

XV.L. Market Street Corridor

[Print Layout \(PDF\)](#)



City of Kirkland

MARKET STREET CORRIDOR PLAN



1. OVERVIEW

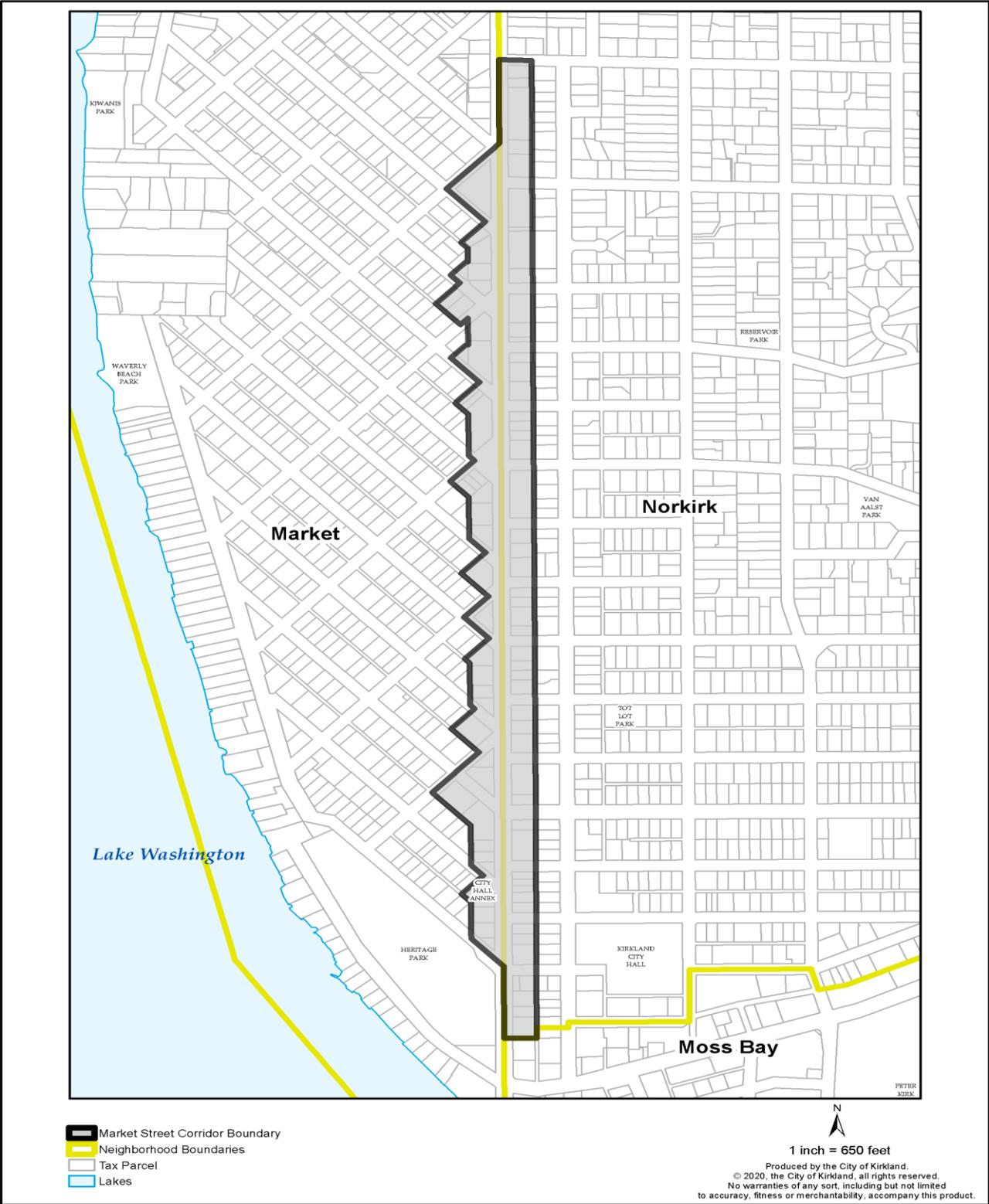
The Market Street Corridor is centered around Market Street and includes properties along the eastern border of the Market Neighborhood and the western border of the Norkirk Neighborhood.

The Market Street Corridor is an eclectic, attractive, and economically healthy area that includes a mix of small-scale office and retail uses, along with various housing types. A few commercial buildings provide convenient retail shopping and services for nearby residents, employees, and visitors from other areas in the region. The corridor is generally one lot wide bordering Market Street and is bounded by established and highly valued single-family residential neighborhoods to the north, east and west and the Central Business District to the south.

Market Street provides access to both the Market and Norkirk Neighborhoods and is heavily used as a principal north/south arterial for Citywide and regional bicycle, bus, truck, and automobile-vehicular traffic. Local neighbors depend on the Market Street Corridor as a connection between the Market and Norkirk Neighborhoods and to the Central Business District. During commute periods, residents and guests experience challenges exist accessing Market Street to and from the surrounding neighborhoods. Still visible today is the mix of historic 1890s buildings at the intersection of Market Street and 7th Avenue that represent the original town center that is a focal point for Kirkland's earlier history.



The Market Street Corridor Commute



The Kirkland Comprehensive Plan is current through Ordinance 4864, passed December 12, 2023.

Figure MS-1: Market Street Corridor Boundary

2. VISION STATEMENT

The following vision statement is a description of the character and qualities of the Market Street Corridor at a future time when the goals and policy direction expressed in this chapter are realized.

The Market Street Corridor is a leafy and comfortable neighborhood-compatible mix of residential, office, and retail land uses that support and complement the surrounding Norkirk and Market Neighborhoods. Well-lit crosswalks, signs, flags, designated bike lanes and other infrastructure improvements along Market Street help pedestrians and bicyclists to feel comfortable and safe.

The corridor is envisioned to continue to be an area where:

- Trees line both sides of Market Street and within the center median.
- Development regulations ensure buildings are smaller in scale compared to other commercial districts in the City.
- There is an eclectic, livable, and attractive-inviting mix of housing types, neighborhood-oriented commercial, and retail uses.
- Retail establishments are small and, to be viable as businesses, likely serve the larger community as well as the surrounding neighborhood.
- Architectural and site design standards ensure buildings are spaced, set back, scaled, and designed to ~~attractively~~ blend seamlessly with the surrounding residential neighborhoods as well as the historic district at the intersection of 7th Avenue and Market Street.
- Commercial uses are limited to those that minimize potential noise, light, odor and traffic impacts ~~adjacent~~ to nearby residential uses.



Preserve Sequoia Tree at 17th and Market

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3. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

~~Prior to the 1800s, the First Peoples of the Duwamish Tahb tah byook tribe inhabited the Lake Washington shoreline from Juanita Bay to Yarrow Bay, as described in more detail in the Community Character Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Lake Washington offered an abundance of riches, including wapatoes (a wetland tuber), tules, cedar roots, salmon, waterfowl, berries, deer, muskrat, beaver and otter. The 1855 Treaty of Point Elliott guaranteed hunting and fishing rights and reservations to all Tribes represented by the Native signers, including the Duwamish People. In return for the reservation and other benefits promised in the treaty by the United States government, the Duwamish People exchanged over 54,000 acres of its homeland. Today those 54,000 acres encompass much of present-day King County, including Kirkland (and the Market and Norkirk Neighborhoods). Unfortunately, the opening of the Lake Washington Ship Canal in the early 1900s also had a detrimental effect on the Duwamish People, lowering the level of the lake, affecting wetlands, and diminishing traditional food sources.~~

See the [Kirkland Historic Narrative included in Appendix # for a discussion of citywide historic context, inclusive of all previous inhabitants of the area \(pre-and post-white/European settlement\) especially along the culturally rich Lake Washington shoreline.](#)

The historic buildings dating from the 1890s at the intersection of Market Street and 7th Avenue represent the original town center and are still a focal point for Kirkland's history. This historic district reflects the City's past and its continued evolution through its old and new buildings and its streetscape, including street trees, public seating and street lights.

Between 1888 and 1890, Peter Kirk's Kirkland Land and Improvement Company purchased much of the land that had been homesteaded in the 1870s to begin the proposed new city. This new city was to support the construction of the steel mill on Rose Hill near Forbes Lake. The new town center was at the intersection of Market Street and Piccadilly, which is now 7th Avenue. This intersection, with four nearby remaining 1891 brick buildings, three of which are on the National Register of Historic Places, is one of the most historically significant in Kirkland. An alternative street plan was also developed which included a large square at this intersection and a hotel on what is now Heritage Park at the corner of Market Street and Waverly Way. The cluster of historic properties at the intersection of Market Street and 7th Avenue forms an important historical link and entrance to both the Market and Norkirk Neighborhoods. See the Market and Norkirk Neighborhood Plans for more historical information about the area.

Policy MS-1:

Encourage preservation of structures and locations that reflect Kirkland's heritage.

The ~~Community Character-Land Use~~ Element Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan ~~features tables and figures Table CC-1 which identifies-identify~~ Designated Historic Buildings, Structures, Sites and Objects in Kirkland designated by the Kirkland Landmark Commission and King County Landmark Commission. ~~Figure CC-1 identifies, as well as~~ the locations of those resources. Refer to those tables for more information about the historic features along the corridor and in the Market and Norkirk Neighborhoods. Figure MS-3 shows the location of the historic features along the corridor. Attention must also be given to landmarks and locations that can help illustrate the history of the area prior to white settlement.

Policy MS-2:

Provide incentives to encourage retention of identified buildings of historic significance.

The City should include incentives in the Zoning and Building Codes for maintenance of the historic buildings at the 7th Avenue and Market Street Historic District. These incentives can help to make the maintenance of the historic structures more economically viable.

Policy MS-3:

Provide and maintain markers and interpretive information for the historic sites located in the historic district at 7th Avenue and Market Street.

Providing this information will identify these important sites and enable future community members to have a link with the history of this significant area of Kirkland. Attention should be given to celebrating the neighborhood's history in an inclusive way, to help residents and visitors understand the history of the area prior to white settlement.



The Peter Kirk Building at 620 Market Street

4. LAND USE

Policy MS-4:

Encourage a mix of uses within the Market Street Corridor that includes multifamily residential and office uses, as well as neighborhood-oriented shops and services to promote neighborhood walkability-pedestrian mobility and provide services to the greater community.

Most of the corridor is developed with a mixture of ~~small-scale multifamily-less intensive residences-residential at a density of 12 units/acre~~ and office development. It is also appropriate to have neighborhood businesses interspersed throughout. This scale and pattern of development for the corridor fits well with the adjoining neighborhoods.

There are two nodes along Market Street that function as neighborhood shopping and services areas: one on the south and one on the north shown in Land Use Map Figure MS-2. The area south of 6th Avenue and 5th Avenue West functions as a connection between the City's historic district and the Central Business District (CBD).



Office Development on Market Street



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Neighborhood Shopping Area

~~Small scale multifamily uses and office development are also allowed here, but some of the area is at a higher density than the 12 units/acre allowed north of the historic district. On the east side of Market Street, multifamily density can go up to 24 units/acre. This helps the area to make a better transition into the CBD.~~

The neighborhood-oriented businesses located on the west side of Market Street, north of 14th Avenue West provide convenient shopping and services for residents in the area. If redevelopment of this site occurs, the buildings and site should be designed so that their appearance is complementary to ~~the character of~~ the adjoining neighborhood. Landscaping and other design elements can be used to soften and buffer the commercial uses onsite from the adjoining residential uses.

Policy MS-5:

Retain the historic district roughly between 8th Avenue/2nd Street West and 6th Avenue/5th Avenue West as a special planning area of the corridor.

This area should remain a business commercial zone (shown on the Land Use Map, Figure MS-2) allowing residential, office and retail uses, and should include special regulations that reinforce the historic nature of the intersection at 7th Avenue and Market Street.

Policy MS-6:

Restrict the development of new commercial and large scale ~~multifamily-residential development structures~~ to locations within the limited boundaries and land use districts designated for the Market Street Corridor.

Larger scale ~~multifamily-residential~~ and commercial development should remain in designated areas within the Market Street Corridor and not extend into the residential core of the Market and Norkirk Neighborhoods or beyond 19th Avenue to the north. The slope and alley parallel to the east side of Market Street provide a break between the corridor and the residential core of the Norkirk Neighborhood. The break is not as well defined on the west side of the street between the corridor and the Market Neighborhood residential core; however, it is generally located adjacent to properties that directly abut Market Street and is a useful neighborhood feature. (See Land Use Map, Figure MS-2).



Multifamily Development on Market Street

Policy MS-7:

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~~Maintain Enhance neighborhood compatibility through site~~ design standards and/or guidelines for multifamily and commercial buildings in the Market Street Corridor.

Building and site design standards should address issues such as building placement on the site, site access and on-site circulation by vehicles and pedestrians, building scale, site lighting, signs, landscaping (including for parking lots), preservation of existing vegetation, and buffers between development of different scales, multifamily and commercial developments and lower intensity housing.

~~Policy MS-8:-~~

~~Appropriate building height for the corridor is up to two to three stories—two stories in general, and three stories in the neighborhood shopping and service nodes described in Policy MS-4. Additional height may be allowed as established in the Zoning Code to encourage a variety of roof forms, and as part of the design review process.~~

~~A range of building heights along the corridor is appropriate as a transition to adjacent lower intensity residential uses, to reflect topographical change in the neighborhood, and to encourage below-grade parking areas.~~

Policy MS-9:

Conduct a study of the parking requirements in the Market Street Corridor to encourage more small neighborhood commercial uses such as retail, office, or restaurant uses while minimizing potential adverse impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

There is neighborhood support for encouraging more small neighborhood commercial retail, office and restaurant uses along the corridor. Existing zoning regulations allow flexibility in the amount of parking stalls if a parking demand study is submitted that analyzes the unique parking needs of a business and a reduction in the number of parking stalls is justified. A general study should be completed for the corridor to identify code amendments and incentives that could help foster viable neighborhood-serving commercial uses along the corridor. Areas for further study could include parking requirements, building height, lot area coverage, building setbacks, and design requirements. Any code amendments should be designed to enhance the aesthetics and walkability mobility of the neighborhood.



Parking along Market Street Corridor

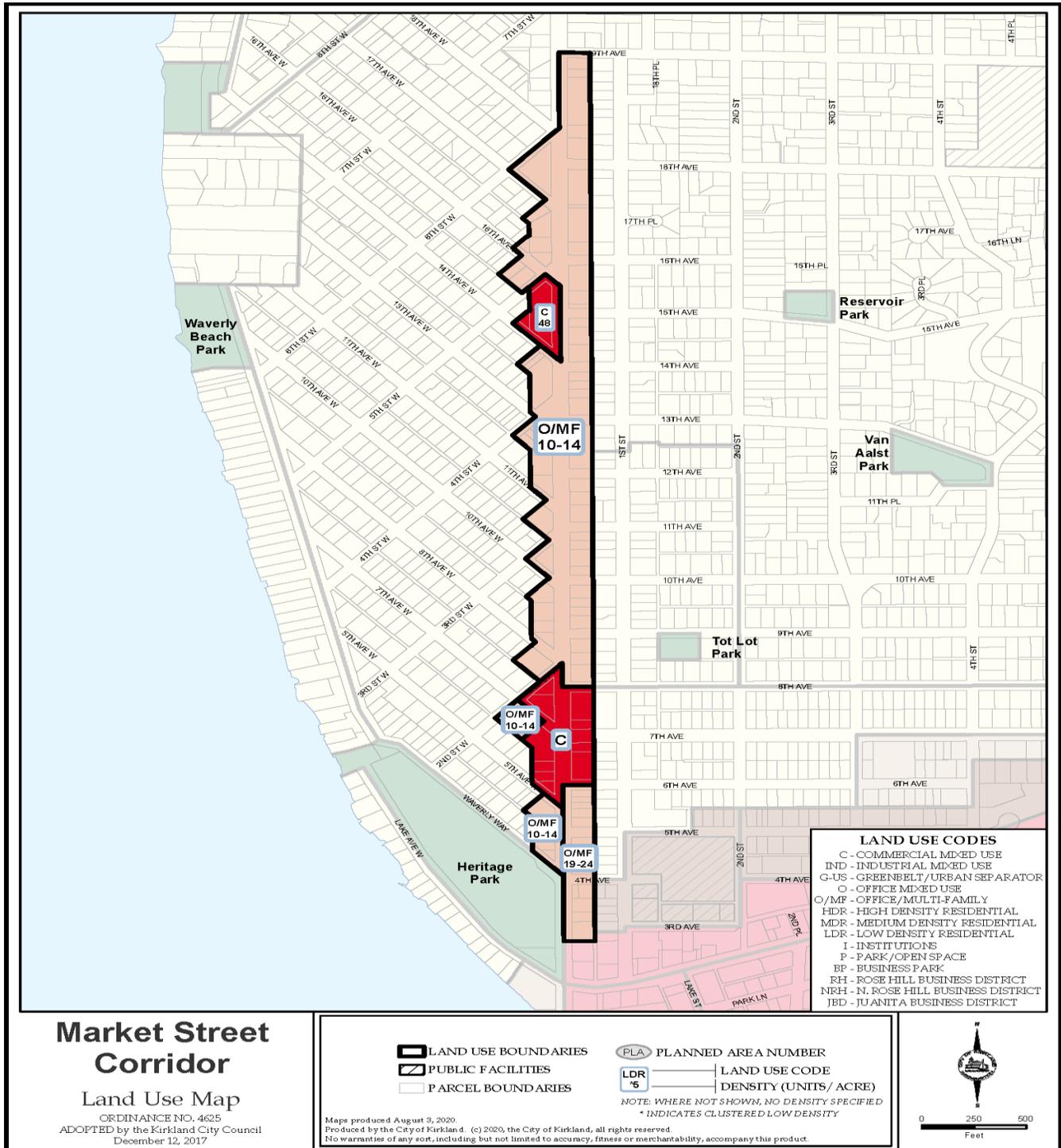


Figure MS-2: Market Street Corridor Land Use **[Staff note: Neighborhood land use map will be updated to reflect the citywide Land Use map being amended in the Land Use Element.]**

Policy MS-10:

~~Maintain and enhance the character~~ Remain mindful of the historic structures at the intersection at 7th Avenue and Market Street as redevelopment occurs.

Existing historic resources should be considered when adjacent structures are being rebuilt or remodeled. The scale and design features of the historic buildings at the intersection of Market Street and 7th Avenue should be considered when development in that area occurs.



Intersection of 7th Avenue and Market Street

Policy MS-11:

Utilize design review to administer building and site design standards for commercial and multi-unit family development along the Market Street Corridor.

Design review is important for the historic area surrounding the Market Street and 7th Avenue intersection (see Figure MS-3) and appropriate for all multi-unit family and commercial development along the corridor. The design review process using the Design Guidelines for the Market Street Corridor or Design Standards in the Zoning Code should be used to review site and building design issues such as building placement, landscaping, and building details, as well as public improvements including sidewalk width and street furniture.

Policy MS-12:

Provide streetscape, gateway and public art improvements that contribute to a sense of inclusive identity, enhance visual quality, and unify the Market Street Corridor.

Decorative street lights, a consistent street tree plan, and pedestrian seating can all be used to reinforce the ~~collective character and reflect the~~ feeling of community belonging along the corridor. The landscape strip on the east side of Market Street adds interest and provides a more secure pedestrian environment. Additional street trees should be considered on the west side of Market Street. The City should also consider funding street lights designed to reflect the area's history within the historic district and possibly along other areas of the corridor.

Policy MS-13:

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Construct and improve gateway features at the locations identified in the Market and Norkirk Neighborhood Plans.

Desired gateway feature locations are indicated on Figure MS-3. Improvements such as landscaping, signs, public art, and other features that identify the neighborhood can be included if they are appropriate for a location. Public investment will be necessary in most instances, but the City can also pursue opportunities to work with private property owners to install gateway features as part of future development.

Policy MS-14:

~~*Administer development standards and design guidelines that address transitions between primarily residential areas and the commercial and multifamily residential uses along Market Street.*~~

~~*The building mass and/or height of higher density structures should complement rather than dominate or overwhelm adjoining lower intensity uses. Landscape buffers, vertical or horizontal building modulation such as upper story step backs or architectural treatments should be used to soften and separate uses by creating a transition zone. Some of the existing buildings may also need enhanced landscaping in order to prevent commercial structures from having a negative impact on adjoining residential uses.*~~

Policy MS-15:

Orient buildings toward Market Street.

Commercial and ~~multifamily~~ larger-scale residential development that is oriented toward Market Street with reduced setbacks will reduce potential adverse impacts on adjacent ~~lower intensity~~ residential neighborhoods.

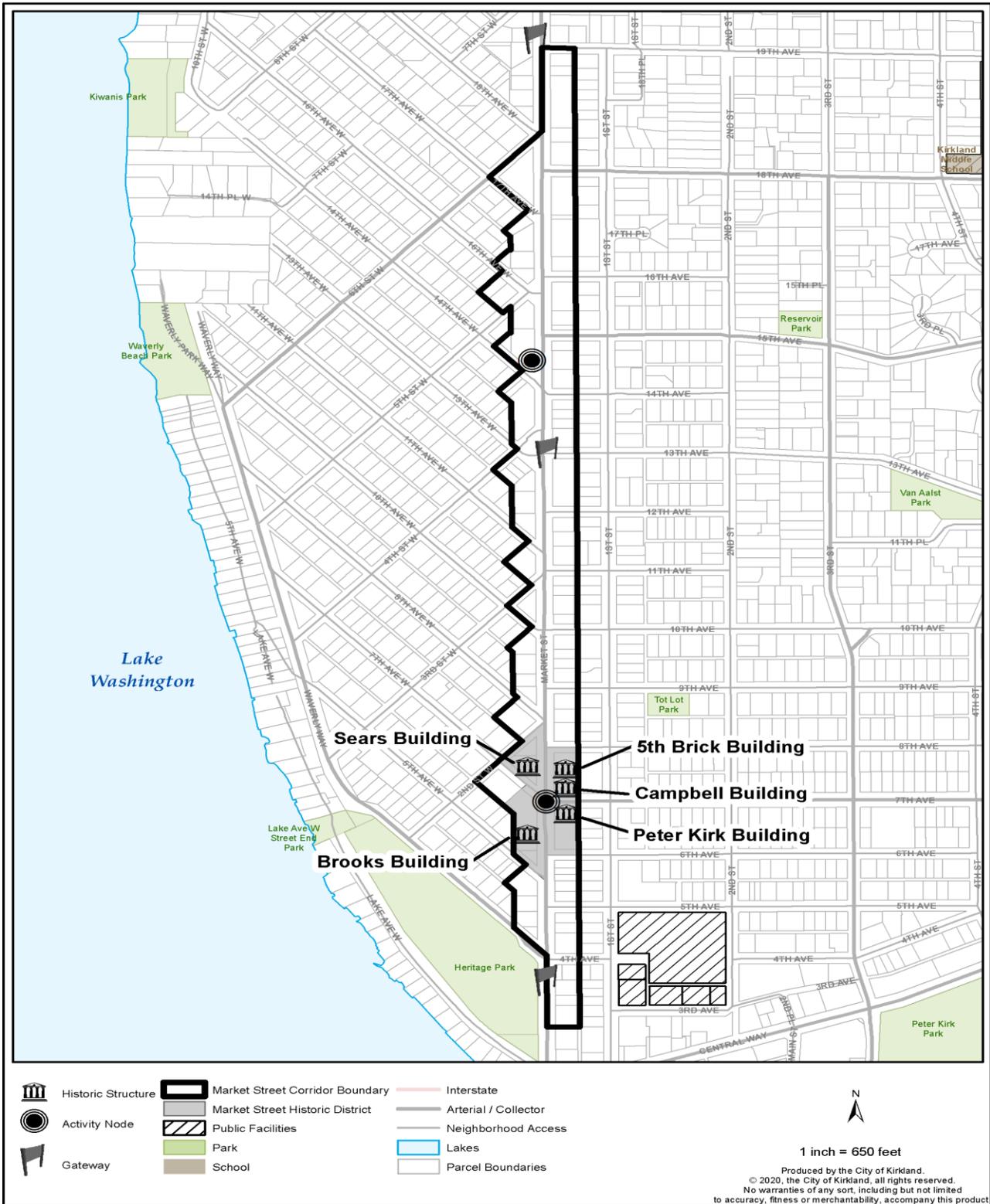
Policy MS-16:

Retain and improve the existing tree canopy in the center median on Market Street.

The mature trees and landscaping in the center median and along both sides of Market Street are important natural features to the neighborhoods to retain and maintain. In addition to the environmental and functional benefits they provide to reduce stormwater runoff, maintain tree canopy, buffer between travel lanes, and shade, the trees provide an aesthetic parkway boulevard that is unique to the neighborhood and provides a pleasant walking experience for pedestrians.



Dibble Office Building



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Figure MS-3: Market Street Corridor Urban Design Features

5. TRANSPORTATION

Market Street is a principal arterial that is the most traveled route into and along the borders of both the Market and Norkirk Neighborhoods. It also plays an important Citywide role since it is the only principal arterial west of Interstate 405 between NE 85th Street and NE 116th Street. Most of Market Street is fully improved with one lane in each direction, and a series of left turn pockets. The street is fully developed with curbs, gutters, sidewalks, a landscape strip and bike lanes. A landscape median provides additional green space while controlling left-turn movements. A center turn lane north of the 7th Street West intersection extends to Forbes Creek Drive.

Policy MS-17:

Maintain Market Street as a transportation corridor with a balance among transportation modes.

As a principal arterial, it is important on Market Street to maintain safe and convenient facilities for ~~all modes of transportation~~, transit, pedestrians, ~~and~~ bicycles and other forms of rolling while maintaining vehicular traffic capacity.

Policy MS-18:

Promote transportation improvements that adequately support the existing and planned land uses in the Market Street Corridor and the adjoining neighborhoods.

Transportation improvements should maintain vehicular capacity on Market Street; minimize traffic delays; enhance connectivity between the Market and Norkirk Neighborhoods; and discourage motor vehicle shortcuts through the neighborhoods.

Policy MS-19:

Incorporate measures that will allow for safe access to Market Street during heavy traffic periods without disrupting the general flow of traffic and the multimodal function of the corridor.

Initial research indicates that issues such as pedestrian safety, sight distance problems, short acceleration lanes, speeding, lack of gaps for entry traffic, and transition to a 25- mph zone near the downtown all contribute to general traffic flow problems, particularly during peak hours. Possible solutions include simplifying intersections; creating gaps in the traffic flow; and calming or slowing traffic on Market Street and adding a northbound transit-only lane between 18th Avenue and Forbes Creek Drive. Ongoing observation and study will be necessary to ensure that Market Street will continue to function as a principal arterial while providing efficient access to adjacent neighborhoods.



Pedestrian amenities

Policy MS-20:

Encourage the use of ~~nonmotorized~~active transportation modes by providing facilities for pedestrians, wheelchairs and bicyclists throughout the corridor.

Pedestrian improvements, including pedestrian crossings between the Market and Norkirk Neighborhoods, should be installed at appropriate locations to improve pedestrian safety and enhance the pedestrian environment. The installation of these improvements should be funded by the City and, when appropriate, also required as new development occurs.

Policy MS-21:

Work with transit agencies to enhance transit service connecting the Market Street Corridor and the Market and Norkirk Neighborhoods to other areas of the City and region.

Transit service is an important element of the City's transportation system. Metro Transit serves the Market and Norkirk Neighborhoods with routes along Market Street that provide service to the Kirkland Transit Center, Downtown Seattle, Totem Lake, Bellevue and other surrounding areas. This corridor is expected to see more frequent transit service depending on King County Metro service changes in the early 2020s intended to provide opportunities to transition automobile traffic to other modes and reduce traffic in the corridor. The Market Street Corridor is one of the main north/south connections through the City and is also a main transit route. The City should work with Metro Transit on facilitating bus access along the corridor in order to encourage transit use and reduce commute time.



Bus shelter on Market Street

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