



Downtown and Waterfront Master Plan

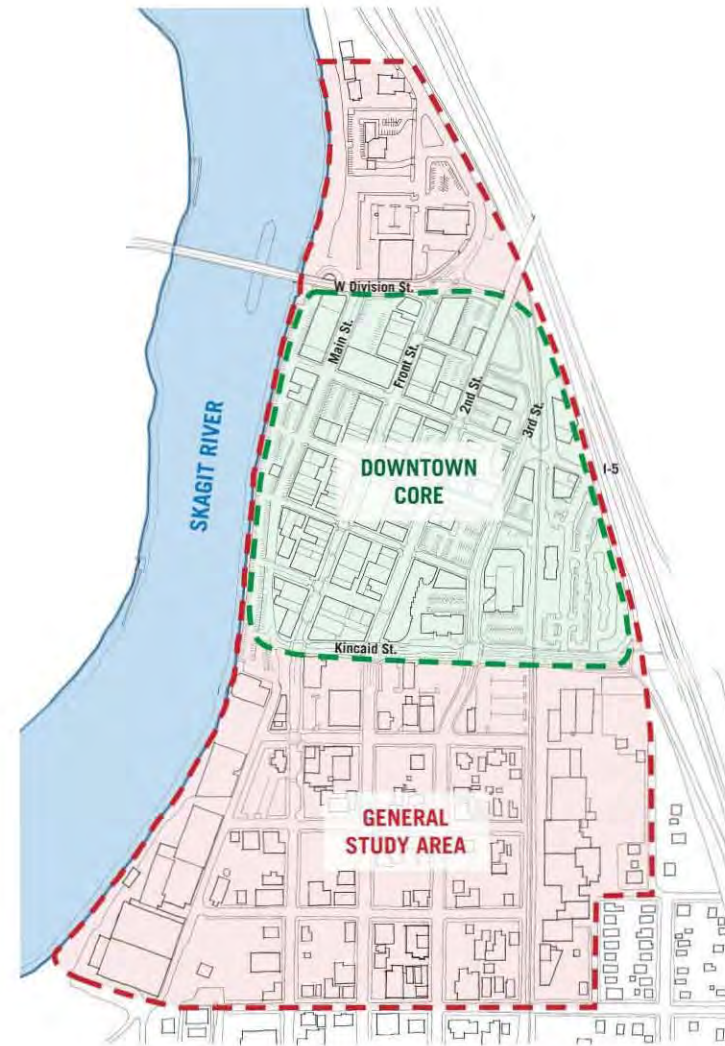
June 11, 2008

Overview

- Introduction, Background, Process
- Vision, Goals, and Objectives
- Existing Conditions
- Master Plan
 - Urban Design Framework
 - Land Use and Development
 - Transportation and Parking
 - Streetscape, Open Space, and Character
 - Infrastructure
 - Economics
- Implementation Strategies

Introduction

- Focus is on the downtown core
- North and south boundaries not well defined
- As Mount Vernon grows, principles can be applied to the General Study Area and beyond



Background

Issues:

- Flood events that threaten the downtown area
- River is not treated as a valuable amenity
- Underutilized waterfront property
- New FEMA flood maps will further restrict downtown development
- Declining investment in the downtown

Needs:

- Permanent certified flood protection
- Centrally located multi-level parking structure
- A master plan showing a vision for downtown
- Development guidelines and design principles that embrace the historic character of the downtown
- New and enhanced public amenities downtown

Process - Overview

- Phase I: Preliminary Master Plan
 - August 2005 – March 2006
- Phase II: Flood Control EIS
 - April 2006 – July 2007
- Phase III: Final Master Plan
 - June 2007 – June 2008
- Implementation Steps
 - Flood Control & Promenade Design
 - Update City Comprehensive Plan
 - Update County Shoreline Master Program

Process – Public Involvement

- City Council Presentations
 - Phase I: 8/3/05, 2/22/06, 3/29/06
 - Phase II: 2/21/07
 - Phase III: 6/13/07, 8/15/07
- Public Meetings, Workshops & Open Houses
 - Phase I: 1/4-5/06 Two-Day Workshop
 - Phase II: 7/11/06 Scoping Meeting
2/21/07 Public Hearing
 - Phase III: 10/17/07 Alternatives Open House

Process – Citizens Advisory Committee

- Membership
 - Local business and property owners
 - Local organizations (Farmers Market, Lincoln Theatre)
- 7 meetings since project initiation
 - Phase I: 1/4-5/06
 - Phase II: 6/29/06, 10/9/06, 1/3/07
 - Phase III: 5/29/07, 8/14/07, 4/15/08

Flood Control EIS

- Multiple stakeholder and public meetings
- No impacts
- No opposition
- Preferred alternative has agency support

Preferred Alternative



Vision

"Downtown Mount Vernon is the vibrant heart of Skagit County. It is a place where people come to live, work, and play, enjoying the riverfront promenade, boutique shopping, fine dining, and entertainment of all sorts. Its public spaces are enlivened by a farmer's market and live music.

People come for its fairs, festivals, and riverfront setting. They come back for its small town character and the ease with which they can park their car and walk wherever they want to go.

Downtown Mount Vernon is thriving because it is where people want to be."

Vision



Goals and Objectives

- Provide flood protection for downtown
- Create a pedestrian oriented downtown
- Develop a mixture of land uses
- Increase overall residential density
- Provide sufficient and convenient parking
- Ensure good vehicular circulation
- Build on existing historic character
- Provide more open space
- Provide more public amenities
- Encourage multi-modal transportation
- Encourage sustainable design

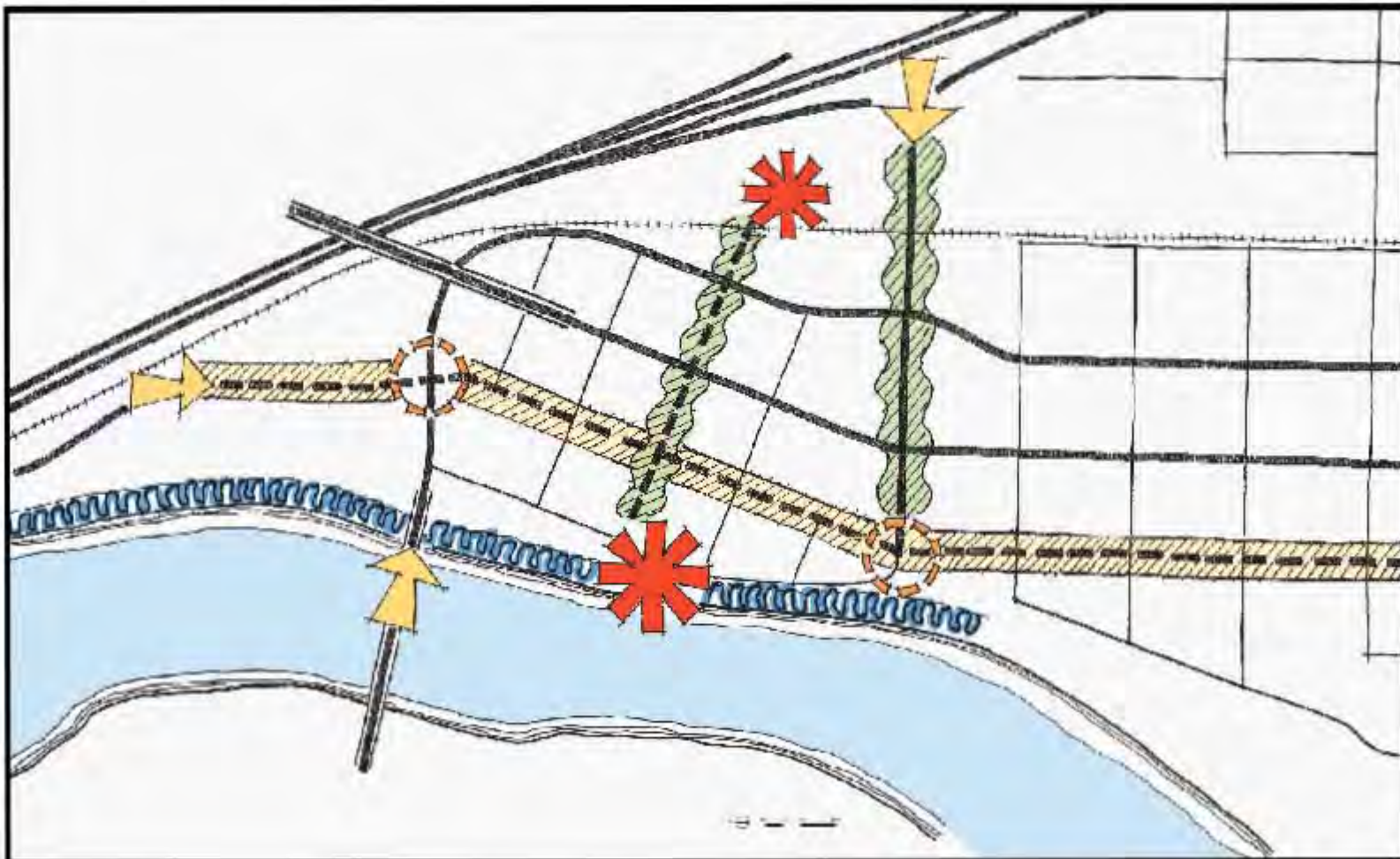
Existing Conditions

Economics

	Next 10 Years	Subsequent 10 Years
Retail	125,000 square feet	155,000 square feet
Office	55,000 square feet	65,000 square feet
Residential	200 units	250 units
Lodging	100 rooms	100 rooms

Urban Design Framework

Urban Concept Diagram



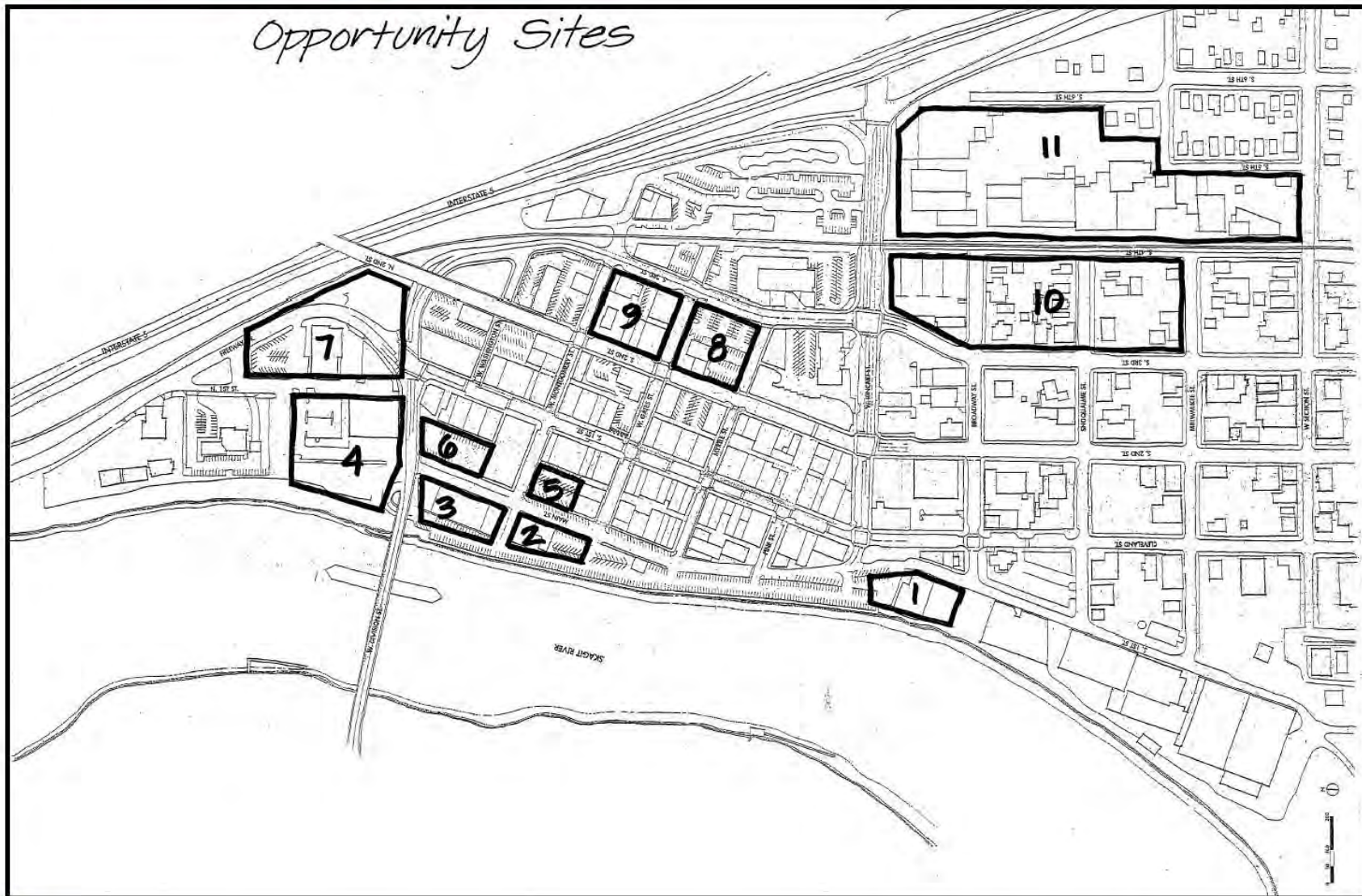


Urban Framework Plan

Land Use and Development

- Increased density and intensity
- Mixture of land uses
- More housing downtown
- Redevelopment of properties purchased for flood control
 - Make the Skagit River an amenity
 - Compliment existing retail on First Street
- Redevelopment of underdeveloped properties
 - City investments to encourage desired development
 - City policy changes to provide incentives and streamline development process

Opportunity Sites



Implementation Strategies: Land Use

Mix of uses

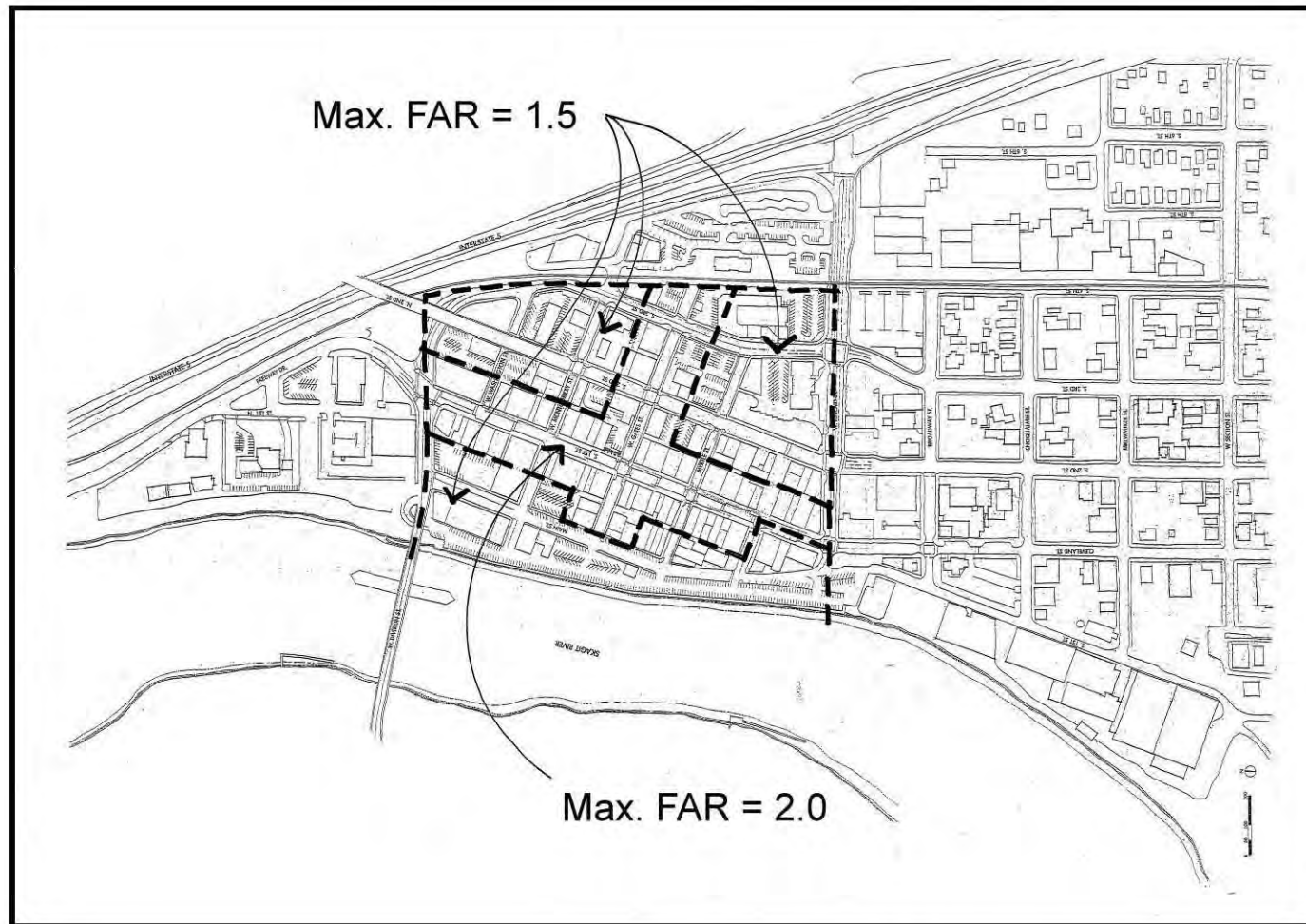
- Along river, encourage development program providing housing, office space, hotel and/or restaurant uses
- In rest of downtown, allow a wide variety of uses above street level but require pedestrian-friendly uses at street level

Density

- Encourage density sufficient to enable layering of uses in multi-story buildings
- Control density with Floor Area Ratios (FAR)

Implementation Strategies: Land Use & Development

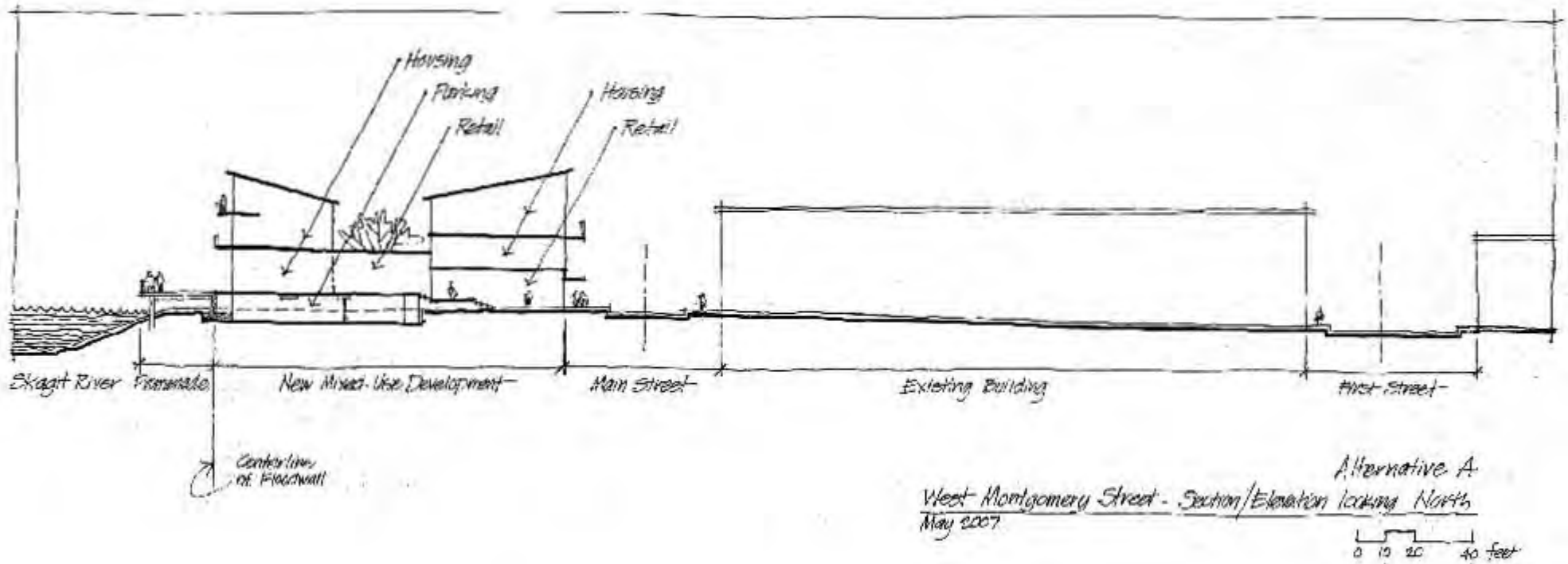
FAR Zones





Streetscape

- Extend pedestrian improvements north and south on First Street
- Improve pedestrian connection between Skagit Station and the riverfront promenade
- Provide clear and attractive pedestrian connections between the riverfront and the downtown core
- Improve streetscape on Kincaid Street to provide attractive entry to downtown
- Improve pedestrian walkway on Division Street Bridge
- Create inviting alleys and pathways
- Provide clean, comfortable, and safe transit stops
- Provide pedestrian-friendly parking



Open Space

Riverfront promenade

- At least 24 feet wide
- East approached landscaped to connect to downtown
- Vertical access via stairs and ramps at street ends

New riverfront public plaza

- Central location, east of promenade
- Accommodate performances, events, and Farmer's Market
- Include public restrooms and access to public dock

New landscaped public space across Kincaid from Courthouse

- Maintain and enhance views from Third
- Create gateway to downtown



Public Amenities

- New riverfront promenade
- New public plaza
- New public dock
- New public restrooms
- Space and support facilities for Farmer's Market
- New public art
 - Establish unique identity for Mount Vernon
 - Mark special places and help with wayfinding
- Historic and/or children's museum

Implementation Strategies: Streetscape, Open Space, and Amenities

- Set high standard for design of public realm
- Design improvements to reinforce downtown character and fit within local context
- Consider 1% for Art policy for public improvements



Character

Existing street grid

- Build to property lines
- Use materials compatible with older buildings

Height and density

- Greatest along First Street and Gates Street
- Maintain view corridors

Design guidelines

- Retain existing historic character
- Establish design review process to achieve highest quality designs for both public and private development

Implementation Strategies: Character

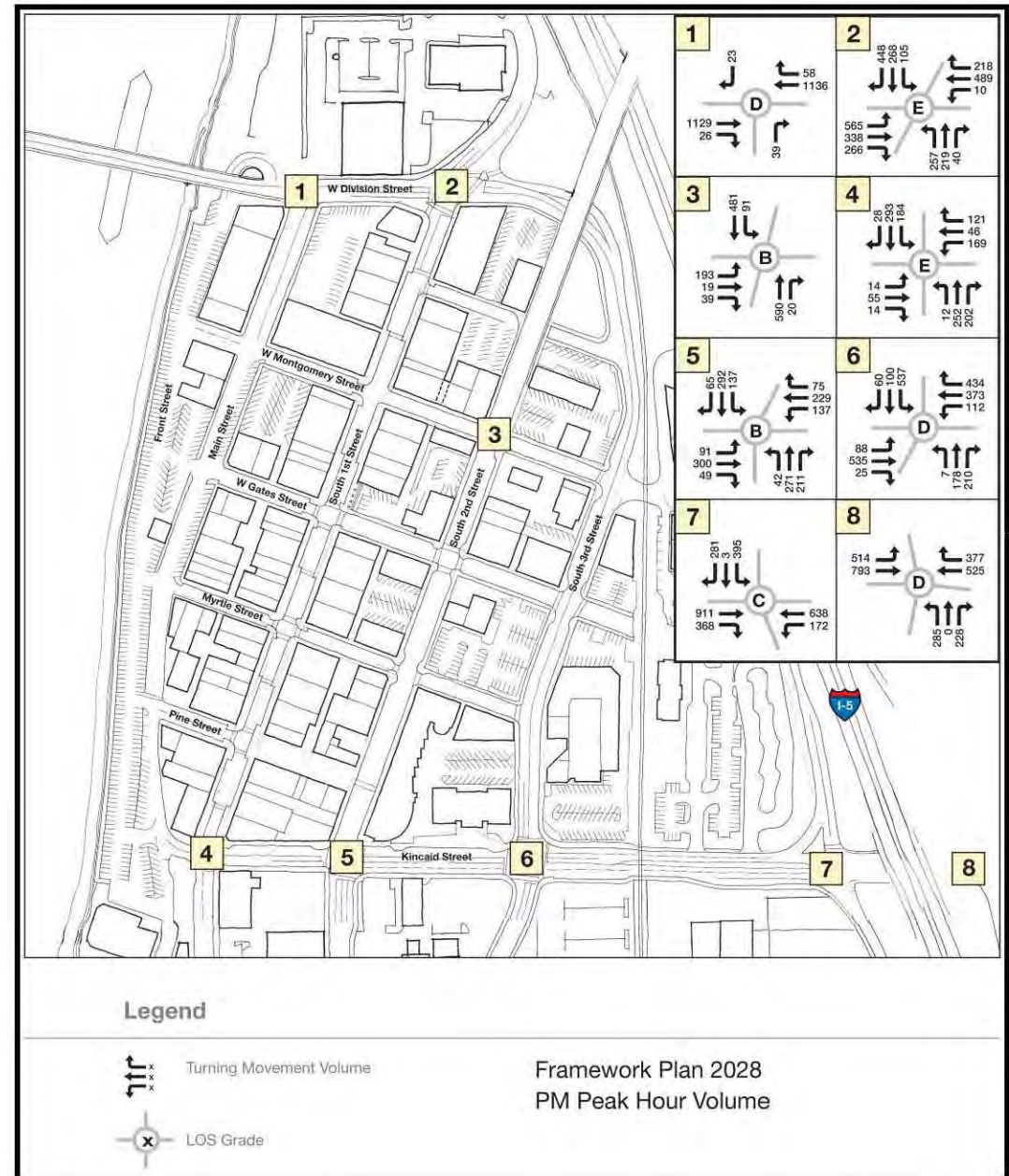
Design Guidelines

- Setbacks and exceptions
- Building materials and colors
- Building height
- Entryways
- Windows
- Modulation
- Lighting
- Fencing
- Signage
- Historic Rehabilitation/Restoration Standards

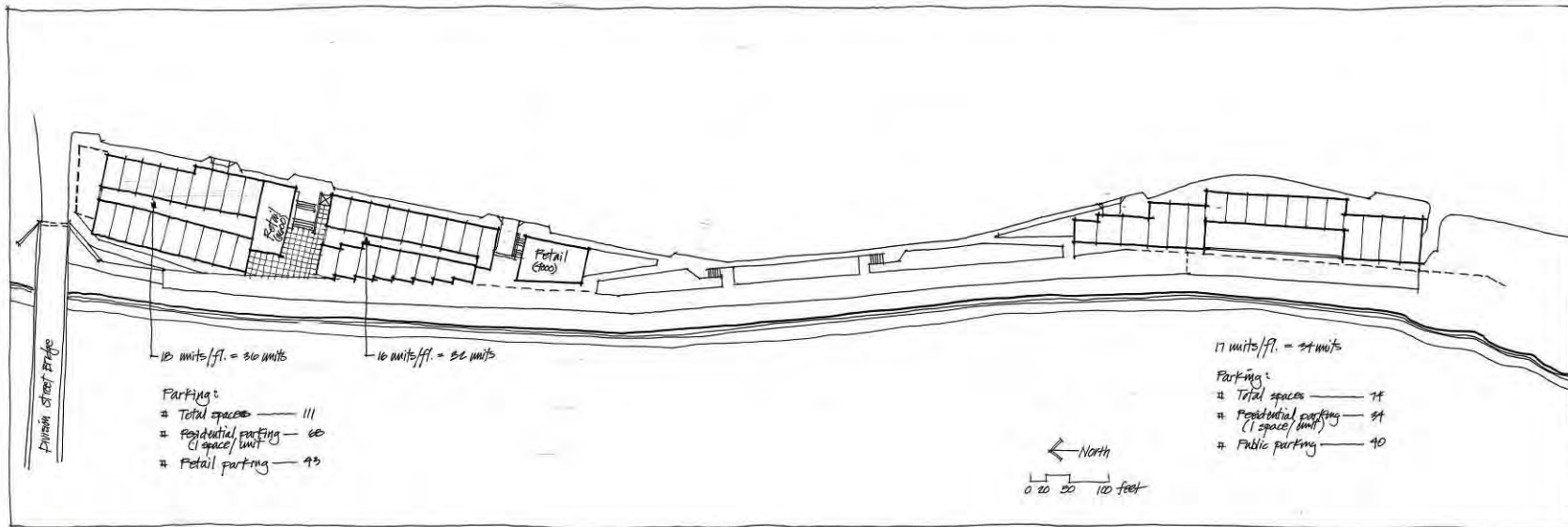
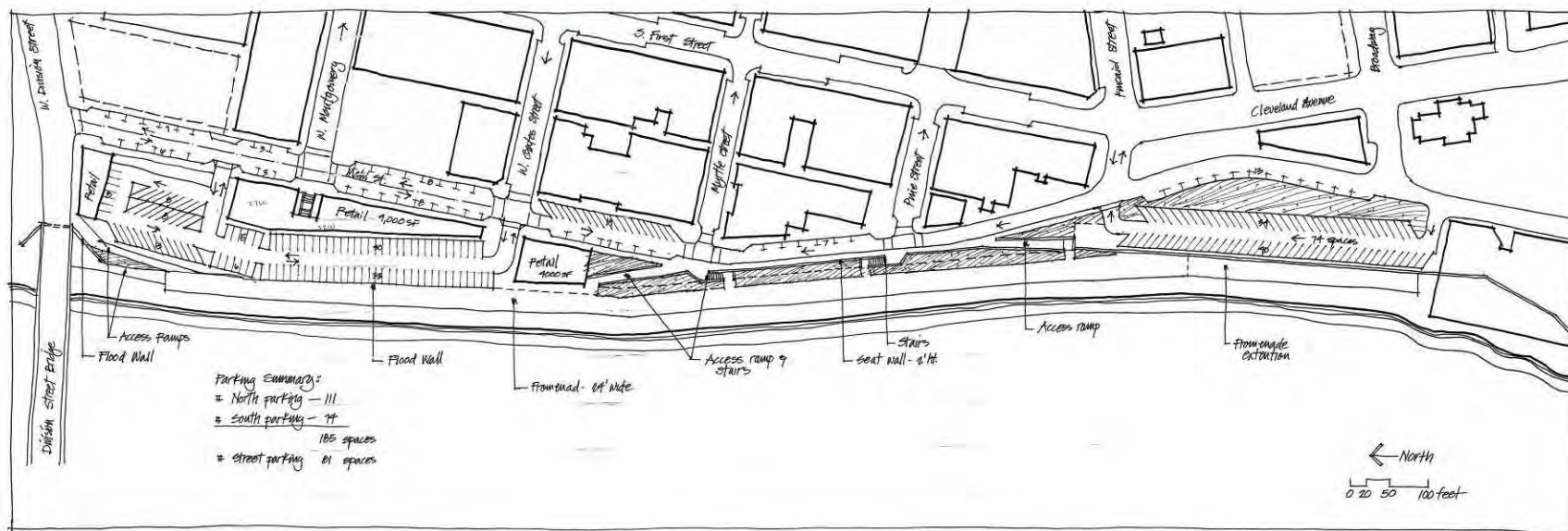
Transportation and Parking

Traffic

- 1,300 additional PM peak hour trips
- Average delays expected to increase
- LOS "E" at:
 - First/Division
 - First/Kincaid
- City standard is LOS "D"



Parking – New Development



Implementation Strategies: Transportation and Parking

Traffic

- Improve First/Division intersection
 - Realignment plus improved signal timing maintains LOS with predicted growth
 - First Street ROW north of Division = 60', enough for 2-way traffic plus SB left turn pocket and pedestrian-friendly sidewalks
- Improve First/Kincaid intersection
- Add both projects to Transportation Improvement Program

Public Transit

- Work with SKAT to add transit service to riverfront

Parking

- Build new parking garage near county offices

Infrastructure

Flood control

- Build the flood control preferred alternative

Utilities

- Underground overhead wires with new development
- Waterline modifications associated with construction of flood control and realignment of Division Street
- Require stormwater detention or flow control for new developments

Implementation Strategies

- Fund utility improvements with existing capital budgets or from developer, if required

Economics

Feasibility of private development

- Type of development shown should attract private development
- City can enhance feasibility in several ways
 - Provide additional amenities downtown
 - Price properties for sale to reduce development cost
 - Charge lower impact fees for new development downtown

Economics

Benefits

	2008 - 2013	2013 - 2018	2018 - 2023	2023 - 2028
New Jobs	200	545	858	1,190
New personal income	\$6.5 M	\$16.3 M	\$25.6 M	\$35.7 M
Additional annual taxable sales	\$19.3 M	\$34.6 M	\$51.4 M	\$67.9 M
Increased assessed value	\$28.0 M	\$66.6 M	\$106.7 M	\$147.4 M
Increased tax collections	\$0.6 M	\$1.2 M	\$1.9 M	\$2.5 M

Implementation Strategies: Economics

Funding Requirements

- Flood control and promenade: \$18.0 M
- Parking Garage: \$14.6 M
- Other: \$0.7 M (includes Master Plan)

Financial strategies

- Incremental tax revenues
 - Tax Increment Financing
 - Local Infrastructure Financing Tool (LIFT)
 - Other restricted taxes
- Increased development value
 - Local Improvement District (LID)
 - Impact Fees

Implementation Strategies: Economics

Development Strategies

- Complete riverfront improvements
- Set development incentives for downtown
- Solicit development proposals for riverfront parcels
- Solicit appropriate new businesses to enhance local business climate
- Complete other improvements throughout downtown
- Promote business retention
- Make physical improvements to existing buildings
- Program special events
- Develop overall visitor and tourism strategy

Next Steps

- Incorporate final changes and publish adopted master plan
- Submit grant applications
- Submit floodwall permit applications
- Design promenade and public plaza