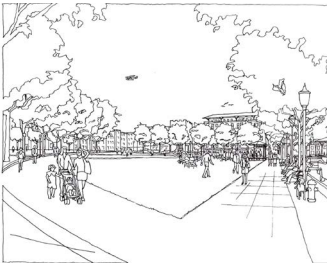
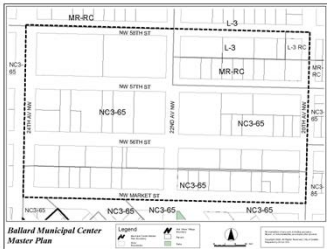


Ballard Municipal Center Neighborhood Design Guidelines



Revised 2013
Adopted 2001

City of Seattle
Department of Planning and Development

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Acknowledgments

The following groups were instrumental in preparing the original Ballard Municipal Center Neighborhood Design Guidelines in 2001.

BMC Master Plan Steering Committee
City of Seattle Executive Services Department
Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD)

Introduction

What are Neighborhood Design Guidelines?

Design guidelines are the primary tool used by Design Review Boards. These guidelines apply to development that is subject to design review as set forth at SMC 23.41.004 if it is located in the Ballard Municipal Center (BMC) Master Plan Boundary as reflected in Map 1 (page v). 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:

- Seattle Design Guidelines—applying citywide except for downtown; and
- Neighborhood design guidelines—applying to a specific geographically-defined area, usually within a neighborhood urban village or center.

Once a set of neighborhood guidelines is adopted by City Council, they are used in tandem with citywide guidelines for the review of all projects within that neighborhood that fall within the scope of the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) section 23.41.004. Not all neighborhoods within the city have neighborhood-specific guidelines, but for those that do, both sets of guidelines—citywide and neighborhood—are consulted by the Boards, with the neighborhood guidelines superseding the citywide ones in the event of a conflict between the two. Neighborhood 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 specific neighborhood.

As of November 2013, there were nineteen sets of neighborhood design guidelines, each following the same organization and numbering system of the City's original citywide guidelines entitled Design Review: Guidelines for Multi-family and Commercial Development that were adopted in 1993.

These guidelines reveal the character of the Ballard 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 Seattle Design Guidelines, can increase overall awareness of design priorities and encourage involvement in the design review process.

Revised Neighborhood Design Guidelines

The Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan Area Design Guidelines (Ballard Design Guidelines) were developed by community members and design consultants, and adopted in 2001. In 2013, the City adopted new, updated guidelines entitled Seattle Design Guidelines to replace the citywide guidelines that had been in effect since the inception of the Design Review Program in 1993.

Because the Seattle Design Guidelines uses a different organizational and numbering system than the original guidelines, DPD has revised each set of neighborhood guidelines to match the Seattle Design Guidelines in format, organization, and numbering system. The revised neighborhood design guidelines will help Board members, applicants, staff, and the public better correlate neighborhood guidelines with the updated Seattle Design Guidelines.

Guidelines at a Glance

The Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan Area Design Guidelines apply to development that is subject to design review as set forth at SMC 23.41.004 if it is located in the BMC Master Plan Area Boundary as reflected in Map 1 (page v). These guidelines augment the Seattle Design Guidelines adopted in 2013. The list below correlates the guidelines by subject matter and shows which Seattle Design Guidelines are augmented by the Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan Area Design Guidelines. A “yes” indicates supplemental guidance is provided; a “no” indicates that the citywide guideline is sufficient. Note that the numbering system of the Seattle Design Guidelines is different from the original numbering applied to the Ballard guidelines in 2001.

Context and Site

CS1. Natural Systems and Site Features	no
CS2. Urban Pattern and Form	yes
Site Context	
Responding To Site Characteristics (former A-1)	
Streetscape Compatibility (former A-2)	
Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility (former B-1)	
CS3. Architectural Context and Character	no

Public Life

PL1. Connectivity	no
PL2. Walkability	yes
Entrances Visible From the Street (former A-3)	
Human Activity (former A-4)	
Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances (former D-1)	
PL3. Street-Level Interaction	yes
Transition Between Residence and Street (former A-6)	
PL4. Active Transportation	no

Design Concept

DC1. Project Uses and Activities	yes
Parking and Vehicle Access (former A-8)	
Blank Walls (former D-2)	
Visual Impacts of Parking Structures (former D-5)	
Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities and Services (former D-6)	
DC2. Architectural Concept	yes
Architectural Context (former C-2)	
DC3. Open Space Concept	no
DC4. Exterior Elements and Finishes	yes
Exterior Finish Materials (former C-4)	

Context and Priority Issues: Ballard Design Guidelines

Note: The Ballard Design Guidelines were written in 2001; some of the context may have changed (i.e. the library and service center was constructed in 2005).

The Ballard Municipal Center Mission

The Ballard Municipal Center (BMC) is the priority element that emerged from the Ballard/Crown Hill Neighborhood Plan. The BMC is intended to facilitate a healthy, vibrant urban core. It would bring together well-used public services, a new library, an urban park, retail and new midrise residential units into a “center piece” venue that would be pleasant to visit and easy to access.

Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan Area Design Guidelines

Purpose: The BMC Master Plan identifies potential sites for a new public park, neighborhood library, and city service center and establishes design criteria and guidelines for the development of a six block area in the heart of Ballard (see Map 1).

Goals: Create critically needed open space, increase the supply of housing, improve access to city services, spur economic development in the core of the hub urban village, and provide a focal point for transportation improvements.

Plan Area: This plan covers an area of approximately 30 acres - ten acres of which include existing streets and land planned to be in public ownership in the near future (for the park, library and neighborhood service center). The area extends from 20th Avenue NW to 24th Avenue NW and from NW 56th Street to NW 58th Street, including abutting properties. Currently, the area is primarily zoned Neighborhood Commercial with a 65 foot height limit (NC-65'), which calls for mixed use (commercial/residential) development.

BMC Design Guidelines

The [Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan Design Guidelines](#) are intended to be a catalyst to encourage high quality public and private development in the core of the urban village. In order to articulate the desired mix of civic character and vibrant, pedestrian-oriented mixed use/residential development, the community evaluated the citywide design guidelines to determine whether the guidelines supported the Master Plan’s design criteria for new development. The existing citywide design guidelines were found to be generally appropriate; however, neighborhood-specific guidelines have been added to address particular master plan-related siting and design issues.

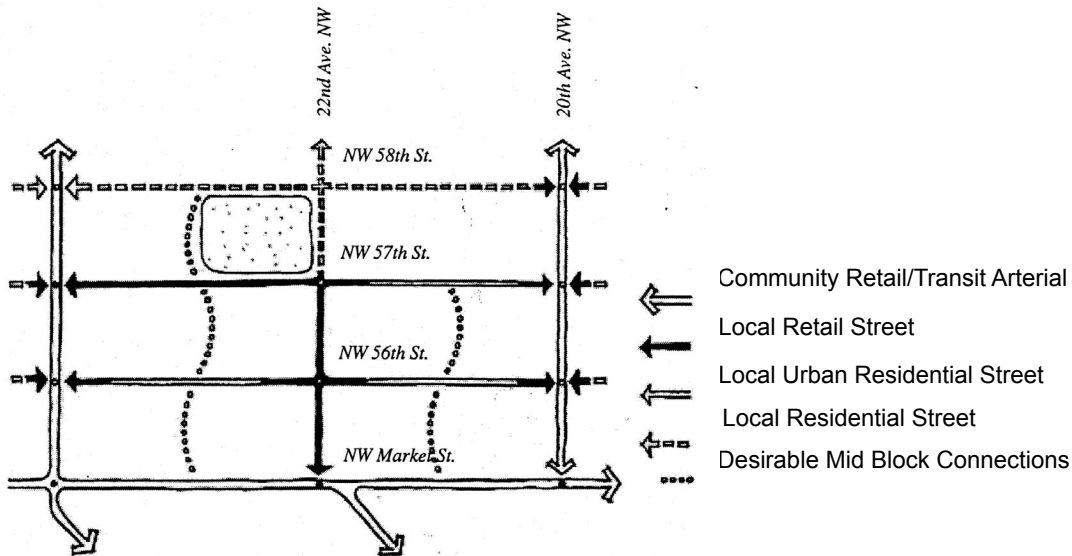
The overriding objective of the citywide design guidelines is to encourage new development to fit in with its surroundings. Neighborhood guidelines, such as the BMC Master Plan Area Design Guidelines, share this objective. Whereas Citywide guidelines are meant to apply throughout the City, neighborhood guidelines provide a more focused opportunity to recognize local concerns and design issues. The Ballard neighborhood identified several design issues - both general and specific to site conditions (e.g. adjacency to the park, mixed use development on North-South avenues, etc.) – to which new development should respond. These have been incorporated into the [Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan Area Design Guidelines](#) and serve as augmenting guidelines to supplement the citywide design guidelines for projects subject to design review.

Master Plan Elements and Guidelines

The guidelines are organized into three elements: the park, streets, and buildings. The building element describes appropriate siting and design principles for distinct areas within the master plan area by augmenting applicable citywide design guidelines and identifying potential departures from development standards. However, an understanding of the other two elements (park and streets) is important to new development, as they contribute greatly to overall context to which new buildings should respond. Therefore, project proponents should carefully study both the master plan and citywide design guidelines documents when developing in the BMC Master Plan area.

Park: A new park is the centerpiece of this vision. In general, the park should be characterized by a broad lawn for public gatherings and linked to the surrounding neighborhoods by pedestrian friendly sidewalks. A distinctive civic character is an important neighborhood goal, and the plan envisions a co-located new library and neighborhood service center on 22nd Avenue NW, either directly south or southeast of the park.

Streets (Public Right-of-Way): A clearly identifiable and consistent streetscape will help extend the park to the surrounding neighborhoods. Clear connections between the park, library, Market Street and the surrounding neighborhood is a key master plan objective. In addition to streetscape continuity, mid-block pedestrian connections are desired to break up the long East-West blocks between 20th and 24th Avenues NW.



A framework for flexible application of the design elements is intended to encourage different types of high quality development yet maintain the right amount of continuity. The master plan streetscape recommendations have been formalized as the “Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan Street Improvement Design Standards”. These include specific paving, lighting, and other sidewalk and streetscape standards with which new development shall comply. As a set of standards separate and distinct from the BMC Master Plan Area Design Guidelines, the proposed street improvements are not intended to provide design guidance to new development through the Design Review process. Rather, implementation of the Street Improvement Design Standards would occur at a different stage of the Master Use Permit review process.

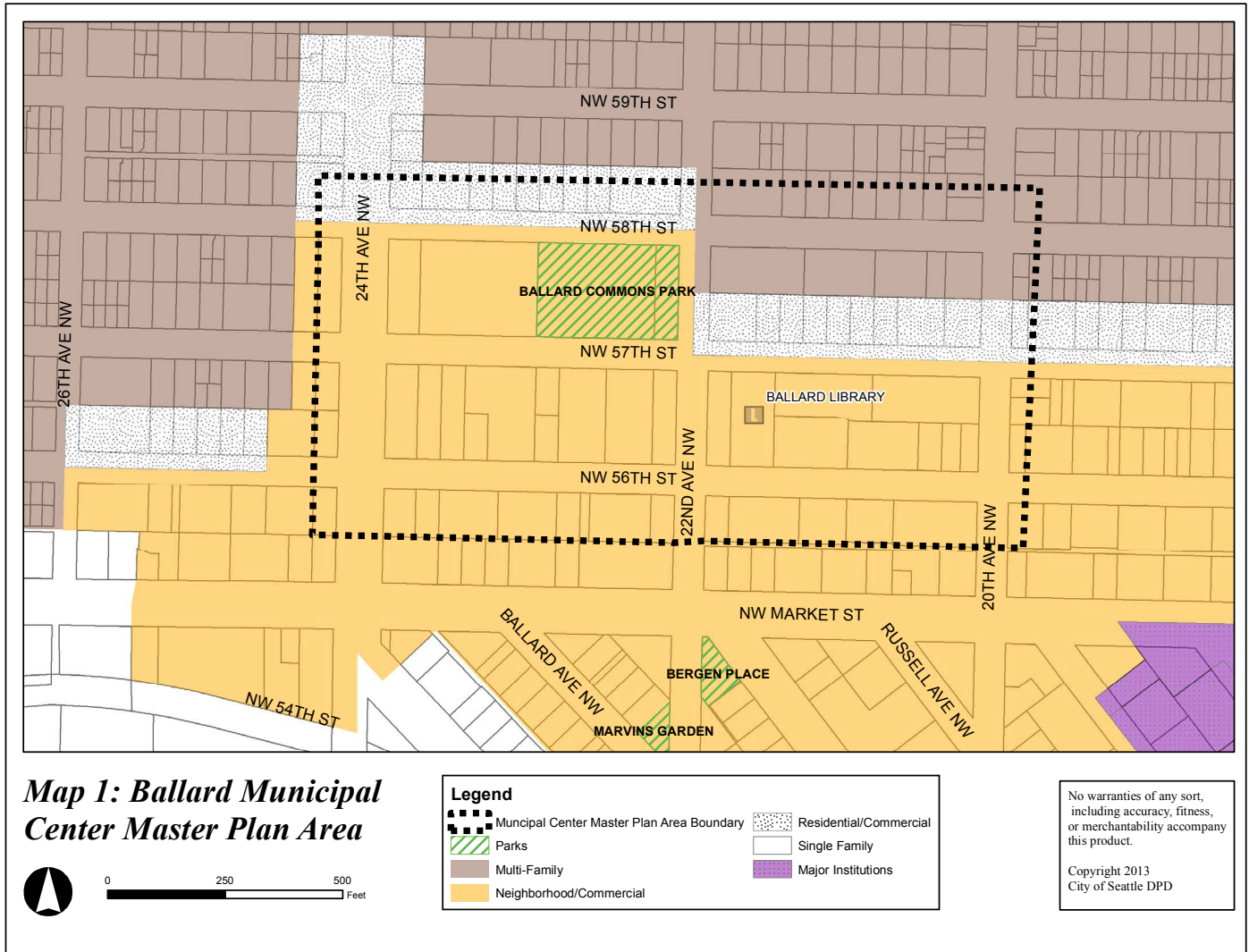
Note: The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is responsible for permitting all work in Seattle’s rights-of-way (ROW). For information about ROW permitting and Seattle’s street improvements and standards, consult SDOTs Street Use division page at http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse_home.htm.

Buildings: The design guidelines will guide the development of attractive and high quality new commercial, mixed use and residential buildings that clearly define the public street spaces, maximize solar access to the street/park and provide a delightful and vibrant pedestrian environment. The BMC Master Plan Design Guidelines emphasizes unique design guidance for five distinct areas:

- Developments surrounding the park
- Institutional developments
- Mixed-use developments on 20th, 22nd and 24th Avenues NW
- Mixed-use/residential developments located mid-block on NW 56th, 57th and 58th Street.
- Single-use residential developments on NW 58th Street.

Design departures from development standards to help meet the BMC Master Plan Design Guidelines’ goals and objectives related to new development, as set forth at SMC 23.41.012, are identified in applicable design guidelines. For example, these departures include: an additional level in building height in exchange for providing townhouse style units at street level abutting the park, and a reduction in open space requirements when a mid-block pedestrian connection is provided.

Uses: In addition to the new library and neighborhood service center, the Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan Area Design Guidelines also proposes that townhouses, with retail behind and parking below, are the most appropriate development directly fronting the park to the west. A mix of residential, commercial, cultural and civic uses is desired. Residential developments that provide units with direct access to the public street are preferred since they help enliven the street environment. Overall, the area is intended to have a civic quality while accommodating a variety of uses and activities giving the area a vitality 24 hours a day.



Note: The Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan Area Design Guidelines apply to development that is subject to design review as set forth at SMC 23.41.004 if it is located in the BMC Master Plan Area Boundary. Additionally, zoning areas shown on this map are for general reference only. For confirmation of a specific property's zoning, contact the Department of Planning and Development.

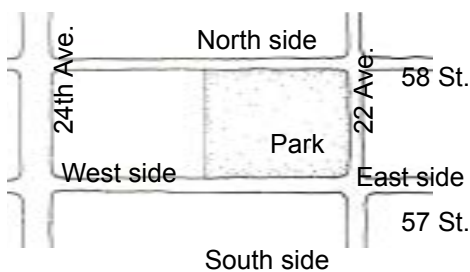
Ballard Municipal Center
Master Plan Area
Design Guidelines
2013

CS2

Urban Pattern and Form

Citywide Guideline:

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



Ballard Supplemental Guidance

Context

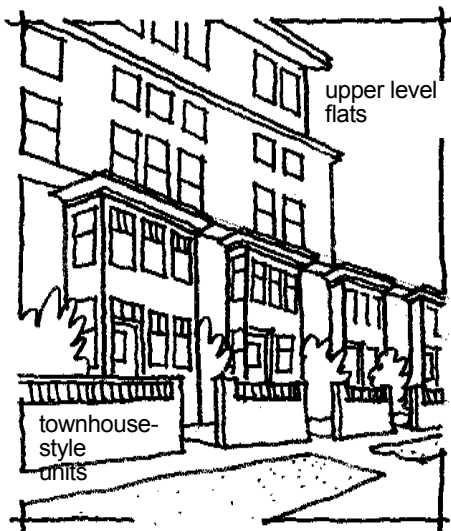
The [Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan Area Design Guidelines](#) envision a civic district and identifies sites for a park, library, Neighborhood Service Center and potential senior center in Ballard's core urban village area. These elements are envisioned to comprise a new 'center' for the community. A new park is the centerpiece of this vision, characterized by a broad lawn for public gatherings and linked to the surrounding neighborhoods by pedestrian-oriented streetscapes.

A co-located new library and Neighborhood Service Center on 22nd Ave. NW, either directly south or southeast of the park, is planned. New mid-rise residential units and retail space adjacent to the park will add to the vitality of the master plan area. In general, the plan proposes a mix of residential, mixed use, commercial, cultural and civic uses.

I. Responding to Site Characteristics

Development Surrounding The Park

- i. **West, North, and East Sides of the Park:** Buildings are encouraged to create a consistent two-story street wall with ground related entries. Development above the base should be set back and/or modulated to increase solar exposure to the street and other public places.
- ii. **South Side of the Park:** Cultural and civic uses are planned in this area. However, if mixed use development occurs, a consistent street wall with a two-story minimum base is encouraged. Development should be set back above the two-story height and/or modulated in a manner that enhances solar exposure to the park.



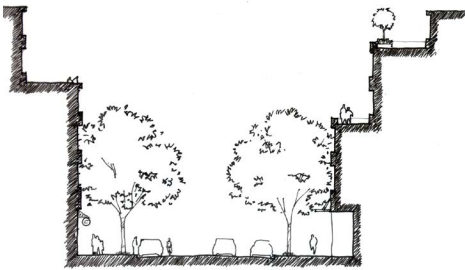
A maximum 10-foot setback to allow for the desired transition from townhouse units to the public right-of-way is encouraged.

II. Streetscape Compatibility

Development Surrounding The Park

- i. **West, North and East sides of the Park:** Townhouse style design is appropriate at street level adjacent to the park. Residential developments that provide units that directly access the public right-of-way are preferred since they help enliven the street environment. Sidewalk-related spaces should appear safe and welcoming.
- ii. **South Side of the Park:** If mixed use development occurs around the park, it is desirable to provide active storefronts along the entire south edge of NW 57th Street, west of 22nd Avenue NW, and a consistent street wall with a two story minimum height.
- iii. **Mixed Use and Residential on East--West Streets:** Buildings should maintain a consistent street wall up to a minimum of two story development and provide a setback(s), particularly on the south side of the street, beyond three stories to enhance solar access to the street and avoid a 'canyon'. Deviations from the consistent street wall should be allowed for public usable open spaces.

Where appropriate, mid-block pedestrian connections are strongly encouraged. The Design Review Board may consider a departure as set forth at SMC 23.41.012 to reduce open space requirements in exchange for a mid-block pedestrian connection. Such spaces shall be sited and designed in a manner that are clearly public in nature and engaging to pedestrians.



Building developments should set back above a consistent street wall to allow sunlight in.

III. Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility

Development Surrounding The Park

- i. **West, North and East sides of the Park:** In general, the overall development massing should maximize the solar access to the park through careful massing arrangement of the upper levels, set back above a two story base containing townhouse style units.
- ii. **South Sides:** Civic and cultural uses are anticipated to be developed along the south edge of the park. However, if mixed use development does occur, it should provide a consistent street wall with a two-story minimum height. Development should be set back above the two story height and/or modulate the facade to enhance solar exposure to the park.
 - a. **Townhouse/Retail-related Departures:** *In providing solar access through design treatments such as significant modulation and setbacks above townhouse units, the Design Review Board may consider allowing an additional floor level (not to exceed 9 ft.) in height.*
 - b. *If retail and/or townhouse units are placed along the mid-block connection with active facades and identifiable entries, the Board may consider an additional floor level (not to exceed 9 ft.) in height (provided that the additional height is set back and does not dimin-*

ish solar access to the park).

- iii. Mixed Use Development on North-South Avenues:** Buildings should maintain a consistent street wall up to a minimum of two stories and provide a setback(s), particularly on the west side of the avenue, beyond three stories to enhance solar access to the street and avoid a canyon effect.
- iv. Mixed Use and Residential Development on East-West Streets:** Same as above, except with setbacks particularly on the south side of the street beyond three stories to enhance solar access to the street. Buildings should provide façade modulations that break down the scale of larger developments to recall the underlying original 50' parcel widths.
 - a. The Board may consider exceptions of up to 10 ft. from the recommended consistent street wall for public usable open space. Design should provide facade modulation that breaks down the scale of larger development to recall the underlying original 50 ft. parcel width.*

PL2

Walkability

Citywide Guideline:

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

Ballard Supplemental Guidance

I. Entrances Visible from the Street Development Surrounding the Park

- i. **West side:** Access to the front doors of townhouse residences should be provided via a paved and well lit pedestrian connection.

The non-residential development west of the park should provide at least two separate retail entrances on 24th Avenue NW. Residential access (both vehicular and pedestrian) is most appropriate on NW 58th Street.

- ii. **Streets**

The mid block pedestrian connection should foster social contact in a safe environment. New development is highly encouraged to front retail and/or townhouse style units on the mid block connection at street level. To further promote vitality and safety in the pedestrian experience, entries to retail and townhouse units should be placed in an identifiable and engaging manner.

As implied in the discussion above, this type of development includes a mix of uses within close proximity of one another. As a result, walking is promoted and therefore if retail or townhouse style development is provided to the satisfaction of the Design Review Board, a design departure, as set forth at SMC 23.41.012, to allow for an exemption (similar to a Pedestrian Zone designation) to the parking requirement for the mid block fronting retail use(s) may be considered. Also, if townhouse style development is provided at the street level, an additional floor level in height may be considered as a departure by the Board, as set forth at SMC 23.41.012,B.16b. This additional floor area is meant to encourage human scale, ground-related units at street level, which typically results in less density.

II. Human Activity

- i. **Development Surrounding the Park**

South sides: Setbacks from the property line should be allowed up to ten feet consistent with pedestrian zoning requirements for

outdoor activity.

ii. Mixed Use Development on Avenues

Commercial uses are encouraged to set back in order to provide opportunities for pedestrian activities where appropriate.

III. Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances

The Master Plan places particular emphasis on connecting development-related pedestrian activity to the street and clearly defining public space.

- i. New development is encouraged to contribute to a mid-block, north-south connection system for pedestrians. Active, pedestrian-oriented commercial design and/or ground related townhouse units are encouraged to extend from the street facing facade and front the pedestrian connection path, thereby contributing visual interest and more opportunity for social contact.

Considerations

Open commercial facades that encourage pedestrians to look into the building interior; configure retail space to attract tenants with activity that will spill out onto the sidewalk; street front open space that features artwork, street furniture, and landscaping; and multiple building entries.

A reduction in a development's open space or lot coverage requirement may be granted, as set forth at SMC 23.41.012, in return for landscape and hardscape treatment that provides and/or enhances the pedestrian connection.

ii. Mixed Use Development

Continuous overhead weather protecting canopies are encouraged on buildings adjacent to the sidewalk. Transparent or translucent canopies along the length of the street provide welcome weather protection, define the pedestrian realm, and reduce the scale of taller buildings.

Considerations

Overhead weather protection should be designed with consideration given to :

- a. the overall architectural concept of the building;
- b. uses occurring in the building (entries, commercial space) or adjacent environment (bus stops);
- c. continuity with weather protection provided on nearby buildings;
- d. the scale of the space defined by the height and depth of the weather protection; and
- e. when opaque material is used, the illumination of the underside.

The Design Review Board may consider relaxing setback requirements for Pedestrian Zones at street corners, as set forth at SMC 23.41.012, in exchange for providing generous, usable open space or well-designed indoor/outdoor retail-lined spaces.

PL3

Street-Level Interaction

Citywide Guideline:

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

Ballard Supplemental Guidance

I. Transition Between Residence and Street

- i. **West side of the park:** For residential units with direct access to the street, a ten foot landscaped setback or pedestrian walkway immediately adjacent to the park property edge is recommended with a low landscaped fence or low hedge to help define the relationship between the property and the park edge.
- ii. **North and East sides:** New development should provide a landscaped fence or low, dense hedge to help define the street edge. No more than a ten foot setback to provide an effective transition between townhouse units and the public realm is desirable.

In general, the landscaped setback from the park to the building edge should be integrated as an extension of the mid-block pedestrian connection system.

II. Single Use Residential

Townhouse or other residential developments that have direct unit entrances on the sidewalk are encouraged. New development should mark the property line with a landscaped fence or low hedge planting to enhance the continuity of the street.

DC1

Project Uses and Activities

Citywide Guideline:

Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

Ballard Supplemental Guidance

I. Parking and Vehicle Access

- i. In Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zones, vehicular entrances are discouraged on the avenues. When absolutely necessary, they should be limited to right turn ingress and egress only.
- ii. Vehicular access to sites is most appropriate along NW 56th, 57th, and 58th Streets. Commercial vehicular access is most appropriate on NW 56th and/or NW 57th Streets.
- iii. New at-grade parking areas should minimize exposure to the street edge. At-grade parking areas and driveways are discouraged directly adjacent to the park.
- iv. Where curbcuts are provided, the number and width should be minimized.

II. Blank Walls

Development Surrounding the Park

Active, open, interesting building facades are strongly encouraged, particularly on sites adjacent to the park.

III. Visual Impacts of Parking Structures

- i. When surface parking and/or first level parking adjacent to the park is unavoidable, it should be concealed in an attractive manner through the use of screening devices such as landscaping (e.g. low hedge), artwork, well executed fencing, walls, and use of site topography to provide a buffer between the parking area and the public realm.
- ii. New at-grade parking areas are discouraged directly adjacent to the park.

IV. Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities and Service Areas

Service areas, loading docks and refuse should be internal to the development or carefully screened, especially on sites directly adjacent to the park.

DC2

Architectural Concept

Citywide Guideline:

Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

Ballard Supplemental Guidance

I. Architectural Context

In general, the Master Plan intends to guide the development of attractive and high quality new commercial, mixed use and residential buildings that clearly define the public street spaces, maximize solar access to the street/park and provide a vibrant pedestrian environment.

- i. Institutional Development:** The design of institutional buildings should be distinguished from commercial and residential buildings by location on the site, materials and massing. A building with public uses should exhibit a civic presence through careful attention to its relationship with the public realm. A primary entrance, building form, and architectural elements should be designed and scaled to reflect the public activities contained within.

DC4

Exterior Elements and Finishes

Citywide Guideline:

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

Ballard Supplemental Guidance

I. Exterior Finish Materials

New development should exhibit craftsmanship through the use of durable, attractive materials. Building materials and interesting details found on older buildings on Market Street and the Ballard Avenue Landmark District should be considered.