

Northgate Transit Oriented Development Project

Community Outreach Summary

2017

OVERVIEW

Throughout 2017, King County Metro's Northgate Transit Oriented Development (TOD) project conducted outreach to stakeholders, interested groups and the general public to share information about the project and gather feedback.

Goals

King County had three key outreach goals for the Northgate TOD project:

1. Share project goals and information with a wide audience in accessible formats
2. Gather value-based feedback on project goals to hear what matters most to the community and interested stakeholders for incorporation into the Request for Proposals (RFP)
3. Show the public how their feedback has been incorporated into the project

Strategies

The project team implemented the following strategies to reach these outreach goals:

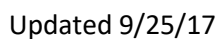
- Met with and talked to interested stakeholders including community organizations, groups and local businesses to share project information and project goals, and to gather feedback
- Hosted an open house near the project site to gather feedback on project goals and values from near neighbors, stakeholders and the general public
- Hosted an online open house with meeting materials and information from the in-person open house, including an opportunity to submit feedback

AUDIENCES

Project team members emailed, met with, and/or had phone calls with the following list of stakeholders and groups to provide information about the project and gather feedback on project goals and values:

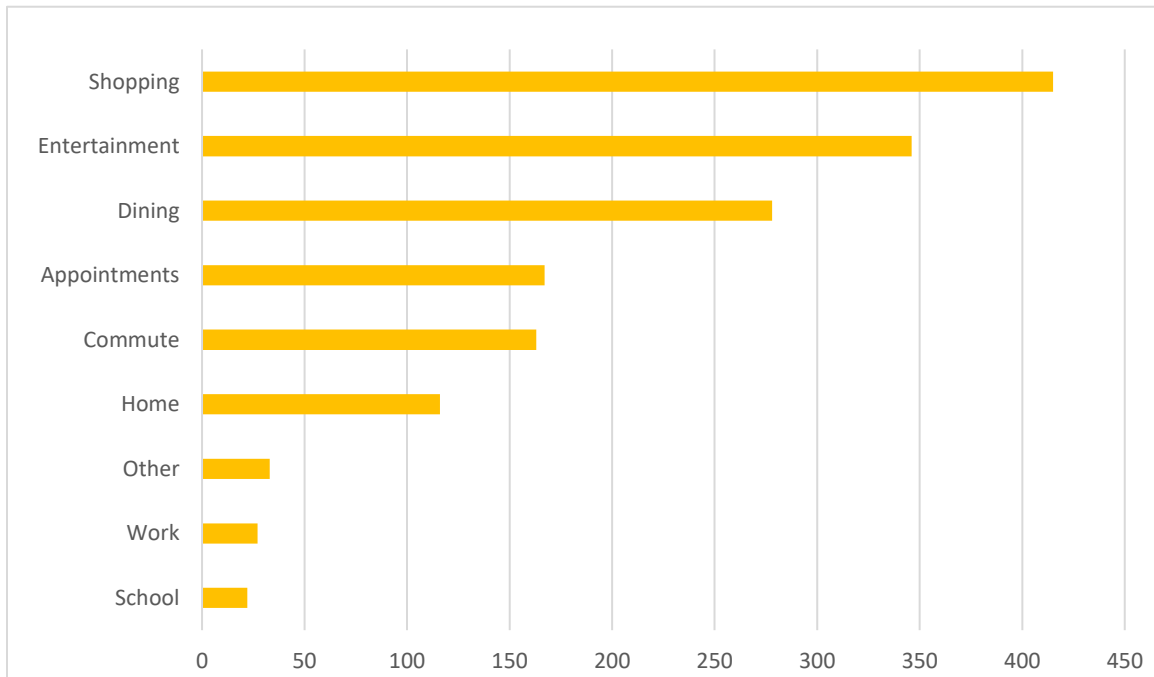
- Bellwether Housing
- BRIDGE Housing
- Cascade Bicycle Club
- City of Seattle Bike Advisory Board
- City of Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board
- City of Seattle Transit Advisory Board
- City of Seattle and King County elected officials
- Commuters using the Northgate Transit Center
- Enterprise Foundation
- Feet First
- Futurewise
- Idris Mosque
- King County Transit Advisory Commission
- Licton Springs Community Council
- Maple Leaf Community Council
- Meadowbrook Community Council
- Mercy Housing
- Nearby neighbors
- Neighborcare Health
- North Seattle Chamber of Commerce
- North Seattle College
- Northgate Plaza
- Northhaven
- Pinehurst Community Council
- The Housing Development Consortium
- Thornton Creek Alliance
- Thornton Place
- Transit Riders Union
- Transportation Choices Coalition
- Victory Heights Community Council

We asked in-person and online open house attendees to tell us where they live. Most respondents came from the Northgate area, Maple Leaf, Licton Springs and the Downtown Seattle area (highlighted in the red areas below). In-person meeting attendees primarily came from the Northgate area and surrounding neighborhoods. Online survey respondents primarily came from the downtown Seattle area or other outlying neighborhoods.



I come to Northgate for...

We asked in-person and online open house attendees what they do when they come to Northgate. People primarily come to Northgate for shopping, entertainment, dining, appointments and commuting.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Project team members met with, called, and/or emailed over 20 community groups. To engage with near neighbors and individual stakeholders the team held an in-person open house on May 6, 2017 at the Hampton Inn and Suites in Northgate. At the open house attendees could learn about the project, talk to project staff and provide feedback on project goals and values. Partner projects from the City of Seattle and Sound Transit were also in attendance to share information, including Northgate Greenway, Street Concept, Northgate Pedestrian and Bike Bridge and North Seattle Greenway.

To further engage with the community and provide opportunity for those that were unable to attend in person, all meeting materials and feedback opportunities were available in an online platform from May 8 through May 22, 2017.

Notifications

Meeting notifications sent to the community prior to the in-person open house included:

- Postcards sent to approximately 11,000 Northgate residents
- Two transit rider alerts
- Three emails to approximately 20 key project stakeholders
- Project website announcement
- Posters at the Northgate Transit Center

Notifications sent following the in-person open house thanking attendees and promoting the online open house included:

- Business cards with online open house web address (distributed at the in-person open house)
- Email to project contact list
- Email to approximately 20 key project stakeholders

- Transit rider alert
- Project website announcement

Participation

- Approximately 300 people attended the in-person open house
- Approximately 870 people participated in the online open house
- Over 20 groups and stakeholders received briefing from the project team
- Over 2,000 points of feedback were received including survey responses, comments, conversations with staff and emails

FEEDBACK

Overview

Feedback was gathered from the community both in-person and online. Project staff gathered thoughts from the community during project briefings, emails, phone calls and at the project open house. At the open house attendees could project feedback through written comments, survey responses and in-person discussions with project staff.

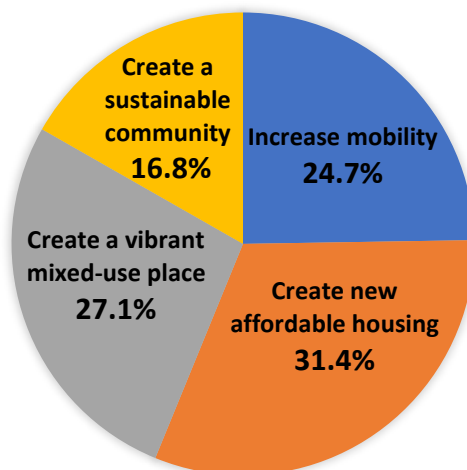
Project goals

The team identified four goals for the project:

- Increase mobility for people who walk, ride transit and bike
- Create new affordable housing
- Create a vibrant mixed use place that enhances and connects to the surrounding community
- Create a sustainable community that balances urban growth and natural resources

We asked in-person and online open house attendees to share their priorities for the project through open-ended feedback and to identify the project goal that was most important to them.

Which project goal matters most to you?



Sample of open-ended feedback received

"Walkability, paths, sidewalks."

"Northgate area must get improved bicycle access!!! It is currently unsafe."

"It doesn't matter how great a place is if it's difficult to reach."

"Affordable housing is a huge city-wide problem that this project can help address."

"Ample open space to accommodate weekly farmers market and other activities."

"An attractive mixed-use place provides employment, housing, and the ability to live car-lite."

"Very important! Housing is a basic need for everyone. People NEED to have houses, if they are to become future professionals. Houses need to be VERY affordable!!"

"Need basic services for people who will live here and ride transit: childcare, neighborhood grocery, florist, shoe maker."

"Include accessible green roofs, for internal green space and external stormwater benefits."

"We should build taller in Northgate so we can help stop sprawl into farm and forest land."

Themes

The following list highlights the themes the project team heard through open-ended feedback gathered from briefings, comment cards, conversations, boards and online survey questions.

1. Neighborhood retail, amenities and activation

- Neighborhood essentials that make it possible to be transit-dependent (e.g. neighborhood grocery store, daycare, drug store)
- Neighborhood retail to gather, build community (e.g. coffee shops, small businesses, dog-friendly places, theater space)
- Public and green outdoor spaces to gather and play, have celebrations and neighborhood events (e.g. cultural celebrations, farmer's markets, kids play areas)

2. Housing, site height and density

- Build as much affordable and work force housing as possible
- Affordable housing for a mix of income levels; don't forget the people in "the middle"
- Zoning that allows for taller buildings, build higher for greater density to avoid sprawl
- Amenities and infrastructure in place to support more people and increased density

3. Connections, parking and mobility

- Improve walkability of the area (additional/better sidewalks, improved street crossings, etc.)
- Concerns about removing or rerouting bus routes and a need for clarity around impacts to bus routes during Phase I construction and once the station opens
- Concerns about parking for new residents, visitors (both to businesses and residents' friends/family) and commuters (park and ride)
- Reduce need for cars, increase mobility for non-car (transit, bike, pedestrian) or have car-sharing options

4. Water quality, stormwater

- Accessible green roofs and more permeable surfaces, for internal green space and external stormwater benefits
- Water quality protections, and more green-space integration
- Increase protection for Thornton Creek Watershed