South Lake Union Urban Design Framework

Report to the Seattle Design Commission
September 17, 2009
Context

• Urban Center Designation – 2004
• Urban Center Neighborhood Plan – 2007
• Urban Form Study - 2008
Recent Development

- Growth is occurring throughout the neighborhood

- Non-residential development
- Residential development
- Major Growth Areas
Designation as an Urban Center 2004

Urban Centers
1. Northgate
2. University
3. Uptown
4. 1st Hill/Capitol Hill
5. Downtown
6. South Lake Union
SLU Growth Targets

- Planned for significant growth – most aggressive targets in Seattle
- 2004-2024:
  - 16,000 new jobs (+200%)
  - 8,000 new households (+700%)
Urban Center Neighborhood Plan

- Affordable Housing
- Diversity of Building Types
- Public Benefits
Urban Form Study

- Phase I: Development of EIS Alternatives
- Phase II: EIS Process
- Phase III: Rezone Process
Transit Corridors and Nodes Option
Edge Transitions Option
Parks Focus Option
Alternative #1

Floor Plate Size
Commercial floor plates:
35,000 from podium to 160 feet
24,000 above 160 feet.

Residential floor plates:
12,500 from podium to 160 feet
10,500 above 160 feet.

Minimum Lot Size:
22,000/18,000 s.f. per tower.

Legend:
- Podium
- 40'
- 55'
- 65'
- 75'
- 85'

Updated 9/11/08
Floor Plate Size
Commercial floor plates:
35,000 from podium to 160 feet
24,000 above 160 feet.

Residential floor plates:
10,500 from podium to 160 feet
8,500 above 160 feet.

Minimum Lot Size:
22,000/18,000 s.f. per tower.
Floor Plate Size
Commercial floor plates:
35,000 from podium to 160 feet
24,000 above 160 feet.

Residential floor plates:
8,000 above podium height limit.

Minimum Lot Size:
22,000/18,000 sf. per tower.
Scoping Comments

• Use
• Street Experience
• View Corridors
• Public Amenities
• Community Center
What is the UDF?

• Distill ideas and themes from past planning efforts into a shared, unifying vision.

• Seize new opportunities (e.g. north portal).

• Build a direct link between plan goals and implementation, bring in all city depts.
Key Goals for SLU

• Encourage innovative, equitable development

• Create safe, attractive streets and public spaces as the setting for the neighborhood’s public life

• Identify opportunities to improve access to community services over time
UDF—Informs the EIS

Existing Plans and Policies

- Urban Form
- Placemaking
- Sustainability and “Green Infrastructure”

SLU Rezoning Proposal

Specific Projects
“Incentive Rezoning” Approach

Base Zoning (SM and CI)

Incentive Zoning Overlay

Design Framework Establishes:

Bonus FAR allowed for:
- Affordable Housing (per SMC 23.58A); required in neighborhood?
- Ground-level public space, on or off-site
- others

New standards for Bonus FAR:
- tower floorplates, min. spacing, # per block
- others

Revisions to base zoning standards:
- Street-facing retail / blank walls
- Setbacks on Denny Way
- Upper Story Stepbacks
- Streetscape Requirements

4.5-5 FAR allowed; residential exempt from FAR
Process

• Stakeholders: SLUFAN, LUOA, CNC, Issue Advocates.

• Working Group: City staff from capital departments, design staff from Weber + Thompson, Mithun, NBBJ, VIA Architecture.
Six Charettes

- Six identified “opportunity areas”
- Walking tour followed by Charrette
- Charrette results provided to stakeholder group for review/revision/direction.
- City staff prepare policy language/implementation matrix / udf final product.
Stakeholder Review

• Meet every 3-4 weeks to review/revise charrette recommendations.
• Provide direction.
• Participate in Charrettes
• Provide connection to community.
Opportunity Areas

• Gateways Heart Edges
• East/West Connections
• Residential Zones
• Waterfront
• Implementation I: Building Prototypes
• Implementation II: Incentive Strategies
Challenges/Issue Opportunities
Challenges

• Managing expectations – what the UDF can and cannot do.

• Keeping discussion off height.

• Identifying tools necessary to implement UDF: legal limits on our ability to leverage private development.
Next Steps

• Working Group “Bringing It All Together”
  Session: Sept 23rd

• Community presentations in October, November

• Final document in early 2010