

**NORTHGATE COMMUNITY DESIGN STUDY
NOTES FROM JULY 26, 2011 OPEN HOUSE**

URBAN DESIGN PREFERENCES

Development Types comments and preferences

Photo examples shown: (What do you like or dislike about these examples?)

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| A. Midrise Office | G. Midrise Office |
| B. Highrise Office | H. Highrise Office |
| C. Lowrise Residential & Retail at base | I. Midrise Residential, Residential at base |
| D. Highrise Residential & Retail at base | J. Highrise Residential, Residential at base |
| E. Lowrise Residential, Residential at base | K. Midrise Residential, Retail at base |
| F. Highrise Residential, Residential at base | L. Highrise Residential, Retail at base |

Public comments on these photos:

- A. **Midrise Office:** *Nothing for the pedestrian at street level. *Don't need only office because it's dead at night. *Too many office buildings
- B. **Highrise Office:** *Too high! Height is out-of-scale with the neighborhood unless wrapped with lowrise retail or residential uses. *Plaza could create space for public gatherings
- C. **Lowrise Residential + grocery:** *Need a Trader Joes! *Grocery store, hardware store, "small" big box could be good underground. *Mixed use is good for walkability. *OK, but better to have if taller and retail would have more sidewalk cafes or vegetable stands. *Like the mix. *Need more café nodes for sitting.
- D. **Highrise Residential:** *In Northgate go up with step-back like Vancouver BC – lively street retail with tall, thin towers. *Go big, go high, Northgate is an Urban Center. *Allow highrise with proper amenities and landscaping – this is the place for it. *Narrow or medium width highrise towers over a 3-4 story base (looks best along with J and K). *D is too high! *D is OK if street edge is lower-rise or pedestrian scale or if high rise stepped back to avoid "canyons." *Maximize affordable housing in tall buildings at core. *One-half mile radius is not suitable for this plan—concentrate growth on Northgate footprint.
- E. **Lowrise Residential:** *Green space is good. Keep the green spaces wide and usable. *Good! *Mix of low- and midrise; no highrise please. *Green is good with use of native plants. *Maximize affordable housing with midrise stepped toward single-family neighborhoods.
- F. **Residential highrise with residential at base.** *Boring for the pedestrian. *A lost opportunity. *Maybe OK if coupled with a pocket park that has retail kiosks or a covered farmers market.
- G and H. **Office, Midrise and Highrise.** *"Bad bad bad - see the office buildings south of 100th St." *G is "too boxy" while H is "good"
- I. **Residential Midrise.** *"Boxy"
- J. **Residential Highrise with Residential at base.** *Good mix of height. *Nice, but needs a couple of corner stores to serve the residents, coffee and green grocer. *Step back higher-rise buildings (for light and air).

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- K. **Residential Midrise & Retail at base.** *Good visually. Just needs midrise stepped back at street edge. *Retail should not be big box; provide mix of large and small retail spaces. *More density and more amenities = win-win. *Retail or not doesn't matter, just make them pretty. *Hide big-box stores and parking inside larger buildings; Northgate North is a good example.
- L. **Residential Highrise & Retail at base.** *Please—setbacks, trees, natural infrastructure are needed. *Ugly—step it back; avoid “caves” for retail.

Additional Public Comments:

- Favor high-density living and active base
- Timing is important: don't build TOD too soon, if it would outstrip bus demand prior to light rail
- Mixed use with easy walkable access to groceries & public transport (2 agree)
- Make a “place” not a space
- Parks and open spaces everyone can use
- A park to congregate in
- Make it pedestrian-friendly, and green
- Create setbacks from the street for wide sidewalks and planters. Taller is better if we can get more space at the base.
- 85-foot base height, and then developers should earn bonus with contribution to sidewalk funds
- Don't block the view of the Olympics with high rises (3 agree)
- A few set-back highrises with view corridors – allow for public views
- Community-accessible vista points from the top of buildings would be great
- Don't like huge buildings in an area that has been residential homes
- Go easy on the ugly buildings
- Tall & skinny
- Prefer midrise buildings, create a beautiful and livable environment
- Keep original residents and add new ones with different income levels
- Price the housing right: mix of condos and apartments
- Provide more than one retail store
- Need grocery shopping (1 agrees)
- Keep retail property affordable
- Businesses should cater to the widest variety of people, to generate continuous pedestrian presence. Need businesses that meet people's daily needs: supermarket, hardware store. Not just high-end boutiques that most people never visit, or go to once a year.
- Need all these uses. As tall as we can make them. Maximize transit ridership. Retail at ground level on all buildings
- Developer/owners, not developer/sellers. They do both when they plan for the future.
- Precedent: Pasadena where the Gold Line goes through a building

Public Spaces comments and preferences

(What do you like or dislike about these examples? Pick your top 3 preferred public spaces for the Northgate study area)

A. Residential Green Street (urban active edge):	14 prefer
B. Residential Green Street (maximum greenery):	12 prefer
C. Neighborhood Retail (brick, angle parking):	14 prefer
D. Neighborhood Retail (retail district, wider):	2 prefer
E. Woonerf ped-oriented street (urban paved):	22 prefer
F. Woonerf ped-oriented street (residential, greened):	3 prefer
G. Sidewalk with cafés (narrower):	7 prefer
H. Sidewalk with cafes (wider):	5 prefer
I. Large plaza (open and seating):	3 prefer
J. Large plaza (fountain, trees, seating):	7 prefer
K. Pocket park (enclosed, green):	8 prefer
L. Pocket park (open , street feature):	<u>0 prefer</u>
TOTAL:	97 opinions

Public comments on these photos:

- Trees are better than empty open spaces
- A woonerf needs major activation otherwise it becomes empty, unused, dangerous. Best to have cars but keep them slow.
- Create more large community gathering spaces similar to Portland’s Pearl District
- If big plazas or walkways, allow carts selling goods to help populate the area to make it lively
- Pocket parks are expensive to maintain
- Dog friendly space such as walking trails and dog park
- Wider sidewalks planted w/ trees, shrubs
- I agree about the need for sidewalks. I regularly walk and bike up Meridian Ave N from 88th to 92nd Street but Meridian is unsafe as cars zoom up and down it. It is used as a short cut to get to Northgate and NSCC by cars. Already pretty good at 92nd St but would be great to connect it up with Meridian Ave N.
- Shrink road width =more comfortable streets
- Look at successful pedestrian oriented spaces in Denmark and on Capitol Hill (Broadway, Summit and Mercer). We want spaces that always have people in them, not large empty windwept plazas
- like Freeway Park, Lake Union Park, or the concrete plaza near Pier 57. Generally, smaller scale, more intimate spaces work better than large spaces. Definitely agree.
- Sidewalks are most important public spaces. They are lacking and needed on Meridian Av N. (north of N 115th St), 15th Ave NE (between NE 115th Street and Northgate Way), and 1st Avenue NE. This is more important investment than park & ride or pedestrian bridge over I-5.
- Need a pedestrian connection from 5th Ave to 8th Ave (especially to Beaver Pond). Need sidewalks on 8th Ave NE for pedestrian safety.
- Think about creating walkable loops, unlike Hubbard Homestead Park, which lacks an outer path. People like to get exercise by walking around measurable circuits.
- Help Northgate Mall turn more space in parking lots to pedestrian meeting spaces with green setting. Especially lower parking lot on corner of 5th/103rd Street.
- Santana Row (Bay area) isn’t a public space but it has mixed use and brings lots of \$\$ to area, and exercise
- Re: neighborhood retail example D , “do we need another University Village? Don’t like D.”

Public Features comments and preferences

(Pick your top 3 preferred community assets for the Northgate study area)

A. Bicycle and Walking Trails	27 prefer
B. Playground	2 prefer
C. Active Plaza	13 prefer
D. Bike Station	7 prefer
E. Farmer's Market	16 prefer
F. Green Space	14 prefer
G. Athletic Facilities	5 prefer
H. Grocery Store	18 prefer
I. Community Artwork	6 prefer
J. Green Infrastructure	13 prefer
K. Fire Station/Police/Post Office	3 prefer
L. Community Garden	10 prefer
Other – affordable housing	<u>3 prefer</u>
TOTAL:	137

Public comments on these photos:

- Bike infrastructure for travel/commute purposes [rather than] recreation purposes.
- Need more bike lanes and bike connections
- Pedestrian access through the superblock: i.e. have breaks in chain link fences & buildings
- Work with citizens to improve & highlight the beaver pond (at 8th Ave/105th St), with a bridge as in the picture
- Should be able to have more than 3 public features...
- Yes, prefer athletic facilities
- Aquatic Center with kid's pool and features ("lazy river", 50 meter swimming pool). Look at Hillcrest Aquatic Center in Vancouver BC (2 agree)
- I really value green infrastructure and other sustainable features; anything to humanize the traffic and commercialism of our neighborhood
- We have a community garden already!
- Affordable housing at a % of median income comparable to average wages at Northgate Mall (3 agree)
- A Trader Joes would be so nice (3 agree); or PCC (3 agree). Not Whole Foods (too expensive, trendy, upscale and large – 2 agree). We need a grocery store on this end of Northgate – alternate to QFC.
- No crappy public art – only great art

TRANSIT RELATED QUESTIONS

Transit & Parking Questions

1. Do you support building a pedestrian and bicycle crossing of Interstate 5?

Strongly Agree:	38
Agree:	2
Strongly Disagree:	<u>1</u>
TOTAL:	41

Public Comments:

- Why not a simple pedestrian tunnel under the freeway to NSCC? The fill material to be bored under the freeway is well known!
- Very car-oriented; entrance separated from street; sidewalk should be same level as the street

2. Do you think we need to replace all commuter parking spaces that would be displaced by development?

Strongly Agree:	20
Agree:	8
Neutral/Don't Know:	3
Disagree:	8
Strongly Disagree:	<u>4</u>
TOTAL:	43

3. Which of these improvements would be most important in convincing you to use bus& rail transit, or use it more often?

Bus routes that get me closer to home:	12
More continuous sidewalks into my neighborhood:	12
A pedestrian/bicycle bridge that crosses Interstate 5:	12
More parking:	10
Buses and trains that come often enough, so I don't have to worry about schedules:	35
Light and security at the station, so I will feel safe*:	<u>16</u>
*One person notes: put some retail there...	
TOTAL:	97

Bus Transfer at Rail Station

Option H: 4 favor this

Option I: 9 favor this

Public Comments:

- Break up the [larger] development block at the Transit Center site. Need to walk from 2nd to 3rd at midblock.
- There needs to be overhead weather protection options for pedestrians with either option in the station between bus and light rail.
- Bike/Ped bridge across I-5 is [a] magnitude more important than whichever of these [options] is more expensive.
- Option H: don't bring traffic through station site

TRANSPORTATION-RELATED COMMENTS AND PREFERENCES

Accompanying public comment notes:

- I-5 crossing would be great (4 agree); it is a must (3 agree).
- Too expensive! No agency can afford it; all have more important unfunded projects
- A lack of I-5 crossing betrays the public's investment in light rail. Need greater pedestrian visibility perhaps with wider crosswalks or crosswalks that are artistic or reflective of Northgate
- Need lots of bicycle parking – some covered? Like Amsterdam
- Prioritize sidewalks in area surrounding TOD area. Streets without sidewalks in this area (e.g. Meridian Avenue) are already dangerous for pedestrians
- Do NOT remove lanes to appease bike [interests]. (If not, then build bike lanes/ paths).
- How about using buses to connect more frequently with neighborhoods across I-5 instead of a bridge? It would cost considerably less and be a dryer, safer walk for pedestrians.
- The incline to the Maple Leaf neighborhood is steep and lacking in sidewalks on many of the streets.
- Probably should prioritize locating new Maple Leaf sidewalks where the topography is most forgiving for walkers.
- Need more sidewalks on 8th Avenue NE, especially to make up for increased cut-through traffic when light rail comes.
- A sight-impaired person noted the presence of multiple impediments by power poles on 5th Avenue NE, narrowness on area sidewalks, and presence of other impediments or trees in the middle portions of sidewalks and at intersection corners. Would be fine if these features were consistently in the planting strip/near curb.

Pedestrian Route notes:

- Need pedestrian bridge of I-5 (3 agree)
- TOD: break up the superblock on Transit Center site, for pedestrians. Make small plaza connecting with Thornton Place at 3rd Avenue mid-block
- 3rd Ave NE/NE 103rd Street marked as an important intersection
- Connections between the library/community center through Thornton Place, and to/from the Thornton Creek park, along 100th St (Maple Leaf), and between Aljoia to/from the Mall are marked. The pedestrian blockage at the Beaver Pond toward 15th Avenue NE is noted.
- Need better sidewalks south of library on 5th Avenue NE. Needs to extend the whole way when there's new development or improvements – otherwise, abrupt ending would feel like was stranded.
- Disconnect of building from pedestrians and streets noted at Aljoia and at the new Wallace Building at Northgate Way
- 1st Avenue NE from 90th Street to the Mall. Doesn't feel safe (crime). Marked as a pedestrian connection from west of I-5.
- 1st Avenue NE west of mall, needs sidewalks
- NE 92nd Street from 1st Ave NE east to Roosevelt Way – need improvements
- Along 5th Avenue NE: power poles make walking difficult, other places too
- Need to improve 103rd and 105th Streets at 5th Avenue NE
- Need good park trail from 105th to 104th between 5th and 8th
- Existing ped bridge on 104th St is too low, not safe, can't use...

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- Close/vacate 105th between 5th and 8th – add to the park with pedestrian access only (1 agrees)
 - Green sidewalks/steps down from 8th to 5th Ave NE
 - Clean up garbage, beer cans at 8th near 106th St. Doesn't appear to be a very safe place to walk
 - Walkway along the Thornton Place drainage channel: use some townhomes for coffee shops or live-work stores. Allow "pushcart" vendors on that walkway. Try a "night market".
 - Connect 3rd Ave NE between 95th St and 97th Place for pedestrians (south edge of study area).
 - Need sidewalks on Meridian Ave N, south of 92nd St to 85th St. (2 agree)
 - 92nd freeway overpass: sidewalks only on one side of the bridge
 - 90th to 92nd: continue other arterials
 - 8th Avenue NE (Maple Leaf). A sidewalk from 96th to 105th St. would be best and safest and cleanest for us senior citizens. Another agrees for 92nd to 100th St.
 - 8th at Northgate Way: Crossing Northgate Way takes too long to cross.
 - Inform persons who live along rail route what is going on.
 - (Maple Leaf): 100th Street sidewalks from 15th Ave NE to 5th Ave NE on one side at least; OR improved crossing at NE 100th St and Roosevelt Way.
 - (Licton Springs): Sidewalks needed at N 100th Street between College Way and Wallingford Avenue N, south side of street (Liz Kearns, Lictonsprings.org)
 - Licton Springs: sidewalks on N. 105th St. between Meridian Ave N and Ashworth Ave. N.
 - My access from 15th Ave NE: I would not walk because of hills. Would take a Roosevelt to Northgate LINK station shuttle operating on Roosevelt and 15th Ave NE.
 - Boardwalk type sidewalk over Beaver Pond (1 agrees)
 - Clean up graffiti/gang markings near medical at 105th St./5th Ave NE.

Bicycle Route notes:

- Better bike facilities on 1st Ave NE from 95th Street to the Mall
- Need pedestrian bridge, also for bicycles; connect to 100th St.
- 100th Street: - [need] better south access, 1st to 5th Ave.
- Make 8th Avenue south of Northgate Way to a ped/bike Green Street
- Make 8th and 105th St. pedestrian and bike friendly sidewalk next to Beaver Pond
- 105th St. should be made pedestrian only, between 5th and 8th
- 104th St. connection with a street level bridge

Neighborhood Qualities	This is important: final tally
Safe, accessible conditions for walking and biking	25
Safe, reliable transit	23
Good air quality inside and outside buildings	14
Noise level management	13
Mixture of jobs and businesses	11
Safe, inviting and accessible parks and open spaces	11
Opportunities for social interaction	10
Good quality and affordable housing	9
Access to healthy food	8
Access to healthcare and wellness services	2

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON SEA.-KING CO. PUBLIC HEALTH DEPT INFO:
Please place a dot next to the three most important qualities for healthy neighborhoods. Results tallied in the table to the left.

How can we ensure this site is a healthy place to live, work and play?

Safe, accessible conditions for walking and biking

1. Provide mitigation to the residential communities to the east in the form of sidewalks to make up for impact of increased cut-through traffic through neighborhood
2. Pedestrian friendly is key
3. Enjoyable walking routes
4. Make neighborhood pedestrian and bike friendly
5. Sidewalks up Meridian Ave 85th-92nd
6. Good pedestrian connections with housing, balconies to provide 'eyes' on the street for safety

Noise level management

1. Noise control for the multifamily housing in the south. Could the wall built to the south be extended? What about noise of train leaving tunnel? Mitigation?
2. Manage the noise and air quality of anything you do; anything else will be moot
3. Bus noise on 100th and 5th is terribly loud

Good air quality inside and outside buildings

1. Manage the noise and air quality of anything you do; otherwise, anything else will be moot

Access to healthy food

1. Need grocery store – 4 people said this
2. Sources of good affordable food

Good quality and affordable housing

1. Housing units should have space, not like downtown and Capitol Hill, consider carefully the number of units per building

Safe, inviting and accessible parks and open spaces

1. Trees, green space
2. P-patch garden spaces

Other

1. Drainage
2. Keep density low
3. Garbage control at station – the crows get into the garbage and spread it around–wildlife proof the garbage cans
4. Aquatic center needed in the area

5. Don't block out the light by creating canyons of buildings.
6. Take out a lane of I-5 and provide transit parking for commuters, health externalities from traffic are enormous
7. Don't put garbage or utility where pedestrians are entering site – bad example, 3rd Ave entrance to Thornton Place retail

GENERAL COMMENT SHEETS

1. "I'm excited about the potential growth. I would like the study to look at growth of small, local, and/or community business. We already have the Mall as a large commercial establishment. Having small urban areas would be most welcome."
2. "It's growing! Not enough parking. Accessibility and walking are good. Need more public spaces and community functions (for all ages), plus a few more eateries with "healthy" food. Bring a farmer's market on weekends or during week, and more art/fair festivals. Maybe a Greek or seafood festival too."
3. "Ped bridge across I-5 is necessary!! Prefer the diagonal steel-truss bridge. It's cheaper and has more direct station access. Put decorations on the bridge side walls to make it less plain. The bridge to College Way and the trail to the medical center will allow the buses to be moved to 92nd Street instead of College Way/Northgate Way, so they'll have less time-consuming turns and traffic."
4. Make the area pedestrian-oriented. Smaller-scale plazas and walkways encourage ped traffic and don't look as empty and lonely. See Denmark examples, also Capitol Hill and Pike Place. Have a wide variety of businesses meeting people's everyday needs, not just high-end boutique shops.
5. Narrow highrise and density are good: make Northgate like Vancouver's Metrotown."
6. "Look at providing amenities near the transit station. Grocery and/or drug store. Small cafes, etc. Make it more like London or New York – mixed uses. Food for students close to pedestrian bridge!"
7. "Build an aquatic center! It would be an instant hit. Include a 50-meter pool and separate kid's pool with slides, lazy river, etc. I like the informal format, versus Q&A."