## Context & Site

### CS 1
**Natural Systems & Features**

*Use natural systems and features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPOSED UNIVERSITY DISTRICT GUIDELINES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Plan for Light &amp; Trees</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A. <strong>Access to light.</strong> Arrange building massing and use upper level step backs to minimize impacts to solar access into ground floors, shared amenity spaces, and the public realm, especially on narrow rights-of-way such as University Way NE. Use two-story or mezzanine layouts for residential or live-work units at grade to increase daylight access.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. <strong>Distance below grade.</strong> Minimize the distance that units are located below grade to provide direct access to light and air from above-grade windows for each unit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. <strong>Existing &amp; New Trees.</strong> Site buildings and design building massing to preserve and incorporate existing mature trees, especially on slopes. Where removal is unavoidable, configure open space to accommodate large canopy replacement trees.</td>
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### CS 3
**Architectural Context & Character**

*Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.*

<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>I. University District Context &amp; Architectural Vernacular</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. <strong>Foster the eclectic mix of architectural styles and forms</strong> on the block and throughout the neighborhood while maintaining articulated bases that are pedestrian-oriented in design.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. <strong>Strive to complement and continue predominant styles or materials</strong> when the immediate context of a site is comprised of buildings or a collection of buildings with local significance or identifiable architectural styles or similar materials.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. <strong>Articulate buildings to respond to historic platting patterns</strong> to create compatibility between contemporary architecture and existing development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. <strong>Respond to nearby predominant horizontal and vertical patterns</strong> and datum lines, and taking cues from the campus gothic style and design elements in older structures such as punched windows, texture-rich materials, and thoughtful detailing.</td>
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**II. Adaptive Reuse & Preservation**

A. **Preserve positive qualities of existing development or rehabilitate existing structures or facades,** especially those with exceptional character, local significance, or quality materials including brick.

B. **Creatively repurpose materials, signage, and other physical pieces** from existing development into new projects to create a connection with the neighborhood's past and contribute to a sense of place.
CONTEXT & SITE

PROPOSED UNIVERSITY DISTRICT GUIDELINES

II. Character Areas (See Map A)

A. Cowen Park: In the Cowen Park character area, forge a connection from the park to University Ave NE by incorporating public seating, small plazas, and landscaping. Use lush landscaping to carry the experience of Cowen Park down the north end of University Way NE.

B. 17th Avenue Boulevard & University Park: Reinforce the existing pattern of generous front setbacks with occupiable space, with area for large shade trees and landscaping. Take cues from the design, scale, and character of historic buildings, including grand, elevated entries; the use of brick, masonry, and wood; a high level architectural detailing; and the use of pitched and gabled roofs.

C. Ravenna Springs: Projects in Ravenna Springs should reinforce the quality of a “village” with smaller massing, pedestrian-priority design, individual unit entries and ground-related housing, highly permeable blocks with walkways and open spaces, and a high degree of landscaping and pedestrian amenities.

D. University Village & 25th Ave NE: Projects in the University Village area should prioritize active edges and direct pedestrian connections to 25th Ave NE and the Burke Gilman Trail. Development along 25th Ave NE should create an active, engaging edge for pedestrians and create protected sidewalks by utilizing planter strips with lush landscaping.

E. The U District Core and "The Ave".

- Support an eclectic mix of businesses, architectural styles, and highest degree of pedestrian activity.
- Development on The Ave should respect historic platting patterns and pedestrian-oriented design by breaking large development into multiple buildings and design languages of 20-40’ modules.
- Use upper level steps back to create a human-scaled street wall that responds to predominant datums and increases solar access.
- Provide opportunities for businesses to individualize storefronts and streetscapes through colors, materials, signage, seating, or other pedestrian amenities.
- Support activity and passive surveillance from upper levels with balconies and terraces.

II. Neighborhood Context (See Map A)

A. Contribution to Community Character. To enhance the eclectic character of the University District, integrate elements that allow for commercial tenants to provide variation and individual expression through mediums such as paint, awnings, materials, seating, art, and signage.

B. Zone Transitions. When a project abuts a zone with a significantly higher allowed height of at least two stories, provide upper level setbacks that create a sensitive transition to the less intensive zone.

C. Parks & Open Space. Development adjacent to open space and parks should contribute to activity by incorporating small public plazas and seating areas for ground-floor uses that face the park and activate the edges. Design projects to act as a backdrop, with subdued but refined building facades that help frame the open space, or incorporate artistic features that complement the function of the open space.

III. Gateways & Placemaking Corners

A. Gateways: Identified on Map A are significant "entry" points that express a sense of arrival to a distinct area with unique design concepts and the highest attention to design quality.

- Express a sense of arrival to a distinct area with strong forms, prominent massing, and unique design concepts and the highest attention to design quality.
- Create gracious entries with wider sidewalks, significant landscaping features, public plazas, active uses, and art.

B. Placemaking corners: Identified on Map A are key landmarks and pedestrian activity areas within the U District Neighborhood.

- Design all of the adjacent corner-facing sites as a composition that frames the space, and should balance strong spatial edges with providing adequate space for movement and activity, including small plazas, seating, and public art.
- Design prominent corners to emphasize pedestrian activity and visual interest in the public realm through special paving and surface treatments; art installations; seating; kiosks.
A. Reinforce existing movement patterns and introduce connections that weave a pedestrian-priority network throughout the neighborhood with mid-block pedestrian connections and shared alleys.

• Include interior or exterior east-west pedestrian walkways from the street to alley, especially for projects located within the middle-third of long blocks in areas designated on Map B.

B. Design adjacent facades as a second “front” with active uses.

• Locate active-ground level uses that physically or visually engages the public realm and enhances the sense of community and activity. Options include plazas, public courtyards, play areas, gardens, and ground level patios.

C. Green Streets and Green Spines. On sites within the Green Spines (See Map B) and on Green Streets, include multiple types of public open spaces and private amenity spaces that address the public realm including: balconies and unit patios, pocket plazas, strategic setbacks at grade for seating areas and play areas, and upper level setbacks with terraces or patios.

D. Connections to the Burke-Gilman. For projects located adjacent to the Burke Gilman Trail, provide physical and visual connections for pedestrians and bicycles. Design the Trail-facing façade with active uses, including retail, shared amenity space, and unit stoops or patios.

Please leave comments below!
University District Neighborhood Design Guidelines

Character Areas, Gateways, and Placemaking Corners

Key
- Neighborhood Design Guideline Area
- Gateway Corner
- Placemaking Corner
- Character Area
- Mixed-Use Corridor
- Shared Alley
- Burke Gilman Trail
- Mid-Block Pedestrian Pathway Area
- Green Spines

Note: Design Review does not apply to all zones. See the Seattle Municipal Code, Section 23.41.004 for more details.

Public Realm Activation & Open Space Network

Key
- Neighborhood Design Guideline Area
- Mixed-Use Corridor
- Shared Alley
- Burke Gilman Trail
- Mid-Block Pedestrian Pathway Area
- Green Spines

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University District Neighborhood Design Guidelines

Character Areas, Gateways, and Placemaking Corners

Map A

Key
- Neighborhood Design Guideline Area
- Gateway Corner
- Placemaking Corner
- Character Area
- Corridor

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Public Realm Activation & Open Space Network

Map B

Key
- Neighborhood Design Guideline Area
- Mixed-Use Corridor
- Shared Alley
- Burke Gilman Trail
- Mid-Block Pedestrian Pathway Area
- Green Spines

Note: Design Review does not apply to all zones. See the Seattle Municipal Code, Section 23.41.004 for more details.
PUBLIC LIFE

EXISTING CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINE
Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

PROPOSED UNIVERSITY DISTRICT GUIDELINES

I. Entries

A. Design prominent, generous entries with vertical emphasis and architectural interest at a variety of scales. Use high-quality materials and detailing to create a welcoming experience.

B. Create a hierarchy of entries that is easily distinguishable. Main entries should be identifiable from far away and up close.

C. Avoid grade separations at retail entries. Step floor plates along sloped sites to avoid below-grade entries for commercial and residential uses.

D. Courtyard entries should be physically and visually accessible from the street. Units facing the courtyard should have a porch, stoop, or deck associated with the dwelling unit to support community interaction. Any fences or gates should be set back from the sidewalk to incorporate a semi-public transitional space.

II. Ground-level Residential

A. Articulate individual dwelling units and provide usable stoops or patios for street-facing residential units. Include architectural detailing that indicates a residential use, such as contrasting trim, special materials, door knockers, awnings, and appropriately scaled materials. Provide opportunities for personalization.

B. Use rowhouse-style units at the base of larger residential structures to transition to a pedestrian scale.

C. Provide adequate defensible space as a transition from the sidewalk to residential uses for visual connection and passive surveillance of the public realm. Raise units slightly above grade or provide an adequate setback. Use buffers of low walls, planters, and layered landscaping; avoid tall fences and patios below grade.

D. Where direct-unit entries are not desirable, include a generous main entry with defensible and occupiable shared space or forecourt to create a “front porch” for residents. Provide ample space for bicycles, furniture, or planters.

III. Mixed-Use Corridors & Commercial Frontages (See Map B)

A. Design projects on mixed-use corridors to contribute to a welcoming and lively pedestrian-oriented streetscape with a high degree of fine-grained detail and ground-level activity that engages the outdoor public realm.

B. Maintain a well-defined street wall on mixed-use corridors to create an urban feel. Incorporate strategic setbacks at corners and entries for seating, usable open space, and landscaping.

C. Provide frequent entrances, expressed breaks, and visual interest at regular intervals of 20-40 feet to create a human-scaled experience and accommodate the presence or appearance of small storefronts.

D. Residential entries to upper floor residential uses should not dominate the street frontage over commercial uses.

E. Minimize the size and presence of residential lobbies and other non-activating uses to maintain the viability of mixed-use corridors.

F. Avoid courtyard entries along mixed-use corridors, unless used in conjunction with street-facing individual unit entries a design that does not diminish the street wall.

G. Strive for a porous, engaging edge for all commercial uses at street-level. Include operable windows at all levels of the building and especially at the streetscape to maximize permeability and activate the streetscape. Design street-level facades to allow uses to spill out, and provide areas for outdoor seating.

H. Design live/work units for commercial uses by providing a direct path to the entry from the sidewalk, transitional areas that can be used as outdoor seating, awnings, and pavement treatments. Use recessed entries and non-permanent solutions for privacy for residential uses, such as movable planters.
**PUBLIC LIFE**

**EXISTING CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINE**
Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

**PROPOSED UNIVERSITY DISTRICT GUIDELINES**

I. Bicycle Circulation & Parking

A. Design bicycle parking for maximum efficiency and security, using covered and double decker bike storage when possible.

B. Incorporate flexible areas for bike-share storage, so that these do not end up on the sidewalk.

C. Locate bicycle parking and bicycle racks in convenient locations for residents and temporary users with easy access and minimal grade changes. Provide direct routes from bicycle lanes to bicycle parking in garages or bicycle racks, and provide signage that directs bicyclists to these facilities. When located inside, minimize the number of doorways to travel through, and consider using sliding or automatic doors.

D. Plan for and delineate areas near entries and facilities where bicyclists are likely to mount or dismount to minimize pedestrian conflict.

II. Connections and Facilities for Transit

A. Support pedestrian traffic and connections to the light-rail station and other high-volume transit stops by incorporating signage and wayfinding features, wider sidewalks, and recessed entries to support a high level of pedestrian activity.

B. Integrate waiting areas for transit and rideshare into the building design, rather than adjacent to the street. Include shelters, large canopies, lean bars, and benches.

**DESIGN CONCEPT**

**EXISTING CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINE**
Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

**PROPOSED UNIVERSITY DISTRICT GUIDELINES**

DC1 Project uses & Activities

I. Activating uses

A. Maximize active uses along street frontages and minimize the amount of frontage dedicated to vehicle access, lobbies, and offices. Provide a high frequency of entries, including direct unit entries with patios, stoops, and porches.

B. Group live-work and commercial uses at street level rather than dividing between lobbies and other ground-floor uses.

II. Visual and Safety Impacts

A. Locate service entries and trash receptacles within the building, and away from gathering spaces along shared alleys and mid-block connections, and entrances.

B. Use high quality materials and finishes for service screening and garage doors with artful and architectural detailing that reinforces the design concept and contributes to the visual interest at street level.

C. Wrap above grade parking in active uses to minimize visual impacts and loss of street activity. Additionally, design above-grade parking with a high level of architectural detailing, rotating displays, community artwork, or usable open space.

III. Shared Space

A. Provide curbless access drives designed as shared space for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles to move slowly and safely.

B. Design the layout of the shared space and surrounding uses intentionally to function as shared community space. Include landscaping, pedestrian amenities, lighting, and paving treatments that clearly delineate entries, gathering areas.
UNIVERSITY DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINE UPDATE

**DC2 Architectural Concept**

**EXISTING CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINE**

Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

**PROPOSED UNIVERSITY DISTRICT GUIDELINES**

**I. Massing**

A. **Optimal building massing and form** expresses an authentic and thoughtful response to the scale and context of the immediate streetscape, and is not merely a reflection of the allowable building envelope. Avoid blocky massing on large buildings, opting for sculptural and functional forms.

B. **Reduce the bulk and scale of large buildings**. A large building should be able to be read as a series of discrete forms to reduce visual dominance, create interest, and help users understand how the building is occupied. Break up larger development into multiple buildings and smaller masses with pass throughs and pathways. Alternatively, give the impression of multiple, small-scale buildings by incorporating different façade treatments at intervals that complement the context by articulating the building at regular intervals.

C. **Employ purposeful modulation** that improves unit layout and contributes positively to the overall composition and building proportion.

D. **Design strong bases** that create a “grounded” form in conjunction with taller elements to transition to a human-scale at the street.

E. **Use upper level step-backs** to maintain a human scale along the street and respond to historic datums, which prevents taller buildings from appearing oppressive or dominant.

F. **Ensure that building massing does not dominate the public realm** by leaving setbacks from the sidewalk open to the sky. Where overhangs are used to create usable open space at grade, provide an adequate ceiling height—generally at least two stories—and lighting to create a welcoming space.

G. **Locate vertical stair and elevator cores to minimize height impacts** to the street and adjacent buildings. Stair cores visible to the street should be designed as a prominent feature with a high degree of transparency. When vertical cores are visible to internal courtyards, design them to be integrated into the façade composition.

**II. Architectural Concept & Facade Composition**

A. **Embrace modern design through distinctive, elegant forms** that demonstrate a context-sensitive approach to massing and façade design. This approach is preferred over the use of colored cladding to increase visual interest.

B. **Design all street-facing façades as “fronts”**, with entries, massing, and architectural treatments that engage the public realm, to ensure each frontage responds to the adjacent streetscape character. This is especially important for corner sites or projects with entries facing the side lot lines.

C. **Strive for consistency and cohesion in the street wall** and skyline while balancing the need for punctuation and a variety of complementary architectural styles on a block.

D. **Reinforce the massing and design concept with materials and color**. Changes in color and material should generally be accompanied by a change in plane or design language.

E. **Use high-quality, durable, and fine-grained materials** at the base to reinforce a strong base massing and differentiate it from the upper levels.

F. **Create a finely-grained mix of buildings and architectural styles**, taking cues from established patterns such as frequent entries, the use of brick and other highly-articulated materials.

G. **Employ a judicial application of bold or high-contrast colors** and moments of whimsy to contribute to the eclectic character of the University District without overwhelming the streetscape.

H. **Roof lines or the top of the structure should provide architectural interest** that is clearly distinguishable from the façade walls.

I. **Avoid large panels with minimal detailing**. Break down large, boxy forms by 1) using quality materials that provide relief and interest through shadow lines, depth of fenestration, texture, and detailing; and 2) delineating a base, middle, and top with architectural detailing and massing.

J. **Intentionally detail joints, reveals, and fasteners** to articulate and reinforce the design concept.

K. **Incorporate depth into building facades**, especially those with minimal modulation and boxy massing. Integrate façade depth and shadow casting detail, including projecting elements, setbacks and expression of window reveals, to give visual richness and interest. Recessed windows of 6-8” are preferred to protrusions applied to the exterior.
**EXISTING CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINE**

**PROPOSED UNIVERSITY DISTRICT GUIDELINES**

**I. Open Space Organization & Site Layout**

- A. Organize and design development around on-site open space, considering the location, design, and function of the space.
- B. Arrange open spaces to break up large sites and foster permeability.
- C. Extend entry courtyards or forecourts all the way through a project site to become a pedestrian pathway and break up building mass.
- D. Consolidate open space areas into shared spaces for rowhouse and townhouse developments instead of only small individual spaces for each unit.

**II. Residential Open Space**

- A. Provide direct access to usable open space for units, either as balconies, patios, or terraces. Incorporate balconies with usable space—either recessed or extruding—instead of Juliet balconies.
- B. Provide shared play areas for children with direct sightlines to units.
- C. Consolidate open space on site to accommodate larger occupiable spaces and large trees.
- D. Design courtyards to incorporate layered planting and trees that provide privacy to units surrounding the courtyard as well as users.
- E. Provide a variety of outdoor private amenity space, instead of only locating private amenity space on rooftops, including balconies and terraces at the second or third floor.

**III. Pedestrian-Scaled Streetscape Design**

- A. Intentionally design venting for commercial uses and other screening for mechanical equipment on the roof or affixed to the building into the overall design concept. Green roofs are highly encouraged.
- B. Integrate building service elements, such as drainage pipes, grilles, screens, ventilation louvres and garage entry doors into the overall facade design, and use these features as opportunities to provide artful or unique applications.

**DC2 Architectural Concept**

- Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

**DC3 Open Space Concept**

- Integrate open space design with the design of the building so that each complements the other.

**CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS BOARD**

**III. Pedestrian-Scaled Streetscape Design**

A. Design facades to a human-scaled rhythm and proportion through hierarchical arrangement of elements by: avoiding monotonous repetition of the same unit; establishing vertical and horizontal lines and modules with features such as party walls, exposed downpipes, setbacks, cornices, balconies, eaves line, and door head. Provide enough variation to avoid monotonous repetition.

B. Provide points of visual interest and architectural features, every 15-30 feet such as windows, lighting fixtures, planters, art, or decorative pieces along street-facing building facades. Layer articulation and detailing at a variety of scales to express a high degree of quality and visual interest.

Please leave comments below!
I. Durable, High-Quality Materials

A. Use materials that aesthetically represent durability and permanence. Avoid thin materials that do not age well in Seattle's climate, including those that deform or "oil can", weather quickly, or require paint as their finish. Use materials in locations that have a durability that is appropriate for an urban application, especially at grade.

B. Brick is a preferred material, especially for the first 30-40' from grade.

C. Limit the use of large panels or materials that require few joints or minimal detailing. Use materials that provide purposeful surfaces, reinforce the design concept and building proportions, and allow intentional detailing of joints, reveals, and fasteners.

D. Utilize emerging technology and innovative materials that inspire inventive forms, applications, and design concepts.

E. Consider the life cycle impacts of materials, and choose those that are renewable, responsibly sourced, and have minimal impacts to human and environmental health.

II. Hardscaping & Landscaping

A. Incorporate artistic, whimsical, and unique elements into hardscape materials to define spaces and contribute to placemaking, including mosaics, wayfinding elements, reused materials, and lighting.

B. Use hardscape materials with fine-grained texture. Avoid large slabs with minimal texture, especially in areas with pedestrian traffic.

C. Incorporate pavers and ground treatments to delineate uses, including building entries and seating areas within the public right of way.

D. Integrate purposeful green walls into the construction and design of the building and landscape to avoid appearing "tacked on" as an afterthought. To maximize the potential for success, provide irrigation and choose locations with appropriate growth conditions.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE: TALL BUILDINGS

I. Designing Tall Buildings

A. Respond to Context (CS2.B & CS2.D): Integrate and transition to surrounding fabric of differing heights; relate to lower, predominant datums (vertical and horizontal patterns), the street wall and parcel patterns.

B. Tower Placement, Spacing & Orientation (CS2.D): Optimize the tower placement in relation to adjacent structures; minimize shadow impacts on neighbors and public realm; maximize tower spacing, to afford light and air to the streets and public spaces, and with balanced privacy, light and views for existing, proposed and future occupants.

C. Tower Form (DC2.A): Avoid long slabs and big, unitary boxy forms, which cast big shadows and lack scale and visual interest. Consider curved, angled, shifting and creative non-rectilinear forms.

D. Intermediate Scales (DC2.B): To mediate the extra height/scale, add legible, multi-story intermediate scale elements: floor groupings, gaskets, off-sets, projections, sky terraces, layering, or other transitions to the middle of towers.

E. Shape & Design All Sides (DC2.B): Because towers are visible from many viewpoints/distances, intentionally shape the form and design all sides (even party walls), responding to differing site patterns and context relationships.

F. Adjusted Base Scale (DC2.B): To mediate the form’s height, employ an extra tall ground floor and/or a legible base scale to adequately transition to the ground.

G. Ground Floor Uses (PL3.B): Include identifiable primary entrances -scaled to the tower - and multiple entries. Employ genuinely activating uses or grade-related residences to activate all streets.

H. Facade Depth & Articulation (DC2.B): Because of larger facade areas, employ plane changes, depth, shadow and texture to provide human scale and interest, especially in the base/lower 100 ft. Compose fenestration and material dimensions to be legible and rich from long distances.

I. Quality & 6th Elevations (DC4.A): Employ quality materials and detailing, and intentionally design all soffits, balconies and other surfaces seen from below, including lighting, vents, etc.