



BALLARD REZONE AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Director's Report

4/29/2016



Executive Summary

The Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) is recommending rezones and amendments to Neighborhood Commercial development standards in the Ballard hub urban village. The proposals are based on the Ballard Urban Design and Transportation Framework (2016) and carry out key actions identified by OPCD and the community. The proposals are intended to ensure that new buildings better fit into the scale and character of Ballard and support the neighborhood's pedestrian environment.

Ballard is experiencing rapid growth and change. Business owners, community groups, and residents collaborated to form the Ballard Partnership for Smart Growth to provide new neighborhood leadership. Many people want to guide growth so that it is more in keeping with the character of Ballard's historic buildings and scale. The community has developed a shared vision that will help guide growth and provide the needed improvements to sustain a healthy community.

This proposal focuses on property within the Ballard Urban Village, making the following changes:

- Rezone parcels in specific locations from General Commercial (C1) to Neighborhood Commercial (NC3), in order to encourage commercial and mixed use development more in keeping with an active pedestrian environment.
- Expand the Pedestrian Overlay along several key streets.
- Add the "Residential Commercial" designation to existing lowrise multifamily residential properties along 14th Ave NW, to allow flexibility for small neighborhood-serving businesses.
- Apply new development standards to reduce the appearance of bulk throughout the urban village, with a particular emphasis on large development sites.

This report contains analysis of the proposed zoning changes and developed standards needed to implement elements of this vision.

Contents

A. Background

B. Public Engagement

C. Recent Growth

D. Planning Area and Guiding Principles

E. Urban Design Concept

1. A Healthy and Equitable Community
2. A Complete Community
3. Character Sub-areas

F. Relationship to the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA)

G. Proposal

1. Legislative Rezones

(i) Neighborhood Commercial 3 Zone

(ii) Pedestrian Zone Designation

(iii) Residential Commercial (RC) Zoning

2. Non-Conforming Uses and Structures

3. Area-Specific Neighborhood Commercial Development Standards in the Ballard Hub Urban Village

4. Summary of Recommendations

6. Design Guidelines

6. Streetscape Concept Plans

H. Conclusion

Appendix 1: Summary of Recent Actions and Investments in Ballard

Appendix 2: Rezone Analysis

A. BACKGROUND

In 2014, the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD), in partnership with the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and the Ballard Partnership for Smart Growth's Urban Design and Transportation (UDaT) sub-committee¹, started work on an integrated urban design and transportation framework plan. The goal was to identify short and medium-term recommendations to support the growing population density in the Ballard hub urban village. The UDaT committee served as the project advisory committee, holding monthly meetings to address topics including land use, design standards, transit, public spaces, and development. Their work provided the foundation for our recommendations.

The Urban Design and Transportation Framework (UDTF) plan was completed in February 2016 with sustained and extensive public engagement throughout the process. The attached legislation is one part of a series of coordinated interdepartmental recommendations and actions to support livable growth in Ballard (Appendix 1). Specifically, this report and attached legislation describe our urban design proposal implementing the plan's building character, streetscape, zoning, and land use recommendations².

The scope of this proposal is limited to new development standards and use provisions to encourage development that enhances livability and character while creating a health-promoting public realm. We are not recommending increases or decreases to height as part of this proposal.

B. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

There has been sustained and extensive public engagement throughout this planning process, including:

Monthly working meetings with Ballard Partnership's Urban Design and Transportation (UDaT) subcommittee (18 meetings): The UDaT served as the project advisory committee, holding monthly meetings to address topics including land use, design standards, transit, public spaces, and development.

Community-wide open houses (370+ attendees): OPCD and SDOT worked with the UDaT to host 4 open houses to provide community input and review of the committee work. The open houses focused on: 1) issues and opportunities; 2) urban design; 3) multimodal transportation; and 4) UDTF review. OPCD also used online engagement to expand input into issues and opportunities, including two online surveys (400 + participants), focus group and office hours at Ballard Library (30 + attendees), email updates (294 subscribers)

Community groups: Project staff briefed many of the community organizations during the planning process and encouraged their membership to participate at community meetings. Groups included North Seattle Industrial Association, Central Ballard Residents Association, East Ballard Community Association, Sustainable Ballard, Groundswell Northwest, Ballard Chamber of Commerce, Young Professionals in Transportation, Connect Ballard, seniors from Seattle Housing Authority residences, Ballard Landmark (private retirement living community)

¹ In 2013, the Office of Economic Development awarded an "Only in Seattle" grant to the Ballard Chamber of Commerce to initiate the Ballard Partnership for Smart Growth, a collaboration between business, resident, and community organizations. The Partnership works together to address the challenges Ballard is facing and plan for a future based on a shared vision about what makes Ballard a great place to live, work, and play. The Partnership is a multi-year strategic initiative to encourage investment and build sustainable relationships in Ballard.

² For more information about coordinated transportation recommendations, please visit SDOT's website: <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/moveballard.htm>

C. RECENT GROWTH

The Ballard hub urban village is an attractive, amenity-rich, and high opportunity neighborhood³.

Between 2000 and 2010, the population of the urban village increased by approximately 24 percent. Since then, 2,200 net units have been added to the existing 7,000 units (approximately 30 percent growth in units in five years), and an additional 981 units are permitted. This growth is likely to continue⁴. Partially in response to recent growth and change, SDOT and Sound Transit have plans to create a high capacity transit connection between Ballard, Downtown, and the University District.

On one hand, development has brought improved services and amenities to the community – including investments in public parks, facilities, streets, and sidewalks. On the other hand, the rapid rate of change has brought concern about the quality of building design and loss of character, declining affordability especially for seniors and people on fixed income, and parking availability. We also heard strong support for more transit investments and job growth. Many would like Ballard to grow as a community for all ages where people can live close to where they work and recreate. The City is committed to working toward inclusive and affordable growth that fosters community health in Ballard.

D. PLANNING AREA AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In response to hundreds of public comments, ongoing citywide planning efforts, and several UDaT working meetings, our planning effort focused on those parts of the urban village that are likely to experience sustained change and impact neighborhood character due to underlying zoning and height, existing land use, parcel size, and proximity to frequent transit, bike infrastructure, and major mobility corridors (Map 1).



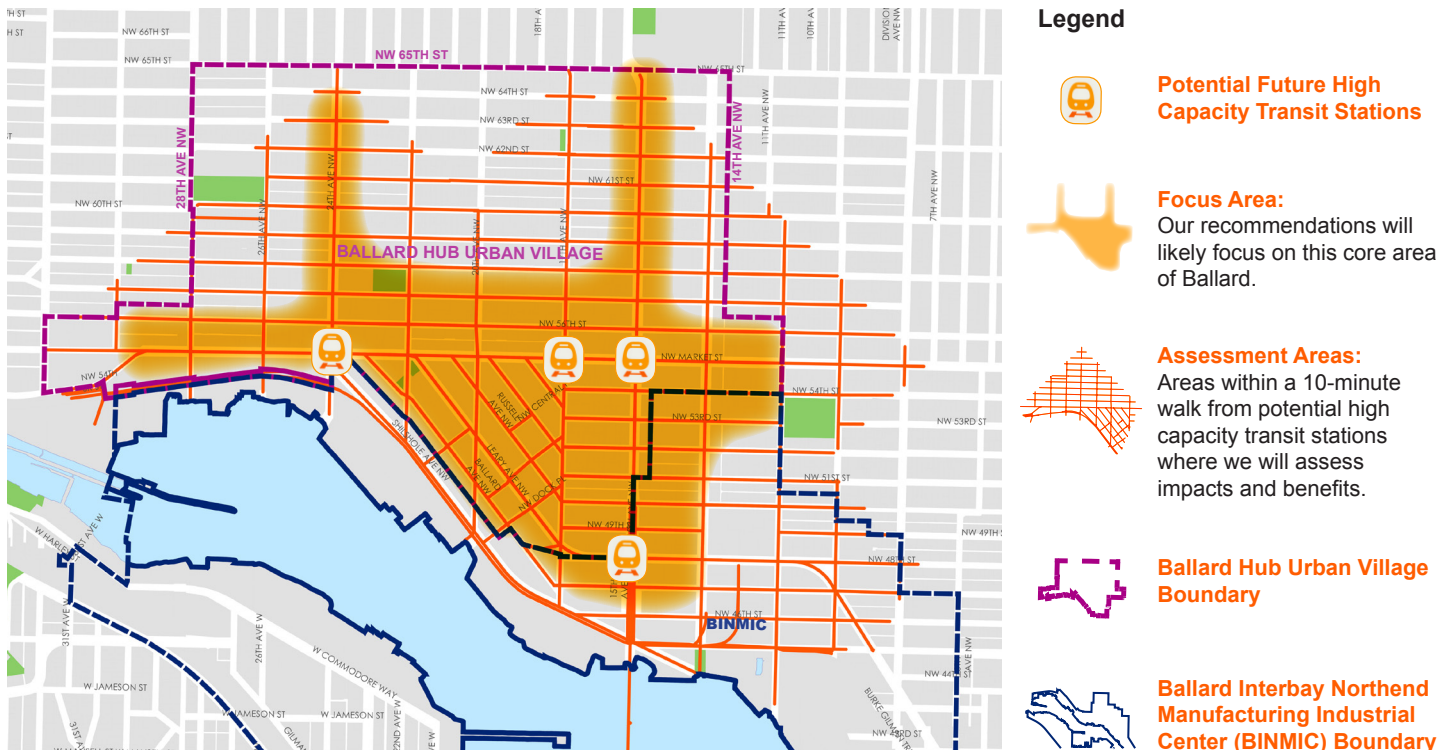
³ As per the Seattle 2035 Equity Appendix, Ballard can be described as a high opportunity neighborhood with a relatively low risk of displacement.

⁴ As of March 2015, the Ballard urban village had the capacity for an additional 4,978 residential units and 5,243 new jobs.

The following principles, written jointly with the UDaT committee, have guided our work:

- Support a vibrant downtown Ballard business district.
- Create a hierarchy of great streets and public spaces, with special attention to Market Street, and preserve green spaces.
- Expand the diversity of jobs to include more office, skilled manufacturing, industrial, and technical jobs. Protect and support Ballard’s thriving industries while ensuring appropriate balance between maritime/ industrial, retail and restaurants.
- Coordinate infrastructure projects to support existing and new businesses and residents, increase waterfront access, improve multimodal mobility, and steward public investments.
- Preserve the historic character of the neighborhood.
- Provide design guidance for areas that are likely to change, encouraging quality and variety.
- Balance the mobility needs of pedestrians, bicycles, transit, cars, and freight.
- Prepare for potential light rail investment.
- Support affordable housing.
- Embrace community equity, health, and sustainability as fundamental planning philosophies.
- Consider views of iconic streetscape and nature as downtown Ballard grows.

Map 1: Planning Area



E. URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT

The [UDTF](#) includes detailed consideration of neighborhood character and livability, at the scale of the whole neighborhood, its relationship to the region, and character subareas. Some key concepts are summarized here.

1. A Healthy and Equitable Community

The document focuses on the public realm and how it is experienced and used. Elements that shape this public realm include the street; the sidewalk; adjoining parks and landscaping; and the massing, scale, design, and use of surrounding buildings.

As Ballard grows, these elements should work together to support desired roles and characteristics and address emerging issues and concerns. Our urban design approach focused on sustaining the neighborhood's character and health by creating public spaces that foster interaction and activity, support active transportation, facilitate access to transit, and increase access to light, views, and nature.

2. A Complete Community

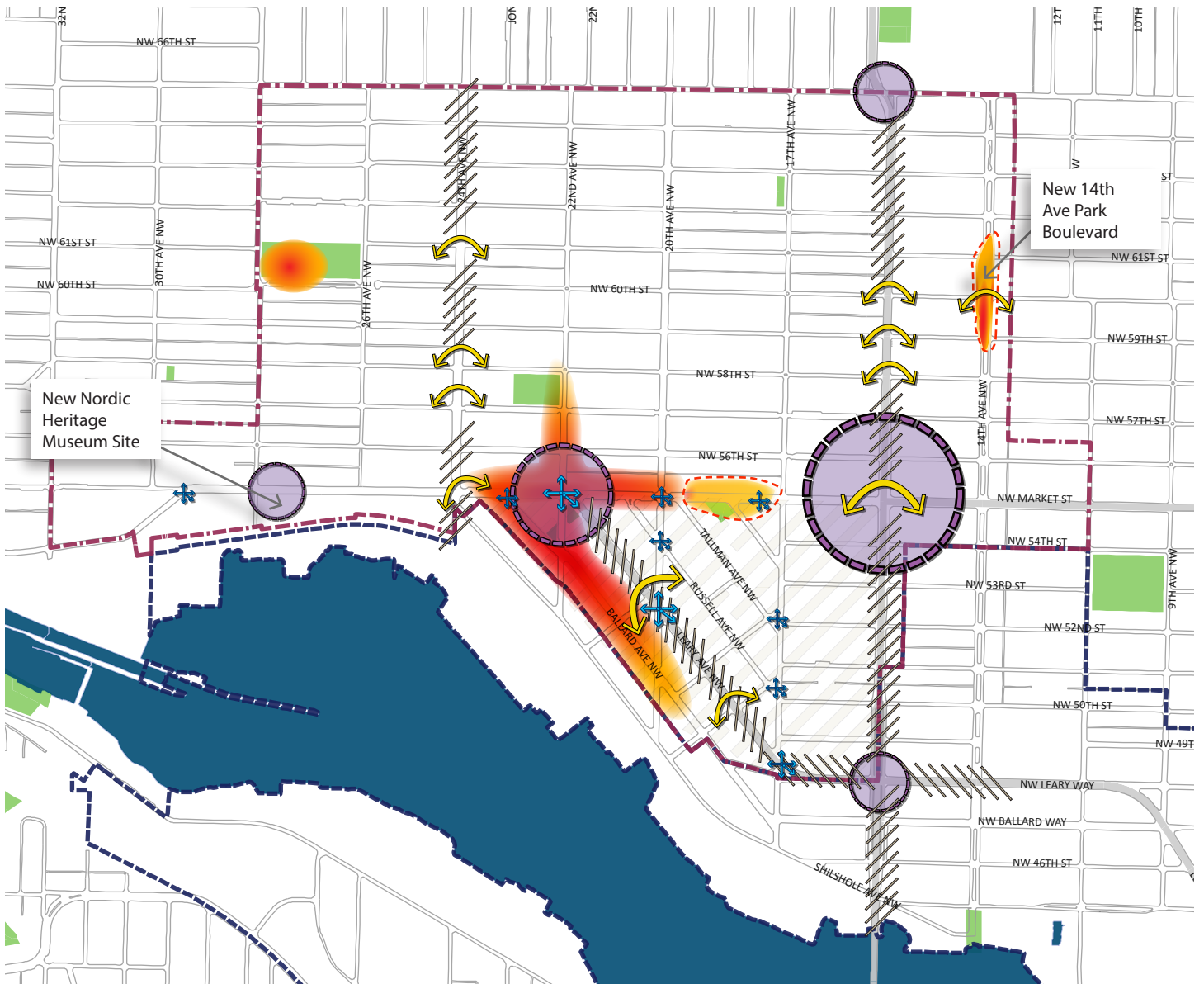
A common refrain is “You never have to leave Ballard” -- everything you need is here. There is not one thing or place that defines Ballard, there are many layers of activities and building forms that give it character. For example, machine shops, restaurants and bars share the mix of brick buildings along Ballard Avenue. Banks, shops and cafes share Market Street. The library, Ballard Commons, and the old pedestrian-oriented Bartell pharmacy shape a civic core along 22nd Avenue NW. Similarly, 15th Avenue NW acts as a barrier separating the east and west sides of the neighborhood. Together these places create neighborhood where people walk, shop, and work.

Two types of analyses with the UDaT working group inform the proposal:

- I. We examined how people used the neighborhood – where they gather, where they shop, how they get around, informal walking paths, and gateways and landmarks in the neighborhood. We also looked at how the underlying physical character (block sizes, street orientation, nodes and landmarks, barriers to walking and biking) shape how people use and perceive the neighborhood (Map 2).
- II. On the basis of existing and desired use and character, we identified character sub-areas within our study area (Map 3). Differentiating factors include existing and desired future uses, building scale, exterior materials, whether the area favors auto, transit or pedestrian access, and street-level activation. We looked at the relationship between the long east-west block sizes and the recent large and bulky buildings.



Map 2: Hearts, gateways and edges



Hearts

Concentrations of lively community activities, opportunities for social interaction.

Support these existing and future hubs of neighborhood activity through building design, land use, open space and streetscape improvements.



future heart



Gateways

Changes in land uses, activity and/or building character signal one's arrival to Ballard.

Reinforce the gateway character through street level uses, landscaping, building character. Respond to the pedestrian's speed. At Market St and 15th Ave, new buildings should create a sense of having arrived in Ballard. A potential future light rail stop would be another new gateway.



Edges

High car volumes and speeds are a barrier to pedestrians who want to walk across or along these streets.

Make existing pedestrian, bicycle crossings and transit facilities on these edges more appealing and safe through signalization improvements, active street-level uses at the corners, wider sidewalks and landscaped buffers,



Way-finding

Ballard's numerous five-way intersections pose a way-finding challenge to pedestrians, especially for new visitors, seniors and Ballard Swedish users who may wish to walk to local destinations.

Establish a direction and way-finding strategy in this area through art, landscaping and other strategies to connect and give each intersection a unique and memorable identity, encouraging people to explore the neighborhood on foot.

3. Character Sub-Areas

A summary of present use and role, and desired future use and role for each of these areas is presented below. These together with the above approaches inform the proposed development standards (setback dimensions, street-level uses and building widths), neighborhood-specific design guidelines, and streetscape concept plans for each of the character sub areas.

- I. Character Core: Ballard’s Downtown is centered on its “main streets” – NW Market Street and Ballard Avenue NW and includes the Ballard Avenue Landmark District. Their inviting mix of historic and heritage buildings, and a welcoming business district with shops, restaurants and bars, and services define Ballard’s character. *Recommendation: Sustain the historic role and character of Ballard’s main streets as they evolve through streetscape and new development standards. Ensure new buildings are informed by Ballard’s historic design precedents for scale, and well-detailed, quality construction. Support community events and street festivals in the community’s heart.*
- II. Civic Core: The civic and community core has a quieter character of civic activities, and community-oriented businesses, and a variety of residences. *Recommendation: Include unifying streetscape elements, such as wider sidewalks, abundant planting, and street furniture to support an all age and neighborhood-oriented street. Encourage a mix of commercial and street-related residential uses. Discourage surface parking and drive-through businesses, and minimize curb cuts to foster an uninterrupted and accessible pedestrian environment.*
- III. General Commercial: This is the community’s shopping area that meets weekly and monthly needs for goods and services. *Recommendation: In the future, this transit-oriented location can accommodate dense offices and residences on upper floors with pedestrian-oriented grocery, pharmacy, and commercial activities on street level. Active storefronts and generous sidewalks should balance automobile volumes. Structured parking should be provided in future development to make more efficient use of land and accommodate access to these uses by car, while creating a more engaging and safe walking environment.*
- IV. Commercial Mixed: These commercial streets provide opportunities for a mix of local small businesses serving neighborhoods as well as services and shops serving greater north-west Seattle. They have potential for office and moderate density residential on upper floors which take advantage of the transit and auto access. *Recommendation: Improve the quality of the pedestrian environment and encourage moderate density residential development over commercial development.*
- V. In-Town Residential/ Neighborhood Retail: These are multifamily neighborhoods provide in-town living opportunities that enjoy easy access to shops, services and jobs. *Recommendation: Encourage small neighborhood oriented retail on corners along arterials to provide convenience retail and services to the immediate residential neighborhood.*
- VI. Industrial: The industrial areas in the urban village emphasize “maker” and production uses, continuing tradition of people who use their hands and minds to create. They are both utilitarian and urban. The streets can be navigated by trucks and walkers, and some businesses have a retail element, while others are wholesale or industry focused. *Recommendation: Expand the diversity of jobs and employment. Protect and support Ballard’s thriving industries while ensuring appropriate balance between maritime/ industrial, retail and restaurants.*

F. RELATIONSHIP TO THE MAYOR'S HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND LIVABILITY AGENDA (HALA)

The proposed legislation contains recommended changes to zoning and development standards. These changes will implement UDTF recommendations relating to character and scale. The recommendations are not expected to impact development capacity in affected zones and parcels. Rather they are meant to guide the form and scale of buildings, and uses along the street level, within the constraints of existing floor area ratio (FAR) limits and building heights.

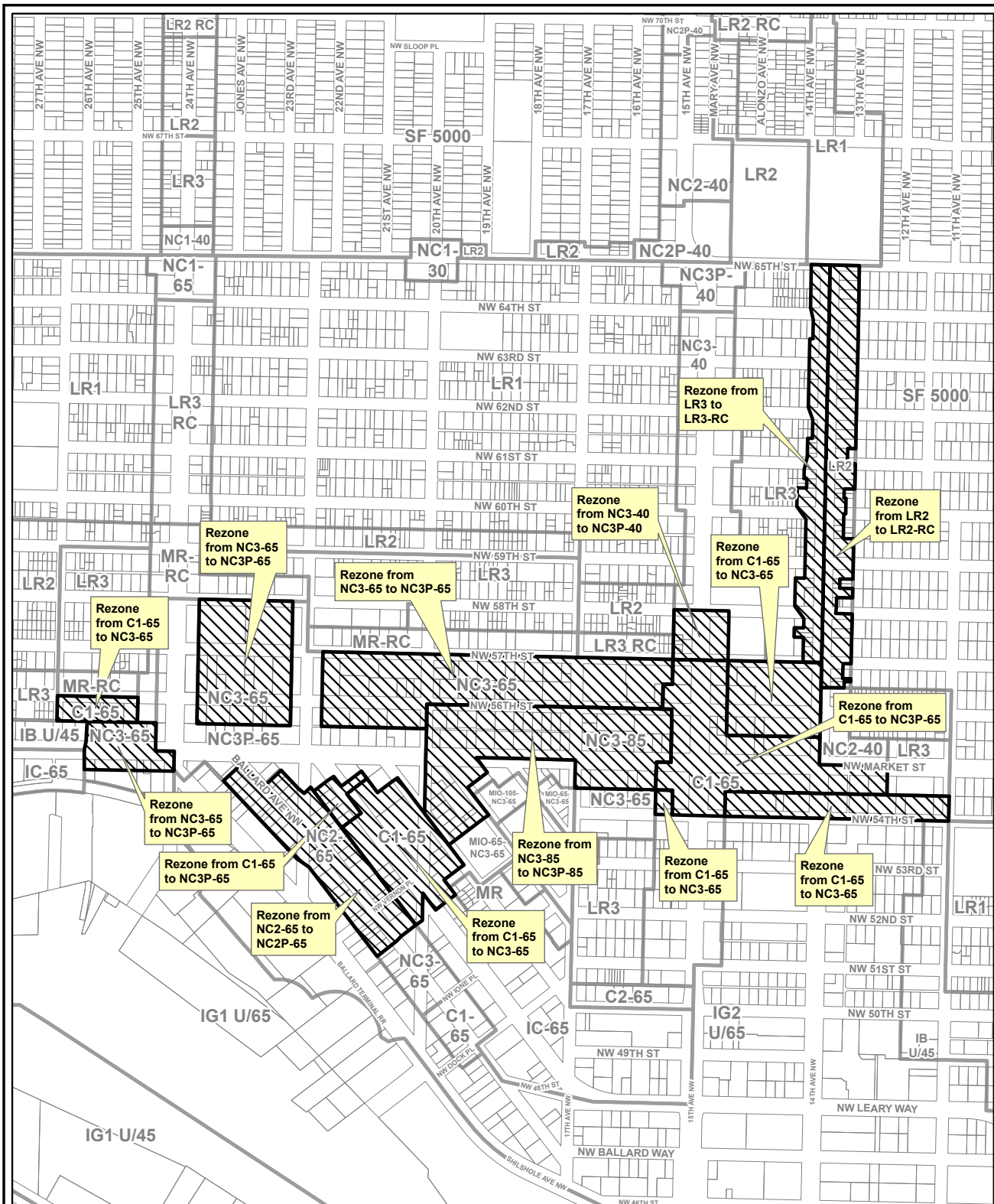
Later in 2016 and 2017, the Mayor's Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) will consider changes to zoning to implement the Mandatory Housing Affordability legislation that will create affordable housing and foster economically inclusive communities throughout Seattle's Urban Centers and Urban Villages. The proposed development standards are compatible with potential height increases that could be considered through HALA.

UDTF recommendations that might affect development capacity will be implemented after or along with the HALA Mandatory Housing Affordability legislation changes or other planning efforts (Table 4, p. 24).

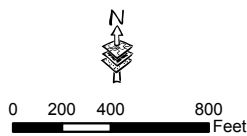
G. PROPOSAL

To implement the urban design concept described in the previous section, changes to zoning, street level use requirements, and development standards are needed. These recommended changes, and the analysis that led to them are presented here.

In addition to these changes, updated neighborhood-specific design guidelines are recommended to guide context-sensitive design in the urban core. To improve open space amenities, create comfortable pedestrian network, and increase the tree canopy in the urban village, streetscape design concept plans are recommended for key pedestrian streets.



**Ballard
Rezone Map**



No warranties of any sort, including accuracy, fitness, or merchantability accompany this product. Copyright 2016, All Rights Reserved, City of Seattle Prepared May 2, 2016 by Seattle IT-GIS, SDCI

(ii) Pedestrian zone designation and principal pedestrian streets

The purpose of a Pedestrian zone (P designation) is to encourage or preserve a pedestrian-oriented shopping district with uninterrupted commercial frontage. This is most appropriate at major commercial nodes in urban villages served by great public transit, where dense commercial, multifamily and mixed use development is likely. Requirements in Pedestrian-zoned areas include prohibitions on drive-through and drive-in businesses, and minimum FAR requirements if in an urban village.

Within Pedestrian zone areas, principal pedestrian streets are designated and facades facing these streets must meet requirements for active commercial uses for 80 percent of the building facade at ground-level, overhead weather protection, and limitations to curb cuts, driveway, and parking location (Figure 10). There are no limitations to ground-level residential uses off of principal pedestrian streets.

In Ballard, sections of NW Market Street between 20th Avenue and 24th Avenue NW, and 22nd Avenue and 24th Avenue from Market Street to NW 58th Street are existing designated principal pedestrian streets, and the area surrounding them has a Pedestrian zone designation. Separately, residential uses are limited to 20 percent of facades along arterial streets in the areas shown on Map 6. As Ballard’s core develops to a higher density, pedestrian traffic will increase throughout the core.

We propose expanding the pedestrian zone and designating principal pedestrian streets as shown on Map 6 and as described on Page 16.

Map 5. Currently, residential uses are already limited to 20 percent of facades along arterial streets (20th Ave, Market St) in the areas shown below. Other Pedestrian-zone requirements do not currently apply.

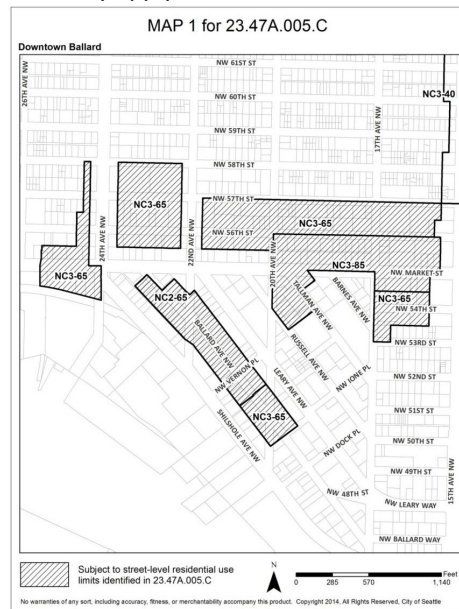
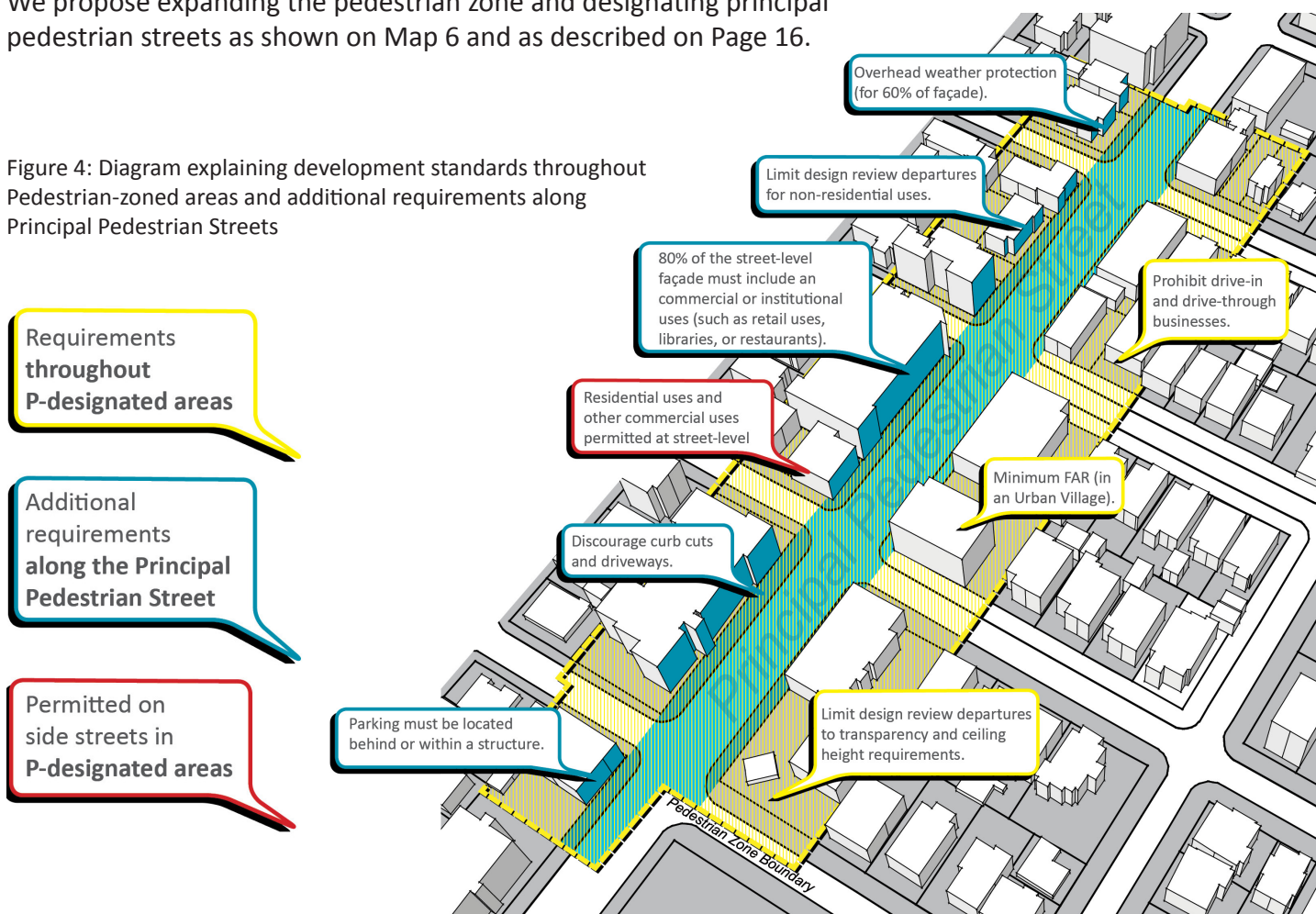


Figure 4: Diagram explaining development standards throughout Pedestrian-zoned areas and additional requirements along Principal Pedestrian Streets



Expansion of principal pedestrian streets

1. NW Market Street between 20th Avenue NW and 14th Avenue NW, and a half block east of 24th Avenue NW, to preserve existing intensely pedestrian-oriented retail character on Market Street and also encourage pedestrian-oriented street level uses close to major transit routes on 15th Avenue NW where future light rail service is expected.
2. 15th Avenue NW between NW 54th Street and NW 58th Street to foster a pedestrian-oriented environment that serves the needs of transit users and connects the east and west side neighborhoods, while maintaining general access to cars from side streets.
3. Ballard Avenue NW between NW Market Street and 20th Avenue NW to preserve the existing intensely pedestrian-oriented retail district. In case of conflicts between Pedestrian zone requirements and Landmarks District Guidelines, the Landmarks District Guidelines apply.
4. Designate NW Leary Way for a half block south of NW Market Street as a principal pedestrian street to preserve the existing pedestrian oriented commercial character on in this area.
5. Replace the 20% restriction on residential uses along portions of arterials NW Market Street, 20th Avenue NW and 17th Avenue NW with a principal pedestrian street designation, maintaining the same street level use requirements but applying additional development standards (Maps 5 and 6, Table 1).



Continuous weather protection, activity generating uses, and transparency support a vibrant and active business district (above). In contrast, curb cuts, drive-throughs, and surface parking lots create breaks in the pedestrian realm (below).



Map 6: Existing and Proposed Pedestrian Zones and Principal Pedestrian Streets along major transit and pedestrian corridors

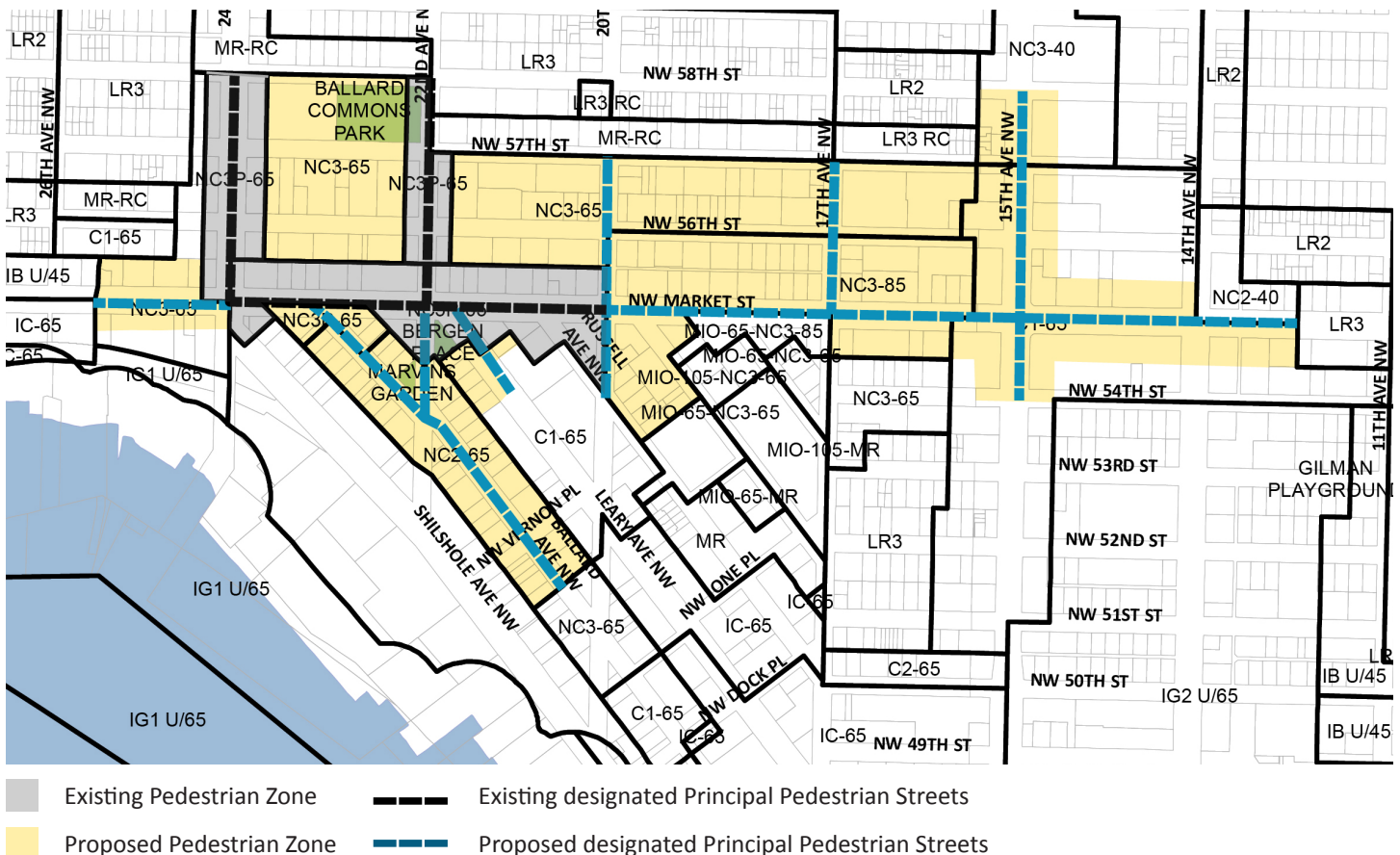


Table 1: Comparison of Development Standards required by Commercial 1, Neighborhood Commercial, and Pedestrian Zones

	Commercial 1 (C1) - Existing	Neighborhood Commercial 3 (NC3) - Proposed	Pedestrian-Designated Zone
Intent	<i>An auto-oriented, primarily retail/service commercial area that serves surrounding neighborhoods as well as a citywide or regional clientele</i>	<i>A larger pedestrian-oriented shopping district serving the surrounding neighborhood and a larger community, citywide or regional clientele; allowing comparison shopping among a range of retail businesses</i>	<i>P designations are applied to NC and zones along pedestrian-oriented commercial streets</i>
Typical Land Uses	Large supermarkets, building supplies and household goods, auto sales and repairs, and apartments.	Supermarkets, restaurants, offices, hotels, clothing shops, business support services, and residences that are compatible with the area's mixed-use character.	The P designation preserves and encourages an intensely pedestrian-oriented, retail shopping district where non-auto modes of transportation, both to and within the district, are strongly favored.
Building Types	A variety of commercial building types and site layouts including one-story commercial structures with extensive surface parking, and multi-story office or residential buildings.	Single purpose commercial structures office buildings, multi-story mixed-use and residential structures. Non-residential uses typically occupy the street front.	Same as NC3
Street-level Uses	Non-residential uses required at street-level on street-facing facades. Residential uses are limited to 20% of the street-level, street-facing facade.	No limit on mix of residential and nonresidential uses, except where P zones or other mapped areas limit residential presence at street level.	80% of the façade must include nonresidential uses that have the potential to animate the sidewalk environment, such as retail, entertainment, restaurants, and personal services. Drive-in or drive-thru businesses are prohibited.
Street-level Non-residential Design	Same as NC1 zone for structures containing residential uses, or when across a street from a residential zone. No requirements for non-residential structures, or when not across from a residential zone.	Transparency required for 60% of a street-facing facade. Nonresidential uses at street level must have an average depth of 30', and have a minimum height of 13'.	Same as NC3, plus additional requirements for weather protection for 60% of the façade.
Street-level Residential Design	Must contain at least one visually prominent pedestrian entry for residential uses. Dwelling units must be at least 4' above, or 10' back, from a sidewalk, unless conversion of a nonresidential space to a residential use is authorized.	Must contain at least one visually prominent pedestrian entry for residential uses. Dwelling units must be at least 4' above, or 10' back, from a sidewalk, unless conversion of a nonresidential space to a residential use is authorized.	Same as NC3
Maximum Size of Commercial Use	No size limits for most uses; 25,000-40,000 square feet for warehouse and wholesale showroom uses; 35,000 square feet or size of lot, whichever is greater, for office uses.	No size limits for most uses; 25,000 square feet for wholesaling, light manufacturing and warehouse uses.	Same as NC3
Parking Location	No restrictions generally. When a development contains residential uses or is across a street from a residential zone, it must meet NC1 zone standards.	At the rear or side of a building, within a structure, or off-site within 800'. Parking between a building and a street is not allowed. Parking between buildings along the street is limited to 60'. Within a structure, street level parking must be separated from the facade by another permitted use.	In addition to NC zone standards, surface parking is prohibited adjacent to principal pedestrian streets.
Parking Access	No restrictions generally. When a development contains residential uses or is across a street from a residential zone, it must meet NC1 zone standards.	Must be from the alley if feasible. Curbcuts are limited.	Must be from alley or side-street if feasible, otherwise a two-way curbcut on the principal pedestrian street is allowed.
Parking Quantity	Depends on land use and location. No minimum parking is required in Urban Centers, and portions of Urban Villages with frequent transit service within 1/4 mile.	Same as C1	Same as C1

(iii) Residential Commercial Suffix Zone

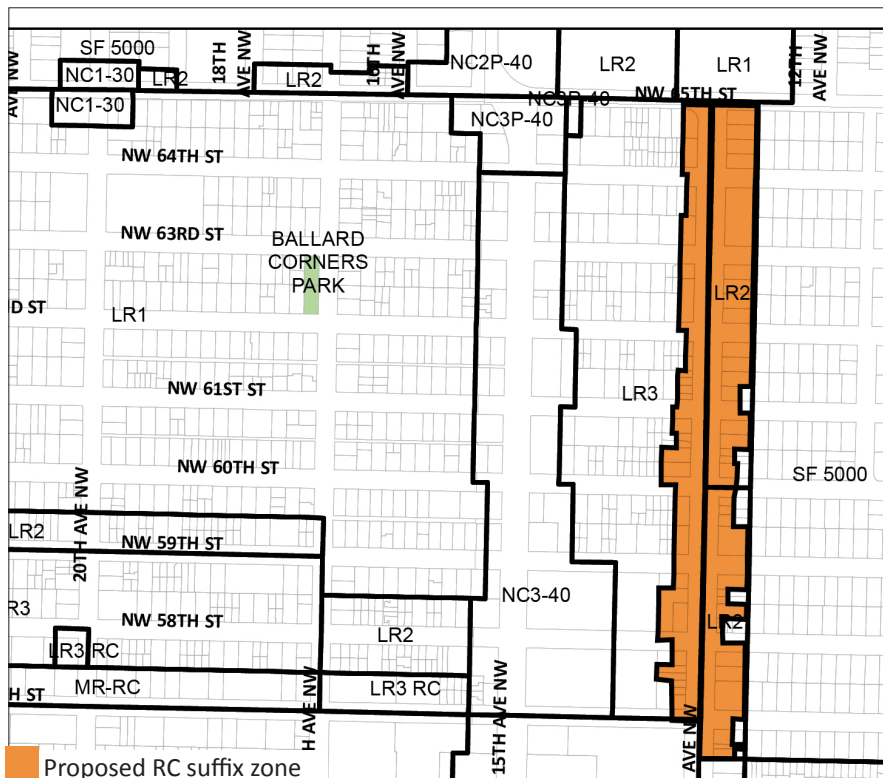
The Residential Commercial suffix zone (RC) allows small-medium sized commercial uses at the street level in multifamily neighborhoods, where small commercial uses can fit into buildings that resemble the neighboring low-medium density residential areas. In areas with a RC suffix zone and an underlying Lowrise zone (LR), the maximum size limit for individual business establishments is limited to 4,000 square feet. Commercial uses are allowed only in structures containing at least one dwelling unit or live-work unit. Drive-through businesses are prohibited.

We recommend adding the RC suffix zone along sections of 14th Avenue NW to support small commercial uses meeting the daily needs of the neighboring residential area. This area has an existing pattern of mixed residential-commercial development along 14th Avenue NW, with a primarily residential neighborhood to the east. Currently there are no small stores or cafes serving this area, and residents have to either cross 15th Avenue NW or walk 8-10 blocks east to 4th Avenue NW to access these uses. We expect an increase in foot traffic to this area after the City completes a linear street park on 14th Avenue NW between NW 59th Street and NW 61st Street. Small active street-level commercial uses such as cafes, corner stores and similar uses at key corners and locations on this segment of 14th Avenue will support pedestrian activity in this area, and serve the immediate neighborhood's needs.

2. Non-Conforming Uses and Structures

Most existing uses in the affected areas would be allowed under the proposed changes from C1 to NC3 and the addition of a P designation. Most existing structures could be maintained and expanded provided the expansion meets the new standards. In new NC3 zoned areas, the most significant change would be the prohibition of parking in front of buildings. Parking in front of buildings could continue, but wouldn't be allowed if the sites redevelop. This would impact several sites near the intersection of 15th Ave. NW and NW Market St., and along NW 56th St. (between 24th Ave. NW and 20th Ave. NW) including: Elliott Tire, Ballard Market, Safeway, Walgreens and Firestone. In P-designated areas, parking would need to be under or behind buildings, and buildings would need to be located close to the street. Along Principal Pedestrian streets, more active businesses must occupy 80% of the street-level, street-facing facade. Drive-in businesses such as McDonalds and banks with drive-in lanes such as Union Bank would become non-conforming uses and structures. They could continue, but expansion would be limited. The affected areas are all rapidly redeveloping and most new development has not included the types of uses or

Map 7: Proposed Residential-Commercial zoning on 14th Ave. NW



Small commercial spaces in residential areas can serve the neighborhood's needs.



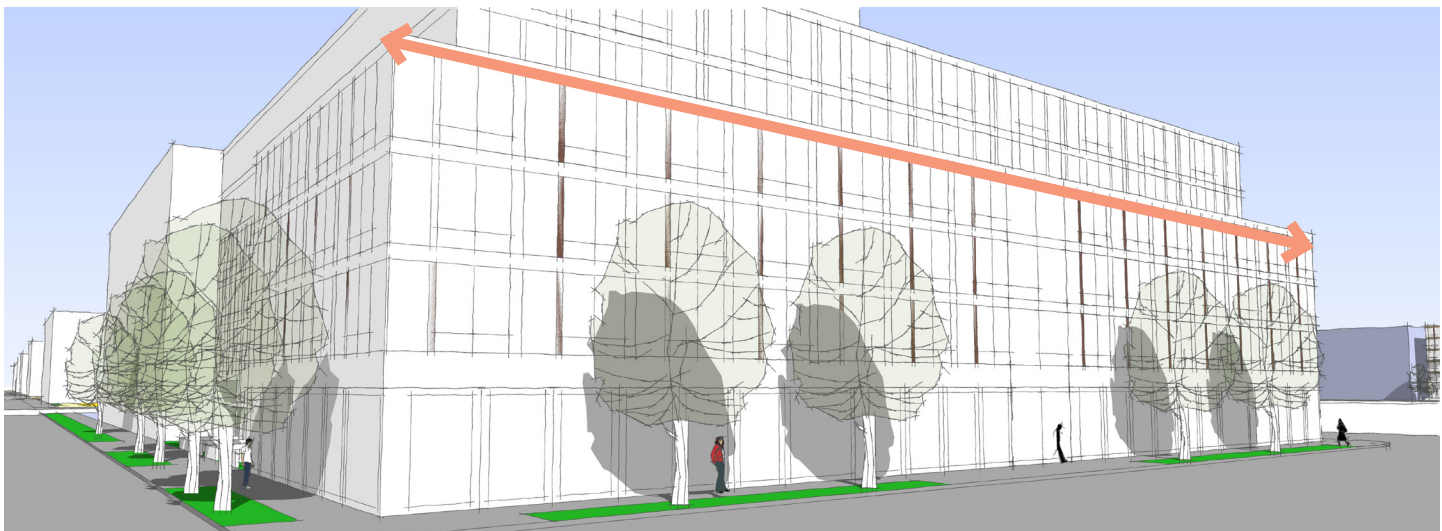
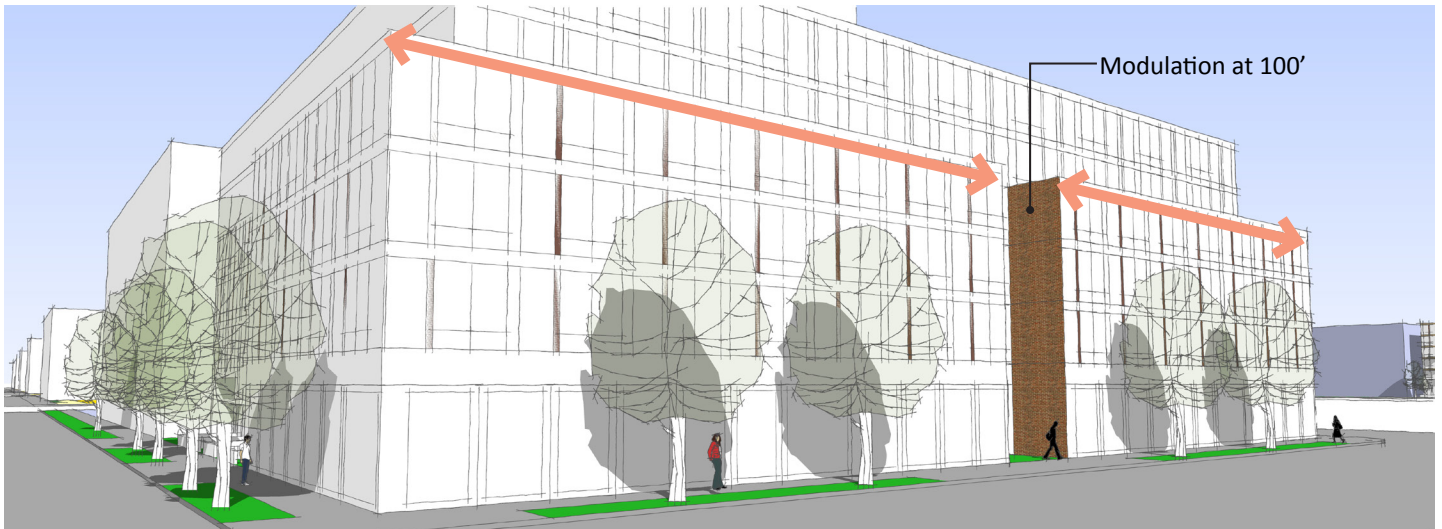
structures prohibited under the proposed NC rezones or P - designation. Consequently the impacts to non-conforming uses is likely to reduce over time.

3. Area-Specific Neighborhood Commercial Development Standards in the Ballard Hub Urban Village

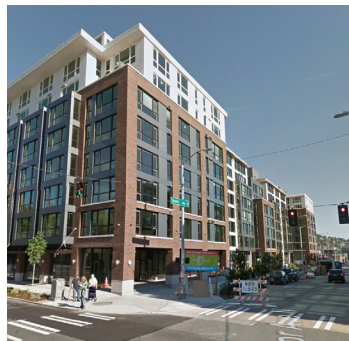
(i) Facade modulation

The existing variation of building widths in historic Ballard reflect the underlying historic parcel sizes, typically in multiples of approximately 50 feet. To help reinforce the neighborhood’s historic scale and character, we recommend a maximum facade width of 100 feet after which a portion of the building facade must be set back a minimum depth of 10 feet to create a visual break and reflect the historic scale. This requirement will only apply to facades located within 10 feet of the property line, and up to 45 feet in height.

Figure 5: A 200’ wide building with (above) and without (below) modulation. Modulation can help reinforce smaller neighborhood scale.



Modulation can create breaks in massing and help the building fit into the surrounding context.



(iii) Lot coverage limits on very large lots

Ballard has long blocks in the east-west direction, ranging from 550 feet to 750 feet. In comparison, block length in downtown Seattle averages 250 feet. Ballard’s long blocks allow for the assimilation of multiple parcels to form super-block buildings that are out of scale with the existing context and the human scale. The impact of these large buildings on light, comfort, interest, pedestrian scale, air, and views is most apparent on parcels exceeding 40,000 square feet.

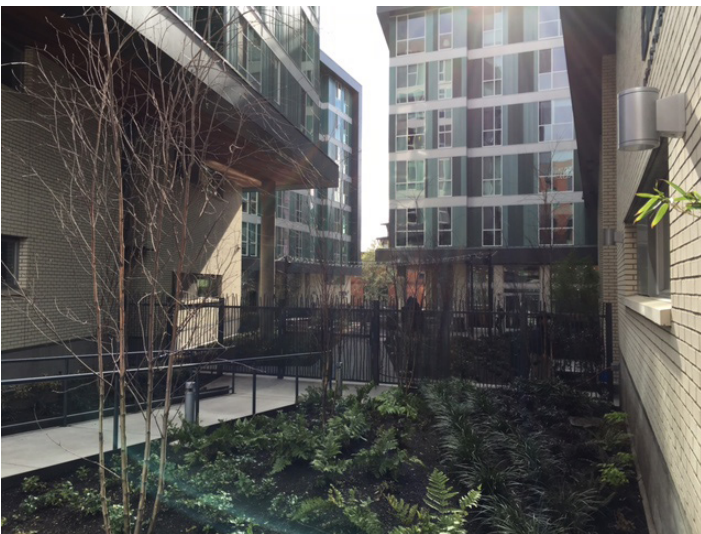
More successful recent buildings on lots over 40,000 square feet have a lot coverage ratio between 65 and 87 percent. Between 2010 and 2015, 20 percent of the total mixed-use developments in the Ballard hub urban village were on parcels over 40,000 square feet.

We recommend a 80 percent lot coverage limit for development on parcels exceeding 40,000 square feet, with the remaining 20 percent of area being used for trees and landscaping, setback transitions, sidewalk cafes, mid-block pedestrian paths, pedestrian plazas, bicycle parking, and other pedestrian-scale amenities at the street level and visible from adjacent rights-of-way. These elements can help create a transition between the building and the sidewalk resulting in finer-grain, human-scaled edge conditions that can help the building fit into the existing neighborhood scale and context.

Table 3: Lot coverage of recently developed parcels over 40,000 square feet in area

ADDRESS	Building Name	Lot Area (square feet)	Square foot coverage at street level	Approximate Lot Coverage*	Total Allowed FAR	Total Achieved FAR	Existing Zoning	Comments
Development parcels over 40k square feet in area								
1 2428 NW MARKET ST	Amli	70,360	61,392	87%	4.75	4.11	MULTIPLE ZONE	
2 1400 NW Market St	Avalon Ballard	60,017	57,000	95%	4.75	4.57	C1 65	
3 1500 NW MARKET ST	Urbana	59,907	57,000	95%	4.75 in C1 65 6 in NC3 85	4.41 5.25	MULTIPLE ZONE	
4 5343 TALLMAN AVE NW	Odin	49,084	32,000	65%	6	4.68	NC3-85	

* Buildings with a lot coverage of up to 85% appear to better fit into the existing scale and context.



Landscaped amenity areas can be used to break up the mass of a building at street level.



Small landscaped setbacks can help create privacy transitions between the sidewalk and residential units.

(iv) Maximum width of a structure

The dominant parcel width of areas platted up to the 1930 was 50 feet. Building facades created continuous frontage along the block lengths, but individual buildings were between 50 and 200 feet. To help reinforce the neighborhood’s historic building scale and character, we recommend a maximum building width of 250 feet.

On sloping sites, maximum building widths can result in a better designed street-level facade. Resulting vertical shifts in floor lines can help visually reduce the width of the building and the block, and mitigate the long “canyon feel” created by very wide buildings. Recent building widths have ranged from 78 feet (Saltworks), 150 feet (Odin and The Commons), 295 feet (Urbana), to 390 feet (Amli).

Figure 7: Existing scale of building widths on Market Street

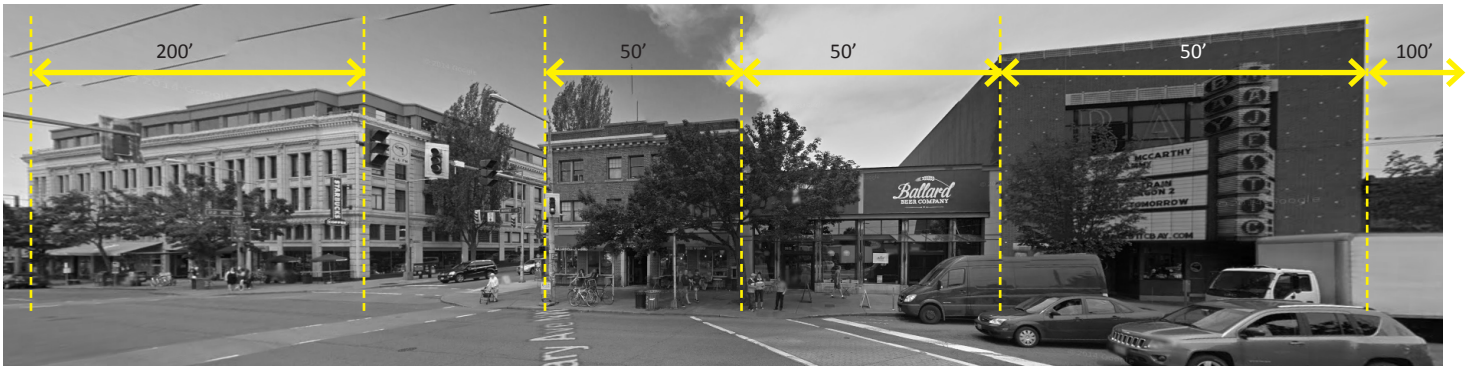


Figure 8: Proposed maximum building width is 250'

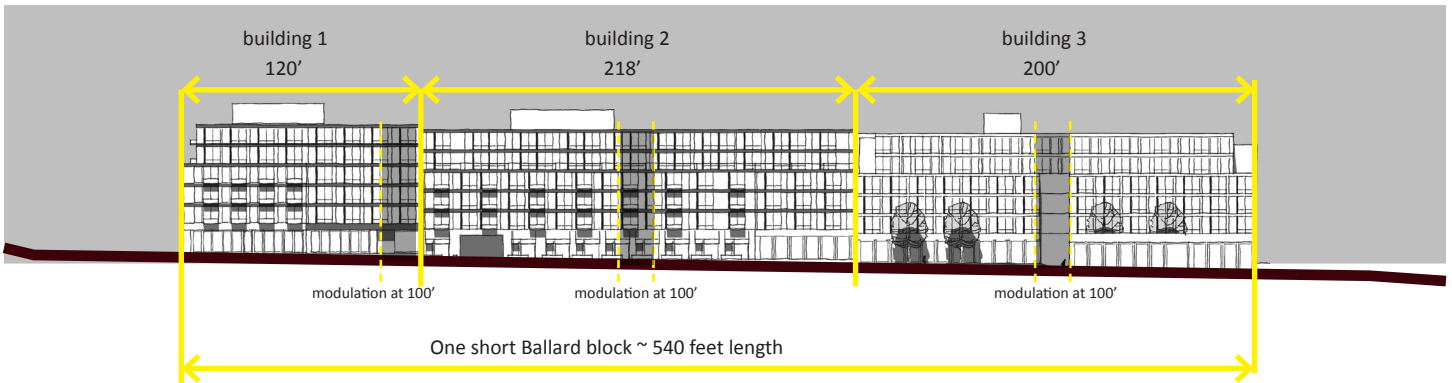
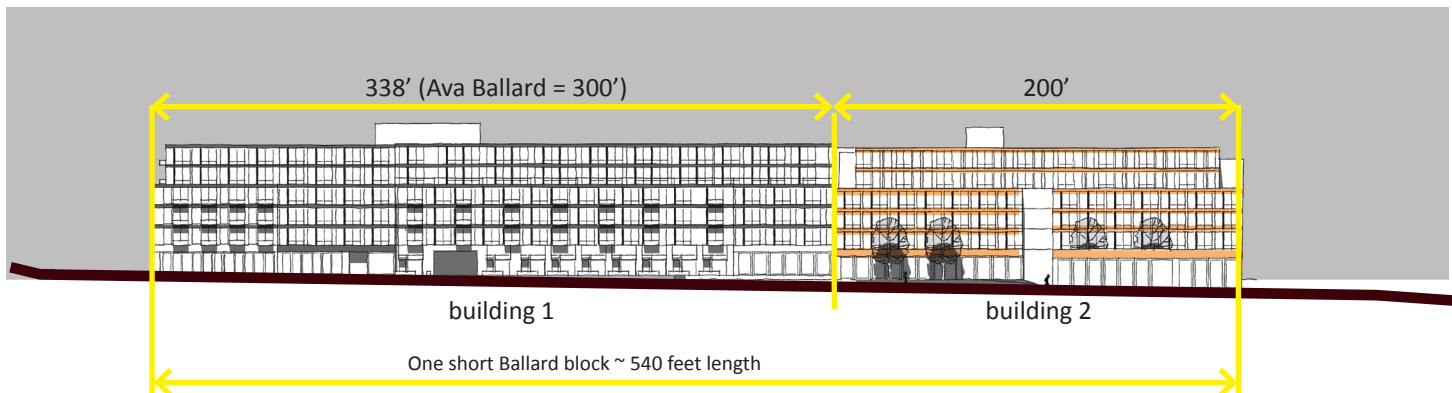


Figure 9: Likely development without maximum building width limit

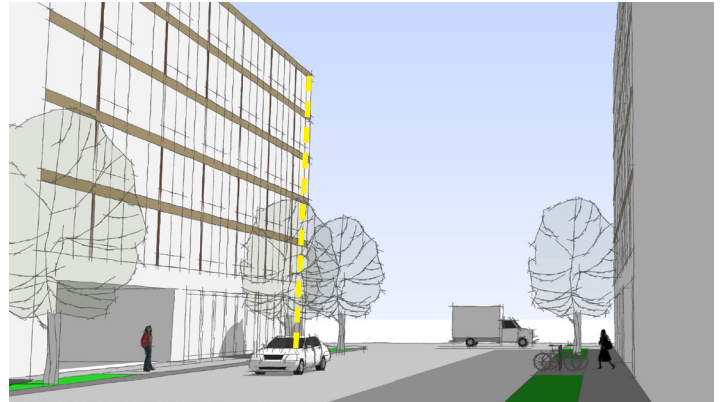


(v) Upper level setbacks

Shading impacts due to Ballard’s longer east-west blocks are more apparent. Up to 30-45 feet, the scale of the building provides for adequate light and air to the street. To increase light and air while supporting density in the urban village, we recommend upper-level setbacks on facades at 45 feet height to reduce shadows, increase sunlight at street level, and continue the neighborhood’s human-scale street environment. Portions of a structure between 45 feet and 65 feet in height shall be set back by an average of 10 feet measured from the street lot line. Portions of a structure above 65 feet shall be set back by an average of 15 feet measured from the street lot line. The maximum setback that can be used to calculate the average shall be 20 feet from the lot line.

Figure 10: Street with upper-level setbacks

Figure 19: Street without upper-level setbacks



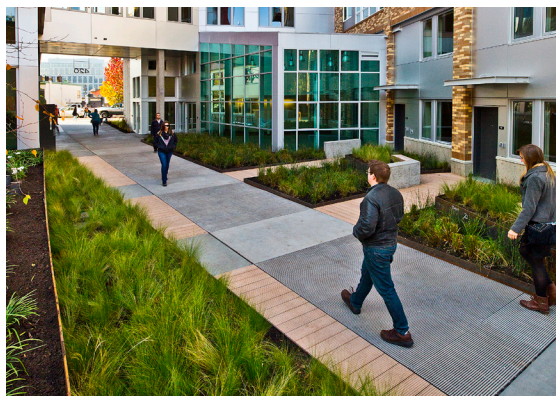
Additional direction for large lots:

For lots 40,000 square feet in size or greater, building width, modulation, and upper level setback requirements may only be waived or modified only if one or more of the following features are provided to offset the bulk of the project:

- a. An open space that abuts the street, is no more than four feet above or below the adjoining sidewalk grade, has a minimum width equal to 30 percent of the width of the street-facing facade or 20 feet, whichever is greater; and a minimum depth of 20 feet measured from the abutting street lot line.
- b. A separation between structures that serves as a north-south through-block or through-lot passage, an approved amenity area, or a combination thereof; has a minimum width of 20 feet; and is no more than four feet above or below the adjoining sidewalk grade.

Some development standards may be modified if street-level through-block walkways are provided to offset the bulk of a project.

Some development standards may be modified if street-level street-facing courtyards are provided to offset the bulk of a project.



(vi) Street level setbacks

15th Avenue NW is a major arterial and freight route with average weekday traffic of approximately 40,000 vehicles. 15th Avenue NW is also a major transit street, and City and Sound Transit plans call for high capacity transit that integrates with transit on this corridor. Unfortunately, the volume and speed of car traffic along this corridor can make 15th Ave NW uncomfortable for pedestrians, transit users or bicyclists, despite the presence of sidewalks, presenting a significant pedestrian barrier between the east and west sides of the neighborhood.

Between NW 54th Street and NW 58th Street, we recommend that the street-level 15th Ave facing facade of structures be set back from their 15th Avenue NW lot line, by a minimum depth of 6 feet up to a maximum depth of 10 feet. This setback could create space for planting, seating, bicycle parking, and other pedestrian-oriented amenities serving the businesses. Supporting ground-level activity with pedestrian interest at key intersections could also help improve pedestrian access and circulation across and along 15th Ave NW.



A small setback can be used for outdoor seating where sidewalk widths are limited.



A small setback can be used for outdoor displays where sidewalk widths are limited or where pedestrian volumes are high.



A small setback can help create an entrance transition space between the busy street and internal uses.



A small setback can be used to create room for customer amenities like bicycle parking, seating, or lean rails close to bus and rail stops.

4. Summary of proposed zoning and other changes recommended in the UDF

Community Priority	Proposed Zoning Changes / New Development Standards
<p>Create a hierarchy of great streets and public spaces with special attention to Market Street. Preserve Ballard’s historic character and views.</p>	a. Rezone Commercial (C-65) zoned parcels to Neighborhood Commercial (NC-65) along Market Street NW, 15 th Ave NW, and NW Leary Way to encourage more pedestrian-oriented building design.
	b. Add Pedestrian Zone designation, and require active uses along Market Street, 15 th Ave NW between NW 58 th St and NW 54 th St, 17 th Ave NW between NW 57 th St and Market St, 20 th Ave NW between NW 57 th St and Leary Way, Leary Way between NW Market St and 20 th Ave NW, and Ballard Ave NW between NE Market St and 20 th Ave NW.
	c. Draft neighborhood-specific design guidelines for the character core and civic core areas to guide context-sensitive design.*
	d. Encourage mid-block pedestrian walkways, landscaped plazas at gateway locations, and street level courtyards, to create human-scale breaks in massing, encourage landscaping at street level, and foster a porous pedestrian-oriented environment.
	e. Require small street level setbacks along 15 th Ave NW with pedestrian-oriented amenities and uses to improve the pedestrian and transit experience.
	f. Explore incentive to continue alley between NW Market Street and 56 th St NW.*
<p>Ensure that new buildings fit into the character of Ballard. Steer new development away from creating a canyon-like effect along Ballard’s long east-west blocks. Modulate building bulk and increase light to street. Enhance walkability as Ballard grows.</p>	a. Require upper level setbacks to encourage a human-scaled street environment.
	b. Establish building width limits so that new buildings are more sensitive to the scale of older and historic buildings.
	c. For wide buildings require facade modulation at appropriate distances to create breaks in massing so that new buildings fit into the scale of older historic buildings.
	d. Encourage a variety in size of street level commercial spaces to support a vibrant and varied retail environment.
<p>Improve open space amenities, create green spaces, and enhance sustainability.</p>	a. Design 22 nd Ave NW between Ballard Commons Park and Ballard Ave as a festival street to support community events, for e.g. play streets, farmers market, Seafood Fest.*
	b. Design NW 56 th St as a slower and quieter neighborhood street with abundant landscaping, street trees, wider sidewalks, and seating.*
<p>Address declining housing affordability.</p>	a. Coordinate development standards to work with HALA recommendations.
	b. Rezone St Luke’s property to support housing development and a potential affordable housing partnership.*
<p>Expand the diversity of jobs and support industrial uses.</p>	a. Encourage single-purpose commercial buildings through increased floor area ratio (FAR).*
	b. Consider revisions to Industrial Commercial (IC) standards in the urban village to favor industrial and manufacturing uses at street level while allowing maker/local production uses above to increase job density.*

*Subsequent to the current proposed rezone and/or HALA.

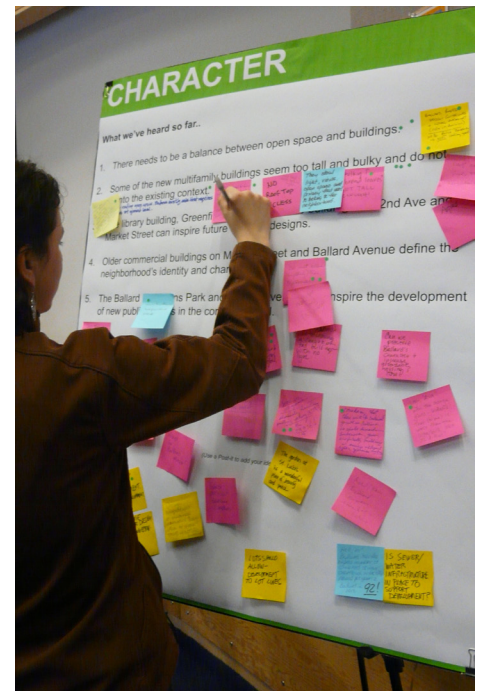
5. Design guidelines

OPCD anticipates drafting revised design guidelines proposed in the UDTF in late 2016.

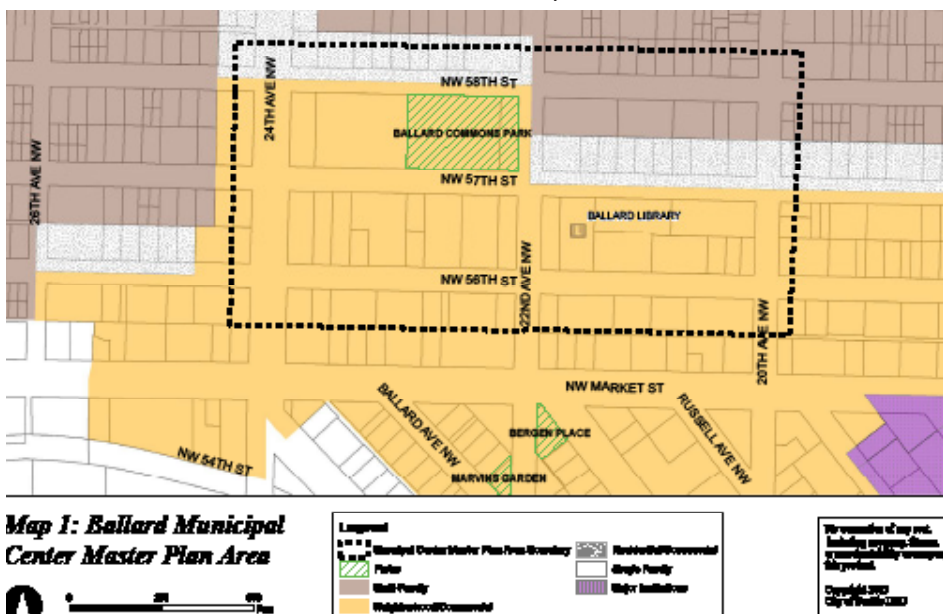
Design guidelines are the backbone of the City's Design Review Program. They direct designers and project reviewers to look closely at the neighborhood and its character to design new buildings that enhance their surroundings. The guidelines are used by the Design Review Boards and City staff to assess the merits of a project.

There are three types of design guidelines: citywide design guidelines; downtown guidelines and neighborhood-specific guidelines. The neighborhood-specific guidelines are divided into districts. The existing Ballard-specific design guidelines only address six blocks in the civic core (Map 9). Citywide guidelines apply to proposals in other parts of the neighborhood. Since neighborhood guidelines provide a more focused opportunity to recognize local concerns and design issues, we recommend updating and expanding the scope of the Ballard-specific design guidelines to address all mixed use areas in the urban village.

- An update to the neighborhood design guidelines will address
- Design of the first 30 feet of a building's height
- Design and materials approach
- Relationship to established context
- Desired character in areas without an established context (for eg. NW Market St and 15th Ave NW node)
- Relationship and contribution to the public realm



Map 9: The current Ballard neighborhood design guidelines only apply to the area located within the BMC Master Plan Area Boundary.



6. Streetscape Concept Plans

Streets are an important part of Ballard’s open space. The concepts in this section would reinforce the distinct characteristics of selected streets to create interconnected and linear public spaces. We have developed draft concepts for NW 56th St and 22nd Ave NW (between Ballard Commons and Ballard Ave). These corridors are key pedestrian connections serving major neighborhood destinations. OPCD anticipate completing streetscape concept plans recommended in the UDTF during 2016 and 2017. These will be adopted by joint SDOT and OPCD Directors Rules after more community engagement and design work. Typically, streetscape concepts are built out by private developers as part of frontage improvements. The community can also use these concepts to support grant funding applications for implementation.

(i) 22nd Avenue NW Festival Street: Between 58th Street and Ballard Avenue, 22nd Avenue hosts seasonal community events like the Ballard Seafood Festival. For this section of 22nd Avenue, we are developing a design for a pedestrian-oriented street with generous sidewalks and traffic calming elements, that is flexible enough to accommodate occasional community events.

(ii) NW 56th Street Green Street: NW 56th Street functions as a “Green Street,” a neighborhood-oriented counterpoint to the very public Market Street. The recommended street concept plan will include wider sidewalks, street furniture, and abundant planting. Accompanying street level development standards should encourage periodic setbacks to accommodate landscaping and outdoor cafe-style seating.

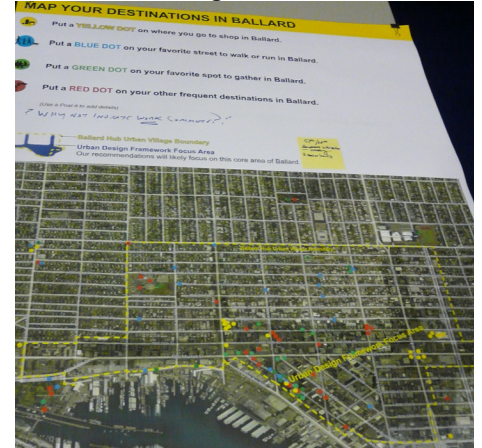
(iii) 15th Avenue NW between NW 54th and NW 58th Streets: 15th Avenue NW is an arterial and freight route with average weekday traffic of about 40,000 vehicles. This presents a significant physical barrier between the east and west sides of the neighborhood. 15th Avenue NW is also a major transit street. We recommend developing a streetscape concept for 15th Avenue between NW 54th Street and NW 58th Street to establish guidelines for planting, seating, bicycle parking, and other pedestrian amenities to create a pleasant environment for walking, taking transit and supporting future light rail service in the vicinity.

(iv) Ballard Ave Streetscape Concept (SDOT): Ballard Ave is an historic corridor that has become a regional dining and shopping destination. SDOT’s long term vision to enhance the pedestrian environment and activate the street space includes introducing an “urban curbless” treatment similar to Bell St in Belltown, constructing permanent wider sidewalks, updating crosswalks, and installing more streetlights to increase pedestrian and bicycle visibility. In the shorter term, pedestrian lighting and low cost improvements that contribute to the historic feel and pedestrian safety are high priorities for the community. This improves the general livability and economic vitality of the neighborhood by increasing activity along the commercial corridor, while accommodating delivery needs of local businesses.

Figure 20: Initial streetscape concepts for NW 56th Street.



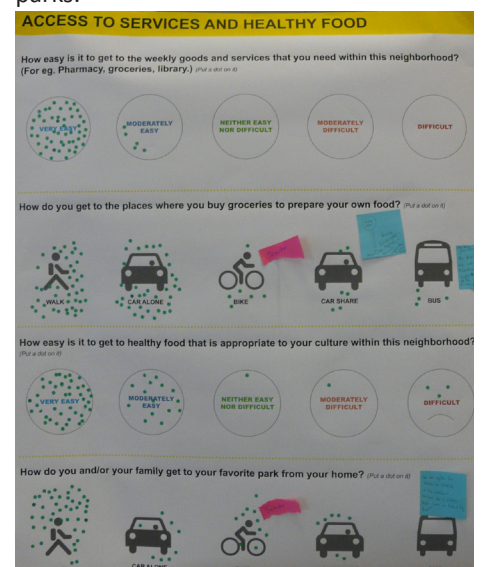
Distribution of neighborhood destinations.



Future light rail service will increase transit riders and pedestrians at 15th Avenue NW and NW Market Street.



People love Ballard’s walkability, and many people walk to local destinations, such as parks.



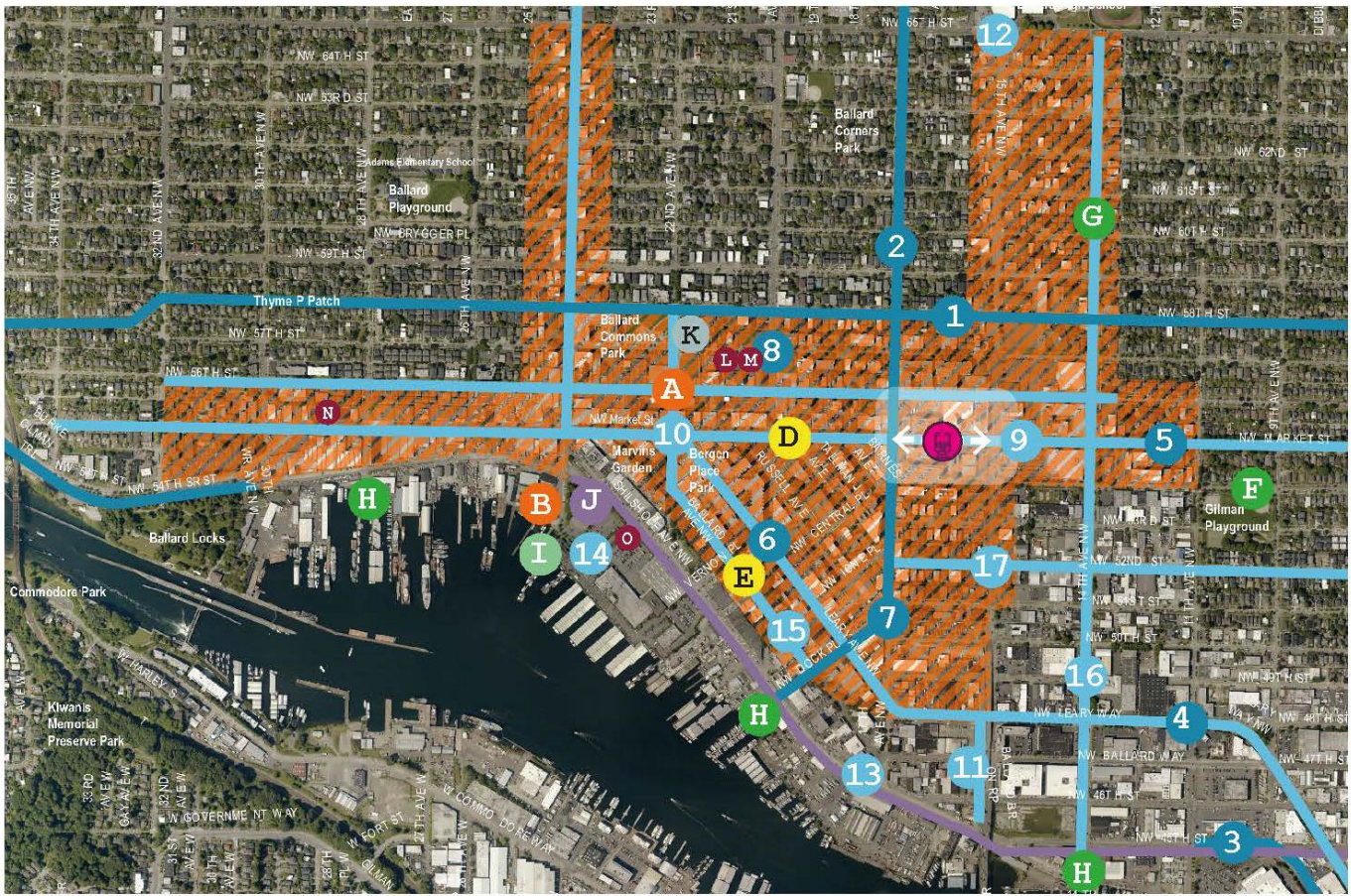
H. CONCLUSION

Ballard is a thriving neighborhood with thousands of residents, scores of independent businesses, and a cherished character. It is home to a dynamic manufacturing and industrial district that not only includes traditional maritime business, but also craft businesses, and a growing brewing community.

Ballard is currently experiencing rapid growth, and in the long-term, Sound Transit intends to connect Ballard and downtown with high capacity transit. This infrastructure will fundamentally change Ballard, potentially spurring sustained development. Working collaboratively, the community and City departments spent a year talking to each other, neighbors, colleagues about how Ballard should change and grow. Now is the time to establish clear community priorities and implement policies to guide growth.

Adoption of the proposed legislation will help set clear priorities for new buildings and result more context-sensitive and appropriate high density development in the core of the Ballard hub urban village.

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF RECENT ACTIONS AND INVESTMENTS



● funded ① partially funded ○ regulatory

CHARACTER (OPCD)

- Zoning, standards, guidelines walkability & character ○
- Ⓐ 22nd Ave Festival & 56th St Green Street Concepts ○
- Ⓑ 24th Ave Capital Projects Coordination ○

BUSINESS AREA DEVELOPMENT (OED)

- Ⓓ Business Improvement Area ●
- Ⓔ Ballard Ave lighting or similar ●

OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS (DPR)

- Ⓕ Gilman and Webster Play Area updates - Design ●
- Ⓖ 14th Ave Park - Final Design ●
- Ⓗ Street End Parks (SDOT and DPR) - Complete ●
- Ⓘ 24th Ave Street End Open Space ●

DRAINAGE INFRASTRUCTURE (SPU)

- Ⓙ CSO Facility - Outreach ●

HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT (SOUND TRANSIT)

- Ⓜ Potential station location and alignments ●

HOUSING (OPCD, OH)

- Ⓚ Potential for affordable housing partnership ●

MOBILITY IMPROVEMENTS (SDOT)

Bike Improvements

- ① NW 58th St Greenway - Complete ●
- ② 17th Ave NW Greenway - Construction ●
- ③ Burke Gilman Missing Link - EIS ①

Move Seattle Funded Transit Improvements

- ④ Leary Ave NW Corridor Study ①
- ⑤ NW Market St Corridor Improvements ○

Move Ballard Recommendations

Tactical and Spot Recommendations

- ⑥ Leary Ave NW & 20th Ave NW Crossing Improvement ○
 - ⑦ Dock Place Pavement to Parks ①
 - ⑧ 20th Ave NW & NW 57th St Pedestrian Crossing ○
 - ⑨ 15th Ave & Market St Intersection Study ○
 - ⑩ Ballard Five Points Crossing Improvement ○
 - ⑪ 17th Ave NW Greenway Connection ○
 - ⑫ NW 65th & 15th Ave NW Gateway Project ○
 - ⑬ Shilshole Ave NW & 17th Ave NW Truck Access ○
 - ⑭ 24th Ave NW & Shilshole Ave NW Street End Access ○
- #### Corridor Recommendations
- ⑮ Ballard Avenue Streetscape Concept Plan ○
 - ⑯ 14th Ave NW Corridor Study ○
 - ⑰ NW 52nd St Neighborhood Greenway ○

HUMAN SERVICES (HSD, OH)

- Ⓛ Urban Rest Stop - complete ●
- Ⓜ LIHI Low income housing - complete ●
- Ⓝ Temporary authorized encampment - on site ●
- Ⓞ RV safe parking - announced ●