
5.7 Historic, Cultural, and Architectural Resources, and Section 4(f) Evaluation

The Bellevue Nickel Improvement Project will not adversely affect any historic properties or Section 4(f) resources in the study area.

Historic, Cultural, and Architectural Evaluation

Cultural resources refer to places, things, and human institutions that provide information about people from the past, their experiences, and their cultural identities. Cultural resources can include archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, spiritual places, people, documents, districts, sites, buildings, objects, and structures. Several interrelated federal, state, and local laws and regulations require, and provide guidance for, consideration of how development projects might adversely affect cultural resources (see Exhibit 5-1).

What is our study area for this analysis?

Cultural resource experts use the term “area of potential effect” when describing the study area for a cultural resource investigation. The area of potential effect is the area within which an undertaking may cause direct or indirect changes to the character of any historic property. The area of potential effect can extend beyond the actual area where construction is planned.

The horizontal limits of the area of potential effect for the Bellevue Nickel Improvement Project are approximately one property removed from the boundary of the I-405 right of way and reflect the extent to which the project has the potential to affect historic properties. The vertical extent of the area of potential effect is limited to the maximum depth of ground disturbance associated with project construction.

Agencies and Organizations Consulted for Background Information Included:

Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

- King County
 - King County Archives
 - King County Department of Assessments
 - Washington State Archives, Puget Sound Regional Branch
 - King County Historic Preservation Program
 - King County Assessor’s Office
 - University of Washington Libraries
 - Seattle Public Library
 - King County Road Services Division
 - City of Bellevue
 - Bellevue History Center
 - Bellevue Historical Society
 - Eastside Heritage Center
 - Bellevue Regional Library
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Please refer to the Bellevue Nickel Improvement Project Historic, Cultural, and Archeological Resources, and Section 4(f) Resources Discipline Reports in Appendices I and U (on CD) for a complete discussion of these analyses.

What is a historic district?

Historic districts may contain a variety of resource types, but these resources share a common historic theme and time period. Historic districts, like other historic properties, must also have definable boundaries.

Are any cultural resources located in the area of potential effect?

Project historians did not identify any archaeological remains within the area of potential effect. No buildings or other structures within the project area are currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

We did identify a residential neighborhood just east of I-405 that may qualify as an historic district based on criteria used by the NRHP. The neighborhood, known as Norwood Village, is a unique, architect-designed, post-World War II housing community designed and built in the early 1950s. The neighborhood is considered eligible for listing in the NRHP for possessing distinctive design characteristics and being associated with two important local architects, Fred Bassetti and Paul Hayden Kirk.

The team also identified the Wilburton Trestle, listed on the Washington Heritage Register and eligible for listing on the NRHP. For a more detailed discussion on the Wilburton Trestle and Norwood Village, see “Section 4(f) Evaluation” later in this chapter.

How will the project affect cultural resources?

We concluded the project will not have an adverse effect on Norwood Village because the results of the noise analysis for the project showed that none of the residences within the Norwood Village neighborhood will experience future noise levels approaching or exceeding the FHWA noise abatement criteria for residential areas.

We concluded that the project will not alter any portion of the Wilburton Trestle, nor will it result in increased noise, visual, or vibratory elements that will alter the noteworthy characteristics of the trestle (see Section 5.2, “Noise Analysis”).

How will the No Build Alternative affect cultural resources?

The No Build Alternative would not adversely affect Norwood Village or the Wilburton Trestle. None of the residences within the Norwood Village neighborhood would experience future traffic noise levels that approach or exceed the FHWA NAC for residential areas. The No Build Alternative would not adversely affect the Wilburton Trestle because it is largely outside the project area of potential effect. The portion of the trestle within

the area of potential effect is too far from the I-405 right of way to be directly or indirectly affected by it.

How will project construction affect cultural resources?

Construction activity associated with the project may temporarily affect Norwood Village and the Wilburton Trestle by increasing the amount of noise and dust that they experience. Based on federal guidance, we do not consider temporary effects, such as those we expect during construction, in evaluating a project's adverse effect on historic properties because they do not diminish characteristics of the property that make them eligible for the NRHP.

What will we do to avoid or minimize effects on cultural resources?

We concluded that the project will not adversely affect either Norwood Village or the Wilburton Trestle. Because we expect no adverse effects, no specific avoidance or minimization efforts beyond those that we will incorporate into the project (see Appendix B) are necessary at this time. We will prepare an Unanticipated Discovery Plan for the project that we will follow in the event that construction activities uncover unknown cultural resources.

Section 4(f) Evaluation

This section of the EA summarizes our formal evaluation of whether the project would affect particular resources protected by Section 4(f) of the 1966 Department of Transportation Act.

What is Section 4(f)?

Section 4(f) of the DOT Act of 1966 (49 USC 303) prohibits FHWA from approving a transportation project that uses land from a significant public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or land of an historic site of national, state, or local significance, unless:

- There is no feasible and prudent alternative, and
- The project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property.

Feasible and Prudent

A term that is integral to the Section 4(f) process, **feasible and prudent** refers to the viability of an alternative that avoids the use of a Section 4(f) resource. The term "**feasible**" refers to the constructability of a project — whether or not it can be built using current construction methods, technologies, and practices. The term "**prudent**" refers to how reasonable the alternative is — in essence, whether or not it makes sense.

An alternative may be rejected if it is considered not feasible and prudent for any of the following reasons:

- project purpose and need are not met
 - excessive cost of construction
 - severe operational or safety problems
 - unacceptable impacts (social, economic, or environmental)
 - serious community disruption
 - a combination of any of the above.
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Minimize Harm (Minimization)

Minimization involves developing measures during the planning phase of a project to reduce proposed effects to a resource. Minimization measures could include shifting an alignment, committing to off-season construction, replacing land or facilities, restoring or landscaping, or paying fair market value for affected lands.

A Section 4(f) evaluation must be prepared if the project uses any 4(f) resource. In a Section 4(f) evaluation, the agency or persons proposing the project must describe the affected properties; discuss the specific use(s) of the resources; identify and evaluate alternatives that avoid use of 4(f)-protected lands; include measures to minimize harm resulting from unavoidable effects to Section 4(f) resources; coordinate with officials who have jurisdiction over or who administer the lands that will be affected; and determine the applicability or non-applicability of Section 4(f) to a property.

What constitutes a “use” of Section 4(f) resources?

“Use” of Section 4(f) resources can occur when land is temporarily or permanently incorporated into a transportation facility. Short-term, temporary occupancy or effect does not constitute a use under Section 4(f) as long as occupancy is temporary, changes are minimal and land is restored, agency agreements are in place for the temporary resource use, and/or there is a constructive use of land. A constructive use occurs when a project creates noise or vibration that substantially interferes with the use and enjoyment of the resource, aesthetically or visually compromises a resource, or restricts access to that resource.

What study area did we use for the Section 4(f) Evaluation?

In general, we established the study area to include Section 4(f) resources located within 0.25 mile of the proposed improvements. We expanded the horizontal limits of the study area to include one property removed from the boundary of the I-405 right of way to be consistent with the area of potential effect used for the cultural resources investigation conducted as part of the EA.

What Section 4(f) resources might the project affect?

There are four publicly-owned parks and two architecturally historic resources near the proposed Bellevue Nickel Improvement Project right of way. No waterfowl or wildlife

refuges are present in the study area. Exhibit 5.7-1 compares each of the resources with Section 4(f) criteria and identifies Section 4(f) properties. Each of these properties and the study area are shown in Exhibit 5.7-2 and briefly described below.

Exhibit 5.7-1. Resources in the Study Areas and Section 4(f) Criteria

Property	Publicly Owned	Open to the Public	Major Purpose is Recreation	Significant as a Park	Section 4(f) Protected Property
Park and Recreation Facilities					
Mercer Slough Nature Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Environmental Education Center	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lake-to-Lake Trail and Greenway	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kelsey Creek Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Historic Resources					
Norwood Village					Yes ^a
Wilburton Trestle					Yes ^b
^a Norwood Village has not been officially determined to be eligible for NRHP listing but because the cultural resource survey concluded that it had the potential to be NRHP- eligible, it is appropriate to treat it as a historic resource for the purposes of determining the potential effects of the project on this possible Section 4(f) resource. ^b Wilburton Trestle has been determined eligible for listing in the NRHP.					

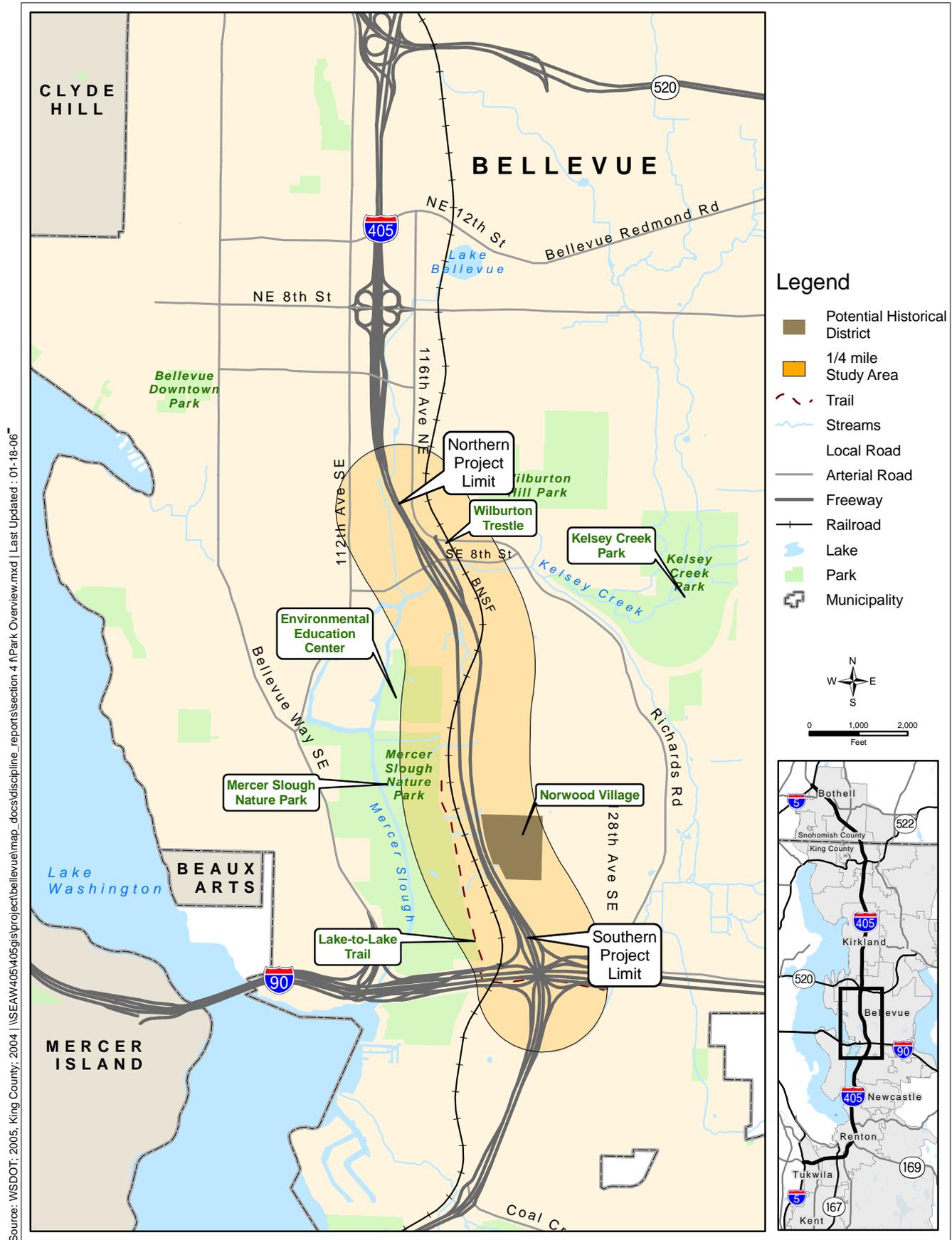


Mercer Slough Nature Trail

Mercer Slough Nature Park

The 320-acre City of Bellevue Mercer Slough Nature Park provides a variety of recreational experiences. Mercer Slough is Lake Washington’s largest wetland. It contains hundreds of plant species; wetlands, slough, and streams; and provides diverse habitat for more than 170 species of wildlife. Visitors travel through this unique urban wetland on elevated boardwalks, soft surface trails, and asphalt paths.

Exhibit 5.7-2. Section 4(f) Resources in the Study Area



Source: WSDOT; 2005; King County; 2004 | \\SEAW405\gis\project\bellevue\map_docs\discipline_reports\section 4 f\Park Overview.mxd | Last Updated : 01-18-06

Environmental Education Center

The Environmental Education Center is located immediately north of Mercer Slough Nature Park. The Center currently resides in the Sullivan House, an approximately 70-year-old home that was moved to this site from the Bellevue Downtown Park site. The Center engages children and adults in education programs focusing on environmental stewardship, wetland ecology, and nature awareness. The Environmental Education Center program is a partnership between the Pacific Science Center and the Bellevue Parks and Community Services Department.



Environmental Education Center

Lake-to-Lake Trail and Greenway

The Lake-to-Lake Trail and Greenway extends from Lake Washington to Lake Sammamish. The trail is a work in progress. Major pieces of the trail are in place and final links are being acquired to provide a walking path from Bellevue's Lake Washington beach parks, through the wetlands of Mercer Slough Nature Park, the Botanical Gardens at Wilburton Hill Park, Kelsey Creek Park, the lakes and wildlife in the Lake Hills Greenbelt and finally on to Lake Sammamish. The Lake-to-Lake Trail and Greenway provides a crucial link in the trail system developing throughout the Puget Sound region and also serves as a wildlife migration corridor.



Lake-to-Lake Trail

Kelsey Creek Park

Kelsey Creek Park encompasses 150 acres of forest and wetland habitat in central Bellevue and features more than 2 miles of hiking and jogging trails. The park includes Kelsey Creek Farm, as well as Frazier cabin, built in 1888. The log cabin is one of the City's few remaining pioneer structures and was moved to Kelsey Creek Park in 1974.

Norwood Village

Norwood Village is an example of post-World War II housing that is eligible for listing in the NRHP because it possesses distinctive design characteristics and is associated with important local architects. Its period of significance spans from 1950 to 1955, the design and construction period for the neighborhood. This is not currently a designated historic resource. The property



West Tributary within Kelsey Creek Park (looking northwest)



Typical architecture: Norwood Village



Wilburton Trestle

owners have not requested such designation. Eight houses within this neighborhood are within the Bellevue Nickel Improvement Project cultural resources area of potential effect.

Wilburton Trestle

We also identified the Wilburton Trestle, listed on the Washington Heritage Register and eligible for listing on the NRHP. The trestle lies immediately adjacent to the area of potential effect and is notable for its contribution to the history, architecture, and culture of the State of Washington. The 30-meter timber trestle was originally built in 1904 and was structurally modified several times up until the 1940s.

How will the project use 4(f) resources?

We will not acquire any Section 4(f) lands, either permanently or temporarily, for this project, and the project will have no effect on Mercer Slough, the Environmental Education Center, the Lake-to-Lake Trail and Greenway, Norwood Village, or the Wilburton Trestle.

Kelsey Creek Park

We propose to create just over an acre of wetland to compensate for the permanent loss of wetland within the study area. The proposed wetland mitigation site is located within an undeveloped and unused portion of Kelsey Creek Park, immediately north of the intersection between Richards Road and Lake Hills Connector. Because the proposed wetland mitigation site will enhance this portion of Kelsey Creek Park and will not become part of the I-405 transportation facility, the provisions of Section 4(f) do not apply. Because Section 4(f) protection will not apply, we have not conducted an evaluation on direct, proximity, and construction effects for Kelsey Creek Park.

What did we conclude about the project's use of Section 4(f) resources?

Because we considered and incorporated avoidance alternatives into the Build Alternative, the Bellevue Nickel Improvement Project will not require acquisition of any Section 4(f) resource lands, will not impose any adverse temporary occupancy on resource lands, and will not create any constructive use effects at any of the identified Section 4(f) resources.