



UNIVERSITY DISTRICT

# ECUMENICAL CAMPUS Coalition

## Progress Report

January 1, 2010





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## Introduction

UDECC is creating a new way to be Church in the 21st Century.

We're 7 faith traditions conducting a feasibility study for a new facility in Seattle's University District. There, multiple sacred spaces will house different congregations worshipping separately and together. The project will also house well-coordinated human services and will be a center for the community, with classrooms, assembly spaces, and a neighborhood park.

As the project proves to be feasible, several congregations and campus ministries will build it together, combining equity from their existing properties and leveraging a period of unprecedented urban growth in a bold new way. These nearby properties can in turn be made available for development of housing for populations in need, distributed throughout the neighborhood.

This great *gesture* will become a great *reach* for justice. Together we will better sustain and renew our own ministries, as well as the outreach ministries we support in common. Together we will be wiser stewards of the earth's resources and build an environmentally and economically sustainable home. And together we will share a vital center of cultural and civic life with all of our neighbors.

## Background

The University District Ecumenical Campus Coalition (UDECC) is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit corporation founded in June 2007 by several Christian faith communities who have shared Seattle's University District since the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Initially consisting of 5 congregations and 1 campus ministry program, the coalition has since grown to include 7 congregations and 3 campus ministries. These 10 coalition members are:

- Christ Episcopal Church
- Metropolitan Community Church Seattle
- University Baptist Church
- University Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- University Congregational United Church of Christ
- University Lutheran Church
- University Temple United Methodist Church
- Cooperating Ministries in Higher Education (A collaborative ministry of the American Baptist Church USA, Christian Church Disciples of Christ, Presbyterian Church USA, United Church of Christ, and United Methodist Church)
- Lutheran Campus Ministry
- The Wesley Club (United Methodist Campus Ministry)

UDECC welcomes inquiries from faith communities who are interested in being considered for membership.



## Mission Statement

The mission of UDECC is to enable the development in Seattle's University District of an ecumenical home for several Christian congregations and campus ministry programs – a capital facility that will:

- House the ministries of multiple worshipping communities, as well as other compatible organizations and businesses
- Provide urban amenities such as public open space and community assembly facilities
- Accommodate well-coordinated services to disadvantaged populations

## Statement of Purpose

The mission of UDECC will be furthered through the completion of a detailed Feasibility Study, which will develop and test the concept of the proposed facility, to include the following program elements:

1. Separate worship facilities for multiple Christian worshipping communities.
2. Shared facilities for fellowship, Christian education, and church administration.
3. Welcoming and distinctive facilities for campus Christian ministry.
4. Public amenities to serve the surrounding community, including public open space, a gracious pedestrian environment, excellent connections to public transportation, and assembly facilities available for community use.
5. Generous facilities designed to accommodate a range of human service organizations, to enable the integration and coordination of services to disadvantaged populations.
6. Accommodations for other complementary institutional and/or commercial enterprises, to help capitalize the project, and to provide long-term revenue to support the missions and ministries of the partner institutions.

The whole to be a notable achievement in fine architecture: Spiritually uplifting, fully accessible, durably constructed, economically and environmentally sustainable.



## Project Progress

Significant progress has been achieved since UDECC's incorporation on June 12, 2007. The following narrative describes our progress from 06/12/07 – 12/31/09.

### Scope of Predevelopment Feasibility Study

The following outline presents the scope of the feasibility study as presently in development:

1. Proposed ownership and governance structure.
2. Draft of legal commitment between partner institutions.
3. Building program.
4. Project schedule.
5. Project budget estimate.
6. Conceptual architectural plan.
7. Resolution of site control.
8. Market analysis for tenant space.
9. Preliminary environmental assessment of site.
10. Proposed strategy for project financing.
11. Assessment of market for existing church properties.
12. Development *pro forma* (economic analysis).

### Ownership and Governance Structure

The Seattle office of Perkins Coie is generously providing comprehensive legal services to UDECC on a *pro bono* basis for our Predevelopment Feasibility Study. Founded in Seattle, Perkins Coie is a leading international law firm offering a full spectrum of legal services. With more than 650 lawyers in 14 offices across the United States and in China, the firm serves clients in traditional industries and emerging technology markets.

Partner Laura Whitaker leads Perkins Coie's UDECC team. Laura's area of practice is real estate and land use law, and her team is also providing legal expertise in the areas of nonprofit/corporate law, real estate acquisitions and financing, labor and employment law, and tax law.

Our agreement with Perkins Coie was executed on January 19, 2008. Having thoroughly scrutinized UDECC's corporate documents to confirm that the organization's legal foundation is consistent with its mission, our attorneys turned their attention to evaluating and further developing our draft Ownership and Governance Plan, which will be a key component of the final feasibility report. This legal structure will define the relationships among the worshiping communities that will partner to develop, own and operate the Ecumenical Campus.

At present, our attorneys recommend that the legal form for the entity that will own and operate the Ecumenical Campus should be a tax-exempt LLC (limited liability company), which would be owned and governed by the participating congregations and ministries. Perkins Coie's draft recommendations are posted on UDECC's web site, and are available for download at [www.ecumenicalcampus.org/documents/UDECC\\_DraftOandG\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.ecumenicalcampus.org/documents/UDECC_DraftOandG_Plan.pdf)



The draft Ownership & Governance Plan was presented to a gathering of the governance groups of UDECC member organizations on October 25, 2008. Subsequent congregational presentations, large and small group discussions were conducted at each member congregation, resulting in a number of questions and comments that are being incorporated into a final draft of the plan. Additionally, the attorneys are developing a “Terms Sheet” which will constitute a detailed draft of the LLC agreement that will ultimately be negotiated between the member organizations.

Other issues where Perkins Coie has been advising the UDECC board include:

- Discussions and transactions with existing property owners.
- Dealings with City of Seattle agencies concerning land use issues and entitlements.
- Professional services agreements with consultants
- Development of UDECC’s employee manual and personnel policies
- Evaluation of corporate insurance coverage
- Nonprofit tax law

To date, 10 attorneys have contributed their time and expertise to this effort. UDECC is grateful to the Perkins Coie team members who have generously extended themselves to assist us through completion of the feasibility study.

### **Building Program Outline**

In a process that began with a UDECC board retreat in October 2007, the Building Program Outline for the Ecumenical Campus was approved by the UDECC Board of Trustees on May 17, 2008. Along the way, the program was enriched by the active involvement of over 150 individuals from participating institutions. The program was further enhanced by a series of five “focus sessions” conducted from August to October of 2008 to further deepen and expand specific elements of the program. The program outline will benefit from further input from our architects, who will add quantitative data to what has to date been a primarily descriptive and qualitative document. The Building Program Outline is posted on UDECC’s web site, and is available for download at [www.ecumenicalcampus.org/documents/UDEC\\_BuildingProgramOutline\\_10-24-08.pdf](http://www.ecumenicalcampus.org/documents/UDEC_BuildingProgramOutline_10-24-08.pdf)

### **Revised Project Timeline**

- Concept Development: 02/04 – 06/07
- Predevelopment Feasibility Study: 06/07 – 05/10
- Commitment Phase: 05/10 – 11/10
- Preconstruction Phase: 11/10 – 10/12
- Construction Phase: 10/12 – 09/14

### **Conceptual Design and Cost Estimating**

From January to April of 2008, UDECC conducted a full-scale architect selection process. At its April 19, 2008 meeting, the UDECC Board of Trustees voted unanimously to approve the selection of Olson Kundig Architects of Seattle to develop the project’s new conceptual plan, a central element of the feasibility study.



Olson Kundig Architects (OKA) is among the most honored design firms in our region. In January of 2009, OKA was named the single recipient of the American Institute of Architects' 2009 AIA Architectural Firm Award. Often referred to as the "Firm of the Year Award," this national award is the highest honor the AIA bestows on an architecture firm. Since the 1960s, OKA's international reputation for design excellence has been built through their commitment to urbanism and civic life, and through a worldwide collection of noteworthy projects including places of worship, museums, academic buildings, interior design and residences. The office combines the capacity of a large firm with the intensity of a small one. Their work has been published extensively, and has been honored with numerous regional and national design awards.

Rick Sundberg, FAIA, Principal-in-charge of the UDECC project for OKA, is personally leading the design and planning process. Associate Bob Jakubik, AIA is Project Manager for the UDECC team, and Principal Stephen Yamada-Heidner, AIA leads the team's sustainable design efforts, as well as providing management support.

In addition to generating the conceptual plan for the Ecumenical Campus, OKA will be actively and directly involved in presenting the plan to each of the partner congregations, playing a central role in the predevelopment commitment phase. Their enthusiasm for the project was an important factor in their selection.

On June 10, 2008, OKA commenced work on the conceptual plan for the Ecumenical Campus. As the summer progressed, however, it became evident that control of the intended site was going to take longer than earlier anticipated. On September 4, 2008, work on the conceptual design was suspended pending resolution of site control. As most of the architects' efforts thus far were preparatory to completion of the conceptual design, most of the work completed to date retains its value to the project. The OKA team remains poised to continue their work as soon as site selection is resolved.

Sellen Construction Company, one of the region's preeminent builders, will be providing construction cost estimating and constructability reviews during the development of the conceptual design. Sellen is providing these services at no cost to UDECC. The building professionals at Sellen will be working directly with our architects at OKA as they develop and refine the conceptual design. This work will be led by Sellen Senior Vice President Jack Avery and Vice President Dan Barrett, under the direction of Sellen President Scott Redman.

### **Real Estate and Project Economics**

Lorig Associates of Seattle was commissioned in September 2007 to advise UDECC on its development plans. Lorig provides consulting services for clients who require assistance with property development, and who wish to maintain ownership of their real estate. They are known for their extensive work with nonprofit and public agencies, and their thorough understanding of the unique requirements of such projects. Their consulting capabilities span the development cycle, including feasibility studies and master planning, property acquisition, market research, financing, budget management and regulatory approvals.

Founding partner Bruce Lorig personally leads Lorig Associates' UDECC team. Lorig has been advising UDECC on issues pertaining to site control, helping to strategically identify, evaluate and



pursue site configuration alternatives. Lorig's considerable experience in negotiating with large public-sector agencies as well as private-sector owners has been particularly helpful. Additionally, Lorig has assisted two neighborhood churches and adjacent owners in pursuing the rezoning of a substantial tract to enable development of affordable housing, an important goal of the UDECC vision.

Looking forward, Lorig will be actively involved, along with Perkins Coie, in negotiating site control agreements. They will advise UDECC during development of the conceptual facilities plan, and will take the lead in generating and refining the project's economic *pro forma*.

### **Site Selection**

The Ecumenical Campus will be located in Seattle's University District neighborhood. The partner churches have shared this neighborhood for a century, and are committed to actively participating in the life of this vital urban center. The choice of a project site has been based on several important criteria, including visibility, proximity to the heart of the University District, convenient and diverse transportation options, and proximity to the University of Washington's central campus. Several alternative sites were considered prior to the UDECC Board's decision, on November 21, 2009, to select property at the intersection of NE 45<sup>th</sup> Street and 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE as its preferred site.

Early efforts were focused on consolidating multiple parcels into a substantial building site on the block where University Temple United Methodist Church is located. These efforts, although initially promising, ultimately led to the conclusion that securing sufficient property at this location would be excessively costly. Hence, the UDECC board elected to evaluate a range of alternative sites, with the goal of identifying the most feasible and advantageous option. Working with its staff and consultant team, the UDECC board identified a total of 12 potential sites in the target neighborhood, bounded by Roosevelt Avenue NE on the west, 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE on the east, NE Campus Parkway on the south, and NE 52<sup>nd</sup> Street on the north. Through critical analysis, these alternate sites were evaluated and ranked. Guided by this ranking, multiple site options were pursued, with multiple potential configurations.

On March 16, 2009, UDECC asked the Church Council of University Congregational United Church of Christ (UCUCC) to grant permission for UDECC to select property belonging to UCUCC as the preferred site for the Ecumenical Campus, for the purpose of completing the feasibility study. After a 7-month discernment process, during which UCUCC formed a task force and hired a consultant to facilitate its consideration of UDECC's request, the congregation at UCUCC voted to approve the use of their property for the study. The UCUCC Church Council unanimously affirmed this vote the next day, on October 26, 2009.

The study site includes a parking lot and a small building used by a neighborhood service agency, both owned by UCUCC. UDECC is pursuing additional properties proximate to the UCUCC property, in order to maximize the capacity of the project site. The site is located at the NE corner of the intersection, adjacent to the existing UCUCC church building, and directly across NE 45<sup>th</sup> Street from the central campus of the University of Washington.



The UCUCC property has several important advantages, including:

- Direct adjacency to the existing UCUCC congregation, whose building recently underwent over \$5M in infrastructure improvements
- Excellent access to multiple modes of public transportation, including close proximity to the new Link Light Rail station at NE 45<sup>th</sup> Street and Brooklyn Avenue, scheduled to be in full operation by 2020
- Highly-visible location at the true “crossroads” of the University District, and central to the existing locations of all participating congregations
- Unbeatable proximity to the central campus of the University of Washington
- Central to the active life of the University District

### **Planning Approvals**

In these early project stages, we are actively communicating with agencies of the City (including the Department of Planning and Development, the Mayor’s office, and several City Council members), which have been consistently supportive of our project efforts. With a new Mayor at City Hall as of January 2010, we will be working to establish a productive working relationship with the new administration.

As conceived, the Ecumenical Campus project is consistent with the approved University District Neighborhood Plan. Further analysis and negotiation of entitlements will accompany conceptual development of the project during the predevelopment feasibility study.

### **Communications with Neighborhood Stakeholders**

We continue to brief a variety of neighborhood stakeholders on the planning for and status of the Ecumenical Campus project, and have done so since UDECC was incorporated.

One very important player is, of course, the University of Washington. Since January 2008, UDECC Executive Director Clint Pehrson has met regularly with UW administrative officers. This line of communication is especially valuable, as the University has recently completed transformation of the former Safeco Tower into the new administrative headquarters of the UW. This change, in the immediate neighborhood under study by UDECC, presents an opportunity for both institutions to benefit from their shared presence there.

Other groups that UDECC has briefed include the Ave Group, the University Heights Redevelopment Committee, the University District Community Council, the Roosevelt Neighborhood Association, the University Park Community Association, the University District Kiwanis, the University District Parking Associates, the Business and Professional Women’s Club at the University of Washington, and the University Lions Club. UDECC has been an active member of the Greater University Chamber of Commerce since July 2007. We have worked deliberately to cultivate good relations with a diverse group of local business leaders and community activists.



## Feasibility Study Funding

UDECC's approved project budget for the predevelopment feasibility study is \$286,033.

### Funds Received to Date

As of this writing, the 10 UDECC congregations and campus ministries have contributed \$69,900. Contributions by these "voting member organizations" range from \$500 to \$20,000. 100 percent of pledged contributions have been paid in full.

As for UDECC board member support, we have consistently had 100 percent participation among UDECC board members and alternates, resulting in total contributions of \$20,951. These contributions have far exceeded budgeted goals each year. All of these funds have been paid in full.

Additionally, we've received donations from over 150 individuals and businesses totaling \$21,067 to date. All of these funds have been paid in full. In addition to direct contributions, this total includes the proceeds from one benefit event, as well as a few cash donations from supportive businesses. Board members continue to work to build on this total. We have also initiated on-line giving with a PayPal account accessed through our fully developed web site.

We have extended numerous inquiries to private foundations. So far, 2 of these foundations have responded with generous grants:

- The Seattle Foundation responded to our January 14, 2008 submittal with a rigorous review process, concluding at their June 11, 2008 board meeting with a \$25,000 grant to UDECC.
- The Norcliffe Foundation quickly responded to our April 10, 2008 submittal with an approval dated May 5, 2008, accompanied by a check in the full amount of our \$10,000 request.

We continue to await responses from other prior inquiries to potential funders, and are currently engaged in extending new inquiries to a number of additional private foundations.

Thus we have to date received gifts and grants totaling \$146,918 (all of which has been paid in full).

UDECC's approved 2010 budget anticipates further fundraising of \$139,150, including foundation grants, individual gifts, and further contributions from member congregations and ministries.

### Financing

In addition to charitable gifts and grants, we have also been approved for \$75,000 in unsecured, zero-interest Phase One Predevelopment financing from Impact Capital. This financing is earmarked for architect (OKA) and development consultant (Lorig) fees. Impact Capital is a nonprofit funder that provides predevelopment financing for community development projects in their earliest stages. Financial institutions, charitable foundations and public agencies contribute funds, which are then distributed by Impact Capital after careful scrutiny of project proposals.

Additionally, UDECC has "line of credit" loan commitments from board members totaling \$45,000, designated toward UDECC's operating budget, to ensure that fundraising cash flow will not interrupt the completion of the predevelopment study.



The financing that Impact Capital and board members have committed to UDECC does not in any way encumber or obligate UDECC's partner congregations. Should the Ecumenical Campus project proceed toward full development, repayment of the Impact Capital loan can be incorporated into the overall project budget under the terms of the loan agreement. Nonetheless, UDECC's fundraising goal for 2010 provides for full repayment of all financing.

### Spending Performance and Current Cash Position

All spending to date is well within budget. All consultant agreements are negotiated, and all are within budget allowances. In most cases, consultants are providing services on a *pro bono* basis, or at significantly discounted rates. All expenses and consultant fees for work performed to date have been paid in full. As of the date of this report, UDECC has current assets of \$13,220, with accounts payable of less than \$100. To date, UDECC has received financing disbursements of \$38,835 from Impact Capital, and \$10,000 from board member financing.

The approved predevelopment study budget provides for expenditures totaling \$286,068, as follows:

General & Administrative	\$ 21,496
Insurance	6,204
Advertising	500
Payroll (incl. federal and state payroll taxes)	150,339
Professional Fees	96,544
Development Consultant	30,109
Grant Writer / Researcher	5,078
Architect: Existing Facilities Analysis*	0
Architect: "Scheme A" Conceptual Plan*	0
Architect: Feasibility Study Conceptual Plan	50,222
Cost Estimating Consultant*	0
Legal Services*	0
Legal Services – Reimbursable Expenses	1,000
Accounting	2,116
Graphic Design & Web Site Design	8,019
Ongoing Web Master Services*	0
Office Rent*	0
Occupancy*	0
Finance Charges and Financing Fees	2,485
Contingency	8,500
	<hr/>
	\$ 286,068

\*Pro bono or in-kind donation



## Board of Trustees

We are excited about the caliber of the UDECC board, and their extraordinary level of commitment to this endeavor. The UDECC Board of Trustees currently has 21 members (plus 6 designated alternates). Among our ranks are 1 attorney, 1 architect, 3 CPAs, 5 PhDs, 5 clergy, 8 educators, and 11 persons who are or have been executive directors of nonprofit organizations.

The UDECC board is also a very stable group, with only 3 members rotating off the board and needing to be replaced during our first 30 months of operation. At UDECC's annual meeting on June 13th, 2009, all existing board members and officers renewed their commitment to serve.

Out of 21 trustees, 16 were appointed as representatives by and for their member organizations. Additionally, the UDECC Executive Director is a nonvoting *ex officio* trustee. The remaining 4 members are nonvoting at-large trustees selected to connect UDECC with the larger community. These at-large members include:

- Karen Ko, Neighborhood District Coordinator for the City of Seattle
- Jack Olive, Int. Associate Dean of the School of Theology and Ministry at Seattle University
- Sinan Demirel, Executive Director of the Elizabeth Gregory Home (transitional housing for homeless women), and former Executive Director of the ROOTS Young Adult Shelter
- Darel Grothaus, former Executive Director of the Washington Association of Churches

Most current trustees were active participants in the Collocation Task Force, a group of individuals appointed by their congregations for the purpose of forming what ultimately came to be called UDECC. Beginning with its first meeting on March 7, 2007, this group met weekly for 3 months, culminating in the incorporation of UDECC as a nonprofit corporation on June 12, 2007. The organization's first annual meeting took place on June 30, 2007.

The UDECC board gathers monthly for 3-hour board meetings, normally on the fourth Saturday of each month. Our board member meeting attendance rates are exceptionally high, despite our Saturday morning meeting time. In addition to regular board meetings, the board has also convened extended working sessions in three retreats, with 2 more retreats planned in the first half of 2010.

All board members participate actively on working committees, including:

- Executive Committee
- Finance Committee
- Capital Development Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Communications Committee
- Feasibility Committee
- Building Committee
- Commitment Phase Committee

In addition to Board members, other volunteers also serve on UDECC's working committees, including clergy and members of participating congregations.



## Communications

We have accomplished a great deal toward establishing mechanisms for communicating with stakeholder groups and individuals.

### **Board Representation**

Of course, members of the Board of Trustees, as representatives of their member organizations, have accepted the responsibilities of keeping their congregations informed on UDECC's progress and of continually updating the board on UDECC discussions occurring in each of their churches. They also speak on behalf of the congregations that appointed them to the UDECC board. In addition to meeting with and briefing their governance groups, clergy and lay leadership, members place updates and notices in church newsletters and bulletins.

### **Web Site**

The URL for the UDECC web site is [www.ecumenicalcampus.org](http://www.ecumenicalcampus.org).

We are thrilled to have an exceptional web site fully developed and posted on the Internet. UDECC had a "splash page" posted as of October 2007, stating our mission and providing contact information. The expanded site went live on April 29, 2008.

The web site was designed and developed by a Seattle firm, 5ive Creative, who were willing to enter into a creative barter arrangement for a sizeable portion of their compensation. As a result, the design and development of the web site, originally quoted at \$14,000, cost UDECC only \$5,033.

A very capable volunteer serving on our Communications Committee, professional web developer Brian Maschhoff, is working as our ongoing web master at no cost to UDECC. Brian makes additions and updates to the web site on an ongoing basis (often several times each week). 5ive Creative remains very supportive of our efforts, and makes periodic "tweaks" to the site at no additional charge.

The web site is equipped with on-line donation capabilities so that visitors can easily make charitable contributions to UDECC through PayPal. Within the first week of posting the expanded web site, 8 on-line donations totaling \$1,100 were received through PayPal (this thanks to a matching challenge by one of our board members).

Looking forward, we intend to post plenty of additional content to the web site, especially as news of our progress emerges, and as the feasibility study is completed. We also post the UDECC newsletter digitally on the web site, in color.

### **Newsletter: The Labyrinth**

The first edition of our bimonthly newsletter was published in September 2008. All editions of The Labyrinth are posted and archived on the UDECC website, and paper copies are available for pickup in the narthex (entry) of each church. We also offer Labyrinth articles for member churches to use in their own newsletters. Besides project updates, the newsletter includes personal interest stories and interviews with church members and folks in the community. Looking forward, we'll talk about the history of our congregations and their buildings, and the way people feel about the prospect of



relocating to the Ecumenical Campus. We'll include all perspectives. We'll also publish informative stories about the human service agencies that our member organizations support.

### **Popular Media**

Local, regional and national media have shown some considerable interest in the UDECC effort. The December 2, 2008 edition of *The Christian Century* (a prominent national publication) featured the Ecumenical Campus project in a 3-page article, as part of their larger coverage of religion in the Northwest.

Also noteworthy was a 4-page feature article that appeared in *Faith & Form*, the national journal for religion, art and architecture. This particular issue of *Faith & Form* was focused on environmental sustainability in religious architecture, and the UDECC project was featured as a project that is notable for achieving greater land use efficiency, exchanging single-use facilities for multi-use, and the tremendous efficiencies that can be achieved through collocation.

Similarly, *Worldchanging*, an international on-line publication concerned with sustainable strategies for the 21st Century, recently featured the UDECC project in their series "Seattle to the World." In the words of *Worldchanging* writer Julia Levitt, "the Ecumenical Campus Coalition's progressive approach to resources and land-use planning is truly a next-generation solution that we hope will be modeled by many different kinds of social, business and community groups in years to come. And the best part is that the individual congregations don't sacrifice their own good for the creation of a community center. On the contrary, it seems that by changing their thinking, each participating church will see tremendous gains in productivity, financial resources, and hopefully even a revitalized congregation once they combine their assets and engage with the broader community."

Reporters for the *Seattle Times*, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce* and others have "staked-out" UDECC with earlier stories, and will be interested in following-up with additional pieces as news warrants.

Tony Robinson, columnist on religion/spirituality for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, has served four congregations in rural and urban settings, including 14 years as pastor at Seattle's Plymouth Congregational Church. His latest (2008) book, [Changing the Conversation: A Third Way for Congregations](#), devotes several pages to the UDECC effort, and the ideas behind the Ecumenical Campus concept.

Links to a variety of previous news stories, local and national, are posted on the UDECC web site at [www.ecumenicalcampus.org/news\\_udeccInTheNews.php](http://www.ecumenicalcampus.org/news_udeccInTheNews.php)



## Congregational Life

*This brief narrative is rooted in the vision that was first articulated in the early conceptual development of the Ecumenical Campus from 2004-06, enlarged through the development of the Building Program Outline in 2007-08, and refined through a series of focus sessions in summer and fall of 2008, involving dozens of lay leaders and clergy.*

The congregations that occupy the Ecumenical Campus will share a remarkable environment for worship, education and fellowship.

Each congregation will continue to operate and sustain itself as an independent institution with its own denominational affiliation, clergy and lay leadership. Each will continue to govern itself, and each will retain its particular identity, history and culture.

### **Worship**

Likewise, each congregation will gather for worship in its own worship space, on its own schedule, and conduct its worship services according to its own traditions. Each worship space will be configured and designed with the active participation of the members of the congregation that will worship there.

At the same time, tremendous new opportunities will emerge from participation in this larger community of believers. While continuing to participate in the particular activities of their own congregations, members will also have abundant opportunities to participate in worship and fellowship activities that are only possible in a wider setting. Shared ecumenical services (large and small) will occur frequently during the church year, providing worship opportunities beyond those offered by individual congregations, and with more diverse clergy and lay leadership than any single congregation can muster. The separate traditions of multiple faith communities will emerge as gifts to be shared throughout this larger Christian community.

### **Education**

Numerous adult bible classes and forum discussions presented by multiple congregations will provide a variety of opportunities for participation on any given Sunday, and at other times during the week. A “marketplace of ideas” will emerge, with diverse voices and traditions contributing to a richer theological and social milieu. Collectively, the participating congregations have a “deep bench” of talented discussion leaders and program planners.

Youth programs and events will be particularly exciting. While confirmation classes and other educational activities specific to each congregation will enrich and deepen the faith journey of each young person, important opportunities will also result from larger numbers of youth sharing activities and experiences as a larger community of young believers. Social activities become much more interesting for youth who can look forward to joining with larger numbers of people their own age. Many activities become more appealing with more participants. Group outings, movie and bowling nights, service learning activities, “lock-ins” and other events become more feasible, and also benefit from a larger pool of available adult and peer leaders.



Children will also enjoy greater educational and social opportunities. Some congregations may choose to maintain separate Sunday school programs. Others may find it advantageous to participate in an ecumenical Sunday school program with larger numbers of children enjoying each other's company, and sharing the same lessons as they are nurtured in the Christian faith. In such an ecumenical Sunday school, teachers from several congregations will work together to plan lessons and activities.

### **Fellowship**

Congregations are deepened and strengthened by worshiping together, but they are also enriched by the time they share outside of worship. Fellowship activities draw members into deeper community with each other. Whether sharing a cup of coffee after worship, or gathering for a potluck dinner, or joining forces to compete in a softball league, the time we share as members of the same faith community knits us together with strong bonds.

The Ecumenical Campus will enable much greater opportunities for fellowship than any single congregation can provide. This larger community of believers will occupy a building with generous spaces for sharing meals, coffee and cookies before and after worship, and special social events large and small. On a typical Sunday morning, members of various congregations will gather in clusters with each other and with members of other congregations, sharing a "rolling coffee hour" that will extend from prior to the start of the first worship service until well after the conclusion of the last. As worshipers come and go from their sanctuaries, the activity level in the atrium lounge will rise and fall, traffic will flow through, and discrete corners will be sought for quieter conversations. The dining facilities may be subdivided for 2 or 3 overlapping events, or opened up for one great ecumenical celebration. The library will provide a restful setting for curling up with a book, rendezvousing with a neighborhood friend, or browsing the Internet.

Parents of small children will have the added resource of a well-equipped, professionally staffed nursery, with separate areas for infants (quiet), toddlers (medium), and preschoolers (active).



## Campus Ministry

The college years are a time of great personal transformation. As students make the transition from high school graduates to working adults, college life provides abundant opportunities for experimentation, enlightenment and personal growth.

Spiritual growth for college students is the mission of campus Christian ministry. UDECC currently includes 3 campus ministry programs supported by a total of 6 denominations.

One reality that campus ministries wrestle with is the fact that young people in their teens and twenties often drift away from active participation in the church, often (but not always) drifting back in as they mature, marry and begin raising families of their own.

Campus ministry is an opportunity to remain engaged in a welcoming, inclusive spiritual community at a time when everything else in a student's life can seem to be in turmoil. Informal worship services are an important part of these ministries, but fellowship opportunities are just as integral, along with opportunities to seek the counsel of campus clergy and peers. Sometimes, the biggest attraction is the chance to find a quiet place to study or escape the hubbub of dorm rooms and classrooms. Not surprisingly, food is essential to these programs, and volunteers make sure that meals and snacks are abundant and free.

The Ecumenical Campus is an opportunity to create a more visible presence for campus Christian ministry at the University of Washington.

It also promises to foster stronger bonds between the campus ministry programs and parish churches that want to be supportive and present in the lives of young people who may be seeking church homes now or in the future.

Finally, the collocation of student ministries at the Ecumenical Campus is also an important opportunity to cultivate service-learning opportunities for University students, working with the various service agencies that will collocate there, too. This direct connection between the University student population and populations of homeless, at-risk street youth and elderly may be the most powerful outcome of the UDECC effort, and a huge opportunity for personal growth for all concerned.



## Service and Outreach

*“To provide a capital facility that will ... accommodate well-coordinated services to disadvantaged populations.”*

This simple statement, featured prominently in the UDECC Mission Statement, grows from deep commitment among the people of UDECC’s member congregations. A central purpose of the Ecumenical Campus concept is the transformation of great abundance, now trapped beneath aging church buildings, into greater resources to more effectively serve populations in need.

### **Service to At-Risk Youth and Young Adults**

A number of agencies serve disadvantaged populations in the University District. Many of these agencies focus on the substantial population of at-risk youth and young adults that live on U District streets. Many of these agencies operate in church basements and other marginally suitable facilities, and are scattered about the neighborhood.

Beginning in early January 2008, UDECC board members met individually with representatives of 21 service agencies in the U. District. They interviewed the service providers, delved into their programs, sought out their thoughts about what’s working in the neighborhood and what needs to improve, and then provided written reports to the UDECC board. Agencies in this conversation include:

- 45<sup>th</sup> Street Clinic / Homeless Youth Clinic
- Elizabeth Gregory Home (transitional housing and day center)
- Peoples Harm Reduction Alliance (Needle Exchange)
- Planned Parenthood
- ROOTS Young Adult Shelter
- Sanctuary Art Center
- Seattle Education Access
- Seattle Youth Garden Works
- SHARE/WHEEL Shelters
- Street Youth Ministries (SYM)
- Tallmadge Hamilton House
- UTUMC Thrift Store
- University Churches Emergency Fund
- University District Food Bank
- University District Service Providers Alliance
- University District Youth Center (UDYC)
- University Family YMCA
- University Neighborhood Service Center
- University Street Ministry
- The Working Zone
- YouthCare

In the next stage of our engagement with these existing service providers, we are inviting their directors, staff and board members to engage in a discussion of the merits and challenges of collocating service programs at the Ecumenical Campus.



Some programs will lend themselves more successfully to collocation than others. We also know that there are advantages to having some duplication of services in a neighborhood as diverse as the U. District. We do not intend to automatically accommodate any agency that wants to be a part of what we're doing, because some may not be well served by collocation; others may be redundant. Rather, we are taking a strategic approach, looking for gaps in service and assessing the viability of existing programs.

Still, our recent discussions suggest that collocating a range of services to at-risk street youth will provide several important benefits:

- Access to services will be greatly improved.
- The transition out of homelessness is much more successful when supported by well-coordinated services.
- Important relationships can be nurtured between service agencies and supportive worshipping communities abiding in the same facility. This pays dividends not only in terms of financial support, but also in building a reliable corps of dedicated volunteers.
- To solve homelessness, we need to make it more visible to the whole community. Fragmented services in found space scattered throughout the neighborhood are too easy to overlook, ignore, or take for granted.

### **Service to Seniors**

In February and early March 2008, four building programming discussions were hosted at four different churches. A fifth discussion, open to all, was conducted on Saturday, March 15th. More than 150 people participated in these conversations, enriching the building program and building consensus around it.

Whenever the conversation turned to outreach services, existing agencies that have been supported for so many years by the U. District churches logically emerged as topics of conversation. This was to be expected, particularly considering the long history of service to street youth in the neighborhood, extending back to the mid-1980s.

When participants were asked to think beyond existing services to at-risk youth, the hungry and homeless, the idea of serving senior citizens resonated with those present. Indeed, one way of making the Ecumenical Campus a true neighborhood commons and nurturing a diverse, multi-generational community there would be to address the unmet needs of seniors in NE Seattle.

On average, each senior center in Seattle serves approximately 450 seniors daily. These numbers are increasing. They serve more women than men, mostly 70+ years of age, and typically low or very low income. Until recently, Seattle had 9 senior centers, oriented to serving seniors only, distributed throughout Seattle. Four of these centers are affiliated with Senior Services, a large nonprofit agency. The others are independent. Among the five independent senior centers was Tallmadge Hamilton House, a 10,000 sf freestanding facility located in the University District at 5225 - 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. Founded in 1958, Hamilton House was the oldest senior center in the Pacific Northwest, and the only one serving northeast Seattle. It was started by several charitable organizations, including the University Kiwanis Club. In early 2008, however, Hamilton House ceased operations, and has closed permanently. The building housing the center has been sold. Another North Seattle facility, the Wallingford Senior Center, ceased operations in late 2009, leaving only 2 NW Seattle centers (Ballard and Greenwood), and none in NE Seattle.



On March 17th, 2008, we met with the people who operated Tallmadge Hamilton House, including Program Director Marilyn Michael and Executive Director Barbara Clarke. Also participating in this discussion was A.J. Skurdal, Secretary of the University Kiwanis Club. We talked about the need to empower seniors in our community by offering support to maintain their health and well being, foster peer interaction, prevent isolation, reinforce independence, and enrich daily life. Tallmadge Hamilton House had offered programs ranging from how-to and self-improvement classes to discussion and support groups, arts and crafts, computer technology, social services and counseling as well as weekday lunches throughout the year. Other Seattle senior center programs include fitness classes, dancing, driving lessons, senior rights assistance, tax assistance, pet food distribution, and transportation services. Such programs are essential to the goal of building a healthy community in a time of increasing personal isolation.

The loss of Tallmadge Hamilton House leaves a gaping absence in the University District, and indeed throughout all of Northeast Seattle.

On March 7, 2008, we met with Pat Dougherty, Director of the University of Washington Retirement Association, and several of her board members. Our discussion centered on the Retirement Association's goal of establishing services for seniors in the University District, as well as affordable housing for retired faculty and staff from the University (many of whom qualify for low- or very-low income housing). The University District, although generally regarded as a neighborhood tailored to the needs of young people, is in fact a splendid environment for seniors. It is a walkable urban neighborhood, with very affordable restaurants and shops and good transit connections to the rest of the city. Its crown jewel is the presence of the University of Washington. Retired faculty and staff from the University feel a great attachment to the institution, and welcome opportunities to sustain their relationships with the University and its neighborhood after retirement.

The University of Washington is also a great resource for seniors. For a basic fee of only \$100 per year, they may audit any of the on-campus classes they choose, and enjoy full access to the University's library system. Cultivating a safe and hospitable environment for seniors is an important goal for the Ecumenical Campus.

We believe there are many ways that seniors and street youth can benefit each other. As we seek new ways of serving both populations, important synergies can develop from locating their programs in proximity to each other and looking for connections that might not always be readily apparent. "Grandparents" with time to care can be a positive influence in the lives of at-risk youth who don't otherwise trust adults. Seniors and street youth can share the resources of the Sanctuary Arts Center, computer facilities, and other resources. Computer-savvy young people can help seniors learn to access the Internet. Retired artists and authors can coach young people. Retired educators can be tutors. In short, a multigenerational approach can bring vitality to all ages.

We continue to explore these ideas with professionals active in service to these populations.

Our increasingly focused discussion on services to University District populations in need continues to grow, with input from a number of authorities. The UDECC building program and conceptual plan will be enriched accordingly.



## Conclusion

The vision of the Ecumenical Campus is unprecedented. The project promises to leverage the abundant equity of several faith communities, presently lying fallow beneath ill-fitting buildings and parking lots, to enable more ambitious and far-reaching ministries. It will transform the way these congregations experience and share worship and fellowship, the resources they can marshal for service to populations in need, and the opportunities they have to enrich and contribute to the life of the surrounding community.

On a practical level, the Ecumenical Campus will provide a more economically and environmentally sustainable future for participating congregations and campus ministries. It will enable their members to take advantage of expanding transportation options, and will replace single-use, isolated facilities with more visible mixed-use, integrated facilities that model more responsible land-use principals.

The University District Ecumenical Campus will model to communities near and far a new way for the Church to move boldly and confidently into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.