

# Downtown Livability Initiative

## Downtown Land Use Code Amendments



City Council Study Session  
October 2, 2017

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# Tonight's Study Session

## Based on Memory Book – Specific Recommendations for Council Consideration

- Floor Plate Reduction when Nonresidential Buildings Exceed Trigger Height in DT-OLB and DT-MU Districts
- Trigger Height in the DT-OLB Central and DT-OLB South Districts
- Downtown Linear Buffer
- Residential Tower Setback from Interior Property Lines

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		
Tower separation (w/visuals)	Chelminiak Robinson Wallace	July 10 and discussion to be continued on September 5
Transportation analysis briefing	Lee Wallace	July 10
Downtown parking flexibility	Lee Chelminiak Wallace	July 10
Small site exceptions and deviations		
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

# Council 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 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</li> <li>• DT-OLB density and design</li> </ul>
☑	<b>Meeting 5</b> <b>Sept. 18 – Study Session</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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> <li>• Small site exceptions and deviations</li> <li>• Floor plate reduction when nonresidential buildings exceed trigger height; discussion of no reduction below 20,000 square feet</li> </ul>
	<b>Meeting 6</b> <b>Oct. 2 – Regular Session</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nonresidential floor plate reduction in DT-OLB and DT-MU districts</li> <li>• Trigger height in the DT-OLB Central and DT-OLB South districts</li> <li>• Downtown linear buffer</li> <li>• Residential tower setback from interior property lines</li> </ul>
	<b>Oct. 16 – Final Adoption</b>	

# #1 Floor Plate Reduction for Nonresidential in DT-MU & DT-OLB

## Options for Council Consideration

1. **Current Code Version** – 10% reduction above the trigger height *(Staff recommendation; consistent with Planning Commission recommended range)*
2. **Safe Harbor** – No reduction in DT-MU, DT-MU Civic Center, DT-OLB Center and DT-OLB South Districts, because any reduction would go below 20,000 square foot floor plates
3. **Departure from Reduction** – Provides a departure from reduction requirement for exemplary design that better meets the goals in current code version LUC 20.25A.140

# Floor Plate Examples



**405 Colorado, Austin, TX  
(16.7K)**



**The Mark, Seattle  
(17.4K)**



**Midtown 21, Seattle  
(20K)**



**Madison Centre, Seattle  
(22K)**

## #2 Trigger Height in DT-OLB Central and DT-OLB South

### Options for Council Consideration

1. **Current Code Version** – 115 feet as the nonresidential trigger height in DT-OLB Central and DT-OLB South (***Staff recommendation; consistent with Planning Commission recommendation***)
2. **Increased Trigger Height** – Increase nonresidential trigger height in DT-OLB Central and DT-OLB South from 115 feet to 150 feet (**Councilmember requested option of additional discussion**)

# DT-OLB Trigger Heights

- Trigger heights throughout Downtown were set at the current maximum achievable building height in each district except for DT-OLB Central and South.
- The Planning Commission raised the trigger height for nonresidential buildings in DT-OLB Center and South from 87 feet to 115 feet for economic parity with DT-MU.
- Trigger height was the tool employed by the Planning Commission to achieve a public benefit (open space and taller, more slender buildings) in return for the new entitlement to build taller buildings.
- The maximum FAR and maximum height have been increased significantly in DT-OLB Central and South.

# DT-OLB Trigger Height Increase

Increases for nonresidential building heights in DT-OLB Central and South included in Current Code Version

	Base/Max FAR under Current Code	Proposed New Base/Max FAR	Maximum Achievable Height under Current Code	Trigger Height	Proposed New Maximum Height
DT-OLB Central	0.5/3.0	5.4/6.0	87 feet	115 feet	403 feet
DT-OLB South	0.5/3.0	4.5/5.0	87 feet	115 feet	230 feet

**Increases in Floor Plates:** Both districts provided ability to increase floor plates by 25% (or 25,000 sf maximums) between 80 and 150 feet in building height.

# DT-OLB Trigger Heights

**Scenario w/ Trigger Height at 115 feet;  
150-foot tall office towers over a podium**

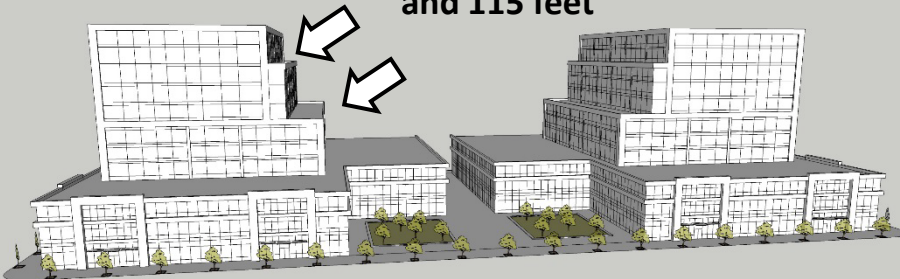
**Scenario w/ Trigger Height Raised to 150 feet;  
150-foot tall office towers over a podium**

**View Angle 1**

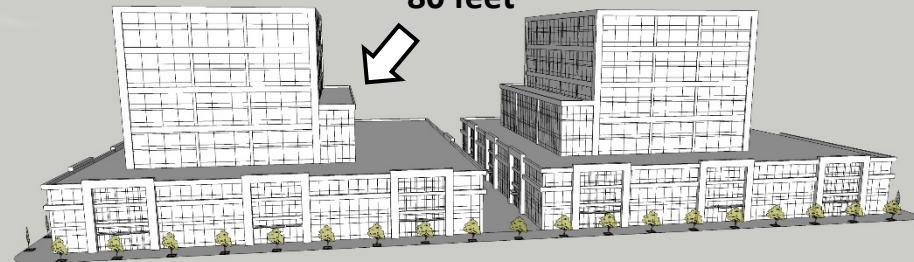


**View Angle 2**

**Floor plate  
reductions at 80 feet  
and 115 feet**



**Floor plate  
reduction at  
80 feet**



# Comparison of Trigger Heights

Looking West from Above Main Street to DT-OLB South

**Scenario w/ Trigger Height at 115 feet;  
150-foot tall office towers over a podium**



**Scenario w/ Trigger Height Raised to 150 feet;  
150-foot tall office towers over a podium**



# Comparison of Trigger Heights

Looking West from Wilburton to DT-OLB South (Main Street to NE 4th Street)

**Scenario w/ Trigger Height at 115 feet;  
150-foot tall office towers over a podium**



**Scenario w/ Trigger Height Raised to 150 feet;  
150-foot tall office towers over a podium**





# #3 Downtown Boundary Linear Buffer

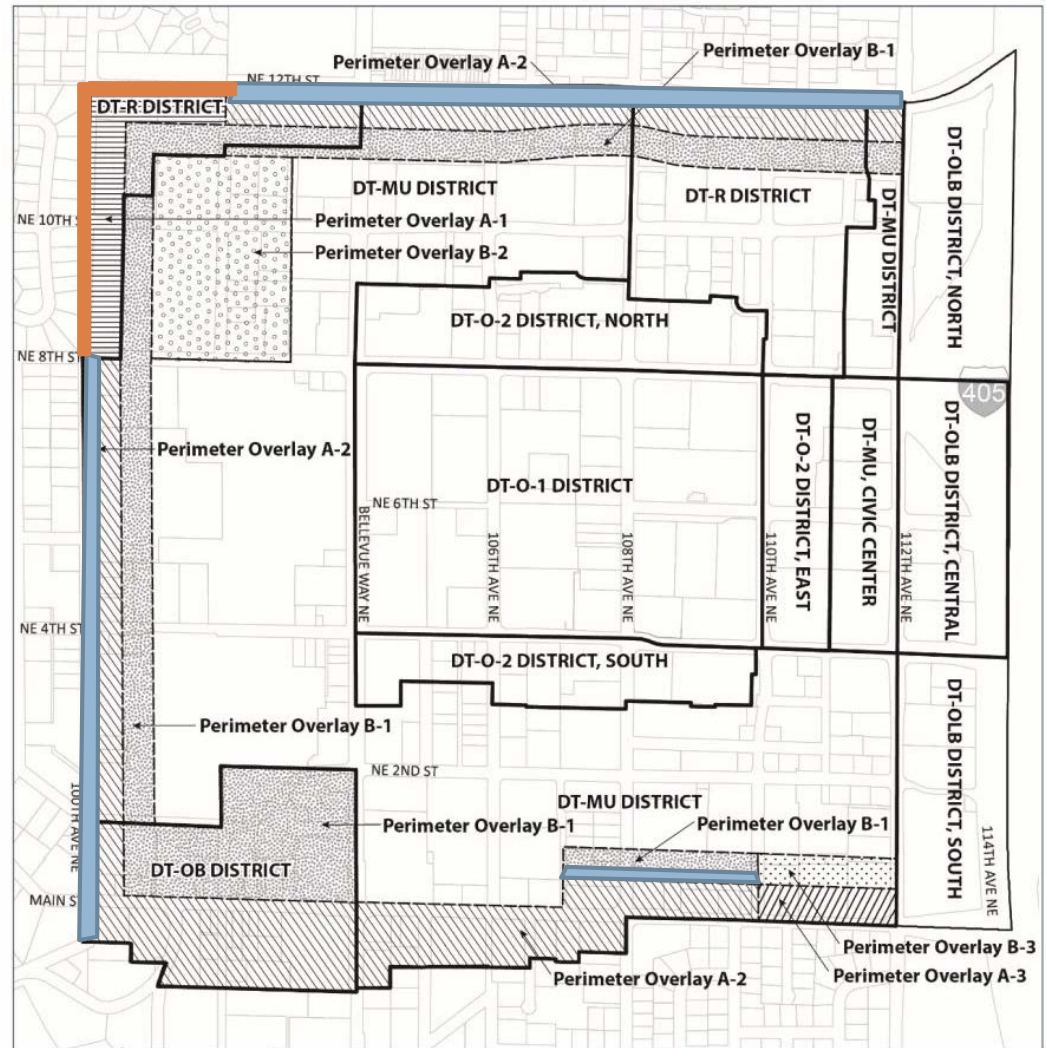
## Options for Council Consideration

1. **Current Code Version** – Measures setback from Downtown Boundary from back of curb in Perimeter Overlay A-2. Sidewalk located within linear buffer area would exceed hardscape allowance. (*Planning Commission recommendation*)
2. **Modifications to Avoid Unintended Consequences** – Continues to measure setback from back of curb in Perimeter Overlay A-2, and hardscape limitation removed. Measurement requirements for Perimeter Overlays A-1 and A-2 clarified, linear buffer requirements applicable to A-1 unchanged. (*Staff recommendation*)

# Linear Buffer Measurement

- Measured from back of sidewalk in Perimeter Overlay A-1. 
- Measured from back of curb in Perimeter Overlay A-2 (includes sidewalk in the measurement of the buffer). 

Hardscape limitation recommended for removal from Perimeter Overlay A-2 because sidewalk located within linear buffer area would exceed hardscape allowance.



## #4 Residential Tower Setbacks between Projects above 80 feet

### Options for Council Consideration

1. **Current Code Version** – 20-foot setback from interior property lines above 80 feet for residential and nonresidential towers (***Planning Commission recommendation***)
2. **30-foot Setback with Flexibility to Reduce** – 30-foot setback from interior property lines above 80 feet for residential towers with ability to reduce to a minimum of 20 feet if departure criteria met (***Councilmember requested option of additional discussion***)

# Residential Setback Alternative

**30-foot setback above 80 feet. May be reduced to 20 feet through an administrative departure if:**

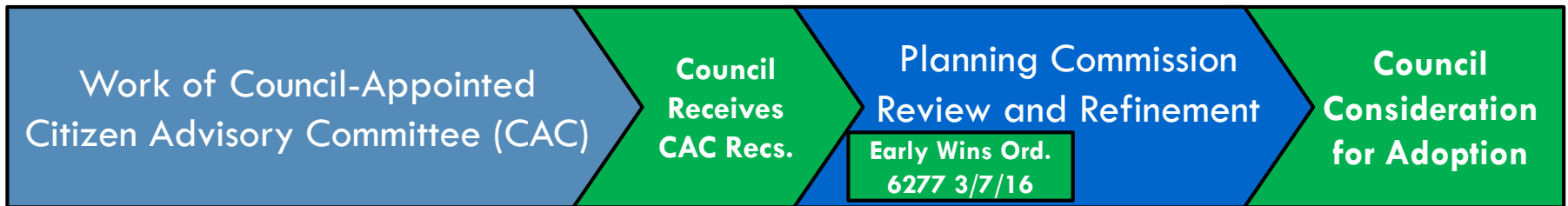
- No façade is located within 20 feet of an interior property line;
- May be located within 30 feet of an interior property line if there is:
  - No development on abutting property above 80 feet, or
  - Residential development on abutting property more than 30 feet from interior property line;
- Curved or angular tower may provide an average 30 foot setback from interior property lines;
- No more than 25% of façade may be within 30 feet of interior property lines; and
- Intrusion doesn't affect light, air, and privacy of users of proposed tower or users of residential towers on abutting property.

**Small sites are exempt from 30-foot setback requirement**

# Next Steps

- Confirm Downtown Land Use Code adoption date (proposed for 10/16)

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



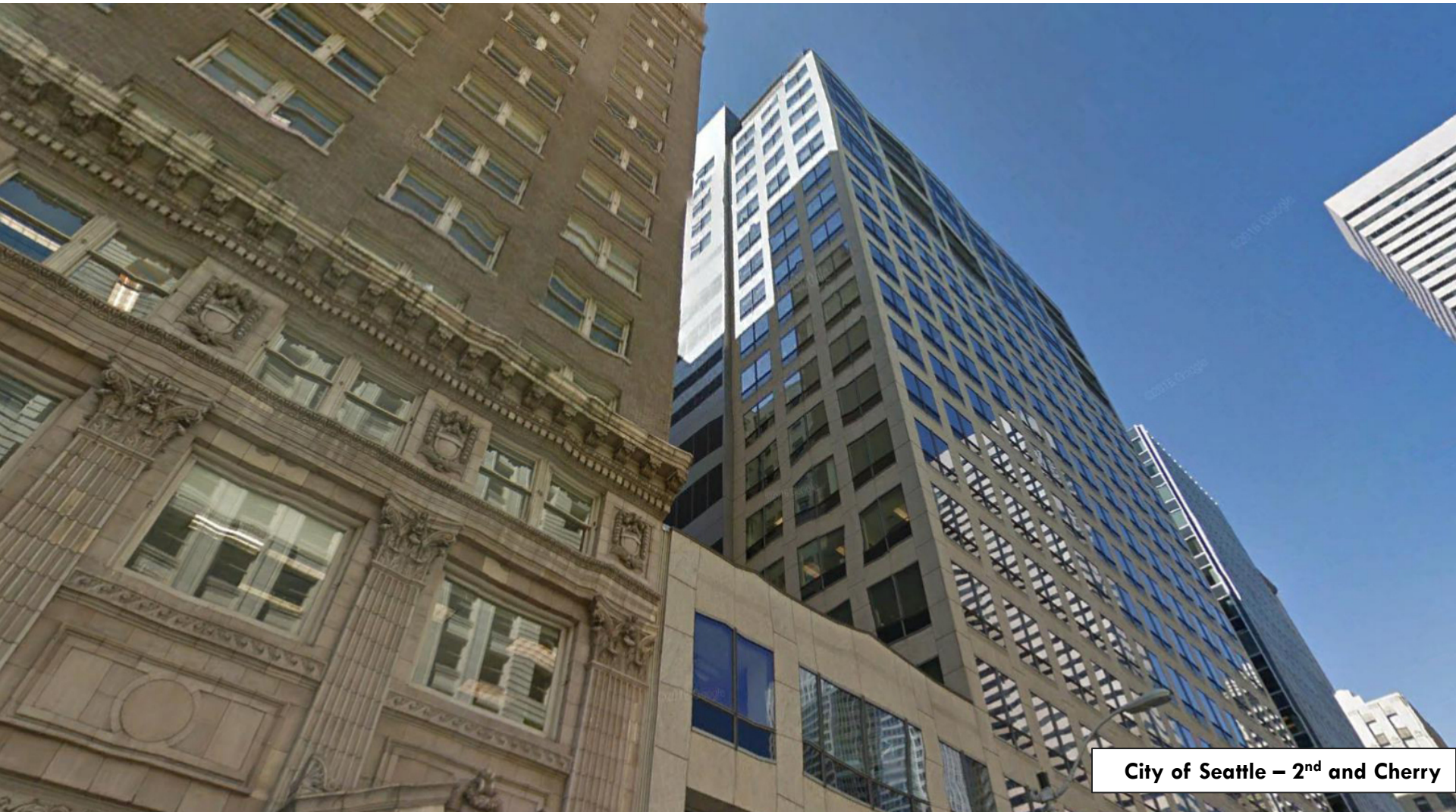
**We Are Here**

# Tower Spacing



- 30-foot residential tower setback aimed at preserving access to light, air and privacy
- Adequate spacing between some future projects will likely be an issue
- Significant stakeholder concern has been expressed about any setback beyond 20 feet

# Tower Spacing



City of Seattle – 2<sup>nd</sup> and Cherry

# Tower Spacing



# Tower Spacing

