



# NORTH HIGHLINE

# Urban Design

# Standards & Guidelines

PRELIMINARY DRAFT  
FEBRUARY 2022

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## DRAFT COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT

Residing on the traditional land of the Duwamish people, North Highline celebrates its ethnic diversity, inter-generational roots, and our ongoing inclusivity of diverse families and individuals, especially those most isolated and vulnerable. We call out race- and place-based inequities and are committed to dismantling systems of power, privilege, and racial injustice. With mutual support and respect, we value and live out our brilliance and power through community-led initiatives, creating thoughtful development without displacing longtime residents and small business owners, forming and owning the policies that impact us, and building our individual and collective wealth, health, and well-being.

## DRAFT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles support the community vision and were used to inform and direct the development of the Subarea Plan:

- a.** We are proud of our community and continue to share our collective history with others and to invest in this place, our home away from home for current residents and their future generations.
- b.** We support community investments and programs that reduce the risks, and mitigate the impacts, of residential, economic, and cultural displacement.
- c.** We live in thoughtfully designed housing and commercial spaces where intergenerational households and legacy businesses can stay and where affordability and ownership are realized.
- d.** We support a thriving and equitable economy, with ethnically diverse, community minded, small business owners, entrepreneurs, and employers.
- e.** We support residents, especially children, youth, and young adults, with services and resources they and their families need to succeed.
- f.** We promote the development of community-desired amenities to improve aesthetics, enrich the community's diverse physical and cultural assets, and support gathering together as a community.
- g.** We support regulations and investments that result in a safe, secure, and healthy community and compatible development.
- h.** We support residents growing their work interests, skills, and wages.
- i.** We enjoy neighborhoods with accessible and safe streets, roads, and alleyways, with well-connected hiking and biking trails.

## Community Vision

*As part of the work done for the Subarea Plan, the White Center Community Development Association (WCCDA) prepared a vision statement based on what they have learned from the values and priorities of the North Highline community. This vision reflects the aspects of the community's character that are valued, and will guide the formulation of the design standards with the intent that the future of the community will come closer to this aspiration.*

## **SECTION A**

# **INTENT & COMMUNITY VALUES**

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### **A.1. Scope and Intent**

These Design Standards apply to new and substantially improved existing buildings as defined in King County Code (K.C.C.) section 21A.06.1270, commercial, mixed-use and multi-family developments in the North Highline area of unincorporated King County. At the direction of the King County Council, these Design Standards prioritize the pedestrian environment, encourage human-scale design, and reflect the character and cultures of the North Highline community.

### **A.2. Neighborhood Vision & Guiding Principles**

The Design Standards are rooted in the community's vision for their neighborhood and serve to help bring that vision to life. During the outreach phase for the North Highline Subarea Plan, a community vision and guiding principles statement for North Highline's future was created. The outreach done for the Design Standards community vision and guiding principles statement. The Equity Impact Review created for this project details the engagement and findings that influenced these Standards. It is the intent of these Design Standards to create a set of regulations that most fully draw on the vision and desires of the North Highline community for its future, and result in new development that best aligns with those principles.

### **A.3. Community Input**

Community input was important to formulating the Design Standards, and included a community advisory group, walking tours, a digital survey, a visual preference survey, and presence at community events. The development of the Design Standards is also based on weekly meetings with the White Center Community Development Association (WCCDA), to coordinate public input and to coordinate with concurrent projects, particularly the North Highline Subarea Plan. The standards also draw on results of outreach from previous projects such as over a hundred community meetings done during the design of King County Housing's Greenbridge and Seola Gardens developments. Further information on the community input process can be found in the Urban Form and Character Memorandum.

# WHAT THE COMMUNITY VALUES



*Welcoming storefronts with weather protections and lighting*



*Color and signage add character to this business*



*Local pride can be seen in this "White Center" mural*



*Stormwater pond at Greenbridge*



*Fabric and scale of White Center main street*



*Landscaped frontage and entryway protect privacy*

## A.4. Neighborhood Form and Character

Prior to creating Design Standards, the form and character of the neighborhood was analyzed and documented in the Urban Form and Character Memorandum. This analysis serves as a starting point for understanding current conditions and which aspects of North Highline are most valued by the community. The desired neighborhood form and character, based on the analysis and public input, is summarized as follows:

### Neighborhood Character

- The North Highline Subarea has a **distinctive character** and neighborhood form composed of its buildings, public realm, landscape, natural environment, and the infrastructure that supports it. These guidelines are intended to preserve the desirable existing design characteristics and support future enhancements to meet the community's vision by accomplishing these specific goals.

### Neighborhood Composition

- **Traditional neighborhood-scale commercial pattern** - The district will benefit from continuing its pattern of clustered commercial areas composed of sites and buildings scaled to traditional neighborhood-serving businesses and institutions. The core character comes from closely-spaced building adjacent to lining streets, within convenient walking distance of the residential blocks and transit stops. Retention of that scale is of highest priority in the White Center business district on 16th Avenue SW between SW Roxbury Street and SW 100th Street.
- **Human scale** - Derived from its heritage of small homes and neighborhood-serving storefronts, the development pattern has varied elements that convey the human activities within the buildings and sites, and has elements visibly designed to provide amenities attuned to the size and activities of individuals both inside and outside of the sites and structures.
- **Visible cultural diversity** - The cultural diversity of the residents, workers, and business patrons is made visible through distinctive and uniquely designed signage, symbols, design features, and public art relevant to different residents, institutions, enterprises, and visitors.
- **Historic and traditional elements** - Historic buildings and traditional building features are scattered throughout the district and help retain and directly embody the traditional scale of the Highline district as a residential neighborhood with neighborhood-supporting businesses.

### Sites

- **Patterns associated with small parcel sizes and development scales** - Individual site development reflects the established pattern that grew from small parcels with differentiated, closely spaced building frontages and entrances oriented towards the streets, without long expanses of uniform or repetitive buildings or landscaping.

## Public Realm

- **Emphasis on street environments and street edges for pedestrians** - The public realm emphasizes the quality of the environment for pedestrians, providing for continuous interest, universal access, and frequent amenities. As a pedestrian-oriented district, sidewalks are extended where they do not exist today, on-street parking is better organized, without expansive parking lots along street frontage.

## Stormwater

- **Integration of stormwater management and visible landscape features** - In addition to accomplishing other goals, stormwater management improvements in this district should provide visible amenities and planted areas visible from the public realm.

## Landscape

- **Highly varied landscapes** - Derived from the precedence of its fine-grained parcels, individual yards and sites, the district's future landscaping is similarly highly varied and human-scaled, rather than being repetitive.

## Building Design

- **Segmented and varied massing and styles** - The neighborhood-scale size and massing of existing buildings should be the inspiration for shaping future larger buildings; they should incorporate articulated parts or segments with varied expressions, heights, forms, and materials that complement the smaller-scale buildings in the neighborhood. The district also benefits from a mix of architectural styles, and this quality should be maintained, rather than shifting to repetitive and extensive use of a limited architectural aesthetic.

## Distinctive Expression

- **Place-specific design and cultural expressions** - The cultural diversity of the residents and the area's business enterprises is a fundamental asset and is a highly visible feature of the area evident in signage, displays, symbols, wall murals, and public art. This quality should be encouraged as highly visible feature of the area evident in ways that are meaningful and useful for members of the community. Similarly, non-generic signage predominates in the area, reflecting its small business and neighborhood-supporting orientation; custom place-specific signage should be a distinctive and prominent aspect of the district.

## Safe and Welcoming Neighborhood

- The public realm and private development should be seamlessly **connected** as universally accessible environments that promote the **safety** of pedestrians and all those who live, work, and shop within the district.



## SECTION B

# HOW THE STANDARDS ARE USED

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### B.1. Relationship of the Standards and Other Regulations

The Design Standards are part of a set of King County regulations that projects are required to meet. These regulations include the King County Municipal Code, Title 21A, Zoning; King County Road Design and Construction Standards, the King County Stormwater Design Manual, King County Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, and the current version of the International Building Code and other applicable regulations verified by King County Permitting staff.

### B.2. Where the Standards Apply

The Design Standards apply in areas of North Highline zoned for commercial uses, mixed-use, and residential zones where 18 units or more are allowed per acre. Zoning designations include Community Business (CB), Neighborhood Business (NB), Regional Business (RB), Office (O), and Urban Residential zones including R-18 and greater. For multifamily developments these standards apply to developments that of six units or greater. Please see K.C.C. section 21A.04 for complete definitions of each zone. Some of the zones where Design Standards apply also have Overlay designations that need to be considered. Zoning designations supersede Map designations.

### B.3. Process for Using the Design Standards

The process for using the Design Standards is specified in King County Municipal Code, [Title 21A.XXXXX Section 7](#). Forms required for this submittal are found in [Title 21A.XXXXX Section 4](#) of the Design Standards.

The process is summarized as:

1. The applicant has to prepare information relative to the proposed project including: 1) a community outreach plan, 2) a concept-level site analysis, 3) a concept design, 4) a cultural analysis.
2. The applicant has to convene a community meeting to discuss the proposed project and receive community input.

3. The applicant has to schedule a preapplication review meeting with County's staff to go over the requirements.
4. The applicant has to fill in permit application and submit required documents, including 1) a community outreach plan and documentation demonstrating compliance with the community outreach plan, and 2) a development proposal package.
5. Design Review by County Staffs.
6. The applicant can appeal of the design review decision.

## **B.4. Applicant Requirements for Design Standards Review**

In addition to the requirements, King County may request additional information specific to the site's circumstances in order for it to make a recommendation as to whether the proposal complies with the Design Standards.

## **B.5. Design Standards Compliance Checklists**

Project applicants will respond to two Compliance Checklists tied to Design Standards and Guidelines. The first is prepared before the public Pre-Development Meeting, reviewed by the County for completion prior to scheduling the meeting. This checklist forms the structure for the meeting, with community input solicited on the Design Standards and the Guidelines as applied to the specific conditions of the site and the proposed program and design. The materials prepared by the applicant for the checklist will also be made available for comment outside of the meeting itself.

The second checklist is prepared by the applicant as part of the County's normal permitting process. Plans are expected to be responsive to the input received from the community, as determined by County staff based on responses to the checklist (See Section D).

## B.6. Definitions

### **Context Analysis**

A context and site analysis, including but not limited to the location and dimensions of existing adjacent public rights-of-way, including streets, sidewalks, and parking areas; landscape features, drainage elements; and an analysis of the physical context and current uses within 500 feet of the site.

### **Cultural Analysis**

A cultural analysis demonstrating an understanding of neighborhood demographics, historic structures, existing local businesses, art, landmarks and culturally significant elements, including a map of cultural features within a analysis of the cultural context on all parcels within 500 feet of the site.

### **Concept Design**

A concept design, including but not limited to sizing and locations of proposed buildings; proposed building uses; architectural intent, and conceptual building design including elevations and materials; proposed opportunities for cultural expression; proposed pedestrian amenities and bicycle facilities; proposed barrier-free access; proposed parking quantity, location, and access point(s); for multi-family residential proposals, quantity, location, and quality of on-site recreation areas(s); proposed landscape concept; proposed approach to stormwater; proposed approach to managing waste and recycling; phasing (if proposed); a narrative explaining how the proposal addresses the expressed community vision and meets this code section.

### **Public Realm**

The public realm includes the public streets, sidewalks, paths, public open space, and parking areas that are intended for public use. This realm is framed and supported by the adjacent publicly accessible open spaces, landscaping, building frontages that define the “street walls”, and semi-public spaces accessed directly from public sidewalks and places.

### **Community Meeting**

To promote early discussion with the public, according to [Title 21.A xxxx Section C](#), when a proposed development is required to comply with this section, a community meeting shall be convened by the applicant prior to submittal of an application at least two weeks in advance.

# SECTION C

# DESIGN STANDARDS

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## INTENT

*New development can build and strengthen communities in many ways, based on an understanding of the physical and cultural context, and on an understanding of the community's vision for its future.*

## C.1. Contribute to the Physical and Cultural Context

Based on the Context Analysis and Cultural Analysis and documented input from the Public Outreach Meeting, the project applicant will provide written and graphic responses to the ways in which the project addresses the community vision and intent of the Design Standards by contributing to the physical and cultural context of the site.

### C.1.a

#### Contributing to Physical Context

Based on the Context Analysis and input from the Public Outreach Meeting, the project's design will emphasize a distinctive sense of place, enhancing patterns of built fabric where existing, and establishing a desirable urban context in places where physical context is currently less established. Strengthening a sense of place will include such considerations as creating continuity of interest along sidewalks, responding to views of the site from public spaces, using geometric shifts to create character in massing, and retaining existing mature vegetation.

### C.1.b

#### Contributing to Cultural Context

Based on the Cultural Analysis and input from the Public Outreach Meeting, the project's design will contribute to the cultural richness of North Highline by including informal spaces for social interaction, considering the space needs of the community and its demographic breadth, honoring older buildings or historic uses, and encouraging distinctive identities through design, landscape, and art.

## INTENT

Street frontage is an important interface between the public sidewalk and the uses on adjacent private property. The design of the street frontage is intended to support a quality experience along the sidewalk and the appropriate level of interaction with the private property; for example, retaining privacy for residential uses and encouraging retail uses to enliven the sidewalk.

## C.2. Streets and Frontages

Project proponents will determine the street type that fronts on the subject property (see Table 1). For sites with multiple frontages, all street types will be noted. Allowable building frontages vary by street type as shown in Table 2. The Street Type and Frontage Type will be identified for all site frontages.

**Table 1. Street Type**

Street Type	Applicability / Zoning District
Arterials	Arterials are identified as Major, Minor, and Collector Arterials on the Exhibit 1. Arterials frontages apply regardless of the zoning district.
Local Mixed Use	Two lanes non-arterials streets with Community Business (CB), Neighborhood Business (NB), Regional Business (RB), and Office (O) zones.
Local Residential	Non-arterials streets with Urban Residential zones including R-18 and greater. For multifamily developments this street type apply to developments that of six units or greater.
Main Street	All properties that front 16th Ave SW between SW Roxbury Street and SW 100th Street.

**Table 2. Frontage Type**

X=Allowed	Arterials	Main Street	Local Mixed-Use	Local Residential	Setbacks
Linear		X	X		0'
Plaza	X	X	X	X	5' to 25'
Landscape	X		X	X	10' to 20'
Forecourt	X		X	X	0' (+ dimensions for forecourt)
Porch/Stoop/ Terrace			X	X	5' to 15'
Parking					

### C.2.a

#### Attractive and Appropriate Street Frontages

Based on the Street Type that fronts on the project site, or multiple Street Types for corner or larger sites, design a frontage that provides a comfortable and attractive edge to the sidewalk.

### C.2.b

#### Integrating the Street Level with Adjacent Open Space

Where there is open space between the building face at street level and the property line along the sidewalk, integrate the design of the building and the open space to support the building uses and the appropriate level of privacy or interaction.

### C.2.c

#### Variety along the Street Wall

Integrate architectural interest along the street level facade, with variation in terms of plane such as expressing columns, variations in depth at windows, variety in the landscape and other elements that provide interest to people using the sidewalk.

### C.2.d

#### Contributing to Comfort along the Sidewalk

Include continuous and generous overhead weather protection along Main Street frontages and other areas with heavy use of the sidewalk.



## Street Types

As described in Table 1, the following street types determine the allowable building frontages and vary by zoning district.



*Arterials are identified as Major, Minor, and Collector Arterials on the Exhibit 1 - Arterials Map.*



*The Main Street typology is applicable to the portion of 16th Ave SW between SW Roxbury Street and SW 100th Street.*



*Local Mixed-Use Streets are two-lane, non-arterial streets that have commercial or mixed-use zoning.*

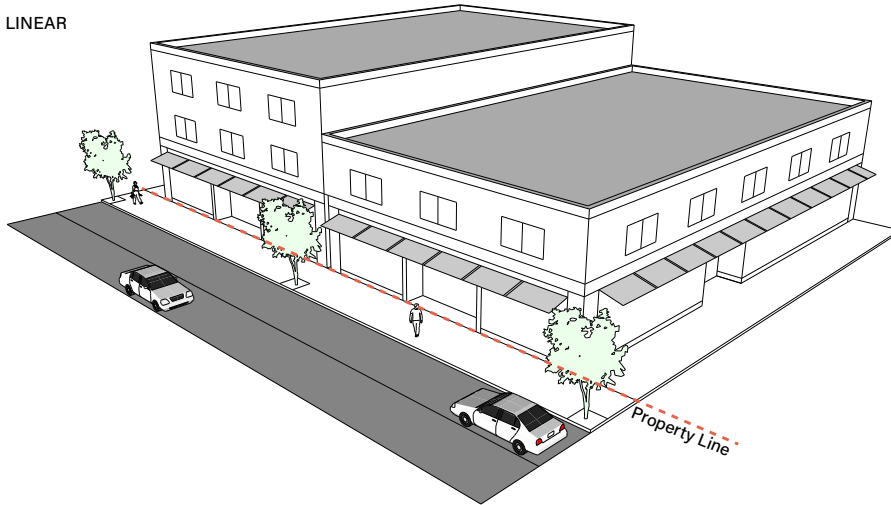


*Local Residential Streets are non-arterial streets with residential zoning.*

## Frontage Types

The project will follow one or more of the following frontage types, based on the frontage street type. Refer also to King County Road Design and Construction Standards.

LINEAR



The linear frontage has no setback from the property line. It is the primary building frontage for pedestrian oriented retail streets and is appropriate for active ground-floor uses as part of non-residential or mixed-used development.

PLAZA



The plaza building frontage includes a public space in the setback between the building and the property line. This frontage type is permitted on retail and mixed-use streets and is appropriate for active uses such as retail, dining, or civic and cultural uses. The plaza must contribute to a welcoming streetscape, and should support human activity, with amenities such as seating, outdoor dining, and activation.

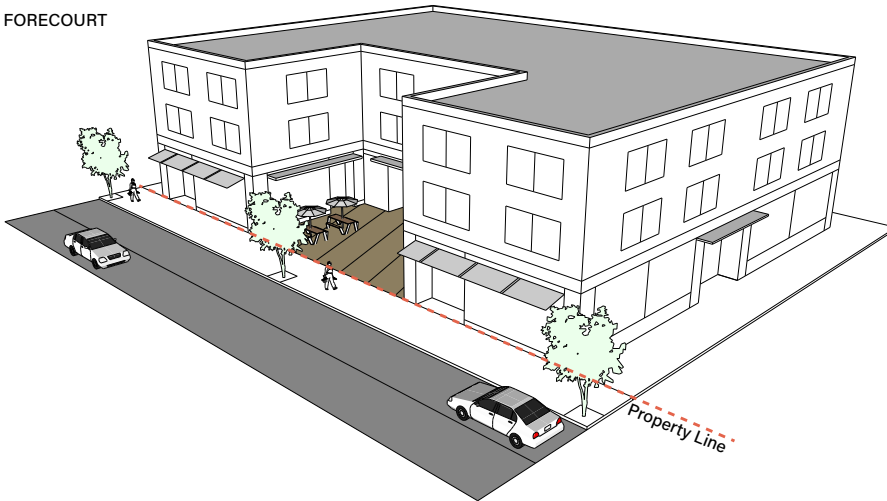
LANDSCAPE



The landscape building frontage includes a landscaped setback between the building and the property line. This frontage type is permitted on mixed-use and residential streets and is appropriate for office and residential uses particularly when on the ground floor.



FORECOURT



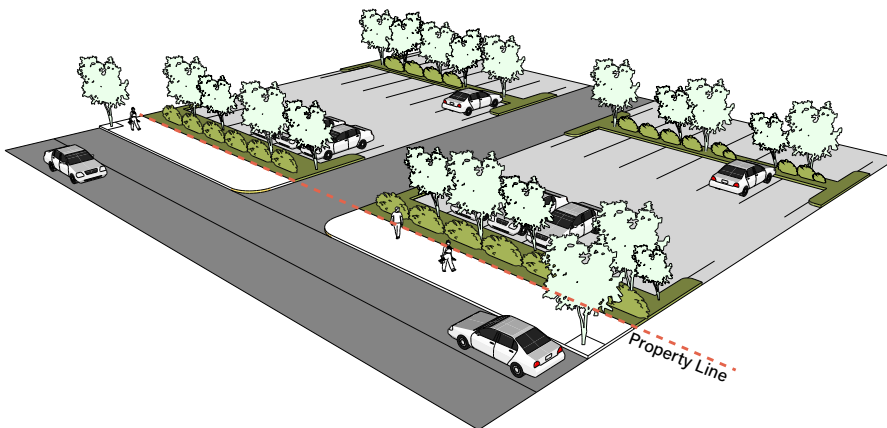
The forecourt building frontage has a defined open or public space at the entrance along the property line. This frontage type is permitted along retail and mixed-use streets and is appropriate for a wide range of land uses and mixed-use development.

PORCH/TERRACE/STOOP



The porch / stoop / terrace building frontage includes a landscaped setback from the property line that accommodates a porch, stoop or terrace at the building's primary entrance. This frontage type is permitted on mixed-use and residential streets and is appropriate for residential and non-retail commercial uses.

PARKING



The parking frontage is the only frontage type with parking along the right-of-way. A landscaped area with trees and understory plantings is required between the property line and the parking area.

## C.3. Site Design

### INTENT

*Site design includes the arrangement of the uses and structures in a way that the project best fits into and contributes to the context of the site. The layers of context include natural systems and features, circulation systems, the architectural, and the cultural context. Community input prioritizes compatibility with the existing scale of the neighborhood, walkability, and generous landscaping.*

*Also refer to King County Zoning Requirements, Title 21A.*

#### C.3.a

### Integrating Natural Systems

Use natural systems, site orientation, natural features and major vegetation as a starting point for project design, take into consideration topography, soils, solar orientation, hydrology, and existing vegetation in the approach to building orientation, energy choices, daylight and shading, and green stormwater infrastructure.

#### C.3.b

### Arranging Buildings and Spaces

Position the buildings and spaces on site with an understanding of the uses and activities for each, and how they connect to and support adjacent public spaces.

- Each area on the site will have a clear function, avoiding “leftover” spaces.
- Open space, including that which is required on-site for residential projects per KCC Section 21A.14.090, will be located in an area that is safe, with good solar access, and designed to meet the needs of the building residents, with seating and play equipment. The design will respond to community preferences from the Public Outreach Meeting.

#### C.3.c

### Connecting to Circulation Systems

Access points will be arranged and designed to integrate effectively into the system of streets and pedestrian routes.

- Parking will be accessed from alleys where an alley exists. If there is no alley, parking access will prioritize pedestrians.
- In the placement of buildings on site, prioritize pedestrian access and associated spaces over access for cars, parking, and service areas.
- Bicycle access should be easy and safe, with bicycle parking facilities that are convenient and secure.

#### C.3.d

### Accessibility and Welcome

Projects will be designed to accommodate people of all ages and abilities, welcoming people from the diverse cultural backgrounds of North Highline.

Projects will provide access for people of all abilities with an equal level of quality for accessible routes, designing with the spirit of universal design for the benefit of all.



The site plan for the BelRoy Apartments in Seattle added a set of new buildings to a historic building, creating a variety of building types, building heights, and shared open spaces.



Roberto Maestas Plaza has a strong architectural concept that connects a central plaza with adjacent active uses and culturally rich art related to the Centro de la Raza. 7 Directions Architects/SMR

## C.4. Public Realm Design

### INTENT

*Public realm includes the places accessible to everyone, where people can move comfortably, spend time, and gather. The design of the public realm includes those spaces themselves and what is visible from them, including the buildings and landscape. The intent of public realm design is a streetscape that is attractive and comfortable for moving through the neighborhood and spending time in it, that reflects the culture of the community, and supports neighborhood activities and businesses. Community input prioritizes compatibility with the existing scale of the neighborhood, walkability, and generous landscaping.*

*Refer also to King County Road Design and Construction Standards*

### C.4.a

#### Streetscape

Improvements to the sidewalk and the streetscape required by the zoning code and the King County Road Standards will be designed in a way that will encourage walking and moving through the neighborhood for people of all ages and abilities. The design will encourage social interaction, support local businesses, and highlight the varied cultures of North Highline.

Provide ample space for people's movement and activity, including pulling the building back from the sidewalk property line if space in the right-of-way is insufficient. Refer to the Frontage Diagrams above.

Amenities are expected along the building frontage; examples of amenities include seating and other street furniture, lighting, year-round landscaping, seasonal plantings, human-scale signage, well-crafted façade details, art, awnings, display windows, and outdoor retail displays.

### C.4.b

#### Creating Spaces for the Public

Paths and connections will be designed to be safe and accessible for people walking and moving on wheels including bicycles, wheelchairs, scooters, and skateboards.

Where surface parking lots are provided, there will be a well-marked, properly lit, accessible pedestrian route to the primary building entry and a secondary entry if applicable.

On projects with street frontage over 200 linear feet on a single frontage, a pedestrian through-route is required. It may be through the building interior so long as it is open to the public during business hours.

Some sites are adjacent to key active transportation routes such as SW 98th Street that connects Greenbridge and the heart of White Center, or the path along White Center Pond. Buildings facing key routes will orient windows toward such routes.

### C.4.c

## Creating Spaces for the Public

If a project with a retail street level has over 150 linear feet of frontage, a minimum of one outdoor publicly accessible space is required between the right-of-way and the building. Minimum dimensions of that space are 200 square feet, with a minimum dimension of 6 feet. The minimum area of the outdoor space is 200 square feet, with minimum dimensions of 6 feet. This is not required along Main Street frontages.

### C.4.d

## Supporting Activity in the Public Realm

Promote year-round activation in public spaces by creating a strong connection between indoor and outdoor spaces, providing amenities to encourage and support positive social behaviors, and orienting interior activities so that there is good visual access to outdoor areas.

Projects will support active zones between the building and the right-of-way with a set of amenities; examples include movable seating, tables, umbrellas, opportunities for dining, merchandise displays, decorative lighting, art, water features, seasonal heaters, and publicly available wi-fi.

A mix of landscaping and plaza space is required, with at least two amenities included in the design of any space over 60 square feet.



*Public spaces encourage and support a variety of functions to meet a range of community needs.*

## GREENCENTER SCORE

*Because a greener North Highline will need to be accomplished in large part through private development, the Design Standards use a tool that has proven to be very successful in the adjacent neighborhood in Seattle, and in cities such as Berlin, Germany, and Malmo, Sweden, requiring new development to incorporate plantings and green stormwater infrastructure on private property and optionally in the adjacent public streetscape.*

### **Value of Generous and Sustainable Landscape**

*The benefits of trees, sustainable landscaping, and open space are well documented. As urban areas densify, these benefits are even more needed for new residents. Providing both increased density and, at the same time, sufficient green space, has been a challenge for growing cities.*

*To address this challenge, a growing number of cities around the world are adopting some variation of a points-based system requiring sustainable landscaping with new development. These include Washington DC's Green Area Ratio, Seattle's Green Factor, and Berlin's Biotope Area Factor.*

*In order to address the desires expressed by the community for usable, culturally responsive spaces, the GreenCenter calculations favor usable space over green roofs and walls.*



*North of Roxbury Street, the City of Seattle Green Factor applies to new development, and results in the kind of streetscape desired per North Highline community input.*

## C.5. Stormwater and Landscape Design

### INTENT

*Rainfall is part of a natural cycle that can be treated in sustainable and attractive ways. The intent of the Design Standards for stormwater and landscape is to connect the urban environment to the natural systems with designs that are both functional and beautiful. Community input prioritizes compatibility with the existing scale of the neighborhood, walkability, and generous landscaping.*

*Refer also to King County Surface Water Design Manual, King County Code Landscape and Water Use Development Standards, Section 21A.16, and requirements for residential open space in Title 21.*

### C.5.a

#### Integrated, Usable Landscape

Landscape design will be a fundamental component of the design of the project, contributing environmentally and aesthetically to the character of the neighborhood.

### C.5.b

#### Functional and Attractive Stormwater Solutions

Stormwater design will be functional, environmentally sound and aesthetic, contributing to the character of the neighborhood, and to the understanding of natural systems for people in the neighborhood.

### C.5.c

#### Ensuring Sufficient and Sustainable Landscape

The GreenCenter Scoresheet will provide a mechanism for ensuring that green stormwater infrastructure and biomass are part of each project, with design decisions made for maximum contributions to ecology and neighborhood character.

The GreenCenter score is required to be a total of 0.3, or what could be considered the equivalent of 30% of the site with landscape materials. This score can be achieved in the way that the project proponent deems best, using a variety of options including trees and plantings, permeable paving, green roofs, etc (see p44 GreenCenter Scoresheet).

Landscape is still required to meet the Development Standards for landscaping and water use in KCC Title 21A.16, and a maintenance agreement with the County is required for landscape within the right-of-way or other publicly-owned property.

Permeable paving and structural soil credits cannot count for more than one-third of the GreenCenter score. It is not an acceptable material in the public right-of-way.



*Examples of beautiful stormwater treatment in an urban setting. (SvR/MIG)*

## C.6. Building Design

### INTENT

*The Design Standards for buildings are intended to promote a level of thoughtfulness and quality in newly developed buildings.*

*Refer to the land use regulations in King County Title 21A and the current version of the International Building Code adopted by King County.*

### C.6.a

#### Architectural Concept

Buildings, and groupings of buildings, will have a coherent and attractive design concept appropriate for the site and its surroundings. An acceptable architectural concept will be specific to the circumstances of the context and will support a building program appropriate to the neighborhood vision. It will include thoughtful design at all scales, from massing to materials and detailing.

### C.6.b

#### Relationship to the Block

Corner sites will address both adjoining streets with pedestrian-oriented uses and elements appropriate to the context and building program.

Mid-block sites will take into account the users of the buildings on either side (if existing), with window placement to retain privacy.

### C.6.c

#### Modulation

Sites with frontages over 100 feet in length will have modulation at least every 50 linear feet of façade, with a minimum of 6 feet of inset. Inset balconies may be substituted for modulation up to 100 feet of façade length.

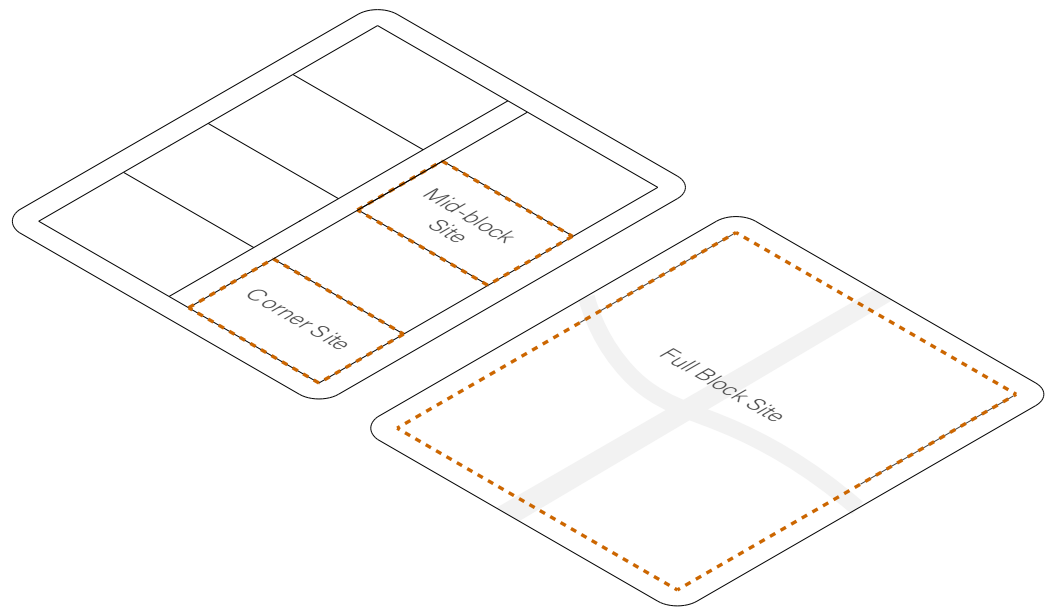
### C.6.c

#### Entries

Commercial storefronts will have entry doors available for every 40 feet of linear frontage in order to allow the street level to be subdivided for smaller retail uses.



Hirabayashi Place, in Seattle's International District, has a clear architectural concept that provides both consistency and interest, using modulation of well-proportioned solid elements and recessed grouped windows. Artist-created panels are based on Japanese fabric, appropriate for a building that honors Japanese-American civil rights hero Gordon Hirabayashi. (InterIm/Mithūn)



This diagram illustrates different relationships of sites to blocks. For corner sites or large sites such as the full block site shown, the Design Standards apply to each street frontage.

Left: Examples of modulation breaking down building mass.

Right: Inset balconies offer changes of depth in the facade.

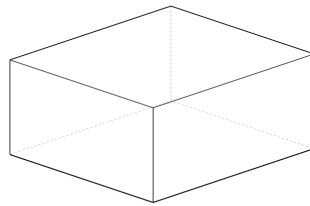
(Midtown Center, by Weinstein A+U and Lake Union Partners)



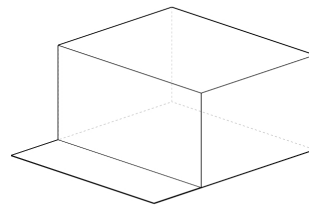
**C.6.d****Building Bulk and Massing**

Buildings will incorporate, in a manner consistent with the overall design concept, a coherent set of design techniques to create a sense of human scale. The project proponent will describe how the architectural concept relates to building massing that fits with its surroundings.

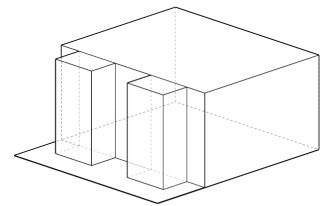
- These design techniques include modulation, setbacks, varied roof forms, variations in plane, material and color changes, and balconies. The design of scale elements will consider rhythm, proportions, and detailing consistent with the overall design concept.
- Variety in height is encouraged, and buildings with over 100 feet of façade length will include a variety of height in their massing.
- Building massing should respect transitions between zones. Where buildings are adjacent to zones with lower heights, the portion of the building with height variation will be lower, with a minimum width of 30 feet.



*Massing*



*Setback*



*Modulation*

**C.6.e****Reflecting Culture**

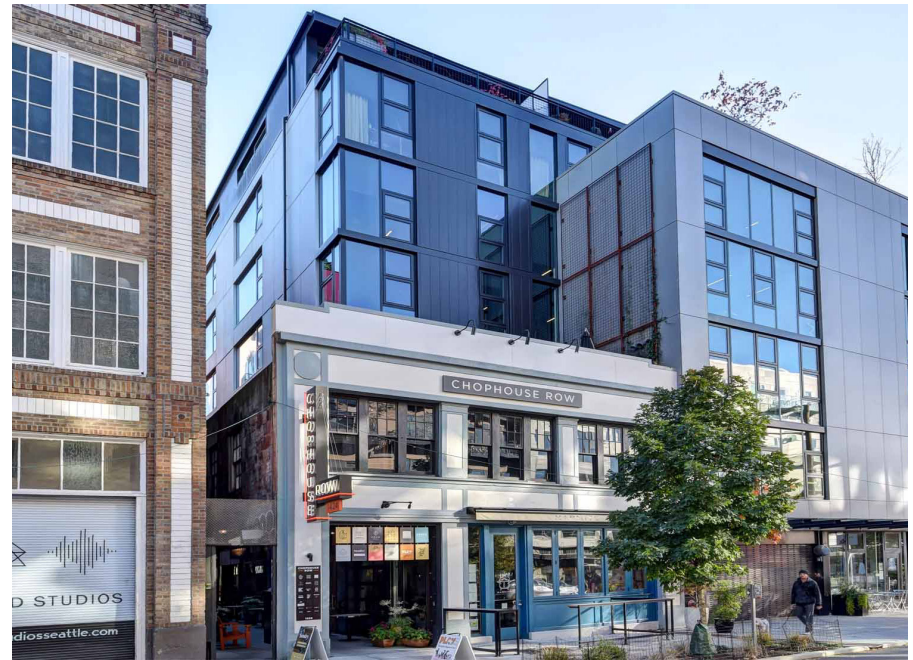
Building programming and design will reflect the diverse cultures of North Highline and be tailored to community needs. The project proponents will incorporate cultural design strategies and elements based on input from the community gathered during the Public Outreach Meeting.

**C.6.f****Supporting Social Connections**

The design will encourage informal social connections on the site and in the building by including focal points in the building where people pick up their mail, do their laundry, or perform other daily activities.



*This example makes use of a set-back ground level and contrasting materials to create generous space and reduce building volume. (Left: KIRIN Apartment. Right: Rally Mixed-Use Development. By Jonhston Architects)*



*Example of mid-block site using side setback to create interesting interior public access for through-space. (Chophouse Row)*



*Scale elements include textured material, exposed structural elements, and window patterning*



*Different building heights add interest and variety*



*Example of building with variety of height. (Unity Village)*



*Panels and soffit along the street include artwork by artists rooted in the Black community at Seattle's Central District.*



*This building at Seattle's Central District include details on the canopy edge incorporate by African art motifs.*

## C.6.g

### Architectural Details and Features

Architectural detailing will convey a sense of craft, thoughtfulness and scale that relates to the overall architectural concept of the building.

- Commercial and Mixed-Use buildings will be designed with a permeable and attractive interface along the public streetscape, supporting active uses.
- Residential buildings will provide varied, human scale to the design character and features at the street level, using landscape and landscape elements to ensure privacy for ground level units and usable space within any setbacks.

## C.6.h

### Glazing

Glazing in storefront windows will have low reflectivity. Smash-proof glass is encouraged at street level.



*The Wadajir development in Tukwila includes a transparent and a facade that opens to the street connecting a community-desired use with an amenity-filled exterior space (Forterra/Mithun Architects)*



*Strong landscape treatment and grade changes creates privacy for ground level units (Greenbridge, King County Housing Authority)*

**C.6.i** Design in the White Center Core

For buildings along the Main Street segment of 16th Avenue SW between SW Roxbury Street and SW 100th Street, architectural details and features will take cues from the historic building stock of White Center, including the carpentry at street level windows, attention to lighting, signage, and materials. The project proponent will describe the measures taken in the design to relate to the historic precedents that add to the character of White Center

**Facade Terminology**



**Example: Facade Character Elements**



## Example: Facade Character Elements

Strong, simple design provides rhythm at the street and individuality for store fronts

Signage opportunities for wall-mounted signs above and projections for blade signs

Outdoor tables and seating



## Example: Facade Character Elements

Integrated canopy offers weather protection and opportunities for lighting

Facade pulled back from property line adds sidewalk space and reduces need for vestibule

Property line



## Example: Facade Character Elements

Generous overhang provides weather protection

Multilingual signage highlights the cultural diversity of North Highline



## Example: Facade Character Elements

Integrated canopy offers weather protection and opportunities for lighting

Generous display windows turn the corner

Pavement

Base has durable materials





## Example: Facade Character Elements



Plantings

Art

Street display

Seating and tables

## Example: Facade Character Elements



Iconic canopy highlights the entry

Detailing at entry

Prominent signage at pedestrian eye level

C.6.j

### Sustainability

Buildings are expected to provide sustainable design solutions, including renewable materials, passive solar heating and cooling, the use of renewable energy sources, and reductions in energy use relative to minimum building code requirements.

C.6.k

### Service Areas

Service uses such as trash and utilities will be functional and accessible to users, but screened from public view by incorporating them within buildings, walls, fences, or landscaping.



Example of sustainable design strategies for Othello Square affordable housing (SKL Architects)

## C.7. Design for Distinctive Identity

### INTENT

North Highline's diverse cultures, tradition of small, neighborhood-oriented enterprises, and "quirkiness" are highly valued and fundamental to its character. The intent of the Design Standards is to keep the neighborhood's diversity visible and to promote distinctive, unique designs through architectural features, signage, display space, transparency, art, landscape, and amenities such as seating, lighting and ornament. The project proponent will describe the approaches to expression that are incorporated into the architectural concept and site design, addressing each of the following strategies.

### C.7.a

#### Signage that Expresses Character and Cultural Diversity

New building, project and business signage for local businesses should continue the tradition of North Highline's custom-designed and expressive signage. Design will offer multiple signage opportunities for retail uses. Project proponents will describe the approach to signage and how it relates to North Highline in the Public Outreach Meeting.

- The principal sign of any building or establishment must be unique and custom designed. Such signs may include logos, colors or other brand-identifying elements, but the overall sign must not be generic or identical to a sign in any other location.
- Multi-lingual signage is encouraged.
- Flashing or moving images are not allowed.



White Center's character is expressed in facades and architectural elements with personality and a sense of humor.



Much of White Center's signage is a prominent design feature and unique to local businesses.

**C.7.b**

**Art and Murals Rooted in Community Values and Community Artists**

New development is expected to draw on the character of White Center and the tradition of integrating murals and art.

- Blank walls extending more than 20 feet are not allowed along sidewalks except under exceptional circumstances. Where blank walls are unavoidable, murals, graphics, or other decorative motifs are required.



*White Center's murals express the varied cultures of the community.*

**C.7.c**

**Landscape Design that Adds to Neighborhood Character**

Creative landscape design is distinctive, attractive, and has functional characteristics. The project proposal will describe how the landscape plan adds to neighborhood character and supports the cultural diversity of North Highline.



*Vines provide shading and an attractive canopy along the building front conjunction. (Mint Plaza, CMG Landscape Architects)*



*Landscape and murals in this pocket park were done in conjunction with artists. (Tenderloin National Park, San Francisco, Photos by Luke Thomas)*

**C.7.d**

**Distinctive Identity of Commercial Storefronts**

The project will provide many opportunities for unique and distinctive identity in the design of façades and storefronts, displays, or other features.

**C.7.e**

**Distinctive Identity of Residential Entries and Facades**

Residential building entries will incorporate amenities or features at the entries that are distinctive, attractive identifiers. These may include culturally relevant art, architectural elements such as doors or canopies, or landscaping. Units in the building will have opportunities on the façade for expression and personalization with a preference for usable balconies. Open spaces and play areas will also include distinctive features, such as seating and play elements that are supportive of residents such as children and elders.



*This entry to the Liberty Bank building in Seattle has a distinctive entry with art by artist deeply connected to the neighborhood (Irvin & Al Dogget)*

**C.7.f**

**Offices that Contribute to Neighborhood Character**

Offices will be designed to add character to the neighborhood by providing and expressing scales and variety that are distinctive characteristics of North Highline with its tradition of small-scale residential and neighborhood-supporting commercial buildings. This may be achieved with a combination of articulated masses, varied roof forms, varying cornice or parapet, heights, bays, balconies, or other scaling elements.



*Office buildings can be shaped, rather than “boxy”, and can incorporate outdoor spaces.*

## C.8. Design for a Safe and Welcoming Neighborhood

### INTENT

*Perceptions of being safe and welcome vary for different people. In terms of the Design Guideline intent, making a space more welcoming can actually contribute to making it safer. Increasing public interactions and supporting more positive interactions builds the sense of community that ensures that friends, families, and neighbors know one another, trust one another, and look out for one another. This intent also goes along with best practices for accessibility, lighting, and visibility.*

#### C.8.a

### General Lighting

Lighting will be considered for the entire site, with special attention to pedestrian paths, vestibules, and service areas.

The landscape and lighting design will be designed so that fixtures are not obscured as trees and plantings mature.

Lighting will support universal access and the needs of people with limited mobility and sight in lighting design.

Projects will provide sufficient light at directional and informational signs for legibility at night.

Lighting will be shielded to prevent light pollution.

Lighting levels will meet the best practice standards

#### C.8.b

### Lighting along Street-Facing Façades

Lighting on the street facing façade will include fixtures with lighting levels oriented at pedestrian areas and the sidewalk.

Lighting levels should be designed so that people can recognize faces of people nearby, and limit extreme contrasts within pedestrian areas, with higher lighting levels at site and building entrances and within publicly-accessible spaces.

Glare should be avoided for pedestrians, drivers, and adjacent properties.

#### C.8.c

### Lighting in Parking Lots

Parking lots will have a consistent level of lighting that limits substantial contrasts to provide for safe use after dark.

Light standards will be a maximum of 15 feet high.

#### C.8.d

### Window Locations

Locate windows from interior activity areas, such as living areas and kitchens, to overlook sidewalks, paths and other outdoor usable spaces, rights-of-way, or other publicly-owned property.

#### C.8.e

### Alcove Design

Avoid low lighting levels or substantial contrast relative to higher lighting levels in places of potential entrapment. Consider wide alcoves, angled walls, or pulling the street façade back from the sidewalk to allow outswinging doors instead of vestibules, and gates at service doors.

## **SECTION 4**

# **DESIGN STANDARDS**

# **FORMS + CHECKLIST**

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## NORTH HIGHLINE

DESIGN STANDARDS &  
GUIDELINES

# PRE-DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC MEETING MATERIALS

## Checklist for Applicants and Reviewers

### Street Frontage Types

What Street Type(s) does the project front on?  
What is the linear footage along the street(s)?  
Which building frontage type(s) are you proposing?

### Context Analysis

**Show:** Context and Site Analysis

**Describe:** Include provisions of Section 2d. of the Design Standards.

### Site Design

**Show:** Proposed Concept Site Plan

**Describe:** How does project's proposed design meet the Site Design Intent?  
Describe the publicly accessible spaces and open spaces and their functions; the building footprint and first floor uses; pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle access, and service functions. Describe the project's strategies for contributing to the public realm, meeting the overall goals of the Goals for Neighborhood Form and Character, and how the project approach best meets the expressed community values.

### Public Realm Design

**Show:** Proposed Public Realm Plan

**Describe:** How does project's proposed design meet the Public Realm Design Intent?  
Describe the ways in which the project will add to the available space for the public and increase the vitality of public space, how it fits into the context as analyzed, and how it best meets the expressed community values.



## Stormwater and Landscape Design

- Show:** Stormwater Design, prepared by a licensed Civil Engineer  
Landscape Plan, prepared by a licensed Landscape Architect  
GreenCenter Approach and Calculations
- Describe:** How does the design meet the Stormwater and Landscape Design Intent and respond to input from the community?  
Describe stormwater strategies and features and landscape design, noting intended uses for each space.  
Explain how the proposed approach for GreenCenter maximizes sustainability and community benefit.  
Show calculations for any required residential on-site recreation space.  
Show type and number of units proposed.  
Show amount of on-site residential space required and provided.

## Building Design

- Show:** Architectural Concept Description  
Architectural Plans, Elevations, Façade details
- Describe:** How does the project's proposed design meet the Building Design Intent, and respond to input from the community?  
Describe the architectural concept and how it responds to the context, program and community input. Describe materials, colors, detailing, and ways in which the proposed design meets expressed community input.
- Proposed building façade lengths:  
Modulations required:  
Proposed building Heights:  
Height variations required:  
Sustainability Features:

## Design for Culture and Expression

- Show:** Cultural Analysis
- Describe:** How does the project's proposed design meet the Cultural and Expression Intent?  
Describe features encouraging expression for street-level uses and upper-level uses (if applicable) and features supporting the cultural diversity of North Highline.

## Design for a Safe and Welcoming Neighborhood

- Show:** Lighting Plan prepared by a qualified professional
- Describe:** How does the project's proposed design meet the Intent of a Safe and Welcoming Neighborhood and input from the community?  
Describe the lighting and other safety measures, and how the project will meet the spirit and requirements for universal design to welcome all.

## NORTH HIGHLINE

### DESIGN STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

# PERMIT APPLICATION MATERIALS

## Checklist for Applicants and Reviewers

### Summary of Public Input

Provide a summary of input from the Pre-Development meeting and comments received by the County regarding the project.

### Street Frontage Types

What Street Type(s) does the project front on?  
What is the linear footage along the street(s)?  
Which building frontage type(s) are used?

### Site Design

**Show:** Context Analysis  
Site Plan

**Describe:** Describe how the project's proposed design meets the Site Design Intent and responds to input from the community.  
Describe the public spaces and open spaces, their dimensions and their functions; the building footprint and first floor uses; pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle access and service functions. Describe the ways that the project contributes to the public realm, fits into the urban, natural, and cultural contexts, and best meets the expressed community values and input.

### Public Realm Design

**Show:** Public Realm Plan

**Describe:** How does the project's design meet the Public Realm Design Intent and respond to input from the community?  
Describe the dimensions, uses, and characteristics of space for the public and how it meets the expressed community values and responds to community input.

## Stormwater and Landscape Design

**Show:** Proposed Stormwater and Landscape Concept Diagrams  
Proposed Green Center Approach

**Describe:** Describe how the project's design meets the Stormwater and Landscape Design Intent and Standards.  
Describe stormwater strategies and features, and landscape design, noting intended uses for each space. Explain how the proposed approach for meeting GreenCenter requirements maximizes sustainability and community benefit.

Type and number of units proposed and amount of on-site residential open space required and provided

## Building Design

**Show:** Proposed Architectural Concept Diagrams  
Proposed Concept Plans and Elevations

**Describe:** Describe how the project's design meets the Building Design Intent and Standards. Describe the project's proposed uses and the overall architectural concept and why it is most appropriate for the site and the neighborhood. Describe the massing, style, materials, detailing, and ways in which the proposed design responds to community input.

Indicate proposed building façade lengths  
Modulations required  
Proposed building heights  
Height variations required  
Sustainability features

## Design for Culture and Expression

**Show:** Cultural Analysis

**Describe:** Describe how the project's design meets Intent and Standards for Cultural and Expression and ways in which the proposed design responds to community input. Describe features encouraging programs, expressions, or features for street level uses and upper level uses (if applicable) and strategies supporting the cultural diversity of North Highline.

## Design for a Safe and Welcoming Neighborhood

**Show:** Proposed Conceptual Lighting Plan

**Describe:** Describe how the project's design meets Intent and Standards of a Safe and Welcoming Neighborhood.  
Describe approaches to lighting and to other safety measures, and how the project will meet the spirit and requirements for universal design to welcome all.



# GREENCENTER SCORESHEET

## NORTH HIGHLINE DESIGN STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

*The GreenCenter score is required to be a total of 0.3, or what could be considered the equivalent of 30% of the site with landscape materials. This score can be achieved in the way that the project proponent deems best, using a variety of options below.*

### To calculate the GreenCenter Score for your project:

1. Enter the areas for all qualifying landscape elements across entire parcel in the Areas column. Instructions for calculating areas in square feet are included in the worksheet.
2. Multiply the Area value for each landscape element by the element's Factor value (given in worksheet) to populate the Total column.
3. Calculate the Green Center Numerator for your project by adding the totals (from the Total column) for all landscape element categories.
4. Divide the Green Center Numerator by your project's parcel size to calculate the Green Center Score.

Landscape Elements	Area (in sq ft)	x	Factor	=	Total
<b>1. Planted Areas</b>					
Planted areas with a soil depth of 24" or greater			0.6		
Bioretention facilities			1.0		
<b>2. Small Plantings, Shrubs, &amp; Perennials</b>					
Mulch, ground covers, or other plants less than 2' tall at maturity			0.1		
Medium shrubs or perennials 2'-4' tall at maturity (Area = Number of plants x 9 sq ft)			0.3		
Large shrubs or perennials 4'+ tall at maturity (Area = Number of plants x 36 sq ft)			0.3		
<b>3. Trees</b>					
Tree canopy for trees with canopy spread of 8' - 15' (Area = Number of trees x 75 sq ft)			0.3		
Tree canopy for trees with canopy spread of 16' - 20' (Area = Number of trees x 150 sq ft)			0.5		
Tree canopy for trees with canopy spread of 21' - 25' (Area = Number of trees x 250 sq ft)			0.7		
Tree canopy for trees with canopy spread of 26'+ (Area = Number of trees x 350 sq ft)			0.9		
Tree canopy for preservation of existing trees with trunks 6" or greater at 4.5' above the ground (Area = 20 sq ft x inch of tree diameter )			1.0		

Landscape Elements	Area (in sq ft)	x	Factor	=	Total
<b>4. Green Roofs</b>					
Green roofs with at least 2" and less than 4" of growth medium			0.2		
Green roofs with 4"-8" of growth medium			0.3		
Green roofs with 8" or more of growth medium			0.4		
<b>5. Vegetated Walls</b>					
Square footage of vegetated wall			0.3		
<b>4. Permeable Pavement</b>					
Permeable paving over at least 6" and less than 24" of soil or gravel			0.2		
Permeable paving over at least 24" of soil or gravel			0.4		
<b>5. Structural Soil Systems</b>					
Square footage of structural soil systems			0.5		
<b>6. Bonuses</b>					
Landscaping that consists of drought tolerant and/or native plant species			0.1		
Vegetation visible to passerby from adjacent public right of way or public open spaces			0.2		
Landscaping in food cultivation			0.1		
Landscaped areas where at least 50% of annual irrigation needs are met through the use of harvested rainwater or collected greywater			0.2		
Spaces that support sitting or small gatherings.			0.2		
Landscape requested by community through the public outreach process			0.2		
GreenCenter Numerator Add totals for all landscape elements categories					

GreenCenter Numerator

÷

Parcel Size (in sq ft)

=

**GREENCENTER SCORE**