3.3 AESTHETICS

The Aesthetics section analyzes the compatibility of the Proposal with the existing neighborhood character in the project vicinity. While the Land Use section analyzes compatibility of use, the aesthetics analyzes the physical form and scale of the Proposal in relation to its surroundings.

This analysis identifies existing neighborhood character, analyzes aesthetic compatibility and identifies potential ways to mitigate identified impacts. Specifically, this section analyzes aesthetics from three perspectives:

1. Impacts to neighborhood character. This review considers the potential impacts of the physical form and scale of the Proposal on the character of the surrounding area.
2. Impacts to adjacent development. The potential impacts of the physical form and scale of the Proposal on adjoining development will be analyzed.
3. Impacts to public views of Lake Washington. Consistent with Comprehensive Plan policy CC-4.5[1], potential impacts to public views of Lake Washington will be considered.

3.3.1 Affected Environment

Existing Neighborhood Character

The study area is generally bounded by Lake Washington to the west, State Street to the east, 7th Avenue South to the north and NE 64th Street to the south (see Figure 3.1-1). Character is assessed by analyzing buildings and groups of buildings and their relationships to geography and landform, streets and other buildings. Specifically, the analysis considers lot and building size, parking, building massing, building heights, building/street relationships and building color and materials.

Building Footprint: The total area of a building surrounded by walls

Mass: The arrangement of the building's bulk, including relative openness and solidity.

Scale: A comparative term referring to relative size of building elements and details as they proportionally relate to each other and to humans.

[1] **Policy CC-4.5: Protect public scenic views and view corridors.**

Public views of the City, surrounding hillsides, Lake Washington, Seattle, the Cascades and the Olympics are valuable not only for their beauty but also for the sense of orientation and identity that they provide. Almost every area in Kirkland has streets and other public spaces that allow our citizens and visitors to enjoy such views. View corridors along Lake Washington's shoreline are particularly important and should continue to be enhanced as new development occurs.

Private views are not protected, except where specifically mentioned in some of the neighborhood plan chapters of the Comprehensive Plan and in the City's development regulations.

Source: Kirkland Comprehensive Plan (excerpt)

Project Site

As described in Chapter 2, the site is approximately 1.21 acres in size and consists of two relatively flat areas separated by a steep grade change that runs north south through the approximate center of the site. (See Figure 2.9). The portion of the site at the corner of Lake Street South and 10th Avenue South contains a small commercial building (See Figure 3.1-3). The remainder of the western portion of the site is vacant, with some remnant asphalt pavement and concrete slabs from a prior use. The western portion of the site also contains shrubs, deciduous trees (alder, cottonwood and maple), and brush primarily along the southern edge and in the steep slope area. The northeastern portion of the site contains a single family home and shed with ornamental landscaping (See Figure 3.1-2). The southeastern portion of the site is undeveloped and covered with brush.

Surrounding Area

The project site fronts onto Lake Street South/Lake Washington Boulevard, a public right-of-way of citywide and regional importance for its transportation function, its recreation function as a key pedestrian and bicycle route, and proximity to Lake Washington, city parks and access to views of the Lake and region. Lake Street South/Lake Washington Boulevard connects SR 520 to downtown Kirkland and beyond. The street travels parallel to the Lake Washington waterfront, which is developed with residential buildings and public parks. Views to Lake Washington are provided through the parks and view corridors between buildings.

North and south of the project site, Lake Washington Boulevard/Lake Street South curves and partially defines the extent to which the project site is visible from the street. From the south, the presence of large trees south of the project site in Marsh Park and on private property further define the extent to which the project site is visible from public properties. The street curvature and retaining walls on the east side of the street define and influence views experienced by drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists, which vary depending on location and side of street. See Figure 3.3-1. While the actual viewshed, defined as public areas from which the Proposed Action will be visible or partially visible (street right of ways and parks), is a limited part of the study area, the project site is in a somewhat more visually prominent location than some other sites along Lake Washington Boulevard/Lake Street South due to its location on a corner and at street grade. (See Building/Street Relationship discussion below).

Similarly, from the north, the street curvature, trees (primarily street trees in the public right-of way) and retaining walls and vegetated embankments define how the project site is visible from public properties. Figures 3.3-2 and 3.3-3 show views to the site from a close-up and more distant different vantage points.

Tenth Avenue South, a residential street, connects Lake Street South with State Street South and serves single and multifamily development in the local area. Views of the project site from 10th Avenue South, which climbs a steep hill, are primarily of the northwest corner of the property. See Figure 3.3-4.

FIGURE 3.3-1 VIEWPOINT 1: VIEW TO SITE FROM SOUTHWEST

FIGURE 3.3-2 VIEWPOINT 2: DISTANT VIEW TO SITE FROM NORTHWEST

FIGURE 3.3-3 VIEWPOINT 3: CLOSE-UP VIEW TO SITE FROM NORTHWEST

FIGURE 3.3-4 VIEWPOINT 4: VIEW TO SITE FROM NORTHEAST

Existing Neighborhood Character, Lake Washington/Lake Street South/10th Avenue South

Development in the study area has gradually transformed over a period of decades from primarily single family houses to primarily multifamily development of varying scales, densities and forms. The following section identifies key characteristics of the existing community character and some common themes which were used as the basis of identifying aesthetic impacts (See Figure 3.1-4 through 3.1-7).

Lot and Building Size

As shown in Figure 3.1-1 and Figure 3.1-8, individual developments vary in size, proportions, and location on the property. For example, lot sizes vary in size from less than 1/10th of an acre to 2 1/3 acres, building height varies from single to five-story structures, and number of units varies from one to 60 per development. While varied, the area is clearly identifiable as residential in character.

Parking

Location, configurations and amount of parking affects individual property development and building coverage. Existing parking configurations within the study area include surface parking lots, freestanding individual or multiple garages, visible parking under buildings and structured parking within buildings. Properties with surface parking lots tend to have a smaller proportion of the overall property covered with buildings, while buildings with structured parking (parking within or beneath buildings) tend to have a larger proportion of building lot coverage. For the majority of the development in the viewshed, parking is not a prominent visual feature, particularly among multifamily buildings

Landscaping and Tree Cover

Public and private landscaping in the study area strongly influence study area character. There are some areas of the viewshed, when seen from certain angles or on road curvatures, such as from sidewalks, where landscaping and street trees obscure views of existing buildings (though not in winter months).

The majority of front yard setbacks on private properties are extensively landscaped on Lake Washington Boulevard/Lake Street South (See Figure 3.3-5). Much of the landscaping that exists on private properties in the study area is mature vegetation and may exceed City requirements. On 10th Avenue South, landscaping varies considerably from property to property with no specific patterns or frequency.

There are a number of mature trees near the project site which are visually prominent along Lake Street South. These occur on the west side of the street in Marsh Park and several properties immediately to the north of the Park on both sides of the street. Mature trees on the project site are also visually prominent in this area. Street trees are present on the west side of Lake Washington Boulevard where there are more recent developments. See Figure 3.3-6.

FIGURE 3.3-5 STUDY AREA LANDSCAPING

FIGURE 3.3-6 TREE CANOPY

Building Massing

Age of development and style of development spans several decades, from the 1960s or 1970s to present. While older multifamily buildings tend to have more simple box-like forms with little façade modulation, more recent buildings tend to have more façade articulation or modulation through use of varied wall planes, recesses, balconies and similar features.

Articulation or Modulation: Refers to the many street frontage design elements, both horizontal and vertical, which break up large wall masses and provide variation in a building façade or frontage.

Building Heights

Building heights vary from one to five stories in the Study Area, though all stories may not be visible from differing vantage points due to landform, landscaping or other foreground features. Many factors impact the perception of building height, including the base elevation from which height is measured (in the study area, this ranges from street level to embankments 20-30 feet above the street), building articulation and modulation, materials, size of building footprint (See Figure 3.3-7).

Building/Street Relationships

Building relationships include setbacks or distance between building and street, first floor uses, and relationship building entrance and windows to the street. Building/street relationships on Lake Washington Boulevard/Lake Street South within the viewshed are largely influenced by topography and landform. See Figure 3.3-8), which is described below.

1. West side of Lake Washington Boulevard/Lake Street South. Properties are generally at or close to street grade. Building setbacks include one or multiple retaining walls on some properties and moderate to extensive landscaping. Entrances are typically on building fronts or sides and are close to street grade or slightly lower where properties slope down towards the shoreline. Driveways serve individual properties.

2. East side of Lake Street South, north of Project Site. There is a vegetated embankment moving uphill east of the sidewalk for most properties in this area, which also includes limited areas with retaining walls. Most buildings are located on the top of the bank and set back varying distances from the street. The bank and setbacks, combined with building modulation and landscaping, minimize the perception of scale compared to buildings developed at grade with small front yards. Most development is not accessed from Lake Street South.

3. East Side of Lake Washington Boulevard South of 10th Avenue South. Most properties have one or multiple retaining walls which abut the sidewalk, varying in height from roughly three to twenty or thirty feet. Building setbacks vary and many are heavily landscaped. As with 2) above, retaining walls, higher bank, landscaping and setbacks affect perception of scale. Most building entries are not accessed directly from Lake Washington Boulevard.

4. Tenth Avenue South. The mixture of a wide variety of scales and styles of single- and multi-family residential development along 10th Avenue South presents no particular patterns in building street relationship.

FIGURE 3.3-7 BUILDING HEIGHTS

Building Color and Materials

While individual building colors vary, the majority of buildings in viewshed are within the range of white, beige, tan, gray and light brown. These colors, especially combined with significant levels of landscape materials, tend to place buildings visually as more background than do more bright vibrant colors. A few exceptions to this general color palette occur in in the viewshed including orange, yellow, green and brown buildings. Building materials in the viewshed are primarily wood, wood-like materials (siding), and stucco, with less use of brick or concrete.

FIGURE 3.3-8 BUILDING STREET RELATIONSHIPS

Common Visual Themes

While a wide variety of properties, building footprints, style, form, landscaping, and color exist in the Study Area and viewshed, common themes may be identified, including the following:

- Parking typically not prominent as a visual element;
- Use of tones of white, beige, tan, gray and light brown in building color;
- Building footprint that leaves a significant amount of open landscaped area
- Moderate to extensive use of façade articulation and modulation in both the horizontal and vertical planes, including common use of balconies, and
- Moderate to extensive use of landscape materials, retaining walls and trees in building setbacks (though landscape and tree cover are considerably less prominent in winter months).

Adjacent Properties

To the east, adjoining development consists of a single family residence and multifamily development (see Figure 3.3-9). The single family residence is set back from the shared property line with the subject site and consists of a single-story building. The site is extensively landscaped with ornamental trees, lawn and shrubs. The multifamily development is located immediately south of the single family home. The development consists of two two-story buildings located approximately 26 feet from the property line shared with the subject site. The buildings are oriented to the west, with decks and windows overlooking the subject site.

To the south, there is a 12.5 foot wide vacant strip of land and an access driveway serving the Monterey Bay and Pleasant Bay multifamily developments. This strip of land and driveway provide visual separation from the subject site. The multifamily developments consist of three- and four-story buildings that rise up the hillside with surface parking around the buildings (See Figure 3.3-10).

To the west, the site is bounded by Lake Street South. On the west side of the street, development includes single family and multifamily residences and Settler's Landing. As shown in Figure 3.3-11, development includes a mix of newer and older buildings, the majority of which are located relatively close to the street. Settler's Landing is a heavily landscaped park developed in the alignment of the 10th Avenue South street end.

FIGURE 3.3-9 ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT TO THE EAST

FIGURE 3.3-10 ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT TO SOUTH

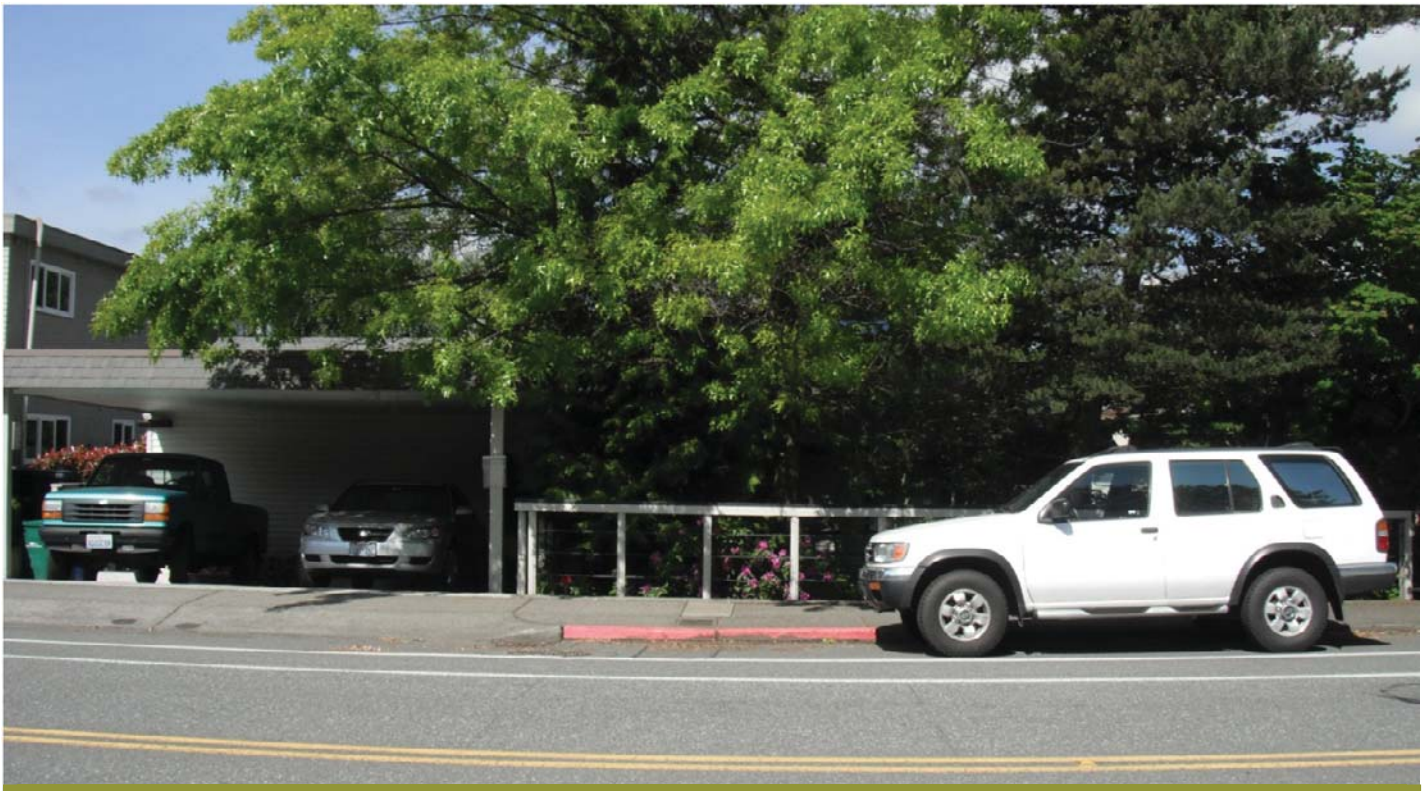

FIGURE 3.3-11 ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT TO WEST

To the north, the site adjoins 10th Avenue South. On the north side of the 10th Avenue South, development includes two multifamily structures. On Lake Street South, the building is located generally in the center of the site with two stories of building over carport parking (See Figure 3.312). The front yard area is paved for vehicular circulation. The second multifamily building is located uphill and overlooks the first. It is also a two story building built over carport parking. Site access is provided off of 1st Street South.

FIGURE 3.3-12 ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT TO THE NORTH

Public Views to Lake Washington

As described previously, public views to Lake Washington are available at numerous points along Lake Street South/Lake Washington Boulevard, including views through public parks and view corridors between existing buildings required under the City's SMP on the west side of the right-of-way, as well as from some points on 10th Avenue South. See Figure 3.3-13.

From 10th Avenue South, there are some limited views to Lake Washington from some areas on the hill and at crest of the hill. Views are intermittent and interrupted by existing vegetation and some rooftops.

FIGURE 3.3-13 PUBLIC VIEWS TO LAKE WASHINGTON

Design Guidelines and Regulations

Design Guidelines for Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts

The *Design Guidelines for Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts* (Design Guidelines) is intended to be used by the City in the design review process in conjunction with the City's Chapter 92 KZC Design Regulations (summarized below). To the extent that the Design Guidelines and Regulations address the same issues but are not entirely consistent, the City has the option to determine which standard will result in superior design. The Design Guidelines are also intended to assist the City in interpreting the Design Regulations and to help project developers and architects through graphic examples of the intent of City regulations and guidelines.

Because the subject site is not located within a pedestrian-oriented district, the Design Guidelines are not applicable to the Proposal. However, pertinent guidelines are noted here to help illustrate City intent as it relates to characteristics of design quality, scale and character. Specific guidelines that relate to pedestrian-oriented elements, scale, and building material and color have been excerpted below.

Pedestrian-Oriented Elements

- Awnings or canopies should be required on facades facing pedestrian-oriented sidewalks. A variety of styles and colors should be encouraged on pedestrian-oriented streets, and a more continuous, uniform style encouraged for large developments on entry arterial streets.
- All building fronts should have pedestrian-friendly features…[such as transparent or decorative windows, public entrances, murals, bulletin boards, display windows, seating, street vendors, artwork, trellises, planting beds].

Parking Lot Location and Design

- The intrusive qualities of parking garages must be mitigated. In pedestrian areas, ground-level retail uses or appropriate pedestrian spaces should be required. Also, extensive landscaping should be required near residential areas and in high visibility locations.

Scale

- Architectural building elements such as arcades, balconies, bay windows, roof decks, trellises, landscaping, awnings, cornices, friezes, art concepts, and courtyards should be encouraged.
- Vertical building modulation should be used to add variety and to make large buildings appear to be an aggregation of smaller buildings.
- Horizontal building modulation may be used to reduce the perceived mass of a building and to provide continuity at the ground level of large building complexes.
- Buildings above the second story should utilize upper story step backs to create receding building forms as building height increases, allow for additional solar access and maintain human scale at the street level.
- In addition to apply setbacks to upper stories, building facades should be well modulated to avoid blank walls and provide architectural interest.

- Continuous two or three story street walls should be avoided by incorporating vertical and horizontal modulations into the building form.

Building Material Color and Detail

- Color schemes should adhere to the [following] guidelines… The range of colors compatible within a coordinated color scheme should be encouraged.
  - Where appropriate, use the natural colors of materials such as brick, stone, tile, and stained wood.
  - Use only high-quality coatings for concrete.
  - Emphasize earth tones or subdued colors such as barn red and blue-gray for building walls and large surfaces.
  - Reserve bright colors for trim or accents.
  - Emphasize dark, saturated colors for awnings, and avoid garish and light colors that show dirt.
  - Avoid highly-tinted or mirrored glass.
  - Consider the color of neighboring buildings when selecting colors for new buildings.

Chapter 92 Kirkland Zoning Code

Kirkland Zoning Code Chapter 92 establishes design regulations that apply to several of the City's business districts, including the Central (CBD) and Yarrow Bay (YBD) Business Districts. While not applicable to the subject property, these regulations provide information on characteristics of design quality, scale and character that may be useful in this analysis.

Pertinent to the Proposal, the Design Regulations address the following topics:

- Site Design, Building Placement and Pedestrian Oriented Facades.
- Architectural and Human Scale.
- Building Material, Color and Detail.

Requirements associated with each of these topics are briefly discussed below. Please note that requirements have been summarized and generalized. For specific requirements, the full text of KZC Chapter 92 should be consulted.

Site Design, Building Placement and Pedestrian Oriented Facades

This section provides specific building and site design standards for sites in several of the commercial business districts. The section provides standards for multi-story buildings adjacent to low density residential zones (in the Rose Hill Business District [RHBD] and Totem Lake Neighborhood [TLN]), but does not specifically call out standards for development adjacent to multifamily zones.

Standards that establish site or building treatments for development located on street corners in the CBD, RHBD and TLN are provided. Examples of some of the identified treatments include:

- Additional sidewalk or pedestrian-oriented open space, beyond required sidewalk areas.

- Entranceway to building, exterior courtyard or open space.
- Building elements, such as bay window/turret, roof deck, balconies above the ground floor, building corner setback, artwork, distinctive use of façade materials.
- Treatment for pedestrian weather protection at the building corner.
- Architectural features that adds identity to the area.
- Substantial landscaping.

Architectural and Human Scale

In KZC Section 92.30, measures to achieve horizontal definition, architectural scale and human scale are identified. These are briefly summarized below.

Horizontal Definition

- Clearly define the top, middle and bottom of the building using suggested methods for vertical articulation:
  - Top: Sloped roofs, strong eave lines, cornice treatments, horizontal trellises, sunshades, etc.
  - Middle: Windows, balconies, material changes, railings, and similar treatments that unify building design.
  - Bottom: pedestrian oriented storefronts and building materials, awnings, arcades, natural materials.
- Where appropriate, coordinate the horizontal elements in a pattern to reflect similar elements in neighboring buildings.

Architectural Scale

- For buildings of three or more stories, all stories above the second story set back from the ground floor façade along at least two facades of the building.
- Building modulation to meet specific standards maximum horizontal dimension between modulations, minimum depth of modulation, and minimum width of modulation.
- Balconies on at least every other floor, with specific standards for the maximum distance between balconies and the minimum individual balcony floor area.
- Vertical modulation of the roof line.

Human Scale

- Balconies or decks above the ground floor.
- Bay windows above the ground floor.
- Pedestrian oriented space in front of each building façade.
- Provide window areas that meet specific standards.
- Use of a hipped or gable roof.
- Covered porch or entry.
- Upper story setbacks.
- Smaller building elements near the front entrance of the building.

Building Material, Color and Detail

Section 92.35 establishes standards for required elements and provides a menu of possible measures, summarized below.

- Decorative roof lines, including ornamental molding, frieze or other roof line devices visible from the ground.
- Decorative molding or framing details around all ground floor doors and windows.
- Decorative glazing on ground floor doors and windows.
- Railings, grill work, landscape guards or similar elements.
- Trellises or arbors.
- Decorative light fixtures.
- Masonry elements, wood patterns or details, ceramic tile or other elements with textural qualities.
- Decorative unit paving.
- Artwork.

3.3.2 Significant Impacts

Alternative 1 (No Action)

Neighborhood Character

Under the No Action alternative, there would be no change to the site or neighborhood character. The existing single family residence on the upper portion of the site and commercial buildings on the lower portion of the site would remain as they currently exist. No additional development would occur on the site.

Because the site would experience no change from existing conditions, it is not anticipated that new significant neighborhood character compatibility impacts would result from the No Action Alternative. Because much of the surrounding area is well landscaped and maintained, existing site features in the vacant area on the western portion of the site, including outdoor storage, broken pavement and overgrown vegetation, may potentially be considered visually incompatible with the surrounding area.

Adjacent Properties

Because all existing development would remain as it currently exists, no significant impacts to adjoining development is anticipated.

Public Views to Lake Washington

Existing public views to Lake Washington would remain as they currently exist. Over time, continued growth in vegetation on the subject property may marginally reduce public views toward the Lake. However, because these are already partial views, no significant impact is anticipated.

Alternative 2 (Proposed Action)

Neighborhood Character

The analysis of potential aesthetics impacts includes consideration of the following:

- Building footprint of the Proposal relative to existing development (Figure 3.3-14),
- Site and building design of the Proposal, based on plans shown in Figures 2-2 through 2-4, relative to area development, as shown in maps and photographs,
- Consistency of the Proposal with surrounding development based on massing model (gross building form) views of the Proposal inserted into photographs of the area (See Figures 3.3-15 through 18); and
- Consistency of the Proposal with the common visual themes described in the Existing Conditions discussion, above.

Figures 3.3-15 through 18 contain visual simulations of the Proposed Action in the neighborhood context through the use of a massing model inserted into a photograph of existing conditions from three different vantage points on public streets. These views can be compared with existing conditions from the same vantage point in Figures 3.3-1 through 4. The massing model is designed to view the Proposed Action within the existing neighborhood context.

Lot and Building Size

The proposed building footprint is larger and lot coverage higher than much of the development in the study area, as illustrated in Figure 3-3.14. In general, the proposed development would cover most of the site, except in 15-30 foot setbacks around the perimeter of the property. While some other properties in the study area also have relatively high lot coverage ratios, either topographic and/or building and site design features serve to reduce perceived scale. These include variations in the locations of the planes of perimeter walls, variations in site elevations, landscaping, retaining walls, undeveloped space and building location relative to the street.

It should be noted, however, that the proposed building footprint and lot coverage are allowed under the existing development standards for the BN zone. In part, the difference between the Proposal and surrounding development is a reflection of the different lot coverage standards in the BN zone and surrounding zoning designations.

Parking

The parking structure entrance is a prominent visual feature in the building face due its placement at roughly the center of the building, accessed by a ramp from the sidewalk.

Landscaping and Tree Cover

The proposed landscape plan includes street trees, shrubs and ground cover on the Lake Washington Boulevard/Lake Street South side of project between the building and the street (See Figure 2.3). In general, the proposed landscaping is less extensive than other landscaping on private properties in the area.

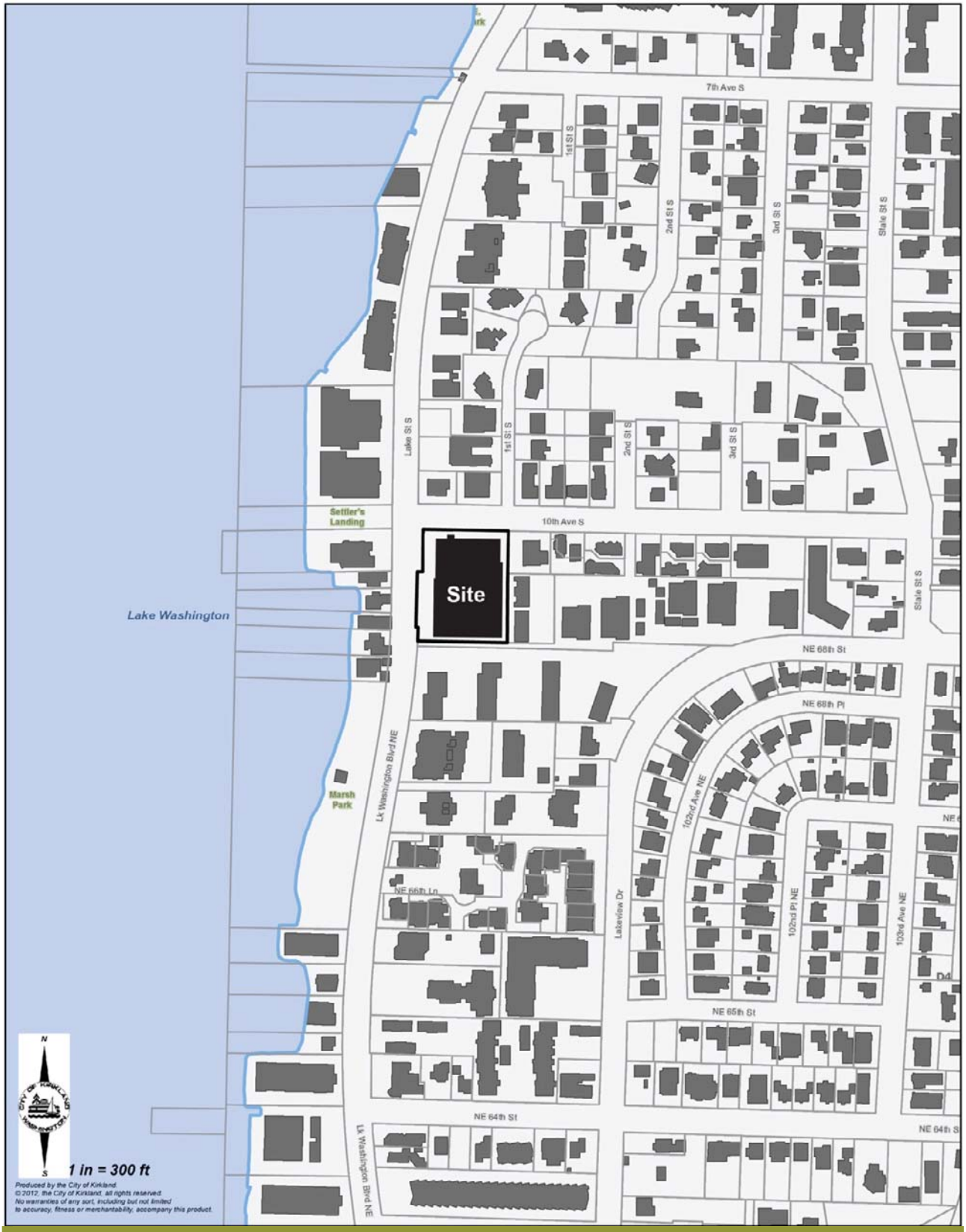

FIGURE 3.3-14 STUDY AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN

FIGURE 3.3-15 PROPOSED ACTION: VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST

FIGURE 3.3-16 PROPOSED ACTION: DISTANT VIEW FROM NW

FIGURE 3.3-17 PROPOSED ACTION: CLOSE-UP VIEW FROM NW

FIGURE 3.3-18 PROPOSED ACTION: VIEW FROM NORTHEAST

The Proposed Action includes excavated areas around three sides of the building perimeter to provide daylight into residential dwelling units and which creates 10-15 foot wide trenched areas between retaining walls around the building perimeter on the north, east and south sides of the building. The design of this feature is driven by the size of building footprint and the use of underground parking and building area in order to meet the maximum allowable height standards and parking requirements. Required landscape buffers are proposed to be located in the trenched areas and in concrete planters designed into the retaining walls. This feature of site design is unique to the area and may mean that landscaping in these perimeter areas is not visible from off site. This feature also affects perceived mass and scale of the Proposed Action, and Building/Street Relationship.

Building Massing

Building massing is driven at a gross scale by the size and location of the building footprint and the design of the perimeter walls of the building on upper floors. Finer grained architectural detailing of building elements at a human scale, such as window and door detailing, materials, trim, finishes and similar elements also contribute to perception of building mass and scale.

At a gross level, while allowed under existing code, the building façade on Lake Washington Boulevard/Lake Street South is significantly larger in scale than other development in the study area due to both the size of the building footprint and the design of the upper story walls. These upper story walls are designed with relatively minimal modulation (horizontal or vertical variations, stepbacks or other changes in wall planes), which contributes to the actual and perceived large building mass and scale. Similarly, the architectural detailing at a more minute or human-scaled level is relatively minimal, which also contributes to real and perceived mass and scale. Please see the discussion of the Design Guidelines and Design Regulations, above, for potential treatments to reduce perceived mass and scale.

Building Heights

As proposed, the project would meet the City's existing standard for building height and front yard setback. The building height is within the range of building heights that exist in the neighborhood. However, because the building is close to street elevation, consists of 4-stories visible from the street, and has minimal horizontal or vertical modulation, the perception of height may be that the building is taller than surrounding development. Please see the discussion of Design Guidelines and Design Regulations for potential measure to increase building modulation.

Building/Street Relationship

The Proposed Action drawings identify the area in the front yard setback area as a vegetated slope between the sidewalk and building walkways (See Figure 2-3)[2]. The first floor of the Proposed Action is shown to be about 5 feet below the existing street elevation so that visibility and relationship from this floor to the street will be limited. This style of development, while permitted by the City's development standards, is generally not consistent with development in the area and is not a generally preferred building/street relationship on pedestrian streets in

[2] Note that the areas identified in this figure as "Courtyards" in the Proposed Action are light wells which penetrate to the second building floor to bring light to interior residential units and do not occur on the ground floor.

more commercially-oriented areas due to lack of visibility and a direct visual and physical connection to the sidewalk. The Proposal does provide an awning along portions of the Lake Street South façade, but does not include any designated public pedestrian areas between the street and building.

Building Materials and Color

The Proposed Action elevations are rendered in red, gold, brown, gray and white (See Figure 2.4). Though building color is not regulated, the proposed color, as well as the application of multiple colors, is not consistent with surrounding development in the study area.

Adjacent Development

To the east, the proposed development will be located approximately 10 to 15 feet from the property line. The existing multifamily development to the east is approximately 26 feet from the shared property line and has decks and balconies oriented toward the subject site. This site also contains a landscape hedge that partially screens the subject site. Due to the proposed excavation, the approximate two upper floors of the building and a solid 6-foot tall fence will be visible, with the remaining floors below existing grade and surrounded by retaining walls. The City's development standards require a landscape buffer along this edge to minimize noise and visual impacts. As described above, the proposed landscape buffer in this area would be located below the grade of the adjacent site and would not be visible from off-site for a number of years, if ever.

To the south, the proposed development will be separated from existing multifamily development by a 12.5-feet wide strip of vacant and the existing driveway and landscaping serving the adjoining development. As required by the development standards, perimeter landscaping is proposed on the subject property, consistent with the City's buffer requirements. On the eastern portion of the south property line, excavation may mean that some of the proposed landscaping is not visible from the adjoining site and may not meet the intent of the landscape buffer.

To the west and north, the site is separated from adjoining development by public rights-of-way and impacts to compatibility are as described above for the public viewshed. No additional impacts are identified.

Public Views to Lake Washington

Because the site is located on the east side of Lake Street South, future development will not impact views to Lake Washington from Lake Street South or public parks in the study area. From the east side of Lake Street South, as shown in Figure 3.3-16, the proposed development is not expected to impact public views to the Lake from 10th Avenue South.

Summary

Key aesthetic impacts associated with the proposal are summarized below:

- **Building Size and Massing.** Building size and mass appear to be out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood and adjacent development.
- **Parking.** The visual prominence of parking due to the proposed location and design treatment of the parking entrance is generally out of character with development in the study area.

- **Landscaping.** The perimeter retaining walls/landscape buffers are out of scale with the neighborhood and may not fulfill the intent of the buffer requirement due to their location below adjoining site grades. The lack of visible landscaping from adjoining properties may be particularly significant for the adjoining the development to the east, which is closest in proximity to the proposed development, relative to other adjoining uses.
- **Building Street Relationship.** The first floor elevation below street level is generally out of character with the neighborhood.
- **Building Materials and Color.** Proposed building colors may not be consistent the general color palette found in the neighborhood.

3.3.3 Mitigating Measures

This mitigating measures section contains two sub-sections. The first sub-section provides a discussion and illustrations of alternative development scenarios that may help to mitigate identified impacts of the Proposal described in Section 3.3.2, above. These alternative scenarios assumed the mix of uses as proposed, existing code requirements and approximating the objectives of the Proposal, as described in Chapter 2 of this Draft EIS.

The three alternative development scenarios are intended to illustrate how combinations of different elements could mitigate for some of the identified impacts of the proposal. The scenarios are conceptual in nature and intended to illustrate options, but do not include all potential design options.

The second sub-section lists specific mitigating measures that could be applied to address the impacts of the Proposal.

Alternative Development Scenarios

As described above, three alternative development concepts were created to help illustrate how impacts of the Proposal could be addressed. These concepts were developed in a computer model that allows for a three dimensional view of the site and inserted into photo views of the site. The three scenarios include:

1. **Scenario 1** – Central Courtyard
2. **Scenario 2** – Three Buildings
3. **Scenario 3** - "H"-Shaped Footprint

Key features of these scenarios are described in the table, text and graphics below. Table 3.3.1, Mitigation Scenarios, provides a summary of key features of the Proposed Action and Alternative Development Scenarios. The table is supplemented by site plan diagrams and visual simulations of the Alternative Development Scenarios which were created by inserting massing models into the views used above. (See Figures 3.3.-19 through 22, Scenario 1; Figure 3.3.23 through 26, Scenario 2; and Figure 3.3-27 through 30, Scenario 3).

The conceptual scenarios described in this section were developed to illustrate comparative differences in building mass, scale and neighborhood compatibility. Scenario 1 was developed by the applicant and includes an estimate of residential units and parking spaces (See Table 3.3-1).

Scenarios 2 and 3 were developed by the consultant team and City. Estimates for residential units and parking areas are based on average space requirement information from the proposal, adjusted to match the gross floor area and estimated floor plate size of the scenarios. The scenarios have not been designed to specific floor plans and are provided for comparative information only. In all three cases, the approximate 6,200 sf ground floor commercial area is assumed to be constant.

Table 3.3-1. Mitigation Scenarios

	Proposed Action	Scenario 1 "U" Footprint	Scenario 2 3 Buildings	Scenario 3 "H" Footprint
Number of Units	143	110	90	100
Parking Capacity (Stalls)	316	270	185	216
Number of Leasable Floors	4	4	3	3 1/2
Ground Floor Elevation	Below street grade	Below street grade	At street grade	At street grade
Vertical Modulation	No	Upper story setback	No	Upper story setback
Horizontal Modulation	Light wells, balcony projections, window projections, building corner indentation	Courtyard, balcony projections, balcony indentations, upper story building corner voids	Courtyards, balcony projections, balcony indentations, upper story building corner voids	Courtyards, balcony projections
Existing Topography	Significantly modified	Significantly modified	Generally closer to existing topography	Generally closer to existing topography
Reduced Building Footprint	No	No	Yes	Yes

Source: inova planning communications design, llc. 2012

Scenario 1

As shown in Figures 3.3-19 through 22, Scenario 1 consists of a "U" shaped building with a central courtyard facing Lake Street South. This scenario was prepared by the applicant and is similar to the Proposal in that the site would be excavated, the ground floor would be 5 – 6 feet below the grade of Lake Street South and the parking entrance would be at the center of the site. This scenario would allow for ground floor commercial use and approximately 110 residential units. It differs from the Proposal in that the top floor is set back from the front façade, and the central courtyard provides greater modulation to the front façade compared to the Proposal and a usable courtyard on the ground floor. The Lake Street South façade includes projecting and recessed balconies and upper floor corner voids which decrease large expanses of the building façade. Also in contrast to the Proposal, this Scenario would not provide for any modulation along the east side of the building, where it adjoins existing multifamily development that is located in relatively close proximity.

FIGURE 3.3-19 SCENARIO 1: VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST

FIGURE 3.3-20 SCENARIO 1: DISTANT VIEW FROM NW

FIGURE 3.3-21 SCENARIO 1: CLOSE-UP VIEW FROM NW

FIGURE 3.3-22 SCENARIO 1: VIEW FROM NORTHEAST

The characteristics of Scenario 1 with respect to the key impacts identified for the Proposal are summarized below:

- **Building Size and Massing.** Building elements such as the courtyard opening, top floor setbacks, and use of balconies to create horizontal and vertical modulation of the building façade facing Lake Street South/10th Avenue South, views of the site from surrounding streets may perceive a reduced overall building mass and scale more consistent with the surrounding area, compared to the Proposal. Views to the site from the adjoining property to the east would see a smooth building façade that may appear larger and less interesting than the Proposal due to the lack of internal light wells which penetrate the east wall of the Proposal.
- **Parking.** The entrance to the parking area has been shifted to the southern edge of the subject site. The City has determined that the location of the driveway near the south property line is not feasible due to the proximity of the existing driveway south of the site and would not be permitted. It is shown in this EIS for comparison purposes only and, if proposed for actual development, the driveway would be required to be moved to the more central location shown in the Proposal. Measures to minimize the visual prominence of the driveway would focus on design features instead of geographic location.
- **Landscaping.** The courtyard area provides an opportunity for enhanced landscaping in the front adjacent to Lake Street South. Because the site will be excavated, landscape buffers along the eastern portion of the site would be below the grade of the adjoining site and may not be visible from the surrounding area.
- **Building/Street Relationship.** Similar to the Proposal, locating the ground floor elevation below street level is generally out of character with the neighborhood.
- **Building Materials and Color**. Building materials and color are not addressed in any of the scenarios. KZC 92.35 should be considered for measures to ensure compatibility in building materials and color.

Scenario 2

As shown in Figures 3.3-23 through 26, Scenario 2 would break the development up into three structures built over underground parking. Two smaller structures would be located in the lower portion of the site, fronting on Lake Street South. The third larger structure would be located in the upper portion of the site. Separate underground parking structures would be developed for the western and eastern portions of the site. Commercial uses would be located on the ground floor of the two lower buildings, with the remainder of the development in multifamily use, with an estimated 90 residential units. This scenario differs from the Proposal in that, although underground parking is still provided, existing site grades remain to a much greater degree. This scenario also retains the parking entrance on Lake Street South in the south central portion of the site. The ground floor of the buildings would be at, rather than below, existing grades along Lake Street South. Also in contrast to the Proposal, this scenario would not provide for any modulation along the east side of the building, where it adjoins existing multifamily development that is located in relatively close proximity. The smaller building footprint allows for larger building setbacks, particularly along the north and south property lines, compared to the Proposal and Scenario 1.

FIGURE 3.3-23 SCENARIO 2: VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST

FIGURE 3.3-24 SCENARIO 2: DISTANT VIEW FROM NORTHWEST

FIGURE 3.3-25 SCENARIO 2: CLOSE-UP VIEW FROM NORTHWEST

FIGURE 3.3-26 SCENARIO 2: VIEW FROM NORTHEAST

The characteristics of Scenario 2 with respect to the key impacts identified for the Proposal are summarized below:

- **Building Size and Massing.** Because the development is broken up into three buildings, views to the site from the public streets may perceive that the overall building size and mass is reduced and more consistent with the surrounding area. Views to the site from the adjoining property to the east would see a smooth building façade that, because it sits at the approximate existing grade, is about one floor higher than shown in the Proposal and Scenario 1. The reduced footprint and expansion of the side yard setbacks means that the façade width is slightly less than shown in the Proposal and Scenario 1.
- **Parking.** The entrance to the parking area is located in the south central portion of the site, where it is more visually prominent than as shown in Scenario 1. As noted in the discussion of Scenario 1, the location of the driveway near the south property line is not feasible due to the proximity of the existing driveway south of the site. Similarly, location of the driveway closer to the north corner of the site is also not feasible, due to the proximity to the corner. Therefore, measures to minimize the visual prominence of the driveway should focus on design features instead of geographic location.

  For functional reasons, such as to match building/site elevations or for parking garage circulation, it may also be possible or desired for garage access and/or circulation to access the eastern building from a garage entrance 10th Avenue South. The addition of an entrance on 10th Avenue South would result in changes to traffic patterns immediately around the site, but is not expected to result in changes to the overall impacts of the Proposal described in Draft EIS Section 3.4.
- **Landscaping.** With three smaller building footprints and open space between them, there would be opportunity for enhanced landscaping throughout the site. Perimeter landscape buffers would be at the grade of the adjoining sites and would contribute to the overall sense of greenery and landscaping in the area.
- **Building/Street Relationship.** With the two smaller buildings fronting onto Lake Street South, the ground floor at street grade along the Lake Street South frontage would further reinforce the existing building/street relationship pattern with more entrances, windows and modulation. The at-grade access to the three buildings from the street would create a stronger building/street relationship due to direct physical and visual access to building entrances and commercial area windows.
- **Building Materials and Color**. Building materials and color are not addressed in any of the scenarios. KZC 92.35 should be considered for measures to ensure compatibility in building materials and color.

Scenario 3

As shown in Figures 3.3-27 through 30, Scenario 3 consists of an "H" shaped building with a central courtyard on the east and west sides of the building. It would allow for ground floor commercial use and approximately 90 residential units. This scenario is similar to Scenario 2 in that existing site grades remain to a much greater degree and the ground floor of the buildings would be at or close to, rather than below, grade. The proposed driveway and parking entrance on Lake Street South is located near the south central portion of the site. Similar to Scenario 1, the top floor

steps back from the front façade, and the balconies and central courtyard provides for reduced height and width of the walls fronting on Lake Street South and facing east.

Scenario 3 would provide a courtyard along the east side of the building, where it adjoins existing multifamily development that is located in relatively close proximity. Building setbacks, particularly along the north and south property lines are enlarged, compared to the Proposal and Scenario 1. However, because the building is set closer to existing grades, it would be about one floor higher than shown in the Proposal and Scenario 1.

The characteristics of Scenario 3 with respect to the key impacts identified for the Proposal are summarized below:

- **Building Size and Massing.** Because of the at-grade courtyard, balconies, and upper floor setback, views to the site from the public streets may perceive that the overall building size and mass is reduced and more consistent with the surrounding area. Views to the site from the adjoining property to the east would see a building façade that, because it sits at the approximate existing grade, is about one floor higher than shown in the Proposal and Scenario 1. However, the courtyard on that side of the building would break up and reduce the east wall building mass more than the Proposal and Scenarios 2 and 3. The expansion of the side yard setbacks means that the façade width is slightly less than shown in Scenario 1. Depending on the perspective of the viewer, the presence of one larger courtyard may be seen as a positive or negative difference compared to the two smaller light wells which start on the second floor of the Proposal.
- **Parking.** The entrance to the parking area has been is located in the south central portion of the site, where it is more visually prominent than as shown in Scenario 1. As noted in the discussion of Scenario 1, the location of the driveway near the south property line is not feasible due to the proximity of the existing driveway south of the site. Similarly, location of the driveway closer to the north corner of the site is also not feasible, due to the proximity to the corner. Therefore, measures to minimize the visual prominence of the driveway should focus on design features instead of geographic location.
- **Landscaping.** The courtyard is smaller than depicted for Scenario 1 and larger than the modulation in the Proposal, and provides adequate area for enhanced landscaping in the front adjacent to Lake Street South and additional area on the east side of the building. Perimeter landscape buffers would be at the grade of the adjoining sites and would contribute to the overall sense of greenery and landscaping in the area.
- **Building/Street Relationship.** With the single central at grade courtyard that is larger than the two small light wells which start on the second story of the Proposal, ground floor visual and physical access to commercial areas and the courtyard would further reinforce the building/street relationship.
- **Building Materials and Color**. Building materials and color are not addressed in any of the scenarios. KZC 92.35 should be considered for measures to ensure compatibility in building materials and color.

Additional views of the model for the Proposal and each mitigation scenario are provided in Appendix 4.

FIGURE 3.3-27 SCENARIO 3: VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST

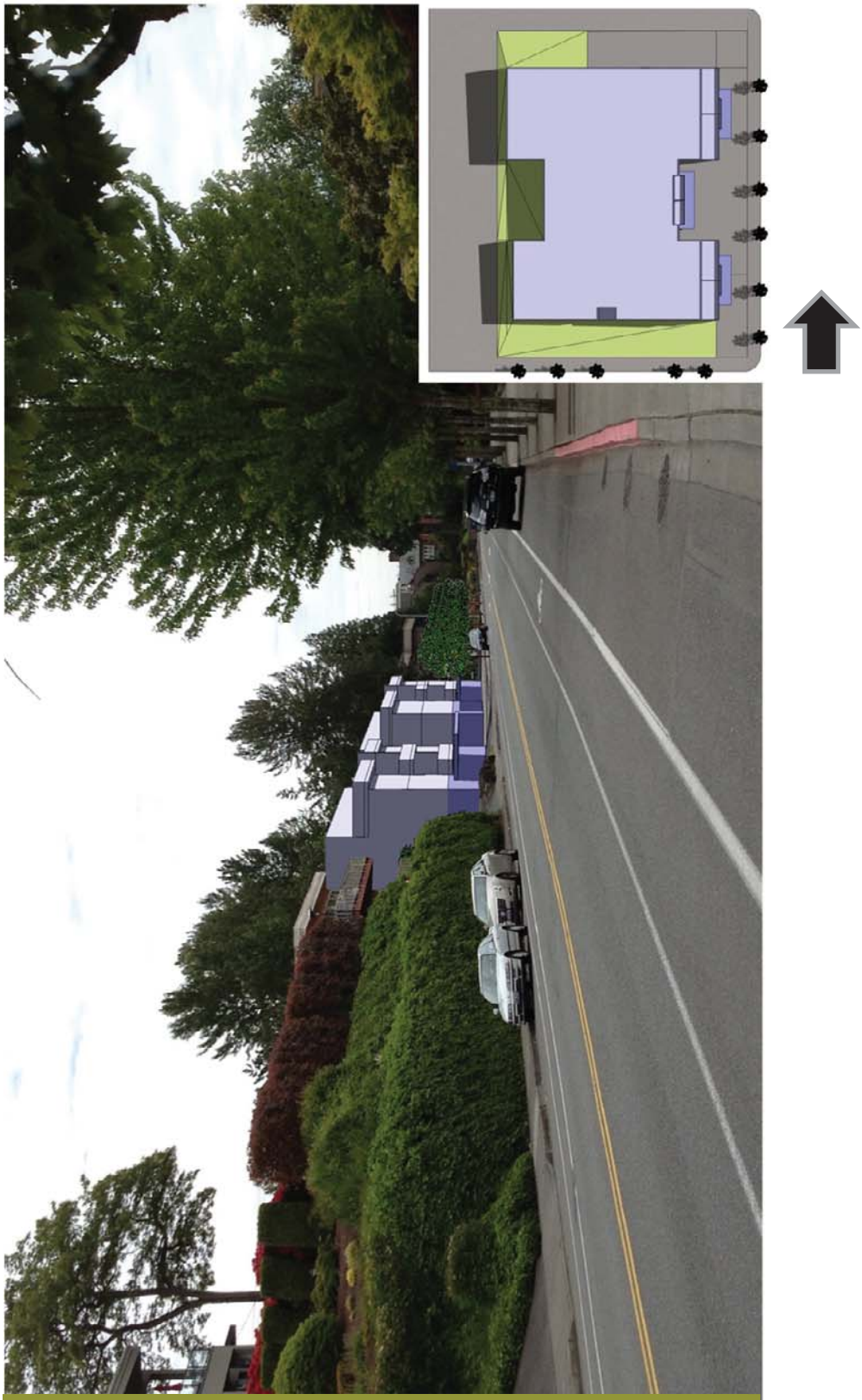

FIGURE 3.3-28 SCENARIO 3: DISTANT VIEW FROM NW

FIGURE 3.3-29 SCENARIO 3: CLOSE-UP VIEW FROM NW

FIGURE 3.3-30 SCENARIO 3: VIEW FROM THE NORTHEAST

Mitigating Measures

Applicable Regulations and Commitments

The proposed development would be required to comply with applicable provisions of the Kirkland Zoning Code.

Other Mitigation

Building massing and size

To address building massing and size impacts, consider the following measures:

- Stepped back upper floor as shown in Alternative Development Scenario 1 and 3.
- Use of deep balconies or other features which provide horizontal modulation as shown in Scenarios 1-3.
- Development of separate buildings as shown in Alternative Development Scenario 2.
- Reduced building footprint as shown in Alternative Development Scenarios 2 or 3.
- Reduced number of building floors as shown in Alternative Development Scenarios 2 or 3.
- Incorporation of measures to achieve architectural and human scale, as described in the Design Guidelines for Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts and KZC 92.30.4 and 6.

Parking

To mitigate impacts related to the visual prominence of the driveway, consider the following design features:

- Enhanced landscaping around the driveway, such as densely planted landscape islands, foundation planting, trellis, screen or other features.
- Special pavement treatment to help identify the pedestrian area and enhance the visual appearance of the driveway.
- Use of lighting, seating areas, artwork or other features.
- Decorative grill, screening or similar architectural means which diminish the prominence of the parking entrance.

Landscaping

Improve the visibility of perimeter landscaping from adjoining properties by providing for a more gradual transition in grade from adjoining sites, setting the retaining walls back from the property line (with a reduced building footprint) and installing buffer plantings between the retaining walls and property lines or widening the buffers for space to install raised platforms so that landscaping exceeds the height of the fence at time of planting.

Building Street Relationship

To improve the building/street relationship, consider the following measures:

- Match the first floor elevation to the elevation of the street frontage along Lake Street South as shown in Alternative Development Scenarios 2 and 3.

- Consider additional landscaping and/or pedestrian features incorporating elements described in the Design Guidelines for Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts and KZC 92.10.6 and 7.

Building Materials and Color

To address impacts associated with building color and materials, consider measures identified in the Design Guidelines for Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts and KZC 92.35.

3.3.4 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Development on the project site will change its existing character and the long-term relationship of the site to the surrounding area over the long term. However, with implementation of proposed mitigating measures, the proposal is expected to meet the City's vision for development in the BN zone and no significant unavoidable adverse impacts to aesthetics are anticipated.