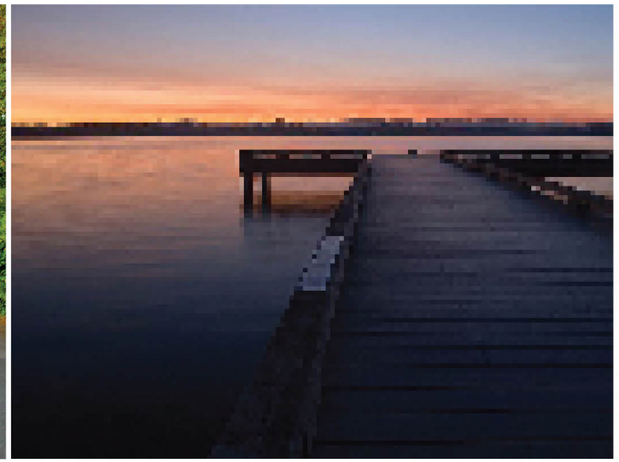


# Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan

## Preliminary Preferred Land Use Plan

Meydenbauer Bay
PARK AND LAND USE PLAN

CITY OF BELLEVUE WASHINGTON

SASAKI

AJEM ▪ EPS ▪ ESAA ▪ KPFF
PRR ▪ SATO ▪ TENW ▪ YANTIS

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


INTRODUCTION . . . . . 3

BACKGROUND . . . . . 4

EARLY ALTERNATIVES . . . . . 7

PRELIMINARY PREFERRED LAND USE PLAN . . . . . 11

DEFERRED ISSUES . . . . . 15

CONCLUSION . . . . . 16

APPENDIX

A. Planning Principles . . . . . 17


*The information in this material was compiled, written, and/or prepared by an independent consultant, and does not represent any endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the City of Bellevue.

# INTRODUCTION

On January 17, 2008 the Meydenbauer Bay Steering Committee reached consensus on a Preliminary Preferred Land Use Plan for this project. This Plan will be temporarily set aside while the project turns its attention to design of the new waterfront park on Meydenbauer Bay. As the park design evolves, park and land use elements will be re-merged to ensure that the entire project establishes a unified template for future development actions.

REPORT PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to document the consensus reached by the project Steering Committee on January 17, 2008. This report:

- Establishes a record of the project status at this stage, to facilitate the re-joining of the land use and park components at a future point in the planning process;
- Identifies the land use themes, concepts, and direction supported by the Steering Committee; and
- Identifies issues that will continue to be addressed during the park planning phase.

Figure 1: The city now owns approximately 10 acres of land along Meydenbauer Bay. Also shown are Wildwood and Downtown Parks

The Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan project officially began in early 2007, following years of property acquisition by the city along the north shore of Meydenbauer Bay for the purpose of developing a significant waterfront park and destination. The city now owns a quarter-mile of shoreline along the Bay, encompassing approximately 10 acres of land reaching from Meydenbauer Beach Park east to, and including, the Bellevue marina at Meydenbauer Bay and up to the southwest corner of downtown (see Figure 1).

The Bellevue Comprehensive Plan and the Bellevue Parks and Open Space Systems Plan envision both the creation of the new park and connections between the park and the downtown through the intervening "upland" area. The project includes the study of development patterns and land uses in this area to determine how properties might redevelop, through rules or incentives, in a way that helps visually or physically connect the waterfront to the downtown, create pedestrian-oriented spaces, and enhance and protect neighboring residential areas.

Figure 2: Project Study Area

The project study area includes a "primary study area" and a "secondary study area" (see Figure 2). The primary study area includes city-owned property along Meydenbauer Bay plus nearby upland properties that might redevelop in a manner that complements the new park. The secondary study area is broadly drawn to encompass the area that might be influenced by the new park, but where changes in park-related land uses are less likely.

A citizen Steering Committee was established by the City Council to help engage the public, guide the planning effort, and assist the city staff in developing land use and park master plan alternatives. The Steering Committee serves in an advisory role to the City Council and their Boards and Commissions, and will ultimately forward recommendations on the future land use and park master plan vision and tools to implement that vision to the City Council. The Council approved a set of twelve planning principles for the project to help guide the Steering Committee in its work (Appendix A). These principles establish the foundational themes for the project, and will continue to be relied upon through completion of the planning effort.

To allow land use planning activities to move forward in a stable land use environment, the City Council imposed a development moratorium on thirteen properties within the primary study area, temporarily prohibiting the application for or issuance of development permits (see Figure 3). The moratorium, which expired January 30, 2008, provided sufficient time to produce the preliminary preferred land use plan that is discussed in this report.

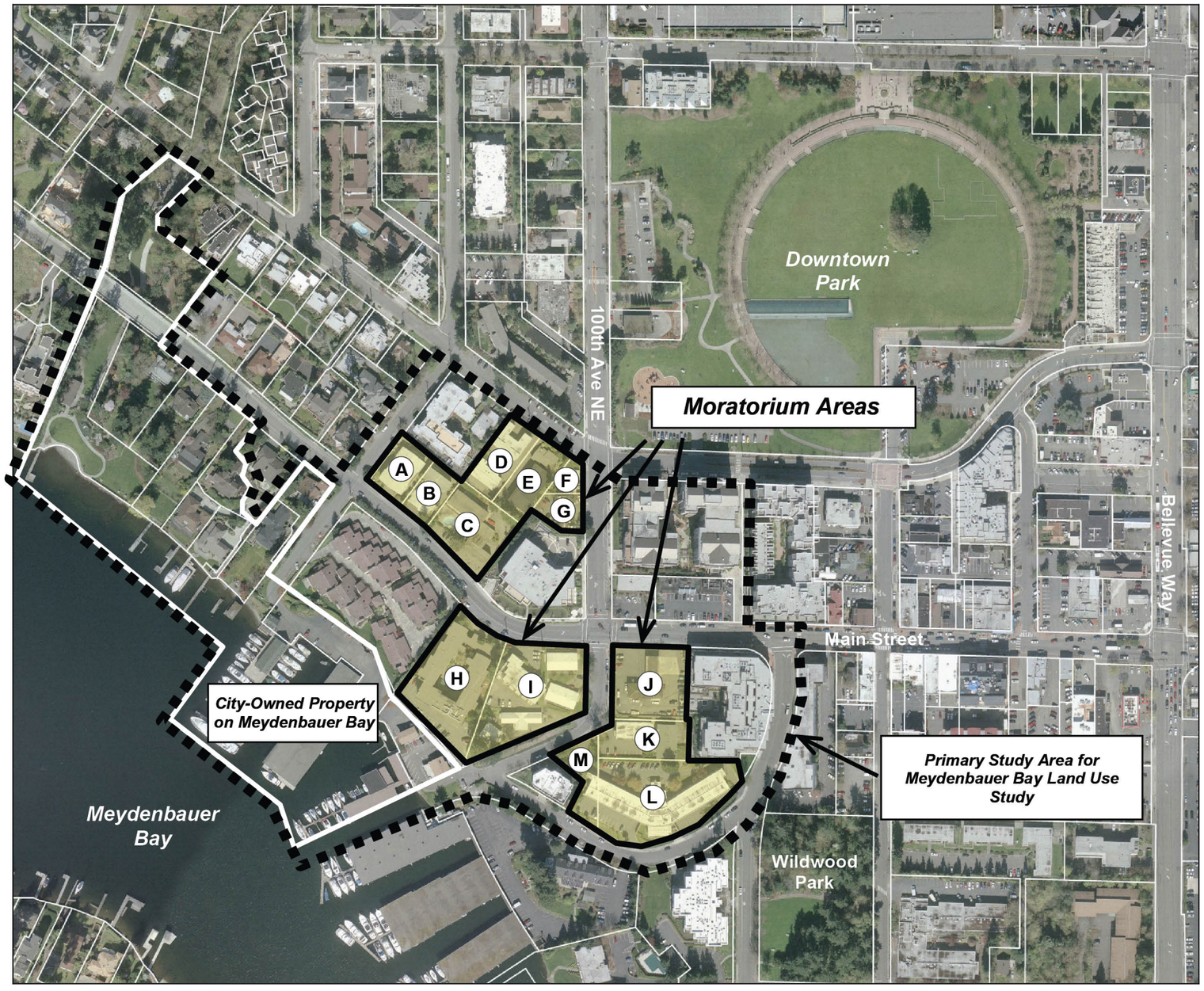
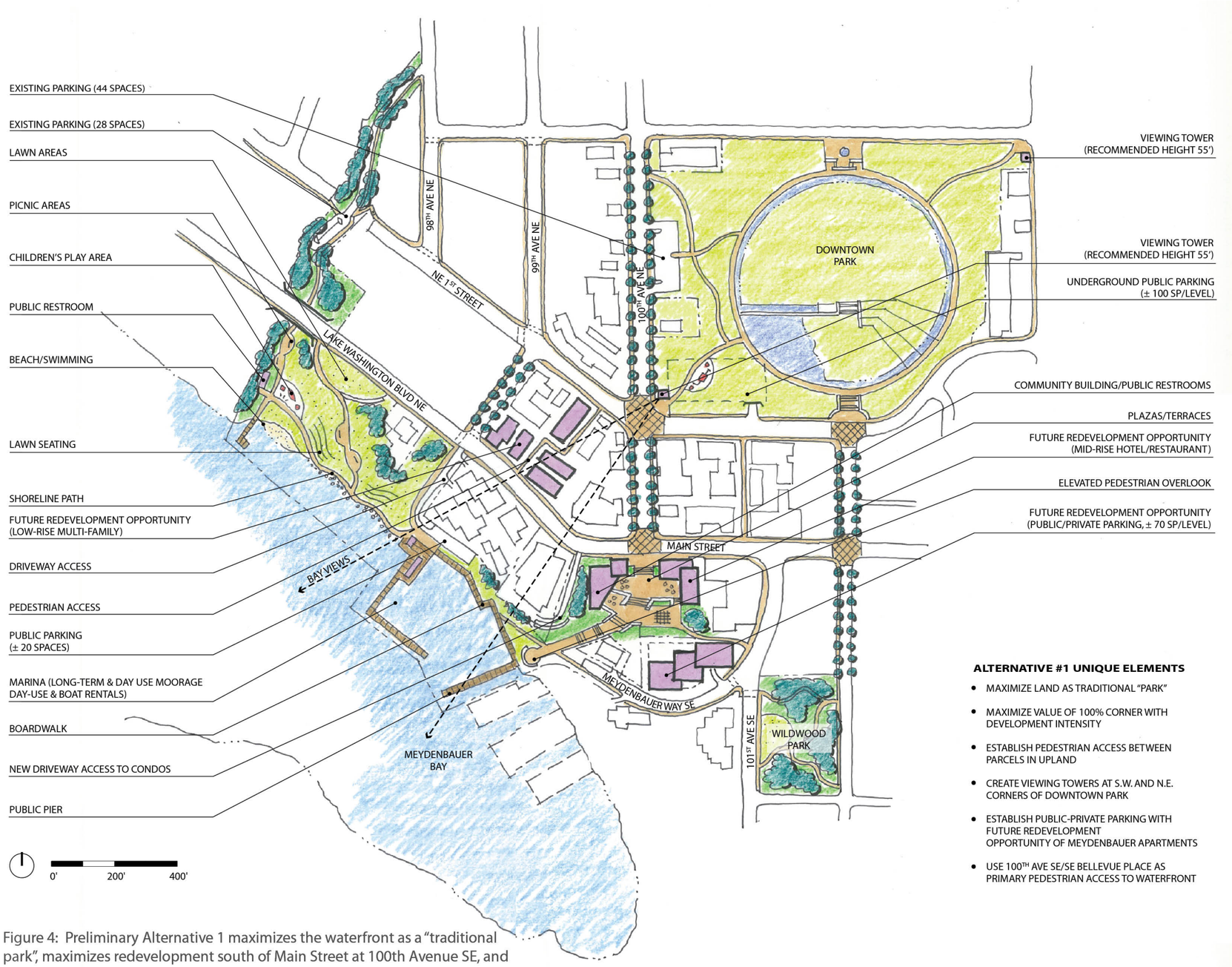



Figure 3: Moratorium Areas + City-Owned Property

In September 2007 three preliminary alternatives were developed that displayed, at a conceptual level, a range of opportunities and approaches to park design, redevelopment of upland areas, and connections of the waterfront with nearby neighborhoods (see Figures 4-6). The alternatives were not intended to represent three different choices, but rather a menu of ideas that could be mixed and matched and further explored and refined as the project progressed. Although the alternatives share many common elements or themes, each also suggests unique elements, some of which relate specifically to the eventual park plan, some to the land use plan, and still others that relate to both the park and land use components.

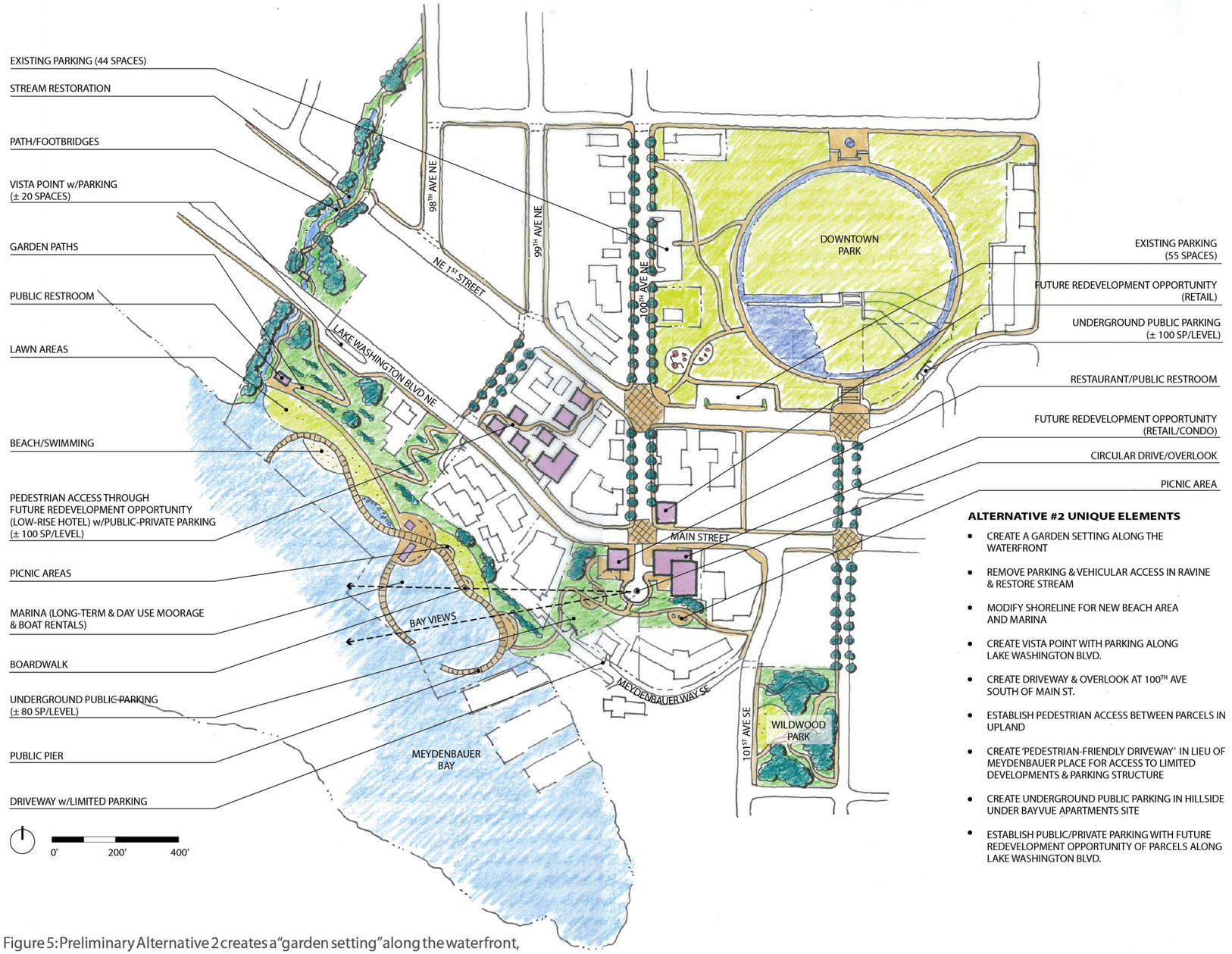
While each preliminary alternative includes a concept for the park design, the focus of the Steering Committee since these alternatives were produced has been on the land use component. This was due to the desire to produce a preliminary preferred land use plan prior to the expiration of the moratorium. No further work has been done on the park plan itself, and no decisions about the design or use of the park have been made. Planning of the park will resume in 2008.




**ALTERNATIVE #1 UNIQUE ELEMENTS**

- MAXIMIZE LAND AS TRADITIONAL "PARK"
- MAXIMIZE VALUE OF 100% CORNER WITH DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY
- ESTABLISH PEDESTRIAN ACCESS BETWEEN PARCELS IN UPLAND
- CREATE VIEWING TOWERS AT S.W. AND N.E. CORNERS OF DOWNTOWN PARK
- ESTABLISH PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARKING WITH FUTURE REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY OF MEYDENBAUER APARTMENTS
- USE 100TH AVE SE/SE BELLEVUE PLACE AS PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO WATERFRONT

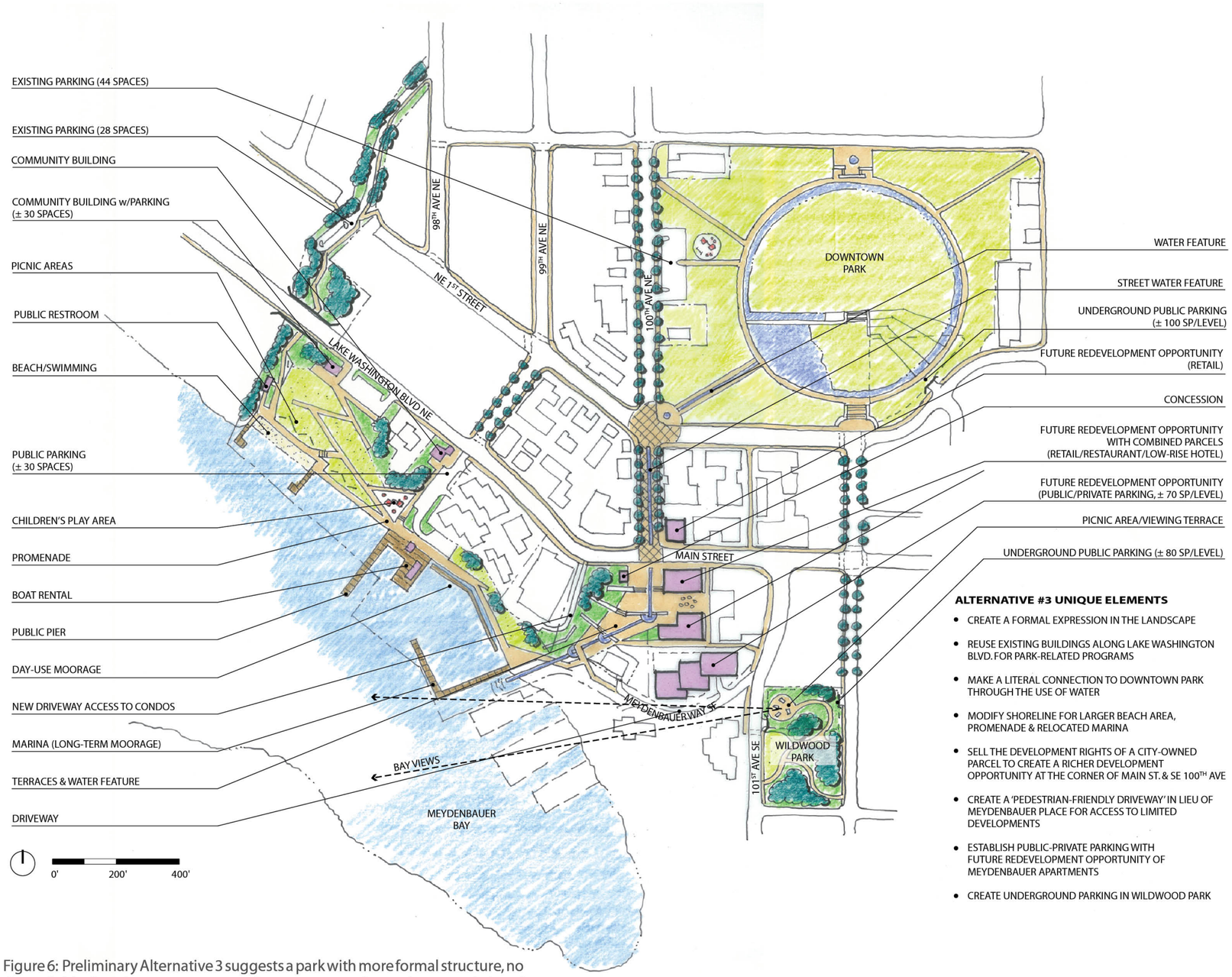
Figure 4: Preliminary Alternative 1 maximizes the waterfront as a "traditional park", maximizes redevelopment south of Main Street at 100th Avenue SE, and provides a through-block pedestrian connection from NE 1st Street to Lake Washington Blvd




**ALTERNATIVE #2 UNIQUE ELEMENTS**

- CREATE A GARDEN SETTING ALONG THE WATERFRONT
- REMOVE PARKING & VEHICULAR ACCESS IN RAVINE & RESTORE STREAM
- MODIFY SHORELINE FOR NEW BEACH AREA AND MARINA
- CREATE VISTA POINT WITH PARKING ALONG LAKE WASHINGTON BLVD.
- CREATE DRIVEWAY & OVERLOOK AT 100TH AVE SOUTH OF MAIN ST.
- ESTABLISH PEDESTRIAN ACCESS BETWEEN PARCELS IN UPLAND
- CREATE 'PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY DRIVEWAY' IN LIEU OF MEYDENBAUER PLACE FOR ACCESS TO LIMITED DEVELOPMENTS & PARKING STRUCTURE
- CREATE UNDERGROUND PUBLIC PARKING IN HILLSIDE UNDER BAYVUE APARTMENTS SITE
- ESTABLISH PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARKING WITH FUTURE REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY OF PARCELS ALONG LAKE WASHINGTON BLVD.

Figure 5: Preliminary Alternative 2 creates a "garden setting" along the waterfront, daylights a stream at the west end of the park, and creates a circular drive and overlook on 100th Avenue SE




**ALTERNATIVE #3 UNIQUE ELEMENTS**

- CREATE A FORMAL EXPRESSION IN THE LANDSCAPE
- REUSE EXISTING BUILDINGS ALONG LAKE WASHINGTON BLVD. FOR PARK-RELATED PROGRAMS
- MAKE A LITERAL CONNECTION TO DOWNTOWN PARK THROUGH THE USE OF WATER
- MODIFY SHORELINE FOR LARGER BEACH AREA, PROMENADE & RELOCATED MARINA
- SELL THE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS OF A CITY-OWNED PARCEL TO CREATE A RICHER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AT THE CORNER OF MAIN ST. & SE 100TH AVE
- CREATE A 'PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY DRIVEWAY' IN LIEU OF MEYDENBAUER PLACE FOR ACCESS TO LIMITED DEVELOPMENTS
- ESTABLISH PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARKING WITH FUTURE REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY OF MEYDENBAUER APARTMENTS
- CREATE UNDERGROUND PARKING IN WILDWOOD PARK

Figure 6: Preliminary Alternative 3 suggests a park with more formal structure, no through-block pedestrian connection from NE 1st to Lake Washington Blvd, and the use of water to draw pedestrians from Downtown Park to the waterfront

As the land use component of the project emerged, discussion focused on two separate geographic nodes within the primary study area. One area was referred to as the "Upper Block", which is surrounded by NE 1st Street, 100th Avenue NE, Lake Washington Blvd NE, and 99th Avenue NE (see Figure 7). The second area was referred to as "South of Main", which lies along 100th Avenue SE/ Bellevue Place SE, generally between Main Street and Meydenbauer Way SE (see Figure 8).

UPPER BLOCK

In the Upper Block, the purpose of the study was to explore 100% market-based land use incentives and zoning standards that would cause property to redevelop and provide through-block public corridors for views of or pedestrian access toward the water. Ultimately, two critical conclusions were reached. First, due to topography and the location of nearby buildings, opportunities for ground-level views of the bay from NE 1st Street were limited at best. Second, the development intensity necessary to persuade property owners to redevelop properties and create a significant view and pedestrian corridor was so great in the context of the current market, that it would result in buildings having much greater bulk and height than those on surrounding properties. The Steering Committee determined that such buildings would be unacceptable in this location and would provide too little public benefit.

Although there was some discussion of alternative public subsidy programs and options that could potentially overcome market based incentive deficiencies in today's market, the consensus of the Steering Committee with respect to the Upper Block was that current efforts should focus on improving pedestrian connections within existing rights-of-way and improving edge treatments along those pedestrian ways. The Steering Committee suggested incentives that might encourage, while not necessarily ensuring, redevelopment of existing structures in order to achieve improved architecture and some pedestrian amenities.

UPPER BLOCK CONSENSUS CONCEPTS:

Pedestrian linkages in existing rights-of-way are an important Plan element, and special treatment of these connecting rights-of-way is needed to incorporate this element into the Plan. This can be accomplished through some or all of the following:

- Improved and consistent sidewalk system
- Landscaping
- Surface treatment, within walkways and at crossings
- Pedestrian amenities, such as, but not necessarily limited to, benches
- Signage
- Public Art

Provide incentives for redevelopment of aging properties, not for the purpose of creating through-block corridors, but to help improve the edge treatment along public walkways through improved buildings and landscaping and providing minor pedestrian amenities. Such incentives would not necessarily guarantee redevelopment, but could result in some public amenities where a property owner chooses to redevelop. Incentives to consider include:

- Increased density (control through Floor Area Ratio vs. units per acre)
- Increased lot coverage/building coverage allowance
- Reduced setback requirements
- Reduced parking requirements

Incentives should:

- Maintain existing height limitations
- Maintain existing allowable uses

Figure 7: Shown above is the entire primary study area; the Upper Block lies southwest of Downtown Park, surrounded by NE 1st Street, 100th Avenue NE, Lake Washington Blvd NE, and 99th Avenue NE

SOUTH OF MAIN

The South of Main area envisions coordinated redevelopment of three property ownerships: The Chevron Station site at Main Street and 100th Ave SE, the Bayvue Village Apartments parcel lying east of 100th Ave SE (now owned by the City of Bellevue), and the Meydenbauer Apartments site on the north side of Meydenbauer Way SE. Together, these parcels contain 2.63 acres of land. Coordinated redevelopment has the potential to provide a number of public benefits, such as shared underground parking, multiple pedestrian routes through the block, public plazas and viewpoints, and activation of public spaces by adjacent uses. The South of Main concept includes the conversion of 100th Ave SE/Bellevue Place SE from a vehicle access route to a major pedestrian gateway to the waterfront park (see Figure 8).

Redevelopment would be stimulated primarily by increased residential density, expansion of retail opportunities, shared development of parking, and creation of a coordinated site plan that produces a strong relationship between the public and private realm and capitalizes on the unique physical setting.

SOUTH OF MAIN CONSENSUS CONCEPTS

- Facilitate coordinated redevelopment of Chevron and Meydenbauer Apartments sites with the participation of the city-owned Bayvue Village Apartments site (east of 100th Ave SE), in a manner that provides public benefits
- Incorporate 100th Ave SE/Bellevue Pl SE into the primary pedestrian connection from Main Street; close this road to vehicles but ensure that emergency and other service vehicle access needs are addressed and provided for
- Allow southerly expansion of retail uses east of 100th Ave SE onto the Bayvue Village Apartments site
- Increase density on the east Bayvue Village and Meydenbauer Apartments sites; control density through Floor Area Ratio rather than dwelling units per acre (for planning purposes, a density of approximately 60 units per acre was assumed)
- Increase allowable lot coverage to accommodate increased density
- Maintain existing height limits on all parcels
- Promote shared underground parking
- Consider a minimum/maximum approach to parking
- Provide pedestrian connection through block to Wildwood Park
- Change character of Meydenbauer Way SE to be more “pedestrian-friendly”
- Use water as unifying theme through the area and to strengthen the connection to Downtown Park

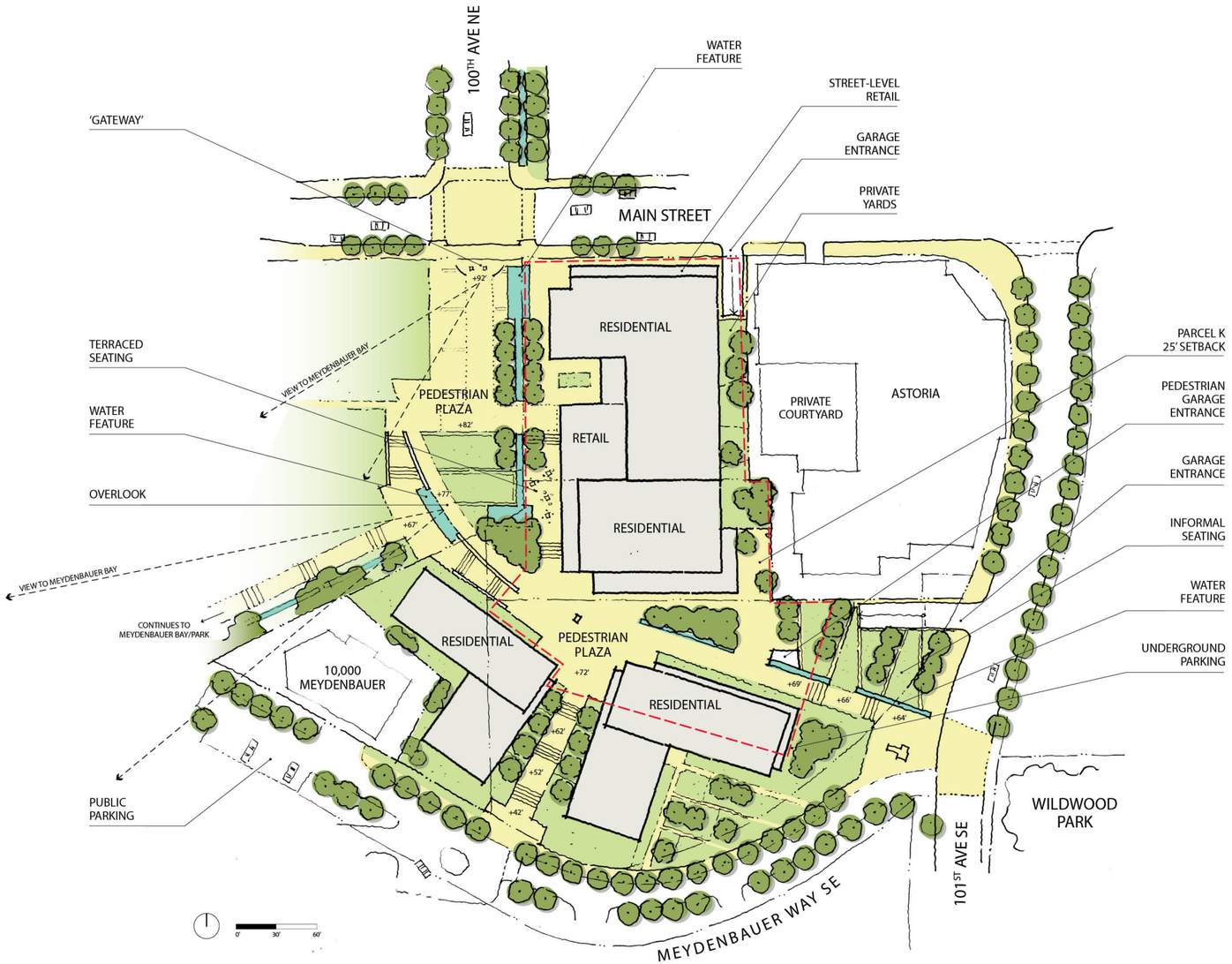



Figure 8: The South of Main concept envisions coordinated redevelopment of several adjacent properties and the creation of a significant pedestrian entry using the 100th Avenue NE right-of-way

# DEFERRED ISSUES

Several issues have been identified that will require resolution before completion of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan. This is not an exhaustive list of issues, and it is likely that additional issues will arise during the park planning phase.

UPPER BLOCK

- The mix of incentives for redevelopment in this area in order to gain public amenities and enhancements along street edges will require more definition and incorporation into the Land Use Code.

SOUTH OF MAIN

- Use and design of the Bayvue Village Apartments parcel lying west of 100th Ave SE, including whether to include any structures
- Final design of 100th SE/Bellevue Pl SE and Meydenbauer Way SE as it continues down to the waterfront park
- Vehicle access to the Vue Condominium
- Pedestrian access connections to existing adjacent properties
- Ensure access and maneuvering room for emergency, service, and other vehicles serving adjacent properties such as 10000 Meydenbauer and others
- Determine parking approach to uses (consider establishing minimum and maximum parking requirements), as well as overall parking quantity.

PARK

- Determine the overall park character
- Identify uses and activities (programming)
  - Public art program
  - History
- Identify and design access points and types (vehicle, pedestrian, marine)
- Park relationship/connections to surrounding parks
  - Programming
  - Pedestrian connections
- Environmental attributes
  - Bay management and water quality improvements
  - Stream restoration opportunities
  - Shoreline treatment
- Moorage/piers
  - Long-term moorage
  - Day use/transient moorage
  - Covered/uncovered slips
  - Quantity and size of slips
  - Public access to piers
  - Reconfiguration of piers
- Parking - Types, quantity, and location(s)

# CONCLUSION

Consensus on a preliminary preferred land use plan marks an important milestone in this project. As the project focus turns to the planning of the park it will be important to not lose sight of the work that has been accomplished on the land use plan. Documenting the concepts embodied in the land use plan will record the work done to date and will facilitate the merging the land use and park components at a later date to make sure the entire project works as a whole and fulfills the vision expressed in the project planning principles.

# APPENDIX A: PLANNING PRINCIPLES

1. REMARKABLE AND MEMORABLE SHORELINE EXPERIENCE

The park will be an extraordinary community-wide public asset. The new park will greatly increase waterfront access, recreational opportunities for all Bellevue residents, and in conjunction with its proximity to the Downtown Park and neighborhood, establish Bellevue as a waterfront city. The surrounding area should complement and take advantage of the unique shoreline location.

2. SPECTRUM OF ACTIVITIES

The new park should provide visitors with a wide range of activities and experiences, from active recreation such as swimming and sailing to passive enjoyment of intimate, green, natural areas. The park plan should artfully blend traditional park uses with a new urban experience, allowing individuals to enjoy different or multiple experiences with each visit or over time.

3. COMPLEMENTARY LAND USES

Urban design and land uses in the upland area adjacent to the park should be pedestrian-oriented and serve the broader community to make the transition from the upland to the shoreline seamless, enjoyable, inviting, and compelling. They should draw the pedestrian toward the water, convey a sense of excitement, and provide an interactive experience between the waterfront and upland areas.

4. INCREASED PHYSICAL AND VISUAL ACCESS

Corridors that visually open up the waterfront from upland areas and that facilitate pedestrian movement from Downtown Park to the waterfront should be maximized. It is critical that corridors and public spaces overcome real or perceived physical obstacles to reaching the shoreline.

5. PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY

The park and its connections should be places that can be enjoyed by pedestrians without fear of conflicts with automobiles. Where vehicle drives or parking areas are necessary, they should be designed and located to promote a "pedestrian first" message.

6. ECONOMIC VITALITY

The park and its connections should support the nearby business community, providing an interactive and welcoming environment for downtown employees, residents, and visitors. Land uses and urban design elements should contribute to the economic vitality of the area as a whole.

7. SUPERIOR DESIGN

The park should be reinforced, communicated, and celebrated through high quality urban design, landscape architecture, building design, and streetscape treatment, not only within the park itself but also throughout nearby public spaces and park connections. The plan should reflect a high standard of excellence.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

The park design should respect and reflect its unique and sensitive waterfront setting. The plan should explore opportunities to incorporate measures that improve the shoreline characteristics and water quality in the bay. Best practices for sustainable building and land management should be incorporated.

9. HISTORY

The park design should recognize the heritage of Meydenbauer Bay, from the time of Native Americans, explorers, and early settlers to the industries of whaling, ferrying, and today's residential and pleasure boat moorage. The plan should assess opportunities to preserve and reuse structures of historical note and incorporate means to animate the Bay's rich heritage through public art and interpretive programs.

10. NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT AND PROTECTION

The land use component should be a catalyst for revitalization of older uses while minimizing impacts on neighboring residential areas. Redevelopment of properties in the study area or conversion of apartment buildings to condominiums is expected in the foreseeable future. The land use plan should ensure through rules or incentives that these actions occur in a manner that is both consistent with the area's land use vision and sensitive to adjacent residential uses.

11. COORDINATED PLANNING PROCESS

The park master plan and the land use plan will impact and influence one another. The planning schedule needs to be flexible and expedient, necessitating close coordination.

12. COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENT

The Waterfront Plan should include an implementation strategy that leads to the fulfillment of the vision.

Approved by the City Council March 19, 2007