

PUGET SOUND REGIONAL COUNCIL PRIORITY PROJECT LIST

Project Sponsor: Bellevue

Project Name: Bel-Red Regional Connectivity Corridor: Part 2

Project Location: NE 15th Street (116th to 120th Avenues NE)
120th Avenue NE (NE 15th Street to Northup Way)

What type of project is it: Corridors Serving Centers

Plan Consistency:

- Transportation 2040 project number: 4526, 4264
- Is the project consistent with the Transportation 2040: Yes

Project Description

This package of projects builds on the NE 4th Street Extension and 120th Avenue NE (NE 4th to NE 12th) projects currently being implemented and the Bel-Red Connectivity Corridor – Part 1 (see narrative) to complete a connection between Downtown Bellevue (a regional growth center)/I-405 and SR 520, which serves the Seattle and Redmond/Overlake centers. Component specifics include:

NE 15th Street – Construct a new multi-modal corridor consisting of general purpose travel lanes in each direction, turn lanes at designated intersections, sidewalks on both sides, and bicycle facilities incorporated within or adjacent to the corridor with regional trail connections. Accommodation for light rail guideways will be incorporated, as needed. The project may also utilize “green” elements, including urban open spaces, tree canopy, enhanced landscaping, and natural drainage elements.

120th Avenue NE – From NE 15th to NE 18th Streets, widen roadway to five lanes (including center turn lane), complete bicycle facility gaps, and install continuous sidewalk to arterial standards. From NE 18th Street to Northup Way, widen roadway to four lanes with arterial standard sidewalk on both sides, and a separated multi-use path on the west side.

Project Outcome/Benefit

BENEFIT TO CENTERS

- The project, in combination with other improvements, connects Downtown Bellevue/I-405 to centers served by SR 520, including Seattle and Redmond/Overlake. Projections for growth in the Bellevue Downtown over the next ten years anticipate 28,000 new jobs - many in the high tech industry - and 9,000 new residents.
- The neighborhoods in the north end of downtown Bellevue, which can be accessed by the new NE 15th Street project, are expected to absorb more than half of the residential growth in the downtown area (consistent with the Growth Management Act). Having multi-modal

amenities attracts development and promotes the use of active transportation for commute, errand, and recreational purposes.

- The project also provides direct access to Bellevue's emerging Bel-Red area and two planned transit-oriented-development nodes. Through recent planning, zoning, and environmental actions taken by the city, the Bel-Red Corridor is poised for growth. Over the next 15 years, the low-rise light industrial uses are expected to transition to include four million square feet of new mid-rise office space and 5,000 new residential units. This growth is not sprawl, but rather mixed-use infill with most of the office tenants expected to be high tech companies seeking the synergy of being between the technology centers in Downtown Bellevue and Overlake. (Bellevue hosts nearly 20 percent of high tech jobs in King County.)
- The project supports a major catalyst development, to be known as the Spring District, which will convert nearly 40 acres of a former distribution facility. The planned development will support more than 10,000 new jobs and more than 1,000 new residents in a transit-oriented node incorporating an East Link light rail station.

SYSTEM CONTINUITY

- The project builds on other street improvements currently being implemented to create a new connection from downtown Bellevue to SR 520 that allows drivers to avoid the most congested section of I-405 in Bellevue and to avoid the congested NE 8th Street, the principal arterial serving Downtown Bellevue.
- The project draws volumes from NE 8th Street and downtown streets serving I-405 on-ramps and balances the traffic on the downtown street grid improving travel time and reliability for passenger cars, transit, freight, pedestrians, and bicycles.
- All components of the connectivity corridor extend and/or complete gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle networks with separated facilities.

LONG TERM BENEFIT/SUSTAINABILITY

- An average of 50 accidents has occurred along 120th Avenue NE in each of the past five years, including 1-2 pedestrian or bicycle injury accidents each year. Providing complete/separated non-motorized facilities and a center turn lane will significantly reduce the corridor accident rate.
- Environmentally sensitive elements are being incorporated into each portion of the project corridor, including rain gardens along 120th Avenue NE and urban open spaces, tree canopy, enhanced landscaping, and natural drainage elements along NE 15th Street.

MOBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

- The new NE 15th Street multi-modal corridor enhances the mobility of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, rail, and vehicles by providing new facilities and connecting the downtown to regional facilities such as the SR520 Trail.

