

The City of Seattle is proposing a Station Area Overlay District and Pedestrian Overlay Zone for the First Hill Light Rail Station Area

The Overlay District and Pedestrian Overlay Zone extension are intended to help achieve the neighborhood plan vision of a lively, mixed-use center on First Hill

Background & Intent of Overlay & Pedestrian Overlay Zone

This pamphlet summarizes the intent and features of the First Hill Station Area Overlay District (SAOD) and extension of the Pedestrian Overlay Zone. These actions will achieve the intent of the First Hill Neighborhood Plan and Station Area Planning recommendations to create a pedestrian-friendly center to the First Hill neighborhood on Madison Street.

The legislation is intended to achieve a number of neighborhood and City goals that are part of the long term neighborhood vision, regardless of when light rail is constructed.

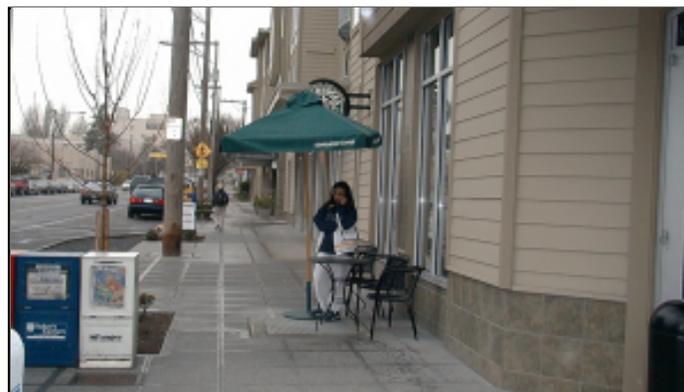
First Hill Neighborhood Plan Recommendations for the Station Area

The First Hill Neighborhood Plan, adopted in March 1999 by Seattle City Council (Resolution #29869) describes a vision and recommendations for the light rail station. The Plan's Key Strategy A: Madison Street District includes the following objectives:

- Create a well-lit, pedestrian-friendly urban village in north First Hill.
- Create a "critical mass" of housing, transit and shops in the vicinity of the light rail station.

Specific Neighborhood Plan recommendations in support of the SAOD and Pedestrian Overlay Zone are as follows:

- I-A-5** Increase housing and retail density along the north side of Madison Street through a public/private joint development. A desirable project would be a mixed-use housing and retail building above the light rail station. Encourage conversion of one story retail properties on the north side of Madison to mixed-use retail and housing.
- II-B-7** Designate Key Pedestrian Streets and prioritize these streets for sidewalk, crossing and design improvements.
- II-B-8** Implement the First Hill parking study recommendations including shared parking opportunities.



The Pedestrian Overlay Zone on 12th Ave. requires buildings to have shops and services on the ground floor as well as large windows and other elements that appeal to pedestrians.

Concept-Level Recommendations for the First Hill Station Area

The Concept-Level Station Area Planning Recommendations, adopted in September 2000 by City Council (Resolution #30165), encourage the following changes to the Land Use Code:

- Establish a Station Area Overlay to encourage well designed development that encourages a variety of housing types, shops and open space, supports light rail and bus ridership, discourages auto use and promotes pedestrian and bicycle activity.
- Change lot coverage requirements and development standards.
- Ensure that the height of new developments takes into account the proximity of historic buildings.

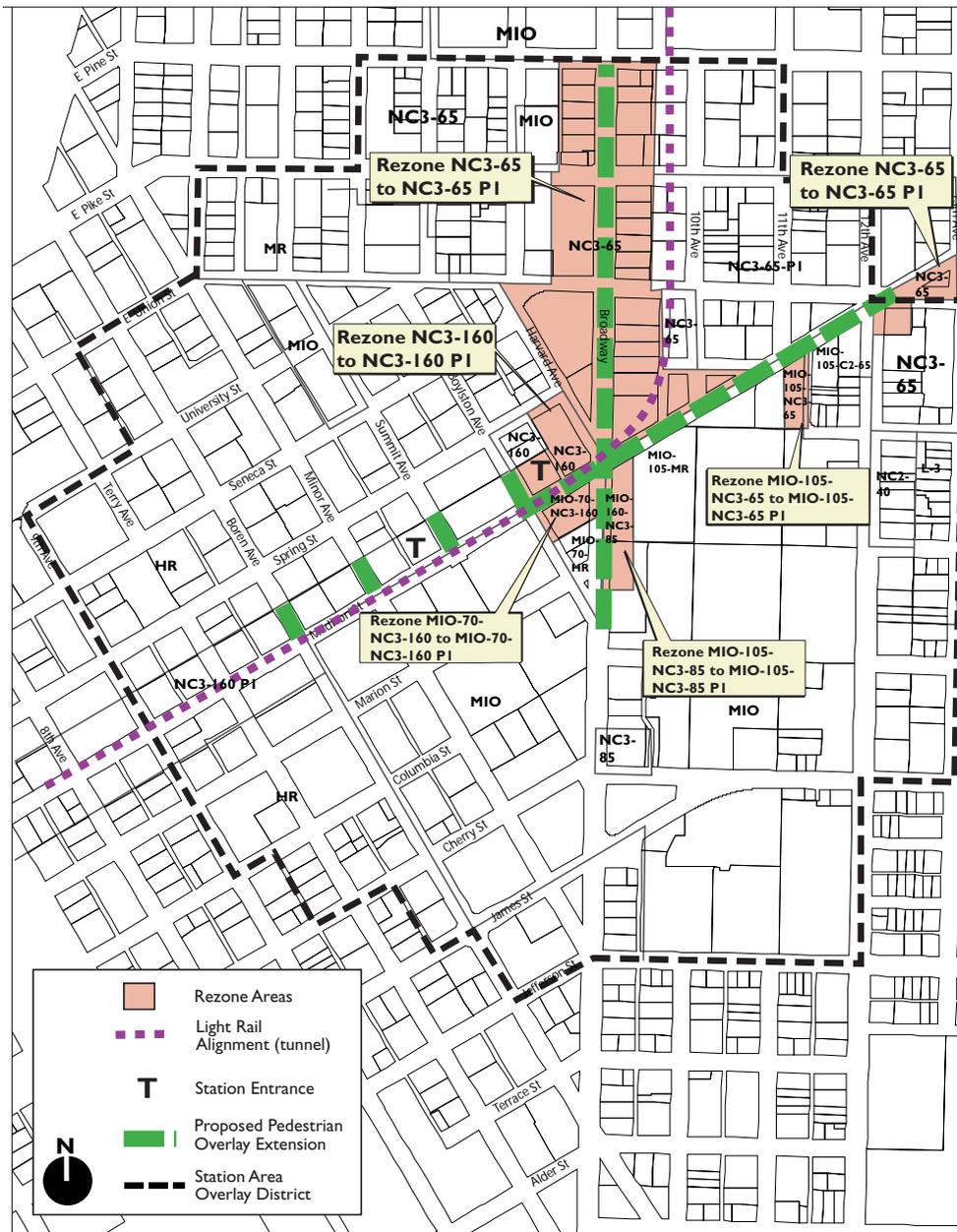
The elements of the SAOD and rezones, when taken together, are intended to discourage auto-oriented development and increase opportunities for housing development near the future light rail station.

The City will not develop property in the First Hill Station Area. This proposal is intended to set a zoning framework for property owners who may redevelop their property in ways that balance neighborhood desires with their own goals.

While market and site conditions will be major factors in determining the pace and extent of redevelopment on First Hill, this proposal is intended to help the neighborhood achieve its vision for the future as articulated in the Neighborhood Plan.



Station Area Overlay and Pedestrian Overlay Boundaries



Existing Zones

Highrise (HR)

An urban scaled residential area with a concentration of high density, multi-family housing. Highrise zones are pedestrian-oriented and have convenient access to transit, as well as a full range of amenities and services, including employment opportunities.

Height limit: 240 feet

Neighborhood Commercial 3 (NC3-65, NC3-85, NC3-160)

A pedestrian-oriented shopping district serving both surrounding neighborhood and larger community or citywide clientele with a wide range of retail businesses as well as offices and business support services. Residential use is also permitted.

Height limit: 65, 85 and 160 feet

Midrise (MR)

Concentration of housing in pedestrian-oriented urban neighborhoods with convenient access to transit and to a full range of services and amenities, and opportunities to be within walking distance of employment. The RC designation allows for limited commercial use.

Height Limit: 60 feet + 5 foot pitched roof

Lowrise 3 (L3)

Moderate scale multifamily housing compatible with existing mix of houses and small to moderate scale apartment structures.

Height Limit: 30 feet + 5 foot pitched roof

Major Institutional Overlay (MIO)

The Major Institution Overlay establishes a boundary around colleges, universities and hospital/medical centers, and a process whereby these institutions must plan for future growth and development with surrounding communities. In return, institutions may achieve higher heights than would otherwise be allowed in the zone, and development standards applicable to institution uses and structures.

Proposed New Zones

Pedestrian Overlay (P1)

A pedestrian overlay can be applied to any neighborhood commercial zone along pedestrian oriented streets. The overlay preserves and encourages a pedestrian-oriented shopping district by requiring no more than 10 foot front setback, reduces retail parking requirements, and directs the location of parking lots and their access.



Neighborhood Commercial (NC3-65)



Midrise



Rezone & Overlay Recommendations

Action

Extend the Pedestrian Overlay (P1) designation to Madison Street from Boylston St. east to 12th Ave, to parts of Terry Ave., Boren Ave., Summit Ave., and Boylston Ave., and on Broadway from Marion St. north to E. Pine St.

Intent

(see page 1 for City Council's adopted Neighborhood Plan and Station Area Planning policy direction for these actions)

The P1 designation will promote pedestrian-friendly commercial uses at street level and will help create a street environment that is more conducive to walking and using transit. This action is consistent with Neighborhood Plan recommendations for Key Pedestrian Streets (II-B-7).

Existing P1 Zoning

The P1 Overlay preserves and encourages pedestrian-friendly shops and services at street level to enliven the sidewalk environment. Walking, transit use and other non-auto modes of transportation are strongly favored.

The provisions of the P1 Overlay apply to the uses at street-level of a P1 zoned parcel along streets designated in the Land Use Code as "principal pedestrian streets." The P1 Overlay is currently in place along Madison St., west of Boylston Ave. This rezone proposal would extend the PI zone east on Madison to 12th Ave., and on Broadway between E. Pine St. and Marion St. It also designates Terry Ave., Boren Ave., Summit Ave. and Boylston Ave. as principal pedestrian streets.



Overlay District Features

Supporting Existing Businesses

All existing legal businesses and uses would be allowed to remain and maintain existing structures and sites. For areas of the city where the real estate market may not support new development in the near future, the SAOD will allow for a one-time expansion of certain existing businesses made "non-conforming" by the Overlay District. This is an effort to help maintain the viability of businesses that are already established in the SAOD until the market makes redevelopment a more attractive option.

Shared Parking Provisions

The Station Area Overlay District will allow buildings to provide off-site residential parking by leasing parking on nearby sites. This helps lower the cost of new housing by reducing the amount of on-site parking an individual building must construct and pooling off-site parking resources in the area.

The Station Area Overlay District will allow parking for residential and non-residential uses to be located on a lot within the SAOD and within comfortable walking distance of the site to which it is accessory. Off-site parking will not be allowed outside of the SAOD and the number of required parking spaces will not be reduced.

Prohibited Uses

All existing legal businesses and uses would be allowed to remain and maintain existing structures and sites. The following type of new development will be prohibited in the SAOD:

Principal use long-term non-residential parking	General manufacturing	Warehouse	Vessel repair
Drive-in businesses	Sales, service & rental of commercial equipment & construction materials	Outdoor storage	Marine service station
Vehicle repair	Sale of heating fuel	Sales & rental of motorized vehicles	Salvage & recycling
Towing services	Mini-warehouse	Dry storage of boats	Spectator sports facilities
Car wash		Sales & rental of large boats	Wholesale showroom
Heavy commercial services			Work-release centers



...helping achieve the neighborhood's vision for a well-defined center to the First Hill neighborhood

The vision for an active, lively center to the First Hill neighborhood can be achieved by increasing opportunities for housing development in First Hill's commercial core. Our proposal removes two obstacles from the land use code for housing development.

Housing Development Flexibility In Commercial Zones: Allowing Single-Purpose Residential Use

As part of the Station Area Overlay District proposal, single-purpose residential structures would be permitted outright in certain locations. Single-purpose residential (SPR) structures are apartment or condominium buildings in commercial zones. These buildings could include housing at the street-level, either permanently or until the market is ready to support more businesses. When the market could support more commercial development, the street-level use could be converted to commercial use.

This proposal provides flexibility and acknowledges market realities for developing either housing or businesses on the ground floors of buildings (on commercially zoned property on the edges of the neighborhood business district). This proposal would apply to all NC3 zones within the First Hill SAOD, except for those with Pedestrian Overlay (P1) designations.

More Housing Without Raising Height Limits: Removing 64% Upper Level Coverage Limits

There are some places in the city where multifamily buildings can use the entire lot area on all levels for residential units. The zoning in the Cascade and Belltown neighborhoods allow these kinds of multi-family buildings. This is also the way many of the historic buildings in older Seattle neighborhoods, such as Queen Anne, Columbia City, Ballard, and Georgetown were built.

But in many other places, a coverage limit reduces the area that can be developed for housing on upper levels (64% of the size of the lot for residential buildings in a commercial zone—there is no limit for the size of upper levels for commercial buildings). By removing this "upper-level coverage limit" imposed on residential buildings in station areas, we can help encourage additional housing that is so vital to lively neighborhood centers as envisioned by the Neighborhood Plan, and in a way that is working in other parts of the city.

Existing requirements for building setbacks will still apply where residential buildings in commercial zones border residential zones. These required setbacks, along with lowrise building setbacks, promote transition between buildings in different zones. Architectural features such as bays, courtyards, and building details reduce the appearance of the bulk and scale of these buildings, and allow dwelling units access to light and air. These features address one of the main goals of the original 64% upper-level coverage limit.

Also, the required Design Review Program, which was instituted after the upper-level coverage limits were put in place, provides an additional way to address and modify the bulk and scale of new buildings during the design and permitting process.

For more information on the SAOD or rezone proposals for First Hill, contact Barbara Gray, Strategic Planning Office, at (206) 615-0872, barbara.gray@ci.seattle.wa.us



Example of development which can accommodate ground floor housing or commercial use. Street-level residential in SPR structures can be converted to commercial use when the market is ready.



Example of new development in the Cascade neighborhood without the 64% Upper Level Coverage Limit. The Design Review Program addresses bulk and scale issues during the design and permitting process.



Example of transitioning using upper level setbacks. Existing building setback requirements still apply where residential buildings in commercial zones border residential zones.

