



Chapter 1: **Introduction**

1 Introduction

1.1 Delridge community history

Delridge has a unique and interesting heritage. Following is a brief excerpt of past community developments based on information compiled in the “Delridge Community History” published by the Seattle Department of Parks & Recreation in 1994.

Herring’s House

A site along the eastern slope of Pigeon Hill at the present day intersection of Southwest Idaho Street and West Marginal Way is thought to have been inhabited by Native Americans as early as the 6th Century AD - making the site the oldest continuously inhabited Indian village in North America.

“Herring’s House, as the site was called, was named for the abundance of herrings that spawned in the area where the saltwater of the Sound meets the freshwater of the Duwamish River. According to early accounts, Herring’s House included seven longhouses, some 60 by 120 feet, located along the shoreline and centered on a huge potlatch house measuring about 60 by 360 feet.

Herring’s House and the Duwamish River valley was inhabited by the Duwamish Indians - who called themselves the k-ul-KAH-koob-yu - the “proud or confident”. Tribal nobility hosted kinfolk from tribes drawn from throughout Puget Sound at Herring’s House potlatches consisting of great feasts and celebrations. Tribal shamans conducted boisterous competitions and mock battles on the beach to establish tribal importance and supremacy.

The Duwamish were river people, as opposed to lake people, valuing the resources of the river for anadromous fish. The Duwamish divided themselves among the upstream and downstream village groups who took turns building weirs across the Duwamish River channel to keep fish from moving away. These up and downstream groups established territorial agreements governing the timing and placement of the weirs.

The US Senate Treaty of Point Elliott, forced the Indians to surrender their claims to most of the Duwamish River region in 1859. Many Indians stayed behind at their village sites, however, working for early settler mills, farms, and fisheries.

Young’s Cove

In 1853, William Heebner settled near a coved outlet off of Elliott Bay where the Duwamish Indians “camped and smoked their fish on the narrow beaches below Duwamish Head (Herring’s House).

A few years later, Captain John R. Williamson built a sawmill on the campsite and a small settlement developed around it. The mill burned, was rebuilt, and burned again. The settlement was not rebuilt the second time.

In 1894, a cluster of dwellings was developed in this area called “Young’s Cove” - though the site was platted by John Reed and his uncles, Abe Manning and Roscoe Boynton, and a Mr. White. White developed the land in 1886 calling the area “Humphry’s Settlement”. the name remained until 1904, when William Pigott

and Judge Wilson, both from Youngstown, Ohio, established Seattle Steel and renamed the area Youngstown.

Longfellow's Creek and Logging Company

In 1868, John Longfellow, a native of Maine, moved to the town of Port Gamble, on the Olympic Peninsula, where the Puget Mill Company had established its first logging site.

At the time, Puget Mill owned several thousand acres of land, several hundred of which were located all around the hills and valleys surrounding Humphry's Settlement. John Longfellow moved to Young's Cove in 1886 to build a farm and open the Longfellow Logging Company near a creek fed from the cove - likely close to the present day intersection of 28th Avenue and Oregon Street.

Longfellow was a community activist, serving a term as councilman of West Seattle in 1905, and treasurer of the newly annexed City of West Seattle in 1907.

His small mill was eventually destroyed by fire - a typical casualty of the time. However, his logging operation and personal prominence were enough to establish his name on Longfellow Creek.

Tidelands fill

In 1890, legislation enabled the dredging of waterways and reclamation of ocean tidelands, precipitating development around Young's Cove, the Humphry Settlement, and along the Duwamish River.

The Duwamish River valley was particularly prized for industrial sites due to its level topography, extensive contiguous plains, proximity to transportation - including railroad, ship lines, and north/south roadways - and access to natural power provided by the Coulee Dam.

The low gradient and meandering course of the Duwamish River made it valuable as a transportation artery for loggers and agricultural producers. The Port of Seattle established a river position as a northern outpost for gold rush scavengers and the trans-Pacific trade.

Young's Cove was eventually developed with new sawmills, a grain elevator, and other manufacturing industries to become the industrial district of Freeport, centered near Duwamish Head.

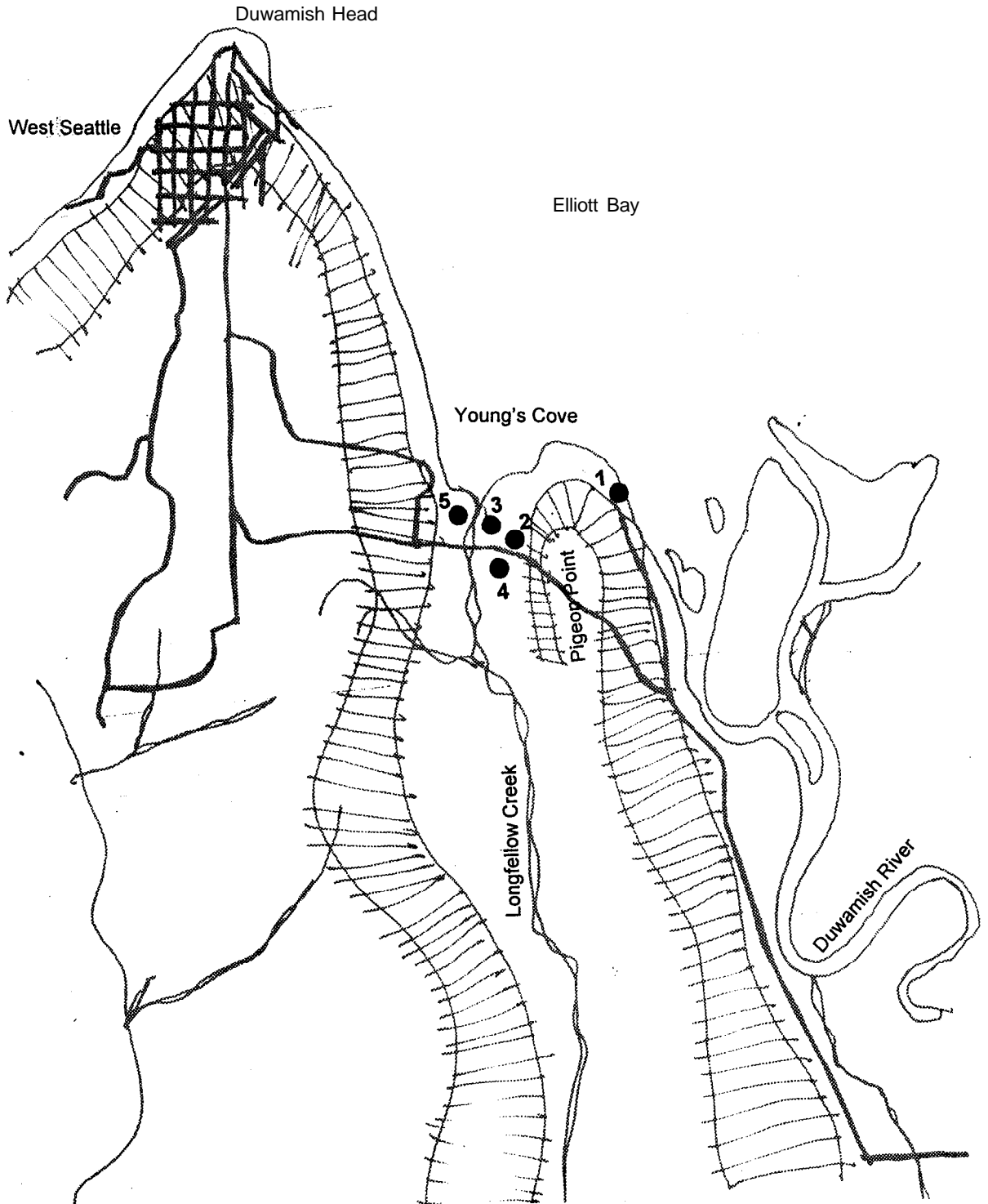
Settlers

English, German, Swede, and Yugoslavian settlers emigrated to the area to work in familiar trades, and began building homes on the hill east of Young's Cove. The hill was called "Pigeon Hill" due to the large number of pigeons who roosted and fed on excess wheat grain from the nearby flour-making mills, and the persistent nature of these early settlers.

Many of these settlers plied their native trades, working as sailors on merchant ships, fishing, or working in local brickyards, grain mills, and other industries. Most raised chickens, tended vegetables gardens, and brewed home-made beers and wines - some of which were sold to neighbors and nearby residents.

Historical attributes

- 1 Herring's House
- 2 Longfellow Logging Company
- 3 Humphry Settlement
- 4 Youngstown
- 5 Pacific Coast Steel Company



Youngstown and Seattle Steel

In 1902, William Pigott and Judge Wilson, met in Seattle after several years of pursuing separate ventures in the steel industry. Judge Wilson was trying to save an existing mill in Lakeview (near Tacoma) with a friend, Richard Brown (owner of the Western Iron Steel Company in Youngstown, Ohio). Pigott worked for North Pacific Railroad developing plans for rail access to the peninsula - a significant development, since prior to this, the only connection between West Seattle and Seattle, was a small, swinging gate bridge.

Pigott purchased land near Humphry Settlement to start his own mill and take advantage of the pending rail service. He became concerned, however, when he saw other mill owners in Kirkland and Irondale encounter difficulties. Consequently, he determined his venture would be more successful if he could move an existing mill to the site rather than build from scratch. He persuaded Judge Wilson to go in on the scheme by changing the site name from Humphry Settlement to Youngstown - to play on their common Youngstown, Ohio heritage.

The initial Pacific Coast Steel Company (Seattle Steel) development consisted of eight frame buildings including a scrap shed, heating room, four stock buildings, a rolling room with several sizes of rolling mills, and an office building. The complex also had an electric power plant and crane, and a gravity water system that drew water from a nearby hillside.

Many Youngstown settlers worked at the steel mill, living in the valley around the mill or along the main road into town.

Youngstown

A small town developed around the steel mill and remaining tide flats, mostly along the plank road (now 16th Avenue Southwest) and the north side of Andover Street. The streetcar was extended to West Seattle in 1904 along Spokane Street, and a "dinky" or rail jitney, shuttled into Youngstown to the end of Avalon.

Houses were built along the streetcar lines, occupied by families of workers at the steel and flour mills, brick yards, and fishing terminals, as well as commuters to downtown Seattle.

Ferry service was established by the West Seattle Land & Improvement Company to transport passengers from Seattle Harbor to West Seattle - initially to boost West Seattle's reputation as a commercial center and residential paradise rather than for general access.

In 1890, the first bridge was built connecting Seattle's principal roadways with Spokane Street. Before this, access was provided by a small hand-operated bridge with a big wheel that traveled up and down the Duwamish River turning from side to side to allow boats to pass. The bridge was operated by Bob Boswell - the man with the wooden leg.

Early Youngstown establishments included Sauriol's Andover Street grocery store, dry goods, and post office; Baldi's meat market, and Picardo's small vegetable stand supplied from a nearby South Park farm.

Lucchesini's pool hall was located close to 28th Avenue Southwest; Bostocks's boarding house, and Reynolds boarding house were located west of the mill. Eventually, stores and a gas station lined the plank road south of Youngstown - though most of the valley was occupied by scattered farms.

Scott's grocery and butcher shop was located at the top of Pigeon Hill, serving the nearby residents. The town of Riverside developed east of Pigeon Hill, along the Duwamish River. The town housed ship building shops and brickyards where local residents worked or ferried across the river to work in Georgetown.

Youngtown's commercial center occupied the crossroads of all of these early communities. Today, Madison Cafe (Lucchesini's original Delridge Tavern), and the Brenner's Market building complex (the popular Youngstown grocery in the 1930's), are the remaining tangible reminders of Youngstown.

Youngstown School

In 1906, the steel mill built the one-room Youngstown School so that local resident's children could avoid the long trek by-foot to the Haller School in West Seattle. Although a streetcar ran between the two schools, most local residents could not afford to pay the fare on a regular basis.

Seventy students enrolled in the first year - more than the first year teacher could handle. The school was expanded to two rooms within a year and a second teacher hired from West Seattle.

In 1914, the Youngstown School was moved to a new site near Pigeon Hill and temporary buildings were added to meet the needs of the growing community. In 1919, a new five-room building was built and again in 1929, a new brick eight-room school was built in place of the second, to provide a gymnasium and room for classes in sewing, cooking, art, and drama. The new school was renamed the Frank B. Cooper School in 1929, even though Cooper had no direct connection to Youngstown.

Land transfers

Beginning in 1905, following state tax increases, the Puget Mill Company began selling portions of their land near growing communities. In the Youngstown area, they both sold and donated a number of sites to the Department of Parks & Recreation for parks and playgrounds - as part of the citywide park plan initiated in 1903 by the Olmstead Brothers.

In 1912, the woods behind the Youngstown school were excavated and filled for the community playfield, and plan on Pigeon Hill was slated for park development.

During the 1930's and 1940's, WPA funds were used to develop the West Seattle Golf Course and Recreation Area. During World War II, property on Pigeon Hill (present day University of Washington research laboratory site) was owned by the Alaska Communications Corporation and used for military activity. The Youngstown playfield was used by the US Military as a barrage balloon battalion. The site was later purchased by the Seattle Housing Authority as a temporary housing site for steel workers during peak wartime production periods.

Delridge

In 1939, the community was renamed Delridge to describe the vast dells and ridges of the surrounding area. In this postwar period, new emigrants to the area included increasing numbers of Asian, Filipino, and African Americans, followed by successive immigrations in the 1980's and 1990's of Koreans and Samoans.

These successive immigrations created housing booms - particularly for home ownership. As late as 1957, the percentage of Delridge residents who owned their homes was larger than in any other section of the city.

Since the completion of the Spokane Street Bridge in the early 1980's however, an increasing number of multifamily rental complexes were developed along Delridge Way to take advantage of waterfront access, views, and appropriately zoned land.

However, the rugged topography of the area, particularly the flood prone dells and slide prone hillsides, inhibited developers saving the community from being built out like much of the rest of West Seattle.

Community empowerment

In 1914, the Youngstown Improvement Club (YIC) was formed to enable residents to gain control over the physical and social future of the community. The YIC built a meeting and activity center - currently occupied by the Disabled American Veterans Association.

When Youngstown was renamed Delridge, the new Delridge Community Association (DCA) successfully lobbied for the pedestrian bridge from Cooper School to the Delridge Playfield across Delridge Way - continuing the tradition of community activism.

In 1980, Housing & Community Development Block Grants and Forward Thrust funds were combined to build the Delridge Community Center - replacing the previous building built as a community hall for steel workers.

Seattle's comprehensive planning process

In 1994, Seattle adopted the city's comprehensive plan, "Toward a Sustainable Seattle". The plan evolved over a five year period through discussion, debate, and creative thinking of thousands of city residents working with city staff and elected officials. The 20-year policy (1994-2014) articulates a vision of how Seattle will grow in ways that sustain citizen values. The plan makes basic policy choices and provides a flexible framework for adapting to real conditions over time.

The plan articulates land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities, and utilities elements in accordance with the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act. The plan will eventually include an economic development element to comply with King County's Countywide Planning Policies. And, the plan will also include neighborhood planning and human development elements to comply with the Seattle Framework Policies Resolution 28535.

The goal uniting all elements of the Comprehensive Plan is to preserve the best qualities of Seattle's distinct neighborhoods while responding positively and creatively to the pressures of change and growth.

The plan's objectives - are to develop and enhance the following qualities:

- a diverse mix of people of varied ages, incomes, cultures, employment, and interests;
- a variety of housing types, ranging appropriately for each neighborhood scale to meet the needs and preferences of the diverse community;
- a strong relationship between residential and commercial areas;
- community facilities, including schools, community and recreation centers, libraries, parks, and human services within walking distance of neighborhood centers;
- partnerships with neighborhood and community-based organizations to improve people's access to services and activities;
- to create opportunities for interaction through means as neighborhood planning and community policing;
- transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities with connections to adjacent neighborhoods, good circulation within the neighborhood and surrounding area;
- well-integrated public open space, providing recreational opportunities for neighborhood residents and workers; and
- a unique identity reflecting local history, the neighborhood's natural features, its culture, and other sources of community pride.

The implementation strategy - will achieve this by:

- developing a more complete and competitive intermodal public transportation system;
- targeting use of housing assistance funds and planning tools to provide desirable and affordable housing;
- investing in facilities and service delivery systems design to serve higher density neighborhoods; and
- using neighborhood-based decisions built upon local citizens' expressed priorities.

1.2 Delridge neighborhood planning process - phase 1

The Delridge Neighborhood Planning (Organizing) Committee was organized in December 1996, with the assistance of the Seattle Neighborhood Planning Office, to initiate this neighborhood planning process. Committee members included 20 resident stakeholders drawn from various interest groups who have been active on community issues within the neighborhood for a considerable time.

The Committee's purpose was to organize the process for phase 1 neighborhood planning so that the Delridge community could develop:

- a vision statement for the future of Delridge,
- identify the most important issues to address in neighborhood planning, and
- establish planning boundaries.

Neighborhood planning area

The Delridge neighborhood is generally described as the lands between 35th Street on the west and Marginal Way or the Duwamish Waterway on the east, the Spokane Street Bridge on the north and Roxbury Street on the south - although the lands south of Thistle Street are being planned by the Westwood/Highlands Neighborhood Committee - a separate neighborhood planning effort. Outreach efforts were targeted toward the whole of Delridge during the planning process.

For the purposes of this plan, the Delridge neighborhood planning area is generally a five block area on either side of Delridge Way from the West Seattle Bridge (at Spokane Street) to SW Webster Street (just south of the south node at Kmart). The Planning Committee felt that focusing the community's attention and the Committee's effort on Delridge Way would create the greatest positive impact on the whole community with the limited time and resources for the planning effort. Some aspects of the plan, however, do not conform easily to boundaries (such as human development issues) and some aspects do not fit within the confines of the Neighborhood Planning Area (such as open space and trails). These issues were addressed on a broader level than the Planning Area.

Topic meetings

During February-March of 1997, the Delridge Neighborhood Planning Committee conducted a series of topic meetings covering public safety and the community, business and economic development, housing and land use, traffic and transportation, and parks and open space.

Topic newsletters (with Cambodian and Spanish translation) were mailed to 5,000 households within the planning outreach area. Approximately 85 persons attended one or more meetings identifying issues, priorities, and visions.

Focus group meetings

During April-June of 1997, the Committee conducted a series of 10 focus group meetings with community council, church group, English as a second language (ESL) classes, school teachers and staff, and apartment residents who were not represented in the topic meetings.

The Committee reviewed the results of the topic sessions (which were translated into Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Spanish) with focus group participants identifying additional concerns of interest to this population group.

Sanislo School survey

Using the results of the topic and focus group meetings, the Committee developed a questionnaire survey that was sent home with students at Sanislo Elementary School. The Committee used the school survey results to draft a list of phase 2 planning priorities for neighborhood validation.

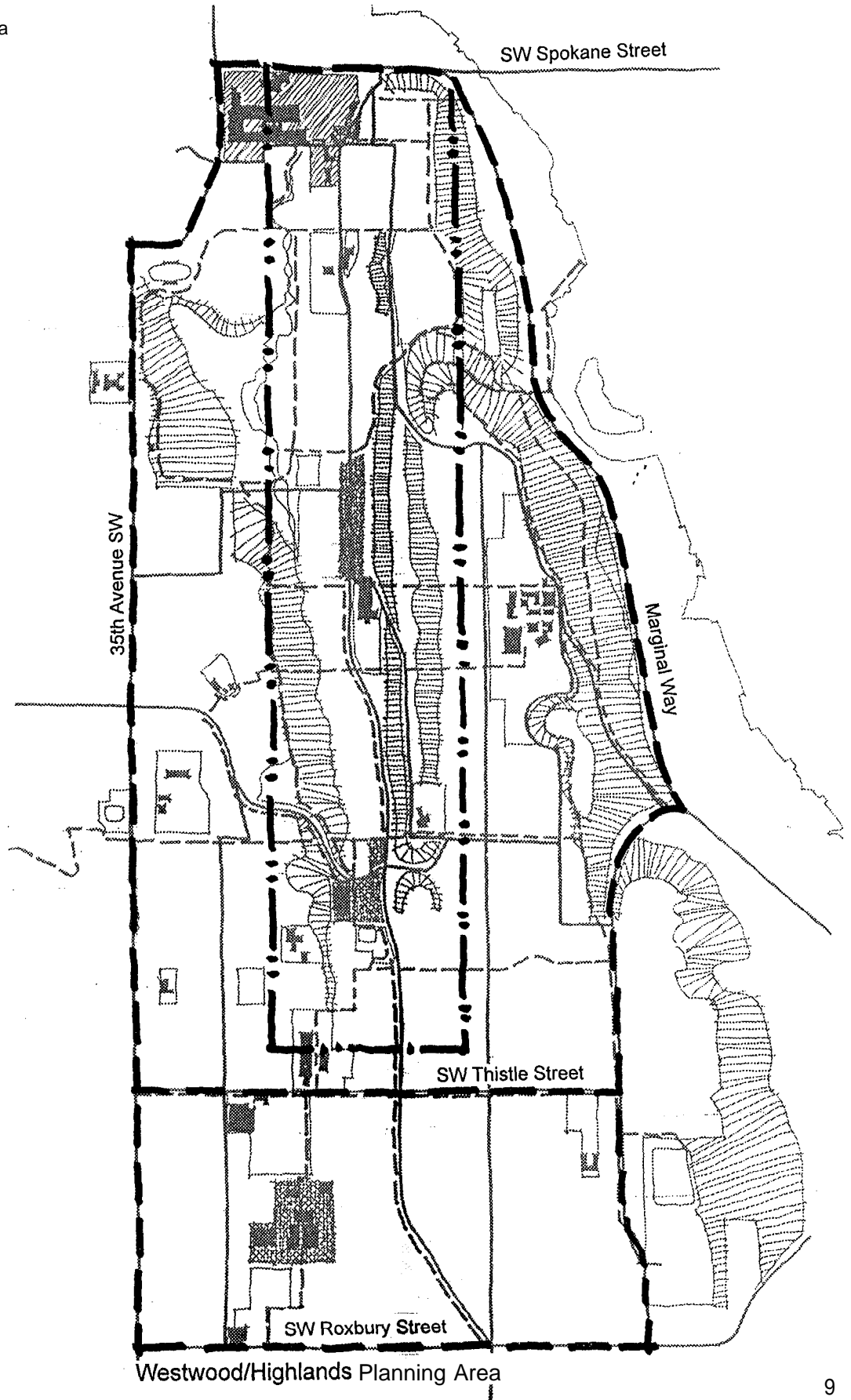
Validation event and survey

The Committee designed and mailed a phase 1 validation event notice and survey to over 5,000 households within the neighborhood planning area. The validation event was conducted at Delridge Community Center with supporting food, music, and informational displays.

Discussion group sessions were conducted with event participants to review proposed phase 2 tasks, priorities, and other particulars. Validation surveys were

Planning area boundaries

- **-Planning Focus Area
- -Planning Outreach Area



Westwood/Highlands Planning Area

completed and returned by over 110 event participants - who represented a diverse cross-section of neighborhood ethnic, income, housing tenure, and business groups.

1.3 Delridge neighborhood planning process - phase 2

The phase 2 planning process consisted of the following tasks:

Topic workshops

During March-May of 1998, the Delridge Neighborhood Planning Committee hosted a series of planning workshops with interested neighborhood residents and property owners, school and church organizations, and representatives of city and regional agencies including the Seattle School District, Parks Department, SEATrans, and RTA, among others.

During the brainstorming sessions, over 200 neighborhood residents created over 500 ideas dealing with public safety, transportation, community and culture, the neighborhood economy, nature, and the built environment. Some of the ideas were duplicates - created by different participants during different workshop sessions. The Committee's consultants compiled the most obvious common ideas into a single proposal consisting of 479 separate ideas.

Public forum

In June, the Committee hosted a public forum in the first floor conference room of the DSHS Building on Delridge Way. Over 60 Delridge residents reviewed the results of the brainstorming workshops and completed a survey indicating those features they wanted to see included in the proposed Delridge Neighborhood Plan.

Design concept development

In July and August, the Committee developed the design concepts illustrated in this plan using the results of the public forum. The initial topic ideas were organized into a series of proposed plans dealing with nature, transportation, and three proposed neighborhood nodal centers along Delridge Way - at Andover, Oregon, Brandon, and Sylvan Way (Kmart). A fourth community campus node was defined by Delridge Community Center, Playfield, and Old Cooper School.

In August, the design concepts were illustrated in a newsletter and mailed to the community residents who had participated in the initial topic workshops for their review and information.

Node workshop reviews

In late August, the Committee hosted a workshop for each of the three nodes of activity proposed along Delridge Way - at Andover, Brandon, and Kmart. During the workshop reviews, over 45 property and business owners, residents, and other interested parties reviewed and critiqued the preliminary proposals.

The Committee refined and expanded the proposed concepts based on the comments received during the workshop review sessions. The preliminary recommendations outlined in the section on key strategies, other strategies, and the Action and Approval Matrix are based on the results of these public participatory events.

Draft plan recommendations

In September and October, the Committee developed draft plan recommendations for about 100 plan and project proposals using the results of the review sessions with nodal business owners and residents.

In September, the preliminary recommendations were presented to a meeting of city department representatives to obtain preliminary technical staff reviews and comments.

Public survey and forum

In November, a third public newsletter and survey was developed to describe the 94 principal proposals of the draft plan. The newsletter and survey was mailed to every Delridge household and provided for review and comment at a public forum conducted at the DSHS auditorium on Delridge Way on November 23.

The final plan recommendations and priorities included within this planning document and the accompanying Approval & Adoption Matrix are based on the results of the comments provided at the forum and in the collation of the returned surveys.

Zoning proposal discussion meeting

During the development of the Plan, planning participants and Neighborhood Planning Committee members proposed several zoning changes in each of the three neighborhood anchors (nodes) designed to accomplish various objectives of the plan. The Planning Committee discussed these proposals with the Seattle Department of Construction and Land Use and DCLU created a mailing list of property residents and owners within 300' of each parcel for which there was a proposed zoning change. A flyer describing the zoning changes was mailed to this list inviting people to a meeting to discuss the proposed rezones. The meeting was held on December 14, 1998 and attendees commented on the proposals. Based on participation at the meeting, responses from people unable to attend the zoning meeting, and comments received at the Validation event (see below) rezone proposals were refined for inclusion this draft plan.

Validation survey and forum

In January of 1999, the Committee produced a "plan validation mailer" which included a survey that was mailed by the Seattle Neighborhood Planning Office, to all households within the planning area. The survey asked residents to validate the final preferences and priorities to be retained in the plan and presented to City Council for action.

This plan is the Committee's best effort at combining all of what we have heard over the three year planning process in a way that represents the wishes of the community for the future of the Delridge Planning Area.