



## BOARD MEETING AGENDA

11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

April 15, 2025

WSECU - 1121 NE 45th St, Seattle, WA 98105

I.	Welcome & Introductions	Lois	11:30 a.m.	
II.	Guest: Chief Amy Barden, Seattle CARE Department		11:35 a.m.	
III.	Public Comment	Public	12:00 p.m.	
IV.	Approval of February Meeting Minutes	Lois	12:05 p.m.	(Vote)
V.	Finance Committee Report	Trevor	12:10 p.m.	
	• Acceptance of March 2025 Financials			(Vote)
	• Fidelity Investments Trading Authorization			(Vote)
VI.	New Urban Vitality Manager	Don/Janet	12:15 p.m.	
VII.	New Temporary Administrative Assistant	Don/Jannat	12:20 p.m.	
VIII.	Executive Director Report	Don	12:25 p.m.	
IX.	Clean, Safe & Outreach Report	Marcus	12:35 p.m.	
X.	Marketing & Events Report	Polly	12:40 p.m.	
XI.	Governance Committee Report	Josh S.	12:45 p.m.	
	• Board Nomination: Julie Blakeslee, UW			(Vote)
	• Prospective Board Member: Paul Yunker, University District Food Bank			
XII.	New Business	Lois	12:55 p.m.	
XIII.	Adjourn	Lois	1:00 p.m.	



## **Dr. Amy Barden**

*Chief, Seattle CARE Department*

**Guest Speaker, April Board of Directors Meeting**



### **ABOUT DR. BARDEN**

Dr. Amy Barden is the first Chief of Seattle's third public safety department, called CARE (Community Assisted Response & Engagement). She directs the work of Seattle 911 and the CARE community crisis responders, behavioral health specialists responding to appropriate 911 calls. Amy holds advanced degrees in ethical leadership, administration, and organizational learning, most recently completing a doctorate at Vanderbilt University where she honed skills in data science and behavioral research. She has spent twenty years in leadership at human service organizations in Washington, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, consistently driving positive change to ensure more people are availed of services and interventions that work.

Amy has been valued for her aptitude in community-driven design, cross-team collaboration across a wide range of stakeholder groups, and demonstrated belief that every life has equal value. She is a member of the Seattle University Criminal Justice Advisory Council, the Georgetown Law Alternative Response Research Collective, and sits on the CSG Expanding First Response National Commission.



## Board Meeting Minutes

11:30am to 1:00pm

February 11, 2025

WSECU, 1121 NE 45th Street, Seattle WA 98105

### UDP Board Members in Attendance in Person

Lois Ko, Sweet Alchemy – *Co-Chair*  
Trevor Peterson – *Treasurer*  
Jeremy Eknoian, UW Real Estate  
Josh Gana, UW Housing & Food Services  
John Hix, Seattle Vineyard Church  
Rick Jones, University Business Center  
Anson Lin, Astora Construction

Naomi Lewis, Luminati Labs  
Maya Lu, Boba Up  
Angela Mercado, U Heights  
Jessie Quan, Ladd & Lass Brewing  
Aaron Hoard – *Co-Chair*  
Anna Sorokina, WSECU  
Katie Betz, Urban Renaissance Group

### UDP Board Members Not in Attendance

Santhi Perumal – *Secretary*  
Kate Barr, Scarecrow Video/Grand Illusion  
Kristine Kenney, UW Planning  
Moe Khan, Cedars Restaurant  
Emily Scully, Shultz's on the Ave  
Stephen Antupit, U District Resident

Alfred Shiga, Shiga's  
Miles Richardson, Audi Seattle/University VW  
Don Schulze, U District Property Assoc  
Josh Stabenfeldt, University YMCA

### UDP Staff

Don Blakeney, Executive Director  
Lauren Carey, Events Manager  
Marcus Johnson, Clean & Safe Manager

Daniel Lokic, Economic Development Manager  
Pollyanna Yokokawa, Marketing Manager

Phil Lloyd, Seattle CFO

### Guests\*

John Lynch, Chapel on the Ave  
David Ollee, Key Bank  
Royce Morrison, University Congregational United Church of Christ

Julie Blakeslee, University of Washington

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

### Welcome and Introductions

Aaron started the meeting, with a round of introductions.

### Public Comment

Aaron called for public comment. Royce with University Congregational United Church of Christ discussed the youth care coordination

### **Approval of UDP Board Meeting Minutes**

Aaron introduced the December 2024 meeting minutes, asked for any questions or amendments.

**Motion:** John moved to accept the December 2024 UDP Board meeting minutes.

**Second:** Angela seconded the motion.

**Approval:** The motion was approved.

### **Finance Committee Update and Approval of the Financials**

Trevor shared an update with the Board on the financials. The UDP Finance Committee met on January 31, 2025 with Don and Phil. Trevor noted we are in good shape financially, the BIA assessment collections are still coming in. UDP spending as a whole is moving as it should, with a few variances that include: BIA contract income still low because of some timing issues, and some of the administrative costs were covered by the DOC grant. The collections for the BIA are down, however UDP is working with the city to bring in past due accounts. Variances include underspending in staffing and over spending in contracted services. Don gave an overview of BIA collections for guests, and what the collections are used for.

**Motion:** On behalf of the Finance Committee, Trevor moved to accept the December 2024 financials as presented at the February 11, 2025 Board Meeting.

**Second:** No second was required because this motion came from the Finance Committee.

**Approval:** The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Executive Director Report**

Don shared the news about the closing of the AMC movie theater, as well as the Grand Illusion. Arts and culture have long been integral to the identity of the U District, and with the future hiring of a new Urban Vitality Manager, UDP is optimistic about revitalizing and strengthening the local arts and culture scene.

Next, Don provided an update on the U District Partnership's (UDP) RFP submittal. He explained that the RFP process was lengthy and drawn out, requiring significant effort from UDP to confirm that they are indeed the right organization for the job. Both UDP and the Office of Economic Development (OED) agreed that the process is not considered a best practice in the industry. Don noted that this process was established by Alex Pederson in 2020 during the renewal of the UDBIA. It demanded a considerable amount of staff time and effort from both UDP and OED.

Don shared that UDP was awarded a \$1.5M grant from the US Department of Transportation, to create a feasibility study on putting a lid over I-5 between NE 45th and 50th streets, helping reconnect Northeast Seattle communities. The study would include priorities of the lid, design, and other areas such as housing.

UDP has renewed their office space lease in the current building and expanded to accommodate our growing team. This new lease will take effect in February 2025 and remain in place through June 2030.

Lastly, UDP is currently in the interview process for the new Urban Vitality Manager position, and we aim to have this finalized and a new hire in place by mid-March 2025. Additionally, Don



shared that Daniel has accepted an Executive Director position with the Manufacturing Maritime Industrial Association (MMIA). As a result, UDP will be posting the position for hire very soon. Daniel offered some insight into his new position. The Board thanked Daniel for all of his work at UDP.

### **Economic Development**

Daniel started with an update on the Commerce Grant wrap up. UDP's work on the grant is nearly all the way completed, with just a few items left. All the funding has been exhausted with one vacant space grant remaining. The final report is due to Commerce by June 30, 2025, and all other reporting requirements have been completed.

Daniel thanked the U District Rotary for the grant which, with help from the Commerce grant, will go toward purchasing new picnic tables for the 43rd plaza. These picnic tables are being built by JumpShip in Ballard.

Lastly Daniel gave an update on new issues to track in 2025 which included restaurants bracing for price hikes as minimum wage rises, and tip credit sunset. Also noted was the number of restaurant and bar closures because of the minimum wage hike. Other issues that have popped up pertain to the mass deportation plan with the Trump administration and options businesses have.

### **Clean & Safe Report**

Marcus offered a few updates with the Clean and Safe Program, one of which was Ambassador Funding from the Seattle City Council. Councilmember Martiza Rivera championed the \$25k funds to expand ambassador hours in 2025. Funds will be used to extend program hours on key dates, such as special events, football games, in the U District.

Next Marcus thanked the U District Rotary again for their help in the purchase of a snow blower, which came in handy when it snowed in the U District. This helped the team save time on snow and ice removal. UDP continues work on the new operations center, and Marcus reminded all to get their ice melt to combat the ice.

Lastly, Marcus gave an overview of the tragic loss of King County Metro driver Shawn Yim on December 18, 2024. The stabbing occurred near NE 41st St and University Way NE. UDP collaborated with local businesses and property owners to assist in the investigation. This was the 2nd homicide in the U District within weeks, emphasizing the need for improved safety measures.

### **Events Update**

Lauren gave a 2024 UDP events in review which included the following; Cherry Blossom Festival had 93 businesses participate (including windows and promotions), with over a half a million people attending; Seattle Boba Fest had 28 businesses participate, with 33.5k attendees; U District Street Fair had 18 business activations, with over 100K attendees throughout the entire weekend; and Chow Down & Street Party had 83 businesses participate, with 50K attendees. UDP Events provide fee/low cost opportunities for promotion and community building for all of the U District businesses throughout the year. Lauren discussed the new for 2024 Winter Window Walk which offered neighborhood beautification, financial support for

small businesses, the launch of the OKAPI cup program, and city partnership. This event had over 27 businesses participate. There was a contest for best decorated window, Gargoyles won first place, and Davis Optical won second place.

Lauren shared some of the dates for the 2025 event season: Cherry Blossom in March/April (sign ups were due Feb 1) , U District Street Fair on May 17-18, 2025 (applications launched in December), and Boba Fest is moving to July 19, 2025.

### **Marketing and Communications**

Polly shared that the University Book Store is celebrating 125 years in the U District. There was a great feature in the UW Magazine about this anniversary.

Polly also mentioned the UDP's award of the \$1.5M grant for a Lid I-5 feasibility study in the neighborhood.

Polly mentioned U District Real Estate and the impacts on the neighborhood; Goldman Sachs purchased the 21-story Accolate student housing tower.

Media mention included - Saint Bread received national recognition in the New York Times as one of the 22 best bakeries across the US.

Lastly, Polly gave an overview of the new CRM system that UDP will be using. IT is an all in one advanced reporting and app solution that is BID based which includes property addresses, assessments, businesses, property owners/managers, and incident tracking.

### **Governance**

Rick offered a governance report which included the possible on-boarding of new members, including Julie Blakeslee, who was in attendance, as well as David Ollee with KeyBank. Board members spoke about their appreciation for Kate Barr, who will be rolling off the board immediately due to her change in employment status.

### **New Business**

Aaron asked for new business, Don mentioned we were given an offer of a \$100K donation to UDP. Aaron called for a motion to open a new brokerage account so that UDP can take donations of stocks, and other monetary items.

**Motion:** Trevor moved to accept the motion to open a new brokerage account.

**Second:** Rick seconded the motion.

**Approval:** The motion was approved

### **Adjournment**

Aaron thanked everyone and then called the meeting adjourned.



## Finance Committee Report & Budget Narrative

*Prepared on 4/11/25*

This financial narrative provides a summary of The U District Partnership's financial statements as of the end of March 2025, covering approximately two-thirds of the fiscal year's spending.

### **Budget Report**

The main variances below pertain to timing issues with the Street Fair income/spending and the reduced spending on staffing due to a slow ramp-up of our in-house clean team and the two vacant manager positions that will be filled by June. UDP will use the surplus funds from the end of fiscal year 2025 to cover any gap between planned spending for next year, and the FY26 assessment, consistent with the strategy from the past few years. The numbers along the left side of the page correspond with the numbers on the budget report:

#### Income:

**444300 – BIA Income:** *BIA income is lower than anticipated because there are few costs this year, meaning less reimbursements to UDP from the BIA coffers at the City. This is due to underspending on staffing. With both the Urban Vitality and Economic Development Manager Positions vacant this spring, in addition to the administrative support of program grants, UDP has not needed to invoice the City for as much staff time as originally planned in the 2025 budget. UDP will instead use these unspent funds in 2026 to cover any gap between the annual assessment and the planned program spending for next year.*

**44530 – Grants Income:** *UDP is spending down the DOC grant in the next few months. The under collection on grants is just a timing issue.*

**47000 – Program Fees & Sponsorship Income:** *UDP brings in booth fees for the U District Street Fair during the winter months, which boost income in this category. With booth sales up again this year, this surplus should offset any underperformance seen in sponsorship.*

**47215 – Sponsorship:** *Sponsorship is down this year, offset by increases in program fees and booth fees.*

#### Expense:

**60000 – Staffing:** *Spending on staffing is lower than anticipated due to vacant positions this year on the Clean Team, and for both the Urban Vitality and Economic Development Managers. All of these positions will be hired-up by June.*

**62000 – Office and Overhead Expenses:** *UDP postponed some of the planned office renovations until UW was able to sign a new five-year lease, which happened in February. Future renovations include expanding to the rest of the floor and updating the kitchen. UDP budgeted for a cushion for our lease renewal which shows a slight underspend. Insurance*

came in a little lower than anticipated and the banking fees will increase as Street Fair approaches, with the booth transactions.

**70335 – Program Supplies:** This relates to the purchasing of cleaning supplies and the underspend here is mostly a timing issue.

**70300 – Advertising:** UDP has underspent on advertising this year, but may make some investments before July.

**70320 – Contracted Services:** UDP had planned to hire in-house clean-team employees for FY25, but this transition took longer than anticipated, so the cleaning contract with Seattle Surface Cleaners persisted through October, driving this expense line up. This is offset by the underspend in staffing that was budgeted for the same time period.

**70360 – Other Program Expenses:** The underspend here will even out by the end of the year, with the completion of the Department of Commerce grant.

**70370 – Printing and Reproduction:** Cherry Blossom Festival and Street Fair printing costs are still landing, so this variance is more of a timing issue.

### Balance Sheet Report

The balance sheet will continue to have some distortion from the lingering influence of the Commerce grant.

### Department of Commerce Grant

The original \$5,126,600 grant has been fully collected, with the exception of a \$25,000 payment which will be paid by Commerce at the closure of the grant. Grant payments are winding down and should be completed by June.

### UDBIA Collections As of March 2025

Collections are on target, with collection most years eventually achieving more-than 95%, per the annual budget. UDP works with the City to collect the remaining delinquent assessments.

Period	Total Outstanding	Total Assessment Billed Amount	Collection Rate %	Collected \$
2019	\$ 10,190	\$ 946,505	98.92	\$ 936,315
2020	\$ 21,212	\$ 1,215,853	98.26	\$ 1,194,641
2021	\$ 40,583	\$ 1,271,712	96.81	\$ 1,231,129
2022	\$ 54,965	\$ 1,325,847	95.85	\$ 1,270,882
2023	\$74,723	\$ 1,596,501	95.32	\$ 1,521,778
1S/2024	\$ 70,557	\$ 879,656	92.02	\$ 809,499
2S/2024	\$122,917	\$880,344	86.04	\$ 757,427
Total	\$ 292,586.91		94.73	

# The U District Partnership

## Budget Report

### March 2025

	Mar 25	Budget	\$ Over Budget	Jul '24 - Mar 25	YTD Budget	\$ Over Budget	Annual Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense							
Income							
44430 · BIA Contract	0.00	156,380.51	-156,380.51	1,120,670.02	1,387,424.70	-266,754.68	1,841,566.23
44530 · Grants							
44532 · DOC	223,607.68	41,202.59	182,405.09	428,320.15	370,823.23	57,496.92	494,431.00
44536 · SPU	6,750.00	6,750.00	0.00	20,250.00	20,250.00	0.00	27,000.00
Total 44530 · Grants	230,357.68	47,952.59	182,405.09	448,570.15	391,073.23	57,496.92	521,431.00
47000 · Program Fees	670.37	0.00	670.37	197,482.75	185,000.00	12,482.75	185,000.00
47213 · Retail Sales	0.00	83.33	-83.33	737.35	750.01	-12.66	1,000.00
47215 · Sponsorships	0.00	12,000.00	-12,000.00	28,920.71	37,000.00	-8,079.29	91,000.00
43400 · Donations/Partnerships							
43410 · Business & Corp. Contributions	0.00			6,773.00			
43400 · Donations/Partnerships - Other	2,079.00	3,166.67	-1,087.67	25,134.88	28,499.99	-3,365.11	38,000.00
Total 43400 · Donations/Partnerships	2,079.00	3,166.67	-1,087.67	31,907.88	28,499.99	3,407.89	38,000.00
46400 · Interest and Other	836.05			1,028.50			
Total Income	233,943.10	219,583.10	14,360.00	1,829,317.36	2,029,747.93	-200,430.57	2,677,997.23
Expense							
60000 · Staffing Expenses							
60100 · Wages & Salaries	67,164.18	91,478.99	-24,314.81	703,456.62	823,310.93	-119,854.31	1,119,747.90
60020 · Payroll Taxes	6,520.60	7,775.72	-1,255.12	63,345.36	69,981.43	-6,636.07	95,508.59
60030 · Medical Benefits	5,346.38	8,816.44	-3,470.06	64,106.41	79,347.99	-15,241.58	105,797.31
60040 · Retirement Benefits	1,490.00	2,744.38	-1,254.38	16,888.30	24,699.30	-7,811.00	32,932.44
60050 · Transit Benefit	0.00	250.00	-250.00	2,516.67	2,250.00	266.67	3,000.00
Total 60000 · Staffing Expenses	80,521.16	111,065.53	-30,544.37	850,313.36	999,589.65	-149,276.29	1,356,986.24
61000 · Professional Expenses							
61100 · Accounting Fees	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	26,600.00	26,000.00	600.00	30,500.00
61110 · HR Consulting	0.00	166.67	-166.67	0.00	1,499.99	-1,499.99	2,000.00
61120 · Legal Fees	0.00	166.67	-166.67	2,187.00	1,499.99	687.01	2,000.00
Total 61000 · Professional Expenses	1,500.00	1,833.34	-333.34	28,787.00	28,999.98	-212.98	34,500.00
62000 · Office and Overhead Expenses							
62150 · Renovations & Repairs	195.42	0.00	195.42	21,009.14	56,000.00	-34,990.86	56,000.00
63600 · Banking and Service Fees	172.69	2,841.67	-2,668.98	2,186.58	8,774.99	-6,588.41	14,500.00
62800 · Dues & Subscriptions	19.96	141.67	-121.71	1,959.14	1,274.99	684.15	1,700.00
62200 · Insurance	0.00	125.00	-125.00	7,858.29	11,125.00	-3,266.71	12,500.00
63100 · Licenses and Permits	0.00	10.00	-10.00	2,585.40	2,090.00	495.40	17,920.00
63120 · Merchandise	0.00	166.67	-166.67	668.92	1,499.99	-831.07	2,000.00
62300 · Office Equipment	1,267.91	625.00	642.91	5,007.06	5,625.00	-617.94	7,500.00
62900 · Postage & Mailing	0.00	33.34	-33.34	296.48	299.98	-3.50	400.00

# The U District Partnership Budget Report March 2025

	Mar 25	Budget	\$ Over Budget	Jul '24 - Mar 25	YTD Budget	\$ Over Budget	Annual Budget
62100 · Rent and Monthly Parking	5,840.08	7,416.67	-1,576.59	60,463.27	66,749.99	-6,286.72	90,500.00
63300 · Staff Development	45.29	1,099.98	-1,054.69	11,411.91	9,900.06	1,511.85	13,200.00
62400 · Office Supplies	255.32	416.67	-161.35	2,028.53	3,749.99	-1,721.46	5,000.00
62700 · Technology and Software	976.90	1,870.83	-893.93	16,314.81	16,837.51	-522.70	22,450.00
62600 · Telephone	148.08	151.67	-3.59	1,332.72	1,364.99	-32.27	1,820.00
62500 · Local Travel and Meetings	254.85	458.34	-203.49	2,502.64	4,124.98	-1,622.34	5,600.00
<b>Total 62000 · Office and Overhead Expenses</b>	<b>9,176.50</b>	<b>15,357.51</b>	<b>-6,181.01</b>	<b>135,624.89</b>	<b>189,417.47</b>	<b>-53,792.58</b>	<b>251,090.00</b>
<b>70000 · Direct Program Expenses</b>							
70310 · Committee & Board Meetings	190.09	750.00	-559.91	6,196.81	6,750.00	-553.19	9,000.00
70335 · Program Supplies	516.69	3,916.67	-3,399.98	14,692.44	22,249.99	-7,557.55	36,600.00
70300 · Advertising	600.00	2,055.23	-1,455.23	3,614.16	8,915.67	-5,301.51	11,690.67
70320 · Contracted Services	37,435.00	43,420.83	-5,985.83	394,965.21	367,587.51	27,377.70	586,012.00
70340 · Equipment Rental	0.00	0.00	0.00	12,833.58	12,000.00	833.58	52,800.00
70350 · Event Entertainment	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,900.00	7,000.00	-4,100.00	22,500.00
70360 · Other Program Expenses	40,067.69	23,493.42	16,574.27	161,877.81	199,440.74	-37,562.93	268,128.18
70370 · Printing and Reproduction	437.66	6,480.76	-6,043.10	11,121.55	21,692.28	-10,570.73	30,354.77
<b>Total 70000 · Direct Program Expenses</b>	<b>79,247.13</b>	<b>80,116.91</b>	<b>-869.78</b>	<b>608,201.56</b>	<b>645,636.19</b>	<b>-37,434.63</b>	<b>1,017,085.62</b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>170,444.79</b>	<b>208,373.29</b>	<b>-37,928.50</b>	<b>1,622,926.81</b>	<b>1,863,643.29</b>	<b>-240,716.48</b>	<b>2,659,661.86</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>63,498.31</b>	<b>11,209.81</b>	<b>52,288.50</b>	<b>206,390.55</b>	<b>166,104.64</b>	<b>40,285.91</b>	<b>18,335.37</b>

# The U District Partnership

## Balance Sheet Prev Year Comparison

As of March 31, 2025

	<u>Mar 31, 25</u>	<u>Mar 31, 24</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>			
Current Assets			
Checking/Savings			
10100 · Operating Bank Accounts			
10110 · WSECU Checking	354,416.33	304,497.94	49,918.39
10111 · WSECU Savings	160,555.11	135,278.09	25,277.02
Total 10100 · Operating Bank Accounts	<u>514,971.44</u>	<u>439,776.03</u>	<u>75,195.41</u>
Total Checking/Savings	514,971.44	439,776.03	75,195.41
Accounts Receivable	8,829.00	186,821.98	-177,992.98
Other Current Assets			
12026 · Lease Rights	33,119.29	89,894.06	-56,774.77
12022 · Prepaid Expense	6,000.10	1,344.25	4,655.85
12021 · Employee Advances	234.22	883.93	-649.71
Total Other Current Assets	<u>39,353.61</u>	<u>92,122.24</u>	<u>-52,768.63</u>
Total Current Assets	563,154.05	718,720.25	-155,566.20
Fixed Assets			
15000 · Furniture and Equipment	14,690.79	11,013.05	3,677.74
Total Fixed Assets	14,690.79	11,013.05	3,677.74
Other Assets			
17025 · Security Deposits	3,235.87	3,235.87	0.00
Total Other Assets	<u>3,235.87</u>	<u>3,235.87</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u><b>581,080.71</b></u>	<u><b>732,969.17</b></u>	<u><b>-151,888.46</b></u>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>			
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable (Prepaid Expenses)	-41,461.55	19,403.71	-60,865.26
Credit Cards	1,372.20	7,609.90	-6,237.70
Other Current Liabilities			
20220 · Lease Liability	33,880.56	91,046.06	-57,165.50
20210 · Deferred Revenue	51,100.80	132,457.66	-81,356.86
24000 · Payroll Liabilities	62,323.48	59,972.10	2,351.38
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>147,304.84</u>	<u>283,475.82</u>	<u>-136,170.98</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>107,215.49</u>	<u>310,489.43</u>	<u>-203,273.94</u>
Total Liabilities	107,215.49	310,489.43	-203,273.94
Equity			
32000 · Unrestricted Net Assets	267,474.67	234,685.26	32,789.41
Net Income	206,390.55	187,794.48	18,596.07
Total Equity	<u>473,865.22</u>	<u>422,479.74</u>	<u>51,385.48</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<u><b>581,080.71</b></u>	<u><b>732,969.17</b></u>	<u><b>-151,888.46</b></u>



## **Program Reports**

**April 2025 UDP Board of Directors Meeting**

**April 15, 2025**

### **URBAN VITALITY**

#### **Lid I-5 North Initiative**

Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) awarded The U District Partnership (UDP) \$1.5 million to explore the feasibility of lidding Interstate 5 as part of the federal Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program. This was three-fourths of the projected cost of the project and traditionally, awards like this can take up to nine to contract, after which point UDP would engage a project management firm to begin leading the project with UDP and the Lid I-5 North Coalition.

This funding complements a local match of \$250,000 that was awarded to this effort through the Seattle Transportation Levy. The Washington State Legislature is also considering funds to support this effort. Washington State Senator Javier Valdez is stewarding a \$500,000 funding package that will fill a critical budget gap that still remains for one-fourth of this project which will conduct an engineering and programmatic feasibility study, in addition to a community visioning process that investigates ways to reconnect Northeast Seattle neighborhoods. This is the second Reconnecting Communities grant to be awarded to a Seattle project—the first of which was the Lid I-5 project in downtown Seattle. More details to follow as details of the grant are shared with The U District Partnership.

There continues to be much turmoil and confusion over federal spending, so UDP will follow what is happening in Washington D.C. and support the local delegation (including U.S. Senator Patty Murray, who has been incredibly supportive and helpful) as they advocate to honor this award. The team remains optimistic, but the path forward is murky for the time being.

#### **New Urban Vitality Manager**

UDP has hired a new Urban Vitality Manager who will start later this spring and will be announced later this month. This new manager will fill the role left by Katy Ricchiuto in November of last year when she left after five years to take the role of Policy Director at Transportation Choices Coalition.

### **CLEAN, SAFE & OUTREACH**

#### **Homeless Census**

As part of its monthly effort to better understand and respond to neighborhood needs, the UDP conducted its March homeless census. During the census, approximately 100 individuals were



observed, with 52 recognized from prior engagement. Of those, 16 are known by name, and seven are currently participating in the High Impact Individual Case Conferencing program, which connects individuals to intensive, coordinated services.

Four encampments were documented during the March count, including two tents, one RV, and an unstructured collection of tarps and personal belongings. This monthly snapshot helps inform the UDP's approach to outreach, safety, and resource coordination, ensuring efforts remain responsive and grounded in current conditions on the ground.

DATE	NUMBER OF PEOPLE
03/27/2025	100
02/19/2025	46
01/15/2025	47

### **Clean and Safe Committee**

Join UDP for the Spring U District Clean and Safe Committee Meeting on Wednesday, April 17th from 3:00 to 4:30pm in the Rita Koontz Community Room at WSECU (1121 NE 45th St). The meeting will cover updates and initiatives across public safety, alleyway improvements, homeless outreach, and neighborhood beautification. Topics include ongoing advocacy efforts, alley audits, oil storage concerns, the latest homeless census, and a chance to meet our new outreach team member, Dimitra. The discussion will also highlight spring beautification projects, including flower bed plantings, new hanging baskets, and our work along NE 43rd Street.

### **New Retro Litter Cans**

The U District served as a pilot site for Seattle Public Utilities' Public Litter Can Program over the past several years, testing an alternative can design in high-pedestrian areas within our furniture zones. While these experimental cans provided valuable insights, they ultimately proved problematic and were not selected for citywide use. Badly beaten-up, the cans currently in place have reached the end of their lifecycle much sooner than anticipated.

The U District Partnership is now working with SPU to refurbish a previous style of litter cans that are more durable, less bulky, and allow for U District branding.

SPU plans to return them to the neighborhood with more strategic and thoughtful placement in the next month.



### **Summer Flower Baskets on the Ave to Arrive in May**

This year, UDP is working with a new flower basket supplier, Squak Mountain Nursery. By partnering directly with the grower, UDP was able to upgrade the quality of the baskets while also reducing costs. These savings will allow UDP to bring on Henry Gavin, the gardener behind the landscaping on NE 43rd Street, to maintain the baskets with daily watering and regular care. The new baskets are scheduled to arrive shortly after the U District Street Fair.

## Tulips

Back in November, UDP planted thousands of tulips, crocuses, and daffodils in the flower beds along NE 43rd Street to bring a vibrant burst of color to the neighborhood as winter fades. These early spring blooms were chosen to create a welcoming and lively atmosphere for passersby and to highlight the continued investment in making 43rd a welcoming corridor in the heart of the neighborhood. Right now, the tulips are in full bloom and putting on a stunning show.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Hiring for Economic Development Manager Position

After five years of service to UDP, Daniel Lokic took a job leading the new Manufacturing Maritime Industrial Association (MMIA), a citywide stewardship organization dedicated to strengthening Seattle's maritime, manufacturing, logistics, and industrial sectors. UDP is in the final stages of hiring for this position and hopes to have someone in this role by the end of May.

## EVENTS



### Cherry Blossom Festival

The fourth annual [U District Cherry Blossom Festival](#) returned March 21- April 6 in alignment with peak bloom of the historic cherry blossom trees on the University of Washington campus.

82 businesses participated in the event featuring cherry and blossom-themed food, drink, and retail specials. During the festival dates, over 405k unique visitors (not including residents or regular employees) came to the U District business area, 68% of which visited the Ave directly. This translated to 730k+ visits to the same U District business area, roughly 419k+ visits to the Ave during the festival dates of Friday, March 21-Sunday, April 6.

The Cherry Blossom Festival window decorating contest also returned this year—expanding to offer three prizes to participating small businesses! The Grand Prize winner receiving \$1000 was Shiga's and the two runners up were Cheba Hut and Pink Gorilla, both who received \$500 gift certificates to spend at the U District business of their choice.



## Window decorations from the U District Cherry Blossom Festival



## U District Street Fair Returns May 17-18, 2025

The Street Fair is sold out! This year, there is a fantastic lineup of artists, food, music, dancers, and activations on Brooklyn! In addition to over 300 booths on the Ave stretching from NE Campus Parkway to NE 50th Street, the Street Fair is expanding to bring activity to the new U District Station Park. The park and space along 43rd will include live muralists, screen printing, custom dog portraits, a wild putt-putt course (holes designed by artists), UW Engineering Student- robots, rockets and race cars! Plus Emerald City Soul will be on-hand spinning vintage 45's to keep the vibe.



## Seattle Boba Fest Jumps to A New Summer Date – July 19, 2025

[Seattle Boba Fest](#) returns this year, but will be making a move from April to July to make use of warmer weather as the U District continues to build excitement for the robust bubble tea offerings of the neighborhood.

Registration for participating businesses will open later this spring!



## MARKETING

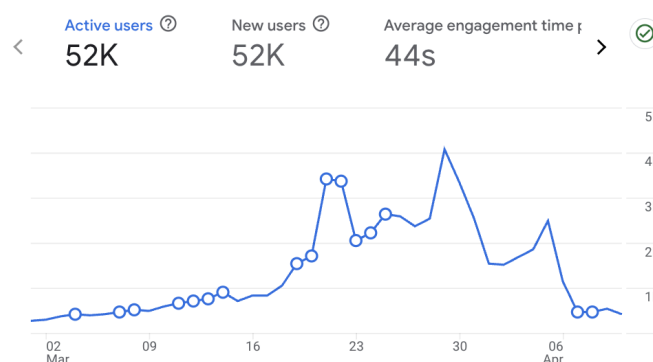
### Festival Promotion, Advertising & Analytics

The U District Partnership worked with local media to feature the fourth annual U District Cherry Blossom Festival. Media partnerships with KUOW and The Stranger offered expanded reach through digital advertising opportunities.

Additionally, UDP collaborated with local news stations to feature the festival in widespread segments. FOX 13's [Good Day Seattle](#) filmed four segments, plus an [additional segment](#) for the evening news on the first day of the festival with features and interviews with business representatives at Leon Coffee House, TOASTED. Bagels & Coffee, Seattle Boulderling Gym, Shultz's Bar & Grill, and Luminati Labs. [KIRO 7's Around the Sound segment](#) featured an video interview with UDP's Don Blakeney and on-location features of Sweet Alchemy Ice Creamery, Shiga's Imports, and footage of festivity around University Way NE, a subsequent [Around the Sound feature article](#) was also published.

**Website traffic for the event** surpassed 2024 numbers by about 5k additional active users and 7k additional new users. The [udistrictseattle.com](#) website continues to provide a strong central location for the general public to experience and explore U District major events and happenings.

**Social media reach and engagement** was also strong during the fourth annual U District Cherry Blossom Festival. Particularly on Instagram, posts sustained strong organic reach with favorable interest in the event. Dates for the event were announced on social media on March 3. The post, containing a branded event graphic depicting cherry blossoms and the U District skyline, garnered over 3,000 likes, 2,830 shares, reaching over 72,317 accounts, with 95,667 views. An Instagram reel produced by UDP and showing features of the festival, reached over 4,500 accounts with over 7,000 views.





## Recent Media Features

- Seattle Refined – [17 of the oldest things around modern-day Seattle](#)  
Cafe Allegro, celebrating 50 years in 2025, is noted in this lineup. Founder Dave Olsen chose the location for Cafe Allegro as it would be the busiest entrance to the University of Washington campus.
- The Daily – [TOASTED.'s Ramadan hours offer cafe nightlife and celebration in the U-District](#)  
Despite the fact that it was nearly 10 p.m. on a Wednesday night, TOASTED. Bagels & Coffee was already filling tables during their second opening of the day. In the typically quiet Seattle night, swaths of customers showed out for the second night of TOASTED.'s extended Ramadan event.
- KUOW – [U District pharmacy closures leave community anxious about medication access](#)  
As thousands of pharmacies shutter nationwide, a series of closures in Seattle's University District has left residents wondering how they'll access important medications if the trend continues.
- Daily Journal of Commerce – [Hello, Gateway, and farewell, UDSB!](#)  
The U District Station Building is no more. Set atop U District Station, the brand-new office tower at 4328 Brooklyn Ave. N.E. is now the Gateway Building.

## Email Marketing

Email opens remain strong across topics and features for U District events.

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| • 4/9 – Newsletter - Cherry Blossom Fest, Pressure Washing | Opens: 33.6% / CTR: 4.1% |
| • 4/3 – Event Email - Cherry Blossom Festival              | Opens: 41.9% / CTR: 2.4% |
| • 3/25 – Newsletter - Cherry Blossom Fest                  | Opens: 50.0% / CTR: 5.1% |
| • 3/21 – Event Email - Cherry Blossom Festival             | Opens: 41.6% / CTR: 5.5% |
| • 3/14 – Newsletter - Street Fair Last Call, Event Dates   | Opens: 48.3% / CTR: 6.0% |
| • 2/28 – Newsletter - Revive I-5 Delayed, UDP Hiring       | Opens: 51.4% / CTR: 4.5% |
| • 2/13 – Newsletter - Snow Response, Valentine's Day Fun   | Opens: 52.9% / CTR: 4.5% |