Lake City Urban Design Framework Overview

The Lake City Urban Design Framework (UDF) establishes a shared vision and implementation strategy for the future of the North District and the Lake City hub urban village, an area designated for growth in our citywide Comprehensive Plan. The UDF is part of broader efforts to improve the neighborhood being guided by Lake City Future First (LCFF). The process initially began in 2013, when Neighborhood Action Teams formed partnerships between community members and City staff to identify and respond to neighborhood concerns. The recommendations below represent key highlights from the draft UDF.

Building Form, Height, and Open Space

Along with zoning changes, development standards will encourage upper floors of buildings to be set back from the street. On larger blocks, mid-block pedestrian connections and ground floor open space will also be encouraged. While the draft UDF envisions modest height increases in locations around the Civic Core, some have expressed interest in taller buildings that have more public open space on the ground floor.

Getting Around Lake City

The Traffic Safety Corridor Project and Safe Routes to School are making numerous improvements along Lake City Way and around the North District. As part of the UDF, a streetscape concept plan will be developed to create a Festival Street in the Civic Core at 28th Avenue NE. The NE 130th Street Light Rail Station will help connect Lake City to other neighborhoods.

Parks and Open Space

The North District has a lot of natural features, including street trees, that should be preserved and enhanced as the neighborhood grows. Habitat restoration and appropriate public within the Thornton Creek watershed will help distinguish Lake City from other urban neighborhoods. A new full service community center, and other public recreation activities, including access to Lake Washington, are important priorities for the neighborhood.

Examples of Buildings in Commercial zones

Examples of Buildings in Neighborhood Commercial zones
Guiding Principles

The urban design framework identifies the history, context, issues, within Lake City’s Hub Urban Village, civic core, and commercial areas. The following are guiding principles which the proposed planning concepts and strategies are based on:

1. Strong Sense of Place
   Preserve and enhance the main street character and vitality of the commercial area, establish a civic core as a destination resource, preserve and restore the natural environment, and encourage cultural diversity.

2. Economic Vitality
   Promote development that includes a balanced diversity of retail, commercial, office, institutional, and service relate activities. Support locally owned businesses while proactively attracting innovative enterprises, technical and academic educational institutions, healthcare and biomedical companies which can utilize the cultural and physical resources of our community.

3. Transportation Excellence
   Improve existing transit service and facilities, strongly support light rail access to the Lake City Community, create safe and enjoyable bicycle routes, promote easier connection between neighborhoods. Enable LCW/ST522 to become an amenity in and for the community.

4. Pedestrian Orientation
   Build sidewalks and pedestrian connections across and along Lake City Way, within the Civic Core, and to public schools and parks. Prioritize connections between residential uses, schools, parks, and other civic places, especially across Lake City Way.

5. Diversity and Housing
   Provide housing opportunities which respond to the diversity of cultures, economic levels, and age groups that make up the demographics of our growing populations. Encourage housing which integrates communities groups in healthy and respectful ways.

6. Sustainable Development
   Provide incentives for development which is responsive to the community vision, adheres to contextual development guidelines, and is committed to using sustainable practices such as meeting Green Factor requirements, Green Built standards, and LEED guidelines.

7. Environmental Stewardship
   Restore and protect existing natural systems such as the Thornton Creek watershed and its connection to Lake Washington, steep slopes, wetlands, and contiguous areas of native vegetation. Rejuvenate and expand the iconic tree lined boulevards, parks and open spaces. Uphold the preservation of trees in both the public and private realm.