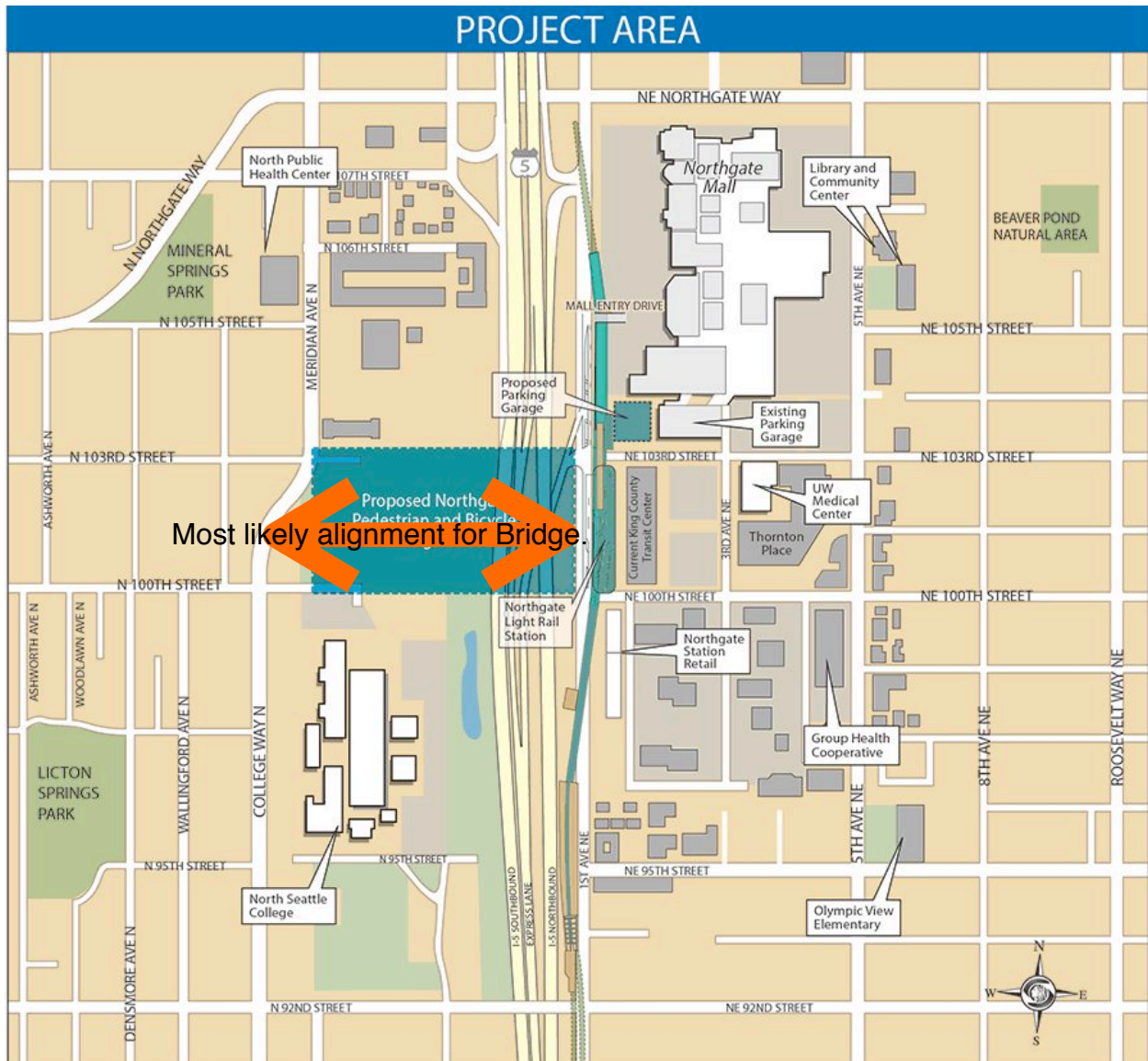


A Bridge to Somewhere

A Triple Bottom Line for "The Next Seattle"

The City of Seattle cannot create more land. But it can, with other institutions, create more building sites to meet its housing needs. It can seek out "discovered spaces" and encourage "found opportunities" such as air rights on the parking lots at North Seattle College.

Here is the overall project area:



graphic placeholder

- North Seattle College has a substantial untapped asset — its surface parking lots.



- Seattle needs more housing.
- Parking lots are not a protected resource.

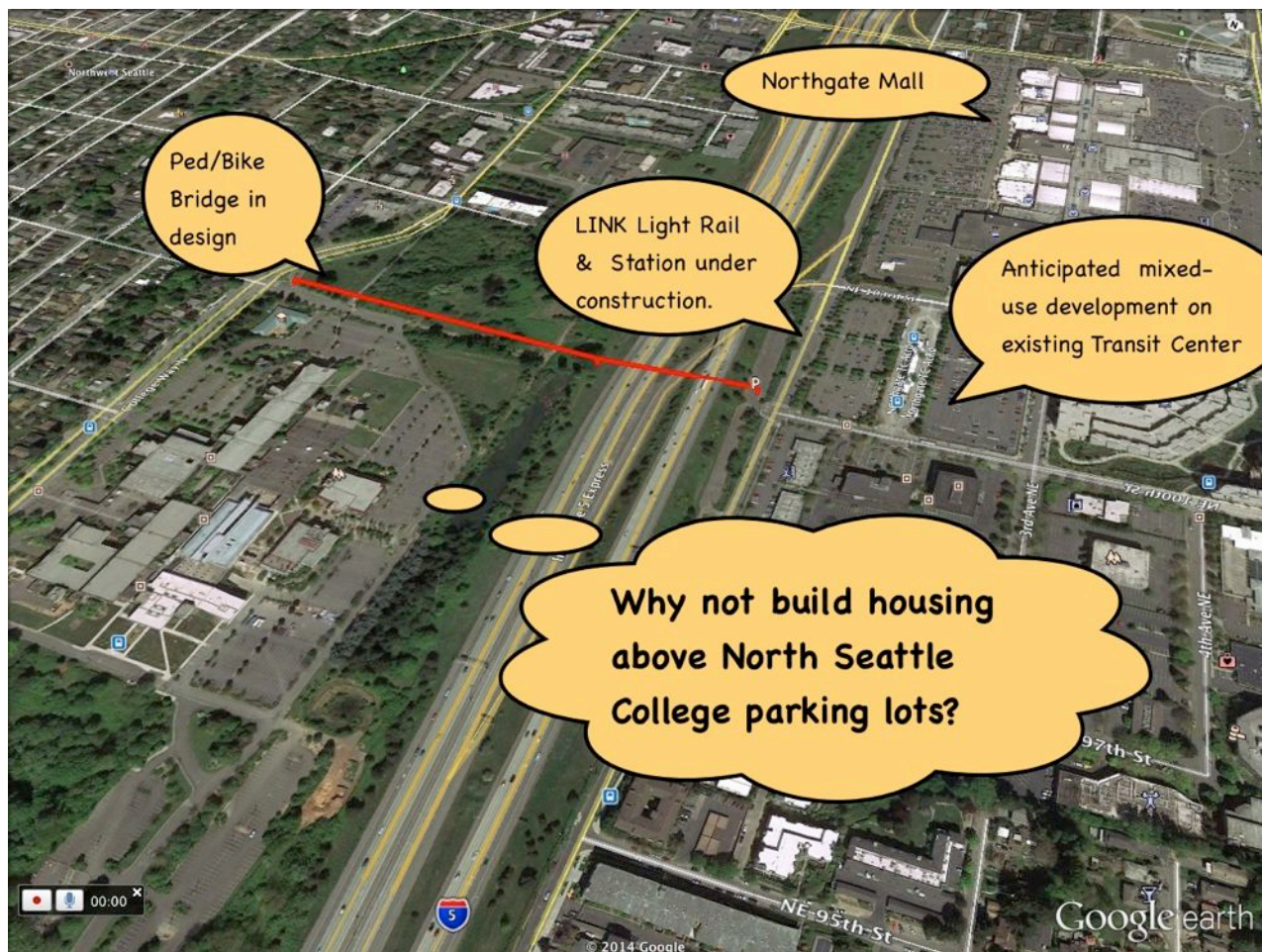
So...

Use the air rights above the lots to build more housing.

- Income from leasing air rights can create long-term financial endowment to benefit its educational mission (within the context of the Triple Bottom Line — Financial, Social, Environmental.)

Existing Condition:

- Northgate Link Rail Line & Station is now under construction.
- Many have long anticipated commercial & residential redevelopment of the KC Transit Station (on the east side of I-5, adjacent to the Bridge/Rail Station)
- King County is starting to think about disposition of Transit Center blocks, consistent with City of Seattle Northgate Urban Design Framework.
<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cityplanning/completeprojectslist/northgate/whatwhy/>
- Seattle DOT is designing a Ped Bike Bridge from the Northgate Link Light Rail Station crossing I-5 to the North Seattle College and Licton Springs neighborhood.
- Now, consider possibility of residential redevelopment on the west side of I-5 i.e. North Seattle College and other properties (including the soon-to-be-surplussed Police North Precinct.)
- Campus could accommodate a minimum of several hundreds of dwelling units (and there are many variables it could be quite a few more.)



Parking Lots on Campus



- Shaded areas shows parking lots.
- Offer wide range of housing for students, seniors, affordable, subsidized, and market rate.
- How many how many dwellings can be built is a function of square feet? at what appropriate scale?

Some Issues & Opportunities for Discussion

Environmental

- Protection of green space: All discussion of "Bridge to Somewhere" concept should explicitly state *No development on ANY open space and ecological preserve on North Seattle College Campus.*
- Minimal impact: ALL development will be over existing paved parking lots, presume minimal environmental impact.
- Topography: Site slopes down from N 92nd Street and College Way and mass of existing NSC megastructure will largely block visibility of new construction
- Traffic: Trip generation should presumably be less-than-typical due to access to Light Rail
- Parking: Impact may be mitigated by share in day/night split of NSC/ housing uses. Per 2007 Master Plan NSC is already "over-parked" by 600 spaces (out of 1600)

Neighborhood

- Expectation: Will neighborhood express typical fear of change?
- Building housing for general population on a college campus will be novel and there will be pushback.
- Assume maximum scale similar to multifamily housing and other development in immediate area to north of campus
- Existing topography allows construction above parking lot without eliminating parking spaces
- North Seattle College will have to go through City of Seattle process to amend the current Master Plan for the College so plenty of time for discussion.

NSC as an Institution

- Campus integrity: Development sites will never be sold but only via long-term lease? (I hope and presume so.)
- Future expansion: NSC administration has concerns about limiting ability to build new College facilities. Can existing structure (footings, foundations, walls) support additional stories above existing campus buildings?
- Campus Megastructure: College's own Master Plan characterizes Campus as dated and needs significant redesign. Page 3 of North Seattle

College Master Plan <http://goo.gl/A0EYxS> So should Master Plan amendments to allow housing include revisions to existing buildings & megastructure? Or is that a different issue? There may in fact be overlap. Perhaps there is potential for Campus-wide “district heating” to lower long-term occupancy costs for housing?

- Legal: What legal authority required to implement? Community College Board? State Legislature? (Beyond City approval of Master Plan.)

Financing

- Value: How much is the “ground” (or air rights, mostly) worth on long term lease basis? What could income be?
- Financing: Long-term leases offer challenge to developers obtaining financing since lenders usually require subordination. Redevelopment will require lease language to allow developer to obtain construction and long-term financing while protecting State of Washington.
- Build-out: How many years for build-out? Financial security and learning curve may argue for slow but steady. For example, if LINK really works then parking, traffic impact may be less than usually calculated, which could favorably change parking/unit ratios allowing more housing.

Livability

- Vision: What is vision for campus? What could it feel like with a mixture of students and just plain folks? A neighborhood? A “*learning-oriented urban village*” for not just formal students but for anyone who will be attracted to a place to grow personally.
- Physical scale: What is proper “scale”? Size of buildings? How many? Should be tight, “villagey”. Suggest starting Master Plan process with circulation rather than buildings. Street and sidewalk determine the feel of a place.
- Housing type mix: Criteria for determining mix of housing markets i.e. senior, market rate, affordable etc? What makes most successful neighborhood? how to divide the maximum development. NSC will (presumably) desire maximum market-rate housing for maximum future income. Obviously there will be countervailing pressures.

One other thought

- Bigger picture: Government owns many parking lots throughout Seattle. There should be systematic inventory of government property within the

Seattle metro area to determine which lots might be jointly used (as for example for housing as well as essential parking.) Consider the UW parking lots (north of Husky Stadium.) They would be a terrific amenity-rich location for housing, and again, in proximity to LINK, the Hospitals. The concept is bigger than NSC and can be used at many already-owned government properties inside the Urban Growth Boundary.