

West Seattle Triangle Land Use Code and Zoning Amendments

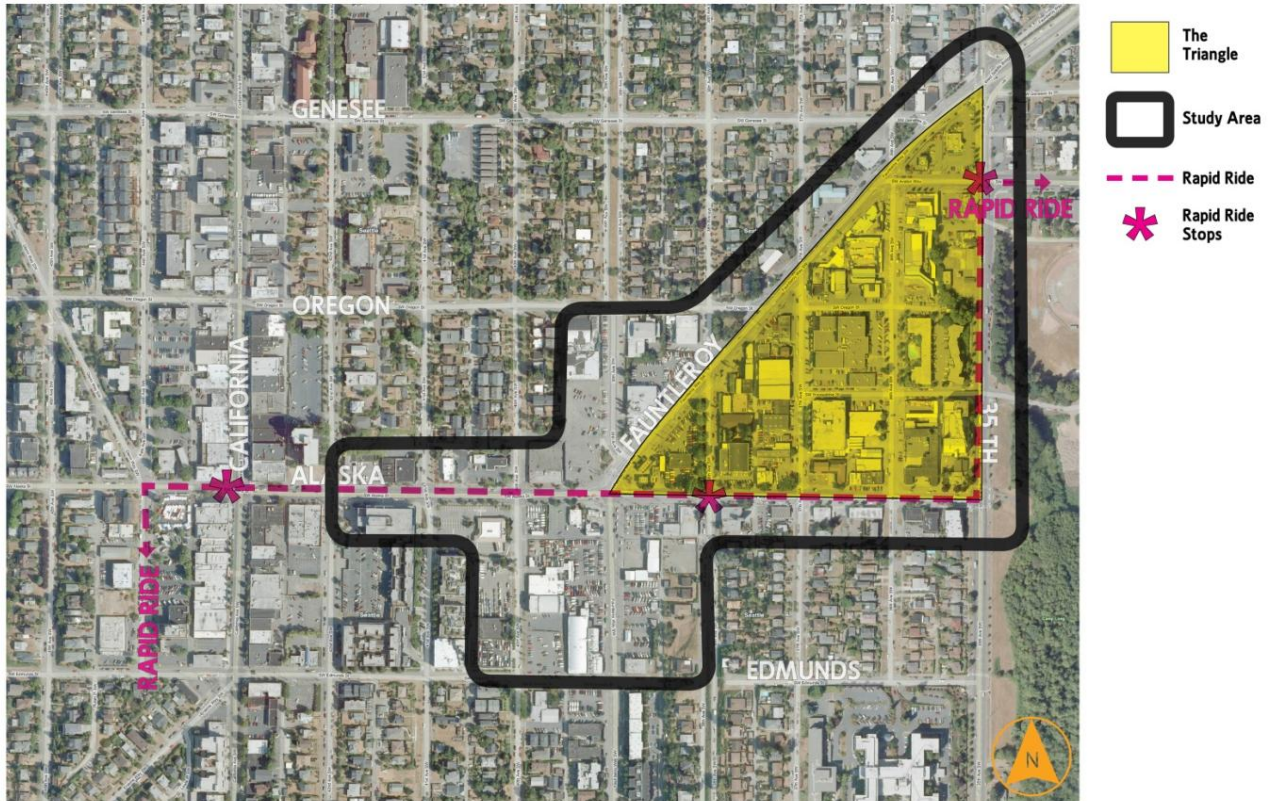
September 1, 2011



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WEST SEATTLE TRIANGLE AREA



A note about the project boundaries

The West Seattle Triangle planning project was named for the yellow-shaded area on the above map. This area is bounded by Fauntleroy Way SW, SW Alaska Street and 35th Avenue SW.

The “project study area” for the West Seattle Triangle planning project includes all commercially-zoned land in the area outlined in black above.

Introduction

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has been working with members of the community to identify preferred development directions for the West Seattle Triangle planning area. The project was initiated in response to general guidance provided in the 1999 West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village Neighborhood Plan.

The West Seattle Triangle Planning Project identified specific recommendations for the evolution of street rights-of-way and future development projects in a separate document entitled the *West Seattle Triangle Urban Design Framework*, presented in the appendices to this report. Chapter 4 of the Framework document includes the *West Seattle Triangle Streetscape Concept Plan*, which is undergoing inter-departmental review prior to its inclusion in the City's Right of Way Improvements Manual.

This *Director's Report* identifies recommended amendments to Seattle's Land Use Code consistent with the West Seattle Triangle Urban Design Framework. Recommended changes will:

- Apply neighborhood-oriented street frontage standards to commercial areas throughout the Triangle planning area.
- Apply new development standards to large lots in the southwest portions of the Triangle planning area in consideration of community context and the urban design framework.
- Increase height and density in a limited area where under-developed lots predominate to ensure that future development is feasible and has adequate flexibility to support a diversity of building types.
- Focus pedestrian-oriented uses and designs along SW Alaska Street to better connect the Triangle with the Junction business districts and to complement bus RapidRide that is planned for implementation in 2012.
- Retain existing height and density east of 38th Avenue SW in the small business district within the Triangle, allowing existing businesses to thrive and expand; and provide transitions between larger developments and lower-intensity residential areas.
- Resolve "split zone" lot situations where a single property is subject to more than one zone designation.

Summary of Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

The following amendments to Land Use Code regulations are recommended to apply in the West Seattle Triangle planning area. A more detailed accounting of the recommended code amendments begins on page 14 of this report.

- *Rezone from general commercial 1 (C 1 zoning) to neighborhood commercial 3 (NC3) throughout the Triangle Planning area.*

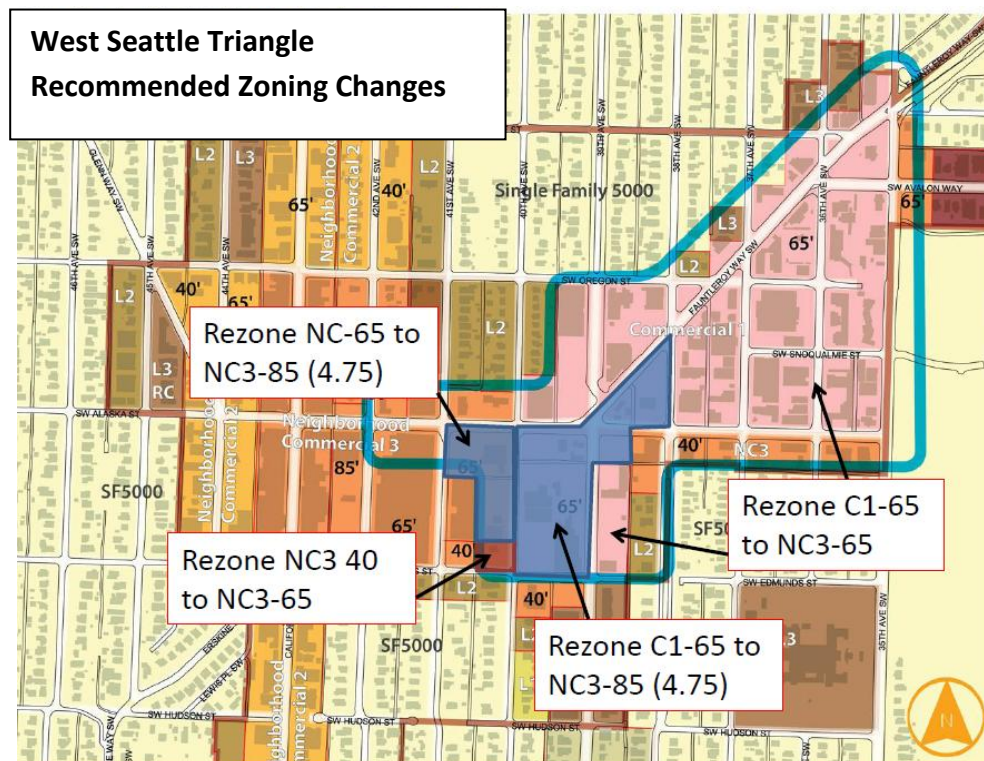
The primary effect of this proposal would encourage new development that would be neighborhood-oriented and pedestrian-friendly in design, while allowing existing businesses to operate and expand.

- *Establish a pedestrian-designation (P) along SW Alaska Street between the Junction business district and SW 36th Street.*

The “P” designation would require a higher-intensity of pedestrian-oriented design and retail uses along the designated street front. This action would encourage a strong pedestrian connection between the Junction and Triangle business districts.

- *Retain existing height and density in the Triangle business district east of 38th Avenue SW.*

Many very small businesses are located in the Triangle. Retention of existing heights and densities is consistent with a strategy to preserve the overall scale of the business district.



West of 38th Avenue SW and Near the Intersection of Fauntleroy/Alaska (area in blue on the map on the previous page)

Several acres of land in the West Seattle Triangle planning area are located at an important “gateway” in the West Seattle community. These properties remain vacant or under-used since the Huling auto dealership closed in 2007. As they redevelop in the coming years, these properties are likely to have a defining effect on neighborhood character and functions due to their highly-visible location. These areas were the subject of more focused study regarding possible future development scenarios and streetscape. The following recommended code amendments would apply in the area west of 38th Avenue SW near the intersection of Fauntleroy Way SW and SW Alaska Streets.

- *In an approximately two-block area, increase allowable height to 85 feet through incentive zoning.*

The 85’ zoning would be located in such a way as to avoid direct proximity to low density residential areas (lowrise and single family residential zones). In combination with the amended development standards and density limits, the 85’ zone would provide an incentive to integrate elements of the *West Seattle Triangle Street Concept Plan*, a component of the urban design framework.

Within the 85’ zone, the proposal would allow an increase in maximum density, expressed as a floor area ratio (see page 21). Density above the existing limit of 4.75 FAR would be achieved through participation in the City of Seattle’s affordable workforce housing program. The program requires the provision or funding of units affordable to households earning up to 80% of area median income for rental units and up to 100% of area median income for owner-occupied units.

- *In the 85’ zone, apply development standards to mitigate the potential bulk of structures on very long lots, to provide open areas for pedestrian access and landscaping, and to complement the Triangle Street Concept Plan. The recommended development standards include:*
 - a. An upper level 10’ setback along SW Alaska Street beginning at 45’ in height*
 - b. 80% lot coverage limit for structures on lots over 40,000 square feet in size*
 - c. A maximum structure width of 275’*
 - d. Separation of 30’ between structures that are wider than 250’ in the north-south direction*



Nearby, the Mural is an example of an 85’ tall structure

Project Background and Planning Context

Bounded and bisected by three major arterials—Fauntleroy Way SW, 35th Avenue SW and SW Alaska Street—the Triangle serves as a major gateway to West Seattle. It is located east of the Junction, West Seattle’s central retail district, and is home to numerous locally-owned businesses and the West Seattle YMCA. It is adjacent to a large open space and golf course. The Triangle is the location of numerous bus routes, and will soon be home to West Seattle’s first Bus Rapid Ride network.

The West Seattle Triangle planning area is located within the West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village. The future of the Triangle area was a topic of discussion during the Junction’s neighborhood planning process that concluded in 1999. Since that time, several changes have occurred, bringing focused attention to this particular area for several reasons:

- Likely future development. Many large parcels of land in the triangle have been the subject of development interest over the past few years, including several acres that were part of the Huling family auto dealership. Recent development interest has prompted members of the community and City Council to request review of zoning that would apply to future new construction projects in the area.
- Planned Bus RapidRide. King County Metro’s planned Bus RapidRide will move through the triangle planning area with stops along 35th Avenue SW and SW Alaska Street. Street redesign for the RapidRide route is being conducted by King County Metro and the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), and is being informed by the West Seattle Triangle Project.
- Existing neighborhood character and functions. The triangle planning area is an eclectic mixed use area with active commercial and residential uses. A key challenge for both land use and street design is helping to ensure the needs of those uses are met while the area changes over the coming decades.



The former Huling auto dealership defined the character of the Triangle for many years

Project Goals

Changes will occur in the West Seattle Triangle in coming years. Throughout the West Seattle Triangle planning process, discussion has focused on how to *anticipate and respond to future change while retaining what is great about the Triangle area today*. Goals for planning were reported at a February 7, 2011 open house:

- Build on what is great about the Triangle while planning for the future.
- Capitalize on the investment in transit and transportation: a transit-friendly neighborhood.
- Embrace the area's location as a gateway to the West Seattle peninsula.
- Support the continued success of small businesses & the Triangle business district.
- Welcome a diversity of residents.
- Building designs meet the needs of occupants and property owners while supporting a vibrant community life.
- Accommodate all travelers: cars, transit, pedestrians, trucks and bicycles.
- Create places for people: new community spaces and connections to parks.
- Integrate natural systems.
- Link to other neighborhood areas, including the Junction business district.
- Accommodate parking and loading, and continue to plan for parking needs in the future.

Community Dialogue to Date

The Triangle Planning Project builds upon the efforts of community and business groups and individuals over the past decade to further the idea of walkable streets, a vital small business/mixed use district, and aesthetic improvements to this important entry to West Seattle. This vision emerged from the 1999 West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village Neighborhood Plan.

The first community meeting on the West Seattle Triangle project took place in November 2008. At this meeting, stakeholders in the Triangle and from throughout West Seattle identified assets and challenges of the planning area, and ideas for changes as the Triangle develops and evolves.

In 2010, DPD convened an advisory group consisting of twelve community leaders to discuss and frame the Triangle's future and consider options for land use and urban design. Many additional members of the community observed and offered commentary throughout eight advisory group meetings. The advisory group meetings concluded with the publication of the *Urban Design Framework* document, including the *West Seattle Triangle Streetscape Concept Plan*.



West Seattle Triangle meetings were well-attended

The Triangle planning process included over 35 public meetings including the following forums:

- A group of businesses within the Triangle, in collaboration with the West Seattle Chamber of Commerce, identified needs specific to businesses.
- In collaboration with West Seattle Triangle businesses, DPD completed an inventory of businesses in the Triangle.
- A special meeting about parking issues took place in May 2010 with SDOT community parking program staff. Parking issues are of critical interest to both businesses and residents in the Triangle area.
- A walking tour/discussion about public parks took place in June 2010.
- 5,000 letters and postcards were mailed to every address within and in close proximity to the Triangle planning area, informing them of the study and of upcoming public forums.
- Meetings to discuss the design of King County Metro Bus RapidRide alignment were held.
- A community open house was held on February 7, 2011.
- The West Seattle Blog has provided extensive coverage of the project: <http://westseattleblog.com/>. Search "West Seattle Triangle."



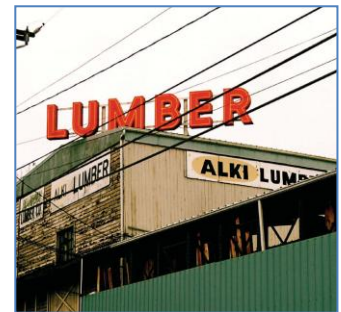
City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen addressing the advisory group

Planning Context

Small Business District

The West Seattle Triangle is home to over 70 businesses that serve the West Seattle peninsula and Seattle as a whole. In mid 2010, DPD surveyed businesses in the Triangle planning area and found a diversity of enterprises offering an array of goods and services. The Triangle business district includes several market niches and is home to auto repair/parts, medical services, and a growing outdoor sports business sector. Many businesses are locally-owned. Interviews with local business owners reveal numerous long-term relationships between business tenants and property owners. An inventory of businesses can be found on the project web site.

Outside of surface parking, Alki Lumber represents the single largest use of land in the area. The business occupies over 1.5 acres of land, and employs over 17 people. In its present location since 1921, Alki Lumber supplies construction products to contractors and the public, and requires access for large trucks from south to north along 36th Avenue SW.



Alki Lumber is a thriving locally-owned business

Following is a table that identifies the percent of land devoted to different types of uses that are identified and regulated in the Seattle Land Use Code. All existing uses are generally consistent with a mixed use commercial district under either C1 or NC3 zoning.

<i>Current Uses</i>	<i>Percentage of the Planning Area (Excluding Rights-of-Way)</i>
Un-leased Land (surface lots, empty buildings)	24%
Outdoor sales, storage (Alki Lumber)	10%
General retail sales and services	13%
Community organizations	10%
Residential, including residential within mixed use	12%
Automotive sales and services	8%
Parks	8%
Restaurant & entertainment	7%
Customer service, office, medical service	5%
Gas station	2%
Government (not parks)	2%

Residential Community

Over 400 residential units are located among area businesses within the West Seattle Triangle planning area. In addition, single family neighborhoods are located north and south of the planning area. Residences within the Triangle include the following properties:

- Avalon West Apartments
- Chinook Apartments
- Duplex, triplex, 4-plex and three single family homes
- Bari Apartments
- Fairway Apartments
- Merrill Gardens Senior Housing
- West Point Condominium
- Link Apartments
- Nova Apartments (planned)

Because of the area's convenient location and the existing mixed-use commercial zoning, it is likely that additional residential units will be constructed in the West Seattle Triangle planning area. No changes are proposed for the existing residential multifamily or single family zoning.

Under-developed Land near the Intersection of Fauntleroy Way SW and SW Alaska Street

Over 20% of the Triangle planning area is in surface parking lots or vacant buildings. Numerous other lots in the area are lightly-developed and may redevelop under favorable economic conditions.

In the area west of 38th Avenue SW, near the intersection of Fauntleroy Way SW and SW Alaska Street, the community identified the under-developed land as an opportunity for investment and new development that can have a transformative effect on the neighborhood.

In this area, the West Seattle Triangle Streetscape Concept Plan identifies streetscape improvements that have the potential to add a dimension of green and complement community spaces. Land use recommendations support the streetscape concepts by encouraging the integration of open spaces onsite and nearby, and by ensuring an appropriate scale of future buildings.

Neighborhood Plan

The West Seattle Triangle Project was prompted by the West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village Neighborhood Plan, published in 1999. Several aspects of the neighborhood plan speak directly to the future of the Triangle planning area including the following:

- Fauntleroy Way SW: create a community gateway, enhance pedestrian safety and comfort, retain vehicle capacity while calming traffic.
- Encourage the provision of parking for shoppers and employees.
- Allow higher density mixed use residential, but not height, in the Triangle area bounded by Fauntleroy/Alaska/ 35th.
- Encourage a diversity of housing affordability levels.
- Develop opportunities for public open spaces, community gathering spaces and pedestrian bicycle trails, including the use of unneeded portions of street rights-of-ways.
- Promote greening and beautification of the neighborhood.



***The West Seattle Junction Hub
Urban Village Neighborhood
Plan calls for pedestrian
improvements between the
Junction and the Triangle***

Comprehensive Plan Highlights

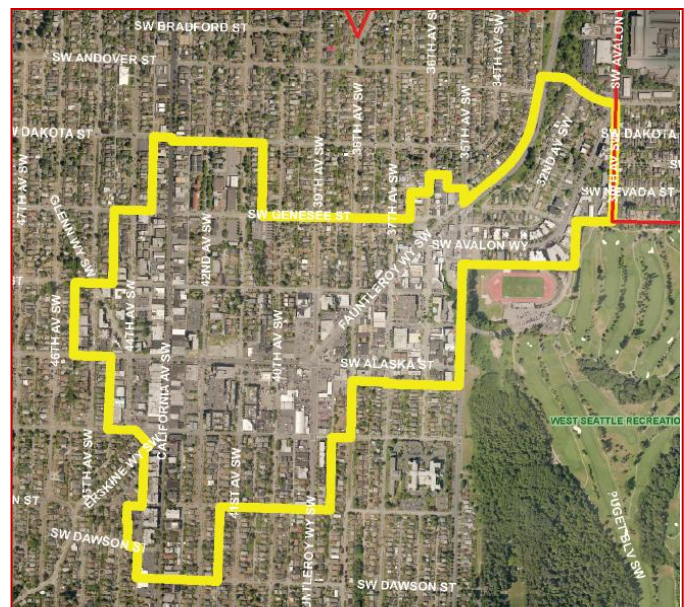
The West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village is one of six Hub Urban Villages in Seattle. The Comprehensive Plan (2004-2024) identifies a Hub Urban Village as featuring a broad mix of commercial and residential uses, frequent transit service, parks facilities and the potential to accommodate both housing and job growth.

Growth targets represent estimates for planning growth in Seattle’s urban villages. These estimates change periodically based on planning projections at the State level. The West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village has seen steady growth over the years.

Growth Information for the West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village			
	2000	2010	2024-Projected Households Comprehensive Plan
Households	1,981 Occupied units	2,324 Occupied units	2,980 Households
Employment	2,825 jobs	2,591 jobs (2009)	3,420 jobs

Housing data from the Decennial Census, U.S. Census Bureau. Employment Information from the Washington State Employment Security Division. Comprehensive Plan information from the Seattle Comprehensive Plan, 2004-2024, Urban Village Appendix A

It is likely that infill development will continue in coming years. Increases in both households and jobs are likely under any zoning scenario.



West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village

Recommended Changes to Land Use and Zoning

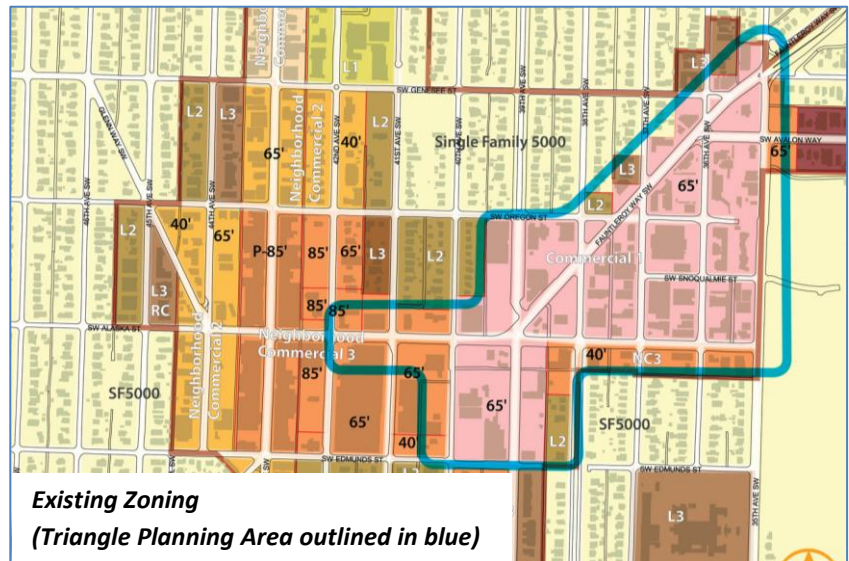
The following changes to land use and zoning in the West Seattle Triangle are described and supported by the following discussion:

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1. Rezone from general commercial (C zoning) to neighborhood commercial (NC) throughout the Triangle Planning area.	13
2. Establish a pedestrian-designation (P) along SW Alaska Street between the Junction business district and SW 36 th Street.	18
3. In an approximately two-block area, increase allowable height to 85 feet through incentive zoning with a maximum allowable density of 5.5 FAR In the 85' zone, apply development standards to mitigate the potential bulk of larger structures, and to encourage open areas and pedestrian amenities at the street level	19

1. Rezone from general commercial (C zoning) to neighborhood commercial (NC) throughout the Triangle Planning area.

Much of the West Seattle Triangle planning area is zoned “Commercial”, specifically Commercial 1 (C1) and Neighborhood Commercial 3 (NC3). Seattle’s Land Use Code describes the C1 zone as an auto-oriented retail sales and service area, most appropriate on land that is generally either a) outside of urban villages, or b) within urban villages and either abutting a state highway or in use as a shopping mall. The Land Use Code describes the NC3 zone as being appropriate within urban villages in areas with excellent transit service and significant pedestrian activity.


Both the C1 zone and the NC3 zone allow a broad range of commercial and residential uses. At 65 feet in height, the zones allow the same development density on a lot. An additional increment of density is allowed for buildings that include a mix of residential and nonresidential uses. Thus, both the C1 and NC3 zone provide an incentive for mixed-use development.



Another similarity between the two zones is their approach to allowing different types of commercial uses. All uses—or types of business functions—within the Triangle planning area would be allowed outright under the C1 and the NC3 zone, and most could expand.

One of the key differences between the two zones is how buildings relate to the street. The NC3 zone emphasizes a “pedestrian friendly” street front. Buildings must be located near the sidewalk, with windows and doors that face the sidewalk. Parking is generally located behind, beside or below the building. In C1 zones, parking for automobiles may be located between the structure and the street.



Comparison of C1 and NC3 Zones in the West Seattle Triangle planning area:

Land Use Code Provisions Governing Development 	Commercial 1 (C1) Zone	Neighborhood Commercial 3 (NC3) Zone
Density/ FAR¹ FAR: Residential-only or nonresidential only FAR: Mix of residential land nonresidential uses	<p style="text-align: center;">4.25</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">4.75</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4.25</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">4.75</p>
Uses	Nearly all existing uses would be allowed outright in either the C1 zone or the NC3 zone and could expand as the market allows. Future “food processing” uses could expand up to 25,000 square feet in size. The incorporation of “drive-in lanes” would be more limited under an NC3 zone designation.	
Parking Quantity	Parking quantity is treated the same in NC and C1 zones.	
Parking Location and Access (see separate discussion on “street frontage considerations.”)	Parking may be located in front of the building— between the building and the sidewalk.	Parking is generally located below, behind or beside a structure, except where not feasible.
Design Considerations	Generally design of buildings is oriented to vehicles rather than pedestrians	Building design is generally oriented toward the sidewalk, allowing vehicle access and parking in less-prominent locations on the lot.

¹ For an description of FAR, see page 21

Design Consideration in Commercial Zones

Street Frontage Element 	Commercial (C1)	Neighborhood Commercial (NC)
<p>Blank walls facing the street long, un-interrupted blank walls lack visual interest and can create isolated areas that feel unsafe to pedestrians.</p> 	<p>Allowed in C1 zones</p>	<p>Not allowed, generally, in NC zones</p>
<p>Transparent facades: Windows and doors at the street level support pedestrian activity and public safety through “eyes on the street”.</p> 	<p>Allowed but not encouraged.</p>	<p>Required, generally, in NC zones.</p>
<p>Off-street parking: in front This style of development is consistent with the formula for national stores: the building is located toward the rear of the lot, and the parking lot is located near the street frontage.</p> 	<p>Allowed in C zones.</p>	<p>Generally not allowed in NC zones.</p>

<p>Off-street parking: below, behind or beside In NC zones, parking is located away from the sidewalk, and store fronts are located near the sidewalk. This creates a safer, more interesting streetscape for the pedestrian.</p> 	<p>Not typical in C zones.</p>	<p>Generally required in NC zones.</p> <p>In NC zones, parking must be located below, behind or beside the structure unless such an arrangement is not feasible.</p>
<p>Drive in Businesses</p> 	<p>Allowed in C zones with few conditions</p>	<p>Limited in NC zones.</p>

Impacts of a Zone Change from C1 to NC3 on Small Businesses

A key concern for businesses is the extent to which changing zoning from the current auto-oriented C1 zone to a pedestrian oriented NC3 zone will affect the ability of existing businesses to continue to operate at their current location. A change from the existing Commercial 1 (C1) zoning would allow all existing commercial uses to remain. For example, Alki Lumber, the largest single use in the area, would be allowed under both zoning scenarios and could expand. However, food processing uses and the allowance for drive-in lanes would be more limited under the NC zone. Characteristics of structures that do not conform to NC standards could remain but not expand.

Currently there are no uses in the Triangle that are considered to be “industrial.” Auto service uses and outdoor sales (Alki Lumber) are considered to be “commercial” in nature and consistent with a commercial zone designation of either C1 or NC3.

Retaining the C1 zone does not guarantee that the existing pattern of uses will be preserved. Many small business districts in the city find that the C1 zone is most conducive to very large national chain stores that do not necessarily fit with the character or the small-scale economy of smaller business districts. Large retail uses would be allowed under NC zoning, but new structures would be required to be designed in such a way as to encourage walking between businesses.

Another common concern for many small businesses is the future stability of land-related costs such as lease rates and taxes. For example, land on which allowable height or density is increased may be vulnerable to higher taxes or rents. Local ownership and small parcel sizes provide some reassurance that redevelopment is not likely in the near-term on land on which many small businesses are located. However, recommendations can respond to this concern by retaining (not raising) zoned heights and/or densities, allowing for more gradual change over time. Recommended zoning retains allowable heights in most of the planning area.

NC zones contain neighborhood-oriented and pedestrian-friendly design standards for new development.

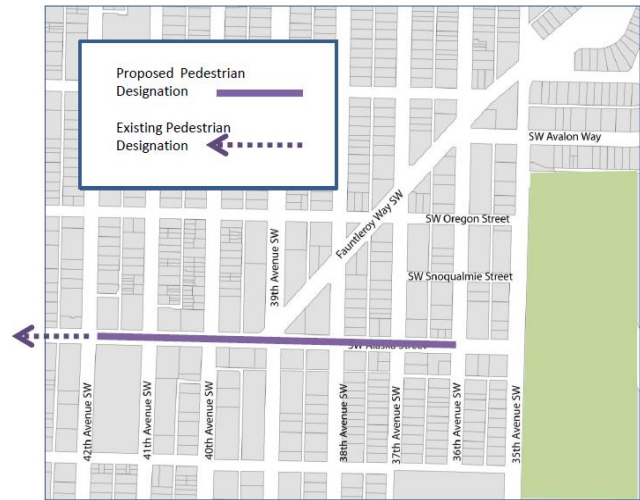
Most businesses in the Triangle would continue to operate and could expand with NC (Neighborhood Commercial) zoning.



Photo courtesy West Seattle Blog

2. Establish a pedestrian-designation (P) along SW Alaska Street between the Junction business district and SW 36th Street.

The West Seattle Junction Neighborhood plan calls for pedestrian connections between the Triangle business district and the Junction business district. The recommended Pedestrian (P) designation requires a higher degree of pedestrian-oriented characteristics and uses. This designation can accompany Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zoning in specific locations along specifically identified streets.



Currently The West Seattle Junction features a P designation along California Ave SW and along one block of SW Alaska Street.

With a pedestrian-designation, street-level uses are required that are believed to activate the sidewalk environment and provide accessibility to goods and services needed by the surrounding community. Drive-in uses are prohibited. Required uses include:

- Retail
- Entertainment
- Restaurant
- Personal Services



California Avenue SW is a pedestrian-designated street with store fronts that date back before the trolley era

The pedestrian designation is not recommended for the block of SW Alaska Street between 35th and 36th Avenues SW. This is to allow flexibility for development in this area to face either SW Alaska Street or a north-south Avenue such as 35th Avenue SW.



Example of a pedestrian street

3. Recommended Zoning for a Portion of the Fauntleroy/ Alaska Blocks

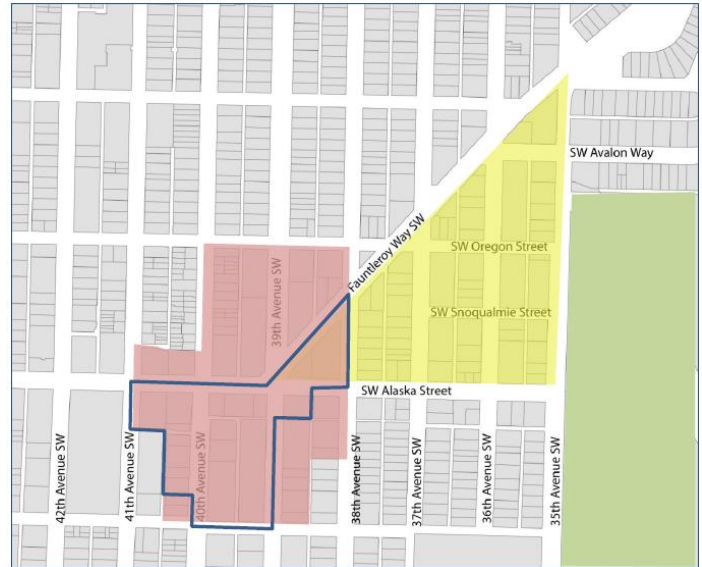
Phase II of the West Seattle Triangle planning process focused on the blocks west of 38th Avenue SW. Here, many properties are considered to be under-developed and likely candidates for new development in the coming decades.

The community has repeatedly identified the intersection of Fauntleroy Way SW and SW Alaska Street as a “gateway” to West Seattle through which hundreds of people travel each day. Similarly, under the right circumstances, future development in this area has the potential to introduce new uses, functions and building forms that can serve the entire West Seattle peninsula and complement the Junction- and the Triangle business districts.

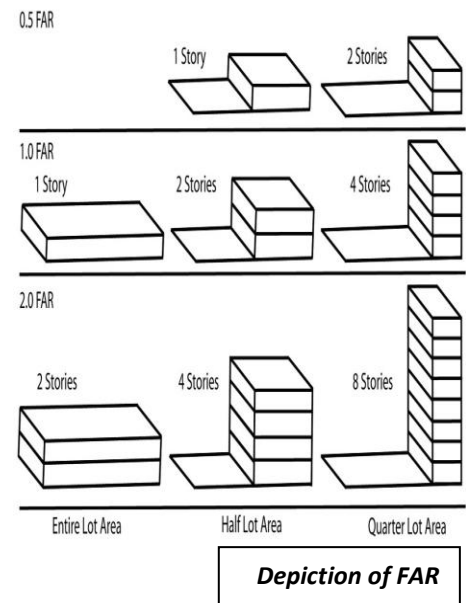
In the Fauntleroy/Alaska blocks, several lots are over 40,000 square feet in size. Larger lots offer the potential for a diversity of building arrangements that can respond to the surrounding context. In contrast, development on smaller lots is often constrained by site conditions, resulting in less diversity in building forms and the arrangement of different elements. Recommended zoning includes new standards for future development on larger lots in this area.

As recommended, new structures would be allowed up to 85’ in height in a NC3 85 zone, and would be required to reserve open space at the ground level. This space could complement the neighborhood open space concepts identified in the *West Seattle Triangle Street Concept Plan*, serve natural drainage functions on-site through permeable surface treatments, and mitigate the potential bulk of new buildings on very long blocks. Together with existing landscaping requirements in NC zones, development standards would support the introduction of green features on-site and in the adjacent right of way.

In addition to a recommended increase in allowable height, allowable density is also recommended to be increased in order to provide flexibility for development.



The “Fauntleroy/Alaska Blocks” include areas west of 38th Avenue SW (rose color). The blue lines indicate the recommended 85’ zone presented in this report.



A measure of density used in the Land Use Code is “Floor Area Ratio” or “FAR”. For example, 1 FAR represents the equivalent square feet in structures as is contained on the lot. Two FAR is the equivalent of 2 lots worth of square within built structures.

Heights of 85’ would accommodate up to 5.5 FAR of density while reserving 20% of the lot un-covered by structures. Thus, recommended zoning combines additional height with lot coverage limits and other development standards that respond to conditions in this particular area.

Recommended zoning for a two block area within the Fauntleroy/ Alaska blocks includes the following elements:

Recommended Height and Density for the Fauntleroy/ Alaska Blocks Subarea

- A. Rezone certain blocks in the Fauntleroy/Alaska area to allow buildings up to 85’ in height.
- B. In the 85’ zone, increase allowable FAR from 4.75 to 5.5.
 - Added density above the existing density limit of 4.75 FAR would be gained through participation in the City’s affordable workforce housing incentive program requiring the provision of affordable housing at 80% to 100% of area median income.
 - Certain areas west of 38th Avenue SW were not included in the recommended NC3 85’ zone. These areas include properties with active development permits and properties adjacent to low density residential zones.

Recommended Development Standards for NC3 85 (4.75) Zone

In addition to a recommended increase in height and density, development standards are intended to mitigate the potential bulk of taller structures on the long blocks, facilitate building design to increase pedestrian access, encourage on-site landscaping to address rainwater runoff and other site drainage concerns, and establish a more pedestrian-scale along SW Alaska Street.



Draft 85’ Height Limit (blue area) within the Alaska/Fauntleroy Blocks



Recommended Land Use Code standards in the 85’ zone complement the Urban Design Framework

The following standards are recommended apply only to the NC3 85 zone within the Triangle planning area.

- A. Lot coverage limit. A maximum of 80% lot coverage in the NC3 85 zone for lots 40,000 square feet or larger. This standard will require future development projects to integrate on-site open areas and provide light and air between structures on larger lots. As a nearby example, the Link mixed use structure located on 39th Avenue SW was developed to approximately 82% lot coverage, and is 65' in height.
- B. Maximum structure width. Maximum structure width of 275' with separation of 30' between structures. The north-south dimension of typical blocks in this area is 600' in length. The 275' wall length would serve to break-up the potential bulk of buildings on the very long block frontages. The 30-foot separation between structures would allow light and air between structures.
- C. Upper level setback along SW Alaska Street. For structures greater than 65 feet in height, an upper level setback is recommended for building frontages abutting SW Alaska Street. The standard is recommended in order to maximize access to light and air, and to create a lower-scale street frontage for taller buildings. The setback would not be required for structures within 100 feet of Fauntleroy Way SW in order to encourage buildings that provide a focal point at the corner of SW Alaska Street and Fauntleroy Way SW.

As recommended, a minimum setback of 10' would be required from the property line at 45' in height. For each ten vertical feet of height thereafter, an additional 2' of minimum setback would be required from the street property line.



Example of separation between structures



Example of an 85' building with an upper level setback at 65' in height.

Appendices

Appendix A: Illustrations of Structures in the West Seattle Triangle

Note: The following images depict maximum building “envelopes” with little modulation, setbacks or design details. They are provided simply to illustrate the distinction between the existing 65’ zoning and the potential for structures built under the proposed 85’ limit with streetscape improvements.

What are the colors?

Red illustrates street-level commercial spaces. *Yellow* represents the floors of structures that could be built under the current 65’ height limit. *Blue* represents floors of structures constructed above 65’ in height.



Theoretical view south at 39th Avenue SW across Fauntleroy Way SW



Theoretical view south at 40th Avenue SW across SW Alaska Street



Theoretical view southwest across the 40th Avenue SW from a small plaza at the corner with SW Alaska Street

**Appendix B: West Seattle Triangle Summary of Public Group Meetings
 (partial list)**

Date	Group/ Event
November 17, 2008	Community working session
January 27, 2010	Small meeting to discuss project scope with six residents of the community.
March 31, 2010	Advisory Group Meeting #1
March 2010	Triangle business inventory conducted
April 14, 2010	Advisory Group Meeting #2, attended by advisors + over 15 members of the community, including Triangle business owners
April 15, 2010	Letter sent to all addresses and property owners in the Triangle and within 100 feet of the Triangle planning area.
April 26, 2010	Meeting with a group of 20 Triangle business owners, meeting organized by West Seattle Chamber at Mountain-to-Sound Outfitters
May 12, 2010	Advisory Group Meeting #3, attended by advisors + over 25 members of the community including numerous Triangle business owners
May 20, 2010	Community meeting on parking issues in the planning area, organized by DPD with SDOT parking staff
June 7, 2010	Community meeting/ walking tour about parks and open space issues
June 8, 2010	Meeting with a group of 20 Triangle business & property owners, organized by the owner of Tom's Automotive and DPD staff
June 9, 2010	West Seattle Triangle Advisory Group Meeting #4, attended by advisors + about 15 members of the community
June 14, 2010	Meeting with the Junction Neighborhood Organization (residents)
July 15, 2010	Triangle business survey initiated
August 31, 2010	Community "walk and talk" of the Triangle sponsored by Feet First
October 27, 2010	Advisory Group Meeting #4, attended by advisors + over 20 members of the community, including Triangle businesses
October 7, 2010	Seattle Design Commission Briefing
November 10, 2010	Advisory Group Meeting #5, attended by advisors + over 10 members of the community, including Triangle businesses
November 17, 2010	Advisory Group Meeting #6, attended by advisors + over 25 members of the community, including Triangle businesses
November 18, 2010	Community meeting sponsored by DPD about RapidRide design in the Triangle, about 25 people in attendance

December 2, 2010	Triangle information and DPD staff at the Mayor's Town Hall event at the Youngstown Cultural Arts Center
January 5, 2010	West Seattle Triangle Street Trees and Pedestrian Lighting w/ SDOT arborist and lighting specialist. Several advisory group members in attendance
January 12, 2011	SW Alaska Street RapidRide Street Design, convened by SDOT and METRO
February 2, 2011	SW District Council
February 7, 2011	Community open house event, attended by about 60 people
February 16, 2011	Delridge District Council
March 10, 2011	Seattle Planning Commission
March 15, 2011	Seattle Freight Advisory Board
April 6, 2011	Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board
April 13, 2011	Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board
April 14, 2011	Advisory Group Meeting #7, advisors + 8 members of the community, including Triangle businesses
April 28, 2011	West Seattle Junction Association
May 5, 2011	Advisory Group Meeting #8, advisors + 8 members of the community
June 1, 2011	Southwest District Council
June 13, 2011	Nearly 5,000 postcards sent to addresses within and around the West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village
June 23, 2011	Mayor's community forum at Hiawatha Community Center (table with information and DPD staff)
June 29, 2011	West Seattle Triangle open house #2
July 28, 2011	West Seattle Candidate's Forum at the South Seattle Community College (table with information and DPD staff)

Note: For local media coverage of meetings relating to the West Seattle Triangle Planning Project, see the West Seattle Blog (westseattleblog.com/) and West Seattle Herald (westseattleherald.com) and search under "West Seattle Triangle".

Appendix C: Rezone Analysis

The Seattle Land Use Code requires the analysis of certain types of information for rezone actions. For the West Seattle Triangle, much of the required information is presented within the body of this report. In addition to the report document on the preceding pages, the following pages present analysis of the proposed rezone criteria identified in the Seattle Land Use Code (Chapter 23 of the Seattle Municipal Code).

General rezone criteria (SMC 23.34.008)

The table below analyzes the broad rezone proposal against a set of general rezone criteria.

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<p><i>In urban centers and urban villages the zoned capacity for the center or village taken as a whole shall be no less than one hundred twenty-five percent (125%) of the growth targets adopted in the Comprehensive Plan for that center or village.</i> (SMC 23.34.008.A.1)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Existing zoned capacity plus additional jobs capacity as a result of the rezone will result in zoned capacity for jobs that is 236% of the Comprehensive Plan target for 2024.</p> <p>Zoned capacity for households including capacity resulting from the recommended rezones is equal to 530% of the 2024 projected household growth in the Comprehensive Plan.</p>
<p><i>For the area within the urban village boundary of hub urban villages and for residential urban villages taken as a whole the zoned capacity shall not be less than the densities established in the Urban Village Element of the Comprehensive Plan.</i> (SMC 23.34.008.A.2)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The proposal represents an increase in the development capacity available in the neighborhood, thus, this criterion is met.</p>
<p><i>The most appropriate zone designation shall be that for which the provisions for designation of the zone type and the locational criteria for the specific zone match the characteristics of the area to be rezoned better than any other zone designation.</i> (SMC 23.34.008.B)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A specific evaluation of the proposed NC zone designation is provided on page 15 of this report.</p>

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<p><i>Previous and potential zoning changes both in and around the area proposed for rezone shall be examined. (SMC 23.34.008.C)</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Existing zoning for the West Seattle Junction area, including the West Seattle Triangle planning area, was established in 1986. Prior to that date, zoning in the Triangle was “general commercial” which allowed a mix of commercial uses and residential uses under certain circumstances. In 1986 zoning was applied that reflected the auto oriented nature of the existing uses of the time. Until 2007, the predominant use in the Triangle was an auto dealership that included several show rooms and lots.</p> <p>Zoning at the edges of the West Seattle Triangle planning area prior to 1986 allowed varying degrees of residential uses.</p> <p>In 1986, with the introduction of Title 23, (Land Use Code), mixed use commercial zones were applied to the West Seattle Triangle planning area. These included the General Commercial 1 zone (C1), and the Neighborhood Commercial zone (NC).</p>
<p><i>Council adopted neighborhood plans that apply to the area proposed for rezone shall be taken into consideration.(SMC 23.34.008.D.2)</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The proposed rezones are consistent with West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village Neighborhood Plan policies and goals. A summary of goals and policies from the neighborhood plan can be found on page 12 of this report.</p>

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<p><i>Where a neighborhood plan establishes policies expressly adopted for the purpose of guiding future rezones, but does not provide for rezones of particular sites or areas, rezones shall be in conformance with the rezone policies of such neighborhood plan. (SMC 23.34.008.D.3)</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village Neighborhood Plan provides some general guidance as to the direction of zoning and land use in the West Seattle Triangle planning area including policies and goals to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage attractive, higher density mixed use development at heights compatible with the neighborhood’s small town feel; - Enhance pedestrian safety and circulation along SW Alaska Street and other streets in the area; - Enhance the community gateway along Fautleroy Way SW; - Support a diversity of housing types and affordability; - Maintain the integrity of single family areas.
<p><i>The impact of more intensive zones on less intensive zones or industrial and commercial zones on other zones shall be minimized by the use of transitions or buffers, if possible. A gradual transition between zoning categories, including height limits, is preferred. Physical buffers may provide an effective separation between different uses and intensities of development. (SMC 23.34.008.E.1)</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>In all circumstances, proposed heights of 85’ are separated from single family-zoned areas by lowrise multifamily zones, commercial zones with a 40’ height limit, or a street right-of-way that provides a physical barrier between the higher height zone and the lower-intensity residential area.</p>
<p><i>Boundaries between commercial and residential areas shall generally be established so that commercial uses face each other across the street on which they are located, and face away from adjacent residential areas. An exception may be made when physical buffers can provide a more effective separation between uses (SMC 23.34.008.E.3).</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The existing boundaries for commercial zones within the West Seattle Triangle planning area were established before 1986. These boundaries are not proposed to change. All commercially-zoned properties face each other across streets and are separated from residential areas by physical buffers, such as street rights-of-way.</p>

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<i>In general, height limits greater than forty (40) feet should be limited to urban villages. (SMC 23.34.008.E.4).</i>	Yes	The entire West Seattle Triangle planning area is located within the boundaries of the West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village.

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<p><i>Negative & positive impacts on the area, including factors such as housing (particularly low-income housing), public services, environmental factors (noise, air & water, flora & fauna, odor, glare & shadows, energy), pedestrian safety, manufacturing activity, employment activity, architectural or historic character, shoreline review, public access and recreation, should be examined. (SMC 23.34.008.E.4.1).</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Existing zoning has an estimated capacity for 1,720 residential units and 905,537 square feet of commercial space. If all land within the study area west of 38th Avenue SW were to be rezoned to allow heights of 85', development capacity would be increased by 17 residential units and 286,743 square feet of commercial space.</p> <p>As part of the environmental (SEPA) review process, the potential impacts of a height increase on development capacity and on environmental elements, housing, recreation, transportation and public services were reviewed.</p> <p>In general, pedestrian safety is likely to be enhanced as a result of future development that includes a more pedestrian-oriented street front. Proposed zoning is consistent with other dense, walkable, mixed-use areas where transit is a viable option for travel. Anticipated increases in transit ridership are expected to result in environmental benefits as compared to suburban style auto-oriented development where motor vehicle dependence is common.</p> <p>In terms of environmental impacts, much of the study area is composed of impervious surfaces. Future development would be subject to landscaping and drainage requirements that would help mitigate the potential impacts of future development on the existing drainage and wastewater system. In addition, proposed development standards applicable to the 85' height zone would require additional open spaces. This would help mitigate the drainage impacts of future development by encouraging the integration of landscaping into future projects.</p> <p>In the 85' zone, density over a base FAR (floor area ratio—a measure of built density on a lot) would be obtained through participation in the City's affordable workforce housing programs which require contributions toward the provision of housing affordable to households earning up to 100% of median income.</p>

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<p><i>Development which can reasonably be anticipated based on the proposed development potential shall not exceed the service capacities which can reasonably be anticipated in the area, including street access, street capacity, transit service, parking capacity, utility and sewer capacity. (SMC 23.34.008.E.4.1).</i></p>		<p>Traffic impacts that may result from the proposal were evaluated. Based on screenline data and anticipated zoning, arterials in the study area have sufficient capacity to accommodate the incremental increase in development capacity that may result from the rezone proposal.</p> <p>In addition, King County Metro is investing in Bus RapidRide, a form of express bus service that is expected to serve riders between West Seattle and downtown beginning in 2012.</p> <p>Seattle Public Utilities' assessment of proposed zoning indicates that water system capacity is sufficient to accommodate the proposed increase in allowable density as a result of proposed zoning. However, some of the combined sewer lines in the study area may be capacity-constrained. The relatively constrained status of sewer lines is typical of other areas in the city. New development may be required to increase capacity to the system. Impacts to drainage infrastructure would be partially mitigated by landscaping and stormwater requirements associated with future development.</p> <p>A review by City Light indicates that changes as a result of proposed zoning would have negligible effect on the electrical distribution system under any likely development scenario.</p>
<p><i>Evidence of changed circumstances shall be taken into consideration in reviewing proposed rezones, but is not required to demonstrate the appropriateness of a proposed rezone. Consideration of changed circumstances shall be limited to elements or conditions included in the criteria for the relevant zone and/or overlay designations in this chapter. (SMC 23.34.008.G).</i></p>	Yes	<p>Zoning for this area was established in the mid 1980s when a large auto sales business was the predominant use in the area. That business was closed in 2007, resulting in several acres of land that has been vacant or under-developed. Current and proposed zoning for most of the planning area allows structures up to 65' in height. Land that has largely been vacant is the subject of zoning that would increase allowable height and density.</p>

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<p><i>If the area is located in or adjacent to a critical area, the effect of the rezone on the critical area shall be considered. (SMC 23.34.008.I).</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The planning area does not contain an environmentally critical area. However, the area is located within the Longfellow Creek Salmon watershed. A wildlife habitat is also identified on Seattle Parks Department property east of the planning area. Impacts to these areas were considered as part of the project's SEPA review process.</p>

Locational Criteria for Pedestrian (P) Designation (23.34.086.B)

The following table evaluates the proposed extension of a Pedestrian (P) designation along SW Alaska Street between 41st Avenue SW and 36th Avenue SW.

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<p><i>A. Function. To preserve or encourage an intensely retail and pedestrian-oriented shopping district where non-auto modes of transportation to and within the district are strongly favored, and the following characteristics can be achieved: (SMC 23.84.086)</i></p>	Yes	<p>The West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village calls for pedestrian-oriented retail uses along SW Alaska Street. Additionally, two bus RapidRide stops will be located within the Pedestrian-designated area. Numerous retail and service front SW Alaska Street. The proposed P designation would be consistent with these factors.</p>
<p><i>1. A variety of retail/service activities along the street front;</i></p>	Yes	<p>A wide variety of retail services and activities are present along existing streets proposed for P designations.</p>
<p><i>2. Large number of shops and services per block;</i></p>	Yes	<p>There is already a variety of shops and services on many of the blocks in the areas proposed for the P designation. In areas without existing shops and services, redevelopment will result in the expansion of pedestrian oriented shops at street level, expanding local goods and services to new residents and employees.</p>
<p><i>3. Commercial frontage uninterrupted by housing or auto-oriented uses;</i></p>	Yes	<p>In the area proposed for rezone the street front already exhibits an uninterrupted commercial frontage, or can readily achieve a pedestrian oriented commercial street front as the area redevelops.</p>
<p><i>4. Pedestrian interest and activity;</i></p>	Yes	<p>The area contains a variety of small shops and services, as well as future Bus RapidRide stations that provide interest and activity along the street.</p>
<p><i>5. Minimal pedestrian-auto conflicts.</i></p>	Yes	<p>Blocks proposed for the P designation feature sidewalks. Curb cuts across the sidewalk are limited, reducing the potential incidence of pedestrian-vehicle conflict.</p>

<i>B. Locational Criteria. Pedestrian-designated zones are most appropriate on land that is generally characterized by the following conditions:</i>		
<i>1. Pedestrian district surrounded by residential areas and/or major activity centers; or a commercial node in an urban center or urban village;</i>	Yes	The area connects two commercial nodes within an urban village.
<i>2. NC zoned areas on both sides of an arterial, or NC zoned block faces across an arterial from a park, major institution, or other activity center;</i>	Yes	Both the north and south sides of SW Alaska Street are proposed to be zoned NC.
<i>3. Excellent access for pedestrians, transit, and bicyclists.</i>	Yes	The area is well-served by sidewalks and pedestrian oriented streetscapes, excellent existing transit service, and will be served by Bus Rapid Transit as early as 2012.

Locational Criteria for the Neighborhood Commercial Designation (23.34.078)

The proposed rezone must meet the general functional and locational criteria of the NC3 zone.

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<i>To support or encourage a pedestrian-oriented shopping district that serves the surrounding neighborhood and a larger community, citywide, or regional clientele; that provides comparison shopping for a wide range of retail goods and services; that incorporates offices, business support services, and residences that are compatible with the retail character of the area; and where the following characteristics can be achieved: (SMC 23.34.072.A)</i>	Yes	A diversity of commercial uses currently serves a local and regional clientele. The area includes over 70 commercial retail businesses, small offices and commercial services. Additionally, the rezone area includes numerous residential units in both multifamily and mixed use structures. The business district currently offers a range of goods and services that would likely expand over time under proposed zoning.
<i>1. [can achieve] a variety of sizes and types of retail and other commercial businesses at street level; (SMC 23.34.072.A.1)</i>	Yes	The area includes a wide variety of parcel sizes that can accommodate a diversity of commercial businesses at street level.

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
2. <i>[can achieve] continuous storefronts or residences built to the front lot line; (SMC 23.34.072.A.2)</i>	Yes	Most structures in the area are currently constructed to the front lot line. The configuration of the roadway and sidewalks, as well as grade are conducive to development that fronts on the street at the front property line.
3. <i>[can achieve] intense pedestrian activity; (SMC 23.34.072.A.3)</i>	Yes	The area provides pedestrian amenities and sidewalk widths at a scale at which pedestrian activity is comfortable and encouraged. Currently, a variety of businesses, several existing Metro bus stops, the YMCA, and other destinations in the neighborhood help to enable significant pedestrian activity. The future implementation of bus RapidRide by King County Metro will further increase pedestrian activity in the area.
4. <i>[can achieve] Shoppers can drive to the area, but walk around from store to store; (SMC 23.34.072.A.4)</i>	Yes	A variety of stores are located near one another in adjacent blocks allowing shoppers to walk from store to store.
5. <i>[can achieve] transit is an important means of access. (SMC 23.34.072.A.5)</i>	Yes	Excellent transit opportunities exist in the neighborhood, including Metro routes that operate primarily along the area's principal arterials. A new bus RapidRide (bus Rapid Transit) is planned to serve the area beginning in 2012.
<i>Locational Criteria. A Neighborhood Commercial 3 zone designation is most appropriate on land that is generally characterized by the following conditions: (SMC 23.34.072.B)</i>		
1. <i>The primary business district in an urban center or hub urban village; (SMC 23.34.072.B.1)</i>	No	The area is located within the West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village.
2. <i>Served by principal arterial; (SMC 23.34.072.B.2)</i>	Yes	Principal arterials nearby include Fauntleroy Way SW, 35 th Avenue SW and SW Alaska Street.

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<p><i>3. Separated from low-density residential areas by physical edges, less-intense commercial areas or more-intense residential areas; (SMC 23.34.072.B.3)</i></p>	Yes	<p>As proposed, the expanded NC3-65 zone would be largely separated from low-density residential areas by lowrise multifamily zones or other neighborhood commercial zones. In areas north of Fauntleroy Way SW between 36th Avenue SW and 37th Avenue SW, the General Commercial (C1) zone is already located immediately adjacent to single family zoned properties.</p>
<p><i>4. Excellent transit service. (SMC 23.34.072.B.4)</i></p>	yes	<p>Excellent transit opportunities exist in the neighborhood. Bus RapidRide is planned to serve the area beginning in 2012.</p>
<p>Conclusion: DPD determines that the area generally meets the functional and locational criteria of the NC3 zone and therefore is appropriate for the proposed NC3-65 zone.</p>		

Criteria for height limits of proposed zone (SMC 23.34.009)

The table below analyzes the rezone proposal against a set of criteria related to height limits.

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<p><i>Height limits for commercial zones shall be consistent with the type and scale of development intended for each zone classification. The demand for permitted goods and services and the potential for displacement of preferred uses shall be considered. (SMC 23.34.009.A)</i></p>	Yes	<p>The highest proposed height of 85 feet in the rezone area matches the highest currently allowed height in the neighborhood. The 85 foot zone is proposed to be located in an area where a significant amount of land is under-developed or lacking in retail and service uses.</p> <p>Areas where a predominance of small businesses are located, east of 38th Avenue SW, are not proposed for an increase in height. This recommendation is also consistent with the West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village Neighborhood Plan, which calls for retaining zoning in areas east of the junction of SW Alaska Street and Fauntleroy Way SW.</p>

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<p><i>Height limits shall reinforce the natural topography of the area and its surroundings, and the likelihood of view blockage shall be considered. (SMC 23.34.009.B)</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Existing and proposed height limits respond to the context of the urban grid, including the key intersection of SW Alaska Street and Fautleroy Way SW.</p> <p>The existing height limit of 65' has the potential to limit views from private properties in upland areas south, north and east of the rezone areas.</p> <p>While some views from private and public properties may be impacted by future development projects that benefit from additional height afforded by the proposed 85' zone, it is not anticipated that view impacts would be significantly greater than might be expected from development permissible under the existing 65' height limit.</p>
<p><i>The height limits established by current zoning in the area shall be given consideration. In general, permitted height limits shall be compatible with the predominant height and scale of existing development, particularly where existing development is a good measure of the area's overall development potential. Height limits for an area shall be compatible with actual and zoned heights in surrounding areas. (SMC 23.34.009.C)</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Heights are not proposed to increase throughout most of the proposed rezone area beyond the existing height limit. Much of the existing context consists of very low-scale properties.</p> <p>An 85' height limit is proposed in areas that feature numerous surface parking lots, vacant land and properties that are likely to redevelop in future years. The 85' height limit is proposed in western portions of the rezone area, in proximity to other 85' zoning, and structures that exceed 65' in height.</p> <p>Recommended development standards would modify the bulk of structures by breaking-up the potential width of future buildings to be more consistent with the scale of structures in the neighborhood currently.</p>

Criterion	Met?	Analysis
<p><i>A gradual transition in height and scale and level of activity between zones shall be provided unless major physical buffers are present. (SMC 23.34.009.D.2.)</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>In all cases, areas recommended for increases in height are separated from lower-scale areas by rights-of-ways, such as streets and alleys.</p> <p>Proposed rezones adhere to the traditional zoning model, in which more intensive (commercial) zones are buffered from least intensive (single-family) zones by moderately intensive (multifamily) zones.</p>
<p><i>Particular attention shall be given to height recommendations in business district plans or neighborhood plans adopted by the City Council subsequent to the adoption of the 1985 Land Use Map. (SMC 23.34.009.E.)</i></p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>The West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village Neighborhood Plan recommended retaining existing heights in eastern portions of the planning area.</p>

Appendix D: West Seattle Triangle Draft Urban Design Framework

(See Attachment 1)

Attachment 1: West Seattle Triangle Urban Design Framework Draft