

Application for Neighborhood Street Fund Grant

1. Do you have a name for the project?

U District Alley Activation Project

2. Exactly where is this project?

The project site is the southern section of the middle block of the north-south aligned, three block alley located between University Way NE and 15th Ave NE, and between NE 42nd Street and NE 43rd Street. The section is directly in front of Cafe Allegro, Seattle's oldest espresso bar, a large tourist attraction in the neighborhood.

3. What is the problem(s) at this location that you'd like the project to fix?

In 2014, the U District community collaborated with Seattle's Departments of Planning & Development (DPD) and Department of Transportation (SDOT) to produce an affirmative plan to activate the alleys of our neighborhood, identifying one connected alley as a prototype of the project. This north-south aligned, three-block alley is located between University Way NE and 15th Avenue NE, and between NE 45th Street and NE 40th Street.

The alley section in the middle block is a dynamic nexus of community activity that welcomes and supports the strongest diversity of neighbors sharing a common space. In addition to several businesses that cater to a large, regular clientele, the alley is host to a homeless youth shelter, a needle exchange, a busy United States post office, and is adjacent to a very active church, a children's day care, and an urban rest stop, among other services. The alley is one of the most used alley's in the neighborhood for vehicle, pedestrian, and bike traffic. While not an officially-recognized festival street, this section of alley is often used as such and has been host to numerous neighborhood events such as Alley Lights, Founder's Day, and other UW Club events.

Without the basic amenities and environmental quality to nurture community and provide safety in this shared, public space, the opportunities to mix socially and organize democratically are diminished. This alley has the potential to be a destination public space for the University District due to its long history of hands-on community support, variety of current uses, and location in the community (near the UW, Light Rail, Transit, Greenways, etc). The Alley Activation Plan addresses this opportunity and proposes concrete strategies to improve the alley for all to enjoy.

Our project will implement some of the proposed priority strategies from the Alley Activation Plan in the most active section of the alley as a prototype for future, more comprehensive interventions. These strategies will be focused on safety, providing a vibrant more connected usable public space for a wide variety of users, be affordable and serve as an innovative prototype for future Alley Activation strategies in the city.

4. If you already have a solution to the problem, please describe it here.

This project will focus on the following strategies proposed from the SDOT and DPD approved U District Alley Activation Plan developed by SvR Design:

1. **Surface Treatment:** To designate the alley as a pedestrian-priority space, a consistent pattern of paint will be applied to the existing alley pavement within the project boundary area. A painted surface treatment will provide traffic calming benefits for pedestrians and bikes as well as provide a highlighted space for public use and events.

2. **Overhead Lighting:** To improve nighttime safety, overhead tivolli lights will be strung across the projected boundary area above 26'. Tivolli lights will also distinguish the space as an inviting evening destination space for the community to enjoy.

3. **Bicycle Parking:** Reflecting the frequent shortage of adequate bicycle parking, the project will install vertical bike parking frames to maximize access to parking as efficiently as possible. The vertical bike racks would add an additional 8-10 bike parking spots for an already crowded parking location. These bike racks will be located out of vehicle right of way, on adjacent private property.

4. **Garbage Containment:** Taking advantage of the existing agreement between multiple entities on the alley to share trash, recycling & compost dumpsters, the project will prototype the centralization of these receptacles within an attractive and secure enclosure. This will reduce the visual clutter and errant litter in the alley while coordinating the shared use of a common resource.

5. **Seating:** Additional seating will be added in the form of counter height tables and stools (removable overnight).

They will be located out of the right of way and out of vehicle traffic. The additional seating will provide a privately-managed, public space for the community to gather and aid in hosting community events.

The proposed solutions have wide community support from alley stakeholders including property owners Alfred Shiga, Unico Properties, Cafe Allegro, and has received letters of endorsement from The University District Partnership, The University District Community Council, The University Temple Board of Trustees, ROOTS Shelter, U District Square, The People's Hard Reduction Alliance, Bulldog News, ...

For supporting documentation of our community-driven project, visit: udsq.org/alley

5. Who is the primary contact for this application?

Kate Robinson, Cafe Allegro

6. Who is the alternative contact for this application?

Cory Crocker, U District Square