

SOUND TRANSIT 3

INFILL LIGHT RAIL STATION: GRAHAM STREET



Graham Street Station

Ian Crozier & Ian Macleod
Dynamic Futures I Rainier Valley
University of Washington | College of Built Environments
Winter 2017 | Instructors: Manish Chalana + Kathryn Merlino

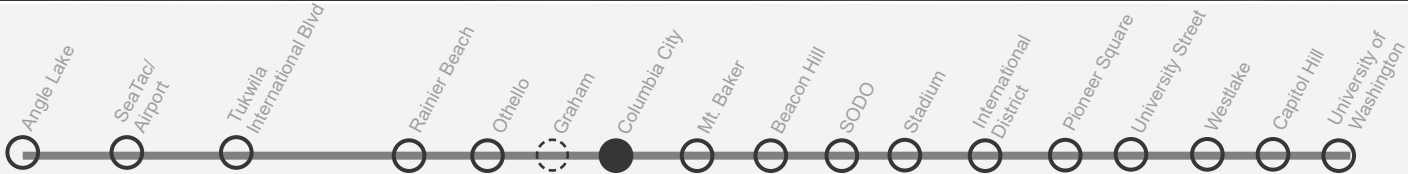
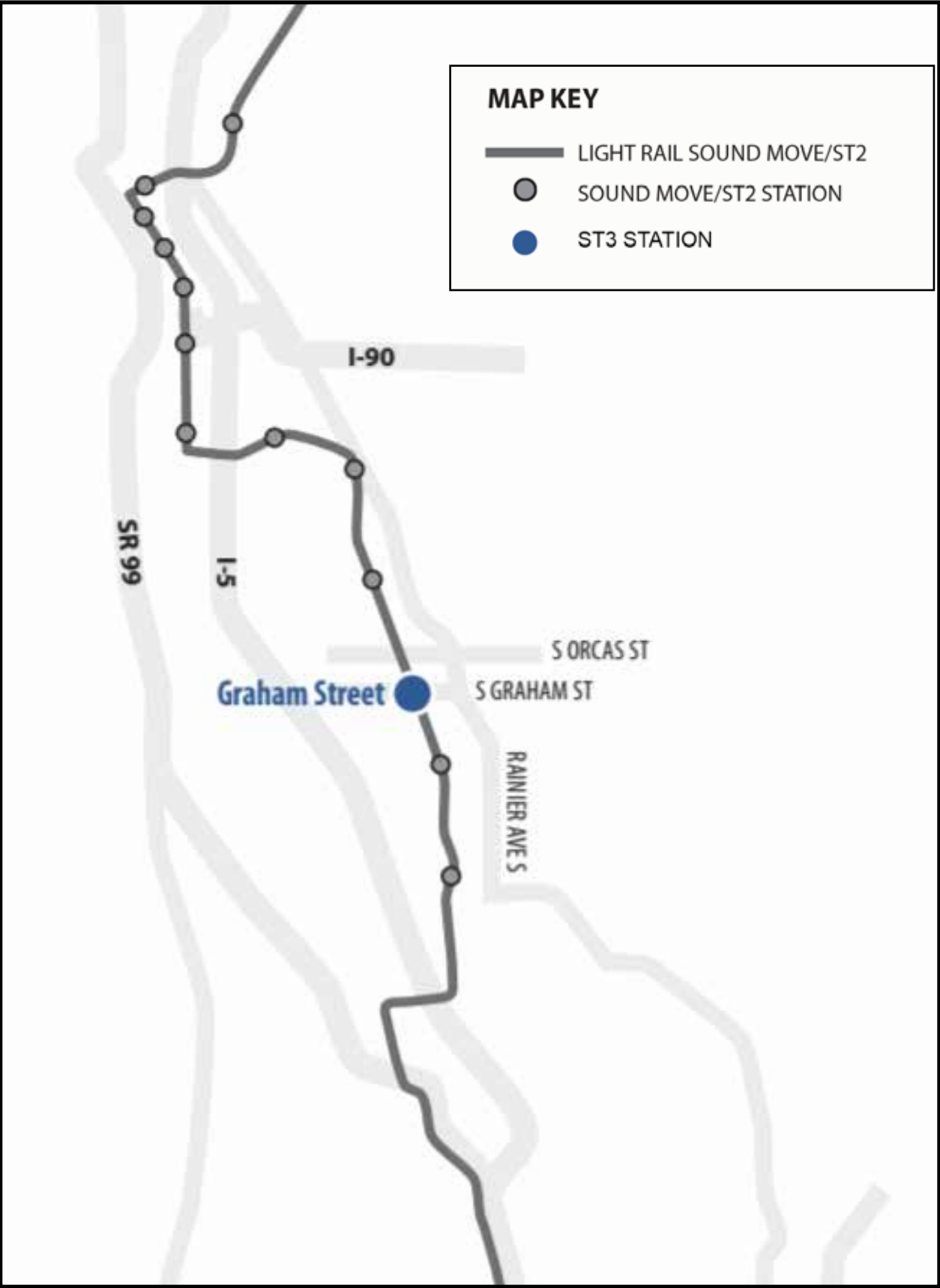
COMING CHANGES

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture

Passed in 2016 with 54% of the vote, Sound Transit 3 is a regional transportation package that includes three infill stations on existing light rail lines. One of these stations is located at the intersection of Graham Street and MLK Way in Rainier Valley, halfway between Columbia City and Othello stations.

This studio project considers the effects of this new station on the existing neighborhood and ways in which the coming transformation could be directed into the most beneficial and least harmful form.

The neighborhood as it currently exists is characterized by low-density retail businesses with massive parking lots, grown-over vacant lots, and heavy vehicular traffic. However amidst the concrete and black-berry vines is a neighborhood of striking human diversity, home to independent and immigrant-owned businesses from all across the earth. Numerous service providers and institutions are located here too, helping people from many walks of life. Just outside the commercial core, the residential neighborhoods is characterized by a fine-grain of single family homes of diverse styles and ages.



COMMUNITY ASSETS

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture



noji gardens



katharine's place



filipino community ctr



hillman city center



brighton play-field
aki kurose ms



wash. state dshs



aki kurose school



co lam pagoda

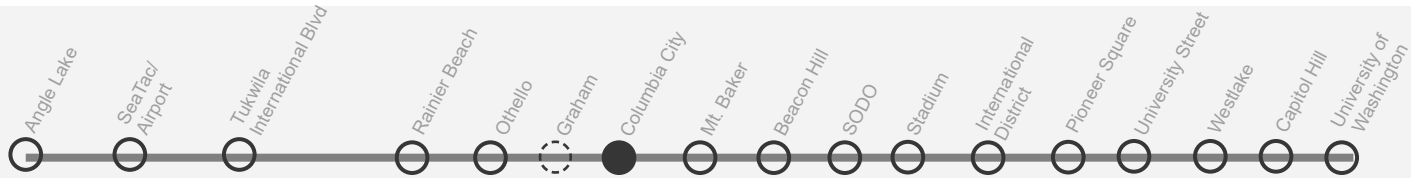
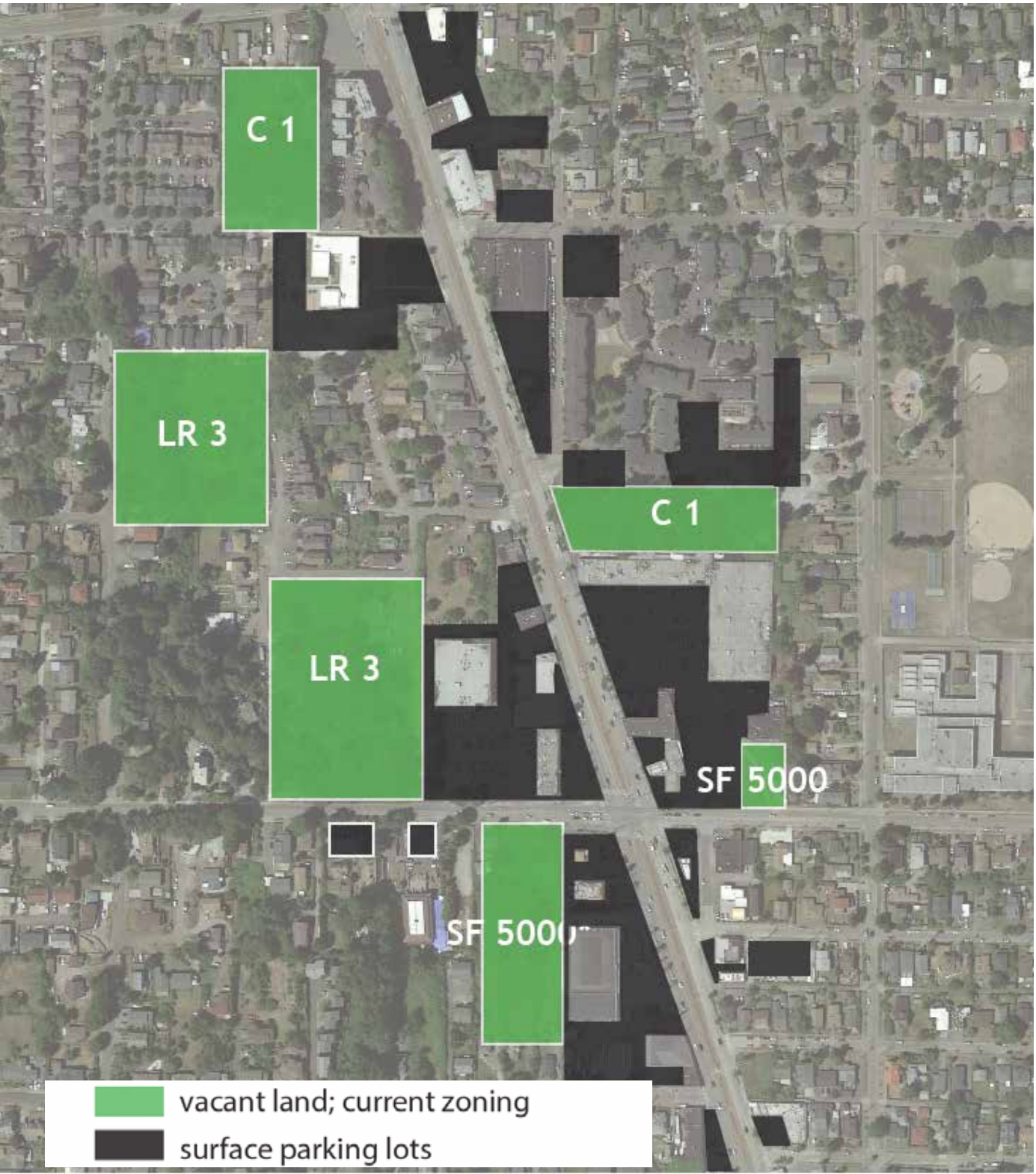
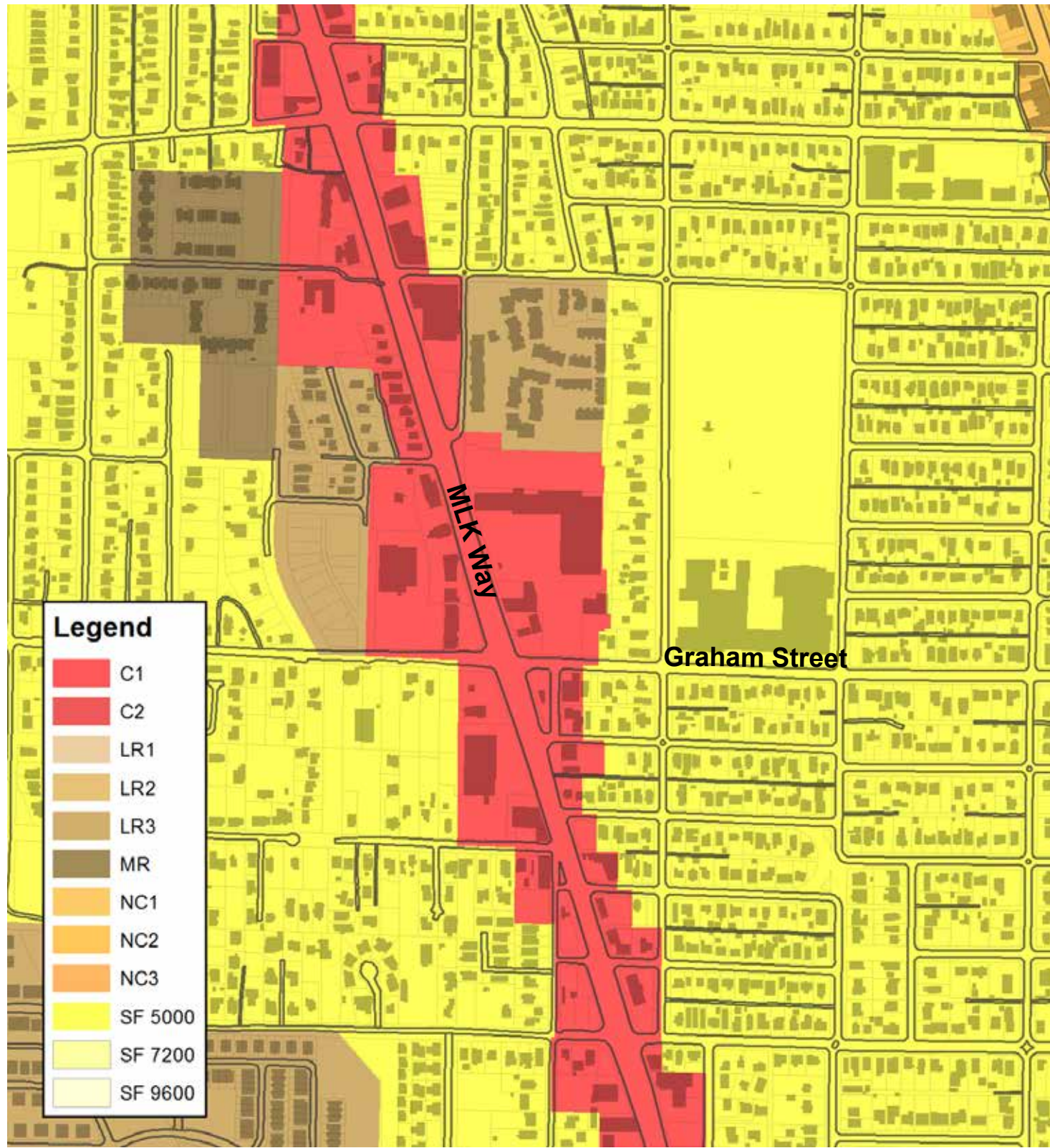


island pacific market



Current Zoning

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture

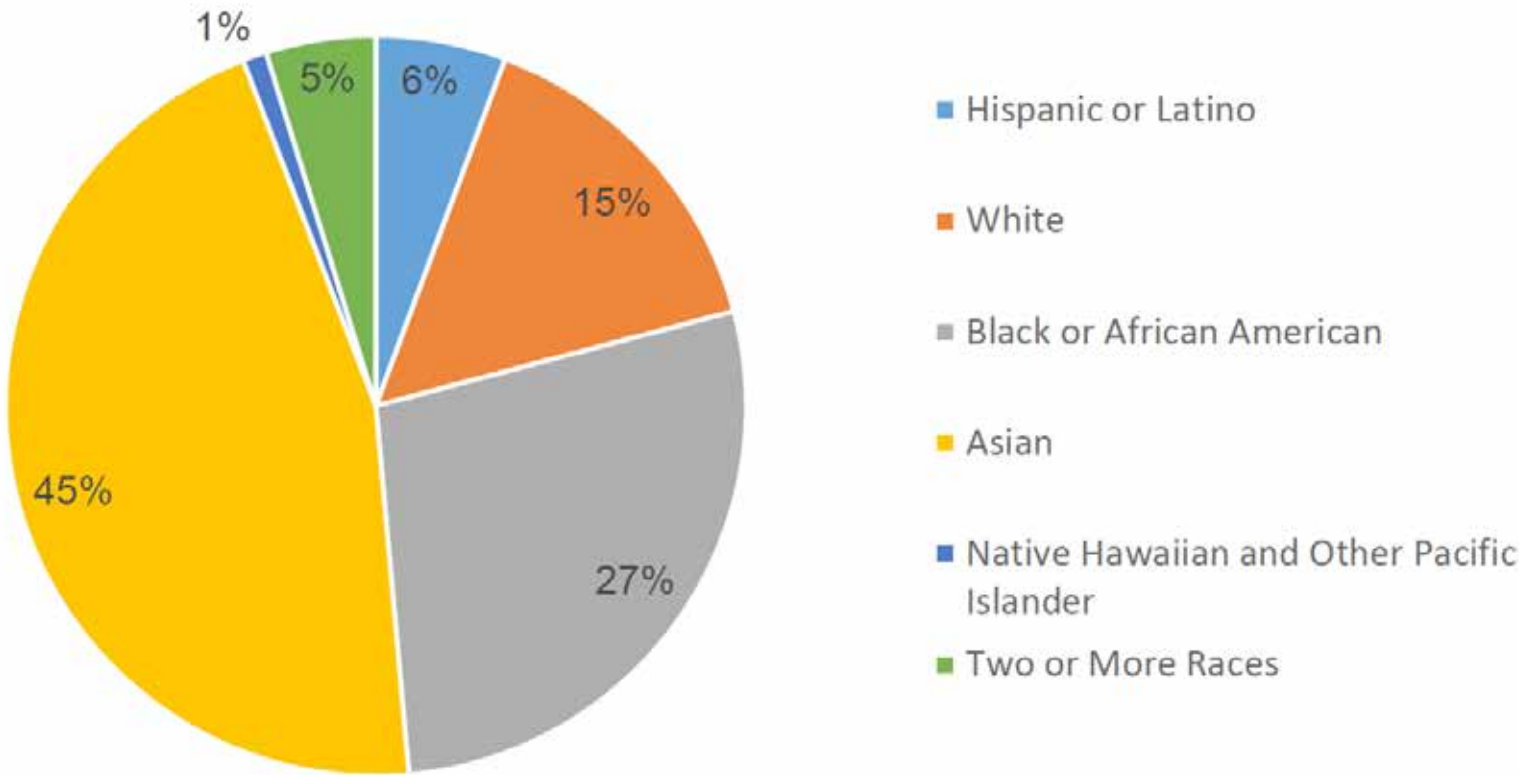


Existing Community

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture



Graham Street Study Area Race and Ethnicity



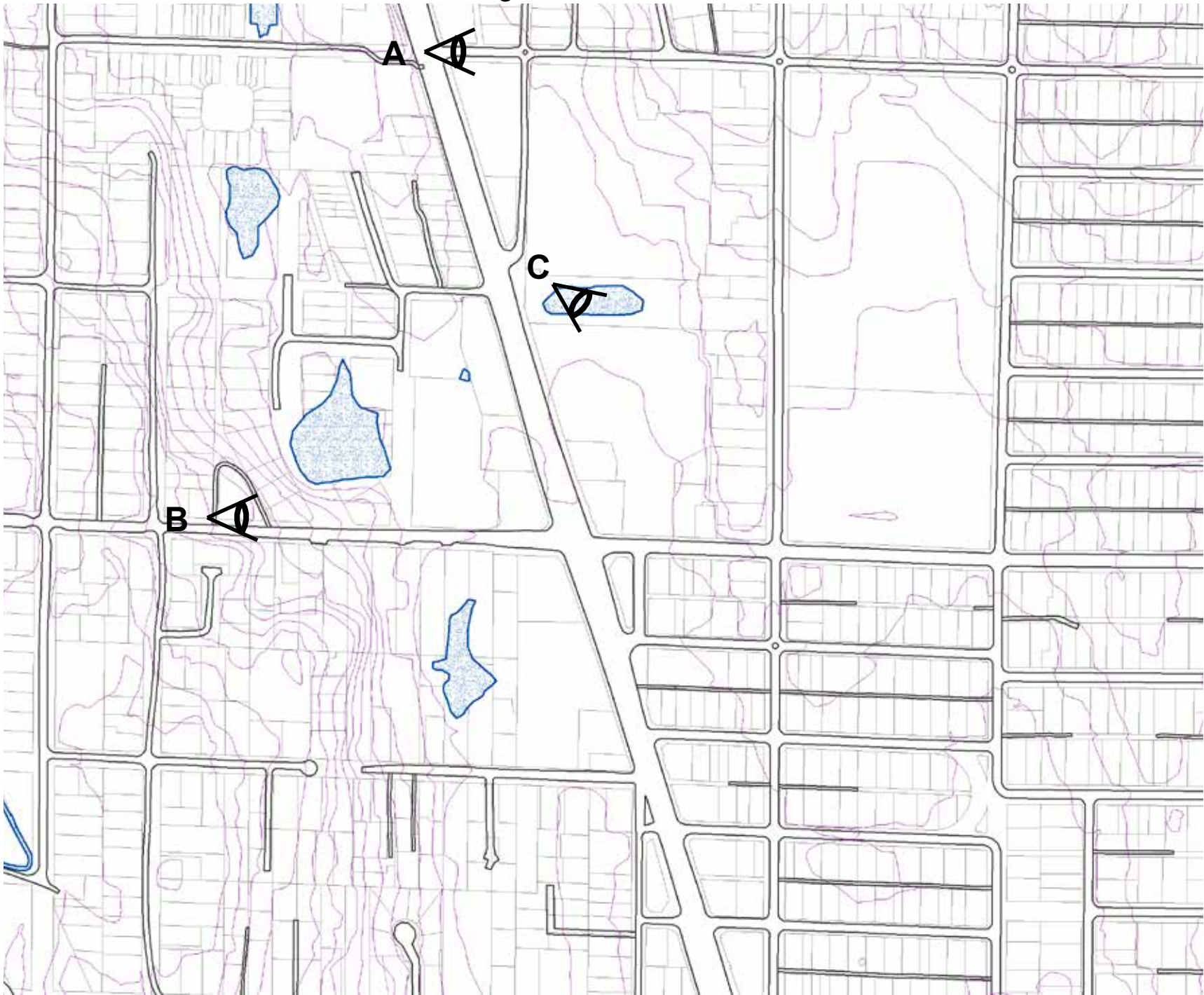
Rainier Valley is the most ethnically diverse area of Seattle and Graham Street exemplifies this beautifully. The neighborhood is a center for the Vietnamese community of Seattle, with several grocery stores, restaurants, bakeries and a Buddhist Temple called the Co Lam Pagoda. Other ethnic communities are represented as well, with Ethiopian, Chinese, Hispanic and African American owned businesses. The Cham Refugee Center is also located here, providing relief and services to Cham people from Cambodia and Vietnam.

Opening of the light rail station at Graham Street could potentially threaten these communities with displacement if rents rise due to increased demand for housing and commercial space. Protections for existing tenants and property owners, programs to increase community political capacity, economically benefit existing residents and businesses, and to allow development to occur adjacent to rather than on top of existing buildings could help prevent this displacement.



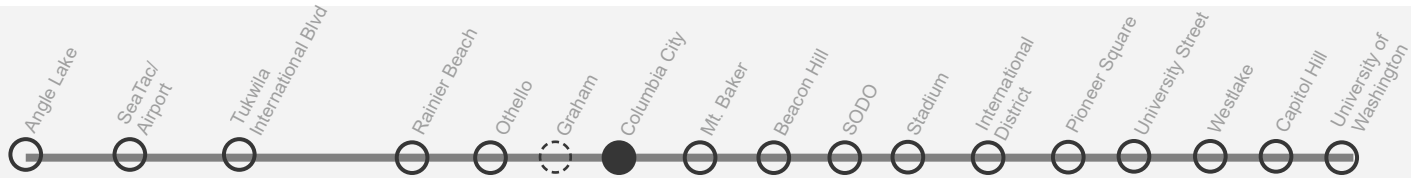
Geographic Profile

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture



The land around the Graham Street commercial center is characterized by a steep slope descending from Beacon Hill to the west and a moderate ridge around 39th Ave descending from the north.

Several small county-designated wetlands have prevented development in residential parcels at the foot of Beacon Hill. Another small wetland is located just east of MLK Way between Graham St and Juneau St.



MORPHOLOGY

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture



As part of the former U.S. Route 10/State Route 599 alignments, much of the MLK corridor developed around automotive-oriented structures: outdoor shopping centers set far back from the street, surrounded by parking lots. At Graham street, this includes several early-postwar commercial buildings, bookended by more contemporary drive-thru restaurants and gas stations. most buildings share a small number of large lots with attendant parking.

In contrast, the residential blocks more resemble those found elsewhere in the city, belying the neighborhood's initial growth around the Rainier Avenue and Beacon Avenue streetcars. These blocks form a tight, rigid grid made up of detached homes, usually bisected by alleyways.

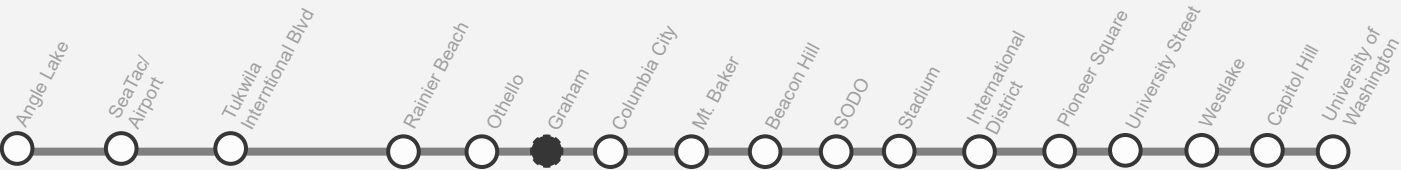
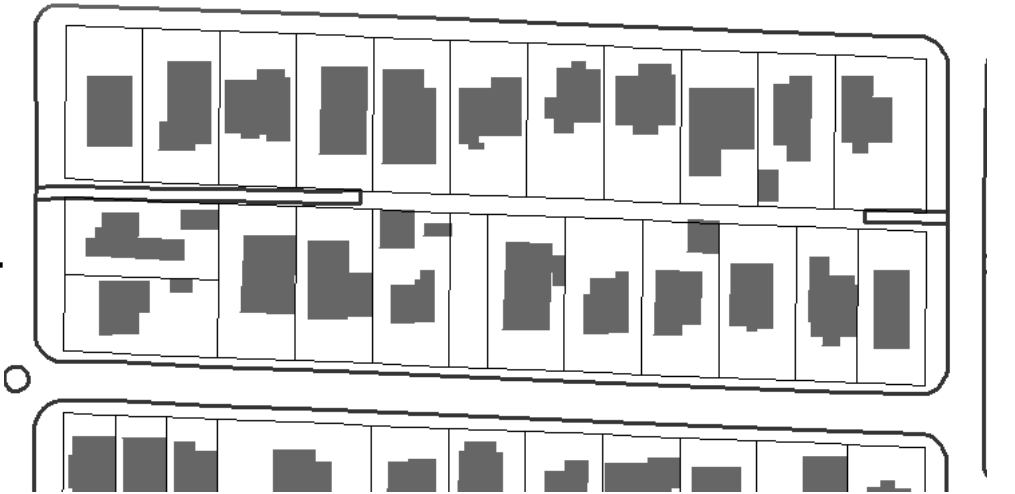
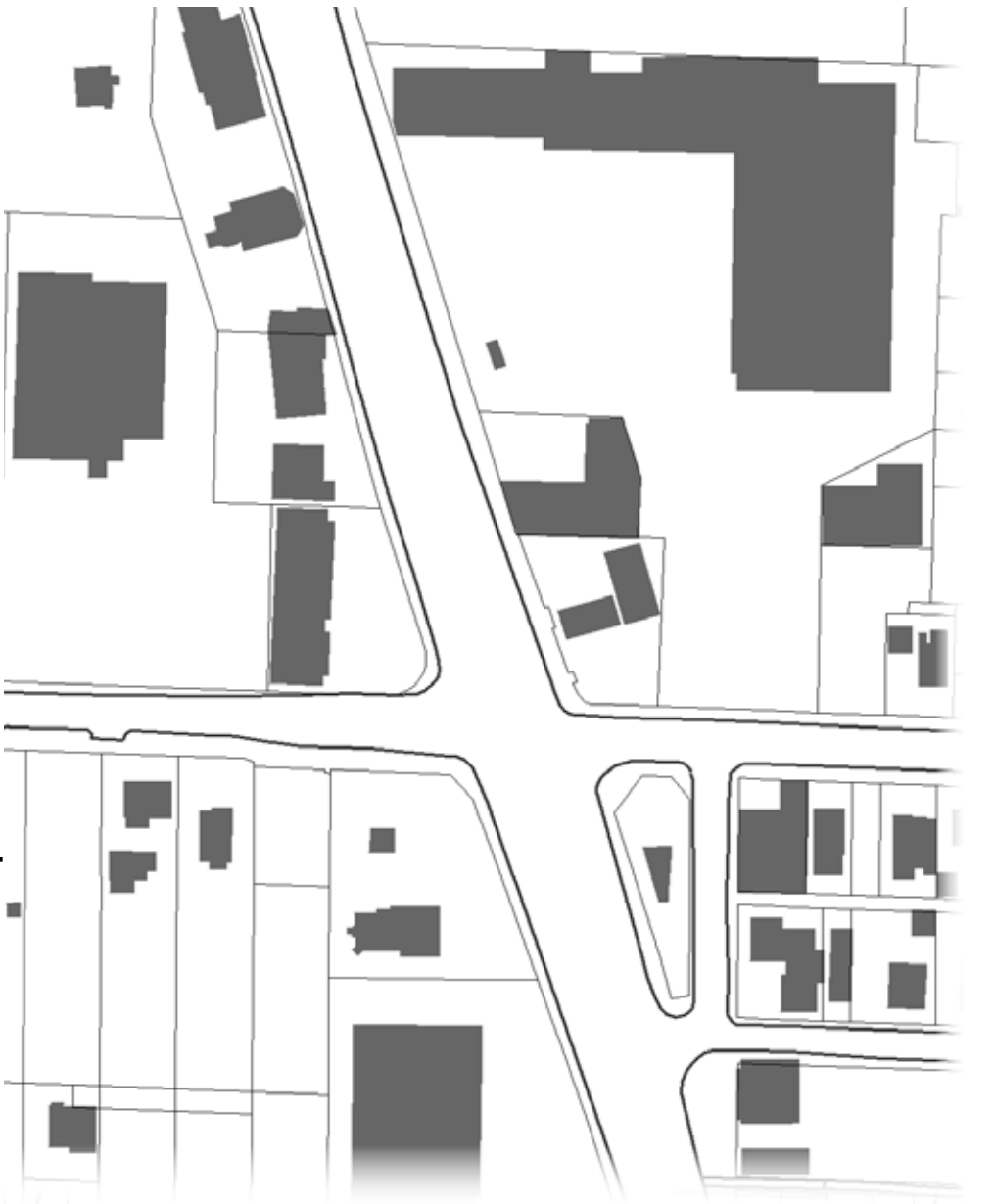
The street connections between these two block types are infrequent, leading to heavy traffic on the few secondary thoroughfares connecting to MLK.

COMMERCIAL CORE:

Large parcels, excessive parking, no streetwall

RESIDENTIAL FABRIC:

small lots, small homes; short, walkable blocks



COMMERCIAL CORE

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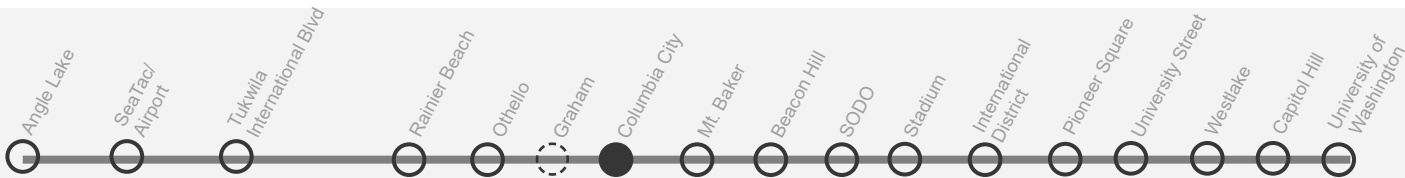
Left: Island Pacific plaza, the anchor of the business district.
Right: small shops, restaurants and bakeries ring the perimeter of the parking lot.



Left: The district hosts a variety of shops and services, not just food—such as a photo studio.
Right: few buildings abut the sidewalk. Those that do are too close for comfort, after the 2008 widening of MLK for the trackway.



Left: The neighborhood's local spots are known citywide. Tony's Bakery has been featured in The Stranger and a destination on Plate of Nations.
Right: Running a surface alignment saved on construction cost, but severed numerous pedestrian and vehicular crossings. Massive retaining walls make the sidewalk a hostile place.



RESIDENTIAL/GREEN

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Left: Homes adjacent to Kurose MS. Lots are relatively large for Seattle, and houses vary in age from turn of the century to the 1990s.

Right: Brighton Playfield serves both the school and the neighborhood with playgrounds, baseball fields, and recreational space.



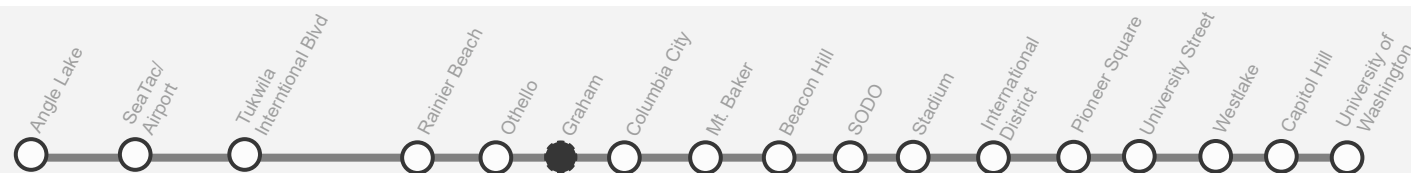
Left: Low costs, large lots and an aging housing stock have made the area attractive for new construction, particularly for large, suburban-style homes.

Right: Just north of the shopping center is a long, narrow lot designated as wetland by King County. Currently, it serves as an illegal dumping area.



Left: A handful of homes in the area predate the highway and streetcar eras, hinting at the Rainier Valley's agrarian past.

Right: Just west of MLK, a recent fire has cleared out one of the larger non-commercially zoned lots. The development future of this site is indeterminate.



Dynamic Futures I Rainier Valley

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Winter 2017 | Instructors: Manish Chalana + Kathryn Merlino

VISION and SENSORY MAPS

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture

NEIGHBORHOOD VISION

Change brings the opportunity for the Graham Street neighborhood to grow prosperously and equitably. Valued neighborhood qualities must be preserved while accommodating new arrivals. Streets, pedestrian pathways, open spaces, and regulatory frameworks can be restructured to give form to a better-connected and more vibrant urban center. Growth will occur in phases, planned in coordination with transportation improvements.

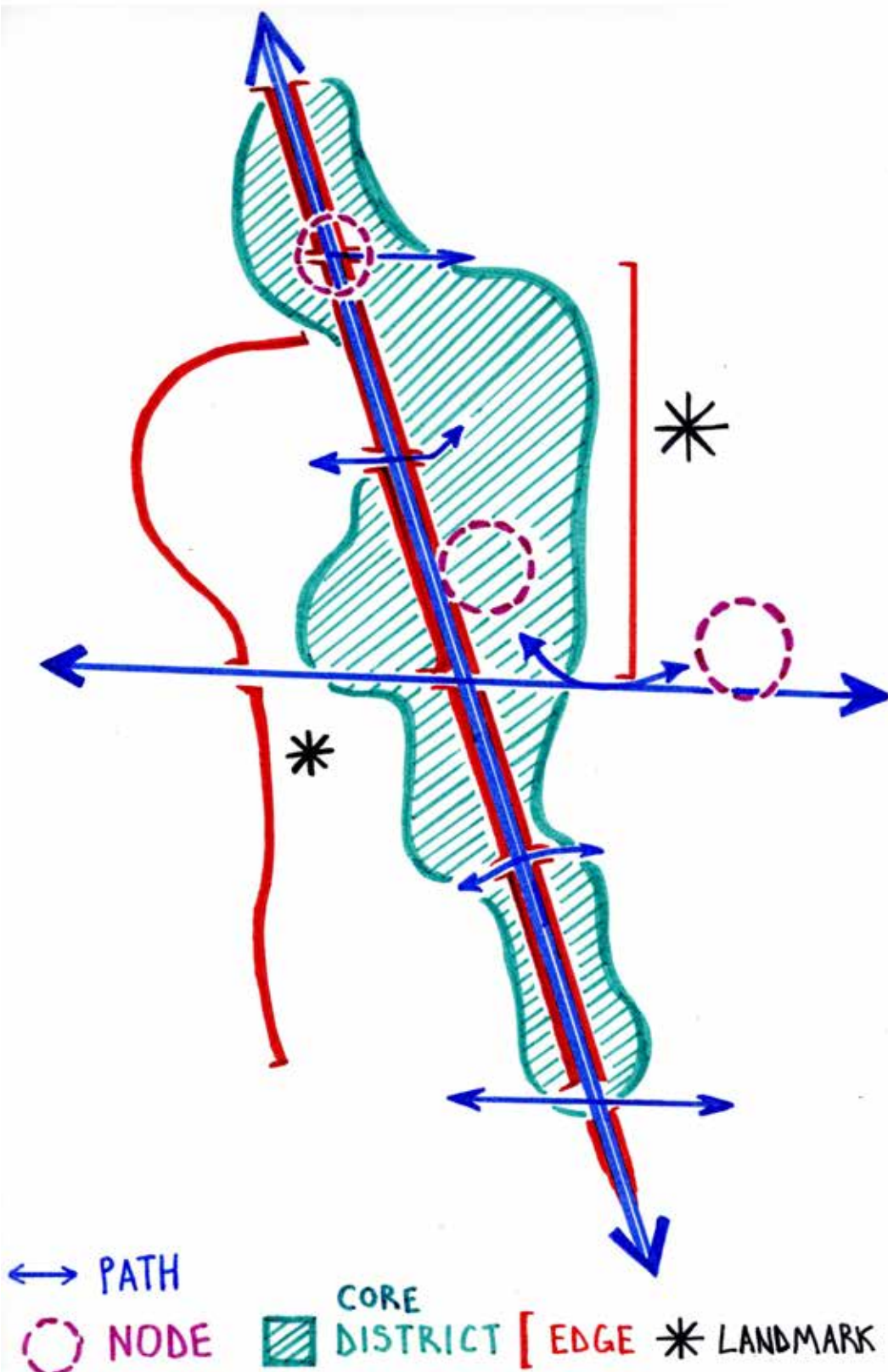
Qualities and Conditions

This neighborhood lies roughly halfway between Columbia City and Othello stations, each of which has developed a unique, core character as destination neighborhoods. Graham is home to several regional and local destinations, but their nodal qualities are diminished by the lack of spatial definition along the MLK corridor, reinforcing the perception as a place to drive through, rather than arrive at. Wide thoroughfares and large parking lots make a hostile pedestrian environment, and steep terrain limits the potential walkshed for the future station.

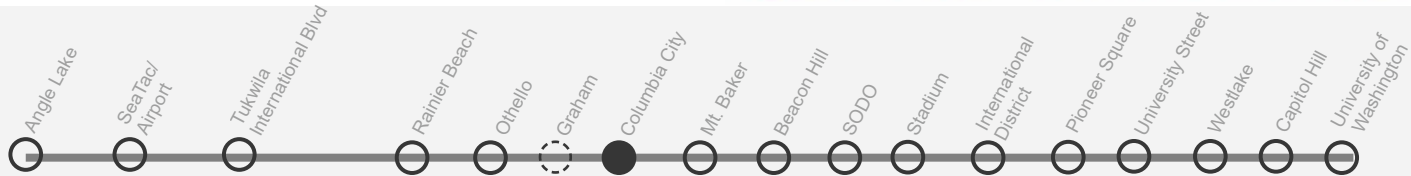
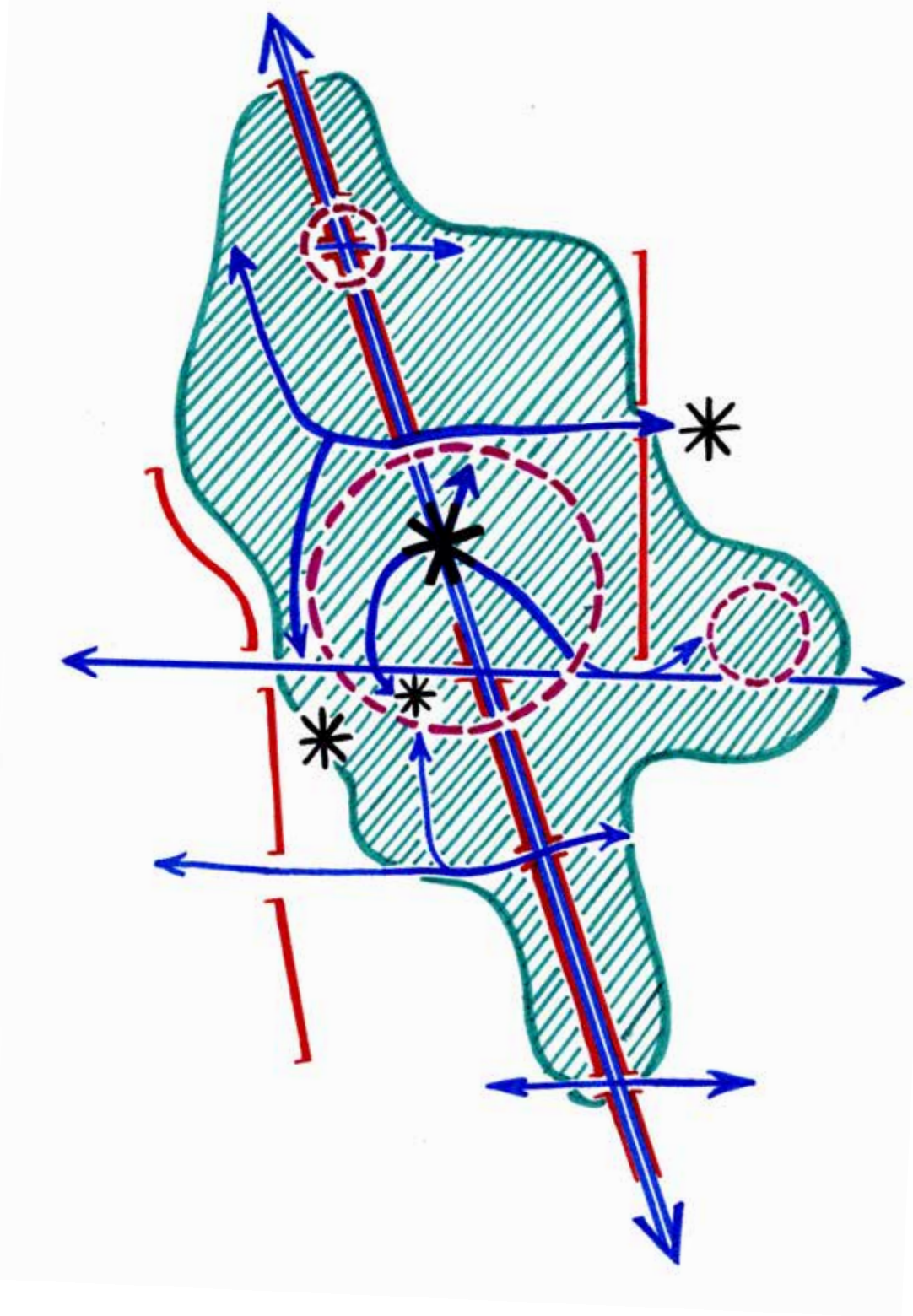
Residential areas resemble the sort of fine-grain, small-lot neighborhoods elsewhere in the city, but the transition to the commercial core is abrupt, with large suburban-style buildings turning their backs to the extant fabric and leaving little opportunity for pleasant walking routes.

The proposal envisions developing a strengthened spatial identity befitting the coming station—where pedestrian routes are created or augmented, and new growth serves the neighborhood as a whole.

SENSORY MAP - EXISTING



SENSORY MAP - ENVISIONED



Structure: Setting Stage for Growth

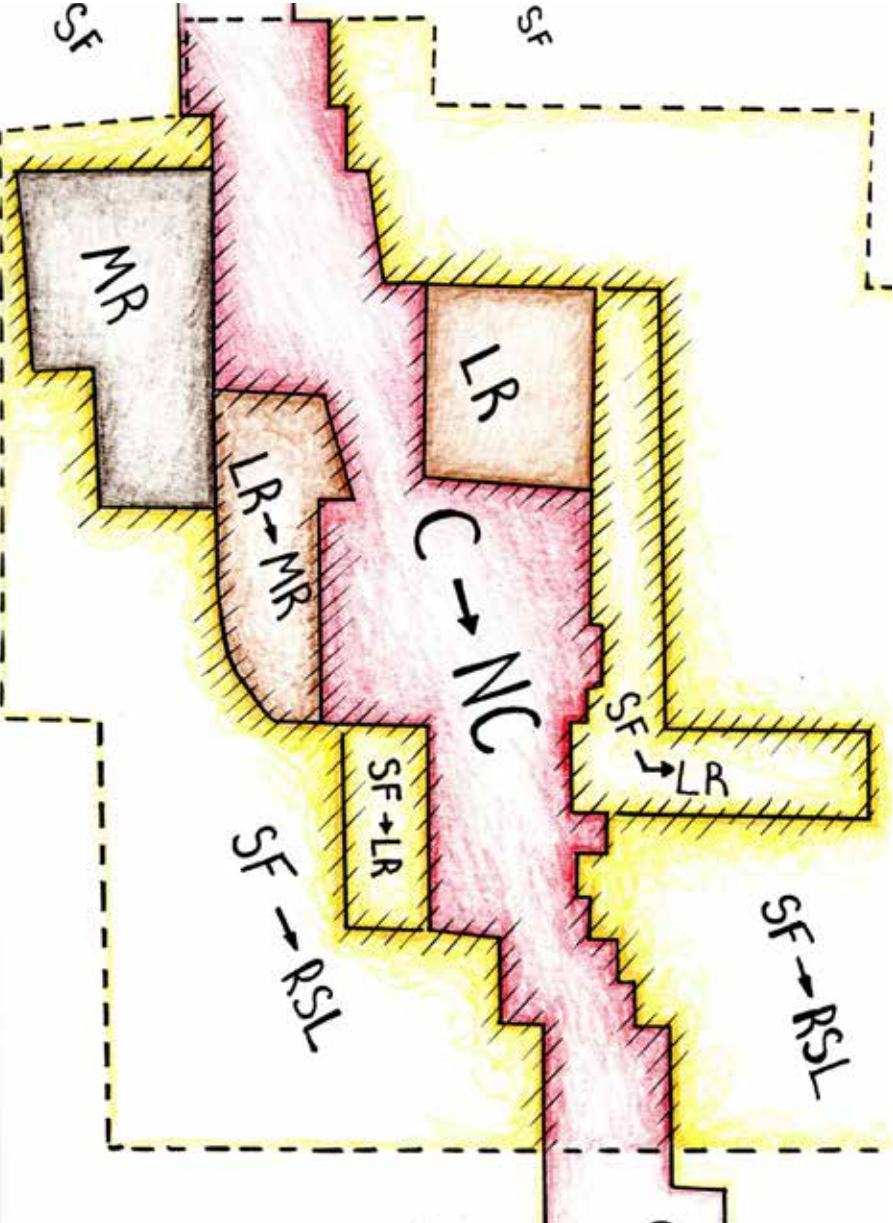
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Stairs to 33rd Ave
A stairway along the unused Raymond St right-of-way between 35th Ave and 33rd Ave would provide new pedestrian connections to the future light rail station.

Raymond St Ravine Path
This parcel is vacant and has a wetland on it. It lies in the middle of a very large block, preventing connections to the shopping center and future station on MLK Way.

36th Avenue
This right-of-way never was built out as a road, however it remains vacant. A street here would reconnect the dead-end cluster branching off of Raymond St and provide a driving and walking connection to Graham Street.

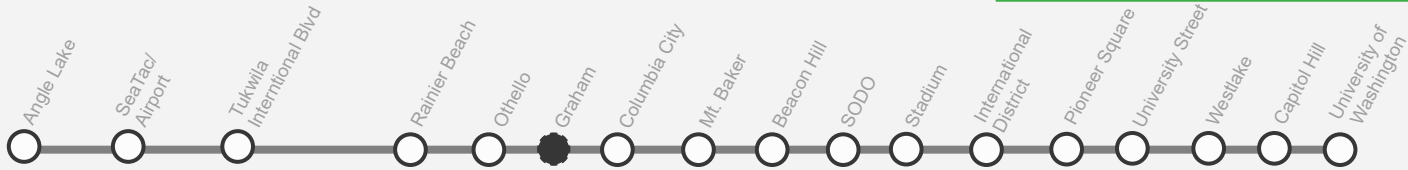
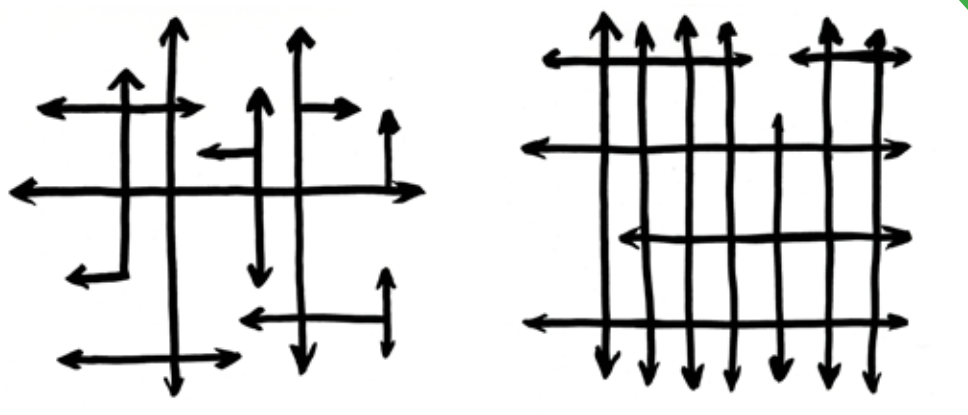
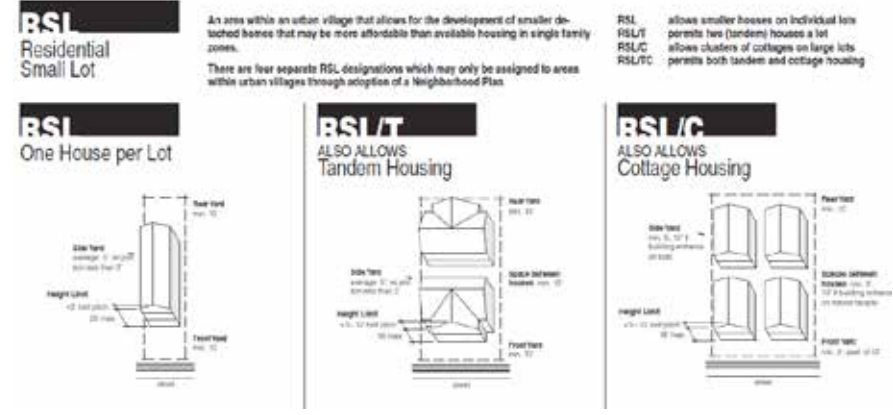


C to NC
Rezoning the commercial core along MLK Way from Commercial to Neighborhood Commercial will facilitate the transition to neighborhood-scale retail and mixed-used buildings with smaller parking lots.

SF to LR
Several single family areas around the light rail station could accommodate small-scale multifamily buildings with a change to low-rise zoning. These areas provide housing capacity and a transition from the intensity of the commercial core.

LR to MR
The area to the west of the shopping center and future light rail station has a mix of single-family homes, multifamily buildings, and vacant parcels. With a direct pedestrian connection to the future station this area is a good place for high-density residential development.

SF to RSL
Rezoning the area within a short walk from the future light rail station from Single Family 5000 to Residential Small Lot will allow gradual, fine-grained infill on residential blocks.



Open Space Network

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture



Raymond Street Ravine

Due north of the Empire Shopping Center is a vacant lot across from Raymond street. This lot contains a ravine is currently a degraded wetland and has been used as an illegal dumping ground. The ravine runs through the middle part of a very large block measuring 1/4 mile between Juneau and Graham St .

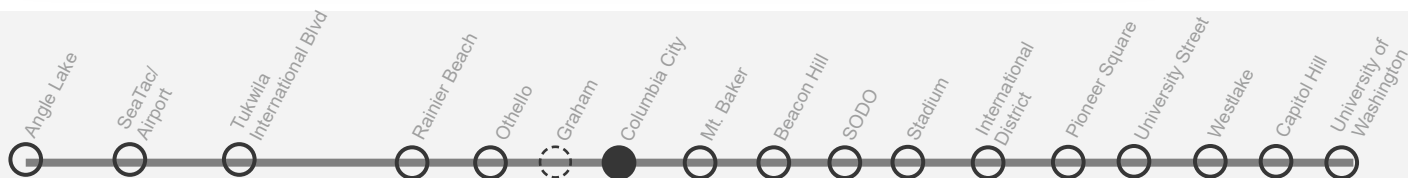
This ravine could be cleaned up to improve its function as a wetland and natural area and provided with walking paths to 39th Ave to improve connectivity to the future light rail station. The paths could also improve connectivity between the adjacent apartment complex to the north and the large Brighton Playfield and Kurose Middle School to the east of 39th Ave.



36TH Avenue Park

Just past the south-west corner of the intersection of MLK Way and Graham Street is a vacant lot between the Co Lam Pagoda, McDonald's, and across the street from the DSHS office. The nexus of the Pagoda, DSHS, and nearby shopping center forms the central node of activity in the neighborhood.

A new park located in this currently vacant lot would serve as a central place for community members to socialize and relax. It is centrally located enough to be easily accessible, but far enough away from MLK to be shielded from that road's noise and speed. The park would be much smaller than Brighton Playfield but could provide a play space for nearby families. Row-homes directly to the south would provide a sense of protective enclosure as well as "eyes on the street". Meanwhile a paved plaza section adjacent to the road would have tables and seating for socializing and room for parties or events.

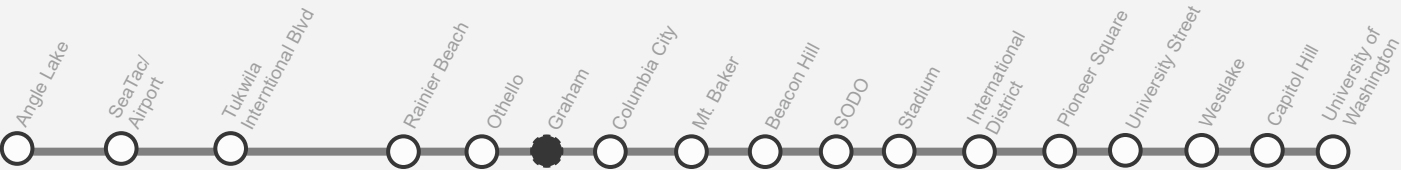


Policies and Phasing

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture

The structural changes and patterns for growth and how each contributes to the larger vi-
laid out in this report will require a range of sion for the neighborhood. The appropriate
policy changes and programs. Suggestions timing for each policy is considered, as well
for these policies are sketched out above, or- as potential negative impacts or constraints.
ganized according to the goal to be pursued

Vision		Goals	Tools/Objectives	Impacts	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
M1	Mobility rich community	Well-connected multi-modal transportation network linking station and neighborhoods	Introduce new streets to reconnect grid	Parcel acquisition and road making	X	X	X
M2		Well-connected multi-modal transportation network linking station and neighborhoods	New bus routes			X	X
M3		Well-connected multi-modal transportation network linking station and neighborhoods	New crosswalks		X	X	X
M4		Residents and visitors easily navigate the neighborhood on foot	Bridge to station	Reconfigure Pacific Foods site and site across the street		X	X
M5		Residents and visitors easily navigate the neighborhood on foot	System of perceptual links to nearby landmarks - playfield, school, pagoda, shopping center etc.			X	X
P1	Preserve valuable neighborhood qualities	Fine grain residential areas	Limits on parcel assembly, building size,	Limitation on new residential capacity	X	X	X
P2		Automobile-accessible services	Underground parking lots	Expensive			X
P3		Ethnic diversity of residents and businesses	Support for local businesses and organizations during construction			X	
P4		Intact Vietnamese community	Strengthen connections between Vietnamese community assets	Potential discrimination or neglect of other communities?	X		
		Layered urban fabric	maintain vernacular retail buildings while infilling empty spaces	complicated site issues for new development	X	X	
G1	Neighborhood Greening	Use well-maintained and designed green spaces to provide community benefit	Use part of one or two vacant parcels to create small park near light rail for socializing	Property acquisition - design. Might not be well used.		X	
G2		Use well-maintained and designed green spaces to provide community benefit	Restore wooded areas of vacant parcels for improved ecological function and green benefit	Property acquisition - Opportunity cost of non-development	X		
		Imrpove natural habitat and ecological conditions	restore Raymond street rivine for habitat and walking trail	Property acquisition - safety	X	X	
A1	Affordable Transit-oriented urban community	Expand total housing capacity near future transit	Plan for development of X new units of housing	Parking lot and low-density building displacement. Market-rate expensive apts are expensive			X
A2		Expand total housing capacity near future transit	Change zoning to allow residential infill within 1/4 mile of station. LR and SLR zoning recommended.	Displacement of SF homes			X
A3		Maintain housing affordability near transit	Set high level MHA requirement	May suppress development of market rate units	X	X	X
A4		Maintain housing affordability near transit	Encourage development of "naturally occurring" affordable housing arrangements: boarding houses, multi-generational family homes, micro-units, manufactured homes, tent cities, etc.	Neighbors complain	X	X	X
A5		Leverage future light-rail-related growth to the benefit of existing residents	Establish TILT (Tax Increment Local Transfer) district to reduce property tax bills of existing residents with funds from tax revenue of new developments	Reduced city general fund tax revenue. Phase out and boundary issues.	X	X	X
		Maintain housing affordability near transit	Facilitate development of Community Land Trust		X	X	X
I1	Develop and strengthen neighborhood identity	Provide sense of arrival at neighborhood center	Public art in centrally located plaza near LRT station			X	X
I2		Provide sense of arrival at neighborhood center	Conceptual links at LRT station to surrounding community resources			X	X
I3		develop community capacity	create community coalition action agenda a la O Hello Othello			X	X
I4			Launch Graham street festival - and incorporate planning workshops		X	X	X
I5		increase community input in future planning	facilitate community planning workshops for Light Rail station, parks, and new rights of way		X	X	

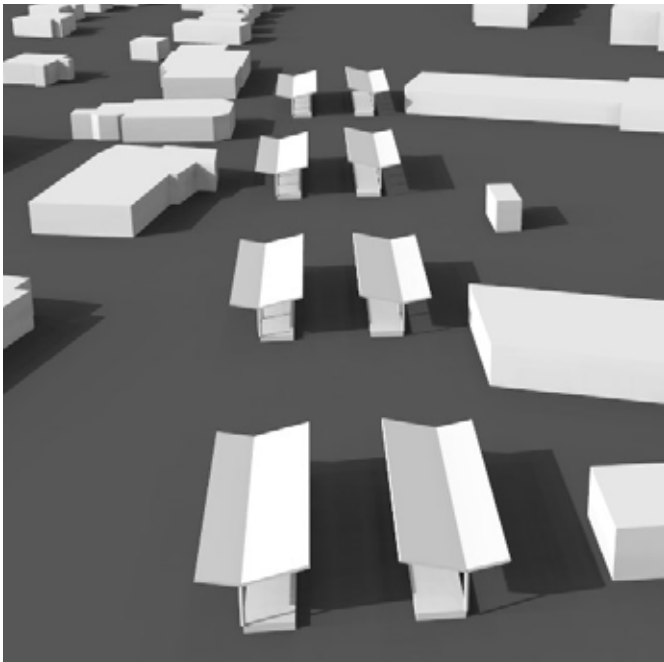


Station Plaza

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod



At-grade trackways, new paving



covered, raised platforms

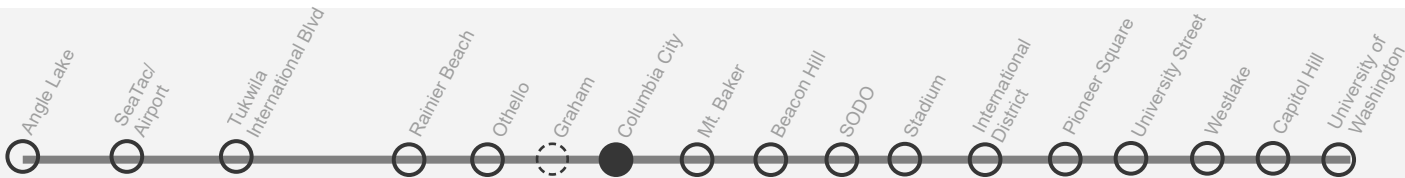
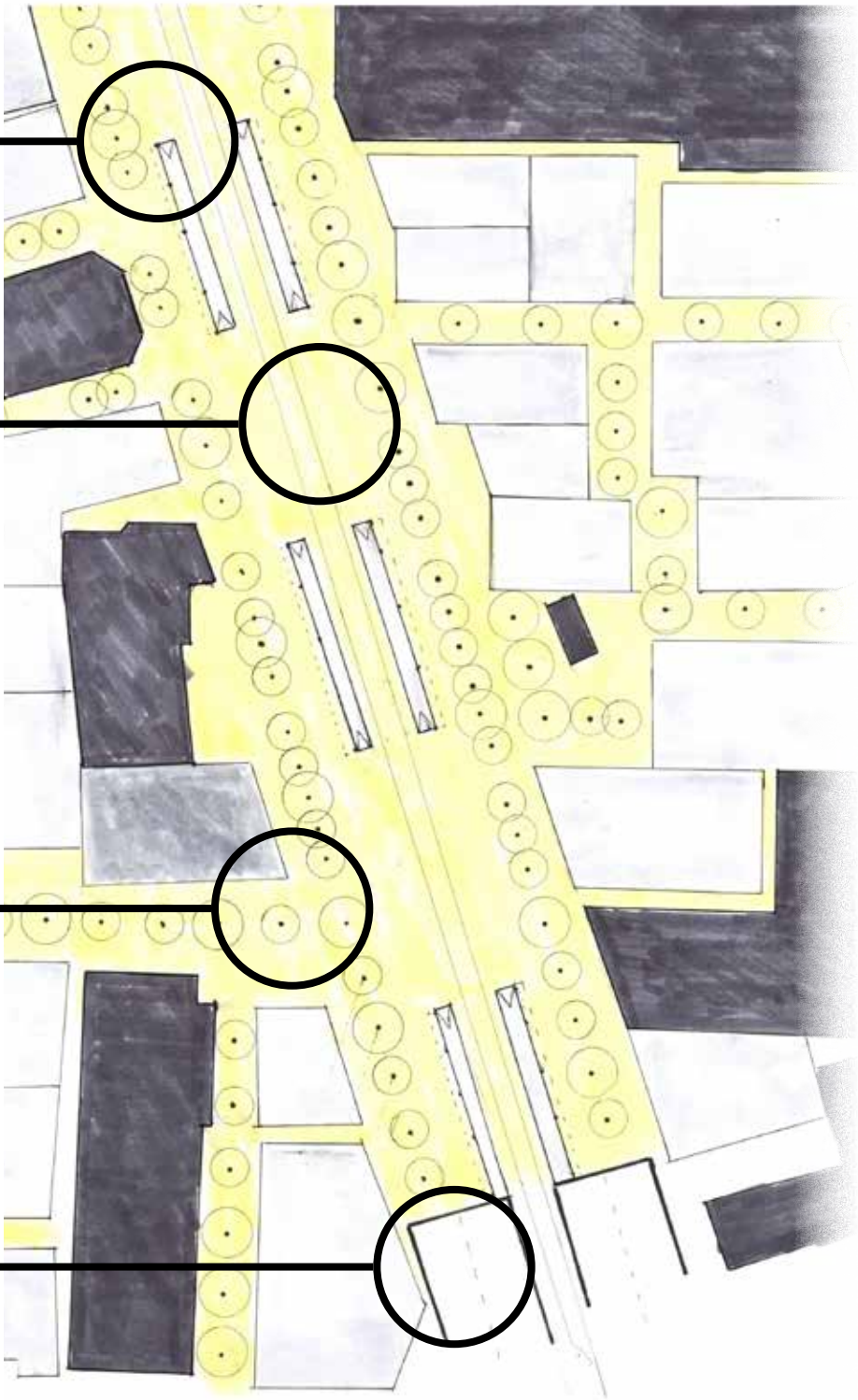
Significant logistical challenges in building a new station are maintaining existing service during the project, and acquiring land for widening the corridor. As MLK is already 200 feet wide, widening for a station would necessitate either removing already narrow sidewalks, or demolishing the few buildings abutting the street. By tunneling from Graham to Raymond streets in stages, impacts to rail service is minimized. The former surface alignment can then be turned over to a streetcar-style pedestrian plaza, creating a welcoming entryway for the neighborhood.

Widened Pedestrian Corridors



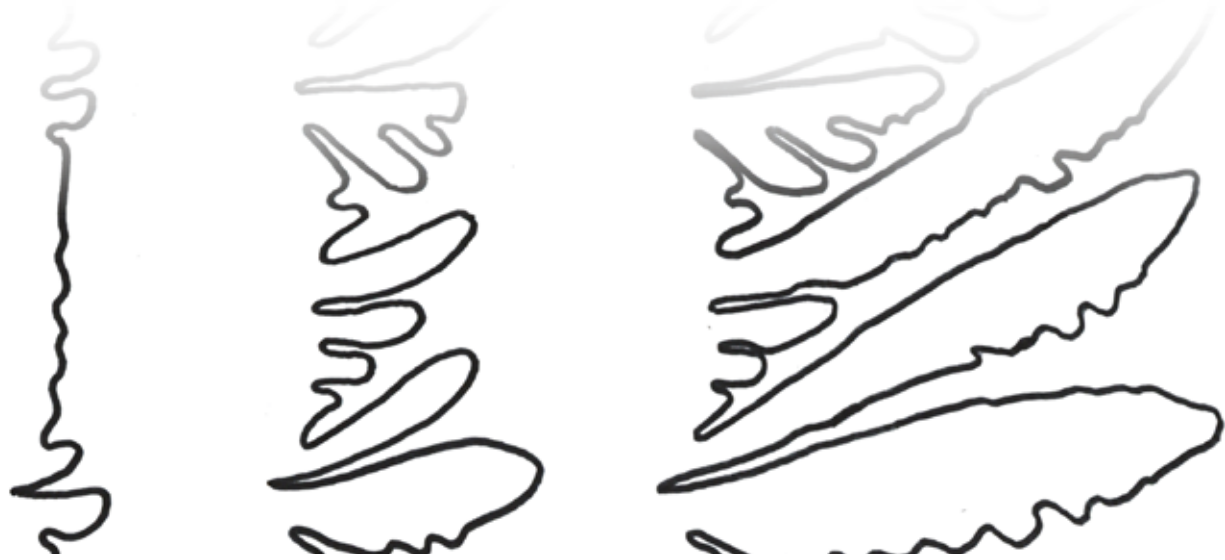
6TH Ave. Transit Mall, Portland (Photos: American Planning Association)

MLK Way moved underground



Patterns of Growth

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture



After the station opens, demand for commercial properties will likely skyrocket, creating the potential for induced development to swallow existing legacy businesses. Preserving all current, structurally sound buildings both hedges against rising commercial rents and affords a space for long-standing businesses to remain in the community long into the future.

Many of the existing structures are irregular in shape or have a difficult relationship to the street front: qualities that make them easy targets for demolition and redevelopment. However, these irregularities have the potential for interesting spatial relationships with new buildings. Leaving them in place and allowing new development to occur around them encourages an organic, crystalline pattern of growth.

Establishing a station plaza and connecting pedestrian routes sets up a framework which, along with existing building and lot restrictions, encourage a finer grain of development and strengthening the spatial identity of the neighborhood.

In the residential side of the neighborhood, like the rest of Seattle, there is already demand for additional housing stock. However, the qualities that make it desirable—affordabil-

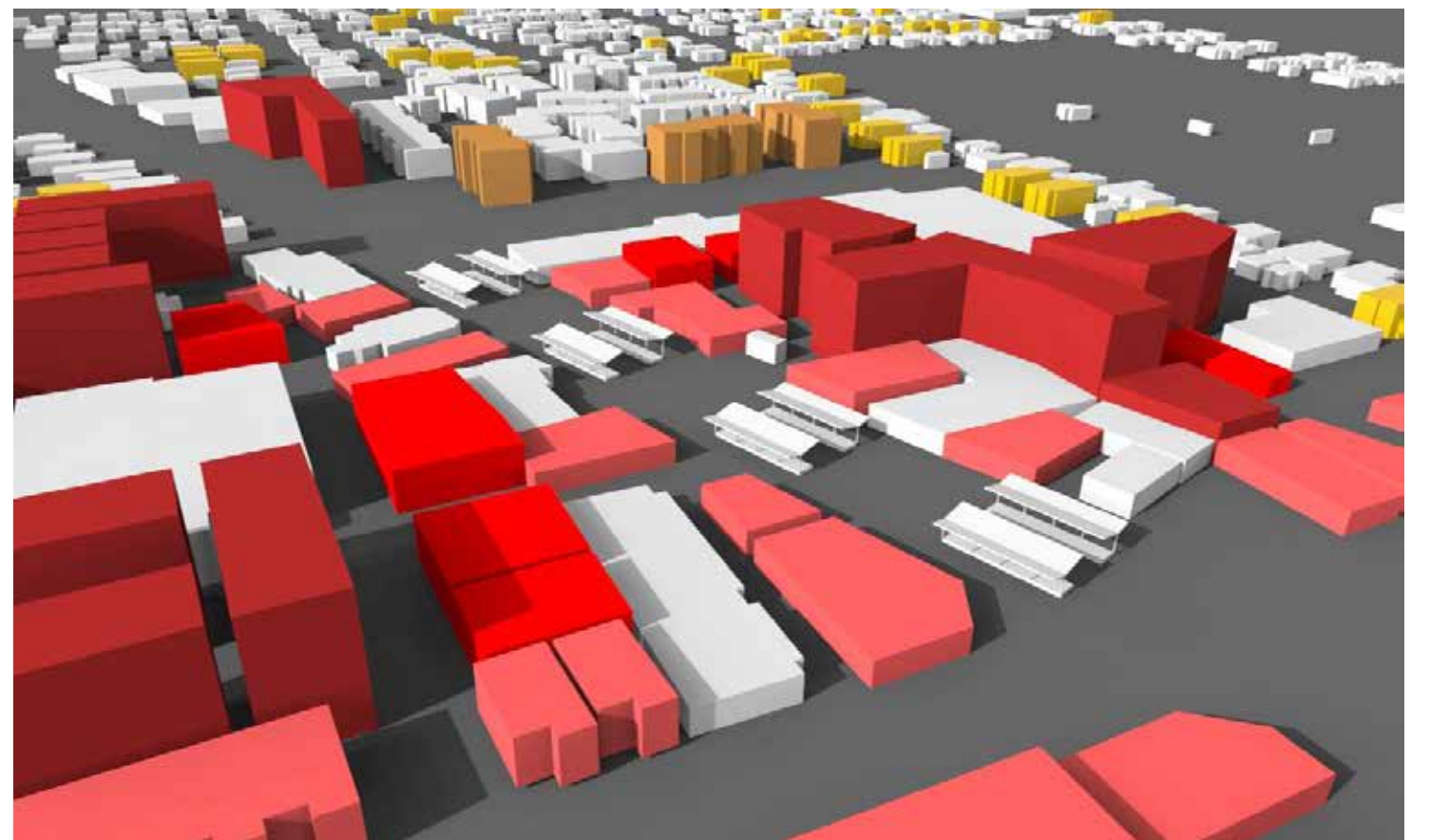
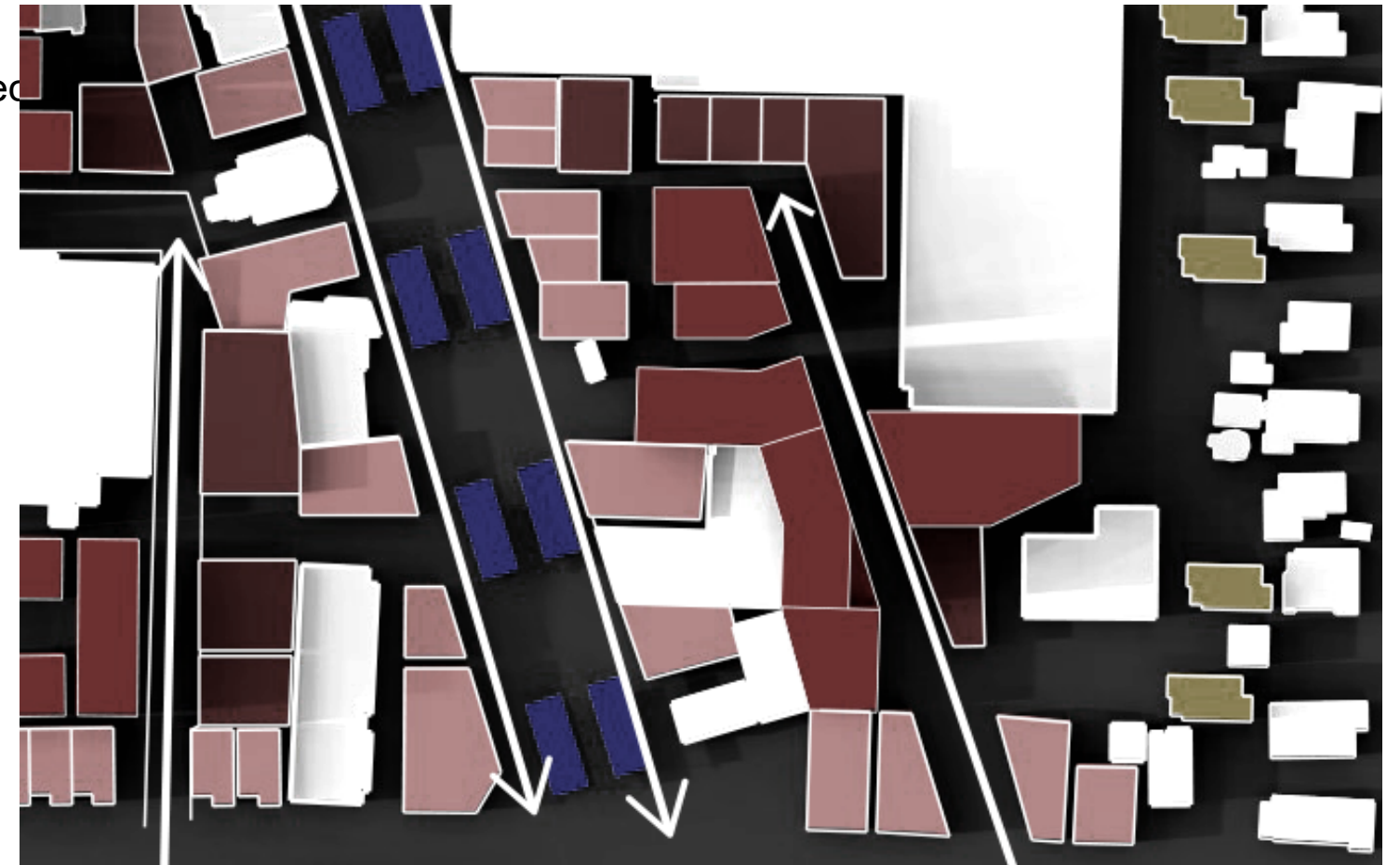
Connection corridors + seeds of growth

ity and a streetcar-suburb scale—are under threat, and would only grow more scarce with a transit station and more robust commercial center.

A similar pattern can be applied on the residential blocks: small infill that intensifies land use, but respects existing residences, maintaining ownership and adding a variety of housing types. Like in the commercial core, this pattern grows around the seed of the existing buildings.

By developing strategies to encourage small, incremental changes, the neighborhood will be able to remain a stakeholder in its own economic future and grow organically—a difficult challenge in Seattle's current climate of expansion.

Density through land coverage—not just height



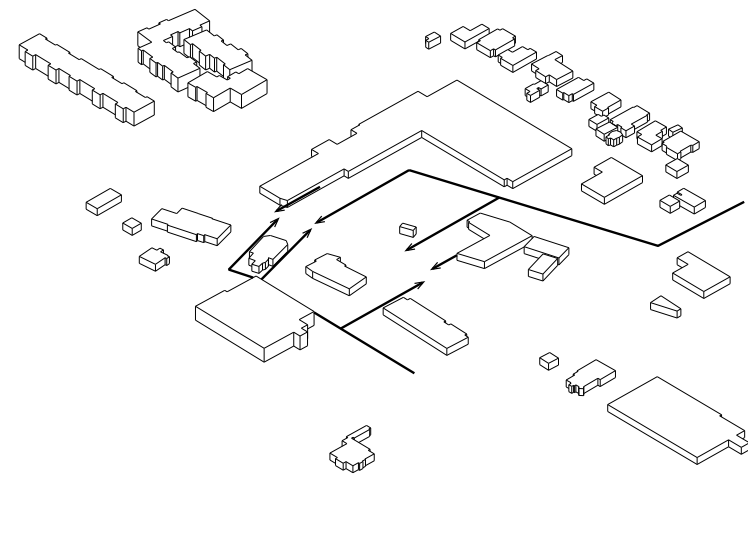
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Patterns for Growth: Commercial Core

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture

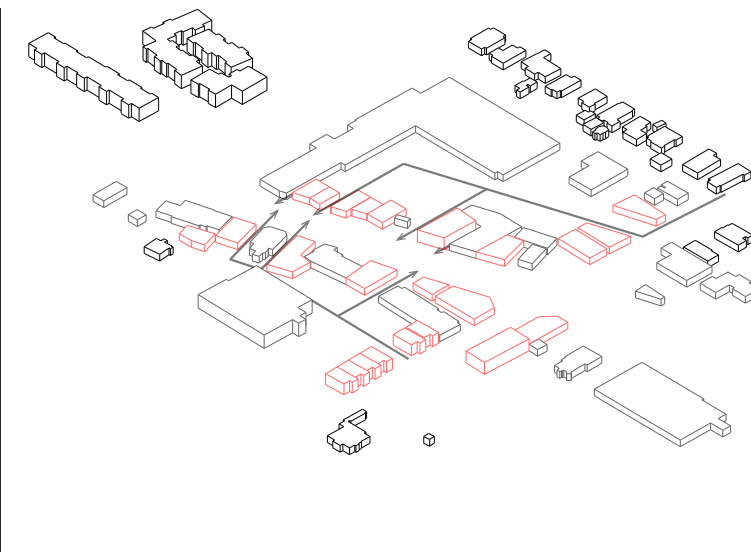


Establishing pathways

Roadway improvements and a station plaza turned over to pedestrians opens up new opportunities for development. In the first phase, small commercial buildings reinforce the plaza corridors with a human-scaled street-wall resembling other districts in the area. Inexpensive, single-use development limits barriers to local and community investment

As pedestrian demands increase and parking needs decrease, mixed-used development occurs along secondary corridors outward from the station. These enliven the routes, provide additional live-work and office arrangements, and take additional pressure off legacy businesses.

Only after these corridors are filled out may taller structures be built. Away from the core district and restricted by limited footprint, buildings can approach a 65' height without becoming monolithic. Accomodating residen-tial demand through multiple smaller buildings encourages diversity in architecture, price, and housing types.

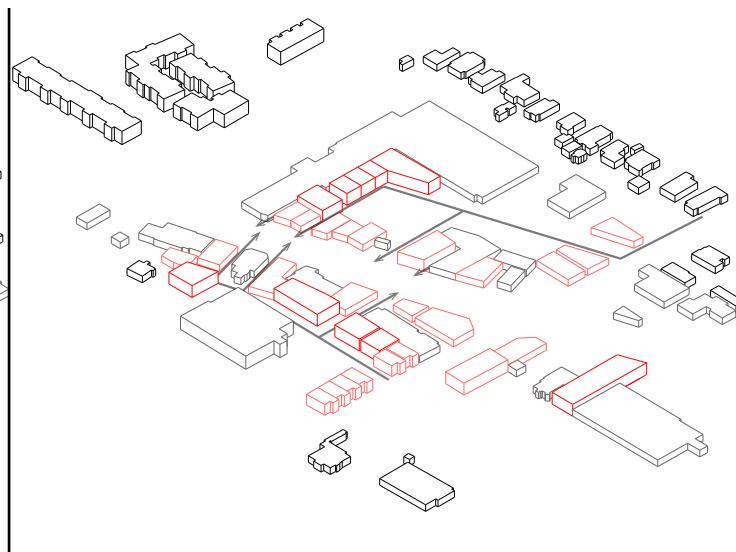


PHASE I: Rebuilding the streetwall

single-story, small retail



Tradewell Bldg, Columbia City (Photo: Macleod)

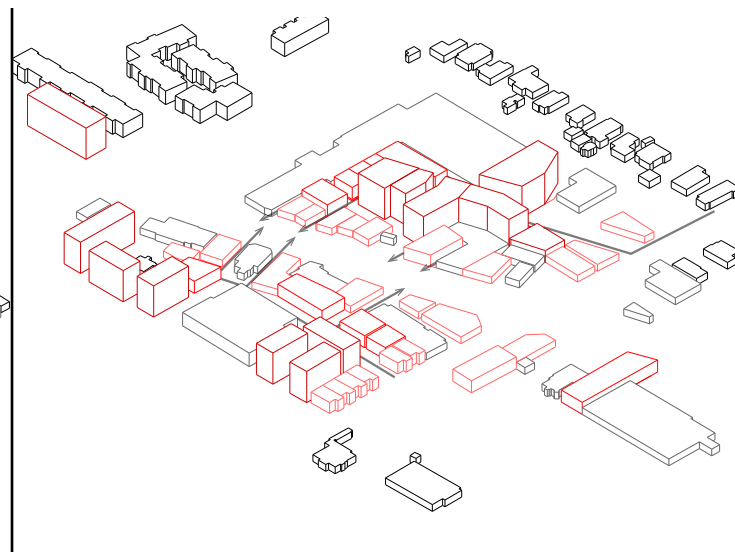


PHASE II: Reinforce connections

two-story, mixed: live-work, retail-office



Yost Bldg, Columbia City (Photo: Macleod)



PHASE III: Fill in the gaps

5+ story, ground-floor retail, housing above



1310 E. Union (Photo: Dunn + Hobbes)



Patterns for Growth: Residential Fabric

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleo

Within a 10 minute walk of the future light rail station there are 27 blocks of single-family housing. Changes in zoning rules will allow gradual infill of diverse housing types in these blocks, increasing housing capacity while preserving the fine-grain neighborhood fabric.

Attached ADUs

— allowed but difficult to build under current zoning

Backyard Cottages (DADUs)

— allowed but difficult to build under current zoning

Small Lot Housing

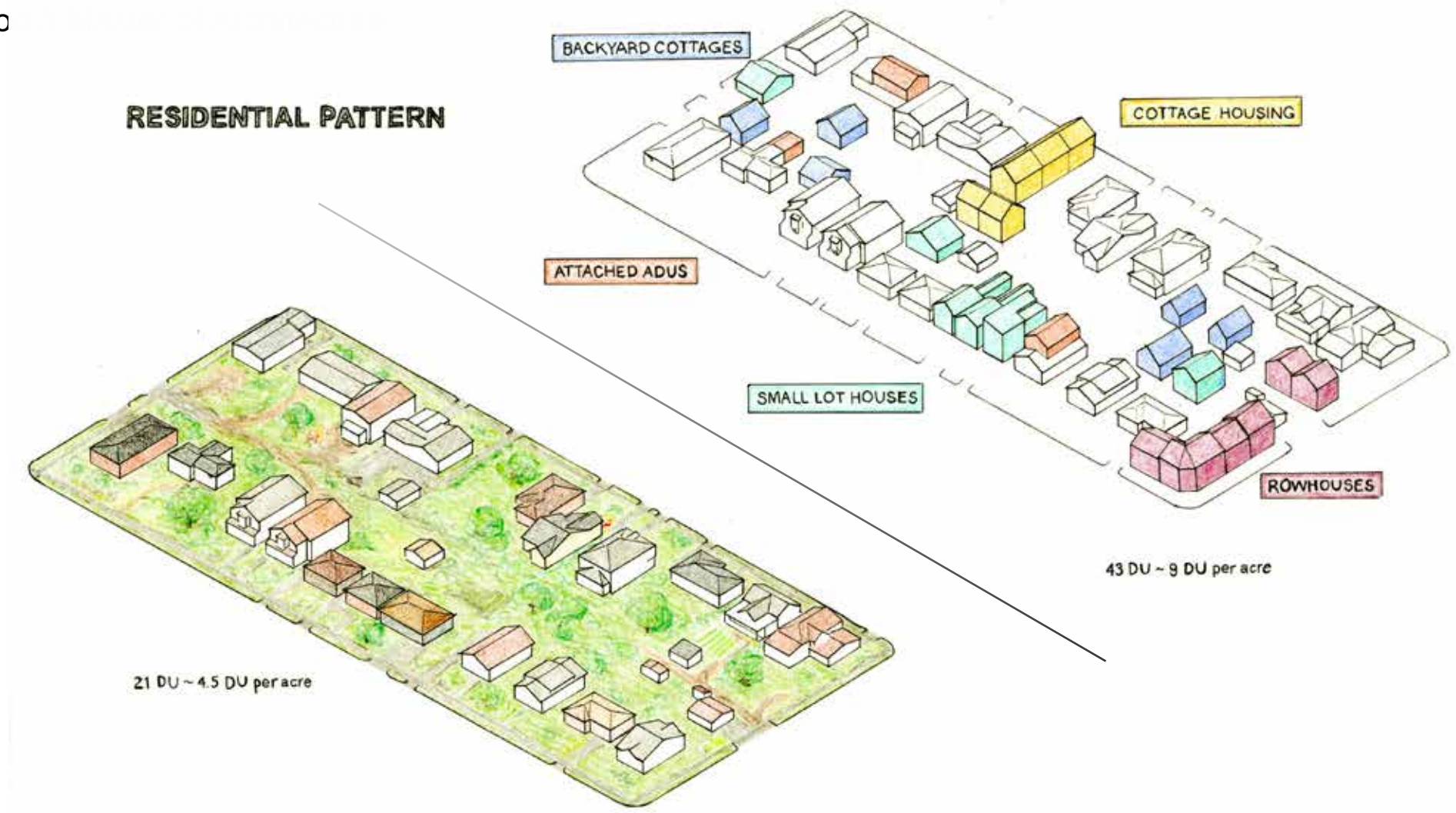
— requires rezone to Residential Small Lot (RSL)

Cottage Housing

— requires rezone to Residential Small Lot/Cottage (RSL/C)

Rowhouses

— require rezone to Low-Rise (LR)



Small-lot House
(Photo:GreenFab)



Attached ADU



Backyard Cottage



Rowhouses

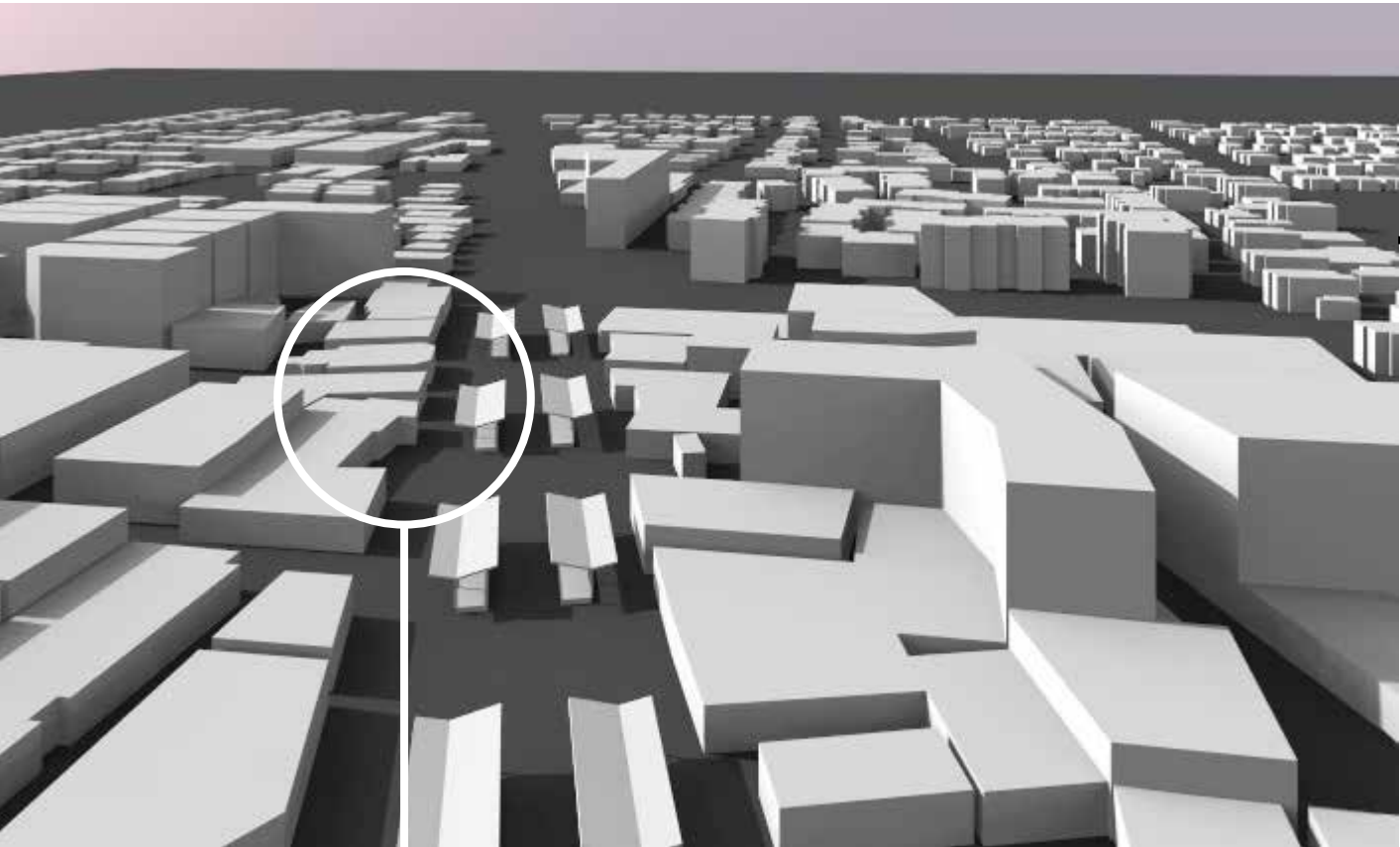


Cottage Housing



Future Buildout

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture



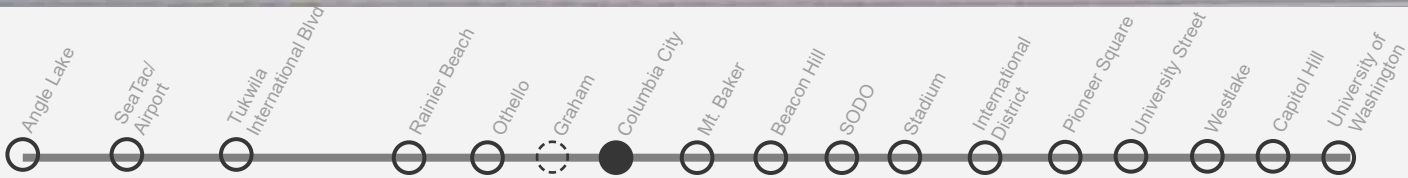
View down MLK, facing NW



- 1-story Commercial
- 2-story / Live-work
- 5+ story Mixed-use
- Residential infill
- Multi-family residential
- Existing structures



One-story infill at station plaza



Full Buildout

By: Ian Crozier // Master of Urban Planning & Ian Macleod // Master of Architecture



Residential to commercial transition



Residential infill patterns

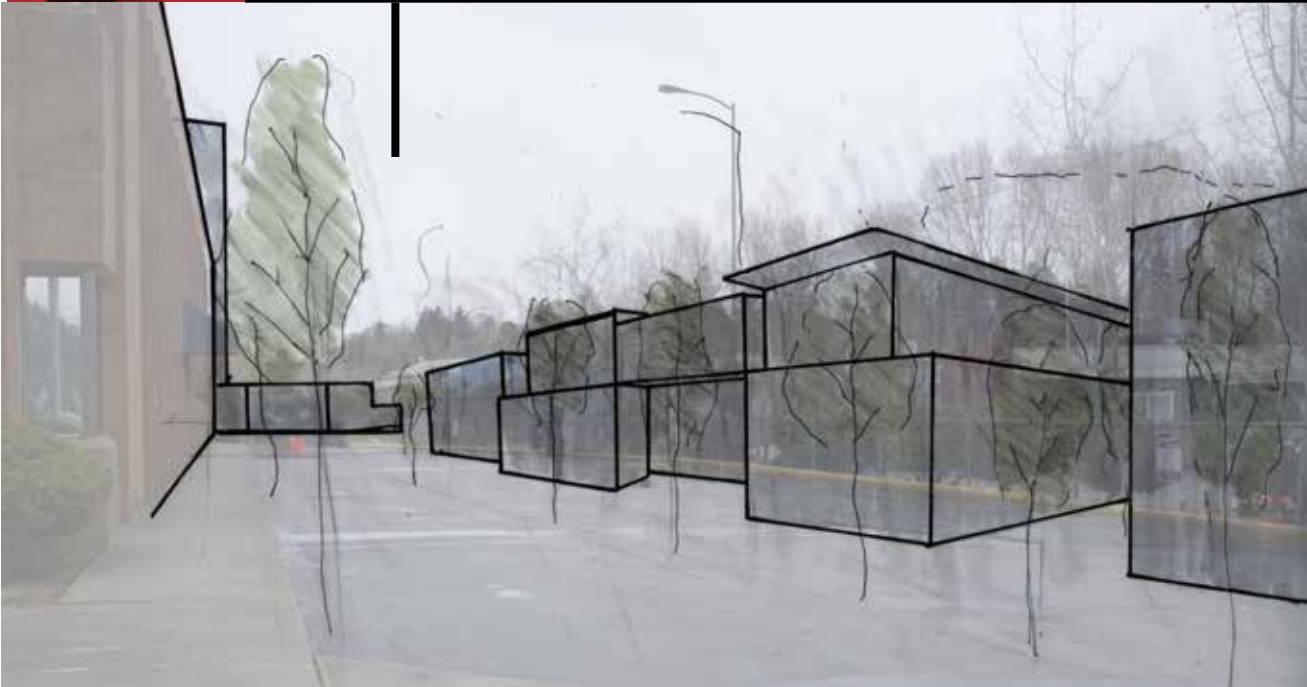


Full Buildout

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Station area, facing NE



37TH Avenue reconnection

