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MEMORANDUM

To: Kirkland Planning Commission

From: Jeremy McMahan, AICP
Angela Ruggeri, AICP

Date: July 1, 2008

Subject: POLICY AND CODE APPROACH TO PARKPLACE PRIVATE AMENDMENT REQUEST, FILE NO. ZON07-00016

RECOMMENDATION:

Review the proposed approach to establishing policies and regulations for the proposed Parkplace private amendment request and provide direction to staff. The proposed framework is divided into three categories below (Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code, and Master Plan and Design Guidelines) with some key questions under each category. The focus of discussion on July 10th will be on this framework, with discussion of draft Comprehensive Plan language (Attachment 1) as time allows.

DISCUSSION:

For discussion purposes, staff is utilizing the applicant's proposed eight story option for draft policies and regulations. As direction from the Planning Commission is provided, the policies and regulations will be adjusted accordingly.

Whatever the specifics of the PAR recommendation and decision, staff recommends that the development documents provide a high degree of clarity and certainty for all parties. At the same time, to the extent that the project proponents have made fairly specific commitments development components and qualities, those commitments should be captured in the regulatory framework to ensure that the actual product matches community expectations.

Staff's initial recommendation for a policy and regulatory framework for Parkplace is divided into three key documents:

- **The Comprehensive Plan** (amendments to the Downtown Plan section of the Moss Bay Neighborhood Plan) establishes the policy basis for redevelopment.
- **The Zoning Code** (creation of a new CBD 5A zone and accompanying CBD 5A Use Zone Charts) establishes the basic regulations for redevelopment.

- **The Master Plan and Design Guidelines** (creation of a new document) to drill down to a greater level of specificity on the form and character of redevelopment.

Comprehensive Plan: Establish the general policy basis for how a project should fit into the Moss Bay Neighborhood. Establish general urban design principles for how the site should develop. Staff recommends that we avoid regulating through the Comprehensive Plan in a manner that leaves uncertainty for the community and the developer. An initial draft of revised Moss Bay Neighborhood Plan language is included as Attachment 1. While the draft establishes policies that would support the proposed PAR for purposes of discussion, the Planning Commission would need to decide on specifics as part of their recommendation and adjust the wording accordingly.

Key policy questions:

- *What is the appropriate height range? Is there a policy basis to allow this height only in exchange for certain features and amenities (open space, minimum retail, sustainability measures, etc.)?*
- *Is there currently a "territorial view" of the lake from 6th Street and Central Way or does it occur further east (a video will be available at the meeting)?*
- *Should there be a vehicular and pedestrian connection between Kirkland Way and Central Way along the west edge of CBD 5?*

Zoning Code: Create a new Central Business District 5A (CBD 5A) zone. Within the CBD 5A zone, create a use category for master planned development that establishes a review process; minimums for lot size, required yards, and parking; maximums for lot coverage and building height; landscape buffers based on adjoining use; sign requirements; and any special regulations. The charts would refer to the "Parkplace Master Plan and Design Guidelines" where needed for specifics and graphic representations. The preliminary assumption is that new master planned use would be reviewed through a design review process, both for consistency with the master plan and for building and site compliance with established design guidelines.

Key regulatory questions:

- *What is the appropriate development review process?*
- *What are the key physical or use components that would enable development to utilize the height incentives (consistency with the master plan, minimum retail square footage, minimum public open space, sustainability measures, etc)*
- *Would development not subject to the master plan be allowed, is so under what provisions (e.g. – under existing CBD 5 regulations, modified CBD 5 regulations, etc.)?*
- *Should maximum heights be measured by stories or by feet?*

Parkplace Master Plan and Design Guidelines: Unlike traditional development regulations, the project proponent has consistently illustrated what the proposed amendments will look like. This provides the City with an opportunity to establish a highly graphic master plan and set of design guidelines that fixes the specific commitments that the proponent has made while leaving enough flexibility for improvements.

Key master plan/guideline questions:

- *Will the Planning Commission and City Council be prepared to adopt a master plan in conjunction with the design guidelines through this PAR process or is another discretionary process necessary after the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning are adopted? With Totem Lake Mall the master plan was reviewed through Design Review after the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning were adopted. With Juanita Village the master plan was reviewed through Process IIA after the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning were adopted. However, in both cases a developer was not prepared with the level of detail and project commitment as is the case with the Touchstone proposal.*

The following text is excerpted from the Downtown Plan section of the Moss Bay Neighborhood Plan to illustrate potential changes related to the Parkplace PAR within the context of the Plan. For complete text and graphics, review the online version of the Plan from the City's webpage. Edited paragraphs are indicated in shaded text. Graphics showing modifications to neighborhood maps are included as Attachment 2.

A. VISION STATEMENT

Downtown Kirkland provides a strong sense of community identity for all of Kirkland. This identity is derived from Downtown's physical setting along the lakefront, its distinctive topography, and the human scale of existing development. This identity is reinforced in the minds of Kirklanders by Downtown's historic role as the cultural and civic heart of the community.

Future growth and development of the Downtown must recognize its unique identity, complement ongoing civic activities, clarify Downtown's natural physical setting, enhance the open space network, and add pedestrian amenities. These qualities will be encouraged by attracting economic development that emphasizes diversity and quality within a hometown setting of human scale.

B. LAND USE

A critical mass of retail uses and services is essential to the economic vitality of the Downtown area.

The Downtown area is appropriate for a wide variety of permitted uses. The area's economic vitality and identity as a commercial center will depend upon its ability to establish and retain a critical mass of retail uses and services, primarily located west of 3rd Street. If this objective is not reached, it relegates the Downtown to a weaker and narrower commercial focus (i.e., restaurant and offices only) and lessens the opportunities and reasons for Kirklanders to frequent the Downtown.

The enhancement of the area for retail and service businesses will best be served by concentrating such uses in the pedestrian core and shoreline districts and by encouraging a substantial increase in the amount of housing and office floor area either within or adjacent to the core. In implementing this land use concept as a part of Downtown's vision, care must be taken to respect and enhance the existing features, patterns, and opportunities discussed in the following plan sections on urban design, public facilities, and circulation.

Land use districts in the Downtown area are identified in Figure C-3.

Figure C3 identifies five land use districts within the Downtown area. The districts are structured according to natural constraints such as topographical change, the appropriateness of pedestrian and/or automobile-oriented uses within the district, and linkages with nearby residential neighborhoods and other commercial activity centers.

CORE AREA

Pedestrian activity in the core area is to be enhanced.

The core area should be enhanced as the pedestrian heart of Downtown Kirkland. Land uses should be oriented to the pedestrian, both in terms of design and activity type. Appropriate uses include retail, restaurant, office, residential, cultural, and recreational.

Restaurants, delicatessens, and specialty retail shops, including fine apparel, gift shops, art galleries, import shops, and the like constitute the use mix and image contemplated in the Vision for Downtown. These uses provide visual interest and stimulate foot traffic and thereby provide opportunities for leisure time strolling along Downtown walkways for Kirklanders and visitors alike.

Drive-through facilities and ground-floor offices are prohibited.

The desired pedestrian character and vitality of the core area requires the relatively intensive use of land and continuous compact retail frontage. Therefore, automobile drive-through facilities should be prohibited. Similarly, office uses should not be allowed to locate on the ground level. These uses generally lack visual interest, generate little foot traffic, and diminish prime ground floor opportunities for the retail uses that are crucial to the ambiance and economic success of the core area.

The attractiveness of the core area for pedestrian activity should be maintained and enhanced. Public and private efforts toward beautification of the area should be promoted. Mitigation measures should be undertaken where land uses may threaten the quality of the pedestrian environment. For example, in areas where take-out eating facilities are permitted, a litter surcharge on business licenses should be considered as a means to pay for additional trash receptacles or cleaning crews.

The creation and enhancement of public open spaces is discussed.

Public open spaces are an important component of the pedestrian environment. They provide focal points for outdoor activity, provide refuge from automobiles, and stimulate foot traffic which in turn helps the retail trade. The establishment and use of public spaces should be promoted. Surface parking lots should be

eliminated in favor of structured parking. In the interim, their role as one form of open area in the Downtown should be improved with landscaped buffers adjacent to rights-of-way and between properties. Landscaping should also be installed where rear sides of buildings and service areas are exposed to pedestrians.

A high-priority policy objective should be for developers to include only enough parking stalls in their projects within the core area to meet the immediate need and to locate the majority of their parking in the core frame. This approach would reserve the majority of core land area for pedestrian movement and uses and yet recognize that the adjacent core frame is within a very short walk.

The City should generally avoid vacating alleys and streets in the core area. The existing network of street and alleys provides a fine-grained texture to the blocks which allows service access and pedestrian shortcuts. The small blocks also preclude consolidation of properties which might allow larger developments with less pedestrian scale. Vacations may be considered when they will not result in increased building mass and there is a substantial public benefit. Examples of public benefit might include superior pedestrian or vehicular linkages, or superior public open space.

NORTHWEST CORE FRAME

Office and office/multifamily mixed-use projects are appropriate in the Northwest Core Frame.

The Northwest Core Frame includes the area south of City Hall and north of the core area. This area should develop with office, or office/multifamily mixed-use projects, whose occupants will help to support the commercial establishments contained in the core. Retail and restaurant uses are desirable provided that they have primary access from Central Way.

This area presents an excellent opportunity for the development of perimeter parking for the core area and is so shown in the Downtown Master Plan (Figure C4). Developers should be encouraged to include surplus public parking in their projects, or to incorporate private parking "transferred" from projects in the core or funded by the fee-in-lieu or other municipal source. While pedestrian pathways are not as critical in this area as they are in the core, drive-through facilities should nevertheless be encouraged to locate elsewhere, to the east of 3rd Street.

Northeast Core Frame

A broad range of commercial uses should be encouraged in the Northeast Core Frame.

The Northeast Core Frame currently contains the bulk of the Downtown area's automobile-oriented uses. Redevelopment or new development in this area should be encouraged to represent a broader range of commercial uses.

Future development should set the bulk of structures back from the street while providing low, one-story retail shops at the edge of the sidewalk. Development should also underground utilities, and incorporate parking lot landscaping and a reduction in lot coverage in site design. This will present an open, green face to Central

Way and, in conjunction with Peter Kirk Park on the south side of the street, create a tree-lined boulevard effect as one approaches the core area from the east.

EAST CORE FRAME

Development in the East Core Frame should be in large, intensively developed mixed-use projects.

The East Core Frame is located east of Peter Kirk Park, extending from Kirkland Way northerly to 7th Avenue. The area include~~s the area where~~ the Kirkland Parkplace shopping center as well as several large office buildings and large residential complexes. South of Central way, the area is largely commercial and provides significant opportunities for redevelopment.~~is located, and extends northerly to 7th Avenue. Developments in this area should continue to represent a wide range of uses, in several large, mixed-use projects. However, b~~Because the~~is~~ area ~~between Central Way and Kirkland Way~~ provides the best opportunities in the Downtown for creating a strong ~~vital~~ employment base, redevelopment for ~~this area should continue to emphasize~~ office use should be emphasized ~~redevelopment over residential~~. Within the Parkplace center site, however, retail uses should be a significant component of a mixed use complex.

Limited residential use should be allowed adjoining the eastern edge of Peter Kirk Park as a complementary use. These residential uses should be designed to accommodate the active nature of the park (e.g., noise, lighting, etc.) to avoid potential conflicts between future residents and park uses.

The north side of Central Way, within the East Core Frame, has been redeveloped to nearly its full potential with high density residential uses.

SOUTH CORE FRAME

Retail, office, and office/multifamily mixed-use projects are suitable for the South Core Frame.

The South Core Frame immediately abuts the southern boundary of the core area. This area is suitable for retail, office, and office/multifamily mixed-use projects.

Public parking may be provided in the South Core Frame.

The South Core Frame, like the Northwest Core Frame, presents an excellent opportunity for the development of close-in public parking. Developers should be allowed to include surplus public parking in their projects in this area or to accommodate private parking “transferred” from the core or funded by “fee-in-lieu” or other municipal source.

The western half of the South Core Frame should develop more intensively than the eastern half of this area, due to its proximity to the Downtown core. The vacation of 1st Avenue South, west of 2nd Street South, and 1st Street South should be considered as a means of concentrating more intensive development to the west.

Mitigation measures to reduce impacts on single-family residences may be required.

As this area lies just north of an established single-family neighborhood, mitigation measures may be required to minimize the impacts of any new nonresidential development on these single-family homes. These measures may include the restriction of vehicle access to projects within the South Core Frame to nonresidential streets. Public improvements, such as physical barriers to restrict traffic flow in these areas, may be considered. The architectural massing of projects in this area should be modulated both horizontally and vertically to reduce their visual bulk and to reflect the topography which presently exists.

C. URBAN DESIGN

The urban design of Downtown Kirkland consists of many disparate elements which, together, define its identity and "sense of place." This document provides policy guidelines for the design of private development and a master plan for the development of the public framework of streets, pedestrian pathways, public facilities, parks, public buildings, and other public improvements (see Figure C4).

The following discussion is organized into three sections:

A. Downtown Design Guidelines and Design Review;

B. Building Height and Design Districts; and

C. The Image of the City: Urban Design Assets.

DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES AND DESIGN REVIEW

Mechanics of Design Review are described.

The booklet entitled "Design Guidelines for Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts," which is adopted in Chapter 3.30 of the Kirkland Municipal Code, contains policy guidelines and concepts for private development in Downtown Kirkland. The booklet includes an explanation of the mechanics of the Design Review process to be used for all new development and major renovations in the Downtown area. The booklet entitled "Master Plan and Design Guidelines for Kirkland Parkplace" contains guidelines for the master planned development of the Kirkland Parkplace site (Design District 5A). Discretion to deny or condition a design proposal is based on specific Design Guidelines or a master plan adopted by the City Council and administered by the Design Review Board and Planning Department. Design Review enables the City to apply the Guidelines in a consistent, predictable, and effective manner.

The Guidelines are intended to balance the desired diversity of project architecture with the equally desired overall coherence of the Downtown's visual and historic character. This is to be achieved by injecting into each project's creative design process a recognition and respect of design principles and methods which incorporate new development into Downtown's overall pattern. The Guidelines would be applied to any specific site in conjunction with the policy guidance provided by the Downtown Master Plan and the following text regarding Design Districts.

The Design Review Process enables the City to require new development to implement the policy guidance contained in the Guidelines, the Master Plan for Downtown, and to protect and enhance the area's urban design assets. A more complete description of how Design Review should operate is found in the Zoning Code.

BUILDING HEIGHT AND DESIGN DISTRICTS

Figure C5 identifies eight height and design districts within Downtown Kirkland. The boundaries of these districts are determined primarily by the topographical characteristics of the land and the area's proximity to other noncommercial uses.

Design District 1

Maximum building height in Design District 1 is between two and five stories, depending on location and use.

This district is bordered by Lake Street, Central Way, 3rd Street, and generally 1st Avenue South. When combined with District 2, this area corresponds to the core area as shown in Figure C3.

The maximum building height in this area should be between two and five stories with no minimum setback from property lines. Stories above the second story should be set back from the street. To preserve the existing human scale of this area, development over two stories requires review and approval by the Design Review Board based on the priorities set forth in this plan.

Buildings should be limited to two stories along all of Lake Street South to reflect the scale of development in Design District 2. Along Park Lane west of Main Street, Third Street, and along Kirkland Avenue, a maximum height of two stories along street frontages will protect the existing human scale and pedestrian orientation. Buildings up to three stories in height may be appropriate along Central Way to reflect the scale of development in Design District 8 and as an intermediate height where adequately set back from the street. A continuous three-story street wall should be avoided by incorporating vertical and horizontal modulations into the design of buildings.

The portions of Design District 1 designated as 1A in Figure C-5 should be limited to a maximum height of three stories. As an incentive to encourage residential use of upper floors and to strengthen the retail fabric of the Core Area, a fourth story of height may be allowed. This additional story may be considered by the Design Review Board for projects where at least two of the upper stories are residential, the total height is not more than four feet taller than the height that would result from an office project with two stories of office over ground floor retail, stories above the second story are set back significantly from the street and the building form is stepped back at the third and fourth stories to mitigate the additional building mass, and the project

provides superior retail space at the street level. Rooftop appurtenances and related screening should not exceed the total allowed height, and should be integrated into the height and design of any peaked roofs or parapets.

The portions of Design District 1 designated as 1B in Figure C-5 provide the best opportunities for new development that could contribute to the pedestrian fabric of the Downtown. Much of the existing development in these areas consists of older auto-oriented uses defined by surface parking lots and poor pedestrian orientation. To provide incentive for redevelopment and because these larger sites have more flexibility to accommodate additional height, a mix of two to four stories in height is appropriate. East of Main Street, development should combine modulations in building heights with modulations of facade widths to break large buildings into the appearance of multiple smaller buildings. South of Kirkland Avenue, building forms should step up from the north and west with the tallest portions at the base of the hillside to help moderate the mass of large buildings on top of the bluff. Buildings over two stories in height should generally reduce the building mass above the second story.

As with Design District 1A, an additional story of height may be appropriate in 1B to encourage residential use of the upper floors and to strengthen the retail fabric in the Core Area. This additional story may be considered by the Design Review Board for projects where at least three of the upper stories are residential, the total height is not more than one foot taller than the height that would result from an office project with three stories of office over ground floor retail, stories above the second story are set back significantly from the street and the building form is stepped back at the at the third, fourth, and fifth stories to mitigate the additional building mass, and the project provides superior retail space at the street level. Rooftop appurtenances and related screening should not exceed the total allowed height, and should be integrated into the height and design of any peaked roofs or parapets.

Design considerations of particular importance in this area are those related to pedestrian scale and orientation. Building design at the street wall should contribute to a lively, attractive, and safe pedestrian streetscape. This should be achieved by the judicious placement of windows, multiple entrances, canopies, awnings, courtyards, arcades, and other pedestrian amenities. Service areas, surface parking, and blank facades should be located away from the street frontage.

Design District 2

One to three stories in building height above Central Way or Lake Street are appropriate in Design District 2, depending on location.

This area is bordered by the shoreline, Central Way, Lake Street, and 3rd Avenue South. This area serves as the link between Downtown and the Lake and helps define the traditional pedestrian-oriented retail environment. In addition, the existing low development allows public views of the Lake from many vantages around the Downtown and allows evening sun into the Downtown core. To emphasize this link and the traditional role, building heights in this area should remain low. Two stories above the street are appropriate along Central Way and south of Kirkland Avenue. Along Lake Street South between Kirkland Avenue and Central Way, buildings should be limited to one story above the street. Two stories in height may be allowed in this area where the impacts of the additional height are offset by substantial public benefits, such as through-block public pedestrian access or view corridors. Buildings over one story in this area should be reviewed by the Design Review Board for both design and public benefit considerations. These benefits could also be provided with the development of the Lakeshore Plaza project identified in the Downtown Master Plan (see

Figure C-4). Building occurring in conjunction with that project or thereafter should be reviewed in relation to the new context to determine whether two stories are appropriate. South of Second Avenue South, buildings up to three stories above Lake Street South are appropriate. Buildings over two stories should be reviewed by the Design Review Board to ensure an effective transition along the street and properties to the south.

As in District 1, pedestrian orientation is an equally important design consideration in District 2. In addition, improvements related to the visual or physical linkage between building in this area and the lake to the west should be incorporated in building design.

The public parking lot located near Marina Park at the base of Market Street is well suited for a parking structure of several levels, due to its topography. Incentives should be developed to encourage the use of this site for additional public parking.

Design Districts 3 and 7

Maximum building height is three stories in Design Districts 3 and 7.

These districts are east of 3rd Street, north of Central Way, and south of Peter Kirk Park. Maximum building height should be three stories, with a minimum front yard setback of 20 feet and maximum lot coverage of 80 percent. Lower portions of projects with a pedestrian orientation should be allowed to encroach into the setbacks to stimulate pedestrian activity and links to eastern portions of the Downtown. Street trees and ground cover are appropriate along Kirkland Avenue and Central Way. By keeping structures in this area relatively low-rise and set back from the street, views from upland residences can be preserved and the openness around Peter Kirk Park enhanced.

In Design District 3, the restriction of access points to nonresidential streets may be necessary in order to prevent a negative impact of development in this area on the single-family enclave which exists to the south.

Design District 4

Maximum building height to be four stories.

This district is located south of 1st Avenue South, east of 1st Street South. Land in this area is appropriate for developments of four stories in height.

The method for calculating building height should be modified for this area as described in the discussion of height calculation for structures in District 8. The opportunity to take advantage of substantial grade changes with terraced building forms also exists in the western half of District 4.

Vehicular circulation will be an important consideration in project design in this area. The restriction of access points to nonresidential streets in order to prevent a negative impact of development in this area on the single-family enclave which exists to the south may be necessary.

Design District 5

Building heights of two to five stories are appropriate in Design District 5.

This district lies at the east side of Downtown between ~~Central Way~~Design District 5A and Kirkland Way. Maximum building height should be between three and five stories. The existing mix of building heights and arrangement of structures within the district preserves a sense of openness within the district and around the perimeter. Placement, size, and orientation of new structures in this district should be carefully considered to preserve this sense of openness. Buildings over two stories in height should be reviewed by the Design Review Board for consistency with applicable policies and criteria. Within the district, massing should generally be lower toward the perimeter and step up toward the center. Facades facing ~~Central Way,~~ Kirkland Way, and Peter Kirk Park should be limited to between two and three stories, with taller portions of the building stepped back significantly. Buildings over three stories in height should generally reduce building mass above the third story.

Buildings fronting Peter Kirk Park and the Performance Center should be well modulated, both vertically and horizontally, to ease the transition to this important public space. Buildings should not turn their backs onto the park with service access, blank walls, etc. Landscaping and pedestrian linkages should be used to create an effective transition. ~~Residential development should be designed to integrate into both the office/retail character of the zone and the active urban nature of Peter Kirk Park. Residential development should also be limited to those portions of the property fronting on park green space, rather than those portions fronting the Teen Center and Performance Center.~~

Design considerations related to vehicular and pedestrian access, landscaping, and open space are particularly important in this area. ~~The intersection of 6th Street and Central Way is a prominent gateway to the Downtown. New development in this area should have a positive impact on the image of Kirkland and should be designed to enhance this entry.~~ Within the district, a north-south vehicular access between Central Way and Kirkland Way should be preserved and enhanced with pedestrian improvements.

Design Districts 5A

Building heights of "x" to "y" stories are appropriate in Design District 5A.

This district lies at the east side of Downtown between Central Way and Design District 5 and is commonly known as Parkplace. Design considerations related to vehicular and pedestrian access, landscaping, and open space are particularly important in this area. Within the district, a north-south vehicular access between Central Way and Kirkland Way should be preserved and enhanced with pedestrian improvements.

Redevelopment of this area should be governed by the Kirkland Parkplace Master Plan and Design Guidelines as set forth in the Kirkland Municipal Code. Greater heights of up to eight stories are appropriate as an incentive to create a network and nodes of public open space around which is organized a dynamic retail destination. Development under the Master Plan and Design Guidelines should guide the transition of this district from an auto-oriented center surrounded by parking into a pedestrian-oriented center integrated into the community by placing parking, activating the streets with retail uses, and creating comfortable pedestrian paths and gathering places. The intersection of 6th Street and Central Way is a prominent gateway to the Downtown. Development at this gateway should have a positive impact on the image of Kirkland and should be designed

to enhance this entry. Special attention to building design, size, and location should be provided at three key locations: at the northeast corner to enhance this important downtown gateway; along Central Way to respond to the context along the north side of street; and facing Peter Kirk Park to provide a transition in scale to downtown's central greenspace.

Because of the intensity of land use in 5A, the design of the buildings and site should incorporate aggressive sustainability measures, including low impact development measures and green building methods.

Design District 6

Maximum building heights of two to four stories are appropriate for Design District 6.

This large block of land located between 5th Street and 6th Street, north of Central Way, and south of 7th Avenue, is identified as a major opportunity site for redevelopment elsewhere in this document. Figure C6 contains a schematic diagram of design and circulation considerations that should be incorporated in the redevelopment of this district. Development of this district should be relatively intensive and should be physically integrated through pedestrian access routes, design considerations, and intensive landscaping.

Safe, convenient, and attractive pedestrian connections across the district should be provided. This path should be designed under a covered enclosure or arcade along the storefronts in this area. Visual interest and pedestrian scale of these storefronts will contribute to the appeal of this walkway to the pedestrian. A connection of this pathway to Central Way should be made, with a continuation of the overhead enclosure to unify this pedestrian route.

Design considerations related to vehicular and pedestrian access, landscaping, and open space are particularly important in this area. The intersection of 6th Street and Central Way is a prominent gateway to the Downtown. New development in this area should have a positive impact on the image of Kirkland and should be designed to enhance this entry.

A substantial building setback or mitigating design such as the site configuration on the south side of Central Way is necessary in order to preserve openness at this important gateway site. The northeast and southeast corners of this block should be set aside and landscaped to provide public open spaces or miniparks at these gateways. Side-yard setbacks, however, should be minimal to reduce the appearance of a building surrounded by a parking area.

The northern portion of this district should be developed in uses that are residential both in function and scale. Access to this portion of the site may be either from 7th Avenue or from one of the adjacent side streets. Some of the significant trees along 7th Avenue should be incorporated into the site design as a means of softening the apparent mass of any new structures and to provide additional elements of continuity facing the single-family residences along 7th Avenue. In addition, building mass should step down toward 7th Avenue and design consideration should be given to the massing and form of single-family homes to the north.

Design District 8

Building heights of two to four stories are appropriate, depending on location.

This district is located north of Central Way and south of 4th Avenue, between Market Street and 3rd Street. Maximum building height should be three stories abutting Central Way and two stories at 3rd and 4th Avenues. Structures which do not abut either of these streets should be allowed to rise up to four stories.

Building height calculation should require terracing of building forms on sloped sites.

Where dramatic elevation changes exist in this district, an innovative method of calculating height is appropriate. In order to encourage the terracing of building forms on the hillside, building height should be calculated relative to the ground elevation above which the individual planes of the structure lie. Additional bulk controls should apply to restrict the height within 100 feet of noncommercial neighborhoods to the same height allowed in the adjacent zone. Heights on the north side should step down to ease the transition to the core area and moderate the mass on top of the hillside.

Vehicular circulation to nonresidential portions of projects within this area should not occur on primarily residential streets. In addition, design elements should be incorporated into developments in this area which provide a transition to the residential area to the north.

THE IMAGE OF THE CITY: URBAN DESIGN ASSETS

Many of Downtown's urban design assets are mapped on the Master Plan (Figure C4) or are discussed explicitly in the text of the Height and Design Districts or the Downtown Design Guidelines. The following text should read as an explanation and amplification of references made in those two parts of the Downtown Plan.

Visual Landmarks

Lake Washington is a major landmark in Downtown Kirkland.

The most vivid landmark in Downtown Kirkland is Lake Washington. The lake provides a sense of openness and orientation and is a prominent feature from two of the three main approaches to the Downtown. Many residents and visitors to Kirkland form their impressions of the community from these important vantage points. The preservation and enhancement of views from the eastern (NE 85th Street~~Central Way~~) and northern (Market Street) approaches~~gateways~~ is a high-priority policy objective.

Despite the prominence from these vantage points, the core area is not well oriented to capitalize on its waterfront setting. The existing activity centers of the retail core and the lake are separated by large surface parking lots. The City and property owners around Marina Park should aggressively pursue opportunities to correct this deficiency by structuring the existing surface parking below a public plaza. This open space amenity could redefine the Downtown and become the focal point of the community.

Other outstanding visual landmarks include the large green expanse of Peter Kirk Park, which provides an open space relief to the densely developed Downtown core to the west. The library and Senior Center building at the southeast edge of Peter Kirk Park, as well as the METRO transit center at the western boundary of the park, are also well-known local landmarks.

The City Hall facility provides an important visual and civic landmark on the northern slope above the Downtown. Marina Park and the pavilion structure situated there are also symbolic reference points of community, recreational, and cultural activities.

There are a number of features in and nearby the Downtown area with historic significance which add to its visual character and historic flavor. These landmarks include the historic buildings on Market Street and the old ferry clock on Lake Street at Kirkland Avenue. These structures should be recognized for their community and historic value, and their preservation and enhancement should have a high priority. In contrast to the bland architecture of many of the buildings in the Downtown constructed since the 1940's, some of the older structures help define the character of the Downtown. The City will consider preserving this character through a process of inventorying these structures and adopting historic protection regulations. New regulations could range from protecting the character of designated historic buildings to protecting the actual structure. Some form of preservation would provide continuity between the Downtown vision and its unique past.

Public Views

Important Downtown views are from the northern, southern, and eastern gateways.

A number of dramatic views exist in the Downtown and its immediate vicinity due to the hills, the valley, and the sloping land areas which form the bowl-like topography which characterizes the City's center. One of the views most often associated with Downtown Kirkland is from NE 85th Street near 114th Avenue NE ~~the eastern gateway, where Central Way meets 6th Street~~. From this vantage point, the hills north and south of the core area form a frame for a sweeping view of Lake Washington in the distance and the Olympic mountain range beyond.

Another striking view, identified in Figure C4, is from the Market Street entry into Downtown. This approach is met with a view of the lake, Marina Park and its pavilion, and the City's shoreline. This view could be enhanced with redevelopment of the GTE site, where the existing massive building substantially diminishes this broad territorial view.

Where the Kirkland Avenue and 2nd Avenue South rights-of-way cross Lake Street and continue to Lake Washington, an unobstructed view of open water is visible to pedestrians and people traveling in vehicles. These views are very valuable in maintaining the visual connection and perception of public accessibility to the lake. These views should be kept free of obstruction.

Gateways

Topographic changes define gateways into the Downtown area.

The gateways into Downtown Kirkland are very clear and convey a distinct sense of entry. Two of the Downtown's three major gateways make use of a change in topography to provide a visual entry into the area.

At the eastern boundary of the Downtown area, Central Way drops toward the lake, and the core area comes clearly into view. This gateway could be enhanced by an entry sign, similar to one located farther up the hill to the east, or some other distinctive structure or landscaping feature.

A second major gateway is the Downtown's northern entrance where Market Street slopes gradually down toward Marina Park. The historic buildings at 7th Avenue begin to form the visual impression of Downtown's character and identity, and the landscaped median adds to the boulevard feeling of this entryway. Some type of sign or other feature could be incorporated into the improvements to the Waverly site.

At the Downtown's southern border, the curve of Lake Street at about 3rd Avenue South provides a very clear gateway into the commercial core. It is at this point that the transition from residential to retail uses is distinctly felt. Here, also, is an opportunity to enhance this sense of entry by creation of literal gateposts, signs, or landscape materials.

Pathways

An extensive network of pedestrian pathways covers the Downtown area.

The size and scale of Downtown Kirkland make walking a convenient and attractive activity. An extensive network of pedestrian pathways covers the Downtown area, linking residential, recreational, and commercial areas. Downtown Kirkland is a pedestrian precinct unlike virtually any other in the region. It is almost European in its scale and quality.

The core of the shopping district, with its compact land uses, is particularly conducive to pedestrian traffic. Both sides of Lake Street, Park Lane, and Kirkland Avenue are major pedestrian routes. Many residents and visitors also traverse the land west of Lake Street to view and participate in water-oriented activities available there.

The Downtown area's major east/west pedestrian route links the lake with Peter Kirk Park, the Kirkland Parkplace shopping center, and areas to the east. For the most part, this route is a visually clear pathway, with diversity and nearby destinations contributing to its appeal to the pedestrian. Enhancement and improved definition of this important east-west pedestrian corridor would help link Parkplace ~~Place~~ with the rest of the shopping district.

Minor pedestrian routes link the residential areas north of Central Way and south of Kirkland Avenue. These linkages need to be strengthened in order to accommodate the residential and office populations walking from the Norkirk Neighborhood and core frames, respectively. Additional improvements, such as brick paver crosswalks, pedestrian safety islands, and signalization, are methods to strengthen these north-south linkages.

Enhancement of Downtown pedestrian routes should be a high-priority objective.

Enhancement of the Downtown area's pedestrian routes should be a high-priority policy and design objective. For example, minor architectural features and attractive and informative signs should be used to identify public pathways. Public and private efforts to make pedestrian walkways more interesting, functional, convenient, and safe, should be strongly supported. Figure C4 highlights a number of projects proposed for this purpose. These projects are discussed in detail elsewhere in this text.

D. PUBLIC FACILITIES

OPEN SPACE/PARKS

Four major park sites are critical to the Downtown's feeling of openness and greenery. These parks weave a noncommercial leisure-time thread into the fabric of the area and provide a valuable amenity, enhancing Downtown's appeal as a destination. Each of the major approaches to the Downtown is met with a park, with the Waverly site and Marina Park enhancing the northern entry, and Peter Kirk Park and Dave Brink Park augmenting the eastern and southern approaches. Physical improvements in and near these parks should strengthen their visual prominence and prevent view obstruction.

Marina Park and Peter Kirk Park in particular are well-used by families and recreational groups. Public facilities at these parks should continue to expand opportunities for residents, such as the installation of permanent street furniture and play equipment for children at Marina Park.

Pedestrian improvements should be made to improve connections between parks and nearby facilities.

Downtown projects which are not directly related to the parks should continue to locate adjacent to the parks, and in some cases, should share access or parking. Impacts from projects, such as the tour boat dock at Marina Park and the METRO transit center at Peter Kirk Park, should be minimized. Efforts to provide continuity between these facilities and the parks through the use of consistent walkway materials, landscaping, and other pedestrian amenities, will help to reduce the appearance of a separation of uses at these locations.

The boat launch ramp which exists at Marina Park is an important amenity in the community. It should be retained until another more suitable location is found.

OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES

City Hall and the Library/Senior Center facility add to the community atmosphere and civic presence in the Downtown area. The plan for Downtown developed in 1977 recommended that the City Hall facility be moved from its previous location in the core area to its present site overlooking the Downtown from the northern slope. In its new location, City Hall is close enough to Downtown to contribute workers to the retail and restaurant trade, as well as to provide a visually prominent and symbolic landmark when viewed from the Downtown.

Public efforts to assist the Downtown business district should be continued.

The City should help to foster economic vitality in the Downtown by working with the private sector and by encouraging independent efforts toward economic development by the private sector. Such assistance to the

business community might include supporting efforts to establish local improvement or business improvement districts. This could take the form of seed money for preliminary studies and the dissemination of information.

Other public efforts to strengthen the Downtown business climate should include the continued promotion of public projects such as the tour boat dock, in addition to continued support for private projects such as the Lakeshore Plaza Boardwalk, which would help to implement public policy goals.

E. CIRCULATION

PEDESTRIAN

Pedestrian routes should have equal priority to vehicular routes in Downtown circulation.

Pedestrian amenities and routes should continue to be improved, and should be given equal priority with that of vehicular routes for circulation within the Downtown. Modifications to the street network and traffic patterns should not be allowed to disrupt Downtown pedestrian activity and circulation.

To be a truly successful walking environment, the core area of the Downtown must be safe, convenient, and pleasant for the pedestrian. Pedestrian safety would be increased greatly by reducing opportunities for conflicts with cars. The reprogramming of crosswalk signals to favor the pedestrian would discourage jaywalking and allow sufficient time for slower walkers to cross the street.

Convenience to the pedestrian will be enhanced by improving the directness and ease of pedestrian routes. "Shortcuts" between streets, or even between buildings, can link pedestrian routes over large distances where vehicles cannot circulate. Coordinated public directory signs and maps of walkways should be developed to clearly identify public pathways for the pedestrian.

A system of overhead coverings should be considered to improve the quality of pedestrian walkways year-round.

The pleasures of walking in the Downtown area would be enhanced by the installation of minor public improvements, such as street furniture (benches, planters, fountains, sculptures, special paving treatments), flower baskets, and coordinated banners and public art. The creation of a system of overhead coverings such as awnings, arcades, and marquees would provide protection to the pedestrian during inclement weather, allowing for pedestrian activity year-round. All of these features would add visual interest and vitality to the pedestrian environment.

Brick crosswalks have been installed at 3rd Street and Park Lane in conjunction with the METRO transit center facility. The expansion of the use of brick for crosswalks throughout the Downtown should be considered. In any case, additional restriping of crosswalks in the Downtown area should be actively pursued.

The establishment and improvement of pedestrian pathways between activity centers should be a high-priority policy objective. Major pedestrian routes within the Downtown area are identified in Figure C4. Major

pathways include the extensive east-west "spine" or "Park Walk Promenade," which links the lake with points east of 6th Street and the shoreline public access trail.

The Downtown Master Plan also identifies other important pedestrian routes which provide north-south pedestrian access. Improvements to these pathways should be promoted, particularly at the intersection of 6th Street and Central Way. Elevated crosswalks should be considered among the alternatives reviewed for pedestrian access across Central Way. Disadvantages to elevated crosswalks which should be considered are potential view blockage and the loss of on-street pedestrian traffic.

The portion of the Park Walk Promenade spanning Peter Kirk Park was installed by the City during renovation of the park facilities. The walk serves the ~~Senior Center~~Peter Kirk Community Center and library, as well as commercial areas to the east and west. This walkway should be expanded upon when the remaining land south of Kirkland Parkplace develops.

Figure C4 illustrates pedestrian system improvements for the two major routes which are intended to serve several purposes. These projects would improve the safety, convenience, and attractiveness of foot traffic in the Downtown, provide shelter from the weather, and create a unifying element highlighting the presence of a pedestrian linkage.

A large public plaza should be constructed west of buildings on Lake Street to enhance the Downtown's lake front setting (See Figure C-4).

The Lakeshore Plaza shown on the Downtown Master Plan envisions a large public plaza constructed over structured parking. Ideally, the plaza would be developed through public/private partnerships to provide a seamless connection between the Downtown and the lake. The plaza would be at the same grade as Lake Street and would provide visual and pedestrian access from a series of at-grade pedestrian connections from Central Way and Lake Street.

The Park Walk Promenade identified on the Downtown Master Plan should consist of a series of minor structures placed at prominent locations along the walkway in order to clearly identify the pathway throughout its length, as well as to provide some protection during wet weather. The plexiglas and metal "space frames" used at Mercer Island's Luther Burbank Park and at the Seattle Center are possible design options for protective structures. The concrete and metal gateway feature where Parkplace abuts Peter Kirk Park is a good model for visual markers along the east-west pedestrian spine.

VEHICULAR

Automobiles and public transit are the modes of transportation which move people in and out of the Downtown, and often between the core area and the frame. Within the Downtown, pedestrian circulation should be given equal priority with vehicular circulation. A primary circulation goal should be to emphasize pedestrian circulation within the Downtown, while facilitating vehicle access into and out of the Downtown.

Alternate traffic routes should be considered.

Lake Street should be designated to function as a major pedestrian pathway. The objectives for land use and pedestrian circulation should be seriously considered during any plans for traffic and roadway improvements on Lake Washington Boulevard. The goal to discourage commuter traffic on the boulevard should not be viewed independently from the need to retain vehicle access for tourists, shoppers, and employees to the Downtown.

State Street should continue to serve as a major vehicular route, bringing shoppers and workers into the Downtown area. Sixth Street should be developed to accommodate additional vehicles. Future plans for Lake Street and Lake Washington Boulevard may include the diversion of cars from the Downtown area, and 6th Street would provide the most appropriate north/south alternative route. The existence of commercial development on this street renders it more appropriate than State Street to handle substantial commuter traffic.

The use of public transportation to the Downtown should be encouraged.

Third Street has been designed for the pedestrian and public transit user, with the METRO transit center located on this street. The use of public transportation as an alternative for people who work or shop in the Downtown should be encouraged. Increased use of this mode of transportation would help to reduce traffic congestion and parking problems in the core area.

The number of vehicular curb cuts in the Downtown area should be limited. Both traffic flow in the streets and pedestrian flow on the sidewalks are disrupted where driveways occur. In the core frame in particular, the placement of driveways should not encourage vehicles moving to and from commercial areas to travel through residential districts.

PARKING

The core area is a pedestrian-oriented district, and the maintenance and enhancement of this quality should be a high priority. Nevertheless, it should be recognized that pedestrians most often arrive in the core via an automobile which must be parked within easy walking distance of shops and services. To this end, as discussed elsewhere in this chapter, private projects which include a substantial amount of surplus parking stalls in their projects should be encouraged to locate these parking stalls in the core frame.

The Downtown area contains a variety of parking opportunities. Four public parking lots exist in the Downtown area: at the west side of Peter Kirk Park, the street-end of Market Street at Marina Park, in Lakeshore Plaza, and at the intersection of Central Way and Lake Street. These lots are shown on the Downtown Master Plan (Figure C4).

Public parking to be a permitted use on private properties north and south of the core area.

Other sites that would be appropriate for public parking include the north and south slope of the Downtown as shown in Figure C4. Public parking in these areas would help to serve core-area businesses, while not detracting from the dense pattern of development critical to the pedestrian environment there.

More intensive development of existing parking areas should be considered as a way to provide more close-in public parking. Certain sites, such as the Market Street-End lot and the Peter Kirk lot would adapt well to structured parking due to the topography in the immediate vicinity of these lots. Structuring parking below Lakeshore Plaza could make more efficient use of the available space and result in a dramatic increase in the number of stalls available.

The fee-in-lieu of parking alternative allows developers in the core area to contribute to a fund instead of providing required parking on site. The City's authority to spend the monies in this fund should be expanded to include the use of the funds on private property in conjunction with parking facilities being provided by private developers.

Another option for off-site parking should be considered which would allow developers to provide the parking required for their projects elsewhere in the core area or core frame. This alternative should include the construction of parking stalls in conjunction with another developer, if it can be shown that the alternative parking location will be clearly available to the public and is easily accessible to the core area.

The City's parking management and enforcement program should be maintained. The program should be evaluated periodically to assess its effectiveness, with revisions made when necessary.

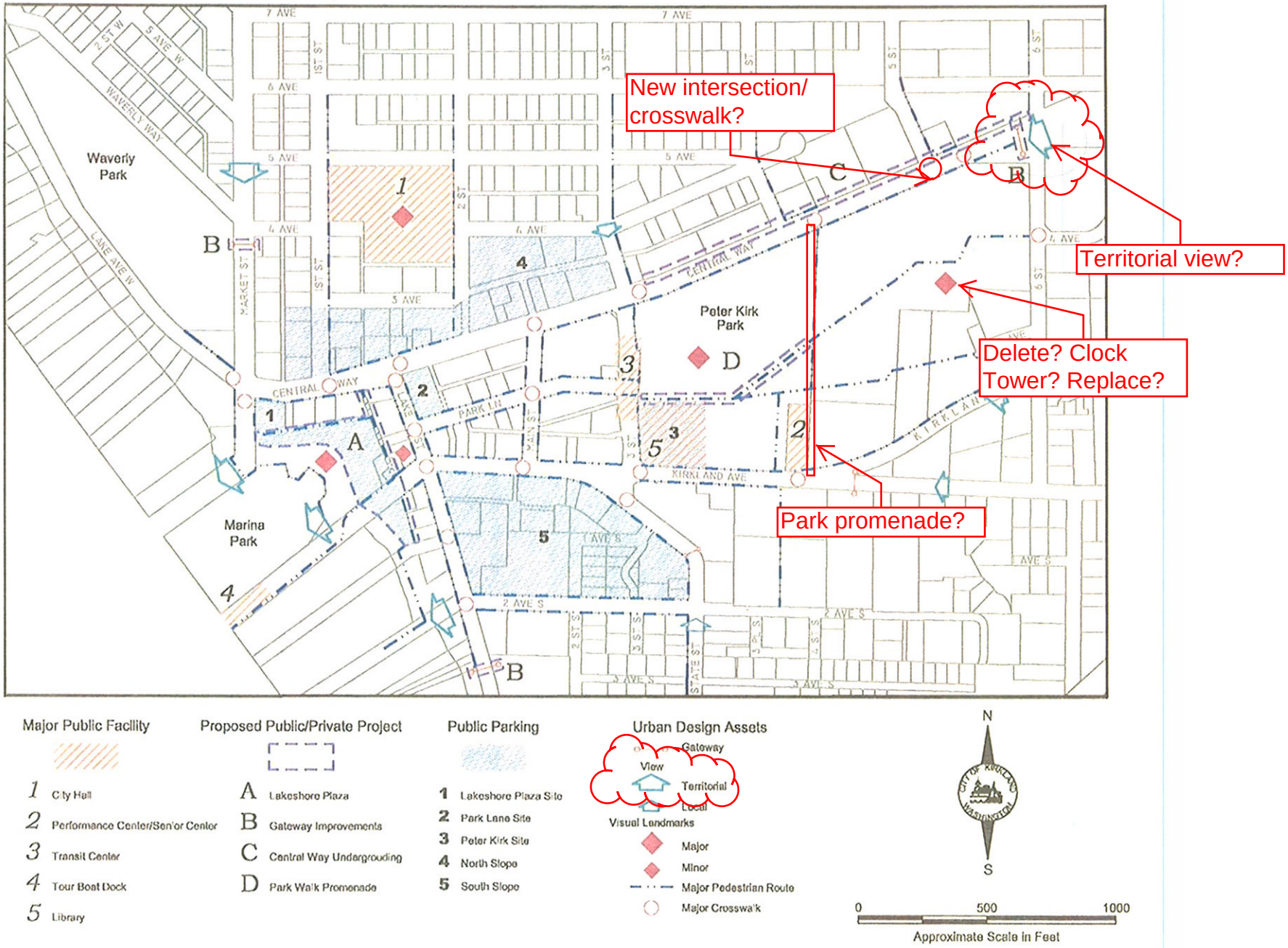
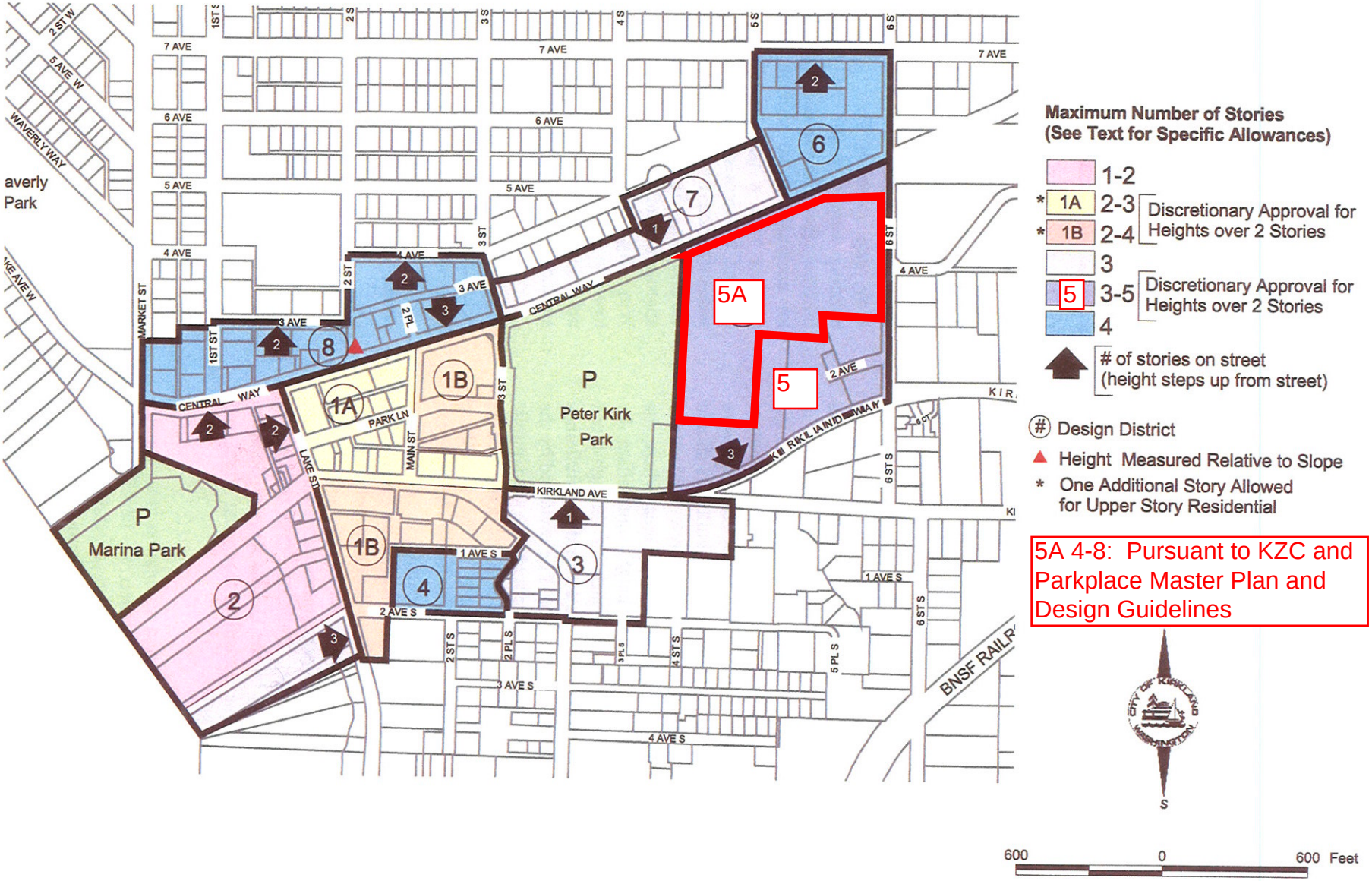


Figure C-4: Downtown Master Plan

Figure C-5: Downtown Height and Design Districts



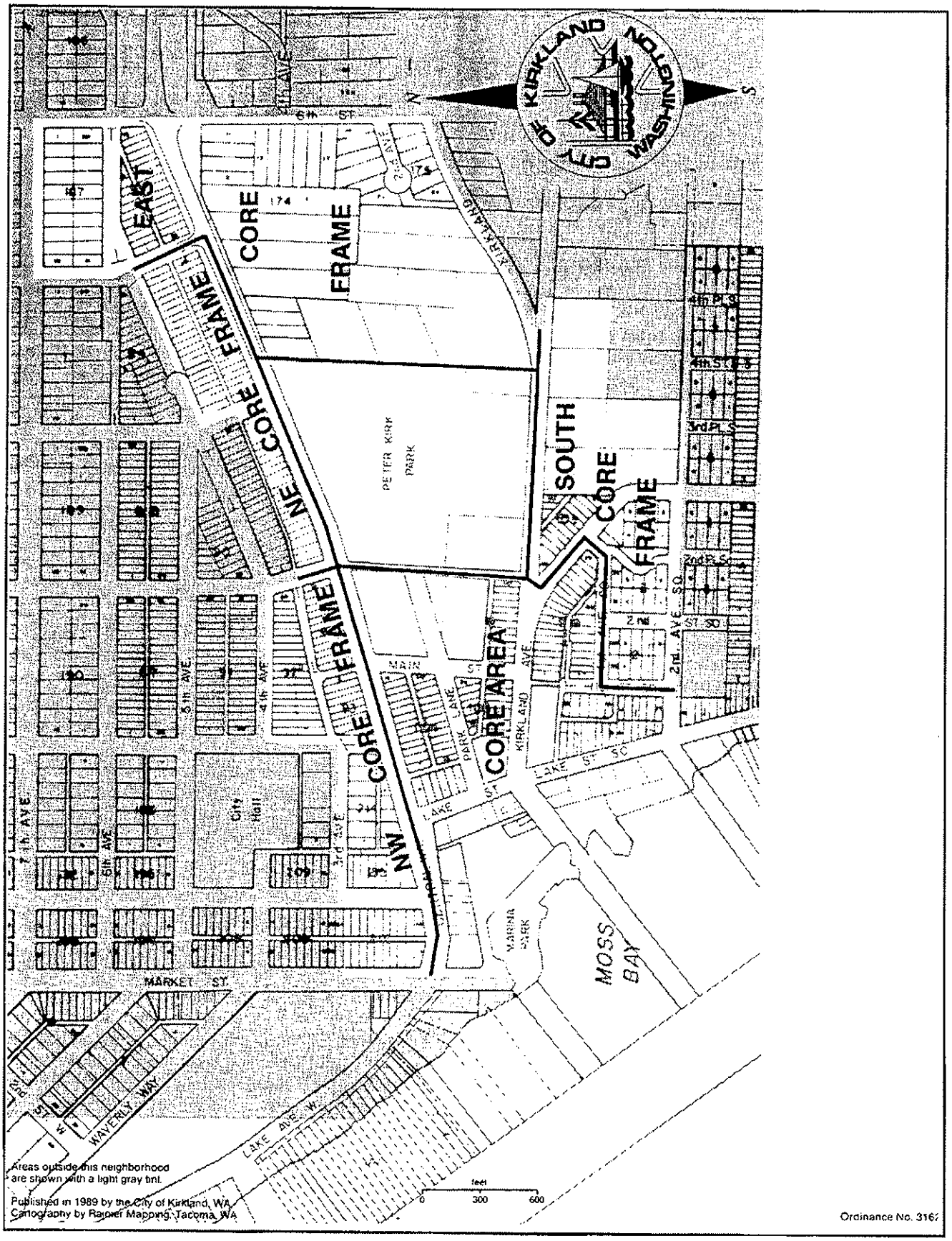


Figure C-3: Downtown Land Use Districts

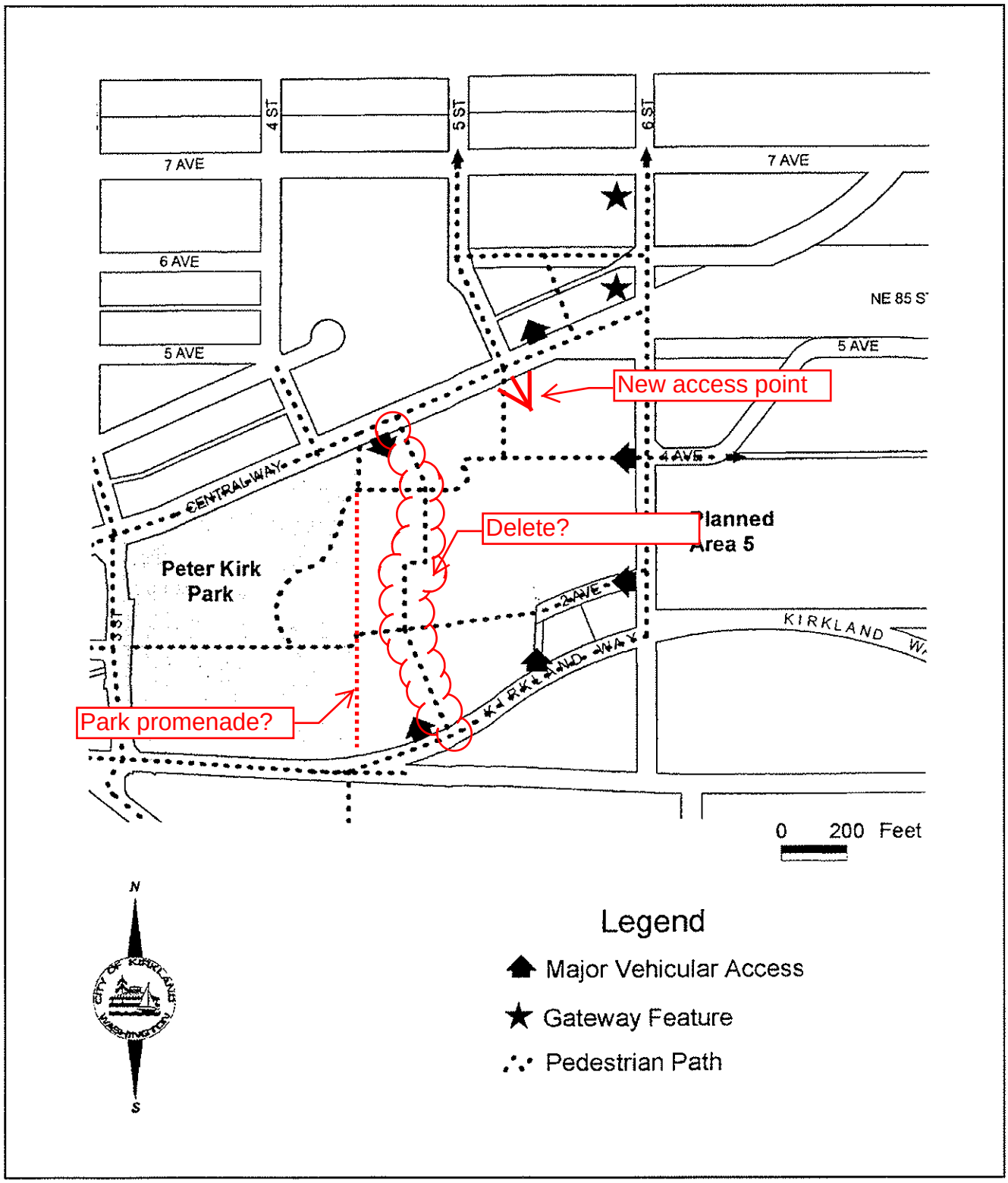


Figure C-6: Design Districts 5 and 6 - Circulation and Gateways