



DATE: December 14, 2007

TO: Meydenbauer Bay Steering Committee

FROM: Mike Bergstrom, Planning & Community Development
Robin Cole, Parks & Community Services

SUBJECT: **December 20, 2007 Steering Committee Meeting – Agenda Item #3 – Review of Land Use Alternative**

On December 20 the steering committee will review a land use alternative that was developed in response to direction given by the committee on November 15. The alternative and support materials are enclosed, and highlights of the alternative are identified below.

This memo will help focus the December 20 discussion, and addresses the following topics:

- Completing the Land Use phase;
- Description of the land use alternative;
- Items to resolve later (as part of the Park Master Plan phase);
- Testing the Land Use alternative; and
- Next steps

Completing the land use phase:

With the land use moratorium set to expire January 30, the committee has been striving to conclude the land use component of the project before proceeding with park planning. To that end, we propose the approach outlined below. This approach recognizes that some of the issues inherent in this project do not fall neatly or entirely into a “land use” or “park” component, but instead overlap the two. Each component will continue to inform and influence the other.

Therefore, we do not propose that completion of the land use piece be followed immediately by development and adoption of any required comprehensive plan and land use code amendments. Instead, we propose that once the land use alternative receives the support of the steering committee it be set aside while attention is turned to the park component. The land use and park components would be re-joined once a park alternative is developed and refined, allowing us to:

- Create a seamless transition between the waterfront park and the upland, particularly along 100th Ave SE/Bellevue Place SE;

- Ensure the edges of the park plan and land use plan mesh, and adjust the land use component as necessary for optimal integration of the two components;
- Continue to consider parking options and opportunities;
- Address any needed amendments to the comprehensive plan and land use code as a single package, rather than preparing one set of amendments arising from the land use component and a subsequent set arising from the park component.

To complete the current land use phase, we propose that the December and January committee meetings be used as follows:

December 2007:

- Review and evaluate the enclosed alternative. Test the alternative as described below (see “Testing the land use alternative”).
- Give direction for any further refinements to discuss at the January meeting.

January 2008:

- Final review of the land use alternative.
- Declare position of committee on the land use alternative.
- Set the land use alternative aside, pending development of the park master plan.

Description of the land use alternative:

In September 2007 the committee was introduced to three alternatives, presented in graphic form. While those alternatives portrayed both the park and land use components of this project, the discussion of the committee in that and subsequent meetings focused on the land use component due to the moratorium. At the conclusion of the November meeting the committee provided direction to the project team with respect to land use approaches for the “upper block” (between 99th and 100th NE and between NE 1st and Lake Washington Blvd) and the area “south of Main”. The alternative represented in the attached drawings reflects the following features:

Upper Block:

- No changes to existing land use regulations are proposed. The committee concluded that there is too little public benefit to be gained through this block, and that any benefit would come at too great a public cost, at least if pursued entirely through market-driven incentives;
- Other means of influencing redevelopment or instilling better architectural quality would continue to be investigated (e.g., tax incentives);
- Existing rights-of-way will provide pedestrian linkages through this neighborhood to the park. The focus would be on improving the pedestrian experience through such measures as:
 - Better/more complete sidewalk system;
 - Landscaping (street trees);
 - Surface treatment;
 - Pedestrian amenities;
 - Signage;
 - Art.

South of Main (see attached “South of Main Land Use Concept” drawing):

- Maximizes use of 100th Ave SE/Bellevue Place SE as the “grand entry” to the waterfront park;
- Provides transition from Old Bellevue down to the water through variety of activities, experiences, pedestrian routes, and views;
- Integrates redevelopment of Chevron, Bayvue Village Apartments, and Meydenbauer Apartments sites; “blurs” the lines between public and private spaces;
- Allows shared below-grade parking, including public parking, with vehicle access from Main Street and 101st Ave SE and a pedestrian entrance from one of the internal pedestrian plazas;
- Provides retail/commercial uses adjacent to public spaces (pedestrian plazas, terraces, seating areas, view points) to help frame and activate those spaces;
- Maximizes views of the bay from Main Street/100th Ave NE and from plazas, terraces, and overlooks;
- Uses water features as unifying theme/element;
- Provides east-west connection to Wildwood Park;
- Provides a variety of pedestrian routes and experiences through the area;
- Uses different streetscape treatment along Meydenbauer Way to provide a “driveway” feel; would serve adjacent properties and would produce a more interesting pedestrian experience;
- Holds building heights to existing land use code limits;
- Allows residential density of approximately 60 dwelling units per acre.

Items to resolve later (as part of park plan):

Although the attached drawings depict design features and uses within and west of the 100th Ave SE/Bellevue Place SE right-of-way, features and uses in those locations will continue to be designed, evaluated, and determined throughout the park planning process. They are shown on the attached drawings in order to provide context for the area located east of the right-of-way, and to depict important themes (e.g., pedestrian orientation, transition from Old Bellevue to the water, maximization of views, activation of space, response to topography). The drawings help illustrate the fact that development within the right-of-way and on either side of the right-of-way will relate to and inform or influence each other.

The following project elements will be determined or resolved as part of, or in conjunction with, the design of the waterfront park. No action is requested of the committee on these items as part of the land use component.

- Final design of the 100th Ave SE/Bellevue Pl SE right-of-way;
- Use and design of the west Bayvue Village Apartments parcel;
- Vehicle access to The Vue Condominium;
- Park program and master plan design;
- Public parking quantity and location(s);

- Park relationship/connections to surrounding parks;
- Final match-up/integration of the park and land use components.

Testing the land use alternative:

When reviewing the attached alternative, the committee should consider the following questions:

- How well does the alternative respond to prior committee direction?
- Should any of that prior direction be reevaluated?
- How well does it fulfill relevant Comprehensive Plan policies (enclosed)?
- How well does it fulfill the project Planning Principles (enclosed)?
- How could the alternative be improved?

Part of the meeting time should be spent discussing these questions, to make sure that the alternative that emerges sets the best possible course for the future and responds to the project vision as embodied in the Comprehensive Plan and Planning Principles.

Next steps:

How we proceed from here depends in part on answers to the above questions. If the committee determines in December that this alternative fulfills the land use portion of the project vision (or that it can fulfill that vision with modest revisions), we would proceed as follows:

- Provide the City Council with a project update in early January; Council could decide at that time to lift the moratorium earlier than its January 30 scheduled expiration;
- Return to the steering committee on January 17, 2008 with final revisions/refinements;
- Produce a report documenting the primary features, status, and images of the land use component, and those items listed above that will be decided as part of the park planning phase;
- Set aside the land use component pending development of the park master plan;
- Prepare the park program and park master plan alternatives;
- Re-join the land use and park planning components once the park plan is developed;
- Draft comprehensive plan and land use code amendment language;
- Complete the comprehensive plan amendments, land use code amendments, and park master plan, and process them through the appropriate review and adoption processes.

Conclusion:

The project is arriving at a critical and exciting point. Completion of the land use component will answer many of the questions raised by the public over the past several months with respect to the upland portion of the study area. It will allow us to turn our attention to the future park itself and begin answering questions about park character, programming, moorage, and similar issues of interest or concern to the public.

We look forward to meeting with you on December 20 and gaining your feedback on the enclosed land use alternative.

Attachments:

- Waterfront District Land Use Concept
- South of Main Land Use Concept
- South of Main Views
- Circulation Plan
- Comprehensive Plan Policies
- Planning Principles

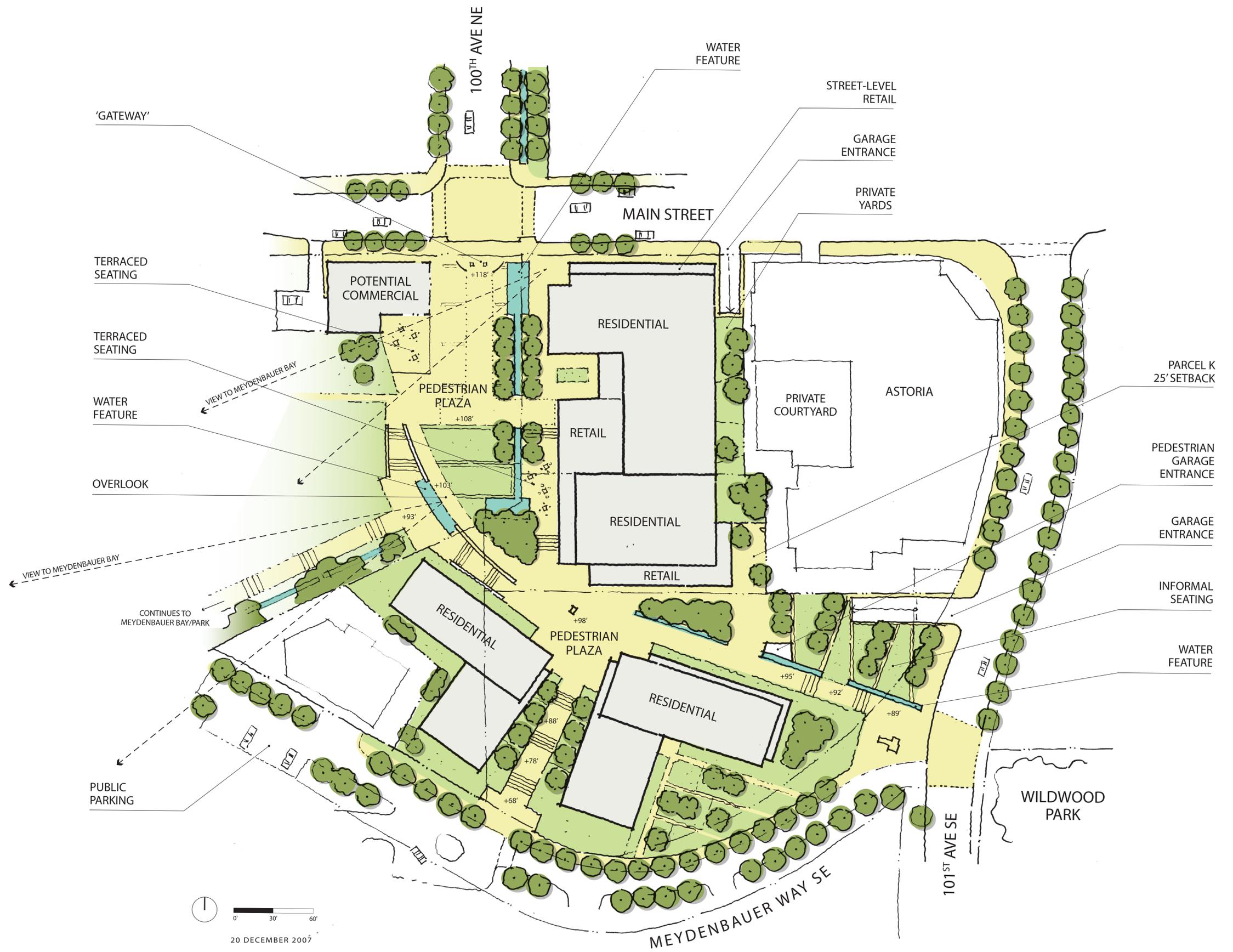
WATERFRONT DISTRICT LAND USE CONCEPT



20 DECEMBER 2007

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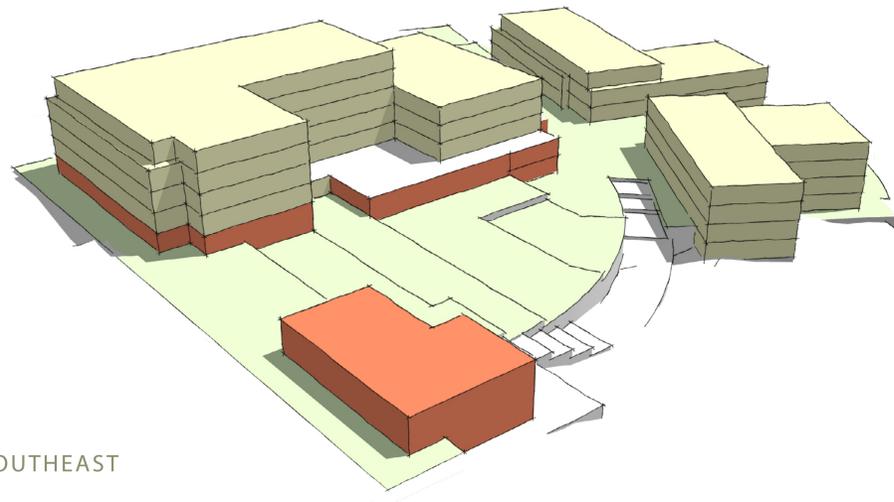
SOUTH of MAIN LAND USE CONCEPT



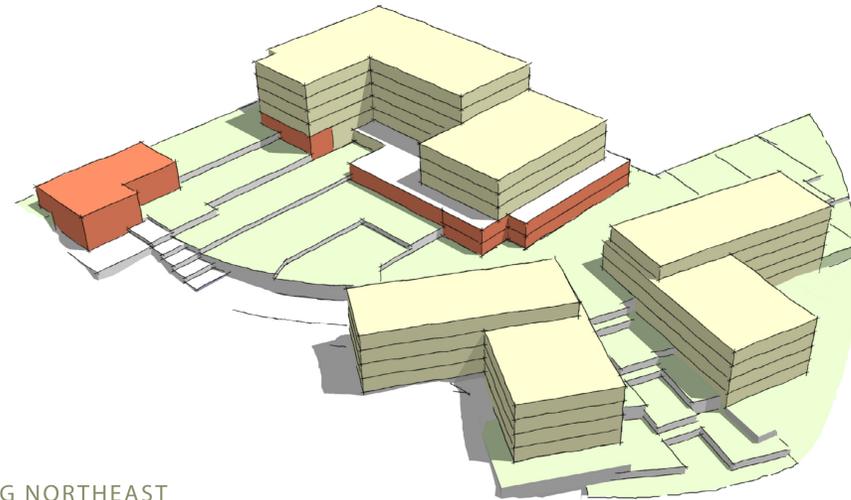
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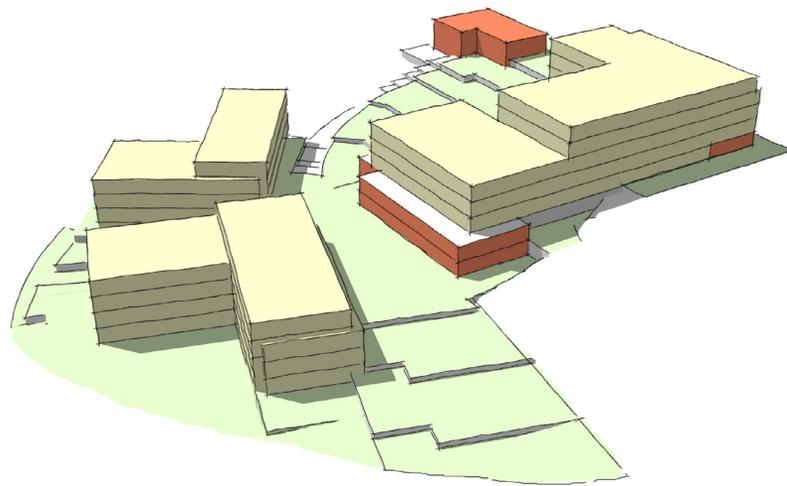
SOUTH of MAIN VIEWS



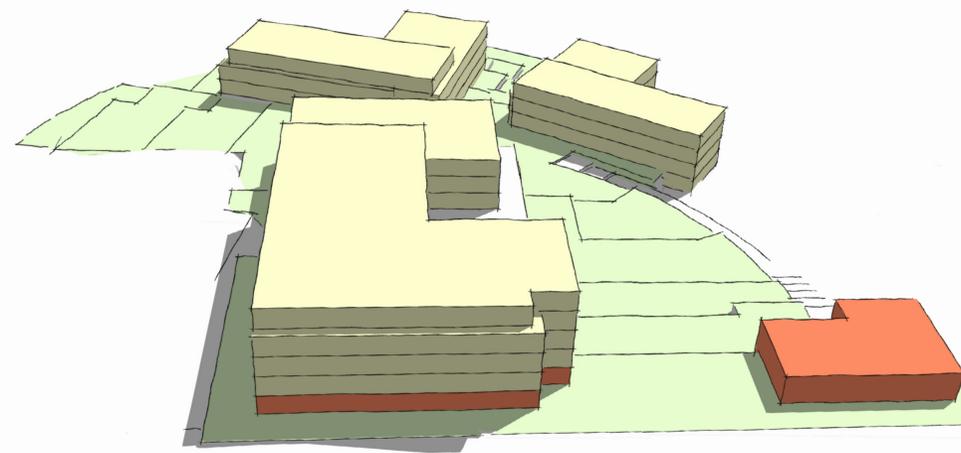
LOOKING SOUTHEAST



LOOKING NORTHEAST

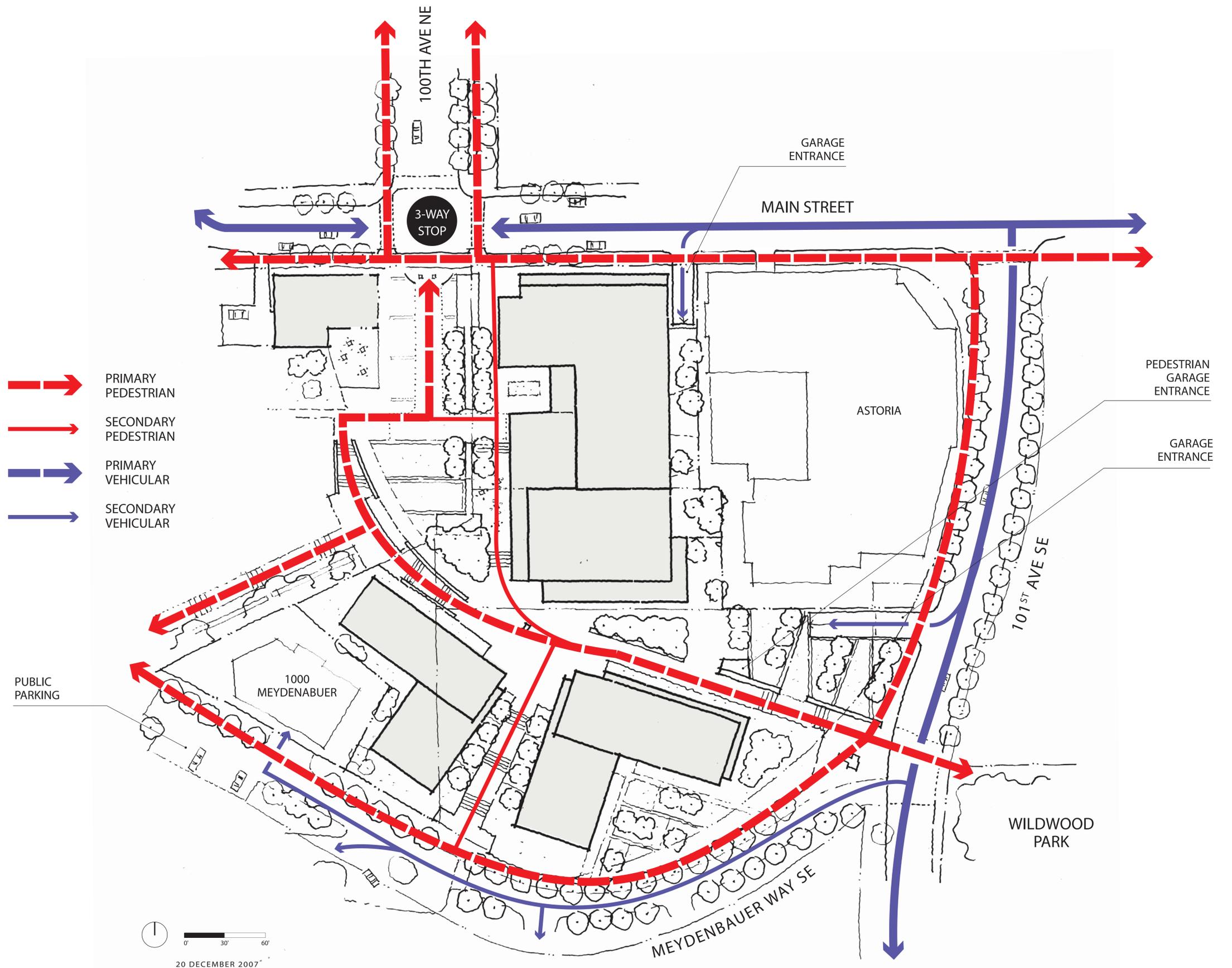


LOOKING WEST



LOOKING SOUTH

CIRCULATION



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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES

Downtown Subarea Plan

Old Bellevue

The Old Bellevue District sits above Meydenbauer Bay and proudly displays the roots of Downtown. This area is home to many small shops and Downtown's oldest buildings. This district is also home to the 20-acre Downtown park. Main Street functions like the traditional "Main Street USA", with low traffic speeds, comfortable sidewalks, and on-street parking – elements that together make this a very safe and enjoyable place to walk.

Policy S-DT-87. Provide a graceful pedestrian connection from Downtown Park through Old Bellevue to Meydenbauer Bay.

Parks, Recreation & Open Space

.... Major new features of the system will be neighborhood parks in the northwest and southeast quadrants of Downtown as well as a visual and physical connection from Downtown Park to Meydenbauer Bay. People naturally gravitate to areas with water to enjoy the aesthetics and unique recreational opportunities. This connection is imperative if Bellevue intends to identify itself as a waterfront city and provides an opportunity to recognize the Meydenbauer Bay's historical significance in the region's development.

Goal: To provide urban parks, recreation opportunities, and open space within Downtown.

Policy S-DT-105. Provide a visual and physical connection from Downtown to Meydenbauer Bay that terminates in a significant waterfront presence. The connection will provide unique recreation, retail, and tourism opportunities.

Policy S-DT-114. Strengthen pedestrian connections between Downtown Park and other Downtown features, such as Bellevue Square, the NE 6th Street pedestrian corridor, Bellevue Way, Main Street, and Meydenbauer Bay. This will enhance the role of the Park as a major pedestrian destination and as a pedestrian linkage with other areas of Downtown.

Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element

Park and Open Space Acquisition

.... The city's Parks and Open Space System Plan provides acquisition recommendations and explores alternative solutions for acquiring open space. Acquiring additional waterfront access is a high priority. Meydenbauer Bay continues to be a major focus for increasing Bellevue's access to the waterfront. Bellevue's acquisitions of key waterfront parcels along Meydenbauer Bay are evidence of this priority and of the city's commitment to providing waterfront opportunities for future generations. The immediate acquisition goal is to complete assembling the properties between Meydenbauer Beach Park and the existing city owned marina property. The ultimate goal is to connect the expansion of these properties to the Downtown area, creating a significant citywide park and waterfront destination.

PARKS & OPEN SPACE SYSTEM PLAN 2003 POLICIES

Chapter 1 – Perspective – Future Direction

...This Park Plan update suggests that priority attention be given to:

- Establishing a major pedestrian connection between the Downtown Park and Meydenbauer Bay and establishing a major public park presence along this waterfront;

Chapter 5 – Focus Areas – Waterfront Access

Meydenbauer Bay

Meydenbauer Bay is a major focus for increasing Bellevue's access to the waterfront. The immediate acquisition goal is to complete the assemblage of property between Meydenbauer Beach Park and the existing marina property. The ultimate goal is to connect this waterfront parcel to the Downtown's commercial and residential areas and the Downtown Park and to create a regionally significant park and waterfront destination.

Expanding the Meydenbauer Beach Park and marina and connecting it to the Downtown are imperative if Bellevue intends to identify itself as a waterfront city. The bay provides both a destination point for water-based recreational activities and amenities, as well as an opportunity to recognize the day's historical significance in the region's development. The Parks & Community Services Department's 2002 *Downtown Needs Assessment* and the *Downtown Implementation Plan* acknowledge the significance of visually and physically connecting the Downtown to Meydenbauer Bay. Connections can be achieved with expanded streetscape amenities, property acquisition, and/or public amenities created by developer incentives. Connecting Downtown to Meydenbauer Bay as part of the Lake-to-Lake Trail system would provide convenient access to unequalled waterfront amenities. Clearly signed pedestrian paths ("way-finding") could link Downtown and nearby neighborhoods with the Bay.

Recommendations (Map):

2. Develop a significant citywide waterfront park along Meydenbauer Bay.
3. Connect Meydenbauer Bay/Meydenbauer Beach park to Downtown Bellevue and the Downtown Park.

Chapter 5 – Focus Areas – Downtown Area

Recommendations (Map):

3. Provide a physical and visual connection between the Downtown Park and Meydenbauer Bay.



Meydenbauer Bay

PARK AND LAND USE PLAN

November 15, 2007

Agenda Item #3

Attachment 2

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