



Seattle
Office of Planning &
Community Development



Seattle Northgate

REGIONAL CENTER PLAN

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Land Acknowledgement

The City of Seattle acknowledges that we are on the homelands of the Coast Salish peoples, who continue to steward these lands and waters as they have since time immemorial. We recognize Tribal Nations and Native organizations, who actively create, shape, and contribute to our thriving communities. We offer land acknowledgement because Native land was taken by force and colonized to form the United States as we know it today. The City is committed to engaging with and amplifying the voices of Native peoples.

So often these statements are performative and perfunctory. People say and hear the words without understanding what they mean or why they're being said. The words are just the starting point. It is our job to ensure they have real impact, for our Native community and for those of us not in the Native community who have so much to learn.

For more information on how an Indigenous planning lens and “Native Neighborhood” concepts were brought to this plan, please see the **Native Neighborhood Planning** section of this document, starting on page 30.

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Introduction

Welcome to Northgate, Seattle's northernmost Regional Center. This neighborhood has a longstanding identity as a retail shopping district with strong regional transportation connections. Today, stronger transit integration and redevelopment of many key sites introduce the possibility of a refreshed identity for the Northgate of the future. This chapter will help set the stage for the Vision, Goals, and Policies that define this Regional Center Plan by sharing relevant history and context for this important place in the Puget Sound.



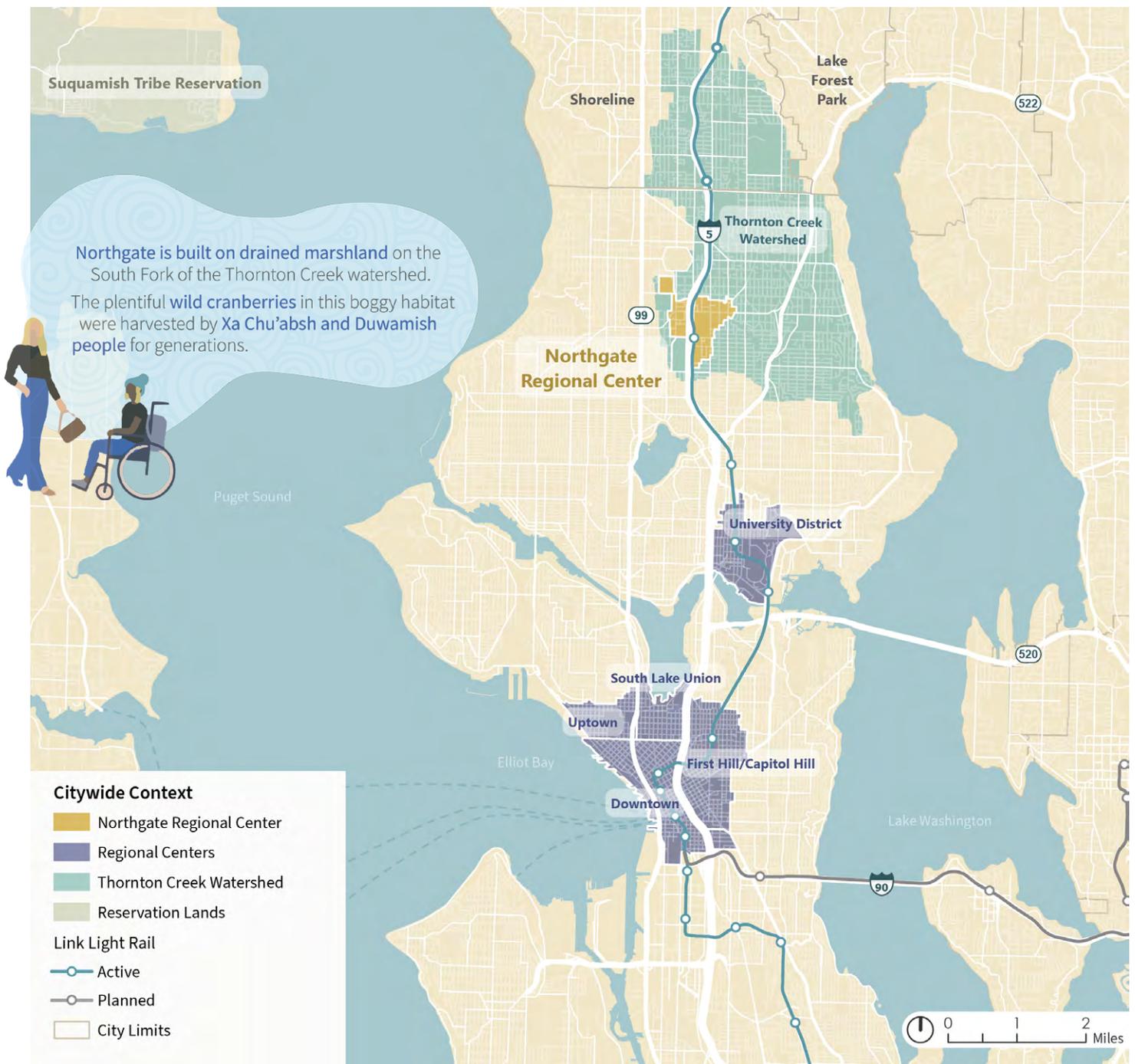
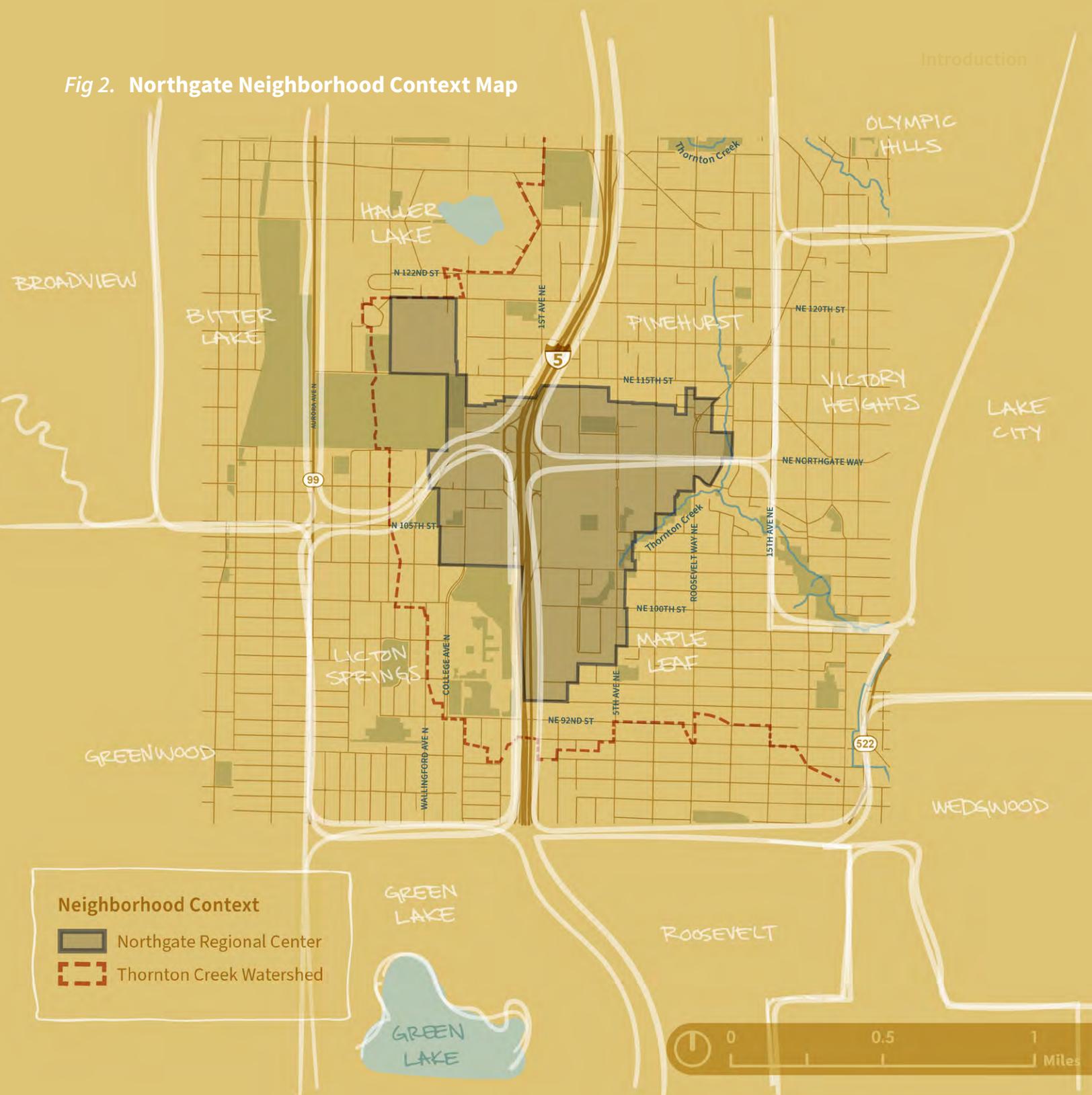


Fig 1. Northgate Regional Context Map

The Northgate Regional Center is situated at the south end of the Thornton Creek watershed and at the northern limits of the city of Seattle, six miles north of Downtown. Once a cranberry bog, trapping and foraging location for Coast Salish peoples, and habitat for abundant Chinook salmon, birds, and muskrats, the area today is one of the most

densely developed and populated parts of the city. A major interstate bisects the area, and Northgate continues to bear the markings of having come of age in the mid-20th century golden age of car-centric development, with wide arterials, long blocks, and large swaths of parking lots. While many fish passage barriers prevent Lake Washington salmon

Fig 2. Northgate Neighborhood Context Map



from reaching Northgate, all the stormwater runoff from Northgate impacts downstream salmon habitat.

The area today is relatively affordable and home to a diverse group of residents. Regional amenities such as the Northwest Hospital, North Seattle College, and a major shopping center are core to its identity.

With a Sound Transit Link light rail station and a King County Metro transit hub, the Northgate subarea also serves as a crucial regional connection point for residents of neighboring communities such as Haller Lake, Pinehurst, Licton Springs, Maple Leaf, Victory Heights, Lake City, and Green Lake.



Fig 3. Northgate Regional Center Map

- | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|------------------------|---|---------------------------|
|  | Movie Theater |  | Seattle Public Library |  | Northgate Regional Center |
|  | Retail Center |  | Community Center |  | Parks and Open Space |
|  | Police Precinct |  | Place of Worship |  | Link Light Rail |
|  | Fire Station |  | Hospital | | |
|  | Public School |  | Licensed Childcare | | |

What makes Northgate Special?

Amenities for the young and young at heart

Northgate is home to several senior living facilities, multiple daycare centers, a library, community center, movie theater, and special recreation amenities such as a skate park and indoor ice rink.

Housing affordability

Housing prices in Northgate are relatively affordable when compared to citywide rates, with a high concentration of rental units. A new fully income-restricted affordable housing development is on the verge of opening and located directly adjacent to the light rail station.

Strong commercial sector

Regional shopping at anchor retailers is complemented by local restaurants, businesses, and service providers. This concentration of commercial activity makes Northgate a convenient place to live and a regional destination. The current redevelopment of the mall site and access via regional transit gives promise to this identity carrying forward for the long term.

Diverse community

Northgate is a racially and ethnically diverse center, home to a wide range of cultural communities. Sites such as the Idris Mosque, Korean Catholic Church, and Latvian Community Center are examples of gathering places for different groups in this Regional Center.

Transportation options

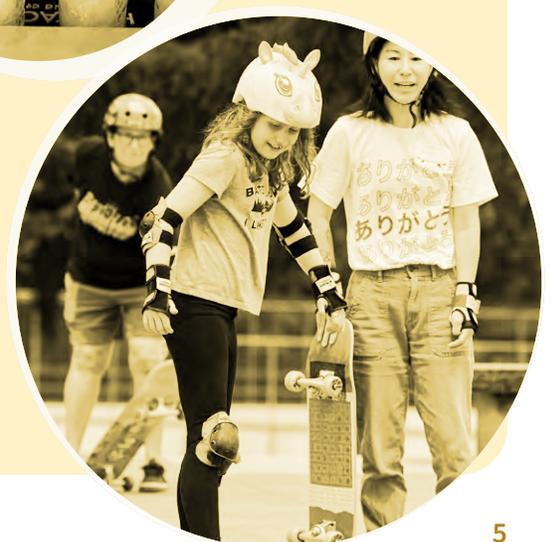
The I-5 corridor, Link light rail station, and Metro transit center make Northgate a convenient place for many people to live. Access to opportunity is high for residents of the neighborhood with these different mobility options.

Urban creek ecosystem

Thornton Creek is the largest salmon-bearing creek system in Seattle, including a south branch that extends into Northgate and a north branch that extends into Lake City and Shoreline. The eastern border of the Northgate Regional Center includes public access to creek and wetland trails.

Opportunity for transformative action

With a number of vacant and work-in-progress development sites, now is the time to make lasting change for Northgate's next chapter as an urban neighborhood. This includes exciting potential for advancing the vision of a Native Neighborhood.



Clockwise from top: A bartender mixes drinks at Watershed Pub; Girls learn to skateboard with Skate Like a Girl; and an Indian dance group

The History of Northgate

Carved by glacial progressions, the ravines, hills, valleys, and waterways of the Thornton Creek watershed nurtured a rich ecosystem that sustained plants, fish, wildlife, and the early humans who crossed the Bering land bridge approximately 20,000 years ago to arrive in the Puget Sound. Surrounded by fir trees, water, and abundant natural resources, Coast Salish peoples established permanent settlements in the area. The area, now referred to as Northgate, was home to a cranberry bog and streambeds teeming with life, including the keystone species Chinook salmon.

With the arrival of European settlers in the mid-19th century, competition for these natural resources resulted in Indigenous dispossession of land, dismantling a way of living that had been in place since time immemorial. The Treaty of Point Elliott (1855), an intergovernmental agreement between the U.S. government and sovereign Native nations

and foundational law, reserves fishing, hunting, and gathering rights for Native people. It was also used as the legal basis for removing Native people from areas desired for white settlement, making way for development that destroyed natural habitats. The protections for fishing and hunting promised in the treaty were weakly enforced, if considered at all, in the subsequent decades of growth and settlement.

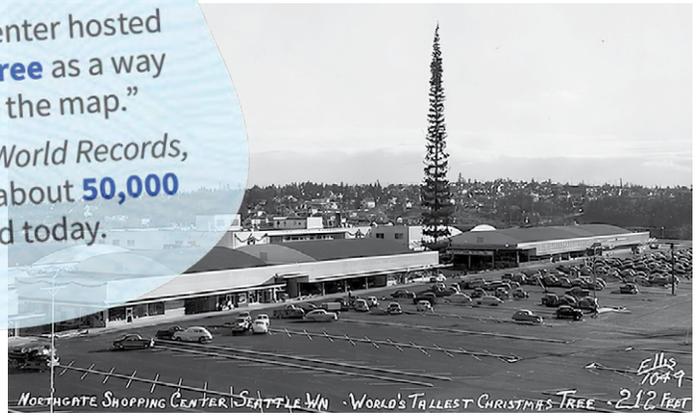
Logging, as well as road and trolley line construction in the North Seattle area, ensued when the Puget Mill established operations in the Lake City area and settlers established homesteads. The bogs and lowlands were drained and/or covered to convert to other uses. As automobile use began to boom in the early 20th century, the backwater and suburban character of the Northgate area began to shift as it became more accessible. Its destiny as a regional commercial center was sealed in 1950 with the opening of the Northgate Mall. The 62-



Oak Lake farm in present-day Northgate area (1895). Image: Museum of History & Industry (MOHAI), Seattle.



In 1950, the newly built Northgate Center hosted the **world's tallest cut Christmas tree** as a way to put the new development "on the map." According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, the **212-foot Douglas fir** weighed about **50,000 pounds** and still holds the record today.



acre site at the time was a groundbreaking design, one of the first to feature a central plaza of shops for pedestrians surrounded by parking lots—the classic suburban mall. In the 1960s, the portion of Interstate 5 traversing Seattle from North to South was completed, running to and through the Northgate area, resulting in more growth, spurring Mall expansion, and separating the east and west portions of the neighborhood.

Throughout this period of growth and expansion, Northgate has historically remained an affordable neighborhood for people from all walks of life. Though not completely insulated from the practice, housing in Northgate has had far less evidence and impacts of racially restrictive covenants than other parts of the city. Its location near major arterials and the highway has generally suppressed runaway growth in housing prices and supported greater



1952



1965

Fig 4. Evolution of the Northgate Mall Site, 1952-1974

The 1952 aerial photograph shows the Northgate mall area from the east prior to the construction of I-5. The aerial photograph from 1965 demonstrates the evolving footprint of the mall site and addition of I-5 to the west. By 1974, the Northgate Mall had been transformed to be a fully enclosed and climate-controlled space. Images: Museum of History & Industry (MOHAI), Seattle, and seattlepi.com.



1974



Fig 5. Current day aerial photograph of the Northgate Mall site (2024). Most of the previous mall site has been demolished, the light rail station is integrated, and increased residential density surrounds the site.

income, age, and racial diversity compared to other parts of Seattle. This position, however, also comes at a cost for resident wellbeing. The freeway interferes with walkability in the neighborhood and environmental impacts from the freeway, such as air quality and noise pollution, are prevalent in Northgate.

Growing environmental awareness and recognition of past harms in recent years have contributed to two landmark decisions bringing the City of Seattle and Tribal Nations closer together in a shared vision and management of the land and watershed. The Boldt Decision (1974) affirmed tribal rights to fish in usual and accustomed harvesting areas, while the Culvert Case (2018) mandated the replacement of culverts that have the worst impact on fish habitat by 2030. Documented in planning materials since the 1990s, the community has expressed a desire to move away from large swaths of pavement

and long blocks to create a more integrated area, reconnecting with nature and the land's origins as a place of nurture and sustenance.

Today, Northgate is poised for transformative change that builds a shared future out of lessons from the past. Major stream restoration projects in the Thornton Creek watershed are already underway, with positive impacts for the natural areas of Northgate. The introduction of the Link light rail station and the Kraken Community Iceplex has spurred a refreshed relevance for the neighborhood, with more redevelopment at the mall underway. Continued efforts are being made to encourage pedestrian and bicycle-friendly ways of getting around for Northgate's diverse residents and visitors.

Why Plan Now?

The City of Seattle is expected to reach one million people by 2050, continuing recent robust population and economic growth trends. The One Seattle Plan prepares for this expected growth with an updated citywide growth strategy. As a key part of the strategy, Regional Centers (referred to as Urban Centers in the previous Comprehensive Plan) are planned to accommodate a significant share, nearly half of the city's growth in jobs and housing, over the next 20 years. These centers also serve as regional hubs for activity and transportation, with access to regional transit and a density of office, retail, and cultural and entertainment uses.

Northgate (along with Downtown, the University District, First Hill/Capitol Hill, Uptown, South Lake Union, and Ballard) is a designated Regional Center in the One Seattle Plan. Northgate was originally designated at a regional level in the 1990s by Puget Sound Regional Council and the Growth Management Planning Council. Subarea plans are a requirement for continued regional designation.

Broad goals and policies for Regional Centers are included in the Growth Strategy element of the One Seattle Plan. Subarea plans for each center, including Northgate, are adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan to provide more detailed policies and actions and reflect the unique characteristics of each place and address the needs and desires specific to residents and visitors to



Fig 6. Planning Framework for Coordinated Statewide and Local Growth

Source: PSRC, 2024

that area. Consistent with PSRC requirements and VISION 2050, subarea plans address a range of policy areas, including public services, transportation, economy, housing, land use, and the environment.

The most recent neighborhood plan for the Northgate Regional Center dates to 1993. More recent planning efforts include the Northgate Public Art Plan (2005) and the Northgate Urban Design Framework (2013). Much has changed since these previous efforts, including the extension of the Sound Transit Link light rail service to Northgate in October of 2021 and the initiation of major redevelopment of the Northgate Mall. After years of limited growth, Northgate is starting to experience new development and public investments that have the potential to transform the neighborhood. This fully updated subarea plan for Northgate includes analysis, policies, and actions that are intended to guide growth and change over the next 20 years, including continued growth in housing and jobs with investments that benefit both newcomers and existing residents.



Link train approaches Northgate Station. Image: Chip Rountree.

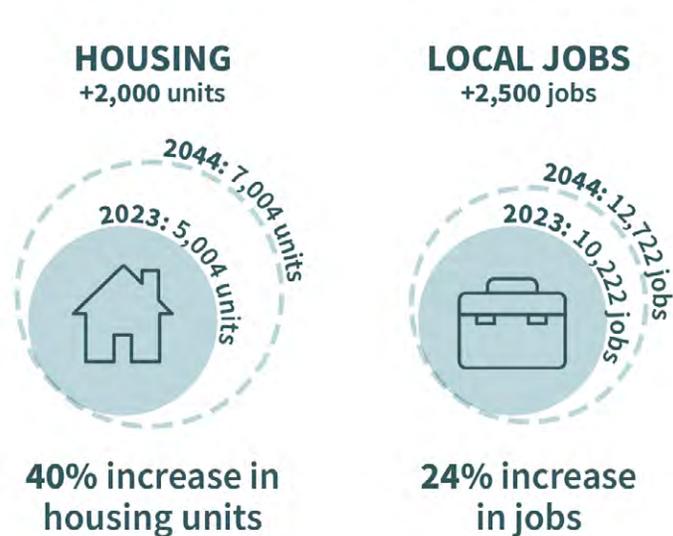
Planning Context

As a Regional Center, Northgate will play a key role in accommodating future growth in housing and jobs. The Growth Strategy element of the Comprehensive Plan includes targets for the minimum number of housing units and jobs planned for in each Regional Center. The targets calls for the addition of at least 2,000 housing units and 2,500 jobs in Northgate.

Current zoning within the center is sufficient to accommodate the adopted targets. However, there are several factors that point to the need to allow growth and development, particularly for housing, beyond the targeted levels. Market trends suggest that growth rates over the next 20 years in Northgate may greatly exceed trends from the last 20 years. In addition, increased accessibility to regional high-capacity transit is likely to support higher density development near the Link light rail station. Finally, Northgate has a role in providing an abundant and diverse supply of housing to address the persistent challenges of housing supply and affordability in Seattle and the broader region.

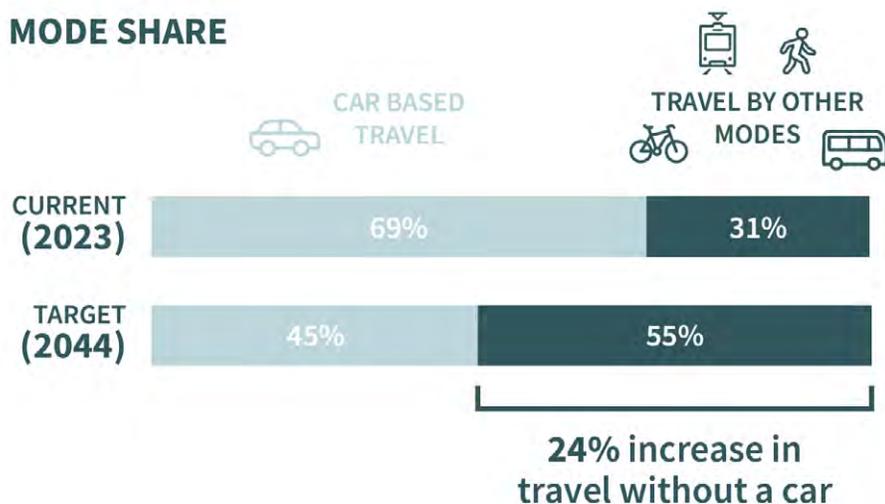
While doing so, the City also hopes to see a transformation in mobility patterns for Northgate.

Fig 7. Northgate Baselines and 2044 Targets for Growth



Sources: OFM population data, 2023; PSRC, summarized by City of Seattle 2023; Seva Workshop, 2024

Fig 8. Northgate Baselines and 2044 Targets for Mobility Patterns

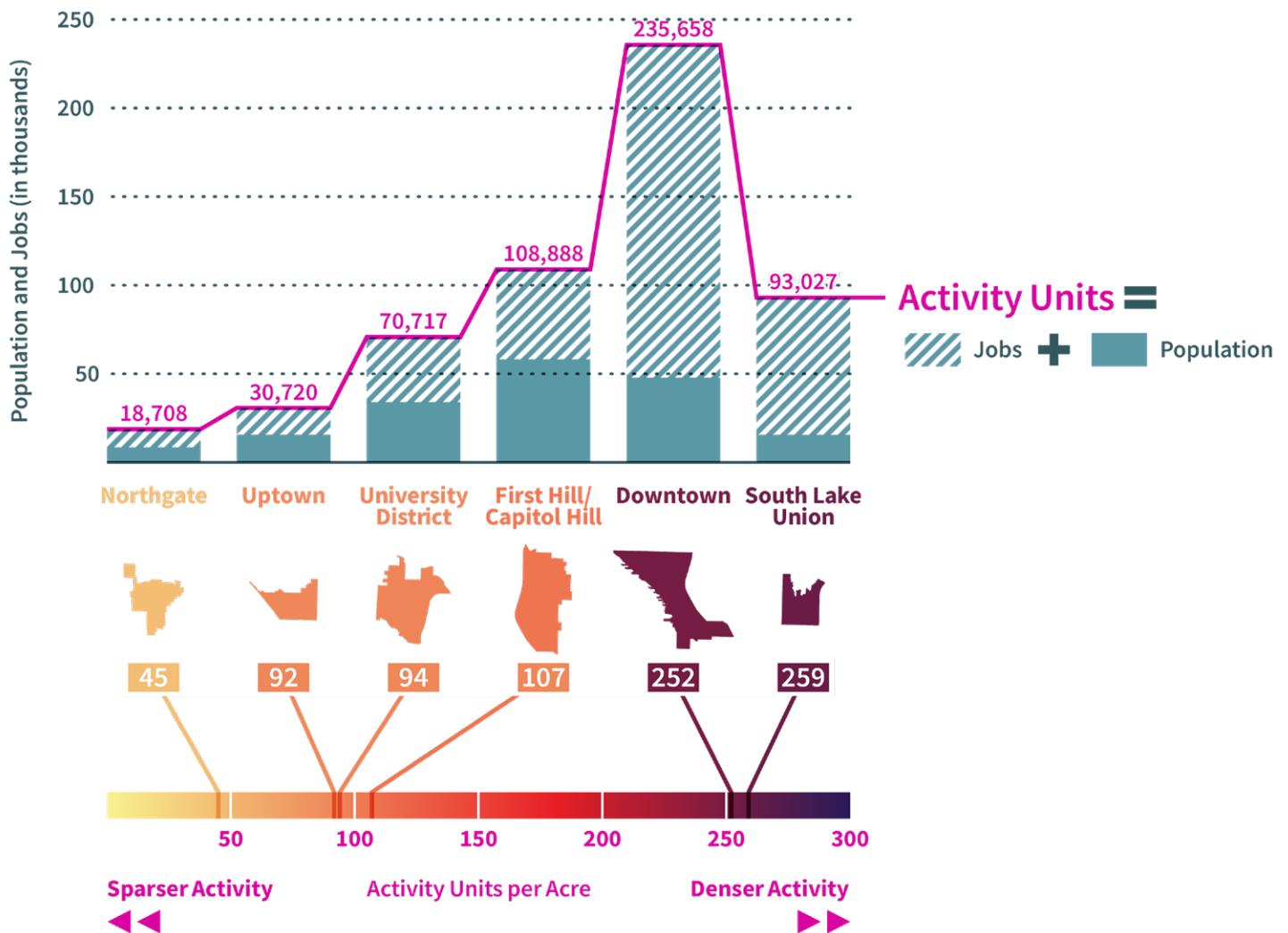


Source: Replica, Spring 2023; SDOT, 2025.

As focus areas for housing and jobs that provide for a critical mass of activity around the region’s high-capacity transit investments, such as Link light rail, Regional Centers are expected to be dense compact areas, now and into the future. Specifically, PSRC and GMPC define density in terms of activity units (population plus jobs) per acre within each center. The Northgate Regional Center currently includes

approximately 45 activity units per acre (see **Figure 9**). With future growth targets achieved, Northgate would reach at least 65 activity units per acre, and even higher levels of density with additional development that would be allowed under current and future anticipated zoning. At these levels, Northgate exceeds the minimum expectation of PSRC for designation as a Regional Growth Center.

Fig 9. Northgate's Activity Units in Context



Sources: OFM population data, 2023; PSRC, 2023; Seva Workshop, 2024

Fig 10. Percent Population Growth by Population Density for Seattle's Regional Centers



Sources: OFM population data, 2014-2023; Seva Workshop, 2024

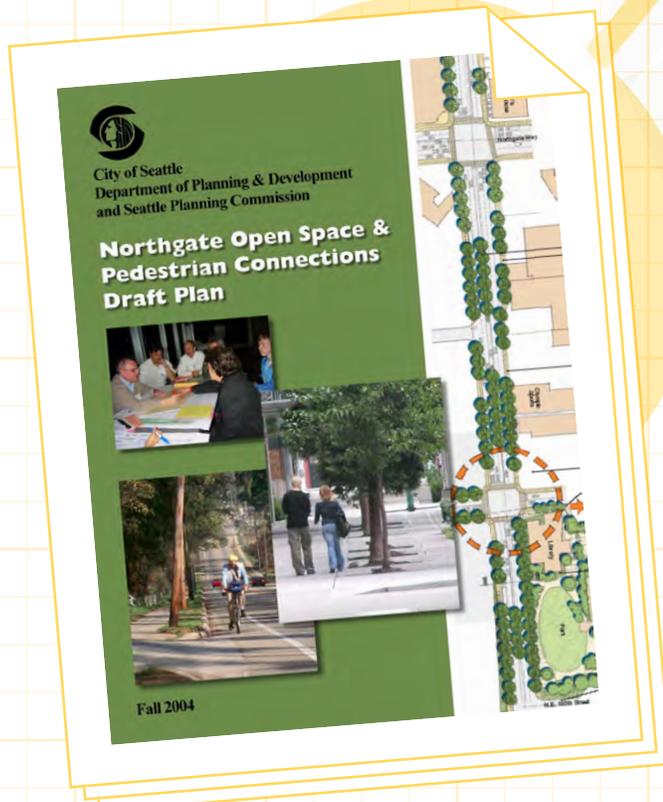
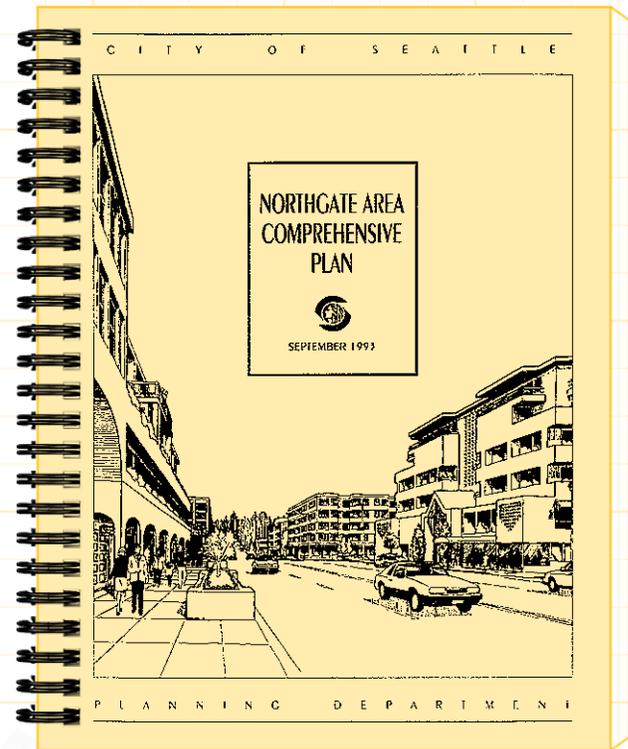
As shown in **Figure 10** above, compared with other Regional Centers in Seattle, Northgate is both the least dense and has experienced the slowest increase in population over the past decade. These trends reflect factors such as the closure of the Northgate Mall, a lag in new housing while light rail construction was underway, and the need for investment in neighborhood quality features such as green space and walkability.

Among the objectives of this subarea plan are to identify the policies and actions that will prepare the Northgate Regional Center to experience more robust growth in the coming years. Policies and actions in the chapters that follow address the need for investments that help Northgate shift its orientation toward becoming a more lively, walkable, transit-oriented community and land use strategies that accommodate a broad range of residential and employment activities.

Past Plans

Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan (1993)

The Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan was developed by the City of Seattle Planning Department Staff in collaboration with a Northgate Advisory Committee. In anticipation of growth and the initiation of a regional high-capacity transit system in 2002, the plan was heavily motivated by a need to address traffic congestion in the interim decade. The vision of this plan was to “transform a thriving, but underutilized, auto-oriented office/retail area into a vital, mixed-use center of concentrated development surrounded by healthy single-family neighborhoods.” The three pillars of the plan were (1) a transportation mode shift away from automobiles, (2) a land use strategy of dense core development to take full advantage of the available capacity with strategic transition to surrounding neighborhoods, and (3) improving both the quantity and quality of open space to serve the anticipated growth in daytime population and to offset the environmental impact of the dense core.

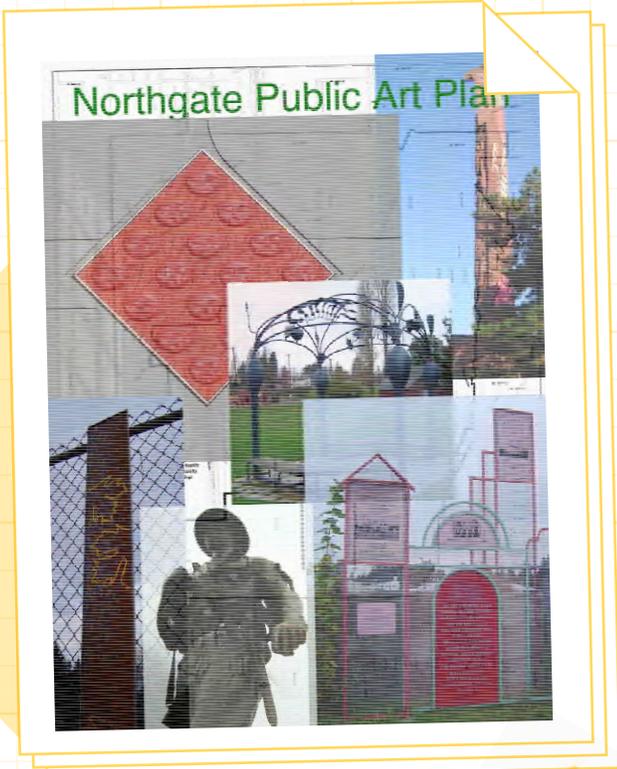


Northgate Open Space & Pedestrian Connections Draft Plan (2004)

Including a review of existing policies, guidelines, regulations, and community engagement, this plan articulates how the City can realize the community vision for more open spaces and safe connections for pedestrians and bicyclists in the Northgate area.

Northgate Public Art Plan (2005)

This Art Plan, developed by the Department of Planning and Development and Office of Arts and Culture in partnership with the community, is a resource to guide planners, administrators, and public artists in developing public art experiences in Northgate.



Northgate Technical Urban Design Guidelines (2006)

A 2005 Technical Design Charrette built on and articulated the design goals and pedestrian desires identified in the 2004 Open Space and Pedestrian Connections Plan for Northgate. The guidelines have a particular focus on pedestrian right of way.

Northgate Urban Design Framework (2013)

This design framework continues advancing the 1993 vision for Northgate in light of adding several new amenities. The framework recommends several urban design improvements to enhance livability, a better environment, and a well-functioning community. These include support for future transit-oriented development with high-quality public places next to the Link transit station, enhanced transit services and operations, and investments to improve pedestrian and bicycling mobility and safety.



Northgate Technical Urban Design Guidelines

Background and Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure continuity, consistency and urban design excellence for the Northgate urban center, with a particular focus on the public right-of-way. The guidelines have been applied to the Northgate Commons/ERA Care project, the Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel, and the proposed development on the site of the Northgate Mall property. Future additions to these guidelines will address anticipated public and private development along the Northgate Way corridor.

These guidelines were developed in the 2005 Technical Design Charrette. They build on and articulate the design goals and pedestrian desire lines identified in the 2004 Open Space and Pedestrian Connections Plan. They provide specific design direction on key urban design components, including street tree species, pedestrian lighting specifications, and key locations for public art.

Project Design and Review Processes

During the design phase, projects are reviewed in various ways. Each project undergoes an environmental assessment, design review, and considerable public involvement with the community and other public agencies, such as King County Metro. There are different types of project review. The type of review depends on a project's location, whether public funds are expended, and the specific regulations to which it is subject.

Code Review: Land Use and Street Improvement Requirements

When the City reviews a project, it applies different standards to a project depending on its classification in the Land Use Code. In Northgate, these classifications include different street improvement requirements. Different requirements apply to streets designated as 'special landscaped arterials' (Roosevelt Avenue NE, 15th Avenue N.E., N.E. 100th Street, N.E. 103rd Street), green streets (Grid Avenue N.E., 8th Avenue N.E.) and major pedestrian streets

(Northgate Way, 5th Avenue NE). Typical street improvement standards include minimum sidewalk width, landscaping and, for major pedestrian streets, requirements that particular uses be present at street level. In addition to these street improvement requirements, other development standards, such as city-wide commercial or multi-family zone standards, are also applied to Northgate projects. Other review processes also play an important role. Design Commission review and Design Board review focus on applying principles of good urban design to help guide Northgate's public and private projects. Some of these design principles are articulated in the 5th Avenue NE Streetscape Design Plan, the Northgate Open Space & Pedestrian Connections Plan, the Northgate neighborhood-specific design guidelines, and this document.

Design Commission Review

The City Design Commission guides good design through its review of publicly funded projects and projects in the public right-of-way. The Com-

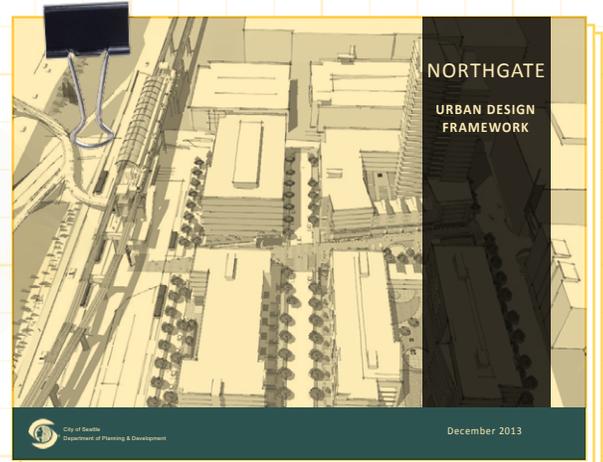
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Darell Vango, Seattle Design Commission
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Barbara E. Woods DPD/SPC, City of Seattle
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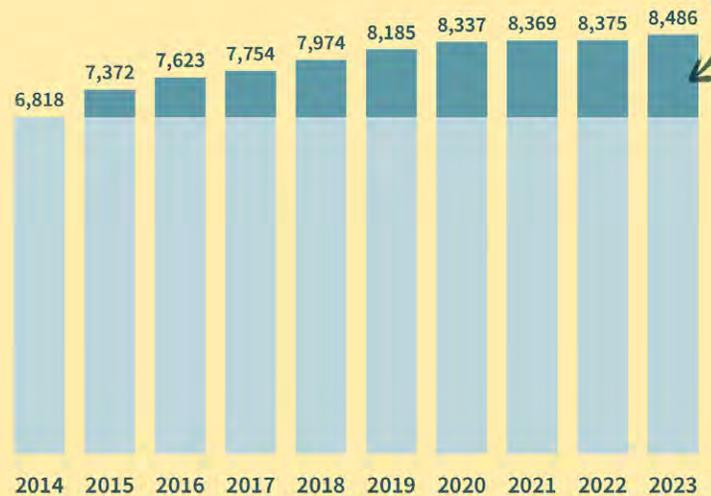


Northgate Today

Northgate’s population has steadily grown over the past decade, and today, the subarea is home to 8,486 people. Age demographics show a higher proportion of adults in their 20s and 30s than other parts of the city, aligned with the high prevalence of smaller-unit apartments, and among adults 70 or older, likely related to the retirement communities and assisted living facilities in the subarea.

The neighborhood is more ethnically and racially diverse than the city overall: 54% White, 15% Asian, 13% Black, 9% Hispanic or Latino, 7% Multiracial, 1% “Other,” and 0.5% American Indian or Alaska Native (AI/AN). Within the Seattle context, Northgate is home to many equity-priority communities, such as renters, lower-income households, and single-parent families. Community engagement identified small pockets of tight-knit communities across the Northgate area, with cultural anchors in place, such as the Idris Mosque, Latvian Community Center, Kraken Community Iceplex, and Korean Catholic Church, among others.

Fig 11. Northgate Population Growth, 2014-2023

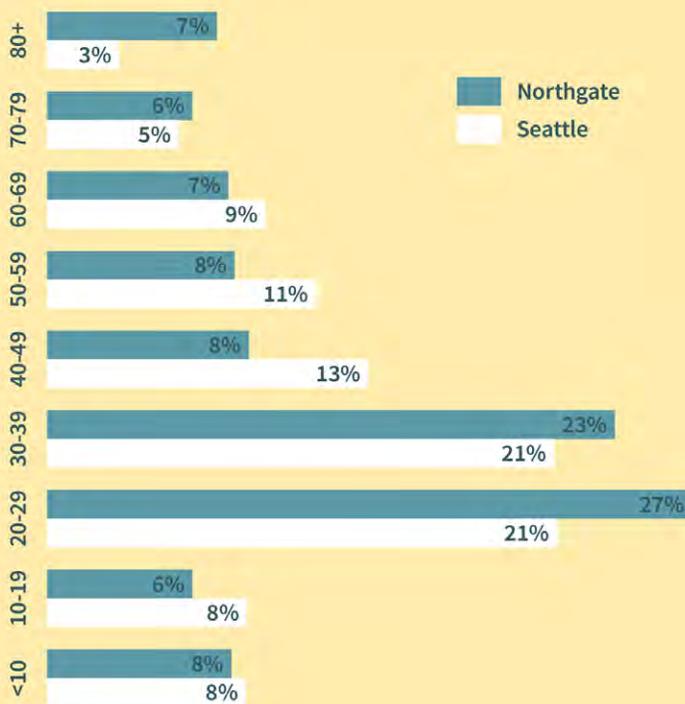


+24.5%

From 2014 to 2023, Northgate’s population grew by nearly a quarter, on par with the growth rate of Seattle as a whole over the same period, 23%.

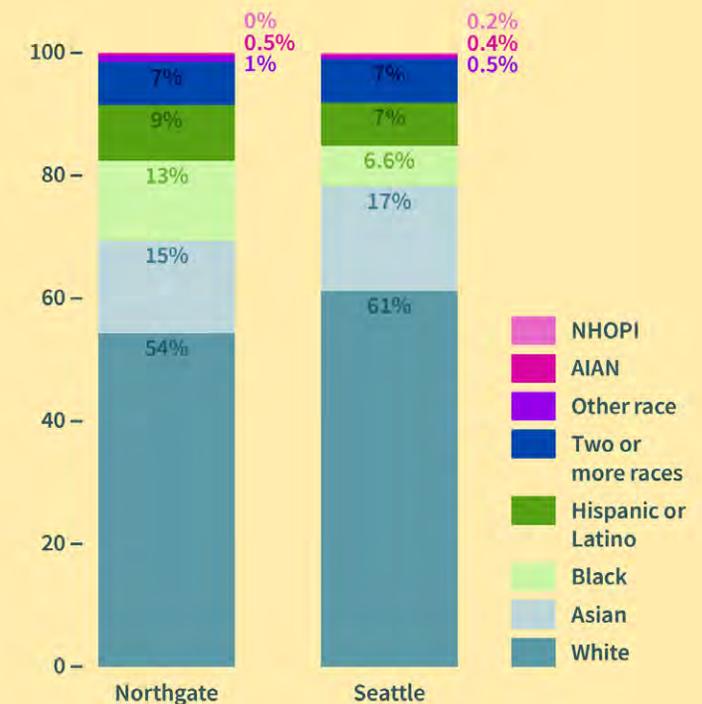
Sources: OFM SAEP as summarized by City of Seattle, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

Fig 12. Population by Age, 2022



Sources: ACS 5-year (B01001, block group); Seva Workshop, 2023

Fig 13. Population by Race and Ethnicity, 2022



Sources: ACS 5-year (B03002, block group); Seva Workshop, 2023

How We Listened & What We Heard

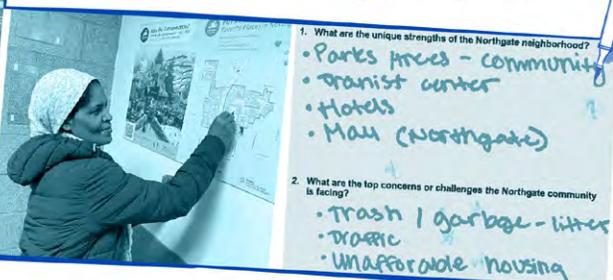
Fig 14. Community engagement summary presentation board shared at fall 2024 outreach events



5
Listening sessions

55
Youth participants

1,028
Community survey participants



6
Interagency interviews

306
Post-its and map pins

14
Interviews

Community

Identity

Activity Level

Green Spaces

Getting Around

Community Engagement

Engagement Approach

The development of this subarea plan started with a racial equity analysis using the City of Seattle's Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) to identify priority populations who have historically been left out of planning efforts. Engagement methods were designed to reach broadly and connect with priority audiences identified in the RET. Community members shared their needs, desires, and vision for the future of Northgate.

During the first round of engagement, methods included a community survey that received 1,028 responses over three and a half months, 14 stakeholder interviews, and five community listening sessions. Interactive installations designed by artist Mel Isidor were hosted at four local businesses and community gathering spaces to invite input from residents and visitors to Northgate. Tahoma Peak Solutions facilitated a series of three interviews to build the vision story and indigenous planning concepts incorporated in this plan. A



Centering Racial Equity

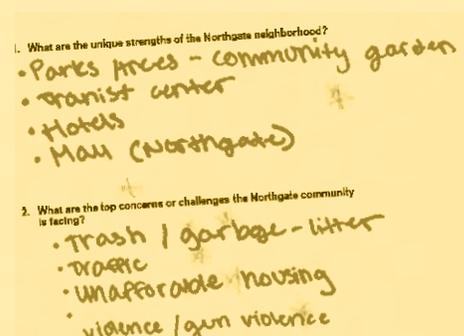
The Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) is a policy analysis framework designed to guide the development and implementation of policies, initiatives, programs, and budget issues to address the impacts on racial equity. The Northgate Regional Center RET **identified populations who have historically been left out of planning efforts and utilized engagement methods focused on these populations to center and prioritize their voices.** These included Coast Salish Peoples; Black communities; foreign-born residents; people with limited English proficiency; small businesses and places of faith; renter households; elders and older adults; and youth.



1,028 Community survey participants provided valuable insights into neighborhood quality of life issues, strengths to build on, and challenges to address. The survey was broadly distributed via ethnic media outlets, flyers with QR codes, social media, and partner organizations.



5 Listening sessions provided opportunities for in-depth conversations with indigenous youth, East African elders, neighborhood service providers, environmental advocates, and Hispanic families.



55 Youth participants at James Baldwin Elementary shed some light on how young people experience quality of life and public realm issues living and going to school in Northgate.

concurrent planning effort at Beaver Pond also contributed engagement findings and themes that informed this plan.

Communication strategies were used to notify the community broadly about the subarea plan and invite engagement with a survey. These strategies included distributing physical posters and flyers at local businesses, sending press releases to broadcast and ethnic media, and sharing on social media.

Visioning engagement used an adaptive approach to language access for this project. Methods provided language interpretation according to the community partner's request. For example, on-site interpreters assisted with listening sessions for the East African elders (Tigrinya and Amharic). At the same time, the Hispanic Families Group preferred that participants provide written comments that were then translated (Spanish). The posters and interactive installation boards included key messages in four project languages: Spanish, Arabic, Simplified Mandarin Chinese, and Amharic.



Fig 15. Community engagement postcard used during visioning engagement, Fall 2023. Design by Mel Isidor and Seva Workshop.



14 Interviews included members of Idris Mosque and the Urban League; employees at local restaurants; local community-based organizations; and staff at the library, community center, college, and hospital. Through these interviews we learned about various and diverse social networks in the existing community, concerns



for park access and quality across the neighborhood, and the need for walkability improvements. **306 Post-its and map pins** were collected from interactive installation boards placed at four popular neighborhood spots to collect insights from the community.



6 Interagency interviews with Metro, Sound Transit, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, Seattle Housing Authority, Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections, and Seattle Public Schools provided opportunities for targeted discussions around public services in Northgate.

Key Takeaways: Second Round of Engagement

After the initial project visioning engagement, the community was again engaged before developing the draft plan. This round of connection involved a survey diving deeper into specific ideas related to the vision themes identified in the first round and with targeted questions about potential transportation projects for the neighborhood. This survey had 329 responses, and additional activities during this second round of engagement included 5 community pop-up events and 2 focus group interviews with community stakeholders. The City then prepared a full draft plan, and community members were invited to provide feedback on this draft. Key takeaways from this round of engagement include:

- > Sidewalk improvements
- > Safe street crossings

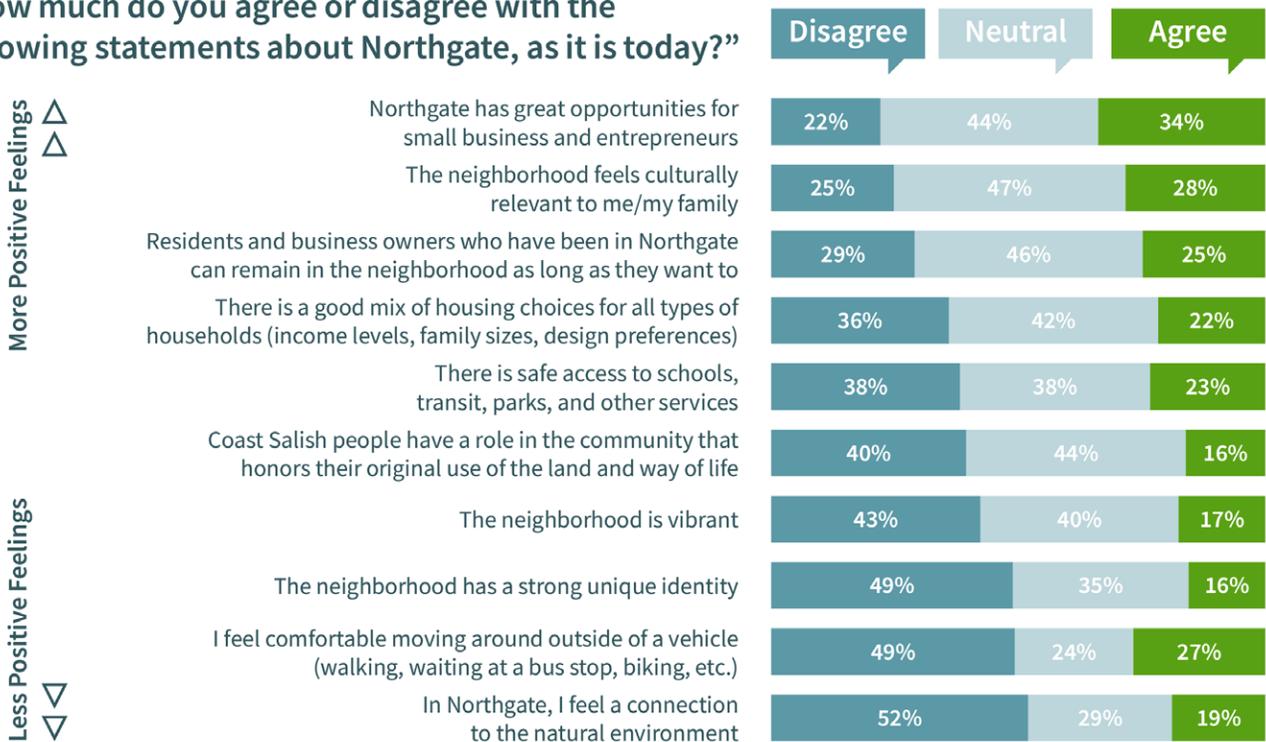
- > Improved connectivity for those who are walking
- > More greenery within public spaces
- > Gathering spaces that emphasize dining, shopping, meeting, recreation, and entertainment
- > Improvements to existing bus routes
- > Concerns about high speeds for drivers

In addition to these topic areas, the survey asked specific questions about transportation project priorities alongside a map with pins. Responses to these questions drive many of the project priorities reflected in the Connected Communities Vision Map, directly tying community voice to City action.

A complete summary of the project’s engagement efforts can be found in the Engagement Summary report, Appendix 1.

Fig 16. Survey Responses to Community Attributes

“How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Northgate, as it is today?”



Source: Northgate Community Visioning Survey by Seva Workshop, 2024



The Vision for Northgate

Northgate is at the cusp of transformative change. Major redevelopment, infrastructure changes, and growth are already underway. Additional investments and changes that the community has long desired are still needed to make Northgate a safer, comfortable, connected, and beautiful place. This plan is an opportunity to embrace transformative change in Northgate, and finally “shed the cocoon” to become the place people have envisioned for decades.



Vision Statement

Northgate is a thriving center of social and economic life in North Seattle. It is a complete neighborhood with features like green and open spaces, high quality schools, healthcare, community gathering spaces, and essential retail like grocery stores. In Northgate, walkable and transit-oriented lifestyles are convenient and accessible. A tangible connection to nature and an abundance of recreation amenities are experienced throughout the neighborhood. Regional connectivity, local attractions, diverse social networks, and access to opportunity make Northgate a fantastic place to live, work, and play.

Developing a Vision

In summer/fall 2024, the main themes distilled from initial visioning engagement with community members and detailed technical analysis covering demographic data, physical characteristics of the neighborhood, land use patterns, real estate trends, and much more, began to form the plan's structure, built on the foundation of our guiding values and key project outcomes.

Five visioning statements were developed to encompass specific themes among the general big ideas that emerged from this planning process. Through a series of online and in-person community engagement events, the project team re-engaged with community members in the winter of 2024. Participants were asked to rank these five visioning statements according to their own priorities and hopes for the future of Northgate. Over 300 community members took part in this exercise, the results of which informed the crafting of a singular statement envisioning what's next for Northgate and what this Regional Center plan aspires to achieve in the coming years.

Two thirds of participants ranked the visioning statement that proved to be most popular as either their top or second highest priority: "Northgate is a complete neighborhood with amenities like green and open spaces, high quality schools, community gathering spaces, and essential retail like grocery stores." In addition to desiring a full spectrum of uses within the neighborhood, participants identified walkability and transit convenience/ accessibility as the second highest priority area, with 59% of individuals ranking the following visioning statement as either their top or second priority: "The Northgate neighborhood is walkable and mass transit options, such as Link Light Rail, are convenient and accessible to many."

Your neighborhood vision

These five visioning statements encompass the general big ideas to drive change that have emerged from this planning process. All of these areas will be addressed as part of the plan--but if you had to rank them, which resonate the strongest with you?

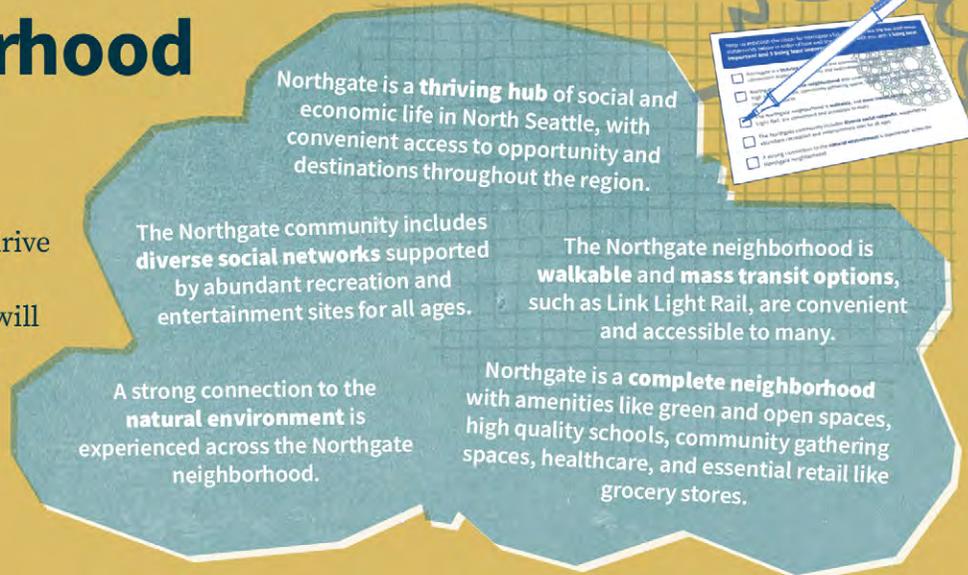


Fig 17. Vision Priority Survey Results

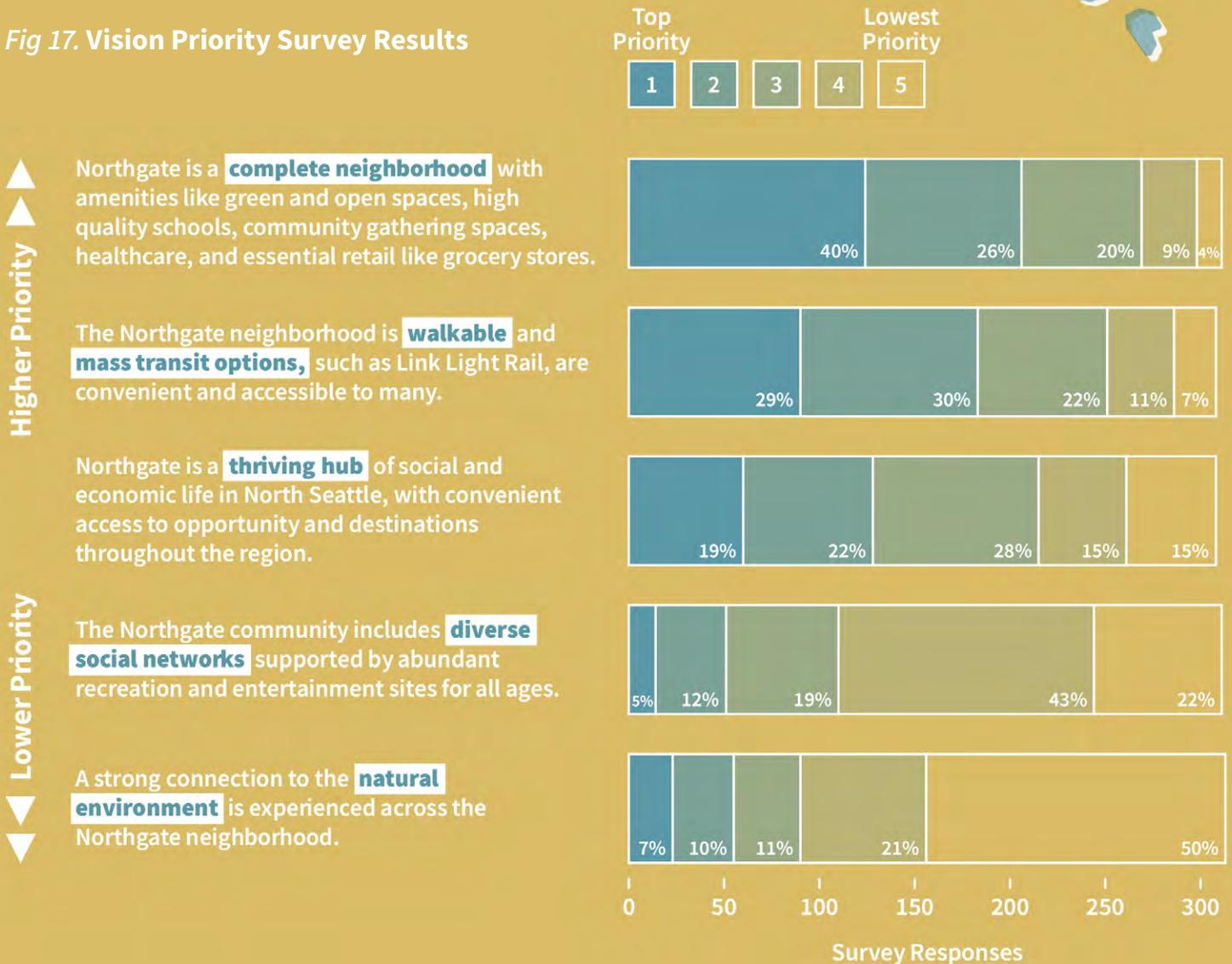


Fig 18. Northgate Vision Conceptual Collage

Envisioning Northgate's Future



Diverse Housing Types

Job Opportunities

Beautiful Public Realm

Accessible Connections

Art and Color

Cooling Areas

Spaces for Youth

Transit Connections

Abundant Gardens

Key Initiatives

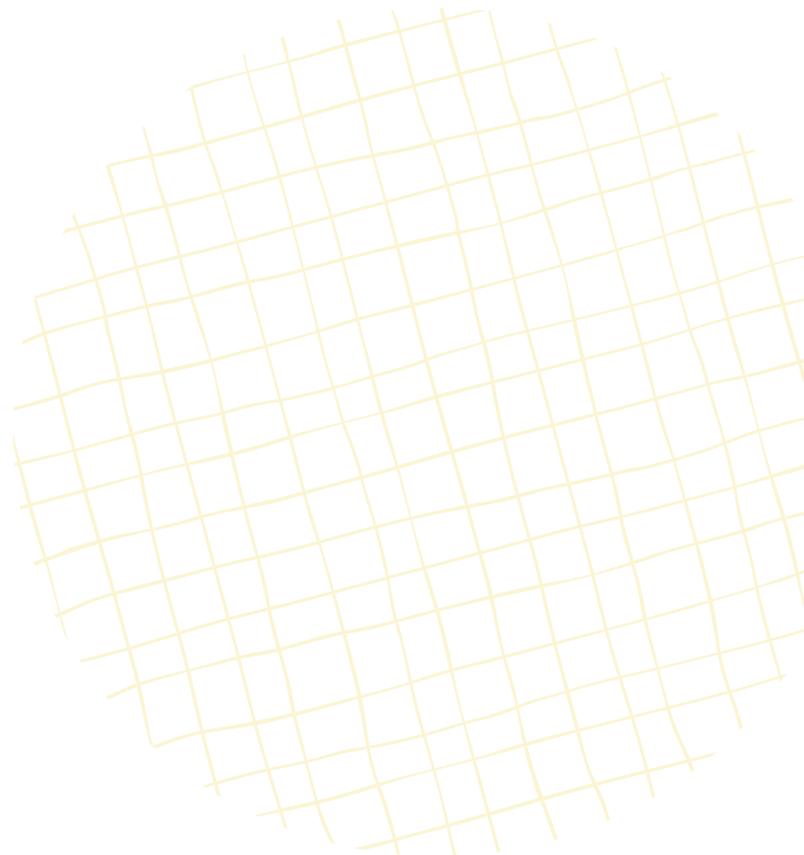
A set of key ideas and intended outcomes for Northgate's future are expressed in the maps on the next two pages. First, a Vision Map highlights eight key initiatives to implement the vision of this plan. Second, a Regional Center Land Use Vision illustrates the land use changes recommended to support growth and density in this Regional Center. A more technical Future Land Use Map (FLUM) can be found in the Implementation chapter, outlining zoning changes that can help achieve these outcomes.

Key Initiatives (mapped on the following page)

- 1** A transformed environment for people at the I-5 underpass, with art and public realm investments.
- 2** Safety improvements along Northgate Way, with a focus on adding art and design elements at 5th Ave.
- 3** A car-free path, Northgate Square welcomes transit riders into the neighborhood and serves as a gathering place for the station area and surrounding community. Designs for this mid-block corridor include seating, landscaping, lighting, play features, and artistic elements.
- 4** Investment in Hubbard Homestead Park includes new crossings for better access to the park, an improved suite of features such as a play area and community garden, restrooms, and expanded tree cover.
- 5** An ecology corridor connects from Barton Woods to Thornton Creek, integrating native, edible, and/or climate-resilient species. Barton Woods is enhanced as a local food forest.
- 6** Major streets in Northgate are redesigned to allow people to safely and comfortably walk, bike, roll, and take transit throughout the neighborhood. This includes: Northgate Way, 5th Ave NE, Meridian Ave N, Roosevelt Way NE, and NE 100th St. See Appendix 12 for a full transportation project list.

Throughout the Regional Center, in as many places as possible, opportunities to:

- 7** Expand tree canopy
- 8** Create new street connections and pedestrian pathways to break up long blocks, improving the walkability and quality of experience of Northgate's streets.



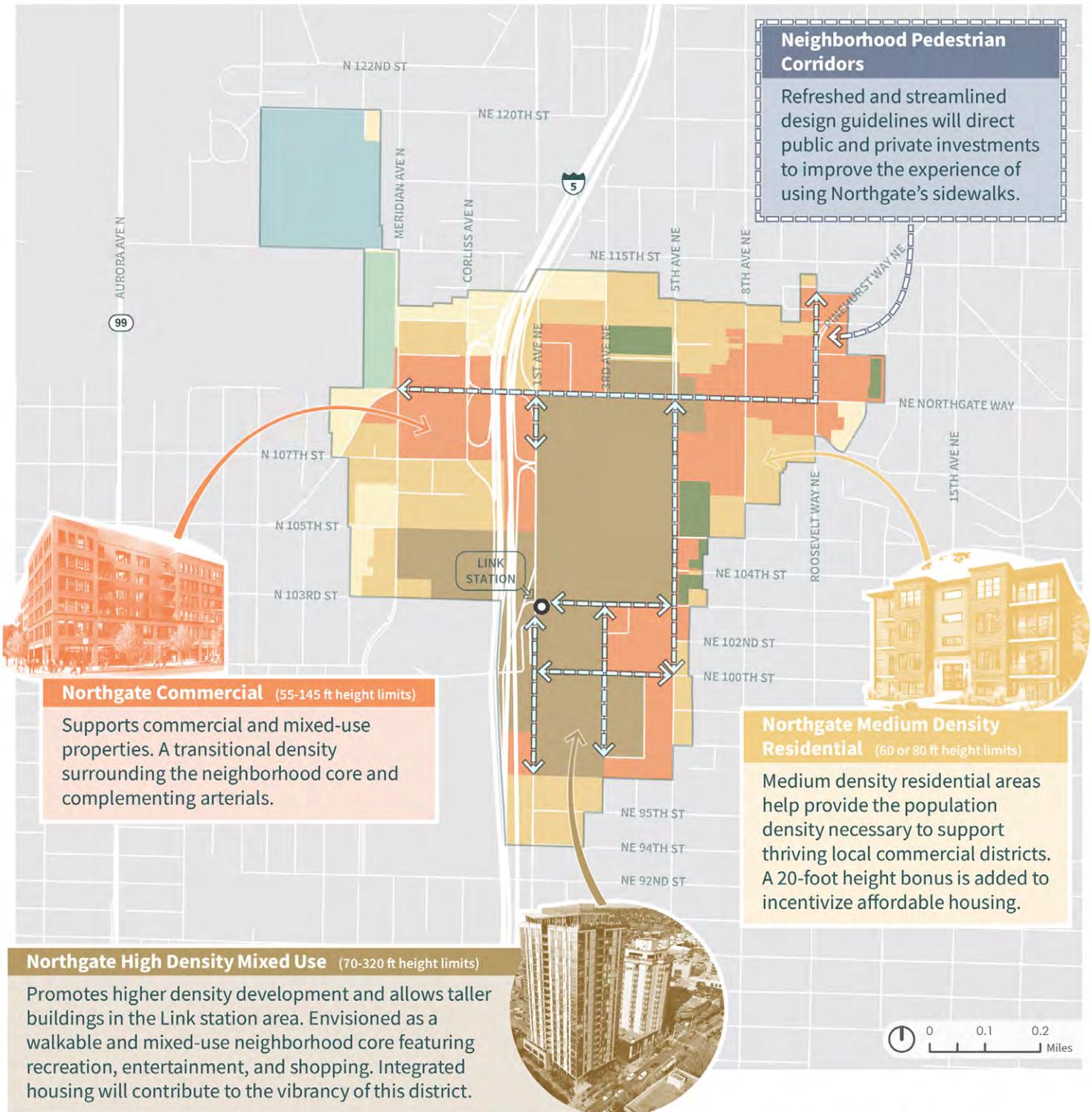


Fig 20. Northgate Regional Center Land Use Vision

Native Neighborhood Planning

In planning for the Northgate neighborhood, we must both honor the past and prepare for the future. This means celebrating and centering the people who have stewarded this place since time immemorial and acknowledging past harms and inequities. We hope to build a future that contains both the wisdom of learning from history and elders and the energy and vision of our youth.

At the onset of this project, one of the City's goals was to pursue a vision of Northgate as a Native Neighborhood. While the City has prioritized bringing Indigenous planning concepts into all of its Regional Centers Plans, Northgate presents a unique opportunity in that it is currently undergoing major development moreso than other Centers. This provides more chances to instill foundational Native Neighborhood concepts into both long-range planning efforts and future on-the-ground development.

In pursuit of this goal, Indigenous communities were a priority in stakeholder engagement and the project team partnered with the Indigenous Planning Strategist at the City of Seattle and Tahoma Peak Solutions, a Native women-owned consulting firm, to integrate Coast Salish values in the plan from start to finish. The vision for Northgate's future amplifies the guiding values of relationality (to each other and to the environment), reciprocity, respect, responsibility, and sustainability in the context of the Northgate area. Waterways are central to Native cultures and livelihoods. Thornton Creek's health and the Chinook salmon's health are inextricably linked to the health of the Northgate community and the region that depends on this hub.

Native Neighborhood Features

To be consistent with the Indigenous planning lens, the Northgate Regional Center Plan introduces several key policies and action steps that align with the values shared in the Native Neighborhoods Report, Indigenous Inclusivity Guide, and Northgate Vision Story. Many of the ideas shared align well with Seattle's planning priorities, such as improving the accessibility of public transportation, housing

Indigenous Planning Lens

The Northgate Regional Center Plan has been shaped by using an indigenous planning lens to envision a Native Neighborhood concept here through a process of listening, storytelling, guiding key project questions, and visioning. That said, this plan is geared towards **guiding change in directions that support indigenous values for living**, as they relate specifically to housing needs, food access, mobility, community space and programming, green spaces and ecosystems, wellness, access to waterways, art, and culture.



affordability, and community safety. Below are a few key examples that, if implemented, will advance the Native Neighborhood vision specifically:

- > **Create land ownership opportunities for Indigenous families and communities.** As part of this project's technical work, financial modeling for a community land trust tested the level of financial support that would



Native Warriors listening session at North Seattle College

be needed to support a holistic vision for a residential community specifically designed to reflect features of a Native Neighborhood such as ample green space, art integration, and community rooms. Several sites in the Regional Center could be a good match for this type of development.

- > **Increase green spaces, gardens, and native plants in Northgate.** This plan outlines a vision to restore tree canopy in Northgate and identifies key areas for right-of-way landscaping improvements where native and climate resilient species can be introduced. The plan envisions an ecology corridor between Barton Woods and Thornton Creek over time. Reintroducing foraging plants and intentional stewardship within Barton Woods would reconnect to the area’s previous function as a food forest.
- > **Holistic well-being and healing services, community gathering spaces, and healthy food access should be available.** To truly foster a Native Neighborhood in Northgate, this plan envisions a cluster of culturally specific services and community spaces. The plan identifies potential sites and collaboration partners among incoming development projects to secure space for these important amenities.



**Partner Profile:
Native Warrior Athletics**

Founded in 2008, the Urban Native Education Alliance (UNEA) supports Native youth and their families through culturally relevant consultation, advocacy, support, and resources. Programming is youth-driven and volunteer-run, with support from four board members and five elder advisory council members.

UNEA has a program called Native Warrior Athletics, which includes sports, fitness classes, workshops, and basketball training for youth. The program provides an opportunity to grow leadership skills, serve as role models for other Native youth in the community, and learn about cultural and tribal identity. **The Native Warrior Athletics program is an example of a community initiative that can help build Northgate into a Native Neighborhood, increasing the footprint of Indigenous leadership in this Regional Center.**

Key Planning Outcomes

A set of eight plan outcomes, developed as part of this project’s Racial Equity Toolkit, provide an organizing framework for monitoring the success of this plan. The selected metrics are only a subset of a wide range of potential indicators to track. Where possible, they represent readily available statistics already tracked by City departments to increase the likelihood of ongoing review. These data points are markers of equity alongside growth for the Northgate community. Many of these selected outcomes recognize that Northgate is currently home to a higher proportion of BIPOC community members than other parts of the city, and thus, quality of life investments here, specifically, disproportionately improve racial equity in Seattle.

1. Environmental Quality. Northgate is an attractive neighborhood, with high standards for air, noise, and water quality. Environmental assets flourish.

> Metric: Tree canopy coverage. Baseline: **15%**

2. Housing. Northgate’s housing inventory meets growth targets, offering options that reflect Northgate’s vision for the future. The available housing mix reflects the income levels, family sizes, and design preferences of cultural communities in Northgate and residents of Seattle.

> Metric: Rate of housing cost burden. Baseline: **39% overall, 49% renter**

3. Transportation. Available transportation options make it attractive to travel by modes other than a personal vehicle, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving environmental conditions.

> Metric: Percent of trips made by walking, rolling, biking, and transit. Baseline: **32%**

4. Social Infrastructure and Well-being. Residents of Northgate have safe access to schools, open

space, recreational facilities, transit stops, community gathering spaces, and other components of robust social infrastructure (childcare, healthcare, schools, wellness centers, etc) at levels of service comparable to other North Seattle neighborhoods.

> Metric: Continued asset mapping. Baseline: See **Figure 3** of Introduction chapter.

5. Placemaking. Northgate neighborhoods feel vibrant, comfortable, and culturally relevant to their residents and broader communities. Public and private developments prioritize urban design that builds identity.

> Metric: Foot traffic, measured by share of trips that start and end in the neighborhood that are by walking. Baseline: **22%**

6. Indigenous Inclusivity. Parts of the Northgate neighborhood are co-developed in partnership with Indigenous communities. The neighborhood becomes a hub of activity for Indigenous people, including a mix of residential and culturally specific sites.

> Metric: Population that identifies as AI/AN in the Northgate area. Baseline: **90 people**

7. Anti-Displacement. Growth in Northgate benefits its long-standing residents and business owners. Anti-displacement measures support households and businesses that want to remain in the growing and changing Northgate subarea.

> Metric: % and count of BIPOC population. Baseline: **46% / 4,194 people**

8. Business mix. Northgate is full of opportunities for entrepreneurship and business ownership. A diverse economic ecosystem provides a healthy mix of retail, services, and jobs.

> Metric: New business licenses. Baseline: **32**

Sources for listed metrics: Tree canopy from City of Seattle, 2021; Housing Cost Burden from HUD CHAS data, 2016-2020; Mode split from Replica, spring 2023; Social infrastructure mapping by Seva Workshop, 2024; Transit ridership data from 2023, as summarized in SDOT Baseline conditions report, Table 1; AI/AN alone or in combination and BIPOC population from ACS 5-year estimates at the block group level, 2022; Business license from City of Seattle business license database, June 2024.

Defining Features of this Plan

- > The Northgate Regional Center Plan is **centered on people and their needs**, across seasons of life and time, tackling topics like social infrastructure as a key outcome.
- > The Implementation chapter details actions and investments that can make this plan a reality, focusing on using this roadmap as a **true catalyst for change**.
- > The Native Neighborhoods focus of this planning work **incorporated Indigenous thought leadership and allocated financial resources** to tackle relevant questions and perform technical analysis that can advance these ideas in Northgate.
- > The timing of this work allows for the City to **make impactful interventions prior to major redevelopment** of several key sites in the neighborhood.

The quotes you'll find throughout this plan in yellow speech bubbles like this one are taken directly from community members who participated in outreach and engagement activities organized as a part of this process. Their insights and ideas contributed greatly to this vision for Northgate's future, and so their words sit side by side with the policies they helped inform.



Structure of this Plan

This plan is organized by five themed chapters. Each of these themes includes nested sets of goals, policies, and actions that add detail to the larger vision.

Goals represent the results that the City hopes to realize over time, generally within the 20-year life of the plan. Goals are aspirations, not guarantees or mandates.

Policies should be read as if preceded by the words “It is the City’s general policy to...”. A policy helps to guide the creation of or changes to specific rules or strategies (such as development regulations, budgets, or program plans). City officials will generally make decisions by following ordinances, resolutions, budgets, or program plans that reflect relevant plan policies, rather than by referring directly to this plan.

Actions are steps that the City will consider taking within the 20-year planning period to achieve the goals and implement the policies in this subarea plan. When and how to move forward with each action will depend on the availability of financial and staff resources, coordination with more specific plans and programs develop by City departments, and opportunities and challenges that emerge in and around the Northgate Regional Center over time.

Implementation of most policies involves a range of actions over time, so one cannot simply ask whether a specific action or project would fulfill a particular plan policy. For example, a policy that states that the City will give priority to a particular need indicates that the City will treat the need as important, not that it will take precedence in every City decision. Some policies use the words ensure, encourage, and so forth. In general, such words describe the emphasis that the policy places on the action but do not necessarily establish a specific legal duty to perform a particular act, to undertake a program or project, or to achieve a specific result.

Following the five chapters that contain this plan's goals, policies, and actions is the **Implementation** chapter. This includes the future land use map, with detailed explanations for the intent of each district. This chapter also includes planting guides for different areas that can help with realizing the ecology corridor vision.

Separate from this document, there is a series of **Attachments** where readers can find all supporting technical documentation, including a detailed summary of community engagement and excel tables of intended implementation actions. These should be available on the project website.

- Appendix 1** Engagement Summary Report
- Appendix 2** Land Use Technical Report
- Appendix 3** Housing Technical Report
- Appendix 4** Housing Financial Feasibility Report
- Appendix 5** Transportation Technical Report
- Appendix 6** Commute Travel Analysis
- Appendix 7** Economics Technical Report
- Appendix 8** Environment and Climate Change Technical Report
- Appendix 9** Public Services & Facilities Technical Report
- Appendix 10** Designing a Native Neighborhood
- Appendix 11** Northgate Reindigenized Landscapes
- Appendix 12** Implementation Spreadsheet

A Neighborhood for All Seasons

Northgate should be a welcoming, comfortable, and exciting place to live in all seasons of the year and all seasons of life. This chapter is dedicated to celebrating Northgate as home to an intergenerational community by creating a range of housing choices, quality indoor and outdoor spaces, and programming that brings people together and increases well-being. A wider variety of housing options and affordability levels will promote Northgate is an attractive place to live throughout life phases and across family types. In addition, a range of mitigation strategies that can increase community comfort on days with high heat levels and during seasons with persistent precipitation are envisioned.

Goals

- NS 1** Expand housing options across the age and income spectrum
- NS 2** Implement a comprehensive set of cooling strategies
- NS 3** Expand offerings of indoor and outdoor spaces for gathering, recreation, and entertainment



All seasons of life: Northgate is home to an intergenerational community, including many lower-income households, single-parent households, and older adults

It offers one of Seattle’s relatively affordable housing markets and is predominantly home to renters (82%). These communities benefit disproportionately from targeted investments to provide affordable housing, improvements to public parks and spaces, recreational access, and low or moderately priced entertainment options. This plan envisions Northgate remaining relatively affordable but with livability upgrades into the future.

Fig 22. Household Income Breakdown, 2022



Median income in **Northgate** is roughly half that of **Seattle** as a whole.

Fig 21. Population by Age, 2022

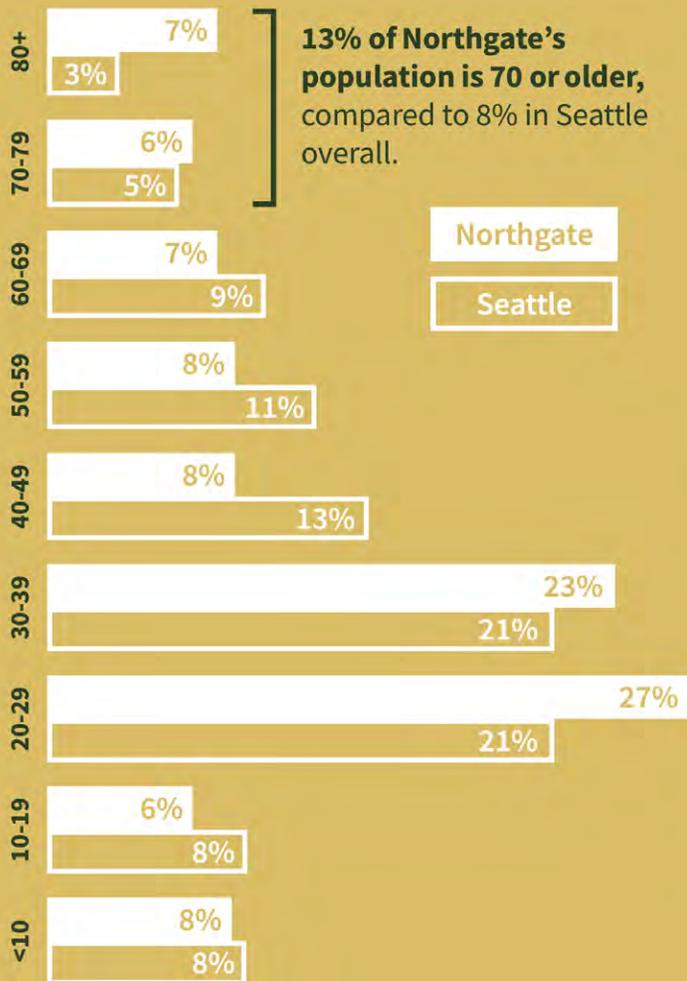
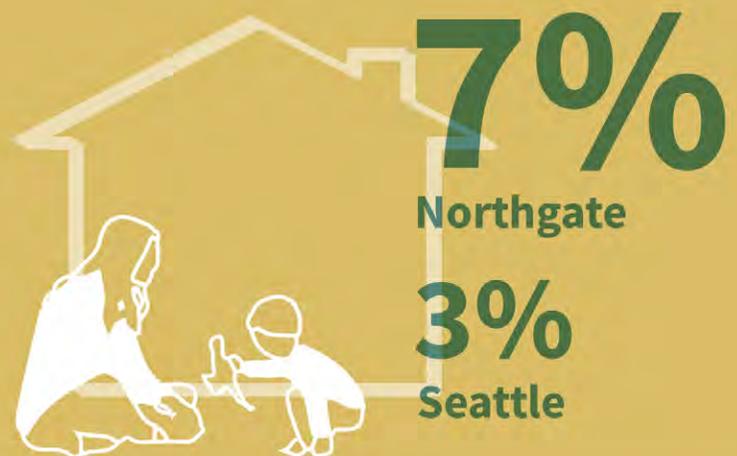


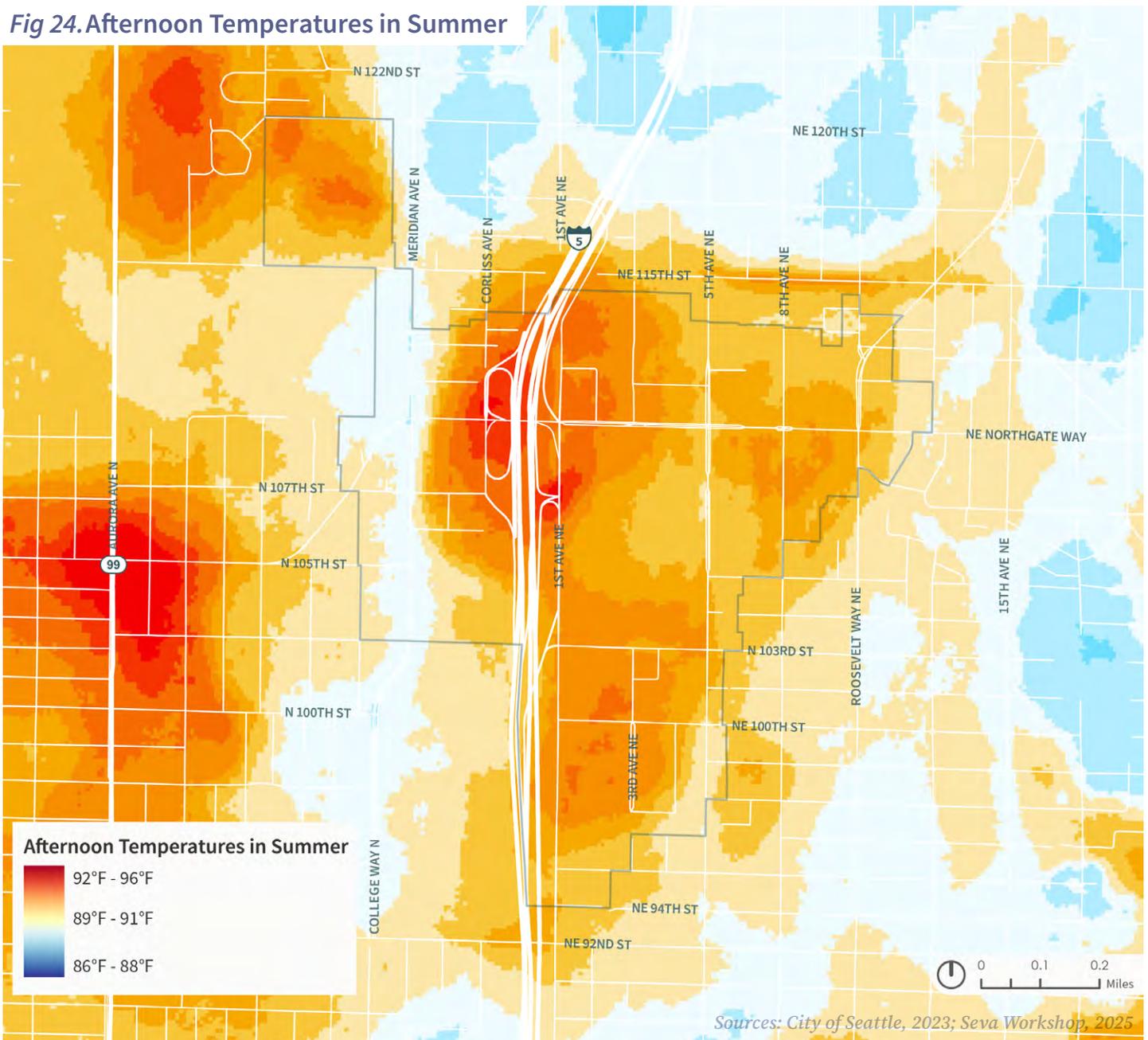
Fig 23. Percent Single Parent Households



Single parent households are more than twice as prevalent in Northgate compared to Seattle.

Source: ACS 5-year block group estimates, 2022; Seva Workshop, 2024

Fig 24. Afternoon Temperatures in Summer



All seasons of the year: Seattle’s urban landscape creates a patchwork of heat islands

Factors like industrialization, impervious surface coverage, and tree canopy loss intensify the urban heat island effect in specific areas. This temperature disparity not only affects comfort but also poses serious health risks. According to Seattle's 2023 data, Northgate has over 73% impervious surface coverage, and many of these impervious surfaces are dark-colored, absorbing heat and raising local temperatures. This intensifies the need for cooling measures. However, Northgate is not without its cooling oases. The Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel is a great example of green infrastructure integrated in a dense mixed-use context, reducing impervious surfaces by 78% in its vicinity and increasing open space by 50%.¹ Similarly, the green corridors along Meridian Way, from Evergreen Washelli cemetery to North Seattle College, and Thornton Creek itself, offer vital heat buffers.

1 <https://climate.asla.org/ThorntonCreek.html>

Seasons of change: Northgate is overdue for quality-of-life investments to make this Regional Center a great place to live all year long

Existing public spaces in Northgate lack some key amenities, such as barbeques and picnic shelters to host community celebrations, covered and lighted playgrounds for neighborhood children, or venues for outdoor concerts. The community has consistently expressed the desire for more and enhanced gathering places within Northgate. We received feedback on specific locations where formalized gathering spaces are desired. Existing sites such as the Iceplex, Community Center/Library, and Hubbard Homestead Park are places that have strong support for their potential to boost Northgate’s activation. New development in underutilized parking lots could help increase activity and create new spaces to serve the community.

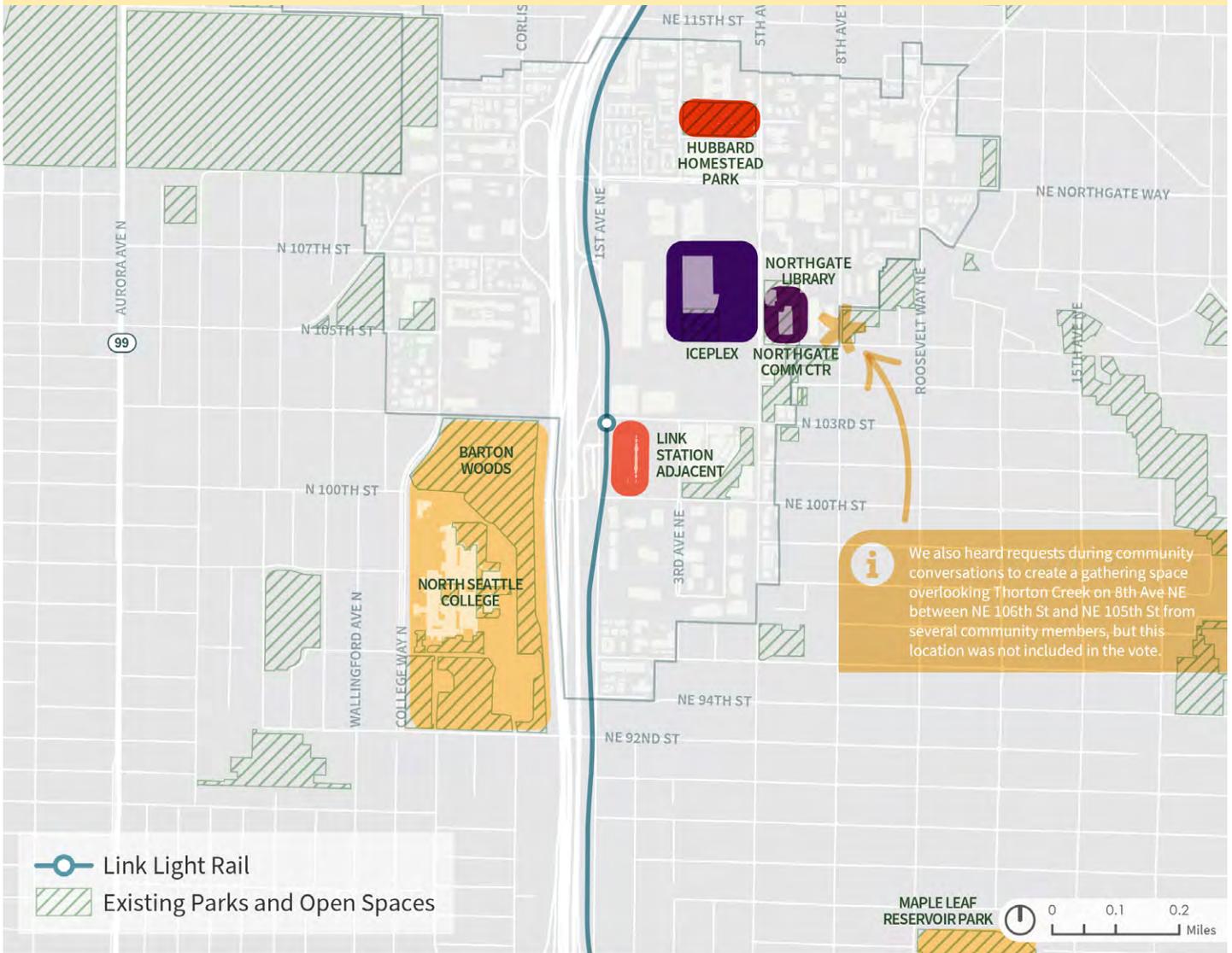
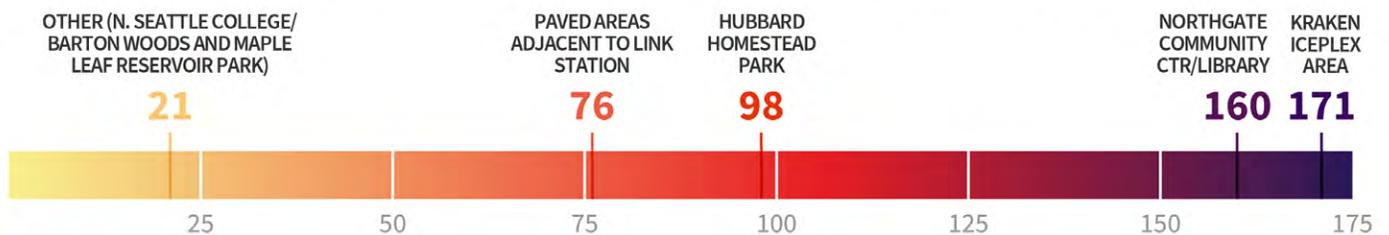


Fig 25. Participant Votes for Public Gathering Space Improvements



A Neighborhood for All Seasons: Key Initiatives

This chapter sets a vision for Northgate as a wonderful place to live all seasons of the year and across all phases of life. This means more housing, especially where the light rail can provide easy access to everyday destinations. It also means targeted investments that expand the tree canopy and green footprint, enhance public spaces as places to gather, cool off on a hot day, and play or exercise year-round.

- 1 Incorporate additional open space**, as outlined in Northwest Hospital's latest campus master plan. Changes to the campus configuration outlined in this vision include a densified medical campus with the incorporation of additional green space at the north end of the site.
- 2 Enhance Hubbard Homestead's function and activation.** New recreation amenities are incoming already, including a playground and sport courts. These could be further enhanced with additional tree canopy, a community garden, benches, shade over the skate park, and/or a water feature such as a splash pad.
- 3 Increase housing supply and variety**, including income-restricted affordable housing, in the closest walkshed of the light rail station. This TOD area directly surrounding the station area should be dense hub of activity that incorporates a variety of housing styles and price points, activated street fronts, and a quality public realm experience.
- 4 Improve the resilience and cooling center functions** at the library, community center, and Community Iceplex sites. This existing nexus of indoor recreation and cooling center opportunities could be further enhanced with additional tree canopy, water features, and cool roof/pavement painting projects. Existing efforts to improve resilience include the City's initiative to decarbonize all City-owned buildings by 2030.
- 5 Create Northgate Square**, connecting the light rail station to 3rd Ave NE. This will introduce a new gathering space that should boast beautiful landscaping, cooling elements such as a water feature, and identity building design.
- 6 Integrate shade structures across the John Lewis Memorial pedestrian bridge.** Shade structures would help cool the walk during summer and provide refuge from the rain during wet seasons.
- 7 Plant trees** throughout the Northgate Regional Center. Expanded tree canopy provides many benefits such as neighborhood cooling and improving the quality of the pedestrian realm. In particular, more conifers would help reduce stormwater runoff.



Fig 26. A Neighborhood for All Seasons Key Initiatives Map

- Public Realm Improvement Priority Areas
- High-Density Core
- Link Light Rail

- 1** Open Space Enhancements at Northwest Hospital Campus
- 2** Hubbard Homestead Park Improvements
- 3** Increased Housing Density Target Area
- 4** Resilience Hub and Cooling Center Improvements
- 5** Northgate Square
- 6** Shade Structures Across Pedestrian Bridge

Goals, Policies, and Actions

Goal NS 1: Expand housing options across the age and income spectrum

Added residential density is on the way, and opportunity remains for even more. Northgate is a hub of relative affordability in Seattle, with many rentals and ownership units at a lower cost than citywide trends. It is also home to a number of senior housing developments, expanding the age diversity of the area. To maintain these important functions into the future, the neighborhood will need to incorporate income-restricted affordable housing units, ownership units in housing types that can offer more moderate price points, and subsidized developments for cooperative housing formats like community land trusts. Added residential density across Northgate will provide support for successful retail nodes, which are important features in low-pollution neighborhoods.

"A neighborhood where we can all survive even if we lack money, have disabilities, or both. A city without a housing crisis."



The need for preserving and expanding affordable housing options in Northgate was voiced frequently by the community.



2-3 bedroom starter units for young families was the top housing type identified as a need in Northgate, according to the visioning survey for this project (59%).

The next highest priority housing types selected by respondents were 1-2 bed starter units (45%) and units that suit multigenerational households or communal living arrangements (31%).

Policy NS 1.1 Allow a range of opportunities for dense residential and mixed-use developments that provide for transit supportive densities, abundant housing supply, and transitions to lower density development in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Actions

- 1 Update zoning as guided by the Northgate Future Land Use Map (see **Figure 52**).

Policy NS 1.2 Promote a diversity of housing types to better meet the needs of current and future residents of Northgate.

Actions

- 1 Explore the use of incentives or requirements for (a) accessible housing that meets the needs of people with limited mobility, (b) housing with multiple bedrooms and child-friendly features that meet the needs of families with young children, and (c) residential development that is designed to accommodate multigenerational living.
- 2 Encourage the development of housing types that provide opportunities for homeownership, ranging from lowrise and middle housing units to opportunities for condominium ownership in higher density residential development.
- 3 Support Indigenous-led coalition building for a community land trust development; specifically, one geared toward urban Native communities that would align with the Native Neighborhood vision. Explore the use of public funds or lands to help support this vision becoming a reality.

Policy NS 1.3 Preserve and increase the supply of rent and income restricted housing in the Northgate Regional Center to meet the needs of low-income households and mitigate displacement risk.

Actions

- 1 Promote the development of new income-restricted housing in Northgate, including through funding, site availability, and other supports.
- 2 Identify opportunities to acquire and rehabilitate existing affordable market rate residential buildings in Northgate for long-term affordability.
- 3 Identify publicly owned sites in the Northgate Regional Center that may be available for income-restricted housing.
- 4 Use tools to leverage new market development to include and/or fund affordable housing, such as Multifamily Tax Exemption and Mandatory Housing Affordability.
- 5 Explore requiring the production and preservation of income-restricted housing as part of master plans and development agreements.

Policy NS 1.4 Connect housing to local sites of interest, making it easy to choose walking, and supporting a broader range of mobility needs.

Actions

- 1 Encourage, and in strategic locations require, new development to incorporate ground-floor commercial uses that contribute to a mix of uses that make it easy to walk to everyday needs such as grocery stores, pharmacies, or tenants that offer arts/culture access. Confirm that the right of way allocation generally prioritizes generous sidewalks, activity zones, trees, and commercial loading over street parking.
- 2 Consistent with the Future Land Use Map (see **Figure 52**), implement a pattern of dispersed density by allowing additional height outside of the densest areas in the immediate walkshed of the light rail station, to provide multifamily housing options

throughout the neighborhood.

- 3 At the incoming Seattle Housing Authority redevelopment site, partner with local CBOs and community leaders to identify ground floor uses that provide community benefit. Improve connections between this site and Hubbard Homestead Park, the mall site, and the western portion of the Regional Center.
- 4 When sites are redeveloped, require new developments to break up long blocks with pedestrian pathways that over time will seamlessly connect to the wider grid system.

Goal NS 2: Implement a comprehensive set of cooling strategies

Northgate should offer a high quality of life throughout all seasons of the year. Days with high summer temperatures have increased with climate change, yet many existing homes and buildings—particularly older ones—do not have air conditioning. The King County Heat Mitigation Strategy outlines a multipronged, countywide approach to addressing this issue, including effective preparedness for heat events, expanding the use of natural and built solutions to reduce impacts of heat, and strengthening the resilience of communities most impacted during these events. Policies and action steps in this section align with this broader strategy, recognizing this Regional Center as an area of particular concern.

Policy NS 2.1 Preserve and expand tree canopy and the green footprint throughout Northgate.

Actions

- 1 Increase tree planting with trees that are climate-compatible, edible, and/or native, where possible. One priority location includes the park outside the community center and library. The Green Seattle Partnership Program could be a resource, for example.
- 2 Foster tree canopy expansion on private property and at schools with the Trees for Neighborhoods program, which provides free trees along with guidance for ongoing care and maintenance.

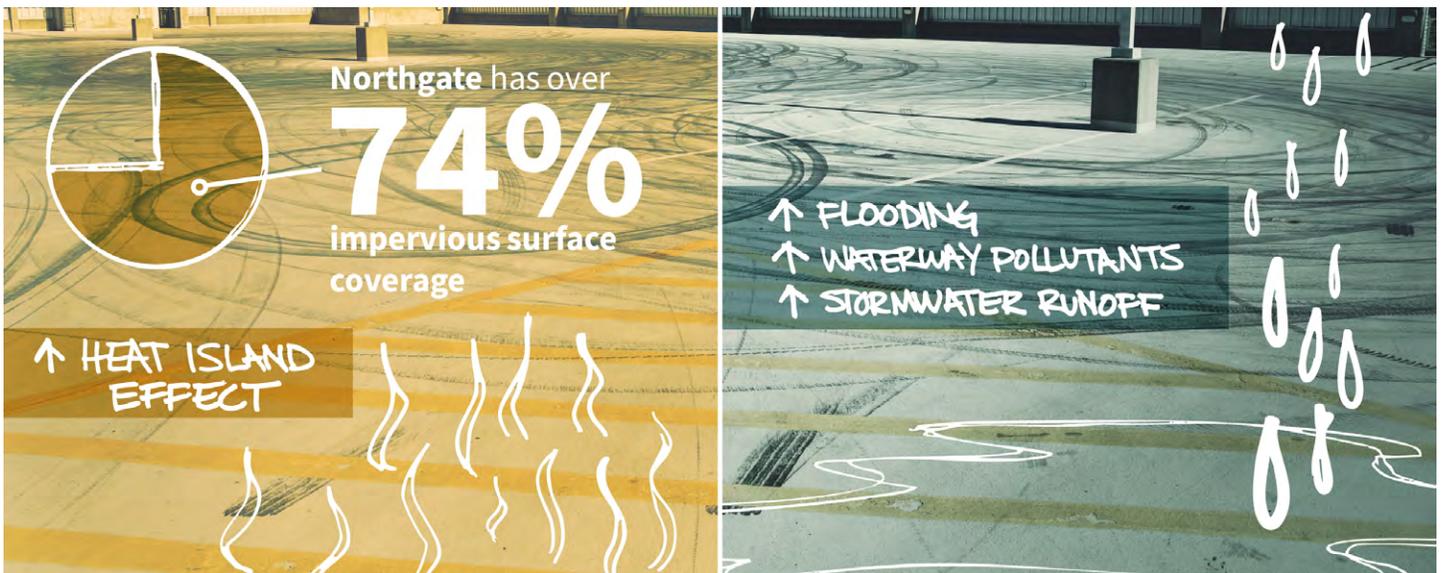


Fig 27. Effects of High Impervious Surface Coverage. Northgate's high impervious surface coverage has a range of negative effects for the immediate area and Thornton Creek watershed. Seattle's impervious surface coverage city-wide is 60%. Source: City of Seattle, 2023; Seva Workshop, 2025.

Policy NS 2.2 Encourage built environment adaptations that can lower temperatures, such as cool roofs, painted parking lots, water features, exterior shade structures, and other measures.

Actions

- 1 Study the potential to install shade structures, prioritizing locations in the public realm, within parks, and along the path from the light rail station to the library. Measure the feasibility of key locations such as the John Lewis Memorial Bridge.

- 2 Integrate playable water features into the public realm. This could include a splash pad at Hubbard Homestead Park and/or within a new development site.
- 3 For new development, encourage green roofs and walls or the use of cool pavement and roof materials. Cool pavement and roof strategies can also be applied to existing sites.



The John Lewis Memorial Pedestrian Bridge is particularly exposed to the elements.



Cool pavements have been implemented in many LA neighborhoods, with priority given to areas most frequented by children and seniors. A year after these cool pavements were introduced, researchers found a 10-degree reduction in surface temperature and 2-degree reduction in ambient temperature on hot days. Image: NBCU Academy.

Policy NS 2.3 Weave a network of outdoor and indoor cooling spaces across the Regional Center.

Actions

- 1 Work with community-based organizations to identify potential locations and partners for cooling locations. Resource these entities to boost their ability to serve as resilience hubs.
- 2 Evaluate providing direct funding for specific needs and/or applying for grants in partnership with the organization to help resource site needs, such as heat pump installation, weatherization, renewable energy systems (such as solar), backup battery energy storage, external and internal shade structures, or supplying organizations with portable air conditioners.

Goal NS 3: Expand offerings of indoor and outdoor spaces for gathering, recreation, and entertainment

A high quality of life locally means access to spaces outside the home that offer opportunities to interact, recreate, and play. Most of Northgate's residents occupy rental units, which are often smaller and add to the need for interesting places to go outside the home. Throughout this process, community members lamented the loss of the mall for its role as a climate-controlled gathering space. This Regional Center is unique in having some larger sites that offer potential for experiences that are hard to find elsewhere within the city. Offerings should appeal across life phases to truly function as a complete neighborhood. Some of these will be privately owned, while others will be public, but there should be ample opportunities to host a community barbeque, celebrate a holiday, go for a walk with friends, or share a meal within the Regional Center.



During visioning engagement in Northgate, participants were asked to pin a map with their favorite places in the neighborhood.

The top two selections were, first, outdoor spaces, such as Thornton Creek and, second, the library and community center site. These existing assets provide a strong foundation for continued investment in community space.



**Partner Profile:
James Baldwin Community Learning Center**

James Baldwin Elementary School has a brand new campus and serves children in parts of the Northgate Regional Center.

Access to these fresh facilities benefits families in the area. It is one of five Community Learning Center (CLC) sites, which host out-of-school programming to support 2nd-5th graders' reading and math skills.

James Baldwin READS offers creative reading instruction for 2nd and 3rd graders, while James Baldwin COUNTS provides targeted math instruction for 4th and 5th graders. In addition to these programs, the CLC hosts enrichment activities for kids that range from computer programming to swimming to sewing. Recently, participants have gotten to play a new game called floorball, which is a version of hockey without skates or ice. Floorball has helped participants practice teamwork and perseverance, as well as connect to the Kraken community.

"An indigenous community space, like the Duwamish Longhouse or the Intellectual House on the UW Seattle campus."



"More physical fitness activities at Northgate Community Center aimed at [people in their] 40-50s."

Policy NS 3.1 Continue to invest in and activate indoor neighborhood gathering spaces such as the public library, community center, college, Iceplex facility, local restaurants, and new spaces.

Actions

- 1 Consider expanding the community center to include functions such as a larger fitness area with more equipment, additional multipurpose rooms for classes and meetings, or a swimming pool.
- 2 Better integrate the existing library branch with the community center by, for example, creating joint programming opportunities, such as reading hours followed by arts and crafts activities.
- 3 Consider public space incentives within private developments.



**Partner Profile:
East African Elders Program**

In August 2018, community non-profits and the City of Seattle launched a weekly program for East African elders to exercise, eat, and socialize together at the Northgate Community Center. The program is run by Sound Generations, the Hunger Intervention Program, Horn of Africa Services, and Seattle Parks and Recreation.

Many participants are immigrants or refugees who live around Northgate, Lake City, and Shoreline. The weekly program provides an opportunity to connect on shared experiences and culture and reduce feelings of loneliness among elder communities. Participants start with supervised exercise in the gym, then come to a large gathering room for lunch. During the pandemic, the program supported members with socially distanced meals, transportation, and other services.

Policy NS 3.2 Expand and improve outdoor opportunities for recreation and play.

Actions

- 1 Create a mid-block pedestrian corridor as a new outdoor public space (Northgate Square), connecting from the light rail out toward neighborhood destinations like the movie theater.
- 2 Look for opportunities to acquire space for public parks.
- 3 Add recreation features like outdoor gym equipment, chess boards, cover and lighting for the skate park, and walking paths to motivate adults to use existing parks. Consider the needs of older adults by including equipment designed to increase balance and coordination.
- 4 Add more shade structures in parks, especially where mature trees are not planted or are not yet developed.
- 5 Integrate a splash pad within a local park.
- 6 Find opportunities to accommodate lingering or resting while implementing the ecology corridor and/or food forest concepts.

Policy NS 3.3 Support dynamic and flexible uses of public rights-of-way and underutilized sites.

This includes temporary transformations (such as repurposing a street for weekend festivals), pop-up experiences (food truck corrals or game day gatherings), and outdoor entertainment (open-air movie screenings or concerts).

Actions

- 1 Seek to partner with existing or future CBOs to create publicly accessible activations that they can manage.
- 2 Incorporate more fun and playful touches throughout the urban environment with interventions like pocket parks, playful bus stop designs, and public art projects.
- 3 Look for opportunities to add standards to mid-block corridors that allow the spaces to be more usable for public gathering/lingering, rather than just passages every time.

"A safe area for many ages similar to Third Place Commons. A multi-use place including internet use is available and where you can eat and drink."



"Use larger parking lots for temporary activations like food truck corrals/ summer concerts."



Top: A flower vendor at Third Place Commons' weekly (May-October) Lake Forest Park Farmers Market. Above: Public-private partnerships can help make new activations possible, like the Lawn on D initiative in Boston, where Citizens Bank helps fund a site for art activations and tent-covered events.

- 4 Provide City staff capacity to lead and support programming initiatives, such as special events, particularly near local businesses that can benefit from the additional foot traffic.
- 5 Lean into multifunctional space where possible, with repurposed parking lots, schoolyards open to the public outside of operating hours, and partnership with North Seattle College.

Living with Place

Living with a place rather than living in a place emphasizes the idea that humans are an integral part of an environment and ecosystem. The more we care for and give to our environment, the more we receive in terms of clean air, water, and healthy food. This keystone idea of reciprocity is a core Indigenous value. Plans and policies of the past have led to compounding negative impacts on the habitats of Northgate, harming both the animals and humans that live there. With this chapter, we seek to restore connections between people and natural systems, foster a sense of balance between built and natural environments, and create more climate resilience in the Regional Center.

Goals

- LP 1** Enhance environmental health and climate resilience
- LP 2** Connect communities to nature and outdoor spaces
- LP 3** Create an ecology corridor connecting Barton Woods to Thornton Creek



Northgate was once a place rich in diverse ecosystems

Before extensive urban development, the subarea was a wetland bordered by prairies that extended into forested regions. Thornton Creek, a salmon-bearing stream, has been and continues to be a vital water source for the community. Indigenous communities residing here utilized the area during the summer months for hunting and resource gathering. These communities nurtured the area's unique ecosystems by cultivating food-bearing plants, which served as a harvest and attracted game, creating a food forest.

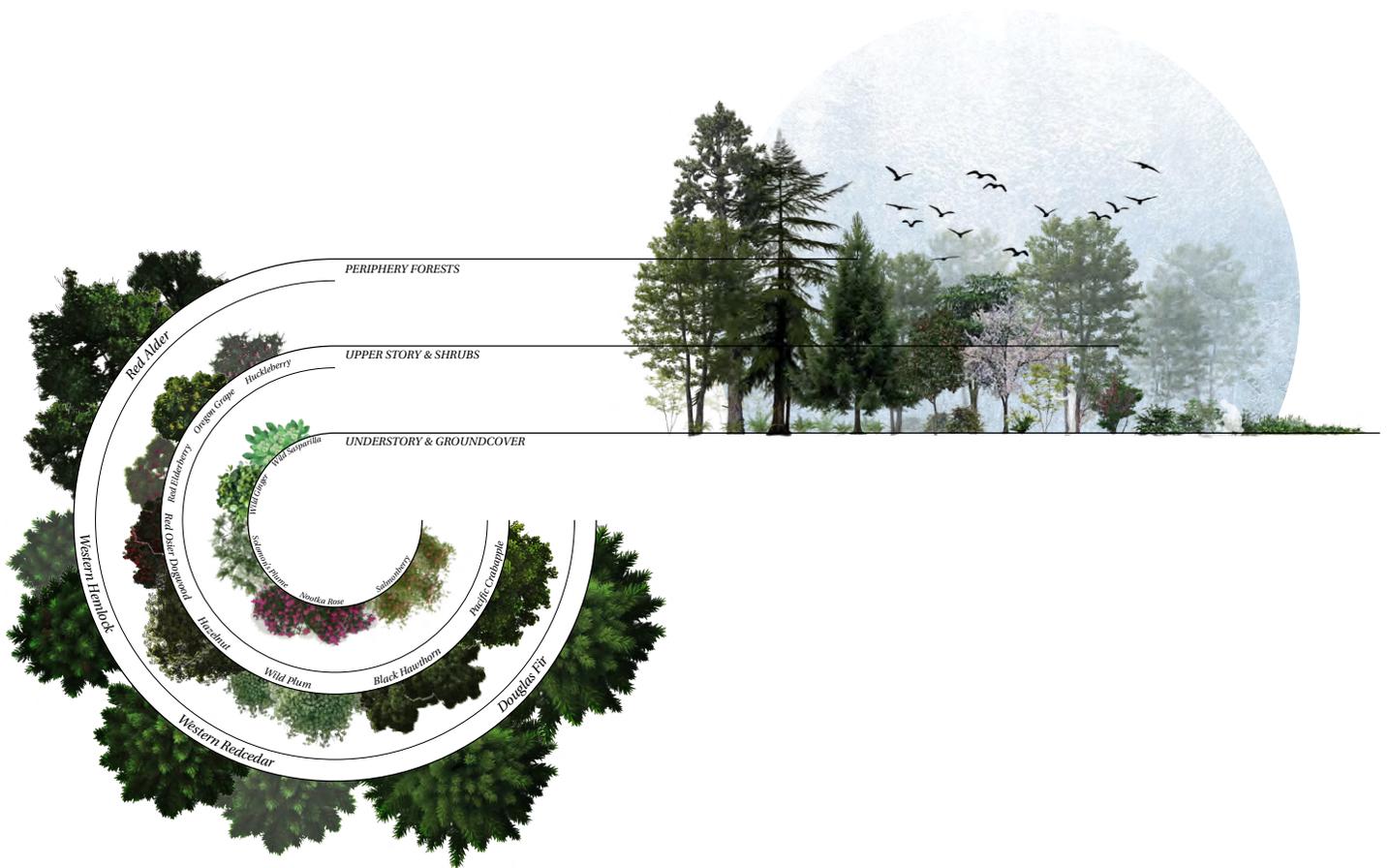


Fig 28. Coast Salish Food Forests

Source: Darryl Vallejos, "History Lines"

Today, Northgate has been cleared of most all its natural landscape

Community members report feeling a lack of connection to the natural environment and Coast Salish ways of life. Of the ten “agree/neutral/disagree” statements offered for Northgate, the most “disagree” responses were associated with the phrase: “In Northgate, I feel a connection to the natural environment”. Looking to the future, restorative work can focus on rebuilding ecological corridors and food forests and reconnecting the local community to its land, water, and air.

- “Daylight more of Thornton Creek and protect Beaver Pond”
- “Abundant safe clean gardens and green spaces.”
- “Additional walking paths along a daylight Thornton Creek.”

“How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Northgate, as it is today?”

Coast Salish people have a role in the community that honors their **original use of the land and way of life**
 In Northgate, I feel a connection to the **natural environment**

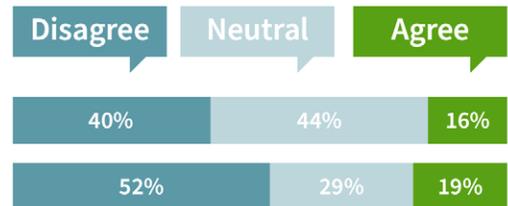
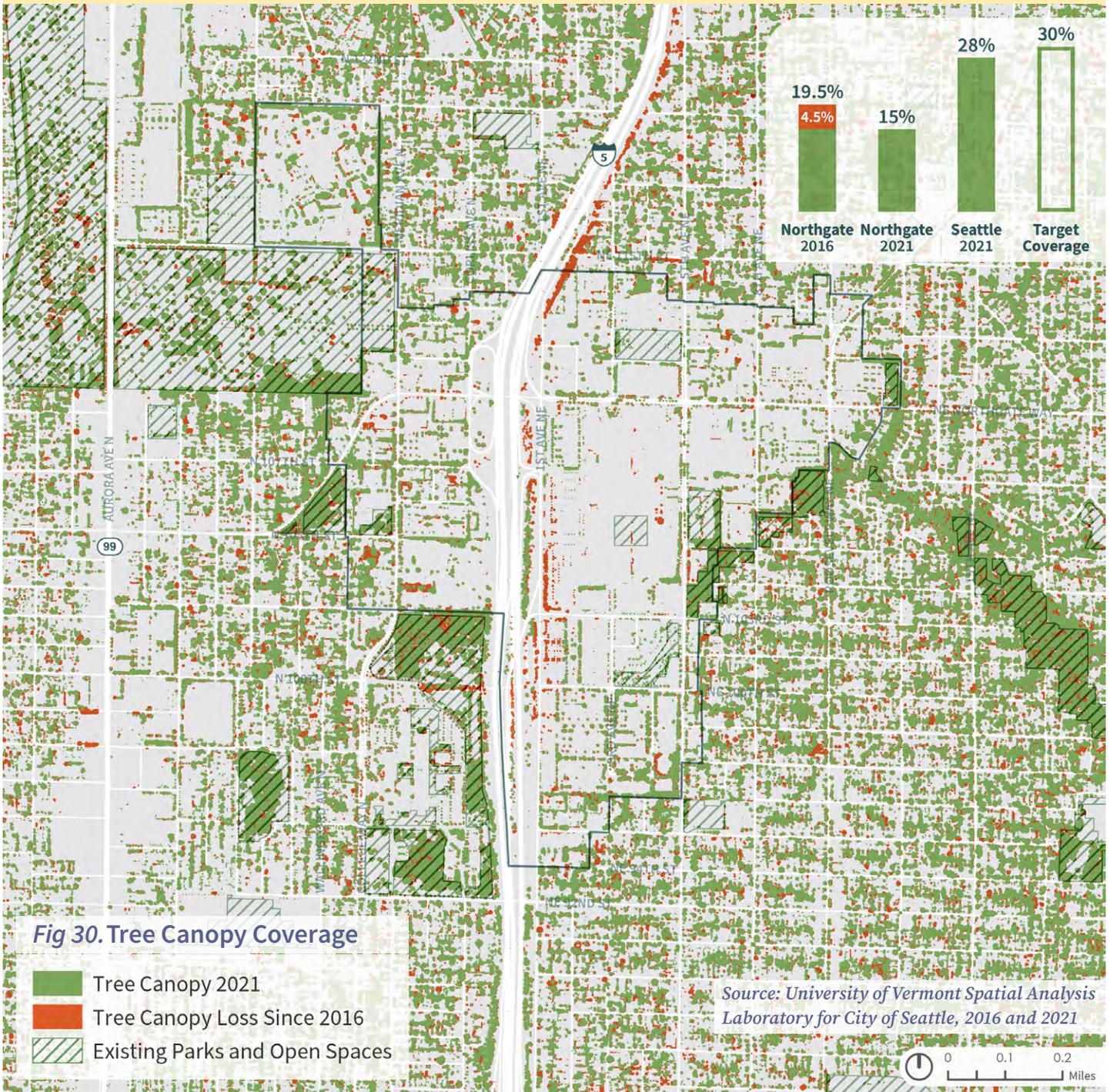


Fig 29. Community Survey Results Related to Living with Place Themes

Transformative infrastructure development has further reduced Northgate’s already low levels of tree canopy

Trees are one important component of strengthening a person’s connection to their environment, among the many other benefits they provide. From 2016 to 2021, Northgate lost 18.55 acres of tree canopy, equating to 4.5% of the subarea’s total. Re-establishing tree cover in this Regional Center will increase its beauty, improve the air quality, build climate resilience, cool temperatures on hot days, and contribute to the citywide tree canopy goal of 30%. Mitigation measures from light rail development impacts are underway to re-establish lost canopy in Northgate and more can be done such as right-of-way plantings and requirements within new development sites.

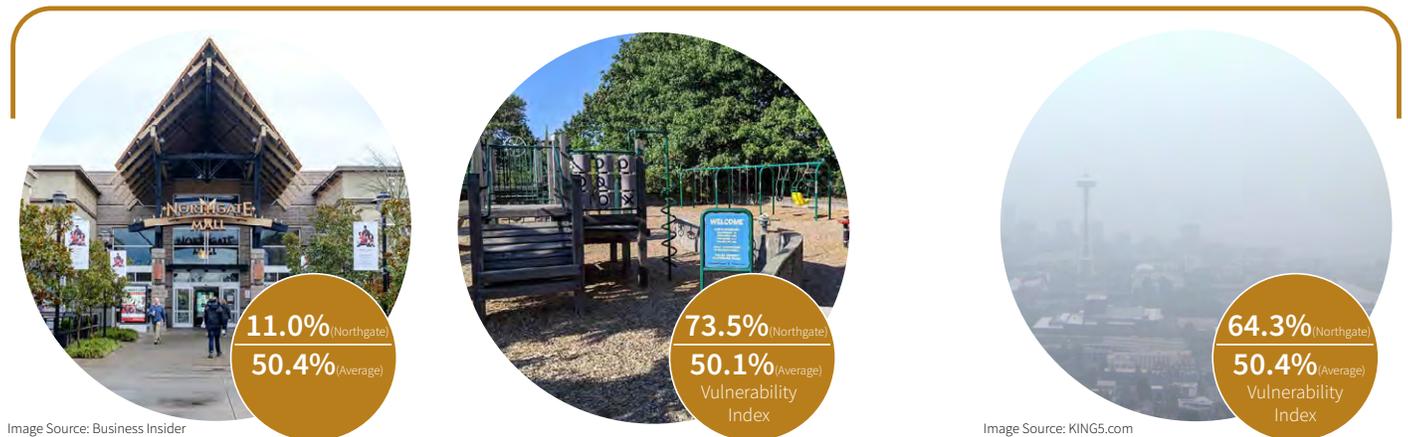


Northgate's greatest climate vulnerabilities are related to community well-being and public health factors

The City of Seattle’s Climate Vulnerability Assessment identifies Northgate as having higher than average vulnerability for the categories of “community amenities and wellbeing”, including elements such as food access and available green space, and “public health”, including rates of asthma and residents without health insurance. Several areas in the Regional Center are flagged for flood risk due to limited capacity in drainage systems and low-lying terrain. Points of strength for Northgate’s climate resilience include its economic resilience, given the presence of several large and institutional businesses, and the physical assessment of the area since it is inland and less susceptible to sea level rise. Addressing climate vulnerabilities and building upon existing strengths will be equally important for cultivating a resilient community in Northgate.

Social and Economic Vulnerability

Assess the **relative vulnerability** to climate change that **communities experience**; examines geographic distribution of vulnerability by **census tract**.



Economy

Economic vulnerability refers to the impact of climate change on the local economy, including businesses, workers, and other economic factors. Northgate hosts several large and institutional businesses, which positively increases the neighborhood's climate economic resilience. Currently, Northgate does not have a high number of climate-exposed employees, such as outdoor laborers. However, this could change as development and construction in the area increase.

Community Amenities and Wellbeing

The vulnerability of community amenities and well-being is caused by climate change's impact on essential community assets and services, such as food access, parks, and critical facilities that contribute to residents' well-being. In comparison to other Seattle neighborhoods, Northgate has lower access to food and less park space, with only 5% classified as open space. Additionally, the neighborhood faces high heat exposure due to the significant amount of impervious surfaces, with over 51% being impervious (buildings, roads, or parking lots). These factors worsen existing disparities and make it harder for residents to cope with climate events.

Public Health

Public health vulnerability refers to how climate change exacerbates existing health risks and introduces new health challenges for residents. Northgate has a high percentage of residents with asthma and many with limited or no health insurance. Only 94% of residents within Northgate have health insurance. This makes the population particularly sensitive to environmental changes and reduces their ability to cope with extreme weather, especially during smoke-filled days

Fig 31. Climate Vulnerability Assessment

Source: City of Seattle Climate Vulnerability Assessment, 2023

Living with Place: Key Initiatives

In “Living with Place,” Northgate deepens its connection to natural systems and addresses climate vulnerability threats with restorative policies that improve air and water quality, expand tree canopy, improve access to healthy food and green spaces, and reconnect ecosystems with native and climate-resilient plants. Climate resilience also considers the social fabric of the community, and Northgate is envisioned as a center where resilience hubs thrive and expand their capacity for addressing climate events.

- 1** Expand the green buffer and tree canopy coverage along I-5 to improve air quality and noise levels for those in the Regional Center most exposed to negative impacts from the corridor.
- 2** Improve access to green spaces for the Northgate community. This can be addressed by replacing paved areas with greenery and by improving access to existing assets. Hubbard Homestead is a key example of a park in the Regional Center where interventions such as mid-block street crossings or gates connecting to neighboring sites would better integrate this space into the urban fabric of the neighborhood.
- 3** Cultivate a food forest in Barton Woods. North Seattle College manages this large open space area directly adjacent to the Regional Center, where more foraging friendly plants could be integrated. This concept connects with the area’s native ecology and Indigenous ways of life from previous generations. Foraging friendly plants can be added throughout Northgate, but Barton Woods represents a special opportunity for this type of landscape.
- 4** Create a continuous ecology corridor that connects between Barton Woods and Thornton Creek. Key areas of opportunity for introducing more native plants and climate-resilient species include the public rights-of-way along 100th Street and I-5.
- 5** Address flood risk and wastewater capacity constraints in Northgate. SPU has classified several areas in Northgate as “high” or “critical” for wastewater and drainage capacity risk. All of these areas are located either along a neighborhood arterial or close to important community resources and infrastructure. It’s important that infrastructure in the Regional Center be well-maintained and improved and that green stormwater interventions are prioritized.
- 6** Plant more trees in the right places. One way to help expand tree canopy is to encourage or incentivize planting edible, native, and/or climate-resilient species, particularly conifers, into site landscape plans, in depaved parking lanes, and along streets.

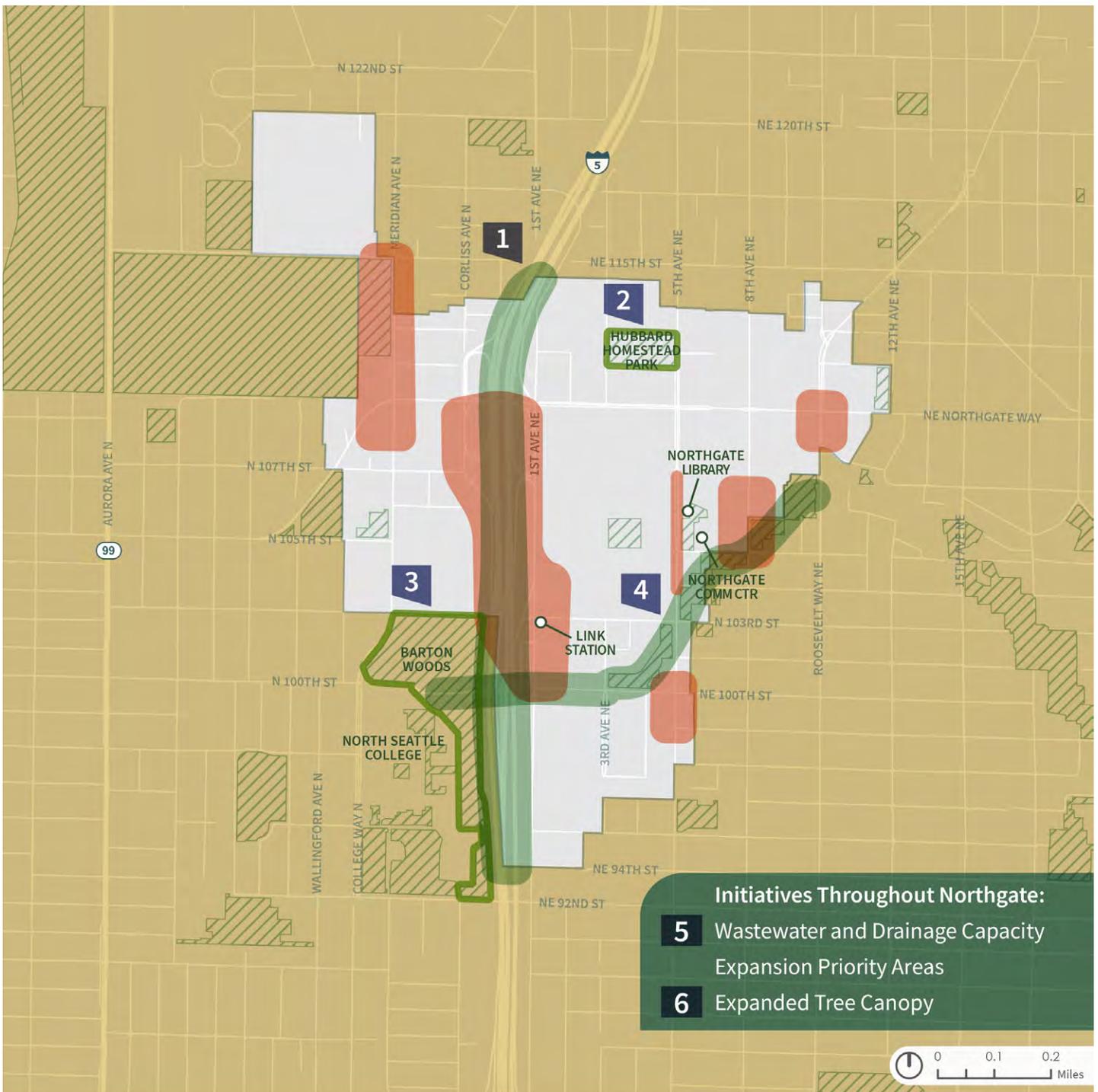


Fig 32. Living with Place Key Initiatives Map

- High/Critical Wastewater and Drainage Capacity Risk Areas
- Green Corridor Priority Areas
- Park Improvement Priority Areas
- Existing Parks and Open Spaces
- 1 I-5 Green Buffer
- 2 Hubbard Homestead Park Access Improvements
- 3 Barton Woods Foraging-Friendly Food Forest
- 4 Ecology Corridor

Goals, Policies, and Actions

The following policies and action steps demonstrate a commitment to fostering and enhancing the connection between people and Northgate’s natural resources. The Regional Center’s natural features contribute to community well-being in many ways. As a center for future growth, the “greening” of Northgate will be key to its success as a thriving urban neighborhood. The policies in this goal address three main themes related to living harmoniously with the environment: enhancing environmental health and climate resilience, strengthening community connections with outdoor spaces, and developing an ecology corridor from Barton Woods to Thornton Creek. Enhancing the health of Northgate’s ecosystem requires a deliberate effort to improve air and water quality, expand tree canopy, and introduce native and foraging plants, which are climate-resilient and context-sensitive. Climate resilience also includes coordination with community-based groups and public facilities for a network of well-equipped, trained, and connected community members.

Goal LP 1: Enhance environmental health and climate resilience

Natural, built, and social systems are integral to cultivating a healthy and resilient community. Existing environmental assets in Northgate include Thornton Creek, Northgate Park, Hubbard Homestead Park, and the adjacent areas of Barton Woods and Beaver Pond. Tree canopy and landscaped areas add to neighborhood environmental connections. However, Northgate’s pavement coverage is high and tree canopy coverage is low, which was further reduced in recent years with light rail construction. Today it is at just half the desired citywide coverage rate. The I-5 corridor introduces significant impacts to air and noise quality that should be buffered and mitigated for adjacent uses. Steps are in place to mitigate construction impacts and restore tree canopy in the area but it will take time for those impacts to fully take shape.



Hubbard Homestead Park, pictured above, is situated in a central location to serve the communities north of NE Northgate Way. Currently, a skate park is the main amenity on the site, although additional improvements are underway including a playground. The site offers opportunity for expanding tree canopy in the neighborhood as well, since much of the area currently is open and exposed to the elements.

Policy LP 1.1 Expand tree canopy using native and/or climate-resilient species. Priority areas include housing developments adjacent to the highway or arterial roads, planting buffers along the sidewalks of Neighborhood Pedestrian Corridors and commercial nodes, and within existing parks and green spaces.

Actions

- 1 Steward natural areas in forested parks and plant more trees in developed parks through the Green Seattle Partnership Program.
- 2 Foster tree canopy expansion on private property and at schools with the Trees for Neighborhoods program, which provides free trees along with guidance for ongoing care and maintenance. (Note – this action also exists under Policy NS 2.1)
- 3 Update Northgate’s Overlay District to align with Streets Illustrated street type designations and design guidance. Strengthen tree canopy coverage guidelines for new development sites.



There was no shortage of feedback about the need for an expanded tree canopy in Northgate as a part of this process.

Barton Woods and Campus Pond currently serve as effective freeway buffers just south of the Regional Center. This style of buffering should extend along as much of the corridor as possible to provide air quality benefits for surrounding communities.

Policy LP 1.2 Create a focused buffer area of planting designed to mitigate air and noise pollution impacts closest to the highway.

Actions

- 1 Explore the installation of air quality sensors and work with agencies like the State’s Department of Ecology, to monitor air quality in locations around the Regional Center, including sites in close proximity to the freeway. Use this data to identify priority locations for increased tree canopy.
- 2 Identify sites buffering the interstate for increased noise and air quality buffering. In particular, work with the SHA redevelopment site to prioritize plantings and/or visual barriers along its western border.
- 3 Explore partnering with SHA for a mass timber pilot project on their redevelopment site.

Policy LP 1.3 Support the preservation of the quality and health of Northgate’s critical water resources.

Actions

- 1 Evaluate restoration opportunities to make the South Branch of Thornton Creek healthier and more accessible to the public. Strategically invest in culvert replacement to seek the best possible improvements for salmon, beaver, and other wildlife through the habitat corridor.
- 2 Clear Beaver Pond of invasive species using low impact, integrated pest management methods. Reintroduce native and climate-resilient plant and tree species to Thornton Creek and use enclosures to protect trees and shrubs from resident beaver populations.

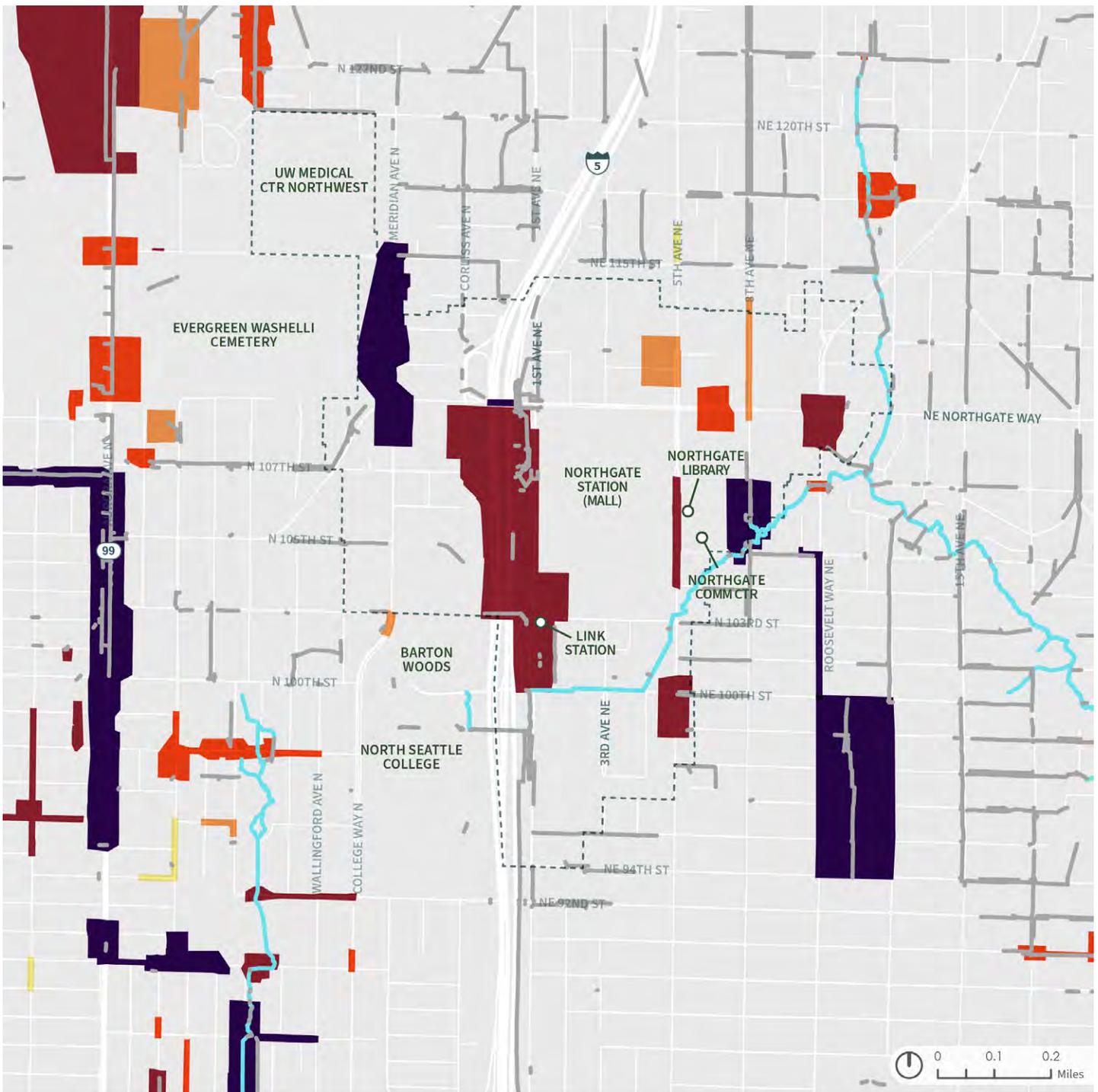


Fig 33. Drainage Risk Areas

Capacity Risk Areas

- Critical
- High
- Medium
- Medium-Low
- Low

- Ditches and Culverts
- Urban Watercourses
- Northgate Regional Center

Sources: Sources: City of Seattle, 2023; Seva Workshop, 2024

Policy LP 1.4 Address capacity constraints for drainage that lead to localized flood risk.

Actions

- 1 Improve the capacity of drainage systems, particularly in identified areas of constraint.
- 2 Use incentives to promote developer participation in SPU’s Beyond Code Program to exceed stormwater management requirements, protecting Thornton Creek through additional water quality treatment and/or peak flow control.

Policy LP 1.5 Support the creation of resilience hubs.

Actions

- 1 Complete a performance audit on public facilities in the subarea against resilience hub features and improve the function of places such as the library, community center, incoming fire station, and others to serve as sites of community resilience during extreme weather events. This could include the installation of solar panels on roofs backup generators, and emergency medical supplies (example sites: Kraken Community Iceplex, faith-based buildings).
- 2 Consider technical assistance or developer decarbonization incentive utilizing the Seattle Building Emissions Performance Standard regulations and Clean Buildings Accelerator program to exceed City and State emissions and carbon waste requirements. Evaluate if any buildings in Northgate are good candidates for partnership with the Building Emissions Navigator Program.



Resilience hubs are trusted, community-serving facilities that support residents in everyday life and before, during, and after an emergency.

They are flexible, place-based, and range in size and function. These places play a crucial role in mitigating the effects of climate events, such as days with extreme heat or smoke, by providing:

- > cooling spaces
- > air filters
- > backup power sources
- > clean water
- > food
- > charging stations
- > medical supplies
- > emergency response trainings

For example, Los Angeles is retrofitting existing buildings like the Green Meadows Recreation Center to serve as Resilience Hubs, equipped with solar panels and battery storage to function as microgrids during emergencies.

core components of a resilience hub



power



buildings & landscapes



communications



operations



programs & services



Goal LP 2: Connect communities to nature and outdoor spaces

Policy LP 2.1 Improve access to lands and waters to support cultural practice and the exercising of treaty rights for Indigenous communities. This includes access to Thornton Creek, Barton Woods, and neighboring Licton Springs Park, as well as transit access to Lake Washington (east) and the Puget Sound (west).

Actions

- 1 Establish new park entrances and safe pathways to enhance park accessibility, particularly at Hubbard Homestead and Beaver Pond.
- 2 Partner with King County Metro as they assess east-west bus route reorientation to provide direct access from Northgate to Lake Washington (east) and the Puget Sound (west).

Policy LP 2.2 Enhance access to healthy foods by expanding community gardens and fostering Northgate’s food forest ecosystems.

Actions

- 1 Continue to work with North Seattle College to establish a food forest in Barton Woods. Also establish foraging friendly plantings across open spaces in Northgate, aligned with Seattle’s Food Action Plan.
- 2 Integrate community gardens into various sites within and around the Regional Center, such as Hubbard Homestead Park, at the community center, and at local schools.

Policy LP 2.3 Increase opportunities for residents to spend time in parks and natural areas.

Actions

- 1 Explore resources necessary to improve amenities at Victory Creek Park.
- 2 Update incentives and explore new strategies for increasing privately owned public spaces as part of new development.
- 3 Identify opportunities for new pocket parks throughout the Regional Center, particularly in areas anticipated to increase their density.



Seattle’s 2024 Food Action Plan sets the City’s roadmap for improving the equity, sustainability, and resilience of local food systems.

A key strategic priority in this plan is to support local growing and harvesting of culturally-relevant and nutritious food across Seattle’s diverse demographics. Community gardens and the integration of food forests within public open space align with this vision of a stronger, healthier, and more accessible food system in Seattle.



An informal gardening site is spotted in the existing buffer zone between the freeway and neighborhoods to the east along 3rd Ave NE. Additional sites for community gardens would enhance access to healthy foods across Northgate.

Goal LP 3: Create an ecology corridor connecting Barton Woods to Thornton Creek

Barton Woods is one of the few large green spaces found in the Northgate area. The Thornton Creek area is the next natural area across the highway to its east. A vision for restoring the Northgate landscape includes connecting these two areas with a ribbon of native and climate-resilient species. This is a simple concept with complex implementation, as the connective areas span the interstate, public rights-of-way, and private development sites. Success could result in habitat restoration that is friendly to pollinators such as mason bees which are highly productive and particularly helpful for native plants.¹ This vision was introduced specifically through the Indigenous-led technical assistance for Northgate and lays the roadmap for a significant improvement in Northgate's potential to function as a Native Neighborhood.



Highlighted in this image are opportunity areas for plantings that would build the spine of an ecology corridor, from Barton Woods to Thornton Creek. Plantings should prioritize edible, native, and/or climate resilient species. Image source: Darryl Vallejos.

Policy LP 3.1 Create context-sensitive planting guides for the various areas spanning the corridor, including public rights-of-way and private development sites.

Actions

- 1 Develop planting guides for the various conditions across the identified ecology corridor, prioritizing edible, native, and/or climate-resilient species that offer wide canopies. This includes freeway buffer areas, rights-of-way along arterial and neighborhood streets, within Barton Woods, and on redeveloped private property sites. Use the guides found in the Implementation chapter of this report as a starting point. Coordinate with Urban Forestry Core Team for development of each planting guide.
- 2 Create or adapt existing planting guides for homeowners throughout Northgate for an overall local increase in native, climate-resilient, edible, and pollinator-friendly species in the Regional Center. Raise

¹ <https://www.seattle.gov/parks/about-us/plans-and-reports/environment-plans-and-reports/pollinator-habitat>



Seattle Parks and Recreation is committed to sustainable land management in part by supporting the many pollinators that live in or migrate through the city's open spaces.

Many native insects and birds, such as hummingbirds, butterflies, and bees, depend upon certain flowers blossoming throughout the year, and also require other habitat elements for survival such as woody debris and water sources. These pollinators need this healthy habitat in connected corridors or expansive ecosystems during critical times of the year.



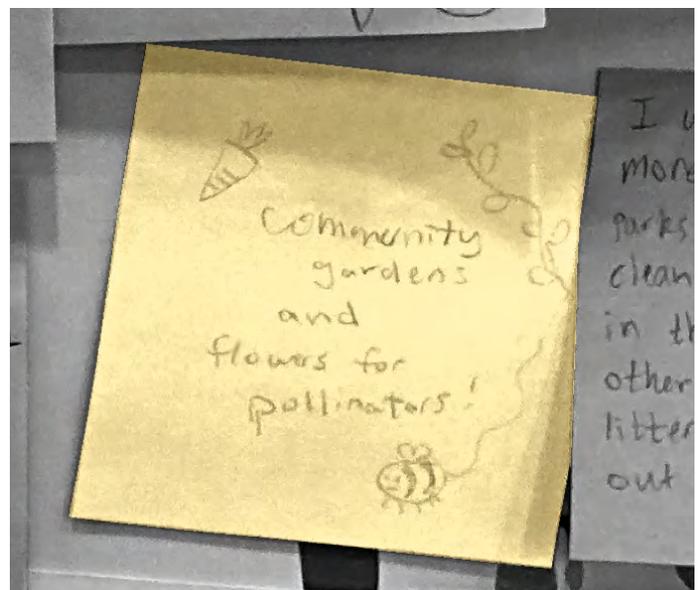
awareness about resources within Northgate to boost the success of these recommendations.

- 3 Partner with resilience hubs sites to connect with homeowners and offer planting guides, free or discounted starter plants, and/or home gardening courses with a focus on selected species in the planting guides.

Policy LP 3.2 Partner with state, regional, and local agencies to update and expand landscaping in areas surrounding roadways.

Actions

- 1 Update internal systems to realize the ecology corridor concept, like changing the Green Factor score sheet to allocate additional points for use of preferred species types in this area, creating more space for planting in the ROW, and/or adding setback requirements for private developments.
- 2 Identify partners at Tribal governments, WSDOT (I-5), North Seattle College (Barton Woods), and among private developers to share planting guides and brainstorm pathways to realizing a cohesive and connected ecology corridor strategy.
- 3 Develop interpretive signage along the ecology corridor to share the concept with the public, expand awareness and support for the concept, and educate community members on habitat connectivity benefits and the pre-mall landscape history of Northgate.



Top: Ecologically-focused interactive interpretive signage. Image: Gecko Group. Above: Community feedback from the interactive installation at Northgate's public library branch.

Create Northgate

With its origins as the northern “gateway” to the Seattle area, Northgate has too long been considered a place you pass through en route to other more desirable destinations. The predominant first impression of the area is of wide swaths of grey concrete and the noise of car traffic, with not much beauty to call one’s attention or on which to rest the senses. This chapter focuses on creating a public realm that is safe and welcoming to all residents and visitors—especially people walking, biking, and taking transit. It also focuses on creating activities and experiences at destinations that are uniquely Northgate—with treasured community gathering spaces, public art, and expressions of cultural identity honoring the past and inviting us to collaborate on our shared future.

Goals

- CN 1** Prioritize urban design that builds identity
- CN 2** Enhance community safety, especially for those not traveling by car
- CN 3** Integrate public art into public facilities, spaces, and rights-of-way



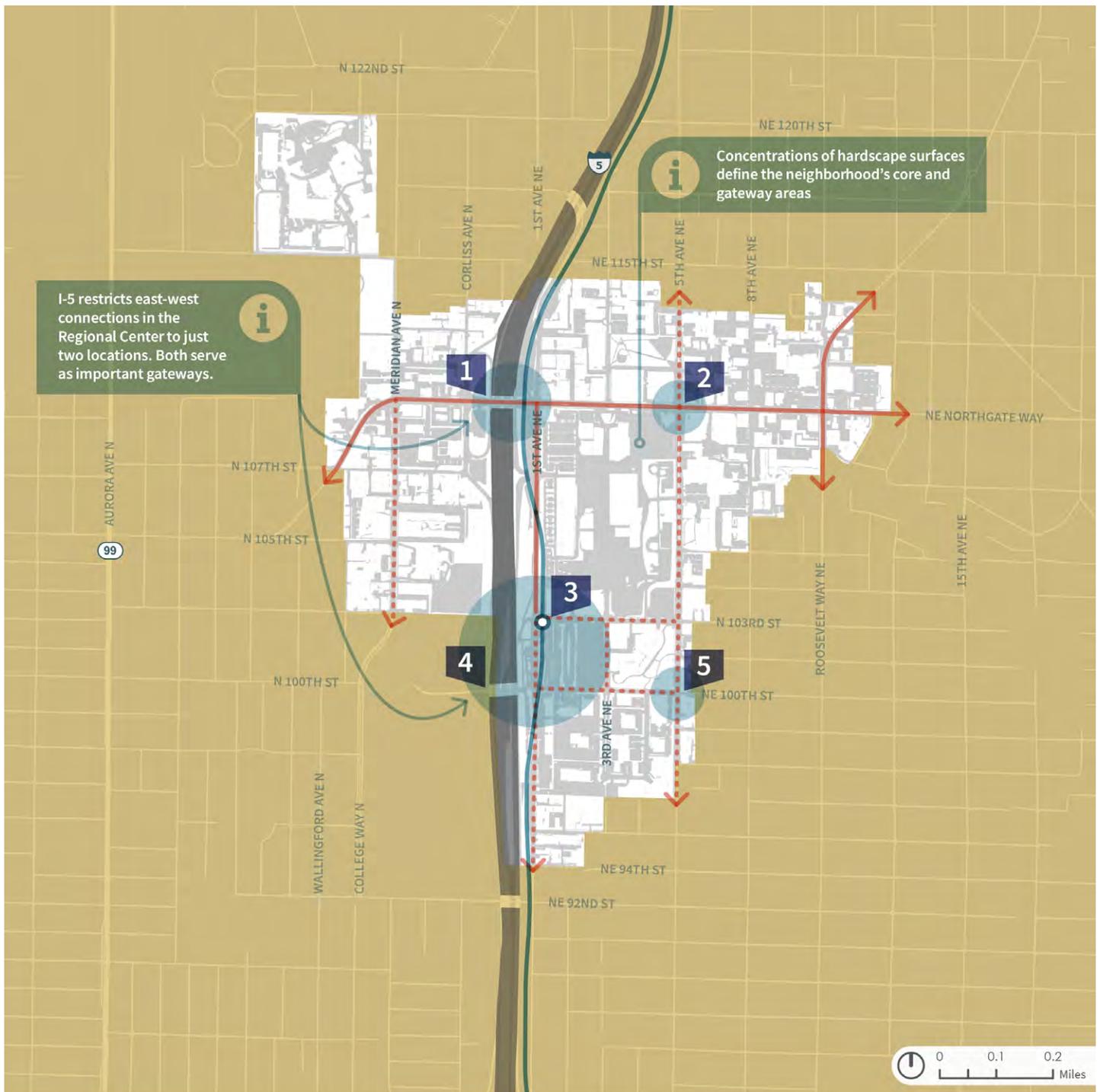
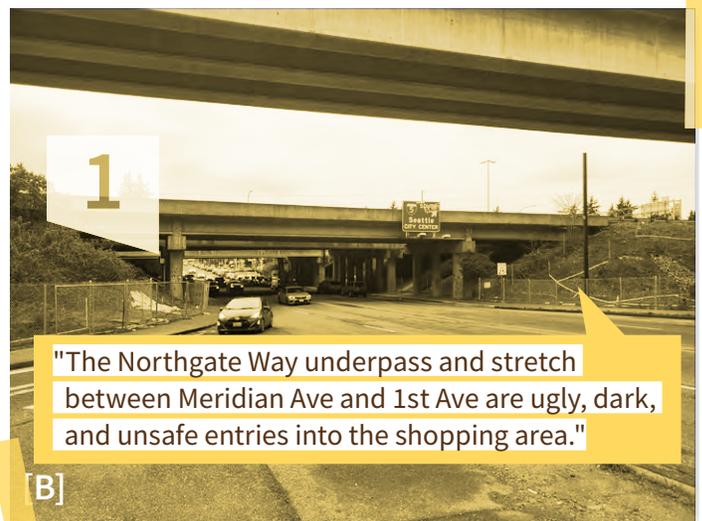


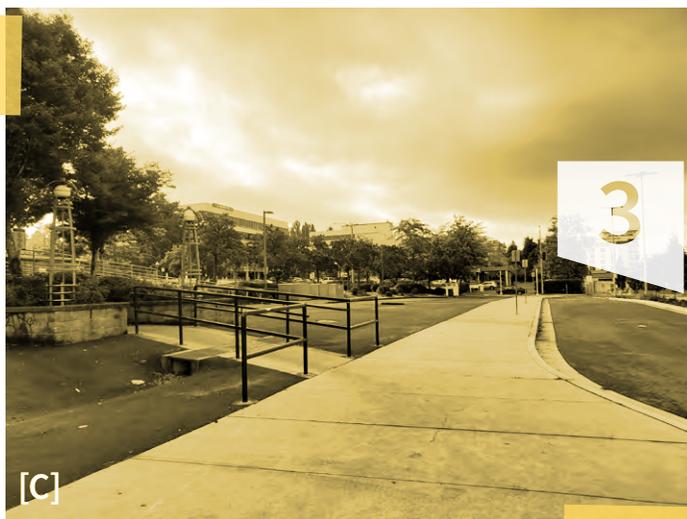
Fig 34. Northgate Gateways, Surface Conditions, and Arterials

- I-5 Stretches without Cross-Access
 - Hardscape: Parking, Driveways, Roadways, Pavement
 - Principal Arterials
 - Minor Arterials
 - Link Light Rail
 - Neighborhood Gateway Areas
- 1 NE Northgate Way I-5 Underpass
 - 2 NE Northgate Way and 5th Ave NE
 - 3 Link Light Rail Station
 - 4 John Lewis Memorial Pedestrian Bridge
 - 5 NE 100th St and 5th Ave NE

Sources: NOAA Land Cover Data, 2022



[A]: The I-5 underpass at NE Northgate Way spans about 250 feet. [B]: Street view of the I-5 underpass gateway to Northgate.



Northgate's gateways and the connections between them have room for improvement

Per 2023 City of Seattle GIS portal data, 51% of this Regional Center is covered by roads and parking lots. A concrete aesthetic dominates the neighborhood experience. Many key corridors and entry points (or gateways) into the neighborhood are unmarked and lack a defining identity. This can leave Northgate feeling cold, unwelcoming, and more like a place to pass through rather than a home or destination.



[C]: Despite some planting strips, hardscape overwhelms the stretch between Northgate Station and the bus transit island, an important gateway to the neighborhood. [D]: This stretch of 1st Avenue between the Link Light Rail Station and NE Northgate Way presents an opportunity to create a more welcoming pedestrian experience leading to/from two of the neighborhood's primary gateways. [E]: Underutilized parking lots are a defining characteristic of the neighborhood's core, flanked by the main gateways to Northgate.

Northgate's community members have expressed the need for more placemaking and a clean and safe neighborhood

Engagement conversations for this Regional Center Plan confirm that many in Northgate’s community feel a lack of identity, vibrancy, and safety in access to key destinations. Specific comments heard during listening sessions include “The identity is not fully baked”; the Northgate Way underpass and stretch between Meridian Ave and 1st Ave are “ugly, dark, and unsafe entries into the shopping area.” When asked about changes for Northgate, many talk about creating a neighborhood where color, art, and personality shine through. The Native Neighborhoods Report highlights that “Indigenous art, language, and symbols in public areas, like murals and wayfinding signs, are essential for maintaining and celebrating cultural heritage.”

"Walkable. Improve safety. Improve security. A mall would be useful. Reduce theft and crime. Reduce vandalism."



"The identity is not fully baked."

NE Northgate Way at 5th Ave

"I would love to see more community or parks department clean ups, particularly in the Beaver Pond and other natural areas. The littering has really gotten out of control."

Fig 35. Identity and Public Realm Community Survey Responses

“How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Northgate, as it is today?”



It's a critical moment to redefine Northgate as an interesting, beautiful, and walkable neighborhood

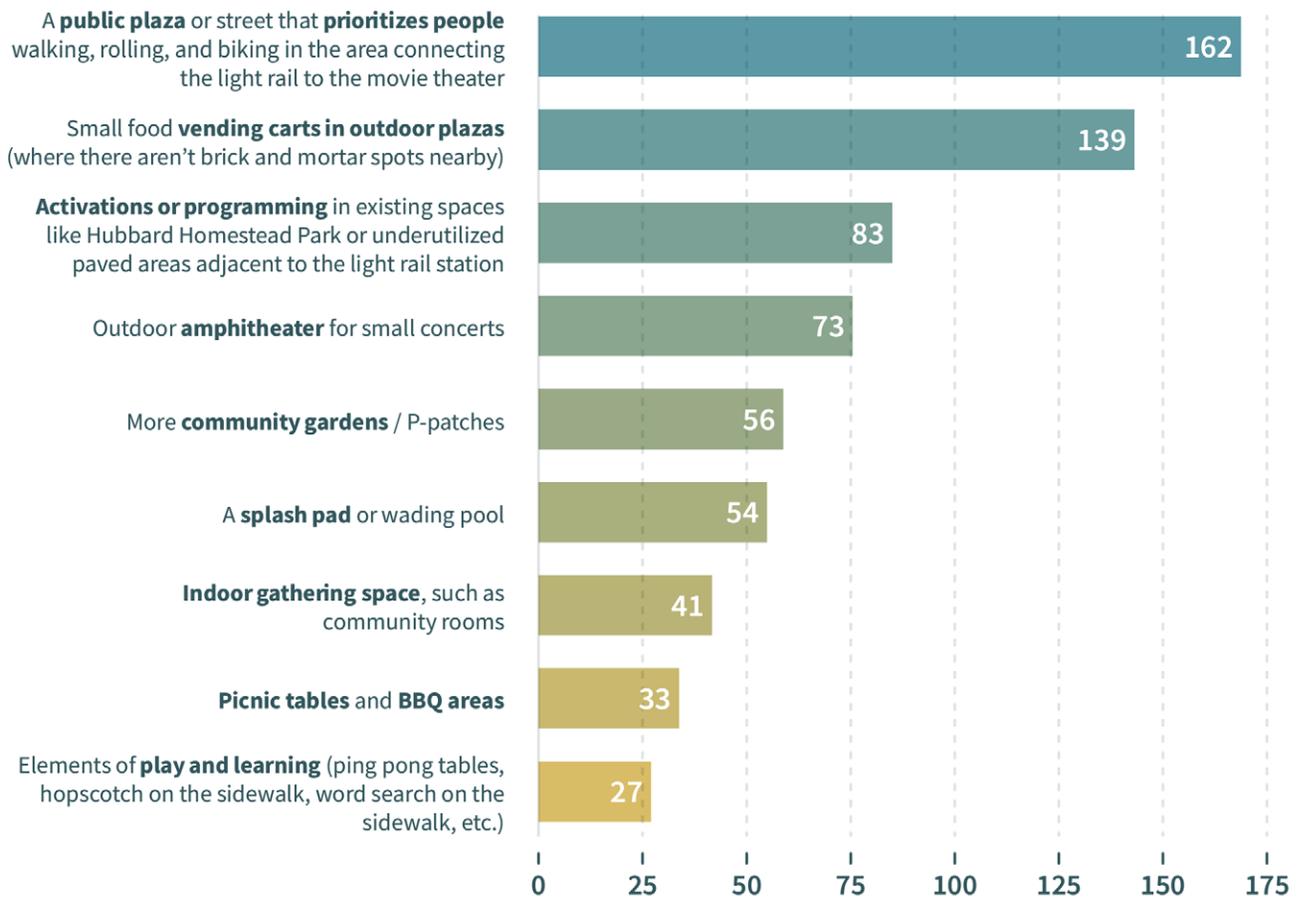
Northgate's identity was defined by the mall for decades, and with its current state of redevelopment-in-progress, a central void is left in its place. A fresh look and feel for the community would be a timely way to welcome new residents to a place offering a high quality of life. An attractive public realm can draw people out onto the sidewalks and into local businesses, fostering a greater sense of community ownership and responsibility. During the second round of public engagement, community members shared many ideas for public spaces and community amenities they hope to see in Northgate's future.



"A big indoor/outdoor shared community space! There are many different communities that live here, but very few places to meet host/congregate that has tables; bathrooms, etc. Also, a playground!"

Fig 36. Visioning Phase Community Input: Gathering Spaces and Amenities

“What types of gathering spaces and amenities would you most love to see in Northgate?”



Create Northgate: Key Initiatives

“Create Northgate” outlines a roadmap for establishing a fresh visual identity in Northgate. Policies in this chapter highlight the need for clearer neighborhood gateway moments, improvements to the public realm throughout but particularly along key corridors, more art and color that reflect neighborhood identity, and enhanced public safety for a vibrant street life.

- 1** Transform the neighborhood experience with focused investment and creativity at the I-5 underpass along NE Northgate Way. This is a critical gateway to the neighborhood where conditions are inhospitable and unsafe, with wide swaths of pavement, numerous crossings and wait times, poor lighting, loud ambient noise, utilitarian fencing, drainage issues, and lack of buffer from the sidewalk to fast moving traffic.
- 2** Make improvements along Northgate Way to improve safety and create a more beautiful street for walking and accessing transit, including public art and intersection enhancements at 5th Avenue, defining this locally serving commercial node.
- 3** Create a new Northgate Square, connecting the light rail station to 5th Avenue. This will introduce a new gathering space that should boast notable enhancements such as a beautiful tree canopy, a water feature, playable features for children, and/or identity building design.
- 4** Focus on arterial corridors and important connective pathways for public realm improvements that establish neighborhood identity. This could be a cohesive suite of designed lamp posts, benches, landscaping, signage, and other elements, led by a neighborhood organization, to promote a consistent experience for someone traveling through the Regional Center from one destination to another. Alternatively, this could be a public art campaign to infuse the area with local artists on crosswalks, signal box artwork, or other “add-on” art to existing lampposts, bus stops, blank walls, or sidewalks. These "Neighborhood Identity Focus Corridors" are identified in the Key Initiatives Map on the next page.
- 5** Make strategic bus stop upgrades, pointing to how public infrastructure can be leveraged to add art and color and lighting in the street environment. Specialty treatment at these shelters can celebrate local culture and neighborhood identity and be driven by a neighborhood organization.
- 6** Prioritize pedestrian safety conditions within the immediate travel radius to local elementary schools to protect some of our society’s most vulnerable.



Fig 37. Create Northgate Key Initiatives Map

- Gateway Improvement Areas
- Neighborhood Identity Focus Corridors
- Potential Bus Stop Upgrade Locations
- Safe Routes to School Target Areas (¼ mi radius)
- Link Light Rail

Goals, Policies, and Actions

Goals and policies in the Create Northgate theme reflect the vision of enhancing the neighborhood’s visual identity, promoting community safety, and integrating art and color across public facilities and especially around the neighborhood’s gateways and commercial nodes. Urban design interventions, additional eyes on the street, and strategic traffic calming will improve comfort and safety for those in Northgate who are commuting to work or school, especially when outside a car. A unique and special identity will make Northgate a home to be proud of and a destination on its own.

Goal CN 1: Prioritize urban design that builds identity

A beautiful environment honors the community that inhabits the space. Northgate is a diverse neighborhood with an interesting story to tell, home to many tight-knit communities and long-standing traditions. When the mall was first introduced, the site design cleared the area of much of its original greenery and assumed automobile access would be the primary way anyone would visit this area. Today, urban density has filled in much of the surrounding areas with residents, workers, and community members who desire a more beautiful and welcoming environment for affirming daily interactions. The public realm can play a large role in fostering community, understanding of a place’s history, and excitement for bright futures ahead.

Policy CN 1.1 Enhance the public realm with well-maintained sidewalks, distinctive landscaping, and effective wayfinding. Key corridors for improvement include NE Northgate Way, 5th Ave NE, NE 100th St, and Meridian Ave N.

Actions

- 1 Use tools such as "Green Street" and "Pedestrian Zone" designations to bring the Northgate Overlay District into alignment with recommendations in the Connected Communities chapter and Future Land Use Map.



Top: Place based branding in a District of Columbia neighborhood. Above: Elements of the recently developed brand strategy and visual identity for Seattle Southside, which highlights a multitude of "microadventures" to be experienced by visitors to the region. Below: In Capitol Hill, landscaping buffers, shade structures, and open air restaurants combine for an activated and attractive street environment.



- 2 Address sidewalk deficiencies and improve landscaping and buffering, particularly within smaller and moderate scale commercial nodes.
- 3 Encourage on-site access for critical access needs (such as garbage collection) as sites redevelop to minimize demands on the curb and sidewalk, where possible.

Policy CN 1.2 Provide attractive neighborhood gateways as well as distinctive and welcoming public spaces.

Actions

- 1 Establish a neighborhood brand identity, reflected by elements such as storm drain covers, lamp posts, plantings, murals, and signage.
- 2 Provide clear and consistent guidance to developers so that new projects contribute to neighborhood identity and an enhanced public realm.

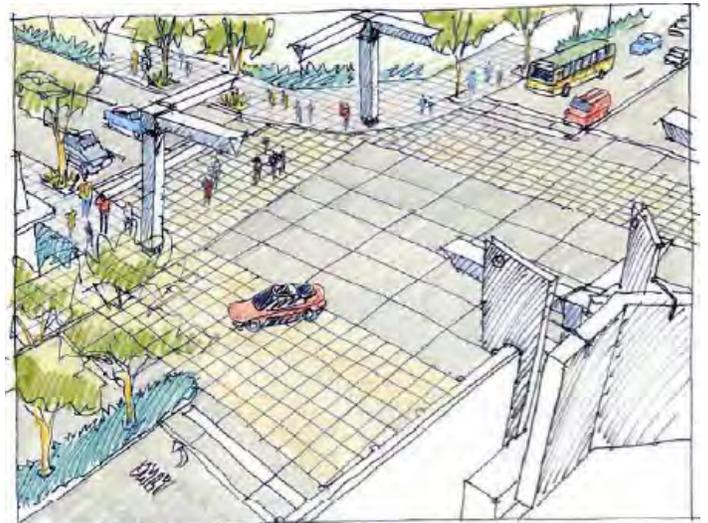


Fig 39. Stanchions Concept for Northgate Way & 5th Ave, 2004 Northgate Open Space & Pedestrian Connections Plan

"An open space that could host a farmers market and pop-up retail near Northgate Station would be awesome. Right now the closest markets are in the U District and Lake City, but Northgate could definitely support one of its own."

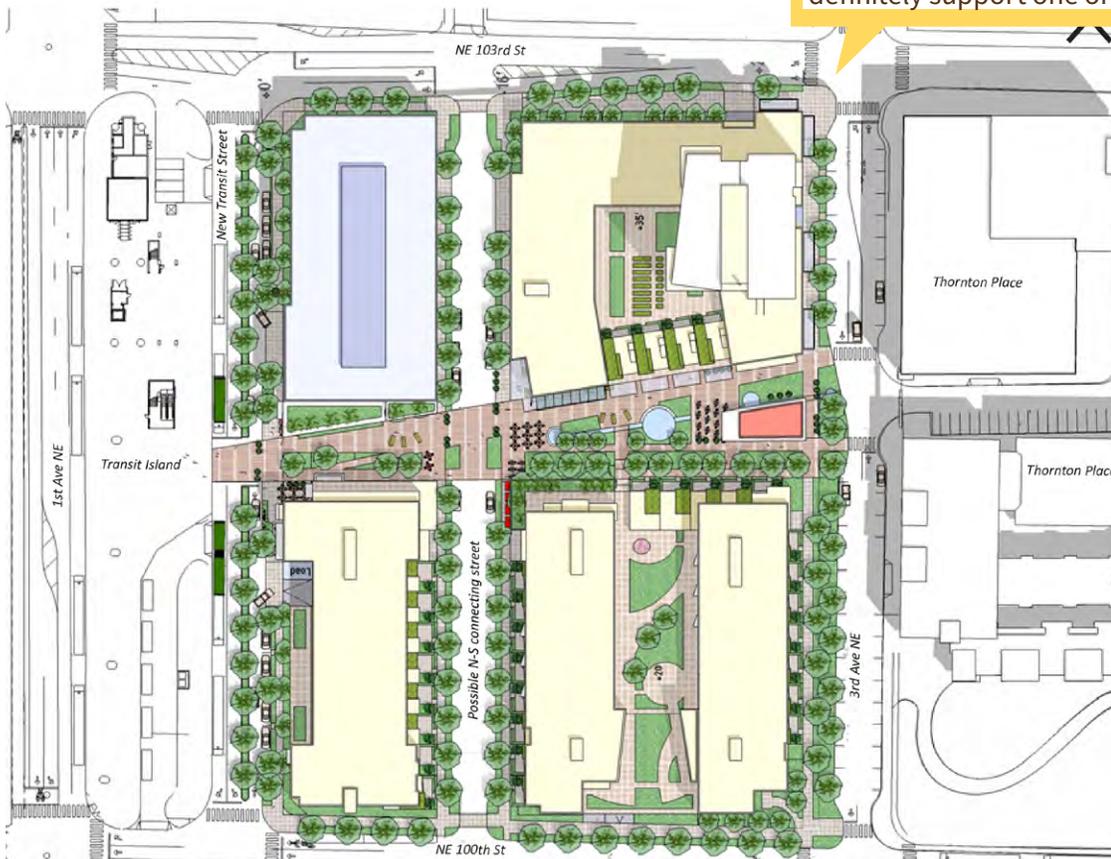


Fig 38. Public Plaza Illustrative Site Plan, 2013 Northgate Urban Design Framework



[A]



[B]

[A]: Lightweave, a permanent public artwork located in Washington DC's NOMA district, has turned a rail underpass into a neighborhood attraction. [B]: A mural underneath the Avenida Libertador y General Paz Bridge in Buenos Aires, Argentina by Martín Ron lends a friendlier face to the infrastructure.

- 3 Update and add features to the I-5 underpass so that it is more pedestrian-friendly, safer, and more welcoming.
- 4 Partner with King County, Sound Transit, and potential private developers to plan for the Northgate Square concept and realize the intent for the space. Adapt the existing code language to enhance the function of this defined mid-block corridor.
- 5 Partner with King County and the community to activate the underutilized drop-off/pickup space directly adjacent to the light rail station.

Policy CN 1.3 Showcase Indigenous Art, Language, and Culture within Northgate's Public Realm.

Actions

- 1 Work with Tribal governments, urban Indigenous organizations, Indigenous designers and artists to reflect Native cultures in the public realm.



[C]



[D]

[C]: Tacoma-based Salish artist Paige Pettibon created a distinctive mural featuring Native patterns and iconography for the interior of Northgate's Kraken Community Iceplex. [D]: Cedar and Steel sculpture outside the Kraken Community Iceplex by Andrea Wilbur-Sigo, Native American master carver and Squaxin Tribe member.

Goal CN 2: Enhance community safety, especially for those not traveling by car

Everyone deserves to feel safe and comfortable in their community, whether accessing transit, crossing the street, or working at a customer-facing business. It also means that people experiencing homelessness are not threatened with violence and that residents, visitors, and business owners are not persistently plagued with property damage and theft. Public safety encompasses a range of actions, including some outside the scope of this plan.

Policy CN 2.1 Provide appropriate lighting for streets and sidewalks at all times, recognizing seasonal shifts in daylight patterns.

Actions

- 1 Identify locations that are particularly dark for people walking, biking, and driving, and improve lighting conditions, particularly in areas such as the I-5 underpass and corridors with high pedestrian traffic.

Policy CN 2.2 Implement traffic calming measures, with examples such as traffic circles, speed cushions, chicanes, curb bulbs that narrow the street, street art, raised crosswalks and intersections.

Actions

- 1 Build traffic calming measures into future SDOT projects in the Regional Center.
- 2 Design pedestrian crossings along major roads that are clearly marked and accessible.

Policy CN 2.3 Identify programmatic and physical interventions to increase active commuting to local K-12 schools.

Actions

- 1 Implement safe routes to school improvements adjacent to K-12 schools that serve Northgate families, especially at James Baldwin Elementary, Hazel Wolf K-8, and Olympic View Elementary.
- 2 Work with schools to identify barriers for active commuting and find programmatic changes to address these challenges, such as walking or biking school buses, bike donations, or other solutions.



In this case, pedestrian scale light fixtures not only serve to make sidewalks feel safer after dark, they also combine with planted areas and trash receptacles to create a buffer from street traffic.

"Better sidewalks, on demand pedestrian crossings on Northgate Way."



The Northgate area has a number of locations that generate frequent pedestrian traffic, including the Idris Mosque on the very busy NE Northgate Way.

Policy CN 2.4 Improve agency responses to individuals experiencing homelessness and mental health issues, with a focus on compassionate and non-criminalized response.

Actions

- 1 Train EMTs, firefighters, and police officers who serve Northgate’s community in de-escalation techniques, mental health first aid, and compassionate response approaches when working with individuals experiencing homelessness, such as connecting people to service providers and care networks.

Goal CN 3: Integrate public art into public facilities, spaces, and rights-of-way

Many of Northgate’s newer developments have set good examples of public art integration with building design, making strides toward Northgate becoming a more colorful and visually interesting neighborhood to explore. Leveraging public dollars and spaces to expand this work is a powerful way to invest in community well-being, especially when the installations connect to the cultural heritage of a place and its communities.

Policy CN 3.1 Integrate public art into and onto all public facilities.

Actions

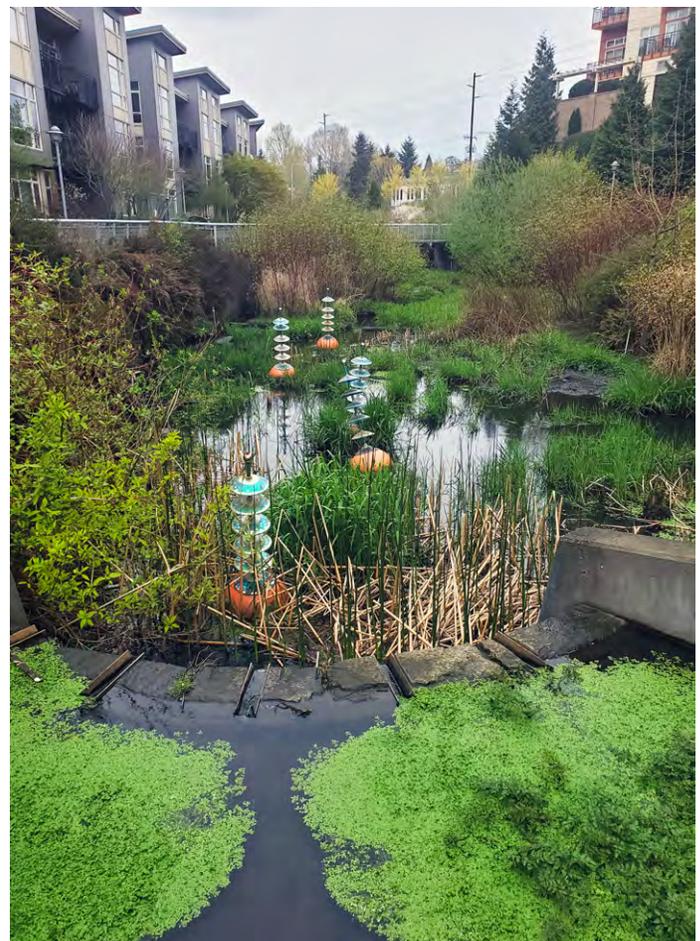
- 1 Leverage the new fire station being built along Meridian as an opportunity to add art and color to the public realm.
- 2 Identify additional opportunities with public facilities and public property in Northgate to integrate art and color in new ways.

Policy CN 3.2 Strategically identify neighborhood gateway locations for artist collaborations that are remarkable, inspiring, and welcoming.

Actions

- 1 Identify partners to implement public art at the intersection of Northgate Way and 5th Avenue.
- 2 Integrate art, along with lighting and safety buffering, at the I-5 underpass.

"Lots of visible art that reflects diversity and nature."



Top: Mural by Craig Cundiff at Thornton Place. Above: Sculptural elements bring visual interest to a Thornton Creek biofiltration swale.

Connected Communities

A robust and safer network of streets and multi-use pathways will make it easier to travel around Northgate, bring people together to socialize, and encourage stronger relationships between small businesses, residents, local employees, and visitors from neighboring areas. Building upon City efforts such as the Seattle Transportation Plan (2024) and Draft One Seattle Plan (2025), investments in Northgate will promote connectivity as a key priority for its future. Better connection starts with making it easier for people to walk and roll around Northgate. This infrastructure will better integrate the light rail station with its surrounding environment, provide new connections through long blocks that currently make it challenging to walk in Northgate, introduce new access points to neighborhood parks and gathering places, and strengthen transportation networks.

Goals

- CC 1** Support the vision of Northgate as a transit-oriented community and prioritize pedestrian connections to the light rail station
- CC 2** Improve conditions and connections for people walking, biking, and rolling in Northgate
- CC 3** Enhance Northgate’s streetscape and integration with park spaces



Transit is one of Northgate's greatest assets, but the street grid surrounding the light rail station is fractured and sparse

Light rail stations are sites of large community investment, integrating regional transportation needs into a cohesive and connected transit network. Northgate’s light rail station presents an exciting opportunity to connect the neighborhood to the region, and vice versa. While the entire Regional Center is evaluated for connectivity improvements in Northgate, the light rail station represents a focal point for enhancing Northgate’s function as a transit-oriented community. The Northgate station area, in contrast to others within Seattle Regional Centers, demonstrates much less density capture in its immediate walkshed. These four images show all buildings within a half mile radius of light rail stations in different Seattle Regional Centers, with the dotted lines showing the extent of areas accessible to or from the station within a quarter mile walk. Northgate is notable in its large swaths of pavement instead of buildings accessible by walking, rolling, or biking in close proximity to its station. This goal will focus on connectivity improvements to establish a grid in the Regional Center that is more navigable outside of a vehicle.

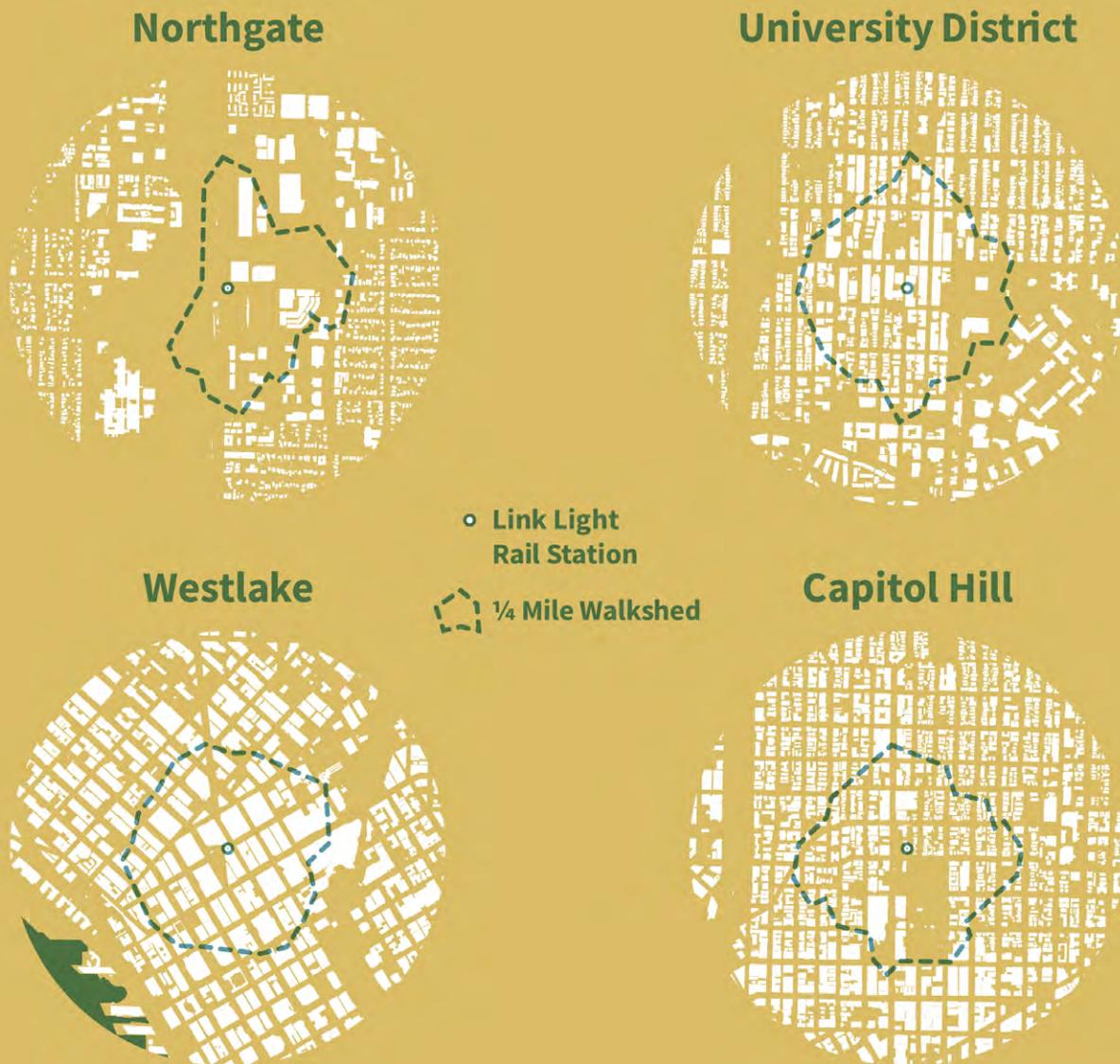


Fig 40. Light Rail Station Area Figure Ground Diagrams

Source: Seattle Street Network Database, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

Connectivity is a big issue in Northgate and the community is vocal about it

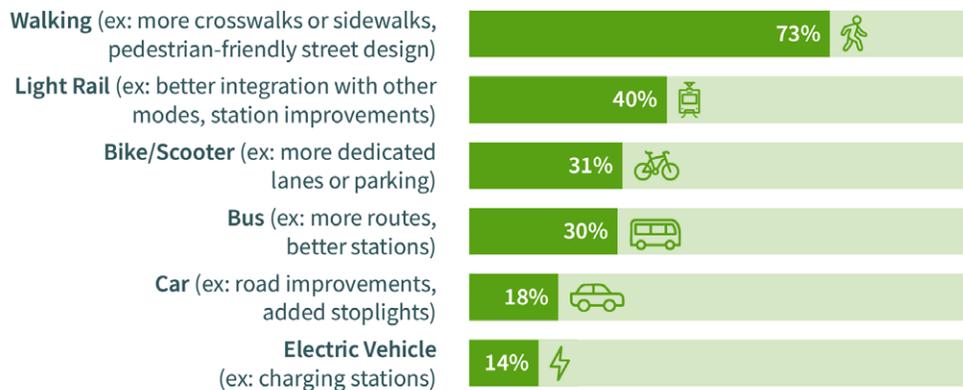
Community voices expressed during this project engagement emphasize connectivity as a key challenge in Northgate. This message has been consistent across various neighborhood planning efforts in Northgate spanning 30 years, starting with the 1993 Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan, which helped create the pedestrian bridge across I-5. In the visioning community survey conducted for this project, when asked “What are your hopes for the future of the Northgate neighborhood?”, the top response theme was “walkability”, written by 255 respondents (36%). Respondents were also asked to rank their priorities for potential transportation investments—walking improvements again ranked #1, selected by 73% of respondents, followed by light rail station integration (40%), and bike/scooter investments (31%).

The barrier imposed by I-5 is one of Northgate’s biggest connectivity challenges. The magnitude of the interstate and its relatively few crossing locations within or near the subarea extends travel times between the east and west sides of the subarea, particularly for pedestrians. While the John Lewis Memorial Bridge, among other public rights of way, stitches the two sides of the subarea together, multimodal improvements in terms of capacity, comfort, and convenience will be necessary to strengthen this connection in the long-term.

“A large number of sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and radical anti-cut through-traffic calming in the neighborhoods to the north and east of Northgate, where the use of the very streets we live on often involves risk of death and where children often cannot walk to their assigned schools.”

Fig 41. Transportation Investment Priorities Community Survey Response

“Pick the top two types of transportation investment needed most in Northgate”



“There should be more neighborhood bus loops to shuttle folks to Northgate & light rail station. These could also reduce traffic and enable our neighborhood to become less dependent on cars to get to/from grocery & retail centers.”

“A complete, safe, and comfortable bike network throughout the neighborhood, including protected bike lanes, trails, and multi-use paths.”

Northgate's long blocks are an imposition on pedestrians and limit accessibility

Short blocks and a highly connected street grid tend to be considered more “walkable,” or pedestrian-friendly in an urban environment. Long block segments or “blocks”—the distance along a street between intersections – lead to longer and less direct pathways for pedestrians, higher car speeds, and more congested intersections. Within Seattle’s other Regional Centers, the share of blocks that are 600’ or less is near 100%, compared with the Northgate Regional Center at 70%. These long blocks have an outsized impact on the center – accounting for 54% of the street distances, in terms of total feet.

54%

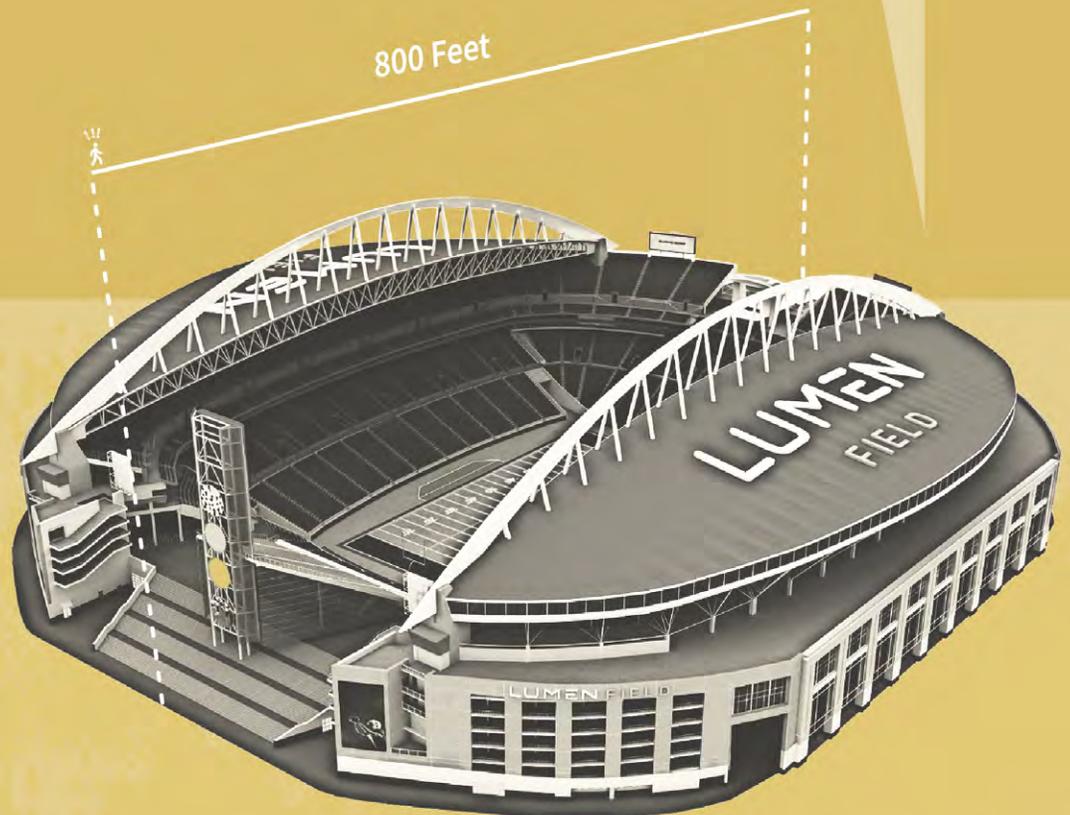
of block lengths in Northgate are longer than the Space Needle is tall

21%

of block lengths in Northgate are longer than the length of Lumen Field (yes, the whole stadium!)



600 Feet



800 Feet

Block Length	# of Blocks	Share of Blocks	Share of Total Length
600 feet or less	107	70%	46%
601 - 800 feet	47	23%	33%
801 feet or more	12	7%	21%

Fig 42. Northgate Block Lengths

Source: Seattle Street Network Database, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

Connected Communities: Key Initiatives

There are many components to enhancing mobility in a walkable, transit-oriented urban neighborhood. In addition to a compact street grid, sustainable lifestyles are promoted with interventions such as traffic calming, widening or improving sidewalks, adding and improving crosswalks, expanding a network of protected bike lanes, providing electric vehicle charging stations, and providing comfortable places to wait for a bus or rest along your route. In **Figure 43**, this plan outlines key transportation initiatives that will improve mobility, accessibility, and connectivity across Northgate. Projects are grouped by category, summarized below as they appear in the legend. The complete and detailed SDOT project list for the Northgate Regional Center can be found in Appendix 12.

Corridor Improvements – Improvements across the entire right-of-way to better serve the modal networks planned in the Seattle Transportation Plan. This may involve adding bike and e-mobility lanes, bus-only lanes, crossings; upgrading streets to better withstand the weight of trucks and buses; constructing/repairing sidewalks; improving bus stops; and other improvements.

Crossing, Traffic Operations, Intersection Design – Improvements at intersections to improve safety and make streets operate more smoothly, such as changes to signal timing, striping crossings, and modifying street geometry/design.

Sidewalks and walkways – Projects that construct and repair sidewalks or neighborhood walkways, which are quick-build spaces made from paint, asphalt, and barriers.

Traffic Calming/Vision Zero – Projects aimed at creating safer streets and slowing traffic. These projects typically use proven safety countermeasures and street design strategies, such as speed humps, traffic circles, narrowed lanes, and more.

Bike Infrastructure – Projects that add bikeways suitable for all ages and abilities (AAA) that allow for safe, comfortable, and accessible bicycle travel, such as protected bike lanes.

Multi-Use Trail – Off-street paths for people walking, biking, rolling, or using other non-motorized/e-mobility devices.

Community and Mobility Hub – Places of connection that bring together transportation options, community spaces, and travel information into a seamless, understandable, and on-demand travel experience. They are located with major transit facilities and places and may feature People Streets and Public Spaces (PSPS) elements.

Neighborhood Greenway – Safer, calmer neighborhood streets in Seattle where people walking and biking are the priority. They include wayfinding signage and enhanced crossings where they cross busy streets.

People Streets and Public Spaces – An overarching term for different street types defined in the Seattle Transportation Plan that put people first and offer inviting spaces for people to linger.

On-ramp Improvements – Improvements to the ramps drivers take to get on and off limited access highways, such as reconfiguring lanes to improve sightlines and merge time for drivers

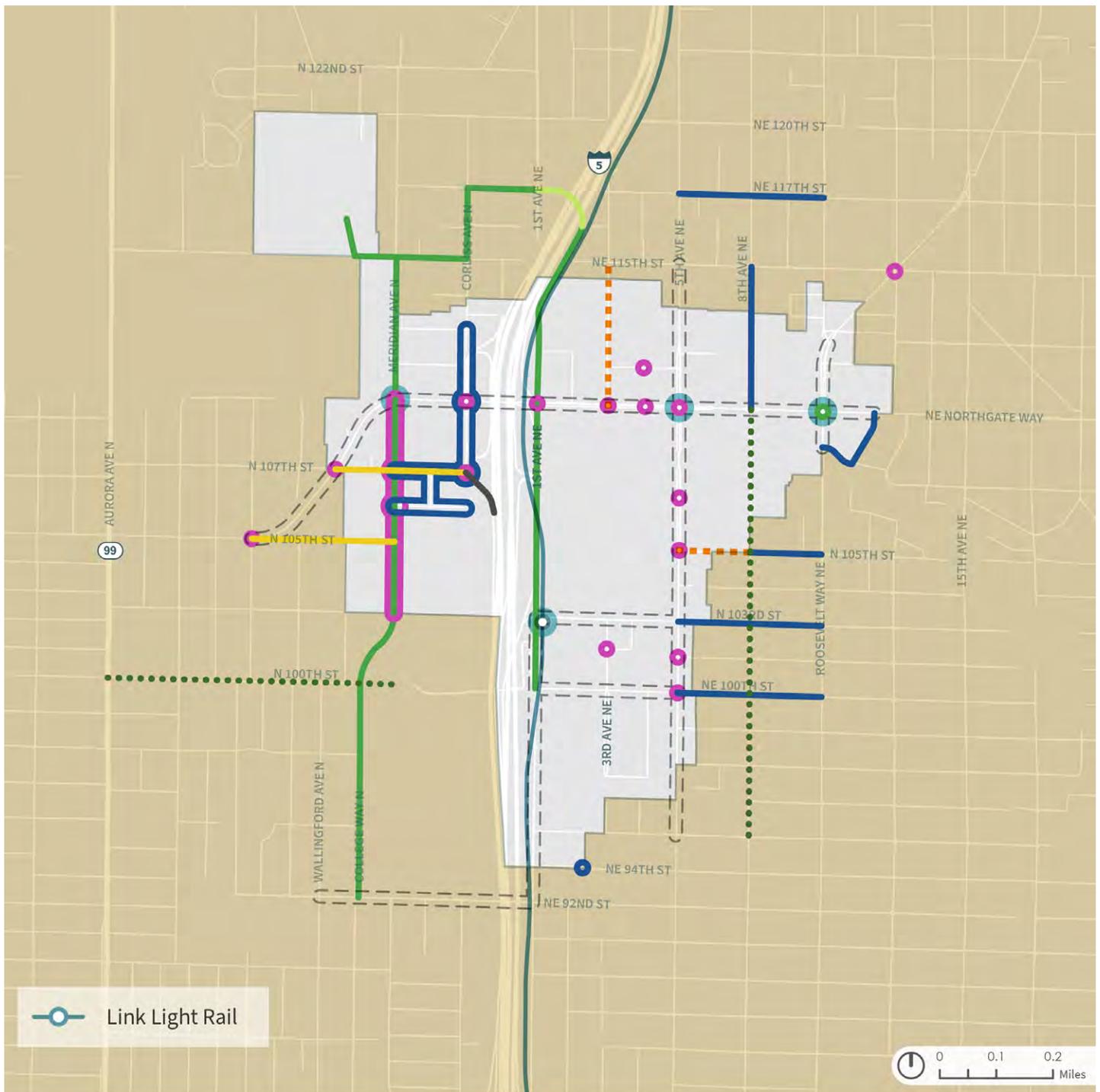


Fig 43. Connected Communities Key Initiatives Map

- Corridor Improvements
- Crossing, Traffic Operations, Intersection Design
- Sidewalks and walkways
- Traffic Calming/Vision Zero
- Bike Infrastructure
- Multi-Use Trail
- Community and Mobility Hub
- Neighborhood Greenway
- People Streets and Public Spaces
- On-ramp Improvements

Note: See Appendix 12, Implementation Spreadsheet, for a full transportation project list and detailed corresponding map.

Goals, Policies, and Actions

Policies and action steps in the Connected Communities theme set a roadmap for achieving the vision of Northgate as a transit-oriented community: easily, safely, and enjoyably navigable outside of a car. This includes an enhanced streetscape environment that encourages increased foot traffic, complete with comfortable and attractive places to spend time, read a book, or hang out with friends.

Goal CC 1: Support the vision of Northgate as a transit-oriented community and prioritize pedestrian connections to the light rail station

Since the 1990s decision to build a light rail station and connecting pedestrian bridge in Northgate, the community’s transformation journey from a purely car-centric shopping center to transit-oriented retail and recreation destination has been in process. Policies in this section build on a longstanding commitment to promote Northgate as a connectivity hub across modes of travel. Today’s station area is the centerpiece of mobility in the community but remains lacking in some elements of connection to its immediate surroundings and broader community. These policies include an emphasis on overcoming walkability barriers around the transit station. Bus stops in Northgate are served by various routes, and community members hope for future improvements in east/west connectivity along its key corridors.

Policy CC 1.1 Improve connections to the light rail station, both locally and beyond, with particular focus on pedestrian connections near the station

Actions

- 1 Continually assess and improve walking, biking, and transit access conditions in the immediate transit station area. Make investments as necessary to better connect people using these modes to the station, particularly within walking distance of the station.

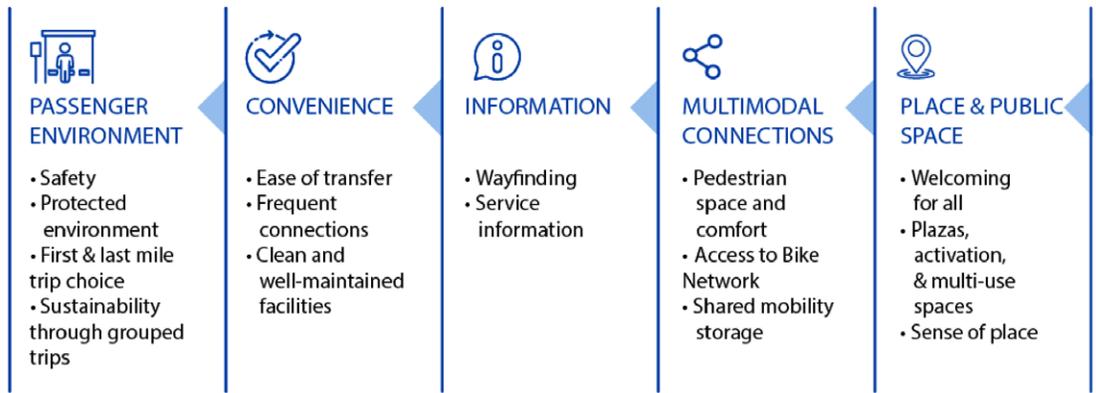


Top: The John Lewis Memorial Bridge represents a long-term investment in Northgate’s transformation toward becoming a walkable, transit-oriented community. Above: E-scooter rentals are lined up at the light rail station, helping transit riders make their nearby connections without a car.

- 2 Fill in gap areas for safe, on-site parking for bicycles, including larger cargo and family-size bikes, and scooters in the transit station and at community destinations.
- 3 Add more wayfinding and create a consistent wayfinding look and feel between community destinations and the station.
- 4 Continue to work with major employers, such as the University of Washington Medical Center, not within short walking distance of the light rail station to improve access to the station and other transit and shift commuters away from single occupancy vehicle commutes.

Fig 44. Community and Mobility Hubs

Seattle Transportation Plan's Transit Element (2024) proposed these hubs located along major transit routes. A range of features are selected in collaboration with community. They combine transportation options, community gathering spaces, and travel information.



Policy CC 1.2 Design community and mobility hubs for enhanced transit connections.

Actions

- 1 Leverage emerging mobility technology, such as on-demand “microtransit” buses or shuttles and shared ebikes and scooters, to provide first-/last-mile service to the light rail station and other Community & Mobility Hubs.¹
- 2 Co-create Community & Mobility Hubs within Northgate at locations indicated in the STP to enhance the waiting and transfer experience for transit riders.
- 3 Work with Northwest Hospital to provide subsidized e-bike and scooter service to employees.
- 4 Use bus shelters as opportunities to integrate public art and reflect an enhanced identity for Northgate.
- 5 Complete the Transit Network outlined in the STP.
- 6 Work with King County Metro to prioritize off-street layover space either at their existing site - incorporated into a transit-oriented development - or in a new location nearby.



Partner Profile: Seattle Public Library Northgate Branch

One of 27 public libraries in the Seattle network, the Northgate Branch opened in 2006 with capacity for over 40,000 books, DVDs, CDs, and audiobooks. The Northgate Community Center is right next to the library with a shared park in between. The library is a community asset that offers meeting space, study rooms, computer access, homework help for youth, language conversation groups, story time, author talks, and more.

According to engagement findings, the library is a top community asset for residents and visitors alike. Access via light rail is available with a ten minute walk or two minute bus ride. **This Plan proposes improvements to the pedestrian environment between the library and light rail station for a cohesive and enjoyable walking experience.**

¹ See Action NEM 41 in the Seattle Transportation Plan's New and Emerging Mobility Element for more details.

Goal CC 2: Improve conditions and connections for people walking, biking, and rolling in Northgate

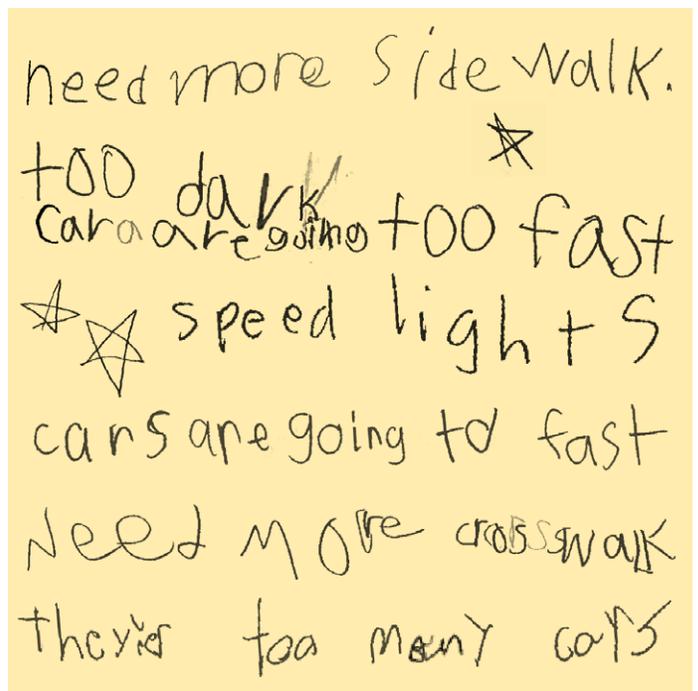
The infrastructure needed to travel to, from, and around Northgate without a car is incomplete and often uncomfortable or inconvenient. During outreach, community members expressed that the Regional Center and its surrounding areas lack adequate sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, bicycle facilities for all ages and abilities, and convenient transit service to the destinations people want to reach. Completing the pedestrian and bicycle networks within and around the Northgate Regional Center is critical to achieving the community's goal of enhancing connectivity. In particular, enhancing connectivity and adding routes through larger blocks is absolutely necessary to transition Northgate from a vehicle-centric, underdeveloped commercial area to a dense, mixed use, multimodal neighborhood and hub, as is required for all Regional Centers in the One Seattle Comprehensive Plan. The policies and action steps in this section support efforts to build out these networks, providing safe, enjoyable, abundant transportation options for all in alignment with adopted plans in the 2024 STP.

Policy CC 2.1 Make it safer and easier to get to destinations on either side of I-5, especially for people walking, rolling, and biking, by improving conditions at the Northgate Way underpass, John Lewis Memorial Bridge, 1st Ave NE overpass, 92nd St NE overpass, and Meridian Ave N (Northgate Way to the UW Medical Center).

Actions

- 1 Make the Northgate Way underpass more pleasant for people walking through interventions such as adding art, improving lighting, enhancing crossings on either side of the underpass, and potentially reconfiguring the street to widen the sidewalk and/or add a buffer.
- 2 Study the potential to install shade structures or other weather-proofing measures on the John Lewis Memorial Bridge.
- 3 Better connect the UW Medical Campus to

"Walkable blocks and more nature space."



James Baldwin Elementary students had a lot to share about getting around in Northgate. (Excerpts sourced from several individual student surveys)

the rest of the Regional Center by adding bike facilities for people of all ages and abilities to Meridian Ave N.

- 4 Widen the sidewalk on 1st Ave NE over I-5 to better serve people walking, rolling, and biking over the highway.
- 5 Evaluate 92nd St NE for ways to make walking, rolling, and biking more comfortable.

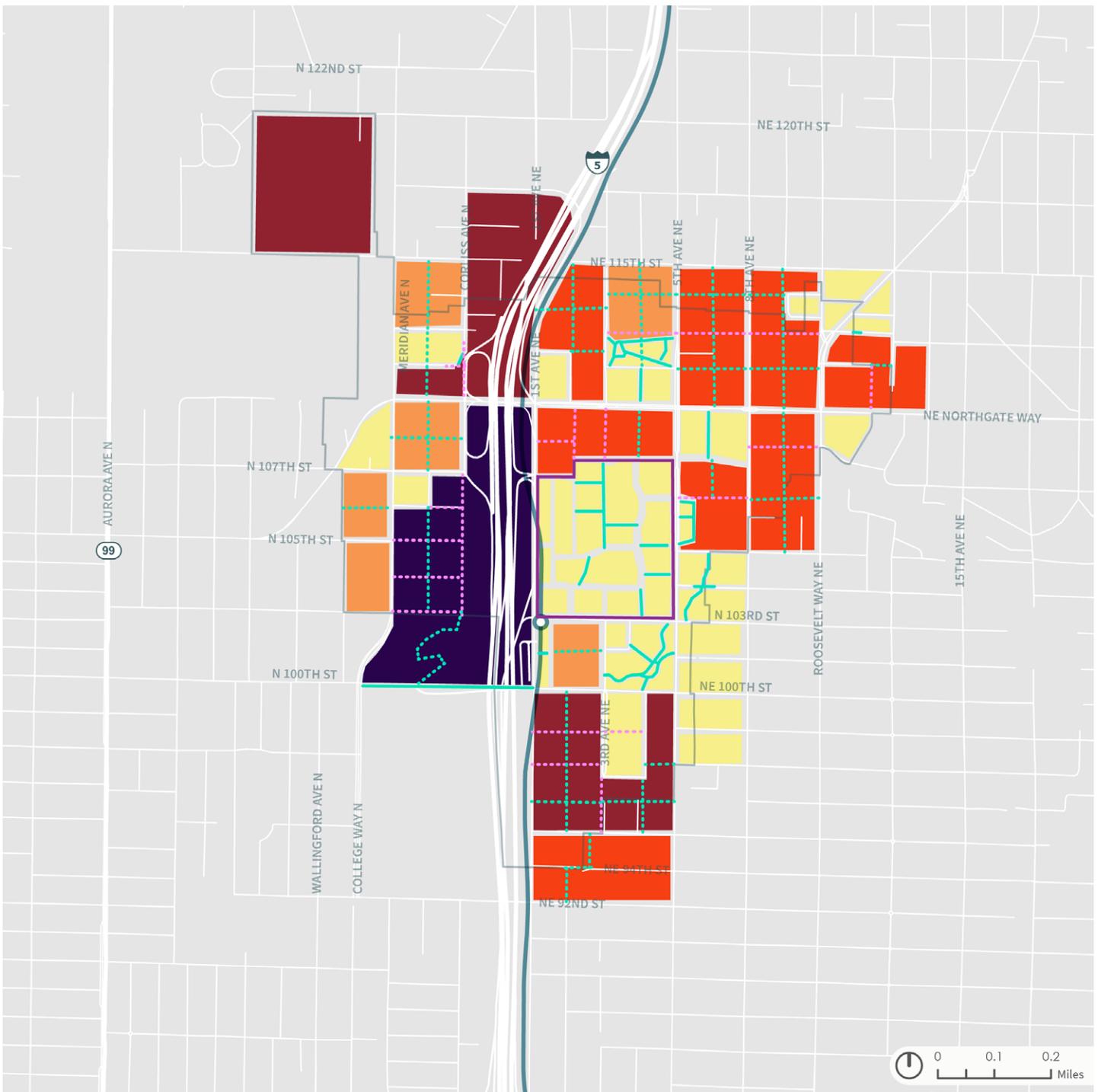


Fig 45. Northgate Potential Block Pattern Map

- Target Northgate block size (180,000 sq ft or 300' x 600') or smaller
- Approximately 1-2 times the ideal block size
- Approximately 3-5 times the ideal block size
- Approximately 9 times the ideal block size
- More than 13 times the ideal block size
- Potential Street Circulation
- Potential Pedestrian Circulation
- Off-Street Existing/Under Development Pedestrian Connection
- Simon Site Boundary (streets and paths may still be under construction)

Policy CC 2.2 Create a human-scale street grid to make it easier and more enjoyable to travel around Northgate. Cut through long blocks with new streets and pathways.

Actions

- 1 Fill in sidewalk gaps connecting the Regional Center to surrounding neighborhoods and deficiencies or declining conditions on sidewalks within Northgate.
- 2 Using The Northgate Potential Block Pattern Map as a guide (**Figure 45**), require that future development contributes to enhanced connectivity in Northgate.
- 3 Update the Northgate Overlay District to identify locations where new public and private streets and pedestrian or cycling pathways will be built as land redevelops.
- 4 Require that major planned sites have a coordinated plan for connectivity.
- 5 Identify retroactive solutions on existing sites with desired paths, such as 3rd Ave NE between NE 97th and NE 95th or between multifamily buildings adjacent to, but disconnected from, the library and community center.



This image looks north on 1st Avenue, adjacent to the light rail station on the right. The multiuse trail provides safe, separated travel lanes for cyclists, but ends abruptly at the station entrance. Extending this trail further north would create a more complete network of cycling infrastructure.

"Better bike connections to and from Link, including better access to points, north, east, and south. Currently, 5th is very scary to ride east of the mall complex, but access to many businesses is difficult without riding on streets that lack bike lanes. Pedestrian infrastructure is slightly better but still not great. The area all around the mall and transit center needs a redesign to support Vision Zero."

Policy CC 2.3 Improve bike facilities along key corridors to enhance the ease and safety of cycling.

Actions

- 1 Complete the Pedestrian and Bicycle and E-Mobility Networks outlined in the STP.
- 2 Extend the multiuse trail that currently dead ends at the light rail station coming from the south. Continue the pathway north to 115th, where it can link with the I-5 crossing.
- 3 Among other modal priorities, create "all ages and abilities" biking corridors on Meridian Ave and 5th Ave NE.



The segment of 1st Avenue between the light rail station and NE Northgate Way has plenty of room for improvement in terms of bike and pedestrian infrastructure.

Policy CC 2.4 Enhance the accessibility of Northgate for all ages and abilities. Address areas where sidewalks or bike lanes end abruptly, where intersection crossings are wide, and areas near buildings that serve older adults, young children, and/or those with a physical disability.

Actions

- 1 Integrate the strategies outlined in SDOT’s Vision Zero Action Plan in street redesigns as the pedestrian, bicycle, e-mobility, and transit networks are built out.
- 2 In coordination with WSDOT, improve the experience and safety of three I-5 crossings in and around the Northgate Regional Center—Northgate Way, 1st Avenue NE, and NE 92nd Street— for all travelers, but especially the most vulnerable (i.e., people walking, biking, and rolling).
- 3 Add and enhance existing crosswalks along key corridors, such as NE Northgate Way, 5th Avenue, and Meridian Ave.
- 4 Improve the connective experience for those biking, rolling, or walking from Aurora to the west across the John Lewis Memorial Bridge.

Policy CC 2.5 Manage on- and off-street parking and loading, with special attention paid to redevelopment sites.

Actions

- 1 Conduct a parking study for the Regional Center to right size the supply of on-street and surface parking spaces.
- 2 Revise the development code to establish a parking maximum, reduce the overall supply of parking, and encourage more efficient use of existing parking.
- 3 Revise the development code to encourage that critical access needs (such as garbage collection and loading/unloading) be met on site as redevelopment occurs to minimize conflicts on the curb and sidewalk, where possible.

"Fewer cars. More sidewalks. People-oriented streets."



A pedestrian pushing a cart filled with groceries attempts to climb the steep topography of 100th Street after it crosses 5th Avenue. Sidewalks suddenly disappear approaching the residential community directly outside Northgate’s Regional Center boundary.

Goal CC 3: Enhance Northgate’s streetscape and integration with park spaces

Policy CC 3.1 Create comfortable places for people to linger, gather with people, shop, and stroll throughout the Northgate Regional Center, including public rights of way.

Actions

- 1 Partner with community members to co-create a PSPS Plan for Northgate, building on the Regional Center Plan, which will identify which types of People Streets and Public Spaces people want to see in the neighborhood and where.
- 2 Cultivate community gathering spaces that encourage lingering at or near the Northgate light rail station and the other Community & Mobility Hubs planned in Northgate, as indicated in the STP. Different types of amenities and placemaking features can exist at these hubs, and it will be important for the community to weigh in on what these will look like.
- 3 Create a mid-block pedestrian corridor (Northgate Square) connecting from the transit station over to 3rd Avenue as part of

Fig 46. People Streets and Public Spaces (PSPS)

The Seattle Transportation Plan, adopted in 2024, includes the People Streets and Public Spaces Element. The “PSPS Element” presents a vision for city streets that goes beyond moving from point A to point B and conveying essential services. It presents a case and a framework for how we can better and more equitably use public streets to strengthen places and communities.



Several streets in Northgate are aligned with the PSPS Element:

- A 3rd Avenue NE, from NE 103rd Street to NE 97th Street.** This corridor connects transit riders with neighborhoods and businesses to the south of the station area. It represents an important opportunity to build identity and placemaking in a central, highly visited part of the Regional Center. Pedestrian Zone adjustment to level one would be made for 97th to 103th in order to support a smaller locally focused commercial area.
- B NE 100th Street from 1st Avenue NE to 5th Avenue NE.** Landscaping along this corridor would align with the ecology corridor concept explored in Living with Place and creates an opportunity for an improved pedestrian environment directly adjacent to the transit center.
- C 3rd Avenue NE, from NE Northgate Way to NE 115th Street.** A linear park-like street would better integrate Hubbard Homestead Park into the neighborhood and build upon the existing designation of this corridor as a Green Street.
- D Roosevelt Way NE, from Pinehurst Way NE to NE 115th Street.** Public realm enhancements and placemaking would expand upon the existing cluster of small businesses that form a locally serving commercial node for surrounding neighborhoods.



a cohesive strategy to transform the public realm adjacent to light rail.

- 4 Incorporate edible, native, and/or climate-resilient plantings into the design of landscaping plans for public rights-of-way, in collaboration with the ecology corridor project detailed in Living with Place. This includes using rights-of-way as part of the overall strategy to increase Northgate’s tree canopy coverage.
- 5 Collaborate with business owners in locally serving commercial nodes when designing streetscape enhancements to maximize benefits for small businesses, address key concerns, and cohesively cultivate a sense of place for the surrounding community.

Policy CC 3.2 Improve access to parks, such as Hubbard Homestead and nearby Beaver Pond, with new entrances and improved connections to the street grid for those who are walking, biking, or strolling.

Actions

- 1 Improve pedestrian access to Hubbard Homestead Park.
- 2 Use context-sensitive design practices for all future transportation facility projects.



A traffic barrier separates Hubbard Homestead (left in the above image) from the shopping center across the street. This street segment has no midblock crossings to the park, despite a pedestrian pathway carved midblock at the shopping center. Finding a safe opportunity to better connect these two destinations would improve connectivity and navigability.



**Partner Profile:
North Seattle College**

North Seattle College was founded in 1970 and now enrolls over 14,000 students per year. The college offers associate’s degrees across many disciplines and six bachelor’s degrees in Applied Sciences and Computer Science. After receiving their associate’s degree, many North students transfer to the University of Washington or other institutions to complete a four-year degree. In addition to academic support, North Seattle College also provides a rich student life including concerts, lectures, fitness programs, and an award-winning literary magazine. The student body is diverse in race and age, and the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Community (EDIC) Team promotes equitable policies and practices to support feelings of belonging on campus.

North Seattle College is located on the west side of I-5 and, until recently, was completely cut off from the east side of the subarea for pedestrians. **The John Lewis Memorial Bridge opened in 2021 and stretches across the freeway to connect the college to the light rail station. This bridge provides easier access to transit, shopping, and entertainment opportunities and is an important investment for a connected Northgate into the future.**

Shared Abundance

Northgate is poised to undergo great change over the next decade. If properly cared for, Northgate can become a place of shared abundance. However, past experience has shown us how vulnerable residents can be to rapid growth and change in communities, especially communities with relatively lower incomes, renters, and communities of color. With this chapter, the City sets an intention for Northgate to be a place where the current residents and businesses can remain in the community as it grows and benefit from future investment.

Goals

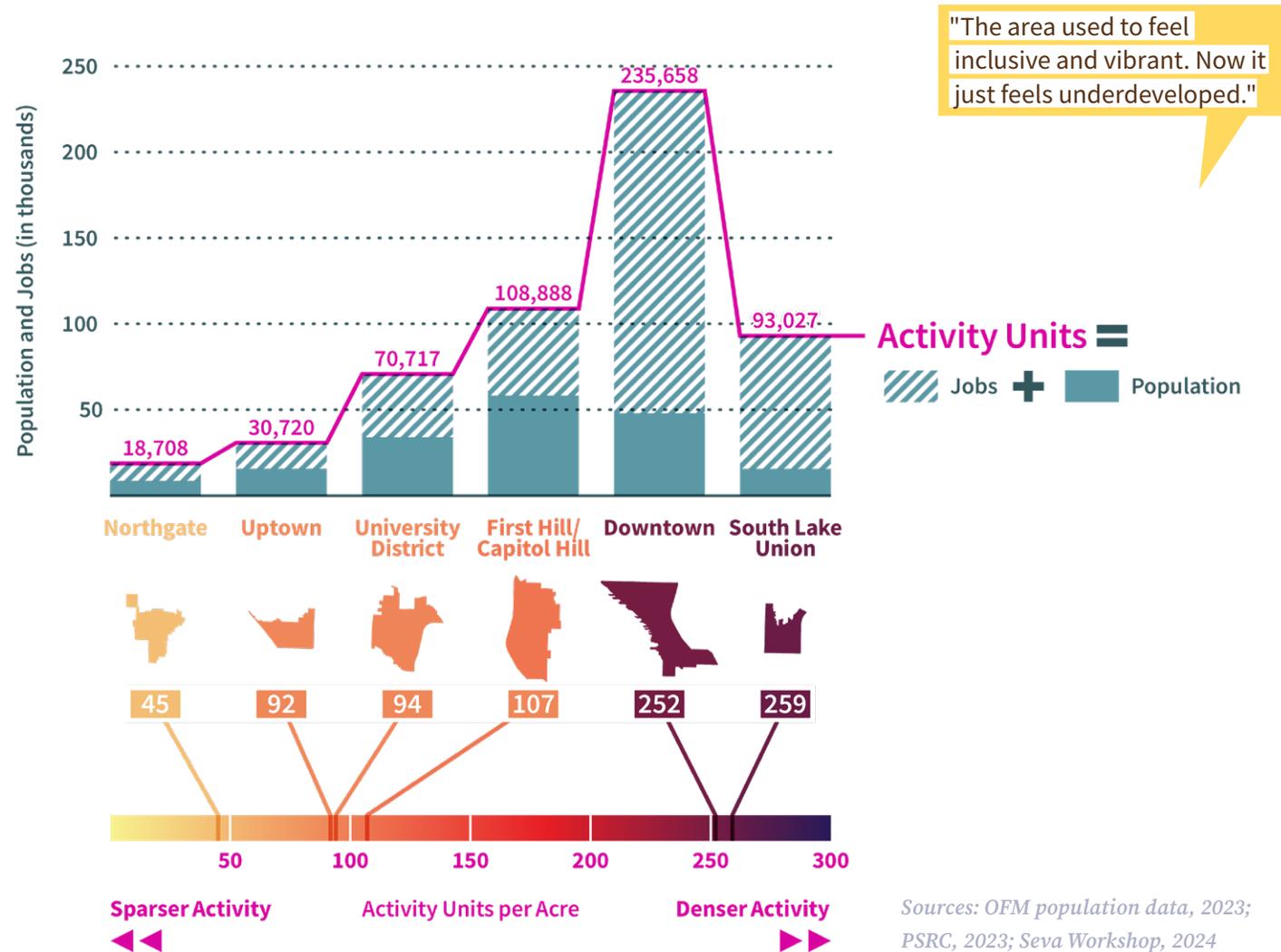
- SA 1** Support existing businesses and residents
- SA 2** Attract new commercial activity and support entrepreneurship
- SA 3** Promote community strength and relationship building among neighborhood stakeholders



Fig 47. Northgate's Activity Units in Context, 2023

Northgate has great capacity for growth that is currently underutilized

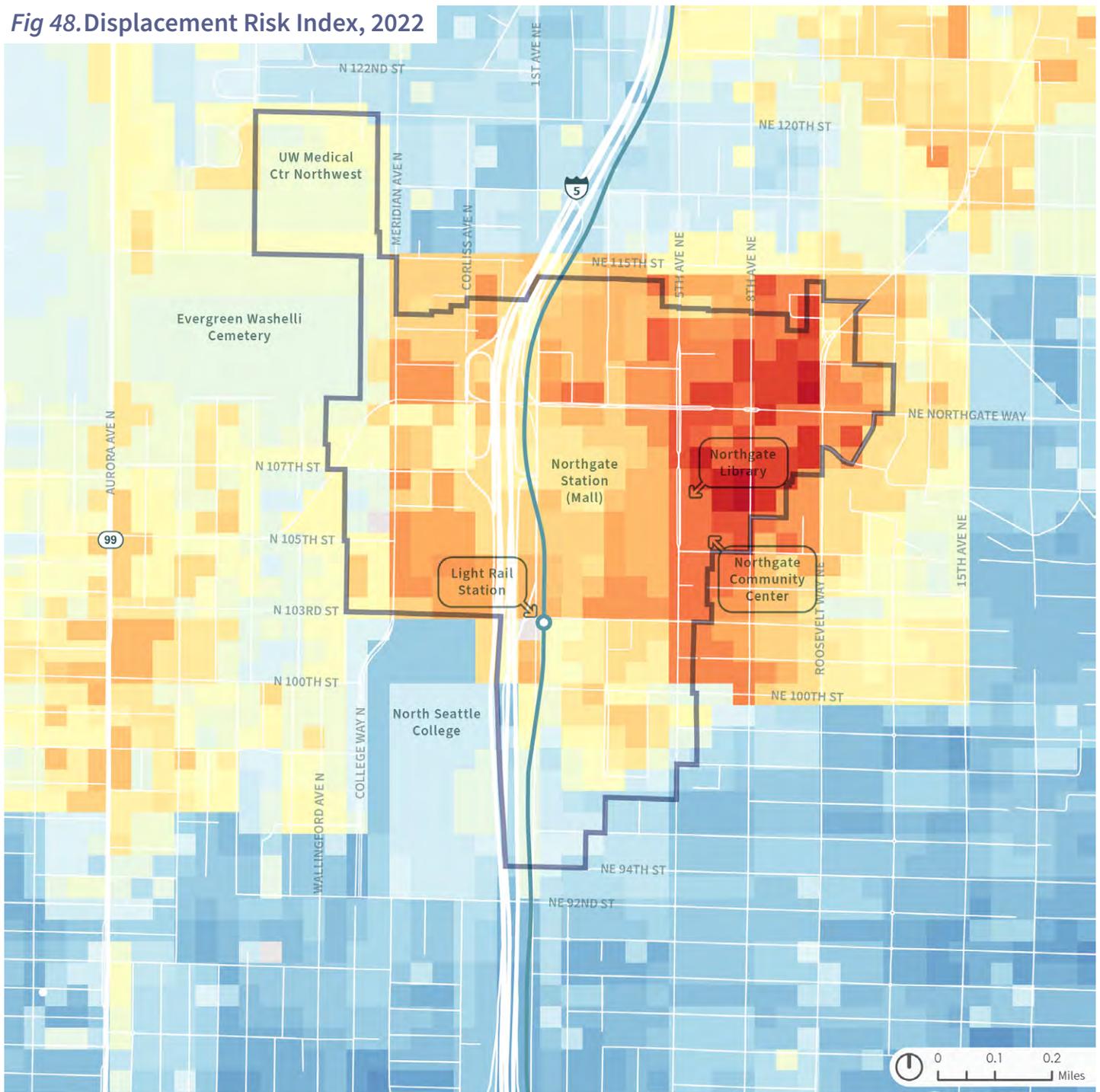
A neighborhood's level of activity can be measured by adding the resident population with the number of jobs in the area to determine its total "Activity Units." As these areas aren't all the same size, measuring Activity Units per acre compares how active or inactive each area might feel.



Northgate holds great potential as a center for new housing opportunities and jobs in Seattle

Northgate's density of activity is drastically lower than Seattle's other Regional Centers. This aligns with feedback we heard from the community, that the neighborhood today can feel underdeveloped or lacking vibrancy. With its valuable transportation connections, diverse base of existing residents, and potential for growth in the healthcare and service industries, Northgate is an important piece of the puzzle for equitable growth citywide.

Fig 48. Displacement Risk Index, 2022



The threat of displacement in Northgate is concerning

Northgate has a high to moderate displacement risk. This is due to the prevalence of communities most vulnerable to displacement and the potential for pressures to increase land value in the coming years.

Displacement Risk Index, 2022



Source: *One Seattle Plan: Anti-Displacement Framework*, 2024

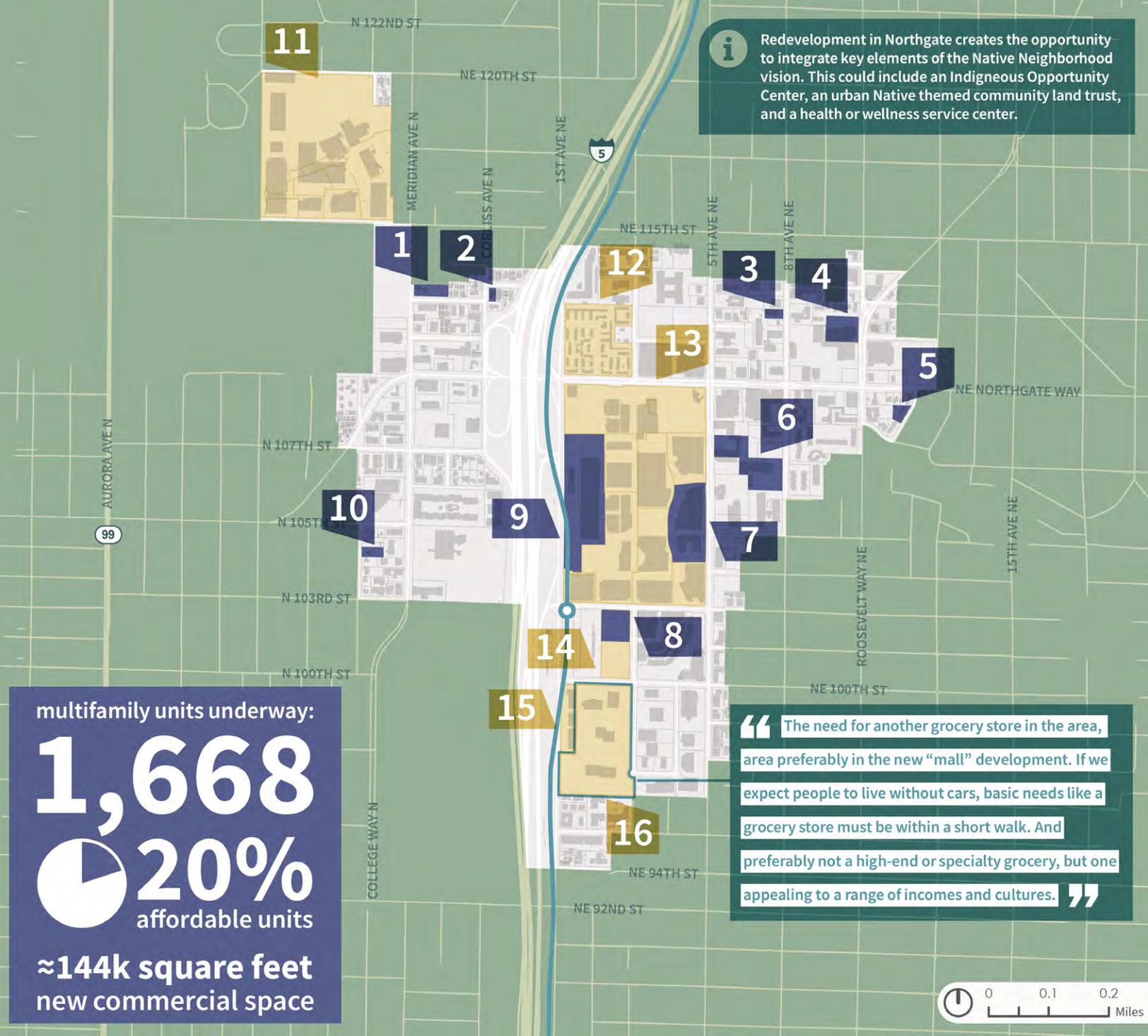


Fig 49. Northgate Redevelopment Opportunity Sites

Current Redevelopment Sites

- 1 New Fire Station 31
- 2 6-unit clustered townhome site
- 3 89 workforce housing units with childcare center
- 4 291 housing units, including four live-work
- 5 Clustered duplex site
- 6 635 housing units in two developments adjacent to library and community center
- 7 418 housing units with ground floor retail at Northgate Mall site
- 8 235 units of affordable housing with on-site daycare
- 9 167 room Marriott hotel
- 10 Clustered duplex site

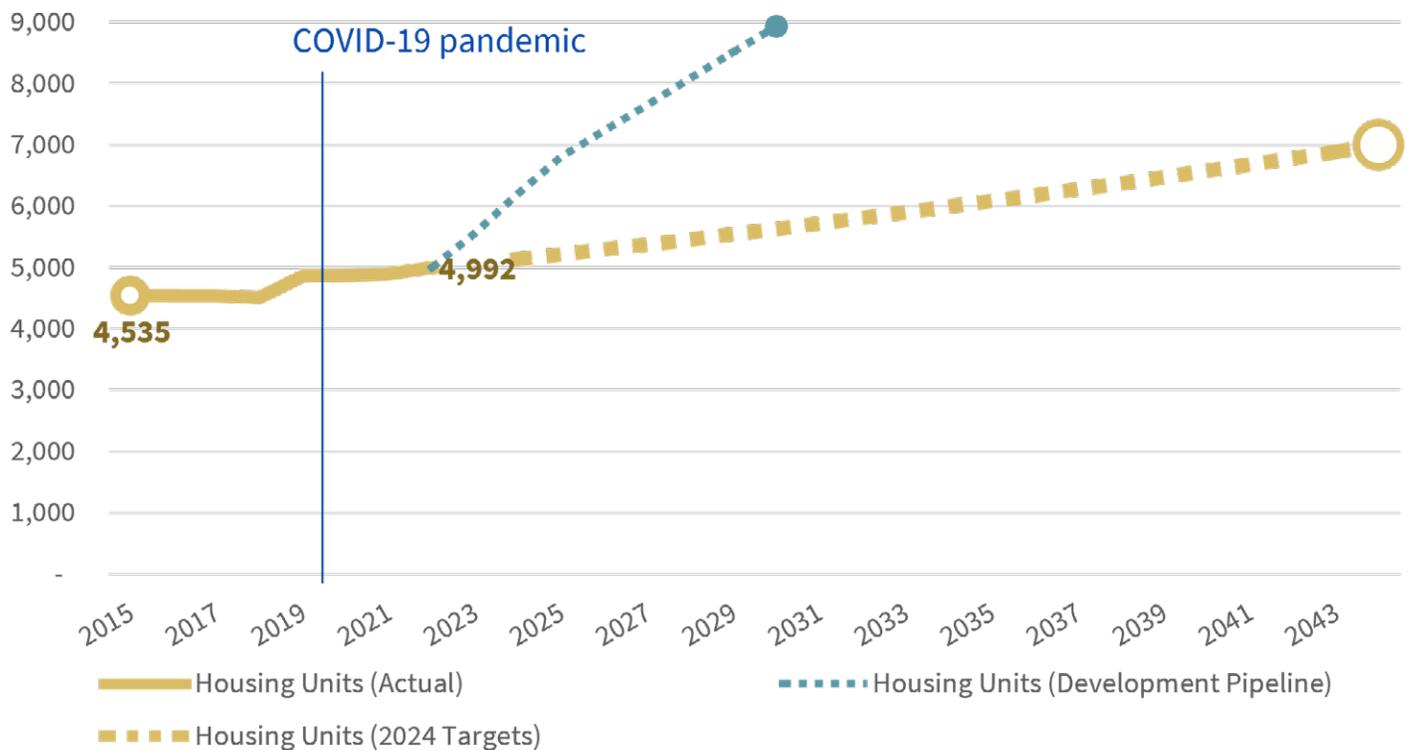
Anticipated Redevelopment Sites

- 11 UW NW Medical Center Campus expansion to **add jobs, double facility capacity and add green space**
- 12 SHA development: 1,400 units with 30-40% affordable housing and opportunity to integrate community-focused ground floor use
- 13 Northgate Mall redevelopment. Plans for integrated retail, lifestyle, and hospitality uses. **Hopeful partnership with local businesses for commercial anti-displacement support**
- 14 Second half of King County parcel to be developed -- adjacent to light rail with opportunity for completing the **public plaza project**
- 15 Sound Transit remnant parcel site for development -- **potential Community Land Trust or community benefit use**
- 16 Office park site south of light rail station -- potential to redevelop into high-density, mixed-use site integrating connectivity improvements. Good potential site for a **new grocery**.

Momentum is building for growth in Northgate

The *One Seattle Plan* has assigned at least 2,000 housing units to the Northgate Regional Center by 2044. The current units under construction (1,668) plus other developments in the pipeline are anticipated to exceed 2,000 units well before then. If these plans are realized, Northgate will be home to many new residents and this added density can dramatically expand the number of people and destinations with access to the light rail station hopefully bolster the success and attraction of local retail and services for a healthy neighborhood into the future.

Fig 50. Northgate Housing Units, Actual and Targets from 2024 Comprehensive Plan and Units in Development Pipeline



Note: The development pipeline figures represent six projects actively in progress and two major development site plans still pending construction. Source: City of Seattle "Regional Center Housing Unit Growth Report," 2022, and "One Seattle" Draft Plan, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

Goals, Policies, and Actions

Goals and policies in the Shared Abundance theme reflect the overarching priorities of supporting Northgate’s existing businesses and residents to thrive locally, attracting new economic activity, supporting entrepreneurship, and promoting community strength via supportive service infrastructure and through relationship-building between the various development entities who are active in the Regional Center. Related action steps recognize the current context of the neighborhood and parallel planning efforts underway at the City.

Goal SA 1: Support existing businesses and residents

Shared abundance means a thriving Northgate future that does not discard or “price out” the current community. Existing community members value the strong local availability of options for retail shopping, medical services, and affordable dining. As the various commercial centers within Northgate grow and evolve, this combination of convenience and affordability remains central to Northgate’s identity.

Policy SA 1.1 Nurture thriving commercial activity nodes across Northgate, especially clusters of small and BIPOC-owned businesses.

Actions

- 1 Improve the access infrastructure, streetscapes, and event programming along the locally serving commercial corridors for an enhanced visitor experience.
- 2 Build and maintain connections between qualifying businesses, non-profits, and the City’s Equitable Development Initiative.

Policy SA 1.2 Establish commercial and residential anti-displacement policies.

Actions

- 1 Connect small business owners to City programs such as the Small Business Capital

Access Program, Tenant Improvement Funds, or Business Community Ownership Fund, among others.

- 2 Explore the creation of “commercial preservation zones” that aim to maintain commercial culture and character of clusters of small and BIPOC-owned businesses.
- 3 Partner with existing non-profits such as Ventures to support small businesses through technical assistance and training, commercial leasing, and access to capital. This program can also assist small businesses to be placed in larger commercial developments.
- 4 Aim to leverage public land ownership adjacent to the station area for the integration of income-restricted affordable housing, land trust housing cooperatives, or ownership housing opportunities.
- 5 Offer targeted tenant relocation funds for development sites where existing housing will be removed so residents can remain in the community if they desire. When possible, connect these residents with opportunities for incoming income-restricted units.
- 6 Partner with business owners during construction projects in the right of way that impact visitor access to their establishments and mitigate these impacts.



The City of Seattle defines displacement as “the relocation of residents, businesses, or institutions from an area due to forces outside their control.”

This can occur through forces such as eviction, site demolition and redevelopment, and affordability pressures such as rising rents or property taxes. Not all households are equally vulnerable to displacement pressure, and the factors that contribute to displacement risk are not equitably distributed throughout the city. Impacts from displacement are borne most heavily by households with low incomes and less access to generational wealth. Communities of color experience disproportionate rates of displacement and are also most affected by fractured social networks and loss of access to culturally specific businesses and resources.

Goal SA 2: Attract new commercial activity and support entrepreneurship

With incoming development and added residential density, new commercial activity will be desired to support local shopping and service needs. Attracting a healthy mix of businesses, ranging in size and type, fosters a healthy and resilient local economy. Employment opportunities that offer living wage career pathways are an important component of this mix as well.



Partner Profile: Family Donut

Family Donut, true to its name, is a family-run donut shop in Northgate. The business was started in 1993 by a Cambodian family, who continues to operate the store today. Family Donut has established itself as a local gem with consistently high-quality apple fritters, traditional glazed donuts, fruit donuts, and more. Staff report that local customers often come from the nearby hospital and North Seattle College, and even cruise ship tourists make the trek for a donut.

During the interview they shared that they would like to see public realm enhancements such as better lighting and cleaner sidewalks to help improve customer experience at their longstanding location.



When asked what they love most about Northgate, the greatest number of community survey participants ranked “shopping” their top choice.

It also ranked second among things that people hope to see more of in the neighborhood's future, after walkability. In addition, survey respondents were asked how they would prioritize funds for economic development in the neighborhood. The top response by far (selected by 62% of respondents) was to focus on “recruitment and support for restaurants and entertainment.”

Policy SA 2.1 Create opportunities for entrepreneurship and support business owners, especially within BIPOC and immigrant communities.

Actions

- 1 Increase allowed density throughout the Center for a resident base that can support a wider range of businesses. Maintain or add ground floor commercial requirements in select focused areas for locally serving commercial nodes.
- 2 Explore opportunities within the land use code to require or encourage smaller and more flexible commercial spaces that can be affordable to start up businesses. Work to connect property owners with interested entrepreneurs to enhance the success of these spaces.

Policy SA 2.2 Offer a robust network of businesses to provide convenient and culturally relevant shopping nearby and support Northgate as a transit-oriented community.

Actions

- 1 Explore commercial affordability programs or incentives for new development to build out more of their commercial space to lower tenant improvement costs.
- 2 Identify vacant retail spaces for businesses to enter and match with businesses looking to expand.
- 3 Use empty parking lots in convenient locations, such as adjacent to light rail, for pop-up markets and food trucks.

- 4 Decrease the footprint of surface parking through land use policy in Northgate, particularly in the high-density core.

Policy SA 2.3 Promote economic resilience by cultivating a diverse economic base. Additional entertainment and recreation-focused activities and employment sites could complement the existing mix of retail, healthcare, and residential activity in Northgate.

Actions

- 1 Explore additional partnerships with North Seattle College, the University of Washington Medical Center - Northwest, and other private and public agencies to enhance resident opportunities for accessing career pathways with stronger prospects for middle-wage jobs. Identify opportunities from the City’s Key Industries Workforce Development program.
- 2 Leverage larger sites and parcels in this Regional Center for unique uses in the entertainment and recreation sectors for a healthy clustering of activity.



Partner Profile: Watershed Pub

Ben and Kelsey Curran opened the Watershed Pub in 2014 as a family-friendly restaurant in the heart of Northgate. When the pub first opened, Northgate was primarily a shopping center with fewer residents. A decade later, the pub serves the growing residential population, commuters off the light rail, Kraken Iceplex visitors, and more. **The owners take pride in supporting local farms and are involved in environmental advocacy to protect watersheds and waterways.**

Watershed Pub is an example of the Shared Abundance vision. They are located in a mixed-use development directly across from the light rail station, contributing to a sense of place and neighborhood activation on a key corridor. Locally sourced food is complemented by a tap list of regional beers and ciders. Regular events include trivia nights, drag bingo, live music, tastings, and monthly fundraisers that support local breweries and non-profits.

"We are losing all sorts of 'normal' stores and getting too tourist driven. We need more retail that is normal in terms of clothes and things like that."



Goal SA 3: Promote community strength and relationship building among neighborhood stakeholders

A complete community is more than homes and businesses. Social support infrastructure is crucial for livability, providing the childcare, healthcare, and wellness support that make for a high quality of life. With many large sites currently under redevelopment or considering redevelopment, another component of success in Northgate is collaboration between these different actors to achieve a cohesive and navigable environment in this Regional Center. Social infrastructure is most effective and supportive when sites are well connected and offer complementary uses. Aligned with that mindset, this plan proposes future expansion of the Northgate Regional Center boundary to include the campus of North Seattle College. This adjustment recognizes the important role that the college and its campus community play for Northgate. Inclusion of the campus also connects geographically as the bridge from the light rail station lands within the campus.

Policy SA 3.1 Contribute to a strong ecosystem of social infrastructure (childcare, healthcare, schools, wellness centers, etc.) for enhanced community resilience.

Actions

- 1 Partner with Indigenous leaders to identify suitable locations in Northgate for the siting of an Indigenous Opportunity Center.
- 2 Pair incoming development sites with businesses and nonprofits that meet existing community needs and reflect neighborhood diversity.



Partner Profile: Idris Mosque

Idris Mosque, a non-profit religious organization, was established in 1981 by Sheikh Abdel-Kader Idriss. The building is the first mosque west of the Mississippi River designed in the Arabesque architectural style, which is characterized by floral patterns, symmetry, and spirals that represent the endless movement of nature.

The Islamic Center of Washington, an independent non-profit, manages properties, programs, and operations at Idris Mosque. Everyone is welcome at the mosque, regardless of background. The mosque's mission reads: "We will work to establish positive relationships in America with our diverse Islamic families, partners, and communities through extending friendships, for strengthening relationships, bonds and building a solid foundation, for the future of Islam." The mosque hosts programming for Muslims and non-Muslims, five daily prayers, weekend school for children, Arabic language classes, weddings, funerals, tours, and counseling services. **The mosque fosters a sense of place in Northgate both by cultivating community as a gathering place for its members and aesthetically with its distinct and decorative architecture.**

Policy SA 3.2 Encourage community capacity building and communication among businesses, community leaders, developers, and property owners in the area. This could include forming a BID structure, coordinating investments for connectivity infrastructure, and matchmaking between ground floor retail and locally serving businesses or nonprofits.

Actions

- 1 Host stakeholder meetings among 1) existing businesses and services and 2) developers of key sites in the neighborhood to explore areas for cooperation and collective benefit. Share information about available resources and services from existing City programs.
- 2 Conduct outreach with leaders in the business community to determine interest at the local level for a neighborhood business association or similar entity.

Policy SA 3.3 Consider expanding the boundary of the Regional Center to encompass the area that includes North Seattle College, recognizing new pedestrian connections to the Link light rail station and the significance of the college to employees, students, and the broader community.

Actions

- 1 Identify boundary options for potential expansion based on existing and potential future land uses and activities and connectivity to transit and areas with the current Regional Center boundary.
- 2 Continue outreach and collaboration with North Seattle College and stakeholders in the surrounding community about potential inclusion in the Regional Center.
- 3 Coordinate any proposal for boundary change with regional partners including the Puget Sound Regional Council and the Growth Management Planning Council.



Partner Profile: Skate Like a Girl

Skate Like a Girl is a non-profit organization with a mission to create an inclusive community by promoting confidence, leadership, and social justice through skateboarding. A mighty team of staff and volunteers host in-person programming and free online tutorials to break down barriers for youth, women, trans, non-binary, and gender non-conforming skaters in Seattle, Portland, and San Francisco.

In 2023, Skate Like a Girl served 12,433 participants through in-person programs and events, including summer camps, school programming, overnight camps, competitions, mentorship programs, inclusivity workshops, service learning, and an exchange trip to Cambodia.

Many Seattle youth skate at Hubbard Homestead Park, but the skatepark lacks amenities that would create the ideal community gathering space.

Kristin Ebeling, the Executive Director of Skate Like a Girl, wishes for an accessible and weather-proof skatepark with water, bathrooms, lights, and youth services so they could host programming year-round.

Implementation

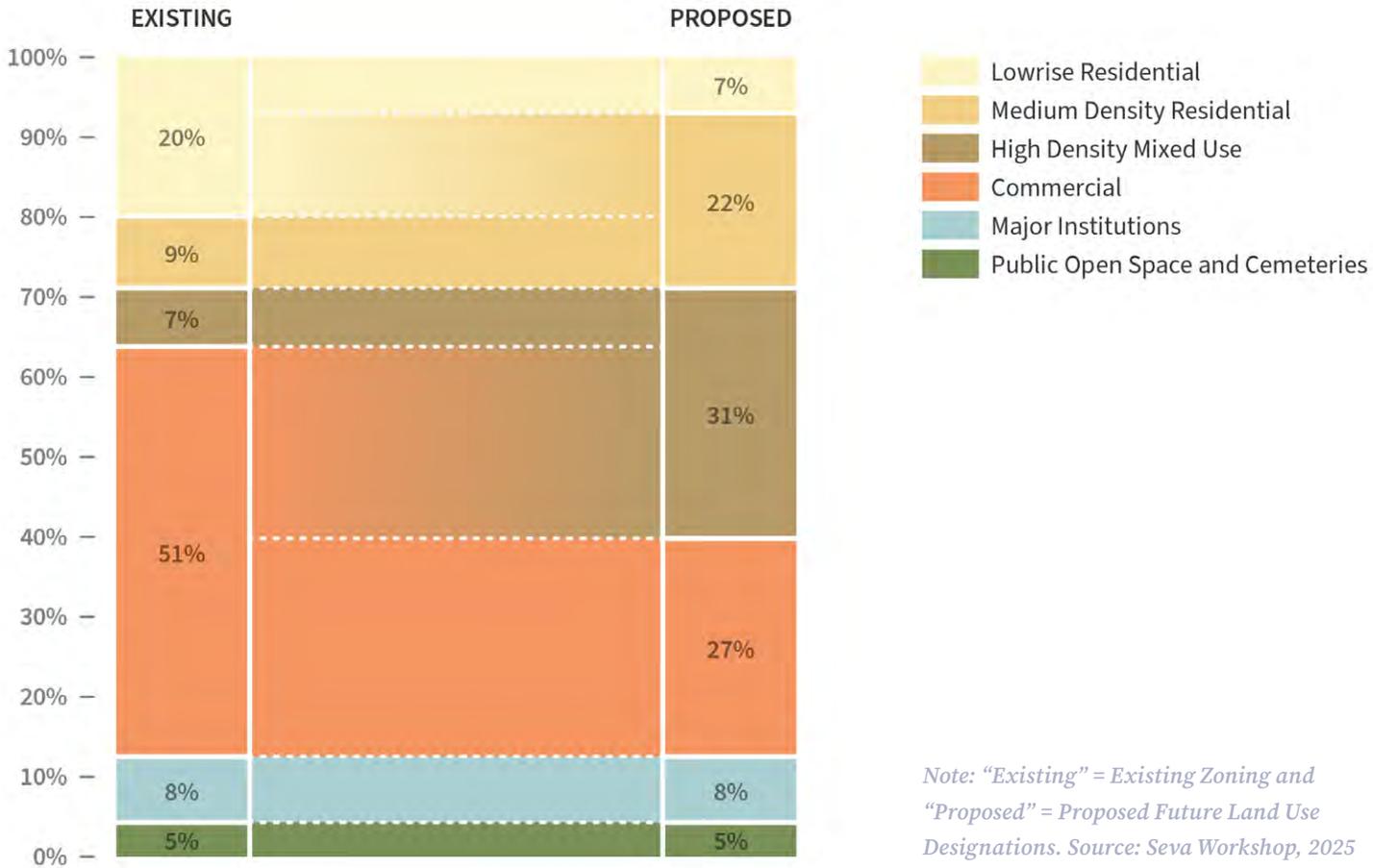


Land Use and Zoning Districts

This plan envisions Northgate in 2044 as a bustling, walkable, and transit-oriented Regional Center. The core of the neighborhood, areas in closest walking distance of the light rail station, is the center of increased density and includes a variety of commercial, recreation, entertainment, and residential uses. Extending out from here, neighborhood commercial districts provide supportive residential densities that promote the success of locally serving commercial district nodes. Components of a complete, livable neighborhood, such as parks and cultural facilities, are distributed

equitably across the neighborhood. Midrise residential districts provide additional housing opportunities and serve as a transition between sites of higher intensity and the low-rise residential neighborhoods surrounding the Regional Center boundary. A breakdown of the land use policy shifts that support this vision is provided below in **Figure 51**, showcasing existing zoning categories on the left and Future Land Use Designations on the right. The purpose of the Future Land Use Map (**Figure 52**) is to guide zoning, and other related land use policy, in support of this vision.

Fig 51. Land Use Category Breakdown by Acreage (% Share), Existing and Proposed



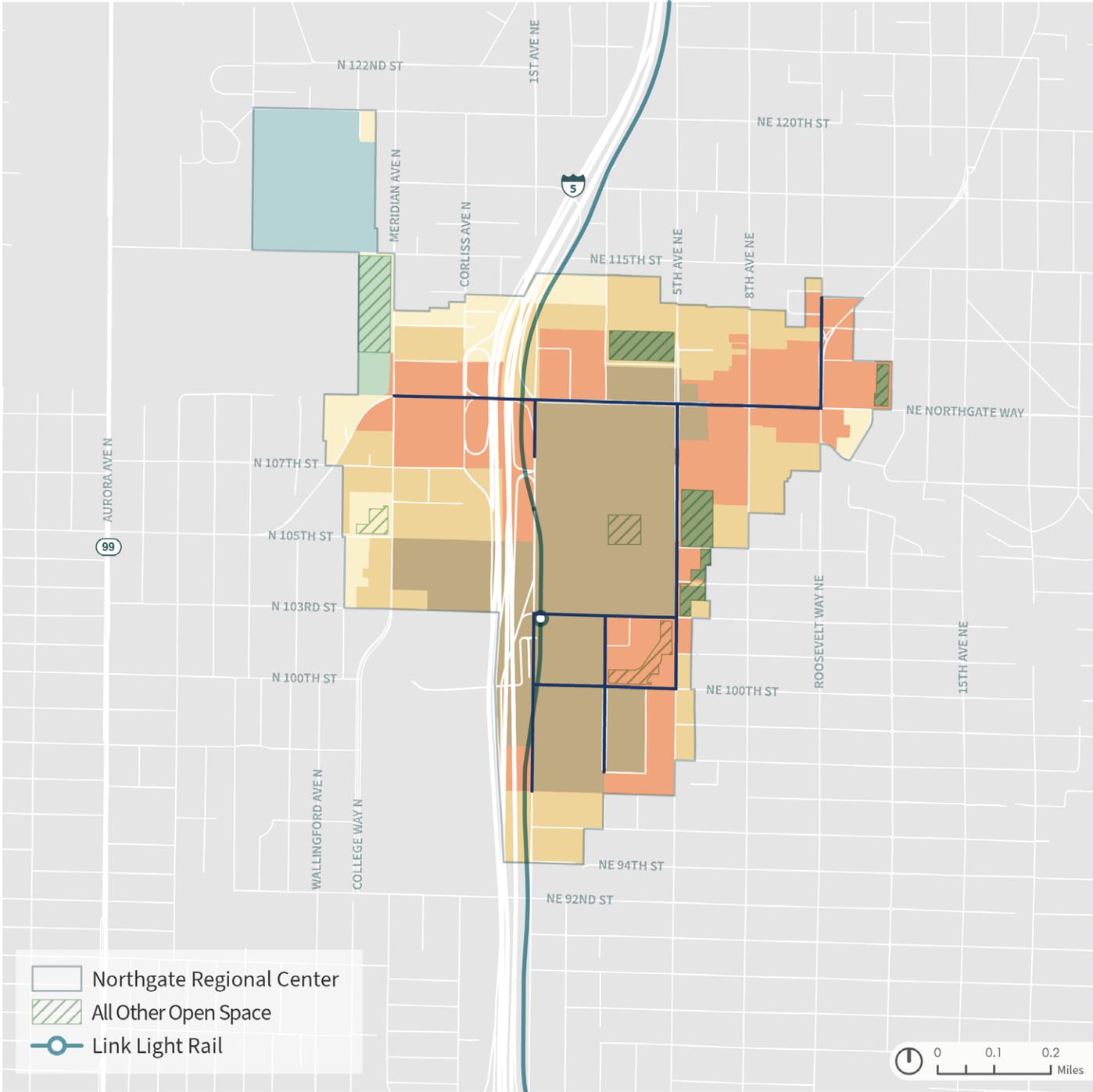


Fig 52. Northgate Regional Center Proposed Future Land Use Map

- Northgate Lowrise Residential
- Northgate Medium Density Residential
- Northgate High Density Mixed Use
- Northgate Commercial
- Major Institutions
- Public Open Space
- Cemetery
- Neighborhood Pedestrian Corridors

Source: Seva Workshop, 2025

Fig 53. Vision for Future Land Use Designations

FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION

NORTHGATE LOWRISE RESIDENTIAL

Areas designated lowrise residential are generally located between the denser core of the Regional Center and surrounding neighborhoods. Diverse housing options are located in these areas including townhouses, cottage housing, small-lot houses, accessory dwelling units, cohousing, and smaller apartment buildings.

Zoning districts that allow for a wider mix of middle housing types and configurations, such as LR2 and LR3, are most appropriate within the Northgate boundary. Light commercial uses, such as live-work units and corner store style retail are appropriate here, as well.

NORTHGATE MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

The Medium Density Residential designation offers walkable, urban housing options that bridge the gap between lowrise residential and higher-density areas. It allows for moderately scaled multifamily housing with height limits up to 80' and promotes supportive density that can help Northgate be successful as both a transit and retail hub. Site design should improve pedestrian connections to adjacent areas. Street frontages are activated, with any on-site parking situated on site away from sidewalk corridors and space for trees and sidewalks is prioritized over street parking.

NORTHGATE HIGH DENSITY MIXED USE

The area with this designation, generally within the walkshed of the light rail station, is a recreation, entertainment, and shopping district. It should allow for high-density, mixed-use flexibility to accommodate diverse activities, and heights from 70 to 320 feet to allow for a high volume of housing.

High density residential sites complement the Regional Center's commercial areas and boost their success. Housing types supported in these areas are predominantly multifamily, in formats ranging from townhomes to multistory, mixed-use developments. For commercial development, the intent is for a mix of larger, regionally attracting destinations as well as locally-serving businesses that meet neighborhood needs. Retail, entertainment, services, and office uses are appropriate.

Surface parking spaces are reduced in this area, while other modes of travel are supported with new pathways and connective infrastructure. Street frontage is activated, and multifamily buildings incorporate ground floor retail providing commercial uses conducive to neighborhood walkability. Sites that are redeveloped incorporate new pedestrian pathways to promote connectivity.

Fig 53. Vision for Future Land Use Designations (Continued)

FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION

NORTHGATE
COMMERCIAL

Areas designated for neighborhood commercial zoning promote commercial activity along major corridors and in nodes serving the surrounding residential community. Higher densities and heights are appropriate along arterials and in select opportunity locations near key community assets. This designation is characterized by larger-scale buildings and moderate to high trip generation, as well as moderately scaled commercial sites focused on serving the surrounding community. Higher density residential housing is also allowed. Height limits could vary from 55 - 145', with higher densities and heights allowed in areas along arterials. Street frontages should be pedestrian-oriented and any required parking should be situated on the site to not interfere with pedestrian corridors. Sites that are redeveloped incorporate new pedestrian pathways to promote connectivity to neighboring areas.

NORTHGATE
MAJOR
INSTITUTIONS

The hospital campus follows a unique planning process, in collaboration with the community and City, for future development and expansion. Upcoming development plans show a densified campus with more integrated open space. Future plans should incorporate public pathways for pedestrians to promote connectivity.

NEIGHBORHOOD
PEDESTRIAN
CORRIDORS

Development along these corridors should be oriented to the designated street, feature active ground floor uses, and provide adequate setback and overhead clearance to allow for a comfortable and stimulating pedestrian environment. The goals for a Neighborhood Pedestrian Corridor may be met through the application of Seattle's "Pedestrian Zones," "Destination Streets," or similar linear land use designations that ask private developers to accommodate and enhance the pedestrian experience.

Interdepartmental Implementation Steps

The vision of this Regional Center Plan will be implemented by a coordinated series of short-, medium-, and long-term actions. Short-term actions are intended to be complete within 5 years or less of plan adoption, medium-term actions between 5 and 10 years of adoption, and long-term actions look between the 10 and 20 year horizon. The key initiatives of this plan are outlined and mapped in the Vision chapter, starting on **page 23**. Actions that directly relate to one of these eight projects are flagged for focus. While many, if not most, of these actions require interdepartmental coordination, a lead department has been identified for each. These actions are taken from all chapters of this plan and organized into a spreadsheet for ongoing use and reference by City of Seattle teams. They can be found in Appendix 12. On a separate tab of the same spreadsheet is a project list for transportation work in Northgate, along with a corresponding map for geographic reference of each identified project.



Complete Streets in Seattle

Adopted in 2007, the City of Seattle's Complete Street Ordinance (#122386) directs SDOT to "design, operate, and maintain

Seattle's streets to promote safe and convenient access and travel for all users." Users encompass people walking, riding bicycles, taking transit, and people of all abilities, as well as people driving freight and motor vehicles. Complete Streets is among our foundational policies: it is incorporated in our Comprehensive Plan and guided preparation of the Seattle Transportation Plan. SDOT incorporates a Complete Streets approach into all of our capital projects. This process draws from recommendations in our plans, such as this one, and builds on the various network maps within the Seattle Transportation Plan.

As we are often working with limited or constrained street widths, the Comprehensive Plan recommends a "Complete Corridors" approach. When all functions and needs cannot fit in a single street, we look to nearby parallel streets, side streets and alleys to accommodate every need. In this way, we can use a collection of parallel streets and alleys to meet the needs of people walking, bicycling, taking transit, moving goods, and driving.

Planting Guides

The project team for this plan, as part of its technical work, developed a set of planting guides that can be used in various places across Northgate. The recommended plantings are either indigenous to the area and/or are well suited to local climate conditions for resilience and longevity. These guides can be used as a tool and reference to help increase tree canopy, realize the vision for the ecology corridor, and improve the community's experience of connection to nature. They may be adapted and modified over time, as needed.

1. Public right-of-way, particularly along NE 100th St

The plantings featured on this list were curated based on comparison between the Climate Vulnerability Matrix and the Seattle Department of Transportation's Approved Street Trees List. The Tulip Tree was selected because it was one of the few native species listed in SDOT's list, despite its high climate vulnerability.

TREES	SHRUBS	GROUND COVER
Tulip Tree	Low Oregon Grape	Camas
Vine Maple	Snowberry	Fawn Lilies
Oregon Oak	Western Sword Fern	Yellow Montane Violet
	Lady Fern	Lupine
	Evergreen Huckleberry	Yarrow
	Salmonberry	Kinnikinnick
	Red Osier Dogwood	Salal
	Trailing Blackberry	
	Native Rose Species	
	Thimbleberry	
	Oceanspray/Ironwood	
	Pacific Coast iris species	

Fig 54. Planting Guide: Public Right-of-Way

2. Median spaces along I-5

The plants on this list are meant to be regarded as a speculative list, as the actual regulations governing what can and can't be planted in the medians based on things like site distance, vegetal clearance, design clear zones, etc. ultimately dictate what can be planted on these sites. This is decided by a number of governmental organizations like Washington Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, etc.

TREES	SHRUBS	GROUND COVER
Western Cedar	Osoberry	Camas
Western Hemlock	Snowberry	Fawn Lilies
Douglas Fir	Western Sword Fern	Yellow Montane Violet
Bigleaf Maple	Lady Fern	Lupine
Vine Maple	Evergreen Huckleberry	Yarrow
Gary Oak	Salmonberry	Kinnikinnick
	Pacific Wax Myrtle	Salal
		Common Velvet Grass

Fig 55. Planting Guide: I-5 Medians

3. Thornton Creek Protected Area, along NE 105th St

The plantings along Thornton Creek in this area were planted more recently and are intentionally managed, and thus the recommendations here are much less intricate. The slow introduction of more riparian and wetland plants like Salal, native Sedges like Slough Sedge, and others would only stand to improve the ecosystem functioning, there isn't a pressing need to create large-scale interventions like Barton Woods. The area with the highest need for intervention is along 105th street, where the project team observed a large concentration of invasives. The following recommendations take into account improvement for the health of the area's ecosystem.

TREES	SHRUBS	GROUND COVER
Pacific Willow	Low Oregon Grape	Skunk Cabbage
Western Cedar	Snowberry	Slough Sedge
	Western Sword Fern	Horsetail
	Lady Fern	
	Red Osier Dogwood	

Fig 56. Planting Guide: Thornton Creek Protected Area

