
DOWNTOWN ELEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The Growth Management Act (GMA) does not require the creation or retention of a downtown area within communities. However, several GMA goals, as well as Countywide Planning Policies, address the containment of sprawl, and the provision of efficient services and utilities, which can be met through development of “regional growth centers” such as a downtown. Downtown areas also can function as a community-enhancing central place, particularly in a community like Kenmore dominated by regional traffic flows along Bothell Way/SR-522.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Current Development Conditions and Trends

In December 2021, Downtown Kenmore was designated as a King County Candidate Countywide Growth Center by the King County Growth Management Planning Council. Once finalized in 2025-26, Downtown will be identified as one of several other regional centers that accommodate employment and housing. The larger Downtown area includes the four quadrants surrounding the intersection of 68th Ave NE and SR522. Additional information is provided below.

Kenmore’s downtown core adjacent to the intersection of 68th Ave NE and NE 181st Street is continuing to transform into a walkable and vibrant community. Completion of pedestrian and bicycle improvements on 181st Street and 68th Ave NE have enhanced connections to downtown. Completion of public facilities such as City Hall (2010), Kenmore Library (2012), Jack V. Crawford Skate Court (2015), The Hangar and Town Square (2017) provide access to public services and also access to recreation/gathering opportunities. Several mixed-use developments and apartments along 68th Avenue NE (Spencer 68, LINQ, Flyway and the 25 Degrees condominium project), provide new housing opportunities in the downtown. Preservation of existing manufacturing home communities provides affordable housing opportunities downtown. Planned partnerships on city property will bring additional affordable housing downtown. New commercial development and office/service development and renovation of existing commercial buildings (Kenmore Camera, Cooley Smiles) all support a vibrant downtown., City sponsored events such as the farmers market, movies at the Town Square, and various programs and activities at the Hangar all support Downtown.

Kenmore Urban Design Inventory and Analysis

In 2003, the Kenmore Downtown Plan was adopted. At that time, it was noted that the location, frequency and quality of buildings, parking lots, pole signs, sidewalks, crosswalks, landscaping and street trees were elements of urban form that individually and collectively determine visual cohesiveness, comfort, and pedestrian-orientation in urban areas. While there has been a lot of redevelopment in and around the Kenmore Village area (adjacent to NE 181st Street/68th Ave NE), many of the same design characteristics found twenty years ago are still noticeable today.

Issues still impacting design in the Downtown area include:

- Many of the existing buildings are not built to the edge of the street, and are of discontinuous size, location, and shape. These buildings do not form a consistent or recognizable urban form or a continuity of pattern. Typically, buildings that are set back from the street or have

- 1 parking lots separating them from the street, discourage pedestrian activity and are simply
2 less pleasant for walking. Many such buildings are found within the Downtown area.
3 However, new development must comply with adopted site and building design standards
4 that address these issues.
- 5 • Pole signs are mostly found on the north side of SR-522 between 61st Avenue NE and 80th
6 Avenue NE, where automobile-oriented retail uses predominate. Frequent use of pole signs
7 can create visual clutter, particularly when competing with other street elements such as
8 billboards, telecommunication towers, utility poles, streetlights, etc. New development would
9 have to comply with adopted design standards and sign regulations.
 - 10 • The predominance of parking lots in the Downtown area is indicative of the overall auto-
11 oriented nature of the region. The numerous access points to and from the parking lots of
12 establishments along SR-522 create potentially hazardous situations as vehicles enter and
13 exit the traffic flow from SR-522. Consolidating driveway access along SR522 is a
14 requirement when new development occurs.
 - 15 • There are few sidewalks in the Downtown area. Although completion of sidewalks on SR522,
16 181st Street from 73rd Ave NE to 67th Ave NE and sidewalks and bike lanes on 68th Ave
17 NE/Juanita Drive have improved access to Downtown.
 - 18 • There is little or no street trees along major arterials and along portions of SR-522, with the
19 exception of those separating SR-522 from the Burke-Gilman trail. However, street trees
20 along SR522, along 68th Ave NE/Juanita Drive and NE 181st Street between 73rd Ave NE and
21 67th Ave NE have improved the streetscape and access to Downtown.
 - 22 • Parks and open space uses include Log Boom Park and the Burke-Gilman Trail. Nearby parks
23 include Rhododendron Park, ʔaxʔadis (TI' awh-ah-dees) Park, and the State Boat Launch
24 facility. The Town Square and Hangar and Jack V Crawford Skate Court and City Hall park
25 also provide opportunities for recreation and gathering.
 - 26 • Several major natural features exist within the Downtown area, including Swamp Creek, the
27 Sammamish River, and Lake Washington. Steep hillsides sloping to the north offer views to
28 of the Lake.
 - 29 • In Kenmore, pedestrian destinations and generators include bus stops, grocery stores and
30 other retail establishments, The Hangar and Town Square, City Hall, the Burke-Gilman Trail
31 and trail-oriented businesses, ʔaxʔadis (TI' awh-ah-dees) Park, Jack V Crawford Skate Court,
32 Kenmore Library, the Park and Ride lot, Log Boom Park, and Rhododendron Park. Nearby
33 mobile home parks, apartments, and senior housing complexes also function as pedestrian
34 generators.
 - 35 • Sidewalks have been added to SR522 and sidewalks and bike lanes have been added to 68th
36 Ave NE/Juanita Drive improving pedestrian and bicycle access on the City's main north/south
37 and east/west arterials. Crosswalks have been added at key intersections. Nevertheless,
38 SR522 is still a significant barrier. These road corridors essentially "divide" central Kenmore
39 into four quadrants. SR522 is still a significant barrier especially for pedestrian and bike
40 travel, dividing the north and south sides of Downtown.

- 1 • Key pedestrian crossings exist at the intersections of SR-522 and 61st, 68th, 73rd and 80th
2 Avenues NE, with crosswalks and pedestrian signalization in place. Additional pedestrian
3 crossings along Bothell Way/SR-522 could help break up the considerable distance
4 pedestrians must currently travel to cross SR-522 (e.g. 65th Avenue NE).

- 5 • Both King County Metro and Sound Transit provide frequent bus service to/from surrounding
6 communities from Kenmore Park & Ride and several bus stops located along the SR-522
7 corridor. The planned Stride SR3 Line, a bus rapid transit provided by Sound Transit, will
8 provide additional fast, frequent, and reliable bus service that will connect Kenmore to the
9 Link 1 Line at Shoreline South/NE 148th Street.

10 **Market Area**

11 The City of Kenmore has the potential to provide retail goods and services for an area beyond
12 its own boundaries. The market area for any commercial district is determined by several
13 factors:

- 14
- 15 • Distance to surrounding population.
- 16 • Natural boundaries and impediments to travel.
- 17 • Transportation links.
- 18 • Competing development.
- 19 • Scope of existing development in the district.
- 20

21 The projected market area for Kenmore lies within an approximate 3-mile radius around the City
22 Center. The area extends west to approximately I-5; south into Lake City; north into Snohomish
23 County; and east to I-405. The existence of regional commercial centers largely determines
24 these boundaries. Kenmore currently loses a significant portion of retail spending by Kenmore
25 residents to businesses outside of city.

26

27 Kenmore also has another significant advantage over many other cities, that being its Lake
28 Washington waterfront. With commanding views, and excellent recreational and commercial
29 access, the waterfront is certainly one of the best assets the city has to offer. With future
30 redevelopment, including the 43+ acre Lakepointe site south of SR-522 and west of 68th Avenue
31 NE, Kenmore’s market area has the potential to expand its market area from being locally
32 focused to one that is regionally significant.

33

34 See the Economic Development Element for more specific market data.

35

36 **Opportunities for Development**

37 The opportunities for development in Downtown Kenmore are as follows:

38 *Lakepointe*

39 Lakepointe has the potential to offer a high amenity setting for a mix of residential, commercial
40 uses and recreational uses serving a broad market area. Factors affecting its relationship to the
41 Downtown Core are its lakefront site and the barriers represented by SR-522. While Lakepointe
42 may include some traditional neighborhood scale uses, the existing core north of SR-522 between
43 61st and 73rd Avenues should continue to capture the food and miscellaneous retail spending by

1 residents north of SR-522. The role of the core should be enhanced with growth in both single-
2 and multi-family housing to the north and multi-family development to the east and west.

3 *Demand by Development Type*

4 The types of development likely to be supported within the area are described in a summary
5 fashion below.

- 6 • Multi-family residential. Such development is already occurring in the area and reflects the
7 need for increasing density throughout the urbanized area. The area to the east is particularly
8 well suited for such development, located between the commercial core and the public service
9 concentration on 73rd Avenue NE to the east. In 2023 new Transit Oriented Development
10 regulations were adopted supporting higher density residential development with affordable
11 housing recognizing Kenmore’s designation as a high capacity transit community and future
12 Bus Rapid Transit along the SR522 corridor.
- 13 • Manufactured housing communities. The existing manufactured housing communities
14 provide affordable, unsubsidized homeownership for seniors and lower-income households.
15 In 2019 the City adopted regulations to make closure less likely and/or address the impacts of
16 closure of the manufactured housing communities, while at the same time offering
17 landowners the ability to transfer their development rights. The regulations are in effect
18 pending resolution of an appeal filed in 2019.
- 19 • Neighborhood commercial development including small-scale neighborhood commercial
20 development. Additional grocery, drugstore, eating/drinking, miscellaneous retail, personal
21 and business services will be required as the local area and larger market area grow over time.
22 These uses should be increasingly accessible to pedestrians as well as automobiles.
- 23 • Mixed-use development (residential with office and retail). Horizontal mixed-use, with
24 residential next to commercial is favorable in the area, and conditions allowing for vertical
25 mixed-use developments are likely favorable in the near future. Mixed-use development in the
26 area of 68th Ave NE/NE 181st Street are examples.
- 27 • Corridor commercial. Such development along SR-522 will continue to be viable given the
28 volume of traffic on SR-522. However, the overall vision is to convert the area from a
29 commercial strip corridor to a mix of non-auto-oriented uses, taking advantage of lake views
30 and proximity to transit. Transit Oriented Development supporting higher residential densities,
31 inclusionary affordable housing and allowing for ground floor commercial uses are currently
32 allowed along the SR522 corridor.
- 33 • Light manufacturing. Small-scale advanced or artisanal manufacturing could offer significant
34 new employment opportunities. Such uses are permitted in several downtown zones.

35 *Long Term Opportunities*

36 The large parcels like the Plywood Supply site and Lakepointe site south of SR-522 and east of
37 68th Avenue NE provide an important resource for large-scale planned development in the future.

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39

1 **DOWNTOWN PLANS**

2 The Kenmore Comprehensive Plan focuses upon the establishment of a Downtown core.

3 **General**

- 4
- 5 ▪ Plan for and implement an attractive, vital, pedestrian-oriented, transit friendly, city center
6 offering commercial, civic, cultural and park spaces, integrated with higher density housing.

 - 7 ▪ Support redevelopment in accordance with the Vision for the Downtown through investment
8 in public infrastructure including transportation (especially pedestrian and bicycle facilities
9 and other forms of micro-modal transportation), utility, and civic infrastructure.

 - 10 ▪ Give priority to creating indoor and outdoor public spaces; promote community activities
11 meeting the needs of a range of ages and interests. Outdoor spaces should include plazas,
12 parks, and public green spaces. Encourage the efficient use of space and shared uses where
13 appropriate.

 - 14 ▪ Give priority consideration to strong linkages between the four Downtown quadrants and the
15 surrounding neighborhoods. Pedestrian crossings, including a grade-separated crossing
16 above or under SR-522, linking the north and south quadrants, should be readily accessible,
17 functional, visually attractive, safe, and inviting links to key destinations, and should provide
18 a Kenmore identity.

 - 19 ▪ Create a Downtown circulation system that promotes mobility for all modes of travel.

 - 20 ▪ Create a local pedestrian oriented “main street” on NE 181st Street where parking and
21 motorized transportation is minimized.

 - 22 ▪ Create an interconnected network of trails, shared use paths, sidewalks, bikeways, and open
23 spaces in Downtown.

 - 24 ▪ Promote the revitalization and expansion of business and retail compatible with the character
25 of the Downtown districts. Encourage businesses that draw patrons during both the day and
26 evening. Provide an adequate mix of on-street, surface, and structured parking, and
27 encourage shared parking options. Where feasible, reduce parking requirements.

 - 28 ▪ Provide high density, high amenity (includes public spaces and private facilities) pedestrian
29 oriented residential neighborhoods meeting the housing needs of a variety of income levels
30 and developed at densities high enough to support transit and commercial uses. Off-street
31 parking should be minimized.

 - 32 ▪ Coordinate public and private investment to achieve optimal leverage of public funds.

 - 33 ▪ Create an identity for the Downtown and SR-522 by giving priority consideration to improving
34 the appearance of the physical environment through design guidelines, sidewalks,
35 landscaping, street trees, public art and signage.

 - 36 ▪ The Downtown should acknowledge and create a beneficial and symbiotic relationship with
37 SR-522.

- 1 ▪ Integrate and manage Downtown development to support sound ecological principles by
2 responding to natural landforms, providing storm water management, improving water quality
3 and retaining and adding green spaces.

- 4 ▪ Identify Downtown view corridors of significant off-site features (i.e. Lake Washington,
5 Cascades, and surrounding hillsides), giving priority consideration to provision of public
6 physical and visual access from the Downtown quadrants to the waterfront.

- 7 ▪ Locate new Civic Center facilities (including the Town Green and Community Building) in the
8 northwest quadrant to provide the greatest stimulus to redevelopment. If there is a truly
9 unique opportunity in another quadrant of the Downtown that would meet the balance of Civic
10 Civic Center criteria, it should not be ruled out.

- 11 ▪ Locate a multi-modal transportation facility Downtown or close to Downtown, linked with
12 other public facilities and spaces, functioning as a key node within a larger regional system.

- 13 ▪ A large, functional, open, outdoor space should be created to function as a focal point and
14 “public square,” providing opportunities for public and private gatherings.

15 The City developed a Downtown strategy (Kenmore Downtown Plan, April 2003) with four key
16 components and implementation of the strategy is ongoing:

DOWNTOWN STRATEGY

Component 1: Land Use Districts

Component 2: Circulation Plan

Component 3: Strategic Civic Investment Area

Component 4: Implementation Strategies

Land Use Districts

24 Recognizing the different character of the quadrants around the 68th Avenue NE and SR-522
25 intersection, the City has applied four districts in the Downtown.

- 26 • Downtown – Commercial: To promote a community-serving mixed-use area, north of SR-522,
27 the Downtown Commercial District features a mix of private and public uses designed to
28 create a welcoming community, and pedestrian-friendly environment. Public places,
29 sidewalks, extensive landscaping, transit-orientation, shared or structured parking, protection
30 of environmentally sensitive areas, and high-quality design and signage are key features.
31 Permitted uses emphasize mixed or multiple use developments, and include high-density
32 housing, civic and governmental, offices, small-scale commercial and retail, and locally
33 oriented professional and personal services. Uses not compatible with the Downtown
34 Commercial intent such as those which require vehicle or materials storage, service bays,
35 wide curb cuts, expanses of exterior product display or storage, or produce little customer or
36 visitor activity are discouraged. Park-and-Ride/Transit Centers are promoted along SR-522.

- 37 • Downtown – Residential: The Downtown Residential District in the northeast and northwest
38 quadrants provides higher density residential development in support of the Downtown
39 Commercial Zone. Limited retail and office uses are also allowed as part of mixed-use

1 developments. The District represents an opportunity to provide a range of housing types in
2 the community with attention to appearance and scale.

3 • **Manufactured Housing Community:** The existing manufactured housing communities in the
4 Downtown provide higher density housing that is more affordable for seniors and lower-income
5 residents.

6 • **Regional Business with Mixed-Use Master Plan Requirements:** The Regional Business District
7 encompasses the southwest and southeast quadrants of the 68th Avenue NE/SR-522
8 intersection and includes areas commonly referred to as the Lakepointe and the Plywood
9 Supply areas. Property conditions and overlay districts, and in some locations, design
10 standards, not only recognize Kenmore’s position as a regional transportation center for larger
11 scale commercial, office, and multi-family developments, but also promote a mixed-use,
12 compact development with coordinated internal circulation, shared or structured parking,
13 compatible design and signage, and direct access to public transportation. Emphasis is
14 placed on public access to the waterfront, protection of environmentally sensitive areas,
15 building modulation and façade treatments that help create a human scale, and land
16 use/design transitions and linkages to neighboring districts.

17 **Circulation Plan**

18 Refer to the Transportation Element for the city’s pedestrian and vehicular circulation plan.

19 **Strategic Civic Investment Area**

20 Revitalization of Downtown will involve partnerships. A public private partnership was
21 instrumental in the development of the 9.6 acre Kenmore Village property. . The City actively
22 pursues and identifies potential partnerships to encourage private development that aligns with
23 the Downtown Vision. The vast majority of property in Downtown is and will remain in private
24 ownership. Private property owners will determine their property investment and development.
25 City plans and regulations will guide and encourage development to meet the community vision.
26 It is anticipated that private development will likely occur according to market forces in the
27 southwest and southeast quadrants of the 68th Avenue NE and SR-522 intersection, due to the
28 desirability of the Lake Washington and Sammamish River location, and with the spillover effects
29 of the Lakepointe development. It is likely that incentives will be needed to stimulate
30 development in the northwest and northeast quadrants of the intersection, due to the numerous,
31 small, privately owned parcels.

32 The City recently provided a “central place” for the community with the development of The
33 Hangar and Town Square. The Hangar acts as an indoor/outdoor community building, while
34 Town Square is essentially an “outdoor living room” and extension of The Hangar space. City Hall
35 and the Kenmore Library, both constructed in the 2010s, as well as street and infrastructure
36 improvements such as road realignment, sidewalks, and street trees, improve the look and add
37 vibrancy to downtown. These improvements support existing businesses and be complemented
38 by private investment of commercial, office, and multi-family uses located in downtown.

1 **Implementation Programs**

2 Implementation programs are an identification of activities that, if pursued, would further the
3 concepts found in the Comprehensive Plan and implementing plans and regulations.
4 Implementation Programs are identified at the conclusion of this Chapter.

5 **DOWNTOWN KENMORE – COUNTYWIDE GROWTH CENTER**

6 As mentioned previously, Downtown Kenmore was designated as a candidate Countywide
7 Growth Center (CGC) by the King County Growth Management Planning Council in December
8 2021. Countywide Growth Centers, as defined by King County, are areas for equitably
9 concentrating jobs, housing, shopping, and recreational opportunities. They are often smaller
10 downtowns, high-capacity transit station areas, or neighborhood centers that are linked by transit,
11 provide a mix of housing and services, and serve as focal points for local and county investment.

12 Candidate jurisdictions will identify and plan for countywide centers as part of their 2024
13 Comprehensive Plan updates. Once completed, King County Growth Management Planning
14 Council will act in 2025-26 to adopt the final set countywide centers, including Downtown
15 Kenmore, at which time the City will submit an application for full designation.

16 As noted in the descriptions above, downtown Kenmore is divided into 4 quadrants, with 68th
17 Avenue NE and Bothell Way/SR-522 as the two road corridors separating the quadrants.

18 Figure D-1 shows the boundary of the Countywide Growth Center.

19 **Figure D-1 Countywide Growth Center**



Source: City of Kenmore

1 **Center Criteria**

2 As a candidate Countywide Growth Center, Kenmore has the option of documenting how it meets
3 Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Plan Review Manual specifications in a comprehensive
4 plan element instead of a stand-alone subarea plan. Once the County adopts the final set of
5 countywide centers in 2025-26, Kenmore shall develop a separate Downtown Kenmore subarea
6 plan.

7 Goals, objectives, and policies that are applicable to the Downtown Kenmore Countywide Growth
8 Center may be found in the Countywide Growth Center policy section below.

9

10 **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADOPTION OF A NEW DOWNTOWN PLAN**

11 Because many of the key components of the original Downtown Plan have been implemented
12 since the original Plan's adoption in 2003, there is a need to revisit and develop an updated
13 Downtown Plan. In March 2024, City staff collaborated with the Urban Land Institute (ULI)¹ to
14 evaluate existing conditions and help City staff consider the next "lifecycle" of Kenmore
15 downtown planning. Through a 2-day "TAP" working session, ULI expert panelists interviewed
16 key community stakeholders, evaluated current economic and demographic trends, and
17 developed several recommendations as part of a report titled *Downtown Kenmore TAP Report*.
18 This document serves as a guide that City leaders and the community may consider when
19 updating the next Downtown Plan.

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¹ Urban Land Institute is an interdisciplinary, worldwide membership organization which represents all aspects of real estate and urban development. ULI Northwest conducts one-and-a-half-day TAPs offering objective and responsible advice to local decision-makers on a wide variety of land use and real estate issues ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The TAP program is intentionally flexible to provide a customized approach to specific land use and real estate issues. In fulfillment of ULI's mission, this technical assistance report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

1 **GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES**

3 **Downtown Kenmore**

4 Following are the Downtown goals, objectives and policies. In some cases, policies are cross-
5 referenced in more than one Element, and this is noted by a policy reference in italics (e.g., *Policy*
6 *LU-2.5.1*).

7 **GOAL DT-1. MAKE DOWNTOWN THE FOCAL POINT OF THE COMMUNITY.**

8 **OBJECTIVE DT-1.1 Identify and support Kenmore’s Downtown as a center for commercial,**
9 **civic, cultural, park, and higher density housing uses and activities.**

10 Policy DT-1.1.1 Consistent with the districts identified in Policy LU-2.1.2, encourage a mix of
11 uses in Downtown including several or all of the following:

- 12 a. Government, educational, health, human service, and public safety
13 facilities;
- 14 b. Retail stores and services;
- 15 c. Professional offices;
- 16 d. Multi-family housing, manufactured housing communities and
17 mixed-use developments;
- 18 e. Underground, under-building, structured, and/or shared parking;
19 and,
- 20 f. Parks and open space.

21 Policy DT-1.1.2 Identify Downtown Kenmore as part of a High-Capacity Transit (HCT)
22 Community pursuant to VISION 2050 and the King County Countywide
23 Planning Policies. HCTs are cities connected to existing or planned light
24 rail, commuter rail, ferry, streetcar, and bus rapid transit facilities. As one
25 of 34 HCT communities, Kenmore plays an increasingly important role as
26 a hub to accommodate regional employment and population growth.
27 Targeting growth within these transit-rich communities helps to support
28 mobility and reduces the number and length of vehicle trips.

29 Policy DT-1.1.3 Work with other organizations to promote civic and community events
30 which foster community pride and promote the Downtown. For example, a
31 farmers’ market, activities at the Hangar and Town Square.

32 **OBJECTIVE DT-1.2 Define Downtown Land Use Districts.**

33 Policy DT-1.2.1 Continue to implement and evaluate land use regulations that support
34 different districts of downtown by encouraging regional serving
35 development south of SR-522 and local serving development north of
36 SR-522.

- 1 Policy DT-1.2.2 Support public investment, as well as mixed uses, in the northwest
2 quadrant of the 68th Avenue NE and SR-522 intersection.
- 3 Policy DT-1.2.3 Foster public/private partnerships to stimulate development consistent
4 with Downtown character.
- 5 Policy DT-1.2.4 Develop a Main Street, such as 181st Street, that emphasizes architectural
6 integration, promotes walkability, and helps develop and reinforce a
7 sense of place and identity of downtown Kenmore.
- 8 **OBJECTIVE DT-1.3 Define varying development intensities and scales within the Downtown.**
- 9 Policy DT-1.3.1 Continue to implement and evaluate ~~Create and apply~~ different intensity or
10 density standards that address the different characters of different areas
11 of Downtown. Types of land uses allowed may be more intensive in
12 regional-serving districts than in local-serving districts.
- 13 Policy DT-1.3.2 Continue to implement and evaluate ~~Vary~~ design and development
14 standards by district such as floor area ratios, building heights, ground-
15 level and upper-story setbacks, building modulation, and façade
16 treatments, dependent upon the regional-serving or local-serving nature of
17 the differing areas. Development standards also should consider
18 topography, view corridors, and compatibility with adjacent residential
19 uses surrounding the different areas of the Downtown.
- 20 Policy DT-1.3.3 Consistent with the Climate Action Plan and Element, promote density near
21 high frequency transit, and encourage infill and redevelopment in and near
22 the Downtown area.
- 23 **OBJECTIVE DT-1.4 Identify development and redevelopment incentives and infrastructure**
24 **phasing in the Downtown.**
- 25 Policy DT-1.4.1 Invest in transportation, surface water, civic, and park infrastructure and
26 facility improvements in portions of the Downtown where public
27 investment has the most potential to stimulate private reinvestment and
28 redevelopment where strategically financially feasible and sustainable.
- 29 Policy DT-1.4.2 Identify Downtown as a receiving area for density transfers from properties
30 with environmentally sensitive areas or to preserve existing affordable
31 housing.
- 32 Policy DT-1.4.3 Give Downtown locations the highest priority when siting City and
33 government facilities which have significant employment or destination
34 potential.
- 35 Policy DT-1.4.4 Encourage innovative, quality development and redevelopment through a
36 variety of regulatory, incentive, and program strategies. Possible
37 approaches include:
- 38 a. Special development standards for infill or redevelopment sites;

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | | b. Assembly and resale of sites to providers of affordable housing or |
| 2 | | mixed-use developments; |
| 3 | | c. Impact mitigation fee structures that favor infill or redevelopment; |
| 4 | | d. Expedited permit processes; |
| 5 | | e. Greater regulatory flexibility; |
| 6 | | f. Reduced permit fees and/or delayed fees; and |
| 7 | | g. Joint public/private loan guarantee pools. |
| 8 | | h. Financial incentives such as Multi-Family Tax Exemption, Tax |
| 9 | | Increment Financing. |
| 10 | | i. Tax Increment Financing |
| 11 | Policy DT-1.4.5 | Facilitate development in the Downtown that meets the community vision. |
| 12 | | Guide Downtown implementation strategies with input from key Downtown |
| 13 | | and community stakeholders. |
| 14 | Policy DT-1.4.6 | Monitor ongoing economic trends to anticipate future development |
| 15 | | opportunities and assist the City in amending development regulations. |
| 16 | OBJECTIVE DT-1.5 | Beautify Downtown with attractive, functional, and enduring buildings |
| 17 | | and places. |
| 18 | Policy DT-1.5.1 | Focus design review standards and guidelines towards Downtown as well |
| 19 | | as commercial and multi-family development Citywide. Ensure that |
| 20 | | provisions allow for creativity and flexibility while meeting common design |
| 21 | | principles. <i>(see Policy LU-10.1.2)</i> |
| 22 | Policy DT-1.5.2 | Promote the concept of a “center” through the use of common design |
| 23 | | themes such as street and landscape materials and building style and |
| 24 | | materials. |
| 25 | Policy DT-1.5.3 | Enhance the aesthetic quality and compatibility among land uses through |
| 26 | | landscaping, building orientation and setbacks, traffic control and other |
| 27 | | measures to reduce potential conflicts. Distinctive or historical local |
| 28 | | character and natural features should be reflected in development design |
| 29 | | to provide variety within Downtown. |
| 30 | Policy DT-1.5.4 | Identify and encourage the creation of parks, plazas, and public green |
| 31 | | spaces which enhance the aesthetics and social and environmental health |
| 32 | | of Kenmore. |
| 33 | Policy DT-1.5.5 | Require screening of unsightly views, such as heavy machinery, storage |
| 34 | | areas, loading docks, and parking areas to minimize their visibility from |
| 35 | | adjacent properties and from arterials. |

1 Policy DT-1.5.6 Provide locations for public gatherings in civic and commercial
2 developments where appropriate. (see *Policy LU-12.1.2*)

3 Policy DT-1.5.7 Regulate signs to contribute to the visual coherence of Downtown, while
4 reducing glare and other adverse visual impacts on nearby residents.

5 **GOAL DT-2. PROMOTE DOWNTOWN AS A VITAL, PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY CENTER.**

6 **OBJECTIVE DT-2.1 Increase pedestrian activity in the city center and encourage pedestrian-**
7 **oriented uses and designs.**

8 Policy DT-2.1.1 Encourage transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel through compact
9 development patterns. Multistory construction, structured parking, and
10 other techniques to use land efficiently should be encouraged.

11 Policy DT-2.1.2 Through zoning regulations, master plan and site plan reviews, or other
12 methods, group compatible uses to reduce conflicts among uses and to
13 increase convenience for businesses, employees, users and pedestrians.

14 Policy DT-2.1.3 Provide routes for pedestrian, auto, bicycle, transit and truck travel with
15 convenient access to each major destination. Buildings should be close to
16 sidewalks to promote walking and browsing, with parking areas located on
17 the side or rear of buildings.

18 Policy DT-2.1.4 Off-street parking should not disrupt pedestrian access to commercial uses.
19 Front yard parking should be discouraged, and interconnection of parking
20 lots should be required.

21 Policy DT-2.1.5 Identify the most desirable placement and orientation of new buildings to
22 improve the overall pedestrian activity and improve the aesthetics of the
23 center.

24 Policy DT-2.1.6 Improve and add sidewalks in the Downtown in accordance with
25 Transportation Element goals, objectives, and policies.

26 **OBJECTIVE 2.2 Create a Downtown circulation system that promotes mobility for all**
27 **modes of travel to and within Downtown.**

28 Policy DT-2.2.1 Design and implement a sidewalk system in the Downtown. Ensure that
29 crosswalks are identifiable and contribute to the design and intended
30 character of the Downtown.

31 Policy DT-2.2.2 Provide trail connections to the Burke-Gilman Trail through a pedestrian
32 bridge crossing SR-522 and at signalized intersections.

33 Policy DT-2.2.3 Continue coordination with Sound Transit in the development of future bus
34 rapid transit (BRT) service in Kenmore, as well as a future garage at
35 Kenmore Park & Ride.

- 1 Policy DT-2.2.4 Implement a Transportation Improvement Program that emphasizes
2 improvements facilitating Downtown redevelopment and traffic movement
3 consistent with the Transportation and Capital Facility Elements.
- 4 Policy DT-2.2.5 Promote pedestrian-friendly streets with street furniture and trees.
5 Develop street trees and vegetation standards that unify the Downtown,
6 define Downtown streets, and allow for appropriate business visibility.
7 Incorporate street furniture and art into Downtown street standards,
8 including benches, trash and recycling receptacles, tree grates, street
9 lamps, and other amenities.
- 10 Policy DT-2.2.6 For safety and aesthetic purposes, promote the use of landscaped buffers
11 between curbs and sidewalks, particularly along arterials. Ensure
12 appropriate levels of illumination. Encourage bus stops to have shelters
13 and benches. Provide crosswalks at key locations in Downtown, as well as
14 on SR-522 near Park and Ride lots and transit stops.
- 15 **OBJECTIVE DT-2.3 Encourage mixed-use development which contains a variety of uses**
16 **having activity levels at different times of day.**
- 17 Policy DT-2.3.1 Adopt land use and zoning regulations that encourage a mix of uses either
18 within the same structures or within an overall site development.
19 Incentives could include density bonuses, reduced parking rates for uses
20 with alternate peak parking utilization, or other mechanisms.
- 21 Policy DT-2.3.2 Encourage housing development within and surrounding the Downtown to
22 encourage evening utilization of the Downtown.
- 23 Policy DT-2.3.3 Encourage concentrations of housing and commercial and service
24 activities with complementary activity levels such as office and
25 entertainment complexes, housing and office uses, and other
26 combinations.
- 27 **OBJECTIVE DT-2.4 Provide housing and commercial development that supports transit.**
- 28 Policy DT-2.4.1 Establish minimum housing densities for Downtown development
29 districts.
- 30 Policy DT-2.4.2 Establish minimum floor area ratios or employment levels, and/or
31 implement business retention and expansion activities, for Downtown
32 development districts to support transit.
- 33 Policy DT-2.4.3 Allow joint parking facilities in the vicinity of the development they serve.
- 34 **OBJECTIVE DT-2.5 Provide a variety of housing choices within and surrounding Downtown to**
35 **support commercial businesses and alternative modes of transportation.**
- 36 Policy DT-2.5.1 Designate appropriate locations for multi-family land use and zoning
37 districts accommodating a variety of housing types such as townhomes,
38 apartments and manufactured housing communities.

1 Policy DT-2.5.2 Encourage multi-family housing as part of mixed-use developments within
2 Downtown.

3 Policy DT-2.5.3 Allow multi-family housing in stand-alone complexes within Downtown
4 districts subject to locational criteria, such as sites along secondary
5 access points or sites that would not inhibit commercial or mixed-use
6 development in prime locations.

7 **GOAL DT-3. LINK DOWNTOWN TO THE REST OF THE COMMUNITY.**

8 **OBJECTIVE DT-3.1 Strengthen the connections between Downtown and other**
9 **neighborhoods.**

10 Policy DT-3.1.1 Develop an integrated and hierarchical street tree, signage, and public art
11 program to identify Downtown, government facilities, and parks throughout
12 the community.

13 Policy DT-3.1.2 Ensure that appropriate development, design, and buffering techniques
14 allow for a graduated transition between the Downtown and adjacent
15 neighborhoods.

16 **OBJECTIVE DT-3.2 Provide safe pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile connections across SR-**
17 **522 and the Sammamish River.**

18 Policy DT-3.2.1 Consider sidewalk priorities consistent with the Transportation Element
19 and provide a continuous sidewalk system on 68th Avenue NE.

20 Policy DT-3.2.2 Establish an identifiable and safe bicycle route across SR-522.

21 Policy DT-3.2.3 Endeavor to reduce traffic volumes through an intra-community transit
22 system.

23 Policy DT-3.2.4 Consider capacity improvements cautiously to ensure that the
24 improvements will not attract significantly greater pass-through traffic.

25 **OBJECTIVE DT-3.3 Connect Downtown to the Lake Washington and Sammamish River**
26 **waterfronts, and to area parks and open spaces.**

27 Policy DT-3.3.1 Ensure the sidewalk system is improved to allow for connections to the
28 Burke-Gilman trail and to shoreline access areas established through the
29 Shoreline Master Program permit process.

30 Policy DT-3.3.2 Establish a primary and secondary path network in and around Downtown
31 with connections to the waterfront. The primary network consists of
32 sidewalks along streets and the Burke-Gilman Trail. The secondary
33 network consists of off-street non-motorized paths encircling and
34 bisecting Downtown blocks.

35

36

1 **Countywide Growth Center**

2 The following are goals, objectives and policies specifically related to the Downtown Kenmore
3 Countywide Growth Center. See also Goal 3 in the Land Use Element.

4 **GOAL DT-4. ENSURE A VARIETY OF LAND USES IN THE DOWNTOWN CENTER.**

5
6 **OBJECTIVE DT-4.1 Retain a variety of uses and activities in downtown that serves the needs
7 of existing and future residents and businesses.**

8
9 Policy DT-4.1.1 Promote the countywide growth center as a location for a variety of
10 businesses, including retail, services, office, cultural, and entertainment
11 uses, while ensuring that these uses are compatible with mixed-use
12 development.

13
14 Policy DT-4.1.2 Coordinate land use and infrastructure/services planning such that major
15 public and semi-public uses are located within walking distance to transit.

16
17 Policy DT-4.1.3 Ensure that transit-supportive land uses² are permitted to maximize
18 increased transit ridership.

19
20 Policy DT-4.1.4 Explore opportunities for sustainable, equitable, and resilient transit-
21 oriented development (TOD) that helps create a vibrant downtown.
22 Reduce disparities and improve access to opportunity and equitable
23 outcomes through inclusive community planning.

24
25 Policy DT-4.1.5 Create opportunities and incentives for equitable TOD, and through
26 targeted public and private investments that meet the needs of current
27 and future residents and businesses.

28
29 Policy DT-4.1.6 Explore public-private partnerships, co-location of facilities, regional
30 facility opportunities, and other creative tools to meet the unique public
31 needs of centers, including utilities, transportation, parks, beautification,
32 civic, social, and other improvements and needs. When reviewing and
33 updating land use and sub-area plans, consider potential location for
34 these public needs.

35
36 **GOAL DT-5. ACCOMMODATE FOR AND ALLOCATE GROWTH IN THE DOWNTOWN CENTER.**

37
38 **OBJECTIVE DT-5.1 The majority of Kenmore’s future growth shall be allocated to Downtown
39 Kenmore.**

40
41 Policy DT-5.1.1 Focus housing and employment into downtown and high-capacity transit
42 areas consistent with VISION 2050 Regional Growth Strategy and at
43 densities that maximize transit-oriented development potential.

² See PSRC’s 2015 [Transit Supportive Densities and Land Uses](#) report. Among job categories, government, knowledge-based, and entertainment industries are most likely to locate in transit-oriented development and are most likely to benefit from proximity to transit. Education, civic, and cultural institutions, such as universities, libraries, community centers, and museums attract significant travel by a variety of modes, including transit.

1
2 Policy DT-5.1.2 Use State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) planned actions and
3 exemptions to efficiently accomplish and streamline environmental
4 review in downtown.
5

6 **GOAL DT-6. EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS**
7 **IN THE DOWNTOWN CENTER**
8
9

10 **OBJECTIVE DT-6.1 Provide a variety of mobility choices to increase access to, from, and**
11 **within downtown, with emphasis on walking, bicycling, and transit.**
12

13 Policy DT-6.1.1 Encourage transit-oriented development within downtown that is within a
14 walkable and bikeable distance of high-capacity transit stops to take
15 advance of local and regional transit options.
16

17 Policy DT-6.1.2 Work with King County Metro and Sound Transit to provide a full range of
18 transit services within the downtown area. Continue to provide and
19 upgrade transit shelters and other amenities, as needed.
20

21 Policy DT-6.1.3 Downtown streetscapes should be safe for pedestrians, bicyclists to
22 meet the needs of all community members consistent with the Diversity,
23 Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) strategy.
24

25 Policy DT-6.1.4 Support transportation demand management and right-size parking
26 strategies to help manage parking for residents, businesses, and during
27 special events in the downtown area.
28

29 **GOAL DT-7 ENSURE PARKS, RECREATION AND OTHER CULTURAL AMENITIES ARE KEY**
30 **ASSETS IN THE DOWNTOWN CENTER**

31 **OBJECTIVE DT-7.1 Provide for a variety of parks, plazas, pathways, open spaces and public**
32 **art in downtown.**
33

34 Policy DT-7.1.1 Create opportunities for parks, plazas, pathways, and public art
35 throughout the downtown.
36

37 Policy DT-7.1.2 Parks and open spaces within downtown should linked or adjacent to one
38 another to provide for connectivity.
39

40 Policy DT-7.1.3 Expand hardscapes and other gathering spaces that provide for both
41 small and large events.
42
43

1 **IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS**

2 As the City embarks on the new updated Downtown Plan, it is important to identify key
3 implementation programs. The following implementation programs may be considered to
4 implement the Downtown Vision:

- 5 ▪ Business Retention
- 6 ▪ Economic Development
- 7 ▪ Infrastructure/Services, ~~and~~
- 8 ▪ Regulations/Permitting
- 9 ▪ Parks, Open Space, and Recreation
- 10 ▪ Architectural/Placemaking
- 11 ▪ Streets/Sidewalks/Bike Lanes
- 12 ▪ Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program for Affordable Housing
- 13 ▪ Parking Management
- 14 ▪ Update the Four Downtown Quadrant Strategy

15
16
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