University District

NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES

Adopted 2000 | Revised 2019

DESIGN REVIEW

Seattle
Office of Planning &
Community Development

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Introduction to Design Guidelines

What are Neighborhood Design Guidelines?

Design guidelines are the primary tool used in the review of proposed private projects by Seattle Department of Construction & Inspections (SDCI) staff for administrative design review, or the Design Review Boards. Design guidelines define the qualities of architecture, urban design, and outdoor space that make for successful projects and communities. There are two types of design guidelines used in the Design Review Program:

- **Seattle Design Guidelines** - apply to all areas of the city except for downtown, historic districts, and the International Special Review District (ISRD); informally called 'citywide guidelines'.
- **Neighborhood Design Guidelines** - apply to a specific geographically-defined area, usually within a residential urban village or center.

Once a set of Neighborhood Design Guidelines is adopted by City Council, they are used in tandem with the Seattle Design Guidelines for the review of all projects within that designated neighborhood design guideline boundary. Not all neighborhoods within the city have neighborhood-specific guidelines, but for those that do, applicants and Design Review Board members are required to consult both sets of design guidelines. The Neighborhood Design Guidelines take precedence over the Seattle Design Guidelines in the event of a conflict between the two. Neighborhood Design Guidelines offer additional guidance on the features and character of a particular neighborhood, and are very helpful to all involved in the design review process.

Neighborhood Design Guidelines reveal the character of the neighborhood as known to its residents and business owners. The Neighborhood Design Guidelines help to reinforce existing character and promote the qualities that neighborhood residents value most in the face of change. Thus, Neighborhood's Design Guidelines, in conjunction with the Seattle Design Guidelines, can increase overall awareness of responsive design and involvement in the design review process.

Reader's Guide

This document is organized around the larger themes and format of the Seattle Design Guidelines with distinct topics and directives specific to the University District neighborhood. Photos and graphics that illustrate selected guidelines are presented, in addition to the text which explains design intent and/or provides background information. Photos not individually credited are City of Seattle file photos.

These Neighborhood Design Guidelines have purview over all physical design elements within the private property lines. Additionally, some Neighborhood Design Guidelines (especially under the Context & Site category) may comment about design features outside the private property, pertaining to adjacent sidewalks and landscaping; these comments are advisory. All elements within the right-of-way (ROW) are under the purview of the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), which must review and approve all physical elements in the ROW. In the event of contradictory design guidance, SDOT regulations, standards and interpretations shall prevail.

All Design Guidelines at a Glance

The University District Neighborhood Design Guidelines work together with the Seattle Design Guidelines, which remain applicable on all projects subject to Design Review. See SMC 23.41.004 for information on Design Review thresholds.

Below is a list of the 11 Seattle Design Guidelines. The column to the right indicates if these Neighborhood Design Guidelines provide supplemental guidance for that topic. A "**YES**" means both Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines are applicable; a "**NO**" means only the Seattle Design Guidelines apply.

Seattle Design Guidelines		Neighborhood Design Guidelines
CONTEXT & SITE (CS)		
CS1	**Natural Systems and Site Features** Use natural systems and features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for design	**YES**
CS2	**Urban Pattern and Form** Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics and patterns of the surrounding area	**YES**
CS3	**Architectural Context and Character** Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood	**YES**
PUBLIC LIFE (PL)		
PL1	**Connectivity** Complement, connect and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site	**YES**
PL2	**Walkability** Create a safe and comfortable walking environment, easy to navigate and well connected	**NO**
PL3	**Street-Level Interaction** Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level, including entries and edges	**YES**
PL4	**Active Transportation** Incorporate features that facilitate active transport such as walking, bicycling and transit use	**YES**
DESIGN CONCEPT (DC)		
DC1	**Project Uses and Activities** Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site	**YES**
DC2	**Architectural Concept** Develop a unified, functional architectural concept that fits well on the site and its surroundings	**YES**
DC3	**Open Space Concept** Integrate building and open space design so that each complements the other	**YES**
DC4	**Exterior Elements and Finishes** Use appropriate and high-quality elements and finishes for the building and open spaces	**YES**

See the below link for a complete version of the Seattle Design Guidelines, and a complete list of all Neighborhood Design Guidelines:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/whoweare/designreview/designguidelines/default.htm

Context and Priority Issues

Context

After extensive work with the University District community, areas in the University District (or U District) were zoned at higher intensities in 2017 to focus and shape development near high-capacity light rail (which is expected to start operation in 2021). As growth continues, the University District and the areas around it are likely to experience a period of redevelopment. It is critical that new development continues the established physical character of the University District as a welcoming, inclusive neighborhood designed and built at a human scale.

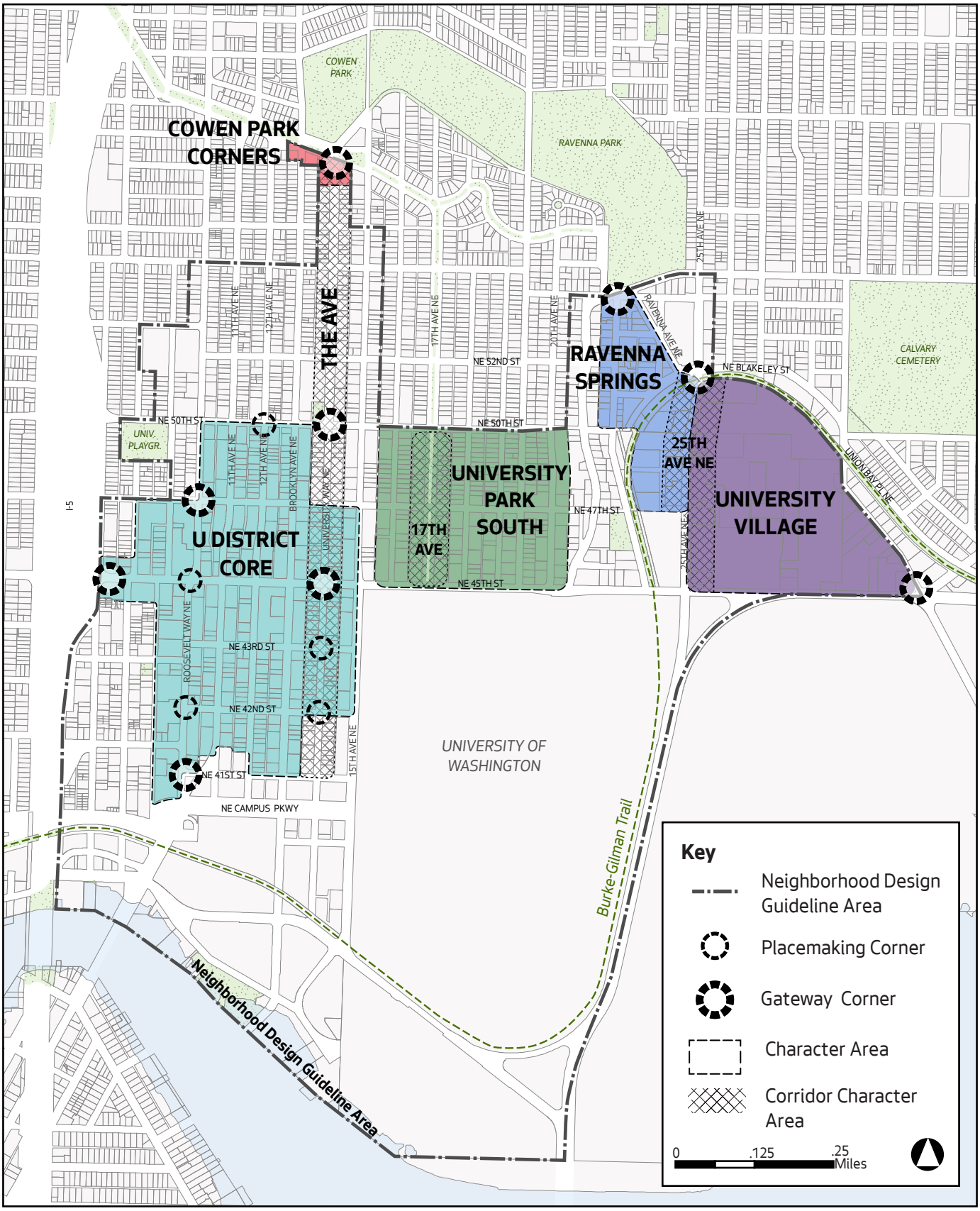
The design of the buildings, places, spaces, and mobility networks that make up the University District have a direct impact on how people interact with the built environment, how they contribute to it, and how they value it. The University District Neighborhood Design Guidelines outline specific qualities for the design of buildings and the public realm that achieve a high standard of design excellence and contribute positively to the distinct identity of the U District neighborhood. The University District Neighborhood Design Guidelines contain specific strategies and approaches to achieve the following principles, which community partners have defined as priorities for guiding new development within the University District Neighborhood Guideline Area (see Map A).

Design Excellence in the University District

- **Create richness in the quality and variety of elements that form the public realm.** Enhance the distinct identity of the U District as an eclectic, mixed-use, pedestrian oriented urban center by ensuring new development contributes to the variety of experiences provided. Consider new development as a fresh canvas for the people that live, work, and play in the U District to help create and recreate their neighborhood. A range of uses, colors, spatial variety, outdoor spaces, public art, and self-expression contributes to the variety and complexity that creates an eclectic, welcoming, and intimate neighborhood.
- **Emphasize human-scaled design and generate pedestrian activity to foster an engaging public realm.** An individual interacts directly with the street level of a building; a building's design and the uses within should be driven by the goal of creating a welcoming, walkable, pedestrian-oriented urban streetscape through the layering of details, textures, and visual interest that create an expectation of discovery and novelty. Street walls should be well-defined but permeable as to engage pedestrians.
- **Contribute to a robust network of pedestrian-priority outdoor spaces that act as a "front yard" for the University District community.** The physical environment forms the setting for community and public life. Streetscapes and open spaces (public and privately owned) should serve as an outdoor living room for daily life with building designs that maximize social interaction. Residents of the University District have long expressed the desire for more spaces within the public realm to accommodate the range of needs for the growing population. Public and private outdoor space is especially important for people living in smaller dwellings, to provide a variety of passive and active areas for children and young people to play, and it improves overall livability.
- **Establish design excellence and U District Identity in taller buildings**. Revised zoning allows for tall buildings that will be visible and substantially taller than the existing and surrounding context. Design guidelines that specifically address tall building design principles are crucial to ensure prominent, new forms fit into the U District, contribute to the streetscape and public realm, and express sophisticated design and materials.
- **Integrate art and new technology.** Public art embodies the University District's unique cultural spirit and is one of the strongest ways in which to create a sense of place, even with temporary installations. New development should engage with artists and take advantage of the connection to the University of Washington to integrate art and emerging technologies into both development and open spaces to enrich the experience of the public realm and foster a unique district identity.

University District Neighborhood Design Guidelines

Map A: Character Areas, Gateways, and Placemaking Corners



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

CS1
CONTEXT & SITE
Natural Systems & Site Features

Seattle Design Guideline:
Use natural systems and features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

Cristoph Hoessly

Upper-level step-backs on left building maximize daylight to public plaza.

Courtyard units with modestly sunken living space retain daylight and air to the units.

Building form shaped to preserve existing trees.

University District Supplemental Guidance

1. Plan for Daylight & Trees

a. **Arrange building massing and use upper-level step-backs to increase solar access** into ground floors, shared amenity spaces, streets, 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 or below-grade to increase daylight access to those units.

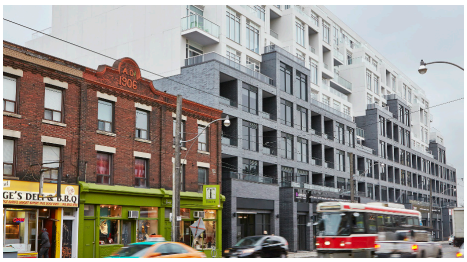
b. **Avoid recessed or sunken living space,** and minimize the distance that units are located below grade to provide direct access to daylight and air from above-grade windows for each unit.

c. **Incorporate new & existing trees.** Site the buildings and design building massing to preserve and incorporate existing mature trees, especially on slopes; this is especially relevant in the Ravenna Springs character area (see Map A). Where removal is unavoidable, configure open space to accommodate large canopy trees that replace those removed.

CS2
CONTEXT & SITE
Urban Pattern & Form

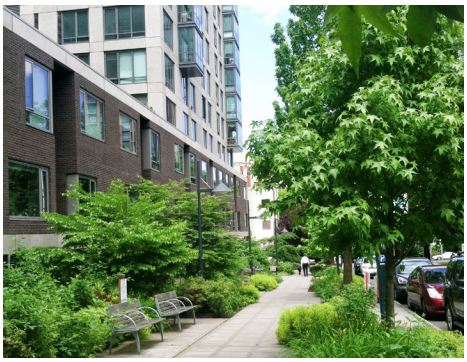
Seattle Design Guideline:
Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

DoubleSpace Photography



New development responds to datum line of adjacent exiting building by stepping back at the second story and again at the upper-levels.

Lush plantings and engaging pedestrian edge at University Village.



Layered landscaping at street level in front of residential uses to provide screening and soften buildings

University District Supplemental Guidance

1. Character Areas & Corridor Character Areas

For projects within the areas identified on Map A, development design should reinforce and/or enhance the quality of place in the surrounding area.

a. **Cowen Park Corners:** Use lush landscaping to carry the experience of Cowen Park down the north end of University Way NE. Incorporate generous sidewalks and seating areas.

b. **University Park South & 17th Ave Boulevard:** Reinforce the existing pattern of generous front setbacks. Incorporate occupiable amenity spaces into front setbacks with areas for large shade trees and landscaping. Take cues from the design, scale, and character of historic buildings, including: grand entries; sloped roofs; the use of brick, masonry, and wood; vertical window proportions; and a high degree of architectural detailing.

c. **Ravenna Springs:** Design projects to create and reinforce the quality of a cohesive neighborhood with massing that is broken into multiple buildings, individual unit entries, ground-related housing, highly permeable blocks with walkways and open spaces, and a high degree of landscaping and pedestrian amenities.

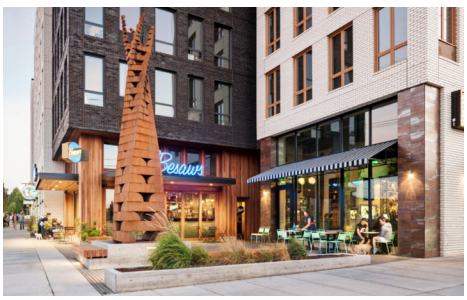
d. **University Village & 25th Ave NE:** Prioritize active edges and direct pedestrian connections to 25th Ave NE and the Burke Gilman Trail. Development along 25th Ave NE should create an active, engaging building edge for pedestrians and create protected sidewalks by utilizing planter strips with lush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

e. **The U District Core & The Ave:** Express an urban character that is distinct to the U District and prioritize the pedestrian experience with human-scaled design and a high degree of visual interest. Foster an eclectic mix of businesses and architectural styles.

1. Reflect historic platting patterns by articulating and/or modulating buildings and design styles at 20-40 foot intervals.
2. Use upper-level step-backs that respond to predominant and historic datums in context.
3. Incorporate balconies or terraces in buildings with residential uses to contribute to passive surveillance and visual interest.

Commercial uses at grade adjacent to the park help activate the space. A significant upper-level step-back reduces visual and solar impacts to the park, while balconies provide passive surveillance and depth to the facade.

Corner plaza with activating edges, upper-level terraces, plantings, and special paving, marks gateway location.



A small setback at the corner creates space for seating and a sculpture.

4. Use lush, layered landscaping at street level, especially in residential areas south of NE 43rd St.

2. Neighborhood Context

a. **Contribute to community character:** To enhance the eclectic character of the University District, plan and include elements that are easily customizable for tenants and businesses to individualize storefronts, kickplates, and streetscapes through paint colors, materials, lighting, signage, awning design, seating, or other pedestrian amenities. Use these features to express 20-40 foot storefront modules.

b. **Provide zone transitions:** When a project site abuts a zone with a height limit that is two stories shorter than the project site, provide upper-level setbacks that create a sensitive transition to the less intensive zone.

c. **Activate parks & open space:** In development adjacent to open space and parks, activate the building edges by incorporating active uses, small public plazas or seating areas for ground-floor uses, as well as balconies or terraces at upper floors. Design adjacent projects to act as a deferential backdrop, with refined building facades that help frame the open space, or incorporate artistic features that complement the function of the open space and create an "outdoor room."

3. Gateways & Placemaking Corners

a. **Gateways** identified on Map A are significant "entry" points in the U District Neighborhood.

1. Express a sense of arrival to a distinct area with distinctive forms, prominent massing, unique design concepts, and the highest attention to design quality.

2. Create pedestrian accommodating entries with wider sidewalks, significant landscaping features, public plazas, active uses, and art.

b. **Placemaking Corners** identified on Map A are key nodes and pedestrian activity areas within the U District Neighborhood.

1. Design projects as part of a composition with the adjacent corner-facing sites to frame the space and balance strong spatial edges with adequate space for movement and activity, including small plazas, seating, and public art.

2. Incorporate special paving and surface treatments; art installations; seating; kiosks.

CS3
CONTEXT & SITE
Architectural Context & Character

Seattle Design Guideline:
Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

Architectural diversity is a defining characteristic of the U District.

Lara Swimmer

Two examples of new development reflecting context through the use of related materials, datum lines, and horizontal and vertical elements.

Tim Bies Photography

New development incorporates a historic facade and mid-block passageway. The two-story facade provides a transition from the taller building to a pedestrian scale and breaks up the building massing.

University District Supplemental Guidance

1. University District Architectural Character

a. **Foster the eclectic mix of architectural styles and forms** on the block and throughout the neighborhood while maintaining articulated base designs that are pedestrian-oriented. Repetition of architectural forms and character, whether visually adjacent or within the U District, is strongly discouraged.

b. **Complement and continue predominant styles or materials** 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.

c. **Articulate building forms and facades to respond to historic platting patterns** to create compatibility between contemporary architecture and existing development.

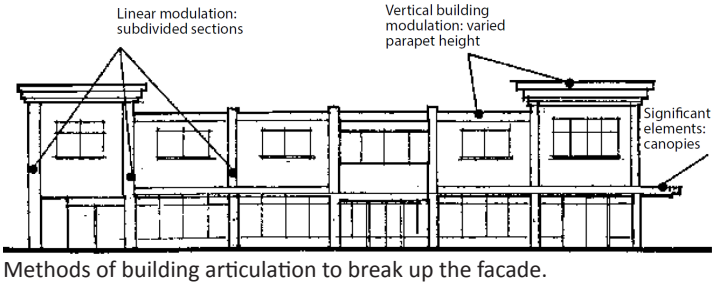
d. **Respond to nearby predominant horizontal and vertical patterns** and datum lines, and take cues from design elements in older structures such as campus gothic style, punched windows, texture-rich materials, and thoughtful detailing.

2. Adaptive Reuse & Preservation

Establish a connection to the U District's history by preserving positive qualities of existing structures with architectural or cultural significance.

a. **Preserve or rehabilitate existing structures or facades**, especially those with architectural merit, local significance, and/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.



Methods of building articulation to break up the facade.

PL1

PUBLIC LIFE

Connectivity

Seattle Design Guideline:
Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

Lara Swimmer

Unit entries, windows, landscaping, and lighting provide a welcoming and pedestrian-friendly mid-block pathway.

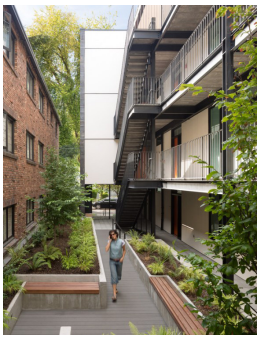
Green Garage Detroit.

Permeable pavers delineate space along the alley. Landscaping provides a buffer from residential uses.

Affinity Photography

Shared community space and pedestrian access.

Lara Swimmer



A mid-block pedestrian connection provides open space, access to light and air, and incorporates benches and landscaping. Balconies and windows on the adjacent buildings provide passive surveillance.

University District Supplemental Guidance

1. Networks & Connections to Community Open Space

a. **Include open space at grade that physically or visually engages the public realm**: Options include plazas, public courtyards, play areas, gardens, and ground level patios.

b. **Projects located on Green Streets** (as designated on SDOT maps) **and within the U District Green Spines** (See Map B)**:** Include multiple types of publicly-accessible 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.

c. **Connect to the Burke-Gilman Trail:** For projects adjacent to the Burke-Gilman Trail, provide physical and visual connections for pedestrians and cyclists. Design trail-facing facades with active uses, including retail, amenity space, and unit stoops or patios.

d. **Treat all alleyways as potential pedestrian routes:** Incorporate windows, entries, art, lighting, and active uses on alley-facing facades to activate and improve safety in alleys.

2. Shared Alleys & Mid-Block Pedestrian Connections

Pedestrian connections provide open space and create a fine-grained urban fabric and intensity of pedestrian activity in the University District.

Mid-block pedestrian connections: *Mid-block connections provide more pedestrian routes on long blocks.*

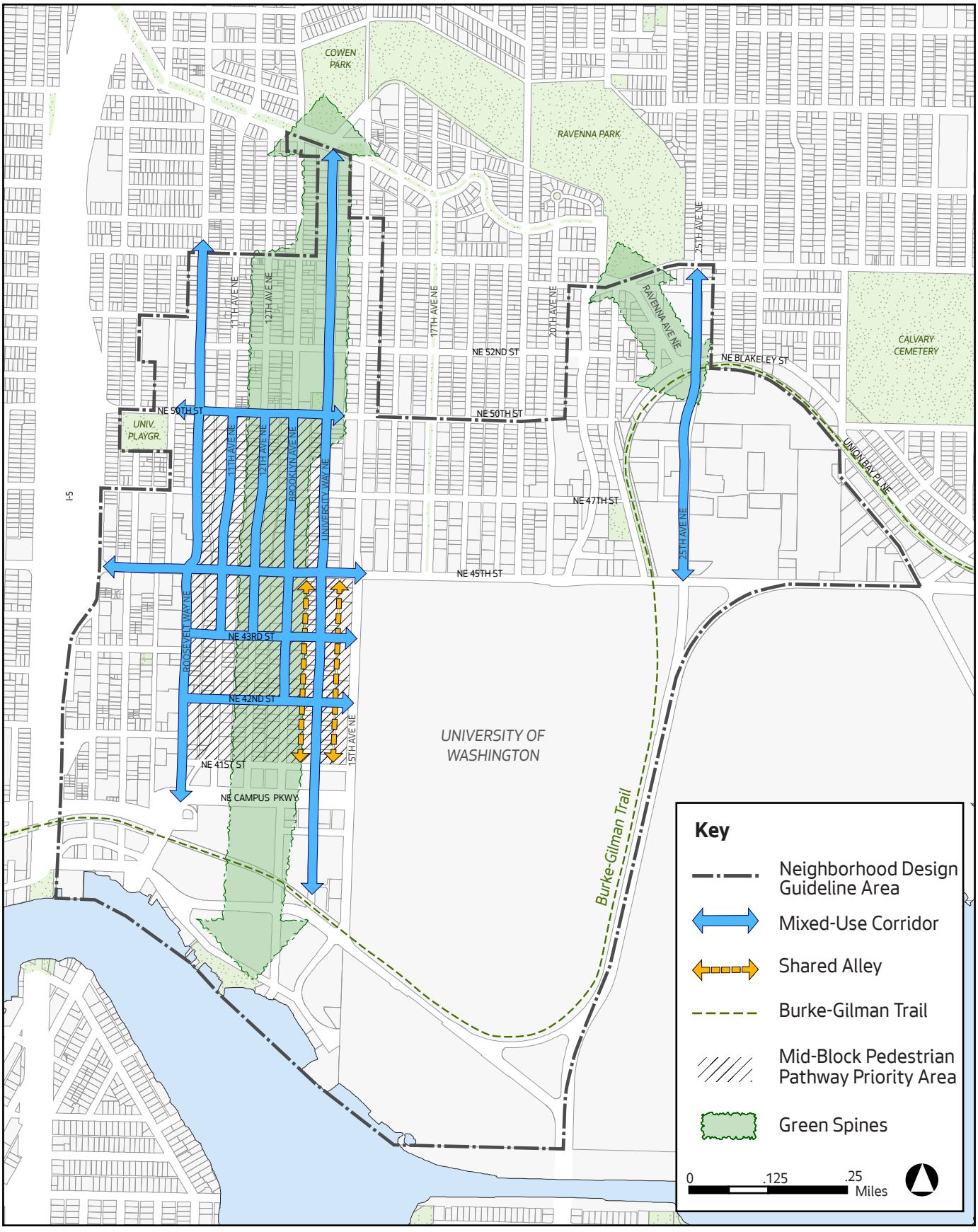
Shared Use Alleys: *Activated alleys, shared by vehicles and pedestrians are a defining feature of the University District Core.*

a. **Reinforce existing movement patterns** and introduce connections that weave a pedestrian-priority network throughout the neighborhood with mid-block pedestrian pathways and shared alleys.

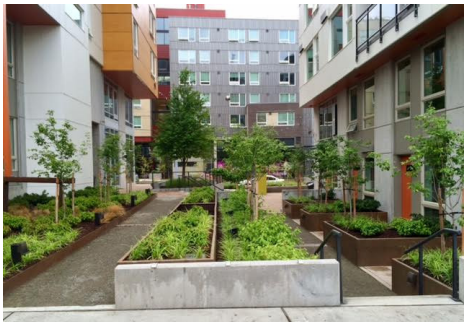
b. **East-west mid-block pedestrian connections from the street to alley** are strongly encouraged on blocks within the “Mid-block Pedestrian Pathway Priority Area” on Map B. Projects within the approximate middle third of the block are the preferred location for mid-block pedestrian connections.

University District Neighborhood Design Guidelines

Map B: Public Realm Activation & Open Space Network



A mid-block pathway is lined with shops, windows, seating, and landscaping to make it welcoming and pedestrian-friendly.



A mid-block pathway through a residential development is lined with unit entries, planters, and windows. A change in paving signifies the transition to semi-private space.

Block 136 by Mithun

Buildings adjacent to a mid-block pathway incorporate balconies and windows for passive surveillance.

Calvin Hodgson

Signage for Post Alley creates a unified identity.

A kiosk provides an opportunity for displaying art and information while establishing a playful landmark.

c. **Design facades adjacent to mid-block pedestrian connections and shared alleys as a second "front" with activating uses:**

1. Locate active ground-level uses along shared alleys and pedestrian pathways, including secondary entrances for businesses and individual unit entries separated by grade or setbacks for residential uses.
2. Avoid long blank walls. Where unavoidable due to service uses, treat blank walls with artwork, interesting materials, lighting, and/or architectural features.

d. **Create usable, safe, people-friendly spaces:**

1. Include upper-level balconies or terraces so that occupiable spaces overlook shared alleys and mid-block connections.
2. Strive for clear sightlines. Where mid-block connections do not cross the right-of-way or do not align across an alley or street, provide a focal point and wayfinding features at the visual terminus.
3. Incorporate secondary spaces for impromptu gatherings, play opportunities, outdoor seating, and bike racks.

e. **Create consistent signage & incorporate wayfinding elements:**

1. Install wayfinding elements on street and alley facades to highlight entrances to alleys and midblock crossings including special architectural treatments, creative signage, ground treatments, lighting, and façade design. Strive for continuity of design features throughout the neighborhood.
2. Incorporate street furniture, art installations, creative paving, paint patterns or lighting throughout shared alleys and mid-block connections.

PL3

PUBLIC LIFE

Street-Level Interaction

Seattle Design Guideline:
Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

Ground-level setback zone with residential patios.

Residential uses at grade are set back from the sidewalk to provide transitional space and landscaping. The use of brick, awnings, and individual unit entries are engaging to passers-by.

Individual patios provide private open space, passive surveillance, and enhance the relationship with the public realm.

University District Supplemental Guidance

1. Entries

a. **Design prominent, accommodating entries** with vertical emphasis and intricate architectural interest at a variety of scales. Use high-quality materials and detailing to create an identifiable entrance and welcoming experience for visitors and users.

b. **Avoid grade separations at retail entries:** Step building floor plates along sloped sites to avoid raised or below-grade entries for commercial along the sidewalk.

c. **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.

2. Ground-level Residential Design

a. **Articulate individual dwelling units and provide usable stoops or patios** for street-facing residential units. Include architectural detailing that expresses a residential use, such as contrasting trim, hardware, awnings, mailboxes, address numbers, and appropriately scaled materials. Provide opportunities for personalization.

b. **Use rowhouse-style units at the base** of residential structures to transition to the pedestrian sidewalk and street; they provide large windows, entries, patios and other activating features.

c. **Provide adequate buffer 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 challenging due to a site's physical constraints, **include a generous main entry with occupiable shared space** or forecourt to create a "front porch" for residents. Provide ample space for bicycles, seating, furniture, and planters.

Cafe Solstice has a small outdoor patio that provides a porous, engaging edge while maintaining the street-wall.

Operable windows at upper-levels add human scale with an ever-changing facade. The notched parapet and corners breakdown bulk of the form.

Live-work units designed for commercial uses at grade, with living spaces above.

3. Mixed Use Corridors & Commercial Frontages

Mixed-use corridors (as indicated on Map B) should be designed as welcoming and lively pedestrian-oriented streetscapes with a fine-grained detail and ground-level activity that engages the public realm.

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

b. **Provide frequent entrances, expressed breaks, and architectural interest at regular intervals of 20-30 feet** (regardless of uses/ tenants occupying ground-level spaces) to create a human-scaled experience and accommodate the presence or appearance of small storefronts. Add unique features to long sections of storefront systems.

c. **Residential entries for upper-floor residential uses and residential signage should not dominate** the street frontage over commercial uses.

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

e. **Design a porous, engaging edge for all commercial uses at street-level**. Include operable windows at all levels of the building and especially at the street level to maximize permeability and activate the streetscape. Design street-level facades that open to or near sidewalk level allowing uses to spill out, and provide areas for outdoor seating.

f. **Design live-work units and all other non-commercial spaces for conversion to street-accessed commercial uses over the life of a building.** Provide a direct path to the entry from the sidewalk, transitional areas that can be used as outdoor seating, awnings, and pavement treatments. Avoid or minimize tall, structural sills that would inhibit future storefront flexibility. Use recessed entries and non-permanent solutions for privacy for residential uses, such as movable planters. Unit layout should separate living spaces from work space, to provide appropriate privacy for living spaces.

PL4

PUBLIC LIFE

Active Transportation

Seattle Design Guideline:
Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

A bike corral with "inverted U" style racks provide ample and convenient parking without impeding a narrow sidewalk.

Custom bike racks provide an opportunity for placemaking. (Uptown example)

University District Supplemental Guidance

1. Bicycle Circulation & Parking

a. **Design bicycle parking for efficiency and security**. Bicycle use and parking should be encouraged to promote a healthy and active neighborhood and to support local businesses. Bicycle racks should be plentiful, and either be from the Seattle Department of Transportation's bike parking program or be an approved rack of similar "inverted U" or "staple style".

b. **Integrate design features into bicycle facilities that enhance placemaking**, such as having a uniform color for bike racks within the U District or having distinctive place-names designed into the racks.

c. **Locate bicycle parking and bicycle racks in convenient locations** for residents and temporary users with easy access, weather protection, 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 bicycle parking is located indoors, minimize obstructions, and consider using sliding or automatic doors.

2. Connections and Facilities for Transit:

a. **Ensure convenient connections to the light-rail station** for development near the station or other high-volume transit stops. This might include voluntary setbacks to afford widened sidewalks, chamfered building corners, and/or recessed entries to facilitate higher pedestrian volumes near the stations.

b. **Integrate waiting areas for transit and vehicle pick-up into the building design**, rather than adjacent to the street, where possible and with approval of agencies. Include shelters, large canopies, lean bars, and benches.

DC1

DESIGN CONCEPT

Project Uses & Activities

Seattle Design Guideline:
Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

Frequent individual unit entries in the landscaped setback zone, and upper-level balconies provide an engaging edge.

Artistic screening for ventilation celebrates local history and culture (Belltown example)

Residential uses fronting a shared space incorporate high-quality materials, curbless drive aisle, entries, balconies, stoops, and landscaping to create a pedestrian-friendly shared space.

University District Supplemental Guidance

1. Activating Uses

a. **Maximize active uses along street frontages** (especially Mixed Use Corridors on Map B) and minimize the amount of frontage dedicated to lobby/lounges, office, and leasing spaces - uses which an be located elsewhere in the building. Provide a high frequency of entries for both commercial and residential uses.

b. **Group commercial spaces (or live-work)** at corners and clusters at street level rather than fragmenting them between lobbies and other ground-floor uses.

c. **Where residential uses face on-site or public open spaces, parks, or access drive**, balance privacy layering with passive surveillance by incorporating stoops, patios, and balconies, lighting. Minimize garage frontages at these locations.

2. Visual and Safety Impacts

a. **Locate service entries and trash receptacles within the building**, mid-block along shared alleys (see Map B) and away from pedestrian crossings or gathering spots at mid-block connections.

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

c. **Wrap any above grade parking with active uses** to minimize 'dead facades'. Design any above-grade parking with a high degree of architectural detailing consistent with the non-vehicle design, possibly integrating changing displays or community artwork.

3. Shared Open Spaces

a. **If access drives are provided on site, design them as shared space** for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles to move slowly and safely. Include entries, windows, landscaping, and opportunities for personalization. Curbless drive aisles are desirable.

b. **Design the layout of the open space and surrounding uses intentionally to function as shared community space**. Include landscaping, pedestrian amenities, lighting, and paving treatments that clearly delineate paths from gathering areas.

DC2
DESIGN CONCEPT
Architectural Concept

Seattle 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.

Andre Pouge Photography

A distinct sculptural form on a highly visible corner creates a sense of depth and responds to each adjacent street.

Block 136 by Mithun

A full-block development is broken into two distinct and complimentary buildings with a mid-block pedestrian pathway.

An appropriately-scaled brick base provides grounding for a set-back upper massing. Balconies provide depth to the facade while a skilled use of analogous colors adds a whimsical flair that is not overwhelming.

University District Supplemental Guidance

1. Massing & Reducing Bulk and Scale

a. **Design building massing and form to express an intentional and original response** to the context, streetscape and all guidelines, not merely a reflection of the code-allowable building envelope.

b. **Reduce the bulk and scale of large buildings:** A large building should be legible as a series of discrete forms at multiple scales to reduce perceived bulk, create interest, and help users understand how the building is occupied.

   1. Break up larger development into multiple buildings and smaller masses with pass-throughs and pathways.
   2. Alternatively, give the impression of multiple, smaller-scale buildings by employing different facade treatments at intervals that complement the context by articulating the building at regular intervals.
   3. Employ purposeful modulation that is meaningful to the overall composition and building proportion, or that expresses individual units or modules. Avoid over-modulation. Changes in color and material should typically be accompanied by a legible change in plane and/or design language.
   4. Opt for distinctive and sculptural forms and elements, especially in highly visible locations or corners (see Map A).

c. **Design the building base to create a solid and "grounded" form** that transitions to a human-scale at the street. The height of the base/podium should be proportional to and substantial enough to "anchor" the upper massing.

d. **Use upper-level step-backs to maintain a human scale** along the street and respond to historic datums.

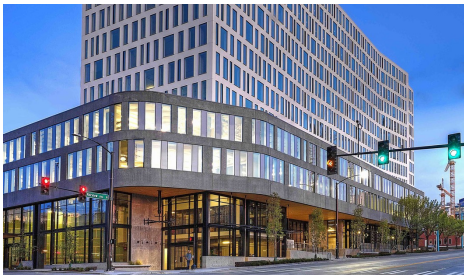
e. **Ensure that building massing does not dominate the public realm:** Setbacks along the sidewalk should be open to the sky. Where overhangs create usable open space at grade, provide an adequate ceiling height—generally at least two stories—with lighting and design detail to create a welcoming space.

f. **Locate vertical stair and elevator cores internally to minimize height impacts** to the street. Stair cores visible to the street should be designed as a prominent feature with a high degree of transparency.

GBD Architects, David Papazian Photography

A large building is broken down by employing modulation that corresponds to distinct, yet related design languages. The use of punched windows, brick, and wood adds a layer of complexity and depth to the facade.

Student housing gets a pop of pink on the internal courtyard. The massing is broken up into three distinct pieces with varying but related themes and proportions.



A significant set-back of the upper massing and a slight bend reduces the overall bulk and creates a unique form. Strategic setbacks at corner entries creates pedestrian space.

Hybrid Architecture

Depth and complexity is added to a simple form with the use of recessed balconies. Lush landscaping provides a buffer from the public realm.

2. Architectural Concept & Facade Composition

a. **Embrace contemporary design through distinctive, elegant forms** that demonstrate a context-sensitive approach to massing and facade design.

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

c. **Reinforce the massing and design concept with a deliberate palette** that limits the number of materials, colors, and fenestration patterns to achieve design cohesion.

d. **Use brick, stone or other high-quality, durable, and non-monolithic materials** as the predominant base material to reinforce a strong base massing.

e. **Employ a restrained and purposeful application of bold or high-contrast color**s and moments of whimsy to contribute to the eclectic character of the University District, without overwhelming the streetscape.

f. **Provide architectural interest with legible roof lines or the top of the structure** that is clearly distinguishable from the facade walls.

g. **Avoid expanses of large panels with minimal detailing, and do not rely on the use of colored cladding alone to provide visual interest:** Break down large masses or facades by 1) using quality materials that provide relief and interest through shadow lines, depth of fenestration, and detailing, and 2) delineating a base, middle, and top with architectural detailing and massing.

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

i. **Incorporate depth into building facades,** especially those with minimal modulation and boxy massing. Integrate facade 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 inches are preferable to window trims or fins applied to flush windows.

3. Pedestrian-Scaled Streetscape Design

a. **Design facades to a human-scaled rhythm and proportion and avoid monotonous repetition of the storefront or module** by providing points of interest every 15-30 feet. Layer a hierarchical arrangement of articulation and detailing at a variety of scales to express a high degree of quality and visual interest by including features such as articulated mullions, setbacks, patios, intricate architectural detailing, art, light fixtures, entries, planters, and window groupings.

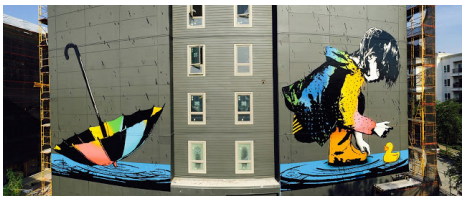
b. **Limit the height and use of retaining walls** along streets, open spaces, and in other areas of the public realm. Use stepped terraces as a preferred solution to resolve grade differences.

GBD Architects, David Papazian Photography

One development incorporates multiple storefront designs in 20-40' intervals to break down the scale of the building and demarcate businesses.

Multiple elements are layered to enhance the pedestrian experience through detailing and visual interest.

BumbleBee, Rom Levy



A party wall adjacent to an underdeveloped site uses local artists to provide visual interest and contribute to placemaking

Aqua Tower, Studio Gang

Intricately designed protruding balconies provide depth to an otherwise simple form, creating a sculptural and scaled tower form.

4. Service & Mechanical Elements

a. **Intentionally design wall venting for commercial uses and other screening for mechanical equipment** on the roof or affixed to the building into the overall design concept.

b. **Integrate building service elements**, such as drainage pipes, grilles, screens, vents, louvres, and garage entry doors into the overall facade design, and use these features as opportunities to provide artful or unique applications.

5. Blank Walls

a. **Finish visible walls and rooftops with quality materials or artistic expressions** that reinforce the design concept, avoiding simplistic treatments of cladding with only color changes.

b. **On party walls visible from streets, provide visual scale and interest** with murals or other legible artistic or architectural expressions, including joint patterns, plane changes, and/or proportions that break down the scale of large walls.

6. Tall Buildings

Tall buildings require additional design guidance since they are highly visible above typical 'fabric structures' and impact the public visual realm with inherently larger façade surfaces, bulk and scale shifts.

Tall Building Guidelines apply to the entire structure whenever any portion of the structure exceeds 85 feet height.

a. **Response to Context**: Integrate and transition to a surrounding fabric of differing heights; relate to existing visual datums, the street wall and parcel patterns. Respond to prominent nearby sites and/or sites with axial focus or distant visibility, such as waterfronts, public view corridors, street ends.

b. **Tall Form Placement, Spacing & Orientation**: Locate the tall forms to optimize the following: minimize shadow impacts on public parks, plazas and places; maximize tower spacing to adjacent structures; afford light and air to the streets, pedestrians and public realm; and minimize impacts to nearby existing and future planned occupants.

c. **Tall Form Design**: Avoid long slabs and big, unmodulated boxy forms, which cast bigger shadows and lack scale or visual interest. Consider curved, angled, shifting and/or carved yet coherent forms. Shape and orient tall floorplates based on context, nearby opportunities and design concepts, not simply to maximize internal efficiencies. Modulation should be up-sized to match the longer, taller view distances.

d. **Intermediate Scales**: To mediate the extra height/scale, add legible, multi-story intermediate scale elements: floor groupings, gaskets, off-sets, projections, sky terraces, layering, or other legible modulations to the middle of tall forms. Avoid a single repeated extrusion from building base to top.

South Beach, Foster + Partners

A sculptural roof line reinforces the design concept and transitions to the sky.

The Cute, Orange Architects

A tall building is broken up into horizontal stacked boxes to create a distinct form and break down the scale of the building.

Individual tower designs contribute to the collection of buildings that define Seattle's skyline.

e. **Shape & Design All Sides**: 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. Accordingly, not all sides may have the same forms or display identical cladding.

f. **Adjusted Base Scale**: To mediate the form's added height, design a 1-3 story base scale, and/or highly legible base demarcation to transition to the ground and mark the 'street room' proportion. Tall buildings require several scale readings, and the otherwise typical single-story ground floor appears squashed by the added mass above.

g. **Ground Floor Uses**: Include identifiable primary entrances-scaled to the tall form - and provide multiple entries. Include genuinely activating uses or grade-related residences to activate all streets.

h. **Facade Depth & Articulation**: Use plane changes, depth, shadow, and texture to provide human scale and interest and to break up the larger facade areas of tall buildings, especially in the base/ lower 100 feet. Compose fenestration and material dimensions to be legible and richly detailed from long distances.

i. **Quality & 6th Elevations**: Intentionally design and employ quality materials and detailing, including on all soffits, balconies, exterior ceilings and other surfaces seen from below, including lighting, vents, etc.

j. **Transition to the Sky & Skyline Composition**: Create an intentional, designed terminus to the tall form and enhance the skyline (not a simple flat 'cut-off'). Integrate all rooftop elements and uses into the overall design, including mechanical screens, maintenance equipment, amenity spaces and lighting. Applicants should design and show how the tall buildings will contribute to the overall skyline profile and variety of forms.

k. **Architectural Presence:** Consider citywide visual appearance when designing tall buildings, both as an individual structure and as a collection with other tall buildings, as these will be visible from many vantage points throughout Seattle.

l. **Landmarks & Wayfinding:** Design tall buildings with memorable massing and forms, to serve as landmarks that enhance a sense of place and contribute to wayfinding in the U District.

DC3
DESIGN CONCEPT
Open Space Concept

Seattle Design Guideline:
Integrate open space design with the design of the building so that each complements the other.

A pedestrian-friendly shared space is lined with balconies, entries, landscaping, windows. The presence of garage doors is minimized.

Cowen Park Apartments feature a lush semi-private courtyard entry that is accessible from the street.

Zanderroth Architekten

A courtyard incorporates area for trees and play space for kids, with direct sightlines to units.

University District Supplemental Guidance

1. Open Space Organization & Site Layout

a. **Design outdoor amenity areas, open space, and pedestrian pathways to be a focal point and organizing element within the development**, break up large sites, and foster permeability. Arrange buildings on site to consolidate open space areas into designed, usable shared spaces or places for large trees instead of "leftover" spaces or drive lanes.

b. **Extend pedestrian routes from entry courtyards or forecourts** all the way through a project site to improve pedestrian walkability.

c. **Arrange residential development, especially townhouse and rowhouses, to orient units towards the street**. Where units are oriented towards internal pathways or access drives, design these shared pathways that prioritize the pedestrian experience with paving, landscaping, lighting, stoops, and human-scaled design features.

2. Residential Open Space

a. **Provide a variety of types of outdoor private amenity space** instead of only locating private amenity space on rooftops. Include usable patios, terraces, and balconies; opt for usable projecting or recessed balconies instead of flush railings.

b. **Design shared play areas for children** with sightlines to units.

c. **Design courtyards to incorporate layered planting and trees** that provide privacy to units surrounding the courtyard as well as users.

3. Street-level Open Space

a. **Design open spaces at street-level to be welcoming:** Semi-public spaces such as forecourts should engage the street and act as a "front porch" for residents. Minimize the use of gates, or visual and physical barriers, especially those adjacent to the street. Any necessary fences or gates should be set far back from the street to create a semi-public transitional space.

b. **Open space design and location should support lively community interaction rather than passive space** within a development, as well as the larger University District community.

DC4

DESIGN CONCEPT

Exterior Elements & Finishes

Seattle Design Guideline:
Use appropriate and high-quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

COOKFOX, Max Touhey

Base massing reflects the immediate context with the use of brick and fenestration patterns. Setbacks and modulation reinforced with changes in the design language.

Upper-level step-backs provide room for terraces and balconies while reducing the overall mass.

George Gruel/DCI Engineers

A cohesive design expresses the modular construction technology used for this project.

University District Supplemental Guidance

1. Durable, High-Quality Exterior Materials

a. **Use materials that provide and evoke durability and permanence:** Avoid thin materials that do not age well in Seattle's climate, including those that deform or warp, weather quickly, or require paint as a finish. Use materials in locations that have a durability appropriate for an urban application, especially near grade.

b. **Brick or other masonry units are the preferred materials,** especially for podiums and the first 30-50 feet from grade.

c. **Use materials with inherent texture and complexity:** Limit the use of large panels or materials that require few joints, reveals, or minimal detailing. Use materials that provide purposeful transitions and reinforce the design concept and building proportions.

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, recyclable, reusable, responsibly sourced, and have minimal impacts to human and environmental health.

2. Hardscaping & Landscaping

a. **Incorporate artistic, historical, and U District-unique elements into landscape materials** to define spaces and contribute to placemaking, including mosaics, wayfinding elements, reused materials, and lighting.

b. **Use hardscape materials that contribute a fine-grained texture** through joint patterns, scoring, or inherent material qualities. Avoid areas with minimal texture, especially in areas with pedestrian traffic.

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

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