

# City of Lynnwood Highway 99 Corridor Study Adopted Strategies

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# HIGHWAY 99 CORRIDOR STRATEGIES

## INTRODUCTION

Lynnwood's Highway 99 Corridor appears to include ample opportunity for redevelopment. Continued growth expected for the Puget Sound region coupled with Lynnwood's desirable location positions the City well in terms of future demand for all land uses. The City's location brings many advantages including proximity to Boeing employment to the north in Everett, the growing employment base in Bothell, Eastside King County commerce centers in Bellevue and Redmond, and access to Seattle to the south.

Transit improvements planned for the corridor are anticipated to make the corridor in Lynnwood more desirable for transit-oriented uses, including multifamily housing developments, and a mix of retail and commercial services. Other areas in proximity to the corridor that will drive future demand include growing medical centers to the south in Edmonds, office demand stemming from Premera Blue Cross in Mountlake Center, and the City of Lynnwood's own growth plans for its City Center and Alderwood Mall.

Initial data and market research indicated several findings for the area's redevelopment potential which include:

- Many parcels qualify under typical criteria for being redevelopable, and relatively few parcels are actually vacant at present, though their combined land area totals more than 20 acres.
- Retail along the corridor has always been highly visible and successful and retail and real estate professionals in the area report strong and strengthening markets at present for the retail space within the study area. Upgrading the existing mix of retail should be a primary focus for retail strategies, along with integrating retail into a desirable corridor-wide plan that incorporates planning considerations (transportation, accessibility and more).
- Planned transit improvements spur creative energy for new development products. Developments benefit from increased pedestrian activity and potentially a greater concentration of commuters using the corridor. Mixed-use and transit-oriented development projects can serve as a catalyst and anchor for broader activity nodes, which will likely be the focus of subsequent work for the corridor strategy.

A Community Forum was conducted to gather local impressions regarding the overall corridor's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints, as well as its redevelopment potential along distinct segments of its length. The following strategies were developed based on the both the initial findings and several themes found within the community members' comments which include:

- Many comments about a need for gathering places along the corridor sparked several focused recommendations highlighting opportunities and necessary regulatory changes required to create “third places” along Highway 99. For example, a medium to high density housing component can bring the required density for retail success, increase the use of community areas, and provide added security through natural surveillance from residents’, however, the regulatory environment must support the creation of this housing.
- There is a desire to accommodate the small business which makes up much of the corridor, and in particular the parcels that most readily meet the criteria for redevelopment. The economies of scale achieved by larger businesses and large scale development presents significant challenges to providing places for small business along the corridor, and the small business support strategies below attempt to accommodate small business so that they continue to have a future along the corridor.
- Efforts to understand how the community sees the corridor at present and in regards to its future revealed that the majority believe the corridor to be similar throughout in terms of its look and mix of uses. There is an opportunity to create a more desirable and distinctive identity along the different segments of Lynnwood’s corridor by concentrating development type into various districts; the recommended and adopted strategies support this concept.

## **ADOPTED STRATEGIES**

### **I. CREATE GATHERING PLACES**

- **Develop mixed use high density nodes at key locations**
  - ✓ **Locate nodes at major intersections & in conjunction with BRT**
- **Increase development capacity at key locations**
  - ✓ **Increase lot depth and commercial zoning**
- **Ensure safety**
  - ✓ **Lit pathways, housing, enhance security**
  - ✓ **Introduce housing**
  - ✓ **Create vitality and take advantage of transit**
- **Create park / Plazas**
  - ✓ **Complement transit and commercial/residential nodes**

### **II. SUPPORT TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT**

- **Allow flexibility in zoning and increase density, particularly at the Gathering Places**
- **Leverage capacity of transit by concentrating housing within walking distances to stations**
- **Provide and enhance bus and pedestrian access to properties while maintaining through traffic capacity**
- **Improve vehicle access to properties**
- **Ensure the corridor continues to be a transit priority**
- **Collaborate with Community Transit to ensure success**

### **III. ALLOW A WIDE VARIETY OF BUSINESS TYPES ALONG THE CORRIDOR**

- **Connect the Gathering Places with a broad mix of commercial uses**
- **Capitalize on regional growth and current market success to build capacity and recruitment**
- **Expand commercial zoning back from Hwy 99 where appropriate to encourage higher quality developments**
- **Identify potential redevelopment areas**
- **Recognize needs of retail frontage, foster access and visibility**
- **Encourage small business development in strategic locations**
  - ✓ **Shallower commercial parcels**
  - ✓ **Near housing; within mixed use**
- **Broaden allowed uses at key sites.**
  - ✓ **Create Flex buildings**
  - ✓ **Light industrial and manufacturing as allowed flex uses**
- **Update comp plan, zoning and development regulations to be supportive of desired outcomes**

### **IV. SUPPORT HOUSING**

- **Encourage a variety of housing types to:**
  - ✓ **Increase housing choices**
  - ✓ **Create opportunities for affordable home ownership**
  - ✓ **Create a better sense of place**
  - ✓ **Increase vitality along the corridor**
- **Encourage homeownership next to commercial uses**
- **Locate housing back from street**

## V. SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESS

- Develop a product type that supports small business
- Encourage a business improvement association to:
  - ✓ Create marketing campaigns for the corridor
  - ✓ Support design and maintenance standards
  - ✓ Provide business education and training
  - ✓ Advocate for small businesses
  - ✓ Conduct research and surveys
  - ✓ Act as a funding mechanism for corridor improvements
- Accommodate flex space spaces for small businesses

## VI. IMPROVE IDENTITY & IMAGE OF CORRIDOR & KEY SEGMENTS

- Enhance commercial areas and encourage higher quality investments
- Address quality of life issues: perceptions of crime, safety and cleanliness
- Maintain and support successful niche businesses
  - ✓ Identify geographic areas with concentrated uses and identities
  - ✓ Create guidelines to reinforce character and market potential
  - ✓ Determine other strategies to support geographic segments
- Auto dealers and service as a desirable niche business
  - ✓ Recognize the value and potential of new dealerships
  - ✓ Improve physical condition of auto support services

## VII. DEVELOP A PHYSICAL PLAN

- **Work with urban designers to coordinate a plan for physical conditions consistent with the Corridor strategy**
- **Address quality-of-life issues in the physical planning process**
- **Create coordinated communication and outreach plan to include adjacent neighborhoods**