



DESIGN GUIDANCE  
STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

Project Number: 3027541

Address: 5006 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NE

Applicant: Qi Qi, Studio 77 for Bravo Studios

Date of Report: Friday, November 17, 2017

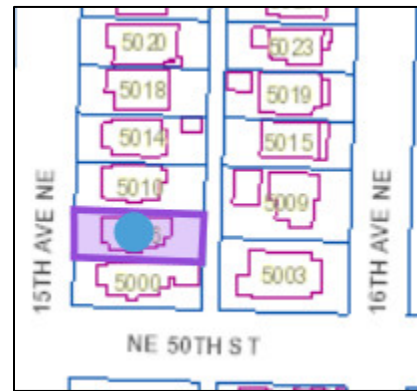
SDCI Staff Present: Abby Weber

**SITE & VICINITY**

Site Zone: Lowrise 3 (LR3)

Nearby Zones: (North) LR3  
(South) LR3  
(East) Single Family 5000 (SF 5000)  
(West) LR3

Lot Area: 4,322 SF



**Current Development:**

The site is currently developed with a 2-story single family structure with a front porch and gabled roof form. The structure was built in 1924.

**Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:**

The site is located within the University District Northwest Urban Center Village, which includes the University of Washington campus and its surroundings. The vicinity includes a variety of uses and types of development, including single family residential, small-scale lowrise apartment structures, midrise mixed-use structures, and institutional uses. The future Link light rail station is located an approximate 10-minute walk away.

There are several existing single-family structures on the block that are similarly proposed to be redeveloped as lowrise apartment structures. The lowrise zone transitions to single-family zoning across the alley at the rear of the site. Many of the existing buildings are set back from the street and adjacent property lines.

The surrounding neighborhood is in transition with several new large-scale mixed-use

developments are in the process of permit review or are under construction. Across 50<sup>th</sup> St to the south, a 7-story building containing 102 units and 3,510 SF of commercial space is proposed. New development in the vicinity typically ranges from five to seven stories. Early and mid-20th century structures in the area tend to be brick construction; while newer buildings are wood framed with a variety of finish materials.

**Access:**

Existing vehicular access is from the alley. No vehicular access is proposed. Existing and proposed pedestrian access is from 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, and a pathway provided along the north property line connects the street and alley to the primary entrance.

**Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs):**

There are no known ECAs onsite.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Streamlined Design Review Application proposal to allow a 4-story building with 30 small efficiency dwelling units (SEDUs). Existing single-family residence is proposed to be demolished.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following public comments were received:

- Concerned that the proposed development does not include onsite parking.

SDOT provided the following comments:

- Noted that street trees are required, and encouraged coordinating street tree placement with adjacent developments for a consistent streetscape.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the project number: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

The purpose of the streamlined design review process is for SDCI to receive comments from the public, identify concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable citywide and neighborhood design guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design and siting alternatives. Concerns with off-street parking and bicycle storage are addressed under the City's zoning code and are not part of this review.

**PRIORITIES & SDCI STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Planner provided the following siting and design guidance. The Planner identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

## 1. Massing & Façade Composition

- a. Staff is concerned about the lack of massing differentiation between the two developments proposed by the same design team, which are located at 5006 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NE and 5014 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NE. While Staff understands the desire to create two related designs, the two designs are too similar and the differences appear to be limited to material application. Staff encourages further differentiation by simplifying the facades, massing moves and roof form in response to the guidance provided herein. (CS3-A-1, CS3-A-4, DC2-A, DC2-I-ii)
- b. Staff recommends further development of a simplified architectural concept. Once the concept is established, apply to all facades, massing moves and roof form to achieve a unified architectural expression. (DC2)
- c. Staff does not support the roof form and massing moves as proposed at the rear of the site, and encourages further simplification in a manner that relates to the refined architectural concept. These features should be well coordinated and intentional. (CS2-D, DC2, DC2-A-1, DC2-C-3)
- d. Staff is not inclined to support the requested adjustment from façade length and side setback requirements as proposed, as it is not clear how the adjustments result in a design that better meets the Design Guidelines. Furthermore, the design resulting from the requested adjustment raises concerns regarding the perceived bulk and scale of the proposed development, particularly along the north and south facades. To resolve these concerns, Staff recommends incorporating thoughtful modulation, and maximizing the depth of windows and material transitions to avoid coplanar surfaces. (CS2-D, DC2-B-1, DC2-C)
- e. Staff questioned the cedar-clad bays proposed on the south façade as they appear to be arbitrarily located, and encouraged further exploration of purposeful massing modulation that relates to the overall architectural expression while breaking up the bulk and scale of the south façade. (CS2-D, DC2-B-1)
- f. Staff is concerned about the ground-level bedroom window adjacent to the proposed amenity space as it does not promote privacy for the resident of that unit. Consider a long, narrow window type located high on the wall, which would prevent direct sightlines into the interior space. (PL3-B-2)
- g. Staff is concerned that the project may not meet the façade opening requirements of SMC 23.45.529.C.1, and encourages increasing the amount of glazing on the street-facing façade in a thoughtful and intentional manner. Consider incorporating multiple window types that are well-composed in a manner that relates to and is organized by modulation and material treatments. (DC2-B-1, DC2-C-1)
- h. Staff is concerned that the project may not meet the façade articulation requirements of SMC 23.45.529.C.2. Demonstrate that the project meets these required Design Standards. (DC2-B-1, DC2-C-1)

## 2. Materiality

- a. Staff encourages simplifying the material application and reducing the number of different materials as the design of the building mass evolves. A change in façade

- depth should occur at all material transitions to avoid coplanar surfaces of the same material. (DC2-B-1, DC2-C-1)
- b. Staff supports the proposed use of cedar as it is a high quality, textured material that responds well to the residential context and achieves a fine-grained architectural character. Staff, however, encourages using cedar in more prominent locations that are more visible to the public realm. See also Staff Recommendation 1-e above. (DC2-I-ii, DC4-A)
  - c. If the base expression is maintained as the architectural concept is refined, then the base should be constructed of a high-quality and durable material and there should be a deliberate detailing and plane change marking the transition between the base and the middle. This expression should be applied to all facades. (CS3-A-2, DC4-A)

### **3. Entries, Pedestrian Experience & Amenity Area**

- a. Staff supports the proposed site plan and circulation as it promotes pedestrian access between the street and alley, connects all entries and amenity spaces, and provides convenient access to the bike storage room. (PL1-B-1, PL4-B-2)
- b. Staff encourages further resolution of the design and scale of the entry, including how the stair/stoop relates to the pathway within the north side setback, creates a strong connection to the street, and relates to the adjacent amenity area. Glaze the recessed portion of the façade and wrap the glazing around the northwest corner along the pathway to provide visual connections between the lobby and public realm. Consider whether a two-story entry expression would be appropriate, how that could inform the development of a unified architectural expression and differentiate from the proposed development at 5014 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NE. (CS2-B-2, PL1-I-I, PL3-A, DC1-A-4)
- c. Staff recommends refining the design of the entry frame and canopy so that it appears well-integrated with the structure, particularly as it relates to the recess and overhanging upper-level, rather than tacked on. The angled canopy is in visual conflict with the right-angled overhang and requires resolution. (PL3-A-1, PL3-A-4)
- d. Staff preliminarily supports the requested adjustment from amenity area requirements, however, would like to see better integration of the covered space adjacent to the entry and the proposed front amenity space to create a larger common and more functional amenity area. As proposed, the entry frame and canopy appear to divide the two spaces. The common amenity areas should be designed as attractive space with an intended purpose, and function as a front stoop to the neighborhood. (DC3-B-1, DC3-C-2)
- e. Staff generally supports the proposed landscaping, particularly the use and quantity of trees. As the architectural concept is refined, the choice of plant materials should reinforce the overall design. (DC4-D-1, DC4-D-3)
- f. Reduce the impacts of alley traffic, promote security, and create a more attractive space by incorporating a landscape buffer, material screening and a gate between the rear common amenity space and the alley to. (PL2-B, DC3-B-1, DC3-C-2, DC4-D-1)
- g. Staff recommends incorporating lighting to promote safety and security, particularly along the pathway and rear common amenity space. However, avoid glaring lights. Provide a lighting plan in the permit drawings. (PL2-B-2, DC4-C-2)

#### 4. Bike Storage & Service Uses

- a. Staff supports the proposed alley-accessed trash storage area, and landscape and material screening, including the trellis above the storage area as it provides visual screening from above. The use of cedar as a fencing material is consistent with the overall architectural expression, and the trees and vegetation provide an effective visual and sound buffer between the adjacent residential units and the trash storage area. Provide screening and trellis details in the permit drawings. (DC1-C-4, DC4-D-1)
- b. Staff supports the proposed second level bike storage room provided that direct access from the exterior is maintained for convenient access. (PL4-B-2)

#### DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

### CONTEXT & SITE

**CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.**

#### CS1-A Energy Use

**CS1-A-1. Energy Choices:** At the earliest phase of project development, examine how energy choices may influence building form, siting, and orientation, and factor in the findings when making siting and design decisions.

#### CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

**CS1-B-1. Sun and Wind:** Take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Use local wind patterns and solar gain to reduce the need for mechanical ventilation and heating where possible.

**CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading:** Maximize daylight for interior and exterior spaces and minimize shading on adjacent sites through the placement and/or design of structures on site.

**CS1-B-3. Managing Solar Gain:** Manage direct sunlight falling on south and west facing facades through shading devices and existing or newly planted trees.

#### CS1-C Topography

**CS1-C-1. Land Form:** Use natural topography and desirable landforms to inform project design.

**CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes:** Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

#### CS1-D Plants and Habitat

**CS1-D-1. On-Site Features:** Incorporate on-site natural habitats and landscape elements into project design and connect those features to existing networks of open spaces and natural habitats wherever possible. Consider relocating significant trees and vegetation if retention is not feasible.

**CS1-D-2. Off-Site Features:** Provide opportunities through design to connect to off-site habitats such as riparian corridors or existing urban forest corridors. Promote continuous habitat, where possible, and increase interconnected corridors of urban forest and habitat where possible.

**CS1-E Water**

**CS1-E-1. Natural Water Features:** If the site includes any natural water features, consider ways to incorporate them into project design, where feasible

**CS1-E-2. Adding Interest with Project Drainage:** Use project drainage systems as opportunities to add interest to the site through water-related design elements.

***University Supplemental Guidance:***

**CS1-I Streetscape Compatibility**

**CS1-I-i. Solar Exposure:** Minimizing shadow impacts is important in the University neighborhood. The design of a structure and its massing on the site can enhance solar exposure for the project and minimize shadow impacts onto adjacent public areas between March 21st and September 21st. This is especially important on blocks with narrow rights-of-way relative to other neighborhood streets, including University Way, south of NE 50th Street.

**CS1-II Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions**

**CS1-II-i. Existing Trees:** Retain existing large trees wherever possible. This is especially important on the wooded slopes in the Ravenna Urban Village. The Board is encouraged to consider design departures that allow retention of significant trees. Where a tree is unavoidably removed, it should be replaced with another tree of appropriate species, 2 ½ inch caliper minimum size for deciduous trees, or minimum size of 4' height for evergreen trees.

**CS1-II-ii. 17th Ave NE Boulevard Character:** The 17th Avenue NE (boulevard) character, with landscaped front yards and uniform street trees, is an important neighborhood feature to be maintained.

**CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.**

**CS2-A Location in the City and Neighborhood**

**CS2-A-1. Sense of Place:** Emphasize attributes that give a distinctive sense of place. Design the building and open spaces to enhance areas where a strong identity already exists, and create a sense of place where the physical context is less established.

**CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence:** Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

**CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces**

**CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics:** Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

**CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street:** Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

**CS2-B-3. Character of Open Space:** Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

**CS2-C Relationship to the Block**

**CS2-C-1. Corner Sites:** Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

**CS2-C-2. Mid-Block Sites:** Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. Continue a strong street-edge and respond to datum lines of adjacent buildings at the first three floors.

**CS2-C-3. Full Block Sites:** Break up long facades of full-block buildings to avoid a monolithic presence. Provide detail and human scale at street-level, and include repeating elements to add variety and rhythm to the façade and overall building design.

**CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale**

**CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning:** Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

**CS2-D-2. Existing Site Features:** Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties.

**CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions:** For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

**CS2-D-4. Massing Choices:** Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

**CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites:** Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

***University Supplemental Guidance:***

**CS2-I Responding to Site Characteristics**

**CS2-I-i. Views Along Burke Gilman Trail:** For properties facing the Burke Gilman Trail, new buildings should be located to minimize impacts to views of Mount Rainier, Cascade Mountains and Lake Washington, and allow for sunlight along the trail and increase safety and access.

**CS2-II Respect for Adjacent Sites**

**CS2-II-i. Zone Edge Areas:** Special attention should be paid to projects in the zone edge areas as depicted in Map 2 of the full Guidelines to ensure impacts to Lowrise zones are minimized.

**CS2-III Corner Lots**

**CS2-III-i. Special Site Features:** For new buildings located on a corner, including, but not limited to the corner locations identified in Map 3 of the full Guidelines, consider providing special building elements distinguishable from the rest of the building such as a tower, corner articulation or bay windows. Consider a special site feature such as diagonal orientation and entry, a sculpture, a courtyard, or other device. Corner entries should be set back to allow pedestrian flow and good visibility at the intersection.

## **CS2-IV Height, Bulk, and Scale**

**CS2-IV-i. Reduce Visual Bulk:** Special attention should be paid to projects in Map 4 of the full Guidelines to minimize impacts of increased height, bulk and scale as stated in the Seattle Design Guideline. In order to reduce the impacts of apparent building height and bulk at specified zone edges listed above, the following alternatives should be considered:

1. Along zone edges and specified streets, step back upper floors above 40', or modify the roofline to reduce the negative effects of the allowable height limit.
2. Along specified corridors, a gradual setback of the building's facade above 40' in height from the street, alley or property line may be considered.
3. In exchange for setting back the building facade, the Board may allow a reduction in the open space requirement.
4. Access to commercial parking on corner lots should be sited and designed in a manner that minimizes impact on adjacent residential uses.

## **CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.**

### **CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes**

**CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together:** Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

**CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design:** Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

**CS3-A-3. Established Neighborhoods:** In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

**CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods:** In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

### **CS3-B Local History and Culture**

**CS3-B-1. Placemaking:** Explore the history of the site and neighborhood as a potential placemaking opportunity. Look for historical and cultural significance, using neighborhood groups and archives as resources.

**CS3-B-2. Historical/Cultural References:** Reuse existing structures on the site where feasible as a means of incorporating historical or cultural elements into the new project.

## ***University Supplemental Guidance:***

### **CS3-I Architectural Elements and Materials**

**CS3-I-i. Incorporate Local Architectural Character:** Although no single architectural style or character emerges as a dominant direction for new construction in the University Community, project applicants should show how the proposed design incorporates



elements of the local architectural character especially when there are buildings of local historical significance or landmark status in the vicinity.

**CS3-I-ii. Ravenna Urban Village:** Within the Ravenna Urban Village, particularly along 25<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, the style of architecture is not as important so long as it emphasizes pedestrian orientation and avoids large-scale, standardized and auto-oriented characteristics.

**CS3-I-iii. Historical Character:** When the defined character of a block, including adjacent or facing blocks, is comprised of historic buildings, or groups of buildings of local historic importance and character, as well as street trees or other significant vegetation (as identified in the 1975 Inventory and subsequent updating), the architectural treatment of new development should respond to this local historical character. New buildings should feature a combination of traditional and contemporary materials employed in a manner that reflects the character of historic buildings in the vicinity.

## PUBLIC LIFE

### **PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.**

#### **PL1-A Network of Open Spaces**

**PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space:** Design the building and open spaces to positively contribute to a broader network of open spaces throughout the neighborhood.

**PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life:** Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

#### **PL1-B Walkways and Connections**

**PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure:** Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

**PL1-B-2. Pedestrian Volumes:** Provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, particularly in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian traffic or where the project is expected to add or attract pedestrians to the area.

**PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities:** Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open spaces to enliven the area and attract interest and interaction with the site and building should be considered.

#### **PL1-C Outdoor Uses and Activities**

**PL1-C-1. Selecting Activity Areas:** Concentrate activity areas in places with sunny exposure, views across spaces, and in direct line with pedestrian routes.

**PL1-C-2. Informal Community Uses:** In addition to places for walking and sitting, consider including space for informal community use such as performances, farmer's markets, kiosks and community bulletin boards, cafes, or street vending.

**PL1-C-3. Year-Round Activity:** Where possible, include features in open spaces for activities beyond daylight hours and throughout the seasons of the year, especially in neighborhood centers where active open space will contribute vibrancy, economic health, and public safety.

### ***University Supplemental Guidance:***

## **PL1-I Residential Open Space**

**PL1-I-i. Active, Ground-Level Open Space:** The ground-level open space should be designed as a plaza, courtyard, play area, mini-park, pedestrian open space, garden, or similar occupiable site feature. The quantity of open space is less important than the provision of functional and visual ground-level open space. Successfully designed ground level open space should meet these objectives:

- a. Reinforces positive streetscape qualities by providing a landscaped front yard, adhering to common setback dimensions of neighboring properties, and providing a transition between public and private realms.
- b. Provides for the comfort, health, and recreation of residents.
- c. Increases privacy and reduce visual impacts to all neighboring properties.

**PL1-I-ii. Central Courtyards:** A central courtyard in cottage or townhouse developments may provide better open space than space for each unit. In these cases, yard setbacks may be reduced if a sensitive transition to neighbors is maintained.

**PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.**

### **PL2-A Accessibility**

**PL2-A-1. Access for All:** Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is fully integrated into the project design. Design entries and other primary access points such that all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

**PL2-A-2. Access Challenges:** Add features to assist pedestrians in navigating sloped sites, long blocks, or other challenges.

### **PL2-B Safety and Security**

**PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street:** Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

**PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety:** Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

**PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency:** Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

### **PL2-C Weather Protection**

**PL2-C-1. Locations and Coverage:** Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.

**PL2-C-2. Design Integration:** Integrate weather protection, gutters and downspouts into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.

**PL2-C-3. People-Friendly Spaces:** Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath building.

### **PL2-D Wayfinding**

**PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding:** Use design features as a means of wayfinding wherever possible.

**University Supplemental Guidance:**

**PL2-I Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances**

**PL2-I-i. Residential Entries:** On Mixed Use Corridors, entries to upper floor residential uses should be accessed from, but not dominate, the street frontage. On corner locations, the main residential entry should be on the side street with a small courtyard that provides a transition between the entry and the street.

**PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.**

**PL3-A Entries**

**PL3-A-1. Design Objectives:** Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

**PL3-A-2. Common Entries:** Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

**PL3-A-3. Individual Entries:** Ground-related housing should be scaled and detailed appropriately to provide for a more intimate type of entry.

**PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements:** Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

**PL3-B Residential Edges**

**PL3-B-1. Security and Privacy:** Provide security and privacy for residential buildings through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

**PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential:** Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

**PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses:** Maintain active and transparent facades in the design of live/work residences. Design the first floor so it can be adapted to other commercial use as needed in the future.

**PL3-B-4. Interaction:** Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

**PL3-C Retail Edges**

**PL3-C-1. Porous Edge:** Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.

**PL3-C-2. Visibility:** Maximize visibility into the building interior and merchandise displays. Consider fully operational glazed wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays.

**PL3-C-3. Ancillary Activities:** Allow space for activities such as sidewalk vending, seating, and restaurant dining to occur. Consider setting structures back from the street or incorporating space in the project design into which retail uses can extend.

**University Supplemental Guidance:**

### **PL3-I Entrances Visible from the Street**

**PL3-I-i. Entrance Orientation:** On Mixed Use Corridors, primary business and residential entrances should be oriented to the commercial street. Secondary and service entries should be located off the alley, side street or parking lots.

**PL3-I-ii. Walkways Serving Entrances:** In residential projects, except townhouses, it is generally preferable to have one walkway from the street that can serve several building entrances. At least one building entrance, preferably the main one, should be prominently visible from the street. To increase security, it is desirable that other entries also be visible from the street; however, the configuration of existing buildings may preclude this.

**PL3-I-iii. Courtyard Entries:** When a courtyard is proposed for a residential project, the courtyard should have at least one entry from the street. Units facing the courtyard should have a porch, stoop, deck or seating area associated with the dwelling unit.

**PL3-I-iv. Fences:** In residential projects, front yard fences over 4 feet in height that reduce visual access and security should be avoided.

### **PL3-II Human Activity**

**PL3-II-i. Recessed Entries:** On Mixed Use Corridors, where narrow sidewalks exist (less than 15' wide), consider recessing entries to provide small open spaces for sitting, street musicians, bus waiting, or other pedestrian activities. Recessed entries should promote pedestrian movement and avoid blind corners.

## **PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.**

### **PL4-A Entry Locations and Relationships**

**PL4-A-1. Serving all Modes of Travel:** Provide safe and convenient access points for all modes of travel.

**PL4-A-2. Connections to All Modes:** Site the primary entry in a location that logically relates to building uses and clearly connects all major points of access.

### **PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists**

**PL4-B-1. Early Planning:** Consider existing and future bicycle traffic to and through the site early in the process so that access and connections are integrated into the project along with other modes of travel.

**PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities:** Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.

**PL4-B-3. Bike Connections:** Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the project.

### **PL4-C Planning Ahead For Transit**

**PL4-C-1. Influence on Project Design:** Identify how a transit stop (planned or built) adjacent to or near the site may influence project design, provide opportunities for placemaking.

**PL4-C-2. On-site Transit Stops:** If a transit stop is located onsite, design project-related pedestrian improvements and amenities so that they complement any amenities provided for transit riders.

**PL4-C-3. Transit Connections:** Where no transit stops are on or adjacent to the site, identify where the nearest transit stops and pedestrian routes are and include design features and connections within the project design as appropriate.

## DESIGN CONCEPT

### **DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.**

#### **DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses**

**DC1-A-1. Visibility:** Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

**DC1-A-2. Gathering Places:** Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

**DC1-A-3. Flexibility:** Build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed.

**DC1-A-4. Views and Connections:** Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

#### **DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation**

**DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design:** Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

**DC1-B-2. Facilities for Alternative Transportation:** Locate facilities for alternative transportation in prominent locations that are convenient and readily accessible to expected users.

#### **DC1-C Parking and Service Uses**

**DC1-C-1. Below-Grade Parking:** Locate parking below grade wherever possible. Where a surface parking lot is the only alternative, locate the parking in rear or side yards, or on lower or less visible portions of the site.

**DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts:** Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

**DC1-C-3. Multiple Uses:** Design parking areas to serve multiple uses such as children's play space, outdoor gathering areas, sports courts, woonerf, or common space in multifamily projects.

**DC1-C-4. Service Uses:** Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

### ***University Supplemental Guidance:***

#### **DC1-I Parking and Vehicle Access**

**DC1-I-i. Driveway Width:** In Lowrise residential developments, single-lane driveways (approximately 12 feet in width) are preferred over wide or multiple driveways where feasible.

#### **DC1-II Design of Parking Lots Near Sidewalks**

**DC1-II-i. Views to Businesses:** Screening of surface parking lots should allow views of businesses.

**DC1-II-ii. Screen Type:** On Mixed Use Corridors, walls rather than shrub screens are generally preferred because walls require less space and landscaping can be difficult to maintain in congested areas. If walls are provided, they must be made of “permanent” materials such as masonry.

**DC2-II-iii. Surface Lots:** When adjacent to residential zones, surface parking lots adjacent to sidewalks should be screened with shrubs and double rows of street trees for a more sheltered, residential feel.

### **DC2-III Visual Impacts of Parking Structures**

**DC2-III-i. Ground-Level Commercial Use:** The preferred solution for parking structures is to incorporate commercial uses at the ground level. Below-grade parking is the next best solution.

**DC2-III-ii. Access to Street Network:** There should be careful consideration of the surrounding street system when locating auto access. When the choice is between an arterial and a lower volume, residential street, access should be placed on the arterial.

**DC2-III-iii. Residential Area Consideration:** Structured parking façades facing the street and residential areas should be designed and treated to minimize impacts, including sound transmission from inside the parking structure.

## **DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.**

### **DC2-A Massing**

**DC2-A-1. Site Characteristics and Uses:** Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space.

**DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass:** Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

### **DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition**

**DC2-B-1. Façade Composition:** Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

**DC2-B-2. Blank Walls:** Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

### **DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features**

**DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest:** Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

**DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements:** Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose— adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other project functions.

**DC2-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings:** Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

### **DC2-D Scale and Texture**

**DC2-D-1. Human Scale:** Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

**DC2-D-2. Texture:** Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

**DC2-E Form and Function**

**DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility:** Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

***University Supplemental Guidance:***

**DC2-I Architectural Elements and Materials**

**DC2-I-i. Modulate Facade Widths:** On Mixed Use Corridors, consider breaking up the façade into modules of not more than 50 feet (measured horizontally parallel to the street) on University Way and 100 feet on other corridors, corresponding to traditional platting and building construction. (Note: This should not be interpreted as a prescriptive requirement. Larger parcels may characterize some areas of the University Community, such as lower Roosevelt.)

**DC2-I-ii. Fine-Grained Architectural Character:** Buildings in Lowrise zones should provide a “fine-grained” architectural character. The fine grain may be established by using building modulation, articulation and/or details which may refer to the modulation, articulation and/or details of adjacent buildings. To better relate to any established architectural character encountered within the community, consider the following building features:

- a. Pitched roof;
- b. Covered front porch;
- c. Vertically proportioned windows;
- d. Window trim and eave boards;
- e. Elements typical of common house forms.

**DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.**

**DC3-A Building-Open Space Relationship**

**DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit:** Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the functions of the development.

**DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities**

**DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs:** Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function.



**DC3-B-2. Matching Uses to Conditions:** Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space activities.

**DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space:** Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

**DC3-B-4. Multifamily Open Space:** Design common and private open spaces in multifamily projects for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

### **DC3-C Design**

**DC3-C-1. Reinforce Existing Open Space:** Where a strong open space concept exists in the neighborhood, reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes. Where no strong patterns exist, initiate a strong open space concept that other projects can build upon in the future.

**DC3-C-2. Amenities/Features:** Create attractive outdoor spaces suited to the uses envisioned for the project.

**DC3-C-3. Support Natural Areas:** Create an open space design that retains and enhances onsite natural areas and connects to natural areas that may exist off-site and may provide habitat for wildlife.

### ***University Supplemental Guidance:***

#### **DC3-I Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances**

**DC3-I-i. Plaza Location:** Plazas should be centrally located, on major avenues, close to bus stops, or where there are strong pedestrian flows on neighboring sidewalks.

**DC3-I-ii. Plaza Proportioning:** Plazas should be sensitively proportioned and designed. For example: not more than 60 feet across and no more than 3 feet above or below the sidewalk.

**DC3-I-iii. Seating:** Plazas should have plenty of benches, steps, and ledges for seating. For example: at least one linear foot of seating per 30 square feet of plaza area should be provided; seating should have a minimum depth of 16 inches.

**DC3-I-iv. Plaza Frontage:** Locate the plaza in a sunny spot and encourage public art and other amenities. For example: at least 50% of the total frontage of building walls facing a plaza should be occupied by retail uses, street vendors, building entrances, or other pedestrian-oriented uses.

**DC3-I-v. Planting Beds:** Provide plenty of planting beds for ground cover or shrubs. For example: one tree should be provided for every 200 square feet and at a maximum spacing of 25 feet apart. Special precaution must be taken to prevent trees from blocking the sun.

### **DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.**

#### **DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes**



**DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials:** Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

**DC4-A-2. Climate Appropriateness:** Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle’s climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

**DC4-B Signage**

**DC4-B-1. Scale and Character:** Add interest to the streetscape with exterior signs and attachments that are appropriate in scale and character to the project and its environs.

**DC4-B-2. Coordination with Project Design:** Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context.

**DC4-C Lighting**

**DC4-C-1. Functions:** Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

**DC4-C-2. Avoiding Glare:** Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

**DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials**

**DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials:** Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

**DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials:** Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

**DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning:** Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

**DC4-D-4. Place Making:** Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

**DC4-E Project Assembly and Lifespan**

**DC4-E-1. Deconstruction:** When possible, design the project so that it may be deconstructed at the end of its useful lifetime, with connections and assembly techniques that will allow reuse of materials.

***University Supplemental Guidance:***

**DC4-I Exterior Finish Materials**

**DC4-I-i. Desired Materials:** See full Guidelines for list of desired materials.

**DC4-I-ii. Relate to Campus/Art Deco Architecture:** Sculptural cast stone and decorative tile are particularly appropriate because they relate to campus architecture and Art Deco buildings. Wood and cast stone are appropriate for moldings and trim.

**DC4-I-iii. Discouraged Materials:** See full Guidelines for list of discouraged materials.

**DC4-I-iv. Anodized Metal:** Where anodized metal is used for window and door trim, then

care should be given to the proportion and breakup of glazing to reinforce the building concept and proportions.

**DC4-I-v. Fencing:** Fencing adjacent to the sidewalk should be sited and designed in an attractive and pedestrian oriented manner.

**DC4-I-vi. Awnings:** Awnings made of translucent material may be backlit, but should not overpower neighboring light schemes. Lights, which direct light downward, mounted from the awning frame are acceptable. Lights that shine from the exterior down on the awning are acceptable.

**DC4-I-vii. Light Standards:** Light standards should be compatible with other site design and building elements.

#### **DC4-II Exterior Signs**

**DC4-II-i. Encouraged Sign Types:** The following sign types are encouraged, particularly along Mixed Use Corridors:

- a. Pedestrian-oriented shingle or blade signs extending from the building front just above pedestrians.
- b. Marquee signs and signs on pedestrian canopies.
- c. Neon signs.
- d. Carefully executed window signs, such as etched glass or hand painted signs.
- e. Small signs on awnings or canopies.

**DC4-II-ii. Discouraged Sign Types:** Post mounted signs are discouraged.

**DC4-II-iii. Sign Location:** The location and installation of signage should be integrated with the building's architecture.

**DC4-II-iv. Monument Signs:** Monument signs should be integrated into the development, such as on a screen wall.

### **DEVELOPMENT STANDARD ADJUSTMENTS**

Design Review Staff's recommendation on the requested adjustments will be based upon the adjustment's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the adjustments.

At the time of Design Guidance, the following adjustments were requested:

- 1. Façade Length (SMC 23.45.527.B):** The Code requires that the maximum façade length for all portions of the façade within 15-feet of the property line shall not exceed 65-percent of the length of that lot line. The maximum allowed façade length is 70.2-feet on this site. The applicant proposes to exceed the maximum façade length by 6.8-feet on the north and south façade, creating a 77-foot long façade.

Staff does not support the requested adjustment from façade length requirements as proposed as a clear design-based rationale was not provided, and it is unclear how the design resulting from the requested adjustment better meets the intent of the Design Guidelines. Staff, however, would be open to reconsidering the adjustment request provided

that a design-based rationale is provided and the guidance regarding the unified architectural expression, façade depth, and reduction of the perceived bulk and scale are resolved. (CS2-D, DC2-C, DC2-B-1, DC2-C)

- 2. Setbacks (SMC 23.45.518.A):** The Code requires apartments in Lowrise zones to maintain a 5-foot minimum side setback and 7-foot average side setback for facades greater than 40-feet in length. The applicant proposes to allow a 6.94-foot average setback side setback along the north property line, and a 6.18-foot average setback side setback along the south property line.

Staff does not support the requested adjustment from average side setback requirements as proposed as a clear design-based rationale was not provided, and it is unclear how the design resulting from the requested adjustment better meets the intent of the Design Guidelines. Staff, however, would be open to reconsidering the adjustment request provided that a design-based rationale is provided and the guidance regarding the unified architectural expression, façade depth, and reduction of the perceived bulk and scale are resolved. (CS2-D, DC2-C, DC2-B-1, DC2-C)

- 3. Amenity Area (SMC 23.45.522.):** The Code requires an amenity area equal to 25-percent of the total lot area for apartments in Lowrise zones; 1,080 SF for the proposed development. The applicant proposes to provide 1,021 SF of amenity area, a 5-percent reduction of the requirement.

Staff preliminarily supports the requested adjustment provided that the guidance regarding the design of the front common amenity area is resolved. The covered exterior space adjacent to the entry should be better integrated with the front common amenity area to create the perception of a larger, well-designed and more functional amenity area. (DC3-B-1, DC3-C-2)

## **STAFF DIRECTION**

At the conclusion of the Design Guidance, Staff recommended the project should move forward to building permit application in response to the Design Guidance provided.

1. Please be aware that this report is an assessment on how the project is meeting the intent of the Design Guidelines. This review does not include a full zoning review. Zoning review will occur when the MUP plans and/or building permit is submitted. If needed and where applicable, SDR adjustments may be requested in response to zoning corrections.
2. If applicable, please prepare your Master Use Permit for SEPA review with a thorough zoning analysis listing the 23.45 and SMC 23.54 code section criteria, showing both required and proposed information (include page number where you graphically show compliance). You may want to review Tip 201 (<http://web1.seattle.gov/dpd/cams/CamList.aspx>) and may also

want to review the MUP information here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits/permittypes/mupoverview/default.htm>

3. Along with your building permit application, please include a narrative response to the guidance provided in this report. This response should be submitted both as a separate document and included in the plans.
4. All requested adjustments must be clearly documented in the building permit plans.