

MAKING A
GREAT PLACE
TOGETHER

In this issue...

<i>Office Vacancy Rates</i>	2
<i>Member Profile</i>	2
<i>Events & Happenings</i>	3
<i>Board of Directors</i>	3
<i>Member Meeting</i>	4

Contact Us

Leslie Lloyd, 425.990.3096
President
lesliel@bellevuedowntown.org

Leslie Ota, 425.990.3095
Vice President
leslie@bellevuedowntown.org

Robert Glann, 425.990.3097
Director, Transportation Services
robert@bellevuedowntown.org

Jessica Shambora, 425.453.3113
Communications Coordinator
jessica@bellevuedowntown.org

Barbara Hinz, 425.453.1223
Office & Member Manager
barbara@bellevuedowntown.org

Justin Howley, 425.990.3098
Transmanage Coordinator & Web Administrator
justin@bellevuedowntown.org

Alison Crosier, 425.460.5712
Transportation Services
a.crosier@verizon.net

Cookie Schlocker, 425.453.3114
Bookkeeper
cookies@bellevuedowntown.org

Welcome New Members!

- Bis On Main**
- Factoria Mall**
- Pogacha Restaurant**
- Sound Transit**
- Swinerton Builders**
- Villa Firenze**

For a complete listing of members, visit bellevuedowntown.com.

BDA Establishes Land Use Task Force to Study Local Issues

The Bellevue Downtown Association recently established a Land Use Task Force to study issues of interest to BDA members in the areas of development, zoning, land use and planning. The task force will endeavor to develop a comprehensive understanding of issues and recommend a position for the BDA Board to endorse in formal fashion, where appropriate. Meetings will occur on the third Wednesday of each month from noon to 1:30pm and membership is open to all BDA members.

SCOPE OF ISSUES

- Comp. Plan/Land Use Code Amendments
- New City Hall
- DIP Plan Approval; Implementation (Park-Once, Mid-Block Ped Xings, etc.)
- Wilburton/NE 8th/Auto Row Study
- Sign/Building Codes
- Bellevue Development Services Initiative
- Monitoring permit/decision activities

In July the Task Force reviewed a proposal for Schnitzer Northwest to amend the code to exempt pedestrian retail in Superblock situations. The BDA Board endorsed this proposal as recommended by the task force.

LAND USE TASK FORCE MEETING SCHEDULE

August 27, 2003: Presentation by Kemper Development of proposal to allow skybridges in Downtown Bellevue

September 24, 2003: Continuing review of Schnitzer/Kemper proposals; permit update

October 29, 2003: TBD

A Word From the President

Summer weather continues to amaze everyone, and it has made our event lineup even more enjoyable than usual.

The Family 4th of July was truly spectacular, with record attendance of 50,000 Eastsiders. The 6th Street Fair was once again a success, and the Taste of Bellevue was welcomed back by the Eastside community. As the Live @ Lunch, and the brand new Live @ Five concerts continue into September, the popularity of the Live at Five Beer Garden grows. Downtown residents and workers alike are spreading the word, and event attendance is growing. We look forward to these events returning next year.



This issue of our newsletter takes a look at the Downtown office market, and some unexpected silver linings. Long a popular destination, Downtown's low vacancies used to mean high rents. Nowadays, downtown Bellevue is more popular than ever, with competitive rental rates and high quality office environments. Board member Leo Backer offers his perspectives in our *Issues & People* section.

If you're interested in joining our new Land Use Task Force (see column to left), please let me know. Another issue coming up for the Task Force is an idea from the DIP, of "Parking Once," or ways to enhance the parking experience for our visitors. For the visitor, receiving a parking ticket can be an unwelcome experience, especially where the boundaries between stores are not evident. We also have traffic on our streets that might be avoided by managing parking supplies differently. You may have seen interviewers on the street surveying folks about their preferences and attitudes about parking. The results, due in a month, will inform the process of determining whether the park once concept will fly, or if there are other feasible solutions.

This great summer weather won't last forever, so find time to create memories you will want to savor when it's cold and dark!

--Leslie Lloyd

Office Market Looking Up Despite Tough Times

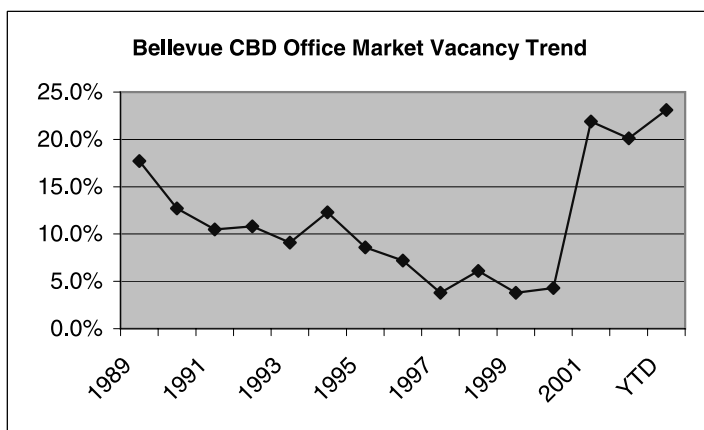
by Leo Backer, Washington Partners, BDA Board Member

The Downtown Bellevue office market remains in a unique state of flux at mid-year 2003. Driven by highly competitive rental rates and surplus vacancy (approximately 23% including sublease space), many tenants are taking advantage of these unprecedented conditions to upgrade their offices to many of the well-located, class A buildings in Downtown Bellevue. Or in some instances, tenants are remaining within or moving to the same grade of building, but opting for a better view, layout, or just a new look and feel. As a result, this "flight to quality" is causing vacancy rates to decline in class A buildings; however, without significant growth or contraction, this is causing a net-zero end result in terms of overall space absorption: one building benefits from the other's loss.

In terms of overall market activity, the market is forecast to begin tightening up around mid-2004. We have started to see a decrease in new sublease spaces, as most consolidations or economic-related company closures appear to be behind us. With interest rates at an all-time low and business confidence looking up, the next 12-18 months should bring continued positive market activity and economic growth to the region.

In anticipation of an impending market recovery, the stalled Lincoln Square mixed-use project located in downtown Bellevue was given another chance at life, as developer Kemper Freeman recently agreed to purchase the 1.4-million square foot property from Lend Lease. It is expected that development will move forward by the first of next year on all but the office tower, foregoing any significant preleasing that might occur. At present, Freeman is focused on leasing the 330,000 square feet of retail space located at the base of the project.

In addition, Schnitzer Northwest is planning a mixed-use development on NE 8th & 112th Ave. NE (former Tochterman Property) which, ultimately, will include two hotels totaling 600+ rooms, 150,000 square feet of retail space, and 1.2 million square feet of office space. The office component will most likely not begin without market rental rates increasing, and a reasonable prelease commitment. Both of these projects further the BDA's mission to lead the continuing evolution of Downtown Bellevue as the economic and cultural heart of the Eastside.



A Conversation with Grant Ringel, Director of Corporate Communications, Puget Sound Energy

by Jessica Shambora, BDA Communications Coordinator



Grant Ringel grew up in Kansas, but he is also from New Orleans, Louisiana; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Louisville, Kentucky; and Bellevue, Washington. He always cooks his Dungeness crabs cajun style with crab boil. He has developed an appreciation for a good bourbon. He feels a special connection to the people he knew while living in Oklahoma City when the bomb went off. And he has experienced "living in a postcard," which is how he describes the stunning scenery of the Pacific Northwest.

Ringel moved to Bellevue in August 2000, when he joined Puget Sound Energy as the director of Corporate Communications. He has worked in Utility Public Relations since he answered a blind classified ad in 1982 for a position in Pineville, Louisiana. Although the ad did not list the name of the company, Ringel knew what he was getting himself into because he recognized the address listed as the same one he sent his electric bill to every month! When addressing his choice to make utilities his niche within the communications profession, Ringel explains how it differs from working in other private sector industries, "Being a regulated monopoly, customers aren't shopping for another provider, but they do have high expectations. We do less marketing and more direct communications, seeking more relationship driven opportunities which allow us to connect to our customers."

Aside from his passion for power (electric, not ego), Ringel has a family and a Harley Davidson he loves very much. When he is not spending time with his wife and three children, Ringel is riding with friends on his Heritage Softail. He recently returned from the Black Hills Rally in Sturgis, South Dakota, a trip which featured many landmarks along the way including the Crazy Horse Monument, Mount Rushmore, Devil's Tower, and Beartooth Pass on the road into Yellowstone Park. Ringel bought his Harley only a year ago; he owned a motorcycle in college, but sold it to buy his wife's wedding ring. "Selling it has paid dividends over the years," he says with a smile.

Ringel also has an interest in economic development. While utilities have a natural interest in the state of the economy because of its impact on the company, Ringel's concern is due to his experiences in different cities throughout the U.S., especially living in Oklahoma during the height of the oil market collapse. "Every place I have lived it has been apparent that what you do today to retain and attract jobs has a huge impact on whether or not your kids and grandkids will have jobs and be able to stay in the community," Ringel explains. The BDA can look forward to Ringel's leadership on this front. "We must consistently work toward a healthy, diverse economy for Downtown Bellevue."

Events & Happenings

September Live at Lunch & Live at Five Final Summer Concerts



<u>Time</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Artist</u>
noon-1:30pm	Tues., Sept. 2	Skyline Tower	Kellee Bradley - <i>Americana Pop</i>
noon-1:30pm	Tues., Sept. 9	One Twelfth at Twelfth	Talisman - <i>Worldbeat Funk/Reggae</i>
noon-1:30pm	Tues., Sept. 16	Key Center/Rainier Tower	Limited Edition - <i>Funky '80s Pop</i>
5-7pm	Thurs., Sept. 4	Bellevue Galleria	The Retros - <i>Hits of the '80s</i>
5-7pm	Thurs., Sept. 11	Bellevue Galleria	Michael Powers - <i>Upbeat Blues Guitar</i>
5-7pm	Thurs., Sept. 18	Bellevue Galleria	Stephanie Schneiderman - <i>Sultry Rock</i>

Grab a cool one at the Live at Five Beer Garden every Thursday at the Galleria!

Get Paid for Cutting Commutes!

Downtown Bellevue companies are invited to participate in a special program sponsored by the City of Bellevue, K.C. Metro, Sound Transit, and the WSDOT. The incentive program is designed to reduce traffic within Downtown by converting single occupant vehicle commuters to other commuting options. Each annual trip reduced results in **\$175** for your company. Help reduce traffic and earn money for your business by calling Bryan Jarr at 425.452.2747.

City Hall Renovation

In late July, the Bellevue City Council reached a unanimous decision to approve the \$102.4 million budget to create a new city hall and public safety complex on Northeast Fourth Street. The project will be completed in 2006. The architectural firm SRG Partnership has been chosen to design the building renovation. Because of the more centralized location and consolidated customer interface, the new city building is expected to improve access to city services for businesses and residents. For more information, please visit www.ci.bellevue.wa.us.

Save the Date: NE 8th Street Bridge Rolling into Place!

The rolling of the bridge will take about six to seven hours starting at about 10:30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 19. Crews will jack up the south half of the new overpass and move it on rollers to its permanent location near the north half of the overpass. There will be a total closure of I-405, multiple ramp closures and eastbound NE 8th will also be closed, at various times. For details and weekly updates, go to www.AccessDowntown.com.

Bellevue Downtown Restaurant Guide Online!

The Bellevue Downtown Association recently introduced the first-ever comprehensive downtown Bellevue restaurant guide. In addition to the printed guide inserted in the summer issue of Bellevue Downtown, an interactive version of the guide is also available at bellevuedowntown.com, where you can search for downtown eateries with a convenient pop-up map. Appreciation for this invaluable dining resource continues to pour in from the downtown Bellevue community. The guide is helping to lead downtown Bellevue's continuing evolution as the preferred dining destination on the Eastside.

PSE Energy Conservation Quick Tip

Turn off lights when out of your office or cubicle. Also turn off lights in unused common areas such as copy rooms, break rooms, conference rooms, and restrooms. The effect on lamp life and energy use when turning the lamp back on is negligible. For additional details, log on to www.pse.com or call PSE, 1-800-562-1482 (option 1).

2003 Bellevue Downtown Association Board of Directors

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500 108th Avenue NE, Suite 210
Bellevue, WA 98004

Bellevue Downtown Association Mission:

To lead the continuing evolution of Downtown Bellevue as the economic and cultural heart of the Eastside.

September Membership Meeting

Downtown Bellevue's New East End:

Schnitzer Northwest to Unveil Plans for Signature Development Downtown

Friday, September 26, 2003

7:30 – 9 a.m. breakfast

Meydenbauer Center

11100 NE 6th Street

Downtown Bellevue

Presenting Sponsors:

SCHNITZER NORTHWEST
LLC



Join us for our September breakfast meeting!

Schnitzer Northwest is moving forward with plans to develop a mixed-use development to complement the planned expansion of the Meydenbauer Convention Center. Designed to wrap around the expanded Convention Center, the Meydenbauer project will consist of two hotels, including a headquarters hotel for the Convention Center, Class A office, retail and ancillary uses. At this September Member Meeting, Schnitzer Northwest will give an update on the Meydenbauer Project, with special focus on the hotels, and will discuss their aspirations for the regional marketplace as they anticipate future economic growth. Join us for an exciting look ahead at the next phase of Downtown Bellevue's evolution as the economic and cultural heart of the Eastside.

To register, email Barbara@bellevuedowntown.org, call 425-453-1223, or visit www.bellevuedowntown.com.