



# **NORTH RAINIER**

## **Neighborhood Plan**

February 1999

# **NORTH RAINIER** **Neighborhood Plan**

final plan recommendations

A Project of the

## **North Rainier Neighborhood Planning Committee**

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February 1999

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## Under Separate Cover

- Neighborhood Planning Phase I Report, December 1997
- North Rainier Hub Urban Village Economic Technical Report, December 1998
- Neighborhood Community Profiles, Maps, and Administrative Meeting Notes, 1997 to 1999

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# Chapter 1.0

## Plan Introduction

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### 1.1 Purpose of the Plan

The North Rainier Hub Urban Village is one of seven “villages” designated in the City of Seattle’s 1994 Comprehensive Plan. The others are Ballard, Fremont, Lake City, Aurora Avenue North @ 130<sup>th</sup> Street, South Lake Union and West Seattle Junction. To recognize differences in existing or desired functions and physical characteristics, district areas were designated as Urban Center Villages, Hub Urban Villages (the category into which North Rainier has been designated) and Residential Urban Villages. The intent of these designations is to encourage growth in areas with the infrastructure, services and zoning capacity to handle it.

**Why Do We Need A Plan?** As one of 37 neighborhood plans being prepared in the City of Seattle, North Rainier needs to face the challenges of population and employment growth through the year 2014. The City’s designated growth targets for the North Rainier Valley Hub Urban Village are 3,500 new jobs and 1,200 new households. In addition, the community sits at the crossroads of the future regional light rail system, and must grapple with how to ensure its sensitive and compatible interface with the North Rainier community. The recommended actions, goals, and policies of this Plan seek to provide the framework for tackling these issues.

Through the hard work and partnerships of the North Rainier Planning Committee, its project staff and consultants, the Seattle Neighborhood Planning Office, and most importantly, the members of the North Rainier residential and business communities, this Plan has been developed to serve as North Rainier’s blueprint for a viable and vibrant future.

### 1.2 Neighborhood Planning Context

In 1994, the Seattle City Council adopted the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan’s primary focus centered on targeting population and employment growth in already well established urban neighborhoods. In return for accommodating the burden of this growth, these designated “urban villages” would benefit from increased capital investment in their communities. As stated above, the Comprehensive Plan designates North Rainier as one of seven hub urban villages scattered throughout the City. As illustrated in Figure 1 on page 3, its boundaries generally extend south from Interstate 90 to Charlestown Street, and are contained on the east and west by the topography of the foothills that shape the Rainier Valley floor. Please also note that the community seeks to amend the boundaries by extending the urban village boundary south to meet the Columbia City Residential Urban Village.

### 1.3 Community Outreach Efforts

Planning efforts for the Rainier Beach Neighborhood Plan, like all of the plans prepared under the guidance of the Seattle Neighborhood Planning Office have occurred in two phases. Phase I of the planning effort was completed in December 1997, and involved identification and review of all relevant past planning efforts, community outreach and validation, community visioning and planning goals, and development of a Phase II Planning Committee and project scope of work. The culmination of this expansive and successful process is documented in the report, *North Rainier Neighborhood Planning Report, Phase I*, dated December 1997. The report is published under separate cover of this Neighborhood Plan. A key component of this first phase was conducting a thorough review of the many past planning efforts for the North Rainier. These reports were reviewed to ensure that many of the ideas could be carried forward as part of this Neighborhood Plan. The plans reviewed included the following:

- Mount Baker Neighborhood Improvement Plan, May 1976
- Seattle Comprehensive Plan, July 1994
- Seattle Comprehensive Plan Appendices, July 1994
- South Atlantic Street Neighborhood Draft Concept Plan, 1992
- Southeast Seattle Action Plan, February 1991
- City of Seattle's 4th Annual Response to Southeast Action Plan, September 1994
- City of Seattle's 5th Annual Response to Southeast Action Plan, September 1995
- City of Seattle's 6th Annual Response to Southeast Action Plan, September 1996

Following the completion of Phase I, the North Rainier Planning Committee moved forward to develop a grass roots, community-directed plan that addressed the top community priorities. To achieve this goal, the Committee held two monthly meetings beginning in February 1998. The first, held the second Tuesday of every month, brought together a small group of Planning Committee members to plan and design a monthly working session on a specific planning topic. These meetings also were used to address administrative issues and to respond to City requirements of the neighborhood plan.

The second meeting of the month, held every 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday, invited the community-at-large to share ideas and concepts on the five primary planning topics:

- Housing and Land Use
- Transportation Planning
- Economic Vitality
- Transit-Oriented Development and Future Light Rail (Town Center)
- Community Life

To supplement this outreach effort, the Planning Committee also utilized an Outreach Consultant to make contact and seek opinions from hard-to-reach North Rainier stakeholders. The following describes the work of this outreach effort.

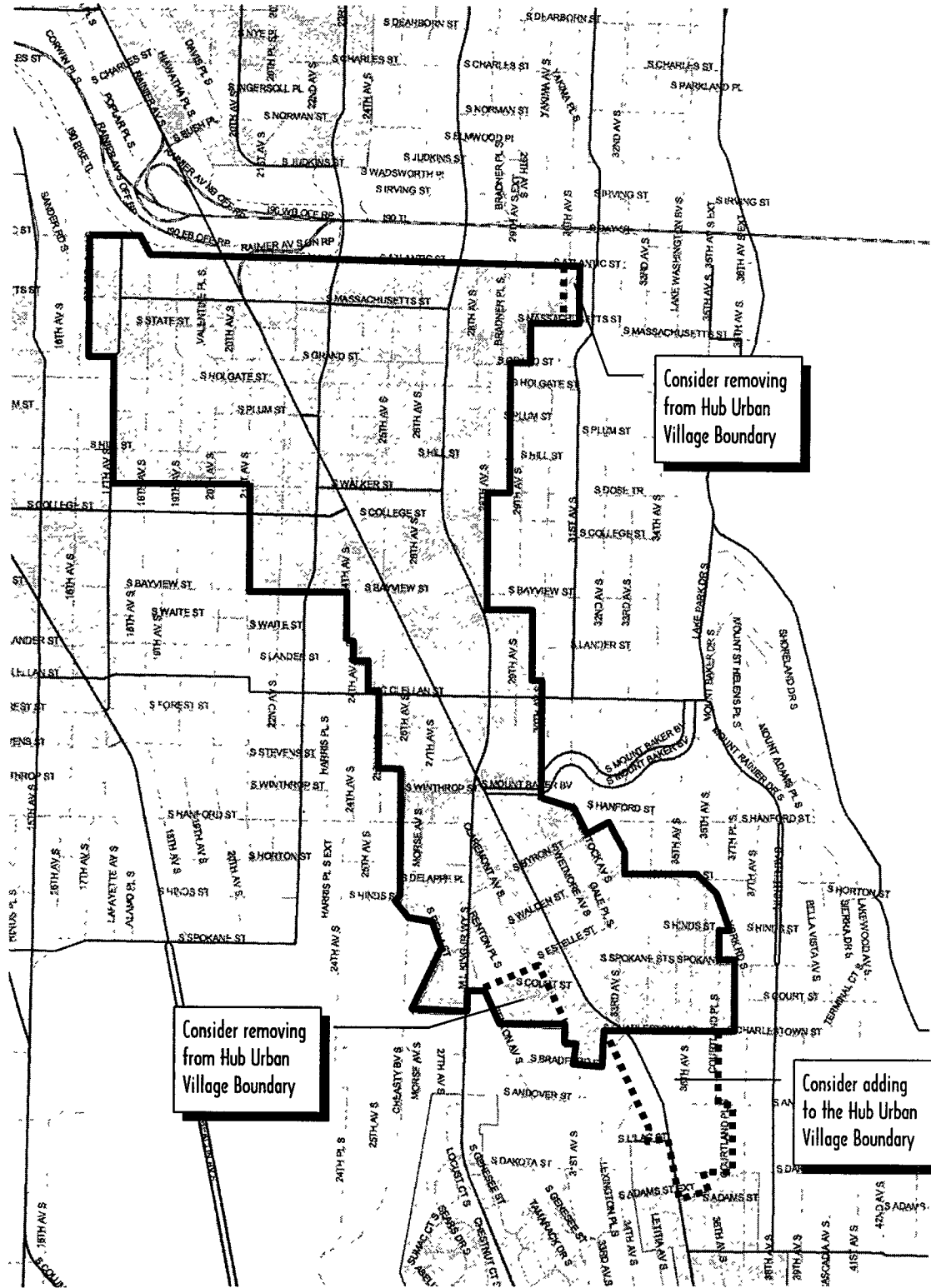


Figure 1  
North Rainier Hub Urban Village Boundary



Phase II outreach strategies and activities were implemented to inform and educate North Rainier residents, property and businesses owners, representatives of organizations and institutions, and other interested citizens of the planning process. The primary focus for outreach was to involve underrepresented citizens from communities of color, those with various disabilities and seniors in the process of developing strategies for the following overarching planning issue elements:

- Transportation Planning
- Transit-Oriented Development (Town Center concept)
- Community Life
- Economic Vitality
- Housing and Land Use

This section represents a summary of outreach strategies implemented. The North Rainier Planning Committee served as one of the major outreach vehicles through which community planning meetings and workshops were held. North Rainier residents, property and business owners, representatives from community organizations and institutions were invited to help develop planning issues and strategies.

- **Telephone Survey:** 170 of 480 individuals expressed an interest in participating in the planning efforts in some volunteer capacity.
- **The North Rainier Neighborhood Planner:** Community stakeholders were kept up to date on the planning efforts and upcoming events through a monthly publication. Over 500 newsletters were mailed each month to participating stakeholders, in addition volunteers distributed over 5,000 copies door to door in the RainKing neighborhood, to churches, and businesses throughout neighborhoods along the north Rainier and Martin Luther King Jr. Way S. corridor.
- **DON Grant and Partnerships:** As a result of the Neighborhood Outreach and Development grant awarded by Department of Neighborhoods and a partnership with Xerox Corporation, 10,000 flyers were developed, over half of these were in Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Tagalog languages. Volunteers canvassed homes, churches, businesses, apartment complexes, the Columbia Library and Rainier Community Center. These efforts helped to contribute to the increased participation among the Asian and Pacific Islanders communities.
- **Media:** Over thirty City, community papers, TV and radio stations announced monthly meeting and special event notices. This included publication in Center Park Resident Council's newsletters for individuals with limited vision.
- **Orientation Packages:** Three hundred North Rainier stakeholders received copies of the North Rainier Neighborhood Orientation package in an effort to bridge the gap and bring people up to speed regarding planning activities.

- **Yard Signs:** High community visibility was achieved through planting thirty North Rainier Neighborhood meeting yard signs along Martin Luther King Way S., McClellan, Grand, Hanford, Atlantic, Walden, Charlestown and a number of other residential streets.
- **Religious Leaders Meetings:** Individual meetings were held with Pastors and Priests of the following churches informing them of planning efforts and soliciting their support and participation. These meetings resulted in several congregational planning workshops.

Berean C.O.G.I.C.	Japanese Presbyterian	Our Lady Mt. Virgin
C.O.G.I.C.	Rose of Sharon	Holgate Church of Christ
St. Clements	United House of Prayer	Mt. Baker Community Church
Mt. Moriah	Power House	

- **Preliminary Plan Review:** 6,000 community stakeholders received copies of the preliminary plan alternatives newsletter as part of a mailing sponsored by the North Rainier Planning Committee and the Neighborhood Planning Office.

## Involving Underrepresented Communities

**Neighborhood Gatherings:** Informal meetings were conducted to inform and involve individuals from underrepresented communities. These activities span throughout the planning process and included information sharing sessions with Asian business owners, churches and the Central Area Senior Center. Planning materials were provided in Tagalog, Cambodian, and Vietnamese. Three individuals acted as liaisons who attended the larger Planning Team meetings and provided translation service for their communities.

**Community workshops:** From March '98 through June '98, workshops were conducted at the above churches and with members of the Filipino Community Center, and Center Park residents. Approximately 70 individuals focused on specific transportation and infrastructure, community life, and economic vitality questions and concerns to further identify issues and ideas.

## Assessing Community Issues, Concerns, and Resources

**North Rainier Questionnaire:** Approximately 30 community members expressed their interest in participating in transportation, housing, land use, zoning, economic and business development, and other planning issues. Individuals informed the Planning Team of the skills and resources they were willing to contribute to the process. This also resulted in identifying individuals with telephone, photography, translation, and outreach skills who helped to support outreach activities.

**Roving surveys:** Roving survey boards were taken to Center Park, Rose of Sharon Church, the Cambodian Community Center and other locations in the community in an effort to reach underrepresented stakeholders. Individuals used this as an opportunity to provide their issues and concerns for the overarching planning issues.

**Yard signs were place throughout the neighborhood announcing the Community Picnic and Preliminary Plan Review:** Over 80 North Rainier residents, property and business owners, and other stakeholders and interested individuals attended this September 1998 preliminary review event. Community outreach efforts were supported by a Department of Neighborhoods grant, and copy services provided by Xerox Corporation. Over 500 announcements were mailed to key stakeholders and flyers were translated in Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Tagalog and distributed by volunteers. Press releases were in all the community papers, on TV and radio as part of this major outreach campaign. To allow for broader public access, copies of the Plan were distributed at key locations in the community for public review.

# Chapter 2.0

## Existing Conditions in North Rainier

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### 2.1 The Built Environment

The slopes of Beacon Hill to the west and the hillside neighborhoods of Mount Baker and Leschi to the east frame the North Rainier Valley. The community is less than four miles from Downtown Seattle and has easy access to several points in the region due to nearby freeway and transit connections to Interstates 90 and 5. The following section, and Figure 2, briefly discuss and illustrate some of the physical elements of North Rainier's built environment.

#### Natural Landscapes

- The 35-acre wooded hillsides of the Cheasty Greenbelt stand out as the North Rainier's most significant natural landscape feature. The drive along Cheasty Boulevard, which connects the Rainier Valley floor to Beacon Hill, gives the appearance of a tunnel of trees due to the old growth vegetation.
- The hillsides to the east of the valley floor are more urban, housing lower-intensity residential neighborhoods. The slopes can be equally as steep as those along Beacon Hill, but rise to much lower elevations.

#### Parks, Recreational Areas, & Open Spaces

- The North Rainier Valley houses part of Seattle's Olmsted system of parks and boulevards. Cheasty Boulevard and Mount Baker Boulevard are both part of the boulevard system developed by the Olmsted Brothers early in Seattle's History. These meandering, landscaped streets were meant to connect to each other, but are physically separated by the hourglass intersection formed by Martin Luther King, Jr. Way and Rainier Avenue S. The entrance to Cheasty Boulevard along Winthrop Street right-of-way is Parks and Open Space property; however, this parkland opportunity is current unimproved.
- The North Rainier has a number of large park facilities, including the I-90 Lid, Colman Park, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park, Blue Dog Park, Taejon Park along Sturgis Avenue, Bradner Park, and Mount Baker Park and Bathhouse. In addition, several pocket park opportunities also exist at the York Substation property off of Renton Avenue S.
- The North Rainier also has important bicycle connections via the designated bicycle trail that travels east-west through the I-90 Lid Park properties and north-south through Taejon Park.
- Currently, North Rainier has no designated multi-use community center, as called for by the City's Comprehensive Plan for Hub Urban Villages.

## Built Form

- The valley floor, bisected by Rainier Avenue S, consists of a wide mix of building types. The area maintains a range of old-time industrial and light warehousing uses, particular in the area just south of Interstate 90.
- From Walker Street down to Charlestown Street, the majority of uses are typically auto-oriented commercial uses, with large parking areas in front of commercial buildings. This is typified by the likes of Eagle Hardware, QFC/Rite Aid, and Rainier Valley Square.
- A small segment of storefront-style uses occur along Rainier Avenue S south of 23<sup>rd</sup>. This stretch includes the Desimone Fruit Stand, the Fish Market, and Borrachini's Bakery. Several other small storefront businesses can be found here.
- Within the Hub Urban Village boundary and its immediate outskirts, there exists a mix of older single-family homes, and higher density multi-family housing. The latter includes projects such as the HomeSight Townhomes and Residential Small Lot Houses on Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, the Cherry Lane Townhomes, and the SHA-operated Mount Baker Apartments.
- Surrounding the urban village are several stable and attractive single-family neighborhoods. These include the craftsman and bungalow homes of the Mount Baker neighborhood, the hillside houses of Leschi, and the older single-family community atop Beacon Hill. Pockets of older and isolated single-family housing can be found in the Renton Avenue S area and throughout the Cheasty Greenbelt.
- A number of landmark buildings also grace the North Rainier Valley. These include beautifully restored Franklin High School and its surrounding grounds and the old Colman School Building which rests atop the I-90 Lid and awaits rehabilitation as the future African American Heritage Museum and Cultural Center.

## 2.2 Community Demography

North Rainier community supports a mix of residential, commercial, warehousing/industrial, and institutional uses. The neighborhood is home to cafes, auto showrooms and detailing shops, barber shops and beauty salons, small retail shops, business and professional services, special trade contractors, and social and health services. Relative to all of southeast Seattle, in 1990 the North Rainier neighborhood supported nearly 7% of area residents and 37% of area jobs. This compares with just less than 1% of residents and less than 1% of jobs citywide.

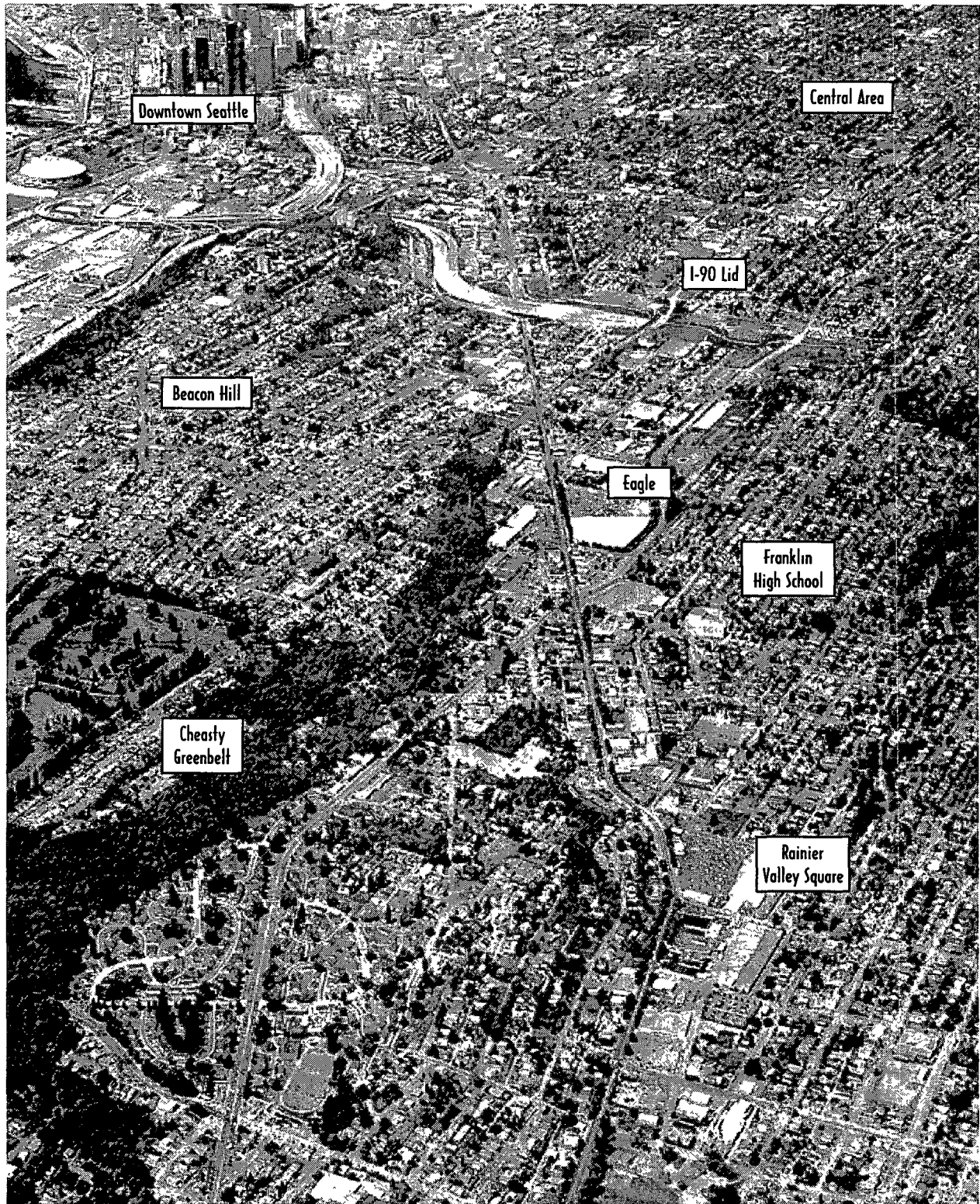


Figure 2  
Aerial Perspective of North Rainier's Built Environment

**Table 1. 1990 Population and Employment Estimates**

AREA	1990 Population	North Rainier as % of Total	1990 Employment	North Rainier as % of Total
North Rainier	2,787	100.0%	3,371	100.0%
Southeast Seattle	42,406	6.6%	9,214	36.6%
City of Seattle	516,259	0.5%	487,698	0.7%

Sources: Population based on 1990 Census of Population and Housing. Employment based on Employment Security Department, 1990 and 1998

Demographic characteristics for North Rainier community are presented below. Please note the source and date for the information, as much of it derives from the 1990 Census as well as other state and local resources. In 1990, the North Rainier Hub Urban Village

area had a total estimated population of 2,913 residents, 6.7% of the population of Southeast Seattle and .6% of the City's population (Table 2).

**Table 2. 1990 Population Comparison**

Area	Population		
	1990	% Southeast Seattle	% Seattle
City of Seattle	516,259	~	100.0%
SE Seattle	42,406	100.0%	8.2%
North Rainier	2,913	6.7%	0.6%

Source: 1990 U.S. Census, Block Group Report, STF3.

**20 Year Population Growth Target.** The North Rainier Hub Urban Village is expected to accommodate approximately 2,880 additional residents by the year 2014 (based on an average household size of 2.4 people) this represents 2.4% of targeted population growth citywide. Other Urban Villages in Southeast Seattle include Columbia City Residential Urban Village, Beacon Hill Residential Urban Village, MLK Jr. Way South @ Holly Street, and Rainier Beach Residential Urban Village. As illustrated in Table 3, total growth targets for all of Southeast Seattle suggests an increase of more than 4,000 households and 10,000 residents by 2014.

**Table 3. 20-Year Population Growth Target**

Southeast Seattle Residential Urban Villages	Households	Population
Rainier Avenue @ I-90 Hub Urban Village	1,200	2,880
Beacon Hill	550	1,375
MLK Jr. Way South @ Holly Street	800	2,080
Columbia City	740	1,924
Rainier Beach	740	1,850
Total	4,030	10,109

Population estimates based on average household size of 2.5 people per household (PPH) for Rainier Beach and Beacon Hill, 2.6 PPH for Columbia City and MLK Jr. Way South @ Holly Street, and 2.4 PPH for Rainier Avenue @ I-90.

Source: Seattle Office of Management and Planning, 1994; Puget Sound Regional Council Household Size Forecasts, 1995

**Age Characteristics.** In general, residents within the North Rainier Hub Urban Village are somewhat older than residents citywide and tend to be concentrated in age between 25-44 and 45-64 years. In 1990, median age of residents within the North Rainier Hub Urban Village was 35.4 years. This compares with median age of 33.5 years citywide. Compared with the City's median, North Rainier has larger concentrations of under 18 year olds and those 50-65 and older, and lower concentrations of all other age groups.

**Table 4. Age Characteristics within the North Rainier Hub Urban Village and the City of Seattle**

Age	North Rainier Hub Urban Village	City of Seattle
Under 18 Years	23.5%	16.3%
18 to 24 Years	4.6%	11.9%
25 to 34 Years	21.3%	21.9%
35 to 49 Years	22.2%	23.4%
50 to 64 Years	12.5%	11.3%
65 and Older	15.9%	15.2%
Median Age	35.4 Years	33.5 Years

Source. 1990 Census.

## 2.3 Housing Characteristics

**Housing Characteristics.** In 1990, the North Rainier Hub Urban Village had 1,282 housing units, 8% of the units in Southeast Seattle and less than 1% of the 249,032 units citywide (Table 5). Compared with the city, North Rainier has a larger percentage of multi-family units (46.3% vs. 24.8%) and renter-occupied units (54.7% vs. 51.5%).

**Table 5. 1990 Housing Unit Comparison**

Area	Housing		
	1990	% SE Seattle	% Seattle
City of Seattle	249,032	-	100.0%
Southeast Seattle	16,688	100.0%	6.7%
North Rainier Hub Urban Village	1,282	7.7%	0.5%

Source: 1990 U.S. Census, Block Group Report, STF3

Typically, there are more people per unit in North Rainier than the city. In 1990, households in North Rainier averaged 2.43 people per housing unit. This compares with the citywide average of 2.0 people per housing unit. Housing characteristics within Seattle, Southeast Seattle and the North Rainier Hub Urban Village are presented in Table 6.

**20-Year Housing Growth Target.** The North Rainier Hub Urban Village is targeted to accommodate 1,200 additional households by the year 2014. This represents approximately 2% targeted housing growth citywide. Additional household growth is targeted for the Columbia City, Beacon Hill, MLK Jr. Way south # Holly Street and Rainier Beach Residential Urban Villages in Southeast Seattle. Initially, the Southeast Seattle Urban Villages are targeted to accommodate 4,030 additional households by 2014. This represents just over 6.7% of targeted household growth citywide (see Table 2).



**Household Income.** Overall, estimated household income for residents within the North Rainier Hub Urban Village was less than the citywide average. In 1990, median household income within the Urban Village was \$17,672, 40% below the citywide median of \$29,353. The North Rainier planning area (larger geographically than the urban village boundaries) had a median household income of \$28,316, just 4% below the

**Table 6. 1990 Housing Characteristic Comparison**

Housing Characteristic	North Rainier Hub Urban Village	Southeast Seattle	City of Seattle
Total Units	1,282	16,688	249,032
Persons/Unit	2.43	2.69	2.01
<b>Occupancy</b>			
Owner Occupied	566	9,782	115,669
%	47.4%	62.9%	48.9%
Renter Occupied	652	5,760	121,003
%	54.7%	37.1%	51.1%
<b>Unit Type</b>			
% Single Family	53.7%	72.7%	53.4%
% Multi-Family	46.3%	26.2%	45.4%
Median Year Built	1952	1952	1949

citywide median. In 1996, median household income within the North Rainier planning area (census tracts 94, 95, 100 and 101) was estimated to be \$37,647, an increase of 33% over the 1990 median household income. Over the same period, median household income in Southeast Seattle increased from an estimated \$28,057 in 1990 to \$39,214 in 1996, an increase of nearly 40% (Puget Sound Regional Council, 1998).

The Puget Sound Regional Council (1995) prepared household income forecasts for Forecast Analysis Zones (FAZs) within the four-county Puget Sound region. The North Beacon Hill/Mount Baker FAZ includes the approximate area encompassed in the North Rainier planning area, but is larger than the Hub Urban Village boundaries (see the maps in the Appendix). In 1990, it was estimated that 40.3% of households within the North Beacon Hill/Mount Baker FAZ earned incomes below the county median (20.3% were in the lowest 25% of households). By 2010, it is estimated that 40.5% of households within this FAZ will earn incomes below the county median (18.5% will be in the lowest 25% of households). The number of households earning incomes above the county median is expected to decrease from 59.7% to 59.5% of total households over the period 1990-2010, with those in the uppermost 25% of households decreasing from 35.4% to 32.4% of total households.

Southeast Seattle FAZs include the North Beacon Hill/Mount Baker, South Beacon Hill/Columbia City, and Rainier Beach communities. In 1990, it was estimated that 55.1% of households within these FAZs earned incomes below the county median (31% were in the lowest 25% of households). By 2010, it is estimated that 52.8% of households within these FAZs will earn incomes below the county median (28% will be in the lowest 25% of households). The number of households earning incomes above the county median is expected to increase from 44.9% to 47.2% of total households over the period 1990-2010, with those in the uppermost 25% of households increasing from 23% to 24% of total households (PSRC, 1995).

**Poverty Status.** As shown in Table 7, the poverty level was higher in the North Rainier Hub Urban Village in 1990 than occurred citywide. Within the North Rainier Hub Urban Village, 28.1% of the population earned incomes below the poverty level, compared with 16.5% in

Southeast Seattle and 12.4% citywide. Children under 18-years of age comprised 8.4% of the total population in poverty and 23.5% of the total residential population. In Southeast Seattle, children under 18 comprised 6.5% of the total population in poverty and 28.3% of the total residential population. Citywide, those under 18 comprised 21.5% of those in poverty and 16.3% of the total residential population.

Those aged 65 and older within the North Rainier Hub Urban Village comprised 2.3% of the total population in poverty and 16.0% of the total residential population. This compares with 1.0% of those in poverty and 13.4% of total population in Southeast Seattle and 10.9% of those in poverty and 15.2% of total population citywide.

**Housing Affordability.** The citywide average purchase price for a single-family home in 1994 (the most recent affordability data available) was \$182,834. In 1994, the median income household (approximately \$41,104 for the Seattle-Everett Metropolitan

Statistical Area) was able to afford a \$166,400 home (assuming 20% down, 25% of income for principal and interest, and a 30-year conventional mortgage at prevailing interest rates). This left a \$16,434 gap between the average purchase price of a single-family home and what the median income household could afford (see Table 8). The situation was quite different in Rainier Valley neighborhoods (which include North Rainier) where the average purchase price for a single-family home was \$127,561. This left a positive gap of \$38,800 between the average purchase price of a single-family home and what the median income household could afford. That is, housing remained affordable for households earning the median income. Areas with comparable affordability characteristics are included for comparison. Citywide, 59% of the housing units sold were below the median income household's affordable price (King County, 1995).

**Table 7. 1990 Income Characteristic Comparison**

Income Characteristic	North Rainier Hub Urban Village	Southeast Seattle	City of Seattle
Median Household	\$17,672	\$28,272	\$29,353
Poverty Status			
% Below	28.1%	16.5%	12.4%
% under age 18	8.4%	6.5%	21.5%
% age 65 +	2.3%	1.0%	10.9%
Source: 1990 U.S. Census, Block Group Report, STF3.			

**Table 8. 1994 House Purchase Affordability**

Subarea	Annual Mean Price	Affordability Gap	
		Median Income	Low Income
Seattle	\$182,834	(\$16,434)	(\$122,334)
Beacon Hill	\$115,709	\$50,700	(\$55,200)
Central Area	\$135,600	\$30,800	(\$75,100)
Rainier Valley	\$127,561	\$38,800	(\$67,100)
Riverton/Tukwila	\$107,873	\$58,500	(\$47,400)
Source: King County Department of Development and Environmental Services, 1995.			

The affordability gap facing first time homebuyers and low-income households remains prohibitively large, however. First time home buyers (earning 85% of median income, or \$34,938 in 1994) were able to afford a \$102,900 home (assuming 4.5% down, 26% of income for principal and interest, and a 30-year FHA loan with mortgage at prevailing interest rates). This left a gap of \$79,934 citywide and \$24,661 in the Rainier Valley. Citywide, 15% of the housing units sold were below the first time buyer's affordable price. Low-income households (earning 50% of median income, or \$20,552 in 1994) were able to afford a \$60,500 home, leaving a gap of \$122,334 citywide and \$67,100 in the Rainier Valley. Citywide, 3% of the housing units sold were below the low-income household's affordable price.

While more recent affordability data are unavailable, information on housing prices in the Rainier Valley is available through the Northwest Multiple Listing Service. In March, 1998, the average sale price of a single-family home in the Rainier Valley was \$166,557, or 30.6% higher than the average price of \$127,561 in 1994 (Table 8). This is equivalent to an increase of approximately 6.9% per year. The likely result of these housing price increases is a widening of the affordability gap for first time and low-income homebuyers.

The affordability gap for median and low-income renters represents the difference between contract rent and 30% of monthly household income. In 1994, median income renter households earned \$27,577 and could afford \$689 per month in rent, which was below the citywide average rent of \$700 per month (a gap of \$11) and above the average within the Rainier Valley of \$464 per month (a gap of +\$226). Low income renter households, however, earned \$13,788 and could afford a monthly rent of \$345, which left a gap of \$355 citywide and \$119 in the Rainier Valley (see Table 9).

**Table 9. 1994 Rent Affordability**

Subarea	Annual Mean Rent	Affordability Gap per Month	
		Median Income	Low Income
Seattle	\$700	(\$11)	(\$355)
Beacon Hill	\$695	(\$5)	(\$350)
Central Area	\$750	(\$61)	(\$405)
Rainier Valley	\$464	\$226	(\$119)
Riverton/Tukwila	\$559	\$131	(\$214)

Source: King County Department of Development and Environmental Services, 1995.

## 2.4 The Economy

As of March, 1994 (the most current employment and wage data available), there were 235 businesses and 4,523 employees in the North Rainier Hub Urban Village. This represented just over 1% of total covered employment in Seattle and 41% of total covered employment in Southeast Seattle. Quarterly wages totaled \$26 million dollars, or 38% of wages in Southeast Seattle. In terms of wage comparisons, the average North Rainier employee earned approximately \$23,600 per year, 22% lower than the City average of \$30,400 per year and 5.6% lower than the Southeast Seattle average of approximately \$25,000 per year.

Please note: the North Rainier Hub Urban Village is defined by census tract/block groups 94 (1-3, 5, 6), 95 (1, 4-8), 100 (1, 2, 6) and 101 (3-6) and Southeast Seattle by 94 (1, 2), 95 (5-8), 100 (1, 2), 101 (3-5), 102 (3, 4), 103 (2-5), 104 (1, 2), 110 (1, 2) 111 (1-7), 118 (3-6) and 119 (1, 5) (Washington State Employment Security, 1998).

As shown in Table 10, employment in the North Rainier Hub Urban Village accounted for 41% of total employment in Southeast Seattle during the first quarter of 1994. Employment in North Rainier accounted for over 60% of total employment in Southeast Seattle in manufacturing and service industries, 50% of mining/construction and 40% of transportation/communication/utilities. It should be noted that employment figures do not include sole proprietors, people working from home and other self-employed individuals. Census data for 1990 indicate that 440 people within Southeast Seattle worked at home, while only 18 people worked at home in the North Rainier Hub Urban Village.

**Table 10. North Rainier Hub Urban Village Covered Employment and Wages, 1st Quarter 1994**

SIC Industry	Units	Employees	% Total Employment	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter Wages
Ag/Forest/Fishing	6	32	0.7%	\$118,362
Mining/Construction	12	183	4.0%	\$1,257,363
General Bldg. Contractors	7	91	2.0%	\$555,899
Manufacturing	19	1,360	30.1%	\$10,079,146
Apparel & Other Textiles	5	66	1.5%	\$261,579
Printing & Publishing	3	261	5.8%	\$2,618,876
Industrial Machinery/ Equip	3	382	8.4%	\$1,941,489
TCU <sup>1</sup>	7	96	2.1%	\$428,330
Trucking & Warehousing	3	33	0.7%	\$229,884
Wholesale Trade	17	179	4.5%	\$1,191,344
Retail Trade	52	609	13.5%	\$1,951,707
Building Materials/Garden	4	25	0.6%	\$129,838
Food Stores	11	157	3.5%	\$539,225
Auto Dealers/Service	7	53	1.2%	\$168,331
Apparel & Accessories	3	62	1.4%	\$123,350
Eating & Drinking Places	15	192	4.2%	\$365,946
Misc. Retail	9	104	2.3%	\$554,021
FIRE <sup>2</sup>	5	31	0.7%	\$163,741
Services	107	1,340	29.6%	\$5,793,770
Personal Services	4	9	0.2%	\$35,620
Business Services	4	44	1.0%	\$138,370
Auto Repair/Serv/Pkg	12	49	1.1%	\$248,676
Misc. Repair Services	4	11	0.2%	\$60,907
Health Services	10	518	11.5%	\$2,352,180
Social Services	15	528	11.7%	\$2,342,206
Private Households	52	46	1.0%	\$94,996
Government	10	693	15.3%	\$5,203,628
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>4,523</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$26,187,391</b>

<sup>1</sup>transportation, communication and utilities. <sup>2</sup>Finance, insurance and real estate.  
Source: Washington State Employment Security Department, 1998.

In 1994, nearly 60% of total employment in the North Rainier Hub Urban Village was in manufacturing and service industries. An additional 30% was in government and retail trade industries (Table 11). The remaining 10% was in all other industries, with the smallest share of employment in agriculture/forestry/fishing and finance/insurance/real estate (0.7% each), transportation/communications/utilities (2.1%) and mining/construction and wholesale trade (4.0% each).

**Table 11. 1994 Industry Employment Comparison**

Industry	1994 First Quarter Covered Employment				
	Southeast Seattle	% of Total	North Rainier Hub Urban Village	% of North Rainier	% of SE Seattle
Ag/Forestry/Fishing	86	0.8%	32	0.7%	37.2%
Mining/Construction	352	3.2%	183	4.0%	52.0%
Manufacturing	2,238	20.3%	1,360	30.1%	60.8%
TCU	228	2.1%	96	2.1%	42.1%
Wholesale Trade	2,211	20.1%	179	4.0%	8.0%
Retail Trade	1,716	15.6%	609	13.5%	35.5%
FIRE	181	1.6%	31	0.7%	17.1%
Services	2,192	19.9%	1,340	29.6%	61.1%
Government	1,806	16.4%	693	15.3%	38.4%
Total Covered Employment	11,010	100.0%	4,523	100.0%	41.1%
TCU: Transportation/communication/utilities FIRE: Finance/insurance/real estate.					
Source: Washington State Employment Security Department, 1998.					

Manufacturing supported 30% of total employment within the North Rainier Hub Urban Village in 1994. The largest employer within this sector was Industrial Machinery and Equipment, which supported 8.4% of total employment and 28% of manufacturing employment. Printing and Publishing industries employed nearly 6% of total employees and 19% of manufacturing employment. Apparel and Other Textile Product industries supported about 2% of total employment and 5% of manufacturing employment. The average annual wage within the manufacturing sector in North Rainier was \$29,600 in 1994 compared with \$29,630 in Southeast Seattle and \$36,920 citywide.

The services sector was the second largest employer in the North Rainier Hub Urban Village with 29.6% of total employment. The largest employers within this sector were Social and Health Services, which employed 11.7% and 11.5% of all employees and 40% and 39% of all service-related employees, respectively. The average annual wage within the services sector in North Rainier was \$18,100 in 1994 compared with \$16,200 in Southeast Seattle and \$27,600 citywide.

Federal, state and local government supported 15.3% of total employment within North Rainier in 1994. No breakdown of employment by government sector is available from the Washington State Employment Security Department. The average annual wage within the government sector in North Rainier was about \$26,800 in 1994, this compares with \$31,300 in Southeast Seattle and \$34,612 citywide.

Retail trade was the fourth largest employer in the North Rainier Hub Urban Village, accounting for 13.5% of total jobs. The largest employer within the retail trade sector was Eating and Drinking Places, which employed 4.2% of all employees and 31.5% of all retail jobs. Another important retail employer was Food Stores, which accounted for 3.5% of total employment and 25.8% of retail employment. The average annualized wage within the retail sector in the North Rainier Hub Urban Village during the first quarter of 1994 was \$13,540 compared with \$16,020 in Southeast Seattle and \$17,800 citywide.

Employment growth by industrial sector for 1990 and 1994 for the North Rainier Hub Urban Village and Southeast Seattle are presented in table 12. Southeast Seattle experienced job growth of nearly 20% over this period, compared with 38% job growth in North Rainier.

**Table 12. Changes in Employment, 1990-1994**

Industry	North Rainier Hub Urban Village			Southeast Seattle		
	1990	1994	% Change	1990	1994	% Change
Ag/Forestry/Fishing	24	32	33.3%	84	86	2.4%
Mining/Construction	151	183	21.2%	465	352	-24.3%
Manufacturing	832	1,360	63.5%	1,752	2,238	27.7%
Trans/Com/Utilities	25	96	284.0%	619	228	-63.2%
Wholesale Trade	155	179	15.5%	2,195	2,211	0.7%
Retail Trade	1,025	609	-40.6%	1,992	1,716	-13.9%
Finance/Ins/Real Estate	25	31	24.0%	166	181	9.0%
Services	581	1,340	130.6%	1,070	2,192	104.9%
Government	454	693	52.6%	871	1,806	107.3%
Total Covered Employment	3,272	4,523	38.2%	9,214	11,010	19.5%

Source Washington State Employment Security Department, 1998.

Total employment within the North Rainier Hub Urban Village increased by 1,251 jobs, or approximately 38.2%, between the first quarter of 1990 and the first quarter of 1994. With the exception of retail trade, all Industries experienced job growth. Industries experiencing the greatest job growth included services (+759 jobs), manufacturing (+528 jobs), and government (+239 jobs). Smaller job growth occurred in other sectors, while retail trade establishments lost a total of 416 jobs.

North Rainier experienced relatively poorer job performance than did Southeast Seattle as a whole, which gained 1,796 jobs (a nearly 20% increase), primarily in manufacturing (+486 jobs), services (+1,122 jobs) and government (+935 jobs). These increases were offset, to some extent, by

losses in mining/construction (-113 jobs), transportation/communications/ utilities (-391 jobs) and retail trade (-276 jobs).

**Employment Trends and Forecasts.** Employment forecasts are one measure of how the region and local area are expected to perform economically in the future. The expected composition and performance of specific industries provide insight into where growth is expected to occur, the types of labor skills and training that will be required, infrastructure needs, and other factors that can be planned for. Employment and wages also drive business and household purchases, which in turn generate additional spending. If the industries attracted to a region or area are typically high wage paying industries, the economic impacts will be substantially different than if the industries are typically low wage paying industries.

The North Rainier Hub Urban Village is targeted to accommodate an additional 3,500 jobs over the 20-year planning horizon. However, no specific industries have been identified as recipients of this growth. No 20-year employment targets were identified for the four Residential Urban Villages in Southeast Seattle (Beacon Hill, Columbia City, MLK @ Holly, and Rainier Beach). These areas are not targeted for additional employment growth over the next 20-years, however, some level of employment growth is likely to occur. This is reflected in new and planned construction throughout the Rainier Valley.

While employment targets were not identified for each Residential Urban Village within Southeast Seattle and the specific mix of likely future employment was not identified for the North Rainier Hub Urban Village, local area forecasts are available from the Puget Sound Regional Council. The following section (Table 13) presents employment trends and forecasts for Seattle and the Forecast Analysis Zones (FAZs) that comprise Southeast Seattle and the North Rainier planning area. These forecasts give some indication about the general magnitude and composition of future employment.

Southeast Seattle's share of total City employment is expected to decrease slightly over the forecast period (4.2% in 1990 to 4.1% in 2020). Total employment in the Southeast Seattle FAZ's is expected to increase 29% between 1990 and 2020, or just less than 1% per year. The greatest growth, nearly 100%, is expected in the services sector, followed by retail trade (38%), government/education (31%) and wholesale trade/ transportation/communications/utilities (0.6%). Manufacturing employment is expected to decline 44% over the forecast period.

The North Rainier share of Southeast Seattle employment is expected to increase marginally over the forecast period (54.6% in 1990 to 55.8% in 2020). In 1994, the North Rainier Hub Urban Village supported 4,523 jobs, while the North Beacon Hill/Mount Baker FAZ supported approximately 11,433 jobs (assuming that employment growth occurred in equal increments between 1990 and 2000). Thus, the North Rainier Hub Urban Village "captured" approximately 40% of the FAZ's total employment.

Total employment in the North Beacon Hill/Mount Baker FAZ is expected to grow 32% over the period 1990-2020, or approximately 1% per year. This is comparable to the rate of growth for Southeast Seattle (29% employment growth, or 0.9% per year) and for the city as a whole (34% employment growth, or approximately 1% per year).

Table 13. Employment Forecast Comparison, City of Seattle, Southeast Seattle and North Rainier FAZs

Employment Sector	1990	2000	2010	2020
<b>Seattle</b>	<b>469,802</b>	<b>521,878</b>	<b>597,836</b>	<b>631,594</b>
Manufacturing	47,839	37,206	36,958	32,044
Whol Trade/Trans/Comm/Util	69,258	71,106	75,000	77,701
Retail Trade	64,813	72,414	81,880	87,632
Services	204,277	249,199	306,413	330,807
Government/Education	83,615	91,953	97,585	103,410
<b>Southeast Seattle*</b>	<b>19,953</b>	<b>22,322</b>	<b>25,222</b>	<b>25,756</b>
Manufacturing	2,727	2,052	1,843	1,529
Whol Trade/Trans/Comm/Util	4,212	4,402	4,362	4,239
Retail Trade	2,890	3,107	3,858	3,978
Services	4,069	5,513	7,632	8,096
Government/Education	6,055	7,248	7,527	7,914
<b>North Rainier (FAZ 5925)</b>	<b>10,896</b>	<b>12,238</b>	<b>14,070</b>	<b>14,384</b>
Manufacturing	1,773	1,258	1,111	840
Whol Trade/Trans/Comm/Util	555	792	1,082	1,195
Retail Trade	1,622	1,669	1,969	1,951
Services	2,440	3,321	4,524	4,798
Government/Education	4,506	5,198	5,384	5,600
*Includes PSRC Forecast Analysis Zones 5915 (Ramier Beach), 5916 (South Beacon Hill/Columbia City), and 5925 (North Beacon Hill/Mount Baker).				
Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 1995				

Employment in the North Beacon Hill/Mount Baker FAZ is expected to lose relative share of Southeast Seattle's manufacturing employment by the year 2020 (approximately 65% in 1990 to 55% in 2020). Similar losses in relative share are expected in retail trade (56% in 1990 to 49% in 2020) and smaller losses in services (60% in 1990 to 59% in 2020) and government/education (74% in 1990 to 71% in 2020). Only employment in wholesale trade, transportation, communications and utilities is expected to increase from 13% of total employment in Southeast Seattle in 1990 to 28% in 2020.

In terms of employment make-up, several changes are expected in each industries relative share of total employment in the North Beacon Hill/Mount Baker FAZ over the period 1990-2020. Manufacturing, retail trade and government/education are expected to lose relative share of total employment, while wholesale trade/ transportation/ communication/utilities and services are expected to gain relative share. Manufacturing employment is expected to lose the greatest share of total employment (from 17% of total employment in 1990 to 6% in 2020). Smaller losses are expected in retail trade (15% of total employment in 1990 to 14% in 2020) and government/education (41% of total employment in 1990 to 39% in 2020). Service employment is expected to gain relative share of total employment by the year 2020 (from approximately 22% of total employment in 1990 to 33% in 2020). Employment in wholesale trade/ transportation/ communication/utilities is expected to increase from approximately 5% of total employment in 1990 to 8% in 2020.



**Consumer Spending and Supportable Sales Capacity.** The following section presents information on consumer spending patterns in the Seattle Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and on taxable retail sales within the City of Seattle and the North Rainier area (defined as zip code 98144). The information on consumer spending was obtained from the 1995 Consumer Expenditure Survey (Bureau of Labor Statistics) and the information on taxable retail sales by zip code was obtained from the Washington State Department of Revenue. Information from the 1992 Economic Census (Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census) is also presented. The most recent Consumer Expenditure Survey was conducted in 1995. The results of the survey are summarized in Table 14 for selected average annual expenditures for all consumers in the United States, consumers in the Western United States, and for consumers in the Seattle MSA.

**Table 14. 1995 Consumer Expenditure Survey, Selected Annual Expenditures**

Item	All CU's	% Total	West. CU's	% Total	Seattle MSA	% of Total
No. of Consumer Units (CU) (000s)	103,123		21,442		1,065	
<b>Consumer Characteristics:</b>						
Income before taxes	\$36,918		\$40,027		\$44,007	
Age of reference person	48.0		46.6		44.8	
<b>Average Annual Expenditures:</b>						
Food at Home	\$2,803	8.7%	\$2,931	8.3%	\$2,780	7.6%
Cereals and Bakery Products	\$441	1.4%	\$448	1.3%	\$443	1.2%
Meats, Poultry, Fish and Eggs	\$752	2.3%	\$730	2.1%	\$621	1.7%
Dairy Products	\$297	0.9%	\$322	0.9%	\$306	0.8%
Fruits and Vegetables	\$457	1.4%	\$472	1.3%	\$456	1.3%
Food Away from Home	\$1,702	5.3%	\$1,752	5.0%	\$1,715	4.7%
Shelter	\$5,928	18.4%	\$7,358	20.9%	\$7,684	21.1%
Owned Dwellings	\$3,749	11.6%	\$4,469	12.7%	\$5,115	14.1%
Rented Dwellings	\$1,788	5.5%	\$2,447	6.9%	\$2,051	5.6%
Housekeeping Supplies	\$430	1.3%	\$445	1.3%	\$529	1.5%
Household Furnishings & Equip.	\$1,401	4.3%	\$1,642	4.7%	\$1,291	3.6%
Apparel and Services	\$1,704	5.3%	\$1,704	4.8%	\$1,467	4.0%
Transportation	\$6,014	18.6%	\$6,318	17.9%	\$6,778	18.6%
Health Care	\$1,732	5.4%	\$1,661	4.7%	\$1,520	4.2%
Entertainment	\$1,612	5.0%	\$1,907	5.4%	\$2,422	6.7%
Personal Care Products/Services	\$403	1.2%	\$433	1.2%	\$345	0.9%
Reading	\$162	0.5%	\$184	0.5%	\$237	0.7%
Education	\$471	1.5%	\$460	1.3%	4449	1.2%
Cash Contributions	\$2,964	9.2%	\$3,478	9.9%	\$3,988	11.0%

Source Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1995 Consumer Expenditure Survey.

In general, the data indicate (by geographic region) the percent of average annual before-tax income that is spent on various items such as food, transportation, health care and entertainment. Historic expenditure data, as well as the complete results of the 1995 Consumer Expenditure Survey for all expenditure categories, are included in the Appendix.

**Expenditure Potential.** As indicated in Table 14, for all consumers in the United State, just over 87% of before tax income was spent on food, housing, transportation and other goods and services in 1995. This compares with 88% of before-tax income in the Western United States and 83% in the Seattle MSA. Given the average before-tax income of \$44,007 in the Seattle MSA in 1995, \$36,360 was spent on various goods and services. The greatest share of consumer spending was on housing (32.8%), transportation (18.6%) and food (12.4%). Within the housing category, the largest share of total expenditures was for shelter (21.1%), followed by utilities (5.1%), furnishings (3.6%) and housekeeping supplies (1.5%). Within the transportation category, the largest share of total expenditures was for vehicle purchases (7.8%), followed by vehicle expenses (6.1%) and gas and oil (2.7%). Food at home consisted of expenditures on meats, poultry, fish and eggs (1.7%), followed by fruits and vegetables (1.3%), cereals and bakery products (1.2%) and dairy products (0.8%).

In 1996, median household income within the North Rainier planning area was estimated to be \$37,647, which compares with median household income of \$39,214 in Southeast Seattle. The estimated mean household income was \$47,514 in North Rainier, compared with \$48,437 in Southeast Seattle. Based on 1995 average annual expenditures in the Seattle MSA (the percentages given in Table 14) and 1996 income and household estimates, total consumer spending potential in the North Rainier planning area in 1996 ranged from approximately \$283 million to \$357 million. This compares with consumer spending potential of \$876 million to \$1.1 billion in Southeast Seattle for the same period. Table 15 presents spending potential based on 1996 median household income estimates for North Rainier and Southeast Seattle.

**Consumer Spending and Supportable Sales Capacity.** The Urban Land Institute (ULI) collects and analyzes data on receipts and expenses in shopping center operations throughout the United States and Canada. These data are published in the *Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers*. There are three general types of shopping centers that are currently and/or could be located in the North Rainier area. These include the neighborhood center, community center and convenience center, which are briefly summarized below.

Table 15. Consumer Expenditure Potential for North Rainier and Southeast Seattle

Item	Seattle MSA	North Rainier		Southeast Seattle	
	1995	1996 Consumer Spending Potential			
	% Total Spending	By Type	Total (\$Millions)	By Type	Total (\$Millions)
Number of Households	1,065,000	9,098		27,034	
<b>Consumer Characteristics:</b>					
Median Income before taxes	\$44,007	\$37,647		\$39,214	
<b>Average Annual Expenditures:</b>	82.6%	\$31,105	\$283.0	\$32,400	\$875.9
Food at Home	7.6%	\$2,378	\$21.6	\$2,477	\$67.0
Cereals and Bakery Products	1.2%	\$379	\$3.5	\$395	\$10.7
Meats, Poultry, Fish and Eggs	1.7%	\$531	\$4.8	\$553	\$15.0
Dairy Products	0.8%	\$262	\$2.4	\$273	\$7.4
Fruits and Vegetables	1.3%	\$390	\$3.5	\$406	\$11.0
Food Away from Home	4.7%	\$1,467	\$13.3	\$1,528	\$41.3
Shelter	21.1%	\$6,573	\$59.8	\$6,847	\$185.1
Owned Dwellings	14.1%	\$4,376	\$39.8	\$4,558	\$123.2
Rented Dwellings	5.6%	\$1,755	\$16.0	\$1,828	\$49.4
Housekeeping Supplies	1.5%	\$453	\$4.1	\$471	\$12.7
Household Furnishings & Equip.	3.6%	\$1,104	\$10.0	\$1,150	\$31.1
Apparel and Services	4.0%	\$1,255	\$11.4	\$1,307	\$35.3
Transportation	18.6%	\$5,798	\$52.8	\$6,040	\$163.3
Health Care	4.2%	\$1,300	\$11.8	\$1,354	\$36.6
Entertainment	6.7%	\$2,072	\$18.9	\$2,158	\$58.3
Personal Care Products & Serv	0.9%	\$295	\$2.7	\$307	\$8.3
Reading	0.7%	\$203	\$1.8	\$211	\$5.7
Education	1.2%	\$384	\$3.5	\$400	\$10.8
Cash Contributions	11.0%	\$983	\$8.9	\$1,024	\$27.7

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1995 Consumer Expenditure Survey; and PSRC 1996 Household Income Estimates, 1998

A **neighborhood shopping center** provides for the day-to-day living needs of the immediate neighborhood and typically includes the sale of convenience goods (e.g. food, drugs and sundries) and personal services (e.g. laundry, dry cleaners, barber, shoe repair, etc.). The neighborhood center—built around a supermarket as the principal tenant—ranges in size from 30,000 to 100,000 square feet of gross leasable area (GLA). The typical size is about 50,000 square feet.

A **community shopping center** generally provides a wider range of goods and services, including men's, women's, and children's clothing, and hardware and appliances, in addition to the convenience goods and personal services provided by the neighborhood center. The community center usually has a greater variety of merchandise available – in sizes, styles, colors and prices.

The community center—built around a junior department store, variety store, or discount department store as the major tenant, in addition to a supermarket—ranges in size from 100,000 to 450,000 square feet. The typical size is about 150,000 square feet GLA. According to ULI, the community center is the most difficult to estimate for size and pulling power.

**Convenience centers** are oriented toward personal services and convenience goods such as food stores, food service, drugstores, flower shops, beauty shops, hair salons, and cleaners, similar to those of a neighborhood center. Convenience centers are typically 20,000 square feet or less GLA and are not anchored by a supermarket, but usually contain a convenience market or mini-market as a primary tenant.

Table 16 presents a comparison of sales per square foot for the various types of centers. The data reflect how well the tenants in each type of center are doing. Tenants in convenience centers are not doing as well overall as community and neighborhood centers. Sales declined for convenience centers (0.1%), while they increased for community and neighborhood centers (0.5% and 9.7%, respectively). According to ULI, the lack of growth in sales for convenience centers suggests that neighborhood and community centers are providing more inclusive services and may reflect overbuilding in the convenience center market.

**Table 16. Comparison of Median Tenant Sales per Square Foot for U.S. Convenience Centers, Community Centers and Neighborhood Centers**

Type of Center	1995	1997
Convenience Centers	\$167.45	\$165.05
Community Centers	\$197.73	\$198.71
Neighborhood Centers	\$197.17	\$216.22

ULI, 1997. Dollars & Cents of Convenience Centers: 1997.

Table 17 presents a comparison of sales per square foot for convenience, community and neighborhood centers. Overall, tenants in neighborhood centers generate the highest sales per square foot of any of the centers. The one exception,

**Table 17. 1997 Sales per Square Foot Comparisons for U.S. Convenience Centers, Community Centers and Neighborhood Centers**

Type of Center	Average	Median	Lower 10%	Upper 10%
Convenience Centers	\$186.14	\$165.05	\$89.60	\$343.75
Community Centers	\$210.23	\$198.71	\$116.78	\$370.81
Neighborhood Centers	\$228.76	\$216.22	\$103.04	\$403.17

Source: ULI, 1997 Dollars & Cents of Shopping Centers; ULI, 1997 Dollars & Cents of Convenience Centers.

in 1997, was the lower 10% of tenants in community centers performed relatively better than their counterparts in neighborhood centers in sales per square foot.

Table 18 identifies the most common types of tenants in convenience centers and their typical space requirements, relative contribution to total sales and ratio of sales to leasable area. The food and food service groups (generally represented by convenience markets and fast food/carry outs, respectively) occupy about 27.5% of the available GLA but account for about 43.4% of sales. The percentage of sales generated in these two categories continues to decline, however. This change seems to indicate increasing specialization within convenience centers and greater diversification of tenant types that appeal to a broader range of clientele and increase the drawing power of convenience centers.

**Table 18. US Convenience Shopping Centers, Composition by Tenant Classification Group**

Tenant	% Total GLA of Mall Shops	% Total Sales	% Sales to % GLA
General Merchandise <sup>1</sup>	2.6%	8.4%	3.28%
Food	6.3%	17.4%	2.76%
Food Service	21.2%	26.0%	1.23%
Clothing and Accessories	4.7%	5.0%	1.06%
Women's Wear	0.9%	*	*
Children's Wear	0.1%	*	*
Men's Wear	0.7%	2.2%	3.17%
Family Wear	0.6%	*	*
Shoes	0.3%	3.0%	8.72%
Home Furnishings	0.8%	*	*
Home Appliances/Music	5.5%	23.4%	4.30%
Building Materials/Hardware	2.4%	2.1%	0.87%
Automotive	2.4%	*	*
Hobby/Special Interest	3.8%	1.0%	0.26%
Gifts/Specialty	3.0%	*	*
Jewelry	0.8%	*	*
Liquor	0.9%	*	*
Drugs	2.6%	*	*
Other Retail	6.9%	4.2%	0.61%
Personal Services	19.9%	9.5%	0.48%
Recreation/Community	3.9%	*	*
Financial	5.2%	*	*
Offices (non financial)	6.8%	*	*
Total	100.0%	100.0%	
<sup>1</sup> Excludes department stores.			
*Less than 0.05 percent			
Source: ULI, 1997 Dollars & Cents of Convenience Centers.			

Personal services occupy about 20% of the available GLA but only account for 9.5% of sales. Tenants with high sales volumes relative to gross leasable area are home appliances/music which account for 5.5% of available GLA but account for over 23% of sales; general merchandise (excluding department stores) which accounts for 2.6% of available GLA but accounts for over 8% of sales; and shoe stores which occupy 0.3% of available GLA and account for 3% of sales.

Table 19 identifies high median sales volume tenants for convenience, community and neighborhood shopping centers. Food service and personal service groups typically generate high median sales volumes in convenience centers (e.g. fast food, insurance, dry cleaners) and community shopping centers compared with neighborhood centers, where computers/software, clothing and supermarkets are the top sales volume tenants.

**Table 19. High Median Sales Volume Tenants**

Convenience Shopping Center	Community Shopping Center	Neighborhood Shopping Center
Chinese Fast Food	Newspapers/ Magazines	Computer/Computer Software
Insurance	Sunglasses	Men's Wear
Liquor/Wine	Steak/Roast Beef	Supermarket
Dry Cleaner	Japanese Fast Food	Specialty Apparel-Unisex
Computer/Software	Cookie Shop	Jewelry
Video Tape Rentals	Bagels	Cosmetics/Beauty Supplies
Automotive	Service Station	Women's Specialty
Pizza	Travel Agent	Mexican Fast Food
Tanning Salon	Supermarket	Drugstore
Sandwich Shop	Computer/ Computer Software	Hamburgers

Source: ULI, 1997 Dollars & Cents of Shopping Centers; ULI, 1997 Dollars & Cents of Convenience Centers.

Table 20 presents median GLA and sales per square foot by tenant class. The largest median sales per square foot in both neighborhood and community centers are generated by supermarkets (\$321 and \$379, respectively), followed by fast food/carryout (\$284 and \$361, respectively) and drug stores (\$241 and \$247, respectively). Tenants with the lowest sales volumes included video tape rentals (\$79 and \$96, respectively) and variety stores (\$87 and \$97, respectively). The estimated capacity - in square feet - of the

**Table 20. Median GLA and Sales per Square Foot Characteristics of Neighborhood and Community Shopping Centers**

Tenant Classification	Neighborhood Center		Community Center	
	Median GLA	Median Sales/SF	Median GLA	Median Sales/SF
Supermarket	31,229	\$321.39	42,465	\$378.84
Restaurant w/Liquor	3,375	\$175.82	4,278	\$210.41
Fast Food/Carry Out	1,360	\$283.62	1,238	\$361.22
Drug Store	9,176	\$241.00	11,153	\$247.29
Variety Store	6,400	\$86.90	26,803	\$97.38
Hardware	7,984	\$107.99	7,857	\$121.08
Home Accessories	2,400	\$176.00	4,821	\$166.54
Furniture	5,000	\$128.63	7,471	\$141.84
Books	2,455	\$142.60	2,905	\$161.16
Misc. Retail	1,612	\$172.91	2,180	\$163.09
Personal Care	1,200	\$139.22	1,271	\$124.98
Apparel	2,975	\$123.42	3,616	\$146.31
Video Tape Rental	3,156	\$79.46	5,000	\$96.32
Medical and Dental	1,461	\$142.56	1,498	N/A
Other Services	1,137	\$85.40	1,281	\$172.55

Source: ULI, 1997 Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers

North Rainier community to support various retail uses is based on the expenditure potential data presented in Table 15 and on median sales per square foot data for neighborhood shopping centers in the United States, as reported in Dollars & Cents of Shopping Centers (Urban Land Institute, 1997) and presented in Tables 16 and 20. Results are presented in Table 21.

Based on the median sales per square foot for all tenants in community and neighborhood centers (\$198.71 and \$216.22, respectively), and average annual expenditures within Census Tracts 94, 95, 100 and 101 (\$283 million), the North Rainier community could support approximately 1.3 million to 1.4 million square feet of commercial development. There are currently about 1.17 million gross square feet of commercial development within the community; 865,700 gross square feet in retail/service uses and 301,400 gross square feet in office uses. Based on these rough estimates, it appears that the community could support more commercial development than is currently present. Given that North Rainier households are spending an estimated \$283 million per year on food, housing, apparel, health care, entertainment, personal care and other expenses, a portion of these expenditures are occurring outside the area. This is consistent with findings by Southeast Effective Development that there is an estimated \$28 million a year in uncaptured retail demand and \$29 million a year in uncaptured service demand within the Rainier Valley trade area (Rainier/Genesee and Columbia City/Hillman City) (SEED, *Rainier Main Street Strategic Economic Action Plan*, 1996).

**Table 21. North Rainier Neighborhood Supportable Sales Capacity**

Goods and Services	Median Sales per Square Foot		
	Sales per Square Foot	Sales Capacity (SQ FT)	
		North Rainier	Southeast Seattle
Food at Home	\$321.39	67,300	208,400
Apparel	\$123.42	92,500	286,300
Food Away from Home <sup>1</sup>	\$229.72	58,100	179,800
Reading (Books)	\$142.60	12,900	40,000
Household Operations	\$107.99	41,400	128,300
Household Furnishings and Equipment <sup>2</sup>	\$152.32	66,000	204,200
Personal Care Products and Services <sup>3</sup>	\$190.11	14,100	44,000
Total <sup>4</sup>	\$216.22	338,200	4,051,000

Sales capacity estimates are based on estimated spending potential divided by sales per square foot factors.  
<sup>1</sup>Represents the average of sales per square foot for restaurant w/liquor and fast food/carryout presented in Table 20.  
<sup>2</sup>Represents the average of sales per square foot for home accessories and furniture presented in Table 20.  
<sup>3</sup>Represents the average of sales per square foot for drug stores and personal care stores presented in Table 20.  
<sup>4</sup>Based on median sales per square foot for tenants in neighborhood centers presented in Table 16.

Source. ULI, 1997 Dollars & Cents of Shopping Centers.

Based on taxable retail sales data, the area defined by zip code 98144 (which includes North Rainier) generated over \$182 million in taxable retail sales in 1997. Within zip code 98144, there are approximately 20,600 households and median household income (before taxes) is about \$38,000 (of which \$31,397 represents average annual expenditures). Based on consumer spending patterns in the Seattle MSA, total spending potential within the 98144 zip code area is approximately \$647 million per year.

Using taxable retail sales and estimated expenditure potential for zip code area 98144, a rough estimate of uncaptured spending potential can be calculated (Table 22). Gross business sales would be a preferred base against which to measure expenditure potential; however, gross business sales data for zip code area 98144 are not readily available. It should be kept in mind that taxable retail sales will generally be less than gross sales because not all sales are subject to sales tax. For instance, approximately 34.8% of gross food store sales are subject to the sales tax (the number for food store sales in Table 22 has been adjusted to reflect this relationship). Therefore, the uncaptured spending potential is likely overstated, but does give some indication of the magnitude of spending that is occurring outside the area. It is likely that much of the neighborhood spending occurs in adjacent communities, including Renton, Tukwila or closer in to Seattle.

**Table 22. Estimated Uncaptured Spending Potential in Zip Code Area 98144**

Business SIC Classification (Consumer Expenditure Category)	Taxable Retail Sales	Estimated Expenditure Potential	Uncaptured Spending Potential
Food Stores (Food at Home)*	\$9,025,870	\$49,450,860	(\$39,652,921)
Apparel and Accessories (Apparel and Services)	\$1,395,600	\$26,095,112	(\$24,699,512)
Eating and Drinking Places (Food Away From Home & Alcoholic Beverages)	\$9,784,616	\$37,088,145	(\$27,303,529)
Home Furniture & Furnishings (Household Furnishings & Equipment)	\$772,069	\$22,964,410	(\$22,192,341)
Auto Dealers, Service Stations & Repair (Vehicle Purchase, Gasoline and Motor Oil)	\$8,730,299	\$68,448,529	(\$59,718,230)
Personal Services (Personal Services)	\$1,207,353	\$6,136,887	(\$4,929,534)
*Estimate for food store sales has been adjusted to reflect that approximately 34.8% of gross sales in this industry are subject to sales tax. The taxable retail sales estimate has been increased about 65% to get at an estimate of gross business sales.			
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1996; Washington State Department of Revenue, 1998.			

The estimated uncaptured spending potential, while rough, indicates that opportunities exist for commercial growth and development. Other factors that would support such development include population growth and increasing household incomes within the North Rainier area. Development in close proximity to existing commercial developments that attracts local shoppers (Eagle Hardware, QFC, Chubby & Tubby, Rainier Valley Square) could increase the potential for success. Future development of light rail stations along Rainier Avenue South at I-90, South McClellan, South Charlestown, and South Genesee streets could also influence the type and location of future development, and should be considered in future planning.



## 2.5 Public Safety

Seattle Police Department crime statistics for 1996 indicate that the total number of crimes within the North Rainier neighborhood (based on census tracts 94, 95, 100 and 101) exceeded the median occurrence citywide (Table 23). For comparison purposes, crime data from 1990 are also included (Table 24). Comparison of these data indicates that the number of crimes has decreased—nearly 13%—in the area over the period 1990-1996.

**Table 23. 1996 Crime Statistics for Census Tracts within the North Rainier Planning Area, Southeast Seattle and the City of Seattle**

1996 Census Tract	Total Part I Offenses	Rape	Robbery	Aggr. Assault	Res. Burglary	Non-Res. Burglary	Theft	Auto Theft
94	534	3	32	39	66	21	282	83
95	556	3	35	24	53	31	312	89
100	853	7	23	51	89	26	487	163
101	620	6	24	32	82	23	346	102
<b>North Rainier</b>	<b>2,563</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>1,427</b>	<b>437</b>
<b>Southeast Seattle</b>	<b>7,431</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>1,056</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>3,566</b>	<b>1,131</b>
<b>Seattle Average</b>	<b>55,889</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>1,963</b>	<b>2,282</b>	<b>4,981</b>	<b>2,874</b>	<b>36,883</b>	<b>6,355</b>
<b>City Median</b>	<b>134-621</b>	<b>1-4</b>	<b>2-29</b>	<b>3-35</b>	<b>15-68</b>	<b>4-34</b>	<b>86-421</b>	<b>18-84</b>
<b>City Median</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>43</b>

Southeast Seattle includes Census Tracts 94, 95, 100-104, 110, 111, and 117-119. North Rainier includes Census Tracts 94, 95, 100 and 101.

Source: City of Seattle Police Department, 1996

Of total Part I offenses (e.g. robbery, burglary, theft), during 1996, the North Rainier neighborhood (census tracts 94, 95, 100 and 101) exceeded the average occurrence level citywide (134-621 occurrences). The total number of crimes occurring within each census tract (see the census tract map in the Appendix) was considerably above the city median for all categories of crimes.

Between 1990 and 1996, the number of Part I offenses within the North Rainier neighborhood, decreased from 2,928 in 1990 to 2,563 in 1996, a decrease of approximately 13%, or 365 fewer crimes (Table 24). This compares with an increase in Part I offenses of just over 11% in Southeast Seattle and a decrease of 14% citywide. The greatest decrease occurred in the number of aggravated assaults (153 fewer occurrences), residential burglary (70 fewer occurrences), theft (59 fewer occurrences), non-residential burglary (49 fewer occurrences) and robbery (40 fewer

occurrences). Smaller decreases occurred in the number of rapes (8 fewer occurrences), murders (3 fewer occurrences) and auto theft (2 fewer occurrences). The only increase occurred in the number of arsons, which increased from 9 occurrences in 1990 to 28 in 1996.

**Table 24. 1990 Crime Statistics for Census Tracts within the North Rainier Planning Area, Southeast Seattle and the City of Seattle**

1990 Census Tract	Total Part I Offenses	Rape	Robbery	Aggr. Assault	Res. Burglary	Non-Res. Burglary	Theft	Auto Theft
94	1	6	41	56	68	44	329	91
95	1	7	27	60	63	16	307	77
100	1	8	55	91	127	59	445	165
101	1	6	31	92	102	31	405	106
<b>North Rainier</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>1,486</b>	<b>439</b>
<b>Southeast Seattle</b>	<b>6,667</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>1,108</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>3,152</b>	<b>958</b>
<b>Seattle Average</b>	<b>65,322</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>2,695</b>	<b>4,551</b>	<b>7,221</b>	<b>3,960</b>	<b>39,552</b>	<b>6,570</b>
<b>City Median</b>	<b>134,787</b>	<b>0-6</b>	<b>0-40</b>	<b>0-68</b>	<b>23-92</b>	<b>5-55</b>	<b>46-484</b>	<b>17-85</b>
	<b>461</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>19.02</b>	<b>33.43</b>	<b>57.78</b>	<b>29.75</b>	<b>264.79</b>	<b>50</b>
Southeast Seattle includes Census Tracts 94, 95, 100-104, 110, 111, and 117-119. North Rainier includes Census Tracts 117-119.								
Source: City of Seattle Police Department, 1990								

## 2.6 Transportation Facilities

The following discussion describes the existing conditions for transportation facilities in North Rainier. It includes a description of pedestrian facilities, City Streets, and transit service.

**Pedestrian Facilities.** Most of the major arterials in the North Rainier Valley have 10- to 14-foot sidewalks. The lone exception to this is the segment on the east side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Way north of McClellan Street. While the major arterials have adequate pedestrian facilities, neighborhood residential streets often lack sidewalk improvements. Many of the residential streets in the urban village have no curbs or gutters. This is most prevalent in the area on either side of Rainier Avenue S from Massachusetts Street to McClellan Street. Pedestrian multi-use trails can be found along I-90 lid and informal paths also occur within the Cheasty Greenbelt.

**Arterial Designations and Conditions.** The following table depicts the major travel streets within the North Rainier Hub Urban Village. The table includes a description of key segments, the arterial classification of the street, and a measurement of the streets volume to capacity ratio. The latter provides an indicator of congestion. Table 25 shows existing (1990) V/C ratios and projects of V/C ratios for typical evening peak in 2010 for all arterials in North Rainier.

**Table 25. Transportation Street Analysis for North Rainier**

Arterial	Segment	Arterial Class	Direction	Existing V/C Ratio	Forecast 2010 V/C Ratio
Rainier Ave S	S Genesee St – MLK Way S	Principal	N	0.5	0.6
			S	0.7	0.9
Rainier Ave S	MLK Way S – 23 <sup>rd</sup> Ave S	Principal	N	0.7	0.9
			S	1.0	1.2
Rainier Ave S	23 <sup>rd</sup> Ave S – I-90 EB Ramps	Principal	N	0.9	1.0
			S	0.9	1.0
MLK, Jr. Way S	S Alaska St – Rainier Ave S	Principal	N	0.4	0.5
			S	0.6	0.7
MLK, Jr. Way S	Rainier Ave S – I-90 Overcross	Minor	N	0.5	0.6
			S	0.5	0.8
23 <sup>rd</sup> Ave S	S McClellan St – Rainier Ave S	Minor	N	0.6	0.8
			S	0.4	0.4
23 <sup>rd</sup> Ave S	Rainier Ave S – I-90 Overcross	Principal	N	0.3	0.4
			S	0.4	0.6
17 <sup>th</sup> Ave S	S College St – S Massachusetts St	Collector	N	0.5	0.7
			S	0.2	0.4
S McClellan St	23 <sup>rd</sup> Ave S – 31 <sup>st</sup> Ave S	Minor	E	0.6	0.7
			W	0.7	0.7
S College	17 <sup>th</sup> Ave S – Rainier Ave S	Minor/Collector	E	0.5	0.5
			W	0.4	0.5
S Walker St	23 <sup>rd</sup> Ave S – MLK Way S	Principal/Minor	E	0.2	0.2
			W	0.2	0.2
S Massachusetts St	17 <sup>th</sup> Ave S – 26 <sup>th</sup> Ave S	Collector	E	1.0	1.1
			W	0.9	1.2

SOURCE: City of Seattle Transportation, Community Profile for North Rainier

**Transit Routes.** Given its importance as a local employment center and its general proximity to important regional employment centers such as Boeing Field/King County International Airport, Boeing's Renton facilities, Southcenter and Downtown Seattle, it is not surprising to see several transit routes serving North Rainier. It should also be noted that North Rainier is expected to be served in the future by the Sound Transit LINK Light Rail System. This may result in the rerouting of existing routes and the development of a more formal transit transfer center. Table 25 describes the existing King County Metro Transit bus routes serving North Rainier.

**Table 26. King County Metro Transit Routes Serving North Rainier**

Route No.	Connects North Rainier to . . .	North Rainier Service Corridor
7,9	University District to Rainier Beach	Serves North Rainier via Rainier Avenue S with connections at transfer points at Massachusetts S Walker and S Winthrop Streets.
8	Seattle Center, Capitol Hill, Madison Park, to North Rainier	This route connects the neighborhoods of North Rainier and Madison Park with Capitol Hill and Seattle Center.
38	Beacon Hill to North Rainier	This route traverses the valley along S McClellan Street with a transfer point at Rainier Avenue S.
39	Downtown, Beacon Hill Central Area to Rainier Beach	North Rainier is an intermediate point for the route, allowing connections both north and south. Route 39 enters from the north along Rainier Avenue S connecting at the transfer points at South Atlantic and S Walker Streets. The route continues toward Southcenter via the MLK, Jr. Way corridor then to Interstate 5.
42	Downtown Seattle, Rainier View, and Skyway (limited morning service)	Serves North Rainier via MLK, Jr. Way. Continues south to Rainier View via the 51st Avenue S Corridor. Service to Skyway is direct for some routes along Renton Avenue S to about 78th Avenue S.
48	Ballard, Greenlake, U District, Central Area to Rainier Beach	Provide service to North Rainier via the MLK, Jr. Way corridor, connecting to other bus lines at the transfer station at Rainier & Massachusetts.



# Chapter 3.0

## Plan Recommendations

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### 3.1 About the Plan Recommendations

Each plan being prepared by neighborhoods throughout Seattle has its big ideas; its dreams for the future; its essential elements. The City of Seattle's Neighborhood Planning Office calls these things "key integrated plan strategies." We call them the Cornerstones of the North Rainier Neighborhood Plan. These cornerstone elements represent the basic and main part, or the foundation, of the plan. They should be considered the highest-priority elements, but not the only components of the neighborhood plan.

Through the course of hosting several workgroup sessions during the Phase II planning stage, the Planning Committee has heard several great ideas for transportation, land use, housing, economic development, and community life. Those concepts which had strong community support have been included in sections of this chapter. To understand the level of priority placed for these various recommendations, the accompanying "Adoption & Approval Matrix" spells out whether the concept is considered for near-term or long-term implementation.

**Issues, Goals, and Recommendations Format.** In an effort to provide a basis for plan recommendations, the following chapter provides: (a) an issues discussion that describes the existing setting and level of importance of each category, (b) a statement of goals that act as the catalyst for plan recommendations, and (c) a set of recommendations that intend to address the issues and satisfy the objectives of the overall goals for each plan component.

### 3.2 Vision of the Future

During the first phase of neighborhood planning, the North Rainier Neighborhood Planning Committee created a vision statement to provide a basis for specific recommendations that would enhance the residential quality of life and business climate in the North Rainier Valley. This vision of the future boldly states what type of community people would like to see as the area grows over the next 20 years:

*Entering the North Rainier Valley we are impressed by the neat, well-maintained, well-landscaped main thoroughfares that accommodate all major modes of transportation. We are an interweaving of people of various backgrounds who live and work in a culturally and economically diverse area which is a destination for recreational, theatrical, and historical events. The retail core is strong and still maintains its ethnic roots. Business, light industrial, and high-tech job opportunities provide welcome employment for the entire Puget Sound region.*

*The residential environment comprises multi-family, single family, and mixed-use housing in clean, safe neighborhoods affordable to a broad range of people. Housing density increases near the core of the urban village and around transportation hubs. Multi-family housing is not concentrated in one area, allowing increased density while not overwhelming the community.*

*Residential areas are peaceful, quiet, and safe. They are inviting to pedestrians, children, families, the elderly, and people with special needs. Anyone is able to walk or roll along the streets at all hours of the day or night. Consistent maintenance keeps all areas clean, neat, and safe. Pocket parks and patches are interspersed throughout the neighborhoods. Iron bars covering doors and windows are seen no more, having been replaced by vibrant architecture and colors, open doors, and a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere that has drawn residents back to the community. Neighbors know and care about each other; children are welcome and have plenty of safe places to play.*

*North Rainier Valley is a destination for recreational activities. Continuous bicycle paths and routes meander from Lake Washington through the residential areas through parks, the City, and outlying areas. The green spaces are linked together. Playfields and courts allow for all ages and skill levels to gather and compete. Venues are set up for regional sports.*

*The valley is a draw for film, theater, music, dance, and visual arts. Public squares, religious institutions, schools, and community centers are also gathering places for activities for neighborhood residents. The community enjoys and celebrates its diversity.*

*Committed to helping immigrants become an integral part of this neighborhood, programs are set up to accommodate new immigrant populations and aid them with English classes, cultural interaction, and advocacy for their needs. Such programs are increasingly shared in and with other parts of the City.*

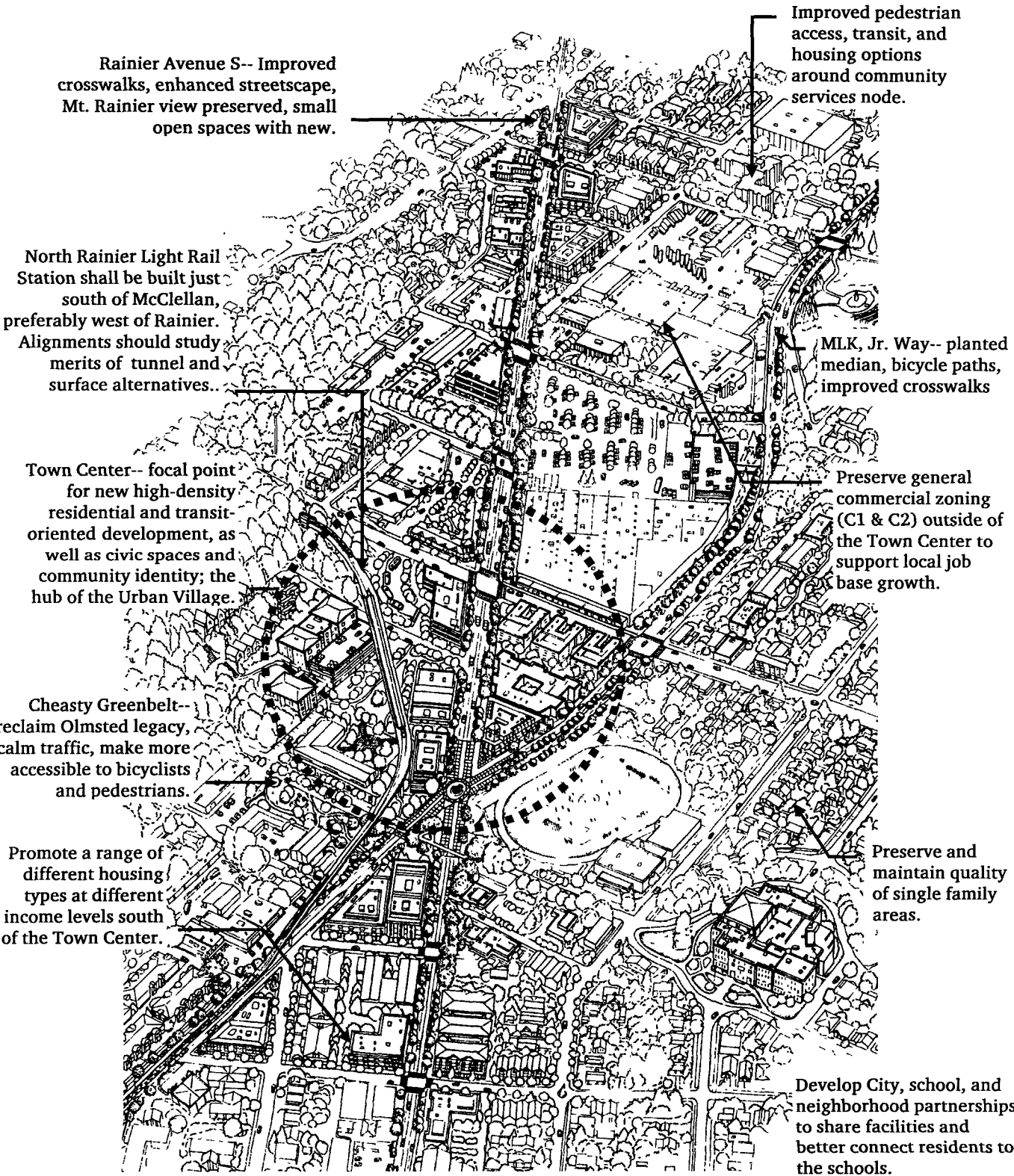
*Our ongoing commitment to the education of our youth is the cornerstone of the North Rainier Neighborhood. Schools are consistently and fully used for adult education, after-school activities, and a wide variety of educational and tutorial opportunities. Citizens are actively involved in outreach and volunteer programs. High-quality school programs have become a draw for business and employment.*

*The businesses are strong, stimulating, and economically stable. Various new commercial and industrial activities have recently entered the scene and retain the diversity and ethnic heritage that make our Rainier Valley unique. A full range of services is available without leaving the community. Zoning coordinates industrial, commercial, and residential uses to their mutual advantage. Businesses actively participate in community activities. Retail property is well kept and accessible to all.*

*Public transportation has become easier to use than the automobile-oriented systems of the 20th century. Major routes are safe for bikes, pedestrians, autos, and transit users and are completely accessible for the visually and physically impaired. The streets themselves are tree-lined and smooth. Transit systems link the east, west, north, and south areas of Seattle, and the entire Puget Sound region in a way that is non-intrusive to the fabric of the neighborhood. The commute is easy for folks from other areas to visit, work, and shop in the North Rainier Valley.*

*Mount Rainier remains a landmark vista in the heart of Rainier Valley. The pulse of our area is vibrant. The future is grand.*

# Figure 3 - Illustrative Vision of the Future North Rainier Neighborhood





### 3.3 Cornerstones of the North Rainier Neighborhood Plan

The Cornerstones of the plan are either geographically defined (the Town Center concept) or focus around an important topic such as housing or community life. Overall, six major ideas have been developed:

- C-1 **Town Center:** Opportunities for Transit-Oriented Development and Station Area Planning
- C-2 **New Housing for North Rainier:** Targeted locations for Housing development
- C-3 **Encouraging Pedestrians and Bicyclists:** Key Streets and New Paths
- C-4 **Rainier and MLK Streetscapes:** Improving the North Rainier Neighborhood's Major Arterials
- C-5 **Reclaiming North Rainier's Olmsted Parks & Boulevards:** Enhancing Cheasty Boulevard & Greenbelt
- C-6 **Community Services Node:** Housing Needs and Overall Neighborhood Accessibility
- C-7 **Charlestown to Genesee:** Commercial Retail in the North Rainier Valley

#### C-1 Town Center

**Issue Discussion.** Implementation of a Town Center at the hourglass intersection formed by the crossing of Rainier Avenue S at Martin Luther King, Jr. Way would create the "hub" in the North Rainier Hub Urban Village. With anticipated employment and household growth targets of 3,500 new jobs and 1,200 new households by 2014, the Town Center concept identifies an area to concentrate some of that growth by capitalizing on light rail station construction and transit-oriented development opportunities.

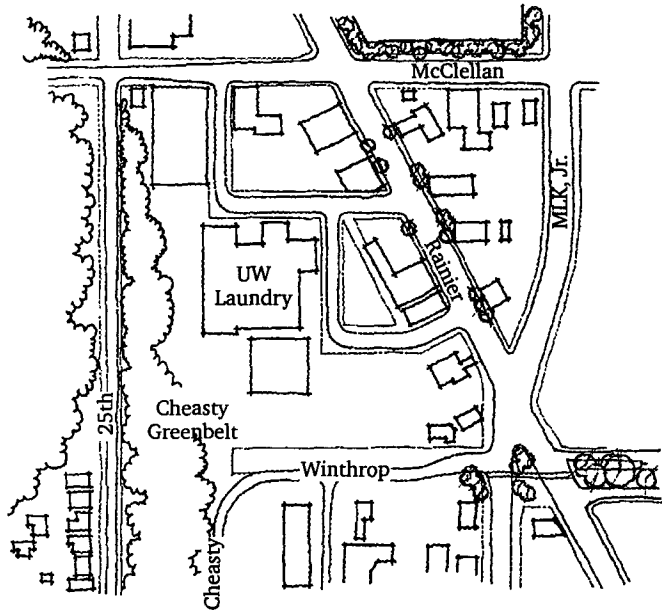
In the future, the Town Center is envisioned as the heart of the neighborhood; the place where people will gather, shop, stroll, and enjoy community life. It will be the location where the greatest commercial and mixed-use density will occur, where transit connects people to the region, and where public places and open spaces help create a sense of identity and welcome.

#### Goals and Recommendations

- Goal C-1** Establish a Town Center for the North Rainier Valley to concentrate the highest density growth around the construction of the regional LINK Light Rail system. Promote a range of housing, commercial, and mixed-use activities that will add to the vitality of the hub. Implement appropriate community amenities such as attractive streetscapes, open/civic spaces, and a street network that places its priority on serving pedestrians and bicyclists.

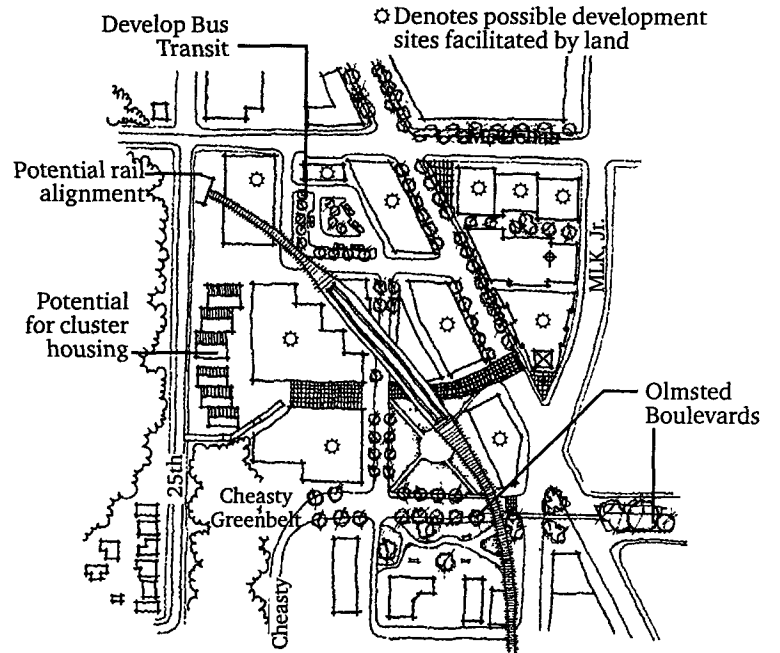
- C-1.1 For the purposes of future station area planning, delineate the Town Center's boundaries approximately as properties abutting McClellan Street to the north, Winthrop Streets to the south, the Cheasty Greenbelt to the west, and MLK, Jr. Way/Rainier Avenue S to the west. Within this area the City must develop the needed strategies that will assemble land and finance the type of development envisioned around the light rail station.
- C-1.2 Amend Land Use and Zoning designations as needed to facilitate transit-oriented development. Ensure that any amendments provide an appropriate transition from higher density development to the Cheasty greenbelt single-family areas south of Winthrop Street. Existing general commercial zoning (C1 and C2) would need to be changed to zones that would allow for more residential or mixed-use projects. It is envisioned that this would be limited to properties south of McClellan to the pedestrian overpass spanning Rainier Avenue S and MLK, Jr. Way. These zoning changes shall be further analyzed and acted upon as the City develops a station area plan (based on the content of this neighborhood plan) for the North Rainier Light Rail station.
- C-1.3 Significant capital street improvements will be required. For the area where the light rail transit station will be developed, streets will need to be reconfigured. Other recommended actions include providing for a minimum of 12-foot sidewalks, installing decorative crosswalks, adding streetscape elements, and appropriate signage. Encourage landscaping throughout the Town Center and within surrounding commercial uses to mitigate the presence of current and future parking lots as a means of enhancing the physical attractiveness of the area.
- C-1.4 Ensure that the City works with King County Metro and Sound Transit (RTA) to provide a transit facility that accommodates a bus transfer center and vehicle drop-off point in the immediate vicinity of the North Rainier light rail station. Encourage the development of a mixed-use parking structure (with ground-floor retail and perhaps housing/office above) to serve as the single parking point for the entire Town Center.
- C-1.5 To ensure attractive new buildings and preservation of significant community natural resources such as the hillside greenbelt, general urban design and site-specific development guidelines should be developed as part of the station area plan phase and should be enforced beginning with the first new development. The City should also consider putting in place a development moratorium for the Town Center area.
- C-1.6 Add urban amenities. New pedestrian connections should be developed between the Town Center and the Cheasty Greenbelt, the Mount Baker area, and along the major arterials of Rainier Avenue S and MLK, Jr. Way. Build new open spaces and require public/civic spaces as part of new transit-oriented development.

**EXISTING**



The current condition of the Town Center area consists of a mix of auto-related retail and institutional uses. The greenbelt is its most defined feature.

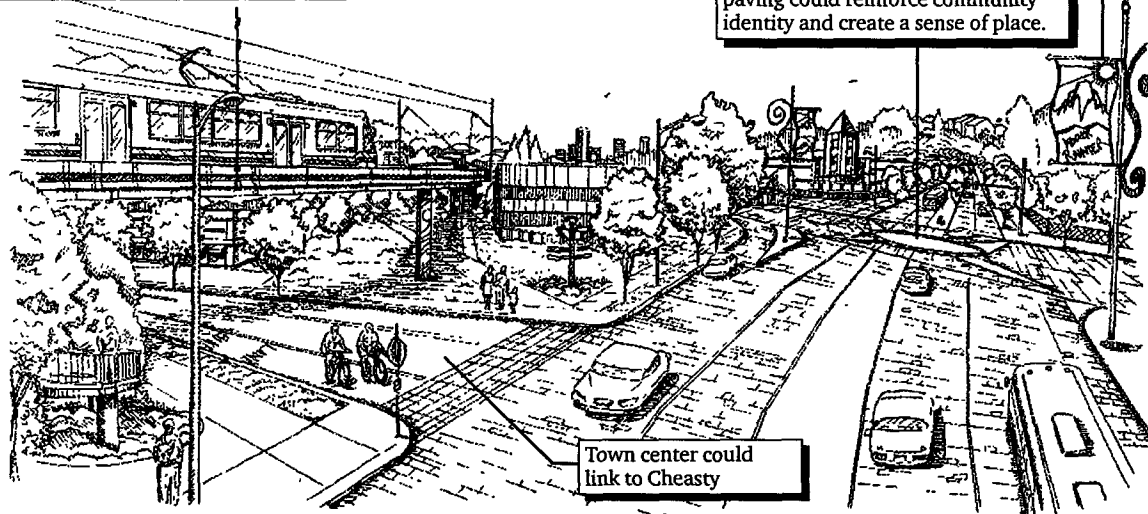
**PROPOSED TOWN CENTER**



The proposed Town Center would put the hub in the North Rainier Hub Urban Village. It would be the heart of the community, creating opportunities for mixed-use housing, commercial retail, and civic and public places.

Light rail alignment shown is for discussion purposes only. Four alternatives are under consideration by Sound Transit.

Banners, signage, and special paving could reinforce community identity and create a sense of place.



Illustrative view looking north from the overhead pedestrian bridge. Implementation of the Town Center concept would establish an area where both residential and employment growth could be focused around construction of the LINK light rail system.



**NORTH RAINIER  
Neighborhood Plan**

Figure 4  
Town Center Concept

- C-1.7** Provide connection to the regional light rail transit system to the Town Center with a station just south of McClellan Street. Ensure that the future light rail alignment mitigates impacts to this area through an all-tunnel Rainier Valley alignment and North Rainier/McClellan Street Tunnel Station, or services the area via a Rainier Avenue S tunnel to McClellan Street west of Rainier, or through the Beacon Hill/Lander Street tunnel alternative.

Ensure that Sound Transit, in partnership with the City of Seattle and its elected officials, effectively mitigate concerns related to a surface and/or elevated light rail alignment. Mitigation strategies must adequately address the following:

- Noise impacts to nearby residents in the Cheasty Greenbelt.
- Crime and public safety at the station site.
- “Hide-and-ride” parking impacts in adjacent low-density communities.
- Pedestrian safety and vehicle crossings along Martin Luther King, Jr. Way.
- Relocation assistance for displaced businesses to thrive and locate in North Rainier. The City and Sound Transit should jointly coordinate this effort to assist businesses affected by the light rail alignment as well as the proposed Town Center station area.

## **C-2 New Housing for North Rainier**

**Issue Discussion.** The City’s adopted Comprehensive Plan designates the North Rainier Neighborhood as a “hub urban village.” This means that between 1994 and 2014, the community is expected to achieve a good mix of new jobs and population. Currently, there are over 2,000 households in the North Rainier Neighborhood. The City’s growth targets propose 1,200 new households moving into the area during that period. By 2014, this would make the total number of households more than 3,200. Also, with present zoning, this could result in as many as 2,033 new housing units, at maximum buildout allowable by code.

The community’s vision for the residential environment foresees “multifamily, single family, and mixed-use housing, in clean, safe neighborhoods affordable to a broad range of people. Housing density increases near the core of the urban village and around transportation hubs. Multifamily housing is not concentrated in one area, allowing increased density while not overwhelming the community.” The challenge for the North Rainier Neighborhood planning process has been to determine where new, higher-density housing would be appropriate, what housing types and physical forms are most compatible, what needs to be preserved, what needs to be encouraged to retain the diverse population mix, and how sensitive transitions can be made from higher-intensity to single-family areas.

## Goals and Recommendations

**Goal C-2** Develop housing and accompanying land use policies for North Rainier, to suggest preferences for where new, higher-density housing would be appropriate, what housing types and physical forms are most compatible, what housing needs to be preserved, and to ensure sensitive and gradual transition from higher-intensity mixed-use and multifamily residential to single family areas.

**C-2.1** Alter the existing City-designated urban villages boundaries. Modify the boundary to exclude single family areas south of Estelle Street and east of 31st Avenue S. Consideration should also be given to extending the boundary to include all commercial and any multifamily areas south of Charlestown (refer to C-7.3).

**C-2.2** Allow for the highest intensity residential development to occur in the proposed Town Center. The Town Center would also be the focal point of mixed-use housing development. Other areas to be targeted for new higher-density residential growth:

- South of the Rainier/ MLK intersection within the urban village, and continue south toward Rainier Valley Square Shopping Center.
- In vacant parcels located east to 23rd Avenue S and west to 17th



Figure 5- Higher-density, mixed-use housing could be feasible in the Town Center, south of the Rainier/MLK intersection, and on vacant parcels around I-90 and Massachusetts Street

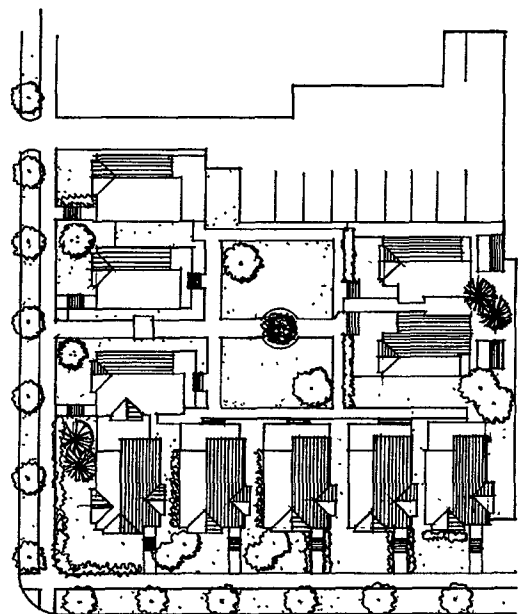


Figure 5- Bungalow Courts/Cluster Housing would be appropriate in single family areas within the Urban Village boundary



▲ Residential Small Lot Housing: Pine Street Cottages



▲ High-density, mixed use housing: San Francisco, CA



▲ High-density, affordable homes: Antonio Terry Estates



▲ New Senior Housing in Seattle's Central Area



▲ New single family infil home: Squire Park



▲ New townhomes compatible with existing Vancouver, BC residential neighborhood



▲ New Construction, Artist Lofts: Emeryville, CA



▲ Street-oriented rowhouses: Vancouver, BC



# NORTH RAINIER Neighborhood Plan

Figure 6  
Housing Options  
for North Rainier

Avenue S around the intersection of Massachusetts Street and Rainier Avenue S. Multifamily or mixed-use development would be appropriate in this part of the community.

- C-2.3 Create opportunities to provide affordable, well-designed, neighborhood-compatible single-family housing. For single family zones (SF5000) inside of the hub urban village boundary, allow for residential small lot opportunities that would encourage cluster housing developments and bungalow courts.
- C-2.4 Require the City to seek partnerships and continue to develop programs such as down payment assistance and homeownership workshops, with the likes of HomeSight and Southeast Effective Development (SEED) to develop affordable and attractive homeownership opportunities in the North Rainier Valley.
- C-2.5 Promote mixed-use, townhomes, and higher-density development as potential housing types that could accommodate anticipated growth. Ensure that new buildings are well-designed, attractive structures that respond to the physical character and environment of the neighborhood. Avoid suburban “tract home style” development that occurs in, and detracts from the character, of some of North Rainier’s single-family neighborhoods(see Renton Avenue S south of Walden Street).
- C-2.6 The unique topography of North Rainier is one of its most outstanding features. Environmentally sensitive hillsides, particularly those in the Cheasty Greenbelt, should be preserved from further residential development.

### C-3 Encouraging Pedestrians and Bicyclists

**Issue Discussion.** The North Rainier Neighborhood holds no pretension to be an existing urban village in the mold of Capitol Hill, Ballard, Wallingford, or even Columbia City. There are currently no “Main Street-style” pedestrian districts and concentrations of small commercial storefronts. However, the North Rainier Neighborhood has envisioned the possibility of such an environment as significant changes, such as the regional light rail, occurs over the coming years. To that end, the community has established, as a cornerstone of the neighborhood plan, that it promote the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists.

#### Goals and Recommendations

- Goal C-3** Establish a priority network of key pedestrian streets and bicycle paths. New development along these streets and paths must address the needs of pedestrians and provide safe and easy access for bicyclists.

**C-3.1** Require the City to establish a definition for key pedestrian streets and key bicycle paths. The City should define what elements of street design, lane configuration, and urban amenities will be required of new development and invested in by the City for those streets and paths prioritized by the neighborhood.

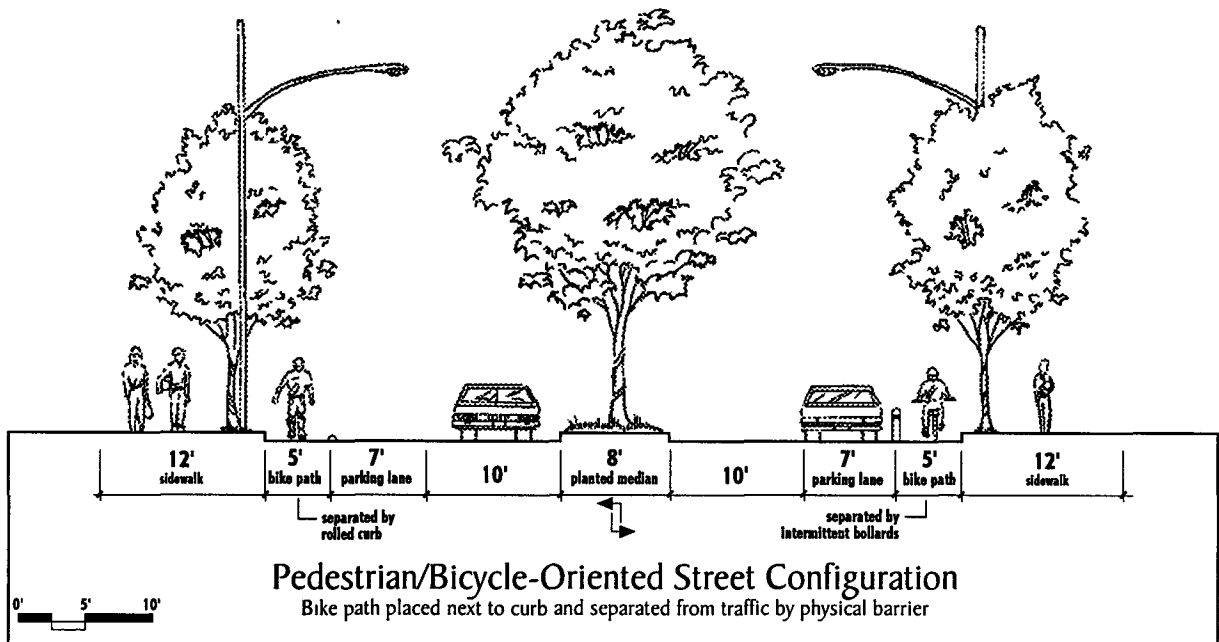
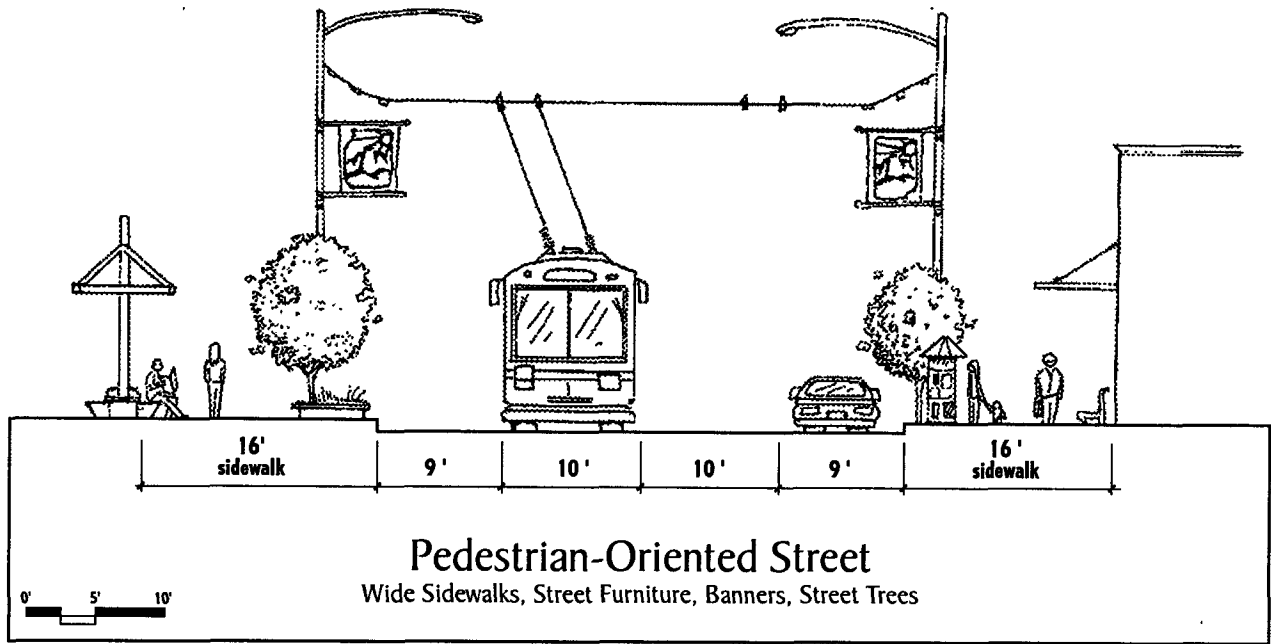
**C-3.2** **Key Pedestrian Streets.** Designated streets shall require new development to allow for a minimum 12-foot sidewalk with street trees, while also accounting for the needs of the disabled (i.e., those wheelchair-bound, the blind). Additional pedestrian amenities should be encouraged, including but not limited to seating, trash cans, kiosks/bulletin boards, and street lighting.

- Rainier Avenue S from 23rd to MLK, Jr. Way
- Walker Street from Rainier to MLK
- McClellan Street from Rainier to Mt. Baker Drive
- Cheasty Boulevard- pedestrian path
- All streets within the Town Center
- Develop a pedestrian network from upland neighborhoods along street ends and street rights-of-way to connect down to the Town Center.

**C-3.3** **Key Bicycle Streets.** The following streets should be designated as bicycle lanes/paths/routes to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of non-motorized wheeled travelers (i.e., cyclists, rollerbladers) within and through the North Rainier Neighborhood.

- MLK Bicycle Path
- Mount Baker-Cheasty Boulevard Paths
- McClellan Street Bicycle Path
- 31st Avenue S





# NORTH RAINIER Neighborhood Plan

Figure 7  
Example of Possible Pedestrian/  
Bicycle-Oriented Streets

## C-4 Rainier and MLK Streetscapes

**Issue Discussion.** Two major north-south arterials dominate the valley floor of the North Rainier Neighborhood: Rainier Avenue S and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. The community recognizes the importance of both streets as major automobile corridors, but desires to see these roads become more friendly to transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Therefore, plan recommendations propose that Rainier Avenue S and MLK, Jr. Way become more like boulevards with attractive streetscapes, clearer pedestrian crossings, and where feasible, designated bicycle lanes.

### Goals and Recommendations

**Goal C-4A Rainier Avenue S.** Recognize the importance of the street as the arterial spine of the entire Rainier Valley. Improve the street into a grand boulevard that retains its vista of Mount Rainier and balances the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists.

**C-4A.1** Preserve Mount Rainier vista. Ensure that the future light rail alignment travels either below Rainier Avenue S, to the west of Rainier, or services the North Rainier Valley via the Beacon Hill/Lander Street tunnel alternative. Also explore the merits of surface and tunnel alternatives as the alignment proceeds south of McClellan Street Station. Plant large, mature street trees along the entire length of Rainier Avenue S where there are currently no trees.

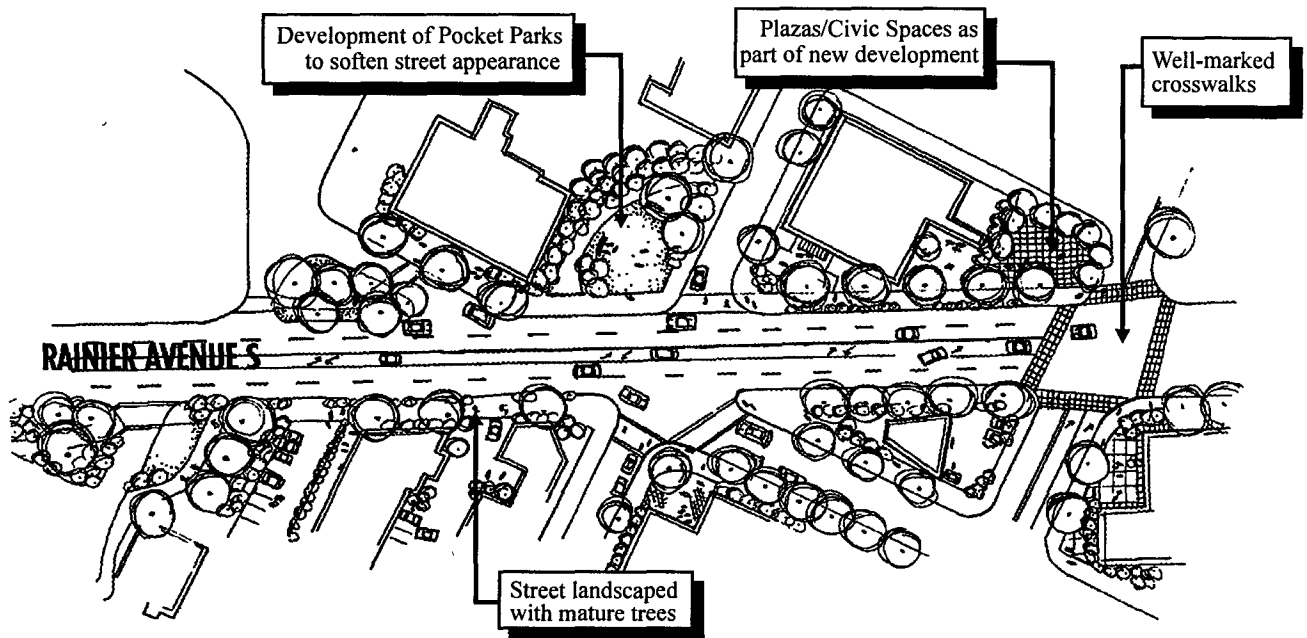
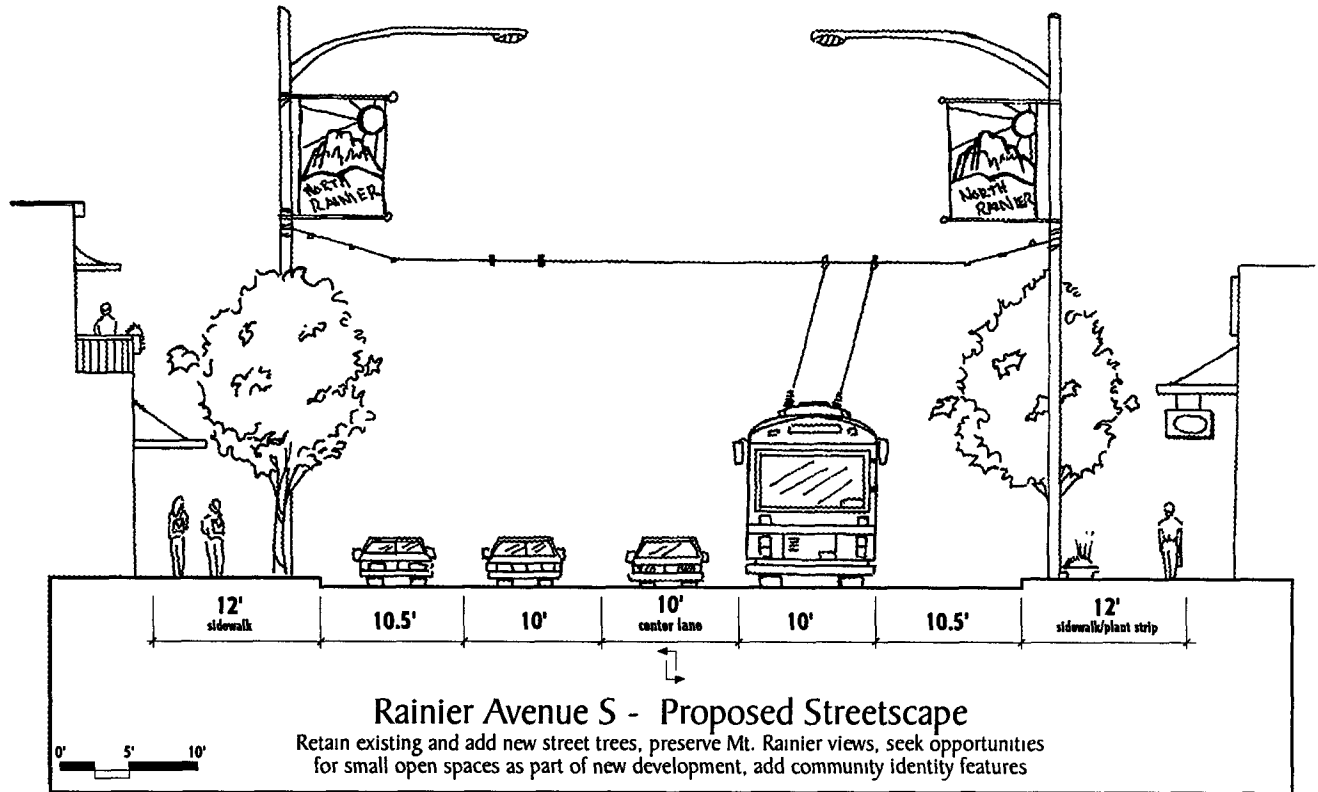
**C-4A.2** Create incentives through development standards and other regulatory mechanisms to encourage new development to build small pocket parks or landscaped spaces to soften the appearance of the street and allow for pedestrian refuge areas.

**C-4A.3** Provide for well-marked, ladder crosswalks at all intersections. Provide for decorative, paved crosswalks at Massachusetts, Walker, McClellan, and in the Town Center area.

**C-4A.4** Build on the Rainier Chamber's community identity and beautification efforts by installing banners and gateway markers.

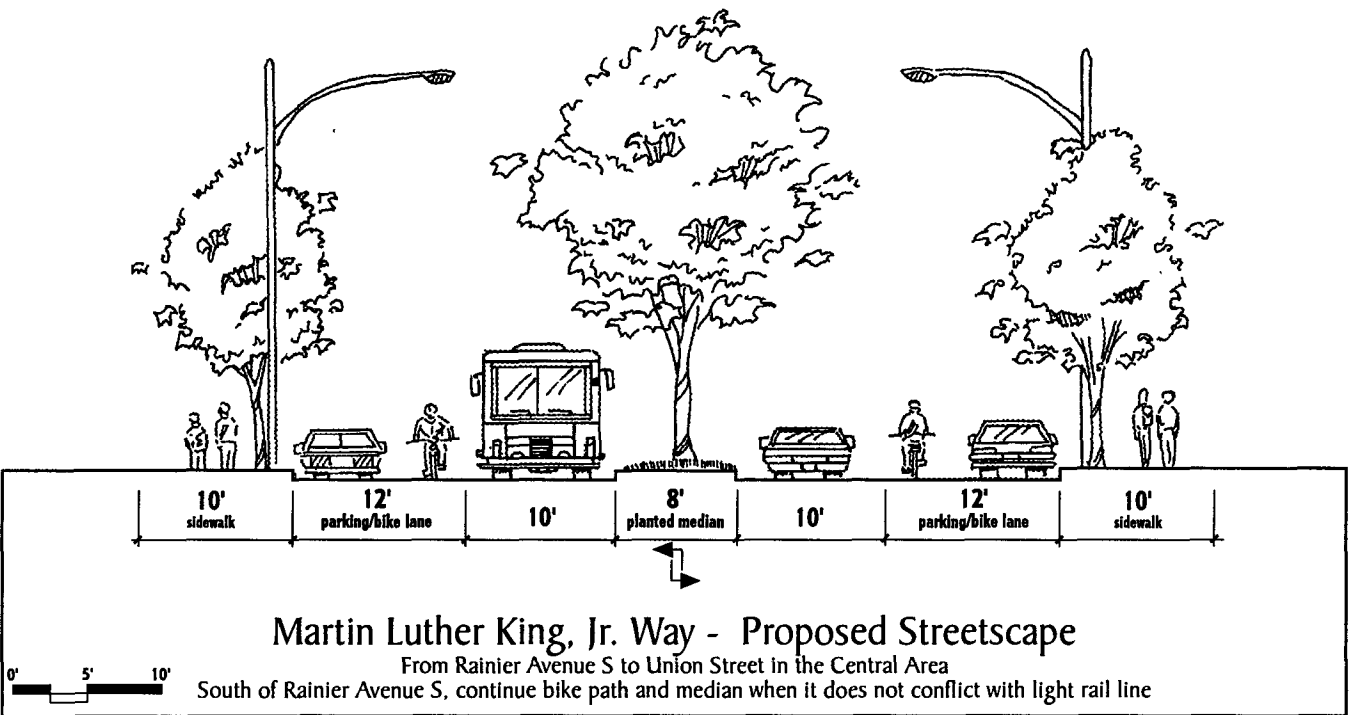
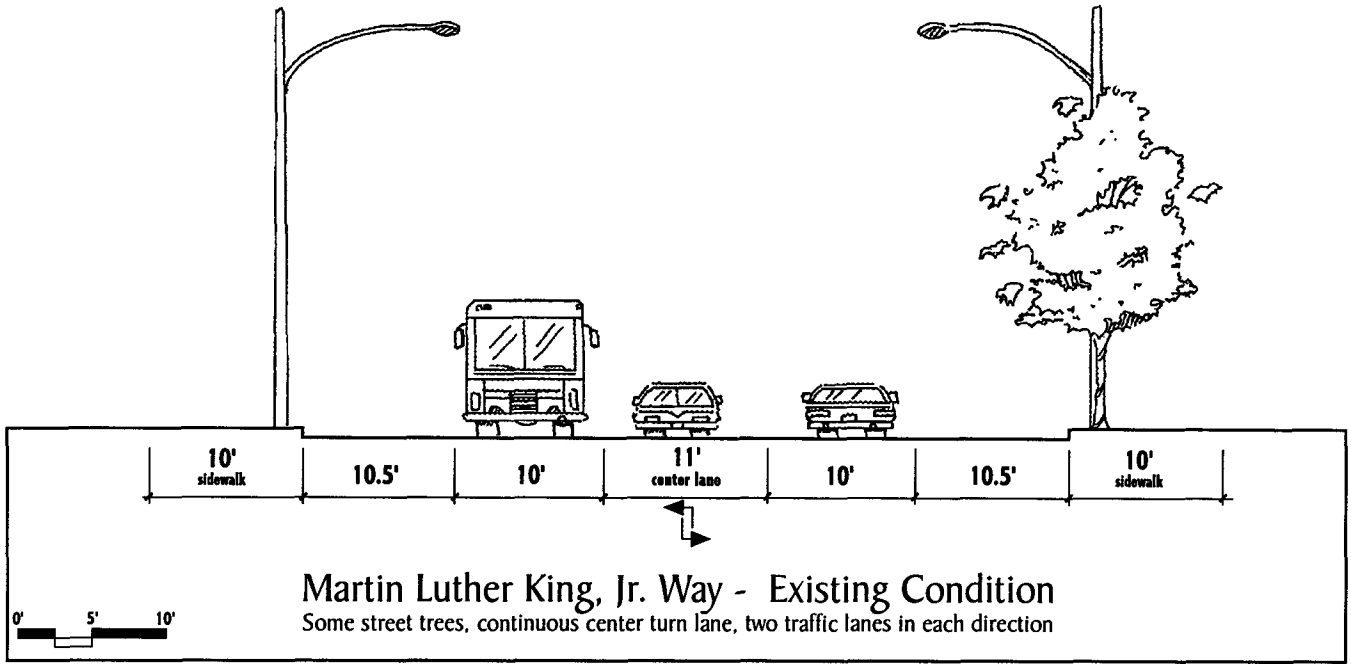
**C-4A.5** Retain the current lane capacity of two travel lanes in each direction and a center median. Where business access is not needed, consider developing landscaped islands in the center median.

**Goal C-4B Martin Luther King, Jr. Way.** As one of the plan's highest priorities, develop MLK, Jr. Way into an attractive, landscaped boulevard that connects the Rainier Valley to Seattle's Central Area. Establish the street as friendly to bicyclists, rollerbladers, pedestrians, and transit riders by providing the necessary facilities and atmosphere to welcome these types of users.



# NORTH RAINIER Neighborhood Plan

Figure 8  
Proposed Rainier  
Avenue S Improvements



# NORTH RAINIER Neighborhood Plan

Figure 9  
Proposed Martin Luther King, Jr. Way Improvements

- C-4B.1 Establish a planted median from Rainier Avenue S to the I-90 lid, connecting with the proposed median in the Central Area neighborhood. Allow for a minimum 8-foot median, while still allowing left turn access at each intersection and curb cut to access local businesses. Continue south where it does not conflict with the future light rail line.
- C-4B.2 Reduce traffic at all times to one travel lane in each direction, as it currently is north of Massachusetts Street. Create a curb-separated bicycle path, similar to that illustrated in Figure 7, to protect bicyclists and rollerbladers from the flow of traffic. Continue south all the way to City limits.  
  
As an alternative, reduce travel during off-peak hours to one travel lane in each direction, adding a parking lane and designating a minimum 4-foot bicycle lane.
- C-4B.3 Make the bike lanes distinctive by painting the stripe or the entire lane a different color.
- C-4B.4 Build sidewalks along stretches where there are currently none, particularly on the east of the street north of McClellan.

## C-5 Reclaiming North Rainier's Olmsted Parks and Boulevards

**Issue Discussion.** In 1909, a Seattle Park Commissioners Report stated, *“Under the proposed system of Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, the designers of the Seattle system, it is planned to have a boulevard system of fifty miles practically belting the city, and a park system of over two thousand acres ...”* Planning for parks and boulevards early in its development history has left the City of Seattle with one of the country's finest examples and best preserved systems of Olmsted Parks, Playgrounds, and Boulevards.

The North Rainier Neighborhood houses two of the boulevards of the system: Mount Baker and Cheasty. The plan called for a continuity and connection between these two boulevards linking the uplands of Beacon Hill to the shores of Lake Washington. Today, the two are connected by a pedestrian bridge just south of the intersection of Rainier Avenue S and MLK, Jr. Way. One of the top community life recommendations focuses on developing ideas and concepts for establishing Cheasty as the boulevard it was envisioned to be in the Olmsted plan, and creating some type of physical, social, and/or cultural connection to Mount Baker Boulevard.

### Goals and Recommendations

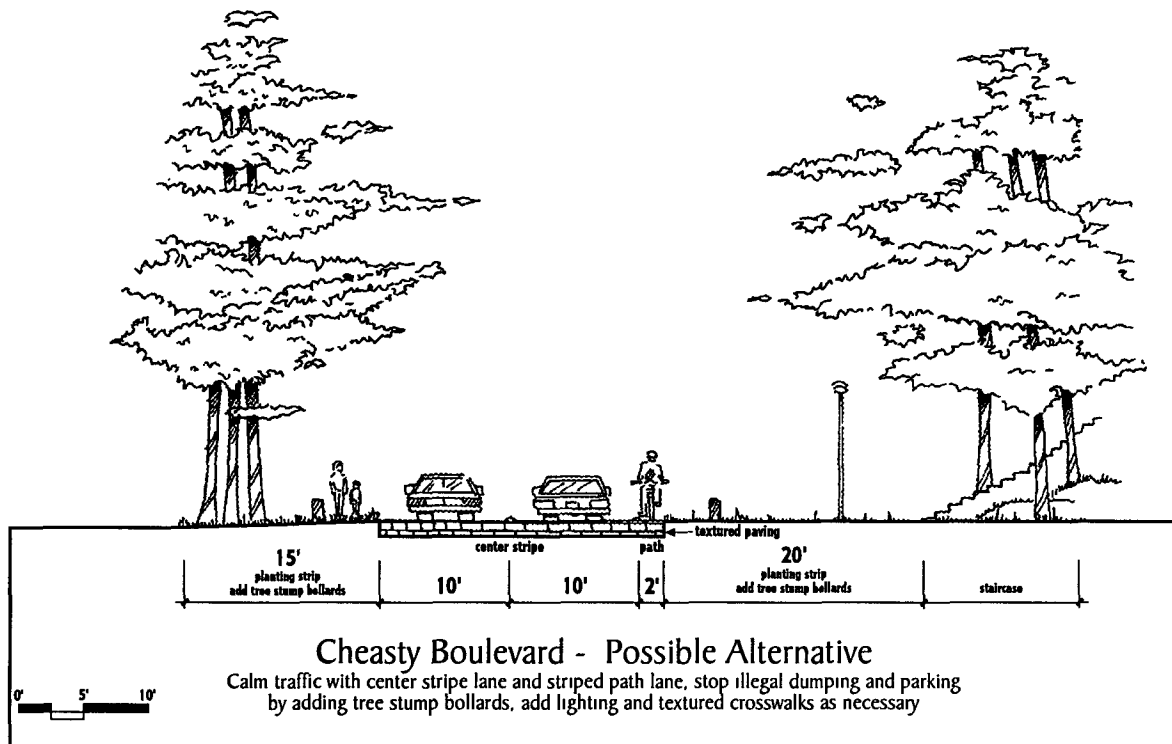
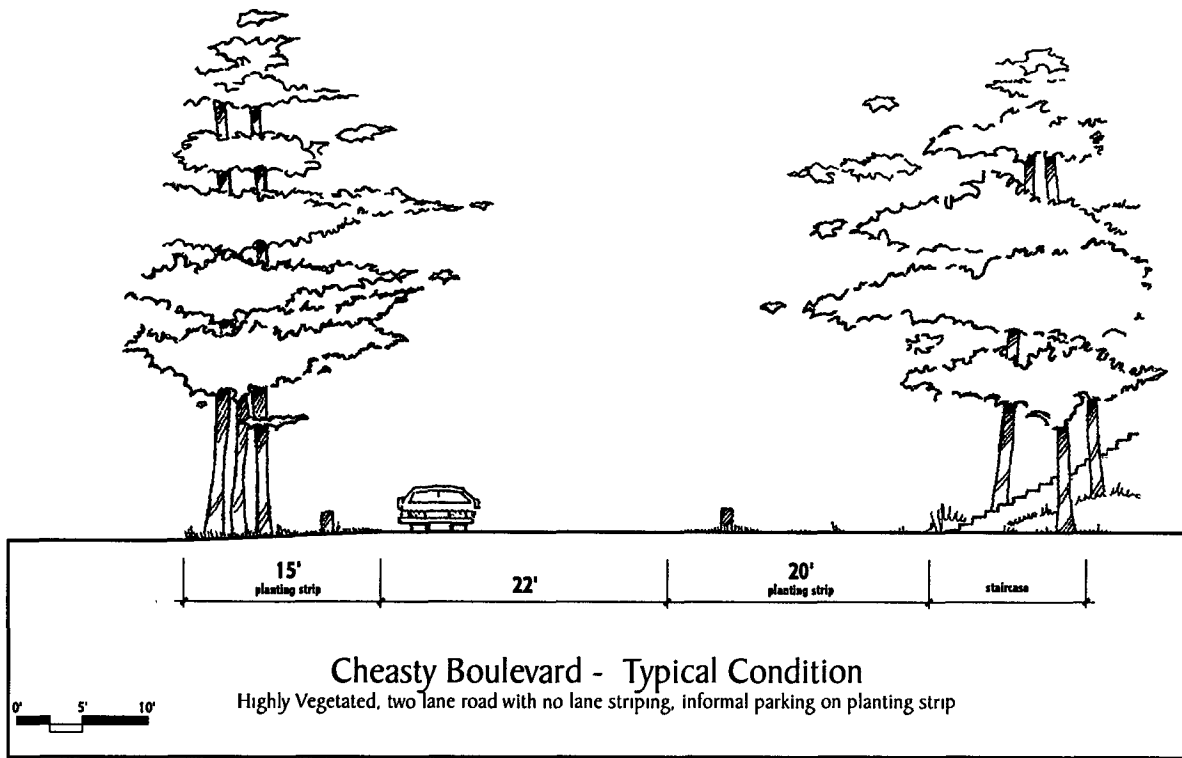
- Goal C-5 Enhance Cheasty Boulevard and Greenbelt as a means toward reclaiming and celebrating North Rainier's Olmsted Parks and Boulevards legacy.**
  - C-5.1 Reclaim the parkland along Winthrop Street which serves as a gateway to Cheasty Boulevard. City maps show a 120-foot parkland right-of-way west of MLK, Jr. Way.

- C-5.2 Develop the Winthrop Street parkland to allow for tree plantings, sidewalks, and small open spaces as a means of buffering and limiting automobile traffic access from the single-family neighborhood within the Cheasty greenbelt from the proposed higher-intensity Town Center development.
- C-5.3 Develop alternative possibilities for Cheasty Boulevard to promote non-motorized use of the street and to calm existing traffic. Where feasible, extend non-motorized paths onto the landscaped shoulder of the right-of-way (refer to Figure 10).
- C-5.4 Provide for decorative, textured crosswalks at hillclimbs and street intersections. Also, add street lighting and signage as appropriate.
- C-5.5 Improve safety and discourage street parking and loitering by placing tree stumps (like those that exist) along the landscaped parkway.
- C-5.6 Consider allowing an at-grade crossing for bicyclists and pedestrians between Mount Baker and Cheasty Boulevards. Accomplish this by moving the limit line on northbound Rainier Avenue S south of the overhead pedestrian bridge
- C-5.7 Enhance the connection between Mount Baker and Cheasty Boulevards. Explore the possibility of a new pedestrian bridge to physically connect the two boulevards; work with the City to seek such a facility through Sound Transit light rail impact mitigation. Plant street trees in the landscaped median of Mount Baker Boulevard. Develop public artworks that could be integrated into the pedestrian bridge to create a community gateway.

## C-6 Community Services Node

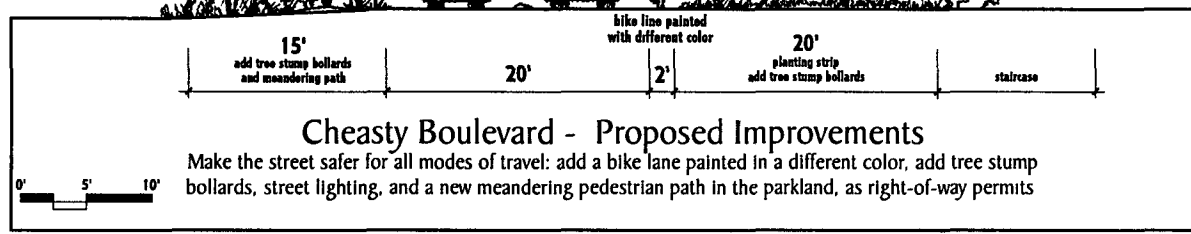
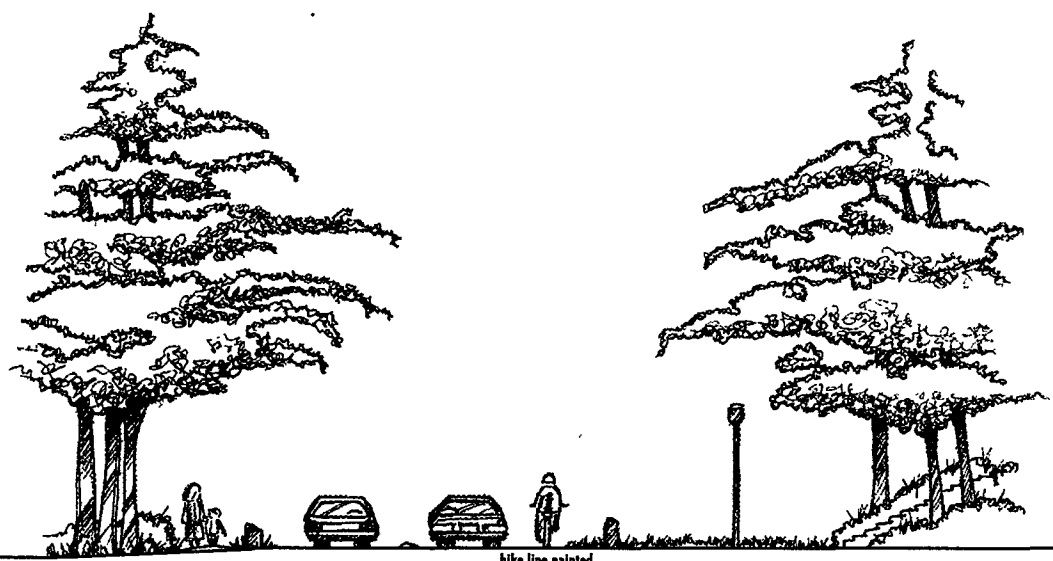
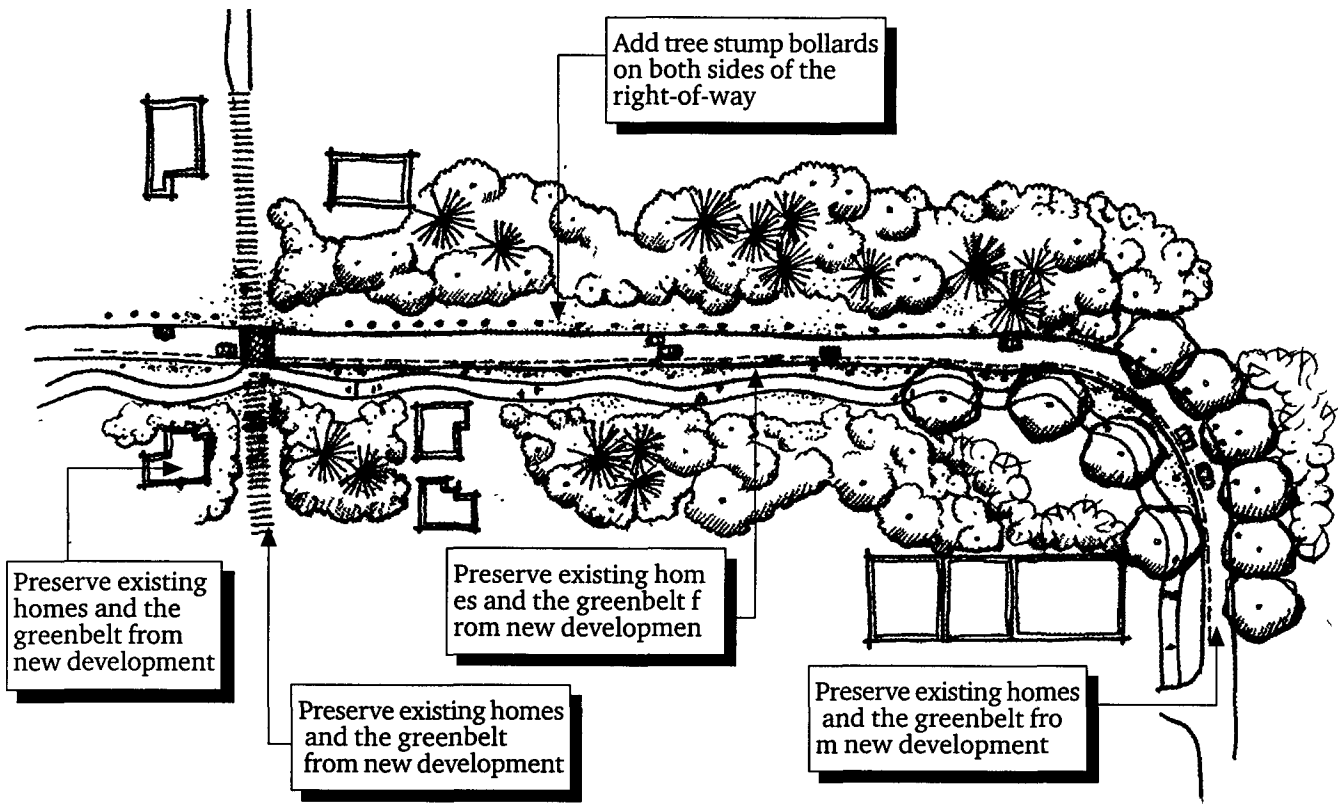
**Issue Discussion.** The North Rainier Neighborhood is home to several community service uses that have special needs populations. They are largely concentrated in the same part of the neighborhood, north of Bayview Street between Rainier Avenue S and MLK, Jr. Way. The uses include Center Park Housing Complex and the Lighthouse for the Blind. Because many of the users are disabled, special consideration must be taken to address their needs. Among the most pressing issues include:

- Easy and efficient access to public transportation, including existing bus routes and the future light rail system.
- Access at the street level across both Rainier Avenue S and MLK, Jr. Way in order to reach commercial shopping destinations.
- Opportunities for employment and affordable housing in the immediate vicinity.



# NORTH RAINIER Neighborhood Plan

Figure 10  
 Proposed Cheasty  
 Boulevard Improvements



# NORTH RAINIER Neighborhood Plan

Figure 10  
Proposed Cheasty  
Boulevard Improvements



## Goals & Recommendations

- Goal C-6** Provide for transit, access, and potential housing needs of users of North Rainier's community service facilities such as Center Park and Lighthouse for the Blind.
- C-6.1** Provide support for local housing providers, CDCs, and North Rainier property owners to build land uses which meet the needs of the population, including special needs housing and employment centers.
- C-6.2** Improve the transit system. Provide future routes that establish direct and immediate access to the Town Center and regional light rail system, as well as to the commercial area anchored by Rainier Valley Square.
- C-6.3** Pedestrian improvements must be made. Several of the local streets have no sidewalks and difficult crossings. Specific pedestrian enhancements should be made along Walker, Hill, and/or Plum Streets. Crossings of Rainier Avenue S and MLK, Jr. Way at these streets must also be enhanced to meet the needs of local users.
- C-6.4** Provide an inventory of existing public and quasi-public facilities which could potentially be shared facilities for community use.

## C-7 Charlestown to Genesee

**Issue Discussion.** The Charlestown to Genesee corridor along Rainier Avenue S provides an existing mix of commercial retail use and general commercial/light industries. The area also consists of several vacant parcels and potential redevelopment of underutilized areas. On the west side of Rainier Avenue S, there exists a unique combination of older homes, smaller storefronts, and commercial uses which have adaptively reused former residential properties.

The Rainier Valley Square shopping center and the Darigold Facility currently anchor the area. Future redevelopment by Southeast Effective Development of lands in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Rainier and Charlestown creates unique opportunities for this part of the North Rainier Valley. In addition, the potential connections to historic Columbia City and its commercial storefront uses create intriguing possibilities.

Because of the potential changes to this part of North Rainier, specific action items for land use, zoning, and necessary capital facilities have been included in this neighborhood plan to address the growth and development of the commercial area extending from Charlestown to Genesee.

## Goals & Recommendations

- Goal C-7** Establish opportunities for the future redevelopment of underutilized parcels to strengthen the commercial retail environment of this part of North Rainier, and explore strategies for enhancing pedestrian linkages to historic Columbia City via Rainier Avenue S. Ensure installation of all necessary capital facilities and infrastructure to support the growth of this segment of the North Rainier Valley.
- C-7.1** **Rainier Valley Square II.** Support SEED's expansion of the Rainier Valley Square shopping center north of Charlestown Street, but in so doing, require the following:
- New roads and sidewalks within and at the perimeter of redevelopment.
  - Development and implementation of a streetscape plan for Charlestown.
  - Installation of all necessary capital facilities, i.e. drainage, wastewater hookups, prior to or concurrent with redevelopment.
- C-7.2** **Potential Land Use/Zoning Changes.** Support a contract rezone agreement between SEED and the City to change existing L2/L3 zones along the west side of 36th Avenue S from Charlestown to Spokane Streets, under these conditions:
- Require community design review for the project. Develop site specific design guidelines.
  - Allow input from local organizations to shape the overall site plan, and internal and external pedestrian/vehicle circulation of the site.
- C-7.3** **Rainier south of Charlestown Pedestrian Overlay Zone.** Create a Pedestrian Overlay Zone (P2) along Rainier Avenue S from Charlestown to Dakota Streets to connect to the proposed P2 zone recommended by the Columbia City Neighborhood Plan. Also support recommended Columbia City zone changes for NCR zoning in this corridor (see Figure 11 on the following page).
- C-7.4** **Extend Urban Village Boundaries.** Extend the North Rainier Hub Urban Village boundary to include the Rainier Valley Square shopping center and the Darigold manufacturing and distribution plant. Include all properties in commercial and multifamily zones south of Charlestown to Dakota in the Urban Village boundary.
- C-7.5** **Preservation of Lower Intensity Residential and General Commercial Uses.** Ensure preservation of the existing uses in the Charlestown to Genesee corridor. Create a strategy, perhaps as an amendment to the P2 Overlay that encourages the rehabilitation of existing homes and general commercial uses, and allows for the non-conforming uses to expand their size and function.

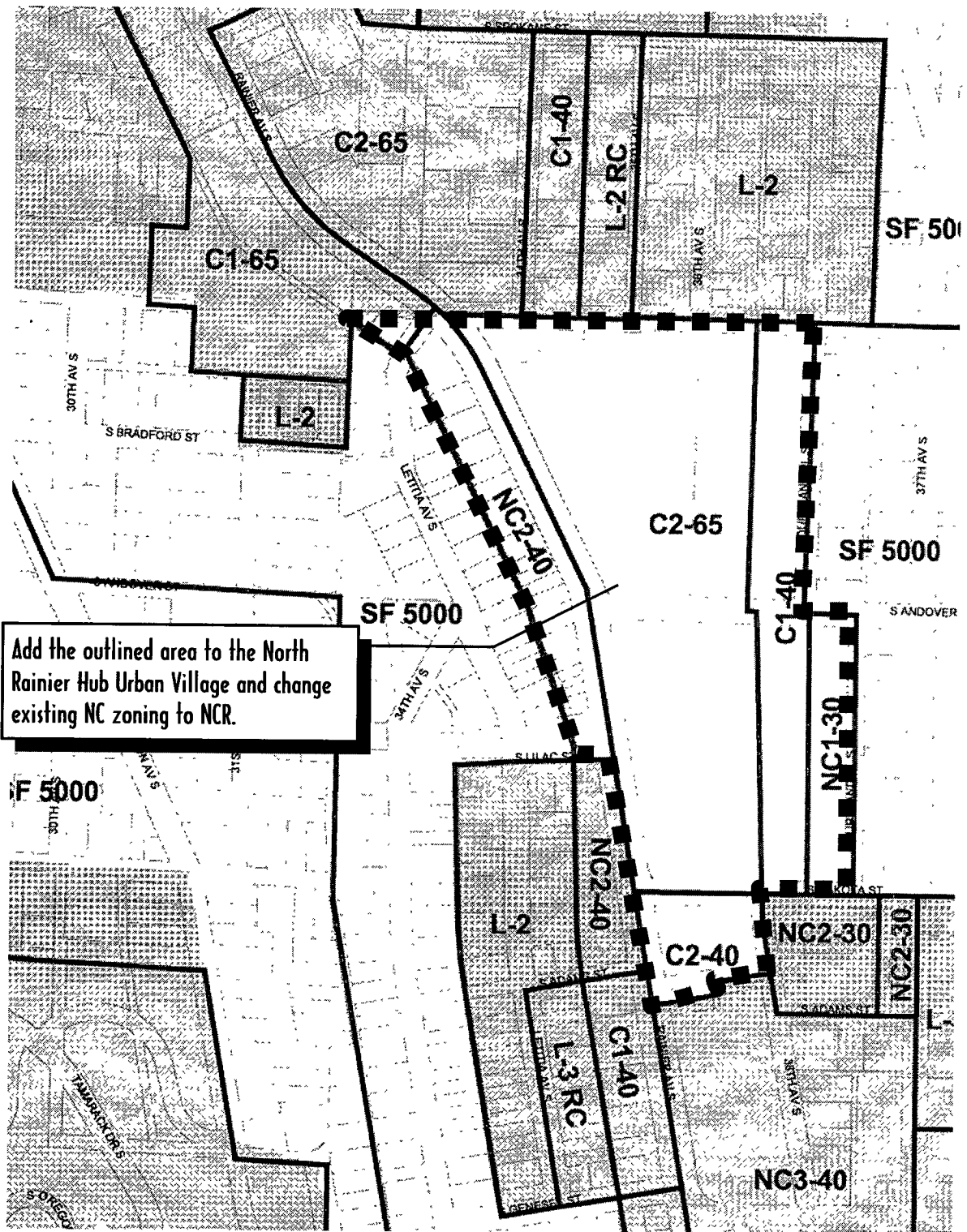


Figure 11  
Urban Village Recommended Boundary Amendment and Columbia City Recommended Zone Change

## 3.4 Economic Development

**Issue Discussion.** The vision of the future foresees “various commercial and industrial activities to enter the scene and retain the diversity and ethnic heritage that make Rainier Valley unique. A full range of services will be available without leaving the community. Zoning coordinates industrial, commercial, and residential uses to their mutual advantage ...” The North Rainier Neighborhood recognizes the importance of its local job base. Employers ranging from Pepsi Distribution, Darigold, and other light industrial uses, to QFC, Rite Aid, and Eagle Hardware are all valued members of the Rainier Valley and City of Seattle economy. With an expected increase of 3,500 new jobs, preservation of existing zoning to allow for job-generating uses must be considered.

In addition, small, unique businesses must be preserved. Plan proposals must explore ways of retaining local neighborhood economic landmarks such as Oberto’s, Borrachini’s Bakery, Mutual Fish Market, Desimone’s, and several other small businesses. The challenge will be to help these businesses continue in the face of future regional light rail construction, and to ensure that they are marketed to more significantly attract local residents.

### Goals and Recommendations

**Goal ED-1** Ensure retention of an adequate supply of general commercial zoning, outside of the Town Center area, to facilitate the growth and expansion of existing job-generating businesses and the influx of similar employment-oriented uses.

**ED-1.1** Retain all C1 and C2 zoning (general commercial) outside of the proposed Town Center, transit-oriented development, mixed-use housing area in order to provide a land supply that promotes higher-wage manufacturing, distribution, and office and professional employment.

**ED-1.2** Implement design review, as per City Ordinance 118980, for all new development in C1 and C2 zones located in the designated Hub Urban Village boundary. Ensure sensitivity to adjacent lower-intensity residential uses.

**ED-1.3** Provide support for and implementation of the economic development Neighborhood Revitalization Strategies being developed for Southeast Seattle. Ensure fair and equitable distribution of any federal Community Empowerment Zone funding throughout Southeast Seattle. For the North Rainier Valley, target funding toward increasing the presence of family-wage job businesses and implementation of the Town Center project.

**Goal ED-2** Preserve and promote the continued economic viability of North Rainier's unique small businesses.

**ED-2.1** Require the City to consider the feasibility of one of the following Link Light Rail alignments as a means of minimizing construction and business displacement impacts in the North Rainier Valley outside of the proposed Town Center: (1) Lander Street/Beacon Hill Tunnel, (2) Rainier Avenue S Tunnel via Dearborn/Poplar Place, or (3) a Rainier Valley all-tunnel alignment.

**ED-2.2** Require the City's Office of Economic Development to actively promote the Good Neighbor Fund program that provides property and business owners financial assistance for building facade improvements. Efforts should also be made to promote the retention and development of family and locally-owned small businesses either through existing City resources or development of tax incentive or special loan programs.

**ED-2.3** Request the City's Office of Economic Development to work with the Rainier Valley Chamber of Commerce to develop a marketing program that would promote local businesses to new and existing residents. Explore the potential of a "Welcome Wagon" packet that provides discounts to local establishments, general information about local business services, advertises community programs such as the Columbia City Farmers Market, and promotes the unique range of ethnic and one-of-a-kind uses located in the greater Rainier Valley.

**ED-2.4** Request that the City, in conjunction with SEED, actively pursue the development of a movie theater complex within Southeast Seattle.

## 3.5 Community Life

**Issue Discussion.** Community Life refers to the things that add to the quality and character of a neighborhood. It is a measure of what is valued, but also an opportunity to define what is missing or needs to be done to enhance residential quality of life and improve the overall business environment of the North Rainier Valley. It encompasses topics such as Parks and Open Space, Urban Amenities, Pedestrian and Bicycle Paths, Community Safety, and Social Services. While the topics may be broad and wide-ranging, they are all interrelated.

What improvements are needed with respect to community life in North Rainier? The diversity of both the residential population and local business owners and uses are key elements that community members wish to preserve and celebrate. In addition, establishing an attractive, clean, and safe environment stand out as high priorities. To improve and maintain existing parks is

essential, yet so is creating small pocket parks or landscaped spaces as part of new development. Identifying opportunities for arts and culture must also be addressed, particularly as a means of celebrating the community's diversity.

- Goal CL-1** **Improve the overall character, usability, and function of the North Rainier Neighborhood. Seek ways to enhance the community's network of parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces in schools, while also promoting arts and culture.**
- CL-1.1** Improve maintenance of all park properties in North Rainier, and add amenities such as public restrooms and drinking fountains where currently there are none.
- CL-1.2** Require the City Department of Parks and Recreation to work with the State to ensure maintenance and continued improvement to the I-90 park facilities.
- CL-1.3** Continue efforts to build City-Seattle School District partnerships that will result in the joint use of school facilities as community facilities, including playgrounds and school buildings (also refer to Cornerstone Recommendation C-6.3).
- CL-1.4** Require the City to meet the criteria for parks and open spaces, and community/recreational facilities for Hub Urban Villages. The criteria are:
- One acre of village open space per 1,000 households. This space must be a dedicated open space of at least 10,000 square feet in size, publicly accessible, and usable for recreation and social activities. All locations in the village must be within 1/8 mile of a Village Open Space.
  - There must be at least one facility for indoor public assembly.
  - There must be one dedicated community garden for each 2,500 households in the Village with at least one dedicated garden site.
- CL-1.5** Promote arts and culture in North Rainier, including:
- Fair-share investments of the City's 1% for Art Programs for public projects built in the North Rainier Valley. This shall include the LINK Light Rail system.
  - Development of Seattle Arts Commission-School District partnerships to establish "Artists in Residence" for local schools.
  - Establishment of "Art and Theater-in-the-Park" programs for locations such as Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, Blue Dog Park, Taejon Park, and I-90 Lid Park.

- Establishment of community-serving arts and culture programs in the African American Heritage Museum and Cultural Center.

**Goal CL-2** Increase the perception of North Rainier as a safe and hospitable neighborhood. Develop strategies for improving public safety and personal security; increase citizen awareness of existing community-based crime prevention programs; and strengthen sense of community and pride of place by promoting multicultural community festivals, youth mentoring, and other youth programs.

**CL-2.1** Increase community policing: add a police pocket precinct in a storefront, as well as bicycle and horse patrols.

**CL-2.2** Require the City to change its policy to ensure new officers are hired prior to the retirement of existing officers. Also, the City should hire a diverse group of officers and create incentives for police to live in neighborhoods like North Rainier.

**CL-2.3** Improve street lighting throughout North Rainier, but particularly along bus routes and commercial areas. However, efforts should also be made to reduce “light pollution” in residential areas. One area cited as an example is 42nd Avenue S where lights are placed on each utility pole.

**CL-2.4** Create a multipurpose facility where area youth can “hang out” yet also develop computer skills, search for jobs, and get career/vocational counseling.

**Goal CL-3** Enhance North Rainier’s built environment by (1) instituting neighborhood-wide clean-ups and “Adopt-a-Street”-style programs for local parks, school campuses, public walkways, and pedestrian refuges or medians; (2) promoting the rehabilitation and reuse of old or historic buildings and properties; and (3) reclaiming public land for public use (i.e., street ends and planting strips, City-owned vacant lots/buildings).

**CL-3.1** Institute programs that increase community beautification and fight littering. Request Seattle Public Utilities to actively promote Adopt-a- Programs among local businesses and Franklin High School. Work with local school leadership to create a school “Community Service Corps” that will be responsible for clean-ups around campus and the neighboring business district, plant and steward trees, and improve the overall appearance of the surrounding area.

**CL-3.2** Request Seattle Public Utilities to post “Littering Fine” signs in and around the commercial area and adjacent to Franklin High School. To discourage littering, waste cans should be placed intermittently in these locations as well.

**CL-3.3** Ensure the adaptive reuse of the Colman School as a building of architectural significance. Support the development of the African-American Heritage Museum and Cultural Center at the old Colman School. Require responsible City agency to track its progress and establish a schedule for its completion. Should the Museum become infeasible, the City should search for an alternative use for the school, perhaps housing or some other type of active, multipurpose facility.

**CL-3.4** Continue to allow and facilitate the ease of developing City street ends and other City properties for open space purposes. Target locations along the shoreline (Lake Washington shoreline is in planning area), but also at hillclimbs on both Mount Baker/Leschi and Beacon Hill streets. Recommendations include:

- Streamline Street Use Permit processing.
- Develop street ends above the Tennis Center: Hill, Plum and Holgate Streets.
- Street ends in and around the Cheasty Greenbelt.
- York substation located east of MLK and west of Rainier: restore to former park status and develop it into a “usable” open space.

**CL-3.5** Identify possible sites for new community gardens. Explore the potential of developing an open space/community garden in-lieu fee where developers can pay a fee in exchange for relaxing building/land use code open space requirements. Potential locations identified during the planning process include:

- Vacant lands adjacent to the Tennis Center on MLK, Jr. Way.
- Lands north of Rainier Valley Square just east of Rainier Avenue S.
- Near Center Park and the Lighthouse for the Blind.

**Goal CL-4** Dare to dream big ... promote community improvement projects that can be acted upon through community-based efforts, as well as through public investment. These are projects that may be implemented both in the near-term and as the community grows in the future.

**CL-4.1** Place overhead utility wiring underground.

**CL-4.2** Pave major arterials and add sidewalks for all streets in the urban village.

**CL-4.3** Expand Parks and Recreation budget, and complete 4 to 5 of the existing proposed parks projects in the North Rainier Valley. For examples, complete the Bradner Park project, transform the York substation property, and expand the play area in Seward Park to be similar to that at Green Lake.



- CL-4.4 Change existing codes to mandate a higher percentage of landscape area vs. impervious surface as part of new residential development.
- CL-4.5 Promote a “Respect for One Another” Campaign. Encourage community friendliness; discourage litterbugs; increase block watches; and create new community festivals.
- CL-4.6 Promote development of community gathering uses such as a high quality newsstand that would carry printed matter representative of all the nationalities in North Rainier. Also encourage smaller newsstands at bus stops and street corners.
- CL-4.7 Institute and actively enforce a “Tree Cutting” Ordinance that would require new development to gain a City permit prior to cutting down a tree.
- CL-4.8 Work with King County Metro to allow bikes to travel into the Downtown Free Ride Zone during peak hour travel.
- CL-4.9 Work with local community councils, group organizations, and the Rainier Chamber of Commerce to establish a theme or identity for the North Rainier Neighborhood. The purpose would be to create a physical identity, but also provide a social and cultural focal point that could be shared by all local residents and business owners.

### 3.6 Transportation and Transit Service for North Rainier

**Issue Discussion.** The North Rainier Valley is served by two major north-south arterials, Rainier Avenue S and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, as well as smaller local arterials such as McClellan Street. At the neighborhood’s northern boundary, Interstate 90 provides quick and efficient access to eastside cities. Because of the north-south flow of arterials, transit service also travels primarily in this direction with routes along Rainier Avenue S, MLK, Jr. Way, 31st Avenue S, and along 13th/14th/Beacon Avenue S on neighboring Beacon Hill. East-west transit is highly limited, with local shuttle bus service connecting North Rainier, Mount Baker, and Beacon Hill via Route 38 on South McClellan Street. Today, the North Rainier’s transportation network can be fairly considered as auto-oriented.

The challenge for the future will be to enhance non-motorized modes (as recommended in the Cornerstones section of the plan), as well as to identify better transit service to complement the future regional light rail system. In addition, specific hotspots for local auto circulation must be addressed.

**Goal I-1** Complement the future LINK Light Rail system by providing increased east-west service between the North Rainier Valley, Mount Baker, and Beacon Hill

neighborhoods and good connections to the rail transit station to be located south of McClellan Street.

- I-1.1 Require SeaTran to work with King County Metro to provide for additional east-west bus service. Expand and promote the existing Route 38 shuttle bus route, and add new routes in the future to link residential areas to the regional light rail system.
  - I-1.2 Require SeaTran to work with King County Metro to create new Rainier Valley-serving routes to replace those that may be terminated with the construction of the LINK Light Rail System. Ensure consideration for intra-Valley connections and frequency of service.
  - I-1.3 Require development of a bus transit center as part of the proposed Town Center concept. Ensure that both east-west and north-south routes provide clear and efficient access to the light rail station.
  - I-1.4 Enhance the quality of the bus transfer station at Rainier Avenue S and I-90. Add durable and vandal-proof bus shelters, benches, kiosks/bulletin boards, make the environment more hospitable, and improve the overall experience for transit riders at both the Rainier Avenue S street level and I-90 bridge deck.
- Goal I-2 Address local traffic circulation for the North Rainier Neighborhood, with particular attention to neighborhood traffic calming and service along the major arterials of Rainier Avenue S and MLK, Jr. Way.**
- I-2.1 Through the course of neighborhood planning, the issue of local vs. regional traffic has been brought up. The community has made no specific recommendations, other than to raise concerns about residential cut-through traffic and heavy peak-hour volumes on Rainier Avenue S. The community would like SeaTran to conduct a traffic circulation analysis to address concerns regarding:
    - the unusual and uneven lane configurations on Rainier Avenue S.
    - pedestrian safety on Rainier Avenue S and MLK, Jr. Way.
    - improving signal timing on Rainier from Dearborn Street to MLK, Jr. Way.
    - Reconfiguration of 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue S to calm traffic and increase pedestrian safety.
    - residential cut-through traffic throughout the North Rainier Valley.
    - existing and potential future “park-and-ride” impacts.
  - I-2.2 Require the City to ensure Commute Trip Reduction compliance by large area employers. SeaTran should actively promote alternative transportation programs and build in incentives for bicycle commuting, local hiring, vanpools, and transit ridership. SeaTran should also consider creating penalties for those businesses that do not comply with Commute Trip Reduction requirements.



# Chapter 4.0

## Plan Implementation

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The previous chapters elaborated on the specific concepts and recommendations that will guide the development and enhancement of the North Rainier Community into the next century. While the previous chapter established the ideas that will lead to physical, social, and economic improvement of North Rainier, this chapter strives to answer: How can these concepts be turned into realities.

### 4.1 Implementation Strategy

Plan Implementation will require a partnership between the neighborhood and commitment from the City of Seattle. This means that both sides must be accountable to the other. While the long process of the preparing the plan has concluded, the new work of ensuring future action begins. To do this, the community must initially begin on developing a Stewardship body in conjunction with the Department of Neighborhoods. Some of the steps that will be needed will include but may not be limited to the following:

- Forming a Stewardship Committee from a wide range of representative area groups
- Establishing a mission statement for stewardship.
- Using the mission statement to guide the committee, as well as give the City an idea of neighborhood expectations.
- Determination of near-term Early Implementation Fund spending for North Rainier.
- Establishment of a strategy of reporting back to the community at large.

**Stewardship Group.** Members would be expected to serve for a minimum of 1 year and make a commitment to that term. The Mission Statement and two main goals – (1) Early Implementation Funds Allocation and (2) Shepherding the Plan Through The Approval & Adoption Process – will require that the Committee meet approximately once a month, and to establish a process for reporting back on the status of Plan Implementation. Among the objectives of the Stewardship Group will be:

#### Monitoring the Plan

- *Make a Neighborhood Planning Calendar.* Predict a schedule – a little research would reveal how long it took to get similar actions implemented. For each action ask: How long does it take to get it built? How long does it take to get legislation/zoning changes, etc.? What is the current rate of revitalization of our, and comparable neighborhoods? What are the current economic trends and how are they expected to affect us?

### Advocate on behalf of the community and keep them informed

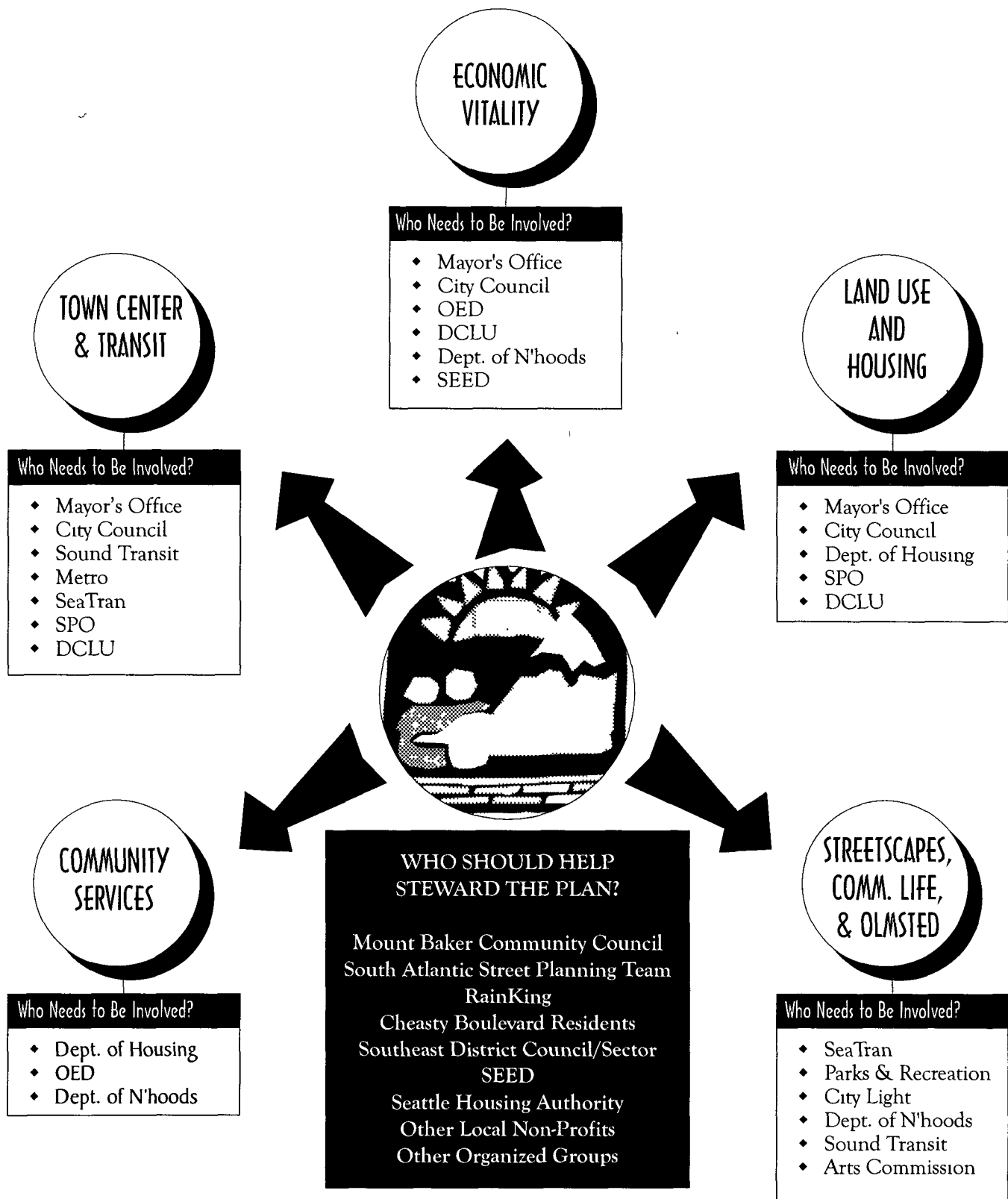
- Produce a newsletter and distribute it throughout the community ~ maybe a deal could be made with the Times/PI or some local merchant who does direct mail to include the newsletter. Get it thrown into grocery bags at local markets.
- Get on Seattle TV with a PSA or a presentation on the Plan or an interview with somebody about some part of the plan
- Keep in touch with City officials who helped with the plan, even informally
- Attend Council meetings - be familiar to lawmakers
- Continue to organize events - potlucks or public forums to talk about neighborhood developments, work parties to accomplish one of the plan goals, talk to school classes about community activity ~ so that the Community has a sense that the Plan wasn't the end of the planning road.
- Set up a web site for your community

### Act as liaison between the City and the community

- Be available to community members - include a contact e-mail address and phone number on newsletters, the web site, PSAs and advertisements of upcoming events.
- Use contacts maintained through work with City government and built through activism to get City representatives and the community together and talking - about the progress of plan implementation, problems, the EIF project, etc. Get City reps to speak at forums or participate in panel discussions on Seattle TV
- Take the DON up on its offer to assist with outreach and feasibility study for EIF project

### Early Implementation Funds

1. Use the Plan ~ The list and research described above to identify the project for these funds. The research will support claims of feasibility for the final selection. The cost, construction time and usefulness of many projects - crosswalks, street trees, gateways ~ are a matter of public record. But if the City doesn't have the information, call the Library, other city Public Works departments, university planning departments and construction companies.
2. Outreach ~ Get as much information as possible from/about any groups/organizations proposing a project.
3. Get the most from the funding. Evaluate the projects for their potential to benefit the neighborhood. Consider:
  - **Joint efforts** - Some projects might be accomplished through a joint effort of two or more groups of professionals, for *example (what are some of the plan elements?)*



# NORTH RAINIER Neighborhood Plan

Figure 12  
Potential  
Implementation Strategy

- *Sweat equity* – Some projects may require a commitment from community members to help implement the project or maintain it afterwards.
  - *Combining projects* ~ Some projects might be combined. The Committee could explore ways of combining projects whose scopes overlap, e.g., combine lighting/gateway project with a lighting/ped crossing safety project
4. Evaluate feasibility. Since the Committee will share responsibility for overseeing implementation and may also be the fiscal agent, it will be important for the Committee to fully understand what is involved in completing the project and potential problems.
  5. Choose 2-3 projects
  6. Involve the groups/organizations proposing the project in the EIF application process.
  7. Publicize the project's progress from groundbreaking to celebration of its completion.

#### **Approval & Adoption Process**

- Review and respond to Approval and Adoption Package
- Plan and conduct Executive and Council Tours
- Present Neighborhood Plan to the City Council
- Follow the plan through the adoption process

