



MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 20, 2016

To: Planning Commission

FROM: Janice Coogan, Senior Planner
Paul Stewart, AICP, Deputy Director

SUBJECT: FINN HILL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN- LAND USE POLICIES STUDY
SESSION, FILE CAM15-01754

I. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission review, discuss and provide direction on the preliminary draft vision statement, guiding principles, and land use policies prepared by the University of Washington Green Futures Lab for the Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan. Staff requests direction from the Commission on remaining land use issues and study areas for potential land use or zoning changes.

II. BACKGROUND AND PROJECT STATUS

At your [May 12, 2016](#) study session, the U.W. Green Futures Lab team presented the results of the public comments received at the February 14, 2016 Priorities Forum. Priorities expressed by the public outreach activities will form the basis for the neighborhood plan goals and policies.

The Green Futures Lab team is in the process of developing a draft of the neighborhood plan, incorporating comments from various city department staff and the Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance. The goal is to bring a complete draft plan to the study session on August 25. In the meantime, staff would like feedback on the land use issues, preliminary policies and direction on potential areas to study for land use changes or rezones. The Transportation Commission will review and comment on the preliminary transportation policies on July 27, 2015. Staff will report back their comments at your study session.

Simultaneously, the Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance is in the process of reviewing the preliminary draft plan and organizing smaller working groups to delve deeper into draft goals and policies related to land use/zoning, mobility, parks, open space and recreational connectivity, and the Holmes Point Overlay.

III. DRAFT FINN HILL VISION STATEMENT AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As a result of the public outreach process including three neighborhood workshops and a survey, the Green Futures Lab has developed a draft vision statement and **suggest four "guiding principles"** to reflect **the neighborhood's overarching values for the Finn Hill** Neighborhood.

Draft Vision Statement for Finn Hill

Attachment 1 contains the draft Vision Statement and Guiding Principles for Finn Hill. The Vision Statement is intended to describe the unique character of the neighborhood and how the residents envision the area to be like in twenty years.

Draft Guiding Principles for Finn Hill

The Guiding Principles are intended to be the overarching values from which the goals and policies evolve to implement the Plan:

1. Promote human and wildlife connectivity through multifunction green spaces.
2. Reduce islands of higher density zoning in single family residential areas to support the **neighborhood's desire to** retain its low density character, to protect sensitive areas, and to preserve tree canopy cover and wildlife habitat.
3. Develop the neighborhood commercial districts into pedestrian oriented villages that are residential in scale, provide needed services and gathering places within walking distance, and support additional transit options. They should be developed with sensitivity to the **neighborhood's environmental and traffic concerns and while maintaining the neighborhood's** character
4. New development in the neighborhood should be **in keeping with the neighborhood's** vision.

Questions for Planning Commission-

1. *Does the Planning Commission have comments on the vision statement and guiding principles?*

IV. PRELIMINARY DRAFT LAND USE POLICIES

Land Use Policies- Preliminary Draft

Attachment 2 is a preliminary draft of the land use policies section for the Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan prepared by Green Futures Lab. The draft Land Use Section reflects the priorities expressed from the public outreach meetings and surveys and suggested implementation action steps that the City, neighborhood or consultant could do to implement the policies. There are remaining land use issues needing Planning Commission direction in order to proceed to a final draft described in Section V below.

Here's a summary, the enclosed preliminary draft land use policies:

- Describe the reasoning for the different residential zoning districts. Lower densities should be located on steep slopes containing sensitive areas and higher densities on level areas with good vehicular access and emergency accessibility.

- Describe where the multifamily areas should be located.
- Limit development on environmentally sensitive or geologically hazardous area and minimize loss of tree canopy.
- Encourage development of housing diversity in all residential areas and affordable housing in multi-family and mixed use areas.
- Describe the vision for the commercial areas with consideration being given to increase building height to incentivize redevelopment to provide services, amenities and affordable housing. At the Finn Hill Neighborhood Center (Inglewood shopping center) increase in height to 3-5 stories and for Holmes Point Market increase to 3 stories.
- Encourage additional small scale commercial gathering spaces within the neighborhood (including old fire station).
- Design principles are described for commercial development that encourage pedestrian oriented development, building scale within the neighborhood context, transitions between uses, pedestrian connections between uses, providing amenities, use of green building techniques, and public art.

Questions for Planning Commission:

1. *Does the Planning Commission have questions, edits, or need additional information for the draft Land Use Section?*
2. *Does Planning Commission support the idea of small scale neighborhood commercial or community center in designated areas of the low density zones? A suggestion was reuse the old fire station?*

Staff comment: *This idea has been suggested in other neighborhoods but there are questions about the economic viability and potential traffic impacts of such an idea.*

3. *Planning Commission direction is needed on the land use issues and study areas discussed in the next sections. As a result, additional policies may need to be added to the draft Land Use Policies Section.*

V. REMAINING LAND USE ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

The following summarizes the land use issues in need of Planning Commission direction in order to proceed with the final draft or land use map changes. These issues reflect input from the public outreach process, Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance, Green Futures Lab team or city staff. The list includes areas for consideration for potential land use changes or legislative rezones discussed in Section F below.

- A. Participants from the public outreach process targeted certain parcels for public acquisition of land to expand parkland, preserve trees/retain tree canopy or lower residential density. These were included in the Priorities Forum discussion at your last meeting (see land use study areas section F. below).
- B. Participants from the public outreach process suggested certain areas be rezoned to decrease or increase density (see Attachment 3). These were also included in the Priorities Forum discussion at your last meeting

Staff comment or recommendation-

For both A and B above, the areas where the public meeting participants suggested land be purchased for parks and open space and increased or lowered residential density are shown on Attachment 3. Staff recommends the study areas shown in Attachment 4 discussed in Section F rather than the ones in Attachment 3. For example, parcels desired for parks and open space will be forwarded to the Parks Board for consideration but staff recommends these not be brought forward in the neighborhood plan and mapped for potential acquisition for parks and open space. Parcels suggested for parks and open space should remain as RSA 4 zoning.

Public meeting participants suggested parcels surrounding the Holmes Point Residential Market should be considered for increasing density (the majority of the suggested parcels are developed with multifamily and not shown for further development). Section F. discusses why not all of the RSA 8 areas are recommended for land use changes.

- C. Range of low density residential districts – Neighborhood residents have expressed concerns with the patchwork of zoning inherited from King County. For example, what should be the appropriate zoning for each location and are there areas that should be studied for changes in zoning?

Staff comment or recommendation- *Staff has identified specific study areas in Section F below to study where zoning districts could be consolidated to reduce the variations in zoning districts and where it may be appropriate for legislative rezones to lower or increase density (See Attachment 4).*

- D. Holmes Point Overlay (HPO) Zone Regulations and Boundaries- There is neighborhood concern that the HPO regulations are not being enforced because of the level of site disturbance and tree removal occurring as a result of development activity. Some residents would like to see the HPO regulations apply to other areas of Finn Hill. Staff believes there needs to be increased public education about how the Holmes Point Overlay regulations are applied. Development permits on smaller parcels in the RSA 8 and RSA 6 zones with HPO regulations and narrow lots with steep slopes, are particularly challenging to review and meet code requirements. As a result projects develop at less than the allowed density.

The introductory paragraph of Zoning Code Chapter 70 contains a purpose statement that describes the intent of the HPO regulations. In summary, the regulations are intended to provide an increased level of environmental protection for the Holmes Point area which includes steep slopes, environmentally sensitive areas, landslide hazard and erosion areas and a

substantial tree canopy. The intent of the HPO is to allow residential density infill but also to reduce visual impacts of development, maintain community character, and to protect undisturbed soils, maintain vegetation and tree cover, protect wildlife corridors and manage surface water.

Questions for Planning Commission:

1. *Is the intent, purpose and enforcement of the HPO regulations effective?*
2. *Should HPO expand to other areas of the neighborhood for greater tree preservation? The perception that greater enforcement of tree retention is needed.*

Staff comment or preliminary recommendation:

Staff considered the public input, and has met with development review planners to discuss challenges with applying the HPO regulations to smaller parcels in the RSA 6 and RSA 8 zones and exploring potential code amendments to clarify the intent of the regulations. Staff is interested in hearing from the Finn Hill Neighborhood regarding specific suggestions for changes to the HPO regulations or if none are needed at all.

Staff will continue to evaluate if the HPO regulations are meeting the intent, whether they can be clarified or what options should be considered for code amendments and will bring forward to the Commission at a later time in the process.

Regarding the HPO boundaries, staff does not recommend expanding the boundaries for the purpose of retaining more trees. However, protecting tree canopy is an important value for the neighborhood and there may be other approaches to address this. If the HPO area is to be expanded to other areas of Finn Hill, one approach is to consider those areas of the neighborhood containing steep slopes exceeding 40 % and landslide hazard areas. Staff would like to hear from the neighborhood association if there is support for this concept or what other specific concerns they have. The staff recommendation at this point is to not expand the boundaries to other areas of the neighborhood.

- E. Commercial areas long term vision for the Finn Hill Neighborhood Center and Holmes Point Residential Market- Some of the issues raised by the neighborhood and generally supported are increasing building height (one to three stories at Holmes Point Market area; three to five stories at Finn Hill Neighborhood Center), establishing urban design principles, expansion of boundaries in the Holmes Point Market BNA area (result in rezoning adjacent multifamily parcels), or allowing small scale commercial areas in neighborhoods. Heat maps were created for both commercial areas to study the walkability of each area consistent with the 10 minute Neighborhood planning concept. Even though both areas could improve pedestrian connections to the surrounding residential areas they scored in the high walkability range.

The land use study areas in Section F. evaluates the options to consider related to potential rezones of adjacent multifamily parcels and commercial expansion of the Holmes Point BNA boundaries.

Questions for Planning Commission:

1. *Compare the areas recommended for rezones from the public outreach process on the map in Attachment 3 **and staff's recommended study areas** map in Attachment 4 and discussed in Section F. below. Do you agree with the areas staff has included to proceed to the next step and study for potential legislative rezones?*

2. Commercial areas-
 - a. *Does Planning Commission support increasing the building height in both commercial areas (existing zoning allows 35 feet above average building elevation)? Finn Hill Neighborhood Center to 3-5 stories and at the Holmes Point Residential Market to 1-3 stories?*

 - b. *In BNA commercial zones affordable housing is optional. If increases in height or density are decided for the BNA zones then affordable housing would be required **consistent with the City's adopted policies**. Would Planning Commission support making affordable housing a mandatory requirement in BNA zones if there is an increase in building height in BNA zones in Finn Hill?*

Staff comment or recommendation- *Staff preliminary recommendation is to support an increase in building height in the BNA zones and require the 10% affordable housing requirement as in other commercial zones.*

F. Study Areas For Potential Land Use Changes

This section describes the areas staff recommends be studied for land use changes or rezones. Each study area includes a vicinity map showing location, topography, existing parcel conditions, surrounding zoning, options if rezoned to another zoning category and preliminary staff recommendation. Attachment 4 is a map showing where the staff suggested land use study areas are located. For context, Attachment 5 is an overview of the zoning regulations in Finn Hill.

These study areas were chosen as a result of the public input, the consideration of consolidating zoning districts, and appropriate zoning for the location given environmentally sensitive areas. Other considerations were the surrounding neighborhood character and consistency with the Citywide Land Use Element. The Planning Commission commented that the neighborhood plan should also consider where an increase in density could be appropriate and policies to encourage a diversity of housing types including affordable housing.

There are two previously submitted citizen amendment requests (CAR) that the Planning Commission and City Council recommended be postponed and studied with the Finn Hill Neighborhood plan process. One (Chaffey) requested a change from RSA 4 to RMA 5.0 or RMA 3.6 and one (Heally) requested a change from RSA 4 to RSA 6 (See RSA 4 Heally discussion below).

There was general support from the public outreach process to lower densities in general throughout the neighborhood from RSA 6 or RSA 8 to RSA 4. For parcels zoned RSA 8 concerns are in response to high level of development activity, size of houses on small lot. For RSA 6 areas the desire to lower to RSA 4 or lower especially if they contain sensitive areas.

Staff is cautious to recommend lowering density on property because of legal concerns or vesting issues, unless there is strong community support for a change and the change would be in the public interest such as result in greater environmental protection.

In evaluating and preparing the preliminary recommendations for each study area staff considered the following information:

- existing vacant and underdeveloped land likely to develop
- proposed development permits
- existing development pattern
- surrounding lot sizes
- consistency with similar density and development pattern in other areas of the city
- environmentally sensitive areas such as high landslide, steep slopes and ravines, streams and wetlands
- street network and infrastructure, proximity to transit or arterials/collectors
- available services within walking distance
- citizen amendment requests previously submitted that were put off until the Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan study, such as Mr. Heally request to rezone his three parcels located at 8506 NE 129th PI in the RSA 4 zone to RSA 6 (discussed below)

At this stage, property owners have not been notified that their property is being considered for land use changes. If the Planning Commission supports pursuing changes in land use or legislative rezones staff would proceed with a public outreach process that would require public notice to property owners, public notice signs, a public hearing before the Planning Commission and final decision by the City Council. This would generally be done concurrent with the neighborhood plan update process.

Low Density Residential Study Areas

RSA 4 areas where public desires property be acquired for Park or Open Space

Results from the public outreach process suggested parcels in four RSA 4 zoned areas be acquired by the City or other entity for parks and open space (see vicinity maps):

- Triangular area south of Big Finn Hill Park. Big Finn Hill Park is owned by King County.
- South of NE 132nd ST between 87th Pl NE and 93 Avenue
- North of Juanita Dr. east of 85th Ave NE
- Parcels adjacent to Juanita Heights Park

The areas contain steep slopes, streams or wetlands.

Preliminary staff recommendation:

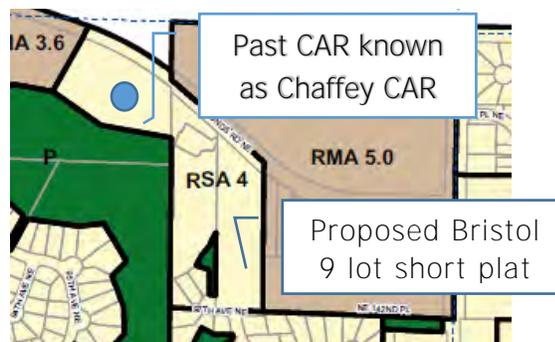
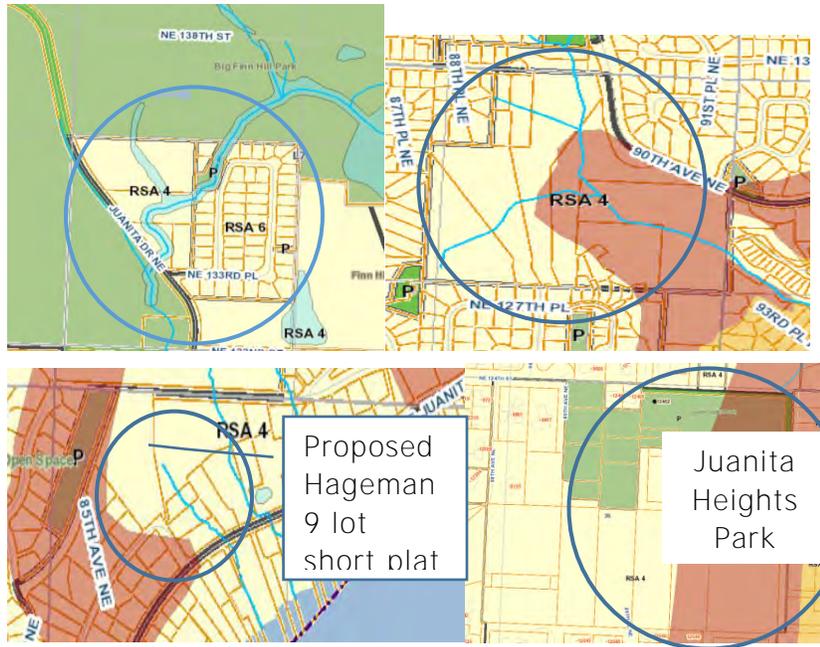
The City does not typically identify private property for potential acquisition and designation as parkland. It would be up to the property owners to approach the City or County to see if they are interested in purchasing the property. Staff will forward this information to the Park Board. Staff recommends these parcels identified be retained as RSA 4 zoning.

Other RSA 4 Study Areas

RSA 4 Study Area 4-B- This RSA 4 zone is located south of Simonds Rd and east of 100th Ave and includes several parcels (see Attachment 4 map).

Parcels in this area contain steep slopes, ravine, and stream to the south.

In 2012, the Chaffey citizen amendment request was submitted to rezone from low density RSA 4 to medium density RM 3.6 or RMA 5.0 (parcel shown with the blue dot ●). At that time, Planning Commission and City Council decided to defer studying the CAR request with the Finn Hill neighborhood plan.



Property to the west of blue dot is developed with multi-family and zoned RMA 3.6. Property to the north is located in Kenmore and developed with multi-family. Parcels located to the east are either developed with single family or pending development permit (Bristol 9 lot subdivision and sensitive area request).

Therefore, staff suggests studying only the parcel shown with the blue dot.

Options:

- Retain study parcel as RSA 4
- Rezone study parcel from RSA 4 to a higher density.

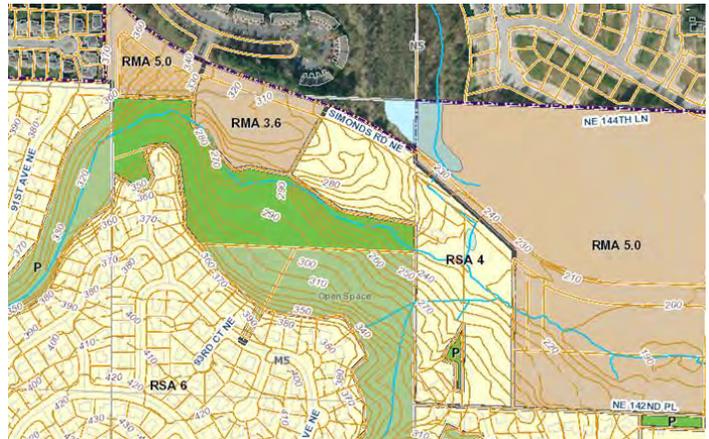
Based on the lot size of the property (155,828 sq. ft. (3.5 acres) the following shows the potential number of new units/lots under each zoning category:

- RSA 4=13 lots
- RMA 5.0=30 lots
- RMA 3.6=47 lots

Preliminary staff recommendation:

The parcel shown with the blue dot may be a good candidate for rezoning the parcel (Chaffey CAR) to RMA 5.0 or RMA 3.6 because of the location and adjacent multi-family. RMA 5.0 may be a more appropriate zoning because of the steep slopes, stream channel and RMA 5.0 zoning to the east.

Multi-family allows for more creative site design than standard single family subdivision and attached or stacked dwelling units. If rezoned, staff recommends adding policies to require clustered development away from steep slopes and stream.



RSA 4 Study Area 4-F- This RSA 4 zoning district is located south of NE 132nd ST surrounding Carl Sandburg elementary school. A portion of the zone extends north to Finn Hill Middle School and wraps along Juanita Drive on the west and south (see Attachment 4 map).

The RSA 4 area is located on top of the hill, fairly level topography, defined street network, and largely developed. Some of the parcels along Juanita Dr. contain steep high landslide hazards and streams. Finn Hill Middle School contains a wetland.

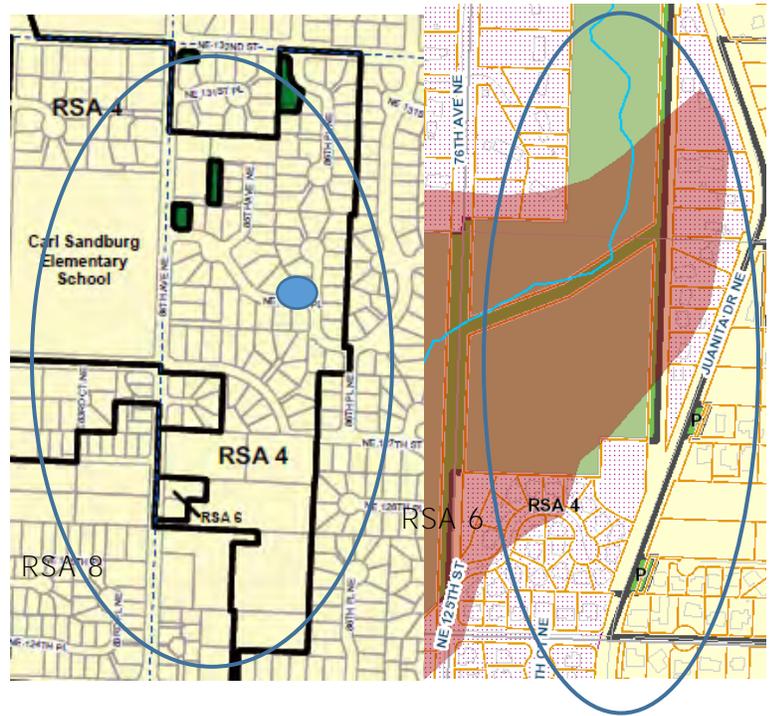
Surrounded by either RSA 6 or RSA 8, this is one study area that could be consolidated with the surrounding RSA 6 or RSA 8 zones to reduce the patchwork of zoning districts. A largely platted area on top of the hill, the existing lots in this area meet or exceed the RSA 6 minimum lot size requirement of 5100 SF. Driving through the RSA 4 or RSA 6 areas in the neighborhood it is difficult to tell which houses are zoned RSA 4 or RSA 6.

After annexation in 2013, a citizen amendment request application was submitted by Kevin Healy (located in this area ●) Healy owns three lots part of larger plat approved with larger lots than RSA 4. Mr. Healy requested we reactivate his CAR request for inclusion for study with the Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan.

Options:

- Keep entire district as RSA 4. 69 additional lots would be feasible.
- South of NE 132nd ST change from RSA 4 to RSA 6 or RSA 8 to consolidate zoning districts, but keep the area North of NE 132nd ST and along Juanita Drive as RSA 4 because some parcels contain steep slopes, streams or wetland.

If entire district is rezoned to RSA 6: 89 additional lots are possible. 20 more than under existing RSA 4 zoning.



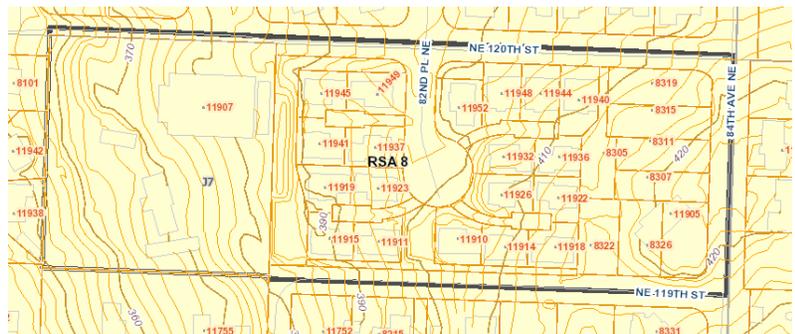
Preliminary staff recommendation:

Rezone entire study area from RSA 4 to RSA 6 consistent with surrounding area. There is really no justification why this area is different than the surrounding RSA 6 area. Rezoning the RSA 4 district to RSA 6 would be consistent and consolidate the zoning district to RSA 6 zone.

RSA 8 Study Areas

Throughout the neighborhood there are isolated pockets of RSA 8 zoning. Many of these RSA 8 zones are developed either under King County or recently since annexation. Minimum lot size in the RSA 8 zone is 3,800 sq ft... For RSA 6 5,100 sq. ft.. For RSA 4 7,600 sq. ft. Only a few of the RSA 8 zones contain parcels with further development potential. Some contain wetlands or a couple are located along the shoreline like study area 8-L or K (see Attachment 4 for map).

RSA 8 Study Area 8-H- This study area is located between NE 119th ST to NE 120th ST and 84th Ave NE to 81st Ave NE. This is one of the small, isolated RSA 8 zoned areas and contains only one further developable parcels on the west side of the district with the remainder parcels platted.



Options:

- Retain as RSA 8. The one parcel has a redevelopment potential for 28 additional lots.
- Rezone to RSA 6. If rezoned to RSA 6 the property has a potential for 12 additional lots or 16 less lots than would be allowed in RSA 8 zone. Many of the existing platted lots would become non-conforming because some are less than the minimum 5,100 sq. ft. lots for the RSA 6 zone.

Preliminary staff recommendation:

Retain as RSA 8. Zoning district is largely developed.

RSA 8 Study Areas RSA 8-K and RSA 8-L- These two RSA 8 areas are located along the shoreline between Champagne Point PI and 80th Ave N between the RSA 4 area and located in the Holmes Point Overlay (HPO).

These two RSA 8 areas are bounded by RSA 6 on the west, north and east. The majority of shoreline parcels in Finn Hill have RSA 6 zoning (in or out of the HPO zone) except for a small area south of Saint Edwards Park (see Attachment 4).

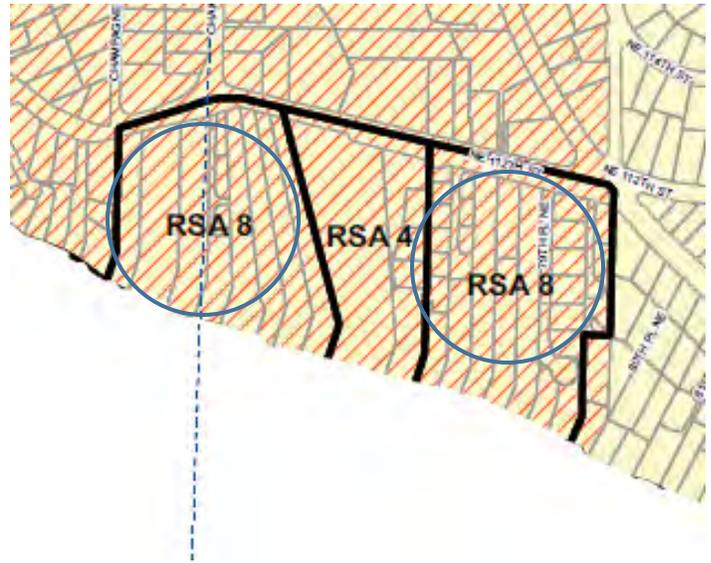
Lots in this study area are narrow in width. The HPO area requires permanent native protective areas to be preserved on each lot, more restrictive tree preservation and more restrictive lot coverage requirements than other areas of the city, making developing at the 8 dwelling units per acre challenging.

The southeast corner of the eastern most RSA 8 zoned area contains high landslide hazard slopes. The RSA 4 area in between the two areas contains a section of Champagne Creek.

Because of the constraints of narrow shape of the sloped lots and HPO regulations, new short plats are being developed at a lower density than zoning allows.

Options:

- **Retain at RSA 8 zone.** Under existing RSA 8 Zoning study areas have the potential for:
 RSA 8-K: 65 additional units
 RSA 8-L: 36 additional units
- **Change to RSA 6.** If changed to RSA 6 several lots would become non-conforming for minimum lot size (5,100 sq. ft.).
Under RSA 6 the study areas would have the potential for:
 RSA 8-K= 46 or 19 less units than existing zoning.
 RSA 8- L= 23 or 13 less units than existing zoning.



- **Change to RSA 4.** If changed to RSA 4 (the minimum lot size would be 7,600 sq. ft.) the study areas would have the potential for:
 RSA 8-K= 25 or 40 less units than existing.
 RSA 8-L= 12 or 24 less units than existing

Preliminary staff recommendation:
 Rezone both RSA 8 areas to consistent with other RSA 6 areas along the shoreline in Finn Hill.

RSA 8 Study Area RSA 4-J- This RSA 8 area is located between Champagne Point Rd NE and Juanita Dr. south of Juanita Woodlands Park and north of the area discussed above.

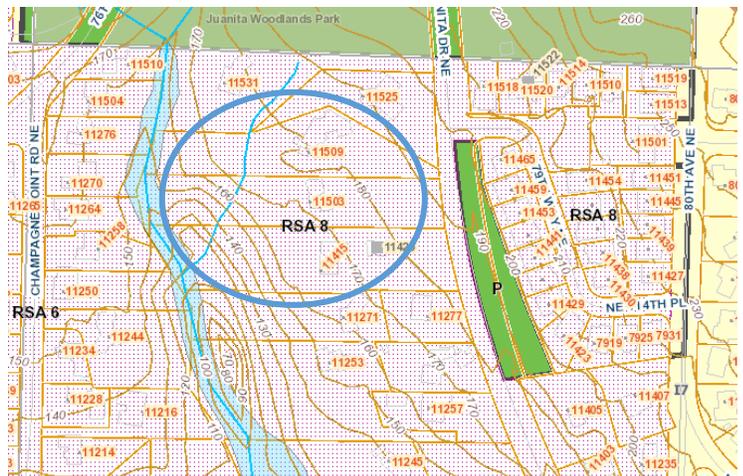
The area contains 5 larger parcels with a steep sloped ravine, the Champagne Creek drainage system. Champagne Creek flows south through the RSA 4 zoned area before entering Lake Washington. This island of RSA 8 is surrounded by RSA 6 zoning. Directly across Juanita Dr is also zoned RSA 8 zone. The hatched area denotes the Holmes Point Overlay.

RSA 4 would be consistent with other similar steep sloped areas containing high landslide hazard soils and streambed ravines. RSA 8 density seems high given constraining environmental factors

Options:

- **Keep as RSA 8 (with HPO).** Under existing RSA 8 zoning the five lots in the study area have the potential for 26 additional lots.
- **Change to RSA 6 (with HPO) consistent with surrounding area.**
 RSA 6= 17 additional lots; 9 less lots than existing zoning

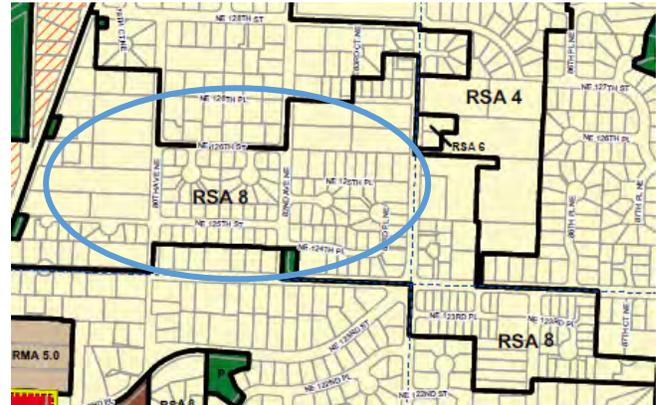
Preliminary staff recommendation:
 Rezone from RSA 8 to RSA 6 consistent with surrounding RSA 6 zone.



The RSA 8 area located between NE 124th ST/NE 126th PI and Juanita Dr to 86th Ave was not chosen to study because most of the vacant and further developable land in this area have subdivision applications in for review. Approximately 10 applications are in various stages of development review.

This area is seeing increased development activity raising concerns from the public about smaller lot sizes and a denser development pattern. The area is generally flat and contains a good street network to support RSA 8 zoning.

*Preliminary staff recommendation:
 Retain as RSA 8 zone.*



Commercial Land Use Study Areas

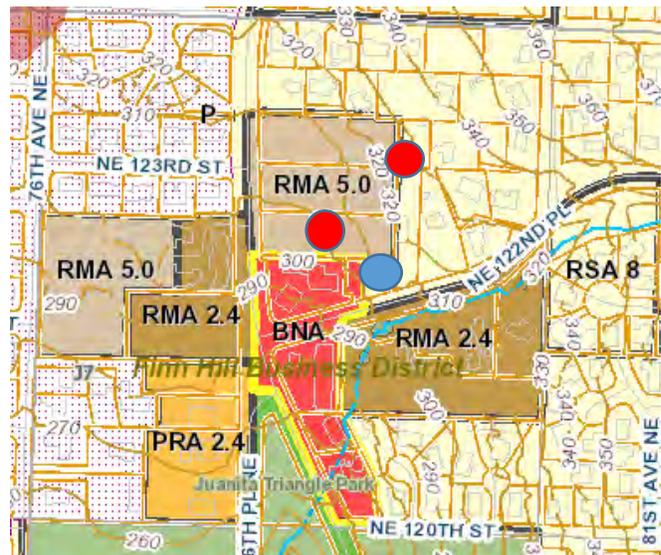
Holmes Point Residential Market BNA Study Area 5-E- This commercial area shown in red and RMA 5.0 under study is located north of BNA area on Juanita Dr. at NE 122nd ST (north of BNA area).

Some residents expressed an interest in expanding the existing commercial area by rezoning adjacent property to the north, east and west.

The lots in the BNA zone are smaller, have vehicular access point and existing zoning height limits, make redevelopment into mixed use buildings challenging.

The three parcels to the north of the red commercial area are zoned RMA 5.0 and contain two single family homes. These lots have the potential for redevelopment. The parcels are shown in the King County Assessors data to be owned by three related family members. See ● . A fourth parcel located to the east at 7834 NE 122nd PI is owned by a different family member.

To the east of the BNA zone is a small single family zoned parcel (RSA 6) at 7830 NE 122nd PI located next to two cell towers in the BNA zone. ●



This parcel contains a single family house and was the subject of the Hoerth citizen amendment request submitted in 2013 to change the parcel to commercial use as an office. The property has since changed been sold and is no longer owned by Hoerth.

To the west across Juanita Dr. is Fire Station 25, an office building and multifamily zoned parcels that are unlikely to redevelop in the near future.

Options:

- Retain the three parcels as RMA 5.0
- Rezone the three RMA 5.0 parcels to RM 3.6, RMA 2.4 or RMA 1.8
- Rezone all 5 parcels to BNA commercial zone or a higher density multi-family

If three parcels remain as RMA 5.0, **24 additional units would be feasible.**

If three parcels zoned RMA 5.0 are rezoned to:
RMA 1.8= 83 additional units
RMA 2.4= 62 additional units
RMA 3.6= 40 additional units

Preliminary staff recommendation:

Rezone the 3 RMA 5.0 parcels north of BNA zone to RM 2.4 consistent with surrounding multifamily zoning or BNA (max density of 2,400 sq. ft. of lot area per unit) and not mandate commercial on the ground floor.

Questions for Planning Commission

1. **Staff is looking for the Planning Commission's direction on** each study areas to determine if we should proceed for further study for land use changes or rezoning and begin the public noticing process to property owners.
 - a. Do you agree that staff should proceed with studying land use changes described in Attachment 4 and begin the public outreach and notification for the legislative rezones?
 - a) Study Area 5-E: Should parcels located adjacent to the commercial study area (north of the Holmes Point BNA zone) be considered for rezoning from RMA 5.0 to RMA 3.6, 2.4 or 1.8 or BNA?

Staff comment or recommendation- Staff recommends receiving public input on the land use change options before making a recommendation.

b) Lowering density in RSA 8 zones (Study areas RSA 8-K, RSA 8-L, RSA 8-H)

Staff comment or recommendation- Staff discourages an across the board lowering of density in all RSA 8 zones for a number of reasons. Many of the RSA 8 districts are developed, many of the vacant and further developable areas have short plats and subdivisions applications are in process for development review and may be vested under the current zoning.

c) Should areas zoned RSA 6 or RSA 8 containing sensitive areas with streams, steep slopes greater than 15-40% or located along the shoreline be lowered in density or rezoned from RSA 8 to RSA 6 or RSA 4? Staff recommends RSA 8-J, RSA 8-K, RSA 8-L lowered to RSA 6 or RSA 4 because of the narrow width and length, steep slope of lots, shoreline location and areas of landslide hazard slopes.

G. Split Zoned Parcels

There are a few parcels in the neighborhood for whatever reason staff discovered have split zoning. Attachment 6 is a map showing where these properties are located. As a follow up to the neighborhood plan the zoning boundaries on these parcels should be adjusted. As with other legislative rezones discussed above, the Zoning Code requires the property owner and public notice be provided and public notice boards be installed.

Staff comment or recommendation-

Staff will come back at a future study session with a more detailed map showing where the split zoned parcels are and a recommendation for which zone to change each parcel(s).

VI. NEXT STEPS

Staff and GFL plan to bring back to the Planning Commission a draft neighborhood plan on August 25 for discussion. If the Planning Commission supports considering land use/zoning changes staff will begin the public notice process to property owners. A public open house is tentatively scheduled in the fall to present the draft plan for public input followed by a public hearing and final adoption by City Council in December or early 2017. Attachment 7 includes a revised schedule.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft vision statement and guiding principles
2. Preliminary draft Land Use Policies
3. **Public meeting participant's suggested Land Use Study** areas map
4. Staff suggested Land use study areas map
5. Zoning overview for Finn Hill
6. Split zoned parcels map
7. Revised Schedule

Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan—DRAFT June 20th-2016.

Introduction

In collaboration with the City of Kirkland, the Green Futures Lab (GFL) has been working with Finn Hill residents, the Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance (FHNA) and others to develop a neighborhood plan. This is the first neighborhood plan for Finn Hill following annexation to Kirkland in 2011.

Preparing the Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan involved a comprehensive, year-long process that included public events, online surveys, the development of alternatives by residents, and feedback on priority plans and policies from the neighborhood, City staff and City Boards and Commissions. (See Public Process Overview below).

At the first major public event, the Finn Hill community was invited to express their thoughts about their neighborhood during a “Listening Session” led by the University of Washington’s GFL Team. The event was sponsored by the City of Kirkland and the FHNA. At the Session the GFL Team also conducted an Instant Poll, leveraging attendees’ cell phones to collect opinions on how key commercial centers for the neighborhood might function and look like in the future. Following this session, an “online survey” allowed people who could not attend the meeting to share their thoughts, answering similar questions to those posed at the evening session.

In November of 2015, a day-long “Alternatives Workshop” was hosted by the GFL with the support of the City and FHNA. Finn Hill residents were asked to envision the future of their neighborhood, by defining neighborhood goals and by working at two scales: the entire neighborhood, and a focus on a specific drainage basin or commercial area. Eight teams created alternatives at both scales. Participants received guiding workshop goals and principles, based on information and results from the Listening Session phase, to provide a framework for the brainstorm session.

After analyzing the alternatives generated at the workshop, and developing hybrid alternatives discussed with the City and joint City Commissions, the GFL Team, with the City and FHNA as event partners, set up a public “Priorities Forum.” Finn Hill residents were invited to list their priorities regarding land use and zoning, mobility, open space and recreation, the natural environment, and urban design at five stations, and to provide feedback on a draft vision statement and policies for inclusion in the neighborhood plan. As a follow up for people who could not make the forum, or who did not have time to provide feedback at all the stations during the forum, an anonymous web survey opened the following week. Forum and survey results, and feedback from City staff and commissions, have then guided development of this draft Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan.

Public Process Overview:

Date	Event	Respondents/participants
August 2015	O.O. Denny Festival informational booth	Not recorded
October 15th, 2015	Listening Session	50 + participants
November 2 nd -11th, 2015	Listening Session Online Survey	167 respondents
November 14th, 2015	Alternatives Workshop	70 participants
February 24th, 2016	Neighborhood Priorities Forum	81 participants
March 2 nd -27th, 2016	Priorities Forum Online Survey	67 respondents

All the results are presented in separate documents, with maps and the record of all comments and survey responses. A synthesis of those results is presented in the Vision Statement, and all the issues and policies in the following chapters are sustained by those results.

1-Vision Statement

The following vision statement reflects how residents envision the Finn Hill neighborhood to be like in the year 2035.

Finn Hill is a largely residential and heavily treed picturesque neighborhood overlooking Lake Washington. Two mixed use neighborhood commercial centers located on Juanita Drive, Finn Hill Neighborhood Center and Holmes Point Residential Market (Inglewood and Plaza Garcia centers), provide retail amenities and multi-family housing in the neighborhood. The neighborhood is bounded by Lake Washington to the south and west, NE 145th Street to the north, and North and South Juanita to the east. Access to the neighborhood is limited to three main entry points: Juanita Drive provides access to the southern and western portions of the hill, Simonds Road/NE 145th ST and NE 132nd/90th street provide the north east/west access to Finn Hill.

The vision statement was written with extensive public input, based on statements made by the public and voted for inclusion during the Neighborhood Forum and Survey held Feb/Mar 2016. Statements are presented in order of highest to lowest approval (nature 79%; density 68%; transit 62%; existing character 50%).

Finn Hill residents feel very strongly about the **unique setting** of their neighborhood. **Parks and natural areas** are the stars of Finn Hill and are considered **high value resources** that

create important wildlife and recreation connections. There is a deep connection with—and a desire to care for—the natural environment, parks and open space, the tree canopy, and Lake Washington. Preserving or improving **natural space connectivity** wherever possible is a major goal for Finn Hill residents, and has received the **strongest support** through the Listening Session and the Alternatives Workshop, as well as in the surveys. Additionally, Finn Hill's natural setting includes many steep slopes that residents recognize must be protected or developed carefully to prevent landslides and erosion.

In keeping with the desire to preserve Finn Hill's natural areas is the desire of Finn Hill residents to keep **density low in residential areas**. Although Finn Hill residents understand the need to accommodate newcomers to the neighborhood, they are especially concerned about the **consequences from additional density**. The development of multi-family zones should be adjacent to neighborhood commercial zones in order to **avoid high-density spots in low-density areas**. The improvement or **redevelopment of existing commercial centers**—rather than building new ones—would make more sense in the context of Finn Hill. The Finn Hill Neighborhood Center (Inglewood commercial area) in particular has strong potential for redevelopment and residents expressed a desire to see the amenities here updated and diversified. Inglewood could support the inclusion of more multifamily or cottage housing in and adjacent to the shopping center, particularly if doing so would justify additional transit services for the neighborhood.

Transportation around and through Finn Hill is currently car centric, although the existing **trails and bike networks are much enjoyed** and need further development. There is also a need for **better connectivity** up/down hill and towards key facilities such as schools, parks, and shopping centers. Forming a **safe network of sidewalks** and trails where walking is facilitated and comfortable should be a major goal for Finn Hill. There are also concerns about **traffic congestion during commute hours** on key roads in Finn Hill, particularly Juanita Drive which is the main North South thoroughfare through the neighborhood.

Overall, Finn Hill is a place for passive recreation, tranquility, oneness with nature, where the quietness of parks and residential areas are greatly appreciated. Residents want to **preserve the existing character of the neighborhood** while planning for the future.

2-Guiding Neighborhood Values

Finn Hill residents' vision for their neighborhood's future is complex, with many interrelated ideas and values. However, since the Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan must be implemented through a series of goals and policies, this section is meant to explicitly lay out the guiding values and ideas that connect the goals and policies between and within chapters and provide a basis for the rest of the neighborhood plan.

Neighborhood Value 1: Promote human and wildlife connectivity through multifunction green spaces.

Neighborhood parks and green spaces should be connected into a continuous loop of woodland and trails. Key functions for these spaces include providing wildlife habitat, preserving forest canopy, protecting sensitive areas (including steep slopes), providing

hiking and walking opportunities, and providing opportunities for biking that do not conflict with pedestrians. Ideally, these green spaces would also integrate the two commercial areas more strongly into the neighborhood by improving pedestrian access to the commercial areas and be easily accessible to residents throughout the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Value 2: Reduce islands of higher density zoning in single family residential areas to support the neighborhood’s desire to retain its low density character, to protect sensitive areas, and to preserve tree canopy cover and wildlife habitat.

The neighborhood’s residential zoning should minimize pockets of zoning that allow residential development at densities and in forms that are incongruous with that of surrounding homes. For sensitive natural areas and landslide hazard areas, the neighborhood should examine policy options for protecting these areas and connecting them to the broader green spaces network (see NV1, above). These include:

- a. Regulating development on geological hazard areas and near streams in addition to Kirkland’s existing requirements;
- b. Zoning approaches such as encouraging clustering of building structures to reduce development on slopes or retain more trees;
- c. Requiring development easements to restrict development on parcels or part of a parcel to protect sensitive areas; and
- d. Implementing financing options including non-contiguous clustering or transfer of development rights.

Neighborhood Value 3: Develop the neighborhood commercial districts into pedestrian oriented villages that are residential in scale, provide needed services and gathering places within walking distance, and support additional transit options. They should be developed with sensitivity to the neighborhood’s environmental and traffic concerns and while maintaining the neighborhood's character.

This value complements NV2 above and is based on the idea and principles of the “10 minute walkable neighborhoods” concept. This concept of development emphasizes accessibility and walkable destinations, and it has already been developed in other neighborhoods of Kirkland. Finn Hill residents would like to see denser multifamily residential development occur near existing commercial districts, in order to diversify residential housing choices (including affordable housing and housing for seniors), enhance shopping amenities, and improve transit options.

Neighborhood Value 4: New development in the neighborhood should be in keeping with the neighborhood's vision.

Requests for land use changes and land use decisions should reflect the vision statement and the goals and policies of the neighborhood plan.

Residential and commercial development applications should be evaluated carefully with regard to their impact on transportation in and out of the neighborhood. They should particularly be evaluated in regard to commute congestion, their impact on the neighborhood's tree canopy, and their impact on surface water quality and flow management.

RECOMMENDATIONS for implementation:

1. [FHNA and City of Kirkland staff] : While a project alone might not have a significant impact at the particular location, when viewed in combination with all other development happening, it may be the source of more significant impacts. Our recommendation is to examine potential for different mechanisms that would trigger limits on development projects when key transportation or environmental goals/targets are threatened by this development project, at local and neighborhood scale.

3-Historical Context

Prior to European settlement, Kirkland and Finn Hill were dominated by Douglas fir and western red cedar forests. Fire was the major disturbance in the ecosystem, after which both understory shrubs and canopy trees would regenerate¹.

Just south of Finn Hill at the mouth of Juanita Creek was a settlement called *TUHB-tuh-byook'w*. It was occupied by members of the Duwamish tribe and part of a larger group of settlements on the eastern shore of Lake Washington in what is now Kirkland². These settlements were abandoned in the mid- to late-19th century after the Duwamish ceded 54,000 acres of land under the 1855 Treaty of Point Elliott³.

Early European settlers of Finn Hill were predominantly from Finland or of Finnish descent. The first families settled Finn Hill in 1896; some of the 55 families in the area include the Jarvi, Salmonson, and Haapa families⁴. The Inglewood neighborhood—now part of Finn Hill and the area of Finn Hill's largest commercial development—was platted and named by L.A. Wold in 1888⁵.

¹ Halpern, C. B., & Spies, T. A. (1995). Plant species diversity in natural and managed forests of the Pacific Northwest. *Ecological Applications*, 5(4), 913-934.

² Coast Salish Villages of Puget Sound. Located at: http://coastsalishmap.org/new_page_6.htm

³ Viltos-Rowe, Irene. Waste Not, Want Not—The Native American Way.

⁴ Kirkland Heritage Society records; Radford, Barbara. What's in a Name located at: <http://finnhillalliance.org/2013/12/whats-in-a-name-2/>

⁵ Majors, H. M. (1975). *Exploring Washington*. Van Winkle Publishing Company.

As elsewhere in Kirkland, these early settlers first logged the area, then burned and pulled out the massive stumps left behind to prepare the land for agriculture. Fruit, dairy, and vegetables were among the crops grown.

As Seattle was preparing for the 1962 World's Fair, and the 10 million people who'd be coming to experience it, the Evergreen Point floating bridge was completed to connect Kirkland to Seattle. This led to a sharp increase in the population of communities on the eastside, including Kirkland and Finn Hill. At that time, to be prepared for the change, Kirkland's local leaders wrote visions and recommendations, which would become the first Comprehensive Plan of Kirkland.

Today, single family residential has replaced farms and agriculture. Development, not fire, is the greatest threat to the large Douglas fir and western red cedars that still dominate the landscape. Finn Hill was annexed into Kirkland in 2011.



Kirkland Shoreline Around 1910

Figure 3.1: An early photo of Kirkland's shoreline, showing early homes with remnants of the area's extensive forests in the background. Photo courtesy Kirkland Heritage Society.

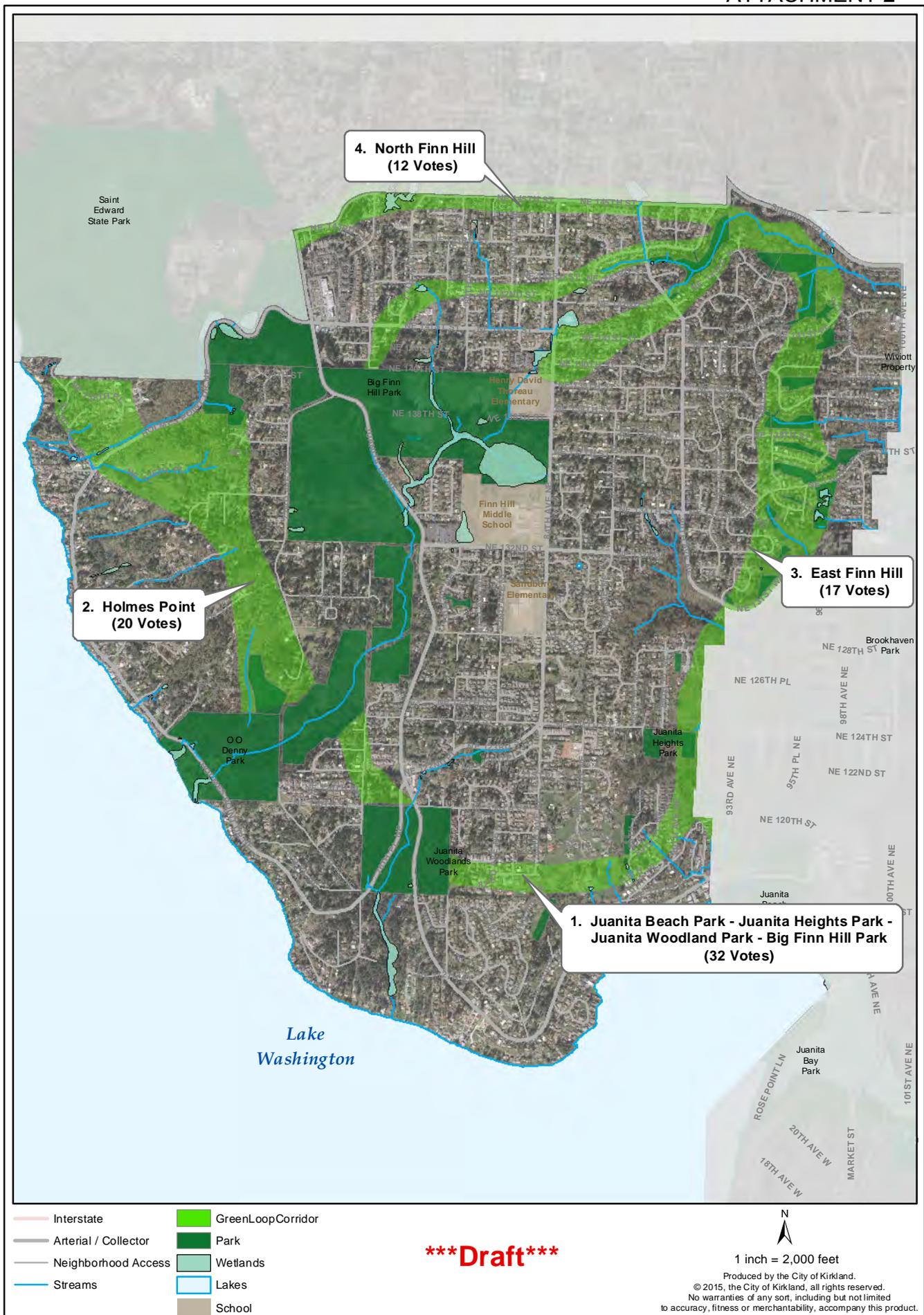
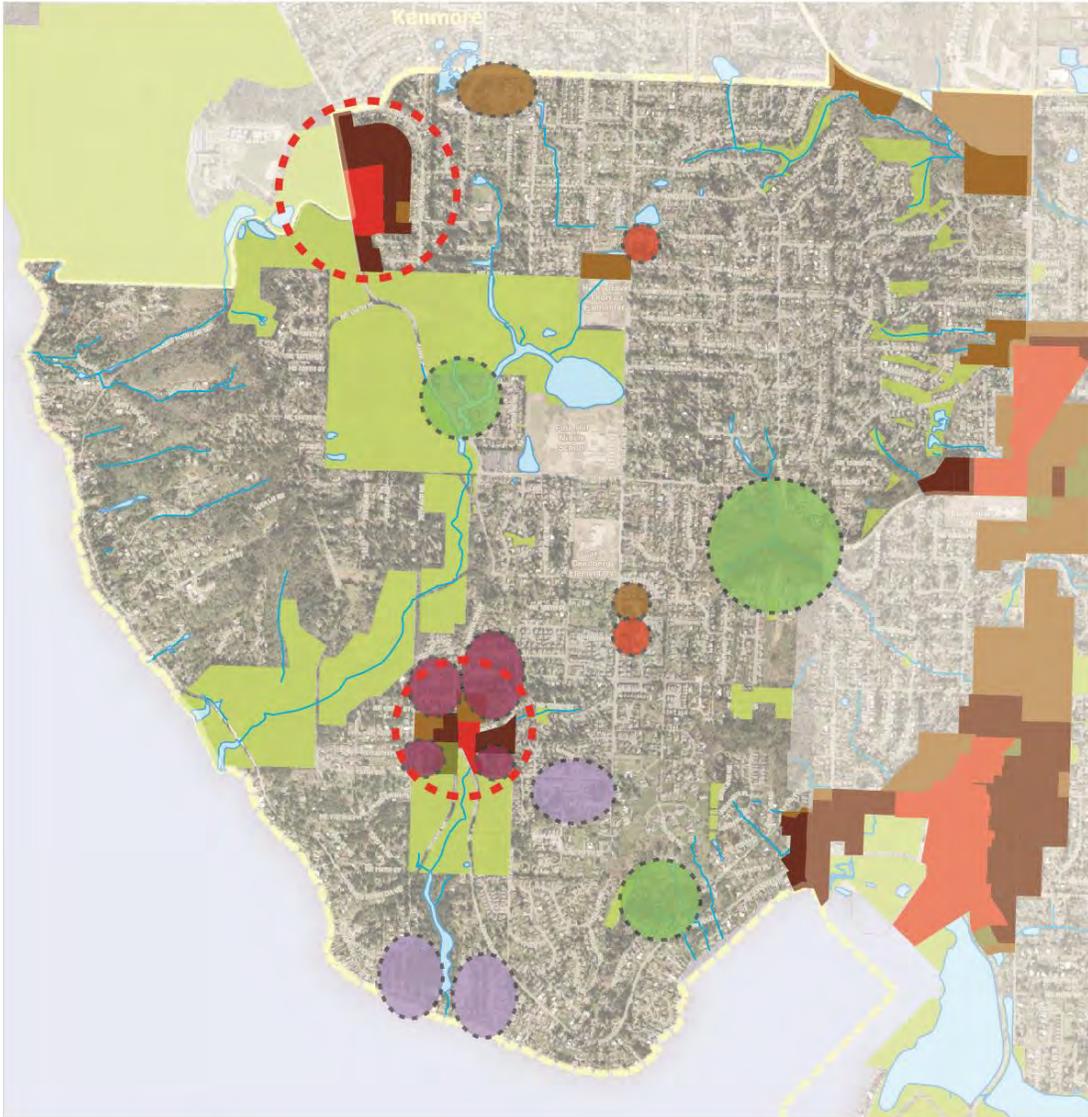


Figure 5.1.1 Green Loop Corridor and Development Priorities

COMBINED HYBRID ZONING MAP



LEGEND

BASE MAP

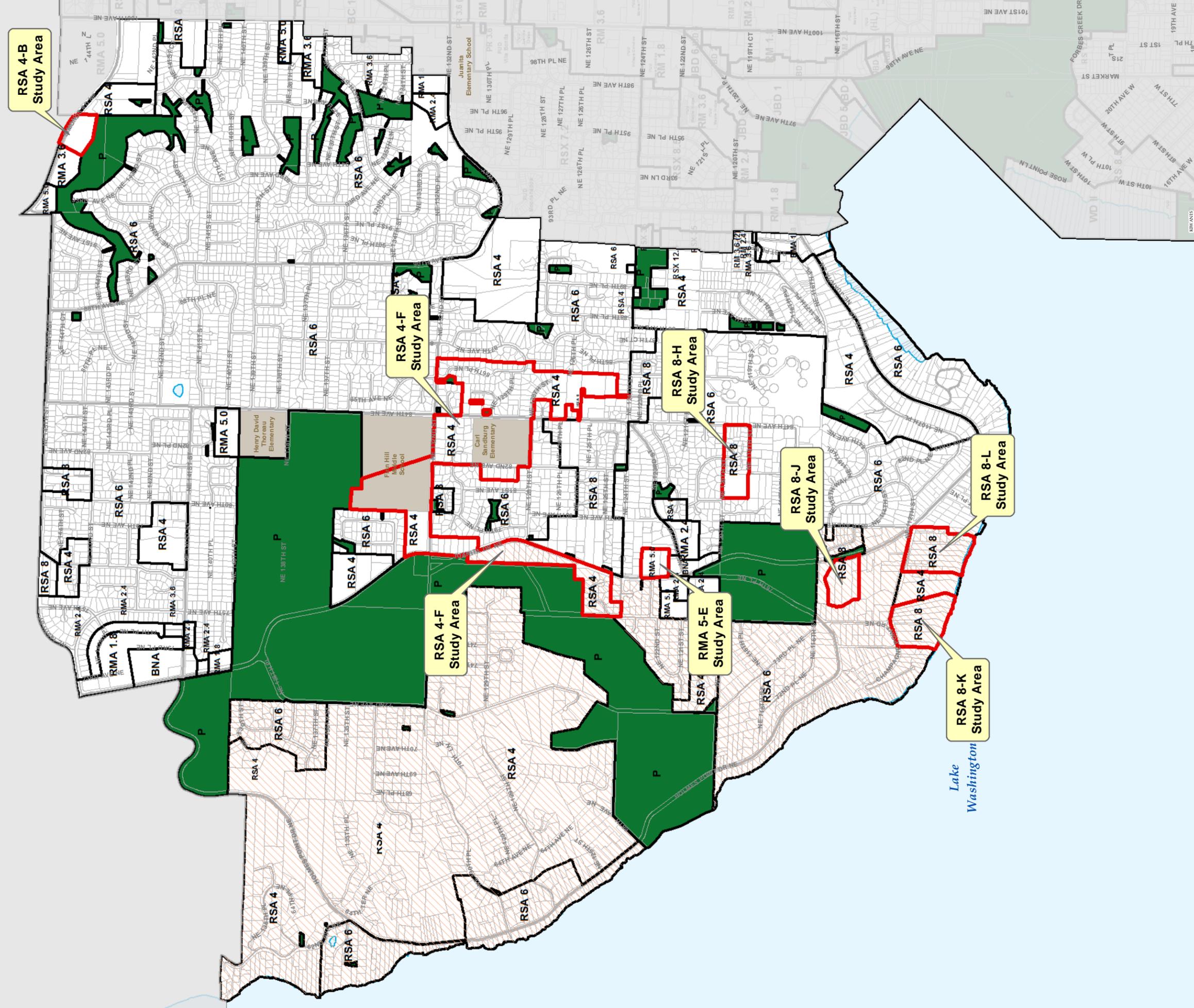
-  Existing Parks / Open Space
-  Existing Streams
-  Existing Wetland
-  Neighborhood Boundary

EXISTING ZONING

-  Commercial
-  High-Density Residential
-  Medium-Density Residential
-  Office

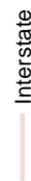
PROPOSED ZONING

-  Neighborhood Commercial Area
-  Reduce Housing Density
-  Increase Housing Density
-  Zoning change to Park / Open Space



1 inch = 1,283 feet

Land Use Study Areas

-  Interstate
-  Arterial / Collector
-  Neighborhood Access
-  Park/Open Space
-  Parcel Boundaries
-  Lakes
-  School
-  Land Use Study Areas
-  Holmes Point Overlay

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OVERVIEW OF FINN HILL ZONING REGULATIONS

The following is a summary of the Kirkland Zoning Code regulations for Finn Hill. At annexation the City generally adopted the underlying zoning that existed in King County as of 2011. The land use map for Finn Hill from the Land Use Element chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is the basis for the zoning map districts in Finn Hill. Here is a link to the [Kirkland Zoning Map](#). Links to the Kirkland Zoning Code are provided below for more detail.

Low density single family residential zones – [Zoning Code Chapter 15](#)

The low density residential areas of Finn Hill have a range of allowed density from four to eight dwelling units per acre. Comparable zoning districts are the RSA 4, RSA 6, and RSA 8 zones. For each zone a minimum lot size also applies. The size of a house in relationship to the lot size is also regulated, known as floor area ratio. In addition, for those areas generally located west Juanita Dr, Chapter 70 provides the regulations for the Holmes Point Overlay (HPO) zone (see more detail below).

For convenience we’ve included the following table that summarizes the maximum density per acre, minimum lot size, lot coverage, etc. for each of the zones.

Zoning Regulations in Low Density RSA Zones					
Zoning District	Maximum units per acre or density **	Minimum Lot Size	Maximum Lot Coverage (If in Holmes Point Overlay stricter maximums apply)	Floor Area Ratio	Max Building Height *
RSA 4	4 dwelling units per acre	7,600 sq. ft.	50%	50% of lot size	30 feet above Average Building Elevation
RSA 6	6 dwelling units per acre	5,100 sq. ft.	50%	50% of lot size	30 feet above Average Building Elevation
RSA 8	8 dwelling units per acre	3,800 sq. ft.	50%	50% of lot size ***	30 feet above Average Building Elevation

* Except in Juanita Beach Camps Plat on Goat Hill maximum building height is 35 feet above average building elevation.

**Road dedication and vehicular access easements or tracts may be included in the density calculation but not in the minimum lot size per dwelling unit.

*** In RSA 8 zones F.A.R. may be increased up to 60% of lot size for the first 5,000 sq. ft. of lot area if the roof form is peaked (4/12 pitch).

Notes:

Additional regulations may apply to parcels located along the shoreline, see Chapter 83

Additional regulations may apply to parcels located within the Holmes Point Overlay, see Chapter 70.

Holmes Point Overlay Regulations- [Zoning Code Chapter 70](#)

If property is located in the Holmes Point Overlay area, regulations are more restrictive than the rest of the City regarding site disturbance, lot coverage, tree retention and tree removal. A maximum site alteration shall not exceed 75% of the total lot area. At least 25% of a lot area **must be set aside in perpetuity for a permanent "protected natural area" or PNA. If a** designated PNA is insufficient with existing vegetation, supplemental native plant material must be installed. In addition to a tree retention plan, a landscape plan is required for the PNA area. Tree removal requests for home owners or developers require tree permit applications to be submitted to the City accompanied by an arborist report describing the health of the tree and justifying tree removal. Tree replacement based on tree credits is required. Chapter 70 also specifies that construction of pedestrian trails must meet maintenance standards of the U.S. Forest Service Trails Management Handbook and not be constructed of concrete, asphalt or other impervious surface.

Multifamily areas – [Zoning Code Chapter 20](#)

Finn Hill multifamily zoning areas surround the two commercial areas and along the north and east perimeter of the neighborhood. Medium density areas range from nine to fourteen dwelling units per acre to high density at eighteen to twenty four dwelling units per acre (comparable zoning is RMA 5.0, RMA 3.6, RMA 2.4, RMA 1.8). All development creating four or more new dwelling units in these zones must provide at least 10% of the units as affordable housing units as defined in Chapter 5, KZC.

Commercial areas- [Zoning Code Chapter 35](#)

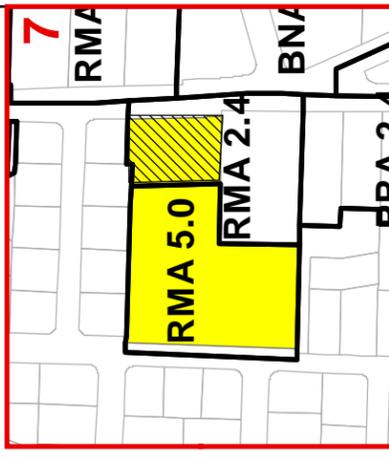
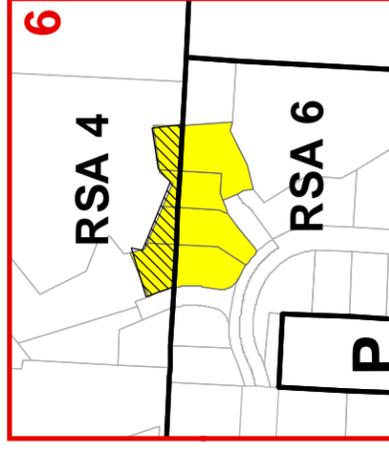
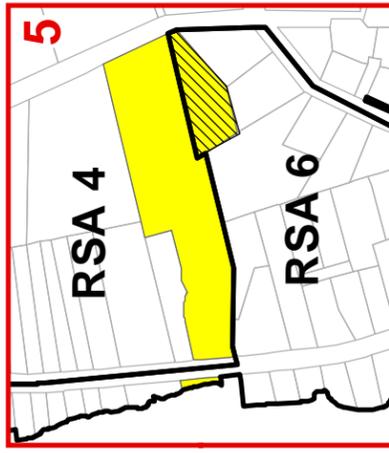
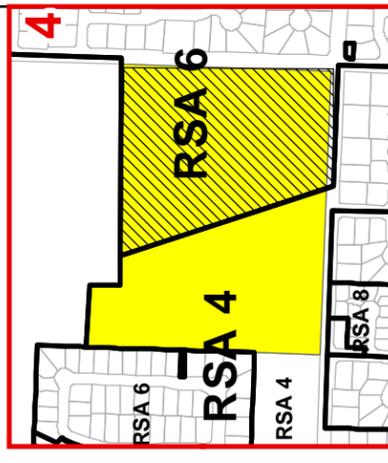
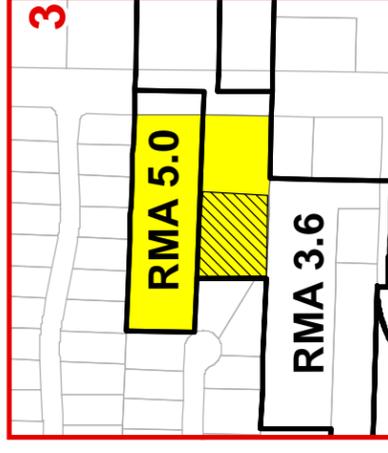
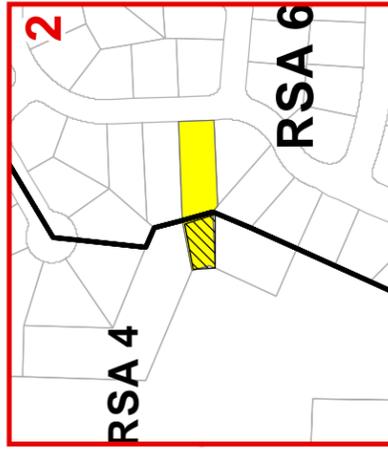
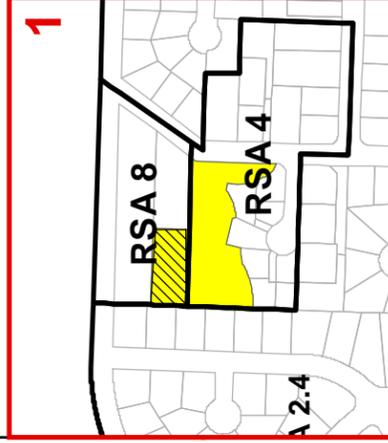
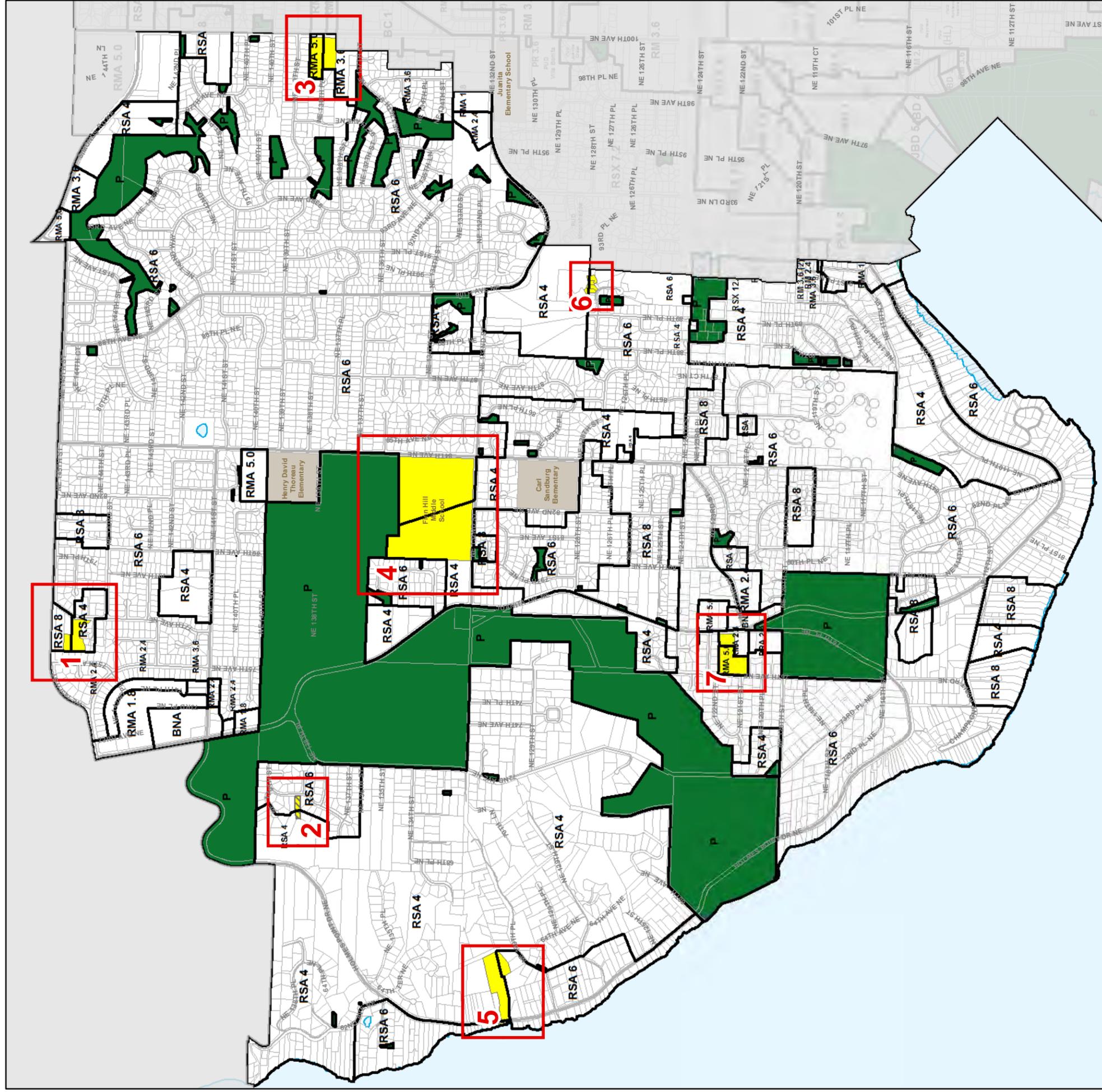
The two commercial areas are zoned Neighborhood Business commercial (BNA) zones. The Land Use Element in the Comprehensive Plan designates the northern Inglewood shopping center area as Finn Hill Neighborhood Center and the southern BNA area as the Holmes Point Residential Market. Appendix B Glossary of the Comprehensive Plan defines the characteristics of the two areas and the types of uses intended:

Neighborhood Center (mixed use)- A Neighborhood Center is an area that serves the needs for goods and services of the local community as well as the sub regional market. These districts vary in uses and intensities and may include office, retail, restaurants, housing, hotels and service businesses. These centers provide facilities to serve the everyday needs of the neighborhood and grocery stores are considered a high-priority anchor for these areas. Residential use are encouraged where they support and do not displace the commercial viability of these areas.

Residential Market (mixed use) - A Residential Market consists of individual stores or mixed use buildings/centers that are pedestrian-oriented and serve the local neighborhood. Residential scale and design are critical to integrate these uses into the surrounding residential area. Residential uses may be located above or behind commercial uses in the center at densities specified in the Comprehensive Plan.

In BNA areas where development includes residential uses, zoning requires street level floor commercial uses, ground floor minimum width, depth and height requirements to encourage viable commercial tenant spaces (housing above ground floor commercial). Housing density is limited in the Finn Hill Neighborhood Center to 24 dwelling units per acre (equivalent to RM 1.8 zoning) and at the Holmes Point Residential Market BNA zone 18 dwelling units per acre (equivalent to RM 2.4 zoning). Maximum building height is 35 feet above average building elevation. Affordable housing is not currently required but encouraged in the BNA zones. Design review is required.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas, Tree Management and Shorelines- for all property containing wetlands, streams, geologically hazardous soils, within 200 feet of Lake Washington shorelines, or requests for tree removal, the regulations in [Chapter 85-Geologically Hazardous](#), [Chapter 90-Drainage Basins](#) and [Chapter 95-Tree Management and Landscaping](#), Shoreline regulations of [Chapter 83](#) and State Shoreline Management Act provide added protection. Depending on the scope of development the State Environmental Policies Act applies to new development.



- Interstate
- Arterial / Collector
- Neighborhood Access
- Parcels Split by Zoning
- Parcel Area to be Changed
- Parcel Boundaries
- Park/Open Space
- Lakes
- School

Key Milestones and Schedule for the Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan Process*Revised 7/11/2016*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ April 2015 -September 2015 ✓ October 8, 2015 ✓ October 15, 2015 ✓ November 14, 2015 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GFL under contact; team formation; tour; information gathering; Denny Fest • Planning Commission study session • Public involvement to inform and identify issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Listening session event with instant polling ○ Public Alternatives workshop ○ Web survey conducted with community to identify issues and ideas |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ December 2015-January 2016 ✓ January 14, 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public comments and alternatives documented; alternatives hybridized and further developed • Joint meeting with Planning Commission, Park Board, Transportation Commission |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ February - March 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Priorities Forum and web survey to share hybrid Alternatives and get feedback • Preferred alternatives developed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 2016- July 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Plan development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policy concepts to Planning Commission for direction ○ GFL preliminary draft plan and implementation strategies ○ Share draft with Neighborhood Association for comment ○ Transportation Commission review draft transportation policies (July 27, 2016) ○ Planning Commission study sessions (May12, July 28, 2016) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City studies potential land use changes and public outreach to property owners • Planning Commission study session on draft plan (August 25, 2016) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft neighborhood plan available for public comment • City conducts environmental review • Public Open House on draft plan • Planning Commission holds public hearing |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2016- Early 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Commission recommendation to City Council • City Council final adoption |