

## RESPONSES TO REQUEST FOR PHOTOS OF GOOD DESIGN EXAMPLES FOR THE HOUGHTON/EVEREST NEIGHBORHOOD

**#1** - Juanita Village is a great example of how Houghton/Everest/6th could be zoned for 5 foot buildings with a mix of retail and housing. Juanita Village is vibrant, has open gathering spaces, and the building heights provide the residential density we need for our current housing shortage and future growth.

One reason it works well is that there are many entrances and exits for cars, and I hope that traffic flow and safe/easy walking routes will be prioritized in this planning process. Something Juanita Village lacks is a good grocery store, while Houghton has two, which will reduce the need for residents to drive because they can get their basic amenities at their doorsteps.

I hope the people who are opposed to 5 story building heights don't have undue influence on decisions by nature of being the "loudest voices in the room." There are plenty of us who are passionate about smart planning for growth but are not the types to show up at the workshops and meetings and shout about it.

**#2** - I'm writing to you in response to your request for input on the HE6th plan. First, I want to say that I generally am for higher-density, mixed-use spaces. However, I'm appalled that you and the commission are planning to add more residences and more businesses to Houghton WITHOUT widening 68<sup>th</sup> or 108<sup>th</sup>. It appears you're looking to add more on-street parking but not widen

along the entire length of either road, despite residents saying the PM congestion is a #1 concern.

I looked through the online survey conducted to gather opinions on HE6th, and found it really frustrating. I have some expertise in this area, and find this survey to be lacking. First of all, you did not make clear that you were asking these questions in the context of a proposal to put more residents and more businesses at that intersection. That was critical information for those answering the survey. Second, there is a bias in the low-scale development question. It reads "Continue existing patterns. Continue existing low-scale development (even at the risk of losing current grocery or other uses)." You basically told people if you don't accept increased use you may lose your nearest grocery stores. If that isn't bias, I don't know what is.

Then, people said by a huge margin that they are concerned about the PM traffic. Yet, the survey doesn't offer widening the roads as a clear option for people to pick. That option is in a question along with the option of keeping people on I405 and I520, which, of course, is what people preferred--but keeping people on regional traffic facilities isn't an option if you are adding people and businesses to the neighborhood. Not unless you are going to somehow enforce that no new residents can bring cars with them and no people outside of the neighborhood can drive their cars to the new stores. Is that your plan?

If not, the survey should have separated those questions. There should have been a question that clearly asked something

like, "If more businesses and residences are placed at Houghton Center creating more people who want to get to and from the neighborhood, how do you want to address the increased need for access?" and then ask whether people wanted to widen 108<sup>th</sup> and 68<sup>th</sup>, only provide bike options, provide some kind of transit center parking with bus in/out, etc. The survey did not clearly explain the situation and provide a clear way for people to choose between equivalent options.

I LOVE the idea of making Houghton a hub, but to add more residents and more businesses and not widen 108<sup>th</sup> and 68<sup>th</sup> runs counter-purpose. You'll bring in new residents who will be frustrated when they can't get anywhere at rush hour or can't get home. You'll invite people outside the neighborhood to come to the businesses here, only to put them in Bellevue-style traffic that angers them and makes them not want to visit the stores. How does that help our neighborhood?

To me, the survey and the options seem disingenuous. I want more density and wider roads as well as bike lanes. If you can't do that, then get light rail to Kirkland so people have an option other than bikes. As much as I love bikes, most people aren't going to do their grocery shopping on bikes and most residents aren't going to bike to Bellevue or Microsoft or Seattle every day. And we aren't only going to have Google employees wanting to live here (I hope).

I'd appreciate you not giving into the developers at the expense of both reason and the neighborhood I live in. Widen the

roads—it's already backed up every afternoon and night, every direction.

**#3** - I cannot think of a better example than University Village for ideas for Houghton area shopping area. Ravenna Garden Store in the center of the mall, lots of trees, garden accents planters, smaller shops in square footage. Walkways made of brick in the parking lot with trees and shrubs to break up the mass asphalt parking lot.

**#4** - the cities/areas that come to mind to me are (and in no particular order) -

1. Cherry Creek in Denver – not the mall, but the surrounding retail/office/housing area
2. Pearl Street in Boulder – actually, this pedestrian feel is more what I'd like to see in our downtown, but I think there are some useful concepts at Pearl Street that could lend itself to the Houghton/Everest corner
3. Portland – there's many areas in Portland neighborhoods that have either been popular for years, or have recently gentrified – with the sense of come, shop, visit and linger. I'm especially intrigued with Portland because it is such a neighborhood-identity city (and it's my home town ☐ )
4. Piedmont CA
5. Jackson Hole/Teton Village (OK, we don't have ski slopes here, but there are areas near the Teton Village ski area that have some concepts we could look at)

Common themes are community character, scale of height (such as per the

outreach memo), active commerce, and pedestrian activity – even in inclement weather.

**#5** - After talking with the various existing retailers in the area and citizens in the Houghton Everest community I come away with one burning question. Who is really pushing for this redevelopment?

The residents are luke warm at best and understand that this development is going to have an even greater negative impact on traffic in this area.

The residents are almost overwhelmingly opposed to any buildings over three stories.

They know full well that parking is going to be a nightmare no matter what we are told.

Last but not least, merchants who have faithfully served our community will be closed down to make way for this project and those I talked to already know that they won't be able to afford the new rental prices.

So, I ask again, who is pushing this project, developers, the city?

It's certainly not the residents.

**#6** – Very Good question. I've noticed that the most recent mixed use projects are functional but lifeless. I'd take a field trip to the Pearl District of Portland. You'll see lots of creative ideas for this type of product. Give yourself lots of time as it is at least 30-40 square blocks.

**#7** - Part of the charm of Kirkland is that it hasn't turned into any of the surrounding cities by staying flat, local, friendly. I'm terrified for what they're developing by the QFC and would hate to see more changes.

How about finding ways for affordable housing here in the area instead of developing more crap that won't get filled- there's already tons of places in downtown Kirkland that need tenants - businesses and homes. Find ways to get businesses in that can afford without super high rent. Bring home prices down to reasonable levels where you don't have to be a principal senior engineer or born into wealth to be able to buy homes just nearby the lake.

**#8** - I agree. A recent community meeting at Northwest University on the development plan for Houghton demonstrated a widespread concern about present and future traffic congestion. This does seem to be a priority in the community and yet the new planned development in Houghton seems to fly in the face of that concern. As with the development referenced by Christie, the winners are the developers. Are those the people who will manage and control development policy of this City Council - in the months and years to come? I wonder

**#9** - one aspect is low carbon footprint - i found this article on a recently built building to be inspirational: <http://architizer.com/blog/timber-america...>

**#10** - Thanks for the opportunity to provide input into the design of a new Houghton/Everest neighborhood center.

I love living in this area, which exemplifies a family-friendly, environment-friendly and outdoor-activity-friendly atmosphere. Like most of the residents in this

community, we chose this location instead of Bellevue, Juanita and downtown Kirkland specifically because of its quiet, laid-back, low-density characteristics, proximity to CKC trail and lakefront parks, and ease of access to additional amenities and services when needed. This is the ambience we would like to continue to nurture in this community.

The existing retail, office and services developments serve our community very well as-is and already provide the desired walkability for residents to access basic amenities such as grocery, pharmacy, dry-cleaning, restaurants, specialty shops, banking etc. Granted, it would be nice to upgrade the look/feel of some of the older structures and store-fronts, but not at the risk of changing the innate low-density, quiet, family-friendly and outdoor-activity friendly ambience of this neighborhood. Furthermore, traffic and parking are already an issue in this neighborhood, so increasing the volume of residents and vehicular traffic would overburden the existing infrastructure, impede desired bike commuting and cause massive travel delays in the area - especially given that 108th Ave is the major artery through Kirkland.

**#11** - Attached are some photos, actual and sketches, of the Redmond Center area, whose appearance and function is a good fit for the Houghton Everest neighborhood.

Please let me know if there is any support I can provide during the planning and execution of this community project.

**Design Example: Redmond Town Center**

- 2 stories high maximum, with shops, restaurants, small service providers on both levels
- Some pedestrian-only sections (*only if surface space allows*)
- Parking garage – due to limited surface space in 6<sup>th</sup> St/ Houghton area, this may have to be underground
- Covered walkway to cross 68<sup>th</sup> Ave (from Met Market area to PCC Area) would be very beneficial given traffic congestion





#12 - When I was back in the Midwest over Christmas, I noticed that the Dillons grocery store (old grocery store surrounded by a sea of parking lot) had redeveloped out to the street. I've added a couple of those images because they are similar to Houghton Center plans. As far as I could tell, they still had surface parking on the side. I don't know if they built more. It looked good.

Midwest (Dillons redevelopment)





**#13** - Orenco Station, Hillsboro, Oregon



**#14** - This is a building in Old Greenwich, CT. This type of building would like nice as a 3 story.





**#15** - I'm a resident of Houghton and I would like to request that any plans for the PCC area redevelopment retain the open view of the lake. It's one of the most delightful aspects of living here in Houghton – and any development above 30 feet would deprive us all of our beautiful view of the lake and mountains.

I also recognize the traffic burden that happens for an hour in the evenings, but I would like to ask that you don't turn 6<sup>th</sup>/108<sup>th</sup> and 68<sup>th</sup> into a major thoroughfare. It's very nice to have our sidewalks and verge, people walk around here a lot, and it wouldn't be worth disrupting people's daily enjoyment of our neighborhood on account of some traffic after work. I've sat through it and it's not that big a deal. I think it's coming from the mess on the I405 – the tollways are an unmitigated disaster and an insult to everyone who doesn't have an extra \$5k/year to spend getting to work and back (\$10 each way to Mill Creek x 2 x 5 days week x 50 weeks). I won't drive the freeway much anymore because of the constant traffic jam on the 3 lanes they left us.

It was always a pleasant community event for the children to walk home from school. I loved that my kids could do that and they did too – stopping at PCC for a piece of fruit on the walk home. Widening the roadways and making this intersection amenable to more traffic and faster moving cars increases the risk for our kids. This is a family friendly neighborhood, and I'm sure no one living here would want that to change.

I agree the whole PCC corner needs a revision. The biggest problem with it is the ungainly entries to the parking lots. They are at awkward angles and the one to PCC dips down weirdly so people have to really slow down to get in or out. That causes the backups on the street. The entrances by Shamiana and Wan Luk are the biggest problems with the entire intersection. It seems like a combined shopping center between the two properties and a redesign of the parking lot would fix a lot of problems.

Thank you for listening to my concerns. As a resident, the decisions that get made affect me daily and I hope that planners will put the greatest emphasis on the quality of life and preferences of the people who live here and have to deal with the redesign. We spend a good deal of money to live in this nice neighborhood – and it's really a shame for all the people in downtown Kirkland to have had their lake/mountain/city views taking away from them by over-tall, built-to-the-sidewalk buildings. Downtown Kirkland has lost its livability – much like Bellevue has turned into a monstrosity – on account of these Bauhaus buildings. A setback on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor for a penthouse deck doesn't compensate for the alteration of the view from street level – once of water and

sunsets and now of a concrete wall 5 floors high and cold shadows.

I sincerely hope the redesign prioritizes the open vista and lake/mountain views we currently enjoy from the 68<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> intersection.

**#16** - Continuation of low rise 3-5 stories.

**#17** - I live on South Rose Hill. I just saw a thread on Nextdoor South Rose Hill/Bridle Trails + Nearby Neighborhoods about future development scenarios for the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center. Deborah Munkberg suggested to send pictures that promotes the community character that we would like to see in the Neighborhood Center.

I love Kirkland and I would like to see modern architecture, wood, metal, glass... Below are few examples. Thank you.



**#18** - I'm probably one of the few that is willing to see PORTIONS of Houghton Center go as high as 5 stories, multi-use. It seems counter-intuitive, but I think that will be necessary to assure the parking and traffic issues can be handled. Surface parking will force us to do more of the same-old, same-old.

So the only concept I can come up with is Slater 116, which I think fits in nicely with its surroundings. Here's a couple photos I pulled from their website.

And again, get the PCC people and their Menchie's and office park neighbors working TOGETHER, on their parcels, combining them for the greater benefit and profit of all 3, plus the community.

Thanks for what you do.



**#19** - Angela, you must be joking or trying to con us. Your question presupposes consent to the Council's plan for Houghton. Based on community feedback so far, I have not seen what the Council plans to do with the traffic congestion as the population is greatly expanded as a result of this development. Also, professional architects will design what ever buildings are built – not members of the public. Who are you kidding!