

Downtown Livability Initiative



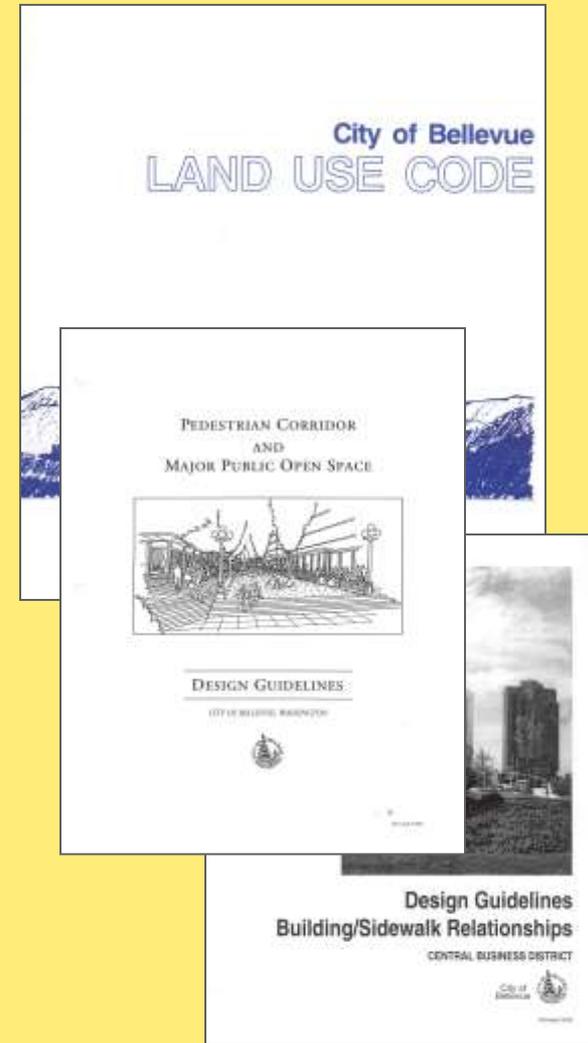
Bellevue City Council Study Session

March 3, 2014

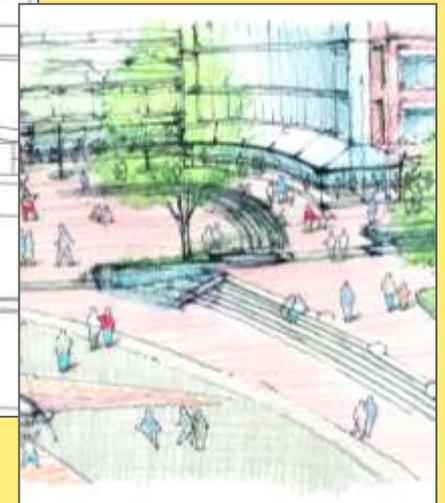
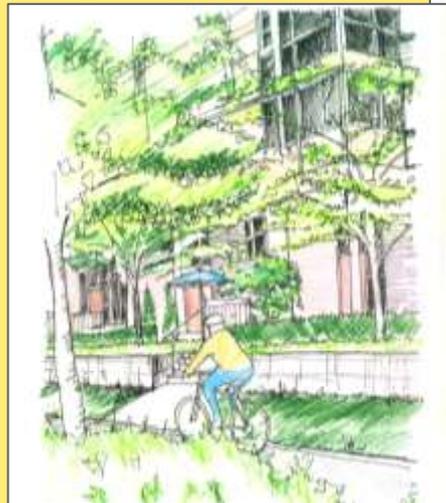
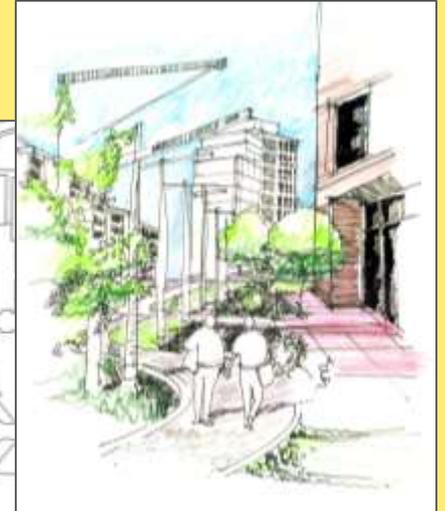


Focus of the Livability Initiative

- Targeted review of regulations that guide Downtown development and land use activity
- Important to set the stage for future development;
most extensive update since original 1981 Land Use Code
- Incorporates elements from Downtown Transportation Plan Update and East Link planning
- Implementing existing Downtown Subarea Plan
- Tonight: Overall status report with focus on alternatives & strategies under analysis



Reinforcing Neighborhood Identity

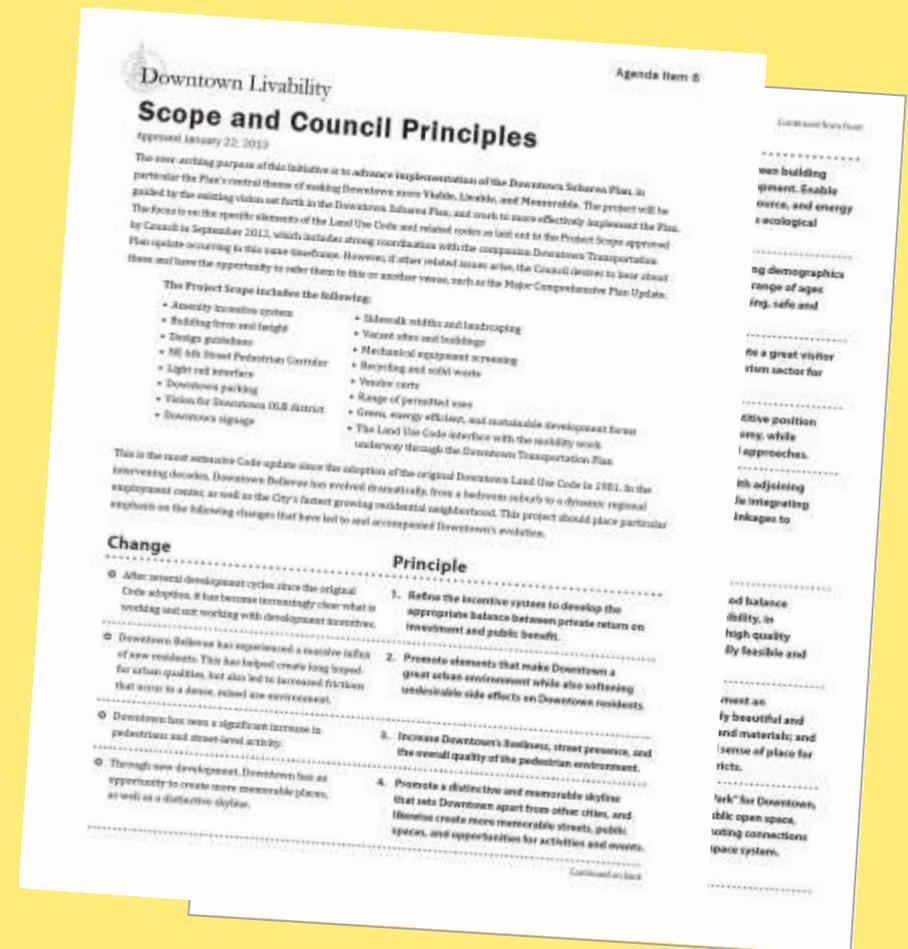


Inspiration from Other Cities



Council Principles

- Series of 12 principles built upon *What's Changed*
- Providing guidance as project progresses



Study Area: Downtown Subarea



Opportunities for Future Development



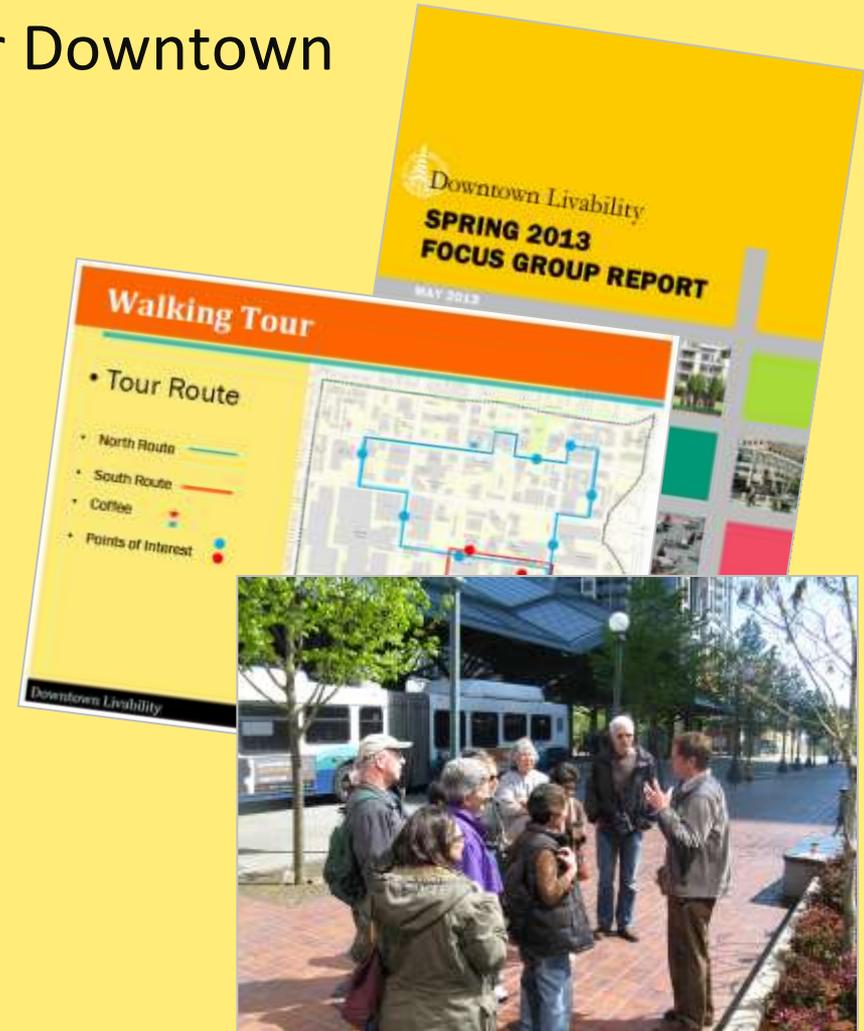
Council-Appointed Advisory Committee

- Kicked-off their work in May 2013
- Have been meeting monthly, with public comment accepted at all meetings
- Reached milestone in January with identification of range of alternatives and strategies to be evaluated

MEMBER	REPRESENTATION
Aaron Laing (co-chair)	Planning Commission
Ernie Simas (co-chair)	Transportation Commission
Hal Ferris	Planning Commission
Erin Powell	Parks & Community Services Board
Jan Stout	Human Services Commission
Brad Helland	Environmental Services Commission
Trudi Jackson	Arts Commission
Patrick Bannon	Bellevue Downtown Association
Gary Guenther	Bellevue Chamber of Commerce
Ming Zhang	Small business representative
Michael Chaplin	Architect
Mark D'Amato	Downtown resident
Lee Maxwell	Resident from nearby neighborhoods
Loretta Lopez	City-wide representative
David Sutherland (Resigned due to work)	Downtown employer

Stakeholder Engagement

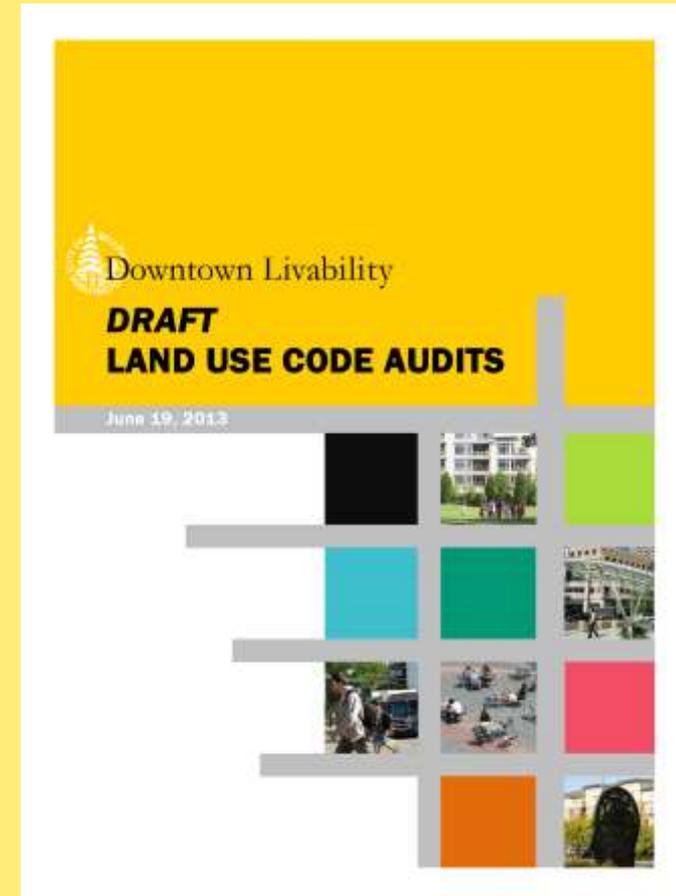
- Residents—in Downtown, near Downtown
- Tenants/employers
- Employees
- Visitors
- Developers and landowners
- City-wide residents
- Business Organizations
- Regional interests



Land Use Code “Audits”

■ Purpose of Audits

- Identify what is working well and where there is room for improvement
- Help diagnose issues and opportunities on which to focus
- Not building new system from scratch



Current Phase: Strategies/Alternatives Analysis

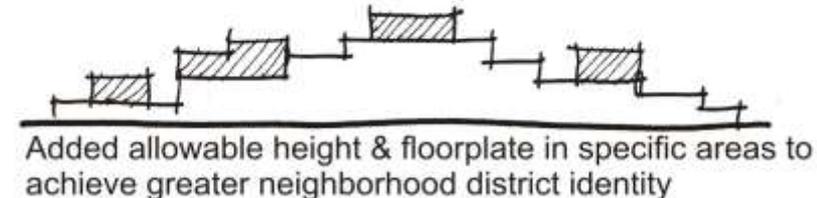
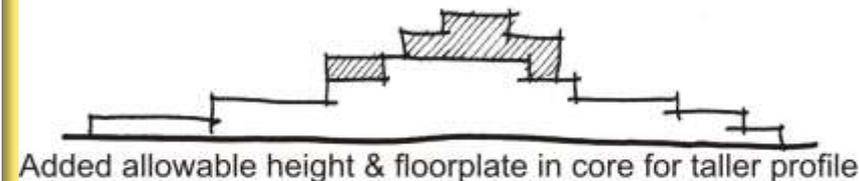
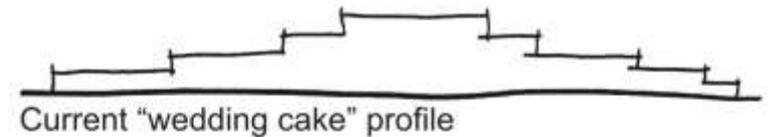
- Based on direction from Advisory Committee, range of strategies and alternatives being evaluated against Council Principles and sets of Evaluation Criteria
 - Building Height and Form
 - Major Pedestrian Corridor
 - Public Open Spaces
 - Amenity Incentive System
 - Design Guidelines
 - Downtown Parking
 - Other Code Amendments (such as Downtown Food Trucks)

Building Height and Form

- KEY ISSUE: Should building heights and their urban form be modified to better achieve the vision for Downtown?

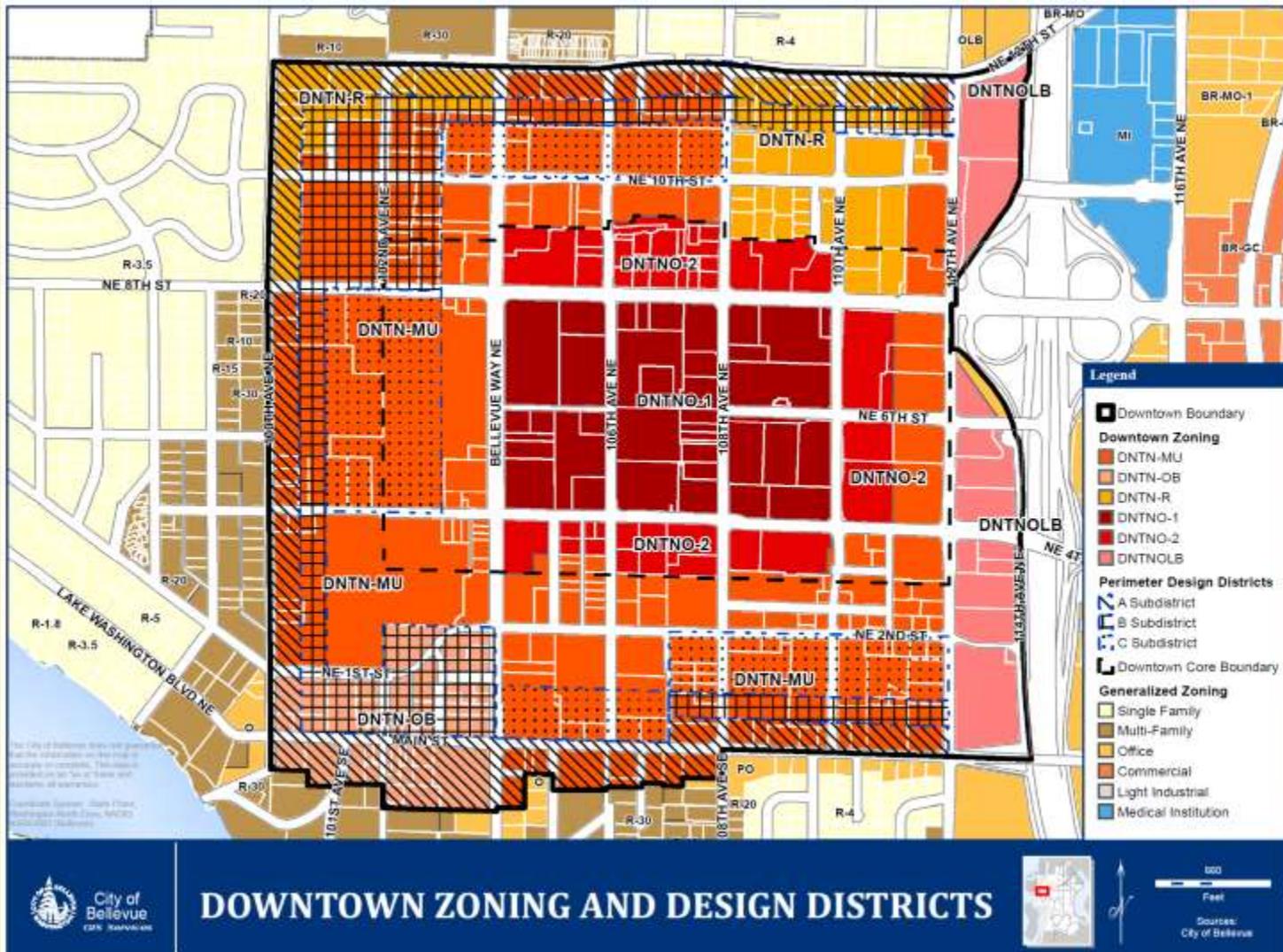
Evaluation to include:

- Review of current height and density provisions (status quo)
- For Downtown Core Area, allow for increased height and/or density to accentuate *wedding cake*
- For all of Downtown, examine increased height and/or density to achieve greater district identity
- Also:
 - Bringing nonresidential density and height provisions in line with residential
 - Floorplate sizes and tower configurations

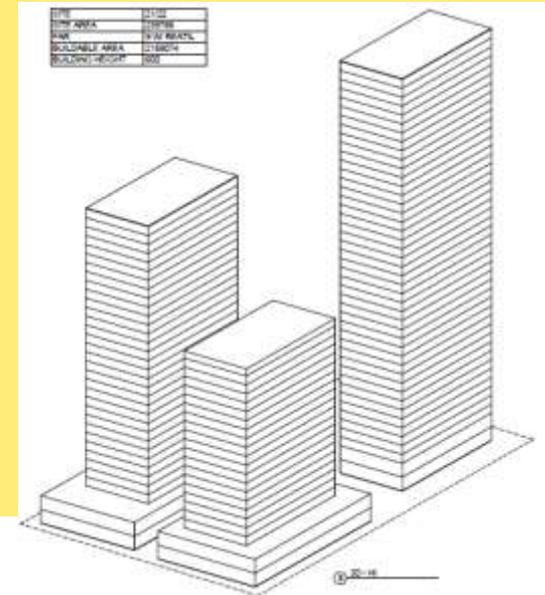


Note: All dimensions are not to scale. This diagram is to illustrate general concepts only and not a specific proposal.

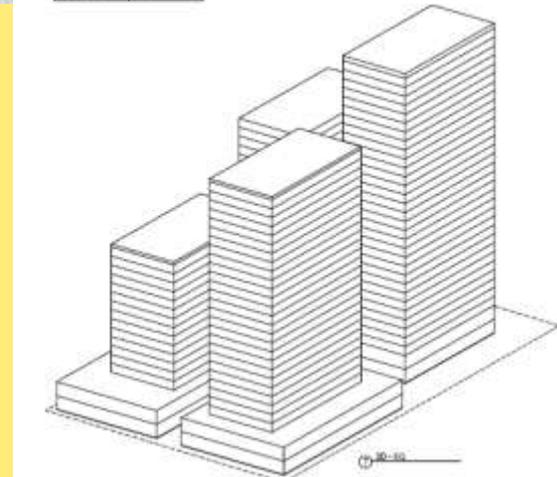
Building Height and Form



Building Height and Form



SITE	0100
TOTAL AREA	17000
FOOTPRINT	15000
BUILDABLE AREA	118000
BUILDING HEIGHT	300



Major Pedestrian Corridor



Major Pedestrian Corridor

- KEY ISSUE: How can the Pedestrian Corridor make for a more memorable and vibrant Downtown urban fabric?

Evaluation to include:

Land Use Code Measures

- Extend corridor to east include light rail station
- Require weather protection
- Increase activation of building frontages
- Add additional landscaping/green elements
- Allow off-site developers contributions
- Evaluate bicycle usage

Other City Measures

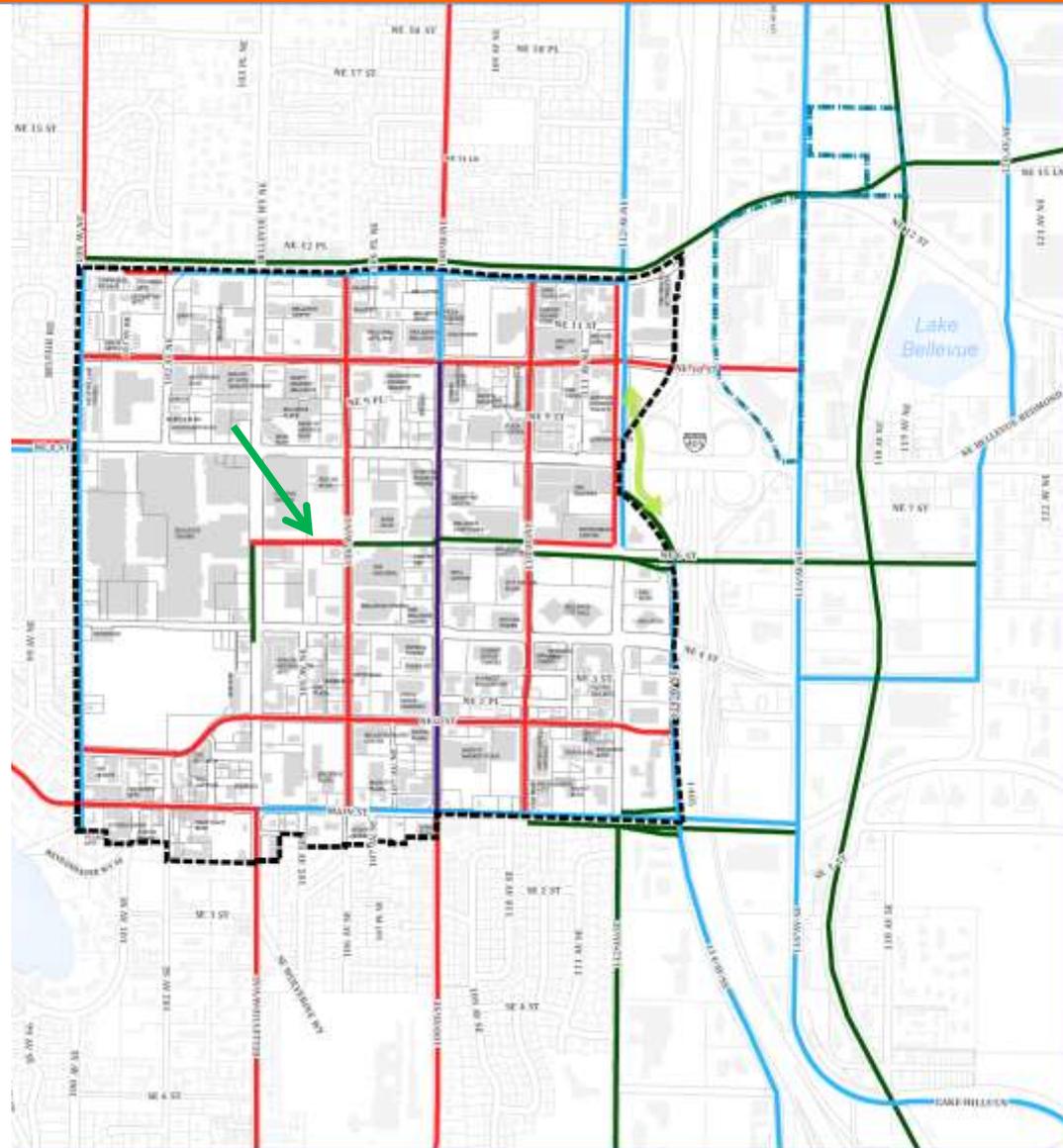
- Potential public investment in key sections
- Usability improvements (wayfinding, weather protection, lighting, crosswalks, etc.)
- Create partnership to add events and activities
- Rename/re-brand the Corridor



Bicycle Use of NE 6th Street

How to integrate bicycles onto the Pedestrian Corridor?

- Issue of compatibility with pedestrians and bicycles
- Pedestrian & Bicycle Transportation Plan
- Location of Transit Center & Light Rail Station
- Parallel streets are busy (esp. NE 4th and 8th)



2030 Bicycle Facilities Network Downtown Area

Downtown Transportation
Plan Update

Bicycle Facilities

Facility Type

Shared Roadway

Bicycle Lane

Off-Street Path

Grade Separated
Off-Street Path

Multi-Modal Corridor

Bicycle Priority
& Transit
Enhancements

Area Boundaries

Downtown
Bellevue

Medical
Institution
District



Source:
City of Bellevue
Planning Department
April 2008

Public Open Spaces

- **KEY ISSUE:** How can public open spaces make for a more memorable and vibrant Downtown urban fabric?

Evaluation to include:

- **Open Space Expression** – Identify/incentivize open space that addresses each neighborhood’s needs and character
 - **Active Spaces** – Incentives and design guidelines (e.g. sports courts, community gardens, play structures, etc.)
- **I-405 Open Space/Connection** – Potential for significant open space/park investment w/ lid over 405
- **Mid-Block Connections** – Strengthen guidance for routes through superblocks
- **Update Design Guidelines** – Solar access, seating, active edges, etc.
- **Funding Mechanism** – Explore methods to fund open space acquisition and improvement.



Amenity Incentive System

- **KEY ISSUE:** How should the incentive system be updated to meet evolving market conditions and integrate newer thinking about desired Downtown amenities?

Evaluation to include:

- **Shorter, More Focused Amenity List –**
Adjust to include only a handful of highest priority items
- Some current amenities, such as weather protection, may shift to be requirements
- Some new amenities being considered (e.g. affordable housing, sustainable design); others may be adjusted (e.g. open space tailored to each neighborhood)
- Recalibrate values to reflect updated economics and public priorities
- Provide mechanism for fee-in-lieu payments
- Update system on a set interval



Design Guidelines

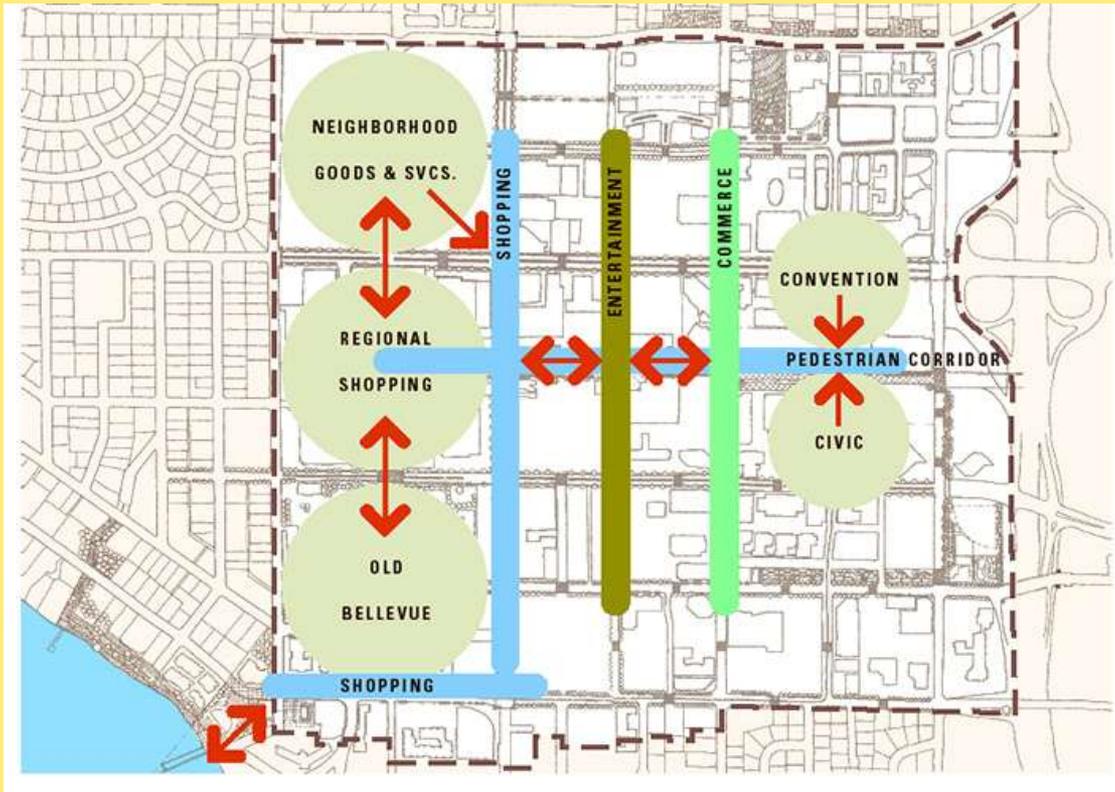
- KEY ISSUE: How should Design Guidelines be refined to improve the livability and character of Downtown?

Evaluation to include:

- **Revise Street Classifications** – Create stronger focus for most concentrated pedestrian activity
- **Update Design Guidelines** – Update to emphasize the following:
 - Increased focus on the public realm and pedestrian experience
 - Neighborhood-specific design elements to reinforce character and identity
 - Importance of site design, and high-quality urban architecture
 - Encourage creativity
 - Flexibility – Guidelines for design departures
 - User-friendly, graphically rich



Design Guidelines



Downtown Parking

- **KEY ISSUE:** Should Downtown parking standards be modified to meet the evolving needs of the city center?

Evaluation to include:

- **Reduction to Minimum Required Parking with Set Ratios** – Potential new minimum ratios for residential, restaurant and office
- **Flexibility – Option for Departure from Minimum Requirements via Parking Study**
- **Old Bellevue** – Focused look at unique parking needs in Old Bellevue
- **“Accessible” parking** – Explore potential updates relating to number of stalls, location, etc.
- **Non-Code Issues** – Public parking supply & potential for public garages, opportunities for coordinated management of existing parking supply.

Other Downtown Topics

Topics to be covered through Design Guidelines

- Garbage collection
- Mechanical Equipment
- Vendor Carts/Food Trucks
- Vacant sites/ buildings
- Permitted Uses



Other Issues to be Addressed

Key Issues brought up through Focus Groups and Stakeholders also being referred to other departments for action.

Transportation Design, Signals and Public Safety:

- Traffic Enforcement – Speeding, Red Lights
- Pedestrian Safety – Enforcement and Facility Design
- Transient Activity

Parks and Community Services:

- Off-Leash Dog Park
- Ashwood Park Master Plan

Development Services:

- Universal Design and ADA Standards (design for all ages and abilities)
- Construction types permitted Downtown
- Noise/Nuisance Control

Overall Schedule

Public Scoping/Open House	Winter 2013
Advisory Committee Orientation and Kick-Off; First Round of Focus Groups	Spring 2013
Committee and Public Review of Land Use Audits; Second Round of Focus Groups	Summer/Fall 2013
Identification of Range of Alternatives/Strategies to Further Analyze and Evaluate	Winter 2014
Analysis of Alternatives/Strategies; Results Reviewed by Public and Committee	Spring/Summer 2014
Identification of Committee's Recommendations	Summer/Fall 2014

More Info / Project Manager Contacts

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