

OVERALL TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) POTENTIAL IN THE RAINIER VALLEY AND BEACON HILL

Summary

- There is market support for a moderate amount of new transit-oriented development, which is consistent with the desire of most Southeast Seattle neighborhoods to avoid large-scale and mid- or high-rise development and protect existing retail areas such as Columbia City and Rainier Beach.
- The predominantly single-family, low density character of the Rainier Valley and the Beacon Hill neighborhood will likely remain the same, especially over the near term (i.e., the next 7 - 10 years).
- New transit-oriented development in station areas will likely occur gradually in individual, smaller projects and not rapidly in multiple large-scale projects.
- Some stations are likely to experience more new transit-oriented development over the near term (i.e., the next 7 - 10 years) than other stations, particularly Beacon Hill, McClellan and Othello stations.
- Among 6 potential land uses (retail, office, multi-family residential, entertainment, education, and civic/arts), the largest potential for transit-oriented development will likely be community- and neighborhood-serving retail (e.g., goods and services serving the local area); small professional and services offices; and multi-family residential.
- Demolition of existing commercial space for transit construction creates an immediate need to identify which business owners are affected, what space may be available for their relocation, and the potential/options to retain them.
- Land assembly to create projects of a viable size is a significant obstacle to transit-oriented development in several station areas (e.g., McClellan, Graham) while the decisions of key individual property owners will determine when development occurs in other station areas (e.g., Othello).
- Successful new transit-oriented development will require collaboration and coordination between the various public agencies engaged in Southeast Seattle, private property owners and developers, and neighborhood and community groups.
- Opportunities for new transit-oriented development can be increased by leveraging existing and planned public projects to create tenants for TOD and through the establishment of supportive zoning and other public policies.

SUMMARY FOR SIX LAND USES ANALYZED

Retail

- There may be market support for additional retail space in Southeast Seattle as a whole because a significant portion of the retail purchases by Rainier Valley and Beacon Hill residents in the categories of eating and drinking places, furniture/home furnishings/appliances, apparel/shoes, and specialty retail (e.g., floral, book, gift, and jewelry sales) occur outside the area. Additional analysis is needed to estimate the amount of new retail space which can be supported and the ability of existing local retailers in these categories to capture some of the leakage of retail sales outside the area.
- The potential support for additional retail space varies among the station areas in Southeast Seattle and will be strongest in areas with existing concentrations of retail space, such as Othello, McClellan, and Beacon Hill. Demolition of existing space for transit construction will also be a factor in the near term demand for retail space.
- Market demand in the grocery and drug store retail categories will likely be satisfied by existing or planned stores. As a result, no net increase in grocery and drug stores in southeast Seattle is likely to occur the near term (i.e., the next 7 - 10 years).
- A new department store is unlikely to locate in Southeast Seattle because department stores typically look for a trade area with greater than 100,000 residents, which is significantly larger than the population of Southeast Seattle.

Office

- There is more potential for office space for smaller professional and services office users than for larger corporate office users.
- There is some market support for small professional and services offices, particularly at the Beacon Hill, McClellan and Othello stations. Office use is well-suited for the upper floors of transit-oriented mixed-used developments. Demand from new and displaced office users could help support one or more successful mixed-use transit-oriented development projects.

Multi-Family Residential

- For-sale and rental multi-family units were studied. Vacancy rates in Southeast Seattle as a whole are low and rents are rising. However, current market rents may not yet generate sufficient cash flow to support the unsubsidized construction of new market rate units.

Summary for Six Land Uses Analyzed

- There is near and long term demand for affordable for-sale multi-family units. There is long term potential for unsubsidized market rate transit-oriented rental units and live/work loft units.

Entertainment

- Entertainment uses that were considered include themed restaurants, entertainment-oriented retailers, family entertainment, high-tech entertainment centers, and indoor sports (e.g., rock climbing, roller rinks). Movie theaters were not evaluated because of the multiplex theater proposed for the Rainier Court project near McClellan.
- Many large entertainment facilities (e.g., high-tech entertainment centers) need to attract customers from a larger regional area and are unlikely to locate in Southeast Seattle in the near term. There is long term (i.e., 10 or more years) potential for family-oriented entertainment uses targeting middle income families that combine food, games, indoor sports facilities (e.g., soccer, rock climbing). There is also long term potential for ethnic-themed restaurant clusters that cater to local and regional diners and that could serve as an anchor for a transit-oriented development project.

Education

- The potential for new education facilities, including public schools, private and parochial schools, job training facilities, adult education, and related facilities that would provide education services to Southeast Seattle was studied.
- There is existing consideration by agencies of the potential for a new public school at the Edmunds or Othello station and a “one-stop” job training center in southeast Seattle. Additionally, a “Campus of Learning” is planned a part of the New Holly development, which will include classroom space for South Seattle Community College. No additional near term potential development opportunities for four-year or community colleges were identified.

Civic/Arts

- Development opportunities related to the functions of government and non-profit institutions such as libraries, community centers, and performing and cultural arts centers were considered. These uses can be good anchor tenants for larger transit-oriented development projects and help strengthen the center of a community.
- In the near term projects such as the new Beacon Hill library, relocation of the Filipino Community Center, and redevelopment of the El Centro de la Raza and Union Gospel Mission sites can result in transit-oriented development opportunities. Over the long term, the location of new City offices and services can also support transit-oriented development opportunities.

SUMMARY OF BEACON HILL TOD POTENTIAL

What We Heard:

- Preserve the predominant single-family character of neighborhood
- Limit new development to a maximum of 3 stories
- Increase neighborhood retail and multi-family housing along Beacon Avenue

What We Learned:

- Relatively high home ownership rates and projected daily boardings
- Market support for some additional neighborhood-serving retail
- Market support for additional for-sale multi-family housing units
- Market support for a moderate amount of new neighborhood office development
- Amazon.com plans to add an additional 4,000 jobs at the PacMed complex in the next several years

Challenges:

- Land assembly -- many small parcels owned by different owners
- Small number of potential redevelopment sites; relatively “built-out” area
- Neighborhood plan calls for downzoning parcels around PacMed complex
- Identification and implementation of short term strategies that support maximum long term development opportunities
- Suitable zoning to permit and encourage desired development

Summary Of Beacon Hill TOD Potential

Opportunities:

- Station entry locations and redevelopment of transit construction staging areas
- New library branch and potential for a development partnership
- El Centro de la Raza development plans; possible development partnership
- Amazon.com plans to add an additional 4,000 jobs at the PacMed complex in the next several years

Next Steps:

- Local Chamber of Commerce financial feasibility analysis of development in station area
- Explore potential for public/private partnerships involving the Seattle Public Library or El Centro de la Raza, including the potential for such a project to serve as a prototype transit-oriented development project
- Identify potential sites with near and long term feasibility for transit-oriented development
- Review zoning designations that would create incentives (e.g., regarding density, parking requirements, etc.) for transit-oriented development
- Develop financial incentives to attract developer interest in transit-oriented development

SUMMARY OF McCLELLAN TOD POTENTIAL

What We Heard:

- Create mixed-used neighborhood center
- Increase neighborhood retail and multi-family housing in the area
- Increase employment/office development in the area

What We Learned:

- Existing retail/commercial/employment concentration and proximity to downtown increases the area's development potential
- Relatively high homeownership rates and projected daily boardings
- Market support for additional community- and neighborhood-serving retail
- Market support for a limited quantity of additional market rate rental multi-family housing units
- Market support for a moderate amount of additional office development
- Amazon.com plans to occupy a portion of the nearby Pepsi facility as office space

Challenges:

- Land assembly; relatively "built-out" area, so new development will need to involve the re-use of existing commercial sites
- Plan new development to harmonize pedestrian and vehicular access
- Displacement of existing businesses
- Preserve opportunities for auto-oriented businesses
- Identification and implementation of short term strategies that support maximum long term development opportunities
- Suitable zoning to permit and encourage desired development

Summary Of McClellan TOD Potential

Opportunities:

- Redevelopment of transit construction staging areas
- Displacement of Department of Social and Health Services building; possible public/private development partnership
- University of Washington laundry facility; possible public/public development partnership
- Possible public/private development partnerships with other adjacent property owners
- Potential for new development along Rainier and multi-family housing development on nearby vacant land

Next Steps:

- Make a final determination of which properties and businesses will be affected by transit construction, extent affected, and potential/options to retain affected businesses
- Determine development potential for station area, including changes in types of commercial space potentially available and ability to accommodate displaced tenants
- Conduct site specific analysis of the financial and physical feasibility of constructing new residential units and commercial space to accommodate new users
- Explore potential for public/private partnerships, including the potential for such a project to accommodate displaced tenants and serve as a prototype transit-oriented development project
- Identify mechanisms to facilitate land assembly in station area and issues related to their use
- Identify potential sites with near and long term feasibility for transit-oriented development
- Review zoning designations that would create incentives (e.g., regarding density, parking requirements, etc.) for transit-oriented development
- Develop financial incentives to attract developer interest in transit-oriented development

SUMMARY OF EDMUNDS TOD POTENTIAL

What We Heard:

- Preserve predominant single-family character of neighborhood
- Protect and enhance existing Columbia City business district
- Provide neighborhood retail services in new mixed-used developments along MLK

What We Learned:

- Development potential here is more long term
- Projected daily boardings are not as high as other stations
- Long term (i.e., more than 10 years) market support for a limited increase in neighborhood-serving, convenience retail
- Market support for affordable, for-sale multi-family housing units in the near term and market rate rental units over the long term
- Market support for family and child-oriented activity and education facilities, including childcare
- Potential location of civic and cultural facilities such as the Filipino Community Center in a redeveloped Rainier Vista

Challenges:

- Protecting and enhancing Columbia City business district while providing opportunities for limited mixed-used development around the station
- Identification and implementation of short term strategies that support maximum long term development opportunities
- Suitable zoning to permit and encourage desired development

Summary Of Edmunds TOD Potential

Opportunities:

- Redevelopment of transit construction staging areas
- Possible redevelopment of the Rainier Vista housing complex
- Possible relocation/renovation of Orca elementary school
- Potential location for a new Filipino Community Center and a new Refugee Women's Alliance facility
- Free Ride Zone (bike station operator); possible partnership opportunity

Next Steps:

- Make a final determination of which properties and businesses will be affected by transit construction, extent affected, and potential/options to retain affected businesses
- Determine development potential for station area, including changes in types of commercial space potentially available and ability to accommodate displaced tenants
- Conduct site specific analysis of the financial and physical feasibility of constructing new residential units and commercial space to accommodate new users
- Evaluate public/private and public/public partnership with Seattle Housing Authority to relocate dislocated and/or existing retail uses at Alaska, Orca elementary school, and community and social service uses into a redeveloped Rainier Vista
- Identify potential sites with near and long term feasibility for transit-oriented development
- Review zoning designations that would create incentives (e.g., regarding density, parking requirements, etc.) for transit-oriented development
- Develop financial incentives to attract developer interest in transit-oriented development

SUMMARY OF GRAHAM TOD POTENTIAL

What We Heard:

- Preserve predominant single-family character of neighborhood
- Encourage new mixed-used development along MLK
- Some existing business and property owners would like to remain in the area

What We Learned:

- Development potential here is more long term
- Projected daily boardings are not as high as other stations
- Long term (i.e. more than 10 years) market support for any significant increase in additional community- and neighborhood-serving retail
- New commercial development will likely require the re-use of existing commercial sites
- Success of nearby Noji Gardens and New Holly Park for-sale housing developments suggest potential for additional affordable for-sale housing units

Challenges:

- Land assembly; new commercial development will need to involve the re-use of existing commercial sites
- Displacement of existing businesses
- Identification and implementation of short term strategies that support maximum long term development opportunities
- Suitable zoning to permit and encourage desired development

Summary Of Graham TOD Potential

Opportunities:

- Soliciting and encouraging additional community input regarding a long term development vision for the area
- Redevelopment of transit construction staging areas
- Leveraging planned public improvements as catalyst for new development
- Department of Social and Health Service relocation; possible public/private partnership opportunity
- Filipino Community Center; possible partnership opportunity in its retention or relocation in the area

Next Steps:

- Make a final determination of which properties and businesses will be affected by transit construction, extent affected, and potential/options to retain affected businesses
- Determine development potential for station area, including changes in types of commercial space potentially available and ability to accommodate displaced tenants
- Conduct site specific analysis of the financial and physical feasibility of constructing new residential units and commercial space to accommodate new users
- Identify mechanisms to facilitate land assembly in station area and issues related to their use
- Encourage a prototype transit-oriented development project incorporating relocated and new businesses
- Identify potential sites with near and long term feasibility for transit-oriented development
- Review zoning designations that would create incentives (e.g., regarding density, parking requirements, etc.) for transit-oriented development
- Develop financial incentives to attract developer interest in transit-oriented development

SUMMARY OF OTHELLO TOD POTENTIAL

What We Heard:

- Create mixed-used neighborhood center at MLK and Othello
- Preserve predominant single-family character of neighborhood
- Limit new development to a maximum of 3 stories
- Significant cooperation and initiative shown by impacted business/land owners who would like to remain in the area

What We Learned:

- More near term development potential than at some other stations
- Existing viable business district
- Success and planned expansion of King Plaza
- Large key parcels of land in single ownership which could facilitate redevelopment
- Market support for a moderate level of new development for additional community- and neighborhood-serving retail (including ethnic retailers) and small offices
- Any new development in the short-term is not likely to be greater than 3 stories
- Near term demand for additional multi-family housing units in the area is likely to be satisfied by New Holly project. New residents will strengthen the area's retail base

Challenges:

- Timely support for business/land owners seeking to redevelop and remain in the area
- Identifying resources (both technical and financial) to assist business/land owners seeking to redevelop and remain in the area
- Coordinating existing and planned development to meet transit-oriented development and relocation objectives
- Communicating clear acquisition/development timelines to property, business owners

Summary Of Othello TOD Potential

- Identification and implementation of short term strategies that support maximum long term development opportunities
- Suitable zoning to permit and encourage desired development

Opportunities:

- New Holly Park Phase 3; possible public/private development partnership opportunities and ability to leverage additional resources
- Significant cooperation among impacted business/land owners who would like to redevelop their properties and remain in the area
- Redevelopment of transit construction staging areas

Next Steps:

- Make a final determination of which properties and businesses will be affected by transit construction, extent affected, and potential/options to retain affected businesses
- Determine development potential for station area, including changes in types of commercial space potentially available and ability to accommodate displaced tenants
- Identify City provided technical assistance to assist displaced business owners interested in evaluating development alternatives for new locations
- Conduct site specific analysis of the financial and physical feasibility of constructing new residential units and commercial space to accommodate new users
- Encourage a prototype transit-oriented development project incorporating relocated and new businesses
- Identify potential sites with near/long term feasibility for transit-oriented development
- Review zoning designations that would create incentives (e.g., regarding density, parking requirements, etc.) for transit-oriented development
- Develop financial incentives to attract developer interest in transit-oriented development

SUMMARY OF HENDERSON TOD POTENTIAL

What We Heard:

- Create mixed-used neighborhood center
- Strengthen existing commercial/retail core around Rainier Beach business district
- Encourage additional market-rate multi-family housing development

What We Learned:

- Development potential here is more long term
- Approximately 90% of the land in the station area is single family residential, public schools and open space
- Limited parcels available for development because of physical/topographical constraints
- Long term market support over the long term for a moderate level of convenience/transit-related retail, market-rate and affordable housing, and neighborhood office uses
- A new mixed used development (ground level realty office and second floor residential) is currently being constructed at Henderson and Renton Avenue South
- Relatively high homeownership rate and projected daily boardings

Challenges:

- Physical and topographical constraints limit development options (e.g., City Light right of way and greenbelt/steep slope west of MLK)
- Protecting and enhancing the Rainier Beach business district while encouraging some transit-oriented development in the station area
- Reconciling the industrial character of the area along MLK south of Henderson with the desire for additional residential/retail/office development in the area
- Identification and implementation of short term strategies that support maximum long term development opportunities

Summary Of Henderson TOD Potential

- Suitable zoning to permit and encourage desired development

Opportunities:

- Bus layover facility siting; possible public/public development partnership
- Redevelopment of transit construction staging areas
- Siting of bus layover facility; potential public/private development partnership to create development site
- Potential relocation for the Filipino Community Center, Southeast Dental Clinic
- Preserve light industrial character south of Henderson and encourage new job creation in the area to support transit ridership and economic development
- Leveraging planned public improvements as catalyst for new development

Next Steps:

- Determine development potential for station area, including changes in types of commercial space potentially available and ability to accommodate displaced tenants
- Conduct site specific analysis of the financial and physical feasibility of constructing new residential units and commercial space to accommodate new users
- Evaluate economic development strategies for new light industrial uses south of Henderson compatible with limitations in large truck access resulting from new transit
- Evaluate public/private partnership with King County Metro to create a prototype transit-oriented development project in conjunction with its new bus facility
- Identify potential sites with near/long term feasibility for transit-oriented development
- Review zoning designations that would create incentives (e.g., regarding density, parking requirements, etc.) for transit-oriented development
- Develop financial incentives to attract developer interest in transit-oriented development