

DESIGN NARRATIVE

Meander has one mission: to provide a path to a better neighborhood. Based on Seattle's 2035 Comprehensive Plan, Meander has community, equity, sustainability, and prosperity at the forefront of its design, prioritizing an inclusive experience of people over structures. Utilizing these values, Meander creates a neighborhood primed for living, working, and playing for families and individuals of any financial, cultural, or generational background.

Community:

To create a vibrant and culturally rich community, Meander looks at what a complete neighborhood needs. Abundant housing is key and is provided to Seattleites of various income levels throughout the development. Transforming the Yesler Building, the King County Courthouse, and the Chinook Building into residential and retail mixed use spaces was the first step toward Meander's vision. Mixed uses are present throughout all of Meander's phases; residential spaces ultimately constitute over three quarters of the overall plan's area. Of the offered units, 26% are slated exclusively for affordable housing tenants and 4% for luxury dwellings. This mixture of income levels in every building allows Meander to cater to **everyone**. This also provides all residents with equal access to other neighborhood amenities, such as grocery stores, transportation, medical care, and recreation areas which are also included in the development.

Equity:

Meander is a place where everyone belongs; its design has considered issues of homelessness and disability from its very beginning. Downtown Seattle's large concentration of unhoused individuals have direct access to Meander, including the University of Washington's Harborview Medical-affiliated homeless outreach clinic. On top of providing essential medical care, special transitional housing has been reserved for unhoused individuals receiving care and participating in Meander's Transitional Work program. Our goal is to provide these individuals with the tools to break the cycle of homelessness and seamlessly integrate into more typical living conditions. Additionally, the Meander Path and multi-level entry access in all buildings allows for inclusive access throughout the site, especially for elderly and disabled individuals. We achieve this through a considerably reduced slope which allows all users to stroll more comfortably throughout Downtown. Finally, Meander assumes that City Hall Park has been redesigned to provide greater tribute to the indigenous tribes of this part of Seattle, as well as having been reprogrammed to reactivate and promote interaction daily within this historic landmark.

Sustainability:

Meander is site responsive, prioritizing the advantage the steep slope provides. The heights of the new construction buildings are directly attributed to maximizing solar penetration into all areas of the site, maximizing passive solar heat gain. Additionally, all new construction is planned to be 100% mass timber; this decision was made as both a callback to the Pacific Northwest's logging history as well as an environmentally friendly substitute when compared to traditional construction materials. The immense amount of "green" on the site, included in its various pocket parks, allows for Meander to utilize the idea of the 'Sponge City', which provides water reclamation and reuse throughout the development. Meander also promotes green design through meeting the guidelines set by the Seattle Living Building Pilot, actively participating in the City of Seattle's Climate Strategies.

Prosperity:

Economic opportunity and security are provided in Meander through the Meander Mobility Hub. Fixed on the assumption of the new Sound Transit stop, the new transit terminal provides Meander residents with a wide menu of transportation choices, easily connecting them with the greater Seattle area. Similarly, Seattleites of all neighborhoods will gain a new access point to a heavily pedestrianized area of their city's Downtown. Additionally, of all those working within the Meander development, 25% of labor must be from Meander's Transitional Work program, providing job opportunities and training to unhoused residents in the area.

Looking Forward, Urban Design Scheme Narrative:

Meander fits seamlessly into the existing urban fabric of Seattle while also striving toward a more inclusive user-oriented methodology. The adjacent site study area could be utilized to expand Meander's outreach by prioritizing the use of mass timber on new construction, a minimum of 25% affordable housing in all new residential communities, and ease of accessible public paths throughout developments with greater than a 5% slope.