

Legislative Items To Support Downtown Activation Plan Summer 2023

Letter from Mayor Harrell

Downtown is the heart of Seattle and is powered by people - workers, neighbors, families, and visitors alike. Our Downtown Activation Plan is designed to bring Downtown into a new age. Downtown must be safe, welcoming, and a neighborhood for all.

This is an exciting time, where we all get to dream, partner, and create the future of our city's core together. Earlier this year, in my State of City address, I called for us to embrace bold, creative thinking to design the Downtown of tomorrow. This is not about restoring the Downtown of the past, but rather reimagining what is possible as our city evolves.

Our goal is a robust Downtown neighborhood with more housing and amenities - ensuring Downtown is more than just a great place to go for work, but also a place where residents can afford to live, learn, shop, play, and so much more. Like downtowns across the United States, ours faces complex challenges including the remote work revolution, an ever-evolving retail landscape, affordable housing pressures, crises of homelessness and addiction, safety, and environmental priorities. The problems are real, but they are not insurmountable, and together, we can work to make positive change for our city.

Collaborating across levels of government and with private, nonprofit, and philanthropic partners, we are building a new Downtown that embodies our One Seattle values and vision. Our possibilities are endless, and together we will make them happen.

Bruce Harrell

Downtown is → you

Potential or Proposed Near Term Legislation

- **Downtown Retail Core zoning amendment** (OPCD lead)
- **Belltown lodging use flexibility** (OPCD lead)
- **Downtown digital kiosks** (SDOT lead)
- **Temporarily waive permit fees for vending and events** (SDOT lead)
- **Master Use Permit expiration modifications** (SDCI lead)
- **Facilitate Office-to-Residential Conversions** (OPCD and SDCI lead)
- **Increased flexibility for ground level use regulations** (SDCI lead)
- **Design Review exemption for MHA performance** (Council led - completed)

Belletown Lodging Use Flexibility

- Text amendment only to the DMR/R 95/65 zone.
- Lodging use would be exempted from chargeable floor area in the DMR/R 95/65 zone, treating lodging uses the same way that residential uses are regulated in the zone. (Lodging currently has an FAR limit of 1.5)
- All other standards controlling height, bulk and scale of development in the zone would remain unchanged. The amendment is a text amendment only and no changes to zoning maps are required.
- Flexibility is only for new development (not conversion of existing residential use).

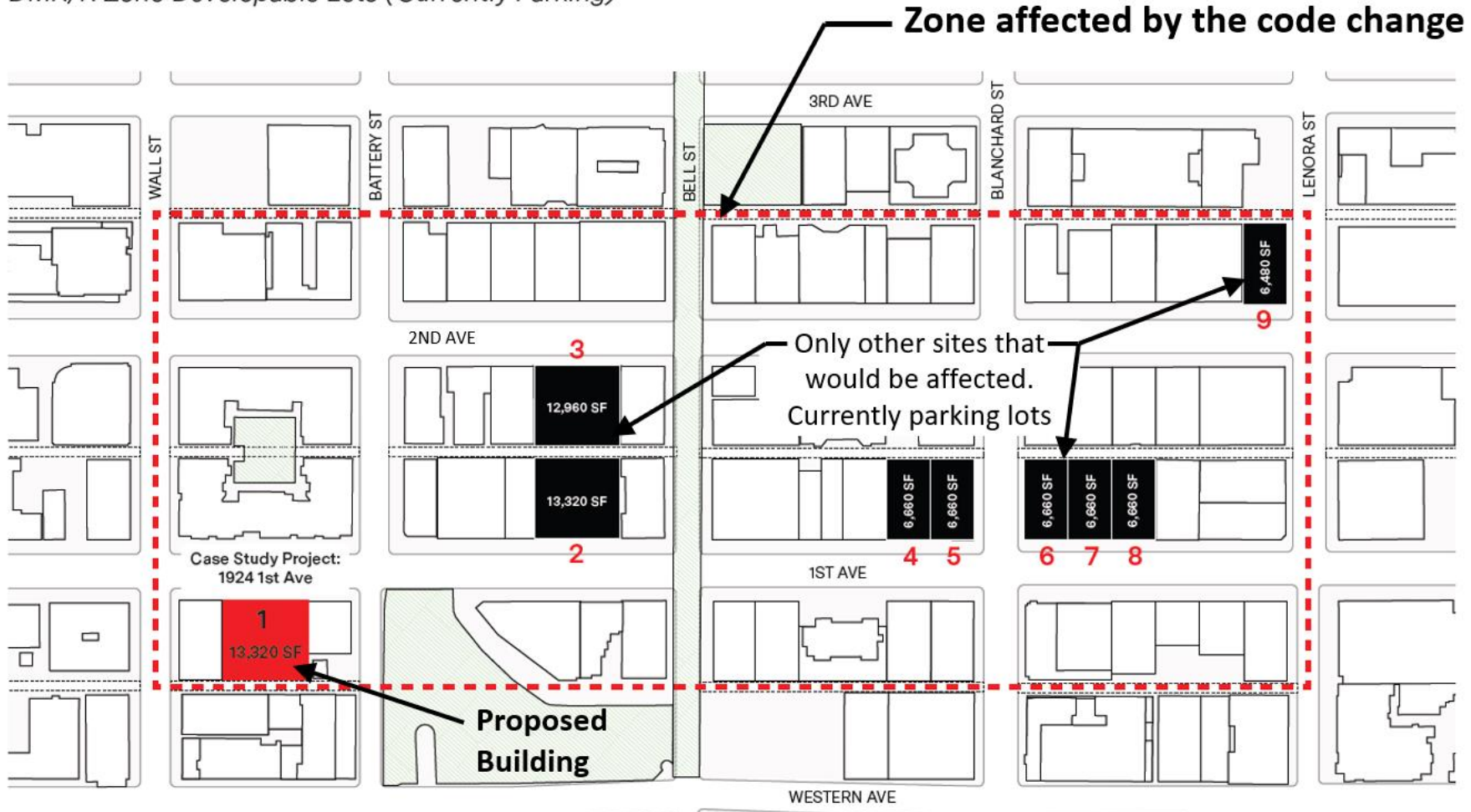
Belletown Lodging Use Flexibility- Purpose

Tourism and lodging is strong in downtown Seattle during the post-pandemic period, while other uses including retail and commercial office are lagging. Summer 2023 hotel occupancy rates in downtown exceeded 90% and were among the highest of any US city. Seattle's hotel occupancy is projected to fully recover and exceed pre-pandemic levels in 2024.

- **Encourage investment.** One or more new infill development projects could be supported in the area of the legislation.
- **Support street activation.** Visitors have a high propensity for walking near their place of stay and supporting other local businesses.
- **Community support.** Members of Belletown community organizations specifically requested the proposed code change to encourage infill development on key sites.

Belletown Lodging Use Flexibility

DMR/R Zone Developable Lots (Currently Parking)



Belldtown Lodging Use Flexibility

