

NORTH BEACON HILL TOWN CENTER Urban Design Framework



October 2011

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INTRODUCTION



North Beacon Hill Town Center Action Team, October 2010.

Since 1999, many members of the North Beacon Hill community worked together to create the vision for the North Beacon Hill Town Center through a series of planning processes beginning with the *North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan* (March 1999). A recent update to the plan (September 2010) identified a need to look more closely at the Town Center. The purpose of this Urban Design Framework is to guide the future work and investment of the community, developers and the City to make that vision a reality. It identifies the existing conditions, and specific planning and design strategies necessary to achieve the community's vision.



North Beacon Hill planning workshop with planning outreach liaison.

The Urban Design Framework focuses on the North Beacon Hill Town Center (Town Center) and the Beacon Hill Station Area Overlay District—a special zone to encourage the development of a diverse, mixed-use community with a pedestrian orientation close to transit. For the purposes of this Urban Design Framework, the Town Center and the Beacon Hill Station Area Overlay District are considered the same area.



2010 Neighborhood Plan Update.

North Beacon Hill Town Center – The Vision

The 1999 *North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan*, adopted by City Council through ordinance #119713, described enhancing the “heart” of the urban village with transportation improvements, expanded retail services and greater public amenities. Then as now, the community placed a high value on creating a vital neighborhood core with a range of transportation options. Both the 1999 plan and 2010 update envisioned Beacon Avenue S. as “a linear outdoor living room of the neighborhood with nodes of commercial activity, public art and public open spaces where neighbors can meet and pass the time.”

The 2010 update involved a broad cross section of the community. Long-time veterans of neighborhood planning, stewards of the important work begun in the 1990s, and a new generation of neighborhood citizen planners came together to build a renewed base of civic engagement. The plan reaffirmed the community’s vision for future growth and set out new goals in light of recent changes, notably the start of light rail service.

“The urban village plan will reinforce existing single family neighborhoods by encouraging and focusing additional growth within the boundaries of the urban village while maintaining affordable housing alternatives throughout North Beacon Hill. Finally, the committee’s plan shall encourage the development and acquisition of additional public open space.”

Strengthening the vitality of the neighborhood retail district, a central theme of the neighborhood plan, continues to be a neighborhood priority. Specific goals include developing a vibrant neighborhood core that concentrates housing, commercial uses, services and a civic gathering place — a hub that is well served by a range of comfortable and convenient travel options. This Urban Design Framework is a blueprint for how the physical elements of the neighborhood’s plan can be realized.



North Beacon Hill light rail station. © tracktwentynine via Flickr



Crowd enjoying performance at 2011 Beacon Rocks. © litInemo via Flickr



North Beacon Hill bus route. © Oran Viriyincy via Flickr



Kids playing with a sprinkler at a North Beacon Hill picnic. © Yuek Hahn via Flickr



Town Center/ Beacon Hill Station Area Overlay District

North Beacon Hill Town Center - Today

The North Beacon Hill Town Center lies south of I-90, just three miles from downtown Seattle. Its neighborhood-scale business district sits on a ridge of Beacon Hill and offers striking views of Downtown Seattle, Elliott Bay, West Seattle and the Olympic and Cascade Mountains. To the west, the preserved wooded slopes of Beacon Hill buffer the neighborhood from I-5. Areas surrounding the Town Center are primarily residential. Beacon Avenue S., a major arterial, carries over 11,000 average vehicle trips per day. The surrounding community is ethnically and culturally diverse and includes a broad range of incomes. El Centro de la Raza is a major community institution and landmark in the Town Center.

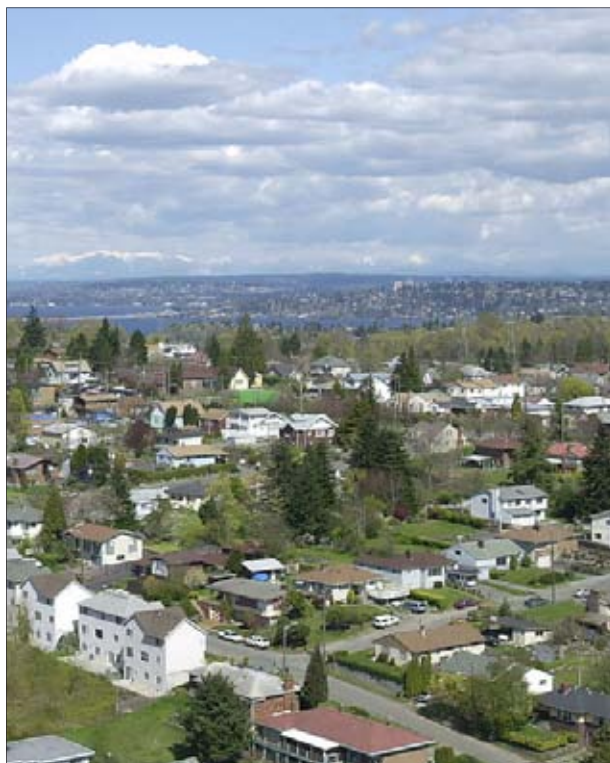
The Town Center has changed in the past decade bringing parts of the community’s 1999 vision to life— a stunning new library, light rail service, and a festival street. While these improvements have enriched the quality of life in North Beacon Hill, the community recognizes that much hard work remains. Residents are open to growth, but do not want to lose the unique character of living on Beacon Hill.



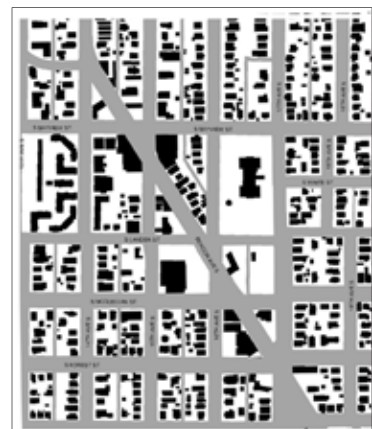
Beacon Hill LINK Light Rail Station.



The new Beacon Hill Library.



Beacon Hill



North Beacon Hill’s urban form lacks buildings to enclose and define Beacon Avenue S.



The Town Center is a place for the community to come together.



Banners contribute to sense of place. © javacolleen via Flickr.



Redevelopment opportunity site near the Beacon Hill Station. © litlnemo via Flickr

Achieving the Vision

In May 2010, North Beacon Hill community members formed a Town Center Action Team to assist in the implementation of goals, strategies and actions identified in the *North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan*. In October 2010, this team met to further define the vision and make specific recommendations on how to change the physical form of the neighborhood to make the Town Center vital, walkable and economically successful.

This document, the result of these discussions, is a blueprint for cementing community goals, coordinating private and public actions, and prioritizing capital investment decisions.

Some of the “big moves” or opportunities to create a vibrant Town Center are highlighted in Figure 1 and listed below. Many of these opportunities are supported by the existing zoning, but some will require changes (see Figure 1).

Focus Pedestrian-Oriented Retail on Beacon Avenue S. with thriving small retail businesses. (Figure 1- yellow area)

Mark the Prime Corner at the intersection of Beacon Avenue S. and S. Lander Street. (Figure 1- orange circle)

Create Pedestrian Priority Areas by expanding the festival street and reclaiming right of way on 17th Avenue S. near Stevens Place (a triangular parcel of parkland) for open space. (Figure 1 - striped areas)

Reinforce the Strong Identity of the Town Center with a civic gathering place, open space, gateways, iconic landmarks and distinctive streetscapes.

Strengthen Connections to the Surrounding Neighborhood with safer crossings, bike/pedestrian links and a clear hierarchy of complete streets.

Catalyze Change through the mixed-use El Centro de la Raza redevelopment project and other opportunity sites. (Figure 1 - blue area)

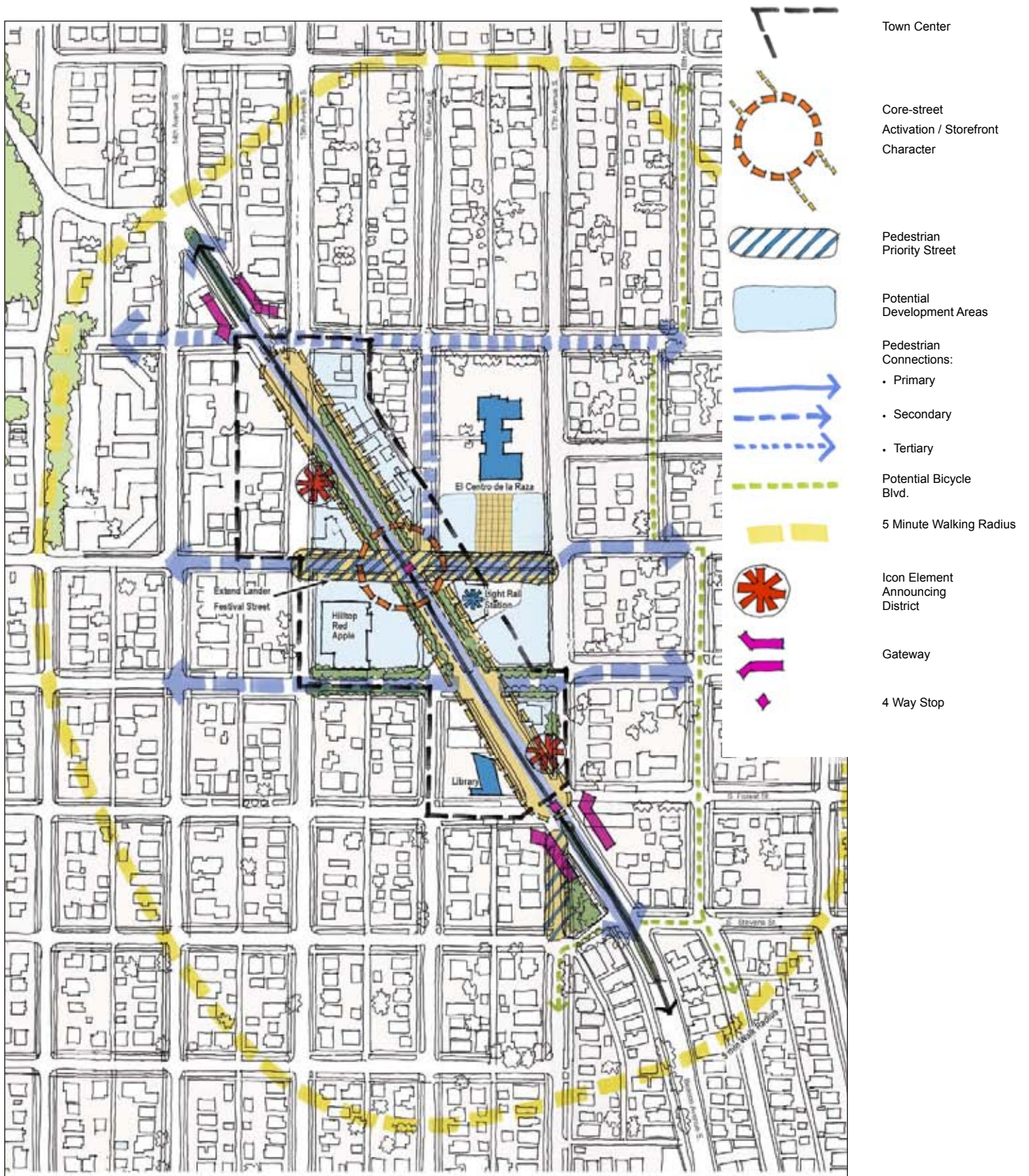


Figure 1 — Opportunities



Figure 2 – Concept Plan for the Town Center

The transformation of the Town Center will occur incrementally over time. Figure 2 represents one illustration of how these ideas might play out through public and private investment. It shows how new development, over time, around the station can create a heart with neighborhood retail, gathering places, new mixed-use buildings and streetscapes. The Urban Design Framework recommendations will elaborate on these big ideas and set the stage for redevelopment. (Note: Sections A, B and C are illustrated on pages 16-17).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The community’s ideas for a vibrant Town Center are captured in the *North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan*. The following Urban Design Framework recommendations refine those ideas. The community’s vision for the Town Center incorporates many of the fundamental urban design principles used to make good streets and vibrant urban places—an interesting mix of retail uses along the street; multiple options for getting around; human-scaled buildings, streets and sidewalks; well-designed streetscapes and public space; and a strong local identity. A good urban place is where you want to stop, get out of your car and walk around because it’s attractive, interesting and buzzing with activity.

The Urban Design Framework recommendations are organized as follows:

- Land Use and Built Form
- Circulation
- Streetscapes
- Open Space and Gateways
- Sustainable Strategies
- Additional Streetscape Concepts for Beacon Avenue S. (south of the Town Center)

The final section, Implementation, includes a summary of how the Urban Design Framework recommendations can be implemented through zoning changes and other tools.

Land Use and Built Form

Existing

The Town Center, situated on a narrow north-south ridge, is constrained and defined by steep topography to the east and west, and lower density residential in all directions. The current pattern of land use and built form within the Town Center is characterized by a modestly-sized, but active neighborhood business district with a mix of single-story storefronts, former single-family residences and newer auto-oriented strip commercial. It offers goods and services reflecting the diverse culture of the surrounding population. Directly north and south of the retail



Chance meetings are more common on vibrant streets.



Sharrow – a shared lane for cars and bikes.



Outdoor seating enlivens the street.



Festivals, parades and other events can bring vitality to a town center.



Shady sidewalks and interesting signage help make this retail street pedestrian-friendly.



An example of a mixed-use building for a Town Center

district are low-density, multi-family developments. Established, single-family residences lie mostly to the east and west. The neighborhood is further defined by the East Duwamish Greenbelt to the west and the Cheasty Greenbelt to the east. Existing zoning allows heights of 40 feet on sites close to the station.

Recommendations

A necessary component to achieving a vital Town Center is greater pedestrian activity and residential density, and strengthening the use of pedestrian-scale building forms and land uses. Pedestrian-oriented retail and amenities need to be concentrated at the core of the Town Center.

Creating a vibrant Town Center—a place where more people want to live, work, shop and gather—will require a change in the uses and building forms. The continued use of neighborhood commercial zoning will allow the configuration of buildings to shift from single story to multi-story buildings and evolve into a richer mix of uses—multi-family housing with ground floor retail and commercial uses. Built form will be consistently urban—continuous street walls (e.g. buildings are not separated by driveways or surface parking), taller buildings built to the sidewalk, but designed to preserve views and sunlight. These changes will bring more people and urban vitality to the Town Center.

During the planning processes for the *North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan* and the Urban Design Framework the community discussed increasing allowable building heights in the Town Center from 40 to 65 feet for some sites fronting Beacon Avenue S. The community was supportive of more height, but saw a need for sensitive transitions to adjacent lower density residential areas.

- **Main Street Retail** — Focus pedestrian-oriented “main street” retail on Beacon Avenue S. from S. Bayview Street to S. Forest Street to create a linear outdoor living room—a place for shopping and eating, and meeting friends and neighbors. Design buildings to accommodate small neighborhood shops with front doors on Beacon Avenue S., form a continuous street wall and create an intimate and comfortable retail environment.
- **Single Family Housing** — Transition some existing single-family residential uses close to the station to lowrise residential or neighborhood commercial.

- **Opportunity Sites** — Encourage redevelopment that incorporates the existing use of “opportunity sites” (e.g. El Centro de la Raza) to mixed-use development with a high quality pedestrian environment, multicultural civic gathering space, and affordable places to live and run a business.
- **Outdoor Retail** — Develop areas for an outdoor “market arcade” that could provide affordable commercial space, accommodate street vending or a farmers market, and enliven public space. Potential sites include the Station plaza, festival street, existing triangle open spaces on Beacon Avenue S., or new public space as part of El Centro de la Raza’s redevelopment project.
- **Building Height** — In general, increase allowable height for neighborhood commercial up to 65 feet for selected sites fronting Beacon Avenue S. that are closest to the station. (See Figure 3)
- **Building Setbacks and Massing** — Use the supplemental guidance for height, bulk and scale included in the current *North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Design Guidelines* to transition from taller buildings in the core to lower intensity residential uses. These strategies include facade treatments to break larger building into separate volumes, and upper level setbacks preserve views from public right of ways and maximize sunshine in public space and residences. Specific locations for upper level setbacks will be recommended as part of a future review of the existing design guidelines.



Ethnic and cultural diversity is reflected in local festivals.



Outdoor retail animates the streets.



Mobile street vending creates opportunity for local entrepreneurs.

Use mobile vending units (vending carts and delivery vans) to provide goods and services for which there might not be enough demand to support a freestanding business and to augment in-store sales.

—Retail Development Strategy for Rainier Valley, December 2009

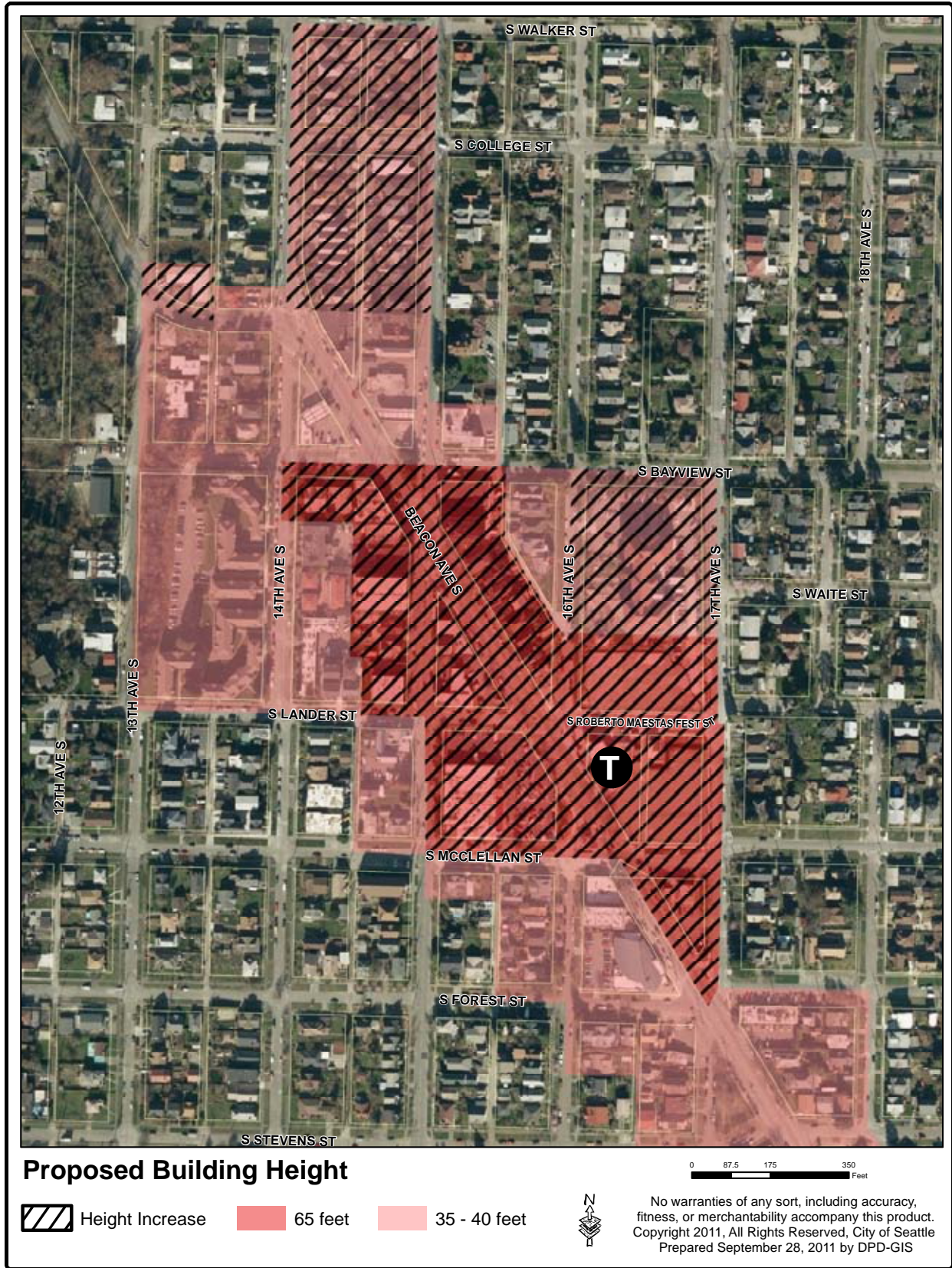


Figure 3 – Proposed Building Height

Circulation

Existing

The Town Center is intersected by several minor or collector arterials. All but S. McClellan Street are north/south routes. The street grid provides good connections to neighborhoods. The diagonal Beacon Avenue S. cuts across the grid creating oddly shaped parcels and making it difficult for pedestrians to cross safely. In general, Beacon Avenue S. and other streets within the Town Center have the right conditions to support a good walking and bicycling environment— e.g. moderate traffic volumes, sidewalks, short blocks, street trees. But gaps in infrastructure exist in some locations. Transit in the Town Center is excellent—light rail easily connects residents and businesses to other Rainier Valley communities and downtown Seattle.



The diagonal Beacon Avenue S. creates awkward intersections.

Recommendations (see Figure 4)

Creating a vibrant, walkable Town Center requires retrofitting the auto-focused arterials into “complete streets.”

- **Provide bicycle infrastructure.** Implement the recommendations of the *Seattle Bicycle Master Plan* to add new bicycle infrastructure (lanes, sharrows, signage) within the Town Center that is part of the citywide bicycle route system.
- **Make the sidewalk network complete and safe.** Implement the recommendations of the *Seattle Pedestrian Master Plan* and the *Southeast Seattle Transportation Study* to make pedestrian crossings safer—fill gaps, widen, landscape, curb bulbs pavement markings consistent with Seattle’s Complete Streets Policy. Pedestrianize short street sections off Beacon Avenue S. adjacent to McClellan Place and Stevens Place (triangular parks).



Curb Bulbs for safer and shorter pedestrian crossing.

See the following section *Streetscape Concepts* for additional and complementary recommendations related to the design of streets.



Green bike lane and bike box.

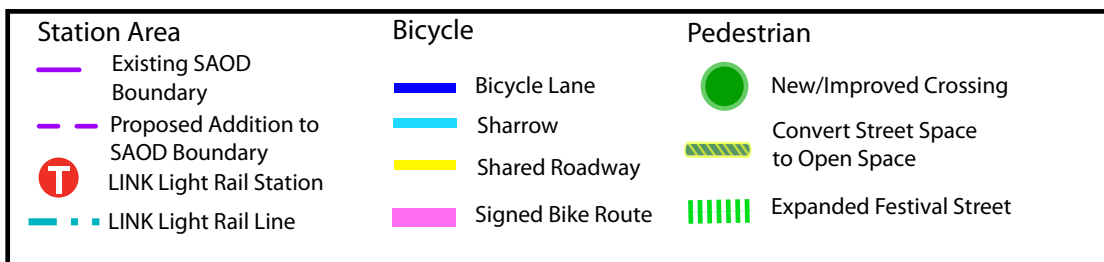
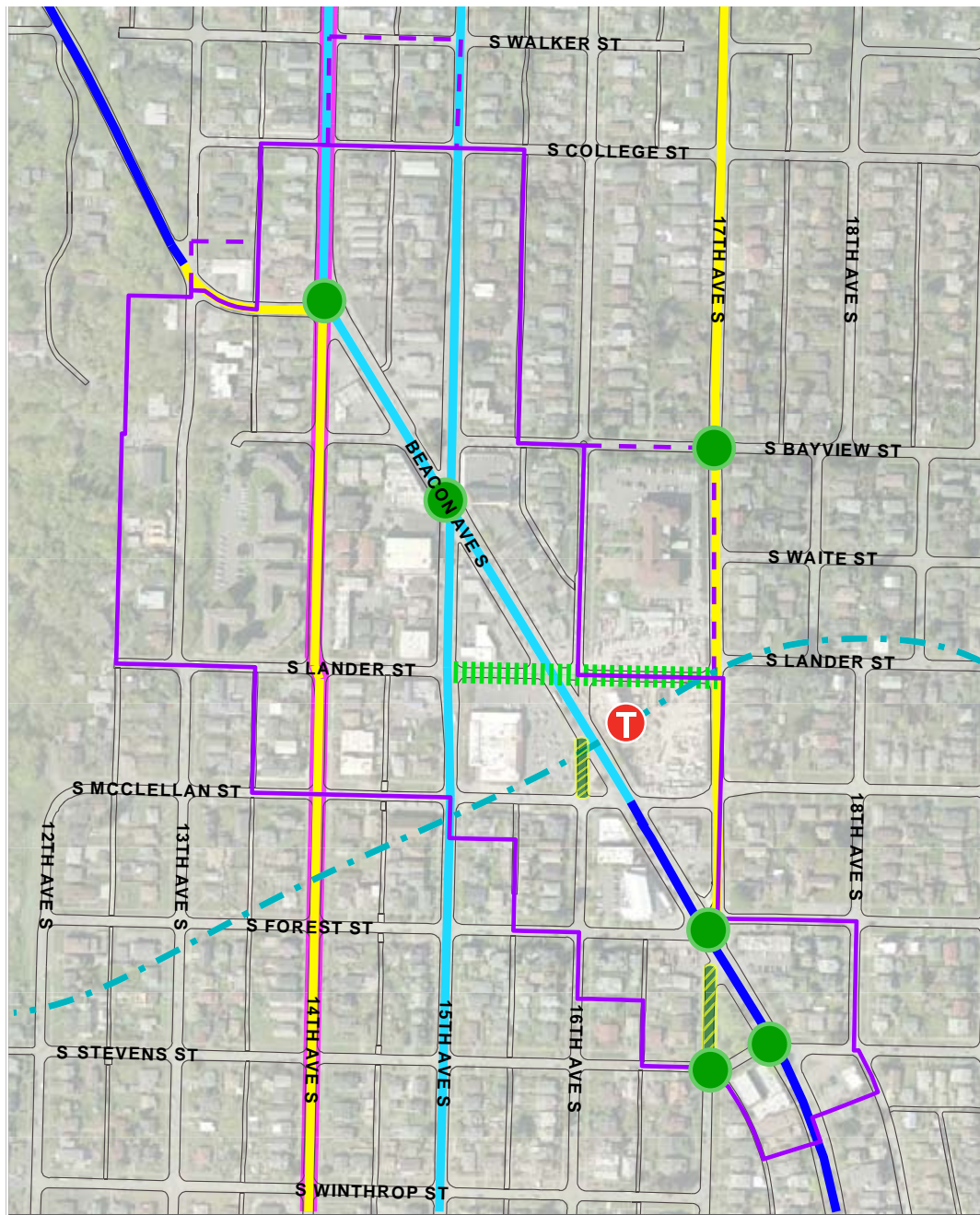


Figure 4 – Proposed Circulation

Streetscape Concepts for the Town Center

Existing

Streetscape refers to the physical design of the public realm – the space between buildings. It includes not only the road, but also the adjacent sidewalk areas. The current streetscape reflects a pedestrian-scaled street that could be enhanced with wider sidewalks, short and safe crossings, and other street furnishing. Recent improvements have converted one block of S. Lander Street to become the Roberto Maestas Festival Street. The design allows the street to function as a pedestrian plaza for celebrations, fairs and festivals.

Recommendations

Improving the Town Center for pedestrians, cyclists and transit patrons was identified as a high priority in the *2010 North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan*. Solutions include widening sidewalks, adding landscape, introducing bicycle infrastructure and extending the Roberto Maestas Festival Street.

Design elements emphasize pedestrian comfort and safety such as seating, pedestrian lighting, directional signage, landscaping, street trees, overhead weather protection, and shorter and safer road crossings with curb bulbs and landscaped medians. Audible signals and special paving could be integrated into the streetscape design to assist mobility impaired pedestrians.

The illustrations on pages 16-17 show rights-of-way improvement concepts to enhance the beauty and vitality, and improve pedestrian connections at the core of the Town Center. These concepts will be studied in more detail with the community.



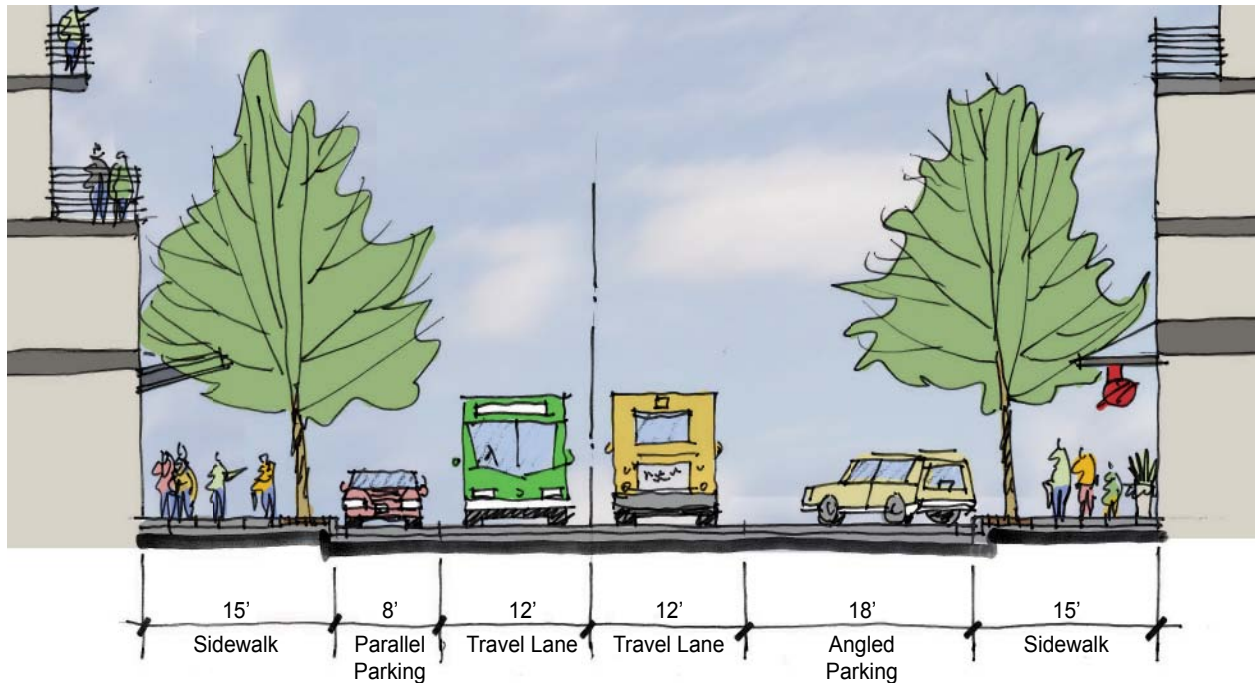
This streetscape is designed with pervious paving, street trees and other planting—types of green stormwater infrastructure.



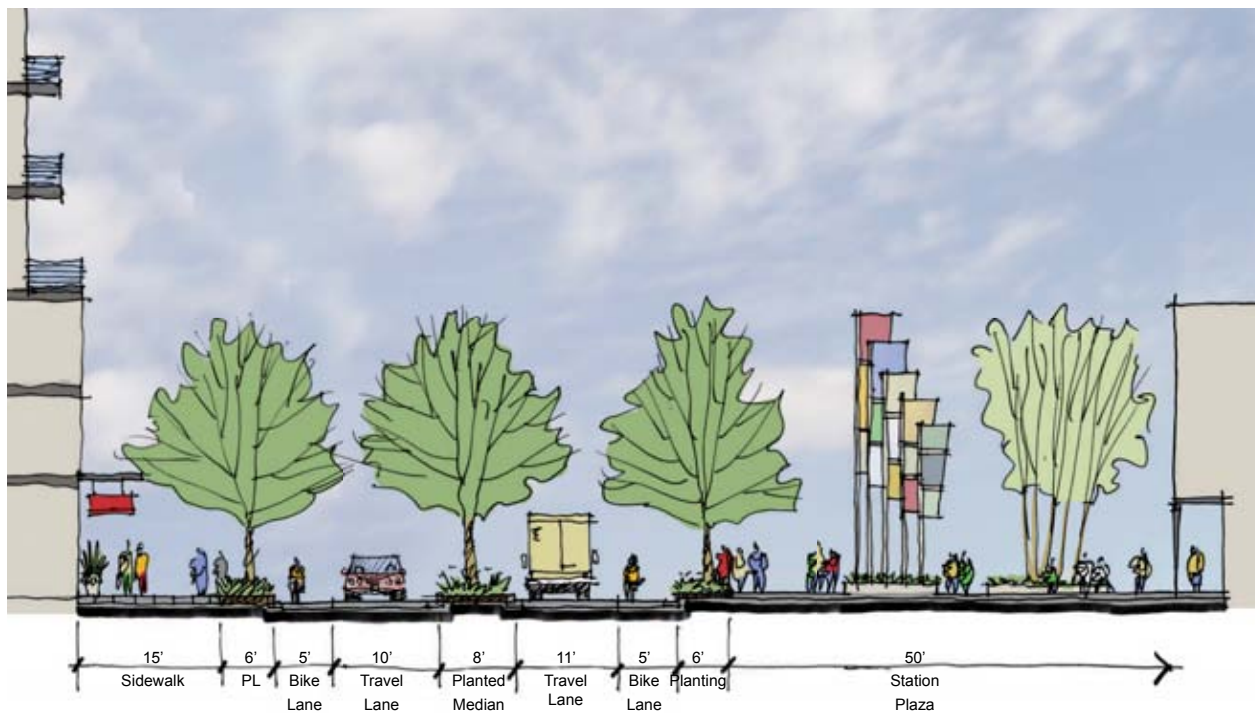
A unique bike rack adds character to the street.



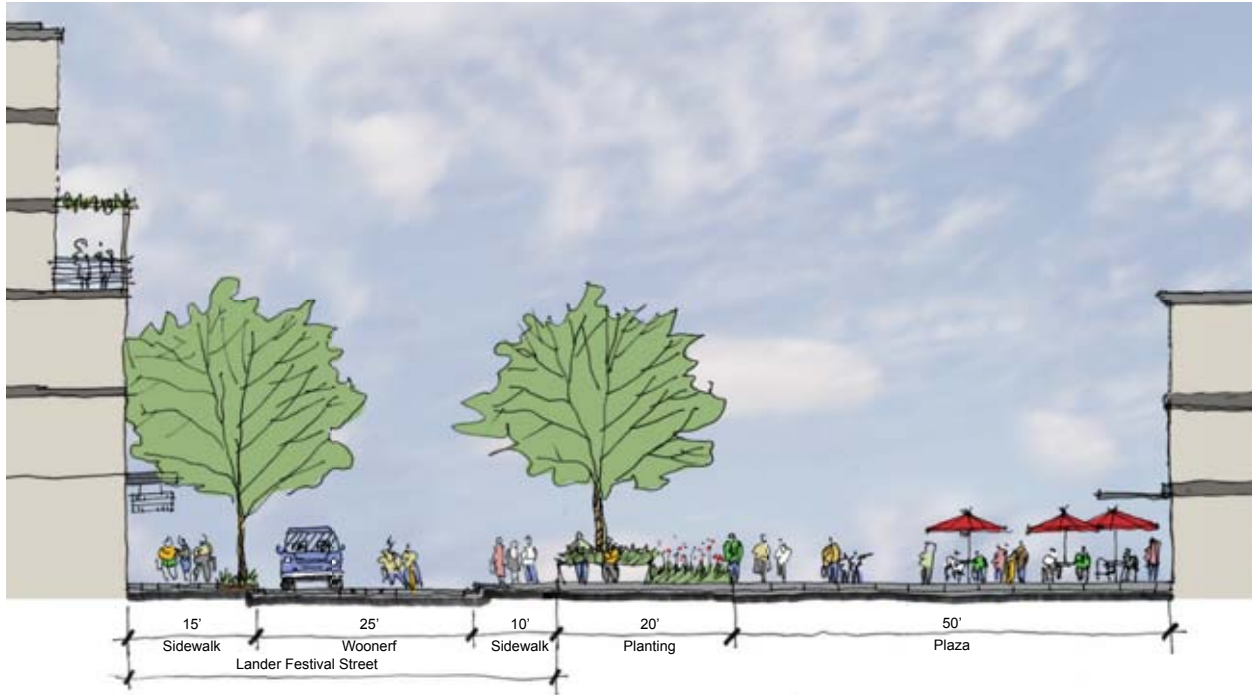
This streetscape design uses angled parking to narrow the arterial's right-of-way and calm traffic.



Beacon Avenue S. (north of S. Lander Street) is reconfigured as “a linear outdoor living room.” It is a well-defined space with wider sidewalks, generous trees and landscaping, weather protection shorter crosswalks and angled parking on one side. (Section A in Figure 2)



Beacon Avenue S. (between S. Lander Street and S. McClellan Street) is reconfigured as a civic space. It includes wider sidewalks, landscaped plaza, street trees, planted median and safer pedestrian crossing. Note: Median planting subject to SPU approvals. (Section C in Figure 2)



Festival Street Extension continues the Roberto Maestas Festival Street design across Beacon Avenue S. to the west, and incorporates plazas and additional landscaping to create gathering places. (Section B in Figure 2)

See the following section Gateways and Open Space for additional and complementary recommendations related to the public realm.



Robert Maestas Festival Street.

In a walkable city, the pedestrian realm is attractive—whether it be a street tree turning color in the fall, an interesting detail in a facade or on a walkway, a sidewalk cafe that bubbles with laughter, an inviting display in a shop window, or the smile on the face of a passerby.

—Seattle Pedestrian Master Plan



Robert Maestas Festival Street.

Open Space and Gateways

Existing

The existing open space in the Town Center includes two triangular parks along Beacon Avenue S. (McClellan Place and Stevens Place) and the new Roberto Maestas Festival Street. Many larger parks and trails beyond the Town Center (Jose Rizal Park, Beacon Hill Playground, Jefferson Park, Cheasty Greenbelt, East Duwamish Greenbelt, Chief Sealth Trail) will enhance the quality of life for current and future residents. The updated neighborhood plan also called for establishing smaller pocket parks throughout the community and more gathering places in the Town Center.



Landscaping on the corner of Beacon Avenue S. and S. McClellan Street. © liltnevo via Flickr

Recommendations (see Figure 5)

Gateways and landmarks—highly visible landscape or structural features—can enhance the identity and express civic pride of the Town Center by announcing arrival in a distinct special place. Signage, structures, lighting, landscaping, banners and even buildings can create gateways or landmarks.

- **Expand open space in the core.** Use new developments and public improvements around the station to increase open space within the Town Center, especially within the El Centro de la Raza project. Reclaim rights of way adjacent to McClellan Place and Stevens Place (existing triangular parks) to create more useable pocket parks.
- **Establish gateways on Beacon Avenue S.** (near S. Bayview Street and S. Hinds Street). Given the intimate scale of the Town Center, the types of gateways that are appropriate include signage, pylons, sculptures or landscaping. Although beyond the bounds of the Town Center, the community’s preferred location for a southern gateway is S. Hinds Street.
- **Create iconic landmarks.** The Town Center has several prominent buildings (library, station, El Centro de la Raza) that serve as landmarks. Yet the unbuildable corners of triangular blocks provide excellent opportunities for landscaping or public art that can further enhance the identity of the Town Center and become a source of civic pride.
- **Include Unique Streetscape Elements** such as pedestrian-scaled lighting, distinctive tree species, directional signs and seasonal banners and plantings can add character and strengthen the identity of the Town Center.



Welcome to the Wheel World,” a public art piece installed at the International School, is also a bike rack. © Rob Ketcherside via Flickr

While most of the North Beacon Hill urban village is located within 1/4 mile of Village Open Space (usable accessible open space within an urban village), some gaps appear when considering parks within 1/8 mile of locations within this urban village.

—Seattle Parks and Recreation 2011 Gap Report Summary

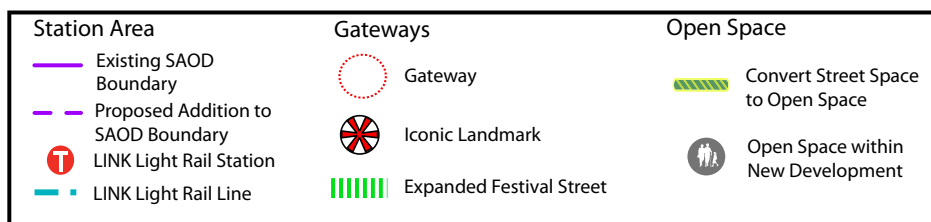
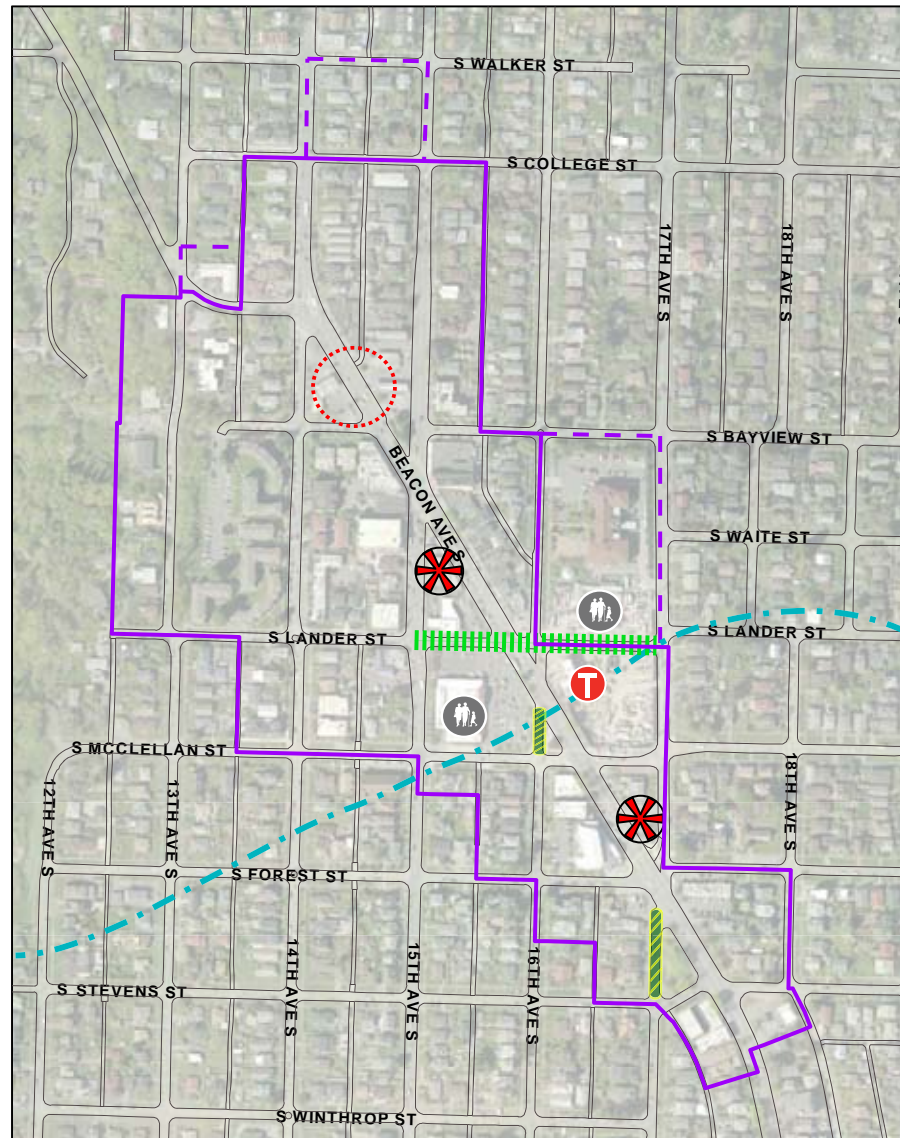
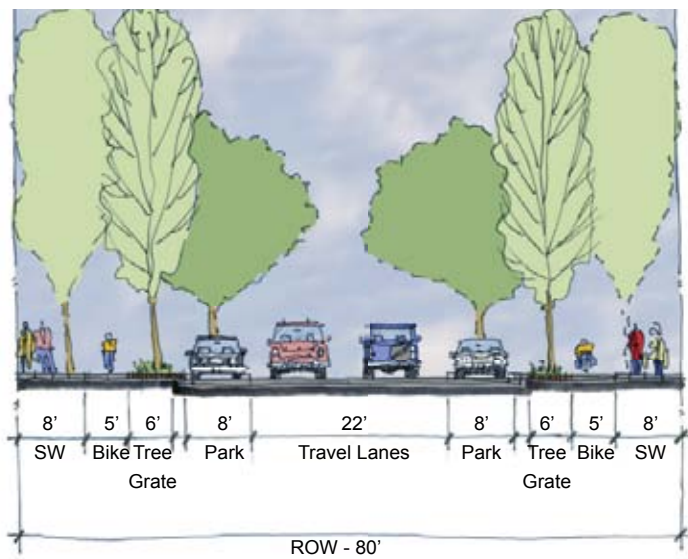


Figure 5 – Proposed Open Space and Gateways

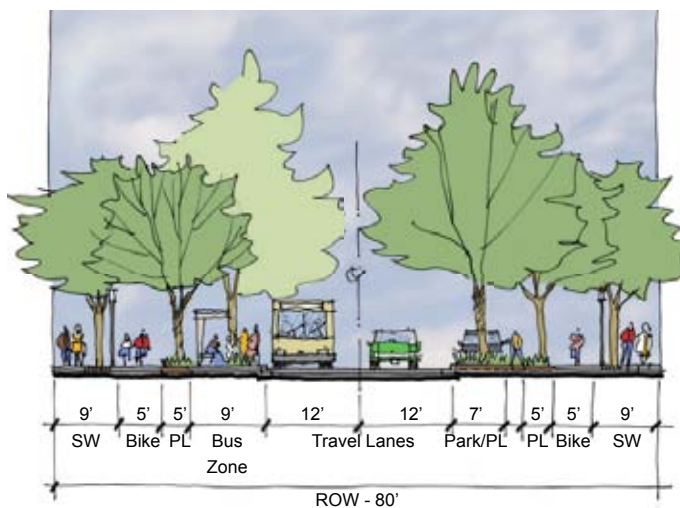
Additional Beacon Avenue S. Streetscape Concepts (South of the Town Center)

Strategy 10.2 in the *North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Action Plan* called for completing a design for Beacon Avenue S. south of the Town Center. Although beyond the boundaries of the Town Center, concepts were explored at the Town Center Action Team’s October 2010 meeting and are included in this Urban Design Framework. These concepts illustrate how the existing rights-of-way could be reconfigured as a complete street that accommodates all users—pedestrians, bikes, cars and buses. Note: A planted center median concept was not developed because it would conflict with an existing Beacon Avenue S. water main.

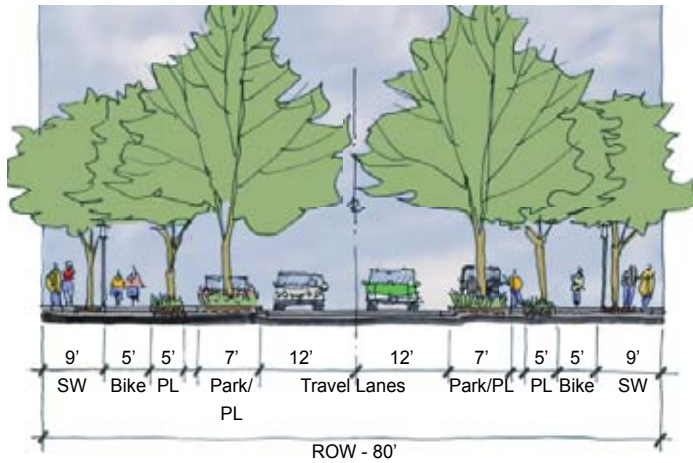
PL = Planting PK = Parking ROW = Right of Way SW = Sidewalk



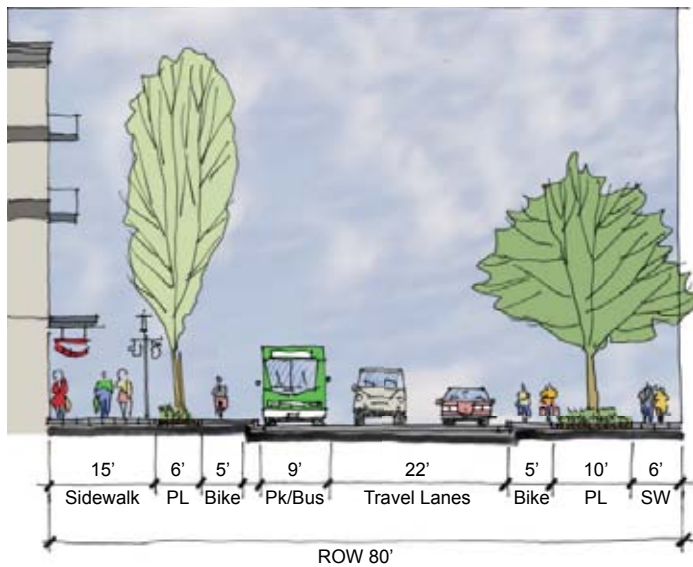
Green Way—This concept maximizes street trees while providing a bicycle sidepath. Requires modifying the existing curbline.



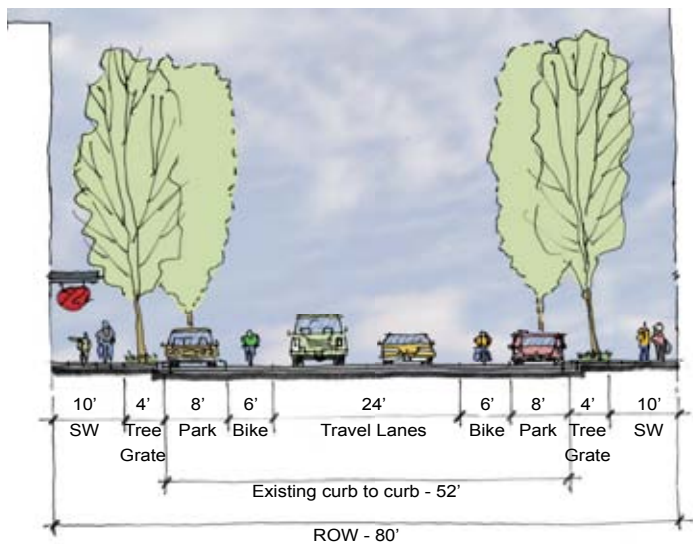
Green Way plus Bus—Similar to the “Green Way” solution, this concept incorporates in-lane bus stops.



Maximum Green (to the right)—This concept removes 50% of on-street parking to provide a triple colonnade of trees, bicycle sidepaths and planting. Requires modifying the existing curbline.



Trees and Tracks—This concept removes parking from one side of the street to add bicycle lanes and generous planting areas. Requires significant modifications to the existing curbline.



Green Bulbs—This concept incorporates bicycle lanes and a double colonnade of trees. By incorporating curb bulbs at intersections and mid-block planting areas. Requires fewer modifications to the existing curbline.



Green roof on the new Ballard library.



Plantings on a roof deck absorb stormwater and enhance a shared open space. © William Wright Photography



Green stormwater infrastructure can be designed to provide seating.

Sustainable Strategies

The *North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan* affirmed a commitment to creating a community that is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. Environmental sustainability is implicit in the previous recommendations for urban form, land use, circulation, streetscapes, and open space. With ample opportunity to walk, bike, and take transit current and future residents of the Town Center will live a more sustainable life. Research by the US Environmental Protection Agency found that residents of compact walkable neighborhoods consume half the energy of those who live in conventional suburbs. Additional sustainable strategies can help build an even more sustainable Town Center by integrating green stormwater infrastructure and green building technology to the extent feasible.

Green Stormwater Infrastructure refers to landscapes that are designed specifically to absorb and manage stormwater—bioretention plantings, permeable paving, green roofs, and rainwater harvesting. These practices keep urban runoff out of storm drains and overloaded combined sewers, and help improve Seattle’s water quality and aquatic habitat. In addition to their functional role, green stormwater infrastructure can be designed as an open space amenity adding interest and beauty to streets and public spaces. The new Stormwater Code requires Green Stormwater Infrastructure to the ‘maximum extent feasible’ for new projects throughout the city including the North Beacon Hill Town Center.

Green stormwater infrastructure should be integrated into the design of future intersection improvements (curb bulbs, curbside planting strips, pavement) and open space (p-patch, plazas, pedestrian connections). These practices should be considered on a site-by-site basis in all new development—buildings, streets, trails and open space. More information at www.seattle.gov/util/About_SPU/Drainage_&_Sewer_System/GreenStormwaterInfrastructure/index.htm

Green Building Technology refers to an array of strategies that result in a building that uses sustainable materials and is highly energy and water efficient. The City has a several incentive programs to encourage green building technology (see Sustainable Development, page 23).

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation refers to the next steps—the policies, regulations, programs and resources that the City can use to implement recommendations. The Urban Design Framework considered a number of implementation tools to require or encourage the desired physical form and land uses within the Town Center.

Zoning

Existing

The Town Center currently includes one commercial zone (Neighborhood Commercial 2), three residential zones (Single Family, Lowrise2, Lowrise 3) and two special districts (Station Area Overlay District, Pedestrian Designation) that affect land use, building types, street-level uses and design, and parking location and access. See Appendix A for a brief description of these categories and districts.

Recommendations (Figure 6)

The *North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan* recommends “rezoning key opportunity sites to encourage the redevelopment of parcels surrounding the light rail station in a manner that incorporates housing, commercial services (such as a grocery store and small businesses) and amenities.” The community considered zoning classifications and building heights that would preserve the diversity and strengthen the vitality of the Town Center. A detailed description and analysis of rezone recommendations are contained in the *Director’s Analysis and Recommendation on the North Beacon Hill Rezone Proposal*.

Continue to Use Neighborhood Commercial Zoning — The recommended zoning continues to use Neighborhood Commercial to shape an

active street level retail environment mixed with upper level residential use.

Increase Height — Increase the allowable heights in the neighborhood commercial zones, and expand the areas of Lowrise 3 zoning as shown in Figure 3. These changes will allow denser mixed-use and residential development to activate the street with street-level retail and house a critical mass of people to live, work and shop in the Town Center.

Rezone Select Residential Areas Near Light Rail — An area of single family zoning located between 16th Avenue S. and 17th Avenue S. is proposed for rezone to LR3 and NC2P with a 65 foot height limit. A second area at 14th Avenue S. and 15th Avenue S. is proposed for an upzone from LR2 to LR3 to allow denser residential development. The proposed changes are appropriate because of the proximity to the Beacon Hill Station.

Expand the Boundary of the Station Area Overlay District — The Station Area Overlay District is recommended for expansion to include the residential areas proposed for rezone to Neighborhood Commercial 2 and Lowrise 3.

Sustainable Development

Much of the desired physical character and sustainability of the Town Center will be determined by decisions of private property owners. In Seattle, certain sustainable development practices are required by the Land Use, Building and Stormwater codes. In addition, the City has introduced several programs to promote sustainable building and design in new development projects:

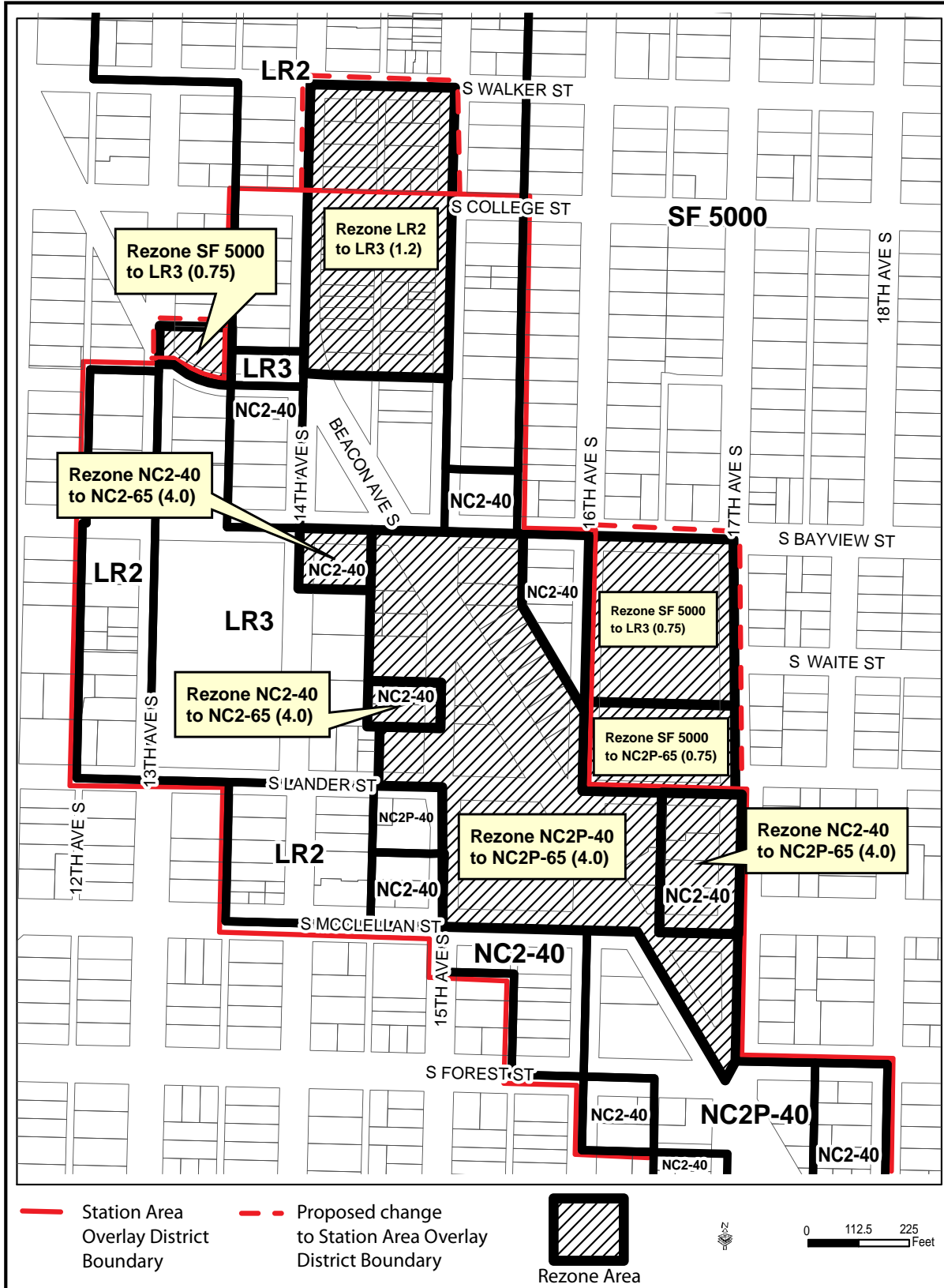


Figure 6 – Proposed Zoning

Green Factor

The Green Factor is a landscape requirement designed to increase the quantity and quality of planted areas in Seattle while allowing flexibility for developers and designers to meet development standards. It currently applies to new development in commercial and neighborhood commercial zones outside of downtown, and multifamily residential zones. The requirement is designed to encourage larger plants, permeable paving, green roofs, vegetated walls, preservation of existing trees, and layering of vegetation along streets and other areas visible to the public. Bonuses are provided for food cultivation, native and drought-tolerant plants, and rainwater harvesting.

Priority Green

Priority Green is a suite of green permitting incentives to assist projects that use smart approaches to design and construction and innovative practices.

- **Priority Green EXPEDITED** shortens review times for projects that meet typical green building standards and have less code complexity.
- **Priority Green FACILITATED** assists all innovative project types that will serve as visible models of high performance and sustainability.
- **Priority Green TOOLS** provides additional code incentives to assist applicants developing green projects.
- **The Living Building Pilot Program** assists projects attempting to meet the requirements of the Living Building Challenge—a green building rating system to recognize buildings meeting the highest level of sustainability. The Pilot Program allows flexibility in development standards to accommodate innovative technologies or design approaches that might otherwise be discouraged or prohibited.

Analyses Requested by City Council

City Council Resolution 31204 requested that the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) study and analyze some specific implementation tools as part of the Urban Design Framework. Complete analyses, discussions and recommendations regarding these items are included in the *Director's Analysis and Recommendation on North Beacon Hill Rezone Proposal*. Findings are summarized below:

- **Development capacity under existing and proposed zoning.** The proposed rezones are anticipated to add 213 housing units over the next 20 years.
- **Proposed incentive structures for public benefits.** The recommended maximum building heights of 65 feet allows the use of incentive provisions where 100% of the bonus floor area could be used to provide affordable housing.
- **Transfer of development rights.** Participation in a transferable development rights program is not recommended due to potential conflicts with City policy and community priorities, as well as the high transactions costs that would be incurred.
- **Minimum density.** The use of minimum densities is not recommended because under current market conditions, this requirement may be a disincentive to new development and the expansion of existing businesses.

Other Implementation Resources

Multi-Family Tax Exemption Program

The Multifamily Property Tax Exemption (MFTE) Program provides a tax exemption on the residential improvements on multifamily projects in exchange for the provision of

affordable housing. The current rules allow a tax exemption for 12 years if 20% of the units are set aside for moderate-wage workers to rent or buy. Rental units are income restricted based on the average household median income (AMI). The 2011 income limits for rental units are 65% of the AMI for a studio (\$39,520 for an individual, \$45,175 for a couple), 75% of the AMI for a one-bedroom (\$45,600 for an individual, \$52,125 for a couple), and 85% of the AMI for a two-bedroom or larger (\$51,680 for an individual, \$59,075 for a couple). The 2011 Income limits for sale units are 100% of the AMI for a studio or one bedroom (\$60,800 for an individual, \$69,500 for a couple), and 120% of the AMI for a two-bedroom or larger (\$72,960 for an individual, \$83,400 for a couple).

Funding and Implementation Toolkit for Transit Communities

The Seattle Planning Commission has created this online toolkit to provide decision makers, private partners and community groups with information about funding programs, implementation and planning tools commonly used to develop the essential components that create vibrant lively transit communities. The toolkit focuses on three broad categories of “livability elements”: infrastructure, community development and parks/open space. The toolkit includes local, state and federal sources from small programs like the Opportunity Fund for community initiative park development to larger sources like federal Community Block Grants that fund affordable housing, neighborhood revitalization, community facilities and services and economic development. The toolkit can be viewed on the Commission’s website at <http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/projects/transit.htm>.

Public Investments in Streetscape Improvements

Many of the recommendations for streetscape improvements could be implemented by SDOT as part of the *Pedestrian Master Plan* and *Bicycle Master Plan*, although when funding would be available is uncertain. A key next step in the streetscape improvement process would be the development of a Street Design Concept Plan that would become part of the *Seattle Right-of-Way Improvement Manual*. Streetscape improvements can be helpful in attracting private investment to the Town Center.

Summary of Actions

Building a successful Town Center requires the coordinated effort of the community, the City, private development and a range of other public and private entities. The following matrix describes the likely time frame for completion and the responsible parties for Urban Design Framework recommendations.

ACTIONS ● = 1 to 3 years ○ = 3 to 5 years ○ = more than five years	City of Seattle	Community	King County Metro	Private Development	Sound Transit
Land Use + Built Form					
Focus “main street” retail on Beacon Avenue S.	○	○		○	
Rezone selected residential areas where appropriate.	●				
Encourage the redevelopment of opportunity sites.	○			○	○
Develop areas for outdoor vending.	●			●	●
Increase allowable heights.	●				
Encourage upper-level setbacks on principal pedestrian streets.	●				
Circulation					
Improve bicycle infrastructure.	○				
Make the pedestrian network complete and safe.	●			○	
Improve pedestrian and bicycle access to the Light Rail station.	○			○	○
Streetscapes					
Design Beacon Avenue S. as a linear outdoor living room with civic space near the station.	○			○	
Extend the festival street west of Beacon Avenue S.	○			○	

ACTIONS ● = 1 to 3 years ○ = 3 to 5 years ○ = more than five years	City of Seattle	Community	King County Metro	Private Development	Sound Transit
Open Space and Gateways					
Establish open space in the core of the Town Center.	○	○		○	
Animate and enhance the station plaza.		●			●
Establish gateways and landmarks.	○	○			
Use unique streetscape elements.	○	○		○	
Sustainable Strategies					
Integrate green stormwater infrastructure into design of streetscapes and open space.	●			●	
Promote green building technology in new development.	●			●	
Zoning					
Implement proposed zoning changes to allow more density and mixed-use.	●				

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Lyle Bicknell

Mark Braseth

Moon Callison

Patrice Carroll

Nora Liu

Seattle Planning Commission

Seattle Design Commission

GGLO, LLC

Mithūn, Inc

Great City

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Thank you to all the community members who have generously given their time and energy since 1999 to plan the future of North Beacon Hill.

APPENDICES

Appendix A — Zones and Districts within the Town Center

Below are descriptions of zones and districts that are existing and/or proposed within or adjacent to the Town Center.

Single Family 5000 (SF5000) — This zone provides for a detached house with a single dwelling unit, or one principal unit and one accessory unit. The minimum lot area for this zone is 5000 square feet.

Lowrise 2 (LR2) — This zone provides a variety of multifamily housing types in existing multifamily neighborhoods and along arterial streets. A mix of small scale to multifamily housing such as townhouses, rowhouses and apartments are encouraged.

Lowrise 3 (LR3) — This zone provides a variety of multifamily housing types in existing multifamily neighborhoods of moderate scale. LR3 accommodates residential growth within growth areas (urban centers, urban villages and Station Area Overlay District). A mix of small to moderate scale multifamily housing is encouraged including apartments, townhouses and rowhouses.

Neighborhood Commercial (NC2) — This zone provides a moderately-sized pedestrian-oriented shopping district with a full range of retail sales and services for the surrounding neighborhood. Typical land uses include: medium-sized grocery store, drug store, coffee shop, medical or dental facilities and apartments.

Station Area Overlay District (SAOD) — The SAOD designation is intended to discourage auto-oriented development and increase opportunities for housing and mixed-use development near light rail stations. All

existing legal businesses and uses are allowed to remain and maintain existing structures and sites. New development of certain commercial and industrial businesses—such as drive through businesses, warehouses, manufacturing, etc.—are prohibited.

Pedestrian Designation (P) —The P designation preserves and encourages an intensely retail and pedestrian-oriented shopping district where non-auto modes of transportation are strongly favored. The P designation restricts street level use to pedestrian-friendly commercial uses that enliven the sidewalk environment. A pedestrian designation can be applied to any neighborhood commercial zone along principal pedestrian designated streets. The designation preserves and encourages a pedestrian-oriented shopping district by limiting building setbacks, reducing retail parking requirements, and controlling the location of parking lots and their access to behind, in, or under a building fronting on a principal pedestrian street.

Appendix B

Council Resolution Number 31204

RESOLUTION 31204

1
2 A RESOLUTION outlining specific actions, deliverables, and a schedule for completing
3 neighborhood plan updates for the North Beacon Hill, North Rainier, and Othello
neighborhoods.

4 WHEREAS, Seattle maintains a commitment to a true partnership between neighborhoods and
5 government in building innovative planning structures and visionary neighborhood plans;
and

6 WHEREAS, in 1998 and 1999, the City Council recognized neighborhood plans for North
7 Beacon Hill, North Rainier, and Othello (previously called MLK@Holly) neighborhoods
8 and approved implementation plans, i.e. Approval and Adoption matrices, for each; and

9 WHEREAS, the City Council approved resources in the 2008 Budget to begin updating the
10 City's existing neighborhood plans; and

11 WHEREAS, in September 2008, the City Council passed Ordinance 122799 and adopted
12 Resolution 31085, which collectively outlined a process for updating the City's
13 neighborhood plans and placed a priority on updating neighborhoods plans containing
transit stations; and

14 WHEREAS, Ordinance 122799 identified the North Beacon Hill, North Rainier and Othello
15 neighborhood plans as priority candidates for updates to capitalize on the opening of Link
Light Rail and light rail stations in these neighborhoods in 2009; and

16 WHEREAS, North Beacon Hill, North Rainier and Othello are three of the most diverse
17 neighborhoods in Seattle; 70% of residents in the North Rainier neighborhood are people
18 of color, nearly 50% of residents in Othello are foreign born and 60% of residents in
19 North Beacon Hill speak a language other than English at home according to 2000 census
data; and

20 WHEREAS, throughout 2009, the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) and
21 Department of Neighborhoods (DON) conducted significant public outreach including
22 reaching historically underrepresented communities in the North Beacon Hill, North
Rainier, and Othello neighborhoods, that resulted in draft neighborhood plan updates; and

23 WHEREAS, meaningful community engagement, as evidenced by over 100 workshops and
24 meetings, occurred during the initial phase of neighborhood plan updates, encouraging
over 1600 City of Seattle residents to play an integral role in neighborhood planning; and

25 WHEREAS, in January 2010, the Executive submitted draft neighborhood plan updates to the
26 City Council for review and approval; and



1 WHEREAS, as with the original neighborhood plans, the neighborhood plan updates include
goals and policies along with potential implementation strategies; and

2 WHEREAS, in 2011, the City Council intends to consider the proposed goals and policies from
3 each neighborhood plan update for inclusion into the City's Comprehensive Plan,
Towards a Sustainable Seattle; and

4 WHEREAS, additional work is required before the City Council can recognize the neighborhood
5 plan updates and consider legislation to implement related rezones and development
6 regulations; and

7 WHEREAS, ongoing meaningful community engagement must continue throughout all phases
8 of planning and implementation that supports community building and neighborhood
development; and

9 WHEREAS, prior to, and as part of, Council recognition of the neighborhood plan updates, DPD
10 and DON should work with the North Beacon Hill, North Rainier, and Othello
11 neighborhoods to develop implementation plans that include specific action steps to
implement the strategies in each of the updates; and

12 WHEREAS, to inform Council decisions related to land use and the built environment in North
13 Beacon Hill, North Rainier, and Othello, DPD should develop urban design framework
14 plans for each neighborhood prior to submitting rezone and development regulation
legislation to Council; NOW, THEREFORE,

15 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE,**

16
17 Section 1. Implementation Plans. The City Council requests that the Executive build upon
18 the community outreach efforts in 2009 and actively engage the North Beacon Hill, North
19 Rainier, and Othello neighborhoods to develop implementation plans (previously referred to as
20 "Approval and Adoption Matrices") for each of the updated neighborhood plans. The City
21 Council anticipates a successful engagement effort will include the elements outlined below.

22
23 a) The engagement effort should enable the public to provide feedback through a variety
24 of mediums, including public meetings and the use of online surveys.

25 b) The engagement effort should involve diverse and meaningful community
26 participation, measured by the number and diversity of participants attending community
27



1 meetings or responding online. Ideally, at least 50 people will attend the public meetings from
2 each of the three neighborhood planning areas (approximately 1% of the population for each
3 planning area) and at least an additional 50 people will participate online or through other
4 avenues. Participants should reflect the demographic makeup of the community and at least one-
5 third of total participants will ideally be from historically under-represented communities.

6
7 c) The engagement effort should identify members of the public who are willing to serve
8 on project implementation teams, with a goal of involving at least 50 people from each of the
9 neighborhood planning areas to participate in ongoing action teams.

10 d) The engagement effort should result in implementation plans that do the following:

- 11
- 12 • Identify priority actions for implementation by the City, neighborhood, and other
13 actors.
 - 14 • Articulate specific steps and deliverables that the City, neighborhood residents,
15 businesses, or other actors will be responsible for completing within an estimated
16 timeframe.
 - 17 • Contain the proposed goals, policies, and strategies from the neighborhood plan
18 updates as well as those from the original neighborhood plans that remain relevant.
 - 19 • Include outstanding work items from the existing Approval and Adoption matrices
20 for North Beacon Hill, North Rainier, and Othello neighborhood plans that
21 neighborhoods have indicated a desire to carry forward.

22
23 In addition, the Executive should submit a proposal to the City Council that describes
24 how it will: 1) involve neighborhoods in plan implementation and stewardship; 2) structure city
25 department workplans and/or staff teams to support neighborhood plan implementation and
26



1 enable departments to achieve on-going community engagement metrics similar to those outlined
2 in this resolution; 3) track and report progress on plan implementation over time; and 4) provide
3 a user-friendly, cohesive location for all neighborhood plan-related documents to be easily
4 located and accessed by the public.

5 Section 2. Council Recognition of Neighborhood Plan Updates. Prior to the City Council
6 “recognizing” each neighborhood plan update by resolution, the City Council anticipates it will
7 hold at least one public hearing, or similar “validation process”, in Southeast Seattle to ensure
8 the updates and associated implementation plans accurately capture the interests, concerns, and
9 vision of the neighborhoods.
10

11 Section 3. Urban Design Framework Plans. The Council requests that the Department of
12 Planning and Development (DPD) develop urban design framework plans for the North Beacon
13 Hill, North Rainier, and Othello neighborhoods, drawing upon the proposed neighborhood plan
14 updates and based on the Concept B options presented in the neighborhood plan updates and
15 recommended for further study by DPD. In addition, DPD should provide opportunities for
16 residents and businesses to participate in the development and review of the urban design
17 framework plans prior to submitting them to the City Council. Prior to beginning work on any
18 related zoning or development regulation legislation, DPD should submit the urban design
19 framework plans for Council review. At a minimum the urban design framework plans should
20 include structure height and bulk concepts; right-of-way improvement concepts; preferred use
21 locations; proposed incentive structures for public benefits; open space concepts; pedestrian
22 connections; an analysis of whether transferable development rights can accomplish any of the
23 goals and policies in the plan updates; and an analysis of the employment and residential growth
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25
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28



1 capacity at buildout under the proposed concepts as compared to existing zoning. If a
2 neighborhood plan update considers the potential use of minimum densities, the urban design
3 framework plan should contain a rationale for minimum density standards that are proposed.


4 In addition, for the North Beacon Hill neighborhood, DPD should include an alternative
5 to Concept B that further optimizes the region's investment in light rail. This could take the form
6 of examining the potential for neighborhood commercial and multifamily zone designations in
7 single family zones in close proximity to the Beacon Hill station. And, for the Othello
8 neighborhood, DPD should include an alternative to Concept B that would allow the potential for
9 denser development around Othello Park as one approach to increasing "eyes on the park" and
10 improving public safety, as well as further optimizing housing opportunities within walking
11 distance of the Othello Station.
12

13
14 Section 4. Legislation Enacting Land Use Changes. The Council anticipates that after it
15 has reviewed the urban design framework plans, it may direct DPD to prepare legislation for
16 Comprehensive Plan amendments or regulatory amendments to implement concepts contained in
17 the framework plans. The Council requests that land use legislation be submitted to Council in
18 time for concurrent review with the annual Comprehensive Plan bill adopting future land use
19 map amendments and updating goals and policies for the neighborhood plans.
20
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1 Section 5. Schedule. To the extent possible, DPD and DON should complete the actions and
2 deliverables within the timeframes noted in the schedule included in Attachment A. If any of the
3 items cannot be completed within the timeframes indicated, Council anticipates that the sequence
4 in which it acts upon items will be similar to that reflected in the schedule in Attachment A.

5 Adopted by the City Council the 19th day of April, 2010, and
6 signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this 19th day
7 of April, 2010.

8 
9 _____
10 President _____ of the City Council

11 
12 _____
13 Michael McGinn, Mayor

14
15 Filed by me this 29th day of April, 2010.

16
17 
18 _____
19 City Clerk

20 (Seal)



Attachment A: Schematic Schedule

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		Neighborhood Planning - Schedule for 2009 Plan Update Implementation												
		Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Dec-10	Jan-11	Feb-11	Mar-11	Apr-11
<i>Executive Actions</i>														
Develop Action Plans with Community														
Develop Urban Design Framework Plans														
SEPA Review of Endorsed Urban Design Framework Plans														
Draft Rezone and Text Amendment Bills														
<i>Council Actions</i>														
Recognize Neighborhood Plans and Adopt Action Plan														
Review Urban Design Framework Plans														
Adopt Goals and Policies in Comp Plan														
Adopt Rezone and Text Amendments Bills														



Appendix C

North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan

January 2010

North Beacon Hill

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN UPDATE



Recommendations to City Council



Goals, Policies and Strategies to
Achieve the North Beacon Hill
Neighborhood Vision

Executive Summary

In the North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan Update process initiated in 2009, a diverse community of stakeholders articulated priorities for the future of their neighborhood, identifying goals and shaping the policies and strategies to achieve them. They benefited from the compelling vision of the existing Neighborhood Plan, first completed in 1999, which successfully established an approach to sustaining the community's long and unique history, including its characteristic ethnic and cultural diversity. Much has been achieved in North Beacon Hill in the past decade since the plan was completed, including a new library, a major park nearing completion, and the opening of a new light rail station. Yet as the community made clear in the update process, there are newly emerging priorities, new strategies, and work remains to be done.

The workshops, meetings, and ongoing discussions that shaped the update underscore the widely shared goal of increasing the community's choices for how to live, work, and enjoy life in their neighborhood. Participants recognized the potential of light rail service to transform the neighborhood center into the cornerstone of a more sustainable community. They envisioned how more households would increase opportunities for the diversity of businesses and services that they value. At the same time, they emphasized that they need a Town Center that works for them, where growth and change include housing for diverse incomes and household sizes, and where connecting to their homes and businesses with safe, green, and walkable streets and sidewalks is equally important. And they spoke to the need for growth to be carefully tailored to fit neighborhood scale, with a clear call for attention to detail, designing for the transitions from a higher density, mixed use center the lower scale and more residential edges of the urban village.

There are several additional core recommendations in the update, including a renewed focus on El Centro de la Raza as an active resource for the neighborhood, where potential redevelopment should increase that crucial community role. In addition, the update process has reiterated strong support for a "festival street" adjacent to El Centro and the light rail station, where it can be a physical gathering place for both informal and organized programs to build and enhance the life of the community. The physical reality of this new type of public space was celebrated with its opening this winter, and community, public agencies, and non-profits are working together to realize the type of programs and events that meet the promise of this vision. The update's format and structure are designed to do exactly this—to allow a civic partnership of the community, city, as well as other public and private organizations to work together to shape the future of the neighborhood.

How the Update Is Organized

This document incorporates various components that together comprise the update. The following is a description of the different components:

Community Engagement – describes the process through which community members provided guidance and invaluable information, and includes the various methods used to reach out to and engage as many neighbors as possible.

Sustainability – provides a discussion of environmental and socio-economic sustainability and its inherent relevance to neighborhood planning.

In the 1990s, community members from 38 neighborhoods across the city created a 20-year vision for how each of their neighborhoods would grow. This work was done as part of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan initiative, a citywide effort which sought to “preserve the best quality of Seattle’s distinct neighborhoods while responding positively and creatively to the pressures of change and growth.” The Neighborhood Plans developed strategies to insure that the creative response to growth was informed by both professional expertise and local knowledge and priority-setting.

In the decade after the plans were completed, there were significant changes in Seattle and its neighborhoods, including growth in housing and major investments in public amenities. Also, during this time the population of the city greatly diversified. Following extensive discussion and review of the existing Neighborhood Plans and their effectiveness, in 2008, the Mayor and

City Council recognized the need to revisit the plans through broad and inclusive discussions with the community, including new strategies for civic engagement. The update process was begun in 2009 to: confirm the neighborhood Vision, refine the plan Goals and Policies in order to take into account changed conditions, and to update work plans to help ensure that each community’s visions and goals are achieved through the implementation of strategies and actions.

The North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan was chosen by the Mayor and City Council as one of three plans to be updated in 2009. The arrival of light rail service brings increased development interest and new residents to the neighborhood. These changes present great opportunities to expand North Beacon Hill’s identity as a vibrant, transit-oriented community, one in which residents, businesses and visitors enjoy the lively, diverse, and distinctive character of the neighborhood. This Plan Update articulates com-

munity goals so that the City, developers and neighborhood residents can work together to bring about the neighborhood vision.

Over the past year, dedicated community members worked with City staff to assess and address those conditions that have changed since the 1999 North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan. New neighbors and new voices joined those who participated ten years ago. Together, community members discussed what they value in the neighborhood, and outlined their shared goals and ideas about how to achieve those goals.

These new Goals and Policies will be incorporated into the City’s Comprehensive Plan. The plan update also creates a shared work plan for the community and City (*see Appendix*). The strategies and actions will be incorporated in a working document that defines shared priorities and responsibilities for next steps.

Vision, Goals, Policies and Strategies – are the key components of this update. The Vision is from the 1999 Neighborhood Plan and holds true today. The Goals, Policies and Strategies build upon one another to help fulfill the North Beacon Hill Vision. They are a distillation of what we heard from the community and will guide the City’s work as well as inform future development that occurs in

the neighborhood. The Goals are organized into two broad categories: Creating Choices for Living, Working and Playing; and Shaping a Transit Oriented Town Center. With each Goal are its associated Policies and Strategies and a discussion that incorporates the community input and feedback that shaped the recommended strategies.

Appendices – The appendix of the update has several important resource documents including a shared work plan for the City and neighborhood to guide implementation and original Neighborhood Plan.

Community Engagement

Over the course of the past year, a broad cross section of community members engaged with planning in a variety of ways. From hands-on workshops and smaller scale interactive meetings with community-based organizations, to online updates and questionnaires, the community had many opportunities to engage and stay involved. Reaching a broad range of those who live and work in North Beacon Hill, including those who have been historically underrepresented in the planning process was a primary objective of the plan update process. During 2009, community members expressed their views at 38 neighborhood and City-sponsored meetings and events in North Beacon Hill. Long-time veterans of neighborhood planning, stewards of the important work begun in the 1990s, and a new generation of neighborhood planners came together to build a renewed base of civic engagement. Bicultural and/or bilingual Planning Outreach Liaisons (POLs) connected with 13 underrepresented communities. The POLs hosted 29 community workshops where historically underrepresented North Beacon Hill community members participated—strengthening the connection between the City of Seattle, residents, community organizations, and businesses.

This intensive effort was necessary for those who were new to the planning discussion to have the opportunity, and background to participate effectively. POLs went beyond translation and interpretation to create culturally-appropriate opportunities for dialogue about planning and to create a deeper understand-

ing of the issues and richer input. For example, residents with impaired site and mobility came together to discuss specific issues and recommendations for making open spaces and streets a better place for people with disabilities

In March 2009, the community engaged in the first phase of the update process through the North Beacon Hill Baseline and Issues Identification Workshop at El Centro de la Raza. They discussed neighborhood-initiated planning efforts since the existing Neighborhood Plan as well as how to build on that work given changing conditions. Participants described how they live, work and play in their neighborhood, what makes it unique, what they value in the community and how they see it changing in the next several years. Community members also described how they move around and through the urban village, the kinds of places they go and how they value those places, especially parks and open space. Embedded in these discussions were their identified needs for a healthy and vital neighborhood. POLs extended this conversation into their respective communities throughout March and April. North Beacon Hill's key priorities emerged from all these conversations.

In May small groups of community members and City staff worked together at a Town Hall meeting, again at El Centro de la Raza, to address themes that emerged from the March and April workshops. Participants worked through hands-on exercises to identify gaps and opportunities for improving mobility around and through the urban

village as well as to explore the relationships between the number of households in the neighborhood, retail destinations, parks and walkability. The POLs replicated the exercises, working with their respective communities. The community's goals and desired improvements within the neighborhood grew from this second phase of meetings.

In September 2009, community members attended open houses to review draft goals and recommendations that grew from the themes, issues, goals and desired improvements voiced by the community throughout the preceding months. Outreach and interaction continued into the final months of the year, including the work of POLs, who reached out to their communities to both review draft plan recommendations and to lay the groundwork for their ongoing engagement in the update's implementation phase. Throughout the plan update process, the workshops and meetings have been structured to engage community discussion and guidance, followed by reporting back, all of which has informed the next steps of drafting and finalizing recommendations. This broad engagement and detailed recording of community comments throughout the process created ongoing transparency that serves as the underpinning of this update to the North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan.



A sustainable community is one that values, and plans for its long term social, economic, and environmental health. Seattle's Comprehensive Plan states this as four values that are the bedrock of the City's commitment to sustainability: community, environmental stewardship, economic opportunity and security, and social equity.

North Beacon Hill is an urban village that has remarkable existing and potential strengths as a sustainable community. A core principle of Seattle's approach to sustainability is that it must be addressed at the neighborhood level, and that it is critical to directly engage the people who live, work, and visit our communities to shape a sustainable future. Through the update process, neighbors voiced their concerns and commitment to making their neighborhood remain and improve as a place that is walkable, livable, and meets the promise of its new light rail service—offering more choices to the people who live and work there. That choice can have an impact on one of the most significant environmental standards—

reducing greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the vehicle miles traveled (vmts). If you don't have to get in your car to get groceries, go to work, or enjoy an afternoon in a park or neighborhood downtown, you can make the more sustainable choice, a local decision that can affect the global challenge of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Yet as community dialogue made clear throughout the update process, the arrival of light rail on its own does not guarantee sustainability. For people to make more sustainable choices, they need to see that there are more and better choices, and to recognize the direct impact of sustainability on their lives. In North Beacon Hill, an expanded approach to sustainability is well underway thanks to the dynamic and engaged community, public agencies, and non-profits. A key example is the Health Impact Assessment work done by the community with King County Health and the Feet First organization, which laid out the connection between walkability and public health. Great City worked with the

community to complete a Green Infrastructure Audit. This work has complemented and informed the Update process, and underscores how a community-informed process—identifying how sustainability directly affects their lives—is key to establishing a new standard. City-wide, regional, and global decision-making remain crucial—Seattle has led the world as a city in signing the Kyoto Protocol in 2005 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and this work continues. But global standards only work if there are local commitments.

As Neighborhood Updates move forward, the City will continue to work with the community to develop further measures of sustainability, from walkability, to the availability of fresh, healthful food, to green infrastructure of trees and open space. Those may be useful tools as the update moves into implementation. At the same time, through the Update process, it became clear that sustainability issues did not need to be set out as separate and apart from the overall recommendations, because the finding was that communities already saw them as integral to their overall vision.



Discussing the future of the North Beacon Hill urban village.

Creating Choices for Living, Working and Play

North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan Vision March, 1999, Excerpt

“North Beacon Hill is a community with a long and unique history, characterized by its ethnic and cultural diversity. The committee will work to develop a plan for a well defined urban village anchored by a new library and commercial/retail core accessed by efficient, pedestrian friendly, public transportation.

Furthermore, the urban village plan will reinforce existing single family neighborhoods by encouraging and focusing additional growth within the boundaries of the urban village while maintaining affordable housing alternatives throughout North Beacon Hill.

Finally, the committee’s plan shall encourage the development and acquisition of additional public open space.”

Community members were very vocal about the importance of preserving, enhancing and improving the day-to-day life of residents and merchants in the North Beacon Hill community. This section outlines goals, policies and strategies to maintain and create choices for living, working and playing in the North Beacon Hill neighborhood.

This community values and wants to build on the following unique combination of characteristics: its location close to downtown with its commercial district on the ridge; its neighborhood-scaled commercial district with goods and services reflecting the diverse ethnic and cultural population; its beautiful parks and open spaces; and a family-oriented community inclusive of a broad range of incomes, cultures, and family sizes. The following Goals and Strategies are intended to strengthen these characteristics.

Note: Numbers in parentheses, such as (NBH-G1), after Goals and Policies refer to the original Neighborhood Plan Goals and Policies as they were incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. Refer to the Appendix to see how the proposed Comp Plan Amendments update the Neighborhood Plan with new and revised goals and policies that emerged from the 2009 Update process.



Goal 1

A well defined mixed-use residential neighborhood where the lives of Beacon Hill residents are enhanced, in part, through affordable and diverse housing options available throughout the neighborhood. (NBH-G1 amended)

Discussion

Community members are interested in promoting options that work for an economically and ethnically diverse community. Rising housing prices are making it difficult for families to remain in their homes and many in the community have extended families in need of larger homes. Of concern is the fact that new construction is often expensive and/or doesn't meet the needs of larger families.

Policies

1.A. Allow alternative housing types, such as cottage housing, in single family zones to support affordable choices while preserving the single family character. (NBH-P6 amended)

1.B. Encourage a mix of unit prices and sizes through active use of incentives, direct City funding, and surplus property programs. (NBH-P3 amended)

1.C. Encourage affordable, family-sized homes through incentives, direct City funding, and surplus property programs. In particular, strive to preserve, or when needed, replace affordable family-sized apartments.

1.D. Encourage a balance of affordable rental and homeownership housing through incentives, direct City funding, and surplus property programs.

Strategies

1. Use City funding to leverage other funding to preserve existing and create new subsidized housing.

2. Apply Comprehensive Plan affordable housing targets to the Beacon Hill Urban Village and periodically evaluate progress.

3. Set affordable rental and home ownership housing objectives and use incentives, direct City funding, and surplus property programs to fill gaps.

4. Provide support to low-income homeowners with weatherization and property rehabilitation assistance and property tax exemption.

Goal 2

A vibrant mix of housing close to the light rail station.

Discussion

A number of comments about light rail also included concern that housing will become unaffordable around the station and negatively impact populations that rely more on public transportation. Residents whose families have lived in the neighborhood over generations are interested in staying in the neighborhood for generations to come, and newcomers want to be able to afford to live in the neighborhood.

Policies

2.A. Encourage the development of housing close to the light rail station.

2.B. Capture the opportunity created by light rail to support affordable housing development close to the light rail station by including homes appropriate for different family sizes, so that residents are able to stay in the community, even as the housing market changes over time.

Strategies

1. Leverage public funding to support affordable housing close to light rail station.

2. Prioritize the provision of affordable workforce housing if incentive zoning is used in the Station Area Overlay District.

Goal 3

An urban village with a strong overall business district image and identity that is home to a variety of commercial services, including a grocery store and a mix of small, local and ethnic businesses. (NBH-Gg amended)

Discussion

The existing commercial district is neighborhood-based and largely comprised of small, local, immigrant and refugee-owned businesses. While the arrival of light rail service presents an opportunity to increase the customer base of these businesses, community members expressed concern about the potential for commercial rents to increase around the station, and thus negatively impact the small, ethnic businesses that are a positive and defining characteristic of the neighborhood.

Policies

3.A. Support a continuing mix of small businesses and encourage new small businesses by providing technical assistance and access to financing. (NBH-P5 amended)

3.B. Retain local access to food, including a grocery store in the commercial core.

3.C. Promote services that can serve neighborhood residents who commute by light rail, such as childcare, close to the station.

Strategies

1. Strengthen the North Beacon Hill

Business Association in order for the business owners to work together and with the community to create a neighborhood business district that serves the community. The business association can also provide a venue for its members to raise concerns to the City as well as pursue grants and technical assistance. Potential partners might include

- Counselors to America's Small Business (SCORE)/Small Business Development Center,
- Community Capital Development, and
- Beacon Business/Property Owner Organization.

2. Explore strategies to support long-term affordable commercial space including new and existing models of financing mixed-use development projects that provide affordable commercial space as well as affordable housing in City-funded mixed-use buildings.

3. Maintain the remainder of parcels

and storefronts north and south of the immediate station area along Beacon Avenue S. for new and small businesses.

4. Pursue improvements to the business district such as streetscape amenities, including benches and banners.

Potential Partners include

- Office of Economic Development, and
- Beacon Business/Property Owner Organization.

5. Work with the King County Public Health Food and Facilities program to promote on-street food vending.

6. Encourage retention of existing or development of a new grocery store.

7. Improve the business district to make it more inviting using the Neighborhood Business District Grant Award Program.



Goal 4

A range of well-maintained parks, community and open spaces in the urban village core with programs that accommodate a variety of uses and diversity of users.

Discussion

Many community members indicated the diversity of the neighborhood as one of the most important characteristics of the neighborhood. They suggested that parks and open space be designed and programmed to accommodate users of diverse ages, interests and cultures. Much of the open space is owned and developed by Seattle Parks and Recreation, but there are other opportunities in the street rights-of-way (ROW), at the light rail station and as part of private development.

Policies

- 4.A.** Preserve and support the expansion of the role of El Centro as a cultural and service center, including current social services such as childcare and the food bank.
- 4.B.** Seek to create small pocket parks spread throughout the urban village, either through City acquisition or private development.

Strategies

- 1.** Work with El Centro to create a civic gathering space at El Centro.
- 2.** Work with El Centro to maintain and improve the children's play area at El Centro.
- 3.** Improve and maintain Jose Rizal Park and establish pedestrian and bicycle connections from the village center to the park.

- 4.** Implement the Parks and Green Spaces Levy project to renovate and improve Beacon Hill Playground.
- 5.** By means of the Parks and Green Spaces Levy, continue further development of Jefferson Park Master Plan and the construction of a skate park.
- 6.** As funding becomes available create additional children's structured and unstructured play areas in the urban village.
- 7.** Work with Seattle Public Schools to develop a park/playground at Beacon Hill Elementary.
- 8.** Sponsor activities and events so that people can get to know each other and their many cultures.
- 9.** Improve greenbelts by removing invasive vegetation, protecting from encroachment and adding or maintaining trails.

Goal 5

North Beacon Hill is an active and safe neighborhood for a diversity of people, throughout the day and evening.

Discussion

Many community members expressed concern about public safety in the neighborhood. Some thought the presence of the light rail station would bring additional eyes to the street and thus help deter crime and violence while others wondered if the opposite would prove true.

Policies

- 5.A.** Encourage additional eyes on the street over the course of the day and evening through community programs and festivals, the design of new developments and other means.

Strategies

- 1.** Pursue employing Park Rangers at Jefferson Park.
- 2.** Request an increase in police bike patrols through the neighborhood.
- 3.** Explore making North Beacon Hill an Alcohol Impact Area.

S. Lander Festival Street.

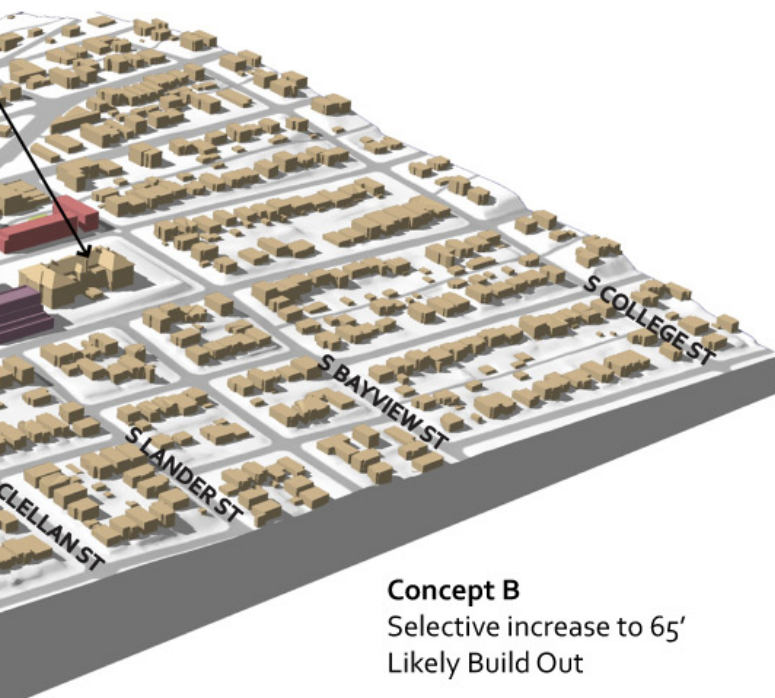
Beacon Avenue S at 15th Ave S Looking South



These building height concepts were created from community discussion and review from meetings that summer and fall. Using tools such as urban form zoning, and street design plans, the community will further define the vision to achieve the goals and vision of their neighborhood plan. See appendix for more details.

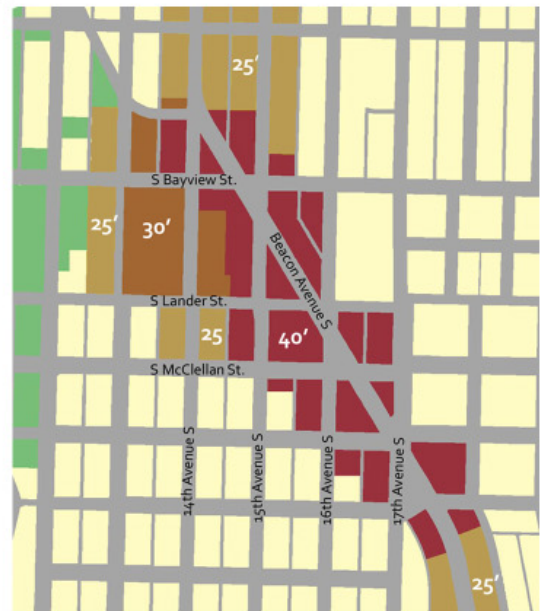
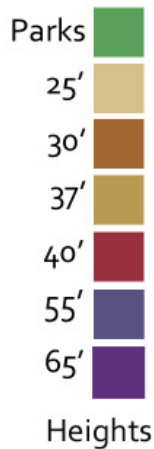


Concept A
 Selective
 increase to 50'
 Likely Build Out

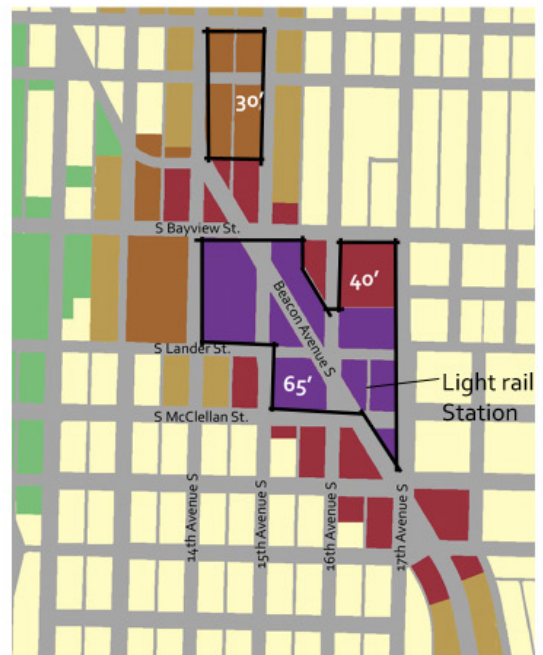


Concept B
 Selective increase to 65'
 Likely Build Out

 Recommended for further study



Existing Height Limits



Recommended Height Limits

discussions in spring 2009 and refined with community urban design framework plans, neighborhood design guidelines, and the desired form and characteristics of this Town Center to provide a detailed appendix for additional land use recommendations.

Shaping a Transit-Oriented Town Center

Community members stressed the importance of preserving the diversity of residents and merchants in the neighborhood while strengthening the core town center around the light rail station. This section outlines goals, policies and strategies to help strike this important balance.

The existing Beacon Hill town center already possesses many admirable characteristics. It has a neighborhood scaled commercial district and is a family oriented community that includes a light rail station, library, grocery store and variety of shops and services. Future planning initiatives will focus on strengthening the vitality of the retail including job development, enhancing housing choices and improving pedestrian safety and comfort.

Goal 6

A civic gathering space appropriate and flexible for the diversity of cultures living in the neighborhood.

Discussion

Many community members expressed a desire for a gathering place that could accommodate specific cultural and interest groups. Given the diversity of cultures and ethnicities represented in the neighborhood, a common and flexible gathering place that can accommodate a variety of gatherings and activities is desirable and more achievable than a multitude of separate venues. While Seattle Parks and Recreation has significant experience with community centers and would be a valuable partner in considering ideas, a cultural gathering space could also result from the actions of non-profits, organizations and/or private developers.

Policies

- 6.A.** Support a multicultural gathering venue.
- 6.B.** Continue to develop neighborhood specific cultural programming and design elements in Seattle's parks.

Strategies

- 1.** Prepare design and development guidelines for a multicultural gathering venue, whether publicly or privately developed.
- 2.** Seek to print material in appropriate languages and have multilingual staff.



Key places and connections.

3. As funding becomes available, acquire land for future development of a multicultural gathering space.

4. Pursue a relationship with one of the city Farmers Market organizations to bring a Farmers Market to North Beacon Hill.

5. Continue to provide access to the City arts and cultural programs and resources to plan and fund arts and cultural organizations, projects and events.

Goal 7

Higher density development surrounds the light rail station and is responsive to the neighborhood context at a variety of scales, from single family houses to multistory buildings.

Discussion

Community members stressed the importance of appropriate transitions between areas of taller and wider buildings to those of shorter and smaller buildings, particularly when the smaller buildings are one and two story residences. Neighbors also expressed concern and frustration over some growing infrastructure needs that are needed to support more comprehensive internet access throughout North Beacon Hill.

Policies

7.A. Encourage sensitive transitions between development densities throughout the urban village; in particular between the Town Center and surrounding residential area. (NBH-P1 amended)

Strategies

1. Rezone key opportunity sites to encourage redevelopment of parcels around the light rail station in a manner that incorporates housing, commercial services (such as a grocery store and small businesses) and amenities. (See page 11.)

2. Evaluate a height increase within the Town Center for some but not all properties that have a current height limit of 40 feet, allowing up to 65 feet with required street and upper level setbacks. (See page 11.)

3. Where land use changes are considered, give particular attention to zone transitions.

4. Evaluate whether the Westward Apartments on Beacon Ave. S. should be included within the Station Area Overlay District boundary and rezoned to reflect the existing use and an appropriate transition to single-family areas to the north.

5. Evaluate water service / fire flow capacity requirements of higher density development under some zoning options, and develop measures to ensure flow needs are met. Evaluate potential need for area-specific sewer pipe infrastructure enhancements.

6. Develop and implement strategies to construct integrated broadband service throughout the North Beacon Hill Urban Village.

Goal 8

A redevelopment of El Centro de la Raza that builds on the site's history and serves as a defining civic element of the Town Center.

Discussion

Many community members acknowledged the importance of El Centro as a community cornerstone and resource. A strong desire was expressed to keep and expand many of the community services such as child care currently offered at El Centro. In exchange for the land use changes sought by El Centro in their redevelopment, many community members expressed a desire to ensure the

ground floor uses at El Centro contribute to an enlivened pedestrian environment, through a variety of retail uses. A civic open space adjacent to El Centro, and an accessible public viewpoint were both mentioned as desirable public benefits to be included in the redevelopment. Many community members underlined the importance of providing a range of housing choices in terms of unit size and affordability. (continued)

Goal 8 (continued)

Policies

8.A. Preserve the role of El Centro as a cultural and service center, with social services such as childcare and food bank.

8.B. Support mixed-use development on the El Centro site through appropriate zoning or regulatory changes.

Strategies

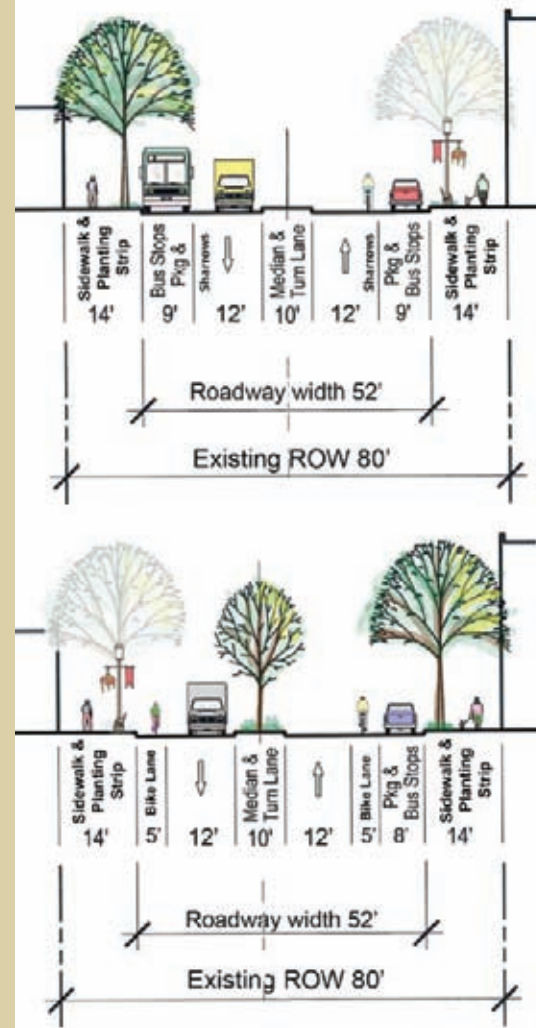
1. Convene a three-way partnership of El Centro, the community, and the City to create a development plan for the site that guides future development. Elements could include the following

- identification of the desired types of development along South Lander Street so as to augment the open space and create a larger civic area that is readily

- identifiable as an inviting community gathering space;
- incorporation of a publicly accessible viewpoint over the neighborhood—such as a view tower—as part of the redevelopment of El Centro;
- inclusion of affordable housing in the redevelopment of El Centro,
- consideration of a “market arcade” along S. Lander St.; and
- preservation of the historic character of El Centro’s former school building.

2. Change the land use and zoning to support the envisioned mixed use development on the El Centro site.

3. Include the El Centro site within the Station Area Overlay District boundary.



Streetscape Concepts: Beacon Ave S.

Goal 9

A Town Center urban form that transitions from denser development at the Town Center core to less dense and single-family residential neighborhoods in a manner that is responsive to the context and character of the North Beacon Hill neighborhood.

Discussion

The existing town center area is developed, but well below the amount allowed under current zoning, and in many instances not reflective of the desired future

character of a more vibrant and diverse mix of shops, restaurants and housing. Additionally, the close proximity of single family and low-density multifamily areas means that there are limited opportunities for higher density development in the station area.

Policies

9.A. Guide future development and potential rezones so they contribute to an urban form and character at the Town Center that is responsive to the North Beacon Hill vision.

Strategies

- 1.** Develop neighborhood design guidelines and an urban design framework plan for the North Beacon Hill station area. Framework elements could include
 - building height options,
 - incentive features such as affordable housing,
 - open space, and
 - pedestrian connections.
- 2.** Amend the Beacon Hill Neighborhood Design Guidelines to incorporate the goals of the urban design framework plan.

Goal 10

An urban village that is a pleasant place to walk, with good access to alternative transportation; where lively, friendly and safe streetscapes encourage pedestrians and bicyclists and where roadways are seen as public access for walkers, bicycles, and buses as well as cars. (NBH-G3 amended)

Discussion

Many community members proposed actions that would decrease the vehicular traffic on Beacon Ave. S. in the town center and provide better environments for pedestrians as people meet their daily needs. Gathering places, human services, schools, childcare centers and daily destinations should be readily and pleasantly accessible on foot as well as on bike, for a variety of ages. Community members also noted the presence of overhead utility wires as a detriment to the aesthetic quality of the town center environment.

Policies

10.A. Enhance pedestrian safety along key streets within the Urban Village and discourage projects that would hinder pedestrian access. (NBH-P9 and NBH-P10 amended)

10.B. Use the Pedestrian Master Plan, which recognizes the importance of Beacon Ave. S., as a tool for identifying and prioritizing pedestrian improvements. (NBH-p19 amended)

10.C. Use the Bicycle Master Plan, which recognizes the importance of

Beacon Ave. S., to identify, prioritize and improve bicycle connections to Downtown, Jefferson Park and Rainier Valley. (NBH-p19 amended)

Strategies

1. Implement specific Southeast Transportation Study (SETS) Projects

- #4: Add a missing sidewalk link along Beacon Ave. S. at S. McClellan St. to provide a continuous sidewalk through the landscaped island, and
- #6: Improve safety at the intersection of Beacon Ave. S. and S. Stevens St.

2. Complete a conceptual design for Beacon Ave. S. from the town center to S. Spokane St.; working within the existing right-of-way. Consider extending the median north along Beacon Ave. S., planting street trees, providing opportunities for sidewalk cafés, and other features such as bike lanes, street furniture and pedestrian lighting, within the existing right-of-way. See street section diagram page 14 (*Note: An operational analysis of any proposed street design changes is necessary to assess impacts upon levels of congestion, especially at intersections, and parking impacts. Both existing and future conditions will need to be studied. Currently there is no funding for analysis, engineering or construction.*).

3. Provide benches at regular intervals along streets in the station areas, at bus stops and along major walking routes (e.g. Beacon Ave.). Consider implementing an adopt-a-bench program.

4. Explore the option of a traffic reroute that would redirect through-traffic off Beacon Ave. S. in the commercial center.

- Consider rerouting through-traffic from Beacon Ave. S. to 15th Ave. S. at S. McClellan St. and back to Beacon Ave. S. at the 15th Ave. S. intersection. By reducing traffic on Beacon Ave., the Beacon Ave. streetscape would be made more appealing for pedestrians and bicyclists and still be able to adequately accommodate transit. A “traffic-calmed” Beacon Ave. S. would most likely promote further streetscape improvements. (*Note: The re-routing strategy would require a more detailed modeling and operational analysis to understand the traffic volumes that would be diverted, effects upon congestion especially at intersections, geometric requirements, and the possible need to acquire additional right-of-way. Both existing and future conditions would need to be studied before any decision were made about this alternative. Currently, there is no funding for such an analysis, engineering, design, or construction.*)

5. Consider transforming existing alleys into a pedestrian network that would link key civic destinations with the surrounding residential area.

6. Pursue opportunities to underground utility wires in the neighborhood.

Appendices

The appendices are posted online at www.seattle.gov/dpd/NeighborhoodPlanUpdates

Work Plan

The attached work plan adds Actions to the Goals, Policies and Strategies and formats them into a document that can be used to guide the Community's and City's work to achieve the goals of this update.

Glossary

Updating the Comprehensive Plan

This document shows how the revised North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan updates and weaves together the Goals and Policies from the 1999 Neighborhood Plan and those that emerged from this 2009 Update process.

Recommended Changes to the City's Comprehensive Plan

Neighborhood Plan

completed in 1999.

Baseline Report

dated March 2009, includes highlights of the 1999 Neighborhood Plan and 2009 statistics.

Meeting Materials and Notes

from the March, May and September 2009 meetings, and Planning Outreach Liaison meetings.

Acknowledgments

In acknowledgment of the participation of thousands of committed Seattleites.

Including:

Greater Duwamish District Council
North Beacon Community Council
Feet First
Great City
International Sustainable Solutions
Scan Design Foundation
Sound Transit
University of Washington, College of Built Environments
Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee
El Centro de la Raza

Planning Outreach Liaisons

Somali speaking community
Amharic speaking community
Oromiffa speaking community
Tigrinya speaking community
African American community
Vietnamese speaking community
Tagalog speaking community
Chinese speaking community
Khmer speaking community
Seniors & People Living with Disabilities
Youth
Native American & Alaskan Native communities
Spanish speaking community

Commissions

Seattle Planning Commission
Seattle Design Commission

City of Seattle Lead Participants

Department of Planning and Development
Department of Neighborhoods
Seattle Department of Transportation
Seattle Parks and Recreation
Office of Housing

The City of Seattle Interdepartmental Team incorporated the contributions of over 20 agencies and departments.



