Welcome to the

U DISTRICT

NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES

WORKSHOP SERIES

THE OFFICE OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

— and —

THE U DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP

Questions? Talk to a planner or fill out a question card.
Comments? Fill out a comment form, email: udistrict@seattle.gov, or talk to a planner.
KICKOFF MEETING

5:00  Open House
Visit stations, talk to City staff and our partner community organization, learn about Design Guidelines, and ask questions!

5:45  UDP Welcome
Opening remarks

6:00  OPCD Presentation
Orientation to the process, design guidelines, key issues, and previous input.

6:15  Q&A

6:30  Conclude

Please note, the room is reserved for another use immediately after this meeting.
Welcome

Agenda
The Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) and the U District Partnership (UDP) are looking forward to working with you on updates to the neighborhood design guidelines.

5:00-5:45 Open House
Review the display boards that summarize the design review process and how design guidelines are used, and provide input on the update process and focus areas.

5:45-6:15 UDP Welcome and OPCD Presentation
Opening remarks by U District Partnership
Overview of U District Neighborhood Design Guidelines and the update process by City Staff

5:15-6:30 Q and A
Time for questions about Design Guidelines and the update process

6:30-7:00 Continue Discussion
Remaining time will be spent visiting stations, providing your input

Tonight’s Kick Off Meeting
Tonight’s open house provides an opportunity for you to learn about the City’s Design Review Program and how the U District Neighborhood Design Guidelines help influence the quality of the built environment.

Please visit our interactive display stations and share your ideas:

1. What are the top priority issues to address with design guidelines in the U District Neighborhood?
2. What areas of the U District Neighborhood need the most detailed consideration?

Want to get involved with the Design Guidelines Update?
Make sure to sign up with the U District Partnership.

More Questions? Talk to a staff member or UDP representative - you can find us near the display boards.
The adopted rezone has three main parts:

1. Greater height and density in the blocks surrounding light rail at NE 43rd St. and Brooklyn Ave NE.
2. New design standards to help new buildings fit into the U District neighborhood context.
3. New requirements for affordable housing, open space, historic preservation, and street improvements.

Neighborhood Commercial - NC and NCP Zones:
- Applied in the area north of NE 50th St. and west of the Ave, and in an area south of Ravenna Way NE and west of the Ave.
- Allows for pedestrian-oriented, mixed use development
- Serves as a transition from proposed SM-U zones to lower intensity multifamily residential areas

Seattle Mixed Use - SM-U Zones:
- Applied in the core of the U District Neighborhood
- Applied in the area with the greatest potential for larger scale and highrise development
- Allows for a high degree of flexibility in building types and use mix
- Incorporates incentive zoning (IZ) where amenities must be provided to earn bonus floor area

Midrise Residential - MR Zone:
- Applied in the southwestern area of the neighborhood between the core blocks and I-5, and an area north of NE 50th St. and west of the Ave
- Applied in the areas near good transit service and commercial uses
- Allows for additional residential density and a variety of housing unit types
Background and Context

Overview
Since 2011, the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) and other City departments have been working with the U District community.

Urban Design Framework
Guiding Principles:
Through the Urban Design Framework process, participants identified ten guiding principles:
1. Recognize light rail as a catalyst for change
2. Balance regional influences with local character
3. Provide a network of great streets and public spaces
4. Grow and diversify jobs
5. Welcome a diversity of residents
6. Improve public safety
7. Encourage quality and variety in the built environment
8. Build an environmentally sustainable neighborhood
9. Improve integration between UW and the U District
10. Support and coordinate active transportation choices

These guiding principles were considered in the development of the recently adopted zoning.

Many can also be advanced through the application of Neighborhood Design Guidelines.

Neighborhood Design Guidelines update is the next step for implementing the urban design framework principles. The foundational work of the Urban Design Framework, Green Streets Concept Plans and open space planning will be reflected in updated design guidelines.

Green Streets Concept Plans
Designated Green Streets in the U District Neighborhood will help inform the updated Design Guidelines.
Background and Context: Investing in the U District

**YMCA redevelopment**
New, larger facility will include transitional housing for homeless youth, a daycare, and an indoor pool.

**CoMotion Labs (UW Innovation District)**
New headquarters space for experts to partner with government, businesses, and nonprofits in forming start-ups.

**Making walking and biking safer and easier**
- Planned bike lanes for 11th Avenue
- Protected bike lanes under construction on Roosevelt, NE Campus Parkway, and NE 40th St
- Expanded sidewalks on NE 43rd St

**New and redesigned parks**
- New park at the University Heights Community Center
- Christie Park, a pocket park south of 45th, will be redesigned and doubled in size
- Large new waterfront park on Portage Bay (Seattle Parks & Recreation, UW, Washington State Department of Transportation)

**New affordable housing**
The Office of Housing funded two new affordable housing buildings, opening in 2016 and 2017:
- UH’s “The Marion West” (48 units)
- Bellwether Housing’s “Arbora Court” (133 units)

**Bus rapid transit and improved bus service**
- SDOT is studying high capacity transit along the Roosevelt corridor
- SDOT, Metro, Sound Transit, and OPCD continue to plan improved bus service for the U District

**Investments in the station area core**
- “Festival Street” on Brooklyn Ave NE will be developed by Sound Transit. Zoning will support further investments on Brooklyn.
- The U District light rail station will open in 2021. About 12,000 transit riders will pass through the station daily. Riders will travel to Downtown in 8 minutes and to Northgate in 5 minutes.
What are neighborhood design guidelines?
The Seattle Design Guidelines define the qualities of architecture, urban design, and public space that make successful projects, and are a tool for guiding individual projects towards successful design outcomes. The goal of the design guidelines is to foster design excellence in private development of new multifamily and commercial projects throughout the city.

The Seattle Citywide Design Guidelines apply to all projects required to undergo design review in all areas of the city. Neighborhood-specific design guidelines supplement the citywide guidelines by defining specific qualities of architecture and urban design that reinforce unique design characteristics of the neighborhood. Applicants with projects located within a neighborhood that has neighborhood-specific guidelines are required to consult both sets of guidelines—neighborhood and citywide—in the development and review of the project design.

What is the Design Review Program?
Design Review is a part of a Master Use Permit (MUP) application and is required for many new commercial, mixed-use and multifamily developments. Design review provides a forum for neighborhoods, developers, architects, and City staff to work together to ensure that new developments contribute positively to Seattle’s neighborhoods.

Who is the Design Review Board?
The City is divided into seven districts, each with its own 5-member board consisting of volunteers with professional experience. The Design Guidelines are used by Design Review Boards for evaluating proposed new development.

How do I comment on a project design?
You can attend a public design review meeting and provide comments, or write/email comments to the land use planner assigned to the project. Find out what projects are near you at www.seattle.gov/dpd/shapingseattle/

How do Design Guidelines work?
Design guidelines set help to shape what is allowed by the Land Use Code by setting the parameters for discussion about building siting, shape, and materials.

Urban Form & Development Standards
Some urban form considerations are included in the Land Use Code as development standards. These standards create an “envelope” that a building can fit within, or require general shaping of a building. The following development standards apply to certain areas of the U District.

Street level and upper level building setbacks are applied in key locations. Building Facade Modulation is required for all portions of the building on sites larger than 15,000 sf.

Maximum building facade width. For reference: the building at left is 100’ wide. The building at right is 470’ wide. Older buildings in the U District range from approximately 50’ to 200’ wide, but more recent development has been much wider. To prevent monotonous facades, the SM-U zoning limits maximum width to 250’.

Departures from Development Standards
Departures are possible from certain development standards to help provide flexibility in responding to context, and require approval by the Design Review Board. The design team must demonstrate to the Board that the departure improves the overall design of the project. Design guidelines can help indicate which design approaches are most appropriate for reinforcing the neighborhood character.

Street Level Character:
Other development standards in the U District include:
• Street trees are required in the adjacent right-of-way for all new development.
• Seattle Green Factor requirements must be met by providing landscape features such as large trees, rain gardens and green roofs.
• Active uses required at the ground level on key streets like the Ave.
• Mid-block connections are required on large development sites that abut two north-south avenues.

Design Guidelines cannot:
• Change zoning, allowed height, or density (units)
• Require design changes
• Require parking
• Control uses or uses of spaces in the building
• Significantly reduce a project’s height or size
• Require community benefits

Design Guidelines can:
• Focus on what is important to the design of projects.
• Indicate design approaches the community wants to encourage or discourage
• Reinforce neighborhood character through design
• Identify most important features of neighborhood character
• Help protect visual aspects of a neighborhood
• Help architects and developers make design decisions

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**U DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES UPDATE**

**Design Guideline Overview & Update Process**

**How are the U District Design Guidelines used?**

The U District guidelines will identify and define approaches to the design of architecture, urban design, and public space that are specific to the University District.

Design Review Boards provide design guidance based on the priority design issues and corresponding design guidelines.

**How long will the U District Design Guidelines update take?**

The City is working with the U District Partnership Urban Design Committee to hold a series of workshops. Each workshop will focus on specific areas or topics in the U District. City staff will present ideas and get input from community members at these meetings that will inform the Guidelines. We will be presenting drafts to the community for feedback periodically—see the timeline for when we have community events.

**How can I help?**

Come to our workshops and community events, or send us comments and feedback! You do not need to be a design expert to attend!

Or, you can upload pictures of buildings you like on the UDP’s twitter at #UDistrictBuildings2017. Provide us with your email address and we will send you let you know about upcoming workshops.

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**PRELIMINARY DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

An applicant with a project site at 50th and University Way consults the Citywide Design Guidelines, and sees a guideline pertinent to the design of corner sites:

**CS2.C - Corner Sites**

Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points. Consider using a corner to provide space for pedestrians, or build out to the corner to provide a strong urban edge.

**NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

The applicant then consults the University District Neighborhood Design Guidelines, and sees that the site is a “gateway” corner, and that supplemental design guidance has been provided.

**CS2.C - Corner Lots**

For new buildings located on corner lots identified as gateways, consider providing special building elements distinguishable from the rest of the building such as a tower, corner articulation or bay windows.

**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING**

The applicant designs the initial massing of the building to respond to the guidelines by indicating the intent to provide a special design treatment at the corner.

The Design Review Board supports the design approach at the Early Design Guidance Meeting, as it meets the Neighborhood Design Guidelines.

**DESIGN PROGRESS**

The applicant submits a more developed plan to City staff, who recommend the corner element be revised to better meet the Board’s guidance and the Design Guidelines.

**RECOMMENDATION MEETING**

The applicant presents a more detailed design, which features a protruding frame at the corner. The Board recommends approval of the design with a condition that the frame depth is increased, and notes that the corner element creates a “strong, dramatic presence at a prominent corner.” The land use planner approves the design after the changes have been made.

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**Here's an example that shows how a neighborhood specific design guideline can influence a project design.**

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**Timeline**

- **2011-2017**
  - Urban Design Framework, Environmental Impact Statement, Zoning changes & MHA
  - Brainstorm on Neighborhood Design Guidelines w/ UDP
  - Kickoff Meeting for Workshop Series 5-7pm
  - Workshop on Design in the Core 8-10am
  - Workshop on Public Realm 8-10am
  - Community Open House 5-7pm
  - Workshop on Subareas + The Ave.
  - OPCD releases draft of Design Guidelines for comment
  - OBD considers draft proposal to City Council
  - City Council considers draft proposal, including a public hearing

- **March 23, 2016**
  - Workshop on Design in the Core 8-10am

- **April 21, 2017**
  - Workshop on Public Realm 8-10am

- **June 2, 2017**
  - Workshop on Subareas + The Ave.

- **June 22, 2017**
  - Community Open House 5-7pm

- **July, 2016**
  - Map of Gateway Corners in the U District Neighborhood Design Guidelines

- **Nov. 2016**
  - Final approved design after conditions met

- **Dec. 5, 2015**
  - Workshop on Design in the Core 8-10am

- **Sept. 2017**
  - Workshop on Design in the Core 8-10am

- **Oct. 2017**
  - Final approved design after conditions met

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1. What areas or corridors have distinct character that design guidelines should address?

2. What other design approaches or features are specific to the U District? Why should these be designed different than elsewhere in the city?

Design Guidelines do not apply to areas in the University of Washington Major Institution Overlay.
The Citywide Design Guidelines encourage design excellence in our city by defining the qualities of architecture, urban design, and public space that make successful projects. The University District Design Guidelines will identify more specific design approaches that reinforce the character of the neighborhood and promote the qualities that the community values.

**Context & Site**

**CS1: Natural Systems & Site Features**
Use natural systems and features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

**CS2: Urban Pattern and Form**
Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

**CS3: Architectural Context and Character**
Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

**Public Realm**

**PL1: Connectivity**
Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around site and the connections among them.

**PL2: Walkability**
Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and is well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

**PL3: Street-Level Interaction**
Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

**PL4: Active Transportation**
Incorporate design features that facilitate forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

**Design Concept**

**DC1: Project Uses and Activities**
Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

**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.

**DC4: Exterior Elements and Finishes**
Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.
What design features do you like or dislike? What design features or approaches are appropriate for the U District?
Design in the U District