



WILBURTON/N.E. 8TH STREET

WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS PLAN

The community Overview, Goals, and Policies for Wilburton/N.E. 8th Street including the 2024 update adding the Vision, Goals, and Policies for the Wilburton Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) area.

The Subarea Plan was recently updated to address policies pertaining to the Wilburton TOD area. Updates to the full Subarea Plan will be addressed as part of the neighborhood area planning process.

GOAL

- To distinguish residential, recreational, open space, commercial, and mixed-use areas from one another.
- To protect and enhance natural systems and open spaces.
- To improve active transportation connections, transit accessibility, and attractiveness of commercial and mixed-use areas for community members.
- To support higher-density mixed use development in the Wilburton Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) area that complements Downtown, provides new housing and job opportunities, and provides convenient access to transit, amenities, and services for the adjacent neighborhoods.
- To provide for a transition in scale and use between the Wilburton TOD area and adjacent residential areas.

OVERVIEW

The settlement history of Wilburton dates to the turn of the 20th century when farms, a logging mill, a railroad and a commercial area near 116th and N.E. 8th Street were established. The construction of the Wilburton trestle over Mercer Slough brought workers into Wilburton by rail, including Japanese farmers who bought property in Wilburton for agricultural production. While logging and milling declined with the lowering of Lake Washington in 1916, the area prospered through the 1930s for the growing, packing, and distributing of agricultural goods. After the attack on Pearl Harbor during World War II, the Japanese population was moved to internment camps, forcing Japanese farmers in Wilburton to sell their crops and lands. Following World War II, many Japanese families who settled in the area did not return.

With the openings of the floating bridges across Lake Washington in 1940 and 1963, there was rapid growth of homes during the 1950s and 1960s in the area. In the 1950s, several car dealerships and inns moved into Wilburton along 116th Avenue NE, referred to as Auto Row today. Construction of the Overlake Hospital began in the late 1950s. Wilburton was annexed to the City between 1964 and 1967.

Today the Wilburton/N.E. 8th Street Subarea is centrally located in Bellevue. Access to I-405 and the Downtown makes the Subarea a desirable place to live and work. Jobs, stores, schools, and community parks are convenient and accessible. Combined, these amenities have greatly enhanced the quality of life for community members.

The Wilburton/N.E. 8th Street Subarea encompasses approximately 1,600 acres. Its boundaries are generally Interstate-405 to the west, Bel-Red Road to the north, 148th Avenue N.E. to the east, and the Lake Hills Connector to the south. Within the subarea

is an approximately 300 acre mixed-use Wilburton Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) area, the boundaries generally being Interstate-405 to the west, N.E. 12th Street to the north, Lake Hills Connector to the south, and 124th Avenue N.E. and 118th Avenue S.E. to the east. Large areas of single-family residences make up the remainder of the Subarea. Multifamily development is most prevalent along the N.E. 8th Street corridor, along 118th Avenue S.E. and 122nd Avenue N.E. and west of 140th north of N.E. 8th Street. Recreational open space includes the Glendale Golf Course, Kelsey Creek Park, and Wilburton Hill Park.

Today, the Interstate-405 business corridor, Lake Bellevue area, and the N.E. 8th Street corridor is home to Overlake Medical Center, Kaiser Permanente Bellevue Medical Center, Auto Row, and a variety of retail uses. Many of the retail areas are anticipated for redevelopment as they evolve from older suburban commercial strips to emerging urban, mixed-use areas that take advantage of proximity to light rail and public infrastructure investments including the Eastrail corridor and the Grand Connection. The area east of approximately 120th Avenue features large, lower-density residential neighborhoods, some with large lots that may provide opportunities to subdivide and add new housing.

Based on 2017-2021 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS) Estimates and 2020 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LODES) data from the Census Bureau, about 11,300 people live, and approximately 18,500 people work, in the Wilburton/N.E. 8th Street Subarea. There are about 1,320 units of single-family housing and 3,410 units of multifamily housing. Wilburton Hill Park provides over 100 acres of open space, sports fields, and a botanical garden.

Limiting impacts from increased development and traffic, enhancing existing retail and mixed-use areas, and establishing clear transitions between differing land uses are the Subarea's major issues.

LAND USE

POLICIES

- S-WI-1.** Distinguish between residential, non-residential, and mixed-use areas through appropriate measures that limit impacts of more intensive uses.
- S-WI-2.** Encourage developers of property located on the south side of N.E. 8th Street between 124th and 126th Avenues N.E., the adjacent single-family neighbors, and city staff to harmoniously resolve landscape screening issues in the Transition Area buffer.
- S-WI-3.** A Multifamily Low-density designation is appropriate for the area north of the Lake Hills Connector, south of Wilburton Hill Park, and east of the Wilburton Addition as shown on the Land Use Plan (Figure S-WI.1). No access should be permitted from east of the site.
- S-WI-4.** The Wilburton Addition area along both sides of S.E. 4th and 5th Streets and east of 118th Avenue S.E. is appropriate for Multifamily Medium-density uses in accordance with the Land Use Plan (Figure S-WI.1). Proposed development should be subject to design review to encourage preservation of significant views from the adjacent park land and to encourage structures which are similar in design, height, and bulk to structures along the western portion of 118th Avenue S.E..

Appropriate mitigation measures should be required of development to ensure that traffic does not significantly impact neighborhoods to the east. Mitigation measures may include traffic diverters and signalization.
- S-WI-5.** The Galeno property adjacent to and north of Main Street at 124th Avenue N.E. is appropriate for Single-family Medium-density in accordance with the Land Use Plan (Figure S-WI.1). Traffic impacts associated with development of this property should be mitigated by the developers.

- S-WI-6.** The WISC (Wilburton Instructional Service Center) property at Main Street and 124th Avenue is appropriate for Single-family High-density use in accordance with the Land Use Plan (Figure S-WI.1). Traffic impacts associated with future development of the area should be mitigated by the developer.
- S-WI-7.** The City-owned land (exclusive of the West Slope area) between 118th Avenue S.E., Main Street, 128th Avenue S.E. and approximately S.E. 5th Street is appropriate for park uses and should be designated public facility/park in accordance with the Land Use Plan (Figure S-WI.1). Appropriate mitigation measures should be required of development to ensure that traffic does not significantly impact the neighborhoods to the east. Mitigation measures may include traffic diverters and signalization.
- S-WI-8.** The land east of 118th Avenue S.E. commonly referred to as the “West Slope” is appropriate for Multifamily Medium-density uses in accordance with the Land Use Plan (Figure S-WI.1). A child care center for not less than 40 children should be developed adjacent to the multifamily use. Design of this center should be complementary to the multifamily use. Appropriate mitigation measures should be required of development to ensure that traffic does not significantly impact the neighborhoods to the east. Mitigation measures may include traffic diverters and signalization. Development should be subject to design review to encourage the preservation of significant views westward from the park and to encourage development that is similar in design, height, and bulk to structures along the western portion of 118th Avenue S.E.. Development of the site should include trail easements from the adjacent park land to 118th Avenue S.E.. Location of these easements should be designated by the Parks Department.

NATURAL DETERMINANTS

POLICIES

- S-WI-9.** Protect and enhance streams, drainage ways, and wetlands in the Kelsey Creek Basin.
- S-WI-10.** Prevent development from intruding into the floodplain of Kelsey Creek.
- S-WI-11.** Development should not interfere with Lake Bellevue as a drainage storage area identified in the City's Storm Drainage Plan.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

POLICIES

- S-WI-12.** Enhance the cohesiveness of established single-family and multifamily residential areas.

Discussion: Neighborhood cohesiveness can be enhanced by: improving nonmotorized systems along streets and between properties, siting neighborhood identification signs, and encouraging community clubs, facilities, and centers.

- S-WI-13.** Encourage multifamily development to provide adequate play areas and other amenities for families.
- S-WI-14.** The impacts of traffic and the building scale of non-residential uses (such as churches and schools) located in residential areas should be considered during development review.

Discussion: The visual impression of the size (height and bulk) of these buildings should be compatible with the development in the surrounding neighborhood.

CIRCULATION

POLICIES

- S-WI-15.** No extension of 124th Avenue south of Main Street should be permitted.

- S-WI-16.** Preserve the safety of residential streets and the livability of local neighborhoods by discouraging non-local traffic with traffic management methods.

Discussion: The neighborhoods that lie between Kelsey Creek Park and the commercial development along 120th Avenue N.E. are concerned about traffic growth on their residential streets due to: the development of Kelsey Creek and Wilburton Parks, cutthrough traffic generated by commercial developments, and traffic avoiding I-405.

- S-WI-17.** Coordinate off-street biking and walking facilities with on-street walking and biking facilities to provide safe connections to destinations such as schools, parks, shopping, and transit service.
- S-WI-18.** Improve arterial streets to provide enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access, safety and comfort throughout the non-residential areas of the subarea.
- S-WI-19.** Where capital projects are not imminent, encourage the City to make interim improvements for nonmotorized transportation.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

POLICIES

- S-WI-20.** Retain the parks in the Subarea and ensure that they remain park facilities (including Wilburton Hill and Kelsey Creek Parks).
- S-WI-21.** Retain and develop open spaces for a variety of purposes.
- Discussion:* In addition to recreation, both active and passive, parks serve to preserve views, define neighborhoods, and provide relief from pavement and development.
- S-WI-22.** The City strongly encourages the continuation of the golf course use at the Glendale Golf Course.
- S-WI-23.** Prepare designs for proposed parks with the participation of the community affected and served.

- S-WI-24.** Support the enhancement of the Lake-to-Lake Trail and Greenway through Wilburton, with improvements along the Main Street Corridor and connections to multimodal facilities on the Eastrail, 116th Avenue NE, and 120th Avenue NE.
- S-WI-25.** The City should consider acquisition of surplus school district sites which might be appropriate for park and recreation uses.
- S-WI-26.** Encourage development of the Highland-Glendale site, located on the northeast corner of N.E. 8th Street and 134th Avenue N.E., as a park facility.
- S-WI-27.** Support implementation of the Wilburton Hill Park Master Plan, including neighborhood park elements.

COMMUNITY DESIGN

POLICIES

- S-WI-28.** Retain, reveal, and enhance public views of prominent land forms, vegetation, watersheds, drainage ways, Downtown and significant panoramas in the Subarea.
- S-WI-29.** Improve the appearance of public streets by completing the sidewalk system and adding pedestrian amenities such as benches, bus shelters, public art, and landscape barriers where appropriate.
- S-WI-30.** Develop street tree plans for arterial streets and non-residential areas. Investigate ways to encourage property owners to implement the City's street tree plan.
- S-WI-31.** Encourage the undergrounding of utility distribution lines in developed areas and require the undergrounding of utility distribution lines in new developments when practical.
- S-WI-32.** Utilities should be provided to serve the present and future needs of the Subarea in a way that enhances the visual quality of the community (where practical).

WILBURTON TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) AREA VISION

The Wilburton Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) area is Bellevue’s next urban, trail- and transit-oriented mixed-use community. Anchored by Downtown Bellevue to the west, BelRed to the north, and residential neighborhoods and large city parks to the east, the Wilburton TOD area serves a diverse and growing population by providing excellent access to housing, transit, parks, retail, neighborhood services, and employment.

Land use changes in the Wilburton TOD area are supported by light rail, the development of the Eastrail corridor as an active linear park and regional trail, and the Grand Connection as defining entrances into the community. A pedestrian-oriented district is achieved through a fine-grained network of multimodal connections, street-level amenities, community gathering spaces, and higher-density building types that transition toward adjacent residential areas. The creation of a sustainable district within the Wilburton TOD area supports the implementation of bold sustainability strategies enhancing the resilience, livability, and quality of life of current and future generations.

Within this larger TOD area, the area between Interstate-405, NE 8th Street, the Eastrail corridor, and NE 4th Street is the primary TOD area, centered along the Grand Connection and its intersection with the Eastrail. This area accommodates the greatest amount and intensity of development, with a mix of housing, employment, services, and retail accessible from Wilburton Station, the Eastrail, and the Grand Connection. Development along the 116th Avenue corridor and NE 8th Street corridor accommodates mixed-use high-rise development while the east and southeast edges of the TOD area see buildings transitioning from high-rise to mid-rise scale toward adjacent residential areas and city parks.

Distinct identity points include the historic revitalized Wilburton Trestle gateway into the Wilburton TOD area; the Grand Connection between I-405 and the Eastrail corridor; and Lake Bellevue, which can be revealed and enhanced as a unique public amenity through future redevelopment.

LAND USE

Goal: To develop a land use pattern that leverages investments in light rail, the Eastrail corridor, and the Grand Connection.

POLICIES

- S-WI-33.** Allow for the tallest buildings along Interstate-405 and around the Grand Connection, transitioning down in height toward the east.
- S-WI-34.** Provide for mixed-use development with convenient access to transit, jobs, daily necessities, services, and activities consistent with the Future Land Use Map.
- S-WI-35.** Provide for ground floor uses and publicly accessible open spaces that support an engaging pedestrian experience.
- S-WI-36.** Use appropriate vehicle and bicycle parking supply and requirements to reflect trail and transit proximity and access, and local access needs.
- S-WI-37.** Develop compact, mixed-use site and neighborhood configurations that support through-block and active transportation access to transit, the Eastrail corridor, the Grand Connection, and adjacent developments.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To enable existing and new businesses to thrive and contribute toward vibrant places and corridors.

POLICIES

- S-WI-38.** Accommodate the continued operation of existing service and commercial uses and allow new service and commercial businesses that are compatible with planned land uses.

- S-WI-39.** Increase access to affordable commercial space for small-scale retailers, emphasizing trail-oriented retail along the Eastrail corridor and the Grand Connection.
- S-WI-40.** Provide flexibility toward developing building floorplates that support a diverse business mix within higher density development.
- S-WI-41.** Promote uses that create third place for people to gather, connect, and build community.

ENVIRONMENT

Goal: To lead innovations in environmental sustainability that enhances the area's natural features and contributes toward the city's climate goals.

POLICIES

- S-WI-42.** Support the development of an environmentally resilient neighborhood through a sustainable district framework, code updates, and public-private partnerships.
- S-WI-43.** Support strategies for net-zero and net-positive development, including renewable energy, net-zero carbon emissions, and net-zero waste.
- S-WI-44.** Support and pursue partnerships toward the development of a district energy system.
- S-WI-45.** Incentivize opportunities to pilot low-carbon building design principles toward the reduction of embodied carbon and greenhouse gas emissions throughout the project life cycle, with the intent to implement additional projects.
- S-WI-46.** Promote and implement sustainable mobility through integrated transportation and land use planning, increased access to low carbon transportation options, and innovative technologies.

S-WI-47. Incentivize improvements that enhance the aesthetic and functional qualities of natural features, such as Sturtevant Creek, Lake Bellevue, and the wetland at 116th Avenue NE and Main Street.

S-WI-48. Incentivize opportunities through the development process to expand green stormwater infrastructure, tree canopy, and landscaping that enhances ecological functions and urban wildlife habitat connectivity.

HOUSING

Goal: To expand diverse housing across unit types and affordability levels.

POLICIES

S-WI-49. Cultivate mixed-income communities that integrate market rate development with subsidized affordable housing through regulatory and incentive approaches.

S-WI-50. Increase opportunities for a range of residential unit types, including for seniors and families, that are close to and/or integrated with neighborhood amenities and services.

S-WI-51. Provide for housing that supports a workforce representing a broad spectrum of professions and income levels being able to live in proximity to where they work.

S-WI-52. Provide for housing units and amenity spaces that are directly accessible at ground level.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

Goal: To provide for a variety of public community recreation and gathering spaces that will serve a growing community.

POLICIES

S-WI-53. Acquire land or rights to develop a network of neighborhood parks of various sizes to serve the needs of the Wilburton TOD area and complement the citywide parks and open space system.

- S-WI-54.** Seek, through the development process, small-scale facilities, such as neighborhood parks, plazas, active recreation facilities, and natural features as public amenities to increase community access to open space opportunities.
- S-WI-55.** Provide a system of active transportation connections that links park facilities, including Bellevue Botanical Gardens and Wilburton Hill Park, with other parks and points of interest, including transit, employment, and medical facilities.
- S-WI-56.** Enhance active transportation and through-block connections with landscaping and amenities to serve as linear open spaces.
- S-WI-57.** Enhance Lake Bellevue to become a unique public amenity.
- S-WI-58.** Provide for centrally located public space as part of the Grand Connection between and including the I-405 lid park and the Grand Connection intersection with the Eastrail.
- S-WI-59.** Require and/or incentivize public access and open space opportunities linking the Grand Connection to 120th Avenue NE and residential neighborhoods east of 120th Avenue NE.
- S-WI-60.** Collaborate with King County, Sound Transit, and adjacent property owners to develop the Eastrail corridor into a linear park, including recreational and natural features within and adjacent to the corridor.
- S-WI-61.** Pursue strategic land acquisitions around the Eastrail corridor, the Grand Connection, north end of Wilburton Trestle, and Lake Bellevue to expand connection, public access, and activation opportunities.

Concept for Wilburton TOD area parks and open space network. Park areas are shown conceptually to illustrate park needs for the area.



TRANSPORTATION

Goal: To create a safe, walkable, bikeable, and transit-rich urban neighborhood.

POLICIES

- S-WI-62.** Redesign and develop the 116th Avenue NE corridor to include planned bicycle facilities, sidewalks, and landscaping.
- S-WI-63.** Incorporate an integrated system of local access and active transportation facilities to support the intended transit-oriented and trail-oriented land use pattern.
- S-WI-64.** Require publicly accessible internal access corridors to facilitate mobility and livability through development review.
- S-WI-65.** Work with developers to provide vehicle access onto their site via internal access corridors rather than along arterial streets.
- S-WI-66.** Design and implement a wayfinding program within the neighborhood and along the Grand Connection to the benefit of active transportation and transit users.
- S-WI-67.** Coordinate with WSDOT to improve the NE 4th Street I-405 overpass to provide safer and more comfortable active transportation connections.
- S-WI-68.** Coordinate with WSDOT to support the planned extension of NE 6th Street to 116th Avenue NE for high occupancy vehicle (HOV), high occupancy toll (HOT), and transit access to I-405.
- S-WI-69.** Provide for emergency and maintenance vehicular access to the Eastrail.
- S-WI-70.** Secure abundant active transportation access to the Eastrail and along/adjacent to the Eastrail through development review.

- S-WI-71.** Collaborate with King County to incorporate trail paving and safety-related design treatments within the Eastrail corridor.
- S-WI-72.** Use transportation facility design guidelines and standards that support the intended land use pattern, ensure safety and accessibility for all users, and advance an efficient development review process.

URBAN DESIGN

Goal: To achieve an inviting, pedestrian-oriented experience reflected in future streetscapes, buildings, trails, and open spaces.

POLICIES

- S-WI-73.** Use distinctive gateway features at key entry points into the area that create a sense of arrival from Wilburton Station, the Eastrail, the Grand Connection, and major corridors into the neighborhood.
- S-WI-74.** Allow flexibility for buildings to provide for activation along the building's frontage zone.
- S-WI-75.** Provide aesthetic and landscaping enhancements on City Boulevards, including 116th Avenue NE, NE 8th Street, and 120th Avenue NE (see Map UD-1 of the Urban Design & The Arts Element) so they become visually attractive, safe, and comfortable corridors to and through the area.
- S-WI-76.** Use design guidelines and standards that promote a high-quality, attractive, and safe pedestrian environment with ample access to sunlight, air, and weather protection.
- S-WI-77.** Support a wide range of active uses and gathering spaces, prioritizing these opportunities fronting the Eastrail corridor and the Grand Connection.
- S-WI-78.** Integrate unique and easily understandable wayfinding into streetscapes and public spaces to enhance neighborhood identity.
- S-WI-79.** Require buildings to be developed in a manner that

provides direct connections to the Grand Connection.

- S-WI-80.** Use design guidelines and standards for development within and adjacent to the Eastrail corridor that consider unique characteristics, topography, and different user groups along the corridor.
- S-WI-81.** Allow adjacent developments to provide upper-story or podium connections to the Eastrail where there is significant elevation difference between the Eastrail corridor and adjacent properties.
- S-WI-82.** Maximize usable Eastrail corridor space for programmable area accessible to the public and allow for integration with adjacent development where there is public benefit.
- S-WI-83.** Ensure that spaces and amenities developed within the Eastrail corridor are designed to be clearly public and foster a sense of welcoming to all.

ARTS AND CULTURE

Goal: To connect people to arts and multicultural opportunities within the Wilburton TOD area and throughout the city.

POLICIES

- S-WI-84.** Recognize Wilburton’s diverse histories and heritages, while elevating contributions of historically marginalized or underserved communities in the area, through placemaking and activation.
- S-WI-85.** Coordinate with Sound Transit on activation opportunities for underutilized space beneath the light rail guideway that is consistent with transit safety and operations.
- S-WI-86.** Pursue partnerships for the development and activation of indoor and outdoor facilities for arts and cultural activities, prioritizing these opportunities along the Eastrail corridor and the Grand Connection.

IMPLEMENTATION

Goal: To develop tools that are effective in attracting and sustaining investment and deliver equitable public benefit.

POLICIES

- S-WI-87.** Use land use code tools that enable development contributions toward public benefit, including affordable and family-sized housing units, open space, and community and cultural spaces.
- S-WI-88.** Use existing and new financial tools to support the construction and maintenance costs of public infrastructure and amenities needed to support the Wilburton TOD area vision.
- S-WI-89.** Pursue opportunities to preserve and expand city-owned land for public use using a combination of strategic acquisitions, incentives, and development requirements.
- S-WI-90.** Coordinate with public and private development so that planned infrastructure, amenities, and uses are provided efficiently and integrated with the surrounding environment.
- S-WI-91.** Coordinate with state and regional agencies on the planning and provision of city desired amenities, including the Eastrail and the Grand Connection.

