



## DESIGN NARRATIVE

Gateway  
Senior Housing

1/19/16

SITE  
DEVELOPMENT  
PERMIT

THE WOLFF  
COMPANY

The Issaquah Gateway Senior Housing development intends to meet the goals of the Central Issaquah Plan (CIP) guidelines and provide a transition from the nearby low density residential development to a more dense and semi-urban development typology within the boundary of the CIP area. The goal is to provide seniors with housing that allows independence with varying care options, dependent on individual need.

The building will accommodate 146 residential units with associated services for a senior living facility with 110 parking stalls, including 78 surface stalls and 32 located within a parking structure below the housing units. The intent is to meet the goals of the Central Issaquah Plan while creating much-needed senior living opportunities to the area.

The site is located on the western edge of Schneider Creek, between the Creek and Newport Way. The creek buffer will be reduced by twenty five percent, as allowed with enhancements, which will be similar in nature to the Gateway apartment's enhancement to the east of Schneider creek. This buffer and some areas of steep slope on the site have reduced the developable area of the site as shown in the developable area diagram.

Access to the site is somewhat constrained and a new access point is planned from Newport Way towards the north end of the west property line, with a new frontage road introduced along the west of the building. This allows the project to consolidate the access from Newport way and introduce the standard neighborhood street typology per the Central Issaquah Development and Design Standards. This strategy also allows reconciliation of the difference in grade from Newport Way to the building site. The design team is requesting a code interpretation for the building height to be measured from the proposed new average grade in lieu of the existing average grade as this is understood to be a forthcoming code amendment. With this interpretation, the building is within the height limit allowed per CIDDS measured to the midpoint of the roof and is able to meet the minimum FAR for the site.



The building location along the west site frontage towards the south also increases the open space between the building and I-90 to the north, which helps maintain significant open space views from I-90 across the site and the Schneider Creek buffer area.

Connectivity between this development and the adjacent Gateway Apartments development is achieved through a proposed pedestrian bridge over Schneider Creek at the location of the existing utility crossing and the plate spanning the creek. Additionally, this will also allow access between this development and the new neighborhood park at the apartment site achieving connectivity goals stated in the CIDDS.

The building design makes use of the surrounding character and terrain. The site is bounded on the west by Newport Way and the terrain at the street is heavily wooded while steeply sloping to a wetland at Schneider Creek. There is a panorama of forested hills to the east and upper level dwelling units will have northeast views to Lake Sammamish. To the west the land quickly rises beyond Newport Way with a hillside interspersed with trees, existing single family homes, and an existing multifamily structure. A significant portion of the site will be preserved as Schneider Creek buffer area.

Vehicular access from Newport Way will quickly turn parallel to the street and descend to a drop off area at the main building entrance. This will be a neighborhood street type with parallel parking along the drive. The access drive will continue around the south end of the building to a lower parking court on the east side. The parking court will also provide access to parking structure beneath the building. The single vehicle entry and single drive aisle through the frontage road and parking areas allows for simple and obvious wayfinding for motorists. An accessible ramp provides pedestrian access to the site, arriving at an entry plaza for both pedestrians and motorists located prominently at the center of the street-facing building façade.

The building will consist of two wings whose axes run parallel to the contours and step with the slope. The north wing is designed to be four stories of senior residential units over a single story parking structure. The south wing is designed to be five stories of senior residential units. The wings are connected by a community center including the lobby, dining, exercise facilities, and support spaces.

Visitors will enter the lobby beneath a canopy from the drop-off area. The lobby will have a high ceiling and a glass wall, through which residents will see lofty views across the wetland to the hills. The lobby and dining are envisioned as highly open with mezzanines and decks to optimize the indoor-outdoor experience with a central location to encourage social interaction. Residents will enjoy a range of exercise equipment and will be afforded amenities such as a salon, wellness center, theater, art room and a swimming pool. In addition, outdoor facilities include a community garden and an overlook with seating and a covered picnic area with walking paths that provide connectivity with a pedestrian bridge across Schneider Creek.



## Landscape Strategy

The landscape design plays an important part in the image of the community. The experience begins with the landscaping along Newport Way creating the vision for the community. Large canopy trees, plantings and a pedestrian walk will provide an inviting human scale along Newport Way and the entry drive for residents and visitors. At the entrance to the building flowering accent trees, heavy plantings, special pavement and lighting will create an inviting space with year round interest. Resident parking will be tucked behind the building and under the building. Trees will provide relief and shade for the parking areas. Residential patios along the street edge will activate the streetscape, and provide a pedestrian scale. There will be a community open space and lookout, located along the creek with a trail connection for residents to walk along. This will be a focal point and gathering space for residents and visitors of the community. The area will include a covered area, seating, tables, interpretive information and flowering accent trees and native shrub plantings. Adjacent to the covered area and patio a large community garden with raised planters for growing edibles, herbs and fruits will be available for residents use.

### City of Issaquah Design Standards: 16.2 B Context

This site is located west of the city center of Issaquah and Schneider Creek and a conservation area which runs east-west. Access to the site slopes steeply but the interior of the site is relatively flat topography and currently is unimproved pasture land. The site will be connected across Schneider creek via a pedestrian bridge to the adjacent residential development. The existing site has relatively few trees, and much of the perimeter of the site at Newport Way NE has a mix of native and non-native trees and invasive understory. Many of these trees have been stuck, topped by utilities and are not viable for the long term. There is a grove of trees located on the south side of the site that will be preserved, as well as a second grove located in the wetland area. Trees removed will be replaced per the CIDDS 10.10 required tree density. See Arborists report for a full tree assessment. The site design incorporates significant restoration planting a the creek buffer and the more formal planting design adjacent to the buildings will be a mix of native, drought tolerant and adaptive species, trees and bulbs that provide seasonal interest through varied foliage size, color, texture and shape, flowers, fall color change and fruits. See sheets SDP L1.08, L1.09, L1.10 and L1.11 for images of trees and description of tree and shrub character and role in the landscape design to meet COI Development Standards. The trees and plants have been chosen to moderate the buildings height and create pedestrian scale. The trees will vary in their aesthetic appearance due to varied form, texture, foliar density/visual permeability, seasonal presence of flowers, growing season color, fall color, bark characteristics and persistence of leaves, (evergreen vs. deciduous). Trees have been chosen to create visual harmony with existing trees and planting, and enhance the character and identity of streets for pedestrians and bikers.



City of Issaquah Design Standards: 16.2 D Key Landscape Elements

The entry area incorporates a focal point ‘art’ element, creating a pleasant exterior waiting area at the pick-up and drop off zone at the building entry. Outdoor community spaces; lawn, orchard and community gardens, covered outdoor seating area and connections to the trail provide residents and visitors varied places to sit, walk, garden and enjoy nature. The design will be composed to combine foliage for maximum effect for year round interest. At building entries and important pedestrian connections repetition and contrast will be considered as wayfinding tools for residents and visitors and to create pedestrian interest. Retaining walls facing the building and aligned with the access road will be buffered with tree, shrub and vine planting. The trees will vary in their aesthetic appearance due to varied form, texture, foliar density/visual permeability, seasonal presence of flowers, growing season color, fall color, bark characteristics and persistence of leaves, (evergreen vs. deciduous).

City of Issaquah Design Standards: 16.2 D Key Design Unity

The site design incorporates significant restoration with native planting a the creek buffer and the more formal planting design adjacent to the buildings that incorporates a mix of native, drought tolerant and adaptive species, trees and bulbs that provide seasonal interest though varied foliage size, color, texture and shape, flowers, fall color change and fruits. Trees have been chosen to create visual harmony with existing trees and planting, and enhance the character and identity of streets for pedestrians and bikers.

Tree Preservation

All healthy trees in the buffer and setbacks will be saved. 25% of total caliper (dbh) of significant trees in developable site area per City of Issaquah IMC 18.12.1385 shall be retained.