

North Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan Update

Themes from March 28th Workshop & Ongoing Outreach

The overall themes are intended to reflect the community's aspirations for the future of their community as expressed in the March 28th workshop and at ongoing outreach meetings. They do not replace existing Neighborhood Plan Goals and Policies. They provide update guidance for the plan leading to the development of additional Goals and Policies, and recommended strategies.

Carry Forward the Neighborhood Plan

Value of Plan & Matrix

- Many people have little knowledge of the neighborhood plan and its relation to neighborhood projects
- Some people thought that the neighborhood plan and the implementation matrix are valuable
- People thought it's worth being flexible in the neighborhood plan
- The neighborhood plan:
 - needs overarching goals as well as specifics
 - could better present priorities, and include a timeline with annotations that indicate what has been accomplished and what has not
- A new format for the neighborhood plan implementation matrix is worth investigating
- Continue the two focuses of the plan – the urban village and Jefferson Park
- Strong neighborhood advocacy has been successful for getting projects done!

Outreach / Involvement

- Not much public notice of this first planning effort
- More planning efforts and greater outreach is needed
- Documents are in English only, they need to be translated
- Rethink the boundaries of the urban village
- Need a central repository and clearing house of neighborhood plan information
- Need to see some coordination between adjacent neighborhoods (such as North Rainier)
- Connect the kids at Franklin High School who are involved with the Beacon Hill planning efforts
- North Beacon is left out of planning (1/2 of the people participating are not on the map)
- South Beacon areas are missing too – not everyone feels included in the plan

Build on the Existing Neighborhood Character & Amenities to Foster a vibrant commercial district

Build on Existing Character and Conditions.

- Historic homes
- Proximity to downtown
- Views
- Celebrate diversity of neighborhood
- Public space
- Residential feel
- Houses converted to business use are nice and keep with the community character
- Lack of chain stores
- Keep businesses coming up to Beacon Hill and support them

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- Art and institutions should be reflective of all Latino cultures in area (Mexican, Salvadorean, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Guatemalan, etc)
- New comers may want to change the character of Beacon Hill – like happened in West Seattle

Create improvements to make the commercial core more inviting.

- A strong connection and better streetscape design should connect the neighborhood center (station area) with Jefferson Park and community center.
- Provide small rest spots - play areas, water features and benches to take breaks while walking
- Start a Beacon Hill Merchants Association
- Start a Business Improvement District to work on clean up and public safety
- Expand Beacon Avenue Boulevard to North Beacon Hill (Rizal Bridge); add bike path
- Need pedestrian-scale street lighting, furnishings, banners and flower pots to celebrate and beautify the neighborhood
- Improve cleanliness and maintenance of shops, streets and sidewalks
- Enjoy coffee outside – opportunities for sidewalk cafes
- Public viewing space (like an observation tower) in Beacon Hill near the Light Rail Station – big city wide draw
- Create a cultural draw at the Light Rail station – perhaps a theatre, meeting space, or children’s theatre
- Add green – good trees
- Full street closure at S Lander St and enhance a plaza area in that space

Expand the mix of generally small-scale businesses

- Retain and invest in the local, small, immigrant owned businesses that serve all the different ethnicities on Beacon Hill. We love this neighborhood. It’s affordable and has character
- Keep money in community. Ideally the business owner would be from the neighborhood
- Mexican bakery/kiosks/fast ethnic food stores (locally owned)
- Create a retail core – build out from there
- Walkable, with good mix of stores serving neighborhood needs
- Move Sears to Beacon Hill (maybe not as big as Sears to keep neighborhood scale) so you don’t have to leave neighborhood to get goods (like clothing, hardware, etc.)
- Need more choices for grocery shopping around transit station
- Small industrial business
- Make people aware of subsidies to help small businesses as rents rise
- Use empty storefronts to exhibit art (like in Columbia City)
- Pizza place, shoe repair, pharmacy, movie theater, etc.
- “Bike Station” next to Light Rail station to store, rent and repair bikes
- Legal clinic to assist with immigration issues
- Need farmer’s market (possibly on S Lander Festival St.)
- Need a critical mass of people to support desired shops, services and entertainment
- Support small businesses in homes
- Health clinic – for easy walk-in treatment (Odessa Brown and SeaMar are too far away)
- Develop method for exchanging home grown crops with local businesses
- Do not redevelop like shown on the inside spread of Beacon Hill Charette document
- Market arcade as a place for small & culturally diverse local businesses

Job Opportunities

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- Create more job opportunities to allow propels to work here
- Support local small business with employment opportunities
- Create jobs that are accessible - jobs that teens are capable of and reachable for teens in the community.
- Opportunity for job training in area

Engage the Community in Exploring Development Options & Opportunities

- Educate the community about how zoning tools can be used to bring desired amenities such as affordable housing, open space and sustainability
- Explain zoning possibilities in a context where development hasn't been built out to current zoning
- Focus on context and desired character to identify the right type of development
- Stress pedestrian-oriented "Main Street" design/development standards
- Link Beacon Hill with other commercial areas to create a hierarchy including:
 - A focus of density and intensity at the station area (central business core);
 - Along the "Main Street" corridor (along Beacon);
 - Around parks/open space;
 - The intersection of Alaska & Columbian Way; and
 - North Rainer
- Allow discrete changes only in single family areas (allow cottage housing/Accessory Dwelling Units/ or allowing multiple units in buildings that look like single family homes or flexible housing that can change with occupant needs; avoid dramatic changes in character)
- Hope for not too high development to maintain community character without high rises
- Create good transitions, higher at corridor/nodes/near parks & open space – step down to surrounding areas of lower intensity
- Create flexible zoning to allow 1st floor to be either residential or commercial – so that there is no vacancy and to allow for different economic times, growth of city

Consider Options for El Centro Development

- El Centro and the S. Lander Festival St. is the heart and soul of the neighborhood
- El Centro is an icon – historic building
- Include El Centro in Station Area Overlay and include El Centro in any rezone efforts
- El Centro housing development should contain indoor parking and store fronts at street level and should include a kiosk and a fountain and a Latin American food market
- Change zoning to allow for El Centro's development of its southern edge to include underground parking, street level businesses, and multi-use affordable housing for low income, workforce families and seniors
- El Centro's housing development should include community performance and gathering space
- Include sustainable features

Improve Park Programming and Facilities

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- Open space, parks and recreational places tend to be Eurocentric - need to have more multicultural parks and open spaces to meet community needs
- Need more culturally aware park design and features to provide a place for Chinese people (Members of the Chinese community liked Hing Hay park in the International District)
- Print material in other languages or have a Bilingual staff at the community center
- Add a community center with space for cultural events, dances (Jefferson community center is too small and is always in use, also is very expensive)
- Improve and expand the children's park at El Centro de la Raza
- Park, recreation, open space needed as part of urban village development
- City-block size parks within walking distance
- Need small pocket parks scattered throughout neighborhood. Green open space with lawn and trees in the core especially as density increases. Cool, comfortable and green places to hang out
- Promote little pockets of green, too, especially associated with part of new development
- Explore creation of observation tower to get to the views from top of Beacon Hill
- Develop park at Beacon Hill Elementary – more equipment for kids and adults to use
- Lack of kids' play areas
- Swimming pool
- Walking track or trail for adults to use for exercise
- Improve Rizal Park, named after the Philippine National Hero, Dr. Jose Rizal
- Create a theater/auditorium and/or children's theater
- Sponsor activities and events to get to know each other and understand the many cultures
- Improve the greenbelt

Promote Neighborhood Sustainability

- Create sustainability principles by neighborhood so we have a shared vision to guide development
- Sustainability must be incorporated into economic development
- Need to have sustainable services in the neighborhood to meet needs locally
- Would like to see more environmentally friendly practices in new development – particularly rainwater: permeable pavement, models like High Point
- Reuse old Seattle Post Intelligencer newspaper boxes to create community flower projects
- Take advantage of hilltop – possibly capture wind energy in new developments. Wind energy on El Centro?
- Support community gardening programs, (Jefferson Park?), and create raised bed gardens
- Locate houses near public transit, improve both the station area and the corridor
- Permeable pavement (brick treatment?), (Low Impact Development techniques)
- More educational opportunities on clean green aesthetic

Provide Affordable and Diverse Housing Options

- New construction is not affordable
- Rising housing costs are pushing people out
- Retrofit single-family homes into shared housing and provide assistance for those on fixed incomes to retrofit single family homes

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- Embrace the ethnic and cultural diversity of the community by promoting a mix of housing types that work for various cultures, especially multigenerational families, and affordabilities as the neighborhood undergoes changes with future growth and the light rail completion
- The greatest potential challenge is for people who are low-income, seniors, retired, and unemployed in Seattle
- Provide more affordable housing, especially for families
- Need flexible home ownership and living arrangements
- People on fixed income need help dealing with taxes and retrofits, especially energy conserving, like replacing single pane windows
- Ensure that current residents are able to continue to reside in the neighborhood without fearing that rents will force them out.
- Probably can't avoid higher density but single family houses contribute to safety and livability
- Need a homeless facility - history of the jungle as an encampment for the homeless -

Improve Walking, Biking & Transit Connections

Improve transit connections and service to light rail station.

- Bus service is being cut when light rail starts
- Implement a circulator service to improve links and discourage park & ride in neighborhood
- More buses on Route 36 & 60
- Increase transportation between Central Area, South Park, White Center, and West Seattle
- We will use light rail. We also want to maintain Metro bus route 36.
- Metro needs to create more east/west bus connections and small busses that serve the local community and nearby areas
 - Transferable passes between modes
 - Day pass (universal – all modes, bus, ferry, LRT, streetcar). Could be higher price. Especially good for tourism.

Expand pedestrian and bike access

- Connect to Mountain to Sound trail
- Extend bike paths and coordinate all bike lanes/paths and their connections
- Create pedestrian access to SODO and Rainier Valley
- Need to see more bike infrastructure with new development (and even before hand)
- Neighborhood wants more dedicated bike lanes
- If no parking on Beacon Ave S, could convert to dedicated bike lane instead of sharrows

Improve the walking experience.

- Enhance pedestrian vitality through streetscape improvements and identity through streetlights/sidewalks, overhead weather protection and other amenities
- Make Beacon Ave a "complete street"
- Sidewalks must meet universal design standards – smooth, grade-separated (curb), wide, clear, free of obstructions, land-side edge of sidewalk should be well-defined
- Clean, light and maintain stairways, move trees, reclaim greenbelt, provide safe pedestrian access to SODO
- Need a zebra-crossing outside Beacon Tower i.e. at Massachusetts St.

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- Adjusted pedestrian signal timing to accommodate pedestrians with walkers and wheelchairs
- Bus shelters take up too much of the sidewalk – like the ones with an awning & leaning bar like at Benaroya Hall
- Signage needs to be clear and understandable to non English speakers and in Braille
- Provide benches and safe marked crosswalks for seniors

Acknowledge driving and address parking

- Zip Car Station all over in key locations
- Electric car charging
- Need less surface parking lots: off-street parking lots deter from walkable community – it creates dead space and should be located behind buildings, not in front
- Station area needs a more sophisticated/realistic approach to parking management to:
 - Better manage (not just restrict) available public on-street parking resources
 - Ensure availability of parking for customers, as well as residents
 - Allow for shared parking where available (for example: El Centro)
 - Identify opportunities for strategic reservoirs of parking to support the station area businesses, residents and commuters (look to Boulder, CO for examples of parking management strategies and parking facilities)
 - Could there be a public parking use in private development? Negotiated with height increases is a possibility – shared parking options
 - Station Area Overlay (Zoning Code) prohibits principal use, long-term parking facilities
 - What if metered parking for business district?

Restricted Parking Permits

- Do we have to pay for RPZ permits?
- Should be RPZ in the neighborhood to protect on-street parking for resident's and businesses
- Many single-family homes only have on-street parking will have to pay but will they have a space?

Increase Neighborhood Safety

- Public Safety very important - gangs, drugs and thugs. Graffiti not good – garbage, prostitution violence in bathrooms next to playground and school (Beacon Hill) and never any full resolution of the issue. Not enough enforcement. GANGS, carjacking, burglaries and robberies
- Why can't there be a SPD storefront station like at 23rd & Union?
- Street lighting – start with arterials, extend
- Safety in Light Rail Station
- On-going sexual harassment on bus route 36 makes bus particularly unsafe for young girls – one participant purchased car for daughter rather than let her ride the bus
- Neighborhood needs to be safely accessible, 24/7
- Alcohol impact area should be extended to Beacon Hill – Beacon Hill is the closest area to downtown for alcohol access
- Safety: more community officers – not full patrol (intimidating)
- There is crime at S Massachusetts St & 14th Ave S. Grandson had backpack taken at bus stop south of Red Apple
- Take care of graffiti (makes people uncomfortable and makes area feel unsafe)