

Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors Strategy Implementation

Planning Commission Workshop
February 14, 2023



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Agenda

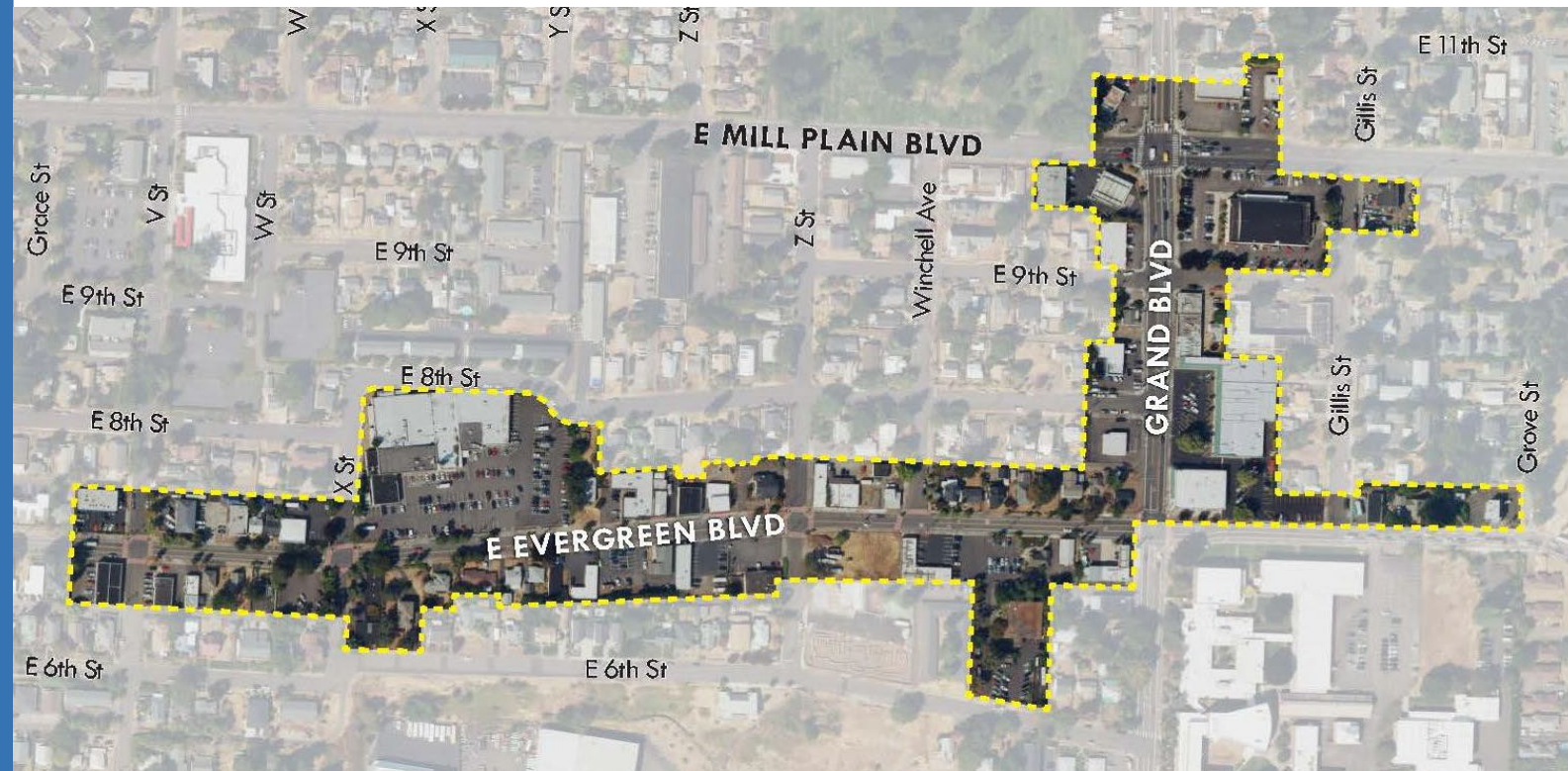
- Review project background and existing Strategy Document
- Presentation from Cascadia Partners on potential code concepts to implement strategy
- Planning Commission discussion and feedback
- Next Steps

Adoption Process

- **Planning Commission memorandum:** April 2020
- **Planning Commissions Workshops:** June 2020, February 2021, September 2021
- **Planning Commission Public Hearing:** December 14, 2021, Passed unanimously
- **City Council Workshops:** December 2019, May 2020, September 2020, March 2021, September 2021, January 2022
- **City Council Public Hearing:** February 28, 2022, passed unanimously
- **Community Outreach:** in person open house on February 13, 2020, online survey in early 2020, virtual open houses on August 26, 2020, August 27th, 2020, February 4th, 2021, October 21st, 2021

Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors Strategy Document Review

The Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors Strategy is a subarea plan for the study area below, and the culmination of the two-year community planning process that evaluated the types of uses that are allowed, regulatory standards for new development, parking and access, the pedestrian environment, and other issues identified by the community and stakeholders.



Alignment with City Council Priorities



Climate

- Strategy aims to create a sustainable community that promotes 15 minute neighborhoods, supporting multimodal transportation.



Equity

- Strategy seeks to promote equitable development that does not displace existing residents and encourages housing at all income levels.



Safety

- Strategy intends to support the creation of a safe transportation network for all users, either walking, biking, rolling, or transit riders.

Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors Strategy

VISION

Promote equitable and diverse corridor development that is vibrant, sustainable, and mixed-use.

Foster development that recognizes and builds upon the neighborhood's unique setting, history, culture, and character.

GOALS

LAND USE. Strengthen current businesses while providing an appropriate mix of commercial and residential uses.

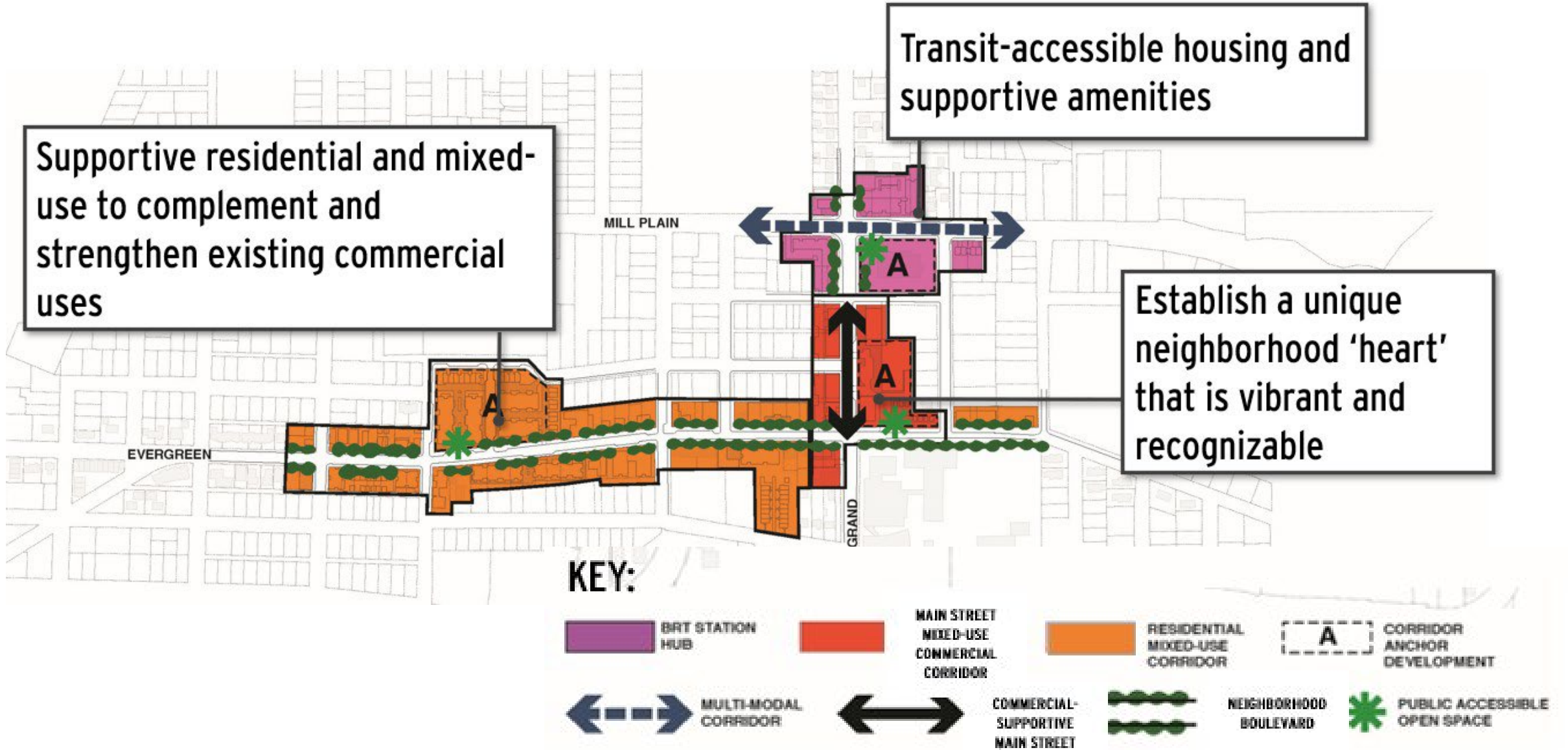
MOBILITY. Establish a balanced multi-modal network of motor vehicle, transit, walking, and biking routes through the corridors.

PARKING. Provide adequate parking to serve existing uses and future development.

URBAN DESIGN. Create public and private spaces that are inclusive, integrated, and contribute positively to the livability of the corridor.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. Provide ample opportunities for small-scale, locally-owned business to thrive.

Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors Strategy Vision



Regulatory Recommendations

- Require ground floor commercial in the Grand Boulevard Commercial Mixed-Use Corridor, while providing flexibility to allow some ground floor residential outside the commercial ‘heart’ of the study area.
- Tailor maximum building heights to align with the corridor vision concepts from the study area.
- Adapt minimum off-street parking requirements that support commercial and residential uses and identify opportunities that promote walkability, vitality, and affordability to the corridors.
- Require a maximum front setback of 0-5 feet at the ground floor regardless of building height and support active edge development.

Regulatory Recommendations Cont.

- Prohibit new uses potentially inconsistent with corridor visions, such as big-box retail; motor vehicle repair, sales and rental; gas stations; self-storage; and drive-thru establishments. Existing uses can be maintained.
- Adopt standards that support activating vacant and underutilized spaces.
- Develop regulations that provide additional access enhancements in the BRT Hub corridor area that take into consideration first/last mile solutions and universal design best practices.
- Allow for non-mixed-use housing types on smaller parcels, where appropriate.
- Explore providing flexibility for nonconforming uses, such as existing small businesses, adaptively reused single-family homes fronting the corridors, etc.

Regulatory Recommendations Cont.

- Consider disincentivizing chains and capping commercial business sizes to accommodate small-scale retail and maintain the fine-grained development pattern of the corridors
- Explore allowances for interim/temporary uses such as food cart pods
- Create standards for ground floor residential to ensure street front activation and interest.
- Develop design guidelines bolstering local identity and street activation that considers development affordability
- Encourage streetscape improvements in all redevelopment projects.

Other Implementation Recommendations

- Create a business district to support art, events, and other placemaking
- Extend the Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) program calibrated to implement the vision and goals for the corridors and add workforce housing
- Attract and retain neighborhood-serving businesses
- Establish a storefront improvement program to support existing businesses
- Establish a signage and placemaking program along Grand Boulevard and in the BRT Hub
- Identify opportunities to support houseless communities and promote community safety

Other Implementation Recommendations

- Explore strategies to maintain economic diversity and housing affordability, especially for low-and moderate-income households
- Consider height bonuses in exchange for attainably priced workforce housing units
- Improve connectivity to nearby destinations such as downtown Vancouver, the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, and the Pearson Field Airport as an economic development strategy.
- Leverage environmental remediation funding opportunities as an incentive to develop eligible sites

Transportation Recommendations

- Through the Vancouver Moves project, inform the upcoming citywide Transportation System Plan (TSP) update as follows:
 - **Overall:** Create a cohesive, safe, walkable, and multimodal environment. Increase signage, consider integrating stormwater and other sustainability best practices. Explore Demand Management strategies. Determine appropriate access management.
 - **Grand Boulevard:** Reduce speed limits and implement traffic calming. Add on-street parking. Allow parking space alternatives such as outdoor seating, or bike parking and other placemaking, temporarily or permanently.

Transportation Recommendations Cont.

- **Evergreen Boulevard:** Update street standards through TSP implementation; Widen sidewalks, increase street trees and other landscaping, add street furniture, lighting, and other features. Considering enhanced pedestrian crossing at V Street intersection.
- **Mill Plain/Grand Intersection BRT Hub:** Design transportation infrastructure and streetscape improvements to facilitate multi-modal access to transit for people of all abilities around the future BRT station platforms.

Strategy Implementation Code Changes

	Current Development Code	2022 Strategy Document	Proposed New Code
1) Maximum Building Height	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50-feet throughout, typically 4 stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-5 stories, varying by parcel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 stories along Evergreen and west Grand, 5 stories on east side of Grand
2) Bulk and Massing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Silent beyond height limits and setbacks. Commercial abutting lower density residential requires 10-foot setback Upper portions need ½ foot setback for each foot of building height above 20 feet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No standard directly proposed to address the development form beyond active edge requirements, maximum front setback of 0-5 feet at the ground floor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum height step down only on rear face within 25 feet of a residentially zoned site Maximum building width, with breaks within the building
3) Required Ground Floor Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least half of frontage along arterial/collector streets must be commercial or office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More flexibility along Evergreen, keep existing requirement on Grand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow for either ground floor commercial or residential along Evergreen. Require at least half of frontage along Grand be ground floor commercial with flexibility for how to meet this standard
4) Required Minimum Off-Street Parking Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0.75 per multi-family unit near frequent transit such as Evergreen and Grand 1/300sf for goods and services, 1/250sf for eating and drinking, 1/400sf office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero for ground floor retail 1/1000sf for commercial uses 1 per unit for residential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0.5 per multi-family unit, potential further reduction as incentive for desired uses/features 1/1000sf commercial, zero for ground floor retail

Cascadia Partners Presentation



EVERGREEN AND GRAND

Code Concepts



PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION | 14 FEB 2023



EVERGREEN GRAND
PROJECT OVERVIEW

EVERGREEN GRAND CORRIDOR | STUDY AREA



EXISTING COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

One of several important commercial corridors that are a focus for City long term to **infill older auto-oriented areas** of Vancouver.

Strategy adopted in 2022 to promote development and enhance livability.

CORRIDOR TYPES | EXISTING AND EXAMPLES

EVERGREEN BOULEVARD - 50 FT ROW



DIVISION AND 37TH - 50 FT ROW



GRAND BOULEVARD - 65 FT ROW



17TH AND MAIN - 65 FT ROW

EVERGREEN GRAND CORRIDOR | STUDY AREA

CURRENT



Older commercial corridor with some new businesses

Mix of single detached homes and single story commercial uses

Opportunities to improve streetscape/multi-modal

FUTURE



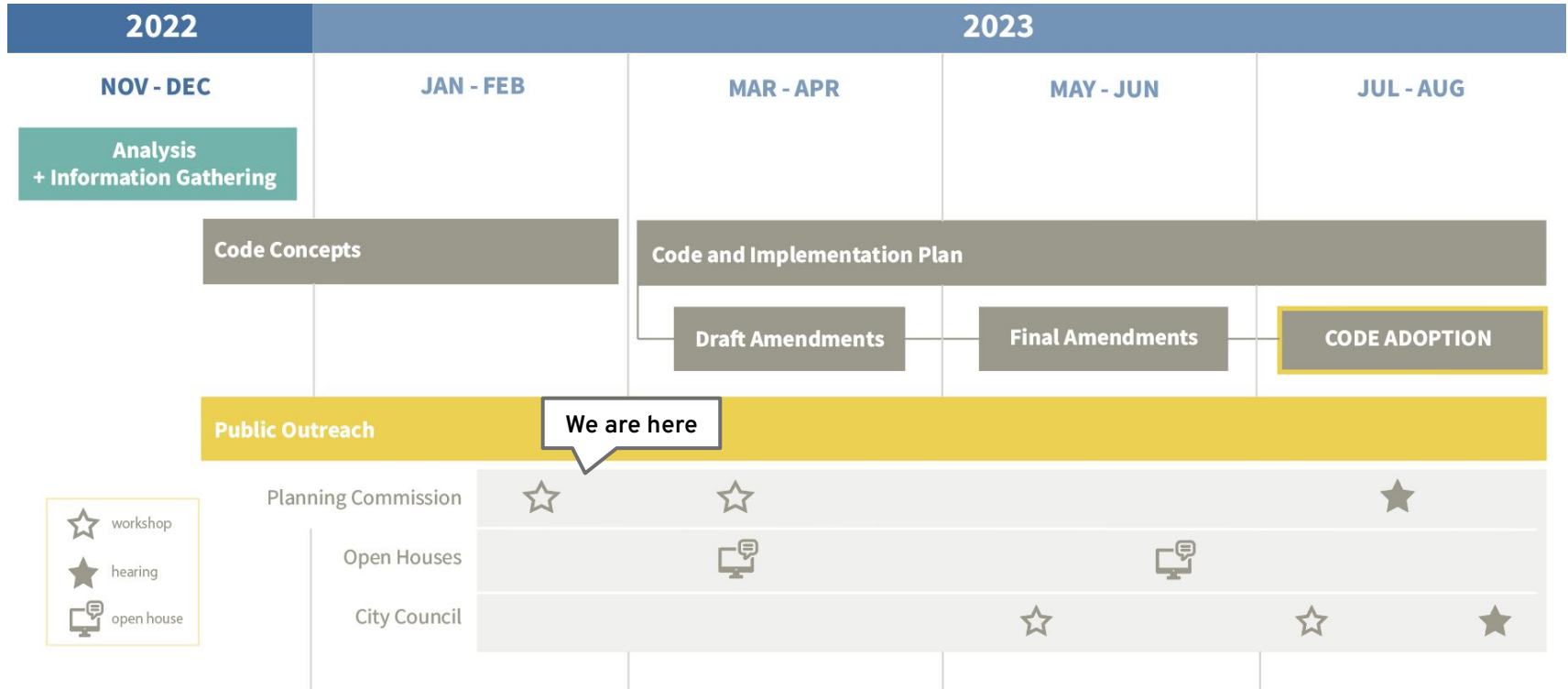
Mix of uses with higher intensities

Connected, appealing multi-modal corridor

Compatible development and scale

Opportunities for thriving local businesses

PROJECT OVERVIEW | TIMELINE



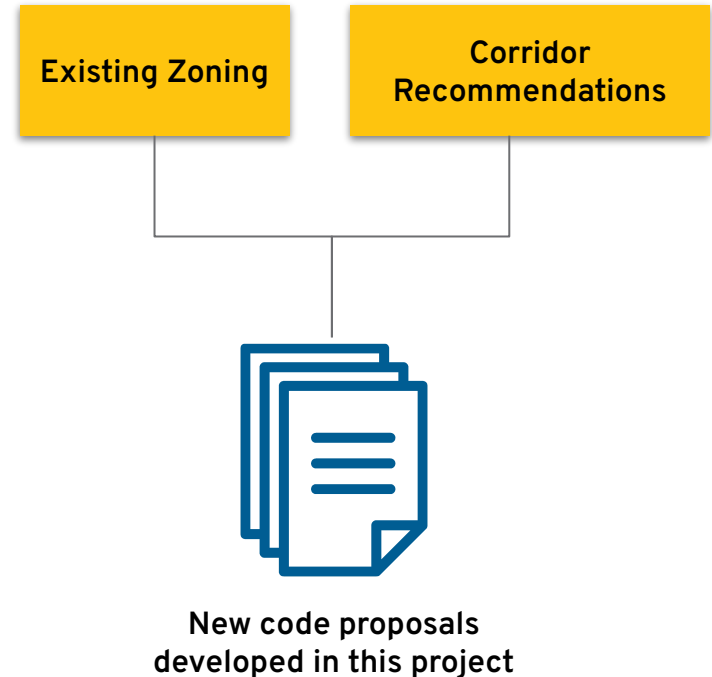
- ☆ workshop
- ★ hearing
- 🖥️ open house



CODE CONCEPTS
OVERVIEW

CODE CONCEPTS | APPROACH

- Code Concepts are **based on an in-depth audit of existing conditions** - both on the ground via a physical site inventory and through detailed review of existing code and policy documents. They respond to the existing character and context of the corridor.
- Code Concepts **further analyze and assess the Corridor Strategy** key goals and initial zoning recommendations.
- Code Concepts are **initial ideas that will be prioritized and refined** based on feedback from the Planning Commission and public.



CODE CONCEPTS | TESTING

- Code Concepts are **tested to ensure market feasibility** and encourage affordability.
- Using detailed pro formas and site plan models, various zoning approaches are analyzed to **determine the impact on cost of projects and potential returns**. There is a delicate balance between the effects of required on-site parking, maximum building heights, lot size, and potential rents.
- Current market conditions in the Evergreen Grand corridor are ripe for infill development. However, the **cost of development is high and the smaller sites on the corridor present unique challenges**.

How does requiring ground floor commercial affect the feasibility of projects?

Is it financially feasible to develop a 3 story building?

Can lots accommodate required parking on-site?



01

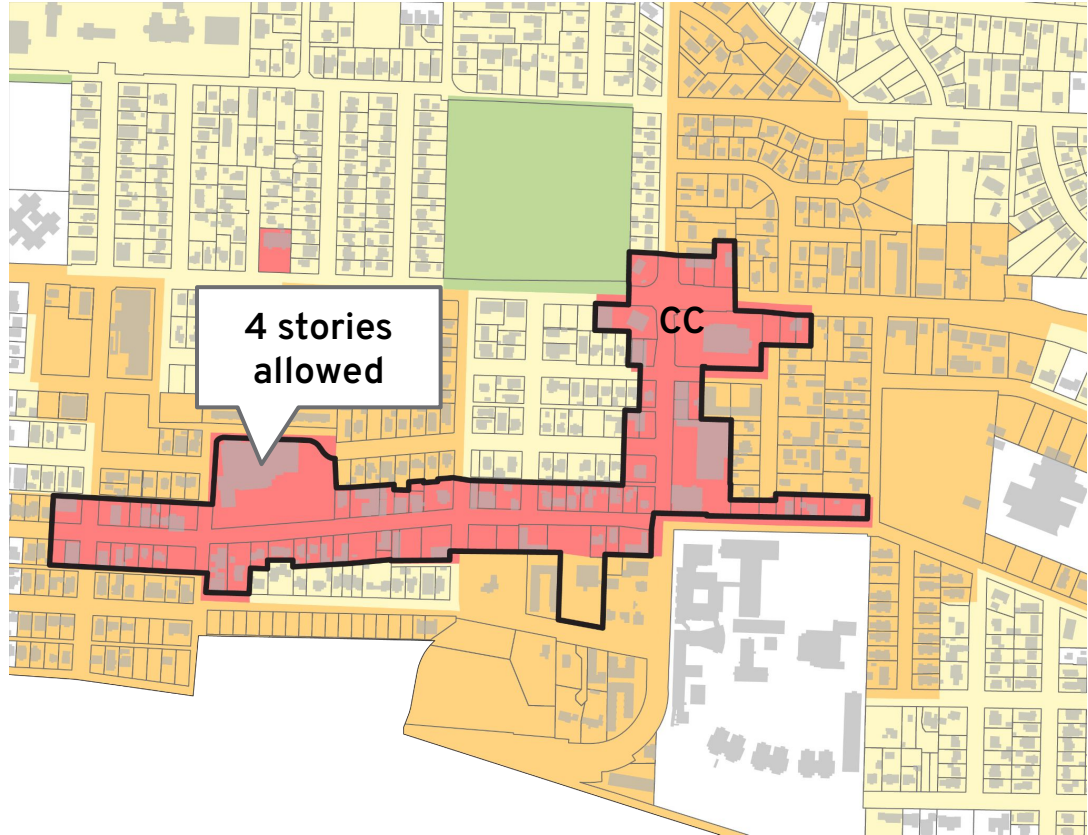
BUILDING HEIGHT
CODE CONCEPTS

4 STORIES

50 feet permitted across entire CC zone, translates to 4 stories

NEW BUILDINGS

Several new buildings have been built and permitted at this height along Evergreen



RANGE OF HEIGHTS

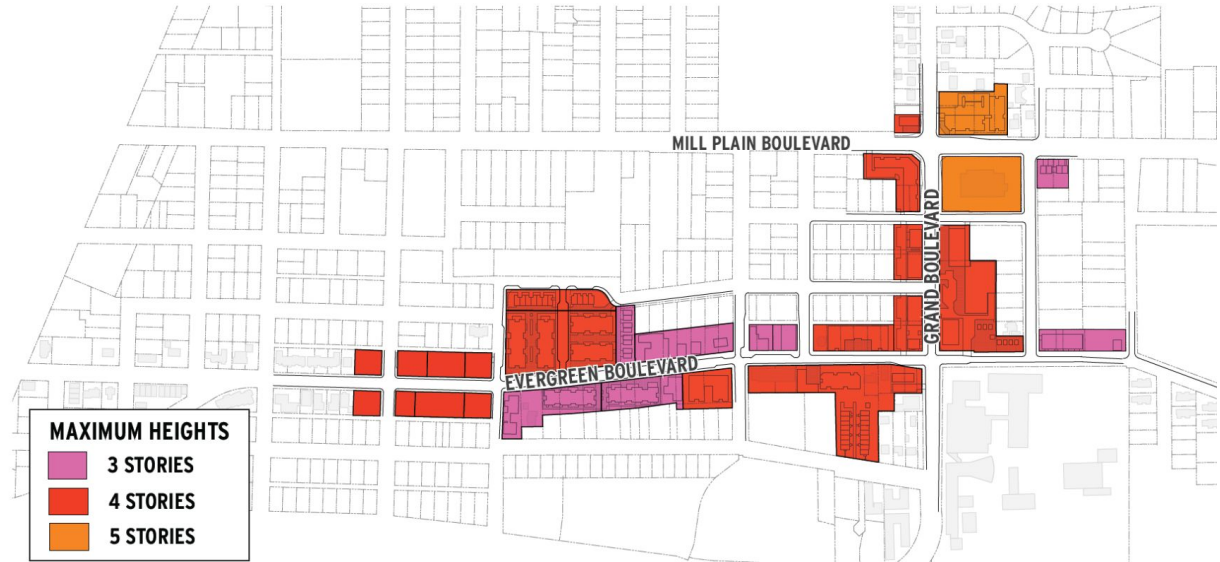
Height recommendations on a parcel level ranging from 3-5 stories

ALIGNED WITH TRANSIT

Increased height near transit stops

COMPATIBILITY

Heights decreased to 3 stories in certain areas along Evergreen to prevent 'canyoning'



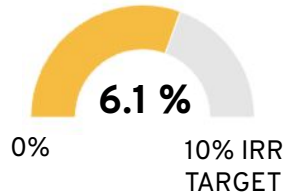
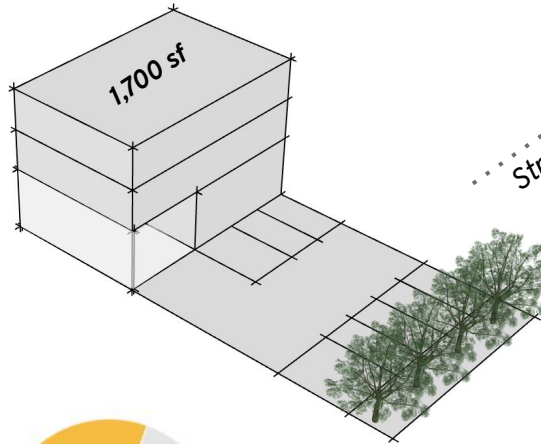
BUILDING HEIGHTS | TESTING

01

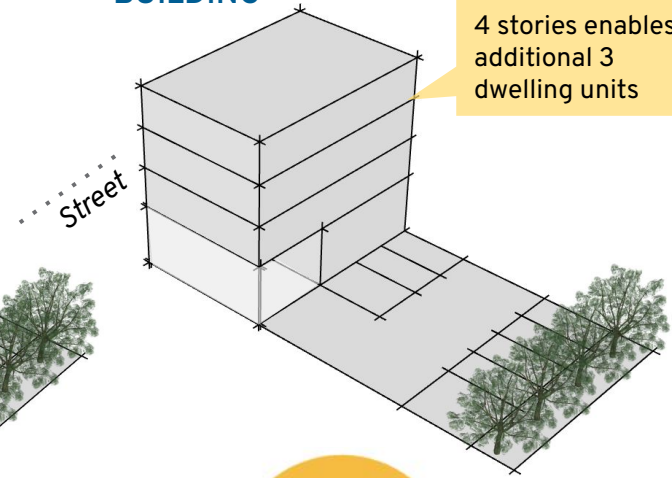
What is the impact of **reducing maximum heights** on development feasibility of residential projects?

- **Height increase from 3 to 4 stories has a significant positive impact on development feasibility.** The impact of increasing to 5 stories is also positive but not as significant as the increase from 3 to 4 stories. On smaller, constrained lots height is critical to achieving higher density.
- **The 10' rear landscaped buffer negatively impacts feasibility on smaller lots.** Allowing parking spaces, but not buildings, in this buffer area would have a meaningful impact on achievable densities on small lots.

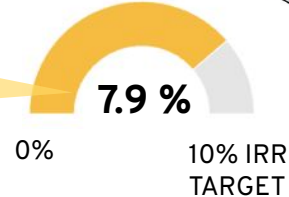
3 STORY RESIDENTIAL BUILDING



4 STORY RESIDENTIAL BUILDING



Significant increase in feasibility



RANGE OF HEIGHTS

Four stories along Evergreen and west side of Grand due to smaller lots

ALIGNED WITH TRANSIT

Five stories recommended near transit node at Mill Plain and Grand and on larger lots on east side of Grand.

COMPATIBILITY

Recommend using bulk/massing controls to address compatibility concerns while preserving feasibility





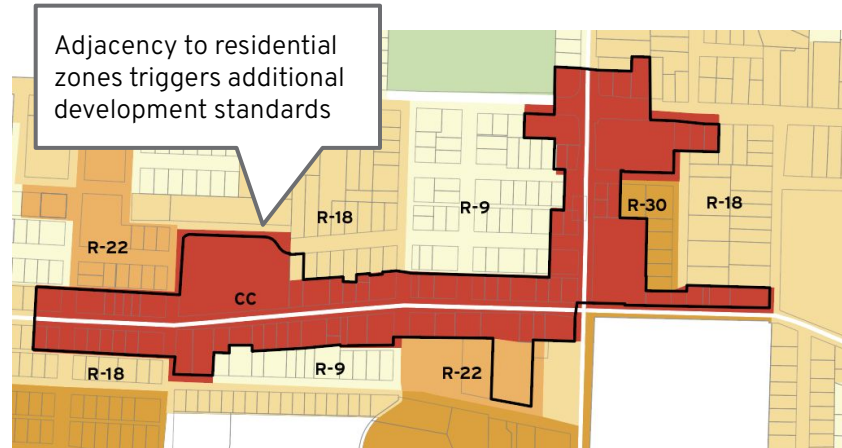
02

BULK AND
MASSING
CODE CONCEPTS

CC ZONE

All lots in Corridor share back lot lines with residential zones, only a few are separated by alleys

The intent of the Community Commercial (CC) Zone is “to provide a transition between more intense General Commercial areas and surrounding residential areas; or is located along a major arterial where parcels are generally small or shallow, and are bordered by Lower Density Residential areas.”



▶ SETBACKS

When not separated by street, rear setbacks:

0 - 5 feet Commercial

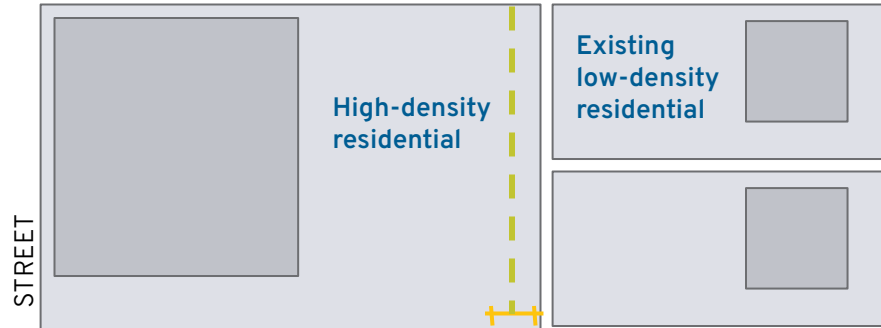
10 feet Low-/High-Density Residential

▶ SCREENING + BUFFERING

When not separated by street:

High Wall screening: extensive screening of visual and noise impacts is required to protect abutting sensitive uses and/or if there is little space for separation between uses.

- Four high shrubs required per 30 lineal feet of wall
- 6-feet with 100% sight-obscuring fence

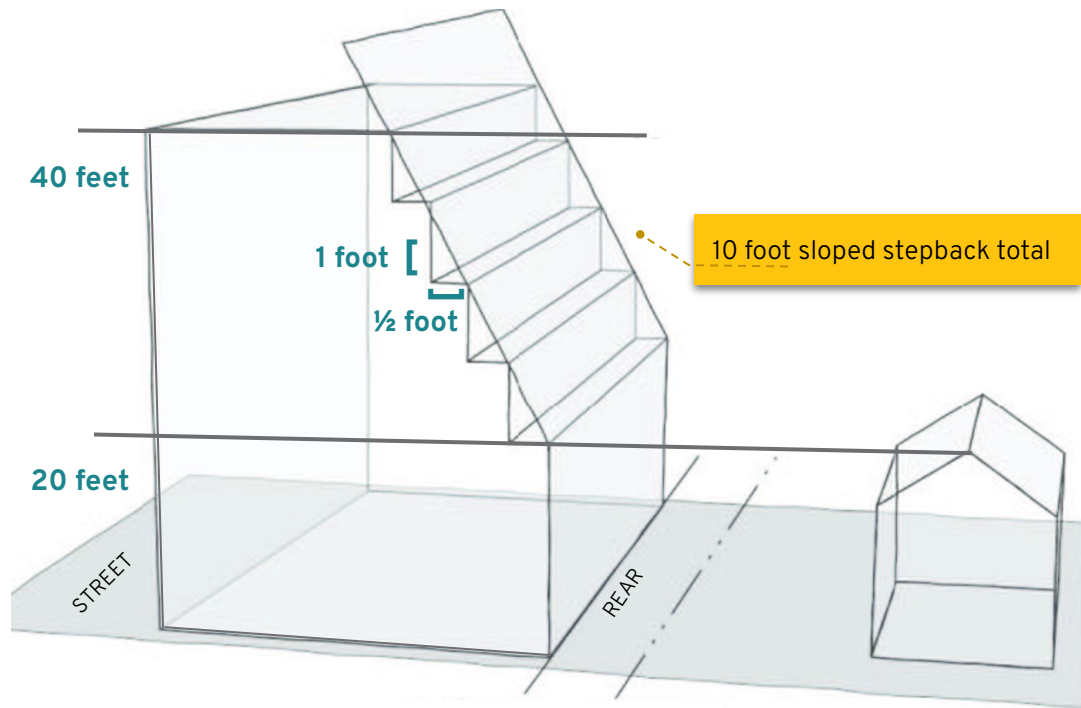


10 ft setback + landscaping or wall

STEP BACK

½ foot setback for each foot building exceeds 20 feet in height up to maximum of 40 feet.

Buildings over 20 feet, may be stepped back.



BULK + MASSING | CORRIDOR STRATEGY

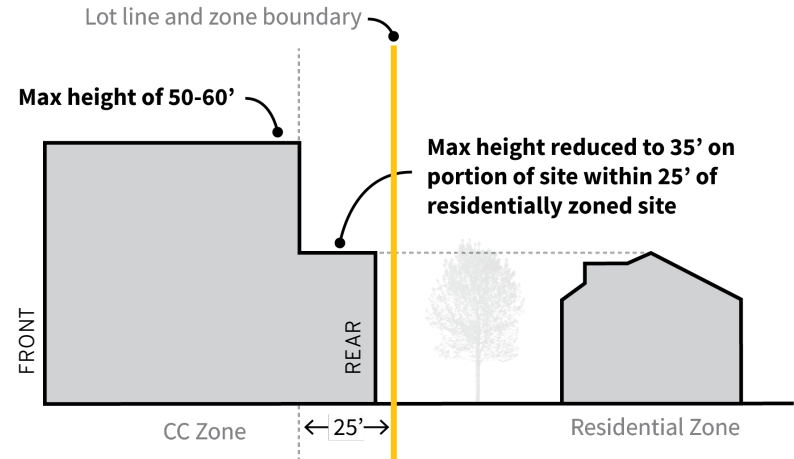
There were no specific standards noted in the Corridor Strategy document related to bulk and massing, but it did note goals related to new development being **context sensitive** to fit comfortably with surrounding character. **Design standards** addressing transparency and entrances were recommended.



BULK AND MASSING | CODE CONCEPT: REAR STEP DOWN

02

- The current standard of a continual slope requires **complex and costly building forms** in order to maximize the size of the building.
- The maximum **height step down** would function similarly to existing step down standards, but would be refined to lessen the negative impact on development feasibility.
- The **proposed standard** is to require a step down only on the portion of the building facing the rear property line that is within 25' of a residentially zoned site to achieve the appearance of transition between different uses and building types.



BULK AND MASSING | CODE CONCEPT: MAX BUILDING WIDTH

- The maximum building width is a **new proposed standard**. No current code provisions directly regulate the width of buildings (as measured along the street frontage).
- This standard is important because **building frontages impact the experience** of people walking along the street. Long, uninterrupted buildings are less interesting visually and large in scale.
- Additionally, older buildings on the corridor tend to be narrower (50-100 feet long). New buildings of a **similar scale will be more compatible** with this existing fabric.

EXAMPLE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS (35-50')



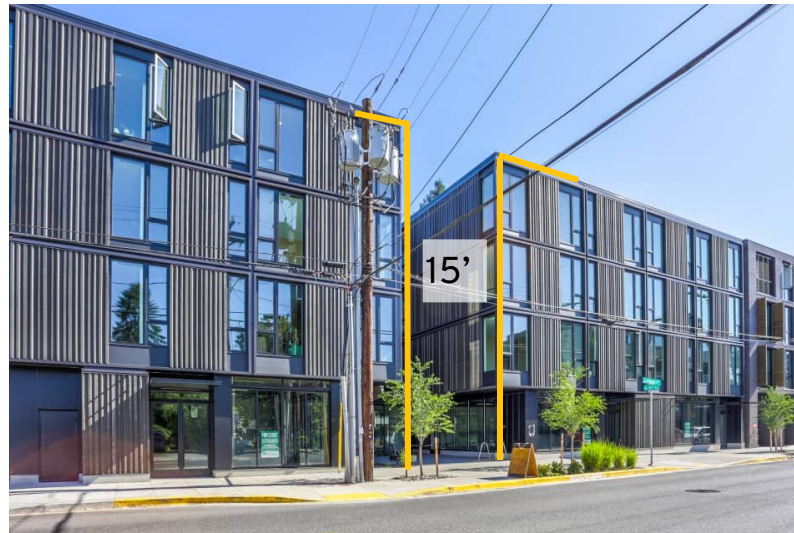
EXAMPLE OF WIDE NEW BUILDING (200')



BULK AND MASSING | CODE CONCEPT: MAX BUILDING WIDTH

In addition to a maximum building width, a break with minimum dimensions could be required of buildings of a certain total width. For example, a minimum 15 foot break could be required every 150 feet.

EXAMPLE (DIVISION STREET)



160' total building length
15'x40' opening in middle of building

EXAMPLE (ALBERTA STREET)



142' total building length
32'x48' patio in middle of building



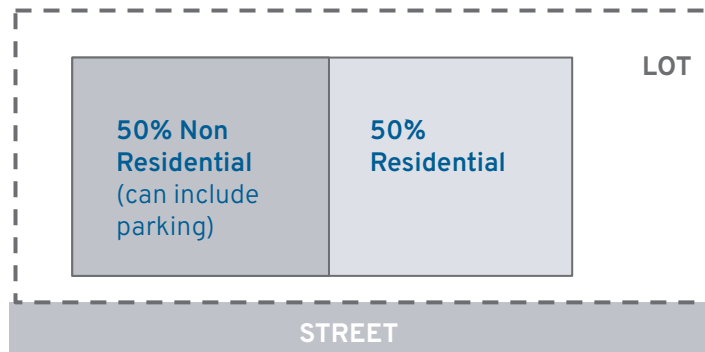
03

GROUND FLOOR
COMMERCIAL
CODE CONCEPTS

SINGLE MIXED USE BUILDING

A minimum of 50% of the lineal street front of the ground floor of mixed use buildings along arterial or collector streets **must be devoted to commercial or office uses.**

Live/Work uses are a permitted exception to the requirement.

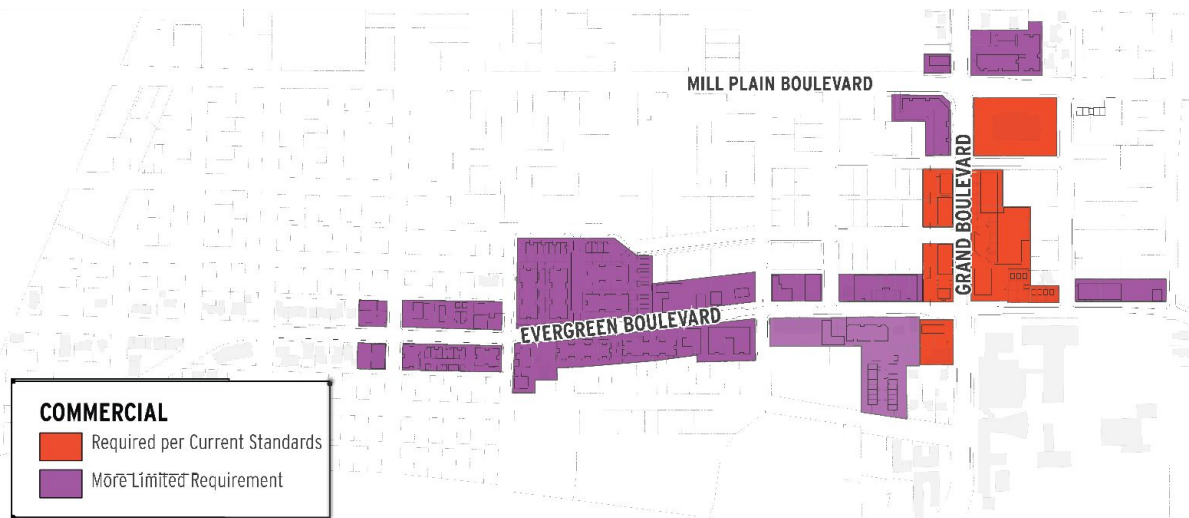


▶ CONCENTRATE RETAIL

Require ground floor commercial at crossroads of Evergreen/Grand in the commercial 'heart' of the study area using existing 50% requirement

▶ LIMITED COMMERCIAL ON EVERGREEN

Corridor Strategy recommended more limited requirement for commercial along Evergreen but did not identify specific standard




REQUIRED COMMERCIAL | TESTING

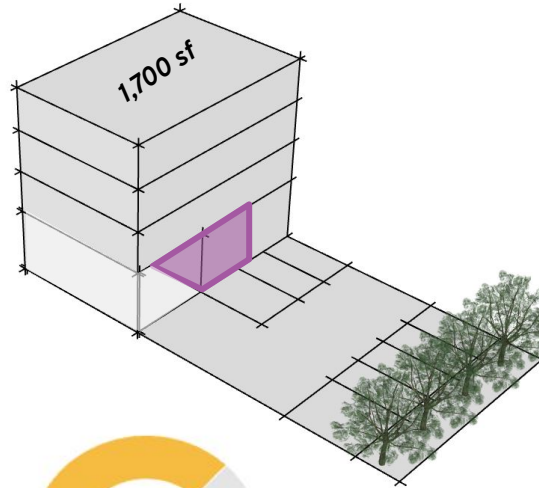
03

What is the impact of **requiring ground floor commercial uses** on development feasibility of higher density mixed-use projects?

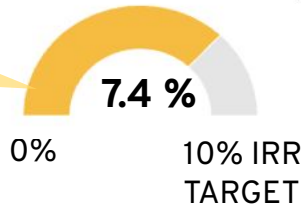
→ **Residential-only buildings perform better than mixed use buildings.** Retail spaces are not as productive because rents are lower on a per square foot basis than residential units. However, the negative impact on feasibility is limited because only 50% of the ground floor is required to be commercial space.

 50% ground floor retail

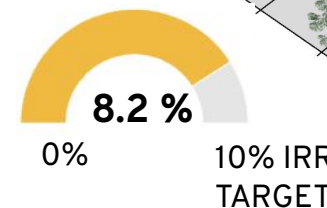
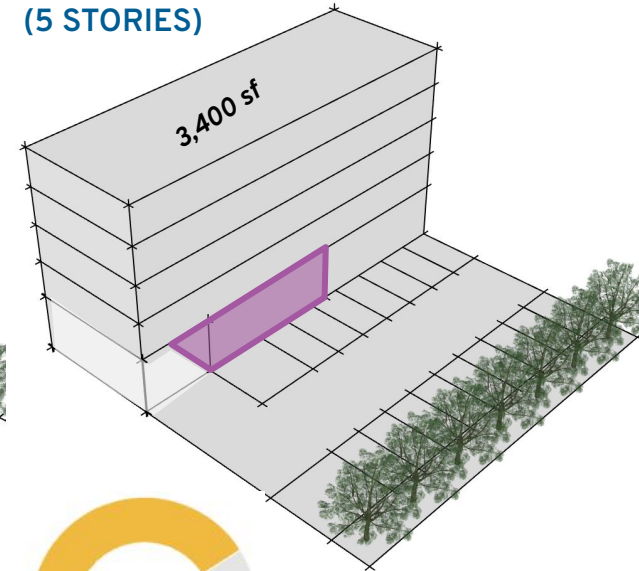
**MIXED-USE SMALL LOT
(4 STORIES)**



Ground floor retail negatively impacts feasibility



**MIXED-USE LARGE LOT
(5 STORIES)**



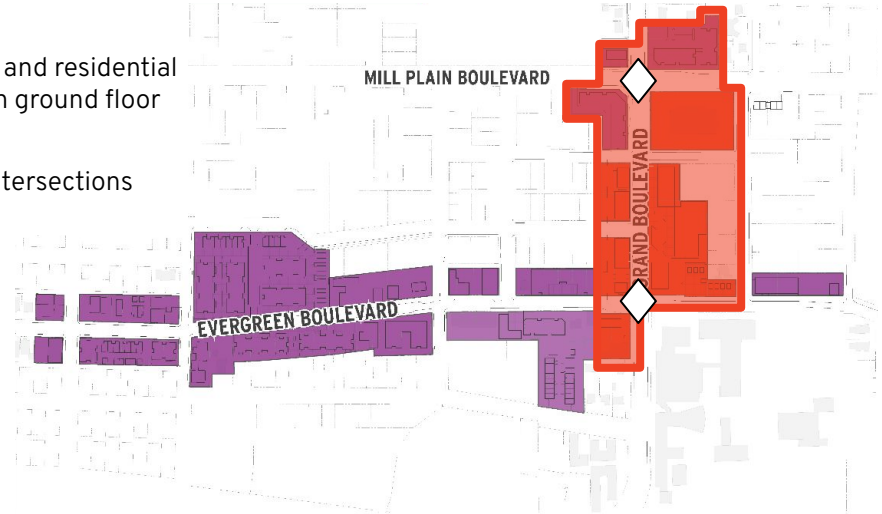
▶ RETAIL ALONG GRAND

Currently the majority of properties along Grand already have retail. Future development should follow this pattern and require 50% ground floor retail along Grand.

▶ FLEXIBILITY ON EVERGREEN

Allow for either commercial or residential on the ground floor on sites on Evergreen. Do not require a minimum amount of ground floor commercial space. **High-density residential uses also support corridor goals.**

- Ground floor commercial required
- Commercial and residential permitted on ground floor
- ◊ Important intersections





04

PARKING
CODE CONCEPTS

▶ LOW EXISTING RESIDENTIAL STANDARD

Given proximity to high-frequency transit service, the current parking standard for residential uses cannot be greater than 0.75 for multi-unit projects. This is already a low number of spaces required.

Lower ratio within ¼ mile of frequent transit

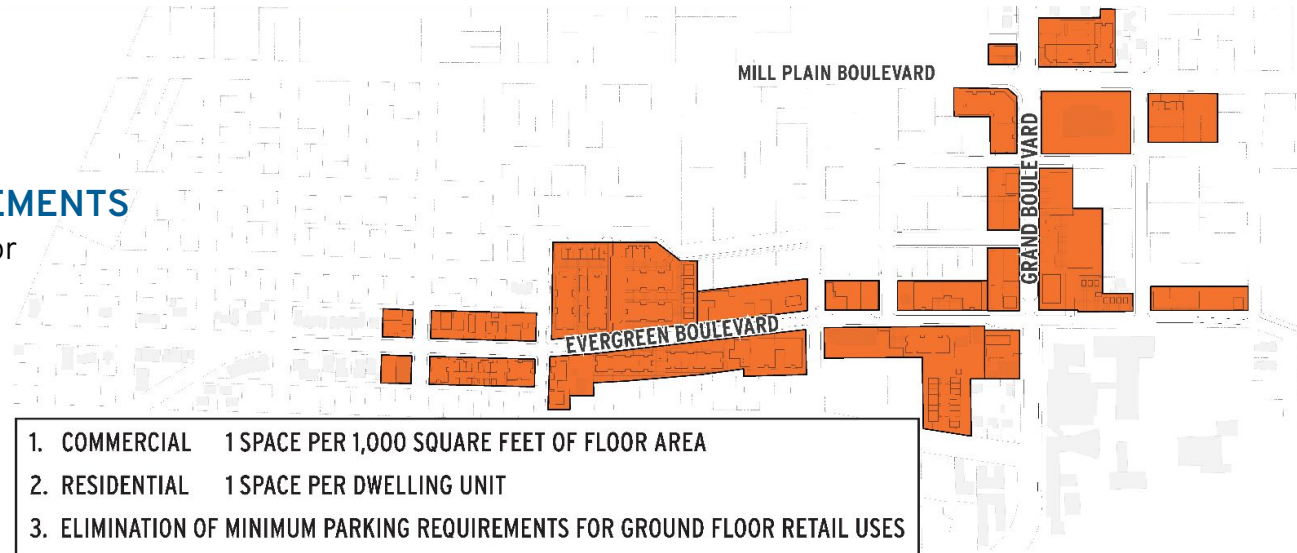
Parking Requirement	# of Spaces
Townhomes	1/unit
Duplex	1/unit
Multifamily	0.75/unit
Goods and Services	1/300 sf
Eating and Drinking	1/250 sf
Office	1/400 sf

▶ NO PARKING FOR GROUND FLOOR RETAIL

Remove requirement to increase feasibility of active uses along street in key locations

▶ REDUCED REQUIREMENTS

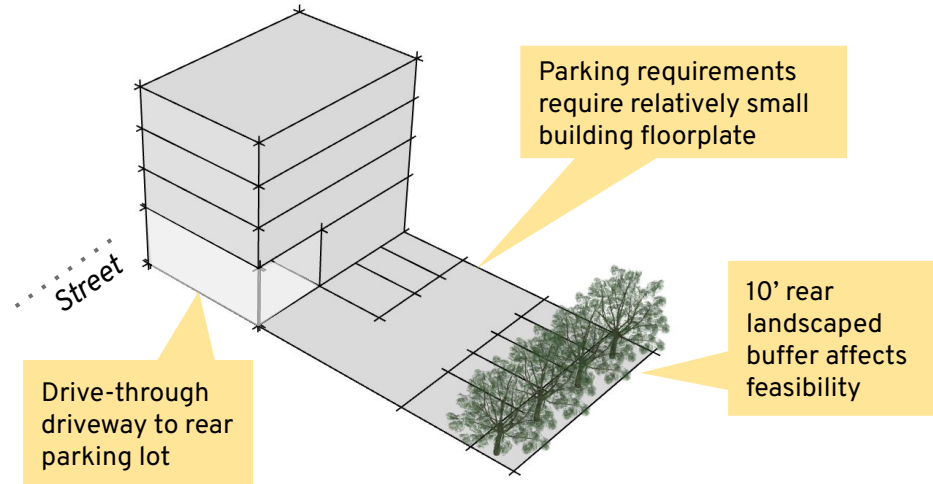
Less parking required for commercial uses throughout corridor to make redevelopment more feasible



Are higher density projects with urban form feasible with **proposed parking ratios** on-site?

- **Reduced parking standards proposed in the Corridor Strategy are critical to feasibility on smaller lots.** If current Title 20 parking standards for commercial spaces were required then many of these models would be physically impractical to build.
- **Further parking reductions may result in more projects being economically feasible.** If the residential parking standards were reduced to 0.5 spaces per unit or lower, it may stimulate more infill development in the corridor than if the current ratio of 0.75 spaces per unit were maintained.

RESIDENTIAL SMALL LOT (4 STORIES)



LOWER RATIOS

In order to achieve desired development, require lower ratio proposed for commercial uses in Corridor Strategy. Do not require any parking for ground floor commercial.

FURTHER RESIDENTIAL REDUCTIONS

Drop parking ratio for multi-unit developments from 0.75 to 0.5 to reduce burden on financial performance of projects and further City climate action goals.

Parking Requirement	# of Spaces
Townhomes	1/unit
Duplex	1/unit
Multifamily	0.50/unit
Commercial	1/1000 sf

Slight reduction to make projects more feasible

Recommendation from Corridor Strategy



QUESTIONS?
CODE CONCEPTS

01

BUILDING HEIGHT

Maintain existing 4-story height limits along Evergreen and western half of Grand and increase to 5-story in target zones along eastern half of Grand supported with high-frequency transit

03

REQUIRED GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL

Require ground floor commercial only along Grand while promoting flexibility in how to achieve. Promote commercial along Evergreen using incentives but allow more flexibility in uses

02

BULK AND MASSING

Amend existing standards and adopt new standards to shape building massing and bulk and address concerns about context-sensitive buildings

04

PARKING

Reduce parking requirements for commercial uses to 1:1,000 SF, do not require for ground floor commercial uses, and reduce requirements for multi-unit projects to 0.5 spaces/unit.

Project Next Steps

- Stakeholder engagement
 - Use direction from Planning Commission and community feedback to make changes to proposed code standards
- Planning Commission Workshop in April
- City Council Workshops in May and July
- Further public outreach in June
- Planning Commission Public Hearing in July
- City Council Public Hearing in August
- Implementation efforts beyond development code requirements

Thank You

