

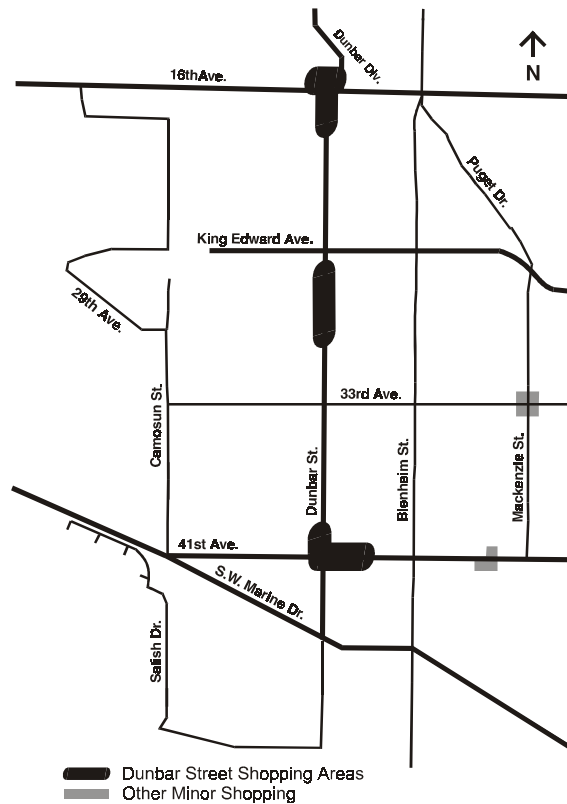


# Shopping Areas

This Vision concentrates on ways to make the three main shopping areas along Dunbar Street more convenient and enjoyable places for community residents to shop and gather, such as, with pedestrian safety improvements, plantings, benches, and a community plaza.

There are also suggestions for improving the design of new developments that are gradually replacing older, often smaller, existing buildings.

Dunbar also has two other small areas with shops: at 33rd and MacKenzie and at 41st and Balaclava. These areas will remain, but they were not singled out for specific attention in this Vision.



## I. Dunbar Street Shopping Areas



Of the three shopping areas along Dunbar Street, the main area is Dunbar Centre, around 28th Avenue. This area has the widest variety of stores, services, and activities, including a library and supermarket. Two smaller shopping areas are at the entrances to Dunbar: Dunbar South at 41st and Dunbar North at 16th. Dunbar South also has a large supermarket.

The zoning regulations for all three shopping areas generally require commercial at street level (shops, services, restaurants) and allow three storeys of residential or two storeys of commercial above. Although strip malls with parking in front still exist, as permitted by older zoning, current zoning does not allow new strip malls. Commercial uses along Dunbar Street are mostly in small storefronts. This is the form of retail that Dunbar residents would like to strengthen.

The Vision directions address a wide range of shopping area elements. The first six directions apply to all three shopping areas and include pedestrian safety and traffic, comfort and appearance, types and design of storefronts, big box stores and internal malls, and parking. The other directions are specific to the three individual shopping areas.

## Approved Vision Directions

### I.1 Pedestrian Safety Improvements and Traffic

It should be easier and safer to cross the street, and traffic should move more slowly through the shopping areas.

Support %: 78/11/11

People's ideas...

- corner bulges; special crosswalk pavement; planted centre medians; more pedestrian crossings; reduced speed limit in commercial areas

### I.2 Pedestrian Comfort and Appearance

Improvements, such as plantings, benches, and public art, should be provided, and they should be designed to create a distinctive Dunbar identity.

Support %: 73/17/10

People's ideas...

- encourage strolling and shopping
- more plantings; shade trees; plantings in corner bulges; improved plantings between sidewalk and parking in strip malls, green links through from lanes behind shopping area
- benches, street furniture, hanging baskets, banners, fountains, paving stones instead of concrete, public art, improved street lighting, bike racks
- distinctive design of improvements, such as light standards, garbage cans, bike racks, banners, benches, bus shelters; murals on walls with Dunbar theme
- fund improvements with development cost levies, Business Improvement Association levy, local area levy

### I.3 Storefronts, Shops, and Services

A variety of small local shops and services should continue to line the sidewalks — instead of developments with parking lots in front or buildings without storefronts. The design should encourage window-shopping and community gathering (e.g., small storefronts; display windows; sidewalk cafes; courtyards). The supermarkets in Dunbar Centre and South should stay.

Support %: 92/6/2

#### More Information

For other information related to the shopping areas, see **Traffic and Transportation** which includes the whole length of Dunbar Street, and **New Housing Types** which includes different types of housing between the shopping areas along Dunbar Street, 16th Avenue, and/or 41st Avenue.

People's ideas...

- reinforce small retail outlets; discourage large chain stores; encourage variety of merchants; provide more upstairs office space for medical and professional services; allow small, clean manufacturing businesses; keep restaurants and cafes; expand hours of operation (but concern about late-night convenience stores)
- transparency (windows facing street), sidewalk displays, rain canopies, visual distinction of stores, sign guidelines specific to the area
- quiet zones and small parks; sidewalks cafes; opportunities in developments for public courtyards like Capers on W. 4th Ave.

#### 1.4 Business Associations

Existing business associations should be supported and expanded, and, where there are no associations, new ones should be encouraged to form.

Support %: 62/33/5

People's ideas...

- keep Dunbar Days; add Seniors Days, etc.
- establish a Business Improvement Association with power to levy its members for funds
- improve store security for merchants

#### 1.5 Parking for Shoppers

On-street parking should remain, and major opportunities for off-street parking (e.g., at supermarkets) should be retained, or replaced if there is redevelopment

Support %: 87/9/5

People's ideas...

- retain on-street parking; retain or replace off-street parking (e.g., Stong's); more parking and/or more turnover; cooperative parking, parkade, timed parking, enforce parking, charge for parking

#### 1.6 No Malls or Big Box

There should not be any very large, or big box stores, or any internal shopping malls, allowed in Dunbar or close enough to threaten the economic health of the local shopping areas.

Support %: 88/5/7

#### 1.7 Dunbar Centre: A Community Plaza

The Dunbar Centre shopping area should include a community plaza as a focus for informal meetings and for community events and information. The exact location should be subject to further community consultation.

Support %: 54/26/19

People's ideas...

- in front of the community centre; as part of redevelopment on the site of the Shoppers Drug Mart parking lot; a new multi-use building on the library site, with library, public square, and residential above
- have library, post office, coffee shop, etc., for casual meeting; use for community billboard, annual art fair, public art



Possible Dunbar Street improvements: more planting, more pedestrian comfort and safety

### 1.9 Dunbar North

In addition to sections 1.1 to 1.6 which apply to all three shopping areas along Dunbar, Dunbar North improvements should include:

- improved appearance of the liquor store
  - keep line of storefronts along both sides of Dunbar, and fill in gaps when redevelopment occurs (but not necessarily along north side of 16th)
  - more local-serving shops
  - businesses taking more care of public surroundings
  - more plantings and more positive (but low-key) sense of entrance into Dunbar
- Support %: 73/19/8



Shopping area - Dunbar North

People's ideas...

- liquor store improvements: planting; larger trees; wider internal sidewalks with seating and displays
- fill in retail gaps when redevelopment occurs; liquor store parking lot; real estate office building
- mark entrance to Dunbar: use plantings; put in plantings instead of pavement on boulevard on south side of 16th east of Dunbar
- take advantage of the city-wide Ridgeway Greenway that will pass



Possible W. 41st Avenue improvements: double row of trees, planted bulges and median, more pedestrian comfort and safety

through here (east-west across Dunbar and then turning north-south across 16th) to provide safer street crossings for shoppers, high school students, and bus users

### 1.10 Dunbar South

In addition to sections 1.1 to 1.6 which apply to all three shopping areas along Dunbar, Dunbar South improvements should include:

- improved safety and convenience for pedestrians who need to cross the long block of 41st between Dunbar and Collingwood
  - improved bus loop
  - plantings to green the area and mark this entrance to Dunbar, including a double row of trees along the wide sidewalk on 41st Avenue
  - keep line of storefronts along the streets, and fill in gaps
  - no additional lanes of traffic on 41st Avenue
- Support %: 80/13/7

People's ideas...

- fill in retail gaps: at 40th Avenue; at bank parking lot
- mid-block crossing on 41st Avenue to IGA, or improved corner crossings at block ends
- bus loop: add shops; improve appearance and safety; add seating; make into mini-park

### Other Vision Directions considered but not approved

#### 1.8 Dunbar Centre: Extend Shopping Area to Community Centre

The Dunbar Centre shopping area should be extended along the block between 30th and 31st (on both sides of the street), to link the edge of the current shopping area with the Community Centre site.

Uncertain %: 41/27/32

*Comment: There are more agree votes than disagree votes, but the difference between the two is closer than for many of the other Uncertain directions. Consequently, this is not a priority for City-initiated action in Dunbar.*

### 1.11 Option: Reduce Size of Dunbar North and South

Allow new residential developments to replace shops in some, or all, of Dunbar North and South, if this would concentrate more shops and services in Dunbar Centre and make Dunbar Centre a stronger shopping area.

Non-support %: 23/24/53

## 2. Mixed Use Development

For many years, there was little development activity in the commercial areas of Dunbar Street. The older one and two storey commercial buildings remained. Recently, there have been more projects with one level of commercial and three levels of apartments above. This is called mixed use development.

The current zoning regulations require commercial use — retail, service or office — at street level. On upper floors, the developer has the choice of whether to have commercial or residential. Zoning also limits the height, requires setbacks from neighbours, sets maximum density, and (now) forbids parking lots along the street in front of buildings. The zoning deals with livability of the residential development — privacy, daylight, and so forth. However, it does not deal with the character and appearance of the building.



Better mixed use design: upper setbacks, breaking up scale, small shops, awnings

The Vision direction recognizes the potential of these developments to provide housing, strengthen local shopping areas, and improve safety by providing “eyes on the street”. However, it also includes ideas to improve the developments.

### Approved Vision Direction

#### 2.1 Design Improvements

The design of mixed use development should be improved:

- less bulky and imposing looking
- less impact on single family neighbours
- designs reviewed to be more attractive
- various architectural styles rather than any one style being required
- more planting to soften the impact on neighbours and improve common spaces

Support %: 89/6/5

#### Other Vision Direction considered but not approved

#### 2.2 Extra Height

One or two additional storeys beyond four storeys should be considered in some cases:

- on higher points of land, to echo the land form
- in return for providing some public open space or other amenity.

Non-support %: 30/9/61

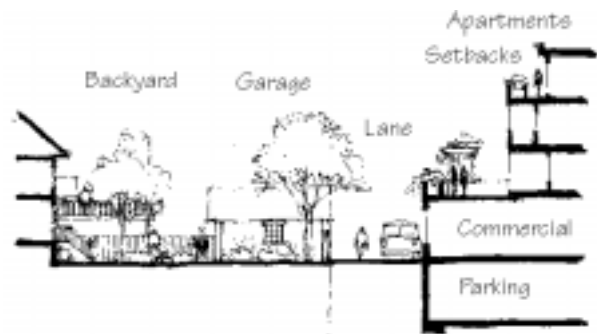


Two recent mixed use projects on Dunbar Street



#### More Planning and Consultation

Vision direction 2.1 would require rezoning, based on more detailed planning with the community. (see Rezoning Policy on page 41).



Setbacks at the rear: less impact on neighbours at rear