Overview

Planning context

EIS proposed action

EIS alternatives

Example impacts and mitigation
Planning Efforts

U District Partnership

- U District Next (2012-2013)
- Strategic Plan (2013)
- Non-profit community organization (ongoing)
- Alley activation (2014)
- Open Space Forum (2014)

Urban Design Framework (DPD, 2013)

- Streetscape designs (2014)
- Comp Plan amendments (2015)
- Zoning (2015)
- Design guidelines (2016?)
Community Participation

Urban Design Working Group
- A year of meetings to develop & review recommendations.
- Participants: residents, developers, businesses, UW, social services, City staff...

Broader public input
- Walking tours
- U District Next
- Open House
- 150+ meetings
What is an Urban Design Framework?

A shared community vision for coordinated improvements in a neighborhood

Consider the full range of physical factors: streets, parks, buildings, etc.

A conceptual plan to guide specific policy changes
UDF: Guiding Principles

- Recognize light rail as a catalyst for change
- Balance regional influences with local character
- Provide a network of great streets and public spaces
- Grow and diversify jobs
- Welcome a diversity of residents
- Improve public safety
- Encourage quality and variety in the built environment
- Build an environmentally sustainable neighborhood
- Improve integration between UW and the U District
- Support walking, biking, and transit
UDF: Building Height

Lowrise in the north, highrise in the core (160’-300’)

Rationale: increase variety of buildings, focus growth, provide public benefits

Standards: tower separation, bulk control...

Mixed opinions about the Ave

Concern from some northern neighbors
DRAFT
Environmental Impact Statement
for the
U District
Urban Design
Alternatives
Programmatic SEPA Review

**Purpose**
- Disclose environmental information to inform plan-level decisions

**Project Area**
- Typically subarea or jurisdiction-wide

**Level of Detail**
- Analysis is broad and cumulative
- Sufficient to support policy decisions by Mayor/Council

**Future Use**
- Platform for future SEPA plan-level and site-specific review
Proposed Action

Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code

Incentive program for affordable housing and public amenities

New development standards
Alternatives

2 Action Alternatives assume different code standards

1 No-Action Alternative assumes growth under current Land Use Code

All alternatives assume same growth

No-Action Alternative establishes baseline

Planning Estimates for Growth

3,900 Housing Units

4,800 Jobs
Alternative 1

Lower high-rises in moderately dispersed pattern

- More dispersed than Alt 2
- More concentrated than Alt 3
- Maximum heights 125 to 160 feet (on the Ave too)
- Mid-rise development north of 50th
- High-rise buildings closer together
- Landscaped setbacks + widened sidewalks
Alternative 2

Taller high-rises concentrated around transit center

- Greatest heights & growth in core area
- Maximum building heights 240 to 340 feet in core area
- Reduced appearance of bulk and more separation, compared to Alt 1
- Along the Ave heights 65 to 85 feet — much less than Alt 1
- Fewer zoning changes north of 50th, compared to Alt 1
- Area-specific and landscaped setbacks + widened sidewalks
Alternative 3

Retain existing zoning designations and standards

- Retains existing zoning
- No increased potential for building heights
- Development pattern most dispersed of all alternatives — new mid-rise buildings extend further north
Alternative 1

Lower high-rises in moderately dispersed pattern
Alternative 2

Taller high-rises concentrated around transit center
Alternative 3

Retain existing zoning designations and standards
Elements of the Environment

Land Use/Plans & Policies

Population, Housing, Employment

Aesthetics

Historic Resources

Transportation

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Open Space & Recreation

Public Services

Utilities
Housing

Supply
- Capacity exceeds growth estimates
- Action alternatives increase multifamily housing capacity

Affordability
- Lowest cost rentals likely replaced by higher cost units
- Action alternatives decrease extent of housing demolition, fitting household growth into fewer development sites
- By square foot, new construction costs more and will rent for more
Housing

Mitigating Measures

Housing affordability a major challenge

Possible Actions

- Expand geographic eligibility of MFTE program
- Expand incentive zoning
- Direct funding to build and preserve affordable housing units
Aesthetics

Impacts

- Height, Bulk and Scale
- Shadows
- Light and Glare

Mitigation

- Employ measure from Seattle Municipal Code 25.05.665 and U District Urban Design Framework
Aesthetics

ALTERNATIVE 1 Lower high-rises in moderately dispersed pattern
Aesthetics

ALTERNATIVE 2 Taller high-rises concentrated around transit center
Aesthetics

ALTERNATIVE 3 Retain existing zoning designations and standards
Aesthetics

ALTERNATIVE 1 The Ave, looking north from 41st — Lower high-rises in moderately dispersed pattern, substantial upzone on the Ave
Aesthetics

ALTERNATIVE 2 The Ave, looking north from 41st — Taller high-rises concentrated around transit center, relatively small upzone on the Ave
Aesthetics

ALTERNATIVE 3 The Ave, looking north from 41st —
Most dispersed development pattern
Transportation Impacts

**Auto & Freight**
- 5 corridors operate with substantial congestion

**Transit**
- 3–6 corridors operate with substantial congestion

**Pedestrians & Bicycles**
- Increase in mode share

**On-street Parking**
- Impacts spread over large area
Transportation Mitigation

**Auto & Freight**
- Manage demand to reduce congestion
- Encourage parking for car-share and bike-share

**Transit**
- Consider projects in Seattle Transit Master Plan
- Install transit signal priority on key corridors
- Implement transit-only or Business Access and Transit lanes

**Pedestrians & Bicycles**
- Consider projects in PMP, BMP, UATAS and UDF
- Modify zoning codes to require wider sidewalks in key locations

**On-street Parking**
- Revise parking minimums and limit new parking spaces
- Upgrade parking revenue control systems (PARC)
Open Space

Population growth will outpace growth of parks and recreation facilities — deficiencies get worse under all alternatives

3 acre deficiency today — 5 acre deficiency in 2035 — even with planned parks

Gap for specific facilities: recreation center and community gardens
Open Space Mitigation

Acquisition and improvement of new properties by Seattle Parks — fund through levy, open space impact fees

Provide dedicated public spaces as part of private development

On-site amenity space to be used by building occupants

Improvement of designated green streets and "festival" streets
Public Comment

Names will be called from sign-in sheet

Please limit comments to 3 minutes

Written and verbal comments will be considered equally