

University District and Uptown Neighborhood Design Guidelines

Seattle City Council

Planning, Land Use, and Zoning Committee

December 19, 2018

Design Review Program

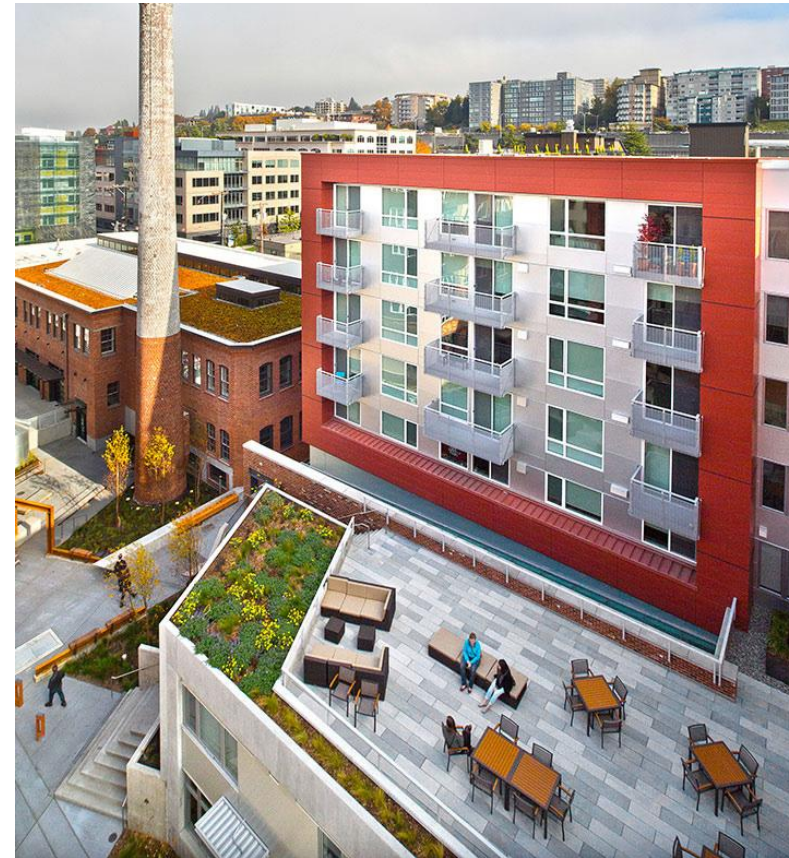
- Seattle's Design Review Program was established in 1994.
- Over 1,500 projects reviewed since the program began – (about 111 projects per year).
- Design review takes place before a new development can apply for construction permits.



Design Review Program

The Purpose of Design Review

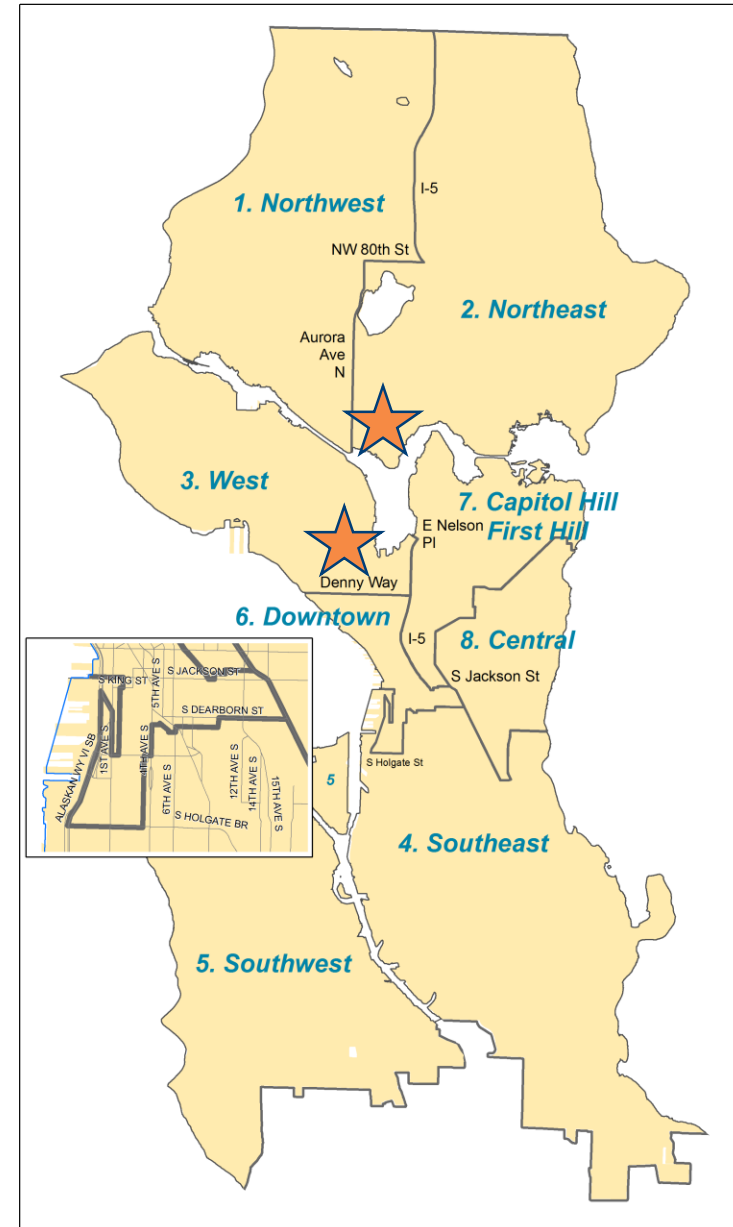
- Encourage better design and site planning to ensure new development sensitively fits into neighborhoods.
- Provide flexibility in the application of development standards to better meet the intent of the Land Use Code.
- Improve communication and understanding among developers, neighborhoods and the City.



Context

Design Review Boards & Districts

- The University District Neighborhood is located within the Northeast district
- The Uptown Neighborhood is located within the West district
- Each district board consists of volunteers appointed by the Mayor and City Council.
- Their duties include: synthesizing community input; providing early design guidance; recommending conditions of approval; and ensuring fair and consistent application of design guidelines.



Guideline Categories and Organization

Categories:

- Context and Site
 - CS1. Natural Systems and Site Features
 - CS2. Urban Pattern and Form
 - CS3. Architectural Context and Character
- Public Life
 - PL1. Connectivity
 - PL2. Walkability
 - PL3. Street-Level Interaction
 - PL4. Active Transportation
- Design Concept
 - DC1. Project Uses and Activities
 - DC2. Architectural Concept
 - DC3. Open Space Concept
 - DC4. Exterior Elements and Finishes



University District

Planning in the U District

2011-13

- Urban Design Framework Plan
- U District Partnership formation

2013-16

- EIS on Urban Design Alternatives
- Parks Plan 2015 Update
- Street Concept Plans

2017-18

- Rezone Adopted
- **Neighborhood Design Guidelines Update**



Neighborhood Design Guidelines Update

- U-District Partnership Urban Design Committee co-sponsored workshops
- Residents, Businesses, Property Owners, UW, Social Service and Faith Community participants
- 3 Topic-related Workshop Sessions + 3 Community Open House Events

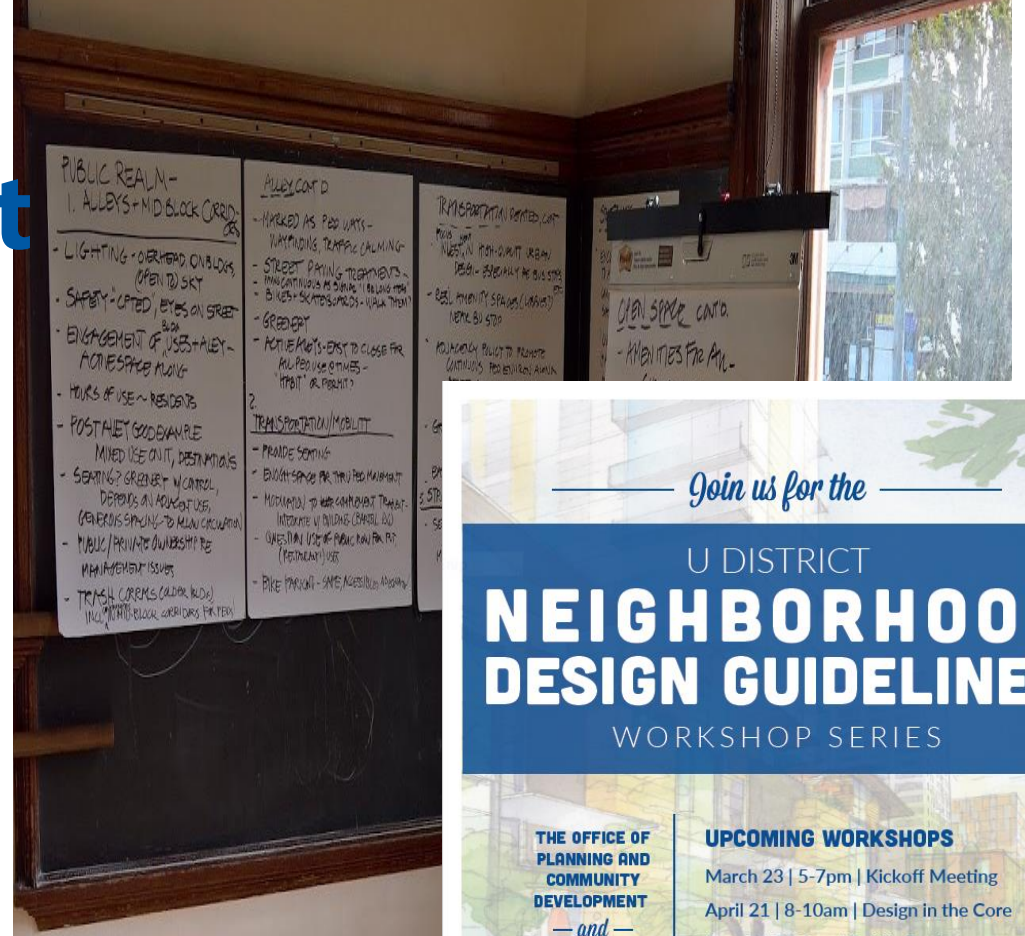
Why Update University District Neighborhood Design Guidelines

- Priorities expressed in the University District Urban Design Framework Plan;
- Change in character of the built environment since guidelines were adopted in 2000;
- Significant public investments – light rail station at Brooklyn Ave NE;
- Zoning changes adopted in 2017 allow more height and density in new development; and
- Improve compatibility with the Seattle Design Guidelines 2013 update.



Community Involvement

- Community Workshops
 - Workshop on The Core – April 2017
 - Workshop on Public Realm – June 2017
 - Workshop on Subareas – July 2017
- Community Open House Events
 - Kickoff Meeting – March 2017
 - Open House 1 – June 2017
 - Open House 2 – November 2017
- Community Outreach
 - U District Street Fair – May 2017
 - Office Hours
 - Coffee Shop meet ups



Join us for the

U DISTRICT

NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES

WORKSHOP SERIES

THE OFFICE OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
— and —
THE U DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

- March 23 | 5-7pm | Kickoff Meeting
- April 21 | 8-10am | Design in the Core
- June 2 | 8-10am | Public Realm
- June 22 | 5-7pm | Open House
- Future meeting dates TBD

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS CENTER
ROOM 209 | 5301 UNIVERSITY WAY NE

WEB bit.ly/u-district
#UDISTRICTBUILDINGS2017

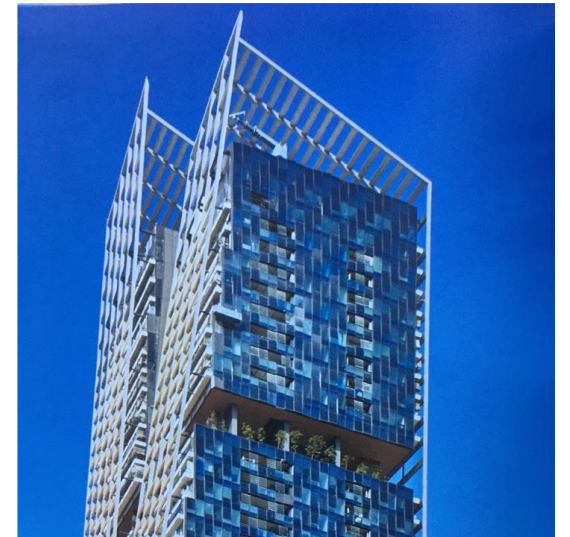
THE U DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP

DC Design Concept: Tall Buildings

- **Common to both University District and Uptown Neighborhood Design Guidelines** (DC 2.6 "Tall Buildings")
 - Response to Context
 - Tall Form Placement & Design
 - Intermediate Scales
 - Shape & Design all Sides
 - Adjusted Base Scale
 - Ground Floor Uses
 - Façade Depth & Articulation
 - Architectural Presence
 - Landmarks & Wayfinding

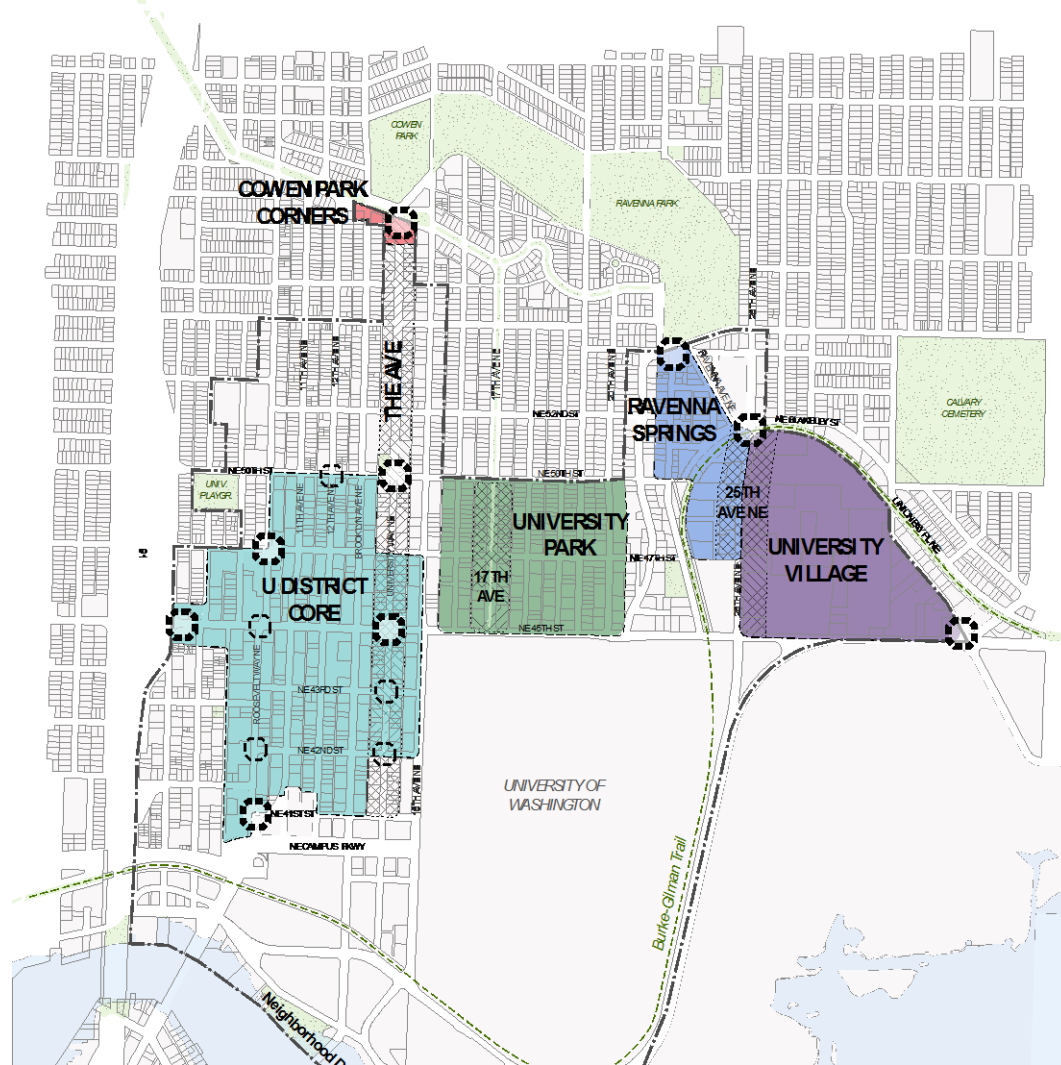


Tower designs contribute to the skyline

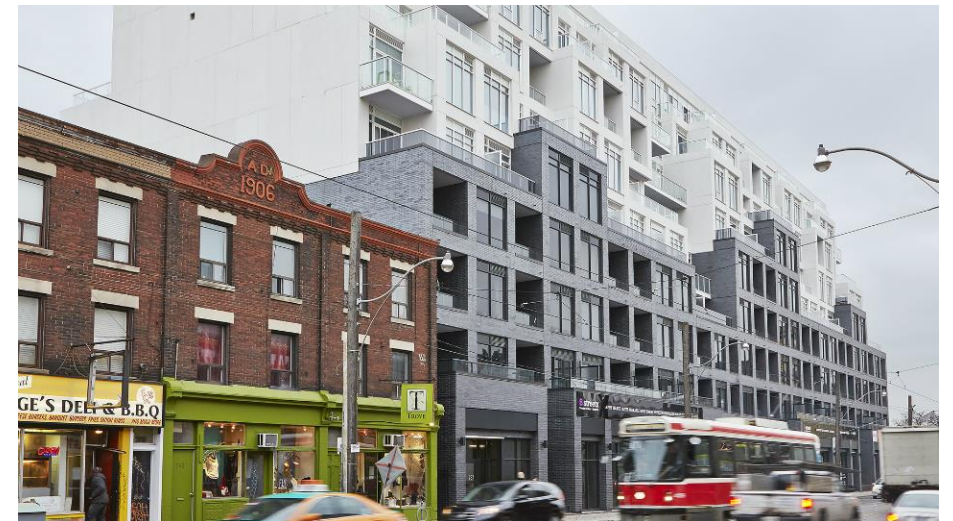


Transitions to the sky

CS Context and Site: Urban Pattern and Form



Placemaking Corner



Use upper story step-backs and reflect historic patterns

PL - Public Life Connectivity

PL1.2 Shared Alleys & Mid-Block Connections

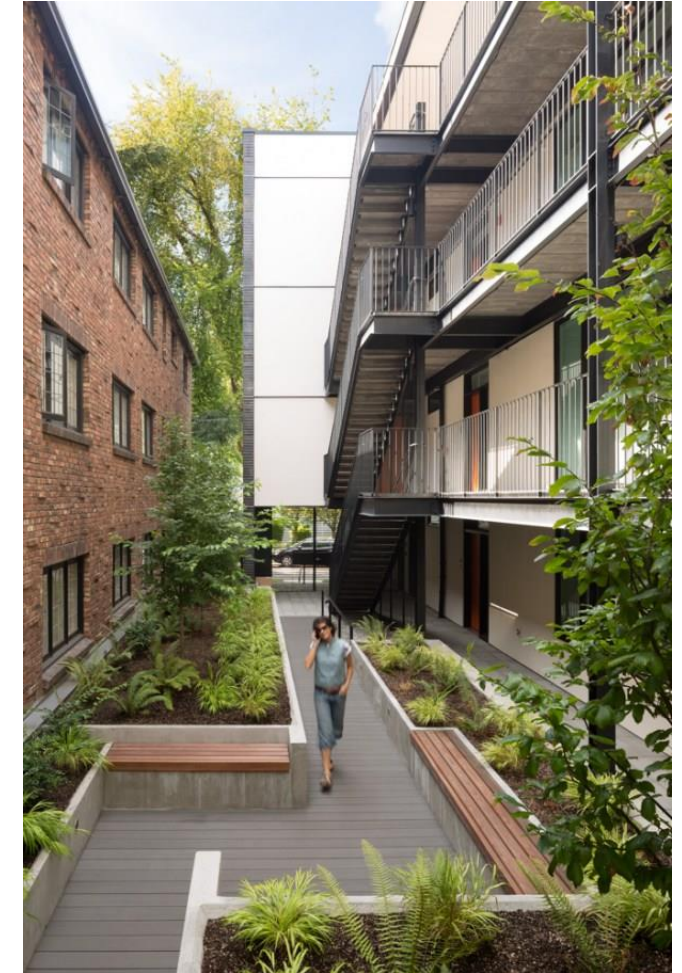
- East-west mid-block connections are strongly encouraged
- Design facades adjacent to mid-block pedestrian connections and shared alleys as a second “front” with activating uses
- Install wayfinding elements and creative signage



Creative signage



Lined with shops and seating areas



Balconies overlook space

PL Public Life

PL3.3 Mixed use Corridors and Commercial Frontages

- Provide frequent entrances...

PL4 1: Bicycle Circulation and Parking

- Locate bicycle parking and bicycle racks in convenient locations



University District and Uptown Neighborhood Design Guidelines

Thank You

Uptown

Planning Uptown

2013-16

- Urban Design Framework
- Vision + Actions

2015-17

- EIS
- Rezone to Seattle Mixed
- MHA, Development Standards, Incentives

2018

- **Neighborhood Design Guidelines Update**



- Uptown UDF Advisory Committee
- Uptown Alliance (UA)
- UA Land Use Review Committee
- Uptown Arts & Cultural Coalition
- Residents, Businesses, Property Owners
- Seattle Center

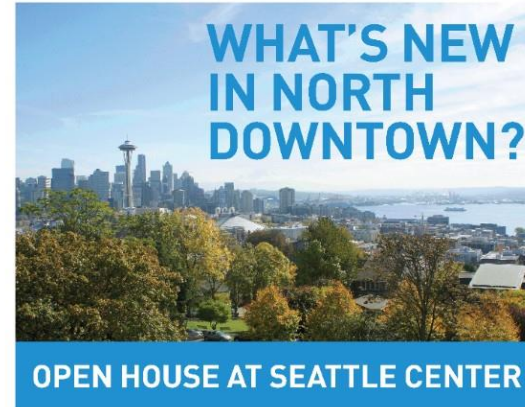
Why Update Uptown Neighborhood Design Guidelines?

- Priorities expressed in the Uptown Urban Design Framework;
- Establishment of the Uptown Arts and Cultural Coalition in 2017;
- Zoning changes adopted in 2017 to allow more height and density in new development;
- Changes to the Seattle Design Guidelines in 2013 that resulted in duplication with some Neighborhood Design Guidelines;
- Formation of the Uptown Alliance Land Use Review Committee to provide early input on proposed development as part of the Design Review process; and
- Future significant public investments– a light rail station and Seattle Center redevelopment.



Community Involvement

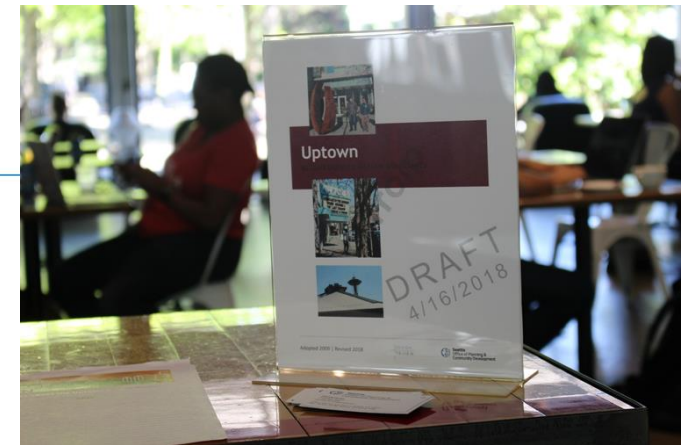
- Monthly Meetings with UA Land Use Review Committee (January – April 2018)
- Walking Tour (Feb 2018)
- Feedback on DRAFT (April- June 2018)
 - What's New in North Downtown Community Open House
 - Online Survey
 - Attended Uptown Alliance Monthly Meeting
 - Briefing and discussion with Arts and Cultural Coalition
 - Office Hours at KEXP
- SEPA Comment Period (Nov 2018)



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25
Armory Lofts 2-3
4:30-6:30 PM

Come talk with City of Seattle staff and get updates on projects and plans affecting the North Downtown neighborhoods of Uptown, South Lake Union and Belltown:

- North Downtown Mobility Action Plan
- Monorail Feasibility Study
- Uptown Neighborhood Design Guidelines Update
- Republican Street Concept Plan



Priority Design Issues

- Contributing to a safe, attractive, inviting pedestrian environment.
- Creating a strong and vibrant Heart of Uptown.
- Ensuring edges surrounding the Seattle Center are inviting and welcoming.
- Complementing Uptown Arts and Cultural Coalition.
- Introducing taller buildings into Uptown.
- Anticipating a new light rail station.
- Achieving a true mixed-use urban center.



Context & Site

- Design strategies to deal with topography
- Emphasis on habitat, native species
- Important locations: Gateways, Corner Sites and sites adjacent to Seattle Center
- Ways to make the “arts district” visible



Example

CS3

CONTEXT & SITE

Architectural
Context &
Character

Citywide Guideline:

Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.



Building signage and patrons at On the Boards activate the adjacent sidewalk.

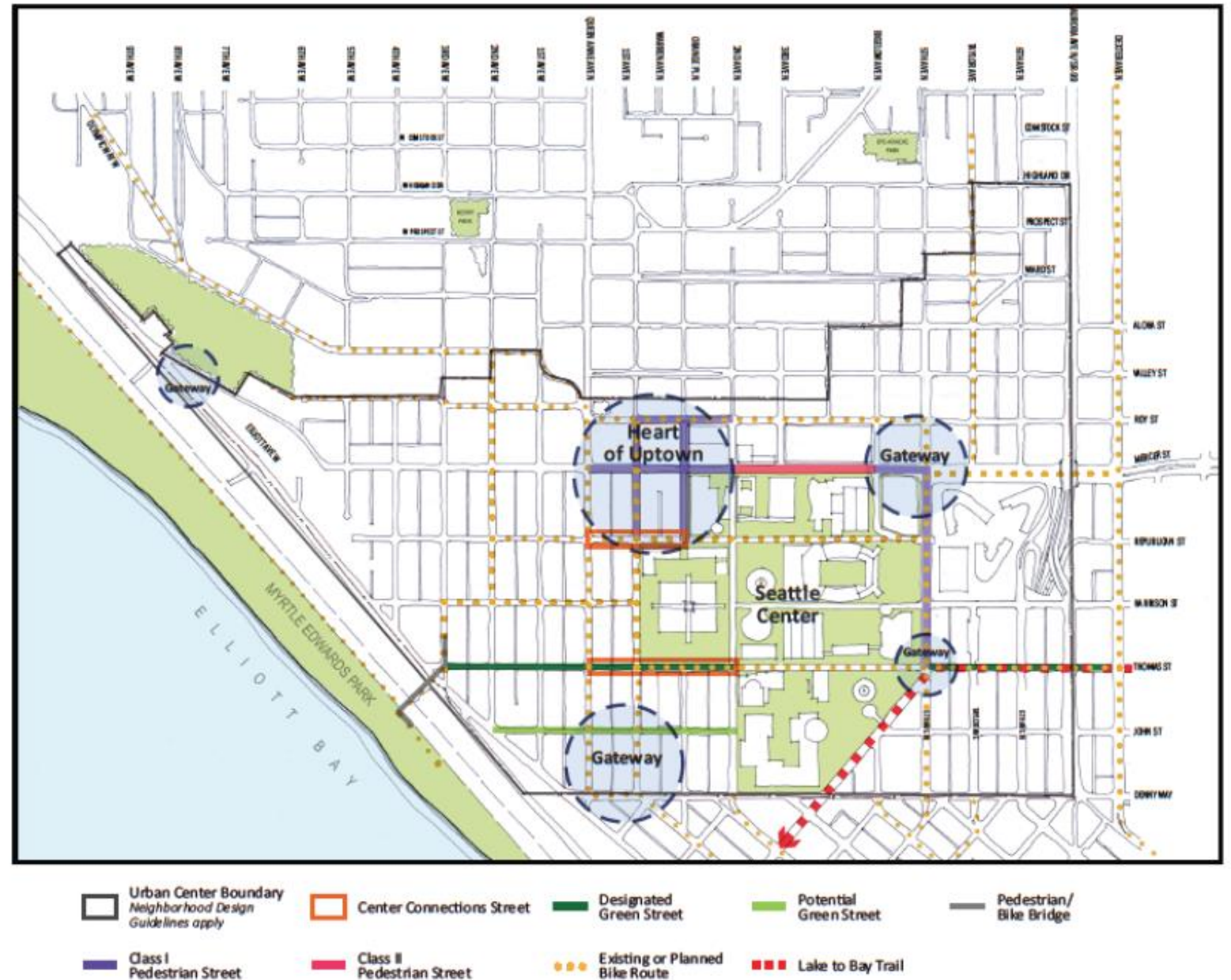
Uptown Neighborhood Supplemental Guidance

1. Placemaking

- a. Include design features that make the Arts and Cultural District visible to pedestrians such as interpretive panels, banners, plaques, building names, wayfinding, signage and art.
- b. Make visual art an integral part of the design concept, especially along Mercer/Roy Street corridor, near theaters and other cultural venues, and in the Heart of Uptown (see Figure 1).

Public Life

- Walkable throughout;
Outdoor dining throughout
- Most important locations:
 - adjacent to Seattle Center
 - Heart of Uptown
- Entries: pedestrian friendly, secure, enhance the street
- Additional guidance to improve edges for Live/Work
- Smaller retail spaces
- Branded bike racks
- Bus layover facilities



Example

PL1

PUBLIC LIFE

Connectivity

Citywide Guideline:

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



Art and planters help define the edges of the privately-owned public space.

Uptown Neighborhood Supplemental Guidance

1. Enhancing Open Spaces

Locate plazas intended for public use at or near grade to promote both a physical and visual connection to the street. Where publicly accessible plazas abut private open space, use special paving materials, landscaping, and other elements to provide a clear definition between the public and private realms.

2. Adding to Public Life

Opportunities to add to public life are especially important for street-facing facades that are adjacent to the Seattle Center.

Design Concept

- No “preferred” architectural style
- Opportunities to integrate art
- Individualized storefronts
- Weather protection
- Tall Buildings
- Texture of building materials
- Lighting



Example

DC2 DESIGN CONCEPT Architectural Concept

Citywide Guideline:

Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.



Mural in Heart of Uptown adds interest to facade.



Uptown Neighborhood Supplemental Guidance

1. Architectural Context

Architecture that emphasizes human scale, streetscape rhythm, quality detailing and materials is more important than consistency with a particular period or style. Uptown's evolving and dynamic architectural context embraces a range of historical styles, and modern innovative design that reflects the Uptown Arts and Cultural District.

2. Blank Walls and Retaining Walls

- a. Artwork and murals, created in collaboration with the Uptown Arts and Cultural Coalition, are encouraged for any temporary or permanent blank walls.

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Thank You