

### III. MAJOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE DESIGN GUIDELINES

#### BACKGROUND

Bellevue was originally planned in the 1950s to provide convenient, efficient automobile access and adequate space for parking and auto-oriented land uses. As Bellevue has grown, demands on available land have increased land values and vehicular congestion. With increased density and urbanization, policies have been adopted to encourage pedestrian and transit trips.

In 1981, the City Council of the City of Bellevue adopted a Land Use Code increasing allowable density in the CBD and requiring the creation of a Pedestrian Corridor with three Major Public Open Spaces linking the Bellevue Square regional shopping center with high-rise office and mixed use development to the east. The Pedestrian Corridor is located in the alignment of NE 6th Street, with Major Public Open Spaces at 110th Avenue NE, 106th Avenue NE and Bellevue Way NE. The Corridor and Major Public Open Spaces are on private land and will be privately designed, developed, and maintained. Transit service has been improved by the creation of an interim transit center near the Pedestrian Corridor. A permanent transit center is being planned.

On May 16, 1983, the City Council of the City of Bellevue amended the Land Use Code to establish a development mechanism for three Major Public Open Spaces in the CBD. These Open Spaces are to serve as focal points and public gathering places within the CBD core and will be located along the Pedestrian Corridor. Among other things, the ordinance required that a Design Plan for each space be approved by the City Council. Property owners abutting two of the spaces hired Don Miles Associates/PPS, Seattle architects and planners, to prepare a set of design guidelines for the spaces which are intended to serve this function. The two locations are:

NE 6th Street and 106th Avenue NE  
NE 6th Street and Bellevue Way NE

The Guidelines include a set of general criteria by which proposed spaces will be reviewed. These criteria address pedestrian movement, adjacent uses and structures, sunlight, traffic crossways, vegetation, activities, and amenities. The detailed design for each open space would be reviewed by the Planning Director through Administrative Design review, as required by the ordinance.

The Planning Department reviewed a draft that was sent to the Planning Commission for review. A number of changes were suggested. Following a Public Hearing held on November 16, 1983, the Planning Commission voted to incorporate the suggested changes. This document was approved by the Planning Commission and was adopted by the City Council, as embodied in Resolution No. 4285, after a Public Hearing held on December 12, 1983.

#### IMAGE

The function of the Major Public Open Space (MPOS) is to serve as a downtown pedestrian focal point and a public gathering place. The MPOS should be designed to host a variety of activities ranging from passive recreation to public events. The MPOS should contain numerous pedestrian amenities to make it comfortable and aesthetically pleasing. The space should have a unified image and be perceived as an extension of the major Pedestrian Corridor.

The space should be physically and visually accessible from the adjacent street right-of-way (ROW), the major Pedestrian Corridor, and abutting development. The MPOS should have a significant amount of vegetation and plantings which reflect the changing seasons.

Because the space beneath the MPOS may be developed for parking and other uses ancillary to abutting development, it is essential that the MPOS is designed integrally with adjacent development. The design of the MPOS will

influence the design of and access to subsurface development, consequently the design development should occur concurrently. The design of the MPOS should recognize its function and setting. The northern, central, and southern portions of the space and the perimeter of the space should reflect varying conditions of use, degree of sunlight, wind and traffic exposure, gradient, and proximity to major pedestrian flows.

### **GENERAL CONDITIONS**

Allocations of design features on contiguous parcels within the MPOS may be reallocated among the parcels by consent of affected owners and upon approval by the Planning Director. An MPOS parcel is defined as the portion of an MPOS under common ownership.

### 106th Avenue NE MPOS

The southern portion of the MPOS at 106th Avenue N.E. has been designed and is scheduled for completion by the end of 1998. It is the first example of a MPOS as it was outlined in the guidelines. It is bounded on two sides by retail/restaurant. The space includes kiosks, seating, fountain, artwork, and sufficient area for special events and vendors. The central elliptical plaza pays honor to the historical fact that a compass manufacturing company was once located on the site. The northern half of the open space should complement the south half of the space.

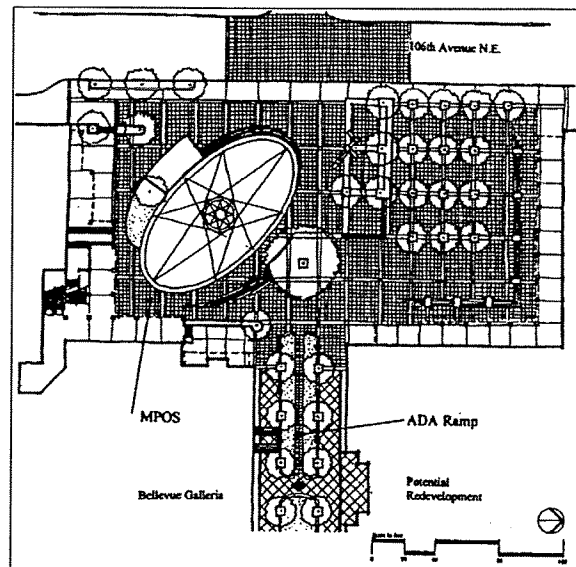


Figure III-1: 106th Avenue NE MPOS Illustrative Plan

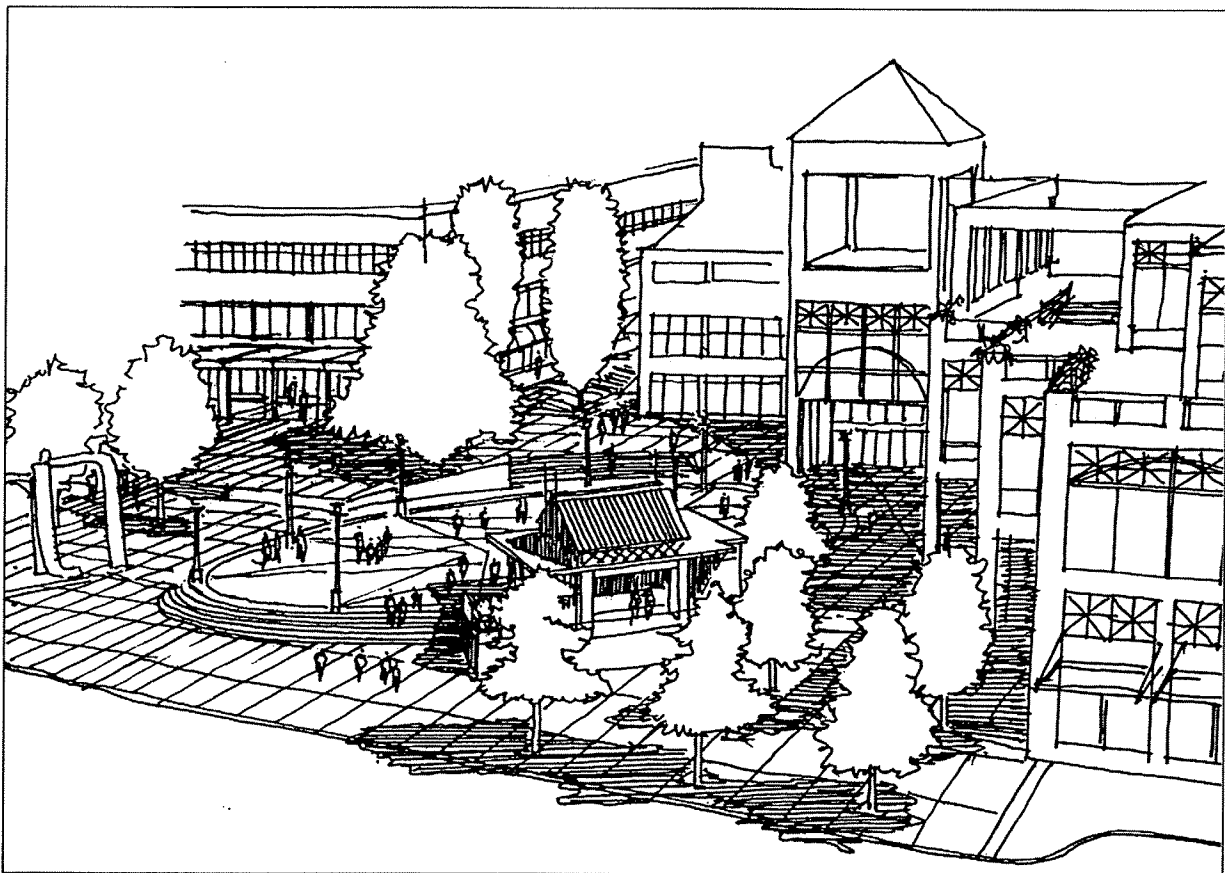


Figure III-2: 106th Avenue NE MPOS Sketch

### Bellevue Way NE MPOS

An illustrative design concept for the Bellevue Way Major Public Open Space is shown, incorporating the footprints of the new Bellevue Art Museum and the proposed Lincoln Square development. The open space is integrated with the “Street as Plaza” concept for this block of the Corridor. The majority of the space is focused on the Corridor. The Bellevue Way MPOS is the western “Gateway” to the Corridor.

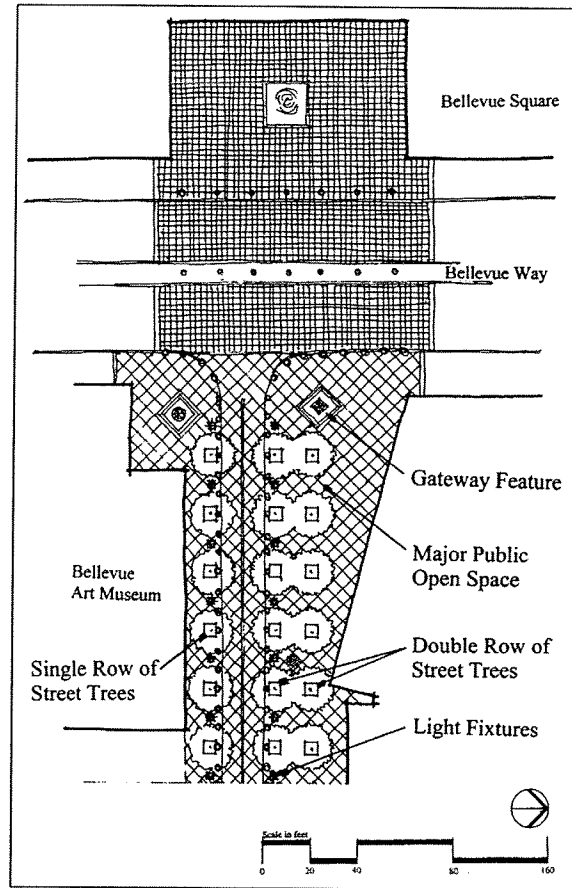


Figure III-3: Bellevue Way MPOS Illustrative Plan

**110th Avenue N.E. MPOS**

The illustrative plan indicates the linear configuration for the MPOS at the intersection of 110th and the Corridor.

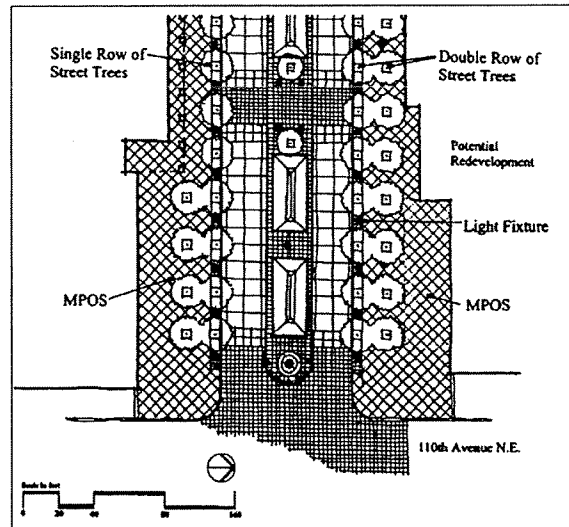


Figure III-4: 110th Avenue NE MPOS Illustrative Plan



Figure III-5: 110th Avenue NE MPOS Sketch

## 1. PRIMARY PATHS OF MOVEMENT

### Intention:

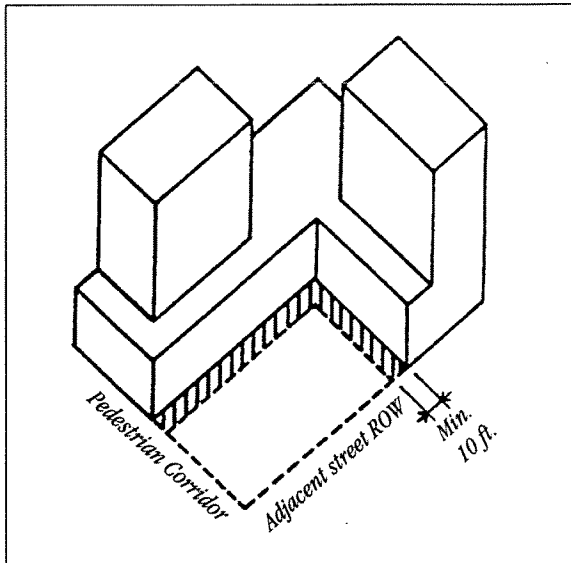
To provide for preferred primary pedestrian movement patterns.

### Accomplished by:

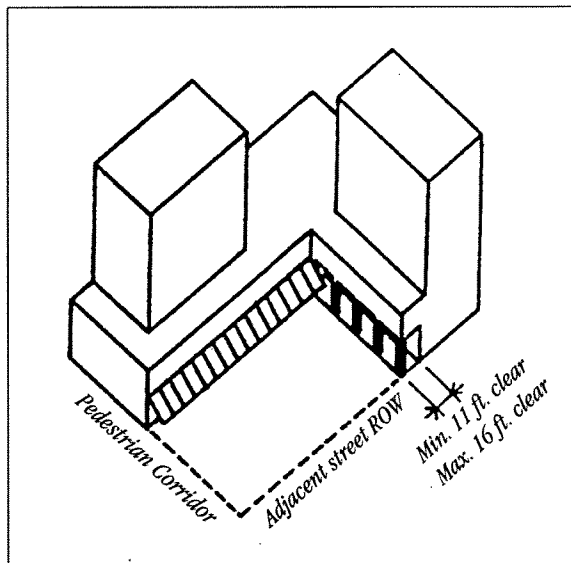
Providing paths of movement connecting the sidewalks on the adjacent street ROW at the corner of the MPOS with the Pedestrian Corridor. These pathways should follow the edge of the MPOS, allowing pedestrians to benefit from storefront views and weather protection of the abutting structures (see 3. Walls of enclosure).

The primary pathway, adjacent to the building walls enclosing the MPOS, should allow for an unobstructed pathway of 10 feet. This pathway may be in a straight path or meander between uses, such as café tables and chairs, displays, kiosks, and planters. A perimeter colonnade, if provided, should allow for 10 feet plus six inches next to the shop fronts and columns, resulting in a minimum clear width of 11 feet (allows two groups of two pedestrians to pass) and maximum clear width of 16 feet (allows groups of three to pass). The sidewalks on the adjacent street ROW are also primary pedestrian paths.\*

The Pedestrian Corridor will intersect the MPOS and will include two paths of pedestrian movement. The pathways in this location may be channeled to a moderate extent by gateways or focal elements, such as sculpture, fountains, archways, or plantings. Pedestrians should be able to maintain the same general direction of travel without major diversion.



*Figure III-6: Primary Paths of Movement*  
The primary pathway, adjacent to the building walls enclosing the MPOS, should allow for an unobstructed pathway of 10 feet.



*Figure III-7: Primary Paths of Movement*  
A perimeter colonnade should allow for a minimum clear width of 11 feet (allows two groups of two pedestrians to pass) and maximum clear width of 16 feet (allows groups of three to pass). Displays, café seating, planters, and similar features within the colonnade should not obstruct more than half the width to allow through pedestrian movement.

\* John J. Fruin, *Pedestrian Planning and Design*, 1971, pp. 19 - 33.

## 2. SECONDARY PATHS

### **Intention:**

To provide pedestrian circulation paths through the MPOS and adjacent development. The orientation and location of these paths are more varied than the primary paths. Pedestrian connections to the MPOS through abutting development, as well as vertical circulation providing access to the towers and parking, are desirable.

### **Accomplished by:**

Providing a variety of secondary pedestrian paths through the MPOS. These paths provide access to the MPOS from primary pedestrian paths. These paths may be defined or undefined. Secondary paths may be direct or may meander through the MPOS.

Frequent MPOS access points should be provided at the perimeter and along the adjacent street ROW sidewalks.

Through-block connections in abutting development, and connections to vertical pedestrian circulation, are encouraged.

