

## McCULLOUGH HILL PLLC

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August 7, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Honorable Lynne Robinson, Mayor  
Members of the City Council  
City of Bellevue  
450 110th Avenue NE  
Bellevue, WA 98004

Re: Avenue Bellevue

Dear Mayor Robinson and Councilmembers:

We are writing on behalf of Andy Lakha, the developer of the nearly-complete Avenue project at Bellevue Way and NE 8th Street. The project will establish a new standard of excellence in design and execution for the region and will include Puget Sound's first Intercontinental Hotel, a new restaurant from 3-Michelin-star chef Joshua Skenes of San Francisco, a new restaurant from Barcelona and a new restaurant by the Iron Chef, Masaharu Morimoto – plus thousands of square feet of new retail and 360 condominium units. Initial opening of the hotel and some of the condo units is this October and at full opening next spring, the overall project will provide 1500 new jobs for the City and a total daily population of over 3000 people.

The heart of Avenue is its urban plaza, which flows from the private street that arcs through the project. This street, which is entirely privately owned, meanders through the site from NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street at the south to Bellevue Way on the east. It will be a curbless facility where pedestrians will have priority over vehicles and will be paved in a signature pattern of granite pavers. It will be utterly unlike any vehicular or pedestrian lane in Bellevue.

The project will soon become an icon at the center of Downtown Bellevue.

The uniqueness and quality of Avenue as a destination in Bellevue will be recognized at all levels, from its branded signage, outstanding architectural design and mix of uses, to its program of public art, green roofs, plazas and water features. Another critical piece to recognizing Avenue as the destination it will be is to christen the privately-owned – but publicly accessible – pedestrian-oriented lane through the project with an appropriate name.

Based on advice from its team, the public and even local leaders, ownership has settled on “Avenue Square” as the name for this facility.

Since the lane is entirely privately owned and is not an existing street, discretion for application of this name should lie with the owner. But Avenue has also been the product of many years of active collaboration between the City and Andy Lakha; indeed, the quality of this project would not have been possible without the City Council's action in 2017 to update the Downtown Plan. So it is in this spirit that we look to the City Council for a mutual endorsement of this name – Avenue Square.

For actual City streets, the Code provides a process for the City Council to adopt street names. Since 103<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE through the site was vacated many years ago, there is no existing street in this location and the Code naming process does not apply to this privately-owned street. But the street naming conventions of the Code can provide some guidance here:

- Avenue Square is a new facility, essentially passing as an arc through the site, connecting NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street at the south to Bellevue Way on the east.
- Since it does not generally run north/south, it cannot be an avenue.
- Since it does not generally run east/west, it cannot be a street.
- Its “sinuosity” indicates that it does not fit into the regular street or avenue pattern, and so requires a different nomenclature.

The City has a long history of adopting special names for public streets outside of the usual street or avenue conventions, and Avenue Square fits nicely into this history. Obvious examples are Bellevue Way, Factoria Boulevard, Spring Boulevard, Eastgate Way, Lake Washington Boulevard, W. Lake Sammamish Parkway, Lakemont Boulevard and Lake Hills Connector – all of which have names based on location or destination in which they are found, just like Avenue Square. The Avenue Square name is consistent with public convenience: just as everyone knows Factoria Boulevard is next to the Marketplace at Factoria and Spring Boulevard adjoins the Spring District, Avenue Square will be the center of Avenue Bellevue. Indeed, Bellevue has dozens more examples of special names for public streets, as reflected on the attached list, few of which are linked to a nearby destination as Avenue Square will be.

We would appreciate the City Council's endorsement of the “Avenue Square” name, properly identifying this important and iconic regional destination in the heart of Downtown Bellevue.

Sincerely,



John C. McCullough

cc: Andy Lakha

Examples of Special Names for Public Streets in Bellevue

Sunset Way  
Evergreen Drive  
Vineyard Crest  
Hilltop Road  
Park Road  
Belfair Road  
Killarney Way  
Detwiller Lane  
Northside Road  
Cedar Crest Lane  
Kaylen Place  
Woodhaven Lane  
Shoreland Drive  
Northup Way  
Rosemont Place  
Kamber Road  
Coal Creek Road  
Eastgate Way  
Landerholm Circle  
Snoqualmie River Road  
Kelsey Creek Road  
Coal Creek Parkway  
Tulalip Key  
Lummi Key  
Skagit Key  
Glacier Key  
Chelan Key  
Newport Key  
Lopez Key  
Columbia Key  
Crescent Key  
Cascade Key  
Bagley Lane  
Laurelhurst Lane