High Density in Norman
Session 6

"Wrap Up Meeting"

August 30, 2012

What we have done throughout this discussion series is:

- Testing the boundaries of the community's comfort with the idea of higher density
- Giving you tools to make your own informed decision about what's right for the community.

The Real Estate Market

Developers consider four key variables when deciding whether to move forward on a project:

1. Land price
2. Rental rates
3. Construction type and costs
4. How much/what can be fit on the site?

SUMMARY: Higher Density: What's In it For Us?

- Walkability—the "5-minute walk"
- Convenience
- Wider variety of housing choices
- Activity attracts people
- Stimulates demand for neighborhood-scale businesses
- Promotes civility and sociability
- Can provide more riders for transit

TOPICS PREVIOUSLY COVERED

- Location/Compatibility
- Height/Mixed Use Buildings
- Parking, Traffic and Infrastructure
- Design

LOCATION

Which criteria should be considered for locating higher density housing?

- On arterial street
- Presence of underutilized land
  - Surface parking lots
  - Underperforming buildings
  - Deteriorating buildings
  - Cost of land
- Close to amenities or in areas where amenities can be developed
- Access
- Neighborhood Context

What Does "Compatible" Mean?

- In planning terms…
  Capable of existing or in harmonious, agreeable, or congenial combination with other land uses.

- In building terms…
  That the density, form, bulk, height, setbacks, and/or materials of buildings are able to co-exist with their surroundings.

HEIGHT RESTRICTION LAWS

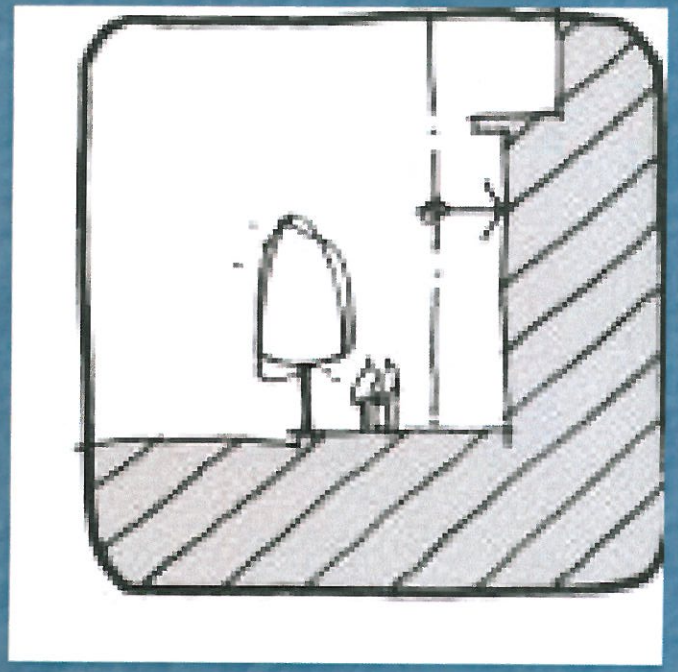
- **Height restriction laws** are laws that restrict the maximum height of structures.
- There are a variety of reasons for these measures. Some restrictions limit the height of new buildings so as to show respect for a cultural landmark.
- Other restrictions are because of practical concern, such as around airports to prevent any danger to flight safety.

BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS

- International Building Code requirements dictate the height of a structure
- Height is based on
  - Use Groups
  - Construction Type
  - Sprinkled or not
- Only residential building types not required to be sprinkled are single-family and two-family structures

SETBACKS

The distance a new building should be set back from the fronting property line should consider the nature and character of the fronting street (local versus arterial), the uses within the building (residential versus mixed-use), the typical setback of adjacent buildings, and the space available between the curb and the property line.

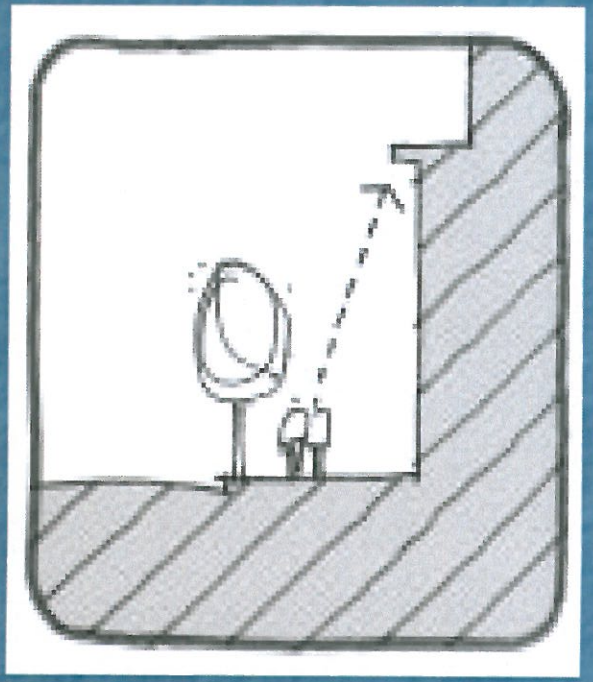


STEPBACKS

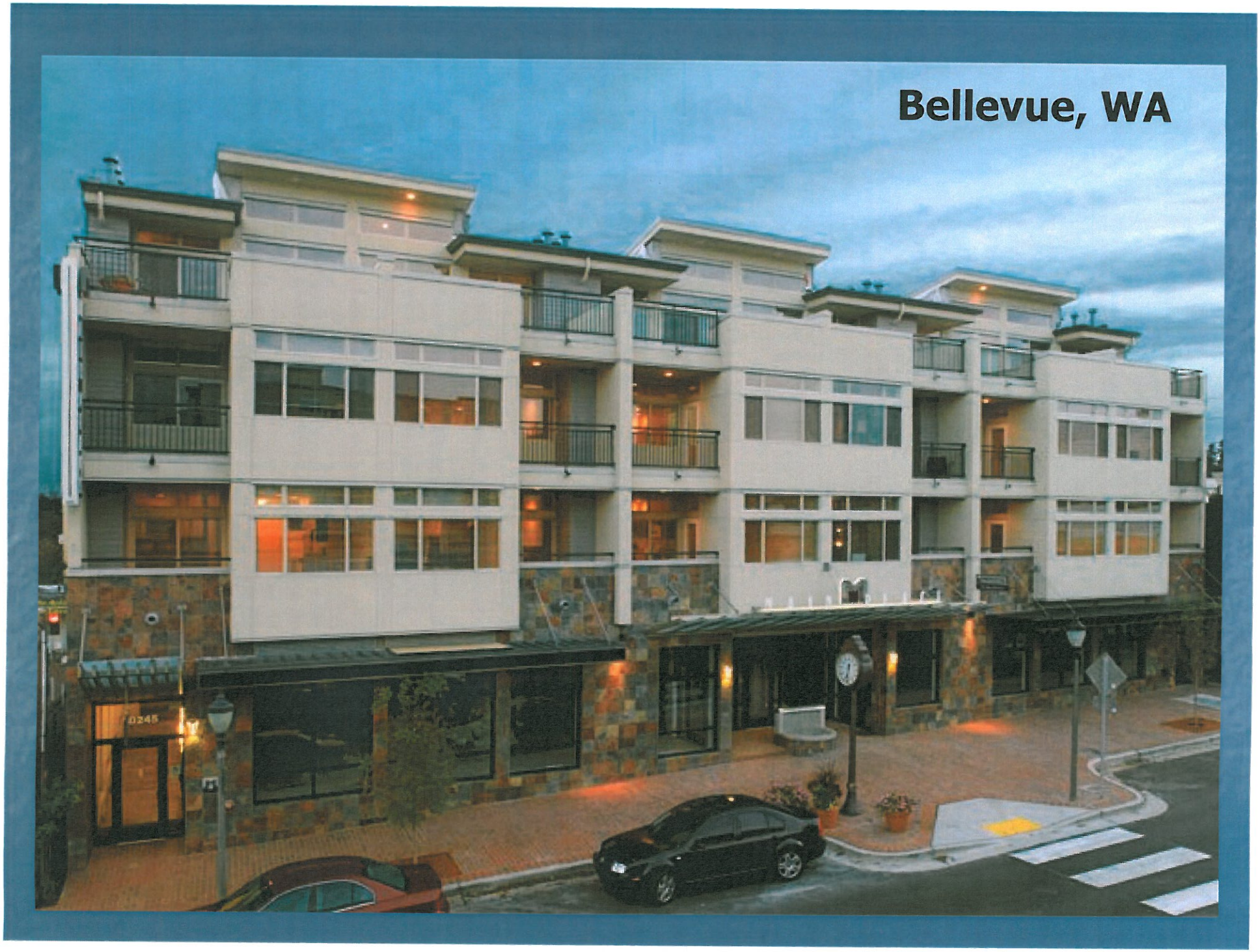
Different character areas along a Corridor can have different requirements for building stepbacks at upper levels

Reduce the overall building massing

Minimize the amount of shadow cast on adjacent properties



Seattle, WA


Bellevue, WA

MIXED USE BUILDINGS

- Mixed Use is a land use term referring to the combining of more than one type of activity on a single parcel.
- A mixed use building is simply one that is used for or suitable for several different functions.
- Uses can be mixed vertically as in ground floor retail and housing above (urban)
- Uses can also be mixed horizontally which is more common in a suburban setting

What's Good About Mixed Use?

- Mixed-uses make for three-dimensional, pedestrian-oriented places layering compatible land uses, public spaces, and utilities together at various scales and intensities.

- This variety of uses allows people to live, work, play and shop in a compact place, which then becomes a destination for people from other neighborhoods as well.

SAFEWAY

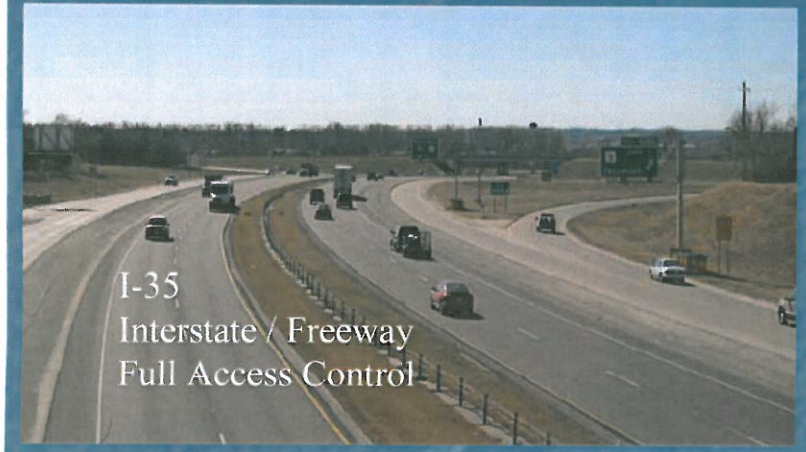
INFRASTRUCTURE

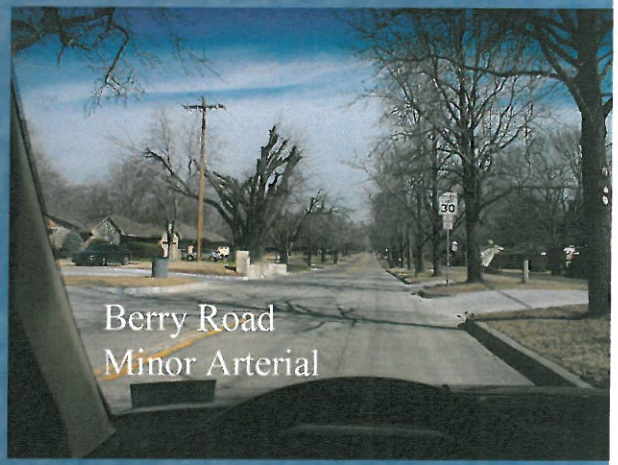
- Infrastructure - The basic facilities, services, and installations needed for the functioning of a community, such as:
  - Transportation system
  - Communications systems
  - Water and sewer systems
  - power lines
  - public institutions

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

- Traffic and Parking
  - Classification of Roadways
    - Freeways, Arterials, Collectors, Locals
  - Access Management
    - Full Access Control
    - Limited Access
    - Uncontrolled Access
  - Capacity
  - Level of Service
  - Traffic Impact Analysis

Classification of Roadways and Access Management





NORMAN

Parking and Circulation

The need to park cars is a fact of urban life but…

- Make parking design work *for* the community character instead of *becoming* the community character
- Don't give away your best visual density to parking! Reserve those areas for high visual pay-off uses such as retail and restaurants and public gathering spaces
- Create mixed use structures that wrap parking with other uses which provides more visual and economic "bang for the buck"
- Adding density makes modes of circulation other than cars much more attractive

Staunton, Virginia

Streetscape side

Rear entrance

Garages: One downtown
Population: 27,000
Institutions: Mary Baldwin College, Stuart Hall, VA School for the Blind and Deaf

Fort Collins, Colorado

204 Maple Street

What Are the Benchmarks of Good Design in Higher Density Projects?

- Respond and contribute to neighborhood context
- Have a relationship to surrounding buildings
- Respond to sites and settings in terms of height, mass, scale, orientation, proportion, design elements and relationship to the street
- Have appropriate density for their sites and settings which is in keeping with community character
- Optimize safety and security for internal and public spaces
- Designed to make efficient use of natural resources, energy and water throughout the full life cycle of the development

Start With Good Architecture

- Authentic and high quality design details are expected to be part of every project.
- Variation and consistency is encouraged between buildings to avoid repetition and to create an interesting streetscape environment.
- Taller buildings should have a clear hierarchy of base, middle and top elements.
- Typically, residential buildings will have a secondary expression at the higher level with a clear expression of the base and the entry.

- High quality architectural details
- Clear statements of base, middle and top parts of buildings
- Secondary expression of residential above through material changes, color and windows
- Variety and consistency of design
- Scale works in context

High Quality Architecture

Clear statements of base, middle and top parts of buildings

Secondary expression of residential above through material changes, color and windows

Variety of design

Keep Street Wall Four Stories or Less

Density added with three stories stepped back from street wall

Street wall well-framed by four stories; plenty of windows and balconies on the street

Articulate a Building's Façade with Variety

Break Up Bulky Facades With High Quality Design

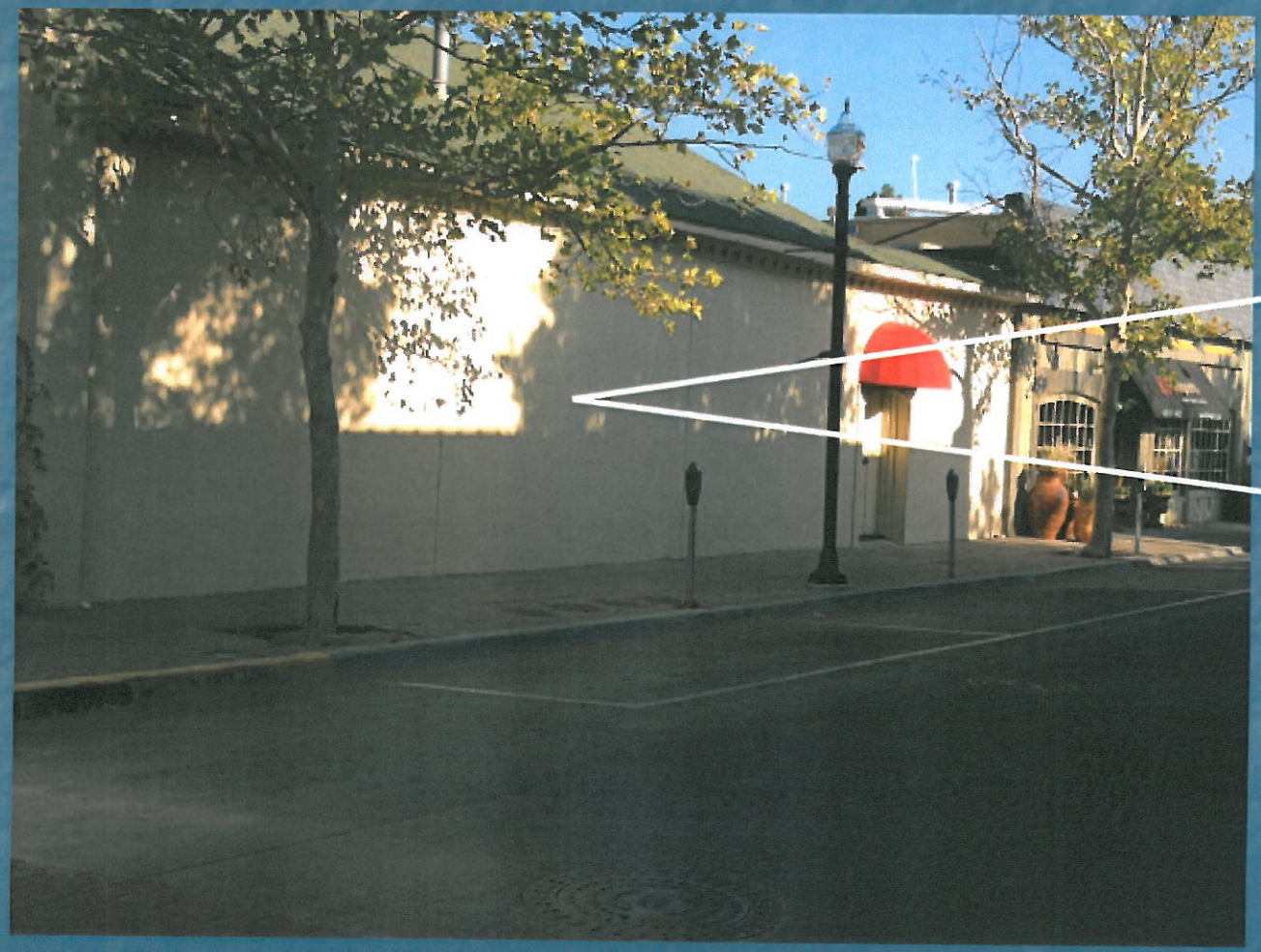
- Both variation and consistency in this facade
- Step Backs
- Windows
  - Size
  - Shape
  - Form
  - Rhythm
- Pilasters/Columns
- Material Changes
- Color Changes

Clearly Identify Building's Entrance

Primary building entrance on a corner makes the structure legible—and establishes a hierarchy

Fort Collins, CO

Avoid Blank Walls on the Street



Windows are the "eyes" of a building façade.

Blank walls are a missed opportunity to enliven the street and allow people to see life inside the building

Preserve/Create a Strong Street Edge and Rhythm

- High percentage of glazing (windows)
- Windows are positioned at regular intervals at consistent heights
- Awnings are consistent
- Building widths are predictable and not too wide
- Buildings create a street wall-but not too tall
- Offset placement varies rhythm for variety and visual interest

Four Key Qualities of Successful Public Space

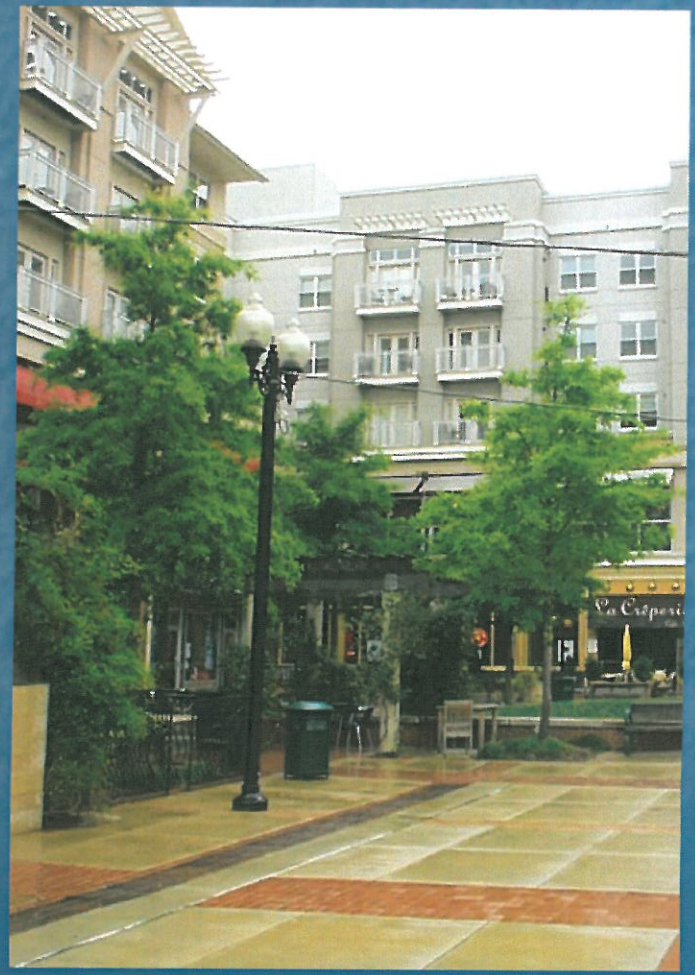
1. It is accessible.
2. People are engaged in activities there.
3. The space is comfortable and has a good image.
4. It is a sociable place—one where people meet each other and take people when they come to visit.

Source: Project for Public Spaces

Sidewalks Are Public Space

Orenco Station, Portland OR

Public Space Can Be Small or Large



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KEBAGHE

PROCESS FOR THIS EVENING

- Staff developed four scenarios that represent distinctly different approaches the community could take to address requests for higher density development. Two of the four scenarios were created based on public comment received throughout the discussion series. The four scenarios are as follows:
- The Status Quo
- Mid-High Density Residential Development (40du/acre)
- High Density, Mixed Use Development (70 du/acre)
- Very High Density Residential Development (100 du/acre)

SCENARIO CONTENT

- Brief, written description of the scenario
- Graphic depiction of the scenario
- Sample design guidelines that would apply to that scenario
- Pictures—photos of relevant development patterns
- Description of Impacts of each scenario—e.g. impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, parking and traffic, architecture, etc.
- Big sheet for posting comment cards

PARTICIPATION

- At sign-in, each participant given a gold sticker and many green and red dots
- Use the star to vote for a scenario that you support in its entirety.
- Use green dots to vote for ideas you agree with, like or support within a scenario
- Use red dots to vote for ideas you disagree with, dislike or do not support within a scenario
- Write comments about that scenario or ideas within it on cards and then tape cards on the big sheet.

PROCESS ORDER

- YELLOW – SCENARIO ONE
- TAN - SCENARIO TWO
- SALMON - SCENARIO THREE
- BLUE - SCENARIO FOUR

- STATION FIVE IS A SURVEY TO BE COMPLETED AT THE END

http://www.ci.norman.ok.us/cm/high-density-development-community-discussion