



Design Considerations

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A Figure 6.1-1: Surrounding Context

CHAPTER 6: DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Neighborhood Urban Design

Architecture & Urban Form

The Plan recommends developing incentives to encourage reinvestment in infill and redevelopment in the upland areas, by allowing density increases within the existing height restrictions. The Plan recommends regulating the recommended increase in density through FAR versus dwelling units per acre (du/a). Use of FAR to regulate density will encourage more diversity of housing sizes, styles, and price points. As the neighborhood becomes more pedestrian oriented, reduction of required parking requirements may be a reasonable incentive to promote better urban design and encourage private investment in public open spaces and corridors and pedestrian amenities. Building and site design should provide ground-level transparency, pedestrian porosity, and attractive building ground relationships. In the Old Bellevue neighborhood, South of Main, coordinated redevelopment is encouraged and needed to achieve the vision.





A *Figure 6.1-2: Example of Active Streets (EDAW AECOM)*

Height and Setbacks

The neighborhood has expressed opposition to any increases in height or the introduction of commercial uses west of 100th Avenue. To encourage redevelopment and infill, the Plan therefore recommends retaining current height restrictions but modifying setbacks and lot coverage allowances to accommodate the increased density envisioned. City codes and policies should encourage infill of surface parking lots and placement of parking underground. Where surface parking remains, it should be located internally and buildings should be oriented to streets. The Plan recommends flexible setbacks, increased density controlled through FAR, increased lot coverage, and reduction of parking requirements in exchange for public amenities. Public amenities are defined as street furniture, public art along public streets, streetscape enhancements, plazas, terraces and viewpoints, water features, access easements, shared parking, and facilities that encourage enjoyment of the waterfront in poor weather such as a covered overlook.

Orientation and Entries

New buildings should have public entrances facing public streets with surface parking minimized. The new buildings should be sited to encourage pedestrian connections between properties. Ideally, multiple property owners will collaborate on an overall development master plan, addressing implementation, phasing, and funding. A coordinated development and infill strategy will result in improved visual and physical connections between properties and the waterfront. At the west end of Meydenbauer Way SE, an attractive new lower entry plaza shared by vehicles and pedestrians with accommodations for short-term parking, drop off, and pick up functions is proposed.

6.2 Public Streets

The Plan recommends enhancements to key intersections and streets leading to and abutting the public park. The proposed improvements are supported by Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives as well as the guiding principles of the Plan. Streets should be designed with pedestrian accessibility, enjoyment, and accommodations as a priority. The Plan proposes a number of routes and parking accommodations that are accessible.



Main Street

Extending the character of Main Street in Old Bellevue west to the intersection of Main Street and 100th Avenue is recommended, as envisioned by the existing Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code. The infill of this block with a vibrant mix of uses will attract pedestrians to the new entry plaza proposed at the southwest corner of the street intersection. The street intersection design at this location should be detailed and scaled to the pedestrian, perhaps extending materials of the entry plaza and streetscape into the street. The conversion of the City-owned parcel west of 100th Avenue SE from apartments to plaza and park opens up scenic views of the bay from Main Street and invites people to enter the park. A covered overlook and a weather-protected gathering space on the lower terrace frame views and encourage year-round visitation by providing shelter.



100th Avenue

North of Main Street, the 100th Avenue NE streetscape will be enhanced to provide a stronger connection from Downtown Park to the new entry plaza. The final design will introduce more landscaping, a linear water feature, and furnishings to enhance the experience for pedestrians traveling from Downtown Park to the waterfront. South of Main Street, 100th Avenue SE will be closed to cars and transformed into a pedestrian place, with a grand staircase descending to the water. It will be designed to include a linear water feature, lush plantings, and intermittent terraces and landings with great views, art, and seating.



Meydenbauer Way SE

Meydenbauer Way SE connects the Yacht Club, new park, City marina, and Wildwood Park. It is one of the termini of the Lake-to-Lake Trail and should therefore be designed to be shared by vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.

- A** *Figure 6.2-1: Main Street, Bellevue, WA*
- B** *Figure 6.2-2: Victoria Park Bioswale (Landcom)*
- C** *Figure 6.2-3: Example of Neighborhood Street with Multi-modal Access*

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6.3 Park Landform, Land Cover, and Shoreline

The ecology and three-dimensional aspects of the site were carefully considered. The Plan recognizes that fairly extensive earthwork and ecological restoration will be required to restore ecological function, improve access, and enhance recreational opportunities.

Grading

The Plan proposes to do the required grading and landscaping needed to resculpt the already disturbed land to create useful spaces and an attractive urban park and to improve environmental quality. In its present condition, the site includes steep slopes, terrain that has been previously modified to create building sites, recreational amenities and roads, engineered drainages and shoreline stabilizations, and shoreline modifications made to accommodate docks, piers, and drainage. Grade separations, rockwork, and retaining walls are incorporated into the grading design to provide subtle barriers to, and protection of, restored slopes, drainages, and shorelines.

A Figure 6.3-1: Meydenbauer Bay Park Proposed Grading Plan

- Park Parcels
- Existing Contours (2' Interval)
- Proposed Contours (2' Interval)

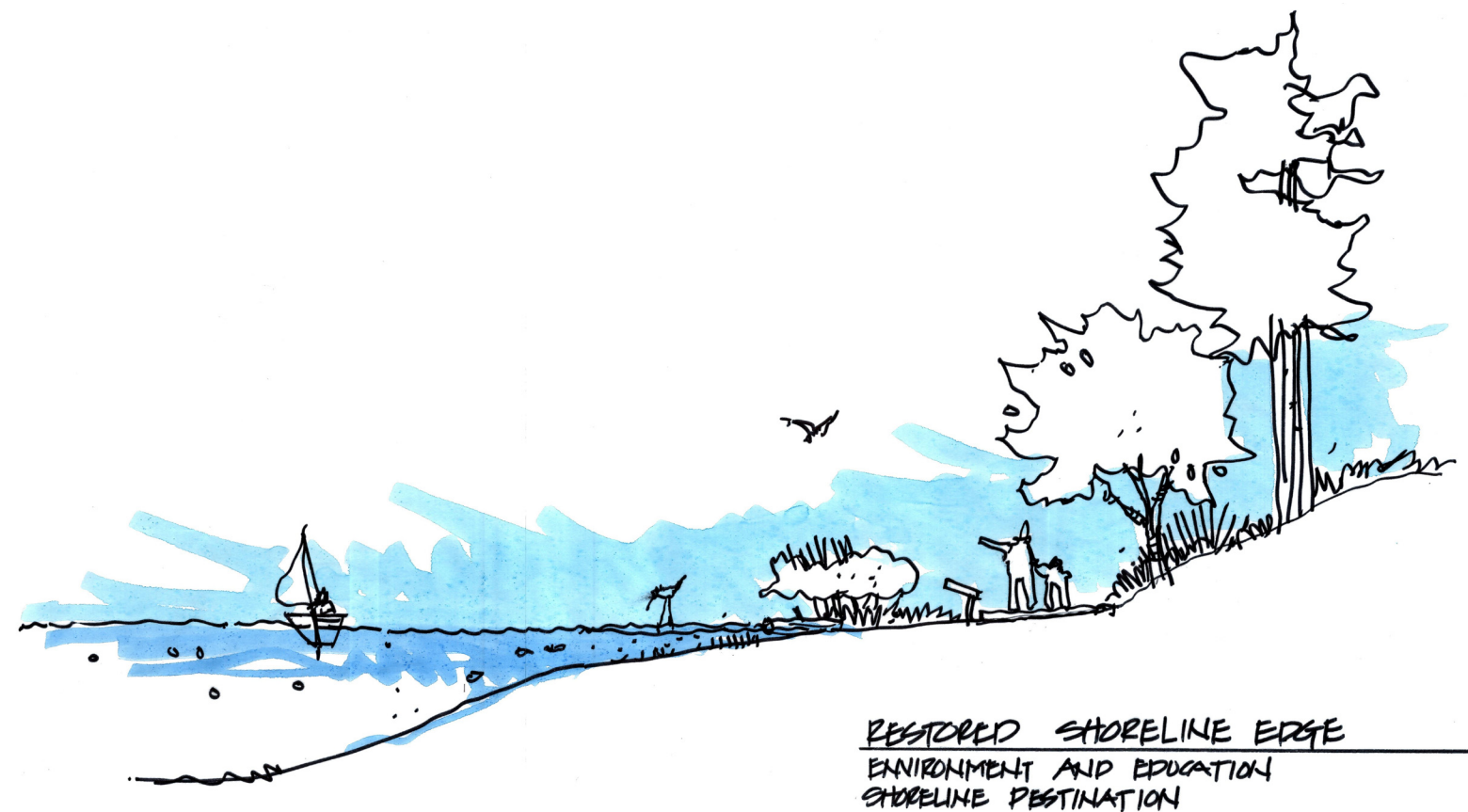
Planting

The existing land cover includes a variety of landscape treatments and styles and extensive paved surfaces constructed of impervious concrete and asphalt. The Plan proposes a softer treatment to reduce paved surfaces and introduce more environmentally appropriate paving materials. Paving and plant materials will be selected to support the proposed use and to provide elements of continuity across the site as well as elements of distinction in various zones or use areas. The current vegetation includes native trees, ornamental landscaping, and forested areas whose succession is compromised by invasive species. While this diversity will be retained, it will be enhanced by the removal of invasive species and introduction of largely native and adapted species. Near the north end, stands of native trees will be protected and managed to encourage succession. The creek will be daylighted and vegetative erosion control measures implemented using native species. The hillside landscape will be graded and planted to appear more natural. Significant trees will be retained when possible. Stylized rock outcroppings will be introduced to create usable areas and minimize hillside grading. The plantings and landscape character will transition from natural, native, and informal at the north end and shoreline to more formal, structured, and ornamental on the more intensively used areas of the site to the south and east.

Shoreline

Bellevue's shorelines are valuable recreational and aesthetic resources. Bellevue's city limits include 14 miles of shoreline along Lakes Washington and Sammamish. However, total shoreline in public ownership is only 10%, or slightly over 1.4 miles.

Meydenbauer Bay Park contains the largest contiguous publicly owned shoreline close to downtown. The Plan proposes a careful balance between public access and protection of this valuable natural resource. The Plan addresses the shoreline, controlling and limiting access points, encouraging restoration, and creating attractive, subtle barriers to protect restored areas.



A Figure 6.3-2: Restored Shoreline Sketch

6.4 New Public Gathering and Activity Places

Entry Plaza

A new urban entry plaza near the intersection of Main Street and 100th Avenue is proposed as a gateway to the park, an anchor to the west end of Main Street and Old Bellevue, and a new gathering space.

Viewpoints and View Sequences

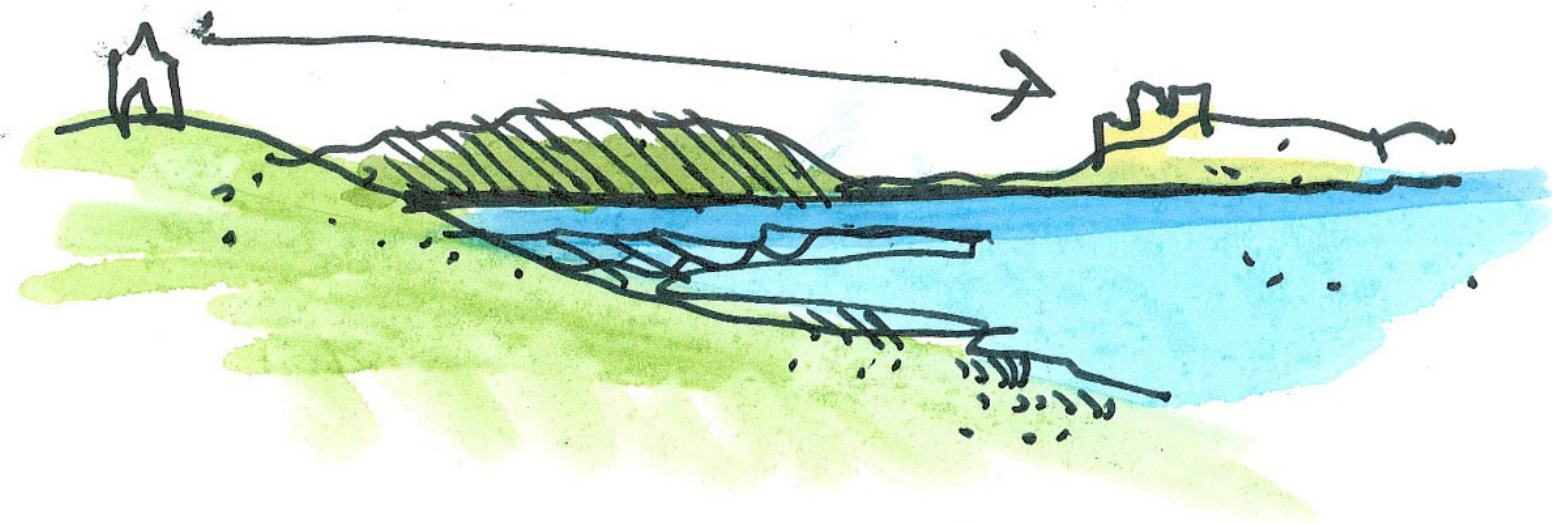
A variety of new viewpoints and view sequences have been thoughtfully incorporated throughout the Plan.

Key views include:

- Views from the City to the lake from the new entry plaza and the grand viewing terrace near Lake Washington Boulevard.
- Elevated views of the lake from the pier near Meydenbauer Way SE.
- Views from the intersection of 99th Avenue and Lake Washington Boulevard are grand and celebrated in the design of a new community activity building.
- Views resulting from the reconfiguration of the marina and removal of moorage covers. These changes open up views and opportunities to observe water and water-related activities.
- Activity terraces on the hillside step down toward the beach, providing viewpoints from sun bathing areas, the discovery playground and rock outcrops introduced to accommodate grade transitions.
- New and dramatic views of the park from Lake Washington are revealed through the introduction of public piers – the curved pedestrian pier embracing the swimming area, the curved boardwalk connecting the public pier to the moorage, and the expanded and modified public moorage located near the Whaling Building.

The three remarkable and memorable view sequences proposed are described below.

- Both pedestrian routes into the park from the intersection of 100th Avenue NE and Main Street —the grand stairway and the elevated pier —offer new and dynamic view sequences, engaging travelers and pulling them toward the shoreline.
- The shoreline promenade that runs the length of the park parallel to the shoreline exposes visitors to a range of activities and views. The character of the park along this primary pathway changes east to west, from urban to natural.
- Entering the park from the north side off of 98th Avenue NE, visitors travel through the ravine surrounded by forests and tracing the path of water and wildlife. Eventually, the forest opens and travelers find themselves on an elevated footbridge with views of the restored creek and shoreline below and views of Lake Washington to the south.





Play Area

The discovery play area is an opportunity to artfully incorporate traditional play activities of swinging, sliding, balancing, and discovering into an engaging creative play experience. The Plan recommends collaboration among artists, educators, and the community and park designers to design and construct a unique playground. The Plan envisions incorporating this into the stylized rock outcrop, terraces, and the beach.



Beach

The existing beach will be enlarged and relocated to a more central location where swimmers are less exposed to stormwater runoff entering the bay. Swimming lanes are envisioned to be placed just off the shoreline during summer months. The larger sand area will be located in proximity to a lawn sunning area, the discovery play area, and a stylized rock outcrop with terraces that encourage sitting, play, and sunning.



Piers and Overwater Boardwalks

Piers and overwater boardwalks will be architecturally appealing and designed to minimize environmental impacts. Materials should be selected for safety, durability, and maximum light penetration, avoiding toxic substances and minimizing underwater disturbance.

- A** *Figure 6.4-1: Morton Arboretum Play Area*
- B** *Figure 6.4-2: Existing Beach at Meydenbauer Beach Park*
- C** *Figure 6.4-3: Example of Overwater Boardwalks*

