

The City of Seattle is proposing

Station Area Overlay District and Rezones for the Henderson Light Rail Station Area

The Overlay District and rezones are intended to help achieve the neighborhood's vision for a pedestrian-oriented connection to Rainier Beach

Background and Intent of Overlay District & Rezones

This pamphlet summarizes the intent and features of the Station Area Overlay District (SAOD) and rezones. These actions help to achieve the intent of the Rainier Beach 2014 Neighborhood Plan and Henderson Station Area Planning recommendations. The legislation is intended to accomplish a number of goals that are part of the neighborhood's long-term vision regardless of when light rail service starts.

Rainier Beach 2014 Neighborhood Plan Recommendations for the Station Area

The Rainier Beach 2014 Neighborhood Plan, adopted by City Council in 1998 (Resolution #29942), identifies the Henderson station area as a focal point for housing and economic development. Specific recommendations relating to changes in the Land Use Code include:

C1.3.3 Allow for higher-density development around the light rail station. Change the zoning around the station area to allow mixed-use development and higher-density housing.

Allow for higher-density development around light rail station allowing mixed-use and higher-density housing.

Allow Single-Purpose Residential (SPR) buildings in all Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zones within the urban village boundary.

Concept-Level Recommendations for the Henderson Station Area

The Concept-Level Station Area Planning Recommendations, adopted by City Council in September 2000 (Resolution #30165), include the following actions for changes to the Land Use Code:

- Establish a Station Area Overlay to prevent development for automobile-oriented uses.
- Ensure protection of existing single family residential areas while encouraging housing and retail development near the station.



New zoning will encourage pedestrian-friendly development near the future light rail station.

- Analyze proposed zoning changes to NC-40 near the station to ensure that they are appropriate and that the zoning will attract development that fulfills these objectives.

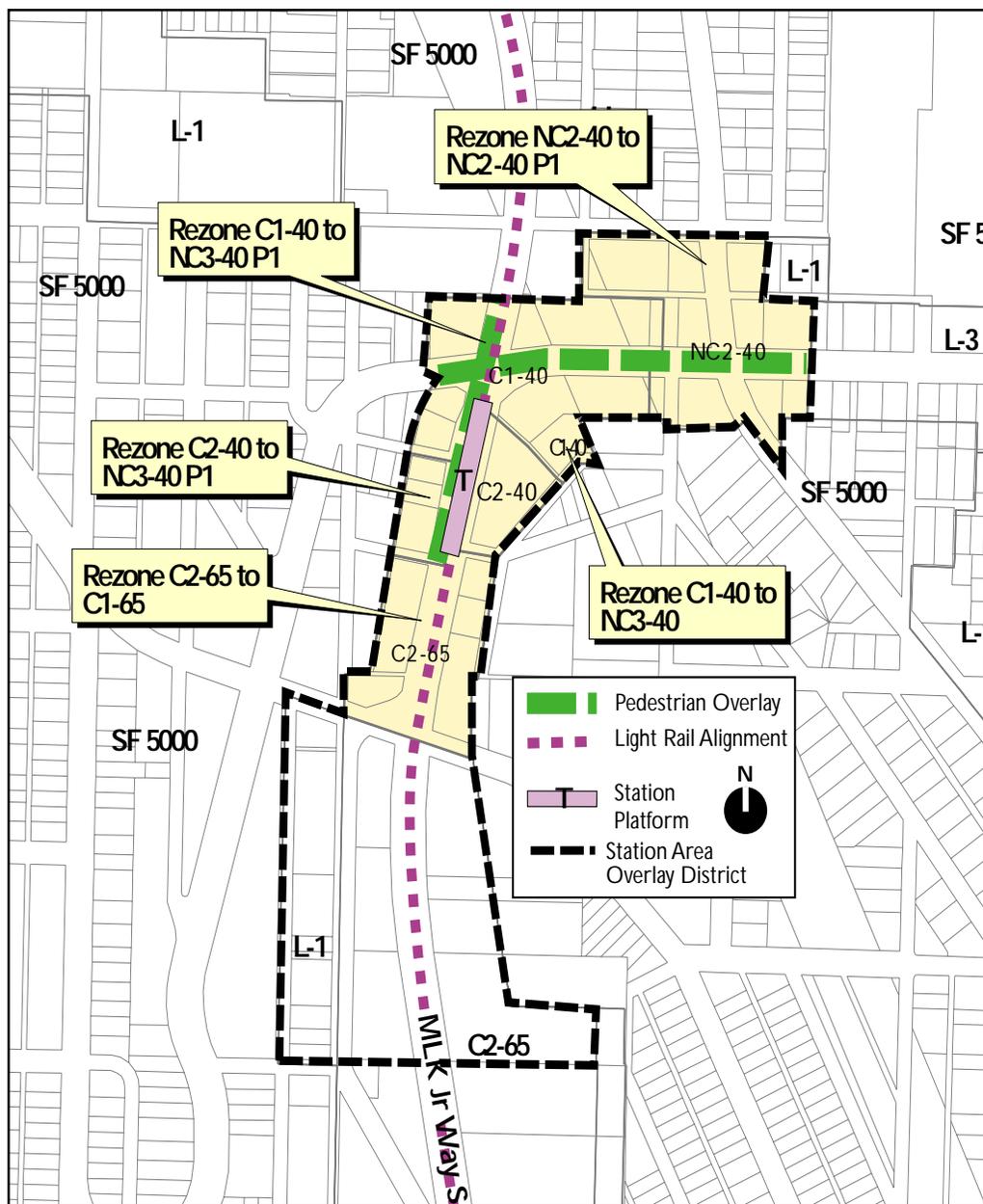
The elements of the Station Area Overlay District and rezones, when taken together, are intended to discourage auto-oriented development and increase opportunities for housing development near the future light rail station.

The City will not develop any property in the Henderson Station Area. This proposal is intended to set a zoning framework for property owners who may redevelop their property in ways that balance neighborhood desires with their own goals.

While market and site conditions will be major factors in determining the pace and extent of redevelopment in the neighborhood, this proposal is intended to help the neighborhood achieve its vision for a pedestrian-oriented connection to the Rainier Beach commercial district.



Rezone & Overlay District Boundaries



Existing Zones

General Commercial 2 (C2-40 and C2-65)

An auto-oriented, primarily non-retail commercial area, serving a citywide function with a wide range of commercial services and employment opportunities in small to large businesses, including offices, business support services, light manufacturing and warehouse uses; residential is permitted only as a conditional use.

Height Limit: 40 and 65 feet

General Commercial 1 (C1-40)

An auto-oriented, primarily retail-service commercial area, serving surrounding neighborhoods and larger community or citywide clientele with a wide range of commercial services, including retail, offices and business support services; residential use is also permitted.

Height Limit: 40 feet

Proposed Zones

Neighborhood Commercial (NC2-40 & NC3-40)

A pedestrian-oriented shopping district serving both surrounding neighborhood and larger community or citywide clientele with a wide range of retail businesses as well as offices and business support services. Residential use is also permitted. P-1 designation requires street-level retail use along street with that designation (a portion of Henderson & MLK, see map)

Height Limit: 40 feet

These are the kinds of buildings that these zones allow.



General Commercial 2
(existing zone)



General Commercial 1



Neighborhood Commercial



Rezone Recommendations

Action	Intent <small>(see page 1 for City Council's adopted Neighborhood Plan and Station Area Planning policy direction for these actions)</small>
Rezone properties along Martin Luther King, Jr. Way S currently zoned Commercial 1 and 2 (C2-40 and C1-40) to Neighborhood Commercial 3, keeping the existing 40' height limit (NC3-40).	The NC3-40 rezone would promote a mix of moderately sized, neighborhood serving commercial and housing development near the light rail station.
Rezone certain properties along Martin Luther King, Jr. Way S from Commercial 2, with a 65' height limit (C2-65) to Commercial 1, keeping the existing 65' height limit (C1-65).	The C1 would encourage single purpose commercial uses more appropriate to an area close to a light rail station, while transitioning too the more intensive, single-purpose commercial area to the south.
Add P1 designation to portions of Martin Luther King, Jr. Way S and S Henderson St.	The P1 would require pedestrian-oriented businesses at street level in the areas closest to the light rail station.

Overlay District Features

Supporting Existing Businesses

All existing legal businesses and uses would be allowed to remain and maintain existing structures and sites. For areas of the city where the real estate market may not support new development in the near future, the Station Area Overlay District will allow for a one-time expansion of certain existing businesses made “non-conforming” by the Overlay District. This is an effort to help maintain the viability of businesses that are already established in the SAOD until the market makes redevelopment a more attractive option.

Shared Parking Provisions

The Station Area Overlay District will allow buildings to provide off-site residential parking by leasing parking on nearby sites. This helps lower the cost of new housing by reducing the amount of on-site parking an individual building must construct and pooling off-site parking resources at in the area.

The Station Area Overlay District will allow parking for residential and nonresidential uses to be located on a lot in the SAOD and within comfortable walking distance of the lot to which it is accessory. Off-site parking will not be allowed outside of the SAOD and the number of required parking spaces will not be reduced.

Prohibited Uses

All existing legal businesses and uses are allowed to remain and maintain existing structures and sites. The following types of new development will be prohibited in the Station Area Overlay District:

Principal use long-term non-residential parking	General manufacturing	Warehouse	Vessel repair
Drive-in businesses	Sales, service & rental of commercial equipment & construction materials	Outdoor storage	Marine service station
Vehicle repair	Sale of heating fuel	Sales & rental of motorized vehicles	Salvage & recycling
Towing services	Mini-warehouse	Dry storage of boats	Spectator sports facilities
Car wash		Sales & rental of large boats	Wholesale showroom
Heavy commercial services			Work-release centers



Increasing flexibility for mixed-use development on commercially-zoned properties can help achieve the vision for a pedestrian-friendly link between the light rail station and Rainier Beach. Our proposal removes two obstacles from the Land Use Code for housing and mixed-use development.

Housing Development Flexibility In Commercial Zones: Allowing Single-Purpose Residential Use

As part of the Station Area Overlay District proposal, single-purpose residential structures would be permitted outright in certain locations. Single purpose residential (SPR) structures are apartment or condominium buildings in commercial zones. These buildings could include housing at the street-level, either permanently or until the market is ready to support more businesses. When the market can support more commercial development, the street-level use could be converted to commercial use.

This proposal provides flexibility and acknowledges market realities for developing either housing or businesses on the ground floors of buildings (on commercially zoned property on the edges of the neighborhood business district). This proposal would apply to all NC and C zones within the Henderson Station Area Overlay District, except for those with pedestrian designations (see rezone map on page 2).

More Housing Without Raising Height Limits: Removing 64% Upper Level Coverage Limits

There are some places in the city where multifamily buildings can use the entire lot area on all levels for residential units. The zoning in Cascade and Belltown neighborhoods allows these kinds of multifamily buildings. This is also the way many of the historic buildings in older Seattle neighborhoods, such as Queen Anne, Columbia City, Ballard, and Georgetown were built.

But in many other places, a coverage limit reduces the area that can be developed for housing on upper levels (64% of the size of the lot for residential buildings in a commercial zone—there is no limit for the size of upper levels for commercial buildings). By removing this "upper-level coverage limit" imposed on residential buildings in station areas, we can help encourage additional housing that is so vital to creating "town centers" and active areas envisioned by Neighborhood Plans, and do it in a way that is working in other parts of the city.

Existing requirements for building setbacks will still apply where residential buildings in commercial zones border residential zones. These required setbacks, along with lowrise building setbacks, promote transition between buildings in different zones. Architectural features such as bays, courtyards, and building details reduce the appearance of the bulk and scale of these buildings, and allow dwelling units access to light and air. These features address one of the main goals of the original 64% upper-level coverage limit.

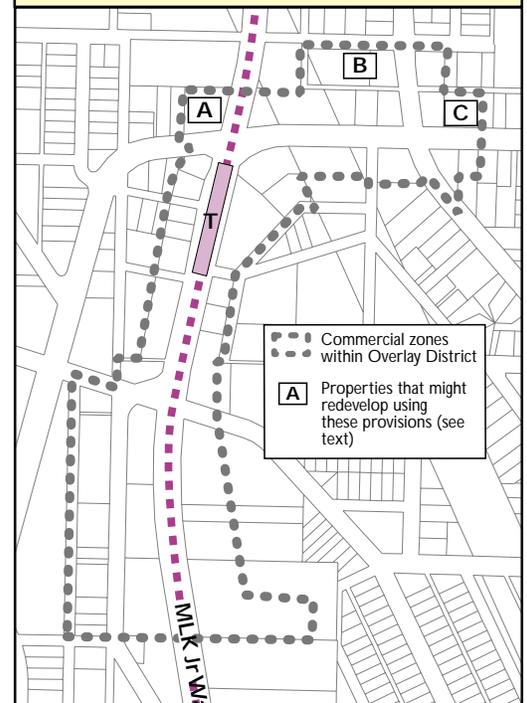
Also, the required Design Review Program, which was instituted after the upper-level coverage limits were put in place, provides an additional way to address and modify the bulk and scale of new buildings during the design and permitting process.



Example of upper story residential without 64% lot coverage (left) and transition from neighborhood commercial to residential zoning (right).

How could these provisions be used in the Henderson Station Area?

The map below shows properties that could make use of these provisions. For instance, the vacant site at the northwest corner of MLK Jr. Way and S Henderson St. (A), as well as sites currently used for parking and storage along Trenton and MLK (B and C) could eventually redevelop as all-residential buildings if the property owners decided that commercial use was not preferable. Also, if they redeveloped, they could provide more housing on upper stories if the 64% upper level coverage limit were removed.



For more information on the SAOD or rezone proposals for Henderson, contact Amy Glenn, Strategic Planning Office at (206) 615-0790, amym.glenn@ci.seattle.wa.us

