Agenda

- Planning process, 2011-2016
- Public investments in the U District
- Proposed legislation:
  - Rezone
  - Design standards
  - Affordable housing (HALA)
  - Open space, historic preservation, social services
Why plan in the U District?

- One of Seattle’s 6 urban centers: priority area for growth and investment
- Light rail in 2021
- Significant development underway, more coming
- Active community: strong interest in shaping growth
- HALA – need to incorporate housing affordability
Community engagement

- 90+ public meetings since 2011
- Different approaches: working groups, open houses, coffee chats, social media, public hearings
- Input from residents, business owners, students, developers, homeless youth, businesses, UW, social services, faith community…

What we’ve heard

• Make the most of light rail – density and walkability in the core
• Provide open space to support a denser neighborhood
• Address the loss of affordable housing

• Achieve architectural variety and good design
• Deal with traffic congestion
• Preserve historic buildings
• Include service to support growth
• Protect tree canopy
Results of planning process

Strategic Plan (2013)

Urban Design Framework (2013)

EIS (2013-2015)

Streetscape Plan (2015)

Parks Plan (2015)

Neighborhood Plan amendments (2015)

Zoning recommendations
Public investments in the U District

- Bike & ped safety
- Light rail
- Festival street
- Affordable housing
- Parks & U Heights Center
Zoning overview

- Increased height and density in the core:
  - Focus growth near light rail and campus, reduce pressure on surrounding areas
  - Take advantage of the large redevelopment sites along NE 45th St, context of three existing towers

- Design standards: new requirements to better achieve architectural quality and variety, tailored to the U District

- Affordable housing requirements (MHA)

- Requirements and incentives for open space, historic preservation, social services, and other amenities
Focus growth south of NE 50th St., with residential highrises up to 240’ and 320’

Offices limited to 160’ in highrise zones

Heights stay relatively low on the Ave

Limited changes north of 50th
Design standards summary

- Maximum width
- Street level uses
- Highrise standards
- Setbacks
- Modulation
- Parking standards
- Floor Area Ratio – limiting the total amount of development
- Landscaping and trees
- Large lot open space requirement
- Residential amenity area
Maximum width

- Historic buildings in the U District: 50’-200’ wide
- Recent development: 300’ to 475’ wide – long facades are monotonous, even with good design
- Recommendations limit any individual building to 250’
Highrise standards

- Sites must be 12,000 sq ft and meet other conditions
- Larger office floor plates limited to 160’ height
- Taller towers must have a smaller footprint
- Tower spacing: 75’ between structures
Setbacks

- Widen tight pedestrian areas
- Provide plantings along green streets
- Keep a lower street wall on the Ave (setback at 45’)
- Ground-level setback for residential
Landscaping, trees, stormwater

- Requirements promote trees, green roofs, rain gardens
- Street trees required
- Canopy in the core projected to grow from less than 5% to greater than 15%.
- Onsite stormwater management required
Open space requirements

- Amenity area required for any residential development
- Large lots must set aside accessible open space
- Mid-block corridors required for certain large sites
- Incentive bonuses for open space
Seattle’s housing reality

- Over 45,000 Seattle households pay more than half of their income on housing.
- 2,942 people are living without shelter in Seattle.
- Average rent for a 1-bedroom apartment in Seattle increased 37% in the last five years.
HALA in action

- Invest in housing for those most in need
- Increase overall housing supply, create new affordable housing as we grow
- Prevent displacement and foster equitable communities
- Promote efficient and innovative development
Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA)

- All new multifamily and commercial development must build affordable housing or pay into a fund.
- Provides additional development capacity to partially offset the cost of these requirements. (Zoning increases)
- Will be applied in neighborhoods throughout Seattle.
- **In the U District, the typical requirement for residential development will be 9% of units set aside, or payment-in-lieu of $20 per sq. ft.**
MHA Outcomes in the U District

In the next 20 years, 40-275 homes will be demolished, with or without zoning changes. Many of these have low rents.

Under existing zoning, no more than 20 affordable homes would be created through incentives.

Under the proposed zoning, ~620-910 affordable homes will be created through developer requirements.

1 key = 20 homes

*In addition, 4,000-5,000 market rate units will be created in the U District.
Incentive zoning

- In order to go highrise, developments must provide one or more of the following:
  - public open space
  - historic preservation
  - green streets
  - childcare
  - space for schools or social services.
Historic preservation

- Transfers of development rights help protect:
  - Designated landmarks
  - Vulnerable masonry buildings that go through safety upgrades
- Floor area exemption for keeping historic buildings
- No highrise on the Ave
Next steps

- Public comment
- Continued Council briefings in November and December
- Potential Council amendments
- Council and Mayor approval