

Downtown Livability Initiative

Planning Commission Recommendations on Downtown Land Use Code Amendments



City Council Study Session
June 26, 2017

Stephanie Walter, Planning Commission Vice-Chair

Carol Helland, Code and Policy Director

Dan Stroh, Planning Director

Trish Byers, Code Development Manager



Tonight's Study Session

- Introduce Planning Commission Recommendations on Downtown Livability Initiative Code Amendments
- Staff joined by Planning Commission Vice-Chair Walter
- Current Game Plan for Future Sessions
 - ▣ Height and Density, Incentive zoning
 - ▣ Other elements as needed to prepare for Council action
- No action requested tonight
- Council feedback will help structure what is needed for future study sessions

Background

- First comprehensive Downtown Code update in 35+ years
- Vast changes in Downtown: Today about 14,000 residents, over 50,000 workers, and tens of thousands of daily visitors
- Intent to align with updated Subarea Plan, Downtown changes, and needs of 21st century center
- Much is working well -- Builds from success
- Part of a broader city focus on livability for the city center
- For people who live, work, and visit Downtown

“Livability is about quality, about weaving an urban fabric rich in resources and quality of life...”

**--Bellevue
Comprehensive Plan**

Downtown Subarea

Lake Washington

100th Ave NE

NE 12th St

Main St

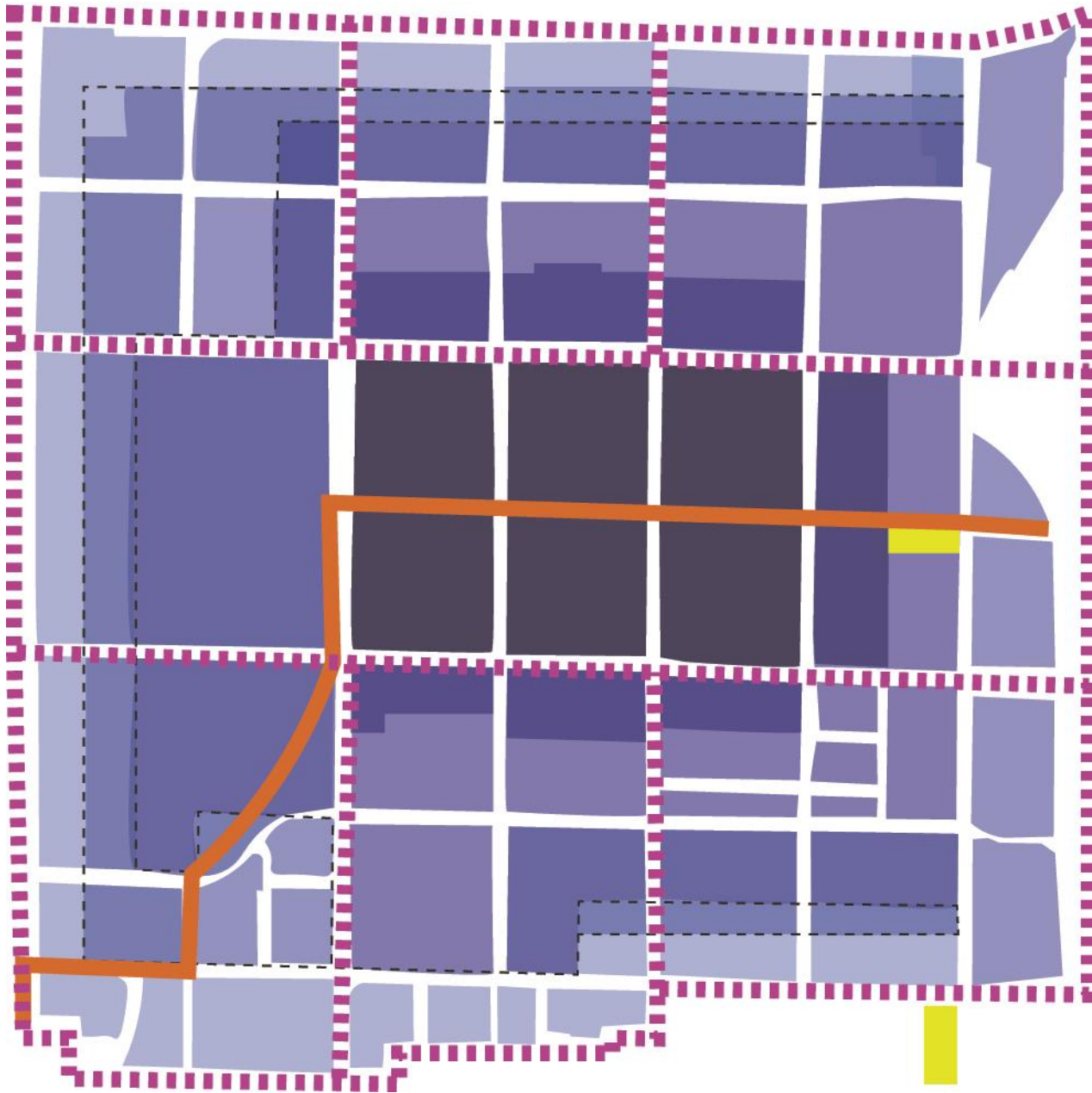


Advancing Livability

- Increased walkability
- Downtown neighborhood character
- Access to light and air between buildings
- Updated incentive system – focus on open space
- Green and sustainable Downtown
- New uses; mixed uses
- Updated design guidelines - High quality and distinctive architecture
- Planning for light rail stations
- Affordable housing

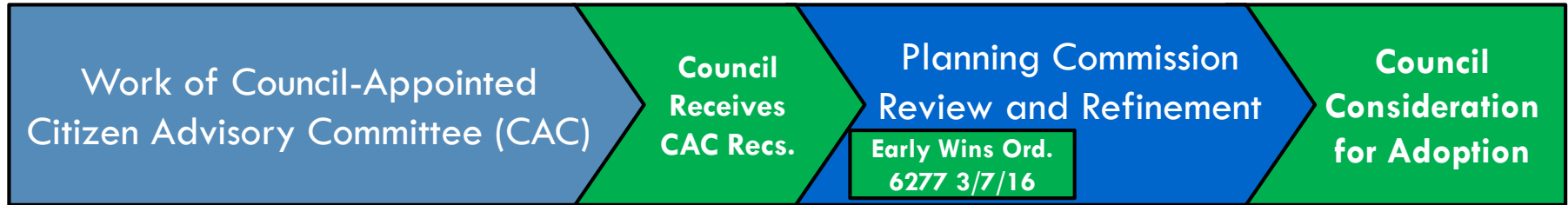
DOWNTOWN FRAMEWORK

Neighborhoods



Process w/ CAC, Commission, Council

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



We Are Here



Planning Commission Vice-Chair Walter

- Overview of Commission Process
 - Series of Study Sessions
 - Stakeholder Input
 - March 8 Public Hearing
- Major Challenges
- Key Observations & Recommendations beyond Land Use Code Package
 - Affordable housing
 - Incentive zoning system
 - Tower separation
 - Floor plate reductions for taller office buildings
 - Downtown parks and open space
 - Comprehensive parking study

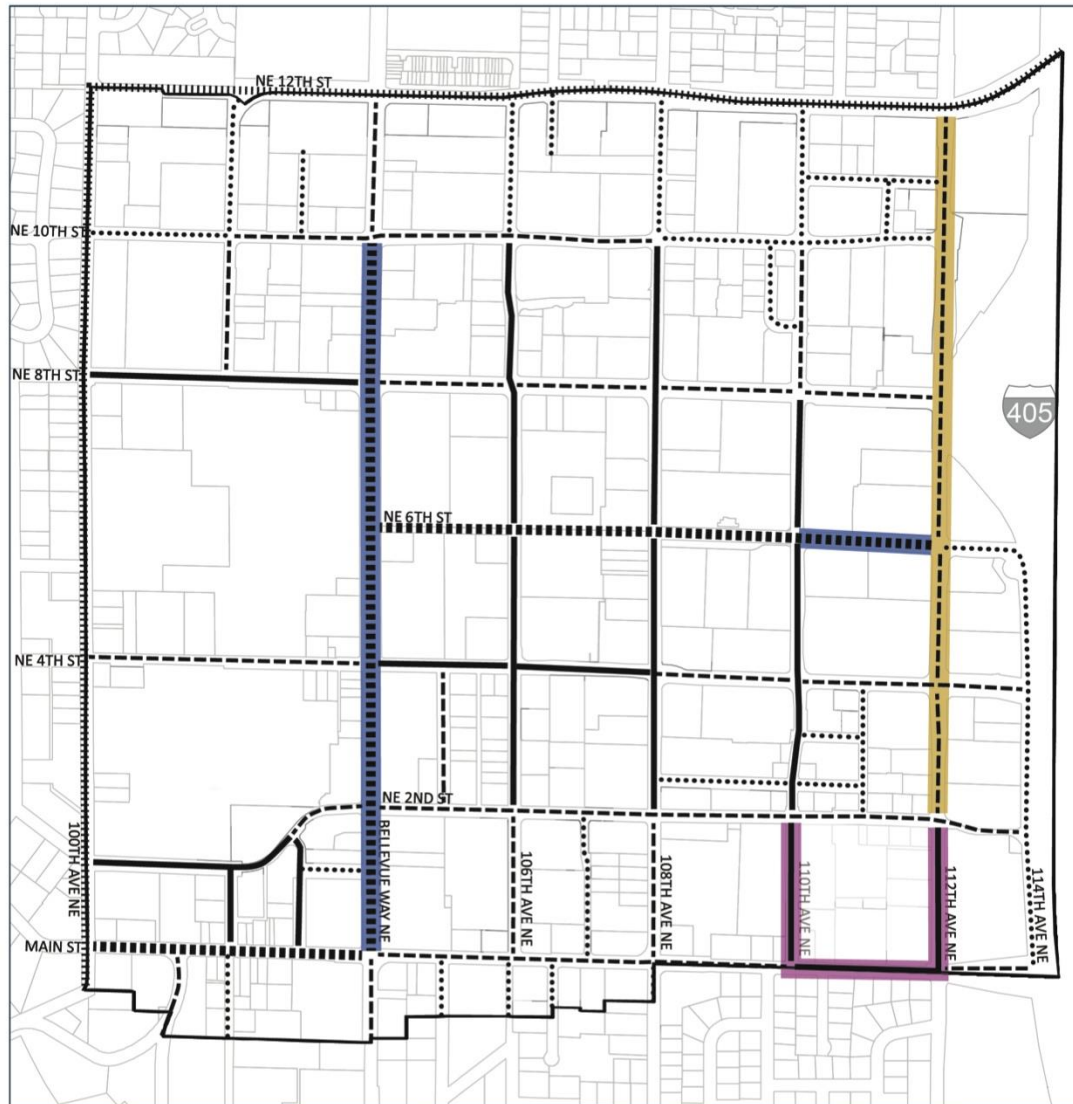
Major Code Changes

- Clean version of Code provided to Council
- Reorganization of many sections for usability
- Margin notes highlight major recommended changes

Walkability

- New Building/Sidewalk Designations
- Sidewalk Dimensions
- Active Uses
- Design Guidelines
 - ▣ Outdoor spaces for retail and restaurant uses
 - ▣ Pedestrian scaled lighting and signage
 - ▣ Streetscape and pedestrian amenities
 - ▣ Increased transparency
 - ▣ Reduction of pedestrian conflict with vehicles
 - ▣ Maximization of sunlight and sky views from sidewalk
 - ▣ Weather protection for pedestrians (Early Wins)

Building/Sidewalk Designations



DOWNTOWN BUILDING/SIDEWALK RELATIONSHIP DESIGNATIONS

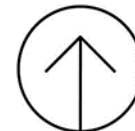
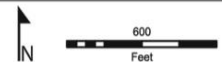
NOTEWORTHY CHANGES

- Converted to Pedestrian Corridor/High Street
- Reflects East Main Station Area
- 112th Covered to Mixed Street

Other Noteworthy Change: Former "D" and "D/R" designations (now "D") combined

LEGEND

- ■ ■ A - Pedestrian Corridor/High Street
- B - Commercial Street
- - - C - Mixed Street
- ... D - Neighborhood Street
- - - E - Perimeter Street
- Parcels
- Downtown Boundary



Sidewalk Dimensions



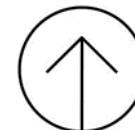
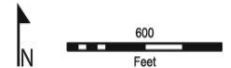
DOWNTOWN SIDEWALK DIMENSIONS

CHANGES

- 16' to 20' (includes 5' landscape buffer)
- 12' to 16' (includes 5' landscape buffer)

LEGEND

- Pedestrian Corridor
- 16' sidewalk width
- Parcels
- 20' sidewalk width
- ... 12' sidewalk width
- Downtown Boundary

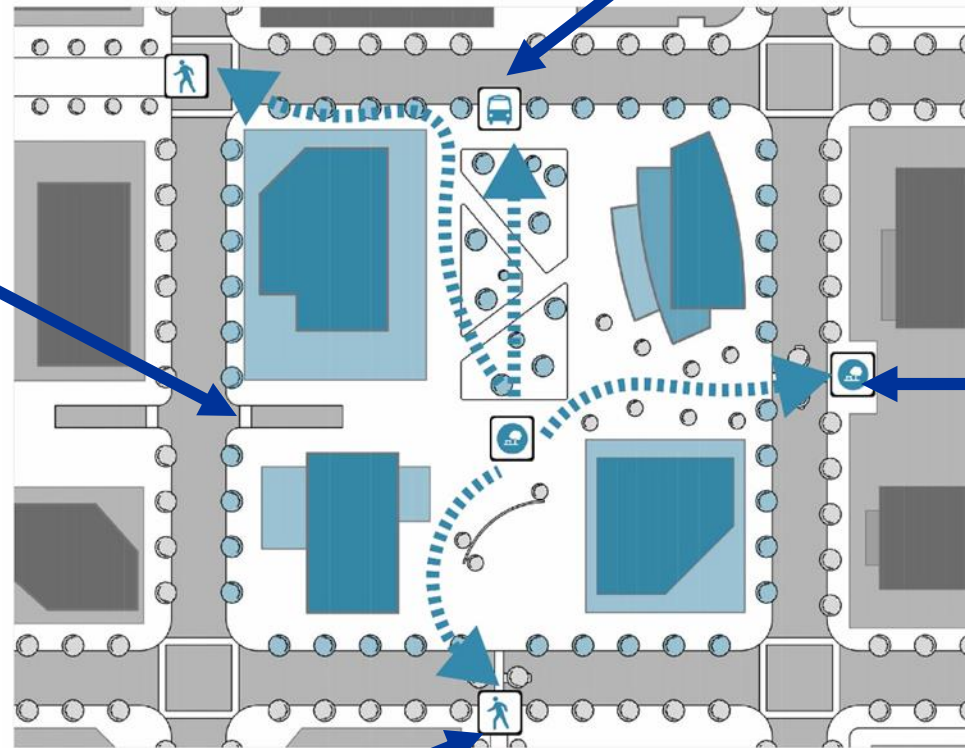


Design Guidelines / Walkability

Coordinate parking access to minimize negative impacts on the public realm

Create logical connections to transit

Provide access and connections to public spaces

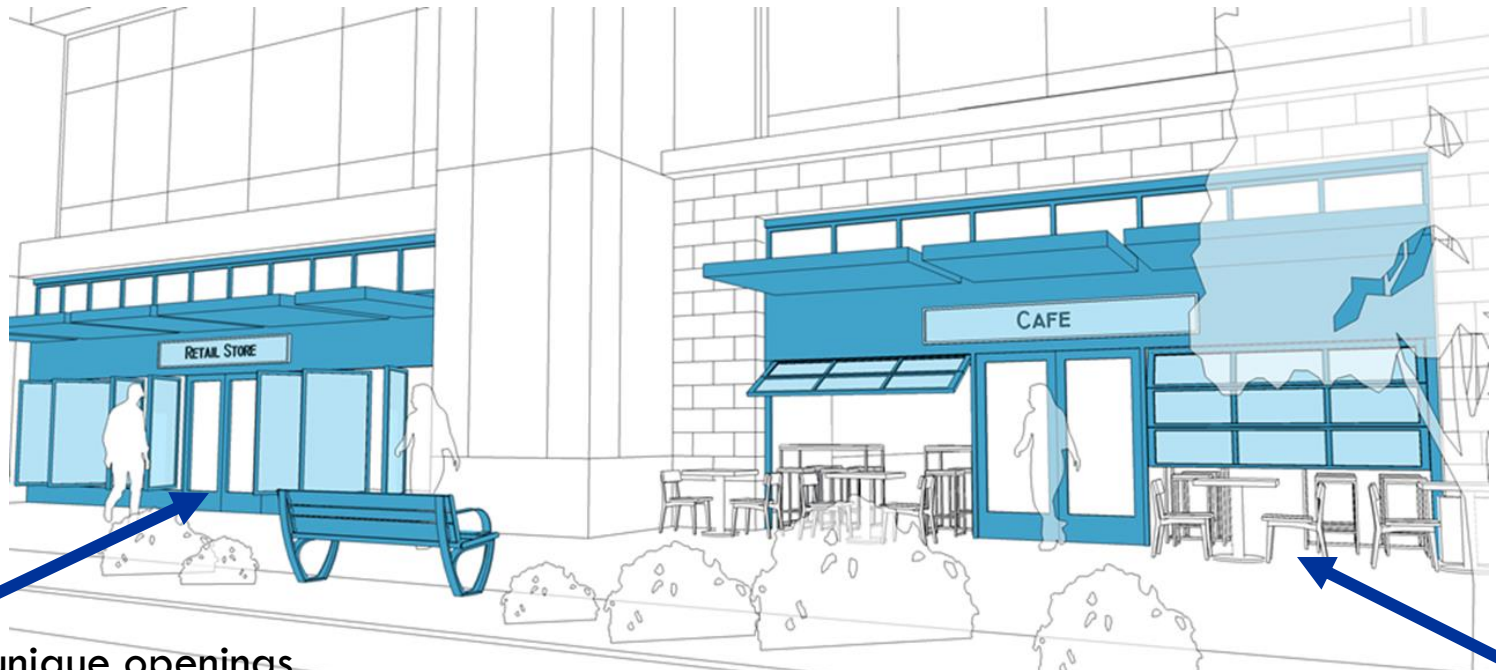


Create logical pedestrian connections

Design Guidelines/Active Uses

Includes retail and services that activate the streetscape such as:

Beauty and barber shops Banks Doggie day care



Provide unique openings that allow for improved visual connection and engagement with internal uses

Provide unique openings that engage street life activity with internal uses and provide opportunities for seasonal use

Design Guidelines / Active Uses

Right-of-Way Designations A-D support an active streetscape

Example of “A” Right-of-Way

Minimum 75%
weather protection
required

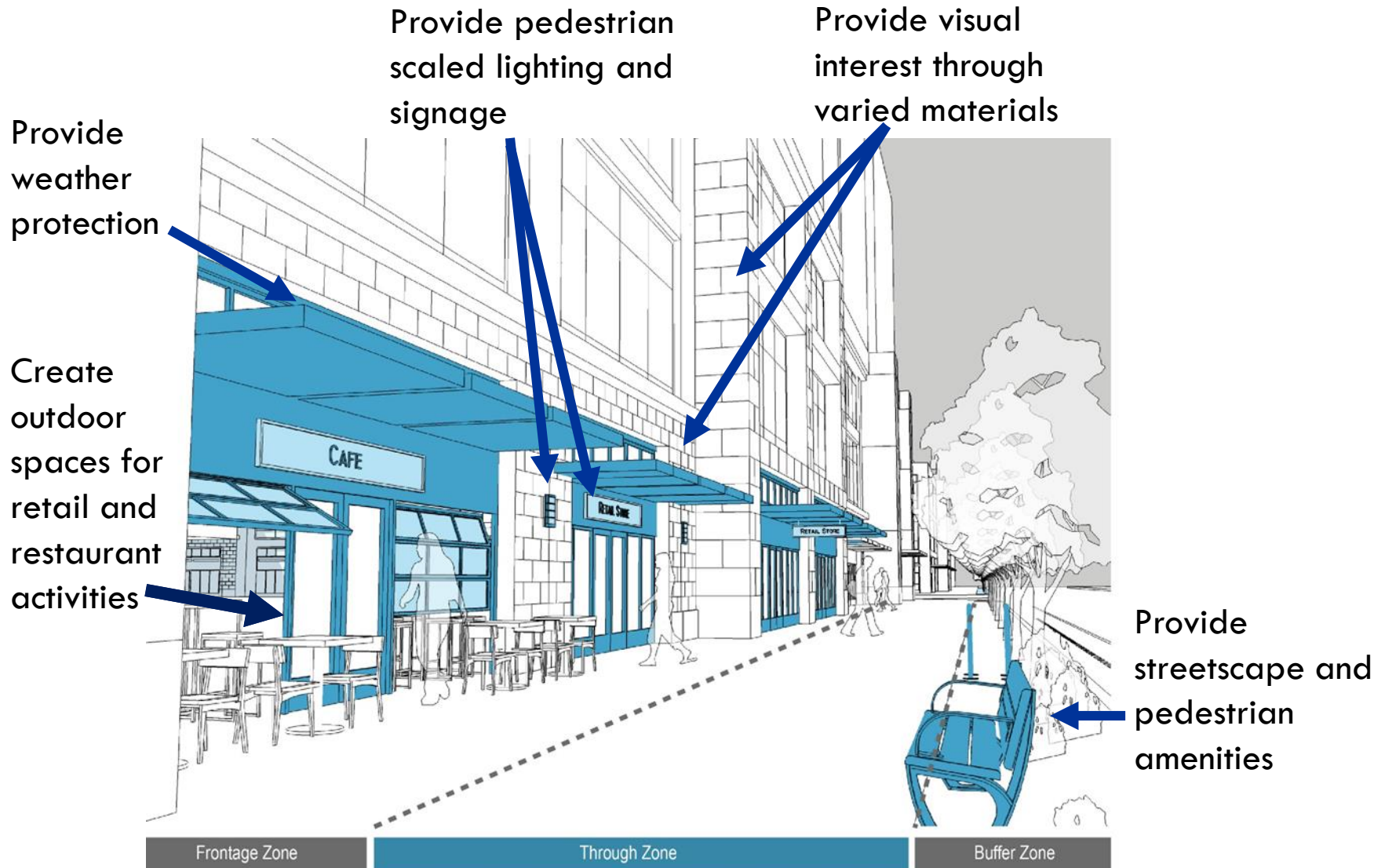
Maximum 30 feet
between entrances and
other points of interest.

Minimum 75%
Transparency

Use setbacks
and
protrusions to
create visual
interest.



Design Guidelines /Streetscapes

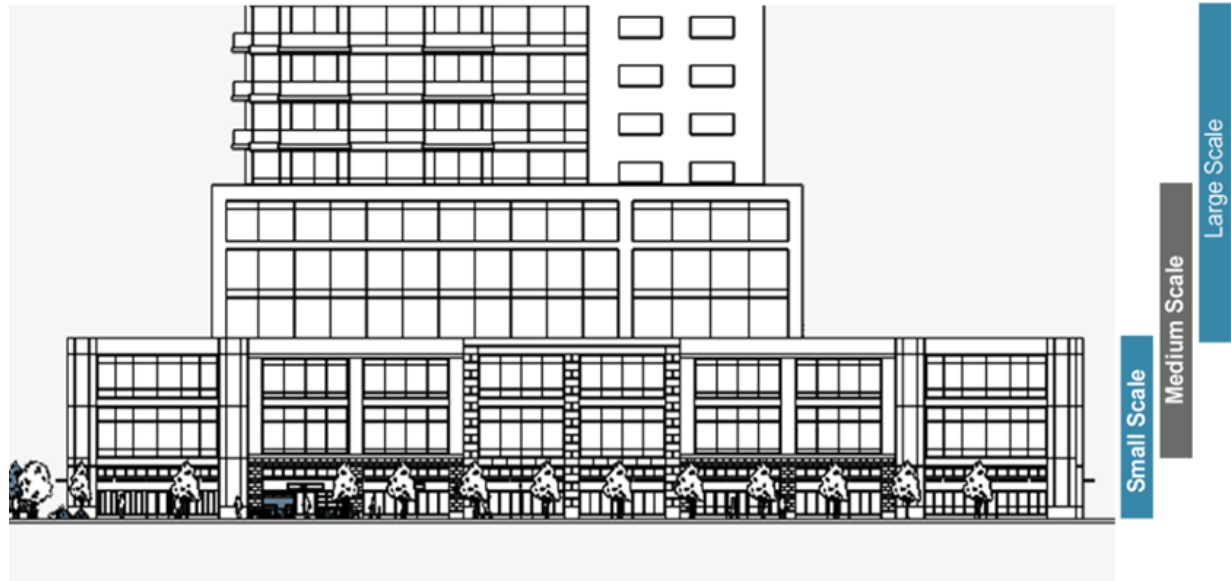


Design Guidelines /Streetscapes

- Design Guidelines are divided into Base, Middle and Top-Tripartite Design

Base relates building to:

- Human scale,
- Defines the edges of adjacent streets,
- Maintains access to sunlight for pedestrians, open space and adjacent properties.

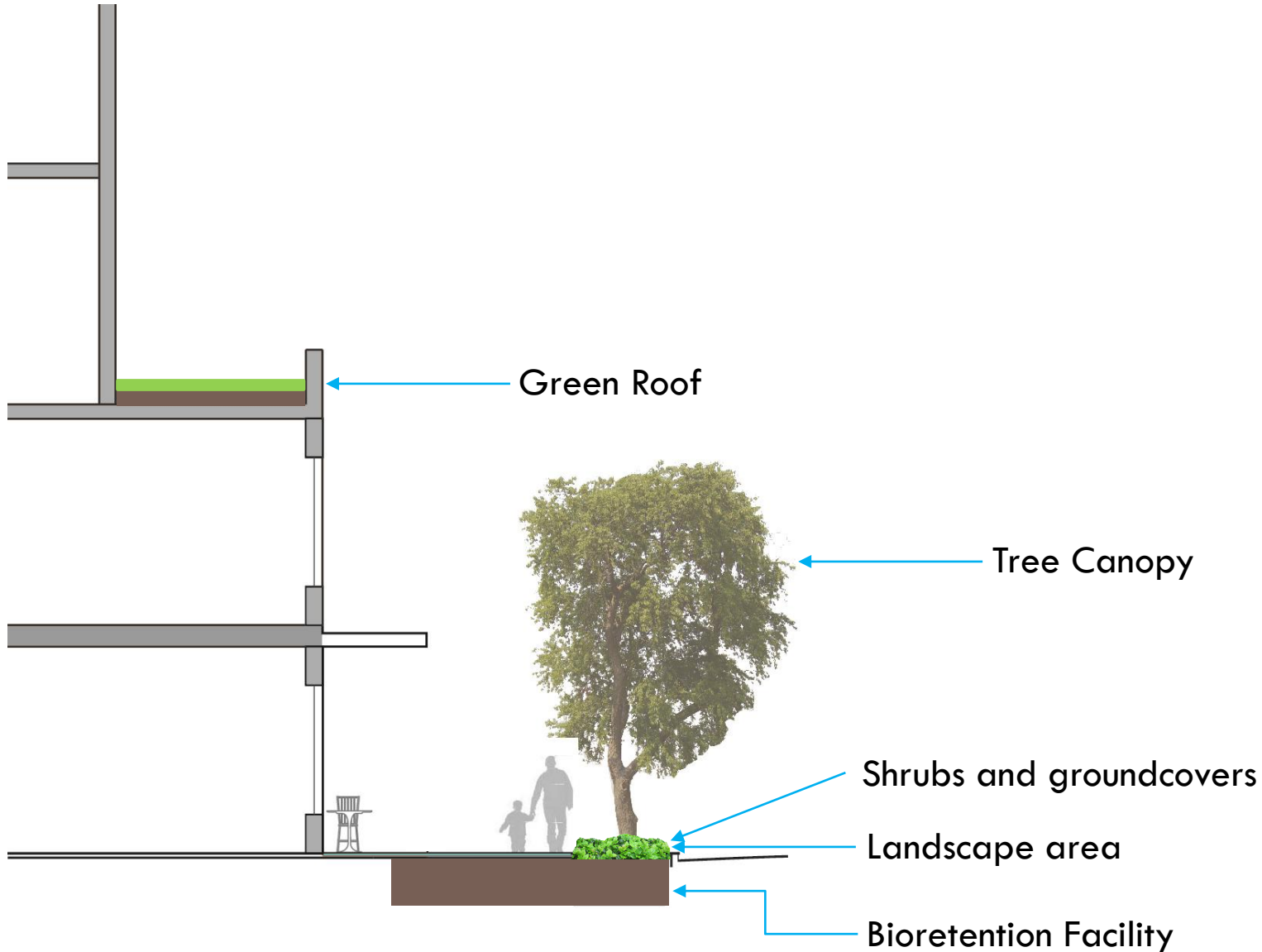


Green and Sustainable Features

- Enhanced focus on sustainability and ecological performance
- Softens the urban environment
- Increases green features in the public realm

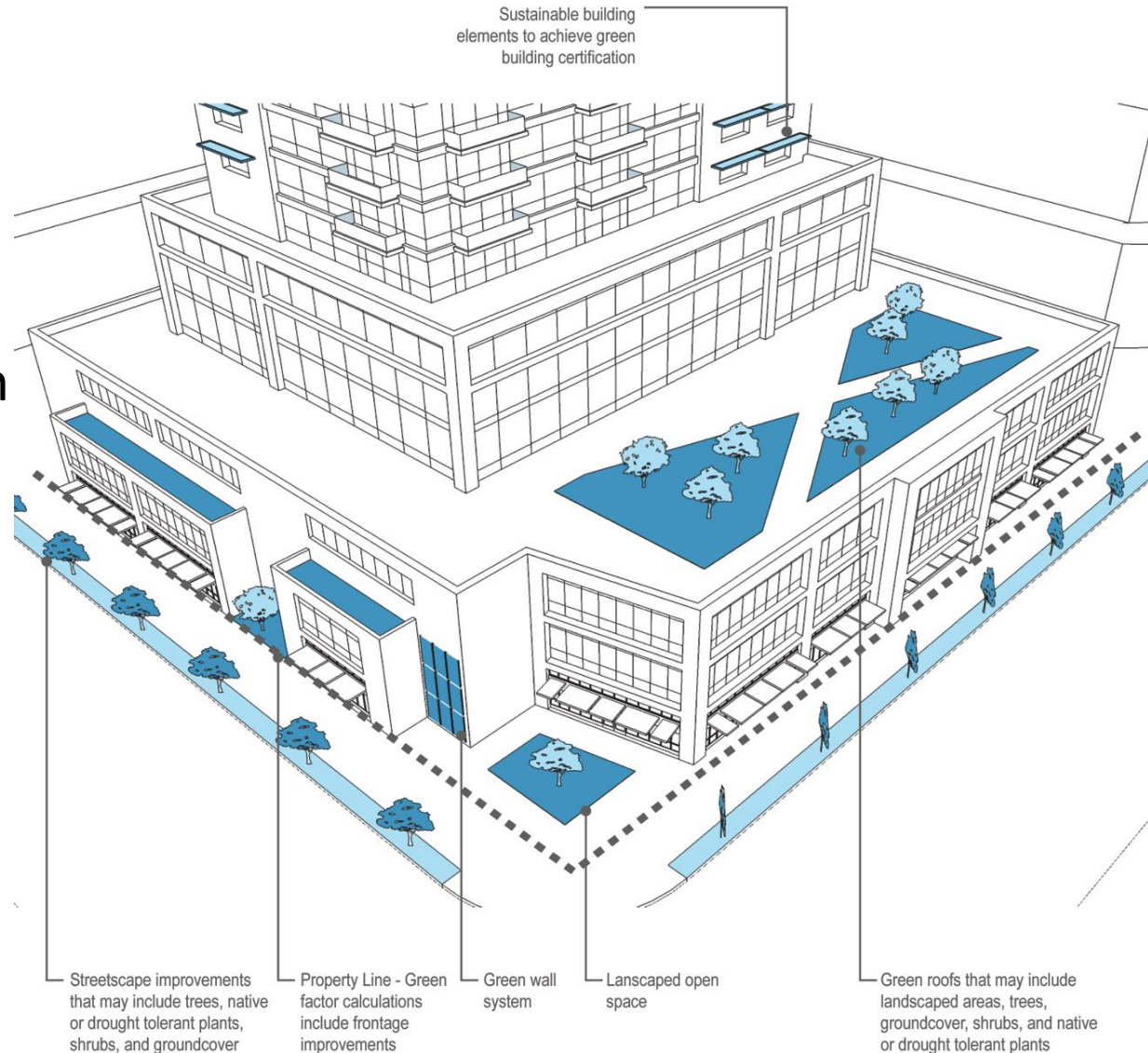


How the Green and Sustainability Factor Works

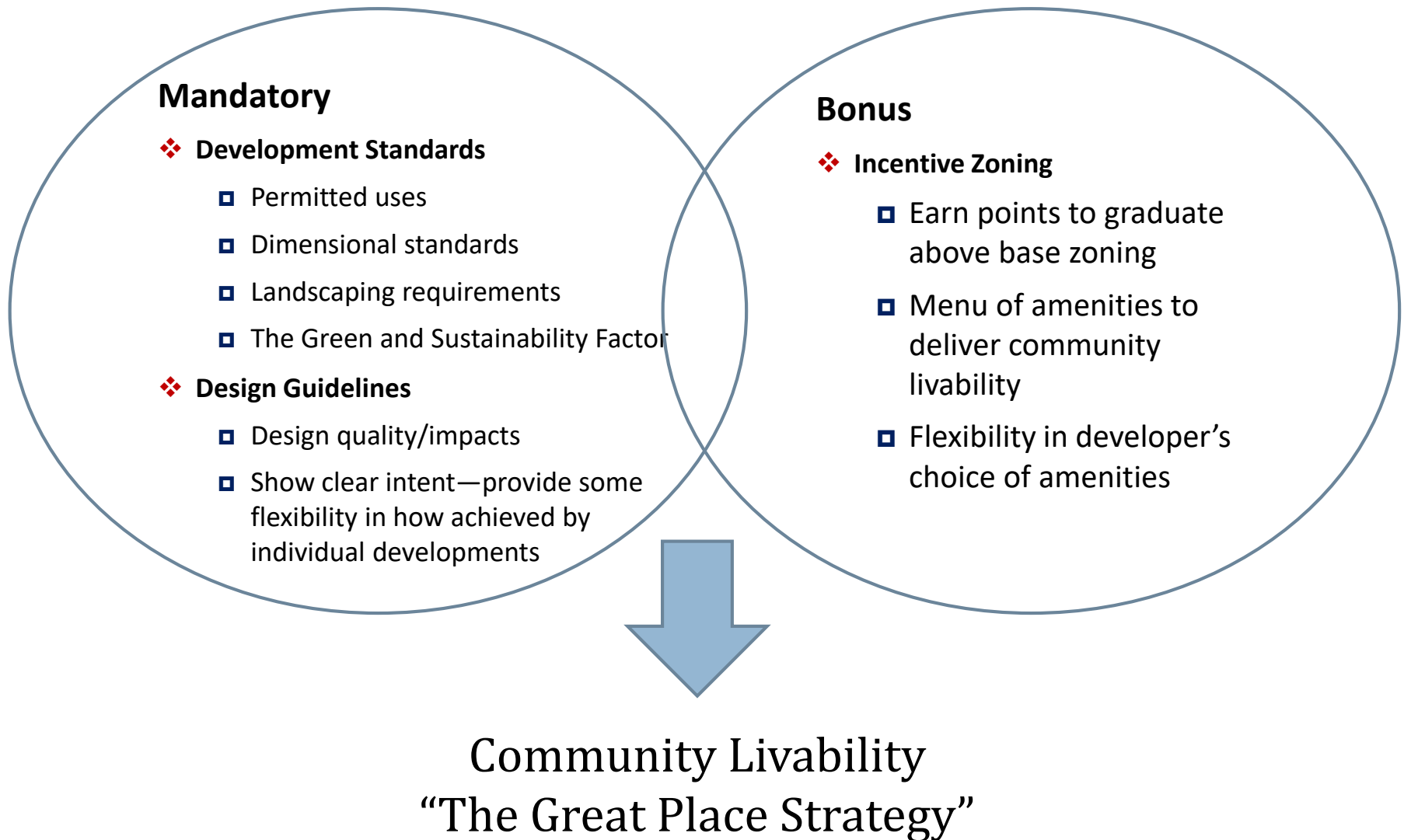


Green and Sustainability Factor

Flexible system that promotes Downtown livability through the inclusion of green and sustainable features in all new development



Role of Incentive Zoning – “Connecting the Dots”



Amenity Incentive System

- Revised list of amenities
 - Improves relationship of amenities to Downtown neighborhood character
- Updated economics
 - Base FARs 90% of maximum FAR
 - Height valuation consistent with Berk Analysis/ULI Panel
- Fee-in-lieu option
- Flexible amenity
- Periodic review and monitoring

Recommended List of Amenities

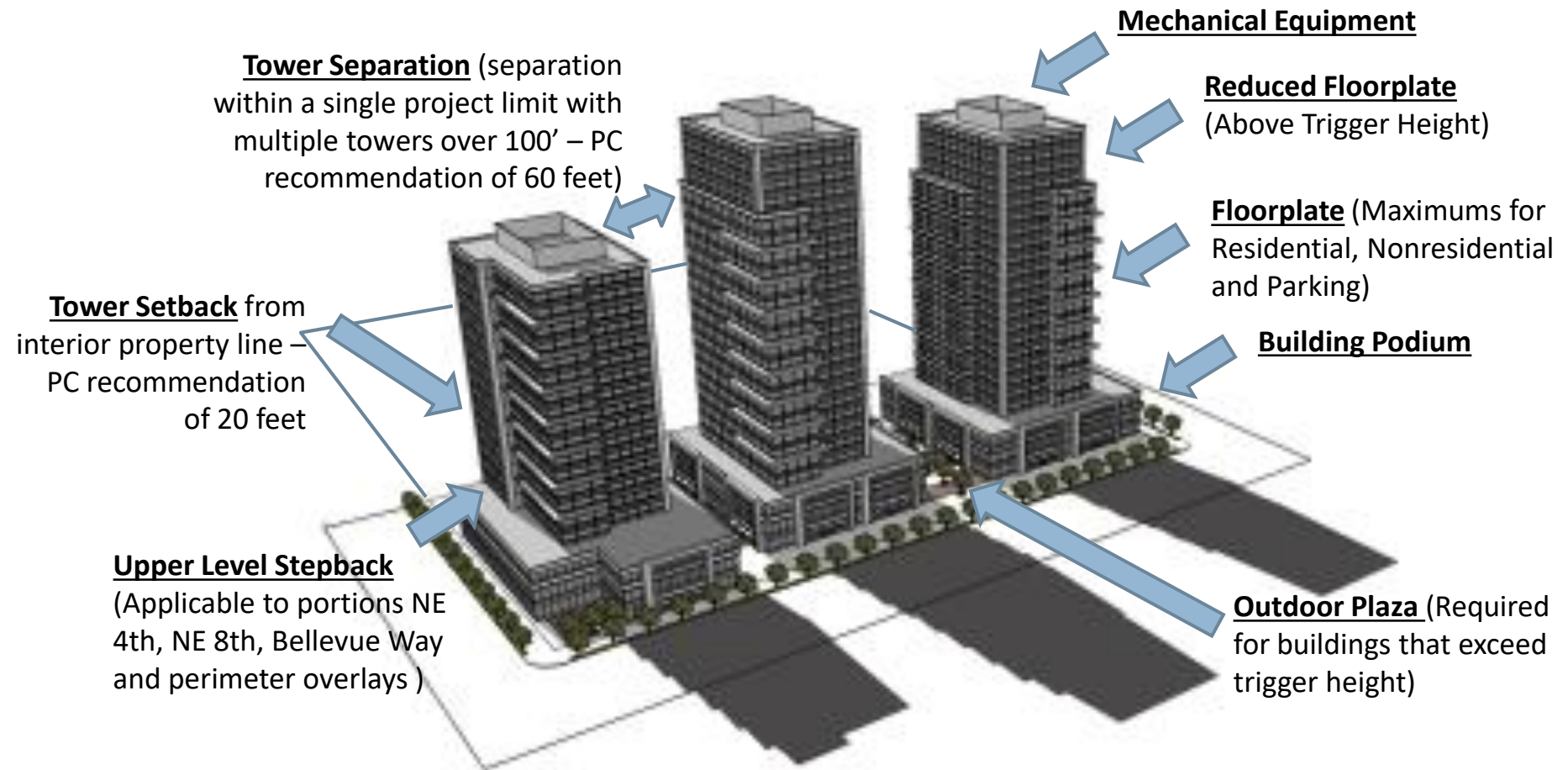
OPEN SPACE/PUBLIC REALM

- Major Pedestrian Corridor
- Outdoor Plaza
- Donation of Park Property
- Improvement of Public Park Property
- Enhanced Streetscape
- Active Recreation Area
- Enclosed Plaza
- Alleys with Addresses

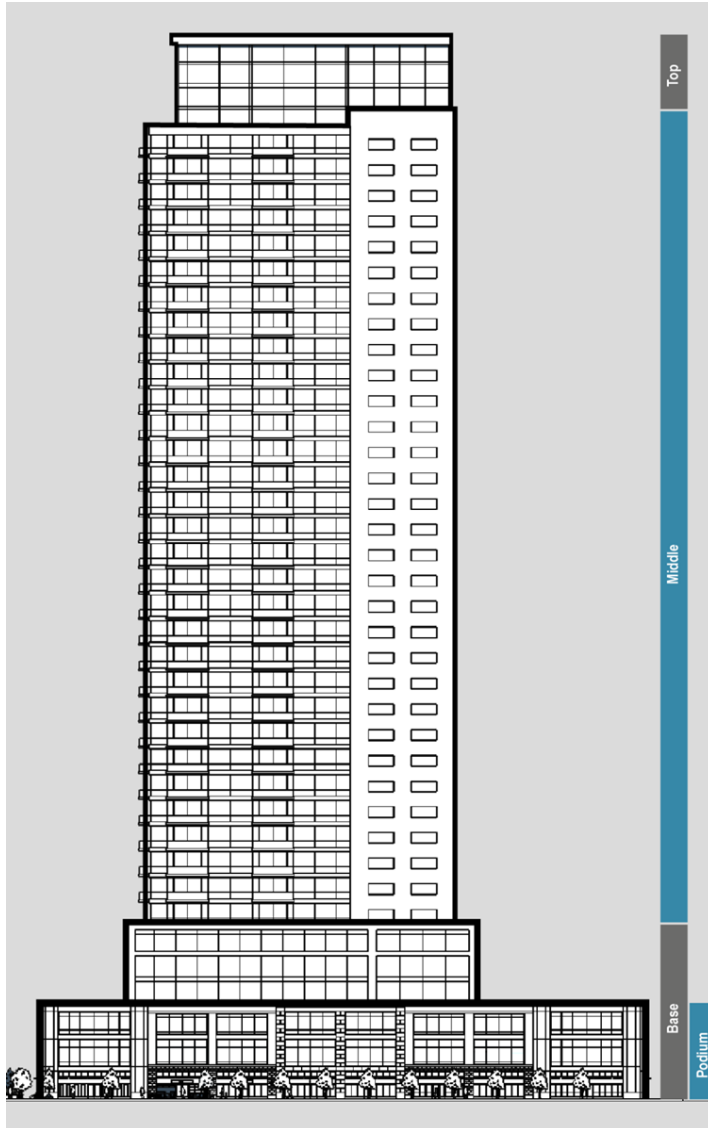
OTHER AMENITIES

- Free-standing Canopies
- Pedestrian Bridges
- Performing Arts Space
- Public Art
- Water Features
- Historic Preservation
- Historic Resources Documentation
- Neighborhood Serving Uses
- Sustainability Certification
- Flexible Amenity

Urban Form Components



Design Guidelines / Urban Form



Tripartite Design

Top

- Create Attractive Building Silhouettes and Rooflines.
- Foster Attractive Rooftops
- Integrate rooftop elements into the building design.

Middle

- Thoughtful tower placement can minimize effects from shade, shadow and wind effects.
- Design tower to provide visual interest and articulation.

Building Height and Form

Principles from Downtown CAC

- Additional height or density would result in a better urban design outcome
- Distinguish the special market niche of Downtown
- Deliver additional amenities that enhance the livability
- Address any impacts that may result from the additional height or density
- Provide for appropriate transitions between Downtown and adjoining residential neighborhoods

Relationship to Livability

- More light and air between buildings
- More ground-level open space
- Variability in building heights
- Reinforce district identity
- Add “lift” to incentive system
- More distinctive skyline
- Interesting and memorable architecture
- Add density around light rail transit investment

Height & Form – Major Recommendations

Note: Recommendation for voluntary 1.0 FAR exemption towards affordable housing that could be used in residential projects.

A-1: Retain height limits

B-2: Height increase to 176'-264'+mech for residential from 105'+mech

DT O-1: Height increase to 600' from 450'

DT O-2 South, west of 106th: No height increase (see footnote 18)

DT MU: Height increase to 288'+mech from 230'+mech for residential; height increase to 230'+mech from 115'+mech for nonresidential w/ FAR increase to 5.0 from 3.0

A-2: Height increase to 70'+mech from 55'+mech

DT O-2 North: Height increase to 460'+mech from 288'+mech

DT O-2 East: Height increase to 403'+mech from 288'+mech

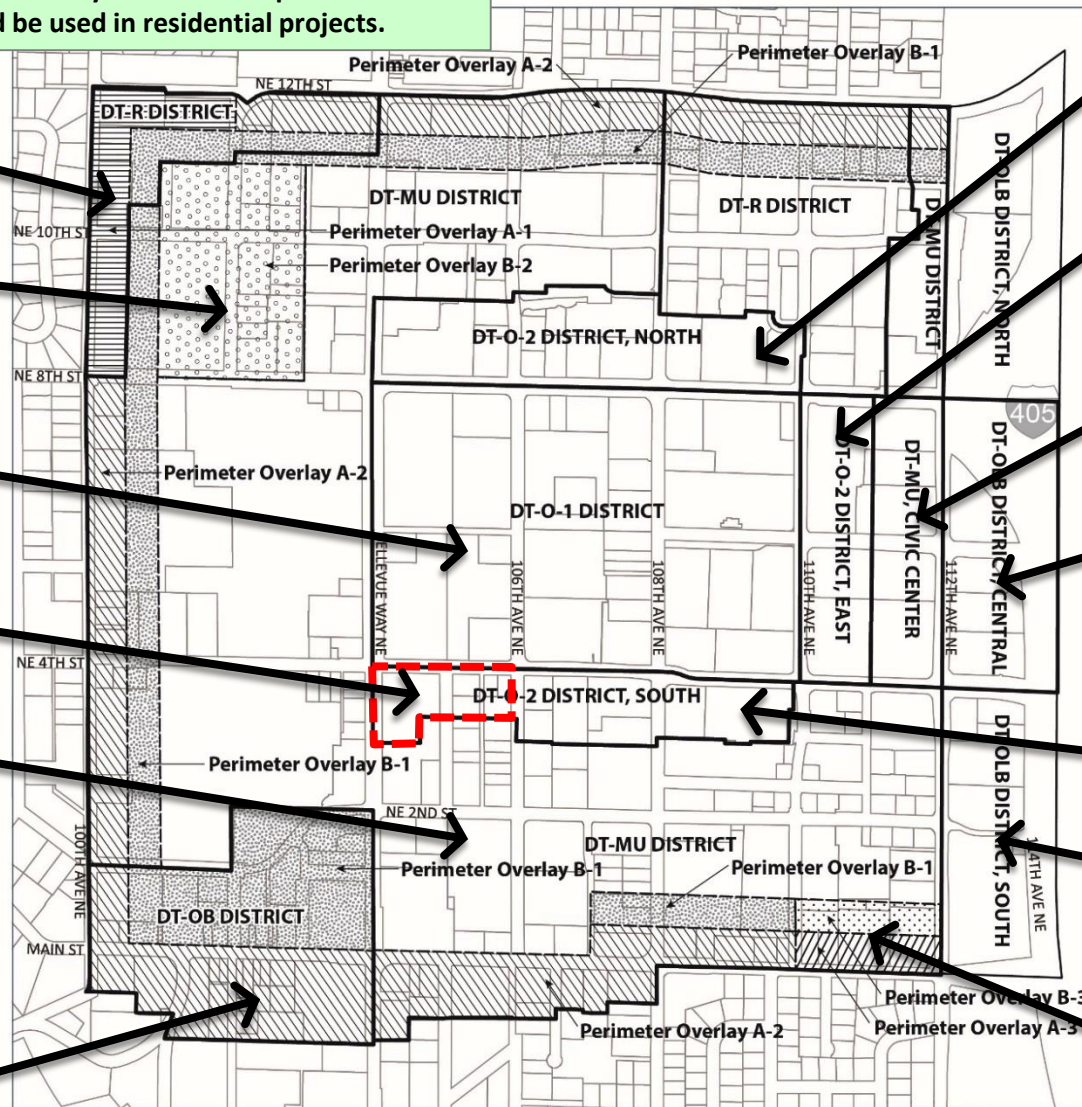
DT MU Civic Center: Height increase to 403'+mech from 115'-230'+mech w/ FAR increase to 6.0 from 3.0-5.0

DT OLB Central: Height increase to 403'+mech from 85'-100'+mech w/ FAR increase to 6.0 from 3.0

DT O-2 South, east of 106th: Height increase to 345'+mech from 288'+mech

DT OLB South: Height increase to 230'+mech from 85'-100'+mech w/ FAR increase to 5.0 from 3.0

A-3: Height increase to 70' from 55', res. FAR to 5.0 from 3.5; B-3 res. height to 230'+mech from 105'+mech



Height & Form – Major Recommendations O-1 and O-2

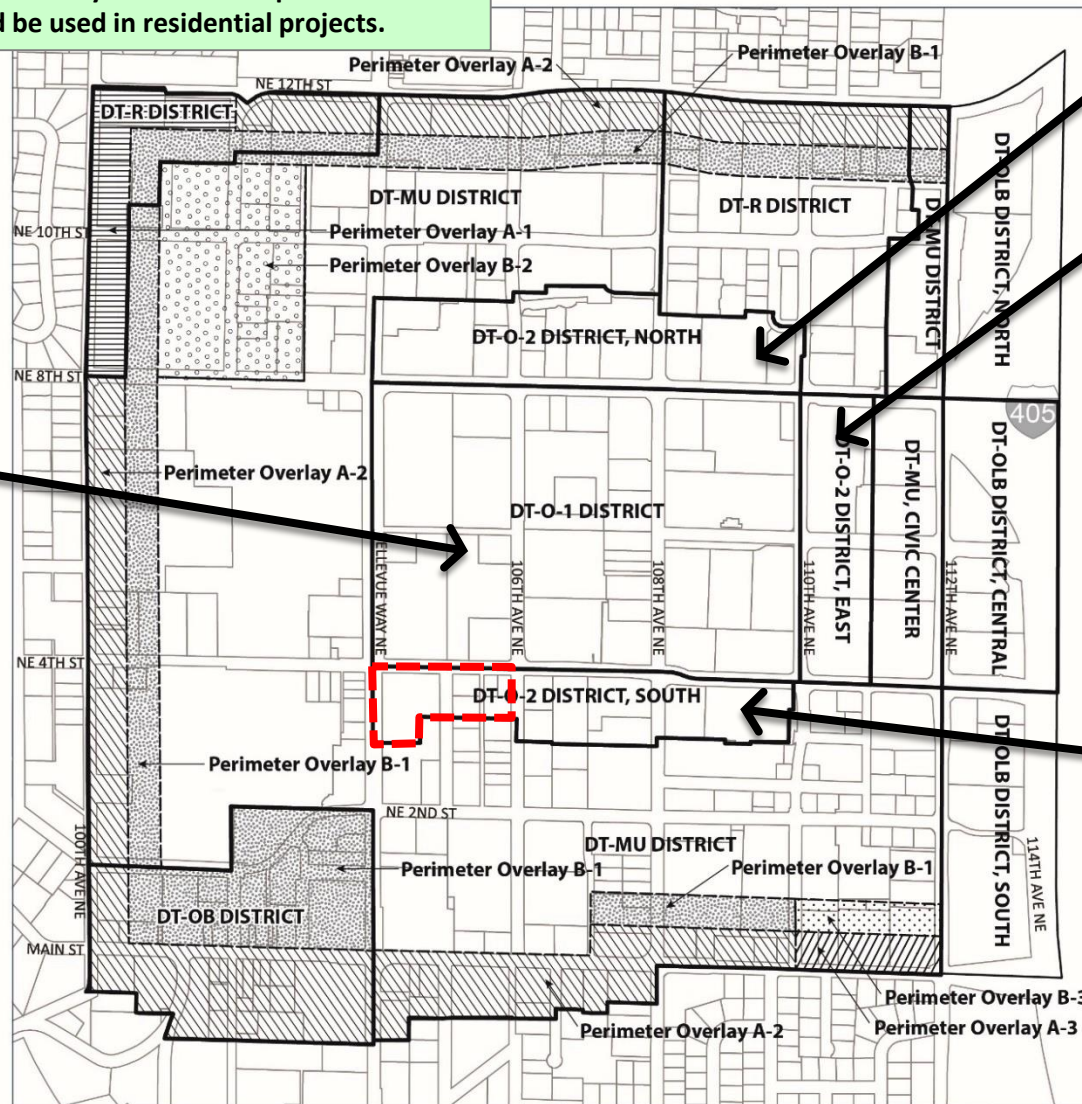
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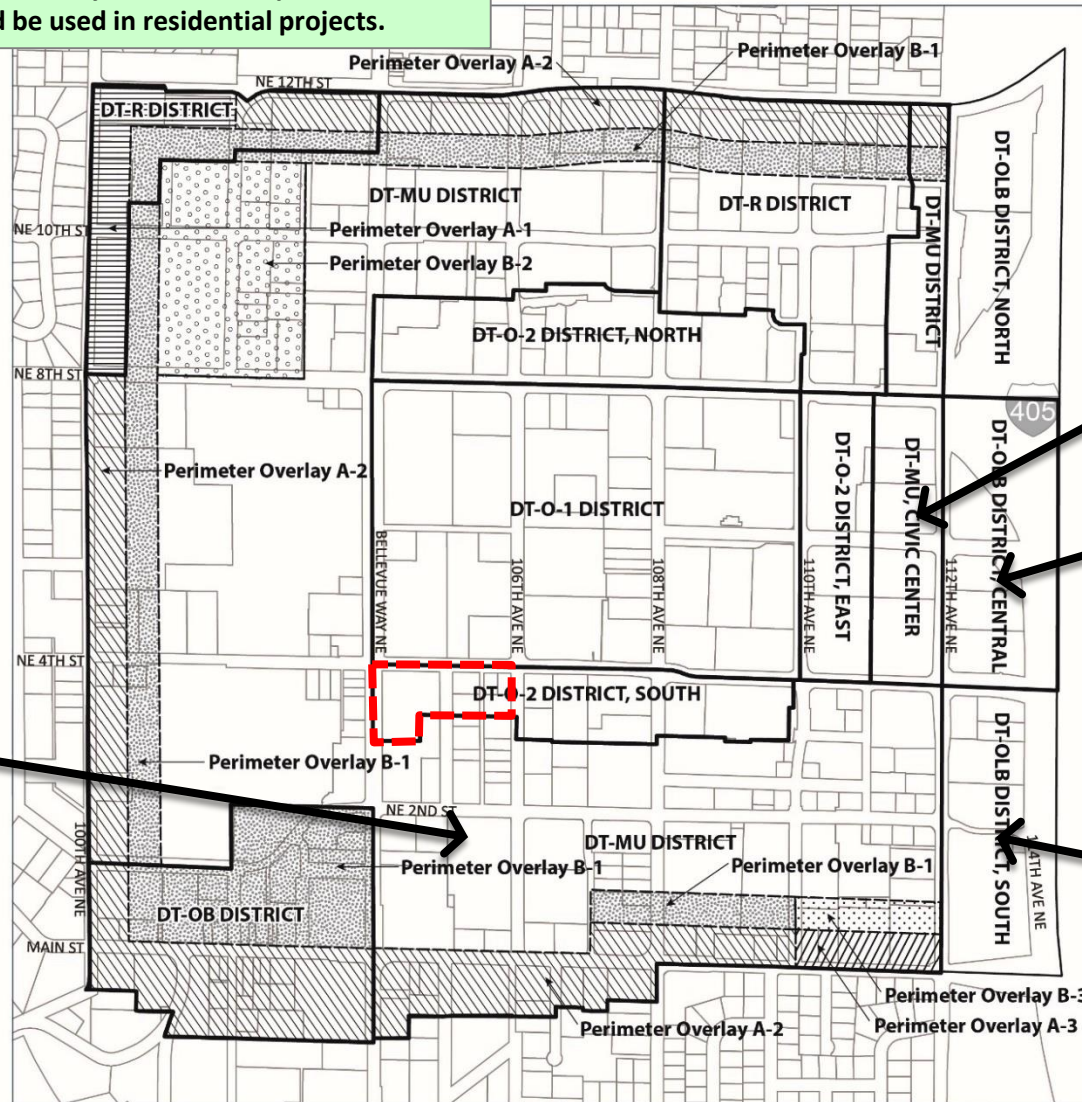
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DT O-2 South, east of 106th: Height increase to 345'+mech from 288'+mech



Height & Form – Major Recommendations-OLB and MU

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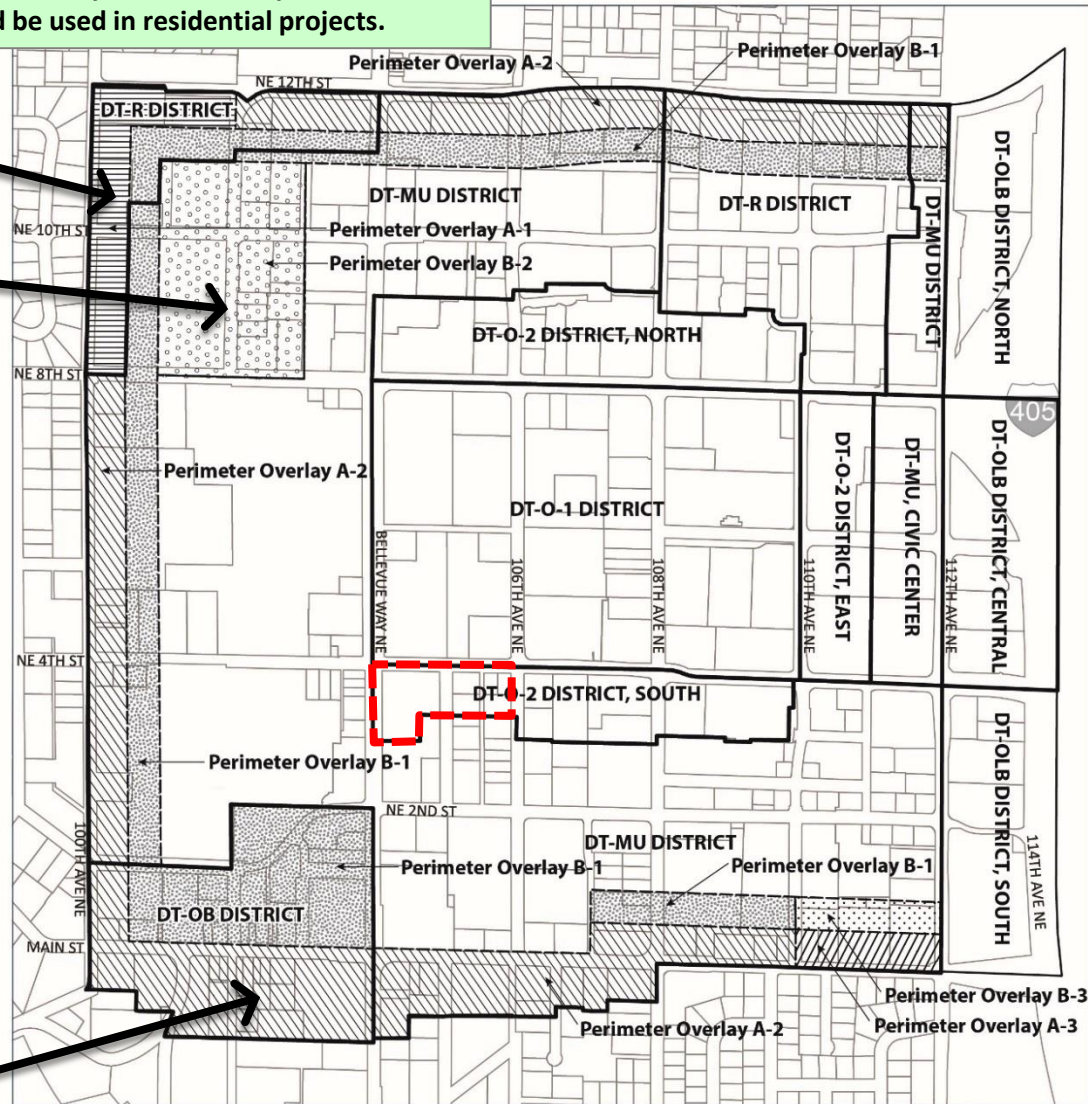
DT OLB South: Height increase to 230'+mech from 85'-100'+mech w/ FAR increase to 5.0 from 3.0

Height & Form – Major Recommendations-Overlays

Note: Recommendation for voluntary 1.0 FAR exemption towards affordable housing that could be used in residential projects.

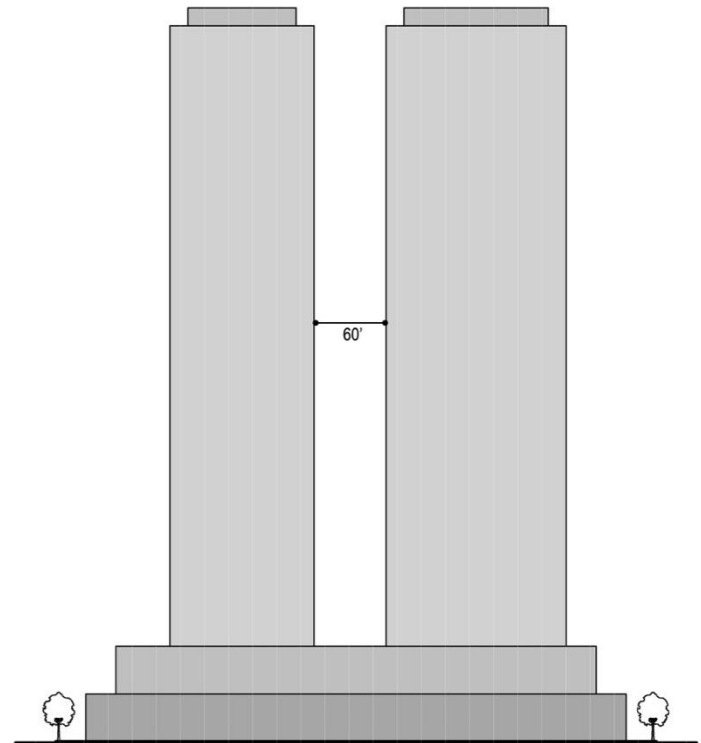
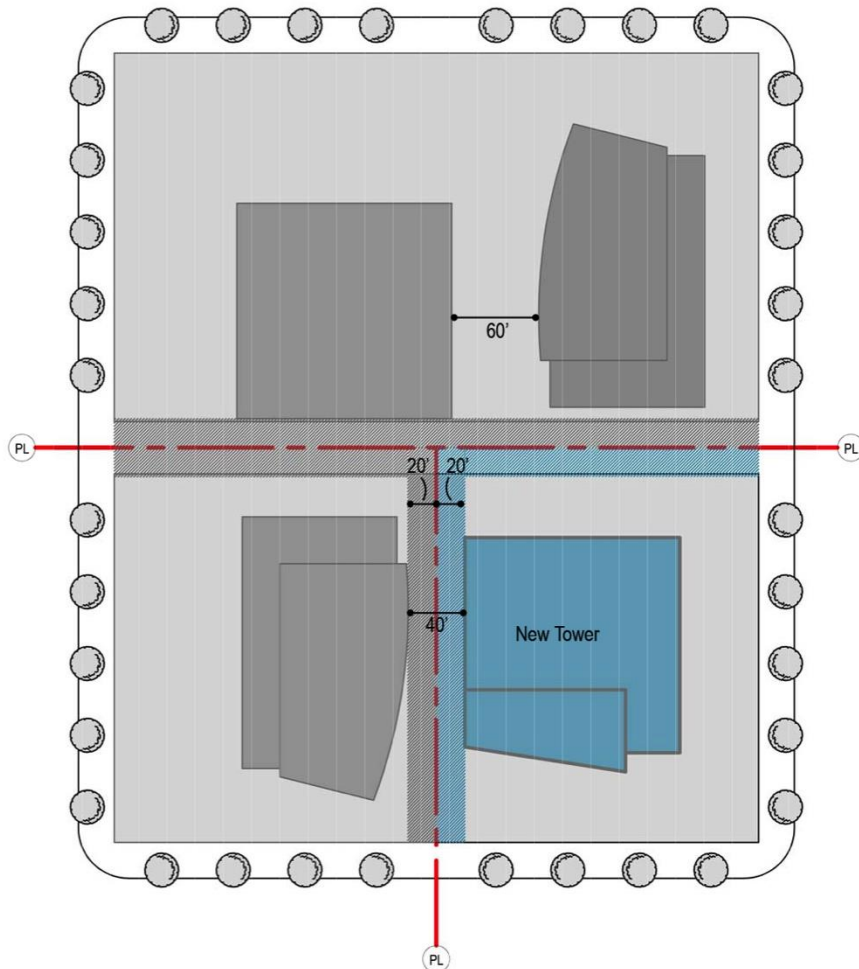
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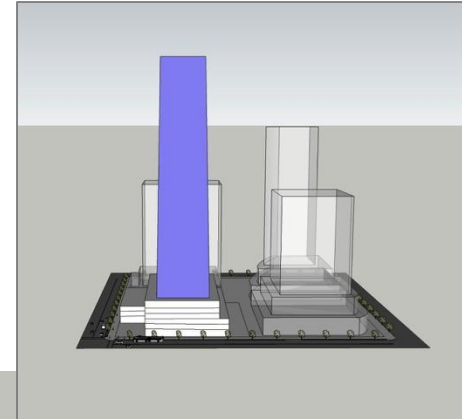
Tower Spacing

- 60-foot tower spacing above 80 feet within project

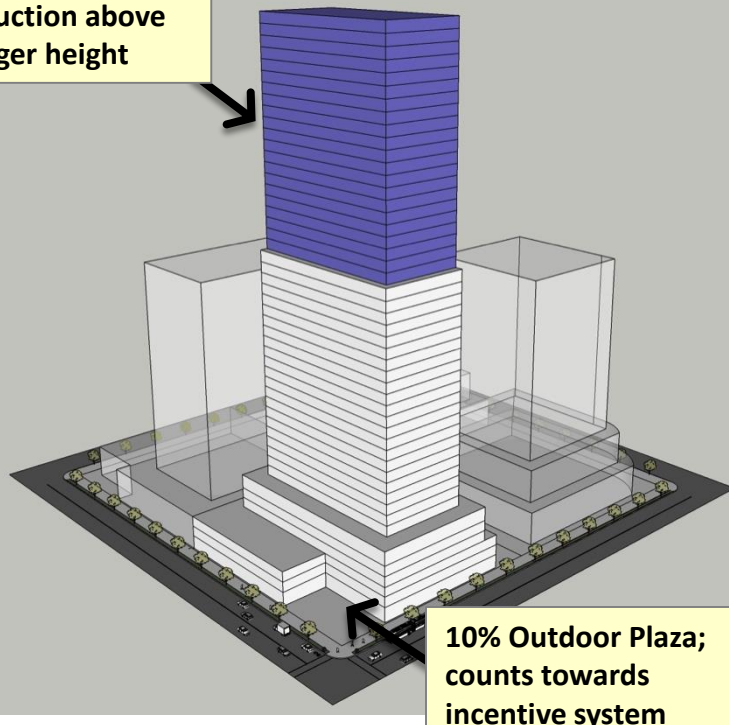


Triggers for Taller Buildings

- Building exceeding “trigger height” must provide 10% open space and a reduction in floor plate size.
- Trigger height is generally old maximum height; except OLB
- Planning Commission recommended a range of 10 -25%, staff will bring back more information on that topic.

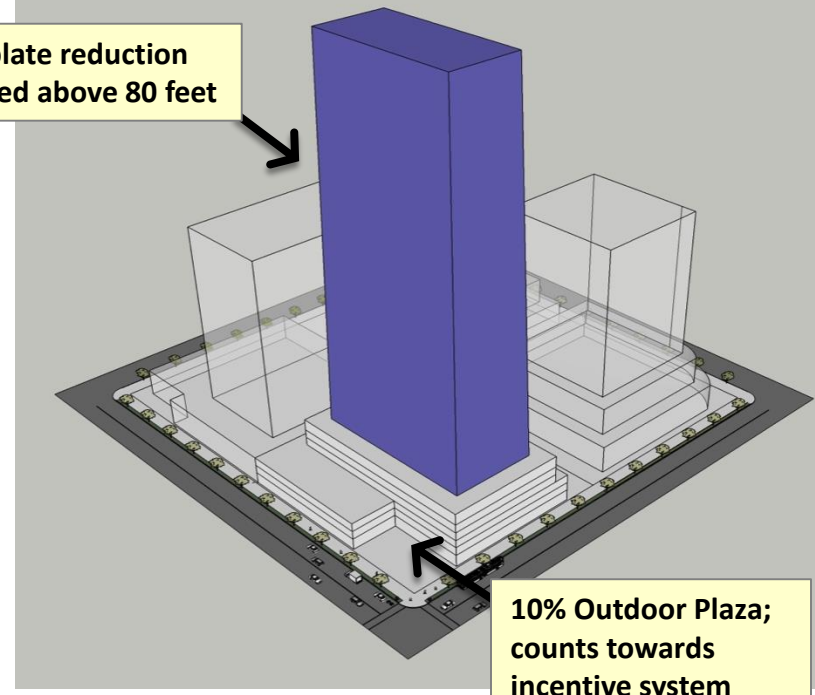


10% floor plate
reduction above
trigger height



10% Outdoor Plaza;
counts towards
incentive system

Floor plate reduction
averaged above 80 feet



10% Outdoor Plaza;
counts towards
incentive system

Design Guidelines/Open Spaces

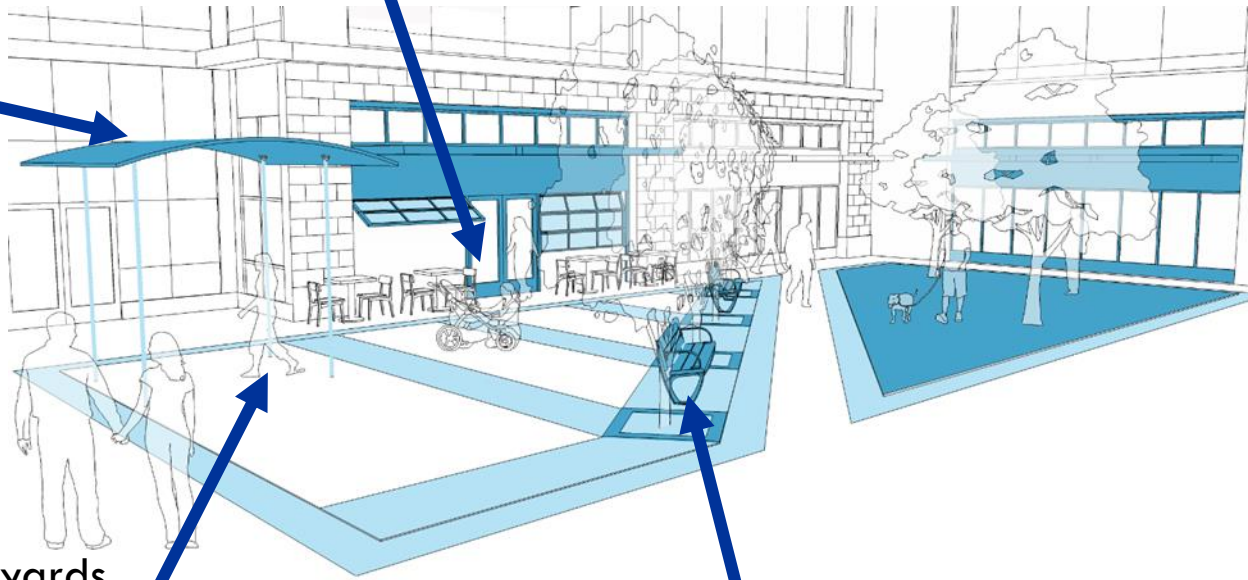
Provide structures or pavilions that are easily accessible

Create vitality with active ground floor uses that provide spatial definition

Use buildings to surround green spaces and provide spatial definition

Provide courtyards, squares, and plazas adjacent to ground floor uses

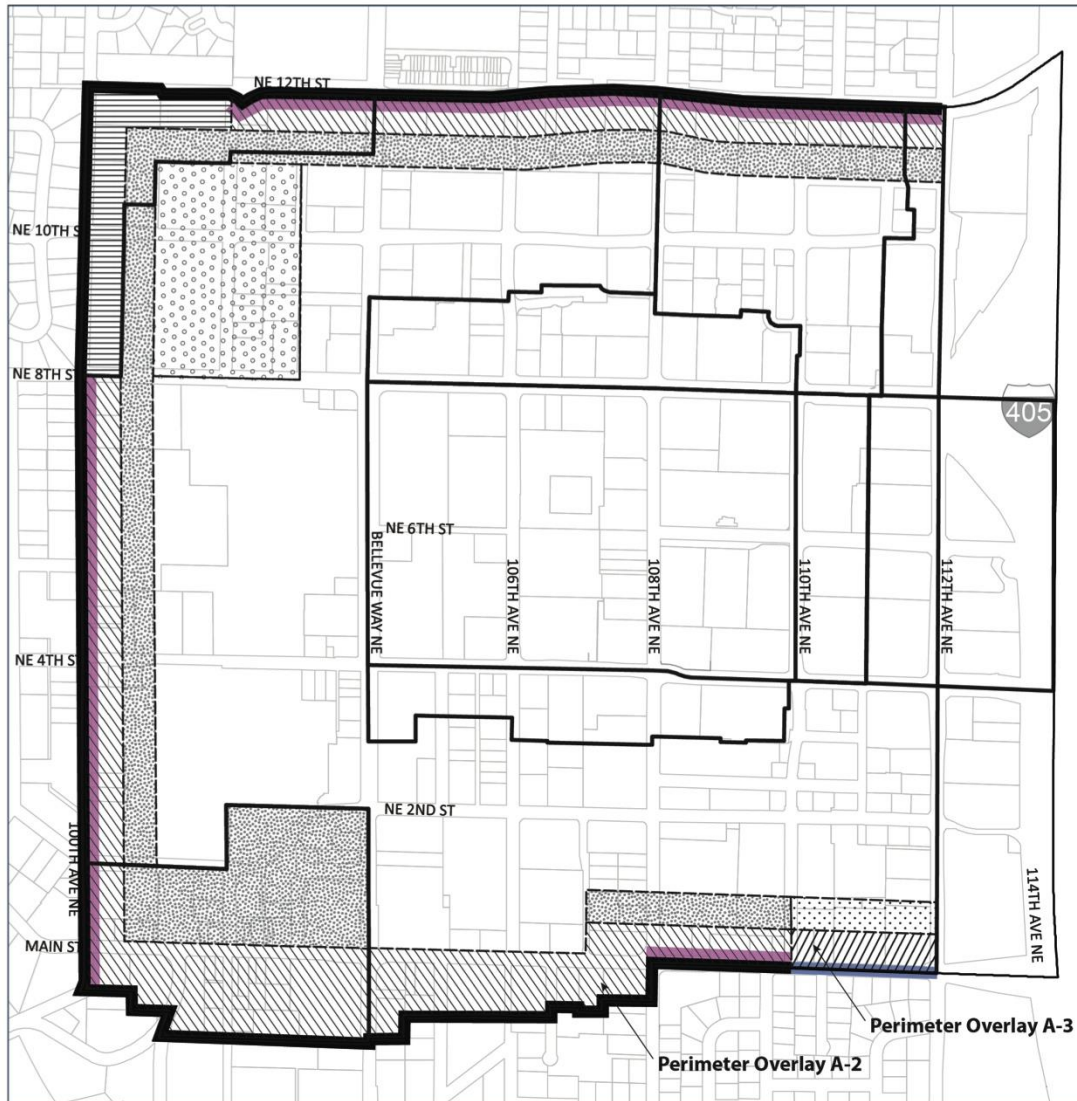
Provide opportunities for seating



Additional Code Changes

- Transitions at the Downtown Boundary
- Parking Requirements
- Code Flexibility

Downtown Linear Buffer



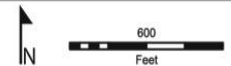
20' LINEAR BUFFER

CHANGES

- Linear Buffer Removed in A-3 Overlay
- Linear Buffer Measured from Curb in A-2 Overlay (formerly back of sidewalk)

LEGEND

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Land Use District | Perimeter Overlay A-1 |
| Perimeter Overlay B-1 | Perimeter Overlay A-2 |
| Perimeter Overlay B-2 | Perimeter Overlay A-3 |
| Perimeter Overlay B-3 | Parcels |
| Downtown Boundary | Linear Buffer |



Parking

- Retained Director's authority to increase the amount of required parking
- Retained reduction allowed for shared parking, but must be supported by a technical analysis
- Parking structure dimensions changed to accommodate ADA requirements
- Visitor parking added as a requirements for residential developments

Code Flexibility

- Added flexibility to ensure the Code allows for the best and most creative development ideas
 - Administrative Departures – 20.25A.030.D.1
 - Council Departures – 20.25A.030.D.2
 - Flexible Amenity – 20.25A.070.D.4

Next Steps

- Future Council Study Sessions, including:
 - ▣ Incentive Zoning (Including amenities)
 - ▣ Height and Density
 - ▣ Floor plate reductions for taller office buildings
 - ▣ Details of 1.0 FAR Exemption for Affordable Housing
- Other Council-identified follow-up items