

CHAPTER 4

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

Implementation of the Mountlake Terrace Economic Development & Market Analysis Study faces a variety of challenges, including:

1. A lack of understanding by some members of the public concerning the difficulty of maintaining current levels of community services with a declining revenue stream in comparison to the cost of providing those services;
2. A relatively small supply of vacant, developable land;
3. A substantial supply of competitive shopping alternatives nearby; and
4. The need to improve the circulation system internal to Mountlake Terrace, in an almost built out environment.

While the challenges are great, given the City's location relative to the interstate highway system, nearness to employment and shopping facilities (which are advantages from a housing development standpoint), and distance from downtown Seattle, opportunities are also great. However, a proactive approach will be necessary if the stated purpose of this project is to be achieved. This section of the Study highlights each of the recommendations identified in the previous section and identifies potential implementation strategies for success.

In this draft, the recommendations are those of the Consultant and have not been reviewed by the Citizen Advisory Committee. In some cases, we have gone beyond the recommendations of the previous report, in order to develop what we believe to be an effective implementation strategy.

II. LAND USE & MARKET NICHE STRATEGIES

At the outset of this project, we had anticipated there would be significant voids in the goods and services offered in the City of Mountlake Terrace; voids which would represent market place opportunities. However, this analysis has identified only two broad land use or market niches for which Mountlake Terrace can respond in a timely manner – housing and office space. With the abundance of retail alternatives very near Mountlake Terrace, the City would not be well served to develop a specific retail marketing strategy. Further, without appropriate lands in both total acreage and locational appropriateness, an aggressive industrial development program is not warranted either. However, the City is very well located to encourage selective office and housing development, which in turn, can generate additional revenues from which the City can continue to provide adequate services.

However, we must point out that neither the community surveys nor the community workshops indicated widespread support for substantial redevelopment in Mountlake Terrace. Consequently, while we believe these recommendations will help the City achieve the initial Statement of Purpose for this project, care must be taken at each step in the process to keep impacted residents both informed and as participants.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Mountlake Terrace Economic Development Market Analysis Study is to identify ways the Community can improve long-term financial stability and improve the quality of life of City residents through managed development.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES

RECOMMENDATION NO. 1: Amend the zoning code to permit greater height and bulk developments in commercial zones.

Strategy No. 1.1: Mountlake Terrace has struggled with the issue of height and bulk regulations for many years. Consequently, we believe this recommendation should be phased in over time, limiting the area of greater height and bulk regulations in commercial areas to existing commercial zones along I-5 and in the northwest part of the community.

If the community is receptive to the changes, consider phased implementation in other areas, after public comment and debate.

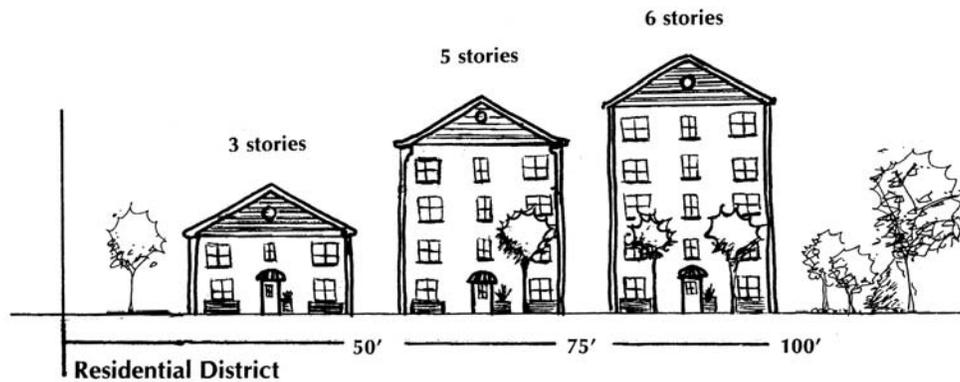
Responsibility: City Staff to draft code amendments.
Planning Commission to conduct hearings.
City Council to provide policy direction and adopt code amendments, when finalized.

Cost: Minimal, beyond hearing related costs and existing staff time.

Timing: Immediate.

Specific Actions:

1. Utilize the existing Freeway/Tourist District to accomplish phase one of this strategy.
2. Increase the height restriction to five stories if within seventy-five feet of a residential district and no restriction thereafter.
3. With community acceptance, increase the height restriction in the Community Business, Downtown, and General Commercial districts to:
 - a. three stories if within fifty feet,
 - b. five stories if within seventy-five feet,
 - c. six stories if within 100 feet,
 - d. no height limitation if a structure is located more than 100 feet of a residential district.
4. Increase the allowable structural lot coverage to 65%; up to 80% with structured parking.



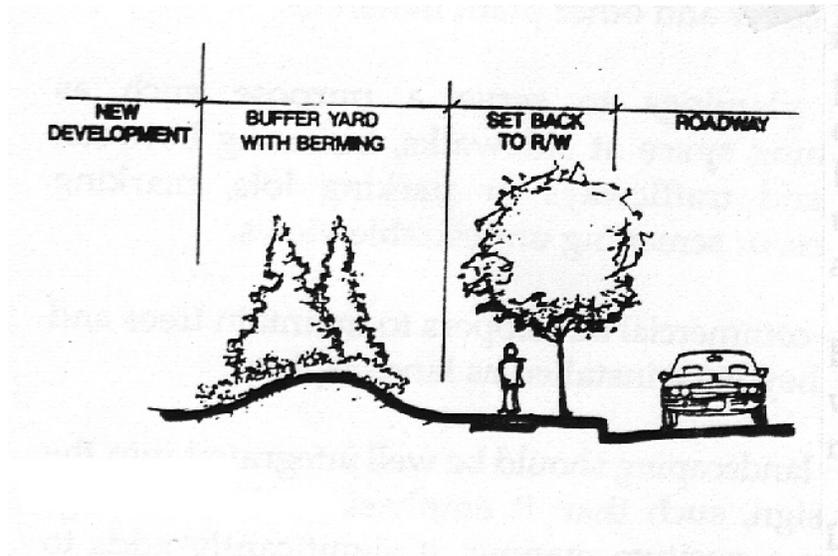
Typical Height Restrictions

Strategy No. 1.2: As part of the amendment process, develop design guidelines that encourage quality development, in exchange for the greater density allowed.

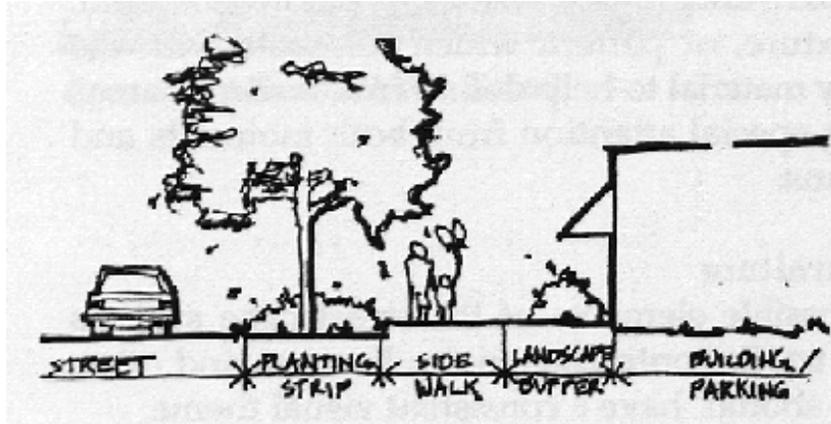
Responsibility: City Staff to draft code amendments.
 Planning Commission to conduct hearings.
 City Council to provide policy direction and adopt code amendments.

Cost: Minimal, beyond hearing related costs and existing staff time.

Timing: Immediate.

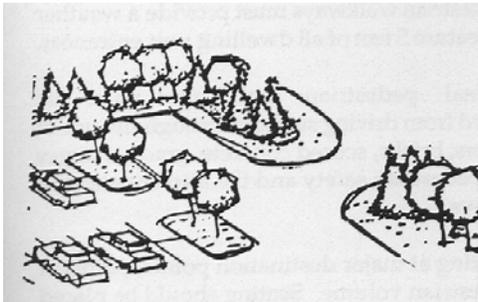


Buffering with Berms and Landscaping



Buffering with Landscaping Alone

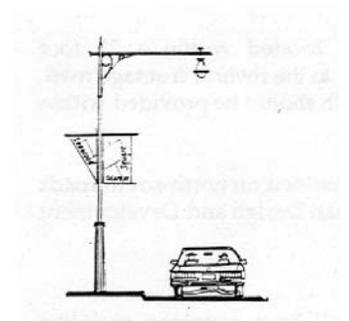
Specific Actions:



Parking Lot Landscaping

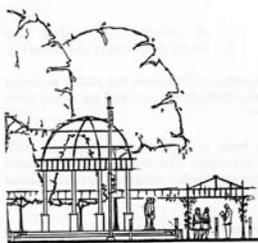
1. In exchange for increases in density, the City should expect improved design standards from developers, including site design, streetscapes, architectural, signage and special features.
2. Design standards can be incorporated as a special overlay zone or as an amendment to the Freeway/Tourist Zone initially, then expanded to

3. Site design standards should encourage improved landscaping of site perimeters, parking lots, outdoor seating areas, and entryways. On street parking should be prohibited and parking areas screened through berms and landscaping. Loading areas should be at the rear of buildings and screened and outdoor storage of should be prohibited or screened. Screening of outdoor storage and/or waste facilities should be with a combination of elements, including solid masonry walls and landscaping. Site lighting should provide for security and safety of on-site areas and the design of light fixtures and supports should be architecturally consistent with building design. All permanent utilities should be underground.

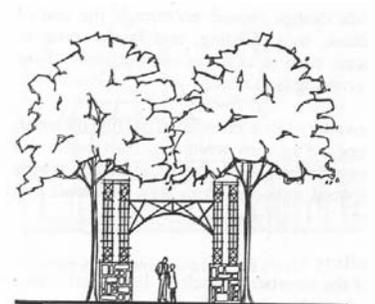


Typical Street Lighting

4. Streetscape design through and adjacent to these areas should also be enhanced with pedestrian amenities and landscaping. The City should develop a list of preferred street trees. Major entry areas to the community and development areas



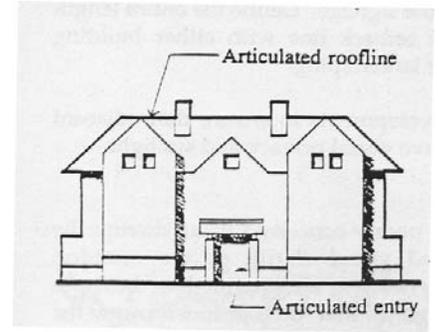
Entry Way Treatments



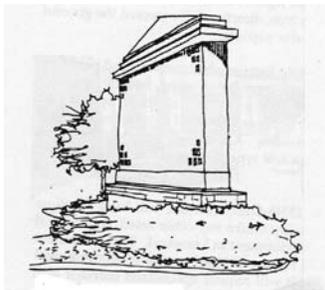
Entry Way Treatments

should receive special entryway treatments and signage.

5. Architectural standards should include discussion of massing, scale, materials, building scale and building details. Elements should include building massing, modulation, avoidance of blank expanses of walls, definition of entryways, canopies, and recesses.



Building Modulation & Articulation



Sign Standards

6. Signage standards should discuss sign materials, design, illumination, entry signs, tenant signs and directional signs. Standards should also address sign height and area.

7. Special features such as open space, outdoor furnishings, and pedestrian amenities should also be encouraged. The City may even want to consider a requirement for public art as some percentage of total project cost.



Pedestrian Amenities

Open Space

Design guidelines that work for the Freeway/Tourist district are not necessarily consistent with those that will be effective for the "downtown." However, to develop effective guidelines for the downtown, the area should be limited to a downtown core.

RECOMMENDATIONS NO. 2:

Develop a subarea plan for the area generally defined as east of I-5, south of 234th Street SW, west of 54th Street and north of 244th Street. All members of the subarea should be included in the planning process, with an understanding at the outset that limited or no change in existing zoning may be the outcome. The broader goal is redevelopment of the Evergreen School site and 56th Avenue West (from 236th St. SW to 244th St. SW). In addition, an important part of this plan is an assessment of the impacts of proposed changes to existing residential development.

Strategy No. 2.1: The subarea plan should be prepared as a Planned Action EIS in order to eliminate as many “hurdles” for the development community as possible.

Responsibility: City Staff to draft a formal “Request for Proposals”.
City Council to appoint a Planning Commission and Neighborhood selection committee of 5 members, supported by City Staff.
Planning Commission to oversee subarea plan development with an extensive neighborhood involvement process and make a recommendation to the City Council.
City Council to adopt the subarea plan as amended by Council action.

Cost: Cost is higher than normal because the recommendation is for a planned action EIS under SEPA. Consequently, most of the environmental issues will be resolved in the plan. \$125,000.

Timing: Selection Committee appointed in January of 2000.
Consultant selected in February of 2000.
Plan development completed by June of 2001.



Specific Actions:

The purpose of this strategy is to develop as much consensus as possible among the affected land owners concerning redevelopment options, then eliminate as many review “hurdles” as is reasonable for developers. Within the Planned Action EIS and Subarea Plan, the following issues should be resolved:

1. Land use and street network, particularly, how to connect the two interchanges with an internal street system;
2. Transportation i **Open Public Process & Citizen Involvement**
3. Storm water imp
4. Other capital infrastructure investments necessary to support higher intensity development, including costs;
5. Tax income generated for the City of Mountlake Terrace under each development option; and
6. Other general environmental impacts & mitigation’s.

The scoping process for the EIS should include the following subjects for analysis – land use, housing, community character, market and economic conditions, earth, air quality, water, plants and animals, transportation, and public facilities and utilities.

To be successful, the plan must have an active citizen involvement process that is very well staffed. We believe the citizens involved should be limited to the impact area.

Strategy No. 2.2: Depending upon the outcome of the Subarea Plan, hire a redevelopment specialist to encourage implementation.

Responsibility: City Manager to formulate budget.
City Council to approve budget.
City Manager to employ staff.

Cost: \$65,000 - \$75,000.

Timing: Dependent on Council Adoption of Subarea Plan.

Specific Actions:

1. Ask other agencies in the area (such as Bremerton, Everett and the Port of Seattle) to make a presentation to the City Council on the public/private development process. Ask the presenting agency on staffing v. private sector staffing (e.g., recently agencies have requested proposals from developers to lead this process rather than develop their own staff).

RECOMMENDATION NO. 3: Non-tax revenue generating uses should be prohibited from commercial zones, given the significant public investment in these zones and the City's need to generate revenues in order to provide the municipal services resident's desire.

Strategy No. 3.1: Declare an immediate moratorium on all non-municipal tax revenue generating uses of land in commercial zones (the focus is on property tax).

Responsibility: City Council, based on City Attorney ordinance.

Cost: Negligible.

Timing: Immediate.

Typical Example:

Under the proposed density changes, the Evergreen School site could achieve an assessed value in excess of \$100 million, generating as much as \$340,000 in property taxes alone for the City of Mountlake Terrace.

Strategy No. 3.2: Complete a detailed evaluation of the zoning code, including appropriate hearings, then amend the zoning code to exclude non-municipal tax revenue generating uses from the limited commercial areas in the City of Mountlake Terrace. Careful consideration should be given to essential public facilities that are required under GMA as part of this review process. The City has limited vacant and/or under developed land a significant public investment has been made in these areas and they must generate revenues in order for the City to continue to provide the services local resident's desire.

Responsibility: City Staff to conduct code review & draft Amendment.
Planning Commission to conduct hearings.
City Council to adopt code amendment.

Cost: Cost of hearings and staff time.

Timing: Begin hearings after January 1, 2000.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 4: In advance of the subarea plan, work with WSDOT and Sound Transit to see if there are joint use development opportunities for the existing park & ride lot.

Strategy No. 4.1: Conduct a meeting with WSDOT, Community Transit and Sound Transit to explore opportunities for joint use development of the existing park and ride lot.

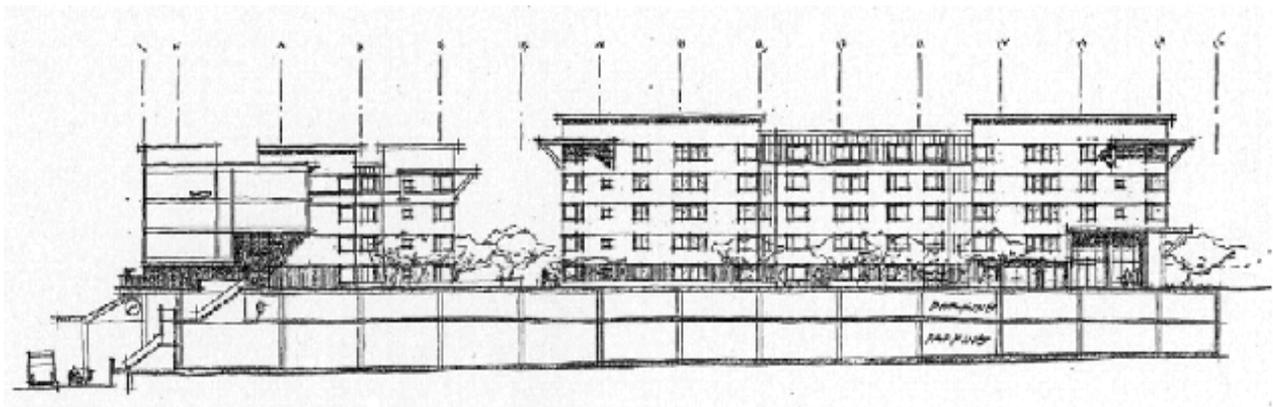
Responsibility: City Manager, Community Development Director & Mayor.

Cost: Minimal.

Timing: Immediate.

Specific Actions:

1. Secure a copy of the Sound Transit ordinance on Transit Oriented Development (TOD).
2. Ask Alyce Conti of Sound Transit (206-398-5238) and Henry Markus of King County (a specialist in this field, 206-684-6738) to make a presentation on the park & ride lot co-development process. There are currently several similar project going on in the area, including a 300 unit apartment and park & ride facility in Bellevue and an 1,100 space park & ride and cineplex at Northgate.
3. Involve Sound Transit, Community Transit and WSDOT as soon as possible in this process.
4. Complete a detailed, site specific market study of the 236th St. SW and I-5 site.



Redmond Park & Ride Lot and Apartment Project

Strategy No. 4.2: If task 4.1 is successful, begin a “Request for Proposals (RFP)” process to identify a private sector development partner with whom to complete the co-use development process.

Responsibility: City Council to authorize RFP.
Committee of Council & Staff to review proposals.
May include WSDOT, Community Transit & Sound Transit.

Cost: Minimal, advertising and selection process.

Timing: Contingent upon outcome of 4.1.

Specific Actions:

1. Allow Sound Transit to take the lead if they will, in order to minimize the drain on present staff resources. However, provide all the staff assistance necessary to ease the development process in this joint venture opportunity.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 5: Work with the School District to evaluate mutually beneficial redevelopment opportunities for the Melody Hill Site (see maps at the end of this section).

Strategy No. 5.1: City Manager should meet with the Superintendent of Schools to begin the discussions necessary for site redevelopment.

Responsibility: City Manager.

Cost: Minimal.

Timing: Within the next six-months.

Specific Actions:

1. Using the work done for the Subarea Plan around the Evergreen School site, show the school district how this can be a “win-win” for both the School District and the City from a revenue and real estate development basis.

Strategy No. 5.2: If discussions go well, consider using the same process as defined in No. 4.2 for site redevelopment.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 6: Mountlake Terrace has an existing housing stock that includes a substantial number of small, two bedroom houses on lots that could support somewhat greater density while remaining single-family in character. Evaluate the redevelopment of these areas, but maintain single-family residential development as the primary goal.

Strategy No. 6.1: Make this a Council and/or Planning Commission Study item to be addressed at some future date, but before 2002.

Responsibility: Planning Commission Study item.

Cost: Minimal at this stage.

Timing: 2002-work program.

Specific Actions:

1. Amend the zoning ordinance to permit 5,400 square foot lots.
2. Undertake a demonstration project or case study with a group of houses in the City to determine if it is beneficial to both the City and property owners to undergo the redevelopment process.
3. Complete a survey of all single-family rental houses in the City of Mountlake Terrace in order to better target the demonstration project.

Given a quick evaluation, the Consultant does not believe this is financially feasible, unless much higher density is achieved. For example, a typical 30-lot subdivision of 7,200 square foot lots could yield up to 40 5,400 square foot lots. Assuming an acquisition price of \$175,000 per unit, demolition costs of \$10,000 per unit and new construction of 1,900 square foot homes at \$125 per square foot, the breakeven cost per home is \$422,500. However, the zoning code can be amended and the City could let the marketplace see if they can make projects feasible.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 7: Continue to encourage the development of existing vacant and under utilized parcels in the city, particularly in the Industrial/Office Zone.

Strategy No. 7.1: Combine this strategy with reconsideration of the Zoning Code to determine if greater development allowances can be given the remaining tracts of vacant or under utilized land in Mountlake Terrace.

Responsibility: Community Development Staff.
Private Development Community.

Cost: Minimal.

Timing: On-going.

Specific Actions:

1. Using the assessors file as a starting point, complete a parcel by parcel inventory of every vacant and underutilized parcel in the City of Mountlake Terrace.
2. Create a digital data base of parcels and assess the redevelopment and/or development potential of those parcels.
3. Make the data base available to both the real estate sales and development community.
4. Reduce the front yard setback to 15' from the appropriate street classification R.O.W. line.
5. Adopt the height restriction proposed in Strategy No. 1.1 above.

IV. CONCLUSION & PHASING PLAN

As part of this process, the Consultant Team reviewed both land use and market niches in which Mountlake Terrace can successfully compete. We have recommended major land use efforts be concentrated along the I-5 corridor and within existing established commercial areas and concentrate on the office and mixed-use development markets, including housing. We have also provided a limited, focused set of recommendations and strategies that we believe should be implemented over the next five years, in a phased manner.

Change is always a challenge, and to many a concern. However, the only thing constant in life is change. The community has expressed, in workshops, surveys and public meetings, a continued desire to maintain Mountlake Terrace essentially the way it is, with improvements that contribute to the existing quality of life. The City Council, staff and community leaders should work hard to keep the community informed of the ongoing challenge of providing municipal services, at the quality desired, given available resources.

V. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Task	Action	Responsibility	\$1,000 Cost	0 - 1 Years	1 - 2 Years	2 - 4 Years
1.1	Increase height restriction in Freeway/Tourist Zone	City	0.5	λ		
	Increase height restriction in the BC & BC/D Zones	City	0.5			λ
	Increase allowable lot coverage in commercial zones	City	0.5	λ		
1.2	Develop design guidelines for F/T Zone	City	0.5		λ	
2.1	Prepare Planned Action EIS & Subarea Plan	City Impacted Area	125	λ		
	Conduct Workshop with experts on private/public partnerships	South County Chamber	1	λ		
2.2	Hire redevelopment specialist	City or Private Sector	70			λ
3.1	Declare moratorium on non-tax generating uses (commercial zones)	City	0.5	λ		
3.2	Complete detailed zoning code review	City	0.5	λ		
4.1	Conduct meeting with affected agencies on joint use of the park & ride lot	Sound Transit City	0.0	λ		
	Conduct special council briefing on joint use development of park & ride lots	Sound Transit City	0.0	λ		
	Complete market study of park & ride lot uses	City	15		λ	
4.2	Send out RFP for development proposals for park & ride lot	Sound Transit	0.5		λ	
5.1	Meet with Superintendent of Schools concerning joint development of school sites	City and School Dist.	0	λ		
5.2	Send out development proposals for school sites	City and School Dist.	0.5			λ
6.1	Amend zoning ordinance to allow 5,400 sq. ft. lots	City	1.5			λ
	Undertake case study of higher density single-family housing	City	10			λ
	Complete survey of all single-family rental units	City	5			λ
7.1	Complete parcel inventory of vacant & under utilized commercial & industrial properties	City	1.5		λ	
	Create digital data base of parcel inventory for distribution	City	1.5		λ	
	Reduce front yard setback in LI/OP zone to 15'	City	0.5		λ	
	Adopt height restriction in LI/OP zone similar to BC zone	City	0.5			λ