

ULI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL REPORT

# CITY OF MAPLE VALLEY LEGACY SITE

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## ABOUT ULI NORTHWEST

ULI Northwest is a district council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI), a non-profit education and research organization supported by its members. Founded in 1936, the Institute today has more than 44,000 members worldwide representing the full spectrum of land use planning and real estate development disciplines working in the private, public, and non-profit sectors.

ULI's mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI Northwest carries out the ULI mission locally by serving as the preeminent real estate forum in the Pacific Northwest, facilitating the open exchange of ideas, information, and experiences among local, national, and international industry leaders and policy makers.

Our mission is to:

- Build a regional vision of the Northwest that embraces and acts upon quality growth principles.
- Encourage the collaboration among all domains—public and private—of the real estate industry.
- Build consensus among industry and public leaders who influence land use, transportation, environmental, and economic development policies.

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## CITY OF MAPLE VALLEY

The 20-year-old City of Maple Valley has gained a reputation as one of the best family-oriented towns in the country. With an estimated population of 25,686, it is situated within a large network of communities south of Seattle and distinguished by its native trees and naturalistic Northwest aesthetic. Major amenities include Lake Wilderness and the Cedar to Green River Trail.

## ABOUT THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL (TAP) PROGRAM

The objective of ULI Northwest's Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Program is to provide expert, multidisciplinary, and non-partisan advice on land use and real estate issues facing public agencies and non-profit organizations in the Pacific Northwest. Drawing from its extensive membership base, ULI Northwest conducts two day panels offering objective and pragmatic advice to local decision makers on a variety of land use and real estate issues, ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The TAP Program is intentionally flexible to provide a customized approach to specific land use and real estate issues. Learn more at: <https://northwest.uli.org>.

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City of Maple Valley TAP  
Panelists and ULI Staff  
touring the Legacy Site



# Panel and Project Staff

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# Acknowledgments

ULI Northwest is grateful to the City of Maple Valley for its commitment to make this TAP a productive and successful experience. ULI is especially thankful to Laura Philpot, City Manager, for sharing her knowledge, dedicated staff time, and resources to make this TAP a success. Matt Torpey was generous with his time and provided his knowledge about the past and future of Maple Valley. ULI Northwest is also grateful to Dorothy Stickney, who managed the overall program logistics and coordinated the City Council members and local stakeholders and to provide valuable input for this report.

# Executive Summary

The City of Maple Valley is a desirable family-oriented community that enjoys rich scenic resources. Abundant opportunities for recreation, education and shopping lie within its boundaries, and other attractions lie just outside its limits.

**“ The city should think long-term.  
Legacy—that’s the name of the site. ”**

The forested 54-acre Legacy Site is owned by the City and situated near the heart of the community. It presents a significant, once-in-a-lifetime chance for Maple Valley to realize important community goals while ensuring that the City’s unique character will be preserved for future generations.

The overarching goal of the City of Maple Valley is to identify and refine the most promising Legacy Site plan for the future of Maple Valley and its residents, and to realize that plan in a timely, cost effective way.

The City can leverage the value of the Legacy Site by selecting and partnering with a master developer. Achieving City of Maple Valley goals begins with setting priorities, including explicit conservation values as well as selecting and prioritizing facilities to be accommodated on the site.



Legacy Site boundaries



Property of Maple Valley Historical Society

Historic photograph of Gaffney's Grove Lodge, which opened in 1939

“ Redevelop Lake Wilderness Lodge—with lodging. ”

Innovative and environmentally sensitive residential development, supported with carefully crafted use, development and design standards, can be a key element to making the economics of the partnership work. Revenues from residential uses can fund overall site infrastructure and help fund community facilities either on the site or elsewhere in the City. Site-sensitive urban design is a key to achieving desired civic facilities and amenities.

“ It has this ribbon through it to dangle jewels on. ”

Key points to keep in mind about uses for the site include:

**String of pearls.** The heritage of the City of Maple Valley includes a unique mix of scenery, low-density development, and civic amenity that is epitomized in the beauty of Lake Wilderness and the celebrated design of the popular 2001 Maple Valley Library. Its rich network of multi-modal trails and parkland connects it with mountain views and with the rest of the region. The following join like a “string of pearls” to be treasured and nurtured for current and future generations:

- Lake Wilderness and Lake Wilderness Lodge
- Multimodal trails
- Library
- Golf course
- Schools

**Site assets.** The Legacy Site combines sheer size, at 54 acres, with a location between a large arterial and a major interurban trail. It is proximate to the center of Maple Valley and shopping as well as civic and recreational opportunities. Covered with second growth forest, it is rich in natural beauty. The location and demographics of Maple Valley position the City to attract a master developer willing and eager to work with the city to achieve explicit City goals and respect the environmental character of the site.

**Better elsewhere.** There are certain uses that can be ruled out of Legacy Site development because they are better located elsewhere within or outside the City. These include:

- *Hospitality.* Hospitality companies will have issues with access, visibility and other critical concerns with the site. Strategic redevelopment/repurposing of Lake Wilderness Lodge is a better option for adding hospitality capacity and amenities to Maple Valley.
- *Major retail.* Density, visibility and 18-hour activity are all important to major retailers. Other centers of retail space nearby will compete in this market, and large-scale retail uses are incompatible with maintaining the environmental character of the Legacy Site.



Present-day Lake Wilderness Lodge, which serves as a local service center and event facility

**Preferred uses.** Along with sensitive site design and implementation, selected uses can bring value to the entire city, create a neighborhood that can serve as a community center as well as benefit neighboring landowners. These include:

- *Residential.* A neighborhood can be integrated with the existing forest and connected through a trail system. Carefully designed residential uses can generate proceeds for the city that can pay for key civic uses and public amenities as they are phased in over time.

**“ What we are not talking about is a subdivision. ”**

- *Civic.* Civic and community uses could anchor the site plan, complementing residential development. A city hall plus open space, combined with flexible, small-scale commercial or office space and with community amenities like a public or farmer’s market, could be part of the mix.
- *Local retail.* Fine-grained café, bar and village-style retail space with curated tenants will complement other uses on the site and will not compete with large retail franchises in the area.
- *Transit.* A transit center combined with parking could be located on the periphery or adjacent to the Legacy Site to ensure that people are able to access the site well into the future by means other than a personal vehicle.

Doing nothing is not a viable option. A forest such as the one that covers the Legacy Site must be managed and maintained or it will degrade and deteriorate, becoming less of an opportunity and more of a liability for the City and the neighborhoods surrounding the site. An upcoming inventory of trees on the site through the University of Washington School of Forest Resources is an important first step in long-term management, and a starting place for leveraging the unique natural features of the Legacy Site.

While it is important to take steps soon, the development of the Legacy Site will take time to realize, and must be planned in phases.





Maple Valley Public Library, built in 2001

In the same year the library was built, the City of Maple Valley purchased 54 acres of land located in the heart of the city from a long-time owner. This land has become known as the Legacy Site. The forested site has lain dormant and minimally maintained, awaiting focused investment.

In 2005, a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) produced a recommendation to the then City Council for the development of the Legacy Site as a “community living room” with a variety of civic, cultural and recreational uses built around a city hall project. However, the City was unable to move forward with planning at the time, and the business cycle turned downward within two years of the recommendations, discouraging further planning or development.

In the meantime, Maple Valley is growing. As of the 2010 Census, there were 22,684 people, 7,679 households, and 6,159 families residing in the city. The City is expecting 3,000 new residents in the near future, with a corresponding need for about 1,000 new housing units.

Recent development in and around the City includes a rapid buildup of big-box retail, restaurants and gas stations in the Four Corners area near the north boundary. To the south, in neighboring Black Diamond, rapid mixed-use development is now adding rental residential capacity to the area.

The Legacy Site acreage stretches between Washington State Route 169, and the Green to Cedar River Trail along the west. The highway connects the Legacy Site with the entire region, and the trail links pedestrians with the scenic Lake Wilderness and Lake Wilderness Lodge.

# Recommendations



TAP Chair, Pike Oliver, reviews recommendations with panelists

Ten years after the CAC made recommendations on the Legacy Site, this City-owned land still represents significant potential for the City of Maple Valley to determine its course of development and to build upon its many assets.

The City is correct to regard decisions about the future of the Legacy Site to be of critical importance, not just for neighboring owners, but for all the residents of Maple Valley. Optimal development must be forward-thinking and also based on the history and “soul” of Maple Valley. Preservation and conservation of natural assets is an important key, as well as connecting the land asset to a regional trail system.

The future begins with a creative and practical vision for asset optimization and development. It must take into account the characteristics of the Legacy Site and its regional context, including nearby community assets and existing development. Such a vision will become the basis for widespread and enduring benefit to the City and the community.

**“ We are not looking at business as usual. ”**

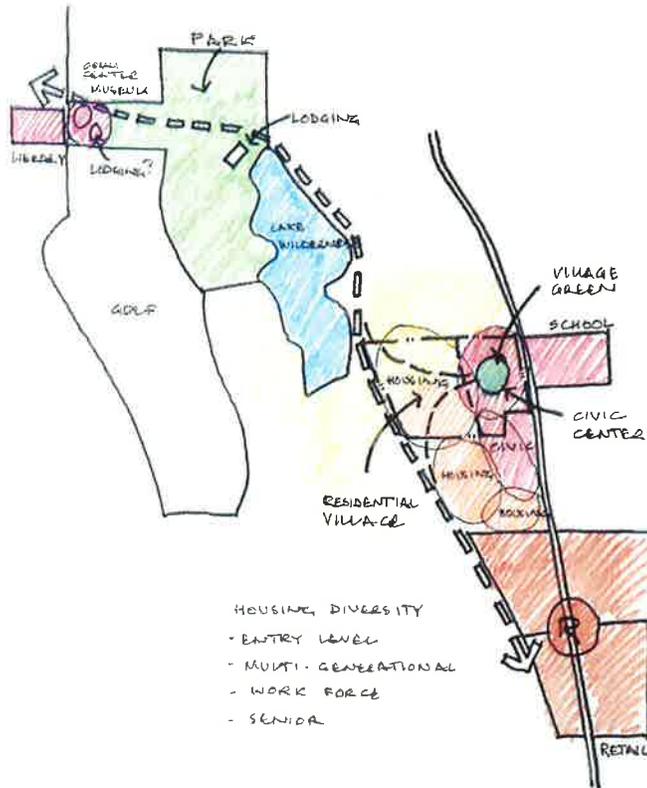
The City’s interests would be best served by engaging in a public-private partnership for development, one combining forest conservation, selected public amenities, and 24-hour uses including a low-density residential area. Site planning and ultimate uses will be based on a combination of City priorities and a master plan produced by the master developer and approved by the City.

In addition to the overall vision, there are two important drivers in successful development of the Legacy Site—site design and an encompassing process and work plan that includes selection of a private master-planning partner and the forging of agreements with that partner.

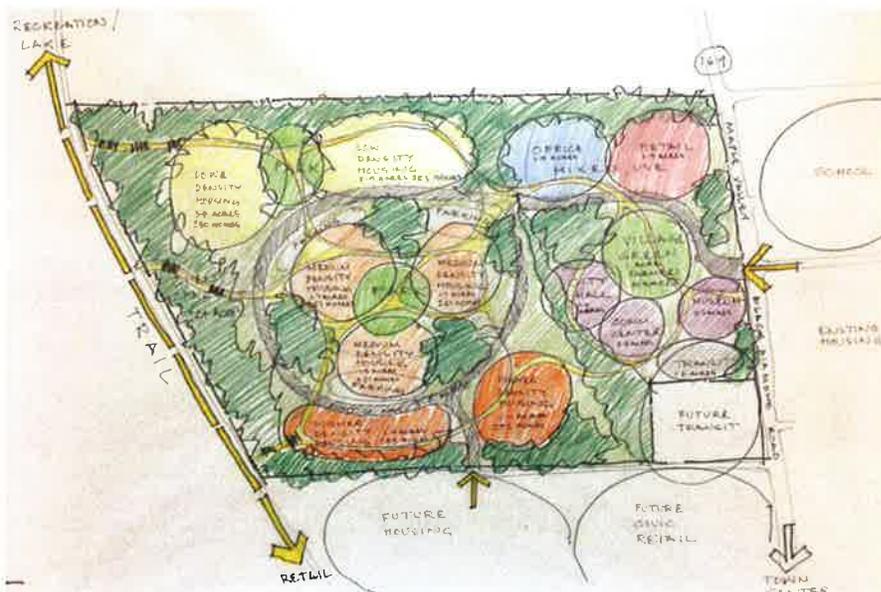
## Site Design

Fine-grained site features will help determine the best future for the 54-acre Legacy Site, and the City would do well to invest in more research around

these. Criteria for site design can emerge from this investigation, and these criteria will guide later phases of development, ensuring that the Legacy Site is always an asset for the City of Maple Valley and its residents, including adjacent property owners.



Legacy Site plan, showing the connection to Lake Wilderness Lodge



Comprehensive Legacy Site plan, designed by panelists Dave Cutler and Jonathan Davis

Civic and commercial uses are best located on the east third of the site, near SR169. A network of clustered, pedestrian-oriented residential units, integrated with the forested environment, similar to innovative projects on Bainbridge Island and elsewhere, should be considered for the western two thirds. The combination of features and uses surrounding the Legacy Site lend



Grow Community on Bainbridge Island, WA

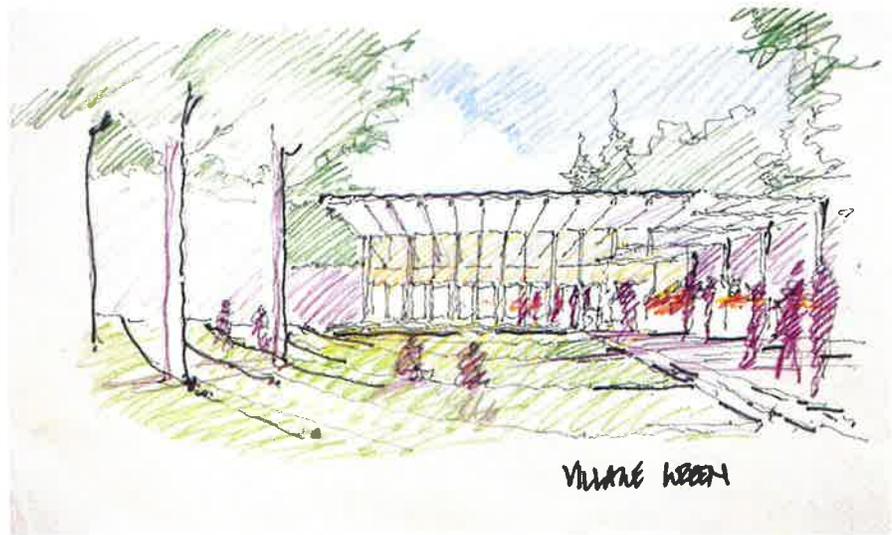
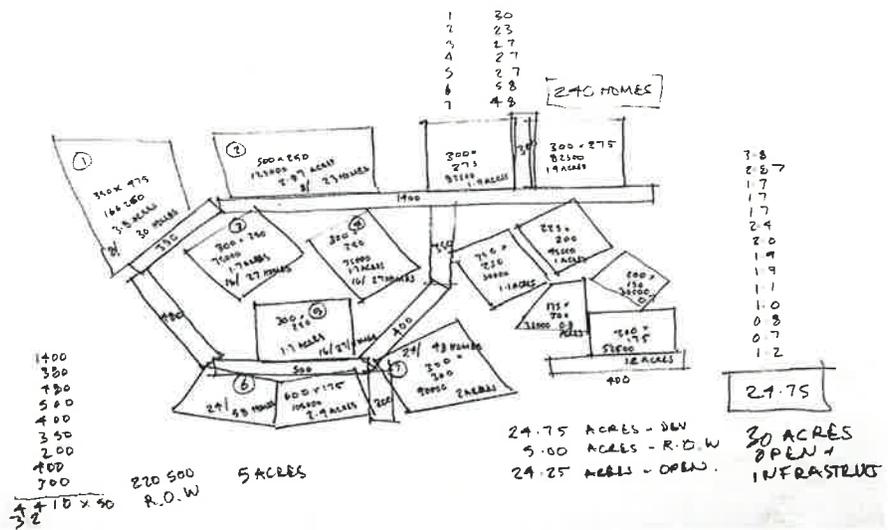
“Housing should be soulful, unique, authentic.”

Estimated count of residential units in Legacy Site master plan

Panelist Dave Cutler's sketch of a "Village Green" that serves as a community gathering place

themselves to more dense residential development on the south side, with a north side that is largely preserved as forested open space. The site appears to accommodate up to 24 acres of forest buffer, for a width of about 200 feet, along the trail on the westernmost edge, with internal walking trails that access the Green to Cedar River Trail.

This would likely leave 10 acres to 16 acres available for development of a residential community as an enclave or hamlet with a forested perimeter. At an overall average residential density of 10 units per acre, the developer might realize up to 160 units on the site. A mix of attached housing and small multi-family structures, along with smaller single-family houses, could generate revenue to support the infrastructure needed for sites to accommodate community and civic uses.



Via a public-private partnership, a private master developer would produce the final plan for the site in accordance with City goals, and subject to City requirements spelled out in the partnership agreement. Covenants and restrictions that are commensurate with conservation development and City goals should apply to residential sales and development, and to all developers and builders under the master plan

Legacy Site design hinges upon:

**The health of the forest and the location of important trees.** An upcoming inventory of trees on the site through the University of Washington School of Forest Resources is the first step in long-term management of the urban forest and a starting place for leveraging the unique natural features of the Legacy Site.

**Grade constraints and topography.** There is a small ridge running roughly northward from the southern boundary of the site on the eastern side. With sensitive development, it could present an opportunity for a lively civic landscape and good views in the future.

**Legal constraints including GSI and LID requirements.** The site presents rich potential for incorporating green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) into a conservation development, depending on legal and civic support. There could be an important role for a local improvement district (LID) in maintaining an urban forest with a green buffer, geared toward adjacent landowners.

**Market factors.** Based on surrounding uses and optimal combinations of uses on the Legacy Site, the market is unlikely to support certain uses that would otherwise yield tax revenues and support bonding capacity for the City, such as hotel/hospitality, retail or restaurant.

In addition to a functional city hall, desirable civic uses for the site might include some combination of farmers market, town green, history museum, police station or transit center. Depending on feasibility within the partnership model, housing types might include multi-generational housing, senior living or entry-level housing.

### Implementation and Partnerships

As it positions itself to seek a private master developer and master-planning partner, the City can make key decisions that guide the process of development. These will involve regulatory criteria and scheduling goals, backed in part by market studies.

City priorities will guide land uses permitted, and set up general provisions for tree preservation, parking, and density limits. These provisions can balance preservation with the priorities of civic campus design, without setting up parking requirements.

### Examples of existing village greens and their connection to people and place

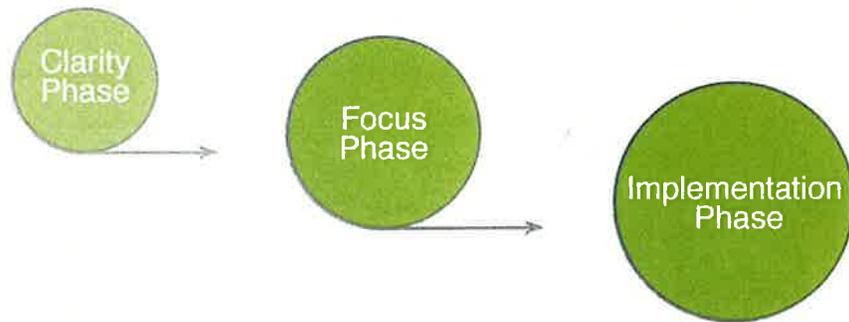


South Coast Botanic Garden Amphitheater in Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA



Sleeping Lady Resort in Leavenworth, WA

## Process and Work Program

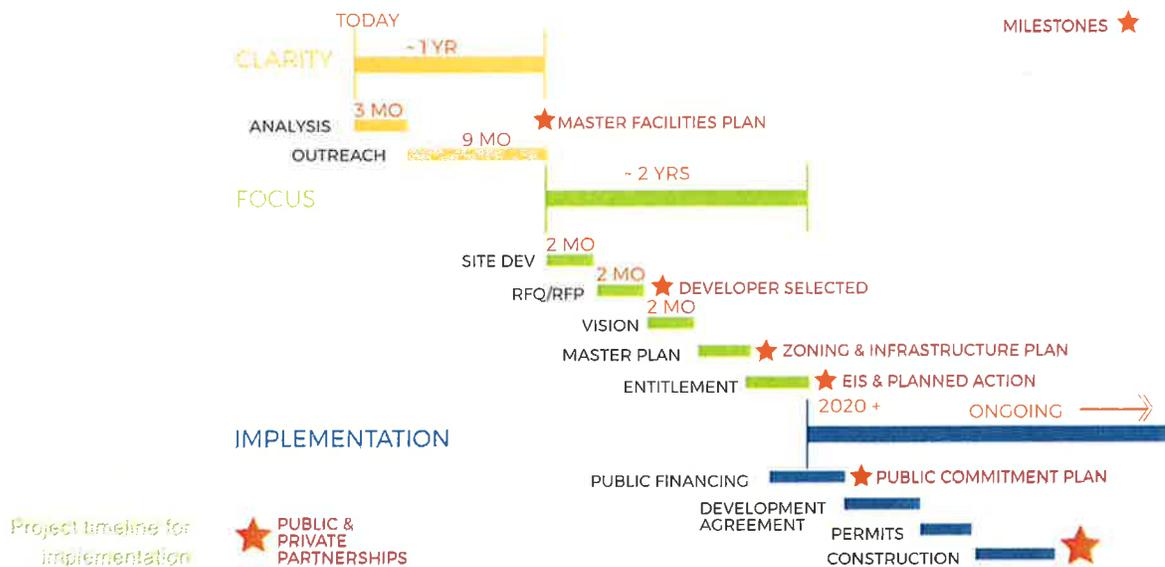


Density goals or ranges can be set out. Density goals and limits might be linked to a combination of floor area ratios (FAR) and heights, with adjacent tree heights taken into account.

The process and work program for developing the Legacy Site can be built around three phases: **Clarity, Focus, and Implementation.**

“ Even after development, you are going to have to manage the forest. ”

## LEGACY SITE TIMELINE



**Clarity.** This first phase is based on analysis and public outreach. Around a year should be allowed for this phase, beginning with analysis and ending with about nine months of outreach. The following steps will prepare the city to make decisions, along with a selected master developer, about which civic uses to include in the development of the Legacy Site:

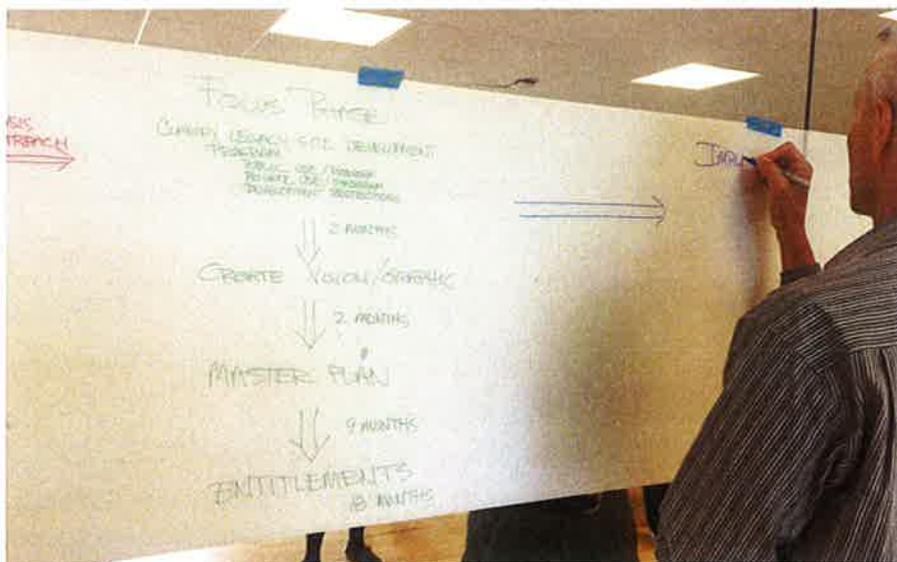
- Develop facilities program (with financial analysis)
- Inventory all city assets (with financial analysis)
- Develop program elements for city facilities
- Develop master facility plan, with preliminary costs and desired locations
- Conduct public outreach, with clarity and transparency about a financing plan\*

*\*Fee simple sales, at a price to be set with development partner, will generate revenue that will pay for infrastructure. This concession to the master developer should be made clear to community stakeholders, perhaps with an overlay diagram that matches a list of civic desires to cost and revenue from sale of lots.*

“ No mass clear and grade. ”

**Focus.** This second phase, which involves the selection of a private partner plus entitlements, might take two years. Important steps with likely time frames follow:

- Program the Legacy Site for a combination of public and private uses. Write development restrictions.
- Issue developer partnership request for qualifications or request for proposal (RFQ/RFP), and choose partner based on ability to create a shared vision. Selection could be tied to a “breakup fee” that would



Panelists work together to create a comprehensive project timeline

partially cover master developer costs should an agreement prove unreachable. This should take about two months.

- Develop a master plan, with private partner. The master plan should include urban design, specific uses, transportation, and environmental factors. Approximately nine months should be allowed for this.
- Grant entitlements. If the previous steps have been completed, this phase should be relatively straightforward, however it will take approximately 18 months. It will include an environmental impact statement and planned action statement, as well as the composition of final zoning restrictions.

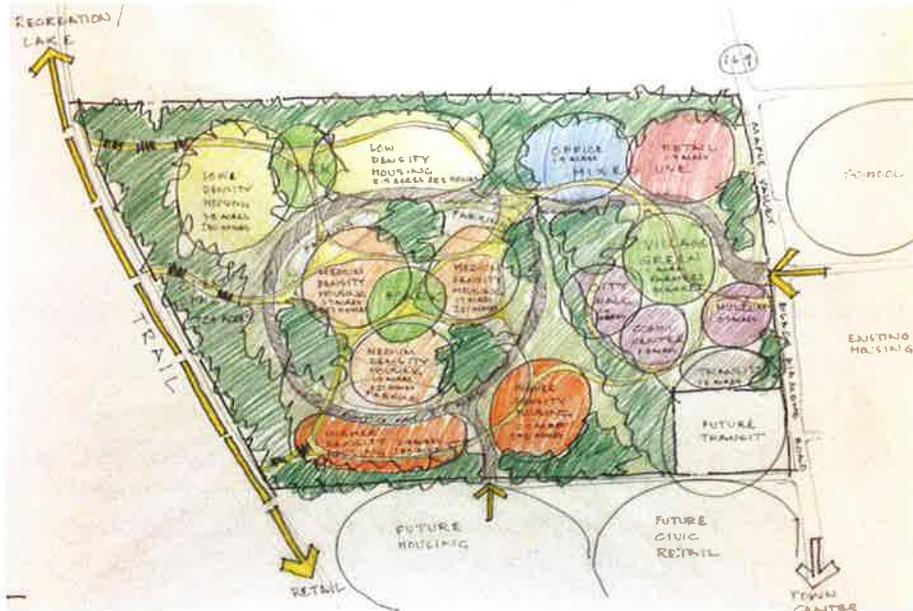
**Implementation.** Finally, the implementation phase of the Legacy Site will be stretched over several years. It will involve:

- Negotiation with development partner over public financial restrictions and public infrastructure, plus forging development agreements on these.
- Possible temporary land uses on certain locations that are designated for a later phase of development. Surface parking, for instance, might be allowed on the footprint of a parking structure that is planned as part of a transit center.
- Land transactions, including the final sales and leasing agreements between City and partner.
- Permits for construction.

# Conclusion

There will be reason to celebrate during the implementation phase of the Legacy Site development process, because the City has made a major untapped asset into a valued legacy and a place like no other. Great design can yield a mix of public and private uses that extend Maple Valley's claims as a model city to many generations of residents.

“ This is that home place. ”



# Panelists



Pike Oliver  
TAP Chair

Owner, Urbanexus

H. Pike Oliver is the sole proprietor of URBANEXUS through which he works on managing land and creating built environments. He also is a member of Acadence, LLC, a developer of cottage style single-story rental housing, and a part-time lecturer at the Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies at the University of Washington. Early in his career, Pike worked for public agencies, including the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research as a principal contributor to An Urban Strategy for California. For the next three decades, he worked on master-planned communities at the Irvine Ranch and other properties in western North America and abroad. He also led the real estate graduate program at Cornell University. Pike is a graduate of the urban studies and planning program at San Francisco State University and holds a master's degree in urban planning from UCLA.



Dave Cutler

Partner, Northwest Studio

Dave Cutler is Founder and Partner at Northwest Studio, a Seattle-based practice of architects and urban designers focused on the fundamentals in design that shape quality in urban space. The studio's work is guided by a deep appreciation for social and environmental justice, interdisciplinary collaboration, clear strategic thinking, and beauty. Projects range from research, programming, and strategic planning to architecture, public space design, and neighborhood-scale redevelopment. Dave is a former Chair of the Seattle Planning Commission, former Co-Chair of the Seattle Light Rail Review Panel, and a founding board member of the Seattle 2030 District.



### Jonathan Davis

Owner, Davis Studio Architecture + Design LLC and pieceHomes™

Jonathan Davis is the owner of Davis Studio Architecture + Design. He was the architect of the Grow Community on Bainbridge Island in the urban core of Winslow. This community, located on eight acres, includes 50 single family homes, 81 rental units, a central community building, as well as some commercial spaces. This net-zero community is the first One Planet endorsed residential community to be built in North America. Davis Studio Architecture + Design was awarded the Environmental Innovator Award for 2013 by the Association of Washington Business.



### Jacqueline Gruber, AICP

Policy & Planning Analyst, Downtown Seattle Association

As the Policy & Planning Analyst at the Downtown Seattle Association, Jacqueline Gruber works to enhance the public realm and make downtown Seattle an enjoyable place for all. Before joining the DSA, Jacqueline worked in the private and public sectors to support comprehensive community development through master planning, land use planning, site development, adaptive reuse, and brownfield remediation with emphasis on projects that require building consensus and unlikely coalitions, communicating complex information, demonstrating leading ideas, and shaping policy.



### Scott Hale

Chief Experience Officer, Brand New Stay® and LEANTO®

Scott Hale is the founder and Chief Experience Officer of Brand New Stay and LEANTO. Brand New Stay repositioned the iconic San Juan Island development located at 123 West Street in the heart of Friday Harbor to be one of Washington's top hotels. LEANTO offers authentic, effortless, and inspiring luxury camping experiences. Prior to Brand New Stay and LEANTO, Scott was the Director of Inns and Resorts for Columbia Hospitality. Scott oversaw operations at several venues on San Juan Island following successful tenures in Long Key, Florida, and Kissimmee, Florida.



## Whit Hammond

Financial Analyst / Project Manager, Oakpointe

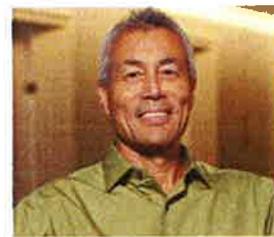
Whit joined the Oakpointe team in 2012. He supports the organization's needs from feasibility through disposition and interfaces with management, capital partners, project managers, and internal staff regularly to ensure projects are optimized for all involved. Whit draws from a variety of construction related experience including building envelope consulting, property management, and light construction and combines that with startup culture and energy gleaned during his time with several early stage companies. Whit holds an MBA with real estate and entrepreneurship focuses from the University of Colorado as well as an economics degree from the University of Washington where in addition to his academic accomplishments he was a successful oarsman. Outside his professional life, Whit contributes time and resources to the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, which supports mountain biking in Washington State. Whit lives with his wife and kids in Kirkland and when not out on the trails enjoys skiing, travel, good food, and time with family.



## Dave MacDuff

Vice President – Development, Intracorp

Dave has 29 years of experience in all aspects of land development, including acquisition, land planning/entitlements, development, marketing/sales, management, and operations. For the past 17 years, his focus has been on the planning and development of master planned communities, corporate operations, capital markets, and land acquisition. In his current role, Dave is responsible for the feasibility, entitlement, and permitting activities of the company's townhome group.



## Harold Moniz

Senior Associate, Collins Woerman

Harold has 27 years of experience directing planning, revitalization and economic development efforts for municipalities and enterprises in the Pacific Northwest region. He was the Planning Director for the resort city of Ketchum, Idaho for over five years where he led the City in rethinking their downtown. The downtown master plan led to the adoption of the first form-based code in the State of Idaho and creation of the town square plaza and pedestrian priority street. Harold has specialty knowledge with government procedures, operations and considerations and has expertise with developing, refining and implementing regulatory codes. He has managed transportation, parking, and transit-oriented master plans, and has worked on land acquisitions, development entitlements, public/private partnerships, affordable housing, form-based codes, transfer of development rights, and other planning issues in his career.



## Morgan Shook, AICP

Project Director, ECONorthwest

Morgan Shook is a senior economic analyst working in real estate, land use, and transportation, economics, tax policy, and finance. He has deep expertise in economic, market, and financial analytics that he brought to bear in business, enterprise, and policy settings. Morgan has worked for a range of government, business, and non-profit clients to advance their missions in a diverse set of areas and topics. Morgan received his M.A. in Urban and Regional Planning from Portland State University's School of Urban Studies and Planning. Morgan graduated from the University of Puget Sound with a B.S. in Molecular Biology. He also has a Certificate in Commercial Real Estate Development from the University of Washington. Before joining ECONorthwest, Morgan worked in biotechnology development at the Institute for Systems Biology, and health disparities research at the University of Chicago.



## Janet Shull, AICP CUD

Strategic Advisor, City of Seattle, Office of Planning and Community Development

As a Strategic Advisor, Janet Shull manages urban design and land use policy projects in the Office of Planning and Community Development for the City of Seattle. Janet has more than twenty-five years of demonstrated history working in both public and private sectors. She is skilled in urban design, sustainable development, community planning, and economic development. She is a successful multi-disciplinary project manager and team leader.



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