Council Meeting Date: June 11, 2007 **Agenda Item:** 9(a)

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE:	UW Ridgecrest Project – Delivery to City Council of the UW Final Report and Discussion of Potential Next Steps
DEPARTMENT:	Economic Development and PADS
PRESENTED BY:	Tom Boydell, Economic Development Manager, CMO Joe Tovar, FAICP, PADS Director Professor Luanne Smith, University of Washington Department of Landscape Architecture and Center for Livable Communities

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

Since May 2006, the City of Shoreline has been working on studying ways to improve the vitality of the Ridgecrest neighborhood commercial center at 165th and 5th Avenue NE. In the first academic quarter of 2007 (January to March), the University of Washington College of Department of Landscape Architecture and Center for Livable Communities conducted a Charrette with the Ridgecrest community. This included a series of three public meetings sponsored by the City, which were attended in total by more than 200 citizens, including City leaders and most of the property and business owners in the target area. Staff and Professor Luanne Smith of the University of Washington will present the published Final Report to City Council, provide an overview of the study findings and visionary ideas, and then discuss potential next steps.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED:

The UW students examined numerous alternatives and consolidated their findings into four alternative scenarios that correspond to four different levels of zoning. Specific designs from property owners are likely to incorporate some or many of these ideas in mixed-use building and at a medium-level of residential density. Many ideas for public spaces and environmental features were incorporated into each alternative.

The principal next steps are as follows:

Zoning Changes

The Ridgecrest commercial area is currently zoned Neighborhood Business (NB), but it is designated in the Comprehensive Plan as a Community Business (CB) District. A CB district allows most commercial zoning designations, ranging from Neighborhood Business to Regional Business. Staff believes that NB zoning does not provide enough flexibility to encourage quality redevelopment of the existing sites, especially as mixed use buildings incorporating underground parking and ample public spaces that serve the local community, as desired by many residents.

In order to ensure that a mixed use development is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and potentially offer added amenities, staff recommends the development of a form-based code. This code would focus on height, design, and compatibility issues, and would be written in a way that would create incentives for preferred use mixes and fit within the long-term vision for this area of a Community Business district. The form-based code would be distinct from that of the one written for the South Aurora Triangle; it would be one that is tailored to the scale and character of this neighborhood retail area.

Incentives

Property tax exemption for the residential portion of any development would be the best and most appropriate incentive that the City could offer. Staff will prepare a proposal for revisions to the current Property Tax Exemption (PTE) program for North City for discussion by Council at a future meeting. In those revisions, staff will propose that Ridgecrest will be added as a second target area.

Improvements in the Public Right-of-Way

Staff will explore grants and other ways to accomplish improvements to the streets, sidewalks, intersection, or other portions of land in the public right-of-way. These types of improvements can be important to establishing neighborhood identity, creating new public spaces and amenities, improving pedestrian safety and mobility, and promoting practices in environmental sustainability.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Zoning and incentives require no budget impacts. Other public improvements would require a funding source to be identified; staff has begun to search for transportation and environmental grants for this purpose.

RECOMMENDATION:

No action is required at this time. Staff will continue to examine if zoning revisions and a form-based code for the Ridgecrest Neighborhood Commercial Center is appropriate. Staff will also formulate a proposal for the identification of Ridgecrest Neighborhood Commercial Center as a new target area under the Property Tax Exemption program. These will both be scheduled for Council action at a future meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

A. UW Final Report

B. Planning Commission memo of April 24, 2007- A summary of the study, actions taken to date, and the potential "next steps" were summarized in a memo to the Planning Commission for their meeting on May 3.

Approved By: City Manager ____ City Attorney ___

ATTACHMENT A

Memorandum

DATE: **April 24, 2007**

TO: **Shoreline Planning Commission**

FROM: **Tom Boydell, EDP Manager**

CC: **Joe Tovar, Planning and Development Services Director**
Steve Cohn, Planning and Development Services Manager
Luanne Smith, University of Washington
Fritz Wagner, University of Washington

RE: **Ridgecrest Project "Next Steps" – Study Session May 3rd**

Luanne Smith of the University of Washington and I will be coming to make a presentation to the Planning Commission on May 3.

Since May 2006, the City has been working on studying ways to improve the vitality of the Ridgecrest neighborhood commercial center at 165th and 5th Avenue NE. In the first academic quarter of 2007 (January to March), the University of Washington College of Architecture conducted a Charrette with the Ridgecrest community. Property and business owners, as well as neighborhood residents and City leaders, participated in most phases of the Charrette process.

Attached is a summary of ideas and progress that has been made so far. The former Cascade Bingo site at the SW corner of 165th and 5th is a key element. Bingo operations closed in April 2006, and the property has been brokered for sale. As a result of the City's actions, the broker and owner decided to participate in the Charrette process before selling the property. It is their hope and our hope that a buyer can be selected who is interested in implementing the community's vision for the property and area.

Key decision points for the City will include:

- Designating this as a target area for the Property Tax Exemption program
- Zoning changes
- Whether to do a capital project (e.g., street and sidewalk improvements)
- Others as identified by the Planning Commission

Ridgecrest Project "Next Steps" Presentation

Presenters: Tom Boydell, Economic Development Manager
Luanne Smith, University of Washington College of Architecture

Purpose: The purpose of this meeting will be to review the Charrette process, discuss the vision for the Ridgecrest area as well as potential "next steps"

Proposed Discussion Agenda

1. Review of Completed Steps – presented by Tom Boydell
2. Summary of Roles and Next Steps – presented by Tom Boydell
3. Summary of Design Concepts and Land Uses – presented by Tom Boydell and Luanne Smith
4. Potential Key Decisions – discussion of Planning Commission

Background Information

Project Steps-to-date

- A Green Building Forum was held on January 18. Then, the UW Student Charrette was completed with two public meetings – January 24 and March 7. About 200 different individuals attended the three meetings. A mid-quarter meeting was also held with students and faculty at the UW in February. Several developers and property owners participated. Planning Commissioner Mike Broili also participated in that event.
- A written report from the UW is due to the City before the end of June. This report will be given to the Planning Commission and City Council. An electronic version will be posted on the City's website. And the 3D models will be housed at Historical Museum beginning April 6.
- CIP proposals were due April 6. The forms were submitted by this deadline, so that we have a placeholder in that budget review process. However, this is a City Council decision that is entirely dependent on the limits of the budget, and no commitments have been made.
- Zoning changes will require six months to complete, if we envision a process similar to that for the South Aurora Triangle.
- Property development discussions are underway.
- The Planning Commission scheduled a May 3rd Study Session for Ridgecrest.

Summary of Potential Roles and Next Steps

1. Economic Development
    i. Potential Incentives/Resources
        1. Local Property Tax Exemption
        2. Federal Investment Tax Credits
        3. Federal or State Environmental Grants
    ii. Discussions with property owners/developers
    iii. Small Business Counseling and Loan Services - to be offered to business owners

2. Planning and Development Services
    i. Zoning changes
    ii. Design guidelines

3. Public Works/Capital Budgeting ***(subject to budget availability)***
    i. Streetscape, plaza/public art, utilities, traffic signal, bike rack, and other?

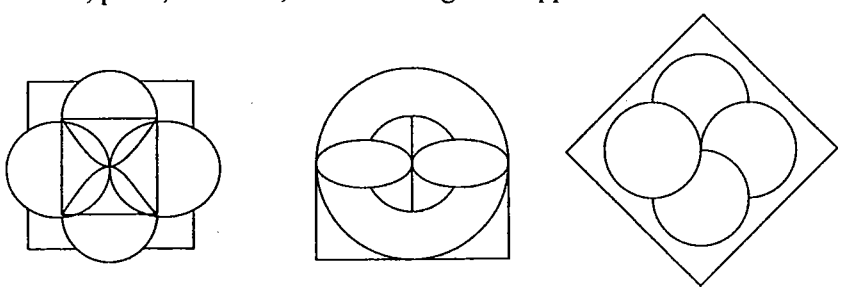
4. Parks & Services, School District, or Non-profit
    i. Enhancements to the entrance of parks and connections
    ii. Creation of a walking path
    iii. Potential future establishment of a p-patch type park
    iv. Theater or Film & Video related program
    v. Connections to existing Library and After-School Programs
    vi. Educate the public about environmental sustainability
    vii. Incorporate Ridgecrest area into the bike trails planning

Student Design Concepts and Land Uses

For one academic quarter, the UW students worked in 4 teams. Each team listened to members of the community and property owners, and then identified some new land use and design concepts for the area. The result was four scenarios – each at different levels of development intensity, ranging from basic infill to high density scenarios. The students also did a great job of exploring the meaning of "sustainability" and identifying creative options for public spaces and intersection enhancements. The following is a summary of some of the common themes in the 4 different scenarios developed by the students:

Conceptual Theme: Sustainability

Symbolic Design Concept (Example): Sacred Geometry – the pattern representing organic wholeness and change is made up of a square and four circles interlocking on a center point. Three simplified pattern examples for an intersection, plaza, sidewalk, or other design use appear below.



Design Principal: Proportion and balance, instead of linear measure

Social Principal: Interconnectedness

Potential Features:

- Natural landscape strips along sidewalks;
- Walking trail that follows the ridge contour;
- Water feature (sculpture) and benches in front of the mural;
- Green open space area and/or plazas;
- Geometric pattern in the sidewalk or plaza;
- Artistic additions to building facades and awnings;
- Hydrologic mechanisms for rain water capture and reuse;
- Information board that teaches principles of sustainability.

Height and Size:

- Development code limitations should be reviewed;
- Reasonable limits on things like height should be considered;
- Underground parking should be encouraged where feasible;
- Bulk should not overwhelm the neighborhood;
- Street trees and canopy soften the façade of buildings;
- Street frontage should be retail space with large windows;
- Outdoor public space elements such as café seating, window seats, and benches should be encouraged

Economic Elements:

- Preserve Existing Connections – movie theater and camera shop, post office, neighborhood service center (connections of the visual arts, writing to the outside world, sharing information in the community)

- Add New Connections – bookstore, art store, organic grocery or food co-op, world food restaurant/deli, places to gather/sit (connections with ideas, creative imagination, nature [via organics], each other)

- Both Condominium and Rental Housing - i.e., include planning for older home-owners who are downsizing but wanting to stay in area

Transit and Parking:

- Balance of commercial and residential parking
    - On the Bingo site, one level of underground parking for residential parking and a portion of the first level for commercial parking.
    - Additional on-street parking by creating some angle parking on 165th.
    - Structured parking would be advised for any development of the NE corner
    - The Crest Theater should be encouraged to lease off-the-street parking space for its patrons

- Move the bus stop that is between 165th and 164th down to 163rd.

- Walk-ability will be emphasized with thought given to the elderly and children.

- Intersection improvements could consist of a traffic-round-about or the addition of a signal