
Medical/Highway 99 Activity Center and Highway 99 Corridor

Medical/Highway 99 Vision. The Medical/Highway 99 activity center is intended to encourage the development of a pedestrian and transit oriented area focused on two master planned developments, Swedish/Edmonds medical center and Edmonds-Woodway High School, with a related high-intensity development corridor along Highway 99. Highway 99 is characterized by a corridor of generally commercial development with less intense uses or designed transitions serving as a buffer between adjacent neighborhoods. In contrast, the overall character of the mixed use activity center is intended to be an intensively developed mixed use, pedestrian-friendly environment, in which buildings are linked by walkways served by centralized parking, and plantings and landscaping promote pedestrian activity and a park-like atmosphere. In addition to the general goals for activity centers, the Medical/Highway 99 activity center is intended to achieve the following goals:

Medical/Highway 99 Activity Center Goals and Plan Policies. The following goals and policies are intended to achieve the framework goals for the Medical/Highway 99 Activity Center. Each key goal in this element (or section) is identified by an alphabet letter (for example, “D”). Goals are typically followed by associated policies and these are identified by the letter of the goal and a sequential number (for example, “D.2”)

Medical/Highway 99 Activity Center Goal A. Expand the economic and tax base of the City of Edmonds by providing incentives for business and commercial redevelopment in a planned activity center.

Medical/Highway 99 Activity Center Goal B. Provide for an aesthetically pleasing business and residential community consisting of a mixed use, pedestrian-friendly atmosphere of attractively designed and landscaped surroundings and inter-connected development.

- B.1 Encourage a more active and vital setting for new retail, office, and service businesses, supported by nearby residents and visitors from other parts of the region.
- B.2 Provide street trees, buffers, and landscape treatments which encourage and support an attractive mixed use pattern of development characterized by pedestrian walkways and centralized parking. Use these same features, in concert with site and building design, to provide a transition from higher-intensity mixed use development to nearby single family residential areas.
- B.3 Provide a pleasant experience for pedestrians and motorists along major streets and in a planned activity center, and provide a gateway along 212th Street SW into the City of Edmonds.

Medical/Highway 99 Activity Center Goal C. Recognize and plan for the distinct difference in opportunities and development character provided by the Highway 99 corridor versus the local travel and access patterns on local streets.

- C.1 Uses adjoining the Highway 99 Corridor should provide more intensive levels of mixed use development, including higher building heights and greater density. However, pedestrian linkages to other portions of the activity center – and adjoining focus areas along the Highway 99 Corridor – should still be provided in order to assist pedestrian circulation and provide access to transit.

Medical/Highway 99 Activity Center Goal D. Promote the development of a mixed use area served by transit and accessible to pedestrians.

- D.1 Provide a more efficient transportation system featuring increased bus service, pedestrian and bicycle routes as well as adequate streets and parking areas. Transit service should be coordinated by transit providers and take advantage of links to future high-capacity transit that develops along corridors such as Highway 99.

Medical/Highway 99 Activity Center Goal E. To provide a buffer between the high-intensity, high-rise commercial areas along SR 99 and the established neighborhoods and public facilities west of 76th Avenue West as indicated in the 1994 Stevens Memorial Hospital Master Plan (see Figure 18 below).

- E.1 Support a mix of uses without encroaching into single family neighborhoods. Uses adjoining single family neighborhoods should provide transitions between more intensive use areas through a combination of building design, landscaping and visual buffering, and pedestrian-scale streetscape design.

- Low:
Maximum height of two stories.
- Intermediate:
Maximum height of five stories.
- High:
Maximum height of nine stories.

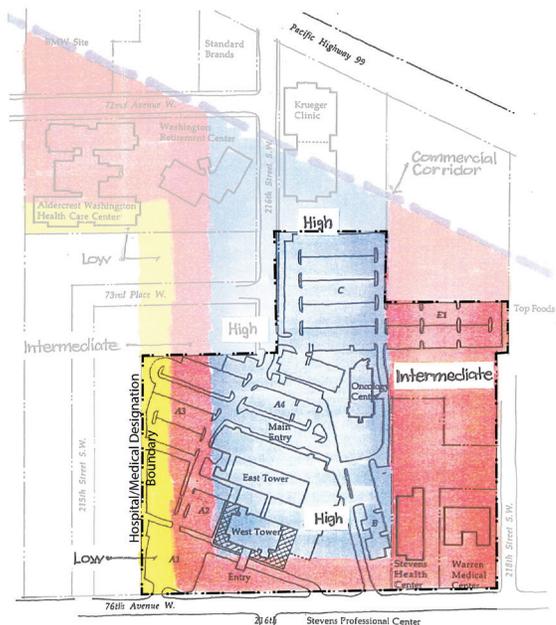


Figure 18: Hospital/Medical Height Envelope Concept

Medical/Highway 99 Activity Center Goal F. To discourage the expansion of strip commercial development and encourage a cohesive and functional activity center that allows for both neighborhood conservation and targeted redevelopment that includes an appropriate mix of single family and multiple dwelling units, offices, retail, and business uses, along with public facilities.

- F.1 In some cases, heavy commercial development (e.g. wholesale or light industrial uses) may still be appropriate where these uses are separated from residential uses.

Medical/Highway 99 Activity Center Goal G. To provide an integrated network of pedestrian and bicycle circulation that connects within and through the activity center to existing residential areas, the high school, the hospital, and transit services and facilities.

- G.1 Development should be designed for both pedestrian and transit access.

Highway 99 Corridor

Highway 99 Corridor Vision. Highway 99 occupies a narrow strip of retail and commercial uses bounded by residential neighborhoods. Historically, the corridor has developed in a patchwork of uses, without a clear focus or direction. To improve planning for the future of the corridor, the City established a task force in 2003-2004, resulting in the Highway 99 Enhancement Report and a related economic analysis. During this process, local residents were contacted and asked to participate in two focus groups to identify current problems and future aspirations for the corridor. After this preliminary survey with the residents, the City invited business owners to participate in two charrette meetings to brainstorm ideas and evaluate possible ways to induce redevelopment in the area. After concepts were developed, Berk & Associates, an economics consultant, performed a market assessment of the enhancement strategy. The following diagram summarizes the general approach that resulted from this work: a series of focus areas providing identity and a clustering of activity along the corridor, providing opportunities for improved economic development while also improving linkages between the corridor and surrounding residential areas.

Focus Areas along the Corridor

Four themes and four areas emerged as particularly interesting along the corridor. Each one of these areas represents a sub system with specific traffic, access and pedestrian characteristics as well as development goals and character.

From the north to the south we recognize the following areas:

- The **Hospital Community and Family Retail Center**;
- The **“International District”** area;
- The **Residential Area Retail Center**;
- The **Commercial Redevelopment/Hotels Improvement Area**.

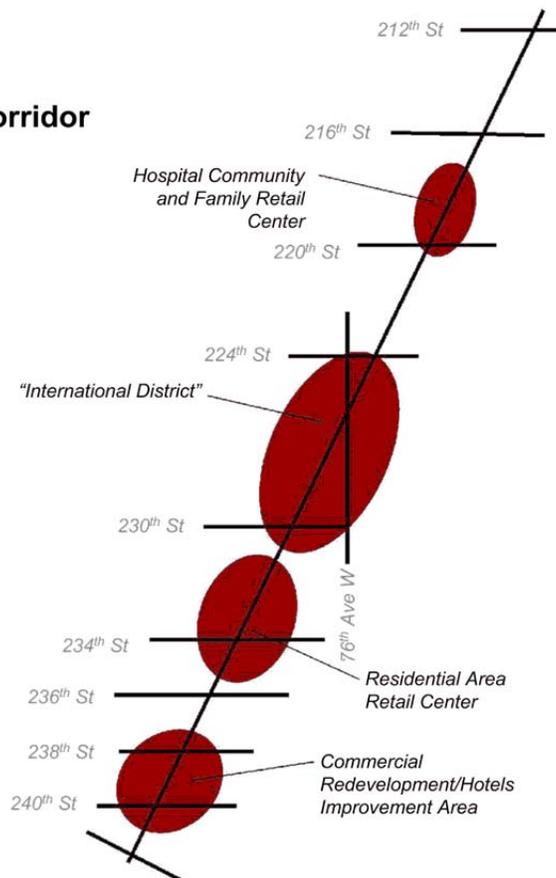


Figure 19: Highway 99 Corridor Themes

Highway 99 Corridor Goals & Policies

Each key goal in this element (or section) is identified by an alphabet letter (for example, “D”). Goals are typically followed by associated policies and these are identified by the letter of the goal and a sequential number (for example, “D.2”)

The following goals and policies are intended to achieve the framework goals for the Highway 99 Corridor:

Highway 99 Corridor Goal A. Improve access and circulation. Access to businesses for both pedestrians and automobiles is difficult along major portions of the corridor. The inability of pedestrians to cross the street and for automobiles to make safe turns is a critical limitation on enhanced development of the corridor into a stronger economic area. Better pedestrian crossings are also needed to support transit use, especially as Highway 99 becomes the focus of future high capacity transit initiatives.

- A.1 Provide for pedestrian access and circulation within development focus areas, while coordinating with high-capacity transit along the Highway 99 corridor.
- A.2 Use traffic signals, access management, and rechannelization to facilitate pedestrian, business, and residential access while maintaining traffic capacity along SR 99. The City should work collaboratively with WSDOT on these issues, and to develop a circulation management plan. In some cases the impacts of the traffic signals can be enhanced by access management, rechannelization and other measures.
- A.3 Make the corridor more attractive and pedestrian-friendly (e.g., add trees and landscaping) through a combination of development requirements and – when available – public investment.
- A.4 Route auto traffic to encourage efficient access to new and existing development while minimizing impacts to surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Highway 99 Corridor Goal B. The City should consider the different sections along the corridor and emphasize their unique opportunities rather than view the corridor as an undifferentiated continuum. Street improvements and, in some cases regulatory measures can encourage these efforts. Focus on specific nodes or segments within the corridor. Identity elements such as signage should indicate that the corridor is within the City of Edmonds, and show how connections can be made to downtown and other Edmonds locations.

- B.1 New development should be high-quality and varied – not generic – and include amenities for pedestrians and patrons while encouraging sustainable practices.
- B.2 The City will encourage the retention of commercial uses which provide high economic benefit to the city, such as new auto dealerships, and encourage these types of uses to locate within the Highway 99 Corridor. When these uses are proposed to be located within one of the corridor focus areas, these uses should also comply with the goals and policies outlined for each focus area.

- B.3 Provide a system of “focus areas” along the corridor which provide opportunities for clusters of development, or themed development areas. Providing focus points for development is intended to help encourage segmentation of the long Highway 99 corridor into distinct activity nodes which will encourage an Edmonds character and identity for the corridor. Concepts for the different focus areas identified in the “Highway 99 Corridor Vision” include the following:

The “*Hospital Community and Family Retail Center*” would be positioned to take advantage of its proximity to the many hospital and related medical services in the area and it would be easily reachable from the Interurban trail.



The idea of an “*International District*” is organized around the international flavor of development in the area combined with the concepts of visibility and internal connection. Access to the “District” is marked by specific gateways, and the many focal points for activity in the area (and the new development in between) are connected with a strong pedestrian corridor.



The “*Residential Area Retail Center*” concept allows for mixed use development while providing access and services to adjacent residential neighborhoods.



Similar mixed use development, linked to surrounding neighborhoods, could occur in the “*Commercial Redevelopment/Hotels Improvement Area*.” In addition, this area has the potential to provide large sites suitable for larger commercial or mixed use development, such as hotels or large retail complexes. Internal circulation between sites is a key to development.



Figure 20: Highway 99 Corridor Focus Areas

Highway 99 Corridor Goal C. Encourage development that is sensitive to surrounding neighborhoods. During the City’s Highway 99 Task Force work, residents noted that they needed a number of services that are not presently provided along the corridor. This can provide an opportunity that might be part of a larger business strategy. At the same time, new development should contribute to the residential quality of the adjacent neighborhoods.

- C.1 Protect residential qualities and connect businesses with the local community. Pedestrian connections should be made available as part of new development to connect residents to appropriate retail and service uses.
- C.2 New development should be allowed and encouraged to develop to the fullest extent possible while assuring that the design quality and amenities provided contribute to the overall character and quality of the corridor. Where intense development adjoins residential areas, site design (including buffers, landscaping, and the arrangement of uses) and building design should be used to minimize adverse impacts on residentially-zoned properties
- C.3 Provide adequate buffering between higher intensity uses and adjoining residential neighborhoods

Highway 99 Corridor Goal D. Encourage a variety of uses and building types. A variety of uses and building types is appropriate to take advantage of different opportunities and conditions. For example, a tall hotel or large scale retail development may be an excellent addition to the south of the corridor while some small restaurants and convenience shops might cater to hospital employees, trail users and local residents near 216th Street SW. Where needed, the City should consider zoning changes to encourage mixed use or taller development to occur.

- D.1 Upgrade the architectural and landscape design qualities of the corridor. Establish uniform signage regulations for all properties within the corridor area which provide for business visibility and commerce while minimizing clutter and distraction to the public.
- D.2 Within the Corridor, highrise nodes should be located to provide for maximum economic use of suitable commercial land. Highrise nodes should be:
 - D.2.a Supported by adequate services and facilities;
 - D.2.b Designed to provide a visual asset to the community through the use of distinctive forms and materials, articulated facades, attractive landscaping, and similar techniques.
 - D.2.c Designed to take advantage of different forms of access, including automobile, transit and pedestrian access.
 - D.2.d Designed to provide adequate buffering from lower intensity uses and residential neighborhoods.