3. Land Use

3.1.1 Subarea Plans

The primary study area is spread across three different subareas in the city: Richards Valley, Eastgate, and Factoria.

The Richards Valley subarea is an area of approximately 1,153 acres. 123 acres or a little less than 20% of the study area is within this subarea. Subarea plan policies support maintenance of employment opportunities, mainly warehousing and office uses, while protecting residential neighborhoods and natural features, especially sensitive/critical areas, forested areas and wooded vistas. Plan policies focus on preserving single-family neighborhoods as the primary use, especially on Woodbridge Hill and Woodmoor, while light industrial and additional residential uses are contemplated for lower elevations of the Valley. Plan policies prohibit auto-sale, rental or leasing uses on LI zoned parcels fronting 118th Avenue SE, SE Richards Road and SE 26th Street.

The Eastgate subarea is an area of approximately 1,500 acres. 443 acres or 70% of the primary study area is within this subarea. The over arching goal of Eastgate subarea plan policies is to preserve and promote the accessibility and appearance of its residential neighborhoods, local amenities and businesses. Land use policies encourage office and retail uses that take advantage of freeway access without adversely impacting residential neighborhoods and support development of commercial uses like restaurants. Policies on commercial uses encourage consolidation of development within existing ‘Community Business’ and ‘General Commercial’ boundaries and limiting retail expansion to that which primarily serves neighborhood and community retail needs. Policies on residential development support single-family housing as the predominant residential land use, limit multi-family housing to locations accessible from arterials, discourage multi-family and commercial traffic from passing through single-family neighborhoods, encourage multi-family uses as buffers and support more affordable housing.

Policies on circulation support evaluation and mitigation of traffic and parking impacts, better transit and improved safety for pedestrian and other non-motorized users. Circulation policies also support interim solutions for non-motorized improvements until major improvements can be made and planning for long-range traffic related needs in the subarea. Subarea policies on community design encourage development of a gateway within the I-90 interchange, use of existing vegetation and topography to buffer land uses, preservation of views and a treed skyline, and the use of landscaping and cohesive site/building design in redevelopment. Policies on natural determinants support protection of the Vasa Creek riparian corridor and stormwater quality entering public drainage systems, streams and Phantom Lake.

The Factoria subarea is an area of approximately 2,100 acres. 66 acres or a little more than 10% of the primary study area is within this subarea. Current issues in Factoria center on the redevelopment of its commercial district while protecting residential neighborhoods, addressing mobility challenges and improving pedestrian links between commercial and residential areas. The subarea plan was last updated in 2005, by a study called the Factoria Area Transportation Study (FATS). FATS analyzed the existing mixed-use environment and land use contemplated in the Comprehensive Plan and recommended transportation, urban design and site planning strategies to create a pedestrian and transit-oriented neighborhood. The study focused primarily on the ability of the transportation system to support anticipated redevelopment under existing zoning. No changes to land uses or intensities were analyzed.

Figure 4. Subareas
The primary study area is focused on the commercial, office and light industrial zones along the I-90 corridor. The predominant zoning in the study area is Office Limited Business (OLB), which allows for office, hotel and some limited retail uses. OLB is present along the north and south sides of I-90 through much of the study area and in a development area stretching north between 156th and 161st Avenues that had once been occupied by the Bellevue air field. OLB allows for heights up to 60 feet, when at least 75% of a use’s parking is placed under-building. Office densities are limited to a sliding scale of floor area ratios (FAR) that ranges from 0.1 to 0.5.

The study area includes three clusters of Community Business (CB) zoning: The Factoria Village shopping center (formerly Loehmann’s Plaza) and adjacent properties at the north end of the Factoria Subarea; the Sunset Village on the north side of the I-90 interchange located at 150th, which includes the Michael’s Toyota and Chaplin’s VW and Subaru car dealerships; and Eastgate Plaza located to the southeast of the 150th Avenue interchange, which includes an Albertsons grocery store and other retail businesses. CB allows for a wide range of commercial, retail, residential and office uses. Residential uses are generally allowed at a density of up to 30 dwelling units per acre, although senior housing or assisted living housing is allowed at up to 60 dwelling units if those units contain less than 600 square feet. Office uses are allowed at floor area ratios of up to 0.1 to 0.5 on a sliding scale. The maximum height allowed is 60 feet, when buildings include under-building parking.

The northwest section of the study area includes a large block of land zoned Light Industrial (LI) between I-90, Richards Road, SE 26th Street, and about 138th Avenue NE. LI zoning also occurs in a smaller area immediately south of Bellevue College. LI zoning allows for a range of light industrial, manufacturing, warehouse, wholesale trade, and utility uses. It also allows for limited retail uses and office uses are allowed only as a component of a larger development. Single family residential uses are allowed only if subordinate to an allowed primary use. The height limit is 45 feet, except that this limit may be exceeded under certain conditions and if approved by the Director.

The Bellevue College is in an area zoned Residential (R-5), although the college does not include residences. Residential zoning in the study area also includes a multifamily area (R-10) west of Bellevue College and two small multifamily parcels (R-20) south of the 150th Avenue interchange.

In addition to these predominant zoning categories in the study area, there are a few exceptions. Several properties are zoned General Commercial (GC) east of Eastgate Plaza and adjacent to I-405; one property near 150th Avenue is zoned Neighborhood Business (NB); several properties are zoned Office (O) adjacent to areas of OLB zoning and north of the Factoria Mall. The office area north of Factoria Mall also includes F-2 zoning, which is similar to OLB, but specific to the Factoria Subarea. The landfill park site in the valley where 160th Avenue runs north of the freeway is zoned Office, Limited Business – Open Space (OLB-OS) – a land use designation that provides for significant amounts of open space and for offices, hotels, or motels, and other uses permitted in the Office, Limited Business (OLB) district, except for residential uses. OLB-OS properties are at least 25 acres in size with at least forty percent of the total site reserved as a contiguous open space area.
### 3.2 General Description and History

The Eastgate corridor, fronting both sides of Interstate 90, is a commercial and employment center with suburban, freeway oriented development. The freeway, a major east-west transportation corridor, divides the 633-acre study area into two unequal parts, with 504 acres on the north and 129 acres on the south. The Eastgate/I-90 Land Use and Transportation Study’s primary study area is surrounded by established single family neighborhoods on the north, east and west sides, and by Factoria Mall on the southwestern edge.

The study area’s current spatial patterns can be traced back to a few historical events. These formative events, and regulatory frameworks that evolved around them, have reinforced specific patterns and outcomes. Commercial development in a linear, corridor fashion can be traced back to the first bridge across Lake Washington, and businesses that sprung up around U.S. Route 10 which later became Interstate 90. Historic land uses, Bellevue Airfield, Lakeside Industries (an asphalt paving company), an abandoned quarry, gravel pits, and a municipal landfill, limited residential development and supported businesses such as service stations, auto body shops, storage yards, marine and aircraft related services and small offices.

Industrial uses in the Richards Valley area can be traced back to efforts in the early nineteen hundreds to establish an industrial center called ‘Factoria’ in the area around the site of the present day Factoria mall. This never took off, but the idea of light industrial uses in the corridor took root and uses such as warehouses and storage yards clustered around SE 30th Street. Historic land ownership patterns, with large tracts of land in single ownership (see figure of land ownership in 1978), has been another determiner of spatial pattern, creating large land swaths with few public streets.

History also tells us that the study area’s current condition as a corridor serving both regional and local needs is not a recent development. Regionally, it served as the entry point to the Seattle metropolitan area for westbound travelers on I-90 with retail and other services for highway motorists, and as the location for regional and public service facilities like the Bellevue Airfield, Bellevue College, the King County Transfer Station, PSE substation, a municipal landfill site and the Northwest’s first Mormon temple. Locally, the presence of established residential neighborhoods around the study area, and their need for convenience shopping and services, led to the development of three retail shopping areas, Eastgate Plaza, Sunset Village and Loehmann’s Plaza (now Factoria Village).

In addition to historical uses, natural topography has been a significant determiner of spatial pattern. Steep slopes defined edges and isolated large tracts of land, further fracturing connections broken by the freeway. Regulatory frameworks that reflected early twentieth century urban planning ideas, such as Euclidean separation of uses, low densities, and limited orientation to transit or pedestrians, and the propensities of the real...
estate market in the 1960s to build automobile-oriented developments, reinforced these natural and physical features.

All these forces, historic uses, natural topography and regulatory frameworks, have made the study area a mosaic of patterns. The northwest and central parts of the study area have a pattern common to manufacturing and institutional uses, which traditionally favor access, large flat parcels, separation from other uses, relatively few through streets and low intensity, while the southwestern and southeastern parts of the study area have a more linear pattern, typical of freeway-oriented commercial districts, with long land swaths and thin buildings.

Figure 7. Land Ownership in 1978, with overlay of study area boundary

Bellevue Airfield, circa 1971

From the Collections of Eastside Heritage Center
### 3.3 Major Activity Clusters

The study area is large and diverse. The four major uses are office, institutional, retail and light industrial.

Office uses dominate the study area. Office clusters in the study area are on the northeastern edge, in the valley west of 161st Avenue SE, and fronting the freeway on the south. Office uses in the northeast are dominated by Boeing, Verizon, and Microsoft while T-Mobile (in the Newport office campus) dominates the southern office clusters. Office uses are also located south of Bellevue College in the Lincoln Corporate Center, west of Bellevue College in the Sunset North Corporate Campus, and as smaller components of light-industrial uses in the Richards Valley area.

Retail uses are in two main locations, Factoria Village near Factoria Boulevard and Eastgate Plaza near SE 37th Street and 150th Avenue SE. Other major retail uses include Toyota and Subaru auto dealerships around 150th Avenue SE, in the Sunset Village shopping area, and a Honda dealership along SE 36th Street.

Light industrial and warehouse uses are loosely clustered in Richards Valley, around SE 30th Street, in the general area between 139th Avenue SE on the east and Richards Road on the west. Major manufacturing employers here are Printed Circuits Assembly, and H.D. Fowler Company.

The two major institutional uses are Bellevue College and the LDS church. A 59-acre parcel of the 99-acre campus of Bellevue College is in the study area. The campus is bounded by 148th Avenue SE to the east, SE 24th Street to the north, and Snoqualmie River Road to the west, while the 23-acre campus of the LDS church is bounded by 156th Avenue SE to the east, SE 28th Street to the north, and 148th Avenue SE to the west. Public facilities classified as institutional/government uses are also scattered across Richards Valley, and these include the King County Transfer Station, PSE substation and the Humane Society.

Since the focus of this study is on the commercial corridor fronting I-90, the study area boundaries have been drawn such that very little residential use is included. There are a total of 221 units within the boundaries of the study area, all of which are multifamily units clustered between 142nd Avenue and Sunset Mini Park. In addition to these housing units, the study area has about 900 hotel rooms, in extended stay format hotels.

In terms of acreage, office uses are the largest consumers of land utilizing 40% of total acreage, while institutional uses consume 16%, commercial uses consume 13% and industrial uses consume 11% of total land area. Bellevue College and Boeing are the two largest land owners.

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**Acreage of use**

- **Office**: 254.8 acres
- **Institutional/Government**: 105.9 acres
- **Retail**: 77.1 acres
- **Industrial**: 68.3 acres
- **Data Missing**: 27.1 acres
- **Vacant**: 23.4 acres
- **Multi Family**: 22.7 acres
- ***Open Use**: 18.7 acres
- **Parking**: 13.1 acres
- **Mixed Use**: 7.4 acres
- **Recreation**: 4.2 acres
- **Hotel/Motel**: 3.8 acres
- **Misc.**: 3.0 acres
- **Parks**: 2.5 acres
- **Single Family**: 0.7 acres

Total: 633 acres

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**Commercial Square Footage**

- **Office**: 5,439,334 sq ft
- **Industrial**: 952,421 sq ft
- **Retail**: 898,305 sq ft
- **Institutional/Government**: 794,099 sq ft
- **Hotel/Motel**: 195,956 sq ft
- **Mixed Use**: 104,704 sq ft
- **Recreation**: 68,929 sq ft

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* *Open use is vacant, undevelopable land*
3.4 Institutional/Government Uses:

Bellevue College

The major institutional use in the study area is Bellevue College, 59 acres of the 99-acre campus of Bellevue College is in the study area. Bellevue College, formerly, Bellevue Community College, is one of 34 community and technical colleges in Washington State and the third largest institution of higher learning in Washington State, behind the University of Washington and Washington State University. This 12-building cluster is the main campus of the college, which also has a North Campus at 10700 Northup Way and 25 additional sites throughout the city where continuing education courses are offered.

Bellevue College is bounded by 148th Avenue SE to the east, SE 24th Street to the north, and Snoqualmie River Road to the west. The southern boundary of Bellevue College is bounded by 148th Avenue SE to the north, and Snoqualmie River Road to the west. The steep sloping areas on the campus perimeter have remained undeveloped and act as forested buffers and barriers between the College and the rest of the study area. Perhaps because of the difficulties of negotiating this context, and also in some part due to mid-nineteenth century campus planning ideas that favored inward-looking, Arcadian academic campuses, none of the campus buildings are adjacent to or orient directly to any city street, and the layout of the College is that of an insular, academic enclave.

The College is currently strapped for space, and would need to add 228,096 Sq.Ft. simply to meet state averages of space required per student. In addition to the required 228,096 Sq.Ft. BC expects a continued rise in enrollment, and an additional 300,000 Sq.Ft. to accommodate this growth. Given the restrictions on expansion, such as the physical limits of the existing campus and parking, and the nature of predicted future growth, mostly in enrollment of students from the eastern perimeters of its service area, BC plans to distribute the total required new space over two locations, its main campus in the study area and a satellite facility at a to-be-determined location. For now, BC’s 2008 masterplan envisions 280,000 Sq.Ft. of new development on the main campus, a 46% increase over the existing 612,683 Sq.Ft.

Bellevue College is an important anchor in the study area, given that it is unlikely to move from the study area, and its physical growth and evolution will have a significant impact on land use patterns. Relationships between universities and their adjacent neighborhoods vary greatly, ranging from the older model of the college as academic fortress, to a more recent form, the engaged university. Bellevue College was originally designed in the former, more traditional style, but this may possibly change as it evolves into a larger institution.
3.5 EASTGATE TRANSIT CENTER

The Eastgate Park and Ride, constructed in 2005 at its present location on SE Eastgate Way, functions as a major transportation node for the area, serving as a major transfer point between multiple Metro and Sound Transit routes. With estimated 2,168 boardings and 1,617 alightings per weekday, the Park and Ride accounts for 48% of the boarding activity and 39% of the alighting activity in the study area. It has 1,614 parking spaces, a few bike racks and bike lockers and 3 electric car charging stations. In spite of the large number of parking spaces, about three times South Bellevue’s 519 spaces and South Kirkland’s 596 spaces, the Eastgate Park and Ride is heavily used, with a utilization ratio of about 80%.

Walkability around the park and ride is low. This might be because the Park and Ride is new, and there has not been enough time for land use patterns to change or orient to it, or because the presence of ample free parking expands the radius of impact to a more regional scale, at the expense of the area immediately around it. Anecdotally, foot traffic is low, and the only signs of pedestrian activity are around the connection to Bellevue College, via the overpass to 142nd Avenue SE, which seem to be used by a number of college students. This overpass has the potential to be a more effective, better used link, given that it connects a major employment/activity node to a transportation node, but improvements to its existing condition (narrow sidewalk, negative perception of safety because of low lighting and absence of “eyes on the street”) may be needed to widen its appeal.

3.6 HUMANE SOCIETY

The Seattle Humane Society, located at 13212 SE Eastgate Way, is a private, nonprofit animal welfare organization. Founded in 1897, the Seattle Humane Society was the first such organization to serve King County. The focus of the Society’s efforts has changed over time and by 1972, when the Seattle Humane Society moved to Bellevue, it had become focused on bringing people and animals together. This was achieved through adoptions, veterinary services, dog training classes, a pet food bank, and education for children.

The Humane Society of Seattle/King County (also known as the Seattle Humane Society) is private and receives no local, state or federal support. Its 3.7-acre campus in the study area is comprised of three single story buildings: the Adoption/Vet Services Center, the Admissions Office, and the Administrative Building/Dog Training Auditorium, with a gross floor area of 12,186 sq. ft.

3.7 DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

The northwest regional office of the Washington State Department of Ecology is located at 3190 160th Ave SE, in a single story office building built in 1982 on a 3.6-acre site, with a total gross floor area of 66,400 sq.ft.

3.8 LDS TEMPLE

The Seattle Washington temple, located at 2808 148th Ave SE, was built in 1980 and is the first Mormon temple in the Pacific Northwest. The 110,000-square foot temple building is set back from the street on a 23.5-acre, hilly site. An interesting historical aspect of the design is that the height of the single spire was reduced, and a red strobe warning light installed at the base of the angel Moroni statue, because of the site’s proximity to the then functioning Bellevue Airfield.
3.9 OFFICE USES

The study area has a concentration of office uses, with a total built area of 5.5 million square feet, spread over both the northern and southern sides of the freeway. On the north side, office uses are clustered around 161st Avenue SE, and along the west and south side of Bellevue College. Office uses on the south side of I-90 show less clustering, with the exception of the Newport Corporate Center, and are generally scattered along SE 36th Street. Major office uses are The Boeing Company, Microsoft (600,000 sq.ft.), T-Mobile (1.1 million sq.ft.), Quadrant Homes, State of Washington (Bellevue College and the Department of Ecology) and Verizon. 24,300 people work in the study area, and about 75% of them are office workers.

3.10 RETAIL USES

Historically, the land currently occupied by the Toyota and Subaru dealerships was the location of the earliest shopping center in the study area, the ‘Sunset Village’ shopping center. Built in 1962, this shopping center included a Safeway supermarket, drug store, bank, cleaners, and other retail uses. It has since changed character, with auto dealerships replacing the grocery store, but the area around the dealerships retains commercial uses with a bowling alley and small stores. Today, convenience retail areas in the study area are in two main locations, Factoria Village near Factoria Boulevard, and Eastgate Plaza near SE 36th Street.

Factoria Village is anchored by QFC and operates on a 10-acre site. The tenant mix is primarily neighborhood serving retail, with an anchor grocery store and smaller stores such as Bartell Drugs, Applebee’s, Blockbuster, Shoe Pavilion, Davis Optical Xpress, Starbucks, Great Harvest Bread Co., a tanning salon, soccer supply store, pet store, nail salon, blinds store and three small Thai, Mexican and Chinese eateries. Anecdotally, the perception is that store turnover here is lower than at other shopping centers, and this is possibly true, given that the city’s GIS ‘year built’ data shows that the QFC has been in operation since 1980, when the shopping center was built.

Eastgate Plaza is anchored by Albertsons and operates on an 8-acre site. The tenant mix is similar to Factoria Village, with Albertsons as the anchor grocery store and other smaller stores including a Baskin & Robbins ice cream store, Rite-Aid, and Outback Steakhouse. Turnover seems to be low here as well, since data shows that both Albertsons and Baskin & Robbins have been in operation since 1972, when the shopping center was built.

The QFC and other smaller stores in Factoria Village, and the Albertsons in Eastgate Plaza, both serve neighborhoods south of I-90, though the QFC and other stores in Factoria Village are part of the larger Factoria Mall retail area, which might draw customers from a larger radius. Both these shopping centers seem to have few vacancies, low store turnover and some pedestrian activity. Compared to other neighborhood shopping centers in the city which are languishing, these two retail strip malls appear to be in relatively good health, aided perhaps by the relative isolation of neighborhoods within the market radius from other retail areas, and at least in the case of Factoria Village, also by access to a captive daytime population of office workers. Nevertheless, both sites are under-utilised and the design of the shopping areas is such that people are not able to easily walk to them. The presence of established residential neighborhoods, and their growing need for walkable, neighborhood amenities mean that reimagining these tired shopping areas is important.
1. 118th Avenue SE - bike/pedestrian path, underneath I-90
2. Richards Road-Factory - sidewalks and bicycles on road, underneath I-90
3. 142nd Avenue SE - sidewalks and bicycles on road, overpass
4. 148th Avenue SE - dedicated pedestrian/bike overpass
5. 161st Avenue SE - sidewalks and bicycles on road, tunnel underpass
6. Dedicated pedestrian/bike overpass
7. Lakemont interchange - sidewalk segments, bicycles on road, underpass
3.11 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL CLUSTER

This part of the study area, around SE 30th Street, with easy access points to the freeway and low rents, is among the few remaining parts of the city where light industrial uses are permitted. 125 acres (62 parcels) in the study area are zoned LI, which is about 75% of the 165 acres (85 parcels) of total LI zoned land in the city. Historically, this area was largely owned by Lakeside Industries, an asphalt paving company, and used for their heavy equipment shop and storage yards, while the area immediately adjacent to SE Eastgate Way was an abandoned quarry.

The Richards Valley area has a spatial pattern common among industrial clusters. This pattern is the intersection of a supply of large, flat parcels, quick and easy access to truck routes and major transportation corridors, wide streets and intersections for vehicles with large turning radii, few roads and intersections and limited access for commuter traffic, few sidewalks, and separation from other non-industrial uses. The light industrial cluster in the study area has a range of light industrial, manufacturing, warehouse, wholesale trade, and utility uses. It also has limited office uses as a component of a larger development. Utility uses in this area include King County’s Factoria transfer station, Puget Sound Energy substation, while other uses are auto-repair centers and light manufacturing uses. The largest LI zoned parcel in the study area is the currently vacant 14.5-acre site owned by King County, formerly used as the Eastgate Park and Ride.

Among manufacturing uses located in this area, the major employers are Printed Circuits Assembly Corporation and HD Fowler Company. Printed Circuits Assembly Corporation was established in 1984 and manufactures bare printed circuit boards. H.D. Fowler Company, founded in the early 1900s, is a family-owned distributor of waterworks, irrigation, pumps and wastewater treatment equipment. Other smaller, light manufacturing businesses in this area are Dirigo Compasses, Pacific Valley Foods, Western Integrated Technologies, Northwest Marble and Terrazzo Co., Inc and Centralized Copy Services.

Public facilities located in this part of the study area include the Factoria transfer station, the only solid waste disposal site within city limits, and the PSE substation. King County currently operates the Factoria transfer station on a site on the north side of SE 32nd Street, east of Richards Road. The 9,900-square feet, one-story transfer station building was built in 1966 and operates on an eight-acre site. King County’s transfer system is aging – five of the eight County-operated transfer stations, including Factoria transfer station, are more than 35 years old. King County is currently planning to expand the Factoria transfer station on the existing parcel, and on parcels immediately west of the existing transfer station. The transfer station generates a fair amount of truck trips and noise as part of operational activities, average weekday trips at the facility range from 848 on weekdays to 1016 on weekends.
Looking south from I-90