



MANAGING GROWTH IN THE UPTOWN URBAN CENTER

The Uptown neighborhood plays a special role in our city. It is home to Seattle Center, a hub of arts, culture, sports, and entertainment. It is also a growing residential neighborhood near new jobs, frequent transit, and transportation options. In the next few years, billions of dollars of public and private investments will be coming to the neighborhood. KeyArena will be re-developed, affordable housing will be built, Sound Transit will locate two stations in the area. Seattle Public Schools is developing a new vision for their property at Seattle Center, including Memorial Stadium. The SR-99 tunnel will be complete, the street grid will be reconnected across Aurora Ave N, pedestrian and bike paths will be improved, and much more.

It is critical that these investments and future growth reflect the neighborhood's input and values. Years of input from the Uptown community has shaped this proposal. The proposed rezone also advances the goal of a dense, mixed-use urban center with a high quality of life.

Specifically, it creates affordable housing, includes new development standards for mixed use development with open space, supports pedestrian activity, reinforces the neighborhood as an arts and culture destination, and leverages the benefits that Seattle Center brings to the neighborhood. The recommended height changes maintain an attractive urban form, while allowing increased jobs and housing growth in this active urban center. Recent and planned public investments in the Uptown neighborhood will provide existing and future uptown residents with important amenities.



Summer 2017

Dear neighbors,

Uptown is not just a fast-growing residential neighborhood - it's a major center for the arts and entertainment, thriving small businesses and dozens of cultural organizations. The proposed rezone and related investments will help us manage growth while preserving what is unique about Uptown.

For over three years, people who live and work in Uptown have communicated their priorities: affordable homes, transportation choices, walkable streets, incentives for cultural spaces, preservation of historical buildings, and improved connections to Seattle Center.

This proposal offers the opportunity for more people who work in Uptown to live here. By increasing housing options in the neighborhood, people will have more options to live near where new jobs are being created. These options not only make urban living more convenient, it takes stress off our regional transportation system.

These changes also allow us to implement Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) in Uptown, so that all new development contributes to affordable housing options for low-income families. The result over 20 years will be 600 new income-restricted and rent-restricted homes for low-income residents.

Thanks to voters, improved bus service is already here. New investments will improve the flow of all vehicles through the neighborhood and add new street connections with South Lake Union. And in the years ahead, Uptown will be a part of our regional light rail network.

Working together, we can ensure a vibrant future for this unique neighborhood.

Regards,



Samuel Assefa

Director

Office of Planning and Community Development

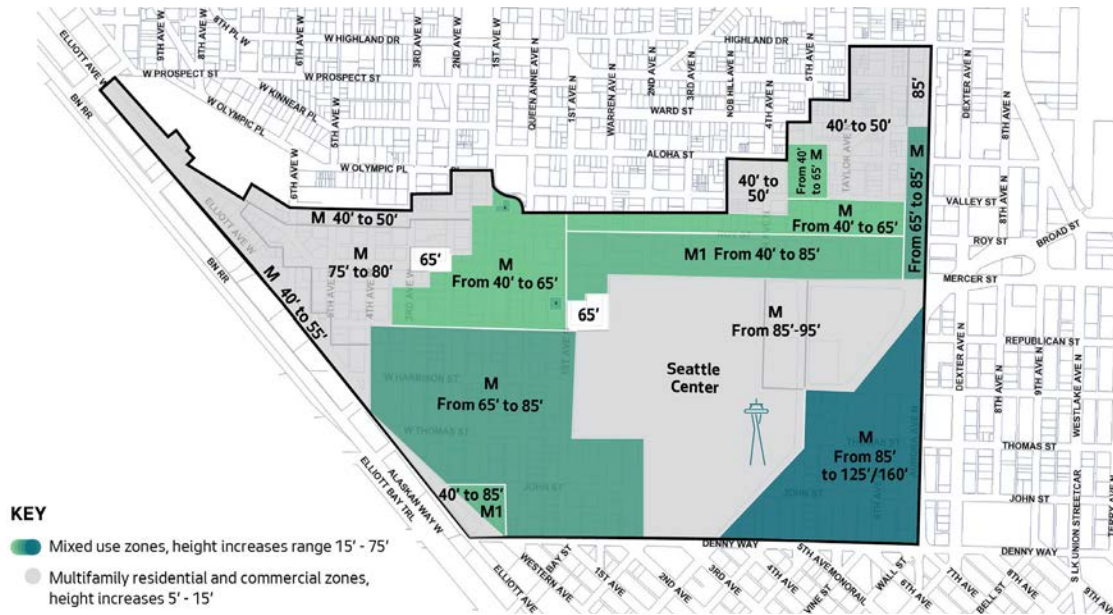


Mayor Edward B. Murray



Samuel Assefa

Uptown Rezone Recommendations



RECOMMENDED UPTOWN REZONE

This rezone recommendation includes changes to zone designations, building heights and development standards. It advances many of the goals of the Uptown Urban Design Framework, informed by analysis from the Uptown Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), discussions with neighborhood stakeholders, and citywide policies relating to affordable housing.

The recommended height limits balance the desire to allow new taller building types in the neighborhood with the importance of maintaining openness to the sky, preserving important public views through the neighborhood, and providing sunlight to streets and public spaces. The tallest building heights are recommended for the areas adjacent to Belltown and South Lake Union with more modest height increases approaching Queen Anne Hill to the north and Elliott Bay to the west. In the heart of Uptown, heights are increased to 65 feet to gain added development capacity, while retaining light and openness in this very active pedestrian district. Height increases in residentially zoned areas to the northwest and northeast and in the Seattle Center campus are limited to approximately 1 story - the smallest increment for implementation of Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) requirements.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The Uptown rezone recommendation development standards will improve the quality of development in the neighborhood. For example, it requires that:

- The ground level of buildings in pedestrian areas have restaurants, retail, theaters and other uses that drive pedestrian activity.
- Storefronts must be transparent at the street level. Windows and openings add visual interest to the pedestrian environment.
- Parking at the street level must be separated from the right of way with buildings and uses that hide the parking. At least half of all new parking must be underground.
- 15 percent of the lot area for large projects be usable open space.
- New development must include upper level setbacks to maintain pedestrian scale and provide light at the street level.

UPTOWN PROJECTS



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

This is a critical need in Seattle and Uptown. The Office of Housing will invest in an affordable housing project on a portion of this block with approximately 80 affordable units. An adjacent privately developed project will also provide affordable housing units through the Multi-Family Tax Exemption program and through MHA.



SEATTLE OPERA

A new home for the Seattle Opera at the site of the former Seattle Center Mercer Arena will bring many production and rehearsal functions of the Seattle Opera on site. The new building will serve as a community resource with educational opportunities and performances along Mercer St.



LIGHT RAIL

With the approval of Sound Transit 3, planning for light rail stations in Uptown is underway. Although the opening of this line is scheduled for 2035, the completion of Sound Transit 2 soon will provide new ways for people throughout the region to get to Uptown and Seattle Center.



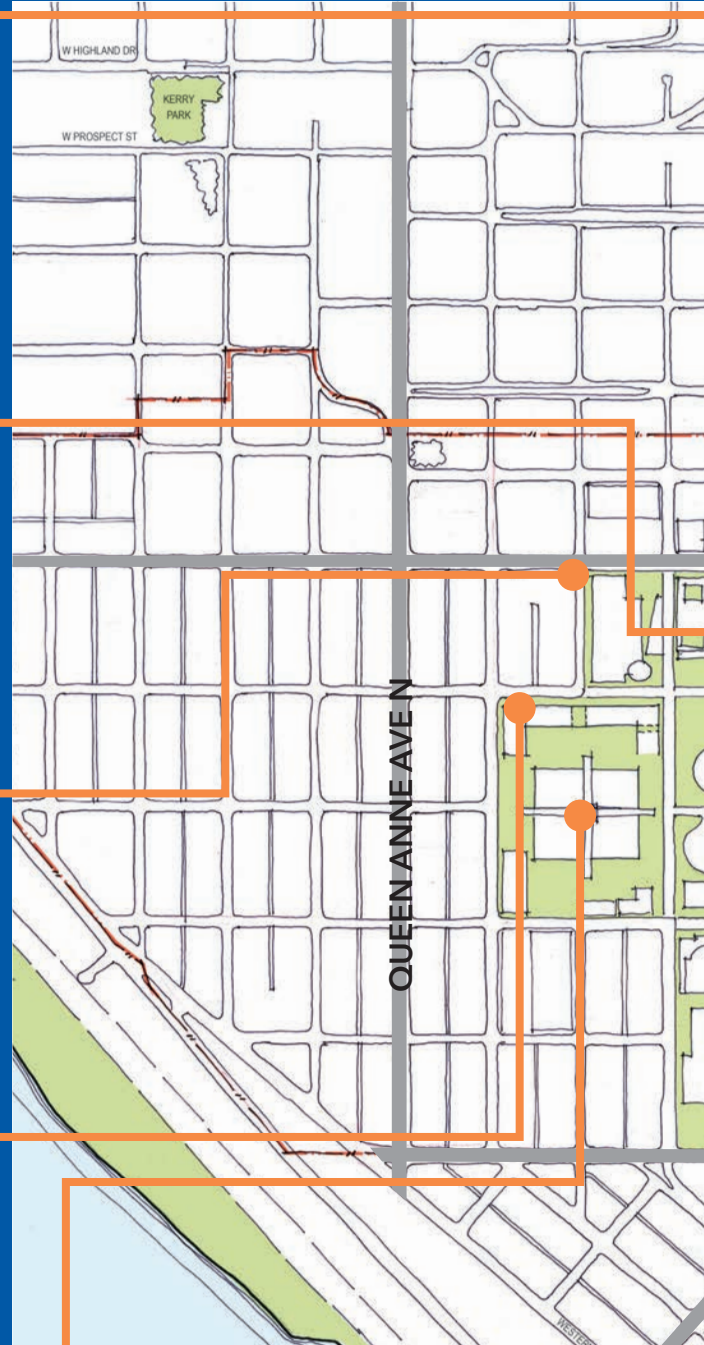
KEXP

The City's support for KEXP helped them to move to the former Northwest Rooms at the corner of 1st Avenue N. and Republican Street, with a popular community resource in its gathering space.



KEY ARENA

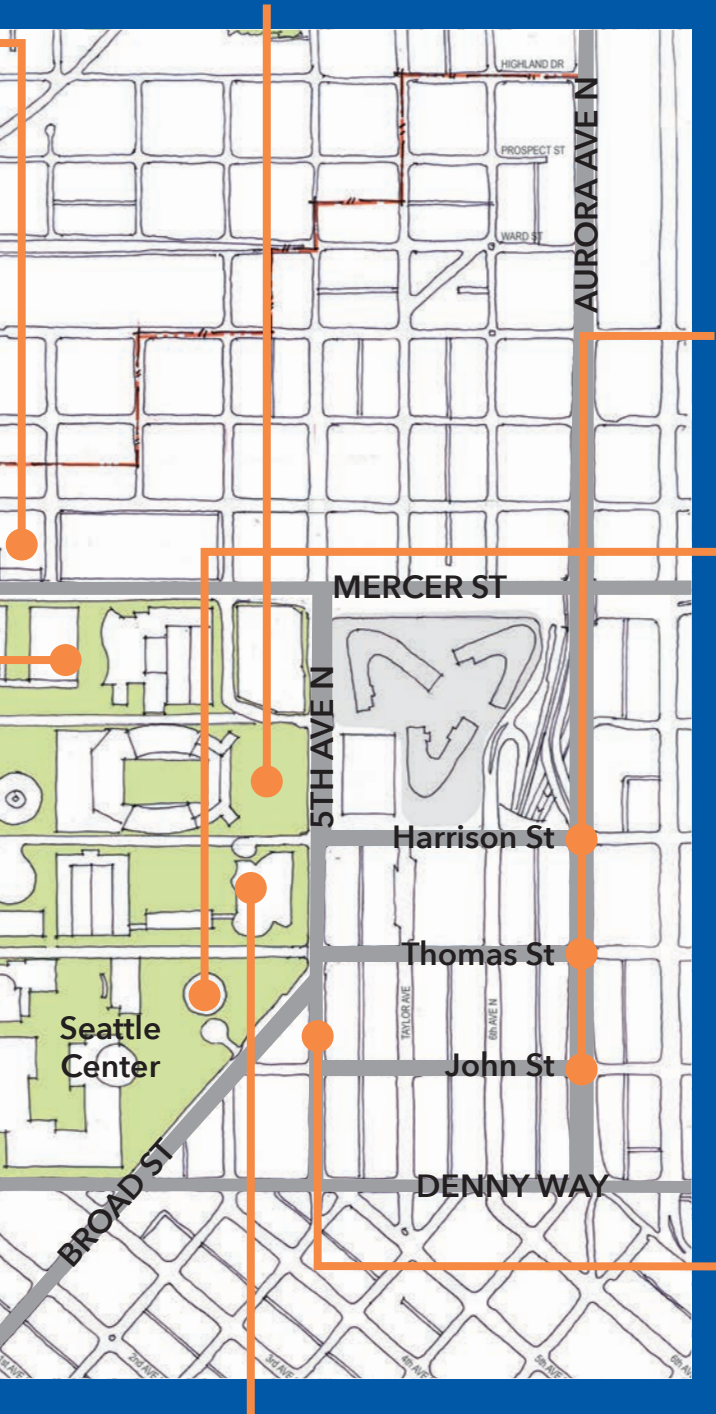
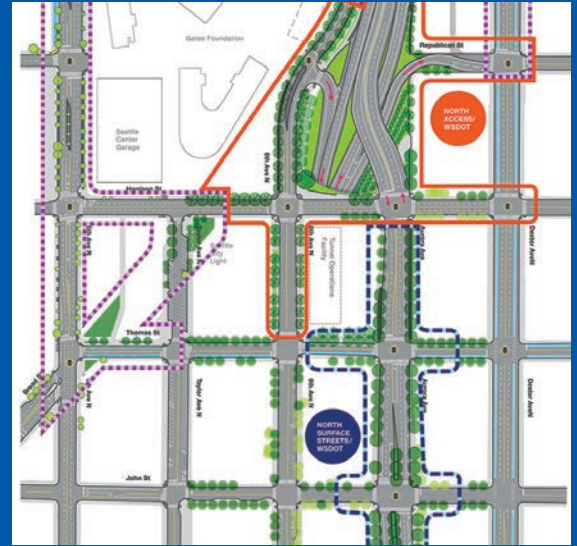
The future of Key Arena is receiving serious attention. If Key Arena is redeveloped to host an NBA and/or NHA team, the increase in attendance to events at the arena would include substantial transportation investments to manage transportation impacts on the neighborhood.





EDUCATION

Seattle Public Schools is currently planning for a new Memorial Stadium and high school on the Seattle Center Campus. The district is planning to obtain funding for this school through the 2019 Building for Excellence Levy.



NEW STREET CONNECTIONS

Reconnection of the street grid across Aurora at Harrison, John, and Thomas Streets in 2019 will provide new connections to and from Uptown and South Lake Union and reduce east/west pressure on Mercer St and Denny Way.



THE SPACE NEEDLE

The iconic Space Needle will continue to draw crowds to the Seattle Center with a \$100 million renovation.



LAKE 2 BAY

Lake 2 Bay Streetscape improvements will provide new connections between a revitalized Seattle Waterfront, the Uptown neighborhood, and Lake Union.



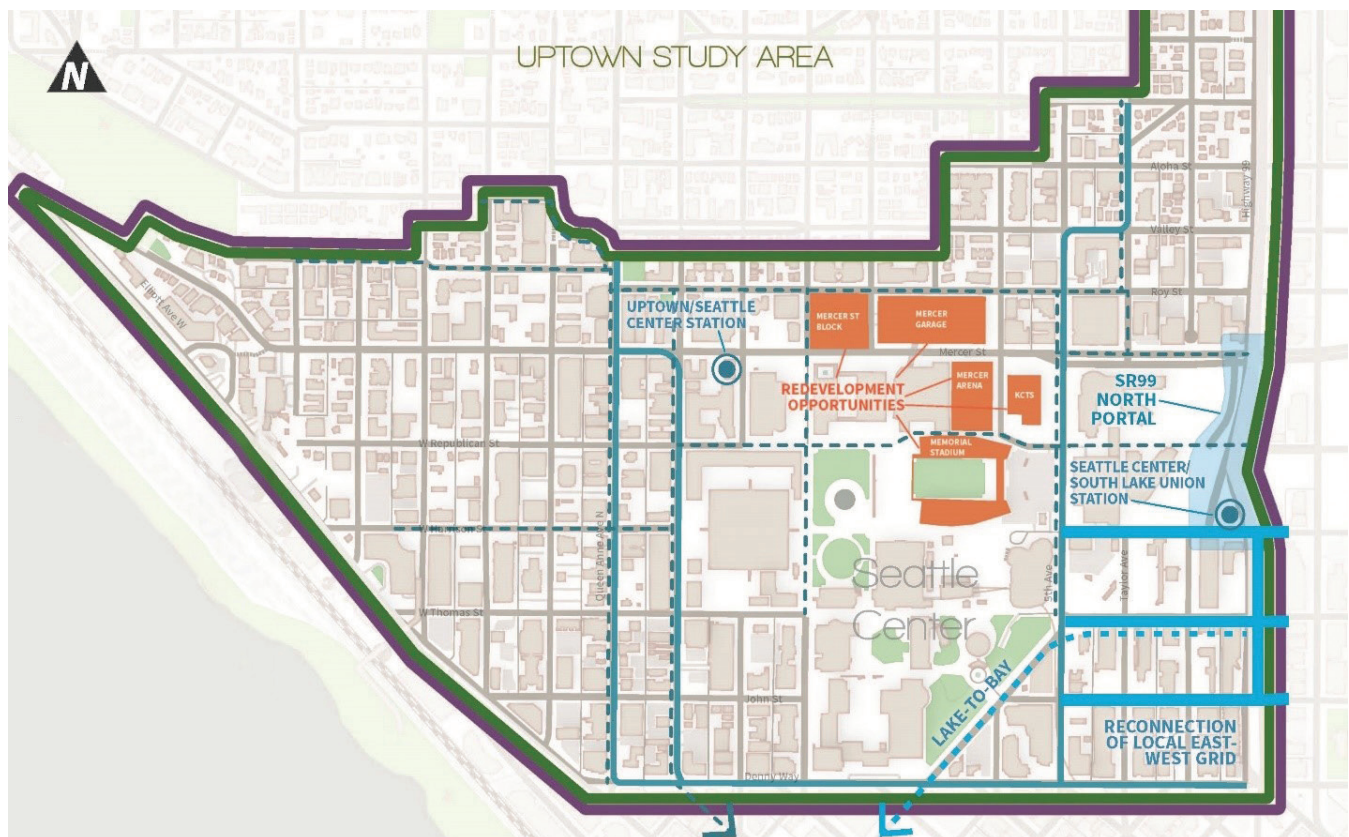
ARTISTS AT PLAY

This interactive playground provides active outdoor space for all children visiting the Seattle Center and is an important resource for families in the Uptown Urban Center.

INVESTMENTS IN TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is one of the most critical issues facing Uptown and Seattle as growth continues. A package of transportation investments, small and large, are necessary to meet this challenge.

- Completion of Sound Transit 2, will provide easy access to the monorail at Westlake Station for people attending events at Seattle Center from throughout the region. In the future, ST3 will provide direct light rail service connecting Uptown to the regional transit system.
- Reconnection of the grid across Aurora at Harrison, John, and Thomas streets providing alternative routes to Seattle Center and Uptown.
- New investments in pedestrian and bike facilities in Uptown. The recent Mercer St work has provided a new and heavily used pedestrian/bike connection between Uptown and South Lake Union.
- Uptown is an important residential neighborhood for those working Downtown and in South Lake Union.
- Transportation benefits result from more people living close to work and not needing to drive.
- Part of the KeyArena redevelopment includes major investments to benefit mobility in Uptown.



- Urban Design Framework Boundary
- Strategic Parking Study Boundary
- Priority Bus Corridor
- Bicycle Network Link

- Future Streets and Connections
- North Portal
- Seattle Center Redevelopment Opportunity
- Proposed New ST High-Capacity Transit Station

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

A mix of buildings from different time periods contributes to Uptown's character. From 1920s era art deco apartment complexes to the futuristic Century 21 architecture of Seattle Center, these buildings provide continuity between Uptown's past and its future. Many of the older buildings are constructed of unreinforced masonry and their preservation will require costly seismic retrofitting. A new program will seek to help preserve some of these buildings.

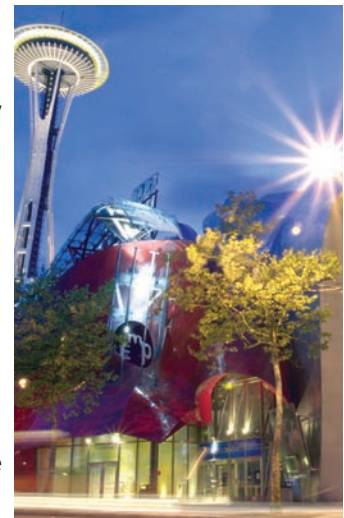


1. Through a transfer of development rights program, eligible building owners can sell development rights to new, taller developments.
2. The Office of Planning and Community Development will fund a Historic Resources Survey of the entire Uptown neighborhood. This survey will identify which buildings are potential landmarks. In addition to establishing eligibility to sell development rights, the survey can open the door to buildings that are not yet landmarks to go through the landmark process to access other historic preservation resources.

SEATTLE CENTER

Seattle Center, with its concentration of arts and entertainment venues, community festivals, programming at the Armory, the Pacific Science Center, the Space Needle, MoPOP, and the Chihuly Glass Museum, is a regional destination and central to Uptown's identity. Investments at Seattle Center also provide important community amenities for Uptown residents:

- Artists at Play. This artist-designed play area provides an active playground for Uptown's families and is accessible to children with disabilities.
- Seattle Opera is building a new administrative and rehearsal space adjacent to McCaw Hall at the former site of the Seattle Arena.
- Open Space. Seattle Center's open space is a valuable community resource for the Uptown neighborhood. This open space provides opportunities for both passive use and programmed use with Seattle Centers year-round festivals and activities.
- Seattle Center is committed to continuing its goals of opening the edges of the campus to the neighborhood.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The rezone proposal implements the Mandatory Affordable Housing program in Uptown. Requirements to either include affordable units in new projects or make financial contributions to develop affordable housing are part of the Mayor's Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda. Over the next 20 years, it is estimated that new development in Uptown will create approximately 600 affordable housing units. In addition, Seattle's Office of Housing is proposing to invest in an affordable housing project with approximately 80 units on a portion of the block across from McCaw Hall.

BUILDING ON ARTS & CULTURE

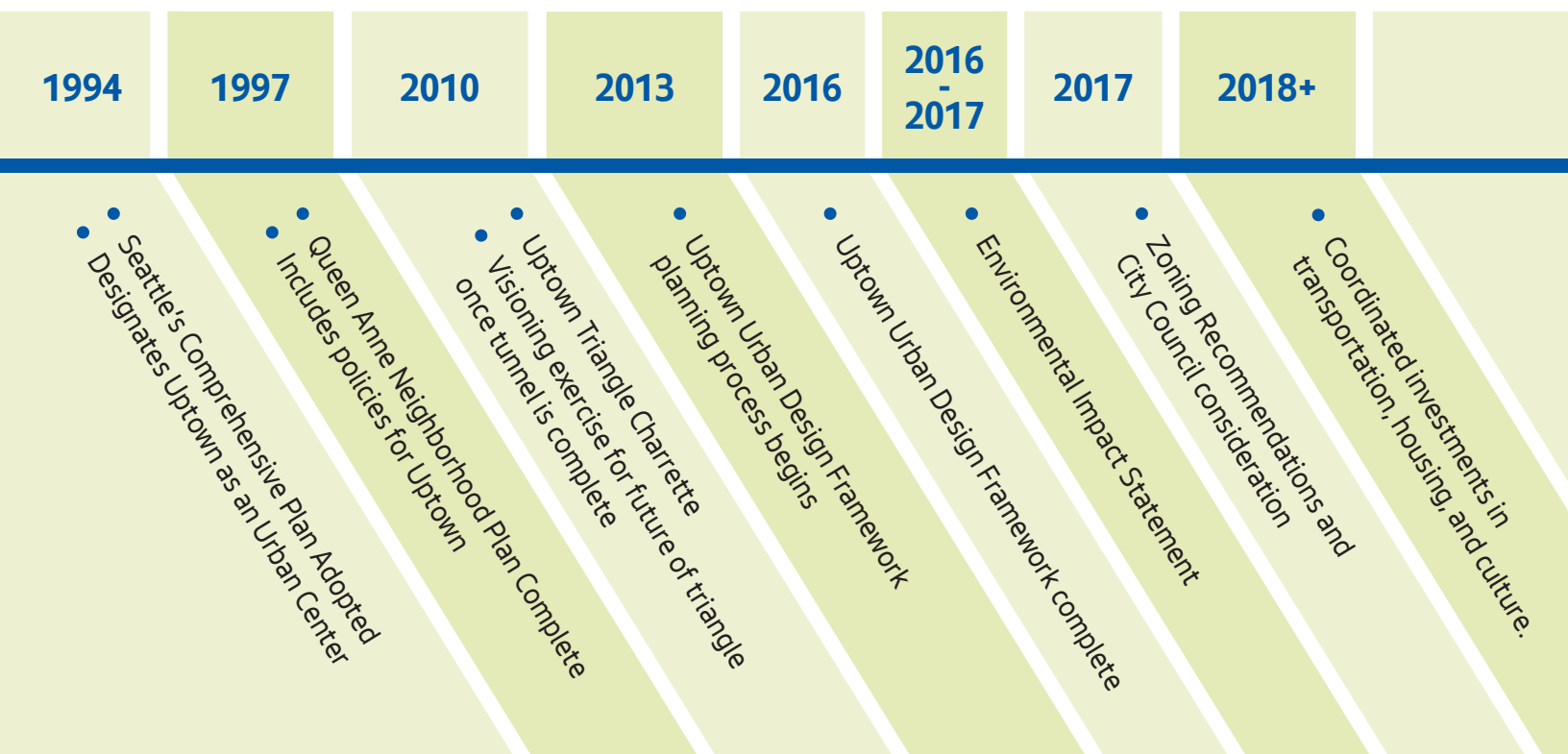
The Uptown Alliance, Seattle Center, and other community partners are working with the City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture to designate the neighborhood as an Arts & Cultural District. This designation will support and expand the neighborhood's identity as a cultural resource for the region. This rezone proposal includes incentives to provide on-site arts space in new development projects. Arts and culture spaces will be exempt from limits on project floor area and an increased floor area is allowed equal to the level of space provided for arts uses.

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Seattle Public Schools is in the planning phase to develop a high school on the Seattle Center campus. This school will be an important resource for families in Seattle's Center City, including Uptown, as well as the Queen Anne and Magnolia neighborhoods. This plan includes development of a new and improved Memorial Stadium. Seattle Public Schools plans to include this school in its 2019 Building for Excellence Levy.

Uptown Planning Process

FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE



For more information

Jim Holmes | 206.684.8372 or jim.holmes@seattle.gov



Seattle
Office of Planning &
Community Development