II. PROPOSED ACTION & ALTERNATIVES

A. Background Information/Framework for Proposed Action

Overview

Northgate is one of six Urban Centers designated in the City of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan. Urban Centers provide a diverse mix of housing and employment land uses, and are planned to be the most intensively developed neighborhoods in the city. A significant portion of the City's projected 20-year residential growth (58 percent) and employment growth (73 percent) is targeted for designated Urban Centers. Within the four-county Central Puget Sound Region, Urban Centers are a key element in accommodating growth to meet the requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA).

The *Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan* and implementing zoning regulations were adopted in 1993 by Resolution 28752. Elements of the plan were re-adopted in modified form into the City's Comprehensive Plan in 2004 by Ordinance 121701; any references in this document to the "adopted Northgate Comprehensive Plan" or to its policies are to the policies adopted by that ordinance. The plan expresses a vision of how the community should grow over time, and provides policies to guide future development and capital facility decisions. The general goal is to transform Northgate, particularly the Urban Center, into a vital concentration of mixed-use, pedestrian friendly and transit supportive land uses, while also maintaining and protecting surrounding residential uses. There is sufficient zoned capacity to accommodate significant future growth, based on growth targets (to 2002). The Seattle Comprehensive Plan, 2005 Update provides updated 20-year growth targets for the Northgate Urban Center – 2,500 new housing units and 4,220 new jobs through 2024.

Since the initial phase of Northgate planning, growth in Northgate has lagged well behind City growth targets (DCLU, Seattle Growth Report 2000). An economic down-turn was one problem that resulted in little growth or change over the past decade. The City's Strategic Planning Office identified additional factors in a report on Northgate growth in 2000. These factors included permitted densities, complex neighborhood-level development review procedures, the transportation system and lagging public investments in improvements. Over the past few years, the City has responded to these limitations with a number of new initiatives, including several significant community facilities and improvements, focused regulatory changes, and new planning initiatives. Council Resolution 30642, adopted in December 2003, established a "framework for actions to accomplish future steps for Northgate [including] economic development efforts, multi-family housing incentives, multi-modal transportation, pedestrian and open space improvements, integrated natural drainage strategies, sustainable design and green building, public art, planning for major commercial and multi-family residential development, and meaningful community involvement in these actions." Resolution 30642, adopted in the same time period, instructed SDOT to prepare a transportation investment plan.

The draft Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan (CTIP) responds to these resolutions. Other major legislative actions and events influencing the development of the CTIP and the transformation of Northgate are summarized below.

1. Northgate Area Plan, Vision and Policies

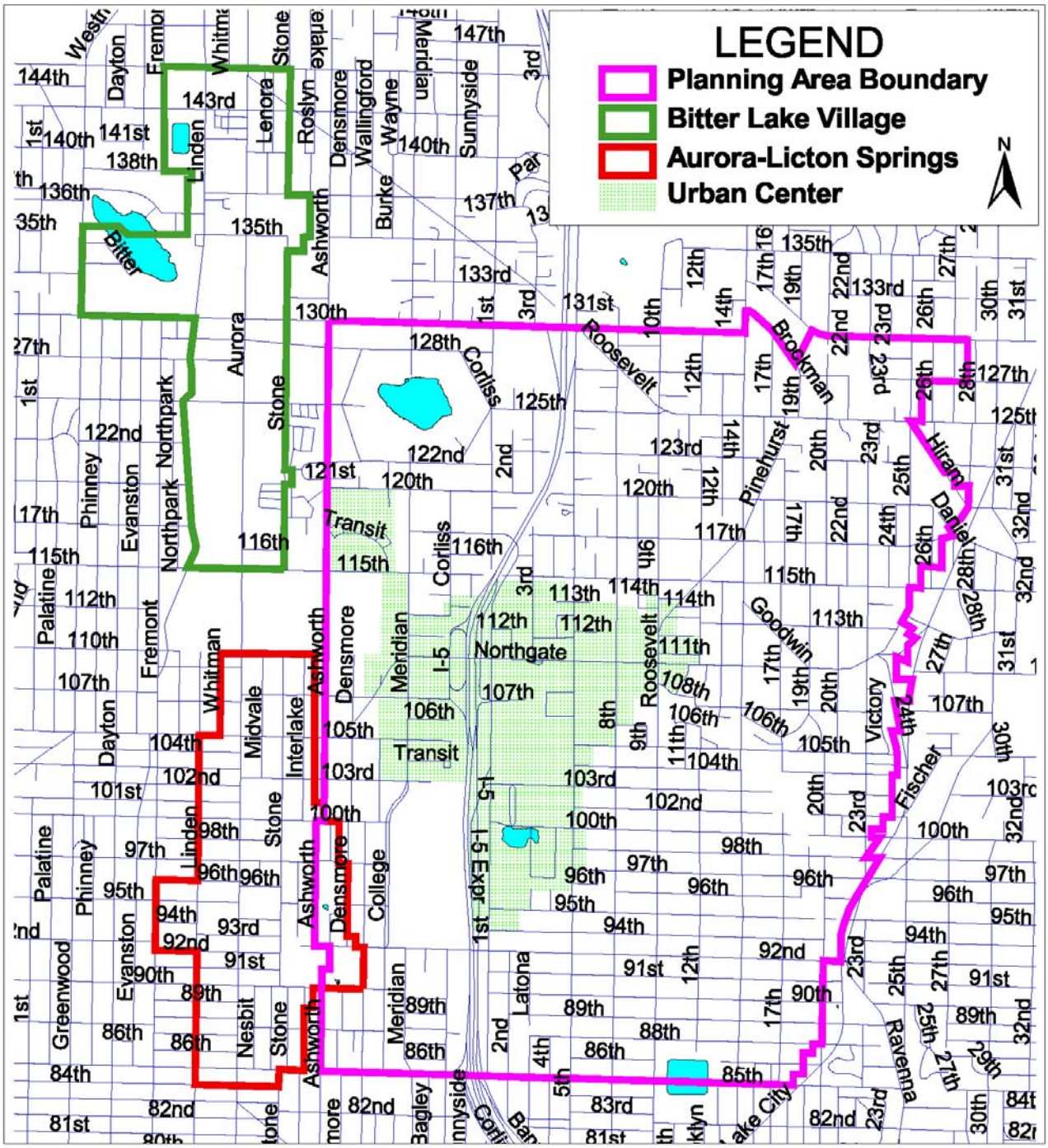
The *Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan* (NACP), adopted in 1993, resulted in a policy framework and changes to land use regulations for the planning area. The planning area is shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2. The Northgate Overlay District, adopted by Ordinance 11695, generally corresponds to the Northgate Urban Center that is designated in the City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan. Applicable Northgate goals and policies are now contained in the Northgate Neighborhood Plan chapter of the city-wide Comprehensive Plan (Ordinance 116770). Development regulations for the Northgate Overlay District are contained in SMC 23.71. DPD is evaluating Northgate neighborhood-specific SEPA policies with respect to the draft CTIP and adopted City policies and regulations.

The neighborhood plan envisions a thriving, vital, mixed-use center concentrated in a pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive pattern of compatible land uses, which protects and maintains existing neighborhoods. The most intensive and dense activities should be concentrated within the "core area," which is described as a major regional activity center, with a mix of uses and densities sufficient to support transit. This core – generally the Northgate shopping center and surrounding high density commercial and multi-family zones – corresponds to the Northgate Urban Center designated in the Comprehensive Plan, and the Overlay District designated in the zoning code. Other Land Use goals and policies include the following:

- Use buffering and transition zones to protect residential neighborhoods.
- Commercial activity outside the core should be smaller in scale and serve the adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Provide good pedestrian connections between uses.
- Promote a mixture of commercial activities and residential uses in areas zoned Neighborhood Commercial and Residential Commercial.
- Promote additional multi-family housing opportunities in appropriate locations at a compatible scale.

Transportation goals envision an economically viable commercial core with improved alternate means of access, and good vehicular and pedestrian circulation. Medium and high density employment and residential uses should be focused within a 10-minute walk of the transit center, which would help reduce the number and length of vehicle trips and make travel by foot and bicycle more attractive. Policies promote the following:

- accommodating more person-trips rather than vehicle trips and encouraging transit, pedestrian and non-motorized travel;
- enhancing transit services and facilities;
- creating safe and interesting pedestrian connections;



Source: Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc.

Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. HWA	**Northgate Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan** Draft EIS	**Figure 1** **Northgate Planning Area**

Source:

Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. HWA	**Northgate Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan** Draft EIS	**Figure 2** **Aerial Photograph - Northgate Planning Area**

- managing parking supply, location and demand to discourage use of autos and to improve short-term parking accessibility for retail customers, patients and visitors; and
- reducing the impacts of increased traffic volumes by limiting conflicts with local access streets, improving traffic flow, circulation and safety, without increasing vehicular capacity.

The plan's vision also assumes initial implementation of a regional high capacity transit system, and a station located near Northgate's core, some time after 2002. The plan encourages transit supportive land uses adjacent to a future transit station, as well as good non-motorized access and an attractive pedestrian environment.

The plan recommends using a variety of approaches to finance capital improvements.

2. Review and Evaluation Report (2000)

A Northgate plan policy required review of the plan after five years experience to evaluate progress and difficulties in implementing the plan. The *Review and Evaluation Report*, published by Strategic Planning Office in 2002, validated the plan's vision but found that the desired transformation was not taking place in large part because the growth and development that would realize the Northgate vision, and provide a funding mechanism for some of the desired improvements, had not occurred. This lack of growth was, in turn, related to several plan or regulatory elements which could be acting as disincentives, including the GDP requirement (which created delay and uncertainty), allowable densities (lower in Northgate than permitted city-wide), lack of incentives, and capital facility funding limitations.

3. Northgate Overlay District Amendments

In 2003, the City Council amended several provisions of the Northgate Overlay District Land Use Code; these changes occurred in conjunction with approval of a development agreement for redevelopment of the Northgate Mall. First, the amendments repealed the requirement that "substantial" developments – defined to include 4,000 square feet on parcels of 6-acres or larger within the Northgate Overlay District – prepare a General Development Plan (GDP). The GDP planning process, as it was implemented, was costly and time consuming for applicants, duplicated existing review processes (such as design review, and the master use permit process) and was a disincentive to development in Northgate. In addition, the Council amended on-site open space requirements in the Overlay District to make them more flexible and less of a disincentive; designated NE 100th Street and NE 103rd Street as special landscaped arterials; and clarified requirements relating to storefront windows.

4. Council Resolution No. 30641

In December, 2003, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 30641 directing SDOT to develop a Northgate Coordinated Transportation Investment Program (CTIP). The resolution recognized that Northgate, designated as an Urban Center in the City's Comprehensive Plan, was not meeting its jobs and housing targets and indicted the City's goal to stimulate revitalization. The CTIP was defined as an area-wide transportation analysis/plan that would facilitate private investment and coordinate transportation investments that reflect the long-term goals of the Northgate area. The CTIP's technical review should evaluate existing/short-term and future transportation needs and deficiencies, and should focus on transforming the transportation network from auto-oriented to balanced and reflecting all transportation modes (e.g., transit, bicycle and pedestrian as well). Safety and efficiency, and traffic calming where appropriate, were noted as measures to be incorporated. The desired program would consist of a list of needed transportation improvements, along with priorities, cost estimates and potential funding sources.

The Resolution contemplates that the traffic analysis prepared for the CTIP would address long-term, cumulative impacts associated with planned growth, and could be in the form of an environmental impact statement (EIS). This analysis could also be used by property owners to meet some or all requirements of project review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). This approach would facilitate project-level SEPA review and encourage planned growth.

The Draft CTIP, which is being published separately, concurrent with publication of the Draft EIS, includes the elements identified in Resolution 30641. An area-wide traffic analysis, that addresses the cumulative impacts of planned growth, is summarized in the *Transportation* section of the Draft EIS and included in Appendix A.

5. Northgate Revitalization

City Initiatives and Proposed Projects

Over the past three years, a number of public and private initiatives have converged in the Northgate area. These are part of the context for the draft CTIP and have advanced the vision of the Northgate community. Significant public improvements that are planned and/or under construction, including the Northgate Branch Library, Community Center and Park campus, Maple Leaf Community Garden, and Fifth Avenue NE Street Improvements. Current City planning initiatives also include the Northgate Open Space and Pedestrian Connections Plan (completed in 2005), design of the Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel (as part of the City's Thornton Creek Action Agenda), and a Northgate Public Arts Plan (completed in 2005) that identifies a public arts program for future Northgate development.

A number of significant private projects are also being planned or undergoing development review, including:

- Redevelopment of the Northgate Mall (Simon Properties) – new retail and parking structure;
- Northgate Commons (Lorig Associates) – cinema, restaurants, retail, apartments and condominiums, and senior housing;
- King County Metro's Northgate TOD – development of a transit center to link various transit facilities, coordinated street and pedestrian improvements, and joint mixed-use redevelopment of the site for retail, residential and lodging uses);
- Proposals for mixed-use (residential/retail), retail, residential and office development for the Wallace, Mullaly, and Kauri properties and the Northgate Medical Pavillion.

North Seattle Community College is also beginning development of an updated Major Institution Master Plan (MIMP) to guide the college's long-term growth. Future developments in Northgate also include proposed extension of Sound Transit's Link light rail system to Northgate (North Link) and construction of a station spanning NE 103rd Street (Sound Transit's currently preferred site). A Final EIS for the North Link extension is planned to be published in the winter of 2006.

Implementation of the projects identified above would occur in the near-term (current), mid term (by 2010) and longer-term (by 2030). Note that "pipeline" development projects (i.e., those approved but not yet constructed, and those with complete, vested applications and currently undergoing permit review) are included in forecasts, planning and analysis for the CTIP.

CTIP Public Involvement Program

Using direction provided in Council Resolution 30641, SDOT has made public involvement an integral element of the CTIP planning process. The Northgate Stakeholders Group, representing a range of interests in the greater Northgate community, was convened in 2004. Its charge is to advise the City on a range of plans and projects, including development of the CTIP. The Stakeholders Group has been involved in each step of the CTIP planning process, including development of recommendations for transportation improvements.

In 2004 and 2005, the Stakeholders Group also hosted five community forums to help gather the public's ideas on major projects, including transportation planning. The October, 2005 Community Forum was used as a "scoping" meeting for the CTIP EIS and to identify environmental issues of concern.

Throughout the CTIP process, SDOT staff has engaged in ongoing discussions with neighborhood groups, residents, property owners and other agencies (including King County Metro and Sound Transit), to respond to questions, address concerns, get feedback on proposals, and to coordinate planning activities.

B. Environmental Review Process

Overview of EIS Process

This Draft EIS has been prepared to comply with the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). These requirements are contained in state statute (RCW 43.21C), state rules (WAC 197-11-197), and the City of Seattle's SEPA Ordinance (SMC 25.05).

A major purpose of SEPA is to ensure that environmental effects are considered in decisions on "proposals," a term which includes public plans and legislation (referred to as non-project or programmatic actions) as well as public or private development projects. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is one type of document that may be used to describe, evaluate and disclose the impacts of a proposal. An EIS also examines alternative ways of accomplishing a proposal's purpose, and techniques that may be used to mitigate (i.e., avoid, reduce, minimize) identified impacts. Communicating such information to the public, agencies, tribes and decision makers before a decision is made is a key objective of SEPA. The required contents of an EIS, the detail of analysis required, and provisions well as requirements for publication, notice, commenting, and using existing environmental documents, are set forth in the previously referenced laws.

An EIS is prepared in four major steps:

(1) *Determination of significance and scoping*, which includes a published announcement that an EIS will be prepared, and uses public comments to help focus on the most relevant environmental issues for consideration in the EIS;
(2) *Draft EIS*, a published document which describes expected significant impacts and how they can be mitigated;
(3) a *comment period*, which permits interested citizens to raise questions or offer comments or suggestions about the EIS or the proposal; and
(4) a *Final EIS*, a published document which responds to the comments received on the Draft EIS, and which may contain a new or modified proposal or alternatives.

Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan EIS

The City prepared an EIS in 1991 to support development of the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan. That EIS evaluated the environmental effects of the proposed plan on land use, population, housing, employment, air quality and transportation. The NACP EIS evaluated a 20-year planning horizon, and growth assumed to occur in this period included 3,000 housing units and 9,300 jobs. Relatively little of this expected growth has occurred; as of 2003, approximately 6 percent of the housing unit target and 16 percent of the job target had been realized. Conditions have not changed significantly, since growth has not been realized. Much of the existing analysis is, therefore, still applicable.

Options Considered for SEPA Compliance

SDOT considered a range of options for SEPA compliance for the CTIP. An objective of Council Resolution 30641 was to prepare an area-wide transportation analysis which could be used by property owners (e.g., by adopting it for project-level SEPA review). In addition, the SDOT discussed the potential for a planned action EIS for the Northgate Urban Center with other city agencies and outside experts. Complexity, timing considerations, and financial constraints made a Planned Action EIS infeasible at this time. An addendum to the NACP EIS, or preparation of an environmental checklist/mitigated DNS could also have been pursued.

SDOT determined that preparation of an EIS for the CTIP would be most consistent with the objectives of Resolution 30641. SDOT also concluded that it would also be desirable to integrate development of the CTIP at an early, draft stage with SEPA compliance, an approach that is encouraged by the SEPA Rules. It facilitates use of the information in the EIS, and the comments received from agencies and the public, to revise the draft CTIP, as appropriate, to ensure that it reflects environmental concerns.

To commence the SEPA process, the City published a determination of significance in October, 2005, and received comments on the scope of the EIS from agencies and individuals. A scoping meeting was combined with an October 2005 community forum and provided attendees an opportunity to comment (verbally or in writing) on the scope of the EIS. SDOT staff also solicited comments from state and local agencies. Using that input, consideration of the nature of the proposal, and its own assessment of likely environmental impacts, the City established the contents of this Draft EIS.

Scope of CTIP EIS

Programmatic Document. EISs for plans, policies, and programs – like the CTIP – are referred to as "programmatic" or non-project documents. Because these types of government actions are usually broad in scope and area, the analysis in programmatic EISs is also broad in scope and general in nature. The CTIP's recommended improvements are defined at a conceptual level; they are not detailed project proposals at this time. The nature of the analysis in this Draft EIS, therefore, is commensurate with the nature of the CTIP.

Impacts Considered. The Draft EIS examines the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of the CTIP. By itself, the CTIP will not have any direct effect on the environment. The CTIP is a coordinated package of potential transportation improvements which, if implemented, would support the vision and growth planned for the Northgate area in the City's Comprehensive Plan. It is intended to implement the recommendations in the Northgate policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan and to address current and future transportation problems. The CTIP would not modify adopted Northgate policies, or change land use, zoning or adopted development regulations.

It should be noted that the draft CTIP does recommend four changes to Northgate-specific parking requirements, which currently differ from city-wide parking regulations. If adopted, these changes (to SMC 23.71.016 and 018) would apply existing city-wide provisions for shared parking (between retail and other uses), minimum and maximum parking requirements, parking reductions for transit and alternative transportation modes, mode split goals, and off-site residential parking requirements, to Northgate. No significant adverse impacts to land use, transportation or other elements of the environment would result from these specific changes, and their impacts are not addressed further in the Draft EIS.

Assuming implementation of its recommended improvements, the CTIP would improve Northgate's transportation system over time and provide some of the infrastructure needed to support the housing and economic growth that is targeted to occur. Without some improvements to the transportation system, growth would likely become constrained. Indirectly, therefore, the CTIP is a step in enabling planned growth to occur with reduced impacts.

A number of positive impacts would occur from the CTIP, and are reflected in the *Transportation* analysis of the Draft EIS. Recommended pedestrian, bicycle and transit improvements would all reduce drive-alone trips, which would reduce traffic congestion, improve safety and facilitate more walking and biking between destinations in Northgate. These effects are reflected in projected 2010 and 2030 intersection and corridor levels of service. These same improvements could also reduce driving between parking lots, which although more difficult to quantify would also benefit the local transportation system.

Cumulative Impacts/Growth Assumptions. The analysis in the CTIP EIS addresses cumulative planned growth of the Northgate area. Planned and pipeline development projects are shown by type in Table 1.

Table 1. Northgate Planned & Pipeline Projects [1]

Development Type	**2010 [2]**	**2030**
Residential Units [3]	1,559	820
Retail/Service (square feet) [4]	310,000	56,000
Hotel Rooms	135	170
Theater (seats)	3,260	
Commercial (square feet)	100,000	9,000
Medical Office (square feet)	68,000	
Community Facilities (square feet)	30,000	

1. Pipeline development projects include the Northgate Community Center & Library, Northgate Mall expansion, Northgate Commons, King County TOD, Wallace, Mullally, Kauri, and Northgate Medical Pavilion.
2. Includes development currently approved and/or under construction as of the date of preparation of the CTIP traffic analysis and the Draft EIS.
3. Includes rental, condominiums, and senior housing.
4. Includes restaurants, health club, and daycare uses.

The EIS, and the CTIP traffic study (Appendix A), also updates Northgate's population and employment forecasts to be consistent with City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan 2024 growth targets. The targets are shown in Table 2 below. The CTIP also uses Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) forecasts to estimate the traffic implications of growth to the year 2030.

Table 2. Northgate Urban Center 2024 Growth Targets

	2004	2024 Growth	Total
Households	3,490	2,500	5,990
Jobs	11,030	4,220	15,250

Note: The Northgate Urban Center is a portion of the larger Northgate study area for the CTIP. Estimates used for traffic modeling for the CTIP assumed 20,000 total households and 27,000 jobs in 2030.

Phased Environmental Review. The draft CTIP's sixty-three recommended transportation improvements, and their estimated costs, are defined at a conceptual level at this time. These potential projects have not been designed and are not formally proposed, and the EIS analysis does not and cannot contain project level detail. SDOT is using phased environmental review to address the impacts of the improvements themselves, consistent with WAC 197-11-060 (5). Future environmental review will be performed, as appropriate, for specific projects when they are designed, funded and proposed for implementation. At that time, affected elements of the environment can be identified and evaluated in greater detail.

Air quality provides an example of how phased environmental review would be conducted. Before CTIP construction improvements can be implemented they will need to be designed, funded, adopted in the City's capital improvement program, and incorporated into the PSRC's regional Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Additional environmental review would also be required. Amendment of the MTP would involve performing a regional air quality analysis, to ensure that the regional system meets state air quality standards. Some improvements and/or changes in intersection level of service could also trigger the need for a project-specific air quality conformity analysis to satisfy the requirements of state law (WAC 173-420-100). This involves detailed traffic and intersection modeling based on project specific design information. Because the Draft CTIP improvements are conceptual in nature, and it is not certain which improvements will actually be funded and programmed, it is not practical to perform detailed air quality analysis at this point in time. This situation fits the criteria for using phased environmental review, and permits the lead agency to defer detailed analysis until more information is known and until some preliminary decisions have been made. More general information about air quality impacts are contained in this Draft EIS.

Possible impacts associated with other elements of the environment – such as stormwater runoff and noise – are addressed in adopted regulations, and/or cannot be meaningfully evaluated at this time because individual projects have not been designed. Construction of transportation improvements would have to comply with adopted City drainage requirements, which would mitigate impacts. The CTIP's sixty-three recommended improvements are conceptual at this time and it is not possible to evaluate their project-specific impacts. Relatively few of the improvements would involve construction of additional impervious surface and/or would raise cumulative or individually significant drainage concerns. Additional environmental review would occur, as appropriate, when specific projects are proposed.

Noise impacts are similarly difficult to evaluate. Noise levels in Northgate are affected by freeway traffic and vehicular traffic on local streets, as well as by land use activities. The CTIP will not directly affect the amount of growth or traffic in Northgate; traffic will be driven by housing and employment growth planned to occur in Northgate, pursuant to City policies and private development actions. Similarly, the CTIP will not affect the type, density or location of growth; those variables are controlled primarily by zoning regulations. The CTIP would not, therefore, have any direct effect on noise levels, and noise was not identified as an issue for detailed discussion in the Draft EIS. Noise impacts associated with growth of the City's Urban Centers, such as Northgate, were previously addressed in the EIS prepared for the City's Comprehensive Plan (1994).

Indirectly, however, the CTIP's recommendations, if implemented, could result in reduced traffic congestion and associated noise. Protecting residential neighborhoods from traffic would also tend to ameliorate traffic-related noise impacts. Noise associated with the construction of improvements would be limited by adopted City noise regulations

C. Description of Proposal & Alternatives

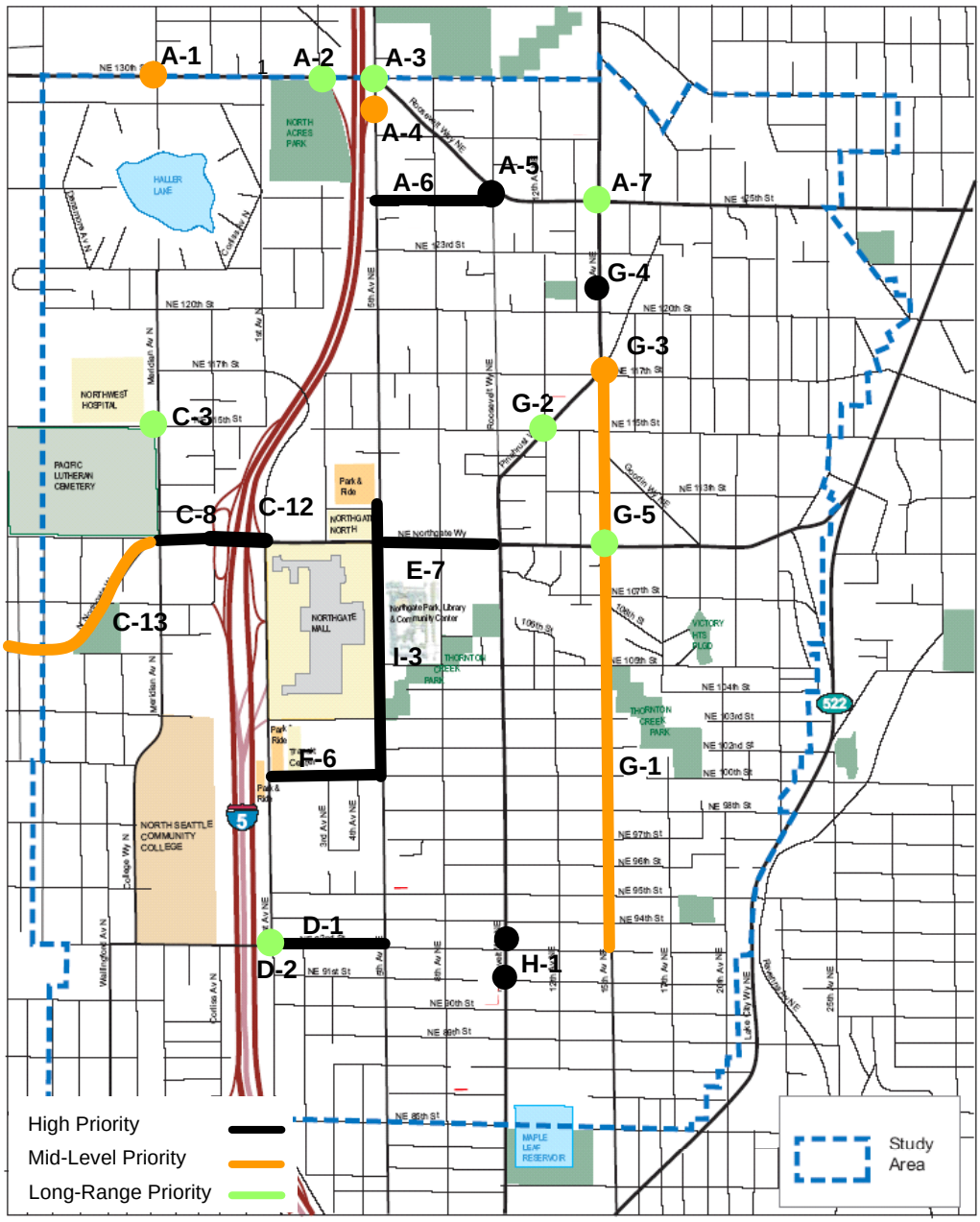
Draft Recommended Improvement Program

The CTIP's sixty-three recommended improvements would address Northgate's future growth and the broad spectrum of transportation system needs. Recommendations are listed in Table 3a-3d, organized by CTIP goal, and priority ("high", "mid-level" and "long-range"). Improvement locations are also shown on Figures 3a-3d. The recommendations seek to balance the needs of different transportation modes – pedestrian, bicycle, auto, and transit – and attempt to spread costs over the planning period (2010 and 2030) so that improvements are capable of being funded. Recommended improvements include additional bicycle lanes, sidewalk improvements and pedestrian crossings; curb and gutters; signalization and vehicle turning king improvements; transit service enhancements; creation of a "parking brokerage" system, to more efficiently allocate parking needs through shared parking; and a few projects involving road or freeway ramp widening at existing congestion points. The improvements are discussed in greater detail in the *Draft Final CTIP Report*.

Table 3a. Proposed Improvements for CTIP Goal: Move People Safely and Efficiently

High Priority Improvements	
F-6	Provide sidewalks on the north side of NE 100th Street from 1st Avenue NE to 5th Avenue NE, along the frontage not funded for sidewalks by Metro and the ERA Care development.
A-6	Provide curbs, gutters, and sidewalks on both sides of NE 125th Street from 5th Avenue NE to Roosevelt Way NE.
A-5	Upgrade the intersection of NE 125th Street/Roosevelt Way NE/10th Avenue NE and include the existing stop-controlled 125th Street intersection as part of one new signal-controlled intersection.
D-1	Provide curbs, gutters and sidewalks on both sides of NE 92nd Street from 1st Avenue NE to 5th Avenue NE. Provide curb bulbs as appropriate to assist pedestrian crossings.
H-1	Analyze pedestrian crossing conditions, including pedestrian demand and adjacent land uses, on Roosevelt Avenue NE between NE 90th Street and NE 94th Street through the neighborhood business district. If consistent with SDOT guidelines and practices, install pedestrian crossing improvements such as curb bulbs and crosswalk signs and markings.
G-4	Install a pedestrian signal, consistent with SDOT signal warrant criteria, at the 15th Avenue NE/NE 120th Street intersection. SDOT is currently evaluating the pedestrian need at this location and considering a pedestrian-actuated signal.
C-8	Work with businesses along N Northgate Way to develop an access management plan that includes construction of a median and restriction of mid-block left turns from Meridian Avenue N to the Corliss Ave N/I-5 off-ramp. Consider where a break in the median may be allowed for access. Investigate the feasibility of providing a business access street south of N Northgate Way.
E-7	Work with the businesses along NE Northgate Way from 5th Avenue NE to Roosevelt Way NE to develop an access management plan that includes construction of medians and restriction of mid-block left turns. Consider where breaks in the medians may be allowed for access, or U-turns at intersections.
C-12	Apply the DPD Open Space/Pedestrian Connections Plan for design treatments that enhance the pedestrian connection on N Northgate Way between Corliss Avenue N and 1st Avenue NE particularly under I-5. A key CTIP recommendation is to place the sidewalks behind the I-5 bridge columns. This project should be implemented together with C-7, C-9, and C-10 as a package.
I-3	Improve the streetscape and pedestrian street crossings at major intersections on 5th Avenue NE from NE 100th Street to NE 112th Street consistent with the 5th Avenue NE Streetscape Design Plan (2003).
Mid-Level Priority Improvements	
A-1	Add left turn pockets on all approaches at the N 130th Street /Meridian Avenue N intersection.
G-1	Add curbs, gutters, and sidewalks on both sides of 15th Avenue NE from NE 92nd Street to NE 117th Street. This project may require phasing due to its high cost. Neighborhood-based funds have been allocated for a raised walkway for approximately four blocks (NE 92nd to NE 96th Street). In 2006 and prior to the execution of this project, SDOT should work with the community to decide upon the permanent design and construction technology to be utilized for the entire 15th Avenue NE pedestrian facility, and phasing and funding options identified to achieve maximum leverage.
C-13	Upgrade N Northgate Way from Meridian Avenue N to Aurora Avenue N to meet the City's principal arterial roadway design standards. Key improvements needed within this

	corridor are adding sidewalks along the north edge of North Seattle Park, improving substandard sidewalks, adding urban design treatments and expanding vehicular capacity at the N Northgate Way/Aurora Avenue N intersection.
A-4	Signalize the I-5 northbound off ramp and 5th Avenue NE intersection and coordinate this signal with the 5th Avenue NE/NE 130th Street intersection signal and connect/coordinate all signals along NE 130th Street/NE 125th Street corridor.
G-3	Install a traffic signal after adopted warrants have been met and modify the intersection geometry at the 15th Avenue NE/NE 117th Street/Pinehurst Way NE intersection.
Long-Range Priority Improvements	
G-2	Construct a roundabout at the Pinehurst Way NE/ NE 115th Street/12th Avenue NE intersection.
G-5	Reconstruct the NE Northgate Way and 15th Avenue NE intersection to provide north-south left turn pockets.
C-3	Install a traffic signal after adopted warrants have been met at the N 115th Street/ Meridian Avenue N intersection.
A-3	Add an eastbound left turn pocket at the 5th Avenue NE and NE 130th Street intersection.
A-2	Add a westbound left turn pocket at the I-5 southbound on-ramp and NE 130th Street intersection.
A-7	Upgrade the traffic existing signal at the NE 125th Street/15th Avenue NE intersection to include poles/mast arms and detection.
D-2	Install a traffic signal after adopted warrants have been met at the NE 92nd Street and 1st Avenue NE intersection. When the traffic signal is installed, replace existing speed humps with humps that are consistent with the most current SDOT design and construction standards.



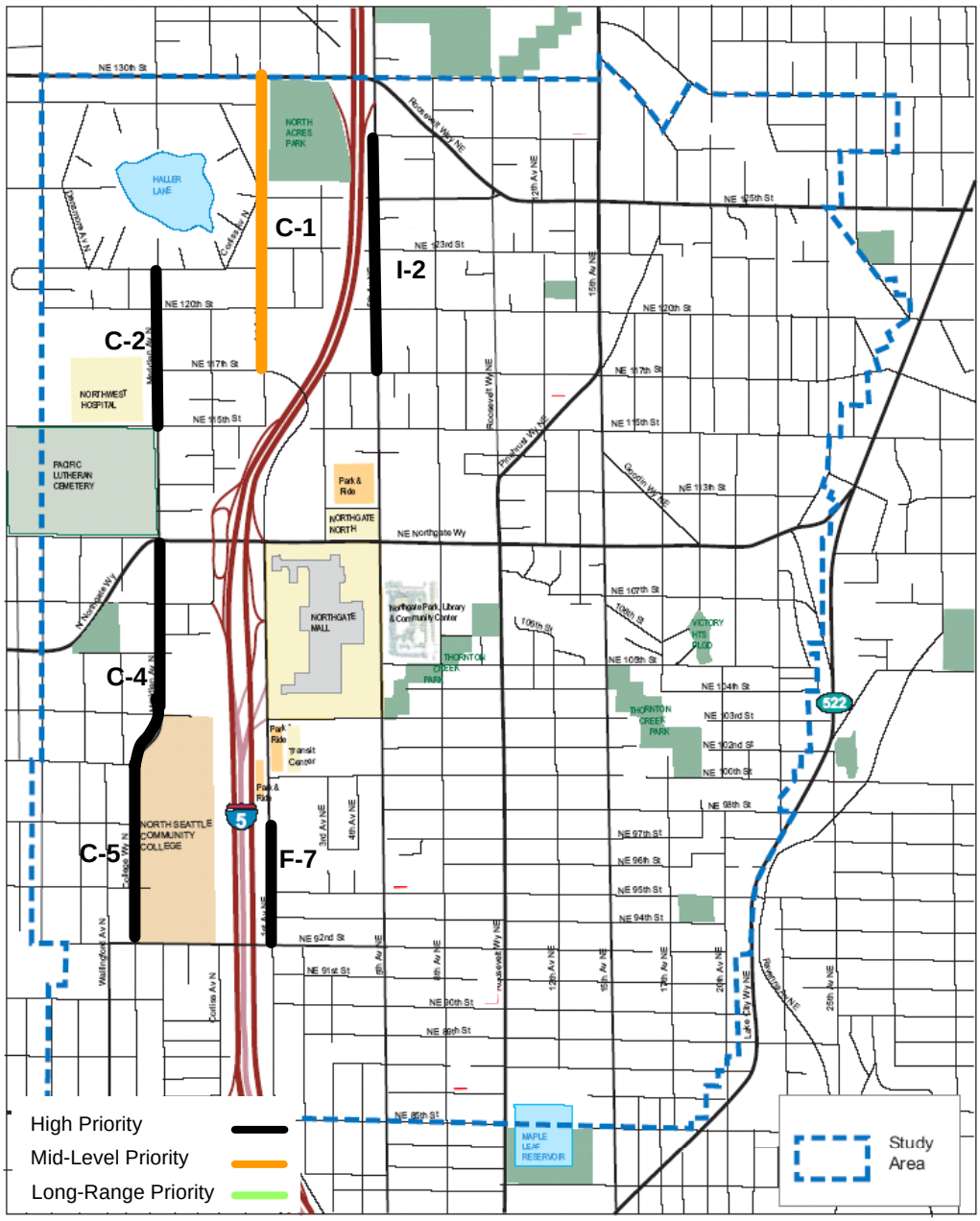
Source: Mirai Transportation Planning and Engineering

Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. HWA	**Northgate Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan** Draft EIS	**Figure 3a** **Priority Ranking of Recommended Improvements for the CTIP Goal: Move People Safely and Efficiently**

Table 3b. Proposed Improvements for CTIP Goal: Reduce Drive-Alone Travel

High Priority Improvements	
C-2	Add bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides of Meridian Avenue N from N 115th Street to N 122nd Street.
F-7	Reconstruct the existing sidewalk on the east side of 1st Avenue NE from NE 92nd Street to NE 97th Street and provide a bicycle lane on the west side of 1st Avenue (by extending the shoulder by 4 feet) between NE 103rd Street and NE 92nd Street.
I-2	Stripe bike lanes on 5th Avenue NE from NE 115th Street to NE 125th Street.
C-4	Provide bicycle lanes on both sides of Meridian Avenue N from N 100th Street to N Northgate Way.
C-5	Provide bicycle lanes on both sides of College Way from N 92nd Street to N 100th Street by converting the curb lanes to bicycle lanes. Work with Metro to ensure that transit service standards for speed and reliability of service are maintained.
J-4	Facilitate development of a "parking brokerage" function to efficiently allocate parking needs through shared use of parking spaces. This function could be managed by a new or exiting association of employers and property owners, a Chamber of Commerce, or a Transportation Management Association (TMA). These organizations may also be able to provide other services related to improving public transportation and promoting alternatives to drive-alone commutes.
J-6	Amend SMC 23.71.016 to allow shared parking between retail stores and other uses. The Northgate Overlay District is the only zone in the city where retail is prohibited from sharing parking with other uses. Shared parking between uses increases the efficiency with which parking supply is used. Parking impacts of a project can be addressed through SEPA mitigation.
J-7	Amend SMC 23.71.016(C) to allow for reductions to minimum parking requirements for commercial uses, and consider expanding 23.71.016 to allow for these reductions to apply to residential uses as well as commercial uses. 23.54.020 (F) applies in other commercial zones in the City, and allows for parking reductions for proximity to transit and provision of alternative transportation strategies such as vanpools and bicycle racks. This reduction should apply in the Northgate Overlay District as well.
J-8	Amend SMC 23.71.018 to make the Northgate Overlay District mode split goals consistent with the goals for Northgate in the Seattle Comprehensive Plan. The Seattle Comprehensive Plan has mode split goals for each Urban Center. Mode split goals are an indicator of how many people are driving alone as opposed to using alternative means of transportation.
J-9	Allow residential uses to meet their parking requirements off-site. Under current Code, commercial uses may meet their parking requirements off-site. Allowing off-site residential parking can encourage adjacent property owners to more efficiently meet their respective parking needs.
J-10	Continue researching appropriate parking requirements to achieve Seattle Comprehensive Plan goals LU50 (parking maximums) and NGP12 (discourage SOV use, improve short-term parking accessibility). Through the process, acknowledge stakeholder concerns, including the following comments: • Retail parking maximums may be appropriate to review with respect to current lending practices. • Reduced parking requirements should be considered by the City contingent on increased transit service. • Benefits to developers from reduced parking requirements should be matched by their commitment to alternative travel as demonstrated by provision of transit passes, bicycle facilities, and car-share vehicles.

Mid-Level Priority Improvements	
C-1	Add bike lanes or widen shoulders to accommodate bike traffic on 1st Avenue N from N 117th Street to N 130th Street.
J-2	Provide improved transit service with average of 15-minute frequencies during off-peak hours from Northgate to the University District. This service improvement recommendation should be consistent with the Seattle Transit Plan.
J-3	Improve transit service with average of 15-minute frequencies during peak periods and 30-minute frequencies during off peak periods to other Urban Villages such as Bitter Lake, and Aurora-Licton Springs. This service improvement recommendation is consistent with the SDOT Urban Village Transit Network plan, prepared in collaboration with Metro.
Long-Range Priority Improvements	
J-1	Following the extension of light rail to Northgate, provide transit feeder services from nearby neighborhoods to the transit center.



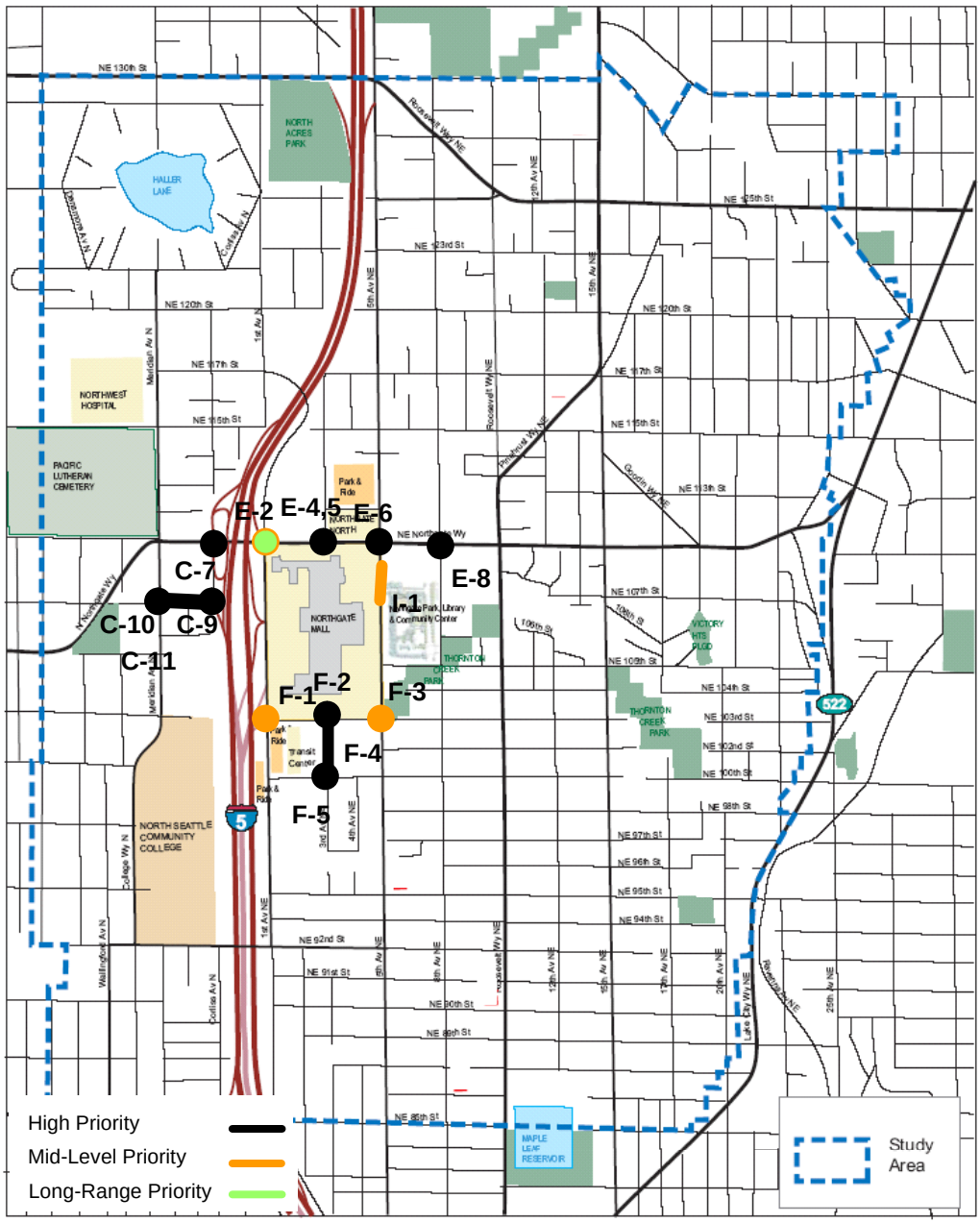
Source: Mirai Transportation Planning and Engineering

Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. HWA	**Northgate Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan** Draft EIS	**Figure 3b** **Priority Ranking of Recommended Improvements for the CTIP Goal: Reduce Drive-Alone Travel**

Table 3c. Proposed Improvements for CTIP Goal: Support Housing and Economic Development

High Priority Improvements	
F-4	Construct a three-lane roadway on 3rd Avenue NE from NE 100th Street to NE 103rd Street.
F-2	Install a traffic signal at the NE 103rd Street /3rd Avenue NE intersection. Provide urban design treatments for accommodating pedestrians.
F-5	When warranted, add four-way stop control and, ultimately, install a traffic signal at the NE 100th Street /3rd Avenue NE intersection. Provide marked crosswalks and urban design treatments to accommodate pedestrians. Note: upon opening, the 3rd Avenue NE extension will have two-way stop controls on the 3rd Avenue NE approaches.
E-6	Add a second westbound left turn lane on NE Northgate Way at 5th Avenue NE by widening the south side of NE Northgate Way from approximately 8th Avenue NE to 3rd Avenue NE. Assign southbound curb lane to right turns only. Re-align the southbound through lane to eliminate the existing "offset" condition. Provide urban design treatment to enhance the pedestrian crossings at the Northgate Way/5th Avenue NE intersection.
E-4, E-5	Working with the Northgate Mall owner, add a new access driveway to the 3rd Avenue NE alignment at the NE Northgate Way/3rd Avenue NE intersection and eliminate the existing semicircular, two-intersection Northgate Mall driveway. It may require widening of 3rd Avenue north of NE Northgate Way to align the approach lane with the Northgate Mall side. Provide crosswalks on all legs at the NE Northgate Way/3rd Avenue NE intersection. Place barriers at the edge of the north sidewalk or in the median (possibly landscaping) between 3rd Avenue NE and 5th Avenue NE to discourage mid-block street crossings by pedestrians.
C-7	Allow westbound left turns from N Northgate Way to southbound Corliss Avenue at the southbound I-5 off-ramp/Corliss Ave/N Northgate Way intersection. Extend the westbound left turn lane on N Northgate Way under the I-5 overpass by placing the new sidewalks behind the support columns.
C-9	Provide a roundabout at the southbound I-5 on-ramp/Corliss Avenue N/N 107th Street intersection. C-9, C-10, C-11 and J-5 work together to form an alternative westbound route to Meridian Avenue.
C-10	Provide a roundabout at the Meridian Ave N/ N 107th Street intersection.
C-11	Provide curbs, gutters and sidewalks on N 107th Street from Meridian Avenue N to Corliss Avenue N/ southbound I-5 on-ramp.
J-5	Re-classify Corliss Avenue from NE Northgate Way to N 107th Street and N 107th Street from Corliss Avenue N to Meridian Avenue N from local streets to collector arterials.
E-1	Coordinate all signals and optimize signal operation for peak, non-peak weekdays and weekend days based on vehicle volumes on N/NE Northgate Way.
E-8	Replace the existing pedestrian signal with a full traffic signal and allow left turns on all approaches at the NE Northgate Way/8th Avenue NE intersection. Utilize urban design treatments consistent with the theme established at other key intersections within the Urban Center (e.g., NE Northgate Way/5th Avenue NE).
E-3	Monitor safety performance of westbound traffic on NE Northgate Way approaching 1st Avenue intersection to determine the future channelization improvements.
J-11	Manage on-street parking supply within the commercial core of the Northgate Urban Center to give priority to short-term customer use.
Mid-Level Priority Improvements	
F-1	Add a westbound right turn lane and implement the intersection improvement concept prepared by King County Metro and SDOT at the NE 103rd Street/ 1st Avenue NE

	intersection.
F-3	Allow eastbound left turns from the existing curb lane at the NE 103rd Street / 5th Avenue NE intersection.
I-1	Extend northbound right turn lane on 5th Avenue NE south of NE Northgate Way to NE 106th Street.
Long-Range Priority Improvements	
E-2	Modify westbound approach – curb lane: right and I-5 on-ramp, 2nd lane: I-5 on-ramp and through, and 3rd lane: through only at the N Northgate Way/1st Avenue NE/ I-5 on-ramp intersection. Widen the on-ramp to have two lanes on northbound I-5 on-ramp from N Northgate Way.

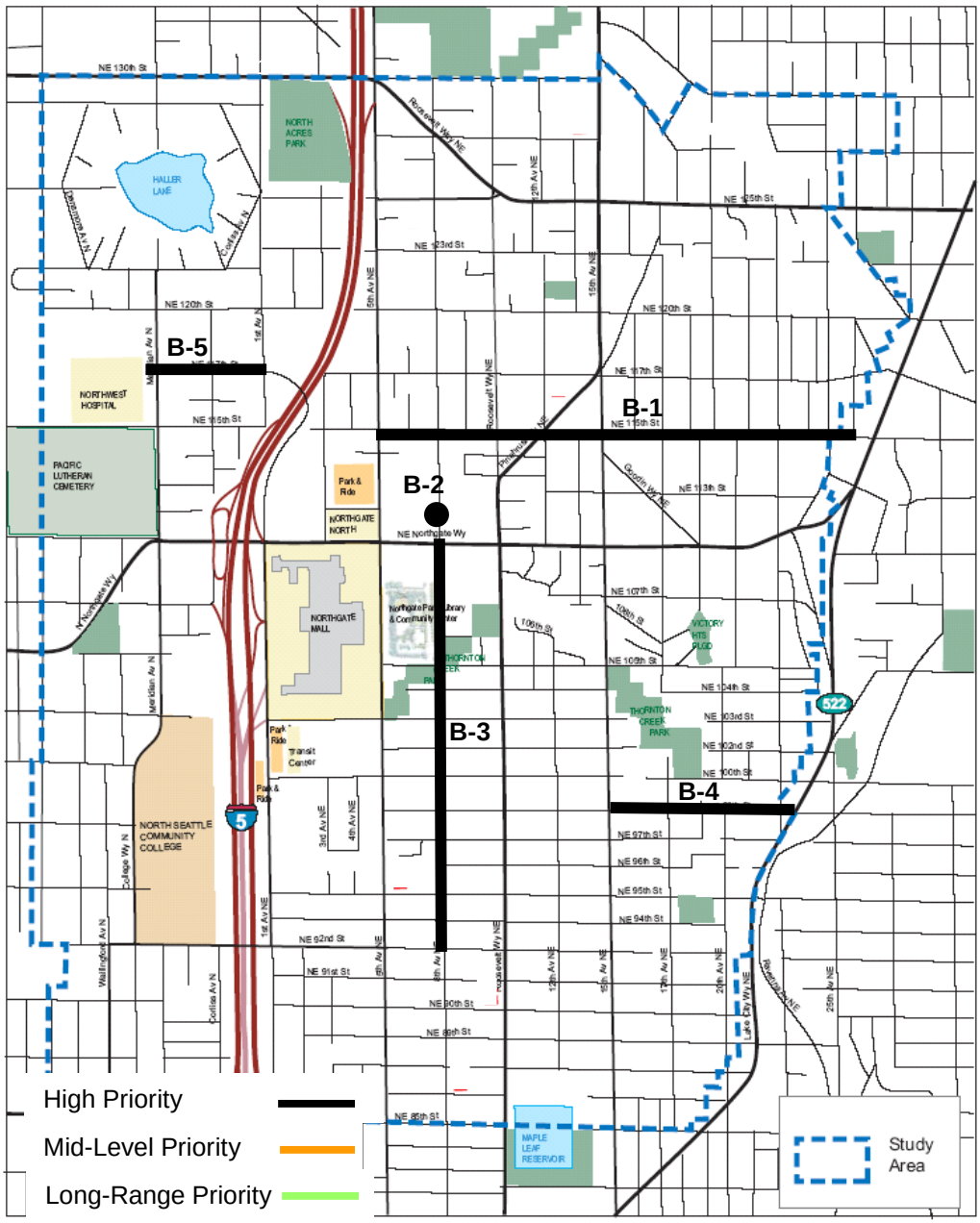


Source: Mirai Transportation Planning and Engineering

Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. HWA	**Northgate Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan** Draft EIS	**Figure 3c** **Priority Ranking of Recommended Improvements for the CTIP Goal: Support Housing & Economic Development**

Table 3d. Proposed Improvements for CTIP Goal: Protect Neighborhoods

High Priority Improvements	
B-5	Add a raised walkway on the north side of N 117th Street from 1st Avenue N to Meridian Ave N and install speed "cushion" for traffic calming. Consider phased implementation of this project.
B-1	Provide a raised walkway on one side of NE 115th Street from 5th Avenue NE to Lake City Way NE. Restrict on-street parking to one side. Consider phased implementation of this project.
B-3	Provide a raised walkway on one side of 8th Avenue NE from NE Northgate Way to NE 92nd Street. Install appropriate traffic calming devices to discourage excessive traffic speeds. Consider phased implementation of this project.
B-2	Analyze pedestrian crossing conditions on 8th Avenue NE between NE Northgate Way and NE 115th Street. If consistent with SDOT guidelines and practices, install pedestrian crossing improvements such as curb bulbs and related signs and markings. Crossing improvements at this location would enhance the connection between the senior housing developments on the west side of 8th Avenue NE with a post office on the east side.
B-4	Provide a raised walkway on one side of NE 98th Street from 15th Avenue NE to Lake City Way NE. Allow on-street parking. Integrate traffic control devices with the sidewalk improvements. Consider phased implementation.
Mid-Level Priority Improvements	
J-12	Conduct a neighborhood parking management assessment for Northgate to ensure that the neighborhood's limited supply of on-street parking adequately serves surrounding land uses, in the mid-term (2008-2010).
J-13	Work with Sound Transit and stakeholders to study and implement proactive parking management techniques around the station to prevent use of neighborhood streets for park-and-ride purposes, prior to the opening of the light rail station.



Source: Mirai Transportation Planning and Engineering

Huckell/Weinman Associates, Inc. HWA	**Northgate Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan** Draft EIS	**Figure 3d** **Priority Ranking of Recommended Improvements for the CTIP Goal: Protect Neighborhoods**

Financing Plan

The recommended improvements are based on assumptions about reasonable amounts of revenue that could be available to the Northgate area. As in most cities, capital improvement funding in Seattle is competitive, in that many projects and neighborhoods compete for the limited funds available in any given year or period.

The CTIP conservatively estimates the revenues available City-wide and, applying various factors (e.g., relative land area, housing, employment), to Northgate over the next 20 years. Amounts range from $10 million to $29 million. Roughly ½ would go to near-term projects, ¼ to mid-term and ¼ to long-term. Total for all recommended improvements – $41 million. Adding the special freeway overpass project (F-1) would add an additional $7-$10 million, for a total of $48-$51 million.

Additional revenues will likely be needed to implement all recommended CTIP improvements. Several potential new revenue sources, currently authorized by state law, are recommended for consideration, including:

- Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID)
- Local Option Vehicle License Fee
- Local Option Fuel Tax
- Transportation Mitigation Payment Program
- Commercial parking Tax
- Property Tax Levy Lift
- Employment Tax
- Local Improvement Districts
- Increased General fund allocation
- Partnerships

The potential use and effectiveness of individual funding techniques will be discussed further as the CTIP is reviewed by agencies and the public.

3. Draft EIS Alternatives

No Action

SEPA requires that an EIS consider the alternative of not taking the proposed action. Taking no action would mean that the CTIP would not be adopted or used as the basis for planning, coordinating, financing and programming transportation improvements in Northgate to support long-term growth. SDOT would follow its usual procedures for identifying and proposing needed improvements, and projects would be implemented as funding becomes available. The City would continue to rely on project-by-project SEPA review and mitigation as a source of funding and implementing improvements. Coordinating the elements of the transportation system would generally be more difficult. There would be less certainty regarding the City's ability to support planned growth in Northgate. If needed improvements did not keep pace with growth, the transportation

system would deteriorate, could become a constraint to further growth, and could inhibit achieving the City's vision for Northgate.

Other Alternatives Considered

No specific alternative to the CTIP is required or considered in detail in the Draft EIS. The CTIP is an updated transportation facilities and implementation plan, and is guided by adopted land use policy and regulations, and City Council direction. This context limits the range of available alternatives. However, alternatives have been considered throughout the CTIP planning process, as the transportation system was evaluated, goals were articulated, and improvements were identified, tested and prioritized.

A range of possible alternatives are implicit within the Draft CTIP. They could involve varying the categories, different combinations of improvements for specified time periods, different objectives, or emphasizing improvements which might emphasize a particular CTIP goal (e.g., auto mobility). However, an alternative which emphasized one particular goal or mode would not be consistent with Northgate policies. A modified CTIP alternative could emerge from review of the Draft EIS and ongoing discussions of the Draft CTIP.