

Interim Street Activation Legislation

April 2, 2025



Purpose and Goals

- Help fill vacant spaces
- Broaden the range of potential new tenants
- Attract more daily activity and eyes on the street – add more vitality
- Promote creativity and entrepreneurship by allowing new types of businesses



What the Data Shows

- Downtown business openings and closures:
 - Nov '23 to March '24: 9 openings and 21 closures
 - 2020 to 2021: 102 openings and 161 closures
- Foot traffic is still regaining year-over-year, but pace is slowing:
 - 2022 – 2023: +10 - 15% (comparing same months)
 - 2023 – 2024: +5% (" " ")

Source: DSA, 2024



Proposal

- Interim legislation: in place for 3 years
- Applies to Class I & II Pedestrian Streets with street-level use requirements – Map of streets shown later in presentation
- Provide more code flexibility and reduce barriers:
 - Allow greater variety of ground-floor and 2nd-floor uses
 - Encourage creative floor plans
 - Maintain exemptions from density limits
- New uses can remain after the interim period, and may revert to prior uses

Comparison of Uses Allowed

Drawn from uses allowed in pedestrian-oriented neighborhood business districts

Existing allowed uses limited to following:	Proposed additional interim uses:
Arts facilities, entertainment uses: recreational, athletic, theaters, lecture halls, libraries, parks	Arts installations, Custom & craft work: glassblowing, printing, motion picture studios, pottery, sculpture, other personal or household items, parks
General sales and services, retail major durables sales (such as furniture)	Sales and services, non-household: such as restaurant supply, business support services
Restaurants: eating and drinking	Food: food and beverage production, commissary kitchens, catering services
Human services, child care, religious facilities, museums, low-income housing (Seattle Mixed)	Medical services: doctors, dentists, vets, chiropractic
	Institutional uses: community centers and support services, community clubs, institutes of advanced study
	Offices and R&D laboratories

Small Spaces are Activators

- People create the daily life that animates the city
- Allow more small businesses by reducing required dimensions at street-level



Flexibility For Multi-level Destination Uses

- Interior design flexibility to encourage creative layouts, such as multi-floor street-level uses



Downtown

Downtown Map 1G:

- Require active street level uses, per 23.42.041
- == Allow interim street activation uses
- Special Review or Historic Districts

- The proposal applies to the outlined streets.
- Existing street level use requirements proposed to be maintained on the streets mapped as —

All streets shown are “Class I pedestrian” designated or Green Streets



South Lake Union

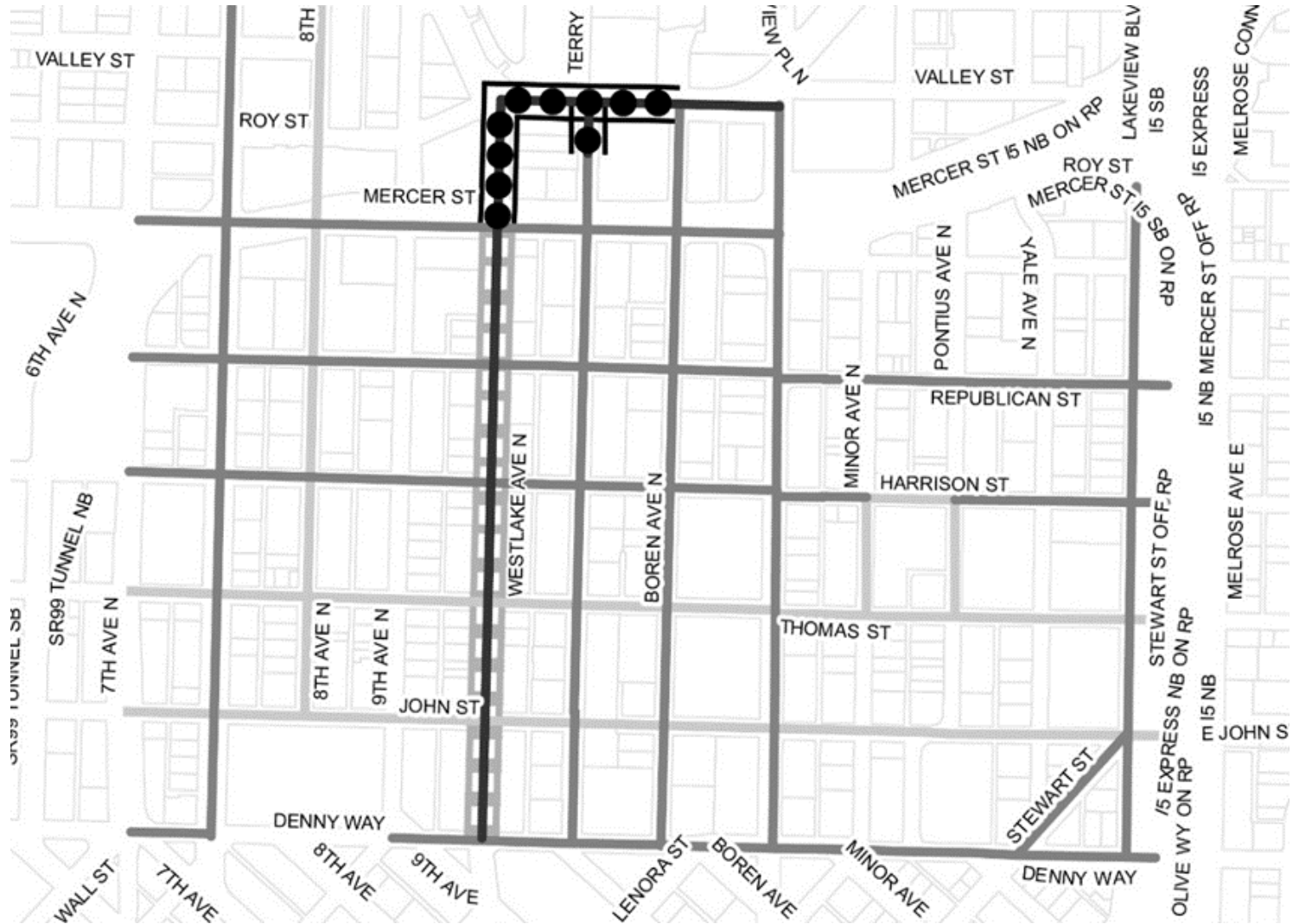


Class I Pedestrian Street; allow interim street activation uses



Required street level uses (Class I)

Existing requirements proposed to be maintained



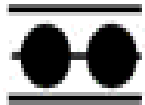
South Lake Union proposed map amendment



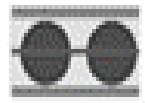
Class I Pedestrian Street; allow interim street activation uses



Uptown



Class I Pedestrian Street; allow interim street activation uses



Class II Pedestrian Street; allow interim street activation uses



Required street level uses

Existing requirements proposed to be maintained



Questions?

Gordon Clowers, SDCI Senior Urban Planner
gordon.clowers@seattle.gov

www.seattle.gov/sdci

