



RECOMMENDATION OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Record Number: 3031302-LU

Address of Proposal: 401 NE Northgate Way

Applicant: Jodi Patterson-O'Hare, Permit Consultants NW

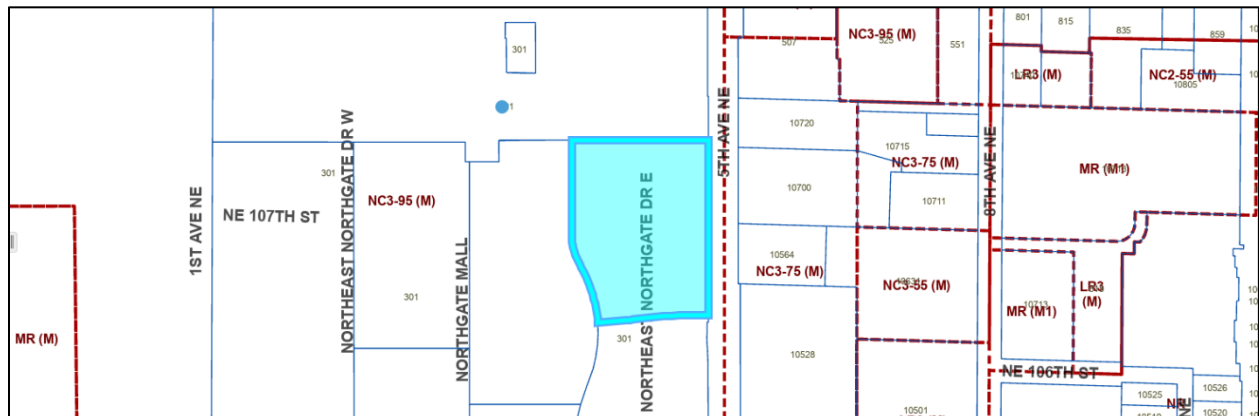
Date of Meeting: Monday, April 27, 2026

Board Members Present: Katy Haima (Chair-substitute)
Ben Doer
Kayleigh Schickler
Che Fortaleza (substitute)
Kirstin Wild (substitute)

Board Members Absent: Todd Lee

SDCI Staff Present: Joe Hurley, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY



The top of this image is north. This map is for illustrative purposes only. In the event of omissions, errors or differences, the documents in SDCI's files will control.

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial 3- 95' (NC3-95 (M))*

*The proposal is vested to a prior zoning designation of Neighborhood Commercial 3-85' (NC3-85)

Nearby Zones: (North) NC3-95 (M); (South) NC3-95 (M); (East) NC3-75 (M); (West) NC3-95 (M)

Lot Area: 214,636 square feet

Current Development:

The development site is the northernmost of four parcels bound by 5th Avenue Northeast and 4th Avenue Northeast between NE 103rd Street and NE 107th Streets and not within the boundary of the Major Phased Development.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The development sites are located in the heart of the Northgate Urban Center, surrounded by a mix of office, mixed-use commercial/residential developments, multifamily apartments and single-family homes in the immediate vicinity. Thornton Place, a mixed-use entertainment center containing numerous restaurants, a movie theater, and apartments is located to the south of the site. The Northgate Branch of the Seattle Public Library and Northgate Community Center are located to the east. In general, the proposed development will re-arrange the commercial developments on the mall site and bring in additional residential units, adding to the different housing options within walking distance of the Link Light Rail transit stop, currently under construction at NE 103rd Street and 1st Avenue Northeast.

Access:

The location of the development sites makes it easily accessible to vehicles traveling along Interstate 5, connecting the mall to many areas in the city such as Roosevelt, Downtown, and the many neighborhoods in South Seattle. A Link Light Rail Station and several metro bus stops (primarily located on 5th Avenue Northeast and NE 103rd Street) are located adjacent to the development site and provide access to additional areas of the city including Sand Point and the University District.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

Category 2 Peat Settlement Prone Areas and Steep Slope Environmentally Critical Areas are present on site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Land Use Application to allow a 7-story, 268-unit apartment building with retail. Parking for 437 vehicles proposed. Early Design Guidance Review conducted under 3032291-EG.

Note: The building reviewed in this process is labeled M1 in the preceding EDG process.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the record number at this website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at SDCI:

Mailing Address:

Public Resource Center
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE AUGUST 27, 2018

Public Comment

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Supported off leash dog parks on site.
- Supported the proposed design of the 3rd Avenue Promenade, suggests the design extends into the existing mall to remain.
- Supported dedicated bike lanes throughout the site.

The following comments were submitted to SDCI in writing prior to the meeting:

Seattle Department of Transportation

- Roosevelt RapidRide may extend its planned service route from the Central District and Downtown Seattle to NE 103rd St, providing a connection to the planned extension of Sound Transit's LINK light rail.
- The LINK extension will also help implement a bridge across I-5 and protected bicycle lane along 1st Ave NE, which will in turn connect with a protected bike lane planned on NE 100th St.
- A neighborhood greenway is planned along 5th Ave NE from south of the intersection with NE Northgate Way to NE 103rd St, as well as on NE 105th St from 5th – 8th Aves NE and NE 103rd St from 5th – 12th Aves NE. Across each frontage, then, the project should prioritize the creation of a welcoming, comfortable, and safe environment for pedestrians, so as to best support healthy connectivity between these modal-network hubs.
- Due to the adjacency of the LINK LRT station, SDOT would like to see the buildings be built to even taller heights to really emphasize the ability for more people to access the station via walking and biking. SDOT is curious as to the amount of parking being added to the site.
- The size and quantity of vehicle access curb cuts should be minimized to the extent possible.
- The access points to the existing parking structure on NE 103rd St will introduce the potential for conflict with people walking and biking to and from the future LINK station. The applicant should consider traffic calming measures, including restriping the existing crosswalks, at the intersection of NE 103rd St and the private drive which will serve this garage.
- There is great potential to partner with SDOT and SPU on the NE 105th St to do something special with the drainage pipe and streetscape improvements.
- The project team could also ponder the integration of bus layover into the building design – co-development with King County Metro.
- 5th Ave NE is a Major Pedestrian Street and the project team could consider incorporating transit stops into the frontage of the new buildings (weather projection, leaning rails, etc.)
- Street trees are required on all frontages of the site.
- When designing the private internal streets proposed as a part of the major phased development, the applicant should proceed according to the standards found in Seattle's Streets Illustrated Right-of-Way Improvement Manual.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable citywide and neighborhood design guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design. Concerns with off-street parking, traffic and construction impacts are reviewed as part of the environmental review conducted by SDCI and are not part of this review.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the record number-EG: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

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.

- 1. M1 Building:** The Board discussed the three massing alternatives, and the programmatic layout of the retail, live work spaces, and ground level amenity space. The Board was supportive of the massing and layout shown in Option 3, noting the retail and residential feel of the live work units are an appropriate response to 5th Avenue Northeast. **(CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street, DC2-D-1. Human Scale)**
 - a. Massing and Façade Composition:
 - i. The Board supported the linear nature of the massing with small recessed areas to break down the scale as shown in Option 3. Carry this design language into the development of the façades. **(DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass)**
 - ii. The Board recommended the use of minimal façade articulation and reliance on the application of materials to provide depth and visual interest. Incorporate clear and concise detailing of the façades, especially at the southeast corner which helps frame a primary entrance into the development site. **(PL3-V-iii. Facade Articulation, DC2-B-1. Façade Composition)**
 - iii. The Board directed the applicant to pay close attention to the design of the corners of the structure as they will be prominently visible in and around the development site. The Board recommended these corners stand out as beacons, reinforced by the breaks in the massing. **(DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest, DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements)**
 - b. Pedestrian Experience along 5th Avenue Northeast: The Board supported the residential feel provided by the design language of the stoops to the live work units. However, the Board was concerned over the level of activity along 5th Avenue Northeast and directed the applicant to provide studies showing successful live work scenarios and to incorporate key elements from

those examples into the design moving forward. **(CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street, PL3-III-i. Visual Connections)**

c. Open Space/Courtyard Amenity Area:

- i. The Board supported the location of the courtyard space along NE 106th Street, which allows for interaction with the adjacent retail pavilion and open space within the Major Phased Development Boundary. **(PL1-I-i. Open Space, DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space)**
- ii. The Board was concerned with the perception of the private amenity space, which appears open to the public as currently proposed. The Board directed the applicant to clearly delineate spaces that will be open to the public and space that are semi-private and private. **(DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs)**

d. Parking Access and Service Uses:

- i. The Board supported locating the retail and resident parking within the structure itself to minimize the visual impact of the garage and service uses. **(DC1-B. Vehicular Access and Circulation, DC1-C-4. Service Uses)**
- ii. The Board supported vehicular access of 5th Avenue Northeast as the curb cut breaks down the scale of the massing and reduces the number of cars entering the building from the interior of the site. The Board directed the applicant to develop an appropriate design to minimize the visual impact of the curb cut and the impact to pedestrian traffic. **(DC1-B. Vehicular Access and Circulation)**

2. M2 Building: The Board discussed the three massing alternatives, which differ in the approach to locating the massing along 5th Avenue Northeast and include an alternative showing the impact of retaining the Exceptional Tree. The Board was supportive of the massing shown in Option 3, which continues the strong street frontage established with the M1 Building but includes townhouse structures along the southern edge to provide additional variety in the massing and unit types. **(CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street, DC2-D. Scale and Texture)**

- a. Massing and Façade Articulation: The Board supported the form of the massing along 5th Avenue Northeast, which carries a comparable design language as the M1 Building but differs in the use of articulation. Similar to the guidance provided for the M1 Building, the Board gave guidance to carry this design language into the development of the façades and to pay close attention to the design of the visibly prominent corners. **(PL3-V-iii. Facade Articulation, DC2-B-1. Façade Composition)**
- b. Exceptional Tree: The Board supported the massing option with removal of the Exceptional Tree based on the overall impact retention would have on the massing, parking garage, and courtyard location. The Board also supported the notion that the replacement vegetation would be planted in other areas, replacing the tree canopy within the MPD boundary. The Board recommended that the replacement vegetation should exceed what is required by

Code (one-to-one replacement) and to locate a portion of this new vegetation in the parking areas to minimize vehicular impacts. **(CS1-B-3. Managing Solar Gain, CS1-D-1. On-Site Features, DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts, DC1-I-i. Landscaping)**

c. Open Space/Courtyard Amenity Areas:

- i. The Board supported the location of the ground level courtyard along the southern edge of the structure and the smaller upper level resident courtyard along the west, taking advantage of solar exposure and the views to the larger Central Park. **(CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading, PL1-I-i. Open Space)**
- ii. The Board was concerned with the relationship between the townhouse structures and the ground level courtyard, recommending the applicant to explore relocating the townhouse to the rear of the courtyard, away from the street. The Board also directed the applicant to provide sections showing the relationship between the two and to clearly identify areas that are public versus private. **(PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential)**

3. M3 Building: The Board discussed the three massing alternatives and was generally supportive of the massing location atop the pedestrian hill climb from 5th Avenue Northeast. The Board was supportive of the southern facing courtyards shown in Options 2 and 3 but was concerned over the design of the hill climb and lack of connection to the street **(CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street, PL3-I-i. Pathways)**

a. Building Massing and Façade Composition:

- i. The Board was concerned with the relationship between the base and upper levels of the massing and directed the applicant to explore how the upper levels intersect with the base, introduce more vertical integration with the base, and utilize different heights and vertical volume dimensions to provide some variety at the ground level. **(DC2-D. Scale and Texture, DC2-I-ii. All New Developments)**
- ii. The Board noted the opportunity for a singular architectural expression due to the site conditions and directed the applicant to consider this in the development of the façade composition. **(DC2-B-1. Façade Composition)**

b. Pedestrian Hill Climb: The Board was concerned with the potential design of the pedestrian hill climb which they expressed should be very deliberate, with careful thought put into the different design elements. The Board recommended the applicant incorporate a series of landscaped terraces with a unique pedestrian experience at the top. **(PL3-I-i. Pathways)**

c. Open Space/Courtyard Amenity Areas: The Board was concerned with the relationship between the ground level residential units and the courtyard amenity areas. The Board directed the applicant to explore this relationship from a privacy perspective. **(PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential)**

- d. Internal Circulation: The Board was concerned with the design of the private access drive located to the east of the building, separating the structure from the street and the pedestrian hill climb. The Board recommended exploring alternatives in the configuration to minimize the impacts of the drive aisle. **(PL2-III-v. Internal Drives/Walkways)**

4. M4 Building:

a. Building Massing:

- i. The Board supported stepping back the upper level massing along the 3rd Avenue Promenade as shown in Options 2 and 3 to allow for amenity areas to be located above but maintain a visual connection below. The Board supported the large open spaces shown in Option 3 which allow for more flexibility in the design of the spaces. **(DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass)**
- ii. The Board suggested the applicant consider incorporating a through block connection at the ground level to improve pedestrian circulation and break down the linear nature of the massing along the promenade. **(PL3-I-i. Pathways, DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass, DC2-I-ii. All New Developments)**

b. Façade Composition:

- i. The Board supported the slight tilt at the northeast corner of the massing to increase interest at the visibly prominent corner of the structure. The Board directed the applicant to pay close attention to the design of this corner and to pull inspiration from the precedent imagery shown on pages 139-140 of the EDG Packet. **(DC2-B-1. Façade Composition, DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest)**
- ii. The Board directed the applicant to be careful in the selection and application of the material palette as each façade will be prominently visible from all sides. Consider how the building will fit in with the neighboring structures' architectural presence. **(DC2-B-1. Façade Composition, DC2-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings)**

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departures will be based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departures. The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the first Early Design Guidance meeting, the following departures were requested:

1. **D1: Parking Space and Access Standards (SMC 23.54.030.F.2.b):** For two-way traffic, the Code requires that the minimum width of curb cuts is 22', and the maximum width is 25', except that the maximum width may be increased to 30' if truck and auto access are combined. The applicant is requesting to maintain the existing curb cut of 34'.

The Board indicated support for an increase in the maximum curb cut width at this intersection to maintain an existing condition, based on the proposed design of this entry which includes generous landscaping and other design elements to slow traffic and minimize the impact of the vehicular traffic. **(DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts, DC1-I-i. Landscaping)**

2. **D2: Street Level Development Standards (SMC 23.47A.008.A.3):** The Code requires street-level street-facing facades shall be located within 10' of the street lot line, unless wider sidewalks, plazas, or other approved landscaped or open spaces are provided. The applicant is requesting 22' setback at the M1 and M2 buildings, and 62' at the M3 building.

The Board was concerned with the scope of this departure and how the additional setback could impact street activation along 5th Avenue Northeast. They Board indicated they would support this departure based on a design that shows how the increased setback would promote activation by creating better spaces for the live work units and allow for interaction between the street and the M1 and M2 Buildings. The Board also required a successful design of the pedestrian hill climb in front of the M3 Building based on the guidance contained in this report. **(CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street, PL3-I-i. Pathways)**

3. **D5: Parking Access and Curb Cuts (SMC 23.47A.032.2 & SMC 23.71.008.D):** If the lot does not abut an improved alley, and only abuts a major pedestrian street(s), the Code requires access from the major pedestrian streets shall be limited to one, two-way curb cut within any 300 foot segment of that lot. The applicant is proposing 2 new 24' wide two-way curb cuts along 5th Avenue Northeast. The new northern curb cut will be located ~190' south of 107th Street intersection to provide access to the M1 parking garage. The new southern curb cut will be located ~287' south of 106th Street intersection to provide access to M2 parking garage.

The Board indicated support for this departure as it breaks down the scale of the massing and reduces the number of cars entering the building form the interior of the site. The Board directed the applicant to develop an appropriate design for the streetscape to minimize the visual impact of the curb cut and the impact to pedestrian traffic. **(DC1-B. Vehicular Access and Circulation)**

4. **D7: Street Level Development Standards (SMC 23.47A.008.D.1):** Where residential uses are located along a street-level street-facing facade, the Code requires at least one of the street-level street-facing facades containing a residential use shall have a visually prominent pedestrian entry. The applicant is proposing the residential entry for M3 building to be located along the new internal private street rather than 5th Avenue Northeast.

The Board indicated support for this departure as the unique site conditions create a situation where the primary entry will be more visible and easily accessible from a private internal street. The Board acknowledges that the proposed residential entry location improves on the overall design as it is in line with the internal circulation pattern and better connects with the rest of the developments within the Major Phased Development Boundary. **(PL3-A. Entries)**

SECOND EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE DECEMBER 17, 2018

Public Comment

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Supported continuous overhead weather protection along 5th Avenue Northeast to strengthen the pedestrian scale of the buildings.
- Supported the incorporation of bio retention planters and the reference to Thornton Creek throughout the design.
- Supported the use of mature vegetation to replace the existing trees identified for removal.
- Concerned about the functionality of the neighborhood community room proposed. Expressed support for the inclusion of community meeting space on site.
- Concerned with the viability of the live-work units proposed along 5th Avenue Northeast.
- Supported the use of landscaping to provide a buffer between pedestrians and vehicular traffic.
- Supported the use of organic forms in the overall design of the site and structures.
- Concerned with the proposed configuration of the parking structures and expressed support for below grade parking to allow for larger courtyards and communal space for the residents.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable citywide and neighborhood design guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design. Concerns with off-street parking, traffic and construction impacts are reviewed as part of the environmental review conducted by SDCl and are not part of this review.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the record number: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

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.

- 1. Building Massing Response to EDG #1:** The Board supported the design evolution of the building massing and site configuration, which have a more successful organization when viewed collectively. The updated design also proposes south facing courtyards for the four buildings which was well received by the Board. There was general support for the preferred massing, site layout, and arrangement of residential/commercial uses for each of the four buildings. **(CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading, CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence)**
 - a. The Board was concerned with the lack of variety and the linear nature of the massing of the four buildings, especially at the ground plane along 5th Avenue Northeast. The Board recommended incorporating more variety in the massing that relates to the building uses and

to explore methods to break down the scale to become more pedestrian friendly. **(DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass, DC2-D-1. Human Scale)**

- b. The Board recommended utilizing a clear design language across the four buildings in respect to the development of the building edges and the relationship with the ground level open space. **(CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence)**
- c. Echoing public comment, the Board was concerned with the design and viability of the live work units proposed along 5th Avenue Northeast. The Board indicated support for live work units that are designed to function as true commercial spaces and would promote activity along the street. **(CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street, PL3-III-i. Visual Connections)**
- d. The Board recommended using gaskets and shifts in the massing between the buildings to provide variation in the façade and to introduce placemaking opportunities at the ground level. **(DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements, DC4-D-4. Place Making)**
- e. The Board directed the applicant to consider a massing strategy for the buildings that deviates from the podium-top approach as shown. The Board recommended providing variation the upper level massing to respond to the change in topography and identify opportunities for the massing to extend down through the podium to the ground level. The Board suggested strengthening these major massing moves by further articulating the façades with a varied expression for retail, residential, and live-work units. **(CS1-C. Topography, DC2-B-1. Façade Composition)**

2. Entry Sequence at the Intersection at 5th Avenue Northeast and NE 106th Street:

- a. The Board was concerned with the relationship between the semi-private courtyard space for the M1 Building and the major intersection for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic at NE 106th Street. The Board recommended relocating the residential lobby of the M1 Building adjacent to the open space (as seen in the M2 Building) to strengthen the relationship between the two and contribute to the overall spatial quality of this intersection. **(PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space, PL1-I-i. Open Space)**
- b. The Board was concerned with the design and functionality of the open space and directed the applicant to provide additional information on how the spaces are designed to meet the needs of the intended users. The Board recommended these spaces be designed to complement and not to disrupt the pedestrian experience along NE 106th Street. **(DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs)**
- c. The Board supported the unique design of the semi-private courtyard north of the M2 Building but was concerned with the programming of the space. The Board indicated support for more active areas in the courtyard and requested more information clearly defining which areas would be active versus passive open space. The Board acknowledged the importance of the programming of the courtyard as it has the potential to support the grand entry and relate to the adjacent retail use. **(PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities, PL3-C-3. Ancillary Activities)**

3. NE 105th Street Hill Climb and Woonerf Design:

- a. The Board was generally supportive of the pedestrian hill climb and woonerf design, which includes an upper level bridging element between the M2 and M3 Buildings. The Board recommended incorporating broader terraces to create a more gradual climb of the topography and allow for more intentionally designed spaces. **(CS1-C. Topography, PL3-I-i. Pathways)**
- b. The Board suggested differentiating the programmed uses at each terraced level and recommended exploring how the adjacent uses in the buildings will interact with each level. **(DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit)**
- c. The Board was concerned with the relationship between the proposed woonerf and pedestrian hill climb. The Board recommended a more natural and organic transition from the hill climb to the woonerf, acknowledging the unique place making opportunity. The Board also recommended developing a more natural and less abrupt transition from the sidewalk on 5th Avenue Northeast to the hill climb. **(DC3-C-3. Support Natural Areas)**
- d. The Board was concerned with the spatial experience underneath the bridging element and suggested the applicant study increasing the height to increase access to light and air. The Board also recommended using light fixtures to help define and create a unique space for the pedestrians. **(PL2-C-3. People-Friendly Spaces, PL3-V-ii. Open-air Passageways)**

4. Dog Park Between the M3 and M4 Buildings:

- a. The Board supported the inclusion of the dog park but was concerned with park maintenance, how people will interact with the space within the larger context of the surrounding development, and how people and dogs would interact within the park itself. The Board recommended the applicant consider these issues in the refinement of the design as the dog park will be a very important and publicly accessible element of the project. **(PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life, DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs)**
- b. The Board recommended broadening the terraces to add variety and utilize the existing topography to help define spaces. The Board also recommended locating the usable area of the dog park further east to establish a visual connection with the pedestrian realm along 5th Avenue Northeast. **(CS1-C. Topography, PL3-III-i. Visual Connections)**
- c. The Board indicated support for a direct connection between the dog park and 5th Avenue Northeast, suggesting a more rustic design (i.e. timber steps) for this point of access to the site. **(CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street)**

- 5. **M4 Building:** The Board discussed the three massing alternatives, which differ in the approach to locating the massing along NE 103rd Street and include an alternative showing the impact of retaining the Exceptional Trees on the building form. The Board was supportive of the massing shown in Option 3, which continues the strong street frontage established with the M1, M2, and M3 Buildings

and incorporates a gateway corner element. Option 3 also includes a building setback along NE 103rd Street to allow for landscaping and a semi-private courtyard. This option includes removal of the Exceptional Trees. **(CS2-III. Gateways)**

a. Massing and Site Configuration:

- i. The Board supported the proposed massing modulation to break down the scale of the building and allow for open space to be located at the ground level. The Board was also supportive of the variation in building height as a response to the existing topography. **(DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass, DC2-D-1. Human Scale)**
- ii. The Board was concerned with privacy issues for the ground level residential units at the north end of the site, adjacent to the dog park. The Board indicated support for locating uses such as commercial or amenity space at this edge to better relate to the dog park. **(PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential)**
- iii. The Board directed the applicant to pay close attention to the design of the southwest corner of the structure as it will be prominently visible and integral to the gateway corner. The Board recommended this corner stand out a beacon, reinforced by the major shift in the massing. **(DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest, DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements)**

- b. Pedestrian Experience at the corner of 5th Avenue Northeast: The Board supported including a public outdoor component at the corner and recommended exploring different methods to program and activate that space. **(CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street, PL3-III-i. Visual Connections)**

6. Exceptional Tree Replacement

- a. The Board supported the massing options for the M2 and M4 Buildings showing removal of the Exceptional Tree based on the overall impact retention would have on the massing, parking garage, and courtyard location. **(CS1-B-3. Managing Solar Gain, CS1-D-1. On-Site Features)**
- b. The Board recommended that the replacement vegetation should exceed what is required by Code (one-to-one replacement) and to locate a portion of this new vegetation in the parking areas to minimize visual impacts. **(DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts, DC1-I-i. Landscaping)**
- c. Echoing public comment, the Board recommended incorporating a variety of trees at different levels of maturity to respond to the Design Guidelines and mitigate the loss of the Exceptional trees. The Board directed the applicant to develop a clear tree planting plan for the recommendation meeting, in response to the Design Guidelines and to address Exceptional Tree replacement. **(DC1-I-i. Landscaping)**

7. Vehicular Access and the Pedestrian Experience along 4th Avenue Northeast:

- a. The Board was concerned with the width of the sidewalks and potential for spillover activity on the west edge of the buildings. The Board recommended a design that allows for ancillary activities and directed the applicant to provide additional information (street sections, diagrams, perspective sketched, etc.) showing how the retail spaces interact with the sidewalk. **(PL3-C-3. Ancillary Activities)**
- b. The Board recommended the larger areas of open space along 4th Avenue Northeast be broken down into more pedestrian scaled spaces that relate to the adjacent retail or residential amenity space. **(PL1-I-i. Open Space, DC2-D-1. Human Scale, DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space)**
- c. The Board was concerned with the potential conflict between the interior vehicular access point for the M1 Building and pedestrians navigating the development site. With vehicular access proposed from 5th Avenue Northeast, members of the Board questioned the need for an internal secondary access point and requested additional information to justify introducing potential conflict with the pedestrian experience. The Board also recommended utilizing wayfinding elements that will be understood by both pedestrians and vehicles accessing the site to minimize these conflicts and promote safety. **(PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding, PL2-III-v. Internal Drives/Walkways, DC1-B. Vehicular Access and Circulation)**

*While the Board did not explicitly discuss vehicular access from the interior of the site to the M2 and M4 Buildings, concerns over the second access point as discussed for the M1 Building would be applicable to these access points as well.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departures will be based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departures. The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the Second Early Design Guidance meeting, the following departures were requested:

M1 Building:

1. **D-1: Parking Space and Access Standards (SMC 23.54.030.F.2.b):** For two-way traffic, the Code requires that the minimum width of curb cuts is 22', and the maximum width is 25', except that the maximum width may be increased to 30' if truck and auto access are combined. The applicant is requesting to maintain the existing curb cut of 34' at the NE 106th Street intersection.

The Board was split in their support for an increase in the maximum curb cut width at this intersection to maintain an existing condition. The Board directed the applicant to explore alternatives where vehicular access is restricted to the 5th Avenue Northeast curb cut and combines access for residents and loading for the retail uses. The Board also recommended improving the pedestrian experience at this intersection with a combination of wider sidewalks, landscaping, and other design elements to slow traffic and minimize the impact of the vehicular traffic. **(PL2-III-v. Internal Drives/Walkways, DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts, DC1-I-i. Landscaping)**

2. **D-2: Street Level Development Standards (SMC 23.47A.008.A.3):** The Code requires street-level street-facing facades shall be located within 10' of the street lot line, unless wider sidewalks, plazas, or other approved landscaped or open spaces are provided. The applicant is requesting a 23' setback along 5th Avenue Northeast.

The Board was concerned with the scope of this departure and how the additional setback could impact street activation along 5th Avenue Northeast. They Board indicated they could support this departure based the applicant providing more diagrams and details showing how the increased setback would promote activation by allowing for better interaction between the street and the building, compared to the Code required setback. **(CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street)**

3. **D-3: Overhead Weather Protection (SMC 23.47A.008.C.4.c):** The Code requires overhead weather protection must be provided over the sidewalk, or over a walking area within 10 feet immediately adjacent to the sidewalk. The applicant is requesting overhead weather protection be located more than 10 feet from the adjacent sidewalk along 5th Avenue Northeast.

The Board was concerned with the scope of this departure and echoing public comment, supported continuous overhead weather protection that extends over the sidewalk or a path adjacent to the live-work units for the pedestrians to travel. **(PL2-C. Weather Protection)**

4. **D-4: Parking Access and Curb Cuts (SMC 23.47A.032.A.1.b):** If the lot does not abut an improved alley, and only abuts major pedestrian street(s), the Code requires access from the major pedestrian streets shall be limited to one, two-way curb cut within any 300 foot segment of that lot. The applicant is proposing to maintain the 2 existing curb cuts and provide 1 new 24' wide two-way curb cut along 5th Avenue Northeast. The new curb cut will be located approximately 143' south of the existing NE 106th Street intersection and approximately 190' north of the existing NE 107th Street intersection to provide access to the M1 parking garage.

The Board indicated support for this departure as it breaks down the scale of the massing and reduces the number of cars entering the building form the interior of the site. The Board directed the applicant to develop an appropriate design for the streetscape to minimize the visual impact of the curb cut and the impacts to pedestrian safety. **(DC1-B. Vehicular Access and Circulation)**

M2 Building:

1. **D-2: Street Level Development Standards (SMC 23.47A.008.A.3):** The Code requires street-level street-facing facades shall be located within 10' of the street lot line, unless wider sidewalks, plazas, or other approved landscaped or open spaces are provided. The applicant is requesting a 19' setback along 5th Avenue Northeast.

The Board was concerned with the scope of this departure and how the additional setback could impact street activation along 5th Avenue Northeast. They Board indicated they would support this departure based the applicant providing more diagrams and details showing how the increased setback would promote activation by allowing for better interaction between the street and the building, compared to the Code required setback. **(CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street)**

2. **D-3: Overhead Weather Protection (SMC 23.47A.008.C.4.c):** The code requires overhead weather protection must be provided over the sidewalk, or over a walking area within 10 feet immediately adjacent to the sidewalk. The applicant is requesting overhead weather protection be located more than 10 feet from the adjacent sidewalk along 5th Avenue Northeast.

The Board was concerned with the scope of this departure and echoing public comment, supported continuous overhead weather protection that extends over the sidewalk or a path adjacent to the live-work units for the pedestrians to travel. **(PL2-C. Weather Protection)**

M3 Building:

1. **D-2: Street Level Development Standards (SMC 23.47A.008.A.3):** The Code requires street-level street-facing facades shall be located within 10' of the street lot line, unless wider sidewalks, plazas, or other approved landscaped or open spaces are provided. The applicant is requesting a 19' setback along 5th Avenue Northeast.

The Board was concerned with the scope of this departure and how the additional setback could impact street activation along 5th Avenue Northeast. They Board indicated they would support this departure based the applicant providing more diagrams and details showing how the increased setback would promote activation by allowing for better interaction between the street and the building, compared to the Code required setback. **(CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street)**

2. **D-3: Overhead Weather Protection (SMC 23.47A.008.C.4.c):** The Code requires overhead weather protection must be provided over the sidewalk, or over a walking area within 10 feet immediately adjacent to the sidewalk. The applicant is requesting overhead weather protection be located more than 10 feet from the adjacent sidewalk along 5th Avenue Northeast.

The Board was concerned with the scope of this departure and echoing public comment, supported continuous overhead weather protection that extends over the sidewalk or a path adjacent to the live-work units for the pedestrians to travel. **(PL2-C. Weather Protection)**

M4 Building:

1. **D-2: Street Level Development Standards (SMC 23.47A.008.A.3):** The Code requires street-level street-facing facades shall be located within 10' of the street lot line, unless wider sidewalks, plazas, or other approved landscaped or open spaces are provided. The applicant is requesting a 13' setback along 5th Avenue Northeast and to allow for landscaped open space along NE 103rd Street in lieu of the required 10' setback.

The Board indicated support for this departure due to the design of the gateway corner which provide public open space and creates an opportunity for the building to engage with the community. The Board directed the applicant to pay close attention to the design of the southwest corner of the structure as it will be prominently visible and integral to the gateway corner. The Board recommended this corner stand out a beacon, reinforced by the major shift in the massing. **(CS2-III. Gateways)**

2. **D-5: Residential Uses at Street Level (SMC 23.47A.005.C.1.e):** The Code requires residential uses, in aggregate, occupy no more than 20 percent of the street level, street-facing façade in all NC and C1

zones within the Northgate Overlay District. The applicant is requesting to allow residential uses to occupy 65 percent of the street level façade facing NE 103rd Street.

The Board indicated support for this departure due to the added privacy and security provided by the landscaping and semi-private courtyard space. The Board recommended utilizing balconies on the upper level massing to increase the number of eyes on the open space. **(PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street, PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential)**

RECOMMENDATION APRIL 27, 2026

Public Comment

- There were no public comments offered at this meeting.
- No design related public comments received in writing prior to the meeting

SDCI received non-design related comments concerning density and transportation safety analysis. These comments are outside the scope of Design Review.

The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) offered the following comments:

- Regarding Departure #1: SDOT strongly recommends consolidating vehicle access to the existing private roadways rather than adding new curb cuts. Specifically, that access should be taken from 4th Ave NE instead of adding a curb cut on 5th Ave NE, to reduce conflicts with pedestrians, cyclists, and traffic on this arterial street, where future multimodal improvements are planned.
- Regarding Departure #2: SDOT supports retaining the existing curb cut width to the private roadway of NE 106th St.
- Regarding Departure #4: SDOT supports the proposed planting strip and street trees along 5th Ave NE, as these improvements create a buffer from traffic and enhance pedestrian comfort.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the record number: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

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 recommendations.

- 1. Response to Early Design Guidance:** The Board supported the evolution of the design in response to previous guidance and recommended its approval with the following notes.
 - a. The Board agreed that the project had responded successfully to the concerns and guidance provided during the Early Design Guidance phase. Board members stated that the revised proposal resolved prior concerns regarding building visibility, linearity, street-level programming, and facade composition. The Board described the revised design as cohesive, well-articulated,

and appropriately refined without becoming overly modulated. (DC2-B, PL1, PL3.DC2-C, DC2-D, CS2-D, DC2-A)

- b. Board members specifically noted the improved corner visibility as shown in the architectural vignettes, the refined massing and facade composition, the use of materiality and secondary architectural elements to create texture and depth, and the addition of balconies that created depth, shadow and texture. (DC2-C, DC2-D, CS2-D, DC2-A, DC2-B, PL1, PL3)

2. Building Massing, Design Language & Architectural Composition

- a. The Board found that the revised massing successfully addressed prior EDG concerns regarding uniformity of the building form, corner visibility, pedestrian scale, and excessive linearity along 5th Avenue NE. (CS2-D, CS2-C, DC2-A, DC2-B)
- b. The Board noted in particular the improved resolution of the building corner, the glazed lantern stair tower element, and the relationship between the stepped massing and site topography. (CS1-C, DC2-E, DC2-D, DC2-B)

3. Street-Level Programming & Public Realm

- a. The Board strongly supported the revised organization of the ground-floor programming along 5th Avenue NE, particularly removal of the previously proposed live/work units. The Board also appreciated the relocation and strengthening of the residential lobby and co-working functions, the increased activation of the corner and street frontage and the openness of the courtyard edges to pedestrians. (CS2-C, PL2, PL3, DC2-D)

4. Bicycle Infrastructure & Wayfinding

- a. Although the Board generally supported the location of the bicycle room, members noted that the facade at this area lacked transparency and activity and expressed concern that the entrance was visually subdued and difficult to identify, which could create a “dead zone” for pedestrians on 5th Avenue NE. (PL3-B, DC1-V, PL3)
- b. The Board encouraged the applicant to consider increasing the legibility of this room and its entrance with enhanced signage, additional glazing or transparency, and distinctive material treatments or graphics. (PL4-B, PL4-A, DC1-V, PL3-B-4)

5. Courtyard Design & Landscape Programming

- a. The Board agreed that the revised courtyard locations and configurations were a substantial improvement over the EDG proposal and noted their support in particular for the more public and pedestrian-oriented layout, improved circulation and openness at the street edge, and the composition of berms, furnishings, plantings, and landscape articulation of the courtyards. (PL1-A-2, PL1-A, PL1-C, PL2-C, DC3-C)
- b. The Board also encouraged the applicant to consider how users would inhabit and activate the southern courtyard and whether a differentiated landscape area with more flexible gathering and

seating areas might be created based on adjacent uses. (PL1-B-3, DC3-A-1, PL1-A, PL1-C, PL2-C, DC3-C)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departures is based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departures.

At the time of the Recommendation meeting, the following departures were requested:

1. **Parking Access and Curb Cuts (SMC 23.47A.032.A.1.b):** The Code requires that if a lot does not abut an improved alley, and only abuts a major pedestrian street, access from the major pedestrian streets shall be limited to one two-way curb cut within any 300 foot segment of that lot. The applicant proposes to allow the existing two-way curb cuts to remain, and the addition of a third 24-foot-wide curb cut on 5th Ave NE, as shown in the Recommendation packet.

The Board discussed the relationship between vehicle access and pedestrian circulation, as well as SDOT's concerns regarding curb cuts and multimodal conflicts. The Board noted that both Departure 1 and Departure 2 related to vehicle access from 5th Ave NE and the potential for conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles and elected to discuss and consider them together.

The Board recognized and deliberated on a number of issues and concerns, including SDOT's strong recommendation to consolidate vehicle access onto the existing private roadways rather than introduce additional curb cuts; SDOT's long-term intention for 5th Ave NE to function as a multimodal corridor that would include bike lanes; and the Land Use Code designation of this section of 5th Ave NE as a pedestrian street.

The Board also acknowledged that the curb cut and configuration of the private drives labeled NE 106th St and NE 107th St in the packet had been developed with and supported by SDOT; that the additional driveway would function as a one-way, right-turn-only exit; that contrasting paving materials would be used where the sidewalk crosses the new driveway; and that the building setback from the property line, combined with limited landscaping, would create clear sightlines and standing room for vehicles exiting onto 5th Ave NE from the proposed additional curb cut.

The Board also recognized the large scale of the project and the site's unique conditions, which defied easy resolution of these access conflicts. The Board discussed these issues, the intent of the Guidelines, and the potential to mitigate impacts to the pedestrian environment on this complex site.

The Board ultimately recommended approval of Departures 1 and 2 with the majority (three members) recommending a Condition to provide crosswalks raised above the roadway to sidewalk level at the three locations on 4th Ave NE shown on the site plan. The Board recommended this Condition to reinforce pedestrian priority, strengthen pedestrian infrastructure, and minimize conflict between vehicles and pedestrians. The Board also suggested a raised crosswalk at the southwest corner of the site at NE 106th St but declined to make this a Condition. The Board stated that the design including the departures could better meet the intent of Design Guidelines PL2 Walkability, DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design, and DC1-IV-i. Minimize Pedestrian/Vehicle Conflicts.

2. **Driveways (23.54.030.D.2.a):** The Code requires the minimum width of driveways for two-way traffic to be 22 feet and the maximum width to be 25 feet. The applicant proposes to allow the existing 34-foot-wide driveway to remain, as shown in the Recommendation packet.

The Board conditionally recommended approval of this departure, as discussed above, as the design including the departures and Condition could better meet the intent of Design Guidelines PL2 Walkability, DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design, and DC1-IV-i. Minimize Pedestrian/Vehicle Conflicts.

3. **Street Level Development Standards (SMC 23.71.008.B.4):** All required street-level uses along major pedestrian streets may be set back no more than 10 feet from the street lot line. The applicant proposes a setback of 12-foot 8-inches from the street lot line.

The Board recommended approval of this departure, finding that the setback area and planting strategy enhanced the pedestrian environment and contributed positively to the streetscape and better met the intent of Design Guideline PL2 Walkability.

4. **Sidewalks (SMC 23.71.008.E.3):** The Code prohibits planting strips on major pedestrian streets. The applicant proposes to include planting strips along 5th Ave NE as shown in the Recommendation packet.

The Board recommended approval of this departure, recognizing that the planting strips were recommended by SDOT and agreeing that the planting strip creates a buffer that improves pedestrian comfort along the heavily trafficked 5th Avenue corridor and better meets the intent of Design Guideline PL2 Walkability.

5. **Overhead Weather Protection (SMC 23.71.008.G.4):** The Code requires the lower edge of the overhead weather protection to be a minimum of 8 feet and a maximum of 12 feet above the sidewalk for projections extending a maximum of 6 feet. For projections extending more than 6 feet from the structure, the lower edge of the weather protection shall be a minimum of 10 feet and a maximum of 15 feet above the sidewalk. The applicant proposes overhead weather protection located between 10 feet and 18 feet above the sidewalk.

The Board recommended approval of this departure, finding that the consistent expression of the canopies helped unify and strengthen the design concept and that the heights respond to the site topography and contribute positively to the pedestrian experience, better meeting the intent of Design Guidelines DC2 Design Concept and PL2 Walkability.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines recognized by the Board as Priority Guidelines are identified above. All guidelines remain applicable and are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

CONTEXT & SITE

CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

CS1-A Energy Use

CS1-A-1. Energy Choices: At the earliest phase of project development, examine how energy choices may influence building form, siting, and orientation, and factor in the findings when making siting and design decisions.

CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

CS1-B-1. Sun and Wind: Take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Use local wind patterns and solar gain to reduce the need for mechanical ventilation and heating where possible.

CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading: Maximize daylight for interior and exterior spaces and minimize shading on adjacent sites through the placement and/or design of structures on site.

CS1-B-3. Managing Solar Gain: Manage direct sunlight falling on south and west facing facades through shading devices and existing or newly planted trees.

CS1-C Topography

CS1-C-1. Land Form: Use natural topography and desirable landforms to inform project design.

CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes: Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

CS1-D Plants and Habitat

CS1-D-1. On-Site Features: Incorporate on-site natural habitats and landscape elements into project design and connect those features to existing networks of open spaces and natural habitats wherever possible. Consider relocating significant trees and vegetation if retention is not feasible.

CS1-D-2. Off-Site Features: Provide opportunities through design to connect to off-site habitats such as riparian corridors or existing urban forest corridors. Promote continuous habitat, where possible, and increase interconnected corridors of urban forest and habitat where possible.

CS1-E Water

CS1-E-1. Natural Water Features: If the site includes any natural water features, consider ways to incorporate them into project design, where feasible

CS1-E-2. Adding Interest with Project Drainage: Use project drainage systems as opportunities to add interest to the site through water-related design elements.

Northgate Supplemental Guidance:**DC1-I Retain Existing Natural Systems and Site Features as Landscaping**

DC1-I-i. Natural Features: Consider design strategies to preserve existing on-site natural habitats, significant vegetation or other natural features including drainage features that can be incorporated into the site design. For example, consider retaining natural features such as existing vegetation and wetlands that are aesthetically pleasing, would emphasize natural features like that of Thornton Creek and its tributaries and can create a pedestrian friendly environment by providing natural areas of interest. Also, features such as larger planting strips located adjacent to sidewalks can be used for landscaping to enhance the site and can effectively separate pedestrians from the impacts of traffic.

CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.**CS2-A Location in the City and Neighborhood**

CS2-A-1. Sense of Place: Emphasize attributes that give a distinctive sense of place. Design the building and open spaces to enhance areas where a strong identity already exists, and create a sense of place where the physical context is less established.

CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics: Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street: Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

CS2-B-3. Character of Open Space: Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

CS2-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-1. Corner Sites: Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

CS2-C-2. Mid-Block Sites: Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. Continue a strong street-edge and respond to datum lines of adjacent buildings at the first three floors.

CS2-C-3. Full Block Sites: Break up long facades of full-block buildings to avoid a monolithic presence. Provide detail and human scale at street-level, and include repeating elements to add variety and rhythm to the façade and overall building design.

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning: Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

CS2-D-2. Existing Site Features: Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties.

CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions: For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

CS2-D-4. Massing Choices: Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites: Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

Northgate Supplemental Guidance:

CS2-I Responding to Site Characteristics

CS2-I-i. Corner Lot Treatments: New buildings should reinforce street corners and enhance the street level environment at these key pedestrian areas. Street corners are common areas for informal interaction, and the building's relationship to the street and related elements should promote comfort and interest within the public realm. Provide a building entry and additional building mass at the corner; and provide space for movement and activity.

CS2-II Corner Lots as Gateways

CS2-IIi. Gateways: New developments on corner lots can aid significantly in marking entry and defining an intersection by "announcing the block" through building forms and features that are visually stimulating and inviting. Consult map for locations.

CS2-III Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility

CS2-III-i. Lowrise 3, Midrise, or Highrise abutting a Single-family or Lowrise 1 or 2 zone:

- a. Multifamily developments should maintain the established front setback pattern of the subject block.
- b. Orient the massing of the structure away from less intensive zones to the greatest extent possible.

CS2-III-ii. NC2-40', NC3-40', and higher abutting Single-family, Lowrise 1 or 2:

- a. Step back the ground-level commercial space to match the established front setback pattern on the subject block.
- b. Orient the massing away from the lot line of an abutting less intensive zone to the greatest extent possible.
- c. Soften the commercial facade on the abutting lot line with elements such as dense landscaping.
- d. Repeat residential architectural elements of surrounding buildings on portions of the commercial facade adjacent to such buildings.

CS-II-iii. Alleys: Along a zone edge without an alley, consider additional setbacks, softening elements, and architectural compatibility to help reduce the potential 'looming effect' of a much larger structure in proximity to smaller existing buildings.

CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design: Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

CS3-A-3. Established Neighborhoods: In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods: In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

CS3-B Local History and Culture

CS3-B-1. Placemaking: Explore the history of the site and neighborhood as a potential placemaking opportunity. Look for historical and cultural significance, using neighborhood groups and archives as resources.

CS3-B-2. Historical/Cultural References: Reuse existing structures on the site where feasible as a means of incorporating historical or cultural elements into the new project.

Northgate Supplemental Guidance:

CS3-I Streetscape Compatibility

CS3-I-i. Response to Context: The architecture of individual buildings should relate to their surroundings. This does not necessarily mean a historical approach, but rather one that is sensitive to the surrounding urban, built and natural environments. In areas zoned for mixed-use development outside the retail core area, orient and design the commercial facade at street level to be compatible with the streetscape of the surrounding residential neighborhood.

Compatibility can be accomplished through a combination of the following:

1. The overall proportion of the facade;

2. Building setbacks;
3. Placement of windows and bays;
4. Location of entries; and
5. Exterior materials.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

PL1-A Network of Open Spaces

PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space: Design the building and open spaces to positively contribute to a broader network of open spaces throughout the neighborhood.

PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life: Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

PL1-B Walkways and Connections

PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure: Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

PL1-B-2. Pedestrian Volumes: Provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, particularly in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian traffic or where the project is expected to add or attract pedestrians to the area.

PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities: Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open spaces to enliven the area and attract interest and interaction with the site and building should be considered.

PL1-C Outdoor Uses and Activities

PL1-C-1. Selecting Activity Areas: Concentrate activity areas in places with sunny exposure, views across spaces, and in direct line with pedestrian routes.

PL1-C-2. Informal Community Uses: In addition to places for walking and sitting, consider including space for informal community use such as performances, farmer's markets, kiosks and community bulletin boards, cafes, or street vending.

PL1-C-3. Year-Round Activity: Where possible, include features in open spaces for activities beyond daylight hours and throughout the seasons of the year, especially in neighborhood centers where active open space will contribute vibrancy, economic health, and public safety.

Northgate Supplemental Guidance:

PL1-I Incorporate Open Space

PL1-I-i. Open Space: The Northgate Plan places a high priority on open space, especially public spaces that are accessible, comfortable, and in proximity to or on routes to high activity areas. Open spaces (including parking areas) can also help improve site and project sustainability.

PL1-II Interior Block Pedestrian Connections

PL1-II-i. Consider Interior Block Connections:

1. Optimize neighborhood connectivity
2. Promote a variety of pedestrian uses such as walking, exercise and relaxing
3. Minimize pavement, and provide an equitable balance between pavement and planting areas
4. Use pervious/pedestrian scaled paving for walking surfaces
5. Accommodate vehicular access only for emergency vehicles;

6. Develop integrated rainwater strategies such as rain gardens, natural drainage collection, building water collection and art;
7. Provide “garden entries” for townhomes at the base of larger residential buildings;
8. Incorporate built-in and movable seating to optimize flexibility of use.

PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

PL2-A Accessibility

PL2-A-1. Access for All: Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is fully integrated into the project design. Design entries and other primary access points such that all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

PL2-A-2. Access Challenges: Add features to assist pedestrians in navigating sloped sites, long blocks, or other challenges.

PL2-B Safety and Security

PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street: Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety: Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency: Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

PL2-C Weather Protection

PL2-C-1. Locations and Coverage: Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.

PL2-C-2. Design Integration: Integrate weather protection, gutters and downspouts into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.

PL2-C-3. People-Friendly Spaces: Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath building.

PL2-D Wayfinding

PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding: Use design features as a means of wayfinding wherever possible.

Northgate Supplemental Guidance:

PL2-I Respond to Site Characteristics

PL2-I-i. Grade Change: Try to match the grade of abutting public rights-of-way where properties meet. If there is a significant grade difference, create an attractive transition, using creative grading and landscaping. Be sure to incorporate pedestrian access.

PL2-II Streetscape Compatibility

PL2-II-i. Walkable Network: Create an interconnected system of streets and open spaces to optimize neighborhood permeability consistent with a typical urban block pattern;

PL2-II-ii. Multi-Modal Use: Encourage and enhance transit/multi-modal use;

PL2-II-iii. Control Speed/Volume: Emphasize pedestrian and bicycle safety, in part by controlling vehicle traffic speeds and managing volumes;

PL2-II-iv. Crossings: Support increased use of designated crossings; and

PL2-II-v. Green Space: Increase urban green space/open space within the public realm by achieving surface treatments that are “more green and less gray.”

PL2-III Superblock Development

PL2-III-i. Siting: Build up to the edge of the sidewalk and meet the other pedestrian street designation standards.

PL2-III-ii. Ped-friendly Environment: Where superblock developments are not along designated Major Pedestrian Streets, they should achieve a pedestrian-friendly environment within the internal layout of a superblock site, where commercial buildings may be separated from the public right-of-way by parking.

PL2-III-iii. Pedestrian Connections: Every attempt should be made to link large sites to the greater community by creating lively, interesting pedestrian connections within the site, and also between the site and its surroundings.

PL2-III-iv. Passageways: Key internal at-grade passageways accommodating pedestrian and vehicular circulation on large sites should not be ignored as locations for pleasant pedestrian places.

PL2-III-v. Internal Drives/Walkways: Developments should have internal drives and walkways adjacent to buildings designed with the basic elements of a good pedestrian-oriented shopping street: buildings oriented close to walkways, landscaping, pedestrian-scale lighting, walkways of sufficient width to encourage social interactions without impeding pedestrian movement, and other similar enhancements.

PL2-III-vi. Usable Spaces: Usable pedestrian spaces, such as a plaza or extra-wide sidewalk near entrances to buildings with pedestrian enhancements, are encouraged either at the street or within the site adjacent to a private drive.

PL2-III-vii. Parking Lots: - Surface parking areas located between primary buildings and the public right-of-way should include walkways, landscaping and lighting to delineate safe and comfortable pedestrian circulation within the site.

PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

PL3-A Entries

PL3-A-1. Design Objectives: Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

PL3-A-2. Common Entries: Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

PL3-A-3. Individual Entries: Ground-related housing should be scaled and detailed appropriately to provide for a more intimate type of entry.

PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements: Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

PL3-B Residential Edges

PL3-B-1. Security and Privacy: Provide security and privacy for residential buildings through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential: Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses: Maintain active and transparent facades in the design of live/work residences. Design the first floor so it can be adapted to other commercial use as needed in the future.

PL3-B-4. Interaction: Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

PL3-C Retail Edges

PL3-C-1. Porous Edge: Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.

PL3-C-2. Visibility: Maximize visibility into the building interior and merchandise displays. Consider fully operational glazed wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays.

PL3-C-3. Ancillary Activities: Allow space for activities such as sidewalk vending, seating, and restaurant dining to occur. Consider setting structures back from the street or incorporating space in the project design into which retail uses can extend.

Northgate Supplemental Guidance:

PL3-I Promote Pedestrian Interaction

PL3-I-i. Pathways: Provide direct and convenient pathways, comfort, visual interest and activity for pedestrians

PL3-II Human Activity

PL3-II-i. Indoor/Outdoor Transition: Consider setting portions of the building back to create spaces at street level for pedestrian-oriented activities. Take the “indoors” outdoors by spilling interior space (e.g. dining areas, merchandise displays) onto plazas and walkways and bring the “outdoors” into the building by opening interior spaces to sunlight and views of sidewalk activity.

PL3-II-ii. Sidewalk Widths: Sidewalk widths throughout the Northgate area are less than ideal, and wider sidewalks will allow for more pedestrian circulation and activity. Within active retail areas, proposed developments are encouraged to set back from the street fronting property line to provide additional space abutting the sidewalk. The Major Pedestrian Street designation calls for 12-foot sidewalks. However, 16-foot sidewalks are preferred in commercial areas, where appropriate.

PL3-III Street Level Transparency

PL3-III-i. Visual Connections: Provide direct visual connection into street level facades. The following are examples of less desirable design treatments that should be discouraged:

1. windowless walls;
2. mirrored or non-transparent glass;
3. glass block;
4. display cases;
5. narrow windows not meeting the intent above;
6. windows located above waist level to persons outside the building on the sidewalk;
7. windows into areas that are too small, shallow, or narrow to support normal human activity (e.g. the back of a tall display case, a narrow hallway)
8. any interior wall, equipment, or functional layout that hampers the intent of transparency stated above.

PL3-IV Lots Adjoining Public Open Spaces

PL3-IV-i. Space Transition: Strive for transitions between public, semi-public, semi private and private space in the design of new development abutting public open space. The following can help accomplish this goal:

- a. Where appropriate, site commercial uses facing the public space with outdoor seating to enliven the space.
- b. For ground floor residential uses, locate residential stoops with a grade separation to provide a transition between the residences and the public space.

PL3-IV-ii. Discouraged Elements: The following are examples of less desirable design treatments that should be discouraged:

- a. windowless walls;
- b. fences and/or tall, dense plantings that create areas that are invisible to passers-by.

PL3-IV-iii. Upper-Level Visibility: Consider upper story balconies, terraces and windows to provide visual interest and eyes and ears on the public open spaces for greater public safety.

PL3-V Commercial and Mixed-Use Buildings

PL3-V-i. Inviting Ground Floors: The ground floors of buildings should appear inviting to the public by containing commercial uses and open spaces with direct entry from the sidewalk. Vary these features in size, width and depth to accommodate a variety of appropriate uses and activities for the site and vicinity. This includes providing multiple entries at the street.

PL3-V-ii. Open-air Passageways: For corridors between commercial spaces, open-air passageways are generally more visible and more inviting than interior hallways. This can be an attractive, successful location for store entries, store windows and restaurant/ cafe seating.

PL3-V-iii. Facade Articulation: Further articulate the street level facade to provide a comfortable pedestrian experience with placement of street trees, exterior lighting on buildings, planters and overhead weather protection.

PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

PL4-A Entry Locations and Relationships

PL4-A-1. Serving all Modes of Travel: Provide safe and convenient access points for all modes of travel.

PL4-A-2. Connections to All Modes: Site the primary entry in a location that logically relates to building uses and clearly connects all major points of access.

PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists

PL4-B-1. Early Planning: Consider existing and future bicycle traffic to and through the site early in the process so that access and connections are integrated into the project along with other modes of travel.

PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities: Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

PL4-B-3. Bike Connections: Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the project.

PL4-C Planning Ahead For Transit

PL4-C-1. Influence on Project Design: Identify how a transit stop (planned or built) adjacent to or near the site may influence project design, provide opportunities for placemaking.

PL4-C-2. On-site Transit Stops: If a transit stop is located onsite, design project-related pedestrian improvements and amenities so that they complement any amenities provided for transit riders.

PL4-C-3. Transit Connections: Where no transit stops are on or adjacent to the site, identify where the nearest transit stops and pedestrian routes are and include design features and connections within the project design as appropriate.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-1. Visibility: Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

DC1-A-2. Gathering Places: Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

DC1-A-3. Flexibility: Build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed.

DC1-A-4. Views and Connections: Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation

DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design: Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

DC1-B-2. Facilities for Alternative Transportation: Locate facilities for alternative transportation in prominent locations that are convenient and readily accessible to expected users.

DC1-C Parking and Service Uses

DC1-C-1. Below-Grade Parking: Locate parking below grade wherever possible. Where a surface parking lot is the only alternative, locate the parking in rear or side yards, or on lower or less visible portions of the site.

DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts: Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

DC1-C-3. Multiple Uses: Design parking areas to serve multiple uses such as children's play space, outdoor gathering areas, sports courts, woonerf, or common space in multifamily projects.

DC1-C-4. Service Uses: Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

Northgate Supplemental Guidance:

DC1-I Design of Parking Lots Near Sidewalks

DC1-I-i. Landscaping: Interior landscaping, in addition to perimeter landscaping, should be installed to help soften the visual impact of surface parking and enhance natural site drainage. To meet this objective, consider the following:

1. Interior landscaping: Use landscaping to break large areas into a series of smaller areas. Plant low landscaping in left over portions of parking areas.
2. Site landscaping strategically to minimize stormwater run-off;
3. Innovative drainage control measures such as swales or treatment islands or pervious pavements;
4. Plant enough trees, which at maturity form a canopy over large portions of the parking area with trees interspersed between parking spaces;
5. Select tree species that do not obscure signage, amenity features, or opportunities for surveillance;
6. Plant a mixture of evergreen and deciduous trees for year-round greenery. Select types of trees, such as sapless trees, that do not impact parked cars.

DC1-II Large Scale, "Super Block" Development

DC1-II-i. Parking Area: The parking area should be laid out as an urban block, at a scale that promotes walking within.

DC1-II-ii. Pedestrian Grid: A network of clearly defined pedestrian walkways should serve as a "grid," connecting these walkways to uses within the site and to the larger street network in a

safe and comfortable manner. The necessary elements—lighting, pavement and plantings—should be placed to support those pedestrian objectives.

DC1-II-iii. Spatial Definition: The space should be defined by buildings, and secondary structures such as shelters and small retail spaces should further define the scale.

DC1-III Parking Structures

DC1-III-i. Siting: Site parking structures away from Major Pedestrian Streets.

DC1-III-ii. Design Quality: Design a well-proportioned and unified parking structure. Consider techniques specified in citywide design guidelines – those relating to height, bulk and scale compatibility; architectural concept and consistency; and fostering a human scale to achieve good scale and architectural design quality.

DC1-III-iii. Ground-Level Retail: Consider placing retail at the ground level of a parking structure along the primary facade, where appropriate.

DC1-III-iv. Quality Materials: Parking structure facades should be treated with high quality materials and given vertical articulation and emphasis similar to the principal structure. The façade should be designed to visually screen cars.

DC1-III-v. Pedestrian Entries: Pedestrian entries should be clearly visible and architecturally expressed on the exterior of the building.

DC1-IV Parking and Vehicle Access

DC1-IV-i. Minimize Pedestrian/Vehicle Conflicts: Site and design driveways to minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. This is especially important along Northgate Way, 1st Avenue NE, 5th Avenue NE, Roosevelt Way NE, 15th Avenue NE, NE 100th Street, NE 103rd Street, and NE 125th Street. Minimize the number of curb cuts and width of driveways and curb cuts along these streets.

DC1-IV-ii. Locate Parking to the Rear: Where feasible, parking areas should be located to the rear of buildings that face NE Northgate Way, 1st Avenue NE, 5th Avenue NE, Roosevelt Way NE, 15th Avenue NE, NE 100th Street and NE 103rd Street. Where surface parking must be located to the side of structures, the following is recommended:

- a. Place surface parking away from the corners of blocks fronting on NE Northgate Way, 5th Avenue NE, 8th Avenue NE, Roosevelt Way NE, 15th Avenue NE, NE 100th Street, NE 103rd Street and NE 125th Street.
- b. Limit the frontage of surface parking areas that face NE Northgate Way and 5th Avenue NE (outside the Major Pedestrian Street designations).

DC1-IV-iii. Encourage the Creation of Multi-Purpose Parking Areas: These areas can provide parking as well as public open space, such as places for special neighborhood functions (markets, gatherings), cultural events (outdoor theater, music), and recreational activities. Examples of elements for public open spaces include: special surface treatments, art, fountains and seating, locations for removable bollards or other elements to restrict automobile access to public spaces when not used for parking. Use lighting to create a safe environment while minimizing glare onto adjacent properties and sidewalks.

DC1-V Bicycle Parking

DC1-V-i. Bicycle Amenities: When providing bicycle parking, consider incorporating features such as storage and wayfinding for bicycle users into the site plan/building design.

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-A Massing

DC2-A-1. Site Characteristics and Uses: Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space.

DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass: Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs—considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

DC2-B-2. Blank Walls: Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features

DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest: Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements: Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose—adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other project functions.

DC2-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings: Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

DC2-D Scale and Texture

DC2-D-1. Human Scale: Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

DC2-D-2. Texture: Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

DC2-E Form and Function

DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility: Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

Northgate Supplemental Guidance:

DC2-I Foster Human Scale (Architectural Materials and Elements)

DC2-I-i. Commercial and Mixed-Use Buildings: The ground level of the building must offer pedestrian interest along sidewalks. This includes windows, entrances, and architectural details. Signs, overhead weather protection and ornamentation are encouraged.

DC2-I-ii. All New Developments: Exterior building materials should have a human scale; this helps people relate to the size of the building. Good examples include stone and brick. Non-modular exterior materials, such as stucco, and those in large modules, such as concrete panels, will need finer details to reduce the perceived bulk and create human scale.

DC2-II Upper Stories

DC2-II-i. Recessing: Recessing the upper stories of developments on arterials allows sunlight to pass onto the street and minimizes the impact of height on pedestrians.

DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.

DC3-A Building-Open Space Relationship

DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit: Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the functions of the development.

DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities

DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs: Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function.

DC3-B-2. Matching Uses to Conditions: Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space activities.

DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space: Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

DC3-B-4. Multifamily Open Space: Design common and private open spaces in multifamily projects for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

DC3-C Design

DC3-C-1. Reinforce Existing Open Space: Where a strong open space concept exists in the neighborhood, reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes. Where no strong patterns exist, initiate a strong open space concept that other projects can build upon in the future.

DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features: Create attractive outdoor spaces suited to the uses envisioned for the project.

DC3-C-3. Support Natural Areas: Create an open space design that retains and enhances onsite natural areas and connects to natural areas that may exist off-site and may provide habitat for wildlife.

Northgate Supplemental Guidance:

DC3-I Urban Gardens

DC3-I-i. Seating: New public spaces should provide as many seating opportunities as possible;

DC3-I-ii. Sittable Planters: Planter walls should be set at a height that allows for use as seating.

DC3-I-iii. Movable Seating: Moveable chairs and tables are strongly encouraged.

DC3-I-iv. Courtyards: Elements such as planters, benches and steps can be sited to break down the scale of an open space, and provide comfortable seating and opportunities for viewing. Courtyards should be integrated with the scale, character and function of the adjoining building.

DC3-II Urban Plazas and Town Squares

DC3-II-i. Public Space: Space should be enclosed by active buildings around the perimeter to encourage its use and maintain its safety. Plazas and squares should be surrounded by pockets of activity: shops, stands, benches, displays, gardens. These various pockets of activity should all be next to paths and entrances to facilitate constant movement. The ultimate goal should be to gather enough people in and around these spaces so that they will overlap and spill in toward the center of the square. The following can help accomplish this goal:

1. Arrange open space elements in a manner that reduces the scale of the larger plaza into smaller spaces more suitable for pedestrian use.
2. Design retail spaces to comfortably “spill out” and enliven public space.
3. Provide landscaping that enhances the space and architecture.

4. Provide visual and pedestrian access (including barrier free access) into the site from the public sidewalk.
5. Site furniture, art work.
6. Consider pedestrian-scaled lighting and other amenities such as fountains, seating (steps provide excellent seating) and kiosks.
7. Design landscaping to assist in absorbing run-off from paved plaza areas.

DC3-III Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites

DC3-III-i. Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site: Quality landscaping is an essential component of the built urban form. Good use of existing and new landscaping adds considerable value to the design of new development and blends new development with surrounding areas, and reduces stormwater runoff.

- a. The corners of street intersections should be distinguished by special landscape treatments: special paving, low planters and flower displays, sculpture, and decorative lighting.
- b. Mark and define pedestrian crossing and walkways with specimen trees and shrubs. Landscaping examples in commercial set-
- c. Ease of maintenance and durability should help guide the selection of plant species and landscape materials such as paving, seating and other site materials. Use native, drought tolerant species of plants and avoid invasive plant species.

DC3-III-ii. Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions: The natural area east of 5th Avenue NE from NE 103rd to NE 105th and east of 8th Avenue NE from NE 105th Street to Roosevelt Way NE will be developed as per the Thornton Creek Park 6 Long Range Plan prepared by Seattle Public Utilities and Seattle Parks and Recreation. New development adjacent to the natural area should consider:

- a. Retaining natural greenbelt vegetation, where possible.
- b. Incorporating gathering areas and lookout points along the edge of the natural area into the design of the project.
- c. Incorporating native plants into the landscape design to provide the feeling of an extension of the natural area into the project site.
- d. Providing linkages to the natural area that direct people to designated pathways and away from protected areas.
- e. The plant list developed for the Thornton Creek Park 6 Long Range Plan can help guide the selection of plant species. Native plants provide ease of maintenance and durability, and are usually drought tolerant.

DC3-IV Use Landscaping Design to Enhance the Site

DC3-IV-i. Natural Features; Consider design strategies to create natural features or systems that can be incorporated into the site design.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes

DC4-A-1. 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.

DC4-A-2. Climate Appropriateness: Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle's climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

DC4-B Signage

DC4-B-1. Scale and Character: Add interest to the streetscape with exterior signs and attachments that are appropriate in scale and character to the project and its environs.

DC4-B-2. Coordination with Project Design: Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context.

DC4-C Lighting

DC4-C-1. Functions: Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

DC4-C-2. Avoiding Glare: Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials

DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials: Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials: Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning: Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

DC4-D-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

DC4-E Project Assembly and Lifespan

DC4-E-1. Deconstruction: When possible, design the project so that it may be deconstructed at the end of its useful lifetime, with connections and assembly techniques that will allow reuse of materials.

Northgate Supplemental Guidance:

DC4-I Design Signage Compatible with Human Scale and Consistent with Architectural Concept

DC4-I-i. Signage: Signage should be designed so that it is appropriate for the scale and character desired in the area. Signs should be oriented and scaled for both pedestrians on sidewalks and persons in vehicles on streets within the immediate neighborhood. Signs should add interest to the street level environment. They can help unify the overall architectural concept of the building, or provide a unique identity for an individual business within the larger structure. While regulatory sign review is not in the purview of design review, integration with the overall architectural expression of a building and appropriate scale and orientation are important design considerations. Franchises should not be given exceptions to these guidelines. The following types of signs are encouraged:

1. Pedestrian-oriented blade signs
2. Signs integrated into the design of the building: along a sign band, on canopies and marquees, located in windows.
3. These types of signs are discouraged: Large illuminated box signs (backlit “can” signs) and Post-mounted signs.

BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations summarized above were based on the design review packet dated April 27, 2026, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the April 27, 2026, Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, reviewing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and the proposed design, the five Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures with the following condition:

1. Provide crosswalks raised above the roadway to sidewalk level at the three locations on 4th Ave NE shown on the site plan. (PL2, DC1-B-1., DC1-IV-i.)