



PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

15728 Main Street, Mill Creek, Washington 98012 - (425) 745-1891

September 16, 2021

**Regular Meeting
7:00 p.m.**

	TIME
I. CALL TO ORDER	7:00 p.m.
II. ROLL CALL	7:01 p.m.
III. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR	7:03 p.m.
IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES	7:10 p.m.
A. Planning Commission Meeting of April 15, 2021 ⁽¹⁾	7:11 p.m.
IV. WORK SESSION	
A. Update of Mill Creek Boulevard Subarea Plan	
B. Potential Code Amendment Regarding Fence Setbacks in Medium Density Residential (MDR) Zone	
V. FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER	7:50 p.m.
VI. ADJOURNMENT	8:00 p.m.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. April 15, 2021 Draft Planning Commission Minutes
2. DRAFT Planning Advisory Committee Recommendations on Mill Creek Boulevard Subarea Plan

We are trying to make our public meetings accessible to all members of the public. If you need special accommodations, please call City Hall three days prior to this meeting (425) 745-1891.

**CITY OF MILL CREEK
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
April 15, 2021**

Draft

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chair Nolan called the virtual meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Chair Stan Eisner (absent)
Vice Chair Matthew Nolan
Commissioner Jose Borunda
Commissioner David Hambelton
Commissioner Brian Hyatt
Commissioner Daniel Mills (absent)

Staff:
Tom Rogers, Planning Manager
Sherrie Ringstad, Associate Planner

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Planning Commission Meeting of March 18, 2021

MOTION: Commissioner Hyatt moved, seconded by Commissioner Borunda, to approve the March 18, 2021 minutes as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING

MCMC Amendments Relating to Accessory Dwelling Units

Associate Planner Sherrie Ringstad opened the public hearing and officially entered into the record: 1) Planning Commission Resolution 2021-0168, 2) the staff report, and 3) staff PowerPoint presentation. She noted that the MCMC Amendments are being proposed as a result of recent state legislation relating to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU). Senate Bill 6617 was passed by the State Legislature in March 2020, which requires Washington cities to adopt or amend their development regulations, no later than July 1, 2021, to remove any requirement for the provision of off-street parking for an ADU located within one-quarter mile of a major transit stop.

She noted that the proposed amendments make the MCMC compliant with state law. In addition, a definition for major transit stop was added, as well as an amendment correcting an inconsistency in the Code. Ms. Ringstad concluded the presentation by recommending that the Planning Commission adopt the resolution recommending approval to the City Council of the proposed amendments.

Vice Chair Nolan opened the public testimony portion of the hearing at 7:13 p.m. and no public was present to comment. Thus, the public testimony portion of the hearing was closed and Vice Chair Nolan opened the floor for Commission discussion.

Ms. Ringstad responded to several questions and the Planning Commission briefly discussed the proposed amendments. Vice Chair Nolan, hearing no further questions, called for a motion.

MOTION: Commissioner Hambelton moved, seconded by Commissioner Borunda, to adopt Planning Commission Resolution 2021-0168 recommending to the City Council approval of amendments to the Mill Creek Municipal Code Chapters 14.01 and 17.22 relating to Accessory Dwelling Units. The motion was approved unanimously.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Commissioner Hambelton moved, seconded by Commissioner Hyatt, to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously.

Submitted by:

Sherrie Ringstad, Associate Planner



Project Advisory Committee Recommendation to City Council

Second Draft, September 3, 2021, for Review by the PAC

Background

In April 2019, the City of Mill Creek initiated a subarea planning process to proactively identify and evaluate economic development and land use development opportunities in the Mill Creek Corridor between the Mill Creek Town Center and 164th Street to the south. The impetus for the subarea planning process was to prepare for the eventual redevelopment of the Mill Creek Boulevard Corridor, taking into account projected economic trends, the arrival of the Community Transit Swift Green Line in 2019, and the new Swift Orange Line in 2024. These bus rapid transit (BRT) lines will bring more people into and through the city – particularly to the Mill Creek Boulevard Corridor – and connect the city directly to light rail, which will run to Seattle, Everett, Tacoma, the Eastside, including key destinations such as University of Washington, the stadiums, and SeaTac International Airport. There has also long been interest in updating this entrance into Mill Creek and travel path to Town Center, and extending the “look and feel” of Main Street south to 164th when the economics make it viable.

The Mill Creek Boulevard Subarea Plan, once completed, will establish a long-term vision for land use and transportation (how Mill Creek Boulevard should look and function in the future) that will be formally considered as a part of the City’s 2024 Comprehensive Plan update. If adopted in the City’s 2024 Comprehensive Plan, the subarea plan would be implemented over several years (up to 20 years).

To assist in the subarea planning process, the City Council hired planning consultants Otak, Inc. and appointed a diverse mix of stakeholders to form a Project Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC includes local residents, property owners, business owners, Community Transit, representatives from City boards (including two members of the Design Review Board one member of the Arts and Beautification Board, and a member of the Parks Board), three Planning Commissioners, and three City Council members. The PAC, supported by City staff, have been meeting since the summer of 2019 at key milestones during the planning process to provide advisory-level guidance to the consultant team. Through the course of eight meetings, the PAC has provided input on the vision for the subarea, potential changes to land use and zoning, and possible future improvements that could be made to enhance the area and support future redevelopment.

The result of the PAC’s collaborative involvement on the Mill Creek Boulevard Subarea Plan is contained in the following recommendations for City Council consideration. If the City Council concurs with the PAC’s recommendations and agrees that that development of the Subarea Plan should proceed, a detailed subarea plan document will be prepared and be used to propose revisions to the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations. The formal 2-year process for preparation and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan will be subject to the review and oversight of the Planning Commission and City Council. This process will also incorporate environmental review and public participation as required by law.



Recommendations from the PAC to the City Council on a Subarea Plan for the Mill Creek Boulevard Corridor

1. **Allow a Mix of Uses Where Redevelopment is Desired.**

Allow for mixed use redevelopment by revising the Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Zoning Maps for the area on the west/north side of Mill Creek Boulevard between 164th and the Maple Leaf Square shopping center. (See attached map with the proposed parcels outlined in the bold orange line.) Mixed use would include including commercial development with owned or rented residential and/or office above. These revisions would constitute the Mill Creek Subarea Plan (Subarea Plan) and would be considered as a part of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update required by the Growth Management Act.

Rationale for this Recommendation:

- This change would allow mixed use development (including commercial and residential development) in up to 34 percent of the developable lands of the subarea, focusing the mixed use development along the west side of Mill Creek Boulevard.
- The mixed use development would be strategically placed adjacent to the North Creek Corridor, thus buffering the area of change, providing density near the core of the city to respect/protect the single-family neighborhoods, and offering public amenities for new residents and commercial tenants.
- Over 200,000 additional square feet of commercial/business space could be provided in the subarea.
- Up to 1,500 additional dwelling units (approximately 3,000 residents/customers) could be provided in the subarea.
- Additional residents in the core of downtown Mill Creek would help support existing and new businesses.
- Redevelopment within the subarea would generate over \$20,000,000 in impact mitigation fees.
- Over a 25-year period, an additional \$16,500,000 of additional property and sales tax could be generated for the City.
- Targeting the area of change to the west side of Mill Creek Boulevard represents a realistic perspective on the level of change that might realistically happen within the next ten to twenty years.
- Although Parcel #20 (Mill Creek Plaza shopping center) has the potential for redevelopment, the long term leases related to commercial anchors will limit redevelopment potential there for decades. The property owner of Parcel #20 is supportive of a recommendation that does not include this parcel.



2. Allow up to 6 or 7 Stories of Building Height.

Prepare Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulation amendments that would allow mixed use buildings of up to six stories in height (base height level) in the area identified to allow mixed use. Include an opportunity for an additional story (up to seven stories total), only allowed with the provision of additional public amenities.

Rationale for this Recommendation:

- This type of building form and construction is the most realistic for mixed use with residential (or office) above active ground floor uses and is commonly seen throughout the region as being feasible and marketable. Under current conditions, there is a much greater demand for residential than office in the regional market.
- This type of building form and density is necessary to provide the financial incentive to redevelop existing development.
- This type of redevelopment would result in the provision of a range of housing options to serve the community.
- Including an incentive program that allows an additional building height and/or additional density can be an effective tool for gaining public and community benefits as part of redevelopment projects.

3. Provide Illustrative Development Design Standards.

Development Regulations should be developed to include illustrative development standards and design guidelines that will support and guide the character of redevelopment to ensure it is consistent with the visioning illustrations presented.

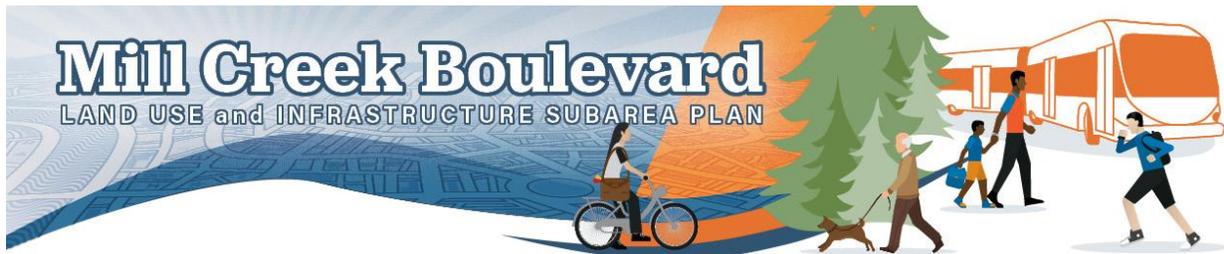
Rationale for this Recommendation:

- Development standards and design guidelines ensure that development is of high quality aesthetically and meets the expectations of the community.
- Clarity in design regulations communicates to developers the City's expectations for future development.
- The City has successfully employed development design standards in Town Center and in the East Gateway Urban Village which have guided high quality development that meets the community's expectations.

4. Require Public Spaces and Amenities with Redevelopment.

Include policies and actions in the Subarea Plan that will require enhanced public spaces and inspire placemaking through public and private investment. These investments should work to ensure that the subarea functions as part of the civic core of Mill Creek. Enhancing the North Creek Trail corridor as part of this recommendation will improve its value as a community asset for the entire Mill Creek community.

Rationale for this Recommendation:



- Placemaking and the creation of additional public spaces and amenities will help to support an environment that attracts people—they will be attracted to the subarea as a place to work, live, shop, dine, gather, and celebrate community.
- Enhancing the public realm—open spaces, plazas, streetscapes, and other elements – can help to catalyze redevelopment.
- Improving public spaces and pedestrian areas along Mill Creek Boulevard and the North Creek corridor will help to extend the presence and aesthetics of Main Street and Mill Creek Town Center.

5. Require that the Streetscape in the Subarea is Designed to Support the Safe Movement of Pedestrians, Bikes and Automobiles.

Ensure that the proposed Subarea Plan recognizes the importance of creating a more walkable, pedestrian oriented, and bicycle friendly place similar to what exists in the Mill Creek Town Center. Redevelopment of the properties and public improvements in the subarea should provide more efficient and safer pedestrian and bicycle connections to the two bus rapid transit stations and to the North Creek Trail corridor.

Rationale for this Recommendation:

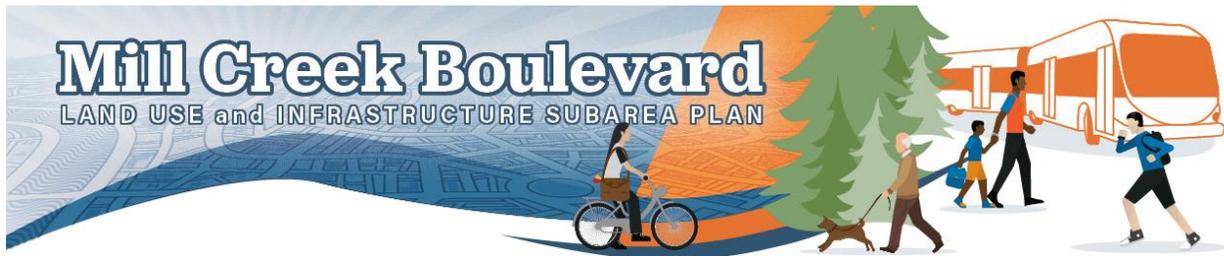
- Creating a pedestrian-friendly environment extends the desirable sense of place and function of Town Center southward.
- Supporting pedestrian and bicycle improvements will connect people to the places they want to go (such as access to the Swift bus rapid transit line, which will connect to the light rail line in the I-5 corridor and allow people to travel throughout the region via transit). This helps to support the investment the region is making in transit.
- Focusing on enhancing safety for walking and bicycling improves safety and security for everyone.

6. Change the Function of Mill Creek Boulevard to Serve the Properties in the Corridor; Not to be a Cut-Through to SR 527.

Change the function of Mill Creek Boulevard to primarily serve the adjacent land uses in the corridor rather than as a cut-through between 164th Street SE and SR 527. Strategies to accomplish this are expanding on-street parking along the corridor and adoption of revisions to the existing policies and strategies in the Transportation Element of the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

Rationale for this Recommendation:

- Ensuring that the function of Mill Creek Boulevard is focused on local business and community needs is best for supporting the local economy rather than as a pass-through connection.



- Expanded on-street parking will serve demand by businesses, supporting customer access, and slowing down traffic.

7. Seek Public Improvement Partnerships to Implement Plan.

Seek opportunities to invest in public improvements to Mill Creek Boulevard (through City investment, grant funding, and/or private partnerships). Require that future improvements to Mill Creek Boulevard in the Subarea Plan include facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and on-street parking as appropriate to serve the properties being redeveloped. A flexible approach to design of the street will be required to align with redevelopment projects that are as of yet unknown.

Rationale for this Recommendation:

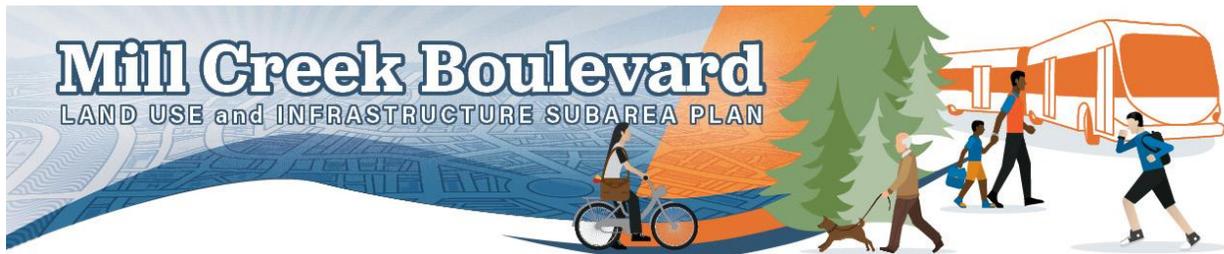
- Enhancing Mill Creek Boulevard and associated streetscapes can help to incentivize redevelopment.
- As a public agency, the City has the capability to leverage grants and funding opportunities for street and trail improvements, intersections, and connections that private developers do not have access to.
- Improving Mill Creek Boulevard will help extend the presence and aesthetics of Main Street in the Mill Creek Town Center.
- Improving the corridor will enhance safety for all modes of traffic, which will in turn enhance public access to businesses and transit.

8. Consider a Regional Strategy for Surface Water Management.

The City should explore the feasibility of a subregional approach to stormwater management for the subarea. A regional approach to stormwater management can incentivize redevelopment and expedite improving the quality of the water being discharged into North Creek. Part of this task would be to pursue grant funding that may be available from the Washington Department of Ecology (DOE) to develop a subregional stormwater plan.

Rationale for this Recommendation:

- As a public agency, the City has the capability to leverage grants and funding opportunities for stormwater management and facilities that private developers do not have access to.
- Specific grant funding is available from the DOE for retrofitting suburban areas.
- Improving the stormwater management functions of the subarea will help to support Mill Creek's NPDES permitting requirements.
- Stormwater management investments will result in improving the environment, health of Puget Sound, habitats for fish and wildlife, and other valuable outcomes.
- Funding sources can be combined to leverage a greater amount of facility improvements and enhancing stormwater facilities can enhance public amenities and help to incentivize redevelopment.



- A subregional system can incentivize and catalyze redevelopment by reducing the amount of land needed for stormwater capacity on individual sites (providing more net developable area) and increasing the predictability of project permitting and approvals.

9. Evaluate the Land Uses Desired in the Corridor.

Review the list of allowed uses in all zones of the subarea and recommend changes to ensure that desired uses are allowed and undesired uses are not. Existing uses would continue to be grandfathered as non-conforming uses.

Rationale for this Recommendation:

- Implementing this recommendation will ensure that future uses are compatible with the desired community character for the subarea, establishing a foundation for future development.
- While existing uses would continue to be allowed as non-conforming, creating a list of desired uses will help to promote the desired form of redevelopment for the subarea and eliminate the potential for undesired uses.

10. Engage Stakeholders Throughout the Planning Process.

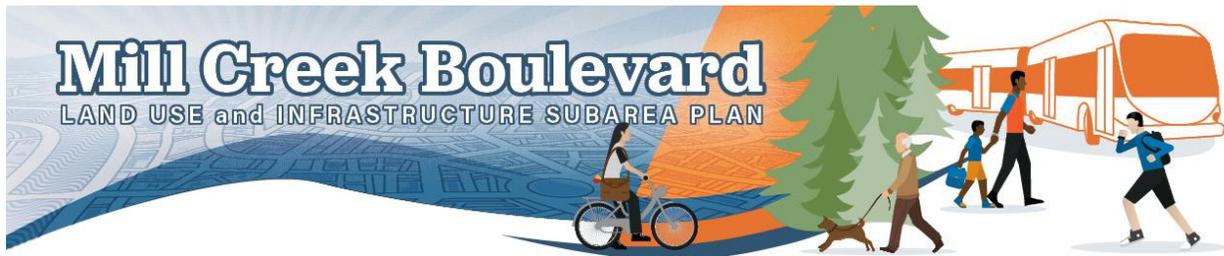
Continue to engage the Mill Creek community, business interests, property owners, and other stakeholders to gather input on future planning and design of projects in the subarea.

Rationale for this Recommendation:

- The subarea is the heart of the community and the public and stakeholders have a vested interest in how this area may change and support community needs over time.
- The community desires to continue the success of Mill Creek Town Center—its sense of place, character, and desirability as a great place to live, work, shop, dine, and celebrate the community. The community will be interested in providing input about how the Mill Creek Boulevard subarea can continue to transform in the same way that town center emerged and became a strong asset to the community.

Next Steps

The recommendations presented above provide a clear direction for the preparation of a Subarea Plan for the Mill Creek Boulevard Subarea. Once the City Council provides the direction for the preparation of the Plan (adopting the recommendations presented above or by providing alternative direction), the next step will be for the preparation of a Subarea Plan document. That Subarea plan document will function as a formal proposal to be considered as a part of the preparation and review of the mandatory 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update. The Subarea Plan document will be prepared over the next several months with completion required by the end of 2021. Once completed, the Subarea Plan and any other revisions to the Comprehensive Plan will be considered by the Planning Commission and the City Council and will be subject to public participation and environmental review.



It has been a pleasure to assist the City Council on this project, which is so important to the future of the City of Mill Creek.

Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Members:

- Zachary Anderson, Resident
- Jamie Barrett, Art and Beautification Board
- Benjamin Briles, City Council—Councilmember
- Dave Hamblen, Planning Commissioner (Former Design Review Board Member)
- Tina Hastings, Design Review Board Member
- Brian Holtzclaw, City Council—Mayor
- Peter Lalic, Resident
- Matthew Nolan, Planning Commissioner
- Steve Knox, Resident
- Artemios Panos, Property Owner
- Christopher Silveira, Community Transit
- Stephanie Vignal, City Council—Mayor Pro Tem
- Jason Wingert, Business Representative