

# CITY OF BELLEVUE TREE INVENTORY REPORT

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## Puget Sound Energy – Energize Eastside Project

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May 2016

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111103.2

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**Cite this document as:**  
The Watershed Company. May 2016. City of Bellevue  
Tree Inventory Report: Puget Sound Energy – Energize  
Eastside Project. Prepared for PSE.

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

APS	APS Survey & Mapping, LLC
BCC	Bellevue City Code
DBH	Diameter at 4.5 feet above the surface of the ground
I-90	Interstate-90
ISA	International Society of Arboriculture
LUC	Land Use Code: Title 20 of the Bellevue City Code
PSE	Puget Sound Energy
ROE	Right of entry
ROW	Right-of-way
SR520	State Route 520
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation
TWC	The Watershed Company



# CITY OF BELLEVUE TREE INVENTORY REPORT

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## PUGET SOUND ENERGY – ENERGIZE EASTSIDE

### 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Watershed Company conducted a field-based tree inventory from March 23, 2015 to November 9, 2015, collecting data on a total of 6,166 trees and 328 groupings of small trees along the 18-mile-long Willow and Oak routes. This inventory provides baseline information and does not represent the number of trees that could be pruned or removed as a result of the Energize Eastside project.

This is the City of Bellevue report, summarizing the findings for Segments E, J, G2, K2, I and the portions of C and M within the Bellevue City limits. These Segments comprise portions of the Phase 2 DEIS Segments 1, 2 and 3. A total of 4,330 trees were tagged and assessed within the study area of these segments in Bellevue. Of those trees, 1,981 meet the City’s definition of “significant”. A total of 229 polygons were delineated around small weedy trees in the subject area in Bellevue.

The study area is an approximately 100-foot wide easement in Segments C, E, J and M, with overhead transmission lines and pole structures in an existing PSE easement. In segments with no PSE easement or overhead transmission lines – Segments G2, K2 and I – trees were inventoried within an area extending 50-feet outward from either edge of the right-of-way.

All vegetation with a potential to reach a height of 15 feet or more were included in this study. All significant trees were tagged with a small, numbered aluminum tag with either a nail or wire tie. All landscaped trees or shrubs that would achieve a maximum potential height of 15 feet, regardless of trunk diameter at the time of the assessment, were tagged. Groupings of small, non-significant weedy trees were grouped in polygons and assessed as a unit. Hedges were mapped and assessed using the polygon method as well. Methodology was altered through Segments G2, I and K2 where temporary flagging was used. In Bellevue Parks parcels, only significant trees were flagged, assessed and survey-located.

The findings of this study slightly under-represent the total number of trees in the subject area. Several parcels were skipped, or were only partially inventoried

where landowners refused entry either before or during work. More detailed parcel data (including records of refusal) were collected and tracked by Enviro Issues and PSE during the field work.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

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The purpose of this tree inventory is to quantify and characterize all significant trees, as well as vegetation with the potential to reach greater than 15 feet in height along the 18-mile-long subject corridor consisting of the routes known as “Willow” and “Oak”. This inventory provides baseline information and does not represent the number of trees that could be pruned or removed as a result of the Energize Eastside project. These routes have been identified by Puget Sound Energy (PSE) as part of the Energize Eastside project. This report summarizes the findings for the City of Bellevue portion of the Willow and Oak routes. The overall project crosses through a total of five local jurisdictions, including King County and the Cities of Bellevue, Redmond, Newcastle, and Renton. Trees inventoried in other jurisdictions as part of this study are summarized in separate reports.

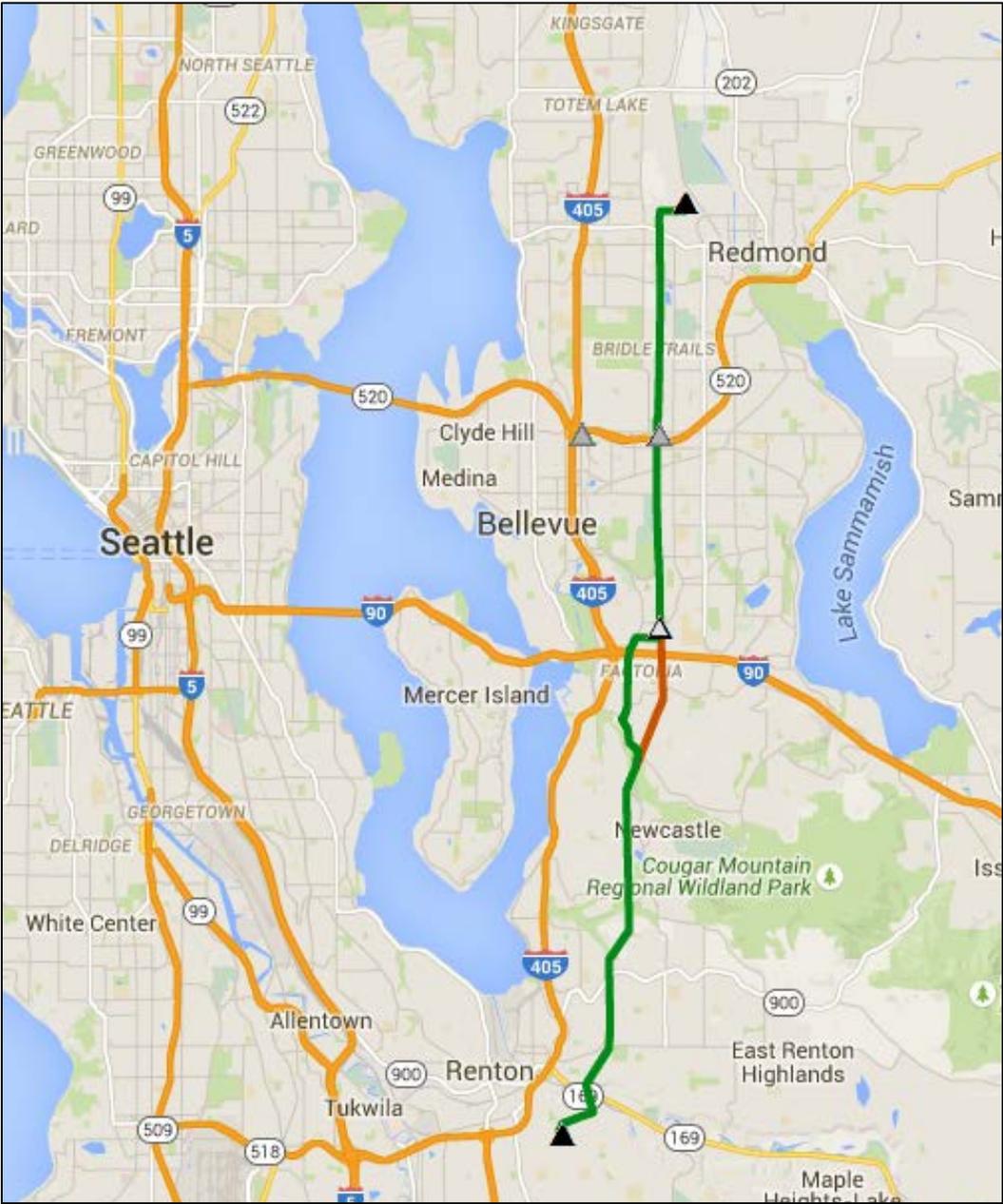
### 2.1 Background

The Energize Eastside project proposes to build a new electric substation and higher capacity transmission lines to serve homes and businesses on the Eastside. Current route options include Oak and Willow routes that will extend from Redmond to Renton (Figure 1). The two routes diverge through the Factoria and Somerset neighborhoods of the City of Bellevue. Each route option includes a set of Segments, as follows. The Oak route comprises Segments A, C, E, G2, I, K2, M, and N. The Willow route comprises Segments A, C, E, J, M, and N.

### 2.2 Defined Study Area

The City of Bellevue portion includes PSE-labeled Segments C, E, G2, I, K2, M, and J (Figures 2, 3, 4, and 5), portions of Phase 2 DEIS Segments 1, 2 and 3. The length of the study area corridor in the City of Bellevue totals approximately 11.3 miles from NE 60th Street to SE 69th Way. For Segments C, E, J and M, the study area corridor is an approximately 100-foot wide easement that includes two existing sets of 115kV transmission lines. These sets, consisting of three conductors (wires) each, are spaced approximately 50 feet apart on-center; H-frame pole structures carry each set of transmission lines.

Segments G2, I and K2, in the Factoria neighborhood of Bellevue, are also located under existing sets of high-voltage 115kV transmission lines. In these three Segments, trees were inventoried within an area extending 50-feet outward from either edge of existing City rights-of-way.



*DISCLAIMER: This interactive map is for illustrative purposes only and search results depicted on it are approximate. It is not used for project planning or engineering purposes. If you have questions about the interactive map, please contact the project team at [energizeeastside@pse.com](mailto:energizeeastside@pse.com).*

Figure 1 - An overview map of proposed Oak and Willow routes from the Energize Eastside website. The Oak route is depicted in green while the Willow route variation is shown in orange.

PSE 230kV Route  
Bellevue Tree Inventory Report

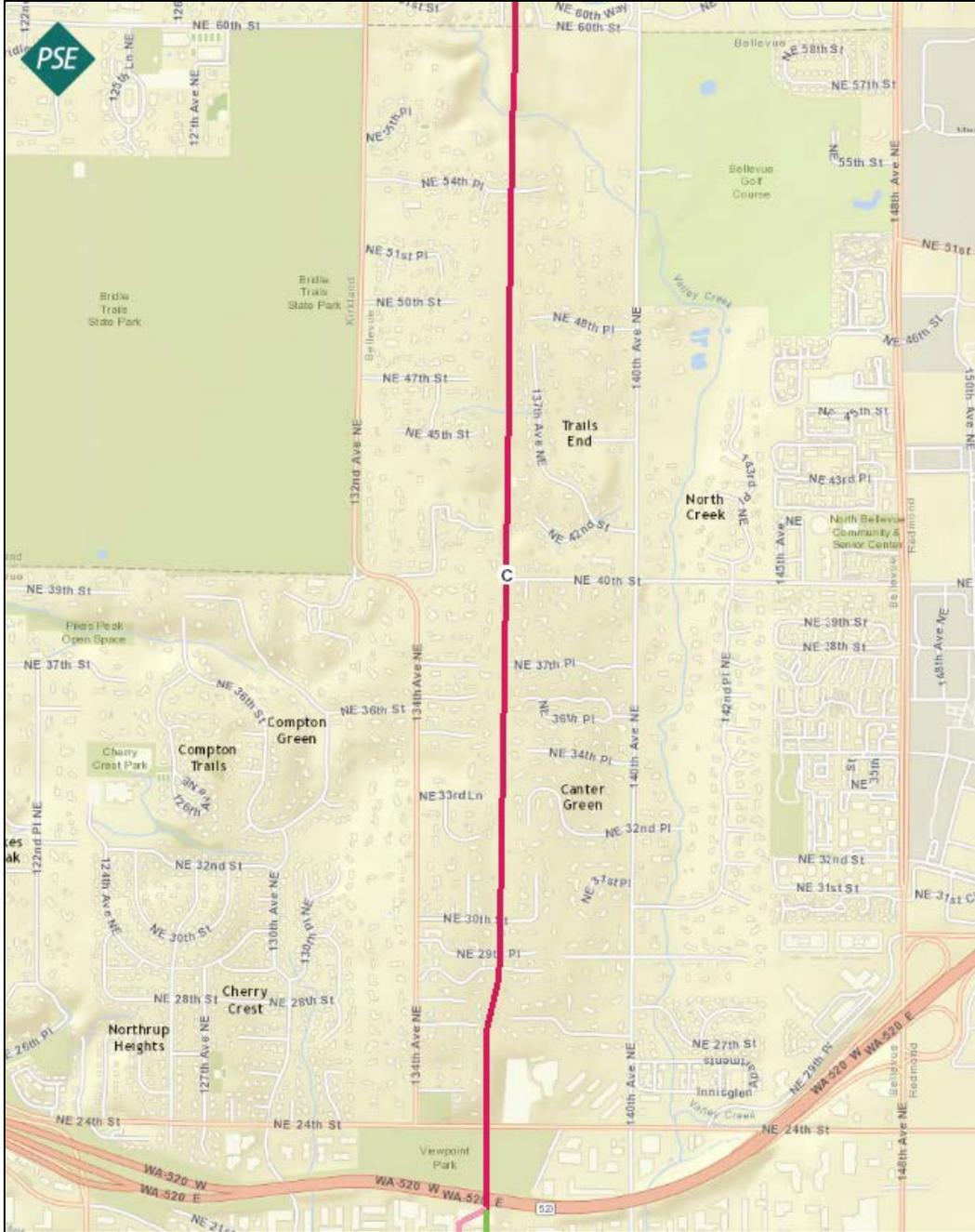


Figure 2 - Energize Eastside study area corridor (Segment C) in the City of Bellevue north of WA-520.

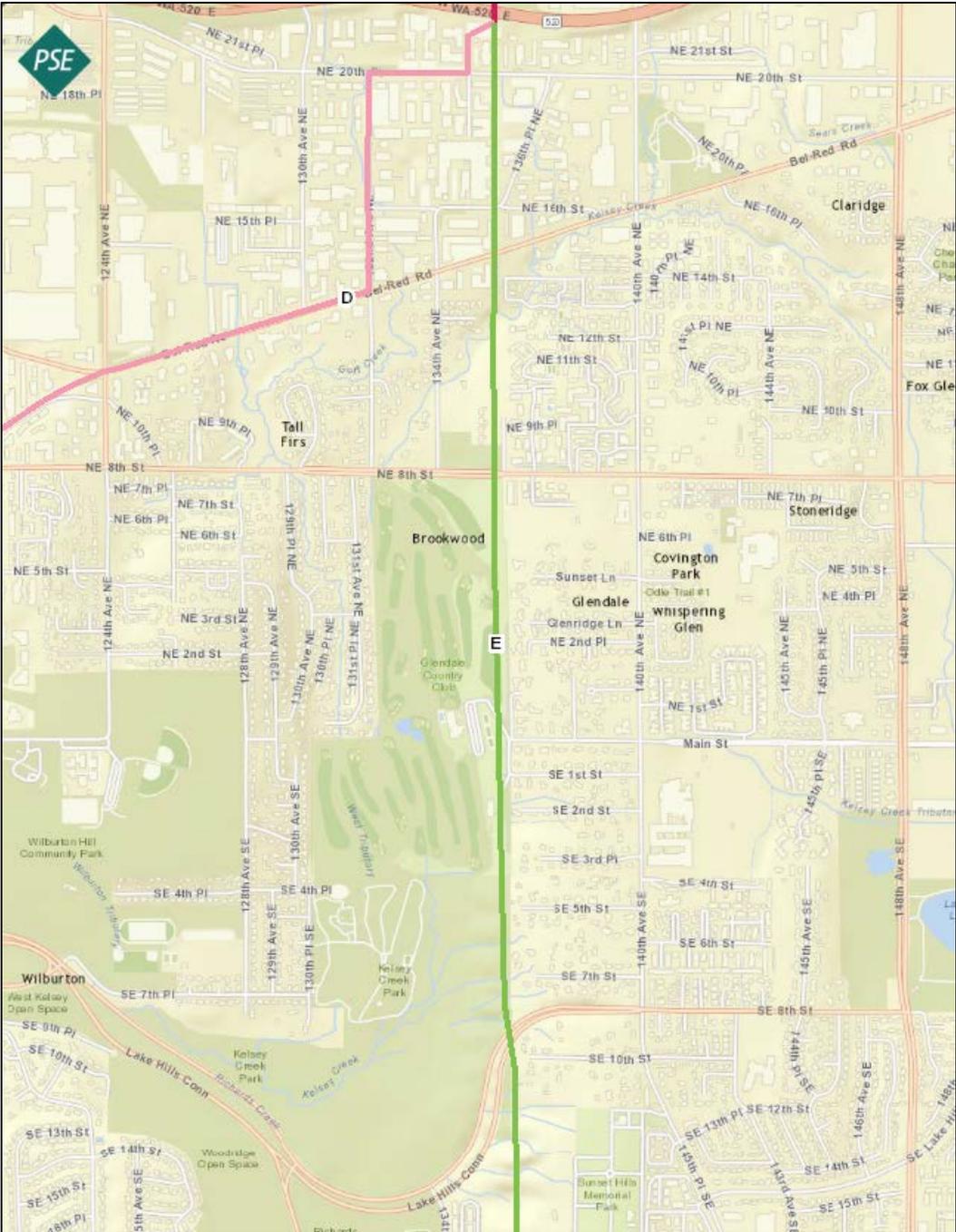


Figure 3 - Energize Eastside study area corridor (Segment E) in the City of Bellevue between WA-520 and Lake Hills Connector.

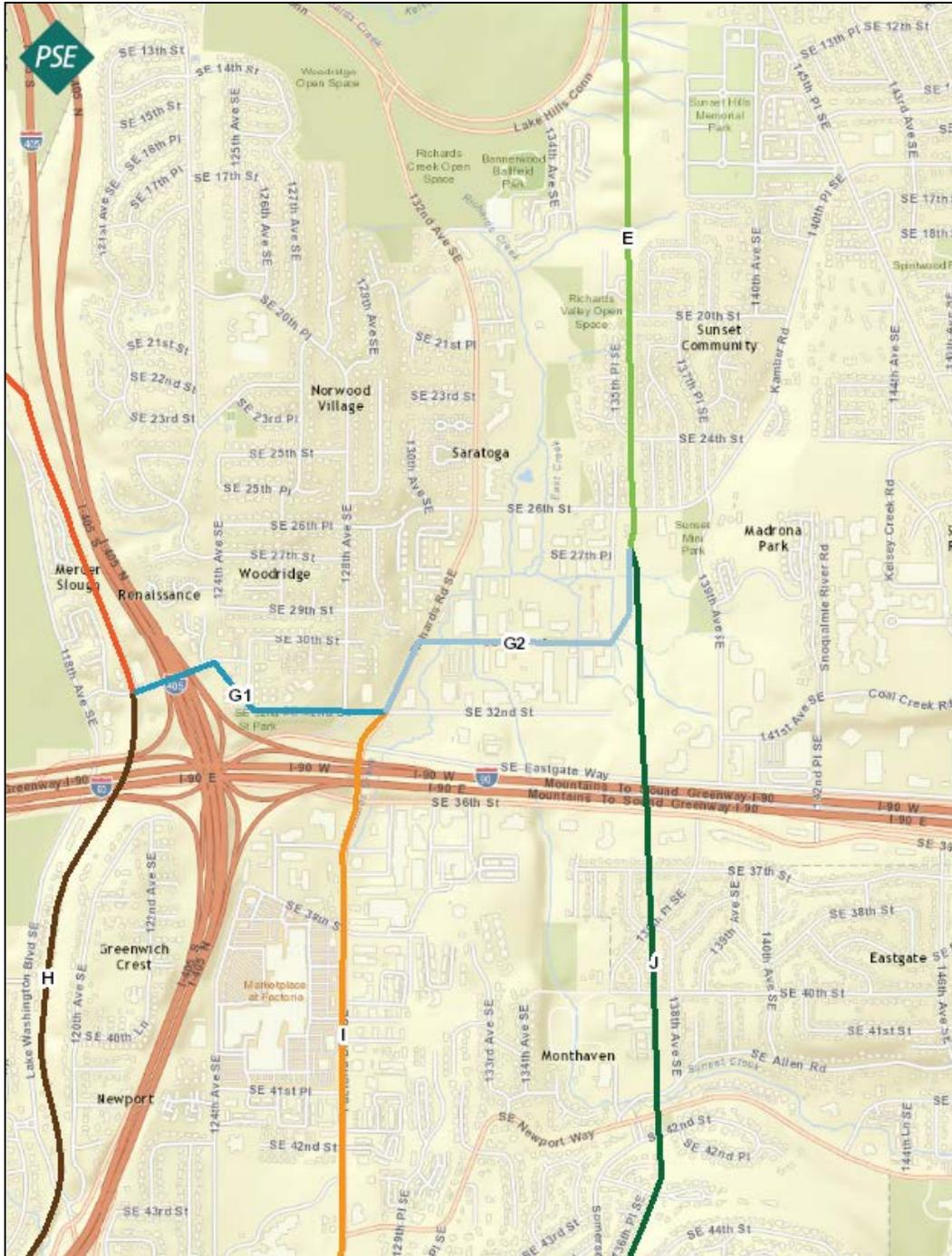


Figure 4 - Engize Eastside study area corridor (Segments E, J, G2, and I) in City of Bellevue in the vicinity of I-90.

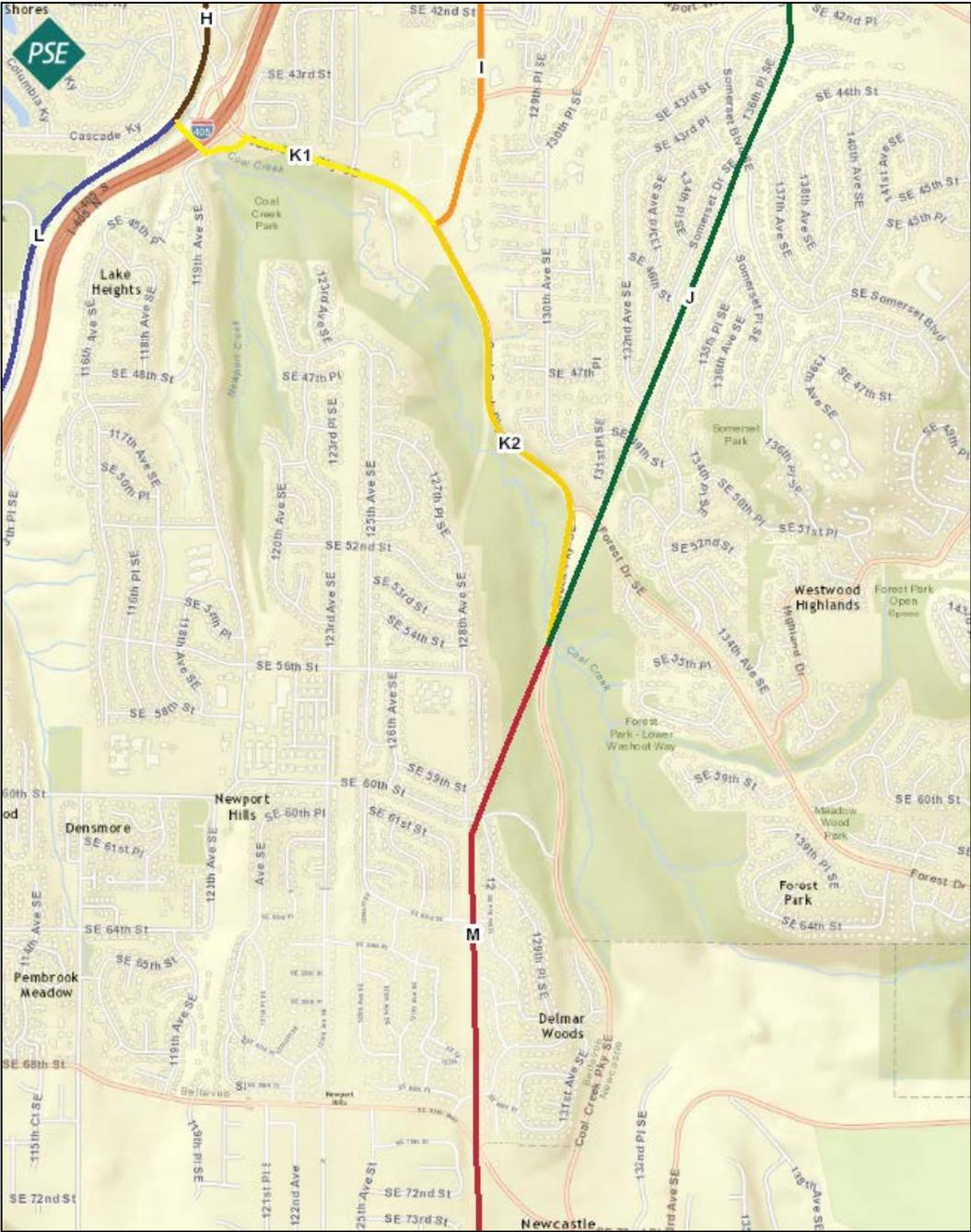


Figure 5 - Energize Eastside study area corridor (Segment J, I, K2, and M) in the City of Bellevue north of SE 69th Way. This is the southern extent of the City of Bellevue.

### 3 SITE DESCRIPTION

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The Willow and Oak routes in the City of Bellevue bisect the Bridle Trails, Bel-Red, Eastgate, Factoria, Somerset, and Newport Neighborhoods, and also run between the Neighborhoods of Wilburton/Crossroads and Woodridge/Lake Hills. The majority of the study area is zoned single-family residential; exceptions include the Bel-Red area and I-90 vicinity, generally zoned commercial and light industrial/office and limited business, respectively. The corridor is located in the following public land survey sections: Sections 15, 22, 27, and 34 of Township 25N, Range 05E, and; Sections 3, 10, 15, 21, 22, and 28 of Township 24N, Range 05E.

The study area in Bellevue is characterized mostly by private residential yards; however, the easement includes major roadways (I-90 and SR520), a golf course, some large unmaintained parcels, and commercial and industrial properties in the City. Residential areas contain lawns and shorter vegetation beneath existing lines. Several stretches of easement cross large, non-landscaped areas where Himalayan blackberry, grasses and weedy trees and shrubs are growing.

## 4 PHOTOS

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Figure 6 – A recently landscaped yard in the Bridle Trails neighborhood of Bellevue (Segment C). Several small landscape trees (tree number 4122 to 4132) were recently installed above the retaining wall. (photo taken on September 4, 2015)



Figure 7 – The Lakes to Trails pathway under the existing lines in Segment E. Some weedy red alders are growing beneath the lines left of the trail (polygon p178). (photo taken on June 1, 2015)



Figure 8 - A typical backyard with an easement in Segment J - the Somerset Neighborhood. Many properties had topped conifers in the easement. (photo taken on July 17, 2015)



Figure 9 - A hedge of cherry laurel (polygon p31) with a southern magnolia (tree number 337) in Segment M. (photo taken on March 30, 2015)



Figure 10 - Segment I (Photo taken on November 1, 2015)



Figure 11 - Bellevue Parks Parcel in Segment K2. (Photo taken on November 3, 2015)

## 5 METHODS

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Watershed Company certified arborists conducted a field-based inventory from March 23, 2015, to November 9, 2015 using the methods detailed below. Proposed methodology was developed, written and submitted to PSE in a Technical Memorandum dated March 13, 2015 for review and approved prior to field work. The methodology was developed to comprehensively identify, describe (by collecting attribute data), and mark (i.e., flagging to assist survey in locating subject trees), all vegetation greater than 15 feet tall, or that had the potential to reach a mature height of 15 feet or taller. The following methodology is based on the memorandum. Any deviation due to specific conditions encountered during field work is noted and described below.

### 5.1 Significant Trees

According to LUC 20.50.046, the City of Bellevue defines a significant tree as a healthy evergreen or deciduous tree, eight inches in diameter or greater, measured four feet above existing grade. The Director of the Development Services Department may authorize the exclusion of any tree which for reasons of health, age or site development is not desirable to retain.

For the purposes of the inventory, any tree with a diameter of six inches at four-and-a-half feet above the surface of the ground (DBH) was tagged and included. A round one-and-one-quarter-inch-wide, numbered aluminum tag was affixed to the trunk of significant trees using a two-and-one-quarter-inch long aluminum nail. Where property owners would not allow nailing, a small wire tie was used to affix the tag to a lateral branch or smaller shoot near the trunk. For a majority of the tags, a length of pink- and black-stripped flagging was included behind the tag to aid survey crews in visually locating the subject trees. Survey crews removed the bright flagging once the tree was survey-located.

Aluminum tags are intended to remain on the tree in perpetuity; however, they will eventually be consumed by the expanding radius of the tree trunk. Some tags may have been removed by property owners after the inventory work was completed.

#### 5.1.1 Segments G2, I and K2

Permanent aluminum tags were not used to mark subject trees in Segments G2, I and K2. As requested by PSE, a temporary, numbered pink- and black-stripped flag was attached to the trunk or low branch of any significant tree (Figure 10). Flagging was removed by the surveyors following survey-location work.

#### *Coal Creek Ravine Sub Area*

Only trees exhibiting a DBH of eight inches or greater were included in this sub area (Figure 11). This alteration to the methodology was agreed upon in order to

speed the inventory in the densely-wooded Coal Creek ravine. The eight-inch threshold corresponds to the significant tree definition in the City of Bellevue as described above. Note that some trees between seven and eight inches may have been inventoried in this area.

## **5.2 Non-Significant Trees and Shrubs**

Small, non-significant trees and shrubs with a potential maximum height of 15 feet or more were assessed and mapped according to the following methods:

### **5.2.1 Landscaped trees and landscaped tall shrubs**

Any landscaped or maintained tree or shrub with a potential maximum height of over 15 feet in a landscaped bed or maintained yard, regardless of trunk diameter or height at the time of the field work, was inventoried (Figure 6). A numbered aluminum tag was affixed to the trunk with a nail where possible. If the trunk diameter was smaller than two inches, generally the aluminum tag was affixed to the trunk or a branch near the trunk using a wire tie.

### **5.2.2 Weedy non-significant trees and tall shrubs; DBH between 3 and 6 inches**

Any weedy, non-significant tree or shrub exhibiting a trunk diameter of between three and six inches, with a potential maximum height of over 15 feet, was tagged similar to Section 5.2.1.

### **5.2.3 Weedy non-significant trees and tall shrubs; DBH less than 3 inches**

Groups of weedy, non-significant trees and tall shrubs (i.e., from seed [not-planted] and not maintained) composed of species with a potential maximum height of greater than 15 feet, but with stem diameters smaller than three inches, were mapped and recorded as a polygon instead of as several individual points (Figure 7). Attribute data was averaged and recorded for the group of vegetation. These polygons were not survey-located. No significant trees were inventoried using this method. Attribute data was collected for each polygon per Section 5.5 below and is included in the data table.

### **5.2.4 Hedges**

Landscaped hedges were also described and mapped using polygons instead of tagging the individual plants that make up the hedge (Figure 9). Maintained contiguous groupings of trees and shrubs with a potential maximum height of greater than 15 feet (e.g., cherry laurel, Portuguese laurel, and arborvitae) that are growing in a row with contiguous and trimmed foliage were assessed as a polygon. Attribute data was collected for each polygon per Section 5.5 below and is included in the data table.

## **5.3 Authority**

Online resources were referenced to determine the maximum height of the various species of tree and shrub encountered in the subject area. For landscape

trees and shrubs (plants not native to Washington State), the Oregon State University Department of Horticulture online landscape plant database (Oregon State University, 2016) was referenced. Native trees and shrub maximum heights were verified using the University of Washington WTU herbarium website (University of Washington, 2016) and the USDA plant database (United States Department of Agriculture, 2016). These resources were used for verifying both the scientific and common names for the spreadsheet reporting.

## 5.4 Vegetation Mapping

APS Survey and Mapping, LLC (APS) survey-located all TWC-tagged vegetation except for a subset of non-significant trees in the Bridle Trails neighborhood (see below). The Watershed Company provided hand-drawn sketches of the tag locations to APS survey crews after every one to two field days to assist in subject tree location. Generally, APS survey-located tagged vegetation within three days following the TWC inventory.

### *Bridle Trails - Sketched Tree Points*

A small subset of TWC-tagged tree points shown in the survey data were not surveyed, but rather sketched in the field. In a 2.70-mile-long portion of Segment C through Redmond and Bellevue, TWC inventoried trees in August and September of 2015, several months after the APS survey crew collected data. APS, per their scope of work, had only tagged and survey-located trees with six-inch stems and larger. TWC crews passed through later to collect attribute data for the significant trees that APS had tagged. Further, TWC tagged and assessed the smaller trees per Section 5.2.1, and hand-sketched their location on a paper copy of the survey in the field. The new “sketched” tree points were digitized in AutoCAD and provided to PSE and APS in January 2016. A total of 273 non-significant trees were mapped in this manner; 118 are located in the City of Bellevue.

## 5.5 Attribute data collection

The attributes collected during the field survey are described in Table 1, below. The Microsoft Excel spreadsheet database contains the data collected for each tree and polygon inventoried. General attributes documented for all inventoried vegetation include the date of assessment, unique identification number of tree or polygon, location (parcel number), and name of plant species. Physical attributes include number of stems, stem diameter (DBH), height, canopy radius, condition, and notes. For polygons, approximate number of individual trees or large shrubs within a polygon was recorded instead of stem number, and other physical attributes for vegetation within polygons were recorded as averages.

Diameter of all subject trees was measured at four-and-a-half feet above the surface of the ground at the trunk (DBH) where possible; however, some stems were measured differently due to size or branching structure. Very small trees

without a defined stem at four-and-a-half feet above the ground were measured using the caliper-method, where the stem is measured at six inches above the ground. For trees with major branching at or below four-and-a-half feet, the smallest portion of the trunk below major branching was measured.

Methodology for measuring diameter of trees with major leans, on steep slopes, and with multiple trunks or stems generally followed those outlined in the *Guide for Plant Appraisal* (Gooding, et al., 2000).

## 5.6 Data Management

Data were recorded in the field using paper field data sheets or a Trimble GeoXH GPS unit. Data were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet in the office and subsequently reviewed, corrected, and organized into a searchable database. The spreadsheet file includes all the Willow and Oak route data and will be delivered along with this report.

Polygons were hand-drawn on maps in the field, manually entered into ArcGIS, reviewed, and corrected before being converted to AutoCAD. Polygon features for the Willow and Oak routes will be delivered with this report as a .dwg file.

### 5.6.1 Data Summary

Summary data reported in the *Tree Inventory Results* section below was derived from querying the tree spreadsheet using Excel formulas. The City of Bellevue definition of significant tree was used to tally data from the spreadsheet. Any tree with a stem diameter of eight inches or greater was considered; however, only trees with a condition of *excellent*, *good*, *fair* and *poor* were tallied (see Table 1).

Table 1 - Attributes recorded for all inventoried vegetation and that are presented in the spreadsheet database.

ATTRIBUTE	DESCRIPTION OF ATTRIBUTE
DATE OF ASSESSMENT	Date that the Watershed Company field crew tagged and assessed the tree or shrub.
ID NUMBER	Unique number assigned to an assessed tree or polygon. This number corresponds to the tag number in the field or the polygon number on the maps.
PARCEL NUMBER	Parcel number(s) in which the subject tree or polygon is located. In some cases, the parcel number corresponds to the closest parcel if the tree is in a City right-of-way.
SCIENTIFIC NAME	Formal scientific name conforming to the International Code of Nomenclature.
COMMON NAME	Name that is based on normal or common language of the Pacific Northwest.
DECIDUOUS/EVERGREEN	Notes whether a tree is considered deciduous or evergreen.
STEMS	Number of trunks or shoots that contribute significantly to the canopy.
DBH	Diameter at Breast Height; or 4.5 feet from the ground surface. See Section 5.5 for variations.
DBH2	DBH of secondary and other minor stems.
HEIGHT	Approximate distance from the ground surface at the trunk to the highest point of the subject tree as visually estimated. Average height for polygons.
CANOPY RADIUS	Measurement from the stem to the average drip line, or end of branches.
CONDITION	<p>Health rating of an assessed tree using a 5-tier system as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 – Excellent: No apparent problems with the tree. Form is exemplary for the species.</li> <li>2 – Good: Few minor defects such as crossed branches, minor foliage die-back, minor trunk damage, or unbalance canopy.</li> <li>3 – Fair: Several minor problems exist.</li> <li>4 – Poor: Major defects visible such as significant trunk decay, codominant leaders with included bark, significant canopy die-back, major cracks in a stem or major limbs, and/or other structural problems. Topped trees are generally considered poor.</li> <li>5 – Dead or dying: Tree is dead or is in a state of significant decline.</li> </ul>
NOTES	Additional comments relating to assessment of the tree or polygon unit.

## 6 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

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The number of trees reported here is an under-representation of the total number of subject trees along the Bellevue portion of the Willow and Oak routes. TWC and APS were denied entry to some parcels with trees in the subject area and were unable to identify, assess, map or tally the trees contained within. These parcels are mostly residential, where homeowners refused entry to field crews. In a few instances, TWC was asked to leave during an inventory of a specific parcel. Thus, trees in some parcels were either not inventoried or only partially inventoried. The details of which parcels were not inventoried were collected and tracked by EnviroIssues and PSE during the field work.

Tree identification was done using the vegetative characteristics present at the time of the inventory. Some trees and shrubs may be misidentified. Some trees and shrubs were unidentifiable, although most were identified to genus and species, or to at least genus. Some taxa, such as the "cherry" genus, contain many species and botanical varieties that were not identifiable given the time limitation and without all characteristics present. Where genus was known, but species was not, the species was indicated with "sp." in the spreadsheet. An unknown cherry tree, for example, was indicated as "*Prunus* sp." If an uncommon tree was simply not identifiable (for lack of leaves or flowers), an "unk.", or "unknown" was entered into the name column of the spreadsheet and any descriptor that would aid in identification was added to the notes field.

Some reported parcel numbers in the spreadsheet may not be correct; the survey should be used as the authority. Trees and polygons located on the edge of parcel boundaries were assigned a parcel number based on field observations. However, fence lines sometimes do not exactly match parcel lines and the parcel boundary overlay on aerial imagery used in the field was sometimes inaccurate. Determining exact parcel boundary locations in the field was not always possible. The survey should be referenced to determine the exact ownership and location of any particular tree.

# 7 TREE INVENTORY RESULTS

For the Willow and Oak routes through the City of Bellevue, 4,330 trees were tagged and assessed under this inventory (Table 2); 1,981 of these trees currently meet the City’s significant tree definition.

A total of 229 polygons containing groupings of small trees and shrubs were mapped and described in the City. The number of individual small trees in these polygons ranges from few weedy individuals (e.g., p16 with two small cherry trees in a blackberry patch) to over 50 plants (e.g., p307 with beaked hazelnut, Scouler’s willow and Douglas-fir saplings). The DBH ranges from one half to three inches in diameter; with average heights varying widely, but mostly ranging from 10 to 25 feet. Many maintained hedges were inventoried using polygons in the City of Bellevue (e.g., p617) and are generally composed of cherry laurel, arborvitae, Fraser photinia or English holly. Most hedges in Bellevue were maintained between 5 to 20 feet tall, but height also varied depending on degree of maintenance. See the polygon tab in the spreadsheet for more information on polygon composition.

Table 2 - Summary of the tree inventory in the City of Bellevue.

SEGMENT	NUMBER OF TAGGED TREES	NUMBER OF SIGNIFICANT <sup>1</sup> TREES	NUMBER OF POLYGONS <sup>2</sup> DESCRIBED
C <sup>3</sup>	738	247	43
E	818	301	39
J	1095	424	71
M <sup>3</sup>	499	162	39
G2	205	128	6
K2	511	457	15
I	464	262	16
<b>BELLEVUE TOTAL</b>	<b>4,330</b>	<b>1,981</b>	<b>229</b>

<sup>1</sup> According to LUC 20.50.046, the City of Bellevue defines a significant tree as a healthy evergreen or deciduous tree, eight inches in diameter or greater, measured four feet above existing grade.

<sup>2</sup> Does not indicate number of trees included in each polygon. See spreadsheet for more information.

<sup>3</sup> Indicates partial Segments; only the portion of the Segment in the City of Bellevue is included in the tree total numbers

The City of Bellevue contains many stream and wetland areas that were mapped and assessed by TWC in 2015 and summarized in the *City of Bellevue Critical Areas Delineation Report: Puget Sound Energy – Energize Eastside Project*. (The Watershed Company, 2016). There are many trees assessed under this inventory study that are located in either wetlands, or stream and wetland buffer areas. Please see the TWC study for more information regarding critical areas.

## 8 REFERENCES

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