

# Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors Strategy Implementation

Planning Commission Workshop  
April 11, 2023



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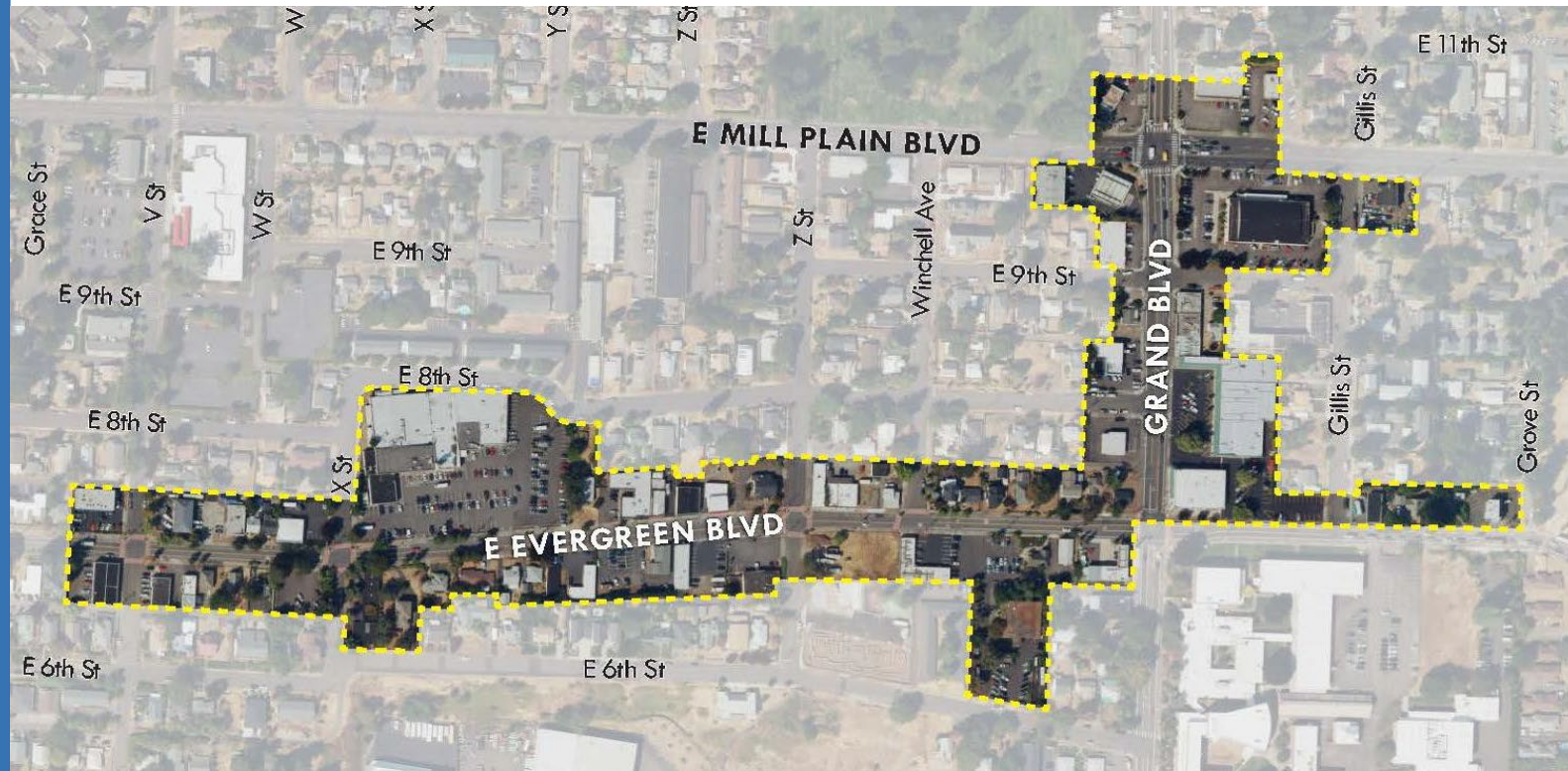
# Agenda

- High level review of the Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors Strategy Document
- Presentation from Cascadia Partners
- Next Steps



# 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.



# 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.

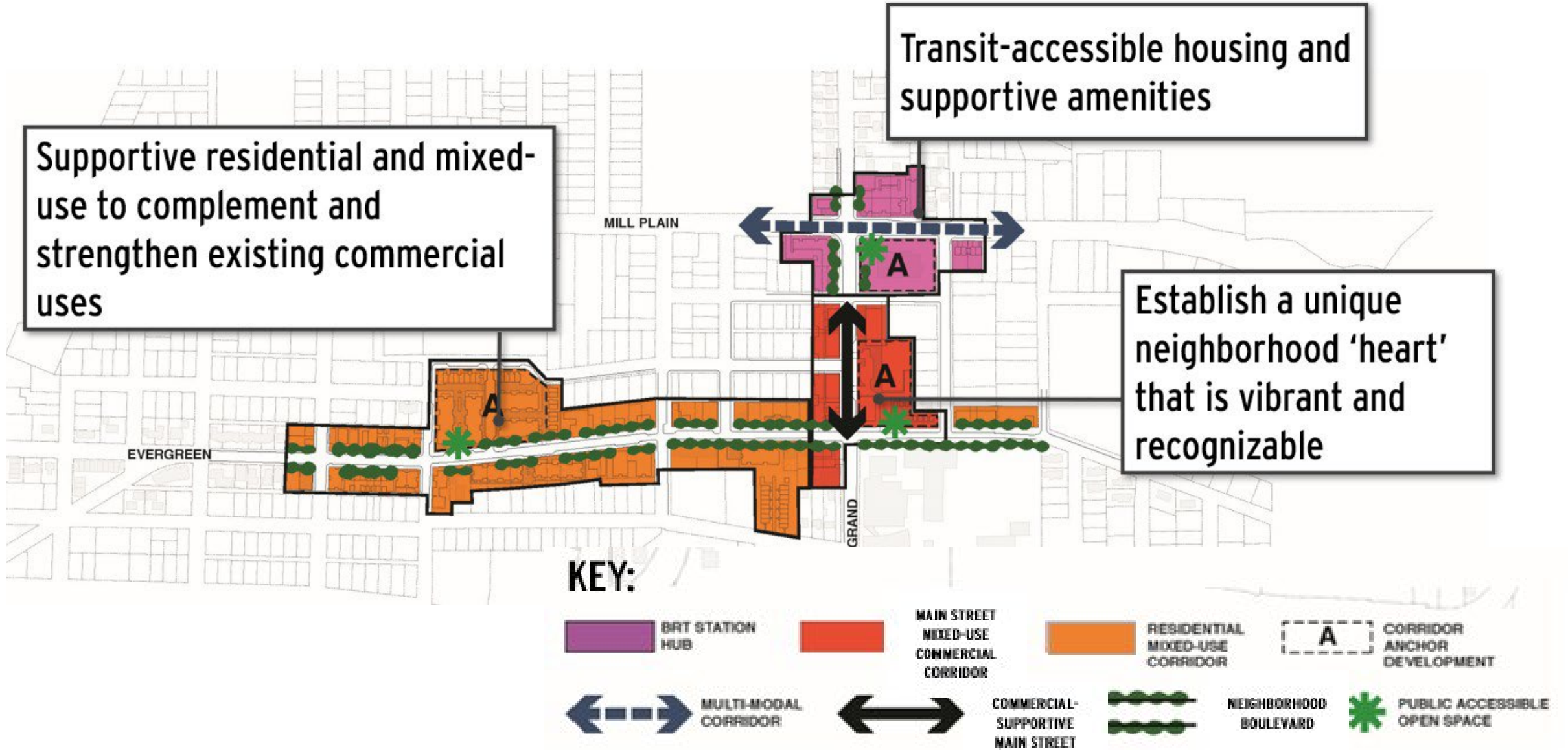
**PARKING.** Provide adequate parking to serve existing uses and future development.

**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





# Cascadia Partners Presentation





# EVERGREEN AND GRAND

## Draft Code Amendments, Design Standards



PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION | 11 APR 2023



# AGENDA

**01**

PROJECT UPDATE

**02**

DRAFT CODE AMENDMENTS

**03**

DESIGN STANDARD  
CONCEPTS

**04**

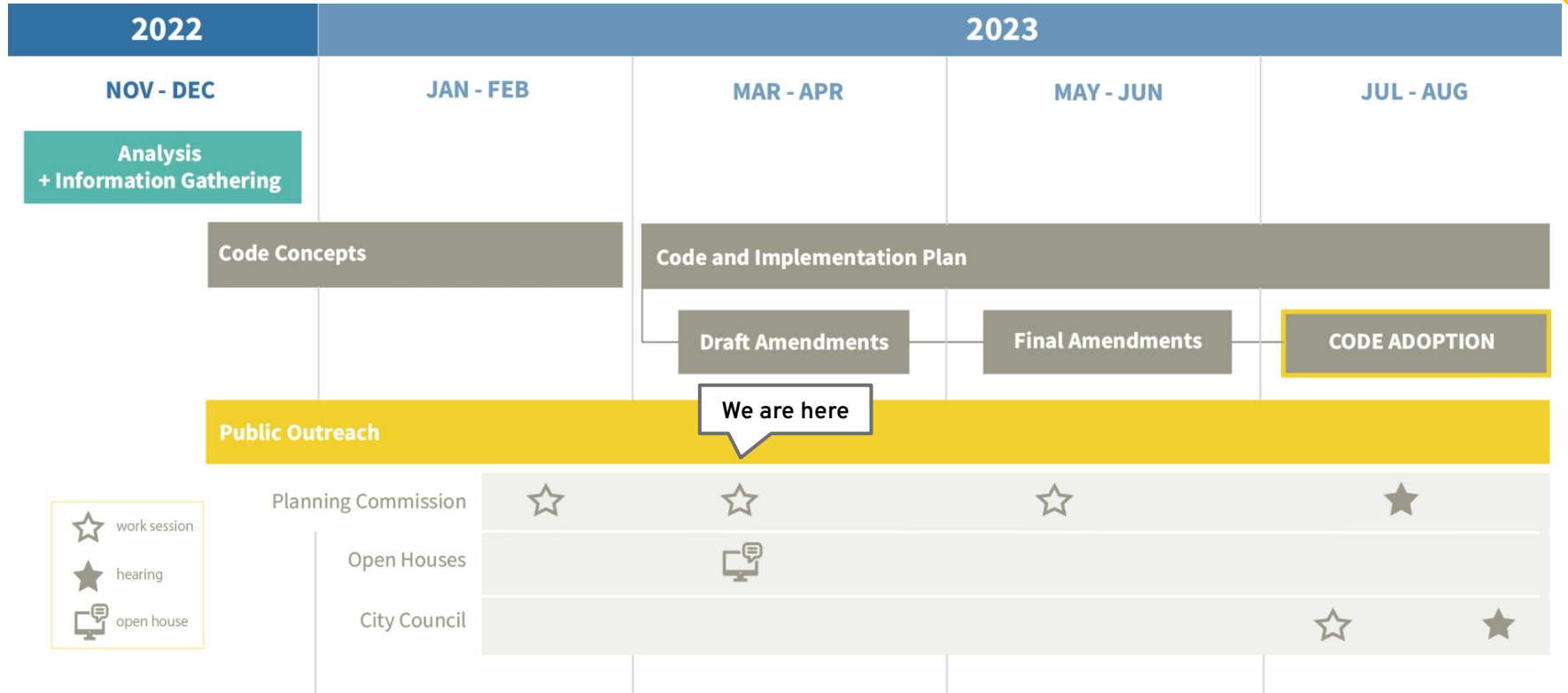
NEXT STEPS





EVERGREEN GRAND  
**PROJECT UPDATES**

# PROJECT UPDATE | TIMELINE



- ☆ work session
- ★ hearing
- 🖥️ open house



# PROJECT UPDATES | CODE CONCEPTS REVIEW

## 01 BUILDING HEIGHT

Maintain existing 4-story height limit along Evergreen and western half of Grand. Increase to 5-story along eastern half of Grand near new transit line.

## 02 BUILDING FORM

Adopt new standards that address the shape and size of new buildings to address concerns about buildings being in character with existing neighborhood.

## 03 REQUIRED GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL

Require ground floor commercial uses only along Grand and allow more flexibility for ground floor residential along Evergreen.

## 04 PARKING

Reduce parking requirements for commercial uses, do not require for ground floor commercial uses, and further reduce requirements for residential uses

## The Planning Commission shared its thoughts at last work session (Feb 14). We heard:

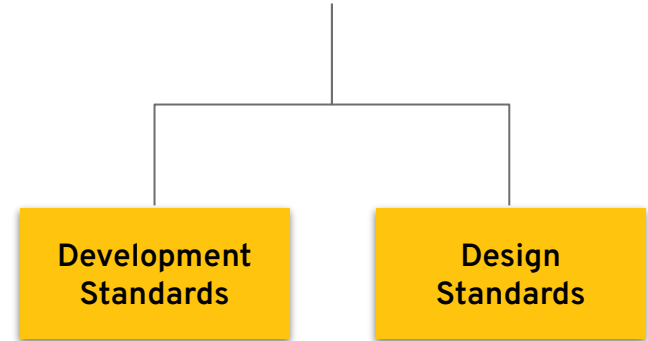
- Open to increasing height limits to 5-stories in certain locations but want **more detail on maximum building length, step downs, and required breaks** to mitigate larger buildings on the Corridor and maintain privacy of residents.
- Be clear on the distinction between **affordable vs. attainable housing** and the role of new building in this Corridor.
- Consider **incentives** to keep existing store frontages to keep district character.
- Open to **reducing parking** but acknowledge the spillover impacts.
- Must **support existing residents and businesses** as well as looking to the future.

# PROJECT UPDATES | WORK COMPLETED

- **Refined Code Concepts** based on Planning Commission and staff feedback.
- Held **Public Open House** to share Code Concepts and gather feedback.
- Wrote **draft development standards** as proposed update to the Vancouver Land Use Code.
- Prepared draft **Design Standard Concepts** that respond to the existing character and context of the corridor and promote Strategy goals



Evergreen/Grand Corridor  
Overlay District



# PROJECT UPDATES | PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

## Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors Strategy Implementation



The Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors Strategy aims to improve livability, by creating a more walkable neighborhood where local businesses can thrive. The vision of the Strategy is to promote equitable and diverse corridor development that is vibrant, sustainable and mixed use, and to foster development that recognizes and builds upon the neighborhood's unique setting, history and character.

The City is currently considering development code changes to help achieve the strategy's vision, comply with new State laws and better meet current market conditions. **We invite you to [share your feedback](#) below.**

+ About the Strategy

+ Proposed Development Code Concepts



## PARKING | DISCUSSION

### 04 PARKING

Reduce parking requirements for commercial uses, do not require for ground floor commercial uses, and further reduce requirements for residential uses



**What aspects of the code concept are most promising?**

**Are there any aspects of this concept that concern you or need additional explanation?**

- Virtual Open House held March 16th
- Community members, residents, and business owners attended
- Shared vision from Corridor Strategy and how Draft Code Concepts could help achieve this vision
- Provided open ended opportunities for feedback and asking questions
- Survey option open online (4 responses to-date)



## The public attending generally supported Code Concepts:

- There was **broad support for the goals of the Corridor Strategy** for increasing activity along the corridor even if that means taller and larger buildings.
- Concern was raised about the need to **support redevelopment with a better, safer, and more coherent streetscape** that creates an identity for the Corridor.
- Many questions were asked about policy and programs that could support existing businesses in the area.
- There was acknowledgement of the positive impact that reducing parking demands for projects could bring and support for programs to address and manage overflow parking into residential neighborhoods.



DRAFT  
DEVELOPMENT  
CODE AMENDMENTS  
**OVERVIEW**

# DRAFT AMENDMENTS | OVERVIEW

- Draft development code amendments were prepared based on the Code Concepts.
- Proposed new code language will be adopted as an overlay district in Chapter 20.500.
- Tonight we would like your input on key remaining questions.

**Chapter 20.590**  
**EVERGREEN/GRAND CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT**

Sections:

20.590.010 Purpose

20.590.020 Applicability

20.590.030 Regulation of Uses

20.590.040 Design and Development Standards

**20.590.010 Purpose**

- A. Purpose. This chapter establishes standards for the Evergreen/Grand Corridor Overlay District ("Corridor") in order to ensure new development contributes to achieving the goals of the Evergreen/Grand Corridor Strategy ("Strategy") as follows:
1. Strengthen current businesses while providing an appropriate mix of commercial and residential uses.
  2. Establish a balanced, multi-modal network of motor vehicle, transit, walking, and biking routes through the corridors.
  3. Provide adequate parking to serve existing uses and future development.
  4. Create public and private spaces that are inclusive, integrated, and contribute positively to the livability of the corridors.
  5. Provide ample opportunities for small-scale, locally owned businesses to thrive.
- B. This chapter is not intended to prevent continued use, repair or modest expansion of lawfully existing buildings, or to render otherwise lawful development as nonconforming.

**20.590.020 Applicability**

- A. Establishment of Boundaries. The standards of this chapter apply to properties along Evergreen Boulevard and Grand Boulevard as indicated in Figure 20.590-1.

# DRAFT AMENDMENTS | APPLICABILITY

- Most minor modifications of existing buildings are exempt from meeting the standards.
- Expansions/additions to nonresidential use of over 500 square feet are subject to the standards, however:
  - Only apply to the expansion/addition (not the existing building)
  - Do not apply if the expansion/addition is not visible from street.
- Exterior modifications not required to meet all design standards.

## Key Question for PC

Do these requirements provide enough flexibility for additions/modifications to existing buildings?



# DRAFT AMENDMENTS | USE REGULATIONS

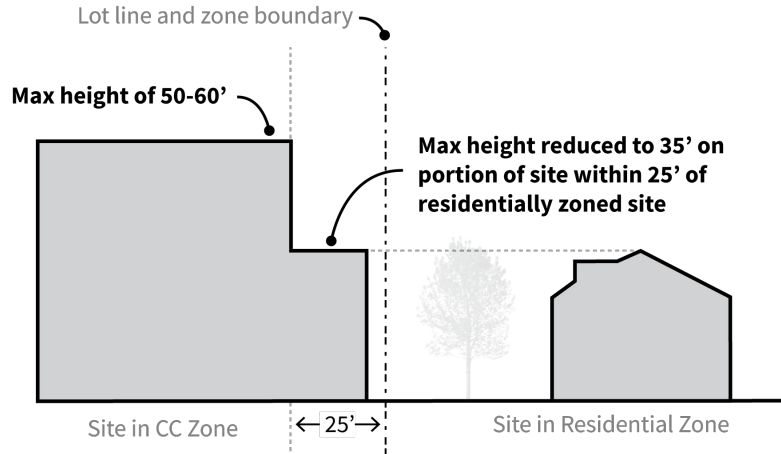
- As with base CC zone, new detached single-family houses are not permitted.
- All other residential uses must meet minimum density of 30 dwelling units/acre.
- Auto-oriented uses, including drive-throughs, will not be permitted. Some existing uses (gas station, auto repair, etc.) non-conforming.
- Existing uses may continue in existing buildings or structures.

## Key Question for PC

Do these use regulations achieve the intent of corridor strategy?

# DRAFT AMENDMENTS | HEIGHT STEP DOWN

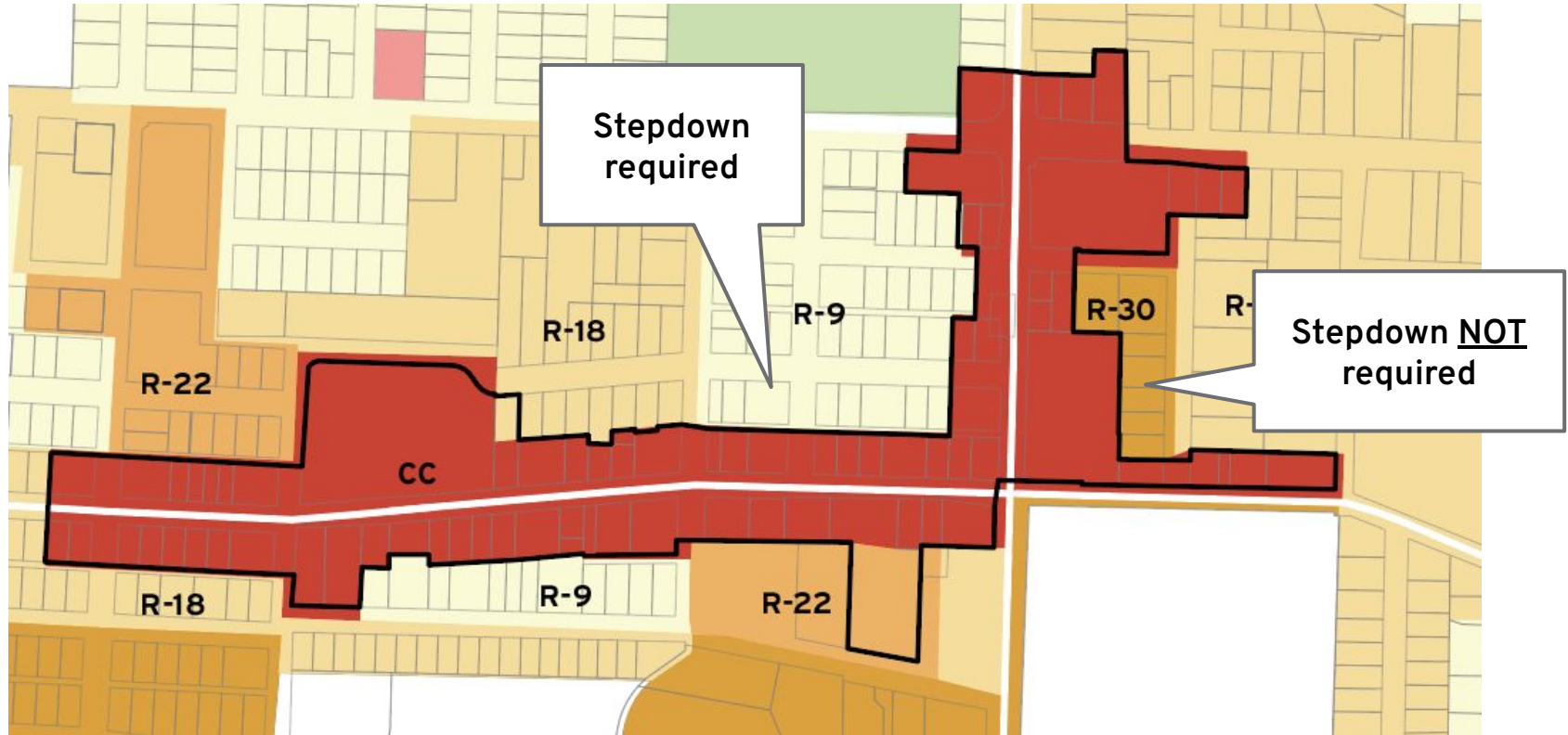
- The rear of buildings abutting to **low density residential zones** will be required to step down to the same maximum height of 35 feet.
- Unlike base zone, **does not apply to high density zones**, which have height limit of 50 feet.



## Key Question for PC

Do you have concerns with not requiring step downs adjacent to high density zones?

# DRAFT AMENDMENTS | HEIGHT STEP DOWN



# DRAFT AMENDMENTS | PARKING

- Minimum requirement for multi-unit dwellings reduced from 0.75 spaces per unit in base zone to 0.5 spaces per unit.
- All commercial uses subject to lowered, uniform requirement of 1 space per 1,000 square feet.
- Ground floor commercial uses in vertical mixed use buildings are exempt from parking requirements. This incentivizes vertical mixed use development.

## Key Question for PC

Should the exemption for ground floor commercial uses only apply to vertical mixed use developments?





QUESTIONS?  
**DRAFT DEVELOPMENT  
CODE AMENDMENTS**



DESIGN STANDARDS  
**CODE CONCEPTS**

# DESIGN STANDARDS | CORRIDOR STRATEGY GUIDANCE

- Ensure development contributes to a **strong sense of place, vibrant and safe pedestrian environment, and active public spaces.**
- Orient uses toward Evergreen and Grand Boulevards and create an **'active edge'**
- Create standards for ground floor residential to ensure **streetfront activation and interest.**



# DESIGN STANDARDS | CORRIDOR STRATEGY GUIDANCE

The Corridor Strategy recommends **new standards** for commercial and residential uses to **create a walkable pedestrian environment**

## FRONT DOOR ACCESS

Require access to create active edge, reduce front setback to 5 feet from 10 feet to bring building up to frame edge of sidewalk

## TRANSPARENCY

Specific percentage of ground floor facade must have windows and doors to provide views to the interiors of buildings and animate the street

### COMMERCIAL



### RESIDENTIAL



# DESIGN STANDARDS | REFINED GOALS

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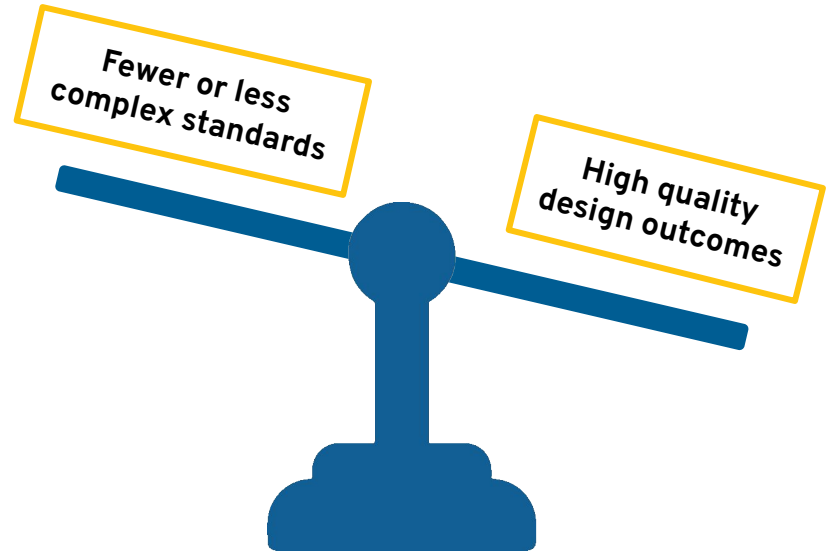
1. Address the ground floor of buildings to create an active street and vibrant pedestrian experience
2. Create residential ground floor design standards that address the unique challenges of creating an active street while preserving resident privacy.
3. Establish a **limited set of design standards** that address overall facade design. Focus primarily on the ground floor and public realm.
4. Emphasize **clear and objective standards** that staff can administer consistently rather than discretionary design guidelines.
5. **Strike a balance** between the number/complexity of standards and encouraging new development in the Corridor



# DESIGN STANDARDS | REFINED GOALS

## Design standards are a balancing act

- Balance complexity of standards with striving for better design outcomes that achieve Corridor Strategy
- Consider ease of use for both applicants and staff
- In general, developers are less deterred by complexity than they are by uncertainty
- Focus on clear, objective, measurable standards



# SUMMARY OF UNIFORM DESIGN STANDARDS

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Topics addressed with clear and objective **uniform standards**:

## STANDARD

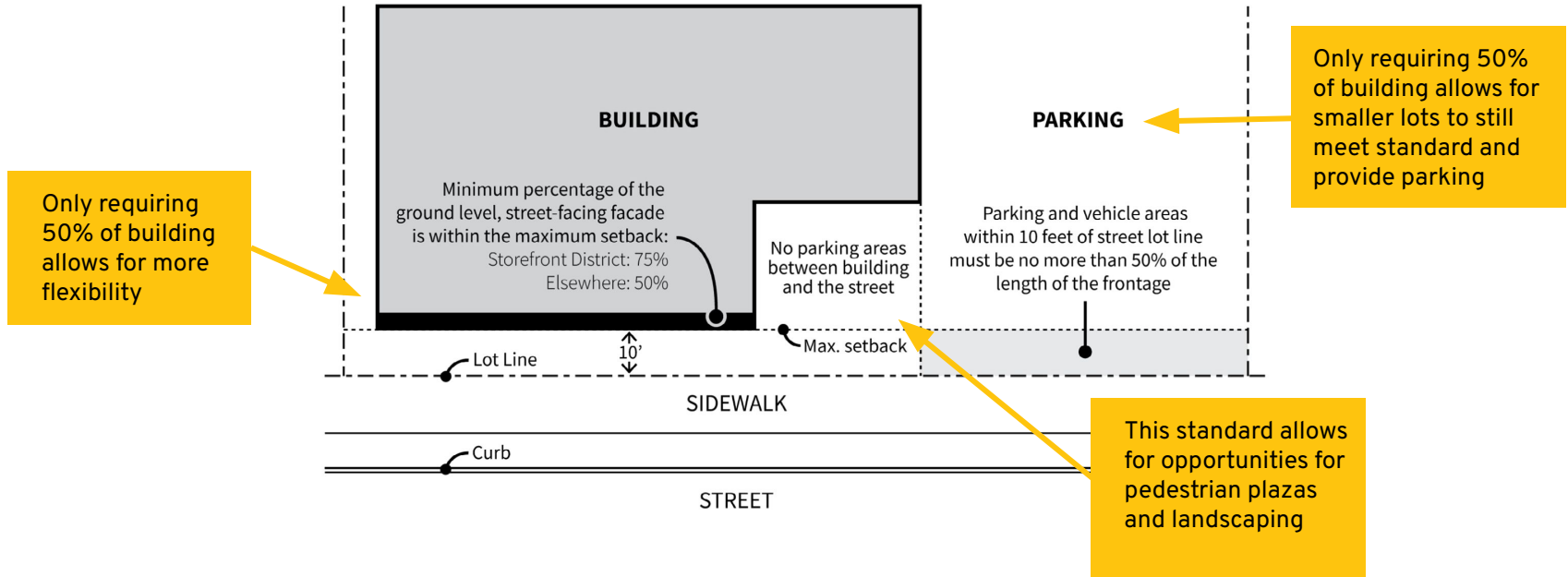
## INTENT

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ○ Building Orientation .....              | Buildings up along the sidewalk edge  |
| ○ Main Entrances .....                    | Active ground floors  |
| ○ Ground Floor Design - Commercial .....  | Engaging and well designed ground floors that enhance pedestrian experience |
| ○ Ground Floor Design - Residential ..... | Appealing places to live and/or walk by                                     |
| ○ Facade Articulation .....               | Buildings that are human-scaled and interesting                             |
| ○ Screening and Fences .....              | Screen views of unsightly elements, sense of safety                         |

# DESIGN STANDARDS | BUILDING ORIENTATION

01

- **Build-to-Line:** A minimum of 50% of the street-facing facade of the building must be located within 0-10 feet of the street.



# DESIGN STANDARDS | BUILDING ORIENTATION

01

- **Parking Areas:** No more than 50% of the street frontage may be used for vehicle areas. Where parking is adjacent to the street, it must be screened with low wall and/or landscaping.
- **Improvements Between Building and the Street:** Parking not permitted between building and the street. Landscaping or pedestrian plaza required.



# DESIGN STANDARDS | MAIN ENTRANCES

02

- **Commercial Uses:** Must provide at least one entrance on Evergreen or Grand. Multiple businesses may share one entrance.
- **Residential Uses:**
  - Minimum 50% of ground floor residential units must have individual entrances.
  - Additional setback and design standards to create a transition from street to private units and activate the street.

Setback for residential units creates separation



Separate entrances frame the sidewalk



# DESIGN STANDARDS | GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL

03

- **Minimum Height:** Ground floor commercial spaces must be 12-15 feet in height.
- **Windows:** Minimum 60% of the ground floor elevation must be windows or other glazed openings.
- **Weather Protection:** A minimum of 25-50% of the width of street-facing facade must include weather protection (awnings, canopies, etc.)





# DESIGN STANDARDS | GROUND FLOOR RESIDENTIAL

04

Ground floor residential design requires a different approach than commercial to create a transition from the public to private realm while creating spaces that will be actively used.

- Residential units must be setback 5-10 feet from the ROW.
- Ground floor entrances must have one of the following: hardscape patio, landscaped private open space, raised private open space, raised ground floor, steps to a terrace, etc.
- Must provide either a low wall, railing, or fence (18-24”) or landscape screening.



This would **not be allowed** under new standards



This would **be allowed** under new standards

# DESIGN STANDARDS | FACADE ARTICULATION

05

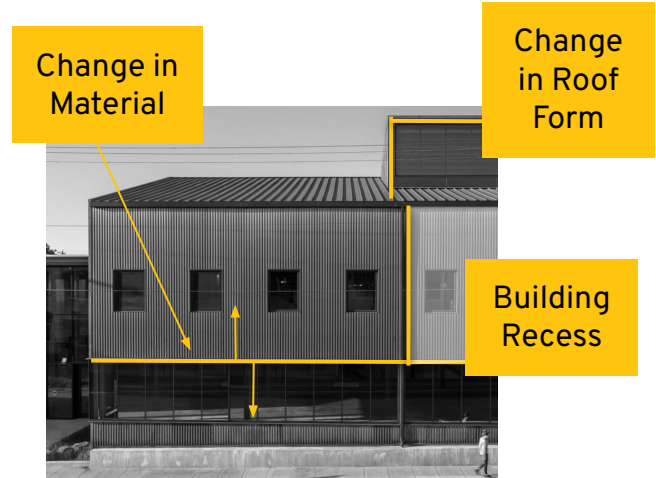
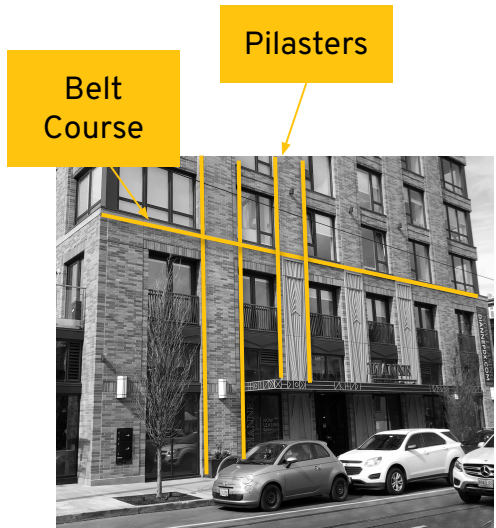
- **Applicability:** Buildings more than 20 feet high. The standard would only apply to larger buildings, not single story commercial buildings.
- **Standard:** Buildings must incorporate **vertical and horizontal** elements that articulate the facade.
- These elements help to divide the mass of the building into a **base, middle, and top** with distinct physical transitions.



# DESIGN STANDARDS | FACADE ARTICULATION

05

- This standard **does not dictate architectural style**.
- It requires **details that break up larger facades** so they are interesting to people walking by and contribute to the identify of the Corridor.



# DESIGN STANDARDS | SCREENING AND FENCES

- **No High Fences/Walls on Street:** Fences, walls, or hedges higher than 3 feet shall be prohibited between the street and the building.
- **Ground Mounted Utilities/Equipment/Waste Receptacles.** New electric meters, gas meters, HVAC equipment, and waste receptacles must be screened from view from the street.
- **Rooftop Utilities/Equipment:** Must be set back at least 15 feet from roof edges on street-facing facades and include screening



# QUESTIONS FOR PLANNING COMMISSION

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- Are there any design issues or topics that you think are missing?
- Did we strike the right balance of scope/complexity of design standards?
- Are there too many standards or are they too complex for developers to understand or staff to administer?

# PROPOSED ADDITIONAL DESIGN STANDARDS

Topics addressed with clear and objective **uniform standards**:

- Building Orientation
- Main Entrances
- Ground Floor Design - Commercial
- Ground Floor Design - Residential Uses
- Facade Articulation
- Screening and Fences

Additional topics addressed with a **points-based system** of requirements:

- Preservation of Older Buildings/Facades
- “Extra” Ground Floor and Public Realm Design Features, such as:
  - Extra Ground Floor Windows
  - Oversized Openings
  - Transit Stop Amenities
  - Pedestrian Plazas
  - Public Seating or Public Art
  - Exterior Lighting




# HOW DOES A POINTS-BASED SYSTEM WORK?

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- Alternative to restrictive singular design standards or vague design guidelines
- Each development must achieve a minimum number of “points”
- Each design element is assigned a point value, some higher than others
- Each design element is specified with a clear, objective and measurable standard
- Total points and point values can be set to balance overall cost/complexity and encourage certain features and

## Example: Minimum 8 points required

Design Standard	Point Value
Public Plaza	3
Public Seating	2
Extra Large Windows	1
Corner Entrance	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b> 

# DESIGN STANDARDS | POINTS-BASED SYSTEM EXAMPLE

## Extra Plaza Space

3 points

- Provide an outdoor plaza that abuts a sidewalk on a public right-of-way.
- The plaza must be a minimum of 800 square feet with minimum dimensions of 20 feet.
- Fifteen percent of the plaza must be landscaped with a tree for each 100 square feet of landscaping.

Standards look complicated but are objective and measurable, providing certainty for developers



# DESIGN STANDARDS | ADDITIONAL DESIGN FEATURES

These are examples of the types of additional design features that are recommended to be required through a points-based system.

15 foot ground floor



Small scale retail spaces



Extra window area



Extra weather protection



Distinct ground floor



Extra plaza space



Transit stop amenities



Public seating



Extra corner feature



Oversized opening



Outdoor recreation area



Public art feature



Pervious paving



Native plants



Corner Entry



# WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF A POINTS-BASED SYSTEM?

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## Advantages

- Flexibility to achieve design outcomes in different ways
- Clarity and certainty of objective standards for both applicants and staff
- Clear pathway for developers and architects to meet design goals

## Disadvantages

- City does not have discretion to reject a design if it meets the objective standard
- Can be complex for applicants and staff, requires tallying points and measuring compliance with quantitative standards

# QUESTIONS FOR PLANNING COMMISSION

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- Are there unique issues associated with the context of Evergreen/Grand that we need to better respond to?
- If you want to regulate some additional design features beyond the “uniform” standards, which approach do you prefer - points system or design guidelines?



QUESTIONS?  
**CODE CONCEPTS**



# PROJECT | NEXT STEPS

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- **Refine draft development standards** and write draft design standards to share at Planning Commission work session **June 13**.
- Develop **draft Implementation Strategy** that identifies other important programs and policies the City can undertake to support the long-term vision for the Corridor.
- Share draft code language for **public feedback** on Vancouver Be Heard project webpage.

# Project Next Steps

- Stakeholder engagement through direct outreach to developers, businesses, and online feedback gathering
- Development of implementation strategy
  
- Planning Commission Workshop in June
- City Council Workshop in July
- Planning Commission Public Hearing in July
- City Council Workshop in August
- City Council Public Hearing in August
  
- Implementation efforts beyond development code requirements

# Thank You

