



City of Seattle
Office of the Mayor

News

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Mayor announces new redevelopment coming to Capitol Hill

SEATTLE – Mayor Mike McGinn today announced an agreement between the City and Capitol Hill Housing (CHH) to make the Seattle Police Department’s East Precinct parking lot available for redevelopment into a mixed-use, transit-oriented development to include affordable housing, retail, arts and community space. Today’s announcement makes the lot available for future redevelopment for the first time. An announcement on funding details will occur later in 2011.

“This is a win for lower-income Seattle residents, community space, artists and the Capitol Hill neighborhood as a whole,” said McGinn. “I’ve heard from many residents who felt that we could do a better job in removing City obstacles to redeveloping this site. And I’m happy today to report back to the community that we are taking action to help support such a vibrant Seattle neighborhood.”

Located on 12th Avenue and Pine Street, the 29,000 square foot site is currently utilized by the SPD as a parking lot, fueling station and mobile command center. Under the agreement, CHH will develop mixed-use building with ground-floor retail, performance art space and at least 85 affordable apartments over the garage. CHH and the Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce also plan to occupy office space on the ground floor. The building will also contain a parking garage and storage space for exclusive police use.

Currently using the placeholder name 12th Avenue Arts, the development is part of CHH’s 12th Avenue Initiative. The initiative is a three-year-old community development effort focused on the mile-long newly invigorated business district along 12th Avenue, stretching from East John Street to East Yesler Way through Capitol Hill and the Central District. Goals of the initiative include ensuring diversity and affordability of residential and commercial space, encouraging a vibrant and healthy business district that includes support for small businesses, and improving the pedestrian environment.

“This is both an affordable housing project and a community-economic development project. We are creating over 80 apartments affordable to low-income households,” said Christopher Persons, Capitol Hill Housing’s Executive Director. “We are also creating vibrant retail and arts space by partnering with local businesses and arts organizations to provide commercial space that is affordable and community-oriented.”

While the agreement announced today includes no commitments for direct City funding, CHH will seek Housing Levy dollars to support the housing. Additionally, the Office of Economic Development is evaluating financing requests from CHH for the investment of New Markets Tax Credits and a Section 108 loan to finance the non-residential portions of the project. If approved, those sources would result in approximately \$2 million of debt financing and \$2 million in equity to the project.

"Arts and culture are drivers in our city's urban development and a benchmark of our city's livability," said Councilmember Nick Licata.

"This is a great example of what happens when we open our minds to exploring unique public-private opportunities and then continue to work together to ensure all parties benefit from the results," said Councilmember Sally Clark.

"This project supports the retention of arts and cultural programming as a driver of our neighborhood economy and the emergence of multiple strong commercial nodes to complement the Broadway business district. Both are critical goals of the Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce," said Michael Wells, executive director of the Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce.

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