Vibrant Urban Neighborhoods
Creating Transit-Oriented Communities for All Ages

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Otak, Inc.
In association with:
BAE Urban Economics and
Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates
Putman Infrastructure
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Acknowledgements

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The Focus of this Phase 2 Report:

**Vibrant Urban Neighborhoods**

Creating Transit-Oriented Communities for All Ages

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Preface

**THE REGIONAL VISION**

VISION 2040 is the central Puget Sound region’s long-range vision for maintaining a healthy region and is a guiding premise for all regional planning and implementation. VISION 2040’s cornerstone is its emphasis on development of vibrant, mixed-use centers where people can live, work, and play. Integrating affordable housing in mixed-use centers throughout the region contributes to achieving a jobs-housing balance that increases access to opportunity, lowers households’ combined cost of housing and transportation, and helps ensure that infrastructure investments enhance equity across the region.

**SUMMARY OF THE GROWING TRANSIT COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP**

In keeping with the regional vision described above, the central Puget Sound region is investing more than $25 billion dollars in high-capacity transit over the next twenty years, providing a once-in-a lifetime opportunity to capitalize on these investments by growing and strengthening communities around stations. The Growing Transit Communities Partnership (Partnership), funded by a grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program and administered by Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), has been designed to help make the most of this investment by locating housing, jobs, and services close enough to transit so that it is a viable option for many people. If done right, more people will have a faster and more convenient way to travel.

The Partnership was formed through a coalition of city and county governments, housing authorities and affordable housing interests, transit agencies, public health agencies and departments, real estate and development interests, social justice and community development groups, economic development and business interests, community based organizations, educational interests, environmental advocacy groups, and the public. This coalition of the Partnership has been supporting neighborhood planning for more connected, livable, and sustainable communities around more than 74 high-capacity transit centers in the region—covering three counties in sixteen cities—including existing, new, and future station areas.

Through these efforts, the Partnership has been working to shape the region and station areas in ways that benefit current and future residents, local businesses, and the wider region. Working within the framework of existing plans, policies, and goals of local governments and guided by VISION 2040, the Partnership has been helping local communities bring their visions to reality and to make the most of new light rail service, bus rapid transit, and other transit investments, including identifying unique roles and opportunities for community development associated with high-capacity transit investments.

For more information about the Growing Transit Communities Partnership and PSRC, visit: [http://www.psrc.org](http://www.psrc.org).
THREE CORRIDORS/THREE TASK FORCES

Planning activities of the Partnership have focused along the three light rail corridors from Seattle north to the city of Everett, south to Tacoma, and east to the city of Redmond. Based on the premise that change can happen at the local level through tools and solutions that address similar challenges shared by communities in the region, the Partnership has provided a big-picture perspective so that people can see both local and regional benefits, and local entities can apply lessons learned in other places in the region. Corridor task forces for the North, East, and South corridors were charged with analyzing and reviewing existing conditions and identifying unique opportunities and challenges for development of existing and future transit station areas.

In development of its work plan and specific assignments for each task force, the Partnership felt that it was important to focus implementation activities in specific station areas of the region’s transit corridors to serve as models for other parts of the region. In the case of the East Corridor, the intention was to work with the East Corridor Task Force to identify what catalyst project, or projects, were most appropriate. This evolved into the defined scope of work for the East Corridor Implementation Support Project.

EAST CORRIDOR CONTEXT

In 2011, the Sound Transit Board of Directors made its final decision about the East Link light rail transit (LRT) corridor alignment and station locations. Also in 2011, King County Metro began operation of its Bus Rapid Transit service (BRT) RapidRide line B. In order to help areas around LRT and BRT stations transform into more transit-oriented communities, the four cities participating in the East Corridor Task Force (Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue, and Redmond) and other Task Force members were interested in developing focused implementation strategies and tools for specific East Corridor station areas. Seattle and Mercer Island had already completed extensive planning for the station areas in their jurisdictions, so the Task Force decided to focus on stations in Bellevue and Redmond.

Staff from the cities of Bellevue and Redmond indicated that the station areas in the Bel-Red Corridor and Overlake were in most need of implementation support. Given these considerations, the Task Force determined that the East Corridor Implementation Support Project should focus on the following subset of East Corridor station areas in the cities of Bellevue and Redmond, along East Link and King County Metro’s RapidRide Route B stations:

**East Link Light Rail Station Areas (Future) Selected for the East Corridor Implementation Support Project:**
- Hospital Station Area in Bellevue
- 120th Avenue NE/Spring Creek Station Area in Bellevue
- 130th Avenue NE Station Area in Bellevue
- Overlake Village Station Area in Redmond
- Overlake Transit Center Station Area in Redmond

**King County METRO RapidRide B Line Station areas (Existing) Selected for the East Corridor Implementation Support Project:**

*Located in Bellevue’s Crossroads Neighborhood:*
- NE 10th Street Station Area
- NE 15th Street Station Area

The Partnership funded and guided the East Corridor Implementation Support Project to examine opportunities for TOD along Sound Transit’s East Link Light Rail and King County Metro RapidRide Line B alignments through the Eastside cities of Bellevue and Redmond in these station areas initially as part of Phase 1 of the project, and then to provide more focused analysis and strategies for selected station areas as part of Phase 2. Portions of the project area are located within the areas known as the Bel-Red Corridor and Overlake.
FOUR FOCUS AREAS FOR EAST CORRIDOR IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Through a series of meetings, the East Corridor Task Force examined key issues and identified barriers to transit-oriented development in the East Corridor, along with particular challenges to implementing equitable TOD in station areas. In its discussion of how to incent and accommodate equitable transit-oriented development in station areas, the Task Force determined four areas of focus for the East Corridor Implementation Support project. The Task Force identified the need for detailed strategies and action steps to implement existing local plans, particularly in the areas of:

- Affordable Housing
- Business Retention and Attraction
- Public and Private Partnerships
- Transportation Access and Connectivity

EAST CORRIDOR PROJECT PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

The East Corridor Implementation Support project has identified pivotal opportunities to transform Eastside station areas into more vibrant, economically healthy neighborhoods that offer equitable housing choices, more convenient access to jobs and jobs-to-housing balance within the high-capacity transit corridors and region, and better connectivity to goods and services.

The project is supporting immediate advancement of the implementation of visions and plans that have already been developed by participating jurisdictions on the Eastside, and the project team has leveraged other products developed by PSRC and the Growing Transit Communities Partnership, including affordable housing and opportunity mapping, existing conditions reports, market analyses, station area typologies, Center for Transit-Oriented Development (CTOD) market strength index, and other information as a base of reference for the project.

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT PROJECT GUIDANCE AND TIMELINE

All phases of the East Corridor Implementation Support Project have been informed by representatives of the East Corridor Task Force. The Task Force identified a subset of members, called the Project Management Team (PMT), to advance the project and bring back matters to the Task Force for direction and decisions. PMT members were selected from the general membership of the Task Force (including representatives from the cities of Bellevue and Redmond) and confirmed by the Task Force co-chairs. See the Acknowledgements page for PMT members.

Growing Transit Communities staff and the PMT members of the Task Force retained a consultant team with expertise in affordable housing, urban design, transportation planning and policy, real estate and economic development, and other areas to assist in identifying actions and strategies to address these issues and help to catalyze TOD.

OVERVIEW OF PHASES 1 AND 2

The scope of work for the East Corridor Implementation Support Project was completed in two phases. Phase 1 included best practices research, a high level assessment of seven East Corridor station areas, screening and selection of station areas for further analysis in Phase 2, and development of the scope of work for Phase 2. See the Phase 1 Best Practices Research Report for a detailed description of initial tasks. Go to (http://www.psrc.org/about/pubs) for the report.

Phase 2 involved more intensive analysis and development of specific recommendations for TOD implementation for two station areas: 130th Avenue NE in Bellevue and Overlake Village in Redmond. Phase 2 explored innovative approaches to leverage opportunities and incent TOD implementation in the short- and long-term in these station areas. Phase 2 developed recommended actions, strategies, and products to address specific issues in each station area per the scope of work that was developed by the Task Force and overseen by the PMT.
PHASE 2 PRODUCTS

Products developed in Phase 2 supporting these four focus areas are listed in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Affordable Housing</th>
<th>Business Retention and Attraction</th>
<th>Partnerships</th>
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<td>Potential District Energy Value Proposition and Implementation Recommendations</td>
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<td>Opportunity Study and Financial Assessment</td>
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<td>Summary of Project Outreach Activities and Recommendations for Ongoing Engagement</td>
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<td>Analysis and Recommendations</td>
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These products have been completed as stand-alone, complementary documents and reports. All reports are available for download at [http://www.psrc.org/about/pubs](http://www.psrc.org/about/pubs) (look for Growing Transit Communities Partnership, East Corridor information).
PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES LIVABILITY PRINCIPLES

The Growing Transit Communities Partnership supports the livability principles of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), US Department of Transportation (DOT), and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have joined together to help communities nationwide improve access to affordable housing, increase transportation options, and lower transportation costs while protecting the environment through the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities works to coordinate federal housing, transportation, water, and other infrastructure investments to make neighborhoods more prosperous, allow people to live closer to jobs, save households time and money, and reduce pollution. The Partnership agencies incorporate the following six principles of livability into federal funding programs, policies, and future legislative proposals.

Provide more transportation choices—Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation’s dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.

Promote equitable, affordable housing—Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.

Enhance economic competitiveness—Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services, and other basic needs by workers, as well as expanded business access to markets.

Support existing communities—Target federal funding toward existing communities—through strategies like transit-oriented, mixed use development and land recycling—to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and to safeguard rural landscapes.

Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment—Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.

Value communities and neighborhoods—Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.
The Focus of this Phase 2 Report:  
Vibrant Urban Neighborhoods  
Creating Transit-Oriented Communities for All Ages

This Phase 2 report of the East Corridor Implementation Support Project presents a summary of recent research and best practices related to creating equitable, transit-oriented communities for all ages. A summary of responses to a questionnaire that collected input on the elements that people feel are most important in livable urban neighborhoods is also presented. The overall purpose of this report is to broaden awareness about how to make urban neighborhoods and transit-oriented communities more family-friendly with components that benefit residents of all ages.

The information in this report, developed for the Growing Transit Communities Partnership, will be helpful to those implementing redevelopment and transit-oriented development projects in the East Corridor as well as for those working in other station areas undergoing transformation throughout the region.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The Growing Transit Communities Partnership is focused on implementing the region’s adopted growth strategy, VISION 2040, which calls for dense and vibrant transit-oriented communities that promote sustainability and social equity. The central Puget Sound region is investing over $25 billion in high-capacity transit in the coming decades. To support this investment and the sustainability of the transit system, the cities of Bellevue and Redmond have adopted zoning to create urban neighborhoods with a higher density of residents and employees living and working near light rail stations in the Bel-Red Corridor and Overlake Village.

Many residents on the Eastside currently live in lower density residential neighborhoods and subdivisions. They have chosen to live in these areas partly because this has been the predominant type of housing available on the Eastside for many decades, but also because suburban living has attracted them for a variety of reasons. In order to better understand the types of features these residents desire in a strong, vibrant neighborhood, and to begin to ascertain the elements in an urban neighborhood that might appeal to them and prompt them to move to an urban area of denser living, the Otak team conducted a review of recent research and planning efforts and developed an online survey to gather information from citizens of the region about their preferences related to urban neighborhoods.

Of key concern to creating equitable transit communities is the need to provide a full range of housing and transportation choices and a mix of services, amenities, and businesses to support a high quality of life as well as economic opportunities. More people living and working in proximity to high-capacity transit builds ridership for the system, enhancing its success, and also brings benefits such as improved environmental health, less traffic congestion, reduced household transportation costs, and stronger neighborhood character and identity.

New urban neighborhoods that emerge around transit stations in the East Corridor will be attractive places to live for professionals working at Microsoft, in Downtown Bellevue, or other areas. This includes young professionals and couples, as well as families and retirees. However, while demographic trends show an increased interest overall in living in urban areas among US citizens, research (completed by Cornell University, see page 8) shows that families in particular tend to move to the suburbs when their children reach the age of 5. So the question
persistence, what would entice these families to live in an urban neighborhood? What features would be most attractive to them, so much so that they would give up suburban homes on individual lots with larger yards and move to a townhome, apartment, or condominium within walking and bicycling distance to/from light rail? This report focuses on analyzing and identifying key elements at the neighborhood, site, and dwelling unit scales that will attract families and contribute to creating a vibrant urban setting.

WHAT IS AN URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD?

An urban neighborhood that is part of a transit-oriented community typically has a higher number of residents and employees in proximity to the station than other neighborhoods. For the purposes of this report, an urban neighborhood is one where people primarily live in high density housing (buildings several levels in height such as condominiums or apartments, as well as in various configurations of multi-family buildings, townhomes, and attached single family dwellings. Vibrant urban neighborhoods are desirable places to live that provide a range of housing at various levels of affordability, with both for sale and for rent products. Housing is often located above ground floor retail, services, and active uses at the street level.

There are many examples of vibrant urban neighborhoods, where most residents live in high density multi-family housing supported by a mix of retail, professional, and civic uses. Here in the US, we think of places like The Pearl District in Portland, Oregon; Downtown Boulder, Colorado; the Mission District in San Francisco, California; and others as vibrant urban neighborhoods. Several neighborhoods in Vancouver, BC exemplify urban living, including False Creek North, as well as neighborhoods and districts in large European cities such as the Marais in Paris, France.

Not all urban neighborhoods are alike. Each has its own character and identity. As Overlake Village in Redmond and the Bel-Red Corridor in Bellevue transform in the coming years, each neighborhood will come into its own vibrant urban character. Perhaps the 130th Avenue NE neighborhood will continue to emerge as an arts district. And perhaps Overlake Village will continue to be known for the diversity of small businesses, ethnic restaurants, and eclectic shops there, supported by many new residents and employees moving into the neighborhood.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN THE CITY

Urban living brings benefits as well as challenges for families and children. Current trends indicate that more people overall will be moving to urban areas and choosing to live urban lifestyles. However more often than not, families with children are choosing to live in suburban areas. There have been several studies that have explored the factors drive families away from urban living. For example, recent research conducted by the City of Seattle found that two key contributing factors were the need for larger, more affordable living spaces and for good schools (K-12).

In determining how urban neighborhoods and communities can become more attractive to families, it is first important to understand the elements that make a neighborhood family-friendly. A 2008 study of 944 planners across the US by Evelyn Israel and Mildred Warner of Cornell University, in collaboration with Carrie Fesperman, found that respondents perceived family-friendly communities as places where families enjoy:

- Housing at affordable prices
- Child care
- Parks to play in
- Pedestrian pathways
- Quality public schools
- Safe neighborhoods
• Other features that promote family well-being

Why is important to have families and children living in our cities? When asked this question, most respondents (97%) expressed that families are important to the growth, sustainability, and diversity of communities, and they represent a valuable consumer population. A high number of respondents (90%) also expressed that communities that keep people for the whole life cycle are more vibrant. Also of note, 64% of respondents stated that the needs of families are similar to the needs of elderly related to accessibility within the physical environment.

Research by Mildred E. Warner and Rebecca Baran-Rees conducted in 2012 at the Department of City and Regional Planning at Cornell University clearly showed that vibrant communities need people of all ages for long-term economic stability.

While the presence of families is important for the health and sustainability of urban areas, many families prefer living in suburban areas for various reasons. Research conducted in Seattle in 2012 by the Downtown Seattle Association (DSA) showed that although more than 3,200 children under the age of 18 live in downtown, “once children reach the age of 5, families will often move out of downtown in search of a neighborhood that fosters a more family-friendly environment. The DSA has been working to increase the number of families with children living in downtown Seattle. DSA asked soon-to-be parents living downtown to discuss what works and what doesn’t work when living downtown with kids of all ages. Reasons most often cited for relocating included:

• Lack of quality schools in the downtown core, and the
• Lack of safe public parks, playgrounds, and amenities for young children.

As a follow on to this research, the DSA, Seattle Department of Planning and Development, and Seattle Planning Commission held a conference on “Ingredients for Designing a Family-Friendly Downtown” where several notable experts on urban living shared their research and insights. The overall recommendation from the conference was to design places where families in general and children and seniors in particular feel comfortable and where there is an emphasis on safety and comfort with the urban experience among people of all ages. From better bike lanes to safer, more dynamic parks that place family at the center of the design and enhance social interaction, the conference highlighted many tools that can help neighborhoods attract a greater proportion of families and people of all ages.

A few years prior to the Seattle conference, the Center City Strategy for Seattle was developed, and as part of this, the Family-Friendly Urban Neighborhoods (FUN) Initiative was born in 2008. The FUN initiative underscored the importance of a family-friendly and youth-friendly city center:

• Youth and families are pivotal to regional sustainability and high quality of life.
• Neighborhoods that work well for children work well for everyone.
• Kids that grow up enjoying an urban lifestyle are more likely to support and champion it later as adults.
• Studies show that urban living encourages healthier lifestyles that thwart the childhood obesity epidemic.
• Center City and its neighborhoods present multi-cultural opportunities and are excellent places for children to explore and learn about the world.

Research for the FUN initiative also found that there was a lack of family housing with two or more bedroom units within the Center City area to serve families’ needs, not to mention a lack of family-oriented facilities such as K-4 elementary schools to meet projected demand. Research showed that while 84,000 of the 236,000 workers who work in the Center City have children under 18, only 25,000
of these workers actually live in the Center City, and only 1,890 of these have children under 18 living in their households. The research recognized distinct needs of the following groups of prospective residents in family-friendly neighborhoods.

**Existing Families**
Pioneering urban families love living in the City for a number of reasons—they appreciate the conveniences of being able to walk to and from shopping and services. They may be frustrated by the lack of facilities to serve their needs, and as such, it is important to determine that there are sufficient schools and educational resources, community centers, family-focused programs, childcare centers, and family-oriented parks and open spaces.

**Emerging Families**
Many young couples may already live in urban areas and may be on the cusp of starting a family. Finding ways to make these residents comfortable that the urban environment will serve all their needs as a family will be important. Encouraging neighborhood development that provides affordable, family-sized (2+ bedrooms) housing units, high quality public schools, childcare centers, and parks and open space with activities for children of all ages are key strategies.

**Youth**
Youth of the city encompasses a broad and diverse group from infants to teenagers, and they have changing needs and priorities. Ensuring that the neighborhood is safe for all youth and provides a variety of activities and amenities that will give them opportunities to grow, learn, thrive, and succeed are critical.

**Seniors**
Addressing the needs of seniors revolves around providing a variety of housing choices including affordable units, access to transit and a variety of transportation options including fully accessible walkways and intersections, senior center/community center facilities, and other amenities that contribute to creating a vibrant urban neighborhood.

The report *Planning for Family Friendly Communities* by Evelyn Israel and Mildred Warner presents the results of their 2008 survey, sponsored by the American Planning Association in collaboration with Cornell University. The lack of affordable housing was the most stated barrier preventing respondents’ current communities from being family-friendly.

Because the cost of housing is typically higher in urban areas than suburban areas, this creates ongoing challenge in attracting families to cities. Exploring options for providing more affordable housing and subsidized housing should be a priority. Calculating household costs including often lower transportation and energy use costs that come with urban living and making this information available to prospective residents/home buyers and renters may help to broaden awareness about the economic benefits of urban living that may offset the higher costs of housing.

Because there is often a perception that public schools in urban areas may not provide as high quality education as suburban schools, confirming academic performance in collaboration with school districts and documenting achievements and rankings may prove that this perception is inaccurate. If the educational system is strong and successful, this will be another positive outreach message to convey to prospective residents.
Baby Boomers, America’s largest generation, are reaching retirement age and are interested in livable neighborhoods where they can maintain an active lifestyle.

**DEMOGRAPHIC AND MARKET TRENDS**

As discussed above, building urban neighborhoods that meet the needs of children and families is critical, and so is making sure that urban neighborhoods are designed to meet the needs of America’s growing generation of older adults.

According to *Pedestrian- & Transit-Oriented Design* by Reid Ewing and Keith Bartholomew, by 2020, the number of individuals turning 65 in America will increase to more than four million per year as a result of the “baby boom” generation (born 1946-1964), our country’s largest generational cohort. Based on Census Bureau data, it is projected that between 2007 and 2050, the share of the US population older than 65 will grow from 12.8 to 20.7 percent. According to Smart Growth America, the men of this largest generation in American history will outlive their ability to drive by seven years and women by eleven years.

As baby boomers become empty nesters and retirees, many are showing interest in compact, walkable neighborhoods and access to public transit, characteristics that are more often found in urban neighborhoods. At the same time, recent studies have shown that the children of the baby boomers, known as the “echo boomers” or sometimes also as millennials or generation Y (born 1981-2000), also are showing a preference for urban living.

A survey of this generation by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) conducted in 2011 found that 64 percent rated walkability as “essential or preferable.” Another 2011 survey conducted by the National Association of Realtors found that 58 percent of the respondents preferred “a neighborhood with a mix of houses and stores and other businesses within an easy walk.”

There is a strong interest in urban living among this generation of homebuyers and renters, and economists and developers are taking note. In summarizing the 2012 Home Design Trends Survey conducted by the American Institute of Architects (AIA), Kermit Baker, AIA’s chief economist noted, “people are asking more from their communities in terms of access to public transit, walkable areas, and close proximity to job centers, retail options, and open space.” (Ewing and Bartholomew 2013).

Moreover, a separate 2011 report, *Real Estate in the New Economy*, published by the ULI had the following key findings:

- The influx of Generation Y, now in their teens through early thirties, will change housing demand. They are comfortable with smaller homes and will happily trade living space for an easier commute and better lifestyle. They will drive up the number of single households and prompt a surge in demand for rentals, causing rents to escalate.

- The senior population will grow fastest, but financial constraints could limit demand for adult housing developments. Many will age
in place or move in with relatives to conserve money. Developers may want to recast retirement communities into amenity-laden “age friendly” residences. Homes near hospitals and medical offices will be popular, especially if integrated into mixed-use neighborhoods with shops, restaurants, and services.

Overall, the demand for smaller homes has been increasing (and will continue to increase) at a much faster pace than previous decades in the US. Refer to the chart below depicting average area of new single-family house based on US Census and National Association of Home Builders data). However, the 2011 ULI Report also found that:

- For most people, finances will continue to be constrained, leading to more shared housing and multi-generational households. Immigration will support that trend, as many immigrants come from places where it is common for extended families to share housing. As such, this may be the one group that continues to drive demand for large, suburban homes.

### Average Area of New Single-Family Houses, United States

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>2015</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Source: US Census, National Association of Home Builders*

### Other Research and Planning Related to Family-Friendly Housing and Development

While the research record is not extensive, several studies and planning activities conducted since the 1990s have advocated for the importance of designing communities to accommodate families and in particular children and youth, as well as seniors and multi-generational households. Several of these are summarized below. Refer to References and Resources at the end of this report for a complete listing.

#### Dara P. O’Byrne’s Thesis

In 2006, University of Washington Master of Urban Planning student, Dara P. O’Byrne completed her thesis, *Reversing the Trend—Strategies to make Center City Seattle Livable and Attractive to Families with Children*. This work informed the development of the Center City FUN Initiative discussed above. Some of the key needs of children are highlighted, including:

- Basic needs for living a healthy life
- A home that provides shelter as well as a sense of emotional security and stability
- Safety and sense of comfort in their environment
- Access to nature and a healthy natural environment
- Exercising the right to play
- Being able to enjoy a variety of activities
- Unprogrammed spaces for creative play
- Streets/sidewalks as part of the neighborhood and places to play, ride bicycles, walk, etc.
- Accessibility and mobility
- Community identity/culture
- Participation
**Courtyard Housing Design Competition, Portland, Oregon**

With a focus on inspiring designs of high density housing to meet the needs of families with children, the City of Portland sponsored a design competition in 2012. Key goals and principles for all competitors included:

- Creating versatile courtyards that increase the availability of usable open space for families and children.
- Building functional homes with flexible, adaptable spaces.
- Using sustainable solutions, such as energy and water saving fixtures that reduce household living costs.
- Making interior and exterior connections that balance community orientation with privacy needs.
- Responding to the surrounding context and human scale.

Key design elements proposed by entrants included:

- Shared courtyards
- Common greens
- Identifiable homes
- Household variety (in size/number of bedrooms, etc.)
- Adaptable plans (rooms that can convert to various uses over time)
- Defined circulation
- Covered parking
- Parking gardens (for off-street parking spaces that can double as open space areas)
- Personal storage spaces
- Capture of natural daylight and ventilation
- Green roofs
- Sustainable building materials
- Sustainable landscaping (low maintenance, low water use, etc.)
- Traditional spaces for privacy for each unit (balconies, patios, porches, stoops, front door gardens, etc.)
- Direct connections with nature/outdoors
- Visible open spaces – eyes on spaces for security
- Engaging the street; safe and comfortable walking environment
- Comfortable scale; appropriate massing, scale, and articulation of buildings

A link to the report summarizing the Courtyard Housing Design Competition and the key attributes of the winning entries is provided at the end of this report under References and Resources.

**North Pearl District Plan, Portland, Oregon**

The City of Portland Bureau of Planning developed the North Pearl District Plan in the mid-2000s with several key objectives in mind, including “the need for more diverse housing options and the ability to make the public and private investments necessary to serve the growing and diversifying population of the Pearl, especially families with children.” The plan calls for community building, additional development capacity, and increased parks and open space zoning. The plan also calls for family compatible housing including units with two bedrooms or larger, adequate storage space, interior and exterior play spaces, and common areas for families to gather on site. And the plan emphasizes access to public amenities, retail services, and cultural institutions.

**Austin, Texas Families and Children Task Force**

The Families and Children Task Force of Austin, Texas presented a report of recommendations in 2008 based on a review of best practices. The report found that family friendly communities are communities where families have access to:

- Housing at affordable prices
- Childcare
- Parks and outdoor play spaces
- Pedestrian pathways
- Quality public schools
• Safe neighborhoods
• Sufficient indoor space
• Privacy and other features that promote family well-being
• Public transit
• Libraries
• Recreation centers
• Grocery stores

A link to the full report is provided under References and Resources at the end of this report.

Examples in Canada

Efforts to create housing and neighborhoods that appeal to the needs of families with children and youth have been underway in Canada for over 25 years. High-Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines adopted by the City of Vancouver in 1992 was one of the first policy and guideline documents developed and since then, many other cities have proceeded to develop child and youth friendly design provisions.

Some of the key suggestions in the 1992 guidelines were:
• Twenty family units suggested as the minimum in a single project
• Minimum of two bedrooms for family units
• Family units can be grouped together in the most appropriate parts of the building, such as on lower floors facing a common play area outdoors, etc.
• Some covered play areas for rainy days
• Housing located within walking distance to elementary school, daycare centers, parks, community center, grocery shopping, etc.
• Design of the entire site to accommodate use by children

In the late 2000s, the University of British Columbia conducted a post-occupancy study of urban neighborhoods in Vancouver and found that in some cases there were more children living in these areas than in surrounding suburban neighborhoods. One of the key lessons learned was that the initial demand for schools and childcare facilities was underestimated. For example, False Creek North (profiled below) is now home to just over 10,000 people, with almost 1,400 children under 14 living there. In 2008, there was a waiting list of 1,800 for daycares in the area and the one school, Elsie Roy, was experiencing lineups of parents camping overnight to get their children a kindergarten spot, according to a January 2009 article in the Vancouver Sun.

With regard to individual dwelling units, occupants who participated in the University of British Columbia survey wanted:
• Larger kitchens
• Spaces at front doors for removal of shoes/play clothes
• More bedrooms and bathrooms

Respondents also expressed the following likes and dislikes about the neighborhood.

Likes:
• The Roundhouse community centre, which has become a focal point
• The parks
• The mix of people in the community, especially children and people from many other cultures
• The sense of safety with more "eyes on the street"
• A car-free life
Dislikes:
- Shortage of school and daycare spots
- Inadequate activities in parks and community centre for young teens
- Conflicts over dogs in the parks
- Lack of a mid-range grocery store that falls between Urban Fare and Costco, along with other regular retail like a hardware store and a dollar store
- The look of the buildings, which many said were "too monotonous, gray and green"

Abbotsford Child and Youth Friendly Housing and Neighborhood Design
As a result of a nationwide focus on creating urban neighborhoods that are friendlier for families with children and youth, the City of Abbotsford developed specific guidelines in 2009 based on research of local needs. Specific design guidelines included:
- Providing discernible social spaces—plazas, squares, or green spaces with transportation located nearby.
- Widening sidewalks and pathways and providing quality streetscapes that create cohesion throughout the community.
- Locating buildings close to sidewalks and engaging streets (urban spatial definition).
- Enhancing walkability—pedestrian and active transportation friendliness.
- Providing places for bicycling, skateboarding, etc.
- Encouraging a mix of building and housing types, including apartments, row houses, mixed-uses, live-work units, etc.
- Locating elementary schools no more than one mile from housing units.
- Providing treed boulevards (high streets) and street trees separating the street from the pedestrian (but not obstructing views of the sidewalk).
- Implementing traffic calming, as well as gateway signs at access ways into the neighborhood.
- Providing a variety of hard surface and soft surface outdoor spaces for a variety of activities.
- Creating technological areas for WiFi, Bluetooth connectivity, etc. that are easily accessible for youth and children.
- Providing areas for family play and space for peer group interactions; outdoor playspace close to housing and safe.
- Creating buffer zones that demarcate private, semi-public, and public spaces.
- Providing front porch, patio and other transitional areas that provide safe play areas for children.
- Integrating private areas into the design of dwellings, such as private courtyards for gardening, etc.
- Providing units with 2 and 3 bedrooms and rooms large enough to hold a bed, dresser, desk, and playspace.
- Providing storage spaces where families can store bicycles, toys, strollers, etc.
- Open designs of dwellings that facilitate movement of children through the living room to the bathroom and kitchen with ease (more room to move around).

False Creek North, Vancouver, BC
As a result of years of careful planning, the False Creek neighborhood strongly attracts families and has been so successful that the demand for housing exceeds the current capacity of this urban district. Success is attributed to the urban school, spacious public parks, numerous transportation options, and dense, family housing oriented around transit. This example clearly shows that when there is the right balance of amenities, families can thrive (and the presence of some families attracts other families). A post-occupancy evaluation conducted in 2007 details the success of False Creek North and changes needed for the neighborhood to continue to function as a desirable urban home for families.
A 2008 article in the Vancouver Sun highlighted the attractiveness of False Creek North to families. The article profiled the Huntleys who moved to False Creek North in 1995 and stayed because they love the lifestyle they’ve created in their downtown neighborhood. As the article stated, they are far from alone. "Everything's within walking distance," said Robert Huntley. "The park, the school [and] the community centre. And our children, all of their friends are local." Huntley works downtown as a cartographer and his wife, Tanya, is a nurse at St. Paul's Hospital.

The two live in a three-bedroom townhouse with their four children, aged 13, 10, 6 and 2. They connect with other families at the Roundhouse Community Centre and the elementary school, but said the neighborhood itself is home to a cross-section of people. "Generally, it's a good mix right across the board, economically and racially," Huntley said. "And age too. You have senior citizens. You have young singles. Everybody seems to get along."

South False Creek Neighborhood, Vancouver, BC

Vancouver, BC West End Design Guidelines for Infill Housing

These guidelines require the provision of open space as part of all overall site development and landscape plans, with each unit required to have access to a private open space suitable for children (provided at grade and taking advantage of sunlight and views).

Edmonton, Alberta Federation of Community Leagues Child/Family-Friendly Multi-Unit Housing Guidelines

Family friendly neighborhoods are encouraged, with:

1. Housing located within safe and reasonable walking distance to elementary schools, parks/outdoor play areas, recreation facilities/playfields, community gathering places/gardens, grocery stores, public transit stops, childcare/after school care
2. Streets that can be negotiated safely and comfortably by parents and children
3. Sidewalks on all streets; bicycle paths and routes to schools, parks and transit
4. Traffic calming, street crossing distances minimized
5. Curb cuts/driveways are kept to minimum
6. Sufficient family-oriented housing to support neighborhood family amenities
7. Schools integrated within the neighborhood with activities beyond the typical school day
8. Strong sense of community; families feel safe and secure from crime and traffic
9. A variety of activities are available such as nature walks, skating rinks, pools, game centers, etc. to appeal to a diversity of interests
10. Diverse age groups live in the community and support each other through intergeneration activities
A link to the Family-Friendly Community Checklist prepared for Edmonton, Alberta is provided under References and Resources at the end of this report.

**Transportation and Family-Friendly Communities**

Families are attracted to neighborhoods that have access to schools, parks, shopping, and amenities. Access begins with transportation designed for all modes including members of the family who don’t drive. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are high priorities in family-friendly neighborhoods, and access to high-capacity transit further expands the transportation options for families, typically at a lower overall cost to the households compared with driving/auto use for every trip. Advocating for complete streets and working with the DOT and school districts to improve walking and bicycling routes to school are other important actions that can support a family-friendly transportation system.

**Family-Friendly Workplaces**

In a mixed-use urban neighborhood, family friendly workplaces are just as important as family friendly housing in supporting the needs of parents, children, and older adults. According to the Mid-America Regional Council and the Metropolitan Council on Early Learning, based in Kansas City, Missouri, employers and businesses should make an effort to recognize the needs of their employees and implement family-friendly programs to serve these needs. While these activities are not typically regulated by government or zoning actions, a variety of family-friendly work policies and their importance can be marketed by the cities through outreach. For example businesses/employers can become more family friendly by:

- Offering flexible work options to help employees meet family responsibilities
- Allowing “floating holidays” for employees to take time off during holidays that are culturally important to them
- Allowing staff to take annual leave in hourly or half-day increments
- Implementing a policy to stay in touch with employees who are on leave after having or adopting a child or due to another leave of absence
- Developing a support network for new parents and other employees who face common issues and providing space for them to get together and share resources
- Sponsoring regular events for employees and their families
- Introducing workplace policies for employees who are nursing mothers
- Sponsoring bring your child to work days
- Offering car share or car check-out programs so employees who take transit to and from work can get home in the case of an emergency
- Partnering and hosting community events and activities (such as a sports team, park clean-up day, etc.)

**VIBRANT URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS: ONLINE SURVEY AND COMMUNITY DISPLAYS**

To gather information about preferences of regional citizens related to urban living, the Otak team developed and conducted a public survey focused on gathering citizens’ opinions about what features/elements are important to the success of vibrant urban neighborhoods. We created large-scale displays with illustrations for Derby Days in Redmond and the Bellevue Farmers Market. People were able to walk up to the displays and place dots on the features they felt were most important. We also developed an online survey (through SurveyMonkey.com), which drew more than 500 responses during the summer and fall of 2013.
Responses to each question are summarized starting on page 19.

In addition to the online survey, our team prepared large-scale displays illustrating features of vibrant urban neighborhoods for display at Derby Days in Redmond and the Bellevue Farmers Market. People were given the opportunity to walk up to the displays and place dots on photos of the types of features they felt were most important for a successful vibrant urban neighborhood. Children were invited to draw pictures of neighborhood elements they felt were most important.

Eight elements under each of six categories were illustrated by a combination of photos and graphic examples on the displays at Derby Days and the Farmers Market. These elements are listed below along with the ranking of each based on the number of dots placed at the Redmond (Derby Days) venue and Bellevue (Farmers Market) venue.

**Places for Convenience and Delight**
- Grocery Stores (Redmond 5th; Bellevue 4th)
- Farmers Markets (Redmond 2nd; Bellevue 1st)
- Other Retail (Redmond 8th; Bellevue 8th)
- Festival Streets (Redmond 7th; Bellevue 5th)
- Arts and Entertainment (Redmond 4th; Bellevue 3rd)
- Restaurants (Redmond 3rd; Bellevue 6th)
- Outdoor Seating (Redmond 1st; Bellevue 2nd)
- P-Patch Community Gardens (Redmond 6th; Bellevue 7th)

*Farmers markets are important in Redmond, where they ranked 2nd and Bellevue, where they ranked 1st as the most important element based on the number of dots places there.*

**Places to Live (Elements at the Dwelling Unit Scale)**
- Studio and Micro Dwelling Units (Redmond 7th; Bellevue 5th)
- 1 or 2 Bedroom (Redmond 5th; Bellevue 6th)
- 2+ Bedroom (Redmond 4th; Bellevue 2nd)
- Private Outdoor Space (Redmond 3rd; Bellevue 3rd)
- Flexible Live/Work Space (Redmond 6th; Bellevue 4th)
- Senior Living (Redmond 2nd; Bellevue 7th)
- Variety of Housing Prices (Redmond 1st; Bellevue 1st)
- Laundry Facilities (Redmond 8th; Bellevue 8th)

*In both Redmond and Bellevue, providing a variety of housing prices was selected as most important by the public.*

**Streets for People**
- Safe Streets (Redmond 4th; Bellevue 4th)
- Sidewalks and Bike Lanes (Redmond 2nd; Bellevue 5th)
The public ranked paths and trails as the highest priority in Redmond and Bellevue. Public transportation ranked 3rd in Redmond and 2nd in Bellevue, and sidewalks and bike lanes ranked 2nd in Redmond.

Places for Community and Comfort
- Plazas (Redmond 6th; Bellevue 4th)
- Playgrounds (Redmond 2nd; Bellevue 6th)
- Recreation for All Ages (Redmond 3rd; Bellevue 7th)
- Semi-Private Gathering Spaces (Redmond 7th; Bellevue 8th)
- Quiet Places (Redmond 5th; Bellevue 3rd)
- Parks (Redmond 1st; Bellevue 1st)
- Places to Sit (Redmond 7th; Bellevue 5th)
- Public Art (Redmond 4th; Bellevue 2nd)

Parks ranked as the highest priority in both Redmond and Bellevue. Public art ranked 2nd in Bellevue. Playgrounds ranked 2nd in Redmond.

Places for All People
- Schools (K-12) (Redmond 3rd; Bellevue 5th)
- Higher Education (Redmond 6th; Bellevue 7th)
- Libraries (Redmond 2nd; Bellevue 3rd)
- Learning Centers (Redmond 8th; Bellevue 8th)
- Preschools and Daycares (Redmond 5th; Bellevue 4th)
- Community Centers (Redmond 4th; Bellevue 6th)
- Neighborhood Centers (Redmond 1st; Bellevue 1st)
- Senior Centers (Redmond 7th; Bellevue 2nd)

Community health with access to fresh foods ranked as the highest priority (1st) in Redmond. “Eyes on the street”—community safety ranked as the highest priority (1st) in Bellevue.
The results of the online survey are summarized below and on the following pages. Question 1 asked respondents to indicate what city they live in. Looking at the combined results from the cities of Bellevue, Redmond, Kirkland and other cities, most respondents were from the Eastside. Just over 40 percent of the respondents were from Seattle. The survey was an online survey open to the general public and not specifically targeted to Eastside residents.
Question 2 asked respondents to indicate which neighborhood they live in. As shown, respondents currently live in a mix of urban and suburban neighborhoods on the Eastside, as well as on the Westside in the vicinity of Seattle.

Folks placing dots on their favorite elements at the Derby Days display
### Q4

**When you think about living in an urban neighborhood, what are you excited about?**

[Q4 Diagram]

#### Percentage of Excitement

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<th>Feature</th>
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<td>Walk Ability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access</td>
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<td>Transit</td>
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<td>Walking Distance</td>
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<td>Nearby</td>
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<td>Small Businesses</td>
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<td>Close Proximity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good Food</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Needing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easy Transportation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Responses to Question 4 on the previous page indicate that most people are excited about opportunities for shopping and being able to readily access goods and service. Respondents ranked walkability and access as second most important (tied for 2nd place) and transit as third most important.

Question 5 on the previous page asked respondents to identify their concerns. Noise was of the highest concern, followed by safety as the second highest concern, traffic as the third highest concern, and parking as the fourth highest. The word diagram above shows words mentioned most frequently – the bigger the word, the more times it was mentioned in responses.
The table below shows the percentage of times that each of the words listed was mentioned by respondents in their answer to Question 5. As shown, “noise” was mentioned the most as a concern in urban neighborhoods, followed by “safety” and then “traffic.” All three of these issues can be addressed through good design.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
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<tr>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>27.58%</td>
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<td>Safety</td>
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<td>Traffic</td>
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<td>Space</td>
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<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<td>Walking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Getting</td>
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<td>Cost of Living</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gentrification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amenities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trash</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>1.52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the Question 6 above, ranking the most important elements or aspects of dwelling units, respondents indicated that having a variety of housing prices and choices is the highest priority to them. Second highest is having laundry facilities in the unit, followed by having two bedrooms and two+ bedrooms in the unit (tied for third priority).
In the ranking of places for convenience and delight, under Question 7 above, online survey respondents ranked grocery stores as the most important elements. Arts and entertainment was selected as the second most important, followed by outdoor seating and then farmers markets.
In considering what is most important related to Streets for People under Question 8 above, safe streets ranked as most important. Public transportation via bus, light rail, etc., as well as good pedestrian access to streets and sidewalks and bike lanes, also were ranked fairly highly by respondents, followed by good lighting and the other elements.
Question 9 above asked about the most important places for community and comfort. Parks were listed as the most important priority by online survey respondents, followed by places to sit and then playgrounds and recreation.
Question 10 shows the ranking of important places for all people, with libraries ranked as the most important, followed by K-12 schools and then community centers, neighborhood centers, and preschool/daycare facilities.
When considering the most important factors affecting quality of life related to living in vibrant urban neighborhoods. Respondents selected reduced commute time as the most important consideration, followed by the need for “eyes on the street” to address community safety. Increased opportunities for walking and biking was ranked third most important, followed by access to fresh foods as fourth most important and reduced household costs as fifth most important.
What other elements are important?

Question 12 was an open-ended question asking respondents to indicate what else is important when considering living in urban neighborhoods. The word diagram above shows several responses—the bigger the word, the most often it was mentioned. The words Community, Spaces, Streets, Urban, Cultural, Downtown, and Affordable Housing were mentioned most. The full list of responses is available separately from this report. Some of the most often mentioned elements by survey respondents included:

- Parks and open space including places for dogs and families, skate parks, pocket parks, green spaces
- Trees and landscaping
- Nearby transit services
- Affordable housing
- Strong sense of community
- Diverse cultural experiences and foods
- Crime prevention and good security
- Clean, safe streets; some quiet streets with less traffic
- Public restrooms
- Diverse employment opportunities
- Public Services
- Preservation of natural areas, habitat for fish and wildlife
- Close to services and shopping so family and friends can walk and bicycle/walkability
- Good pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Green streets and green alleys
- Accessibility at intersections (curb ramps, countdowns, signal detection, etc.)
- Appropriate scale of commercial uses and associated parking; the need for neighborhood retail and services
- Recreation opportunities—trails, walking, community pool and recreation centers, etc.
- Community events/downtown or heart of community
- Parking management -- no free public parking
- Schools (K-12) and grocery stores
- Views and variety in the quality of the outdoor environment
- Community facilities, places to meet
- Public art, color, vibrancy, activity
VIBRANT URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS—RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

Based on a review of research, planning activities, and best practices implemented in the US and Canada and the results of the online survey, the following guidelines for creating vibrant urban neighborhoods are recommended. These guidelines will help planners, designers, developers, builders, neighborhood advocates, and others create urban neighborhoods that are healthy places to live and attractive to families and people of all ages.

Policy Level and Overall Neighborhood Guidelines

The following policies and guidelines can be applied to the overall neighborhood (although several of these already exist in Redmond’s and Bellevue’s adopted plans.)

- Continue to encourage, support, and incentivize affordable housing; explore opportunities to subsidize affordable family-sized units
- Identify potential enclaves for family-oriented housing (areas that may be particularly amenable to family oriented development due to their proximity to open space, parks, schools, etc.) and help to support these areas by funding adjacent capital improvement projects, expediting site development permits, and/or other actions.
- Provide marketing and outreach to the public (and specifically families) to build awareness of the quality of life and cost benefits of urban living.
- Increase the supply of family housing (encourage a mix of housing types and promote households with children to attract more families).
- Continue to use additional density and zoning measures to encourage affordable family housing developments.
- Consider providing property tax exemptions to parents living in urban areas whose children attend the public school system.
- Consider requiring a percentage of family housing units in residential developments.
- Consider developing a unit-size fee, which can be waived if a desired percentage of family-sized units is provided in new developments.
- Create specific design guidelines for family-oriented design at the site and unit level (see below).
- Establish a checklist of criteria for family housing that determines eligibility for funding and as “family-friendly” housing unit for marketing.
- Evaluate demand projections for schools and child care centers and work with school district and private sector partners to serve the anticipated demand.
- Improve streets and build a walking culture; keep key streets residential in nature.
- Take advantage of streets and public rights-of-way for flexible social gathering/public open spaces (block parties, pocket parks, shared/festival streets, etc.).
- Promote healthier, more sustainable forms of transportation, including places to walk, bicycle, and safe, efficient access to transit, and more specifically:
  - Separate sidewalks used by children and youth from streets with heavy traffic or congested traffic where vehicles may idle for long periods.
  - Ensure that sidewalks are suitable for tricycles and slow moving bicycles operated by youth.
  - Provide secure, convenient parking for bicycles.
o Design new light rail stations and facilities with the needs of youth, children, and older adults in mind.

o Establish a bicycle sharing program.

o Establish a tricycle and wagon sharing program in parks.

o Ensure that transportation hubs cater to teens.

- Safety, security, universal design and accessibility should be foundational to all neighborhood design efforts (inside public rights-of-way and on private sites).

- Provide, coordinate, and program a variety of parks and open spaces, and more specifically:
  
  o Provide backyard substitutes by creating safe, public play spaces.
  
  o Convert under-utilized streets into linear parks/plazas; pocket parks.
  
  o Promote programs in urban agriculture for kids/p-patches.
  
  o Create places for relaxation as well as recreation.
  
  o Provide space for and encourage organization of neighborhood festivals and events.
  
  o Provide facilities (such as playground equipment, game tables, etc.) and program activities in park spaces that serve all ages/age groups.

- Encourage development of multi-generational community centers or neighborhood centers.

- Maintain good visibility to all public areas and maintain eyes on the street for security.

- Provide foot and bike beat patrols.

- Encourage neighborhood watch programs.

- Provide a higher level of clean and safe services by forming a special improvement district or neighborhood clean-up organization.

**Site Development Guidelines**

Guidelines that can be applied at the site development scale include the following.

- Design ground-oriented dwelling units with private entrances off the street (most preferred by families).

- Create clear distinction between public space, community space, and private space.

- Provide a private zone at some location around the outside of the dwelling, such as a patio, porch, or yard.

- Incorporate trees and landscaping.

- Provide opportunities for residents to personalize their unit with their own plants/landscaping.

- Include large community and recreation spaces for older children within the development or within the overall neighborhood; consider providing a technology center with personal computers, WiFi access, gaming equipment, kitchen for drinks and snacks and other amenities for teens.

- Provide parking in reasonable proximity to residences.

- Design the entire development with the safety needs of children in mind.

- Provide laundry facilities in convenient locations in the development (if not provided in individual units)

**Dwelling Unit Guidelines**

The following guidelines apply to specific dwelling units offered as part of vibrant urban neighborhoods.

- For some families, two bedroom units may be adequate, but many families with two or more children would prefer three or four bedroom
units (based on studies in San Francisco and Portland, having additional bedrooms is an important factor in attracting families).

- Ensure that each unit has visual and acoustical privacy.
- Separate conflicting uses within the unit (for example, sleeping areas and living areas should not share a wall).
- Provide bathrooms large enough so that parents and children can be in the bathroom together.
- Consider including a generous, non-carpeted entryway to provide space for toys, equipment, dressing children for cold/rainy days, drying wet shoes, boots, outerwear, etc.
- Provide laundry facilities inside the unit.
- Provide flexible space that can be used for multiple purposes over time (for example a bonus area/loft space may function as a play room and then transition to a computer room, library and/or crafts space).
- Provide modern appliances with the best available technologies in energy and water conservation is important in helping to minimize household utility costs.
- Provide additional storage within the unit or outside the unit such as a locked storage locker within the development (families appreciate extra storage for strollers, wheeled toys, bikes, suitcases, sports equipment, holiday decorations, etc.)

As demographic trends continue, with more empty nesters and retirees seeking out urban living there will be more of a market for urban living. In some cases in order to support redevelopment to achieve the desired vision for the station areas, special marketing and outreach efforts can help to convey key messages about the benefits of urban living and the attractive qualities of the new urban neighborhoods emerging in the East Corridor.

These efforts could be sponsored by the City (Redmond and/or Bellevue), private developers, or a combination of interests. City staff also should continue to monitor demographic trends and interests in various housing types and features in each neighborhood and prioritize projects and investments needed to support family-oriented development (e.g. street improvements, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, community centers, parks, plazas, schools, etc.).

CONCLUSION
A review of case examples, best practices, and research results clearly indicates that neighborhoods designed for families in general and for children and seniors in particular are highly desirable places to live. Neighborhoods that support the needs of all ages are more vibrant, equitable, diverse, and sustainable.

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