



Yesler Terrace Redevelopment Fact Sheet

Yesler Terrace is a 28-acre publicly subsidized housing community owned and operated by Seattle Housing Authority. The community sits on the southern slope of First Hill, adjacent to downtown, Harborview Medical Center, the International District and Seattle University. Built in 1941, it is among the most diverse and one of the most economically challenged neighborhoods in Seattle.

Many of Yesler Terrace's 1,200 residents are families with children, seniors, people with disabilities and immigrants who speak scores of different languages. Yesler Terrace residents earn less than 30 percent of the city's median income. Its aging 561 housing units and other structures need to be replaced.

Seattle Housing Authority has worked closely over the last four years with residents, service providers and others to develop Guiding Principles for the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace. These Guiding Principles are the fundamental values that guide each step of Yesler Terrace's redevelopment. The new Yesler Terrace is envisioned as a connected community, linked to adjacent communities and downtown. Over the next 20 years, Yesler Terrace will emerge as a place where people from across society come together to enjoy cultural diversity, high-quality homes and access to parks, shops and offices.

Why does Yesler Terrace need to be redeveloped?

Yesler Terrace is among the oldest publicly-subsidized housing in the United States and is the oldest in Seattle. Built in 1941, many of its buildings are reaching the end of their useful life cycle and need to be replaced. Its water, sewer and other key systems are failing. Most units at Yesler Terrace are functional but do not meet the modern-day needs of tenants and families. The new community will offer high-quality, healthy homes with a variety of services and amenities.

What is envisioned for Yesler Terrace?

The new Yesler Terrace neighborhood is envisioned as a dynamic and welcoming urban, mixed-use neighborhood with convenient connections to neighboring communities. It will be a great place to live and work, and will increase the number of units of affordable and workforce housing near the urban core. The neighborhood will include a mix of market-rate housing, office and retail uses, as well as parks and open space, enhanced landscaping, improved streets and pedestrian and bike amenities. Yesler Terrace is conceived as a model community – safe, healthy and sustainable – incorporating green design practices, enhanced transportation alternatives (including a new street car) and economic opportunity for its residents.

The new community will be significantly larger than today's Yesler community. Preliminary planning concepts suggest the following:

- 3,000 - 5,000 residential units
- 400,000 - 1.2 million square feet of office space
- 25,000 – 100,000 square feet of retail space
- 5 - 8 acres of parks and open space

How will residents benefit from the changes at Yesler Terrace?

Residents in the new Yesler Terrace neighborhood will benefit from:

High-Quality Housing and Economic Opportunity

- Modern, healthy, energy-efficient housing designed for the needs of current and future residents
- Improved and expanded programming for social services, job creation and business development

A Vibrant Neighborhood

- Five to eight acres of large and small open spaces for leisure, play and recreation
- A diverse residential community
- Safety through active community life and well designed public spaces
- Housing, shops, community gathering places and jobs

Better Connections

- Enhanced transit opportunities, including multiple street car stops
- Pedestrian and bike facilities
- Easy connections to adjacent neighborhood retail and employment centers

How will all of Seattle benefit from the changes at Yesler Terrace?

The benefits of a newly developed neighborhood at Yesler Terrace will also be shared city-wide. Seattle residents will benefit from:

- A renewed and vibrant multi-cultural neighborhood
- New jobs, during and after construction
- New housing close to jobs and public transportation, such as the new street car: 25 percent of all jobs in Seattle are within a one-mile radius of Yesler Terrace
- Additional residents to support growing businesses in the International District, Squire Park and First Hill
 - An increased inventory of new rental apartments for families who need low-income, workforce and affordable housing
 - A new neighborhood that models community health and environmental sustainability

How are decisions about the project being made?

The vision for Yesler Terrace began taking shape in 2006 when Seattle Housing created a Citizen Review Committee (CRC) comprised of residents, members of the surrounding community and other key stakeholders.

The CRC developed a set of Guiding Principles and planning concepts to guide the project. These principles—social equity, economic opportunity, environmental stewardship and sustainability and one-for-one-replacement housing—were later adopted by the SHA Board of Commissioners. These Guiding Principles lay the foundation for all planning efforts, including the Site Concept Framework that provides the basis for the range of redevelopment alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIS.

What are the next steps in the planning process?

In spring 2010, the Seattle Housing Authority and the city's Human Services Department began an environmental review process for the Yesler Terrace redevelopment project. The process resulted in an extensive study by consultants to produce an Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS. The study examined how various redevelopment alternatives could possibly effect the project's environment.. The draft EIS was made available for public review and comment in late October.

Once the Draft EIS has been reviewed, commented on and revised based upon the comments, the Seattle Housing Authority will issue the Final EIS. Once this is complete, there will still be a number of steps that occur before the project can begin. The project will be developed over time to assure an orderly and economically feasible phasing strategy. This will allow residents and social service providers at Yesler Terrace to anticipate and plan for any changes.

Major changes to this neighborhood must be carefully planned and carried out in phases. It is likely that the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace will take as long as 15 years to complete. This extended timeline also allows for regional economic recovery and a rebound in the real estate market, both of which are necessary for the success of the project.

For more information

Laura Ray, Yesler Terrace Communications
lray@seattlehousing.org or 206.615.3485