



Memorandum

To: City Council
CC: Mayor Jeff Johnson
Phillip Hill, City Administrator
Kim Adams Pratt, City Attorney
From: Steve Bennett, Planning Director
Date: December 24, 2020
Re: Town Center Code Update Materials for Review on January 9, 2021
Attachment: 2005 Town Center Framework Design Guidelines Text (from regulatory pages codified by Ch. 18.42.140) with notes regarding related guidelines and requirements in new draft Framework and draft TC Code Update

The attached document contains the text of the 2005 Town Center Framework Design Guidelines that is included in regulatory pages codified by Ch. 18.42.140 LFPMC. It also includes notes about the provisions in the new draft Framework and regulations updates that address the highlighted provision in the 2005 text. As additional linkages between the 2005 Framework and the draft updates are identified, this document can be revised to assist Council and the public understanding how the original Framework is informing the new one.

2005 TC Framework Design Guidelines text (from regulatory pages codified by 18.42.140) with notes regarding related guidelines and requirements in new draft Framework and draft TC Code Update

Excerpt from LFPMC:

18.42.140 Town center framework design guidelines – Adopted – Rules of interpretation.

A. The guidelines contained on pages 14 through 15, 24 through 41 and Appendix 2 of the City of Lake Forest Park “Town Center Framework Design Guidelines,” dated September 26, 2005, are adopted as alternate guidelines applicable to applications filed under the optional town center design guideline process and incorporated by reference herein.

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Lake Forest Park Town Center is a 16-acre shopping center located at the intersection of Ballinger Way and SR 522 (Bothell Way), near the shores of Lake Washington. The site has excellent visibility from Bothell Way, and is a “gateway” to the remainder of Lake Forest Park. Ecologically, the site functions poorly as it is largely covered by buildings and non-permeable paving. Surface water runoff flows directly from the site into Lyon Creek, and then nearby Lake Washington. Although it is a key location, it currently lacks the level of public realm amenity expected from a Town Center. The center was built in the 1960’s and is home to many essential and thriving businesses ranging from locally owned businesses to national chain stores.

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To provide maximum opportunity for redevelopment of this center, these Town Center Framework Design Guidelines apply to all parcels within the City of Lake Forest Park’s “Town Center” zoning. The intent of this effort is to encourage the coordinated redevelopment of the Town Center zone. Although, a redevelopment proposal need not include all parcels within the Town Center zone, any redevelopment proposal will be reviewed within the spirit and intent of the framework, provided that it represents a master plan for all the parcels under the control of the Developer.

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Sustainability Task Force Vision for Town Center

An important element of this project was the Task Force’s articulation of a vision statement for Town Center. The vision served as a set of guiding principles or ideas that the City can use to navigate by in discussions and decision-making about the future of the property. The Task Force’s vision is simple and compelling.

- Lake Forest Park is a model community; Town Center is an inviting gathering place and the heart of the City’s diverse, high quality, economically viable, community scale shopping and business district;
- Town Center is a safe and walkable hub of activity for all ages;

- The buildings on the site, including housing, blend in with the community's character; and Recognized regionally for its environmental stewardship, the Center features the community's environmental assets, making it a place unlike any other.

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The Town Center Design Guidelines represent a unique “pre-regulatory” tool with three overriding objectives.

- First, the guidelines seek to encourage redevelopment of the Town Center. By articulating a market-based vision for the property, the City will be seen as a partner in its future redevelopment.
- Second, the guidelines propose to offer more intensive development capacity in exchange for important community amenities. Allowing additional or different development to occur creates value. Portions of this increased value can be allocated toward enhancing public aspects of the redeveloped Town Center.
- Third, the guidelines seek to increase certainty for both residents and the Town Center’s future developer.

Guideline Concept

The Lake Forest Park Town Center is currently zoned for low-density commercial and residential uses and it offers no public amenities (with the exception of Third Place Commons). Existing zoning does not provide sufficient incentive for the redevelopment of the property. In order to balance sufficient incentives with the community’s vision for the Center, the Framework Design Guidelines contain two levels of redevelopment intensity.

- Mixed-Use Baseline: The mixed-use baseline provides an opportunity to integrate a significant number of residential units into the existing commercial space to create a true town center. Buildings would be limited to 4 floors (3 floors over the ground level), a list of “baseline” public amenities would be required, and certain performance standards would have to be met.
- Mixed-Use Bonus: The mixed-use bonus increases the allowed residential density by one level (4 floors over the ground floor) in return for specific public amenities.

In both cases the scale and design of individual buildings would be guided by additional development standards such as setbacks and limitations to the number of levels on the property’s periphery through a development agreement.

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Placemaking

Placemaking is an encompassing term used to define the qualitative nature of an area. For this Framework Design Guideline, we will focus on three areas of Placemaking that are most critical to this site;

1. Pedestrian scale of the site
2. Edge Conditions

Commented [SB1]: Incorporated in Section 4 (Purpose of the Framework Design Guidelines) in new draft Framework

3. Character of the Redevelopment

Pedestrian Scale of the Site The concept of a “pedestrian scale” is one that strongly resonates with the community participants. The 16+ acre Town Center was developed as an auto-oriented strip center. This is clearly not what the community considers a successful model for the future.

For visioning purposes, a grid proportional in scale to Portland’s “Pearl District” was overlaid onto the town center. One at the scale of Bellevue’s downtown was also overlaid for comparison. While both cities are working hard to make their downtown’s more pedestrian friendly, Portland has the advantage of the smaller scale grid which translates to more corners on buildings, opportunities for natural lighting and ventilation, more windows than walls, more places between the buildings - the public realm. Over time, the Lake Forest Park Town Center should be redeveloped in a scale that similarly better suits people. A pedestrian scale grid should be integrated into the overall site to establish a general framework from which elements such as structures, transportation and parking, sidewalks, courtyards, and environmental enhancements can be designed in a coordinated manner. A pedestrian scale grid means there is a people oriented system of moving through the site. It does not necessarily mean the streets and access ways are laid out on the same grid. To achieve the sense of pedestrian scale, at approximately every 200’-250’ there should be a ground related, accessible public walking route throughout the site (Placemaking Baseline Standard).

Any redevelopment scenario must place the pedestrian first. Pedestrians must have the senses of comfort and safety when enjoying the center, and cars should be very slow moving where they interface with people (think Pike Place Market and select areas of UVillage for some examples).

p. 27 [graphic examples of pedestrian scale grid and overlay of the grid on TC aerial photo]

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Edge Conditions

Along Lake City Way south of Lake Forest Park, there are examples of multi-level structures that loom over the public realm. Lake Forest Park’s Town Center will be different. These guidelines recommend that all building frontages that are adjacent to the site’s edges must present a pedestrian character. The following pages offer guidelines for upper level building setbacks that will achieve an appropriate transition to the surrounding neighborhood scale.

The graphic to the right diagrams the perimeter of the site where this transition to the more residential scale of Lake Forest Park will take place. This stepped setback approach will also occur in the interior of the site adjacent to major public realm elements, also described in the following pages.

The buildings on site, including housing, blend in with the community’s character.

EDGE SCALE DIAGRAM: “Step” upper setbacks at project boundaries

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Character of the Redevelopment

The following are baseline performance standards to establish general character elements on the site, such as density, scale, setback and mix of use.

Density

Residential -

Residential density shall be determined by performance rather than prescription, that is, the development proposal will be primarily reviewed for its approach to achieving the ideals set forth related to elements such as the edge conditions and number of levels.

Commercial -

No building footprint should exceed 60,000sf.

Building Scale

The following are anticipated heights for floor to floor levels for various uses.

- Grocery – up to 20'
- Retail – up to 18'
- Workplace/office – up to 12'
- Residential – 10' typical

Streetscape Orientation

- Adjacent the public realm, the following streetscape elements should be incorporated,

Residential Streetscape

- The private residence floor level should be elevated approximately 36" from the adjacent public realm.
- The building should avoid blank walls by engaging the public realm with windows and detailing. Access doors are not necessarily components of this orientation.

Non-residential Streetscape

- The business should architecturally face the public realm with glazing, typically no less than 50% of the ground level façade.
- Doors, plazas and entry courts should typically front onto the public realm.
- The presence of loading bays and garage entries should be minimized.

A note on performance vs prescriptive standards.

When you walk through a great place do you think to yourself “this feels wonderful” or do you think “how many dwelling units to the acre is this?” Performance based standards as proposed in this document recognize Town Center as a unique place. The City must be engaged in its design evolution, rather than rely upon prescriptive based standards typical of zoning code check lists. The Town Center should have excellent spaces and places, not a completed checklist of zoning requirements. Good developers will appreciate the opportunity to show the community what they can do with a creative design team, and the community will benefit from design rigor being wholly focused on the character of this place.

Stepped Setbacks

To help define character, the baseline standard scale of the buildings adjacent the edges and areas of major public realm, such as the major internal plaza or a primary pedestrian-focused “main street,” should not exceed two (2) levels for the building’s first 12- 16’, regardless of its use.

Behind the stepped edge of the buildings, the scale may be three (3) levels over one (1) level of concrete base. An exception to the number of concrete base levels, up to two levels total, will be considered in slope transition areas if the proposal demonstrates that the overall intents of scale, character and reduced surface parking is met.

Another level may be added to the top of the structure as a bonus level if public benefit is provided above and beyond the baseline standards described in these redevelopment guidelines. This will total four (4) levels over concrete base. Suggestions of public realm benefits and its review process can be found in the Implementation section of this document. Any bonus level should be stepped back not less than 6' from the edge of the story below.

p. 31 [more graphic examples of stepped setbacks]

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Character/Mix of Uses

Baseline Standards, Mix of Use [title of box containing the following:]

To achieve the goal of mixing uses on site, uses may be mixed either horizontally (side by side) or vertically (integrated within the same building). Residential must be included on site as a component. Allowable uses include but are not limited to residential, senior housing, live-work, retail, service, office, professional office, public realm, event space and performing arts.

The graphic to the left indicates areas of land use emphasis. Generally, the area nearest Bothell Way (blue) is most suited for commercial emphasis. Residential may be a component of this area, but should be subservient to the commercial uses. The area to the north of the site is more suited to residential uses. Limited commercial activity could occur therein. Market analysis for the site indicates the site is larger than necessary for exclusive commercial activity unless a substantial portion of the site is dedicated for surface parking. It is important for the creation of value on the site to augment the uses with a meaningful amount of residential use.

p. 33 [section divider page – no graphic or text guidance]

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Character Ideas – Buildings [photos with the following words superimposed on them]

VIBRANT MIXED-USE – scale, diversity, visibility, live-work-play, 18-hour use

RESIDENTIAL – transition, stewardship, flexible spaces, people, convenience

STREETS AS PUBLIC REALM – gathering place, transit connection, neighborhood identity, secure and safe

Commented [SB2]: Included in Section 5.4.3 (Step Backs in Building Facades with Buildings Over Three Levels Above Grade) in new draft Framework

Commented [SB3]: Addressed in Section 5.4.2 (Land Use Emphasis Areas and Site Master Planning) in new draft Framework

Above are examples of projects that were presented to the public for comment. Although all have their own design quality, the five images that resonated most with the community and the Design Guidelines Task Force are highlighted with [a yellow square].

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Character Ideas – Site [photos with the following words superimposed on them]

ECOLOGICALLY FUNCTIONING INFRASTRUCTURE – habitat enhancement, biodiversity, solar resources, nutrient cycle, air quality

COMMUNITY BASED PLACEMAKING – stewardship, people, education, neighborhood identity, flexible spaces, transit connections, gathering place

ECONOMIC VITALITY – convenience, visibility, people, , live-work-play, extended hours/24-7, secure and safe

Ecological Infrastructure - The sensible blending of infrastructure function with ecological benefit received strong support from the community and the Design Guidelines Task Force. Highlighting environmental features can create a unique character and identity for the Center.

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Environmental Stewardship

“Recognized regionally for its environmental stewardship, the Center features the community’s environmental assets making it a place like no other...” Sustainable Lake Forest Park Town Center Task Force Vision 2004

ECOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The idea that man-made and natural systems are connected is not new. We recognize that certain infrastructure choices and strategies, especially regarding storm water, can have great impact on a site's ecological performance. A vision of the Sustainable Task Force was to highlight and express the environment at Town Center. At the public meeting it was suggested that the Environment and Placemaking should even be considered as one topic within this document. Further, the idea of an "ecological infrastructure," had strong support.

The graphic at the left is a diagram that expresses in conceptual form some of the particular expectations the community has expressed relative to creating an environmental stewardship strategy for the site. These include:

1. enhance and improve Lyon Creek's habitat in a manner that will create a sense of identity as well for the Town Center.

Commented [SB4]: Addressed in 18.42.130F Land Coverage (impervious surface criteria to incentivize enhancement of buffer)

2. preserve and enhance the strong edge of mature landscape along Ballinger Way including the removal of the ground level invasive species and renovating the area with a native or appropriate low water need planting palette.

Commented [SB5]: Addressed in 18.42.130C. Landscaping (City Arborist discretion to alter standards to protect existing trees)

3. to integrate environment and infrastructure. To highlight this integration as an identity and differentiation for the Town Center.

4. clean and control rate of surface water runoff prior to its release into Lyon Creek.

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Baseline Standards for Environmental Performance at Town Center

The following are baseline recommendations for environmental performance at Town Center. The developer may offer for consideration innovative strategies other than those listed to meet the intent.

This document offers a selection of acceptable standards from which the owner can choose for renovation, new construction and site work. As a baseline standard, the owner/developer will select a performance benchmark to reference, prepare support documentation that demonstrates the project's achievement, and submit this documentation to the City for review. Submittal for official certification to the benchmark organization is encouraged but not required, and would alleviate the requirement for City review. The City reserves the right to submit project documentation for certification on its own.

The owner must submit (to the City or benchmark organization) documentation that refers to at least one of the following performance standards for all significant renovation, new construction and associated site work. Note that none of the standards below are codified requirements from the City, but rather common references for the builder and City to understand environmental performance.

Some uses, such as retail centers and grocery stores, do not have a readily tailored rating system. In this instance, the applicant should demonstrate a benchmark of performance that exceeds "code compliant" by 20% for energy use and water consumption.

Residential

- BuiltGreen three (3) star
- Green Globes two (2) globe rating
- LEED R for residential (certification, when available)

Commercial and Mixed Use

- BuiltGreen three (3) star for residential portion
- Green Globes (2) globe rating
- LEED NC for New Construction (certification level)
- LEED EB for Existing Buildings (certification level)

Benchmark Organization websites

Built Green- www.builtgreen.net

Green Globes- www.thegbi.com

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)-

www.usgbc.org

Other informational web sites

Advanced Buildings Technologies & Practices-

www.advancedbuildings.com

US Department of Energy- www.energy.gov

Rocky Mountain Institute- www.rmi.org

US Government - Energy Star - www.energystar.gov

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Mobility and “Walkability”

[map of existing transit, pedestrian infrastructure]

Map legend text:

vehicular access

- potential transit access also

crosswalk

- same as existing

- re-paint and/or surface

pedestrian connection

bus stops

- structured

- along access drives

- add info kiosks/lighting

burke gilman trail

“The Center will be a safe, walkable hub of activity for people of all ages.” Lake Forest Park Task Force Report Vision 2004

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Pedestrian environment

- “Pedestrian first” design
- Provide a pedestrian pathway adjacent to Lyon Creek along Bothell Way.
- Provide a pedestrian trail adjacent Lyon Creek on the west property when adjacent redevelopment occurs.

- Create a connected pedestrian “grid” system within the Center that gives clear priority to the pedestrian.
- Provide a pedestrian walkway separated by landscape strip from Ballinger Way - 6’ minimum width.

Transit

- Connect shelters with pedestrian walkways to the Center’s retail core.
- Provide lighting and informational kiosks at the shelters.

Bicycle

- Provide clear bike route of travel between the center and the crosswalk connections to the Burke Gilman Trail.
- Highlight this regional trail as an amenity to the site.
- Provide bike racks exclusive from the sidewalks, and bike trails along the site’s edges connecting to the core areas.
- Provide bicycle storage units within multifamily housing area.
- Provide bicycle storage areas adjacent transit
- Facilities or within park and ride facility if developed.

Vehicular

- Maintain five existing access driveways to site
 - Two on Ballinger Way
 - Three on Bothell Way
- Lengthen distance between access points and internal drive aisle options to lengthen stacking capability (internalize parking areas rather than around perimeter)
- Design internal streets with pedestrian authority, traffic calming techniques, and to prevent short cutting of the Ballinger Way/Bothell Way intersection.

Parking

- Specific parking standards as well as shared use calculations from consultant will be considered

ADA

- Redevelopment will at a minimum comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as make every reasonable effort to be an inclusive and accessible to people of all abilities.

p. 40 [map of public realm objectives]

Public Realm - Public Ownership portion

“Town Center is an inviting gathering place and the heart of the City’s diverse, high quality, economically viable, community – scale shopping and business district.”

Maximize the synergy between the adjacent publicly-owned amenities by;

Ballinger Way right of way –

- Preserve and enhance existing mature trees within the Ballinger Way right of way. Replace invasive ivy with more acceptable, native landscape material.
- Consider City Hall as one possible template of how to interface with Ballinger Way (residential/office example)
- With retail, architecturally face Ballinger Way esplanade with uses and courtyards to provide visual connection
- Enhance the functionality of the walkway along the Ballinger Way edge by creating a safe, walkable and bikeable landscape esplanade along the entire Ballinger Way Edge (8'-10' of road separated trailway). Connect to and highlight bus stops.

Bothell Way right of way-

- Integrate a pedestrian space along the Bothell Way frontage extending from east to west.
- Connect to and highlight bus stops and Lyon Creek open space area.

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Public Realm - Private Ownership portion

Design Guideline Task Force member summed it up well when he described the service that Third Place Commons has provided Lake Forest Park. To paraphrase, he said “it is a place where you can easily meet friends rather than “play host,” where it is easy to access from anywhere in Lake Forest Park in 5-10 minutes, it’s a place where teenagers can go with their friends after school, on foot or bike, to work on projects, play “magic” cards or chess in the company of neighbors rather than an unsupervised house. It is a place where people can linger and converse regardless of weather or daylight. It’s a place where seniors have dance classes and kids learn to make puppets. It’s a flexible place for book readings, public gatherings and performances; the list goes on.”

Third Place Commons is privately run and the City has no control over whether it stays or goes. However, the Task Force expresses through this document that any potential redevelopment provide the spirit and function described above. In summary, as a baseline condition we strongly urge the provision of an interior open space that is demonstrated to be flexible and functional for a range of events, that it be central and activated by surrounding uses, day and evening, summer and winter. That it is inviting to all ages and public in nature, where a person can feel welcome even if they are not shopping. In essence, the space should function as a “Third Place.”

The community has suggested that a quality public realm is one of their chief desires to realize within Town Center. We suggest the developer to thoughtfully consider the many important uses of the public realm and suggest a response that meets the spirit outlined above as well as blends with the new Town Center. The Task Force recommends a minimum of 10,000 sf of interior flexible interior open space and 10,000 sf of adjacent exterior open space as a minimum size to be meaningful and programmable.

Public realm summary of recommendations

- 10,000 sf flexible interior open space
- 10,000 sf adjacent exterior open space
- Surrounding uses to have “eyes on” orientation to space
- Space to be welcoming and activated during business hours in every season.

Commented [SB6]: Included in Section 5.4 (Design Guidelines Applicable with Development Agreements and Mixed Use Bonus Provisions) in new draft Framework

- Programming of the space can be through a non-profit or similar organization.
- Open space relative to any residentially focused portion of the site will be reviewed independently and for its appropriateness in providing a range of exterior open space experiences for residents.

“Social condensers” -- the place where citizens of a community or neighborhood meet to develop friendships, discuss issues, and interact with others -- have always been an important way in which the community developed and retained cohesion and a sense of identity. Ray Oldenburg (1989), in The Great Good Place, calls these locations “third places.”

Appendix 2 – Framework Summary Table (Text of ‘Current Zoning’ column not included)

PLACEMAKING	Baseline	Bonus
Site Scale	200 - 250' grid of ground-related walkways.	Same As Baseline
Uses	Mixed Use (horizontal or vertical). Redevelopment must include residential as a component of the overall site. Allowable uses include but are not limited to residential, senior housing, live/work, retail, service, professional office, public realm and event space, performing arts.	Same As Baseline
Height	“Three over one” - Four stories total. Anticipated floor-to-floor heights for various uses are as follows: Grocery 20', Retail 18', Office, Live/Work and Service 12', Residential 10'	Same As Baseline (see Incentive to Redevelop below)
Density		
Residential	Residential - Density shall be determined by form rather than prescription. Density will be based upon complying with elements such as Edge Conditions and floor-to-floor heights.	Same As Baseline
Commercial	Commercial – No single-store footprint should exceed 60,000sf	Same As Baseline

Edge Conditions	Buildings adjacent areas of public realm (public and private ownership), should incorporate 12-16 foot setback of the third floor, regardless of use. Landscaping plan increasing negative cover and buffer treatment complying with Ch. 16.16.350H Town Center provisions.	Same As Baseline
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Commented [SB7]: Included in Section 5.4.3 (Step Backs in Building Facades with Buildings Over Three Levels Above Grade) in new draft Framework

Commented [SB8]: The referenced section of code was repealed in 2017. Intent captured in proposed TC Code Update Ch. 18.42.130 (impervious surface limitations and incentives to enhance buffers)

ENVIRONMENT	Baseline	Bonus
Residential	LEED R for Residential certification or Green Globes 2 Globe level or BuiltGreen 3 star level	LEED R Silver or Built Green 4 Star or Green Globe 3 Globes
Mixed Use and Commercial	LEED R or Built Green 3 star for Residential component, LEED ND or Green Globe 2 Globe level, LEED EB for Existing buildings	LEED NC or EB Silver, Built Green 4 Star or Green Globe 3 Globes

MOBILITY & WALKABILITY	Baseline	Bonus
Pedestrian	"Pedestrian First" design, pedestrian grid (see placemaking), east/west connection adjacent Lyon Creek, enhanced pedestrian walkway along Ballinger Way (separated from street where reasonably achievable)	Same As Baseline
Transit	Connect shelters to pedestrian walkways, provide information kiosks on-site, provide additional lighting to shelters and weather protection for bike racks or bike storage facility. To the extent that third party funding for park and ride and/or transit-oriented facilities is available, work in good faith to include such facilities to the full extent feasible.	Baseline standards plus integrated transit facility within the site.

Commented [SB9]: See Section 5.3 (Pedestrian Amenities and Places for People) in new draft Framework

Bicycle	Provide clear bike route of travel between the crosswalk to Burk Gilman trail and the rest of the site and weather protection for bike racks or storage within multifamily area.	Same As Baseline
Vehicular	Lengthen distance between access points and internal drive aisles (per Heffron report), internal access to have pedestrian authority, use traffic calming, design to prevent short cutting of the intersection.	Same As Baseline
Parking	Alternative off-street parking ratios as well as demonstrated feasibility of shared parking will be considered.	Baseline standards with increased underground parking
ADA	Compliance with ADA, as well as efforts to make this site inclusive to people of all abilities.	Same As Baseline

PUBLIC REALM	Baseline	Bonus
Site Edges	Create visual connection between all public realm spaces and buildings, enhance landscape within adjacent rights of way to replace invasive plants with drought tolerant and native species. Enhance Lyon Creek on west edge with appropriate habitat vegetation.	Same As Baseline
Site Interior	(1) Enhance Lyon Creek adjacent Bothell Way as a character contributing element for center; (2) provide approximately 15,000 sf contiguous flexible open space element, approximately 7,500sf of which is flexible interior space (a third place concept), (3) provide numerous seating opportunities along pedestrian grid, (4) provide "eyes on" design of surrounding structures to public realm.	Baseline standards with Increase in size of indoor and outdoor open space areas and added public amenities (water features, public art, etc.)

INCENTIVE TO REDEVELOP	(1) 3 over 1 Residential Capacity (limited by Edge Condition requirements); (2) proactive permitting process; (3) design flexibility; (4) market-based redevelopment standards	4 over 1 Residential Capacity (limited by Edge Condition requirements).
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