



City of Seattle

Department of Planning & Development

D. M. Sugimura, Director



FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE QUEEN ANNE/ MAGNOLIA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3014863

Address: 531 Queen Anne Avenue North

Applicant: Wayne Shores with The Velmeir Companies

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, July 30, 2014

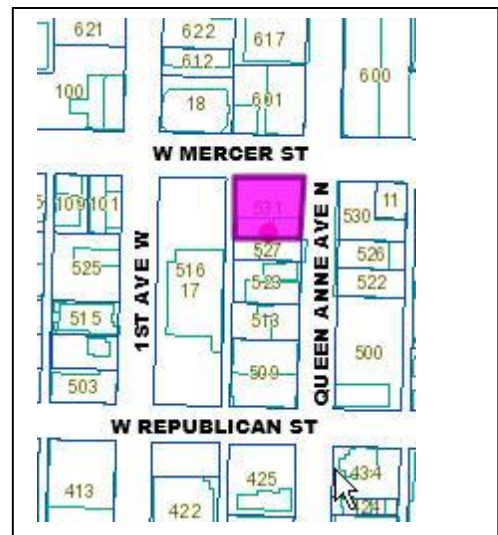
Board Members Present: Mindy Black
Christine Harrington
Katie Idziorek
Boyd Pickrell
Janet Stephenson

DPD Staff Present: Bruce P. Rips

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial Three with a pedestrian overlay and a 40' height limit (NC3P 40).

Zoning Pattern: Most of Uptown and Seattle Center possess a NC3 zoning classification. Multifamily residential classification occurs generally north of W. Roy St. and west of 2nd Ave W. The area lies within the Uptown Urban Center.



Lot Area:	The lot totals 17,280 square feet. The site descends approximately ten feet from east to the alley bordering the site on the west.
Current Development:	A small storefront lounge or bar and a one-story auto oriented strip mall occupy the site's southern portion. A surface parking lot comprises the site's northern half. A Kidd Valley restaurant anchors the retail center.
Access:	Three rights of way bound the site on the east, north and west. The principal arterial, Queen Anne Ave, is classified as a SEPA scenic route. Mercer St also has a principal arterial designation. The two-way alley runs north and south bound. A rapid ride bus stop for south bound transit sits adjacent to the site on Queen Anne Ave.
Surrounding Development & Neighborhood Character:	Uptown possesses a pedestrian orientation with a plethora of small commercial, multi-family and mixed use structures. Older commercial buildings tend to have one or two-stories housing restaurants and other local services. Numerous older three and four story brick residential buildings anchor the neighborhood. Newer mixed use buildings, such as the Tribeca directly across the alley from the site, have been constructed in the past 15 to 20 years.
ECAs:	Seattle Center lies two blocks to the east. Kinnear Park sits at the western edge of the Uptown neighborhood.
	No mapped environmental critical areas

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes a three-story structure containing 19,075 square feet of commercial space and 31 residential units. Parking for 62 vehicles will be provided below grade. Project includes 18,000 cubic yards of grading and the demolition of two structures.

DESIGN PRESENTATION

The applicant presented three variations of a one and a half story drugstore relatively square in plan. Commonalities include garage access from the alley, an articulated single point of entry at the corner of Queen Anne Ave and Mercer St., and a series of repeating bays along the two street fronts with windows set back from the dominant plane and embellished with planters and canopies.

By the second EDG meeting, the applicant submitted three new options to DPD. These options, similar in their two-story bulk and scale and program, varied in façade treatments.

Characterized by an expressed or visible structural frame, Scheme One sits close to the property lines with infill panels set back from the structural grid. The panels allow for a new bus stop integrated into the building and covered by a canopy along Queen Anne Ave. Within the middle of the three bays facing Mercer St., the applicant provides a niche for a small or micro retail use. At the corner of Queen Anne and Mercer, the entry forms a chamfer at the first floor behind an exposed column. Similar to the earlier schemes, garage access occurs from the alley.

Scheme Two's variation in the façade reflects the rhythms of the Uptown storefronts by use of layering. Its white, outer shell alludes to early 20th century design with strong rectilinear forms and the size of window shapes suggesting uses behind them. Glazing sits back from the outer layer with multiple mullions contrasting with the flat surface of the outer layer. The building steps back even further at the small retail niche, the bus stop and at portions of the upper level to introduce a more significant break in the façade, again to introduce a smaller scale, with a series of vertically oriented windows creating a contrast to the predominate horizontality of the two major elevations.

The playfulness of Scheme Three acknowledges Seattle Center, Art Deco and other mid-century design antecedents. A wide, flat cornice that tapers away from the Queen Anne/Mercer intersection caps a mostly glazed storefront and second floor office. The structure steps back from the property line at the south and west ends to differentiate the larger mass and provide a scale in keeping with the retail storefronts along Queen Anne. This scheme does not integrate the Metro bus stop into the east façade. Each scheme would have a portion of the roof above the ground level devoted to a green roof in order to meet the city's green factor requirements.

The architect refined Scheme One yet added a third floor expanding the structural framing system to encompass the expanded residential component. In addition, the development team produced a more robust landscape plan to accommodate residential tenant needs.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Two members of the public affixed their names to the Recommendation meeting sign-in sheet. Speakers raised the following issues:

The two speakers raised questions about safety and blockage in the alley by delivery trucks.

DPD also received a letter from a representative of the Queen Anne Community Council Land Use Review Committee recommending an added fourth floor to the proposal, more thought to the façade design and limits on the size of the "typical" CVS signage. The committee supported the "Uptown" sign at the corner.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the

following siting and design guidance. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

The Neighborhood specific guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

A. Site Planning

A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics. The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown new developments should, to the extent possible, be sited to further contribute to the neighborhood's pedestrian character.

Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas encourage outdoor dining areas utilizing sidewalks and areas adjacent to sidewalks. Outdoor dining is especially encouraged for sites on block faces with southern exposure.

A-2 Streetscape Compatibility. The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown developments that respond outward to the public realm are preferred.

- Site outdoor spaces in accordance with the location and scale of adjacent streets, buildings, and uses.
- Locate plazas intended for public use at or near grade to promote both a physical and visual connection to the street.
- Define outdoor spaces through a combination of building and landscaping, and discourage oversized spaces that lack containment.

Throughout Uptown site identity features such as art, signage or major public open space at gateway locations as identified on the map. Seek opportunities for welcoming signage that is specific to the Uptown Urban Center at gateway locations. Architecture should also reinforce gateway locations.

Within the Uptown Park character area, streetscape improvements should include where feasible a consistent park-like landscaped strip in the planting strip, as consistent with the historic pattern in the area.

In the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas, encourage streetscapes that respond to unique conditions created by Seattle Center.

In the Heart of Uptown character area new development should provide when possible: a widened sidewalk through additional building setback at street level; or retail façade design with panels, sliding doors or other features that allow generous openings to the street.

In the Uptown Park character area, when retail and offices are located within the neighborhood, they should be designed to acknowledge and blend with the predominantly residential environment.

The design of the enclosure or screen for the micro retail space facing Mercer St. must have visual interest when closed to ensure that it engages the pedestrian. The Board directed the applicant to work with the planner to find an adequate solution that possesses adequate transparency.

Along Queen Anne Ave, the applicant or owner of the building shall provide seating in the recessed area of the southern-most bay as shown in the perspectives and elevations in the Recommendation meeting booklet.

A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street. Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown, major entrances to developments should be prominent. The use of distinctive designs with historical references is strongly encouraged. Design, detailing, materials and landscaping may all be employed to this end. Building addresses and names (if applicable) should be located at entrances, tastefully crafted.

In response to earlier guidance, the architect shifted the residential entrance to front onto Mercer St. rather than the alley. See recommendation in guideline E-2 for the Board directive to add landscaping flanking this entrance.

A-4 Human Activity. New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

A top priority within the Heart of Uptown character area is to promote active, customer-oriented retail storefronts at street level.

Major retail spaces are encouraged on streets designated Large Scale Commercial Corridor as shown on the map.

Throughout Uptown encourage outdoor dining.

The Board praised the design of the building; the elements of the storefronts appear to encourage pedestrian activity. The series of art panels along Queen Anne Ave will endow its Uptown context with whimsy.

- A-5 Respect for Adjacent Sites. Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.**

At the 2nd EDG meeting, the Board noted its interest in ensuring the Tribeca residents' privacy. In response, the architects set most of the residential units facing the alley 30' from the property line. Discussion at the Recommendation meeting did not address this issue.

- A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access. Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties, and pedestrian safety.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown the preferred location for surface parking lots is in the rear of the building or away from or otherwise screened from the street and sidewalk.

Preferred Alley Access

Access to new development is preferred via alleyways, if feasible. Throughout Uptown encourage all parking for residential uses to be located below grade.

The Board appeared satisfied with the diagrams analyzing truck and other vehicular movement in the alley. Truck loading, limited to 30 minutes in the alley, should not block traffic.

- A-10 Corner Lots. Building on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Corner Lots in Uptown

Generally, buildings within Uptown should meet the corner and not be set back. Building designs and treatments as well as any open space areas should address the corner and promote activity. Corner entrances are strongly encouraged, where feasible.

The combination of a free standing column, chamfered entry to the drugstore and Uptown signage at the corner meets the design guidelines expectation to create a gateway that anchors this corner of the intersection.

B. Height, Bulk and Scale

B-1 Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility. Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by, less intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown, a departure would be supported for 3' of additional height for projects that step back the top floor of the structure a minimum of 6' from the street.

In the Heart of Uptown character area, break facades into smaller massing units.

In the Uptown Urban character area larger massing units and less modulation are appropriate, provided they are carefully designed, with quality materials.

The applicant introduced a third floor to the proposal which houses an additional level of residential units. The Board endorsed this expansion of the building program. The same structural frame or armature presented at the 2nd EDG meeting adapts to the expanded program.

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

C-1 Architectural Context. New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character and siting pattern of neighboring buildings.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

In the Uptown Park character area, extensive landscaping, the use of brick and inlaid tile as building materials and designs with an appearance of substance and quality are recommended to promote Uptown Park’s desired character.

The Uptown Park character area emphasizes the notion of historic continuity—the relationship of built structures over time.

The Uptown Park and Heart of Uptown character districts prefer an architecture that emphasizes human scale and quality, detailing and materials, and that remains compatible with the existing community.

Supplemental Guidance Scope

The Uptown Urban character area embraces high quality urban infill and responds to special relationships with nearby civic institutions.

Although pleased by the landscape and building designs, the Board applied several conditions (see guidelines D-9, D11 and E-2) to encourage greater compatibility with the Uptown neighborhood.

- C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency. Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its facade walls.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown buildings and landscaping should strive to create projects with an overall neat and cohesive appearance.

See Board recommended condition for the south elevation in guideline D-2.

- C-3 Human Scale. The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements, and details to achieve a good human scale.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown human-scaled architecture is strongly preferred. Proportion should be provided by such components as the detail of windows, doorways, and entries. Appropriate scale and proportion may also be influenced by the selection of building materials.

Architectural designs that create an impression of reduced size consistent with a pedestrian-oriented environment should be encouraged, especially in the Uptown Park and Heart of Uptown character areas.

Throughout Uptown size signs, exterior light fixtures, canopies and awnings to the scale of the building and the pedestrian. Signs that add creativity and individual expression to the design of storefronts are encouraged.

The combination of the art panels, the furniture for the bus stop, the expressed structural frame, the storefront windows, canopies, micro retail and the proximity of the second floor balconies provide texture, incidence and an intricacy of building elements that ought to provide a human scale to this corner of the Uptown neighborhood.

- C-4 Exterior Finish Materials. Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Within the Uptown Park and Heart of Uptown character areas, the use of historic-looking brick and tile facades are strongly encouraged to create a more consistent, unified, and historic appearance throughout the district.

Throughout Uptown, decorative exterior treatments using brick, tile, and/or other interesting exterior finish materials are strongly preferred. Quality exterior finish materials should be incorporated at all levels and on all exterior walls.

The Board specifically recommended that the window frames on the building match the dark color of the Recommendation booklet and the structural framing system remains proud of the windows as illustrated.

D. Pedestrian Environment

- D-1 Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances. Convenient and attractive access to the building's entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown entries should be designed to be pedestrian friendly (via position, scale, architectural detailing, and materials) and should be clearly discernible to the pedestrian.

Throughout Uptown special attention to the pedestrian experience and street right-of-way should be given along pedestrian corridors as identified on the map (pg. VI).

Throughout Uptown the use of a pedestrian-scaled streetlamp within all character areas is encouraged. In addition, streetscape features such as street clocks and benches are encouraged in Heart of Uptown and Uptown Urban character areas.

In the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas, encourage Seattle Center campus redevelopment along its boundaries to either open vistas from Uptown into Seattle Center or to provide activation for the street.

Including amenities for transit riders in a building's design rather than the traditional use of curbside bus shelters generates a safer and more active street. In the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas the elimination of curbside bus shelters is encouraged in retail areas as appropriate.

See guidance and conditions for pedestrian oriented spaces and elements under guideline E-2.

- D-2** **Blank Walls.** Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Within the Uptown Park character area landscaping (e.g., trellised climbing plants and other urban greenery) is the preferred treatment for walls.

In the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas artwork and decorative surfacing may provide an alternative wall treatment to landscaping in some locations.

On the blank south elevation, the Board recommended a scoring pattern that continues the lines of the structural frame established for the east and north elevations.

- D-5** **Visual Impacts of Parking Structures.** The visibility of all at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape.

Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown designs that lessen the visibility of parking structures are preferred. Garages and parking structures should, where feasible, incorporate landscaping to reduce their visual impact.

Parking structures are discouraged in the Uptown Urban and Heart of Uptown character areas.

Deliberation did not address window patterns or screening along the alley façade.

- D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities, and Service Areas. Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.**

The insertion of an at-grade mezzanine level at the alley for loading access complied with earlier guidance about ensuring a fully contained trash and recycling storage area.

- D-8 Treatment of Alleys. The design of alley entrances should enhance the pedestrian street front.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown ensure alleys are designed to be clean, maintained spaces. Recessed areas for recyclables and disposables should be provided.

In Heart of Uptown and Uptown Urban character areas encourage alleys to be activated with subordinate retail spaces at the mouth of the alley. Encourage retail to “turn the corner” at alley entrances.

The truck loading and turning movement diagrams in the Recommendation meeting booklet (pp 50-52) illustrate that vehicular movement in the alley should not be impeded.

- D-9 Commercial Signage. Signs should add interest to the street front environment and should be appropriate for the scale and character desired in the area.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown tasteful signs designed for pedestrians (as opposed to passing vehicles) are preferred. Backlit signs, animated reader boards and similar signs are discouraged. Blade signs, wall-mounted signs, signs below awnings, and similar signs are preferred.

Considerable discussion focused on the signage plan, in particular the size of the CVS signs at the entry and the parking sign, the proposal for the latter would be larger than the 36 inch height the Board stipulated at the EDG meeting. Board members questioned whether the size of the signs met the pedestrian scale articulated in the guidelines. The Board decided that the design of the CVS/pharmacy entry signs with their metal, individually cut-out letters was an elegant alternative to the more conventional CVS sign. The Board endorsed entry sign design. The Board recommended reducing the parking sign, a 48" by 48" sign with a large letter "P", located near the alley, to 36 by 36 inches.

- D-10 Commercial Lighting. Appropriate levels of lighting should be provided in order to promote visual interest and a sense of security for people in commercial districts during evening hours. Lighting may be provided by incorporation into the building façade, the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and/or on signage.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Uptown accommodates shopping and eating experiences during the dark hours of the Northwest's late fall, winter, and early spring. Pedestrian area lighting is an important feature of each block in the Uptown Urban character area, and the Heart of Uptown character area.

The Board recommended implementation of the lighting plan as shown in the Recommendation booklet.

- D-11 Commercial Transparency. Commercial storefronts should be transparent, allowing for a direct visual connection between pedestrians on the sidewalk and the activities occurring on the interior of a building. Blank walls should be avoided.**

The applicant requested two departures from Land Use Code's transparency requirements. On Queen Anne Ave the desire to have an engaging Metro bus stop inspired the applicant to commission a series of vertical art panels interspersed along the storefront. The Board endorsed the art panels as presented and recommended the placement of seating at the southeast corner as shown on the north elevation (p. 36) and on several perspectives (pp. 40, 43, 45, 53) in the Recommendation booklet.

The sloping grade along Mercer St. posed compliancy problems with transparency requirements. The micro retail concession located between the pharmacy entrance at

the corner and the residential entry provides the potential for greater engagement with the activity in the right of way. The Board recommended that the enclosure for the micro retail possess greater visual interest; the applicant must also install landscaping in the portion of the inset bay framing the residential entry.

E. Landscaping

- E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site. Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture, and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.**

Uptown-specific supplemental guidance:

Throughout Uptown, but especially within the Uptown Park character area, landscaping should be substantial and include a variety of textures and colors, to the extent possible. Landscaping should be used to enhance each site, including buildings, setbacks, entrances, open space areas, and to screen parking and other less visually attractive areas. Encourage planted containers at building entries.

In order to distinguish the residential entry from the primarily commercial storefronts fronting the two streets, add landscape elements such as pots or planters within the bay or frame defining the residential entry.

Noting the exemplary pedestrian oriented features of the landscape and lighting plans, the Board conditioned that the street name inlay in the sidewalk, the bike racks and lighting all **remain** as shown in the plans.

- E-3 Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions. The landscape design should take advantage of special on-site conditions such as high-bank front yards, steep slopes, view corridors, or existing significant trees and off-site conditions such as greenbelts, ravines, natural areas, and boulevards.**

Recommendations: The recommendations summarized below were based on the plans and models submitted at the July 30th, 2014 meeting. Design, siting or architectural details not specifically identified or altered in these recommendations are expected to remain as presented in the plans and other drawings available at the July 30th, 2014 public meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities, and reviewing the plans and renderings, the Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and the requested development standard departures from the requirements of the Land Use Code (listed below). The Board

recommends the following CONDITIONS for the project. (Authority referred in the letter and number in parenthesis):

- 1) Design the enclosure or screen for the micro retail to have visual interest when closed to ensure that it engages the pedestrian. The Board directed the applicant to work with the planner on the design. (A-2, D-11)
- 2) Ensure that the owner of the building provide seating in the recessed area of the southern-most bay on Queen Anne Ave as shown in the perspectives and elevations in the Recommendation meeting booklet. (A-2, D-11)
- 3) Ensure that the window frames on the building are a dark color matching the illustrations in the Recommendation booklet. The structural frame shall remain set proud of the windows. (C-4)
- 4) Use the lines of the structural frame established for the east and north elevations as the pattern for scoring the south facade. (D-2)
- 5) Reduce the parking sign, a 48" by 48" sign with a large letter "P" located near the alley, to 36" by 36" (D-9)
- 6) Implement the lighting plan as shown in the Recommendation booklet. (D-10)
- 7) Place seating at the southeast corner as shown on the north elevation (p. 36) and on several perspectives in the Recommendation booklet. (D-11)
- 8) Distinguish the residential entry from the commercial storefronts by adding landscape elements such as pots or planters within the bay defining the residential entrance. (D-11, D-2)
- 9) Ensure that the pedestrian oriented features such as the street name inlay in the sidewalk, the bike racks and lighting all remain consistent with the drawings in the Recommendation booklet. (E-2)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board’s recommendations on the requested departure(s) are based upon the departure’s potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure(s).

STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	JUSTIFICATION	RECOMMENDATION
1. Street Level Development Standards SMC 23.47A.008	Transparency. 60% of the street-facing façade between 2 feet and 8 feet above the sidewalk shall be transparent.	Allow 43% transparency on the north or Mercer St. façade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In order to address Mercer’s sloping grade, applicant proposes a micro retail space fronting the street. ▪ The micro retail should provide interaction between the building and the sidewalk. 	Recommended Approval. See related recommended conditions for Mercer St.
2. Street Level Development Standards SMC 23.47A.008	Transparency. 60% of the street-facing façade between 2 feet and 8 feet above the sidewalk shall be transparent.	Allow 53% transparency on the east or Queen Anne façade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The applicant integrates the Metro Rapid Ride stop into the building. Lean rails and benches are part of the building ▪ A several part mural on the Queen Anne façade provides interest and honors Seattle Center history. 	Recommended Approval. See related recommended conditions for Queen Anne Ave.

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