

# U DISTRICT BRIEFING #2: ZONING & DESIGN



Seattle  
Office of Planning &  
Community Development

September 20, 2016



# Overview of the Mayor's proposal

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Today's  
briefing

1. Public investments in the U District
2. Zoning changes
3. New design standards

Oct. - Dec.

4. Mandatory Housing Affordability requirements
5. Incentive programs: open space, preservation, childcare...



# Community planning recap

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- Extensive public engagement 2011-present: multiple related planning efforts and 90+ public events
- Rezone is one piece of a larger set of changes
- People view growth with both excitement and concern



# Livability investments

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- Mayor's proposal focuses on a coordinated set of local investments by the City, Sound Transit, UW, and others to support growth.
- Council briefings in coming months will focus on land use regulations, but the related efforts are important for context:
  - ▣ Infrastructure
  - ▣ Amenities
  - ▣ Social services
  - ▣ Support for partner organizations



# Livability investments: mobility

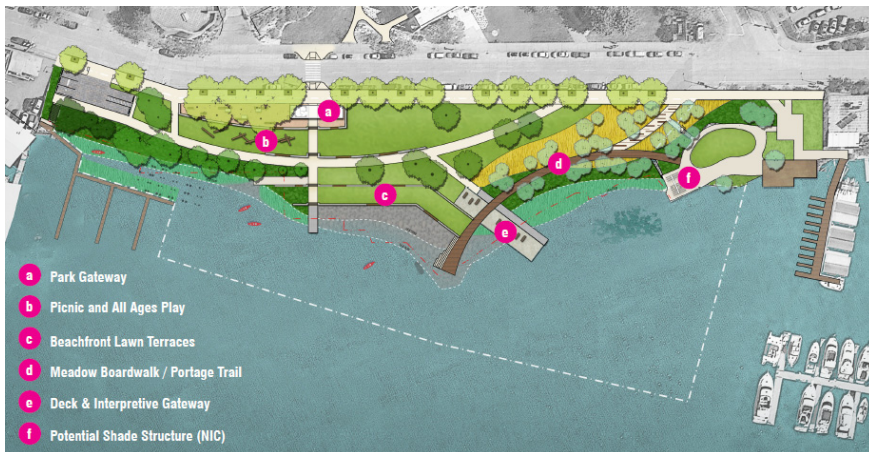
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- Expanded sidewalks
- Protected bike lanes
- Pedestrian safety improvements at busy intersections
- Integration of surface transit with light rail

# Livability investments: parks

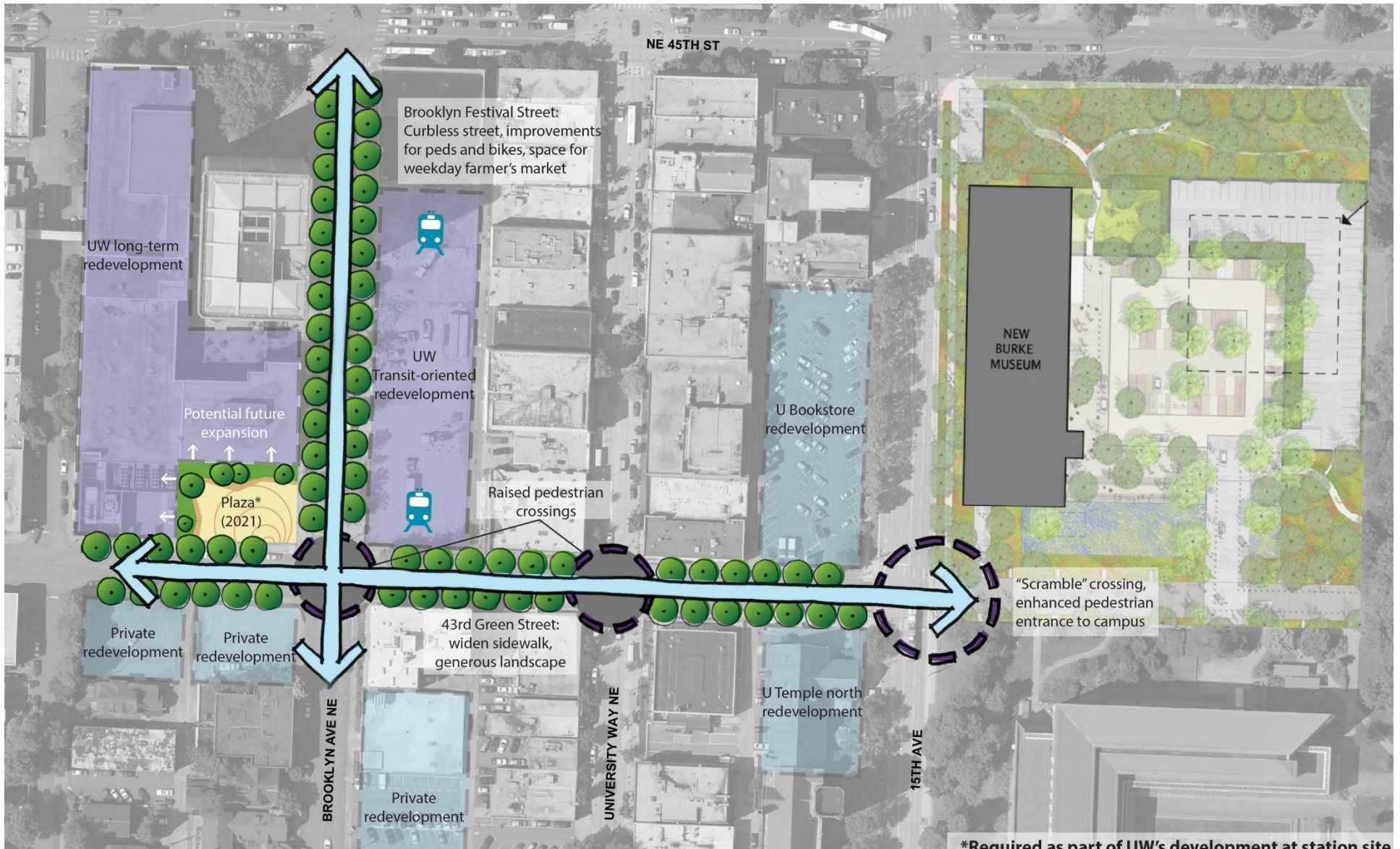
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- U Heights Center Park
- Christie Park Expansion
- Portage Bay Park



# Livability investments: core



# Livability investments: housing

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- Marion West & Arbora Court, affordable housing funded by Office of Housing (2016-17)
- 181 units, including housing for recently homeless families, new space for the University District Food Bank
- New requirements will produce hundreds of additional affordable homes





# Livability investments: partnerships

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- Working with ROOTS, U District Partnership, and UW to create an employment program for homeless youth in the U District.
- UW providing new childcare facilities in the neighborhood, working to expand faculty/staff housing options
- Continued City funding for U Heights Center, Teen Feed, U District Partnership, many others

## YMCA redevelopment



New, larger facility will include transitional housing for homeless youth, a daycare, and an indoor pool.

## CoMotion Labs (UW Innovation District)



New headquarter space for experts to partner with government, businesses, and nonprofits in forming start-ups.

## Making walking and biking safer and easier



- Planned bike lanes for 11th Avenue
- Protected bike lanes under construction on Roosevelt, NE Campus Parkway, and NE 40th St
- Expanded sidewalks on NE 43rd St

## New and redesigned parks



- New park at the University Heights Community Center
- Christie Park, a pocket park south of 45th, will be redesigned and doubled in size
- Large new waterfront park on Portage Bay (Seattle Parks & Recreation, UW, Washington State Department of Transportation)



Image: Walker Henry

- LEGEND:**
- Park
  - University of Washington campus
  - Link light rail (Sound Transit, 2021)
  - High Capacity Transit study corridor
  - Walking & biking improvements
  - Neighborhood green streets
  - Open space improvements
  - Key development project



## New affordable housing

The Office of Housing funded two new affordable housing buildings, opening in 2016 and 2017:

- LIHI's "The Marion West" (48 units)
- Bellwether Housing's "Arbora Court" (133 units)



## Bus rapid transit and improved bus service

- SDOT is studying high capacity transit along the Roosevelt corridor
- SDOT, Metro, Sound Transit, and OPCD continue to plan improved bus service for the U District



## Investments in the station area core



"Festival Street" on Brooklyn Ave NE will be developed by Sound Transit. Zoning will support further investments on Brooklyn.

The U District light rail station will open in 2021. About 12,000 transit riders will pass through the station daily. Riders will travel to Downtown in 8 minutes and to Northgate in 5 minutes.



# Rezone: background

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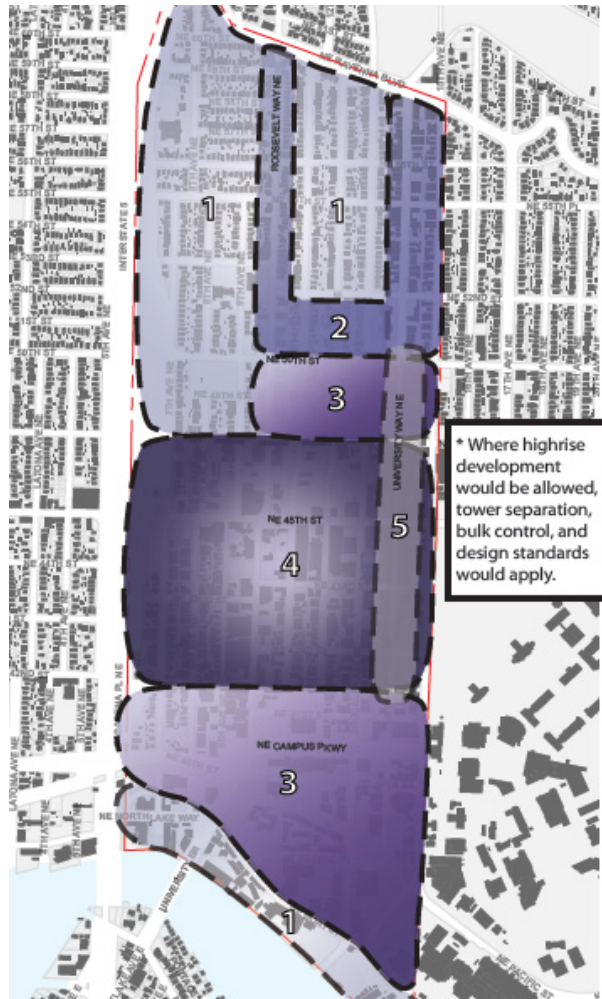
Reasons people cite for supporting density in the core...

- Focus growth near light rail and campus, reduce pressure on surrounding areas
- Take advantage of the large redevelopment sites flanking NE 45<sup>th</sup> St, context of three existing towers
- Greater variety – avoid uniform midrise by allowing mix of highrise, midrise, and lowrise w/ design standards
- Capture public benefits through incentive zoning – tie extra height and floor area to desired services and amenities

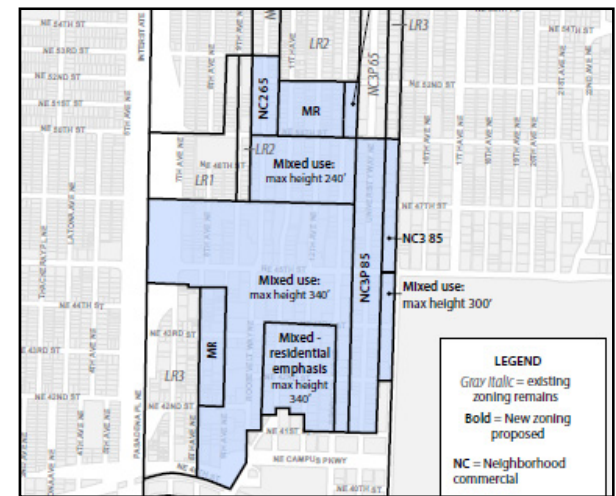
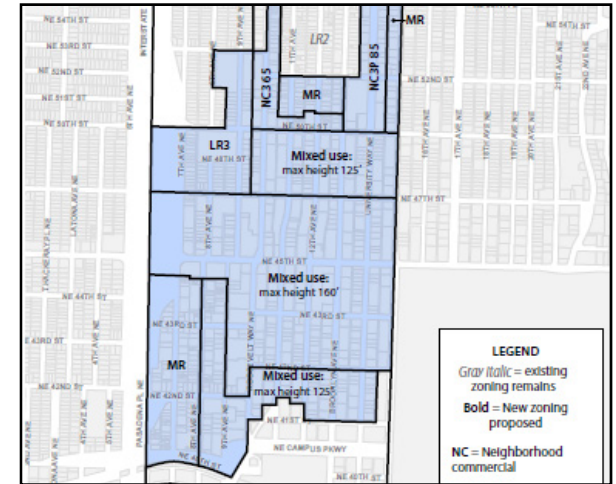
# Rezone: background



Public input, 2012



Urban Design Framework, 2013



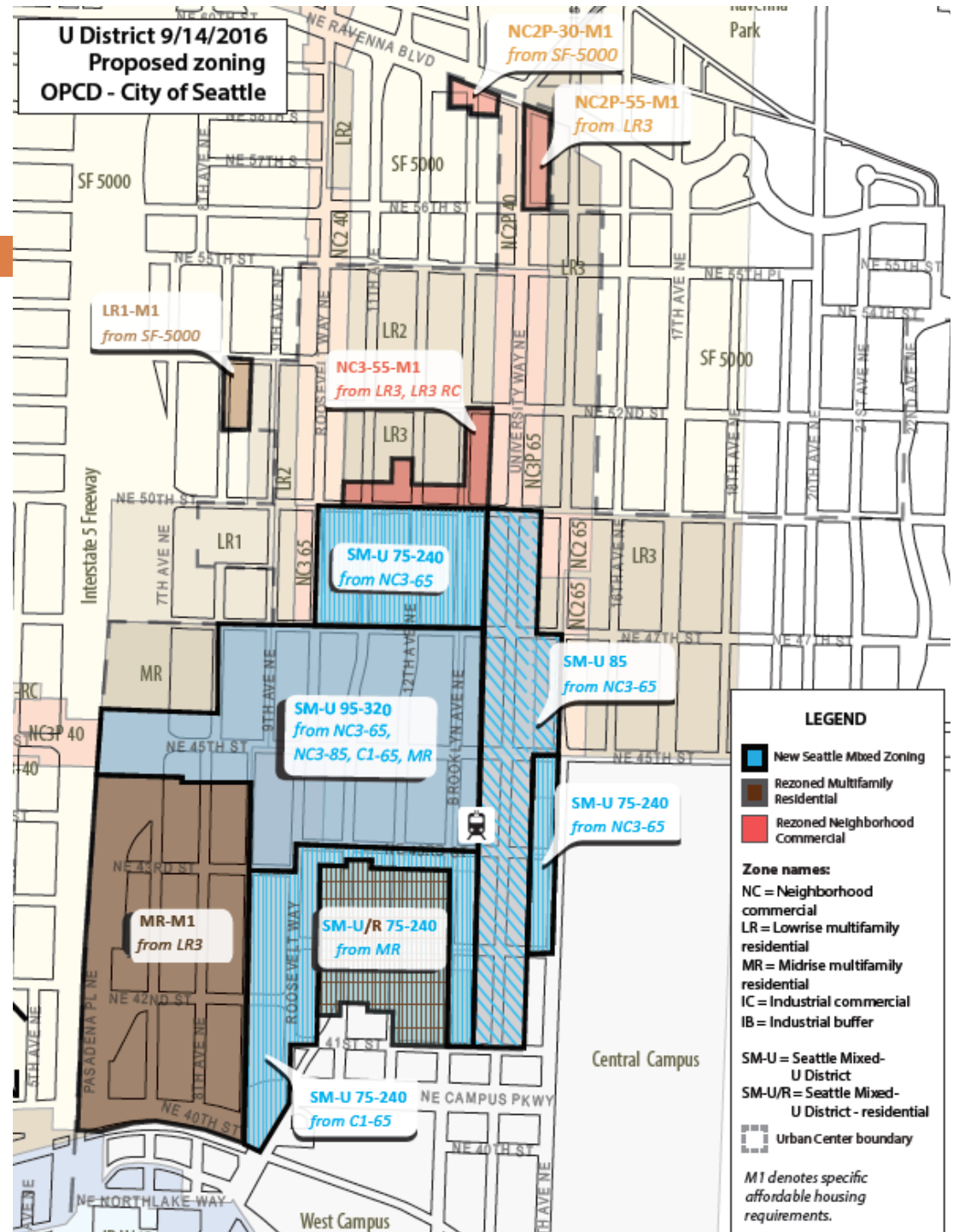
EIS, 2014

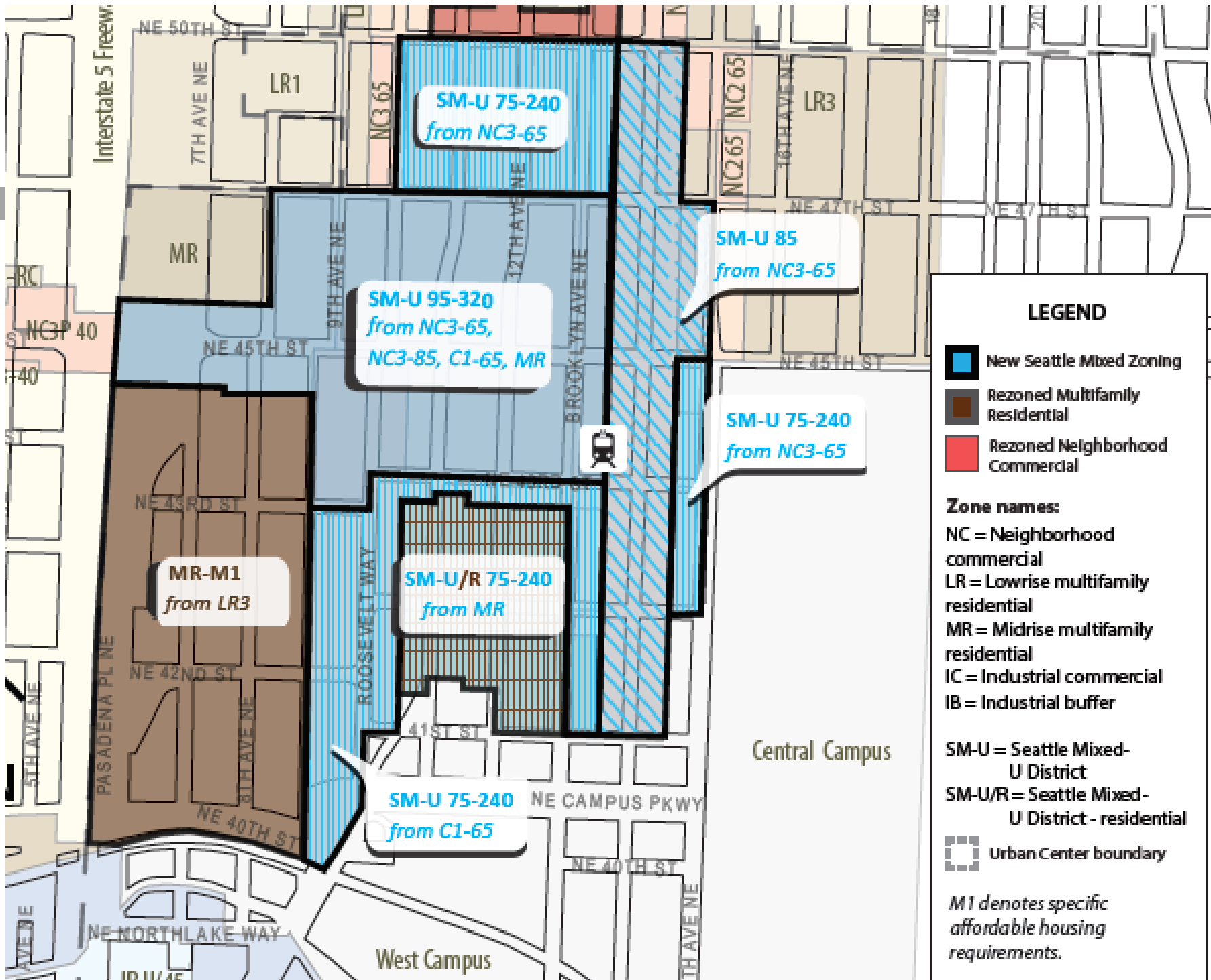


# Rezone map

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- Focus new growth south of NE 50<sup>th</sup> St., with residential highrises up to 240' and 320'
- Offices limited to 160' in highrise zones
- Heights stay relatively low on the Ave
- Limited changes north of 50th





**LEGEND**

- New Seattle Mixed Zoning
- Rezoned Multifamily Residential
- Rezoned Neighborhood Commercial

**Zone names:**

- NC = Neighborhood commercial
- LR = Lowrise multifamily residential
- MR = Midrise multifamily residential
- IC = Industrial commercial
- IB = Industrial buffer

- SM-U = Seattle Mixed-U District
- SM-U/R = Seattle Mixed-U District - residential

Urban Center boundary

*M1 denotes specific affordable housing requirements.*

# U District 9/14/2016 Proposed zoning OPCD - City of Seattle



**LR1-M1**  
from SF-5000

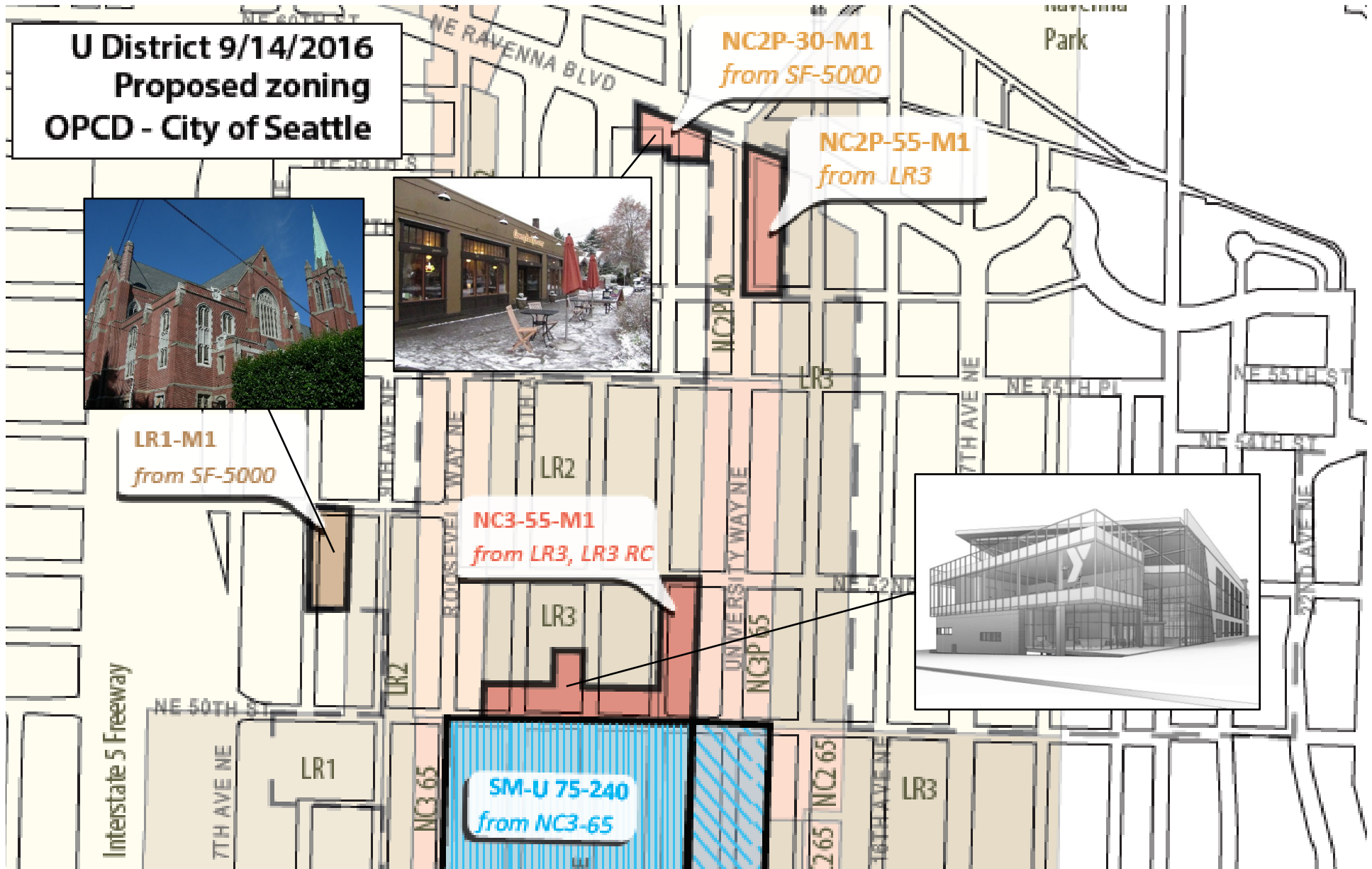


**NC3-55-M1**  
from LR3, LR3 RC

**SM-U 75-240**  
from NC3-65

**NC2P-30-M1**  
from SF-5000

**NC2P-55-M1**  
from LR3





# Design standards

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- New requirements added to the Land Use Code as part of the U District rezone
- Zoning discussions often focus on max height, but design standards have an equal or greater influence over neighborhood character
- Much of the work in the planning process has involved tailoring standards to fit the unique characteristics in the U District: new “SM-U” or “Seattle Mixed U District” zones



# Design standards overview

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- Maximum width
- Street level uses
- Highrise standards
- Setbacks
- Modulation
- Parking standards
- Floor Area Ratio – limiting the total amount of development
- Landscaping and trees
- Large lot open space requirement
- Residential amenity area



# Maximum width

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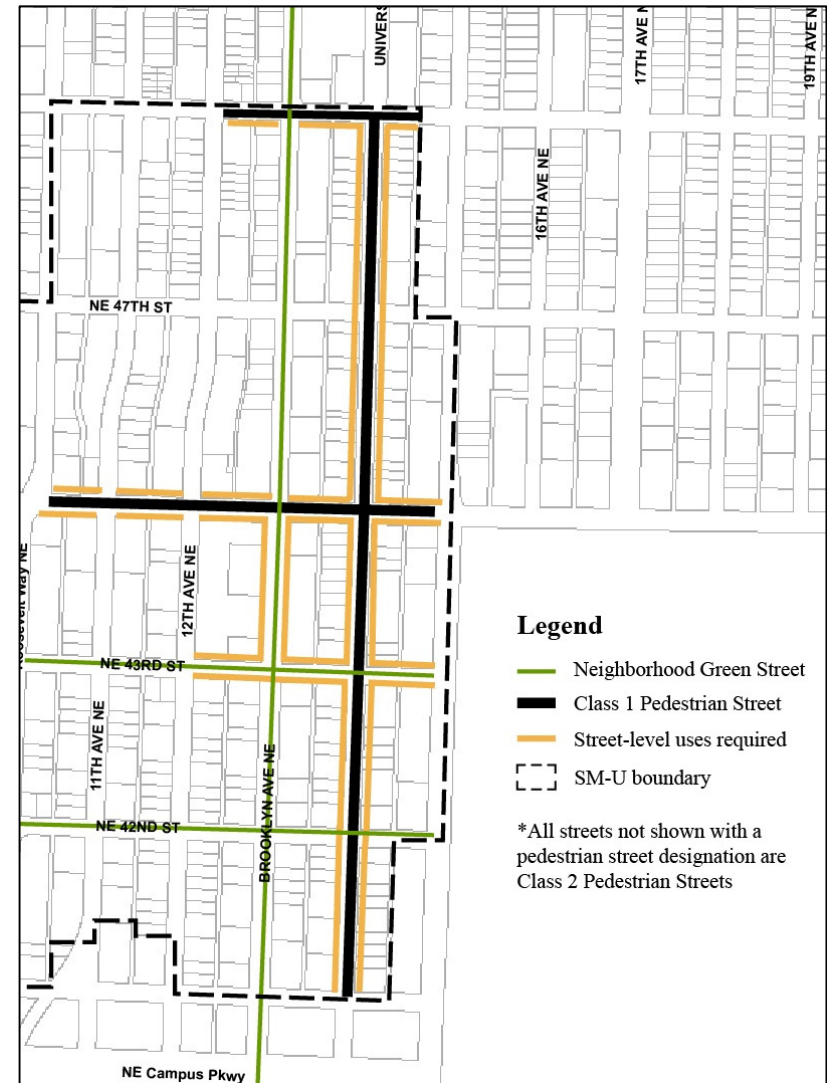
- ❑ Historic pattern in the U District: 50'-200'
- ❑ Recent development: 300 to 475'
- ❑ Overly long facades get monotonous, even with good architectural details
- ❑ Proposal limits any individual building to 250'



# Active street level uses

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- ❑ Standards require retail, services, or other active uses in key locations
- ❑ Similar to “Pedestrian overlay” in commercial zones
- ❑ Works with transparency requirements to achieve pedestrian-friendly frontage



# Highrise standards

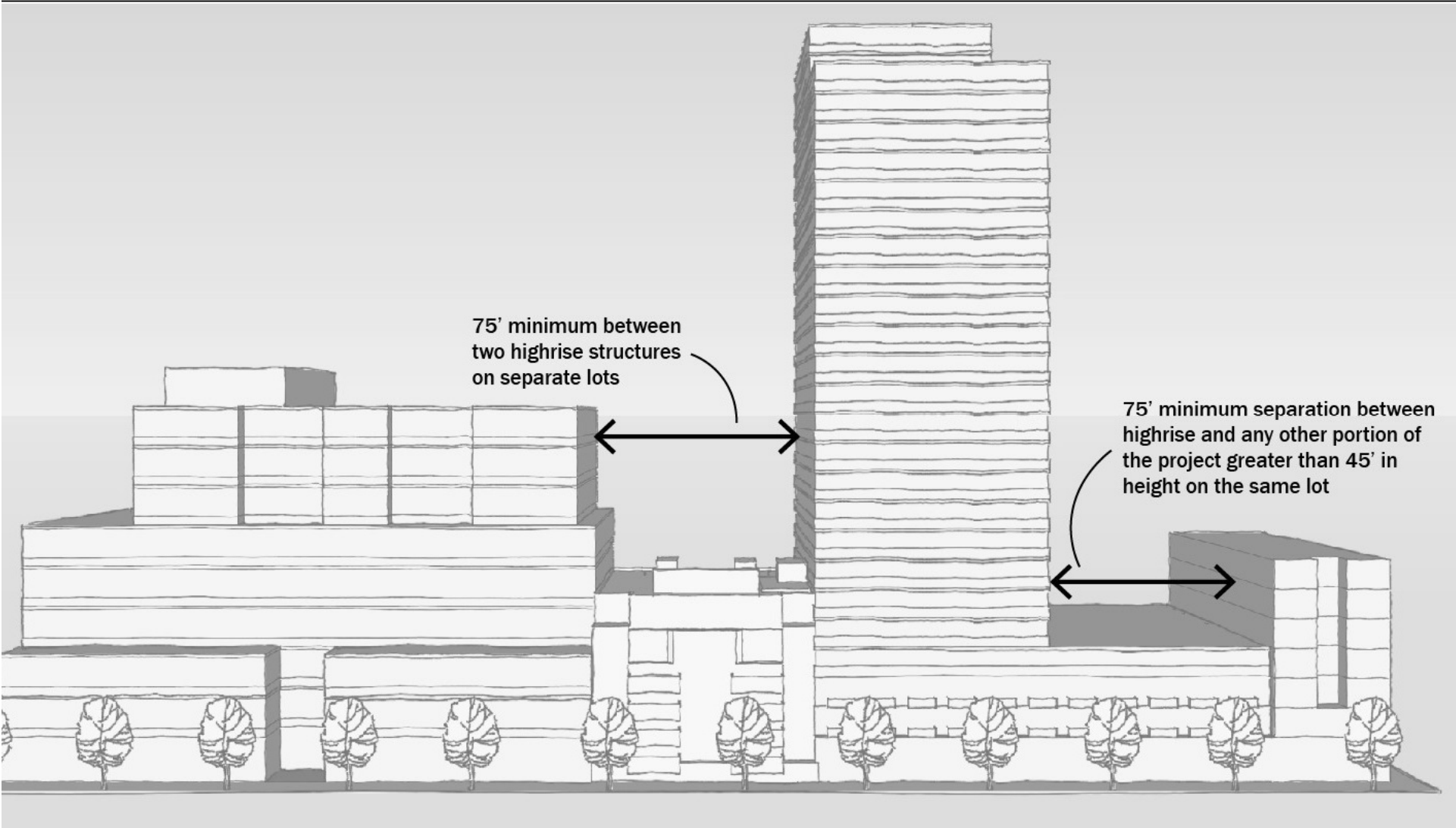
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- Eligibility: sites must be 12,000 sq ft and meet other prerequisites
- Larger office floor plates limited to 160' height
- Smaller residential floor plates shrink taller towers





# Tower separation



# Setbacks

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- ❑ Widen constrained pedestrian areas
- ❑ Room for landscaping on east/west green streets
- ❑ Maintain pedestrian shopping character on the Ave (at 45')
- ❑ Set back ground-level residential for privacy
- ❑ Limit bulk of non-highrise developments (at 65')
- ❑ Transitions to abutting zones



# Modulation requirements

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- Breaks to prevent long, flat facades
- Create visual interest, communicate the building's uses to passersby
- Apply to all portions of the building – ground-level and highrise

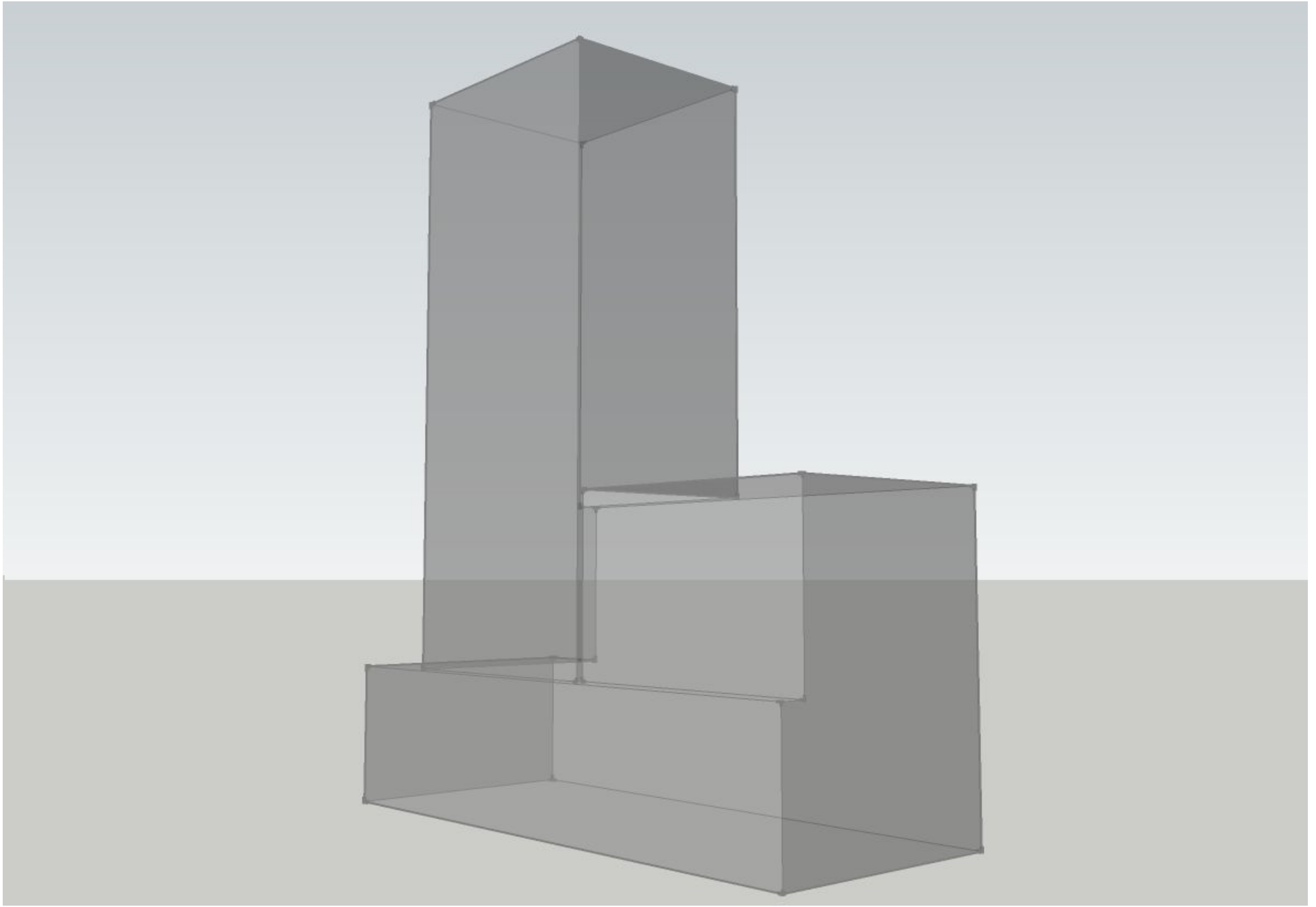


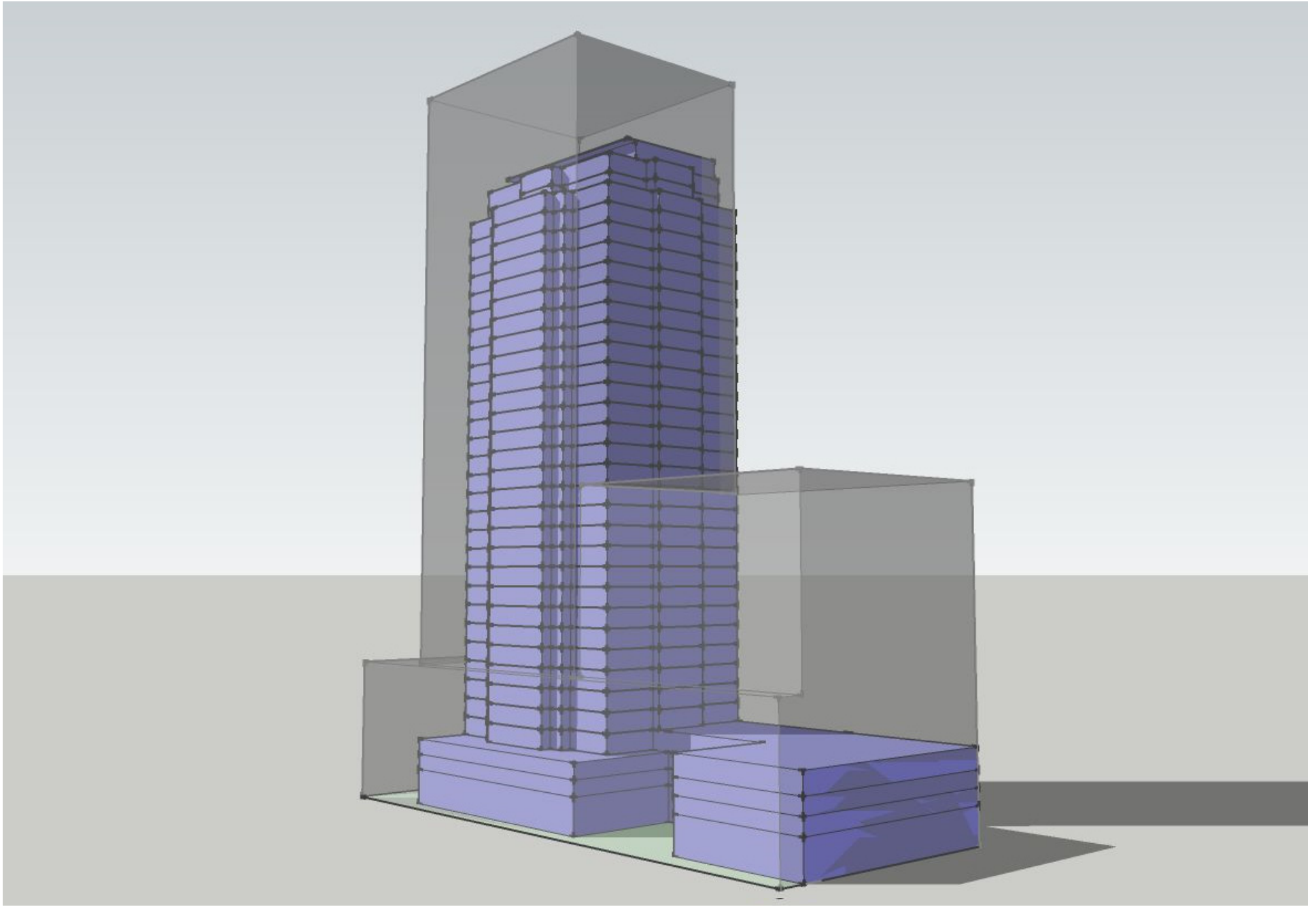


# Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

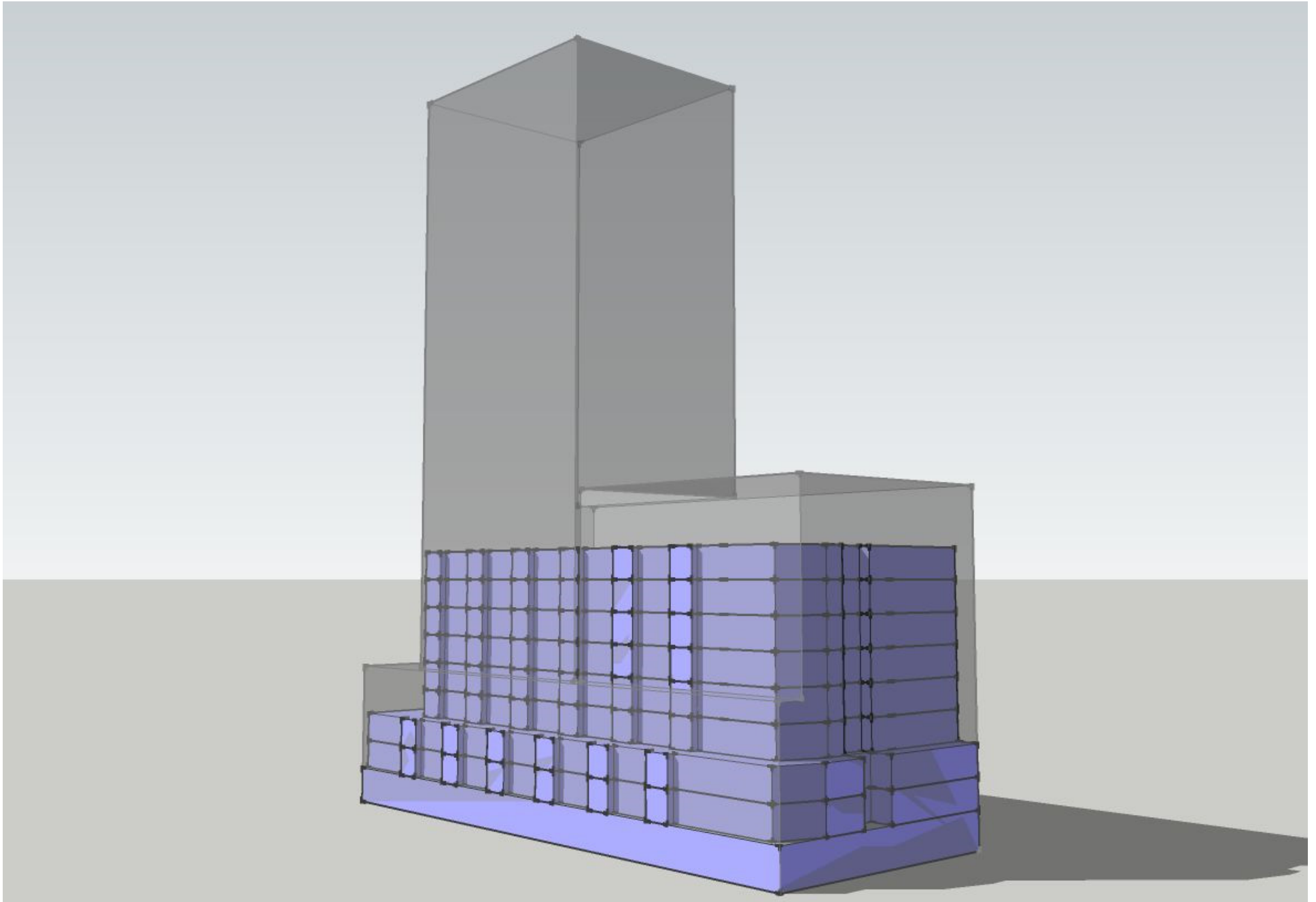
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- Limits the total amount of development on a given site – a factor of your lot area
- “Zoning envelope” defines the boundaries of where the building could be, FAR defines what the actual size is...
  - ▣ 6 for non-highrise
  - ▣ 7 for commercial highrise
  - ▣ 10-12 for residential highrise









# Landscaping and trees

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- Green Factor standards emphasize trees, green roofs, rain gardens
- Street trees requirements
- The core of the U District currently has <5% canopy cover. New development will exceed 15%, the City's goal for mixed use areas.







# Open space requirements

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- ❑ Residential amenity area for any building with housing
- ❑ Large lots must set aside 15% as accessible open space
- ❑ Mid-block corridors for large sites straddling the alley
- ❑ Incentive bonuses for open space



# Parking requirements

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- Any parking at the ground level must be fully wrapped in other uses, levels above that must be screened and partially wrapped
- To reduce traffic impacts:
  - ▣ Parking management plan required for large developments
  - ▣ Parking limit for office uses



# Next steps

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- Director's Report, displacement report, affordable housing recommendations in October
- Public hearing in November
- Further Council briefings after budget





Detailed background: [www.seattle.gov/dpd/udistrict](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/udistrict)



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