

# Downtown Livability Initiative

## Planning Commission Recommendations on Downtown Land Use Code Amendments



City Council Study Session  
September 5, 2017

Mac Cummins AICP, PCD Director  
Carol Helland, Code and Policy Director  
Emil King AICP, Strategic Planning Manager



# Tonight's Study Session

## Based on Memory Book – Specific Recommendations or Options Presented for Council Consideration

1. Tower setbacks between projects
2. Floor plate reduction when buildings exceed trigger height, additional info on larger floor plates
3. DT-OLB density and design
4. Affordable housing code flexibility
5. Accessibility and use of alleys
6. Downtown boundary linear buffer
7. Use of in-lieu fees for parks
8. Wrap-up of minor topics

Attachment A

### Memory Book

The following matrix represents a compilation of the topics raised or questions asked by the City Council during its review of the Planning Commission Recommendation on the Downtown Land Use Code Update. Each of the topics and questions is identified by the date that is was raised, the origin of the comment, by the date that the topic question was discussed and the date that it was resolved.

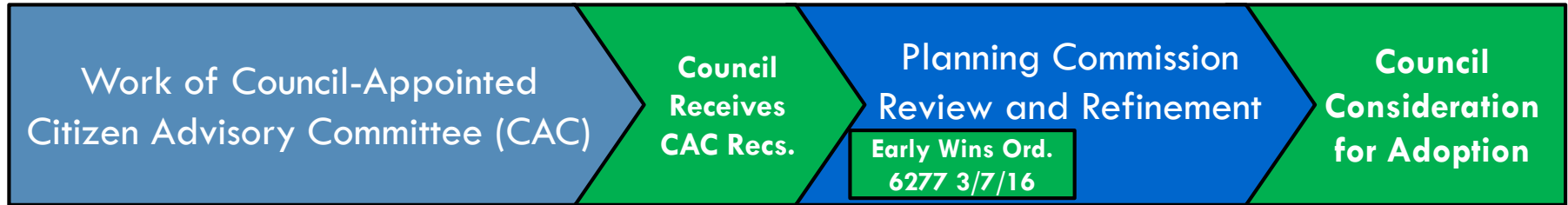
TOPICS AND FOLLOW-UP	REQUESTOR	TARGET DATE FOR DISCUSSION/RESOLUTION
June 26, 2017 – Code Topics for Follow-Up		
Downtown Office Limited Business District <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Density/design parameters (height, floorplates)</li><li>• Incentives</li><li>• Relationship to East Main Station Area Planning</li></ul>	Chelminiak Robinson	Originally targeted for July 17, but discussion postponed until Sept. 5
Floorplate reduction with added height	Chelminiak Wallace	Discussed on July 17 and discussion to be continued on Sept. 5
10% open space with added height	Chelminiak Robinson	July 10 and discussion to be continued on September 5
Tower separation (w/visuals)	Wallace	
Transportation analysis briefing	Lee Wallace	July 10
Downtown parking flexibility	Lee Chelminiak Wallace	July 10
Small site exceptions and deviations	Wallace	July 10
Details of affordable housing exemption	Reserved in Code for Council Discussion	July 17 and continued until Sept. 5 for affordable housing language and departures
20' Downtown boundary buffer/landscaping strip	Chelminiak	Sept. 5
Fee in lieu incentive zoning for parks	Robinson	Sept 5

# Meeting Schedule

	Council Meeting Date	Topics
☑	<b>Meeting 1</b> <b>June 26 – Study Session</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transmittal of Planning Commission's Recommended Code to Council</li> <li>• Council identification of topics for additional review</li> </ul>
☑	<b>Meeting 2</b> <b>July 10 – Study Session</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downtown transportation analysis</li> <li>• Tower separation and tower setbacks</li> <li>• Downtown parking flexibility</li> <li>• Small site exceptions and deviations</li> </ul>
☑	<b>Meeting 3</b> <b>July 17 – Study Session</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Floor plate reduction and open space requirement with added height</li> <li>• Affordable housing</li> </ul>
	<b>Meeting 4</b> <b>Sept. 5 – Study Session</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tower setbacks between projects</li> <li>• Floor plate reduction when buildings exceed trigger height, additional info on larger floor plates</li> <li>• DT-OLB density and design</li> <li>• Affordable housing code flexibility</li> <li>• Accessibility and use of alleys</li> <li>• Downtown boundary linear buffer</li> <li>• Use of in-lieu fees for parks</li> <li>• Wrap-up of minor topics</li> </ul>
	<b>Meeting 5</b> <b>Sept. 18 – Study Session</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued Council discussion of Sept. 5 meeting topics, if needed, and review of final code package.</li> </ul>
	<b>Meeting 6</b> <b>Oct. 2 – Regular Session</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final Council Adoption</b></li> </ul>

# Process w/ CAC, Commission, Council

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



**We Are Here**



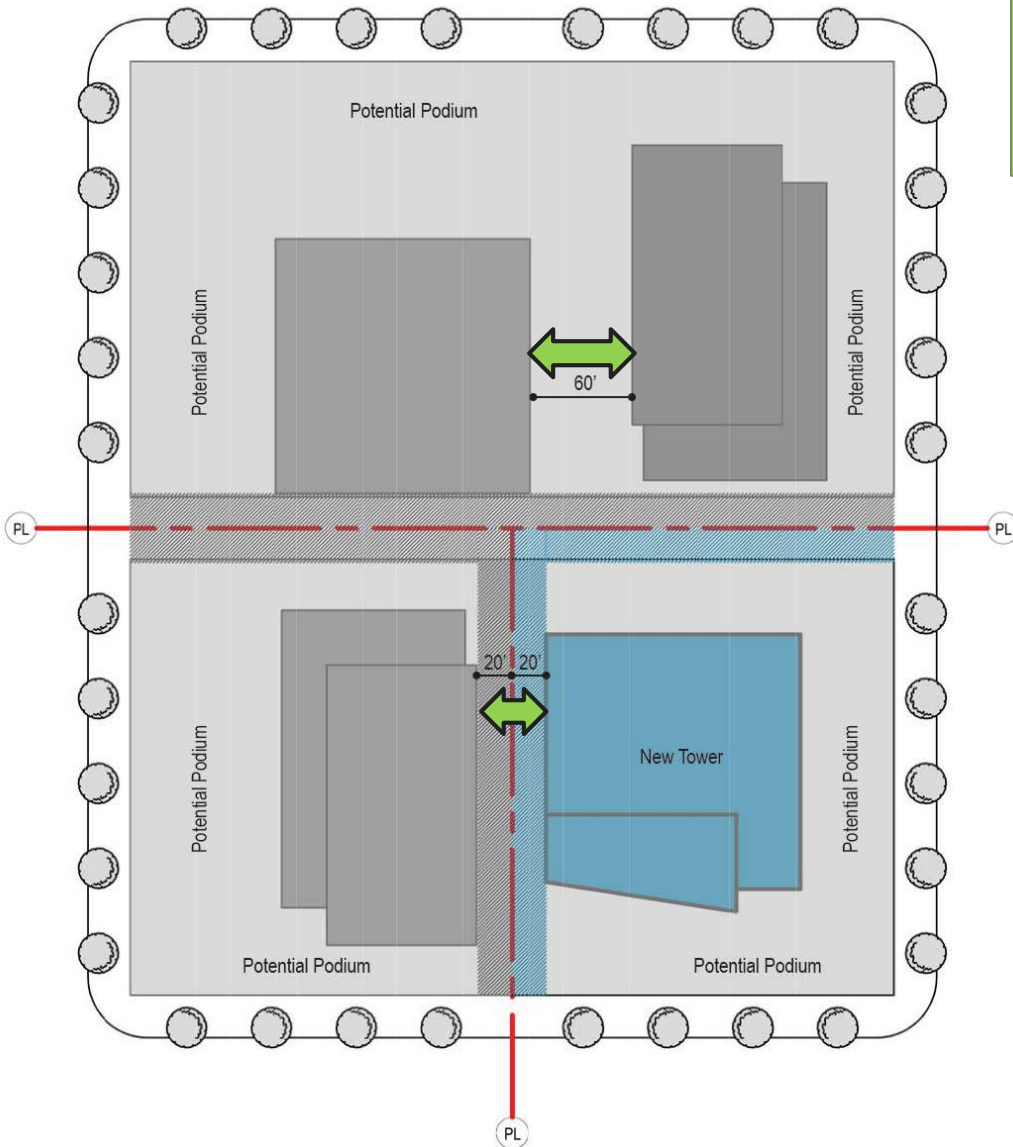


# #1 Tower Setbacks Between Projects

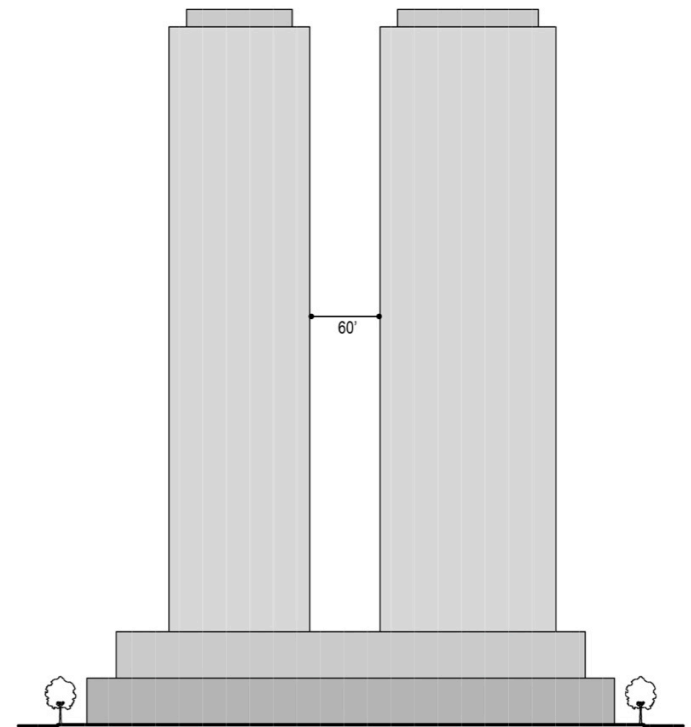
## Options for Council Consideration:

1. Deference to first-in development so 60-foot tower separation between projects is 25 feet for first tower and 35 feet for second tower; or alternatively 20 feet for first tower and 40 feet for second tower.
2. Increase tower setbacks from internal property lines from 20 feet to 30 feet, applied evenly to adjacent properties for 60 feet total.
3. Retain Commission's recommendation for 20-foot tower setbacks from internal property lines.

# Council Direction to Date

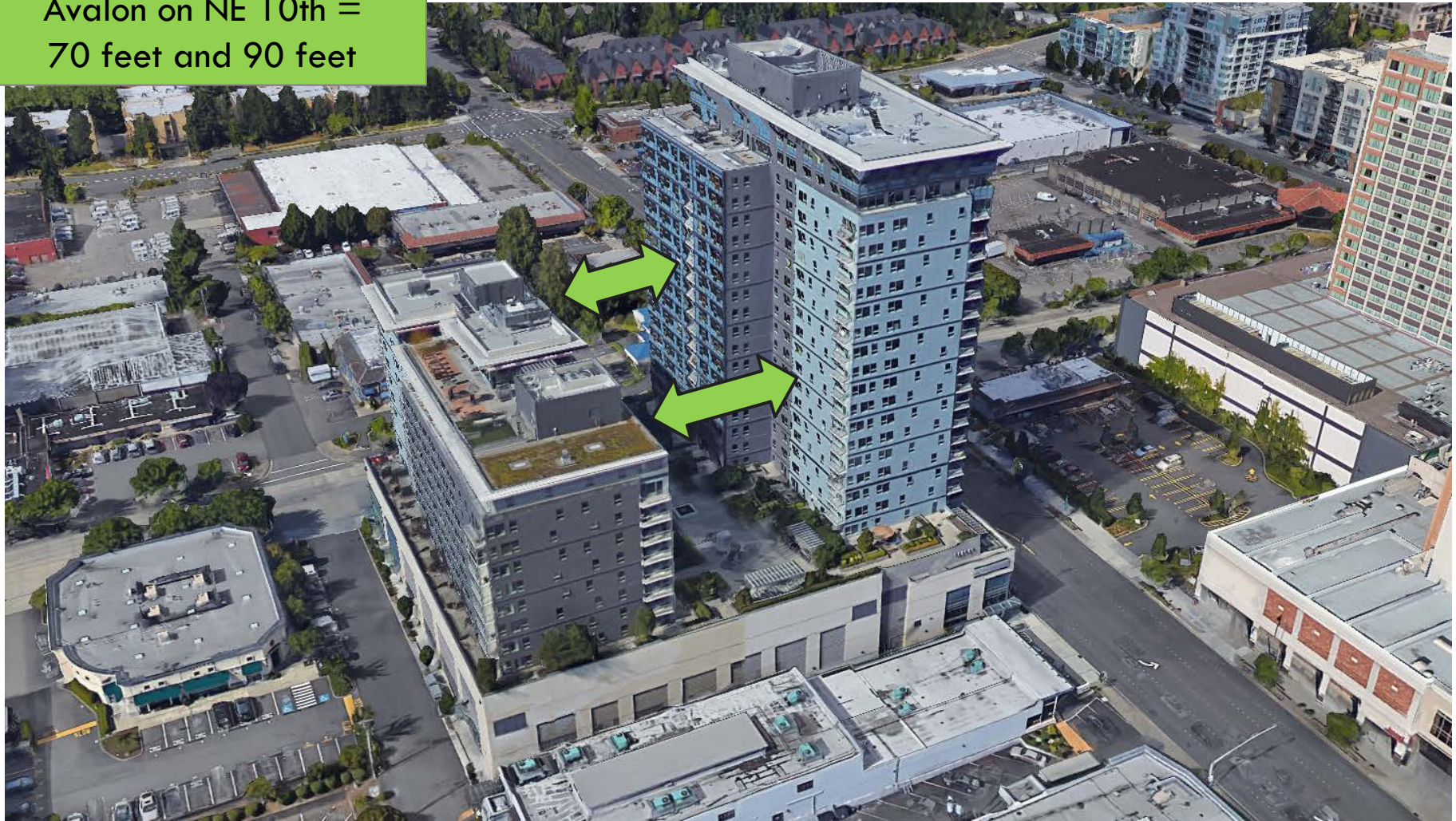


- 60 feet between towers within same project limit
- 20-foot setback for separate projects



# Current Downtown Examples

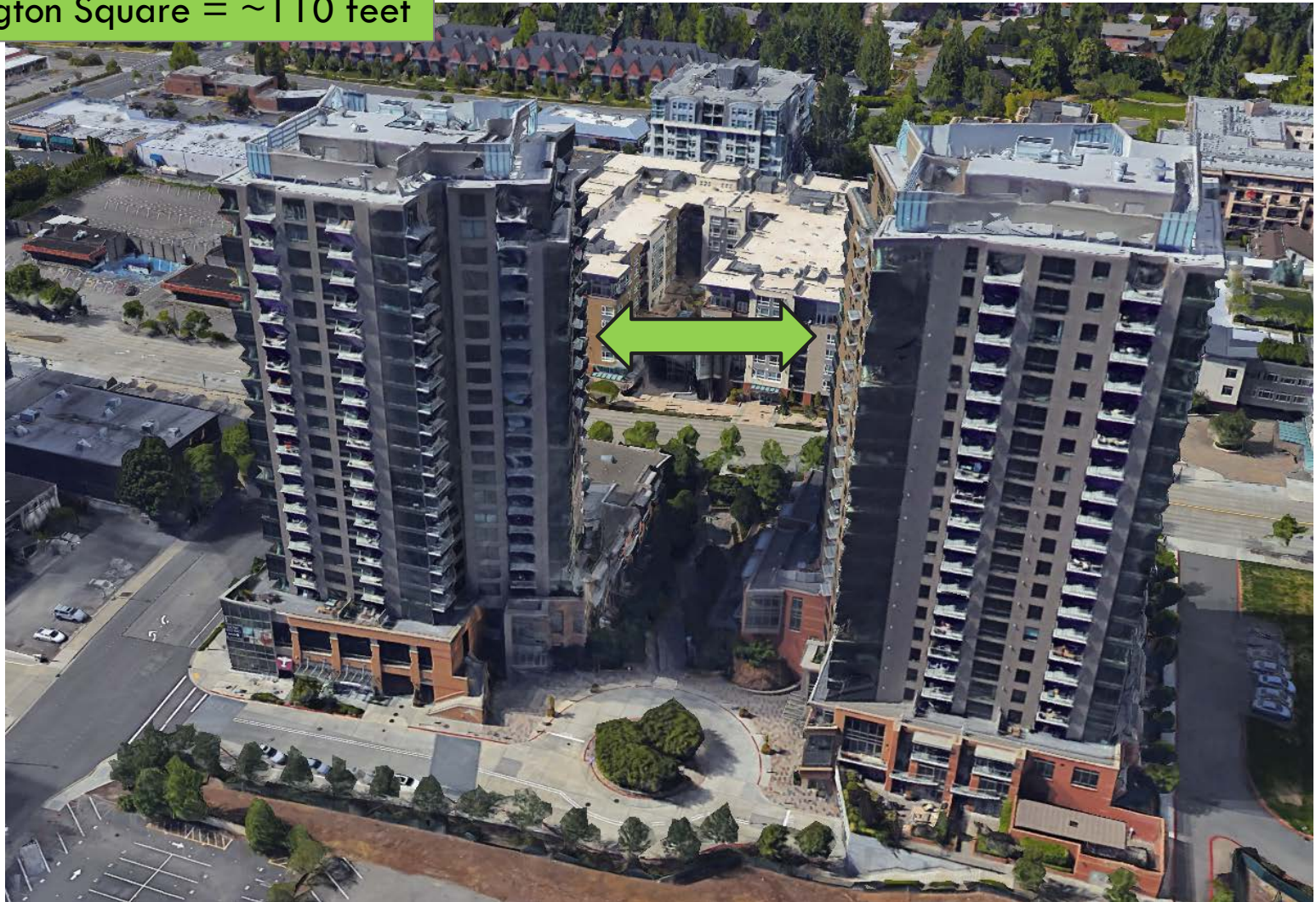
Avalon on NE 10th =  
70 feet and 90 feet





# Current Downtown Examples

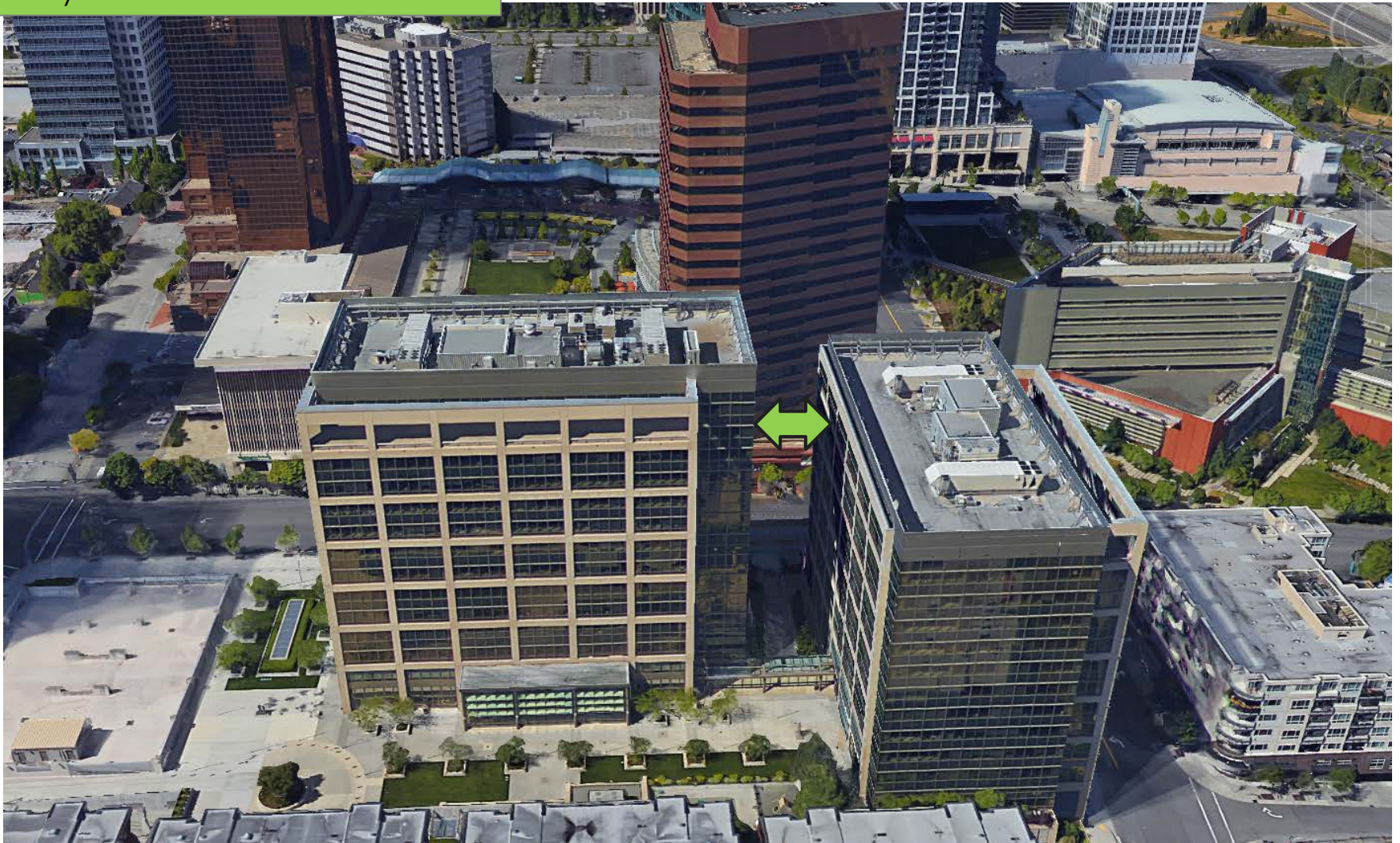
Washington Square = ~110 feet





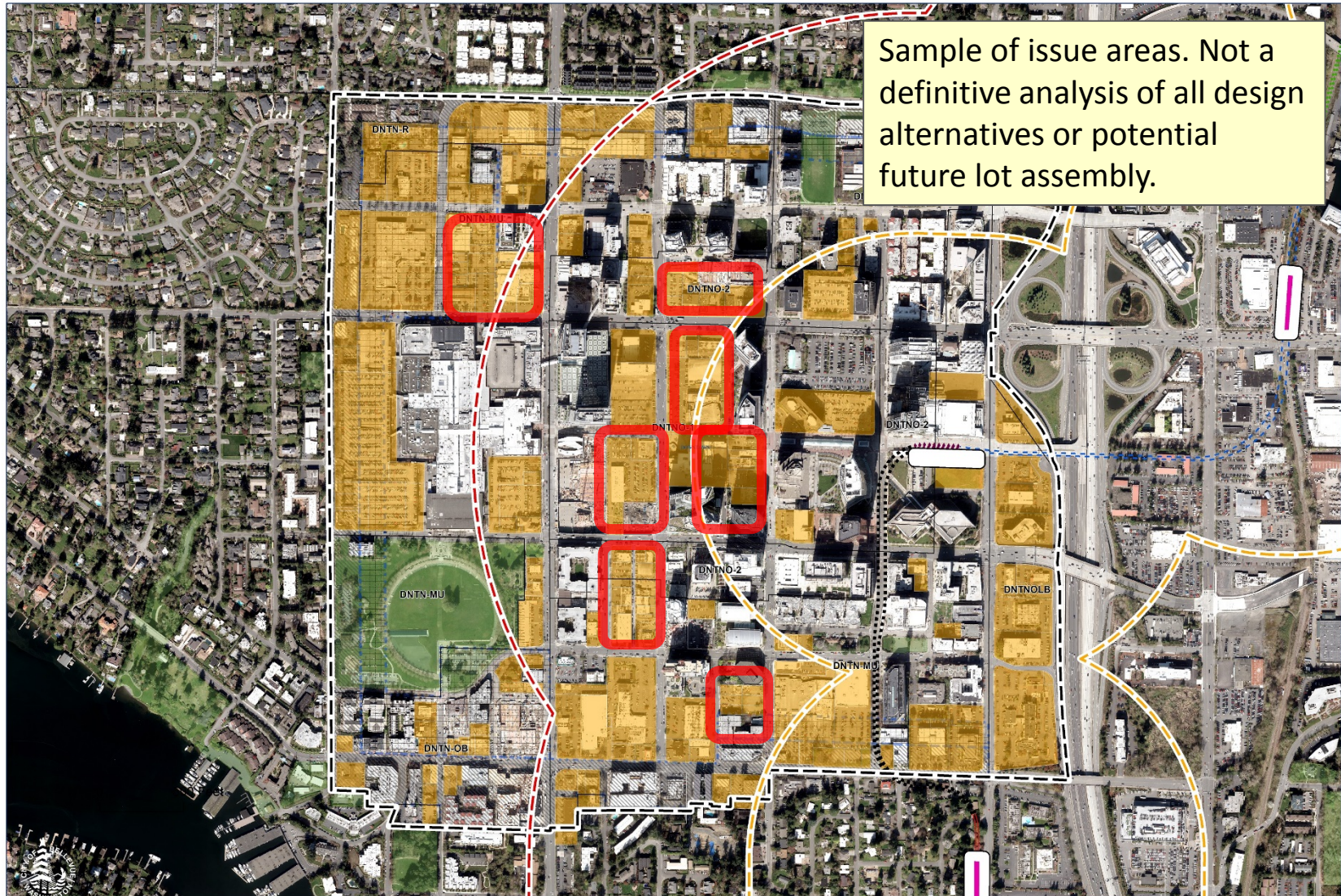
# Current Downtown Example

PSE/Summit 1 & 2 = 55 feet





# Example of Where Spacing Issues May Occur



# CONFIRM COUNCIL DIRECTION

## #1 Tower Setbacks Between Projects

### ■ Options for Council Consideration:

1. Deference to first-in development so 60-foot tower separation between projects is 25 feet for first tower and 35 feet for second tower; or alternatively 20 feet for first tower and 40 feet for second tower.
2. Increase tower setbacks from internal property lines from 20 feet to 30 feet, applied evenly to adjacent properties for 60 feet total.
3. Retain Commission's recommendation for 20-foot tower setbacks from internal property lines.



## #2 Floor Plate Reduction for Exceeding Trigger Height

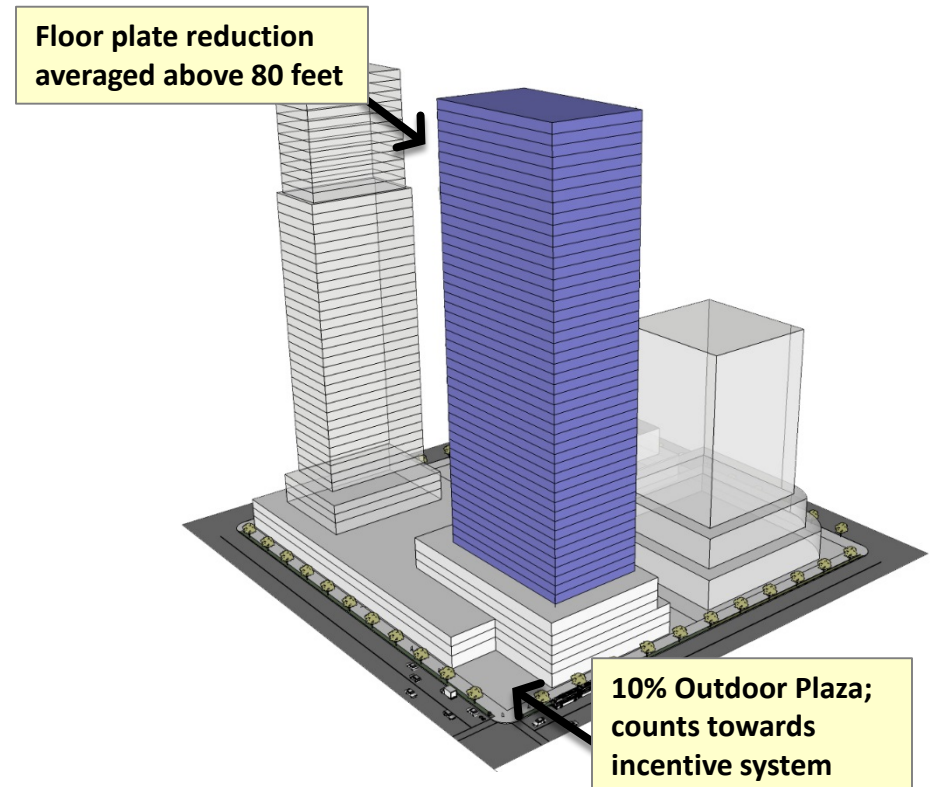
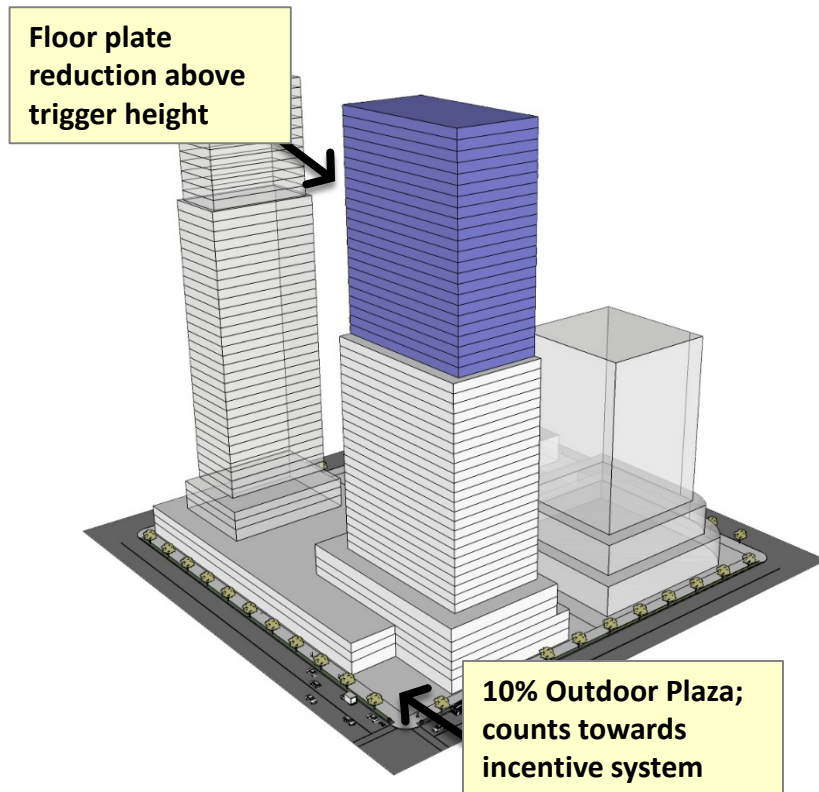
### Staff Recommendations for Council Consideration:

1. Maintain Commission's recommended 10 percent floor plate reduction for nonresidential development in the DT-MU and DT-MU Civic Center Districts.
2. 15 percent floor plate reduction in DT-O-1 and DT-O-2 Districts for nonresidential development.

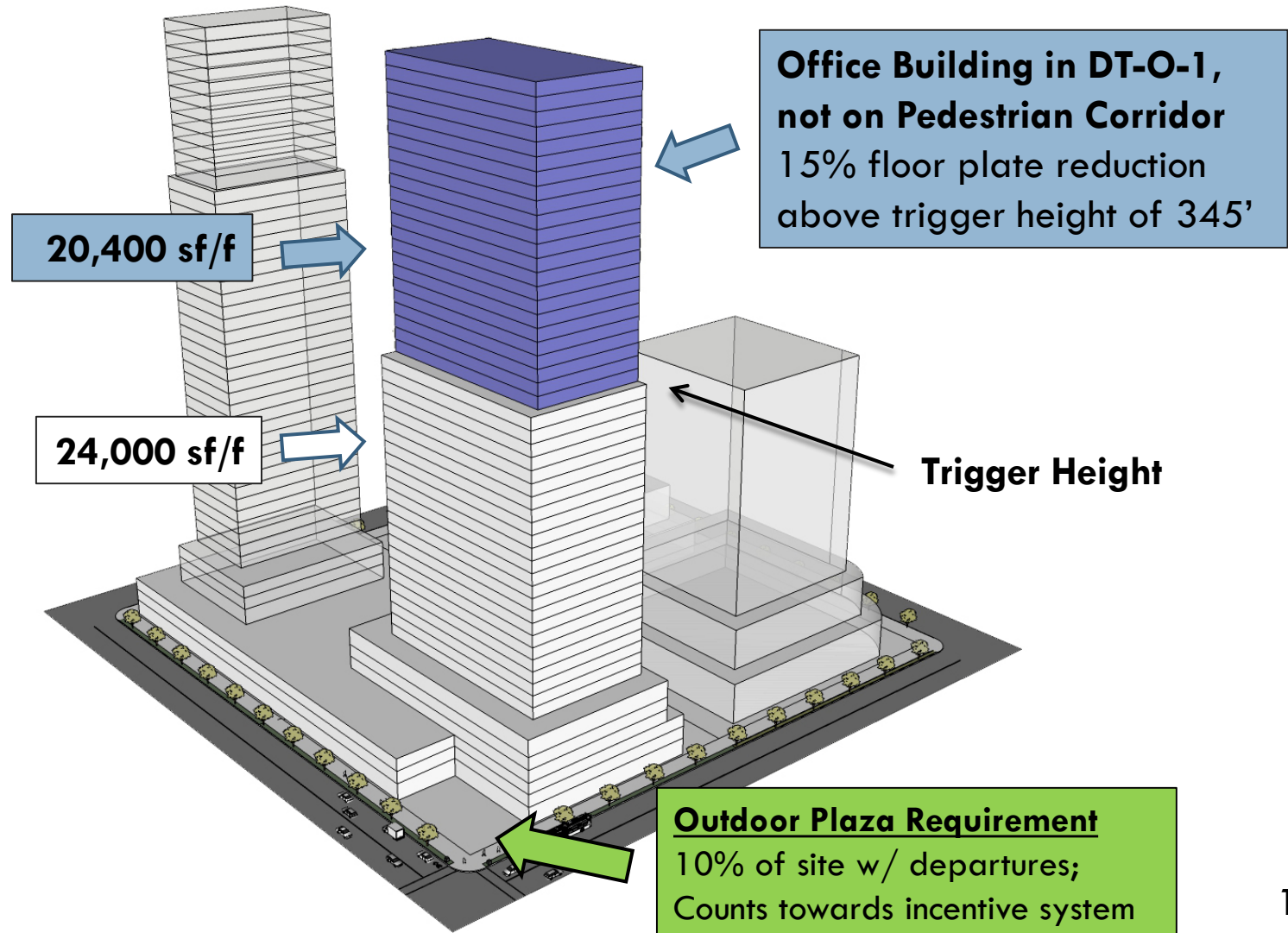


# Triggers for Taller Buildings

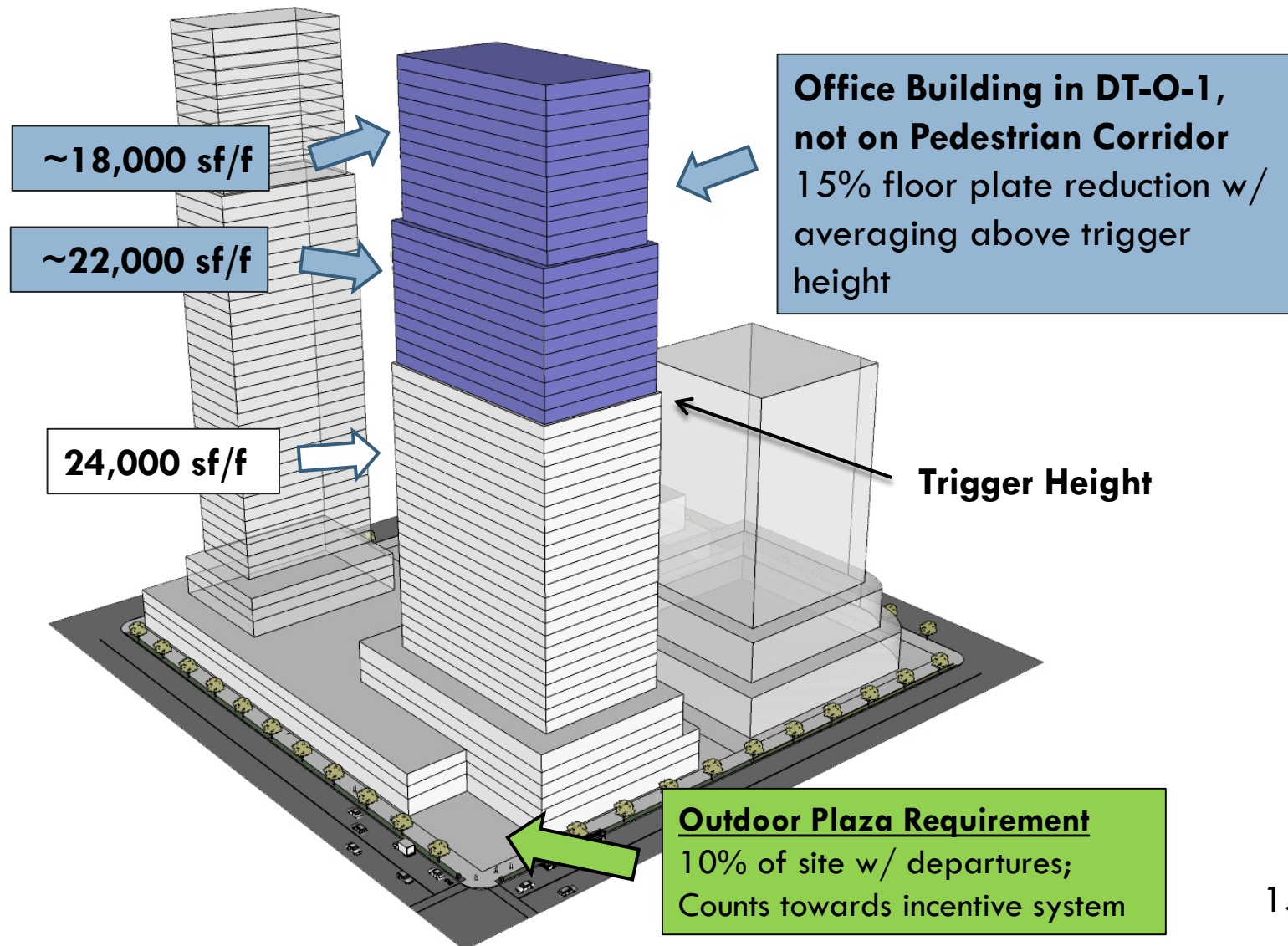
- Building exceeding “trigger height” must provide 10% open space and a reduction in floor plate size.
- Trigger height is generally old maximum height; except OLB
- Planning Commission recommended a range of 10 -25% for nonresidential/office



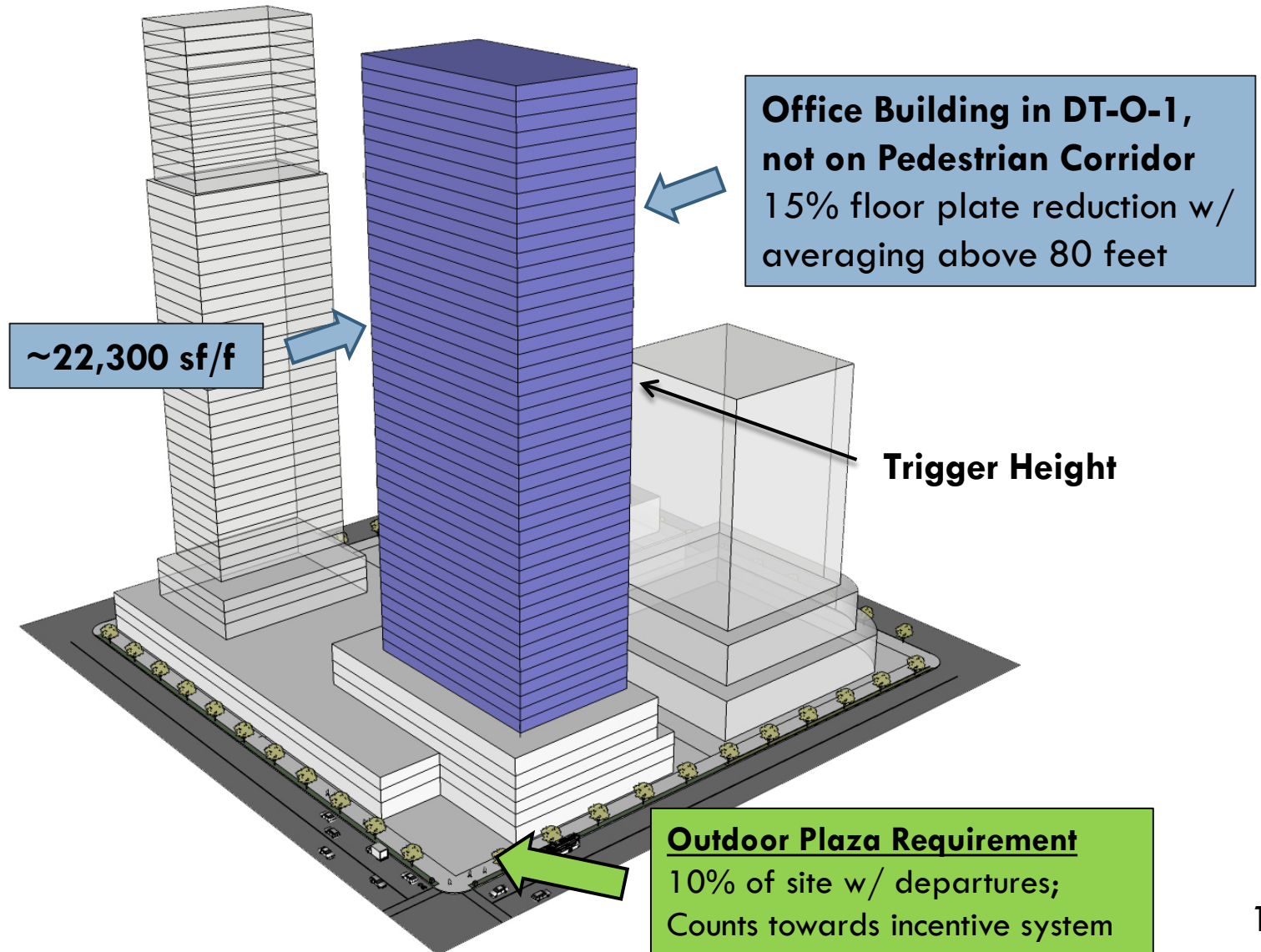
# Example 1: 15% Floor Plate Reduction



# Example 2: 15% Floor Plate Reduction

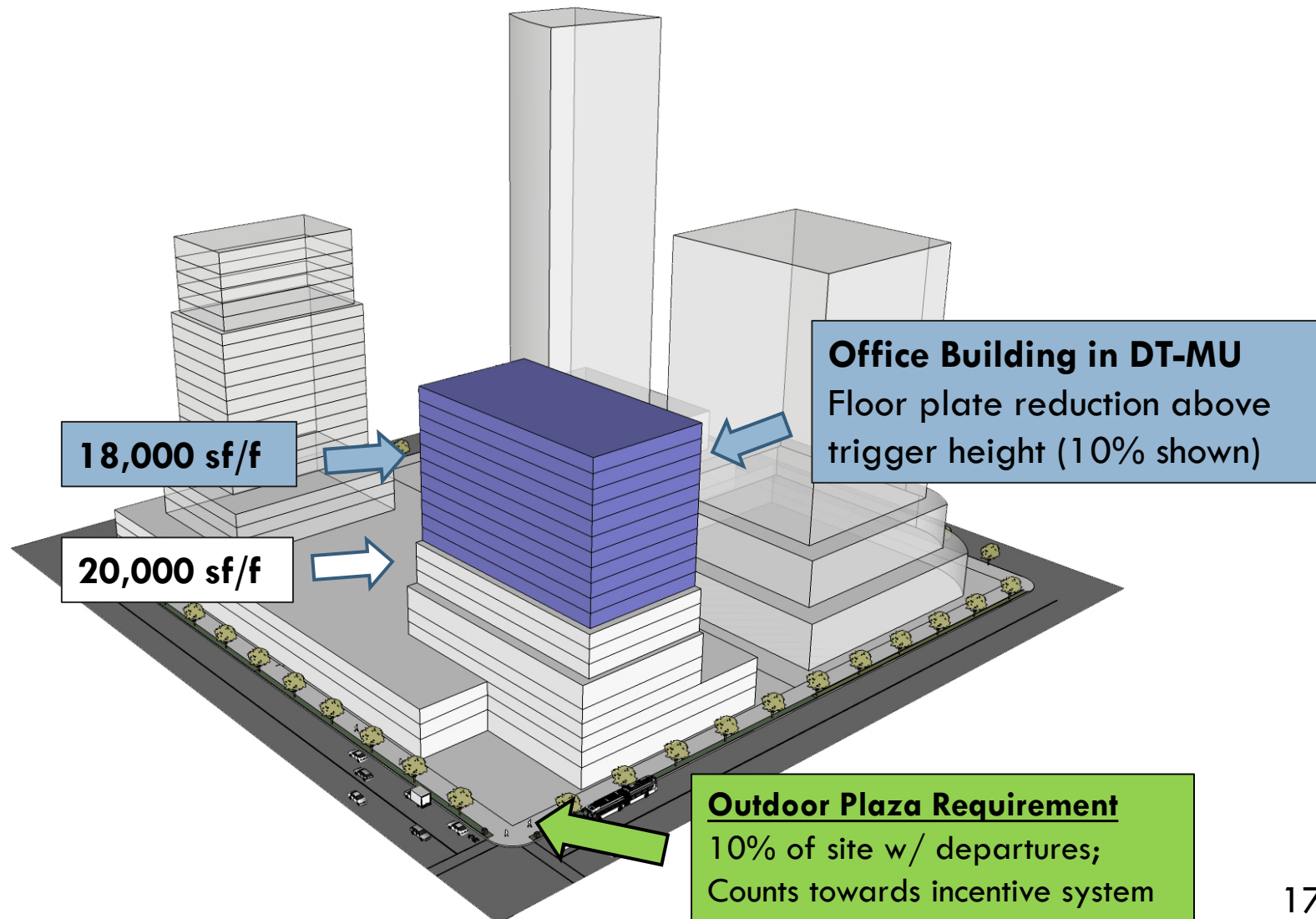


# Example 3: 15% Floor Plate Reduction





# DT-MU Example



# Staff Recommendation

## Recommended Nonresidential/Office Floor Plate Reductions Above Trigger Height

Land Use District	Building Type (2)	Max Floor Plate Above 40'	Max Floor Plate Above 80'	10% Reduction	15% Reduction	Trigger for additional height	Max Height / Max Height with Mech. Equip. (17)	Floor Area Ratio: Base / Max (3)
				Floor Plate Above Trigger, with 10% Reduction	Floor Plate Above Trigger, with 15% Reduction			
DT-O-1	Nonres.	24,000 sf	24,000 sf		20,400 sf	345'	600' (8) / 600'	7.2 / 8.0
	Nonres.(on Pedestrian Corridor)	24,000 sf	24,000 sf		20,400 sf	450' on Pedestrian Corridor	600' (8) / 600'	7.2 / 8.0
DT-O-2 North of NE 8th	Nonres.	24,000 sf	24,000 sf		20,400 sf	288'	460' / 480'	5.4 / 6.0
DT-O-2 East of 110th	Nonres.	24,000 sf	24,000 sf		20,400 sf	288'	403' / 423'	5.4 / 6.0
DT-O-2 South of NE 4th	Nonres.	24,000 sf	24,000 sf		20,400 sf	288'	345' / 365' east of 106th; 288' / 308' west of 106th Ave, see Note (18)	5.4 / 6.0
DT-MU	Nonres.	22,000 sf	20,000 sf	18,000 sf		115'	230' / 250'	4.5 / 5.0
DT-MU Civic Center	Nonres.	22,000 sf	20,000 sf	18,000 sf		115'	403' / 423'	5.4 / 6.0

# CONFIRM COUNCIL DIRECTION

## #2 Floor Plate Reduction for Exceeding Trigger

- **Staff Recommendations for Council Consideration:**
  1. Maintain Commission's recommended 10 percent floor plate reduction for nonresidential development in the DT-MU and DT-MU Civic Center Districts.
  2. 15 percent floor plate reduction in DT-O-1 and DT-O-2 Districts for nonresidential development.

## #3 DT-OLB Density and Design

### Staff Recommendations for Council Consideration:

1. Allow 25 percent floor plate increase with design requirements in the DT-OLB Central between 80 and 150 feet, same as DT-OLB South.
2. Add a 125-foot maximum north/south façade length above 80 feet in addition to other building separation requirements.
3. 10 percent floor plate reduction above the trigger height for residential and nonresidential.
4. Potential additional density bonuses should await Grand Connection Plan implementation.

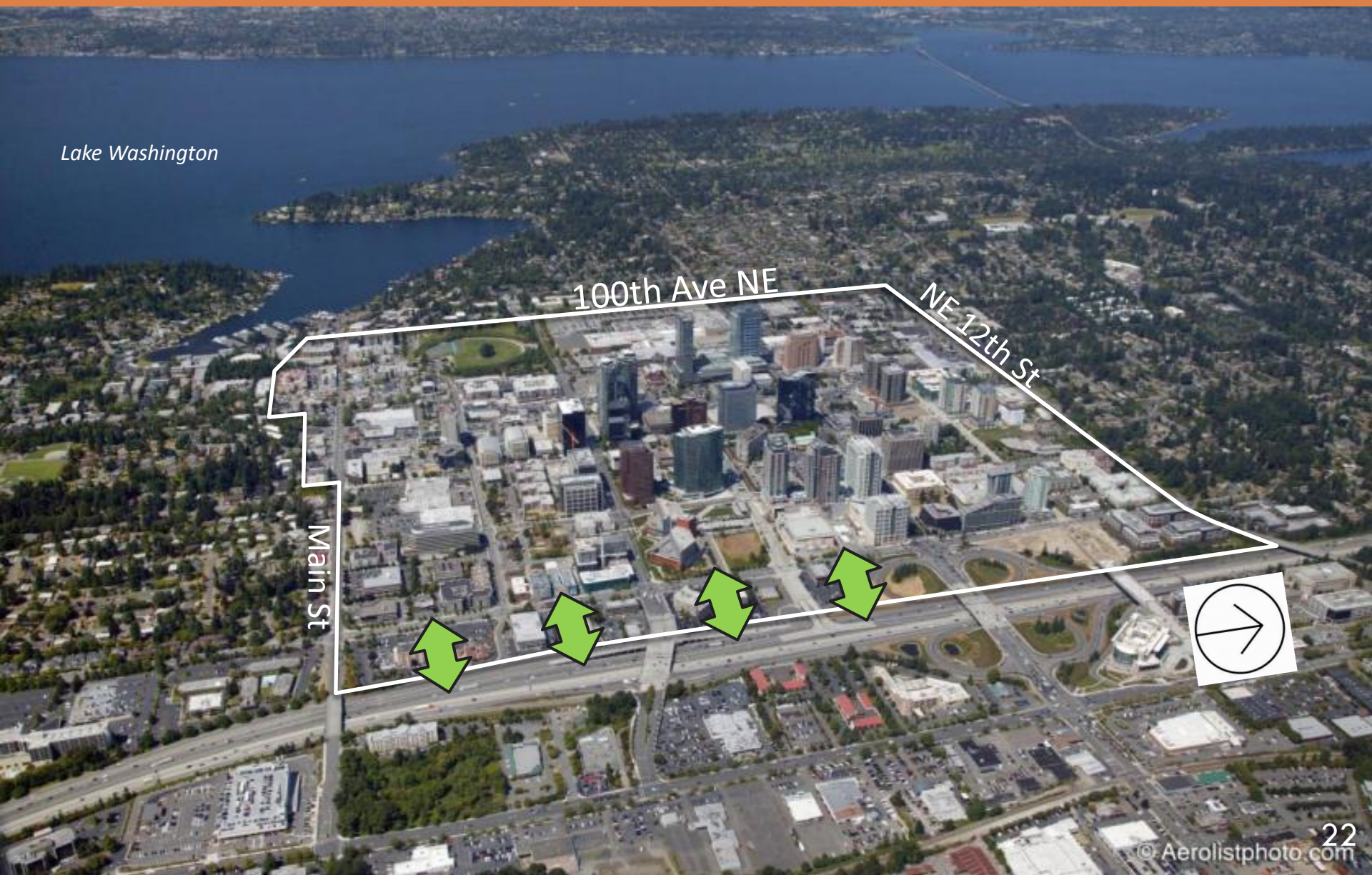


# Redevelopment of DT-OLB

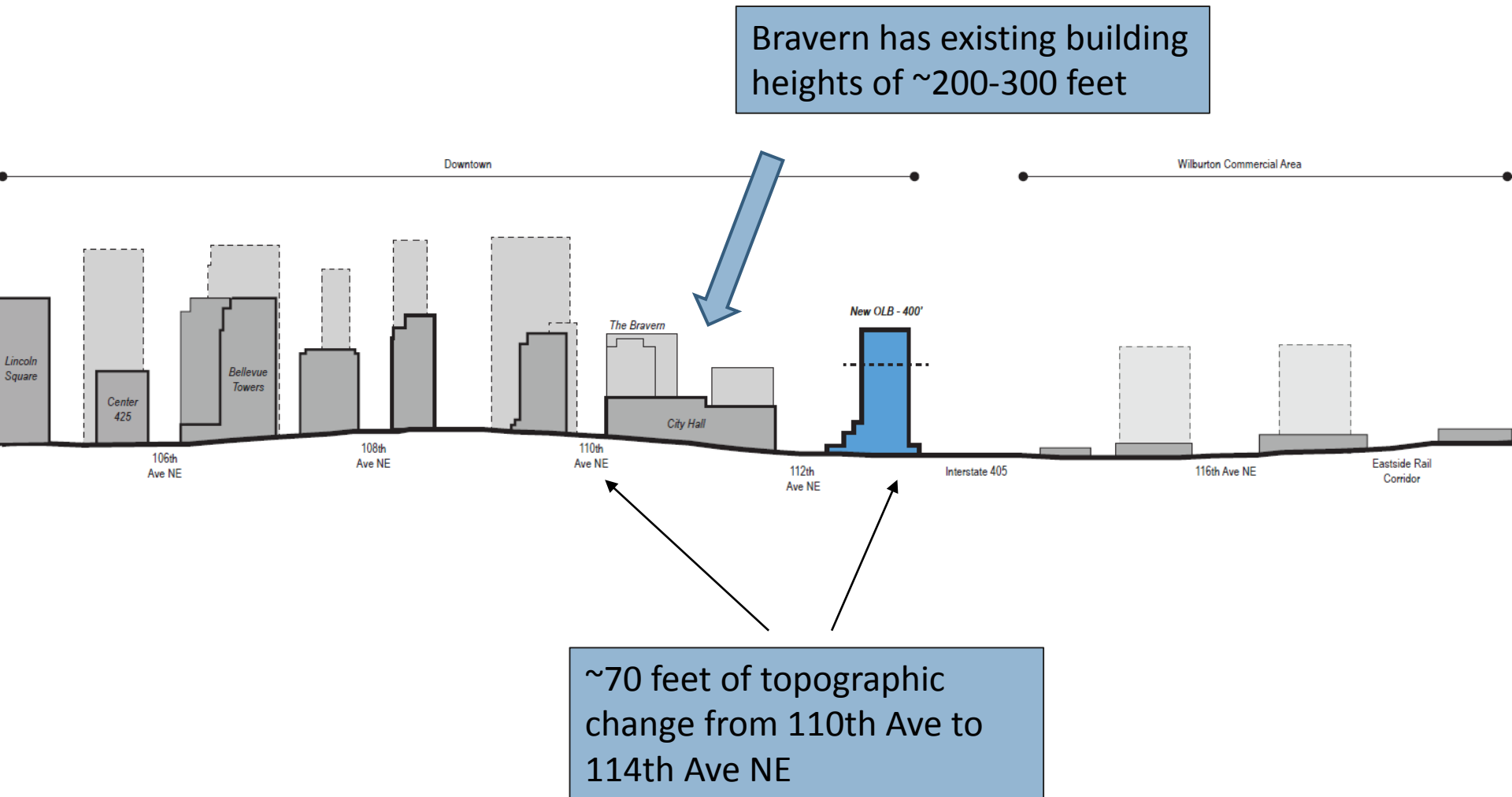
- Proximity to light rail stations
- Freeway access
- Ability to provide a better front-door to Downtown
- Topography allows for larger floor plates at lower levels (up to 30,000 square feet below 80 feet)
- Water table issues to likely drive towards above-grade structured parking
- Permeability has been raised; don't want to "wall-off" Downtown
- Relationship to vision for Grand Connection

# Downtown Subarea: DT-0LB

Lake Washington



# NE 6th Section, 106th Ave to ERC





# Downtown Subarea: DT-0LB

Lake Washington



Main St

100th Ave NE

NE 12th St

NE 8th St

Northbound I-405

NE 1st Street

Grand  
Connection



# View from Northbound I-405 (Current Zoning)



# View from Northbound I-405 (125 foot facades)



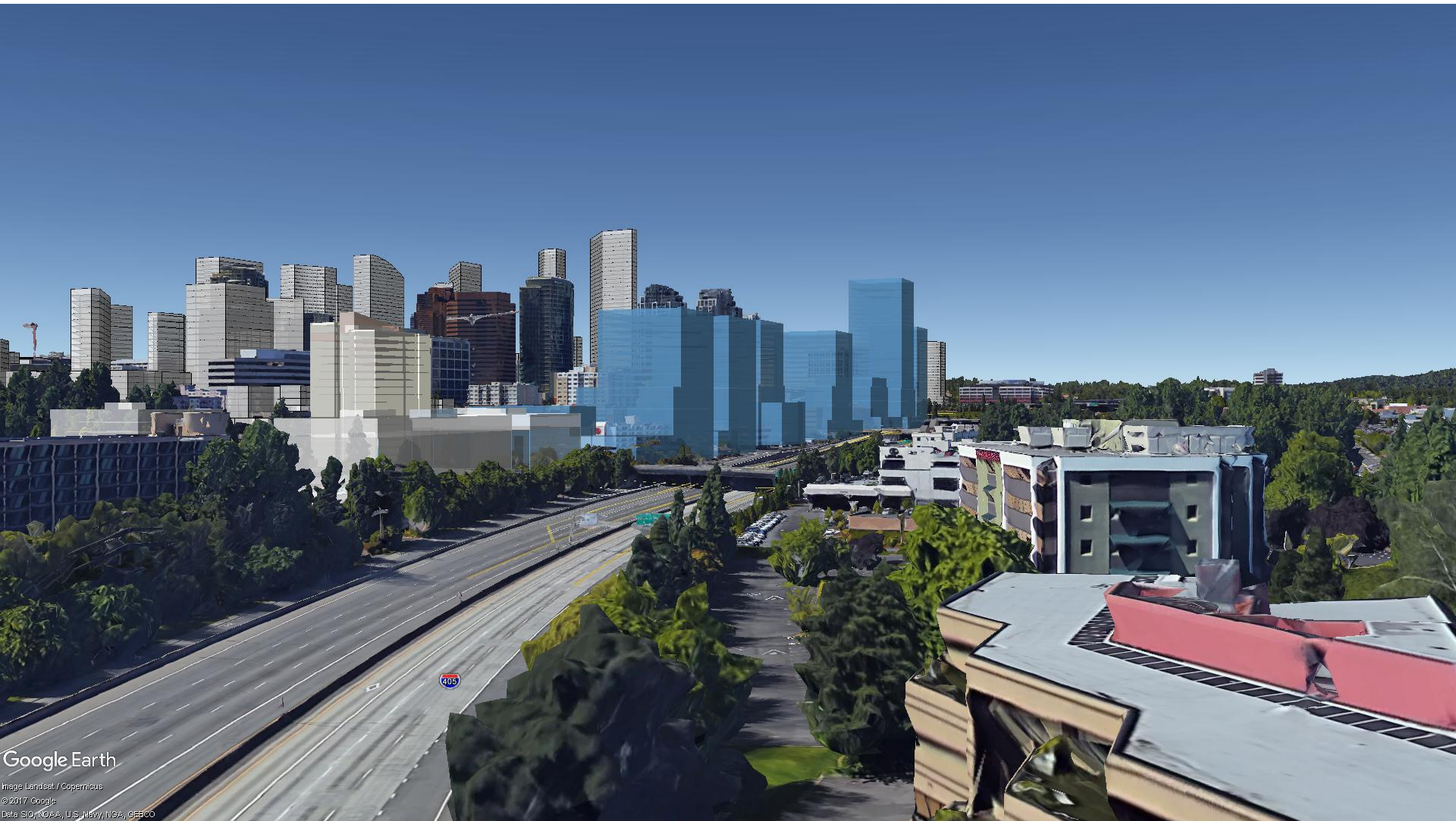


# View from Northbound I-405 (125 foot facades) with other potential downtown buildings





# View from Northbound I-405 (125 foot facades, and 400 foot tower) with other potential downtown buildings





# View from Northbound I-405 (showing 160-175 foot facades) with other potential downtown buildings



Google Earth

Image Landsat / Copernicus  
©2017 Google  
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO



# View from NE 1st Street (Current Zoning)





# View from NE 1st Street (125 foot facades)





# View from NE 1st Street (125 foot facades) with other potential downtown buildings





# View from NE 1st Street (125 foot facades, and 400 foot tower) with other potential downtown buildings





# View from NE 1st Street (showing 160-175 foot facades) with other potential downtown buildings





# View from Grand Connection (Current Zoning)





# View from Grand Connection (125 foot facades)



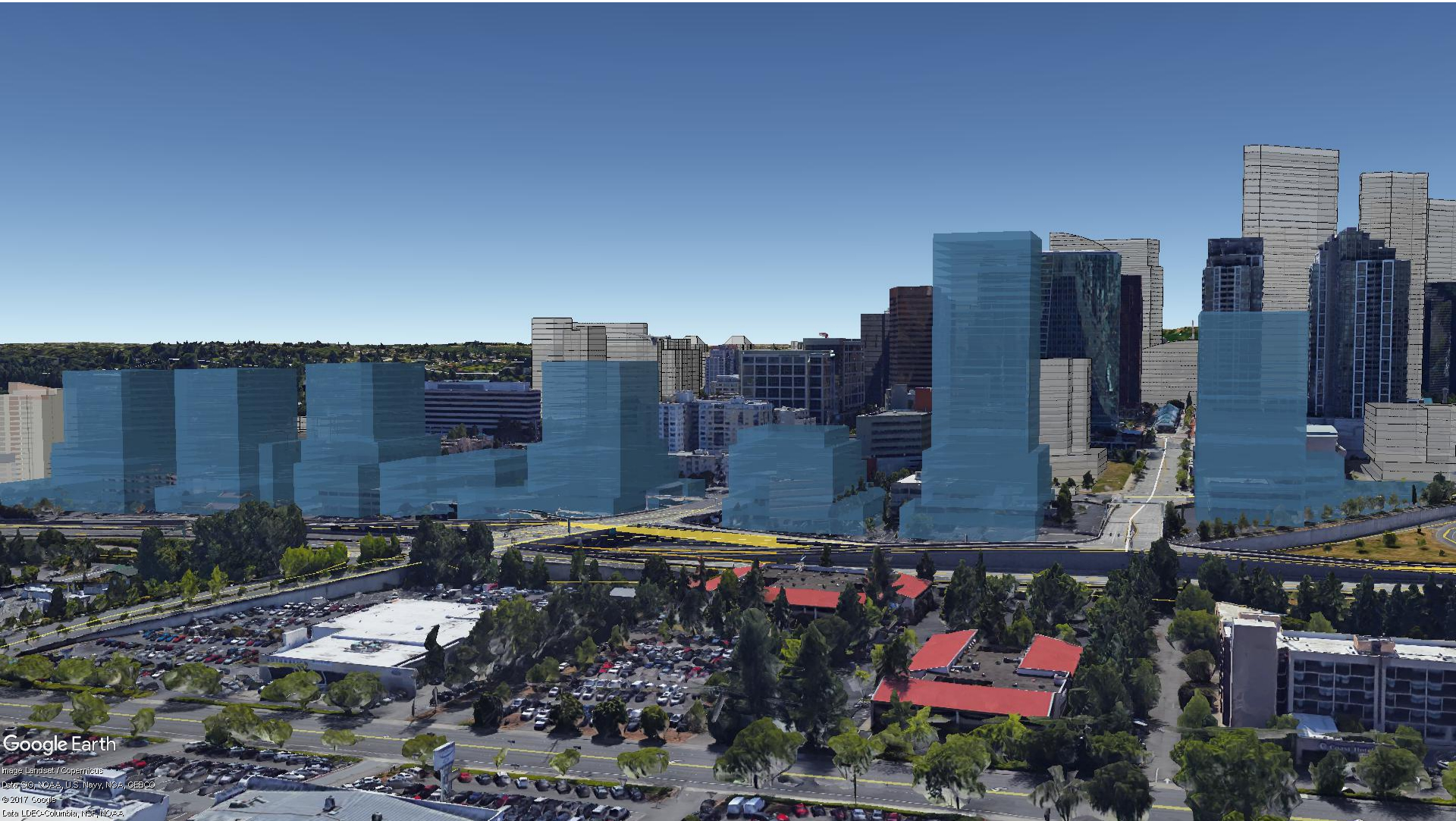


# View from Grand Connection (125 foot facades) with other potential downtown buildings





# View from Grand Connection (125 foot facades, and 400 foot tower) with other potential downtown buildings





# View from Grand Connection (showing 160-175 foot facades) with other potential downtown buildings





# View from NE 8th Street (Current Zoning)



# View from NE 8th Street (125 foot facades)





# View from NE 8th Street (125 foot facades) with other potential downtown buildings



# View from NE 8th Street (125 foot facades, and 400 foot tower) with other potential downtown buildings



Google Earth

Image Landsat / Copernicus  
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO  
© 2017 Google  
Data LDEO-Columbia, NSF, NOAA



# View from NE 8th Street (showing 160-175 foot facades) with other potential downtown buildings



# CONFIRM COUNCIL DIRECTION

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  1. Allow 25 percent floor plate increase with design requirements in the DT-OLB Central between 80 and 150 feet, same as DT-OLB South.
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  4. Potential additional density bonuses should await Grand Connection Plan implementation.

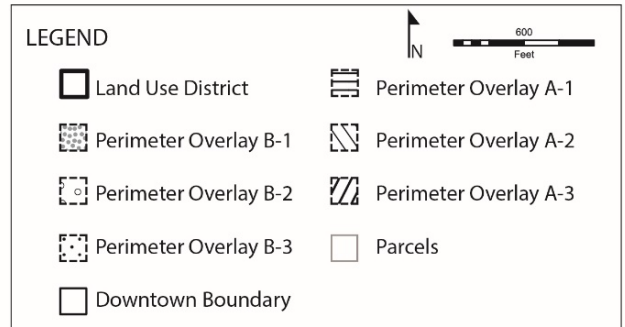
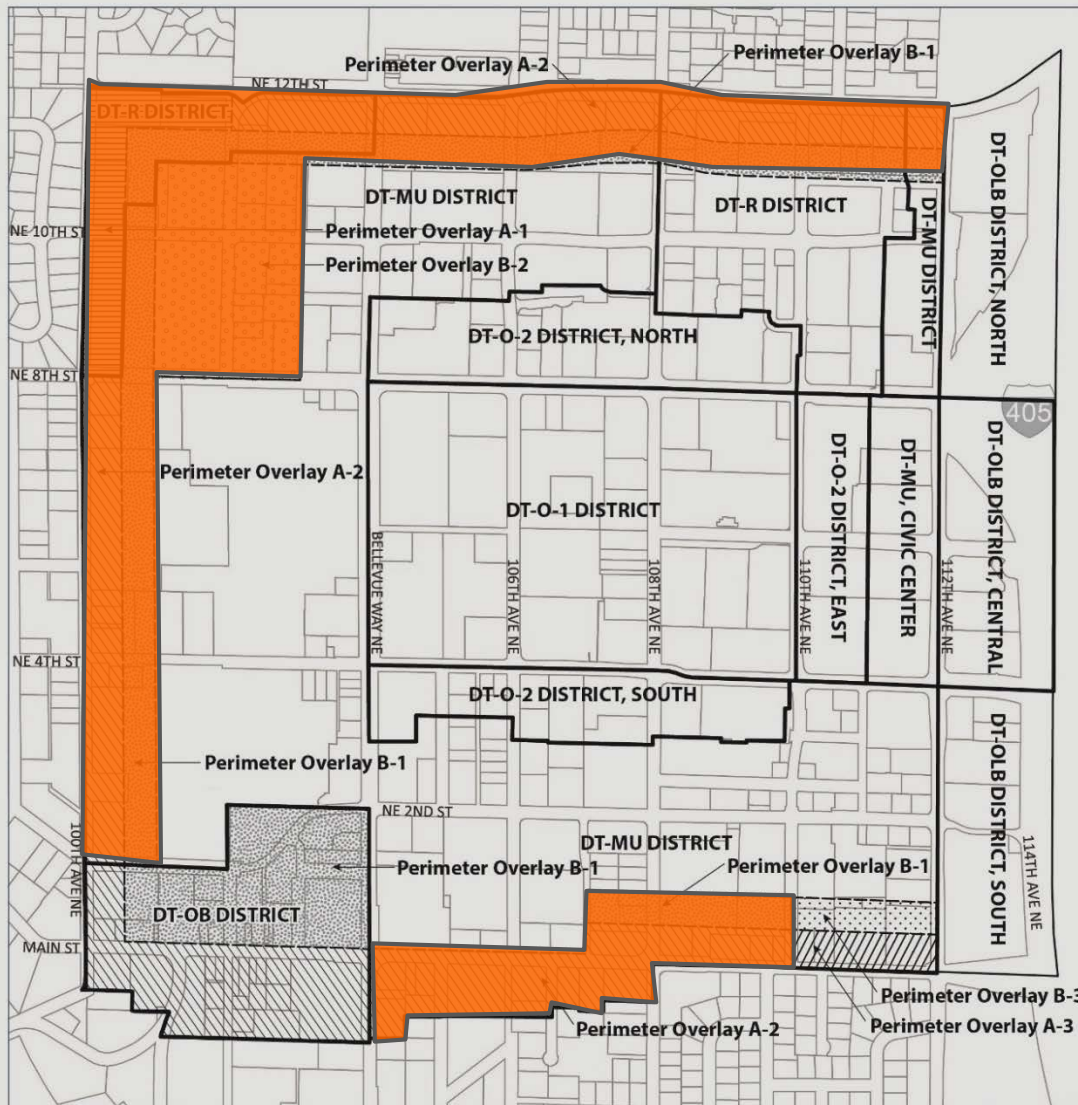


## #4 Affordable Housing Code Flexibility

### Staff Recommendations for Council Consideration:

1. Provide code flexibility for affordable housing 1.0 FAR exemption as follows:
  - a. Reduce minimum parking ratio of 0.5 stalls/unit for affordable studio and one-bedroom units.
  - b. Increase maximum lot coverage by five percent in Perimeter Overlay Districts A-1, A-2, A-3, B-1, and B-2, where it is currently 75 percent.
  - c. Decrease upper level stepback requirements by a maximum of five feet. Currently at 15-20 feet depending on street.

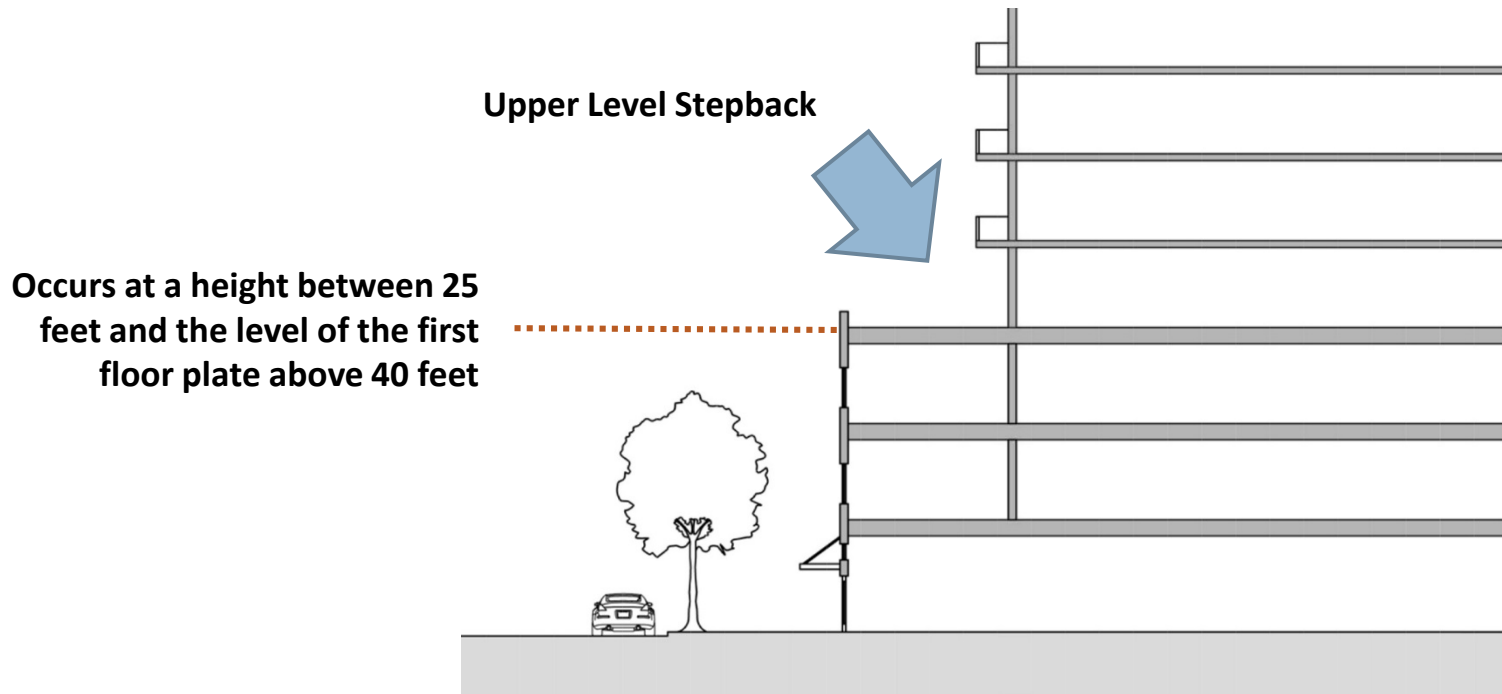
# Maximum Lot Coverage



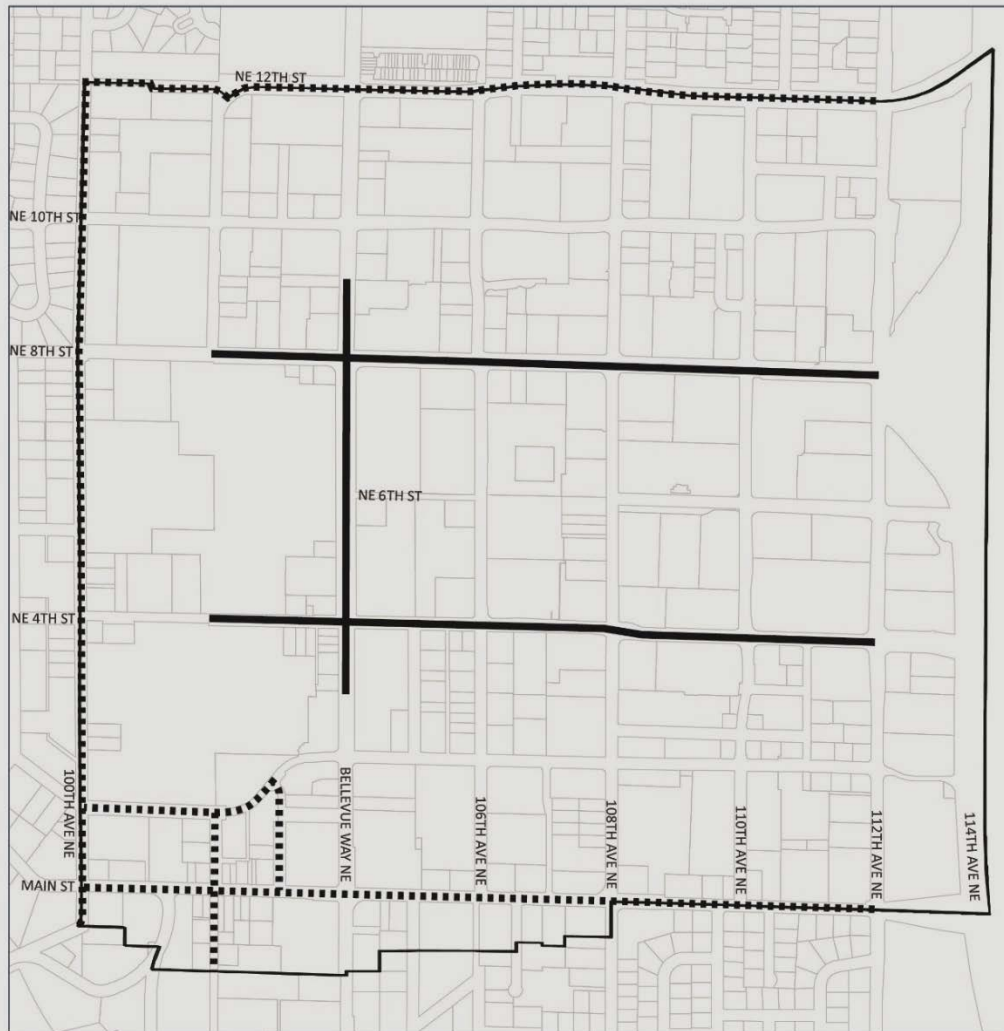
Areas with maximum of 75 percent lot coverage for residential development. Staff recommendation to increase to 80 percent w/ affordable housing.



# Upper Level Stepback



# Required Upper Level Stepbacks



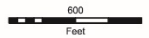
## LEGEND

— Required 20' Upper Level Stepback

- - - Required 15' Upper Level Stepback

□ Parcels

□ Downtown Boundary





# CONFIRM COUNCIL DIRECTION

## #4 Affordable Housing Code Flexibility

### ■ Staff Recommendations for Council Consideration:

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  - a. Reduce minimum parking ratio of 0.5 stalls/unit for affordable studio and one-bedroom units.
  - b. Increase maximum lot coverage by five percent in Perimeter Overlay Districts A-1, A-2, A-3, B-1, and B-2, where it is currently 75 percent.
  - c. Decrease upper level stepback requirements by a maximum of five feet. Currently at 15-20 feet depending on street.

## #5 Accessibility and Use of Alleys

### **Staff Recommendation for Council Consideration:**

1. Adopt the code provisions as recommended by the Planning Commission.



# Accessibility and Use of Alleys

## Code Requirements in Commission's Recommended Code

- Wider sidewalks (12, 16, 20 feet)
- Six-foot unobstructed travel path on sidewalks.
- Mechanical equipment cannot be located adjacent to sidewalks or through-block connections.
- Site servicing must be located away from sidewalks, through-block connections, and open space. Site servicing includes loading, servicing, utilities, vehicle parking.
- Access to site servicing shall be provided underground or within the building and away from the public realm.

**Utilities Department to develop solid waste rules to be incorporated by reference into Code.**



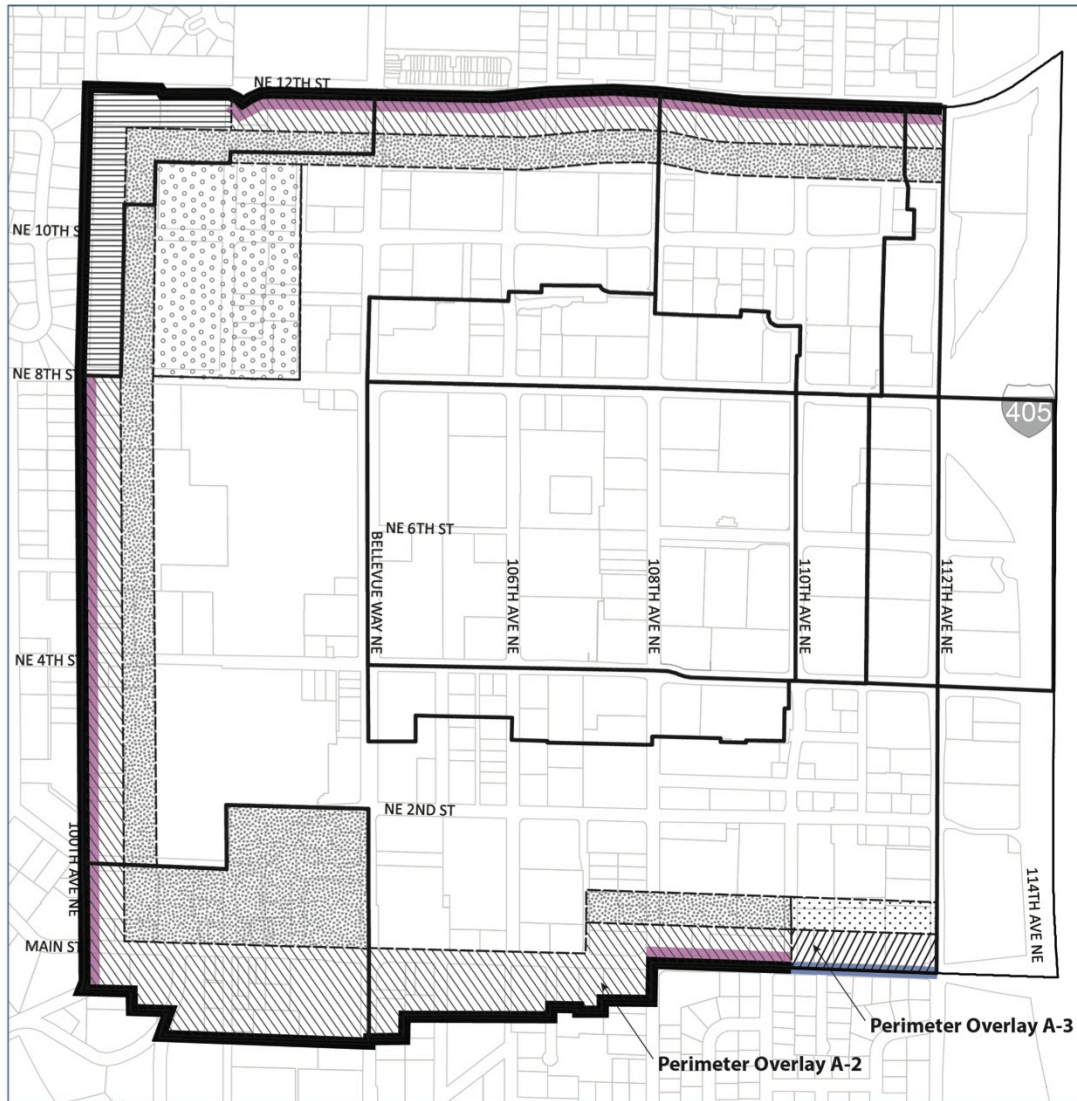
## #6 Downtown Boundary Linear Buffer

### **Staff Recommendations for Council Consideration:**

1. Consistent with the Commission recommendation, eliminate the Downtown linear buffer in Perimeter Overlay A-3.
2. Adopt the code provisions as recommended by the Planning Commission regarding the starting point for how the Downtown linear buffer is measured.



# Downtown Linear Buffer



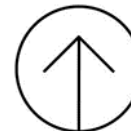
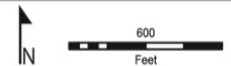
## 20' LINEAR BUFFER

### CHANGES

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

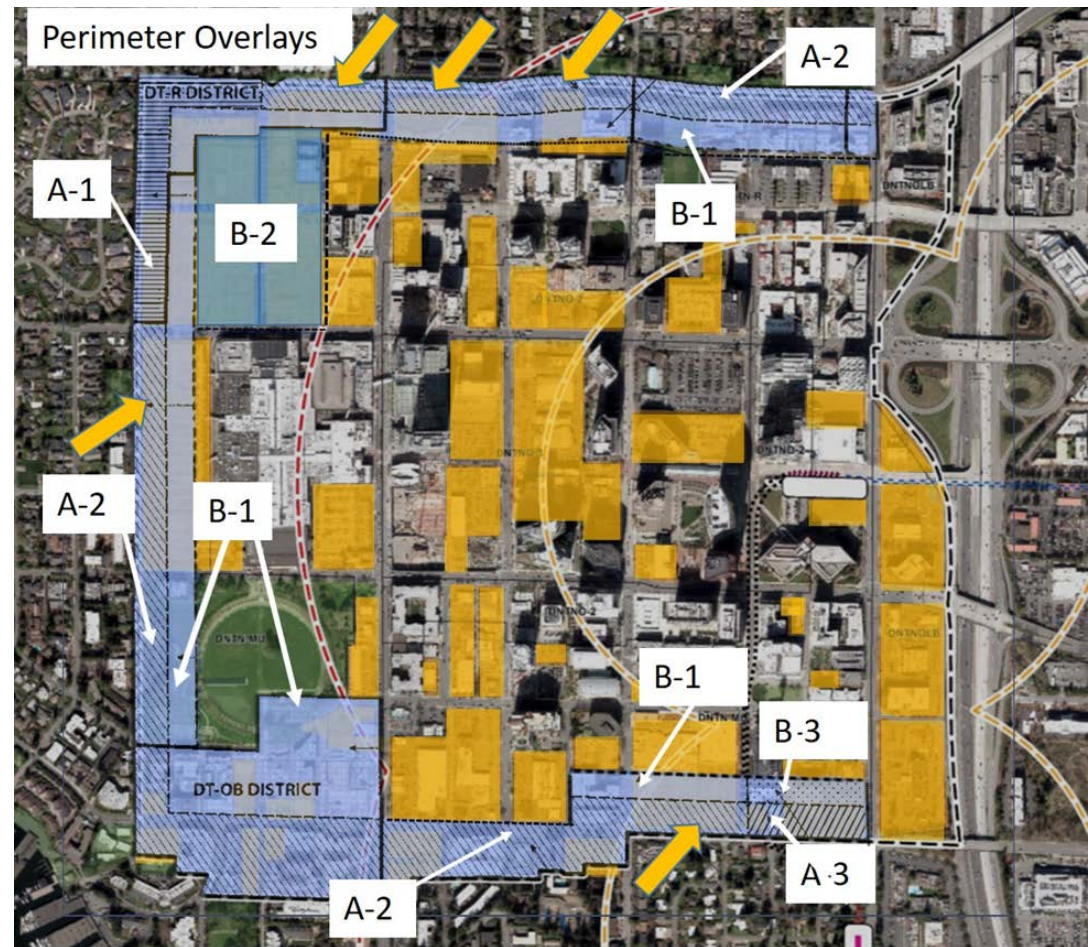
### LEGEND

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 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         |



# Downtown Linear Buffer

- 20-foot Downtown linear buffer.
- Softens the visual impact of larger buildings as viewed from the adjacent neighborhoods.
- Recommendation in Perimeter Overlay A-2: Measure buffer from back of curb, rather than back of sidewalk. Reduces width of buffer by the sidewalk width.





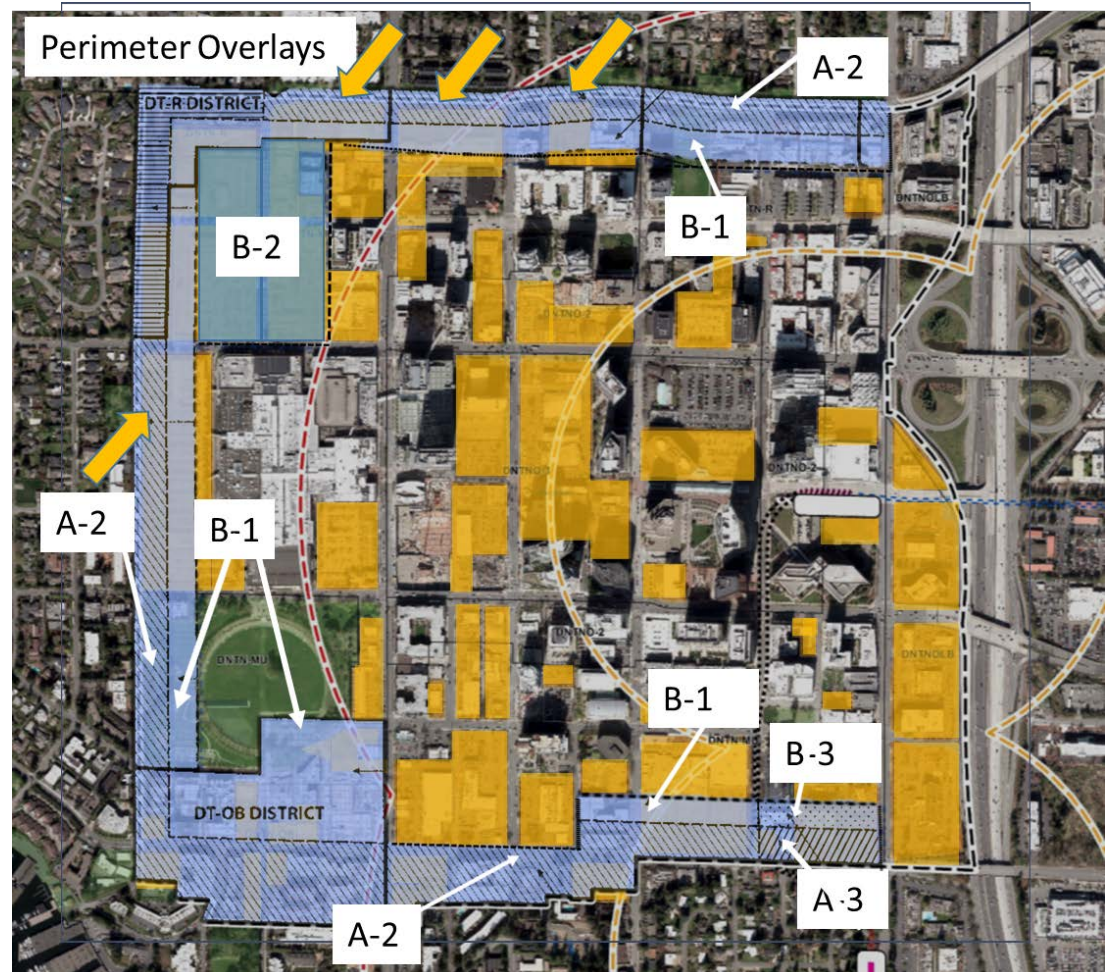
# Downtown Linear Buffer

## Northern boundary:

- Reduces buffer to 8 feet. McCormick Park provides buffer between Downtown and residential uses.

## Western boundary:

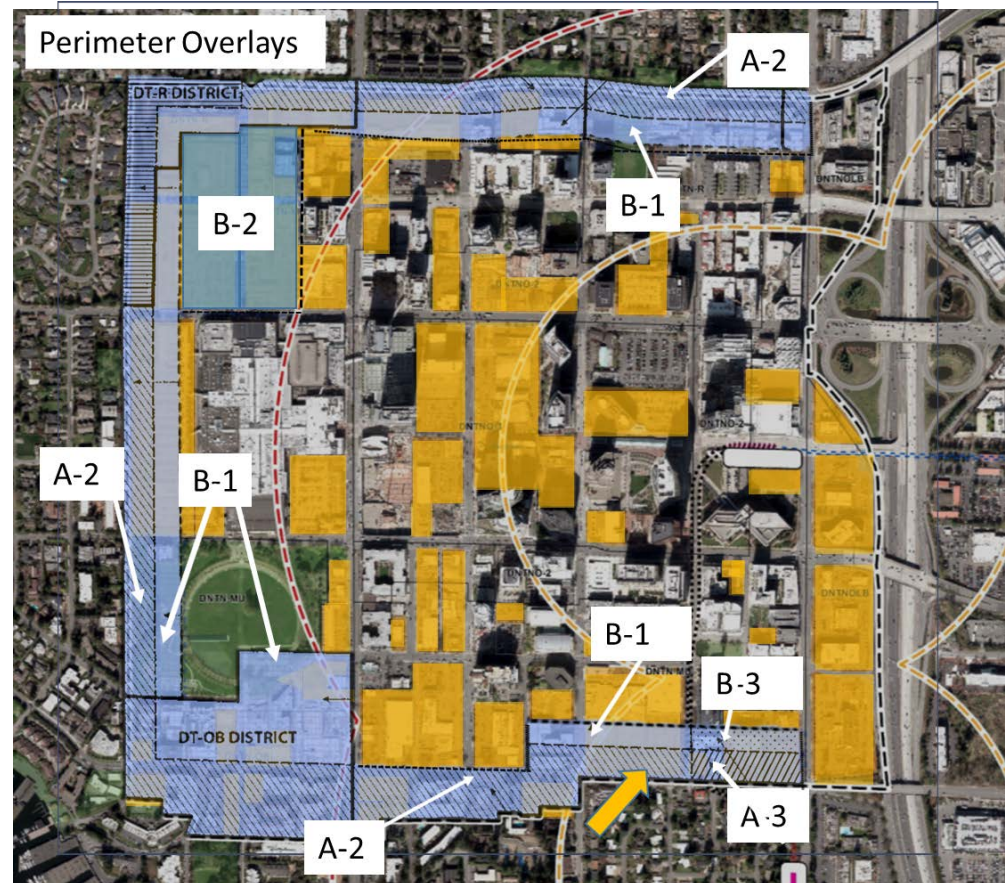
- Southern Downtown boundary to NE 8th St. (much is Downtown Park) - Reduces buffer to 8 feet.
- Uses on west side of street are hotel, park, and multifamily residential. There is little buffer now.



# Downtown Linear Buffer

## Southern boundary:

- Perimeter Overlay A-3 boundary to 108th Street on Main Street – Reduction to 4 feet, but Portal Park and commercial uses on south side of Main St.
- 108th Street to 100th Street – No reduction because boundary is not adjacent to sidewalk.





# CONFIRM COUNCIL DIRECTION

## #6 Downtown Boundary Linear Buffer

- **Staff Recommendations for Council Consideration:**
  1. Consistent with the Commission recommendation, eliminate the Downtown linear buffer in Perimeter Overlay A-3.
  2. Adopt the code provisions as recommended by the Planning Commission regarding the starting point for how the Downtown linear buffer is measured.

## #7 Use of In-Lieu Fees for Parks

### **Staff Recommendations for Council Consideration:**

1. Retain the Commission's language for use of in-lieu fees. It provides flexibility for the fees to be used within Downtown for park facilities as well as for other publicly accessible open spaces at City's discretion.



# Downtown Subarea

Lake Washington

100th Ave NE

NE 12th St

**Downtown Subarea - Focus for  
Use of In-Lieu Fees**

Main St



## #8a Vesting

### **Staff Recommendations for Council Consideration:**

1. Complete applications will continue to be reviewed under prior code. Vested status of a land use application under prior code shall expire on July 1, 2019, unless a complete Building Permit application is filed before end of two-year term.
2. The vested status of a land use permit or approval issued prior to the adoption of this Downtown Code Update shall be governed pursuant to the terms of LUC 20.40.500.B



## #8b Sustainability Certification

### **Staff Recommendation for Council Consideration:**

1. Leave Built Green-5 Star in Tier 1 and Built Green-4 Star Certification in Tier 2 of the Sustainability Certifications in the Amenity Incentive System. Applicant may apply for a Flexible Amenity in extraordinary situations.

## #8c Open Space Provisions

### **Staff Recommendation for Council Consideration:**

1. Retain Commission's recommended open space provisions which provide both mandatory and optional mechanisms to encourage open space in Downtown.



# Open Space Provisions

## ▣ Mandatory Open Space

- New development in the Downtown Core, built to base FAR, must provide minor publicly accessible space.
- 10 percent open space required when building height exceeds trigger height. Minimum area is 3,000 square feet.

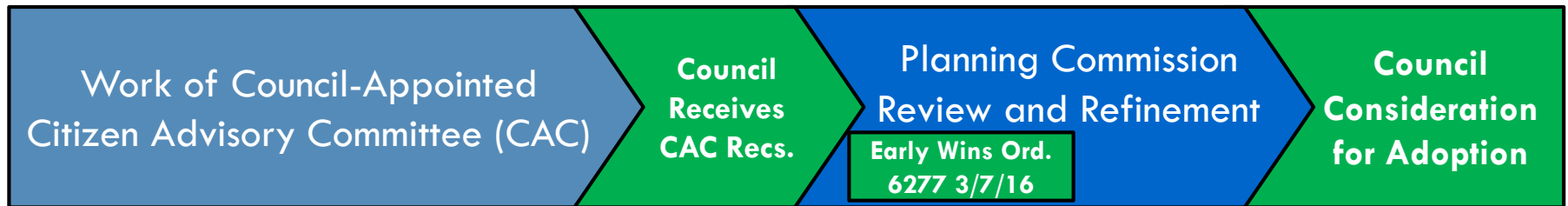
## ▣ Optional Open Space

- 75 percent of a project's required amenity points must be earned by providing:
  - ▣ Major Pedestrian Corridor;
  - ▣ Outdoor Plaza;
  - ▣ Donation of Park Property;
  - ▣ Improvement of Public Park Property;
  - ▣ Enhanced Streetscape;
  - ▣ Active Recreation Area;
  - ▣ Enclosed Plaza; or
  - ▣ Alleys with Addresses.

# Next Steps

- Finalize agenda for 9/18 Council meeting, if needed
- Confirm Downtown Land Use Code adoption date (proposed for 10/2)

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



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