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Subject: University District Alley Activation Street Design Concept Plan Appendix N to Right-of-Way Improvements Manual* * The Right-of-Way Improvements Manual is SDOT's Director's Rule 07-2012.	Code and Section Reference: SMC Chapter 23.53	
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BACKGROUND

In 2011, University District residents, business and property owners, service providers, UW administrators and City staff formed the U District Livability Partnership, which later became the U District Partnership (UDP). The UDP created a Strategic Plan and worked with the City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD) to create the U District Urban Design Framework. In the Strategic Plan, the UDP identified projects for early implementation including developing a "European-style" network of pleasant and bustling alleyways in the U

District. To advance this goal, the UDP applied for and received an Only in Seattle grant from the Office of Economic Development (OED) to fund an Alley Activation Plan. The University District Alley Activation Plan establishes a shared vision for alley activation in the U District and provides a number of potential implementation strategies, including a Street Design Concept Plan, detailed from page 46 onwards of the University District Alley Activation document.

The University District Alley Activation Plan focuses on the three alley corridor between University Way and 15th Ave NE, south of NE 45th St and north of NE 41st St. The Street Design Concept Plan element of the broader University District Alley Activation Plan provides concept level design configuration for design elements within these alleys, providing greater predictability for stakeholders when making investments in City rights-of-way on streets in the study area.

The Street Design Concept Plan's goals include promoting an active, inclusive, pedestrian-focused alley environment; continuing vehicular access from the alley; and showcasing environmentally-friendly design approaches. To create this concept plan, multiple City departments were engaged along with area stakeholders and property owners.

RULE

The University District Alley Activation Street Design Concept Plan is incorporated into the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Right-of-Way Improvements Manual as Appendix N. The provisions of the concept plan are voluntary. However, property owners are encouraged to follow them in order to enhance the neighborhood.

The concept plan has been reviewed by SDOT and the Department of Planning and Development (DPD). Therefore, applicants for Street Improvement Permits that follow these concept plans can be assured that the major design elements contained in their plans meet or exceed the requirements described in the Right-of-Way Improvements Manual. The Right-of-Way Improvements Manual is the standards manual used by SDOT's Street Use Division in the permit review process for private contracts. Additionally, applicants for permits to DPD that follow these concept plans for major public realm design items can be assured that these elements are approvable through the Master Use Permit and Design Review processes.

Note: Certain projects may be subject to review under City development regulations or the State Environmental Policy Act. That review could result in additional conditions relevant to the streetscape but not anticipated in the University District Alley Activation Street Design Concept Plan.

REASON

While the University District Street Alley Activation Street Design Concept Plan does not establish requirements, the conceptual design has been approved through review by SDOT and DPD. Approval of the concept plan as an Appendix to the Right-of-Way Improvements Manual provides recognition of the design and gives clear guidance to property owners who wish to follow these plans.

THE ACTIVATED ALLEY

A PLAN FOR EVOLVING THE UNIVERSITY DISTRICT'S ALLEYS



UNIVERSITY DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP

DECEMBER 2014

PREPARED BY:
SvR DESIGN COMPANY
MAKERS ARCHITECTURE & URBAN DESIGN

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Though there are several challenges presented by today's alley - cracked pavement, dumpsters, unactivated edges - the space is frequently occupied by a variety of users.

WELCOME

You are holding a roadmap to a University District (U District) alley renaissance. With thousands more jobs and residents projected to move into the neighborhood over the next 20 years, new transit connections under construction and city investments on the way, the U District Partnership invites you to imagine beyond what the alleys are today to what they can be in the future.

In 2011, U District residents, business and property owners, service providers, UW administrators and City staff formed the U District Livability Partnership, which later became the U District Partnership (UDP). The UDP is a strategic initiative to encourage investment in the U District's development as a vibrant, innovative and diverse community. The UDP developed a clear vision to shape future development in their strategic plan identifying transformative projects for early implementation, including developing a "European-style" network of pleasant and bustling alleyways.

Imagine neighbors of all stripes gathering in the alley for an outdoor movie showing. Savor a moment on your stroll up the alley,

pausing to enjoy music from a local singer-songwriter spilling from the windows of an alley coffee shop. Grab some Seattle street food at a walk-up food window along the alley and enjoy prime people watching as you eat at the tables set out along the alley. Duck into the alley to access your apartment located in one of several new buildings, and say hello to the recognizable regulars who have built a neighborhood community based on respect: entrepreneurs and parishioners, academics and college kids, restaurateurs and residents. In this narrow urban space, you are all a part of this tight-knit community that makes the U District alleys a hub of informal community building.

Whether you are a long-time resident or new to the neighborhood, this envisioned future of activated alleys will only happen with your help, contributing to a collaborative community-initiated effort to improve the alley environment. When the UDP came together to conduct this study, they did so with the express goal of engaging the community in a conversation about how to make the alleys a great place for everyone. Over six months, a robust series

of conversations unearthed the challenges U District alleys face, but also allowed for a clear vision for alley evolution to emerge amongst all stakeholders.

This Activation Plan documents those conversations (Opportunities Analysis and Options Exploration) and the shared direction the community crafted for their future (Alley Future). Ultimately, however, success will depend on the Implementation section of this document, where a variety of strategies are described to help make the alleys exceptional places. While no one strategy is the cure-all, collectively and organically a suite of strategies will build upon each other to make the alleys work for everyone.

This plan charts a course, but it is just the beginning. With your help, the alleys will become a remarkable urban space: a vibrant slice of Europe, brought to the Pacific Northwest and made possible by a one-of-a-kind community.



PURPOSE OF ALLEY ACTIVATION PLAN

The University District Alley Activation Plan establishes a shared vision for alley activation in the U District and provides a number of potential implementation strategies. Rather than a prescription for what will happen today or tomorrow, it is an empowerment tool to help guide the community as it evolves over the coming decades. With the community's support, this document will help shape future private development along the U District alleys, focus public investments, and leverage programming partnerships. This document translates community priorities and aspirations into a tangible, realistic and implementable concept.

The anticipated audience for the Alley Activation Plan is first and foremost the U District community. As the neighborhood engages development interest, City staff, the University of Washington, King County Metro, Sound Transit and other groups, this document will support their efforts and encourage dialogue about how the alleys can contribute to making the U District a better place for all. This plan is not an

edict. No one is expected to transform their properties overnight, nor give up long-held access to parking, nor provide unwanted public access to their properties. It is simply a roadmap, developed by the U District community and vetted by the City of Seattle, that charts a better future for the neighborhood's alleys. As this vision moves forward, each community member should see themselves as a key player in the alleys' success, because these alleys have the opportunity to thrive in a way that can transform how we see and experience the U District.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2011, U District residents, business and property owners, service providers, UW administrators and City staff formed the U District Livability Partnership, which later became the U District Partnership (UDP). The UDP is a strategic initiative to encourage investment in the U District's development as a vibrant, innovative and diverse community.

By 2035, the U District is expected to have 4,800 more jobs, 3,700 more households, and, in 2021, Sound Transit's LINK Light Rail station at Brooklyn Ave NE and NE 43rd St, in the heart of the U District.

With these changes on the horizon, the UDP began planning ways to leverage this new activity to improve the community. The UDP created a Strategic Plan and worked with the City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD) to create the U District Urban Design Framework. Both documents provide clear vision to shape future development. In the Strategic Plan, the UDP identified five transformative projects for early implementation, including developing a "European-style" network of pleasant and bustling alleyways.

To advance this goal, the UDP applied for and received an Only in Seattle grant from the Office of Economic Development (OED) to fund this Alley Activation Plan. The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) administered the grant working with the Alley Task Force subcommittee of the UDP, including hiring a consultant team to lead the process. The Alley Task Force is primarily comprised of members from stakeholder groups along the alley corridor, including representatives from Shultzzy's, Cafe Allegro, the University of Washington and the University Bookstore.

Rather than looking at all alleys in the U District, the project focuses on the three-alley corridor between University Way and 15th Ave NE, south of NE 45th St and north of NE 41st St. This corridor was chosen as the "pilot" alley corridor for the district with the idea that the successes and lessons learned in this corridor will help spur revitalization of other U District alleys.

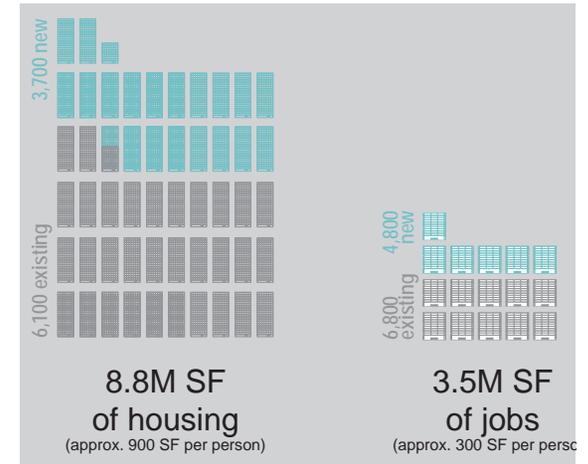
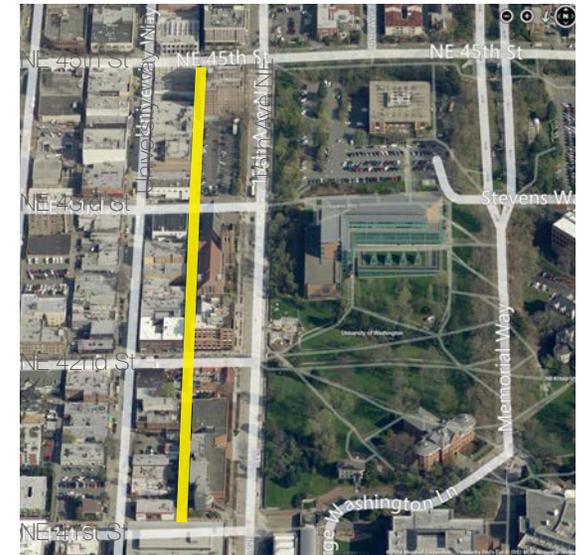


Figure 1: Anticipated U District household and job growth by 2035 (U District Urban Design Draft EIS, 2014)



Alley corridor study area

PROJECT GOALS

The Alley Task Force had three goals for the project, which were vetted at outreach events. Throughout the development of this plan, these goals served to confirm direction and evaluate the appropriateness of proposed interventions.



"European style" alley. (Andrew Alexander Price)



Active, inclusive alley programming in Seattle.
(Nord Alley, Jordan Lewis)



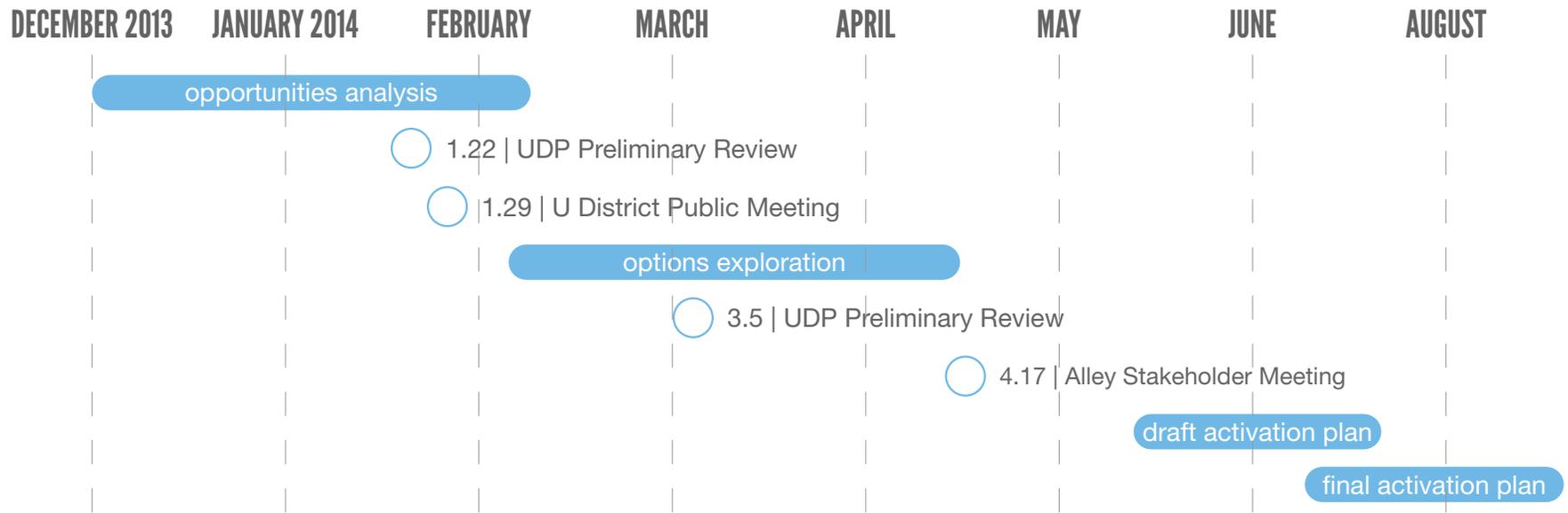
Environmentally-friendly alley design in San Francisco.
(Living Linden Alley via seedfundgrants.org)

1. Provide a catalyst to create a "European style" network of U District alleys.

2. Promote an active, inclusive, pedestrian-focused alley environment.

3. Showcase environmentally-friendly design approaches.

PROCESS & TIMELINE



Task 1: Opportunities Analysis

This first task assessed current site conditions to identify critical issues and opportunities. These findings were presented to the Alley Task Force and vetted by the broader U District community at a public meeting. At this public meeting, the design team also shared a range of alley interventions that could be used to activate the corridor. Through dialog and review of the meeting results, the Alley Task Force identified a suite of interventions they felt may be appropriate for the alley corridor.

Task 2: Options Exploration

During the Options Exploration task, the design team used public feedback and preferred interventions to create streetscape concepts for stakeholder review. All business/property owners, social service providers and property managers along the alley corridor were invited to a focused stakeholder meeting to review the streetscape concepts.

Task 3: Develop Activation Plan

Based on input from alley stakeholders, the options presented during Options Exploration were synthesized into the streetscape concept and design guidelines presented here. This Activation Plan will empower the community to transform the U District alleys and work with existing and new partners to continuously improve the alley environment.



PUBLIC MEETINGS OVERVIEW



Alley Task Force Meeting (January 22, 2014)



U District Public Open House (January 29, 2014)



U District Stakeholders Meeting (April 17, 2014)

Alley Task Force Meetings

The Alley Task Force is a subcommittee of the UDP and is comprised of representatives from stakeholder groups along the study corridor. Throughout the design process, this group provided valuable insight and local knowledge regarding history, trends and realities of the alley corridor through monthly check-in meetings. This insight informed the Activation Plan, making it a context-sensitive document that stays true to the unique character and realities of the U District alleys.

Opportunities Analysis Open House

During the opportunities analysis phase, the U District community was invited to provide input on the best strategies for alley activation and to note specific challenges and opportunities along the alley corridor. The results of this meeting can be found on pages 29-35. Key opportunities included:

- Give each alley an identity.
- Encourage and incubate new businesses.
- Address waste management.
- Promote a safe, comfortable nighttime environment.
- Preserve a place for nature.

Options Exploration Open House

The design team presented two streetscape concepts to test different approaches to transforming the alley corridor. The alley stakeholders, including business/property owners, social service providers and property managers, responded to these concepts sharing hopes, concerns and noting areas that needed refinement. The concepts can be found in the Options Exploration section, which starts on page 36.

U DISTRICT ALLEY SUCCESS STORY: SHULTZY'S SAUSAGE



Don Schulze, owner of Shultzy's Sausage, first experienced the magnetic ambiance of Europe's alleys on a 2009 trip to Ireland, and he was impressed by the Europeans' use of alleys and side streets for commercial activity.

After experiencing these successful models of alley activation, Schulze brought this inspiration back to his U District business. He began improving the alley-facing façade of Shultzy's, placing seating and temporary fencing around what used to be parking spaces behind his business. Looking up his alley, he imagined a network of businesses that created frontages onto the alley. "This," he realized, "could be a differentiating feature of the U District."

Rather than a wholesale transformation, the success of Shultzy's alley was incremental and

"piecemeal:" slowly developing into an atmosphere that was inviting for restaurant patrons. "We just opened our back door and invited folks to use the space back there," Schulze recalls. Soon, Café Solstice next door followed suit and a small alley community was born. Schulze hopes that this momentum continues as neighboring business owners experience the paradigm shift of "looking out their back door and seeing the alley as a business opportunity." After a certain critical mass, Schulze predicts, "more folks will be attracted to the alley and business owners will be enticed to orient their businesses to alley customers."



The U District Partnership Alley Task Force walked the alley with the design team to share key insights about the alley's opportunities and challenges.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

To understand the alley corridor and its context, the design team assessed site conditions and reviewed current planning forecasts for the neighborhood. This assessment revealed issues and opportunities for alley activation.

The design team walked the corridor with the Alley Task Force, learning key insights about how it currently functions and easy opportunities for improvement. These are mapped and discussed in detail in the Existing Urban Quality and Alley Infrastructure sections. These include documentation of lighting levels, pedestrian and vehicular access points, dumpster locations, existing utilities and drainage.

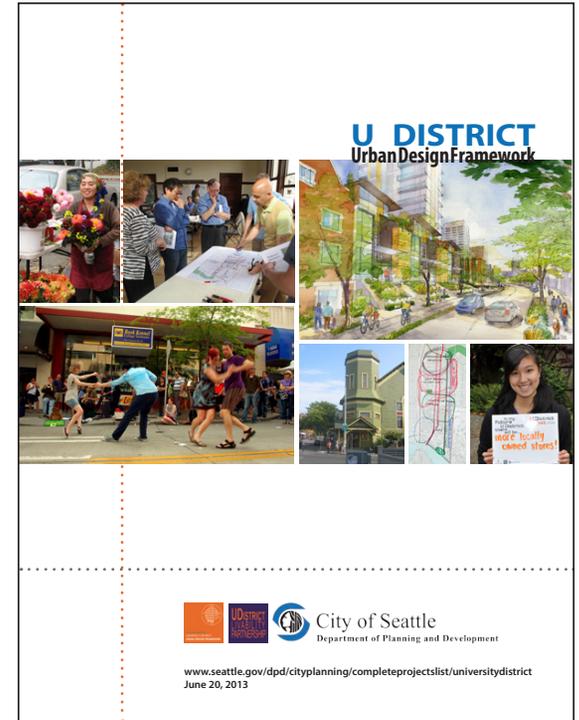
The Alley Task Force encouraged the team to make return visits to the corridor to understand how activities wax and wane throughout the day, over the week and in various weather conditions. Through these visits additional concerns became apparent, including locations where water collected and times of day when the space felt unsafe.

There are a number of ongoing and recently completed planning documents that will guide the growth and change anticipated in the U District in the coming years:

- **U District Urban Design Framework (2013):** Presents a vision to guide development and public investments to create a lively, safe, and walkable neighborhood.
- **U District Urban Design Draft Environmental Impact Statement (2014 Draft):** Looks at potential impacts of zoning changes and Comprehensive Plan amendments. The Draft EIS growth projections for 2035 include 3,700 new housing units and 4,800 new jobs.
- **University of Washington (UW) Master Plan (2003):** Guides development of the UW’s Seattle Campus and how it integrates into the surrounding neighborhood.

Development Opportunities

The UW is investing in new student housing in West Campus. Construction is underway for Sound Transit’s LINK Light Rail station at Brooklyn Ave NE and NE 43rd St. Many other public and private projects are in design or under construction.



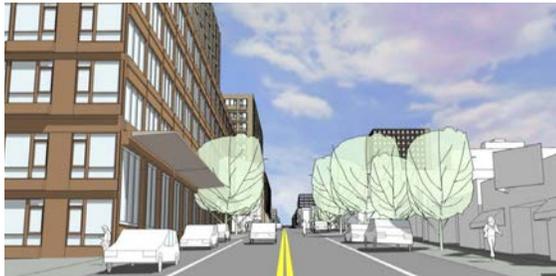
U District Urban Design Framework, June 2013.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Redevelopment Density

The drawings below depict how the anticipated U District growth and resulting density could feel along the Ave. This growth will result in a different pedestrian experience than today.

During the process of developing the Urban Design Framework, DPD identified parcels with high redevelopment opportunity (calculated as improvement value vs. property value). These parcels are identified in Figure 2. Fifteen potential redevelopment sites were identified adjacent to the alley corridor, including six large sites over 10,000



Looking north University Way NE. Existing conditions (upper), 2035 growth under EIS Alternative 1 zoning scenario (lower).

square feet that will likely be redeveloped with increased building heights. These parcels present an opportunity to advance the vision of the alley corridor as a vibrant, active public space.

Transportation

As the U District plans for growth, not only will there be changes in building forms, there will also be an influx of people who will move into and through the neighborhood. By 2030, Sound Transit (ST) projects 12,000 daily boardings through the new U District Light Rail station and NE 43rd St and Brooklyn Ave NE. Many transit riders



Looking south University Way NE. Existing conditions (upper), 2035 growth under EIS Alternative 2 zoning Images above from U District Urban Design EIS

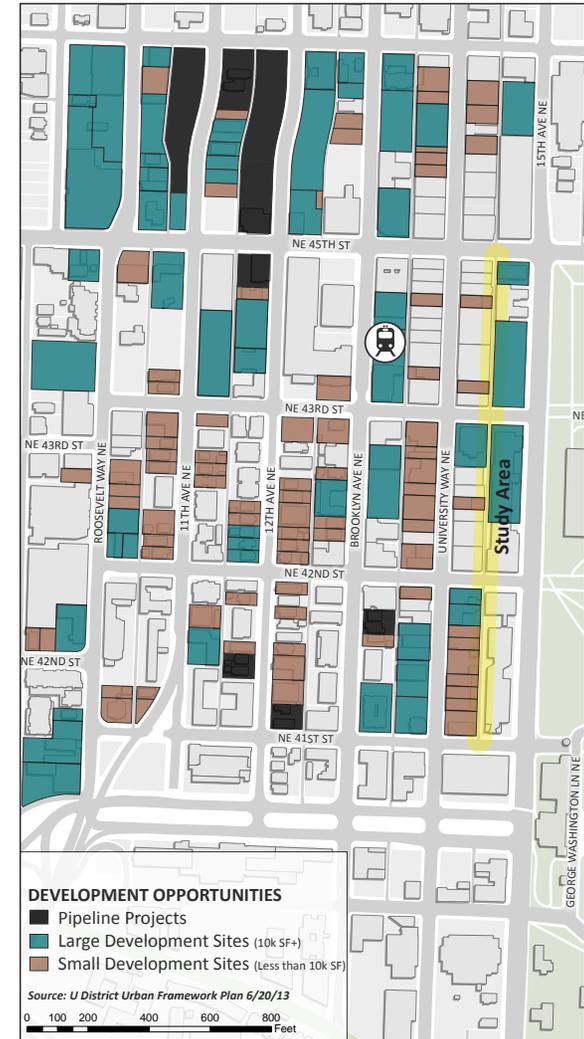


Figure 2: U District Parcels with Highest Redevelopment Opportunity (U District Urban Design Framework, 2013)



Bell Street Park - Green Street, Belltown

will disembark and travel two blocks east to the UW campus. This will result in a major influx of pedestrians travelling along already-crowded sidewalks.

The U District community is rethinking how certain high-demand streets can accommodate a variety of users and modes. Diversifying transportation options and creating a highly-functional complete network for all users and modes is crucial to the U District's success. The current state of transportation planning in the U District includes street designations such as neighborhood greenways, festival streets and green streets to accommodate a variety of modes in the U District street network (see Figure 3). A neighborhood greenway is a low speed, low volume residential street where pedestrians and cyclists are



39th Ave NE Neighborhood Greenway, Seattle

top priority. A green street is a non-arterial street with dense land uses designed to enhance pedestrian circulation and create open space opportunities. A festival street is a portion of public space that can be closed to traffic on multiple occasions for pedestrian-focused special events.

With the surge of pedestrians from the light rail station, alleys are a key component of the U District's multimodal network. The alleys will function as pedestrian passageways providing alternative routes to destinations, access points to new developments, and as highly-trafficked corridors supporting small businesses. With alleys contributing to a finer-grained network of travelways, the U District can maximize existing public right-of-way to optimize the pedestrian

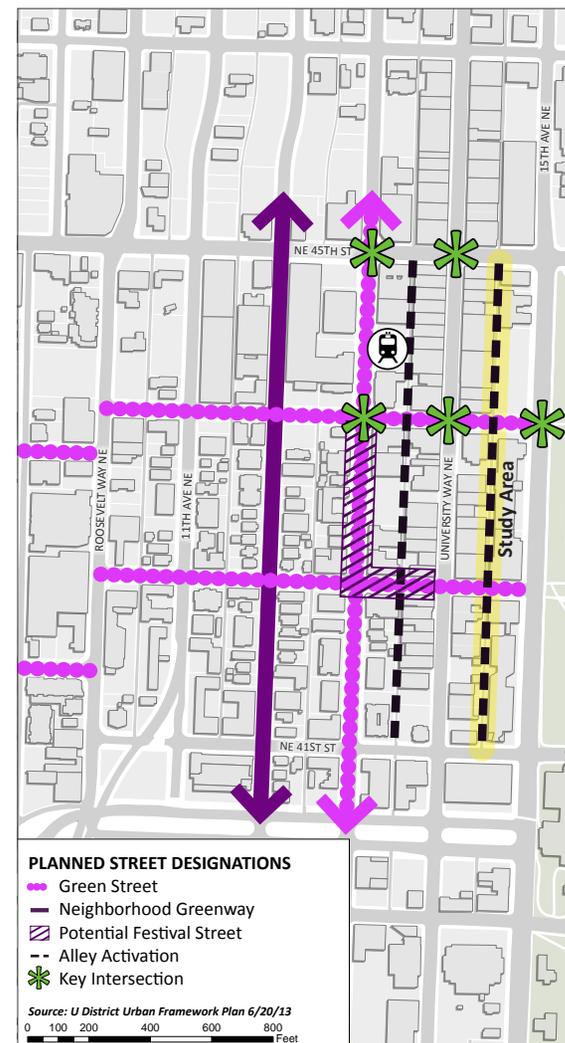


Figure 3: U District Street Designations
Source: U District Urban Design Framework, 2013

EXISTING URBAN QUALITY



Café Allegro Alley Frontage, U District



Growing vine on Magus Books, U District

Certain urban design qualities enhance the pedestrian experience. Figure 4 displays a subjective evaluation of the pedestrian interest and urban design quality of existing conditions on both sides of the alley. The evaluation attempts to grade the following:

Identity

Capture attention, evoke feelings, and create a lasting impression through building identifiers (signs or major architectural elements), courtyards, parks, plazas, major landscape features, historic buildings.

Transparency

Degree in which people can see or perceive what lies beyond the alley's edge (buildings, walls, trees, etc.). Includes ground floor windows, active uses, second story activation, mid-block openings and celebrated entries.

Human Scale

Size, texture, and articulation of physical elements that correspond to the proportion of humans and the speed at which we walk. Elements include building height, street furniture, texture and quality material details, vertical façade rhythm (modulation), doors and windows.

Richness

Complexity of the place with a variety of experiences provided, including number of buildings, variety of uses, colors, spatial variety (avoid tunnel), outdoor dining, public art/self expression.



Figure 4: Relative Urban Design Quality along the Existing Alley Corridor

U DISTRICT ALLEY SUCCESS STORY: U DISTRICT NEEDLE EXCHANGE



Shilo Murphy, Executive Director of The People's Harm Reduction Alliance and the U District Needle Exchange, jokes that he and his fellow alley leaders are members of the unofficial "Alley Chamber of Commerce," working together to make the alley a better place. "To address alley issues, we work together to find the solution we all want for the community. We all set the standard and advocate for the behavior we want to see in our community."

Murphy has found support from neighboring businesses and other service providers in the alley through his work with the Needle Exchange. He cites Café Allegro as the heart of the alley community, which is one of "the souls of the U District."

Murphy cites the collaborative spirit in the alley community as the major reason for the success he's seen in the alley so far. Alley leaders understand that they are stronger together and each deeply cares about the community. Each provides a valuable service to the community. For the Needle Exchange, their off-the-

beaten-path location complements the non-profit's mission to provide a safe and confidential place for drug users to safely dispose of needles and access clean supplies and referrals to detox and treatment services. The Needle Exchange provides a non-judgmental environment that combats the stigmatization and discrimination against drug users. Within the larger matrix of alley users, the Needle Exchange's clients are an unobtrusive, discrete presence.

In regard to future visions, Murphy aims to forge partnerships with restaurants along the alley and collaborate toward a vision for the alley that is not a dumping ground but an opportunity for more valued, beneficial uses and enhanced business opportunities. "There's a diverse community of people coexisting in the alley, which represents a cross-section of the neighborhood. All are valuable members of the community and can contribute to the health and vibrancy of their shared space. There's no conflict that the alley community can't solve," Murphy concludes.

EXISTING ALLEY INFRASTRUCTURE

Pedestrian & Vehicle Access

The alley has a number of pedestrian access points that provide a porous edge onto the alley, but not all are used. Pedestrian access points are typically through rear/secondary entrances of buildings or through a parking lot adjacent to the alley. Activating these alley-facing entrances and façades would create new customer access points for businesses transitioning from their current use to new alley-activating uses.

There are relatively few direct permanent vehicular access points from the alley corridor. The Post Office, the University Temple Methodist Church and the UW School of Social Work need parking access during normal business hours, and the Malloy Apartments need parking access at all hours of the day for their residents. Recently, when Russell Hall at 15th Ave NE and NE 43rd St was undergoing design and construction, the alley community successfully petitioned the property owner to shift the primary vehicular entrance to the building from the alley to 15th Ave NE.

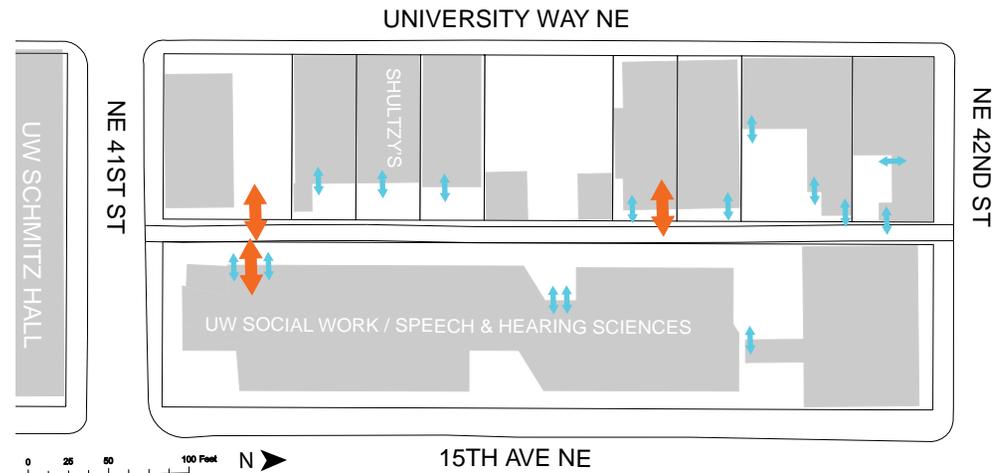
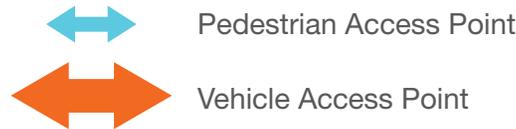
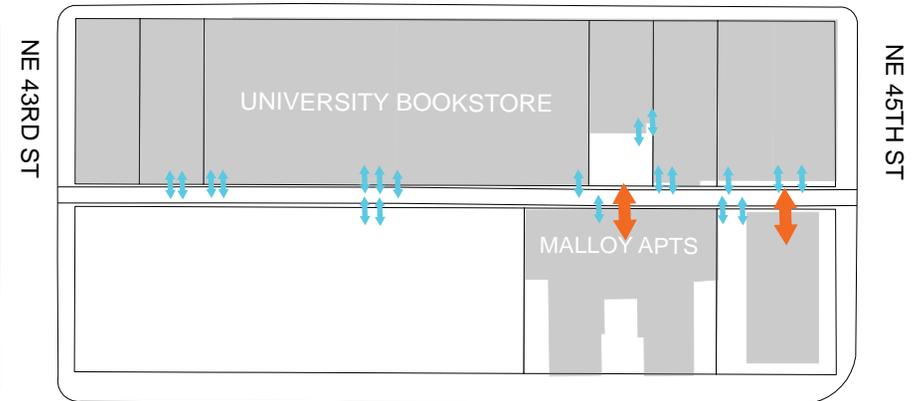
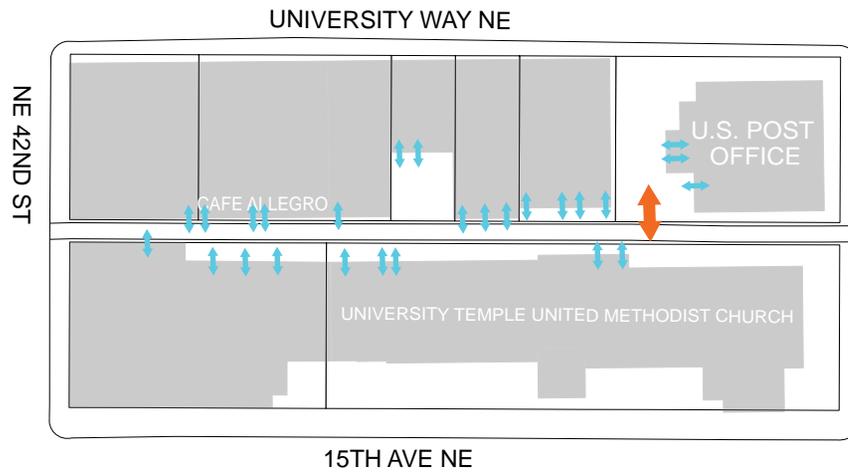


Figure 5: Pedestrian and Vehicle Access Diagram



ROW/ALLEY WIDTH

The City's GIS database shows that the current alley right-of-way width is 14'. There appears to be no condition where the existing buildings are built to the official 14' right-of-way line as described in the City's GIS system. In the alley corridor's most constrained conditions, buildings are located 8' from the alley centerline, giving the impression of a 16' right-of-way. As the properties redevelop, the alley centerline will need to be reconfirmed so that there is a 20' right-of-way. See the Technical Appendix.



Parking access to Russell Hall on 15th Ave NE



Malloy Apartments parking garage access



Alley entrance to the University Bookstore

Parking

The alley corridor provides access to parking spaces along or directly off the alley. There are 177 surface spaces abutting the alley, and approximately 30 private parking spaces are accessed exclusively from the alley. In speaking with alley stakeholders, most of the alley-abutting surface parking serves as free parking for businesses and their employees, but as mentioned previously, the Post Office, the University Temple Methodist Church, the Malloy Apartments and the UW School of Social Work must maintain parking access for their residents and/or customers.

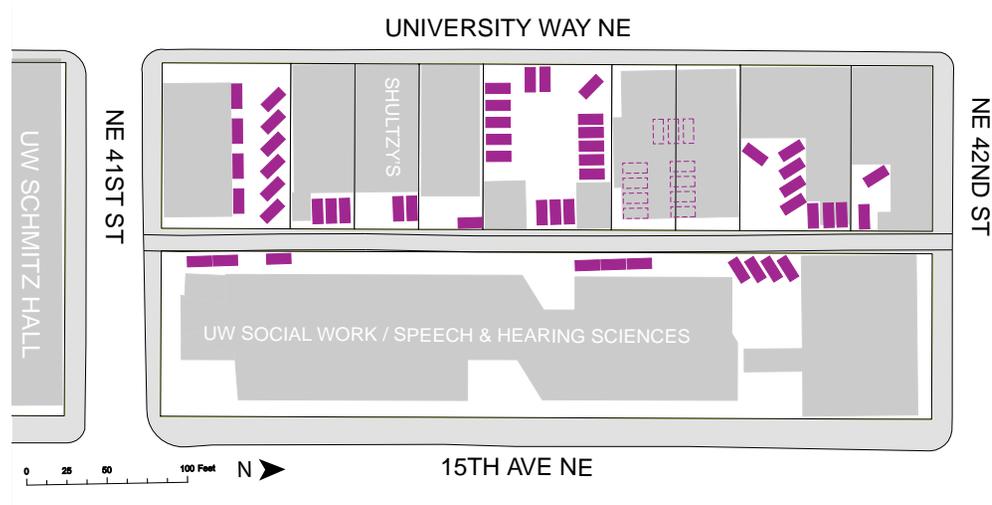
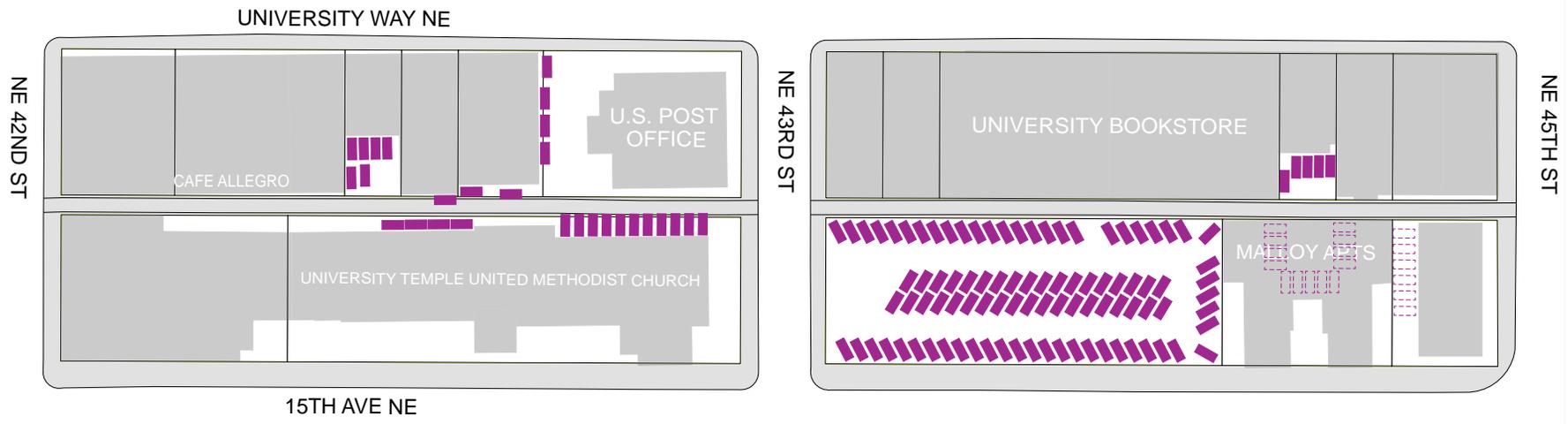


Figure 6: Parking Diagram

- Alley-Abutting Surface Parking
- Approximate Alley-Accessible Parking



Alley parking for business and employees



Alley parking for business and employees



University Bookstore parking lot



Alley parking for business and employees

Dumpsters

The alley is lined with 71 dumpsters and toters. In many situations the dumpsters encroach into the alley right-of-way, and alley stakeholders report trash being frequently stewn throughout the alley due to overflowing dumpsters, non-compliance with the Clear Alleys program or general untidiness.

Garbage trucks can access the alley during all hours of the day. Multiple pick-ups occur each day with three different trucks accessing the alley for trash, recycling and compost removal. These trucks typically take up the whole alley, blocking passage and creating an unpleasant environment during pick-ups. There are opportunities for consolidation of dumpsters and toters into corrals and increased education and compliance with the Clear Alleys program.

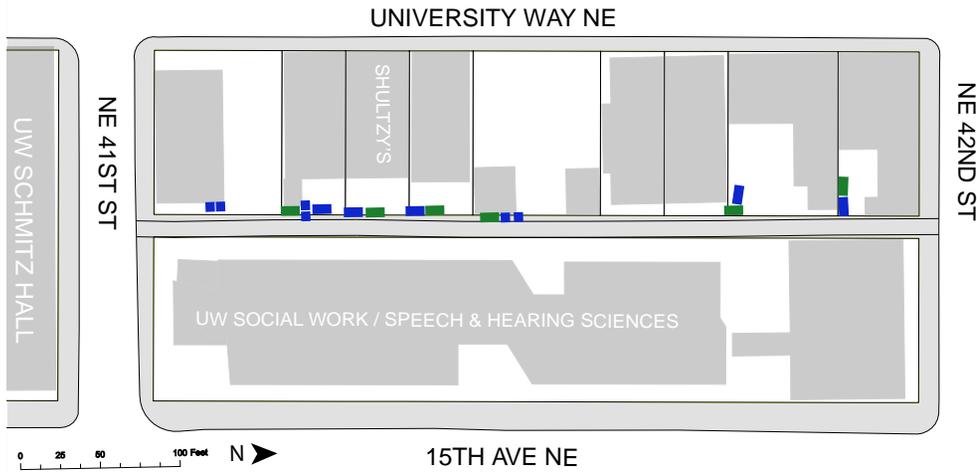
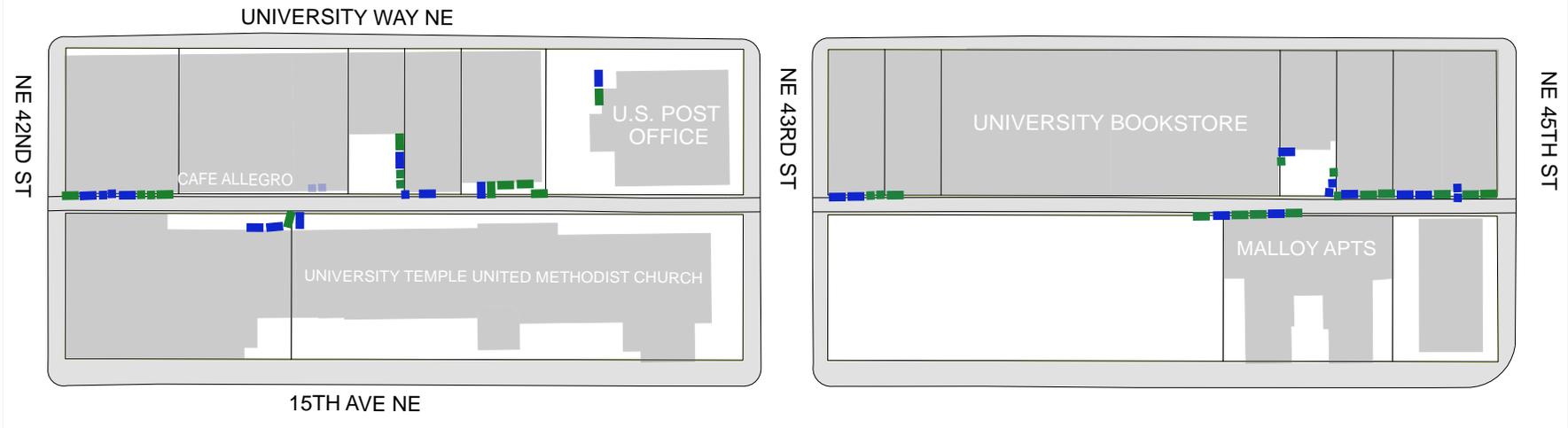


Figure 7: Dumpster Diagram

- Dumpster
- Recycling Dumpster
- Recycling/Compost Toter



Garbage truck blocking alley during daily trash pick-up



Existing garbage corrals incorporated into private parcels



Overflowing dumpsters with trash strewn throughout alley



Dumpsters in the public right-of-way

Drainage + Pavement

The concrete alley corridor has an inverted crown—meaning that the high points of the pavement are at the building edges—consistent with the City of Seattle’s standard alley cross-section. The thickness of the existing concrete pavement is unknown but, based on the prevalence of pavement cracking, we assume the corridor is not built to the City of Seattle standard of an 8” commercial concrete thickness and/or that the subgrade has failed. Further investigation is needed to confirm.

Surface runoff along each block is conveyed south, down the center of the corridor, and collected in a single structure. Other than these structures, there appear to be no public drainage structures in the alley corridor.

At NE 41st St runoff is channeled into the street and conveyed west along the face of curb. At NE 43rd St, runoff from the upstream block is channeled to a catch basin offset from the alley centerline to the west; the catch basin has a pipe that discharges stormwater through the curb at NE 43rd St eventually dropping into the structure at NE 43rd St and University Way NE. Runoff from NE 42nd St is similar to NE 43rd St. Current City plans for the NE 43rd St corridor will necessitate revisions to the alley’s drainage.

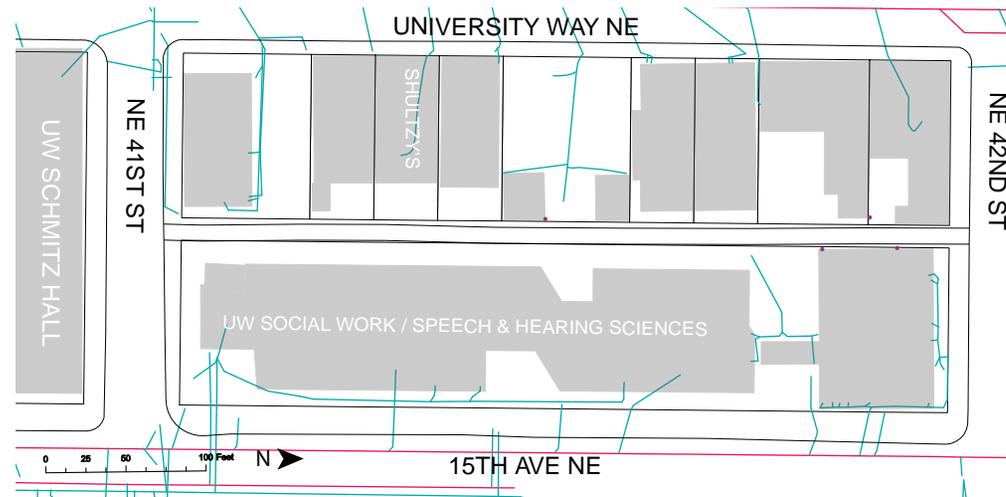
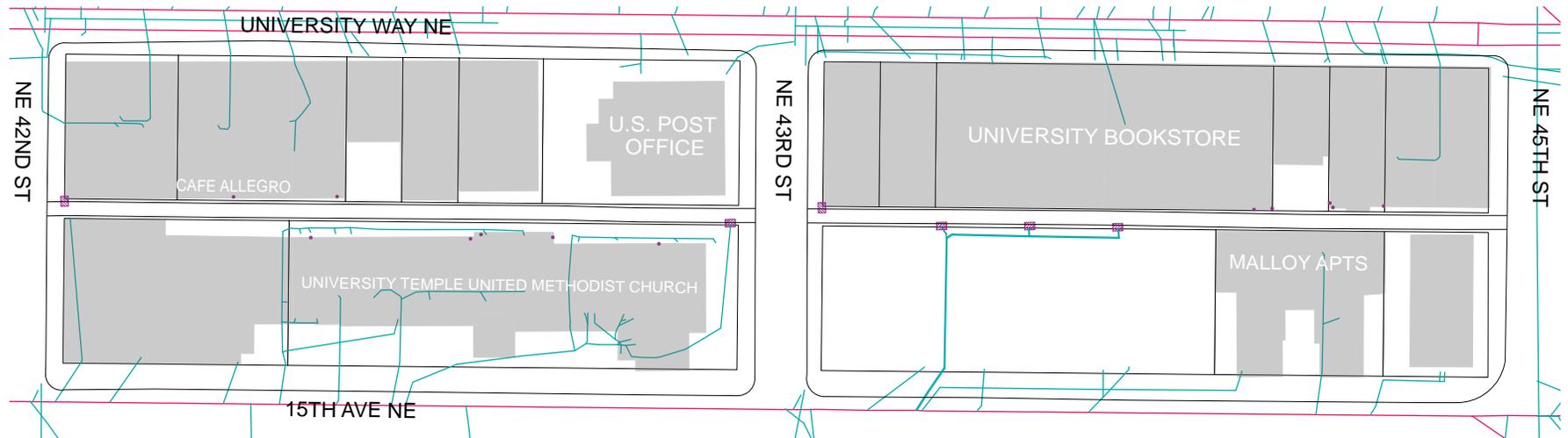


Figure 8: GIS Drainage Map

Stormwater runoff from adjacent buildings is managed differently at each parcel. Some buildings have downspouts along the alley that connect directly to the private side sewer. Other buildings have downspouts that surface discharge into the alley. There is no on-site flow control or water quality treatment for stormwater runoff from the alley.

-  Catch Basin/Inlet
-  Downspout
-  Combined Sewer
-  Sanitary/Side Sewer



Runoff at NE 42nd St being channeled to southern catch basin



Catch basin at NE 43rd St (under dumpster) offset from alley centerline



Runoff channeled down the center of the alley at the University Bookstore

Electrical Utilities

Electrical distribution is located underground along the alleys. Based on the structures, electrical infrastructure appears to be solely distribution; this should be confirmed by an electrical engineer. The system includes underground vaults and maintenance holes typically located in the middle of the alley. Some of these vaults are raised above the grade of the typical alley cross section to prevent surface runoff from entering the structure; other vaults have been retrofitted with a small concrete berm upstream of the vault/structure to prevent surface runoff from entering. The electrical distribution provides service to both the adjacent buildings and street lights that are located intermittently along the west side of the corridor.

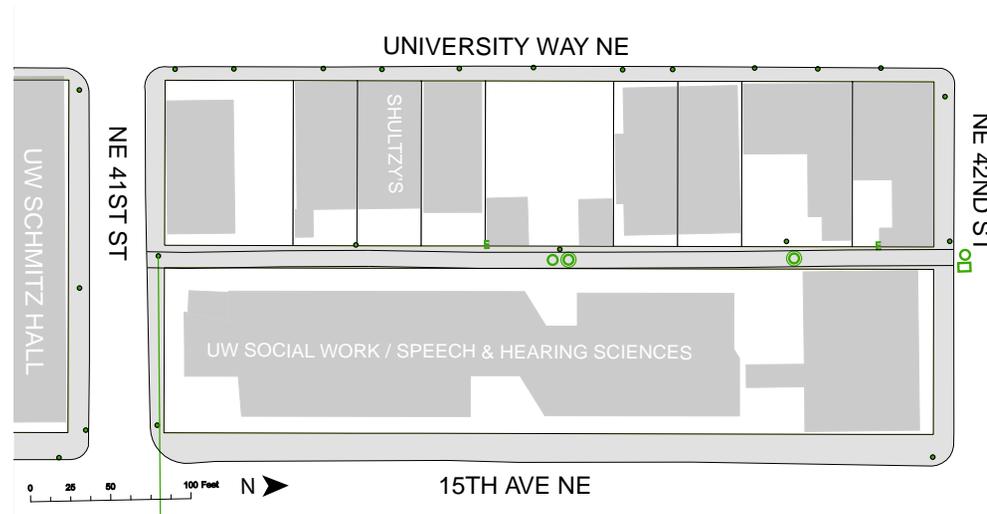
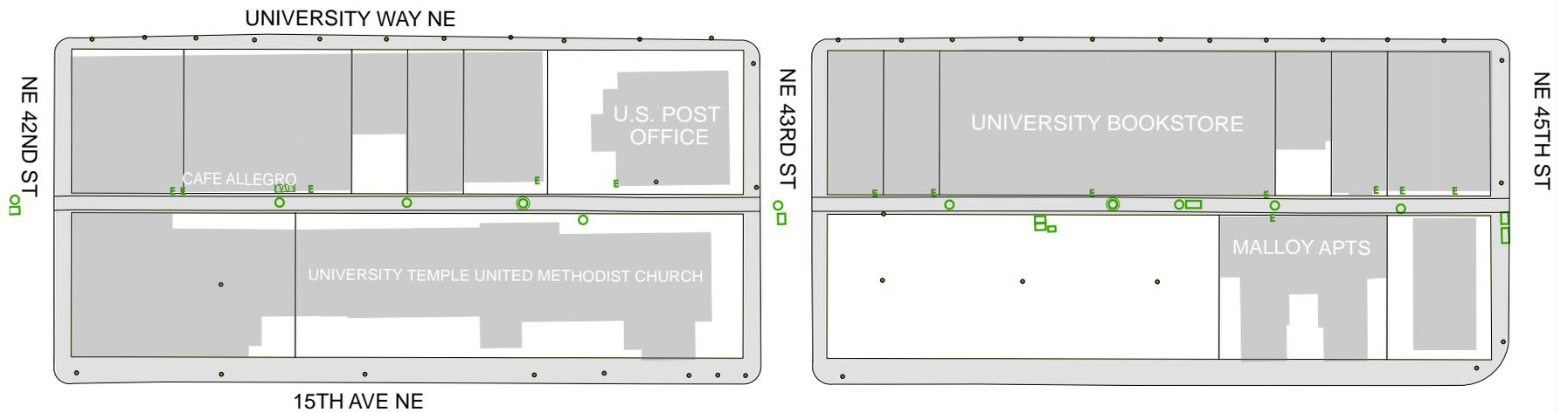


Figure 9: Utility Diagram

-  Raised Maintenance Hole
-  Maintenance Hole
-  Electrical Service Drop
-  Vault
-  SCL Utility Pole
-  SCL Underground Distribution



Maintenance hole near the University Bookstore loading dock



Maintenance hole



Electrical drop



SCL utility pole and maintenance holes

Lighting

Most lighting along the alley is building-related with a few publicly-maintained street lights. The building-related lights have been installed and are managed by the private businesses along the alley, leaving them in various states of repair.

The existing alley-facing businesses have well-lit entrances. These lights along with light from second-story windows that spills onto the alley often creates enough ambient light that gives the alley a safer feel. However, darker spots along the corridor disturb this sense and cause some to refrain from using the alley at certain times of day.

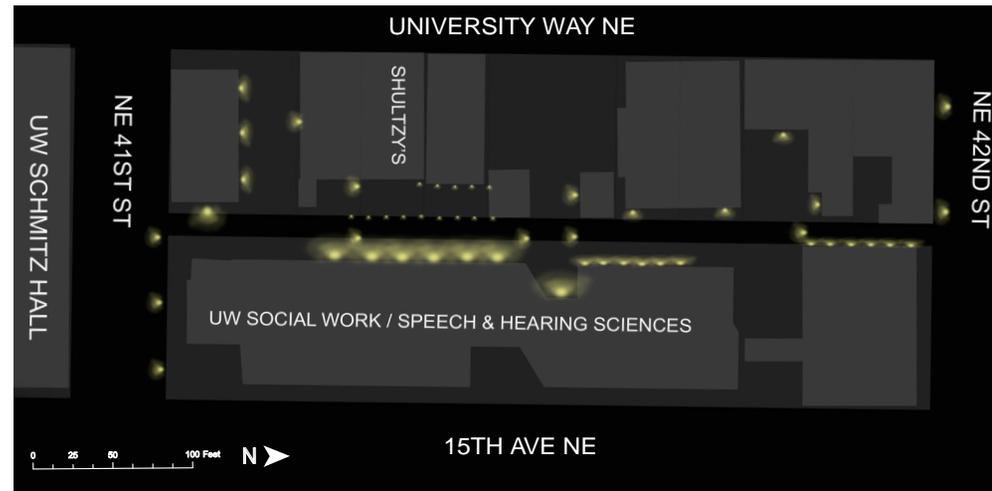


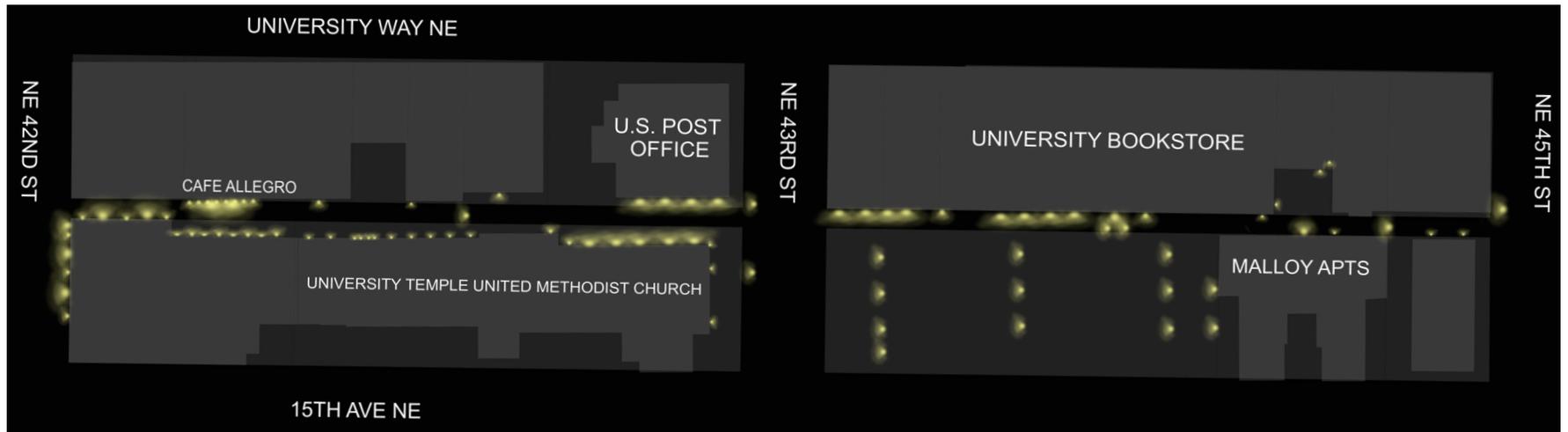
Figure 10: Lighting Diagram



Alley lit by publicly-maintained street light above and adjacent second story windows



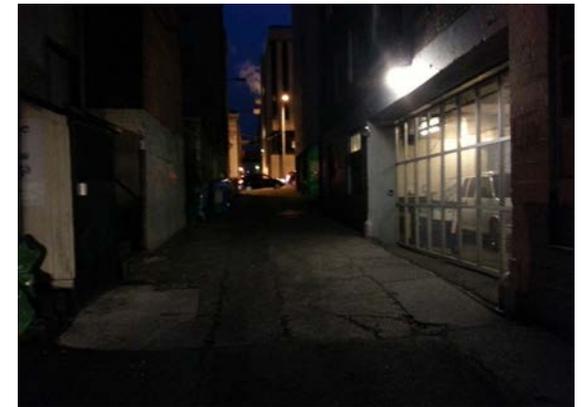
Chapel on the Ave rear parking garage entrance



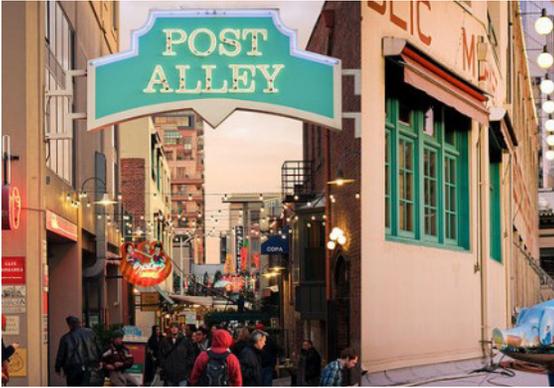
Café Allegro's well-lit entrance



Ambient light from the second story of University Temple United Methodist Church



Dark spot at the north end of the alley with the Malloy Apartments providing the only source of light



Post Alley gateway, Seattle, WA
(via flickr, Katherine Lynn)



Mid-block crosswalk, Bellevue, WA (via ci.bellevue.wa.us)



Ankeny Alley, Chinatown, Portland, OR (via travelportland.com)



Dumpster enclosure, Rochester, MN (via Locus Architecture)



Linden Living Alley, San Francisco, CA (via spontaneousinterventions.org)



Bank Street, Easton, PA; Easton Main Street Initiative (via eastoneccentric.blogspot.com)



Hospitality, Public Safety & Human Services Outreach Team (Seattle Metropolitan Improvement District)



Portland Loo (via City of Portland, OR)



Manigua performing in Nord Alley (via Karen Davis Smith, IS)

OPPORTUNITIES ANALYSIS

To better understand the community's long-term goals, the design team asked the Alley Task Force what they saw as the alley's current assets, the biggest hurdles and their general hopes and fears for the alley activation process. This conversation helped to focus the conversation and directed the design team to explore three broad issues:

- **Operating System**, or the context within which the alley functions;
- **Hardware**, or the physical infrastructure of the alleys, and;
- **Software**, or the social connections and ecology of the alley.

Each of these subject areas were broken down as shown on the following pages.

Community Feedback

With a clear understanding of the salient issues, the design team shared a range of interventions to test the community's appetite for various activation strategies. Varying from quick, easily-implementable interventions to long-term transformations, the community was able to see how other places had solved similar challenges. U District stakeholders then voted on which

interventions seemed to be the right fit for the alleys.

Attendees were given dots to rank the suggested interventions. They placed five green dots on the interventions they thought would work best in the alley, one red dot on what wouldn't work and one yellow dot where they would advise the design team to proceed with caution. Their responses are detailed in the following pages.



Public Feedback on Alley Opportunities at U District Open House, January 29, 2014

OPERATING SYSTEM: CONTEXT

The operating system of the U District alleys is comprised of elements that connect the alleys into the broader district.

Alley Identity

At a district-scale, the alleys have the opportunity to play a special role in the U District, functioning as an integral part of the daily District experience. Creating a strong identity for the alleys that easily integrates into visitors' mental maps of the neighborhood will help make the alleys attractive, vibrant spaces.

Pedestrian Connections

Alleys can function as a key component in the U District pedestrian network, as discussed in the Planning Context section. Safe crossings between alleys at cross streets and east/west mid-block connections can create a fine-grained network allowing pedestrians more routes to destinations.

Alley Business Vitality

The U District alleys can provide a unique niche for small-scale, incubator businesses and back-of-house retail, complementing the primary frontages on the Ave. These businesses in the alleys will contribute to diversified economic vibrancy of the U District.

Alley Identity



Key Insights:

- Name each alley.
- Highlight alley entrances with gateway signage.
- Include alleys as destinations on U District wayfinding.
- Explore vertical fin signage highlighting alley businesses, visible from the cross streets.

Pedestrian Connections



Key Insights:

- Implement formalized, marked crossings at the cross streets.
- Explore a community-organized intersection painting at crossings.
- Formalize pedestrian connections to the alleys.

Economic Vitality



Key Insights:

- No desire to see food trucks operating along the alley.
- Promote business in the alley by creating space for walk-up businesses and by encouraging corner alley businesses to expand operations into the alley (e.g., MOD Pizza).
- Extend the alley's active hours with nighttime business activity and restaurant seating in the alley.

HARDWARE: INFRASTRUCTURE

The U District alley hardware encompasses the physical improvements that will contribute to alley activation.

Infrastructure

Alleys provide a vital district service by accommodating necessary functions such as waste management and pickup, drainage, deliveries and utility connections. These functions can efficiently coexist with pedestrians and active uses in an alley.

Urban Ecology

The Alley Task Force envisions the alleys of the U District as a showcase of environmentally-friendly design. Incorporating planters and green stormwater infrastructure into the alley corridor will not only enhance the functionality of the space but create a vibrant pedestrian environment.

Lighting

Well-lit alleys increase safety and enhance a sense of place. A variety of lighting types, from overhead to wall packs to light art, can create layers of illumination that contribute to a dynamic, appealing feel.

Infrastructure



Key Insights:

- Enclose dumpsters and enhance waste management.
- Repair pavement and incorporate pedestrian-friendly features into a consistent, accessible alley surface.

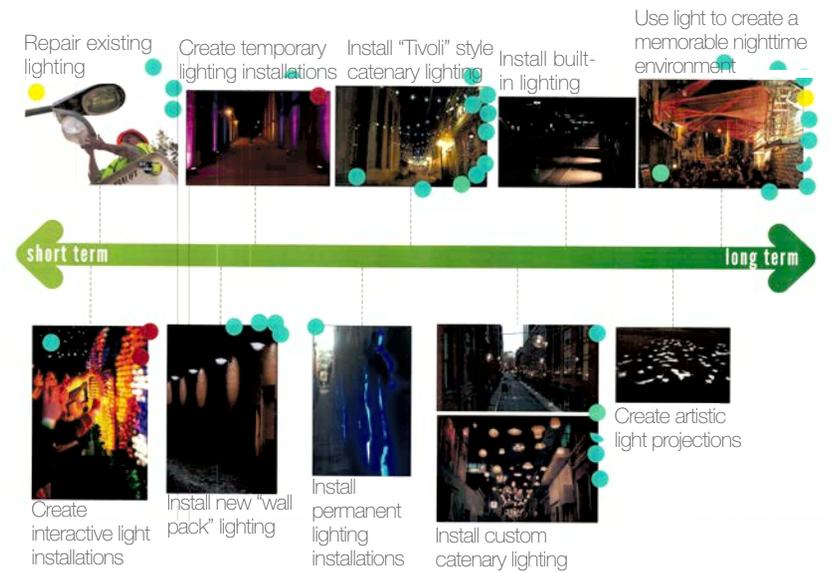
Urban Ecology



Key Insights:

- Support a green transformation of the corridor with in-ground planters and green stormwater infrastructure.
- Install movable planters (both ground-related and vertical) along the corridor.
- Incorporate solar pavers into the alley surface.
- Use plantings and green stormwater infrastructure to manage all drainage.

Lighting



Key Insights:

- Use Tivoli-style catenary lighting throughout the alley corridor.
- Create a memorable nighttime environment.
- Repair and replace existing light fixtures.
- Establish consistent light levels with new wall-mounted lighting.

SOFTWARE: ALLEY PROGRAMMING

The alley software speaks to the social context: the activities and programs that take place in the space, enhancing it as a destination.

Public Safety

In order to encourage best behavior among all alley users, use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles will create a safe, welcoming place for everyone.

Inclusive Design

The Alley Task Force seeks to maintain the corridor as an inclusive space for all, including the social service non-profits along the corridor, which are a valued part of the community.

Events

Regular events and programs reinforce the alleys as unique destinations. Strategic programming can extend the corridor's active hours and lend structure to how the space is used throughout the day.

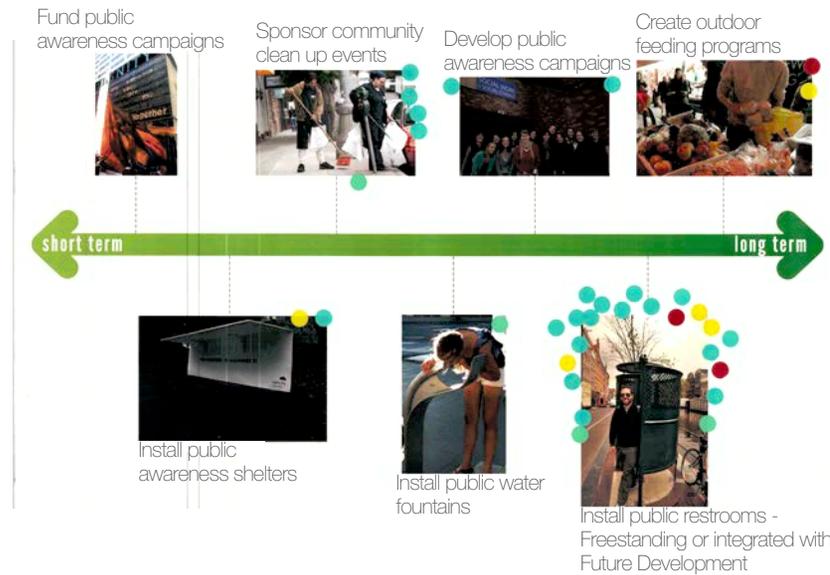
Public Safety



Key Insights:

- Provide ample lighting and create more alley uses that support around-the-clock activity in the alley.
- Avoid installing security cameras or creating a neighborhood crime watch program.
- Consider a U District ambassador program.

Inclusive Design



Key Insights:

- Provide a public restroom along the corridor, with careful planning.
- Sponsor regular alley clean-ups.

Events



Key Insights:

- Create a U District alley events program.
- Host unique performances, movie/sports game viewing and dining events in the space.
- Develop alley-related traditions such as a pre-game “Dawg Run” through the corridor before sporting events.

OPTIONS EXPLORATION

Key Opportunities

The U District community provided invaluable feedback for the design team to consider as they moved into the Options Exploration phase. Overall there was a great desire to seize upon the following opportunities:

- Give each alley an identity.
- Encourage and incubate new businesses.
- Address waste management.
- Preserve a place for nature.
- Promote a safe, comfortable nighttime space with consistent lighting and the presence of other people.
- Make sure there is a place for every one with accessible paving and public restrooms.

Based on feedback received during Opportunities Analysis, the design team created two alley streetscape concepts to test strategies for shaping the alley corridor. These two concepts were presented to U District alley stakeholders. To test several potential strategies for capitalizing on the opportunities, the public's response to these ideas was synthesized into the final concept, presented later (Alley Future). All property and business owners and non-profit leaders along the alley corridor were invited to this public open house to review the streetscape

concepts. They discussed the two options and provided feedback on how the concepts might be refined. The two concepts—Zipper and Thread—are presented in the pages that follow. The community's feedback and the final proposed design are presented in the next chapter.

Zipper

Inspired by the corridor's role as a seam between the University and the neighborhood's commercial core, the Zipper knits together these two zones through interlocking smaller-scale spaces. These strategies allow for incremental investment and transformation over time.

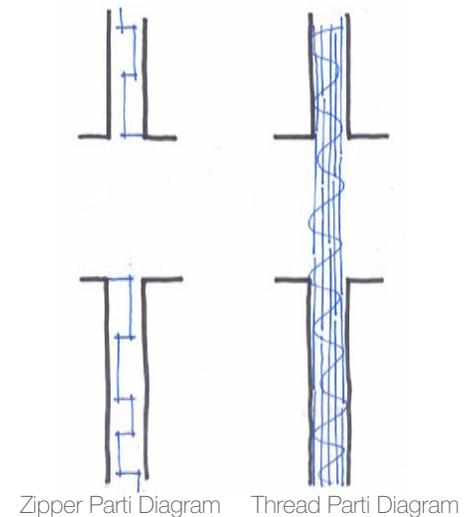
Thread

The Thread envisions all three alley segments as a continuous, pedestrian-oriented corridor. The alleys become a unified, memorable thoroughfare. In contrast to the Zipper concept, implementation of the Thread concept would require a larger, initial capital outlay.

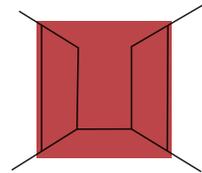
The concepts differ in other important ways. The five characteristics below articulate the differences between the two options:

- **Space:** how the “urban room” of the corridor was created;
- **Surface:** the horizontal plane of the corridor;
- **Movement:** how people would move into, out of and through the space;
- **Identity:** the ways a memorable identity for the corridor was created; and
- **Activity:** the ways that users could enliven and animate the space through various programmatic activities.

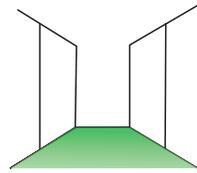
The differences between the concepts are explored in more detail on the facing page.



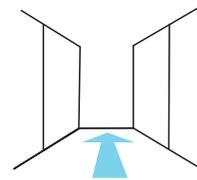
CONCEPT COMPARISON MATRIX



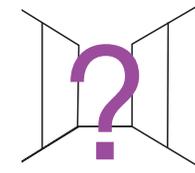
SPACE



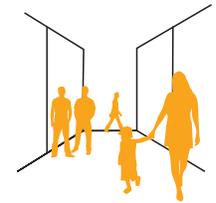
SURFACE



MOVEMENT



IDENTITY



ACTIVITY

ZIPPER

Inspired by the alley's role as a seam between the University and the neighborhood's commercial core, the ZIPPER knits together these two zones through interlocking smaller-scale spaces.

- Building setbacks create varied spaces: eddies and flows.
- The alley is a series of invitations into those eddies.
- Canopies and awnings hang off of buildings into the alley. There would be no continuous canopy.

- Interlocking poured concrete panels invite pedestrians into eddies at the side of the alley, blurring the lines between the public alley and adjacent properties/business' "backyards."
- In-ground planters take advantage of setbacks and provide opportunities for trees.

- The alley creates pause points for people, cars and activities.
- The alley would be open to vehicular traffic at all hours.
- Each alley/street intersection would have a unique treatment.
- Cross-block access through businesses or privately-owned, public spaces.

- Each alley segment has its own name.
- Each alley segment showcases small-scale art opportunities unique to that segment's identity.
- Varied lights spill from the buildings. Tivoli lights zig and zag overhead.

- The alleys are open to all modes at all hours.
- Programming takes the form of smaller-scale, business-sponsored events in each business' "backyard".
- Amenities (restrooms/water fountains) installed in bump outs/eddies through development agreements.

THREAD

The THREAD envisions all three alley segments as a continuous, pedestrian-oriented corridor. It serves the neighborhood as an memorable, walkable thoroughfare.

- Continuous, unified space without building setbacks. The entire three-block corridor functions as one unified experience.
- A continuous corridor canopy provides all-weather protection. A retractable canopy allows summer sun into the alleys.

- Simple, continuous surface. Centerline trench drain with unit pavers.
- Unifying planter opportunities throughout the corridor: green walls, consistent planters.
- Loose, mobile chairs brought into the alley and removed when vehicles are present.

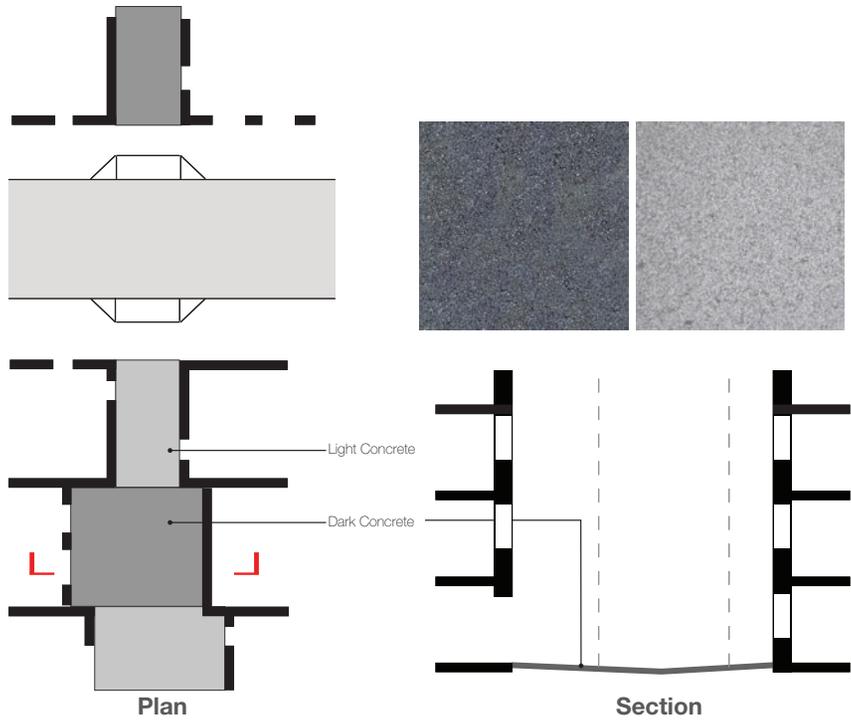
- Alley corridor prioritizes pedestrian circulation with vehicles as invited guests during certain times of the day.
- Festival street designation to allow for easy programming.
- Raised crosswalks as standard treatment for all crossings.
- Consistent public access along the alley and public, cross-block passageways.

- All three alley segments share a common, corridor-scale identity.
- Memorable, permanent art installations.
- Steady lighting levels achieved through continuous, rhythmic placement of lights along the corridor and in the overhead canopy structure.

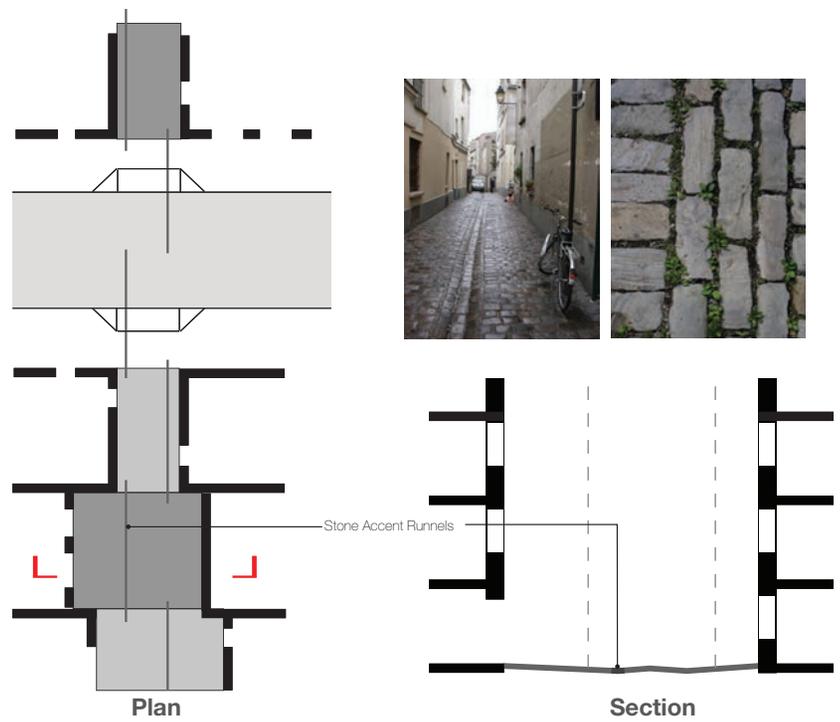
- Festival street designation with managed closures at certain times of day.
- Alley corridor functions as a venue: continuous, shared event space.
- Public restrooms and water fountains in new buildings are part of a public benefits package.

CREATING THE ZIPPER

Space



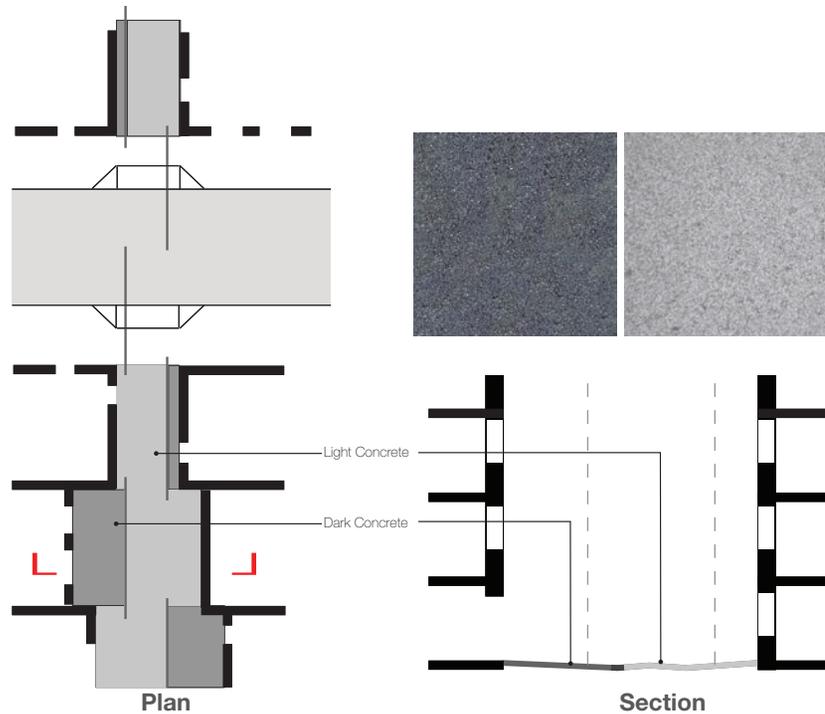
Surface



- Use a modulation of concrete treatments to create a rhythm along the alley and break up the space into a series of smaller spaces.
- Coordinate with redevelopment plans to “notch in” the concrete panels onto private parcels.

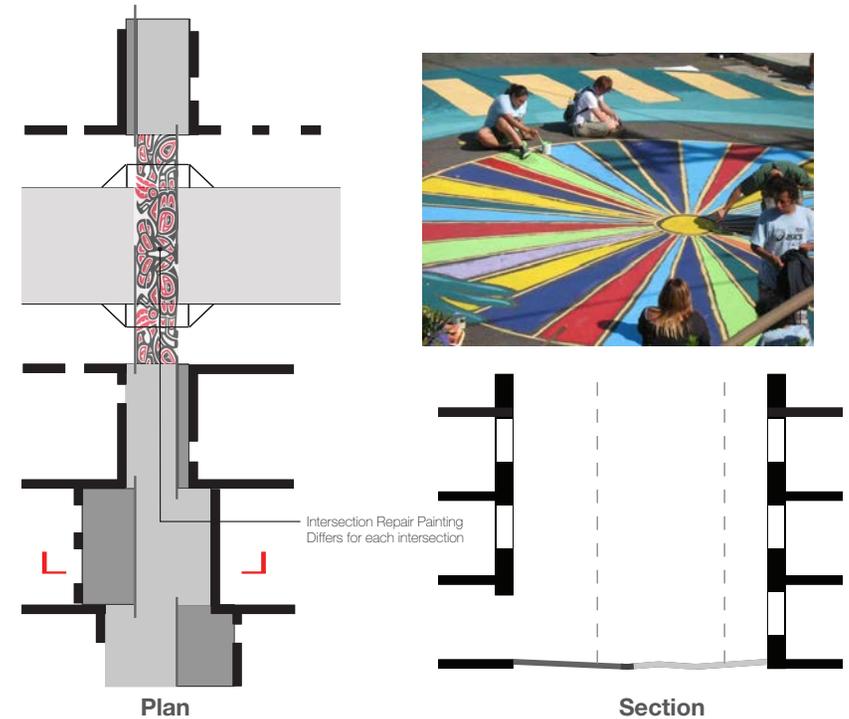
- Use small, alternating runnels to differentiate a central “drive aisle” along the corridor from spaces at the edge that could be used for different purposes.
- Use a unit paving material, like stone or brick, for runnels to create a pedestrian-friendly alley environment.

Consistent Aisle



- Replace the alternating pattern shown in the previous two images with a “teeth-like” pattern of specialty concrete that extends into the alley and is captured by the runnel.
- Create a “W” section for the alley to direct stormwater into the runnels. Rather than having one stormwater structure at the bottom of the alley, the runnels could collect water in multiple locations.

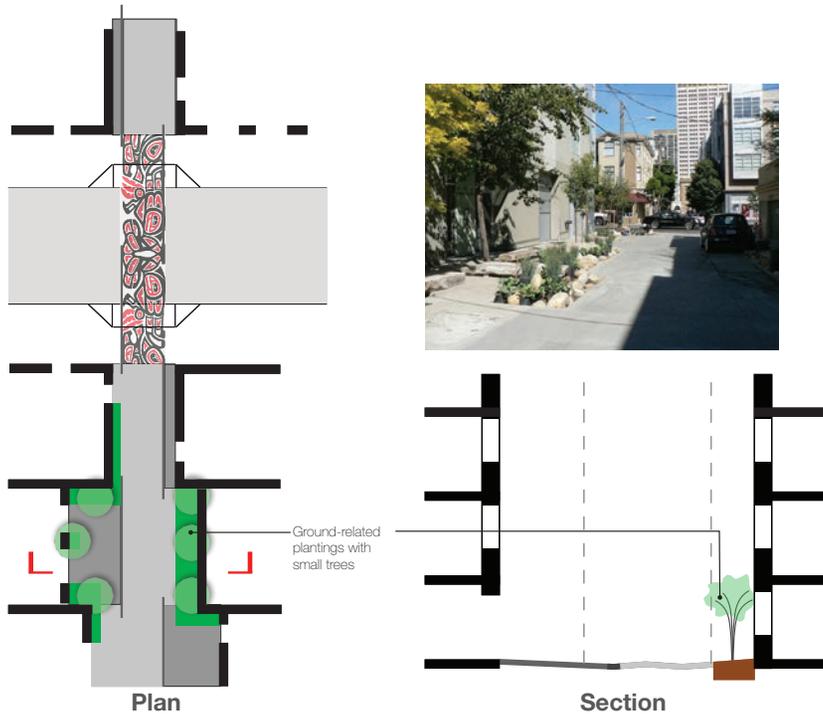
Intersections



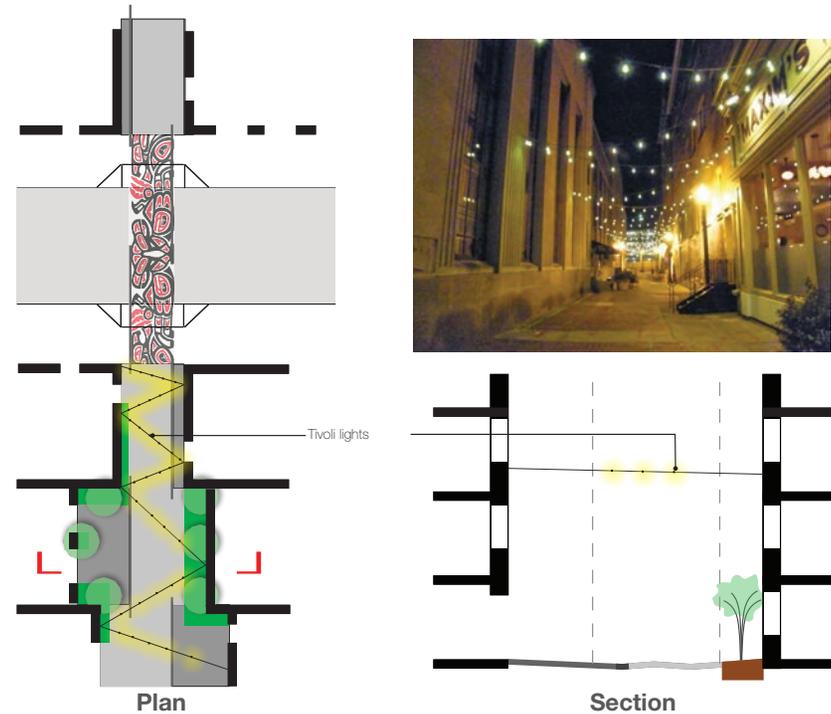
- Use crowd-sourced designs at intersections to paint a unique crossing treatment onto the streets.

CREATING THE ZIPPER

Plantings



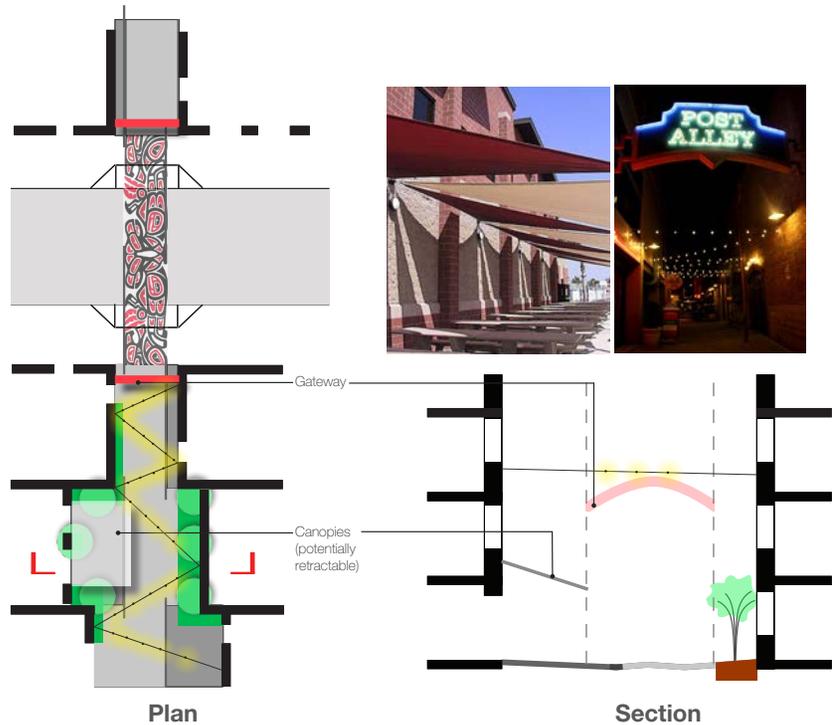
Lighting



- Invite plantings into the alley as opportunities arise.
- Manage private and/or public stormwater runoff, through green stormwater infrastructure in these planting areas.

- String Tivoli-style lights overhead to enhance the ambiance of the alley and create a safe, accessible environment at night.

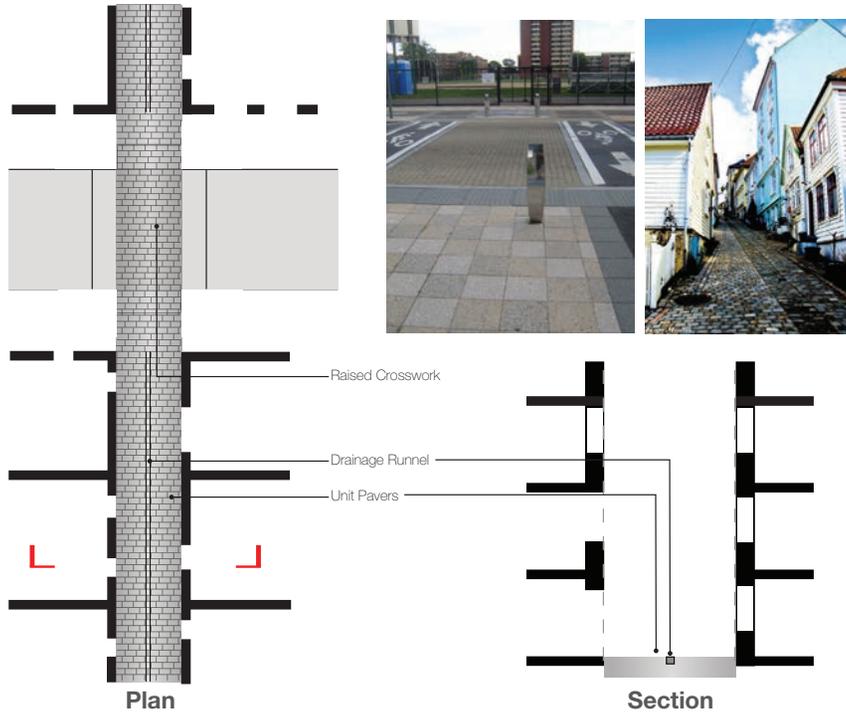
Overhead



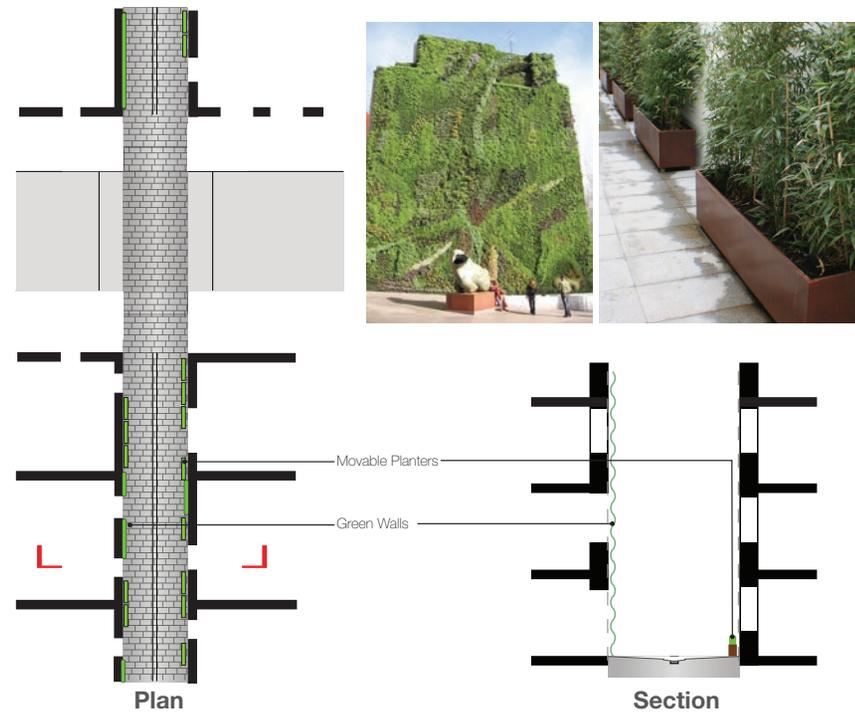
- Encourage private businesses to create canopies for weather protection.
- Install gateway elements at each end of the alleys.

CREATING THE THREAD

Space + Surface



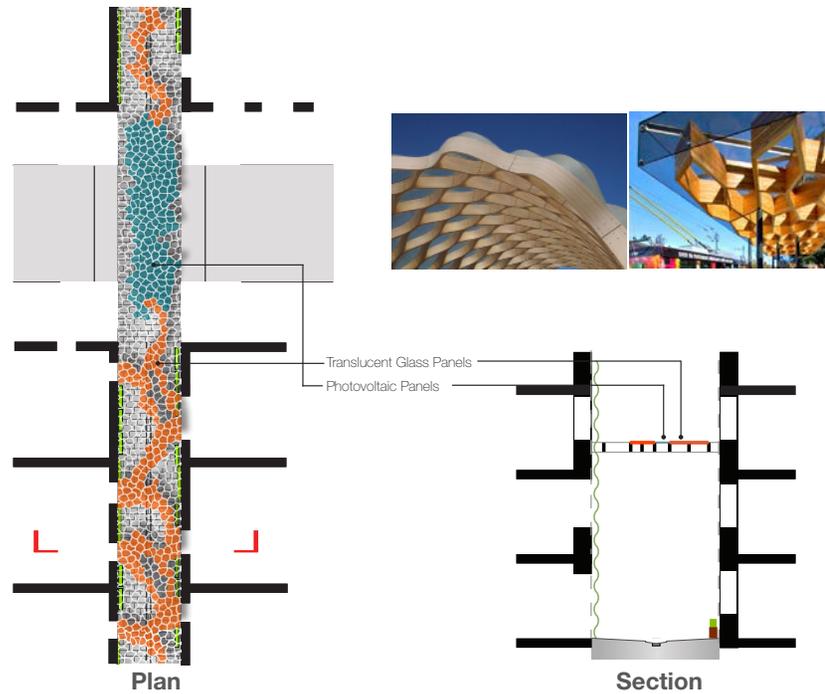
Plantings



- Create a unified alley corridor by employing a consistent unit paving strategy that extends the length of the alley.
- Raise the intersection at cross-streets to provide a continuous raised surface for pedestrians and to slow cars on the perpendicular streets.

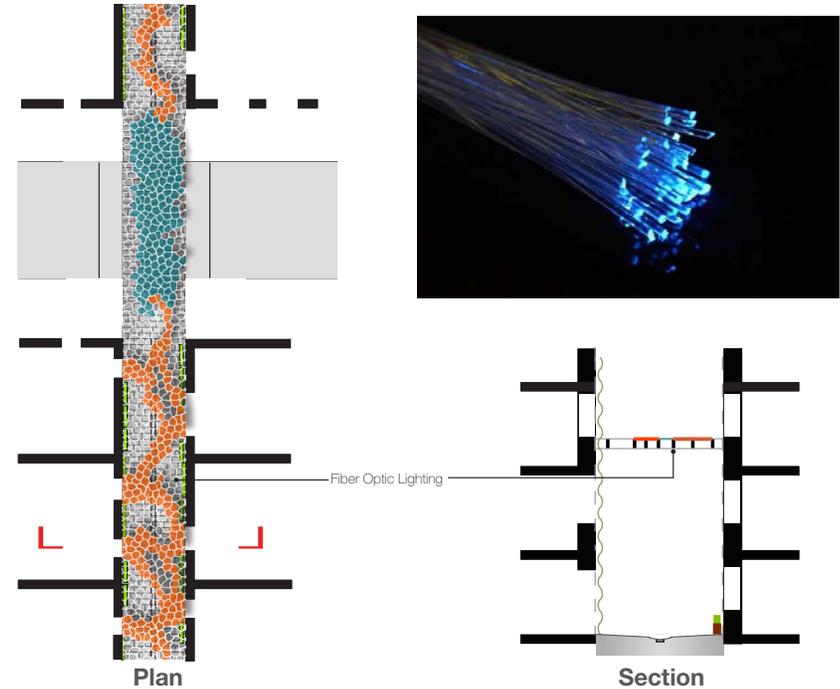
- Use raised planters and/or green walls—like the existing wall at Magus Books—to help keep nature a part of the alley experience despite limited space for in-ground planting.

Overhead Canopy



- Create a protected walking route (in pink) that allows visitors to stay out of the rain and access businesses under the canopy.
- Use photovoltaics to generate power at intersections where buildings allow solar access.

Lighting



- Create a dynamic ceiling of light on the underside of the canopy structure with fiber optic cables.

ACTIVITY

Alleys support a number of activities and, even when used as a pedestrian-friendly, inviting public space, alleys must continue to accommodate all types of uses. Residents, shoppers, diners, and pedestrians moving to and from destinations activate the alley. The intensity and duration of these activities depend on the types of retail uses on the ground floor and alley programming. The graphs to the right compare pedestrian activity for the Zipper and Thread alternatives immediately, and the expected growth after full implementation of each concept.

	<i>Type of Use</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Needs/Challenges</i>
Residents	Access to vehicle parking and residential units	Daily	Physical access required at all times ADA accessibility
UW Student / Faculty / Work	Mobility and movement	Daily	Sense of safety and comfort Visibility
Shoppers	Access and use of alley activities (e.g., seating and incubator business)	Daily	
Police Department	Safety	As needed	
Social Services	Queueing and gathering	Daily (8-9pm) and weekly (5-7pm T/Th/F, 1-5pm F/Su)	
SPU / Garbage Services	Trash and recycling pick-up; access to stormwater infrastructure	Daily or as needed	Load-bearing surface material Width and length clearance
Fire Department	Truck access	As needed	Truck clearance
Business Deliveries	Deliveries, loading, and services	Daily	

THREAD

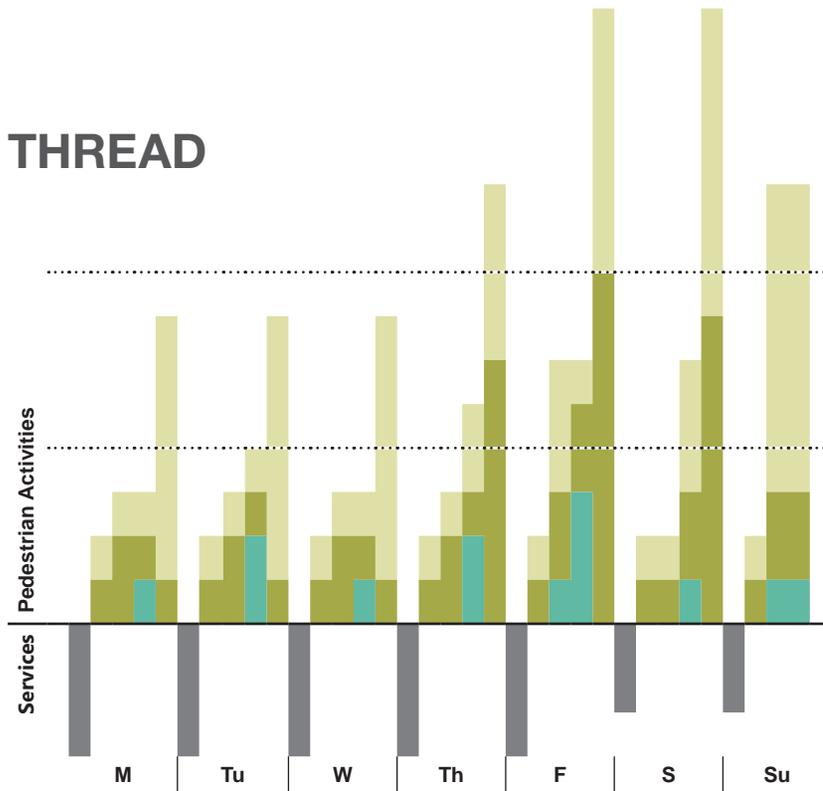


Figure 11: Thread Activity Diagram

These conceptual activity graphics attempt to forecast how the alley corridor will be activated at various times of day and days of the week.

ZIPPER

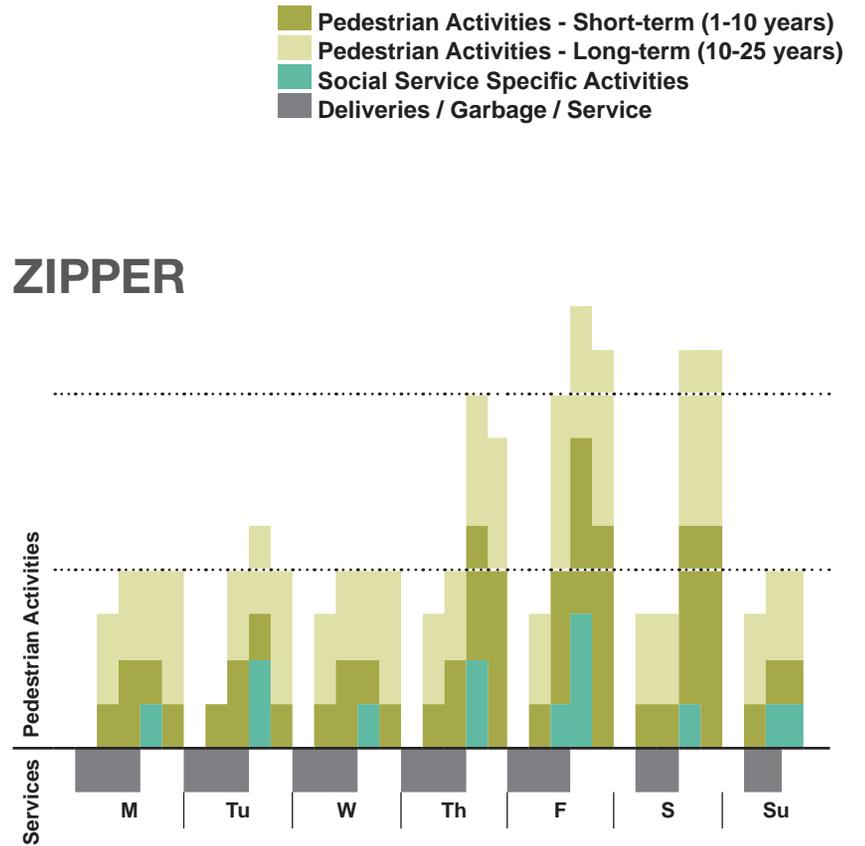


Figure 12: Zipper Activity Diagram

These conceptual activity graphics attempt to forecast how the alley corridor will be activated at various times of day and days of the week.



TRIPPI STRAY

CAFE

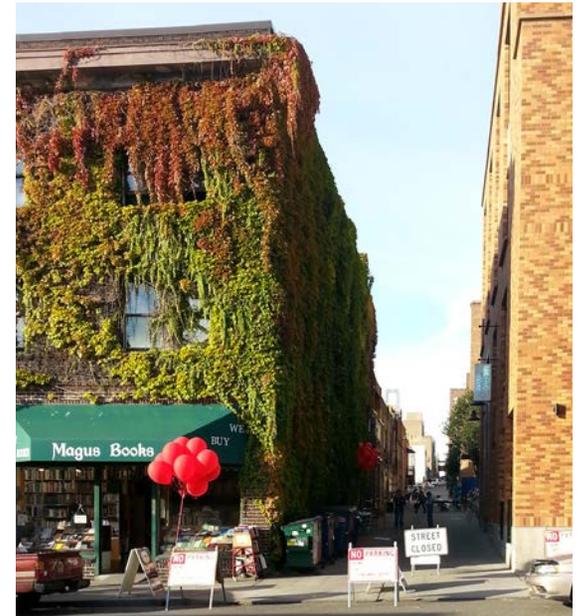
ALLEY FUTURE

The public response to the two options was remarkable for its consistency. The U District community knows what works for it and what doesn't, showing a clear appreciation for the balanced ecology of the alley. Some of the stakeholders' key insights included the following:

- **Diversity:** Everyone acknowledged that the alley blocks are naturally different, and that those differences are important and should be preserved. Some areas of the alley, for example, are residential with quieter uses, whereas others have more of a nightlife focus, lending themselves to longer, louder hours. These differences should not be glossed over, but are important for future alley improvements. Nightlife-oriented alleys might encourage more outdoor seating and lighting, whereas more alley-accessed residences might be appropriate for other alley segments.
- **Variety and Eclecticism:** Many of the stakeholders spoke of the accumulated eclecticism of the alley. The areas of the alley that feel most like a place happened because of accreted interventions that built up over time, without much of a plan in place. This eclecticism is a valued part of the community and

should be celebrated and allowed to flourish in the future. Providing zones where adjacent property owners and businesses can add their “stamp” to the alleys makes a positive contribution to the community.

- **Feasibility:** The long-term success of the University District has always rested on the actions of many interested parties dedicated to the community. This next phase in the neighborhood's evolution will be no different. The community wants a set of guidance documents that is flexible, yet articulates a strong vision for the alley. Newcomers to the community need to know that the community is eager to engage in a conversation about how to make the alley a wonderful place, and the guidelines that follow are a starting point for that discussion. As mentioned above, eclecticism is also important and rote application of these guidelines should not overpower the unique opportunities of a given site.
- **Parking:** Existing alley-accessed parking for residents should be maintained. While existing alley-abutting surface parking could be



Ivy covering Magus Books building wrapping into alley at NE 42nd St.



Alley mural between NE 41st and 42nd Streets

U DISTRICT ALLEY SUCCESS STORY: CAFÉ ALLEGRO



You should have seen the alley in the 1980s and 1990s, recalls Chris Peterson, one of Café Allegro’s owners; that was the alley’s “pedestrian heyday.” Owing to its proximity to the Post Office and University Bookstore, Allegro was baked into the daily routine of thousands of students “back in the day when everything wasn’t online and students had to show up at these locations in person to take care of business,” Peterson recalls.

Peterson has been instrumental in some of the alley’s success stories, including helping to coordinate a recycling program for the alley businesses in the 1980s. He soon became a leader as neighboring businesses and social service agencies united as a *de facto* alley neighborhood.

From those early days, Peterson’s approach to managing a business on the alley has remained the same: he actively works to convene other alley leaders around the common issues. Due in part to his efforts, the alley neighbors between NE 43rd and NE 42nd Streets are a tight-knit community. Chris sees this sense of ownership and community among alley neighbors as the key to the alley’s continued success.

For example, this *ad hoc* community proactively refined the development plans for the new building across from the Café. Presenting a united front, they petitioned the developers through the City’s design review process to create an alley-friendly building. As a result of their activism, the new development features a set-back across from the Café, business entrances facing the alley, a handsome alley façade/frontage, and, perhaps most importantly, a parking garage entrance off 15th Ave rather than through the alley.

Over the coming years, Peterson hopes to see the alley become as vibrant as the Ave with bustling storefronts and high-quality façades and streetscapes. He would love to see a festival street designation so that his neighbors can quickly create a pedestrian/event-friendly space by closing the alley to vehicle traffic. Peterson would also like to see the same public safety elements on the Ave present in the alley.

Peterson concludes, “Allegro could’ve expanded anywhere but we’re investing here because we believe in the potential of this place.” And he is excited to share that vision with new neighbors and businesses as they come into the community.

continued, expanding alley-accessible parking should be discouraged. Using 15th Ave NE to provide parking access will keep the alley a more vibrant space in the long-run. Additionally, economic realities and the success stories of alley activation by the “pioneer businesses” like Cafe Allegro and Shultz’s will help transform some of the spaces currently being used as parking into functional, alley-fronting outdoor spaces.

- **Pedestrian Scale and Comfort:** Maintaining light and access to the alley, providing opportunities for plantings, keeping varied façades and using smaller paving increments can help keep the corridor pedestrian-friendly.
- **Lighting:** Create a consistent lighting approach that works for everyone in the alley. To the extent possible, use solar power to create a “solar ceiling” in the alley using strands of Tivoli-style lights. Additional building lighting should be used to emphasize entrances off the alley.

- **Waste Management:** In the near term, provide corrals and other opportunities to congregate and control rubbish in the alley. Waste contractors have expressed a willingness to provide additional services or provide a different operating model to make waste management a more positive aspect of the alley.
- **Pronto! Cycle Share:** Since the alleys are envisioned as part of the University District’s active transportation network, making Pronto! Cycle Share easily accessible will help make connections to and enliven the alleys. Pronto! stations could be located close to the alley or along the perpendicular streets.

On the following pages, a new vision for the long-term future of the alley is articulated. Since both the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) will have responsibility for permitting and advising new development about the community’s desires, the vision is broken up into an Urban Design Guidelines and Street Concept Plan to make them usable by their respective audiences. The Street Concept Plan is supported by a Technical Appendix at the end of this document.



Example of a business “backyard,” alley-fronting outdoor space



Through block alley passageway

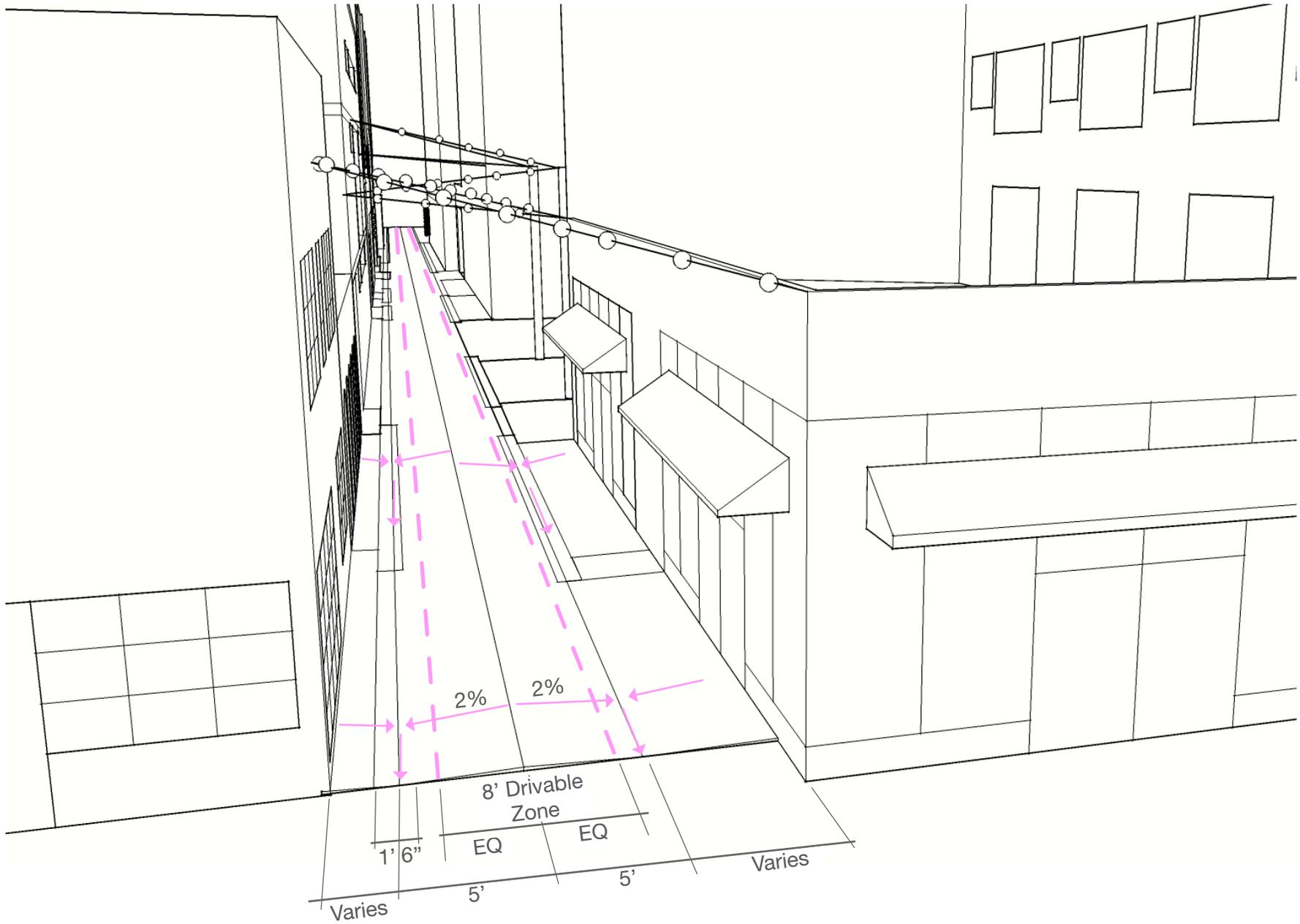


Figure 13: Street Concept diagram illustrating the drainage and geometry of the street. See the Street Concept Plan Technical Appendix for further information.

STREET CONCEPT PLAN

The following pages present the schematic street concept plan for the University District Alleys. Technical information regarding the alleys can be found in the Existing Conditions section of this document and in the Technical Appendix at the end of this document.

This concept plan was most informed by the Zipper concept presented during Options Analysis phase.

These illustrations are provided to convey intent. No individual property is required to make any change based upon these guidelines.

Drivable Zone

While the community's intent is to create a vibrant "shared space" similar to a Dutch woonerf, a critical function of the alley is, and will continue to be, for service: providing a space where garbage trucks can pick up refuse and a place where delivery trucks, residents, and patrons can access alley-fronting residences and businesses.

The alley concept must maintain vehicle access (shown in pink dashes). The largest truck accessing the alley has an eight-foot wheel base, so the alley guidelines create a "sacred" zone down the center of the alley that is kept clear of any obstructions to allow for vehicular access.

This zone is paved with the City of Seattle's standard alley concrete, but scored with the City's standard sidewalk scoring pattern with a 2' by 2' grid.

Drainage

Rather than the standard inverted crown Seattle alley drainage strategy, the University District alleys use a "W" cross-section.

This design slopes water away from the buildings and from the center of the alley into drainage runnels, located 5' from the edge of the alley right-of-way.

This approach offers three advantages over the standard alley section. First, it splits the

relatively significant flow into two channels, providing some level of redundancy with two catch basins at the low end of the alley. This redundancy means there is less of a chance that one side of the alley is impacted if there is localized flooding, as can be seen near Magus Books. As projects are fully engineered, additional catch basins can be used at mid-block locations at the end of the drainage runnels.

Second, this configuration allows for pedestrians to more comfortably move through the alley, creating a relatively flat surface down the center of the alley. From an accessibility perspective, this allows users to move up and down the alley and to turn within the center of the alley in order to access adjacent businesses.

Finally, the drainage begins to act as a space-defining feature, demarcating the seam between different pavement types, different alley zones, and even defining landscaping or green stormwater infrastructure facilities, as allowed on adjacent private property.



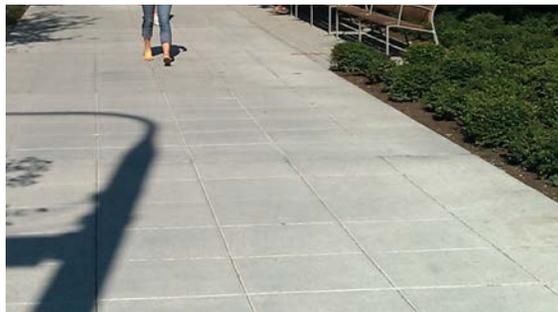
Figure 14: A diagrammatic illustration of where various pavement types should appear within the alley.

The alley concept includes three pavement types that give the alley the feel of a place that has evolved, rather than a space that has been developed at a single point in time. These are:

Standard Concrete

The alley is primarily paved with concrete per the City of Seattle’s standard specifications. This pavement extends the length of the alley, providing a robust, reliable surface for service trucks and other heavy use vehicles. Rather than simply brushed finish panels, the standard concrete here is edged and trowelled similar to the City of Seattle’s standard concrete sidewalk with a more pedestrian-scaled 2’ by 2’ grid along the entire corridor.

A benefit to this “plain” concrete running through the center of the alley is that as utilities need to be replaced or rehabilitated,



City of Seattle Standard 2x2 Concrete Sidewalk.

contractors can use this readily available material without having to worry about matching a premium concrete finish.

Specialty Concrete

At the edges of the alley, specialty concrete is used periodically to reinforce a rhythmic alteration of materials that further breaks up the space. Though still using a 2’ x 2’ grid, this specialty concrete is finished in ways that are quite different from the standard concrete paving described in the previous section. First, the concrete has a darker finish. Second, rather than trowelled joints, the specialty concrete uses saw-cut joints to achieve a precise, finished appearance. Finally, the specialty concrete is lightly sandblasted rather than broom finished.

As the alleys continue to evolve and mature, these specialty concrete aprons can serve



Examples of specialty concrete.

as the “front porches” for the alley-fronting businesses and residences.

Accent Pavers

Intermittently along the runnel of the “W,” stone unit pavers are used in 1’6” wide bands. The purpose of these bands is to help break up and modulate the horizontal surface, giving the alley more of a pedestrian-scaled rhythm and texture. These accents also reinforce the perception of a thinner drive aisle.

These materials can be various unit pavers, as preferred by the adjacent development and approved by SDOT. One idea for these pavers could be to pay homage to the various personalities who helped influence the trajectory of the alley: from homeless youth lost to the University District’s streets to Philip Thiel, from Bob Quinn to Dave Olsen. Each carved their stories into this place, and the paving could offer a way to



Examples of accent pavers.



Figure 15: Ways in which design teams can incorporate nature and lighting into the alley environment.

Plantings

While activating the building façades to create a more pedestrian-friendly edge is important to perceptions of safety and well being, plantings are also important to ensure that there is “nearby nature” in this smallest of urban spaces.

Plantings should adhere to crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles so that hiding spaces are not created along the alley. Similarly, plants should be placed in such a way as to not impede pedestrian safety, particularly in sight triangles where vehicles access the alley. Plants taller than 30” should not be used within 30’ of a perpendicular right of way.

Lower-growing, shade-tolerant plantings will likely predominate the planting scheme, with some taller, visually permeable trees where space and sightlines allow. Where possible, adjacent properties should use plantings in coordination with green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) facilities.

Lighting

In smaller spaces like alleys, lighting offers one of the most cost-effective strategies for creating a sense of safe, welcoming space. SDOT guidance requires that temporary overhead structures be placed 16’ above the pavement surface and permanent structures 24’ above the surface. Strands of Tivoli-style lights, strung opportunistically across the alley, will create a lighted ceiling that provides consistent, romantic lighting throughout the alley.

Along the buildings, a variety of lights should also be employed to illuminate and activate building façades. Most important are lights at doorway entries. The warm glow from a light will make visitors feel welcomed and may discourage unwanted guests from sleeping in doorways.



Boston Ivy (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*)



Tellima grandiflora



Vine Maple (*Acer circinatum*)



Vancouveria hexandra



Sword Fern (*Polystichum munitum*)



Epimedium

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design guidelines are used by the Northeast Design Review Board District during design review of new commercial and multifamily buildings. They encourage new development to complement and enhance its surroundings. The guidelines also direct designers and project reviewers to look closely at the neighborhood and to provide a forum that allows public participation in discussion.

There are two types of guidelines that apply to development in the University District:

- **Seattle Design Guidelines**—apply to all areas of the city except downtown, and
- **University Neighborhood Design Guidelines**—offer guidance that is more specific to the features and character of the neighborhood.

The **University Neighborhood Design Guidelines** were adopted in 2000. Since that time, there has been significant growth in the area. Accordingly, the City will initiate a community process to update the guidelines (expected in 2016).

Interim Recommendations:

The following section proposes additional alley-specific strategies to supplement design guidance for new development along alleys during this interim period, and to inform the update in 2016.

The headers and numbering system for all relevant guidelines have been correlated with the citywide guidelines format under these three themes:

- Context and Site,
- Public Life, and
- Design Concept.

The proposals in this section are predicated on the fact that University District Alleys are an important element of the District's public realm. The city-wide and neighborhood guidelines address design issues for principal street fronts that may or may not be appropriate to alleys. Therefore, these guidelines address many of those same issues specifically for the alley context.

For brevity, only the most relevant City guidelines have been included. The following section includes a more detailed description of strategies and design approaches to consider. This approach addresses open spaces and buildings facing an alley. Photos and diagrams offer examples and inspiration.

Also included are considerations for existing buildings (EB). While existing buildings are not subject to design review, these design strategies may be voluntarily applied during a remodel/renovation to achieve urban design qualities that are valued by the City and community members.

Context and Site

CS1-E2. Adding Interest with Building Systems: On alley fronts, use the building's drainage system or mechanical equipment as a design element and an opportunity to add interest. Consider how other building systems (e.g., air conditioning units) could also be exposed.

EB: Where space is available, consider installing a cistern to store rooftop runoff for irrigation. Install green screens or small planters along the building's edge to introduce a layer of green vegetation.

CS2-C1. Corner Sites: Corner sites serve as gateways into alleys. Enhance street/alley corners by 1) providing extra space for pedestrians (including a generous building entry, take-out counter, display window, or other feature) or 2) providing a strong spatial edge by building out to the corner and including a special feature or artwork.

EB: Add special design features (e.g., artwork, bright painting, signage) at the corner of alleys to entice passersby.

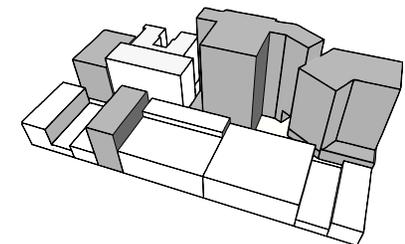
CS3-B1. Placemaking: In alleys, explore the University District's history as a potential placemaking opportunity. Themes might include the University District's bohemian art culture (e.g., Mark Tobey, Elizabeth Bishop), important early businesses, and the district's role in civic affairs (e.g., the anti-war movement). Place a prominent focal point or landmark every 120 feet (i.e., 30 seconds of walking). While the spacing is not a hard and fast rule, such a linear sequence gives the alley corridor its identity.



CS1-E2. This interactive and artistic façade channelizes water flow into a series of instruments to create music.



CS2-C1. Opening and outdoor seating at this corner take advantage of southern light exposure.



CS2-D1. New buildings shown in grey illustrate height, bulk, and scale that is comparable to their surroundings. Although the large development is slightly unconventional, this mimics the narrower building width typical within the alley.

Public Life

PL1-B1. Through-Block Connections: Street grids of 300 feet or less are most friendly to a pedestrian. Since north-south blocks in the district are over 500 feet long, providing additional east-west pedestrian connections to increase circulation and alley access is highly desirable and is an important feature when considering design departures. These can be enclosed within a building (e.g., the University Bookstore) or open to the outside.

PL1-C2. Outdoor Uses and Activities: Provide water spigots and electrical outlets on new façades to support a variety of outdoor activities.

EB: Remove fences and other barriers to ensure that existing passageways wider than five feet are accessible to pedestrians. Improve visibility to both enclosed and open passageways by adding signage, color, or other design features.

PL2-B1. Eyes on the Street: Especially in alleys, create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encourage natural surveillance through strategic placement of doors, windows, and balconies. Consider pulling the second or third story of the building back from the

alley for rooftop cafés or other informal gathering spaces.

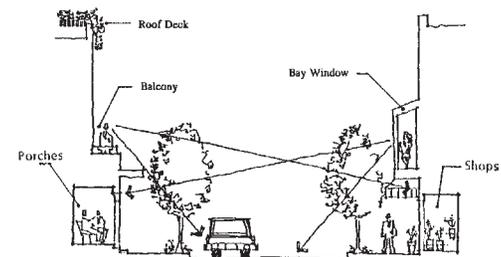
EB: Except where energy efficiency is an over-riding concern, open window coverings (i.e., blinds) throughout the day and keep existing windows clear from clutter. Where existing balconies and accessible rooftops exist, explore measures to activate these spaces.

PL2-B3. Retail Visibility: Where appropriate, use glazing and transparency on alley-facing façades to engage pedestrians with a view of interior uses. Consider fully operational wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to alleys.

EB: Take full advantage of existing alley front windows and doors on the ground floor to provide visibility. Where extra retail space exists, allow secondary uses to inhabit the alley frontage. These may include incubator businesses, walk-up cafés, bike shops, or other pedestrian-oriented uses.



PL1-B1. This mid-block crossing wraps vegetation, pattern and glazing through the development to create an inviting pedestrian space.



PL2-B1. The more people that can see and be seen using the alley, the greater the sense of security and perceived safety.



PL2-B3. Glazed, operable windows can be opened fully to the street, expanding the public space along the alley.

PL2-C1. Weather Protection Location and Coverage: Overhead weather protection in alleys is encouraged, provided that it does not extend into the vehicle drive lane (which extends 20' above any area accessible to vehicles. Ensure that such covered areas do not encourage loitering.

Note: Large covered areas without good visibility may encourage undesirable activities. Covered areas should be sized, located, and designed for safety and security.

EB: Ensure adequate maintenance of existing awnings in alleys. Add new overhead protection to signify public entrances and gathering places.

PL3-A2. Pedestrian Access: Visible public access to the building's alley entry (if any) should be provided. Consider overhead elements, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other design features.

EB: As appropriate, restore entrances for public use and access to the alley.

PL3-C2. Retail Activities: Where outdoor alley activities such as seating and dining are envisioned, set buildings back from the alley to provide adequate space. Where possible, include features for activities beyond the daylight hours and throughout the seasons of the year (e.g., outdoor heaters, overhead protection, movable seating and tables, extra pedestrian lighting, and 24-hour wi-fi service).

EB: Program small open spaces and consider converting existing surface parking areas for temporary or semi-permanent retail uses (e.g., flower shop, café seating).



PL2-C1. This narrow awning provides weather protection and identifies the building entry, while also providing adequate room for service vehicles.



PL3-A2. Recessed entries distinguish an entryway but must be carefully designed for clear pedestrian visibility.



PL3-C2. This building is set back with overhead protection and outdoor lighting that has been re-appropriated for café seating.

Design Concept

DC1-A1. Visibility of Interior Uses: Consider locating semi-public uses, gathering spaces, and other frequently used interior services toward the alley.

EB: Activate interior uses where windows exist on the ground floor.

DC1-B1. Vehicle Access Location and Design: When feasible, locate vehicle access, service uses, and delivery areas within the building to minimize impacts on alley circulation and function. Employ a multi-sensory approach to areas of potential vehicle-pedestrian conflict (e.g., contrasting or textured pavement, warning lights and sounds, and similar safety devices).

EB: Delineate vehicle and service areas with ground-level paint, signage, bollards, and other design features.

DC1-C2. Visual Impact of Parking Areas: Reduce the impact of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs in alleys. To the greatest extent possible, minimize surface parking and visually separate any parking from pedestrian areas with the use of bollards, special pavement, or other design features. Design parking structures so that they are architecturally compatible with the rest of the building and alley.

EB: Clearly delineate where surface parking is allowed with ground-level paint, signage, bollards, and other design features.

DC1-C4. Service Uses: Locate service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles within the building. Where possible, keep these uses away from building entries and outdoor gathering spaces along alleys.

EB: Corral trash receptacles in existing setbacks or underutilized open spaces. Integrate screen walls, planters, or other architecturally appropriate screening to reduce the visibility of dumpsters.

DC2-B1. Façade Composition: Approximately every 15 feet along a building façade, provide small building or streetscape elements such as windows, lighting fixtures, planters, art or decorative pieces to add variety and rhythm to the façade. Wrap the treatment around mid-block corners and where adjacent properties are undeveloped.

EB: Commission murals or other artworks. Take cues from adjacent buildings to create a unified sense of rhythm.



DC1-A1. This residential building has an exercise room facing the alley. While there is no physical access to the alley, the large windows provide extra eyes on the street and visual activity.



DC1-B1. The balcony and other design elements compatible with the façade have been integrated into the design of this parking garage.



DC1-C4. Part art installation, part ventilation screen, this metal sculpture reflects the character of Jazz Alley.

DC2-B2. Blank Walls: Avoid long blank walls facing alleys wherever possible. Where blank walls are unavoidable, treat walls with measures such as green walls, artwork, special materials, or other enhancements.

EB: Consider puncturing the building with new windows and entrances. Add pedestrian-oriented treatments to blank walls greater than 15 feet wide (e.g., signs, artwork, exposed building equipment, landscaping).

DC2-C1. Visual Depth and Interest: Because they are the most visible for the pedestrian, focus architectural interest and elements on the first three floors of buildings with façade-facing alleys (e.g., articulation, special materials, details). Include elements and materials that are attractive when viewed up close (e.g., distinctive door and window hardware, projecting window sills, ornamental tile or metal, other high-quality surface materials and finishes).

To create regular sensory stimulation, provide a minor point of interest or variation about every 15 to 20 feet (e.g., entrances, window displays, seats, landscaping, change of architectural character, alcoves, artwork).

EB: Ensure adequate façade maintenance along alley fronts. Add elements of interest where possible and retain the existing building elements and special features that define the unique alley identity (e.g., brick materiality, fire escapes, ventilation systems).

DC4-B1. Signage Scale and Character: Encourage businesses to present a unique identity in alleys with exterior signs and attachments.

EB: Provide secondary signage along the alley façade. Consider placing perpendicular signage at entries.

DC4-C1. Lighting Functions: Use alley lighting to both increase safety and highlight architectural and landscape details (e.g., entries, signs, canopies, plantings, art). Generally provide at least one foot-candle on the alley surface and all building setbacks. Design so lighting does not spread into residential units.

EB: Attach pedestrian-scaled lighting (i.e., below 20 feet in height) to building façades. One method is to place a light fixture every 30-60' and stagger across the alley from each other. Tivoli-style strings and other hanging lights can also achieve this desired effect. Lights less than 20' in height must be out of vehicle movement areas.



DC2-B2. Planters, clothing stands, signage, and other tenant additions can make an otherwise blank wall into a place of interest and surprise.



DC4-B1. Horizontal signage is viewed by pedestrians from either direction.



DC4-C1. A light installation illuminates this mid-block crossing in what would otherwise be a blank wall.

IMPLEMENTATION: ALLEY ACTIVATION PROJECTS

The implementation plan for U District alley activation will occur over more than 20 years. Interventions should be flexible and adaptable as opportunities present themselves.

Much of the physical infrastructure improvements described in the previous section will be done in concert with new private sector investments along the alley corridor. However, early implementation of a number of the alley activation projects found in the following pages will allow the U District community to successfully leverage those private sector investments. While some are immediately implementable and others opportunistic, cumulatively these projects communicate to new U District stakeholders that the space is well-cared-for and the neighbors are invested in its long-term success.

Not all of these projects need to be implemented in order for the corridor to be a success. There may be projects listed that make sense today, but, within the space of just a few years, will unnecessary.

The plan's implementation should adapt and respond to the shifting alley context.

The projects on the following pages were identified by the U District community throughout the design process. Each alley activation project serves a unique purpose and convenes a variety of stakeholders, broadening and strengthening the community of alley "investors."

Each project includes an activation objective, first steps and identifies a neighborhood lead and potential partners. These project pages point the community toward potential funding sources and partners at the City of Seattle. There is limited City funding for these types of projects. However, the Neighborhood Matching Fund (NMF) provides neighborhood groups with City resources for community-driven projects that enhance and strengthen their neighborhood. (For more information on the NMF visit: <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/nmf/>) Additionally, the U District is in the process of establishing a Business Improvement Association (BIA). The U District BIA would establish the U

District Fund as an ongoing operations and maintenance funding source to ensure the cleanliness, safety and beauty of the U District. Rate-paying businesses and property owners in the U District would contribute to the U District Fund and applicable projects would seek prioritization and funding from the Ratepayer's Advisory Board. For major projects including capital construction, the grant funding through the U District Partnership could be an option.

The following project pages also outline how neighborhood leaders can effectively partner with City departments through the anticipated permitting and approval process for certain projects. Each project page includes a "First Move" section that refers to the first step, meeting or phone call the project lead complete to initiate the project.

POTENTIAL ALLEY ACTIVATION PHASING

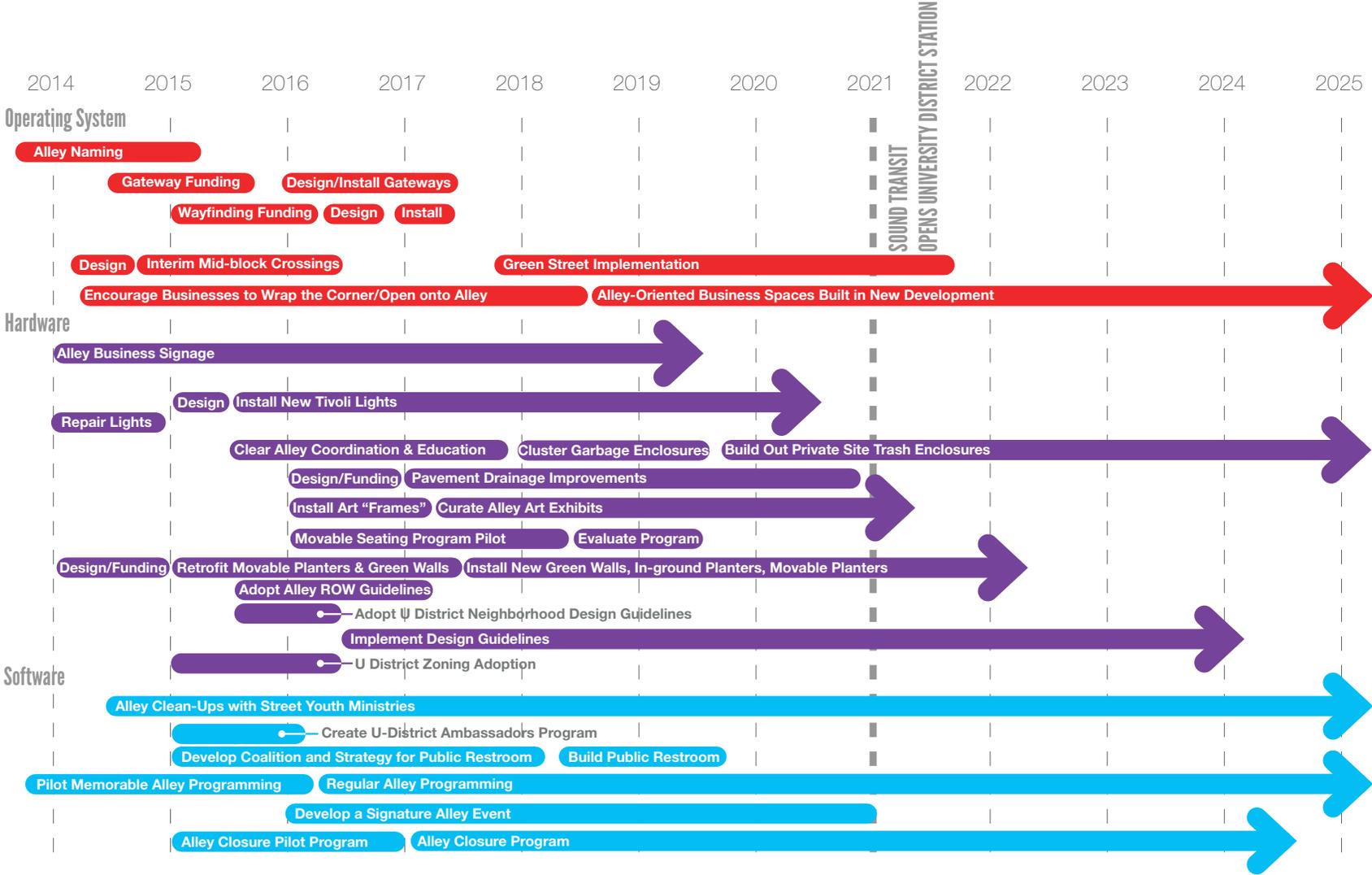


Figure 16: While implementation of the alley activation plan will be opportunistic, this chart offers a possible timeline.



Watching the World Cup in Seattle's Nord Alley



Pillow fight! (via KOMO News)



Busker competitions (via Wikipedia)



Chess tournament (via Cambridge Day)



Poetry slam (via Cambridge Day)



Alley Slip n' Slide? (via Nashville Scene)



Caroling competition (via wedgwoodcc.org)



Pet adoptions (via wikipedia)



Outdoor movies (via wikipedia)

ALLEY PROGRAMMING

Objective

Make the alley a performance space where interesting activities regularly occur.

Description

Develop regular, recurring events among the existing businesses and institutions that invite new people into the alleys and establish the expectation for a lively, inviting experience.

First Move

UDP Alley Task Force begins planning and marketing regular activities in the alley.

Potential Partners

- Alley Businesses
- UDP Events & Marketing Committee
- University of Washington (UW)
- Churches
- Arts Groups and Galleries
- Musical Acts
- UW Fraternities and Sororities
- City Office of Arts and Culture
- UW College of the Built Environment

Considerations

A number of communities have established recurring alley events. Nord Alley, in Pioneer Square, piggybacked their “alley open houses” onto the existing First Thursday Art Walks. In Columbia City, BeatWalk celebrates the area’s musical heritage, inviting visitors into the area once a month. Both events capture the opportunities their context offered and created a regular event that was high-quality, compelling, and inviting to a wide range of visitors.

Some of the potential programs can be seen on the facing page, but ultimately the regular, scheduled programs need to be agreed upon by the community.

In addition to a regularly scheduled event, smaller events should also occur along the alley as frequently as possible. Bars might host wine-tastings and education events. Coffee shops might host musicians. There might be an ad hoc art fair in the alley, or a sporting event could be projected onto a screen, using the alley as an impromptu theater.

Perhaps, with the right insurance, soap box derbies, pillow fights, or slip and slides might be found in the alley.

In the winter, a business could provide a heat lamp, a laptop plug, a wireless connection, and a blanket to encourage Seattle’s vibrant café culture to spill out into the alley.

The programming possibilities are nearly limitless, but they won’t happen without a group convening to organize and publicize them. Nearly every other project described in this document—including influencing new development—becomes easier to implement because programming the alley sends an important message: this alley is a place for people.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

Costs of programming can vary widely, but at the outset, this effort can be conducted on a shoestring budget with volunteer efforts. After some success, dedicated funds for marketing, graphic design and, perhaps, to pay performers may be desired.

Potential Project Funding

The most likely source of funding is either the U District Partnership grant funding or via individual businesses, or some combination thereof.

ALLEY NAMING

Objective

Make the alleys memorable places that are a part of people’s mental map of the U District. In the process, create a new constituency for alley activation. Naming the alleys will also make it easier to direct visitors to the correct geographic destination.

Description

Create a memorable name for each alley segment.

First Move

Contact Erin Harris at SDOT (206) 684-7669, Erin.Harris@seattle.gov

Potential Partners

- Alley businesses
- Department of Neighborhoods (DON)
- University of Washington (UW)
- Department of Planning & Development (DPD)
- Sound Transit
- SDOT
- City Council

Considerations

Naming each alley can become contentious. An open, inclusive competition to name the alleys will get the U District community excited and perhaps even competitive about the space. When the alley names are announced, a celebration with dignitaries and the successful “namers” can be held revealing new alley street signs.

After the names have been selected, the alley names should be added to online databases and maps.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

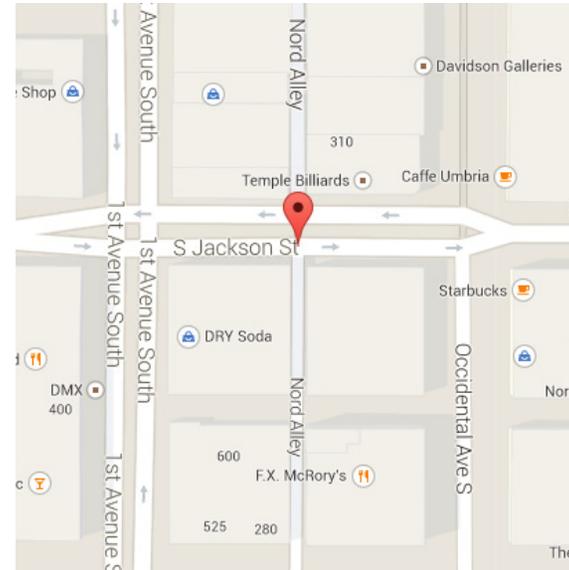
This is a low cost project with a anticipated cost of less than \$5,000. Naming the alleys will be an easy way to generate excitement, create a memorable alley identity, and produce a media “hit” that will allow the Alley Task Force to promote other upcoming alley programs.

Potential Project Funding

- DON
- Local businesses
- U District Partnership grant funding



Catfish Alley, St. Martinville, LA (via Mary Matzek, Jim Jalliet)



Alley Name in GoogleMaps, Nord Alley, Seattle, WA (via GoogleMaps)

ALLEY BUSINESS FIN SIGNAGE

Objective

Make the alleys look activated and alive from the cross streets. Encourage more people to access businesses from the alley. Add another layer of light, making the alleys feel safer.

Description

Encourage existing and future businesses to put up fin signage on their alley façades.

First Move

- Businesses interested in installing signs should contact the DPD Sign Section, Kent Hunnicutt (206) 684-8419
- Reference Department of Planning and Development – Sign, Awning, & Billboard Permit: <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits/permittypes/signawningbillboard/default.htm>

Potential Partners

- U District Partnership
- Businesses with existing alley signage
- SDOT

Considerations

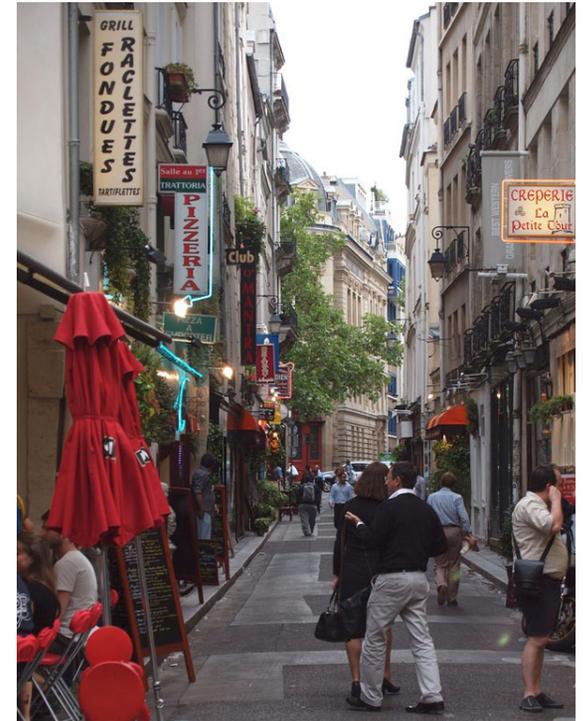
Businesses interested in installing a sign that extends over any public place will need a street use permit from SDOT along with a sign permit. Designs for alley signage must conform to DPD’s Sign Code (SMC 23.55.004).

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

- Varies depending on signage

Potential Project Funding

- Private funding by businesses and property owners



Alley Bustling with Commercial Activity (via andrewalexanderprice.com)



Fluorescent Alley Fin Signage (via everystockphoto.com)

ENCOURAGE EXISTING BUSINESSES TO OPEN ONTO THE ALLEY

Objective

To activate the alley by enhancing commercial/retail activity.

Description

Existing businesses already have an established presence on the alley and can capitalize on that presence by activating their alley-facing façades and entrances.

First Move

UDP Alley Task Force seeks out and encourages property owners to open entrances to alley.

Potential Partners

- Office of Economic Development (OED)
- UW College of Built Environment
- DPD
- SDOT

Considerations

In many cases rear façades need to be improved and/or tidied up to create an inviting frontage. These costs would be borne by the adjacent businesses, but should yield a return through an increase in retail receipts and revenues. As new businesses open up and front onto the alley, success stories need to be told to encourage other businesses to open onto the alley.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

- Varies by property

Potential Project Funding

- Private funding by businesses and property owners



To-Go Only Window on the Alley, Salsa's Restaurant, Asheville, NC (via carolinaepicurean.com)



"What if the Dally was Daily?" Detroit Alley District, Dally in the Alley Event (via modelmedia.com)



Blues Alley Jazz Venue, Washington, DC (via bluesalley.com)

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Objective

Maintain a clean, tidy, and welcoming alley. Encourage civil behavior.

Description

Enhance the alley waste management system through the Clear Alley program, dumpster enclosures and/or coordinated trash pickup. Educate and receive buy-in on the waste management approach from adjacent business owners.

First Move

- Discuss alley waste management needs with UDP Clean & Safe Committee, the Alley Task Force and Seattle Public Utilities (SPU).
- Contact Liz Kain, SPU Solid Waste (206) 684-4166
- Reference: <http://www.seattle.gov/util/MyServices/Garbage/BldgOwnersManagers/index.htm>

Potential Partners

- UDP
- Alley business and property owners
- CleanScapes and/or Waste Management

Considerations

There are a number of ways to address the existing waste management challenges in the alley and, thanks to years of work in Seattle’s Pioneer Square, Downtown and Columbia City neighborhoods, there are excellent models to borrow from in Seattle.

Two quick wins include building centralized enclosures or migrating from an opt-in to an opt-out Clear Alley program. Regardless of strategy, peer education would be necessary to help with compliance.

In addition to these physical improvements, waste contractors are open to limiting hours of trash pick-up and are willing to work with the U District business community.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

Currently waste management is done under two contracts: a standard ratepayer contract and a UDP contract. As these contracts expire or are renegotiated, there is opportunity to evaluate costs and benefits for various options. More intensive and constrained services will cost more.

Potential Project Funding

- U District Fund, pending BIA authorization by City Council and project prioritization by the Fund’s Ratepayers Advisory Board



Clear Alleys Program, CleanScapes (via Seattle Times, Greg Gilbert)

REGULAR ALLEY CLEAN-UP EVENTS

Objective

Clean up the alley and create partnerships to involve underserved youth in alley stewardship.

Description

Establish partnerships to bring new users into the alley and help steward the space.

First Move

Contact Ruedi Risler (risler@u.washington.edu) of the UDP Clean & Safe Committee and Kate Phillips (katep@upc.org) of Street Youth Ministries regarding lessons learned from the U District Youth Jobs Program.

Potential Partners

- Street Youth Ministries
- ROOTS
- University Temple United Methodist Church
- U District Needle Exchange
- UW Fraternities and Sororities

Considerations

These events offer an excellent opportunity to bridge traditional divides and invite new constituencies into the alley. Depending on the funding model, this program can offer jobs to people who are down on their luck.

The U District has a history of creative partnerships for youth employment and alley clean-up. In the 1990s, “Giving Meters” were installed along the Ave as an alternative to giving money to panhandlers. The money was then supplemented by a grant from SPU to pay a crew of youth to clean alleys once a month. Recently, the UDP Clean & Safe Committee partnered with Street Youth Ministries and received a DON Small and Simple Neighborhood Matching Fund (2014) grant to develop the U District Youth Jobs Program. The U District is home to a number of organizations ripe for this type of creative partnership.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

Program development could be relatively inexpensive and largely done by volunteers. An alley clean-up program could be built upon existing programs.

Potential Project Funding

- U District Fund, pending BIA authorization by City Council and project prioritization by the Fund’s Ratepayers Advisory Board
- Social service non-profits and religious institutions



Youth jobs program, Clean Alley Project (via larkinstreetyouth.org)

TIVOLI LIGHTS

Objective

To stimulate business, create a safer environment and add to the ambience of the alleys.

Description

Create a consistent, memorable lighting approach in the alleys with an overhead lighting system.

First Move

- Contact Kate Leitch at SDOT for an annual permit: katherine.leitch@seattle.gov
- Contact Steve Sampson at DPD for a sign/awning permit: steve.sampson@seattle.gov
- Reference: Seattle Right-of-Way Improvements Manual – 4.16 Street Lighting

Potential Partners

- UDP Clean & Safe Committee
- UDP Urban Design Committee
- DPD (design and permitting)
- SDOT (design and permits)
- Office of Economic Development (OED)
- DON
- Seattle Fire Department (SFD)

Considerations

Prior to installation, a business willing to pay for the Tivoli lights' electricity will need to be identified in each alley segment. In some cases, vertical poles will need to be installed to achieve SDOT's requirement of 24' of vertical clearance.

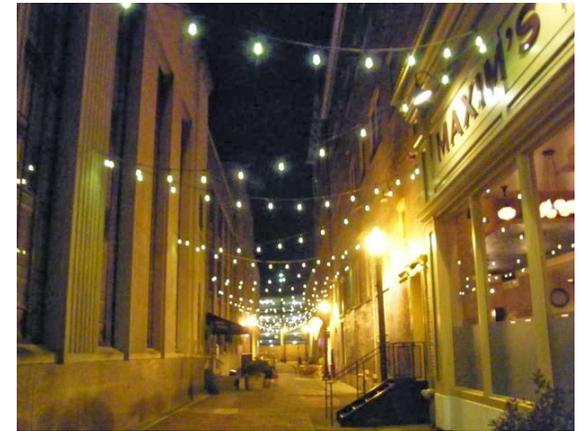
Installation of alley Tivoli lights will require a lighting permit (which falls under the Sign/Billboard/Awning permit as "outline lighting") through DPD and an annual permit (through SDOT).

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

Similar overhead lighting systems in other alleys in Seattle have cost about \$10,000 per alley segment, with some services being provided on an in-kind basis (e.g., architectural detailing).

Potential Project Funding

- *Only in Seattle* grant through OED
- Neighborhood Matching Fund
- Alley businesses
- U District Partnership grant funding
- Private development



Bank Street, Easton, PA; Easton Main Street Initiative (via eastoneccentric.blogspot.com)



Pittaki Street, Athens (via flickr, 612g)



Lehns Court, Easton, PA (via Express Times, Sue Beyer)

SPOT PAVEMENT & DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS

Objective

To improve localized flooding and drainage problems along the alley as well as poor pavement conditions.

Description

Improve existing alley surface and drainage infrastructure where there are critical needs.

First Move

- Request minor improvements through SDOT Street Cleaning and Pothole Reporting (206) 684-7508
- Direct drainage-related questions to SPU (206) 684-3000
- References: Seattle Right-of-Way Improvements Manual – 4.4 Grading; 4.5 Design Cross Section; 4.17 Street Drainage, Storm Drains and Sewers

Potential Partners

- Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

Considerations

Since we anticipate that the alleys will be redeveloped, spot improvements should only be made in localized areas where there is significant ponding and/or localized flooding. However, SDOT does not prioritize alley repaving or substantial repairs.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

- SPU or SDOT Spot Repair Budget

Potential Project Funding

- SPU
- SDOT
- OED
- DON
- Private development



Spot repair (via Komonews.com, AP)



SDOT Pothole Rangers (via SDOT Flickr)

ALLEY ART FRAMES & EXHIBITS

Objective

Create lively, interesting and inviting alley façades.

Description

Provide opportunities for art to be displayed in the alleys, particularly in areas where there are blank façades.

First Move

The Alley Task Force should work with property owners and the local arts community to identify potential locations for alley art exhibits. An annual street use permit will be required from SDOT for a permanent art installation.

Contact Kate Leitch at SDOT for an annual permit: katherine.leitch@seattle.gov

Potential Partners

- Adjacent businesses/property owners
- UW College of the Built Environment
- UW College of Art
- Office of Arts and Culture (OAC)
- DON
- OED
- SDOT

Considerations

The type and location of alley art needs to be considered carefully. Weather, vandalism, light and other urban conditions can damage art easily if it is not made to withstand these challenges.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

Project costs are varied. In other contexts, artists have donated works, or temporarily placed installations in the alley, while retaining ownership of the art.

Potential Project Funding

- OAC, OED or DON
- Individual artists
- Individual businesses/property owners
- UW College of Art



Nord Alley Photography Exhibit (via International Sustainability Institute, Erika Schultz)



Alley Art Installation (via Rosemary Washington)

PLANTERS & GREEN WALLS

Objective

Provide natural beauty, slow stormwater runoff, and activate blank walls.

Description

Create spaces for nearby nature in the alleys.

First Move

Encourage new development to install these types of features and coordinate with alley business and property owners regarding the desire for public management of planter or green wall installations.

Potential Partners

- UW College of Built Environment
- UW College of Forestry
- City Office of Sustainability and the Environment
- Individual businesses/property owners
- New development
- DPD
- SDOT
- OED
- SPU

Considerations

While adding new planters is relatively straight forward, particularly if they are maintained by an adjacent business, the Alley Task Force may want to consider if the planters should be of uniform appearance and then “branded” with adjacent business names via a plaque or other signage option.

Both new and existing development offers the opportunity to add green walls that are either low-tech—like the back of Magus Books—or cutting edge as can be seen along the southeast frontage of Gould Hall along 15th Ave NE, south of NE 40th Street.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

Ranging from a few hundred dollars to tens of thousands, the costs for introducing greenery into the alley are as varied as the opportunities.

Potential Project Funding

- Individual businesses
- UDP grant funding
- New development



Movable planters (via flickr, Kate McCarthy)



Vertical garden of the Cloister of Sor Juana in Regina Street, Mexico City



Movable planters (via Aludean Trough)

MID-BLOCK CROSSINGS

Objective

Make it safe, legal and easy for alley users to cross the east-west streets while walking up the alley corridor.

Description

Provide safe mid-block crossings at the cross streets.

First Move

Work with SDOT and DPD to influence plans for NE 42nd and NE 43rd Streets.

References: Seattle Right-of-Way Improvements Manual – 6.5 Traffic Calming; 4.12 Crosswalks

Potential Partners

- SDOT
- SPU
- DPD

Considerations

DPD has developed conceptual plans for a green street on NE 42nd and 43rd Streets. If this project moves forward, implementation of pedestrian crossing improvements should be relatively low cost as a part of this project.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

Without a complete engineering analysis, the project costs are impossible to determine. Adding zebra crossings is a relatively affordable option while implementing a raised crosswalk, which the community expressed some interest in, would be a more significant capital investment.

Potential Project Funding

- UDP grant funding
- New development



Nord Alley Zebra Crossing at Main St., Seattle, WA

ALLEY GATEWAYS

Objective

Brand the alleys as memorable destinations in the U District and make them more “imageable,” associating a particular entrance image to the alleys.

Description

Install lighted gateways above alley entrances.

First Move

The Alley Task Force should work with property owners and the alley community to identify the best locations for alley gateways. An annual street use permit will be required from SDOT for a permanent installation as well as a Sign/Awning/Billboard Permit from DPD.

DPD – Sign, Awning, & Billboard Permit:
<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits/permittypes/signawningbillboard/default.htm>

Potential Partners

- Property owners at gateway locations
- SDOT
- University of Washington (UW)
- UW College of Built Environment
- OED

- OAC
- DPD
- SFD

Considerations

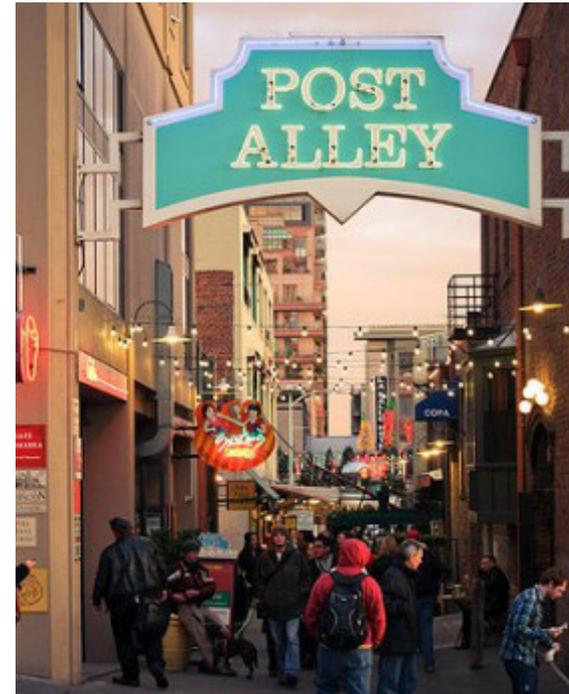
Permanent gateway design must achieve SDOT’s requirement of 24’ of vertical clearance. A neighboring property owner would need to be identified to pay for electricity if the design included a lighted gateway.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

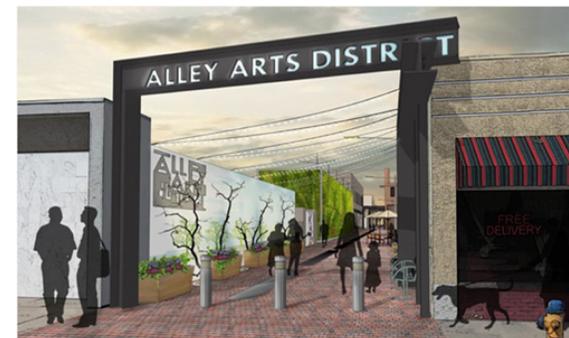
Project costs can vary considerably. An ornate gate in Chinatown was installed at a cost of \$500,000 in 2008, but more simple gates can be installed at lower cost. These gateway elements could be designed and built in coordination with a UW Landscape Architecture or Architecture Design/Build Studio.

Potential Project Funding

- UDP grant funding
- OED
- OAC
- DON
- Private development



Post Alley Gateway, Seattle, WA (via flickr, Katherine Lynn)



Alley Gateway (via csbj.com)

WAYFINDING PROGRAM

Objective

Reinforce the alleys as destinations and vital pieces of the U District pedestrian network.

Description

Install wayfinding signage throughout the U District that includes destinations along the alleys.

First Move

Work with neighborhood partners to develop a district-scale wayfinding strategy.

Potential Partners

- UDP Marketing and Events Committee
- DON
- King County Metro
- Sound Transit
- SDOT
- UW

Considerations

As the new U District Sound Transit Station opens, King County Metro routes are reconfigured, and UW's West Campus projects conclude, there is an opportunity to develop a unified wayfinding program that helps communicate these district changes to newcomers and visitors. Wayfinding signage should connect to a district-wide marketing and coordinated wayfinding strategy.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

Depending upon the scope of the wayfinding project, the costs can vary considerably. A budget of approximately \$100,000 can establish a design language, system and template for wayfinding. Capital costs maybe be borne by individual agencies and entities.

Potential Project Funding

- UDP grant funding
- UW
- King County Metro & Sound Transit
- DON
- OAC
- OED



Wayfinding Signage (via lhsigns.com)



Nord Alley Wayfinding (via Lauren Keene, Sarah Marshall & Jenny Kempson)

CREATE A FESTIVAL STREET

Objective

Create an opportunity for more alley events through the designation of the alley—or some portion of it—as a festival street.

Description

Designate some portion of the alley as a “festival street.” A festival street is a portion of public space that can be closed to traffic on multiple occasions for pedestrian-focused special events.

First Move

The Alley Task Force should submit an application for a festival street designation. For more information see SDOT Director’s Rule 2-2012: Designation of Festival Streets and activities allowed under a Street Use Festival Street permit and CAM 2504 – Festival Streets.

Potential Partners

- Alley businesses and property owners
- SDOT
- SFD

Considerations

Through the festival street designation process, a number of partners should be cultivated to garner support for the designation. Some portions of the alley may be incompatible with a festival street designation. Programming the alley prior to pursuing festival street designation will help neighbors and adjoining businesses better understand how the festival street designation might work.

The Seattle Department of Transportation’s (SDOT) Client Assistance Memo (CAM) 2504 provides all of the information needed to apply for a festival street designation and SDOT Director’s Rule 2-2011 provides additional background and guidance.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

Aside from costs associated with filling out applications, there are relatively few costs. Applicants will need to maintain \$1,000,000 liability insurance and pay a relatively modest permit application fee.



A festival street in New York City (via Wikipedia)

MOVABLE SEATING PROGRAM

Objective

Encourage visitors to spend time in the alley, providing eyes on the space.

Description

Provide seats that can be used along the alley to sit and linger.

First Move

The Alley Task Force should convene enthusiastic business owners along the alley to discuss the possibility of a pilot movable seating program in the alley.

Contact Kate Leitch at SDOT (206) 684-0570, Katherine.Leitch@seattle.gov

Potential Partners

- Adjacent businesses
- SDOT
- DON

Considerations

In other communities, a movable seating program has been a successful public space management expenditure since it provides flexible seating options that extend an invitation for users to linger within a site or corridor.

Consider how the chairs will be managed. In some instances, adjacent businesses are

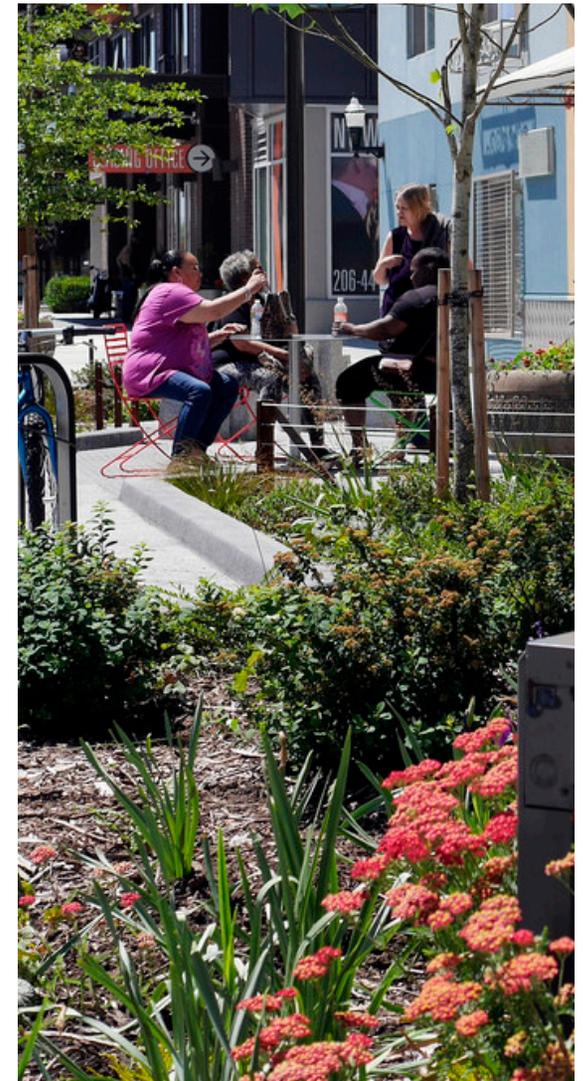
responsible for securing chairs at a certain time of night. In other circumstances, a public-space management entity is responsible for securing chairs at the end of the day, like at Bell Street Park in Belltown or Director’s Park in downtown Portland.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

Seating is a relatively low cost capital investment, but long-term operations and maintenance costs—which are critical for the success of this strategy—should be considered prior to moving forward.

Potential Project Funding

- OED
- DON
- New development
- U District Fund, pending BIA authorization by City Council and project prioritization by the Fund’s Ratepayers Advisory Board



Bell Street Park, Belltown, Seattle, WA

U DISTRICT AMBASSADORS PROGRAM

Objective

To enhance the U District identity as a clean, safe and inviting place.

Description

Create a U District ambassadors program where a team of ambassadors act as a resource and public safety presence.

First Move

Reach out to the Downtown Seattle Association's Metropolitan Improvement District (MID) to understand benefits and constraints. Once the U District BIA is established, the UDP could discuss the development of a U District Ambassadors program with the BIA Ratepayer Advisory Board.

Potential Partners

- UDP Clean and Safe Committee
- Seattle Police Department
- UW Police
- U District businesses

Considerations

The UDP and U District BIA would coordinate with the Seattle Police Department, UW Police Department and other security teams already hired to serve the U District. This would be similar to the ambassadors used throughout the Downtown MID, which do a variety of public safety and customer relations functions in the urban core.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

U District Fund, pending BIA authorization by City Council and project prioritization by the Fund's Ratepayers Advisory Board, would pay for and benefit from the U District ambassadors program.



Hospitality, Public Safety & Human Services Outreach Team (Seattle Metropolitan Improvement District)



Seattle Metropolitan Improvement District Ambassadors

INSTALL A PUBLICLY-ACCESSIBLE RESTROOM

Objective

Provide a dignified place for people to use the restroom that is safe and publicly accessible.

Description

Install a publicly-accessible restroom near the alley.

First Move

There are multiple opportunities for a group of people to step forward and implement this project, depending upon the implementation model. There are two basic paths:

- Stand alone bathrooms: similar to the Portland Loo or other publicly tended restrooms, or
- An integrated restroom, provided by a new development as part of a community benefits agreement.

The City is currently implementing Portland Loos in several parks and lessons learned from that experience should be mined for use in the U District.

Potential Partners

- U District social service agencies
- Current and future developers along the alley

- SDOT
- SPU
- OED
- DON
- UW

Considerations

While construction of the restroom will require capital, it is even more important to have a clear operating model in place prior to moving forward with construction of this facility. There are various models to draw from, including the Seattle Parks Department and Seattle Center's experiences with their public restrooms and the costs associated with maintaining these resources.

Project Costs and Funding Opportunities

The project costs vary widely depending on the ultimate program, operations model and construction process. At the low end, a Portland Loo costs approximately \$90,000, without permitting costs. From there, bathroom project costs can increase significantly depending on the number of facilities and fixtures provided.

Potential Project Funding

The ultimate success of this project will come from coalition-building to help implement and operate a public restroom facility. The partners described above provide a strong nucleus but more funding partnerships should always be sought.



Portland Loo (via City of Portland, OR)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Alley corridor: The three-block study area.

CleanScapes: Seattle-based solid waste and recycling collection and streetscape management service.
<http://www.cleanscapes.com/>

BIA: Business Improvement Area.

DON: Department of Neighborhoods.
<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/>

DPD: Department of Planning and Development.
<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/>

DSA: Downtown Seattle Association.
<http://www.downtownseattle.com/>

KC Metro: King County Metro Transit.
<http://metro.kingcounty.gov/>

MID: Metropolitan Improvement District.
<http://www.downtownseattle.com/mid/>

NMF: Neighborhood Matching Fund, funded by the Department of Neighborhoods.
<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/nmf/>

OAC: Office of Arts and Culture.
<http://www.seattle.gov/arts/>

OED: Office of Economic Development.
<http://www.seattle.gov/economicdevelopment/>

ROOTS: ROOTS (Rising Out of the Shadows) Young Adult Shelter.
<http://www.rootsinfo.org/>

ROW: Right-of-way.

SCL: Seattle City Light.
<http://www.seattle.gov/light/>

SDOT: Seattle Department of Transportation.
<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/>

SFD: Seattle Fire Department.
<http://www.seattle.gov/fire/>

SPD: Seattle Police Department.
<http://www.seattle.gov/police/>

SPU: Seattle Public Utilities.
<http://www.seattle.gov/util/>

UDP: U District Partnership.
<http://udistrictpartnership.org/>

UW: University of Washington.
<http://www.washington.edu/>

Waste Management: Garbage, recycling and yard waste service. <http://www.wmnorthwest.com/seattle/>

Woonerf: Dutch term that can be translated as “residential yard,” referring to an area where motorists and other users share the street without boundaries such as lanes and curbs.

STREET CONCEPT PLAN TECHNICAL APPENDIX

The purpose of this technical appendix is to provide technical information for SDOT reviewers and future engineers and designers to consider in implementing the preferred concept as described earlier in this document.

Right-of-Way

City of Seattle GIS indicates that the existing alley right-of-way is 14'. There appears to be no condition where the existing buildings are built to the official 14' right-of-way line as described in the City's GIS system. At the narrowest face-of-building to face-of-building condition, the alley is 16' wide. As properties redevelop, the alley will need to meet the requirements of SMC 23.53.030, D using the methods described in SMC 23.53.030, F, which will provide the community with a 20' wide public right-of-way for the alley.

Cross-Section Geometry

The concrete alley has an inverted crown similar to the City of Seattle's standard alley cross-section (SDOT Standard Plan 403).

Like SDOT Standard Plan 403, the proposed cross section for the U District alleys uses an 8" thick concrete pavement section with subbase to provide a durable

surface for the various heavy vehicle uses that the alley will continue to support.

Rather than an inverted crown, the U District alley concept proposes a "W" cross-section. This design slopes water away from the buildings and from the center of the alley into a flowline, located 5' from the edge of the alley right-of-way.

For the community, this approach offers several advantages over the typical standard alley section in achieving community goals:

1. The two channels split the stormwater flow, providing some level of redundancy with two catch basins at the low end of the alley. This redundancy means there is less of a chance that one side of the alley is impacted if there is localized flooding, as can currently be seen at the downstream alley catch basin near NE 43rd Street during heavy rains.
2. There are drainage benefits; see the Drainage section of this Technical Appendix for further discussion.
3. By providing a relatively flat surface down the center of the alley, pedestrians of all abilities will be able to more comfortably move through the alley. See Grading and Accessibility section

of this Technical Appendix for further discussion.

4. The stormwater flowline does not directly conflict with this configuration and also allows for easier accommodation of existing electrical infrastructure in the center of the alley.
5. The cross-section geometry begins to act as a space-defining feature, demarcating the boundary between different pavement types, different alley zones, and even defining landscaping, amenity or service areas close to the adjacent buildings.

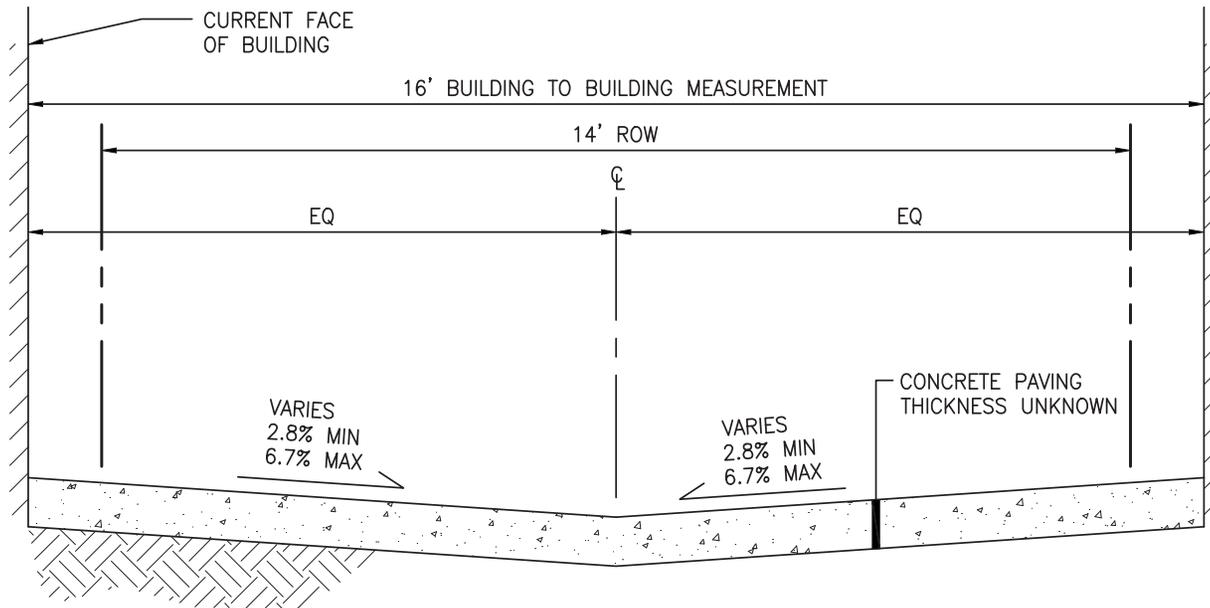


Figure 17: Existing alley cross section

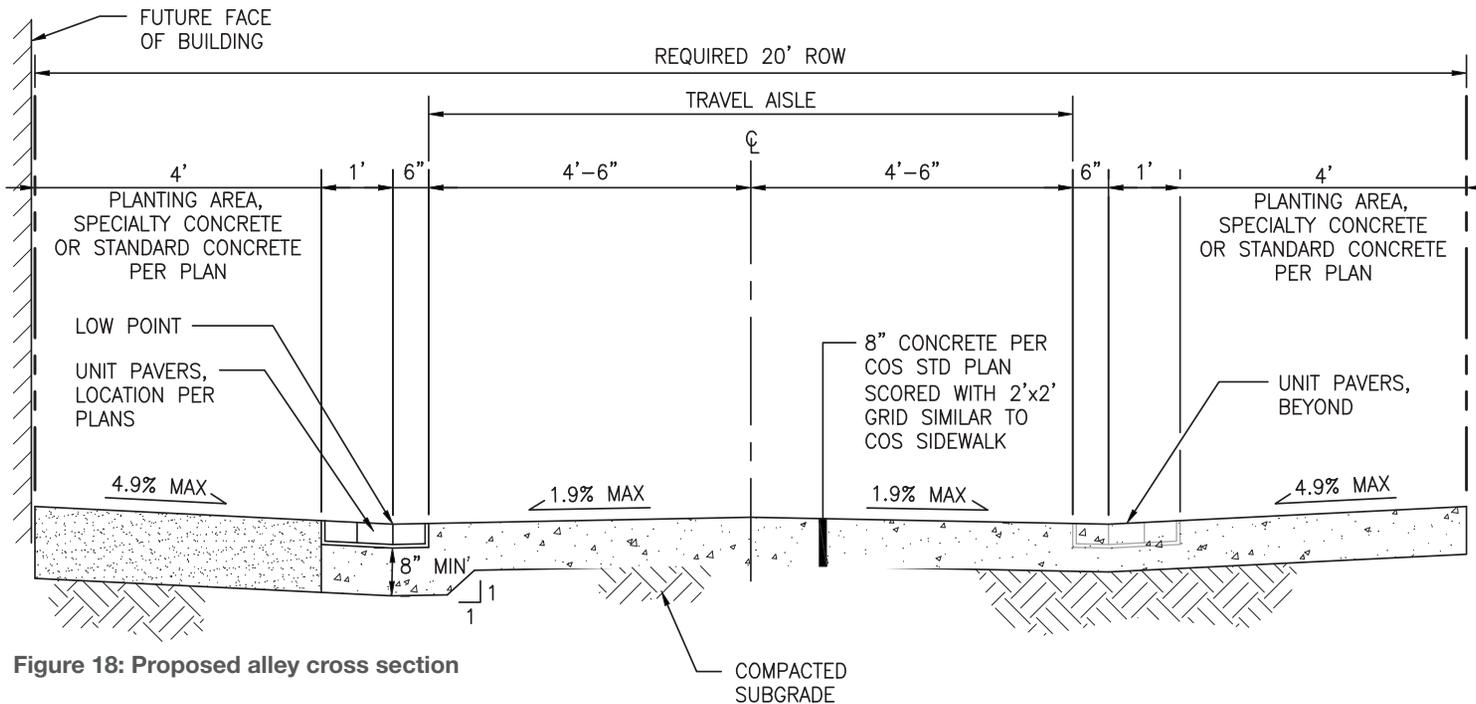


Figure 18: Proposed alley cross section

Grading and Accessibility

The longitudinal grade of the alley will remain the same as exists today: approximately 6.5% between each street crossing.

The existing alley cross slopes vary from 2.8% to 6.7% (Figure 17). The proposed cross section (Figure 18) seeks to improve universal access by providing an area within the center of the alley that does not exceed a 1.9% cross slope. This will improve north-south travel, providing a 10' wide zone wherein users can more easily change direction to access the adjacent businesses and residences. Beyond the flow line, the alley can slope up to 4.9% to the adjacent private property entrance.

Drainage

The alley's long blocks, disconnected downspouts and 6.5% longitudinal slopes create significant runoff, occasionally resulting in localized flooding as documented in the Existing Conditions section of this document. To improve drainage, the proposed alley cross-section creates two drainage flowlines, each terminating in their own catch basin at the downstream end of the alley (see plan view Figure 19).

Cross Section	Width	Capacity (SF)	Capacity to Surface Area Ratio
Current Condition	16' impervious (14' ROW)	3	.18
City Standard Plan	20'	4.7	.23
Proposed Cross Section	20'	3.2	.16

The existing 16' alley cross section creates a maximum cross-sectional conveyance capacity of 3.0 square feet. If implemented using City of Seattle Standard Plans, there would be 4.7 square feet of conveyance capacity. The new cross section provides a maximum cross-sectional storage area of 3.2 square feet. Expressed as a ratio of "capacity" to "alley surface area" (using 1' length of alley), the existing alley is .18, SDOT's standard alley is .23 and the proposed cross section is .16, resulting in a loss of storage/conveyance capacity within the overall alley cross section.

While this loss of capacity is somewhat mitigated by the addition of planting areas and reconnection of disconnected downspouts, additional project-based stormwater modeling should be conducted to determine if more mid-block catch basins are needed in order to comply with the city's drainage requirements.

If so, they should be placed at the end of one of the accent paver strips. Any new mid-block catch basins will need to be tight-lined to downstream pipes.

Alley Mid-Block Crossings

The following are proposed strategies for the locations where the alley crosses various perpendicular east-west streets at the mid-block location between 15th Ave NE and University Way NE.

- NE 45th Street is a principal arterial. Due to the high volumes of vehicle traffic, no changes are recommended.
- NE 43rd Street is a collector arterial. Coordinate an improved, mid-block alley crossing with SDOT/DPD's planned green street improvements to this right-of-way as Sound Transit's U District Station comes online. The community prefers a raised crossing.

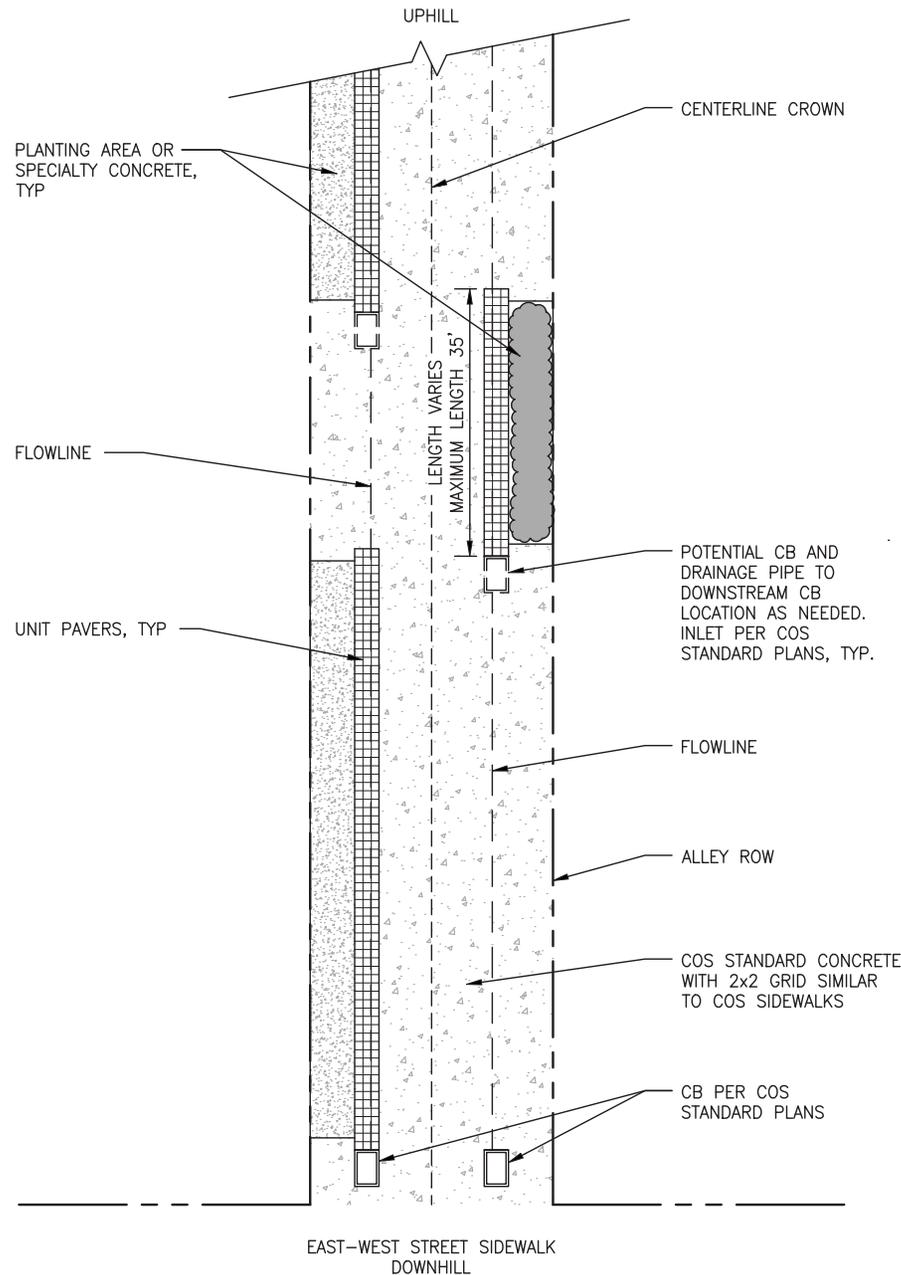


Figure 19: Proposed alley plan

- NE 42nd Street is a local street. Coordinate an improved, mid-block alley crossing with SDOT/DPD's planned green street improvements to this right-of-way. The community prefers a raised crossing.

- NE 41st Street is a local street. A mid-block crossing should be added to connect across to Schmitz Hall. This connection would restore the historic alleyway connection and establish a seamless pedestrian route from the alleys to the main University of Washington campus. Ideally, the connection would be in the form of a raised crosswalk, which would also serve as traffic calming.

Pavement

The U District alley concept includes three pavement types to meet the community's goals of providing the sense of a place that has evolved, rather than a space that has been developed at a single point in time.

In addition to the City of Seattle's standard concrete as described in the Cross-Section Geometry portion of this appenix, there are two additional pavement types.

Accent Pavers

Bands of accent pavers (1'6" wide) are intermittently used along the flow lines. These alternate to each side of the alley, with no band extending further than 35' in length. The purpose of these bands is to 1) introduce a finer-grain, pedestrian-scaled texture to the alleys, and 2) help reinforce the modulation of the buildings. These accents also reinforce the perception of a thinner drive aisle along the alley. The unit paver material need not be consistent along the entire alley; various paver types can be used as preferred by the adjacent development and pending approval by SDOT.

Specialty Concrete

At the edges of the alley, between the buildings and the driveable zone, specialty concrete is used periodically to further reinforce building modulation. Using a variety of scoring patterns, surface finishes and through the use of integral color, this specialty concrete is another opportunity to give the alley a patchwork feel, as desired by the community.

Lighting

Overhead, Tivoli-style lights should be used to create a "ceiling" in the alley. Additional building lighting should be used to emphasize entrances off of the alley. Lighting should be considered comprehensively—looking at both public and private contributions to the alley's overall illumination—and should aim to create a uniformly lit area without dark shadows. Adjacent property owners or a non-profit must agree to provide power to and maintain all overhead lighting in the alley corridor.

Signage and Awnings

Fin signage and building awnings in the right-of-way will need DPD and SDOT approval. See the City's Sign/Billboard/Awning Permit Application and SMC 23.55 for more information.

Plantings

Plantings in the alley should be robust and designed to handle challenging urban conditions including compacted soils, poor drainage and shade. Within 30' of intersections and building entries/exits, do not plant any vegetation over 30" tall so as not to obscure pedestrians or create hiding places. Take care to install plants that will

withstand the shaded conditions of the alley.

Maintenance

The area between the face of building and alley center line, including plantings, is the maintenance responsibility of the abutting property owner. The responsibility to restore the alley at the completion of utility work is borne by the utility doing the work. The central drive aisle of the alley is paved in a readily available SDOT standard concrete to make it easy to restore and maintain consistency.



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THE **U** DISTRICT
PARTNERSHIP