



# NORTHGATE COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS



City of Seattle



KING COUNTY



SOUNDTRANSIT



## Refining Our Choices

December 2000

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# Message from the Agencies

When the City of Seattle, King County and Sound Transit, launched this project in August of this year, we were looking at unprecedented opportunities to create an inviting and attractive urban center at Northgate, complete with transit public facilities and new mixed-use development. All the public agencies involved believed that a coordinated public process was important to discuss the possibilities with residents, businesses and others.

Northgate area citizens have invested a lot of themselves in seeing that opportunities to turn this community into a true urban center are not lost. Everyone saw this as a unique opportunity to combine our individual agency outreach and planning efforts so that together, with the community, we can create an urban center that is "better than the sum of its parts."

Through two workshops, we looked collectively at the public projects currently in planning in the Northgate core area, including the library, community center, potential new park, transit facilities and light rail station. We grappled with technical, policy and program information, and developed concepts that will guide siting and other public investment, and potentially influence private investment actions in the area.

We emerged with concept alternatives and are working towards a coordinated strategy that ensures these public investments enhance one another and create opportunities for open space, pedestrian and transit oriented development, and creation of a focal point for the community.

Much of the discussion focused on the Northgate Mall's south parking lot, which is in private ownership, and may be sold by the time you read this report. Through the workshops, it also became clear that other important opportunities exist in the public realm as well. These include improving 5th Avenue NE as a central pedestrian "spine," creating better pedestrian linkages throughout the area, creating neighborhood specific design guidelines to supplement the city-wide design program, planning for new neighborhood open space, addressing drainage and other important environmental issues, and completing the light rail station area plan.

The sponsoring agencies view these workshops as a beginning framework for moving forward with individual agency decisions. The public agencies are committed to continuing their work with each other, the community and the private interests to achieve the transformation of Northgate into a vibrant and lively urban center.



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# Context/Overview

This report synthesizes work that was accomplished during two Northgate workshops sponsored by the City of Seattle, King County and Sound Transit. The timing of the events reflects the opportunities for transforming Northgate into an Urban Center as envisioned in the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan, and created by recent commitments of public investments in the Northgate area.

## STUDY AREA

The study area for the workshops was the central commercial core of the Northgate Urban Center, east of Interstate 5 in the vicinity of the Northgate Mall. This area contains the candidate sites still under consideration for the new library and community center facilities, including:

- The “Bon Tire” property and adjacent property - located on the east side of 5th Avenue NE near NE 105th Street. These parcels are owned by Simon Properties.
- The South Lot - a 12 acre site between NE 100th & 103rd Streets (east of the Northgate Transit Center) and 1st & 5th Avenues NE, is currently owned by Simon Properties.

Other important properties are:

- The existing 5th Avenue NE Park and Ride facility. The Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan has designated a future park at the location of the 5th Avenue NE Park and Ride facility, but the Park and Ride capacity must be relocated first.
- The Northgate Transit Center - located at 1st Avenue NE between NE 100th and NE 103rd Streets. At this site, the Transit Center will be expanded, and the planned light rail station will be located within the Transit Center property or straddling NE 103rd Street and extending onto the main Mall property.

## WORKSHOP PROCESS

For several years, the City of Seattle, Sound Transit, King County, and several community groups have devoted significant time and energy on issues related to future private and public developments. Citizens have expressed concern about implementation of the policies in the 1993 Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan and about protection of the Thornton Creek watershed. More recently, possible locations for a new Library and Community Center have been discussed. Citizen lawsuits on Northgate Mall's General Development Permit (GDP) have also called into question aspects of the proposed major redevelopment of the Mall's South Lot. In May, 2000, the City of Seattle Planning Commission sponsored a charrette to examine alternatives for siting the Library and Community Center and to engage citizens in examining ways to create a “town center” in Northgate.

In the midst of all of these activities, community members, agency officials and staff have all struggled to understand how these significant, complex projects and associated issues can be addressed in a coordinated way. While it is not likely that one process can encompass all of these issues and initiatives, coordination among them is critical. During the summer of 2000, representatives from the City, King County and Sound Transit explored ways to coordinate their activities. These three jurisdictions committed to collaborate in a joint public process over a period of six months, focusing on better coordination of information and integrated consideration of future decisionmaking related to the light rail station, transit facility, new library and community center. Two workshops, “Understanding Northgate” and “Refining Our Choices” were proposed; the first to identify and discuss pertinent and technical information regarding the development of the public facilities under consideration, and the second to refine the possible site configurations.

The workshops continued citizen and public agency work begun in the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan and expanded in a Northgate Town Center Visioning Charette, Library siting meetings, and Sound Transit public meetings. The community proposal for daylighting Thornton Creek and development of a civic center on the South Lot were additional elements for consideration. The Northgate neighborhoods, while faced with exciting development opportunities, have many diverse opinions about what would provide the greatest community and city-wide benefit. The findings from these two workshops and previous public planning efforts will help inform decision-making on siting and other aspects of public investment in Northgate.

In October 2000, the "Understanding Northgate" workshop provided a forum where the public projects currently planned for the Northgate area could be collectively considered by community stakeholders, technical staff, and sponsoring agency representatives. Program information on the branch library, community center, transit facility and light rail station was presented along with information from four agency planning teams who had focused on urban center concepts, real estate and market analysis, environmental considerations, and transit and transportation issues. Participating community stakeholders also had an opportunity to present their perspective and issues for consideration. Following this presentation of base materials and information, workshop participants were divided into four groups to review and discuss the information presented by the agency planning teams. These discussions served as advice to all participants, who in the afternoon, were redistributed into six groups and charged with developing site planning concepts that met the program requirements of the public facilities as well as the urban center, real estate, environmental, and transit team goals/concepts.



A total of 17 concepts emerged from the "Understanding Northgate" workshop (these may be viewed on the Internet at [www.cityofseattle.net/planning](http://www.cityofseattle.net/planning)). These concepts were further developed and studied by a team of architects and urban designers to provide a framework for the "Refining Our Choices" workshop.

In the four weeks between "Understanding Northgate" and "Refining Our Choices", a design team comprised of architects and urban designers worked to synthesize the seventeen concepts into four more fully developed alternatives. In addition, Seattle Parks Departments' Proposition 1 and King County's Proposition 1 both passed in early November, funding a new park for the Northgate area and improvements to the Northgate Transit Center, respectively.

"Refining Our Choices" was a community-wide event held over two days in an open house format as well as a workshop format. Following the presentation of each of the four alternatives, participants were divided into seven small working groups to discuss the merits and drawbacks of the four alternatives. Each of the four alternatives developed has aspects of several of the seventeen concepts from "Understanding Northgate." "Refining Our Choices" was concluded by Councilmember Richard Conlin who committed to developing an action plan outlining next steps toward priority actions identified in the two workshops.



# Public Facilities Program Requirements

The following information outlines the program requirements and available funding for the future Library, Community Center, Transit Center and Light Rail station for use during the two Northgate Workshops. Developed by the City of Seattle for the Library and Community Center, King County for the Transit Center and Sound Transit for the Light Rail station, it provided the public attending open houses and participants in both workshops with an up-to-date view of current agency understanding about these important future projects.

At the second workshop, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) made a presentation in addition to the City of Seattle, King County, Sound Transit, and Seattle Public Library presentations. SPU expects to be part of the solution and currently has a draft plan for the Thornton Creek watershed. Several ideas have arisen to address detention and drainage issues. SPU has no pre-fixed solution, but will be able to offer technical advice and participate in partnerships with these agencies and other developments to undertake the challenges in the Thornton Creek watershed.



# NORTHGATE COMMUNITY CENTER

## SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION

### Goal

To build a 20,000 square foot full service community center in the Northgate area, including the acquisition of land if necessary, as stated in the 1999 Community Centers levy.

### Facts

#### BUDGET

\$8.206 million (incl. \$1.9 million for land acq.)

#### SITE SIZE

60,000 sq. ft. site needed for 20,000 sq. ft. community center with outdoor play area, landscaping and at grade parking. Although traditional community center program includes outdoor field space, outdoor fields not are part of Northgate Community Center program

#### TIMING

The Northgate Community Center is anticipated to be completed in 2004.

### Facts (cont.)

#### SITE SELECTION PROCESS

The Superintendent of the Department of Parks and Recreation will ultimately make a decision on the siting of the new Northgate Community Center. The decision will be made based on public input gained at community meetings including the October and December 2000 Northgate Public Facilities Siting Workshops. There may be further public process in 2001 before a siting decision is made by the Superintendent.

#### DESIGN

The community center will include a lobby, meeting rooms, a large multi-purpose room, a commercial kitchen, a gymnasium and other amenities. If a 2,000 sq. ft. outdoor play area is not included, the community center cannot be licensed for day care activities including some before and after school programming.



### Candidate Sites



**A: NORTH METRO PARK & RIDE LOT**



**B: 5TH NE & 106TH (COMMERCIAL BLDG)**



**C: 5TH NE & 105TH (BON TIRE SITE)**



**D: SOUTH LOT**

UNDERSTANDING NORTHGATE WORKSHOP

# NORTHGATE COMMUNITY CENTER

## SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION

### Working Assumptions

**SITING**

Parcel size dependent on site, potential for co-location with other facility

**DESIGN**

Multi-story community center difficult because of higher operational costs and because of potential programming limitations. (i.e. Could need more staff to run building, might not be able to use all rooms all the time because of limited staff.)

Existing budget does not allow for 20,000 square foot building AND structured parking

**CO-LOCATION**

**With Library** Co-location preferred in separate buildings, perhaps campus setting because of noise associated with community center. Similar peak hours so shared use of lobby, parking, meeting rooms not make operational sense.

**With Housing** Have experienced program limitations because of noise complaints at existing Ravenna-Eckstein Community Center which is co-located with senior housing.

**With Retail/Commercial/Other Agency Uses** Noise issue could be a problem. If community center developed within large high rise development, hours and operations of facility will not be dictated by retail, commercial, or other agency needs.

**COMMUNITY CENTERS OF SIMILAR SCALE**



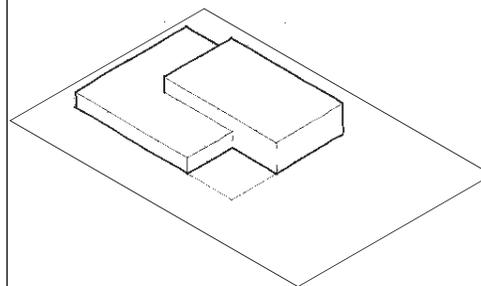
BITTER LAKE COMMUNITY CENTER



MEADOWBROOK COMMUNITY CENTER



MILLER COMMUNITY CENTER



Isometric: 20,000 sf community center with 2000 sf play area on 60,000 sf site  
Scale: 1 inch = 40 feet

UNDERSTANDING NORTHGATE WORKSHOP

# NORTHGATE BRANCH LIBRARY

## SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

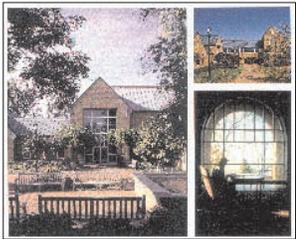
### Goal

To site, design and construct the new Northgate Library as detailed in the Seattle Public Library's Libraries For All capital plan.

#### LIBRARIES OF SIMILAR SCALE



ISSAQUAH LIBRARY (15,000 SF)



ST. MARY'S COLLEGE OF MARYLAND

### Facts

#### BUDGET

\$5,119,000 (includes \$1.3 million for land acquisition)

#### SITE SIZE

30,000 sq. ft. preferred (10,000 sq. ft. library and space for surface parking and expansion.)

#### TIMING

The library is scheduled to open in 2004.

#### DESIGN

The library should be laid out on one floor (due to functionality and operational cost issues).

#### SITE SELECTION PROCESS

The Seattle Public Library Board of Trustees makes all library siting decisions. Following these workshops, they will narrow the list of library sites currently under consideration (six, shown on aerial photo) and ultimately select a site for the new facility.



### Preferred Sites



5: 5TH NE & 106TH (COMMERCIAL BLDG)



6: 5TH NE & 105TH (BON TIRE SITE)



C: SOUTH LOT

UNDERSTANDING NORTHGATE WORKSHOP

# NORTHGATE BRANCH LIBRARY

## SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

### Working Assumptions

#### SITING

- The site for the library should be in an area frequently visited by all segments of the primary community being served, close to or on primary streets and transit routes, and highly visible.
- The siting of the library should be sited like a retail establishment with strong visibility and presence.
- The site must have strong pedestrian and vehicular connections to the neighborhood.

#### DESIGN

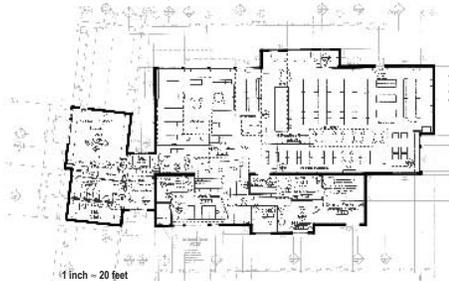
- The siting and the design of the reading room must be designed for future expansion.
- The library should have a strong civic presence.
- The entrance to the library should be at grade to provide easy access for patrons & deliveries.
- Entry to the Reading Room should be achieved with one entrance.
- The public spaces of the library should be designed with an open floor plan with a minimum of load bearing walls and columns to allow future flexibility.

#### CO-LOCATION

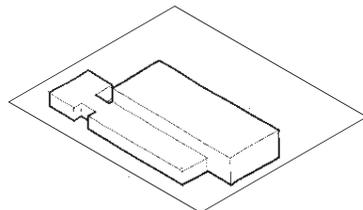
- Co-location with the community center is preferred in nearby but separate buildings with strong pedestrian and vehicular connections.
- The library and the community center have very similar peak hours so shared use of lobby, meeting rooms and parking may not be operationally possible.

### Sammamish Library

10,000 square-foot library on one level



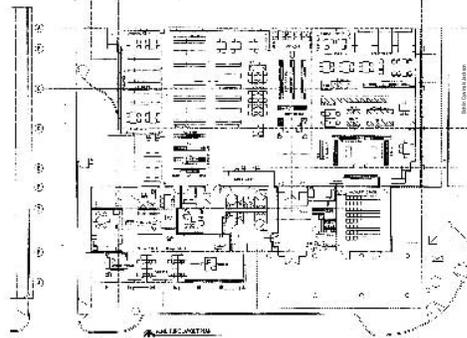
1 inch = 20 feet



Isometric showing 10,000 sf library on 30,000 sf site: 1 inch = 40 feet

### Issaquah Library

15,000 square-foot library on one level



1 inch = 20 feet

UNDERSTANDING NORTHGATE WORKSHOP

# METRO BUS TRANSIT CENTER

## KING COUNTY METRO

### Goals

1. Consolidate and add to park and ride capacity at the Northgate transit center
2. To maintain bus speed and reliability, consolidate and expand park & ride capacity, and jointly plan for new transit facilities with the City of Seattle and Sound Transit in the Northgate Urban Center

### Facts

#### TRANSIT CENTER

1. The Northgate transit center has 6 bus bays with 3 per side. The transit center also contains bus layover space. Bus service at the transit center is scheduled or "pulsed" to provide for convenient bus transfers with minimal wait times. Up to 12 buses can use the Northgate transit center at a time.
2. The Northgate area is served by 17 bus routes. Routes connect with downtown Seattle, the University District, Everett, the east side, Lynnwood, and other Seattle neighborhoods

3. During midweek peak hours, there are about 80 bus trips through the transit center. During midday weekday hours, there are about 50 bus trips through the center. During a typical weekday, there are about 840 bus trips through Northgate. On a typical weekday, 4,000 bus riders pass through the transit center.
4. Paratransit, or access vans, connect to regular bus service at the transit center.
5. There are approximately 60 bus zones located within the Northgate urban center. Six are located within the transit center; the rest are located on arterial streets or inside Northwest Hospital. On a typical weekday, there are more than 7,000 boardings and 7,000 alightings at these bus zones.

#### PARK & RIDE

There are currently three park & ride lots in the Northgate urban center with a total of 921 parking spaces. The lot adjacent to the transit center has 296 spaces, the lot across First Avenue NE from the transit center has 141 spaces (106 north and 35 south of NE 100th), and the lot north of NE Northgate Way on 5th Avenue

#### PARK & RIDE (CONT.)

NE (north of new Target store between 3rd and 5th Avenues NE north of NE 112th Street) has 484 spaces. All three lots are currently full on weekdays.

#### PARKING

The City of Seattle's Northgate 1993 Comprehensive Plan has several implementation guidelines concerning park & ride facilities:

1. The City will seek to acquire the Northgate Park & Ride from King County for a park. This lot is located north of the Touchstone Northgate North project between 3rd and 5th Avenues NE north of NE 112th Street. The 486 spaces that would be lost by creation of a public park would be replaced at the Northgate Transit Center [12.6, page 58].
2. Consolidate all park & ride at the transit center; up to 1,000 dedicated spaces are allowed within 800 feet of the Transit Center; and up to 800 shared spaces are allowed within 1,000 feet of the Transit Center [7.4, page 30 & 11.3, page 51].

### Working Assumptions

1. **Transit Center** Bus routing to the Northgate transit center will change by 2006 to link with light rail. Alternative bus routing is being analyzed by King County, and a preliminary proposal has been developed.
2. **Parking** The King County Executive's Park & Ride Expansion Program includes 500 new spaces at Northgate. This would be in addition to the 921 spaces currently located in the Northgate area.
3. **Parking** King County assumes up to 1,000 dedicated parking spaces for transit, and up to 1,400 spaces (per the expansion program noted above) with shared parking, consistent with the Northgate plan. There would not be less than the existing 921 spaces, nor more than 1,400 spaces.

# LINK LIGHT RAIL STATION

## SOUND TRANSIT

### Goals

Locate a light rail station in the vicinity of the existing Northgate Transit Center that will serve the Northgate urban center, North Seattle Community College, and surrounding residential neighborhoods. The adjacency to the Northgate Transit Center provides a convenient place to intercept a number of Metro buses that would otherwise continue to downtown Seattle or the University District.

### Facts

1. The Sound Transit Board determined that the construction of the Northgate segment has the highest priority for the use of new funds and has committed to actively seek to obtain such funds to permit construction of the segment from the Northgate Transit Center to NE 45th Street as provided in Sound Move.
2. The Sound Transit Board selected the east Northgate station route location on July 27, 2000. The station will be located between 1st Ave NE and existing transit facility, and north of NE 100th St and south of 1st Avenue entrance of Northgate Mall.

### Working Assumptions

1. Anticipated 12,600 people boarding trains at Northgate station by the year 2020. Approximately 60% to 70% of these people are expected to be transferring to/from buses
2. Tail tracks are required since Northgate will be the northern terminus of the system for some time, and extend approximately 400 feet north of station. These tail tracks are necessary for operations.
3. The guideway (elevated tracks) will cross 1st Ave NE from west to east south of NE 100th Street. The exact location will be determined after station location is finalized.
4. The guideway is supported by columns; typically at 90 foot spans.

### STATION PROGRAM

1. An elevated center platform (tracks located on the outside of the platform) 30 feet wide and 380 feet long
2. The height of the station will be between 25 feet and 40 feet above the adjacent parking lot. This will be determined after the station location is finalized.
3. Patrons will access the station platform (where train boarding occurs) by stairs, escalators, and elevator
3. Public restrooms will be provided on the ground level.
4. Some ancillary spaces (electrical, janitor, etc.) are required and will be located on the ground level
5. Bicycle facilities will be provided
6. A passenger-loading zone will be located near the station to allow passengers to be dropped off and picked up by others.
7. The station will be adjacent to or integrated with bus facilities (Transit Center)

UNDERSTANDING NORTHGATE WORKSHOP

# Design Alternatives & Community Response

## ARCHITECT'S PRESENTATION OF FOUR DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

The four alternatives should be viewed as four directions rather than specific plans. The architects reviewed all 17 design schemes from "Understanding Northgate," and from those developed four more refined alternatives that reflected a point of view about how the site(s) could be developed. The four alternatives represent clusters of ideas with elements that can be interchanged. They range from major portions of the site being developed as natural open space to a very dense urban center.

When the architects reviewed the original 17 design schemes, certain characteristics were common to all, including:

- Co-location of Library and Community Center
- Connections across I-5
- 5th Avenue NE as the most important pedestrian corridor
- Park in the existing North Park and Ride lot
- Northgate Way's pedestrian/aesthetic aspects should be addressed in some way

There were also other characteristics that most of the design schemes held in common:

- Thornton Creek restoration or improvement
- Some restoration of the street grid
- Transit-oriented development at the Transit Center
- Housing, particularly multifamily housing, is desirable
- Additional drainage improvements are desirable
- Addressing pedestrian accessibility across the South Lot

The architects tried to incorporate all the ideas in one form or another into the four new alternatives. Each alternative has a legend in the upper left hand corner that describes which team of the "Understanding Northgate" workshop is represented in the alternative.

One of the most difficult aspects is understanding the scale of the spaces. This is a very large study area and we are dealing with broad concepts, so visualizing a particular street or space may be difficult. For perspective, the narrow side of the South Lot is nearly the width of two football fields.

Below is a summary of each of the four alternatives, then a table comparing the elements in each, and lastly, the architect's drawings.

### Alternative A

This scheme represents very specific improvements to 5th Avenue NE which would connect a new park to the north of the Target store to the Library and Community Center on the Bon Tire site. The relocated Park and Ride would be developed at the Transit Center. The South Lot would be left undeveloped at this time, but would be developed in the future by private investment.

### Alternative B

This scheme provides the least dense development by daylighting the creek and creating a large green belt through the South Lot. The Light Rail station and Transit Center are combined with parking, along with an office and retail development on the lid of the parking facility. The edge of this structure would have a pedestrian colonnade sweeping across the site connecting the Library and Community Center with the transit facilities and screening the parking from the open space. In this scheme, the Park to the north would not be developed at this time and the funds used for the large open space and green belt on the South Lot.

### Alternative C

This incorporates the notion of the "Urban Center." Third Avenue NE is extended through the South Lot and divides the site with the westerly half being very dense and the easterly half including a wetland. The Community Center and Library share an urban open space with a retail and residential building, which looks over the green space. A pedestrian path connects this space to the Library and continues onto 5th Avenue NE. There are also connections to the office/residential and parking facility located over the Transit Center to the west.

### Alternative D

This scheme extends the street grid and breaks the South Lot into blocks that are approximately the same size as those in downtown Seattle. Third Avenue NE is extended through the South Lot. A large green boulevard that provides water filtration and open space for the site divides the blocks to the east. The blocks to the west are composed of office, retail and residential on two raised plazas over the Park and Ride and Transit Center. The Community Center is located on 5th Avenue NE and NE 103rd Street, while the Library is located on the Bon Tire site.

## Concepts from Understanding Northgate Workshop

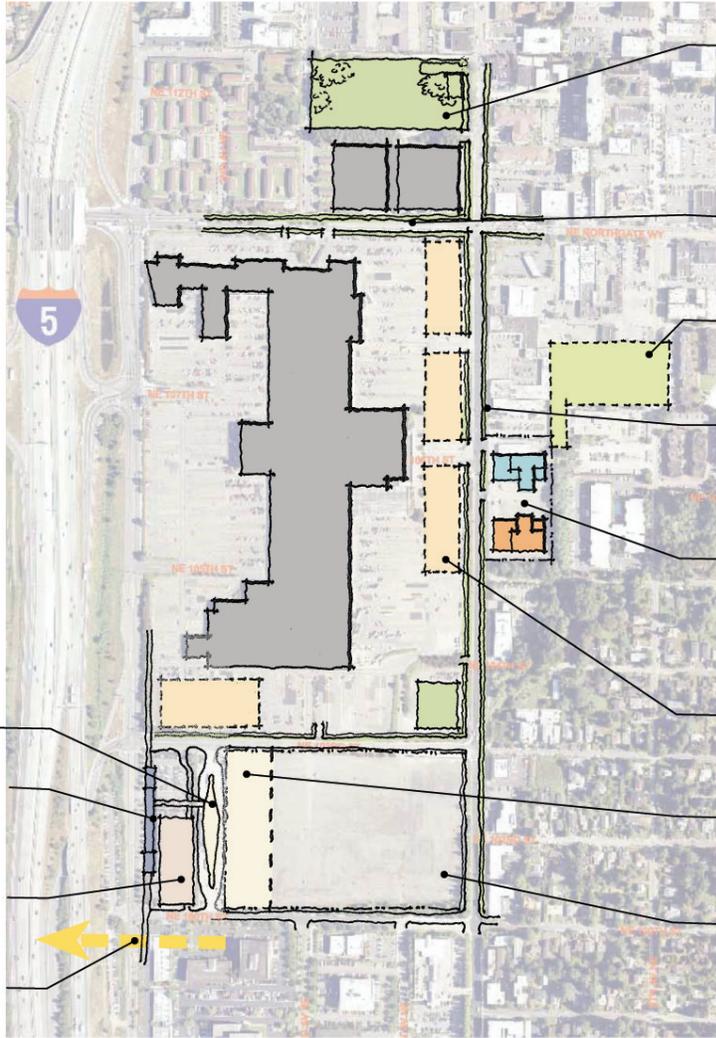
		<b>Alternatives</b>			
		<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>Thornton Creek &amp; Drainage</b>					
	full daylight		✓		
	partial daylight			✓	
	water quality improvements				✓
	no action	✓			
<b>Library &amp; Community Center</b>					
	co-located on Bon Tire	✓			
	co-located on South Lot		✓	✓	
	separate locations				✓
<b>Transit Center</b>					
	as is	✓	✓		
	rotated			✓	✓
<b>Transit Oriented Development</b>					
	at transit center/P&R		✓	✓	✓
	on South Lot		✓	✓	✓
<b>Light Rail Station</b>					
	between 100th & 103rd	✓			
	straddling 103rd		✓	✓	✓
<b>Park-and-Ride Structure</b>					
	at Transit Center	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Pedestrian Connections</b>					
	Interstate-5	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1st Ave (along light rail station)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3rd Ave (through South Lot)			✓	✓
	5th Ave (110th to 115th)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Northgate Way (I-5 to 5th)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	103rd St (1st to 5th)		✓	✓	✓
	100th St (1st to 5th)		✓	✓	✓

# A

# Alternative A

RED TEAM	1	2	3
ORANGE TEAM	1	2	3
YELLOW TEAM	1	1a	2
GREEN TEAM	1	2	
DARK BLUE TEAM	1		
LIGHT BLUE TEAM	1	2	3

■ = Related to Indicated Scheme  
1 = No Relationship to Indicated Scheme



**Existing Transit Station**

**Light Rail Transit station**  
adjacent to the Transit Park & Ride

**Park & Ride** structured with direct connections to LRT and Transit Station.

**Neighborhood Access** across I-5

**North Park & Ride Lot**  
Park developed per the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan. Replacement parking provided in garage near transit center

**Northgate Way Pedestrian Improvements** provided within the street right-of-way.

Potential development of **playfields** with connection to Community Center.

**5th Avenue NE Pedestrian Improvements** tie park, civic center and future south lot development together.

**Bon Tire Center and Bank Sites** Co-location of Library and Community Center with pedestrian connection to the mall.

Dashed lines indicate **potential development**.

**Park & Ride stalls** replacing those lost in conversion of North Park & Ride Lot

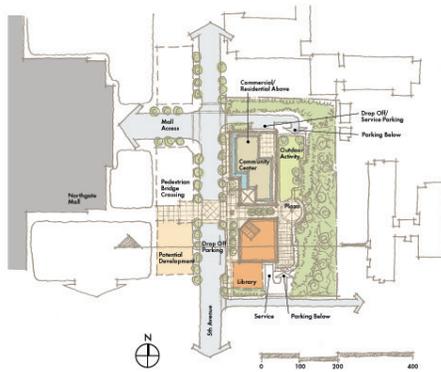
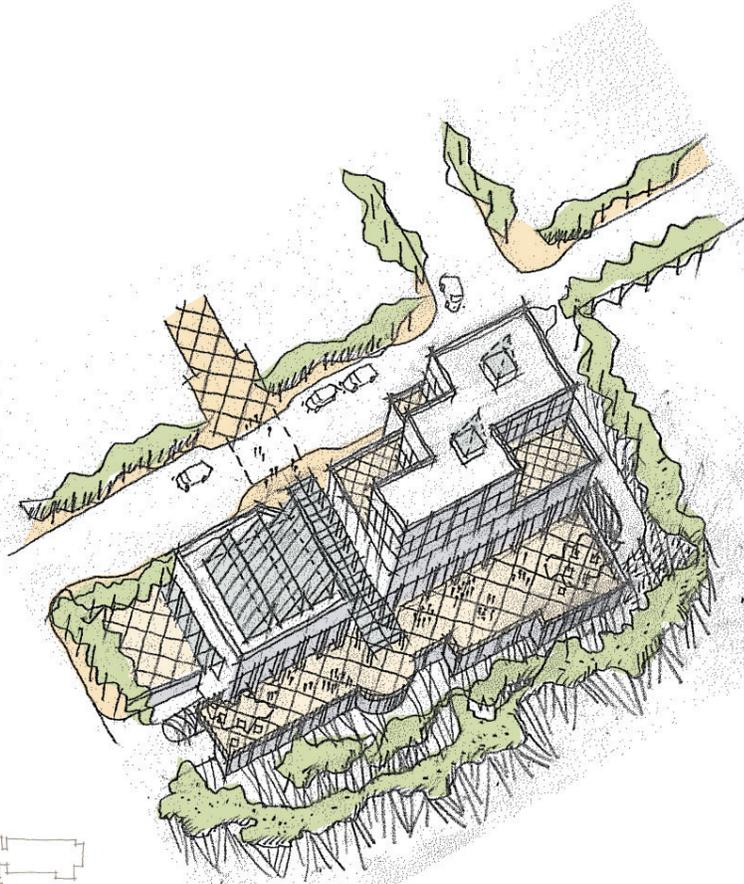
**South Lot** left unchanged for future development



NORTHGATE PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
DECEMBER 1 & 2, 2000

# A

# Alternative A



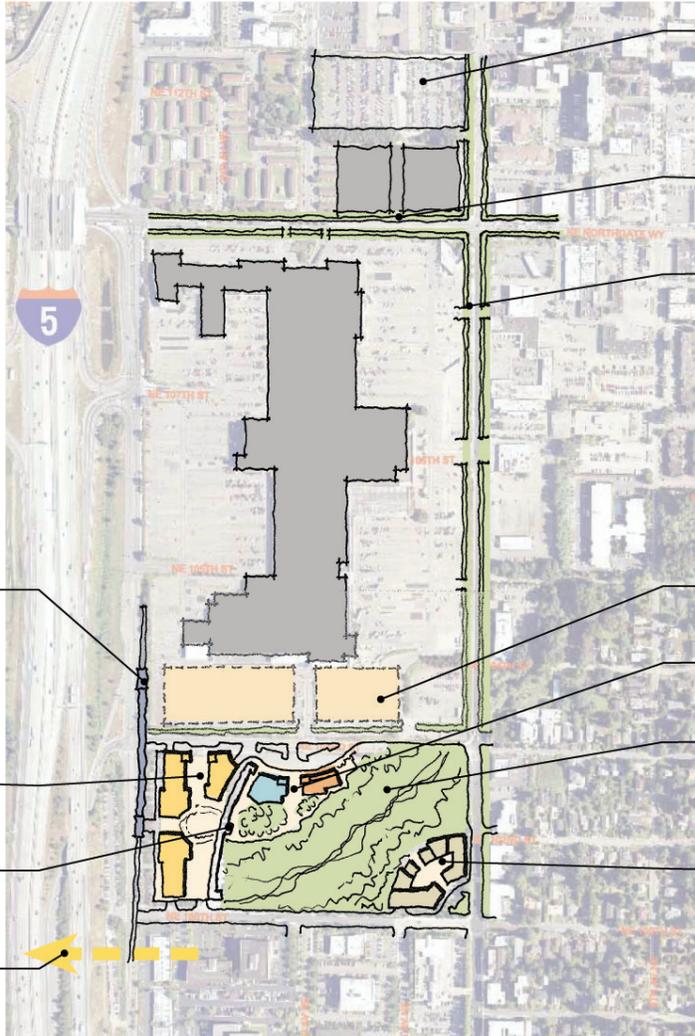
NORTHGATE PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
DECEMBER 1 & 2, 2000

# B

# Alternative B

RED TEAM	1	2	3	
ORANGE TEAM	1	2	3	4
YELLOW TEAM	1	1a	2	3
GREEN TEAM	1	2		
DARK BLUE TEAM	1			
LIGHT BLUE TEAM	1	2	3	

■ Related to Indicated Scheme  
1 No Relationship to Indicated Scheme



**Light Rail Transit Station** straddles 103rd Street with a station entry connected to the Transit Center and development. North entry provides potential connection to Northgate Mall.

**Office/Retail** constructed over 4 levels of transit parking

**Lid over Transit Center** forms pedestrian edge and overlook to Thornton Creek

**Neighborhood Access** across I-5

**North Park & Ride Lot**  
Park & Ride lot remains. Park funding is used to develop Thornton Creek on the South Lot.

**Northgate Way Pedestrian Improvements** provided within the street right-of-way.

**5th Avenue NE Pedestrian Improvements** provided within the street right-of-way

Dashed lines indicate **potential development**.

Co-location of **Library and Community Center**

**Thornton Creek** is fully daylighted and developed as a free flowing creek habitat/wetland

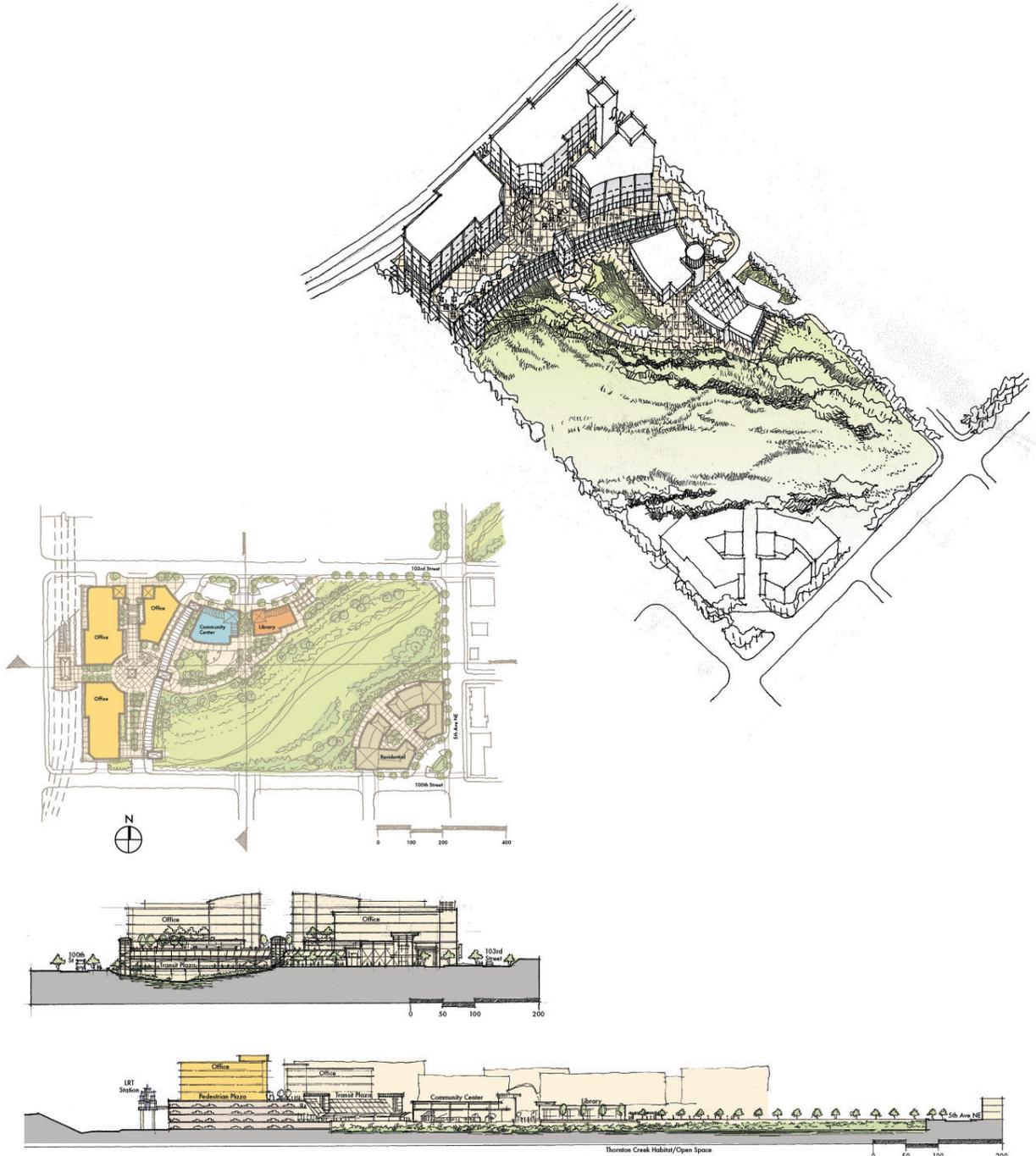
**Residential housing** with parking below



NORTHGATE PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
DECEMBER 1 & 2, 2000

# B

## Alternative B



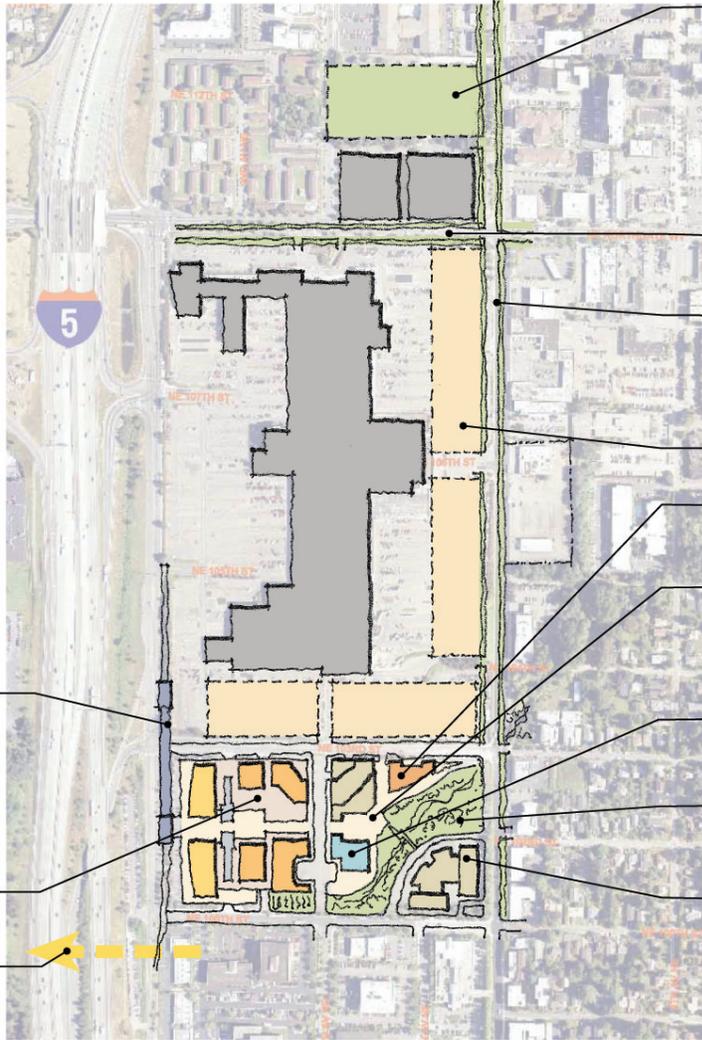
NORTHGATE PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
DECEMBER 1 & 2, 2000

# C

# Alternative C

RED TEAM	1	2	3
ORANGE TEAM	1	2	3
YELLOW TEAM	1	1a	2
GREEN TEAM	1	2	
DARK BLUE TEAM	1		
LIGHT BLUE TEAM	1	2	3

2 = Related to Indicated Scheme  
1 = No Relationship to Indicated Scheme



**Light Rail Transit Station** straddles 103rd Street with a station entry connected to the Transit Center and development. North entry provides potential connection to Northgate Mall.

**Office/Retail** constructed over 4 levels of transit parking

**Neighborhood Access** across I-5

**North Park & Ride Lot** Park developed per the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan. Replacement parking provided in garage near transit center. Options may include sale of this parcel to help fund the wetland habitat at the South Lot.

**Northgate Way Pedestrian Improvements** provided within the street right-of-way.

**5th Avenue NE Pedestrian Improvements** include coordinated public and private development to create strong streetscape

Dashed lines indicate **potential development**.

**Library** located along 103rd Street with direct access to natural habitat

**Town Center** Community Center, Library, and retail form a neighborhood center directly connected to the wetland

**Community Center** located adjacent to Town Center with vehicle access along 3rd Ave

**Thornton Creek** developed as a wetland habitat and open space

**Residential housing** with parking below



NORTHGATE PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
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# C

## Alternative C



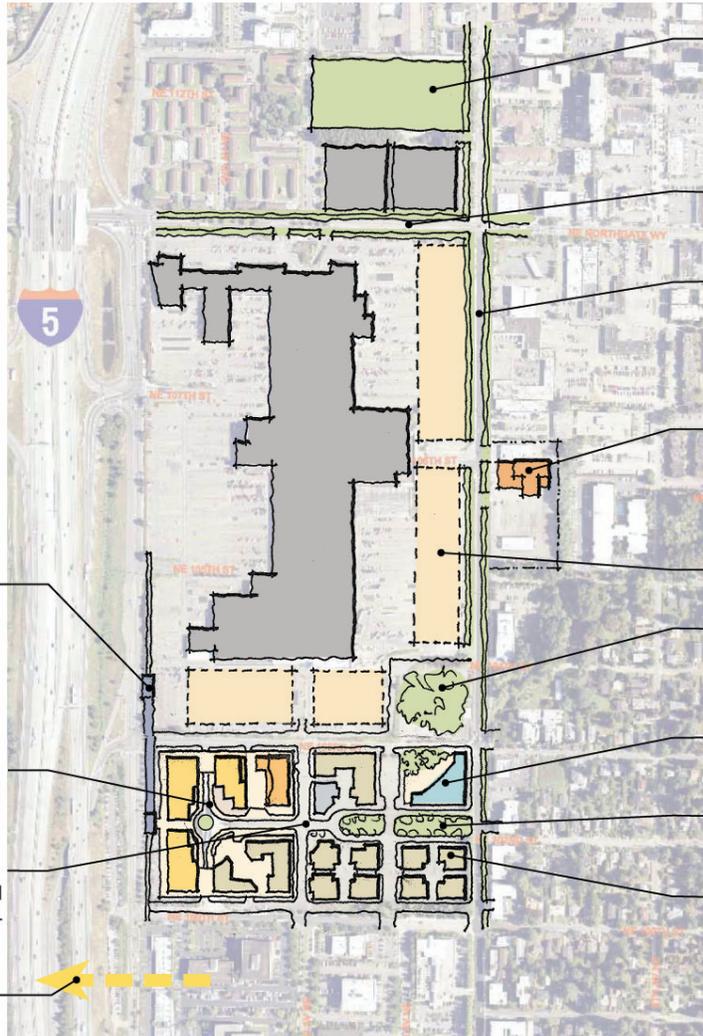
NORTHGATE PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
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# D

## Alternative D

RED TEAM	1	2	3	
ORANGE TEAM	1	2	3	4
YELLOW TEAM	1	2	3	
GREEN TEAM	1	2		
DARK BLUE TEAM	1			
LIGHT BLUE TEAM	1	2	3	

2 = Related to Indicated Scheme  
1 = No Relationship to Indicated Scheme



**Light Rail Transit Station** straddles 103rd Street with a station entry connected to the Transit Center and development. North entry provides potential connection to Northgate Mall.

**Office/Retail, Residential and Hotel** constructed over 3 levels of transit parking

**Town Center** Residential buildings and green boulevard intersect to form neighborhood-scaled Town Center

**Neighborhood Access** across I-5

**North Park & Ride Lot** Park developed per the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan. Replacement parking provided in garage near transit center.

**Northgate Way Pedestrian Improvements** provided within the street right-of-way.

**5th Avenue NE Pedestrian Improvements** include coordinated public and private development to create strong streetscape

**Library** located on the Bon Tire and Bank sites to support pedestrian street improvements and create neighborhood civic center

Dashed lines indicate **potential development**.

Southeast corner of Mall becomes focus for neighborhood, as **local market or open space**

**Community Center** located adjacent to residential housing

**Boulevard** is visible portion of basin-wide water filtration and retention system

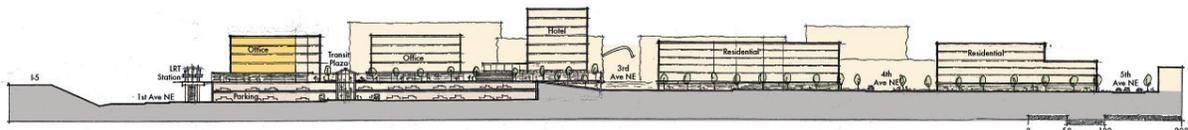
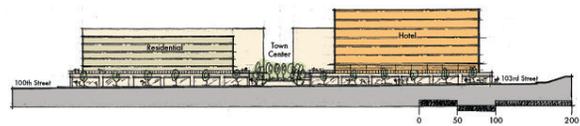
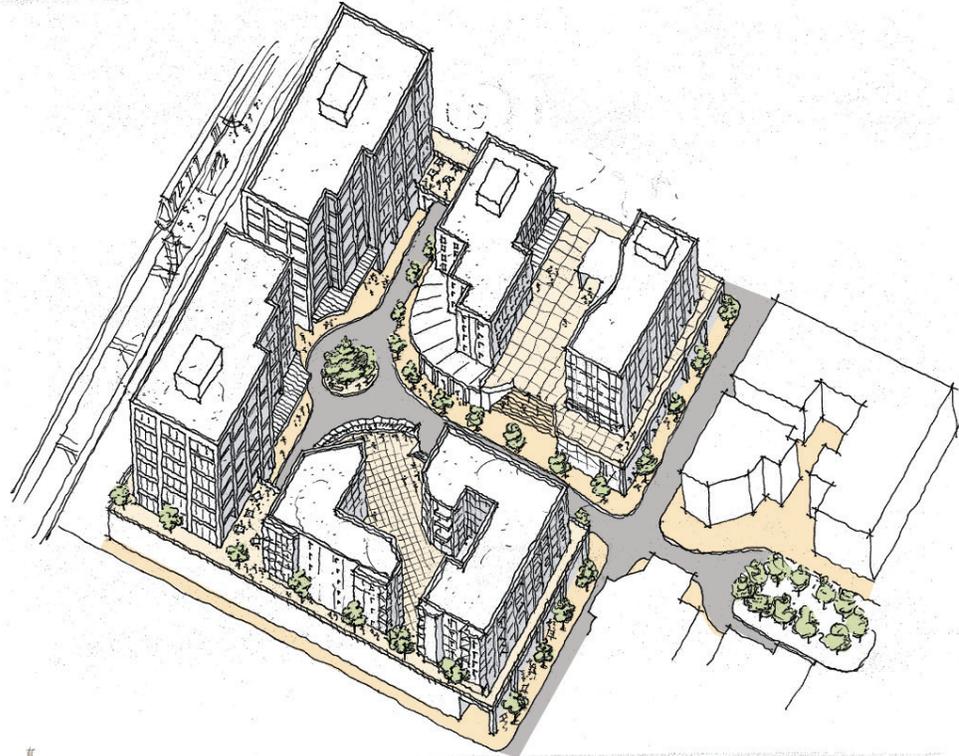
**Residential housing** blocks with parking below



NORTHGATE PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
DECEMBER 1 & 2, 2000

# D

## Alternative D



NORTHGATE PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
DECEMBER 1 & 2, 2000

# ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Following the architect's presentation of alternatives, a panel responded to the design schemes to spur audience discussion. The panel was comprised of Puget Sound Regional Council staff King Cushman, community member and Thornton Creek Alliance member Cheryl Klinker, Seattle Planning Commissioner and real estate developer Val Thomas, Maple Leaf Community Council member Jim Zweigle, and moderated by City Design Director John Rahaim.

## **Jim Zweigle, citizen representative**

Mr. Zweigle's remarks covered the following themes:

He endorsed the theme of "transformation" contained in the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan, hoping for a better urban setting that is dense but offers character and amenity values. A shorthand descriptor of that goal is the term "urban village," with the qualities associated with other attractive neighborhood centers in Seattle. Regarding pedestrian connections, Mr. Zweigle commented, "It's really the quality of the walking experience that matters."

He believes the existence of the creek as part of this denser urban environment is essential, as an open space, recreational and character amenity. He endorsed the ideas and design concepts presented by the Thornton Creek Legal Defense Fund. He believes that daylighting the creek is an amenity that will increase overall property values.

Regarding transit-oriented development, Mr. Zweigle believes the things that contribute to making transit work [e.g., transit-oriented development and density] also will contribute to neighborhood/community placemaking benefits.

He expressed the thought that co-locating the Library and Community Center on the Bon Tire site may not be the best way to help establish an attractive pedestrian setting for the larger area and encourage better types of real estate development. He believes separating the facilities by roughly one block would help create multiple nodes of activity that may be more beneficial to the urban center.

Mr. Zweigle favors setting up a cooperative arrangement with agencies, in the form of working groups, for ongoing coordination of this effort. These groups could address issues such as open space, zoning/land use, etc.

## **King Cushman, Puget Sound Regional Council**

Mr. Cushman described the regional strategy that integrates transportation planning and growth management planning, noting Northgate is one of 21 urban centers in the region. Urban centers are intended to be a focus of long-term investments to help reduce automobile dependence, including investments in pedestrian and bicycle improvements. Over \$80 million has been spent in the region over the past 8 years, for these sorts of improvements.

He encouraged everyone to not think "too small" with regard to plans or the potential for bringing in investments. He encouraged that public investments be done in a comprehensive manner, to act as catalyst for better types of development, and for long-term benefits.

Mr. Cushman endorsed several ideas that are part of the design alternatives, including:

- Improvements to deal with connections across I-5 in the Light Rail station vicinity
- Light Rail station platform spanning NE 103rd Street
- All types of pedestrian mobility improvements
- Relocating parking capacity from the Park and Ride at 5th Avenue NE to the Northgate Transit Center
- Pedestrian improvements to 5th Avenue NE
- Development promoting establishment of a "Town Center"

## **Val Thomas, Planning Commission and developer**

Mr. Thomas expressed the importance of placemaking, and endorses growth management. He noted that in order to be a "vital" place, people need a reason to be there. He sees opportunities for improvement in Northgate, noting the value of "New Urbanism" concepts. He advocated for housing development and creating "rich" sidewalks as keys to success.

He pointed out that open space is an important component of placemaking. Mr. Thomas believes it will be important to determine if the objective for open space is to have intensively usable, recreational open space, or a more natural, passive space.

Mr. Thomas noted the importance of how improvements would be paid for. Any funding arrangements will need to make sense to the City's population at large. Regarding development costs, he noted that they will have to make overall financial sense, including land and construction costs. In other words, costs will need to be balanced in a way that make potential improvements and development feasible.

## **Cheryl Klinker, citizen representative**

Ms. Klinker discussed several Thornton Creek watershed issues, as well as existing problems and prospective funding opportunities for flooding, habitat, water quality, and daylighting improvements.

She noted that there are significant downstream flooding problems, high flow rates, debris, washout of streambank stabilization projects, and pollution threatening public health. These are problems that need addressing, with improvements that include addressing upstream issues in Northgate.

Ms. Klinker noted that a daylighted drainage would provide an aesthetic amenity for the neighborhood that is well-deserved. It would also help improve habitat for coho and cutthroat. She believes that we should also look at ways to provide better detention and provide year-round flows in the creek for fisheries/habitat benefits.

She believes Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) should be a funding partner in a daylighting project, because the improvements would provide drainage improvements, open space, and reduced habitat impacts. However, Ms. Klinker is skeptical that SPU will see the need or the value in improving the drainage utility systems in the Northgate area. Given the level of SPU funding for other projects, she believes there is available funding for daylighting improvements.

Regarding overall area planning, Ms. Klinker noted that what we end up with has to be something we're happy to live with and live in. Also, she noted the best development projects are those that make compromises and accommodate the objectives of everyone. She indicated we should continue working for a public/private solution and recognize that there is no single way to achieve common objectives.



## Public Comments/Questions for Panel

Public comments and questions addressed several relevant topics, including:

- The need and the opportunity to provide more affordable housing in this area
- A belief that the cost estimates of daylighting provided so far are too high
- The importance of improving the pedestrian environment, and getting more open space to offset the density and intensity of development
- The relative lack of funding in City budgets for pedestrian improvements
- Whether the Library and Community Center should or should not be located near the Transit Center
- The need to “think big” in our plans and pursue other funding sources and potential partnerships
- The need to move on to implementing improvements, and determining a timeline for next steps
- The opportunity to develop something that is well-planned and beneficial to the community rather than piecemeal development with no publicly usable features [an example cited is the San Antonio riverwalk development]

# SMALL GROUP SUMMARY AND REPORT OUT

On Saturday, December 2nd, workshop participants divided into seven small groups for a facilitated discussion about the alternatives. Each group had approximately seven to ten interested citizens, with a facilitator to lead the discussion and a scribe to document comments. The purpose of the discussion was to gather comments on the perceived strengths and weaknesses of each alternative, other comments and overall key points each group wished to emphasize. Following the small group session, each group reported out their key points to the entire audience.

## Public Facility Siting

Opinions in most of the groups were mixed about the concept of co-location, and the best location for siting the facilities. Co-location was seen as favorable by most of the small groups. However, some individuals expressed the value of separating the facilities by approximately one block to create multiple nodes of public activity. The Bon Tire site on the east side of 5th Avenue NE was assumed by many to be an acceptable "default" site for either or both of the facilities, and would be seen as even more favorable if athletic fields could be located nearby (perhaps to the northeast). However, several other opinions expressed support for different siting locations, as in Alternatives B and C. Some agreed with the idea of securing the Bon Tire site in the short-term, and then selling it if other sites were ultimately favored for these public facilities.

## Important Design Elements

Some of the design elements most favored by the small groups:

- Provision of a park at the north Park and Ride
- Pedestrian-oriented improvements along 5th Avenue NE to improve its aesthetic character and provide a "spine" for pedestrian movement
- Provision of a crossing of Interstate 5 near NE 103rd Street, as a pedestrian access feature and/or a larger scale feature that would help bridge the physical barrier of the freeway
- Provision of open space for recreational, environmental and urban amenity purposes
- Daylighting or re-creating a creek in the South Lot, as well as greater consideration given to the environment in future development
- The location of the Light Rail station platform extending over NE 103rd Street, to extend the pedestrian accessibility northward into the Mall's main property

## Common Themes in Comments About Alternatives

**Alternative A** was most frequently characterized as a "timid" or "default" alternative that will happen if no special actions are taken by public agencies. The comments reflected an assumption that one or both of the public facilities would be sited at the Bon Tire site, and a generally negative opinion about leaving uses undetermined for the eastern portion of the South Lot. If the public facilities were on 5th Avenue NE, they would contribute to the pedestrian environment.

**Alternative B** was favored by many as the best accommodation of creek daylighting, and for its urban design features on the west side of the site. However, some indicated that the open space shown was larger than necessary, and could have public safety issues if it is a large unlit open area next to a transit center.

**Alternative C** received several positive comments about its arrangement of public and private uses and open space features, and its overall encouragement of a "Town Center" setting. There was some confusion among the participants as to whether the open space was meant to be a daylighted creek or a wetland/bog feature. Some believed there was not enough space shown to accommodate a creek, and some felt that development densities were too high.

**Alternative D** was frequently cited as having too much development, both in terms of density and distribution across the South Lot. The environmental features were frequently perceived as not enough to satisfy environmental or recreational objectives. Some commenters made positive comments about the density and pedestrian amenities in Alternative D. However, others objected to the lack of a larger environmental/open space feature (such as a daylighted creek).

The following summarizes the reporting of the key points by each small group. The Appendix includes a complete record of the small groups' discussions, based on notes taken by the scribe in each group.

## GOLD TEAM

### **Urban Center goals**

- Recommends not fully building out the South Lot with a high-density pattern. Some open space should be retained. Pedestrian and open space amenities should be distributed through the site to break up the lot for development.
- We should not put all of our eggs in one basket (the South Lot), meaning the overall benefits of improvements should be spread throughout the area and not concentrated solely on the South Lot.

### **Open Space goals**

- Daylighting the creek would be a permanent, lasting feature that should be incorporated as a basic organizing principle in site design. Determine creek and open space first, then the rest of the development around it.
- It would be acceptable to have a development with less open space than is shown in Alternative B.
- "Water" should be incorporated as a theme and principle for design, for the sake of environmental benefits and public awareness/appreciation.
- Make more than one of the promised/possible open space improvements happen: north Park and Ride as a park, the creek open space, and athletic fields in the 8th Avenue NE vicinity (in proximity to the Bon Tire site).

### **Community Facilities goals**

- The group had evenly-split opinions about co-location versus separated sites for the Library and Community Center. Proponents of co-location generally favored the vitality it could bring to a town center on the South Lot. Proponents of separated sites generally favored creating multiple activity nodes of public facilities.
- Some felt the Bon Tire site could be acceptable for the Community Center, especially with athletic fields nearby (such as at 8th Avenue vacant lots).

### **Financial/Implementation goals**

- We should sharpen our pencils and refine the financial estimates to determine what it will take to do this. We should focus on innovative strategies.
- We should try to take big steps now to make good progress, rather than counting on benefits over time.

## ORANGE TEAM

- Community Center with adjacent outdoor fields favored
- North Park and Ride as a park
- Library could be combined with a mixed-use facility
- Balance should be sought between the density of built and open space areas
- Daylighting is essential, as is detention for new development and Mall property
- Endorse the Town Center concept, with denser transit-oriented development on the west side of the site, and more open character on the east side
- Perhaps the natural amenity could be connected ponds or something similar
- Should assure housing/other uses be provided in proximity to natural amenity on both sides, for public safety purposes and to take advantage of the increased value that such an amenity would bring

## RED TEAM

- Should look at the Urban Center as a whole in planning next steps
- Should make the improvements user-friendly for families and the public
- The team had more affinities for Alternatives B and C. Key concepts favored include the points below
- Need to continue the dialogue with property owners (Simon and others) to maximize positive achievements
- Need to reserve as much open space as possible to balance development
- Recognize the relevance of the short-term and long-term
- Transit should fit into the community's needs rather than vice-versa
- It is not necessary to have every element of an urban center on the South Lot, so the development does not need to be overcrowded for this purpose
- Emphasize the natural environmental benefits of a daylighted creek
- The amenities should be distributed throughout the area
- Alternatives B and C demonstrate a pretty good balance of Town Center and co-location concepts
- It would be OK for the library and community center to be on separate sites, especially if that would help strengthen the improvement and value of 5th Avenue as a pedestrian environment



## GREEN TEAM

- A major player has so far been missing: Simon Properties
- Open space is important, including north Park and Ride as park, creek, and athletic fields associated with Community Center
- Pedestrian connections/improvements on 5th Avenue are important. Need to be clear on how to get from one facility to another
- They are concerned about the Library and Community Center getting caught up in the complexities of the larger effort to develop the South Lot, and are concerned about the implications of the creek [e.g., critical areas and litigation]

## YELLOW TEAM

- Connection across I-5 is important
- Endorse the location of the Light Rail platform across NE 103rd Street
- Prefer to have accessibility to the open space. They understand that Alternative B was proposed as a limited-access natural open space, and disagree with that concept
- The open space shown in Alternative B is larger than is needed. More area for development would be OK
- Creek daylighting should be extended to the west end of the site (to 1st Avenue NE) if possible
- Co-location is a great idea, but did not decide where the best site for these facilities would be. The selected site should take advantage of green space facing those areas for recreational and educational purposes

## DARK BLUE TEAM

- Include north Park and Ride in all plans
- Since most of the design schemes at the first workshop showed daylighting, there should be more than one scenario at this workshop with daylighting
- Should have a green space corridor all the way to 1st Avenue NE (across whole site)
- Endorse the consolidation of Park and Ride facilities

### **Alternative A**

Considered to be the default scenario and the most timid option. The Library and Community Center on the Bon Tire site is more feasible right now. However, no housing, no daylighting and no park at north Park and Ride are weaknesses.

### **Alternative B**

Like the daylighting and should extend it to 1st Avenue. Like the housing, some should be affordable. Co-location of Library and Community Center on South Lot is feasible. Endorse Light Rail platform straddling NE 103rd Street. Notes the low emphasis on improvements to 5th Avenue, and no north park as weaknesses. They like the arcing pedestrian axis idea, and would like to see that continue through the Mall property too.

### **Alternative C**

They were confused about whether the open space was a wetland/bog or creek. They recommend going with the daylighted creek. They note that the smaller area of this open space/creek is more in scale with the downstream Thornton Creek segment. The smaller area of open space would allow more area for housing and other developed uses. They had mixed opinions about whether 3rd Avenue should be allowed as vehicle access through the site.

They endorse the idea of development on a lid over I-5.

## LIGHT BLUE TEAM

Their comment format is "Points of Agreement."

- Endorse the co-location of Library and Community Center
- Playfields are needed as an amenity, even if provided in future
- Underground parking is a good concept
- Smaller building footprints are a good design concept, to avoid massiveness in development pattern
- Endorse the need for access across I-5
- Park needed at north Park and Ride
- Pedestrian improvements should be provided "everywhere" throughout the area
- They were close to a consensus on daylighting the creek. There were differences on exactly how to do it
- We need to take advantage of known funds (i.e., for Library, Community Center and park), and not hold the Library and Community Center "hostage" [to potential difficulties in realizing South Lot development]
- We should take advantage of short-term opportunities but keep a perspective to the long-term as well
- Endorse the Light Rail platform straddling NE 103rd Street
- Stacking of uses vertically is a preferred concept
- Public safety: large, dark open spaces are not preferred. There should be a proximity of uses to open spaces in order to maintain public safety
- We need to work together to identify a design that is "transformative" to make a real community



## MODERATED DISCUSSION

Following the small group presentations, Planning Commissioner John Owen opened the floor to discussion.

### **John Owens, Moderator**

Some of the main points we've heard today include:

- Think big in our planning, and look at the entire urban center
- There is a significant amount of advocacy for daylighting Thornton Creek
- Open spaces should be used to "balance" the density of development elsewhere on the South Lot and in the area
- Natural environmental features and open space should be used as an organizing principle in all site designs
- Converting the north Park and Ride to a park is important
- Fifth Avenue NE is recognized as the most important pedestrian environment, and should be improved
- Pursue immediate actions on these issues; this may be our only chance to make progress.

### Public Comments

Tom Wales, the chair of the Seattle Planning Commission, stated that we should talk about the difficult issue that no one else has mentioned so far. To the extent that people want the City to invest in improvements at the South Lot, it is inconceivable to him that the City would participate in South Lot development while the current litigation is ongoing. The Library Board and Parks Department have specific missions to implement, that cannot occur effectively when subject to the uncertainties of litigation. He urges the litigation parties to come forward to discuss the situation.

Knoll Lowney, the lawyer for the litigants, made comments responding to Mr. Wales' comments. He said that the litigation was the tool used by citizens to challenge the private development proposal that did not address citizen preferences. For a long time, he said, the City has denied the existence and value of the creek [under the South Lot] and has not applied the proper regulatory protections to it. This is why litigation was necessary.

Mr. Lowney further indicated that the litigation should not be seen as an inhibitor of anything going forward on the South Lot. Ultimately, the litigation is to secure the protection of the creek and compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, whether what happens is public, private, or a combined public-private type of development. All of his clients favor a pattern of urban development [on the South Lot] that harmonizes with the creek. He advocated that the City and citizens work together.

Gloria Butts wanted to know the City's position on environmental protection issues. She indicated we should consider buying open space while it is still open, and take advantage of the current opportunity for daylighting and open space.

### Additional Public Comments Following Summation

Approximately six people made additional comments following Councilmember Conlin's summary comments. The comments primarily urged the City to investigate various implementation and financing methods, and to work with citizens to make progress right away.

The first commenter mentioned the value of financial options such as tax increment financing that require changes in law by the Legislature. He recommended that the City get site control as soon as possible, probably through an option. He recommended against delaying everything by 60 days.

The second commenter noted she would like the City to make an effort to negotiate with the lawsuit parties.

The third commenter would like for citizen groups to be able to work with City staff right away.

The fourth commenter endorses the idea of citizen working groups on various issues related to this effort. Her opinion of Alternative C was that the grouping of buildings on the South Lot is still too dense, and that the development pattern should be broken up into smaller parcels, to avoid allowing one developer to do a "mega-plan" development.

The fifth commenter said that we need to get all of the "affected parties" involved in this, not just the "interested parties." He liked the "man-in-the-street" interviews done for the first workshop, and would like to see more information done for a demographic cross-section of people in the area.

The last commenter endorsed looking into financial options including tax increment financing, and the idea of a Public Development Authority.



## NEXT STEPS

Ron Posthuma from King County and Councilmember Richard Conlin from the City of Seattle offered their observations about the workshop and their agencies' anticipated next steps in the process.

### **Ron Posthuma, King County**

Ron Posthuma complimented citizens for their persistence. He observed some "coming together" of opinions in this workshop. King County will continue to work with the City on steps toward converting the north Park and Ride into a park, and will seek out ways to implement pedestrian improvements.

### **Councilmember Richard Conlin, City of Seattle**

Seattle has a long tradition of exhaustive public processes that often prevent bad decisions, but can also prevent good decisions from being made. This workshop is part of a valuable process, but there is also a time to take action.

Councilmember Conlin cited an example of the growth and improvement of Bellevue's downtown into a balanced urban center, including an urban park.

As part of the next steps, the City will strive to:

- Implement the funded projects
- Implement the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan
- Respect citizen preferences
- Explore availability of financial resources (to understand costs, tradeoffs, etc.)
- Influence private decisionmakers to do the right thing (This depends on our ability to convince them that providing the preferred sorts of pedestrian/open space and public-oriented improvements will pay off for them. This will be a difficult task).

Also, we will need to sort out and make a threshold decision on the City's preferred approach, whether that is similar to Alternative A, or a more comprehensive approach. We will need to look at the feasibility of a public-private approach to improving the South Lot.

Finally, we will be looking at what sort of system or process can be designed to coordinate with citizens. We will be looking for the most effective way to work with the community. Staff will need some time to digest the results of this workshop during this upcoming 60-day period.

In response to public questions, Mr. Conlin indicated in the next 30-60 days he expects a report of the workshop results to be completed and an action plan developed. He also noted that the long-term plan is for light rail to extend past Northgate, a factor which may influence planning.



# SUMMARY OF COMMENT FORMS

The December 1st and 2nd workshops were principally designed to get citizen input on the four design alternatives presented by the design team. The workshop was designed to provide a variety of ways for citizens to participate. One key tool was a "Workshop Response" sheet. When arriving at the workshop, each participant was invited to take a "Workshop Response" sheet and turn it in. Response sheets were turned in on both Friday night and Saturday. A few were mailed to the City after the event. Workshop organizers did not "regulate" how forms were filled out, so participants could turn them in at any time and were not prevented from completing more than one form. Approximately 75 response forms were completed and returned. For each of the four alternatives, a space was provided to identify "strengths," "weaknesses," elements of the design that were important and any other comments. Responders were encouraged to be as specific as possible so that participating agencies can understand the elements that work best from a community perspective.

## Alternative A

The strengths of Alternative A were identified as: its possible contribution to improvement of the pedestrian setting along 5th Avenue NE; the perception that developing the public facilities at the Bon Tire site would be the easiest option (without the complication of legal and development issues on the South Lot); and the ability to co-locate the facilities (along with the perceived potential for nearby athletic fields).

The weaknesses of Alternative A were identified as: the "timidity" and lack of vision of this alternative; the omission of a daylighted Thornton Creek; and failure to take advantage of opportunities at the South Lot for co-located public facilities and better forms of mixed-use development near the Transit Center.

## Alternative B

The strengths of Alternative B were identified as: its inclusion of a large open space with a daylighted Thornton Creek; the inclusion of co-located Library and Community Center on the South Lot near the open space; the strong design concept; and the creation of a Town Center near the Transit Center.

The weaknesses of Alternative B were identified as: the omission of a park at the north Park and Ride; a sense that the developed area is too dense and the open space is perhaps too large; the lack of pedestrian connectivity with northern portions of the urban center; and concerns about costs.

## Alternative C

The strengths of Alternative C were identified as: the ability to daylight Thornton Creek (or provide another drainage feature); the creation of a mixed-use Town Center on the South Lot; the co-location of the Library and Community Center on the South Lot; the potential for pedestrian improvements along 5th Avenue NE; and the Light Rail station straddling NE 103rd Street.

The weaknesses of Alternative C were identified as: too much development is shown on the South Lot and not enough open space; too little area shown for a daylighted creek feature; and the lack of a public facility at the Bon Tire site that could improve pedestrian qualities of 5th Avenue NE.

## Alternative D

The strengths of Alternative D were identified as: the overall density shown would contribute to development of a Town Center; the contribution to pedestrian improvements along 5th Avenue NE and other streets; and provision of a park at the north Park and Ride.

The weaknesses of Alternative D were identified as: the lack of a daylighted Thornton Creek; the failure to co-locate the Library and Community Center on the South Lot; not enough open space included on the South Lot; and too much development density on the South Lot and too much control given to developers.

## Summary

Overall, the greatest amount of support was expressed for Alternatives B and C, because of the open space and public amenity opportunities in these alternatives, as well as development that would contribute to a Town Center near the transit facilities. Strong support was also expressed for improvements to the pedestrian atmosphere of 5th Avenue NE, new housing, development of a park at the north Park and Ride facility, and the general concept of co-locating the Library and Community Center, and access improvements across Interstate 5.

# Workshop Foundations

The Northgate workshops attempted to go beyond a community design “visioning” exercise and introduced a substantial amount of technical and policy information to support development of an informed and integrated public investment approach in Northgate. In addition to detailed project specifications and budget for the Library, Community Center, transit and Light Rail facilities, extensive information was presented and discussed by participants revolving around four topical areas: real estate & finance, urban center issues, environmental considerations, and transit. This information provided a foundation for development of the four design alternatives presented in December. This section provides some of the technical and policy information that was considered at both workshops.



## NORTHGATE DESIGN ALTERNATIVES: COST ESTIMATES

For the "Understanding Northgate" workshop, a real estate team developed a market analysis for use as background information in formulating the 17 design schemes.

For the "Refining Our Choices" workshop, Hewitt Architects developed four alternative plans that represent the synthesis of the 17 plans created during a public planning workshop held the last week of November. The four plans look at how the public projects currently planned for the Northgate neighborhood can influence private development to better meet the neighborhood plan goals. The public projects included in each of the four alternatives are the new Library, the Parks Department Community Center, a new park, and an enhanced Park and Ride/bus transfer facility adjacent to a new Light Rail station. The potential sites for these projects are the Park and Ride lot north of Northgate Way, a former bank and tire center site on the east side of 5th Avenue, and the parking lot south of Northgate Mall. Each plan includes publicly and privately financed development projects. The private development is comprised of various types of projects determined to be viable based on market analysis, and sized to fit in the developable land not used by the public projects, or in the air rights above public projects as part of a mixed use development. The cost estimate was developed to provide some basis for comparing the four alternatives.

The cost estimate for each alternative plan includes both the public and private projects, with a cost estimate for land and construction. Based on the information gathered from various sources it was determined that the land cost for all of the sites under consideration is essentially the same on a per square foot basis (\$45). The land cost for all projects was calculated using the \$45 per SF assumption, multiplied by the total site square feet required for each project. The amount of land required for a project was determined by the structure footprint on the site, plus required setbacks, open space, vehicle access, etc. For the public open spaces in Alternatives B, C & D, the size of the open space corresponds to what was illustrated in the site plan. In order to reduce the land cost for the Community Center, Alternatives A and C assume a mixed-use project that would have private development constructed above the Community Center thereby allowing the land cost to be shared.

The construction cost for the Library and Community Center is based on their respective approved budgets. The estimated cost of the structured parking facility for Park and Ride transit use assumes the sale of development rights for private development in space above the parking structure. The construction cost for the public open space in Alternative B is based on an estimate generated by the consultant engineering firm R.W. Beck for a similarly sized scenario for daylighting Thornton Creek on the Northgate Mall south parking lot. The construction cost for the public open space in Alternatives C and D are estimates generated by City staff, based on the types of construction and landscaping likely to be involved. The cost of the pedestrian improvements is based on an estimate of cost per linear foot for constructing sidewalks and other pedestrian and streetscape features required by the Northgate zoning overlay. The total amount of pedestrian improvements equals the linear feet of street frontage along 5th Avenue from Northgate Way south to 100th, and 100th and 103rd bordering the Northgate Mall south parking lot. The total length of pedestrian improvements in all four alternatives is 5,250 LF. The allocation between public and private financing of the pedestrian improvements is consistent with the amount of public and private development represented in each alternative. The assumption being that more private development in a plan will result in more of the pedestrian improvements being financed by the private sector. The construction cost of the privately financed projects in all of the alternatives is based on the per square foot, or unit cost of similar projects.

The bottom line of the cost estimate for each alternative indicates the split between private investment and public investment, as well as the total estimated development cost for the plan. Additionally there is a public financing gap identified for each of the alternatives. The gap represents the difference between the approved budgets for the public projects involved and the estimated cost for the publicly financed components of the plan. The public financing gap does not necessarily indicate that a particular public project is not feasible. It simply gives an indication of the magnitude of the shortfall that will need to be overcome utilizing the various funding mechanisms outlined in the Funding Options Matrix.

For more information on the cost estimates, contact Eric Pravitz, City of Seattle Office of Housing, by phone at 206.684.0362 or by email at [eric.pravitz@ci.seattle.wa.us](mailto:eric.pravitz@ci.seattle.wa.us).

## Alternative A

### Components

Library	(Single-use)
Community Center	(Mixed-use w/Office Space)
Park	(At 5th & 112th)
Expanded Park & Ride	(1,000 Public Spaces)
Bus Transfer Facility	(No Change)
Private Development	
Office	(60,000 SF above Community Center)
ST Light Rail Station	
Pedestrian Improvements	(5th Ave, 100th and 103rd)

### Cost Estimate

	Development Costs			Budgeted Funds	Unidentified Sources *
	Total	Private	Public		
Library (5th Ave.)					
Land	\$2.5	\$0.0	\$2.5	\$1.3	\$1.2
Construction	\$2.5	\$0.0	\$2.5	\$2.5	\$0.0
Community Center/Office (5th Ave.)					
Land	\$4.5	\$2.6	\$1.9	\$1.9	\$0.0
Construction	\$15.3	\$9.0	\$6.3	\$6.3	\$0.0
Park (5th & 112th)					
Land **	\$7.0	\$0.0	\$7.0	\$3.0	\$4.0
Construction	\$1.0	\$0.0	\$1.0	\$1.0	\$0.0
Expanded Park & Ride (South Lot)					
Land	\$6.0	\$0.0	\$6.0	\$6.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$1.0	\$0.0	\$1.0	\$1.0	\$0.0
Bus Transfer Facility (No Change)					
Land	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
ST Light Rail Station ***					
Pedestrian Improvements	\$3.4	\$0.2	\$3.2	\$0.0	\$3.2
<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>\$43.2</b>	<b>\$11.8</b>	<b>\$31.4</b>	<b>\$23.0</b>	<b>\$8.4</b>

**Notes:**

\* See the Fund Source Matrix for additional detail.

\*\* The land cost for the Park includes relocating the KC Park & Ride facility to the South Lot.

\*\*\* ST Light Rail Station is in conceptual design phase and a cost estimate has not been finalized.

All dollar amounts are shown in millions.

Private development costs are estimates based on similar types of projects.

Prepared by: Eric Pravitz, City of Seattle Office of Housing  
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## Alternative B

### Components

Library	(Single-use)
Community Center	(Single-use)
Open Space	(8 Acres South Lot)
Parking Garage	(1,000 Public/945 Private Spaces)
Bus Transfer Facility	(No Change)
Private Development	
Office	(315,000 SF above Parking Garage)
Residential	(170 Units)
Retail	(60,000 SF ground floor)
ST Light Rail Station	
Pedestrian Improvements	(5th Ave, 100th and 103rd)

### Cost Estimate

	Development Costs			Budgeted Funds	Unidentified Sources *
	Total	Private	Public		
Library (South Lot)					
Land	\$1.3	\$0.0	\$1.3	\$1.3	\$0.0
Construction	\$2.5	\$0.0	\$2.5	\$2.5	\$0.0
Community Center (South Lot)					
Land	\$2.7	\$0.0	\$2.7	\$1.9	\$0.8
Construction	\$6.3	\$0.0	\$6.3	\$6.3	\$0.0
Open Space Park (South Lot)					
Land	\$15.6	\$0.0	\$15.6	\$3.0	\$12.6
Construction	\$10.0	\$0.0	\$10.0	\$1.0	\$9.0
Parking Garage (South Lot) **					
Land	\$2.0	\$0.0	\$2.0	\$2.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$38.9	\$18.9	\$20.0	\$7.0	\$13.0
Bus Transfer Facility (No Change)					
Land	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Office (Above Parking Garage)					
Land	\$2.0	\$2.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$47.3	\$47.3	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Residential (South Lot)					
Land	\$2.7	\$2.7	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$15.3	\$15.3	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Retail (South Lot)					
Land ***	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$6.0	\$6.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
ST Light Rail Station ****					
Pedestrian Improvements	\$3.4	\$0.5	\$2.9	\$0.00	\$2.9
<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>\$156.0</b>	<b>\$92.7</b>	<b>\$63.3</b>	<b>\$25.0</b>	<b>\$38.3</b>

\* See the Fund Source Matrix for additional detail.

\*\* The County's construction of a parking garage is contingent upon private development in the air rights.

\*\*\* All retail space is on the ground floor of mixed-use buildings.

\*\*\*\* ST Light Rail Station is in conceptual design phase and a cost estimate has not been finalized.

All dollar amounts are shown in millions.

Private development costs are estimates based on similar types of projects.

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## Alternative C

### Components

Library	(Single-use)
Community Center	(Single-use)
Park	(At 5th & 112th)
Open Space	(4 Acres South Lot)
Parking Garage	(1,000 Public/945 Private Spaces)
Bus Transfer Facility	(Re-aligned)
Private Development	
Office	(315,000 SF above Parking Garage)
Residential	(286 Units)
Hotel	(100 Rooms)
Retail	(95,000 SF ground floor)
ST Light Rail Station	
Pedestrian Improvements	(5th Ave, 100th & 103rd)

### Cost Estimate

	Development Costs			Budgeted Funds	Unidentified Sources *
	Total	Private	Public		
Library (South Lot)					
Land	\$1.3	\$0.0	\$1.3	\$1.3	\$0.0
Construction	\$2.5	\$0.0	\$2.5	\$2.5	\$0.0
Community Center (South Lot)					
Land	\$2.7	\$0.0	\$2.7	\$1.9	\$0.8
Construction	\$6.3	\$0.0	\$6.3	\$6.3	\$0.0
Park (5th & 112th)					
Land **	\$7.0	\$0.0	\$7.0	\$3.0	\$4.0
Construction	\$1.0	\$0.0	\$1.0	\$1.0	\$0.0
Open Space Bog (South Lot)					
Land	\$7.8	\$3.9	\$3.9	\$0.0	\$3.9
Construction	\$5.0	\$2.5	\$2.5	\$0.0	\$2.5
Parking Garage (South Lot) ***					
Land	\$2.0	\$0.0	\$2.0	\$2.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$38.9	\$18.9	\$20.0	\$14.0	\$6.0
Bus Transfer Facility (Re-aligned)					
Land	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$5.0	\$0.0	\$5.0	\$0.0	\$5.0
Office (Above Parking Garage)					
Land	\$2.0	\$2.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$47.3	\$47.3	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Hotel (South Lot)					
Land	\$2.7	\$2.7	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$15.0	\$15.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Residential (South Lot)					
Land	\$5.4	\$5.4	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$25.7	\$25.7	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Retail (South Lot)					
Land ****	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$9.5	\$9.5	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
ST Light Rail Station *****					
Pedestrian Improvements	\$0.0	\$1.0	\$2.4	\$0.0	\$2.4
<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>\$190.5</b>	<b>\$133.9</b>	<b>\$56.6</b>	<b>\$32.0</b>	<b>\$24.6</b>

\* See the Fund Source Matrix for additional detail.

\*\* The land cost for the Park includes relocating the KC Park & Ride facility to the South Lot.

\*\*\* The County's construction of a parking garage is contingent upon private development in the air rights.

\*\*\*\* All retail space is on the ground floor of mixed-use buildings.

\*\*\*\*\* ST Light Rail Station is in conceptual design phase and a cost estimate has not been finalized.

All dollar amounts are shown in millions.

Private development costs are estimates based on similar types of projects.

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## Alternative D

### Components

Library	(Single-use)
Community Center	(Mixed-use)
Park	(At 5th & 112th)
Open Space	(2 Acres South Lot)
Parking Garage	(1,400 Public/945 Private Spaces)
Bus Transfer Facility	(Re-Aligned)
Private Development	
Office	(315,000 SF above Parking Garage)
Residential	(340 Units)
Hotel	(70 Rooms)
Retail	(80,000 SF ground floor)
ST Light Rail Station	
Pedestrian Improvements	(5th Ave, 100th & 103rd)

### Cost Estimate

	Development Costs			Budgeted Funds	Unidentified Sources *
	Total	Private	Public		
Library (5th Ave.)					
Land	\$2.5	\$0.0	\$2.5	\$1.3	\$1.2
Construction	\$2.5	\$0.0	\$2.5	\$2.5	\$0.0
Community Center (South Lot)					
Land	\$1.9	\$0.0	\$1.9	\$1.9	\$0.0
Construction	\$6.3	\$0.0	\$6.3	\$6.3	\$0.0
Park (5th & 112th)					
Land **	\$7.0	\$0.0	\$7.0	\$3.0	\$4.0
Construction	\$1.0	\$0.0	\$1.0	\$1.0	\$0.0
Open Space (South Lot)					
Land	\$3.9	\$3.5	\$0.4	\$0.0	\$0.4
Construction	\$2.0	\$1.8	\$0.2	\$0.0	\$0.2
Parking Garage (South Lot) ***					
Land	\$5.0	\$3.0	\$2.0	\$2.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$46.9	\$26.9	\$20.0	\$14.0	\$6.0
Bus Transfer Facility (Re-aligned)					
Land	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$5.0	\$0.0	\$5.0	\$0.0	\$5.0
Office (Above Parking Garage)					
Land	\$2.0	\$2.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$47.3	\$47.3	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Hotel (South Lot)					
Land	\$2.7	\$2.7	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$10.5	\$10.5	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Residential (South Lot)					
Land	\$9.7	\$9.7	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$30.6	\$30.6	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Retail (South Lot)					
Land ****	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$0.0	\$8.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Entertainment (South Lot)					
Land	\$0.9	\$0.9	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Construction	\$7.5	\$7.5	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
ST Light Rail Station *****					
Land	\$3.4	\$1.7	\$1.7	\$0.0	\$1.7
Pedestrian Improvements					
<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>\$206.5</b>	<b>\$156.0</b>	<b>\$50.5</b>	<b>\$32.0</b>	<b>\$18.5</b>

\* See the Fund Source Matrix for additional detail.

\*\* The land cost for the Park includes relocating the KC Park & Ride facility to the South Lot.

\*\*\* The County's construction of a parking garage is contingent upon private development in the air rights.

\*\*\*\* All retail space is on the ground floor of mixed-use buildings.

\*\*\*\*\* ST Light Rail Station is in conceptual design phase and a cost estimate has not been finalized.

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# URBAN CENTER

## What is an urban center?

- Northgate is designated a regional Urban Center through the County-wide Planning Policies. It is also a designated Urban Center in the City's Comprehensive Plan - a city-wide strategy for overall growth management.
- Urban Centers are a key part of a strategy to manage this region's rapid growth. Work on this began in the late 1980's with Vision 2020 and passage of the State Growth Management Act (GMA) built on that strategy. Concentrating growth in an existing urban area is a primary strategy of the GMA. This strategy is intended to slow suburban sprawl, conserve farmland and forests, keep existing cities and neighborhoods vital and allow transportation and other services to be provided more efficiently.
- Regionally, there are 21 Urban Centers in the four counties in the Puget Sound region, twelve designated urban centers in King County. Five of King County's urban centers are in the City of Seattle - Seattle Central Business District, Seattle Center (or Uptown Queen Anne), First Hill/Capitol Hill, University District and Northgate.
- To meet goals for focusing growth, these centers have growth targets and zoned density requirements to show that local plans meet the regional strategy. Within the 410 acres of the Northgate urban center, there are 20 year growth targets for 3,000 new households and 9,300 new jobs. These growth targets indicate a near doubling of population and employment over a 20 year period. It is anticipated that all or most of the new housing will be multi-family housing. Given the Northgate core's large lot configuration, future development proposals are key to meeting this target. Planning for new housing is one challenge for this urban center.
- Northgate is not alone in its challenges and opportunities as an emerging urban center. The challenge is to transform these designated regional urban centers into multi-faceted urban centers. These areas are looking for ways to introduce a more dynamic land use mix and density envisioned for urban centers which are now primarily employment centers with good transit/transportation connections.

## Northgate Urban Center Goals

The following goals were adapted from the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan for the workshop:

1. Develop concepts to support the sixteen framework policies of the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan to carry out its overall land use vision:
  - "...to encourage a community with dense commercial and multi-family development at its core surrounded by a low density residential base."
  - "...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."
2. Ensure that capital facilities siting concepts support the desired land use pattern in the Northgate area to concentrate employment activity where the infrastructure and transportation system can best accommodate it.
3. Develop capital facilities siting concepts that will increase pedestrian circulation and that will foster an improved street level environment with pedestrian connections that are safe, interesting, and pleasant.
4. Facilitate opportunities for co-location of the new library and community center in the Northgate core.
5. Promote private development adjacent to transit facilities that is transit oriented, mixed use, and takes full advantage of planned densities.
6. Future development should include environmental amenities and/or urban design features that make a positive contribution to creating a sense of place and connection in the core area. Concepts should contribute to a system of open space and pedestrian connections.

# ENVIRONMENT

## OVERVIEW

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The City's Northgate Environmental Team coordinated the development of information utilized for review and discussion at the two community workshops, "Understanding Northgate" in October, 2000, and "Refining Our Choices" in December, 2000. The following summarizes or reproduces most of the information developed for the workshops.

### **A Fact Sheet**

Summarized information contained in the R.W. Beck report, as well as goals, assumptions, and additional strategies for detention, aesthetic water features, and off-site improvements.

**Northgate Daylighting Scenarios Draft Report.** (prepared for the City of Seattle by R.W. Beck, October 20, 2000)

Description of potential configurations, construction elements, and costs for three generalized creek "daylighting" scenarios based on concepts advanced by community interests. A full copy can be obtained by contacting Seattle Public Utilities, Terry Kakida at 206.615.0507.

### **Peer Review Comments**

Solicited from five technical experts asked to review preliminary draft materials. The purpose of the peer review was to obtain objective opinions, prior to the first workshop, on: the implications of the existing conditions; the City's approach to the environmental issues; and the preliminary draft R.W. Beck report on daylighting scenarios. Copies of the peer letters are reproduced in the appendix, along with a list of the questions asked of the peers.

**Thornton Creek Hydrologic and Hydraulic Modeling Technical Memorandum.** Existing Flooding Conditions. (prepared for the City of Seattle by Entranco, Inc.)

This includes a description of basic hydrologic conditions for the Thornton Creek watershed, including flooding and erosion problem areas and causes, and a modeling of hydraulic response to storm events. A copy of this report can be obtained by contacting Seattle Public Utilities, Terry Kakida, at 206.615.0507.

### **Natural Strategies for Northgate**

Thirteen conceptual approaches that could be integrated and applied to planned project sites within an approximate half-mile radius of the South Lot. These approaches address: stormwater management (reduction of runoff, flow control); water quality treatment (pollution reduction); habitat improvements; aesthetic enhancements; and recreational opportunities. The last portion of this section summarizes the strategies. A display board shown at the "Refining Our Choices" workshop provides graphic depictions of some of these concepts (included in this section).

## ENVIRONMENTAL TEAM FACT SHEET

A fact sheet was developed as a handout reference for workshop participants, summarizing the technical information, and including additional concepts on stormwater detention, off-site habitat development, and aesthetic water feature development. The fact sheet information was organized as follows: goals, facts, working assumptions, and description of scenarios. The fact sheet information, including graphic drawings from the daylighting report, was also displayed on large boards, serving as visual aids and references for workshop participants. The fact sheet information is reproduced below.

During the "Understanding Northgate" workshop, there was significant disagreement by workshop participants regarding elements of the workshop materials, especially the listed goals. As a result, a revised set of goals was developed during this session, along with an acknowledgement of factual disputes.

Environmental information in the fact sheet includes:

### Environmental Team Goals

1. Incorporate natural features into future development, in a manner that is appropriate for the Northgate Urban Center and balances the variety of public and private objectives.
2. Ensure compliance with stormwater code regulations for new development, to protect and improve Thornton Creek flows and water quality.
3. Enhance habitat where possible and practical in the Thornton Creek watershed.
4. Provide functional features that are practical, achievable, cost-effective and sustainable.

### Facts

1. The City's stormwater code requires new developments to provide detention, water quality treatment facilities and source control. All scenarios require provision of facilities that would comply with City and State standards.
2. Construction of any drainage-related facilities and amenities, and acquiring or allocating land for those purposes, would generate significant costs.
3. There is current litigation about the extent to which development may occur over and near the existing stormwater pipe within the South Lot.

### Working Assumptions

1. All scenarios will include some level of urban development; no scenario will consist exclusively of natural environmental features.
2. This workshop primarily addresses potential environmental improvements on the 12.6 acre parcel currently in Mall ownership (the South Lot).
3. For scenarios involving channel excavation, the maximum practical slope for maintaining safety, landscaping viability, and soil stability is assumed to be 3:1 (horizontal:vertical).
4. Based on the City's Critical Areas Ordinance, a minimum buffer requirement of 50 feet from creek channels is applied to all scenarios involving open watercourses, unless special variances are sought and granted. Within creek channels and buffer areas, activities, uses and access are restricted by regulations.
5. Based on available information, soil conditions on the South Lot consist of up to approximately 20 to 30 feet of fill, above native soils that include silts, silty sand, and peat. The peat has been recorded approximately 20 feet below the surface primarily near the southern edge of the South Lot, and its full extent within the South Lot is not known. Groundwater elevations measured to date ranged from a few feet below grade near 1st Avenue NE to more than 30 feet below grade near the southern edge of the South Lot. For this workshop, it is assumed that these soil and groundwater conditions would not seriously impair potential structural development across the site.
6. Design of creek channel options should be physically consistent with the nearest naturally-occurring creek segment, using the "Rosgen" methodology.
7. Several of the physical elements and lack of disturbance required to successfully restore chinook salmon habitat consistent with regulatory requirements unavoidably conflict with public desires to use creekside or in-creek areas.
8. Vegetation intended to provide full riparian cover in a re-created creek channel would require several years to mature and fully aid shading of aquatic habitat.
9. Factors such as illegal dumping, non-point pollution, elevated water temperatures, and too much human disturbance may influence and possibly compromise aquatic conditions. To minimize disturbance to fisheries-oriented habitat, access barriers or restrictions would be necessary—some are required in the Critical Areas Ordinance.

## Scenarios

There is a wide spectrum of possible future water features on the South Lot, including: detention facilities, possibly with open space amenities; new creek channels; or fountains and similar water-oriented amenities. New creek channels could be designed in various ways, to emphasize fisheries habitat or recreational objectives, each with different aesthetic values. However, it is likely that all objectives cannot be realized in a single scenario—priorities, and ultimately choices, need to be made.

### Detention-Oriented Scenarios

Detention systems address stormwater flood and flow control; they do not automatically include features with environmental or open space amenity value. All development alternatives will need to provide detention facilities, in the form of underground vaults or surface ponds, depending upon the nature of site design.

Additional amenity features, including open space, could take many forms, and be flexibly incorporated into various site design alternatives.

To increase the aesthetic and environmental values within detention-oriented scenarios, facilities could be designed as ponds, with additional amenity features such as attractively landscaped wetlands, cascading pools, educational signage, boardwalks or overlooks.

To further improve recreational values on the site, pond detention facilities (with or without design amenities) could be incorporated into larger open spaces with recreational value (such as open, grassy areas for picnicking), and/or passive landscaped areas (such as decorative gardens or natural vegetation plantings).

### Creek Construction Scenarios

The R.W. Beck Report is a preliminary engineering study on three daylighting scenarios. These scenarios generally address concepts, proposed by a few citizen groups, that would replace the existing subsurface drainage pipe with a new open watercourse crossing the South Lot property.

### Fountain/Urban Design Scenario

Some citizens have also advocated for a water feature, such as a fountain or shallow pond or channel, which could be designed into several types of site plans, as a decorative aesthetic feature that could also symbolically represent the natural environment. Fountains and water features help “activate” plazas and streetscapes and create a sense of place.

### Off-Site Habitat and Drainage Improvement Scenarios

As an alternative to on-site fisheries-oriented improvements, workshop participants need to consider whether it is wiser and more beneficial to use limited public funds for fish-friendly improvements in off-site locations. Such investments would be able to directly address known improvement needs.

## SUMMARY OF NORTHGATE DAYLIGHTING SCENARIOS

### **Draft Report, R.W. Beck, October 2000**

The Environmental Team and R.W. Beck developed three approaches for daylighting a drainage feature on the South Lot, based on concepts advanced by community interests, in order to create scenarios for discussion at the first community workshop. These scenarios were described as follows:

Full-length daylighting: a 1,100 foot stream created across the South Lot in an approximate diagonal configuration, meandering from the southwest to northeast corner (depth to the streambed would be 16 to 27 feet);

Full-length daylighting with grading: similar to the above scenario, except that a substantial portion of the existing ground surface would be removed to reduce the depth to the created stream (ground surface elevation lowered by 9 to 27 feet overall to maintain a maximum depth of 8 feet from the created streambed to the top of the bank);

Partial-length daylighting: creation of a 700 foot stream in a predominantly north-south configuration, approximating the path of the existing stormwater pipe below the South Lot (depth to the streambed would be 13 to 27 feet).

For all scenarios, creation of habitat to support chinook salmon (including appropriate streambed and cross section, meanders, and riparian corridor), a bank slope of 3:1 to encourage successful vegetative establishment and safe access for monitoring/maintenance, and a 50-foot streambank buffer were assumed. A preliminary engineering-level cost estimate was developed for each scenario, which included construction costs, land acquisition, excavation/stream channel creation, and plant establishment for the riparian corridor. The scenarios also included costs to remove downstream fish passage barriers, and the engineer’s professional assessment of contingency costs, pre-construction costs and taxes. For each scenario, the remaining developable area for the 12-acre lot was also estimated. Cost estimates for each scenario were as follows:

- Full-length daylighting \$18,670,000
- Full-length daylighting with grading \$35,860,000
- Partial-length daylighting \$13,020,000

Several factual observations were noted, either through review of other technical documents or maps, or through limited site visits (which included surveying). Two of the most important findings are:

- The depth to the stormwater pipe under the South Lot ranges from approximately 13 to 27 feet (along the assumed stream corridors), which would require extensive excavation to create a stream channel.
- The existing gradient of the pipe (0.0002 foot per foot) is very flat, which would likely cause low flow velocities, and sandy sediment deposition in stream channels.

These and a few other physical aspects of the South Lot have been subject to differing perceptions between agency staff and interested parties, including: habitat value and potential for chinook salmon and other fish; and the historical character and function of drainage features.

## PEER REVIEW

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As part of the preparation for the October 2000 "Understanding Northgate" workshop, City staff sought review of draft information and their approach to the issues from professional and academically-based experts ("peers"). The purpose of the peer review was to obtain objective opinions, prior to the first workshop, on: the fisheries and hydrologic implications of the existing conditions; the City's approach to the environmental issues; and the preliminary draft R.W. Beck report on daylighting scenarios.

Five peers were asked to review preliminary draft materials prepared for the "Understanding Northgate" workshop, including: the report, "Northgate Daylighting Scenarios;" additional information on detention; fact sheet prepared for the workshop, and a screening-level benefits assessment table prepared by the City's Environmental Team.

The peers consisted of scientists and engineers, with disciplines in ecology, fisheries biology, civil engineering, and stream geomorphology represented. Two hold positions as university professors, two are government scientists, and one is a private environmental consultant. The experts were asked to comment on the facts, feasibility and appropriateness of various scenarios, and probability of success (e.g., whether the scenarios would actually achieve their functional goals).

In general, the experts' comments were directed only to the technical issues, although one expert was critical of the approach and tone of the draft materials. The comments generated by the experts did express the following common themes:

- The approaches to create a creek or other environmental feature at the South Lot lack a broader watershed perspective.
- The historic character of the South Lot was most likely a wetland/headwaters system.

- Chinook salmon habitat recovery is not an appropriate objective. Physical conditions, both existing and potential (as created by the scenarios), would not result in favorable habitat for this species. Some suggestions were made that other species, such as coho salmon and cutthroat trout, may be more suitable biological objectives from a habitat standpoint.
- Funding projects for chinook salmon recovery may be more appropriately directed to other locations, with a higher value and probability for success.
- The low gradient and flows at the South Lot, likely higher temperatures as a result of daylighting without suitable vegetative (canopy) cover, and probable water pollutant levels may adversely affect salmonids in daylighting scenarios with a chinook salmon recovery objective.
- Ecologically meaningful features at the South Lot that would benefit Thornton Creek would include stormwater runoff controls and water quality treatment, and consideration of features more consistent with the area's historic wetland character.

### Copies of the Peer Letters

Copies of the peer letters are reproduced in the appendix, along with a list of the questions asked of the peers.

## THORNTON CREEK HYDROLOGIC AND HYDRAULIC MODELING TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

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### Existing Flooding Conditions (Entranco, Inc.)

Copies of this engineering study were made available to workshop participants, and key pieces of information were depicted on a large-format display map (not reproducible in this report). This study documented current hydrologic conditions in the Thornton Creek watershed, and utilized three computer models to simulate rainfall events of varying intensity to predict hydraulic impacts from these events, including flooding problems and erosion potential from high flows. These data were compared against historical flooding data, and assessed to determine the causes for flooding and erosion problems.

The documentation includes a compilation of historical flooding locations in the Thornton Creek basin—seventeen locations are noted, with a description of impacts, improvements implemented and those locations not yet addressed. Comparisons of peak flows at various locations are also presented in the study, using the computer models of four storm events, and an analysis of flood potential, with predicted impacts at these locations, including private property and instream structures such as culverts.

(The results of this study are currently being assessed to develop options for additional flood and erosion control strategies for the Thornton Creek basin—this assessment is expected to be completed in 2001, and published by Seattle Public Utilities).

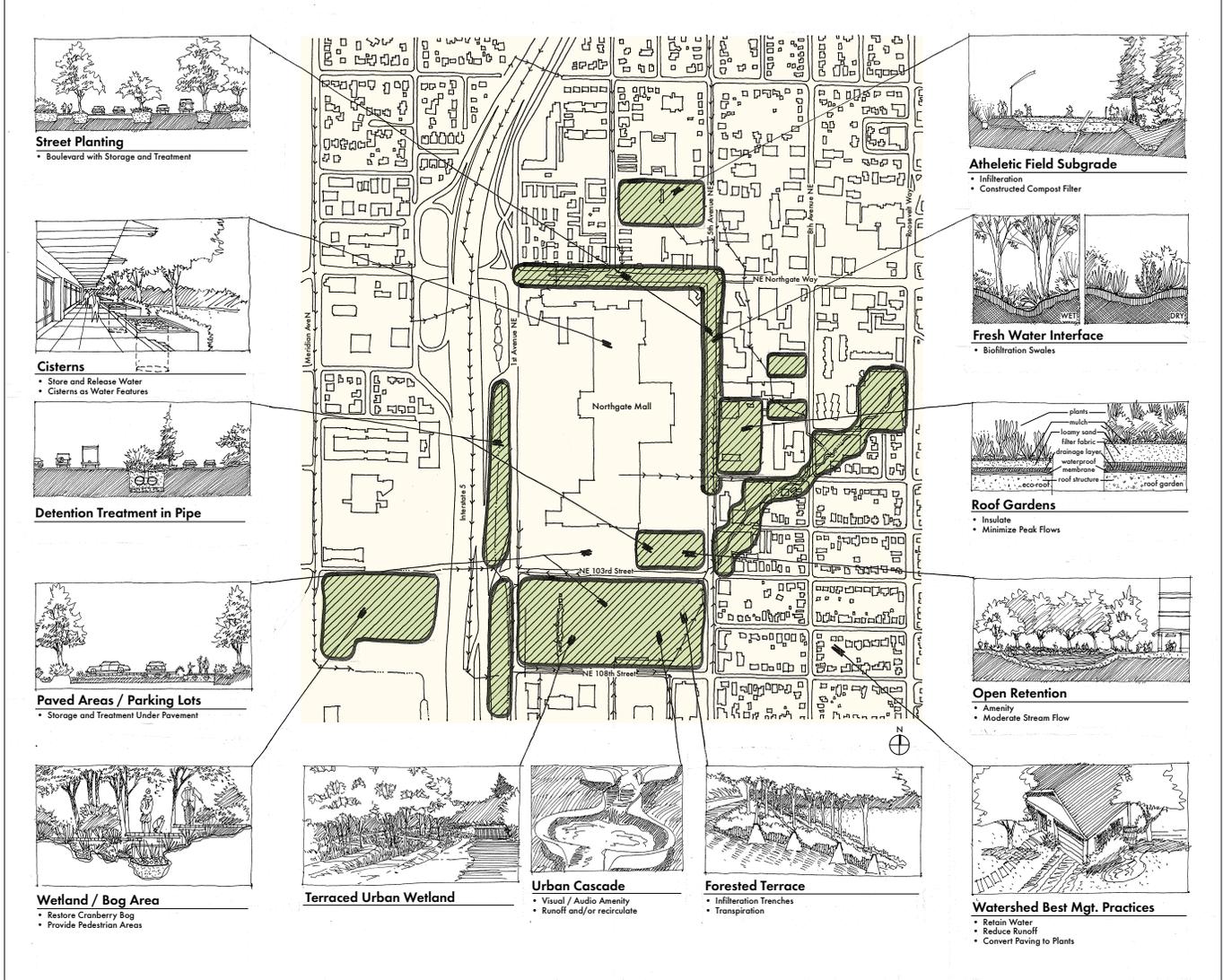
## NATURAL STRATEGIES FOR NORTHGATE

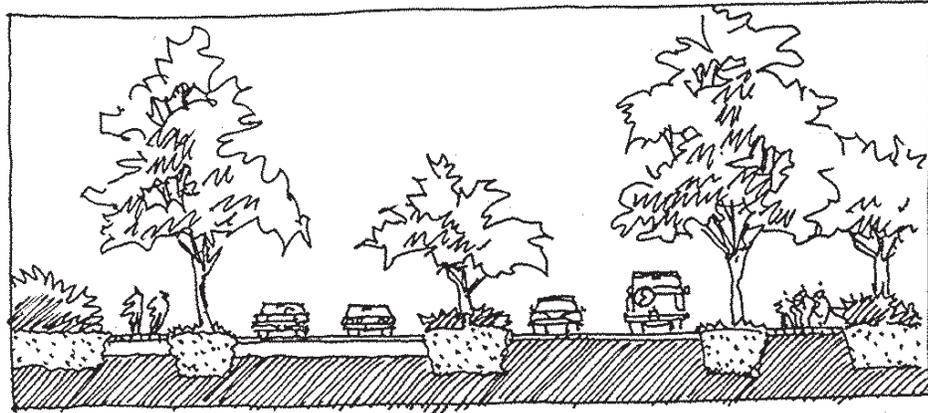
City staff reviewed various development opportunities and priorities noted in the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan, and brainstormed a number of potential opportunities to combine goals of reducing runoff and flooding, protecting habitat, and integrating aesthetic/recreational dimensions into these concepts. An area covering an approximate half-mile radius from the Northgate South Lot was considered. The intent of these concepts is the eventual development of drainage control and treatment features more related to the natural environment, that would improve protection of the Thornton Creek watershed. They also create a more human connection to these features. Thirteen concepts possibly applicable to sites and development opportunities in the Northgate area were identified. A display board describing these concepts was prepared and presented at the workshop, "Refining Our Choices" (see next page).

While these concepts, consisting of constructed features, functional landscaping, and practices, can be integrated into development/redevelopment strategies, in some instances, they can also be incorporated into existing facilities. The intent is that these concepts be creatively applied to comply with the City's Stormwater, Grading, and Drainage Control Ordinance. This could be an enhancement to developers who must comply with general provisions to reduce runoff and address associated pollutants. The possibility exists that some of these concepts could be realized as a public-private partnership, if there is an overall regional benefit or purpose. An example of this partnership is the constructed wetland/detention facility west of I-5, at North Seattle Community College, constructed through the joint efforts of the College and the City. These concepts also reduce runoff impacts to Thornton Creek.

<b>Natural Strategies Concept</b>	<b>Purpose or Benefit</b>
■ Street plantings/vegetation .....	Creating a boulevard atmosphere; potential storage and treatment of stormwater
■ Cisterns.....	Storage and gradual release of water; can also be created as water features
■ Detention/treatment in underground pipes.....	Common method of stormwater management; can utilize under structures or streets/sidewalks
■ Surface/subsurface materials used for parking lots...	May enhance infiltration, storage, and treatment under surface
■ Wetland/bog areas .....	Restore sites to original historic character; provide pedestrian areas for access
■ Terraced urban wetland .....	Storage and treatment of stormwater
■ Urban Cascade .....	Provide a visual/audio amenity; can gradually release water or recirculate
■ Forested Terrace .....	Opportunity for infiltration trenches; transpiration
■ Subgrade for fields .....	Recreational areas can store or infiltrate with proper subgrade, such as constructed compost filter
■ Freshwater interface through bioswales .....	Provide treatment through filtration
■ Roof gardens.....	Storage to minimize peak flows; has insulation value for buildings
■ Open detention .....	Creates a community amenity; manages flows from stormwater
■ Watershed best management practices .....	Operations/practices to reduce runoff, retain water; reduce impervious surface (paving to plants)

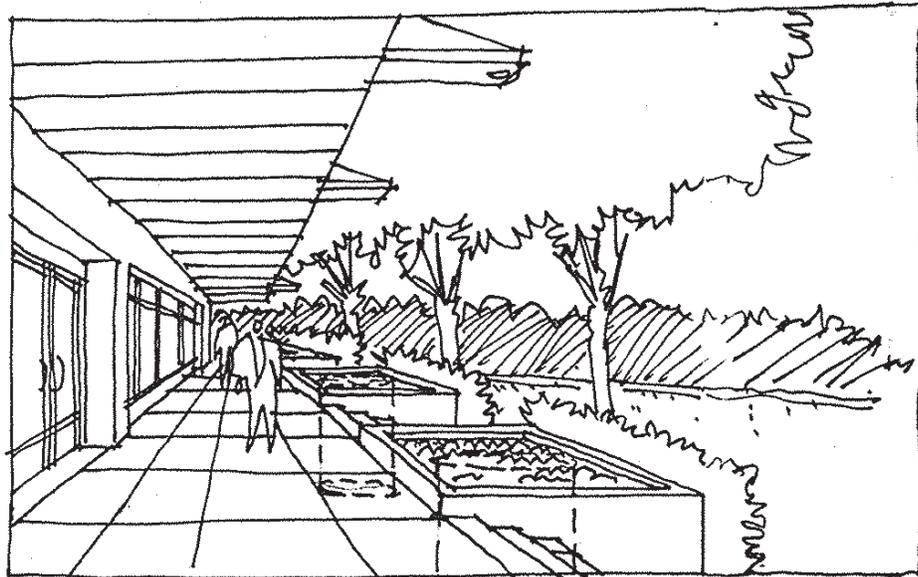
# Natural Strategies for Northgate





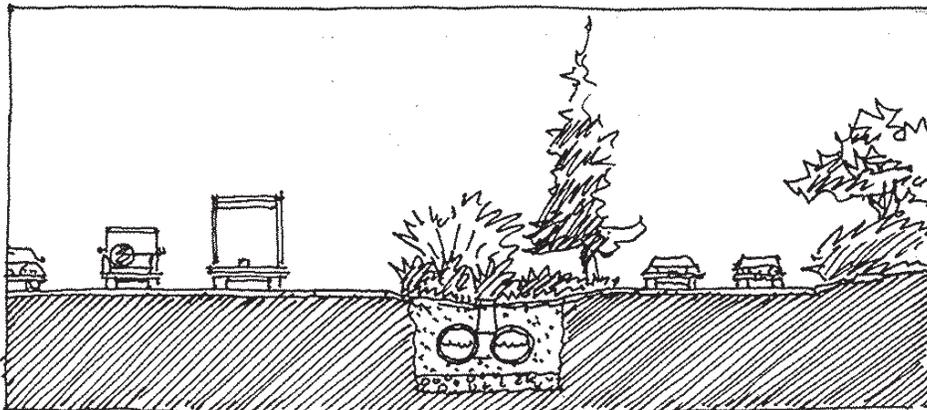
**Street Planting**

--Boulevard with storage and treatment

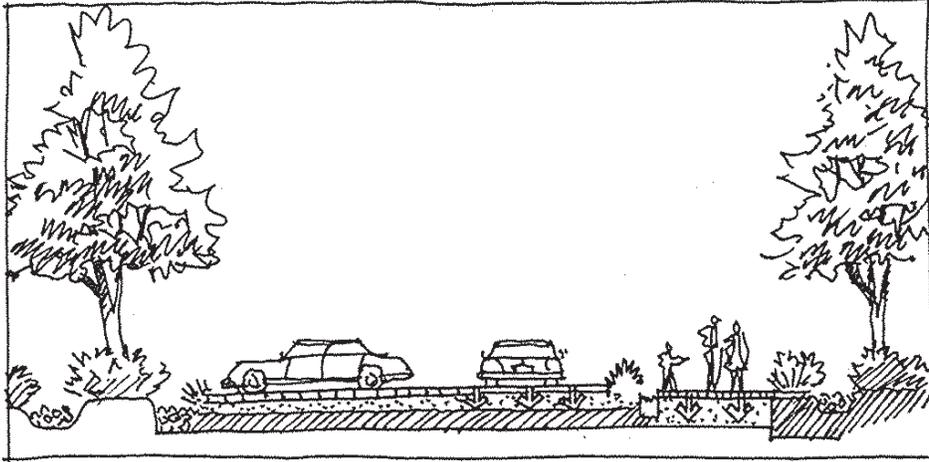


**Cisterns**

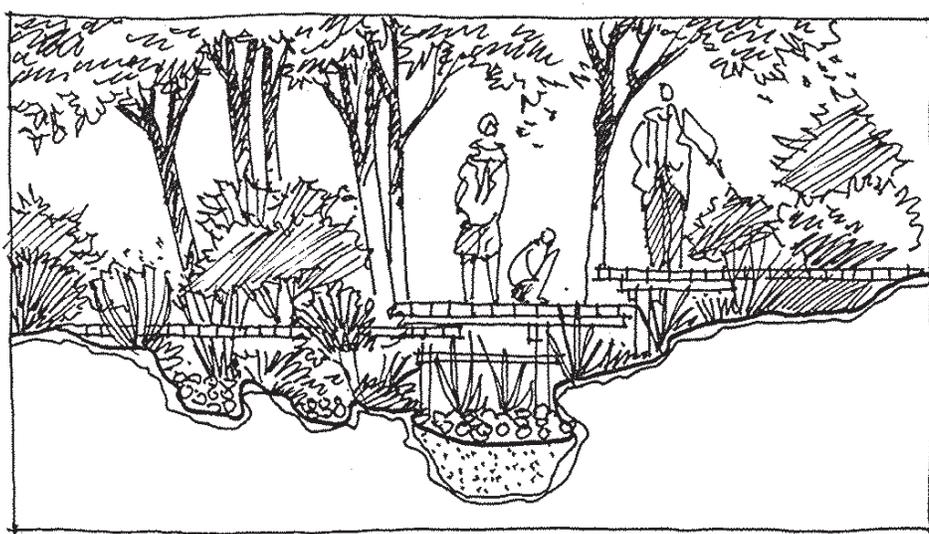
--Store and release water  
--Cisterns as water features



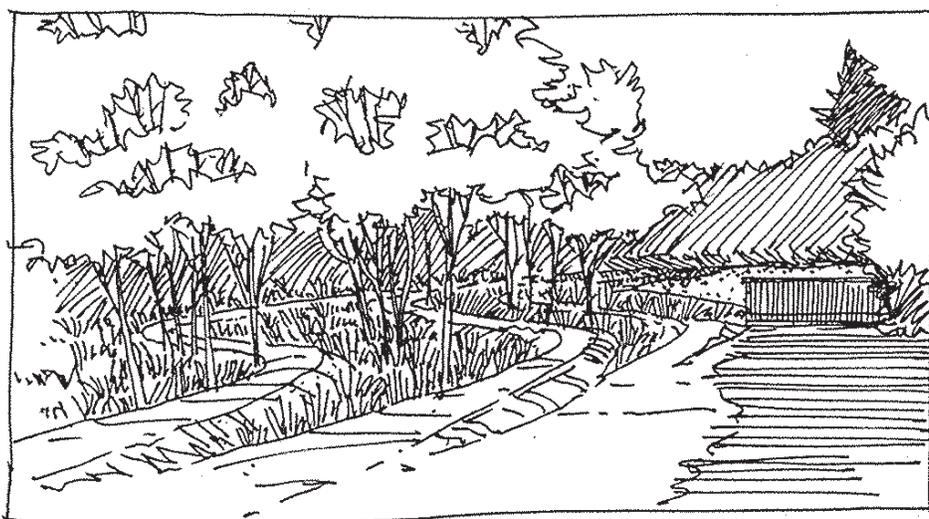
**Detention Treatment in Pipe**



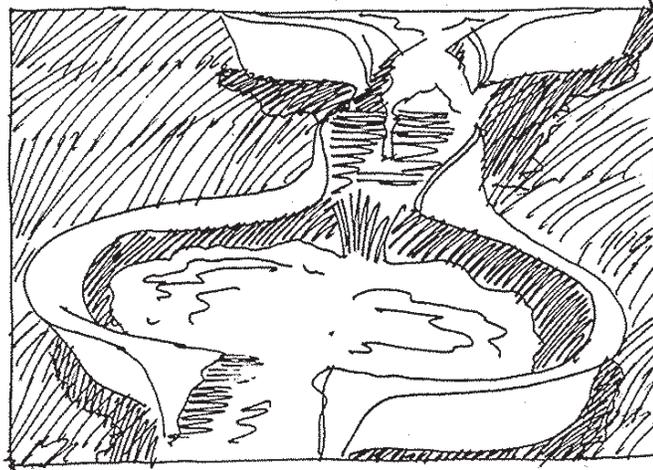
**Paved Areas / Parking Lots** --Storage and treatment under pavement



**Wetland / Bog Area** --Restore cranberry bog  
--Provide pedestrian areas

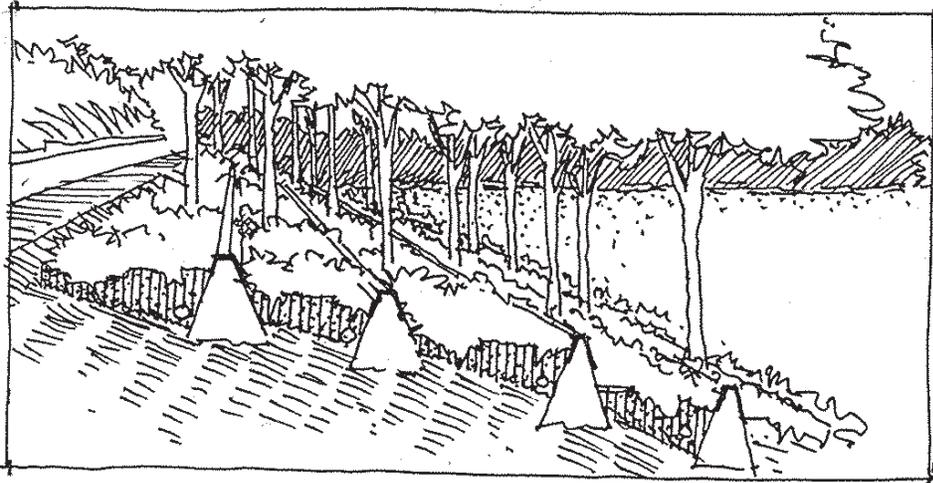


**Terraced Urban Wetland**



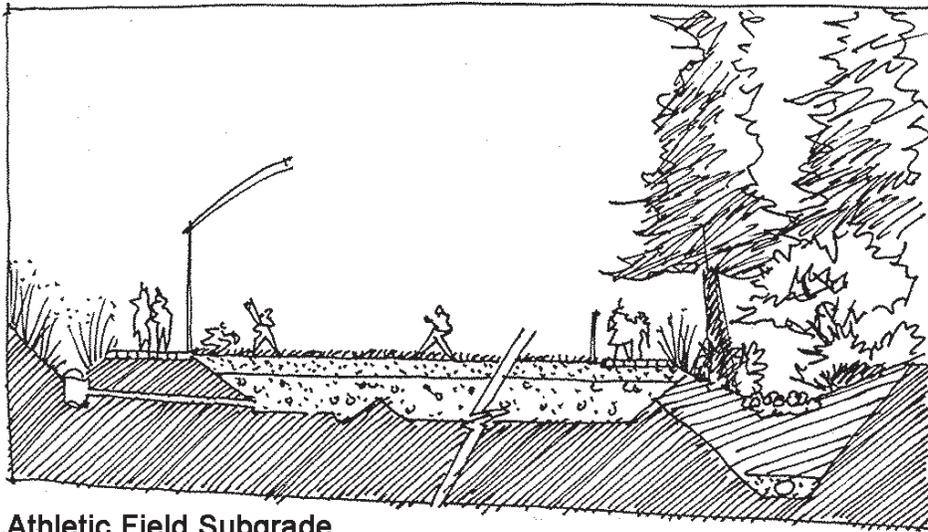
**Urban Cascade**

- Visual/auditory amenity
- Runoff and/or recirculate



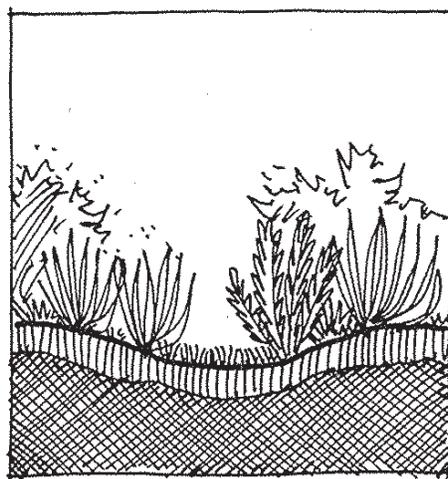
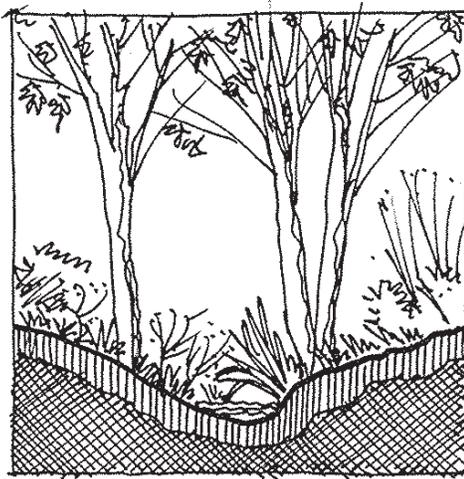
**Forested Terrace**

- Infiltration trenches
- Transpiration



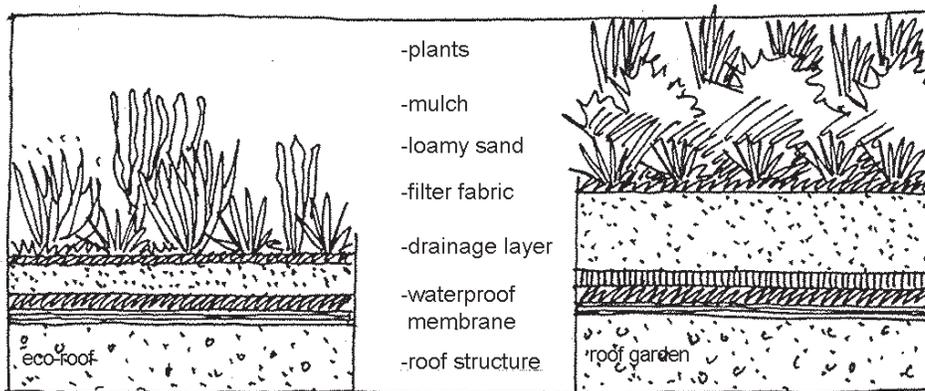
**Athletic Field Subgrade**

- Infiltration
- Constructed compost filter



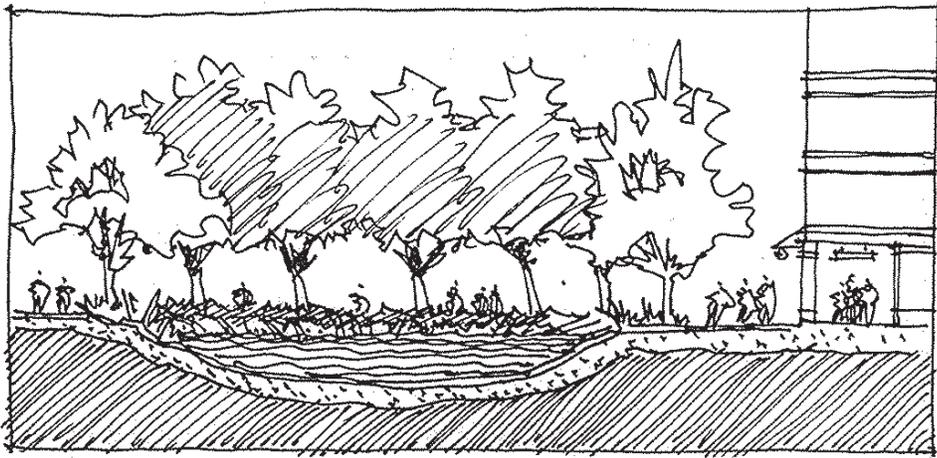
**Freshwater Interface**

- Biofiltration swales



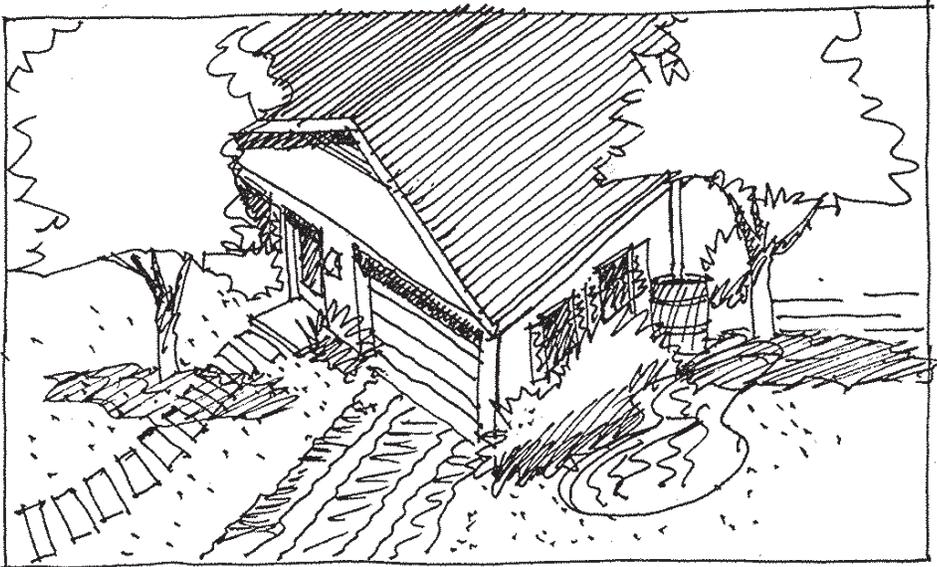
**Roof Gardens**

- Insulate, and minimize peak flows



**Open Retention**

- Amenity
- Moderated stream flow



**Watershed Best Management Practices**

- Retain water
- Reduce runoff
- Convert paving to plants

# TRANSIT

One of the work teams that was established in preparation for the Northgate community workshops related to transit. Transit is an important issue at Northgate: King County operates a transit center and 3 park and ride lots in the Northgate area, and Northgate is the hub for bus activity in North Seattle. In addition, Sound Transit is attempting to extend light rail service to Northgate in the first phase of the light rail project, and are actively pursuing funding to make this happen. In conjunction with Sound Transit, the City Strategic Planning Office has begun station area planning meetings in the Northgate area, which are expected to continue into 2001.

For the past several months, City, King County, and Sound Transit staff have been working together to prepare and evaluate site layout alternatives for a combined bus Transit Center and Light Rail station located east of 1st Avenue and north of NE 100th Street on the western portion of the south lot. On October 12, Sound Transit and King County sponsored a workshop to present these alternatives to the community in advance of the October 26-28 "Understanding Northgate" workshops. The October 12 workshop gave community members the opportunity to review, ask questions, and critique these issues and alternatives in detail, and helped lay the foundation for discussion of these issues at the "Understanding Northgate" and "Refining Our Choices" workshops.



The goals that were used by City, King County, and Sound Transit staff in preparing these site alternatives include:

- Respect Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan vision
- Retain maximum alignment flexibility for future rail extensions to the north
- Provide easy transfers between bus and rail service
- Enhance on-time performance
- Minimize private property impacts
- Minimize environmental impacts
- Minimize impacts on traffic congestion
- Create safe and convenient station layout for transit customers
- Retain transit-oriented development opportunities in development center
- Develop cost-effective solutions
- Create efficient connections for regional transit system
- Consolidate transit park and ride capacity per the Northgate Plan
- Balance the provision of transit parking to enhance transit use and minimize parking impacts to surrounding neighborhood, while at the same time trying to minimize automobile trips to the site
- Support aggressive transportation demand management measures to reduce use of single occupant vehicles

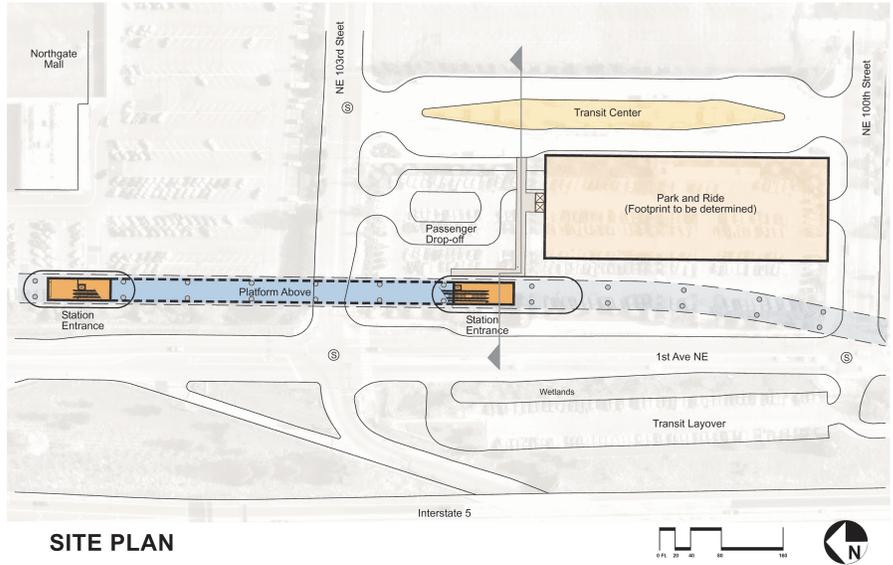
Three alternatives are still under consideration. Two of these alternatives were prepared by Sound Transit, and one was prepared by King County Metro. These alternatives were used by work teams in both the October and December Northgate workshops in preparing and evaluating different development scenarios for the core area.

It should be noted that while the King County alternative prepared in October shows the Transit Center being rotated to intersect with 1st Avenue NE, elements of this alternative would still work with the Transit Center remaining in its current configuration.

# SOUND TRANSIT

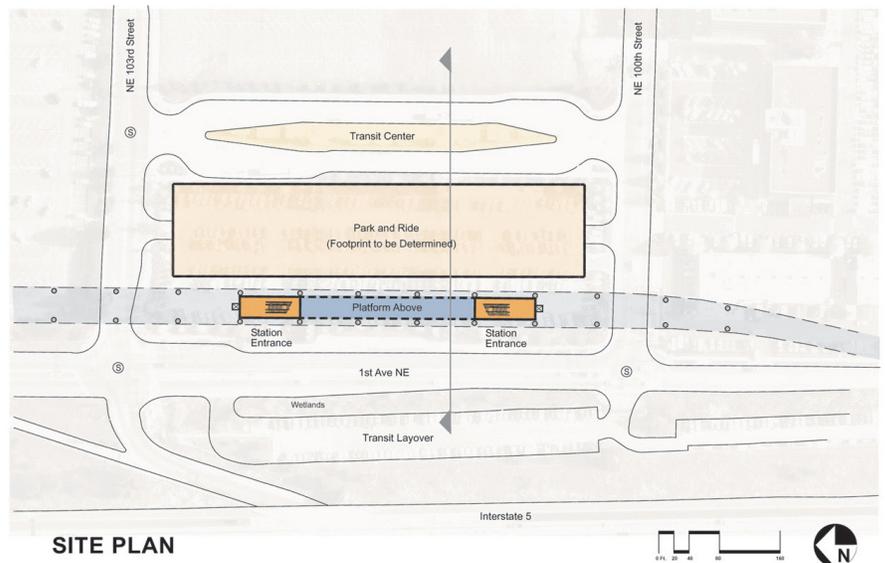
## Station located over 103rd with entrance in Northgate Mall parking lot.

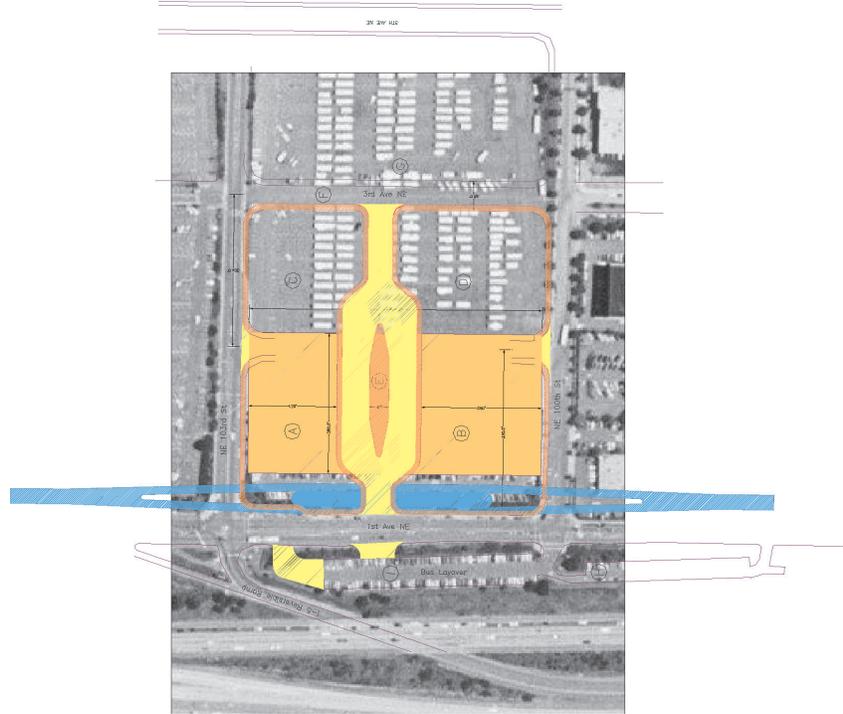
- Utilizes existing bus transit center
- Patrons will be within 300 feet of regional shopping mall
- Transferring rail patrons will be within 300 feet of bus facility
- Retains multiple options for extensions to the north
- Reduces potential pedestrian/vehicle conflicts
- May avoid major property impacts to Northgate Station retail plaza located south of NE 100th



## Station located between NE 100th and NE 103rd

- Utilizes existing bus transit center
- Transferring rail patrons within 300 feet of bus facility
- Retains multiple options for extensions to the north
- Reduces potential pedestrian/vehicle conflicts
- Private property impacts to Northgate Station retail center to the south





## METRO KING COUNTY

### Station located between NE 100th and NE 103rd on expanded site

- Rotates transit center 90 degrees, so bus access comes from 1st Avenue NE and 3rd Avenue NE
- Utilizes some of private property located to the east of existing transit center site
- Creates a new north-south street, 3rd Avenue, between 100th and 103rd for buses
- Incorporates transit-oriented development into the transit facility design

# Appendix

## NOTES FROM SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

**Color of Team: YELLOW**

Facilitator: Denise Lathrop

### Alternative A

#### Strengths

- Co-location of community facilities is good.
- Connection across I-5 is good.
- Only good point is potentially developed near 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Likes access across I-5.
- Strength is little park [library site?], but this does not outweigh the underdevelopment.

#### Weaknesses

- Does not include a park or creek. Library and community center not near [park or creek]. Nothing located near transportation. Needs to be a destination.
- Does not look very developed. This plan doesn't deal with the big blank area of the south parking lot.
- How will people get from transit to other facilities? Too much undecided.
- This plan is not free from litigation problem

#### Other comments

- Structured parking on North Seattle Community College side could provide motivation for lidded crossing of I-5. Lid leaves daylighting idea hanging.
- Last time 6 of 7 groups supported daylighting. This leaves that out.
- If we don't make clear choices, this is exactly what could happen in a month or so. Funding for A is approved and this is low risk.
- Exists as a way for library and park and community center to move forward.

### Alternative B

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#### Strengths

- Like light rail connection to Northgate Mall. Like office and retail near transit center. Residential housing is very good. Creek is there.
- Like access to library and community center from transit and light rail.
- Like transit center with better connection to mall. May promote development of other businesses. Pushing development to the west is good.
- Like residential development with parking.

#### Weaknesses

- What about personal safety?
- Big minus is no access to habitat area.
- Remembers Square Lake in South Lot. Doesn't like idea of restored natural area without access.
- What does 125-foot development to west do to availability of light [in nearby outdoor areas]?
- Wants a realistic proposition for creek daylight. This is not it. Need pedestrian access and realistic cost estimate.
- Divides community by saying have to give up north park-and-ride as park in order to get daylighted creek.

#### Other comments

- Don't know about parking - skeptical of it really happening. Likewise development on the mall property. Skeptical of Northgate Way improvements - can they work? Wants to see good sidewalks and nice places for people.
- Co-location of library and community center - not sure if this is good because removes motivation for pedestrian-friendly 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

- Recommend additional pedestrian access to natural area.
- Need to provide more parks for open, green space.
- Alternative space for ballfields may exist.
- We do want public access and enjoyment of creek. Can't create pristine space in middle of urban village.
- Creek space is larger than necessary.
- Daylighted creek doesn't have to be flat. Can have channeled creek with terraces. Doesn't have to be a swamp.

### Alternative C

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#### Strengths

- Alternative C has a more realistic version of daylighted creek than Alternative B.
- Makes sense to go over transit center with retail and office but requires lots of cooperation between public and private.
- Light rail station platform over NE 103<sup>rd</sup> Street is good. Adding office and retail over top is good. Commercial development needs attractive space too. Housing is good.
- Alternative C is the only one with a Town Center. Northgate needs a town center. Co-location of library and community center is good. Employees in area need green space - this alternative is best for that.
- Likes divided south lot with pedestrian-friendly street - this gives better access and streetscape.

#### Weaknesses

- Doesn't like sale of north park-and-ride to fund other amenities. Park space on south lot is too small. We need to think bigger.
- Want park on north park-and-ride.
- Is width of natural area in Alternative C sufficient for daylighting a creek?
- One problem is creek doesn't go all the way to west side [to 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE]. Want daylighted creek, not a wetland.

#### Other comments

- 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue improvement, and development, will eventually happen (by market).

### Alternative D

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#### Strengths

- Light rail placement is good.
- Access across I-5 is good.

#### Weaknesses

- Doesn't deal with creek.
- Won't work because community center can't be right on top of creek.
- The co-location of the library and community center is lost. Oppose separating these facilities.
- Design layout isn't efficient. Community center and library should be together.
- No green space, no creek.
- Southeast corner of main mall property is not realistic as a "focus" for neighborhood because it needs to become a detention pond.
- Thinking too small [with respect to green space]. The more people you have, the more green space you need.
- Buildings are too tall in western portion of the site.

#### Other comments

- None.

## Key Points presented to larger group

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- **Alternative A:**
  - Strength: accessibility across I-5.
  - Strength: only plan that allows playfield adjacent to community center.
  - Strength: Allows beginning of development of pedestrian-friendly 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
  - Strength: Allows library and parks - all approved projects - to move forward.
  - Weakness: Ignores South Lot and doesn't deal with the creek.
  - Weakness: Gives up opportunity for synergy alternatives on South Lot.
- **Alternative B:**
  - Strengths: Office, retail and housing near transit. Daylighting of creek is good. I-5 crossing is a strength. Some synergy with NE 103<sup>rd</sup> Street by moving transit [platform] further north. Community center and library have street presence.
  - Weakness: Lack of access to natural area. Safety might be concern. Large amount of space devoted to creek is more than necessary. Creek daylighting and open space need modification to meet the needs of interactive [recreational] use. Don't sacrifice north park-and-ride as a park.
- **Alternative C:**
  - Strengths: More realistic daylighting, and design of office and retail uses over parking. Breaking up the superblock with streetscape features. Library and community center co-located and next to park.
  - Weaknesses: Don't want to sacrifice park on north park-and-ride. Creek doesn't go to west edge (1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE).
  - Problem: Timing of library and community center, because they want to move ahead; and the shown configuration of library and community center lessens visibility [of these public facilities].
- **Alternative D:**
  - Strengths: access across I-5. Light rail station platform spanning NE 103<sup>rd</sup> Street.
  - Weaknesses: Separation of library and community center. Not much different from GDP. Not efficient for public space. No green space or creek. Use of southeast corner of main Mall property as public space seems unrealistic. Doesn't represent many of the teams' ideas from the previous workshop.

**Color of Team: GREEN**

Facilitator: Dee Endelman

**Alternative A**

**Strengths**

- Location of the library and community center midway along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE would stimulate pedestrian activity on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- Pedestrian connection to the proposed park on the north park-and-ride.
- Pedestrian [and vehicular] connections across I-5.
- Community center ↔ playfield connection is good. Would like two playfields to be provided.
- Co-location of library and community center. Gets the library and community center closer together.
- Potential to improve the pedestrian orientation of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. Good pedestrian connections to Northgate Mall.
- Can be implemented more immediately and does not preclude future amenities on South Lot.
- This is the easy way to get library and community center.

**Weaknesses**

- Pedestrian connections are weak.
- Too little open space is included to meet the urban center goal, and does not take advantage of opportunities for open space in the South Lot.
- Feeble attempt - not much detail given.
- Access limited to 5<sup>th</sup> only.
- Broader opportunities for open space lost.
- Town center/open space concepts not supported.
- No idea what will happen to Northgate Mall [re: future development].
- Lack of detail on pedestrian amenities, and the fact that South Lot is left open for development.
- Lack of pedestrian/transit connection to community center/library.
- Missing a post office or civic center.
- The influence that the private owner would retain over large tracts (true for all).

**Other comments**

- None.

**Alternative B**

**Strengths**

- Increased open space.
- Inclusion of rental housing.
- Office and retail uses.
- Thornton Creek daylighted.
- Variety of uses is good.
- Would eliminate the litigation issues over daylighting.
- Open space would come closer to meeting [areawide] open space needs (making up the existing deficit).

**Weaknesses**

- Over-concentrates improvements in the South Lot.
- Unclear how the spaces would relate to people.
- Lack of any amenities north of the South Lot.
- Financial feasibility.
- Private development dominates over public/civic spaces.
- Underground parking lots may be infeasible
- Private housing might have to be up-scale.

- The large open spaces may pose a public safety problem.
- Does not take advantage of north playfield/park possibilities.
- Poor [pedestrian] connections between north and south.
- Potential for a library within a mixed use building is lost.
- Housing too concentrated in one location.
- Nothing to improve street life on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

#### Other comments

- None.

### Alternative C

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#### Strengths

- South Lot includes stronger amenities, and acts as a much stronger urban center.
- This is a good compromise and incorporates the mall better than the other alternatives.
- Pedestrian orientation to 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue (up and down).
- Replaces street grid and therefore helps break down mass [bulk of buildings placed on the site].
- The 4 acres of open space is a plus.
- Provides potential for wetlands.
- Inclusion of north park-and-ride as park is good.

#### Weaknesses

- Distance between the north and south parking lots needs to be addressed.
- Curved street impact [on NE 100<sup>th</sup> St. and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE traffic] not assessed and hard to envision how it would work.
- Pedestrian connections to neighborhood are poor and need more attention.
- Bon Tire site looks bare.
- Concentration of housing in one location may increase scale and create incompatibilities with adjacent development - Housing needs to be dispersed.
- Pedestrian connections are unclear and need much more attention.
- Lack of obvious participation from key large property owner.
- The [pedestrian] connection between Northgate Way and NE 103<sup>rd</sup> Street is missing.
- Worry about the feasibility of the library and community center.
- Opportunities to tie 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue development to the center are lost - Many development options are lost.
- Far too heavy emphasis on retail.
- Thornton Creek not fully developed.
- Playfields lacking in conjunction with the community center.

#### Other comments

- None.

### Alternative D

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#### Strengths

- Increased detention at the southeast corner of the main mall property.
- Opportunity to visually link the library and community center.
- Might be able to implement library sooner, and independently.
- Inclusion of park at north park-and-ride.
- Connection between the north and south is better.
- Stronger pedestrian environment along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- Community center/library reads better from 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- Breaks down the scale of the South Lot.
- Market/green space at the Malmo property.
- Coordination good - but put it on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- By concentrating at one location, it leaves other areas open for future opportunities.

### Weaknesses

- Auto accessibility.
- Lack of Thornton Creek daylighting.
- Lack of a tie between community [center] and playfield.
- Scale is very intense over the whole area.
- Lack of open space (only 2 acres).
- Not enough green space.
- Hard for seniors to get around.
- Not practical to lose both the open space and creek.
- Housing might be better spread out rather than concentrated.
- Isolation/isolation/isolation: town center too concentrated.

### Other comments

- None.

### Key Points presented to larger group

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- **Alternative A:**  
--Two thumbs down: just too cautious. Might like the co-location aspect. Thornton Creek not a part of the plan.
- **Alternative B:**  
--Better than Alternative A, and closer to a visionary plan, but it still lacks something on the South Lot. May be better if open space from Alternative A is combined [with public facility uses]...too few civic uses on South Lot. Need more housing on South Lot. It is an oasis in the urban desert.
- **Alternative C:**  
--Better than Alternative A, but worse than Alternative B. Getting compromise. Has improvement at north and south [of core area] but lacks a "spark" in the center. Community center and library location too dependent on other things happening on the site.
- **Alternative D:**  
--Lack of creek makes it undesirable. Intensity is overwhelming and eliminates open space. Town center too internal and does not seem to be for everyone.  
--Value of open spaces and creek daylighting are key values that should be incorporated into a final design. Need both active open space (playfields) and passive open space.  
--Key issue is a need for retail/pedestrian connections, particularly 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.  
--It is important that the library and community need to go forward independently, [without needing to] resolve all other [South Lot development] issues.  
--Major player missing - Simon.

**Color of Team: GOLD**

Facilitator: Jon Layzer

**Alternative A****Strengths**

- This alternative is a reality check: it is what can be done now.
- Opinion in favor of an athletic field at vacant property on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE (northeast of the Bon Tire site).
- Like the more central location on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE (Bon Tire) for the library and community center, to draw people up and down 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, along with the north park-and-ride as park.
- Like the opportunity to have public uses in the quieter area east of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE (field and library/community center).
- Like the closer distance between library and northern park.

**Weaknesses**

- The depictions of future development on the main mall property (to street) are just wishful thinking, and probably won't happen.
- Have to designate something for the South Lot, can't just say we'll deal with that later.
- There is not a clear definition of pedestrian connections between library and transit center.
- Not enough of an urban focus or activity node established at Bon Tire site [to foster growth of a more vital center].
- Doesn't address what happens at the South Lot, which should be resolved.

**Other comments**

- Side question: What is needed to make [a good form of] private development a reality along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE?
- Overall comment on Alternative A: Go for it all now...develop South Lot [in a manner that includes] the daylighted creek, plus the other things described in Alternative A.

**Alternative B****Strengths**

- Light rail station platform straddling NE 103<sup>rd</sup> Street is great idea to improve overall pedestrian accessibility.
- Like the promenade concept, especially if moved eastward to serve as a more convenient pedestrian route north-south across South Lot.
- Likes the daylighted creek and adjacent residential development.
- Like the nice curved design [of the promenade axis], and location of the library and community center.
- Like the location of the library and community center at NE 103<sup>rd</sup> St. better than at the Bon Tire site.
- Likes the concentration of uses on the South Lot.
- Establishes a southern greenbelt, gives a sense of place, gives something "local" as an amenity. An accessible place for neighbors.

**Weaknesses**

- All of the development and amenities are located in the South Lot, meaning there is less opportunity for a cohesive pattern of development to evolve with the remaining portion of the core area.
- There is a tradeoff that the north park-and-ride is no longer assumed in this plan. However, this northern park cancellation is a "false dichotomy" [because it tries to force public to choose between two park facilities that should both be provided].
- Should do South Lot open space, but also several other improvements for environmental benefits (northern park, Mall property drainage control, etc.).

- Don't want to be held "hostage" regarding use of park funds, [meaning that the north park-and-ride park development shouldn't be delayed by wrangling about South Lot development plans.]
- Perhaps not enough space is allocated for an intensely developed [mixed use] area on the South Lot. Should move the promenade alignment further to east. There is a possible opportunity to accommodate other good urban uses in the recommended larger developed area.

#### Other comments

- None.

### Alternative C

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#### Strengths

- Park at north park-and-ride. Open space at both ends of the core area. Trying to serve more areas with amenities.
- More room for TOD development, with its benefits.

#### Weaknesses

- Creek/wetland environment is a little too squeezed in area. Would it work as a creek?
- Perhaps more reliance on private sector for 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE improvements means less certainty these improvements will be done.
- Auto accessibility on new 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue segment would detract from urban/pedestrian quality on the South Lot (person endorses Redmond Town Center as positive example).
- Not enough area devoted to daylighted stream/open space amenity.
- Anti-auto access on new 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue segment. Do something with a pedestrian emphasis instead. Even less need for vehicular access if the buses routed through Transit Center would not use this street.
- The residential loop road at 5<sup>th</sup>/100<sup>th</sup> is seen as a feature without benefits. Adjacency of this street to open space is seen as not preferable; should have residential adjacency to open spaces instead.
- Internal roads on South Lot are too wide, with emphasis on autos. Should have more pedestrian emphasis.

#### Other comments

- None.

### Alternative D

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#### Strengths

- Like the park or local market in southeast corner of main mall property.
- Possibly provides a greater catalyst for other development on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue (because library and community center on different sites).
- Like the light rail platform straddling NE 103<sup>rd</sup> Street.
- Addresses more of the area (by distributing the amenities and development benefits). Generally likes the urban densities.
- Like the separation between library and community center (to provide multiple activity nodes).
- Like the overall housing density shown.

#### Weaknesses

- Too much paving on the South Lot.
- Doesn't offer as many attractive features as Alternative B, and is a lost opportunity for something better.
- Too many buildings on the South Lot, and no daylighting.
- Doesn't take advantage of the opportunity for pedestrian/open space improvements and reduced auto emphasis on the South Lot.

**Other comments**

- None.

**Key Points presented to larger group**

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Development-related recommendations

- Don't need to cover the whole area [of the South Lot] with development. Some [moderate] level of development is acceptable. The pattern of development should be intermingled with open spaces and pedestrian areas that would break up building bulk and distribute it appropriately on the property. Don't emphasize automobile accessibility through the site [greater emphasis on pedestrian accessibility within the site].
- Try to spread the benefits/amenities of public facilities and development over a larger area.
- Choices regarding open space and use of funding should not be an either/or proposition (north park-and-ride OR daylighting).

Environment-related recommendations

- A daylighted creek will have more overall benefit over the long, long term. It will provide preservation and restoration of natural features, be attractive and have ecological and educational benefits. It will have more lasting value [than development].
- The creek should be a focus of physical design and planning, and an organizing principle.
- Favor the provision of pedestrian/accessibility benefits, in general.
- Would like north park-and-ride as park, and a playfield on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and daylighted creek, to provide benefit to the northern, middle, and southern areas of the core.
- A creek/open space could become an identifying character element of the area. "Water" and ecological-oriented design should be pursued as broad design themes with many possible expressions, for environmental benefit, increased public awareness benefits and public enthusiasm about creeks.

Public Facilities/Co-location recommendations

- Two people favor co-location of facilities on the South Lot, in proximity to each other, to contribute to the vitality of a Town Center.
- Two people generally favor locations separated by one block (e.g., Bon Tire site and 5<sup>th</sup>/103<sup>rd</sup> Street) to help create multiple activity nodes on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE [seen as greater benefit to overall urban center].
- Bon Tire could be a good site, particularly if the City can provide the athletic fields on vacant properties nearby (on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE).

Implementation strategies recommendations

- Don't have a sense of how the various financial strategies can be put together to make it happen. Agencies maybe don't either. We shouldn't miss this opportunity.
- Would like a commitment on how this can be done, even if over the long term (10-20 years).
- Need to keep a sense of urgency to make progress.
- Timeline is important.

**Color of Team: LIGHT BLUE**

Facilitator: Vanessa Murdock

**Alternative A**

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**Strengths**

- Library and community center on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE act as magnets for pedestrians—and they are funded. Identifies other magnets as well.
- Playfields.
- Like the way it looks, co-location, plaza [at Bon Tire site].
- Underground parking.
- Footprint of structures less than other alternatives but long-term might have more impacts (South Lot development not addressed).
- Access across I-5.
- Park.

**Weaknesses**

- Not good public exposure [at the Bon Tire site]. Seek access on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- South Lot not addressed—doesn't deal with issues.
- Not transformative.
- Doesn't take care of drainage issues, creek and salmon.
- South Lot is open to anything.
- Doesn't meet goals.
- Doesn't take into account what citizens want.
- Bon Tire facility siting example doesn't address pedestrian issues south of site: pedestrian access to/from NE 105<sup>th</sup> Street needed.
- Doesn't take advantage of public money that could be available to buy South Lot.

**Other comments**

- None.

**Alternative B**

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**Strengths**

- Restores creek to most natural condition.
- Greater greenspace with amenities.
- Transformative: takes advantage of opportunities at the South Lot—all the elements people are interested in—transit, commercial development, etc.
- Apartments will have view and be desirable.
- Co-location of public facilities is desirable—near transit.
- Light rail platform straddling NE 103<sup>rd</sup> Street.

**Weaknesses**

- No park—need to get tax dollars invested now.
- Cost. However, lack of agreement on how City is estimating cost.
- Not enough housing—creek corridor won't feel safe at night.
- [Relative lack of] pedestrian access to creek from southeast.
- Safety at South Lot—dark, big park, not enough housing—need 24-hour presence.
- Grade difference [across the South Lot, relationship of uses and topography] not adequately addressed.

**Other comments**

- None

## Alternative C

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### Strengths

- This alternative has the best pedestrian connections between South Lot and other areas.
- Population density better—resulting in improved safety over Alternative B.
- Development is a way to pay for the South Lot.
- Over-building [e.g. stacking of uses in mixed-use development] is favored.

### Weaknesses

- Where are the pedestrian amenities?—This is only counting on private development for street-side shops.
- Make sure public facilities happen regardless of private development—public/private partnership makes us nervous.
- This alternative lacks purpose [motivation] for developing pedestrian-friendly street on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- No connection between western end [of South Lot site] and upstream reaches of [Thornton Creek].

### Other comments

- None.

## Alternative D

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### Strengths

- Density.
- Magnet on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue with library.
- Concentrates heavier uses towards freeway.
- Compact development—walkable between library and community center.
- Housing and transit nearby.

### Weaknesses

- Doesn't address creek. No creek.
- Nothing unique—could be anywhere in city.
- Least representative of what citizens want.
- Doesn't make sense.
- Too auto-oriented.
- No environmental amenity.
- Put open space where creek is and flip-flop the market [former Malmo site] and community center.

### Other comments

- None.

## Key Points presented to larger group (“Points of Agreement”)

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- Co-location of library and community center.
- Playfields may be needed as future amenity.
- Underground parking is a good design principle.
- Small footprints of buildings is a good design principle.
- Access across I-5 is a good idea.
- Park at north park-and-ride is a good idea.
- Pedestrian improvements favored, important to south and east neighborhoods along I-5.
- Most people want daylighting.
- Need to take advantage of public funding already in place for community center and
- Public safety is an important design principle.
- Want a site design that is transformative.
  - Prefer the concepts of stacking uses and mixing uses for efficiency [and vitality].

**Color of Team: RED**

Facilitator: Maryann Moorman

**Alternative A**

**Strengths**

- Library can move ahead more quickly (beginning decisions re: options). Have an option on Bon tire site to preserve this option
- Park/community center puts some focus on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE - improvements on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue may happen more in a more timely manner.
- Need something on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue - to balance activity on Northgate Mall and South Lot sites. Public sector can set the tone with facilities on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- Q: How has the City organized a system for making progress, and hierarchy for involving elected officials and community?
- Public presence on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue will facilitate development of Northgate Way
- Library (not necessarily community center) on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue leaves more space for open space/increased sidewalk widths, which would be more pedestrian-friendly.
- Option on Bon site would allow public influence on site even if library goes elsewhere.
- Siting on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue makes it easier to go five stories and include housing.

**Weaknesses**

- Need more specifics regarding South Lot.
- Like co-location of library and community center - but could be too far from transit center, creating a pedestrian mobility issue.
- Does not offer any opportunity for creek daylighting or restoration.
- Green spaces not connected. Green space on South Lot would provide connection.
- Would be nice to have public/civic presence on South Lot.
- Puts light rail all south of NE 103<sup>rd</sup> Street without direct access to main Mall property.

**Other comments**

- Request for public performance space.
- Q: How can we ensure that pedestrian improvements will be done?
- Q: Does SeaTran see itself as a player? (A: Yes.)
- Creating view opportunities would provide a development amenity - that can increase value.

**Alternative B**

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**Strengths**

- Aesthetically pleasing
  - maximizes amount of open space;
  - surface water management is well handled (curves slow water);
  - floodplain would be available for stormwater detention/[retention].
- Strong statement about anchoring a major housing/town center/office development
- Good pedestrian treatment.
- Active recreation presence is good (suggest a skate park, ball fields).
- Incorporates community facilities.
- Parking - multiple users.
  - Could use some of the slope in creekside area for an amphitheater (would be good to locate by community center).
  - Many design solutions are available for creating slope [in the open space area].

**Weaknesses**

- Missing potential development opportunities on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE - need to draw people east.
  - Tall rockery on main mall property could be replaced by stores or entertainment uses.
- Does not include the park at north park-and-ride (although, this may not be a given. More dollars would be needed).

- An amount of building potential is lost, [with implications for] tax revenues.
- Too much concentration of people toward freeway.
- Too many eggs in one basket - large part of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue is untouched in this alternative.
- May not need to solve all problems (make room for all urban center needs) in the South Lot.
- Could compromise: reduce open space a bit to make more room for housing.
- South Lot is not an urban space - adjust plan, to make library/community center sites more urbane (co-located facilities in Alternative B lose some of the "electricity" [vitality, synergy] of facility plan in Alternative C). Green Lake offered as an example of successful open space with urban "electricity."
- Metro has done a recent study - may need 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue back, or a bridge over the creek for access to transit center.
  - This could be an amenity.
  - Covered transit/rail connection shown on Alternative B could work for Metro.

#### Other comments

- Financial resources need to be found to close the gap.

#### Alternative C

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##### Strengths

- Good balance of public infrastructure and private development, waterways and transit.
- Price seems doable.
- Good bus circulation on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE.
- Light rail gets up into mall property (north of NE 103<sup>rd</sup> Street).
- Pedestrian circulation is good (maintain solar access).
- Future development/users become community, served by the transit services/facilities.

##### Weaknesses

- Not enough room for stormwater detention, habitat or water quality treatment (unless detention facility is provided in the southeast corner of mall).

#### Other comments

- Need space for active recreation (ball fields, skate parks), especially for youth. Although, North District Community Council is considering a skate park in Lake City (may not need two in the area).
- Moving community center to the Bon Tire site could free up space for active recreation or free up space on South Lot for revenue-generating development.
- Provide zoning or other types of incentives to achieve development goals.
- I-5 pedestrian crossing is an assumed amenity for all alternatives.

#### Alternative D

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##### Strengths

- Public presence on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE is good. Although best co-located, the separation of the library and community center would be OK, to enliven 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- More density/development (more viable due to increased dollars).
- Development appears too boxy.
- Southeast corner of mall property: open space would help pedestrian experience.
- Development on street also pedestrian-friendly.
- Development boxes show urban footprint - architectural detail would alleviate sense of boxiness.
- Would strengthen 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, drawing people south from Target.

##### Weaknesses

- Big apartment buildings do not seem inviting to pedestrians (may be private space).
- Lack of daylighting (no open space, watershed improvements).

- City development of housing on South Lot could be dollar generator.
- Traffic congestion (especially cut-through traffic). Need for cars maybe lessened by mixed-use development and location next to transit.

**Other comments**

- None.

**Key Points presented to larger group**

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- Dialogue should continue with all property owners.
- Open space/creek improvement would help to balance the urban intensity.
- Future development needs to have relevance for community in short- and long-term.
- Design needs to be family/youth-friendly (don't forget about 16-20 year olds in the mix), seniors too.
- Consider design and use of entire area (focused on the South Lot here), as well as entire urban center (1<sup>st</sup> Ave to Roosevelt to...).
- What does the South Lot have to offer?
- Open space/creek serves functional needs and the health of the watershed.
- Need to distribute attractions within reasonable proximity to everyone (walkability is important).

**Color of Team: DARK BLUE**

Facilitator: Marcia Wagoner

**Alternative A**

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**Strengths**

- Co-Location on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue would be feasible, it would avoid litigation problems on South Lot, it would improve pedestrian quality on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, and would be closer to senior housing in the north. It is favored by the Maple Leaf Executive Council of the Community Council.
- Co-location at the Bon Tire site would leave more opportunity on the South Lot for other features (e.g., daylighting a creek).
- Park at north park-and-ride: It would provide green space and a decent park serving the surrounding residential areas, including several schools. It would satisfy the Northgate Plan and wishes of several community members, including those from Victory Heights, Haller Lake and Maple Leaf.

**Weaknesses**

- This is the “default” or “timid” alternative.
- The library and community center together would not offer enough space [on the Bon Tire site] for [future] expansion.
- Community center is only “OK” there...library [could be] on South Lot overlooking a daylighted creek (cop-out because daylighting is affordable).
- No housing shown (this is an urban center).
- Lost opportunities to daylight Thornton Creek and pursue a “bigger idea” [for improving the quality of the core as a town center].
- Doesn’t show enough pedestrian improvements to Northgate Way (refer to Orange Team).
- No other pedestrian-related uses on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

**Other comments**

- [All alternatives should have a park at the north park-and-ride].
- Siting of facilities [is] more responsive to creek changing.
- Air rights over I-5.
- “Breakthrough street.” Mall (at 105<sup>th</sup> St.) becomes more human: put development on other parts of site.
- NE 108<sup>th</sup> Street: take pressure off Northgate Way. Walkway, create more human level.
- Access to users on South Lot can be done through existing bus or shuttle.
- Purchase Bon Tire site now.
- TIF financing: city-dedicated tax revenue.

**Alternative B**

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**Strengths**

- This was the Dark Blue team’s favorite alternative.
- Like the daylighted creek (core community value); becomes politically possible; extend it farther to the west.
- Opportunity for more affordable housing.
- Community center and library are interpreted to be more feasible because of the daylighted creek.
- Like the light rail platform straddling NE 103<sup>rd</sup> Street.
- Like the west end of South Lot—lid over transit center.
- Like the arcing axis of the pedestrian “colonnade.” This arc should be continued onto the main Mall property.

**Weaknesses**

- No increase in pedestrian friendliness on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. No activities they would wish to visit.
- No park at north park-and-ride (recommend consolidating transit uses).
- Not enough low-income, affordable housing (somewhere between Alternatives B and C).
- Library and community center on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE would give you that north-south connection.
- Park-and-ride capacity should be centered around transit uses, not at north park-and-ride.

**Other comments**

- Angles and natural forms. Other: include Malmo site for creek. Extend colonnade on South Lot into the Mall property. Good absorption, site pleasing.
- If community center moved to Bon Tire site, library stays on South Lot, then future educational center expansion is possible.
- Keep south edge available for future creek daylighting—work on headwater areas, don't develop now, so they can be worked on later.
- Needs to focus as both regional (transit) and neighborhood area (amenities).
- Concurrency: GMA not addressed.
- Bigger open space than needed is shown for Alternative B: could do improvements that would resemble the scale of the existing creek, then make funds available for park at north park-and-ride.
- Put community center on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, then leave more space for the creek.
- Leave enough area for parking for the creek.
- Extend grid through area, bridge over creek.
- Could build a parking structure in the park-and-ride lot west of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE, which would leave more space for the creek.
- Build across I-5: put structure on NSCC lot—they would get revenue, all get connections, and more space for creek.
- [Should have more than one scenario with daylighting, since most of the groups at the first workshop favored daylighting.]
- [Should extend a greenspace/creek corridor to 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE.]

**Alternative C****Strengths**

- The north park-and-ride as a park would meet requirement of Northgate Comprehensive Plan.
- [The smaller natural area is perhaps more in keeping with the scale of the Thornton Creek segment immediately east of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.]
- [The smaller natural area would allow more area for housing and other positive urban features.]

**Weaknesses**

- [Team was confused about whether this was supposed to contain a creek or a wetland. Prefer that any such feature use the water in the pipe.]
- Needs to be a daylighted creek rather than a wetland.
- There is insufficient area (not wide enough) to address needs of a daylighted creek. "Wetland habitat" is not enough, too diminished.
- Too much development at southwest corner of South Lot.
- Re: new 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE segment. There are too many roads already; this would take space away from alternate (pedestrian) users.
- General opinion disliking the access street at the southeast corner of the South Lot. Also: turn it into a pedestrian route, and add another narrow road [within that developed area].

**Other comments**

- The team participants had different views on the best size and scale of the creek.
- The team participants had mixed views about whether a new 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue segment on the South Lot should accommodate vehicle access, or just be a pedestrian feature.
- Suggestion to curve the alignment of new 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE segment.
- Bridge on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE over creek.
- [Favor] housing on west side of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- Open up NE 98<sup>th</sup> Street to west, as another access to business park.
- Generally favor pursuing development on a lid over I-5.
- Money is available now, so buy two of Simon's four lots now. Pro Parks has money, data from TC (transit center) purchases. This should be a priority.
- Put community center on the Bon Tire site, leave library and housing on other development. Go back to Alternative B.
- South Lot is too far away to be the real Town Center. Could be a mini-center.
- Hybrid of Alternatives B and C: use the east side of Alternative B and west side of Alternative C. Leave space for daylighting the creek.
- Individual preference: to group all amenities together.
- Community center on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE—room for expansion later.

**Alternative D**

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**Strengths**

- Nothing noted.

**Weaknesses**

- Nothing noted.

**Other comments**

- General comment made about having similar opinions for elements of Alternative D that are in common with Alternative C (use of 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE, space for housing development).

**Key Points presented to larger group**

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- Alternative A:
  - Not bold enough on pedestrian improvements.
  - Park at north park-and-ride is essential.
  - Co-location is good, not enough room to discuss.
  - South Lot: opportunities exist regardless of daylighting.
  - Cut-through street with Mall.
  - 108<sup>th</sup> Street pedestrian way.
  - Site facilities in relationship to arc of creek.
- Other alternatives: points as discussed above.

**Color of Team: Orange**

Facilitator: Paul Tomita

**Alternative A**

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**Strengths**

- [The library and community center would act as] triggers for potential development on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- Parks and playfields identified—good for teens.
- Co-location and site choice for community center and library (Bon Tire) make it feasible and ensure it is built on time and on budget.
- Maintaining current orientation of transit center.

**Weaknesses**

- Realistic detention on South Lot [not shown].
- [Lack of] open space.
- Daylighting [of creek not shown].
- South Lot is still an unknown.
- Lack of pedestrian-friendly amenities—especially if development doesn't happen along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE or if it happens like the Target development.
- Co-location site—5<sup>th</sup> Avenue isn't pedestrian friendly and would be difficult to make it so.
- Co-location site [Bon Tire] is too small.

**Other comments**

- City's commitment to South Lot.

**Alternative B**

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**Strengths**

- Good recreational use.
- More access and pedestrian crossings.
- Good detention and water quality.
- Co-location of facilities.
- Good open space.

**Weaknesses**

- No more development—all the schemes have too much new development.
- Totally unacceptable to not have a park at the north park-and-ride. We can't lose this park.
- South Lot seems too suburban.

**Other comments**

- Is the cost realistically achievable?
- Addressing traffic problems along Northgate Way and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

**Alternative C**

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**Strengths**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE is re-established.
- Good design concepts on South Lot, good new streets.

- More realistic proportion of development.
- Additional detention and water treatment.
- Good pedestrian flow.
- Nice balance between open space and development.
- Good mixed use.
- “European” density.

#### **Weaknesses**

- Community center is too far from park.
- Need to break up “blobs” into smaller parcel developments.
- No hotels on South Lot, and no need for a convention center.
- Too many question marks on development of Simon’s properties.

#### **Other comments**

- None noted.

#### **Alternative D**

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##### **Strengths**

- Good location for the library—gets people walking from South Lot.
- Nice traffic flow around South Lot.
- Nice to have facilities scattered—provides destination sites.
- Access across I-5.
- Adds housing and shopping where it needs to be.
- Community center near transit center.

##### **Weaknesses**

- Unacceptable daylighting and detention.
- Not enough playfields near community center.
- Switch locations of library and community center.

##### **Other comments**

- Southeast corner of mall property needs to remain as a detention pond—this should be required on all schemes.
- Bicycle friendly features?

#### **Key Points presented to larger group**

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- Community center near park and playfields.
- Keep the north park.
- Mixed use above the library.
- Balanced relationship between open space and density.
- Detention for the main mall property and South Lot.
- Daylighting to maximize property values.

# FUNDING OPTIONS

Although there are many financing mechanisms described in the tables below, it should be borne in mind that many of these funding sources are restricted with respect to the projects they can be used to fund. In addition, there is a very strong demand for limited public resources.

	Mechanism	Authority	Who Pays	Existing Legal Authority	New Money or Reallocation	Amount	Authorized Uses	Comments
<b>Voter Approved Bonds (Libraries for All)</b>	Excess property tax	Passed November 1998	Seattle Property Owners	Yes	New	\$235M total over 8 years. Amount includes \$196M in voter-approved bonds, \$25M in private donations, and \$13M in other funding sources.	Design, construction, acquisition, improvement, renovation, and equipping of neighborhood and Central Library facilities.	\$5.119M for Northgate branch
<b>Levy Lid Lift (Seattle Center and Community Centers)</b>	Additional regular property taxes	Passed November 1999	Seattle Property Owners	Yes	New	Total Levy \$72M over 8 years beginning in 2000. \$36M for Seattle Center Performance Hall and Festival Pavilion and \$36M for 11 Community Centers and Gathering Places	\$36M in Community Centers is to be used for the following: Ballard NSC (\$1M), Belltown gathering space (\$1.9M), Chinatown/ID CC (\$2.1M), High Point CC (\$3.6M), Jefferson Park CC (\$2.5 M), Lake City NSC (\$1M) Northgate CC (\$8.2M), Sand Point CC (\$3M), Southwest CC (\$2.3M), Van Asselt (\$3.9M) and Yesler CC (\$6.6M).	Northgate Community Center \$8.2M
<b>Pro Parks Levy Lid Lift</b>	Additional regular property taxes	Passed November 2000	Seattle Property Owners	Yes	New	\$198.2M total.		\$4M for Northgate area park; Pro Parks levy includes a \$10M Opportunity Fund for new acquisition and new development projects identified by neighborhood community groups. Funding priorities for this program include under-served areas, rapidly growing areas (especially in Urban Village locations), and areas and projects in Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas.
<b>Voter Approved Bonds (New)</b>	Ballot measure, then excess property tax	Requires 60% vote, 40% turnout of voters at last general	Seattle Property Owners	Yes	New	Limited only by legal remaining capacity. In 2000, the City has over \$3B of voter approved debt capacity available. (as of 6/99)	Capital purposes only, excluding replacement of equipment. Each ballot measure must be for a single purpose (single project or rationally unified group of projects).	
<b>Levy Lid Lift (New)</b>	Ballot measure, then additional regular property tax	Requires 50% vote	Seattle Property Owners	Yes	New	For 2000, about \$21.4M of unused levy lid lift capacity exists. Projections for future lid lift capacity depend on growth in assessed value and growth in the City's general purpose regular property tax revenue. For 2001, about \$41M of unused levy lid lift capacity is projected to exist, assuming 12.5% growth in assessed value and 6% increase in the general purpose levy. (as of 6/99)	Can be used for any purpose for any length of time, however, if the City wants to bond against levy proceeds, the duration of the levy can be for no more than 9 years.	I-722 constrains increase in Property Taxes. The City of Seattle has challenged the legality of I-722.
<b>Other Public - Excess Levy (New)</b>	Ballot measure, then property tax	Requires 60% vote	Seattle Property Owners	Yes	New	No limit	Anything.	Limited to one year.
<b>Local Improvement District (LID)</b>	Special benefit assessments, which may not be higher on any property than the amount by which the value of that property is increased by the improvement	Council resolution or petition by owners of 50% of area within proposed district; then ordinance after hearing; formation may be blocked by protests from owners who would be assessed for 60% or more of total cost. RCW 35.43	Owners of real property specially benefited by improvement	Yes	New	Depends on special benefits and district support, but typically would not pay 100% of project cost	Any local improvement that increases the value of properties (roads, drainage, sewer, etc.)	Of limited applicability in areas already fully built out. A few large property owners with 60% of total assessed value can block LID. The "typical" LID is about one block in area and usually involves less than ten property owners.
<b>Business Improvement Associations (BIA)</b>	Petition by 60% of businesses and/or by property values to Mayor and Council	Mayor and council approved petition by BIA participants. RCW 35.87A.	Business and/or property owners w/in the identified geographic boundaries	Yes	New/Reallocation	Varies with each BIA and with level of ratepayer assessments.	Determined by BIA Ratepayers Board	Council and Mayor may recommend changes to the BIA boundaries and rate structure. BIA can only exist in business districts. BIA establishment typically cost approximately \$20K for a feasibility study and petition process.
<b>Parking &amp; Business Improvement Association</b>	Petition by 60% of businesses and/or by property values to Mayor and Council	Mayor and council approved petition by BIA participants	Business and/or property owners w/in the identified geographic boundaries typically based on square footage and B&O tax	Yes	New/Reallocation	Varies with each PBIA and with level of ratepayer assessments.	Determined by PBIA Ratepayers Board; typically ratepayers apply revenues to provide additional parking, marketing, cleaning, and security.	Council and Mayor may recommend changes to the PBIA boundaries and rate structure. PBIA can only exist in business districts. PBIA establishment typically cost approximately \$20K for a feasibility study and petition process.

	Mechanism	Authority	Who Pays	Existing Legal Authority	New Money or Reallocation	Amount	Authorized Uses	Comments
<b>User Fees/Rates - Utility Rates</b>	Utility Rate Study	City Council	Rate Payers	Yes	New/Reallocation	Based on annual Utility revenues.	Anything that fits within the mission of the utility as defined by state legislation, common law and City policy.	
<b>REET I</b>	Real Estate Excise Tax of 0.25% on real estate transactions	State authorized mechanism, Council approval of Executive recommendation	Seattle Property Sellers	Yes	New/Reallocation	Depends on real estate market and property values. In 2000, \$9.9M is forecast.	REET I can be used for range of projects specified in the Capital Facilities Element of the Comprehensive Plan, including libraries, administrative facilities, and law enforcement facilities.	
<b>REET II</b>	Real Estate Excise Tax of 0.25% on real estate transactions	State authorized mechanism, Council approval of Executive recommendation	Seattle Property Sellers	Yes	New/Reallocation	Depends on real estate market and property values. In 2000, \$9.9M is forecast.	REET II is more restrictive and is primarily used for parks (excluding acquisition) and transportation public works projects that are specified in the Capital Facilities Element of the Comprehensive Plan.	
<b>Private - Self Organization of Private Business</b>	Contributions from entity comprised of the participating businesses	Private party contracting allow	Neighborhood property owners	yes	New	Limited only by neighborhood willingness.	Anything within the limitations of the signed agreement/contract among the private parties.	City cannot enforce the private party's obligations creating a potential financial risk for the City.
<b>Other Public - Conservation Futures Tax</b>	Annual application process for County funds	County Council	CFT funds are part of the property tax collected by King County.	Yes	New	The City contributes about 33% of the total County property taxes. The tax is expected to generate about \$4-6M per year through 2005.	Open Space Acquisition	County has set aside \$500,000 per year plus 5% of annual take for County Council initiated projects. Other projects are selected by 16 member citizen oversight committee. Projects require a 50% match (cash, land trades, and the cash value of any adjacent or directly linked open space acquired in the previous two years).
<b>Other Public - Community Development Block Grant</b>	Category's Inclusion in Consolidated Plan	Mayor and Council	Federal Tax Payers	Yes	Reallocation	Currently, \$8-9M/year is for "physical development" or one-time capital projects	Funds to benefit low moderate income communities or people	Funds from this source are declining as Seattle demographics change relative to national trends. Significant funding could be redeployed if Council and Executive reprioritize existing commitments. (Sec 108 is borrowing against future CDBG revenues.)
<b>Other Public - Metropolitan Parks District</b>	Ballot measure, then property tax	Requires 50% vote	Seattle Property Owners	Yes	New	\$.50 per \$1,000 assessed value; currently ~ \$25M per year	Acquisition, construction, remodeling, equipping, repairing, maintaining, and operating a public zoo, aquarium, parks, and open space.	Separate jurisdiction. Does not provide a mechanism for existing City employees to stay in City Retirement System. Current MPD considered administratively infeasible.
<b>Other Public - Public Development Authority</b>	Varies. Can include grants, private donations, bond issuance, etc.	City	Users	Yes	New	Varies	Broadly defined by state statutes	Separate jurisdiction. Community based.
<b>Other Public - Public Works Trust Fund</b>	Application for funds	City Council	City funds	Yes	Reallocation	\$10M every two year cycle is maximum, but it is a competitive program with no guarantee of approval.	Infrastructure rehabilitation (roads, utilities or bridges)	Funds basic City maintenance requirements
<b>User Fees/Rates - Parking Meter Fees</b>	Ordinance	City Council	Parkers	Yes	New	At Council's discretion.	Anything.	Under current City policy, primary purpose of parking meters is to encourage turnover, not generate revenue.
<b>General Fund</b>	Budget allocation	City Council	General City taxpayers	Yes	Reallocation	At Council's discretion.	Anything.	Competes with other City needs
<b>General Fund - Neighborhood Matching Fund</b>	Budget allocation	Council	General City taxpayers	New	New/Reallocation	Currently \$3.75M per year	Any project proposed by a qualifying neighborhood organization.	
<b>Private - Donations</b>	Contributions from Private Individuals	Council by ordinance unless gift is covered in gift catalog or donation (within certain dollar amount) is unrestricted.	Private individuals	Yes	New	Varies.	In most cases, conditioned by donor.	Some legal restrictions on City's ability to use donated funds.
<b>Other Public - Commercial Parking Tax</b>	Ordinance	City Council	Parking facility operators or drivers	Yes	New	Depends on amount--no limit. Depending on the level of the tax and how it is structured, could generate from \$6M to \$15M annually.	Transportation purposes	City has supported legislative revisions to broaden the authority. Business has opposed such a tax.
<b>Other Public - Economic Development Agency</b>	Annual process for application for federal funds	City request to Federal Govt.	Federal Tax Payers	Yes	New/Reallocation	Varies	As specified in grant application and award. Typically for use in disadvantaged neighborhoods for community development.	
<b>Other Public - Housing and Urban Development - Brownfield Development Initiative</b>	Annual process for application for federal funds	City request to Federal Govt.	Federal Tax Payers	Yes	New/Reallocation	Varies	As specified in grant application and award. Typically for use in clean-up and redevelopment of brownfields.	

	Mechanism	Authority	Who Pays	Existing Legal Authority	New Money or Reallocation	Amount	Authorized Uses	Comments
<b>Other public - Increase B&amp;O Tax</b>	Ordinance or Ballot measure	Mayor and Council or 50% vote	Companies engaged in business w/in City.	Yes	New	Up to \$6M annually by Council vote: No limit with public vote.	Anything.	Council and Mayor may increase tax by ordinance by up to 6%. Additional increase requires voter approval.
<b>Other Public- Interagency for Outdoor Recreation (IAC)</b>	Annual process for application for State funds	State	State Tax Payers	Yes	New	Parks typically receives about \$1M from the State each year through grant proposals. The success rate has varied over the years.	For outdoor capital improvements (acquisition and development) in the following categories: local parks; water access; trails; and urban wildlife.	
<b>Other Public - Impact Fees</b>	Comp Plan Amendment	City Council	Developers	No	New	Depends on amount of development and legal restrictions	Improvements must have nexus to the development	Project developer is responsible for developing infrastructure in most instances. Current concurrency system in Comp Plan does not allow for imposing development fees, per GMA requirements.
<b>Other Public - Junior Taxing District Authority for Transportation</b>	Ballot measure, then property tax	State, City Council, voters	Real property owners	New	New	\$25M max @50 cents per \$1,000 Assessed Value	Transportation purposes.	This would require a change in the State Legislature. This authority would overlap Metropolitan Parks District authority. So, levying property tax for a "junior district" reduces capacity of MPD on a dollar-for-dollar basis.
<b>Other Public - Local Law Enforcement Block Grant</b>	Annual City process for identifying highest-priority grant-eligible projects.	Mayor and Council approval of LLEBG spending plan	Federal Tax Payers	Yes	Reallocation	\$1.4 M in '99; likely to be reduced in '00	Wide array of law enforcement activities.	Not a likely source of funding for Plan implementation, as the grant amount is decreasing on an annual basis, and the programs funded by the grant are ongoing in nature.
<b>Other Public - Local Option Gas Tax</b>	Ballot measure	State Legislature, King County Council, Countywide voters	Motorists	Yes	New	\$6M per year	Transportation purposes	Currently, it is not administratively feasible for the State to collect this tax. New state law is needed to grant State tax agency additional authority for collection of this tax.
<b>Other Public - Percent for Art</b>	Percentage of certain City capital projects, allocated annually	Council	Rate payers, City tax payers, and grantor agencies	Yes	New/Reallocation	Depends on CIP in a given year and percentage assessed. In 2000, \$1.6M	For purchase of public art. May be used for site integrated art and portions may be used for non-visual art.	May increase depending on Council adoption of Mayoral initiative to increase percent for art funds.
<b>Other Public - Sale of City Property</b>	Property declared surplus by City Departments	Council approval of Executive Recommendation	Depending on source of original property purchase funds. Often bulk of proceeds from property appreciation.	Yes	New/Reallocation	Depends on particular properties and type of sale or redevelopment. Limited number of available parcels.	Any use authorized by Council, except for certain limited exceptions (limits on original fund source - e.g., Only can be used for transportation)	Per City policy and SMC, property proceeds automatically deposited into Cumulative Reserve Subfund.
<b>Other Public - Shoreline Park Improvement Fund (SPIF)</b>	City ordinance	City Council	\$ from the declining fund balance of the SPIF which was established in 1991 and funded by \$25m in payments from METRO as mitigation for the treatment plant at West Point in Discovery Park.	Yes		Council discretion to appropriate remaining fund balance.	Acquisition, planning, renovations, mitigation, studies, improve and enhance park facilities	\$6.3M currently appropriated to: Arboretum Lakeside Trail, Magnuson Park improvements, Myrtle Edwards Park, Smith Cove & Pier 1 acquisition, South Lake Union, the Street End Program, West Lake Union Street Ends & Waterway #1, and West Lake Union Trail.
<b>Other Public - State &amp; Federal Transportation Grants</b>	Application for funds	State or federal government	Motorists	Yes	New	City currently receives about \$15M per year in state and federal transportation grants.	As specified by granting agency. Majority of funds are for major maintenance, safety and congestion relief projects, mainly focused on arterials and regional connections.	

**Note:** In addition to the alternatives in the table, a "Dedicated Tax Stream" have been suggested as possible funding sources.

Prepared by G. Hill, City Budget Office 11/30/00

## PEER REVIEW LETTERS – ENVIRONMENT

### **Questions Provided To Peers:**

Please review the fact sheet which describes the general goals and assumptions used as a basis to develop the scenarios. This fact sheet, and the attached report, describe the type of effort, costs, and improvements needed to realize these scenarios. In your review please consider these questions:

1. The fact sheet's description of detention scenarios will help workshop teams develop scenarios emphasizing detention facilities, paired with other amenities if they wish. The primary goal of detention is for flow control and flood prevention; the specific approaches and designs could also address water quality, habitat, and aesthetic elements.
  - A. Do you agree that creative detention options could provide flow control and address water quality, habitat and aesthetic purposes?
  - B. Does the fact sheet provide sufficient information to describe creative detention options? Would you add other information to better illustrate the range of possible detention-oriented improvements?
2. Please review the assumptions used for the "daylighting" scenarios. These scenarios address environmental/drainage concepts that a few community groups have expressed as desired outcomes for this site.
  - A. Do you think the assumptions regarding minimum slope, buffer, vegetative cover, and general channel design are appropriate and adequate?
  - B. Do you have any comments on the physical feasibility of the daylighting scenarios?
  - C. What other considerations do you think should be addressed?
3. Please review the benefits matrix, which summarizes the expected environmental benefits associated with the developed scenarios—this is intended to provide a "snapshot" comparison for all scenarios.
  - A. Is this useful to you?
  - B. Do you agree with the assessment of benefits associated with each scenario?
4. Several scenarios deal with the creation of open watercourses to replace existing drainage pipes. What are your opinions regarding the possible functional benefits of the various scenarios in terms of water quality, drainage control, habitat, and salmon recovery? Can you identify any serious challenges, unavoidable conflicts, or creative opportunities for designing a project that would achieve multiple benefits?
5. There has been some interest in developing some recreational opportunities with some of these scenarios.
  - A. What kinds of recreational opportunities do you think might be compatible in the vicinity of with the desired benefits (described above)?
  - B. What do you see as opportunities, challenges, or conflicts when recreational choices are combined with the other desired benefits (described above)?

## **Northgate Peer Review of the Environmental Team Goals, Facts, Working Assumptions, and Scenarios**

**Reviewer:** Scott Brewer, Senior Ecologist, King County Department of Natural Resources

**Date:** November 6, 2000

Upon review of the documents, "Environmental Team Fact Sheet" draft dated October 20, 2000 and "Northgate Workshop: Summary of Benefits for Scenarios" dated October 20, 2000 I offer the following:

### General Comments

The difficulty of providing the review of these specific scenarios for the South Lot at Northgate is that there is a lack of the context that can provide a comprehensive view of the vision for the Thornton Creek watershed. What is the vision for the Thornton Creek watershed? What role does the watershed play in the broader Lake Washington watershed? The other context that is missing relates to those habitat factors associated with the Thornton Creek watershed that contribute to the decline of salmonids. Initial review of the Thornton Creek watershed conducted by the Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 8 Technical Committee suggests that altered hydrological conditions, including increased peak flow events, coupled with greater than 50% impervious surfaces are major factors which contribute to the decline of salmonids in the Thornton Creek watershed. Further understanding of the vision for the watershed and the factors of decline are necessary to adequately develop the appropriate scenario for the Northgate situation.

The present process on the part of the City of Seattle to work with the citizens of the Northgate area to develop options and alternatives for the upper Thornton Creek watershed provides a unique opportunity. Coupled with the heightened awareness of the protection and recovery of salmon as a result of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing of Puget Sound Chinook this opportunity may be considered unique for a major urban area. The advantages of this unique opportunity for the City of Seattle are twofold; 1) meaningful benefits for aquatic resources in the Lake Washington basin and 2) education and public outreach on a level that can increase awareness and commitment of the citizenry towards the recovery and protection of aquatic resources.

Working with the citizens, co-managers, and agencies the City can explore the development of a vision for the Thornton Creek watershed. This vision can include the design of aspects of stormwater discharge and drainage facilities in combination with natural features of 'daylighting' and healing of Thornton Creek. The City should not 'hang its hat' on the expectation of having salmon returning to this stretch of river, but rather how measures in the headwaters and upper watershed can benefit downstream habitat and the well being of aquatic resources.

### Specific Comments (relative to the peer review Questions)

1.A. Yes it is possible to provide flow control and address water quality, habitat and aesthetic purposes. I would suggest that detention be combined with some aspect of 'daylighting' to best address the qualities of habitat and aesthetics. Perhaps a combination of pipe, vault and pond would be appropriate. Not being an environmental

engineer I cannot comment specifically on the details for requirements of such detention facilities. I do not know if the required detention for the amount of impervious area provided in the tables is adequate. Peak flows in the Thornton Creek watershed are a problem and any amount of measures designed to alleviate the problem would be welcomed. The present situation with the South Lot at Northgate provides such an opportunity.

1.B. Sufficient information is provided in the fact sheet to ignite some initial creative detention design options. More specific information will be needed to determine the scope and level of detention required that would adequately address peak flow problems in Thornton Creek arising from this stretch of the watershed. What is the goal of the detention aspects? Are there specific objectives or targets to be met regarding detention?

2.A. Without knowing the vision or goals for the Thornton Creek watershed it is difficult to determine if the assumptions regarding minimum slope, buffer, vegetative cover, and general design are appropriate and adequate. The assumptions as stated will never be adequate for restoration of chinook salmon habitat. It is unlikely that chinook ever did or ever will utilize this part of the watershed. As mentioned in the general comments above, the goal should not be chinook habitat, but rather as a properly functioning wetland/headwater stream system. Historically, given the characteristic Puget lowland stream, low gradient and low flow, this area was likely a forested wetland and/or bog and served as part of the headwaters system for the Thornton Creek watershed. The value of such a habitat was in the provision of water filtration, enhancement of water quality for downstream habitats and production of food resources.

2.B. The 'daylight' scenarios only discuss possibilities for certain types of stream that may not be appropriate for this section of the watershed. The City should explore the historical attributes of this area of Thornton Creek. Understanding of the natural or pristine aspects of the area can help guide the type of habitat to be created, knowing that the pristine conditions can never be fully reconstructed. Scenarios, which describe conditions, and physical attributes that more closely mimic the historic situation would be worth discussion and review.

2.C. As mentioned above, the City should explore scenarios which can design a wetland/pond type habitat that can serve as both detention and headwater habitat and combine that scenario with the public outreach education aspects.

3.A. The benefits matrix is not useful in its present state. The Summary of benefits under each scenario column are too general to be meaningful. It is hard to gauge 'least amount of detention benefit' against 'greatest amount of detention benefit.' Is the 'least' amount good enough? Does the greatest provide any meaningful benefit to aquatic resources? The Habitat Benefits parameter needs to be better defined. Depending upon the type of stream habitat, 600' may be better than 1,100'. The Fisheries Benefit parameter is also not well defined. Because of 'no direct benefit to chinook' does that render the scenario viable? The fisheries benefits and habitat benefits would need to be associated with the vision and goals for the Thornton Creek watershed. If the goal was to increase the detention capacity in the Thornton Creek watershed, then all the scenarios can be considered viable. I'm guessing that more than just detention is sought for the Northgate portion of the Thornton Creek watershed.

3.B. To fully assess the benefits associated with each scenario, one would need to understand the target or goal for the Thornton Creek watershed. This would provide a relative measure to assess the benefits.

4. Much of the answer to this question is provided in the answers above. Each scenario has some functional benefit depending upon the goal or vision for the upper Thornton Creek watershed. As stated in the General comments section above, the project at Northgate can provide; 1) meaningful benefits for aquatic resources in the Lake Washington basin and 2) education and public outreach on a level that can increase awareness and commitment of the citizenry towards the recovery and protection of aquatic resources. Obviously these benefits would come at varying levels depending upon the scenario selected relative to the vision. A great opportunity is provided to 'daylight' or create open watercourses in a highly developed urban environment. The situation 'fits' the heritage of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest. 'Daylighting' or open watercourses will not achieve recovery of Puget Sound chinook salmon, but it could raise a much needed awareness and responsibility of a willing public. Coupled with detention facilities, such scenarios will provide aquatic resource benefits for downstream environs. The serious challenge will be to combine developmental desires with aesthetic, cultural and natural resource desires. A balance, which combines all desires with the appropriate expectations, is possible.

5.A. Recreational opportunities that would be compatible with 'daylight' and detention scenarios include public outreach and education benefits. People could learn about the vision for the Thornton Creek watershed and how headwater systems function as part of a larger watershed process.

5.B. Information that describes the natural function and processes of watersheds and headwater systems could be provided for the public in areas that would allow limited access to the created aquatic habitat. Perhaps a design that could provide a 'natural' or open space area in the midst of the Northgate urban area for people to relax and contemplate.

November 3, 2000

Mr. Gordon Clowers  
 City of Seattle - Office of Strategic Planning  
 600 Fourth Ave., Rm. 300  
 Seattle, WA 98104

Re: Peer review comments on “day-lighting” options for South Fork of Thornton Creek

I have had a chance to briefly review some of the materials you provided on the physical setting and preliminary options for addressing restoration of the South Branch of Thornton Creek. These review comments are based on a review of the *Preliminary Day-lighting Scenarios* report prepared by R.W. Beck, and several accompanying matrices that highlighted benefits and costs of the three initial options provided. In addition, I attended the evening meeting held last Thursday which provided a much better understanding of how this issue fits into the overall redevelopment under the Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan. My comments are from the perspective of (1) what contributions to chinook salmon (and ESA listed species) recovery might the various day lighting scenarios provide, and (2) what contributions might the day lighting and channel restoration work provide to overall stream process and functions at the site.

I've made some assumptions about historic conditions at the site in question, that may or may not be valid. The R.W. Beck report was generally silent in regards to these conditions. My assumptions are that prior to development, the area was likely a wetland area that may have exhibited some characteristics of a very low gradient stream. Prior to development, it appears that substantial amounts of fill were applied to the area, and the wetland runoff put into a pipe, to create build able land. This explains why full day lighting of the stream bed on the South Lot would require so much excavation, and why the resulting constructed channel would be incised within its historic floodplain. From the description in the R.W. Beck report, it appears that the channel gradient, at best, would be less than 0.04% which is very flat indeed. Channel flow hydraulics at this gradient would likely result in a sand bedded stream bottom, which limits its suitability for providing spawning habitat for salmonid fishes.

From the first perspective, it is doubtful that the day lighting of the So. Branch of Thornton Creek would have any direct benefit on providing chinook salmon habitat, even though chinook salmon do utilize Thornton Creek downstream.

However, as suggested by the matrix provided that compares relative benefits for the various options, there would be some benefits to other salmonid species, notably cutthroat trout and perhaps coho juveniles if some or all of the 1100 ft. of channel were restored. The exact nature of these benefits might be arguable, and would depend upon the nature of instream flows, groundwater contributions and the characteristics of storm generated peak flows. The R.W. Beck report was silent on projections of storm flow characteristics, including frequency, magnitude and duration, which might be substantial given the overall percent of impervious surfaces in the approximately 660 acre basin. If groundwater recharge areas were somewhat restored, seasonal elevated instream temperature problems might be partially ameliorated (but this is wishful speculation on my part, absent additional information).

An alternative suggestion to consider is returning some of the basin to its former wetland/stream complex. Specifically, re-establish a wetland system at the head of the basin, which would provide some benefits to downstream areas, balance out some flow events and possibly provide some rearing habitat to native fishes, birds, amphibians and insect communities. It is critical that important controlling variables, such as water temperatures within the range acceptable to native fishes, would exist at the site after construction. The important thing to remember is to be clear on what conditions are actually achievable at this site. Can suitable instream and riparian habitats be created that will mimic or restore historic conditions? Can the processes that shape the characteristics of instream flow characteristics, water temperature, dissolved oxygen, the input of nutrients and physical habitat structure - be restored? I'm not sure we have enough information to make that judgement at this point. We definitely want to avoid creating a situation where undesirable exotic species can gain a foot-hold, or that requires constant maintenance.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on this interesting proposal. I will be interested in seeing how it is resolved.

Sincerely,

Stephen C. Ralph, Regional Salmon Ecologist  
US Environmental Protection Agency - Region X  
Mail Stop ECO-086  
1200 Sixth Ave.,  
Seattle, WA 98101-1128  
206/ 553-4497

**TO:** Gordon Clowers - City of Seattle Strategic Planning Office  
**FROM:** Dudley W. Reiser, Ph.D.  
**DATE:** October 26, 2000  
**SUBJECT:** Comments on Daylighting Scenarios – South Fork Thornton Creek

Gordon:

I have had a chance to briefly review some of the materials you transmitted relative to the Northgate daylighting scenarios for portions of the South Branch of Thornton Creek, and am providing via this memorandum, a few comments for consideration. My comments are based on a review of the Preliminary Daylighting Scenarios report prepared by R.W. Beck, and several accompanying matrices that highlighted benefits. Given the recent listing of Puget Sound chinook salmon under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the accompanying directed activities of regional and local jurisdictions to promote projects that are environmentally sound (will not result in “take”) and that ideally will contribute to recovery of the species, my review considered the overall benefits of the various scenarios from both a chinook salmon, and general salmonid ecology perspective. Specifically, which of the options would impart the greatest potential direct benefits to the recovery of chinook salmon in Puget Sound, and/or contribute secondary benefits via ecosystem restoration. As part of this review, I also considered the costs associated with completing each of the options so that perceived benefits can be weighed (at least qualitatively) with the costs.

### **Conclusions**

My review of the scenarios including benefits and costs has lead me to conclude that from a chinook salmon recovery perspective, none of the options provide benefits that justify the extremely high construction costs. This is because:

- 1) None of the options create habitats which would be directly used by chinook salmon; upstream/downstream factors controlling chinook distribution would remain even after daylighting of the stream. Indeed, has it been determined that chinook salmon historically used the South Fork of Thornton Creek?
- 2) The quantity and quality of salmonid habitats that could be created is constrained by design considerations (e.g. low channel slopes; water quality). Thus, although in the best case, 1100 feet of channel may be created, its value as general salmonid habitat (for coho or cutthroat) appears marginal. For example, the low gradient of the stream will most certainly result in severe sedimentation of any gravels that would be placed in the channel. This would limit food production and as well, reduce the utility of the gravels as potential spawning habitats. What type of habitat will actually be created – pool-riffle-runs? And, what life history stages of salmonids will benefit – spawning, juvenile, fry, adult? It is also conceivable that the channel design may actually provide better habitat for non-native fishes (e.g. centrarchids – bluegill/bass) than salmonids, which could adversely impact existing salmonid populations (via predation). In addition,
- 3) It is unclear how this segment of stream channel would ecologically relate to downstream reaches of the South Fork as well as mainstem Thornton Creek. River restoration should be done within a watershed context so that upstream – downstream effects can be evaluated, potential negative impacts identified, and overall benefits defined. I did not see any evidence that the daylighting options had

been considered within a watershed perspective. What are the overall restoration goals of Thornton Creek and do the measures proposed fit into meeting those goals?

From my perspective, moving ahead with any of the three options would represent a mis-direction of funds away from projects which would have far greater certainty of benefiting chinook recovery (e.g. acquisition of lands to protect streams that presently support chinook salmon), to one whose recovery and ecological benefits are marginal at best, and costs are high.

While I strongly support restoration actions directed toward salmon recovery, such actions must be carefully evaluated within an “attainability” and “sustainability” context. That is, will implementation of proposed actions attain the level of ecological restoration and species recovery expected, assuming of course that such levels were identified during the planning process? In addition, will such measures be sustainable in the future; short term alterations and “fixes” do little for overall salmonid recovery. These considerations must then be balanced against the available budgets targeted toward restoration and recovery. In the case of the Daylighting Scenarios, it is hard to justify the costs associated with any of the options, given that the projects would provide no direct benefits to chinook salmon, and indeed there is uncertainty about the degree to which quality salmonid habitat could be created and maintained.

Dudley W. Reiser, Ph.D.

## COMMENTS ON NORTHGATE PROPOSALS

By

Richard Horner

### **General**

1. Thornton Creek has little, if any, potential to breed chinook salmon. From what I understand, it is unlikely that there was ever, at any time in history or pre-history, any significant Chinook salmon production in Thornton Creek, just because of its size, if for no other reason. On the other hand, Thornton Creek is the type of stream that at one time probably had substantial coho salmon and cutthroat trout production, and still has the potential for such production.
2. The small potential to make a difference for chinook salmon under the current Endangered Species Act listings tends to make putting extra efforts in Thornton Creek restoration a low priority. However, possible listing of coho and even cutthroat argues for taking restoration alternatives seriously in a stream like Thornton Creek. As unlikely as it may seem that these species, especially cutthroat trout, will be listed, there is opinion among City of Portland personnel that exactly that will happen in their area.
3. If planning to assist the recovery of some species of salmonids is warranted, the overarching questions are, should the City of Seattle support restoration in any or all of the following places: (1) the piped section of Thornton Creek through the Northgate South Lot? (2) elsewhere in Thornton Creek? (3) in streams less effected by urban impacts?
4. Personally, I believe that it is far better for jurisdictions that have to respond to the Endangered Species Act to put their money into preserving, through purchase and other mechanisms, streams, wherever they are, lightly effected by human activity and having high fish productivity than into efforts within their borders that will never yield many fish. Still, I understand that, under the law and political realities, cities cannot and should not write off their own streams. They must seek ways of preventing the further degradation of these streams and attempt to find ways of achieving some recovery.
5. Attempting daylighting the South Lot piped section appears to have little potential to breed salmonids, which need riffles that only form and are sustained with more slope that exists in that reach. Rearing already hatched juvenile salmonids requires pools, which will tend to fill with sediments rapidly in such a slightly sloped reach. Before piping, this portion of Thornton Creek was probably diffused in a wetland and never had a distinct channel character that provides fish habitat. At \$13,000,000 to \$36,000,000, the projected costs for such small probability of success are beyond excessive.
6. Already open reaches of Thornton Creek, on the other hand, have better prospects for increasing coho salmon and cutthroat trout production. However, this potential cannot be realized without gaining control over the quantity and quality of runoff

discharged to the stream from the watershed. The South Lot offers a place to gain some control. Under redevelopment stipulations, Northgate Mall should be required to install state-of-the-art stormwater management controls, not only for any new development but also for all of the present development.

7. With the level of development of the Thornton Creek watershed and the expectations of the citizens that live there, not much fish recovery will ever be gained. Still, dual goals of some modest recovery and improving the stream corridor as a community resource can be pursued and should be the beneficiary of some of the savings realized from not daylighting the South Lot reach.
8. Results from my own work have taught me that the best payoff in aquatic ecosystem improvement comes from preserving any riparian zone that is extensive (in width), unbroken, and in forest or wetland cover, or obtaining land in the riparian zone and restoring that condition where it does not exist. In addition to controlling all of the Northgate Mall stormwater runoff, I recommend that principle guide the effort to improve Thornton Creek.
9. The main beneficiary from savings in not pursuing daylighting should be investment by Seattle in major land purchases and/or arranging for watershed protection by other means outside the city where salmon production remains strong. The City of Seattle controls very large land areas in its drinking watershed and power generation areas that are natural sites for its investment. However, there are other productive streams not within Seattle's control and threatened with development that should receive an assist from the large funding source that Seattle represents, and could tap if it does not foolishly put money into a window-dressing daylighting project.

### **Questions**

- 1.A. My comments above indicate that I believe detention options can, to a degree, address flow control, water quality, downstream habitat, and aesthetics for the community.
- 1.B. I have nothing in particular to add, realizing that developing the idea will take a great deal of reflection on what is necessary to bring meaningful ecological improvement and to add value to the human amenities of the area.
- 2.A. My work has shown the necessity, for good biological health, for riparian buffers to be at least 30 meters (100 ft) wide (both banks) in at least 70 percent of the stream length, with less than one break per kilometer, and in forest or wetland cover. As remarked above, the extremely minor slope in the reach in question does not give confidence for success in reestablishing fish habitat.
- 2.B. I believe I have made myself clear on this point.
- 2.C. See comments above.
- 3A. The matrix gives a correct impression in a general sort of way.
- 3.B. I generally agree.

4. See comments above.

5.A. There is no reconciling conflicting desires among citizens to have, in one place, an area productive in relatively sensitive biota and a recreation site. Since the potential to have anything very biologically productive is very limited, recreation and other human benefits may as well take priority here and the city put money into more promising fish recovery projects elsewhere.

5.B. I believe I just answered this question.



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October 23, 2000

Gordon Clowers  
 City of Seattle Strategic Planning Office  
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 Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Gordon:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the materials for your upcoming Northgate workshop on the daylighting of Thornton Creek through the Northgate south parking lot. Unfortunately, I believe that the current documentation does the City a disservice, and I encourage you to recast the information before holding any public workshops. The *tone* of the documents have an unmistakable anti-daylighting bias, evident even to an uninvolved, basically unbiased technical reviewer. To a skeptical citizenry, who have already sued the City and pursued Freedom-of-Information-Act disclosures, this will just add gasoline to their fire.

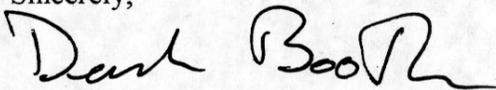
Many of the problems of tone are gratuitous. In the *Northgate Area Plan Review and Evaluation*, the characterization of interest in daylighting as being advanced by "several citizens" (p. 3-81) will incite all the *other* interested citizens to greater passion, if only to ensure that City bureaucrats don't miss them the next time around. The debate on page 3-82 about whether the existing Northgate plan supports daylighting is fatuous; to almost anyone without a preconceived outcome, the plan wording to "restore the creek to enhance aquatic habitat" is a no-brainer in support of daylighting. The decision for the south parking lot will not be made on the basis of the plan, so why articulate such an untenable position? On the *Fact Sheet*, Goal 4 seeks "functional features that are practical, achievable, cost-effective and sustainable." How many different ways do you need to announce that money drives the final decision? The citizenry already suspects that this is the primary motivator; you will never herd them into accepting that outcome by announcing its primacy at the outset.

I would ask you to consider what your desired outcome is for this public-involvement process. I suggest that it should be a healthy, open debate over the relative value to the community of ecological function at both the local and regional scale, recreational open space,

neighborhood aesthetics, and the myriad of other City priorities that must compete for the same pot of money. The current set of materials do not support this outcome. The City looks to be paying daylighting scant lip-service before this process even begins. You have done the community a further disservice by offering only a single daylighting scenario, one that is ecologically and hydrologically unfounded, and whose costs are inflated by unnecessary land acquisition and downstream fish-passage projects that should be a City priority independent of Northgate alternatives. Instead of discussion, I anticipate polarization—citizens will *know* that they are starting off with an insurmountable handicap in how these alternatives are characterized, and they will not be willing to discuss what ought to be the *real* issues. This is particularly ironic, because I doubt that *any* \$20+ million project, if in fact rehabilitation on this site does cost that much, would survive an open community process. The City could truly benefit from hosting such a discussion, because this is hardly the last time that high-priced projects with modest ecological benefits and high community interest will be advanced. I do not believe that we should decide their outcome simply by balancing dollars spent against fish produced, but we need a better accounting system and you are missing an opportunity to start looking for one.

I hope you find these comments constructive. Yours is not an easy task, but the entire region needs leadership on these issues and the City of Seattle is best positioned to provide it.

Sincerely,



Derek B. Booth, Ph.D., P.E.

*Director, Center for Urban Water Resources Management*

*Research Associate Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering  
Department of Geological Sciences*

cc: Denna Cline, Director

## Response to “Questions”

Derek Booth, 10/22/00:

1A. Detention ponds could achieve some degree of flow control; and it is at least possible in theory to incorporate aesthetic elements into such a facility. Habitat benefits, if any, would only be experienced between Northgate and Meadowbrook Pond. Such benefits, however, would depend on constructing a magnitude of detention that is at least several times as great as that articulated by the sheet titled “Northgate Detention Scenarios.” Presently, you have no basis on which to investigate the cost and feasibility of such a scenario because the suggested volume (3400 cu ft per impervious acre) are grossly undersized. My back-of-envelope estimate (ca. 1/3-1/2 acre-ft of storage per upstream impervious acre) is that land-acquisition costs for detention that is effective at the watershed level would exceed that of the daylighted channel.

1B. Without adequate appreciation of the magnitude of detention (and thus the size of facility) needed to achieve any articulated goal, exercises in designing “aesthetic ponds” are not useful.

2A. The scenarios suffer from a narrow focus on the outcome—a “stream channel”—without any evaluation of the watershed setting. Its proffered natural-resource goal, Chinook spawning habitat, is a false and misleading target that should *not* be part of any evaluation. The Northgate area does not occupy that part of a Puget Lowland watershed where Chinook would have any particular interest in spawning—the gradient is too flat, the stream is too small, the sediment too fine, the flows too flashy. Does this mean that *any* natural-resource goal for a daylighted stream is inadvisable? No, but the Fact Sheet does not offer any guidance for other (more reasonable) alternatives.

The “general channel design” articulated in the Fact Sheet, particularly the 50’ buffer measured from the top of the 3:1 slope, is also curious. Where else does the City regulate 3:1 slopes in this fashion? The “channel” is clearly stated as a 20-foot-wide feature. Why is the buffer not measured from it?

2B. The daylighting scenarios are physically feasible but hydrologically and ecologically pointless. The suggested design elements (imported gravel, boulders, large woody debris) are unwarranted, and other features more suited to a low-gradient headwater system have been left unexplored and unarticulated.

2C. There should be a more comprehensive review of the channel conditions downstream and upstream (if indeed, there *is* a channel upstream) of the site. Is the very low gradient a consequence of past filling across the region, or is it intrinsic to this part of the watershed? It appears as though most of the available grade is lost through the culvert under 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, coupled with the necessarily low elevation of the 60” (buried) pipe to the west of the site.

3A and B. The “Benefits Summary” is a poor representation of alternatives, because it is replete with editorial content that biases any reference to it. Why are the habitat benefits of the daylighting options “qualified” or “moderate” (which they are, to be sure) but the water-quality and detention benefits of the Stormwater-Code option described without such modifiers? Why are there potential benefit to downstream habitat from the Stormwater Code but none from

daylighting? Why is water quality degraded by an open channel—should we put *all* of our streams in pipes?

4. The likelihood of significant, direct, on-site salmonid benefits from the proposed daylighted benefits is very low, and I believe it is a mistake to construct a scenario around such a goal—any such scenario is almost guaranteed to fail by any number of measures. Yet this should not be the basis of a watershed-oriented stream-daylighting alternative. I'm not even certain that a *stream*, as opposed to a wetland (for example) is the most appropriate design goal—there is simply not enough information in the materials developed to date. Whether or not such a revised scenario would be financially feasible, or an appropriate use of resources, is a separate (and quite important) question—but right now there is no way to ask those questions, because the offered alternative is neither physically nor ecologically reasonable.

5. I have no particular expertise on this issue.



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