

# Downtown Livability Initiative

Overview of process; focus on station area planning recommendations



## Presentation to East Main Station Area Plan CAC

*January 27, 2015*



# Council Principles

- Series of 12 principles built upon *What's Changed*
- Outlined project scope and provided guidance to CAC



Agenda Item 6

**Downtown Livability**  
**Scope and Council Principles**  
 Approved January 22, 2013

The over-arching purpose of this Initiative is to advance implementation of the Downtown Subarea Plan, in particular the Plan's central theme of making Downtown more Viable, Livable, and Memorable. The project will be guided by the existing vision set forth in the Downtown Subarea Plan, and work to more effectively implement the Plan. The focus is on the specific elements of the Land Use Code and related codes as laid out in the Project Scope approved by Council in September 2012, which includes strong coordination with the companion Downtown Transportation Plan update occurring in this same timeframe. However, if other related issues arise, the Council desires to hear about these and have the opportunity to refer them to this or another venue, such as the Major Comprehensive Plan Update.

The Project Scope includes the following:

- Amenity incentive system
- Building form and height
- Design guidelines
- NE 6th Street Pedestrian Corridor
- Light rail interface
- Downtown parking
- Vision for Downtown OLB district
- Downtown signage
- Sidewalk widths and landscaping
- Vacant sites and buildings
- Mechanical equipment screening
- Recycling and solid waste
- Vendor carts
- Range of permitted uses
- Green, energy efficient, and sustainable development forms
- The Land Use Code interface with the mobility work underway through the Downtown Transportation Plan

This is the most extensive Code update since the adoption of the original Downtown Land Use Code in 1981. In the intervening decades, Downtown Bellevue has evolved dramatically, from a bedroom suburb to a dynamic regional employment center, as well as the City's fastest growing residential neighborhood. This project should place particular emphasis on the following changes that have led to and accompanied Downtown's evolution.

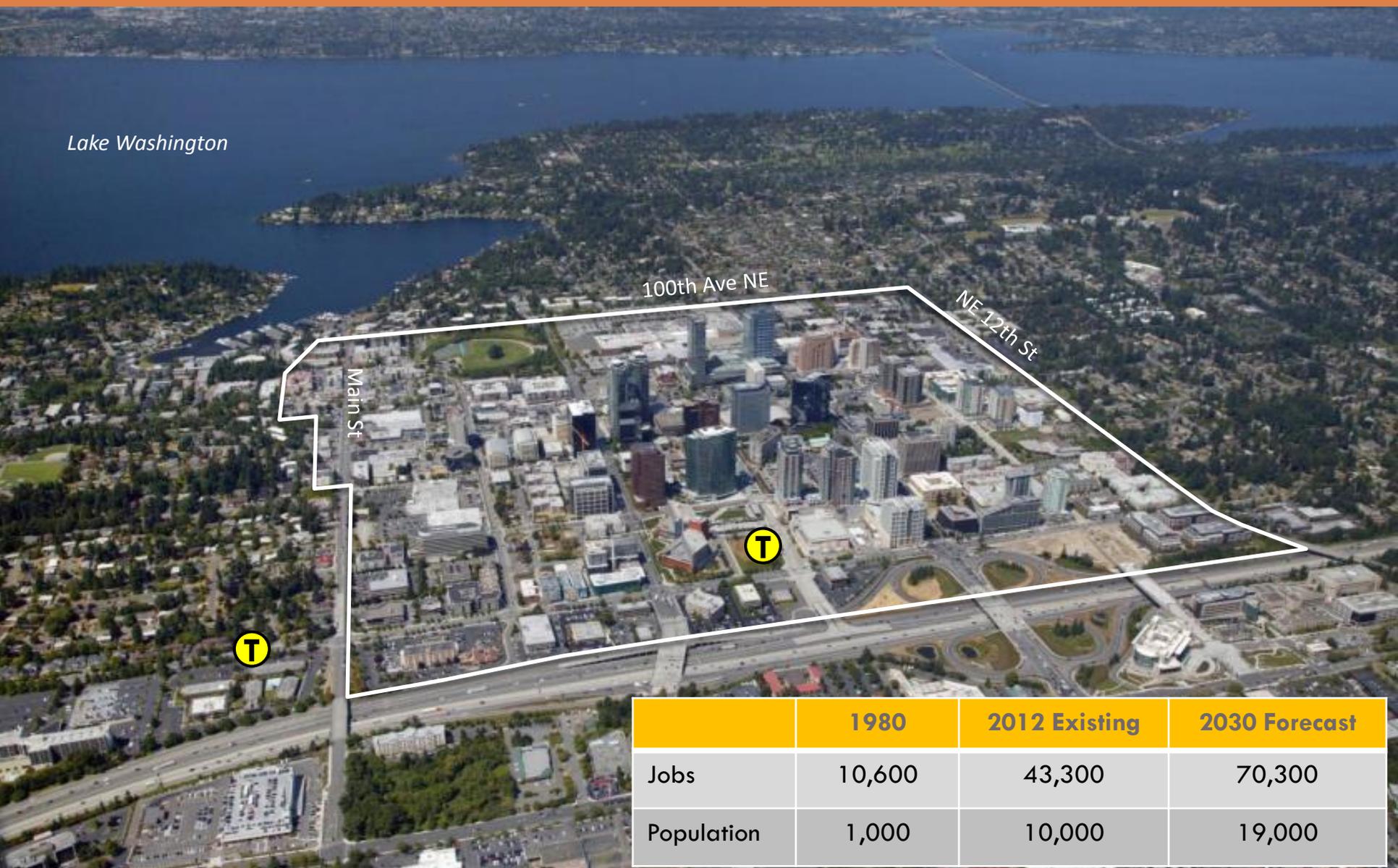
Change	Principle
○ After several development cycles since the original Code adoption, it has become increasingly clear what is working and not working with development incentives.	1. Refine the incentive system to develop the appropriate balance between private return on investment and public benefit.
○ Downtown Bellevue has experienced a massive influx of new residents. This has helped create long hoped-for urban qualities, but also led to increased frictions that occur in a dense, mixed use environment.	2. Promote elements that make Downtown a great urban environment while also softening undesirable side effects on Downtown residents.
○ Downtown has seen a significant increase in pedestrians and street-level activity.	3. Increase Downtown's liveliness, street presence, and the overall quality of the pedestrian environment.
○ Through new development, Downtown has an opportunity to create more memorable places, as well as a distinctive skyline.	4. Promote a distinctive and memorable skyline that sets Downtown apart from other cities, and likewise create more memorable streets, public spaces, and opportunities for activities and events.

Continued on back

the nearby Botanical Garden on Willburton Hill.

# Study Area: Downtown Subarea

Lake Washington



	1980	2012 Existing	2030 Forecast
Jobs	10,600	43,300	70,300
Population	1,000	10,000	19,000

# City's Broader Livability Strategy

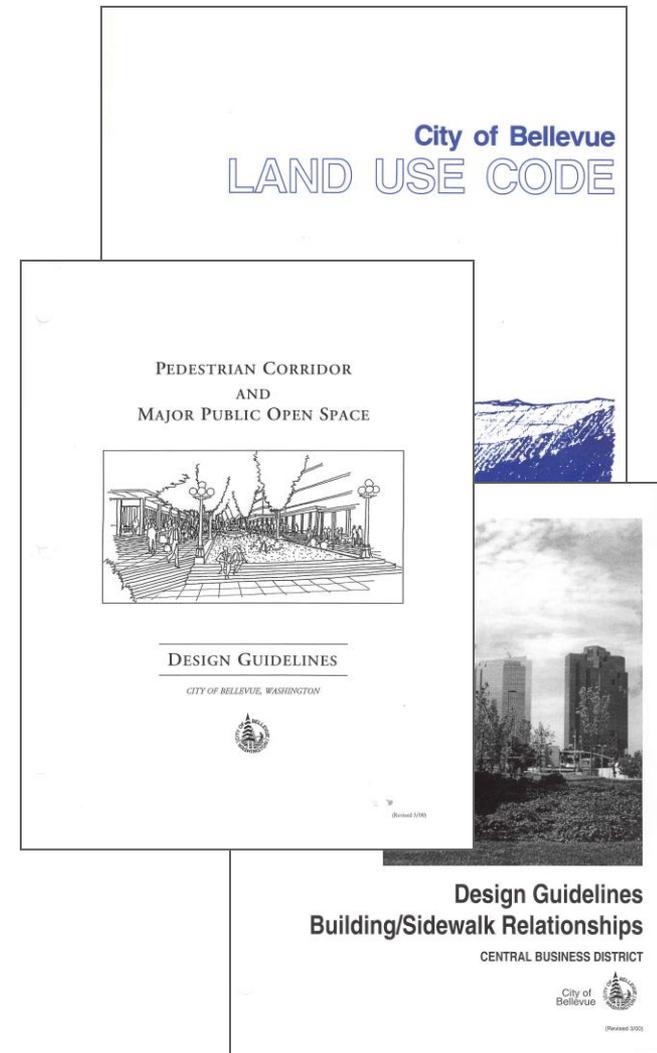
## **CAC's Work Supplements Important Elements of Livability**

- Public Safety
- Schools
- Pedestrian Safety and Convenience
- ADA Access
- Traffic Capacity
- Bicycle Access
- Public Transit
- Parks and Open Space
- “Grand Connection”



# Focus of the Livability Initiative

- Targeted review of regulations that guide Downtown land use activity
- Important to set the stage for future development; most extensive update since original 1981 Land Use Code
- Implements Downtown Subarea Plan
- Incorporates elements from Downtown Transportation Plan Update and East Link planning



# Advisory Committee Members

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

# Overall Livability Process

## Downtown Livability CAC (May 2013-June 2014)

Review of Land  
Use Code Audits

Identification of  
Strategies and  
Alternatives

Evaluation and  
Committee  
Recommendations

## WE ARE HERE

Jan. 2015

Transmittal  
of CAC Recs.  
to Council

Refinement and Adoption  
Process

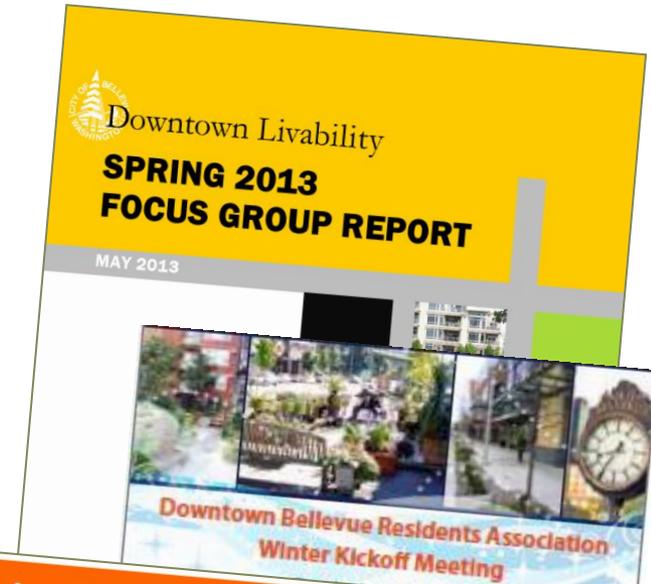
On-going Public Engagement

### CAC Not the End of the Process

- CAC tasked with studying and recommending updates to Downtown Land Use Code
- CAC's Final Report transmitted to Council on Jan. 20, 2015
- Additional work and public engagement opportunities to be included in the process of developing/adopting specific Land Use Code amendments

# Public Outreach

- Broad range of interested parties
- Open Houses
- Focus Groups
- Walking Tours
- Community Meetings
- Website

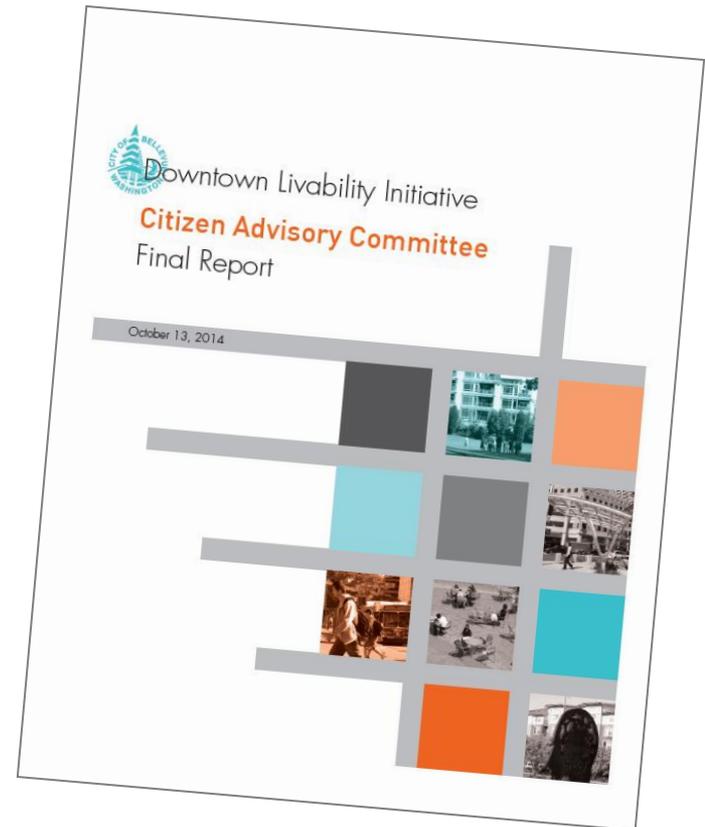


# Committee Recommendations

- Code-related and non-code recommendations included in CAC's Final Report

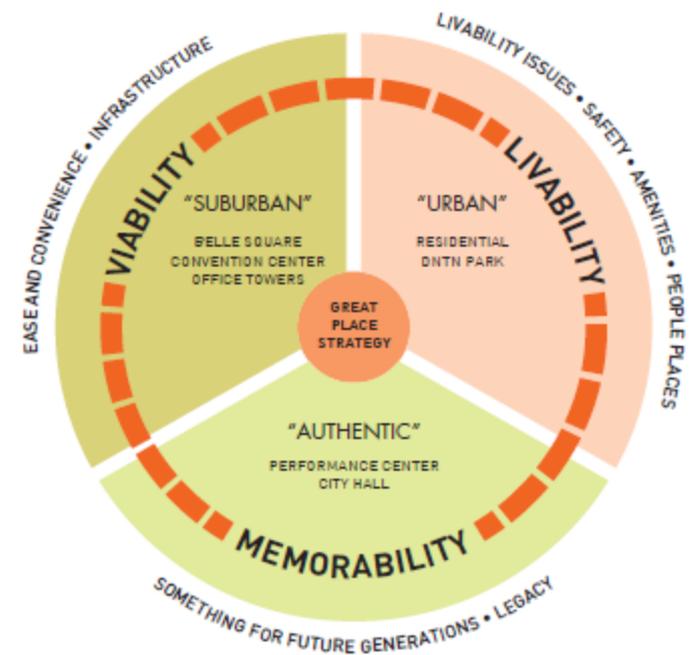
[www.bellevuewa.gov/downtown-livability-reports.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/downtown-livability-reports.htm)

- Public Open Space
- Pedestrian Corridor
- Design Guidelines
- Amenity Incentive System
- Station Area Planning
- Building Height & Form
- Downtown Parking
- Other Topics



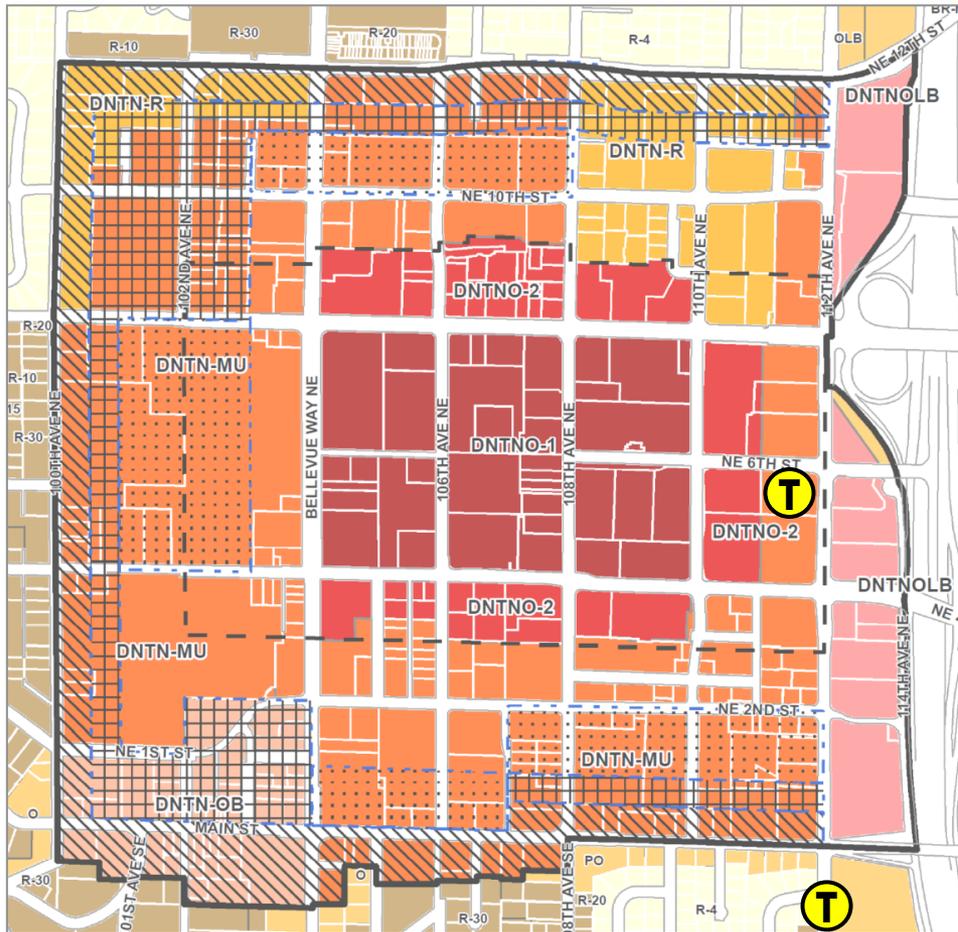
# Key Themes

- **The Great Place Strategy is working** – CAC recommendations will further progress toward vision of vibrant, mixed-use center.
- **Recommendations are inter-related** – they should be considered in an integrated manner and are designed to work together.
- **Integrating land use and transportation** – the Downtown Livability and Downtown Transportation Plan recommendations have been considered together.
- **Walkability contributes to livability** – CAC has focused on the land use elements that contribute to a walkable downtown.
- **Station area planning** – CAC’s work furthers Comprehensive Plan policies supportive of transit use and transit-oriented development.



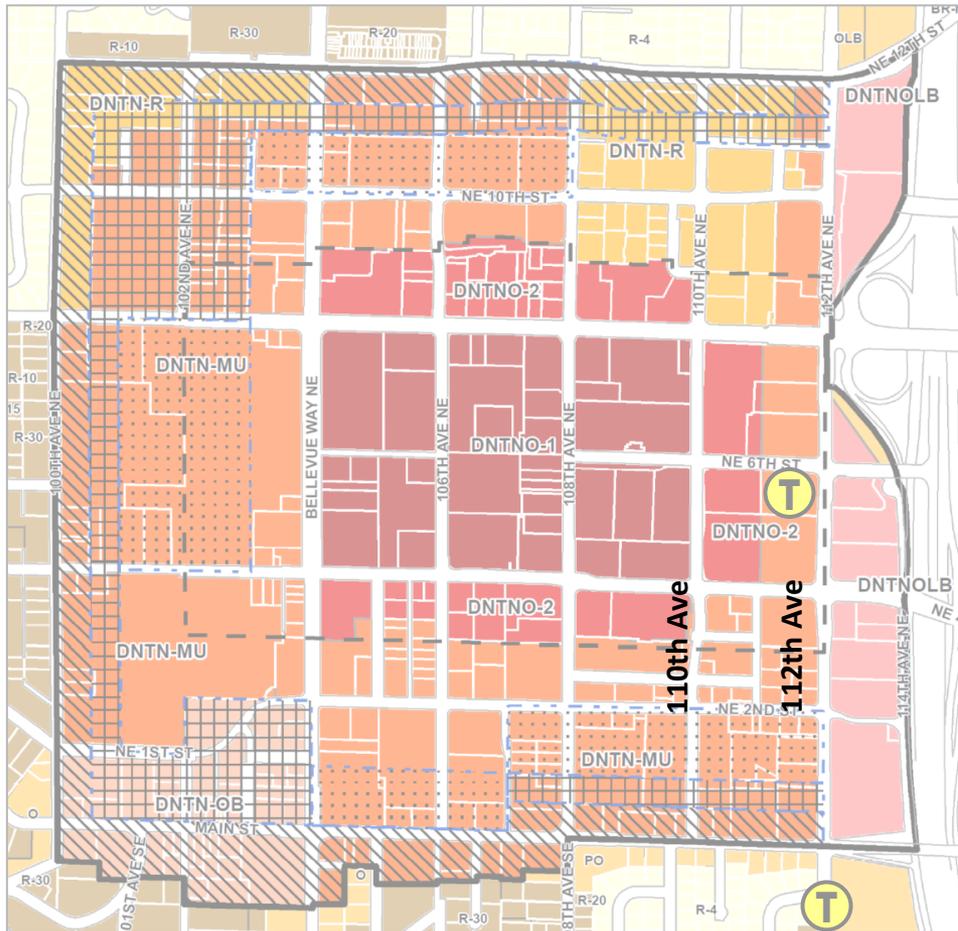
Source: City of Bellevue Comprehensive Plan.

# Focus on Station Area Planning



- Design guidelines relating to streetscape designations, through-block connections, and activated areas near stations
- Updated vision and TOD opportunities for DT-OLB District
- Strong connection between Pedestrian Corridor and the NE 6th station
- Non-motorized connection across I-405 at approx. NE 5th

# Design Guideline Recommendations

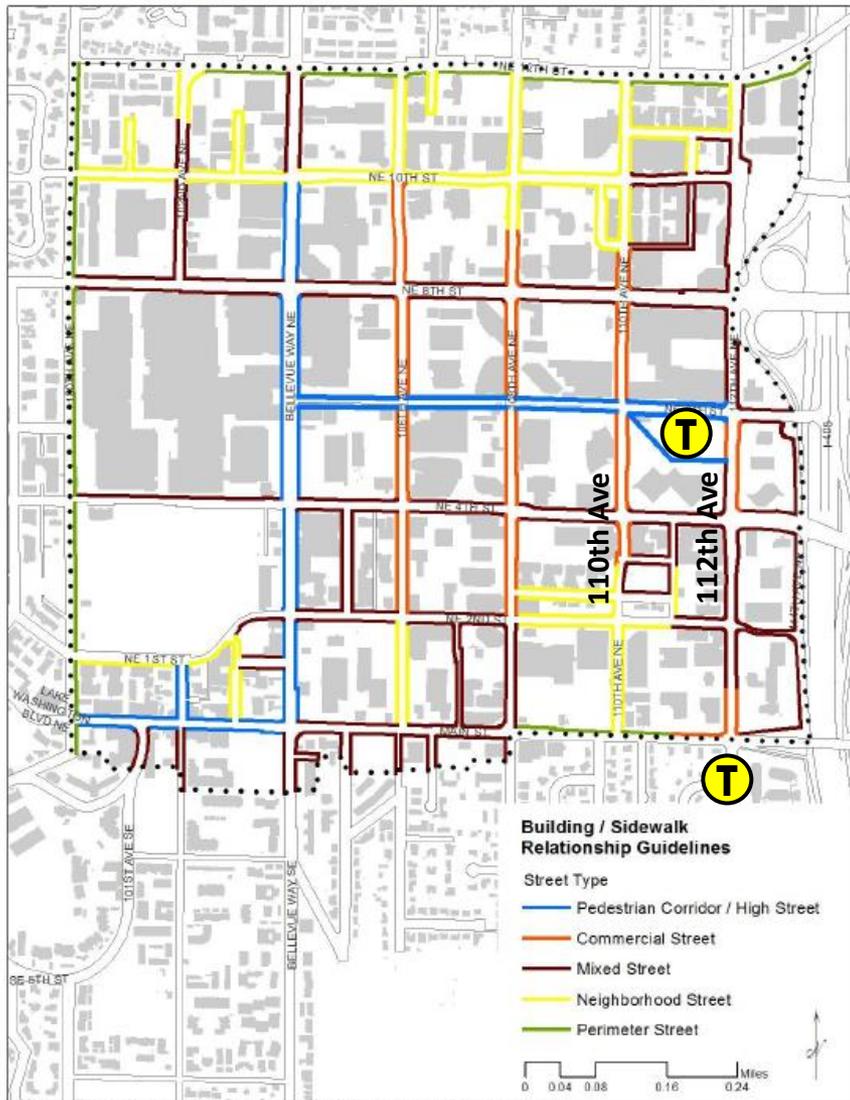


- Updated format for design guidelines; content and process refinements
- Changes along 112th Ave NE and portions of 110th Ave
- Refinements to through-block connections

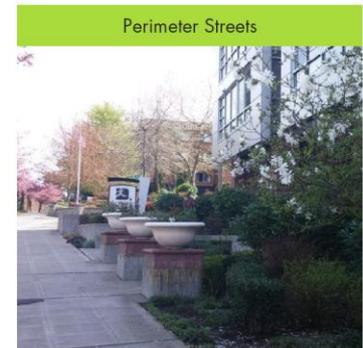
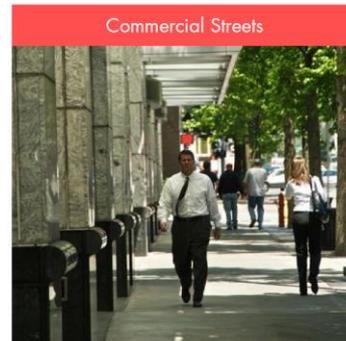
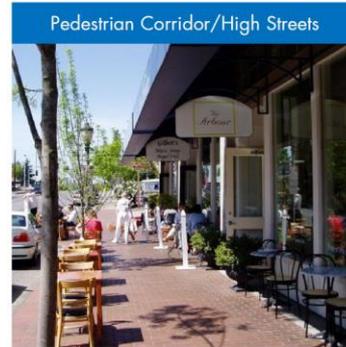
# FOCUS ON STATION AREA PLANNING

# Design Guideline Recommendations

Proposed Right-of-Way Designations: Building/Sidewalk Relationships



## Prototypical Examples



## FOCUS ON STATION AREA PLANNING

# Design Guideline Recommendations

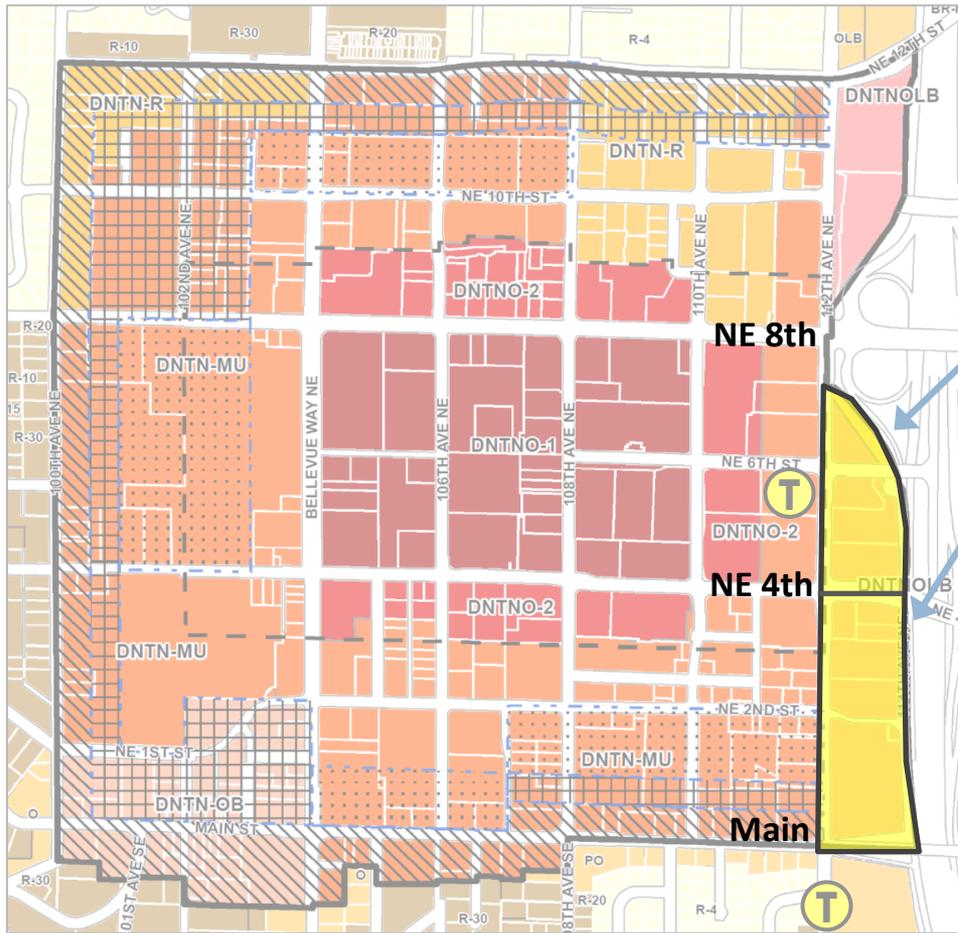
### Conceptual Through-Block Connection Master Plan



### OPTIONS FOR DESIGN OF THROUGH-BLOCK CONNECTIONS

Frontage	Description	Examples
A. Retail Connection (12 ft. clear minimum – consistent with existing guidelines)	Retail storefronts with generous window transparency, pedestrian entries, weather protection, and outdoor seating/dining areas.	
B. Residential Activation (6 ft. clear minimum)	Stoops or similar residential frontages with private individual entries, private individual patio frontages, lobbies/ common residential entries or other common facilities with generous transparency/activation elements.	
C. Passive/Walk-through (6 ft. clear minimum)	Passive corridors that connect uses and open spaces and featuring landscaping, lighting, human scaled details, and other pedestrian amenities.	
D. Vehicular plus Pedestrian Access (6 ft. clear pedestrian access vehicular access TBD)	Connections could take the form of a low traffic route where autos and pedestrians share space) or separated access. Lighting, landscaping, and or other design element separates autos from pedestrians to create a safe and attractive pedestrian route. Frontages along the sides may be landscaped or building walls with transparency and human scaled details that add visual interest.	
E. Through-building connection (project specific)	Some building types lend themselves to through-block connections open to the public during business hours. Hotels, shopping, office buildings, and community uses may provide a safe and weather protected route through a block or large scale development.	

# Recommendations for DT-OLB District

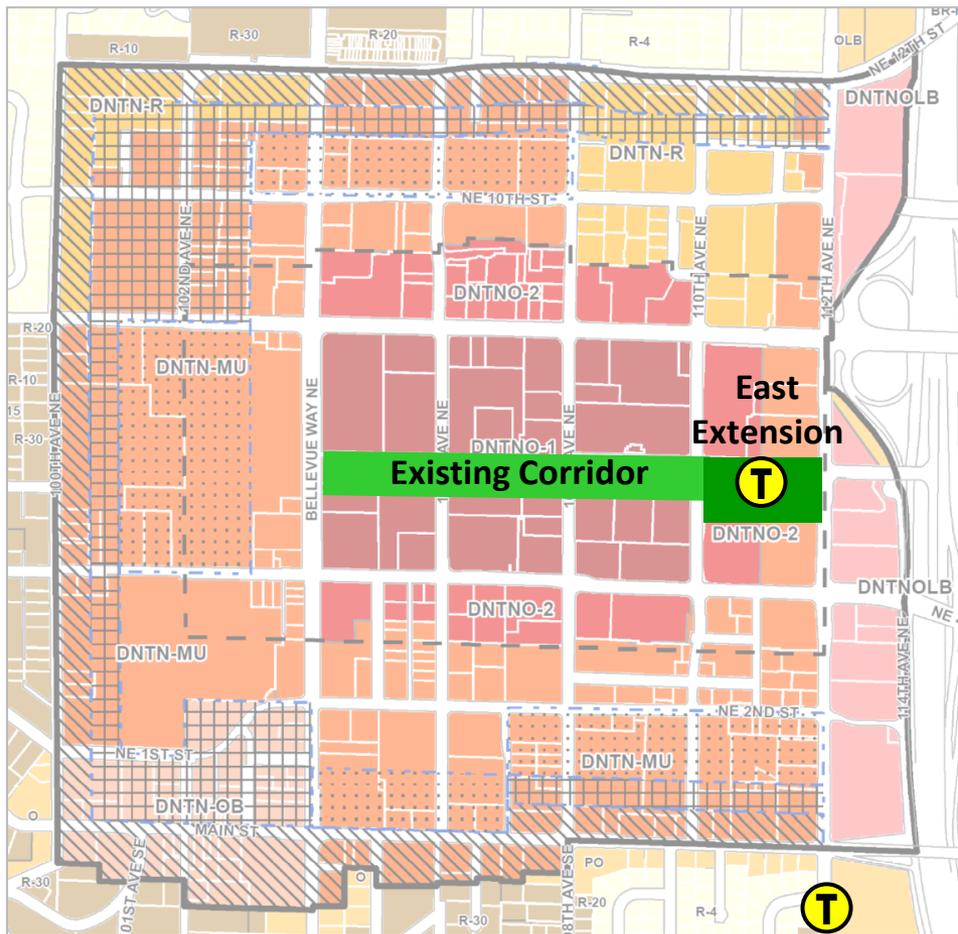


- Better connect DT-OLB District to rest of Downtown w/ linkages to Wilburton
- CAC recommends further consideration of TOD opportunities associated with:
  - Up to 350-foot tall buildings and 6.0 FAR between NE 8th and NE 4th
  - Up to 200-foot tall buildings and 5.0 FAR between NE 4th and Main Street

*Both areas currently 75 to 90-foot height limit and 3.0 FAR*
- **Issues to be addressed:** Tower design and separation; transition issues; effect of added FAR/height at pedestrian scale and larger scale; and mitigation of any localized traffic impacts.
- *CAC recommended further consideration of other Downtown height and/or FAR changes as itemized in their Final Report*

## FOCUS ON STATION AREA PLANNING

# Pedestrian Corridor Recommendations

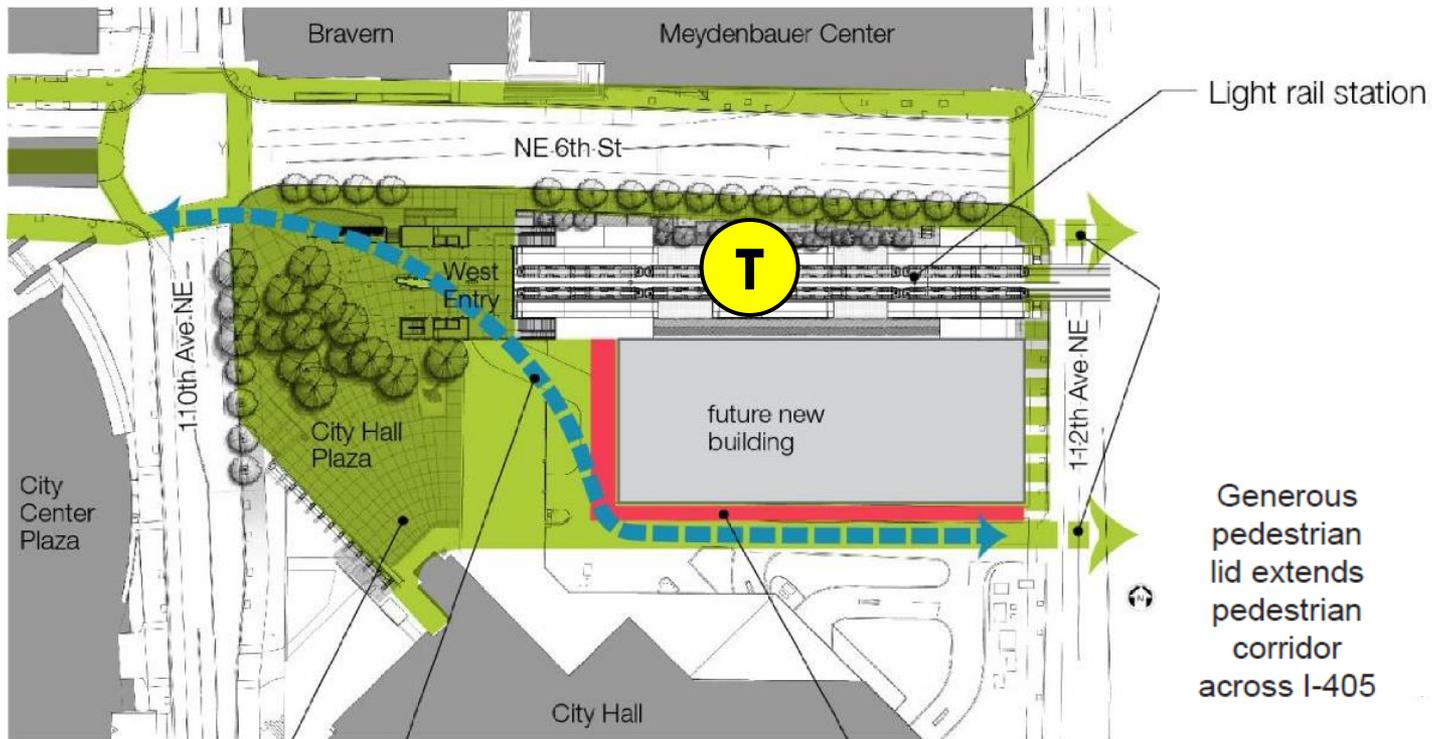


- Extend Corridor to the east
- Provide for mostly continuous weather protection
- Better activate the Corridor
- Add landscaping/green elements
- Integrate bicycles & wheeled users to coexist with pedestrians



# FOCUS ON STATION AREA PLANNING

## Pedestrian Corridor



Expanded plaza  
(conceptual  
design below)

Primary pedestrian route  
connecting Wilburton, light  
rail station, Transit Center,  
and Pedestrian Corridor

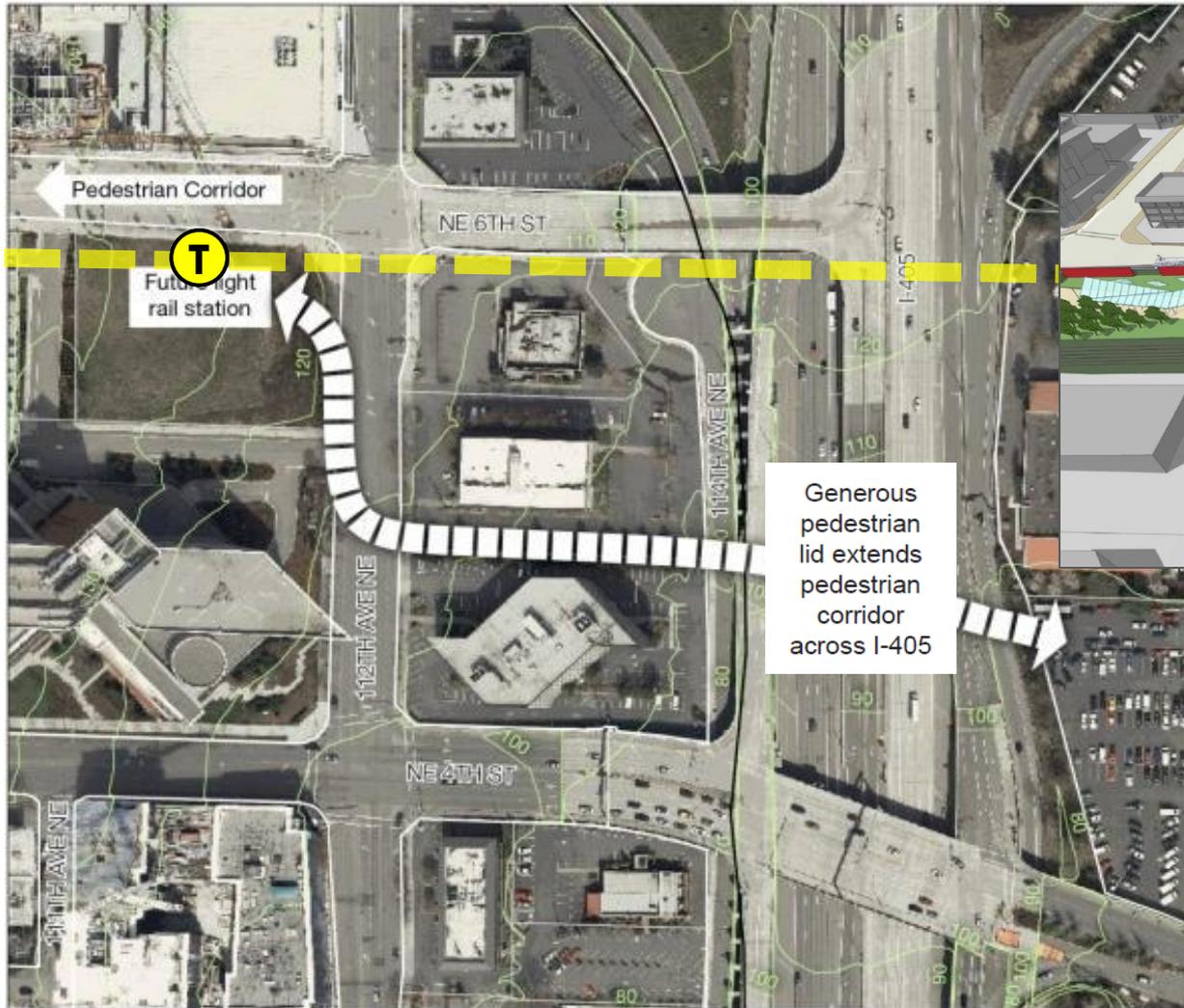
Inviting storefronts or other  
amenities should face the  
pedestrian connections.

Generous  
pedestrian  
lid extends  
pedestrian  
corridor  
across I-405

- Pedestrian circulation part of the Pedestrian Corridor (Guidelines apply)
- Primary Pedestrian Corridor route
- Building facades which must respond to Pedestrian Corridor Guidelines

## FOCUS ON STATION AREA PLANNING

# Connection Across I-405



**Example of I-405  
bridge concept from  
stakeholder process**

# More Info / Project Manager Contacts

- Visit: [www.bellevuewa.gov/downtown-livability.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/downtown-livability.htm)
- Contact: Emil King ([eaking@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:eaking@bellevuewa.gov), 425-452-7223);  
Patti Wilma ([pwilma@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:pwilma@bellevuewa.gov), 425-452-4114)



# Existing Height and Density Framework (Nonres/Res)

