

Existing Land Use Code Provisions for View Protection

Bellevue's Land Use Code for Downtown has specific language regarding view preservation corridors (20.25A.100.E for the core part of Downtown, and not the DT-OLB District) and views (20.25A.110.B.3 which applies to all of Downtown). The location of view preservation corridors are not specifically identified in the Land Use Code although the types of spaces from which the view originates are as well as the subject (mountains, skylines, unique landmarks) of the view preservation corridors. Also addressed is development and redevelopment in locations that affect the skyline or offer views of skylines, considering impacts to views on adjacent sites and buildings, and the availability of public views from public places.

Below are specific sections of applicable Land Use Code that directly addresses view preservation corridors and views.

20.25A.100.E. Downtown Core Design District.

6. View Preservation Corridors
 - a. Purpose. View preservation corridors retain the opportunity for viewing Lake Washington, the Seattle skyline, the Olympic Mountains and the Cascade Mountains from the major public open spaces and the major pedestrian corridor.
 - b. Design Criteria. Consideration must be given to the identification and preservation of these views in the siting, orientation and bulk of structures in the Core Design District.

20.25A.110.B. Downtown Patterns and Context.

3. Views.
 - a. Consider the negative impact of a building on views, both from existing buildings and future developable or redevelopable sites.
 - b. Consider the availability of public views from public spaces such as streets, street intersections, parks, plazas and areas of pedestrian concentration.

Analysis: 20.25A.100.E details possible subjects of views that should be considered for preservation including views of Lake Washington, the Seattle skyline, and the Olympic and Cascade Mountains. Views of these landmarks should be considered for preservation from major public open spaces within the Downtown Core and the major pedestrian corridor. 20.25A.100.E.4.b provides the locations of the major public open spaces as the intersection between the major pedestrian corridor and Bellevue Way, 106th Avenue NE, and 110th Avenue NE.

The Pedestrian Corridor and Major Public Open Space Design Guidelines (in Land Use Code), revised in 2000, indicate an area on all four corners of the NE 6th Street and 110th Avenue NE intersection as a major public open space. Bellevue City Hall has greatly expanded the area originally identified as major public open space and offers public open space that is accessible throughout the day across much of the development, including the concourse balcony where the most prominent view corridor to Mount Rainier within the Downtown Core exists.

20.25A.100.E.6.b directs that identification and preservation of these views within the Core Design District, like the view of Mount Rainier from the Bellevue City Hall concourse balcony, must be considered during site and building design, including orientation and bulk of structures. These considerations, however, are limited to the Core Design District, where current height and FAR maximums typically allow for flexibility in site and building design (example is Metro 112). In the case of the view of Mount Rainier from the Bellevue City Hall concourse balcony, current height and FAR maximums outside of the Core Design District, including the OLB and properties to the south, would not obstruct such a view.

20.25A.110.B.3 applies to all of Downtown. 20.25A.110.B.3.a directs the consideration of potential negative impacts that a building can create on adjacent properties. 20.25A.110.B.3.b is specific to public views from public places.