
Put First Things First for Seattle's Livable U District

Livable U District is an ad hoc coalition of University District tenants, homeowners, small businesses, organizations and their supporters committed to preserving both the livability and affordability of this community.

Livable U District Coalition

**Join a growing list of individuals and groups endorsing this statement at
www.LivableUDistrict.com**

We invite you and/or your organization to join our effort by agreeing to endorse and sign on to this Livable U District position statement. When you do, you'll be kept abreast of our efforts and invited to future meetings of this coalition to help us achieve these goals.

Please visit LivableUDistrict.com Or contact: Livable U District Coalition, c/o Seattle Displacement Coalition, 5031 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105, (206) 632-0668.

Livable U District Position Statement

First Tackle Urgent Livability and Affordability Concerns

The City must put first things first for a livable U District and tackle urgent problems here now - matters already identified and prioritized over years of community planning processes involving hundreds who work and live in our community.

Impacts of Development

Our first concern is to identify and promote steps that must be taken now by the city to alleviate the impacts of development already occurring in the University District under the existing zoning code.

We Need Real Action to Solve Problems and Challenges Here and Now

Right now, we are facing enormous challenges that threaten both the affordability and livability of the University District - unmanageable traffic congestion, a lack of parking, lack of open space, loss of tree canopy, loss of existing affordable housing and historic buildings, public safety issues and a growing homeless population lacking services and shelter. Rezoning first will increase problems; layering greater density over existing problems only makes them greater and harder to solve.

The U District already has been up-zoned to accommodate light rail. That was the explicit purpose of the 2005 UCUC Plan. Before increasing heights again three and four fold, let's see if light rail can address existing near intolerable levels of congestion caused by these past zoning changes. Let's first see if we can find solutions to the problems we're already facing before we precipitate more and deepen the ones we have.

We call on the Mayor and the Seattle City Council to immediately suspend current on-going plans to up-zone the University District until the following measures are adopted:

1. Develop and adopt legislation that requires developers to pay impact fees to ensure that developers pay their fair share of the costs of growth on our transportation network, utilities, parks and public schools;
2. Develop and adopt a comprehensive traffic and parking mitigation plan drawing from the expertise of residents to mitigate enormous levels of congestion already affecting the University District
3. Develop an effective anti-displacement strategy for the U District which includes adoption of legislation that helps preserve it's small business character, that requires developers to replace 1 for 1 at comparable price any existing low cost housing they remove and includes a right of first notice law requiring owners who put their low income apartments up for sale to first consider offers from nonprofits interested in preserving them
4. Develop and adopt a comprehensive plan to increase, improve and maintain parks and open space in the neighborhood accompanied by a real commitment of city funds to make this plan a reality
5. Develop and adopt a comprehensive historic preservation plan with real teeth needed to preserve dozens of identified historic structures now at risk of being lost to redevelopment
6. Adopt strong regulations protecting our declining older growth tree canopy in our community and city-wide.
7. Provide effective social services to address the ever-growing homeless population in the University District.

U District Growth for 2024 Already at 135.5%* of the Target

Many, if not all of these problems, are directly traceable to the rapid growth occurring under the existing zoning code. The district's infrastructure can't handle the current significant increases to density. The University District already has reached record levels of growth under the current code. Since 2005, we've reached 135.5 percent* of our 2024 twenty-year growth target. And there is existing capacity under the current land use code to accommodate twice the residential growth we need to accommodate through 2035.

**Revised 11/13/16 (Urban Center/Village Growth Report 3Q_Oct2016; Urban Center/Village Residential Growth Report 10_15)*

Suspend Up-zones

Until these problems are adequately addressed, we call on the City of Seattle to set aside any further consideration of high-rise up-zone plans. Such dramatic changes in land use for the University District will greatly increase growth and escalate existing problems and make it more difficult to solve them.

First Things First for a Livable U District

Livable U District formed to respond to the City of Seattle's plans to dramatically up-zone the neighborhood for high-rise offices and denser multifamily, mixed-use and commercial development that will fundamentally alter the U District's unique character and escalate the problems we already have.

Let's work together to adopt and develop the measures listed above aimed at preserving and improving both the livability and affordability of the University District, and that truly reflect the needs and wishes of existing residents and small businesses.

We call on the City of Seattle to put first things first by fixing what's wrong now, before creating worsened problems with greater density and higher zoning.

The Livable U District Coalition of Groups and individuals endorsing and committed to these goals at www.LivableUDistrict.com