

north Aurora community action plan

Vision Framework

October 2026

DRAFT FOR COMMUNITY REVIEW

Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development | framework | ECOnorthwest | Illustrations by Natalie Dupille

Project Overview

The North Aurora Community Action Plan is a City of Seattle effort to develop a shared vision for the future of the North Aurora corridor, and identify action steps to implement that vision. Working alongside residents, businesses, community organizations, and other City of Seattle departments, the plan will result in a document outlining short- and long-term strategies to inform growth and development, connect neighborhoods, support a thriving business community, build community capacity for public safety, and foster a sense of place and green space.

Your feedback is a core part of this process, directly shaping the plan's goals and actions.

What Is a Vision Framework?
A document that brings together the first round of research and community engagement, communicates emerging ideas to the public, and establishes a shared direction for continued discussion and more detailed planning.

North Aurora Initiative Concurrent Projects

The North Aurora Initiative is a City of Seattle effort partnering with the community to shape the future of the North Aurora corridor through street and utilities investments, long-term visioning, and short-term improvements. It includes three major projects:

North Aurora Community Action Plan

THIS PROJECT

Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD)

Community partnership to develop a shared vision for the future of the corridor and action steps to implement that vision.

Aurora Ave N Project

Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

Near-term safety improvements, long-term corridor planning, and a future capital project.

Aurora Drainage and Sewer Improvements

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)

Drainage and sewer system improvements along Aurora Ave N from N 80th St to N 145th St.

Project Area

The study area focuses on neighborhoods between **N 80th St** and **N 145th St**, including the Aurora Licton Springs Urban Center and Bitter Lake Urban Center (as designated in the Comprehensive Plan).



The study area focuses on neighborhoods between N 80th St and N 145th St, and includes neighborhoods such as Licton Springs and Bitter Lake.

Community Engagement

From April to September 2026, the first phase of engagement launched the North Aurora Initiative to community and collected feedback on assets, challenges, and community vision for the future.

Phase 1 Engagement Timeline, 2026

16 organization interviews	**200** open house participants	**6+** community events	**201** online responses	**231** paper survey responses	**40** business surveys

April-August

Community organization interviews

16 interviews with community-based, stakeholder, and anchor organizations identified trusted leaders and ongoing initiatives.

May-August

Community events

Two open houses hosted 200 participants, with local food, City and partner tables, and family activities, as well as attending other events related to community safety.

May 7-Aug. 4

Online survey

201 responses on community vision, ideas, neighborhood assets, and desired changes.

August

Paper survey

231 responses from people often left out of traditional engagement, including shelter and supportive housing residents and multi-lingual communities.

May 13-Aug. 11

Business engagement survey

40 responses from small business and industries including professional services, wholesale, medical, restaurants, personal services, retail, and auto-oriented businesses.



Community open house, May 27



Community open house, June 6



Community mapping, June 6

What We've Heard from You

The initial themes from the first phase of engagement include:

Community Health and Safety

Concerns about physical safety and feelings of safety are a consistent message across audiences, including residents, people experiencing homelessness, business owners, service providers, and corridor users.

Transportation Safety and Mobility

Safer crossings, improved sidewalks, better east-west and north-south non-motorized connections, and reliable transit are a strong community priority.

Activation of Public Space

Respondents envision public spaces that support social cohesion, multigenerational activities, cultural expression, and everyday community life.

Small Business Retention

There is a need to stabilize and retain the corridor's diverse mix of local- and regional-serving industrial and functional businesses as future changes come to the corridor.

Aurora's Green Future

Many want to see the future of Aurora be a greener neighborhood, including outdoor spaces for gathering, trees, and other resources to support community identity and livability.

Sustained Coordinated Action

There is a need for corridor-wide capacity building to advocate for, support, and maintain a thriving Aurora, including business groups, service providers, and residents.





Community vision graphic, illustration by Natalie Dupille

Vision Framework

Vision & Values

As we work with community to develop a vision for the future of the North Aurora corridor and surrounding neighborhoods—and to identify strategies and actions to support this vision—our work together is guided by the following values:



Invest in an Aurora for All

The North Aurora corridor has experienced historic underinvestment. This Plan is guided by the opportunity to make transformational investments in the corridor to create a better Aurora for all communities, with a particular focus on those that have been historically underrepresented.

A Safe Place to Thrive

We envision North Aurora as a place where investments create safe and vibrant streets, public spaces, social supports, and economic opportunities for all residents.

Community at the Center

A community-centered approach to planning means elevating community voices in decision-making while supporting community-based organizations in advocating for and implementing the changes they want to see.

Building Toward the Future We Want

While planning for major infrastructure projects in the future, we can work together to shape the North Aurora we envision by identifying and advancing near-term opportunities.

North Aurora Community Action Plan Goals

Based on community feedback, these five goals organize the plan, with strategies and individual actions supporting these goals and overall vision:



Design Land Use and Policy for Equitable Development

Land use · Urban design



Create Active Streets and Interconnected Neighborhoods

Transportation



Support a Thriving and Diverse Business Community

Economic development · Capacity building · Construction mitigation



Build a Safe and Healthy North Aurora

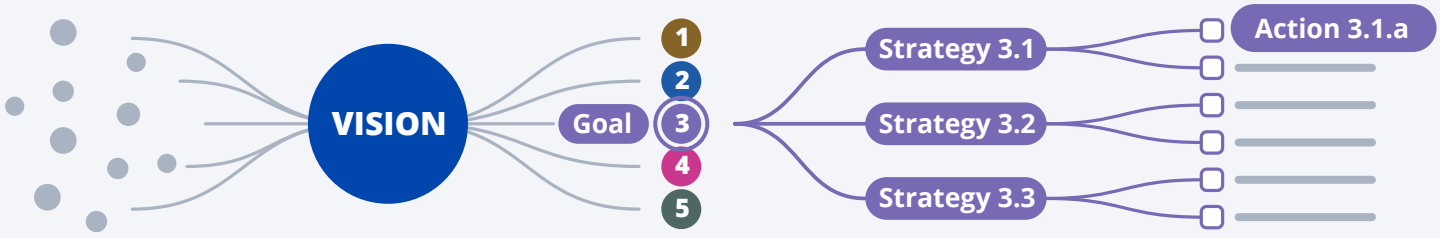
Community safety · Capacity building



Grow Green Spaces and Places for Community

Placemaking · Access to green spaces · Climate mitigation and adaptation

VISION FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM



Engagement
Community input is informing the framework

Vision
Shared aspiration for North Aurora's future

Goals
Key topic areas the plan will focus on

Strategies
Approaches to achieve each goal

Actions
Specific steps to carry out each strategy

GOAL 1

Design Land Use and Policy for Equitable Development



TOPIC FOCUS Land use | Urban design

BACKGROUND: North Aurora is a diverse community that has grown around Aurora Ave N, a major transportation corridor, with neighborhoods and businesses on both sides. Much of the area reflects a car-oriented development pattern, functioning more as a thoroughfare than a neighborhood place.

THIS GOAL FOCUSES ON using land use and policy to guide future growth toward a more people-centered development pattern, with more housing options, a broader mix of community-serving uses, and more equitable development and limiting displacement as the corridor changes.

> More human-scale developments along the corridor. The current wide streets and big block commercial are not inviting people to gather/stay.
> -- Community Connection Pop-In Party

GOAL 1

Strategies and Example Actions

STRATEGY 1.1 Increase the number of homes and housing options

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Update land use and zoning to allow more housing and a broader range of housing types, including family-sized and affordable housing options.

STRATEGY 1.2 Support mixed-use development and a people-centered environment

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Expand permitted land uses to allow a wider range of community-serving uses along Aurora Ave N, along nearby arterials, and in surrounding neighborhoods.

b) Align land use, zoning, and building requirements with future infrastructure changes on the corridor to ensure high-quality urban design and public realm.

STRATEGY 1.3 Explore land use and zoning strategies to mitigate displacement

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Work with the community to identify local assets and priorities as land use changes are considered.

b) Explore community ownership models, land trusts, and social housing to help current residents and businesses remain in North Aurora.

GOAL 1

Create Active Streets and Interconnected Neighborhoods



TOPIC FOCUS Transportation | Safe Streets

BACKGROUND: Aurora Ave N is one of Seattle's major north-south transportation corridors and home to the busiest bus route in the state, the RapidRide E Line. Planned infrastructure improvements to Aurora Ave N create an opportunity to better connect North Aurora neighborhoods and make it easier to get around biking, walking, rolling, and taking transit, including connections to Northgate Link light rail and the Interurban Trail.

THIS GOAL FOCUSES ON making it easier to walk, bike, take transit, and travel into and around the neighborhoods along Aurora.

> **Street end plazas between Aurora and residential streets will allow residents and visitors to enjoy the space we share safely, without speeding cars and bullets interrupting the community building.**
> **–– Community Connection Pop-In Party**

GOAL 2

Strategies and Example Actions

STRATEGY 2.1 Improve walking, biking, and transit connections between Aurora and nearby neighborhoods

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Expand east-west neighborhood connections and greenways to connect people with transit, services, neighborhood destinations, including Link light rail stations.

b) Strengthen connections to the Interurban Trail, and improve north-south connectivity on the east side of Aurora for people biking and walking.

STRATEGY 2.2 Make streets safer and easier for walking, biking, and taking transit

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Create neighborhood traffic circulation plans that reduce cut-through traffic and support more people-friendly streets.

STRATEGY 2.3 Improve the public realm in alignment with SDOT's Aurora Avenue Corridor Project.

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Improve crossings, sidewalks, and walkways along and across Aurora Ave N.

b) Improve crossings and bike connections across Aurora and to key destinations on the corridor.

c) Leverage capital improvement projects to support public realm enhancements.

GOAL 1

Support a Thriving and Diverse Business Community



TOPIC FOCUS Economic development | Capacity building | Construction mitigation

BACKGROUND: North Aurora is home to a diverse mix of local and regional-serving businesses, including restaurants, retail, services, auto-oriented businesses, and light industry. Many businesses have been here for years and rely on both nearby customers and regional access.

THIS GOAL FOCUSES ON helping businesses stay, grow, and adapt as the corridor changes, with stronger organization, access, and support before, during, and after future construction.

> I would like to see car traffic flowing smoothly, with many opportunities to stop at restaurants and small businesses (in larger buildings, with apartments and condos above).
> –– Business Owner Survey
>
> I want to be able to go to a glass/mirror store, an Asian market, a Mexican restaurant and a tire store.
> -- Community Connections Pop-in Party

GOAL 3

Strategies and Example Actions

STRATEGY 3.1 Build business organization capacity and explore opportunities for public-private partnerships

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Convene businesses and property owners to identify shared needs and priorities.

b) Support small businesses to explore different business district organization models, such as a 501(c)(4) nonprofit, membership-based organizations, or a potential Business Improvement Area.

STRATEGY 3.2 Support businesses through corridor change and construction

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Maintain customer and business access before, during, and after corridor construction.

b) Develop construction mitigation strategies and identify resources to help small businesses manage construction impacts.

c) Maintain regular communication with businesses and prioritize outreach to businesses owned by Black, Indigenous, and people of color, and by immigrants and refugees.

STRATEGY 3.3 Support activation, reuse, and reinvestment in vacant buildings

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Explore opportunities to leverage publicly owned sites for community-serving commercial uses, business incubation, and arts and cultural uses.

GOAL 1

Build a Safe and Healthy North Aurora



TOPIC FOCUS Community safety | Capacity building

BACKGROUND: Communities along Aurora want to see better coordination around safety, cleanliness, and access to support services. Gaps in services contribute to safety challenges on the corridor, and increased relationships among residents, businesses, service providers, and community organizations can help to build long-term capacity and accountability for a safer and healthier North Aurora.

THIS GOAL FOCUSES ON strengthening City and community partnerships, connecting local resources and services, and identifying actions to invest in long-term safety and health on the corridor.

> [In the future] more kids playing, families, sense of home. -- Mary Pilgrim Inn Emergency Shelter
>
> What I want to do [that I can't do today] is to be able send my child to a bus stop on Aurora Ave by himself and feel that he can do it safely. –– Community Connection Pop-in Party

GOAL 4

Strategies and Example Actions

STRATEGY 4.1

Develop a strategic plan to enhance community safety and identify needed resources.

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Convene key partners, including social service agencies, schools, residents, businesses, and community organizations, to identify shared safety priorities and develop coordinated strategies.

b) Improve community safety data sharing among City departments and community partners.

c) Support specific safety initiatives, such as the Safe Passage Program and Safe Access to School.

STRATEGY 4.2

Strengthen community health and local services support networks

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Support social service organizations in expanding capacity, including behavioral health services.

b) Connect and build on existing resources and service providers to strengthen local support and referral networks.

STRATEGY 4.3

Maintain ongoing communication, stewardship, and accountability

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Maintain centralized communication hubs and corridor information points, potentially using an on-corridor storefront.

b) Partner with community and service organizations on safety, maintenance, and stewardship of public spaces.

GOAL 1

Grow Green Spaces and Places for Community



TOPIC FOCUS Placemaking | Access to green spaces | Climate mitigation and adaptation

BACKGROUND: Community engagement shows a strong desire for more trees, parks, green spaces, and places to gather throughout North Aurora. People also want public spaces that feel more welcoming and reflect the identity of the community.

THIS GOAL FOCUSES ON expanding access to green and gathering spaces, strengthening North Aurora's sense of place, and integrating climate and stormwater improvements into streets and public spaces.

> More trees. This place is a furnace in the summer. –– Online Survey
>
> More community gatherings, doing things together, block parties. –– Downtown Emergency Service Center Permanent Supportive Housing

GOAL 5

Strategies and Example Actions

STRATEGY 5.1 Expand access to green spaces and natural areas

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Expand tree canopy and planting along streets and through future capital improvements.

b) Advance climate resilience through shade, heat mitigation, and utility investments to reduce flooding through SPU projects.

c) Enhance biodiversity in existing natural and cultural assets, including Licton Springs and Washelli.

d) Capitalize on stormwater management improvements by integrating them with parks, streets, and public spaces.

STRATEGY 5.2 Enhance North Aurora's sense of place

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Develop a corridor-wide public art and placemaking plan.

b) Build an Activate Aurora program, expanding opportunities for community-led placemaking that strengthens North Aurora's identity through events and public realm improvements.

c) Build on existing public art efforts, both temporary and long-term.

d) Leverage the City's One Percent for Art program through SDOT and SPU capital projects.

STRATEGY 5.3 Create more places for community gathering and everyday activity

EXAMPLE ACTIONS

a) Identify opportunities for new indoor and outdoor community gathering spaces through community-based planning and design.

b) Use public property and other opportunity sites for parks, plazas, indoor and outdoor recreation, or community gathering spaces.

c) Support temporary and flexible activation of underused spaces for community events and everyday activities.

What We're Working On Now

Based on early community feedback, we've identified actions we can take now to start working towards these big goals, including:

1 Goal 1: Design Land Use and Policy for Equitable Development

- Studying **zoning changes** and developing accompanying **anti-displacement and community investment** strategies.

2 Goal 2: Create Active Streets and Interconnected Neighborhoods

- Implementing Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) **Vision Zero projects**, improving crossings and other near-term safety interventions at key intersections on the corridor.

3 Goal 3: Support a Thriving and Diverse Business Community

- Working alongside and **providing technical assistance to North Aurora businesses** as they explore development of a business organization.

4 Goal 4: Build a Safe and Healthy North Aurora

- Hiring an outside **community safety convener** who will bring together key stakeholders to help build community capacity to support safety across North Aurora neighborhoods and guide the development of the community safety chapter.
- Supporting **security and placemaking improvements** at Aurora Commons.

5 Goal 5: Grow Green Spaces and Places for Community

- Supporting small business owners with **murals and façade improvements** in the Aurora-Licton stretch of the corridor.
- Developing small grants for community art, placemaking, and events that neighborhood groups, neighbors, and small businesses can use to carry out activities to **Activate Aurora** in 2027.

Next Steps

The goals, emerging strategies, and example actions are an early framework for more community conversations. We will explore and refine them over the next year as the North Aurora Community Action Plan develops.

Project Timeline

1

Spring and summer 2026

Connect, Share, Vision

- connect with residents, businesses, and community organizations
- explore data, stories, and trends
- identify opportunities and challenges
- identify planning goals

2

Fall 2026

Explore Ideas and Strategies

WE ARE HERE

- develop planning concepts and evaluate alternatives
- explore strategies and tools with community and agency partners

3

Winter and spring 2027

Draft Plan

- start early-win opportunities
- vet and refine key strategies and implementation with community and agency partners
- share the draft plan with the community for feedback

4

Mid- to late 2027

Final Plan and Implementation

- prioritize strategies and actions
- use the community plan as the basis for implementation

Stay Connected

Project web page
seattle.gov/planning-and-community-development/north-aurora-community-action-plan

To request this document in an alternate format or language, contact Anneka Olson, Community Planner, at anneka.olson@seattle.gov or (206) 684-8347.

Scan for the project Website

