

# Midtown District

City Council Public Hearing  
February 1, 2022

# Midtown Planning District Project

- Started February 2020 with adoption of Ordinance 2403
- Purpose: Investigate amending development regulations for the Avenue D Commercial zone to facilitate redevelopment and new development
- Intent: Create a revitalized Midtown
- Goals:
  - More affordable housing units
  - Spur economic development
  - Diversify City's economy and tax base
  - Promote job growth



# Midtown Task Force

- 13 members selected by Mayor and confirmed by CC
- Seven public meetings (July 28, 2020 – March 9, 2021)
- Consultant Assistance
- Public outreach
  - Comments at meetings
  - Written comments
  - 3-prong open house
    - Online Story Map
    - Polls
- March 9, 2021 recommendation memo to PC

# Task Force Recommendations

- Comprehensive Plan Policies (7); already adopted as part of the 2021 Comprehensive Plan amendments
- Design Principles (5)
- Regulatory Actions (18)

# Planning Commission

- Held multiple work sessions in 2021 discussing how to codify the Task Force's recommendations
- Code Amendment Recommendations:
  - Adopt new Chapter 14.214 SMC, Midtown District Development Regulations;
  - Amend Chapter 14.25 SMC, Definitions;
  - Amend Chapter 14.30 SMC, Establishment of Zoning Districts;
  - Amend Chapter 14.207 SMC, Land Use Tables;
  - Amend SMC 14.210.330, Dimensional Requirements, Table 1;
  - Adopt a new section SMC 14.235.047, Parking Requirements for Existing and New Structures in the Midtown District; and
- Zoning Recommendation: Rezone the area along Avenue D from Sixth Street north to SR9 to “Midtown District” from “Commercial”.

# SMC 14.214 – Midtown Development Regulations

- Purpose: to reflect the Snohomish “character” while promoting a diverse mix of retail, housing, office and sense of place and to enhance the area’s visual and pedestrian-oriented character
- Five Articles
  - Article I: Administration
  - Article II: Prohibited Uses
  - Article III: Block Frontage Standards
  - Article IV: Site Planning Standards
  - Article V: Building Design Standards

# Article I – Administration

- Applicability
  - All new development
  - Redevelopment if more than 10% of floor area is added
  - All exterior alterations must meet building design standards
- Deviations
  - Allowed outside of variance process
  - Limited to 10% deviation from numerical standard
  - No deviations from uses, maximum bldg. heights, minimum setbacks
  - Approved by Planning Director if criteria are met and if the deviation is equal in kind, extent, and purpose of the original intent of the code

# Article II: Required and Prohibited Uses

- Cross-references to Chapter 14.207 SMC – Land Use Tables
- Outdoor storage prohibited

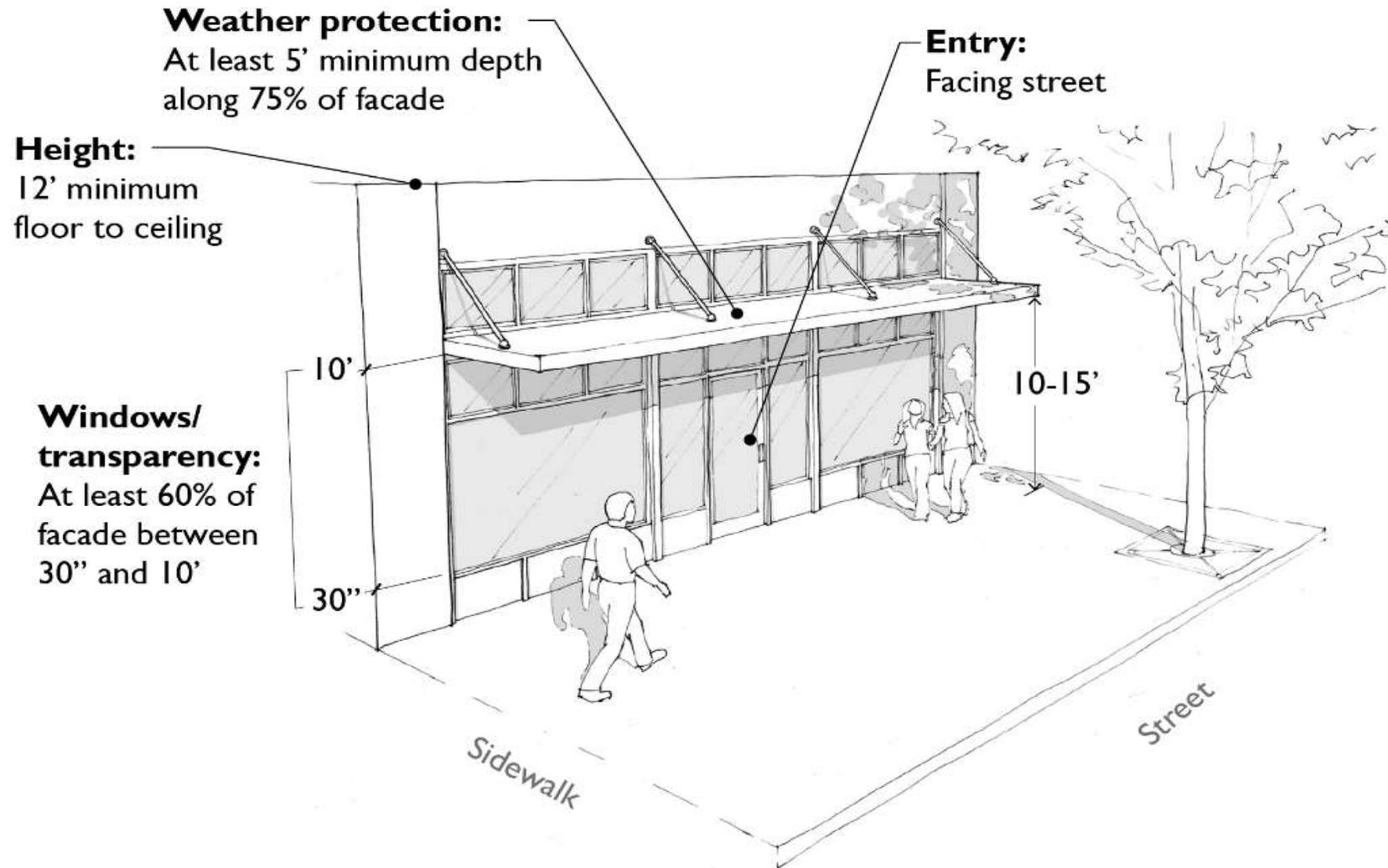
# Article III: Block Frontage Standards

- Three Block Frontage Types
  - Storefront
  - Landscaped
  - Bonneville
- High Visibility Corners
  - Avenue D and Tenth Street
  - Avenue D and 13<sup>th</sup> Street
  - Avenue D and 14<sup>th</sup> Street

# Block Frontage Standards

- Building placement
- Building entrances
- Façade transparency
- Weather protection
- Parking location
- Landscaping

# Storefront



# Landscaped

## Weather protection:

At least 3' minimum depth over all primary entries

## Entry:

At least one building entry shall be visible from the sidewalk.

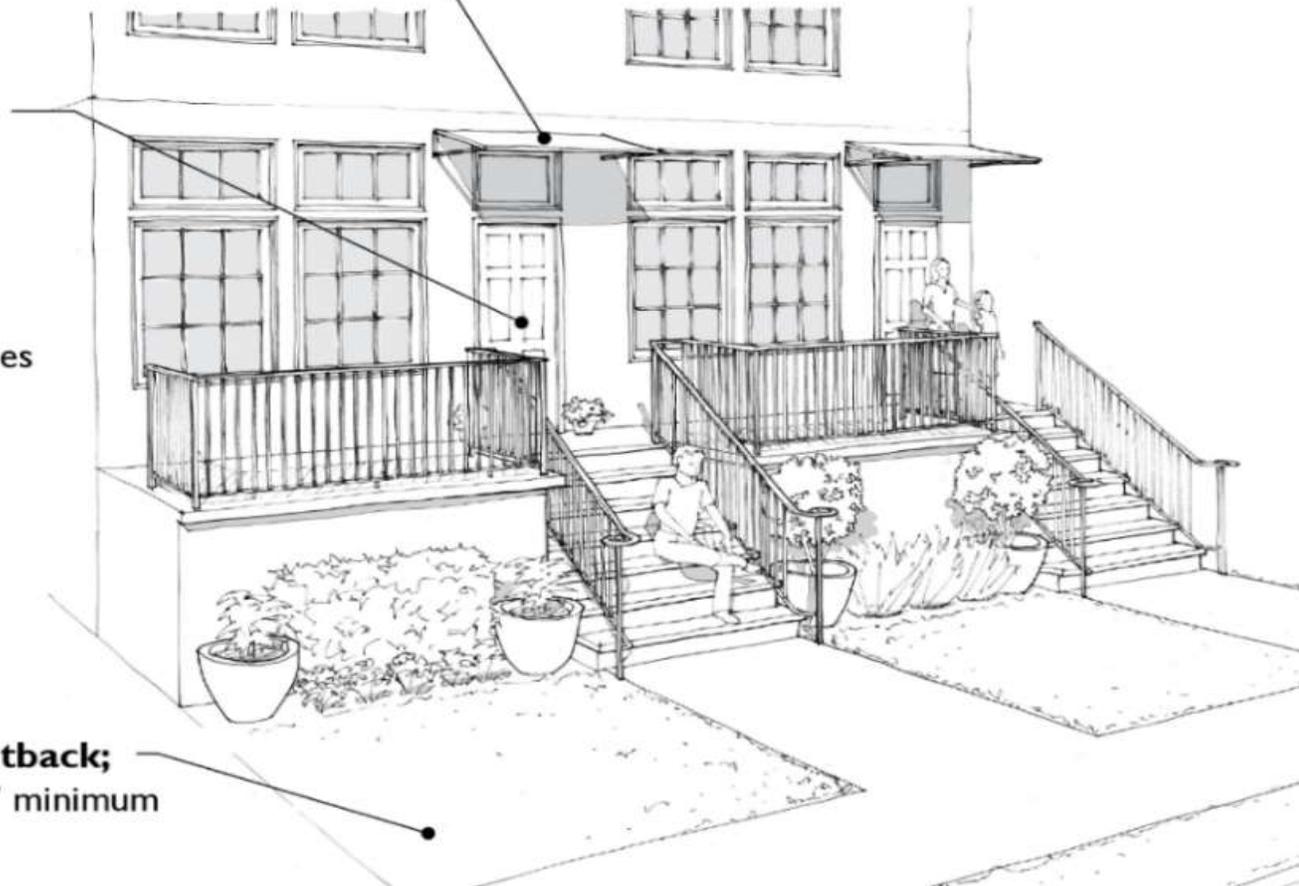
## Windows /

## transparency zone:

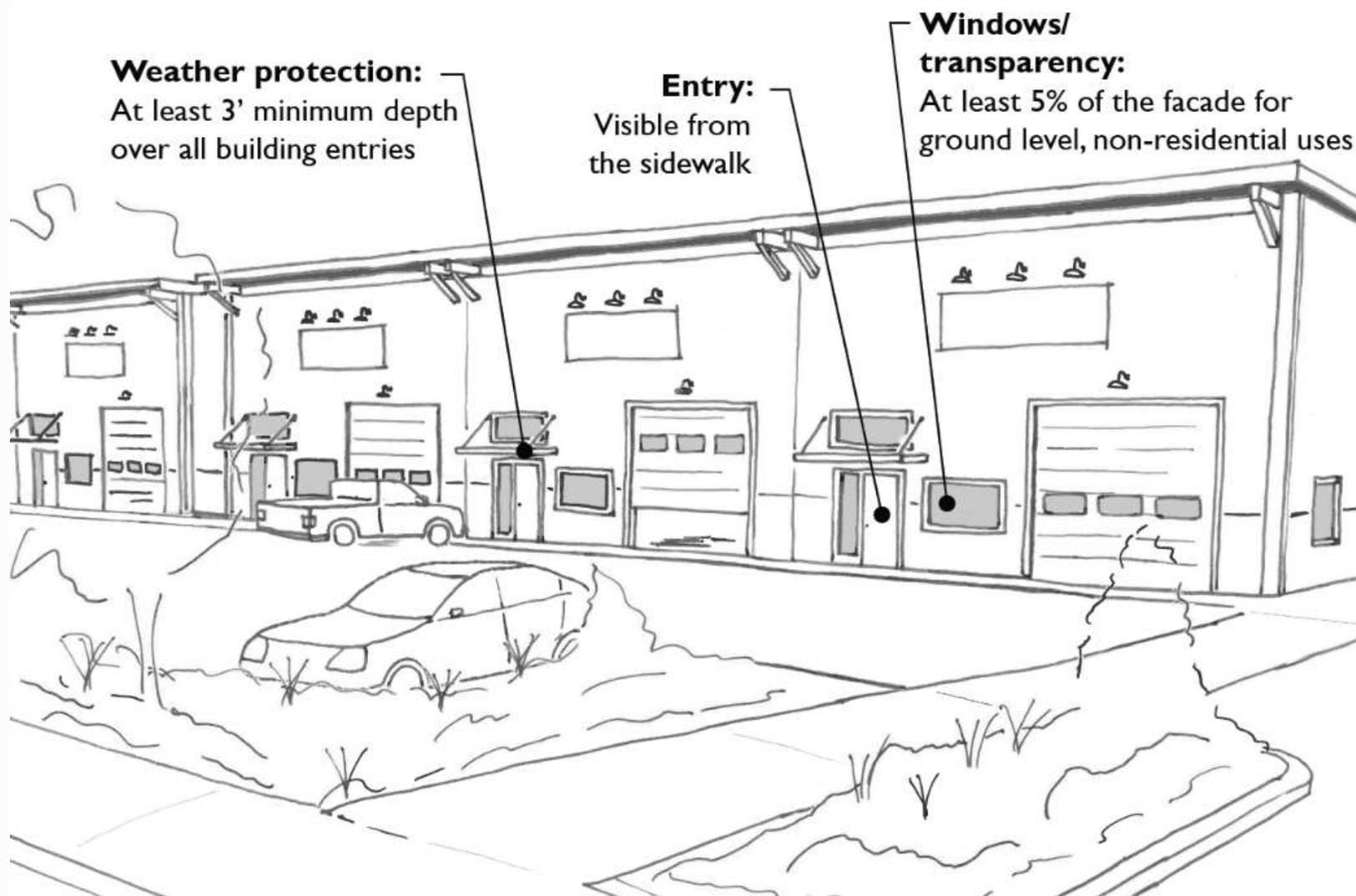
25% for nonresidential uses  
15% for residential uses

## Setback;

10' minimum



# Bonneville



# Bonneville Frontage Code Change

## **14.214.310 Block frontage types.**

All new street-fronting development in Midtown is subject to the Block Frontage regulations of this Article. The Block Frontage type shall be selected by the applicant with the exception of the Bonneville Avenue type which can only be used on blocks fronting Bonneville Avenue.

- A. The proposed development shall meet all regulations of the selected Block frontage type.
- B. The Storefront block frontage type shall not be used for buildings with ground-floor residential uses facing the street.
- C. The Bonneville block frontage type shall not be used for buildings with ground-floor residential uses facing Bonneville Avenue.
- D. Additional treatment shall be required for high visibility intersections, pursuant to SMC 14.214.370. High visibility intersections are:
  - Avenue D and 14<sup>th</sup> Street
  - Avenue D and 13<sup>th</sup> Street
  - Avenue D and Tenth Street

# High Visibility Corner Standards

- High Visibility Corners
  - Avenue D and Tenth Street
  - Avenue D and 13<sup>th</sup> Street
  - Avenue D and 14<sup>th</sup> Street
- Building location (within 20' of corner)
- Special Feature Required
  - Corner Plaza
  - Cropped building corner with special entry feature
  - Decorative use of building materials
  - Distinctive façade articulation
  - Sculptural architectural element





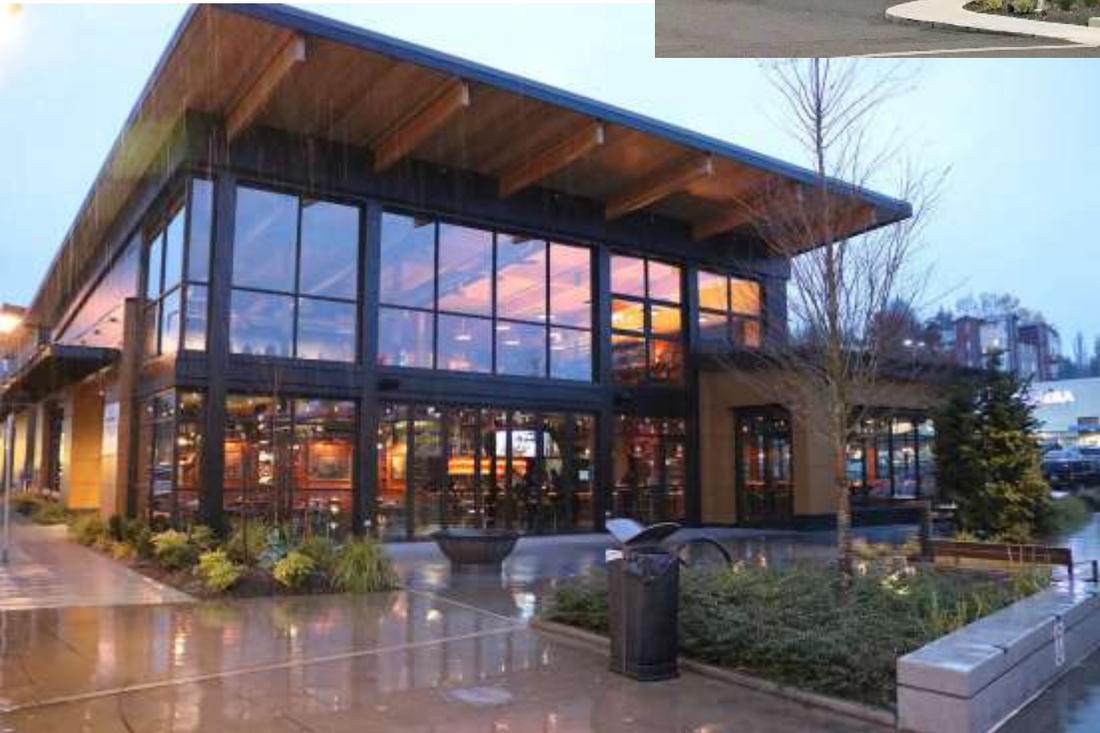
# Article IV: Site Planning Standards

- Setbacks
- Public pedestrian space
- Residential amenity space
- Internal pedestrian access
- Vehicular circulation
- Landscaping
- Screening service areas/mechanical equipment
- Parking

# Article V: Building Design Standards

- Corporate architecture prohibited
- Building massing and articulation
  - Maximum façade width
  - Roofline modulation
- Blank wall limitations
- Architectural details
- Building materials
  - Wood, stone, brick encouraged
  - Fiberglass, vinyl/plastic siding, plywood, T1-11 siding prohibited
  - Concrete block, metal siding, EIFS/Cement fiber use limited





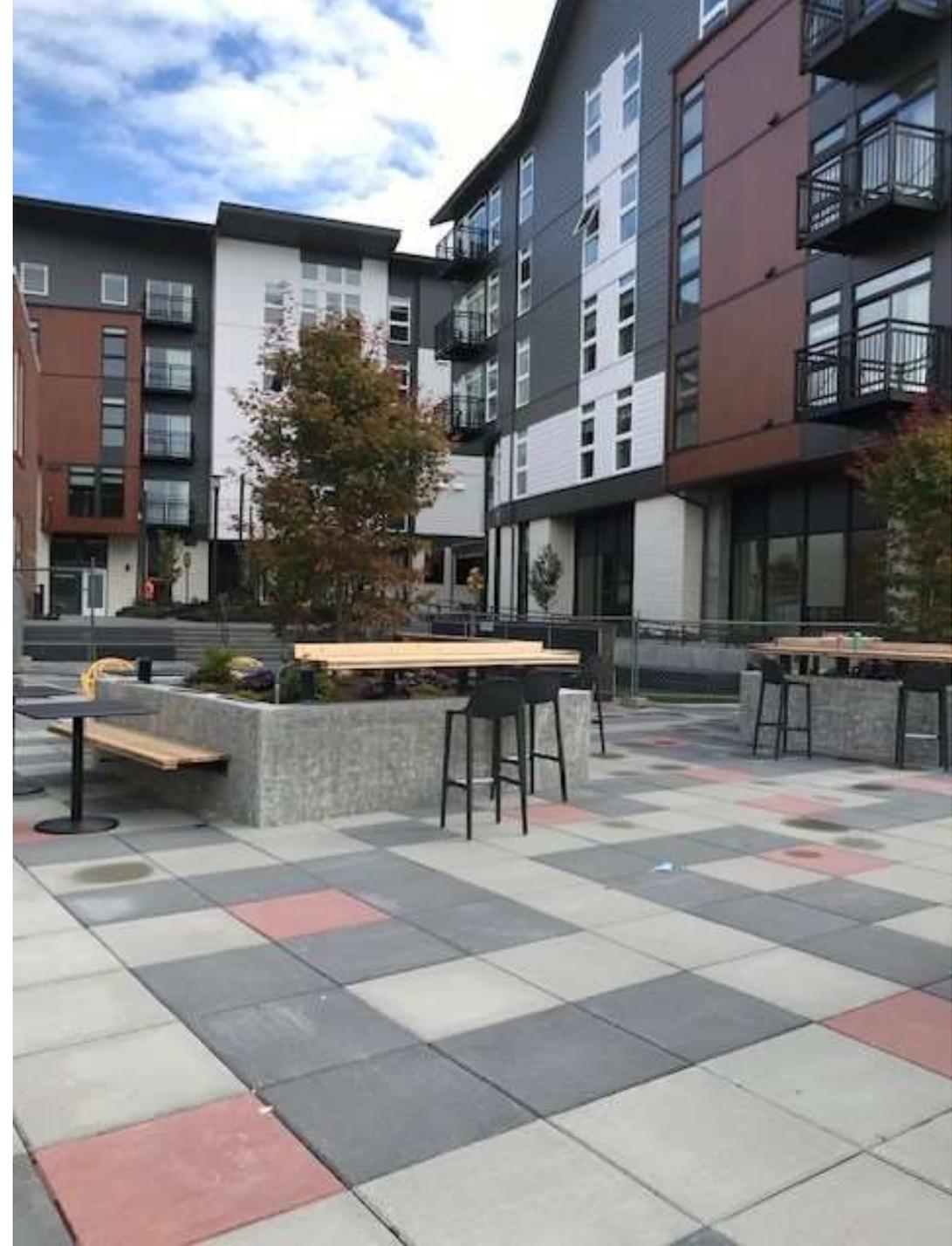






# Woodinville Schoolhouse District





# SMC 14.25 - Definitions

- Articulation
- Artisan manufacturing
- Blank wall
- Bulkhead
- Cornice
- Flat Roof
- Mixed Use
- Modulation
- Roofline
- Streetscape
- Weather protection

**Family:** one or more persons related by blood, adoption, or marriage, or a group of **five** persons not related by blood, adoption, or marriage, living together as a single housekeeping unit in a dwelling unit...

# SMC 14.30 – Establishment of Zoning Districts

- Add Midtown District (MID) to the list of zones
- Add Midtown District-North (MID-N) and Midtown District-South (MID-S) to the list of overlay zones
- Add description of the purpose of the Midtown District
- Add descriptions of the purpose of the North and South Overlays

# SMC 14.207 – Land Use Tables

- Add Midtown District column
- Permitted uses Midtown very similar to those in Commercial with the following more significant exceptions:
  - Detached single-family housing not allowed
  - Self-service storage facilities not allowed
  - RV parks not allowed
  - Fuel dealers not allowed
- Stricter requirements regarding outdoor storage

14.207.100 Retail Land Use Table.

Land Use	Parks, Open Space & Public	Single-Family Residential	Low Density Residential	Medium Density Residential	High Density Residential	Commercial	<u>Pilchuck District<sup>8</sup></u>	<u>Midtown District</u>	Neighborhood Business	Historic Business District	Business Park	Industrial	Airport Industry
Agricultural crop sales						p			p	p	p		
Apparel and accessory stores						p	p	p4	p	p			
Auction houses						p	p		p		p	p	
Auto supply store						p3	p3		p3	p3	p		
Bldg., hardware & garden materials						p	p		p	p	p		
Book, stationary, video and art supply						p	p	p4	p	p	p		
Bulk retail						p	p		p	p	p		
Department and variety stores						p	p		p	p			
Drug stores						p	p		p	p	p		
Eating, drinking	p7					p	p	p6	p	p	p	p	
Fabric shops						p	p		p	p	p		
Florist shops						p	p	p4	p	p			
Food stores						p	p	p4/5	p	p	p2		
Forest products sales						p	p		p	p	p		
Fuel dealers						p				p	p	p	
Furniture and home furnishing stores						p	p		p	p			
Gasoline service station						p	p		p	p	p	p	
Hobby, toy and game shops						p	p	p4	p	p	p		
Jewelry stores						p	p		p	p			
Liquor stores						p	p		p	p	p		
Monuments, tombstones, gravestones						p	p			p	p		
Motor vehicle and boat dealers						p	p		p	p	p		
Personal medical supply stores						p	p		p	p			
Pet store with or w/o grooming						p	p	p4	p	p	p		
Photographic and electronic shops						p	p		p	p	p		
Sporting goods and related stores						p	p		p	p	p		
Used goods: antiques/second hand						p	p		p	p	p		

# SMC 14.210.330 – Dimensional Requirements

- Setbacks
- Density
  - Minimum
    - 12 units/acre in South Overlay
    - 16 units/acre in North Overlay
  - Maximum: None
- Maximum Allowed Building Height
  - 35 feet in both North and South Overlays
  - 45 feet for buildings fronting on Bonneville Avenue

**Chapter 14.210  
DIMENSIONAL AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

**14.210.330 Dimensional Requirements.**

**Table 1. Commercial and Industry Designations**

	Commercial CO	<u>Midtown District MID</u>	Historic District Business HB	Business Park BP	Industry IND	Airport Industry AI
Minimum lot size, in sq. ft.	5,000	<u>none</u>	none	20,000	none	25,000
<del>Minimum</del> lot width, in feet	50	<u>none</u>	none	none	none	none
<del>Permitted</del> Maximum density, du/ac	18	<u>none</u>	18	18	na	1 per 10 acres
<u>Minimum density, du/ac</u>		<u>16<sup>7</sup> 12<sup>8</sup></u>				
Front yard setback, in feet						
a. From street	0	<u>0<sup>9</sup></u>	0	0 <sup>2</sup>	0	35
b. From property line	0	<u>0<sup>9</sup></u>	0	0 <sup>2</sup>	0	0
Side yard setback <sup>2, 3</sup> , in feet	0	<u>0<sup>10</sup></u>	0	0	0	0
Side yard abuts residential designation				50		
Rear yard setback, in feet	0	<u>0<sup>10</sup></u>	0	0 <sup>2</sup>	0	0
Rear yard abuts residential designation <sup>2</sup>				50		
Rear access from an alley	na	<u>0</u>	15			
Open space (vegetated) <sup>4</sup>	15% <sup>4</sup>	<u>See SMC 14.214.270</u>		20%	15%	20%
a. Percent landscaped (excl. screening)	5%	<u>See SMC 14.214.270</u>	0%	5%	5%	5%

	Commercial CO	<u>Midtown District MID</u>	Historic District Business HB	Business Park BP	Industry IND	Airport Industry AI
Height limitation <sup>5</sup> in feet <sup>6</sup>	35	<u>35<sup>7</sup> 35<sup>8</sup> 45<sup>11</sup></u>	40	45	40	40

- 1** An alternative maximum density may be permitted by Chapter [14.285](#) SMC.
- 2** Subject to compliance with landscape screening requirements of Chapter [14.240](#) SMC.
- 3** Side yards abutting streets shall conform to one-half (1/2) the front yard setbacks.
- 4** Twenty percent (20%) vegetated open space required for multi-family developments.
- 5** Measured per SMC [14.210.170](#).
- 6** Height limitation of fifty-five (55) feet for public schools and other public educational facilities such as aquatic centers, stadiums and gymnasiums.
- 7** Applicable to the North Overlay area of the Midtown District which is from the north side of Tenth Street north. Minimum density requirements shall only be applied to developments that are exclusively residential.
- 8** Applicable to the South Overlay area of the Midtown District which is from Sixth Street to the south side of Tenth Street. Minimum density requirements shall only be applied to developments that are exclusively residential.
- 9** Front yard setbacks in the Midtown District are subject to compliance with the block frontage standards in Article III of SMC Chapter 14.214.
- 10** Side and rear yard setbacks in the Midtown District are subject to the provisions of SMC 14.214.410.
- 11.** Applicable only to buildings in the Midtown District fronting Bonneville Avenue.

# North and South Overlays

**North Overlay**  
Tenth Street to  
SR9/Roundabout

**South Overlay**  
Sixth Street to  
Tenth Street

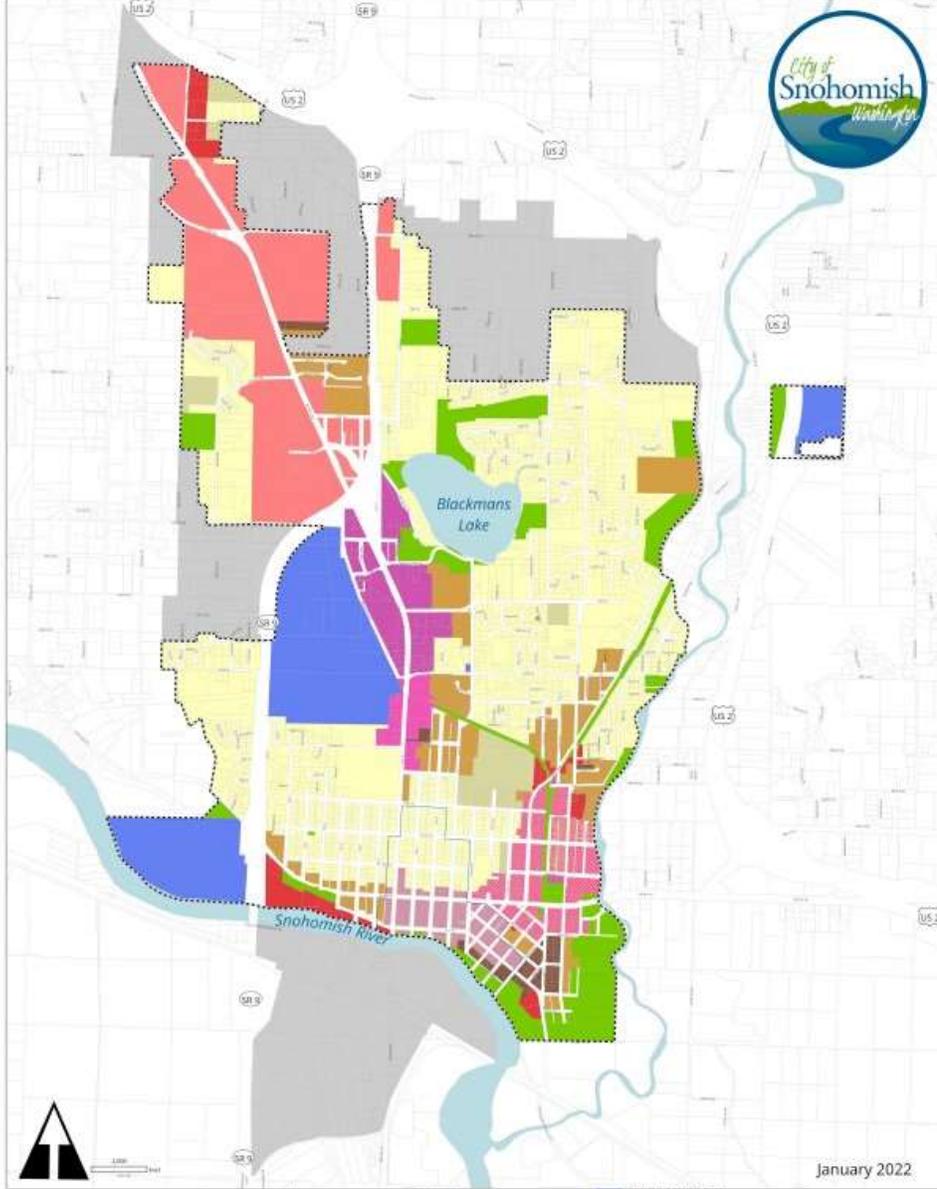


# SMC 14.235.047 – Parking Requirements

- Task Force recommendation was for Midtown to have its own unique parking regulations to provide more flexibility and to incentivize new development
- This section merely directs users to SMC 14.214.480
- Ground floor uses get credit for adjacent street parking
- Tandem parking allowed in townhouses

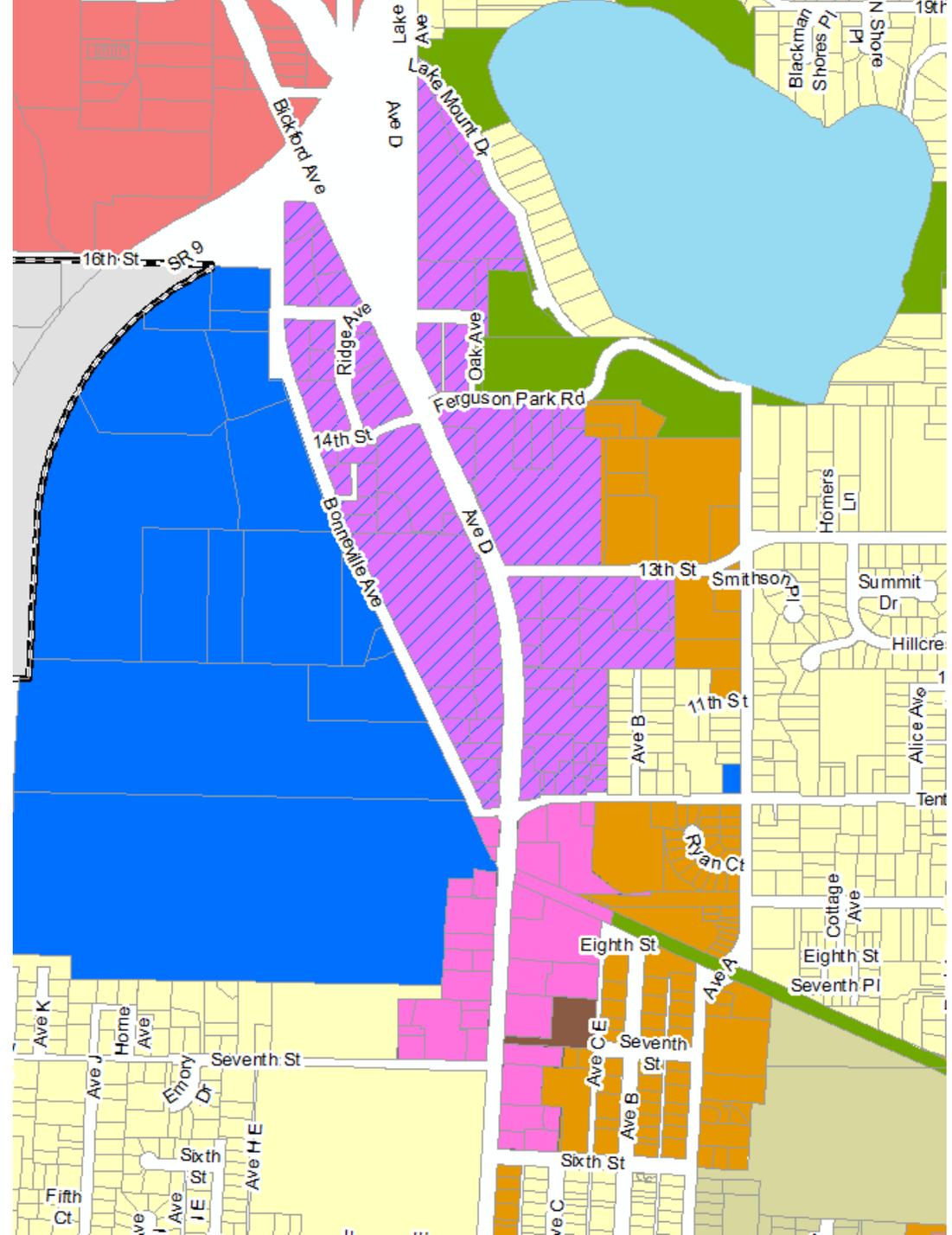
# SMC 14.214.480 – Parking

Land Use	Parking Requirement	SMC
<b>Dwelling Units</b>		
Townhouses	2 spaces/dwelling unit	2
3+ bedroom dwelling units	1.75 spaces/dwelling unit	2
2-bedroom dwellings units <sup>2</sup>	1.5 spaces/dwelling unit	2
1-bedroom dwelling units <sup>2</sup>	1.0 space/dwelling unit	1.5
Studio units <sup>2</sup>	1.0 space/dwelling unit	1.2
Senior housing	1.0 space/dwelling unit	1.2
<b>Personal Services</b>	As listed in SMC 14.235.180	
<b>Business Services &amp; General Commercial</b>	1 space/300 sf gfa	200-400



- |                            |                            |                          |                             |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Zoning</b>              | <b>Commercial</b>          | <b>Pilchuck District</b> | <b>Airport Industry</b>     |
| <b>Residential</b>         | Commercial                 | Single Family            | Public                      |
| Single Family Residential  | Business Park              | Townhouse                | Parks, Open Space, & Public |
| Low Density Residential    | Historic Business District | Center                   | City Boundary               |
| Medium Density Residential | Midtown, North             | Civic                    | Historic District Boundary  |
| High Density Residential   | Midtown, South             | <b>Industry</b>          | Parcel Base                 |
|                            |                            | Industry                 | Urban Growth Area           |

# Zoning Map - City



# Staff Recommendations

- Support the Planning Commission's recommendations with
- Three exceptions where the Planning Commission recommendations conflict with a Midtown Task Force recommendation:
  - Maximum building heights
  - Commercial space requirement
  - Location of parking lots
- In which case the staff's recommendation is to follow the Task Force recommendation

# Maximum Building Height

## **Planning Commission Position**

- 35' in North and South Overlay
- 45' for buildings fronting Bonneville Avenue
- 4-2 vote
- Reasons cited in support of the 35' height limit:
  - Taller buildings are contrary to Snohomish's character
  - There is no economic demand for taller buildings

## **Midtown Task Force Recommendation**

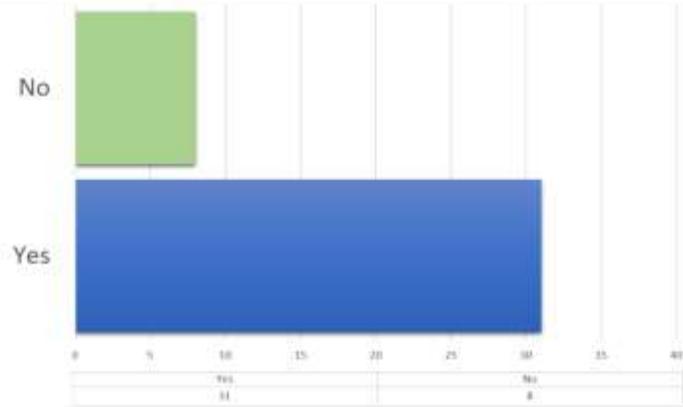
- 45' in South Overlay (four stories maximum)
- 55' in North Overlay (five stories maximum)

# Drawbacks of 35-foot Maximum Height

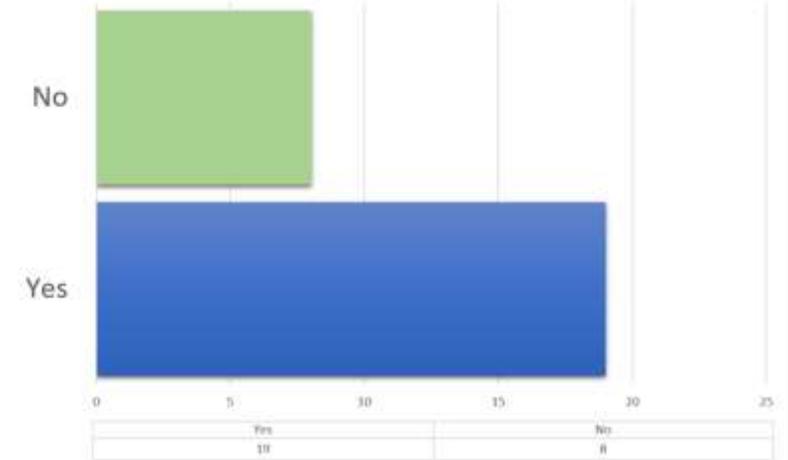
- Does not allow for more intense development despite the removal of the density limit.
- Reduces the likelihood of affordable housing units being created.
- Unfair to require developers to build higher quality projects without the tradeoff of increased building height.
- Public supported taller buildings in Midtown.

# Public Poll

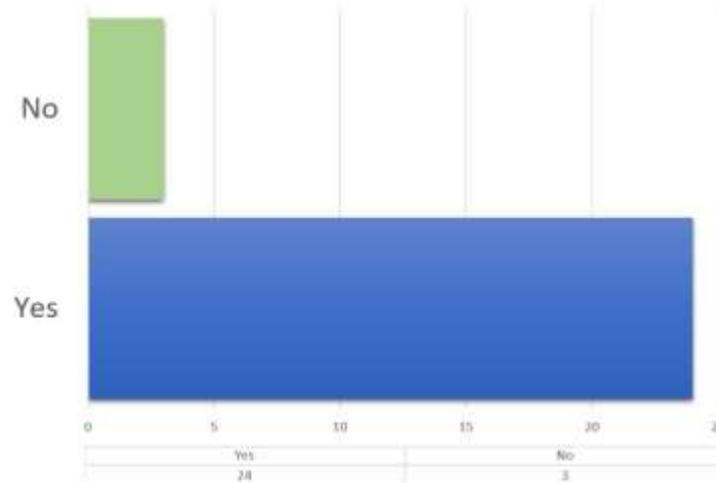
Should more intense development allowing for increased density and taller buildings be permitted in Midtown?



Should buildings in the South overlay be allowed to be as high as 45 feet?



Should buildings in the North overlay be allowed to be as high as 55 feet?



# Tall Buildings on First Street



924 First Street: 42'



1118 First Street: 53'

1024 First St.  
42'



913 First Street: 38'

1020 First St.  
39'



# County Site: Existing Grade



3-story building



4-story building



5-story building

# County Site: Raised Grade



3-story building



4-story building



5-story building

# Concept for County Site







# Haggen Site



3-story building



4-story building



5-story building

# Required Commercial Space

- **Planning Commission Recommendation:** Do not require any commercial space
  - Passed on a 4-1-1 vote
  - Reasoning: Leave it to the market to determine how much commercial space is needed
- **Task Force Recommendation #6:** A minimum amount of commercial space should be encouraged on the street level facing Avenue D.

# Staff Proposal

## **14.214.200 Purpose.**

The purpose of this section is to:

A. Implement the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies for the Midtown District.

B. Buildings fronting Avenue D shall meet the requirements to provide space designed for commercial uses on the street level at the front of the building as specified in SMC 14.214.505.

~~BC.~~ Promote development and re-development in the Midtown District by limiting restrictions on allowed uses.

~~CD.~~ Allow development and re-development in response to local market conditions.

~~DE.~~ Support expansion of existing uses in Midtown District that are not prohibited.

# Staff Proposal

## **14.214.505 Required Commercial Space**

Buildings with frontage on Avenue D shall be required to include space designed for commercial uses on the street level at the front of the building as follows:

- A. If the street frontage on Avenue D of a development site is less than 200 lineal feet, then 25% of the façade width of buildings fronting on Avenue D shall be designed for commercial uses.
- B. If the street frontage on Avenue D of a development site is greater than 200 lineal feet, then 50% of the façade width of buildings fronting on Avenue D shall be designed for commercial uses.
- C. Commercial spaces used to meet the requirements of this section shall:
  - 1. Be at least 20 feet deep; and
  - 2. Average at least 40 feet in depth
- D. Proposals by applicants to require space designed for commercial uses at the street level of buildings with frontage on streets other than Avenue D may be approved by the Planning Director if it is determined the intent of the purpose as stated in SMC 14.214.200B is met.

# Parking Lot Location: Planning Commission

- **Planning Commission Recommendation:** Allow one row of parking in front of buildings with an access lane
- Passed on a 6-0 vote
- Reasons cited in support of allowing parking in front of buildings:
  - Snohomish is still auto-centric and will be for the foreseeable future so transitioning to a pedestrian-friendly environment at the expense of auto-friendly should be done slowly.
  - Not allowing parking in front of buildings adjacent to a business's front door would be a "death knell" for the businesses

# Parking Lot Location: Task Force

## Task Force Recommendation #9:

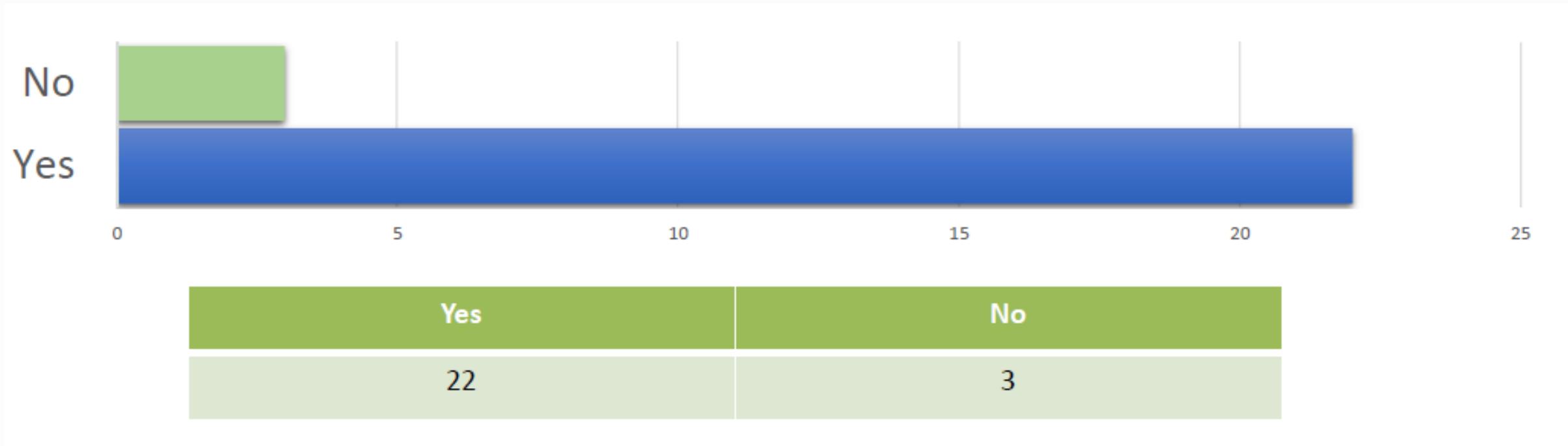
Parking lot location should be determined by block frontage designation:

- a. Storefront: no parking along frontage
- ~~b. Mixed: parking to side or rear of building~~
- c. Landscaped: parking to side or rear of building
- ~~d. Undesignated: no location requirements~~

Strategic flexibility through departures from the parking location provision should be considered for large sites as long as the development meets the intent, however the portion of the frontage that is occupied by parking should be limited.

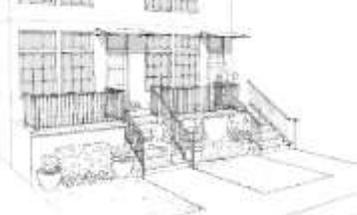
# Parking Lot Location: Public Poll

Should parking lots be obscured from street view whenever possible?



# Staff Proposal

**Table 1**  
**Summary of block frontage standards.**

	Block Frontage Type	Details
Storefront		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special transparency, weather protection, and entry requirements.</li> <li>• Minimum commercial space height and depth.</li> <li>• No ground floor residential uses except for live/work units where the storefront space meets height and depth standards.</li> <li>• <u>Ground-level parking placed to the side or rear of buildings.</u></li> </ul>
Landscaped		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscaping to soften façades and buffer parking areas.</li> <li>• Minimum façade transparency requirements supportive of the use and setback.</li> <li>• <u>Ground-level parking placed to the side or rear of buildings.</u></li> </ul>
Bonneville		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Shall only be used on blocks fronting Bonneville Avenue.</u></li> <li>• No restrictions on parking lot location (except for landscaping requirements to buffer parking areas).</li> <li>• Façade transparency requirements based on use.</li> <li>• At least one primary entry facing the sidewalk with weather protection required.</li> </ul>

**Table 3**  
**Storefront block frontage standards.**

<b>Element</b>	<b>Standards</b>	<b>Additional Provisions and Examples</b>
<b>Parking location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <u>New ground-level (surface or structured) parking between the building and the street is prohibited, including parking lot entries and driveways.</u></li><li>● <del><u>A maximum of one row of parking with an access aisle may be located in front of the building.</u></del></li><li>● Parking may be placed below, to the side, and/or behind buildings.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <u>Primarily only applicable to Avenue D.</u></li></ul>

**Table 4**  
**Landscaped block frontage standards.**

<b>Element</b>	<b>Standards</b>	<b>Additional Provisions and Examples</b>
<b>Parking location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>New ground-level (surface or structured) parking between the building and the street is prohibited, including parking lot entries and driveways.</u></li><li>• <del><u>A maximum of one row of parking with an access aisle may be located in front of the building.</u></del></li><li>• Parking may be placed below, to the side, and/or behind buildings.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Primarily only applicable to Avenue D.</u></li></ul>

# Consultants

- **Bob Bengford: Principal, MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design**
  - Midtown Task Force visual preference survey
  - Drafted Midtown design standards
  - Mill Creek Town Center and Mountlake Terrace Town Center design standards
- **Bill Trimm: former Mill Creek Director of Community Development**
  - Facilitated Midtown Task Force meetings
  - Mill Creek Town Center (director) and Mountlake Terrace Town Center (consultant)
- **A-P Hurd: SkipStone founder**
  - Involved in the development of \$3 billion worth of new buildings in Seattle
  - 25-years career in real estate, finance, and technology

# Staff's Recommended Motion

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2425, to rezone the Commercial zone in the area of Avenue D from Sixth Street north to SR 9 to Midtown District and to amend Title 14 Snohomish Municipal Code, to create a new Midtown Zoning District with its own development regulations and design standards as recommended by the Planning Commission with changes as discussed and except as follows:

- In SMC 14.210.330, Table 1, set the maximum building height in the Midtown District to be 45 feet in the South Overlay and 55 feet in the North Overlay as recommended by the Midtown Task Force;
- In Chapter 14.214 SMC require all buildings fronting Avenue D to have space designed for commercial uses on the street level that is at least 20 feet deep and averages at least 40 feet in depth, and occupies 25%-50% of the façade's width depending on the length of the Avenue D frontage for the development site consistent with the Midtown Task Force recommendation; and
- In Chapter 14.214 SMC, Article III, prohibit new street-level parking adjacent to the street for the Storefront and Landscaped Block Frontage types consistent with the Midtown Task Force recommendation.