



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**Planning and Building Department**  
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**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Scott Guter, AICP, Senior Planner  
Jeremy McMahan, Deputy Planning and Building Director

**Date:** October 20, 2021

**Subject:** Bridle Trails Neighborhood Center Community-Initiated Amendment Request (Phase 2), File No. CAM20-00674

**Recommendation**

At the October 28, 2021 meeting the Planning Commission should continue to review the Phase 2 Community-Initiated Amendment Request (CAR) application by Totem Bowl & Investment, provide feedback and further direction on discussion topics listed below, and identify any additional information the Commission would like to further study at subsequent Planning Commission meetings. The applicant is preparing additional information responding to the Planning Commission's comments for discussion at meeting.

**Background**

Totem Bowl & Investment (Totem) has applied for a Community-Initiated Amendment Request (CAR) for a zoning text amendment. The text amendment would create a new use listing in the BCX zone that would allow mixed use development up to five stories in height consistent with the policies of the Bridle Trails Neighborhood Plan chapter of the Comprehensive Plan (Policy BT-7 is included as Attachment 1).

The Planning Commission initially reviewed the Phase 2 Community-Initiated Amendment Request (CAR) at their October 14, 2021 meeting. The meeting materials for that meeting are available for viewing by clicking on this [hyperlink](#). At that meeting the Planning Commission reviewed the proposal, received a briefing from City staff and an overview of the application materials from the applicant, and provided direction on what the applicant should bring back before the Commission for further consideration.

The goal of these study sessions is for the Commission to provide staff with direction in order to draft zoning regulations and design guidelines for consideration at a public hearing.

**Discussion**

The applicant's proposed approach to developing a design program, development standards, and design guidelines for the Bridle Trails Neighborhood Center is divided into four categories: Uses, Massing, Parking & Transportation, and Public Benefits. Staff provided a series of discussion questions based on these categories for the Commission

to consider at the October 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. Those questions are listed again, together with a summary of the Commission's discussion. Some discussion points are followed by further staff questions for the Commission.

1. Uses: The scope of analysis provided by the applicant covers residential and retail uses. In addition:
  - a. The presumption in the application materials is that the provision of a grocery store and other large floorplate retail will be provided on the larger ROIC parcel in the center. That would suggest that the code set an acreage threshold where such uses are required of projects exceeding 3 stories. Is the Commission comfortable with that approach?  
  
*Note – the Totem parcels total approximately \_\_\_\_ acres and the ROIC parcels total approximately \_\_\_\_ acres.*
  - b. For other neighborhood-serving retail, staff recommends establishing locational, frontage, and depth expectations based on orientation to adjoining rights-of-way and internal pedestrian pathways as envisioned in Policy BT-7. Does the Commission have any initial thoughts arrangement of those uses?

PC Discussion: Planning Commission discussed the policy requirement to have neighborhood servicing retail with a grocery store as part of the neighborhood center. Commissioners asked for additional information on:

- What makes a good grocery store (size, services)?
- When would the neighborhood get a grocery store and where within the neighborhood center is the likely location?
- How much retail is expected on the individual properties within the neighborhood center?
- What commercial mix could work within the neighborhood center to provide a spectrum on ground floor neighborhood services (beyond just the simple zoning definition of retail)?

The Commission asked the applicant to have a discussion with ROIC and confirm ROIC is amenable to providing the grocery store (or providing space amenable for grocery). The Commission also noted the policy direction to orient retail to adjoining rights-of-way and internal pedestrian pathways .

Staff's Follow-up Discussion Topic: In addition to questions above, the Commission should provide direction on establishing locational, frontage, and depth expectations based on orientation to adjoining rights-of-way and internal pedestrian pathways (staff recommends creation one north-south pathway and two east-west pathways across the neighborhood center).

2. Massing: The neighborhood center is surrounded by residential properties except for the park to the northeast and the office zone on the southeast corner. BT-7 policies call for taller building forms to be located away from adjoining residential

properties. The application materials indicate and basic ABE approach to measuring height and a 4' upper story setback.

- a. In terms of how maximum height is measured and how building form is stepped back in relation to these edge conditions, what specific approaches to massing regulations would Planning Commission like to focus on in the coming study sessions to implement the policy direction?

PC Discussion: The Planning Commission has a strong preference to increase the upper-story setback away from surrounding residential properties and set predictable building heights - especially along the neighborhood center's exterior property lines. The Commission asked the applicant to provide examples of massing that can activate street frontages, pedestrian access ways, and that address concerns over perceived building mass from surrounding properties. The applicant should also address height on lower portion of site and provide examples of building heights in line with Policy BT-7 5-story constraint. The Commission also requested some shade/shadow analysis to understand how massing techniques influence future development impacts to surrounding residential and park properties.

3. Parking & Transportation: In addition to parking, are there any transportation topics, such as vehicular access that the Planning Commission wants to discuss in upcoming study sessions?

PC Discussion: The Planning Commission acknowledged the neighborhood center's location next to high-frequency transit and the importance of providing enough parking for successful commercial activity and avoiding residential parking overflow into the surrounding neighborhood. The Commission asked the applicant to come back with multi-modal solutions that would complement the applicant's desired lower parking rate. The Commission asked for more information on the possibilities and constraints for vehicular access around and through the neighborhood center.

4. Public Benefits: Are there any specific public benefits, such as internal pedestrian connections, public open space, sustainable site and building standards that Planning Commission would like to focus on in upcoming study sessions?

PC Discussion: The Planning Commission would like further discussion on specific green building standards and incentives appropriate with redevelopment. The Commission identified that there should be adequate spaces for community gathering opportunities and would like the applicant to provide examples of these spaces. The Commission also asked the applicant to work with other owners and staff to outline equitable distribution of public benefits identified in Policy BT-7 between the properties within the neighborhood center.

### **Additional Questions**

At the October 28, 2021 meeting Staff would like the Planning Commission to provide a

response to the following questions:

1. Are there any comments missing from staff's summary of the discussion at the October 14, 2021 meeting that need to be addressed?
2. What additional information would assist with further study of the code amendment?
3. Based on materials provided by staff and the applicant, does the Commission have preliminary direction to staff for draft code amendments?

Attachments:

Policy BT-7

cc: File Number CAM20-00674

**Policy BT 7:**

*Encourage redevelopment of the Bridle Trails Neighborhood Center into a lively, pedestrian-oriented, transit-supportive, mixed-use residential and commercial neighborhood center.*

*Three-story mixed-use residential and commercial development is allowed and substantial commercial uses should continue to provide shops and services to the neighborhood. Commercial uses should be oriented to adjacent arterials with wide sidewalks and pedestrian pathways should connect uses on site and with adjacent properties. "[Design Guidelines for Pedestrian Oriented Business Districts](#)" should be used with careful attention to architectural scale, massing and upper story step backs, pedestrian orientation and connections, compatibility with surrounding residential uses and commercial uses across NE 70th St., building modulation, and use of materials to reduce the appearance of bulk and mass.*

*In addition to the above standards, allow mixed-use development up to five stories after the City Council has approved development standards, design guidelines, and a design program encompassing all properties within the neighborhood center. These development and design guidelines should address program requirements for such items as a minimum acreage threshold beyond which a grocery store and master sign plan would be required, pedestrian connections, vehicular access, types and organization of uses within the subject property and along adjacent streets, building and massing forms, children's recreation space, public amenities and the additional criteria/performance standards listed below:*

- *Neighborhood-serving retail is provided and oriented to adjoining rights-of-way and internal pedestrian pathways, with a grocery store and mix of complementary uses such as hardware store, or drug store.*
- *Residential (rather than office) should be the predominant use on upper floors with a percentage of affordable housing units consistent with City standards.*
- *Green building standards and sustainable site standards are included in development.*
- *Taller building forms are located away from adjoining residential properties.*
- *Pedestrian-oriented design elements are incorporated into the development such as plazas to create public gathering spaces with public art, water features, and landscaping.*
- *Driveways are consolidated to minimize impacts on surrounding streets, adjacent residential uses, and to foster a pedestrian-oriented site design.*
- *Parking and transportation impacts are minimized to create a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center.*
- *A master sign plan should be required to ensure attractive signage and wayfinding.*
- *A gateway feature is provided at the corner of NE 70th Pl. and 132nd Ave NE.*

