



— Welcome —

U DISTRICT
**Neighborhood
Design Guidelines**

WORKSHOP SERIES



Seattle
Office of Planning &
Community Development

— and —

**The U District
Partnership**



Questions? Talk to a planner or fill out a question card.

Comments? Fill out a comment form, email us: udistrict@seattle.gov, or talk to a planner.

Agenda

5:00 Open House

Visit stations, talk to City staff and our partner community organization, learn about Design Guidelines, and ask questions!

6:00 OPCD Presentation

Orientation to the process, design guidelines, and community feedback

6:20 Continue Open House

6:45 Wrap Up

Welcome

Format for our Open House Event

Tonight's event is designed as an Open House where you can spend as much or little time on a particular topic as you like - depending on your area(s) of interest.

Learn about the City's Design Review Program

If this is your first meeting on Neighborhood Design Guidelines, (or you would like a refresher), see our displays that summarize the design review process and review copies of existing design guidelines.

Provide Input on the draft Design Guidelines Framework

We are most interested in receiving your input on the draft Design Guidelines and draft maps of Character Areas, Gateways, and Corridors. Please take the time to visit the displays and add your comments.

Tell us to what extent you agree or disagree with each guideline.

Let us know if there is something you think we should add to improve the guidelines.

Tell us what your top priorities are for each of the 3 Design Guideline subject areas

Mark your favorites or "priority" guidelines for the U District that you feel should be emphasized in the review process.

Ask Questions

Talk to a staff member or UDP representative - you can find us near the display boards.

Tonight's Open House

Tonight's open house provides an opportunity for you to consider how the updated U District Neighborhood Design Guidelines will help influence the quality of the built environment.

[Please visit our interactive display stations and share your ideas.](#)

We want your feedback on the draft Design Guidelines framework represented in the draft maps and design guidelines text displayed around the room.



DESIGN GUIDELINES Overview

What are neighborhood design guidelines?

Design Guidelines define the qualities of architecture, site design, and open space that make successful projects, and are a tool for guiding individual projects towards successful design outcomes. The goal of the design guidelines is to foster design excellence in private development of new multifamily and commercial projects throughout the city.

The Seattle Citywide Design Guidelines apply to all projects required to undergo design review in all areas of the city. Applicants with projects located in the University District are required to consult both neighborhood and citywide guidelines in the development and review of the project design.

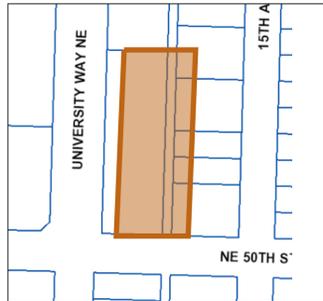
How are the U District Design Guidelines used?

The updated University District Design Guidelines will identify specific qualities of building and site design that reinforce unique design characteristics of the University District. Design Review Boards will use the guidelines to provide design guidance on the design of proposed development.

The example below shows how a neighborhood specific design guideline can shape project design.

1 CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES

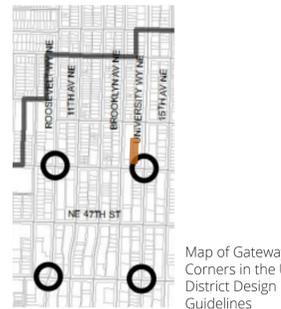
An applicant with a project site at 50th and University Way reads the **Citywide Design Guidelines**, and sees a guideline about corner sites:



CS2.C - Corner Sites
Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points. Consider using a corner to provide space for pedestrians, or build out to the corner to provide a strong urban edge.

2 NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES

The applicant then sees that the **University District Neighborhood Design Guidelines** designate the site as a "gateway":



CS2.C - Corner Lots
For buildings located on corner lots identified as gateways, consider providing special building elements distinguishable from the rest of the building.

3 EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING

The applicant designs the massing of the building to respond to the guidelines by indicating a special design treatment at the corner. The Design Review Board supports the design approach at the Early Design Guidance Meeting.



4 DESIGN PROGRESSION

The applicant uses the Board's guidance and continues developing a more detailed design. The design is submitted to City staff, who recommend the corner element be revised to better meet the Board's guidance and the Design Guidelines.



5 RECOMMENDATION MEETING

The applicant revises the design and presents it to the Design Review Board. The Board recommends that the depth of the protruding frame at the corner is increased to emphasize a "strong, dramatic presence at a prominent corner."



6 DESIGN APPROVAL

The applicant revises the design per the Board's condition by enhancing the corner element. City staff approves the design after the changes have been made.



DESIGN GUIDELINES Overview

How do Design Guidelines work?

Design guidelines set help to shape what is allowed by the Land Use Code by setting the parameters for discussion about building siting, shape, and materials.

Design Guidelines can:

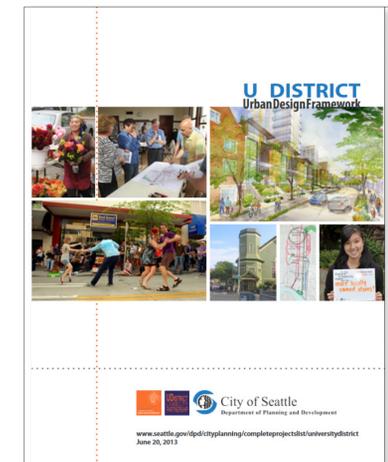
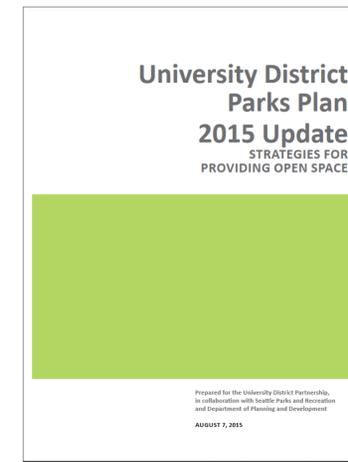
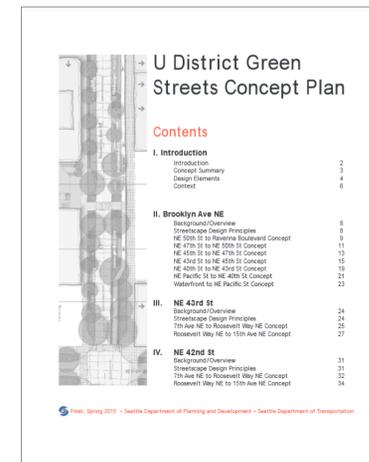
- Focus on what is important to the design of projects.
- Indicate design approaches the community wants to encourage
- Reinforce neighborhood character through design
- Identify most important features of neighborhood character
- Help protect visual aspects of a neighborhood
- Help architects and developers make design decisions

Design Guidelines cannot:

- Change zoning, allowed height, or density (units)
- Require design changes
- Require parking
- Control uses or uses of spaces in the building
- Significantly reduce a project's height or sized
- Require community benefits

Advancing Community Plans

Since 2011, the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) and other City departments have been working with the U District community. The Design Guidelines update is the next step for implementing the urban design framework principles. The foundational work of the Urban Design Framework, Green Streets Concept Plans and open space planning will be reflected in updated design guidelines.



Where are we in the update process?

The City has been working with the U District Partnership Urban Design Committee in a series of workshops. Each workshop focused on specific topics including character areas, and design in the core. OPCD staff presented ideas and collected input from community members at these meetings that have informed the draft Design Guidelines we are presenting tonight.

What are the next steps in the update process?

Following tonight's Open House, staff will refine the draft Design Guidelines, add details including photos and graphics, and circulate the draft Design Guidelines for public review. The Design Guidelines must be reviewed and adopted by City Council before they will be in effect.



U District Neighborhood Guidelines Update Timeline

Gateways & Corners

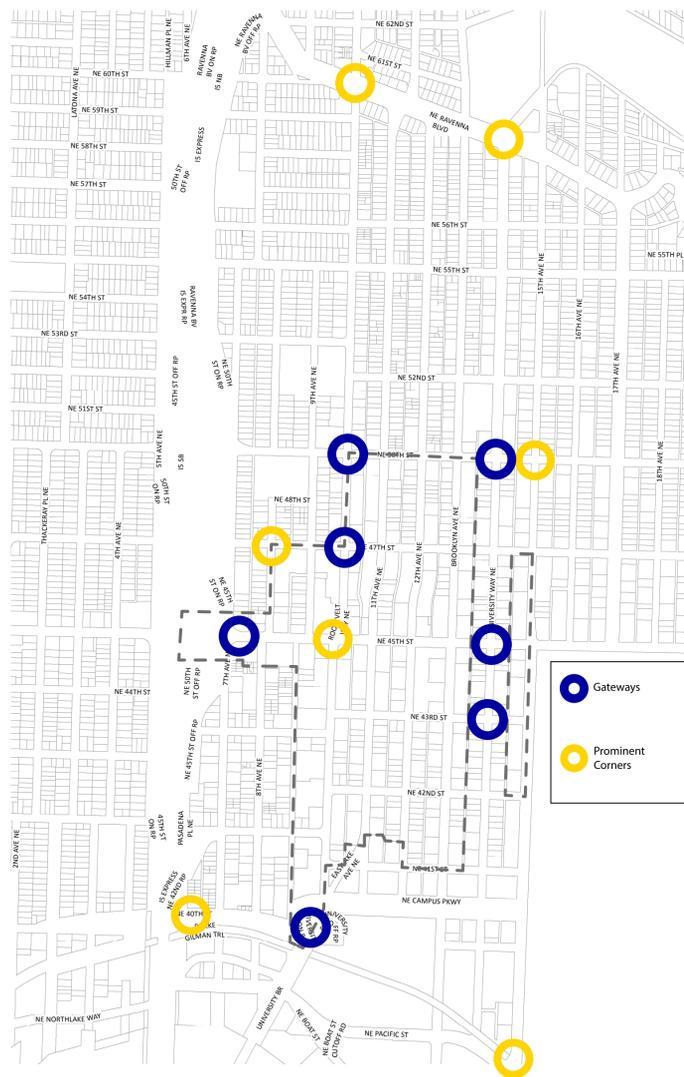
BACKGROUND

Corner sites often serve as gateways or focal points by including special design treatments that emphasize positive attributes and contribute to the U District's sense of place.

MAPPING GATEWAYS

Community feedback helped to refine the list of prominent corners included in U District Guidelines and the Urban Design Framework.

Do you agree on the location of gateways and prominent corners ?



DESIRED DESIGN OUTCOMES

For each of the following overarching themes, please indicate if you agree or disagree with the statement by placing a sticker on the line.

"Gateways" define the edges of the U District "core", and should receive a high degree of unique design articulation and features.

AGREE DISAGREE

"Prominent corners" contribute to a sense of place and should receive some degree of special architectural and design treatment.

AGREE DISAGREE

Additional comments?

COMMUNITY SUGGESTED DESIGN STRATEGIES

Please place a sticker by the strategies or images below that you feel are appropriate.

Tall buildings at gateways for wayfinding and to define "core" of the U District

Repeating elements to enhance neighborhood cohesion

Architectural detailing and unique design features

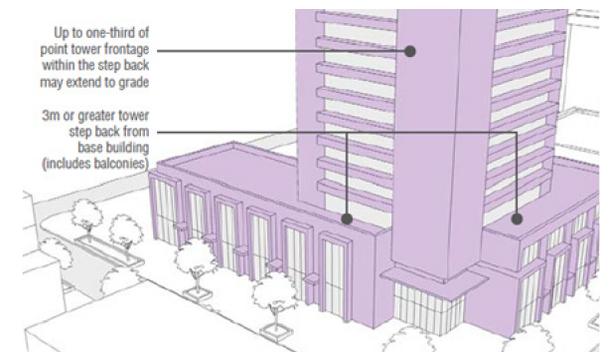
Strategic use of plazas, landscaping, art, and setbacks.

Distinguish building design at street-level from building design above

Additional comments or ideas?



The corner massing features a highly transparent facade and extruding frame to set it off from the rest of the building and provide visual interest at the prominent corner.



Large setbacks at gateways can provide ample room for pedestrian flow, amenities such as seating, landscaping, art, or kiosks.



Smaller setbacks at prominent corners can provide pocket plazas with pedestrian amenities.



A plaza at the corner provides bench seating and art.

Mixed-Use Corridors + Streetscape Design

BACKGROUND

The design of buildings and the adjacent public realm influence human activity and interaction at the street level.

MAPPING MIXED-USE CORRIDORS

Community feedback helped to refine the list of Mixed-Use Corridors included in U District Guidelines and the Urban Design Framework.

Do you agree with the location of mixed-use corridors shown below?



DESIRED DESIGN OUTCOMES

For each of the following overarching themes, please indicate if you agree or disagree with the statement by placing a sticker on the line.

Design all street fronts for activation, visual interest, and variety. The design of buildings and streetscapes should support the use of the public realm as an “outdoor living room”.

AGREE DISAGREE

“Mixed-Use Corridors” are those streets where design of residential and commercial uses create a lively pedestrian environment and encourage interaction and permeability between activities in the building and the outdoor public realm.

AGREE DISAGREE

On residential streets, design street frontages with a quieter, pedestrian-scaled character.

AGREE DISAGREE

Bus and bicycle facilities should be integrated into the design of buildings and the streetscape.

AGREE DISAGREE

Additional comments?

COMMUNITY SUGGESTED DESIGN STRATEGIES

Please place a sticker by the strategies below that you feel are priorities.

- Housing types that have individual unit entries, such as rowhouses, especially on Mixed-Use Corridors.
- For residential uses, use stoops, terraces, and balconies to visually as transitional space from street to building.
- Operable windows at street-level especially for commercial uses.
- Multiple entries for commercial uses to create a pedestrian-scale and provide visual interest.
- Strategic setbacks to not disrupt continuity on Mixed-Use Corridors, but to encourage activity to spill out into the street.
- Direct entries to commercial uses with minimal ramping.
- Building setbacks that are open to the sky to avoid overhangs at the street-level.
- Some small spaces for localized retail, businesses and startups.
- Ample room near bus stops for pedestrian amenities and weather protection, preferably integrated into the building design.
- Opportunities for individualizing transitional spaces and first-floor spaces.
- Use landscaping and open space that softens the street edge on streets with residential character.
- On streets with residential character, use courtyards entries that address the public realm and support community interaction.
- Include shallow recesses at entries to add variety and avoid interference with pedestrian traffic.
- Highly articulated, prominent, and visible entries with distinctive materials such as contrasting trim.
- Continuity in landscaping along the streetscape.

Additional comments or ideas?



Private patios with vertical separation from the sidewalk and lush landscaping provide usable spaces for tenants while contributing to a pedestrian-oriented environment with visual interest.



Small shops each with their own sign make for a colorful and vibrant street presence that exemplifies Ballard's healthy urban life. Other areas may be better suited to a more restrained and coordinated palette of signs. Either way, signs play a large role in a project's character.



A large canopy provides weather protection for bus riders.



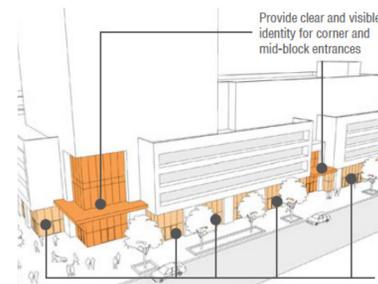
A small forecourt provides bike parking and a bench for residents and passersby.



Raised terraces provide some privacy and while engaging the street.



Rowhouse units at the base of this tower help transition to a human scale.



Multiple entries to the building help activate and engage the streetscape. The location and design creates a hierarchy of entries to aid in wayfinding.



Double-decker covered bike storage is functional and efficient.

BACKGROUND

Building design includes the overall massing and modulation, materials, and how a building responds and compliments its context and surroundings.

DESIRED DESIGN OUTCOMES

For each of the following overarching themes, please indicate if you agree or disagree with the statement by placing a sticker on the line.

Buildings should express design concepts and use materials that are durable, timeless, and highly-articulated.

AGREE DISAGREE

Building design should have a high degree of permeability while respecting privacy.

AGREE DISAGREE

Simple, but varied building massing and articulated facades should contribute to a fine-grained pedestrian scale environment.

AGREE DISAGREE

Building design should be varied, compatible with the historic and eclectic character of the U District, and complement existing styles.

AGREE DISAGREE

Create entries that are generous, welcoming, and have a high level of architectural interest.

AGREE DISAGREE

Additional comments?

COMMUNITY SUGGESTED DESIGN STRATEGIES

Please place a sticker by the strategies below that you feel are priorities.

Tall buildings should have different, unique design concepts, form, and tops to enhance the skyline.

Blank walls should be treated with textured materials, architectural interest, lighting, or art.

A change in colors or materials should be tied to a change in plane.

Composition of windows should be intentional

Use of color should reinforce the massing and design concept, especially when using high-contrast colors.

Facades should incorporate depth, especially at the windows.

Balconies should be used to express a residential character and to enhance a connection with the public realm.

Break down scale of larger buildings by using materials with smaller units and materials with texture or architectural detailing.

Reinforce the fine-grained pattern by articulating building facades at regular intervals and providing spatial changes or points of interest.

Additional comments or ideas?



The massing of the tower includes an articulated top, middle, and base.



Extruding balconies add visual interest and create depth in the facade.



The tower is articulated with significant shifts in the massing. Balconies provide visual interest and indicate a residential use.



The massing is broken into a distinct base and top, expressed through differentiating materials and scale of articulation. The base features vertical elements, while the top features horizontal elements.



A contemporary massing emphasizes positive design elements in the context by using a complimentary color of brick and similar proportions.



Pedestrian-scaled treatments include modulation, materials, texture, and composition.



New development responds to a landmarked structure by taking cues from the window pattern and providing a courtyard to help transition in scale.

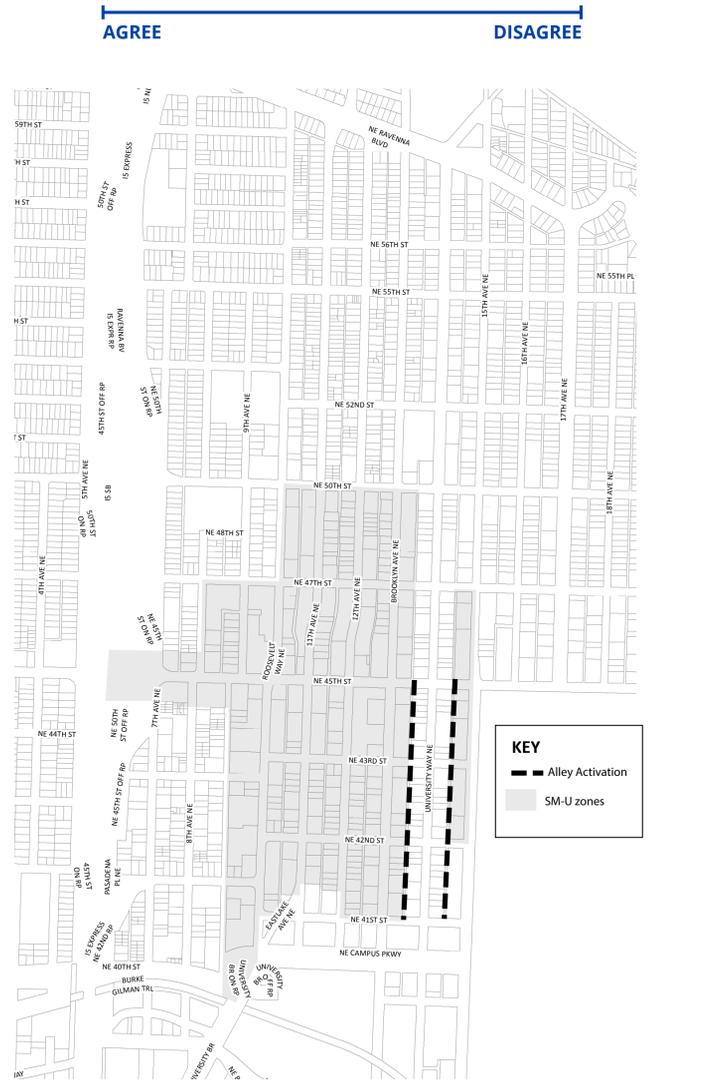
WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Alleys & Midblock Crossings

BACKGROUND
 Many blocks in the U District are north-south oriented. Alleys and mid-block crossings can enhance the pedestrian network and contribute to walkability.

MAPPING ALLEY ACTIVATION
 The following alleys for activation are mapped in the University District Street Alley Activation Street Design Concept Plan, developed by community partners.

Do you agree with the location of priority alleys for activation shown on the map below?



DESIRED DESIGN OUTCOMES

For each of the following overarching themes, please indicate if you agree or disagree with the statement by placing a sticker on the line.

Mid-block connections and activated alleys are an opportunity to provide open space and fine-grained pedestrian connections where it would support the desired intensity of activity in the area.

AGREE DISAGREE

Design mid-block connections and active alleys to be safe and comfortable for pedestrians by promoting visual interest, wayfinding, and safety.

AGREE DISAGREE

Additional comments?

COMMUNITY SUGGESTED DESIGN STRATEGIES

Please place a sticker by the strategies below that you feel are priorities.

- Consistent pedestrian-scaled lighting, such as Tivoli lighting, to enhance wayfinding, identity, and safety.
- Pedestrian amenities such as seating.
- Unique signage to enhance wayfinding.
- Use of distinct, detailed paving treatments to provide continuity and achieve a pedestrian scale.
- Use of art and pedestrian-scaled architectural features and details.
- Focal points to draw in pedestrians, including lighting, art, courtyards, seating.
- Where mid-block crossings do not cross the right of way, provide a focal point at the visual terminus.
- Enclose trash in the building, and provide space for existing buildings trash.
- Landscaping and green stormwater infrastructure.
- Entries to businesses or residential units to generate activity and provide "eyes on the street".

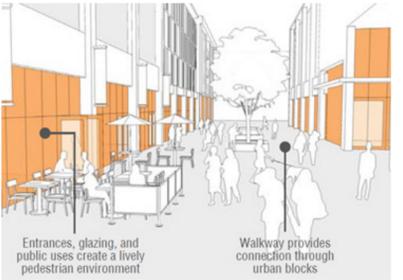
Additional comments or ideas?



Overhead lighting, textured paving, and seating add to the activity and pedestrian-oriented environment.



Entries and landscaping provide visual interest and "eyes on the street".



A mid-block crossing is wide enough to accommodate pedestrian traffic and provide small "rooms" for seating.



Signage and lighting help with wayfinding and enhancing the sense of place.



Landscaping makes a mid-block crossing feel welcoming and provides a sense of enclosure.



Seating, landscaping, and a focal point at the terminus draw pedestrians through the space.



Art provides visual interest, enhances the sense of place, and can become a focal point or destination.

BACKGROUND

Both public open spaces and private amenity spaces can provide safe, welcoming places for people to recreate and socialize, provide visual and environmental benefits, and activate the public realm.

MAPPING ALLEY ACTIVATION

The following priorities for open space are mapped in the 2015 University District Parks Plan.



The six physical strategies listed below in priority from 'Very High' to 'High.'

PUBLICLY-OWNED CENTRAL SQUARE

A large, publicly-owned gathering space for all types of people in the District.

NORTH-SOUTH GREEN SPINE

A vegetation, pedestrian, and cycle connection(s) and safety from Cowen Park to the waterfront.

EAST-WEST PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

More pedestrian options between NE 41st St and NE 45th St Campus Parkway, including mid-block pass-throughs and improved streetscape.

ACTIVATE EXISTING AND PLANNED PARKS

Enhancements and additional uses to existing and planned parks.

POCKET PLAZAS

Small, publicly-accessible spaces, integrated into activate streets and new development.

UW CAMPUS EDGE

Better integration with UW open spaces, the addition of new attractions, and celebrated entrances along 15th Ave NE.

DESIRED DESIGN OUTCOMES

For each of the following overarching themes, please indicate if you agree or disagree with the statement by placing a sticker on the line.

A large variety of open spaces are desirable to create a "front yard" for the University District and contribute to a coherent network of neighborhood open space.

AGREE DISAGREE

The design and location of open space should be the organizing component for new development.

AGREE DISAGREE

Open spaces at street-level should be designed to be welcoming and easily accessible to the public.

AGREE DISAGREE

Open space design and location should support community interaction within a development as well as the larger University District community.

AGREE DISAGREE

Additional comments?

COMMUNITY SUGGESTED DESIGN STRATEGIES

Please place a sticker by the strategies below that you feel are priorities.

On Green Streets and Mixed-Use Corridors, private amenity spaces on second or third level terraces or balconies to provide visual interest and activate the public realm.

Strategic setbacks on Mixed-Use Corridors to provide wider sidewalks, space for building entries, or accommodate amenities while supporting street-level activity.

Larger setbacks for landscaping, courtyards, and other similar features along streets where a residential emphasis is desired.

Minimize the use of barriers to ensure open spaces appear welcoming to all.

Amenities for age-specific groups, such as play structures for children.

Co-locate street-level open spaces when possible.

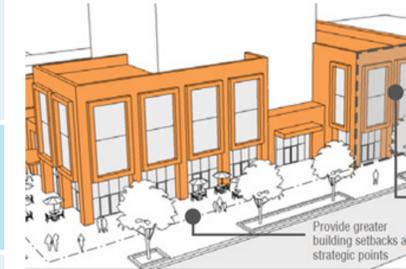
Plazas and open spaces at corners.

Complementary design on building facades adjacent to open spaces.

Ample pedestrian amenities, including seating, lighting, and visual interest.

Locate semi-private courtyards, forecourts, and plazas near principle building entries to function as a "front porch" for residents.

Additional comments or ideas?



Greater setbacks near corners and entries can create room for commercial uses to spill out onto the street.



A small setback provides room for seating; however, there is an absence of an adjacent activity-generating use.



A covered plaza at the corner provides seating for patrons of the shops and booths in the adjacent building.



Rooftop decks provide amenity space for residents, but do not contribute to the public realm at street-level.



A small setback and forecourt adjacent to a residential entry provide a semi-private space that engages the street and acts as a "front porch" for residents.



The new development was designed around a prominent tree and open space.



Shared courtyard entries provide a quiet, semi-private space, but take activity away from the street.



An open space at the corner provides space for landscaping and a generous entry to the residential building.

Design in the U District

Citywide Design Guidelines provide a framework for the Neighborhood Design Guidelines.

Citywide Design Guidelines apply to all projects required to undergo design review in all areas of the city. Applicants with projects located in the University District are required to consult both neighborhood and citywide guidelines in the development and review of the project design.

Citywide Design Guidelines are organized into three subject areas as outlined below.

The University District Design Guidelines provide more specific design guidance within each of the three subject areas that do not duplicate, but reinforce the character of the neighborhood and promote the qualities that the community values.

Context & Site

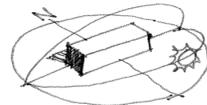
CS1: Natural Systems & Site Features

Use natural systems and features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.



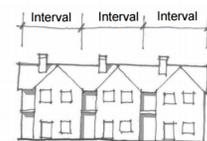
CS2: Urban Pattern and Form

Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.



CS3: Architectural Context and Character

Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.



This building is articulated into intervals to be compatible with adjacent structures. Articulation methods include modulation, broken roof lines, building elements (chimneys, entries, etc.) and landscaping.



Public Realm

PL1: Connectivity

Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around site and the connections among them.



PL2: Walkability

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



PL3: Street-Level Interaction

Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.



PL4: Active Transportation

Incorporate design features that facilitate forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.



Design Concept

DC1: Project Uses and Activities

Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.



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.



DC3: Open Space Concept

Integrate open space design with the design of the building so that each complements the other.

DC4: Exterior Elements and Finishes

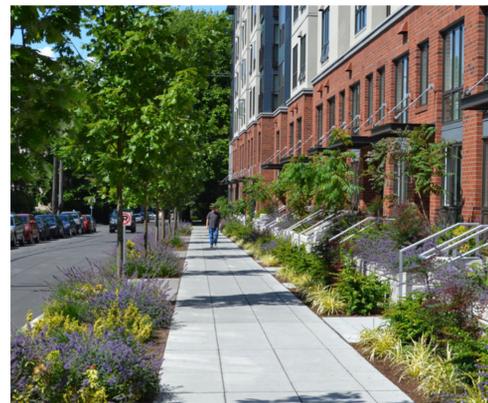
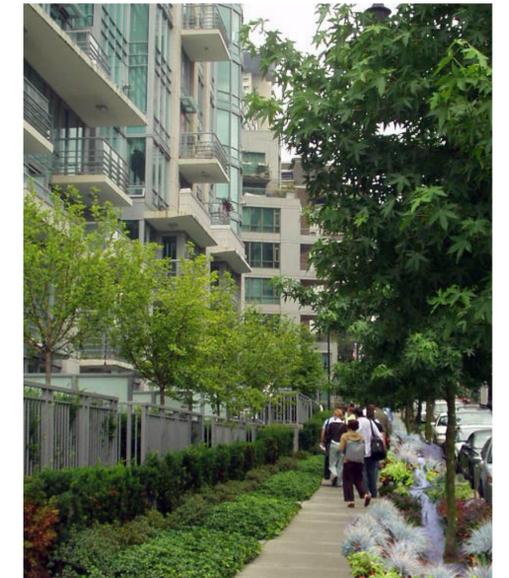
Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.



Small shops each with their own sign make for a colorful and vibrant-street presence that exemplifies Ballard's healthy urban life. Other areas may be better suited to a more restrained and coordinated palette of signs. Either way, signs play a large role in a project's character.

Design in the U District

What design features do you like or dislike? What design features or approaches are appropriate for the U District?



Design in the U District

