



Mount Baker Town Center

Neighborhood Design Guidelines



Final DRAFT
February 2017



City of Seattle
Office of Planning and Community Development

Table of Contents

Introduction..... 3

Context and Priority Issues: Mount Baker Station..... 6

Context and Site 9

 CS1. Natural Systems and Site Features 9

 CS2. Urban Pattern and Form 11

 CS3. Architectural Context and Character 14

Public Life 15

 PL1. Public Space 15

 PL2. Walkability 19

 PL3. Street-Level Interaction 21

 PL4. Active Transportation 25

Design Concept 27

 DC1. Project Uses and Activities 27

 DC2. Architectural Concept 29

 DC3. Open Space Concept 33

 DC4. Exterior Elements and Finishes 35

Introduction

What are Neighborhood-Specific Design Guidelines?

Design guidelines are the primary tool used in the review of proposed projects by SDCI staff for administrative design review, or the Design Review Boards. Guidelines define the qualities of architecture, urban design, and public space that make for successful projects and communities. There are two types of guidelines used in the Design Review Program:

- Citywide—applying to all areas of the city except for downtown; and
- Neighborhood-specific—applying to a specific geographically-defined area, usually within a neighborhood urban village or center.

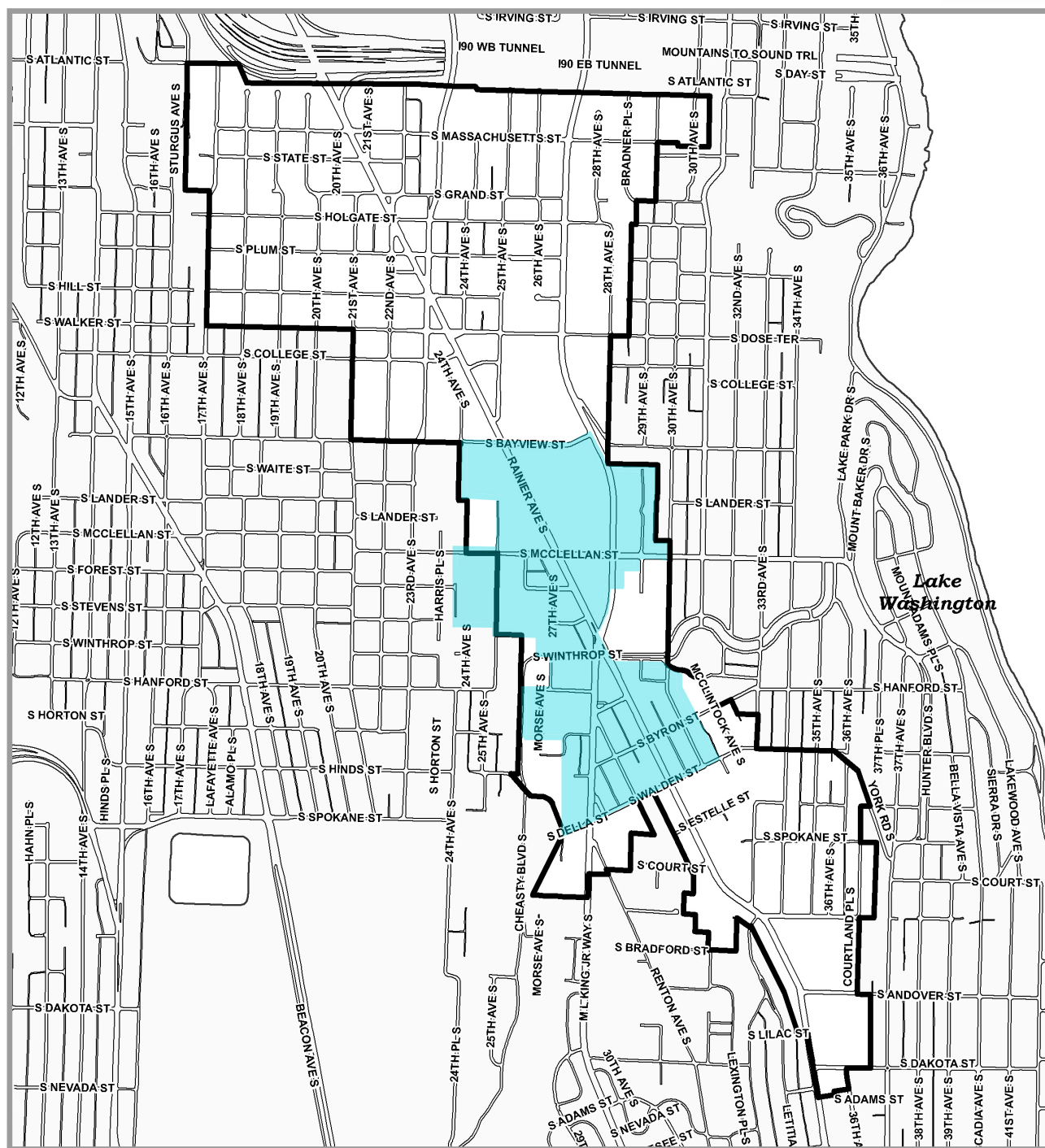
Once a set of neighborhood-specific guidelines is adopted by City Council, they are used in tandem with citywide guidelines for the review of all projects within that neighborhood. Not all neighborhoods within the city have neighborhood-specific guidelines, but for those that do, applicants and Board members are required to consult both sets of guidelines—citywide and neighborhood-specific—with the neighborhood guidelines taking precedence over the citywide ones in the event of a conflict between the two. Neighborhood-specific guidelines are very helpful to all involved in the design review process for the guidance they offer that is specific to the features and character of a particular neighborhood.

Neighborhood-specific design guidelines reveal the character of the neighborhood as known to its residents and business owners. The guidelines help to reinforce existing character and protect the qualities that the neighborhood values most in the face of change. Thus, a neighborhood's guidelines, in conjunction with the citywide Design Guidelines, can increase overall awareness of good design and involvement in the design review process.

Reader's Guide

This document is organized around the themes and guidelines of the Seattle Design Guidelines with additional topics and directives tailored to the Mount Baker Town Center neighborhood. Guidelines are presented in bulleted lists, while other text explains intent or provides background information.

North Rainier Hub Urban Village and Mount Baker Town Center

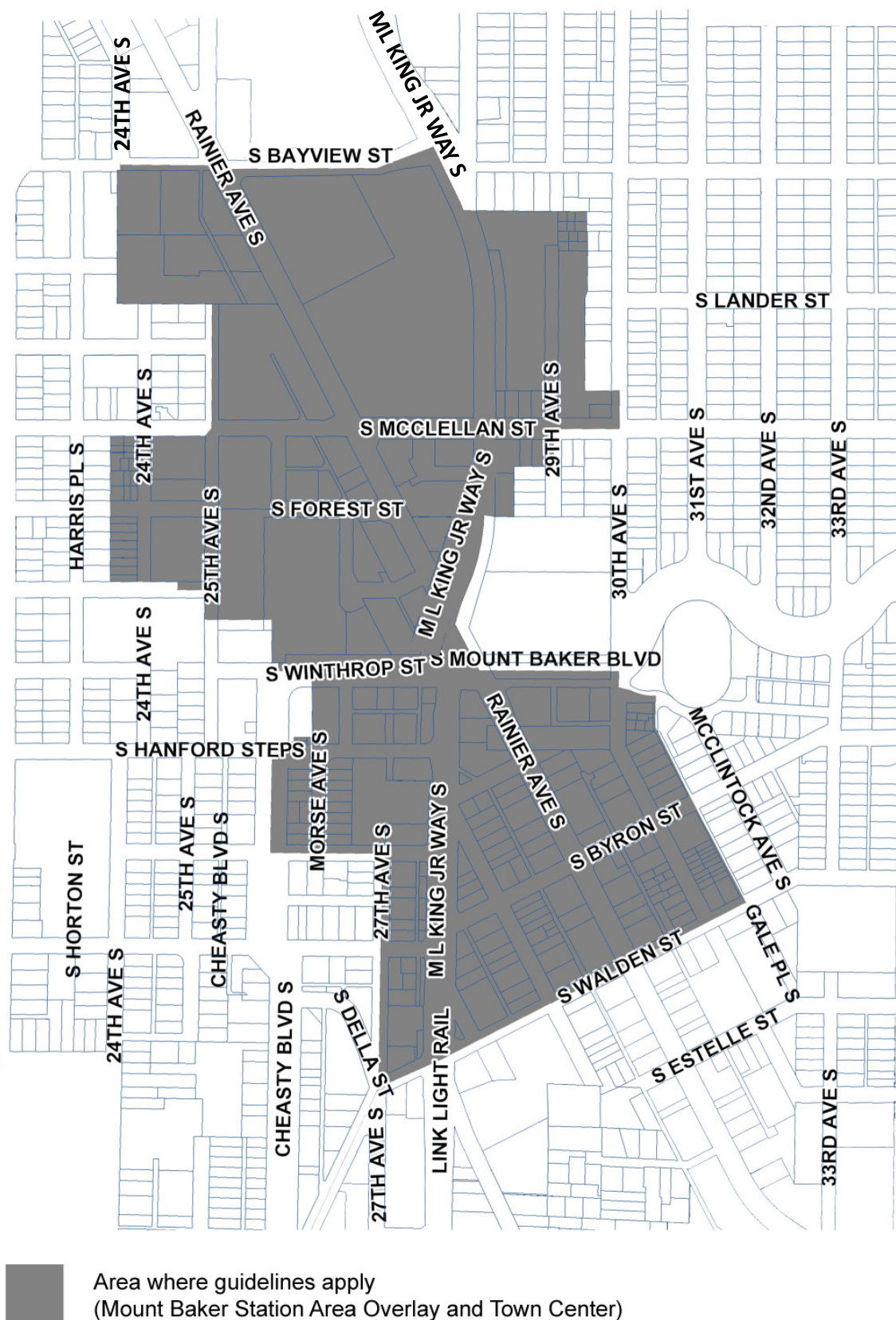


Area where guidelines apply
(Mount Baker Station Area
Overlay and Town Center)

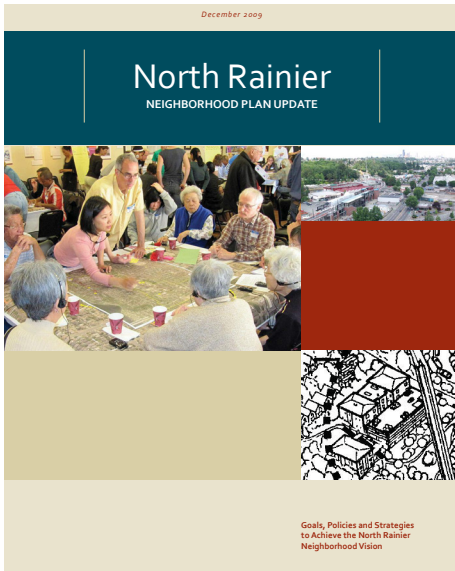
 Urban Village Boundary

Note: Design Review does not apply to all zones. See Citywide Guidelines for details. Additionally, zoning areas on this map are for general reference only.

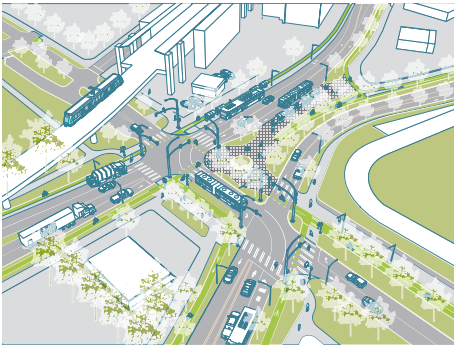
North Rainier Hub Urban Village and Mount Baker Town Center—Enlargement



Context and Priority Issues



Cover of 2009 Neighborhood Plan.



Proposed changes to the intersection of Rainier Ave. S and Martin Luther King Jr. Way S.

Neighborhood Plan

The 2009 North Rainier Neighborhood Plan made the following recommendations:

A Town Center that:

- Concentrates housing, commercial uses, services and living-wage employment opportunities
- Is well-served by transit and non-motorized travel options
- Is well-designed and attractive to pedestrians
- Serves North Rainier residents and is a destination shopping area with stores that serve the greater Rainier Valley

Specific design direction included:

- Breaking down scale of super blocks to create a balance of inwardly and outwardly focused development
- Improving pedestrian connections and providing comfortable sidewalk widths
- Open space that invites people together and to engage in physical activity
- Housing doesn't create a "wall" of undesirable facades that is counter to the feel of the neighborhood

The plan also recommended developing these Mount Baker Town Center specific design guidelines.

These resulting guidelines reflect the neighborhood's direction and aspirations as they apply to new private development.

Background



Sick's Seattle Stadium in 1938.



Dugdale Park.



Borracchini's.



Small independent businesses at S. McClellan St. and 30th Ave. S.

Less than four miles from downtown Seattle, the North Rainier Urban Village is located at the convergence of the Rainier Valley, Beacon Hill, and Central District neighborhood districts, and encompasses portions of the Mount Baker, Atlantic, Beacon Hill, and Columbia City neighborhoods. The area is bisected by two major arterials that provide vehicular access to southeast Seattle: Rainier Ave. S. and Martin Luther King Jr Way S. Currently, the urban village is dominated by auto-oriented uses and lacks architectural definition or pedestrian-oriented spaces.

While the neighborhood has a rich cultural history, little of this history is still reflected in the built environment. One of the area's most significant historical features that no longer remains is Sick's Seattle Stadium, a 25,000-seat baseball stadium which was located at the current site of Lowe's from 1938 to 1979.

The cultural makeup of the North Rainier neighborhood has gone through significant changes over time. In the early decades of the 20th Century there was a thriving Italian community in the area centered around Rainier Ave. and Atlantic St. known as Garlic Gulch. In the 1930s Japanese residents began moving in from the International District, followed by Chinese residents in the 1950s and 1960s, and later, Southeast Asians. Hispanic residents began setting in the neighborhood in the 1960s and 1970s, and Filipino residents in more recent decades. Up until around 1960, most of Seattle's African American residents resided in the Central District, but by 1990 there were more African American residents in the Rainier Valley. This historic ethnic diversity is still reflected in many of the neighborhood's commercial establishments, most notably Borracchini's Bakery, which has been in the same location on Rainier Ave. since 1939.

The North Rainier urban village is also economically diverse, with a relatively high concentration of low-income housing, including the 144-unit Mount Baker Village complex, 386-units at Rainier Court (208 of which are for seniors), and the 132-unit Center Park that provides housing for the physically or mentally challenged. One of largest employers in the urban village is the Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind, currently with over 300 employees, 200 of which are blind or deaf-blind.

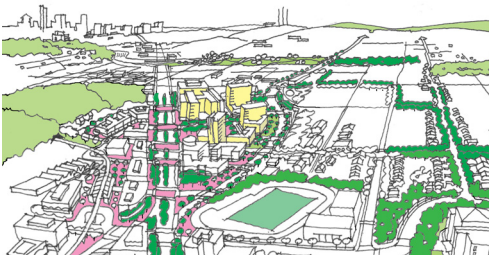


CS1

Natural Systems and Site Features

Seattle Design Guideline:

Use natural systems and features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.



(ZGF)



Mount Baker Supplemental Guidance

I. ENERGY USE

- i. Along Rainier Ave. S., balance energy-based orientations with the goal of creating an active building facade along the sidewalk.

II. TOPOGRAPHY

The North Rainier urban village is located in a long narrow valley bounded by steep hillsides to the west and east. This topography has a range of implications for project design.

- i. Pay particular attention to the ground plane of building facades along a slope to support a good pedestrian environment
- ii. Buildings should be located and designed to take advantage of potential views, and also to enhance views from the public right-of-way. Key views include Franklin High School, the Mt. Baker Light Rail Station, the downtown skyline, Cheasty Greenbelt, the Beacon Hill and Mount Baker ridgelines, the Cascades and Mt. Rainier.

III. PLANTS AND HABITAT

The Mount Baker Town Center is surrounded by a variety of parks and green spaces. These include the 35-acre Cheasty Greenbelt, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, the historic Mount Baker Boulevard and the greenbelt bordering Martin Luther King Way north of McClellan.

- i. Projects that abut the Cheasty Greenbelt should not only minimize negative impacts to the unique character of this “forest within a city,” but also explore ways to enhance the beauty and function of the greenbelt.
- ii. Where possible restore and replant degraded habitat or soils that border green spaces.



Cheasty Greenspace.



Cascading stormwater feature: These cascading concrete pools and landscaping along Maynard in the International District are a good example of capturing and controlling the flow of stormwater on a sloping site in an artistic and engaging design.

- iii. Preservation of significant trees on private property is highly encouraged.

IV. WATER

- i. Where possible, use on-site stormwater management to collect stormwater and create visual interest.
- ii. Combine green roofs, rain gardens, permeable paving, and other plantings to meet Stormwater Code standards while achieving attractive design.
- iii. For sites adjacent to steep slopes within greenbelts, employ features that capture runoff.

CS2

Urban Pattern and Form

Seattle Design Guideline:

Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.



The triangular lot formed on the north side of the intersection of Rainier Ave. and Martin Luther King Jr. Way, shown above, presents an opportunity for a prominent gateway building in the Town Center. It is currently occupied by a Starbucks and surface parking lot.



Gateway Sites at Intersection of Rainier & McClellan.

Mount Baker Supplemental Guidance

I. LOCATION IN THE CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD

The envisioned heart of the community is centered around the intersections of Rainier Ave. and MLK Way with S. McClellan St., an area designated as the “Town Center” in previous neighborhood planning documents. The nearby Link light rail station reinforces the importance of this neighborhood hub.

- i. Capitalize on opportunities for establishing a new neighborhood hub on sites within and adjacent to the Town Center.
- ii. “Gateway” sites abound throughout the neighborhood, and have the potential to provide a sense of arrival to the neighborhood or to a particular place. Identified “gateway” sites include the corners at the intersections of Rainier Ave., MLK Way, McClellan St., and Mount Baker Blvd.; and at Bayview St. to the north, and along McClellan St. to the east and west of the Town Center. Buildings at gateway sites should present strong forms that strengthen the corners through massing and height.
- iii. New buildings should set a positive precedent for future development with quality design.

II. ADJACENT SITES, STREETS, AND OPEN SPACES

Rainier Ave. is the spine of the Town Center, and is currently not a pedestrian friendly environment. Sidewalks are narrow and in most areas provide no buffer from the car travel lanes, curb cuts and front-loaded parking lots are numerous, and most buildings are set back too far from the sidewalk.

- i. All new development fronting on Rainier should be designed with buildings to the sidewalk edge, minimizing curb cuts, minimizing surface parking, and providing active, transparent street facades.



Most of the existing sidewalks along Rainier Ave. are narrow and provide no buffer from the passing car traffic for pedestrians.



Neighborhood arterial street example: This street shows many of features desired on busy arterial streets like Rainier.

Other important streets include Martin Luther King Jr. Way, McClellan St., Mt Baker Blvd, Winthrop St., and Bayview St.

- ii. To help create a pedestrian-friendly environment in the town center, commercial uses fronting these streets should generally be built to the sidewalk.

The triangular lots formed by the angled intersection of Rainier Ave. and Martin Luther King Jr. Way present a unique condition in which a building may need to “front” on both streets.

- iii. On triangular lots at the intersection of Rainier Ave. and MLK, buildings should be designed to create an active, porous facade on both sides, with minimized parking and service entrances.

McClellan St between Rainier Ave. and 30th Ave. S. has been identified as one of the Town Center’s best opportunities for a relatively quiet, pedestrian-oriented, commercial street appropriate for neighborhood-focussed retail such as restaurants and cafes.

- iv. New buildings on McClellan between Rainier and 30th Ave. S should emphasize overhead weather protection, porous, transparent facades, and uses that spill out on to the sidewalk.
- v. Building entrances and circulation patterns should reinforce existing trail systems in the Cheasty greenbelt, as well as other open space network connections.
- vi. Locate busy, noisy service entrances away from natural areas to limit disturbance to natural areas.

Hanford Steps are a significant local features and connection corridor that should be highlighted for special consideration and design sensitivity.

- vii. Adjacent projects should complement and interconnect in to the stairway.

III. RELATIONSHIP TO THE BLOCK

- i. New development should set a good precedent for future redevelopment on the block by building to the sidewalk, providing active street level uses, and minimizing surface parking.
- ii. The Town Center encompasses several very large parcels. New development sites should be broken up with shared-use, mid-block connections wherever feasible. The intention is to break up the bulk of full-block buildings, and increase pedestrian connectivity through the neighborhood.

For example, the Lowe’s site, which has nearly 1,000 feet of continuous frontage on both Rainier Ave. and Martin Luther King Jr. Way, along with about 700 feet on Bayview St., and more than 400 feet on McClellan St.



Example of mid-block connector.
Photo: Derek Reeves.



Mid-Block connections examples: These photos show successful mid-block connections, with pedestrian pathways, community amenities, activating frontages, clear sightlines, and plenty of eyes on the space.



The Claremont Apartments accentuates the corner of Rainier Ave. and S. Walden St. with a prominent entry, setbacks, and building form.

The QFC/Rite Aid site has about 460 feet of frontage on Rainier Ave, and 430 feet of frontage on McClellan St. When redeveloped, each site should be broken up with mid-block connections that provide pedestrian connectivity to adjacent streets. The east-west mid-block connection should align.

IV. HEIGHT, BULK, AND SCALE

- iii. The combination of the above conditions presents a unique opportunity for the development of large buildings without imposing on the surrounding neighborhood context. Taller buildings would be particularly appropriate for sites at the core of the Town Center, such as the Lowe's site.

CS3

Architectural Context and Character

Seattle Design Guideline:

Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.



The Historic Franklin High School building demonstrates superior massing, scale and use of quality exterior materials. Photo credit: Joe Mabel.



Mount Baker Light Rail station.



Fire Station 30 exemplifies a modern architectural aesthetic. Photo credit: Schacht Aslani Architects.

Mount Baker Supplemental Guidance

I. EMPHASIZING POSITIVE NEIGHBORHOOD ATTRIBUTES

- i. Where viable, new development should consider designs that include small commercial spaces or spaces adaptable to small, independently-owned, local businesses.
- ii. The designs of the first several new developments in the Mount Baker Town Center will require especially careful attention. Thoughtful, high-quality design will be critical for the new development, because they will set the context for quality design for future development.

PL1

Open Space Connectivity

Seattle Design Guideline:

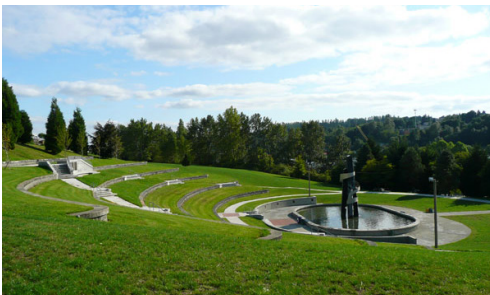
Open space should complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

Mount Baker Supplemental Guidance

I. NETWORK OF OPEN SPACES

The North Rainier urban village has several significant public spaces, and linkages between them could be improved by thoughtfully designed new development. These spaces include the Cheasty Greenbelt, the plaza in front of and underneath the light rail station, Franklin High School playfield, and Martin Luther King Jr. Park.

- i. Redevelopment of the Lowe's site represents an opportunity for contributing to the Town Center's open space networks. Future development on this large site should strive to include a public open space central to the site, as well as pedestrian connections to Martin Luther King Jr. Park through the northeast corner of the site.
- ii. Development adjacent to the light rail station should reinforce connections the station plaza -- to and from Rainier Ave. in particular. New development located on Winthrop St. and Mount Baker Blvd. near Rainier Ave. should emphasize east-west pedestrian movement to strengthen the connection between the Cheasty Greenbelt, Franklin High School, and Mt Baker Blvd. beyond.



Martin Luther King Jr. Park.



Station Plaza.



Cheasty Greenbelt.



Plantings, wayfinding signage, accessible paving, outdoor tables, and building canopies all contribute to an active, all-weather compatible outdoor space the promotes pedestrian connectivity through this full-block development site.



Pedestrian corridors benefit from active adjacent uses.

II. WALKWAYS AND CONNECTIONS

The neighborhood's steep topography creates a challenge for convenient pedestrian connectivity in east-west directions. In particular, the steep slope on McClellan between 23rd Ave. S. and 25th Ave. S. is a barrier to travel to and from Beacon Hill.

- i. Buildings that front on steep streets or cover sloping sites, should consider providing through-block connections that:
 - a. Maximize pedestrian connectivity, encourage interaction, and mediate the site's topography
 - b. Are kept open and accessible to the public
 - c. Incorporate small gathering spaces, terraced seating, bike racks and/or planting areas
 - d. Have clear and creative entries where the driveways or pedestrian pathways meet the public right-of-way
 - e. Coordinate with the design of adjacent parks and private residential amenity areas
 - f. Use landscape buffers at the transition from shared pathways to private residential amenity areas and entries
 - g. Provide active uses adjacent to building edges
 - h. Encourage clear sight lines and consistent pedestrian lighting for all walkways and connections
- ii. In sloping conditions, provide viewpoints, seating opportunities, solar exposure, and bicycle runnels in addition to other standard pathway amenities.
- iii. For large potential development sites such as the Lowe's and QFC sites, pedestrian walkways should break up the blocks windows and openings.
- iv. For the Lowe's site, a mid-block pedestrian connection on McClellan St. would be particularly beneficial.
- v. For the QFC site, pedestrian walkways that step up the hill to the west would provide useful connectivity to the Cheasty Greenbelt and Beacon Hill.



- vi. Development that fronts on the main pedestrian travel routes to the light rail station and bus transfer center should benefit and serve all the development's users by providing pedestrian amenities, such as street trees, pedestrian lighting, benches, newspaper racks, and public art.

III. OUTDOOR USES & ACTIVITIES

Throughout the neighborhood's network of open spaces there are many opportunities to incorporate street furniture, space for art installations and permanent art, and creative paving, paint patterns or lighting on the ground plane.

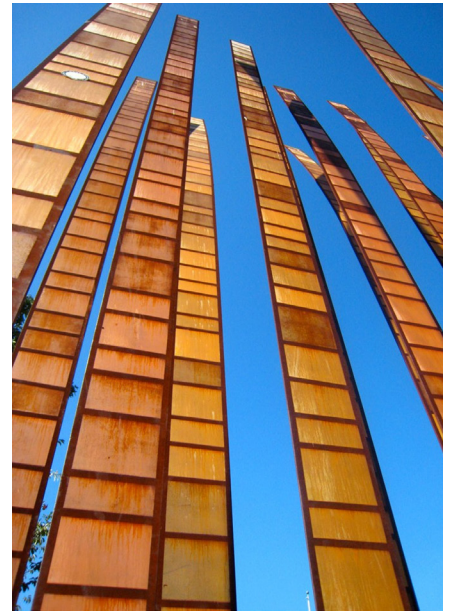
- i. Incorporate playful features and details that engage passersby and create memorable spaces.



Knitted bike racks: The sense of fun and creativity seen in this guerilla art installation of knit tubes sewn onto these bike racks is encouraged. (Streetcolor)



Sculptural seating: These benches are playful additions to public spaces; when not in use they stand up like a sculptural field and when someone wants to sit down they pivot down to become a bench. (Design Yearbook)



Public art to highlight gateways and focal points: These sculptures adjacent to a large central park and plaza, highlight the area as a neighborhood center and add to the area's distinct character. A similar approach is encouraged around the intersections of Rainier Ave. and MLK Way with S McClellan St.



Permanent art | art as gateway: The sidewalk art at the entrance to this small park marks the entry to the park, adds interest to the public realm, and tells a story about the design concept. (Haddad-Drugan Design)



Interactive art installations: The "Be a Pin Up" art installation activates the sidewalk and encourages pedestrians to have fun with art. Interactive installations would be well placed in any number of open spaces. (Lulu Guinness)

PL2

Walkability

Seattle Design Guideline:

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



Pedestrian lighting: Pedestrian-scale lighting creates a more intimate streetscape while providing safety benefits beyond conventional “cobrahead” lights. All luminaires should have a cutoff above the lightsource, directing light down and away from living quarters.



Example of overhead weather protection.

Mount Baker Supplemental Guidance

I. ACCESSIBILITY

- i. Provide physical improvements and activity programming relevant to people with disabilities throughout the Town Center.
- ii. Provide accessible pedestrian entrances at both the right-of-way and at entrances abutting mid-block connections.
- iii. Raised stoops are the preferred entry for ground-related residential uses. This could create a barrier to access for some users; use ramps and setback the building to provide barrier-free access to stoops where needed, or provide access to first floor units via the main building entrance and internal hallways.

II. SAFETY AND SECURITY

- i. All streets, open spaces, walkways and connections should be designed to ensure clear sightlines, such as pedestrian lighting, low or see-through fencing, or landscaping.

III. WEATHER PROTECTION

- i. Wherever possible, buildings fronting sidewalks on the main pedestrian travel routes to and from the train station and bus transfer center should provide continuous and wide overhead weather protection in the form of canopies or awnings.



An example of useful wayfinding display on sidewalk.



Another example of useful wayfinding display.

IV. WAYFINDING

Sites that are good candidates for wayfinding include the light rail station, the bus transfer center, Cheasty Greenbelt, Martin Luther King Jr. Park, Franklin High School, and Mount Baker Blvd, as well as sites further afield, such as Beacon Hill, Mount Baker Park, and Lake Washington.

- i. The light rail station, being such a key destination and recognizable neighborhood icon, merits top priority for wayfinding efforts.
- ii. When located on sites where wayfinding would be beneficial, new building designs should explore ways of integrating useful wayfinding displays. Employ interior displays for building users, as well as exterior displays directed towards people in the public realm.

PL3

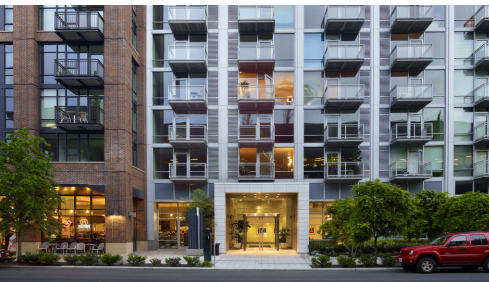
Street-Level Interaction

Seattle Design Guideline:

Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.



Non-residential frontages: A concentration of small-scaled retail with large windows and outdoor seating stimulates activity on the wide sidewalks of this street. (Hord Coplan Macht Architecture)



Mixed-Use frontages. (Mithun)

Mount Baker Supplemental Guidance

I. ENTRIES

- i. All new development should be built to the sidewalk edge with prominent pedestrian entries opening on to the sidewalk. The corners of buildings on corner sites should be designed to be filled with active uses and with transparent facades.

II. RETAIL EDGES

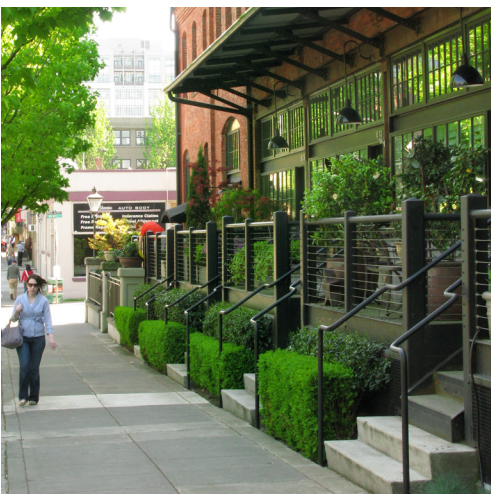
- i. Retail edges should provide porous, transparent facades with prominent entries.
- ii. Ideally, retail edges should incorporate active uses that generate pedestrian traffic during large portions of the day and year, and especially those uses that have the potential spillout on to the sidewalk, as with cafe tables or fruit stands.
- iii. For locations on convenient walking routes to the train station, entries and other elements of the retail edge should be designed with the expectation pedestrian volumes will increase over time, providing more customers, and perhaps even pedestrian congestion.



High-density residential frontage. (Runberg Architecture Group)



Ground-level entries: The setback entrance to an individual residential unit clearly marks the entry, and provides usable private outdoor space that successfully transitions a resident or visitor from the public to the private realm.



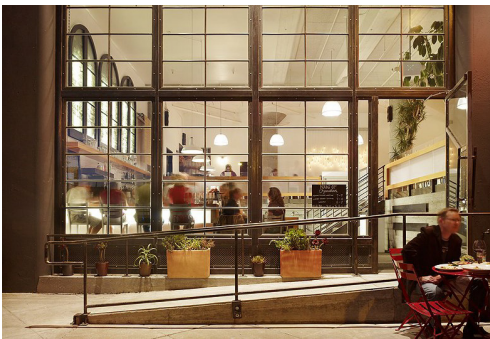
Exemplary compact residential frontage: This narrow but well-designed threshold makes a good transition from the public to private realm in a small amount space. The railings and deck plants strike a good balance between the desire to screen and the need for visual connection to the sidewalk.

III. RESIDENTIAL EDGES

- i. Main residential entries should be designed to maximize their positive impact on the pedestrian environment. Entries should be visually prominent, emphasized with architecture and landscaping, open and transparent, and include amenities such as benches and bike parking.
- ii. Maximize the number of individual residential entries that open directly to the sidewalk on relatively quiet side streets, such as many of the east-west running streets that intersect Rainier Ave. and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
- iii. Articulate individual dwelling units at the ground-level and provide opportunities for personalization by occupants.
- iv. Establish a streetscape that clearly looks and feels residential.
- v. Where building program allows, provide street-facing entries for ground-level units.
- vi. Provide a physical feature behind the sidewalk that both defines and bridges the boundary between public right-of-way and private yard or patio. Locate the threshold between 1 foot and 4 feet from the sidewalk, using features such as a hedge, retaining wall, rockery, stair, fence, gate, railing or any combination thereof. The threshold should screen but not block views to and from the street, and should help define individual units.
- vii. Create a ground-level facade with a residential character. Design the front door and entry area to enhance the privacy transition.



Non-residential frontage build-out edge: Colonnades and canopies provide human-scale definition in this frontage. The use of landscaping, retaining walls, and a terrace demonstrates how welcoming outdoor seating can be provided next to a sidewalk.



Access, visibility, & character: Barrier-free access accommodates all users, railings and plants add texture to the building edge, low sills and a high level of transparency increase visibility, and high quality materials and rhythm create a pleasing facade. (Mathew Millman Photography, Architizer)



Outdoor seating in the setback: Setbacks are an excellent place to locate outdoor seating for cafes, coffee shops or restaurants. On both streets and woonerfs, this strategy adds life to the sidewalk.

IV. NON-RESIDENTIAL FRONTAGE

- i. Articulate building bases with a scale and cadence similar to traditional storefronts. However, style and materials do not need to be traditional.
- ii. Locate entrances at or slightly above grade.
- iii. Provide direct, barrier-free access from the sidewalk, pedestrian pathway, or access drive to the primary entrance. Stairs may be used for secondary access. Minimize the visual appearance of ramps.
- iv. Provide moderate to high transparency at the ground level, consistent with code requirements.
- v. Extend the public realm from the right-of-way to the edge of the building. Threshold elements should only be used within a narrow zone to define or enclose outdoor seating areas, or to increase privacy for ground-level office or live/work units.
- vi. Provide shading, weather protection, and human-scale definition at the street level with canopies, awnings, and/or upper-level balconies.

When designing ground level spaces for flexibility over time, including live-work units, consider the following:

- vii. Build potential future storefronts to the street edge, with moveable planters or other easily modified strategies for privacy in the interim.
- viii. Group all non-residential uses at street level, rather than dividing areas between lobbies, etc.
- ix. Design a consistent floor plate that can be over built for different tenants, with entries at sidewalk grade.

Examples of successful and unsuccessful residential frontages

The successful examples here mostly include a larger setback, similar to the condition encouraged on the higher traffic streets like Rainier and MLK. Many of the features that make these residential frontages successful can also be applied on lower traffic streets and pedestrian connections.



High design, good frontage: These units have a thoroughly modern aesthetic and all essential elements of a residential frontage. Individual units are clearly expressed through form and color, and allow opportunities for personalization.



Traditional residential frontage: This street lined with historic multifamily housing demonstrates that the principles of residential frontage are timeless. (Boston Discovery Guide)



Contemporary residential frontage: A successful residential frontage is not limited to a traditional style. This residential frontage has been interpreted in a contemporary way.



Discouraged residential frontages: Both examples lack essential elements of a public-to-private transition that make ground-level housing comfortable and desirable. There are no private outdoor spaces; threshold elements are non-existent (top image) or present too much of a barrier (bottom image); the entry doors are grouped together and do not articulate individual units. (Tom Eanes)



Abrupt privacy transition: The skillful use of high-quality materials gives this entry an attractive aesthetic, but the transition from public to private is too abrupt.



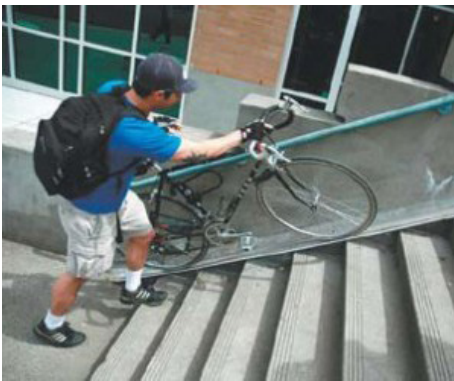
Ideal privacy transition: This example from the same building as the image to the left, it is successful because it contains the essential elements of a residential frontage: a threshold that screens but does not block views, a raised private patio, large windows with operable casements, and an inset front door which adds a subtle layer to the privacy transition.

PL4

Active Transportation

Seattle Design Guideline:

Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, cycling, and use of transit.



Example of a bike runnel.



Public bike parking is well integrated into the building facade.



Interior bike parking.

Mount Baker Supplemental Guidance

I. ENTRY LOCATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

- i. Buildings that abut the plaza beneath the light rail station should locate entries to respond to the plaza and help activate the space.

II. PLANNING AHEAD FOR CYCLISTS

- i. All new buildings in the Town Center should provide amenities that support cycling. This includes dedicated, interior bike parking areas for building residents and patrons, as well as exterior bike parking areas adjacent to the sidewalk that are accessible to residents and the public.
- ii. Provide visible, attractive bike racks at entrances to buildings and pedestrian pathways, within courtyards, next to neighborhood parks, and the retail core, as appropriate. For installation in the right-of-way, coordinate with the Seattle Department of Transportation.
- iii. Incorporate bicycle runnels, a channel for bike tires, in outdoor stairways.



Mount Baker transit center.



Example of integration of bus shelter into building edge.



Example of lean rails.

III. PLANNING AHEAD FOR TRANSIT

- i. Provide public seating and other pedestrian amenities for sites that abut a transit stop, consistent with the recommendations of the Seattle Design Guideline for “On-site Transit Stops”.
- ii. Include weather protection and lean rails or other seating as part of frontage abutting transit stops.
- iii. Buildings adjacent to bus stops should integrate shelters or covered areas with seating/leaning rails into the facade of the building.

DC1

Project Uses and Activities

Seattle Design Guideline:

Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

Mount Baker Supplemental Guidance

I. ARRANGEMENT OF INTERIOR USES

The most important site adjacency in the Town Center is the light rail station.

- i. Buildings located next to the station should present active, porous facades to help create vibrancy in the areas around and beneath the station at all hours of the day.
- ii. Uses should be accessible from street level and reflect the convenience and daily needs of light rail patrons coming and going from the station.

II. VEHICULAR ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Site planning of vehicular access and circulation should not limit access to the light rail station.

- i. In order to promote safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers, new development should minimize the size and frequency of curb cuts and vehicular access points.



Active uses wrap a parking garage: Land Use Code provisions require that aboveground parking be set back behind the facade, and that 80% of the above-ground parking be wrapped in habitable residential or non-residential space.



Screen parking with architectural elements: Where structured parking is exposed (either at access points or in the 20% that does not have to be wrapped), it must be screened with attractive materials and landscape features.

III. PARKING AND SERVICE USES

- i. Surface parking should be minimized in the Town Center. Where surface parking is proposed, create attractive and pedestrian-friendly lots with plantings, walkways, and attractive lighting.
- ii. On-site parking should be minimized, given proximity to a high-capacity transit station.
- iii. Explore opportunities for time-shared parking and Park&Ride arrangements on site.
- iv. Minimize the visual impact of parking. The urban village has numerous potential development sites with steep slopes; these sites present opportunities to bury structured parking in the hillside, increasing design efficiency and reducing the visual impact.
- v. Frontage that wraps structured parking should have dimensions and architectural detailing that create usable, desirable space; occupancy and activity in these frontages is key to truly concealing the parking.

DC2

Architectural Concept

Seattle Design Guideline:

Develop an architectural concept that will result in a functional and harmonious design.



Example of facade articulation.



Finely scaled building features & rhythm: This building increases the level of detail below 30 feet in height, using operable windows with divided panes, natural and durable materials, and pedestrian lighting. Window headers are expressed with brick soldier courses. (Ankrom Moisan Architects)

Mount Baker Supplemental Guidance

I. MASSING

Highly articulated building forms at all levels are desirable for a vibrant urban realm.

- i. Use massing to differentiate between portions of a building with different functions.
- ii. Foster architectural variety on a block.
- iii. Design massing to reduce shading impacts to public open spaces and shared amenity spaces, where feasible.

65' Examples

A range of exterior materials and a significant mid-block setback reduce the perceived bulk of this mixed use building. (Rundberg Architecture Group)



This mixed-use, affordable-housing project successfully uses high-quality materials, storefront windows, weather protection, and landscaping to create an attractive pedestrian environment on the street-level and upper residential floors. (Ankrom Moisan Architects)



This building recognizes the human scale with high-quality materials at street level, including wood and stone. The upper levels are well modulated with the inner uses pushing out and pulling back from the facade. While vinyl windows are used, the color is chosen to integrate well with the other exterior colors. (environmental WORKS)



Horizontal and vertical modulation combined with a diversity of high-quality materials produce a human scaled pedestrian environment. (GGLO Architecture)

85' Examples



A combination of building heights and continuous ground floor retail creates an active and well-proportioned pedestrian realm around the structure.

125' Examples



125' Examples

A dramatic roof line and a well-scaled base creates a dramatic but well-grounded 13 story residential tower (VIA Architecture)



DC3

Open Space Concept

Seattle Design Guideline:

Integrate open space with the building design.



Communal courtyards: This site is a good example of how to provide semi-private amenity space for residents through landscaping, colors, furniture, and balconies and windows that put eyes on the space. (Timothy Soar)

Mount Baker Supplemental Guidance

I. BUILDING-OPEN SPACE RELATIONSHIP

- i. Semi-private and private open spaces should provide building residents with more intimate places to socialize than public open spaces, access to sunlight and air, and foster community within and between buildings. These spaces include private yards, patios and balconies; communal courtyards; community gardens; rooftop patios; and forecourts and entry courtyards
- ii. Private yards, patios and balconies should integrate with the building design, and with adjacent semi-private or public open spaces.
- iii. Buildings with courtyards, gardens and rooftop patios should provide a mix of passive places (e.g. sitting) and active areas (e.g. play) to support residents of all ages and needs. Examples include: areas for a few people; larger areas for a crowd; places to sit, cook, garden, play, and exercise; and a variety of levels and materials.
- iv. Provide gardening opportunities in locations where they will be used, incorporating access to light, water and storage.
- v. Use native, drought-tolerant, and regionally adapted plants.
- vi. Green roofs are encouraged as a multifunctional design strategy to beautify roofs, enhance space, and provide functional benefits including cooling and stormwater management.
- vii. Apply passive and active design strategies for making spaces safe and secure, such as incorporating natural surveillance techniques and adequate lighting.



Community gardens: Community members have expressed a strong desire for community gardens on roof terraces and in building courtyards.

- viii. Design forecourts and entry courtyards to provide clear physical and visual differentiation between the public realm of the street, park, access drive, or pedestrian pathway and the semi-private realm of the forecourt or courtyard.
- ix. Design forecourts and entry courtyards to complement the abutting residential or non-residential frontage, as determined by the primary use of the building frontage adjacent to the forecourt and/or entry courtyard (*PL3: Street-Level Interaction: Frontage*).
- x. Entry courtyards may extend all the way through a project site and effectively become a pedestrian pathway; this is encouraged in order to break up building mass and provide pedestrian permeability (*PL1: Public Space: Walkways and Connections*).

DC4

Exterior Elements and Finishes

Seattle Design Guideline:

Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

Mount Baker Supplemental Guidance

I. BUILDING MATERIALS

- i. Adjacent to the Cheasty greenbelt, building colors should blend rather than clash with the natural landscape, and the impacts of mechanical system noise and lighting should be minimized.
- ii. High-quality windows in materials and colors that are compatible with the rest of the building facade are encouraged.
- iii. Where appropriate, recess the windows into the facade to add depth, rather than apply them to the outside.

II. SIGNAGE

- i. Permanently attach building signage to the ground, building or other structure by direct attachment to a rigid wall, frame, or structure.
- ii. Design the facade with places to easily locate future tenant signage.



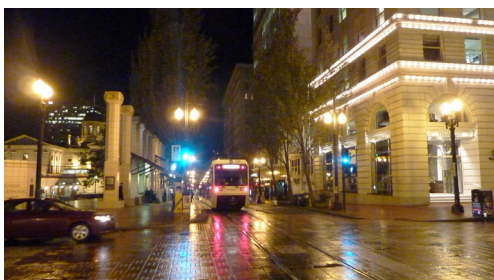
High quality windows: Aluminum windows integrate nicely with the metal facade on this residential building. (Gregg Galbraith Photography)



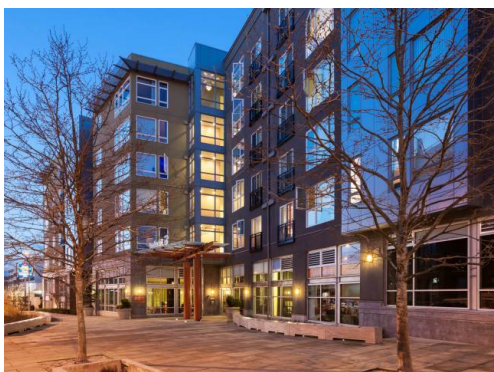
Fixed signage: Both the building address and building name signage are permanently affixed to this building's structure, and integrate well with the overall design. (NBBJ)



Pedestrian-scale lighting integrated into building.



Effective street lighting.



Well-illuminated public space.

C. LIGHTING

- i. Appropriately scaled exterior lighting enhances safety and improves the quality of the Mount Baker town center's public realm.
- ii. Coordinate with SDCI to establish a consistent pedestrian scaled lighting fixture for use throughout the town center.
- iii. Employ well integrated lighting along significant pedestrian corridors, particularly those that connect to the Mount Baker light rail station.