

SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL
FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND DECISION
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON MEDICAL CENTER NORTHWEST HOSPITAL
Clerk File 314511

Introduction

The University of Washington seeks approval of a new Major Institution Master Plan (MIMP) for the University of Washington Medical Center Northwest Hospital (UWMC – Northwest) campus and a rezone to increase the height limits allowed under the current Major Institution Overlay (MIO) and to modify the MIO boundaries within the campus.

The proposed MIMP would increase the square footage of allowable development of UNWMC – Northwest campus to approximately 1.6 million square feet of institutional space. This expansion would be accomplished within the existing MIO boundaries primarily by increasing allowable height. The increased height, bulk and scale of future development would be mitigated by features such as height limits for future structures conditioned below the maximum allowable height in the MIO, landscaped ground-level setbacks, and other MIMP-specific development standards.

Traffic impacts associated with future development would be mitigated by a Transportation Management Plan with a new, lower Single Occupancy Vehicle commute goal.

In September 2022, the University of Washington submitted a notice of intent for the new MIMP. In March 2023, the Council approved a Development Advisory Committee (DAC) to advise on MIMP development through Resolution 32088. Between April 2023 and May 2024 the DAC convened 16 public meetings on the proposed MIMP. In July 2024, the DAC published a final report and recommendation. In September 2024, the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections published a recommendation to conditionally approve the MIMP. In October 2024, the Hearing Examiner convened an open record hearing on the MIMP. In 2024, the Hearing Examiner issued a recommendation for conditional approval of the MIMP and rezones.

Council Review

The City Council's Land Use Committee (Committee) began consideration of the proposed MIMP at its March 17, 2025, meeting and recommended conditional approval of the MIMP and rezones at its meeting on April 2, 2025. The Committee also recommended approval of Council Bill 120963, which rezones the MIO to increase the overlay height limits and modify the MIO boundaries.

Decision

Council hereby adopts the Findings and Conclusions of the Hearing Examiner dated December 20, 2024, and approves the new MIMP, subject to conditions listed below.

CONDITIONS OF MASTER PLAN APPROVAL

MIO 1. The single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) performance goal of 50% is established at the adoption of the MIMP, per 23.54.016.C SMC.

As additional transit capacity is added to the area through regional planning efforts in the future, the Transportation Management Plan will reflect a progressive reduction in the SOV goal in alignment with the SOV targets established by the City of Seattle’s Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) requirements (Chapter 25.02 SMC), as described below.

The major transit infrastructure improvements anticipated at the time of MIMP adoption include the following two milestones:

1. 2030: The transportation network is anticipated to include the Lynnwood Link extension (2024), Line 2 Link to downtown Redmond (2025), NE 130th Link infill station (2026), Federal Way Link extension (2026), and Stride S3 Line (2027).
2. 2038: The transportation network is anticipated to include the West Seattle Link extension (2032) and Everett Link extension (2037).

UWMC – Northwest shall meet with the City after the completion of the first CTR survey following each of the milestones above are reached (i.e., in 2030 or once all improvements in milestone 1 are completed, whichever is later) to review and adjust the SOV goal. The updated SOV performance goal at this site shall follow the relevant standards outlined in Director’s Rule 01-2021 (or any successor rule) on Transportation Management Programs.

MIO 2. Revise the MIMP’s Landscape and Open Space section to note “Tree Protection – Retention of existing street and campus trees shall be encouraged along property perimeters. No trees shall be removed from the City right-of-way without approval of SDOT.”

MIO 3. Amend the MIMP language to clarify the loop drive must provide a minimum 20' landscaped setback from east and west property edges, as well as the north property edge, with the exception of the property edge adjacent to the existing cemetery.

MIO 4. Amend the MIMP's Landscape and Open Space section to include a North Campus Edge bullet and language stating a minimum 20' landscaped setback from the north campus edge shall be provided, maintaining existing mature trees to the greatest extent feasible as consistent with the tree protection provisions in SMC 25.11.080, and in consultation with the DAC.

MIO 5. Add the Urban Forestry Management Plan for the campus as an appendix to the MIMP.

CONDITIONS OF REZONE APPROVAL

Rezone 1. As described in the Master Plan, structures in areas designated MIO- 160 shall be limited to 145 feet in height, and all structures in areas designated MIO-200 shall be limited to 175 feet in height, subject to exceptions to height limits set forth in the Master Plan.

CONDITIONS OF SEPA APPROVAL

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF MASTER USE PERMIT

SEPA 1. At the time of Master Use Permit application, related tree survey and arborist report as necessary will be submitted for review.

SEPA 2. At the time of individual permits, water, sewer, and stormwater shall be evaluated to verify the capacity of each utility service to serve each specific new development project.

SEPA 3. At time of individual permit application submit transportation information related to coordinating the following improvements with SDOT:

- a. Install no right turn on red signage at the intersection of Aurora Avenue N and N 115th Street – a key intersection for pedestrians traveling between campus and RapidRide stops

at Aurora Avenue N and N 115th Street. These improvements will be triggered when the first development project is approved by SDCI.

- b. Calculate the LOS at Meridian Avenue N/N 115th Street intersection with each MIMP project implementation and evaluate mitigation options with SDOT when the project degrades the intersection to LOS F or increases intersection delay by more than 5 seconds when the baseline or with-project LOS operates at LOS F. The EIS identified the potential for a traffic signal, however lesser mitigation could be identified as appropriate, including but not limited to a traffic circle/roundabout. UWMC-Northwest responsibility would include the costs associated with the design and construction of the improvement. The final design of any improvement must accommodate the movements of buses and emergency vehicles destined for the hospital. The cost to the institution shall not exceed the cost of a traffic signal if a more expensive solution was desired by SDOT.
- c. UWMC-Northwest will design and construct protected bike lanes on Meridian Ave N between N Northgate Way and N 115th Street, as approved by SDOT – completing a gap in the bicycle connection between Northgate Link light rail station and the UWMC-Northwest campus. The requirement to construct these improvements would be triggered when the first patient occupiable area and/or administrative office area project that results in an increase in site-wide vehicle trip generation is approved by SDCI, and completion of these improvements shall be a condition precedent to occupancy of said project. To avoid a requirement to construct these improvements with a particular project, UWMC-Northwest must demonstrate to SDOT and SDCI that there will be no increase in site wide vehicle trip generation during the MUP process for the proposed development. The central utility plant and parking increases will not trigger the protected bike lane improvements.

This improvement is not meant to be a corridor restoration project for full street improvements. Improvements excluded from this condition include:

- Corridor-wide curb line modifications
- Intersection curb ramps, except as may be required under SDOT DR 01-2017, “Right-of-Way Opening and Restoration Rules”
- Corridor-wide modifications to other modal facilities such as sidewalks
- Modifications to the curb line or signal system at the Meridian Ave N/Northgate Way intersection

Modification to the typical cross section to match existing conditions at N 115th Street and Northgate Way would need to occur (e.g. transition bike lanes to/from the existing sharrows) without modifying the signal system or existing curb lines at the intersection. Construction will follow the SDOT Director’s Rule 01-2017 ROW Opening and Restoration Rules.

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- d. Ensure construction of curb, gutter, and sidewalk along the south side of N 120th Street between Meridian Avenue N and west to the existing improved section. The requirement to install these improvements would be triggered when the medical center development cumulatively increases the patient occupiable area and/or administrative office area by greater than 250,000 net new gross square footage. The central utility plant and parking increases will not trigger the curb, gutter, and sidewalk improvements.

DURING CONSTRUCTION FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

SEPA 4. At the time of building permit application for each building proposed within the UWMC Northwest MIO, the Applicant shall provide a Construction Management Plan that has been approved by SDOT and focused on the current proposal. The submittal information and review process for Construction Management Plans are described on the SDOT website page “Construction Use in the Right of Way” or its successor page.

SEPA 5. Locate the Central Utilities Plant facility a minimum 50’ from the nearest residential property line and provide noise studies at time of permit review.

SEPA 6. Contractors shall meet the following noise control criteria:

- a. The use of electric equipment and machinery is preferred. If noise levels on any equipment or device cannot reasonably be reduced to criteria levels, either that equipment or device will not be allowed on the job or use times will have to be scheduled subject to approval.
- b. The sound pressure level of each piece of equipment cannot be greater than 85 dBA at a distance of 50 feet. Rubber-tired equipment is to be used whenever possible instead of equipment with metal tracks. Mufflers for stationary engines are to be used in the hospital areas and areas within 100 feet of the campus boundary. Construction traffic should be routed through nearest campus exit.
- c. Air compressors are to be equipped with silencing packages.
- d. Jack hammers and roto hammers may be used where no other alternative is available; core drilling and saw cutting equipment is preferred.
- e. Specific scheduling of construction-related noise activities is required at the UWMC Northwest Hospital.

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Entered this 8th day of April 2025.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sarah K. Jensen", is written over a horizontal line.

President, Seattle City Council