

Questions and Answers about the Preliminary Uptown Rezone Proposal

1. What are the key benefits of the Uptown Rezone?

In partnership with the Uptown community, the Uptown rezone proposal will increase affordable housing, promote new arts & cultural spaces, protect existing public views, and make the neighborhood more walkable. City staff have worked closely with the people who live and work in Uptown to understand what they value most in their neighborhood. The proposed rezone will put their ideas into action and help them shape the growth that's already happening as well as the growth will come over the next 20 years.

2. What are the specific features of the rezone proposal?

The rezone will provide housing options for all income levels, increase jobs and spur more small non-profit arts & cultural organizations. Here's how:

- It will help make the Mayor's Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda a reality, ensuring more housing options for low and moderate income people. About 600 affordable housing units will be developed in Uptown over 20 years.
- It will create new jobs by encouraging commercial developments in the main Uptown business district.
- It will help pedestrians by providing new incentives for sidewalk and landscaping improvements, and by requiring more open space for the public.
- It will offer incentives for developers to help preserve landmark and historic buildings.
- It will promote more transit and better walkways so people can have easier access to Seattle Center and the Uptown area.
- It will protect public views that people care about. The tallest buildings will be close to South Lake Union and downtown with height limits decreasing closer to Queen Anne Hill.
- It will attract a wider diversity of people (age, ethnicity, culture, income and more) who can live, work and visit the area.
- It will give incentives for developers to create affordable space for arts & cultural organizations, giving smaller organizations a chance to operate in or near Seattle Center.

3. How does the rezone fit with what the neighborhood wants?

City of Seattle staff worked with Uptown residents for more than three years to create the [Uptown Urban Design Framework](#). The Uptown community prioritized walking connections to Seattle Center amenities, a vibrant streetscape with active retail businesses, diverse housing types and more affordable housing, and jobs in both large and small businesses. The community wanted incentives for new arts and cultural spaces, giving smaller organizations a chance to operate in or near Seattle Center; and the preservation of historic buildings by allowing them to sell unused development rights. The rezone reflects all of these priorities.

4. How much additional growth do we expect from the rezone in terms of jobs and homes?

By 2035, Uptown will see an additional 3,000 households and about 2,500 more jobs.

5. Why is the rezone necessary?

It serves as a guide for current and future growth of Uptown. The proposal reflects the priorities and values of the Uptown community. Over the next twenty years, a lot more people are expected to move to Seattle, and specifically Uptown. The rezone gives the neighborhood a voice in how that growth happens.

Here are some facts about expected growth in Uptown:

- By 2035, Uptown will see about 3,000 more households and employers will add about 2,500 more people to their payrolls.
- It is one of the four Urban Centers that form the Center City Core. That means Uptown will play a central role in Seattle's future as a regional center for housing and job growth. By 2035, an additional 56,000 jobs and 25,000 households are expected to be added to the four Center City neighborhoods.
- The City of Seattle has asked for proposals to redevelop KeyArena into a world-class civic arena for music, entertainment, and sports, including the potential for NBA and NHL teams. All proposals will include new transportation strategies and mitigation of transportation impacts due to construction and operation of the arena. (Summaries of the proposals will be available online starting April 12 <http://www.seattle.gov/arena>).
- Seattle Center attracts more than 12 million visitors a year. That number will grow.
- Most days, the area around Seattle Center has enough parking, but the public parking supply is maxed out during large event evenings and weekend festivals. Future uses of KeyArena, Memorial Stadium and developments along Mercer St. may require more aggressive parking management.
- The arrival of Link Light Rail in 2035 will improve access and reduce pressure on the parking supply in Uptown.
- The single occupancy vehicle trips to Uptown has decreased over the last two years. The One Center City plan will identify more ways to reduce SOV trips and increase other transportation options.

6. Will the rezone have any impact on transportation in the Uptown neighborhood?

Yes. The rezone will also play a big role in helping people get to and from Uptown. It will increase housing options and promote a transportation system that will help manage growth. Here are some of the current transportation investments happening around Uptown (City, King County, the State of Washington and Sound Transit):

- The new zoning requires that large developments include a Transportation Management Program to reduce peak-hour trips by building occupants.

- Completion of the Alaska Way Viaduct Tunnel and North Portal; and the reconnection of John, Thomas, and Harrison Streets will increase the number of east/west connections between Mercer Street and Denny Way.
- Improvements in metro transit service will increase bus options in and out of Uptown.
- The One Center City plan for transportation and public space improvements will help meet the needs of all four Center City neighborhoods, including Uptown.
- Implementation of the Pedestrian and Bike Master Plans will make Uptown a more walkable and well-connected neighborhood.
- The Community Access and Parking Program will improve on-street parking management in Uptown's business district and nearby residential areas.
- Updated signal controls on Mercer, Roy, and Valley streets will be more sensitive to real-time traffic conditions.
- Extended protected bike lanes on 2nd Ave. and new traffic signals in Belltown will improve access and safety for bicyclists.
- Sound Transit 2 will make it easier for Seattle Center visitors to arrive by monorail.
- Commute Seattle is working with large and small employers in the downtown area to help ease congestion by offering employees multiple options to get to work.

7. What about other big projects in the downtown area, how does the rezone fit in?

The rezone not only fits in, it is essential to the success of some of the big projects in the area. Here are some examples:

- Quality of the pedestrian environment. The rezone creates new street-level development standards that promote pedestrian activity and easy pathways to Seattle Center
- Lake2Bay Corridor. The rezone promotes improvements to the Broad Street Green for greater access to Pacific Science Center, Chihuly Garden and Glass, the Space Needle, and MoPOP.
- One Center City. The One Center City plan spans 20-years covering how we move through, connect to, and experience Seattle's Center City neighborhoods. It is a public/private partnership between the City of Seattle, King County, Sound Transit, and the Downtown Seattle Association. The rezone provides a framework that will help make the One Center City plan a reality.
- Redeveloped waterfront. The rezone promotes better pedestrian and transportation connections to the waterfront.