



BOARD MEETING AGENDA

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

July 15, 2025

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

- | | | | | |
|-------|---|--------|------------|--------|
| I. | Welcome & Introductions | Lois | 11:30 a.m. | |
| II. | Public Comment | Public | 11:35 a.m. | |
| III. | Approval of June Meeting Minutes | Lois | 11:40 a.m. | (Vote) |
| IV. | Finance Committee Report | Trevor | 11:45 a.m. | |
| | • Acceptance of June 2025 Financials | | | (Vote) |
| V. | Governance Committee Report | Rick | 11:55 a.m. | |
| | • Prospective Board Member: Darren Rose, 206 Apartments | | | |
| | • Board Participation Agreement and Conflict of Interest Form | | | |
| | • Board Term Renewals | | | (Vote) |
| | • Board Officer Nominations | | | (Vote) |
| | • Committee Chair Nominations | | | (Vote) |
| VI. | Executive Director Report | Don B. | 12:10 p.m. | |
| VII. | Program Reports | | 12:15 p.m. | |
| | • Clean, Safe & Outreach | | | |
| | • Economic Development | | | |
| | • Urban Vitality | | | |
| | • Events | | | |
| | • Communications & Marketing | | | |
| VIII. | Guest Speaker: Jonathan Marlow, Scarecrow Video | | 12:30 p.m. | |
| IX. | New Business | Lois | 12:55 p.m. | |
| X. | Adjourn | Lois | 1:00 p.m. | |



Board Meeting Minutes

11:30am to 1:00pm

June 17, 2025

WSECU, 1121 NE 45th Street, Seattle WA 98105

UDP Board Members in Attendance in Person

Aaron Hoard – *Co-Chair*

Lois Ko, Sweet Alchemy – *Co-Chair*

Stephen Antupit – U District Resident

Katie Betz – Urban Renaissance Group

Julie Blakeslee - University of Washington

Jeremy Eknoian – UW Real Estate

Josh Gana – UW Housing & Food Services

Rick Jones – University Business Center

Anson Lin – Astora Construction

Maya Lu – Boba Up

Angela Mercado - U Heights

Jessie Quan – Ladd & Lass Brewing

Miles Richardson – Audi Seattle/UVW

Don Schulze - U District Property Assoc

Anna Sorokina – WSECU

UDP Board Members Not in Attendance

Trevor Peterson – *Treasurer*

John Hix – Seattle Vineyard Church

Kristine Kenney – UW Planning

Naomi Lewis – Luminati Labs

Emily Scully – Shultz's on the Ave

Alfred Shiga – Shiga's Imports

UDP Staff

Don Blakeney – Executive Director

Marcus Johnson – Clean & Safe Manager

Janet Lee - Urban Vitality Manager

Hannah Kiburz - Economic Dev Manager

Lauren Carey - Events Manager

Janet Lee, Urban Vitality Manager

Nikki Somers, Operations Manager

Pollyanna Yokokawa, Marketing Manager

Phil Lloyd, CFO

Guests*

Paul Yunker, U District Food Bank

**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 H. started the meeting, with a round of introductions.

Public Comment

Aaron H. called for public comment, there was no public comment.

Approval of UDP Board Meeting Minutes

Aaron H. introduced the April 2025 meeting minutes, asked for any questions or amendments.

Motion: Jeremy E. moved to accept the April 2025 UDP Board meeting minutes.

Second: Stephen A. seconded the motion.

Abstentions: Don S. abstained.

Approval: The motion was approved.

Finance Committee Update and Approval of the Financials

Don B. provided a comprehensive narrative and high-level overview of the current financial report. Key highlights included variances that were attributable to some timing issues, staffing underspending, and grant income. Program fee income variances were attributable to increases in Street Fair vendors, which led to higher revenue, to offset lower-than-planned sponsorship.

Note: A full financial narrative is included in each UDP Board meeting packet, speaking directly to any variances in the budget, which is approved each year at the Annual Meeting each June.

Motion: On behalf of the Finance Committee, Aaron H moved to accept the April 2025 financials as presented at the June 17, 2025 Board Meeting.

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

Approval: The motion was approved unanimously.

Welcome to the Team

Don B. welcomed and introduced Hannah K., who joined UDP as the new Economic Development Manager. Hannah K. previously served as Economic Development Analyst at the Downtown SF Partnership, a BID supporting San Francisco's Financial District and Jackson Square.

Don B. also re-introduced Janet L., who joined the UDP as the new Urban Vitality Manager. Janet has worked for the City of Redmond and King County and brings with her a wealth of experience in planning, equity, and placemaking.

Economic Development Report

Hannah K. offered information about the U District Retail Study Workshop that was held on June 11th, and gave a few key takeaways from the workshop which included the need to support the current businesses while prioritizing new business types with recruitment, to diversify the U District's ground-floor economy. Some early suggestions were around attracting experienced-based business (e.g., "eatertainment") which present an untapped opportunity, and supporting new entrepreneurs by connecting them with resources and mentors.

Hannah K. also offered an update from Scarecrow Video, whose wall collapsed and caused a temporary closure. Scarecrow Video's Jonathan Marlow and Tyler Mesman will be presenting at the July 15 Board Meeting.

Lastly Hannah K. gave a rundown of recent closures in the U District that included Lulumiere, Bugis, Thanh Vi, and the College Inn Pub. However, positive notes include Avole Coffee which is set to open this summer, and Raising Cane's coming in the fall.

U District Events

Lauren C. provided a recap of the 2025 U District Street Fair, marking its 54th annual celebration. The event successfully sold out over 16 city blocks and featured 39 participating local businesses, more than 300 vendor booths, and a total of 33 performances and activations. A highlight of the fair was the debut of the U District Gateway Park at 43rd and Brooklyn, which offered live music, free balloons, muralists, custom dog portraits, and a putt-putt golf course.

Attendance data from Placer.ai indicated strong community engagement, with over 52,000 visitors on Saturday, May 17, and more than 58,000 visitors on Sunday, May 18. The data showed more than 110,000 total visits across both days, with over 92,000 identified as unique visitors.

Lauren C. also shared a preview of upcoming 2025 events. Seattle Boba Fest is scheduled for Saturday, July 19, and the U District Chow Down will take place on Saturday, October 4.

Clean & Safe Program Report

Marcus J. started us off with the Homeless Census that was last conducted in June 2025. Preliminary findings indicate that the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the area is highly variable and often influenced by the presence of services or events on a given day. Recent counts fluctuated between 69 and 133 people. In response to these counts, UDP recently adjusted the timing of its counts to Wednesdays, as that day tends to have the fewest services that might draw individuals from other neighborhoods into the U District.

Marcus J. gave an overview of the U District Alley Audits which are conducted with UDP, Recology, and SPU. These audits include verification of service levels, ensuring proper container placement, as well as enrollment of businesses currently illegally dumping, and replacement of broken receptacles. The area of focus is currently the alley on the 5300 block between Brooklyn Ave NE and University Way NE.

There has been a recent uptick in public safety issues which included 3-armed robberies between May 31 and June 2, as well as a shooting that happened following a 150+ person party on the roof of the Standard on June 9. This was the second gunfire incident at The Standard and the victim is uncooperative.

Urban Vitality

Marcus J. shared that the new U District branded tables on NE 43rd were rolled out on May 28. These tables were custom fabricated by Jump Ship and were made possible by the generous support from the Washington State Department of Commerce and the University District Rotary Club.

Next Marcus J. talked about the annual flower basket arrival! 70 baskets were installed in late May with the primary focus on University Way NE and NE 43rd St. Marcus was able to secure a relationship with the wholesaler which significantly reduced the costs of the baskets.

Lastly, Janet L shared a save the date for the Urban Vitality Committee meeting which will be held on July 22.

Communications & Marketing

Polly Y. gave an overview of the U District Street Fair promotions and partnerships, which included the UDP working with local media to promote the 54th U District Street Fair. UDP collaborated with Fox 13's Good Day Seattle and filmed five segments on Street Fair activities, featuring artists, local businesses, and student engineers. The event was also featured in weekend write ups with Seattle Refined, Kiro 7's "Around the Sound", Seattle Mag, The Stranger, and KUOW.

Polly Y. also mentioned that the UDP has been awarded a Spotlight SEA International Airport Advertising grant for free advertising placement in the terminal. Under the program, the Port will cover the cost of reserving the advertising locations for the U District and other awardees.

Governance:

Rick J. made a motion to nominate Paul Yunker from the University District Food Bank to the UDP Board.

Motion: The motion came from the committee.

Second: No second needed.

Approval: The motion was approved unanimously.

Rick J. and Don B. thanked both Moe K. - Cedars Restaurant and Josh S. - University District YMCA for their time on the board.

2026 Budget Presentation

Don B. offered a thorough 2026 budget plan that included the 2026 budget timeline, context of 2025, projected UDBIA assessment for 2026. Income assumptions, and a draft of the 2026 program spending. *Note: The full budget and proposed work plan is included in the June UDP Board meeting packet.*

Aaron H. called for a motion of the UDP Board to approve and submit the proposed work plan and budget to the UDBIA Ratepayer Advisory Board for their recommendation to the ratepayers at the 2025 Annual Meeting on June 26.

Motion: Don S. moved to accept the 2026 budget.

Second: Rick J. seconded the motion.

Approval: The motion was approved unanimously.

New Business

Aaron H. asked for new business, there was none.

Adjournment

Don B and Aaron H thanked everyone and then called the meeting adjourned.



Finance Committee Report & Budget Narrative

Prepared on 7/8/25

This financial narrative provides a summary of The U District Partnership's financial statements as of the end of Fiscal Year 2025, which ended on June 30th.

Budget Report

As UDP closes out the 2025 fiscal year, there remain several planned variances. Grant funding and vacant positions led to underspending on staff positions. This variance is reflected both in the staff expenses, and in the BIA income lines. 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: *With underspending on staffing due to two vacant positions this winter, and support from the Washington State Department of Commerce, UDP didn't draw as much revenue from the BIA as was anticipated in the budget. This money will roll forward into FY 2026 to support program spending in the year ahead.*

44530 – Grants Income: *UDP has finally spent down the entirety of the DOC grant and other grant dollars have materialized that were not a part of the 2025 budget, hence the variance.*

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 is a sign of a successful Street Fair.*

47215 – Sponsorship: *Sponsorship is down this year, offset by cost savings and increases in program fees and booth fees. UDP has budgeted a more conservative number for FY26.*

43400 – Donations: *Our partnership funding is higher than anticipated this year, thanks to a generous donation from the U District Rotary to support the new blue tables on NE 43rd Street, which is offset by increased spending below.*

Expense:

60000 – Staffing: *Three factors led to a significant underspend on staffing this year—one was the slow start of the in-house clean team, which was ultimately offset by an overspend on the existing cleaning contract last summer; another was the two vacant manager positions that persisted this winter and into the spring; and the third was the administration support for the time our team spent administering the DOC grant. Looking to FY26, the organization's spending on staffing should resume to normal levels going forward.*

621500 – Renovations & Repairs: UDP postponed some of the planned office renovations until UW was able to sign a new five-year lease, which happened in February. Expenses shown here are attributable to the upgrades made to the operations center. Future office renovations will occur in FY26 and include expanding to the rest of the fourth floor of the former Alumni House building and updating the kitchen.

63600 – Banking and Service Fees: This variance is related to a reduction of permit and banking fees associated with the U District Street Fair.

62200 – Insurance: Insurance came in a little lower than anticipated overall.

62100 – Rent and Monthly Parking: UDP budgeted for a cushion for our lease renewal which shows a slight underspend.

63300 – Staff Development: With IDA in Seattle this past year, most staff didn't take advantage of the conference travel budget, which will likely resume next year when some of the team travels to IDA in Washington D.C.

62700 – Technology and Software: This year, the City awarded UDP a grant (which is accounted for in the income section) to use new economic development software including [Placer.ai](#) and CoStar on a pilot basis. These programs are expensive, but give our team the ability to better understand the dynamics around retail and foot traffic, which will inform economic reporting.

62500 – Local Travel and Meetings: This category supports committees and meetings with stakeholders. Most of this work is conducted by the Executive Director and the Urban Vitality and Economic Development Managers. The absence of these two roles this winter and spring has led to less spending under this category.

70335 – Program Supplies: This captures a few areas of spending across the organization's budget—from the purchasing of cleaning supplies to table covers for the Street Fair. The underspend here will be rolled forward into next year's spending.

70300 – Advertising: UDP has underspent on advertising this year, but has recently invested in advertising in the airports which rolled-out this month.

70320 – Contracted Services: This is mostly a timing issue related to Street Fair, for which the invoices are still rolling in. The cleaning contract with Seattle Surface Cleaners persisted through October, driving this expense line up which may reveal itself at the close of June.

70340 – Equipment Rental: This is also a timing issue with Street Fair and should resolve by the end of June.

70350 – Event Entertainment: Event entertainment spending was higher than anticipated this year with the activities on Brooklyn alone pushing this line up by at least \$10,000.

70370 – Printing and Reproduction: This cost came in lower than anticipated this year with fewer printing projects.

Balance Sheet Report

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

USDOT Grant for Lid I-5 North Feasibility Study

Also worth noting is the federal grant that was awarded to UDP and the Lid I-5 North Coalition to fund a feasibility study that would explore the possibility of capping I-5 through the U District. This funding is under review by the federal government and may be awarded and contracted in fiscal year 2026.

BIA Assessment Collections

UDP has been working with the city to ensure that the budget target of 95% collections is attained. In general the average is higher than that over time, as collections continue to roll in.

The U District Partnership
Budget Report
June 2025

	Jul '24 - Jun 25	YTD Budget	\$ Over Budget	Annual Budget
Income				
44430 · BIA Contract	1,540,939.31	1,841,566.23	-300,626.92	1,841,566.23
44530 · Grants				
44532 · DOC	504,425.11	494,431.00	9,994.11	494,431.00
44534 · OED	17,537.07			
44536 · SPU	27,000.00	27,000.00	0.00	27,000.00
44530 · Grants - Other	1,175.00	0.00	1,175.00	0.00
Total 44530 · Grants	550,137.18	521,431.00	28,706.18	521,431.00
47000 · Program Fees	221,879.00	185,000.00	36,879.00	185,000.00
47213 · Retail Sales	950.10	1,000.00	-49.90	1,000.00
47215 · Sponsorships	36,020.71	91,000.00	-54,979.29	91,000.00
43400 · Donations/Partnerships	43,352.88	38,000.00	5,352.88	38,000.00
46400 · Interest and Other	1,087.58			
Total Income	2,394,366.76	2,677,997.23	-283,630.47	2,677,997.23
Expense				
60000 · Staffing Expenses				
60100 · Wages & Salaries	972,028.58	1,119,747.90	-147,719.32	1,119,747.90
60020 · Payroll Taxes	88,539.23	95,508.59	-6,969.36	95,508.59
60030 · Medical Benefits	83,898.70	105,797.31	-21,898.61	105,797.31
60040 · Retirement Benefits	22,476.14	32,932.44	-10,456.30	32,932.44
60050 · Transit Benefit	2,516.67	3,000.00	-483.33	3,000.00
Total 60000 · Staffing Expenses	1,169,459.32	1,356,986.24	-187,526.92	1,356,986.24
61000 · Professional Expenses				
61100 · Accounting Fees	31,100.00	30,500.00	600.00	30,500.00
61110 · HR Consulting	0.00	2,000.00	-2,000.00	2,000.00
61120 · Legal Fees	2,187.00	2,000.00	187.00	2,000.00
Total 61000 · Professional Expenses	33,287.00	34,500.00	-1,213.00	34,500.00
62000 · Office and Overhead Expenses				
62150 · Renovations & Repairs	21,595.40	56,000.00	-34,404.60	56,000.00
63600 · Banking and Service Fees	5,215.97	14,500.00	-9,284.03	14,500.00
62800 · Dues & Subscriptions	2,163.98	1,700.00	463.98	1,700.00
62200 · Insurance	8,546.65	12,500.00	-3,953.35	12,500.00
63100 · Licenses and Permits	19,344.84	17,920.00	1,424.84	17,920.00
63120 · Merchandise	668.92	2,000.00	-1,331.08	2,000.00
62300 · Office Equipment	5,335.91	7,500.00	-2,164.09	7,500.00
62900 · Postage & Mailing	297.42	400.00	-102.58	400.00
62100 · Rent and Monthly Parking	82,507.34	90,500.00	-7,992.66	90,500.00
63300 · Staff Development	5,613.91	13,200.00	-7,586.09	13,200.00
62400 · Office Supplies	2,750.37	5,000.00	-2,249.63	5,000.00
62700 · Technology and Software	39,484.97	22,450.00	17,034.97	22,450.00
62600 · Telephone	1,776.96	1,820.00	-43.04	1,820.00
62500 · Local Travel and Meetings	3,885.13	5,600.00	-1,714.87	5,600.00
Total 62000 · Office and Overhead Expenses	199,187.77	251,090.00	-51,902.23	251,090.00
70000 · Direct Program Expenses				
70310 · Committee & Board Meetings	6,616.51	9,000.00	-2,383.49	9,000.00

The U District Partnership
Budget Report
June 2025

	Jul '24 - Jun 25	YTD Budget	\$ Over Budget	Annual Budget
70335 · Program Supplies	30,356.27	36,600.00	-6,243.73	36,600.00
70300 · Advertising	6,653.66	11,690.67	-5,037.01	11,690.67
70320 · Contracted Services	555,141.42	586,012.00	-30,870.58	586,012.00
70340 · Equipment Rental	67,334.41	52,800.00	14,534.41	52,800.00
70350 · Event Entertainment	40,346.50	22,500.00	17,846.50	22,500.00
70360 · Other Program Expenses	265,513.75	268,128.18	-2,614.43	268,128.18
70370 · Printing and Reproduction	24,520.21	30,354.77	-5,834.56	30,354.77
Total 70000 · Direct Program Expenses	996,482.73	1,017,085.62	-20,602.89	1,017,085.62
Total Expense	2,398,416.82	2,659,661.86	-261,245.04	2,659,661.86
Net Income	-4,050.06	18,335.37	-22,385.43	18,335.37

The U District Partnership

Balance Sheet Prev Year Comparison

As of June 30, 2025

	<u>Jun 30, 25</u>	<u>Jun 30, 24</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Checking/Savings			
10100 · Operating Bank Accounts			
10110 · WSECU Checking	19,342.01	131,386.71	-112,044.70
10111 · WSECU Savings	110,614.19	135,342.20	-24,728.01
Total 10100 · Operating Bank Accounts	<u>129,956.20</u>	<u>266,728.91</u>	<u>-136,772.71</u>
Total Checking/Savings	<u>129,956.20</u>	<u>266,728.91</u>	<u>-136,772.71</u>
Accounts Receivable	188,731.21	140,627.85	48,103.36
Other Current Assets			
12026 · Lease Rights	33,119.29	33,119.29	0.00
12022 · Prepaid Expense	15,647.05	24,380.41	-8,733.36
12021 · Employee Advances	234.22	0.00	234.22
12000 · Undeposited Funds	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
Total Other Current Assets	<u>50,000.56</u>	<u>57,499.70</u>	<u>-7,499.14</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>368,687.97</u>	<u>464,856.46</u>	<u>-96,168.49</u>
Fixed Assets			
15000 · Furniture and Equipment	14,104.53	4,606.61	9,497.92
Total Fixed Assets	<u>14,104.53</u>	<u>4,606.61</u>	<u>9,497.92</u>
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>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>386,028.37</u>	<u>472,698.94</u>	<u>-86,670.57</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY			
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	9,458.91	7,623.90	1,835.01
Credit Cards	12,387.70	20,288.36	-7,900.66
Other Current Liabilities			
20220 · Lease Liability	33,880.56	33,880.56	0.00
20210 · Deferred Revenue	1,995.84	75,851.80	-73,855.96
24000 · Payroll Liabilities	64,880.75	67,579.65	-2,698.90
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>100,757.15</u>	<u>177,312.01</u>	<u>-76,554.86</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>122,603.76</u>	<u>205,224.27</u>	<u>-82,620.51</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>122,603.76</u>	<u>205,224.27</u>	<u>-82,620.51</u>
Equity			
32000 · Unrestricted Net Assets	267,474.67	234,685.26	32,789.41
Net Income	-4,050.06	32,789.41	-36,839.47
Total Equity	<u>263,424.61</u>	<u>267,474.67</u>	<u>-4,050.06</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>386,028.37</u>	<u>472,698.94</u>	<u>-86,670.57</u>



Program Reports

Board of Directors Meeting

July 15, 2025

CLEAN, SAFE & OUTREACH

Maintenance of New Tables at 43rd Street Plaza

One of the most common questions UDP receives is about the long-term maintenance plan for the new tables at the NE 43rd Street Plaza. It is a valid concern, public infrastructure in urban environments often faces heavy use and wear, but UDP anticipated these challenges and thoughtfully designed the tables accordingly.

The tables were specifically built to endure the demands of a dense, active urban environment. Constructed from heavy-duty steel, they are both weighty and structurally resilient, difficult to move and nearly impossible to bend or damage. The steel components are powder-coated, which not only adds durability but also makes graffiti removal easier with the right chemical cleaners.

The tabletop surfaces are made from standard cedar decking, a material chosen for its practicality and ease of maintenance. Light tagging or carving can be addressed with a quick sanding, while more significant damage can be resolved by planing the boards or replacing them entirely. The boards are designed for easy removal and replacement. To accommodate the frequent need for touch-ups, UDP uses a wipe-on stain that can be reapplied quickly and effectively.



For cleaning, a specialty product is used to care for the unsealed, stained wood, helping to preserve its appearance. As the cedar ages and begins to grey naturally, UDP has a product on hand specifically designed to reverse that process and maintain a fresh, well-kept look.

Through careful design and proactive maintenance planning, UDP is committed to ensuring that the tables at the 43rd Street Plaza remain a welcoming and durable asset for the community.

U District Hosts Everett!

This month, UDP hosted representatives from the Downtown Everett Association for a site visit focused on sharing best practices in urban cleaning operations. During the visit, the UDP team provided a comprehensive overview of its in-house cleaning program, including equipment, field coordination strategies, and methods for addressing complex challenges like graffiti removal, biohazard cleanup, and managing high-use public spaces.

The visit created a valuable opportunity for both organizations to exchange ideas, compare operational strategies, and learn from each other’s successes and ongoing challenges. The Downtown Everett Association also shared insights from their own cleaning and maintenance efforts, allowing for a productive dialogue about how business improvement districts can continuously refine and improve their service delivery.

Later this summer, UDP staff will travel to Everett to observe their operations firsthand and continue the knowledge-sharing process. These peer-to-peer partnerships are critical for staying current with industry trends and ensuring that each district can adapt and innovate to meet the needs of their respective communities.



Homeless Census

DATE OF COUNT	# OF PEOPLE
07/02/2025	62
6/11/2025	68
05/28/2025	76
05/16/2025	133
05/02/2025	69
04/18/2025	48
03/25/2025	100
02/19/2025	46
01/15/2025	47

The U District Partnership conducts a regular Point-in-Time (PIT) Homeless Census to provide an updated snapshot of the visible unsheltered population within the U District neighborhood. This data informs outreach efforts, resource allocation, and neighborhood planning initiatives.

Over the past few months there has been a noticeable swing in the homeless census for a few reasons. One, certain days of the week yield higher counts due to the availability of homeless services in the area. This summer, the team has moved counts to Wednesdays, when services are unavailable, so the numbers reflect a more realistic baseline of people living outside in the U District, rather than people receiving services at U District facilities. As a point of reference, the unhoused population reached over 150 people during the pandemic.

PLACEMAKING & URBAN VITALITY

Urban Vitality Committee kick off

The Urban Vitality Committee will have its first meeting of the year at 4 pm at SeaFab Cafe on Tuesday, July 22. As a part of the ongoing Comprehensive Plan Update, the City of Seattle will be working on a more detailed plan for the U District “subarea.” Because of the subarea plan’s role in defining where to focus economic development, capital facilities, services, and public realm investment and implementation tools for the next 20 years, the U District subarea planning process will be a priority for this committee over the next two years. Other likely topics include urban streetscape planning and activation, scooter and bike planning, and pocket park programming.

UDP Hosts National Working Group on Highway Caps and Lids

While waiting for updates on federal funding, UDP and the Lid I-5 committee are continuing to move forward with education and capacity building for the project. On Thursday, June 24, the U District Partnership, City of Seattle, and Lid I-5 will be hosting a full-day workshop for 6 different communities across the country to learn about highway cap and lid projects as part of the national “Reconnecting Communities Institute.” Two

members of the Lid I-5 committee will be present to learn and contribute to the group discussions, which will include presentations about the planning, design, construction and community engagement for the Montlake Lid, as well as site visits to two local highway lids.

Revive I-5 is Here!

To support small businesses during the upcoming “Revive I-5” highway closures, King County Metro is offering free \$25 transit cards which may be given out to either employees or customers, more details [here](#). The first full [weekend closure](#) is scheduled Friday, July 18 to Monday, July 21 when crews will fully close northbound I-5 from I-90 to NE 45th St to repair and resurface up to 20% of the Ship Canal Bridge deck, improve drainage, and repair five expansion joints. After the closure, two northbound lanes of I-5 across the Ship Canal Bridge will remain closed for approximately 4 weeks.

EVENTS

Seattle Boba Fest Moves to the Summer, July 19, 2025

[Seattle Boba Fest](#) makes its move from April to Saturday, July 19 to make use of warmer weather as the U District continues to build excitement for the robust bubble tea offerings of the neighborhood. With over 20 neighborhood businesses participating, it should be a great showing of the best bubble tea Seattle has to offer!

New partnerships with local makers, C89.5FM, and Sakura-Con will enliven the festival atmosphere. This year the event will feature a stage at the corner of 43rd and Brooklyn showcasing the Mak Fai Kung Fu & Lion Dance associations, K-Pop dance crews, sets from three of Seattle’s most celebrated K-Pop DJs, and a cosplay contest organized by Sakura-Con. An artist market will also line the street offering boba-themed and adjacent shopping for festivalgoers.



U District Chow Down Set for October 4

Save the date! The U District Chow Down returns on Saturday October 4, 2025, offering up \$5 bites, live entertainment, and neighborhood vendors. Extended dining will line the Ave along with neighborhood business activations along the closed streets between NE 41st and NE 45th.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Business Openings & Closures

Recent closures include Urban Outfitters and Reiwatakiya. New and upcoming openings include the Vintage Mall (in the former Goodwill space), Bite & Bento (replacing Bugis), Elixir (in the former Oasis location), Avole, and Raising Cane’s, which is expected to open later this year.