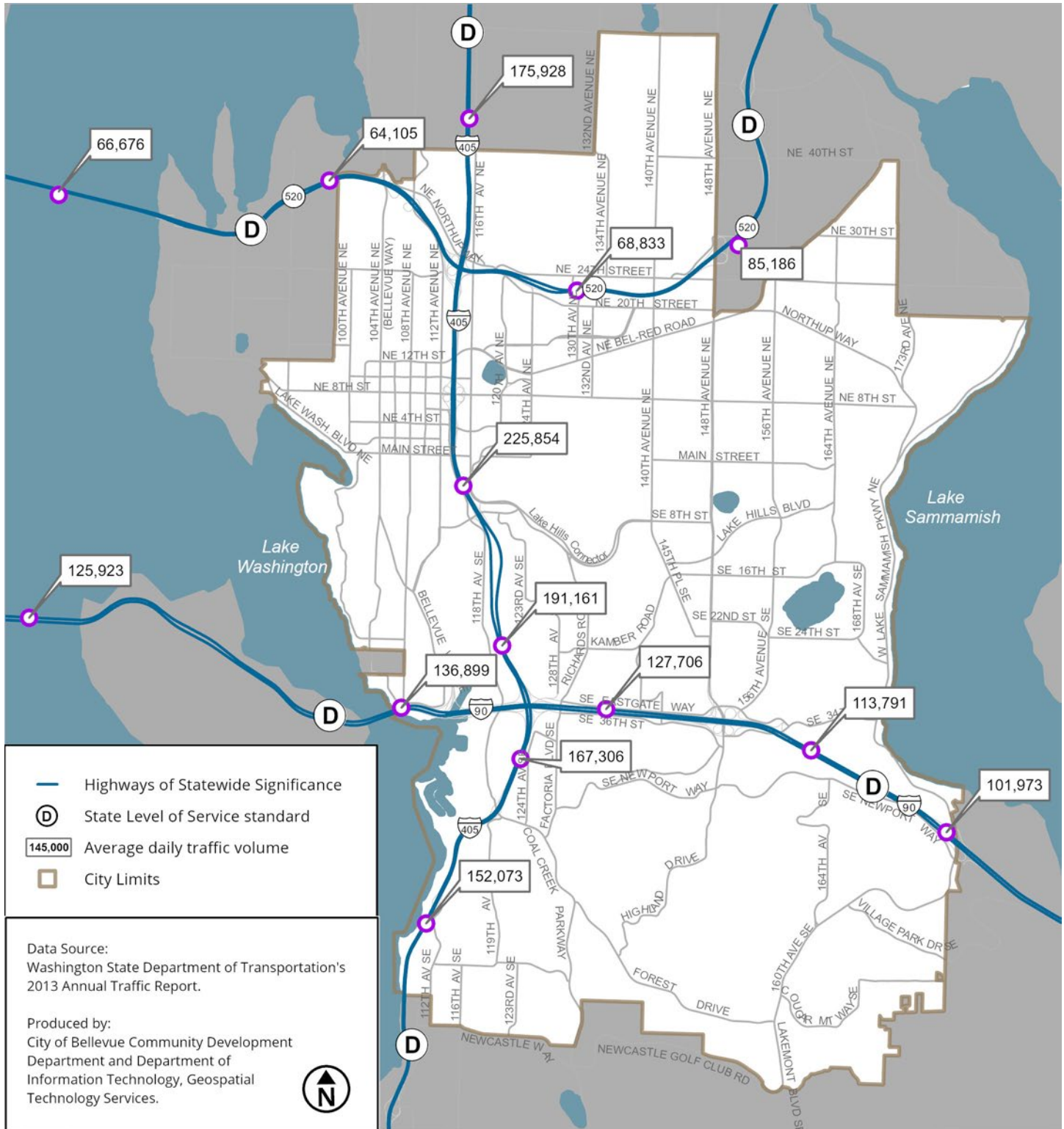
### Map TR-6. Bicycle Facilities

This map shows existing bicycle lanes, shared shoulders, wide lanes, shared lanes and multi-purpose paths that comprise the existing bike network in Bellevue. Please refer to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan for projects that would add to existing facilities.



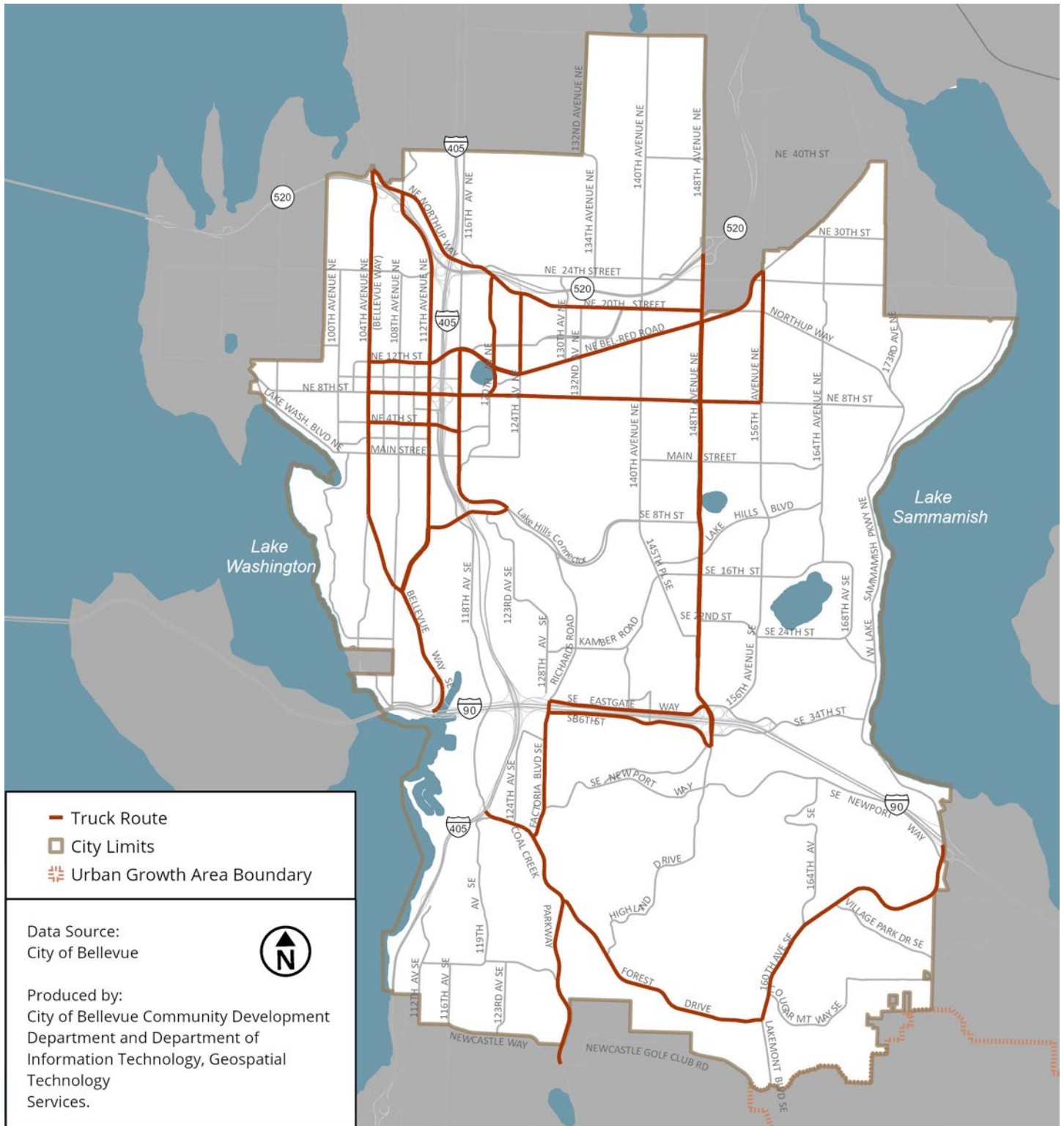
## Map TR-7. Highways of Statewide Significance

This map shows highways of statewide significance designated by Washington State Department of Transportation. Included are the state level of service standards (D) for these facilities and average daily traffic volumes in 2013.



## Map TR-8. Truck Routes

This map shows designated truck routes in Bellevue and their relationship to other arterials and freeways. Truck routes are established via City Ordinance 3692 as amended.



## GOALS & POLICIES

### Goals

To scope, plan, design, implement, operate, maintain and enhance a comprehensive multimodal transportation system to serve all members of the community.

To improve all mobility options so that everyone in Bellevue has a safe, comfortable, and efficient experience on their preferred mode, while encouraging and transitioning to more environmentally and fiscally sustainable modes.

### Policies

#### Transportation and Land Use

- TR-1.** Integrate land use and transportation planning and decisions to support the Comprehensive Plan.
- TR-2.** Direct transportation investments and services to support the designated Urban Center and the Countywide Centers identified in the Countywide Planning Policies.
- TR-3.** Incorporate transit-supportive and pedestrian-oriented design features in new development through development review.

#### Transportation Demand Management

- TR-4.** Establish targets to increase the proportion of commute trips by non-drive-alone mode.
- TR-5.** Periodically evaluate progress toward mode share targets and adjust programs and activities as needed to achieve them.
- TR-6.** Coordinate with other Eastside jurisdictions, the private sector, educational institutions and transit service providers to develop and implement uniform or compatible transportation demand management regulations and strategies that address factors such as the following:
  1. Parking management;
  2. Assistance to facilitate and increase the use of transit, carpooling, vanpooling, active transportation and flexible work schedules;
  3. Other transportation demand management program elements, including marketing, outreach and incentives; and
  4. Reporting, monitoring and performance evaluation standards.
- TR-7.** Require large employers to implement a commute trip reduction program for employees, as mandated by the state Commute Trip Reduction law, and evaluate program effectiveness on a regular basis.

- TR-8.** Encourage employers to reduce peak period commute trips by facilitating employees' use of telework, flexible work hours, compressed work week schedules, and other scheduling options.
- TR-9.** Maintain a comprehensive and effective transportation demand management program for city employees, to set an example for other employers.
- TR-10.** Promote use of mobility options by requiring new development to incorporate design features such as:
1. Preferential parking for carpools and vanpools;
  2. Special loading and unloading facilities for carpools and vanpools;
  3. Transit passenger facilities, including comfortable and safe bus stops and waiting areas that may be integrated in the building design; and
  4. Secure and covered bicycle parking, showers, lockers and related facilities to support bicycle commuters.
- TR-11.** Require new developments that place significant impacts on the transportation system to implement transportation management programs to reduce drive-alone commute trips to the site.
- TR-12.** Provide outreach and assistance to increase awareness and use of alternatives to driving alone for all types and purposes of trips.
- TR-13.** Evaluate and facilitate car-sharing and micromobility-sharing programs.
- TR-14.** Support federal and state tax policies that promote transit use and ridesharing.
- TR-15.** Facilitate small employers and property managers in providing programs to reduce drive-alone commute trips by employees and building occupants through marketing, outreach and assistance activities.
- TR-16.** Support the establishment and operation of transportation management associations as effective partners in advancing the goal and strategies of travel demand management.

## Mobility Management and Technology

- TR-17.** Scope, plan, design, implement, operate and maintain a complete and multimodal transportation network in accordance with the Performance Metrics, Performance Targets and Performance Management Areas as established in the Mobility Implementation Plan.
- TR-18.** Ensure that the transportation network infrastructure in Bellevue provides mobility options for all modes and accommodates the mobility needs of everyone, including underserved populations.
- TR-19.** Ensure that the transportation network infrastructure in Bellevue provides mobility options for all modes, and accommodates the mobility needs of everyone, including underserved populations.

- TR-20.** Aggressively plan, manage and expand transportation investments to reduce congestion and expand mobility opportunities in a multimodal and comprehensive manner and improve the quality of the travel experience for all users.
- TR-21.** Design and develop arterial improvements, including added vehicular capacity, transit facilities and non-motorized active transportation components, to serve citywide travel demand generated by the increases in density in the land use plans, in addition to citywide and regional travel demand.
- TR-22.** Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements into roadway projects to provide complete and connected active transportation networks.
- TR-23.** Incorporate transit/high-occupancy vehicle facility improvements in accordance with the Transit Master Plan and the Mobility Implementation Plan.
- TR-24.** Increase connectivity and system completeness for all transportation modes to create a Complete Streets arterial network.
- TR-25.** Design, implement and maintain transportation system improvements and deliver transportation services and programs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- TR-26.** Employ a citywide multimodal level-of-service concurrency standard that provides a supply of transportation facilities that meets the demand from new development.
- TR-27.** Monitor and document transportation system performance in accordance with the Mobility Implementation Plan.
- TR-28.** Engage the community to evaluate and modify the Mobility Implementation Plan as needed, in concert with each periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan, or as warranted by changed circumstances.
- TR-29.** Evaluate the performance of all modes and engage the community to identify projects, priorities, programs and resources to meet Complete Streets goals and the Mobility Implementation Plan Performance Targets through updates to the Transportation Facilities Plan.
- TR-30.** Plan for and prioritize transportation system projects to support land use and to address Performance Target gaps in each update of the Transportation Facilities Plan.
- TR-31.** Monitor and implement as appropriate, emerging technologies that are intended to improve mobility, safety, efficiency and people-moving capacity on existing and planned transportation network facilities.
- TR-32.** Design, maintain, and protect the transportation network to be resilient to disaster and impacts related to climate change.
- TR-33.** Design curb uses, curb typologies and modal priorities.
- TR-34.** Consider implementation of a pay-for curb use program.



- TR-35.** Identify and create regulated passenger loading zones for taxi and rideshare use, primarily within the Type 1 Performance Management Area as defined in the Mobility Implementation Plan.
- TR-36.** Promote the use of innovative curb technology solutions that enhance safety and efficiency of the curbside environment.
- TR-37.** Consider creating designated curbside zones to allow for vendor and food truck activity.
- TR-38.** Consider creating activated curbside zones, such as on-street dining areas, parklets and other placemaking solutions.
- TR-39.** Develop and implement a curb management plan that designates a curb typology, established a pay-for curb use program recommendation, facilitates dynamic curbside management and accounts for various movement, access, and placemaking functionalities.

## Regional Transportation Coordination

- TR-40.** Work actively and cooperatively with other Eastside jurisdictions regional and state agencies and transit service providers to plan, design, fund and construct regional transportation projects that support the city's Comprehensive Plan.
- TR-41.** Develop the transportation system in a manner that supports the regional land use and transportation vision adopted in VISION 2050, the 2022-2050 Regional Transportation Plan and the Countywide Planning policies for King County.
- TR-42.** Utilize the Eastside Transportation Program Partnership as a forum for the planning, funding, and coordination of transportation system improvements that involve multiple jurisdictions.
- TR-43.** Inform, consult with, and otherwise involve other affected jurisdictions in the city's transportation planning efforts.
- TR-44.** Cooperate with other jurisdictions to resolve mutual land use and transportation concerns.
- TR-45.** Provide an arterial system, and encourage the state to provide a freeway system, that together support local and regional mobility and land use plans.

## Streets

- TR-46.** Employ intelligent transportation system technology and infrastructure to support the efficient movement of people and vehicles throughout the city.
- TR-47.** Classify city streets according to their function, so that needed mobility capacity may be preserved, and planned street improvements will be consistent with those functions.
- TR-48.** Provide sufficient arterial rights-of-way or obtain easements to provide space for street trees and landscaping, and to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle facilities, while considering the visual and functional continuity of the corridor.

- TR-49.** Design arterials and streets to fit the intended character of the areas through which they pass.
- TR-50.** Maintain and enhance safety for all users of the street network.
- TR-51.** Ensure that maintenance of the existing transportation network facilities be given priority consideration.
- TR-52.** Maintain a collision reduction program to identify high collision locations, evaluate and prioritize potential safety improvements and implement recommended changes.
- TR-53.** Provide street lighting where needed and appropriate based on neighborhood context to improve visibility and safety while minimizing light/glare spillover.
- TR-54.** Minimize the number of driveways along arterials to improve the pedestrian and bicycle environment and to reduce the potential for collisions.
- TR-55.** Ensure that city street improvements do not create a bypass for regional traffic that would adversely affect residential neighborhoods.
- TR-56.** Assess arterial speed limits and address concerns related to safety through appropriate speed limits, countermeasures and other techniques.
- TR-57.** Allow for repurposing of travel lanes for other uses such as parking, transit or pedestrian and bicycle facilities where excess vehicular capacity exists at peak periods and/or to optimize person throughput along a corridor following a comprehensive technical analysis and exploration of other options.
- TR-58.** Strive to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries on Bellevue streets by 2030 in accordance with the Vision Zero Strategic Plan.
- TR-59.** Update Vision Zero Action Plans annually to systemically and holistically address safety challenges using the Safe System Approach.
- TR-60.** Advance Vision Zero by implementing Safe Streets strategies that enable and encourage safe behaviors by design.

## Transit

- TR-61.** Implement the Bellevue Transit Master Plan in collaboration with transit service providers and other partners to ensure that transit is an easy and attractive mobility option for those who live, work, visit, learn or do business in Bellevue.
- TR-62.** Support planned growth and development with a bold transit vision that provides efficient, useful, attractive service for most people, to most destinations, most of the time, serving maximum ridership.
- TR-63.** Work with transit providers to enhance a frequent transit network that provides connections within Bellevue, to the greater Eastside and to regional destinations.
- TR-64.** Support a frequent transit network in Bellevue that serves mobility hubs and population and employment centers with reliable commuter and all-day service and seamless interface between transit routes, East Link and other modes.

- TR-65.** Work with transit providers to create, maintain and enhance a system of transit-supportive facilities and amenities.
- TR-66.** Coordinate with private developers and transit providers to integrate transit passenger information and facilities, pedestrian connections and weather protection and bicycle access and parking into new development and redevelopment.
- TR-67.** Integrate safe pedestrian and bicycle access to transit in collaboration with transit service providers and private-sector developers.
- TR-68.** Ensure that transit services and facilities in Bellevue and the Eastside are high priorities for regional system plans and improvements consistent with the Bellevue Transit Master Plan.
- TR-69.** Work with transit providers to maintain and expand frequent and reliable transit service in Bellevue to support community needs, the city's land use plans and mode share targets.
- TR-70.** Implement infrastructure and technology to support reliable transit arrival time and travel speed along the Frequent Transit Network between Activity Centers.
- TR-71.** Identify and preserve necessary right-of-way for transit facilities in collaboration with transit service providers.
- TR-72.** Develop and maintain safe and convenient active transportation access to transit stops and stations, through shared responsibility with transit providers and private-sector developers.
- TR-73.** Facilitate safe intermodal transfers and increased access to transit in mobility hubs through partnerships with public transit service providers and shuttle services.
- TR-74.** Develop and implement, in conjunction with the transit providers, an integrated way-finding system to facilitate transit ridership that incorporates principles of universal design and uses multiple languages.
- TR-75.** Collaborate with employer-based and other private transit service providers to ensure that these services are integrated into the transit service planning and curb management practices.
- TR-76.** Create mobility hubs in alignment with King County Planning Policy guidance.
- TR-77.** Work with transit providers to ensure that high capacity transit service supports Bellevue's role as a Regional Growth Center with frequent, reliable transit service to population and employment centers within the city, and providing direct transit connections to Eastside cities and the region.
- TR-78.** Collaborate with transit service providers to expand high capacity transit to advance the city's long-term transportation and land use objectives, minimize environmental and residential impacts and optimizes regional system ridership and performance.

- TR-79.** Provide ample opportunity for meaningful, comprehensive, cooperative community involvement, coordinated with the transit providers to help shape the ultimate configuration and operation of any high capacity transit system.
- TR-80.** Ensure that light rail adds new travel capacity within its own right-of-way, rather than replacing existing travel lane capacity, in order to maximize speed and reliability for light rail while minimizing impacts to other modes.
- TR-81.** Support plans by transit service providers to connect Bellevue, Seattle, Kirkland and Issaquah with high-capacity transit service that optimizes convenience for riders.
- TR-82.** Collaborate with transit service providers to plan for and implement high capacity transit service within Bellevue in a manner that advances the adopted land use vision.
- TR-83.** Partner with transit providers and work closely with residents, businesses and other stakeholders in the design, security, maintenance and operation of transit stations and facilities to integrate them into the community.
- TR-84.** Implement standards and guidelines to create transit stations that are valued places in the community.
- TR-85.** Work with neighborhood groups, business owners, other stakeholders and transit providers to identify and fund improvements that can be constructed efficiently in conjunction with transit projects.
- TR-86.** Protect residential neighborhoods adjacent to transit facilities from spillover impacts related to construction and operation.
- TR-87.** Maintain and enhance safety when incorporating high capacity transit along Bellevue streets.
- TR-88.** Support transit speed and reliability investments intended to achieve performance targets in the Mobility Implementation Plan, while maintaining capacity for other modes.
- TR-89.** Ensure that agreements with transit providers include elements to provide long-term safety and security, operation and maintenance of stations.
- TR-90.** Develop and implement permit conditions and other agreements with transit providers to develop, monitor, and adapt mitigation measures for the design and construction phases of projects to ensure the continual effectiveness of the measures.
- TR-91.** Collaborate with transit providers to create a construction management plan for all new major transit investments that minimizes the corridor length disrupted by construction at one time and minimizes the time period of disruption.
- TR-92.** Develop and implement an early and ongoing program with transit providers to provide assistance to residents and businesses to address adverse impacts of transit infrastructure construction.
- TR-93.** Minimize disruption and inconvenience of construction staging areas to adjacent

land uses, in collaboration with transit providers.

## Active Transportation

- TR-94.** Promote and facilitate active transportation.
- TR-95.** Incorporate active transportation facilities along with other mobility options in scoping, planning, designing, implementing, operating and maintaining the transportation system.
- TR-96.** Implement the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan and evaluate, describe, and prioritize projects that address Performance Target gaps through the Mobility Implementation Plan.
- TR-97.** Construct, maintain and repair facilities for active transportation in accordance with current standards and guidelines.
- TR-98.** Obtain improvements and easements for active transportation facilities and provide on-site bicycle parking through development review.
- TR-99.** Coordinate with the Washington State Department of Transportation and with neighboring jurisdictions in the planning, design, construction and maintenance of active transportation facilities that pass through Bellevue as part of a regional system.
- TR-100.** Ensure that a safe, permanent and convenient alternative facility is present prior to the permanent vacation of an off-street pedestrian or bicycle facility.
- TR-101.** Consider the personal health benefits and the community environmental benefits of active transportation in project design and funding.
- TR-102.** Promote and support the design, development and use of Eastrail as a regional multimodal facility.
- TR-103.** Provide for current or future multi-modal transportation use and access when considering public and private projects adjacent to and across Eastrail.
- TR-104.** Promote and support the design, development and use of the Grand Connection as a regional active transportation facility.
- TR-105.** Support establishment and operation of a shared micromobility service in Bellevue.
- TR-106.** Improve the opportunities for pedestrians to safely cross streets at intersections and designated mid-block locations.
- TR-107.** Integrate the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway Trail into the I-90 corridor through Bellevue.

## State and Federal Highways and Corridors

- TR-108.** Support and advocate for improved freeway-to-freeway access.
- TR-109.** Support and advocate for the completion of the regional HOV system, including

HOV access to the freeway system and freeway-to-freeway HOV linkages

- TR-110.** Encourage the Washington State Department of Transportation to enhance freeway access to serve Downtown Bellevue, Wilburton, BelRed, Eastgate and Factoria.
- TR-111.** Work with state and regional agencies to ensure adequate capacity for both general purpose and high occupancy vehicle traffic on state highways.
- TR-112.** Work with state agencies to incorporate enhancements to minimize impacts when improving state highways.
- TR-113.** Support transit agencies in developing high-capacity transit facilities and service on I-90, I-405, and SR- 520 that will support planned growth and accommodate anticipated transit ridership.
- TR-114.** Work with the state and other local jurisdictions to coordinate signalization at freeway interchanges.
- TR-115.** Collaborate with partner agencies to include facilities for active transportation when planning, designing and constructing enhancements to I-90, I-405 and SR-520.
- TR-116.** Actively participate in the planning, design and construction of the Eastside Transit and HOV Project on SR-520, including interchange improvements at 124th Avenue NE and the completion of the SR-520 Trail.

## Freight Mobility

- TR-117.** Provide for the needs of freight movement in managing the existing transportation system and developing new facilities.
- TR-118.** Require new development to provide for large-scale freight loading and unloading on-site rather than on the public right-of-way.
- TR-119.** Provide flexible curbside space within public right-of-way to accommodate parcel delivery and passenger loading through development review and curb operation changes.

## Transportation Finance

- TR-120.** Maintain broad-based financing capability to address Mobility Implementation Plan Performance Targets gaps through projects adopted in each update of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the TFP and the CIP.
- TR-121.** Seek broadly-based financing through a mix of funding sources to support the TFP and the CIP through proportional participation from the beneficiaries of the system.
  1. The citywide community;
  2. Existing businesses and property owners; and
  3. New development.

- TR-122.** Support state legislation that preserves or increases state-shared revenues (e.g., gas tax) and retains and develops programs and local authorities (e.g., Public Works Trust Fund, Transportation Improvement Board, motor vehicle excise taxes, transportation benefit districts, etc.) that benefit and support the state, regional and local transportation system.
- TR-123.** Leverage local funding to seek and secure state and federal funds for transportation capital, maintenance, and operations.
- TR-124.** Provide and prioritize transportation funding to address Performance Target gaps for people walking, biking, riding transit, and travelling in a car.
- TR-125.** Use statutorily authorized funding mechanisms available to local governments that are based on the special benefits received by property owners to fund transportation improvements. (e.g.: Local Improvement Districts, Latecomer Agreements, and Special Benefit Offsets).
- TR-126.** Support joint projects, including the contribution of city matching funds, with adjoining cities, King County, the transit providers, or the state, where such partnerships help establish or accelerate projects beneficial to the city.
- TR-127.** Support federal and state gasoline taxes and other funding measures to provide adequate funding for transportation improvements that keep pace with regional and community growth.
- TR-128.** Secure funding to implement transit service and capital facilities.

## Environmental Considerations

- TR-129.** Develop the transportation system in Bellevue to avoid, minimize or mitigate environmental impacts, while addressing long-term transportation and land use objectives.
- TR-130.** Support means to reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled and transportation-source greenhouse gas emissions.
- TR-131.** Add electric vehicle charging stations in designated curbside zones as required through development review.
- TR-132.** Partner with state, county, and local jurisdictions, agencies, and public and private utilities on mobility electrification.
- TR-133.** Incorporate natural drainage practices into transportation infrastructure projects where effective and feasible.

## Residential Safety and Livability

- TR-134.** Preserve the safety and livability of residential streets through an adequately funded neighborhood traffic safety program.
- TR-135.** Consider neighborhood traffic and livability conditions and address potential adverse impacts of public and private projects during the study, planning, design, permit and construction phases.

- TR-136.** Involve affected neighborhoods, residents and other community partners in the planning and design of transportation system improvements.
- TR-137.** Minimize non-residential parking in neighborhoods through residential parking zones and other measures.
- TR-138.** Monitor traffic volume and speed on residential streets and establish appropriate traffic control measures with residents' concurrence.
- TR-139.** Consider the needs of all roadway users when designing and building neighborhood traffic safety projects.
- TR-140.** Employ traffic calming measures that adhere to Vision Zero and Complete Streets principles to slow vehicular travel speed along residential streets and to discourage cut-through traffic.





Photo credit: KC Parks

# Economic Development

## VISION

**Bellevue is a hub for global business and innovation.**

Bellevue’s economic strength is built on the creativity, innovation and hard work of its people. Bellevue works to attract, build and support innovative and entrepreneurial businesses, including small businesses, start-ups and mature businesses, through ensuring that our neighborhoods, cultural amenities, public schools, digital infrastructure, workforce and business climate are among the nation’s best.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCOPE

The Economic Development element is about how the city supports existing businesses and attracts new businesses to the city.

## INTRODUCTION

Bellevue is the second largest employment center in King County, the economic hub of the Eastside and one of the most livable communities in the Northwest. The city's strong local economy is a tremendous asset. It provides economic opportunity for residents, who are able to hold good family-wage jobs in the same community where they live. It has created a series of dynamic commercial areas, a concentration of regional employment and an extraordinary tax base. Bellevue's stable commercial and office base, combined with the highest per-capita taxable retail sales in King County, have allowed the city to deliver high-quality services while keeping taxes low. Bellevue has been able to weather economic downturns, such as the 2009 "Great Recession" and COVID-19 pandemic in part due to its strong and diverse local economy.

To preserve and strengthen the city's position, in 2020 the City Council adopted an updated economic development plan. The economic plan has five desired outcomes:

1. A resilient local economy
2. A strong regional economy
3. Employment opportunities and paths to prosperity for a wide range of residents and workers
4. A supportive and attractive place to do business
5. A sustainable and equitable city

The Economic Development element provides the overall direction to achieve the City's goals for the economy. There are several activities the city engages in to achieve these goals including, fostering a positive business climate, planning for and developing infrastructure to support the economic growth, provide for quality of life and amenities to attract and develop the talent and capitalize on the strengths of an increasingly diverse population to connect Bellevue to the global economy. The city is strategic and focused

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Economic Development Plan contains strategies and actions to help the city achieve its vision of being a vibrant and inclusive global innovation hub fueled by a highly educated, entrepreneurial and diverse workforce. The plan is updated about every five years at the direction of the City Council.

in utilizing limited resources to achieve the highest impact results.

Success will require collaboration with a wide variety of partners to leverage Bellevue's strengths and opportunities, and achieve better outcomes than the city could accomplish alone. Bellevue is a leader and collaborator with others in promoting a sustainable economy that benefits the Eastside and the entire Puget Sound region.

The Economic Development element guides efforts to market the city, offer services to businesses of all sizes and inform citizens and city leaders of the trends and strengths of the local economy. The element also guides decision-making in land use, infrastructure, capital budgeting, regional collaboration, local partnerships and other areas that impact the success of businesses, employees and related services.



# TODAY'S CONDITIONS AND TOMORROW'S PROJECTIONS

## Economic Development Today and Tomorrow

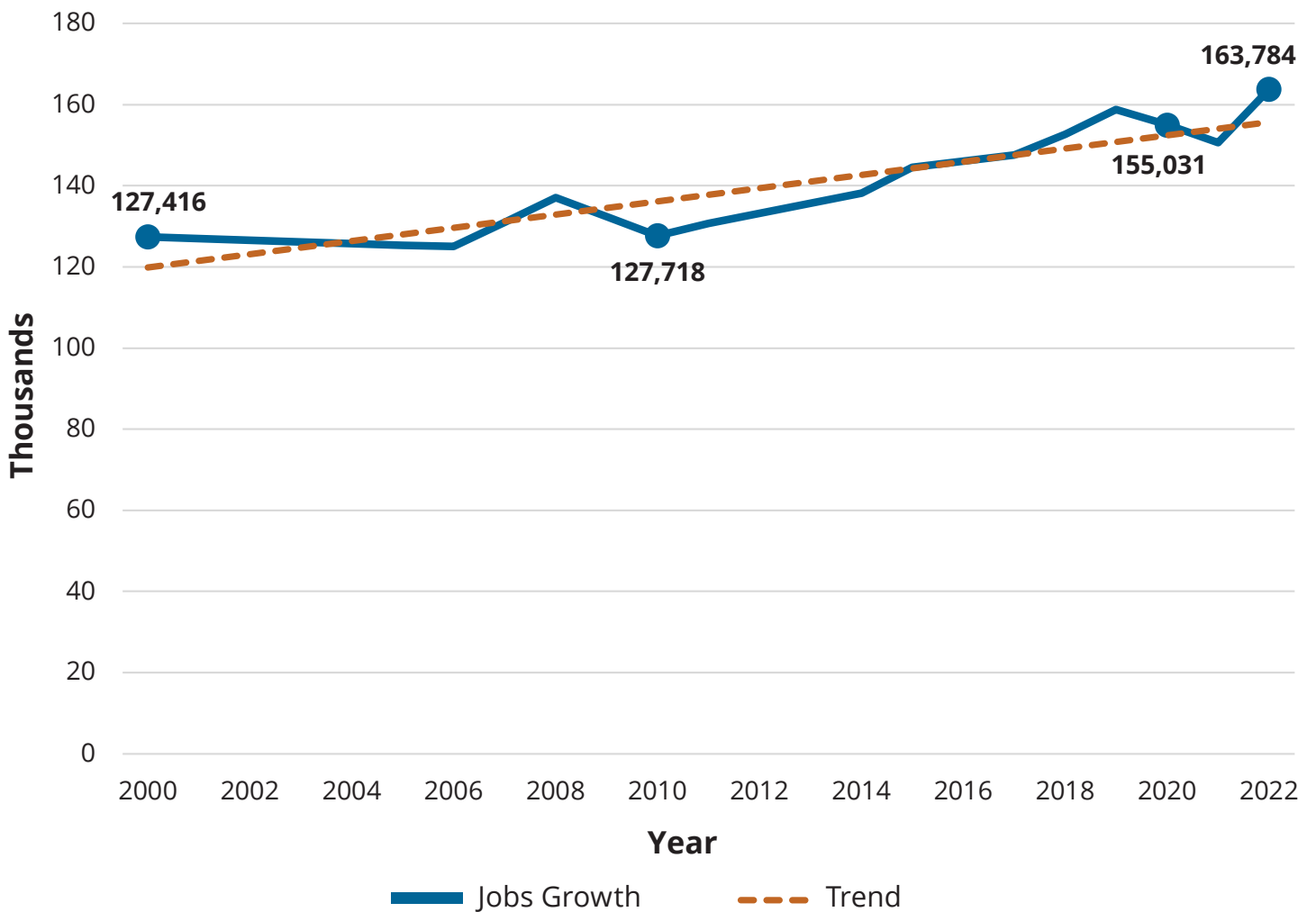
### Trends in Jobs and Business Openings

Bellevue's overall economy has grown rapidly, with an annual employment growth of 2.6 percent between 2012 and 2022 despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. (see Figure ED-1). Proportionally, Bellevue has outpaced the US average and has created more jobs than our peer benchmarked cities on an absolute basis. It is the major employment center on the Eastside.



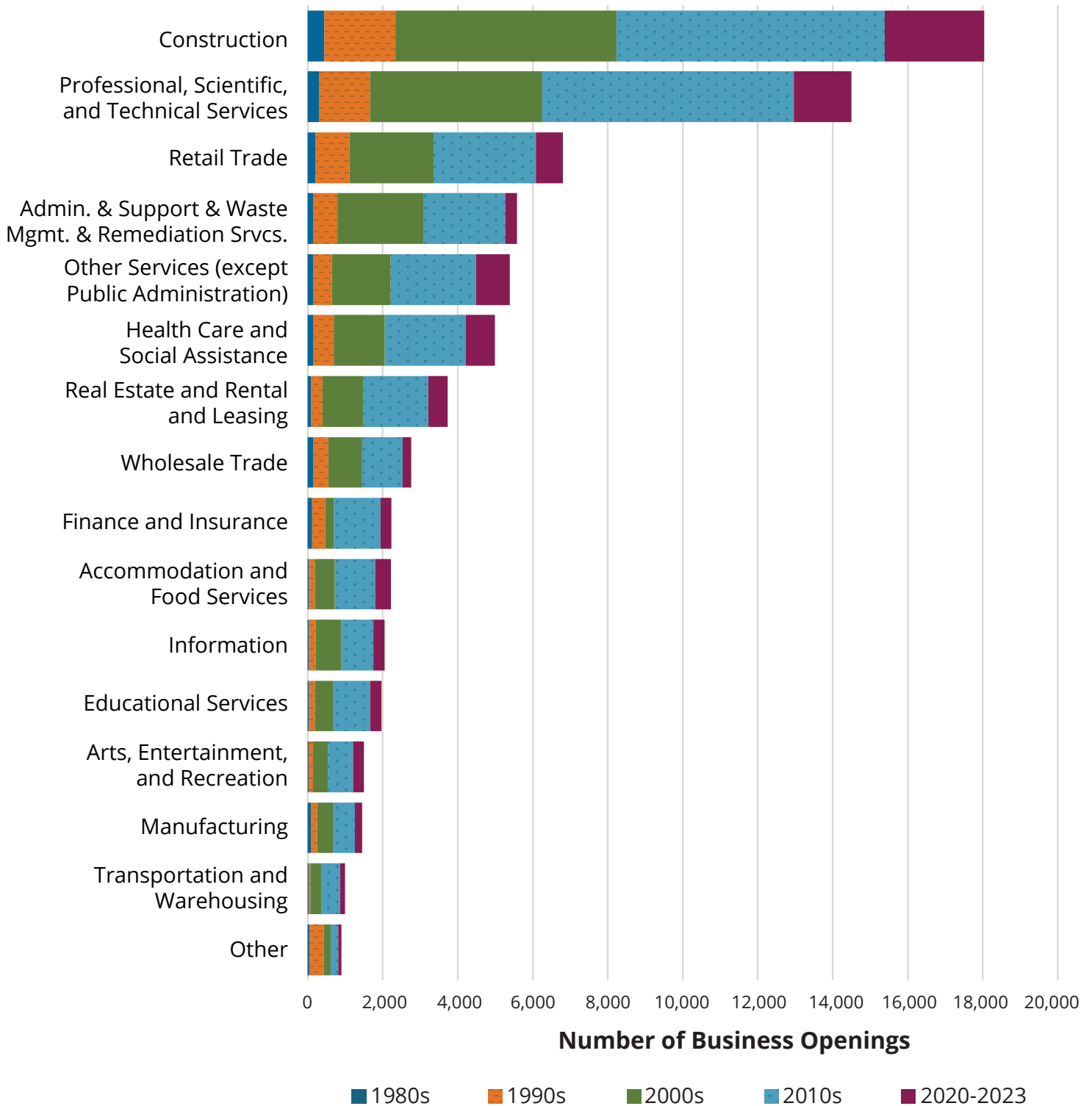
Photo credit: Visit Bellevue, courtesy of Bake's Place

**Figure ED-1. Bellevue Total Employment, 2000 to 2022**



Source: Puget Sound Regional Council. Total Employment.

**Figure ED-2. Past and Projected Business Openings in Bellevue by Decade, 1980-2020**



## Key Industry Sectors

Understanding the major drivers of the local economy will help ensure the city's economic development policies build from local strengths. Five major sectors drive Bellevue's economy: Information Technology, Business Services, Retail, Creative Economy and Tourism. The first two are knowledge-based industries, with particularly strong national and international reaches. As Bellevue grows, diversifying this industry base is a key focus of the city.

### Information Technology

The city's largest industry cluster is Information Technology, which employed 17,193 workers in Bellevue in 2012 and 30,511 in 2020, a growth of approximately 76 percent. This sector is expected to continue to grow, and benefits from a well-educated workforce with professional expertise and cultural diversity. This cluster also had the most business openings of any sector in the last three decades, a trend which is expected to continue.

### Business Services

In the Business Services sector, Finance is the largest sub-cluster, followed by Management Services and Architecture and Engineering. Most sub-clusters were stable in the 2010s. Management Services includes corporate headquarters functions and shows some growth. Bellevue is home to the headquarters for companies such as Paccar, Bungie, Valve, T-Mobile US and Puget Sound Energy.

### Retail

Bellevue is a premier high-end retail destination in the Puget Sound region, generating substantial retail sales from outside the city. This is evidenced by Bellevue's Taxable Retail Sales per capita, which was the highest of any major city in King County in 2022 and nearly twice as high as Seattle's.

### Tourism and Visitors

The local Tourism sector benefits from Bellevue's reputation as a safe, clean city, with excellent high-end shopping, nightlife and restaurants, as well as its central location within the Puget Sound region. Initiatives such as the Grand Connection



and Tourism Promotion Area, and landmark artworks such as Downtown Park's "Piloti" all aim to strengthen Bellevue's status as a destination.

### Creative Economy

The Creative Economy is a driving factor in the continued growth of Bellevue's overall economy and is intertwined with the retention and attraction of innovative companies and a talented workforce. This sector is composed of businesses across the spectrum from digital creative workers and multinational businesses to individual artists and cultural non-profit organizations. Bellevue's creative economy is multifaceted, although heavily concentrated in gaming and technology sectors.

## Challenges and Opportunities

Bellevue is strongly positioned for continued economic vitality but should not take success for granted. The city will need to face key challenges and opportunities as it continues to expand as a regionally and globally competitive city.

### Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurial Development

Innovation and entrepreneurialism are keys to success in the evolving economy, and Bellevue is well positioned to attract and retain the talent that thrives on innovation. The city and community can do more to cultivate an environment that supports entrepreneurialism, to build from the excellent local education system and expand the higher education presence, to recruit innovative companies that are a good fit for Bellevue and to promote affordable and flexible workspaces that attract innovative talent.

### The Built Environment

Bellevue needs diverse business districts and building types to attract new development, adjust to market trends and remain attractive to key industry sectors. The Land Use element, zoning and development regulations work in concert with the Economic Development element to provide for the land use and building types necessary to achieve the city's economic development strategy, within the context of the city's overall land use vision. Moreover, the city will need to ensure the necessary infrastructure is planned, funded and built to support these commercial centers.

### Mobility Challenges

Population, employment and tourism growth have increased the demand for more people moving from place to place. Economic success in Bellevue will require a range of multimodal transportation options that maintain mobility for people and goods. A complete multimodal transportation network requires both local and regional resources to ensure the entire transportation system supports a world-class economy.

### Tourism and Visitor Experiences

While the city has a strong corporate convention market, the city lacks the facilities necessary to host major national or international events. Additionally, while Bellevue is becoming more appealing to leisure travelers, some see it as lacking in unique and memorable visitor experiences.

### Diversity and International Connections

Bellevue has an increasingly diverse population and workforce that mirror the world and attracts some of the best employers in the world. This diversity is a tremendous advantage, giving Bellevue businesses access to worldwide markets and a global workforce. More can be done to build off this advantage and even better position Bellevue as an international gateway.

### Affordable Housing Options and Startup Spaces

Bellevue's shortage of housing options, particularly affordable ones, is widely cited by employers, prospective employees and self-employed business owners like artists as a deterrent to locating in Bellevue. To support a thriving economy, there is a need for housing that serves all income levels with a range of housing options that meet their needs. Promoting housing affordability will continue to be a challenge as the economy grows. Affordable housing is also addressed in the Housing element.

Affordable start-up space, particularly for arts non-profits and creative economy startups, is an ongoing challenge. Rapid development will continue in many of the centers where rents for these uses have been historically lower, like BelRed. The lack of affordable spaces will continue to push these uses out of Bellevue to more affordable cities in the region, impacting the livability and attractiveness of Bellevue and the potential of its residents and businesses.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY SUMMARY

### Business Climate

Nurturing a solid business climate to support the future economy requires an array of efforts. These include the conventional focus on high quality city services and facilities, a timely and predictable permit process, and a thoughtful tax and fee structure. It also includes efforts to recognize and leverage Bellevue's demographic diversity as a pathway for further development as a global business center; to communicate a solid vision of Bellevue as a leading regional and increasingly global city; and efforts to promote a welcoming climate for entrepreneurs.

### Community Livability

"Livability" – the quality, character and richness of place – has become a key driver of the economic competitiveness of cities and regions. High-speed telecommunications allow talented workers and businesses to locate anywhere, increasing the importance of livability factors such as cultural attractions, entertainment, recreational amenities and a high quality built environment.

Creative centers with energetic and talented workers have performed well in the information

economy. Bellevue's Downtown has a culture of creativity and innovation, and is a regional destination that attracts visitors, businesses and residents. These policies also inform the planning for the BelRed Arts district and regional tourism outside of Downtown as well.

### Planning and Infrastructure

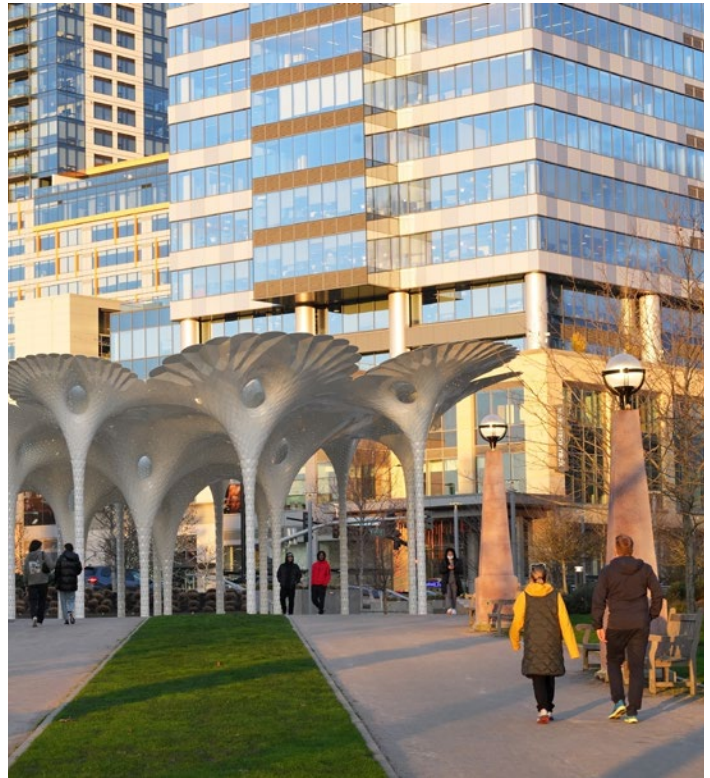
The city helps provide the physical foundation for development by establishing a vision for land use driven by residents and businesses, and by implementing regulations and incentives to help move the vision forward. The city also makes the necessary public infrastructure investments to support the desired land use and prepare the way for economic activity. Thus, the city's infrastructure funding and development efforts are directly linked to and are a critical part of economic development. Likewise, the city encourages private sector investment in infrastructure, encouraging leading edge technologies in rapidly evolving functions such as telecommunications. The city can also help areas adjust to changing market conditions. By doing this well, Bellevue is able to attract and retain desired types of economic development while protecting neighborhoods from the impacts of unplanned growth.

## Education

Education plays a huge role in the Bellevue economy, which is heavily driven by information technology and technical and professional services. Bellevue schools are known as some of the best in the country, and are a strong attractor for local businesses and talent. Exceptional education for Bellevue's children benefits families today and also prepares the next generation of workers to build and maintain a vibrant, innovative and creative economy.

Economic policies also recognize the opportunities created by strengthening Bellevue's higher education sector. A strong higher education sector has the potential for direct economic stimulus in the form of education jobs and funding for research and development. More importantly, growth in higher education will help catalyze Bellevue as a center for research and innovation.

A commitment to lifelong learning also drives innovation and makes it possible to strengthen and diversify the existing workforce while attracting talented new workers. By promoting educational opportunities for residents and workers of all ages and backgrounds, the city lays the foundation for a resilient local economy that continues to attract and nurture outstanding talent.



## Implementation of Economic Development Strategies

Economic development is a dynamic field, and to remain competitive Bellevue needs to stay ahead of change. Policies call for the city to regularly update the Economic Development Plan to ensure it is forward-looking and focused, and that the city monitor its effectiveness and make adjustments as needed. Policies further call for the city to use a full array of approaches, including regulations, incentives, information, business assistance services and strategic infrastructure investments to support the city's adopted plans.

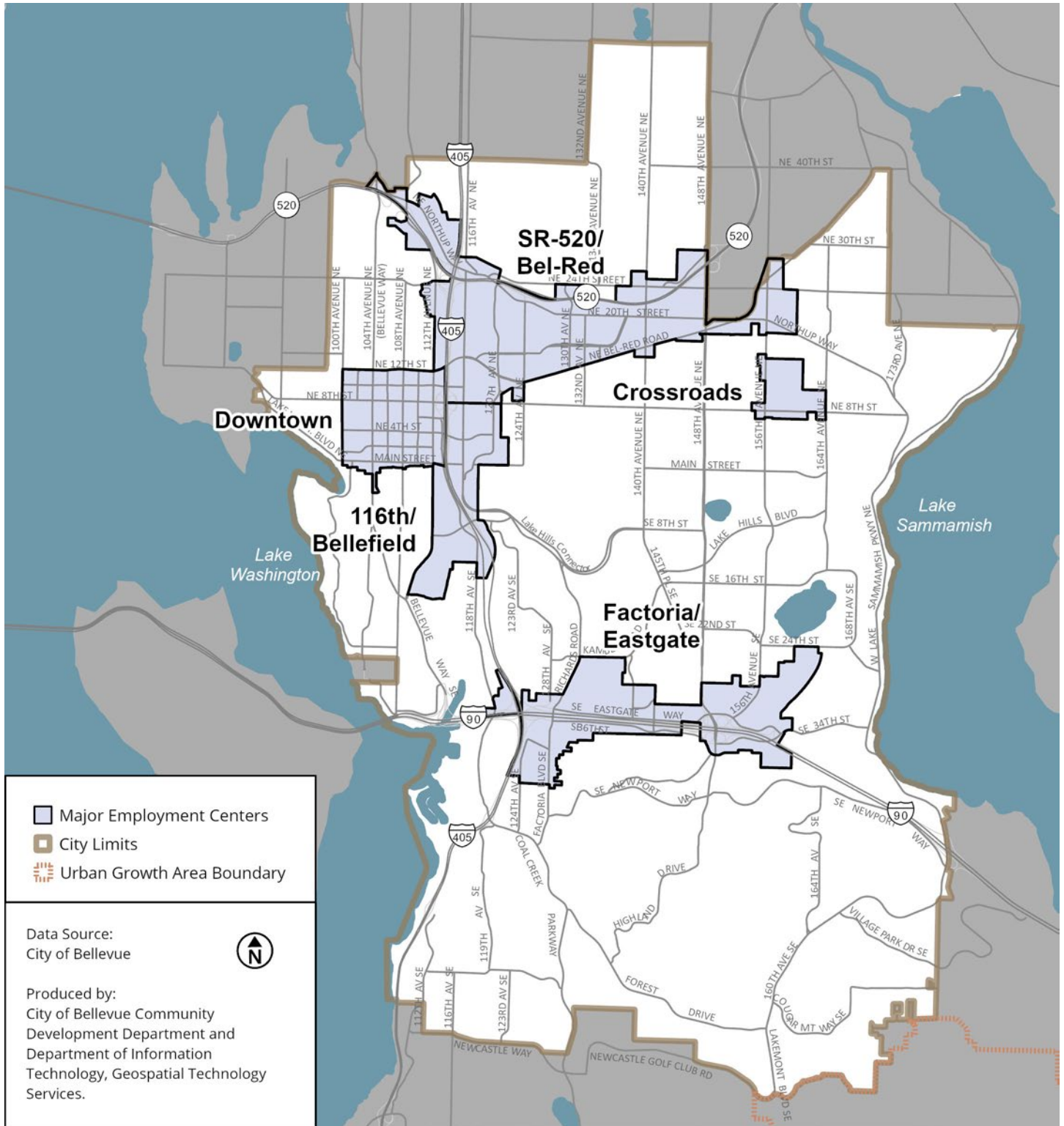
This element also places an emphasis on coordination and collaboration with local and regional bodies, as well as economic agencies, to achieve shared outcomes. Many issues that are critical to economic development will require regional, state or national solutions and collaboration will produce greater outcomes than could be achieved by working alone.





## Map ED-1. Major Employment Centers

Bellevue’s Major Employment Centers are the centers of commercial activity. They also are centers for an increasing number of housing units as well.



## GOAL & POLICIES

### Goal

To support a strong local economy with opportunities for all to prosper consistent with a high quality of life and a sustainable natural environment.

### Policies

#### Business Climate

- ED-1.** Maintain a business climate that supports the retention and expansion of the city's economic base.
- ED-2.** Promote local businesses and locally-produced goods and services.
- ED-3.** Continue to provide high quality and cost efficient city services and facilities consistent with the community's priorities and growth, and promote these as one of Bellevue's outstanding economic development assets.
- ED-4.** Maintain Bellevue's competitive advantage and attraction as a highly connected community.
- ED-5.** Foster business innovation through business development strategies and promoting digital infrastructure.
- ED-6.** Develop and maintain regulations that support continued equitable, environmentally sustainable economic growth.
- ED-7.** Provide an efficient, streamlined, timely, predictable and customer-focused permit process, conducted in a manner that integrates multiple city departments into a coordinated entity.
- ED-8.** Balance the impacts of the city's policies regarding taxes, fees and utility rates on Bellevue's economic development goals with the maintenance of high quality services, and the financial health of city government.
- ED-9.** Recognize and consider the economic and environmental impacts of proposed legislative actions prior to adoption.
- ED-10.** Work with the business community and residential interests to promote community interests and to address differences in a manner that minimizes conflict.
- ED-11.** Build on the strengths of Bellevue's diverse residents and businesses to increase connections and relationships with other countries as Bellevue develops into an increasingly global business center.
- ED-12.** Provide city leadership and direction to maximize the business retention and recruitment efforts in partnership with Bellevue's economic development partners.
- ED-13.** Communicate Bellevue's vision as a leading regional employment and activity center, as a visitor destination and as a leading global city. Communicate this image within the region, nationally and internationally.

- ED-14.** Communicate on an on-going basis with the private sector to help guide the City's marketing and development efforts.
- ED-15.** Inventory, evaluate and strengthen capacity-building programs to support Bellevue based cultural organizations and artists.

## Community Livability

- ED-16.** Strengthen the city's assets in urban amenities such as arts and culture venues, open space and recreational facilities, and high quality urban design as an explicit component of the city's economic development strategy.
- ED-17.** Encourage high quality design and urban amenities for public and private development, maintaining development standards to recognize that a quality built environment helps attract the talented workers who will sustain economic growth.
- ED-18.** Facilitate development of a range of housing opportunities to accommodate Bellevue's growing workforce. See also the Housing element for policies related to housing.
- ED-19.** Develop an environment that fosters equity and accessibility for all.
- ED-20.** Promote opportunities for all Bellevue residents by encouraging employers to hire people with disabilities.
- ED-21.** Emphasize economic development of Downtown as a major regional economic center, retail and visitor destination.
- ED-22.** Strengthen destination retail as an engine of economic activity and a magnet for visitors.
- ED-23.** Support economic development in the city's commercial areas.
- ED-24.** Support efforts that promote tourism, hotel, retail and arts businesses.
- ED-25.** Emphasize the value of a range of commercial centers to provide opportunities for a diverse range of businesses.
- ED-26.** Cultivate development of diverse, distinctive, well-defined places that invite community activity, gathering and connection. Allow for flexibility to repurpose and re-use a variety of building types to accommodate new uses.
- ED-27.** Target investments in public infrastructure that may help catalyze new private sector investment, prioritizing investments that increase economic resilience.
- ED-28.** Where a commercial revitalization effort involves significant changes to plans and regulations that may impact a residential neighborhood, develop strategies to balance impacts with benefits.

## Education

- ED-29.** Encourage the continued investment in higher education and training at institutions such as Bellevue College that benefits local businesses, residents and workforce.

- ED-30.** Support a high-quality primary, secondary and post-secondary public education system in Bellevue.
- ED-31.** Encourage life-long learning opportunities for all.
- ED-32.** Facilitate connections between businesses and institutions to train workers for current and future workforce demands.
- ED-33.** Support continuing education via educational opportunities, apprenticeships, internships, certifications and other methods of upskilling and reskilling.
- ED-34.** Work with education providers and private industry to create a permanent presence for a four-year research institution in Bellevue.

## Planning and Infrastructure

- ED-35.** Maintain and update integrated land use and transportation plans to guide the future of the city's major commercial areas and help them respond to change.
- ED-36.** Identify, construct and maintain infrastructure systems and facilities required to promote and sustain a positive economic climate. Anticipate needs and coordinate city infrastructure investments with economic development opportunities.
- ED-37.** Maintain and improve communications, electric utility and other infrastructure needed to support the city's economic needs and growth.
- ED-38.** Facilitate private sector efforts to implement leading edge technology, including communication technology, throughout the community.
- ED-39.** Promote and nurture entrepreneurial development in Bellevue by retaining and creating areas where small or emerging businesses can develop and flourish.

See also Utilities policies related to non city-managed utilities, [UT-44](#) to [UT-96](#).

## Economic Implementation

- ED-40.** Maintain and regularly update the Economic Development Plan to ensure the city's focus areas and goals are forward-looking and targeted while being flexible enough to be able to respond to market changes.
- ED-41.** Use a variety of tools and partnerships to catalyze private sector investment in line with the city's economic development and land use vision.
- ED-42.** Facilitate economic development through public-private partnerships consistent with the city's adopted policies and balancing public benefits with an acceptable level of risk.
- ED-43.** Use economic monitoring to assist the city and businesses to advance the city's economic development objectives.
- ED-44.** Coordinate with local and regional partners to develop and implement shared economic development policies.

- ED-45.** Collect, analyze and disseminate information to identify and manage economic trends.
- ED-46.** Support new, relocating or expanding businesses in finding and securing space within the city.
- ED-47.** Identify areas at risk of business displacement and the space needs of those businesses and work to find or develop alternative space within the city.



# Climate and Environment

## VISION

Bellevue embraces its stewardship of the environment by protecting and enhancing natural systems, accelerating decarbonization and clean energy, addressing the impacts of climate change and building for a sustainable future.

As growth and development occurs, Bellevue is working to build a greener, more sustainable and climate resilient future for generations to come. New buildings and infrastructure are designed to have a positive impact on the environment and to protect and even restore natural systems. The community highly values and celebrates the results, such as reduced energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, cleaner air, increased tree canopy and more salmon in local streams.

## CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT SCOPE

The Climate and Environment element is about how the city restores, protects and enhances Bellevue's built and natural environment to increase resiliency and sustainability and address the impacts of climate change.



## INTRODUCTION

The City of Bellevue has long been known as a “City in a Park.” Located between the shores of Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish, Bellevue contains unique, environmentally sensitive wetlands and urban forests that provide amenities for residents and key habitat corridors for wildlife. Bellevue is also a rapidly growing and urbanizing city, known as a regionally important jobs center, retail and tourism destination and home to diverse cultural attractions.

Like all cities in our region, Bellevue also faces worsening and accelerating impacts from climate change, while working to mitigate and repair existing environmental damage. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing citywide resilience to climate impacts and protecting and enhancing Bellevue’s urban ecosystems require the coordinated efforts of government, businesses and the community. The City of Bellevue serves as chief steward of the city’s environment and assumes responsibility for the implementation of federal and state environment statutes, such as stormwater management and critical areas protection. Through regulations programs and incentives, the city encourages the preservation, restoration and improvement of the natural environment in an urban setting.

## ENHANCING OUR “CITY IN A PARK”

Bellevue’s park-like setting is a defining characteristic of the city and is created by more than open spaces, ball fields and playgrounds. As a “City in a Park,” Bellevue is made up of streams and lakes that are home to protected species of fish and other aquatic life; dense forests of madrona, cedar and Douglas fir trees where hundreds of species of birds and even large mammals can thrive; unique wetlands that provide peacefulness and recreation and a balanced web of ecosystem functions. These valuable environmental resources exist across multiple land use classifications and therefore require a restoration approach that prioritizes involvement from diverse stakeholders and takes advantage of opportunities for public-private partnership.

To address climate change and preserve Bellevue’s “City in a Park” character, the city has set ambitious targets to preserve and protect natural systems including our urban forests along with targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing mobility options and electrifying car infrastructure, reducing energy use, transitioning to renewable energy and reducing consumption and waste.

As Bellevue has matured, environmental sustainability and climate resilience have assumed a higher priority in public policy. A community that embraces sustainability must continually improve and adapt its built environment to function within natural limits, while restoring and reconnecting to its natural environment. This includes actions such as:

- Minimizing and eventually eliminating greenhouse gas emissions,
- Investing in the citywide transition to renewable energy sources,
- Minimizing the susceptibility of environmentally sensitive areas to damage and increasing their resilience to future climate impacts,
- Minimizing the rate at which resources are consumed to below the rate at which they can be replenished,
- Minimizing the amount of noise, waste, and emissions generated to what the natural world can absorb without negative impact,
- Maximizing open space, habitat, and opportunities for recreation,
- Increasing communitywide climate resilience, with an emphasis on the most vulnerable populations,
- Improving infrastructure systems to support healthy, sustainable living for people and wildlife.

Bellevue evaluates the impact of administrative and legislative decisions on the urban environment—with particular attention to climate change and impacts on environmentally sensitive areas—and seeks to align and integrate environmental sustainability with its other important responsibilities (for example, public safety, infrastructure needs and economic development). Additionally, Bellevue evaluates its policies and decisions to account for current and future climate change to ensure that growth occurs sustainably and resilience is factored into city decision-making. Bellevue recognizes the



## ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Bellevue has been a leader in supporting the growth of electric vehicle adoption. The City is actively working to expand the number of electric vehicle charging stations throughout the city, ensuring that residents, visitors, employees and the city's own fleet can take advantage of low-cost, zero-emissions forms of transportation.

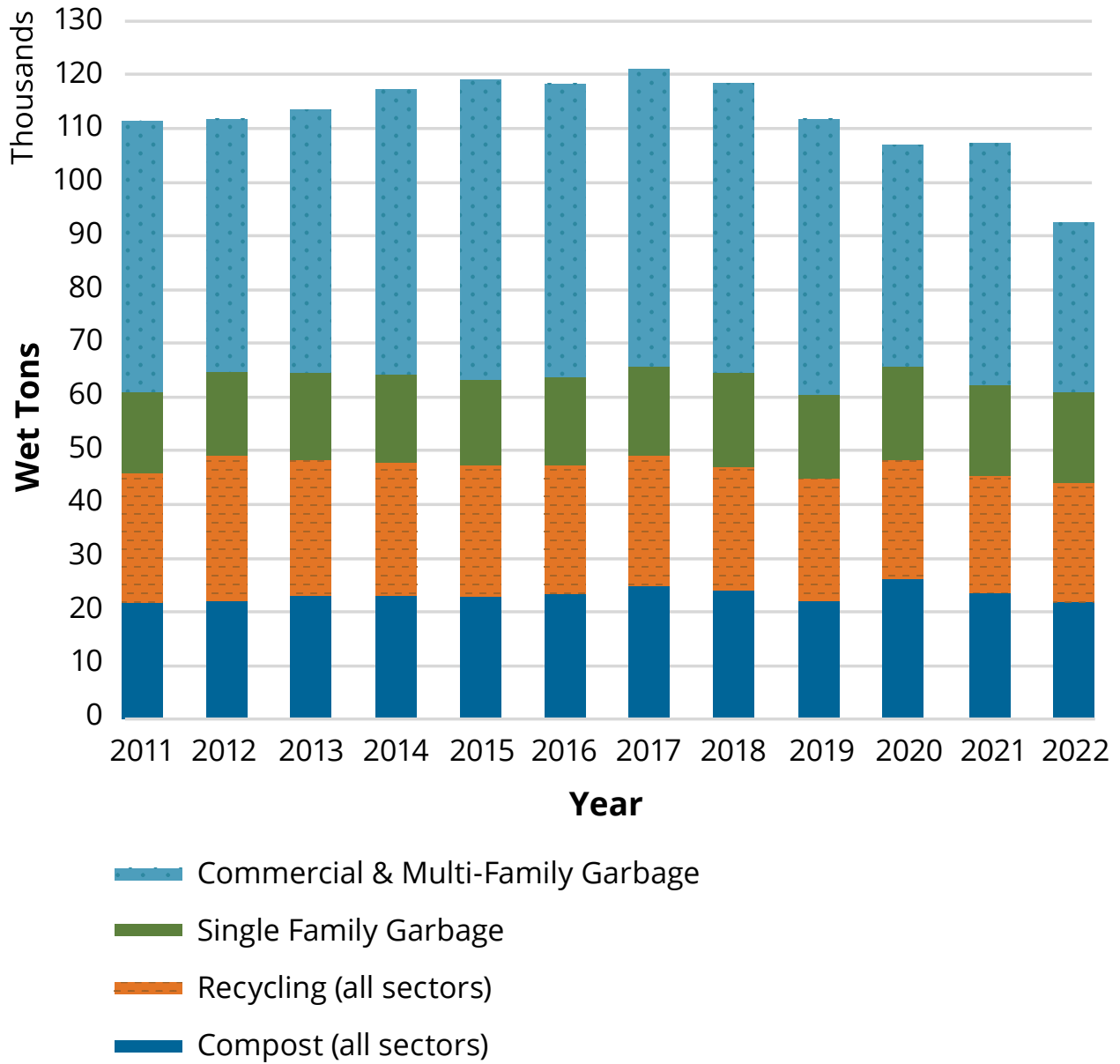
## WHAT ARE CRITICAL AREAS?

The Growth Management Act requires cities and counties to adopt regulations for the protection of environmentally critical areas, which include wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, areas of frequent flooding and geologically hazardous areas. Critical areas may not be suitable for development, either because they are environmentally sensitive or it is not safe to build near them.

importance of protecting the environment and stable climate that have attracted so many people to the city, while ensuring sustainable growth and urbanization to provide for the needs of the growing number of residents and businesses that call Bellevue their home.

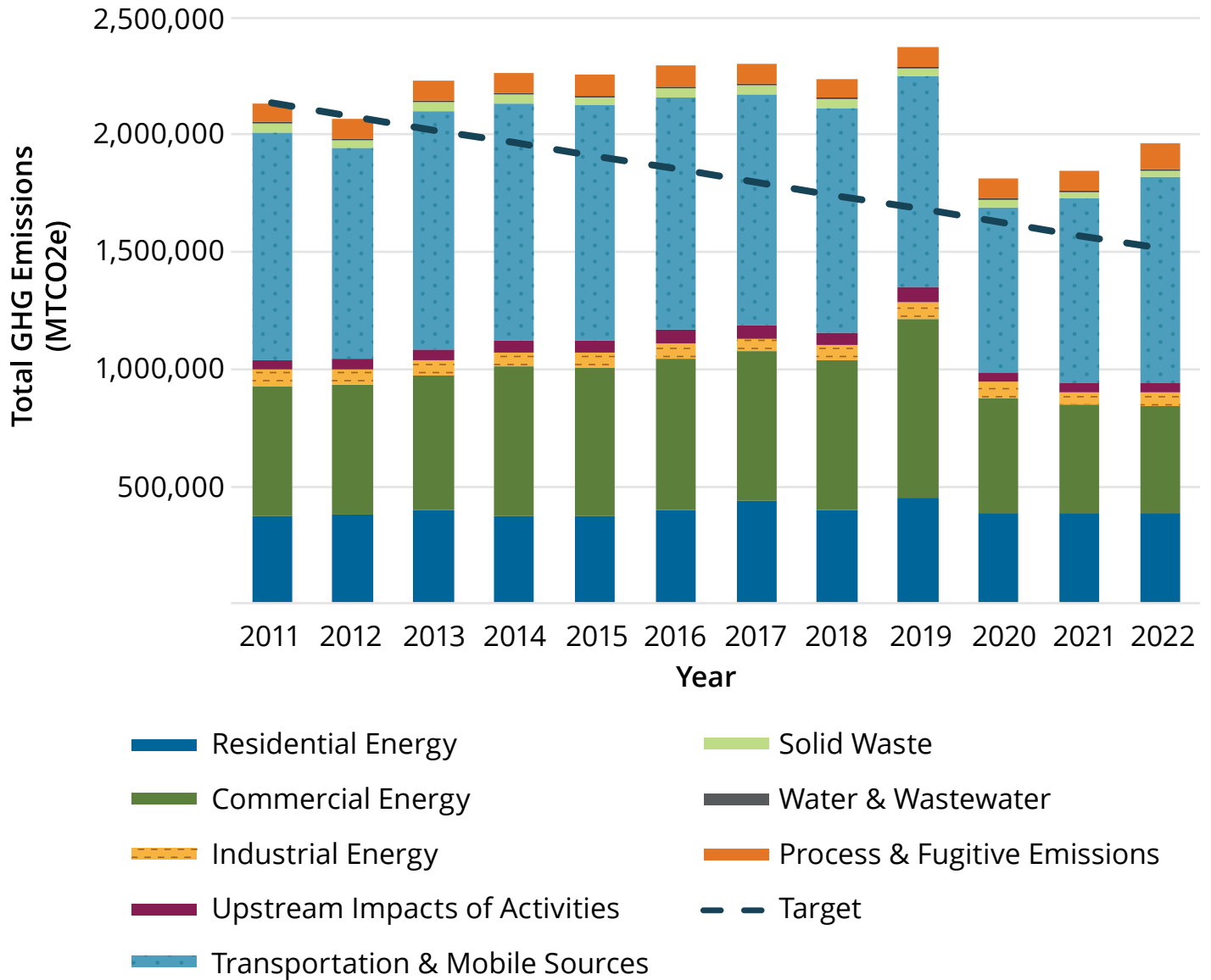


**Figure CL-1. Solid Waste Generation and Diversion**



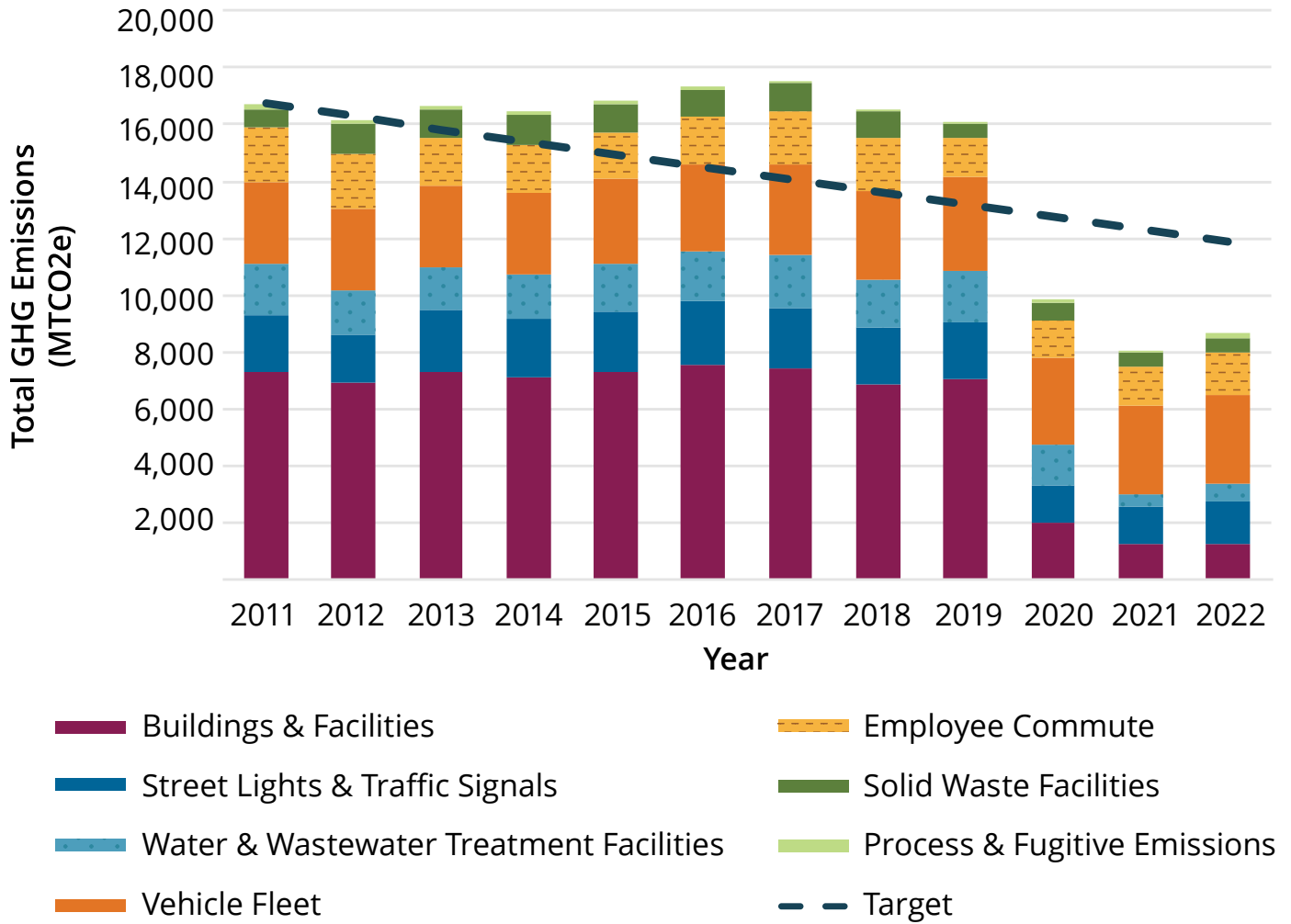
Source: City of Bellevue.

**Figure CL-2. Bellevue Citywide Community GHG Emissions by Sector**



Source: City of Bellevue. 2023. GHG Inventory.

**Figure CL-3. Bellevue’s Municipal GHG Emissions by Sector**



Source: City of Bellevue. 2023. GHG Inventory.



## TODAY'S CONDITIONS AND TOMORROW'S PROJECTIONS

### Climate Change and the Environment Today and Tomorrow

Bellevue's attractiveness as a place to live, work and play depends on preserving and enhancing the natural assets of the community and increasing the city's climate resiliency, while simultaneously nurturing sustainable economic growth and social vibrancy.

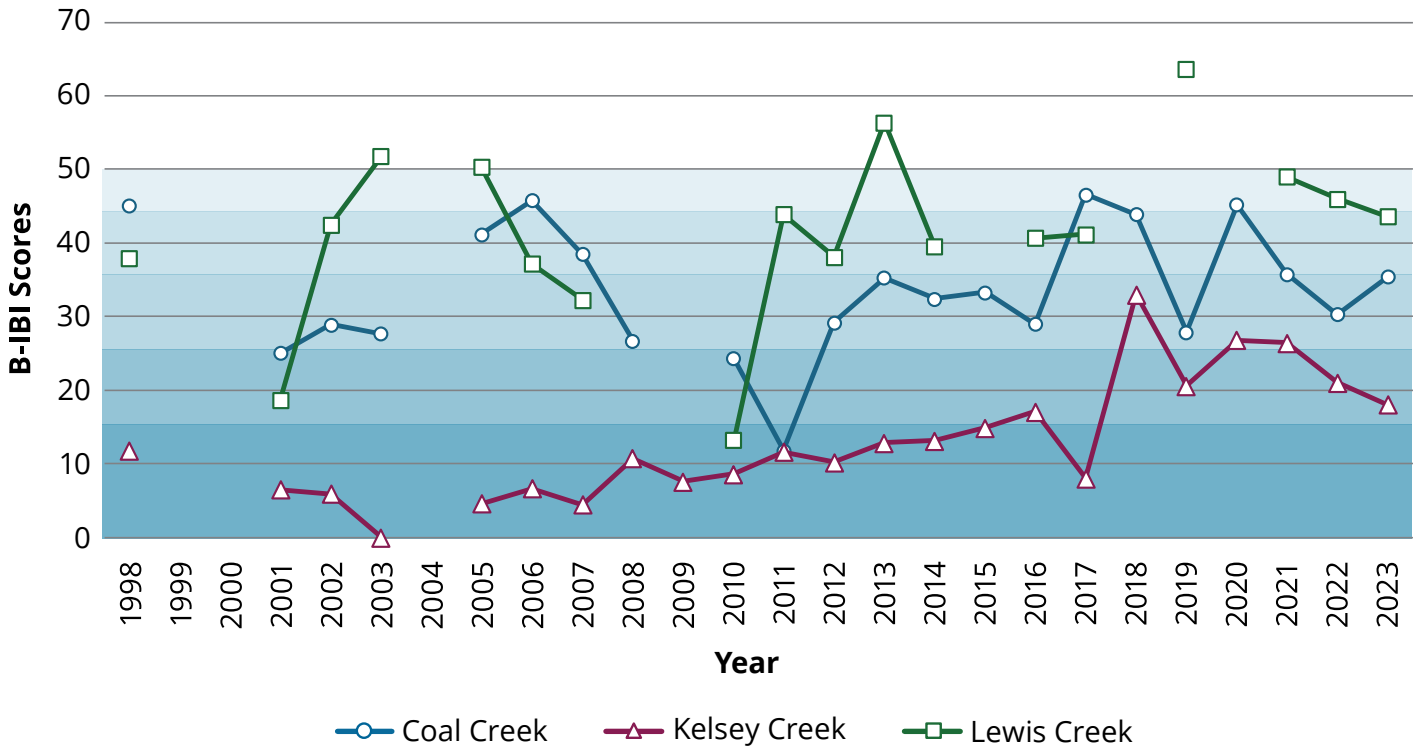
While Bellevue is renowned for its waterways, parks, forests and wildlife habitat, conditions in these environments have been under pressure, due to climate change and unsustainable historical urban development patterns and practices. The city's significant recent development and population growth have resulted in an overall increase in impervious surface, heat island effect and declines in the extent and quality of wildlife habitat, especially for aquatic species. Like most urban streams in the Puget Sound lowlands, all of Bellevue's major streams are classified as biologically impaired. In addition to impacts from unsustainable development and toxic pollution, Bellevue's urban streams and lakes face climate impacts that threaten to further degrade conditions necessary for aquatic wildlife to thrive.

### ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP PLAN

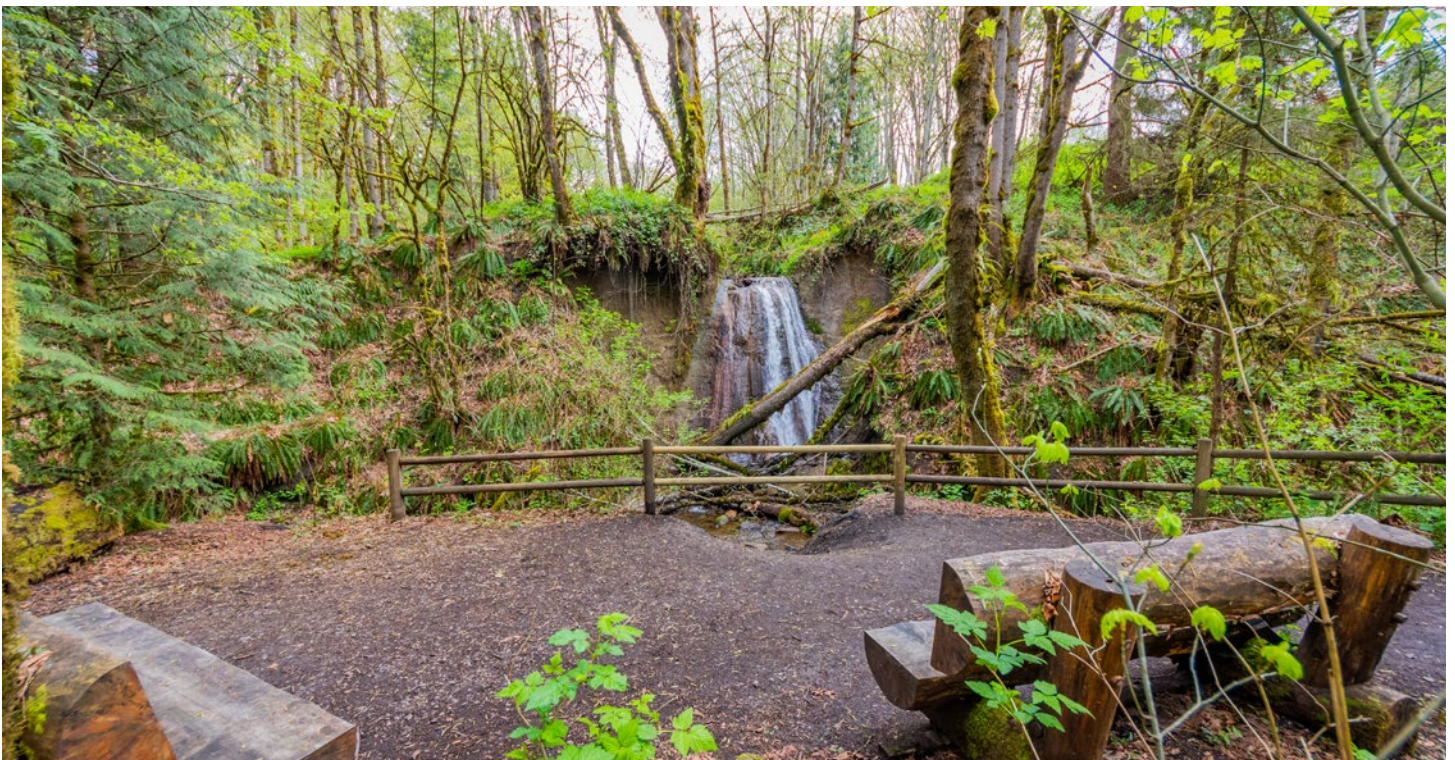
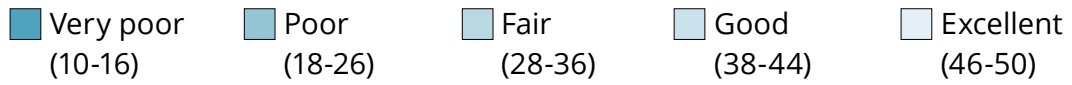
The Environmental Stewardship Plan is a strategic action plan which guides the efforts of the city to achieve short and long-term environmental goals and targets, both community-wide and for its own municipal operations.

At the same time, some environmental conditions have improved alongside recent growth and development: Bellevue's urban tree canopy has increased since 2011 and is at its 40 percent citywide target; the city has increased mobility options and is expanding its multimodal transportation network, building out miles of pedestrian and bicycle facilities that will connect to Eastrail and the East Link Light Rail. The city has made significant progress in its transition to electric vehicles (EV), and has one of the highest EV adoption rates per capita in the U.S. The city has also made progress in reducing municipal and per capita community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, despite significant population and job growth.

**Figure CL-4. Bellevue Stream Water Quality**



**B-IBI Classification Levels**



In addition to environmental impacts from development, both positive and negative, Bellevue is already experiencing the direct impacts of climate change. These impacts range from extreme heat, such as the 2021 Heat Dome event, to extreme rainfall events and flooding. As climate change worsens and accelerates, the City of Bellevue plays a critical role in both mitigating greenhouse gas emissions for the wellbeing of generations to come, and increasing the resilience of its community to current and future impacts that cannot be avoided. Local climate policies and actions must be increasingly ambitious to address years of inaction at the Federal level, and to complement and build upon recent State policies, to achieve emissions reductions and resilience improvements at the speed required by current climate science. Special care must be paid to ensuring that Bellevue’s most vulnerable residents do not disproportionately bear the burden of climate impacts, and that all residents have equitable access to carbon-free energy and transportation systems.

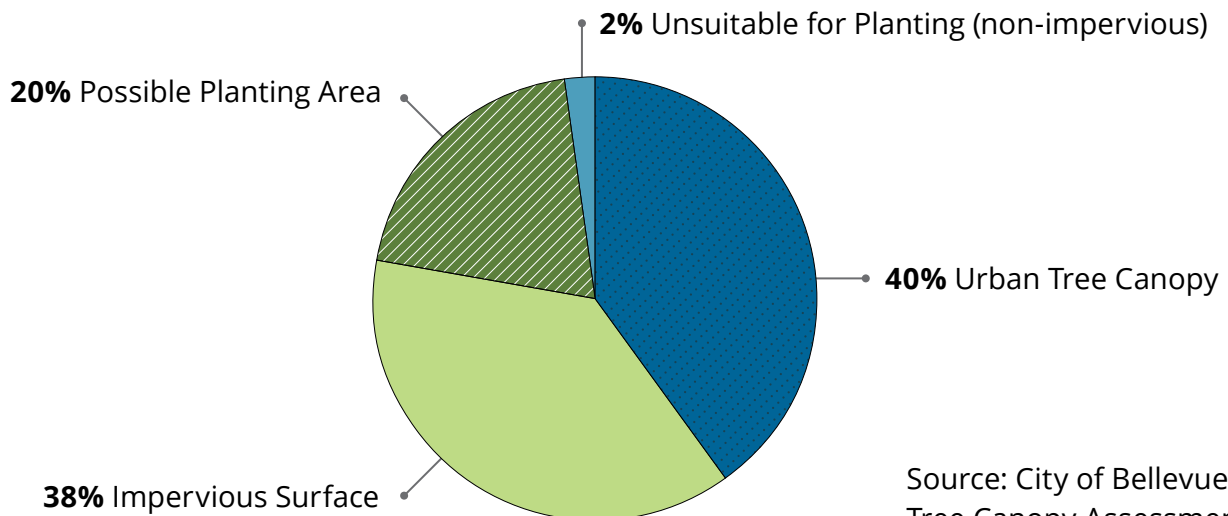
Bellevue can commit to being part of the vanguard of the global movement toward greener cities that foster biodiversity and develop in ways that reduce or eliminate greenhouse gas emissions, build community and ecosystem resilience and

## TREE CANOPY

Bellevue’s urban tree canopy provides habitat, stormwater management services, clean air, carbon capture and a buffer for urban noise and visual pollution. Beyond the trees themselves, vegetation and soils in natural areas reduce the velocity, temperature, and amount of water flow during storms. Additionally, tree canopy provides shade and can significantly lower the surface temperature of urban neighborhoods during extreme heat events linked to climate change. Development projects that result in tree loss compromise all these critical ecosystem services. The city has a goal of achieving a tree canopy that covers at least 40 percent of the city, which is consistent with the American Forests recommended goal of 40 percent tree canopy in urban areas. Despite city-wide declines in tree canopy through the 1980s and 1990s, Bellevue has steadily regained tree canopy in the last couple of decades.

result in net-positive changes in environmental conditions—all of which help to keep Bellevue a green, healthy and livable city into the future.

**Figure CL-5. Bellevue Tree Canopy Coverage**



Source: City of Bellevue, 2021. Tree Canopy Assessment.

## Challenges and Opportunities

Alongside the opportunities presented by Bellevue's abundant natural resources and diverse ecosystems are challenges related to sustaining and stewarding Bellevue's natural environment for generations to come, particularly in an era of worsening climate change.

Bellevue faces the following challenges to its climate and environment in the coming decades:

- Impacts from worsening climate change, particularly in the form of extreme heat, extreme precipitation and flooding; drought; changes to stream temperature and snowpack; aquatic habitat degradation from flash flooding; and wildfire and wildfire smoke.
- Threats to the resilience of Bellevue's various sectors from climate impacts, including: buildings and energy systems, cultural resources and practices, economic development, ecosystems, emergency management and response, human health, land use and development, transportation and infrastructure, utilities (including solid waste, wastewater, and stormwater management) and water resources.
- Increased vulnerability of historically marginalized groups to climate impacts as a result of social inequity that lowers adaptive capacity of communities, including Black, Indigenous and People of Color communities, communities of recent immigrants, low-income households and households who do not speak English. Other groups, including children, older adults and people with disabilities, may also be more vulnerable to climate impacts due to underlying health conditions that lower adaptive capacity.
- Potential for degradation of environmentally sensitive (critical) areas and wetlands from worsening climate change, presenting further threats to the habitat of culturally and historically important species, including salmon.

## PROTECTING CRITICAL HABITAT

Bellevue's natural environment contains critical terrestrial and aquatic habitat, supporting culturally significant species like salmon, western red cedar and American black bear. The city has a strong history of protecting habitat for a variety of species.

The city also plans for the future of its urban forest and its watersheds by utilizing climate resilient species that are adapted to tolerate drought and extremes in heat and precipitation. Protecting water sources from pollution and maintaining high levels of water quality can help aquatic ecosystems withstand climate impacts and increase resiliency.

The Growth Management Act requires cities and counties to adopt regulations for the protection of environmentally critical areas, which include wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, areas of frequent flooding and geologically hazardous areas. Critical areas may not be suitable for development, either because they are environmentally sensitive or it is not safe to build near them.

The Kelsey Creek Basin is the primary Chinook salmon stream in Bellevue. Chinook salmon, in addition to being culturally significant, are a listed species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), which extends protections to critical habitat as well as individuals of the species. Other migratory corridors and habitat for salmonid species include Coal Creek, Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish. Bellevue's salmon, along with regional populations, face increasing stress from climate impacts to stream temperature, toxic pollution and sediment load. Bellevue coordinates its regulatory responsibilities with regional salmon recovery planning efforts.

- Geologic hazards, and the potential for a magnitude 7.0 to 7.5 earthquake along the Seattle Fault, a thrust fault zone two-to-four miles wide that runs parallel to I-90 in Bellevue. Seismic activity could have secondary impacts, including infrastructure damage and soil liquefaction.
- Potential threats to Bellevue’s tree canopy amidst ongoing growth and accelerating climate impacts, particularly to certain species adapted to a colder climate.
- Impacts to electrical grid resilience due to increased demand from building and transportation electrification and extreme weather events.

In spite of these challenges, Bellevue has robust policies to foster sustainable growth and development, climate resilience, ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reductions, and a healthy human and natural environment. In response to the challenges Bellevue faces with regard to climate and environment, the city also seeks to embrace the opportunity to create a thriving and sustainable future. In addition, many policy objectives aimed at improving livability in Bellevue, such as transit-oriented development, multi-modal transportation investments, and middle housing can also support the achievement of Bellevue’s climate and sustainability goals and increase resilience to climate change.

In the coming decades, Bellevue can:

- Grow and develop sustainably, halting and, when possible, repairing the negative impacts of previous growth patterns and development practices.
- Foster equity alongside climate resilience, ensuring that all residents are prepared for a resilient climate future, and reducing disparities in climate vulnerability for Bellevue’s historically marginalized communities.
- Assume regional and national leadership in climate and sustainability through setting and achieving ambitious climate targets, pioneering

## BELLEVUE’S COMMITMENT TO BUILDING GREEN

Bellevue has demonstrated its commitment to sustainable development through a number of recent building projects. The Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center (MSEEC) was designed and built to have minimal impact on the environment. Special gutters, porous concrete, and catchment ponds slow and filter water runoff at the site. Green roofs at the site reduce impermeable surfaces and warming around buildings. Renewable, recycled, local materials, along with sustainably harvested wood, were used in the construction of the buildings. In 2009, the city received a Gold LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) rating for the MSEEC.

Since then, Bellevue has built or retrofit a number of its facilities to achieve LEED or other green building and energy efficiency standards, including Parks facilities, fire stations and City Hall.

sustainable practices and spearheading regional environmental partnerships and collaboration.

- Reduce vehicle miles traveled for every resident and continue to uphold Bellevue’s character as a “City in a Park” through advanced public transit access and robust bicycle and pedestrian networks.
- Maintain, enhance, protect and steward Bellevue’s natural environment for the benefit of its residents and ecosystems for generations to come, ensuring that Bellevue’s unique and precious natural systems continue to contribute to the city as a place to live, work and recreate.



## CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY SUMMARY

Bellevue’s policies establish clear guidance for the city’s actions, regulations and decision-making around climate change and environmental stewardship. The Climate and Environment policies are organized into the following 12 subsections:

### Environmental Stewardship

Bellevue’s Environmental Stewardship policies provide a citywide framework to protect and enhance the environment at a local, regional and global scale. These policies define the various approaches to conserve, steward and sustainably use air, water, land and energy resources over generations. Successful environmental stewardship will help ensure Bellevue is fulfilling its role in minimizing the city’s climate impacts while fostering community values for environmental protection.

### Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emission Reduction policies establish broad strategies to decrease citywide emissions and transition to clean and renewable energy sources. These policies will support programs and regulations that reduce GHG emissions at the speed and scale required by current climate science, which will result in the secondary benefit of improved air quality and climate resilience. New electric transportation technologies, coupled with mobility strategies such as mass transit, pedestrian/bike infrastructure and transit-oriented development, which are elaborated upon in the Transportation element, will help the community reduce the significant greenhouse gas emissions associated with today’s transportation infrastructure.

### Urban Forestry

Urban Forestry policies provide a framework to protect the city’s trees, reach community canopy goals and maintain Bellevue’s “City in the Park” character. These policies support tree canopy co-benefits of local and regional air and water quality, biodiversity and habitat conservation,

climate mitigation and public health. Additionally, these policies address the need for robust tree canopy protection and preservation as the city continues to grow and native tree species face increasing stress as a result of climate impacts. The Urban Forestry policies recognize the important environmental justice role tree canopy plays in mitigating the urban heat island effect, which disproportionately impacts low-income and BIPOC communities.

### Climate Resiliency

Climate Resiliency policies seek to prepare Bellevue for projected climate impacts. These policies support local programs and regulations addressing the city’s climate vulnerabilities, particularly to historically marginalized populations, and prepare the city to respond to environmental changes or natural disasters caused by climate change. The policies address intersecting climate vulnerability across many of Bellevue’s sectors, including stormwater management, grid reliability and long-range planning and capital projects.

### Waste and Materials Management

Waste and Materials Management policies promote sustainable waste management practices. The policies support community goals to achieve zero-waste and prioritize environmentally-friendly products. Responsible waste and materials management contributes to Bellevue’s goals to reduce climate and environmental impacts. Policies address zero-waste practices at a municipal level and across the Bellevue community, including waste produced by residents, businesses and waste haulers.

### Water Resources

Water Resources policies aim to protect or improve local water quality and support regional watershed health. The city’s water resources provide drinking water, recreational opportunities and aquatic habitat for native species. These policies promote strategies to reduce or eliminate pollution sources, improve stream and watershed functions, and protect or improve the community’s aquatic habitats. The policies are

designed to address the sources of point pollution and promote the health of entire basins and watersheds, recognizing the interconnectedness of water resources at a local and regional scale. These policies cover the broad nature of water resources, managing the health and sustainable use of the city's aquatic habitat, groundwater, surface water and drinking water.

### Geologic Hazards

Geologic Hazards policies are intended to protect geologic resources and mitigate risks associated with geologically hazardous areas. These policies promote strategies to manage development in geologic hazard areas in a manner that protects residents, community assets and natural resources. Geologically hazardous areas generally include steep slopes, unstable land or soils and other areas that are vulnerable to geologic risks such as erosion, liquefaction or subsidence.

### Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development policies encourage Bellevue to develop in a manner that minimizes the environmental impacts of development and strives towards a net environmental benefit from new buildings and infrastructure. These policies promote a range of development approaches and practices, based on scientific standards, that promote sensitive site development and emphasize water savings, energy efficiency, sustainable materials and indoor environmental quality. Sustainable development integrates nature-based solutions and mitigates the climate and environmental impacts historically associated with unsustainable urbanization patterns and practices. Successful implementation of these policies will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate impacts, improve water quality and watershed health and enhance Bellevue's livability.

### Air Quality

In the Puget Sound region, emissions from internal combustion engine vehicles are the primary source of air pollution. Other sources include industrial operations, indoor and outdoor burning and wildfire smoke. Air Quality policies aimed

at reducing these sources improve community wide public health while simultaneously supporting the city's climate goals by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

### Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Fish and Wildlife Habitat policies promote habitat preservation, enhancement and restoration for local and regional plant and animal species. These policies prioritize conservation and development practices that avoid or mitigate impacts to the various types of fish and wildlife habitat in Bellevue. The city's fish and wildlife policies are also intended to meet regional and state habitat conservation and management goals to support healthy, resilient and adaptive species communities.

### Critical Areas

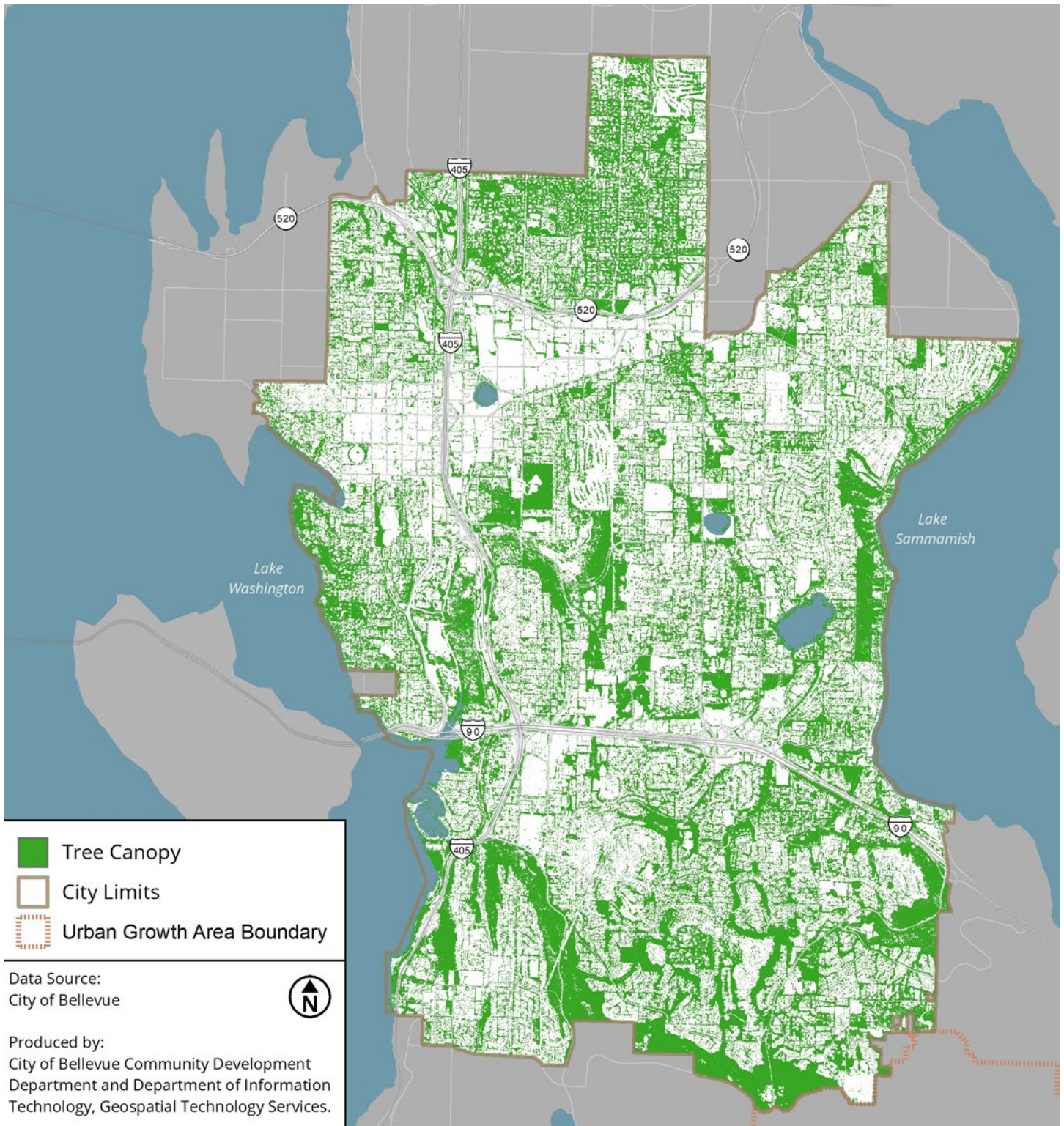
Bellevue's critical areas provide valuable habitat, protect and enhance water quality, facilitate stormwater conveyance, enhance local aesthetics and offer recreation, cultural resources and education opportunities. Bellevue protects these functions and values through the use of a Critical Areas land use designation, which establishes a regulatory framework for critical areas and their buffers. Land use regulations applicable to development within Critical Areas are intended to guide development in a manner that preserves and enhances critical area functions and values.

### Noise

Excessive noise is a form of pollution that has direct and harmful effects upon the public's health and welfare and adversely affects the livability, peace and comfort of neighborhoods and the city as a whole. Noise, like many forms of pollution, is both a local and a regional problem. The city's noise control regulations are based on Comprehensive Plan policies to manage and reduce noise, with a particular focus on traffic and other transportation sources. The Transportation element contains additional policies relating to traffic noise. Noise is expected to be higher near major roadways, heavy industry and dense commercial areas. Therefore, policies support stronger noise protection and mitigation for residential neighborhoods and wildlife.

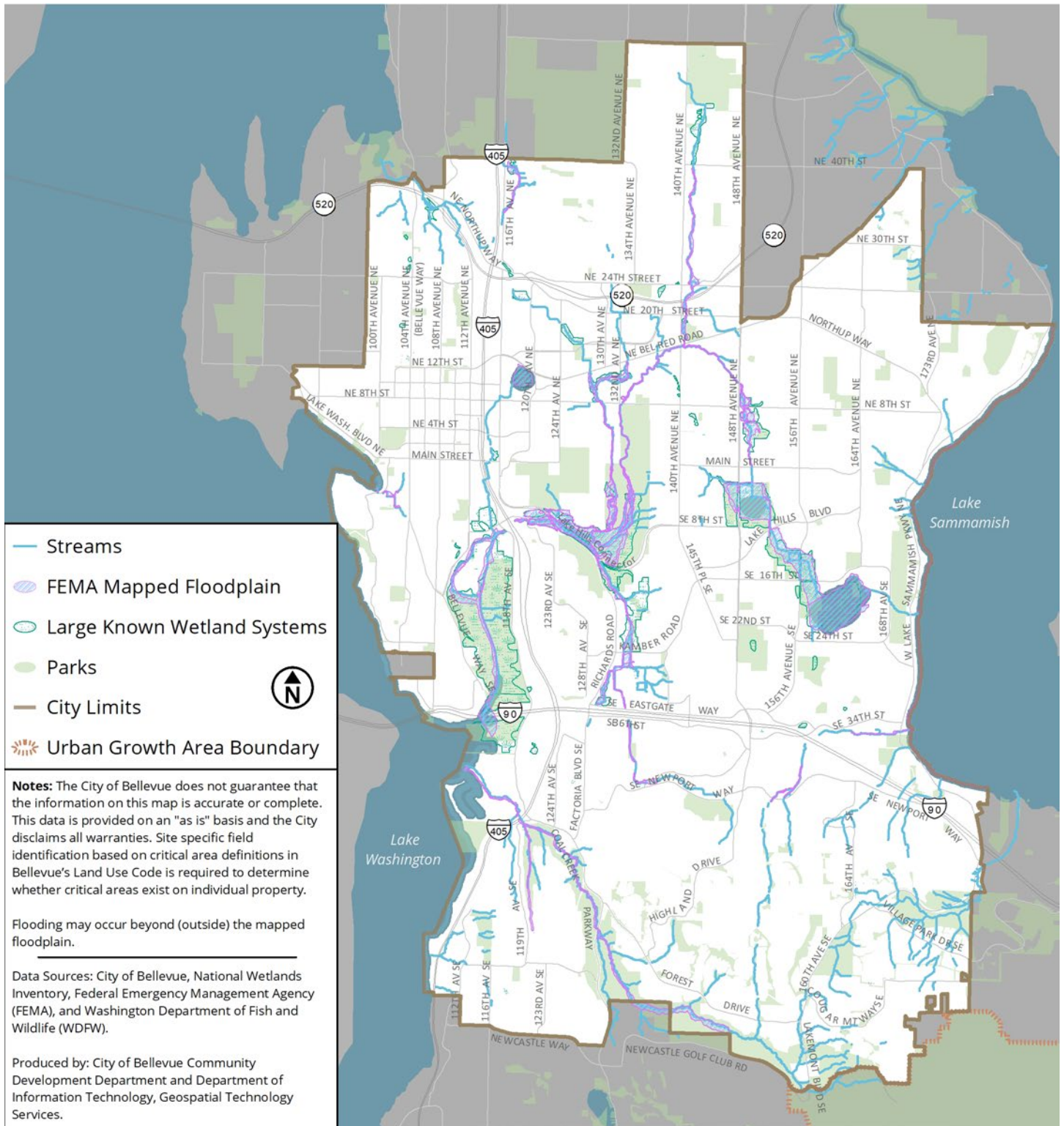
## Map CL-1. Tree Canopy

The tree canopy in Bellevue is measured based on imagery from the USDA's National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP). The methodology is periodically updated to provide accurate estimates that are comparable across time.



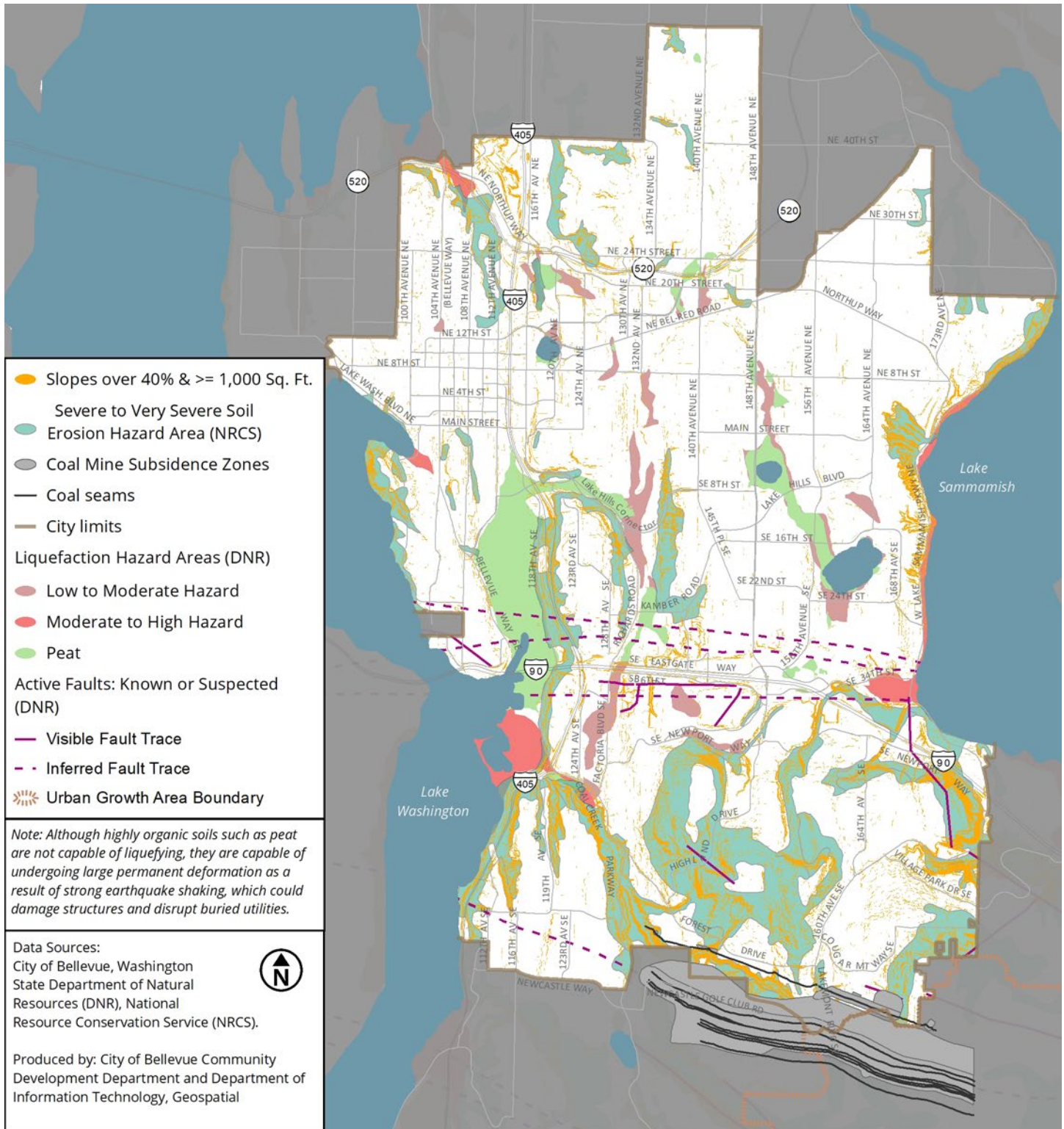
## Map CL-2. Critical Areas Overlay — Streams, Wetlands and Floodplains

This map is a graphic representation of known streams, wetlands, FEMA mapped floodplains and fish and wildlife habitat areas within Bellevue. Site-specific analysis is required to determine whether critical areas exist on individual property.



## Map CL-3. Critical Areas Overlay — Geologic Hazards

This map is a graphic representation of known earthquake fault lines, liquefaction zones, soil erosion hazards, steep slopes and coal hazards within Bellevue. Site-specific analysis is required to determine whether critical areas exist on individual property.



## GOAL & POLICIES

### Goal

Ensure that planning efforts, infrastructure investments and municipal operations proactively manage natural resources to meet the needs of current and future generations while maintaining the integrity, stability and beauty of natural systems.

### Policies

#### Environmental Stewardship

- CL-1.** Conduct city operations in a manner that support of the achievement of Bellevue’s Environmental Stewardship goals and ensures the sustainable use of natural resources, promotes an environmentally safe workplace for its employees minimizes adverse environmental impacts and respects tribal sovereign and inherent rights.
- CL-2.** Eliminate the release of substances into the air, water and soil that may have harmful impacts on people, wildlife or the environment. If total elimination is not practical, minimize to the greatest extent feasible.
- CL-3.** Promote and invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy resources as an alternative to non-renewable resources.
- CL-4.** Protect air, water, land and energy resources consistent with Bellevue’s role in the regional growth strategy.
- CL-5.** Provide regional leadership on sustainable development, climate resilience and greenhouse gas emissions reduction that extend beyond Bellevue’s boundaries and require regional cooperation.
- CL-6.** Provide the public with educational opportunities and resources about environmental issues and illustrate individual actions that benefit the environment.
- CL-7.** Acknowledge ancestral tribal lands as part of environmental education.
- CL-8.** Use life cycle cost analysis that includes a social cost of carbon and best management practices in city procurement, projects and budgeting process as essential components of effective environmental stewardship and long-term fiscal responsibility.
- CL-9.** Support partnerships between the city, private landowners and regional tribes to steward private lands and ancestral lands, streams, habitat and other natural resources for the benefit of all.
- CL-10.** Consider equitable impacts and historic health and environmental disparities when planning land use and capital projects, using recognized local, state or federal environmental justice tools.
- CL-11.** Incorporate environmental education, interpretation and ancestral land acknowledgment into public and private projects, where appropriate.

## Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction

**CL-12.** Accelerate the transition to all-electric buildings to improve public health and safety, increase climate resilience, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect building owners and tenants from the future costs of removing or retrofitting obsolete fossil fuel infrastructure.

**CL-13.** Adopt and implement policies and programs to achieve a target of reducing citywide greenhouse gas emissions, compared to a 2011 baseline, by:

- 50% by 2030,
- 75% by 2040, and
- 95% by 2050 and net-zero emissions through carbon sequestration and other strategies.

Evaluate and update these targets over time in consideration of the latest international climate science and best practices.

**CL-14.** Consider climate change impacts and limit new greenhouse gas emissions when planning for new growth, while supporting emissions reductions from existing uses.

**CL-15.** Lead by example by reducing greenhouse gas emissions resulting from city operations by amounts equal to or greater than citywide goals.

See also Capital Facilities policies related to high performance facilities, [CF-15](#) to [CF-24](#).

## Urban Forestry

**CL-16.** Achieve a citywide tree canopy target of at least 40% canopy coverage that reflects our “City in a Park” character and maintain an action plan for meeting the target across multiple land use types including right-of-way, public lands, and residential and commercial uses.

**CL-17.** Minimize the loss of tree canopy, biodiversity and natural areas as a result of transportation and infrastructure projects, and mitigate for losses where impacts are unavoidable.

**CL-18.** Strive to minimize loss of tree canopy from development and mitigate unavoidable tree removal.

**CL-19.** Protect trees during development to ensure survivability and health of trees on sites undergoing development.

**CL-20.** Protect Culturally Modified Trees on both public and private lands, in partnership and consultation with regional tribes.

**CL-21.** Preserve the significant trees throughout the city to help maintain biodiversity and urban forest health.

**CL-22.** Create optimal soil conditions for street tree plantings as specified in the city’s Environmental Best Management Practices and Design Standards Manual to nurture a large tree canopy and build resilience to extreme heat and precipitation events.

- CL-23.** Consider the long-term impacts of climate for managing the health of the urban forest.
- CL-24.** Strive to increase tree canopy in neighborhoods with lower tree canopy or higher urban heat island effect, using an equity lens.

## Climate Resiliency

- CL-25.** Evaluate climate vulnerabilities as part of long-range planning efforts and capital projects. Develop and implement climate change adaptation strategies that create a more resilient community by addressing the impacts of climate change to public health and safety, the economy, public and private infrastructure, water resources, and habitat.
- CL-26.** Advocate for increased grid reliability through state and utility regulatory rulemaking and legislation that supports demand response, storage and other clean technologies that reduce peak load, improve grid flexibility and support rapid electrification of buildings and vehicles.
- CL-27.** Ensure that stormwater design standards account for future climate change impacts such as extreme precipitation events, and recharge groundwater where feasible, in accordance with Best Available Science.

See also Utilities policies related to storm and surface water, [UT-34](#) to [UT-44](#).

## Waste and Materials Management

- CL-28.** Achieve zero-waste community-wide in accordance with the Environmental Stewardship Plan.
- CL-29.** Prioritize the use of sustainable, healthy products that are recyclable and made from recycled materials, or have other environmental attributes throughout their lifecycle. Support circular economy programs and products.
- CL-30.** Engage in Environmentally Preferable Purchasing practices and support extended producer responsibility to reduce waste to landfill and carbon emissions.
- CL-31.** Work with residents, businesses and waste haulers to continue to improve percentage of waste diverted from landfill.
- CL-32.** Increase the landfill diversion rate of construction and demolition waste through reuse and recycling, from both city and private projects.
- CL-33.** Ensure new commercial and multi-family buildings provide sufficient space for three separate waste streams: landfill-bound waste, recycling and organics.

## Water Resources

- CL-34.** Integrate site-specific development standards with urban watershed-scale approaches to managing and protecting the functions of critical areas to enhance habitat, water quality and other ecosystem services, including the protection of watersheds and wellhead areas that are sources of drinking water supplies.



- CL-35.** Retain existing open surface water systems in a natural state and restore conditions that have become degraded.
- CL-36.** Maintain surface water quality, defined as meeting federal and state standards and restore surface water that has become degraded, to the maximum extent practicable.
- CL-37.** Monitor surface water quality and implement measures to identify and address the sources of contamination.
- CL-38.** Employ the best management practices and technology, education and enforcement strategies to minimize non-point source pollution.
- CL-39.** Retrofit public storm drainage systems and prioritize investments where there is a significant potential for restoring surface water quality important to preserving or enhancing aquatic life.
- CL-40.** Reduce runoff from streets, parking lots and other impervious surfaces and improve surface water quality by utilizing low impact development techniques in new development and redevelopment.
- CL-41.** Restore and protect the biological health and diversity of the Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish basins in Bellevue’s jurisdiction.
- CL-42.** Manage water runoff for new development and redevelopment to meet water quality objectives, consistent with state law.
- CL-43.** Allow existing farming and agriculture in wetlands and in the 100-year floodplain so long as water quality and buffer functions are not substantially impacted.

See also Utilities policies related to storm and surface water, [UT-34](#) to [UT-44](#).

## Geologic Hazards

- CL-44.** Allow land alteration and vegetation removal only for approved development proposals.
- CL-45.** Regulate land use and development to protect natural topographic, geologic, vegetational and hydrological features.
- CL-46.** Protect geologically hazardous areas, especially forested steep slopes, recognizing that these areas provide multiple critical areas functions.
- CL-47.** Maintain updated geologic maps of the city, in conjunction with updates to regional geologic mapping efforts and other significant changes.
- CL-48.** Maintain current geotechnical information related to landslides and erosion problems in the city’s Geographic Information System.
- CL-49.** Promote soil stability and the use of the natural drainage system by retaining and enhancing critical areas of existing native vegetation.

- CL-50.** Prohibit development on unstable land and restrict development on potentially unstable land to ensure public safety and conformity with natural constraints.
- CL-51.** Require an analysis of soil liquefaction potential where appropriate, in the siting and design of structures and infrastructure.
- CL-52.** Use geotechnical information and an analysis of critical areas functions and values to evaluate the geologic and environmental risks of potential development on geologically hazardous areas and implement appropriate controls on development.
- CL-53.** Utilize Best Available Science to ensure development is a safe distance from geologically hazardous areas to protect public safety.
- CL-54.** Use specific criteria in decisions to exempt specific small, isolated or artificially created steep slopes from critical areas designation.
- CL-55.** Minimize and control soil erosion during and after development through the use of best management practices and other development restrictions.
- CL-56.** Provide information to the public about potential geologic hazards, including site development and building techniques and disaster preparedness.
- CL-57.** Regulate development in coal mine hazard areas by requiring that a project proponent (with review, oversight and approval by the city):
  - Conservatively evaluate risks.
  - Eliminate the potential for catastrophic effects and keep development out of catastrophic risk areas.
  - Mitigate any non-catastrophic impacts.
  - Protect ratepayers from costs associated with development in areas potentially impacted by mining.
  - Provide disclosure mechanisms to inform property purchasers of past mining activities.
- CL-58.** Consider climate change impacts, such as increased frequency and severity of storms, in planning and adjusting requirements related to geologic hazards and critical areas, in accordance with Best Available Science.

## Sustainable Development

- CL-59.** Maintain land use regulations that limit the amount of impervious surface area in new development and redevelopment city-wide.
- CL-60.** Provide land use incentives to minimize the amount of impervious surface area below that allowed through prescriptive standards, in new development, redevelopment, and existing development citywide.
- CL-61.** Implement the city-wide use of low impact development techniques and green building practices.

See also Utilities policies related to storm and surface water, [UT-34](#) to [UT-44](#).

- CL-62.** Encourage shared multi-building or district-scale green stormwater infrastructure solutions in situations where on-site approaches are determined infeasible.
- CL-63.** Make low impact development the preferred and commonly-used approach to site development to minimize impervious surfaces, native vegetation loss and stormwater runoff.
- CL-64.** Provide education and incentives to support the implementation of low impact development practices, integrated site planning and green building, with a focus on early consideration of these in the site development process.
- CL-65.** Support the use of emerging best practices in the area of green building and site design, including climate resilience measures, through the use of pilot programs and model ordinances.
- CL-66.** Support sustainable and resilient net-zero and net-positive new development by phasing out fossil fuels and promoting renewable energy, energy efficiency, transportation and building electrification and electric grid integration.
- CL-67.** Support energy efficiency retrofits and electrification in affordable housing properties, through incentives, financing, assistance and other strategies.
- CL-68.** Encourage the use of low-carbon materials and building design principles that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in all parts of the project life cycle.
- CL-69.** Support opportunities for district energy and incorporate district-level sustainability features in growing areas.

## Air Quality

- CL-70.** Support federal, state and regional policies intended to combat climate change and protect clean air in Bellevue and the Puget Sound Basin.
- CL-71.** Work with the private sector to reduce growth in vehicle trips as a key strategy for reducing automobile-related air pollution.
- CL-72.** Implement projects that provide significant air quality improvements to areas with existing poor air quality.
- CL-73.** Provide transportation improvements for the purpose of relieving localized substandard air quality by shifting traffic from the most polluted areas to less congested facilities nearby, balancing other community needs such as equitable traffic or noise impacts.
- CL-74.** Electrify the city's light-duty fleet, and promote the electrification and use of ultra-low or zero-emissions fuels for the city's medium and heavy-duty vehicles.
- CL-75.** Maintain the ban on outdoor burning within the urban area and encourage the composting of leaves and other yard debris and other actions as alternatives to burning.
- CL-76.** Reduce the amount of air-borne particulates through a street sweeping program, dust abatement on construction sites and other methods to reduce the sources of dust.

## Fish and Wildlife Habitat

- CL-77.** Provide incentives to private property owners to achieve specific habitat improvement goals, including retention and enhancement of native vegetation.
- CL-78.** Encourage property owners to incorporate suitable indigenous plants in critical areas and buffers, consistent with the site's habitat type and successional stage, and considering species' climate resilience.
- CL-79.** Anticipate and plan for increased demand in access to green and natural areas, including critical areas, in ways that protect the health and ecological function of those areas for future generations.
- CL-80.** Identify, prioritize and implement public projects to improve habitat.
- CL-81.** Preserve and maintain the 100-year floodplain in a natural and undeveloped state, and restore conditions that have become degraded.
- CL-82.** Protect, restore and maintain shoreline, wetland and riparian habitats to reduce erosion, provide shade, protect water quality, provide habitat for fish and wildlife and restore similar areas that have become degraded and improve the resilience of streams and aquatic species to climate change.
- CL-83.** Stabilize stream banks and shorelines if necessary by using bioengineering techniques except where hydrology, excessive cost, or other factors make this approach infeasible.
- CL-84.** Give special consideration to conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous salmonids, recognizing that requirements will vary depending on the aquatic resources involved, including differing stream classification, and that additional efforts may be identified in the regional salmon recovery planning process.
- CL-85.** Prohibit creating new fish passage barriers and remove existing artificial fish passage barriers in accordance with applicable state law.
- CL-86.** Coordinate with WSDOT, King County and neighboring jurisdictions to plan and prioritize culvert upgrades to ensure fish passage barrier removal, adequate projected stormwater passage and continued climate-related adaptations to handle water passage into the future throughout Bellevue, especially where terrestrial species connectivity can be restored simultaneously.
- CL-87.** Require and provide incentives for the opening of piped stream segments during redevelopment where scientific analysis demonstrates that substantial habitat function can be restored, and where the cost of restoration is not disproportionate to the community and environmental benefit.
- CL-88.** Preserve and enhance native vegetation in Critical Area buffers and integrate suitable native plants in urban landscape development, considering species' climate resilience.

See also Parks, Recreation & Open Space policies related to the provision of parks and open space, [PA-2](#) to [PA-4](#).

- CL-89.** Improve wildlife habitat especially in patches and linkages by enhancing vegetation composition and structure and incorporating indigenous plant species compatible with the site.
- CL-90.** Encourage the use of native and climate-adaptive plants in residential and commercial landscapes, considering species' climate resilience.
- CL-91.** Develop and support additional habitat enhancement demonstration projects.
- CL-92.** Protect wildlife corridors to minimize habitat fragmentation, especially along existing linkages and in patches of native habitat. Identify opportunities to expand habitat protection and improve habitat quality and connectivity using conservation area designations, buffers and open space corridors.
- CL-93.** Utilize studies and management recommendations to protect important wildlife habitat characteristics on land that is not a designated critical area.
- CL-94.** Manage fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas to protect overall habitat functions and values (food, water, cover, space), except where a "special status species" requires targeted habitat management.
- CL-95.** Rely on federal, state, and county agencies to identify "special status" wildlife species, but allow for a process to identify species of local importance to Bellevue in consultation with tribes based on their sovereign and inherent rights to fish, hunt and gather in usual and accustomed areas..
- CL-96.** Manage naturally occurring ponds to provide fish and wildlife habitat, promote good water quality, and control invasive aquatic plants.
- CL-97.** Prioritize efforts to preserve or enhance fish and wildlife habitat through regulations and public investments in critical areas with largely intact functions and in degraded areas where there is a significant potential for restoring functions.
- CL-98.** Recognize the important role Bellevue plays in recovering salmon populations by acting on the goals of the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council, the Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda, the Washington Salmon Coalition, and other related groups and collaborative salmon recovery documents.

## Critical Areas

- CL-99.** Use the best scientific information available in an adaptive management approach to preserve or enhance the functions and values of critical areas through regulations, programs, and incentives.
- CL-100.** Use prescriptive development regulations for critical areas based on the type of critical area and the functions to be protected; and as an alternative to the prescriptive regulations, allow for a site specific or programmatic critical areas study to provide a science-based approach to development that will achieve an equal or better result for the critical area functions.

- CL-101.** Recognize critical area function in preparing programs and land use regulations to protect critical areas and to mitigate the lost function due to unavoidable impacts.
- CL-102.** Develop programs and regulations acknowledging that designated critical areas such as wetlands, shorelines, riparian corridors, floodplains and geologically hazardous areas provide multiple functions including fish and wildlife habitat.
- CL-103.** Establish a target of no net loss of ecosystem composition, structure and function, especially in Priority Habitats and Critical Areas, and strive for net ecological gain to enhance biodiversity and climate resilience.
- CL-104.** Use science-based mitigation for unavoidable adverse impacts to critical areas to protect overall critical areas function in the watershed.
- CL-105.** Implement monitoring and adaptive management plans for critical areas mitigation projects to ensure that the intended functions are maintained or enhanced over time.
- CL-106.** Facilitate the transfer of development potential away from critical areas and the clustering of development on the least sensitive portion of a site.
- CL-107.** Reduce or eliminate regulatory barriers to protecting and enhancing critical areas.
- CL-108.** Develop partnerships with land conservation organizations to acquire critical areas and buffers to protect and restore critical areas functions.
- CL-109.** Explore opportunities for public acquisition and management of key critical areas of valuable natural and aesthetic resources, and fish and wildlife habitat sensitive to urbanization through a variety of land acquisition tools such as conservation easements and fee-simple purchase.
- CL-110.** Allow for building footprint expansion options for existing single family structures in critical areas, protective buffers and setbacks only in a manner that does not degrade critical area functions.
- CL-111.** Require mitigation proportional to any adverse environmental impacts from development or redevelopment in the Protection Zone.
- CL-112.** Establish or use current best-practice methodology for assessing economic value of critical area ecosystem services and climate resilience services. Include ecosystem services valuation in planning and infrastructure projects, including to inform mitigation or loss of ecosystem services compensation.

## Noise

- CL-113.** Ensure that excessive noise does not impair the permitted land use activities in residential, commercial and industrial land use districts.
- CL-114.** Protect residential neighborhoods from noise levels that interfere with sleep and repose through development standards and code enforcement.

- CL-115.** Require a noise analysis for transportation projects in or near residential areas if existing or projected noise levels exceed city-adopted standards, and implement reasonable and effective noise mitigation measures when appropriate.
- CL-116.** Monitor and mitigate freeway noise and air pollution in collaboration with the state and other partners, prioritizing areas that are the most burdened with noise and air quality impacts.
- CL-117.** Require new residential development to include transportation noise abatement design and materials where necessary, including the preservation of vegetation, to minimize noise impacts from arterials and freeways.
- CL-118.** Evaluate the benefits of measures designed to mitigate arterial noise, particularly noise walls, including co-benefits of air pollution mitigation, considering impacts on the pedestrian environment and neighborhood character.
- CL-119.** Consider noise impacts when evaluating measures designed to keep traffic volumes and speeds within reasonable limits on collector arterials.

See also Land Use policies related to air quality, [LU-42](#) to [LU-45](#).



# Human Services

## VISION

Bellevue is an equitable and caring community where everyone can thrive and belong.

Bellevue is a community in which each and every member has equitable access and opportunity to meet their essential physical, behavioral health, economic, and social needs; to feel a sense of belonging; and to thrive. Bellevue invests in the basic building blocks of the community, including human services, to ensure the development of healthy individuals and families.

### HUMAN SERVICES SCOPE

The Human Services element encompasses a range of programs, services and investments provided by the City that foster stability and enhance the well-being of marginalized residents.



## INTRODUCTION

A well-developed and equitable human services infrastructure is a critical component of a healthy community where everyone can thrive. Human services include support for residents with low and moderate incomes most impacted by systemic inequities, who are disproportionately people of color, immigrants, refugees, people with disabilities and members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community. The City of Bellevue defines human services as those provided to residents of all demographics to meet essential human needs, have a sense of belonging and an opportunity to thrive, including services that support the following:

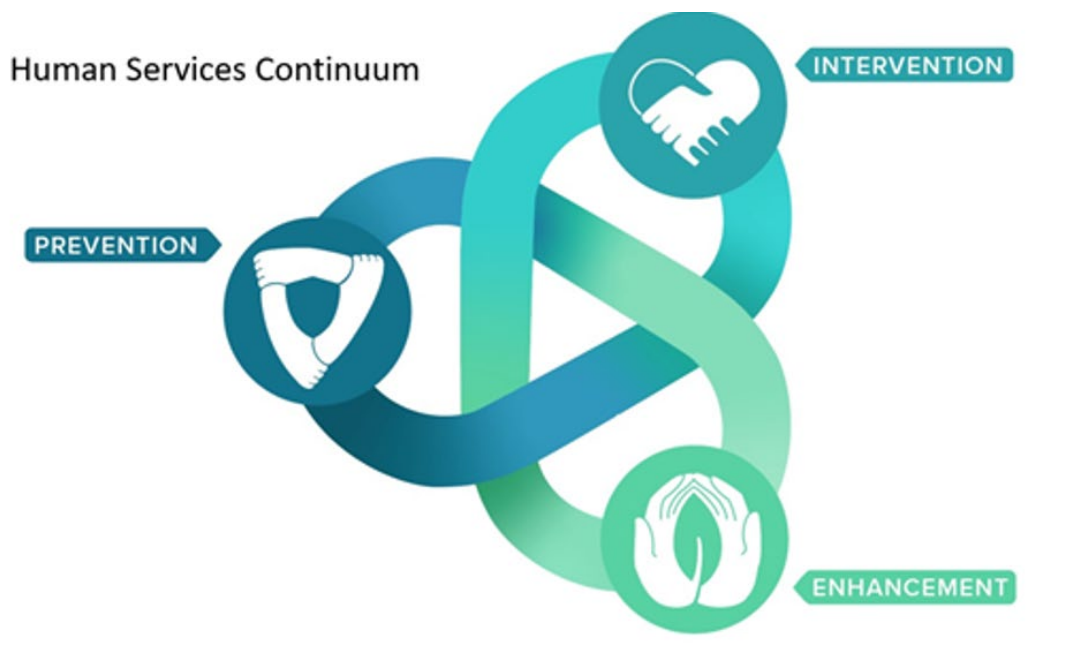
- Food to eat and a roof overhead
- Supportive relationships
- A safe haven from all forms of violence and abuse
- Health care
- Education and job skills

Human Services are provided throughout a continuum, including services that may prevent future needs, that intervene in times of crisis

and that enhance residents' opportunities and abilities to thrive. In order to support residents, needs throughout the continuum, it is necessary to recognize and address systemic inequities that contribute to the need for human services, particularly for marginalized residents. Residents may draw from multiple aspects of the continuum at the same time. In addition, varying types of human services meet resident needs in different ways: a service may be an intervention for some and a preventative measure or an enhancement for others. The continuum is interconnected and the city endorses the need to sustain it in its entirety.. Prevention services may minimize residents' experiences of crisis, preventing further trauma and the need for intervention.

The City works in partnership at the local, regional, county, state and federal level to build and maintain the human services infrastructure. The City collaborates with residents, human services agencies, businesses, educational institutions, faith groups and other community organizations to develop and improve human services in response to changing community needs. The human services infrastructure is part of a larger system that works towards meeting the health and wellbeing needs of residents.

### HS-Figure 1





## TODAY'S CONDITIONS AND TOMORROW'S PROJECTIONS

### Human Services Today and Tomorrow

The City of Bellevue 2023-2024 Human Services Needs Assessment presents a picture of a human services infrastructure with significant need, with both strengths and challenges and significant opportunity. Bellevue works to ensure that each person has the resources and services to thrive, such that disparities are eliminated and outcomes improve for all. Bellevue continually works to become an equitable society, where a resident's identities (race, gender, disability, etc.) are not accurate predictors of their future outcomes. Human services agencies throughout the continuum are trusted partners of the City, and the City works with them to ensure they have the support they need to sustain their operations, including equitable pay for their staff and affordable space to operate and provide services to Bellevue residents. Bellevue is a leader and convener of human services agencies and other stakeholders in order to align efforts and increase the collective impact of services provided in Bellevue and across the region. Planning and provision of human services to Bellevue residents is interconnected with other city and regional planning and service provision efforts. The city strives to ensure that residents can access the services they need within close proximity of their place of residence and through culturally- and linguistically-specific means.

### HUMAN SERVICES NEEDS UPDATE

Since 1989 the City of Bellevue has published the Human Services Needs Update at the beginning of each two-year funding cycle. This report has offered a summary of human services trends, needs, disparities and gaps in Bellevue, East King County, King County and Washington. It helps the Human Services Commission develop focus areas for funding recommendations to the City Council, guides the City's Human Services division and provides information for other city departments, faith communities, concerned community groups and nonprofit health and human services providers in King County.

### ACCESS TO SERVICES

**49%** Survey respondents able to access a human services provider when needed.<sup>1</sup>

**43%** Survey respondents able to access services that supported language and culture needs.<sup>2</sup>



## Housing and Homelessness

The number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Bellevue and across the region is rapidly increasing. There are significant disparities about who is more likely to be experiencing homelessness. Individuals identifying as American Indian, Alaskan Native or Indigenous individuals; Black, African American, or African; Hispanic/Latino; Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander as well as individuals identifying as more than one race are overrepresented in King County's population experiencing homelessness (i.e., larger percent of unhoused population than County population overall).<sup>3</sup> Similarly, individuals living with disabilities and those with a behavioral health condition are more likely to experience homelessness.<sup>4</sup> Supporting our residents who are experiencing homelessness is accomplished through sub-regional and regional collaboration.

### HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS BY THE NUMBERS

- 14 percent increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness in King County from 11,751 in 2020 to 13,368 in 2022.<sup>5</sup>
- 40,871 individuals experienced homelessness during 2020.<sup>6</sup>
- 166 percent increase in the number of Bellevue School District students experiencing homelessness from 249 students in the 2021-2022 school year to 663 students in the 2022-23 school year.<sup>7</sup>



## Food Security and Financial Assistance Opportunities and Challenges

There is an increasing number of Bellevue residents experiencing food insecurity and in need of financial assistance to maintain stability and well-being for their household. There are significant racial disparities in resources and food security in Bellevue. Black and Hispanic/Latino residents are disproportionately represented amongst those who are rent-burdened. Non-Hispanic Black residents are receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits at a rate that is nearly five times greater than their Non-Hispanic White counterparts. Both Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian and Hispanic Latino residents also receive SNAP benefits at a higher rate than the population overall, indicating significant food needs.<sup>8</sup>

## FOOD SECURITY AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BY THE NUMBERS

- 23 percent increase in the number of severely cost burdened Bellevue residents, from 15.4 percent of residents in 2019 (representing 22,803 residents) to 18.2 percent in 2022 (representing 27,960 residents).<sup>9</sup>
- Bellevue residents accessing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits increased in 2021 (most recent data available), after a 5-year period of decline prior to the COVID pandemic.<sup>10</sup>
- Prior to the pandemic, in 2019, 15.5 percent of Bellevue School District students qualified for free and reduced-price lunch. In 2023, 19.9 percent of students qualified (not including students at three schools that provide lunch to all students).<sup>11</sup>



## Health and Well-being

Across the US, there are significant needs related to physical and behavioral health that have increased following the COVID-19 pandemic. While needs are rising across demographic groups, there is variability in access to appropriate behavioral health services by race/ethnicity and language. Both fatal and non-fatal drug overdoses have shown a significant upward trend in recent years, largely driven by the arrival of fentanyl.

## Violence Prevention and Survivor Support and Advocacy

Service data demonstrates the significant and ongoing need for support for domestic violence survivors in Bellevue. Service data also highlights the need for support for individuals experiencing other types of violence such as sexual assault, abuse or trauma. The Bellevue School District identified violence as a contributor to families facing eviction and experiencing homelessness.

## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING BY THE NUMBERS

- Nearly 20 percent of 6th graders reported having seriously contemplated suicide.
- Youth who are sexually and gender diverse and those with disabilities have increased risk of mental health challenges.<sup>12</sup>
- 78 confirmed overdose deaths in East King County in 2022.
- 56 percent of overdose deaths in King County in 2022 were Non-Hispanic White individuals. 16 percent were non-Hispanic Black individuals and 10 percent were Hispanic individuals. Only 7 percent of the County population is Non-Hispanic Black, indicating non-Hispanic Black individuals are disproportionately impacted by overdose death.
- King County EMS responded to 71 overdose events in East King County in August of 2023.<sup>13</sup>

## Education and Employment

Many Bellevue residents experience access to high quality education. However, there are disparities in the educational outcomes for some students of color, students experiencing homelessness, students with disabilities and students of other marginalized demographics. Unemployment in Bellevue is relatively low overall. Black and Indigenous residents experience disproportionate rates of unemployment.<sup>14</sup> Factors such as access to affordable child care and accessible transportation can have a significant impact on employment. Community members identify both as challenges in Bellevue.

## Hate, Discrimination and Bias

A number of demographic groups report experiences of hate, discrimination or bias, including Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), immigrants and refugees, and LGBTQIA2S+ communities. Support to address discrimination or racism stands out as a significant service gap. Communities emphasize the need for representation at decision-making tables to reduce the prevalence of bias and misunderstanding of community needs.

## EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT BY THE NUMBERS

- Fewer than 20 percent of students experiencing homelessness and only approximately one quarter of students with disabilities in the Bellevue School District met benchmarks in the 2022-2023 school year.
- Students who are experiencing homelessness, those who are English Language Learners, and those with disabilities graduate at significantly lower rates than students overall in the Bellevue School District.
- When looking at graduation rates by race/ethnicity, students identifying as Hispanic/Latino graduate at lower rates than other racial/ethnic groups.<sup>15</sup>





### Services for Older Adults

Older adults identify significant challenges in accessing services, especially for those with lack of access to technology. There is a need for increased in-person services and printed materials. Older adults identify a need for increased access to transportation to support meeting their basic needs and to support ongoing involvement in their community. There is a need for affordable housing that meets the specific needs of older adults. Housing options should allow individuals to age with dignity and choice, which includes services to age in place and meet individual needs.

### Services for Individuals Living with a Disability

Providers note difficulties for individuals with a disability who do not speak English as a first language and highlight the need for additional capacity for community-specific outreach and engagement. There is a need to consider intersections between disability and other marginalized identities when designing and evaluating programs. Providers and community members highlight service needs for children and youth with disabilities. Families face challenges in navigating access to both Early Supports for Infants and Toddlers and school district services, particularly when facing language and cultural barriers.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND SERVICES

- **Suburban Cities Funders Collaborative.** Collaborate to identify regional human services needs and to support collective planning and support for providers. Provide a joint application and reporting system to agencies receiving funding to reduce barriers to accessing funds.
- **King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA).** Coordinate with regional homelessness authority to support equitable provision of services and funding.
- **Homelessness Outreach Program.** Provide direct outreach services to unhoused community members to address barriers and connect with housing, shelter and services.
- **Community Crisis Assistance Team (CCAT).** Improve outcomes for individuals interacting with the Bellevue Police Department by providing enhanced police/community member interactions and connecting them to community services. Identify alternatives to jail or the hospital, when appropriate, and facilitate access to resources that address the root cause of the situation.
- **Bellevue Fire CARES.** Work with individuals at the time of a 911 call, during their time of greatest need, providing immediate crisis intervention. Follow with ongoing case management to provide connection to resources and services to address root causes of the crisis.

## Challenges and Opportunities

As Bellevue, along with other communities throughout the region, grows and diversifies, stakeholders are presented with opportunities to adapt their approaches to address shifting needs, particularly the disparity in human services needs created by systemic inequities. As the human services system responds to increasing and changing needs, the well-being and breadth of the human services infrastructure directly impacts the well-being of communities.

### Changing Demographics and Meeting Needs in a Culturally Specific Way

Bellevue is growing and changing, with ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, disability, gender and sexual diversity.<sup>16</sup> The changing demographics of Bellevue also intersect with income disparities across racial groups. The human services infrastructure has struggled to adapt to the changing needs of the community. There is a significant need for increased access to culturally- and linguistically-specific services.

### Disproportionate Impact by Race and Language

Residents have different experiences based on their race and language spoken, which impacts well-being of residents in the City of Bellevue and their access to human services. There is increasing demand for human services and growing challenges, particularly for BIPOC communities. COVID-19 had a disproportionate impact on communities of color. While the impact of the pandemic lingers for all residents, particularly those of low- and moderate-incomes, disparities by race and ethnicity are significant across housing, health and well-being, food security and other human services needs.

### Knowledge of Available Resources

Within the increasing number of residents in need of support are those who have not previously needed human services. There is a lack of knowledge of available resources and the need for continuing and expanded efforts to help residents understand and connect to resources and support.

## CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

- Between 2000 and 2022, the percentage of Bellevue residents identifying as Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) more than doubled and the percentage of foreign-born residents grew at a similar pace (growing from 25 percent to 43 percent over that same time period).
- Nearly 50 percent of Bellevue residents speak a language other than English at home and 15.6 percent have limited English proficiency.<sup>17</sup>
- Approximately 5.5 percent of the adult population in the Seattle/Tacoma Metropolitan area identifies as LGBTQIA2S+, which places it third in the nation for largest LGBTQIA2S+ population by metropolitan area.<sup>18</sup>
- Approximately 7.3 percent of Bellevue residents have a disability.<sup>19</sup>
- White and Asian American Pacific Islander residents of Bellevue have the highest proportion of residents with income over \$150K, while Black and Hispanic/Latino residents have the highest proportion of residents with incomes under \$50K.<sup>20</sup>

## Communication, Collaboration, and Convening

Bellevue plays a unique role in bringing diverse stakeholders together in the service of collaborative efforts to increase the well-being of Bellevue residents. The co-design of human services between residents and the City can create human services models that meet the needs of communities. Residents emphasize that representation at decision-making tables is necessary to ensure community voices are heard, including community members with diverse lived experience and consumers of human services.



## Growing Challenges for Human Services Providers

The community's human services needs are escalating, and agencies are struggling to sustainably meet the demand, due to the decline in COVID-19 related funding, workforce challenges, the need for physical space to provide services and other strains on their provision of services. Workforce challenges include difficulty hiring and retaining staff, particularly in a high-cost region like East King County. These challenges are being echoed throughout the state and country, along with the significant pay gap between human services/non-profit care fields and employees in other industries. These economics present significant short- and long-term challenges to the human services infrastructure in Bellevue and beyond.

### WAGE STUDY

A 2023 wage equity analysis by the University of Washington found that employees in the human services sector make approximately 30 percent less than employees in other fields with comparable skills and responsibilities.<sup>21</sup>

## Cost of Living, Availability of Housing and Availability of Services

Community members and providers identify service gaps across the human services continuum and related areas. Lack of affordable housing options and cost of living are cited as factors contributing to human services needs across community focus groups. Some community members note frustration about only being able to access services that meet their needs outside of the City of Bellevue. This feedback is particularly prevalent from LGBTQIA2S+ residents.

## Human Services Policy Summary

The City's role is to identify the most significant human services needs and disparities in the City of Bellevue, invest in the basic building blocks of the community, and advance equitable outcomes for all.

## Citywide

The policies in this subsection aim to make Bellevue a welcoming, safe and just community marked by fairness and equity and build public awareness and engage the community in planning for human services needs. Bellevue supports the human services system as a facilitator, funder, planner and educator in order to create a community with equitable opportunity for all.

### Facilitator and Educator

Human services is a collaborative effort between the City and many other organizations. One of the roles that the City plays in this effort is to bring many groups together to create dialogue, encourage partnerships, build support for actions and shape funding solutions. The City educates the broader public on the needs of the community, builds knowledge between organizations and shares information about resources with those who can benefit from them.

### Planner and Funder

Bellevue is a leader in coordinating and supporting local, regional and national efforts to address local human services needs. The City uses its regulatory powers to protect the rights of all community members and invests in culturally and linguistically-specific service delivery that honors the strength of Bellevue's diverse community. The City supports systems that help people participate in the life of the city, especially groups that have unique needs such as youth, seniors and people with visible or invisible disabilities. Recognizing that housing and health care are foundational to the ability of an individual or family to participate in the activities of the community, the City supports services that help people remain housed or quickly find housing and provide access to health care. Bellevue works with partners to support a network of service delivery points across the city to create a community where equitable outcomes exist for all.

## GOAL & POLICIES

### Goal

Create a community in which each and every member has equitable access and opportunity to meet their essential physical, behavioral health, economic and social needs; to feel a sense of belonging; and to thrive. Invest in the basic building blocks of the community, including human services, to ensure the development of healthy individuals and families.

### Policies

#### Citywide

- HS-1.** Make Bellevue a welcoming, safe and just community marked by fairness and equity provided to those disproportionately affected by poverty, discrimination and oppression including people with disabilities, people of color, people of all ages, religions, genders, gender expressions and sexual orientations, and other historically marginalized community members.
- HS-2.** Support the human services system as a facilitator, funder, planner and educator in order to create a community with equitable opportunity for all.

#### Facilitator and Educator

- HS-3.** Engage service providers and community organizations in dialogue regarding the functioning of the present service systems, emerging needs, identification of inequities and the building of a complete system of services.
- HS-4.** Develop a broad base of community support for human services, including equitable and timely investment by public and private institutions to ensure human services operations are sustainable, their employees receive a living wage that is equitable, and to address critical shortages in staff in multiple service areas, including childcare, behavioral health and services to those experiencing homelessness.
- HS-5.** Encourage partnerships among public and private institutions, schools, human services providers and others to collectively address needs of Bellevue's low- and moderate-income residents.
- HS-6.** Partner with other city stakeholders to develop community-serving facilities augmented to support residents and coordinate resource distribution and services before, during and after a hazard event.
- HS-7.** Provide leadership and work in partnership with community agencies to encourage and promote the development and expansion of the supply of affordable, accessible and quality child care which meets the diverse needs of the community in all areas of the city.

See also Land Use policy related to child care, [LU-41](#).

- HS-8.** Facilitate the community response to human service needs. Involve the city in direct delivery of human service needs when delivery is consistent with a department's mission or as a last resort when the city is the most equitable and effective provider or there are no other qualified providers.
- HS-9.** Educate community members in a variety of formats of the critical human services available to ensure equitable access to information.
- HS-10.** Educate human services providers, community stakeholders and city leadership on the needs of the community and the City's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging to support the funding process.

## Planner and Convener

- HS-11.** Use City regulatory powers to protect the rights of all community members and advance health and human service objectives to ensure that Bellevue is an equitable community where anyone can thrive.
- HS-12.** Consider the human services impacts of proposed legislation prior to formal adoption.
- HS-13.** Assess community needs and make recommendations to inform the city's human services funding priorities and decisions.
- HS-14.** Identify opportunities and develop strategies that are preventative in their approach to human services needs and that address the underlying systemic inequities that contribute to the need for human services.
- HS-15.** Improve access to services throughout the community by removing physical and systemic barriers and empowering individuals to overcome other barriers that may exist.
- HS-16.** Support and actively coordinate with local, regional and national efforts that address local human services needs to ensure local programs complement programs provided at the regional, county, state and federal level.
- HS-17.** Support agencies locating human services facilities in Bellevue and, where appropriate, encourage efficiencies through agency collocation and collaboration.
- HS-18.** Support a network of service points that are easily accessible by Bellevue residents and workers, geographically distributed within the city and proximate to public transit.
- HS-19.** Allocate funds and other resources throughout the continuum of human service needs by soliciting proposals from community agencies providing human services benefiting low- and moderate-income residents.
- HS-20.** Create a community where equitable outcomes exist for all by investing in services that address or eliminate inequities which may be experienced disproportionately based on a resident's age, religion, race, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, sexuality, and neighborhood.

- HS-21.** Encourage and invest in culturally and linguistically specific service delivery that respects the dignity and honors the strengths that Bellevue’s diverse individuals and families, offer to the community, while supporting them to achieve their self-identified goals.
- HS-22.** Encourage services that support Bellevue residents and those who work in Bellevue to maintain or advance their employment opportunities.
- HS-23.** In coordination with the region, support an intentional local community response to homelessness with housing, shelter and supportive services provided to all demographics.
- HS-24.** Address the crisis of housing instability and homelessness by providing for services that enable residents to remain housed or become re-housed.
- HS-25.** Support services and investments that strengthen the ability of children and youth to participate in their community.
- HS-26.** Support services and investments that provide access to healthy, culturally responsive and affordable food for all people.
- HS-27.** Support services and investments that allow older adults, including those who are low-income or experiencing homelessness, to access the services and supports necessary to be included in community life and to age in the location and manner they prefer.
- HS-28.** Support services and investments for children and youth that lead to equitable outcomes in health, wellness and education and meet essential needs, including shelter, housing, food, physical and behavioral health services, and safety from harm and violence.
- HS-29.** Recognize behavioral health conditions, including substance use disorder, as chronic and treatable diseases that are best managed through the behavioral health system, including walk-in crisis and inpatient treatment programs.
- HS-30.** Support services and investments in equitably available and proven behavioral health care services, including mobile integrated healthcare, co-responder programs, walk-in crisis and inpatient treatment programs, prevention and education programs, emergency overdose treatment and resource navigation for those seeking treatment.

See also Housing policies related to preventing homelessness, [HO-68](#) to [HO-77](#).

## Citations

- 1 City of Bellevue. 2023. Bellevue Performance Measures Survey.
- 2 City of Bellevue. 2023. Bellevue Performance Measures Survey.
- 3 King County Point in Time Count, 2022
- 4 American Community Survey, 2019
- 5 King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA). 2022. Point in Time (PIT) Count, Retrieved from <https://kcrha.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/PIT-2022-Infograph-v7.pdf>
- 6 The King County Department of Community and Human Services Cross Systems Homelessness Analysis; King County Point in Time Count, 2022 Retrieved from <https://kcrha.org/data-overview/king-county-point-in-time-count/>
- 7 Email communication from Bellevue School District October 18, 2023
- 8 American Community Survey, 2017-2021 Average
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- 11 Email Communication from Bellevue School District December 5, 2023
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- 14 U.S. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, QWI Explorer, 2021
- 15 Washington State OSPI, 2022-2023
- 16 Washington State Office of Financial Management
- 17 American Community Survey, 2022
- 18 American Community Survey, 2017-2021
- 19 American Community Survey, 2022
- 20 American Community Survey, 2017-2021
- 21 <https://socialwork.uw.edu/wageequitystudy>



# Parks, Recreation and Open Space

## VISION

**Bellevue is a “City in a Park.”**

Bellevue builds a healthy community through an integrated and accessible system of exceptional parks, natural areas and recreation opportunities. In Bellevue everyone can connect to each other and to nature through experiences that help them to live, grow and thrive.

## PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE SCOPE

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space element is about how the city plans for, acquires and maintains parks, trails and open spaces and how it develops recreational activities and programs.

## INTRODUCTION

Bellevue’s natural environment has long been central to its quality of life. The city lies between Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish, touching the foothills of the Cascade Mountains. Within the city are hundreds of acres of urban forests, wetlands and streams that support wildlife. Recognizing this unique natural setting, Bellevue is a “City in a Park.” Within a fast-growing city, our parks and open spaces serve as a reminder of the natural world.

Bellevue’s parks, recreation and open space system includes land and water access, greenways and trails, recreation amenities, programs and services that are treasured community assets. The system provides opportunities for the community to gather, play, learn and connect with nature, while protecting the city’s natural resources and cultural landscapes. It is expected that everyone in Bellevue can enjoy outstanding parks and recreation facilities through delivery of programs and spaces that are high-quality, accessible, safe and culturally responsive.

To provide a well-maintained and responsive parks, recreation and open space system, the city embraces partnerships and seeks opportunities to collaborate with all sectors of the community. These collaborations promote effective use of public funds, enhance programming and service delivery and invite the community to share in the mission.

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM PLAN

The Parks and Open Space System Plan guides the long-range vision for acquisition and development of parks and trails and preservation of open space. It also sets the standards whereby the system is operated and maintained. The plan is a foundational tool in developing the Parks & Community Services Department’s Capital Investment Program.





## TODAY'S CONDITIONS AND TOMORROW'S PROJECTIONS

### Parks, Recreation and Open Space Today and Tomorrow

Parks, recreation and open space facilities are used regularly by people that live, work and visit Bellevue. System-wide, it is estimated that over one million visits are made to parks facilities each year. In general, park users report a high level of satisfaction with parks and recreation opportunities and see the parks, recreation and open space system as a key element of a high quality of life.

As of 2024, Bellevue Parks & Community Services manages over 2,700 acres of parks and open space. The system features a variety of park lands, from small neighborhood parks to large, multi-use community parks to natural areas managed for resource conservation. About 98 miles of trails managed by Parks & Community Services weave through Bellevue's parks and greenway corridors. Historic structures and art installations are also found throughout the system.

Large multi-use community centers and other recreation facilities serve different geographic areas of the city and offer services targeting specific population groups. Athletic fields and courts support organized outdoor sports such as soccer, football, lacrosse, basketball, cricket, baseball, golf and tennis. Other recreation facilities found in parks include playgrounds, picnic shelters, off-leash dog areas, an aquatic center and community garden plots. There are opportunities for visual and performing arts, special community events, after-school and summer day camps, youth leadership development and life-long learning skills.

Bellevue recreation programs continue to be popular with tens of thousands of participants through community centers, programs for older adults, the Bellevue Youth Theatre, youth sports, skate parks, day camps and other events and opportunities. Annually, several thousand volunteers from the Bellevue community support the programs and services offered by Parks & Community Services.



Bellevue is an attractive place for commercial and residential development in part because of the extensive and well-maintained system of parks and open space. Growth of the population is associated with increased demand for system facilities and will require additional facilities be added to the system to maintain an adequate level of service for the community. Commensurate resources and funding will also be needed to maintain parks to their typically high standard. Several aspects of growth, along with demographic trends, will impact the future of the parks, recreation and open space system in Bellevue.

## RECREATION PROGRAM PLAN

The Recreation Program Plan defines the City's role as a recreational provider in the system, states a vision for recreation programming and establishes a set of priorities to guide the investment of public resources in support of the recreation program vision.

Bellevue has become and will continue to develop as a diverse city. The increasing diversity of park users will affect the type of services and recreation offered in the future. For instance, older adults will need recreation facilities and programs that cater to their specific needs. Growing ethnic and cultural diversity creates opportunities to provide a wider variety of sports, arts and cultural events to all Bellevue residents.

New parks and trails will be needed to serve areas of growth across the city, in addition to currently underserved areas. Maintaining and increasing access to parks and trails is a priority. Neighborhoods like Downtown, BelRed and the western side of Wilburton are expected to see extensive growth. These neighborhoods need to have access to parks and quality outdoor space for many people in a relatively constrained area. Apartment condo and townhome buildings will make up most of the housing growth in Bellevue and multi-family housing does not always have dedicated private parks facilities for residents. Careful parks planning and acquisition strategies will be necessary to ensure that all areas of the city have equitable access to safe, diverse and quality recreation opportunities.



## Opportunities and Challenges

### Neighborhood Diversity

The population is not spread evenly across all of Bellevue's neighborhoods. Downtown Bellevue offers the opportunity for an urban lifestyle preferred by some residents. BelRed and the western edge of Wilburton are developing into dense mixed-use centers as well. At the same time, Bellevue is home to many low-density neighborhoods with detached homes and small apartment complexes and townhomes. Parks designed for urban areas differ substantially from those designed to serve lower density residential areas. A variety of parks, recreation facilities and services are needed to serve people in Bellevue's diverse neighborhoods. Adding parks to meet the needs of residents that are currently underserved as well as future residents will add complexity and richness to the overall system.

### Regional Partnerships

The city pursues a variety of partnerships to provide park facilities and programming of a diverse nature to meet needs of the community and changing recreation trends. Establishment of greenways is one example where partnerships are currently used. Greenways provide important active transportation linkages between neighborhoods, schools, parks and activity areas. The city is actively pursuing a coordinated system of greenways that provide



multiple benefits for residents of the community and natural environment. Examples of major greenway initiatives are the Eastrail corridor and the Mountains to Sound Greenway. The city is working with regional partners to design a new separated trail facility extending the entire length of the city from north to south in the case of the Eastrail corridor and east to west along the I-90 corridor with the Mountains to Sound Greenway. As the community continues to grow, additional partnerships will be needed that provide funding, land and innovative options to create accessible, inclusive and varied parks and recreation opportunities.

### Serving All Areas of the City

While Bellevue's park system is generally well-distributed throughout the community, several areas of the city are less served by parks and trails than others. For example, the Eastgate area south of I-90 included no park facilities at the time of annexation in 2012. The Parks and Open Space System Plan identifies underserved areas of the city and includes a plan for increasing access to the parks system.

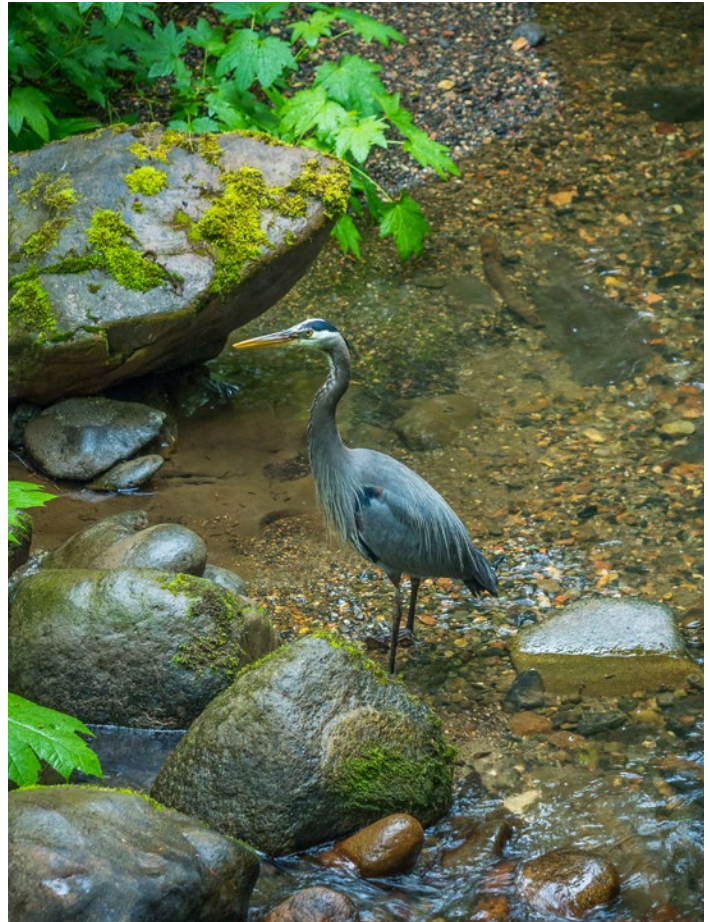


### Rising Land Costs and Land Scarcity

There are competing demands for the fixed supply of land within the city. As commercial and residential development continues to occur, land for parks and open space becomes scarcer and more expensive. At the same time, Bellevue needs to continue to acquire new park land to maintain and increase access to parks and natural areas. The resulting high cost of land across the city, particularly in Downtown and redeveloping areas

of BelRed and Wilburton, along with the scarcity of large tracts of undeveloped land, point to a future of smaller, targeted acquisitions. Such acquisitions would make it difficult to fully serve community needs, put pressure on existing larger parks in the system and limit the ability to satisfy new recreation trends that may require large facilities.

In response, there are opportunities for the city to reduce impacts of land scarcity. Bellevue will need to look for ways to increase acquisition, dedication or other public interests in park land through the private development process. Connectivity of open space is a priority through the development process. For land acquired, options will be assessed to maximize available space that does not contain sensitive natural resources. This may include shared park-use facilities or improvements that could expand the use of facilities. In some cases, the alignment of multiple city objectives under one project may bring together resources to acquire or develop larger properties for public recreation use. Given the increasing cost and scarcity of land, the city will work creatively with many partners to continue to increase access to parks and provide varied recreation opportunities for the community.



### Stewardship of Facilities and Natural Resources

Bellevue prides itself on having well-maintained facilities and strong natural resource management through its parks and open space system. However, with additional growth in the area there is likely to be increased demand and use of parks facilities that may result in their degradation if maintenance and land stewardship resources are not maintained at a high level.

Resource stewardship also provides an opportunity for Bellevue to further the “City in a Park” image. Opportunities may arise in parks to plant trees or restore a stream. As parks are developed there is an eye towards taking advantage of natural water infiltration and installing green stormwater infrastructure where needed. When constructing or renovating buildings the city strives to use sustainable materials and practices. In the face of climate change, Bellevue parks provide an example for environmental stewardship.



## Parks, Recreation and Open Space Policy Summary

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space element contains policies that guide the acquisition, development and operation of Bellevue's parks and open space system. It also contains policies for recreation programs and the provision of community services. Policies are separated into four categories according to different areas of service to the Bellevue community.

### Parks and Open Space System

Bellevue values equitable access to the parks system, providing new recreation opportunities that serve the diverse needs of the Bellevue community, protecting environmentally sensitive areas and maximizing available resources, such as land, funding and partnership opportunities.

### Recreation and Community Services

Bellevue recognizes that use of the park system is maximized by offering a wide variety of education, recreation and social programming for all members of the community. Activities address all ages and provide culturally specific recreational pursuits as well as inter-generational opportunities.

### Stewardship

The community values conserving and protecting natural resources. Bellevue works to maintain parks and open spaces for their recreational uses as well as for their beauty and contribution to a functioning ecosystem.

### Maintenance, Renovation and Redevelopment

Bellevue has a long-standing tradition of providing impeccably maintained and high-functioning parks, trails and open space.



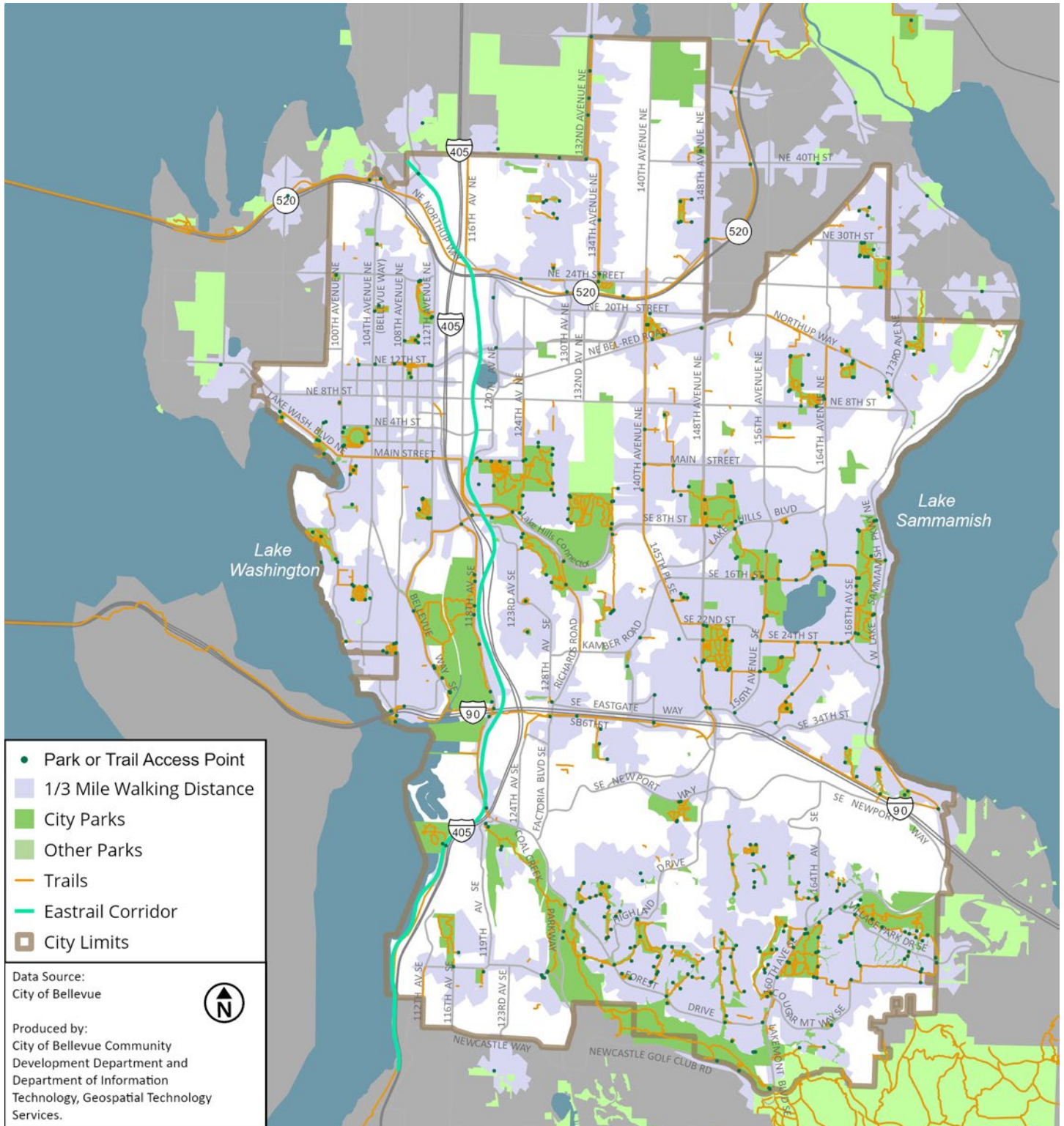
## Map PA-1. Parks, Open Space, Community Centers and Trails

Bellevue works to expand and connect the parks and open space system. The map shows the system as of 2024.



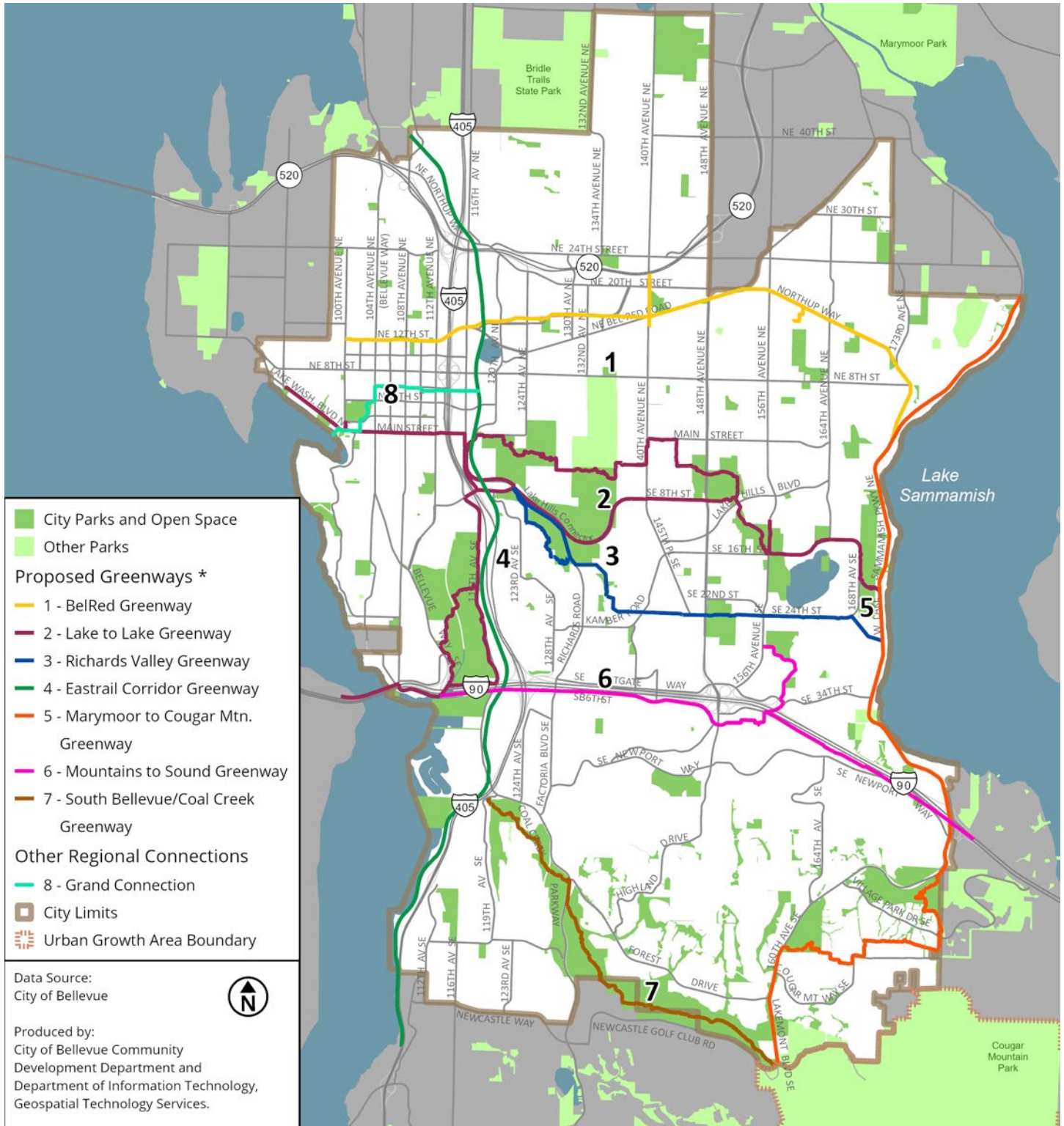
## Map PA-2. Park Access

The map shows areas of the city that are within a 1/3 mile of a public park or trail access point. Bellevue continues to work to increase access to parks and trails for all residents.



## Map PA-3. Regional Park Facilities and Greenway Connections

The regional park facilities and greenways in Bellevue connect the city with the rest of the region. Please refer to the Parks and Open Space System Plan for more details.



## GOAL & POLICIES

### Goal

To build a healthy community through an integrated and accessible system of exceptional parks, natural areas and recreation opportunities.

### Policies

#### Parks and Open Space

- PA-1.** Establish a coordinated and connected system of open space and greenways throughout the city that provide multiple benefits including preserving natural systems, protecting wildlife habitat and corridors, enhancing scenic character, and providing land for recreation.
- PA-2.** Obtain land throughout the community to meet present and future parks and open space needs, with emphasis on providing park land concurrent with growth and density of urban neighborhoods, in alignment with the Parks and Open Space System Plan.
- PA-3.** Equitably distribute a variety of parks, community centers and other indoor and outdoor recreation facilities throughout the city, with consideration of underserved areas and those neighborhoods expected to experience the most growth.
- PA-4.** Design parks and facilities to maximize available space and benefits for users, including offering parks with multiple functions and implementation of shared use facilities.
- PA-5.** Increase safe, non-motorized access between dwellings and parks, trails and open space through development of additional facilities and mobility improvements.
- PA-6.** Connect Bellevue's parks and trails to the regional system of nearby state, King County and neighboring city parks, greenways, trails and facilities.
- PA-7.** Obtain, for preservation, natural areas that are sensitive to development or represent a valuable ecological resource to the community.
- PA-8.** Acquire and develop waterfront property to increase public access to Bellevue's lakes.
- PA-9.** Where in alignment with parks and open space goals, maximize use of public lands by collaborating with other city projects and programs to incorporate utility, storm drainage, underutilized right-of-way and other public lands into the parks and open space system.
- PA-10.** Develop partnerships with other public agencies, non-profits and the private sector to provide and fund parks, open space, and cultural and recreation facilities in the city.



- PA-11.** Actively seek funding from a variety of sources to help implement a park acquisition and development program using tools such as levies, grants, impact fees, special taxing districts or other methods.
- PA-12.** Pursue private dedication of land and funds for park related purposes through a variety of methods such as donation, easement and land use code incentives.
- PA-13.** Encourage a network throughout the city of privately funded and managed facilities that serve recreation and cultural needs and may supplement or link with facilities and programs in the public system.
- PA-14.** Develop safe pedestrian and bicycle linkages between neighborhoods and major natural areas, recreation facilities, schools and commercial centers.
- PA-15.** Coordinate with Eastrail Corridor owners to develop, operate and maintain park and open space amenities in the Corridor, in addition to the multiuse trail, in areas where there is an identified need for added park and open space access.
- PA-16.** Assess needs and develop recreational facilities to meet demand for growing recreation and leisure activities, based upon user trends, demographics and community input.
- PA-17.** Use a community informed planning process to guide substantial development or redevelopment of a park property.
- PA-18.** Provide accessible signage and wayfinding tools to direct individuals to park facilities from nearby streets and trails in order to promote and facilitate public use of parks.
- PA-19.** Acquire new parks and develop additional public gathering spaces that could accommodate large events distributed across areas of the city near mass transit.
- PA-20.** Support development of elements of the Grand Connection that provide spaces for gathering and recreation, such as the Meydenbauer Bay waterfront and a lid park over I-405, as well as connections to parks and greenways.

## Recreation and Community Services

- PA-21.** Provide a variety of services and programs accessible to all throughout the city with special emphasis on underserved groups including low-income households, youth, individuals with disabilities and older adults.
- PA-22.** Provide opportunities for individuals to develop a sense of community through services, programs, events and volunteer activities, including opportunities that encourage cross-cultural and inter-generational interaction.
- PA-23.** Offer programs that are tailored to the unique resources, land and within the city's parks and open space system.
- PA-24.** Use parks to celebrate, acknowledge and preserve the full local history, including that of native populations through park design, signage, programming and cultural landscape conservation.

- PA-25.** Develop partnerships with non-profit organizations in planning, developing and utilizing facilities.
- PA-26.** Develop partnerships with the public school districts to utilize school sites to provide recreation and cultural facilities.
- PA-27.** Collaborate with school districts and private and non-profit providers to deliver a coordinated array of recreation, athletic instruction, arts, gathering spaces and community services.
- PA-28.** Promote partnerships with public and private service providers to meet cultural, recreational, and social needs of the community.
- PA-29.** Explore provision of human services at recreation facilities and community centers when they complement the site's recreational and cultural programming.
- PA-30.** Actively solicit community input in the planning and, delivery and evaluation of services and programs to ensure that they are relevant, equitable and accessible.
- PA-31.** Based upon data trends and inclusive outreach, monitor and respond to the community's evolving recreation and community service needs to ensure a mix of relevant and effective facilities that meet the needs of a diverse population, including programs that are culturally specific or promote intercultural exchange.

See also Human Services policies related to facilitating services, [HS-5](#) to [HS-8](#).

## Stewardship

- PA-32.** Design, construct, operate and maintain parks and facilities to preserve the ecology of natural systems.
- PA-33.** Seek opportunities to integrate natural drainage practices and green stormwater infrastructure into park design and management to provide community amenities and watershed benefits.
- PA-34.** Protect and retain, in a natural state, significant trees and vegetation in publicly and privately-dedicated greenbelt areas.
- PA-35.** Manage park lands to increase ecological health of tree canopy across the city, where appropriate and backed by planning and analysis.
- PA-36.** Seek opportunities to restore natural areas within parks and open space.
- PA-37.** Manage Bellevue's forest resources, including street trees, formal plantings and self-sustaining natural stands, to enhance their ecological function and ensure their long term vitality.
- PA-38.** Provide environmental stewardship and nature education programs to increase the community's awareness, understanding and appreciation of Bellevue's natural environment, while also informing the community about climate change threats and ways to prepare and build resilience to these changes.

See also Utilities policies related to stormwater management [UT-34](#) to [UT-38](#).

See also Climate and Environment policies related to urban forestry, [CL-16](#) to [CL-24](#).

- PA-39.** Develop, fund, and maintain streetscape and arterial landscaping along transportation corridors that provides valuable aesthetic, environmental, traffic calming and storm water management benefits helping maintain Bellevue’s “City in a Park” character.

## Maintenance, Renovation and Redevelopment

- PA-40.** Conserve energy, water and other natural resources, and practice efficient and environmentally responsible maintenance and operation procedures.

See also Capital Facilities policies on high performance facilities, [CF-15](#) to [CF-24](#).

- PA-41.** Evaluate existing parks and facilities, and renovate, where appropriate, to maximize efficient maintenance and operating practices, improve safety and accessibility for all users, and to reduce, where feasible, the impacts on adjacent properties.
- PA-42.** When feasible, install, renovate or replace facilities using materials, construction and operation methods that meet or exceed green building certification or other performance standards and are known to be weather-resistant and longer lasting.
- PA-43.** Develop parks and facilities in a quality manner to assure attractiveness, full utilization and long term efficiency.
- PA-44.** Establish a funding plan for long term maintenance and operation before constructing park-related facilities.
- PA-45.** Eliminate and prevent uses of lands and facilities that impact or are not in alignment with the intended use or plan.



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# Urban Design & the Arts

## VISION

**Bellevue creates extraordinary places for people and embraces the arts as an integral part of the community.**

Through keen attention to urban design, Bellevue's built environment is contributing to the memorability, livability and character of the city and its neighborhoods. Rich expressions of arts and culture are found throughout the city. They are embraced by residents and are "must see" attractions for visitors.

### URBAN DESIGN AND THE ARTS SCOPE

The Urban Design and the Arts element is about how the city guides the design of the built environment and provides programs and funding for all the services that support visual and performing arts in Bellevue.

## INTRODUCTION

The Urban Design and the Arts element seeks to create a city that is inviting, attractive and functional for all people. It provides a design framework for community development and guidelines that reinforce and enhance the city's positive characteristics and honors each of its unique neighborhoods. It also provides a foundation that recognizes the value of culture and the arts in shaping the identity of the community. These goals and policies apply to the continued development of the arts and the built environment in Bellevue, including buildings, streets, sidewalks, parks, neighborhoods and plazas. Combining aspects of architecture, landscape design, public works, art, sustainability and transportation systems, the urban design policies complement corresponding parts of the Environment, Housing, Land Use, Parks, Recreation and Open Space and Transportation elements.



## TODAY'S CONDITIONS AND TOMORROW'S PROJECTIONS

### Urban Design Today and Tomorrow

Urban design is a priority in Bellevue through the thoughtful arrangement and function of the natural and built environment to create livable communities. Bellevue exemplifies a "City in a Park" with tree-lined streets, public art, vast parks, natural areas, wooded neighborhoods, two large lakes and mountain views. Within its stunning natural setting, Bellevue offers many diverse experiences across its neighborhoods.

### Downtown

Bellevue's Downtown is a major regional economic center with dramatic increases in office, commercial and residential uses that have transformed the area into a thriving urban neighborhood with a large variety of services, amenities and nightlife. Sites and buildings in Downtown designed with interesting and memorable architecture and integrated public art help create an engaging and dynamic urban core. Pedestrian pathways, sidewalks, plazas, parks and open areas all work to make Downtown active and connected.

### Mixed Use Centers

Development within Bellevue's Mixed-Use Centers will complement growth in Downtown. BelRed and Wilburton-East Main are planned to experience the greatest physical transformation into denser urban districts with improved multimodal connectivity and light rail access, as well as increased office, commercial and residential development. Crossroads, Eastgate and Factoria are planned for housing and commercial growth with walkable access to retail and services. High-quality urban design will help support the functionality and livability of all Mixed-Use Centers by being interesting, attractive, safe and reflective of neighborhood identity, and complementary to its surroundings.

### Neighborhood Centers

Development within Bellevue's Neighborhood Centers can help enhance existing shopping and office centers as mixed-use neighborhood places with smaller locally-owned businesses and gathering spaces that residents can easily walk to, as well as housing opportunities. High-quality urban design will help create a distinct neighborhood feel and pedestrian-focused experience.

### Residential Areas

Bellevue's residential areas are why many people choose to live here. Ensuring the continuity and enhancement of each area's unique identity will be important as redevelopment, investment and infill development occur.

## Challenges and Opportunities

Development and growth present urban design and art-related challenges and opportunities for the city, including:

### Continued Urbanization and Densification

With the majority of population and employment growth planned for Bellevue's Mixed-Use Centers, these areas will experience greater density. Growth brings with it the challenge of ensuring that new development contributes positively to the city through design that is attractive, engaging and distinct. Designing new developments with context-appropriate landscaping, building design and public art, along with quality pedestrian facilities can improve the appearance and functionality of these developments and nearby areas, support and reinforce positive neighborhood qualities and improve livability.

### Designing for All Ages and Abilities

In many parts of the city, Bellevue's population continues to get older, while in Downtown, the population is getting younger. Designing the built environment for all ages and abilities helps ensure that all residents, workers and visitors experience Bellevue as an inspiring, functional and welcoming place to be.

### Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

The natural environment is a key part of Bellevue's identity. Incorporating natural elements into new development, especially in high-density areas, presents new opportunities for livability, sustainability and climate resilience. As the city changes, there are opportunities to enhance and expand the tree canopy, support landscape health and promote natural drainage as part of new development. Low-impact and sustainable development techniques can help protect and support natural features, reduce long-term environmental impacts and foster climate resilient communities.

## Community Gathering Places

A variety of welcoming community gathering places are needed throughout Bellevue. These can be a plaza, library, community center, place of worship, cafe, large or small park or shopping area. The design of these places, including the nearby streetscape, should facilitate safety and access, create a sense of belonging and community for all people and promote these areas as important community assets.

## Access to Transit and Transit-Oriented Development

High-capacity transit, including bus and light rail, will provide quick and easy access throughout Bellevue and connect to Seattle, Redmond and the larger region. Transit stations will operate as points of arrival into Bellevue and its neighborhoods. Designing nearby buildings, sites and public areas with attractive and accessible pedestrian and bicycle connections to transit can create a more equitable, sustainable and multi-modal city. These connections can be highlighted with engaging architecture, landscaping, art and recreational features.





## Urban Design & the Arts Policy Summary

The Urban Design and the Arts element addresses: Location-Specific Design, Street and Corridor Experience, Pedestrian Experience, Sustainable and Environmental Design, Arts and Culture and Landmarks and Historic Resources.

### Location-Specific Design

As Bellevue evolves it is important to consider design qualities that apply consistently throughout the city to reinforce the citywide public experience of a “City in a Park”. There are design qualities applicable to Bellevue’s mixed use areas, including Mixed-Use Centers and Neighborhood Centers, that contribute to the city’s urban form, address potential impacts to surrounding areas and provide variety in building, site and streetscape design. Development within Mixed-Use Centers can complement the significant growth and major transit investments planned in these areas. Development within Neighborhood Centers can establish these locations as local community gathering places that contribute to neighborhood identity.

### Street and Corridor Experience

Streets and corridors have a significant visual impact for all transportation users in connecting different parts of the city. Streetscape elements such as trees, landscaping, paving, lighting and public art contribute to an area’s design identity. Streets and corridors can incorporate Bellevue’s image as a “City in a Park” as well as elements of surrounding neighborhoods and natural areas.

### Arts and Culture

The arts are an important expression of how people think of and experience the city and each other, especially as the city continues to grow more culturally diverse. Bellevue seeks to foster a strong arts and cultural community supported through a wide range of artists, art and cultural institutions, privately- and publicly-owned artwork, events and arts groups that can introduce people to new cultures, traditions and art forms. These experiences can be integrated into many locations, including streetscapes, entrances to neighborhoods, buildings, plazas, landscapes and parks.



### Pedestrian Experience

The pedestrian experience can be enhanced by integrating amenities, such as weather protection, landscaping, public art, seating and other features, into both private development and public places to create a distinct sense of community and place. Well-designed public spaces throughout the city will offer people the opportunity to engage with their surroundings and gather with their community.

### Sustainable and Environmental Design

Sustainable and environmental design is how the city leads by example to enhance sustainability and commits to environmental stewardship. The design of buildings, streets and open spaces provide opportunities for the city to think creatively about incorporating sustainable features through building materials, energy-efficient technologies and green stormwater infrastructure.

### Landmarks and Historic Resources

A major aspect of Bellevue's character is its history and there are several features in the city that are reminders of the past. These include the Wilburton railroad trestle over SE 8th Street; historic coal mines south of I-90; Winters House along Bellevue Way SE; the plants, wildlife and agriculture of Mercer Slough; unique large trees; and a number of outstanding private gardens that are recognized for their long-standing contribution to the community. The city also acknowledges its history within parks, streets, public places and designated sites.

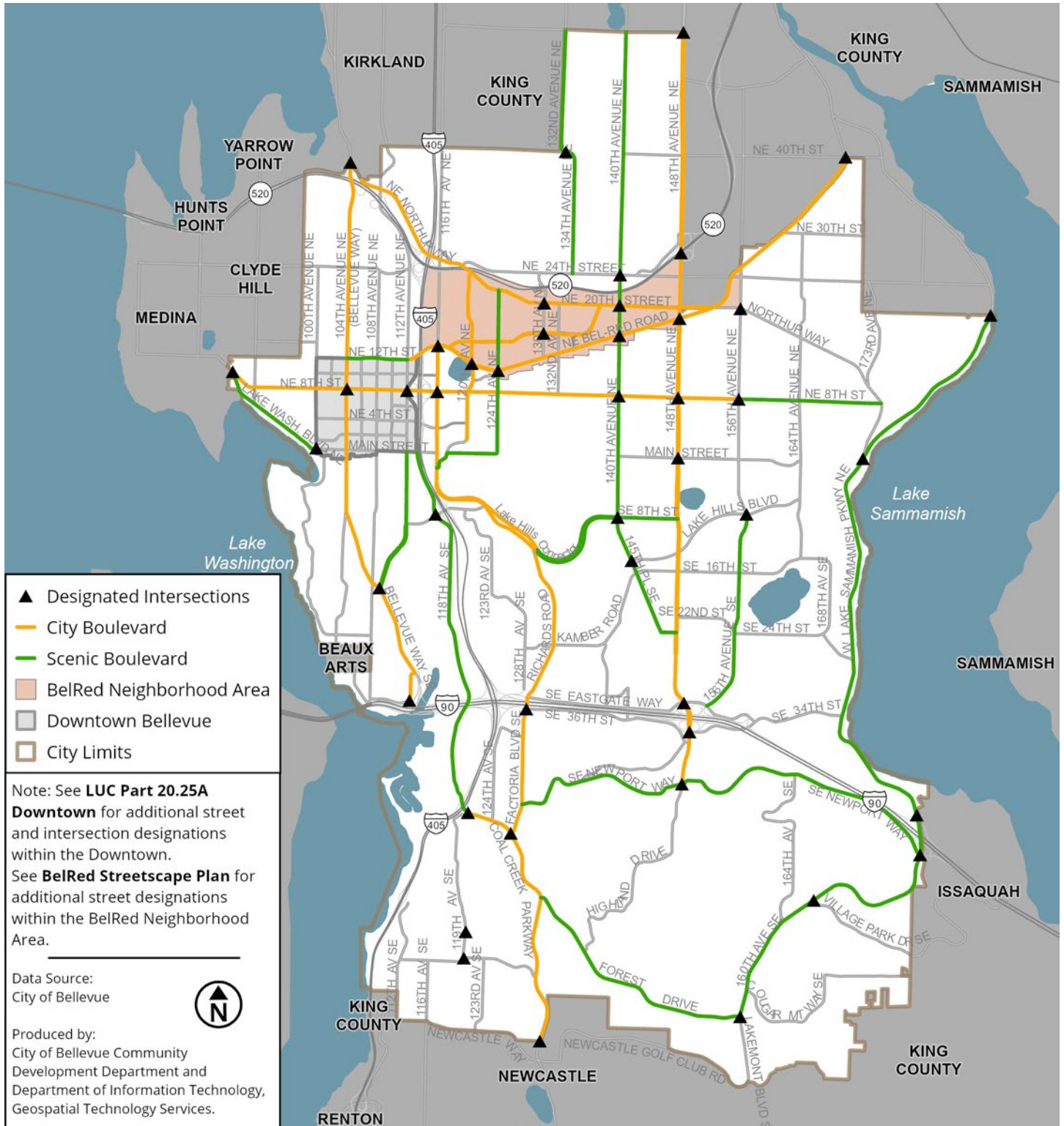
Bellevue's history began long before the arrival of settlers into the area, and tribes can provide valuable expertise regarding culturally significant sites and resources of the ancestral lands in which they have lived and continue to live. In the more recent past, the Japanese American community have contributed to Bellevue's economic, social and cultural vitality—much of which has been lost due to wartime incarceration during World War II.

Preserving historic resources reinforces local values, elevates the contributions and affirms the presence of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities, highlights diverse and unique heritages, provides for continuity over time and contributes to a sense of place within the region.



## Map UD-1. Urban Boulevard Network

This map designates streets and intersections that play a significant role in establishing Bellevue's visual identity.



## GOAL & POLICIES

### Goal

Foster a “City in a Park” that works for, celebrates and inspires its people through the design of the built environment, enhancement of its diverse neighborhoods and open spaces, preservation of its historic and natural features and support for the arts.

### Policies

#### Citywide Public Experience

- UD-1.** Preserve and enhance trees throughout the city to retain tree canopy and foster the city’s image as a “City in a Park.”
- UD-2.** Integrate high quality and inviting public open spaces and publicly accessible privately owned open spaces into major development.
- UD-3.** Provide a network of public places of various sizes and types throughout the community that create a variety of experiences and accommodations.
- UD-4.** Enhance the appearance of all neighborhoods with targeted city programs and right-of-way improvements.
- UD-5.** Encourage the use of high-quality and durable building materials that contribute to excellence in architecture and have a sense of permanence.
- UD-6.** Encourage the creation and preservation of iconic visual reference points and gateway elements in the community through innovative site and building designs.
- UD-7.** Ensure sign design and placement is compatible with building architecture, neighboring commercial signs and with the visual identity of the community.
- UD-8.** Develop and maintain a public signage and wayfinding system throughout the city that reinforces the identity of Bellevue and its distinct neighborhoods.
- UD-9.** Use landscape designs that incorporate native and climate-resilient plants suitable to the Pacific Northwest.
- UD-10.** Ensure public places provide a sense of security, seating, landscaping, accessibility and connections to surrounding uses and activities.
- UD-11.** Incorporate universal design principles in the design of indoor and outdoor spaces to ensure these environments are usable to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of age and ability.

See also Climate and Environment policies related to urban forestry, [CL-16](#) to [CL-22](#).

#### Mixed Use Areas

- UD-12.** Enhance and support a safe, active, connected and functional pedestrian environment that is engaging and attractive for all ages and abilities.
- UD-13.** Ensure that site and building design relates and connects to the surrounding community through architecture, landscaping and signage.

- UD-14.** Ensure that perimeter areas of more intense developments use site and building designs that reduce noise, wind, glare and shadow impacts on adjacent lower-scale development.
- UD-15.** Mitigate potential impacts of more intense developments to surrounding residential areas using landscaping, greenspace and other urban design elements as buffers.
- UD-16.** Encourage rooflines that create interesting and distinctive forms against the sky.
- UD-17.** Screen rooftop mechanical equipment, excluding solar panels, from public view through building architecture and other methods.
- UD-18.** Reduce the visual impact of parking lots, parking structures and service docks to public areas using architectural design, site design, landscaping, screening and appropriate lighting.
- UD-19.** Encourage site and building designs that integrate transit passenger amenities and provide convenient connections to existing or planned transit facilities.
- UD-20.** Preserve and enhance vegetation, giving special consideration to protecting groups of trees and associated undergrowth, specimen trees and other trees that define the natural characteristics of the area.
- UD-21.** Identify and preserve views of water, mountains, skylines or other unique landmarks from public places.

See also Land Use policies related to transit oriented development, [LU-28](#) to [LU-32](#).

## Mixed Use Center Design

- UD-22.** Employ design guidelines to affect public and private development form and building placement to promote solar access and reduce wind impacts in public spaces.
- UD-23.** Link increased intensity of development with increased benefits for the public realm, such as pedestrian-oriented building design, through-block connections, public spaces, activities, openness and views.
- UD-24.** Minimize glare from reflective building material and outdoor lighting into adjacent areas.
- UD-25.** Support and encourage the development of the Grand Connection as a cultural corridor by designing and creating spaces for performance, installation, and temporary-based art and cultural installations.
- UD-26.** Employ design guidelines that promote a consistent aesthetic quality and urban experience for those who use the Grand Connection.
- UD-27.** Encourage the development of the Grand Connection vision to create a unique, defining and signature experience for active transportation recognizing that the pedestrian experience and pedestrian safety take precedence over other modes.

See also Land Use policies related to Mixed Use Centers, [LU-19](#) to [LU-23](#).

- UD-28.** Catalyze the activation of BelRed Arts District as a unique destination focused on arts, culture, innovation and nightlife.
- UD-29.** Support the organization and visibility of the BelRed Arts District, increase the number of affordable creative spaces and foster connection and collaboration with the BelRed community in accordance with the BelRed Arts District Implementation Plan.

## Neighborhood Center Design

- UD-30.** Enhance Neighborhood Centers with exceptional landscaping, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and neighborhood specific design elements.
- UD-31.** Incorporate gateway features when reconstructing streets and/or sidewalks that define the experience of entering each Neighborhood Center.

See also Land Use policies related to Neighborhood Centers, [LU-16](#) to [LU-18](#).

## Street and Corridor Experience

- UD-32.** Design key city boulevards to be visually distinct from other streets and to reinforce the image of Bellevue as a “City in a Park.” (See [Map UD-1](#))
- UD-33.** Design scenic boulevards adjacent to parks, natural areas and open spaces to reflect natural elements of the surrounding areas and neighborhoods. (See [Map UD-1](#))
- UD-34.** Use appropriate street tree species that are well adapted to urban street conditions and provide identity and continuity to street corridors. Adequate soil volume shall be provided to support tree health and limit damage to sidewalk and street infrastructure.
- UD-35.** Identify opportunities at designated intersections to highlight neighborhood identity. (See [Map UD-1](#))
- UD-36.** Work with the state and federal governments on new freeway projects to see that landscaping and lighting enhance the community’s image while limiting noise.
- UD-37.** Encourage freeway corridor and freeway-abutting development to include landscaping and design features that enhance the community’s image.

## Pedestrian Experience

- UD-38.** Provide opportunities to enhance pedestrian and other mobility connections between buildings and public spaces through the development process.
- UD-39.** Provide design or art treatments for blank elevations and/or walls that are visible from the public realm.
- UD-40.** Provide both weather protection and access to sunlight in pedestrian areas and public places.

- UD-41.** Include clearly visible, safe and accessible walkways from street sidewalks and parking areas to building entrances and through large commercial blocks and developments.
- UD-42.** Ensure that walkway and trail furnishings do not interfere with pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

## Sustainable and Environmental Design

- UD-43.** Utilize greenroofs and walls where they enhance the character of Bellevue as a “City in a Park” and soften the visual impact of development.
- UD-44.** Integrate low impact development principles early in the site design and development process to reduce the environmental impact of impervious surfaces and integrate into the design of the adjacent area.
- UD-45.** Promote water conservation in landscape and irrigation system designs.
- UD-46.** Incorporate interpretative or educational materials to highlight sustainable design components.
- UD-47.** Incorporate principles of biophilic design into public and private development.

See also Climate and Environment policies related to low impact development, [CL-62](#) to [CL-65](#).

## Arts and Culture

- UD-48.** Cultivate public art that enhances neighborhood identity, builds community and engages the community in the artistic process.
- UD-49.** Encourage private and public developers to integrate art into the design of the public areas of their projects.
- UD-50.** Cultivate art and arts programs that facilitate involvement, engagement, communication, understanding and respect among the city’s diverse population.
- UD-51.** Support and encourage development, display and performance opportunities for a wide range of artistic expression throughout the city.
- UD-52.** Provide for a wide array of arts and cultural facilities that serve the city and the Eastside.
- UD-53.** Support and encourage lifelong arts education for all skill levels.
- UD-54.** Expand the city’s public art collection and involve the community in the selection of new major items.
- UD-55.** Support artists and arts groups working in the community through city programs.
- UD-56.** Provide for affordable space for artists and arts groups to practice, create, teach, perform and present their art.
- UD-57.** Encourage and enhance arts and cultural opportunities within Neighborhood Centers.

See also Land Use policies related to Neighborhood Centers, [LU-16](#) to [LU-18](#).

- UD-58.** Use art treatments, such as box wraps, where it can extend the usable life and deter vandalism of city owned equipment and facilities.
- UD-59.** Develop a process for designating festival streets that can be temporarily closed to vehicular traffic for pedestrian-oriented activities.
- UD-60.** Support partnerships and spaces for cross-cultural programming that contribute to intercultural engagement, learning and exchange.
- UD-61.** Recognize and affirm diverse heritages within the community through interpretative materials, artistic expression and placemaking.

## Landmarks and Historic Resources

- UD-62.** Preserve, enhance and interpret Bellevue's historical identity.
- UD-63.** Consider establishing a local preservation program to increase historic resources protections.
- UD-64.** Develop opportunities for preservation, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historically significant sites and structures and education about those sites.
- UD-65.** Identify and protect historic and cultural sites and structures from disasters and climate hazards.
- UD-66.** Establish a process of conducting historic surveys that identify, document and evaluate historic properties.
- UD-67.** Coordinate with affected tribes and agencies regarding planning and development activities that may impact significant natural, cultural, or archaeological resources.
- UD-68.** Work with tribes and other historically marginalized or underserved communities to raise awareness of and protect historically and culturally valuable resources to these communities.

# Shoreline Master Program

# Glossary



## GLOSSARY

The glossary provides definitions of words and terms that are used in a particular way in the Comprehensive Plan. Some terms may also be defined by the Land Use Code or other regulations. Where definitions are provided in the Land Use Code, the Land Use Code definitions take precedence for the purpose of the Code's application. All definitions for the Shoreline Management Element are listed at the end of the glossary.

## GENERAL TERMS

**Accessory Dwelling Unit** — A subordinate dwelling unit attached or detached to a single-family structure, duplex, triplex, townhome or other housing unit.

**Active (Nonmotorized) Transportation** — Personal mobility that includes fully human-powered mobility options such as walking and bicycling, and may include electric bicycles, scooters and other similarly-powered personal mobility devices.

**Affordable Housing** — Housing that is reserved for a household that earns up to 80 percent of the area median income, adjusted for household size; to be considered “affordable,” the monthly housing costs, including utilities other than telephone, must not exceed thirty percent of the household’s income. See: Extremely Low-Income Housing, Very Low-Income Housing, Low-Income Housing and Moderate-Income Housing.

**Area Median Income** — The annual household income for the Seattle-Bellevue Metropolitan Area as published on an annual basis by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH)** — A public interlocal agency whose members include Bellevue, King County and other cities in east King County, formed to preserve and increase the supply of housing for extremely low-, very low-, low- and moderate-income households on the Eastside.

**Behavioral Health** — Generally refers to mental health and substance use disorders, life stressors and crises and stress-related physical symptoms. Behavioral health care refers to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of those conditions.

**Best Available Science (BAS)** — Current scientific information used in the process to designate, protect or restore critical areas, that is derived from a valid scientific process as defined by WAC 365-195-900 through 925, now or as hereafter amended.

**Bicycle Facility** — An improvement that accommodates or encourages riding a bicycle. Some examples include bicycle parking and various types of on-street bicycle lanes and off-street multipurpose paths.

**Bicycle Route** — A route specifically designed and designated for bicycle travel, whether exclusively for bicyclists or to be shared with other transportation modes. Refer to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan for the various types of bicycle facilities that may be employed to create a bicycle route.

**Bicycle System Plan Map** — A map in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, that depicts the plan for a complete and connected network of bicycle routes serving the entire community that is compatible with and connected to regional and interjurisdictional facilities.

**Bioengineering** — The use of living plants in combination with non-living plants and inorganic materials in the reconstruction, stabilization and introduction of morphological and vegetative features particularly in streams or along shorelines.

**Biophilic Design** — Design approach that promotes connection between humans and nature within the built environment.

**Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan** — Bellevue’s six-year financing and implementation plan for capital projects.

**Capital Project/Improvement** — Major construction, acquisition or renovation activities that add value to a government’s fixed assets or which significantly increase the useful life of such assets.

**Circular Economy** — A model of resource production and consumption in which products and materials are kept in circulation for as long as possible through sharing, leasing, reuse, repair, refurbishment and recycling (including composting). A circular economy is one in which businesses and institutions are able to capture value, including cost savings, at multiple points within this continued circulation.

**Clustering (Development)** — A development design technique that places buildings on the part of a site that is least sensitive to impacts from development while preserving the natural features and functions on the remainder of the site.

**Collector Arterial** — A street that is two or three lanes that collects (or distributes) traffic from (or to) local streets within a neighborhood and provides connections to minor or major arterials. Collector arterials serve neighborhood traffic and also provide access to abutting land uses. They do not carry much through traffic and are designated to be compatible with residential neighborhoods and local commercial areas.

**Commute Trip** — A trip taken on any mode of travel by a worker from a worker’s home to a worksite with a regularly scheduled arrival time of 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. inclusive on weekdays.

**Commute Trip Reduction Act** — State legislation enacted in 1991 and incorporated into the Washington Clean Air Act. The law establishes goals for the reduction of commute trip vehicle miles by the employees of large employers.

**Complete Street** — An arterial street that provides context-appropriate facilities for people of all abilities to travel using their choice of mode, including vehicles, active transportation modes and transit, while promoting safe operation for all users.

**Comprehensive Plan** — The city’s long range plan prepared following the requirements of the Washington Growth Management Act, containing policies to guide local actions regarding land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities and economic development in ways that will accommodate at least the adopted 20-year targets for housing and employment growth.

**Consolidated Plan** — Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plans. Document that reviews current and future trends taking place in the community regarding housing and human services and outlines strategies to address needs.

**Countywide Centers** — Geographic areas identified by King County as areas of focus for transportation funds. The requirements for these centers are outlined in the King County Countywide Planning Policies. The Countywide Centers in Bellevue are in BelRed, Crossroads, Eastgate, Factoria and Wilburton and East Main. The boundaries differ from Neighborhood Areas by the same name and can be found in [Map LU-3](#).

**Countywide Planning Policies** — The countywide growth management policy plan required by the state Growth Management Act that promotes regional cooperation and specifies the roles and responsibilities of cities and the county. The King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) are developed by the Growth Management Planning Council, a council of representatives of cities and King County, consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy of the Puget Sound Regional Council.

**Critical Areas** — Areas required to be protected under the Growth Management Act, RCW 36.70A, including the following areas and ecosystems: (a) wetlands; (b) areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water; (c) fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas; (d) frequently flooded areas; and (e) geologically hazardous areas. (See Bellevue’s Land Use Code for current regulatory definition.)

**Critical Area Functions and Values** — Critical areas provide ecological functions that include biochemical, hydrological and food web and habitat processes at a variety of temporal and spatial scales. The economic or social roles provided by critical areas are also functions. Values are societal perceptions regarding the benefits provided by critical areas.

**Critical Areas Overlay District** — An area that includes designated critical areas together with adjacent land, within which special provisions apply to protect and restore the natural environment. The Critical Area Overlay District is comprised of the critical area and an area adjacent to the critical area that acts as a buffer or setback to protect the critical area.

**Cultural Competence** — A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system or agency that enable effective interactions in a cross-cultural framework.

**Cultural Landscape** — Elements of history and conservation that include architecture and physical cultural resources as well as locations and practices with meaning to specific native or immigrant cultures.

**Culturally Modified Tree** — A tree that has been modified by native people as a sign post or modified to support native technologies and cultural practices.

**Daylighting (stream)** — An action to excavate and restore a piped stream channel to an open (non-piped) natural condition.

**Development** — All structures and other modifications of the natural landscape above or below ground or water. Please note that a different definition of “Development” exists for implementation of the provisions of the Shoreline Management Act within the Shoreline Overlay District.

**Developed Environment** — Artificially created fixed elements, such as buildings, structures and surfaces, that together create the physical character of the area.

**Disability** — Disability, according to the social model, is a condition that arises when the physical, sensory, cognitive or psychological differences of an individual interact with societal structures, norms and environments that are not designed for their inclusion or success. It emphasizes that disability is not solely a consequence of a person’s condition. It is shaped by individuals and systems that place value on people’s bodies and minds based on societally constructed ideas of normalcy, intelligence and excellence and is also shaped by the extent to which society removes or constructs barriers, promotes or denies inclusion and fosters or denies equal opportunities for those with disabilities.

**Disparity** — A situation in which one group is systematically faring worse than another for reasons that are not due to the group’s needs, eligibility or preferences.

**District Energy** — District energy systems heat and/or cool multiple buildings using thermal energy produced by a central source (or sources), typically using hot and/or chilled water, which then flows through a network of insulated pipes to provide hot water, space heating, and/or air conditioning to connected buildings.

**Diversity** — People of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, disabilities, ages, religions, genders, sexual orientations and other diversity-related factors. At the root of this definition is an acknowledgement that differences exist between any two people.

**Downtown** — Bellevue’s primary center of retail, commercial and service activities as well as for high-density, residential development. Downtown Bellevue is designated a Regional Growth Center in VISION 2050 and an Urban Center in the Countywide Planning Policies.

**Eastside** — A geographic area that includes the King County communities east of Lake Washington.

**Eastrail** — The former Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) rail corridor in King County between Renton and Woodinville. The corridor is owned by multiple agencies and jurisdictions for multiple regional purposes including recreation, transportation and utilities infrastructure.

**Economic Cluster** — Clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field. Clusters allow firms to benefit as if they had greater scale or as if they had joined with others without sacrificing flexibility.

**Ecosystem** — The interacting and dynamic community of living organisms and the physical environment in a defined geographic area.

**Embodied Carbon** — The greenhouse gas emissions associated with all stages of a product’s life, including extraction, production, transport, installation, maintenance and disposal.

**Emergency Housing** — Indoor accommodation for individuals or families who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless that is intended to address their basic health, food, clothing and personal hygiene needs.

**Environmentally Sensitive Design** — Environmentally sensitive design helps to balance community needs, budgetary limitations and natural ecosystems functions. Solutions seek to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the environment, while simultaneously enhancing the quality of human life.

**Environmental Racism** — Racial discrimination in environmental policy-making and enforcement of regulations and laws, the deliberate targeting of communities of color for toxic waste facilities, the official sanctioning of the presence of life threatening poisons and pollutants for communities of color and the history of excluding people of color from leadership of the environmental movement.

**Environmental Stewardship** — The responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices.

**Equipment Support Facility** — A support facility is a freestanding structure, other than a building, specifically designed and constructed to support a wireless communication antenna array.

**Equity** — Equity means that a person’s identity (White, female, disabled, etc.) does not predict personal and social outcomes like income or health. Equitable outcomes are outcomes that are not related to a person’s identity.

**Equity Lens** — Looking at positive and negative outcomes from a program, activity or policy and analyzing whether different groups experience outcomes differently regardless of intent.

**Essential Public Facility (EPF)** — Any facility meeting the definition of Essential Public Facility set forth in RCW 36.70A.200(1), now or as hereafter amended, any facility identified on the statewide list maintained by the Office of Financial Management as required pursuant to RCW 36.70A.200(4), now or as hereafter amended, and any facility identified on the countywide list of essential public facilities.

**Extremely Low-income Housing** — Housing that is affordable to a household that earns less than 30 percent of the area median income, adjusted for household size. (See also [Low-income Housing](#) and [Very Low-income Housing](#)).

**Fair Housing Act** — The act that prohibits discrimination by housing providers based on race or color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status or disability in 42 U.S.C. 3601.

**Faith-based Organization** — An organization that meets the federally protected practice of a recognized religious assembly, school or institution that owns or controls real property including land and permanent and temporary buildings.

**Fish Passage Barrier** — An artificial structure in a stream channel such as a culvert or a dam, or a natural feature such as a waterfall, that precludes the upstream or downstream movement of fish.

**Floodplain** — The land area susceptible to being inundated by a flood having a 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year, also referred to as a 100-year floodplain and frequently flooded areas.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR)** — The gross floor area of all buildings on a lot divided by the lot area, expressed most often as a decimal. For example, 0.50 indicates that the floor area of a building equals 50 percent of the total lot area. (See Bellevue's Land Use Code for the regulatory use of FAR, which excludes some specific areas.)

**Frequent Transit Network (FTN)** — Bus and light rail that serves a stop or station at least every 15 minutes between 6am and 6pm.

**Geologically Hazardous Areas** — See ["Critical Areas."](#)

**Grand Connection** — A corridor that is primarily intended for active transportation use between Meydenbauer Bay Park and Eastrail. It is located along segments of Main Street, 102nd Avenue NE, through the Downtown Park, on Bellevue Way NE, and in the alignment of NE 6th Street between Bellevue Way NE and 112th Avenue NE in the Downtown and extending to Eastrail. Within Downtown and Wilburton, pedestrian-oriented frontages, plazas, street arcades, and other amenities are to be located along the corridor. (See [Map PA-3](#)).

**Green Building** — A general term that encompasses a wide range of innovative building construction and site development techniques that are intended to reduce adverse environmental impacts and improve long-term sustainability relative to traditional construction.

**Green Building Certification** — A set of standards that establish that a building is constructed and operated in a way that benefits the natural environment.

**Green Infrastructure** — The natural systems, including streams, wetlands, trees, soil and other environmental features that help a city function environmentally. Engineered stormwater management solutions can be considered green infrastructure when they mimic natural systems and provide multiple benefits such as aesthetic improvements, recreational space and/or natural habitat in addition to flow control and water quality treatment.

**Greenway** — An open space connector linking parks, natural reserves, cultural features, or historic sites with each other and with populated areas. A greenway may be established along a natural corridor such as stream or ridgeline, on undeveloped land through neighborhoods, overland along a railroad right-of-way, scenic road or other route, or any other course for pedestrian or bicycle passage.

**Grid Harmonization** — Building systems that are responsive to energy grid capacity and stability, using a variety of technologies and design approaches such as reducing energy demand through efficiency, on-site electricity generation and storage and two-way metering that allows real-time electricity demand management amongst multiple buildings (load shedding and shifting).

**Growth Management Act (GMA)** — State legislation (RCW 36.70A) enacted in 1990, and later amended, requiring counties and cities to create cooperative regional strategies to manage growth and to adopt local comprehensive plans and regulations to implement these strategies.

**Habitat** — The environment in which a population or individual lives and includes not only the place where a species is found but also the particular characteristics of the place that make it well suited to meet the life cycle needs of that species.

**High-capacity Transit (HCT)** — Various types of transit systems that operate on a fixed guideway, dedicated right-of-way or freeway/express facility, designed to carry a large number of riders at higher speeds and with fewer stops than conventional transit. HCT may include a mix of commuter rail, light rail, express bus services and facilities and/or other high capacity transit technologies, plus other associated transit improvements that tie local/regional transit services to each other and to other travel modes.

**Highrise Building** — See illustrations in the Future Land Use Map Key.

**High-occupancy Vehicle (HOV)** — A vehicle containing two or more occupants including carpools, vanpools and transit vehicles.

**High-occupancy Toll (HOT)** — Use of electronic tolling and variable pricing to manage demand in lanes reserved for high-occupancy vehicles that access these lanes for free and single-occupant vehicles that pay a toll.

**Historically Marginalized Communities** — see [Marginalized Communities](#).

**Historically Underserved Communities** — see [Underserved Communities](#).

**Homelessness** — Broadly speaking, homelessness is the situation of an individual, family or community that lacks stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate means and ability of acquiring it.

**Housing for Unique Needs** — Housing that meets the needs of populations with specialized requirements such as senior housing or housing for people with disabilities.

**Hydrology** — Scientific study of the properties, distribution and effects of water on the Earth's surface, in the soil and underlying rocks and in the atmosphere.

**Impervious Surface** — A hard surface that prevents or slows the infiltration of water into the soil.

**Incentives (Non-Regulatory)** — Provisions offered by the city to encourage a private property owner to conduct voluntary improvement projects.

**Incentives (Regulatory)** — Regulatory relief or options offered by the city to reduce the adverse economic impact to a property owner from complying with regulations intended to protect the functions and values of critical areas.

**Infill** — Sites within developed areas that have been bypassed and now can be “filled in.”

**In-kind Mitigation** — A replacement of the lost functions and values of critical areas with characteristics and functions that closely approximate those adversely impacted by development or redevelopment.

**Integrated Design Process** — A collaborative method for designing buildings which emphasizes the development of a holistic design. Integrated design processes require multidisciplinary collaboration, including key stakeholders and design professionals, from conception to completion and involve a “whole building design” approach in which a building is viewed as an interdependent system, as opposed to an accumulation of its separate components (site, structure, systems and use). The goal of looking at all the systems together to is make sure they work in harmony rather than in conflict with each other. Projects utilizing an integrated design process approach undertake systems analysis during early design phases and integrated design workshop(s) at multiple stages of the project’s development.

**Invasive Weed** — Plant species that become easily established in disturbed conditions that reproduce readily and that often take over a site to the exclusion of indigenous species.

**Level of Service (LOS)** — A term used to denote the operating conditions or performance of a mode of travel.

**LGBTQIA2S+** — Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual and Two-Spirit (Indigenous people who express their gender or sexual identities as different from others). The plus at the end is inclusive of people who use other terms to express their unique gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation.

**Life Cycle Cost Analysis** — A tool to determine the most cost-effective option among different competing alternatives to purchase, own, operate, maintain and, finally, dispose of an object or process, when each is equally appropriate to be implemented on technical grounds.

**Local Street** — A street designed primarily to provide vehicle and active transportation access to abutting land uses and to carry local traffic to/from collector arterials. This classification includes both local and neighborhood collector streets as described in the City’s Development Standards.

**Low Impact Development** — A stormwater and land use management strategy that strives to mimic pre-disturbance hydrologic processes of infiltration, filtration, storage, evaporation and transpiration by emphasizing conservation, use of on-site natural features, site planning and distributed stormwater management practices that are integrated into a project design.

**Low-income Housing** — Housing that is affordable to a household that earns between 50 and 80 percent of the area median income, adjusted for household size. (see also [Extremely Low-income Housing](#) and [Very Low-income Housing](#)).

**Lowrise Building** — See illustrations in the Future Land Use Map Key.

**Major Arterial** — A street that provides a direct route for long-distance vehicles and active transportation travel within the city and often with connections to neighboring jurisdictions. Streets that connect freeway interchanges to major concentrations of commercial activities are typically classified as major arterials.

**Marginalized Communities** — Communities that have been systemically excluded from local government and community decisions and have faced systemic disadvantages and discrimination due to their identity, including Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), LGBTQIA2S+ individuals, immigrants and refugees, individuals with limited English proficiency, households with low incomes and people with disabilities. These communities often experience limited access to resources, opportunities and equitable services, leading to disparities in areas such as housing, education, employment and healthcare.

**Materials Management** — An approach to using and reusing resources most efficiently and sustainably throughout their lifecycles. It seeks to minimize materials used and all associated environmental impacts.

**Micromobility** — A mode of active transportation that is designed for use by a single individual (or, occasionally, a few people as in a tandem bike or a bike with a child's seat) and is small in size such as a bicycle or kickscooter.

**Middle scale housing** — Housing such as duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, small apartment buildings, cottage housing and courtyard apartments that fills the gap between single unit detached homes and large apartment buildings.

**Midrise Building** — See illustrations in the Future Land Use Map Key.

**Minor Arterial** — A street that provides a vehicle and active transportation connection between major arterials and concentrations of residential and commercial activities.

**Mitigation** — Methods used to compensate for adverse impacts to critical areas.

**Mixed Use Areas** — Areas of the city where a mix of uses, including commercial and residential uses, is allowed.

**Mixed Use Centers** — Areas of the city that are both major commercial centers and centers for substantial future residential growth, focused around existing or planned high capacity transit. Mixed Use Centers may have the same or different boundaries than neighborhoods.

**Mixed-use Development** — A building or buildings constructed as a single project that contains more than one use, typically including housing plus retail and office uses.

**Mobility Hub** — An area with access to and convenient connections between multiple modes of transportation including bus or light rail and active transportation modes.

**Mobility Options** — The ability of a person traveling within the city or the region to choose one or more of several means of transport, including modes such as a private vehicle, public transit, active transportation and rideshare.

**Moderate-Income Housing** — Housing that is affordable to a household that earns between 80 percent and 100 percent of the area median income, adjusted for household size.

**Mountains to Sound Greenway** — A regional trail located along the I-90 corridor that is designed for active transportation use.

**Multicounty Planning Policies** — The regional planning document for Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC).

**Multifamily Dwelling** — A building designed to house two or more families living independently of each other.

**Multimodal** — The consideration of active transportation, riding transit, driving and freight mobility as means of transportation and incorporating connections among modes.

**Neighborhood Area** — The city is divided into 16 Neighborhood Areas for planning purposes (see [Map NH-1](#)).



**Neighborhood Center** — A small commercial or mixed-use area in a location that is otherwise primarily residential. Neighborhood Centers are often anchored by grocery stores and often meet the daily needs of local residents (see [Map LU-2](#)).

**Net-positive Development** — Development where the amount of energy produced from renewable energy sources is greater than the amount of energy consumed.

**Net-zero Carbon Emissions** — A system where the amount of carbon emissions produced is off-set but the amount of carbon removed from the atmosphere.

**Net-zero Development** — Development where the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced is as close to zero as possible, and any remaining emissions are removed from the atmosphere.

**Net-zero Waste** — A system where the amount of waste produced is off-set by the amount of waste consumed in the system.

**Nonmotorized Transportation** — See [Active Transportation](#).

**Nonprofit organizations** — Organizations that operate for a public benefit as defined in 26 USC 501.

**Noxious Weed** — Plants that are not indigenous to the area, that grow unchecked by natural predators and that generally outcompete indigenous species for moisture and nutrients. The King County Noxious Weed Control Board maintains a list of noxious weeds.

**Open Space** — Land that is undeveloped or lightly developed and is set aside for uses such as conservation and parks.

**Pedestrian Corridor** — See [Grand Connection](#).

**Pedestrian Crossing** — A designated street crossing other than at an intersection that is designed and intended to support active transportation. Potential locations are identified in the Mobility Implementation Plan for further study to determine if, and what type of, improved pedestrian crossing should be built.

**Pedestrian-friendly Design** — Physical development characteristics that promote pedestrian activity and may be incorporated into private development and rights-of-way.

**Pedestrian System Plan Map** — In the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, a map that depicts a complete and connected network of pedestrian facilities that serve the entire community and are compatible with regional and inter-jurisdictional facilities. Pedestrian facility types are defined and described in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan.

**Performance Standards** — Benchmarks or requirements for facilities such as buildings or transportation infrastructure that are set internally in documents such as the Transportation Design Manual or externally, such as in a green building certification program.

**Person Throughput** — A measure of the number of people that can move along a street. Person throughput may be documented for a specific period of time (as in people per hour), or using a specific mode of travel (as in transit passengers per hour). Person throughput may also refer to the planning-level capacity of the system (as in a bus lane that may accommodate up to a certain number of riders per hour).

**Personal Services** — Services involving the care of a person or of a person's apparel, such as laundry and dry cleaning services, beauty shops, barber shops, shoe repair shops and tailors.

**Piped Stream** — A segment of a stream that flows under property through a pipe.

**Planned Unit Development (PUD)** — A discretionary land use application that allows flexibility for development proposals in the type, design and arrangement of structures; a mix of land uses; conservation of natural features; and efficient use of open space.

**Potential Annexation Area (PAA)** — An area within the Urban Growth Area and outside the city’s existing southern and eastern boundaries to which the city may eventually expand through annexation.

**Prescriptive Regulations** — Development regulations that provide specific standards.

**Private Partners** — Organizations that work with the city to achieve public benefits. These organizations may be nonprofit organizations or other non-governmental organizations.

**Public Property** — Property owned by a public entity such as the City of Bellevue, King County or the State of Washington. This property belongs to the public at large rather than an individual or a company. Some examples are streets, libraries, many parks, public schools and community centers and sidewalks.

**Publicly Accessible** — Open to the general public for passage, recreation or shopping.

**Qualifying Properties** — Multifamily property that is owned by faith-based or non-profit housing entities; or surplus property owned by public entities; or single-family property that is owned by faith-based entities.

**Region** — An area which in its largest sense generally includes King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties. It may also be limited to a smaller area. If so, this is generally noted in the context of the policy.

**Regional Growth Center** — Regional Growth Centers are areas identified by Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) as areas of focus for transportation funds. The requirements of Regional Growth Centers can be found in the Multicounty Planning Policies. Bellevue has one Regional Growth Center, Downtown.

**Resilience Hub** — Community-serving facility augmented to support residents and coordinate resource distribution and services before, during and after a hazard event.

**Restore** — To reestablish ecological processes, structures, functions and biotic and abiotic linkages that lead to the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged or destroyed. Restoration, as used in the Comprehensive Plan, does not mandate a return to pre-development conditions.

**Ridesharing** — Travel by more than one person in a privately- or publicly-owned vehicle, including a carpool and vanpool.

**Salmonid** — A member of the fish family salmonidae, which includes salmon, trout, dolly varden, char and white fish.

**Scenic Character** — The distinctive features in a landscape that contribute to its sense of place and the image people hold of the area.

**Secure Community Transition Facility** — Defined in the RCW 71.09.020 as a residential facility for persons civilly committed and conditionally released to a less restrictive alternative than a total confinement facility where an individual has total supervision and treatment. A secure community transition facility has supervision and security and either provides or ensures the provision of sex offender treatment services.

**Sensitive Area** — See “[Critical Areas.](#)”

**Sensitive Use** — Land uses for which the occupants are more susceptible to the adverse effects of exposure to air pollution. Examples include residential areas, hospitals and medical facilities, schools, day care facilities, senior and assisted living facilities and recreational areas.

**Short-term Rentals** — A dwelling unit, or part of a dwelling unit, rented for fewer than 30 consecutive nights that is not a hotel or motel or bed and breakfast.

**Significant Tree** — A tree that has attained proportions as defined in the Land Use Code, for which protections from cutting may apply.

**Single Family Dwelling** — A building containing but one kitchen, designed for and occupied exclusively by one household, except where a valid accessory dwelling unit registration has been approved.

**Single-occupant Vehicle (SOV)** — A vehicle containing one occupant.

**Social Cost of Carbon** — An estimate of the cost, in dollars, of the damage done by each additional ton of greenhouse gas emissions (CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent). Also used to estimate the benefit of a given action taken to reduce a ton of emissions.

**Steep Slopes** — See “[Critical Areas](#).”

**Stormwater** — Precipitation that does not infiltrate into the soil or evaporate, but flows over the surface into a stormwater drainage system or directly to a surface water body.

**Street Classification** — The classification of city streets according to their function. These classifications relate to established development standards upon which street improvements are based. Street classifications include major arterial, minor arterial, collector arterial and local street.

**Streetscape** — The design and appearance of streets, sidewalks and the frontage of bordering development including landscaping, street furniture, signs, etc.

**Subarea** — A geographic subdivision of the city with its own character and development focus. Subareas have been used for planning purposes and are the basis for the Subarea Plans in Volume 2. As the plans are updated, they are amended to be consistent with the Neighborhood Area boundaries.

**Substantially Impacted** — A water body is ‘substantially impacted’ by a given source or activity when it causes that water body to exceed established water quality standards (e.g. turbidity and/or nutrients such as nitrogen).

**Superblock** — Typical 600-foot block established by the Downtown street grid.

**Supportive and Transitional Housing** — A residential facility intended to house individuals and families experiencing homelessness, or at imminent risk of homelessness and paired with on-site or off-site supportive services designed to maintain long-term or permanent tenancy, or transition the residents to other living arrangements, if appropriate.

**Sustainable** — A dynamic environment in which an ecosystem and its inhabitants are in ecological balance by maintaining the health and flow of resources needed to support them in perpetuity.

**Third Places** — Places that people go to when they are neither home nor at work that are seen as spaces to provide connection and build community. They can occur informally in any publicly- or privately-owned place as long as it is known to the community as a safe and welcoming space.

**Transit-supportive Design** — Physical development characteristics of buildings and active transportation facilities that encourage transit use.

**Transit-oriented Development (TOD)** —

Development that is within one-half mile walking distance from and oriented toward a transit station that provides frequent, reliable service. TOD supports transit use through a compact mix of housing, retail and office uses and a walkable, pedestrian-oriented character.

**Transportation 2050** — An action plan produced by the Puget Sound Regional Council for transportation in the Central Puget Sound Region.

**Underserved Communities** – Communities that have been systemically underserved due to their identity, including but not limited to Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), LGBTQIA2S+ individuals, immigrants and refugees, individuals with limited English proficiency, households with low incomes and people with disabilities. The lack of service has often resulted in limited access to resources, opportunities and equitable services, leading to disparities in areas such as housing, education, employment and healthcare.

**Universal Design** — A system of design that helps ensure that buildings and public spaces are accessible to people with or without disabilities and regardless of age or ability.

**Urban Center** — Areas designated by the Countywide Planning Policies located on existing or planned transit corridors where there will be higher levels of residential density and employment intensity that support regional land use and transportation goals.

**Very Low-income Housing** — Housing that is affordable to a household that earns between 30 and 50 percent of the area median income, adjusted for household size. (see also [Extremely Low-income Housing](#) and [Low-income Housing](#)).

**VISION 2050** — PSRC’s regional growth strategy for King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap counties.

**Watershed** —A geographic region within which water drains into a particular river, stream or body of water. Watersheds can be as large as those identified and numbered by the State of Washington Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs) as defined in Chapter 173-500 WAC.

**Wetlands** — See [“Critical Areas.”](#)

**Zero Waste** — The conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse and recovery of products, packaging and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water or air that threaten the environment or human health.

## SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

**Boat Launching Facility** — A facility used for launching boats by auto or hand including ramps and other devices, along with adequate parking and maneuvering space.

**Breakwater** — Protective structure usually built offshore for the purpose of protecting the shoreline or harbor areas from wave action.

**Bulkhead** — A wall or embankment used for holding back earth.

**Dredging** — Removal of earth from the bottom of a body of water usually for the purpose of deepening a navigational channel or obtaining bottom materials.

**Enclosed Overwater Structure** — A structure extending on or over the surface of the water which has one or more walls with or without a roof.

**Facilities in Common** — Facilities jointly used by a specific group of property owners.

**Groin** — A barrier-type structure extending from the backshore into the water across the beach. The purpose of a groin is to interrupt sediment movement along the shore.

**Inland Shoreline Areas** — Shoreline areas other than Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish and their associated wetlands which include all other wetlands, smaller lakes and streams covered by the Shorelines Management Act.

**Jetty** — An artificial barrier used to change the natural littoral drift to protect inlet entrances from clogging by excessive sediment.

**Landfill** — Creation or maintenance of beach or creation of dry upland area by the deposition of sand, soil, gravel, or other materials into shoreline areas.

**Marina** — A facility providing for the rental or public use of moorages for pleasure craft and which may include accessory facilities such as sales, rentals and servicing of these craft.

**Moorage** — Any device or structure used to secure a vessel for temporary anchorage, but which is not attached to the vessel (such as a pier or buoy).

**Pier** — A general term including docks and similar structures consisting of a fixed or floating platform extending from the shore over the water.

**Public Access** — A means of physical approach to and along the shoreline available to the general public. Public access may also include visual approach (views).

**Shoreline** — The water, submerged lands and uplands of Lake Washington, Lake Sammamish and Phantom Lake as well as the wetland areas associated with these lakes.

**Shoreline Activity** — Activities include, but are not limited to, fishing, swimming, boating, dredging, fish spawning and wildlife nesting. Not all activities necessarily require a shoreline location.

**Shoreline Development** — A use consisting of the construction or exterior alteration of structures, dredging, drilling, dumping, filling, removal of any sand, gravel or minerals, bulkheading, driving of piling, placing of obstructions, or any other project of a permanent or temporary nature on the shoreline.

**Shoreline Use** — The commitment of land or water surface to a given purpose or activity. Examples of shoreline uses include, but are not limited to, residential units, parks, marinas, open space, office buildings, ports, restaurants, wildlife preserves, factories, or even non-use. Not all uses, however, are necessarily reasonable or appropriate for a shoreline location.

**Shoreline Wetlands** — Land extending landward to 200 feet in all directions as measured on a horizontal plane from ordinary high water mark and all marshes, bogs, swamps, floodways, deltas and floodplains designated by the Department of Ecology as wetland areas.

**Water-dependent** — A use or portion of a use which cannot exist in any other location and is dependent on the water by reason of the intrinsic nature of its operations. Examples of these uses may include marinas that provide moorage, access, fuel, boat repair and boat launch facilities.

**Water-enjoyment Uses** — A recreational or similar use facilitating the general public's access to the shoreline as a primary characteristic of the use; or, a use that provides and assures for recreational use or aesthetic enjoyment of the shoreline for a substantial number of people as a general characteristic of the use through the use's location, design and operation. These uses may include public access, parks (with waterfront access) and scientific/ecological reserves.

**Water-related** — A use or portion of a use which is not intrinsically dependent on a waterfront location but whose operation cannot occur economically without a shoreline location. Some examples of these uses are support facilities for swimming and boating activities.

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