

The City of Seattle is proposing Station Area Overlay District and Rezones for the NE 45th Street Light Rail Station Area

The Overlay District and rezones are intended to help achieve the neighborhood's vision for a people-oriented urban community

Background and Intent of Overlay District & Rezone

This pamphlet summarizes the intent and features of the NE 45th Street Station Area Overlay District (SAOD) and proposed rezones to extend the Pedestrian Designation along NE 43rd St. These actions help to promote transit-oriented development in the University District and support the intent of the University Community Urban Center Plan and University District Station Area Planning recommendations.

University Community Neighborhood Plan Recommendations for the Station Area

The University Community Urban Center Plan, adopted by City Council in 1998 (Resolution #29808), promotes an inviting and welcoming, people-oriented urban community that meets the social, educational, residential, and commercial needs of a diverse array of people. The plan calls for a wide range of housing options to meet the needs of its diverse and growing population. Policy and recommendations relating to changes in the Land Use Code include:

Policy A-2.4: Promote infill development on the Roosevelt Ave NE and NE 45th St (west of 15th Ave NE) commercial corridors.

Policy A-4.4: Establish a vibrant, cohesive, mixed-use neighborhood between NE 43rd St, NE 50th St, Brooklyn Ave NE, and Roosevelt Ave NE.

Policy A-4.5: Strengthen and enhance the midrise residential neighborhood south of NE 43rd St between Roosevelt Ave NE and Brooklyn Ave NE.

Activity I.E-B6: Improve the pedestrian link between "the Ave" and the campus on NE 43rd St without closing the street and [while] maintain[ing] alley access.

Concept-Level Recommendations for the NE 45th Street Station Area

The Concept-Level Station Area Planning Recommendations, adopted by City Council in September 2000 (Resolution #30165), include the following actions for changes to the Land Use Code:



New development is already occurring in the University District. This proposal will promote mixed-use development near the future light rail station.

- Establish a Station Area Overlay around the NE 45th Street Station to prevent strip development with large surface parking lots, and encourage a walkable community, with mixed-use buildings with retail shops at street level, affordable housing, and parking located away from the street or underground.
- Establish a pedestrian overlay on NE 43rd St between Brooklyn Ave NE and 15th Ave NE to encourage active, pedestrian-oriented development adjacent to the NE 45th Street Station.

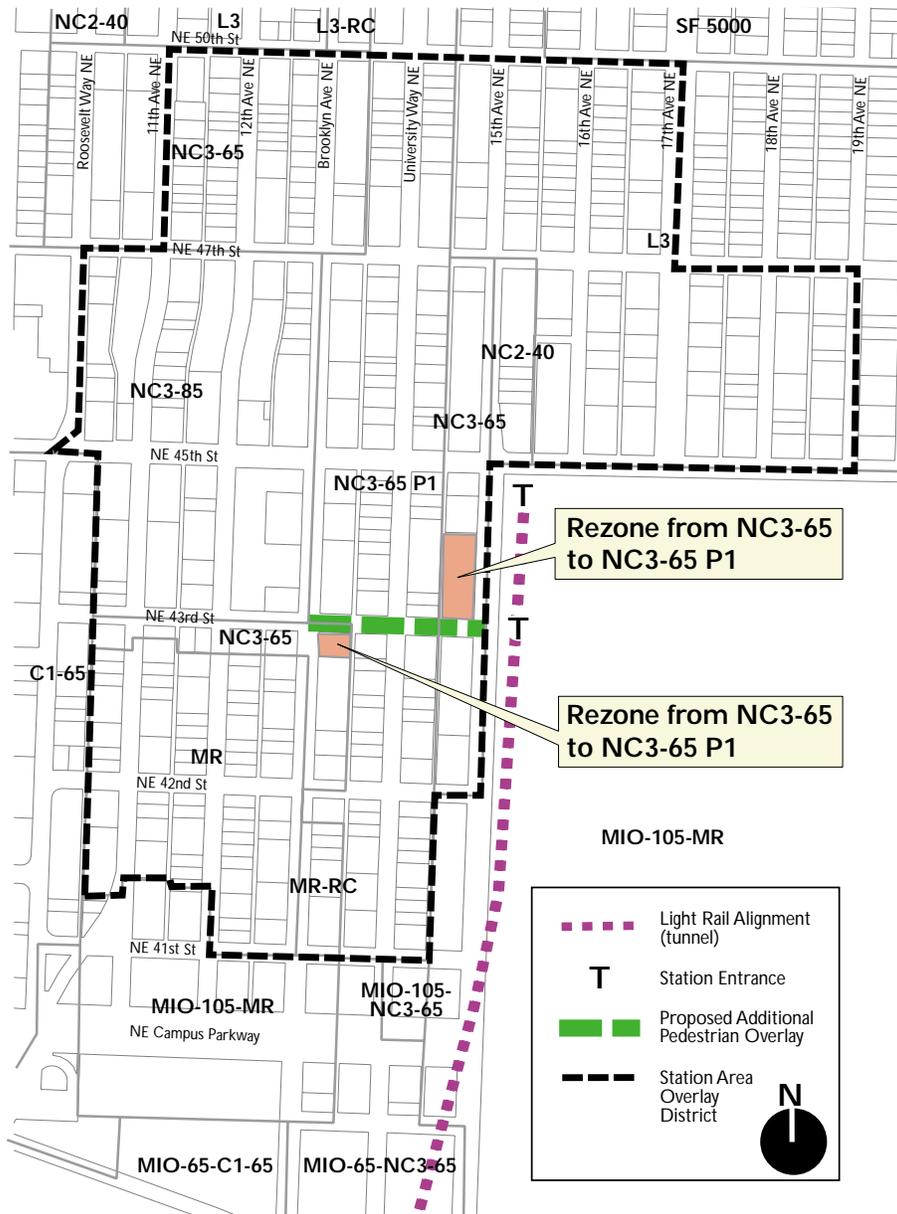
The elements of the SAOD and pedestrian overlay rezone, when taken together, are intended to discourage auto-oriented development and increase opportunities for housing development near the future light rail station.

The City will not develop any property in the NE 45th Street Station Area. This proposal is intended to set a zoning framework for property owners who may redevelop their property in ways that balance neighborhood desires with their own goals.

While market and site conditions will be major factors in determining the pace and extent of redevelopment in the neighborhood, this proposal is intended to help the neighborhood achieve its vision for the University Community Urban Center.



Rezone & Overlay District Boundaries



Existing Zones

Neighborhood Commercial 3 (NC3-85, NC3-65)
 A pedestrian-oriented shopping district serving both surrounding neighborhood and larger community or citywide clientele with a wide range of retail businesses as well as offices and business support services. Residential use is also permitted.

Height Limit: 85 or 65 feet

Neighborhood Commercial 2 (NC2-40)
 A pedestrian-oriented shopping area composed of small- to medium-sized businesses providing a full range of household and personal goods and services to a surrounding neighborhood. Residential use is also permitted.

Height Limit: 40 feet

Midrise (MR, MR/RC)
 Concentration of housing in pedestrian-oriented urban neighborhoods with convenient access to transit and to a full range of services and amenities, and opportunities to be within walking distance of employment. The RC designation allows for some limited commercial use.

Height Limit: 60 feet + 5 foot pitched roof

Lowrise 3 (L3)
 Moderate scale multifamily housing compatible with existing mix of houses and small to moderate scale apartment structures.

Height Limit: 30 feet + 5 foot pitched roof

Major Institutional Overlay (MIO)
 The Major Institution Overlay establishes a boundary around colleges, universities and hospital/medical centers, and a process whereby these institutions must plan for future growth and development with surrounding communities. In return, institutions may achieve higher heights than would otherwise be allowed in the zone, and development standards applicable to institution uses and structures. (University of Washington property)

These are the kinds of buildings that these zones allow.



Midrise



Neighborhood Commercial
(NC3-65)



Lowrise 3



Rezone Recommendations

Action

Extend the Pedestrian 1 Overlay District (P1) to portions of NE 43rd St between Brooklyn Ave and 15th Ave NE.

Intent

(see page 1 for City Council's adopted Neighborhood Plan and Station Area Planning policy direction for these actions)

The P1 designation will promote pedestrian-friendly commercial uses at street-level. The P1 designation will work together with Sound Transit's commitment to improve NE 43rd St and help enhance the pedestrian environment between the UW, the light rail station and the community to the west of 15th Ave NE.

Existing P1 Zoning

The P1 designation preserves and encourages an intensely retail and pedestrian-oriented shopping district where non-auto modes of transportation are strongly favored. The P1 designation restricts street level uses to pedestrian-friendly commercial uses that enliven the sidewalk environment.

The provisions of the P1 overlay apply to the uses at street-level of a P1 zoned parcel along designated principal pedestrian streets. The P1 Pedestrian Overlay is currently in place along University Way NE (shown on right). This rezone proposal would designate NE 43rd St as a principal pedestrian street and extend the P1 zone between Brooklyn Ave NE and 15th Ave NE.



Overlay District Features

Supporting Existing Businesses

All existing legal businesses and uses would be allowed to remain and maintain existing structures and sites. For areas of the city where the real estate market may not support new development in the near future, the Station Area Overlay District will allow for a one-time expansion of certain existing businesses made "non-conforming" by the Overlay District. This is an effort to help maintain the viability of businesses that are already established in the SAOD until the market makes redevelopment a more attractive option.

Shared Parking Provisions

The Station Area Overlay District will allow buildings to provide off-site residential parking by leasing parking on nearby sites. This helps lower the cost of new housing by reducing the amount of on-site parking an individual building must construct and pooling off-site parking resources in the area.

The SAOD will allow parking for residential and non-residential uses to be located on a lot within the SAOD and within comfortable walking distance of the site to which it is accessory. Off-site parking will not be allowed outside of the SAOD and the number of required parking spaces will not be reduced.

Prohibited Uses in the Station Area Overlay District

All existing legal businesses and uses would be allowed to remain and maintain existing structures and sites. The following types of **new development** will be prohibited in the Station Area Overlay District:

Principal use long-term non-residential parking	General manufacturing	Warehouse	Vessel repair
Drive-in businesses	Sales, service & rental of commercial equipment & construction materials	Outdoor storage	Marine service station
Vehicle repair	Sale of heating fuel	Sales & rental of motorized vehicles	Salvage & recycling
Towing services	Mini-warehouse	Dry storage of boats	Spectator sports facilities
Car wash		Sales & rental of large boats	Wholesale showroom
Heavy commercial services			Work-release centers



Increasing opportunities for housing development in the U-District will help accommodate a growing residential population. Our proposal removes two obstacles from the Land Use Code for housing development.

Housing Development Flexibility In Commercial Zones: Allowing Single-Purpose Residential Use

As part of the Station Area Overlay District proposal, single-purpose residential structures would be permitted outright in certain locations. Single-purpose residential (SPR) structures are apartment or condominium buildings in commercial zones. These buildings could include housing at the street-level, either permanently or until the market is ready to support more businesses. When the market can support more commercial development, the street-level use could be converted to commercial use.

This proposal provides flexibility and acknowledges market realities for developing either housing or businesses on the ground floors of buildings (on commercially zoned property on the edges of the neighborhood business district). The University Community Urban Center plan allowed SPR in parts of the University District. This proposal would extend this provision to all NC zones within the 45th Street Station Area Overlay District, except for those with pedestrian designations.

More Housing Without Raising Height Limits: Removing 64% Upper-Level Coverage Limits

There are some places in the city where multifamily buildings can use the entire lot area on all levels for residential units. The zoning in the Cascade and Belltown neighborhoods allows these kinds of multifamily buildings. This is also the way many of the historic buildings in older Seattle neighborhoods, such as Queen Anne, Columbia City, Ballard, and Georgetown were built.

But in many other places, a coverage limit reduces the area that can be developed for housing on upper-levels (64% of the size of the lot for residential buildings in a commercial zone—there is no limit for the size of upper-levels for commercial buildings). By removing this "upper-level coverage limit" imposed on residential buildings in station areas, we can help encourage additional housing that is so vital to creating "town centers" and active areas envisioned by Neighborhood Plans, and do it in a way that is working in other parts of the city.

Existing requirements for building setbacks will still apply where residential buildings in commercial zones border residential zones. These required setbacks, along with lowrise building setbacks, promote transition between buildings in different zones. Architectural features such as bays, courtyards, and building details reduce the appearance of the bulk and scale of these buildings, and allow dwelling units access to light and air. These features address one of the main goals of the original 64% upper-level coverage limit.

Also, the required Design Review Program, which was instituted after the upper-level coverage limits were put in place, provides an additional way to address and modify the bulk and scale of new buildings during the design and permitting process. The University Community Design Guidelines were adopted in October 2000 to further protect the character of the U-District.

For more information on the SAOD or rezone proposals for the University District contact Calvin Chow, Strategic Planning Office at (206) 684-4652, calvin.chow@ci.seattle.wa.us



Example of development which can accommodate ground floor housing or commercial use. Street-level residential in SPR structures can be converted to commercial use when the market is ready.



Example of new development in the Cascade neighborhood without the 64% Upper-Level Coverage Limit. The Design Review Program addresses bulk and scale issues during the design and permitting process.



Example of transitioning using upper-level setbacks. Existing building setback requirements still apply where residential buildings in commercial zones border residential zones.