

Wilburton/N.E. 8th Street Subarea Plan

GOAL:

- **To separate residential, recreational, and open space areas from commercial areas and to protect open space.**
- **To improve pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness of commercial areas for residents of Bellevue.**
- **To support the provision of commercial services in Wilburton that complement Downtown, such as large retail and auto sales; that provide mixed-use opportunities; and that provide convenient shopping for the adjacent neighborhoods.**

Discussion: The Wilburton/NE 8th Subarea Plan seeks to support the residential and non-residential uses in the subarea by protecting residential, recreation and open space areas from encroachment of commercial and other non-residential uses (except for those normally permitted in residential areas, such as parks, churches, schools, utilities, and home occupations). Non-residential development, such as retail activity, medical uses and auto sales, should be concentrated in existing non-residential areas. While this vision seeks to protect residential areas from encroachment, it supports integrating residential uses with commercial development (i.e. mixed-use) in some commercial areas.

OVERVIEW

The settlement history of Wilburton dates to the turn of the century when farms, a logging mill, a railroad and a commercial area near 116th and N.E. 8th Street were established. With the openings of the floating bridges in 1940 and 1963, there was rapid growth of homes during the 1950s and 1960s in the area. Wilburton was annexed to the City between 1964 and 1967.

Today the Wilburton 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 both the residents and business owners.

The Wilburton Subarea encompasses approximately 1,600 acres. Its boundaries are generally I-405 to the west, Bellevue-Redmond Road to the north, 148th to the east, and the Lake Hills Connector to the south. It is comprised of commercial areas

along the I-405, 116th Avenue N.E., and N.E. 8th Street corridors while large areas of single-family residences make up the remainder of the Subarea. Multifamily development is mostly confined to the N.E. 8th Street corridor, along the 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.

The I-405 business corridor, Lake Bellevue area, and the NE 8th Street corridor is home to Overlake Hospital, Group Health, Auto Row, and a variety of retail uses. Many of the retail areas may be ready for redevelopment as they evolve from older suburban commercial strips to emerging urban areas. The area east of approximately 120th Avenue features large, single-family neighborhoods, some with large lots that may provide opportunities to subdivide and add new housing.

As of the 2000 Census about 8,900 people live, and approximately 10,400 people work, in the Wilburton/NE 8th Subarea. There are about 1,250 units of single-family housing and 3,120 units of multifamily housing. Wilburton Hill Park provides over 100 acres of open space, sports fields, and a botanical garden.

Protecting residential neighborhoods from increased commercial development and traffic, enhancing existing retail areas, and establishing clear boundaries between differing land uses are the Subarea's major issues.

Land Use

POLICIES

POLICY S-WI-1. Protect residential areas from impacts of other uses by maintaining the current boundaries between residential and non-residential areas.

Discussion: This plan establishes appropriate areas for non-residential uses. Beyond these areas, non-residential uses, except for those normally permitted in residential areas, (such as parks, churches, schools, utilities, and home occupations) should not be permitted to encroach into residential areas. This does not limit the potential for development that mixes residential uses with commercial, institutional or other uses in areas that are predominately non-residential.

POLICY S-WI-2. Support the provision of commercial services in Wilburton that complement Downtown such as large retail and auto sales; mixed use opportunities; and services that provide convenient shopping for the adjacent neighborhoods. Implement this through zoning and development regulations.

Discussion: The Wilburton/NE 8th Street subarea includes a variety of commercial areas.

The eastern portion of the subarea includes small commercial sites that primarily serve the immediate neighborhood.

The western portion of the subarea includes more intense commercial areas between 116th and 120th Avenues and near Lake Bellevue that serve the broader community. Some of these areas may be ready for redevelopment into new commercial or mixed uses.

The area west of the BNSF corridor is appropriate for auto and motorcycle sales, large retail uses, office and hotel uses.

The vision for the area on the west side of 120th Avenue, between NE 8th Street and the existing Home Depot property is for the development of a “retail village” that is an inviting, attractive, and pedestrian friendly retail area comprised of a mixture of community-oriented and neighborhood-oriented retail and residential uses.

POLICY S-WI-3. Support the long term development of a “retail village” in the commercial area on the west side of 120th Avenue to provide a transition from more intense commercial areas to the west and the residential area to the east. Designate the area west of 120th Avenue NE between NE 8th and about NE 4th Streets, and on the east side of 116th Avenue from about NE 4th to SE 1st Streets General Commercial/Community Business (GC/CB). Without access improvements, the area remains appropriate for General Commercial uses. As NE 4th Street (East Bellevue Transportation Plan project #582) is extended to increase access to the area, Community Business uses are appropriate.

Discussion: The intent is to increase transportation capacity as redevelopment occurs. It is recognized that the complexity of construction and property ownership may require phasing of the street project. Phasing may be accepted through a development agreement that assures adequate right of way and timely completion of the entire connection.

The extension of NE 4th Street may occur as a city-funded capital project, associated with private development, or through an alternative financing mechanism, such as a local improvement district. If private financing is used, the city may facilitate methods of allowing others in the district to contribute as redevelopment occurs, such as through latecomers agreements.

POLICY S-WI-4. Recognize the area between I-405 and the BNSF corridor, and between NE 8th Street and SE 1st Street, as appropriate for a 75-foot height limit. Increased heights limits for the portion of this area east of 116th Avenue should be limited to those areas rezoned for more intense uses consistent with Policy S-WI-3 or future subarea plan amendments.

POLICY S-WI-5. Explore the potential for transit supportive land use designations for the area between I-405 and the BNSF corridor and NE 4th and NE 8th Streets.

Discussion: This policy signals the future potential for this area and its opportunity

for a unique use especially given its relationship to future transit.

POLICY S-WI-6. Retail auto and motorcycle sales are appropriate along Auto Row in GC, CB and OLB districts on both sides of 116th Avenue from the SE 8th Street exit off I-405 to NE 8th Street.

Discussion: The 116th Avenue Corridor between the SE 8th Street exit off I-405 and NE 8th Street is regionally known as “Auto Row”, an area of dealerships featuring cars of domestic and foreign automobile manufacturers. Maintaining this area as a place to purchase and service automobiles enhances the convenience for the citizens of Bellevue and preserves an important retail function. Although the west side of this corridor is designated OLB with specific freeway-oriented urban design objectives, auto sales shall be permitted along with modified landscape standards for retail auto sales only. All other design standards shall apply.

POLICY S-WI-7. Provide for medical institution development within the area bounded by NE 8th and NE 12th Streets, 116th Avenue NE and I-405

Discussion: The medical institution use in this area provides a vital public service for the Eastside community. The City should facilitate development of a long-term master plan that addresses the continued evolution and updating of this facility. Special dimensional standards are appropriate to accommodate the needs of the major medical institution and related uses, provided the facility provides a high quality of design that recognizes this site as a prominent community landmark. Building and site design should create a visual identity for the facility that contributes to the streetscape, is compatible with adjacent and nearby neighborhoods, and is sensitive to views from the freeway and views of the skyline. Design should also create a visually pleasing and safe environment for the public, incorporating features such as public spaces, gateways, streetscape improvements, and safe pedestrian linkages.

POLICY S-WI-8. 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.

POLICY S-WI-9. 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*). The density should not exceed five dwelling units per acre in compliance with the Land Use Code Section 20.25H.100 Density/Intensity Calculations. No access should be permitted from east of the site.

POLICY S-WI-10. The area between the Burlington Northern Railroad tracks and 118th Avenue S.E., if extended to the north, and approximately 190 feet north

of S.E. 5th Street and south of the Main Street extension is appropriate for Office and Multifamily Medium-density residential uses in accordance with the Land Use Plan (*Figure S-WI.1*). Proposed projects within the area should be subject to design review to insure that structures are residential in design, height, and bulk. Properties north of Main Street need not be residential in design, height, and bulk if access and orientation are to N.E. 1st Street and if the structures are visually screened from properties to the south.

POLICY S-WI-11. 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.

POLICY S-WI-12. 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.

POLICY S-WI-13. 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*). Density should not exceed four dwelling units per acre and traffic impacts associated with future development of the area should be mitigated by the developer.

POLICY S-WI-14. 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.

POLICY S-WI-15. 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*). Thirty percent of the dwelling units should be for moderate income families/ seniors. 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

POLICY S-WI-16. Protect and enhance streams, drainage ways, and wetlands in the Kelsey Creek Basin.

POLICY S-WI-17. Prevent development from intruding into the floodplain of Kelsey Creek.

POLICY S-WI-18. Development should not interfere with Lake Bellevue as a drainage storage area identified in the City's Storm Drainage Plan.

Residential Development

POLICIES

POLICY S-WI-19. 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.

POLICY S-WI-20. Encourage multifamily development to provide adequate play areas and other amenities for families.

POLICY S-WI-21. 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.

POLICY S-WI-22. Seek affordable and “work force” housing in new mixed use developments through regulatory and incentive approaches.

Discussion: The area west of 120th Avenue NE may be an appropriate location for housing when it is rezoned to CB due to its proximity to Downtown and convenient access. The City Council initiated a citywide workforce/affordable housing work program on October 15, 2007. Housing development capacity created as part of a change in zoning in this area should be consistent with the citywide workforce/affordable housing provisions derived through this work program.

“Affordable” housing is defined in the Glossary as that which is affordable to a family that earns up to 80 percent of median income. “Work force” housing is considered to be housing affordable to a family that earns up to 120 percent of median income.

Circulation

POLICIES

POLICY S-WI-23. No extension of 124th Avenue south of Main Street should be permitted.

POLICY S-WI-24. 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.

POLICY S-WI-25. Improve local access, street system connectivity and traffic flow by providing additional east-west transportation connections, including an arterial street connection at NE 4th Street between 116th and 120th Avenues and HOV and non-motorized access at NE 6th Street between Downtown and 120th Avenue NE.

POLICY S-WI-26. Require new commercial developments to provide internal streets and adjoining lot connections, where appropriate, to reduce arterial street connections and turning movements.

POLICY S-WI-27. 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.

POLICY S-WI-28. Improve arterial streets to provide enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access, safety and comfort throughout the non-residential areas of the subarea.

POLICY S-WI-29. Make use of available right of way space to develop north and south bicycle lanes or additional traffic lanes on 116th Avenue NE if use of the auto delivery zone is discontinued.

POLICY S-WI-30. Where capital projects are not imminent, encourage the City to make interim improvements for nonmotorized transportation.

Discussion: Nonmotorized facilities along the following routes are a high priority:

- 126th Avenue N.E. from N.E. 8th Street to N.E. 7th Street,
- N.E. 7th Street from 126th Avenue N.E. to 128th Avenue N.E.,
- 128th Avenue N.E./S.E. from N.E. 7th Street, and
- S.E. 7th Street between 128th Avenue S.E. and the Lake Hills Connector.

Sidewalks are preferred along this route, but if a sidewalk project is not imminent, then interim facilities are supported.

Interim nonmotorized improvements can be accomplished in several ways from the addition of a shoulder in conjunction with a street resurfacing project to modifications to the channelization (or street painting configurations). Interim nonmotorized improvements should be designed so that they cannot be used for parking. The Neighborhood Enhancement Program when available would be a funding source for interim improvements.

POLICY S-WI-31. Recognize the transportation and recreation uses under consideration for the BNSF rail corridor when considering public and private improvements adjacent to the corridor and preserve the opportunity for future multi-modal transportation use and access.

Discussion: The Port of Seattle has proposed acquiring the rail corridor from Burlington-Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) for future use as a regional pedestrian/bicycle trail and/or a transportation/rail corridor. As development adjacent to the corridor occurs, the design and placement of streets, driveways, infrastructure, and buildings should take the potential future use of the rail corridor into account so as to avoid inherit conflicts.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

POLICIES

POLICY S-WI-32. Retain the parks in the Subarea and ensure that they remain park facilities (including Wilburton Hill and Kelsey Creek Parks).

POLICY S-WI-33. 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.

POLICY S-WI-34. The City strongly encourages the continuation of the golf course use at the Glendale Golf Course.

POLICY S-WI-35. Prepare designs for proposed parks with the participation of the community affected and served.

POLICY S-WI-36. Support continuation of the Lake-to-Lake Trail through Wilburton.

Discussion: The trail should connect from the N.E. 4th Street interchange at I-405 to the Wilburton Hill Park to Kelsey Creek Park to the Lake Hills Greenbelt and Richards Valley.

POLICY S-WI-37. The City should consider acquisition of surplus school district sites which might be appropriate for park and recreation uses.

POLICY S-WI-38. 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.

Discussion: If this property is developed as a park, safe and obvious pedestrian access should be encouraged from surrounding apartments to this property. It may be appropriate to trade this site for another park site, north of N.E. 8th Street, which would better serve the multifamily community in this area of Wilburton.

POLICY S-WI-39. Support implementation of the Wilburton Hill Park Master Plan, including neighborhood park elements.

Community Design

POLICIES

POLICY S-WI-40. Retain, reveal, and enhance the views of prominent land forms, vegetation, watersheds, drainage ways, Downtown and significant panoramas in the Subarea.

Discussion: Within the Subarea, there are numerous views, some of which are the view west from NE 8th Street and NE 5th Street on the ridge between 122nd and 123rd Avenues, the view south from the Lake Hills Connector north of SE 8th Street, the view east from SE 4th Street toward Kelsey Creek Park and the view

from SE 1st Street and Main Street at the power line right-of-way at 136th Avenue. As development or public improvements occur, efforts should be made to provide public access to these viewing areas. Impacts to significant views may be minimized by encouraging alternative building orientation, roof designs, and the location of rooftop equipment during the design review process.

POLICY S-WI-41. 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.

POLICY S-WI-42. 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.

POLICY S-WI-43. Encourage the undergrounding of utility distribution lines in developed areas and require the undergrounding of utility distribution lines in new developments when practical.

POLICY S-WI-44. 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).

NE 8th Street Corridor

POLICY S-WI-45. Develop an entrance in the N.E. 8th Street corridor to create a sense of entry to the corridor.

Discussion: The existing Burlington Northern crossing lights and the change in grade at that point act as an entrance. A pedestrian entrance encouraged by this policy should be located as near as possible to the crossing lights to enhance and to increase its presence in the corridor. An entrance may include (on both sides of N.E. 8th Street): district signage, major landscaping, pedestrian shelters, and structures of a large enough scale to signify entry into Wilburton and into the Downtown and I-405.

POLICY S-WI-46. Consistent with future transportation improvements, enhance the traffic island and the eastern corner where old Bellevue-Redmond Road intersects with N.E. 8th Street, as major focal points.

Discussion: These focal points are suitable for major landscaping, public art, pedestrian shelters, special paving, and historical markers as well as islands for pedestrians to cross from one side of N.E. 8th Street to the other. The scale of these features should have a large enough presence to balance the expanse of the N.E. 8th Street arterial and to be easily identified in the corridor.

POLICY S-WI-47. Pedestrian walkways should be clear and continuous from surrounding residential areas to the corridor, through the corridor, and from the sidewalks to the entrances of buildings.

POLICY S-WI-48. Promote pedestrian amenities which include the provision of sidewalks, street trees, landscape strips, and bus passenger shelters. Building facades should have awnings, windows, offsets, and material texture or color that add interest for the passing motorist and pedestrian. Signage should be integrated with building design.

Discussion: The commercial corridor along N.E. 8th Street is along a wide arterial and the sidewalk and street landscaping dimensional requirements should be greater than the current development standards for N.E. 8th Street. Street trees should be the same as street trees planted along N.E. 8th Street east of 120th Avenue N.E. Other landscaping should include hardy, pollution resistant, evergreen shrubs that are planted to form a solid band of separation (except driveway cuts and utilities) between the sidewalk and the street for the entire length of the corridor. The purpose of the landscaping is to protect pedestrians and provide a more comfortable pedestrian environment.

The CIP #PW-W/B-29 for this section of N.E. 8th Street will include curb, gutter, and an eight-foot sidewalk along the curb. Where feasible, the sidewalk should be set back a minimum of four feet from the curb to allow for landscaping and street trees. The City should provide the best landscaping and pedestrian improvements possible, allowing for flexibility so that as redevelopment occurs or as additional funding is procured, this policy can be implemented.

POLICY S-WI-49. Allow flexibility for commercial buildings to be sited near frontage property lines.

POLICY S-WI-50. Apply the Public Places and Connections policies from the Urban Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan and the attached Conceptual Design Plan (Figure S-WI.2) to the N.E. 8th Street Corridor.

Discussion (Policies S-WI-34 through 39): The N.E. 8th Street corridor between 116th Avenue N.E. and 122nd Avenue N.E. (see Conceptual Design Plan, Figure S-WI.2.) is an area in a state of transition from an older suburban commercial strip to urban development. This corridor is a highly visible entry because it is the major passage for traffic between Downtown/I-405 and the east part of Bellevue. It is important to encourage cohesive, overall development and street improvements in the corridor. The enhancement of the corridor's appearance and function will help make it an identifiable district and an amenity to the community. This corridor should be an attractive and comfortable environment for the pedestrian to use when walking between Wilburton and Downtown.

Auto Row Corridor - 116th Avenue NE and 120th Avenue NE

POLICY S-WI-51. Encourage buildings developed in the Auto Row area, bounded by I-405, NE 8th Street, 120th Avenue NE, and SE 5th Street, to enhance the area's urban design character and pedestrian environment. Buildings should be sited near the street front, with limited intervening surface parking, and include street oriented pedestrian entrances. Where buildings are visible from streets and pedestrian corridors they should be designed with visual interest and landscaping.

POLICY S-WI-52. Provide aesthetic and landscaping enhancements on 116th Avenue NE consistent with its designation as a Boulevard (see Urban Design Element).

POLICY S-WI-53. Provide enhanced street edge landscaping and, where appropriate, landscaped medians on 120th Avenue NE between NE 8th Street and NE 1st Street to soften the impact of commercial areas on the residential area to the east.

Figure S-WI.2 NE 8th Street Corridor Conceptual Design Plan

