

3.1 Land Use

This section of the EIS describes existing land use, development patterns, character, and scale of development within and near the U District study area. This section also summarizes pertinent plans, policies and regulations.

3.1.1 Affected Environment

Study Area Overview

The U District study area consists of approximately 405 acres bounded by 15th Avenue NE, Interstate-5 (I-5), NE Ravenna Boulevard, and Portage Bay within the City of Seattle. (See Figure 3.1–1.) With about 160 acres in use as public rights-of-way, streets are the primary land use in the study area. The remaining 245 acres are developed with a mix of uses, described in this section.

The study area is a densely developed urban area characterized by a mix of uses and development intensities. The range of development includes single family and multifamily residences, retail, restaurants, entertainment, offices, a portion of the University of Washington campus, and community service facilities.

The majority of the U District study area is within the City of Seattle’s designated University Community Urban Center (UCUC). More specifically, it is largely within the University District Northwest Urban

Figure 3.1–1:
U District Study Area Boundaries



Source: City of Seattle, 2013

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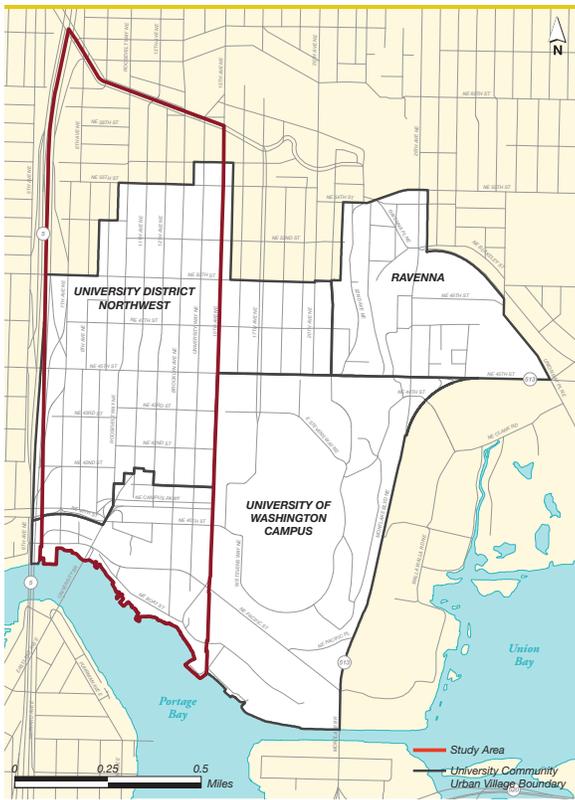
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Village portion of the UCUC (Figure 3.1–2). As shown in Figure 3.1–2, only the northwest portion of the study area is not located within the UCUC.

The urban center designation is part of the city’s comprehensive urban village strategy, which establishes that urban centers should contain a concentration of housing and employment and provide a regionally significant focus for housing and employment growth. For more information on the City’s urban village strategy, see the description of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan in the Plans and Policies section of this EIS (Section 3.1.5).

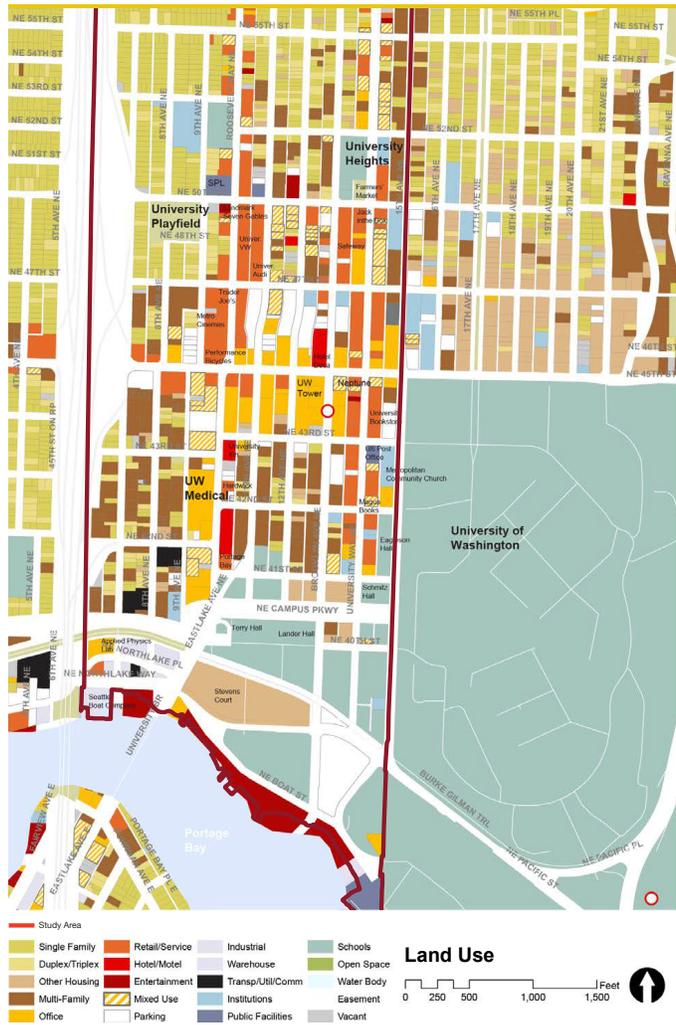
Figures 3.1–3 and 3.1–4 show the overall pattern of existing development in the U District study area. Figure 3.1–3 focuses on the UCUC. Areas to the

Figure 3.1–2: U District Study Area with the University Community Urban Center and Village Designations



Source: City of Seattle, Comprehensive Plan

Figure 3.1–3: U District Study Area Existing Land Use



Source: City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development. Existing Conditions Report. 2012.

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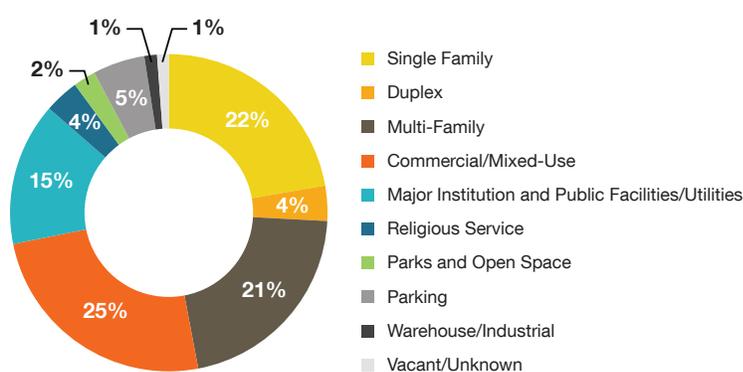
north are primarily single family residential, with neighborhood scale retail along the Roosevelt Way NE and University Way NE corridors.

As shown in Figure 3.1–4, a roughly equal mix of commercial/mixed-use, single family and multi-family development comprise about 66% of the study area. The next largest category of land use is major institution and public facilities, which includes the University of Washington campus and other public facilities and occupies about 15% of the study area. Other uses include religious institutions, parks, parking, warehouse/industrial and vacant/unknown.

In order to provide a more detailed description of the existing land use pattern, the following discussion breaks the study area into four smaller areas (See Figure 3.1–5):

- ▶ **North Study Area**, generally located between I-5, 15th Avenue NE, NE Ravenna Boulevard, and NE 50th Street.
- ▶ **Core Area**, generally south of NE 50th Street, north of NE 43rd Street, and between I-5 and Brooklyn Avenue NE.
- ▶ **South Study Area**, generally located south of NE 43rd Street, west of Brooklyn Avenue NE, east of I-5 and north of Portage Bay.
- ▶ **University Way NE Corridor**, running south of NE Ravenna Blvd east of Brooklyn Avenue NE to NE Campus Parkway and west of the UW Campus.

Figure 3.1–4 U District Study Area Existing Land Use



Source: City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development. Existing Conditions Report. 2012.

Figure 3.1–5 U District Study Area Sections



Source: Studio 3MW

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3.1.1 Affected Environment

North Study Area

This area includes roughly 70 acres east of I-5, west of Brooklyn Avenue NE, south of NE Ravenna Boulevard, and north of NE 50th Street. The southeast portion of this area is within the UCUC. With the exception of development along Roosevelt Way NE, land use in this area is predominately residential.

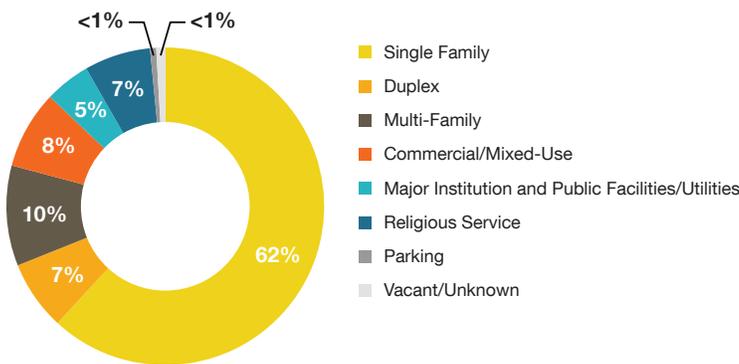
In this area, approximately 62% of the land area is occupied by single family residences, 7% with duplex development, 10% with multi-family (single use) development, and 8% with commercial and mixed-use development. The remaining 13% of area is devoted to religious institutions, major institutions, parking and vacant/unknown. (See Figure 3.1-6.)

Almost all building structures are low-rise, with building heights of one to three stories. The majority of non-residential and mixed-use buildings are along Roosevelt Way NE where uses include office, retail, restaurants, and other services. While primarily low-rise, this corridor has some mid-level (4-6 stories) structures.

There are significant community facilities in this area, including the University Branch Seattle Public Library and the YMCA.

Adjacent areas to the east and north are primarily devoted to residential use.

Figure 3.1-6 Existing Land Use in North Study Area



Source: City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development. Existing Conditions Report. 2012.



The Ave at NE 50th St



Roosevelt Way NE at NE 52nd St



Ravenna Boulevard

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3.1.1 Affected Environment

Core Area

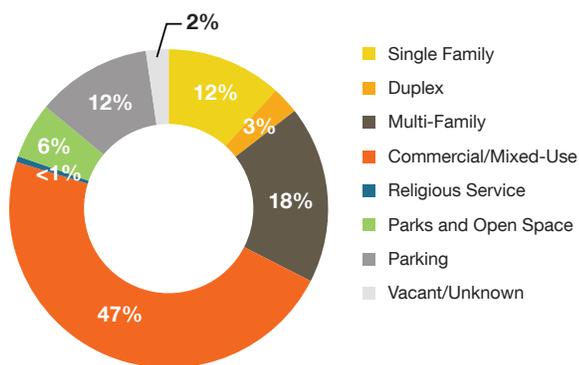
The Core Area includes about 48 acres south of NE 50th Street, north of a portion of the UW west campus, east of I-5 and west of Brooklyn Avenue NE. The entire Core Area is within the designated UCUC. Land use in this area is predominately commercial/mixed-use with a relatively dense mix of residential, commercial, educational, and office uses. Approximately 47% of the land area is in commercial/mixed-use, 18% in multi-family, and 15% single-family and duplex. About 12% of the area is currently devoted to parking, 6% to parks, and 2% of the area is vacant/unknown. (See Figure 3.1.7.)

Building heights range from low-rise to high-rise towers. Many of the buildings are in the 65- to 100-foot range and there are three high-rise structures. At 22 stories and 320 feet high, the University of Washington Tower is the areas tallest. The Hotel Deca is a 16-story structure across from the UW Tower, and the nearby 220-foot University Plaza Condominiums rivals the UW Tower with 24 above-ground floors.

Commercial, office, and mixed-uses are dispersed throughout the Core Area. A large concentration of single-family residential homes surrounds the University Playground at NE 50th Street. The UW Medical Center is located at NE 42nd Street and Roosevelt Way NE and several smaller office uses are clustered around it. Commercial corridors on Roosevelt Way NE and NE 45th Street provide a range of retail and service uses, including larger scale retail businesses and auto dealerships with large surface storage lots.

Between Roosevelt Way NE and I-5, existing development consists of a mix of low- to mid-rise commercial uses transition to residential development at varying densities.

Figure 3.1-7 Existing Land Use in Core Area



Source: City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development. Existing Conditions Report. 2012.



Brooklyn Ave NE at NE 50th St



Brooklyn Ave NE at NE 40th St



Roosevelt Way NE at NE 41st St

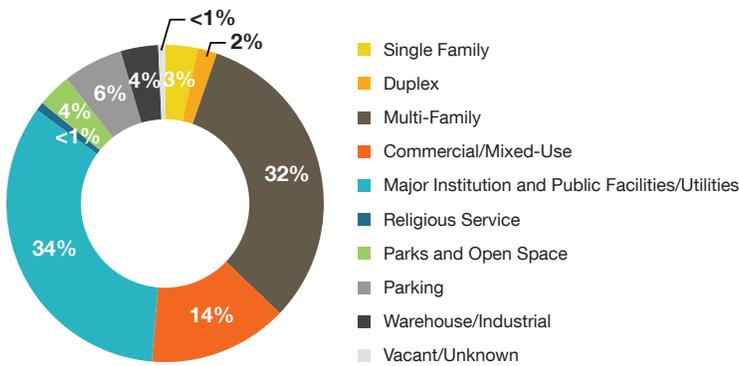
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3.1.1 Affected Environment

South Study Area

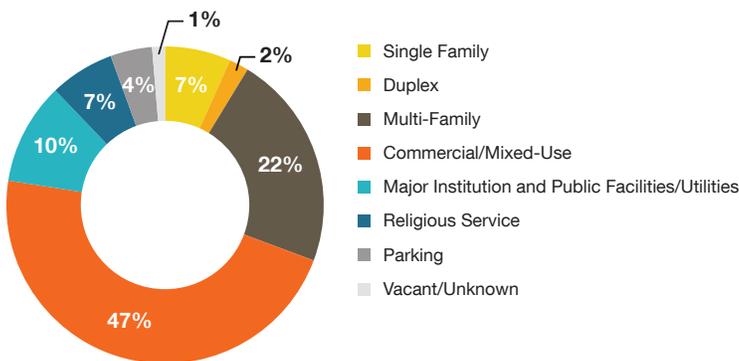
The South Study Area contains about 83 acres, developed primarily with the University of Washington west campus and multi-family housing, which together make up about 66% of the study area. The other major use in the South Study Area is commercial/mixed-use, which comprises about 14% of the study area. The remaining uses each make up 6% or less of the South Study Area.

Figure 3.1-8 Existing Land Use in South Study Area



Source: City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development. Existing Conditions Report. 2012.

Figure 3.1-9: Existing Land Use in University Way NE Corridor



Source: City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development. Existing Conditions Report. 2012.

University Way NE Corridor

The University Way NE Corridor runs north-south along the eastern edge of the study area, generally between NE Ravenna Blvd on the north and NE Campus Parkway on the south. This area includes about 44 acres encompassing both sides of University Way NE and the east side of 15th Avenue NE. Situated between the campus, residential neighborhoods, and the study area's mixed-use Core, this corridor provides a focal point for commercial activity and cultural life in the U District. It is also important for transit routes going north-south and to the western edge of the UW campus.

Commercial/mixed-use development comprises about 47% of the land area. Other land uses include multi-family at about 22% of land area, major institutions and public facilities/utilities at about 10% of land area, single-family and duplex combined at about 9%, and religious institutions at about 9% of land area. (See Figure 3.1-9.)

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UNIVERSITY WAY NE

University Way NE is characterized as a well-established pedestrian-oriented retail corridor. South of NE 50th Street and extending through the Core Area, the corridor is developed with small scale, continuous buildings with narrow storefronts. Streetscape elements such as furniture and lighting give the corridor a distinct and recognizable identity. North of NE 50th Street, retail activity is also a predominant use, but is less densely developed than to the south. Along the entire corridor, many of the small retail and service businesses are oriented toward serving a student population. The diverse mix of shops and eateries are generally recognized as a distinctive characteristic of the corridor. Surface parking lots are scattered throughout the area. The majority of development along the corridor is low-rise, typically less than three stories.

15TH AVENUE NE

Between NE Ravenna Boulevard and NE 50th Street, multifamily development is the primary use along 15th Avenue NE. These are generally low-rise structures with small footprints. From NE 50th Street south to approximately NE 45th Street at the UW campus, there is a change in building scale and mix of uses with more mixed-use apartment buildings and public facilities and services. South of the NE 45th Street, the east side of 15th Avenue NE follows the boundary of the UW campus and the west side of 15th Avenue NE includes a mix of commercial, multifamily and church uses.



The Ave



The Ave



Campus Parkway at 15th Avenue NE

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3.1.2 Significant Impacts

Impacts Common to All Alternatives

LAND USE PATTERNS

Under all alternatives, the study area is expected to experience new growth and development, but the overall mix of uses is not expected to significantly change from the existing mixed-use pattern. The alternatives differ primarily in the intensity and location of development and subsequent impacts on land use patterns. These differences are described in the discussion of each alternative, below.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Within the Study Area

North Study Area. Within this area, increased development intensity in the study area could result in land use compatibility impacts at the boundary between the UCUC and the surrounding low density residential area. The potential for this type of impact differs between alternatives. Please see the discussion of land use compatibility for each alternative, below.

Core and South Study Area. In general, because the Core Area and South Study Area are already developed as dense urban areas, new development under any of the alternatives is relatively unlikely to result in significant land use conflicts within these areas. Please see the discussion of land use compatibility for each alternative, below.

Adjacent to the Study Area

Under all alternatives, there is little potential for significant land use conflicts to the north, west and south. To the west and south, the strong boundaries provided by Portage Bay and I-5 minimize the potential for land use conflicts with development in the adjacent areas. To the north, the existing single family residential area provides a transition between the area to the north and more intensive development in the study area.

Potential land use compatibility impacts associated with the surrounding area to the east are discussed for each alternative below.

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3.1.2 Significant Impacts

Alternative 1

LAND USE PATTERNS

North Study Area. The major impact to the land use pattern in the North Study Area is increased potential for mid-rise development, with maximum heights ranging between 65 to 85 feet along the Roosevelt Way NE and University Way NE corridors. In general, the proposed regulatory changes would not impact the type of permitted use (i.e., residential, commercial, etc.), but would allow for greater intensity and density of these uses. Compared to Alternative 2, the potential area for increased height and intensity extends farther north into the North Study Area.

Core Area. In the Core Area, the major impact of Alternative 1 would be to allow the development of high-rise structures. High-rise development would be between 125 and 160 feet, less than permitted under Alternative 2, but greater than permitted under Alternative 3 (No Action). Although high-rise towers would not be as tall as permitted under Alternative 2, Alternative 1 would allow towers to be located closer together, with a minimum of 60 feet separation between towers, compared to 100 feet separation required under Alternative 2. Consequently, the pattern of tower development may be more dense at the street level, compared to Alternative 2. Development along University Way NE would be permitted to develop to high-rise standards, ranging from 125 to 160 feet, depending on location. Proposed regulatory changes would allow mixed-use development, which would continue the types of uses found in the core (i.e., residential, commercial, etc.), but at a greater intensity and density.

South Study Area. No changes are proposed in this area. Over the long run, increased development activity in the balance of the study area might create pressure for conversion of the existing industrial area to more intensive uses. However, because there is ample capacity within the balance of the study area, this is unlikely to happen within the 20-year planning horizon considered in this EIS. In addition, because development will happen on an incremental basis over time, the City will be able to monitor and address any future potential land use imbalances through the GMA comprehensive planning process.

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3.1.2 Significant Impacts

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Within the Study Area

North Study Area. In the North Study Area, new or expanded LR (Lowrise)2, LR3, MR (Midrise) and NCP (Neighborhood Commercial) 65–85 zones would be established. The proposed rezones would not introduce any new permitted uses to the area, but would increase the permitted intensity in uses already found in the area. The new NC zones are focused on the Roosevelt Way NE and University Way NE commercial corridors, but would adjoin existing single family areas. Similarly, some of the new LR2 and LR3 zones would adjoin existing single family areas. Although an increase in intensity, the LR and NC zones are relatively low intensity multifamily and commercial zones intended to fit compatibly in residential areas. In addition, City of Seattle development standards, including setbacks and separations, landscaping and screening standards, building façade limits, and noise, light and glare standards, should adequately address potential impacts and minimize the potential for significant impacts.

Within existing multifamily areas, infill development within the new NC3 and MR zoning is likely to be of greater height, bulk and intensity than existing development. As the area transitions to development consistent with the new regulations, there may be some abrupt transitions in building height, density and intensity. However, it is likely that these impacts would be limited in magnitude and duration as the area redevelops.

Core Area. Alternative 1 would allow increased building heights on the University Way corridor, ranging from 125 to 160 feet for much of the corridor, compared to existing zoning which allows maximum heights generally ranging from 40 to 65 feet. As infill development along this corridor occurs, there may be abrupt changes between the larger and taller new development and the existing smaller development pattern. Please see the aesthetics section (3.3) for additional discussion of this potential impact.

In the rest of the Core Area, new building heights would be permitted to reach 125 to 160 feet. New development would be consistent with the existing towers, but, as noted above, there may be some abrupt transitions in building height and scale as new development infills around the existing smaller scale buildings. While noticeable as the area redevelops, it is likely that these impacts would be limited in magnitude and duration.

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3.1.2 Significant Impacts

South Study Area. There are no proposed zoning changes to the South Study Area zoning and no anticipated compatibility impacts internal to the South Study Area.

Adjacent to the Study Area

Along the east boundary of the study area, Alternative 1 provides for the greatest building heights and greatest potential for land use compatibility impacts, compared to the other alternatives. In particular, maximum building heights could increase to 125–160 feet along 15th Avenue NE north of the UW campus. This area adjoins a LR3 zone with a maximum building height of 25 to 40 feet. Please see Aesthetics, Section 3.3, for suggested mitigating measures to address the impacts of high-rise height, bulk and scale adjacent to low-rise development.

Alternative 2

LAND USE PATTERNS

North Study Area. Compared to Alternative 1, Alternative 2 proposes fewer changes to zoning in the North Study Area. Proposed changes would include three new areas of NCP 65 and a new MR zone. Potential changes in development types and land use patterns would be less than Alternative 1 and more than Alternative 3.

Core Area. Relative to the other alternatives, Alternative 2 provides for the greatest building heights and most focused growth around the future transit station. Maximum building heights would be between 240 and 340 feet, but proposed standards would reduce building bulk and increase building separation, compared to Alternative 1.

Compared to Alternative 1, building heights would be more focused in the Core Area around the future transit station. Building heights along the University Way NE Corridor would be limited to 65 to 85 feet, significantly less than Alternative 1. Alternative 2 also includes an area of residential focus in the area generally located between NE 43rd Street, NE 41st Street, Brooklyn Avenue NE and 11th Avenue NE.

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3.1.2 Significant Impacts

South Study Area. As with Alternative 1, no changes are proposed in this area. Over the long run, increased development activity in the balance of the study area might create pressure for conversion of the existing industrial area to more intensive uses. However, because there is ample capacity within the balance of the study area, this is unlikely to happen within the 20-year planning horizon considered in this EIS. In addition, because development will happen on an incremental basis over time, the City will be able to monitor and address any future potential land use imbalances through the GMA comprehensive planning process.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Within the Study Area

North Study Area. Within the North Study Area, Alternative 2 would result in fewer changes to zoning and building heights, compared to Alternative 1. Alternative 2 proposes new areas of NC and MR zoning, with changes focused along the Roosevelt Way NE, University Way NE, and NE 50th Street commercial corridors. As discussed for Alternative 1 these new zones are relatively low intensity multifamily and commercial zones intended to fit compatibly in residential areas. In addition, City of Seattle development standards, including setbacks and separations, landscaping and screening standards, building façade limits, and noise, light and glare standards, should adequately address potential impacts and minimize the potential for significant impacts.

Within the new MR zone, new infill development is likely to be of greater height, bulk and intensity than existing development. As the area transitions to development consistent with the new regulations, there may be some noticeable transitions in building height, density and intensity. However, the new MR zone is a relatively small area and would result in limited increases in intensity compared to the permitted development in the existing LR3 zone.

Core Area. Compared to Alternative 1, Alternative 2 limits the increase in building heights on the University Way corridor to a maximum of 85 feet for much of the corridor. Because this is an incremental increase compared to what is currently permitted, there is reduced potential for compatibility

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3.1.2 Significant Impacts

impacts along this corridor, compared to Alternative 1. It should be noted that Alternative 2 does provide for increased building heights to a maximum of 300 feet along 15th Avenue NE south of NE 45th Street, adjacent to the UW campus.

In the rest of the Core Area, new building heights would be permitted to reach 240 to 340 feet. New development would be consistent with the existing towers, but, as with Alternative 1, there may be some abrupt transitions in building height and scale as new development infills around the existing smaller scale buildings. While noticeable as the area redevelops, it is likely that these impacts would be limited in magnitude and duration.

At the south edge of the Core Area, the proposed maximum height of 340 feet adjoins the UW West Campus MIO. Along this edge the maximum height in the MIO is 105 feet. Consideration should be given to ensure a compatible transition between the MIO and adjoining property. Please see potential mitigation strategies in Section 3.3, Aesthetics.

South Study Area. There are no proposed zoning changes to the South Study Area zoning and no anticipated compatibility impacts internal to the South Study Area.

Adjacent to the Study Area

Along the east boundary of the study area, Alternative 1 provides for reduced building heights, compared to Alternative 2 and corresponding reduced potential for land use compatibility impacts. Maximum building heights could increase to 85 feet along 15th Avenue NE north of the UW campus. This area adjoins a LR3 zone with a maximum building height of 25 to 40 feet. Please see Aesthetics, Section 3.3, for suggested mitigating measures to address the impacts of increased height, bulk and scale adjacent to low-rise development.

As noted above, south of NE 45th Street, a two-block area of mixed-use 300 zoning would allow a maximum building height of up to 300 feet adjacent to the UW campus.

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Alternative 3 — No Action

LAND USE PATTERNS

Under the No Action Alternative, incremental development and redevelopment would continue. Because existing development does not fully utilize the development capacity available under current zoning, new development and redevelopment may be at greater intensities than currently exist. However, compared to the action alternatives, development under Alternative 3 would generally be less intensive, and more distributed throughout the study area. Development regulations would not promote increased intensity around the future transit station, as contemplated by the two action alternatives.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Land use compatibility impacts for the No Action Alternative would generally be as described under Impacts Comment to All Alternatives.

3.1.3 Mitigating Measures

Monitor new development to ensure that long-term land use compatibility impacts are not created. If necessary, consider additional standards for building height limits, landscaping, noise or lighting controls or other measures. See also mitigating strategies identified in Section 3.3 Aesthetics of this EIS.

3.1.4 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

No significant unavoidable adverse impacts to land use are anticipated.

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3.1.5 Land Use Plans, Polices, and Regulations

This section describes documentation of pertinent plans, polices, and regulations in effect at the time of the publication of the Draft EIS.

Key plans, polices, and regulations are included from the following sources:

- ▶ King County Countywide Planning Policies
- ▶ City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan
- ▶ University Community Urban Center Plan
- ▶ City of Seattle Municipal Land Code

Please also see the other sections of this EIS for a discussion of policies pertinent to each technical topic.

King County Countywide Planning Policies

The Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) requires cooperative regional and local planning efforts to achieve an overall coordinated vision. City and county comprehensive plans must be consistent with one another under a countywide policy framework (RCW 36.70A.210). King County Countywide Planning Policies (KCPPs) designates the City of Seattle as a permanent urban growth area to accommodate future growth and economic development by increasing densities as needed. The KCPPs also establish goals and criteria for city designation of urban centers. Urban centers are those areas with concentrated employment and housing, direct service by high-capacity transit, and a wide range of land uses. The KCPPs recognize the City of Seattle designated University District Urban Center. As such, the City's Comprehensive Plan shall demonstrate compliance and strategies, which include in part: supporting pedestrian mobility, bicycle use and transit use; achieving a target housing density and mix of use; emphasizing superior urban design; and considering local characteristics necessary to support vital urban areas.

DISCUSSION: *The City of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan is consistent with applicable guidance from the KCPPs. The proposal would maintain the City's existing UCUC designation, as confirmed by the KCPPs. The action alternatives would allow for increased development and intensity focused around the future transit station, supporting pedestrian mobility, bicycle and transit use, and a mix of uses consistent with the intent of a designated urban center.*

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3.1.5 Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations

City of Seattle 1994 Comprehensive Plan, as amended

The City of Seattle developed its Comprehensive Plan in compliance with the Growth Management Act and the King County Countywide Planning Policies, both of which provide a comprehensive framework for managing growth and coordinating land use planning with the provision of infrastructure. The City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan, *Toward a Sustainable Seattle*, was first adopted in 1994 and has been amended nearly every year since. The plan contains the elements required by the GMA and those concepts associated with the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Vision 2040 Multi-County Planning Policies, King County’s Countywide Planning Policies (King County, 1992), Seattle’s Framework Policies (Seattle, 1992), and the University Community Urban Center Plan, 1998. GMA requires comprehensive plan review and update every eight years as necessary to address changing conditions or to manage new issues. The City is currently in the process of preparing this update, scheduled to be complete in 2015.

The City’s Comprehensive Plan consists of eleven major elements— urban village, land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities, utilities, economic development, neighborhood, human development, cultural resources and environment. Each element contains goals and policies intended to “guide the development of the City in the context of regional growth management” for a 20-year time horizon. Relevant to land use, applicable goals in the Urban Village, Land Use, Housing and Neighborhood Planning elements are considered below. Please also see the other sections of this EIS for a discussion of policies pertinent to technical topics.

URBAN VILLAGE ELEMENT

The Comprehensive Plan describes the City’s urban village strategy:

As Seattle’s population and job base grow, urban villages are the areas where conditions can best support increased density needed to house and employ the city’s newest residents. By concentrating growth in these urban villages, Seattle can build on successful aspects of the city’s existing urban character, continuing the development of concentrated, pedestrian-friendly mixed-use neighborhoods of varied intensities at appropriate locations throughout the city.

The Urban Village Element includes a map of the University Community Urban Center, shown in Figure 3.1–2.

URBAN VILLAGE STRATEGY

- UVG1 Respect Seattle’s human scale, history, aesthetics, natural environment, and sense of community identity as the city changes.
- UVG2 Implement regional growth management strategies and the countywide centers concept through this Plan.
- UVG3 Promote densities, mixes of uses, and transportation improvements that support walking, use of public transportation and other transportation demand management (TDM) strategies, especially within urban centers and villages.
- UVG4 Direct the greatest share of future development to centers and urban villages and reduce potential for dispersed growth along arterials and in other areas not conducive to walking, transit use, and cohesive community development.
- UVG5 Accommodate planned levels of household and employment growth. Depending on the characteristics of each area, establish concentrations of employment and housing at varying densities and with varying mixes of uses.
- UVG8 Use limited land resources more efficiently and pursue a development pattern that is more economically sound, by encouraging infill development on vacant or underutilized sites, particularly within urban villages.
- UVG16 Guide public and private activities to achieve the function, character, amount of growth, intensity of activity, and scale of development of each urban village consistent with its urban village designation and adopted neighborhood plan.

DISTRIBUTION OF GROWTH

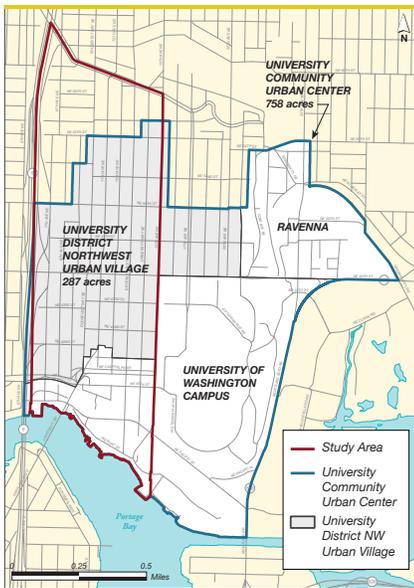
- UVG29 Encourage growth in locations within the city that support more compact and less land-consuming, high quality urban living.
- UVG30 Concentrate a greater share of employment growth in locations convenient to the city’s residential population to promote walking and transit use and reduce the length of work trips.
- UVG31 Plan for urban centers to receive the most substantial share of Seattle’s growth consistent with their role in shaping the regional growth pattern.

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- UVG33 Plan for a distribution of growth to each urban village that accomplishes the goals of the urban village strategy, and recognizes local circumstances, community preferences as expressed in neighborhood plans, and the need for equitable distribution of growth across the city.
- UVG34 Achieve growth in urban centers that are consistent with the 20-year residential and employment growth targets contained in Urban Village Appendix A, below:

Table 3.1-1: **2004-2024 Household and Employment:** Growth Targets for the University Community Urban Center



Households (HH)				
	Existing Qty 2004	Existing Density HH/aces	HH Growth Target quantity	2024 Density HH/aces, estimate
University Community Urban Center (758 acres)	6,850	9	+2,450	12
University District NW (287 acres)	5,230	18	+2,000	25
Employment (Jobs)				
	Existing 2002	Existing Density Jobs/acre	Growth Target Job Growth	2024 Density estimate
University Community Urban Center (758 acres)	32,260	43	+6,140	51
University District NW (287 acres)	6,170	21	+2,640	56

Source: City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan Urban Village Element, Appendix A

OPEN SPACE NETWORK

- UVG39 Enhance the urban village strategy through the provision of:
 1. Amenities in more densely population areas
 2. Recreational opportunities for daytime population in urban centers
 3. Mitigation of the impacts of large scale development

DISCUSSION: Consistent with the goals and policies identified for the City’s Urban Village Strategy, the EIS alternatives would increase residential and employment density within the U District to accommodate planned future household and employment growth, resulting in a compact mixed-use area where residents could live near services, employment, and transit.

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Consistent with the goals and policies identified for Urban Centers, the action alternatives would increase residential and employment density within the U District, helping to create a mixed-use area where residents can live near services, employment, and transit.

Of the three EIS alternatives, Alternative 2 would provide for the greatest focus around the future light rail transit station. To a lesser degree Alternative 1 would also focus growth around the transit station. Alternatives 1 and 2 would also provide increased development capacity for employment and residential units. Alternative 3 would retain the existing zoning and would essentially represent a continuation of the current development trend within the subarea.

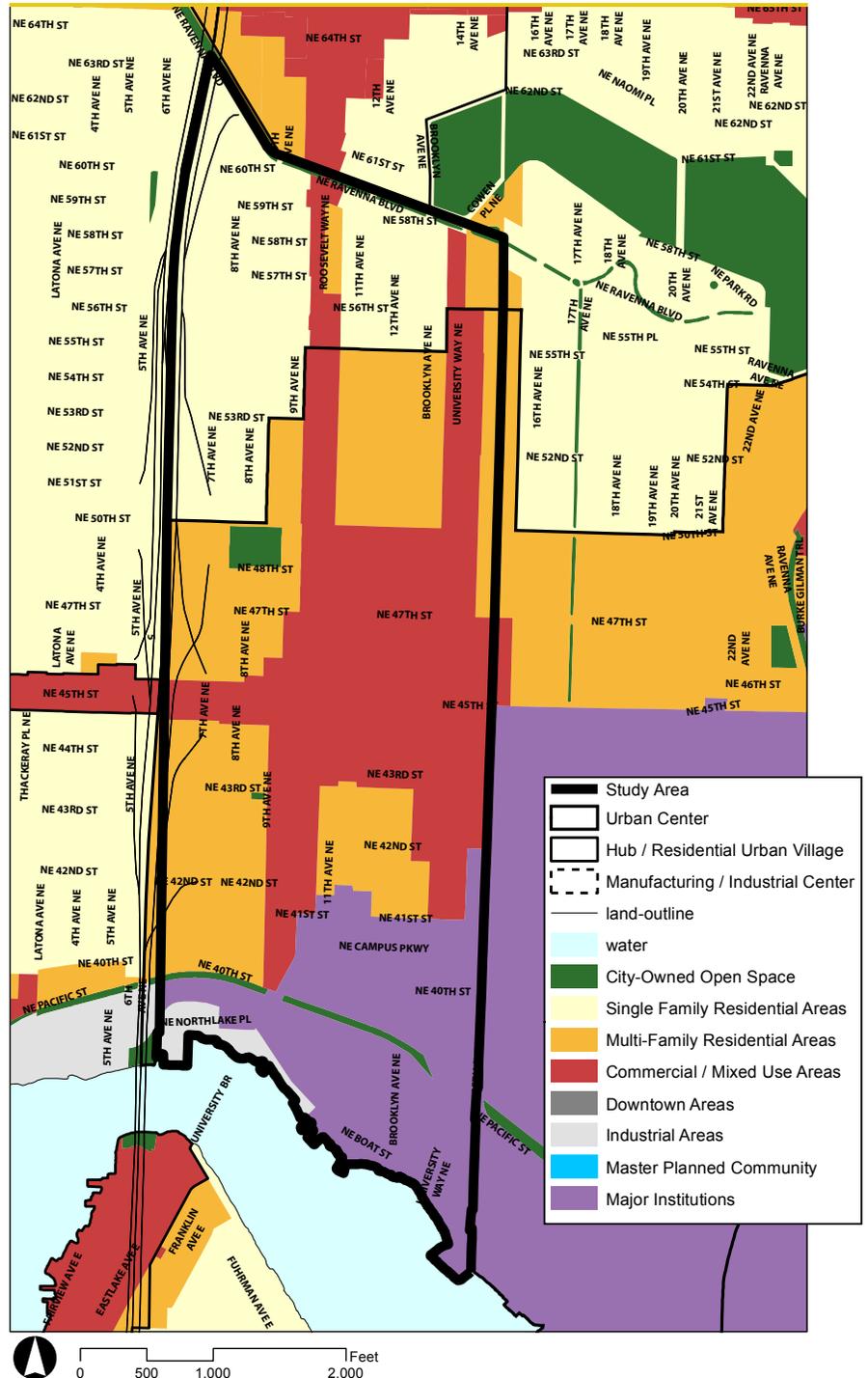
All of the alternatives are supportive of the City's adopted 2024 growth targets for the University Community Urban Center. As discussed in Chapter 2 of this Draft EIS, new planning estimates for growth that extend the planning horizon to 2035 are being reviewed as part of the City's comprehensive plan update.

Regarding the open space network, please see the discussion of parks and open space in Section 3.7 of this EIS.

LAND USE ELEMENT

The City of Seattle Future Land Use Map divides the city into a number of broad categories to implement land use strategies and development

Figure 3.1-10
Future Land Use in U District Study Area



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regulations. Land use categories in the U District include Single-Family Residential, Multifamily Residential, and Commercial/Mixed-use with an Urban Center overlay. Figure 3.1–10 shows how those categories are distributed within the study area.

Applicable goals for the mixed-use commercial, multifamily and single family designations are listed below.

Mixed-Use Commercial Areas Goals and Policies

- LUG17 Create strong and successful commercial and mixed-use areas that encourage business creation, expansion and vitality by allowing for a mix of business activities, while maintaining compatibility with neighborhood serving character of business districts, and the character of surrounding areas.
- LUG18 Support the development and maintenance of areas with a wide range of characters and functions that provide for the employment, service, retail and housing needs of Seattle’s existing and future population
- LUG19 Include housing as part of the mix of activities accommodated in commercial areas in order to provide additional opportunities for residents to live in neighborhoods where they can walk to services and employment.

Single-Family Areas Goals and Policies

- LUG8 Preserve and protect low-density, single-family neighborhoods that provide opportunities for home-ownership, that are attractive to households with children and other residents, that provide residents with privacy and open spaces immediately accessible to residents, and where the amount of impervious surface can be limited.

Multi-Family Areas Goals and Policies

- LUG11 Encourage the development and retention of a diversity of multifamily housing types to meet the diverse needs of Seattle’s present and future populations.
- LUG12 Promote a residential development pattern consistent with the urban village strategy, with increased availability of housing at that promote walking and transit use near employment concentrations, residential services and amenities.

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DISCUSSION: As mentioned above, the Seattle Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map designates the U District study area as Commercial/Mixed-Use, Multi-family Residential, Major Institution, and Industrial. The portion of the study area that is within the UCUC is designated with an Urban Center Overlay. The zoning use designations proposed in the action alternatives are consistent with the future land use map. However, the action alternatives would expand areas designated Commercial/Mixed-use and reduce those designated Multi-family Residential. In order to avoid a future inconsistency with the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map, either the current zoning should be retained or the Future Land Use Map should be amended to maintain consistency with new zoning designations adopted as part of this proposal.

The action alternatives would allow increased residential and employment density within the Core Area around the future transit station, which would help to create a mixed-use area where residents of the City can live near services, employment, and transit. The built character and compatibility of the alternatives is illustrated and discussed in Section 3.10, Aesthetics.

HOUSING ELEMENT

The Housing Element contains goals for the percentage of housing units that will be affordable to lower income households and identifies incentives and other tools the City can use to achieve these goals.

Accommodating Growth & Maintaining Affordability

- HG1 Accommodate 47,000 additional households over the 20 years covered by this Plan.

Encouraging Housing Diversity & Quality

- HG4 Achieve a mix of housing types that are attractive and affordable to a diversity of ages, incomes, household types, household sizes, and cultural backgrounds.
- HG4 Promote households with children and attract a greater share of the county’s families with children.
- HG7 Accommodate a variety of housing types that are attractive and affordable to potential home buyers.
- HG9 Consider new ground-related housing such as townhouses and cottage housing as part of the City’s strategy for creating home ownership opportunities.

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HG11.5 Implement strategies and programs to help ensure a range of housing opportunities affordable to those who work in Seattle.

Providing Housing Affordable to Low Income Households

HG13 Provide new low income housing through market rate housing production and assisted housing programs.

HG14 Preserve existing low income housing, particularly in urban centers and urban villages where most redevelopment pressure will occur.

Housing policy guidance for affordable housing provides specific direction to meet affordable housing needs, described in Policy H30, below.

H30 Address the city’s share of affordable housing needs resulting from expected countywide household growth, consistent with the countywide affordable housing policies, by planning for:

- a. At least 20 percent of expected housing growth to be affordable to households earning up to 50 percent of median income (estimated 9,400 affordable units).
- b. At least 17 percent of expected housing growth to be affordable to households earning between 51 percent and 80 percent of median income (estimated 7,990 affordable units).
- c. At least 27 percent of expected housing growth to be affordable to households earning between 81 percent and 120 percent of median income (estimated 12,690 units).

Both new housing and existing housing that is acquired, rehabilitated or preserved for long-term low-income and affordable occupancy count toward meeting this policy.

DISCUSSION: *Consistent with the goals outlined above, the alternatives as identified would encourage economic development and promote housing within the U District study area, which could help to create a mixed-income, mixed-use community where residents can live near services, employment, and transit. However, under any of the alternatives, the housing developed will be responsive to market demand. Housing programs, regulatory measures and incentives implemented by the City may influence—but not fully control—what the private market will supply.*

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Regarding consistency with policies supporting affordable housing, the action alternatives may promote greater affordability by providing more regulatory capacity for housing development. However, new infill development may replace existing, older, relatively low cost housing, resulting in a short-term loss of affordable housing. See Section 3.2 of this EIS for a detailed discussion of housing affordability and impacts associated with the alternatives.

Neighborhood Planning Element— University Community Urban Center Goals

- UC-G1 Stable residential neighborhoods that can accommodate projected growth and foster desirable living conditions.
- UC-G2 Vibrant commercial districts serving local needs and offering regional specialties.
- UC-G4 A community in which the housing needs and affordability levels of major demographic groups, including students, young adults, families with children, empty nesters, and seniors, are met and which balances home ownership opportunities with rental unit supply.
- UC-G5 A community with a wide range of neighborhood recreation facilities and open space and which meets the Comprehensive Plan’s open space goals.
- UC-G6 A community that builds a unique physical identity on its historical and architectural resources, attractive streets, university campus, and special features.
- UC-G8 A community in which public education resources are readily available.
- UC-G11 A community where people are and feel safe.
- UC-G12 A community where historic resources, natural elements, and other elements that add to the community’s sense of history and unique character are preserved.

University Community Urban Center Policies

As part of the 2015 update of the Comprehensive Plan, the City will consider potential amendments to UCUC policies in the Neighborhood Planning Element. Policies that specifically address the study area are identified below.

- UC-P2 Encourage high-quality development, up to 65 feet, or about five stories, south of NE 43rd Street, and from just east of Brooklyn to

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the west, to enhance this residential area with excellent proximity to the University and to LRT stations.

- UC-P3 Encourage a vibrant mixed-use residential neighborhood in the University Gardens Core area (between NE 50th Street, Brooklyn Avenue NE, NE 43rd Street, and 9th Avenue NE.)
- UC-P5 Strengthen pedestrian-oriented retail on University Way through physical improvements to the street and sidewalk and encouraging private property owners to improve their properties.
- UC-P6 Strengthen a diverse mix of retail and commercial activities on NE 45th Street and Roosevelt Avenue NE.
- UC-P17 In order to serve existing residents to the north and emerging residential neighborhoods, organize a services spine roughly along NE 50th Street. Include a wide variety of public, recreational, educational, community, and human services, plus churches, playfields, and other facilities.
- UC-P21 In the Southwest Quadrant (the area generally south of NE 45th Street and west of Roosevelt Avenue NE), make convenient pedestrian connections to nearby parks and the waterfront and seek to develop a small shoreline park on the Lake Union shoreline at the south end of 7th Avenue NE.
- UC-P22 In Lower Brooklyn (the area generally south of NE 43rd Street between Roosevelt Avenue NE and the UW campus), provide open space for the large population including residents, workers, and students and strengthen physical connections to the waterfront and campus. Encourage better physical integration between the campus and the community.
- UC-P23 In the University Gardens Core (the area generally between NE 50th Street, Brooklyn Avenue NE, NE 43rd Street, and 9th Avenue NE), create a connected network of open spaces integrated with development. Provide open space and recreation facilities for seniors.
- UC-P25 In University Way-15th Avenue NE corridor between NE 55th Street and NE 41st Street, encourage the provision of more street-oriented public space through both public and private investment
- UC-P29 Enhance gateways into the University Community, especially at NE 50th Street at Roosevelt Avenue NE, NE 50th Street at University Way NE, 11th Avenue NE at NE 41st Street, 25th Avenue NE at NE 55th Street, NE 45th Street at 25th Avenue NE, and

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Roosevelt Avenue at NE 42nd Street. “Gateways” means visual enhancements, such as improved landscaping, signage, artwork, or other features, that signify the entries into the community.

***DISCUSSION:** Overall, the alternatives are supportive of the adopted UCUC goals. The alternatives would support more intensive urban development in the subarea, additional housing development opportunities, preserve stable single family residential areas, and promote vibrant commercial districts. It should also be noted that some of the goals address long-standing community concerns related to open space, schools and public safety and that the additional development capacity provided by the action alternatives could increase demand for these services. Please see the relevant sections of this EIS for additional discussion of these issues.*

The alternatives may not be consistent with some specific policies excerpted above. Adopted policies should be reviewed for outdated information, such as subarea names and consistency with any adopted actions associated with the proposal. As needed, policies should be amended, or the final proposal revised, to ensure continued consistency.

All of the action proposals will provide additional capacity and opportunity for development of affordable housing, consistent with adopted City policy. Please see the discussion of affordable housing in Section 3.2 of this EIS.

University Community Urban Center Plan

Completed in 1998, the University Community Urban Center Plan was developed through a collaborative process that included neighborhood representatives, the UW and the City. The plan was not formally adopted by the City, but was approved by resolution. Many of the findings and direction of this plan helped inform the City’s University Community Urban Center section of the Comprehensive Plan Neighborhood Planning Element. The vision statement and plan directives are listed below.

VISION STATEMENT

The University Community will:

- ▶ Be an inviting and welcoming, people-oriented urban community meeting the social, educational, residential, and commercial

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needs of a diverse array of people in an environmentally pleasing setting. The University Community will build on its current strengths and assets and proceed in new directions to accomplish its vision of the future.

- ▶ Offer a wide range of quality housing options to meet the needs of its diverse and growing population while retaining a sense of neighborhood and community.
- ▶ Be a vital and progressive economic area, an integral part of the city and the region, acknowledging the role of the University of Washington in our regional economy and recognizing the community's diverse needs as well as those of the City.
- ▶ Be the hub of efficient, environmentally sound multi-modal transportation serving the needs of residents, students, customers and visitors.
- ▶ Seek an active partnership with the University of Washington as a catalyst for positive change in both residential and business concerns.

The plan translates the vision statement in to several overarching strategies or directives, intended to direct and organize specific actions. The plan directives are listed below:

4. Create/enhance/protect stable residential neighborhoods that can accommodate projected growth and foster desirable living conditions.
5. Support vibrant commercial districts serving local needs and offering regional specialties.
6. Integrate transportation modes into an efficient, balance system.
7. Provide housing to serve a broad spectrum of lifestyles and affordability levels.
8. Provide neighborhood recreation facilities and open space.
9. Upgrade the area's physical identity
10. Actively work with the UW on areas of mutual interest.
11. Coordinate and expand the community's arts and cultural activities to be an important aspect of the community's identity.

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12. Build on present youth-oriented activities and organizations to provide an integrated social service delivery network that serves the entire community.
13. Increase public security and lower the crime rate as both a necessary ingredient and an outgrowth of a high quality of life in the community.
14. Enforce the existing building and housing codes and regulations to promote the health, welfare and quality of life of all community members and increase the level of public activity.
15. Conserve the historic resources and other elements that add to the community's sense of history and unique character.
16. Increase public education resources in the community.

DISCUSSION: *Key goals and policies from the University Community Urban Center Plan were incorporated into the Neighborhood Planning Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Please see the discussion above of this element.*

U District Urban Design Framework

The U District Urban Design Framework (UDF) proposes a shared design vision and implementation strategy for the U District. The document describes that, between now and the 2021 opening of the U District light rail station, the City will revise Comprehensive Plans, zoning and regulations and design guidelines for the U District. The UDF is intended to inform these processes in a clear and holistic manner.

With support from the City of Seattle, the UDF was developed through an interactive public process led by a stakeholders group, the U District Livability Partnership, of residents, businesses, social service providers, the faith community, representative from the University of Washington, students and neighbors from outside the study area.

The UDF provides specific recommendations for the following areas:

- ▶ Urban Design Recommendations
- ▶ Gateways, hearts and edges
- ▶ Land use character
- ▶ Public space network
- ▶ Station surroundings

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- ▶ Urban form
- ▶ Building height
- ▶ Incentive zoning
- ▶ Retail activation
- ▶ Housing choices
- ▶ Environmental Sustainability
- ▶ Mobility
- ▶ Landscaping
- ▶ Green stormwater infrastructure
- ▶ Green building
- ▶ District infrastructure
- ▶ Community health
- ▶ Environmental planning and governance

The guiding principles identified in the UDF are excerpted below:

1. Recognize light rail as a catalyst for change. Light rail will make the U District better connected, support existing and future commercial uses, and allow more people to live within walking distance of high-capacity transit. The station should be a focal point for redevelopment.
2. Balance regional with local. The U District has its own patterns and flavor. It is also a draw for the region, as home to the city's largest employer and the state's largest educational institution. As light rail increases the regional influences, maintain elements of the eclectic local character.
3. Provide a network of great streets and public spaces that creates inviting, memorable neighborhood spaces that support public life.
4. Grow and diversify jobs while maintaining thriving retail and services. The strength and diversity of the U District's small businesses are major assets of the community; protect these while striving to expand the job base to include more office, tech, and research and development.
5. Welcome a diversity of residents. As residential density increases, provide choices for residents of all ages and income levels, including market rate, workforce, and low-income housing. Provide support services and amenities to meet the needs of residents, including social services, childcare, open space, and other livability factors.
6. Improve public safety by increasing natural surveillance in the built environment and encouraging beneficial street activity.

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7. Encourage quality and variety in the built environment, with a particular focus on good design where buildings meet the public realm.
8. Build an environmentally sustainable neighborhood. In addition to the inherent environmental benefits of dense, mixed-use development served by transit, environmental performance can improve through green building, retrofits of existing buildings and green infrastructure.
9. Improve integration between UW and the U District by opening the west edge of Central Campus to the U District and building on existing partnerships between the University and neighborhood groups.
10. Support and coordinate active transportation choices, improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure while continuing to support transit and cars.

DISCUSSION: Work conducted on the UDF provided a framework for defining the alternatives considered in this EIS, including focused growth within the core, separation between towers, street-level setbacks and mid-block crossings. Recommendations also inform applicable mitigation strategies in this EIS, especially those identified in the aesthetics element, see Section 3.3 of this EIS.

City of Seattle Municipal Land Use and Zoning Code

Consistent with provision of the Growth Management Act, Seattle’s Municipal Land Use and Zoning Code implements the goals and policies of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. Through a system of zones, the Seattle Land Use Code identifies how land may be used in the city. The Land Use Code identifies development standards for structures such as height, lot configuration, allowable densities, among other standards.

Existing zoning designations are described in Table 3.1–2.

DISCUSSION: As described in Chapter 2, the City is proposing alternatives that would change the existing zoning designations to increase building height and intensity in certain areas of the U District study area. Two action alternatives have been identified, each of which describes a different approach to the pattern of development in the study area. Please see Chapter 2 for a description of these changes.

In general, Alternative 2 would provide for the greatest increases in building height and for the greatest focus in the core of the study area. Alternative 2 would provide for relatively few changes in the area north of the core and no

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Table 3.1–2: Existing Zoning Designations

Study Area Designations	Principal Uses	Selected Development Standards
Residential—Single Family		
SF 5000	Single family dwelling unit	Minimum lot size 5,000 sf Maximum Building height: 25–35 feet
Residential—Multifamily		
Low Rise (LR1, LR2, LR3)	Multifamily residential	Maximum densities: No limit for rowhouse, townhouse or apartment Building height: 25–40 ft Floor Area Ratio (FAR): 1.1–2.0
Midrise (MR)	Multifamily residential	Maximum densities: No limit Building height: 60–75 ft FAR: 3.2–4.25
Commercial		
Neighborhood Commercial (NC1, NC2)	Residential and commercial uses that provide a pedestrian-oriented retail and services	Building height: as identified on zoning map FAR: 5.75–6.0*
Commercial (C1)	Broad range of commercial uses, including auto-oriented development	Building height: 60–75 ft FAR: 5.75–6.0*
Industrial		
Industrial Commercial	Industrial and commercial uses, including light manufacturing and research and development	Building height: as identified on zoning map FAR: 2.5
Industrial Buffer	Provides a transition between industrial areas and adjacent residential or commercial zones. Typical land uses include general manufacturing, commercial and entertainment uses	Building height: as identified on zoning map FAR: 2.5
Major Institution Overlay		
University of Washington MIO, approved in 2003	The MIO requires development of a campus master plan intended to: (1) establish clear guidelines and development standards on which the institution can rely on for long-term development; (2) provide the neighborhood advance notice of development plans; (3) allow the city to anticipate and plan for public capital or programmatic actions; (4) provide the basis for defining measures to avoid or reduce adverse impacts from major institution growth.	Development standards established through the MIO review and approval process. Maximum development heights in the study area range from 40 to 105 feet. Maximum building heights are generally lowest near the shoreline and highest on the properties farthest from the shoreline.

* For NC 65 and 85 in the Station Area Overlay District

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changes to area south of the core. Alternative 1 would provide for slightly lower building heights and an area of expanded height and intensity that extends farther from the core, compared to Alternative 2. Compared to Alternative 1, Alternative 2 would allow greater heights along the University Way NE corridor and more intensive development north of the core. Alternative 3 would retain the existing zoning standards and height limits.

Seattle Environmental Policies and Procedures

Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.05 establishes local SEPA rules, as authorized by WAC 197-11. The City’s SEPA rules set policies to minimize or prevent adverse impacts of development and other activities. 25.05.675 provides specific policy guidance for the review of environmental impacts under SEPA.

***DISCUSSION:** Analysis of zoning alternatives in this EIS follows the guidance provided by the City’s SEPA Rules. Where appropriate, analyses of specific elements of the environment included in Chapter 3 provide a short summary of the environmental policies found in SMC 25.05.675 for the topic under consideration. Please see individual elements of the environment in Chapter 3 of this EIS.*

Mitigating Measures

In order to avoid a future inconsistency with the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map, either the current zoning should be retained or the Future Land Use Map should be amended to maintain consistency with new zoning designations adopted as part of this proposal.

Adopted UCUC Neighborhood Element policies should be reviewed for consistency with the proposal. As needed, policies should be amended, or the final proposal revised, to ensure continued consistency.

3.1.4 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

No significant unavoidable adverse impacts to plans and policies are anticipated.

FACT SHEET	3.1 Land Use/Plans & Policies
1. SUMMARY	3.2 Population, Housing, Employment
2. ALTERNATIVES	3.3 Aesthetics
3. ANALYSIS	3.4 Historic Resources
4. REFERENCES	3.5 Transportation
APPENDICES	3.6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
	3.7 Open Space & Recreation
	3.8 Public Services
	3.9 Utilities

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