

N/NE Quadrant & I-5 Broadway/Weidler Plans

Land Use, Urban Design and Local Transportation Charrette

February 22-23, 2010

Summary of Results



April, 2011



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I. Introduction

The Central N/NE Quadrant and I-5 Broadway/Weidler Plans are collaborative efforts by the City of Portland and the Oregon Department of Transportation to integrate land use and urban design planning with freeway planning and concept-level engineering in the N/NE portion of the Central City, which includes Lower Albina and the Lloyd District. The plan will act as a quadrant-level guide for implementation of city-wide policy goals to ensure a vibrant Central City at the heart of the metropolitan region.

This document summarizes the results of a charrette focusing on land use, urban design and local transportation in the N/NE quadrant held in February, 2011.

Charrette Purpose

The concept development charrette was intended to be a focused effort by project staff, urban design consultants, and other stakeholders to review and synthesize information gathered to-date and generate preliminary land use, urban design and local transportation concept alternatives for the N/NE Quadrant area. The products of this intensive two-day work session set the stage for the freeway concept development workshop to be held April 11-13, 2011 and represents an important step in moving the planning process from the issue identification phase towards the development of specific land use, urban design and transportation alternatives for the project area.

Charrette Process

The charrette was held in the U.S. Plywood Room of the Veterans Memorial Coliseum on February 22 and 23, 2011. Participants included urban designers from project consultant Zimmer Gusel Frasca Architects, staff from the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and the Bureau of Transportation, the Oregon Department of Transportation and other agency staff, including the Portland Parks Bureau, the Bureau of Environmental Services and TriMet. Members of the N/NE Quadrant Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) and other stakeholders also participated at various stages of the two-day event.

The first day of the charrette began with a review of the N/NE Quadrant Plan project goals, list of identified issues, opportunities and constraints and the results of the February 9 concept-generating workshop held during a joint meeting of the project's land use and transportation subcommittees. The second half of the day was spent generating quadrant-wide concepts and ideas. The second day began with review and refinement of the quadrant-wide concepts and then focused on more localized, subarea-specific concepts.

A large number of ideas and concepts were recorded in a series of drawings that explore alternatives for a number of urban systems in the quadrant, including:

- **Local Transportation** (e.g. street hierarchy/diversity, modes, transit)
- **Open Space and Parks** (e.g. types and function, trails, river)
- **Sustainability/Eco-Districts** (e.g. storm and waste water, district energy, solar orientation)
- **Land Uses** (e.g. employment, residential, event/entertainment, retail)
- **Urban Form** (e.g. height, bulk, views)

The results of the charrette were presented and discussed at the joint Land Use and Transportation Subcommittee meeting on March 2 and with the full SAC on March 10.

Next Steps

A three-day Freeway/Local Interface charrette will be held April 11-13. It will be a focused effort by project staff, urban design and engineering consultants to review and guide participants in designing freeway and ramp interfaces with local streets. Options for ramp and bridge configuration will be driven by City and stakeholder suggestions and will be informed by the results of the land use, urban design and local transportation charrette summarized in this document. The charrette will be guided by planners, urban designers and engineers to facilitate creative thinking. During and after each public charrette session, charrette staff will perform some preliminary analysis to determine the operations, safety and potential "fatal flaws" in particular concepts. After initial screening, staff will refine remaining proposals and offer suggestions on operable solutions and preliminary evaluation of concepts. Members of the SAC, Transportation and Land Use Subcommittees and other stakeholders are welcome to participate in the public work sessions. Charrette products will be presented at the April 20th Subcommittee meeting and April 28th SAC meeting.

In the late spring and summer, conceptual ideas emerging from both charrettes will be analyzed and refined and a set of draft alternatives and options will be developed for review by the SAC, stakeholders and the public. In the following phase of work, a proposed concept that integrates land use, urban design, local transportation and freeway elements will be developed. The proposed concept will guide subsequent development of N/NE quadrant-specific policies and implementation agendas that will be included in a N/NE Quadrant Plan and freeway improvement proposal for review by stakeholders and City and State decision-makers in winter 2011.



II. Summary of Charrette Ideas and Concepts

This section contains a selection of conceptual diagrams and sketches generated during the charrette. Explanatory notes are included to help describe the ideas shown on the diagrams. Not every sketch produced during the charrette is included and a few of the diagrams included here were refined for clarity after the event.

The diagrams do not present complete concepts and many of the elements and alternatives are not necessarily mutually exclusive. These ideas will need additional refinement and development. In the spring/summer concept refinement phase, these preliminary ideas will be refined and synthesized into a menu of options and choices for consideration by stakeholders and the public.

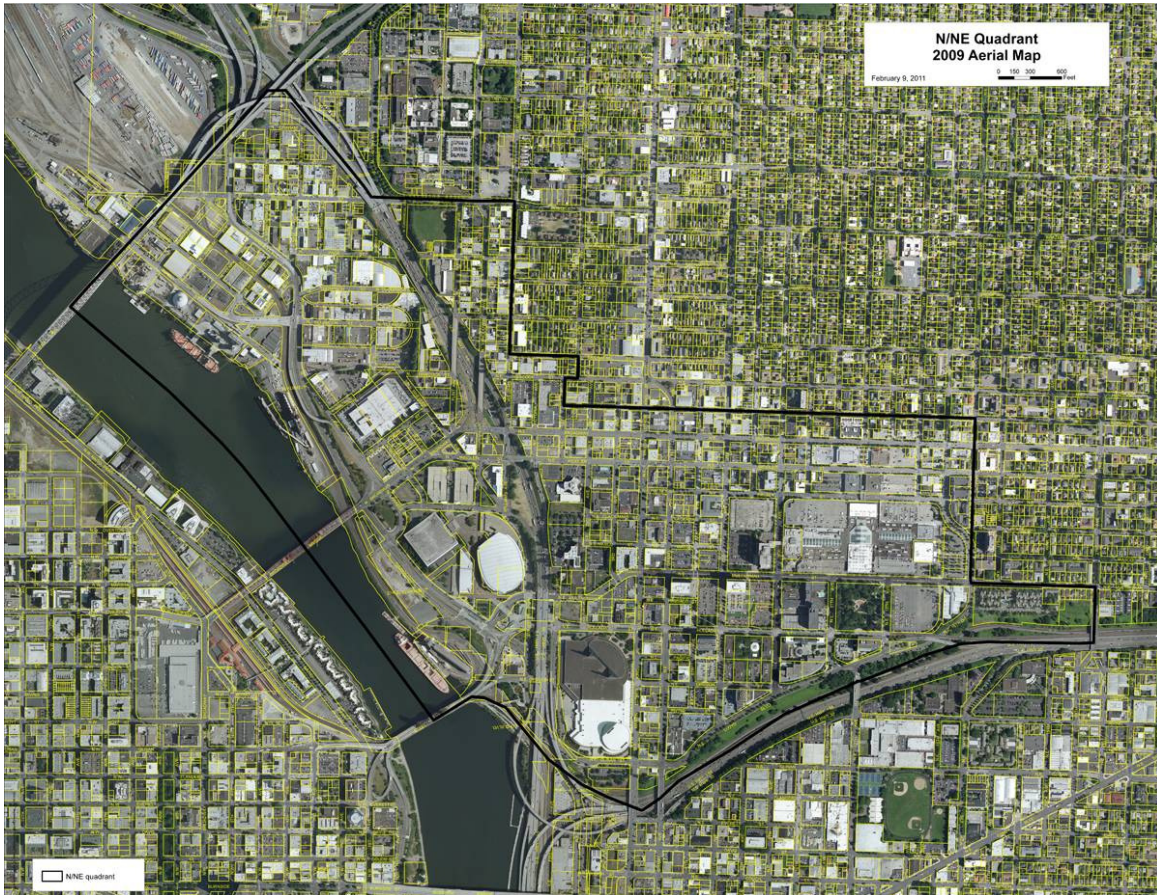
The diagrams in this section are organized into four subsections:

- 1. Existing Conditions**
- 2. Overarching Themes**
- 3. System Concepts**
- 4. Specific Areas**

1. Existing Conditions

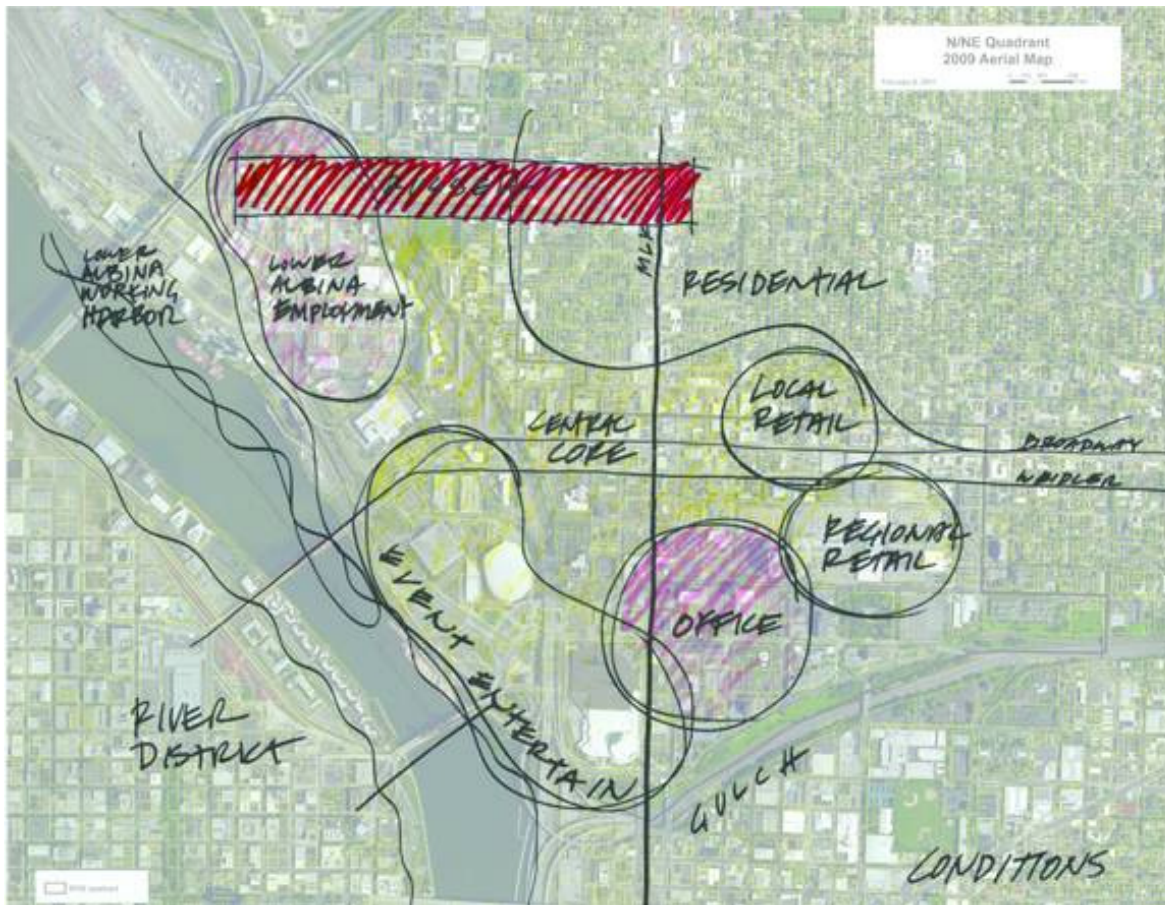
These maps and diagrams outline basic elements of existing conditions in the study area and summarize some of the key assets and opportunities that charrette participants used as a starting place for development of concept ideas.

1.a Study Area Aerial Map



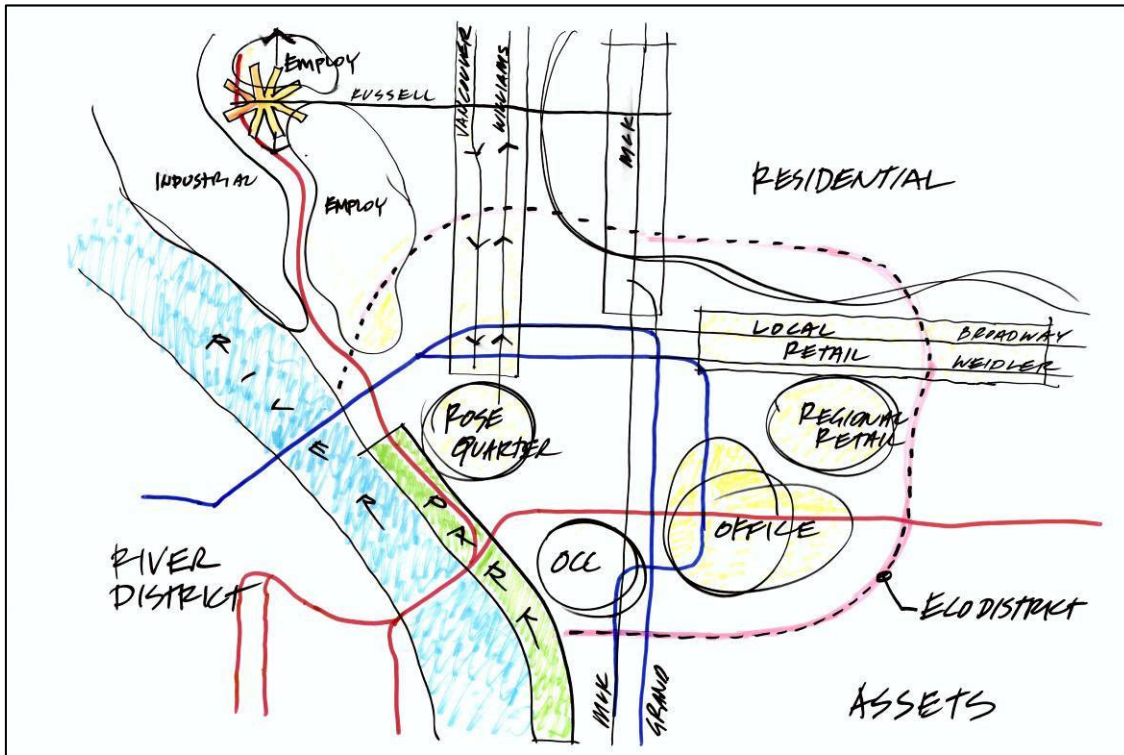
The North/Northeast Quadrant study area includes the Lower Albina and Lloyd subdistricts of Portland's Central City, as well as two additional areas of consideration: lower portions of the N. Vancouver/Williams corridor and properties on the south side of NE Multnomah at NE 21st. Avenue.

1.b Existing Conditions Diagram



The N/NE Quadrant features several areas that have existing unique characters, surrounding a large “Central Core” area that lacks a “there there” or distinctiveness. Lower Albina is an industrial area that provides employment and businesses incubator opportunities. There is a distinct business and architectural texture along lower N. Russell. The Rose Quarter and the Oregon Convention Center draw regional and national audiences to events and entertainment. There is an established cluster of offices along and around Holladay St. The Lloyd Center Mall is a regional retail and shopping center. The eastern portion of the Broadway/Weidler corridor is home to local retail. The area has established residential neighborhoods to the north (Eliot and Irvington) and to the east (Sullivan’s Gulch)

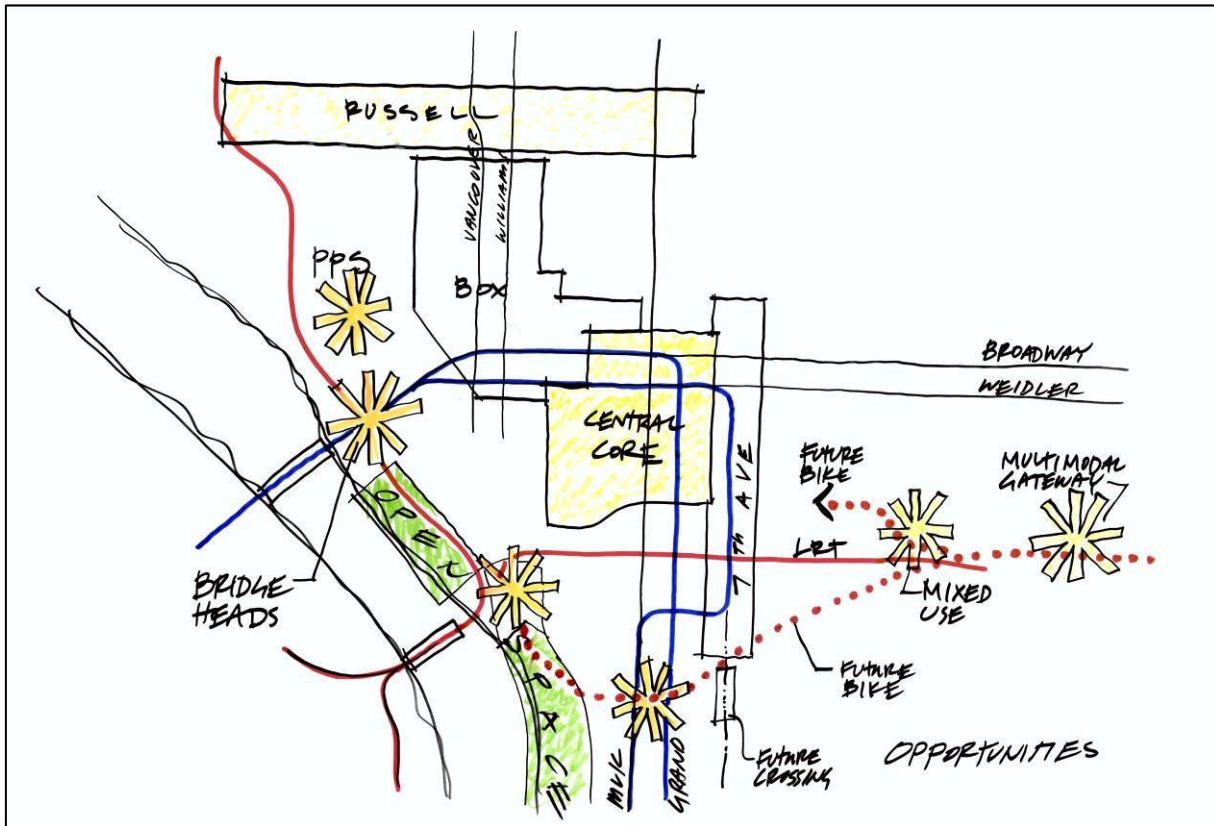
1.c Existing Assets Diagram



The study area features numerous existing assets:

- Historic Conservation District along N. Russell main street
- Industrial/employment activity in Lower Albina
- Event/entertainment facilities in the Rose Quarter
- Oregon Convention Center
- Office cluster along Holladay
- Shopping at Lloyd Center Mall
- Local retail, neighborhood shopping along Broadway/Weidler
- Evolving “Lloyd Green” eco/sustainability district strategies and planning
- MAX light rail service along N. Interstate and NE Holladay, to downtown and regional destinations north and east
- Central City streetcar loop connections via Broadway/Weidler, Martin Luther King Jr./Grand/7th
- Holladay Park open space

1.d Opportunities Diagram



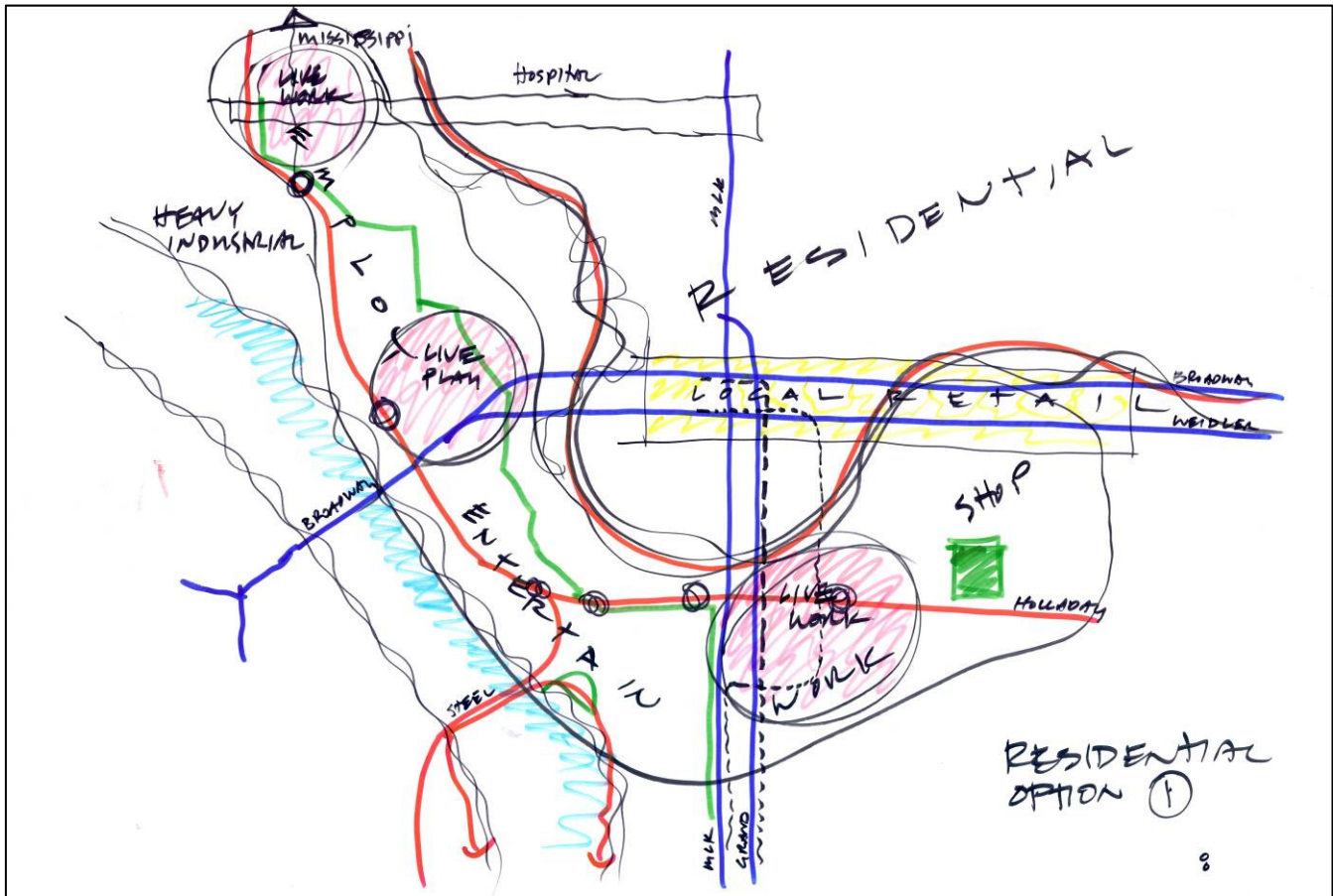
The study area includes many opportunities or areas of potential change. The Broadway Bridgehead, Rose Quarter Transit Center, and Multnomah/Banfield gateway are some of the visible development sites around the edges of the study area. The “Central Core” area represents perhaps the biggest potential for a significant new place (or places). Key north/south and east/west connectivity corridors could be strengthened around N. Russell and NE 7th. The future Sullivan’s Gulch trail could be connected to open space and a trail system. The character of the lower Vancouver/Williams corridor could be strengthened, as could conditions along the Willamette River – perhaps with new habitat restoration and open space amenities.

2. Overarching Themes

Two overarching themes emerged from and guided the charrette work. Both themes appear to have broad, though not necessarily unanimous, support from project stakeholders and charrette participants. Each major theme generated multiple concepts. The themes were:

- Developing **housing/residential neighborhoods in the Central Core area**, and
- Strengthening **connectivity** within the study area, as well as linking the quadrant to the surrounding context.

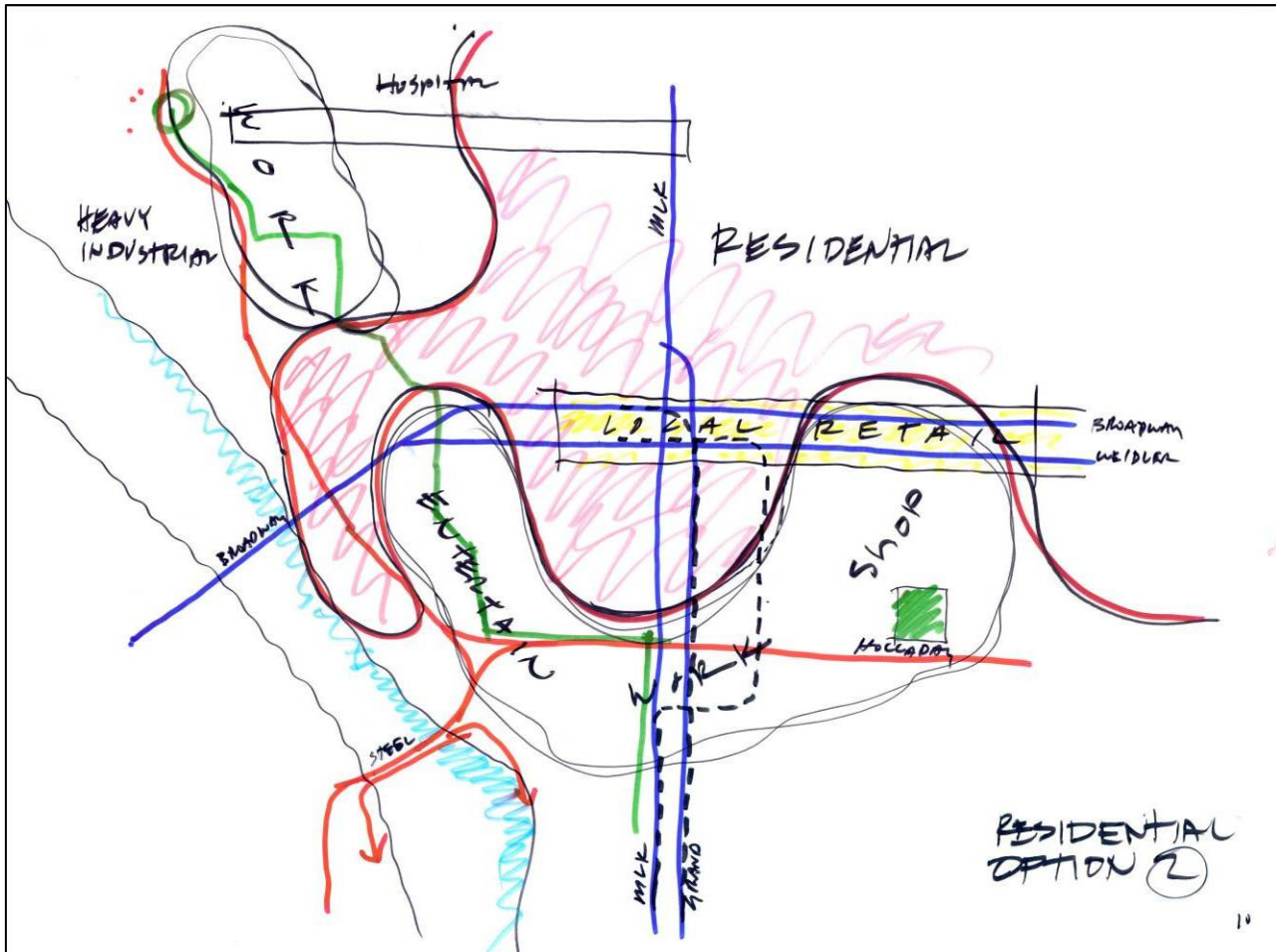
2.a Residential Option #1



Residential Concept 1:

This concept suggests a high-density residential/mixed-use community in the central core area that is linked to and builds on the energy of the existing lower-density residential neighborhoods to the north. The Central Core residential area would be supported by, but not necessarily directly linked, to a series of flanking mixed-use nodes at Russell, the Rose Quarter/Blanchard site, and between the Convention Center and Lloyd Mall.

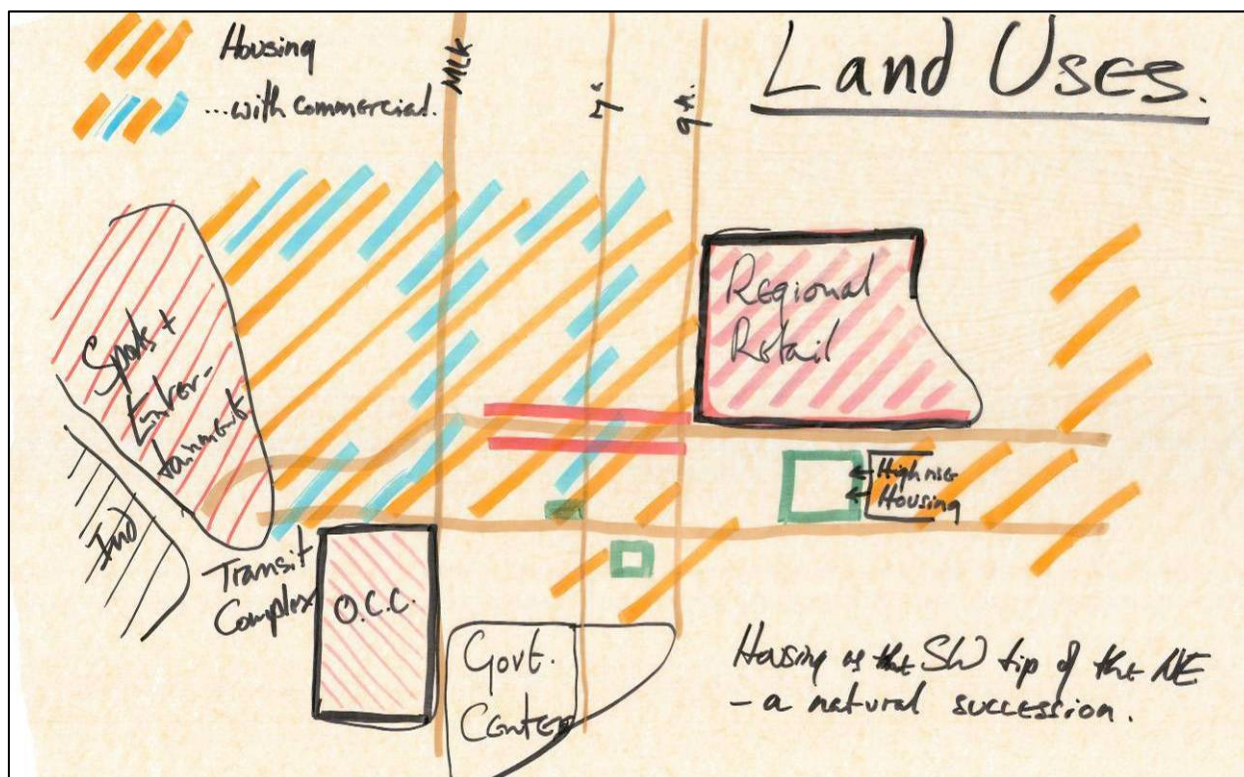
2.b Residential Option #2



Residential Concept 2:

This concept suggests extending a high-density residential community from the Central Core area onto the PPS Blanchard site and the properties overlooking the river (former Red Lion site) – effectively bridging the barrier of the I-5 freeway and the Broadway/Weidler “box.” The employment areas in Lower Albina and the Rose Quarter would be connected across a residential area (via the “Strand” concept, shown in green) extending between N Russell and the Oregon Convention Center.

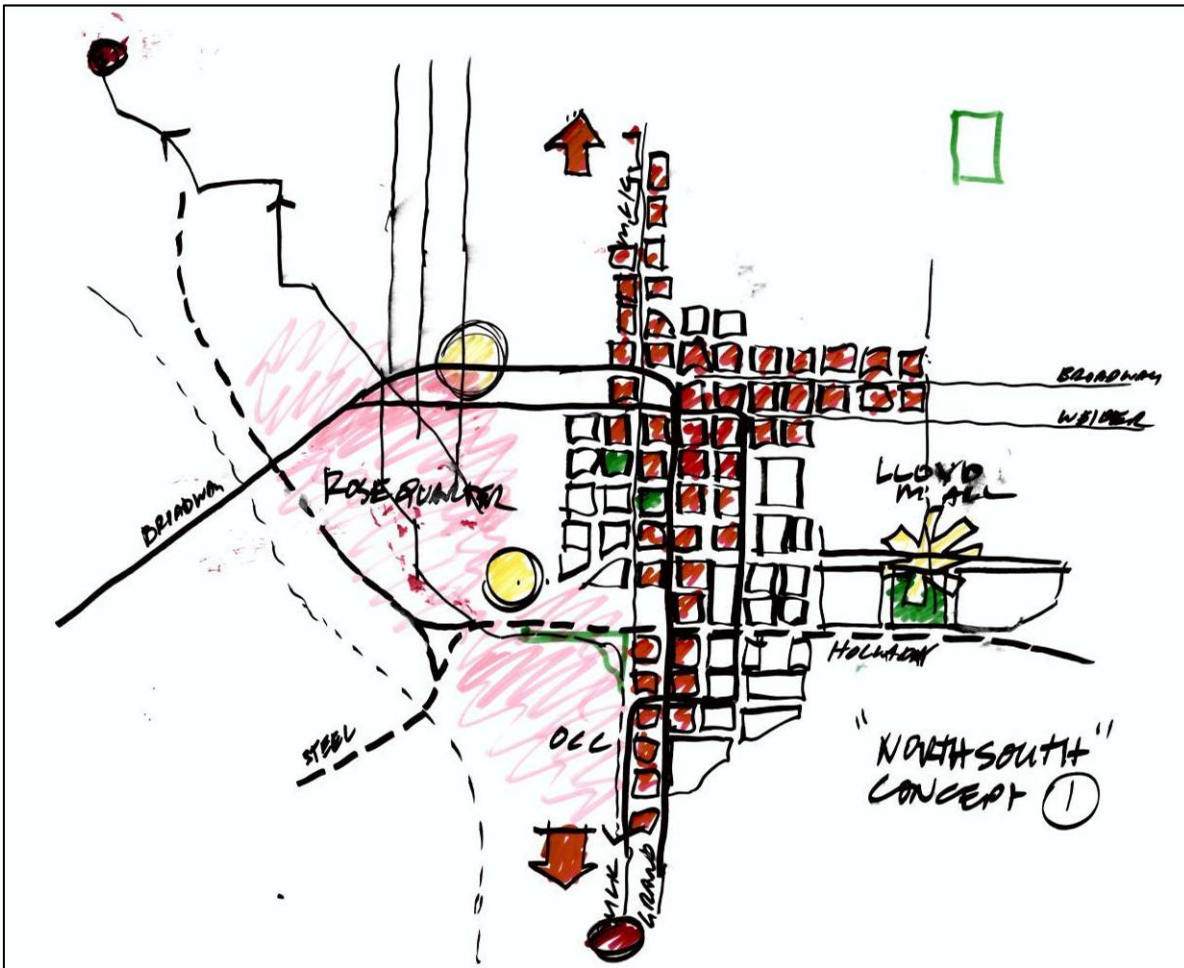
2.c Residential Option #3



Residential Concept 3:

In this concept, the inner parts of the Central Core residential area would be developed with residential-dominant development, focusing more mixed-use buildings toward busier corridors. It also aims to strengthen the eastern end of the Lloyd District with primarily residential developments.

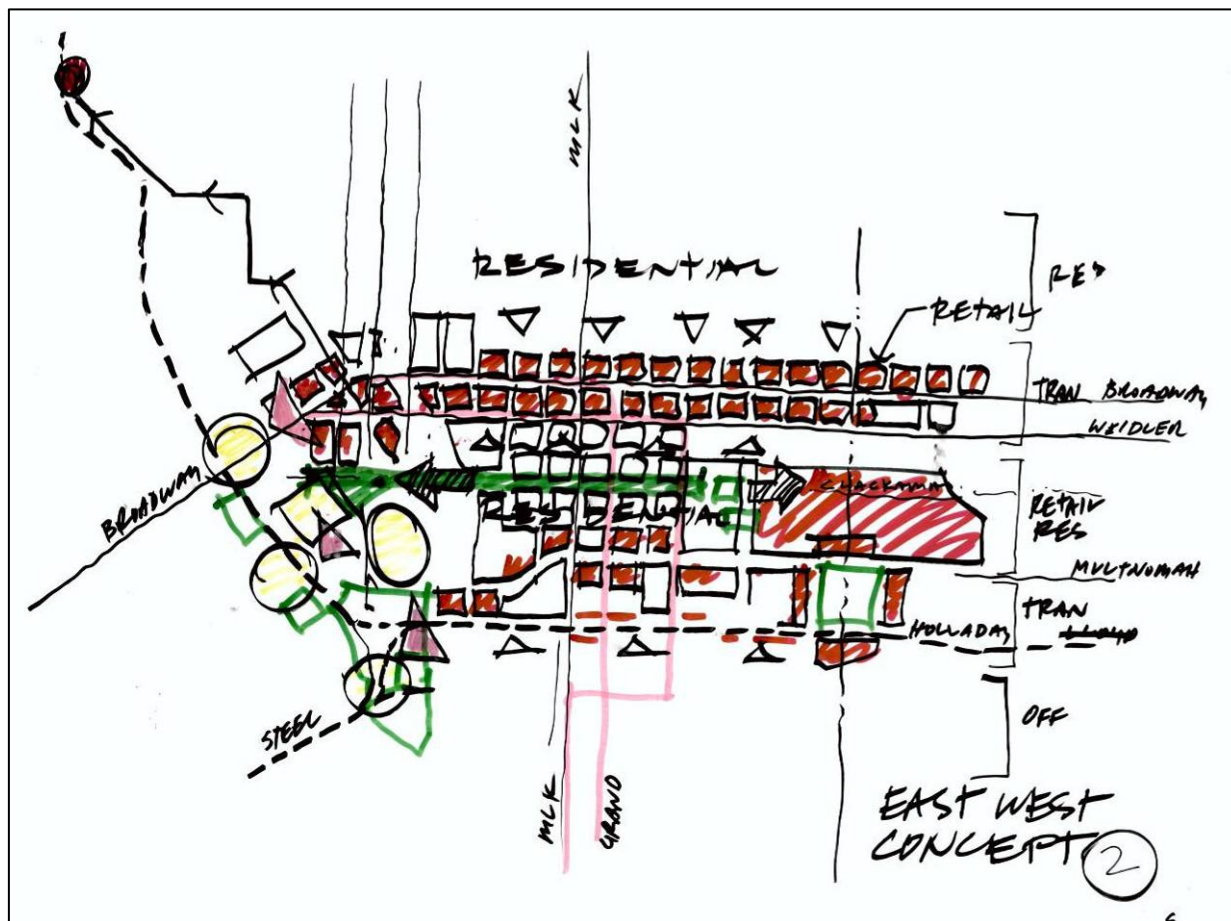
2.d Development Orientation and Connectivity: North/South



Development Orientation and Connectivity Concept 1 - North/South:

This concept recognizes the I-5 Freeway as an edge and strengthens connections (and organizes development energy) north/south along MLK/Grand corridor, between Eliot/Irvington and the Central Eastside. It calls for extending some development eastward along the Broadway/Weidler corridor.

2.e Development Orientation and Connectivity: East/West



Development Orientation and Connectivity Concept, Concept 2 - East/West:

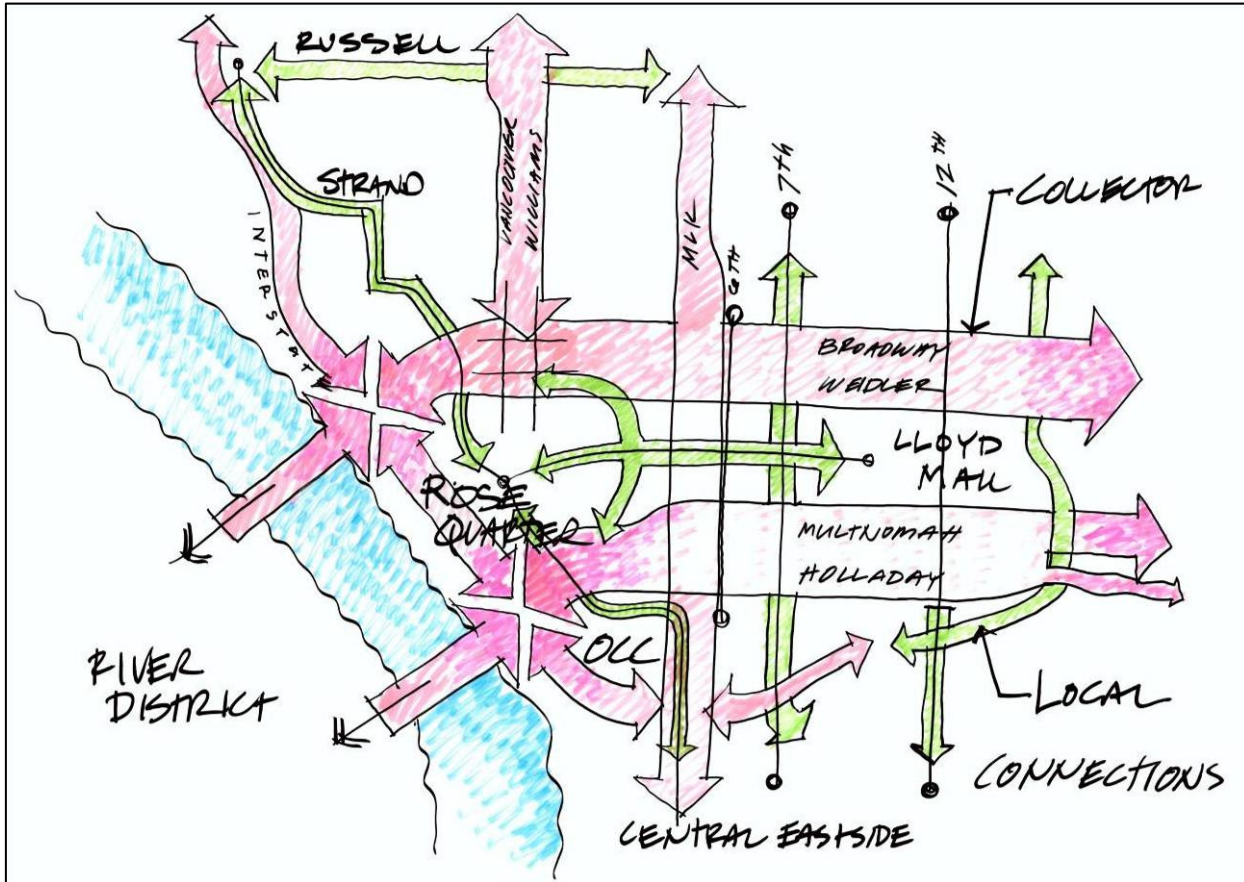
This concept focuses on strengthening connections east/west across the I-5 Freeway along Broadway/Weidler corridor as well as Multnomah and Holladay. It aims to develop a new east/west green spine, potentially across I-5, perhaps on Clackamas. New high-density residential and mixed use development could be organized around this new amenity. It also suggests bringing the mainstreet retail of NE Broadway across the freeway and to the Broadway Bridgehead.

3. System Concepts

Alternative concept ideas were developed for infrastructure support systems in the study area. The three major system categories were:

- Local transportation and connectivity
- Parks and open spaces
- Sustainability

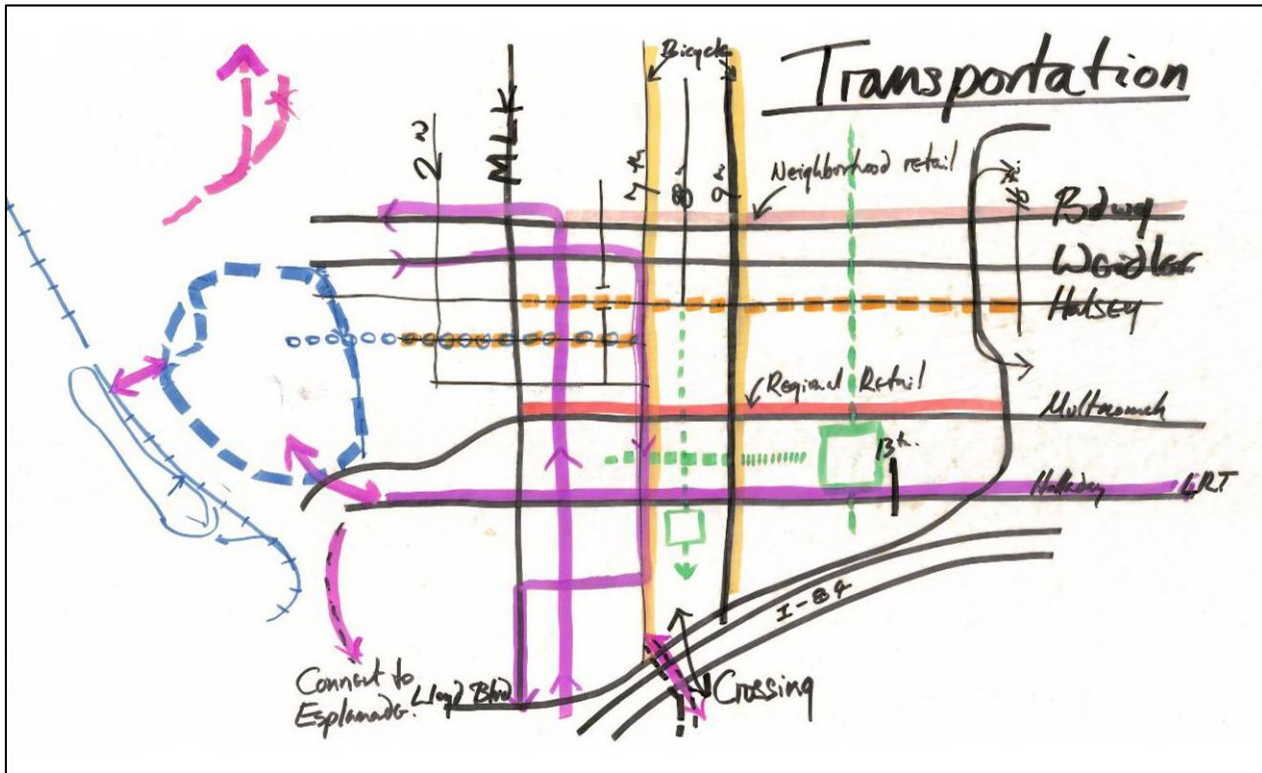
3.a Transportation and Connectivity: Concept #1



System Concepts: Transportation and Connectivity, Concept 1:

This local transportation concept suggests improving street system hierarchy in the study area with two primary types: major, regional collectors (pink) and local circulation streets (green). It also identifies two major crossroads/intersections, Broadway bridgehead and Rose Quarter Transit Center, and highlights the “Strand” concept stretching from N. Russell to Oregon Convention Center. The “Strand” idea represents a secondary local street/pedestrian/bike route connecting N Russell Street to the Rose Quarter and continuing to the Oregon Convention Center. Similarly the idea of a Clackamas connection across I-5 between the Rose Quarter and Lloyd Mall is clearly represented here.

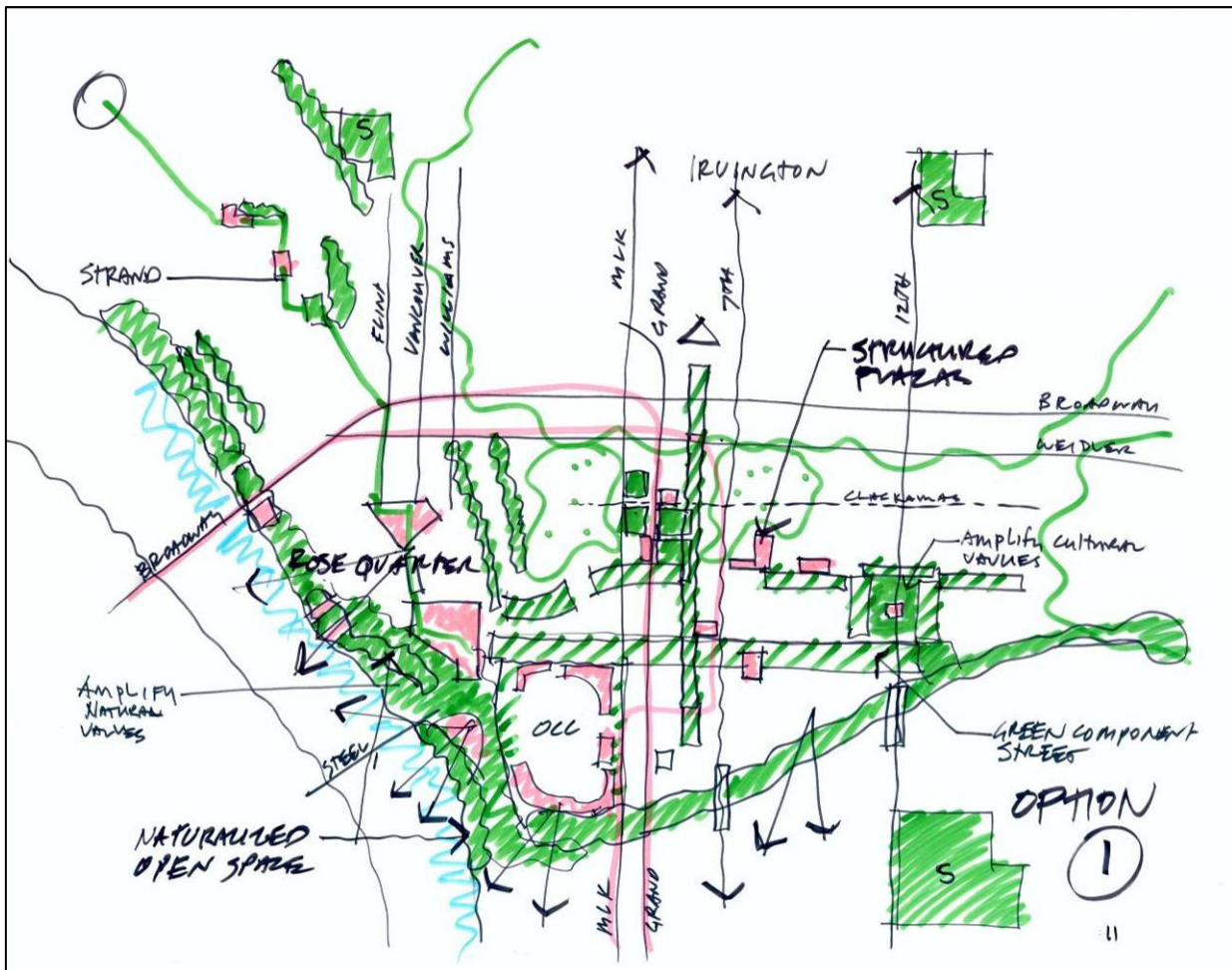
3.b Transportation and Connectivity: Concept #2



System Concepts: Transportation and Connectivity, Concept 2:

This local transportation concept focuses more on street types and is more specific about varied street characters. It identifies transit streets (Holladay, MLK/Grand/7th, Broadway/Weidler), regional retail streets (Multnomah), and neighborhood retail streets (Broadway). The concept highlights 7th and/or 9th Ave. as potential bike corridors, leading to a possible new connection across I-84 to Central Eastside district. It also identifies opportunities for a series of new more locally-oriented and perhaps green connections between the transit and retail streets and across superblocks.

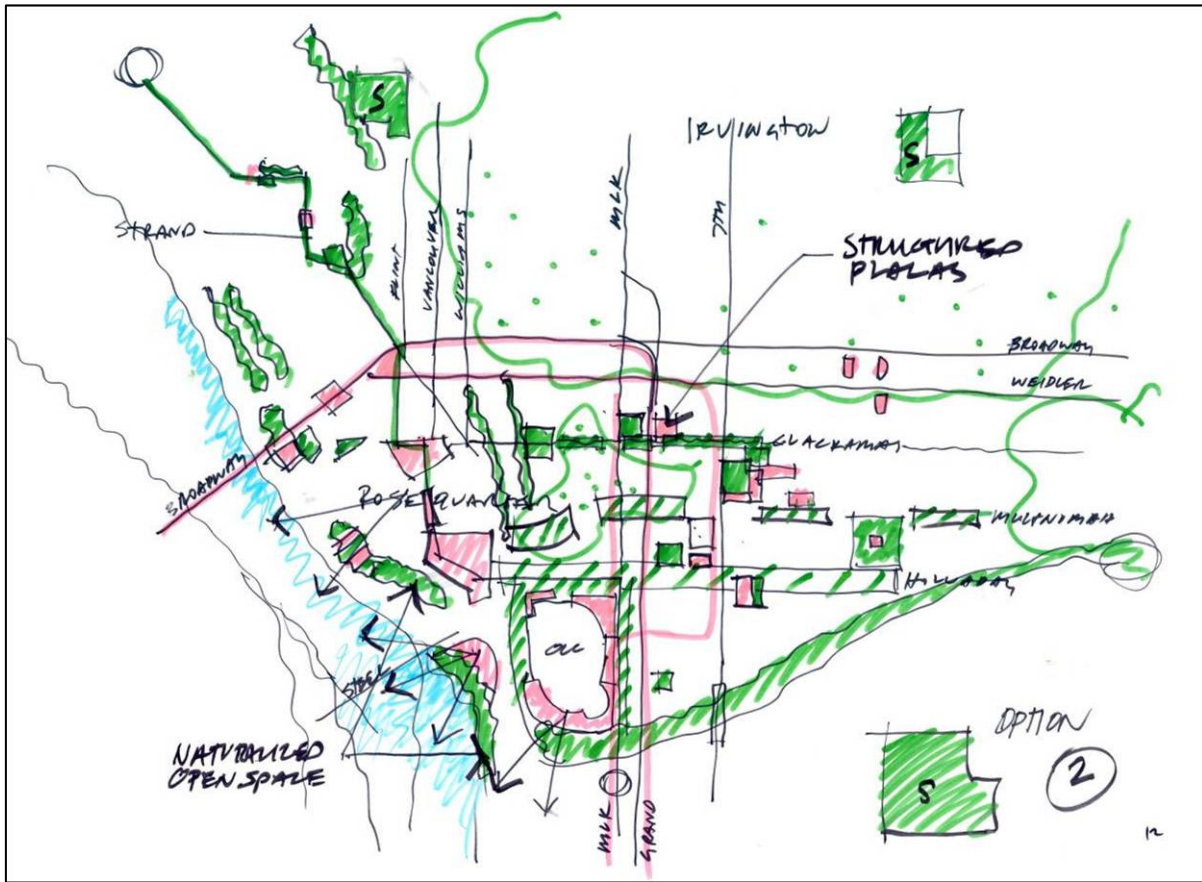
3.c Open Space: Concept #1



System Concepts: Open Space, Concept 1:

This open space concept creates a new organizing open space spine that is oriented north-south along 6th Ave between the streetcar lines on NE Grand and NE 7th. It calls out the potential for a “headquarters park” open space amenity in the vicinity of the NE 6th and NE Clackamas intersection. The concept emphasizes a strong, green riverfront edge linked to the future Sullivan’s Gulch trail. It also integrates the “Strand” connection between N Russell and the Oregon Convention Center, through the Rose Quarter. This concept also suggests significant change to the River Greenway and a seamless green connection to the future Sullivan’s Gulch greenway. Holladay Park is surrounded with new or improved development on all sides.

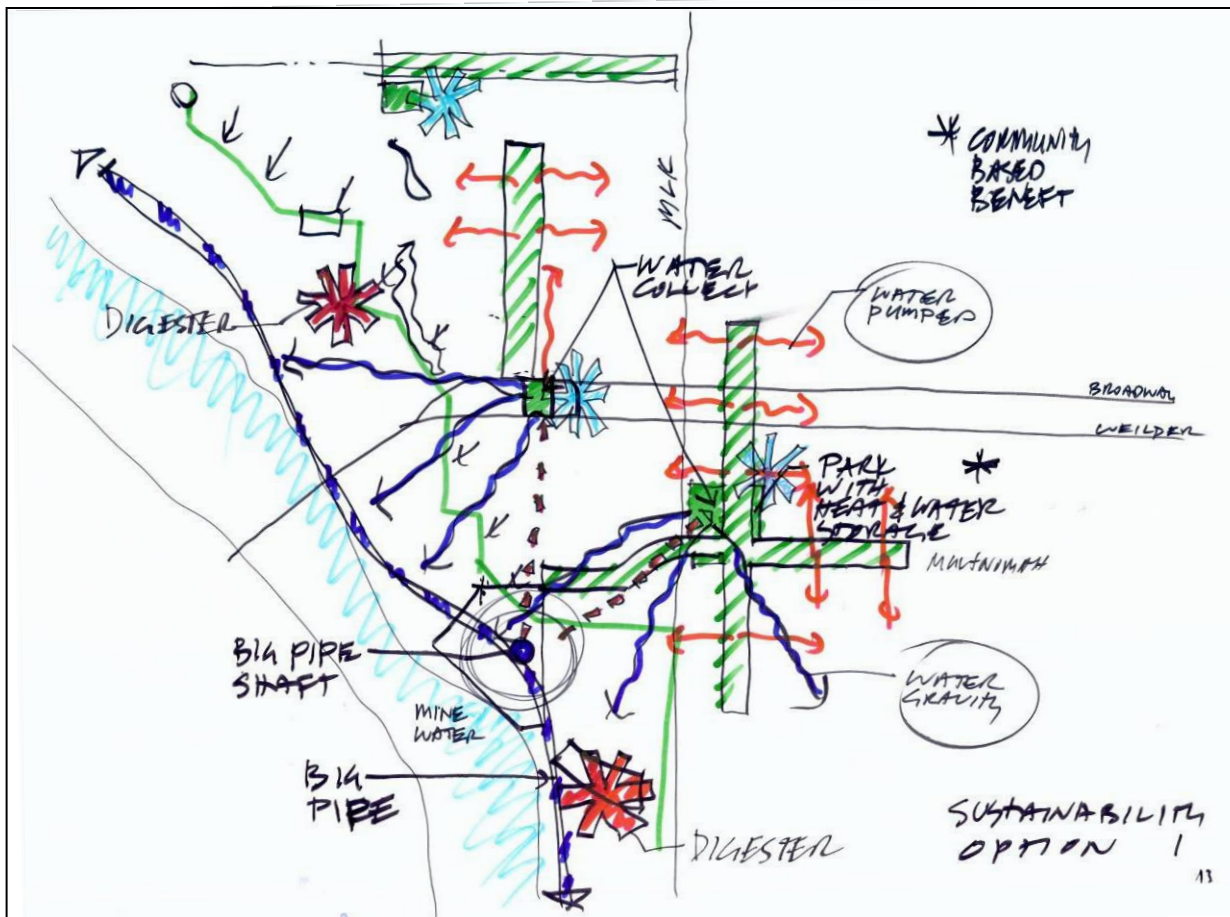
3.d Open Space: Concept #2



System Concepts: Open Space, Concept 2:

This alternative open space concept calls for a new organizing green street spine (with some open space) oriented east-west along Clackamas Street with a series of smaller parks and plazas organized along the corridor. It also suggests green, open space improvements for the Holladay transit corridor, linking Holladay Park to the Rose Quarter plaza/open spaces. Along the waterfront, this concept takes a more opportunistic approach with new parks and natural areas in select locations, perhaps where they become available in conjunction with new development.

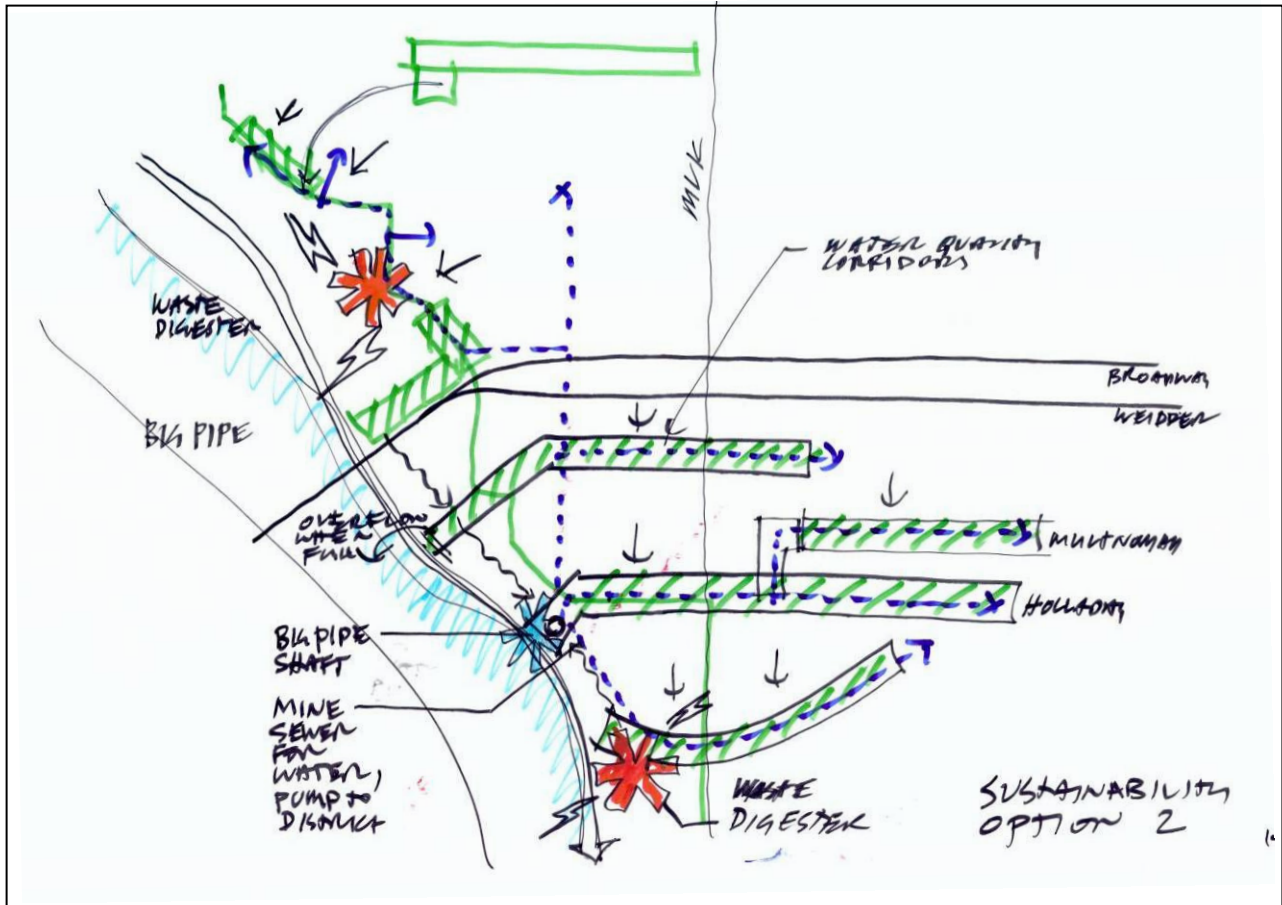
3.e Sustainability: Concept #1



System Concepts: Sustainability, Concept 1:

This sustainability concept creates new organizing, north-south "water quality corridors" in the vicinity of the 6th Ave. and Vancouver/Williams corridors. A series of water collection facilities adjacent to the water quality corridors could be part of an open space system. In this option, the "Strand" acts as a watershed collector to capture water and channel it to collection facilities. Treated water would take advantage of gravity-flow for use in the Rose Quarter, Lower Albina, and areas below the I-5 corridor for re-use. Waste digesters are suggested at the perimeter of the district to generate energy for distribution within the quadrant.

3.f Sustainability: Concept #2



System Concepts: Sustainability, Concept 2:

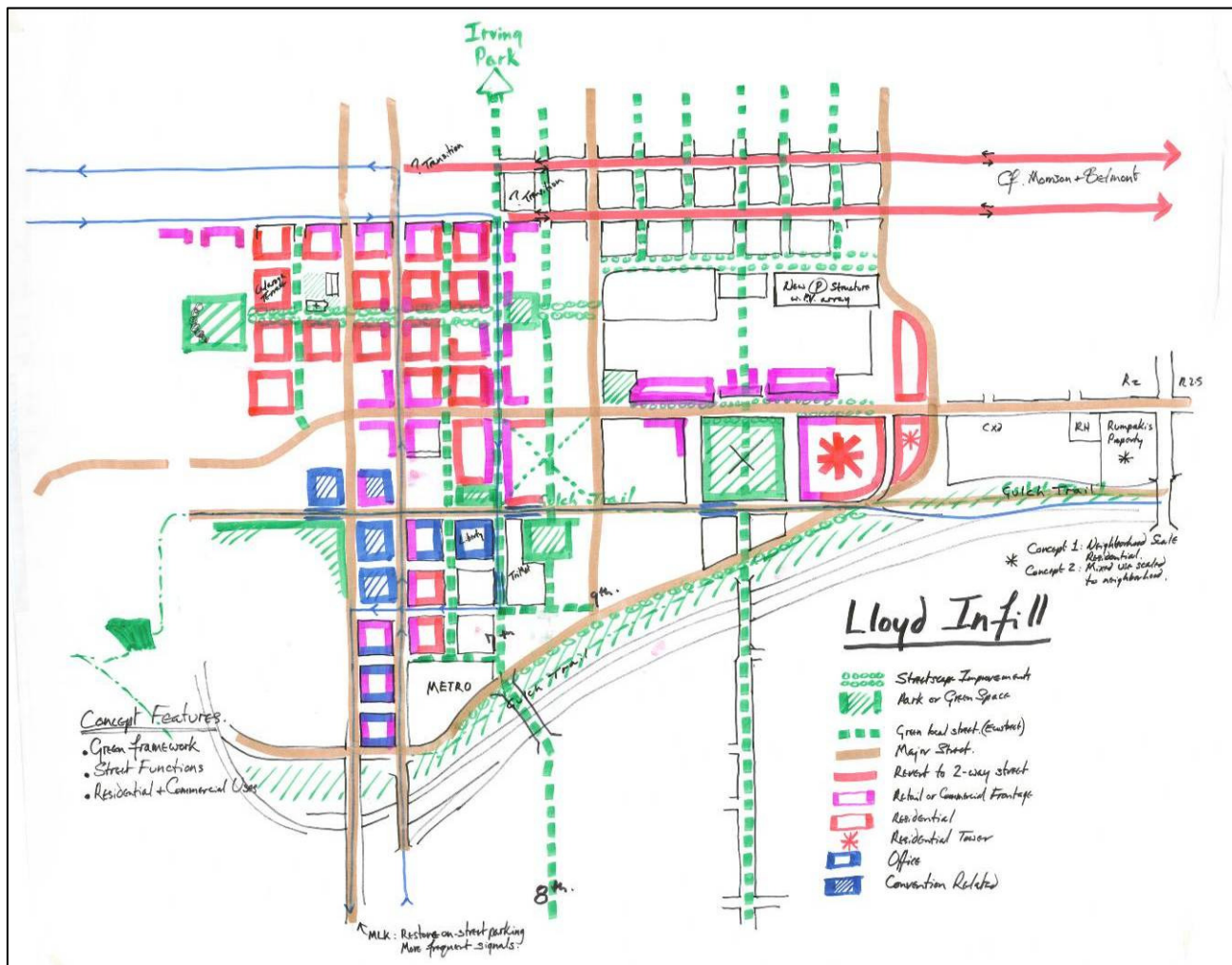
This concept sets up a series of water quality corridors oriented east-west along Clackamas, Holladay, Multnomah, and Sullivan's Gulch. As an alternative to the previous concept, water collected in the corridors would be pumped back into the district from collection facilities along the riverfront. There would be waste digesters in Lower Albina, below MLK/Grand I-84 overpasses, processing waste materials to capture effluents for energy production.

4. Specific Areas

On the second day of the charrette, more detailed concept ideas were generated for the following specific areas and issues:

- Lloyd District and Central Core infill development strategies
- Urban form of the study area and transitions to adjacent neighborhoods
- Lower Albina, Russell Street, Lower Vancouver/Williams and Blanchard site development concepts

4.a Lloyd District Development: Concept #1



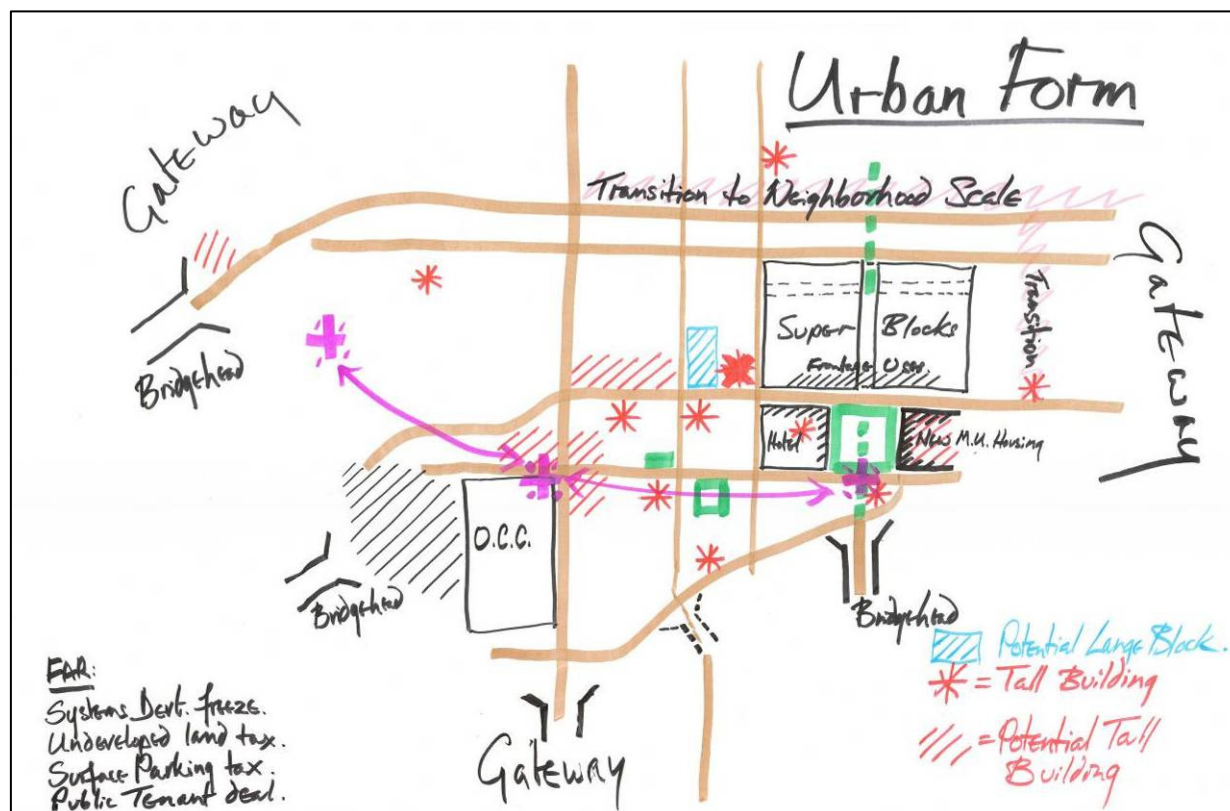
More Detailed Concepts: Lloyd District Development, Concept 1:

This detailed concept for the Lloyd District suggests a new high-density, primarily residential neighborhood organized around an improved and "greened" NE Clackamas with parks at either end. Buildings with more mixed-uses would be oriented to the major streets and corridors. There would be more office and commercial development around the Oregon Convention Center. The edges of the Lloyd Center Mall along Multnomah, facing Holladay Park would be improved. This concept suggests the potential of de-coupling the Broadway/Weidler couplet and making both streets two-way east of Grand Avenue. New pedestrian connections through the superblocks are suggested.

[illegible]

Concept 2 shares many characteristics with Concept 1 but places more emphasis on NE Multnomah as the major east-west “thoroughfare.” It calls for improved pedestrian connections through the Lloyd Center Mall, both in north-south and east-west directions. The concept suggests a sensitive building scale transition to northern adjacent neighborhoods with development limited to the 3-5 story range north of Broadway. It identifies a series of development gateways around the edge of the quadrant study area, including: Broadway/Weidler/I-5 interchange (“the box”), Broadway bridgehead, Rose Quarter Transit Center, MLK/Grand overpass, 12th Avenue overpass, and NE 21st/ Multnomah node. There is a possible reconfiguration of the Holladay Park design for more multi-functionality.

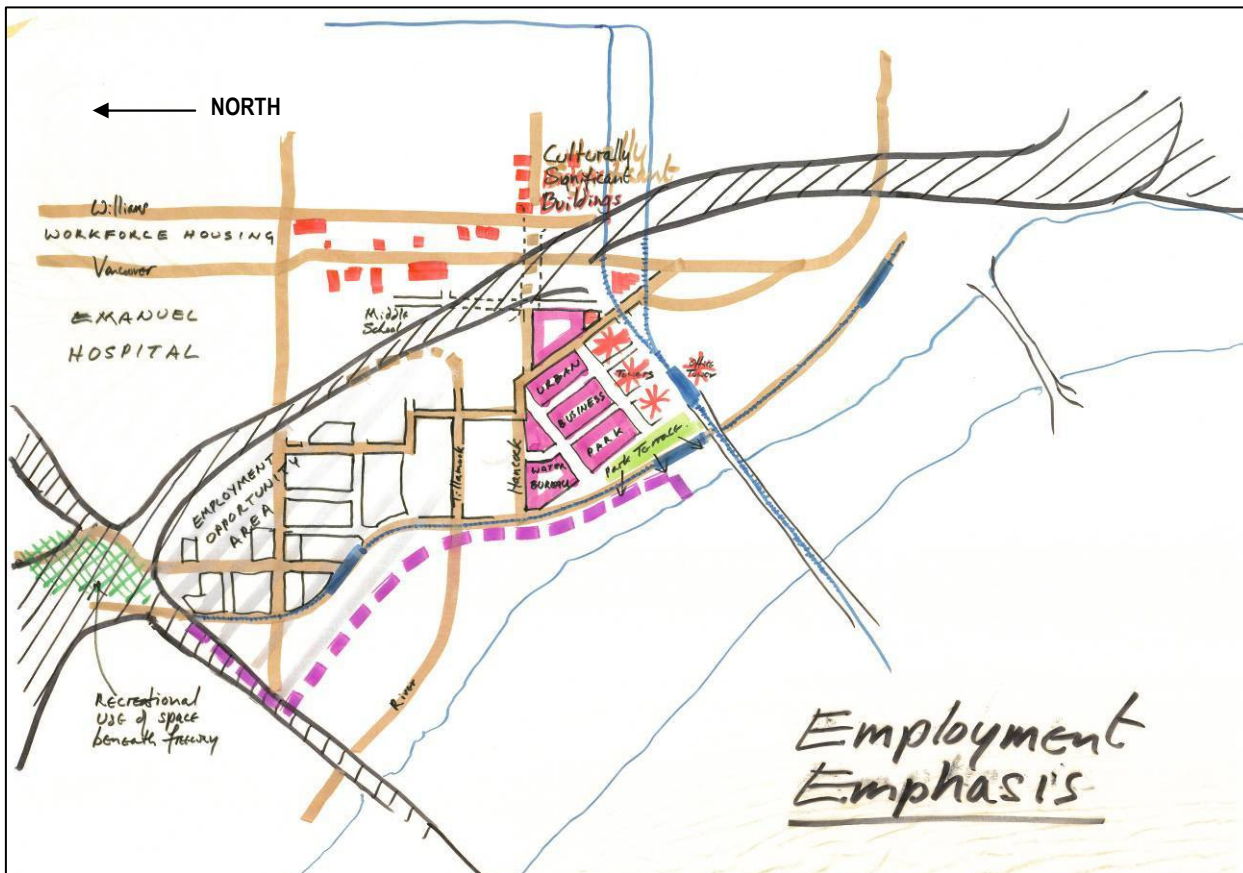
4.c Lloyd District Development: Concept #3



More Detailed Concepts: Lloyd District Development, Concept 3:

This detailed urban form concept highlights potential locations for new taller buildings (red hatch). It also reduces the scale of some of the larger blocks and identifies locations where larger blocks could improve urban patterns. Some implementation strategies and concepts were brainstormed and are noted at the lower-left.

4.d Lower Albina Development: Concept #1



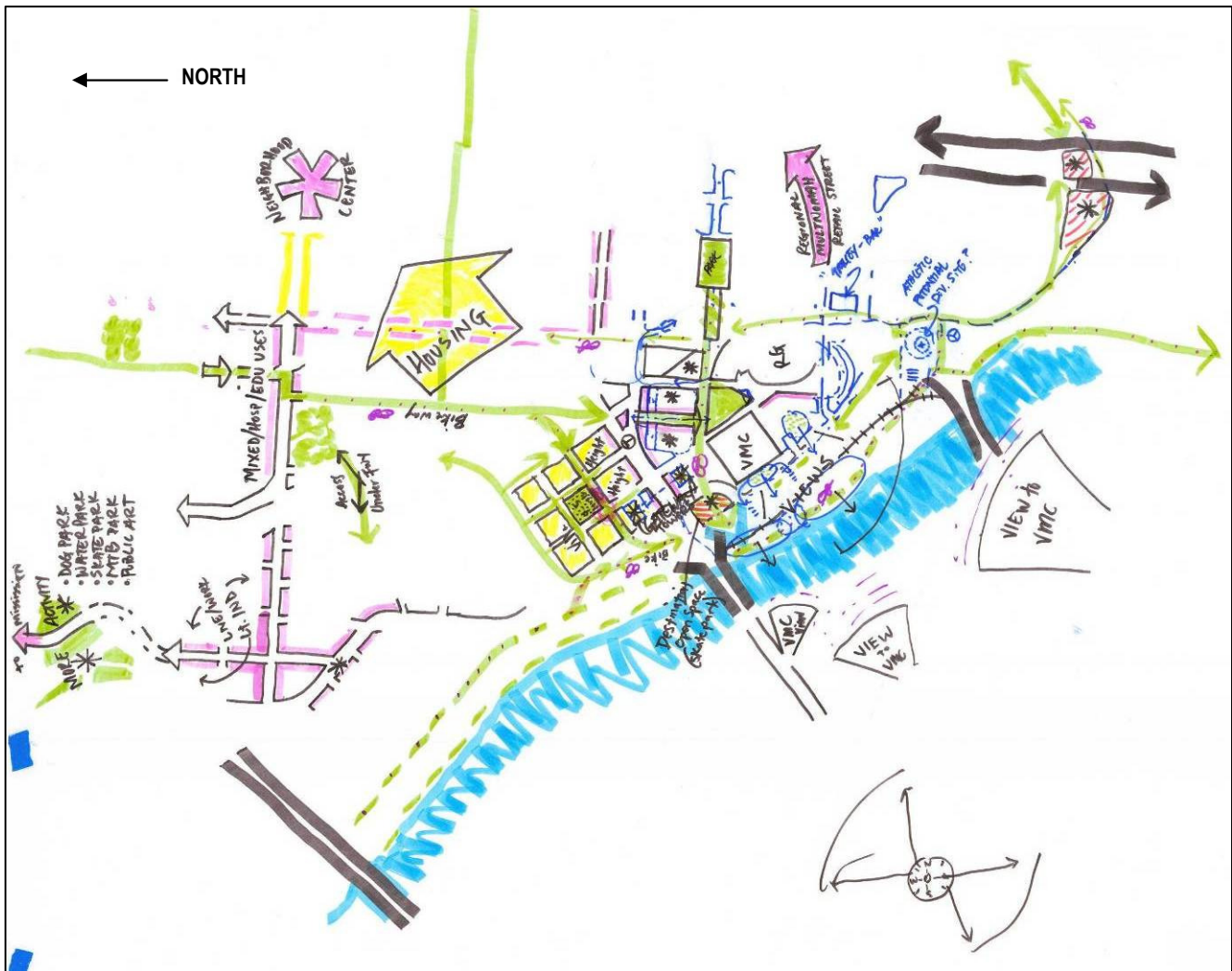
More Detailed Concepts: Lower Albina Development, Concept 1:

In this concept, Lower Albina is recognized as an important employment opportunity area. Using a model from the Central Eastside, this designation suggests increased flexibility for employment uses, but does not allow residential development. The PPS Blanchard school site is envisioned as an “urban business park” with high-rise towers along N Broadway. The concept recognizes and protects culturally significant buildings along the lower Vancouver/Williams corridor and strengthens new employment and commercial development. It considers the “Strand” connection to the Rose Quarter area. The concept also suggests a new connection roughly along a NE Hancock alignment across I-5 to the Blanchard site.

A hand-drawn sketch map of a proposed development area. The map shows a street grid with NE Russell, Williams, and Vancouver streets. A large area is labeled "MIXED USE" in red. Other labels include "EMANUEL HOSPITAL", "RES", "Active Frontages", "Views", "Noise", and "Exclude from Central City?". A north arrow points left. A large orange arrow points right at the top. The map is annotated with various lines, colors, and symbols to indicate different zones and features.

Concept 2 increases and extends flexibility for mixed uses along Russell Street, as well as along N Mississippi between the I-5/I-405 interchange and the MAX light rail station. It calls for the Blanchard school site to be redeveloped with more mixed uses, including potentially residential. The concept aims to comprehensively redevelop lower Vancouver/Williams corridor with more mixed uses and integrate more residential. The character of Russell, between Lower Albina and historic neighborhood center at Russell/N Williams intersection, would be improved. The concept considers removing the industrial areas west of the UP rail line from the Central City boundary. This concept illustrates one way the “Strand” pedestrian connection could be aligned through the Lower Albina area. It also suggests potential future realignment of streets in the Rose Quarter Transit Center area to reduce conflicts with MAX rail lines and create better development opportunities.

4.f Lower Albina Development: Concept #3



More Detailed Concepts: Lower Albina Development, Concept 3:

This concept suggests taking advantage of vacant lands under the I-5/I-405 interchange for public use (such as dog, water, skate or mountain bike parks, or works of art). It calls for the Blanchard school site to be redeveloped with a more historic block pattern and have a mix of uses including a central public park. Tall buildings are suggested along N Broadway adjacent to the Rose Quarter. The concept strengthens connections from locations east across the I-5 Freeway into Rose Quarter district and public spaces. It also considers views to and from the Memorial Coliseum. Finally, the concept develops strong links from Rose Quarter waterfront development(s) and the future Sullivan's Gulch trail.