



DOWNTOWN **STRATEGIC** **PLAN**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





City of Newcastle

Trail System

- ← Esplanade .1 mi
 - ↑ Waterline Trail .1 mi
 - ↑ Lake Boren Shore .3 mi
 - ↑ Lake Boren Park .5 mi
- 118N



Executive Summary

Downtown is widely recognized as critical to Newcastle’s future, helping boost the economy and local tax base, improving resident quality of life, and giving the City a greater sense of “identity” and “place.” A detailed assessment of the Community Business Center (CBC) was completed in early 2016¹, calling for the development of a Downtown Strategic Plan to establish well-defined goals, create new policies, recommend zoning and design amendments, and map future actions for the City to take.

With the Downtown Strategic Plan, the City was looking for input on these and other questions:

- How should the City integrate downtown with surrounding neighborhoods?
- What changes are needed along streets like 132nd and Coal Creek Parkway?
- What is “appropriate” for Newcastle in terms of density, building heights, land uses, and walkability?
- What types of investments should Newcastle make to support envisioned growth?

This Downtown Strategic Plan is the culmination of a year-long effort involving numerous stakeholders, including Newcastle residents, businesses, developers, property owners, Councilmembers, Planning Commissioners, and City staff. The Downtown Strategic Plan was authorized by the Newcastle Comprehensive Plan, amended in December 2017 to set a vision and framework for Downtown Newcastle. It is organized into three separate volumes, each with a specific focus:

1. Visioning and “Community Conversation” – Creating an overall vision, goal, and policy framework to guide the plan.
2. Design Guidelines Update – Implementing plan objectives through work on the City’s existing building/development regulations.
3. Downtown Public Realm Improvements – Transportation-related project recommendations that support plan objectives.

1 Newcastle Business Center Assessment, BERK Consulting, March 2016.



JOHN
PASS
Senior Representative

Acknowledgements

MAYOR RICH CRISPO

NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL

Gordon Bisset

Allen Dauterman

John Drescher

John Dulcich

Linda Newing

Carol Simpson

NEWCASTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Karin Blakley

Bryan Brewer

Charlie Gadzik

Rodd Kippen

Stacy Lynch

Thomas Magers

Kurt Utterback

CITY STAFF

Jeff Brauns, Director of Public Works

Thara Johnson, Senior Planner and Interim Community Development Director

Wendy Kirchner, Community Activities Coordinator

Tim McHarg, Community Development Director (former)

Steve Osguthorpe, Community Development Director

Rob Wyman, City Manager

FEHR & PEERS

Kendra Breiland, Project Manager

Sarah Saviskas

Peter Nguyen

MIG

Alex Dupey

Jon Pheanis

Mathangi Murthy

STUDIO CASCADE

Bill Grimes

Rick Hastings



City of Newcastle
12835 Newcastle Way, Suite 200
Newcastle, WA 98056
(425) 649-4444
www.newcastlewa.gov





DOWNTOWN **STRATEGIC** **PLAN**

VOLUME I

VISIONING AND COMMUNITY CONVERSATION





Contents

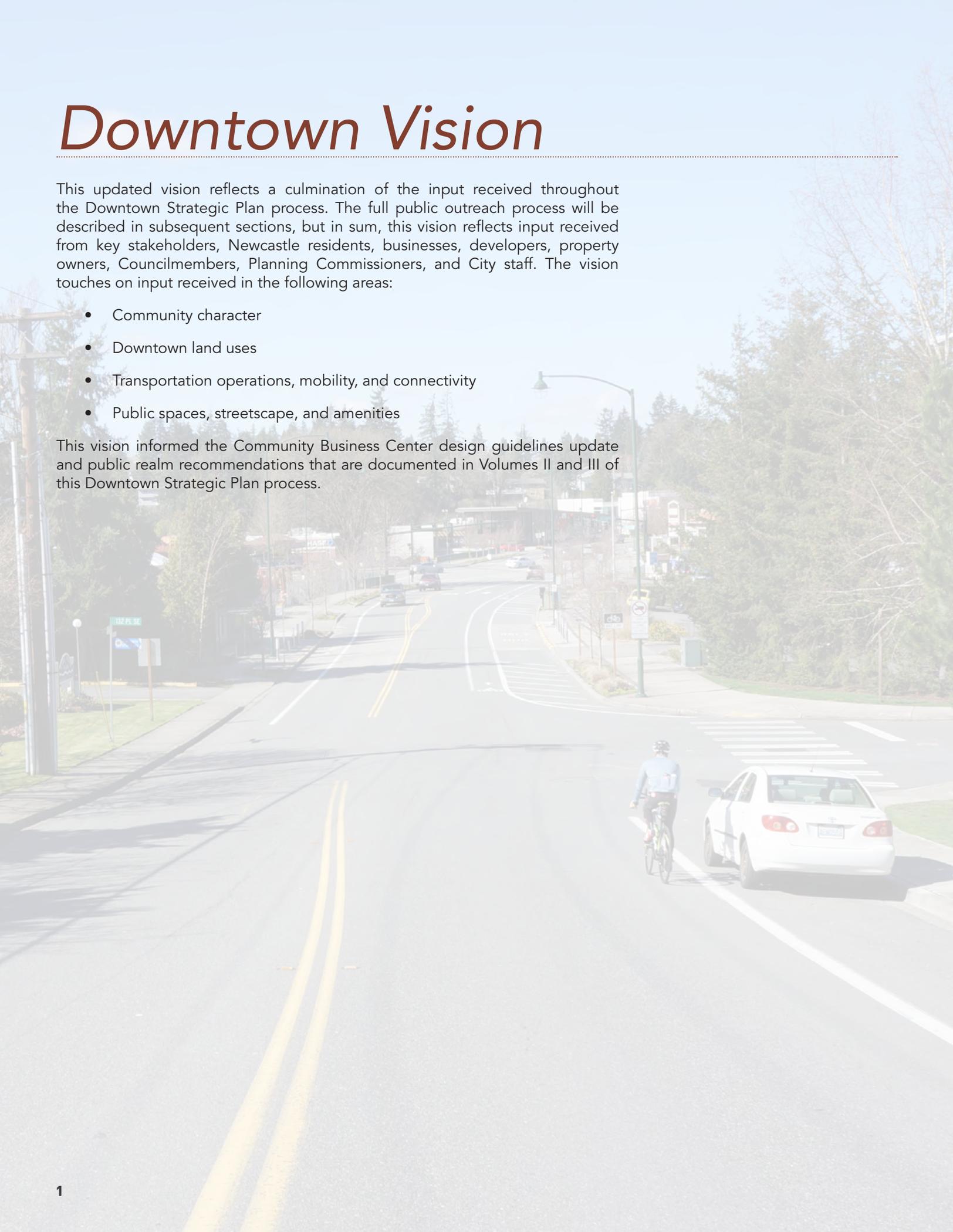
Downtown Vision	1
Process Overview	9
Strategic Plan Website	11
Newcastle Orientation Interviews	12
Downtown “Mini-Poll” Questionnaire	22
Drop-in Center and Walking Tours	31
Workshop One Results	41
Workshop Two Results	50

Downtown Vision

This updated vision reflects a culmination of the input received throughout the Downtown Strategic Plan process. The full public outreach process will be described in subsequent sections, but in sum, this vision reflects input received from key stakeholders, Newcastle residents, businesses, developers, property owners, Councilmembers, Planning Commissioners, and City staff. The vision touches on input received in the following areas:

- Community character
- Downtown land uses
- Transportation operations, mobility, and connectivity
- Public spaces, streetscape, and amenities

This vision informed the Community Business Center design guidelines update and public realm recommendations that are documented in Volumes II and III of this Downtown Strategic Plan process.



Downtown Vision

Newcastle's Downtown is uniquely Newcastle. While it blends a mix of residential and retail land uses, it expresses an identity that capitalizes on its valley setting and intimate connection to the neighborhoods surrounding it.

Coal Creek Parkway is a major regional arterial corridor, carrying more than 35,000 daily vehicle trips through Newcastle. Because of this high-volume transportation corridor, the commercial center has prospered with a regional customer base that extends beyond the city limits of Newcastle. Even with pedestrian-friendly improvements, Coal Creek Parkway will continue to serve as a regional arterial, so Newcastle is looking to other streets in Downtown to shape a pedestrian-oriented commercial environment. Specifically, this vision includes creating a pedestrian-oriented commercial district along 132nd Place SE that provides intimate scale, active public spaces, and opportunities for expanded local retail, dining, living, and community gathering.

Downtown Newcastle is a safe, enjoyable place, facilitating a local lifestyle that reflects the diversity of its residents. While many will drive to their jobs in the surrounding metropolitan areas, once home they'll be able to walk or bike to shop for groceries, go on a date, visit the dentist, and meet up with friends. They may even be able to telecommute or occupy live-work spaces, working from home or from remote office spaces here in Newcastle.

Downtown Newcastle is conveniently connected to its surrounding neighborhoods and parks. And it has a residential population of its own, too. Residents in these new apartments, condominiums, and mixed-use commercial/residential projects are lively, constructive contributors to the Newcastle community. Some of the Downtown residents are the adult children of those who have lived in Newcastle for years. Others here have moved from their homes in the surrounding neighborhoods to the Downtown, staying in the community they love as they leave the responsibility of single-family living behind them.

Key to this vision of central Newcastle is the juxtaposition of a local attraction and a regional one. Activity aligned with 132nd Place SE and SE 70th Street (the private access road north of the QFC shopping center) is more oriented to pedestrians and cyclists, forming a village-like shared space corridor that links The Commons' mixed-use area to the regionally-focused center at Coal Creek Parkway and Newcastle Way. The village is intimately scaled, intense, and complex, with a wide variety of uses, natural landscapes, and public activity areas planned and designed in a relatively small space. Activity aligned with Coal Creek Parkway will likely always be more suited to auto access, with clear visibility of businesses from the

arterial corridor and a pedestrian environment that is effectively split into two halves by the roadway. Pedestrian connections crossing Coal Creek Parkway help the two commercial shopping centers interrelate, but they are clearly divided by the busy arterial.

The area's setting provides uncommon opportunity to incorporate taller buildings rather inconspicuously through quality design and construction. The hillside to the east closely abuts 132nd Place SE, allowing taller buildings to be located west of 132nd Place SE without seeming out of place. This allows for development of urban living with structured parking above or under ground-floor retail or live-work storefronts, contributing to the type of demand that will help the storefronts prosper while reinforcing the Downtown's progress toward becoming an environment suited to walking, biking, transit, and driving. However, new development must employ context-sensitive design at the right scale to remain compatible with the immediately adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Features

There are several physical features that contribute to this vision of central Newcastle, each playing an important role to advance the district's transformation into the type of place that residents desire.

COAL CREEK/NEWCASTLE WAY INTERSECTION

This intersection is to be improved to become more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. While the overall geometry of the intersection is pretty well defined by Coal Creek Parkway's alignment, changes can be made to reduce the curb radii to slow turning movements and to modify traffic signal phasing to optimize non-motorized safety. These enhancements are focused on improved function rather than on just enhanced aesthetics. The community's recent investment in enhanced paving treatment would need to be revised to address the radii modifications.

LAKE BOREN TRAIL

Increasing public access to Lake Boren is important to the community. The lake is a unique community resource, and some trail access exists currently. But new linkages between Downtown and the trail system via 129th Avenue SE and Coal Creek Parkway are relatively easy to make, which would enhance local non-motorized access and address a demand that already exists. As Newcastle's Downtown continues to develop, demand for these facilities will certainly increase. Creation of a 129th Avenue SE greenway is a first move, enhancing the trail experience along that street to link Lake Boren to the library, City Hall, medical clinic, and historic cemetery.



Rendering of potential improvements to SE 70th St



Rendering of potential new crossing on Coal Creek Pkwy



Rendering of potential improvements to Coal Creek Pkwy

SE 70TH STREET

An east-west corridor exists to tie Coal Creek Parkway to 132nd Place SE, but it is currently a private drive and is not publicly owned. Local plans call for increased network connectivity, and this street segment fulfills a critical objective. Downtown’s successful development as an attractive, active, non-motorized space depends on direct connections that reduce distances between existing streets such as this, and the Downtown Strategic Plan calls for it to be added into the public road system. The design of this new public street also presents an opportunity to prioritize non-motorized modes and to develop more public space for Downtown activities.

COAL CREEK PARKWAY CROSSING

Crossing Coal Creek Parkway – whether on foot, on a bike, or in a car – can be challenging. Providing a new safe, convenient crossing opportunity is a priority, locating it along the northern edge of the commercial district. At first, this controlled crossing might be a HAWK signal for non-motorized traffic. Future conversion to a full traffic signal would also accommodate autos and trucks, and if SE 70th Street is successfully integrated into the public street network, this would help improve Downtown connectivity. This crossing location would also do double-duty as a community entry statement, introducing southbound travelers to Newcastle’s Downtown and the Coal Creek “slow zone” (below).

COAL CREEK “SLOW ZONE”

This “slow zone” fills two roles: it slows traffic to enhance pedestrian safety and to spur and sustain Downtown’s economic prosperity. Slower traffic speeds through this area reinforce Newcastle’s community identity by drawing attention to a rich, landscaped “amenity zone” behind the curbs and a series of planted median strips, providing a sense of enclosure and interest that declare the Downtown’s unique identity. Slower vehicles will also be more compatible with pedestrian and bike traffic in the area, encouraging people to leave their cars in one parking lot while they walk to multiple destinations within the commercial center. The “slow zone” makes the place safer overall and more habitable, accomplished by targeted plantings and other techniques that calm flows... even while maintaining efficient vehicular flow.

NEWCASTLE WAY ENHANCEMENTS

Managing traffic flow to and from Golf Club Road will be an important contributor to Downtown’s success. A Comprehensive Plan recommendation is to install a signal or roundabout at Newcastle Way and Golf Club Road. Other enhancements along this street may include a raised intersection on Newcastle Way at 132nd Place to increase pedestrian safety and signal the entry into Downtown for

vehicles coming down the hill, as well as the addition of planted medians between 132nd Place SE and City Hall improve aesthetics and safety. In any case, actions along this corridor will need to be coordinated to ensure flow efficiencies, traffic safety, and overall contribution to the vitality of Downtown commerce and housing.

THE NEWCASTLE COMMONS DEVELOPMENT

This master-planned project is becoming a smaller-scaled counterpoint to Newcastle’s larger commercial shopping centers, with mixed uses, a pedestrian-friendly streetscape, and a central plaza lined with shops and restaurants. It will evolve into a complementary feature of Newcastle’s Downtown, offering an opportunity for local flavor, quieter streets, and for biking and walking to be the preferred way to get around.

THE VILLAGE WALK

Playing off The Newcastle Commons’ energy, the Village Walk on 132nd Place SE will create a slow-paced, convenient connection between The Commons and the shopping centers, creating an extension of the residential and mixed-use atmosphere created at The Commons and fitting it organically into what is a complex and diverse land use environment on 132nd Place. The Village Walk will start at The Commons to the north and extend south to Newcastle Way, passing along the way an open space overlooking the wetland, public use/mixed-use frontage, a festival street and plaza at the intersection of 132nd Place & SE 70th Street, and a blend of local employment and service commercial uses.

FESTIVAL STREET

At the core of the Village Walk will be a festival street at the intersection of 132nd Place and SE 70th Street, designed to serve as a public activity space for concerts, outdoor dining, outdoor markets, food truck festivals, or other similar events. Used as a street intersection the majority of the time, this space can temporarily be closed to cars and used as an extension of a new public plaza at the northwest corner of the intersection. Paving enhancements, special curbing treatment, lighting, and a power supply all enable a quick transformation into an active outdoor place.

ENTRIES

Downtown’s transformation into a dynamic, compact, interesting place may be its own best entry statement. The City may promote Downtown’s identity through more formal entrance signs or public art on Coal Creek Parkway south of Newcastle Way and at SE 70th Street., as well as an integrated wayfinding system that builds on the one already in place for the community’s trails.

TRANSIT

Many Newcastle residents currently use transit to get to Bellevue, Downtown Seattle, and other regional destinations. The recent passage of ST3 and the Metro Connects plan promise improved connections in Newcastle, including the conversion of Route 240 into a Rapid Ride and increased local service to the I-405 BRT. Careful consideration of bus stop locations moving forward and improvements to bus stops will help make bus travel an increasingly pleasant and practical way to access the metropolitan region. As Downtown matures, the City will be proactive in coordinating with regional transit operators to ensure that transit service plans, stop locations, and amenities serve Newcastle’s vision.

MARKET PLAZA

Land at the southeast corner of Coal Creek Parkway and Newcastle Way has long been used as a fruit stand. A favorite of locals, this facility may evolve into more of a permanent farmers’ market. It now exists in a state of impermanence and seasonal activity, with the tenant and property owner unsure of what the future may bring. Integrating this site into the Downtown mix is essential, and the community hopes it will in some way incorporate the culture and local food element now provided by the fruit stand.

NETWORK COMPLETION

At some point, the commercial centers may redevelop, rearranging their sites to take advantage of new opportunities. When this happens, they should plan their sites to establish a more interconnected system of pathways and drives for motor vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists. This will facilitate pedestrian and bicycle travel through and between the properties and increase available “frontage” for retail development.



Spatial Vision

Applying the vision to Downtown's geography produced the following three diagrams. **Figure A** relates to form, illustrating the mass and scale of development Downtown. **Figure B** relates to land use, exploring the types and locations of activities proposed to occur Downtown over the life of this plan. **Figure C** focuses on specific features, those elements that will manage the transportation system, public spaces, and other elements of Downtown to stimulate development in the right direction.

These spatial concepts reinforce the major principles underpinning the plan's policy direction:

1. Manage the impact of new development to respect what has been developed.
2. Emphasize connections to Newcastle Commons and make them habitable and alive.
3. Support diversity of retail use.
4. Encourage a local lifestyle, where people living and working Downtown can choose to walk and bike.
5. Recast the City's role as an active facilitator of and partner in Downtown development.

Figure A: Height/Buffering Schematic Diagram



Figure B: Land Use Schematic Diagram



Process Overview

Newcastle's City Council understood that broad-based community engagement was essential to revising downtown's zoning and transportation investment priorities, commissioning an intensive program to seek, gather and work with public comments and suggestions.

Consultants, City Staff and officials worked together to develop and support a multi-faceted outreach effort. Key features of this effort included:

- A project website, introducing the plan, calendar events, process materials, photographs and library materials;
- Creating website links and newsletter coverage regarding the process on the City of Newcastle website;
- Creating posts and process updates regarding the plan on the City's Facebook™ and Twitter™ feeds;
- A series of one-on-one "stakeholder" interviews, conducted to gain an initial understanding of important issues, opportunities and community expectations for downtown;
- An informal, non-scientific questionnaire, published online and in printed form, used to gauge community priorities and long-term objectives for downtown;
- Development of a press kit for media and leadership use, encouraging coverage in the Newcastle News and supporting Council, Planning Commission and staff efforts to "talk up" the plan process with friends and neighbors;
- Development of event flyers, for distribution by staff in downtown shops and stores;
- Hosting a kick-off "open house" event at the Newcastle Library (January 21);
- Hosting two community workshops at the YMCA (January 23) and at City Hall (January 25);
- Hosting a three-day "Drop-in Center" installation at Home Street Bank at Coal Creek Village, allowing residents to offer input on the plan at their convenience and engaging walk-by visitors unaware of the process.

Work on the Downtown Newcastle Strategic Plan began in January 2017. A three-day "Drop-in Center" and two evening workshops took place on January 23 -25, kicked off by an open house at the Newcastle Library on January 21. The Drop-in Center, set up at Home Street Bank at Coal Creek Village, allowed residents to drop by during business hours to share ideas, work with staff and consultants on plan strategies, and take part in activities.

The evening workshops used findings from the Drop-in Center to seed participant activities, creating first-draft versions of the plan's strategies. Participants weighed ideas on downtown's vision, prioritized topics, considered how their ideas might shape planning and land use, and, in the second workshop, identified specific features seen to help downtown become the place they envision.

Objectives

Work during workshop week was designed to:

- Compile and refine overall objectives for downtown;
- Develop multiple ways for downtown to evolve, each differing in terms of character, land use mix, overall layout and project priority;
- Ask participants to evaluate and identify which downtown strategy (or strategies) best suit Newcastle's vision;
- Ask participants to evaluate key implementation strategies, including project concepts, zoning standards and transportation-related improvements.

Existing goals for the plan and the process, as outlined by the City Council, include:

- Make downtown more navigable and comfortable for all modes of travel;
- Encourage an appropriate, dynamic building and land use mix that reinforces / activates the community's vision for downtown;
- Build excitement about downtown, helping create community and business "champions" to spur and sustain implementation.

Strategic Plan Website

Launched December 16, 2016, the project website provided an accessible source for project-related information, links to earlier planning efforts, and a platform for on-line engagement.

Navigating to www.newcastle-plan.com brought web viewers into the process, outlining the project calendar and highlighting upcoming events. Many of the process participants reference the website as a key information source...and a reason for their involvement at the drop-in center and community workshops.



Envisioning downtown Newcastle's best future.
Working to make it happen.

Evening Workshops



Two in-depth, productive workshops were held on January 23 and 25, engaging citizens and leadership in developing an overall vision for downtown's future - and identifying projects that help achieve it. Results posted here soon.

EVENT INFO

Drop-in Center Days



With kind assistance from Home Street Bank, we created a "drop-in center" for folks to visit during business hours from January 23-25. Scores of residents did just that, helping identify issues and define needs. Results coming soon.

EVENT INFO

Our "Mini-Poll" Survey



For anyone that couldn't attend workshops or visit the Drop-In Center, a special on-line and paper questionnaire was developed - and LOTS of folks responded (483, at last count) Click below for a summary of survey results.

DOWNLOAD

Strategic Plan Library

For years (decades!) Newcastle residents have envisioned a more active, vibrant downtown. Here's a collection of items that set the stage for the 2017 Strategic Plan - and as the process moves along - materials we'll develop reflecting fresh community input.

Featured Items

Conciliatory Memo (2017)
CBC Association (2016)
Comparative Plan
CBC Master Plan (2009)

Newcastle Orientation Interviews

The orientation interviews were conducted November 2016 – January 2017, part of the consultant team's initial efforts to become familiar with the issues the community is facing as it enters the downtown planning process. Interviewees consisted of several community members, each offering a different perspective on central Newcastle, the community as a whole, and what the future might bring.

Results from the interview, summarized below, will inform the first community workshops. These comments are drawn from a small sample of community members, and it is likely that continued public engagement will cause these conclusions to be refined and reworked. But they're a starting point, and the people who committed their time to help kick off the project in these interviews have advanced it as a result of their participation.

Topics

These are the topics discussed in the various questions, with summaries of the answers and comments provided by interviewees.

Why Newcastle?

Interviewees live, work or do both in Newcastle for a variety of reasons. Some are here because of family connections, but most relocated to this town because they appreciate its small-town feel, the ability to be involved in community activities and to make a difference, the repeated contact with other townspeople from day-to-day, the community's schools, and the town's relatively easy access to other places within the Seattle/Bellevue metro area.

Successes now?

According to interviewees, the mix of uses downtown is exceptionally diverse for its size. It does a great job meeting local daily needs, with medical, veterinary, retail, banking, grocery, civic and dining options all located within a small district. The library and the two grocery stores serve as community socializing places, too, where people gather and mingle.

Interviewees also noted that residents have loyalties to the businesses located here. They patronize retailers because they've established personal relationships. The sense of community extends from the surrounding neighborhoods into the commercial core, where local proprietors are welcomed and supported.

The remarkably low vacancy rate for commercial space is evidence of this area's retail success.

Improvements?

Suggestions for improvements range from the somewhat abstract (manage regional traffic flows) to the more specific (revise zoning to require mixed-income housing). While interviewees generally seem satisfied with the ways the commercial core is performing, they expect that future conditions will require it to adapt, providing for even more diversity in the uses downtown (a breakfast place, a pub, some offices) and more effective strategies for safe and convenient pedestrian travel and for management of the car parking resource.

Interviewees also mentioned that it is difficult to cross Coal Creek as a pedestrian and to make left turns onto Coal Creek as a driver. Improvements to the area would address these issues, allowing for more convenient access among all four quadrants of the commercial district.

Unique attributes?

Interviewees noted that Newcastle's commercial district is in something of a funnel, with regional traffic flows coming through at an important crossroads. This provides the neighborhood centers with access to a regional customer base. The local butcher shop, for example, has customers from Renton, Issaquah and Maple Valley. This blending of neighborhood scale and regional draw is seen as unique.

Interviewees also mentioned Lake Boren as a unique attribute. Though it's not within the commercial district, it is linked to it with Newcastle's unique trail network. It offers an experience for those in the commercial district willing to take the five-minute walk.

Some interviewees also believe the center has a unique mix of uses, though this type of diversity may be similar to that found in other small towns. Still, the ability to visit with folks at city hall, get lunch, make a bank deposit, buy groceries, get a massage, repair a car's bent fender, remove stitches, and take pets for examinations is seen as something special for Newcastle.

Transportation downtown?

This was probably the most popular topic among interviewees. Virtually all mentioned the speed and volume of automotive traffic on Coal Creek. Many mentioned the congestion at peak hours and the difficulty of making turns exiting the commercial centers. Many also mentioned the challenges facing pedestrians who wish to cross Coal Creek, even if they use the protected crossing at the intersection with Newcastle Way. However, interviewees also appreciate the opportunity that Coal Creek provides, with a large volume of potential customers flowing by the commercial district's centers and the relative ease of access it provides Newcastle residents to destinations in Bellevue, Factoria, and Renton.

Some interviewees also described the transportation connections to the east via Golf Club Rd to Forest Ridge, Lakemont, and Issaquah. This was identified as an increasingly popular connection to I-90, with traffic flowing into the downtown. A concern here is the four-way stop sign, where traffic on Golf Club Rd coming into Newcastle may back up past the YMCA.

Interviewees also identified parking availability as an issue downtown, confirming that the location, topography, seasonally challenging weather, and relatively low density of surrounding development essentially ensure that most of the patrons of downtown businesses drive to get there. Most believe there may be ways to manage parking more effectively, leading to a more efficient use of land in the district. One interviewee said he expects his customers to park in his lot and then walk to other stores in the district, something he welcomes...as long as they really do come into his store, too.

The large, free parking lots can be attractive for people bound elsewhere, too. One interviewee noted that the Coal Creek Village shopping center hired parking lot monitors to

verify that vehicles parked there belonged to its customers and that drivers were not using the lot as an informal “park and ride” for the bus or carpool.

Almost all interviewees believe pedestrians and cyclists are poorly served in the downtown district. Whether it’s the inconvenience and risk of crossing Coal Creek or the overall quality of the pedestrian experience, interviewees think the conditions for those who walk or bike can be improved.

Bus service is recognized as an asset, providing connections to places beyond Newcastle’s boundaries. However, several interviewees would like to see more frequent and reliable transit options to key destinations, as Route 114 to Seattle only runs during peak periods and Route 240 to Bellevue/Renton is unreliable and frequently delayed. Access to bus stops is convenient for households located within an easy walk of downtown Newcastle, but is considerably more difficult for those living beyond a short walk, limiting transit’s effectiveness as a broadly-used community service. One interviewee would like the City to coordinate with transit agencies to determine where future bus stops should be and what routes will best serve Newcastle residents, especially regarding future Rapid Ride service.

Employment downtown?

The interviewees see Newcastle as a bedroom community, with the vast majority of income-earners commuting to other job centers for employment. Central Newcastle is not seen as a significant place of employment beyond the retail and service-oriented sector. However, one interviewee noted that she has observed people telecommuting in the library, using facilities and Internet connection there to work remotely. In addition, one property owner in the downtown has proposed creating “live-work” lofts, catering to a potential increase in the number of individuals seeking ways to earn a living in town without having to commute elsewhere.

Retail diversity?

While many interviewees noted that they would appreciate more variety in eating establishments in town, they also acknowledge that virtually every possible space is already leased. Additional retail diversity is linked to increased supply of retail space, something that the Commons may well provide. Other retail, like shopping and service commercial, seems to meet local expectations. Shopping for durable goods, cars, or other specialty items is generally done outside of Newcastle or on line, according to interviewees.

“Walkability?”

People generally drive to Newcastle’s downtown, according to interviews. Some may walk, like those who live in the condos and apartments to the east of 132nd Place, but the majority drives. And those who are grocery shopping will also drive, just to accommodate the burdened trip home with a week’s supply of food. Every person interviewed, however, indicated that it would be good to make the downtown area more walkable, where there’s an opportunity to park once in the district and then easily and safely move from one area to the next on foot. One interviewee noted that he expects people shopping at his store to park in his lot and then walk to satisfy other shopping needs. He’d rather have them do that than get in their cars and add to the congestion at the Coal Creek/Newcastle intersection.

Other interviewees believe there are additional opportunities to encourage walking to, in and around the downtown. Newcastle's trail network and proximity to Lake Boren were identified as two walking/biking assets, making downtown's amenities both attractive and accessible. An expanded trail network may make the central business district more accessible to surrounding neighborhoods, though the topography might limit the degree to which folks actually choose to walk than to drive for their shopping trips.

Development at the Commons may also influence walkability downtown, creating another pole of activity within easy reach of the existing center. Interviewees generally agree that enhancing the pedestrian experience along Coal Creek and 132nd PI can take advantage of that energy and encourage a vital, complementary connection between the two areas.

Zoning and design changes?

Interviewees did not suggest many specific revisions to the City's development regulations. However, they did represent the spectrum of ideas related to population growth and development intensity. They shared an appreciation for the community's small-town values, but their ideas on the best ways to retain those in the face of development pressure differed. Some argued for reducing development intensity to reduce visual impact on existing single-family neighborhoods and lessen traffic congestion on Newcastle Way. Others – the majority of those interviewed – argued for an increase of development intensity in the downtown to encourage concentrated reinvestment and an increase in the activity and energy in the commercial core. They seem to believe that a more compact development pattern might have a relatively small impact on Newcastle Way congestion, hoping that residents of apartments and condos will choose to walk for many of their local needs rather than drive.

Interviewees mentioned parking regulations too, but the emphasis was more on ensuring an adequate supply rather than targeting specific parking ratios. Interviewees seemed indifferent to whether the parking was provided on surface lots or in structures, as long as there's enough of a supply to meet the commercial district's needs and keep parking accessible for the folks who want it.

Vision?

As with the conversation on zoning, interviewee concepts on downtown vision varied. Some believe it is what it should be, a small-scale, suburban commercial district, satisfying some of the local community's retail and service needs. Others see it evolving over time into a more urban district, with evening activity, parking structures, street life and a 24/7 buzz. Few believe the district will expand much in area, though, possibly reaching north to encompass a portion of the Commons but still remaining relatively small, an island in a sea of single-family development and natural open space.

Priority actions?

Interviewees generally believe one of the first City actions should be to get the power infrastructure in line to serve anticipated development. They cite concerns with reliability even now and are apprehensive how well the grid will accommodate what might be on the horizon. Other considerations are investment in the pedestrian environment, particularly in ensuring safe and convenient crossings of Coal Creek Parkway and enhancing the local trail

network. Important – but lower priority – actions revolve around clarity in the future of the commercial district’s incremental change.

Conclusions

Based on the comments received, important issues related to the downtown, its future vision and the public process behind a new, implementable plan are as follows:

Timing

There is little urgency in downtown’s transformation...now. However, development of the Commons may inject more competitive energy into the retail space mix, tempting new retailers to seek out a Commons location and potentially cannibalizing from the retail mix in the existing centers. Still, rents now are reliable and vacancy is low, reducing the incentives for owners of the commercial centers to consider any kind of immediate reinvestment.

The residential mix, however, is ready to change. The Commons development is proposing two-bedroom apartments with rents exceeding \$2,500/mo. A new apartment is being built adjacent to City Hall, and some interviewees have discussed other residential development projects in the study area that could significantly increase the amount of housing downtown within the next three years.

Traffic congestion

Interviewees understand and value Coal Creek Parkway’s role as a regional transportation artery. They don’t all like the volume of traffic it carries, but they appreciate the connection opportunity it provides. Peak hour congestion is a necessary evil they’ve accepted. Newcastle Way and Golf Club Rd are different, however. Congestion on these streets is a problem, and interviewees are concerned that they’ve come to augment other regional travel routes to the detriment of the downtown. The degree to which new development exacerbates traffic congestion on these streets will be a focus of community debate, arguing for increased energy dedicated to network density and a more robust, accessible and attractive non-motorized system.

Early actions

Conducting an open and inclusive conversation about downtown’s future is an important first step. While there may not be an immediate transformation ready to happen, the community appears to want to contribute to how it will evolve. Clarifying development intensity – particularly regarding residential projects on the edge of the downtown district – and characterizing the vision and scale of the downtown core are crucial early actions. This effort will also include a frank discussion of the pace and degree of change, aligning community expectations on downtown’s future.

More specifically, the community wants quick action to make pedestrian crossing of Coal Creek Parkway safe, convenient and attractive. It came out in every interview. They think it is OK to slow traffic in the core, too, making the center of Newcastle a calmer place, one compatible with families, dog walkers and meandering shoppers.

Fiscal urgency

Newcastle may not now be facing a budget imbalance, but it will likely continue to rely on a prosperous downtown district to help fund municipal operations. Planning now for gradual intensification, growth and efficiency will benefit future fiscal management. The commercial district is functioning well as a retail and services provider today, but tomorrow's customers and demand patterns will likely be different. Preparing a downtown plan that allows for incremental adaptation and long-term resilience – while still honoring essential community identity considerations – is an important step in ensuring fiscal security.

Urban character

Interviewees seem split on the degree of “urbanization” desired for the commercial center. Our studio can dig into this issue, exploring how folks may reconcile their desires for more variety and more downtown vitality with equally present desires for neighborhood compatibility, ease of parking and “small town” feel.

Employment

Most of Newcastle's workforce heads someplace else for its jobs. While there is some employment in the service, retail, industrial and medical sectors in downtown Newcastle, most of the community's households make their living in other communities. Newcastle is a “bedroom” suburb, but there are indicators that some of the workforce may find local options increasingly attractive. The professionals who telecommute from the library, for instance, have found a way to spend at least some of their workdays nearer home. One local developer has considered a “live-work” project within the town center, anticipating even more local desire for more local employment opportunity. While this may not change the “bedroom” nature of Newcastle, it does increase the level of importance this process can place on accommodating employment opportunities within the downtown.

Variety

Almost all interviewees expressed desires for more variety, more opportunities to do more things in the downtown. While the Commons development will likely add to the mix of things to do, there may be local demand for even more. With existing retail space already 100% leased, this may support proposals to add even more. It doesn't necessarily fuel transformative reinvestment, but it may drive incremental adaptation to squeeze more retail space into places where it might fit.

Community identity

People are proud to say they live or own a business in Newcastle. Interviewees like this town, the relationships they build here, the schools their kids attend, and the experience of being known. There's a sense of involvement, inclusion, and personal belonging. While these may not define the community's identity, they certainly contribute to the community's essential values. Any successful change in the downtown's physical context must respect these values, creating spaces and places that reinforce the reasons why Newcastle is special. This isn't easily captured in a theme or style. It's more about the availability of space, the mix of land uses, the downtown's sense of centrality, the sense of safety, the

presence of civic engagement, the setting in a cozy valley, and an awareness of Newcastle's relative smallness in the greater Seattle metro region.

Parking

Folks drive to downtown. Sometimes they drive from one parking lot, across the street, and into another. Parking downtown is part of a larger pattern of use, where convenient automobile access is a priority. It's likely that initial reinvestment will be limited by the desire to preserve surface parking...at least in the commercial areas. Even when (and if) more intensification occurs in the commercial areas, there will be pressure to retain the amount of parking now provided. Actions to make it more attractive to park once in the district and encourage walking to multiple destinations within it may see some success, particularly if crossing Coal Creek Parkway is made more safe.

Scale

Scale and urban character are closely related. Where scale seems to be of the greatest concern, however, is on the western edge of the downtown. This is where the commercial district directly abuts existing single-family neighborhoods. Any dramatic increase in scale here – as has been witnessed in the apartment project now under construction – will get the attention of the neighbors. They're concerned that the character is changing too much and too close, blocking views they've enjoyed for years, encroaching on their privacy and increasing the number of cars sharing the roads they, too, need to access.

Edge conditions

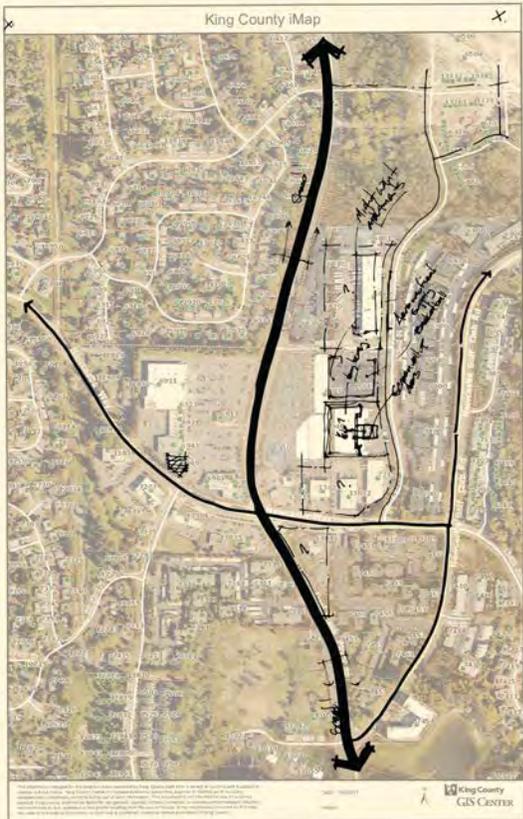
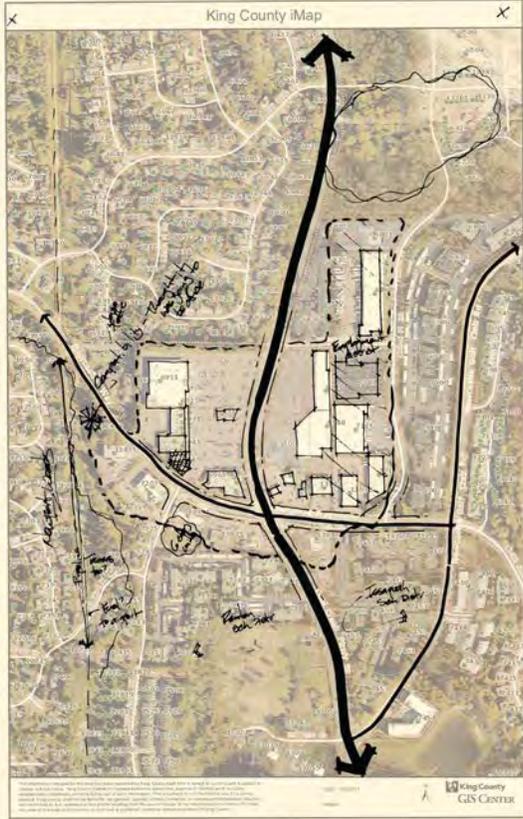
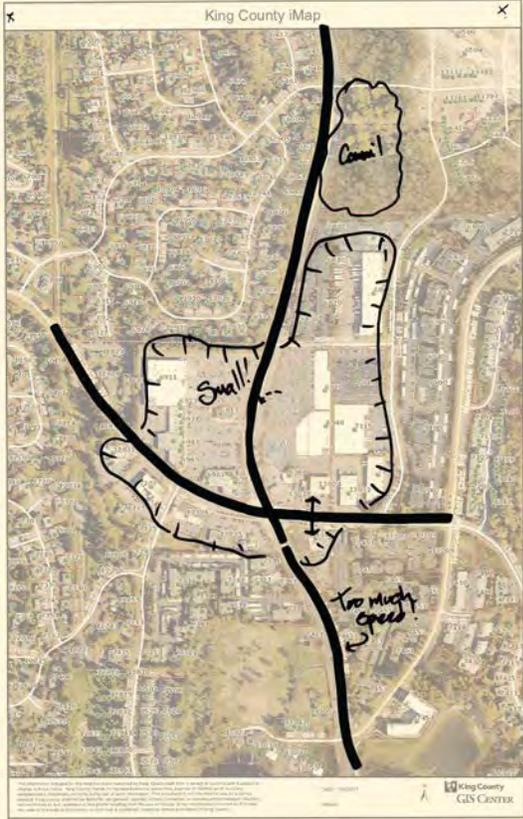
Concerns over scale will drive responses in the way the district's edges are managed. Edge conditions vary across the district, with residential neighborhoods to the west presenting the greatest desire for buffering from future intensification. Areas to the east may present more flexibility, given the hillside and development conditions found there. Blending with the Commons development on the north is an important consideration, as well, taking advantage of adjacencies and transportation network opportunities to establish a workable and vital interconnection. Edge conditions on the south are mixed, with some potential to take advantage of Lake Boren's proximity and the maturing community trail network.

Pedestrian connections

The 2000 CBC plan emphasizes pedestrian connection between the Commons and the downtown. And the community's trails system provides a recreational walking/biking network that links the downtown to Lake Boren and some of Newcastle's neighborhoods. Street crossings are a primary concern. Encouraging pedestrian movement within and between the commercial districts and between the commercial districts and higher-intensity residential development sites is also an important consideration, particularly if this project seeks to reduce auto dependence in the long term.

Sketch Maps

Many interview comments were spatial in nature, so the interviewer used an aerial photo and sketch paper to locate comments and illustrate linkages and relationships. These sketch maps also help underpin early community workshops, assisting in a broader understanding of what may change in central Newcastle and the ways in which future opportunities can be optimized.



Downtown “Mini-Poll” Questionnaire

Between January 5 and 26, a short, non-scientific “mini-poll” was made available to the general public as part of the Downtown Newcastle Strategic Plan. In all, **483 individuals completed surveys**. Notice of the online questionnaire was published on the City of Newcastle website; in City correspondence to its newsletter subscriber base; on the project website; on the City’s social media feeds, and in a January 8 Newcastle News article. A paper version was also distributed by City staff and leadership, and was made available at each of the plan events.

The questionnaire posed seven statements asking respondents to indicate their level of agreement from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). The questionnaire also posed two open-ended questions, in addition to basic questions establishing city of residence, Zip Code, general age, and approximate percentage of goods and services sourced in downtown.

The following pages provide summary results including all responses, expressed in charted form. Full results including verbatim replies to open-ended questions and follow-up notes associated with the ratings scale questions are available from the City of Newcastle. Charts for Q6 and Q8 (open-ended questions) were hand-coded/categorized. A copy of the paper questionnaire is attached at the end of this document.

How the Results Influence This Plan

The mini-poll represents broad input from the general public and users of Downtown Newcastle, as evidenced by the large overall response. The poll was used in the following ways:

- Given that mini-poll was launched in early January, results were available in time to help shape the workshop activities on January 23rd that focused on gaps between current conditions and desired conditions in downtown
- The poll also served as a check on the input received during the Drop-In Center and workshops for consistency with the broader sentiment of the community.

Summary Notes

Q5 – *What percentage of your basic goods and services are provided by Downtown Newcastle? (groceries, gym, gas, etc.)*

Respondents clearly use and appreciate downtown offerings, with more than half (55%) sourcing over 40% of their basic goods and services there – including approximately 8% relying on downtown for nearly all such needs.

Q6 – *What is your favorite thing about Downtown Newcastle today?*

Four-hundred and thirty-five (435) respondents answered this question, with many including multiple things in their replies. Similar reply categories, as grouped below, show a sizable percentage of respondents feel convenience and key offerings are their “favorite thing” about downtown.

Convenience	19% of participants
Library	12

Diverse Offerings	11
Groceries	11
Produce Stand	8
Restaurants	5

66% mentioned one or more of the above

Another grouping involved qualitative aspects of downtown, characterized by terms like “small town”, “walkability” and “community feel”

Small Town	8% of participants
Parks/ Trails	5
Walkable	4
Community Feel	3
Small Scale	3

23% mentioned one or more of the above

Interestingly, 5% of responses included claims that there was nothing they currently considered a favorite feature downtown - and some saying Newcastle didn't really even have a downtown. It may be assumed that some portion of the nearly 10% of respondents that skipped this question may have done so for related reasons.

Q7 – Circle your level of agreement with the following statements:

“I am satisfied with Downtown Newcastle as it exists today.”

“Traffic congestion in Downtown Newcastle is a major concern for me.”

Weighted-average scores (2.5 of 5.0) from respondents suggest middle-of-road satisfaction levels with downtown as it exists today. Not surprisingly, strong consensus exists (scoring 4.0 of 5.0) on the need to address traffic congestion downtown - though the means and costs of doing this weren't provided for consideration.

Q8 – If you could change one thing about Downtown Newcastle, what would it be?

Four-hundred and thirty-one (431) respondents answered this question, with most mentioning multiple things in their replies. Category groupings below show that most desire greater variety of offerings – restaurants, especially - but groceries and other types of retail and services were also mentioned.

Variety, Food	29% of participants
Variety, General	11
Variety, Groceries	2

42% mentioned one or more of the above

A second grouping of replies shows a desire to address general impediments to downtown access, including traffic issues and parking.

Traffic Issues	12% of participants
----------------	---------------------

Improve Parking	3
Improve Transit	1

16% mentioned one or more of the above

A third grouping shows a desire for things to enhance downtown character, including new civic features, better walkability, more parks and other things to establish a better sense of community identity.

Enhance Character	7%
Civic Features	6
More Walkable	6
Parks/ Landscaping	3
Mixed Use	2

24% mentioned one or more of the above

Finally, 8% of responses included statements related to curbing growth, often specifying issues with apartments or higher-density housing as something they'd like to see addressed.

Q9 – *Circle your level of agreement with the following statements:*

“Streets should be improved to make walking and cycling safer and more convenient to get to and around downtown.”

“Downtown should develop as the ‘heart’ of Newcastle, including civic activities, shops, of offices, restaurants and housing.”

“The amount of parking downtown should be retained.”

“Downtown would benefit from having an outdoor gathering space, such as a plaza or park.”

“I support new mixed-use development downtown that adds new commercial activities or public amenities.”

Mirrored by responses from Q6 and Q8, support for making downtown more pedestrian friendly was high (3.6 of 5.0); respondents strongly support downtown’s continued evolution as the clear “heart” of the community (4.0 of 5.0), and parking needs to remain at least as accessible as it is today (4.1 of 5.0). To a lesser degree (3.4 of 5.0), respondents appreciated the idea of a downtown gathering place, and support appears fairly strong (3.7 of 5.0) for new mixed-use development, if associated with new commercial and/or public amenities.

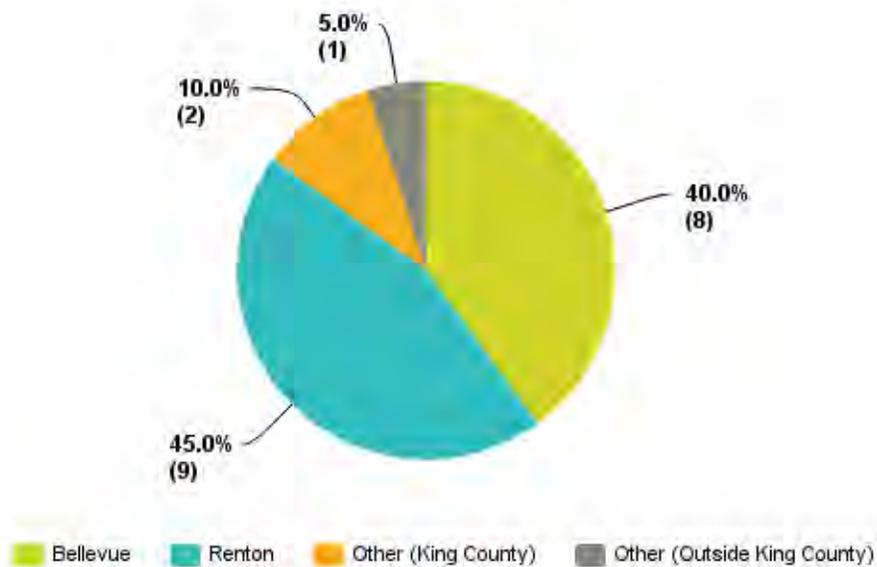
Q1 Do you currently live, work or own property in Newcastle?

Answered: 483 Skipped: 0

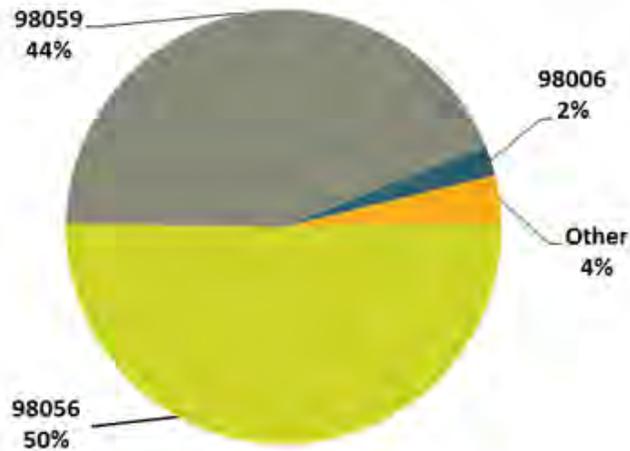


Q2 In what community is your primary place of residence? (Choose one)

Answered: 70 Skipped: 463

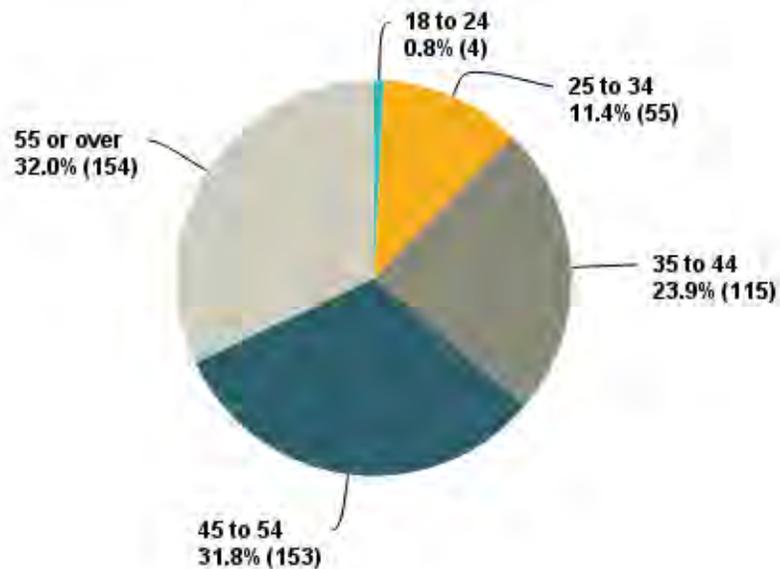


Q3 What ZIP code is included in your address?



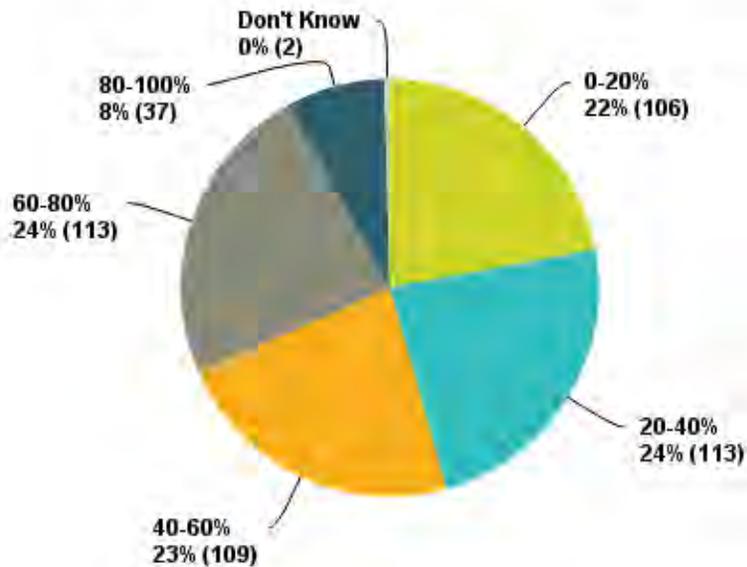
Q4 What is your age group?

Answered: 481 Skipped: 2

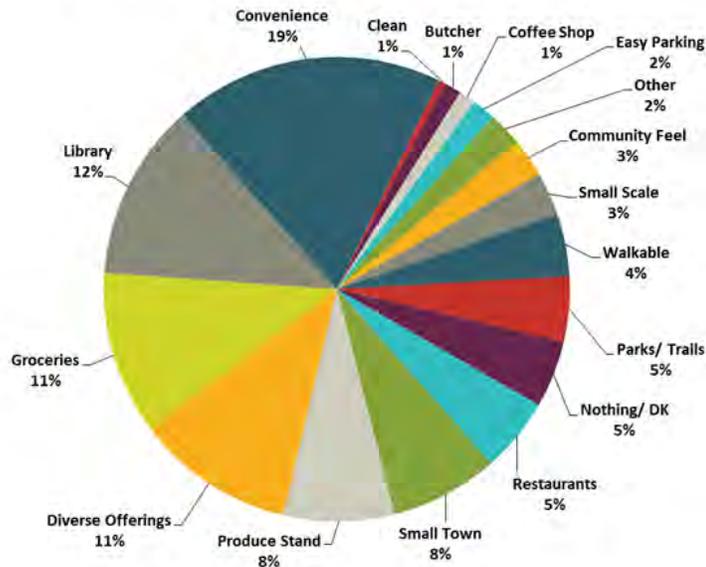


Q5 What percentage of your household's basic goods and services are provided by downtown Newcastle? (groceries, gym, gas, etc.) (Please estimate)

Answered: 400 Skipped: 3

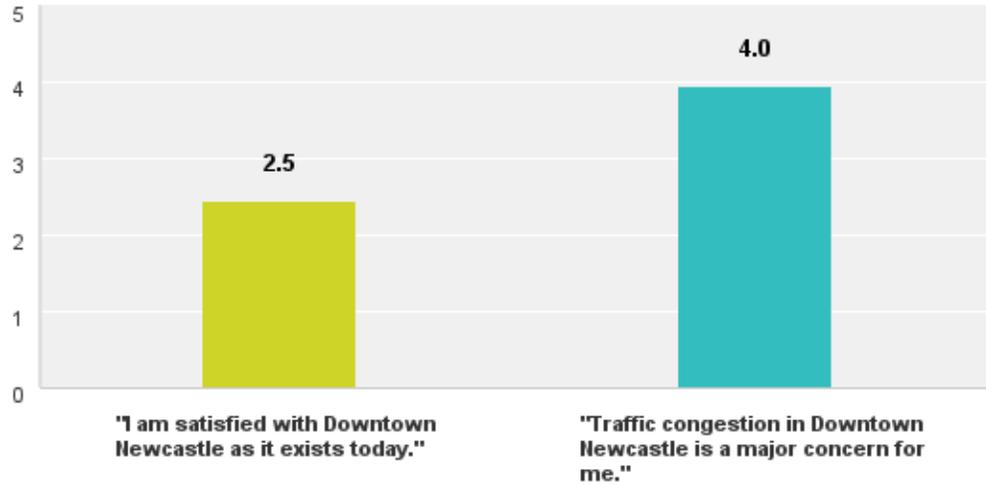


Q6 What is your favorite thing about Downtown Newcastle today?

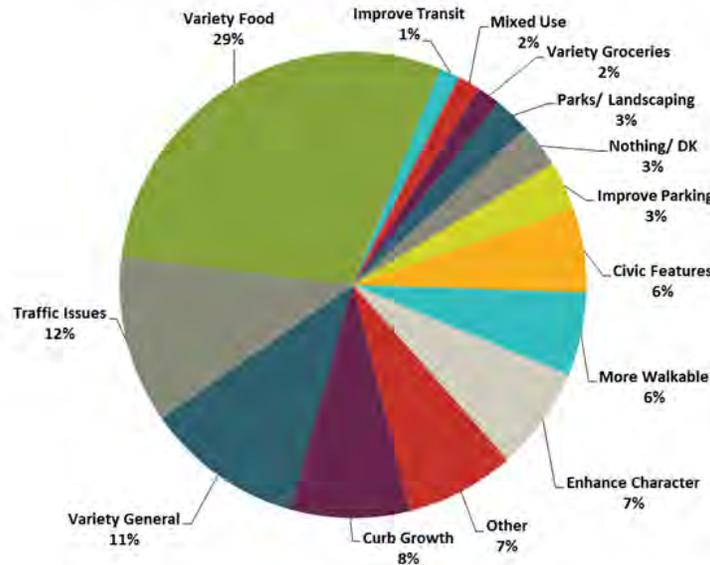


Q7 On a scale of 1 to 5, indicate your agreement with the following statements:

Answered: 462 Skipped: 21

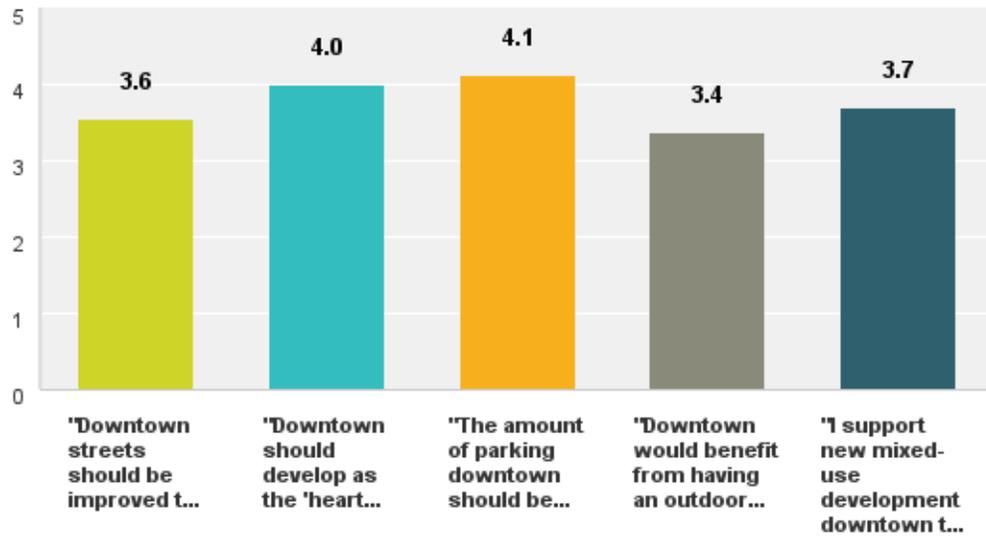


Q8 If you could change one thing about Downtown Newcastle what would it be?



Q9 On a scale of 1 to 5, indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

Answered: 439 Skipped: 44



Mini-Poll: Downtown Needs & Priorities

Newcastle is creating a **Downtown Strategic Plan**, establishing a framework to guide investment, development and decision-making for many years to come. What's missing in downtown today? How should downtown evolve? What should the City prioritize? Share your thoughts and help Newcastle create a better future for downtown!



Downtown Today	What is your favorite thing about Downtown Newcastle today?						
	Circle your level of agreement with the following statements:						
		(Disagree)		(Neutral)		(Agree)	
	"I am satisfied with Downtown Newcastle as it exists today."	1	2	3	4	5	D/K
	"Traffic congestion in Downtown Newcastle is a major concern for me."	1	2	3	4	5	D/K

Downtown Tomorrow	If you could change one thing about Downtown Newcastle, what would it be?							
	Circle your level of agreement with the following statements:							
		(Disagree)		(Neutral)		(Agree)		
		"Streets should be improved to make walking and cycling safer and more convenient to get to and around downtown."	1	2	3	4	5	D/K
		"Downtown should develop as the 'heart' of Newcastle, including civic activities, shops, offices, restaurants and housing."	1	2	3	4	5	D/K
		"The amount of parking downtown should be retained."	1	2	3	4	5	D/K
	"Downtown would benefit from having an outdoor gathering space, such as a plaza or park."	1	2	3	4	5	D/K	
	"I support new mixed-use development downtown that adds new commercial activities or public amenities."	1	2	3	4	5	D/K	

About You	I primarily live, work or own property in: (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> - Newcastle <input type="checkbox"/> - Other/Other City						My Zip Code: _____
	What is your age group? (circle one)						
	0-18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	
What percentage of your basic goods and services are provided by Downtown Newcastle? (groceries, gym, gas, etc.) (circle one)							
0-20%	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%	D/K		

Complete and leave this form at any of our strategic plan events, or return to Newcastle City Hall by January 27. Learn more about the plan, including meeting dates, process results, the on-line version of the survey and more at:

www.newcastle-plan.com

Drop-in Center and Walking Tours

Beginning with an open house at the Newcastle Library on January 21 and concluding in the evening of January 25 at Home Street Bank, the Drop-In Center and Walking Tours hosted **more than 125 conversations** with Newcastle residents and businesspeople.

What We Heard

The following comments were provided during Newcastle's Downtown Strategic Plan "Preview" event on January 21, 2016, the "Drop-In Center" activities on January 23-25, and three walking tours on January 23-25. For ideas that were supported by numerous individuals, a ✓ is shown next to the original idea or overarching idea and represents one additional person showing support. ***This document is not intended to serve as an exact representation of the number of individuals who support specific ideas, but rather a representation of what we heard.*** Many individuals expressed support for these ideas during the evening workshops on January 23 and 25, which is not captured in this document.

Pedestrians/Bikes/Trails

132nd Place SE

- Want pedestrian-scale lighting on 132nd. (✓)
- Need a downtown street with retail (restaurants/pub) on 132nd with sidewalks and street lights.
- Turn manufacturing on 132nd into space to gather – restaurants would benefit from the quieter location to offer outdoor seating.
- Want better amenities for pedestrians and bicycles.
- 132nd needs enforcement – there are abandoned cars and illicit behavior.
- Want 132nd to feel European with shops. Want kids, dogs, and people on 132nd.
- City staff noted that 132nd has ~60 foot right of way. The right of way extends beyond the back of the sidewalk.

129th Avenue SE

- Get rid of speed bumps. (✓✓✓✓✓)
- Consider adding speed bumps. (✓✓)
- Want better pedestrian lighting between Newcastle Way and Lake Boren. (✓✓)
 - Pedestrian lighting south of 76th
 - Add better lighting
- 129th is utilized for pedestrian and bike access to Lake Boren. (✓✓)
 - 129th is a great access point to the lake.
- Want more access to the historic cemetery and nice walkway. (✓)
 - I like the idea to open up the cemetery with new fencing – it's a jewel.
- This street is usually quiet and a beauty.
- Want better amenities for pedestrians and bicycles.
- Add sidewalks.
- Speeding is not an issue on 129th.

Coal Creek Parkway

- Want more crossings on Coal Creek Parkway. (✓✓✓✓✓etc.)

- Easier pedestrian crossing for Coal Creek Parkway.
- Overpasses (✓✓✓)
 - Add pedestrian overcrossings on Coal Creek Parkway at Newcastle Way and at the Private Road.
 - Traffic overpass on Coal Creek Parkway to provide additional traffic congestion relief.
- Redesign intersection of Coal Creek Parkway and Newcastle Way to improve pedestrian safety and comfort. Currently, there are sweeping turns and vehicles turning right are not watching for pedestrians. (✓✓)
 - The pedestrian crossing at Coal Creek is dangerous, even with the signal.
 - Pedestrian safety is an issue at this intersection. Is it possible to have no turn on red onto Coal Creek Parkway?
- The pedestrian crossing time on Coal Creek Parkway is too short. A person with a walker can't make it across in time. (✓✓)
 - Pedestrian crossing timing needs improvement.
- Consider a pedestrian underpass on Coal Creek Parkway.
- Flip sidewalk and amenity zone/landscaping along Coal Creek Parkway to increase pedestrian buffer.
- Would like to see better trail system access off of Coal Creek Parkway.
- It's not safe to cross the street at the bus stop just south of Coal Creek Parkway.
- We may need 1-2 signals on Coal Creek Parkway between Newcastle Way and Factoria.
- Consider putting Coal Creek Parkway underground through Downtown Newcastle. The space above could be used for dining, parks, etc.
- 69th and Coal Creek Parkway is dangerous for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Need safe access to Coal Creek from the shopping centers.

Newcastle Way

- There are pedestrian/vehicle conflicts at Newcastle Way & 129th. There have been several near misses when vehicles don't yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. It's hard to see people crossing Newcastle Way. (✓✓✓)
- Pedestrian safety at 116th is an issue. (✓✓)
 - Newcastle Way & 116th needs a light. Cars don't stop for pedestrians, and this will become an even bigger problem when the Middle School opens.
 - Concern about intersection at new school on Newcastle Way – there's no light.
- It's difficult to cross Newcastle Way between Coal Creek Parkway & 132nd at the bus stop. Cars come speeding down the hill. We need a RRFP crossing signal. (✓)
 - Bus stop on Newcastle Way east of Coal Creek Parkway – speeding vehicles makes crossing difficult.
- Concerns about construction staging on Newcastle Way.
- I can hardly get out of the subdivision on Newcastle Way at 125th Ave SE.

Other ideas

- Concerned about lack of sidewalks and/or crosswalks (✓✓✓✓✓✓etc.)
- High speeds and/or traffic volumes make walking and biking Downtown feel unsafe (✓✓✓✓✓✓etc.)

- Concerned about lack of adequate bicycle facilities (e.g. bike lanes, bike signals, racks, etc.) (✓✓✓✓)
- Concerned about safety at night when walking Downtown or waiting for transit (e.g. lighting) (✓✓✓✓✓etc.)
 - Too dark at night to feel safe walking – need more street lighting.
- Concerned about lack of accessible facilities that accommodate wheelchairs and strollers (✓✓)
- Love the trails!
- Want a space for kids to safely ride their bikes.
- Pedestrian safety is the #1 issue. As a parent and daughter of an elderly mom, I am concerned about this on the streets and in the shopping centers.
- I want better pedestrian access so people don't have to drive everywhere. "Pedestrian access makes a community."
- The immigrant community and others don't know to press the crosswalk button in order to cross the street. You could make the crossing signal change for pedestrians without pressing the button.
- Want to see walkways through the parking lots. Need something to catch the drivers' attention because white crosswalks aren't enough.
- City staff notes that there will be a new trail connection on 129th at SE 75th Street. Construction will start in early summer 2017 and hopefully open by the end of the summer.
- City staff also noted that a wetland trail goes behind the townhome complex to Lake Boren.
- I like the wider sidewalks, which allow pedestrians as well as businesses to move seating outdoors when the weather allows.

Private Drive

- The Private Road is an important vehicle connection. (✓✓✓✓✓etc.)
 - "The Downtown Plan hinges on the Private Road staying open."
 - "The Private Road is huge."
- There were several comments requesting a new signal at the Private Drive. (✓✓✓✓✓etc.)
 - If the Private Drive, there needs to be a light at the intersection and no on-street parking to help visibility.
 - If Tapatio alley is closed, add traffic signal for Coal Creek Parkway.
 - Need another viable option to turn left onto Coal Creek Parkway if we lose alley access along the Hansen Brother property. It's impossible to get out of QFC complex if turning left.
 - Need a light at the Access Road.
 - It's hard to make a left-hand turn onto Coal Creek Parkway from the Private Road.
- City staff noted that there are three owners of the street right of way. The owners of the Hansen Brothers property own roughly half of the Private Road.
- Parked cars from the apartments don't leave enough room to enter the strip mall.

Vehicles/Traffic

- Traffic is too much! (✓✓✓✓✓etc.)
 - More residents = more traffic. What to do?
 - The city only built houses and condos, but no more streets. Traffic is so bad! The City of Newcastle only wants to make money and not take care of the people who live here!
 - Concern about traffic with all the new buildings.
 - Concerned about speed, cut through traffic, and unsafe crossings.
 - Cut through traffic is an issue.
- City staff noted that the new road through Newcastle Commons will be open to the public and provide a new connection to 132nd and Golf Club Road.
- Too many speed bumps.
- Consider the impacts of one improvement on another. For instance, what impact will an intersection improvement at Golf Club Road and Newcastle Way have on the intersection of Newcastle Way and Coal Creek Parkway?
- Want a grid street system.
- The left turn pocket needs to be deep enough to hold a queue.
- Visibility existing the QFC lot is challenging.
- It's hard to access businesses due to intersection traffic.

Newcastle Way

- Look at the intersection of 132nd and Newcastle Way. Traffic backs up on Newcastle Way and it's really hard to get out of 132nd.
- A new treatment (signal or roundabout) at Newcastle Way & Golf Club Road would definitely help with congestion.
- Consider widening Newcastle Way lanes to 4 lanes towards 405.
- Traffic is bad on Newcastle Way. It's a throughway to I-405. It's hard to turn onto it from side streets, and speeding on Newcastle Way is also an issue.

Coal Creek Parkway

- There are concerns about traffic on Coal Creek Parkway specifically. (✓✓✓✓✓etc.)
 - Maintain efficient movement along Coal Creek Parkway.
 - I am concerned about traffic on Coal Creek Parkway from the new developments.
 - Need to address Coal Creek Parkway traffic – I'd like to see traffic redirected to I-405, perhaps by slowing speeds on Coal Creek Parkway.
- There's a desire to synchronize the traffic signals. (✓)
 - No left hand turns at non-signalized locations along Coal Creek Parkway from the bridge north to Factoria Boulevard, so we need to synchronize the signals.
 - Traffic lights are not synchronized, so cars gridlock on Coal Creek Parkway.
- It's tough to have a cool downtown with busy Coal Creek Parkway.
- There needs to be a long-term (10-20 year) plan for alternative routes to Coal Creek Parkway. If there's an accident, it's a huge issue.

Transit

- Want transit to serve more locations. (✓✓✓✓✓etc.)

- Want more bus service to Seattle from Newport Hills.
- Bus route needed along Newcastle Golf Club Road all the way to the Issaquah Park & Ride.
- The Rapid Ride needs to stop outside Newcastle Commons on Coal Creek Parkway.
- Route 240 bus line is not direct enough. Want an Express bus to Bellevue.
- I would like Route 240 to extend further up the hill to the east. It's challenging for my kids to access the bus stop.
- Would like to see transit service from the single-family houses near 82nd & 116th to the Park & Rides, Seattle, and the airport. I'd like to be able to access Seattle by transit during the day.
- Want more frequent transit service. (✓✓✓✓✓etc.)
 - 30-minute bus headways are too infrequent. Every 15 minutes would get people out of their cars.
 - Want better bus access to downtown!
 - Better bus service to downtown please.
 - Bus timing – more frequency
- Would like a Park & Ride for Newcastle. (✓✓✓)
 - There is no parking for transit or carpools.
- Maintain and enhance the one-seat ride into downtown Seattle.
- Would love a train commuter service like the Sounder.
- Want a permanent, good looking bus stop on Newcastle Way Downtown that's closer to shops. Renovate the original (unusable) one to something useable or part of the landscape.
- Change the location of bus stops.
- Bus stop maintenance is an issue.

Downtown Character

- Keep town center green and leafy. (✓✓)
 - More green!
 - Want more green space. Don't cut down the big, old, mature street trees!
- Use Green Lake Village as a model.
- Use Madison Park as a model for Newcastle.
- Like the proximity of uses downtown.
- Maintain small town character.
- Like the 2015 Comprehensive Plan values.
- The downtown idea is great. I want amenities that benefit the community. Currently, downtown is a drive-thru.
- This is all about the community. Our goal should be increasing sense of community.
- Keep Newcastle as a bedroom community. There's good shopping and parking supply.

Public Realm

- Want congregating areas (✓✓✓✓✓etc.)
 - Want a congregating area
 - Need places where people can gather.

- Want more outdoor seating areas.
- Need places to linger – community center, good restaurants (not high end though), etc.
- Like the idea of an outdoor gathering space – the covered space on the Safeway side could work for tables/chairs.
- Want a gathering spot to view the Christmas tree at the nursery. You can only see it driving by on Coal Creek Parkway.
- Consider a public plaza at 129th & Newcastle Way – a small seating area.
- Consider plaza space at 132nd & the Private Road.
- Want a Dog Park (✓✓)
 - Small dogs
 - Want new dog park near Lake Boren.
- There has been an issue of dogs not being on leash and owners refusing to leash. It's a safety issue. I'd like to have a dog DNA database to ID and "fine" irresponsible dog owners for leaving dog poop in public areas. Please fine severely. It's a public health issue.
- Consider covering the shopping center parking lots and placing parks/village uses above.
- It's very loud at the intersection of Coal Creek Parkway & Newcastle Way.
- Need open spaces to offset any crowding/housing.
- Would like more bench seating to create a downtown feeling.

Culture/Identity

- Want funding for public art!! (✓✓)
 - Want public art/character
- Want a community center (✓✓✓)
 - A community center would be great to provide space for neighbors to communicate.
 - Don't segregate "seniors" – a community center could be useful.
 - Annex community center
- Want cultural festivals (✓✓)
 - Want festivals celebrating Asian culture.
 - Want Bon Odori Festival in Newcastle (a traditional Japanese Buddhist summer festival)
- Want to see a theater, live music, culture.
- Would love to see signage or something to show people they're in Newcastle. Want an ambiance that sets us apart – we're not just another strip mall.
- Add a senior center!

Retail

- Don't get rid of the open air market. We love it! (✓✓✓✓✓etc.)
 - My friends and neighbors would be upset to lose the Market. The market is wonderful. It's the only good vegetable market anywhere nearby.
- More restaurants! (✓✓✓✓✓etc.)
 - Would love to see a diner.
 - Don't want high end restaurants

- There is a shortage of restaurants – but a good mix of retail. There is so much to walk to.
 - Want more high-end restaurants that aren't fast food.
 - Want a retail gathering space where I can bump into people I know – a coffee house (not Starbucks) or a lunch spot.
 - Want unique places to eat that aren't chain restaurants.
- There are limited locations for casual business conversations/small meetings. (✓✓✓✓✓)
- Want additional services in downtown. (✓✓✓✓✓)
 - Want a local post office. (✓)
 - Want a variety of things to do.
 - Want unique stores that make people linger – not just Stop & Shop, and leave.
 - Mall should offer Asian products/foods and Whole Foods.
- No more banks! (✓)
- Want larger Starbucks!
- No more nail salons, dentists!
- “Condemn the gas station” to open up access to the shopping center.
- The “back of business” for the retail at the corner of Newcastle Way & Coal Creek Parkway is a drive through, which has difficult access and blind spots. Consider having this in a different location.
- Would like to see fiscal contributions from businesses to relieve the tax burden on families.

Development/Code/Land Use

- There are concerns about affordability and who the new developments are serving. (✓✓✓✓)
 - Want to see lower-income, ownership housing.
 - What about younger families and affordability?
 - Overseas investors are buying homes and leaving them vacant.
 - Want more affordable housing near downtown.
- No more buildings taller than 3 stories! (✓)
 - No “high rises”
- Concerned about a loss of wildlife/habitat. (✓)
 - Wildlife displacement is a concern.
- Want to see brick used for new developments.
- No more apartments, but want more retail. I'd be okay with mixed use if it was offices above rather than apartments. We need a revenue base.
- The shopping centers seem dated – not conducive to serving the growing population. Update to mixed retail/office use.
- Coal Creek Utilities as gold standard for building maintenance and grounds.
- Safety before aesthetics.
- Please be friendlier to small developments and short plats. Have an open information policy for owners and builders. The City is currently known as “New Hassle.”
- Review daycare codes. Use now relies on a school (assumption). The need exists and will grow, so the code should support it.

- The library looks great!
- Short-term: Scenario B, but plan for C!
- Walking tour participants generally liked the density and variety in architecture style found in the townhome complex on the east side of 129th. Participants liked that the homes fronted the street, which is friendlier than the more modern complex on the west side of 129th. It seems more classic and timeless.
- Walking tour participants were concerned about the commercial zoning designation for the properties on 129th across from the new development going in behind the library.
- One walking tour participant found the new building next to City Hall shocking at first, but just needed to get acquainted to it.
- There needs to be a designated, long-term plan for where retail will be so residents don't get blindsided.
- Development should pay its own way.
- Desire for the property where Hansen Brothers is to become mixed use and for the industrial uses along 132nd to become retail. (✓)
- There is no curb appeal for businesses. Overall curb appeal along Newcastle Way is an issue.
- Outside the Safeway, trash/dumpsters are visible.
- There is mixed and confused zoning – retail and manufacturing?

Parking

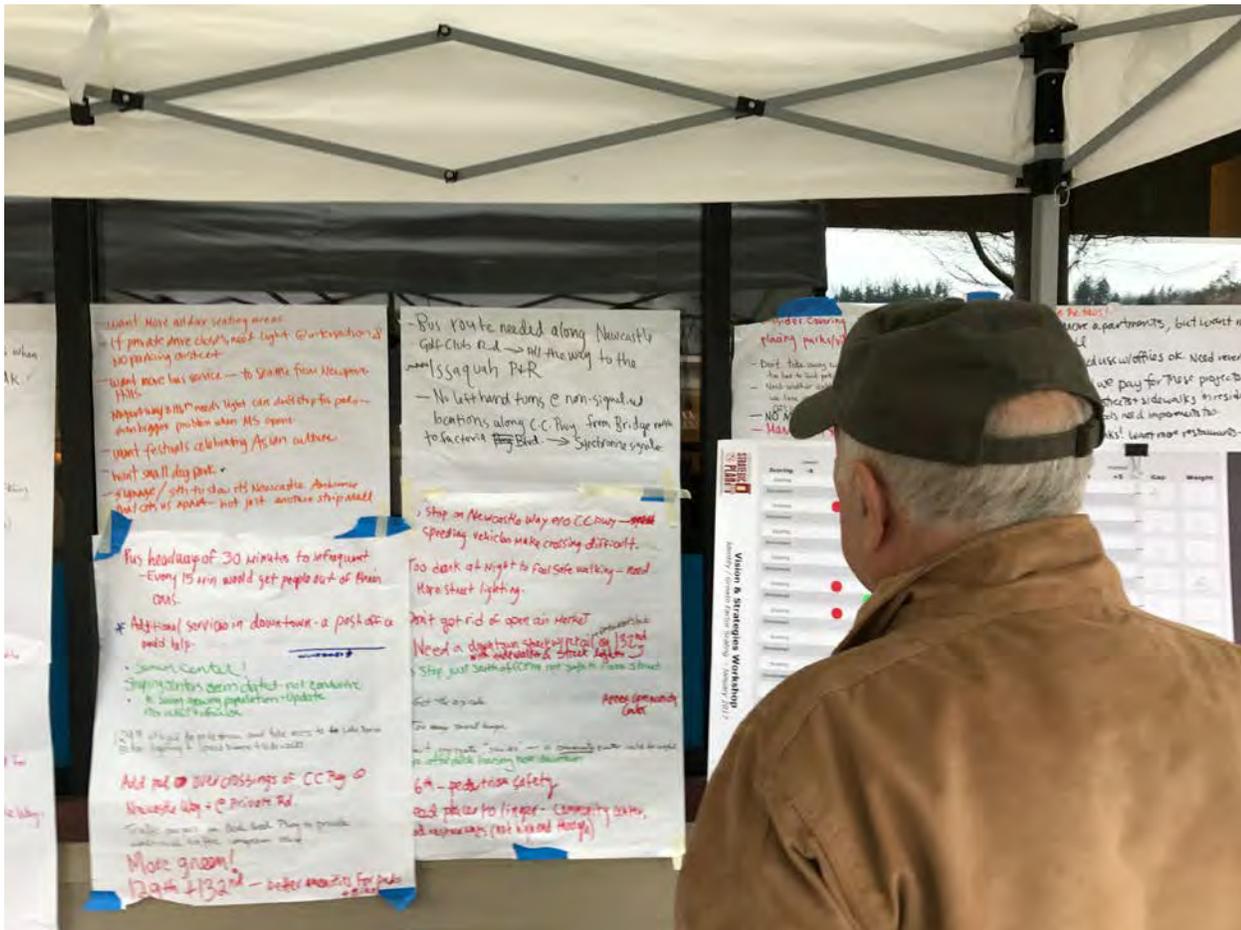
- Concerns about it being difficult to park Downtown. (✓✓✓✓✓etc.)
- Consider if there should be a fee or not.
- Don't take away current parking for grocery stores. It's already too hard to find parking for those who need to drive to get groceries.
- Parking will become more of an issues as downtown grows. The consultants should check the parking impacts in the Newcastle Commons TIA.
- Parking concerns with development at Newcastle Commons.
- It was noted that parked cars on 132nd primarily belong to adjacent residents.
- Parking will be a big issue moving forward. Look into adding more parking behind Safeway.
- Parking on 129th is a key concern with all the new development. It is already really hard to park at the library. I wish we didn't have cars parked on the street.
 - City staff noted that once construction is complete, parking will only exist on 1 side of the street to provide enough space for two cars to pass.
- The Safeway lot could be redesigned to work more efficiently. Handicap access is an issue – it should be redesigned.

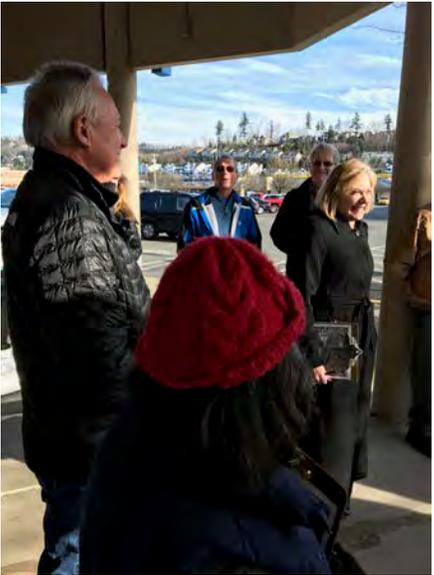
Process

- How will we pay for these projects? There are existing streets and sidewalks in residential neighborhoods that need improvements too. 118th Avenue is a residential road with high speeds and a lack of sidewalks, which is a big concern.
- Clearly identify the benefit to the community and if the community will bear any cost of impacts caused by new growth.

Other Ideas

- Get own zip code for Newcastle. (✓)
- Bring back the Newcastle newspaper. It's a huge loss for the community.
- Name the new Middle School "Coal Creek Middle School" – not Stinson.





Workshop One Results

On Monday, January 23, the first of two public workshops, entitled a "Vision Workshop" was held in support of the Downtown Newcastle Strategic Plan. The meeting was held at the Coal Creek Family YMCA, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Approximately **20 residents** attended and took part in exercises, not including City staff or elected officials or commissioners. A copy of the meeting agenda is attached with this memo, along with copies of the worksheets used in each of two activities. A PDF copy of the slideshow/presentation from the meeting is available from the City of Newcastle.

Following a presentation outlining the plan's background, scope and main objectives, the first group activity was introduced, asking small groups (3-6 persons per table) to help assess and compare community perceptions of downtown Newcastle's existing performance versus how they'd like it to perform in the future. Each group was given a worksheet to complete their evaluations, rating performance on a scale ranging from negative five (worst) to positive five (best) across 10 categories such as "Shopping Variety", "Walking & Biking", and "Civic Activities." Having rated existing performance and indicating how they'd like downtown to perform in the future, groups were asked to calculate the numerical differences, creating a "gap" score for each category.

Following this, groups were asked to assign a "budget" number for each category, indicating how much time, energy and funding they'd like to see applied, all while presuming a total budget value of 10 units. These two activities completed the first group exercise. Facilitators asked several of the groups to report on their findings to the full assembly.

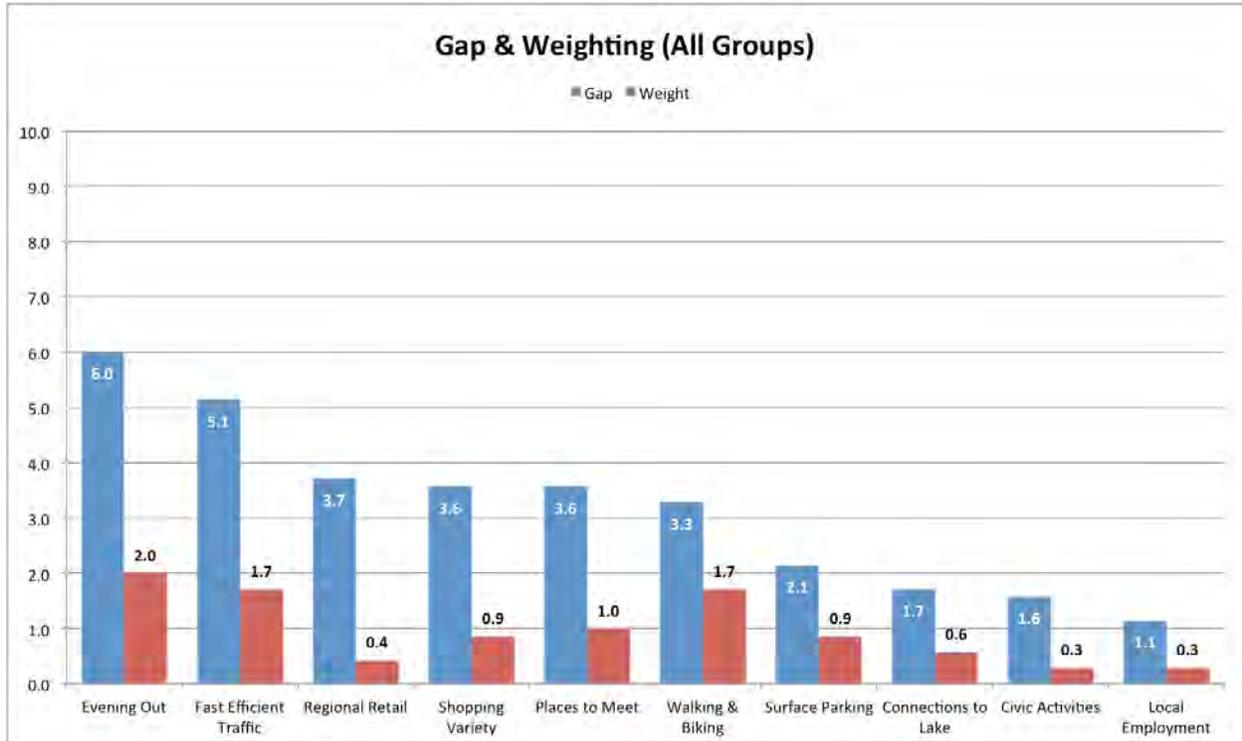
The second exercise asked each group to consider three alternative strategies for downtown, ranging from a low-investment scenario to a more aggressive one, each naming policy and project-oriented actions the City might take to support those scenarios. In addition to review, discussion and offering suggested refinements to the scenarios, groups were asked to indicate how they thought each strategy would likely perform regarding the categories introduced in exercise one, ranging from "negative impact" (-), "neutral impact" (0), to "positive impact" (+). As with exercise one, groups were asked to present their findings and verbally characterize their favorite alternative to the full assembly.

Summary Results – Exercise I

As seen in the table below (blue columns), participants identified the largest “gap” between existing and desired conditions as related to downtown’s ability to support “evening out” activities, followed by “fast/efficient traffic flow”, a place with strong “regional retail” offerings, “shopping variety”, “a place to meet” and a place with safe, comfortable “walking and biking. Scoring showed “local employment” with the lowest performance gap.

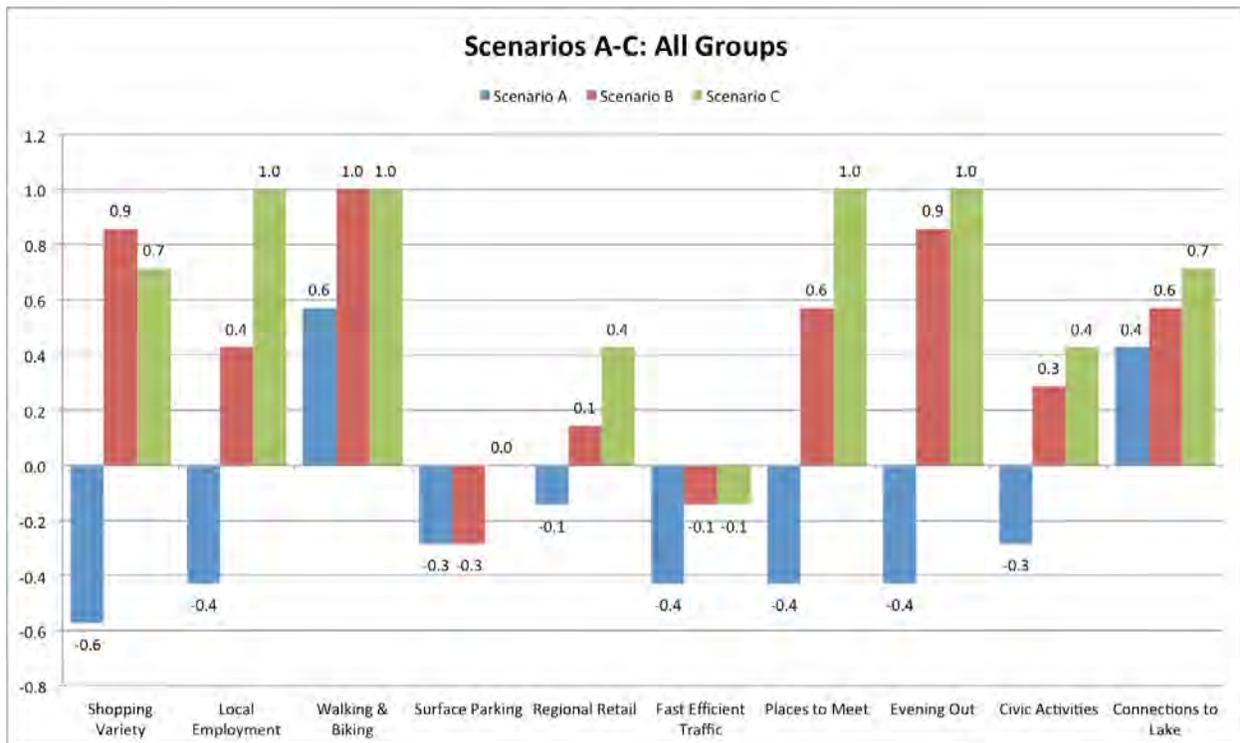
Groups allocated the largest share of their 10-unit budget to the “evening out” category, but assigned the second-largest portion of their budgets to improving “walking and biking” and improving vehicular traffic (red columns).

It may be instructive to note that some categories overlap, i.e., improving “evening out” conditions might also improve conditions involving “places to meet” or “civic activities.” Similarly, the topics of “regional retail” and “shopping variety” might be combined in evaluations. Some groups indicated their scoring tried to reflect this reality.



Summary Results – Exercise II

As seen in the table below, participant groups felt Scenario A performed worst in helping address downtown performance gaps, with features and policies contained in that scenario seen to improve only “walking and biking” and “connections to the lake.” Scenarios B and C performed much better, scoring (combined cumulative) ratings of +4.4 and +6.1, respectively. Despite this, table reporting seemed to indicate a consensus preference for scenario B, with doubts expressed that scenario C would be viable and/or an affordable course for the plan.



How Workshop One Influences This Plan

Participants in Exercise I indicated that they look forward to improvement in downtown’s performance in all ten categories. This underscores the participants’ anticipation of and hopes for change in the downtown environment. When considered within the context of responses to the assignment in Exercise II, the location and scope of that anticipated change began to take shape. Of the scenarios discussed, participants generally hoped for a blend of Scenarios B and C, offering Newcastle a more diverse, lively, and prosperous mixed-use, commercial center. This has implications in terms of:

Retail Evolution

Whether it is increasing the choices for dining during the day or on weekends, finding something to do in the evenings, or having the opportunity to do even more

shopping in Newcastle, folks hope the downtown evolves to meet community demand. Participants weren't surprised to hear that there is not a single vacancy in Newcastle's central commercial area, and hope that more space will come on line soon - helping fulfill the community's desire for additional retail/service offerings where they can spend their money locally.

Connections to Newcastle Commons

While some are apprehensive as to the impact of another 900 or so apartments and townhomes on local streets, many are hopeful that the new retail environment proposed at The Commons will enrich the community's shopping and entertainment options. Conversations during the workshop reflected hopes that the scale and atmosphere of the storefront development will positively influence the ways in which the community engages with retail in Newcastle. This part of the downtown can evolve to be more intimate and personal than the commercial district along Coal Creek Parkway, creating a type of "village" center that is uniquely Newcastle. It can operate at a slower pace, emphasize pedestrian activity on the street, and successfully incorporate outdoor spaces in its retail/entertainment environment.

Transformation of 132nd Place SE

As the Newcastle Commons develops, participants believe 132nd Place SE should evolve as a distinct, locally-oriented connector between the emerging village center and the established central commercial district. Participants see this corridor as a vital link, one that can establish its own identity as a valuable public space - even if its key importance is to connect the community's two activity centers.

Implications for Coal Creek Parkway

Participants believe that Coal Creek Parkway will continue to be a busy, regional arterial that continues to grow in regional importance and continues to boost downtown success. There are concerns about pedestrian crossing, however, and about peak-hour congestion that makes it inconvenient (and unsafe) to navigate, whether on foot or in a car. Wrestling with the need for continued regional mobility and the desire for more sensitivity to community context, participants expressed an interest in a range of calming strategies to make the flow of traffic through town efficient and the quality of trip more "emblematic" of Newcastle.

Implications for Public Spaces

Participants appreciate the value of places for gathering either informally or formally, and they want them in the downtown area. But opportunities for these to be created within the existing context are limited. Participants agree that the community's streets can provide for a social gathering environment if designed and managed appropriately. They also value the role of the fruit stand at the southeast corner of Coal Creek Parkway and Newcastle Way.

Participants also underscored the community's appreciation for Lake Boren, calling for an enhanced multi-modal trail to access the lake and the areas around it.

Neighborhood Compatibility

Existing zoning permits tall buildings. Participants generally understand that wholesale reduction of permitted height would be politically difficult, and they believe that taller buildings might actually help achieve some of the evolutionary concepts that arose from their discussions. Still, they are concerned that tall residential development designed under current zoning standards and design guidelines, particularly along the western edge of the planning area, might negatively impact surrounding neighborhoods. They hope that downtown's future development is sensitive to those neighborhoods and that what emerges in the future downtown Newcastle is seen as an organic, natural intensification, welcomed by the residents who will shop, dine, and work there.

Instructions:

Newcastle is unique, and residents like it that way. It's also growing - so it's important to imagine how downtown should grow as well, matching Newcastle's unique character. For this four-part exercise, tell us:

1. On the "Existing" scale, tell us how well you think Newcastle already performs for each of ten features. What's Newcastle's current status or reputation?
2. On the "Envisioned" scale, tell us how well you'd like Newcastle to perform in the future - how critical do you think each factor ought to be in realizing downtown's potential?
3. Comparing your existing and envisioned scores for each factor, calculate the **total gap** between them - for instance, scores of negative 4 and plus four should equal 8.
4. Finally, tell us how much of an investment Newcastle ought to make to support each factor. Using a "budget" of 10, allocate among the categories as you'd craft a downtown strategy. Make note of your expenditures in the "Weight" column, and total them below. Remember not to exceed 10 units!

Make notes as needed to explain your scoring. We've provided an "Other" category to fill in too - and though we won't include fill-ins in tables today, they will be reviewed as part of the results. *Thanks!*

Scoring	Neutral										Weight			
	Lowest	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3		+4	Highest	
Existing														
Envisioned														
Existing														
Envisioned														
Existing														
Envisioned														
Existing														
Envisioned														
Existing														
Envisioned														
Existing														
Envisioned														
Existing														
Envisioned														
Existing														
Envisioned														
Existing														
Envisioned														
Total:														
(Must equal 10)														



Vision & Strategies Workshop
 Identity / Growth Factor Scaling - January 2017



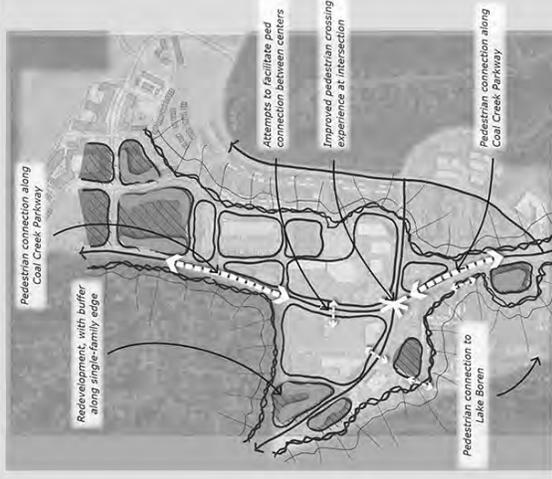
Instructions:
We're trying to find out how much change Newcastle should plan for. The city commissioned a report last spring that outlines three different possibilities for downtown, but we don't yet know if any of these three is really a good fit. Which of the three scenarios here looks like the most appropriate future? As a rule, higher development intensity will afford greater amenities. But a greater degree of change may make some folks uncomfortable...and will take some time to occur. These three scenarios will get us started - and we hope you'll have some thoughts to help get us on track.

Mark this sheet up with your notes. Let us know what works and what doesn't. And please reflect on the results of the previous vision gap exercise. Here's an opportunity to arrange downtown's elements to make sure Newcastle does its best to be the place you want it to be!

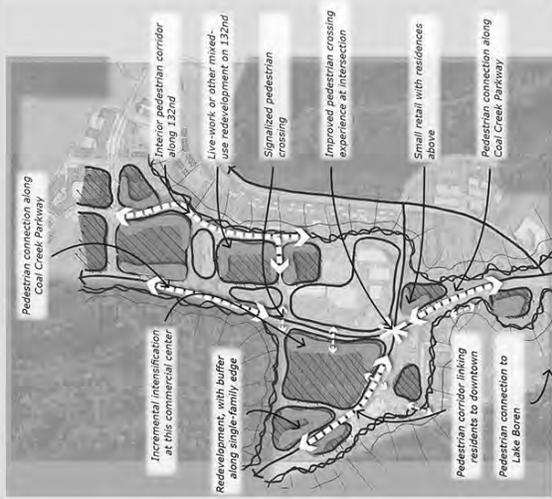
Your thoughts?

If you had to pick a favorite, which would it be?

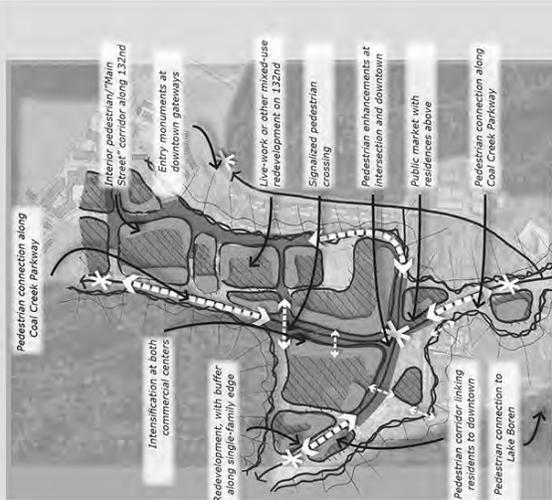
Shopping Variety	Local Employment	Walking/Biking Experience	Surface Parking Availability	Regional Retail Orientation	Fast, Efficient Traffic Flow	Places to Meet/Congregate	"Evening Out" Potential	Civic Activities	Connections to Lake, Greenways
A									
B									
C									



A: This scenario proposes little change, with minimal investment in pedestrian safety. It also relies on the existing Commons as the primary connecting element between The Commons and downtown.



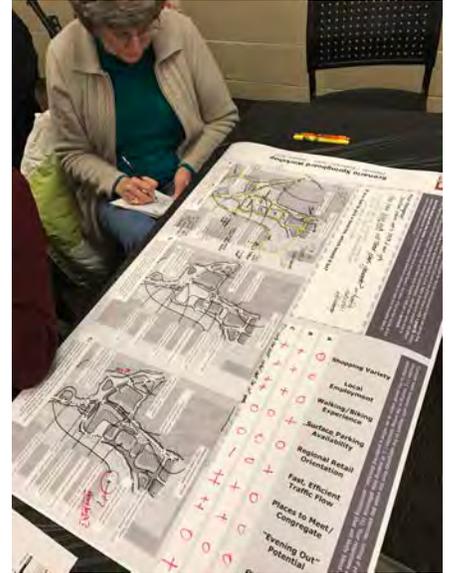
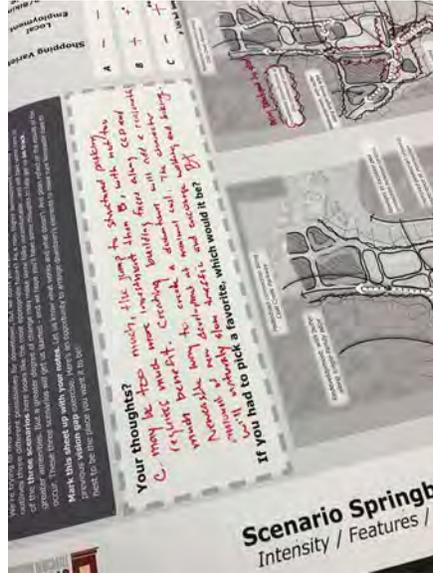
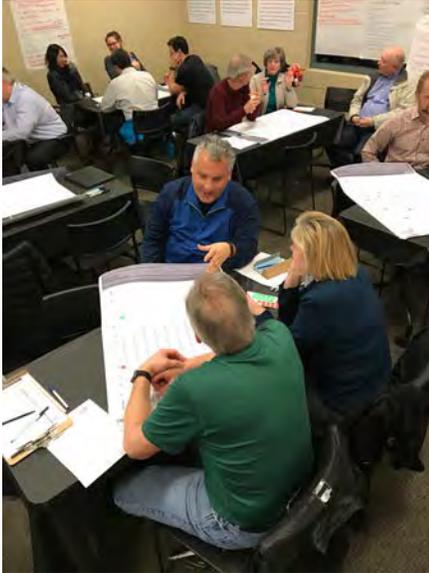
B: This scenario suggests some change in character, with new mixed-use development along 132nd. It also encourages higher density residential development within the center.



C: This scenario suggests transformation, with structured parking to support commercial uses and a strong pedestrian connection to downtown. New residential will spur more retail variety and evening activity.



Scenario Springboard Workshop
Intensity / Features / Scale - January 2017



Agenda

Workshop I: Vision & Strategies

Monday, January 23, 2017

Coal Creek Family YMCA

13750 Newcastle Golf Club Road



Time	Activity
------	----------

6:30 pm	Presentation (<i>City Staff, Breiland, Grimes</i>)
----------------	---

Slides and materials covering:

- Plan background, basis
- Plan process, scope
- Community expectations
- Activity introduction
- Q/A

6:50 pm	Activity 1 – Vision Assessment (<i>Participant groups</i>)
----------------	---

Vision gap exercise; facilitated summary

7:30 pm	Presentation (<i>Grimes</i>)
----------------	---------------------------------------

Slides and materials covering:

- Activity 2 introduction
 - Strategies 1-3 summary
 - Review criteria
 - Q/A

7:40 pm	Activity 2 – Strategic Review (<i>Participant groups</i>)
----------------	--

Strategic review exercise; facilitated summary

8:25 pm	Wrap up/Adjourn (<i>Grimes</i>)
----------------	--

- Q/A
- Next steps

Thank you very much for your participation in the Downtown Newcastle Strategic Plan process. Results will help define local desires and objectives for downtown's future, shaping growth strategies and policies for the City's efforts, as well as investment in streets and future development. Please attend any and all future meetings - times and places will be posted at: www.newcastle-plan.com

Project Contacts:

Fehr & Peers

Kendra Breiland, Consultant team lead

206-576-4223

k.breiland@fehrandpeers.com

City of Newcastle

Tim McHarg, Community Development Director

425-649-4143

tim@ci.newcastle.wa.us

Workshop Two Results

On Wednesday, January 25, the second of two public workshops, entitled “Preferred Alternative + Next Steps” was held to develop the Downtown Newcastle Strategic Plan. The meeting was held at City Hall Council Chambers from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Approximately **24 residents** attended and took part in exercises, not including City staff, elected officials or commissioners. A copy of the meeting agenda is attached with this memo, along with a copy of the worksheet used in the group activity. A PDF copy of the slideshow/presentation from the meeting is available from the City of Newcastle, along with additional photos taken at the event.

Following a presentation outlining the plan’s background, scope and the results of the January 23 workshop, the evening’s group activity was introduced, asking small groups (3-6 persons per table) to help assess and prioritize 20 proposed projects supporting the objectives expressed in Scenario B (the draft “preferred alternative”). Each group was given seven green dots and one red dot, the former to be placed among projects seen as important priorities and the latter used to identify what each group saw as the most important, first-step effort for the City to pursue.

Following group deliberations, each table was asked to report their findings, and dots were placed on a master version of the worksheet to tally the results from all groups.

Summary Results – Exercise I

The following pages present a copy of the worksheet (numbered map), followed by a tally sheet including the descriptive text for each project and enumerating the green and red dots allocated by all groups.

As shown on the tally sheet, the effort addressing intersection issues at Newcastle Way and Coal Creek Parkway (#4 on the worksheet) received five green dots, the most among all projects. Projects #6 and #7 received the next highest number of green dots, indicating support for inverting the sidewalk/landscape buffer arrangement along Coal Creek Parkway (#6) and creating a “Market Plaza” where the current vegetable stand now operates (#7). Several other projects received three green dots each, including #2, 3, 8, 9 and 14.

As for red dots, project #12 - which would create a public “green street” where the private drive between Coal Creek Parkway and 132nd Place SE now exists - received the most support with two red dots. Projects #4 (described above) and #11 – which would create a “Festival Plaza” at the intersection of 132nd Place SE and the private drive – received one red dot each.

How Workshop Two Influences This Plan

By forcing participant groups to choose eight favorites from a list of 20, this exercise began to assign priorities to a range of transportation and public realm improvements. *The 20 improvements were derived from Workshop I, initial mini-poll comments, stakeholder interviews, and what we heard during the Drop-In Center and Walking Tours.* They reflect community preferences for the scale and character of downtown Newcastle. Major implications from this exercise will guide the plan’s approach to the following elements:

Intersection of Coal Creek Parkway and Newcastle Way

Participants are calling for improvements here, making it both safe and attractive to cross these streets on foot or on a bike. Modifications to signal phasing and revisions to the geometry at the intersection are initial thoughts, but there may be other ideas, too.

SE 70th Avenue

SE 70th Avenue is a critical element of the downtown street network, and participants urge the City to wrap it into its public street network. It connects to Coal Creek Parkway at the location of the potential signalized pedestrian crossing and to 132nd Place SE at the location of the potential “festival street.” Its inclusion in the public street network is crucial to realizing the envisioned linkages to the “village” at Newcastle Commons and the emergence of a local, diverse, and active street corridor along 132nd Place SE.

Coal Creek Parkway Calming

Participants appreciated the value of medians, landscaping buffers, and other enhancements to make Coal Creek Parkway safer, more identity-rich and welcoming. They also appreciated the need for efficient traffic flows at peak hours, and the calming approaches they supported were viewed as improvements that slowed/calmed traffic without diminishing overall vehicular capacity.

Greenway Streets

Participants supported the transformation of 129th Avenue SE, SE 70th Avenue, and 132nd Place SE into “green streets.” This concept as applied to 129th Avenue SE would be oriented to slower-speed, shared-use, residential access travel - linking downtown to Lake Boren and surrounding neighborhoods and creating a quiet, peaceful and safe experience for all. The green street concept for 132nd Place SE and SE 70th Avenue was expressed somewhat differently, designed to create a more urban, village-style, mixed-use corridor. While still landscaped and pretty, 132nd Place would develop as a destination of its own, featuring shops, restaurants and the “festival street” plaza for community events.

Public Spaces

Regarding public spaces, participants favored the idea of taking advantage of what is available, working to support multiple uses for existing public land and highlighting unique attributes associated with each site or with the city itself, helping enhance the community’s sense of “place.” Whether it’s the wetland facing 132nd Place, the festival plaza envisioned at the intersection of 132nd Place SE and SE 70th Avenue, or at future transit stops, participants hoped to encourage community events, gatherings and general activity. As for the fruit stand, meeting participants – as well as a great number of those taking part in other plan activities – expressed high hopes for the site, envisioning a continuation of farmer’s market-style activity there, or retaining uses on the site that help it remain a place to meet, take visitors, and enjoy a sense of small-town pride.



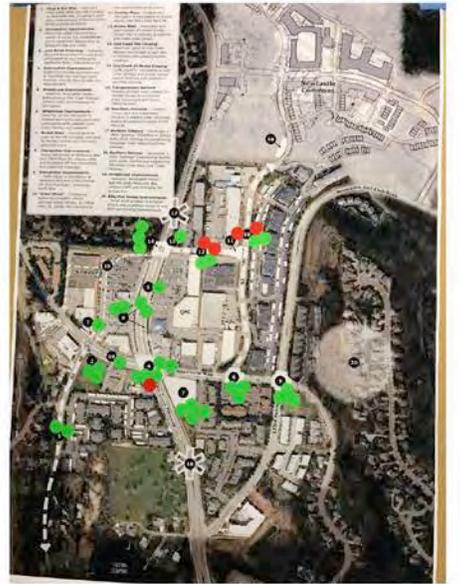
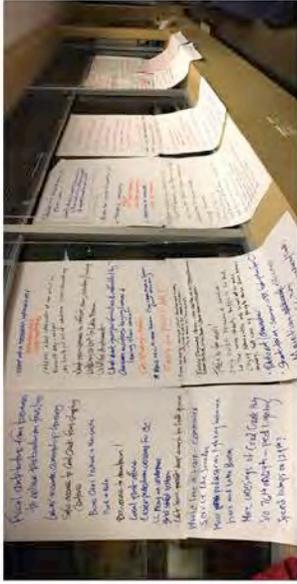
Strategy & Project Concepts

Preferred Alternative + Next Steps Workshop - January 2017



1	Plaza & Bus Stop – Features a small public plaza and new bus stop on Newcastle way, providing a more welcoming entrance for transit riders to the commercial district.	1	12	Access Road – Acquisition and improvement of current private access road to improve connectivity and create green street.	2
		0			2
2	Intersection Improvements – Pedestrian safety improvements related to signal, e.g. protected left turn or pedestrian lead phasing at Newcastle Way and 129th.	3	13	Coal Creek Ped Crossing – Pedestrian signal at Coal Creek Parkway and private access road to facilitate safe pedestrian/bike crossings.	1
		0			0
3	Lake Boren Greenway – Connects the commercial district to Lake Boren with pedestrian and landscaping treatments along 129th Avenue SE.	3	14	Coal Creek All Modes Crossing – Traffic signal or roundabout at Coal Creek Parkway and private access road to facilitate auto, pedestrian and bike crossings.	3
		0			0
4	Intersection Improvements – Pedestrian crossing improvements at Newcastle Way and Coal Creek Parkway, making crossing safer and more pleasant.	5	15	Transportation Network – Creation of small-scale, pedestrian-friendly streets in commercial areas (concurrent with future redevelopment).	0
		1			0
5	Streetscape Improvements – Selective, landscaped median features along Coal Creek Parkway, calming traffic and managing left turn access.	1	16	Mini-Park/Overlook – Creation of mini-park and interpretive overlook to wetland area, improving pedestrian experience along 132nd Place SE.	0
		0			0
6	Streetscape Improvements – Inverting current placement of sidewalk and landscaping, providing landscaping buffer between Coal Creek Parkway and sidewalk.	4	17	Northern Gateway – Landscape or other "gateway" treatment at district entry point, framing and establishing downtown limits along Coal Creek Parkway.	0
		0			0
7	Market Plaza – Improvements to open-air market and plaza, providing for farmers market and community gathering space.	4	18	Southern Gateway – Landscape or other "gateway" treatment at district entry point, framing and establishing downtown limits along Coal Creek Parkway.	0
		0			0
8	Intersection Improvements – Raised intersection at Newcastle Way and 132nd Place SE, slowing traffic and facilitating left turn movements and pedestrian crossings.	3	19	Streetscape Improvements – Selective, landscaped median features along Newcastle Way, calming traffic and managing left turn access.	1
		0			0
9	Intersection Improvements – Traffic signal or roundabout at Newcastle Way and 133rd Avenue SE (Golf Club Road), smoothing traffic flow.	3	20	Bike/Ped Access Improvements – Small-scale projects to enhance bicycle and pedestrian access to and from surrounding neighborhoods.	0
		0			0
10	"Green Street" – Creation of pedestrian-oriented, shared vehicular street corridor, at 132nd Place SE, linking The Commons to the central commercial district.	2	21		
		0			
11	Festival Plaza – Creation of a mini-plaza at intersection of private access road and 132nd Place SE.	0	22		
		1			





Agenda

Workshop II: Preferred Alternative + Next Steps

Wednesday, January 25, 2017

Newcastle City Hall, Council Chambers
12835 Newcastle Way



Time	Activity
------	----------

6:30 pm	Presentation (<i>City Staff, Breiland, Grimes</i>)
----------------	---

Slides and materials covering:

- Plan background, basis
- Plan process, scope
- Workshop I findings
- Activity introduction
- Q/A

7:30 pm	Activity 1 – Strategic Review (<i>Participant groups</i>)
----------------	--

Scenario review, refinement; facilitated summary

8:25 pm	Wrap up/Adjourn (<i>Grimes</i>)
----------------	--

- Q/A
- Next steps



Thank you very much for your participation in the Downtown Newcastle Strategic Plan process. Results will help define local desires and objectives for downtown's future, shaping growth strategies and policies for the City's efforts, as well as investment in streets and future development. Please attend any and all future meetings - times and places will be posted at: www.newcastle-plan.com

Project Contacts:

Fehr & Peers

Kendra Breiland, Consultant team lead

206-576-4223

k.breiland@fehrandpeers.com

City of Newcastle

Tim McHarg, Community Development Director

425-649-4143

timmm@ci.newcastle.wa.us



NEWCASTLE LIBRARY

City of Newcastle
12835 Newcastle Way, Suite 200
Newcastle, WA 98056
(425) 649-4444
www.newcastlewa.gov





DOWNTOWN **STRATEGIC** **PLAN**

VOLUME II

COMMUNITY BUSINESS CENTER DESIGN GUIDELINES



Contents

- 1. Intent..... 3
- 2. Applicability of Design Guidelines..... 3
- 3. Area Specific Guidelines..... 4
 - LAKE BOREN SECTOR..... 5
 - COAL CREEK SECTOR 6
 - DOWNTOWN SECTOR 10
- 4. CBC-Wide Site Design Guidelines..... 31
 - A. SIDEWALKS..... 31
 - B. STREET TREES 32
 - C. STREET FURNISHINGS 33
 - D. PUBLIC OPEN SPACE..... 34
 - E. PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING..... 35
 - F. SCREENING OF TRASH & SERVICE AREAS..... 36
 - G. CURB CUTS 37
 - H. LOCATION OF PARKING..... 38
 - I. PARKING LOT SCREENING 39
 - J. PARKING LOT LIGHTING 40
 - K. PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS WITHIN PARKING LOTS 41
 - L. BUILDINGS SETBACKS..... 42
- 5. CBC-Wide Building Design Guidelines..... 43
 - A. ENTRANCES 43
 - B. TRANSPARENCY..... 44
 - C. FLOOR HEIGHT 45
 - D. WEATHER PROTECTION 46
 - E. MASSING/ARTICULATION 47
 - F. GROUND LEVEL ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS 48

- G. ROOFLINE 49
- H. SCREENING MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT 50
- I. BLANK WALL TREATMENTS..... 51
- J. SCREENING OF PARKING STRUCTURES..... 52
- K. BUILDING CORNERS 53

1. Intent

The Design Guidelines create a platform for expressing the community's desires for the design and function of its Community Business Center and Downtown, to interpret the goals of the Downtown Strategic Plan and to allow for creative and innovative design solutions. The guidelines are intentionally subjective and intended to supplement the required standards of the City of Newcastle Municipal Code. Where the guidelines and zoning ordinance standards conflict, the City shall determine which regulation applies. In applying these guidelines, the intent of this document is to:

- Create a safe, walkable and welcoming environment that is designed around a human scale;
- Ensure design compatibility between different uses, scales and types of development, both existing and proposed;
- Provide clear and understandable guidance for new development that achieves the community's vision for their Community Business Center;
- Shape a unique Community Business Center and Downtown that showcases Newcastle's cultural and historic heritage, with timeless, durable and context sensitive designs; and
- Result in development that supports the local economy and long-term success of local businesses, convenient urban living and public spaces.

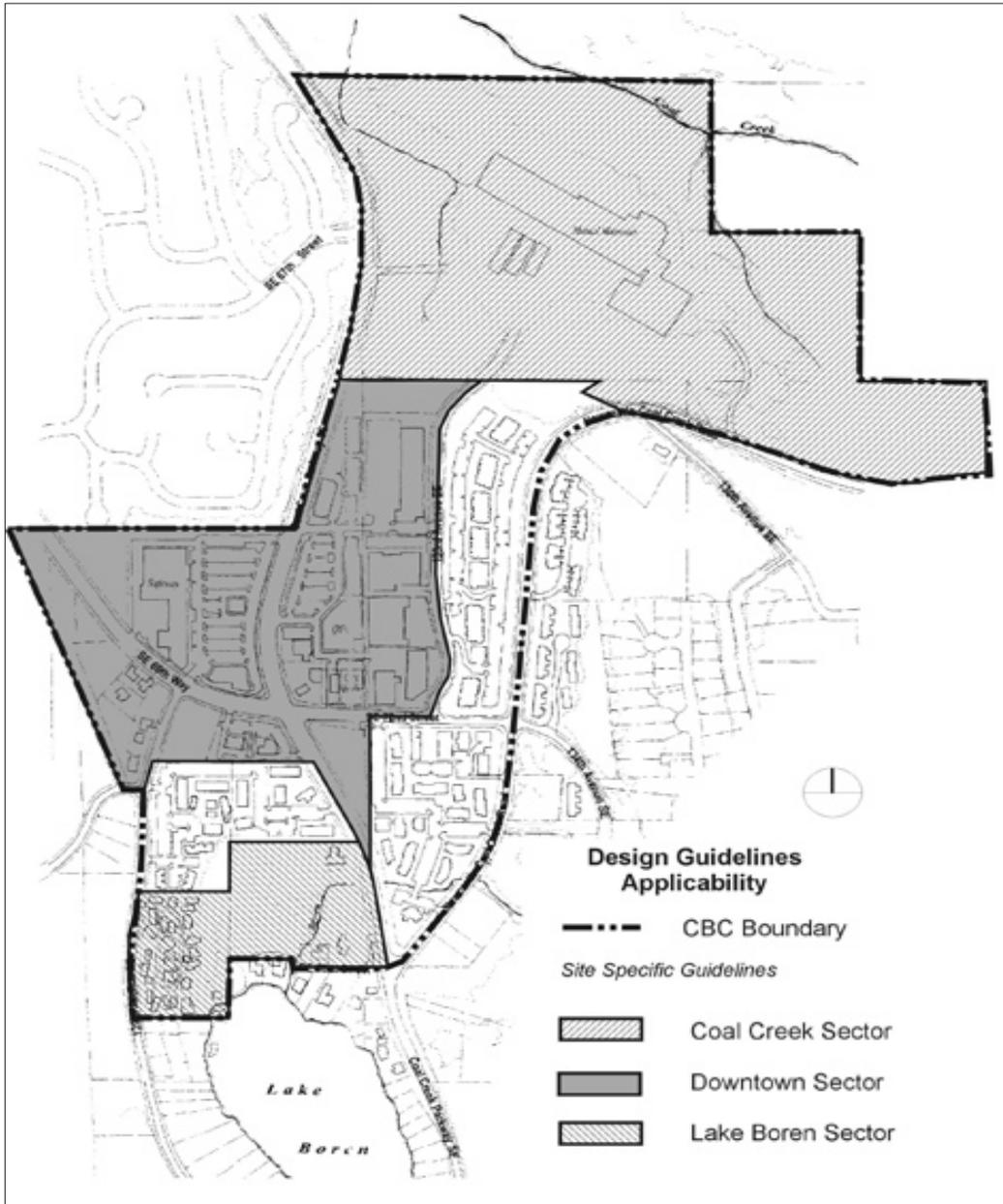
2. Applicability of Design Guidelines

General. Part 3 of these Design Guidelines apply to all development within specific sectors of the Community Business Center (CBC) overlay Zone. Parts 4 and 5 apply to all development within the CBC overlay Zone. Where there is conflict between Part 3 and Parts 4 and 5, the sector specific guidelines shall prevail.

New Structures and Site Improvements. All new structures, all additions to existing structures, and all new site improvements shall conform to these standards.

Remodels. Applicability of these standards to remodels is based upon the extent and value of the remodel. Remodels are designated as either major remodels or minor remodels, which are defined and regulated as follows:

- **Major Remodel:** Includes any exterior changes valued in excess of 50% of the assessed value of the structure. Under a major remodel, the entire structure's exterior façade shall be brought into conformance with all standards pertaining to building design. Major remodels are exempt from standards pertaining to maximum building setbacks from front property lines.
- **Minor Remodel:** A minor remodel is any exterior change, or a series of exterior changes over time, the cumulative value of which does not exceed 50% of the assessed value of the structure at the time of the proposed change. Under a minor remodel, these standards apply only to the proposed changes.



CBC Boundaries with Site Specific Related Design Guidelines Boundaries

3. Area Specific Guidelines

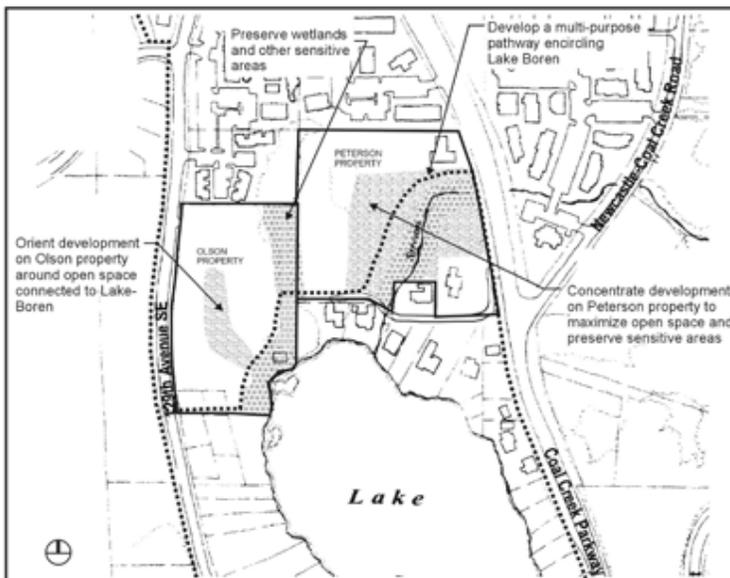
LAKE BOREN SECTOR

INTENT:

- To reduce the negative impacts to adjacent properties.
- To increase pedestrian and vehicular circulation.
- To upgrade the overall visual quality in Newcastle and maintain a human scale in new development.
- To take advantage of special opportunities to create a composition of buildings and landscape features.

GUIDELINES:

- A. Multi-family residential development on the Olson property east of 129th Avenue SE should be oriented towards usable open space connected to Lake Boren. The use of bioretention facilities within joint use open space is allowed.
- B. Develop a multi-purpose pathway that encircles Lake Boren. This pathway shall be an integral part of new development in the Lake Boren area and shall be located to increase visible access to Lake Boren.
- C. Preserve wetlands and other sensitive natural areas in the Lake Boren area consistent with NMC, Chapter 18.24. Utilize natural areas as a major site amenity. The use of native plant species for vegetation is required where feasible.
- D. Concentrate multi-family residential development on the Peterson property to maximize open space and preserve sensitive areas.



COAL CREEK SECTOR

NOTE: Individual site improvements within the Coal Creek Sector shall be permitted in conjunction with an approved Master Plan consistent with the Policies contained in the Community Business Center/Lake Boren Master Plan and the guidelines and standards listed below.

INTENT:

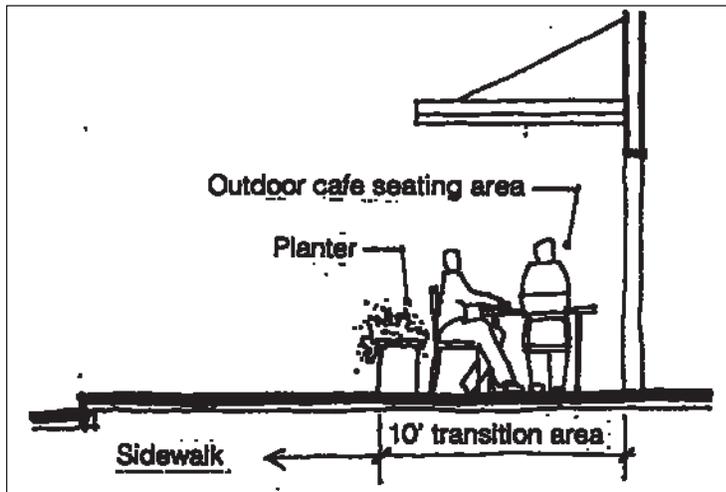
- To provide site specific design standards or guidelines for development on the Mutual Materials site consistent with the Community Business Center/Lake Boren Corridor Master Plan.
- To take advantage of special opportunities to create a composition of buildings and landscape features.

GUIDELINES:

- A. Develop a new access road (hereafter referred to as “Newcastle Connector”) connecting Coal Creek Parkway (at the SE 67th Street intersection) with Newcastle Coal Creek Road and golf course. Where possible, incorporate a landscaped median into the road’s design.
- B. Extend 132nd Avenue SE northward to Newcastle Connector.
- C. Encourage the development of an additional access road linking Coal Creek Parkway and 132nd Avenue SE near the southern boundary of the Coal Creek Sector.
- D. Provide a centralized public plaza adjacent to or near the Newcastle Connector/132nd Avenue SE intersection. Specifically:
 - a. Arcades, pergolas, or other street-level coverings are encouraged on all building facades fronting on the plaza to provide weather protection and an articulated building façade.
 - b. Brick paving materials associated with the historic use of the site are encouraged. Other options can be unit-pavers or concrete with special texture, pattern, and/or decorative features. Decorative and visually interesting permeable pavements are also allowed.
 - c. Separation of active and passive uses is encouraged through placement of planters, street furniture, landscaping, different paving textures, and subtle level changes.
 - d. Lighting shall be low in height, preferably below 20 feet. The overall lighting in the plaza shall average at least four foot-candles. The lighting plan should include pedestrian-oriented lights, such as globes and light bollards. Uplighting of trees is also encouraged. The color of light must be considered in the lighting design. High-pressure sodium, which has a pinkish cast, is recommended for general usage (very effective for lighting brick). Metal halide lighting is effective for uplighting foliage (makes it appear greener) and mercury vapor for lighting concrete. Low-pressure sodium, which casts a yellow light, is not recommended.
 - e. The plaza should be designed as part of a visual corridor/axis running from 132nd Avenue SE to the forested areas of Coal Creek Park.

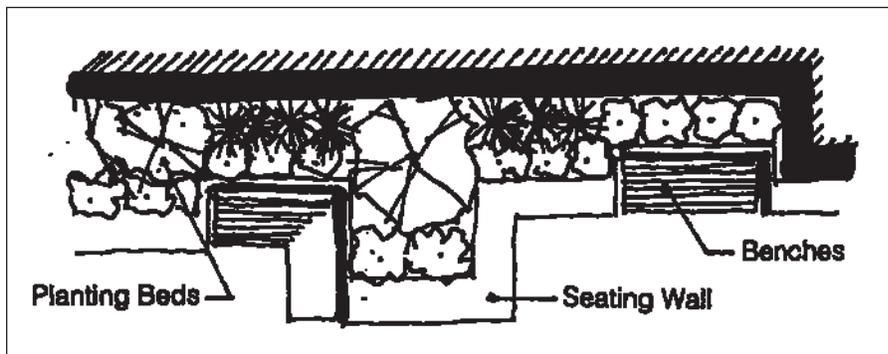
- f. A transition zone or buffer of approximately 10 feet will be left along the building edge where it abuts the plaza to provide an outdoor area for café seating and a planted buffer. This zone could be marked with a change in paving.

Transition Zone Along Building Edge



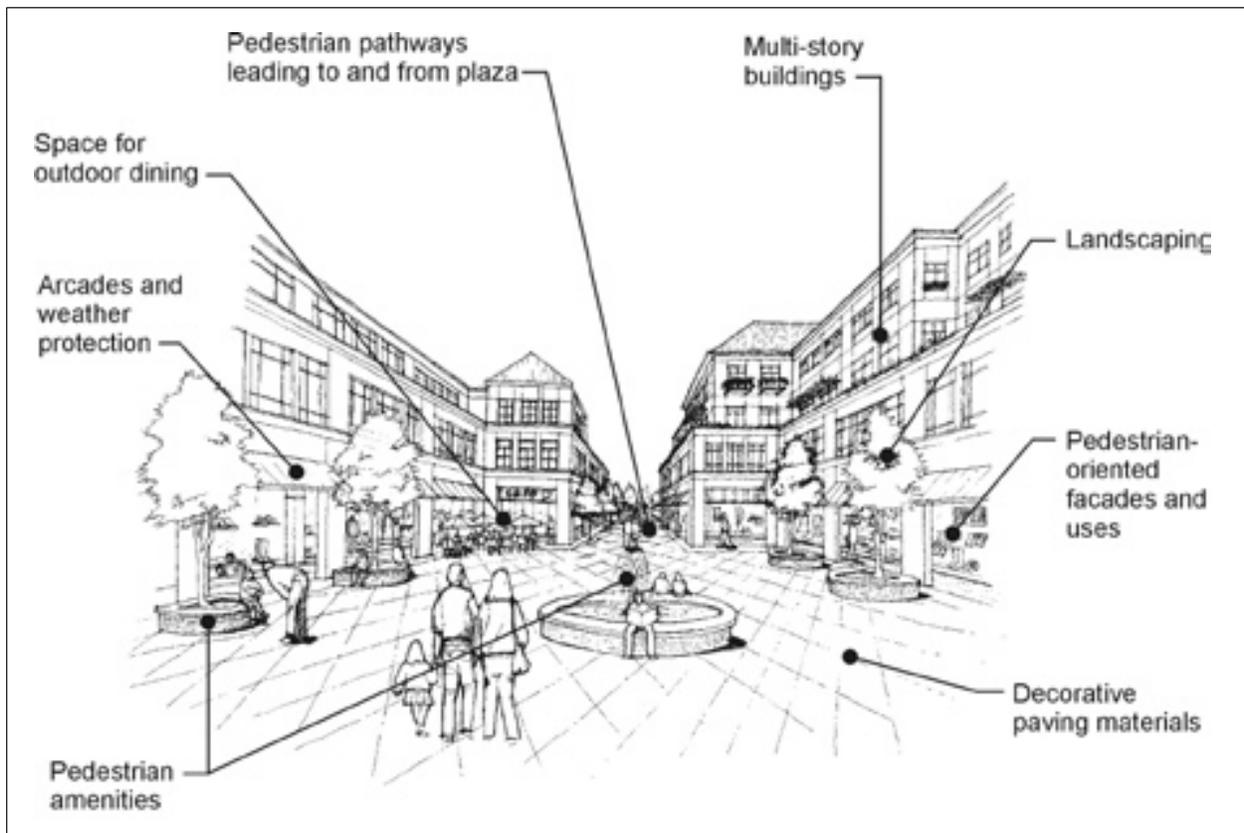
- g. Subareas shall be created within the plaza with seating and landscaping out of the traffic flow.
- h. The plaza should have an articulated edge (buildings, benches, landscaping, etc.) where feasible to provide visual interest and additional seating along the edges of the plaza where people may linger out of the traffic flow.

Articulated Edge



- i. Pedestrian amenities shall be provided: seating, lighting, plants, drinking fountains, distinctive paving, artwork, and a focal point or water feature.
- j. Edges of the plaza opening to pedestrian through-traffic should be defined without impeding traffic flow; i.e., with a planter or low seating wall, pergola with vines, water feature, or sculpture.

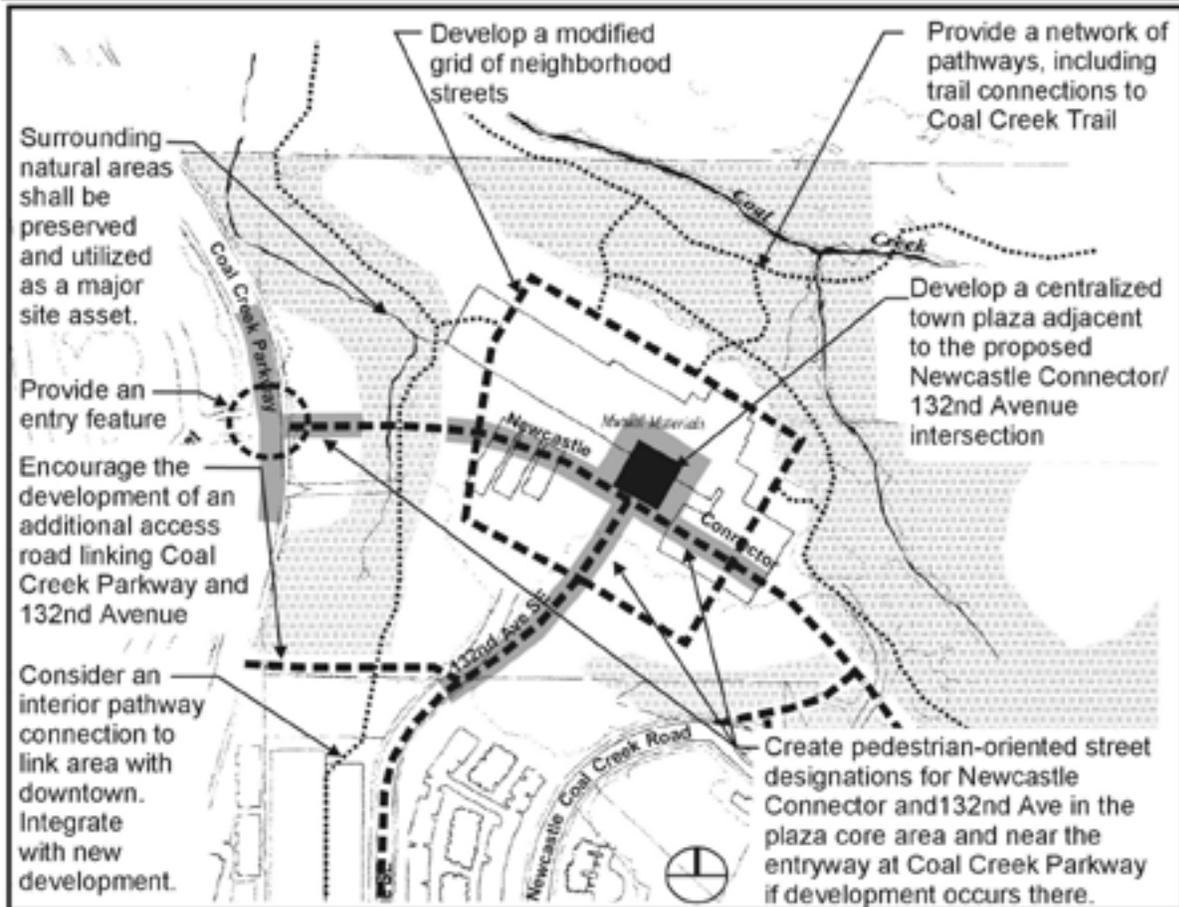
- k. Some covered area along the perimeter (e.g., a vine-covered pergola) is strongly encouraged to provide protection from rain and/or sun.
- l. One linear foot of seating (at least 16 inches deep) should be provided for every 30 square feet of plaza. Seating may include benches, low seating walls, steps, or, if properly designed, a planter edge or edge of a fountain.
- m. The sun angle at noon and the wind pattern should be considered in the design of the plaza.
- n. At least 50 percent of the total area of the building façade facing onto the plaza should be occupied by retail uses, preferably cafes and restaurants or other pedestrian-oriented uses.
- o. The plaza should be large enough to hold a congregation of 300 people.



Example of proposed pedestrian plaza in the Coal Creek Sector

- E. Preserve natural areas within the Coal Creek Sector and utilize as a major site amenity. Native vegetation along the creek, lake, or wetland edges shall be retained in a natural state and supplemented with wetland species if necessary to improve its function as a stormwater detention/drainage swale.
- F. Provide a network of pathways, including trail connections to the Coal Creek Trail. Depending on the nature of the site and adjacent uses, the type of pathway can range from a multi-purpose pathway to a nature trail.

- G. Provide a decorative gateway feature at the Coal Creek Parkway/ Newcastle Boulevard intersection. This feature is intended to announce the arrival to the City of Newcastle and development within the Coal Creek Sector. Backlit signs are not appropriate.
- H. Encourage the use of brick materials associated with historic use of the site.



Coal Creek Sector Design Guidelines

DOWNTOWN SECTOR

INTENT:

The Downtown Sector guidelines are intended to ensure development that employs high quality and context-sensitive design, strengthens a sense of place, ensures return on investment, enhances and humanizes the public realm, and positions the Downtown as a place to live, work and shop. Specifically, these guidelines should be applied to:

- Ensure design consistency and compatibility between adjacent uses and properties;
- Create a pedestrian-oriented environment, while ensuring efficient multi-modal access and circulation;
- Uphold a high quality and timeless design aesthetic for Downtown Newcastle, maintaining a human scale in new development;
- Maximize unique opportunities that lead to a composition of buildings, public spaces and landscape features; and
- Create a focal point and economic center for the City of Newcastle.

GUIDELINES:

The following design guidelines for Downtown provide focused direction for many types of design considerations spanning from larger scale planning efforts, such as determining appropriate building mass and scale, to smaller scale design elements, such as site furnishings. Accompanying images provide examples showing how guidelines can result in the desired form.

1. Site Layout and Orientation

Intent: Promote development that creates a stronger relationship between the street and building, reducing barriers and physical distances between these spaces; that results in development that is oriented towards pedestrians; and that embraces surrounding uses and natural environmental conditions.

- A. All buildings located along a public street should be oriented toward and have their primary entrances toward the public street.
- B. On sites with pedestrian areas or a mid-block connection, orientation of windows and entrances should be designed to complement and enhance the experience for people on foot or bike.
- C. Ground floor building entrances on the interior of the site should be accessible from the public sidewalk, pedestrian areas or mid-block connections.
- D. Buildings should be encouraged to have upper-story activities overlooking the street.
- E. Building orientation should consider future development on or adjacent to the building site, including shared access and potential linkages to such development (e.g. building entries) and building additions.
- F. Building orientation should consider environmental factors such as solar access and wind direction to take advantage of energy reduction.
- G. Break up larger buildings with façades that are perpendicular or at angles to the street to break up larger wall expanses and allow for creative use of space.



2. Building Articulation

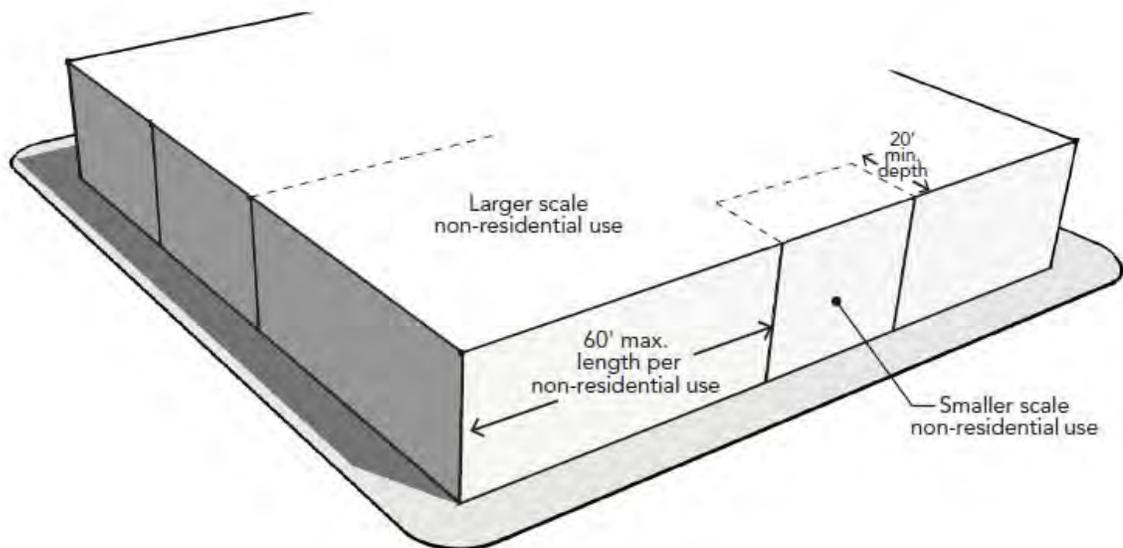
Intent: Respect the scale of existing development and ensure that the design and character of new buildings enhances Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods while creating a scale that relates to the street and pedestrian experience.

- A. At least 50% of the total façade area shall be articulated by use of a change in plane, arrangement of façade elements, or a change in materials (including glazing) to break the building mass.
- B. Streetfront facades must also conform to articulation guidelines based on street type (Table 1). Figure 1 illustrates maximum non-residential single use length and minimum non-residential use depth standards that meet the requirements of Table 1.

Table 1: Streetfront Building Façade Articulation Standards

	Street Type 1	Street Type 2	Street Type 3
Wall Plane Off-set per Length of Façade (min.)	1-foot/50 feet	3 feet/25 feet	3-feet/50 feet
Single Non-Residential Use Street Frontage Length (max.)	NA	60 feet	NA
Non-Residential Use Depth (min.)	20 feet	20 feet	20 feet
Distance Between Entries (max.)			
Non-Residential	100 feet	50 feet	100 feet
Residential	N/A	30 feet	50 feet

Figure 1: Non-Residential Single Use Length (Street Type 2) and Depth Standards Illustrative



- C. New buildings should be designed with a mix of wall areas with door and window elements in the façade.
- D. Break up uninteresting boxlike forms into smaller, varied masses.
- E. Each building design should consider a unique element that distinguishes it from other similar structures (e.g. ceremonial entranceway, limited towers or cupolas, cornices, window surrounds, etc.).
- F. Vertical and horizontal building modulation should be used to add variety and to make large buildings appear to be an aggregation of smaller buildings.
- G. Continuous two or three story street walls should be avoided by incorporating vertical and horizontal modulations into the building form.
- H. Avoid new construction that greatly varies from traditional area building heights (too high or too low). However, limited areas of vertical three, four, or five story walls can be used to create vertical punctuation at key façades or Downtown gateway intersections and where building heights permit. Special attention to maintain an activated streetscape is important in these areas.
- I. Consider the width-to-height ratio of bays in the façade. The placement of openings with respect to the façade's overall composition, symmetry, or balanced asymmetry should be carefully imitated.
- J. A flat building façade shall incorporate details such as window trim, window recesses, cornices, changes in material, color or other design elements in an integrated composition. Some of the architectural features of the street-facing façade shall be incorporated into the rear and side elevations.
- K. There shall be a same or greater level of detail and articulation on the ground floor as on the upper floors of a building.
- L. Building entrances should be celebrated with key vertical and horizontal elements, lighting, accent materials, etc.

- M. Upper story step-backs should avoid a rigid star step or “wedding cake” approach.



- N. Relate the roof forms of the new buildings to those found in the area. Duplication of the existing or traditional roof shapes and materials on new construction is one way of making new structures more visually compatible.
- O. Consider overall building scale when designing roof corning and parapets.
- P. Decks and/or balconies should be designed so that they do not significantly increase the apparent mass of the building within the required upper story step-backs. Residential or mixed-use building façades visible from streets and public spaces should provide balconies of a sufficient depth to appear integrated with the building and not “tacked on”.



3. Pedestrian-Oriented Façades

Intent: Establish guidance for building frontage types and to ensure that proposed development is consistent with the City’s goals for a pedestrian-oriented Downtown, with appropriate scale building form, character and quality.

- A. The ground floor façades facing public streets and public spaces shall feature “pedestrian friendly” street-front façades which consist of one or more of the following characteristics:
 - a) Transparent window area or window displays along the majority of the ground floor façade.
 - b) Sculptural, mosaic or bas-relief artwork over the majority of the ground floor façade.
 - c) Public Open Space that complies with the standards of NMC 18.15 and applicable guidelines.
- B. Guidelines for All Frontage Types: New buildings must demonstrate conformance with the following guidelines (Table 2) for building frontage types based on the street facing the building façade.

Table 2: Guidelines for All Frontage Types

Frontage Type	Street Type 1	Street Type 2	Street Type 3
a) Shop Front	☾	●	●
b) Flex Front	●	●	●
c) Arcade/Gallery	●	●	●
d) Forecourt	●	●	●
e) Front Yard/Porch	○	○	●

● = Most suitable, ☾ = less suitable, ○ = not suitable

- a) Shop Front Frontage Type: Shop Fronts are façades placed at or close to the right-of-way line, with the entrance at side walk grade. This type is conventional for retail frontage and is commonly equipped with cantilevered awnings or similar shade-providing overhangs. Substantial glazing at pedestrian level encourages sidewalk activation. Most appropriate for active retail/commercial areas along Type 2 and 3 streets.

Figure 2: Shop Front Frontage Type



- b) Flex Front Frontage Type: Flex Frontages are designed so that ground floor retail and commercial uses may be used for temporary residential uses, and uses may be interchangeable. The design flexibility allows for ground floor façades to transition between shop front requirements and residential uses.

Figure 3: Flex Frontage Type



- c) Arcade/Gallery Frontage Type: Arcades are a Flex Frontage type where façades have an attached colonnade covered by upper stories. This type is ideal for future uses on the west side of 132nd. For Building Code considerations, this frontage type cannot cover the public right-of-way.

Figure 4: Arcade/Gallery Frontage Type



- d) Forecourt Frontage Type: A Forecourt is a public or semi-public exterior space partially surrounded by a building and open to a thoroughfare, within the shop front, gallery or arcade frontage. The space is suitable for gardens, outdoor dining, shared open space and public plazas and should be situated to maximize solar access.

Figure 5: Forecourt Frontage Type



- e) Front Yard/Porch Frontage Type: Front Yards and porches are only suitable for ground-floor residential uses along Type 3 street types. The façade is set back from the right of way with a front yard. An encroaching porch may also be appended to the façade. A low fence or wall at the property line may be used to define the private space of the yard.

Figure 6: Front Yard/Porch Frontage Type



4. Colors, Materials and Textures

Intent: Building colors, materials and textures of new structures and additions or alterations should contribute to the visual continuity of Downtown and strive to promote a sense of durability and high quality.

- A. To maintain visual consistency, building materials used on the exterior of buildings should be traditional materials that are more durable. New development should incorporate durable materials such as brick, concrete, glass or stone into the design of the ground floor (street facing) façades.
- B. Alternative materials should appear similar in scale, proportion, texture and finish to those used traditionally. Durability should be considered when alternative materials are reviewed.
- C. Concrete and wood siding should be painted using a palette of earth tone or muted colors. Bright, neon- like colors are strongly discouraged.
- D. Where possible, use materials indigenous to the region and/or manufactured or supplied locally and that have minimal adverse impacts to the environment.
- E. Reserve bright colors for trim or accents.
- F. Emphasize dark, saturated colors for awnings, and avoid garish and light colors that show dirt.
- G. Avoid highly-tinted or mirrored glass (except stained-glass windows).
- H. Generally, the use of plastic, bright-unfinished metal, untreated wood, and false stone is inappropriate and should be discouraged.
- I. The use of T-111 or similar sheet materials, stucco clad foam (EFIS), vinyl siding and log construction is incompatible and is prohibited.



5. Sustainable Design Elements

Intent: Prominently feature the incorporation of sustainable technologies, including but not limited to solar energy or hot water generation, green walls, stormwater retention or treatment landscapes, artistic installations, or native habitat areas in the façade of the building to increase environmental sustainability, soften the building's edge and provide visual interest for the pedestrian.

- A. When used, sustainable technologies must be an integral part of the building's form and shall be designed as visible iconic elements in the sidewalk environment. The Planning Director will make the final determination as to the design integration and appropriateness of sustainable elements.
- B. Sustainable design elements are particularly appropriate on 132nd and Newcastle Way, where they will contribute to the City's identity and celebrate the City's unique sense of place in the region.
- C. Consider passive heating and cooling techniques during building design.
- D. Control solar heat gain and glare using external shading devices.
- E. Consider designing rain gardens and green infrastructure projects as interactive or educational spaces that provide additional social functions on site, particularly when used to fulfill open space requirements.
- F. Utilize low-maintenance and native plants to improve natural function and reduce resource usage.
- G. Solar panel installations shall minimize glare reflected onto adjacent properties.
- H. All overhanging elements shall be at least 8 feet above the adjacent sidewalk or grade.



6. Windows and Fenestration

Intent: Promote a pedestrian-friendly streetscape, as well as provide adequate daylight, views, surveillance and ventilation.

- A. Storefront and ground-floor windows should be designed to provide excellent visual connections between the sidewalk and commercial space and provide “eyes” on adjoining streets and public spaces.
- B. Storefront windows should be symmetrically placed within the overall building face, with a recommended window-to-wall ratio similar to neighboring and existing district buildings.
- C. Storefront and ground-floor windows of non-residential uses should be highly transparent with windows of clear vision glass beginning at no higher than two feet above grade and at least 10 feet above grade.
- D. Buildings must incorporate upper-story windows which face the street and are transparent.
- E. Upper-story windows with a vertical emphasis are preferred; windows which are twice as tall vertically as they are wide represent a more traditional design.
- F. Upper-story windows should be symmetrically placed with one another as well as with the overall building façade.
- G. Aligning upper-story windows with those of neighboring buildings is preferred.
- H. The use of opaque and false windows is inappropriate.



7. Gateways

Intent: Create a sense of arrival and reinforce primary entrances into Downtown and create a stronger and more identifiable city center.

- A. Construct entry gateways into Downtown that frame views into Downtown and create visual cues and sense of arrival.
- B. Use public art to establish gateway features that strengthen the character and identity of Downtown. Use landscaping, signs, structures or other features that identify the neighborhood.
- C. A corner land mark consisting of a combination of open space and architectural building design features should be provided to identify Downtown.
- D. At the southeast corner of Newcastle Way and Coal Creek Pkwy, a neighborhood gateway feature such as open space or plaza with signage should be integrated with site design.



8. Sidewalks

Intent: Promote welcoming, functional and flexible space for pedestrians between the street and building frontage.

- A. Demonstrate compliance with the following sidewalk zones for new public sidewalks (Figure 7), and in accordance with other City sidewalk standards. The sidewalk zones are the sidewalk public spaces that front a building and consist of the Sidewalk Amenity Zone, Pedestrian Zone and Activity Zone.
- a) Sidewalk Amenity Zone can contain landscaping, seating, lighting and other urban furniture. On Type 1 and 2 Streets (such as 132nd or Newcastle Way) the Amenity Zone can also serve as an Activity Zone. However, along Coal Creek Pkwy. (Type 3 Street) the Amenity Zone is intended as a buffer to traffic. The Amenity Zone design must incorporate accessibility and shall not block access to bus stops, intersections and crossings.
 - b) Sidewalk Pedestrian Zone is a clear pathway allowing flow of pedestrian movement and full accessibility along the sidewalk.
 - c) Sidewalk Activity Zone provides space for activities such as outdoor dining in front of commercial uses and a buffer zone at residential uses. The Activity Zone must be designed to incorporate accessibility requirements.

Figure 7: Pedestrian Right-of-Way Example



9. Mid-Block Connections and the Pedestrian Esplanade

Intent: New pedestrian and bicycle passageways through large blocks designed to enhance connectivity, reduce travel distances, encourage non-motorized transportation and provide active open spaces.



- A. Orient adjacent windows, openings and balconies towards the public space to provide safety.



- B. Where possible, pave midblock connections and the pedestrian esplanade with permeable paving to lend identity to the connections and to minimize surface runoff.
- C. Provide adequate lighting along midblock connections and the pedestrian esplanade.
- D. Allow trees in tree wells along midblock connections and the pedestrian esplanade.

10. Pedestrian Plazas

Intent: A hardscape public space with seating and other urban furniture intended to provide opportunities for rest and relaxation, outdoor dining, commerce, social gathering and events that complement the use of the building.

- A. Locate plazas in high visibility areas such as intersections, commercial areas and community nodes.
- B. For development adjacent to Coal Creek Pkwy, locate plazas at transit stops.
- C. Provide at least 500 square feet of public open space at the southeast corner of Coal Creek Parkway and Newcastle Way in conjunction with new development. Plazas shall be a minimum of 10 feet deep, 20 feet wide and a maximum of 50% lot frontage. The average dimension should be 40 feet with a minimum of 1,500 sf for corner plazas and 2,000 sf for internal plazas (forecourts).
- D. Provide doors onto plazas, a minimum of 75% transparency on the ground floor façade facing the plaza, and up to 10 feet upper story step-backs to be activated with balconies and other uses to promote interaction between the private and public realms.
- E. Minimize shade from the adjoining building and ensure 50% of the open space is free of shadow during 2/3 of daylight hours (sunrise to sunset). Do not locate on the north facing edge of a building.
- F. Design plazas to be places for community gathering, play, performance and commerce.
- G. Include amenities in all plazas such as benches, trees and landscaping, pedestrian-scaled lighting and shade structures.
- H. Include special paving in the plazas to increase visibility and identity. Where possible, pave plazas with permeable paving.
- I. Outdoor seating from small-scale retail uses is permitted and encouraged on the plazas to activate the space.



11. Public Realm Lighting and Furnishings

Intent: Enhance public spaces, street frontages and other areas intended for people through accessible, convenient and appealing amenities as well as lighting that complement these spaces while serving to promote safety.

A. General

- a) All furnishings should be selected/located to enhance circulation and maintain the orderly aesthetic of Downtown.
- b) Furnishings should be compatible with the architecture and landscape setting that surrounds them.
- c) In high profile/highly visible locations, furnishings should be consistent, simple concrete pieces; in other areas, different pieces are permitted as long as they recognize the distinct character of the adjacent buildings and follow other related guidelines.

B. Lighting

- a) Light illuminating from fixtures should be cast downward with full cut-off shades.
- b) Use minimum lighting levels required by code standards.
- c) Walks and paths should be uniformly illuminated.
- d) Illuminate parking areas, pedestrian plazas, building entries, loading areas, and courtyards.

C. Seating

- a) Seating should be designed at a comfortable height between 16" and 18" with accommodations for universal access.
- b) Benches and seating should be located in plazas and courtyards, near building entries, and at transit stops with considerations for accommodating universal access.
- c) Fixed seating should be designed into planters, low dividing walls, retaining walls, and building façades where practicable; along with accommodations for universal access.

D. Bicycle Parking

- a) Bike parking should be visible, accessible, and safe day and night.
- b) Where possible, provide shelter for bike racks.
- c) Install a consistent rack design in areas adjacent to building entries.
- d) Choose secure bike racks that function well and are aesthetically pleasing when no bikes are present.
- e) Bike racks should allow an entire bicycle to be locked, not just one wheel.
- f) When locating bike racks near building entries, ensure that racks do not interrupt the flow of pedestrians into the building.

E. Public Art

- a) Public art pieces should be located in highly visible locations, Downtown gateways, pedestrian gathering areas, and at the intersection of pathways and walkways.
- b) Public art pieces that are functional or interactive should be encouraged.
- c) Both permanent and temporary installation/exhibit space should be incorporated into the design of new development.



12. Parking Location and Design

Intent: Design parking areas and parking access ways with a focus on pedestrian safety and circulation, while also creating organized and efficient parking and circulation for vehicles that limit congestion and excessive vehicle stacking, and that complement and relate to the intended use these areas serve.

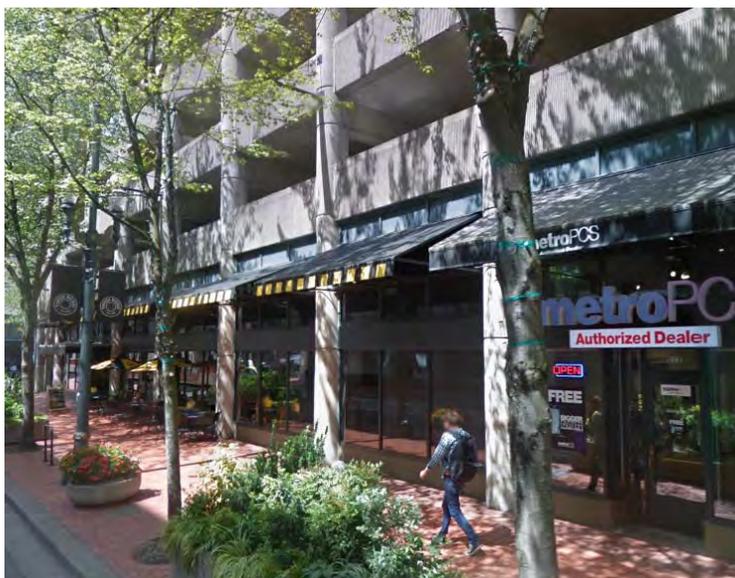
- A. Good pedestrian circulation is critical. A clear path from the sidewalk to the building entrance is required for all sites.
- B. For sites with large parking lots, clear pedestrian circulation routes within the lot from stalls to the building entrances should be provided. In addition, a raised concrete pavement should also be provided in front of the entrance as a loading or waiting area so the entrance will not be blocked by parked vehicles.
- C. Parking lot design should be clear and well organized. Space should be provided for pedestrians to walk safely in all parking lots. Parking lots should have few dead-end parking lanes and provide drive-through configurations with channelized queuing space at the entrances and exits to parking lots to prevent cars from waiting in the street.



- D. Share parking and service access with adjoining developments to minimize land devoted to circulation and parking. Pedestrian access between parking lots on adjacent properties should be provided.
- E. Shared parking and service access could be located between buildings when feasible.
- F. Design service and delivery parking spaces that minimize disruption to traffic flow and operations.
- G. Minimize parking and service frontage along public streets, public spaces and pedestrian pathways.
- H. Create landscaped buffers (e.g. a row of coniferous trees or double row of deciduous trees) between pedestrian paths and parking lots and service areas to mitigate the negative visual impacts.



- I. Parking lots must be integrated with the fabric of the community by creatively using landscaping to reduce their visual impact.
- J. Locate parking lots to maximize opportunities for spaces catering to higher pedestrian and bicycle use to have maximum access to sunlight.
- K. Minimize the number of driveways by restricting curb cuts and by encouraging property and business owners to combine parking lot entrances and coordinate parking areas.
- L. Structured Parking
 - a) The location of parking structures along streets or pedestrian pathways should be discouraged.
 - b) Where parking structures cannot be located underground and must be provided at the ground level, façades facing streets and public spaces should be designed with an active ground floor use to retain the visual interest and function of the structure.



- c) If parking areas are located in a separate structure from the primary use, the structure must be set back from the street, and screened with substantial landscaping.
- d) Structured parking should be developed, oriented and screened to complement adjacent buildings, reduce automobile/pedestrian conflicts, and support the pedestrian environment. Artwork, display windows, trellises and/or dense vegetation are examples of screening devices that may be successful in balancing the scale of the structure with the pedestrian environment.

4. CBC-Wide Site Design Guidelines

A. SIDEWALKS

Intent: to provide safe, comfortable sidewalks that encourage walking.

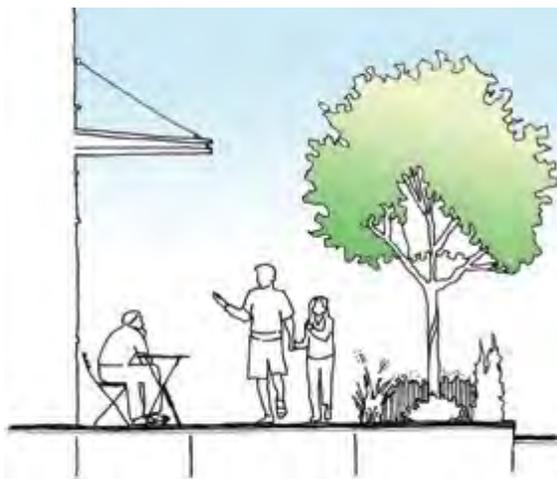
On All CBC Streets:

1. Provide hardscape sidewalks no less than 8 feet in width across the parcel's entire frontage, which may include permeable paving materials, and a landscape strip no less than 4 feet in width.
2. Sidewalks shall maintain a clear zone of 6 feet for pedestrian travel. Areas outside of the clear zone may be used for dining or display for adjacent businesses. No obstructions, including signs and utility poles, shall be placed within the clear zone.

On All Pedestrian-Oriented Streets:

1. Provide hardscape sidewalks no less than 10 feet in width across the parcel's entire frontage, which may include permeable paving materials, and which provides an ADA- accessible route with a 6-foot clear zone and no less than 6 feet of landscape area.

Note: overhead weather protection and utility access flush with the sidewalk are exempt from clear zone requirements



dining/display clear zone

hardscape area

landscape area



B. STREET TREES

Intent: to support the natural setting as fundamental to the character of Newcastle and to provide a consistent and unified street design within the Community Business Center.

1. Street trees shall be provided at a spacing of one tree every 30 feet in minimum 4-foot wide tree grates or landscape areas (6-foot wide on pedestrian-oriented streets) Turf grass is not acceptable in planting areas). Tree spacing may be averaged, provided that trees are no less than 15 feet apart.
2. Street tree species shall be approved by the City.
3. Street trees shall be pruned to be free of branches below 6 feet from the ground for surveillance purposes.

Note: An alternative design may be used if it meets the intent of this section and is approved by the Director of Community Development.



C. STREET FURNISHINGS

Intent: to reinforce a cohesive image and simplify maintenance and replacement.

1. Use City-approved standardized fixtures for benches, trash receptacles and bike racks located in the public right-of-way.
2. Furnishings shall not be placed in the clear zone or in any way that might hamper pedestrian movements.

Note: Approved furnishing information is available from the Public Works Department.

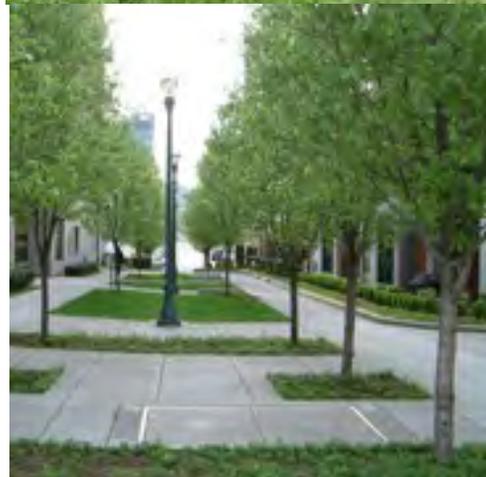


D. PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Intent: To provide a variety of open space areas available to the public.

1. Public Open space shall be located where it is visible and accessible from either a public sidewalk or a pedestrian connection.
2. Public open spaces shall include seating, landscaping and pedestrian-scaled lighting.
3. Public open spaces shall include at least 3 of the following pedestrian elements:
 - a) Greater than 10% of the total area with overhead weather protection
 - b) Drinking fountain
 - c) Sculptural art
 - d) Water feature
 - e) Ornamental unit paving. Permeable surfaces are required where feasible.
 - f) Moveable chairs and tables
 - g) Retention of trees greater than 6 inch diameter
 - h) at breast height (dbh)
 - i) Greater than 30% of total area in landscaping

Notes: This guideline applies to open space requirements set forth in the FAR Incentives program of the City of Newcastle Land Use Code. An alternative design may be used if it meets the intent of this Section and is approved by the Director of Community Development.

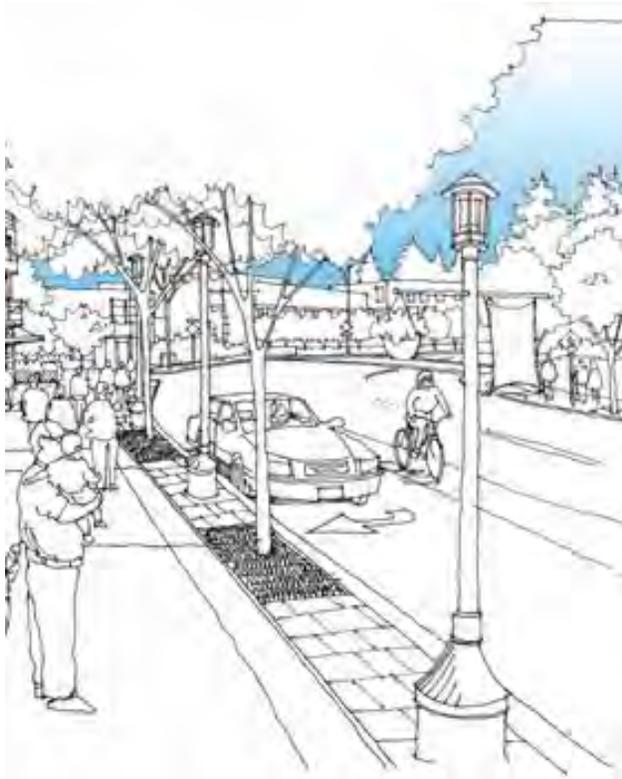


E. PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING

Intent: To reinforce a cohesive image and simplify maintenance and replacement.

1. Use City-approved standardized fixtures for sidewalk lighting.
2. All sidewalks and pedestrian connections shall meet a 5 lux* illumination minimum.
3. All sidewalks and pedestrian connections shall not exceed a 20 lux* illumination maximum.
4. All pedestrian lighting fixtures with luminaires above 12 feet shall be full-cutoff type fixtures (as defined by the IESNA).

*Lux: Ratio of lumens to square meter, approximately equal to 10x footcandles. Lux should be measured on the pavement with a uniformity ratio not greater than 4:1.

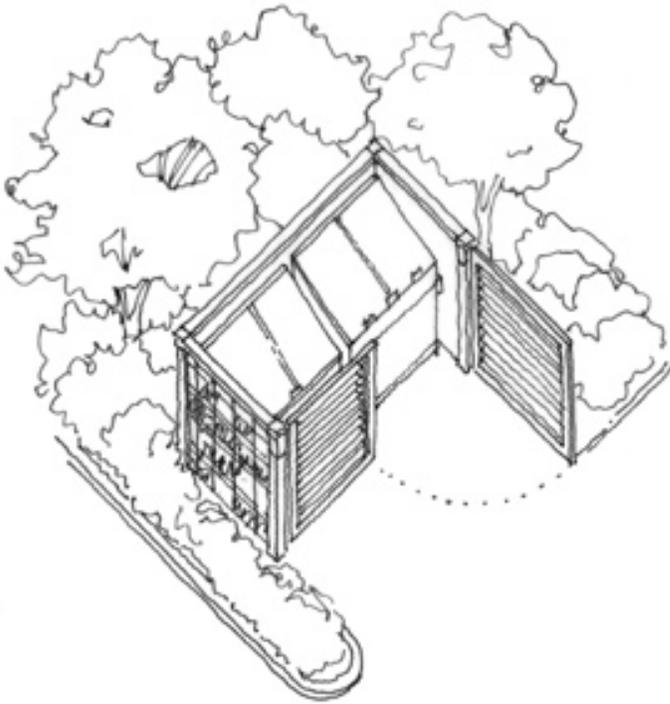


F. SCREENING OF TRASH & SERVICE AREAS

Intent: To screen trash/recycling and service areas from public view.

1. Screen trash/recycling areas from view on all sides with solid evergreen plant material or architectural treatment similar to the design of the adjacent building.

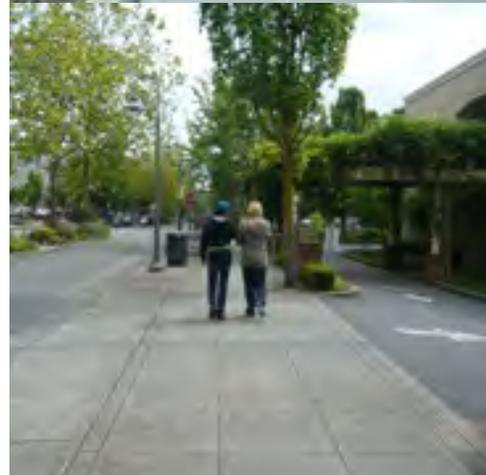
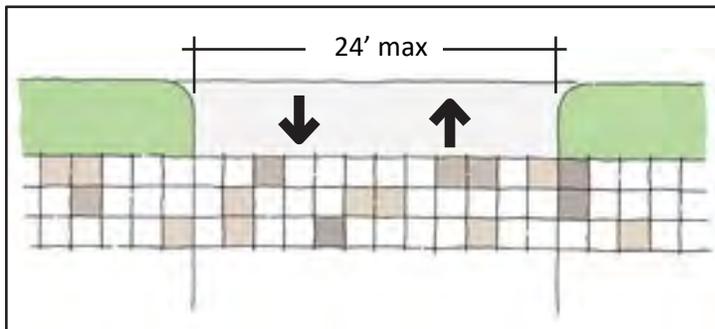
Note: An alternative design may be used if it meets the intent and is approved by the Director of Community Development.



G. CURB CUTS

Intent: To maintain a continuous sidewalk by minimizing driveway access.

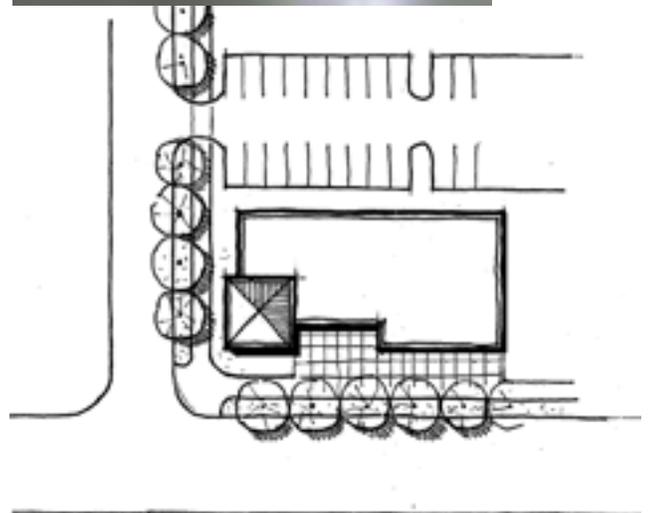
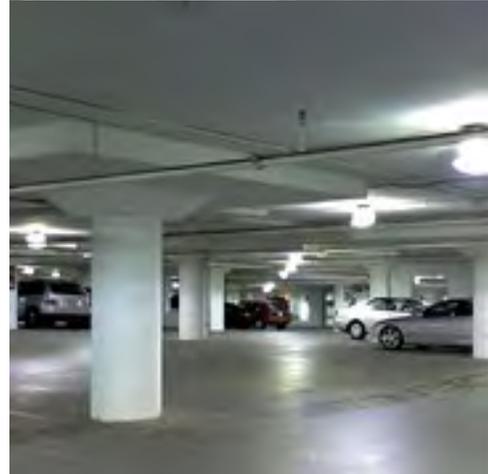
1. Distance between curb cuts should not be less than 300 feet along any single parcel frontage.
2. The sidewalk pattern and material shall continue across the driveway.
3. Adjacent developments should share driveways to the greatest extent possible (cross-over agreements between properties are strongly encouraged).
4. A two-way driveway shall not exceed 24 feet in width and no single lane driveway shall exceed 12 feet in width.



H. LOCATION OF PARKING

Intent: To reduce the visual impact of parking and enhance the pedestrian experience.

1. Parking shall be located under, behind or to the side of buildings.

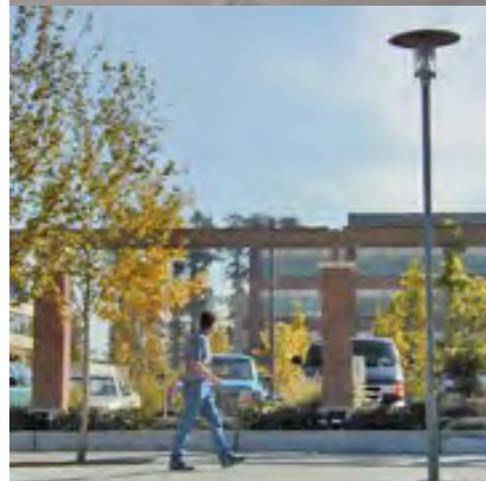
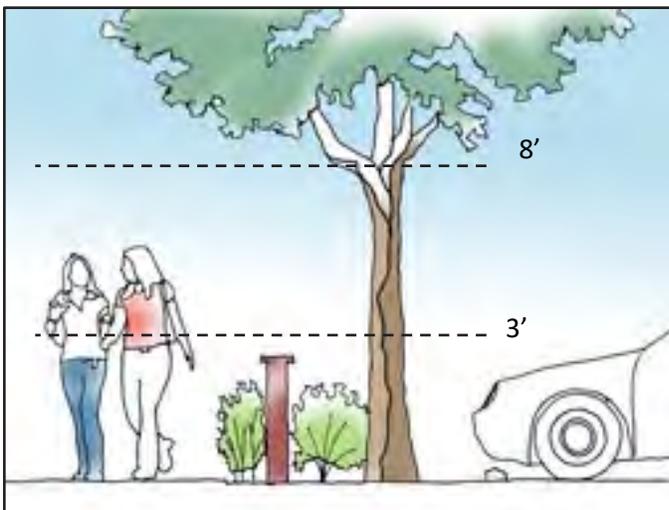


I. PARKING LOT SCREENING

Intent: to reduce the visual impact of surface parking lots.

1. Surface parking must be screened from the public right-of-way by one or a combination of the following:
 - a) Low walls made of concrete, masonry, or other similar material and not exceeding a maximum height of 3 feet.
 - b) Raised planter walls planted with a minimum
 - c) 80% evergreen shrubs not exceeding a total height of 3 feet.
 - d) Landscape plantings consisting of trees, of which at least 80% are deciduous, and shrubs and groundcover materials, of which at least 80% are evergreen.
2. All plant materials and other physical elements used for parking lot screening shall provide clear views between 3 and 8 feet above the ground surface for surveillance purposes.

Note: Alternatives may be considered if designs meet the intent of the guideline and gain City approval.



J. PARKING LOT LIGHTING

Intent: To improve safety and surface parking lot aesthetics, and reduce light pollution.

1. Lighting fixtures above 12 feet shall have full cut-off design (as defined by the IESNA) to direct light downward.
2. Lighting intensity shall be between 3 and 20 lux*.
3. Pedestrian connections and areas of public open space shall have a minimum average lighting of 5 lux.

*Lux: ratio of lumens to square meter, approximately equal to 10x footcandles. Lux should be measured on the pavement with a uniformity ratio not greater than 4:1.



K. PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS WITHIN PARKING LOTS

Intent: To create a network of safe and attractive linkages through surface parking lots for pedestrians

1. Clearly defined pedestrian connections shall be provided through parking lots to building entrances and sidewalks.
2. Pedestrian connections shall have direct pedestrian connections to parking, building entries, parking facilities, public sidewalks, and public open spaces. This network may include sidewalks in the public right-of-way.
3. All pedestrian connections shall meet or exceed public works design standards for 5-foot wide sidewalks. Permeable pavements are required where feasible.
4. All pedestrian connections within the site shall be safely lit with pedestrian-scaled lighting at a minimum of 5 lux*.

Note: Alternatives may be considered if designs meet the intent of the guideline and gain City approval.

*Lux: ratio of lumens to square meter, approximately equal to 10x footcandles. Lux should be measured on the pavement with a uniformity ratio not greater than 4:1.



L. BUILDINGS SETBACKS

Intent: To reinforce an active pedestrian experience along Pedestrian-Oriented Streets.

1. Buildings along public streets shall be set to the back of the sidewalk, except that setbacks may be increased to provide open space for public use such as plazas, courtyards and seating areas.
2. Buildings shall setback to allow the required sidewalk width. Buildings may project over the sidewalk with cantilevers, bay windows, and/or decks, provided that a minimum clearance of 12 feet is maintained between the overhang and the surface of the sidewalk.



5. CBC-Wide Building Design Guidelines

A. ENTRANCES

Intent: To ensure that entrances are easily identifiable and accessible from streets and sidewalks

1. Locate primary entrances* so that they are visible from the public right-of-way. The entry should be marked by architectural elements such as canopies, ornamental lighting fixtures and/or fixed seating that offer visual prominence.
2. Primary entrances shall have direct access to public sidewalks.
3. Entrances may be set back from the property line up to 10 feet.

* Primary entrances are the principle customer entrance(s) to a building,

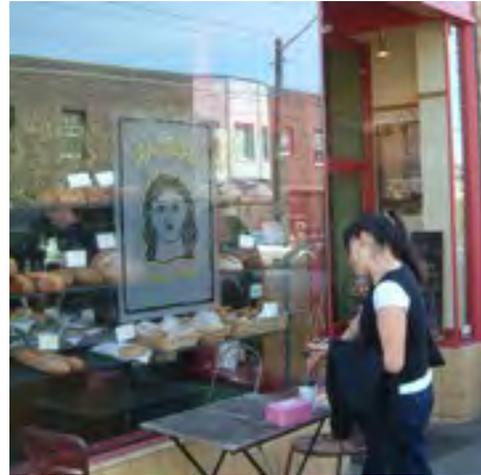
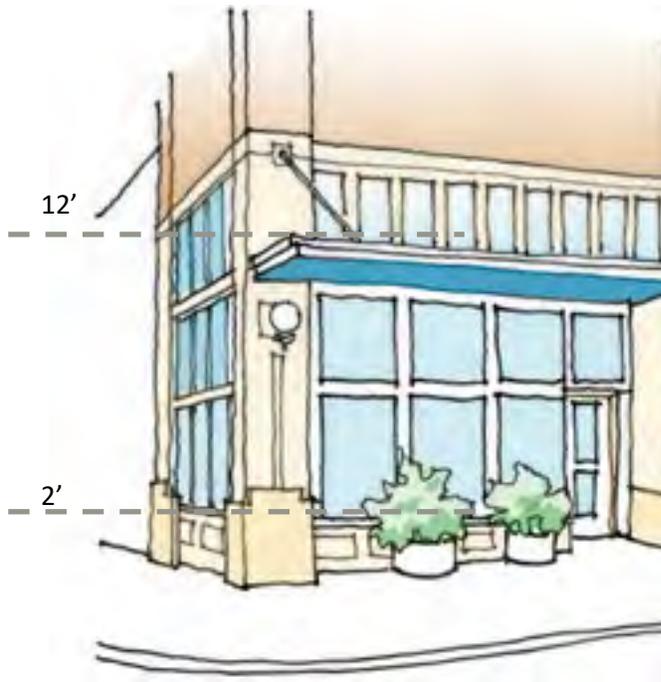


B. TRANSPARENCY

Intent: To provide a visual connection between activities inside and outside of buildings.

For mixed-use and commercial buildings:

1. Along All Streets, buildings shall include windows with clear vision glass on at least 30 percent of the area between two and twelve feet above grade for all ground floor building facades that are visible from an abutting street.
2. Along Pedestrian-Oriented Streets outside of Downtown, buildings shall include windows with clear vision glass on at least 50 percent of the area between two and twelve feet above grade for all ground floor building facades that are visible from an abutting street.

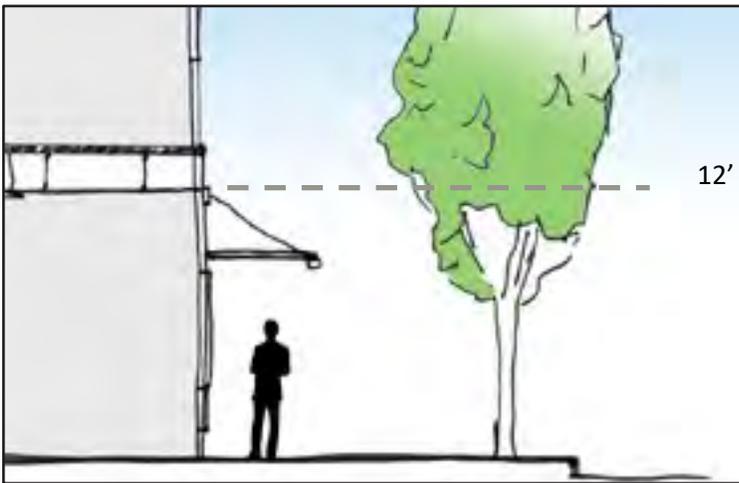


C. FLOOR HEIGHT

Intent: to provide a visual connection between activities inside and outside of buildings and to provide ample floor height for pedestrian-related retail activities.

For buildings abutting Pedestrian Oriented Streets outside of Downtown:

1. Ground floors shall be a minimum of twelve feet in height measured from the finished floor to finished ceiling.

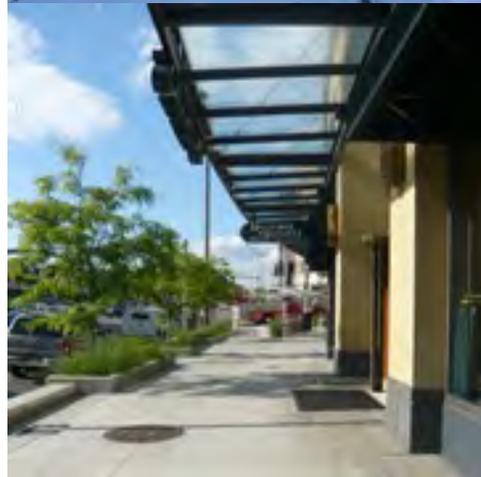


D. WEATHER PROTECTION

Intent: To improve the comfort and pedestrian activity along pedestrian-oriented streets.

1. Mixed-use and commercial buildings shall provide weather protection over all adjacent public sidewalks and pedestrian connections so that 75% of the length of the building frontage and adjacent sidewalk has weather protection.
2. Weather protection shall be placed between 8 and 12 feet above the sidewalk level and be a minimum of 6 feet in depth. 12 feet of clearance shall be maintained for permanent building projections, such as cantilevers, decks, and balconies. 8 feet clearance is acceptable for removable awnings and canopies.

Note: Alternatives may be considered if designs meet the intent of the guideline and gain City approval.



E. MASSING/ARTICULATION

Intent: To reduce the apparent bulk of multi-story buildings and maintain pedestrian scale.

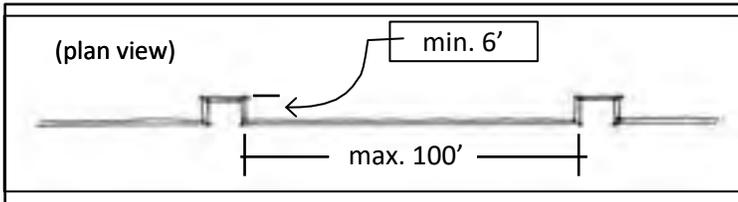
For buildings above 30 feet in height:

1. Distinguish a “base” at ground level using articulation and weightier materials such as brick, stone or decorative concrete.
2. The “top” of the building will emphasize a distinct profile or outline with elements such as a projecting cornice, undulating parapet, upper level setback, or pitched roof line.
3. The “middle” of the building may be distinguished by a change in materials or color, windows, balconies, and setbacks.

and

For building facades longer than 100 feet and that are visible from the public right of way:

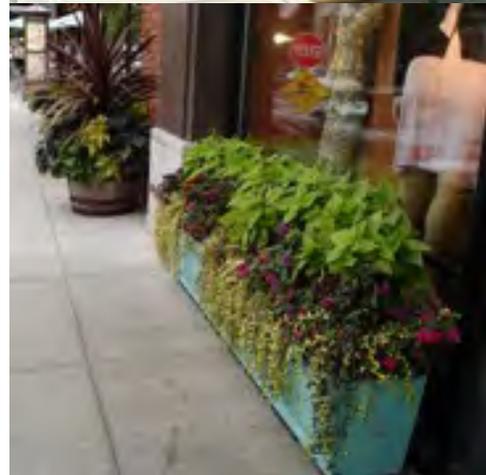
1. Minimum depth of modulation shall be 6 feet.
2. A minimum of one modulation per 100 feet of facade length is required.



F. GROUND LEVEL ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

Intent: To reinforce the character of the streetscape, to add architectural interest at eye level, and provide pedestrian amenities along structure exteriors.

1. Facades of commercial and mixed-use buildings that face the street shall be designed to be pedestrian-friendly through the inclusion of at least four of the following elements:
 - a) wainscots or kick plates below storefront windows made of brick, stone, frame and panel wood, or similar products that create texture, pattern and shadow lines
 - b) projecting window sills, regularly spaced pilasters or similar features that add dimension and form to an otherwise flat wall plane
 - c) projecting canopies or arbors, or recessed entry bays
 - d) commercial-grade window assemblies with wide and deep mullions



G. ROOFLINE

Intent: to ensure that rooflines present a distinct profile and appearance for the building and expresses the neighborhood character.

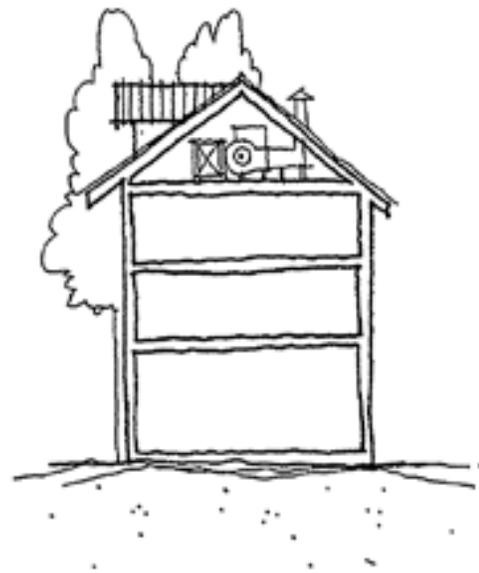
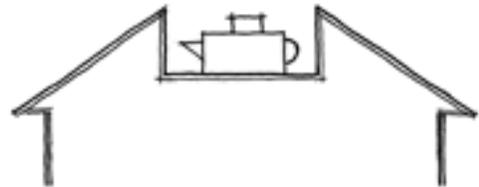
1. Buildings with pitched roofs shall have a minimum slope of 4:12 and a maximum slope of 12:12.
2. Buildings with flat roofs shall have projecting cornices to create a prominent edge when viewed against the sky. Cornices shall be made of a different material and color than the predominate siding of the building, except that brick siding may include matching brick cornices.
3. The use of vegetated roofs is allowed to reduce stormwater runoff, provided that roofline reflects the above-stated requirements.



H. SCREENING MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT

Intent: to screen mechanical and communications equipment from the ground-level view of nearby streets and residential areas.

1. Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be screened from the view of adjacent public streets and abutting properties by an extended parapet wall or other roof forms that are integrated with the architecture of the building.
2. Ground level mechanical equipment shall be screened using vegetation screening or structural screens that are integrated with the materials and colors of the building.



I. BLANK WALL TREATMENTS

Intent: to reduce the visual impact of blank walls by providing visual interest.

1. Blank walls longer than 30 feet shall incorporate two or more of the following:
 - a. vegetation, such as trees, shrubs, ground cover and/or vines adjacent to and covering at least 50% of the wall surface
 - b. artwork, such as bas-relief sculpture, murals, or trellis structures covering at least 50% of the wall surface.
 - c. seating area with special paving and seasonal plantings
 - d. Masonry materials with architectural detailing, reveals, pilasters or other means of rustication techniques.

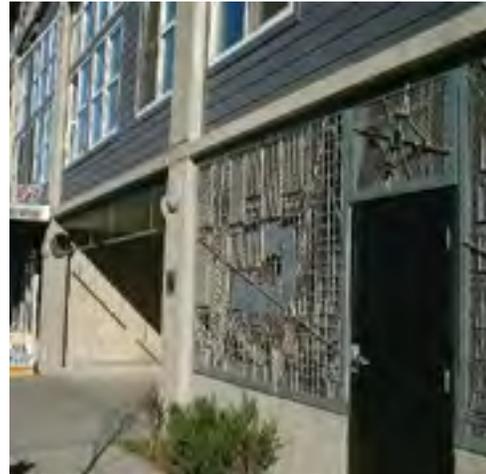
Note: Blank walls are any walls greater than 4 feet in height, visible from a public right of way or open space that have no ground level windows or doors for a distance of 30 feet or more.



J. SCREENING OF PARKING STRUCTURES

Intent: To reduce the visual impact of structured parking located above grade.

1. At ground level, parking structures shall comply with guidelines addressed under 'Ground Level Details.'
2. Upper levels of structured parking should be screened or treated architecturally by; window openings, plantings designed to grow on the facade, louvers, expanded metal panels, decorative metal grills, spandrel (opaque) glass, and other devices, as approved, that meet the intent of this section.
3. Lighting within structured parking should be placed so that glare and light trespass are minimized. The lamps shall not be visible from the public right-of-way.
4. The use of vegetation planters and vegetated roofs is encouraged on the top level of parking structures to reduce stormwater runoff.



K. BUILDING CORNERS

Intent: To ensure landmark quality development at prominent intersections through more stately or lofty forms of building design.

1. New buildings that are located at the intersection of two public streets shall include at least a two-step hierarchy in the building height, with the tallest portion of the building at the corner, tapering down in height along each street frontage. Buildings shall additionally include at least two of the following on the building corner facing the public street:
 - a) Bay windows
 - b) Roof decks or balconies on upper stories
 - c) Corner entrance
 - d) Crowning features to a tower form, e.g., wide cornices, projecting parapets, pitched roof
 - e) Bevel, notch or rounded corner

Note: Alternatives may be considered if designs meet the intent of this section.





City of Newcastle
12835 Newcastle Way, Suite 200
Newcastle, WA 98056
(425) 649-4444
www.newcastlewa.gov



DOWNTOWN **STRATEGIC** **PLAN**

VOLUME III

PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS



Table of Contents

1	<i>Introduction</i>
	2 - Existing Transportation Planning Efforts
3	<i>Priority Projects</i>
	5 - Project 1 - Coal Creek Parkway All Modes Crossing
	7 - Project 2 - 132nd Green Street
	9 - Project 3 - Newcastle Way Raised Intersection
	11 - Project 4 - Coal Creek Parkway Streetscape Improvements
	13 - Project 5 - 70th Street Green Street and Plaza
	15 - Project 6 - Lake Boren Greenway
	17 - Project 7 - Connections to Downtown
	19 - Project 8 - Gateway Signage
	21 - Other Project Ideas
35	<i>Conclusion</i>
36	<i>Appendix</i>
	Current Conditions Memo

Introduction

Volumes I and II of the Downtown Strategic Plan outline the future vision for Downtown Newcastle, community conversations that resulted in that vision, and updates to the Community Business Center's Design Guidelines. This document provides an overview of recommended public realm improvements that would help Newcastle realize the community's vision and support plan objectives.



Existing Transportation Planning Efforts

Volume III of the Downtown Strategic Plan builds on other planning documents. In addition to the public realm investments identified in this document, it is important to recognize other parallel planning efforts will also improve transportation conditions in Downtown Newcastle over time. The City's 2035 Comprehensive Plan establishes citywide transportation priorities and investments over the next 20 years. Moreover, the Sound Transit 3 and King County Metro Connects plans include investments that will improve mobility through and to Downtown Newcastle. This Downtown Strategic Plan complements these planning efforts by identifying downtown public realm investments that will help further the vision developed as a part of this process.

This plan recognizes and complements the following key investments:

- Completion of the "Newcastle Connector" roadway between Coal Creek Parkway and Newcastle Golf Club Road through Newcastle Commons, which is currently under construction. This is a crucial connection that will help maintain reasonable traffic operations in Downtown Newcastle.

- Upgrade to the intersection of Newcastle Golf Club Road & Newcastle Way to a signal or roundabout. The Comprehensive Plan identified this improvement as necessary to manage flows coming down the hill during the PM peak hour.
- King County Metro Service enhancements to convert Route 240 into a Rapid Ride, offering service on 10 minute headways through Downtown Newcastle, as well as high-amenity transit stops.
- Creation of bus rapid transit service along I-405 through Sound Transit 3. This new service will create better transit connections for Newcastle residents to job centers in our region.

In addition, Newcastle was recently selected to participate in King County Metro's Alternative Services program, which will offer additional transit options in late 2017 or early 2018 for Downtown residents. These improvements, while not included in the body of this plan, are critically important to the mobility of all Newcastle residents.



Priority Projects

The Downtown Strategic Plan provides a vision for transforming Downtown Newcastle into the type of place that residents desire. This section describes key public realm investments that were identified as priorities for achieving Downtown Newcastle's long-term vision, which are broken into two priority tiers:

Tier 1

1. Coal Creek Parkway All Modes Crossing
2. 132nd Green Street
3. Newcastle Way Raised Intersection
4. Coal Creek Parkway Streetscape Improvements
5. 70th Street Green Street and Plaza

Tier 2

6. Lake Boren Greenway
7. Connections to Downtown
8. Gateway Signage

To arrive at this list of eight projects, the consultant team evaluated the 20 project ideas that stemmed from the public outreach process on the basis of feasibility, cost, and effectiveness at achieving a variety of elements from the vision, such as improving the pedestrian environment, bicycle environment, vehicle mobility, and access to transit, among others. Ultimately, eight projects ranked the highest in this evaluation process. These projects are shown in *Figure A*.

There were six other projects identified through this process that did not rank as high, but are described in less detail at the end of this section. They include:

- Newcastle Way Streetscape Improvements
- Plaza and Bus Stop
- Reclaiming the Street Grid West of Coal Creek Parkway
- Newcastle Way & Golf Club Road Intersection Improvements
- Fruit Stand Plaza
- Wetland Park Overlook

Please note that additional engineering study is needed prior to design and construction of any of the projects listed in this plan.

Figure A: Priority Projects



Project 1: Coal Creek Parkway All Modes Crossing

Project Description

This project adds a signalized, all-modes crossing that connects the two halves of Downtown. This project would include the following components:

- Install a traffic signal and crosswalks at the intersection of Coal Creek Parkway and SE 70th Street
- Make associated modifications to sidewalks and utilities

While a traffic signal is not currently warranted in this location, it will be once the eastern half of SE 70th Street is closed to through traffic. The City could also explore locating the signalized, all-modes crossing in the middle of the block at the existing driveway entrances; however, a signal at SE 70th Street would tie into improvements proposed in Project 5 nicely. Regardless of the location, traffic signal synchronization is recommended to maintain efficient vehicular flows. **Figure B** shows what this project could look like. The total estimated cost of this project is \$1,057,000.

Project Benefits

- Improves connectivity across Coal Creek Parkway for all modes.
- Improves the street grid connectivity in Downtown Newcastle.
- Provides safer access for left-turning vehicles, which currently have to cross several lanes of uncontrolled traffic on Coal Creek Parkway.
- Improved access will enhance viability of businesses along Coal Creek Parkway and SE 70th Street.



Figure B: New Signal and Street Reconfiguration on Coal Creek Parkway



Before



After

Timeline for Implementation



Potential Funding Mechanisms

- WSDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program – see page 15 for description
- Washington Urban Arterial Program and Urban Sidewalk Program – see page 15 for description
- Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) – see page 15 for description
- Transportation Alternatives (formerly TAP under MAP-21) – see page 15 for description
- USDOT TIGER Grant – see page 15 for description

Parties Involved and Interagency Coordination Needs

- Owners of the property under the west end of the Private Road

Potential Challenges to Implementation

- This project may require right-of-way acquisition and/or negotiations with the Private Road land owners.

Cost Estimate

PROJECT PHASE	COST ESTIMATE
Planning & Engineering/Design	\$136,500
Construction	\$920,500
TOTAL	\$1,057,000

Project 2: 132nd Green Street

Project Description

Project 2 develops a green street along 132nd Place SE between Newcastle Commons and Newcastle Way to promote safe and appealing walking and biking connections into Downtown. The project would include a substantial upgrade to the current infrastructure, including:

- Widened sidewalks with landscaped amenity zones to buffer pedestrians from vehicle traffic
- Stormwater treatments, such as rain gardens or bioswales, intermixed with parallel, on-street parking
- Sharrows and wayfinding signage to announce the presence of cyclists
- Pedestrian-scale lighting and street lights with celebratory banners
- Marked crosswalks at key locations, such as the intersection with the Private Road and entrances to residential complexes on the east side of the street

These treatments would result in a signature street for Newcastle that gives the Downtown a sense of identity that Coal Creek Parkway cannot due regional traffic flows. This street would provide an experiential route for locals and would be a great location for the occasional parade or festival. **Figure C** shows what this project could look like. The total estimated cost of this project is \$3,675,000.



Figure C: Improvements along 132nd Place SE



Before



After

Project Benefits

- Creates safe and welcoming facilities for walking and cycling that help complete the street network.
- Design would ensure traffic is “calmed” and discourages non-local cut through.
- Provides stormwater treatment through a decrease of impervious surfaces.
- Helps create a stronger sense of place and community identity.
- Streetscape would incent redevelopment on 132nd Place SE to more pedestrian-oriented uses, such as retail.

Timeline for Implementation



Potential Funding Mechanisms

- **WSDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program** – see page 15 for description
- **Washington Urban Arterial Program and Urban Sidewalk Program** – see page 15 for description
- **Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)** – see page 15 for description
- **Transportation Alternatives (formerly TAP under MAP-21)** – see page 15 for description
- **USDOT TIGER Grant** – see page 15 for description
- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Grant**
CMAQ funds can be used for specific categories of transportation projects (including bicycle and pedestrian projects) that provide air quality benefits by reducing emissions and congestion. The next funding cycle is in 2018.
- **Potential Ballot Measure**
This project could be a good fit to include as part of a package of projects that is put before Newcastle voters.

Parties Involved and Interagency Coordination Needs

- Puget Sound Energy for potential undergrounding of utilities (not included in cost estimate)
- Potentially adjacent properties (if the City needs to acquire right-of-way)

Potential Challenges to Implementation

- Opposition from businesses along 132nd Place SE due to construction impacts, reduced parking availability, and potential need for right-of-way acquisition.

Cost Estimate

PROJECT PHASE	COST ESTIMATE
Planning & Engineering/Design	\$350,000
Construction	\$2,365,000
Right-of-Way Acquisition	\$960,000
TOTAL	\$3,675,000

Project 3: Newcastle Way Raised Intersection

Project Description

This project reconstructs the intersection of Newcastle Way and 132nd Place SE as a raised (or “table top”) intersection to slow traffic coming down the hill from Golf Club Road. The project would include the following treatments:

- Raised intersection that is flush with the sidewalks (roughly 6-8” higher than the street level)
- Stamped asphalt paving to provide visual appeal
- Marked crosswalks to connect with the transit stop just west of the intersection

Figure D shows what this project could look like. The total estimated cost of this project is \$527,000.

Project Benefits

- Reduces vehicle speeds coming down the hill, which the public noted as unsafe.
- Provides an enhanced crossing of Newcastle Way and 132nd Place SE for pedestrians accessing the King County Metro bus stop, as well as the 132nd Green Street.
- Provides a signature entry to Downtown Newcastle and the 132nd Green Street (see project 2) for people coming from Golf Club Road.



Figure D: Raised intersection on Newcastle Way



Before



After

Timeline for Implementation



Potential Funding Mechanisms

- **WSDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program** – see page 15 for description
- **Washington Urban Arterial Program and Urban Sidewalk Program** – see page 15 for description
- **Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)** – see page 15 for description
- **Transportation Alternatives (formerly TAP under MAP-21)** – see page 15 for description
- **Potential Project Consolidation**
This project could potentially be combined with Project 2.

Parties Involved and Interagency Coordination Needs

- King County Metro to review raised intersection design for bus compatibility
- Fire Department for consideration of emergency response

Potential Challenges to Implementation

- None

Cost Estimate

PROJECT PHASE	COST ESTIMATE
Planning & Engineering/Design	\$68,000
Construction	\$459,000
TOTAL	\$527,000

Project 4: Coal Creek Parkway Streetscape Improvements

Project Description

This project would greatly enhance the visual appeal of Coal Creek Parkway through Downtown Newcastle, providing Downtown with more of an identity relative to other sections of this major regional arterial. This project would also focus on making the street safer by controlling access and speeds. This would be achieved through strategically placed planted medians as well as landscaping buffers between the sidewalk and vehicle traffic. Last, but certainly not least, this project modifies the intersection of Coal Creek Parkway and Newcastle Way to reduce pedestrian crossing distances and minimize pedestrian/vehicle conflicts. Specific treatments include:

1. Planted medians in strategic locations along Coal Creek Parkway (between Newcastle Way and the Private Access Road) that do not hinder vehicle circulation
2. Between Newcastle Way and the Private Access Road, invert the current placement of sidewalk and landscaping, providing a landscaped buffer between Coal Creek Parkway traffic and pedestrians using the sidewalk
3. Crosswalks at shopping center driveway entrances
4. Redesign the intersection of Coal Creek Parkway and Newcastle Way to include:
 - Sidewalk bulbouts to tighten corners and reduce pedestrian crossing distances
 - Signal modification to include protected left-turn phasing on the eastbound and westbound (Newcastle Way) approaches

In addition to these treatments, the City could also consider reducing the speed limit on Coal Creek Parkway through Downtown Newcastle. **Figure E** shows what this project could look like. The total estimated cost of this project is \$1,517,000.

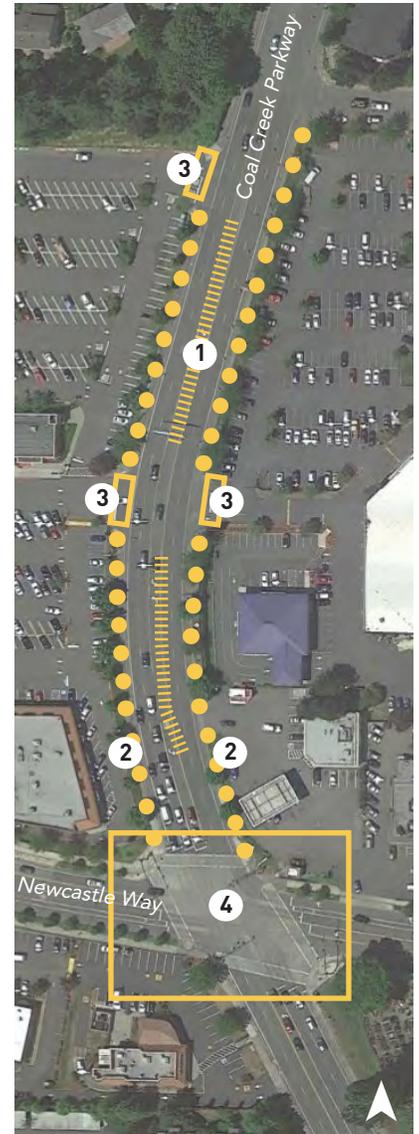


Figure E: Improvements along Coal Creek Parkway



Before



After

Project Benefits

- Planted medians in targeted locations along Coal Creek Parkway will provide a sense of identity, “calm” traffic, and control dangerous turns.
- Provides a landscaped buffer between the sidewalk and vehicle traffic to make walking safer and improve the pedestrian experience.
- Crosswalks will increase the visibility of pedestrians who are walking along Coal Creek Parkway.
- Improves pedestrian safety at the intersection of Newcastle Way and Coal Creek Parkway by slowing down turning vehicles and reducing pedestrian crossing distances (thus exposure to vehicles).
- The signal modification will minimize pedestrian/vehicle conflicts.

Timeline for Implementation



Potential Funding Mechanisms

- **WSDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program** – see page 15 for description
- **Washington Urban Arterial Program and Urban Sidewalk Program** – see page 15 for description
- **Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)** – see page 15 for description
- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Grant** – see page 19 for description
- **Transportation Alternatives (formerly TAP under MAP-21)** – see page 15 for description
- **USDOT TIGER Grant** – see page 15 for description
- **Potential Ballot Measure** – see page 19 for description

Parties Involved and Interagency Coordination Needs

- King County Metro (since buses use the intersection of Coal Creek Parkway and Newcastle Way)
- Potentially shopping center property owners (if the City needs to acquire right-of-way)

Potential Challenges to Implementation

- Reconstruction of Coal Creek Parkway will be disruptive, and there are few alternatives routes.
- This project may require right-of-way acquisition and/or negotiations with the shopping center property owners.

Cost Estimate

PROJECT PHASE	COST ESTIMATE
Planning & Engineering/Design	\$196,000
Construction	\$1,321,000
TOTAL	\$1,517,000

Project 5: SE 70th Green Street and Plaza

Project Description

Project 5 requires the public purchase of SE 70th Street, currently a private access road, which would enable converting the street to a green street that is rich in amenities and can occasionally be closed for festivals and other Downtown events. The project would include a substantial upgrade to the current infrastructure, including:

- Widened sidewalks with landscaped amenity zones to buffer pedestrians from vehicle traffic
- Stormwater treatments, such as rain gardens or bioswales, intermixed with parallel, on-street parking
- Curbless festival street in the eastern half to third of the street, which would be integrated with a public plaza at the northwest corner of the intersection of SE 70th Street and 132nd Place SE
- Utility hook-ups on the festival street to support food trucks and other special events

These treatments would result in a signature street for Newcastle that gives the Downtown a sense of identity that Coal Creek Parkway cannot due regional traffic flows. This street would provide an experiential route for locals and would be a great location for festivals or less-formal events like Food Truck Fridays. *Figure F* shows what this project could look like. The total estimated cost of this project is \$3,252,000.

Project Benefits

- Maintains the current level of street grid connectivity.
- Promotes safe and appealing walking and cycling connections between Coal Creek Parkway and 132nd Place SE that help complete the street network.
- Design would ensure traffic is “calmed” and discourages non-local cut through.
- Provides stormwater treatment through a decrease of impervious surfaces.
- Helps create a stronger sense of place and community identity by providing a much needed space for community gathering.
- Streetscape would incent redevelopment to more pedestrian-oriented uses, such as retail.



Figure F: Improvements along SE 70th Street



Before



After

Timeline for Implementation



Potential Funding Mechanisms

- WSDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program – see page 15 for description
- Washington Urban Arterial Program and Urban Sidewalk Program – see page 15 for description
- Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) – see page 15 for description
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Grant – see page 19 for description
- Transportation Alternatives (formerly TAP under MAP-21) – see page 15 for description
- USDOT TIGER Grant – see page 15 for description
- Potential Ballot Measure – see page 19 for description

Parties Involved and Interagency Coordination Needs

- Private entities that own the land under SE 70th Street
- Future developer of the parcel at the northwest corner of the intersection of SE 70th Street and 132 Place SE to implement the public plaza
- Puget Sound Energy for potential undergrounding of utilities (not included in cost estimate)

Potential Challenges to Implementation

- This project requires right-of-way acquisition of SE 70th Street.
- Hansen Brothers Moving recently extended their lease for another five years, so no action can take place until their lease expires.

Cost Estimate

PROJECT PHASE	COST ESTIMATE
Planning & Engineering/Design	\$265,000
Construction	\$1,787,000
Right-of-Way Acquisition	\$1,200,000
TOTAL	\$3,252,000

Project 6: Lake Boren Greenway

Project Description

This project provides streetscape improvements along 129th Avenue SE to emphasize the street's crucial role in connecting Downtown to Lake Boren as part of the City's trail system. Since the City is already in the process of filling the gaps in sidewalks and street lights on 129th Avenue SE from Newcastle Way to just north of SE 76th Place, this project would include the following aspects:

- Improvement to the signal at 129th Avenue SE and Newcastle Way to provide more protection for pedestrians crossing Newcastle Way
- Sharrows to signal the presence of bikes, wayfinding signage, and celebratory banners on the street lights to enhance the corridor's character (corridor-wide)
- 5 to 6-foot gravel pathway on the west side of the street and pedestrian-scale lighting (south of SE 76th Place)

The treatments would create a greenway that offers complete pedestrian and bicycle facilities between Newcastle Way and Lake Boren, as well as lighting and wayfinding to promote this connection. The project offers a neighborhood feel north of SE 76th Place and a more rural character south of SE 76th Place. **Figure G** shows what this project could look like. The total estimated cost of this project is \$394,000.

Project Benefits

- Signal enhancements at 129th Avenue SE and Newcastle Way will improve pedestrian safety, as conflicts between north-south pedestrian crossings and left-turning vehicles were noted by the public.
- Complete sidewalks, wayfinding, and banners will make the trail connection between Lake Boren and Downtown more obvious and enjoyable.
- Corridor enhancements will encourage active transportation and recreation.
- The project will help create a stronger sense of place and community identity.



Figure G: Improvements along 129th Avenue SE



Before



After

Timeline for Implementation



Potential Funding Mechanisms

- **WSDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program** – see page 15 for description
- **Washington Urban Arterial Program and Urban Sidewalk Program** – see page 15 for description
- **Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)** – see page 15 for description
- **Transportation Alternatives (formerly TAP under MAP-21)** – see page 15 for description
- **Potential Ballot Measure** – see page 19 for description.
- **Potential Project Consolidation**
This project could potentially be combined with Lake Boren Park improvements stemming from the Lake Boren Park Master Plan.

Parties Involved and Interagency Coordination Needs

- Potentially land owners south of SE 76th Place if additional right-of-way is required

Potential Challenges to Implementation

- Right-of-way acquisition south of SE 76th Place (if required)

Cost Estimate

PROJECT PHASE	COST ESTIMATE
Planning & Engineering/Design	\$51,000
Construction	\$343,000
TOTAL	\$394,000

Project 7: Connections to Downtown

Project Description

This project provides enhancements to the Citywide transportation network to improve walking and cycling connections into downtown. While specific locations are not specified at this stage, the types of enhancements include:

- Filling sidewalk gaps
- Building trail connections
- Adding enhanced crossings
- Adding bike lanes and bike boulevards
- Incorporating traffic calming measures to control speeding and cut-through, such as speed humps, chicanes, and traffic circles
- Adding wayfinding to identify key routes into Downtown

To identify the most effective treatments, the City should consider updating its Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, which could evaluate the full spectrum of potential improvements and prioritize treatments based on overall goals and available funds. The photos on this page are examples of some of these types of enhancements.

Project Benefits

- Improves comfort and safety for walking and cycling.
- Reduces vehicle speeds on residential streets.
- Makes connections to Downtown more apparent to all street users.



Bicycle boulevard



Decorative crosswalk for placemaking



Chicane



RRFB Crossing

Timeline for Implementation



Potential Funding Mechanisms

- WSDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program – see page 15 for description
- Washington Urban Arterial Program and Urban Sidewalk Program – see page 15 for description
- Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) – see page 15 for description
- Transportation Alternatives (formerly TAP under MAP-21) – see page 15 for description
- City Funding Setaside
This project could potentially be funded incrementally over time with existing City funds.

Parties Involved and Interagency Coordination Needs

- Newcastle neighborhoods and residents

Potential Challenges to Implementation

- Neighborhood buy-in

Cost Estimate⁶

TYPE OF ENHANCEMENT	COST ESTIMATE
Filling sidewalk gaps	\$300 - \$500 per linear foot
Building trail connections	\$300,000 - \$500,000 per mile
Enhanced crossings	See below
High Visibility Crosswalk	\$3,000 - \$6,000 each
Raised Crossing	\$10,000 - \$30,000 each
RRFB Crossing	\$20,000 - \$50,000 each
Bike lanes and bike boulevards	\$250,000 - \$550,000 per mile
Traffic calming measures	See below
Speed hump	\$2,000 - \$7,000 each
Chicanes	\$10,000 - \$25,000 each
Curb extensions	\$10,000 - \$40,000 each
Traffic circles	\$30,000 - \$150,000 each
Wayfinding	\$800 - \$2,500 per sign

⁶ Federal Highway Administration. *Costs for Pedestrian and Bicyclist Infrastructure Improvements: A Resource for Researchers, Engineers, Planners, and the General Public*, by Max Bushell, Bryan Poole, Charles Zegeer, and Daniel Rodriguez. Chapel Hill, NC: UNC Highway Safety Research Center, October 2013.

Project 8: Gateway Signage

Project Description

Project 8 installs gateway signage north of the Private Access Road and south of Newcastle Way to signal entry into Downtown Newcastle. The gateway signage can be standalone monuments that are adjacent to or above the roadway, or in the planted median on Coal Creek Parkway if the median is extended beyond what is proposed in Project 4. *Figure H* shows existing conditions along Coal Creek Parkway, and *Figure I* shows examples of other cities' gateway signage. The total estimated cost of this project is \$678,000, which assumes one larger steel archway sign like the Rochester sign shown in *Figure I* and one smaller sign.

Project Benefits

- Announces entry into Downtown Newcastle.
- Helps establish a stronger sense of place and community identity for Downtown Newcastle.
- Can be designed as a part of the overall traffic calming approach to increase safety.



Figure H: Existing Conditions



South Location



North Location

Timeline for Implementation



Potential Funding Mechanisms

- King County Lodging Tax revenues, administered through 4Culture
- Potential Project Consolidation
This project could potentially be combined with Project 4 to provide additional funding sources.

Parties Involved and Interagency Coordination Needs

- Civic groups
- City arts board

Potential Challenges to Implementation

- Identifying a location for the entry signs if they are not located within the public right-of-way.

Cost Estimate

PROJECT PHASE	COST ESTIMATE
Planning & Engineering/Design	\$87,500
Construction	\$590,500
TOTAL	\$678,000

Figure I: Signage Examples



Photo Sources: Flickr user Joey Lax-Salinas; Communications Bureau, City of Rochester

Other Project Ideas

	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
10.	Newcastle Way Streetscape Improvements	Add planted medians at targeted locations on Newcastle Way to slow down traffic, control dangerous turns, and provide pedestrian refuge and visual interest in Downtown Newcastle.
11.	Newcastle Way Plaza and Bus Stop	Relocate the bus stop along Newcastle Way to just west of 129th Avenue SE. Work with the shopping center to provide a small plaza/public seating space on the northwest corner of the intersection adjacent to the Home Street Bank. The plaza would activate currently underutilized space and add additional "eyes on the street" adjacent to the bus stop.
12.	Reclaiming the Street Grid West of Coal Creek Parkway	As the shopping center west of Coal Creek Parkway redevelops, the City should work with the future developer to ensure the new development helps reclaim the City's street grid by adding new connectivity that respects a maximum block length of 300 feet.
13.	Newcastle Way & Golf Club Road Intersection Improvements	The recent Comprehensive Plan identified upgrading this intersection to a roundabout or signal as a key capital project to address existing and projected future traffic demands from Golf Club Road.
14.	Fruit Stand Plaza	Create a new public plaza that would enhance the current fruit stand by including public seating, art, and a more permanent structure that could serve as a unique anchor of Downtown. This project would require a public-private partnership.
15.	Wetland Park Overlook	Build a small gathering space/overlook to appreciate the wetlands located off of 132nd Place SE south of Newcastle Commons.

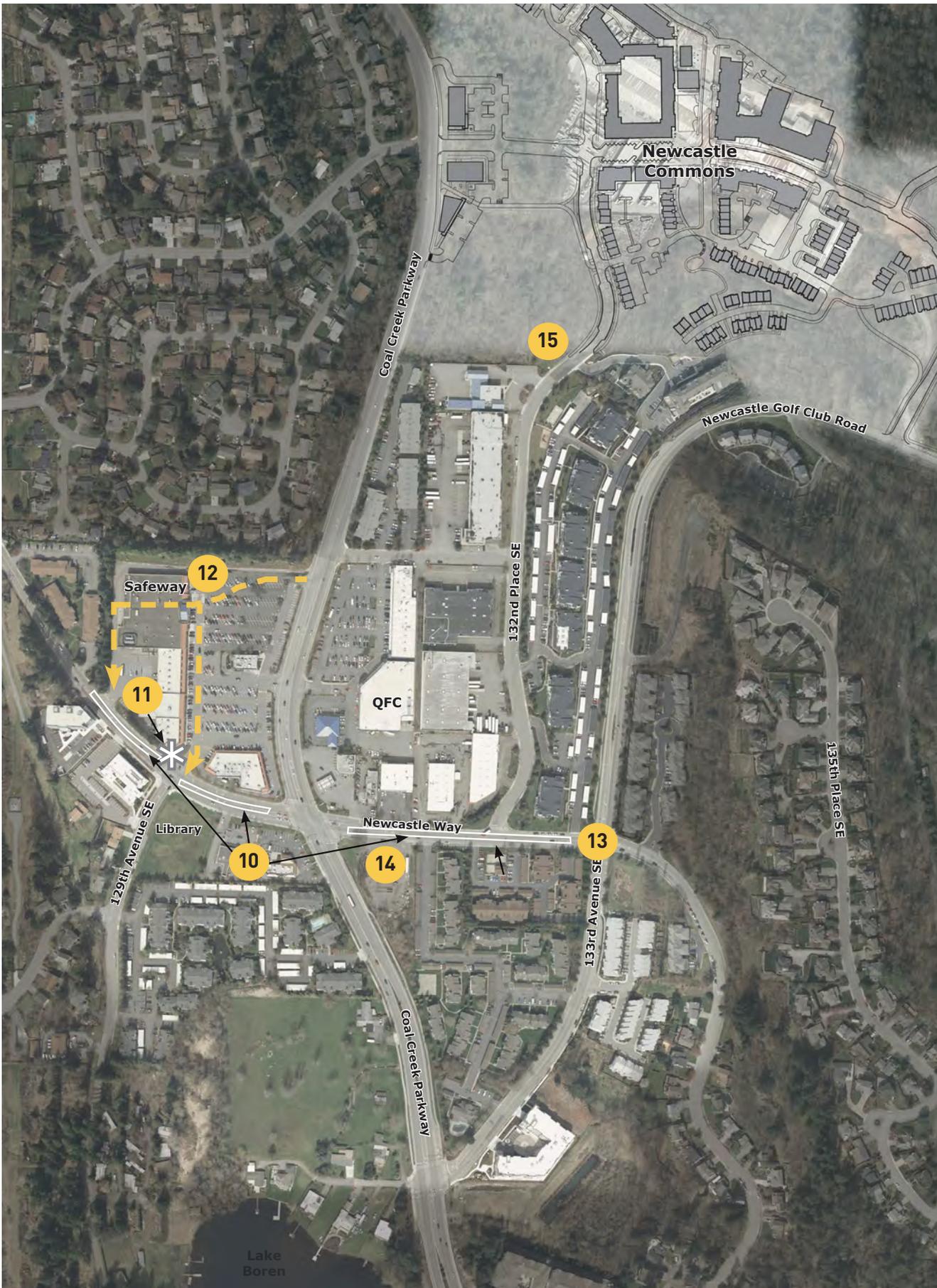


Vision for Fruit Stand Plaza.
Source: Yelp review for Viktualienmarkt



Example of Wetland Overlook.
Source: ohdesignblog.com

Figure J: Other Project Ideas



Project 1: Coal Creek Parkway All Modes Crossing



Before



After

Project 2: 132nd Green Street



Before



After

Project 3: Newcastle Way Raised Intersection



Before



After

Project 4: Coal Creek Parkway Streetscape Improvements



Before



After

Project 5: SE 70th Green Street and Plaza



Before



After

Project 6: Lake Boren Greenway



Before



After

Conclusion

The Downtown Strategic Plan provides a vision for transforming Downtown Newcastle into the type of place that residents desire. The public realm projects described in this document will be priorities for the City of Newcastle in the upcoming months and years. Some of the projects can be realized in the near-term, but others will take more time to come to fruition due to a variety of factors described in this document. The Newcastle community was very active in the public outreach process for this effort, and ongoing engagement and enthusiasm will be crucial to ensure this vision is realized.

These public realm improvements are intended to complement the City's Design Guidelines update that is documented in Volume II of this Downtown Strategic Plan.

Appendix

Current Conditions Memo

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 9, 2017
To: Tim McHarg, City of Newcastle
From: Sarah Saviskas and Kendra Breiland, Fehr & Peers
Subject: **Newcastle Strategic Plan: Current Conditions, Opportunities, and Challenges**

To provide context for the Newcastle Strategic Plan, Fehr & Peers reviewed existing plans, policies, and research studies that provide insight about opportunities and challenges for mobility and livability in Downtown. The main sources of our research included:

- Newcastle Community Business Center (CBC) Assessment, 2016
- Newcastle 2035 Comprehensive Plan, 2016
- Newcastle Lake Boren Park Master Plan, 2016
- Newcastle Bus Stop Assessment Memo, 2015
- Transportation Impact Analysis for Avalon Newcastle (Mutual Materials site), 2013
- Newcastle Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, 2008
- Newcastle Community Business Center Plan/Lake Boren Corridor Master Plan, 2000

The following sections describe the public realm and transportation, including pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and auto transportation modes.

TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

A vibrant downtown should provide a safe and welcoming environment in which to walk, push a stroller, or ride a bike, and also provide seamless connectivity between all modes. The following section summarizes the existing conditions and future plans in place for all travel modes in Downtown Newcastle.

Pedestrian Environment

Today, Downtown Newcastle has some pedestrian-friendly streets, but there is room for improvement. There are sidewalks on all the arterial streets Downtown, but they can feel unsafe in many locations due to high traffic speeds, a lack of buffer between sidewalks and vehicular traffic, and many curb cuts.¹ Coal Creek Parkway feels particularly uninviting to pedestrians for the above reasons. (See **Figure 1.**)

Pedestrian connections to downtown from nearby neighborhoods are not seamless given that sidewalks are missing on several residential streets within a half mile of Downtown. (See **Figure 2.**)

Another challenge is that there are few street connections and long blocks in Downtown Newcastle.² 400 foot long block lengths are ideal for pedestrian mobility,³ yet the crossing signals on Coal Creek

¹ Newcastle Community Business Center Assessment, BERK Consulting, 2016.

² Newcastle Community Business Center Assessment, BERK Consulting, 2016.

³ Newcastle Community Business Center Assessment, BERK Consulting, 2016.

Parkway at Newcastle Way and at Newcastle Commons are more than 2,000 feet apart. This makes traveling between the shopping centers difficult.

Additionally, the public and private spaces are not well integrated, and private properties lack ideal pedestrian connections to the adjacent streets.⁴ As a result, many pedestrians rely on walking through the shopping centers' surface parking lots to get between downtown destinations.

Newcastle is fortunate to have an extensive trail system that is prized by its residents. However, this system could be better linked to Downtown through improved pedestrian-focused wayfinding.



Figure 1: Pedestrians walking on Coal Creek Parkway near QFC

A key way to achieve the goal of having an accessible Downtown is to complete the pedestrian network. Looking to the future, Newcastle should look for opportunities to better connect the shopping centers and Downtown amenities, such as the YMCA, trails, and library, to adjacent residential neighborhoods. 132nd Place SE, 129th Avenue SE, and the private Access Road are promising locations for pedestrian improvements due to their connections to multi-family housing and lower motor vehicle speeds and volumes. Strategies could include new sidewalks, improvements to existing sidewalks, landscaping, and wayfinding signage. To address existing sidewalks that feel unsafe, the City should consider widening sidewalks (in certain locations) and adding a buffer between pedestrians and motor vehicles, such as

⁴ Newcastle Community Business Center Assessment, BERK Consulting, 2016.

landscaping or on-street parking.⁵ This is particularly important on Coal Creek Parkway, though on-street parking would not be appropriate here. The City will also want to consider ADA accessibility in pedestrian amenities, as accessible facilities benefit all users. The completed pedestrian network in Downtown would allow patrons to easily access multiple businesses and public spaces on foot. It would also allow the residents of Downtown to comfortably and safely travel around the neighborhood.



Figure 2: Existing Sidewalk and Trail Networks in Downtown Newcastle

⁵ Newcastle Community Business Center Assessment, BERK Consulting, 2016.

Bicycle Environment

Newcastle adopted its *Non-Motorized Transportation Plan* in 2008, which identified 7.9 segment miles of bicycle infrastructure improvements throughout the city. Coal Creek Parkway, Newcastle Way, and Newcastle Golf Club Road are the designated bike routes for accessing Downtown. (See **Figure 5**.) Outside Downtown, 116th Avenue SE and SE 88th/89th Place also feed into the network. Since 2008, Coal Creek Parkway, Newcastle Way, and Newcastle Golf Club Road have received five-foot bike lanes in several places, as shown in **Figure 3**, but the bike lanes are not contiguous. Many less experienced cyclists will not feel comfortable accessing Downtown by bike until the proposed network of bike lanes is more complete and connected to residential areas. Moreover, bike lanes offering a higher level of separation (buffered or protected bike lanes) would also be more inviting to these users.

While the bicycle routes proposed in the *Non-Motorized Transportation Plan* are a great starting point, they will always predominantly serve more experienced cyclists who are comfortable riding in close proximity to higher traffic volumes and speeds. Newcastle may want to consider supplementing its proposed network of bicycle routes with neighborhood bikeways/bicycle boulevards, which would enable additional connections to Newcastle's trail network. 132nd Place SE and 129th Avenue SE are strong candidates given their connections to multi-family housing, connections to trails, and lower motor vehicle speeds and volumes.



Figure 3: Bike lane on Newcastle Way at 132nd Place SE

Bicycle boulevards take advantage of quiet, low volume roadways to provide bicycle facilities for cyclists of all abilities, and they would complement Newcastle's existing infrastructure nicely. Neighborhood bikeways are more cost effective than bike lanes and typically include features such as unique signage, pavement markings, and traffic calming measures like speed bumps or street barriers. Berkeley, California is well known for its extensive network of bicycle boulevards, as shown in **Figure 4**.



Figure 4: Bicycle boulevard in Berkeley, CA (Photo credit: Kristine Williams)

Between 2010-2016, there were a handful of injuries resulting from collisions with motor vehicles at the shopping centers on Coal Creek Parkway, at the intersection of Newcastle Way & 129th Avenue SE, and near the YMCA, but there were no fatalities.⁶

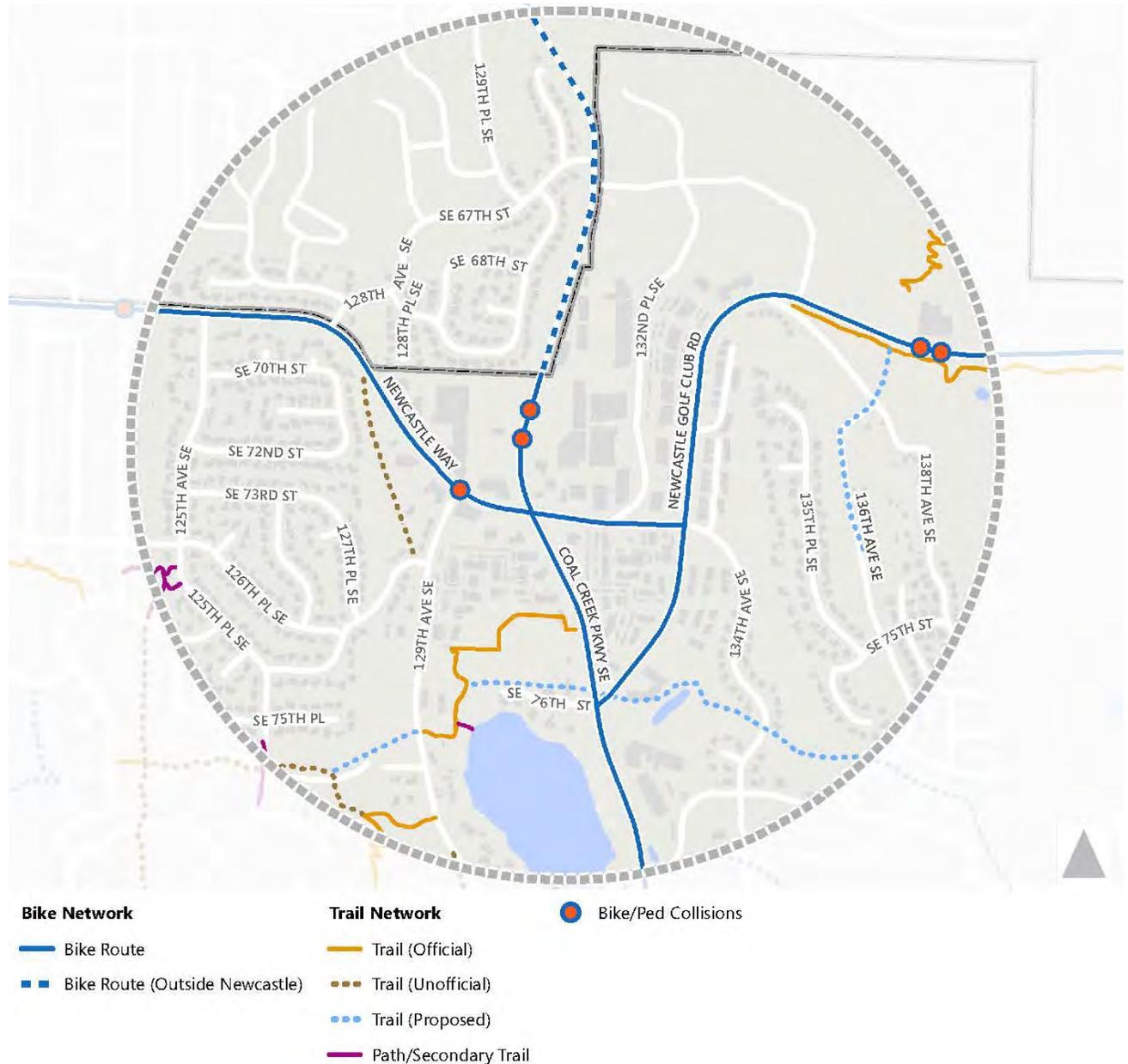


Figure 5: Existing Bike and Trail Networks and Collisions

⁶ 2010-2016 collision data does not distinguish between pedestrians and cyclists, so some of these collisions may have been between a pedestrian and a motor vehicle.

Transit

Two primary King County Metro bus routes serve Newcastle – Routes 114 and 240 – and the main stop is Downtown near the intersection of Newcastle Way and Coal Creek Parkway. Route 114 is a peak direction commuter bus connecting Downtown Seattle and Renton Highlands, which runs every 30 minutes in the morning and evening peak periods. In 2016, King County Metro flagged Route 114 as needing investment to improve schedule reliability, as it is late 42 percent of the time overall and 46 percent of the time in the afternoons/evenings. Route 240 is a well-utilized route that runs between Bellevue and Renton in 30 minute intervals during the day, except after 7:30 pm when it transitions to 60 minute headways. The route is so well utilized that it is receiving 2016 Service Investments to relieve passenger crowding, though like Route 114, it has unreliable service. It is worth noting that Newcastle is also served by two King County Metro school bus routes – Routes 823 and 824 – which provide limited weekday morning and afternoon service to Newport High School and International School.

Pertee's 2015 *Bus Stop Assessment Memo* explores three bus stop locations for the westbound bus stop on Newcastle Way west of Coal Creek Parkway. Currently, a temporary bus stop opposite City Hall serves as the active stop because it became apparent that the original stop location (designed in 2010, shown in **Figure 6**) was too close to the intersection and potentially contributing to significant traffic delays. (See **Figure 7**.) Pertee recommended retrofitting the original bus stop location on Newcastle Way by adding a pullout, rather than the existing temporary stop location and a third proposed alternative further west.



Figure 6: Original bus stop on Newcastle Way that is currently inactive

Additional analysis of these options, including traffic impacts, will be conducted for the final Downtown Strategy document.

Newcastle residents and workers would benefit from more frequent and reliable transit options to Seattle, Bellevue, Renton, and other main destinations. Newcastle was recently selected to participate in King County Metro's Alternative Services program, so additional transit options are anticipated to be available by the end of 2017. The transit network will also significantly change in the next ten years, as a Rapid Ride Route will replace Route 240 and connect to Link Light Rail in Bellevue's Overlake neighborhood, and a new local route will connect Newcastle to the future I-405 Bus Rapid Transit. (See **Figure 8**.) King County Metro is still making adjustments to the routes it plans to add by 2025, so the City of Newcastle has a unique opportunity to weigh in on potential revisions. Several stakeholders were interested in exploring rerouting the Rapid Ride onto Coal Creek Parkway to serve Newcastle Commons, which will be a new destination for both residents and shoppers. The mixed use apartment complex is

located 0.5 to 1 mile away from the current Route 114/240 bus stop, which may be too far for many to access transit on foot. Additionally, Newcastle should explore preserving Route 114 to maintain a “one-seat ride” option for accessing Downtown Seattle.

Looking to the future, Newcastle should also create a complete transit network by including basic amenities at all stops, such as shelters, benches, and crosswalks. A complete transit network also integrates with the bicycle and pedestrian networks to allow users to comfortably and safely switch between modes in order to complete their trip.



Figure 7: Existing and 2025 Future Transit Network

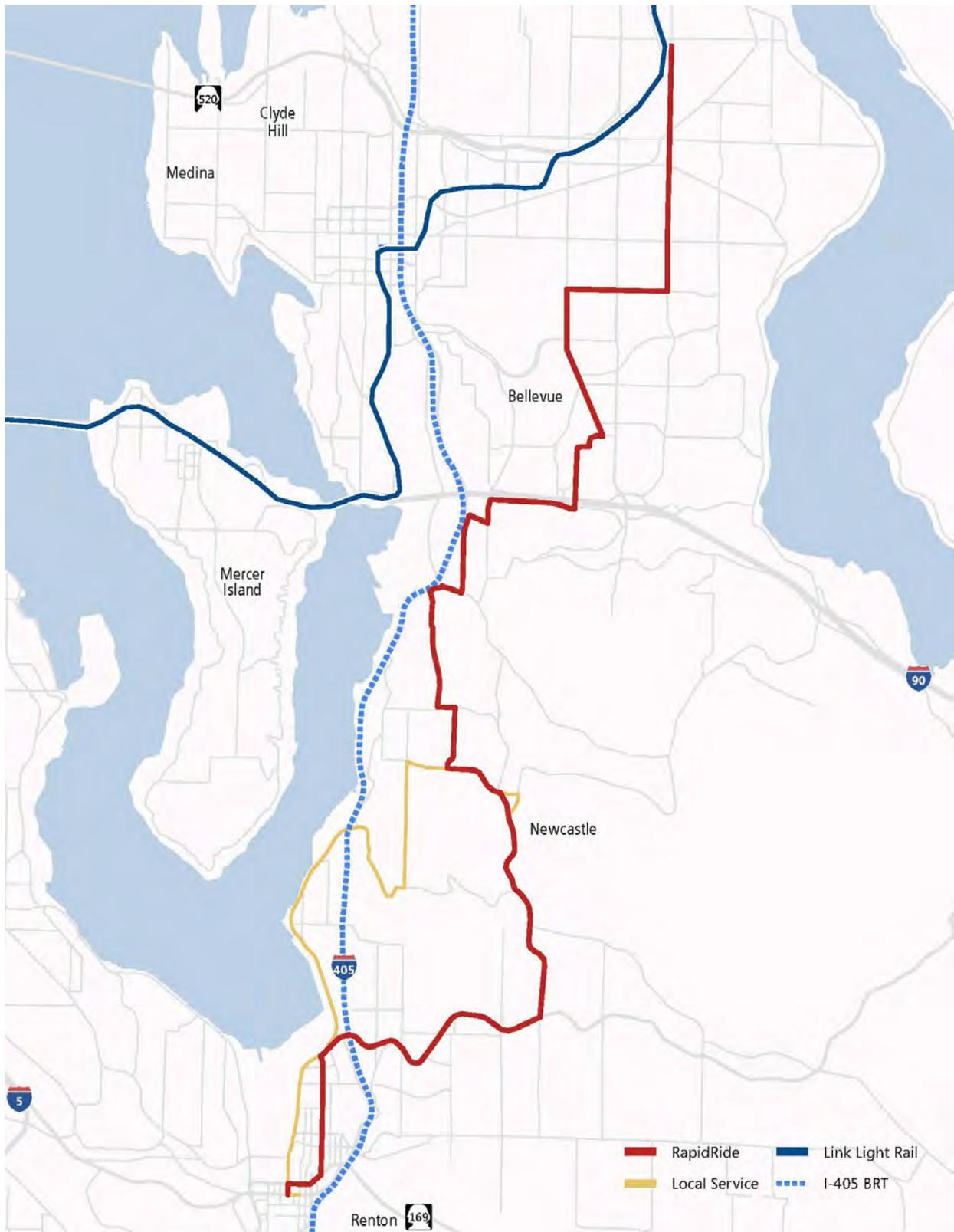


Figure 8: 2025 Future Transit Network connecting to Newcastle

Auto

Newcastle's *2035 Comprehensive Plan* highlights key roadways that serve high volumes of vehicles and trucks. The *Comprehensive Plan* calls for these key roadways, or principal arterials, to be prioritized to minimize delay. The principal arterials identified in Downtown are Coal Creek Parkway (shown in **Figure 9**) and Newcastle Golf Club Road, and Newcastle Way is identified as a minor arterial. (See **Figure 10**, which shows a functional street classification map from the *Comprehensive Plan*.)

Coal Creek Parkway carries 25,000-35,000 vehicles per day, and Newcastle Golf Course Road carries roughly 15,000 vehicles per day. Newcastle Way carries 5,000-11,000 vehicles per day. (See **Figures 11 and 12**, which show existing traffic control devices as well as 2014 Average Daily Traffic Volumes from the *Comprehensive Plan*.) Coal Creek Parkway has a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour, though observed speeds can be much higher. Newcastle Golf Club Road and Newcastle Way both have posted speed limits of 30 miles per hour in Downtown Newcastle.

The *2035 Comprehensive Plan* identifies the "Newcastle Connector" roadway between Coal Creek Parkway and Newcastle Golf Club Road that runs through Newcastle Commons as a crucial connection to maintain reasonable traffic operations in Downtown Newcastle. The roadway is currently under construction. It intersects Coal Creek Parkway with a signal and has side street, stop controlled access onto Golf Club Road.

According to the *2035 Comprehensive Plan*, the intersection of Coal Creek Parkway & Newcastle Way is currently operating at LOS D in the evening peak hour, and is projected to remain LOS D in 2035 with the additional connectivity provided by the Newcastle Connector. The intersection of Golf Club Road & Newcastle Way currently operates at LOS E in the evening peak hour, and the southbound leg operates at LOS F with very long queues. In the future, the intersection is forecast to continue operating at LOS E, with more extensive queues along Golf Club Road unless the intersection is upgraded to include a signal or roundabout, which would reduce delays considerably.

Looking to the future, Newcastle will need to balance opportunities for improving the pedestrian, bicycling, and transit networks through traffic calming and public realm improvements with the reality of needing to maintain efficient motor vehicular movement through Downtown Newcastle. Coal Creek Parkway is a large barrier to the pedestrian network, but traffic operations will be a vital when considering improved crossing opportunities. **Figure 13** shows Transportation Facility Improvements proposed in the *Comprehensive Plan*.



Figure 9: Auto traffic on Coal Creek Parkway

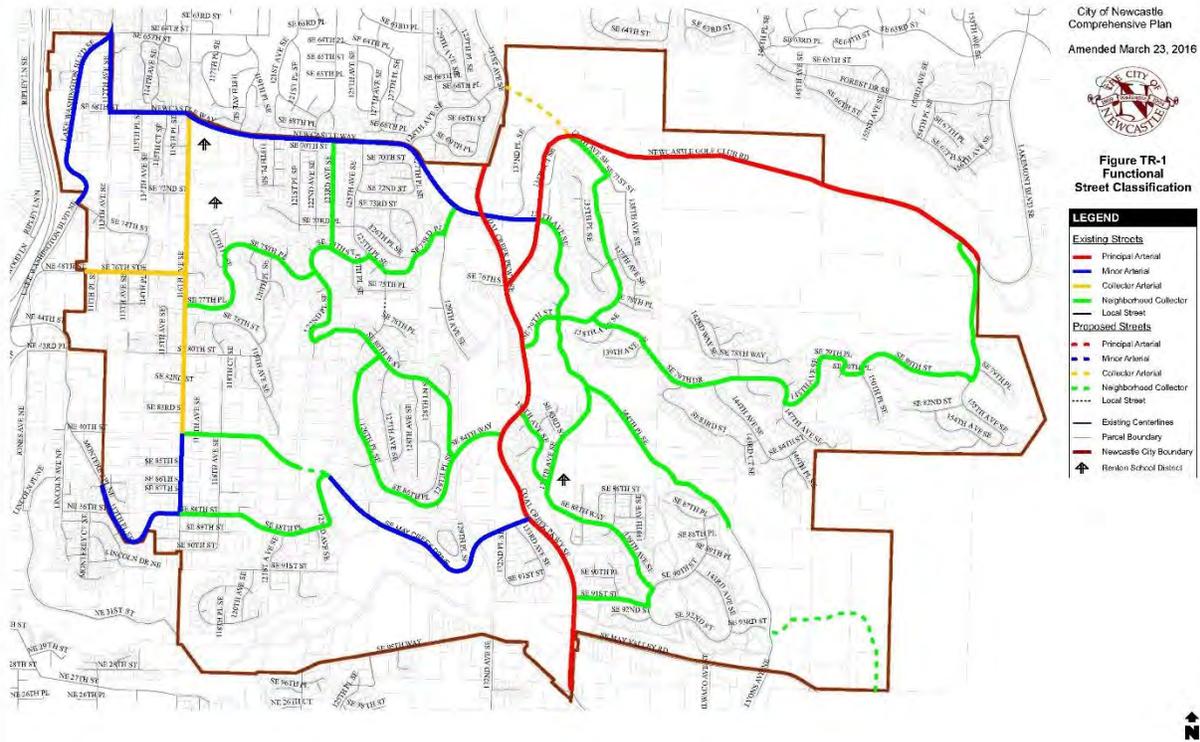


Figure 10: Functional Street Classification, from Newcastle's Comprehensive Plan

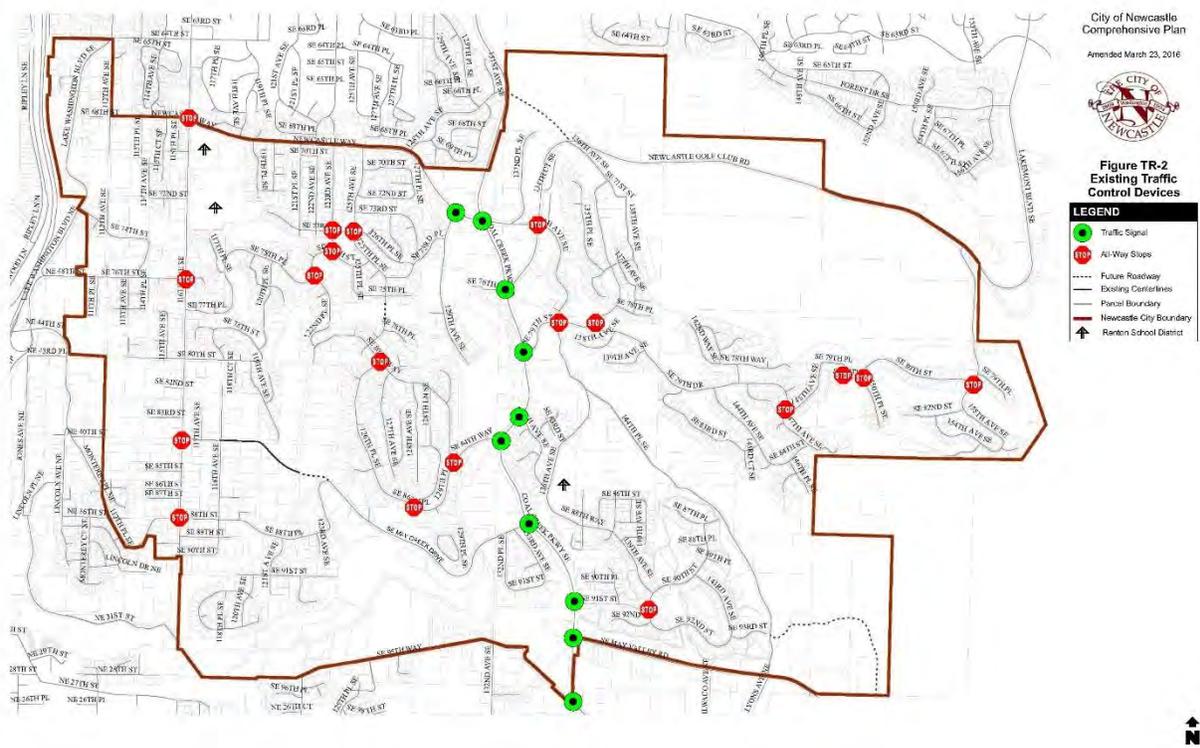


Figure 11: Existing Traffic Control Devices, from Newcastle's Comprehensive Plan

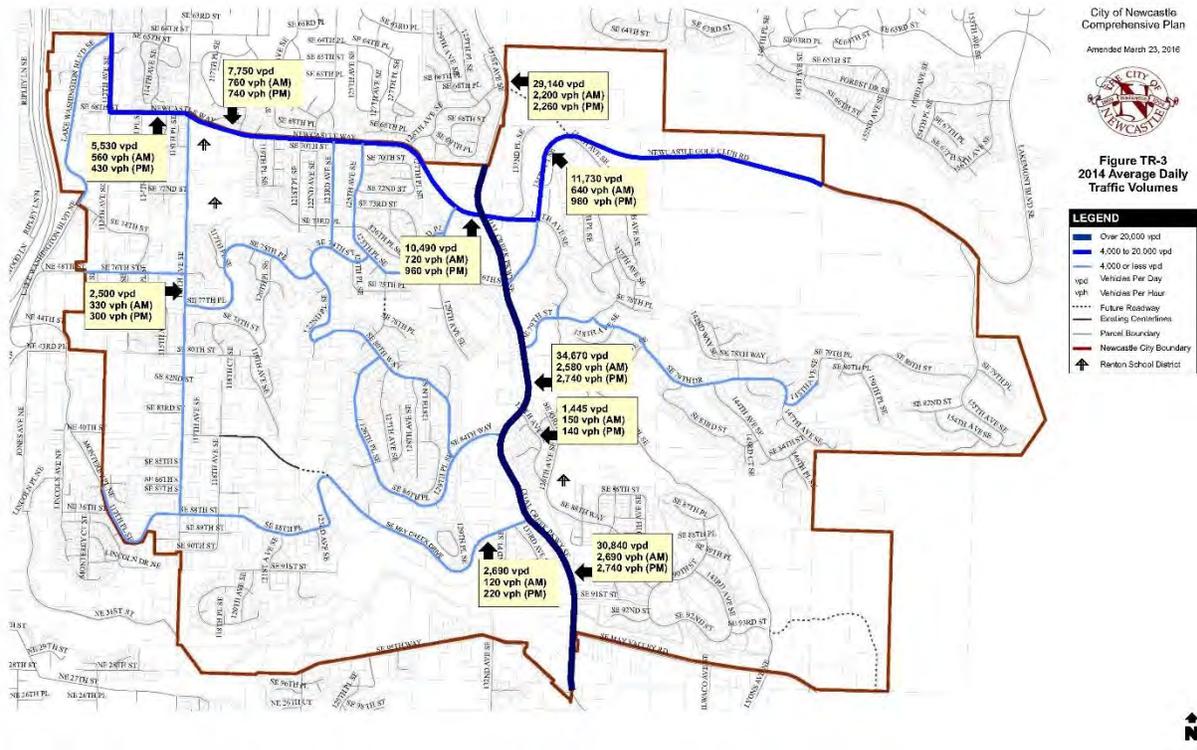


Figure 12: 2014 Average Daily Traffic Volumes, from Newcastle's Comprehensive Plan

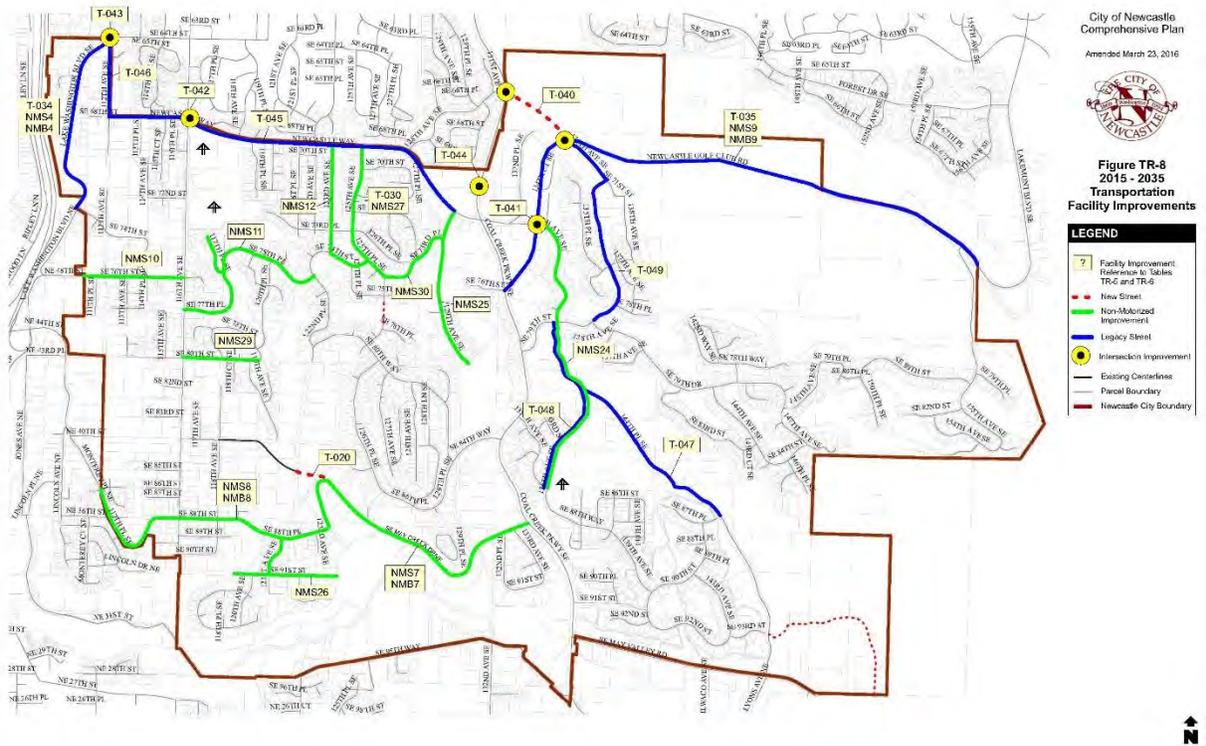


Figure 13: 2015-2035 Transportation Facility Improvements, from Newcastle's Comprehensive Plan

Parking

Downtown Newcastle has two main parking lots at the shopping centers on Coal Creek Parkway, one of which is shown in **Figure 14**. Downtown does not have general public parking on or off-street, which is a concern for many stakeholders because new development projects in Newcastle will bring additional residents to Downtown.

The *Newcastle Community Business Center Assessment* recommended adding on-street parking on key Downtown streets to buffer the sidewalks and provide additional parking in support of local business. It will be critical to consider parking impacts when evaluating alternative strategies and developing the final Downtown Strategy document.



Figure 14: Shopping center parking lot on Coal Creek Parkway

Connectivity

In order to have a connected downtown, the pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and auto networks must all work together. A complete and connected network of all transportation modes will make multimodal trips simple and safe. As discussed earlier, there are currently few street connections and long blocks in Downtown Newcastle. The public and private spaces are not well integrated, and private properties lack ideal pedestrian connections to the adjacent streets, resulting in pedestrians having to cut through the shopping centers' surface parking lots.

Newcastle should consider creating new street connections Downtown to enhance connectivity, increase route options, and reduce block lengths, thereby decreasing travel distances for pedestrians. Newcastle should explore the following street connection solutions:

- Add an additional crossing opportunity along Coal Creek Parkway north of Newcastle Way.
- Work with the owners of the Hansen Brothers site to maintain public access of the private Access Road. It is well utilized by multiple modes of transportation.
- Formalize the desire path between Newcastle Way and the Starbucks building, shown in **Figure 15**, and explore formalizing additional desire paths.
- Enhance the pedestrian and bicycle environments along 132nd Place SE, 129th Avenue SE, and the private Access Road. (See **Figures 16 and 17**.)
- Work with the shopping centers to identify ways to improve the pedestrian environment, which could include creating enhanced pedestrian connections through the parking lots to make walking between destinations more pleasant. While it is recognized that locating buildings at the street edge is desirable, this is unlikely to occur in the near future.



Figure 15: Pedestrian desire path on Newcastle Way near Coal Creek Parkway



Figure 16: Private Access Road looking towards 132nd Place SE

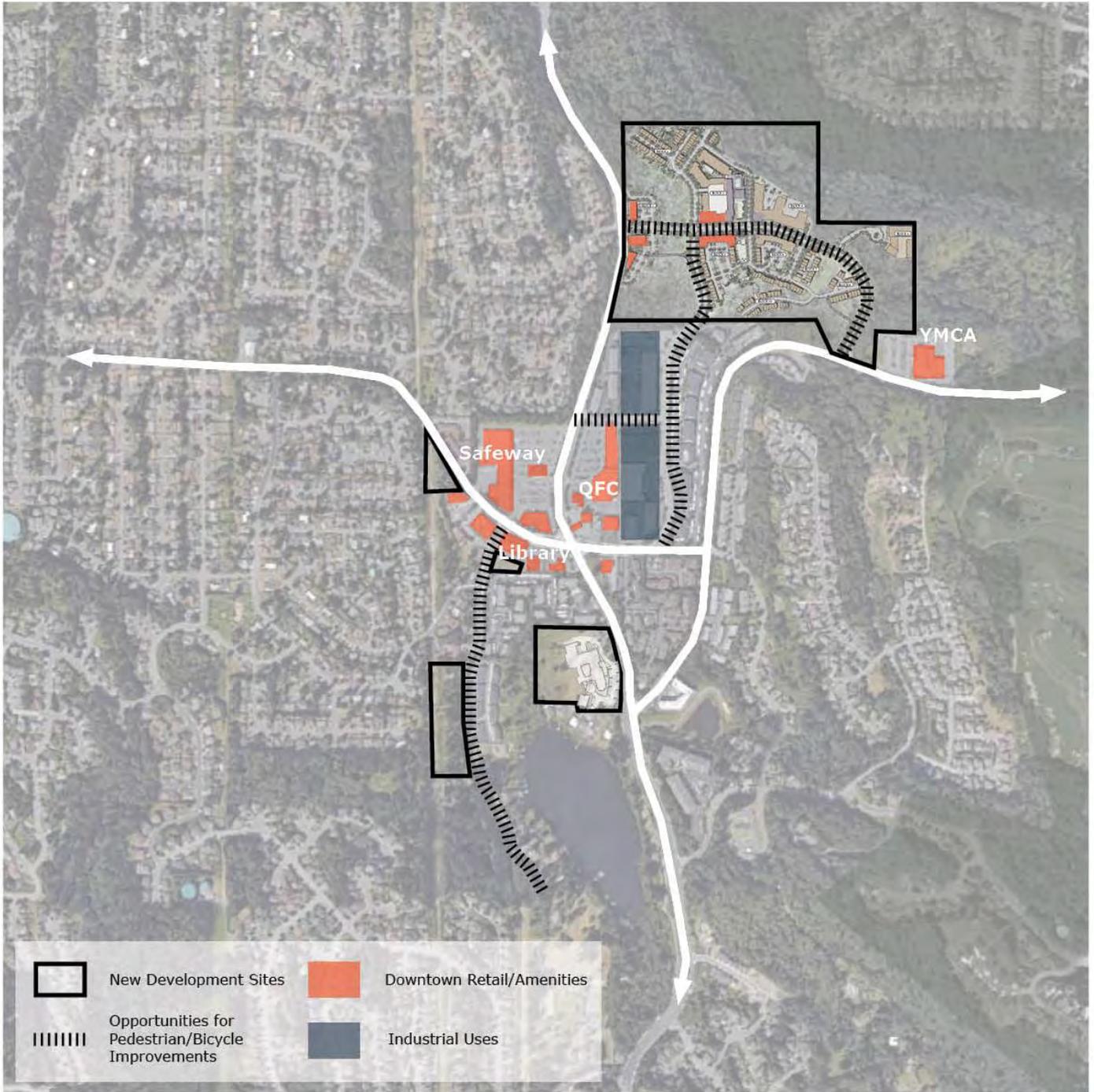


Figure 17: Connectivity opportunities and community context

PUBLIC REALM OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

In the 2016 *Newcastle CBC Assessment*, BERK Consulting states that Downtown Newcastle lacks both the amount and quality of public spaces required to support the 2000 *Newcastle Community Business Center Plan* vision. The only existing outdoor gathering space in Downtown Newcastle is outside Starbucks Coffee, shown in **Figure 18**. Patrons of the Tuscan Stone Pizza food truck were observed eating their lunches in this space, presumably because there was no alternative. Development incentives are a key way of implementing public realm improvements, but these have proven ineffective thus far in Downtown Newcastle.



Figure 18: Existing gathering space outside Starbucks

The *CBC Assessment* sums up the opportunities and challenges facing Downtown Newcastle well:

While the area surrounding Newcastle is saturated with regional shopping destinations that are difficult to compete with, the strategic market opportunity for Newcastle is to provide a retail and service environment based on high-quality design, active public spaces, events, public facilities, and pedestrian amenities that define a true “Downtown.” These improvements would allow Newcastle to differentiate itself from surrounding regional retail centers.

There are lots of opportunities for improving the public realm in Downtown Newcastle. Improvements along 132nd Place SE and 129th Avenue SE could go a long way in improving the public realm, and these streets could be designed to incorporate gathering spaces for moveable furniture, food trucks, street fairs, and more. There may be potential to reclaim small sections of the QFC and Safeway parking lots for public plaza or green space, though further research would be needed on parking utilization. There are large bioswales in the QFC lot, which could potentially be redesigned or relocated to also enable public use, as shown in **Figure 19**. Finally, the *CBC Assessment* recommended that the City develop concept designs and a capital program for public space acquisition and/or improvements in the Downtown that address streets, public spaces, parks, parking, and public facilities.



Figure 19: Bioswales in QFC parking lot that could be used for public gathering space

This page was intentionally left blank.



NEWCASTLE LIBRARY

City of Newcastle
12835 Newcastle Way, Suite 200
Newcastle, WA 98056
(425) 649-4444
www.newcastlewa.gov

