

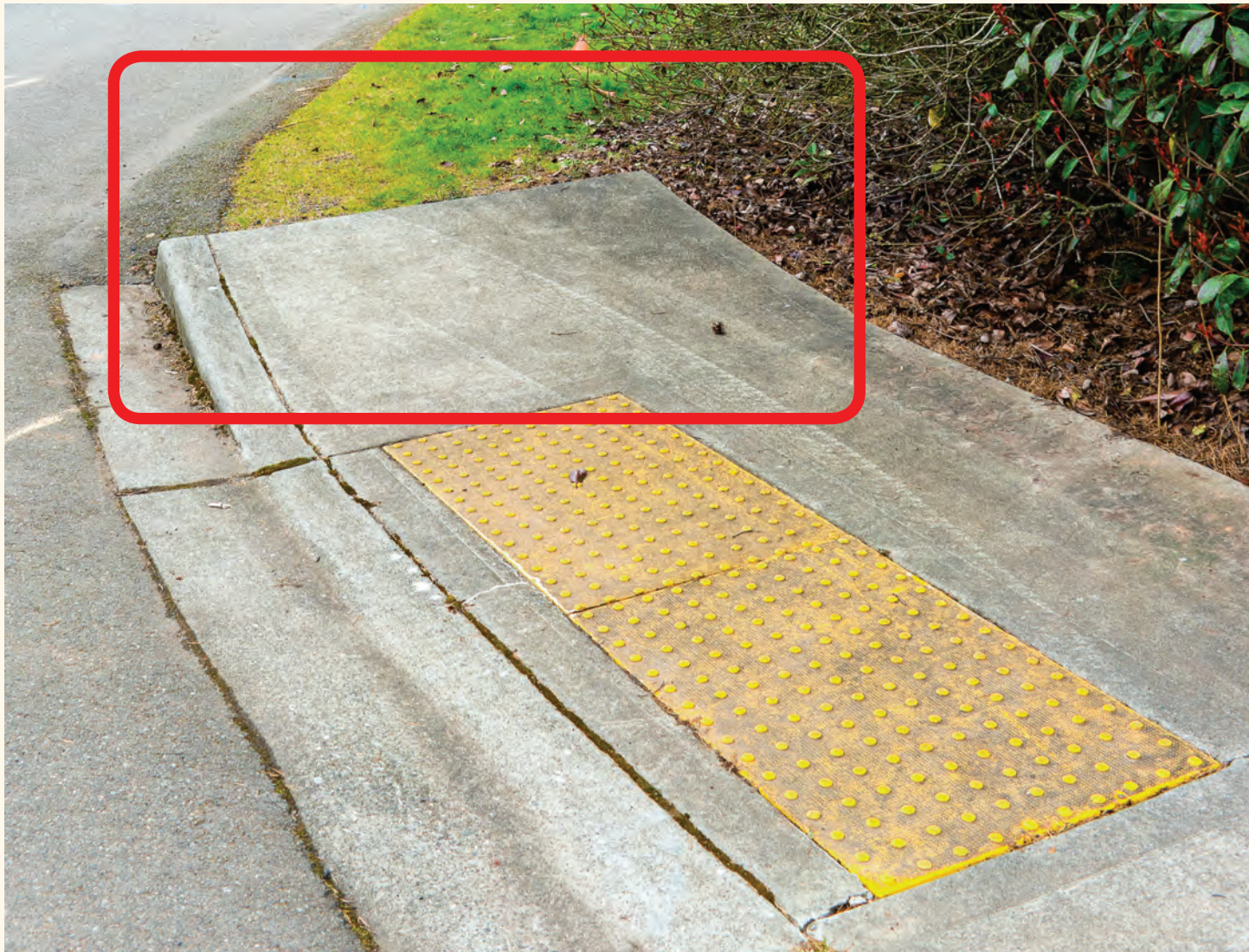


IMPROVING WALKABILITY IN NORTHEAST BELLEVUE

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This is an example of infrastructure in Northeast Bellevue that supports the residents' mobility in the neighborhood. Street crossings are clearly marked and sidewalks are reliable. JONAS GEIER



Sidewalks that end abruptly force pedestrians into the street, reducing the level of comfort and safety associated with walking. JONAS GEIER

THE CHALLENGE

This Livable City Year project has provided a lens for students to view mobility features of Northeast Bellevue. The primary goal for this project has been to consider ways to increase accessibility, safety, and efficiency of non-driving modes of transportation in the context of Northeast Bellevue.

This project complements the City of Bellevue's Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan, especially its goals to make Northeast Bellevue more equitable and accessible for residents who walk and bike. Further, this project serves as a way to promote and expand resident engagement on topics related to mobility, and to facilitate community-based planning in Bellevue. This is important because the topics of this report affect the daily life of residents.

OUR METHODS

Methods employed by student researchers include resident engagement, observational analysis, and spatial analysis. Students applied this combination of methods in an effort to balance the goals of the City of Bellevue with the values of the people of Northeast Bellevue, all while responding to physical conditions of the neighborhood.

Site Visits and Focus Group: Students worked with Nicholas Matz to organize a focus group session with several Northeast Bellevue residents at Bellevue City Hall. Students gained insights about priority concerns of these residents. This guided them in their analysis and allowed them to develop more understanding of who lives in the neighborhood and how the recommendations of this report can be applied.

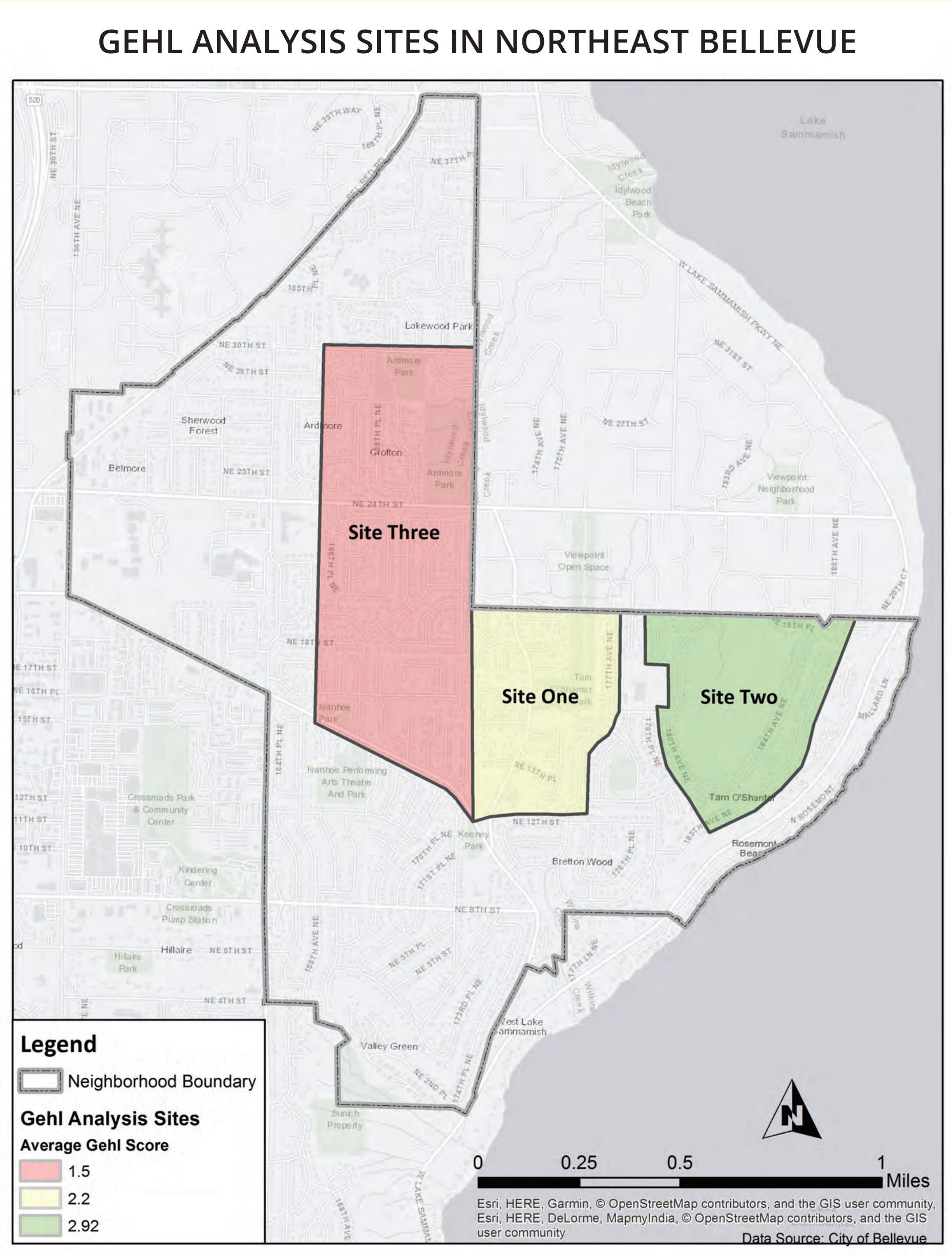
Gehl Analysis:
Students analyzed

three parts of Northeast Bellevue using Gehl's Twelve Urban Quality Criteria. Students graded each area in terms of the level of protection, comfort, and enjoyment it offers residents. Each site received a score on a scale of 1 (low) to 3 (high) for each of the 12 Gehl criteria. This grading scale made it possible to quantify the neighborhood's walkability.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

By implementing student recommendations, Northeast Bellevue can become more accessible and better connected, and in such a way that encourages more people to walk and bike not only for recreational purposes but for transportation. Some examples of final suggestions and implementation strategies follow:

- 1. Provide a network of connected walking and biking paths.** Widen sidewalks and bike lanes on main arterials and side streets. Widening these features can improve walkability and ensure that people are not forced to walk close to high-speed traffic.
- 2. Normalize walking and biking as viable methods of transportation by providing supportive infrastructure.** A network of continuous pedestrian paths can bridge the gap between physical proximity to locations of interest and the actual walkability of much of Northeast Bellevue. As more people walk in the neighborhood, this can increase the social normalcy of walking, causing more people to engage in the activity over time.
- 3. Ensure that suburban lifestyles can coexist with mobility measures.** Provide connectivity from residential areas to commercial areas and businesses. This can bolster the local economy — a goal the City outlines in the existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan — while promoting walkability.



Applying Gehl's Twelve Urban Criteria, students attributed scores between 1 (low) and 3 (high) to each Northeast Bellevue site. SOPHIA NELSON

