

U District Alley Activation Project

The project site is the southern section of the middle block of the north-south aligned, 3 block alley located between University Way NE and 15th Ave NE, and between NE 42nd St and NE 43rd St

Applicant Problem

The alley section in the middle block is a dynamic nexus of community activity that welcomes and supports the strongest diversity of neighbors sharing a common space. In addition to several businesses that cater to a large, regular clientele, the alley is host to a homeless youth shelter, a needle exchange, a busy United States post office, and is adjacent to a very active church, a children’s day care, and an urban rest stop, among other services. The alley is one of the most used alleys in the neighborhood for vehicle, pedestrian, and bike traffic. While not an officially-recognized festival street, this section of alley is often used as such and has been host to numerous neighborhood events such as Alley Lights, Founder’s Day, and other UW Club events. Without the basic amenities and environmental quality to nurture community and provide safety in this shared, public space, the opportunities to mix socially and organize democratically are diminished. This alley has the potential to be a destination public space for the University District due to its long history of hands-on community support, variety of current uses, and location in the community (near the UW, Light Rail, Transit, Greenways, etc).

PROJECT TYPE

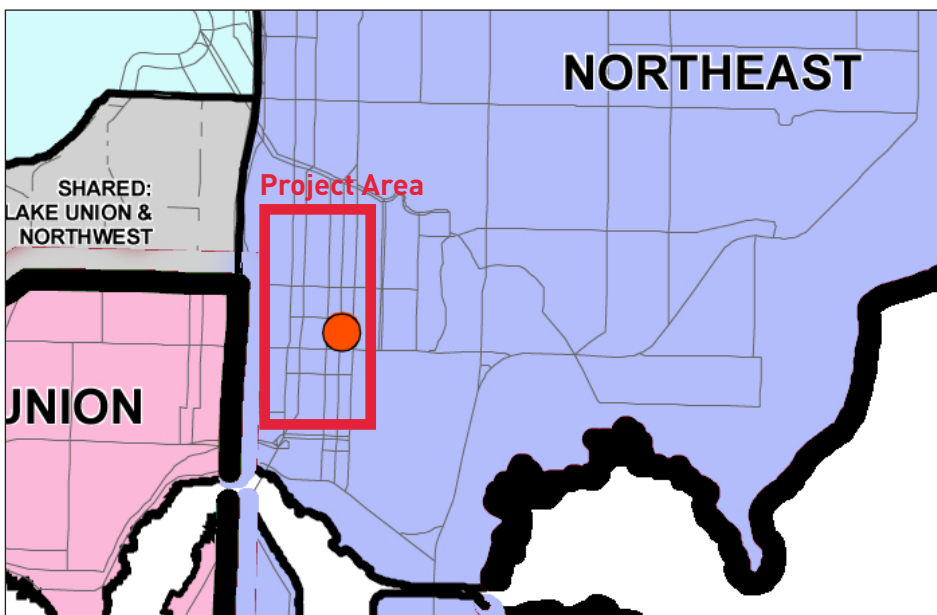
Corridor

APPROXIMATE LENGTH

N/A

COST ESTIMATE

\$269,000



Applicant Solution

1. **Surface Treatment:** To designate the alley as a pedestrian-priority space, a consistent pattern of paint will be applied to the existing alley pavement within the project boundary area. A painted surface treatment will provide traffic calming benefits for pedestrians and bikes as well as provide a highlighted space for public use and events.
2. **Overhead Lighting:** To improve nighttime safety, overhead tivoi lights will be strung across the projected boundary area above 26'. Tivoi lights will also distinguish the space as an inviting evening destination space for the community to enjoy.
3. **Bicycle Parking:** Reflecting the frequent shortage of adequate bicycle parking, the project will install vertical bike parking frames to maximize access to parking as efficiently as possible. The vertical bike racks would add an additional 8-10 bike parking spots for an already crowded parking location. These bike racks will be located out of vehicle right of way, on adjacent private property.
4. **Garbage Containment:** Taking advantage of the existing agreement between multiple entities on the alley to share trash, recycling & compost dumpsters, the project will prototype the centralization of these receptacles within an attractive and secure enclosure. This will reduce the visual clutter and errant litter in the alley while coordinating the shared use of a common resource.
5. **Seating:** Additional seating will be added in the form of counter height tables and stools (removable overnight). They will be located out of the right of way and out of vehicle traffic. The additional seating will provide a privately-managed, public space for the community to gather and aid in hosting community events.



Entrance to the alley of NE 42nd Street



Existing seating outside of Cafe Allegro



Truck unloading in alley.

Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Review

Project Description

The commercial alley north of 42nd Ave NE is used as access to businesses for consumers and for loading/unloading. Currently the businesses have outdoor seating and bike parking. Trash containers and dumpsters are stored out in the open on the southwest corner of the alley. The alley was recently repaved as part of the redevelopment of the southeast corner of the alley. There are both commercial and residential uses adjacent to the alley. Any improvements will need to consider these continued uses in the alley. SDOT is not able to purchase or install improvements such as seating that will be used out of the public rights-of-way.

The estimate for improvements to this alley from NE 42nd St to mid-block (approximately 220 feet) include the following allocations:

- Tivoli or catenary lights across the alley or LED lights if overhead lights are not permitted by the Seattle Fire Department.
- Vertical bike racks between the dumpsters on public property.
- Pavement markings or durable paint on the existing pavement surface.
- Design and construct a trash enclosure, as permitted by Seattle Public Utilities.

Constructability

- Location of lights and lighting levels will be need to be coordinated with adjacent property owners and the fire department. Final light selection will need to be approved by the Seattle Fire Department. Adjacent property owners would be required to hold a permit for the lighting, as well as take responsibility for maintenance and payment of electricity.

Impacts

- All improvements would need to be maintained by the community or the adjacent property/business owners.

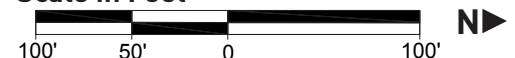
Benefits

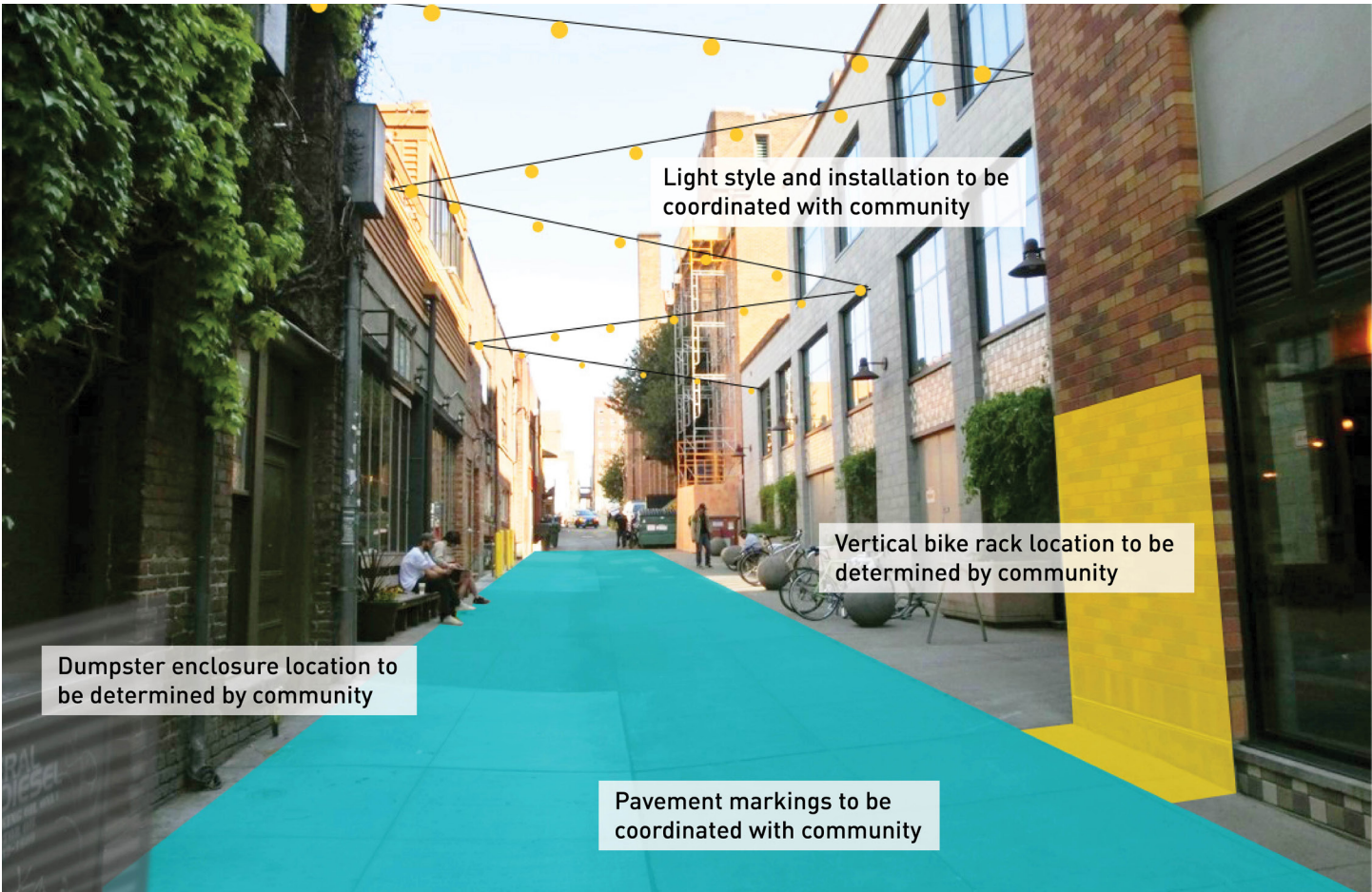
- Increased lighting in the alley.
- Increased activation in the alley.



Project limits

Scale in Feet





Light style and installation to be coordinated with community

Vertical bike rack location to be determined by community

Dumpster enclosure location to be determined by community

Pavement markings to be coordinated with community

Proposed improvements to the alley