

Ed Murray
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Shannon Loew, Chair

Ellen Sollod, Vice Chair

Brodie Bain

Lee Copeland

Thaddeus Egging

Grant Hromas

Martin Regge

John Savo

Ross Tilghman

Michael Jenkins
Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Nicolas Welch
Planner

Joan Nieman
Administrative Staff

**Department of Planning
and Development**
700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000
PO Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

TEL 206-615-1349
FAX 206-233-7883
seattle.gov/dpd

Commissioners Present

Shannon Loew, Chair
Ellen Sollod, Vice Chair
Brodie Bain
Lee Copeland
Grant Hromas
Ellen Sollod
Ross Tilghman

Commissioners Excused

Thaddeus Egging
Martin Regge

Project Description

The Department of Finance and Administrative Services (FAS) proposes to build a new station in the North Precinct of the Seattle Police Department (SPD). The North Precinct encompasses the area of Seattle north of the Ship Canal. The current North Precinct police station, located near North Seattle College at 10049 College Way N, is overcrowded and cannot expand.

FAS has acquired a full-block site at the intersection of N 130th St and Aurora Ave N. The site, zoned C1-65, is within walking distance of Ingraham High School to the east and Bitter Lake Community Center to the west.

The proposed design includes 104,000 square feet of office and operations space, a public lobby and community room, educational space, and a 159,000-square-foot above-grade parking garage for 420 vehicles.

Meeting Summary

The Design Commission unanimously approved the concept design of North Precinct with several recommendations to guide the design as it progresses. In May 2014, the Design Commission reviewed and approved North Precinct at the pre-design phase. The Commission was also involved in the consultant selection process for the police station.

Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures.

March 5, 2015**2:00 – 4:00 pm****Type**

CIP

Phase

Concept Design

Previous Reviews[May 15, 2014](#)**Project Team Present****Dennis Haskell**

SRG Partnership

Katie Hunt

SRG Partnership

Andy Ishizaki

FAS

Duncan Thieme

SRG Partnership

Mark Tilbe

Murase Associates

Rick Zieve

SRG Partnership

Attendees**Dove Alberg**

FAS

Asst. Chief Lesley Cordner

Seattle Police Department

Dan Eder

Council Central Staff

Jason Huff

Office of Arts & Culture

Joy Jacobson

FAS

David Kunselman

FAS

Melissa Lawrie

City Budget Office

Candice Livingston

City Budget Office

Terri Simmons

FAS

March 5, 2015

Summary of Presentation

Andy Ishizaki briefly shared feedback the team received from its meetings with community members. Lesley Cordner said she recently presented the concept design to Chief Kathleen O'Toole, who appreciated many details of the design. The team's presentation is available on the [Design Commission website](#).

Duncan Thieme summarized the project goals and explained how SPD polices the city. He noted that the North Precinct, already the city's largest, is growing. On a vicinity map, Dennis Haskell identified Ingraham High School and Bitter Lake Community Center, both a short walk from the project site. A series of photographs showed the existing condition of the four edges of the project. Mr. Thieme summarized the Commission's comments from the pre-design review in May 2014.

Mr. Thieme explained the organization of programmatic elements on the site, the security requirements around the perimeter of the building, and the facility's parking needs. The proposed 420 parking spaces reflect projected peak-time demand in 2038. Rick Zieve noted that, during their tour of other police stations in the United States, the team noticed a lack of a common gathering space for officers, which they have sought to address in the proposed design.

Mr. Thieme outlined the team's potential sustainability goals: LEED Platinum certification, net-zero by 2020, and the Living Building Pilot. To achieve these, the team is considering geothermal heating and cooling, a solar photovoltaic array above the garage, daylighting, a green roof, and stormwater management.

Mark Tilbe stated that the primary goal for the landscape design is to engage the public at all edges of the site. He noted that all planting at the site must be low to prevent hiding places. A series of landscape beds would line NE 130th St, and a runnel would convey stormwater to a rain garden at the low southeast corner of the site.

Finally, several perspectives illustrated the intended character of the exterior and interior of the facility. The team is working with [Nikolaus Hafermaas](#) on public artwork for the police station that might be integrated into the building façade.

Agency Comments**none****Public Comments****none****Summary of Discussion**

The Commission was supportive of the general direction of the project and particularly impressed with the team's striking architectural design and sustainability goals. The discussion focused on three main areas for further study and refinement.

First, the Commission remained concerned about the length of the NE 130th St façade and its impact on the public realm, as shown in Figure 1. The Commission recognized that the façade length is partly driven by the security and transparency requirements for the facility, which limit the creation of a pedestrian-friendly environment in this already auto-oriented site. Nevertheless, the Commissioners asked that the team continue to investigate how additional transparency, landscape, modulation or articulation of the building façade, or adjustment to the overall building massing can strengthen the pedestrian experience along NE 130th St. One Commissioner suggested looking to Vito Acconci's work for inspiration.¹

¹ Vito Acconci is an American designer, landscape architect, and artist.

Second, the Commission discussed the station entrance and the west façade facing Aurora Ave N. The Commission was supportive of the massing concept, which elevates the third-floor educational area above a two-story transparent public entry space. In contrast to the bold design of the entry space, the Commission recommended further study and integration of the vestibule, which appeared ordinary in comparison. One Commissioner mentioned Viennese architecture firm Coop Himmelb(l)au as a potential reference for elevated or “floating” building masses. The Commissioners also recognized the potential for the soffit treatment to enhance the entrance experience and engage the facility’s users; they suggested the use of mirrors, innovative materials, or a poetic treatment rather than relying on the SPD letters as a design motif.

Finally, the Commissioners emphasized that the team should continue to work closely with the community as the concept design develops. They were particularly interested in how the facility design can engage youth beyond the ground-level community room spaces. The Commissioners encouraged the creation of an inviting, welcoming space that has programming to draw people in.

Action

The Design Commission thanked the project team for a detailed presentation of the concept design of the North Precinct police station. The Commission appreciated the potential for this project to catalyze a new vision of a more pedestrian-oriented environment along the autocratic Aurora Ave N corridor. The Commission praised the team for its exciting and adventurous work and thanked FAS for including the Commission in the original consultant selection process.

The Commission particularly appreciated the bold architectural design and the team’s thoughtful exploration of sustainability. The Commission recognized the challenging parking and security requirements inherent for this type of facility but remained concerned about their impact on the pedestrian environment, especially on NE 130th St. The next phase of design should explore all opportunities to create a pedestrian-friendly experience at all edges of the site.

With a **vote of 7 to 0**, the Design Commission approved the concept design of the North Precinct police station with the following recommendations:



Figure 1. The Commission continued to highlight the need for a pedestrian-friendly environment along NE 130th St, particularly since pedestrians including Ingraham High School students will pass along this edge going to and from bus stops on Aurora Ave N.



Figure 2. The Commission praised the bold design of the entrance but honed in on the vestibule as an area for further study and refinement.

- Continue to refine the pedestrian environment around the project site, particularly along the NE 130th St edge as outlined in Figure 3. Consider opportunities for integrated bus shelters or other gestures that would humanize this long façade.
- Find ways to break down the scale of the NE 130th St façade. Consider additional transparency, articulation, modulation, and/or landscape design to achieve this. Reexamine the building massing along NE 130th St, particularly the parking garage.
- Apply the same architectural rigor to the vestibule and signage as to the rest of the entry (Figure 4).
- Continue to explore options for the material of the soffit. Consider opportunities to use the soffit to enhance the relationship between the building and its users.
- Consider additional landscape and seating in the west plaza as a respite along Aurora Ave N (Figure 5).
- Coordinate closely with the artist as the artwork is further developed on its integration with the facility design.
- Explore opportunities in this facility beyond the community room for engagement among SPD, the community, and youth, particularly given the proximity of Ingraham High School and the Bitter Lake Community Center.

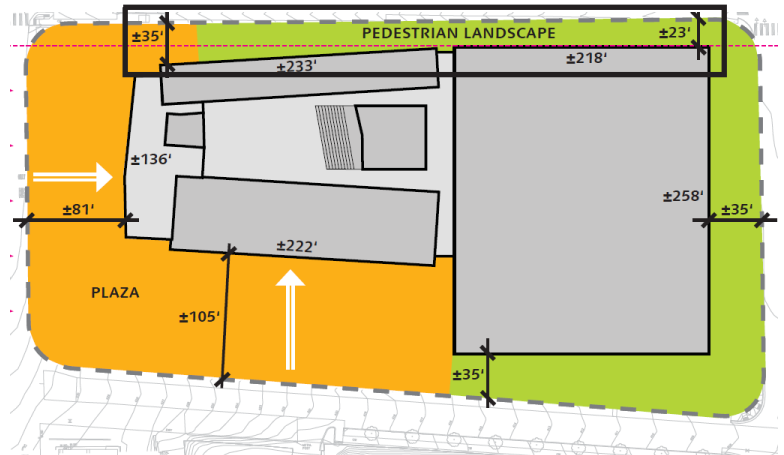


Figure 3. Modifying the massing of the parking garage could help mitigate the length of the NE 130th St façade. The Commission noted that in the concept design the garage aligns with the street grid but could instead reflect or incorporate the slight cant of the other façades.



Figure 4. The Commission praised the bold design of the entrance but honed in on the vestibule as an area for further study and refinement.

The Commission expects to review the project next during the schematic design phase.

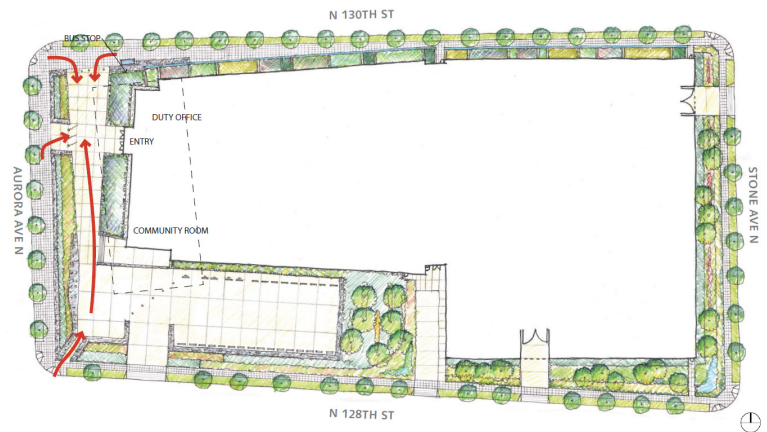


Figure 5. Explore opportunities for additional landscape and seating between the building and Aurora Ave N as they refine the west plaza design.