



U District Business Improvement Area Ratepayer Advisory Board Meeting Agenda

4 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

October 10, 2024

[Zoom Meeting](#)

RATEPAYER ADVISORY BOARD

Jennifer Antos
*Seattle Neighborhood
Farmers Markets*

Max Blume
The Blume Company

Sally Clark
*CampusSafety,
University of Washington*

David Cohanim
Whitefall, LLC

Lora Gastineau
U District Resident

Chris Giles
*U District Resident
University Plaza*

Joe Gruber
U District Food Bank

Mary Kay Gugerty
*The Evans School,
University of Washington*

Jeanette Henderson,
*UW Real Estate,
University of Washington*

Lincoln Johnson
*Student Life,
University of Washington*

Nikole O'Bryan
Nikole O'Bryan, DDS

Chris Petersen
Café Allegro

Braedyn Reed
*Student
University of Washington*

Brian Sellen
*American Campus
Communities*

Sandy Sun
Compass Real Estate

Carolyn Thompson
Neptune Building

Hui Tian
Studio 19 Architects

Polly Yarioka
University Presbyterian

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| 1. Welcome and Introductions | Sally |
| 2. Public Comment | Sally |
| 3. Approval of June 2024 Meeting Minutes | Sally |
| 4. Acceptance of the Financials | Joe |
| 5. 2024-2025 Executive Committee Nominations | Sally |
| o <i>Sally Clark, Co-Chair</i> | |
| o <i>Jennifer Antos, Co-Chair</i> | |
| o <i>Joe Gruber, Treasurer</i> | |
| o <i>Chris Giles, Secretary</i> | |
| 6. Executive Director Report | Don |
| 7. Clean & Safe Report | Marcus |
| 8. Urban Vitality Report | Katy |
| 9. Economic Development Report | Daniel |
| 10. Chowdown & Events Report | Lauren |
| 11. New Business | Sally |
| 12. Adjourn | Sally |



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UD BIA

U DISTRICT BUSINESS
IMPROVEMENT AREA

ANNUAL Board Meeting Minutes

4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

June 27, 2024

Hybrid Meeting

UW Alumni 1415 NE 45th Street, Seattle WA 98105

RAB Members in Attendance

Max Blume, The Blume Company
David Cohanim, Synergy Construction
Lora Gastineau, Novell Condominiums
Chris Giles, Resident
Joe Gruber, University District Food Bank
Hui Tian, Studio 19

Lincoln Johnson, UW Student Affairs
Maria Barrientos, Barrientos / Ryan
Brian Sellen, American Campus Communities
Jennifer Antos, U District Farmers Market
Jeanette Henderson, UW Real Estate

RAB Members Not in Attendance

Sally Clark, UW Campus Safety
Sandy Sun, Corbit Building
Mary Kay Gugerty, UW Evans School
Nikole O'Bryan, Nikole O'Bryan, DDS

Chris Peterson, Cafe Allegro
Polly Yorioka, University Presbyterian
Carolyn Thompson, Neptune Theater
Braedyn Reed, UW Student

UDP Staff

Don Blakeney, Executive Director
Marcus Johnson, Clean, Safe & Outreach Manager
Phil Lloyd, Financial Manager
Daniel Lopic, Economic Development Manager
Katy Ricchiuto, Urban Vitality Manager

Nikki Somers, Operations Manager
Lauren Carey, Events Manager
Pollyanna Yokokawa, Marketing Manager

Ratepayers Present + Guests Present*

Kenny Pulsifer, Soules Properties
Candice Soules, Soules Properties
Gregg Petrie, U Plaza Condominiums
Katie Betz, Urban Renaissance Group
Maya Lu, Boba Up
Lois Ko, Sweet Alchemy
Miles Richardson, Audi Seattle/University VW
Josh Stabenfeldt, University YMCA
Aaron Hoard, UW

Casey Rogers, City of Seattle OED
Cory Crocker, Novell Condominiums
Anson Lin, Asotra Construction
Don and Susan Schulze, UDPA
Shirin Subhani, U Heights
Trevor Peterson, UW Bookstore
Kate Barr, Scarecrow Video
Rick Jones, University Business Center
John Hix, Seattle Vineyard Church

**Please note, there may have been other guests but due to the zoom format and people entering and leaving at different times, we were unable to track all guests.*

Welcome and Introductions

Joe led a round of introductions with the board, guests and staff and then opened both the Summer UDBIA Board meeting and the 2024 Annual Ratepayers meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of April 4, 2024 RAB Meeting Minutes

Joe called for the following motion: "The UDBIA Ratepayer Advisory Board approves the April 4, 2024 meeting minutes as presented at the June 27, 2024 RAB Meeting."

Motion: Chris G. moved to accept the April 2024 meeting minutes.

Second: Jennifer seconded the motion.

Abstention: none

Approval: Minutes were approved unanimously

Finance Committee Update and Approval of the Financials

Don offered an update on the Finances. Since April 2024 spending is largely on track. UDP is still catching up from late hires, and is working through the DOC grant which distorts the finances. *These and other more detailed updates can be found in the finance narrative included in the June Board packet.* Joe called for the following motion: "The Board accepts the May 2024 UDP financials as presented at the June 27, 2024 UDBIA Meeting."

Motion: Lincoln moved to accept the May UDP financials.

Second: Max seconded the motion.

Approval: The motion was approved unanimously.

UDBIA Governance Update & Term Renewals

Joe noted we have three board members up for renewal, Joe, Chris, and Polly and called for the following motion: "The Board votes to renew the terms of Joe Gruber, Chris Petersen, and Polly Yorioka for another three years on the UDBIA Board."

Motion: The Executive Committee moved to accept the new terms.

Second: Max seconded the motion.

Approval: The motion was approved unanimously.

2024-2025 UDBIA Board Meeting Schedule

Don reviewed the upcoming Board meetings for the UDBIA Board in FY 2025. *These dates and times can be found on the UDP website.*

Clean & Safe Report

Marcus reported on the clean and safe committee. The committee is transitioning from a monthly meeting to a quarterly meeting. The recent meeting was June 5th and the guest speaker was Davonte Belle of the Community Assisted Response and Engagement (CARE) Department. Davonte manages this department, which is a 3rd arm of enforcement (the others are Fire and Police). CARE also manages the 911 call center. The next UDP Clean and Safe Committee meeting will be in Fall 2024.

Marcus also reported on Alley Management, an ongoing issue in the U District. Marcus is working with SPU and Recology on an alley by alley basis to resolve issues in the alleys in the neighborhood. The current focused alley is the alley behind the former Target.

Lastly Marcus gave an update on the UWAA Community Clean Up that was held on May 5, 2024. There were 50 volunteers that cleaned 33 windows, picked up 525 pounds of trash, and covered over 12 miles.

Urban Vitality

Katy reported on the Lid I-5 North Seattle project. The coalition working with UDP has been reaching out to local elected officials and to secure potential funding in the Seattle transportation levy to look at the feasibility of building a lid in the U District. Katy also authored an op-ed in the The Urbanist about the funding needed for highway mitigation projects, and their benefits, in collaboration with Lid I-5 and reconnect south park. Katy mentioned that there will be a bicycle tour on June 22nd for the public, as well as a walking tour on June 26th with state elected officials.

Katy also shared that the International Downtown Association is hosting its annual conference in Seattle from September 9-13. The U District Partnership was chosen to lead 3 U District tours that include a full day pre-conference tour on “Embracing the University as Economic and Cultural Engine”, and half day tour on “Transit Oriented Growth in Seattle’s Historic University District”, and a joint tour with the Ballard neighborhood “Ballard to U District: Past, Pandemic, and Future”.

Lastly Katy shared that the UDP is supporting U District Advocates’ Summer Green Street Project, which is an activation of NE 42nd street. This activation is slated to take place from July - September 2024, and will include temporary furniture, street mural, lighting, trees, music, and movies. The street will remain open, however the activation will be on the sidewalks, and some of the parking spaces. There will be temporary closures for events including the Chow Down.

Economic Development

Daniel started with the news that the Office of Economic Development has announced they will support five neighborhoods with a retail study, and the U District is one. It will include recruitment strategy, implementation strategy, neighborhood visioning strategy, understanding specific opportunities, and diagnostic strategy. Daniel also shared the neighborhood Kraken Bar story and video. Lastly, Daniel talked about the outdoor dining enhancements for neighborhood businesses that will be partially funded by the grant. Kate talked about Scarecrow Videos’s future and the hope to raise money to keep Scarecrow in the neighborhood.

Spring Events Update

Lauren gave a recap of the spring events. Boba Fest was on April 27th and over 28 businesses participated, and this year UDP closed 43rd and there were anywhere from 10-15K attendees. The Street Fair was May 18-19 and was the biggest in recent memory. This event continues to be the longest running street fair in America and Seattle’s largest outdoor arts and craft festival. Lauren

shared information about the U Heights summer park pop ups that will be held July 13, August 10, and September 14, as well as The 'Zoid festival on August 3rd.

2025 Budget Approval

Don offered a 2025 budget timeline and recapped where things were and gave an overview of the UDBIA assessment evolution and what that looks like for the 2024-2025 UDP fiscal year. Don discussed the 2024-2025 budget priorities and timeline which included feedback from March's UDP/RAB visioning & budgeting exercise. During the UDP/RAB exercise the themes included more grants, public restroom advocacy, enhanced cleaning and safety, more public space activation, and new business promotions. *More information about the 2025 budget and workplan can be found in your packet.*

Joe then called for the following motion: "The UDBIA Ratepayer Advisory Board accepts the 2024-25 Fiscal Year Work Plan & Budget, as presented at the June 2024 Annual Meeting."

Motion: Jennifer moved to accept the new terms

Second: Lincoln seconded the motion

Approval: The motion was approved unanimously.

Joe called for a second motion: "The UDBIA Ratepayer Advisory Board accepts the continuance of the U District Partnership as the UDBIA Program Manager for the 2024-25 fiscal year."

Motion: Max moved to accept the new terms

Second: David seconded the motion

Approval: The motion was approved unanimously

New Business

Joe asked if there was any new business but there was none.

BIA Meeting Adjournment

Joe closed the UDBIA Ratepayer Advisory Board meeting and moved onto the Annual Ratepayers meeting.

Joe called for a vote of the present ratepayers to accept the 2024-2025 UDP Budget and Work Plan

Motion: Trevor moved to accept the UDP 2024-25 Budget and Work Plan.

Second: Josh seconded the motion.

Approval: The motion was approved unanimously

Joe called for a motion to accept the recommendation of UDP as the UDBIA Program Manager for the upcoming fiscal year.

Motion: Trevor moved to accept the recommendation of UDP as the UDBIA Program Manager for the upcoming fiscal year.

Second: Don S. seconded the motion.

Approval: The motion was approved unanimously

Ratepayer Annual Meeting Adjournment

Joe adjourned the Annual Ratepayers meeting. @ 5:01pm.



FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT & BUDGET NARRATIVE

Prepared on 10/7/24

This financial report represents the close of Q1 for the U District Partnership. The organization is on solid footing thanks to stable BIA collections and continued grant income supporting project administration.

Budget Report

This fall, UDP is bringing the cleaning staff in-house – a transition that should be complete by the end of October. Because this change has taken a few months to realize, there are some spending variances that will persist in the budget report, where spending will be over on cleaning contracts, but under on staffing. The comments below are intended to add context and details to variances seen in the budget report. The numbers along the left side of the page correspond with the numbers on the budget report:

Income:

444300 – BIA Income: *BIA spending is lower than anticipated, due to underspending on staffing. This spending will pick up later this year.*

44530 – Grants Income: *The under collection on grants is just a timing issue. Daniel is tracking DOC grant income and spending carefully. This grant should be spent-down as planned by early next year.*

47000 – Program Fees & Sponsorship Income: *UDP brought in more sponsorship this year for the Chow Down, and also brought in other supplementary income to come very close to hitting the financial targets within a few thousand dollars. As this is the first event, UDP has a long runway to bring in additional resources in the months to come.*

Expense:

60000 – Staffing: *Spending on staffing is behind and will start to catch up later this month. With Katy leaving for TCC, there may be some continued salary savings for a month this fall.*

62150 – Renovations & Repairs: *The upgrades to the new operations center are landing this fall and will show a timing variance for a few months to come.*

70320 – Contracted Services: *UDP is bringing the clean team in-house and the contract is still in place through the end of the month. For the last few months, UDP has been*

incurring cleaning contractor fees, which result in a variance on the staffing and contracted services lines for the time being.

Balance Sheet Report

The balance sheet seems to be calming down, but will continue to have some distortion from the lingering influence of the Commerce grant. New reporting requirements are reflected showing UDP's office lease as a financial obligation and an unrealized asset.

Department of Commerce Grant

The original \$5,000,000 grant was extended again through the end of the current fiscal year, with roughly \$400,000 left to be spent-down by UDP on programs and administration.

The U District Partnership

Budget Report

September 2024

	<u>Jul - Sep 24</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over Budget</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
44430 · BIA Contract	458,163.50	469,141.64	-10,978.14	1,841,566.23
44530 · Grants	120,050.34	130,357.69	-10,307.35	521,431.00
47000 · Program Fees	5,660.00	10,000.00	-4,340.00	185,000.00
47213 · Retail Sales	676.36	250.03	426.33	1,000.00
47215 · Sponsorships	21,420.71	25,000.00	-3,579.29	91,000.00
43400 · Donations/Partnerships	11,993.00	9,499.97	2,493.03	38,000.00
46400 · Interest and Other	71.22			
Total Income	<u>618,035.13</u>	<u>644,249.33</u>	<u>-26,214.20</u>	<u>2,677,997.23</u>
Gross Profit	618,035.13	644,249.33	-26,214.20	2,677,997.23
Expense				
60000 · Staffing Expenses	282,974.21	333,196.47	-50,222.26	1,356,986.24
61000 · Professional Expenses	11,000.00	11,749.94	-749.94	34,500.00
62000 · Office and Overhead Expenses	49,093.44	48,297.41	796.03	251,090.00
70000 · Direct Program Expenses	259,987.23	245,855.25	14,131.98	1,017,085.62
Total Expense	<u>603,054.88</u>	<u>639,099.07</u>	<u>-36,044.19</u>	<u>2,659,661.86</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>14,980.25</u>	<u>5,150.26</u>	<u>9,829.99</u>	<u>18,335.37</u>
Net Income	<u>14,980.25</u>	<u>5,150.26</u>	<u>9,829.99</u>	<u>18,335.37</u>

The U District Partnership

Balance Sheet Prev Year Comparison

As of September 30, 2024

	<u>Sep 30, 24</u>	<u>Sep 30, 23</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Checking/Savings			
10100 · Operating Bank Accounts			
10110 · WSECU Checking	355,943.52	757,781.87	-401,838.35
10111 · WSECU Savings	160,413.42	135,149.28	25,264.14
Total 10100 · Operating Bank Accounts	<u>516,356.94</u>	<u>892,931.15</u>	<u>-376,574.21</u>
Total Checking/Savings	516,356.94	892,931.15	-376,574.21
Accounts Receivable	172,423.59	185,760.77	-13,337.18
Other Current Assets			
12026 · Lease Rights	32,391.29	89,894.06	-57,502.77
12022 · Prepaid Expense	14,153.39	1,344.25	12,809.14
12021 · Employee Advances	0.00	669.37	-669.37
Total Other Current Assets	<u>46,544.68</u>	<u>91,907.68</u>	<u>-45,363.00</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>735,325.21</u>	<u>1,170,599.60</u>	<u>-435,274.39</u>
Fixed Assets	4,606.61	11,013.05	-6,406.44
Other Assets	3,235.87	3,235.87	0.00
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>743,167.69</u></u>	<u><u>1,184,848.52</u></u>	<u><u>-441,680.83</u></u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY			
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	-2,787.56	37,697.78	-40,485.34
Credit Cards	745.81	35,449.50	-34,703.69
Other Current Liabilities			
20220 · Lease Liability	33,880.56	91,046.06	-57,165.50
20210 · Deferred Revenue	366,120.61	710,896.90	-344,776.29
24000 · Payroll Liabilities	63,431.05	59,258.66	4,172.39
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>463,432.22</u>	<u>861,201.62</u>	<u>-397,769.40</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>461,390.47</u>	<u>934,348.90</u>	<u>-472,958.43</u>
Total Liabilities	461,390.47	934,348.90	-472,958.43
Equity			
32000 · Unrestricted Net Assets	266,796.97	234,685.26	32,111.71
Net Income	14,980.25	15,814.36	-834.11
Total Equity	<u>281,777.22</u>	<u>250,499.62</u>	<u>31,277.60</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>743,167.69</u></u>	<u><u>1,184,848.52</u></u>	<u><u>-441,680.83</u></u>

Program Reports

Fall 2024 UDBIA Ratepayer Advisory Board Meeting

October 10, 2024

2024 INTERNATIONAL DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE RECAP

Last month, Seattle hosted the 2024 International Downtown Association (IDA) conference. IDA is the professional association for place management and downtown organizations. The conference is held annually in a different North American city. As a neighborhood in this year's host city, The U District Partnership participated in a number of ways:

UDP Wins the Pinnacle Award at IDA

The U District Partnership was awarded the prestigious Pinnacle Award at the IDA conference. The Pinnacle Award is the industry's highest honor, representing the most creative and inspiring innovations in the industry. The award recognizes the interventions made possible through the U District Vitality Grants that allowed UDP to invest nearly \$5 million in over 140 small businesses. This program was funded by the Washington State Department of Commerce and overseen by Economic Development Manager, Daniel Lokic.



Tours and Sessions Hosted by UDP

UDP hosted three tours of the U District for over 120 total participants. The tours included a full-day tour exploring UW's campus, the south waterfront, the Ave and small businesses, and Brooklyn Ave and new development projects. UDP also hosted two half-day tours exploring transit-oriented development and showcasing our small business support in the neighborhood. Finally, UDP participated in a session that showcased innovative projects across the industry, with a presentation focused on the implementation of the U District Vitality Grants program.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Long-Vacated Commercial Spaces Begin to Fill as New Businesses Blossom This Fall

Over the past several months, the U District has experienced a surge in new businesses, many of which have already opened and more that are nearing their grand opening dates. This influx of new businesses signals growing confidence in the district's economic potential and continues to enhance the neighborhood's appeal to UW students, faculty, residents, and visitors.

When [Toasted Bagels](#) (15th Ave NE / NE 50th St) opened earlier this summer, it immediately drew city-wide attention with their Mediterranean-style bagels on a segment on [Fox 13's Emerald Eats](#). Similarly, [Sweetpea's Cakes](#) (University Way NE / NE 55th St) has brought an artisan touch to the neighborhood offering custom cakes and pastries, adding a unique option for special events and everyday indulgences. Additionally, the U District is now home to Seattle's first [Insomnia Cookies](#) (Brooklyn Ave NE / NE 42nd St) which is rapidly becoming a go-to for late-night snacks among other new businesses including Bombay Express, Solo Noodle, Birrieria Pepe El Toro, and Stuff in Seattle.



Several high-profile businesses are also weeks away from their grand opening. [The Bouldering Project](#) (University Way NE / NE 45th St), an innovative climbing gym, is poised to attract 1000+ daily customers in the long vacant and historically significant Wells Fargo Bank Building. The gym's facility will build upon the history of its space, featuring the city's largest infrared sauna inside of a former bank vault.



Other notable businesses opening soon include [Industrious](#) (Roosevelt Way NE / NE 45th St), a state-of-the-art fitness facility offering a wide range of workout equipment, group classes, and personal training services designed to meet the needs of fitness enthusiasts of all levels. With its modern amenities and focus on community-driven fitness, Industrious provides a motivating environment for members to achieve their health and wellness goals.



Nationally-recognized chain [Raising Cane's](#) (University Way NE / NE 45th St), has begun construction and is set to open its first Seattle location in 2025. This restaurant has a strong following and is anticipated to attract visitors throughout the city. In addition, several other cafes and bakeries are set to open in the coming months including Ancient Gate Coffee, George's Cafe, Avole Cafe, and JIE Bakery & Tea.

These new businesses reflect the U District's evolving commercial economy and will continue to diversify the retail amenities available to UW students, faculty, residents, and visitors.

UDP Kick's Off OED-Funded Retail Study and Implementation Strategy

Through the generous support of Seattle's Office of Economic Development, UDP has begun a retail study looking at the neighborhood's commercial landscape with the aim of aligning property owners, businesses, and stakeholders on a cohesive vision for the neighborhood's future. The scope of this study is designed to examine both financial and regulatory barriers, while fostering collaboration among property owners, real estate brokers, and the broader business community to create a thriving and diverse retail environment.

Property-Owner Roundtables

To better understand the current local ground-floor economy, UDP will host roundtable discussions with property owners to address key market dynamics. These sessions will focus on sharing up-to-date data on realistic market rents, tenant recruitment strategies, and the types of investments property owners can make to support the U District's long-term growth. By facilitating these conversations, UDP aims to better understand local market dynamics while equipping property owners with practical tools to attract and retain tenants who align with the district's evolving needs.

Retail Vision and Consensus Building

A central goal of the study is to explore what a unified vision for the U District's ground-floor retail economy could be. Through collaboration with property owners, real estate brokers, and current business operators, the study seeks to build consensus on business attraction strategies that align with the unmet demand from nearby residents, young professionals, and University of Washington faculty and staff. This vision will guide future tenant recruitment efforts, ensuring the retail landscape reflects the needs and preferences of the community, while promoting long-term economic vitality.

Vacant Space Analysis

Another focus of the study will involve an in-depth assessment of long-standing vacancies, including the former *Target*, *CVS*, and *Tower Records* locations, which have remained inactive due to complex financial and regulatory challenges. This analysis will culminate in a series of recommendations that will provide detailed information on the investment, timeline, and necessary permits required to fill these critical spaces. Additionally, the study will conduct a void gap analysis, aimed at identifying retail categories currently lacking in the district. This analysis will help uncover which types of prospective businesses, such as restaurants, retail, or services, could be most effectively attracted to these underutilized spaces to meet local demand.

By addressing the challenges associated with filling key vacant spaces and fostering collaboration between key stakeholders, this study aims to position the U District as a vibrant commercial hub that meets the demands of a growing and diverse population.

CLEAN, SAFE & OUTREACH

UDP Brings Cleaning Program In-House

Later this month, UDP will take a significant step by bringing its cleaning program entirely in-house. Historically, the cleaning services provided by the BIA were conducted, at least in part, by an external contractor. In 2022, UDP introduced a hybrid model, combining an in-house Clean Team with support from a cleaning contractor. This approach aimed to build the team's skills, acquire the necessary infrastructure and equipment, and secure an operations center for the Clean Team.

Having successfully met these goals, UDP decided to transition fully in-house for core cleaning functions. Notice has been given to the contractor, Seattle Surface Cleaners, who has delivered excellent service to the neighborhood, that UDP will assume all cleaning responsibilities by Nov 1.

In preparation, UDP will be hiring additional Clean Team members to provide seven-days-a-week coverage. The Clean Team will consist of four full-time members and one part-time member. The goal is to have the team fully staffed by October 15, allowing for a training period and a smooth transition between the contractor and the in-house team.

UDP Opens New Operations Center for Clean and Safe Programs

UDP has secured a new Operations Center to better support the Clean and Safe Programs. The previous Operations Center was significantly smaller and not fully equipped to manage a large-scale cleaning program. The new center, located across from the U Heights Center in the Christian Science Reading Room building, includes a large commercial garage that was previously used by a carpet company.

This facility offers the space needed for continued growth in the Clean and Safe Programs, providing secure storage and easy access to equipment. Additionally, it includes parking for Clean and Safe staff, an important benefit for current and prospective team members.

UDP has entered into a five-year lease for this space, with the possibility of extending it if the facility continues to meet the program's needs. Renovations are currently underway to enhance the functionality of the space, with a target completion date by the end of October.

Introducing Elijah Slade to the Clean Team

UDP is thrilled to welcome Elijah Slade as the newest member of the Clean Team. Elijah is the first of three new hires planned as part of the exciting expansion of the fully in-house cleaning program. With experience in both social services and hospitality, Elijah brings a unique blend of skills and a deep passion for serving the community.

Elijah's dedication to helping others, combined with his cheerful and positive attitude, makes him a valuable addition to the team. The UDP is confident that his energy will contribute to maintaining a clean and welcoming environment in the U District.



If you see Elijah out and about, don't hesitate to introduce yourself and give him a warm welcome to the neighborhood!

UDP Works with City and Neighborhood Leaders to Address Growing Drug Market and Safety Issues

The U District is currently facing an entrenched drug market, with the epicenter located around 47th and University Way NE. This surge in street-level drug activity has contributed to an increase in quality-of-life and safety issues in the surrounding neighborhood. One area particularly affected has been the U Heights Center, which has experienced a notable rise in challenges related to this drug market.

In response to these concerns, the Seattle City Council (with support from the City Attorney) passed new legislation designating the area between NE 52nd St and NE 43rd St, from Brooklyn Ave NE to 15th Ave NE, as a Stay Out of Drug Area (SODA). More information on the law can be found on the City's [website](#).

UDP is also playing an active role in addressing issues raised by stakeholder by advocating for further support from both City and regional partners. In collaboration with neighborhood organizations and external stakeholders, UDP is advancing a range of safety strategies, and when needed, seeking assistance from municipal and regional resources with the aim of tackling issues in the district. These partnerships are essential to creating a safer, healthier environment in the U District.

URBAN VITALITY

UDP Advances Lid I-5 North Funding Opportunities

UDP continues to lead conversations around a potential highway lid between NE 45th and 50th Streets. Recent work this summer and early fall has focused on advancing opportunities to fund a feasibility study and community engagement process.

- In July, Seattle City Council and Mayor Bruce Harrell finalized legislation for the Seattle Transportation Levy. The levy will be voted on in the November general election. Thanks to advocacy from UDP, the levy includes \$500,000 in funding to support a study of private funding for a highway lid between NE 45th and NE 50th Streets. Details about the timeline and implementation of the study will be determined by the Seattle Department of Transportation after November.
- In September, UDP applied for \$2 million in funding from the US Department of Transportation's Reconnecting Communities Pilot program. The program aims to dispense hundreds of millions of dollars in funding to projects that address community harms caused by highway infrastructure. Our application included 20 letters of support from community organizations and businesses, City and State elected representatives, and the City of Seattle. The \$2 million would fund a robust community engagement process and multiple feasibility studies done by consultants. Award decisions will be made in winter or spring 2025.
- UDP also created a separate website for the Lid I-5 North project. It can be viewed [here](#).

Public Restroom Site Visit

UDP recently organized a tour of Pike Place Market's public restrooms with a small group of U District stakeholders from the University of Washington, the U District Food Bank, and the U District Community Council. The group met with Market operations and real estate staff to learn more about how their public restrooms are managed. The meeting was a good relationship building opportunity between U District stakeholders and Market staff. Information learned from the visit will be used to inform future conversations about a staffed and maintained public restroom in the neighborhood.

NE 42nd St Placemaking Project

This summer, the U District Advocates group implemented a placemaking project on NE 42nd St between the Ave and Brooklyn Ave NE. The project included public seating, a street mural, and temporary trees in the parking spaces on the street. It also included a series of street closures for outdoor movies, an art walk, and concerts. The project was funded through a Department of Neighborhoods grant. UDP served on the advisory committee for the project. The project wrapped up on September 29. There will be a final meeting for interested neighborhood stakeholders in October, which will allow area businesses to share their thoughts on the project. We have heard feedback from

some businesses on impacts, including insufficient outreach prior to the project, loss of parking for customers, inadequate access to alleys, and additional costs incurred by businesses from the street closure.

MARKETING

U District Seattle Website Updates & Site Traffic

Over the past year, the U District Seattle website (udistrictseattle.com) has positioned itself to be the primary destination for event pages and as a quick guide to the neighborhood. In the past year, over 167k active users visited the site over 245k times, with 1M+ events to note (*events* are indicated by clicks, scrolling, page views). Note: This snapshot spans both Food Walk/Chow Down events in 2023 and 2024.

Site traffic highs correlate directly to signature event dates with the largest spike at Street Fair and the longest window of sustained high traffic correlating to the U District Cherry Blossom Festival. This is also reflected in the top page views data, with Street Fair and Cherry Blossom Festival event landing pages showing the largest counts, and Boba Fest and Chow Down event pages coming in the third and fourth highest counts respectively.

Additional investment was put into the U District Seattle website this year to build out a new community page, an events landing page featuring signature festivals and event and performance venues, as well as a minor restructure of the homepage. These features allow the website to more fully represent the neighborhood and improve site navigation. Previously, event pages could only be accessed directly from the homepage when they were featured. This improved functionality allows users to cross between the core site and the event pages more seamlessly with the goal of increasing time spent on the website.

U District in the News—Recent Press Features

The U District neighborhood was prominently featured in two recent features including in The New York Times Travel and a dedicated article from UW Magazine.

[36 Hours in Seattle](#)

The New York Times | Today's Seattle is ever evolving, filled with colorful neighborhoods beyond the museum-studded central districts. The University District, or U District, is home to more pioneering and enduring businesses than just about any other neighborhood.

[Husky Classics Rock](#)

UW Magazine | The U District has evolved and grown over the years. These establishments feel almost exactly the same.



[The Best Restaurants in Seattle's University District](#)

Eater Seattle | A guide to University of Washington's neighborhood, for Huskies and visitors alike

[Seattle's University District may at last get public restrooms](#)

Seattle Times | The Low Income Housing Institute plans to build street-facing public restrooms into a new apartment complex at Northeast 45th Street and Roosevelt Way Northeast. The complex will also include a nonprofit-operated Urban Rest Stop hygiene center.

Additionally, as long standing neighborhood institutions fastidiously work through the challenges and changes in the landscape of their respective industries, regional media has been quick to raise awareness as organizations call for support to preserve these local gems:

[Scarecrow Video says it needs to raise \\$1.8M or face possible closure](#)

Seattle Times | Scarecrow Video is sending out an SOS. That means "Save Our Scarecrow," to be exact.

[Grand Illusion is Moving — But It's Not Going Far](#)

Seattle Mag | After more than 50 years of screenings in the U District, the Grand Illusion Cinema is losing its lease. The historic arthouse, which has been a staple of Seattle's film scene since 1970, will have to move from its 1403 N.E. 50th St. location by February 2025 — but it's not the end of the story.

[The Historic College Inn Pub Will Close Next Year If Its Owners Can't Sell](#)

Eater Seattle | After saving the University District institution during the pandemic lockdowns, the owners are moving on.

EVENTS

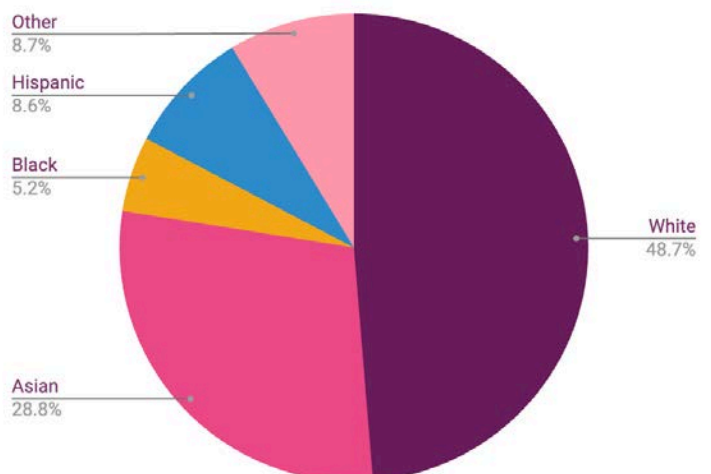
U District Chow Down & Street Party 2024 is the Welcome Back to Campus Event

About Chow Down!

- 67 Restaurants over 150 different \$5 bites
- 28 Tent activations
- Over 40,000 attendees
- Majority of attendees were ages 18-34
 - Ages 18-24: 28%
 - Ages 25-34: 26%



Chow Down Attendee Demographics 2024





As the fall weather cooled to 60 degrees with plenty of sunshine and a double rainbow, thousands of people descended on the Ave from the UW Campus to meet the U District neighborhood.

The 2024 Chow Down and Street Party featured several innovations. UDP expanded the event footprint to run from NE 41st - NE 45th down the Ave, the additional closures allowed space for lines in front of restaurants and community tent activations.

Onsite activations from local businesses both on and off the Ave, along with community groups and sponsors, enhanced the festivity and engagement.

UDP welcomed local businesses to engage with event attendees including U Heights Center, University Family YMCA, Hobo Bird, 3W Medical, Seattle Bouldering Project, and The Graduate Hotel's celebrated rooftop bar The Mountaineering Club. The U District Green Street was also able to celebrate its final weekend of activation with added outdoor seating and post-event live music and dancing.



