



# TRAIL-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE WILBURTON SEGMENT OF THE EASTSIDE CORRIDOR TRAIL

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## THE CHALLENGE

Trail-oriented development promotes access to local businesses, community spaces, public services, and neighborhoods by way of trails designed for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other active transportation modes. As an emerging infrastructure for supporting non-motorized transportation, the Eastside Rail Corridor Trail (ERCT) offers new opportunities for the City of Bellevue to target innovation, sustainability, and quality of life. Trail-oriented development offers residents, employees, business owners, and customers more options from traveling through their communities, while also providing space for them to interact and recreate.

The ERCT will allow residents of Bellevue as well as neighborhood cities of Renton, Kirkland, Woodinville, and Redmond to move along an interconnected trail system. Locally, the ERCT will link to other bike- and pedestrian-focused projects in Bellevue, such as the Grand Connection, a trail planned to link Lake Washington and downtown Bellevue to the ERCT. This Livable City Year project considers options for trail-oriented development along the Wilburton segment of the ERCT.

## OUR METHODS

After site visits to the Wilburton Trestle and to a segment of the Cross Kirkland Corridor trail, we outlined this research question: **What can be developed along the ERCT to create optimal results for community members, and how can the City of Bellevue encourage this?**

In our literature review, we focused on public health, housing affordability, economics, and safety. We considered local applications of trail-oriented development along the Burke-Gilman Trail in Seattle, as well as projects further afield: the Chicago 606, the Atlanta Beltline, and the West Rail Trail in Brownsville, Texas. We highlighted opportunities for community and commercial development along the Wilburton segment of the ERCT in maps we created. We further analyzed four locations along the Wilburton segment and designed an overview of spatial characteristics and potential trail-oriented development strategies for each. Finally, we created graphics to display different stages of development that could occur at each of the four sites.

## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

**Tactical Urbanism:** Short-term/temporary ways to initiate long-term change

- Popup bike lanes
- Gap filler projects in vacant sites
- Public art to cover blank walls
- Events (e.g., runs with local sponsors)
- Wayfinding signage
- Food truck plaza

**Adaptive Reuse:** Repurposing structures and spaces for new uses within 1-5 years

- Trail-facing entryways from businesses
- Outdoor seating/vegetation/water features/bike parking
- Existing gaps become designated trail entrances/exits for people and goods
- Decision-makers could offer grants/loans to support retrofitting

**Long-Term Development:** A sustainable future

- Mixed-use buildings with residential/office space above businesses
  - » More space for housing, jobs, and offices
  - » Economic diversity, inclusivity, accessibility, and ecological resilience
- Neighborhoods preserve distinct character through place-making
  - » Adjacent trail networks, off-path features, unique amenities, vegetation
- Location of homes, workplaces, and institutions near trails increases accessibility
  - » Reducing pollution, road-rage, asthma, deaths/injuries
- Potential to change zoning to benefit residents and promote sustainable growth
- Integration of trail with pocket parks, community gardens, and eco-friendly features



*In this potential design for the NE 8th Street area, we identified that sites north of Whole Foods are ideal for mixed-use development. Housing, commercial space, restaurants, and plazas with seating, water features, and vegetation would make this area more appealing to people using the trail. (Image created using overlays provided by Sound Transit, Google Maps, and the UW.) LCY STUDENT TEAM*

