The neighborhood of Northgate has a strong identity tied to the shopping center sharing its name. Unfortunately this current identity does not foster the development of a diverse mixed-use, pedestrian friendly, and civic based community.

Initially, our group chose to examine the historic 1950’s mall-center around which the neighborhood developed. We feel that the original open-air pedestrian shopping arcade is a valid starting point from which to begin our redevelopment efforts. Although this restoration provides a center, the mega-block site requires radical subdivision to become integrated with its surrounding urban fabric. The addition of new public streets and mixed-use development on both sides 5th Street and within the existing parking areas are intended to create an urban rhythm, density, and pedestrian scale framework in which a strong neighborhood identity can take root and flourish.

We propose the construction of a major civic building on 5th Street opposite the existing Bon Marché, fronted by a large open public plaza and bus stop. This public open space would serve to define and reinforce the civic structures. A pedestrian path cutting through the center of the mall’s east-west axis to a light rail transit station (located off the I-5 right of way on the malls west side) can provide civic counter point to the consumer-oriented arcade stretching south from Northgate way. The intersection of these paths lies at the location of an entry court in the 1950’s Northgate development, which could be further, enhanced by the footprint of the light rail station. This courtyard could serve as an urban mixing chamber-enhancing retail visibility as commuters move between bus and light-rail and using shoppers and retail workers as eyes on the street for the security of passengers.

We feel that higher density housing, the development of existing underutilized natural resources such as Thornton Creek, quality street architecture, and public artwork within the Northgate site and immediate vicinity are needed to support our design and create a livable urban center.
Figure / Ground Circulation Diagram
Land Use
Axonometric