

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 Peter Kirk Park civic and cultural facilities (Library, Municipal Garage, Peter Kirk Pool, Kirkland Performance Center, Peter Kirk Community Center, Teen Union Building)~~library and Senior Center building~~ located 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 just west of Interstate 405 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 Peter Kirk Park civic and cultural center 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 Park civic and cultural 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.

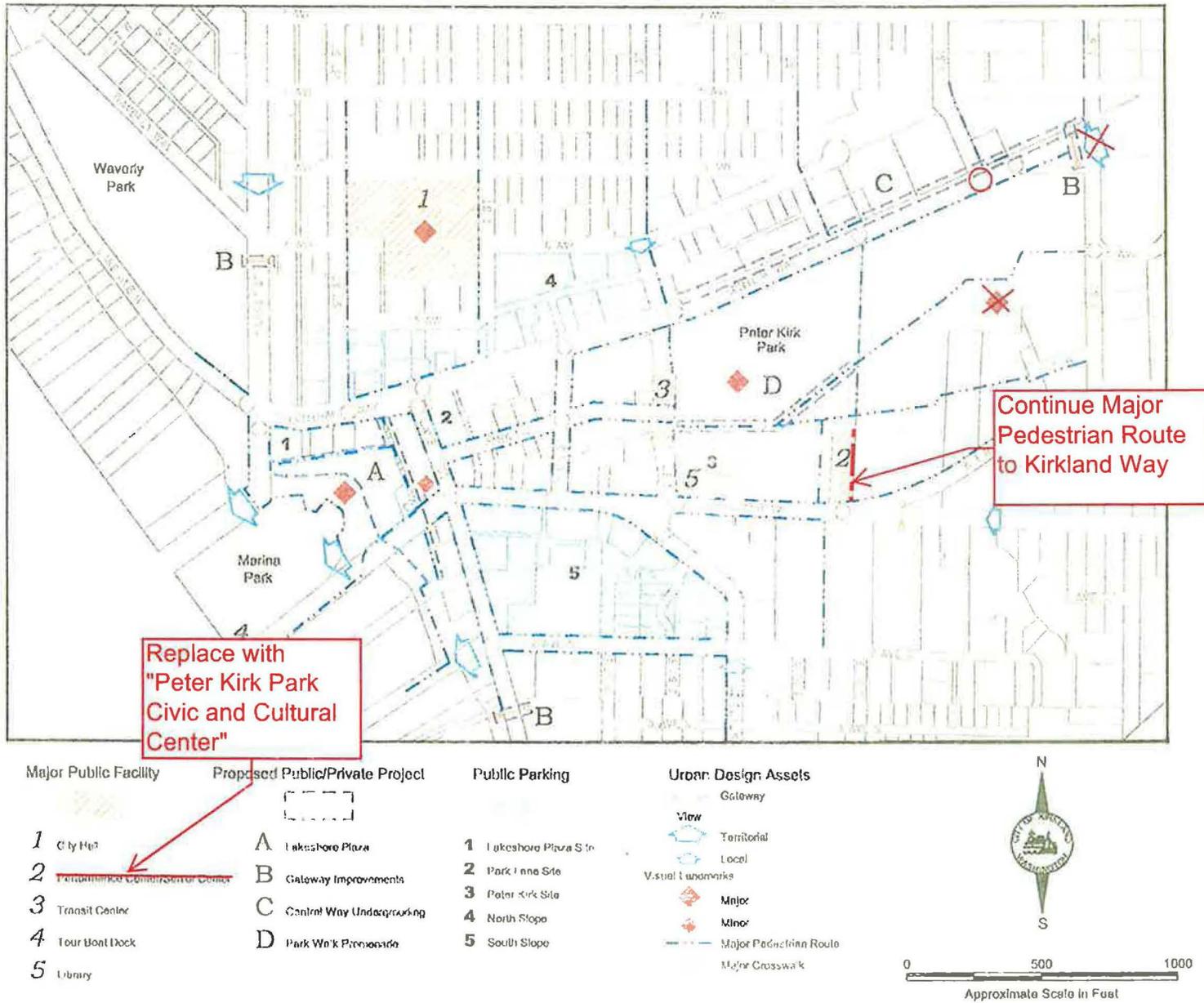
More intensive development of existing parking areas should be considered as a way to provide more close-in public parking. Certain sites, such as the Market Street-End lot and the Peter Kirk lot would adapt well to structured parking due to the topography in the immediate vicinity of these lots. Structuring 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.

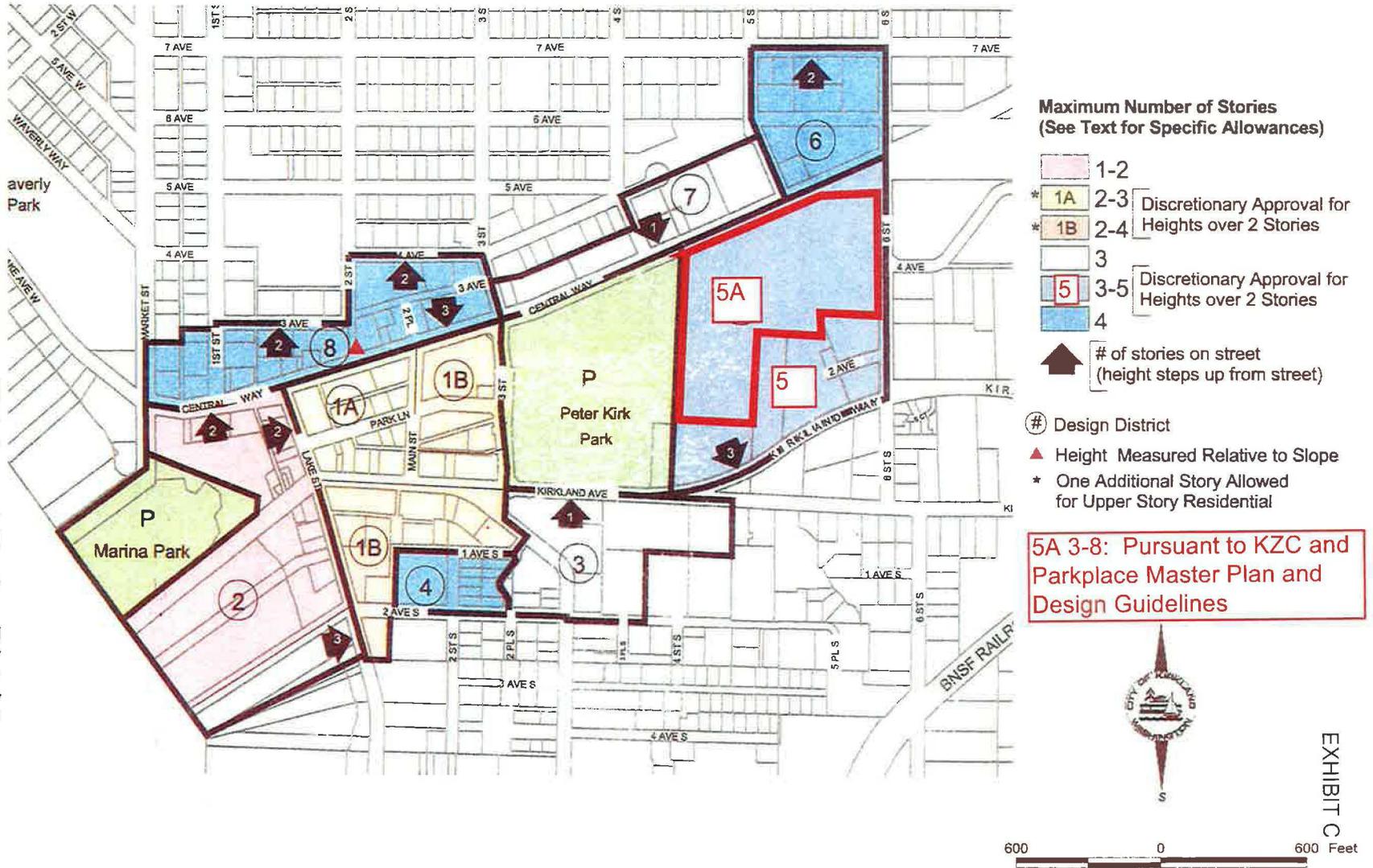
Figure C-4: Downtown Master Plan



Replace with
 "Peter Kirk Park
 Civic and Cultural
 Center"

Continue Major
 Pedestrian Route
 to Kirkland Way

Figure C-5: Downtown Height and Design Districts



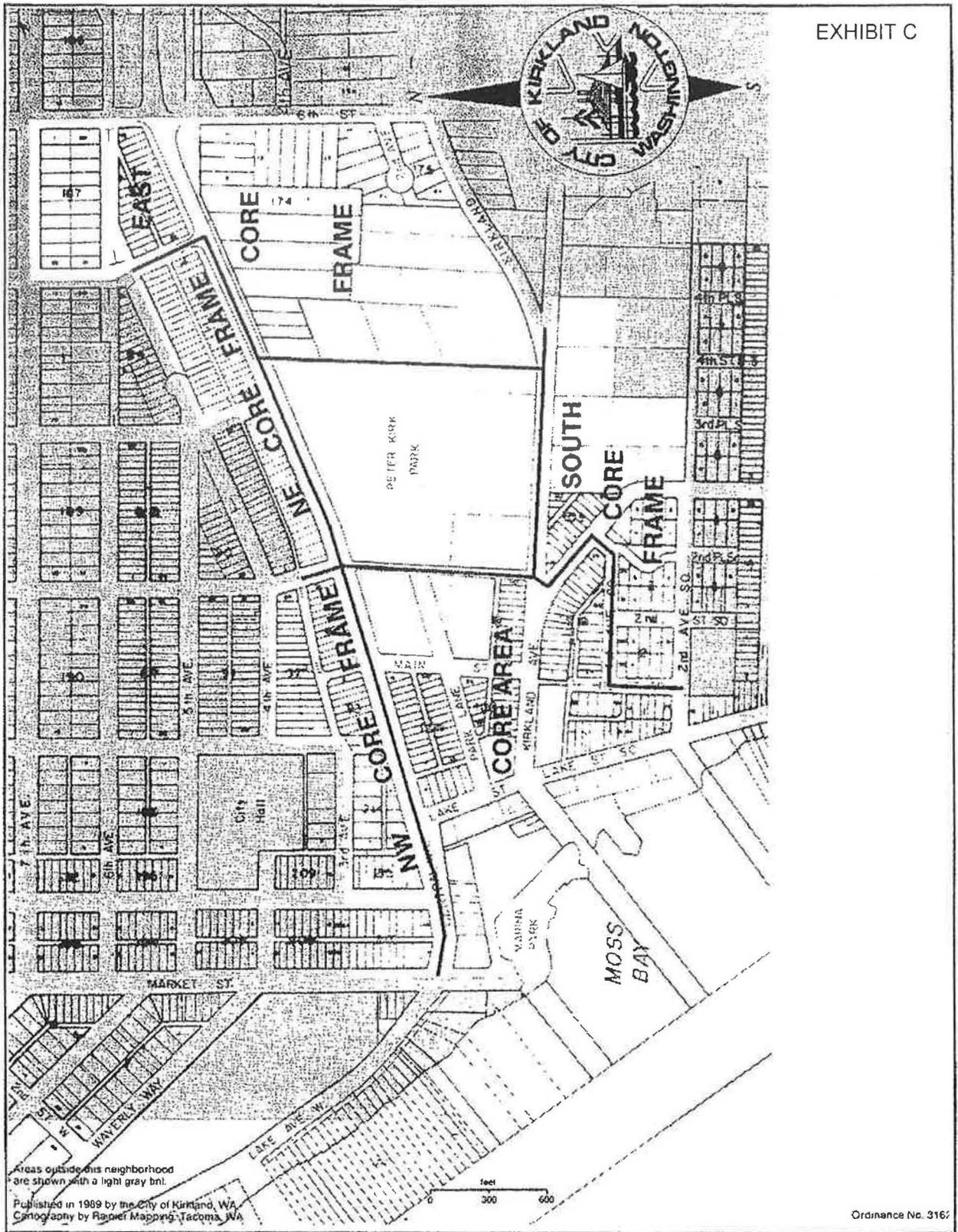


Figure C-3: Downtown Land Use Districts

XV.D. MOSS BAY NEIGHBORHOOD
3. DOWNTOWN PLAN

EXHIBIT C

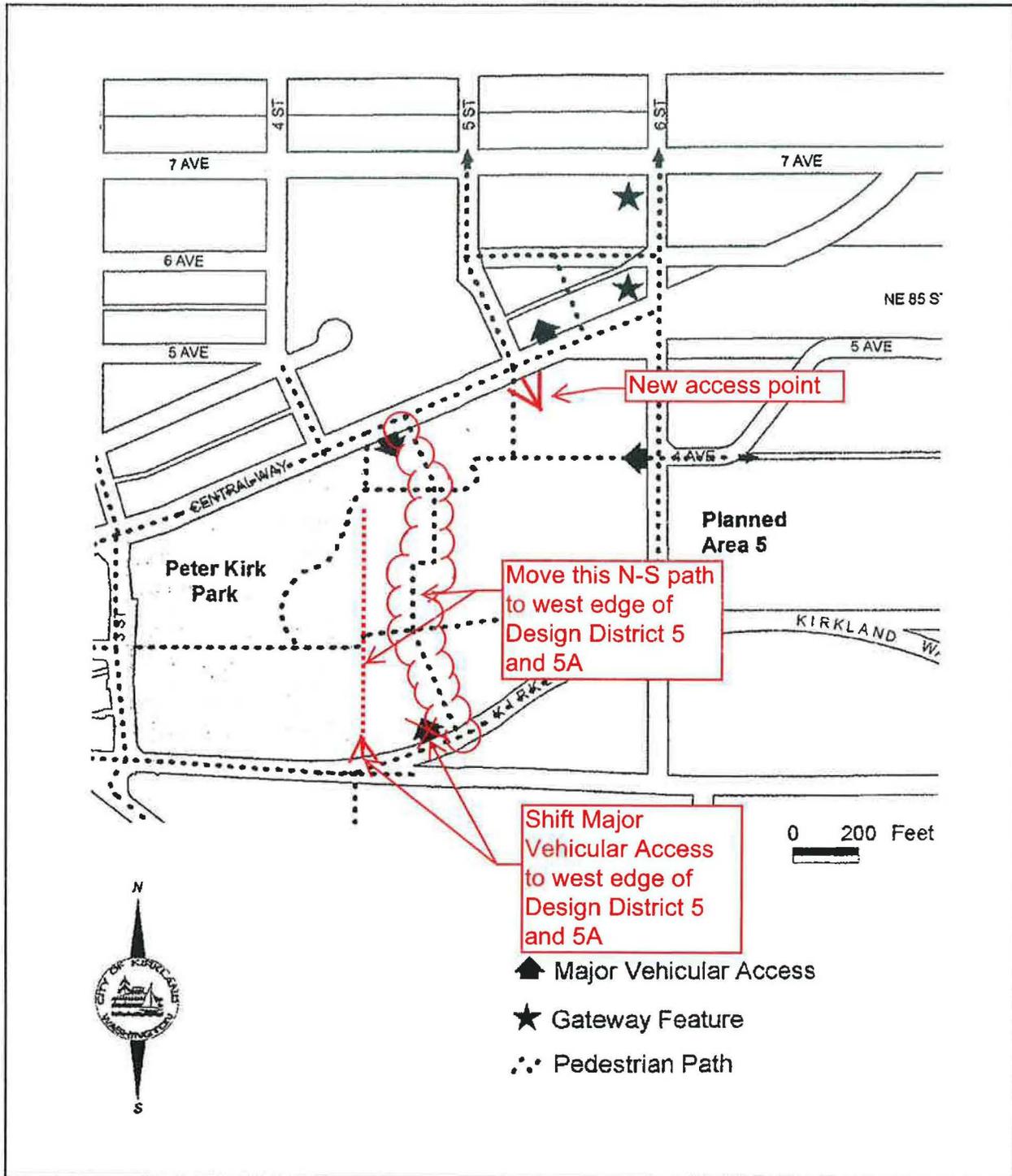


Figure C-6: Design Districts 5 and 6 - Circulation and Gateways