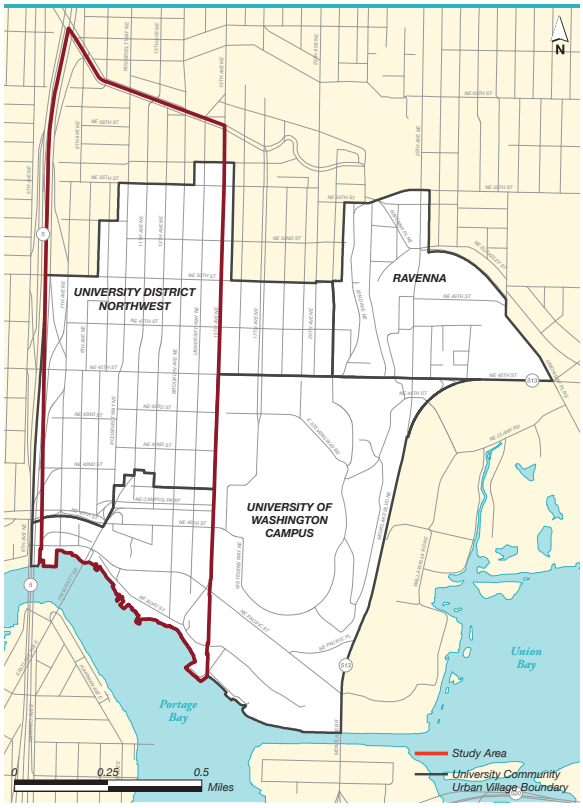
2 Description of the Proposal and Alternatives

2.1 Introduction

The City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan, *Toward a Sustainable Seattle*, is a 20-year vision and roadmap for Seattle's future. It provides the framework for most of Seattle's big-picture decisions on how to grow while preserving and improving our quality of life. For example, the plan guides City decisions on where new jobs and homes should be located, how to improve the transportation system, and how to prioritize investment in public facilities, such as utilities, sidewalks, and libraries.

The urban village strategy is a key component of the plan, providing a comprehensive approach to planning for future growth in a sustainable manner. The Urban Village element of the plan identifies four categories of urban villages: urban centers, manufacturing/industrial centers, hub urban villages and residential urban villages. Urban centers are identified as the densest neighborhoods in the city, with a diverse mix of uses, housing, and employment. The Comprehensive Plan designates the community surrounding and including the University of Washington (UW) campus as the University Community Urban Center (UCUC). As shown in Figure 2.1, the UCUC is divided into three urban villages. The area considered in this EIS—the U District study area—encompasses much of the University District Northwest Urban Village and the southwest portion of the UW Campus Village. (See Figure 2–1.)

Figure 2–1: **U District Study Area with the University Community Urban Center and Village Designations**

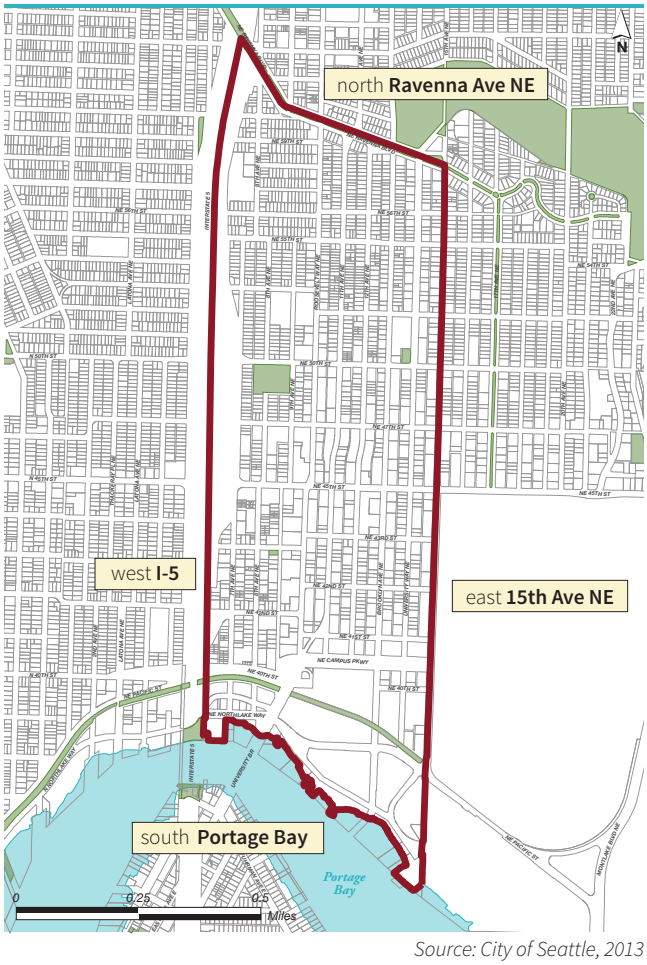


Source: City of Seattle, Comprehensive Plan

Within the U District study area, the potential for a concentration of housing and employment is supported by the future Link light rail U District Station. The station, located on Brooklyn Avenue between NE 43rd and NE 45th Streets, is anticipated to open in late 2021 and to serve as an opportunity to permit more intensive development in the surrounding area.

The City has initiated this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process to study the potential impacts of increased height and density in the U District study area. For the purpose of this study, the City identified two alternative zoning scenarios, along with a scenario that maintains existing zoning standards. Based on the analysis and public comment received during the Draft EIS comment period, the City will determine future actions, if any, associated with code updates to permit increased height and density in the U District study area.

Figure 2–2
U District Study Area Boundaries



Source: City of Seattle, 2013

Overview of the Proposal

The City is considering text and map amendments to the Seattle Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code (Seattle Municipal Code Title 23) to allow development and design standards that permit greater height and density in the U District study area. Zoning changes would be accompanied by an affordable housing incentive program and by development standards, including setbacks, tower separation and street frontage improvements. The proposal is based on a comprehensive public stakeholder process that addressed land use, urban design, transportation and other topics related to the urban character of the U District planning area. The legislative action, if taken, would apply within the U District study area.

Alternatives to be addressed in the EIS include **No Action**—growth under ***current*** land use code standards and development patterns—and **two action alternatives**—growth under ***different*** use code standards and development patterns. Both action alternatives will evaluate increased allowable height and development intensity for residential and commercial development within the study area.

STUDY AREA

As shown in Figure 2–2, the study area is bounded by Portage Bay on the south, NE Ravenna Boulevard on the north, Interstate 5 on the west and 15th Avenue NE on the east.

Objectives of the Proposal

The City has identified the following specific objectives of the proposal:

- Advance Comprehensive Plan goals to use limited land resources more efficiently and to maximize the efficiency of public investment in infrastructure and services.
- Allow greater concentration of development in the area surrounding the future light rail station.
- Provide for a more diverse neighborhood character by providing a mix of housing types, uses, building types and heights.
- Enhance the pedestrian quality at street level by providing amenities, taking into consideration light and air as well as public view corridors and providing for retail activity at key locations.
- Increase height and density to achieve other goals such as providing affordable housing, increasing the variety of building types in new development and supporting equitable communities with a diversity of housing choices.
- Determine how to best accommodate growth while maintaining a functional transportation system, including street network, transit, and non-motorized modes of travel. Similarly, determine how to accommodate growth while maintaining functional capacity of utility systems, including electrical energy, water, sewer and storm drain systems.
- Provide for consistency between the comprehensive plan and land use code.

2.2 Planning Context

Seattle Comprehensive Plan

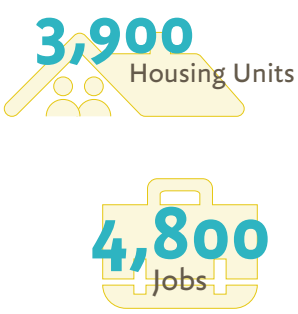
The Seattle Comprehensive Plan, *Toward a Sustainable Seattle*, is a 20-year plan that provides guidance for how Seattle will accommodate growth in a way that is consistent with the vision of the citizens of the City. As a policy document, the plan lays out general guidance for future City actions. In many cases, general guidance in the Plan is more specifically addressed in functional plans that focus on a particular aspect of City services, such as parks, transportation or drainage. The City implements the Plan through development and other regulations, primarily found in the City's zoning map and land use code.

Consistent with the Washington Growth Management Act (GMA), the City adopted the current Plan in 1994. It has been updated in major and minor ways in subsequent years, with the last major update in 2004. The City is currently preparing a major update to the City's comprehensive plan that will incorporate updated estimates of job and population growth and changes since the last major plan update. The current comprehensive plan provides policy guidance through 2024; the updated plan will extend to 2035. This major update is scheduled to be complete in 2015.

PLANNING ESTIMATES FOR GROWTH

The current comprehensive plan contains planning estimates for growth that establish how much residential and employment growth is anticipated through 2024 and where it will be located. The City's ongoing update to the comprehensive plan will adopt new planning estimates for growth for 2035 and allocate growth to individual urban villages based on these estimates. The basis for the planning estimates for growth are established in the King County Countywide Planning Policies. The City has not yet adopted the updated estimates into the comprehensive plan or allocated portions of those estimates to individual urban centers or urban villages. The current 2024 growth estimates for the University Community Urban Center are for 2,450 housing units and 6,140 jobs. As shown in Figure 2–1, the U District study area comprises a portion of the overall Urban Center and overlaps with the University District Northwest Urban Village, which has 2024 housing and jobs estimates of 2,000 housing units and 500 jobs.

Planning Estimates for Growth

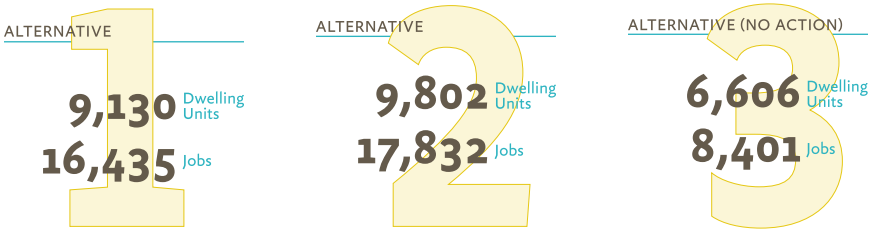


For the purpose of this EIS analysis, growth estimates of 3,900 housing units and 4,800 jobs by 2035 apply equally to all alternatives. While each alternative assumes the same level of growth, each would accommodate this growth in a different manner, with variation in the height, intensity and pattern of potential development in the study area. Please see the discussion of alternatives in Section 2.3.

DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Development capacity is a measure of the total amount of new development that could be added in an area. The City of Seattle calculates this measure by comparing existing land uses to what could be built under current or proposed zoning. The difference between the potential and existing development is the capacity for new development. Development capacity estimates are not a prediction that a certain amount of development will occur or when it may occur, but instead a measure of the maximum development that could occur in a given area. Development capacity is expressed in terms of housing units and the number of potential jobs that could be added.

Development Capacity in the U District Study Area



Jobs = Employment Capacity
Assumes one job per 350 square feet of commercial development

Dwelling Units = Residential Capacity
Assumes an average dwelling unit size of 850 square feet

Source: City of Seattle, Hewitt, Studio 3MW, 2013

The estimate of development capacity varies according to the amount and type of development that is permitted. Accordingly, the development capacity for the U District study area has been calculated for each alternative, including No Action (Alternative 3). Please see Appendix B for a description of the development capacity methodology used in this analysis.

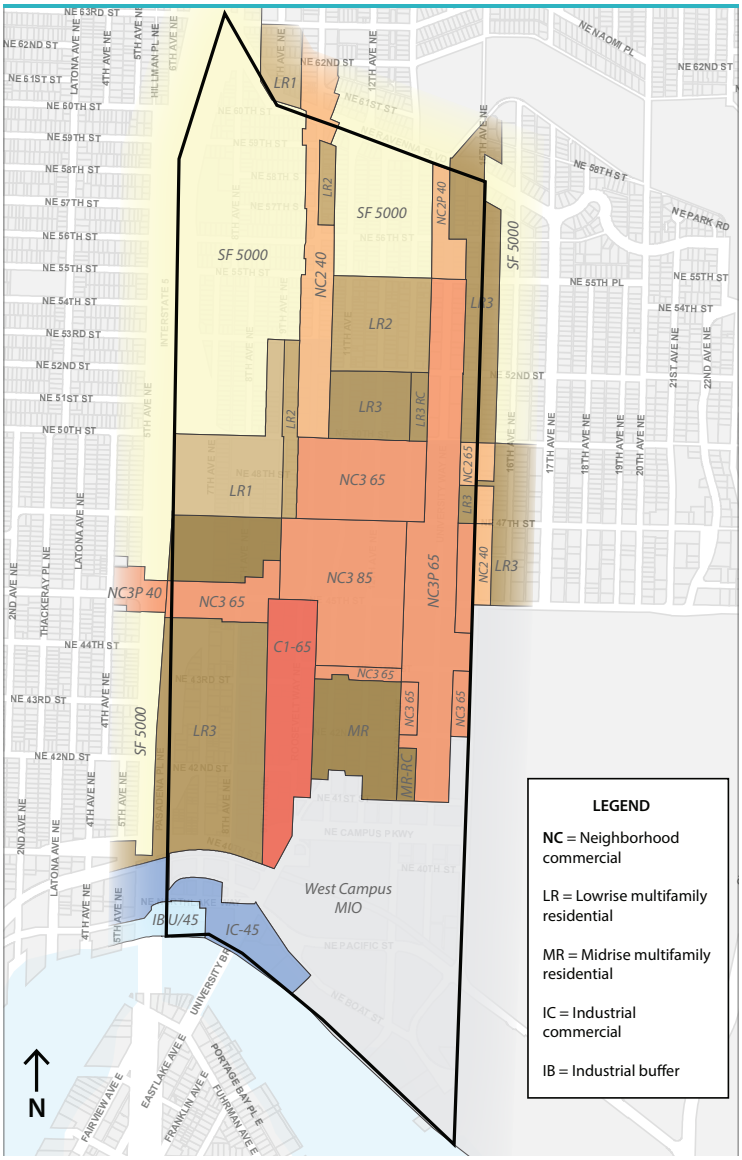
University District Community Urban Center Plan

The University Community Urban Center Plan was completed in 1998. The plan was developed through a collaborative process that included

neighborhood representatives, UW, and the City, and was subsequently approved by resolution by the City of Seattle. Goals of the plan include:

- **Vibrant commercial districts.** Serve local and regional needs, especially along the Ave, Roosevelt, and NE 45th Street
- **Efficient transportation.** Balance different modes, including public transit, pedestrians, bicycles, and cars, minimizing negative impacts to the community.
- **Housing.** Meet the needs and affordability levels of demographic groups including students, young adults, families with children, empty nesters, and seniors. Balance homeownership opportunities with rental unit supply.
- **Recreation.** Increase open spaces and active recreation, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan open space goals for urban centers.
- **Physical identity.** Build on historical and architectural resources, attractive streets, the university campus, and other unique features.
- **Arts, culture, and education.** Build on the widespread recognition of the U District as a hub of arts, cultural activities, and the region's foremost educational institution.

Figure 2–3:
Existing Zoning in the U District Study Area



Source: City of Seattle, 2013

Key goals of the plan were subsequently adopted into the comprehensive plan. Please see discussion in Section 3.1 of this EIS.

Existing Zoning

As shown in Figure 2–3, the study area is zoned for a range of single family and multifamily residential and commercial development. Zoning designations found in the study area are summarized in Table 2–1.

Table 2–1: **Existing Zoning in the U District Study Area**

Zoning Designation	Summary
SF **Single Family**	Single family zones generally allow one unit per lot, typically a detached single family home. Allowable heights range between 25 and 35 feet, depending on the width of the lot. Accessory dwelling units may also be permitted, subject to administrative review.
LR1, LR2, LR3 **Lowrise**	Lowrise zoning allows a variety of multifamily housing types, including cottages, townshouse, rowhouses, and apartments. The LR zones generally allow structure heights of 25 to 40 feet.
MR **Midrise**	Midrise zoning accommodates a full range of housing types and is most often the location of new apartment structures. The MR zone generally allows heights up to 85 feet.
NC2, NC3 **Neighborhood Commercial**	The NC zones allow both residential and commercial uses. Height limits are as identified on the zoning map—for example NC3–65 designates a maximum building height of 65 feet. NC zones include standards to ensure a pedestrian-friendly streetscape environment. Density allowances correspond to height limits. Some NC zones include a Pedestrian (P) designation, which identifies locations where street-front retail and pedestrian-oriented design are required.
C1 **Commercial**	Similar to the NC zone, the C zone allows a mix of residential and commercial uses. However, C zones allow a broader range of higher-impact commercial uses, including auto-oriented lot configurations.
MIO **Major Institution Overlay**	The MIO designation applies to development on the University of Washington campus. The MIO requires development of a campus master plan intended to: (1) establish clear guidelines and development standards on which the institution can rely on for long-term development; (2) provide the neighborhood advance notice of development plans; (3) allow the city to anticipate and plan for public capital or programmatic actions: (4) provide the basis for defining measures to avoid or reduce adverse impacts from major institution growth. Within the U District study area, height limits in the MIO range from 40 to 105 feet. Lowest maximum buildings heights are generally located near the Portage Bay shoreline, and permitted heights increase with distance from the shoreline. The University of Washington Master Plan was approved in 2003. Future updates will be reviewed through a separate process and are not included in this proposal.
IC **Industrial Commercial**	The IC zone allows both industrial and commercial activities, including light manufacturing and research and development. Residential uses are not allowed. Maximum building heights are identified on the zoning map.
IB **Industrial Buffer**	The IB zone provides a transition between industrial development and adjacent residential or commercial zones. Typical land uses include general manufacturing, commercial and entertainment uses. Height limits are identified on the zoning map.

Source: City of Seattle

SHORELINE DESIGNATIONS

The southern edge of the U District study area is bounded by Portage Bay as shown in Figure 2–2. The Portage Bay shoreline is regulated by the Washington Shoreline Management Act and the City of Seattle Shoreline Master Plan. The City has completed an update of its shoreline master plan, which is in review with the Washington State Department of Ecology prior to final adoption.

In the study area current shoreline designations are Urban Stable, east of 7th Avenue NE (extended) and Urban Maritime, west of 7th Avenue NE.

The Urban Stable designation is intended to provide opportunities for substantial numbers of people to enjoy the shorelines through water-dependent recreational uses, to preserve and enhance views of the water from adjacent streets and upland areas and to support water dependent uses.

The Urban Maritime designation is intended to preserve areas for water-dependent and water-related uses while still providing some views of the water from adjacent streets and upland residential streets. Public access shall be second in priority to water-dependent uses.

The proposal and alternatives do not propose any change to existing shoreline designations, activities or uses. Shoreline designations are not discussed further in this EIS.

Public Outreach

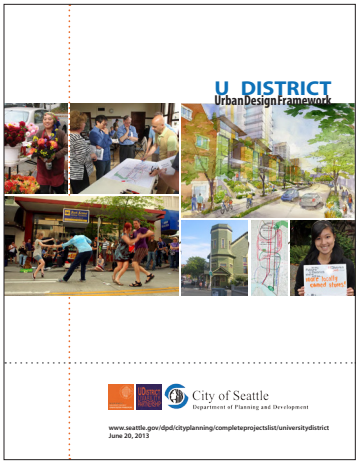
U DISTRICT LIVABILITY PARTNERSHIP (ULDP)

Through a grant provided by the Office of Economic Development (OED), the City of Seattle has participated in and supported a robust public planning process led by the UDLP. Specific to the proposed action, the UDLP created a Future Development and Urban Design working group to focus on the physical development of the U District. This working group led a series of 14 public meetings in 2012 and 2013 to consider land use, design standards, transit, parks and open spaces, and environmental sustainability. The UDLP process and the progress of the Urban Design Framework were widely advertised through print and digital media.

In addition to these public meetings, the UDLP hosted three "Community Conversation" events that were attended by hundreds of people from the U District and beyond. Staff from Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD), OED, Department of Neighborhoods and Seattle Police met with neighborhood groups and individuals. Walking tours were organized in the community.

In April 2013, the working group hosted a public open house to share draft recommendations and DPD held public "drop-in office hours" at a local coffee shop to have more detailed conversations with interested individuals. This public process led to development of the U District Urban Design Framework (UDF), which recommended preparation of an EIS to study the potential impacts of different zoning alternatives.

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK



The U District Urban Design Framework (UDF) was developed in 2012 and 2013 through a collaboration between the community, the Seattle Department of Planning and Development, Office of Economic Development and Department of Transportation. The process was led by the U District Livability Partnership (UDLP). Participants included local business people, residents, social service providers, the faith community, students, UW representatives and neighbors from outside the planning area. A physical development working group of the UDLP met for an extensive series of public meetings which ultimately led to the recommendations in the UDF.

The UDF proposes a shared design vision and implementation strategy for the U District study area. Measures contained in the UDF are meant to help guide future growth in the study area through guiding principles, specific recommendations, and implementation tasks.

Guiding principles identified in the UDF include:

- Recognize light rail as a catalyst for change
- Balance regional and local needs
- Provide a network of great streets and public spaces
- Grow and diversify jobs
- Welcome a diversity of residents
- Improve public safety

- Encourage quality and variety in the built environment
- Build an environmentally sustainable neighborhood
- Improve integration between the UW and the U District
- Support and coordinate active transportation choices

Urban design recommendations address land use character, public space network, station surroundings, urban form, building height, incentive zoning, retail activation, housing choices and gateways, hearts and edges. Environmental sustainability recommendations address mobility, landscaping, green stormwater infrastructure, green building, district infrastructure, community health, and environmental planning and governance.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

As part of the environmental review process the City held a public scoping meeting on September 24, 2013, at the University Heights Community Center. Materials and a presentation at the meeting described the EIS process, draft zoning alternatives, and environmental elements to be considered in the EIS. A total of 72 people signed in and 21 people spoke at the meeting.

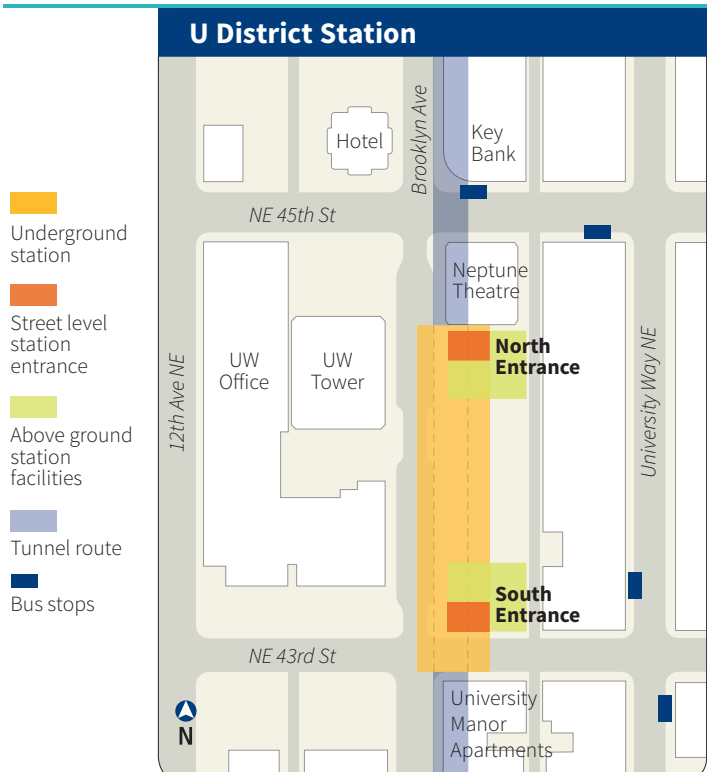
Public involvement continues to be an important element of the planning process. This EIS process includes a public comment period, during which one or more public meetings have been scheduled. During the public comment period, written and verbal comments are invited. Public comments will be considered and addressed in the Final EIS. Please see the Fact Sheet at the beginning on this Draft EIS for the dates of the public comment period and public meeting(s). See Appendix C for a summary of the scoping process.

Sound Transit Light Rail U District Station

The future U District Station is part of Sound Transit's Northgate Link Extension approved by voters in 2008. The U District Station will be located on Brooklyn Avenue NE between NE 43rd and NE 45th streets. The station will serve the surrounding residential community, business district and north University of Washington Campus. The Northgate Link Extension, including the U District Station, is expected to open in late 2021. By 2030, approximately 12,000 people a day are expected to board light rail at the U District Station. Travel time to downtown Seattle will be 8 minutes and to Sea-Tac Airport 41 minutes. See Figure 2–4 shows the U District Station and surrounding vicinity.

As shown in Figure 2–5, the "walkshed" around the station site, meaning the area within a 10-minute walk, extends from the NE 45th Street freeway overpass to UW's Central Campus, and from NE 52nd Street in the north to NE Pacific Street in the south.

Figure 2–4: **Sound Transit U District Station Vicinity**



Source: Sound Transit, U District Station Fact Sheet, 2013

Figure 2–5: **U District Station Walkshed**

Source: City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development. Existing Conditions Report. 2012

2.3 Proposed Action and Alternatives

Overview

The City has identified three alternatives for consideration in this EIS. Alternatives 1 and 2 would allow for high rise development in the core of the study area of varied height and location of growth. Comparatively, Alternative 1 would provide for lower tower heights in a dispersed development pattern. Alternative 2 would provide for taller towers concentrated around the transit center. Alternative 3 would retain existing zoning designations and standards. Zoning designations proposed for each alternative are shown in Figures 2.6 through 2.8.

GROWTH ESTIMATES

For the purpose of analysis in this EIS, a growth estimate of 3,900 housing units and 4,800 jobs is assumed. This assumption is informed by the City's adopted 2024 growth targets, updated guidance from the 2012 King County Countywide Planning Policies, historic development trends and a recent analysis of the U District real estate market.[1] This growth estimate assumes a conservatively high demand for future office and residential high-rise development.

Estimated growth was allocated within the study based on the following:

- Likely development sites were based on the Potential Development Map, U District Urban Design Framework, June 2013
- A range of residential, commercial, mid-rise and high-rise development could occur and should be represented in the alternatives
- New development would likely occur on large sites and smaller easily aggregated sites
- New development would most likely cluster around the future U District Link Light Rail station, but some would also occur throughout the study area
- Residential development would average 850 square feet per housing unit. Commercial development would average 350 square feet per employee.

1 *Heartland. U District Urban Design Framework Support Analysis Memo. June 2013*

Incentive Zoning

The City's existing incentive programs offer development bonuses—usually in the form of additional height or floor area—for development projects that undertake measures beyond standard requirements to mitigate the impacts of development, such as:

- Affordable housing
- Meeting a specific LEED™ standard
- Provision or payment in lieu of childcare
- Provision of public amenities, such as open space
- Transfer of development rights (TDR)

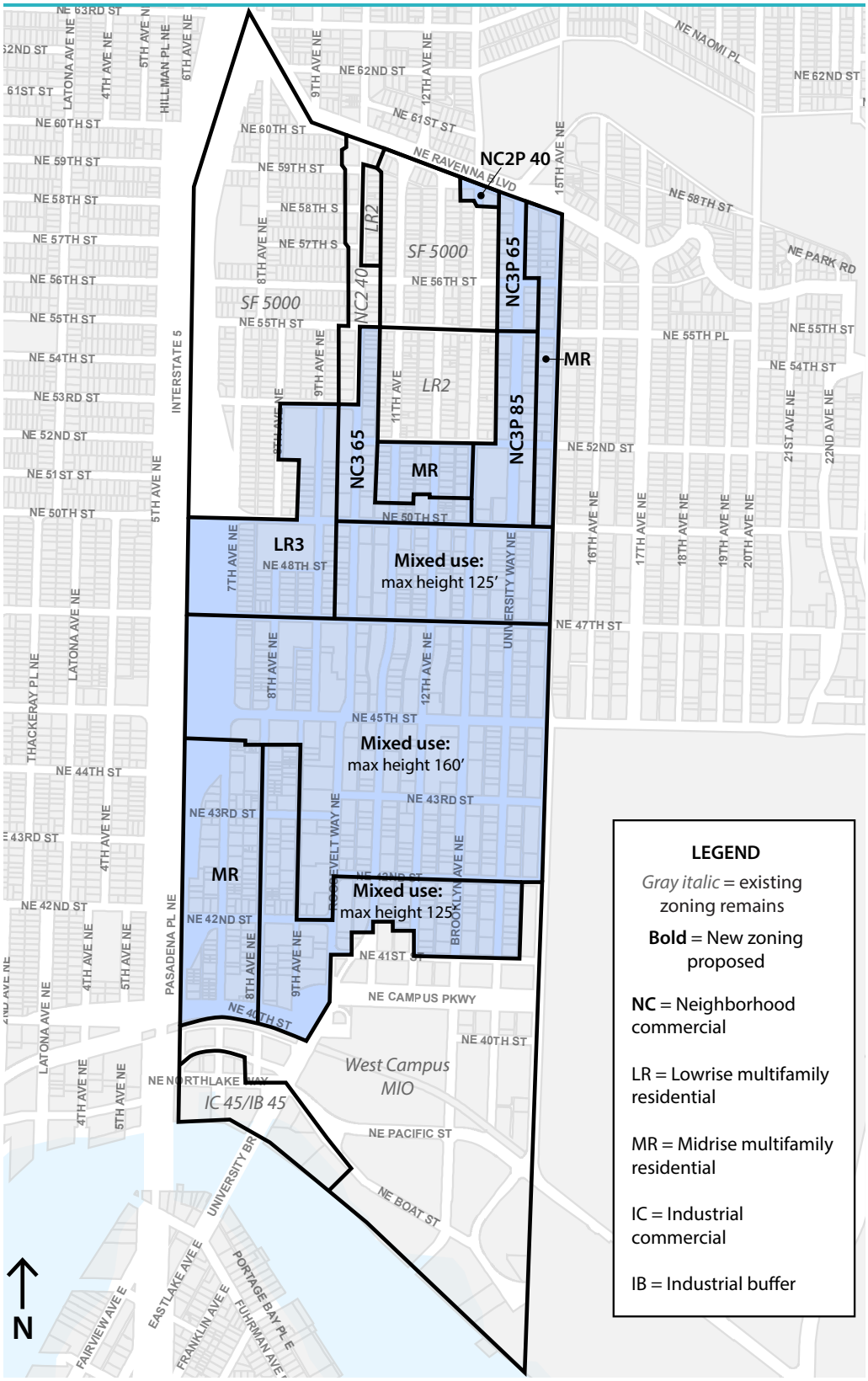
In a separate action, the City is reviewing the provisions of the incentive zoning program which may lead to future change in the program.

For the U District study area, the UDF identifies the following list of incentive measures for further consideration and prioritizing:

- New public and private open spaces, including spaces for active and passive recreation
- Mid-block pedestrian pathways
- Affordable housing
- Larger-sized residential units to accommodate families
- Support services and facilities for vulnerable populations including seniors, non-English speakers, and homeless people
- Child care
- Preservation of historic buildings
- Streets and alleys that are friendly to pedestrians, including landscaping, sidewalk cafés and other features
- Preservation of regional forests and farmlands

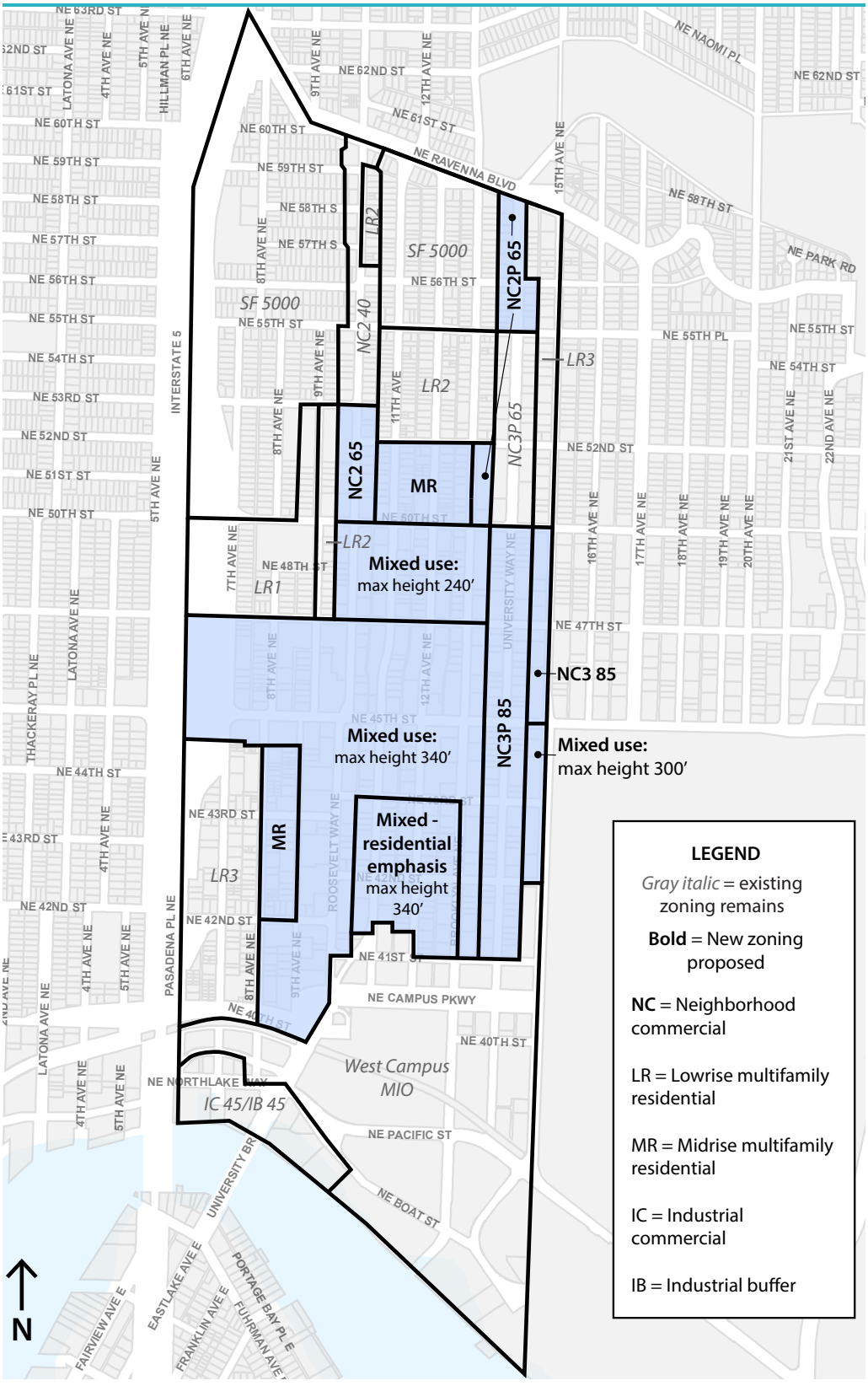
Any future decisions about specific incentive measures will be made based on the public comment and city review of this EIS and other data.

Figure 2–6: **Alternative 1 Proposed Zoning**



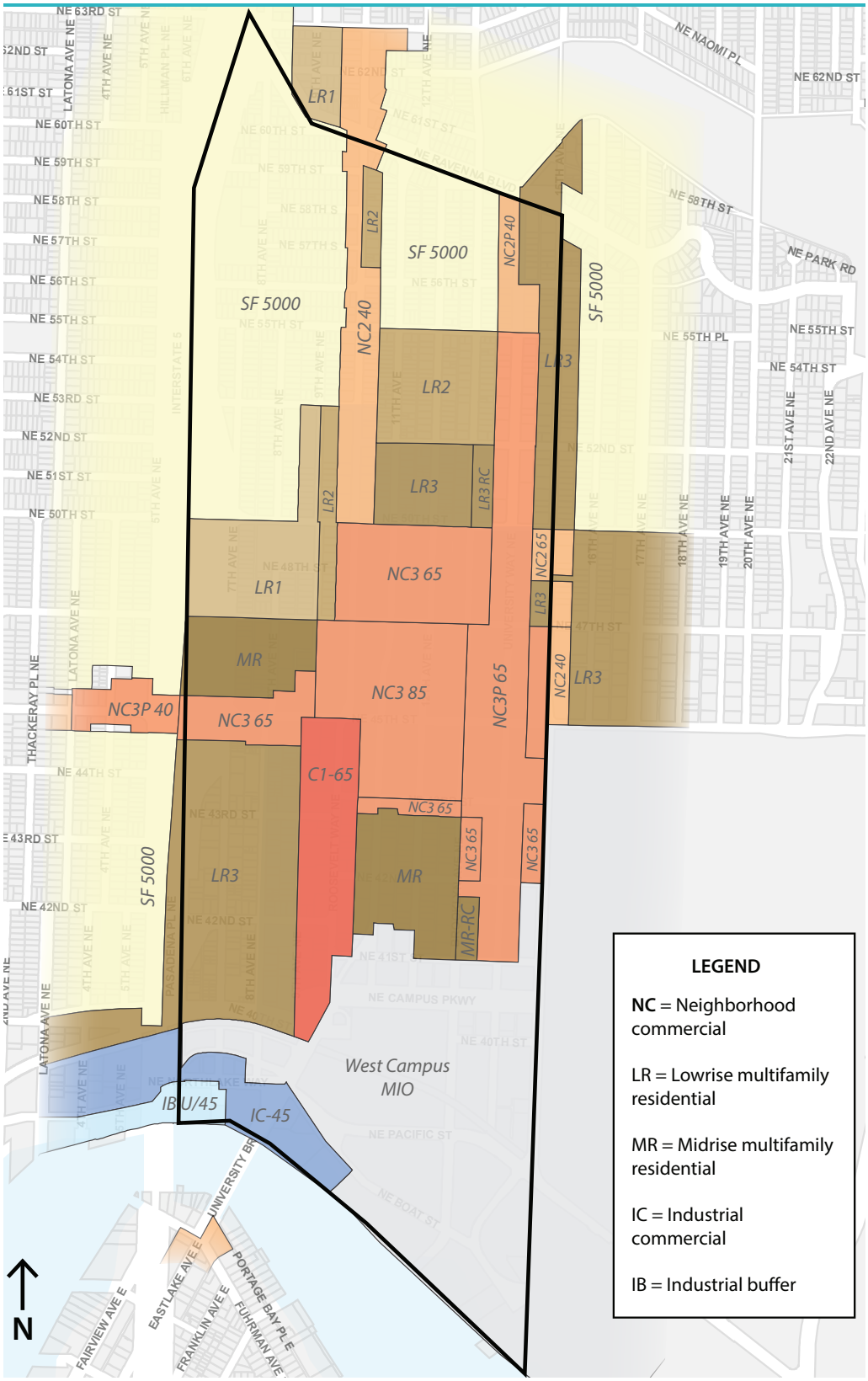
Source: City of Seattle, 2013

Figure 2–7: **Alternative 2 Proposed Zoning**



Source: City of Seattle, 2013

Figure 2–8: **Alternative 3 (No Action) Existing Zoning**



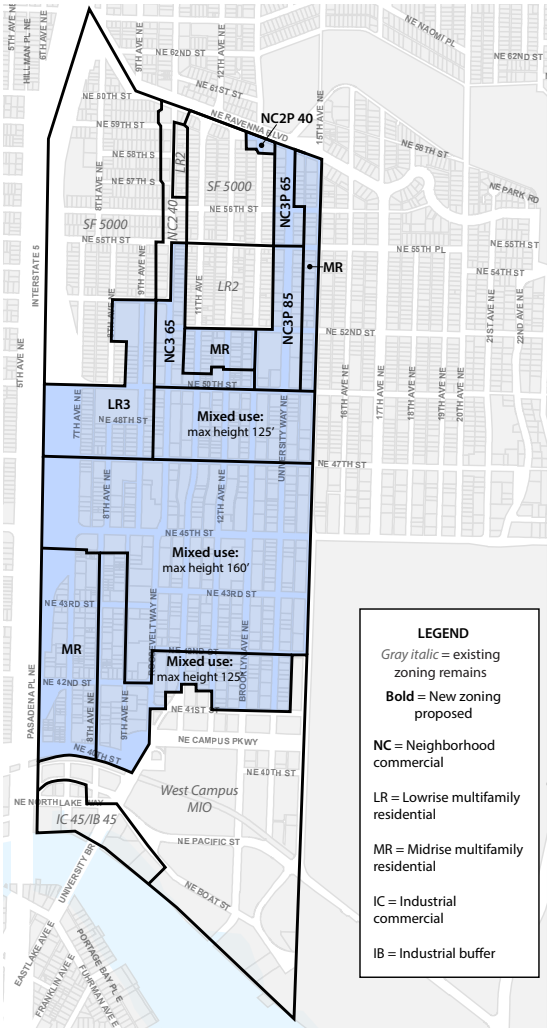
Source: City of Seattle, 2013

Alternative 1

Alternative 1 would allow for high-rise towers in the core area—including along University Way NE—with areas of mid-rise development extending north of NE 50th Street. Maximum building heights would be between 125 and 160 feet, less than permitted under Alternative 2, and significantly greater than permitted under Alternative 3 (No Action). The proposed zoning would generally focus growth around the new transit station while yielding a development pattern more dispersed than in Alternative 2. Alternative 1 zoning designations are shown in Figure 2–6. Areas shown with a blue tint indicate a change to zoning designations as described below.

Compared to Alternative 2, the area of increased height and intensity extends farther north from the core. In addition, development along University Way NE (the Ave) would be permitted to develop to high-rise standards, ranging from 125 to 160 feet, depending on location. Compared to Alternative 2, mid- and high rise towers would be allowed in closer proximity to each other, with a minimum 60-foot separation between towers above 75 feet.

To help maintain the pedestrian character on designated Green Streets, landscaped setbacks would be required on both sides of Brooklyn Avenue NE and NE 43rd and 42nd Streets. Widened sidewalks would be required on NE 45th and 50th Streets.



Ref. Figure 2–6, p. 2–14

CORE AREA: SOUTH OF NE 50TH STREET AND NORTH OF UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CAMPUS MIO

The majority of this area is proposed for redesignation to a future mixed-use zone. The area between NE 47th and NE 42nd Streets, including the University Way NE corridor, would be allowed the greatest building heights, up to a maximum of 160 feet. The area north of NE 47th and south of NE 42nd streets would be allowed a maximum building height of 125 feet. Table 2–2 summarizes the development standards for the mixed-use area.

Other new designations include:

- The area between NE 50th and NE 47th Streets, east of Interstate-5 would be re-designated from LR1 to LR3
- The area south of NE 45th Street and west of 8th Avenue NE would be re-designated from LR3 to MR in the southwest.

NORTH OF NE 50TH STREET

The majority of the area currently zoned SF 5000 would be retained in this area. However, two changes to the SF 5000 zoning are proposed:

- 8th Avenue NE, south of NE 53rd Street—the Blessed Sacrament Church property would be re-designated to LR3.
- NE Ravenna Boulevard/Brooklyn Avenue NE—an existing retail and multifamily development would be re-designated to NC2P 40.

Other changes in the area north of NE 50th Street would include:

- An area along 9th Avenue NE and extending west would be re-designated from LR1 and LR2 to LR3.
- A portion of the Roosevelt Way NE corridor immediately north of NE 50th Street would be re-designated from NC2 40 to NC3 65.
- The University Way NE corridor would be re-designated to NC3P at 65 and 85 feet in height.
- The west side of 15th Avenue NE would be re-designated from LR3 to MR.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CAMPUS MIO

No change is proposed to the existing Major Institution Overlay zoning or industrial zoning.

Alternative 2

Relative to all of the alternatives, Alternative 2 would allow the greatest heights and concentration of growth in the core area. Maximum building heights would be between 240 and 340 feet, but proposed development standards would reduce building bulk and increase building separation, compared to Alternative 1. Growth would be primarily focused in the core area, south of NE 50th Street. In addition, building heights along the University Way NE corridor would be limited to 65 to 85 feet, significantly less than Alternative 1.

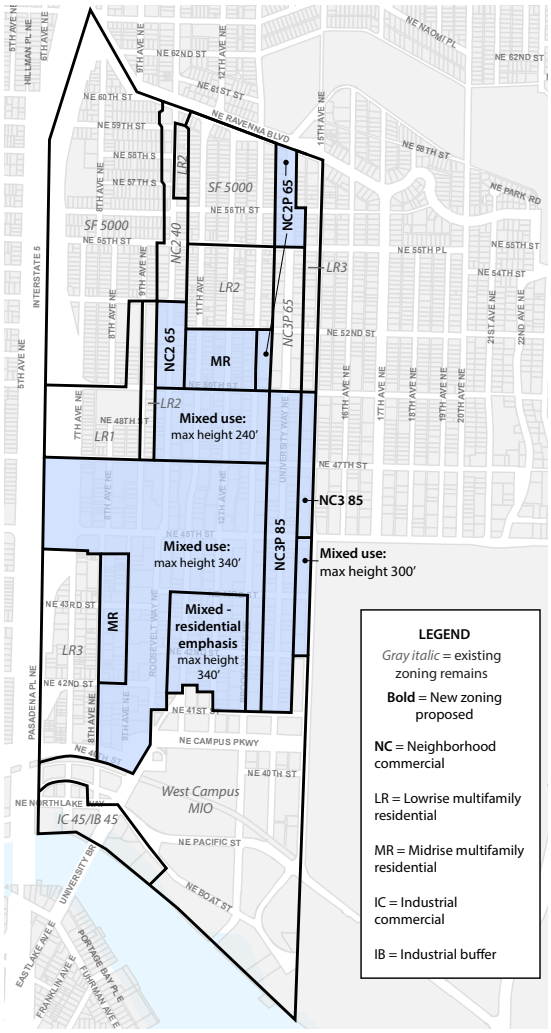
Area-specific setbacks would be required to promote pedestrian character and provide for ground-level residential stoops and landscaping.

The Alternative 2 zoning designations are shown in Figure 2–7 and at right. Areas shown with a blue tint indicate a change to zoning designations.

CORE AREA: SOUTH OF NE 50TH STREET AND NORTH OF UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CAMPUS MIO

The majority of this area would be designated for mixed-use, with building heights varying from 240 feet to the north of NE 47th Street and 340 feet south of NE 47th Street. A portion of the mixed-use area, generally south of NE 43rd Street and between Roosevelt Way NE and Brooklyn Avenue NE, would be mixed-use with a residential emphasis. Table 2–2 summarizes the development standards for the mixed-use area.

In contrast to Alternative 1, the mixed-use designation does not extend to the University Way NE corridor, which would be rezoned to NC3P-85, allowing 20 feet greater height compared to existing zoning. The area to the west of 15th Avenue NE would be rezoned to NC3 85 to the north of NE 45th Street and to mixed-use with a maximum height of 300 feet south of NE 45th Street.



Ref. Figure 2–7, p. 2–15

Two partial blocks south of NE 45th Street and between 8th and 9th Avenues NE would be re-designated from LR3 to MR.

NORTH OF NE 50TH STREET

No changes are proposed to the existing SF 5000 and LR2 designations in this area. Proposed changes include:

- Three discrete areas along the Roosevelt Way NE and University Way NE corridors would be re-designated from NC2P 40 and LR3 RC to NCP 65.
- The area immediately north of NE 50th Street would be re-designated from LR3 to MR.

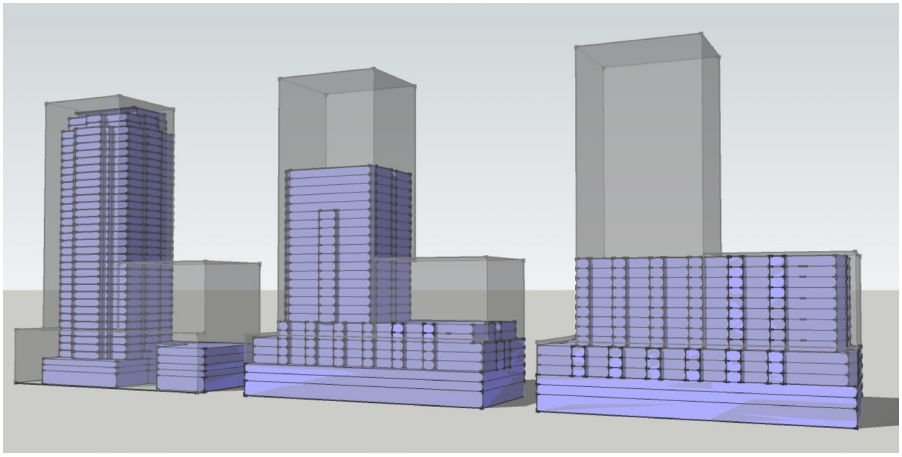
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CAMPUS

No changes are proposed to the existing Major Institution Overlay and existing industrial zoning.

Figure 2–9: **Zoning Envelopes and Floor Area Ratios**

***Gray**: hypothetical "zoning envelopes" established by setbacks, height limits, tower floorplate limits, minimum tower separation and other development standards.*

***Blue**: possible building configurations within the allowed zoning envelope, limited by a floor area ratio (FAR) of 12. All three buildings have the same amount of floor area but they configure the space differently.*



Source: City of Seattle, 2013

A floor plate is the horizontal plane of the floor of a building, measured to the inside surface of exterior walls.

Floor area ratio is the ratio of the total square feet of a building to the total square feet of the property on which it is located.

Table 2–2: **Mixed-Use Development Standards**

Features	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
Height Limits	▶ 125–160 feet	▶ 240–340 feet
Floor Plate Size	▶ Max floor plate is 24,000 SF above 65 feet	▶ If structure over 160 feet tall, max floor plate is 24,000 SF above 65 feet, then 11,000 SF above 120 feet
Floor Area Ratio Limits*	▶ 6–10	▶ 9–12
Tower spacing	▶ 60 feet	▶ 100 feet
Area-specific standards		
University Way NE	▶ 10-foot setback above 65 feet	▶ 15-foot setback above 45 feet 120-foot building facade limit
Brooklyn Avenue NE	▶ 5-foot ground level setback (landscaping) ▶ 10-foot setback above 40 feet	▶ 10-foot ground level setback (balconies above, but not structural overhangs)
NE 42nd & 43rd Streets	▶ 5-foot landscaped setback both sides ▶ 10-foot setback above 40 feet	▶ 10-foot setback above 40 feet on the south side for solar exposure
NE 45th Street	▶ 7-foot ground-level setback for sidewalk (OK to cantilever back above 15 feet)	▶ 10-foot ground level setback for sidewalk (no cantilever, absolute 10-foot setback)
NE 50th Street	▶ 5-foot ground-level setback for sidewalk (OK to cantilever back above 15 feet)	▶ 8-foot ground-level setback for sidewalk (no cantilever, absolute 8-foot setback)

*Floor Area Ratio (FAR) assumptions include an exemption for street-level retail use from the FAR calculation.

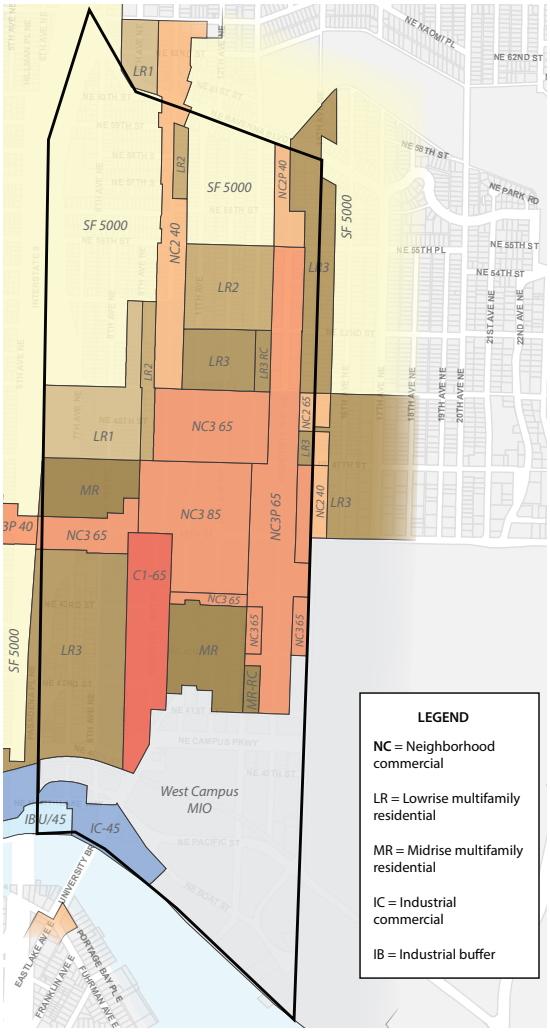
Source: City of Seattle

Alternative 3

Alternative 3 retains the existing zoning designations in the neighborhood, with no increased potential for building heights or development capacity. Existing zoning is shown in Figure 2-8 and briefly described below.

CORE AREA: SOUTH OF NE 50TH STREET AND NORTH OF UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CAMPUS MIO

The central portion of the core area is designated NC3, with heights ranging from 65 to 85 feet. The University Way NE corridor is zoned LR3, NC2 and NC3, with maximum building heights of 40 to 65 feet. Other designations include the MR zone in the northwest and southern portions of the core area, C1 along a portion of the Roosevelt Way NE corridor and LR3 in the southwest corner of the core area.



Ref. Figure 2–8, p. 2–16

NORTH OF NE 50TH STREET

North of NE 50th Street, existing zoning consists of a mix of Lowrise (LR1, LR2, LR3), Neighborhood Commercial (NC1, NC2, NC3) and Single Family (SF 5000) zones. The major corridors along NE 50th, University Way NE and Roosevelt Way NE are generally designated for the greatest relative intensity and building heights. Highest maximum building heights are 65 feet on the south side of NE 50th Street and extending north on Roosevelt Way NE.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CAMPUS

As in the action alternatives, the existing Major Institution Overlay and industrial zoning would be retained.

2.4 Environmental Review

Purpose

The purpose of this EIS is to assist the public and agency decision-makers in considering the potential environmental effects of proposed changes to land use code standards for height and density in the U District study area.

This Draft EIS provides qualitative and quantitative analysis of environmental impacts as appropriate to the general nature of the Proposed Action planning efforts.

Programmatic Review

SEPA requires government officials to consider the environmental consequences of proposed actions, and to consider ways to accomplish the objectives that minimize adverse impacts or enhance environmental quality. They must consider whether the proposed action will have a probable significant adverse environmental impact on the elements of the natural and built environment.

The adoption of development regulations is classified by SEPA as a non-project (also referred to as programmatic) action. A non-project action is defined as an action that is broader than a single site-specific project, and involves decisions on policies, plans, or programs. An EIS for a non-project proposal does not require site-specific analyses; instead, the EIS will discuss impacts and alternatives appropriate to the scope of the non-project proposal and to the level of planning for the proposal. (See WAC 197-11-442 for detail.) The analysis in this EIS may also be used in the future to help inform project-level development proposals.

EIS Scope of Analysis

The City issued a Determination of Significance and Scoping Notice on September 5, 2013. During the scoping comment period, which extended from September 5 to October 9, 2013, interested citizens, agencies, organization and affected tribes were invited to provide comments on the scope of the EIS. During the comment period, the City held a public scoping meeting to provide information and invite comment from interested parties. A total of 21 persons spoke at this meeting. In addition, a total of 29 letters and emails were received during the scoping period related to:

- Specific environmental impacts proposed for study in the EIS

- The alternatives proposed for study
- The planning process that led to the proposed alternatives

See Appendix C for a summary of scoping comments.

Based on this process, the City revised the EIS alternatives and finalized the scope of the EIS. Elements of the environment addressed in this EIS include:

- Land Use Plans & Policies
- Housing
- Aesthetics
- Historic Resources
- Transportation
- Greenhouse Gas
- Open Space & Recreation
- Public Services
- Utilities

Environmental Impacts

For each of the alternatives, potential environmental impacts to the elements of the environment listed above are described in Chapter 3 of this EIS and briefly summarized in Chapter 1. Please refer to these chapters for a comparison of the impacts of the alternatives, potential mitigating measures and significant unavoidable adverse impacts.

2.5 Benefits and Disadvantages of Delaying the Proposed Action

Delaying adoption of zoning that would to allow increased height and density in the U District study area could reduce the likelihood of improvements based on development impacts that may be experienced as a result of development standards and incentive zoning. Delaying the action would also maintain existing height limits. This may be seen as a benefit or a disadvantage depending on the perspective of the individual.