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## L.I.D. petitions to circulate for mall on 'The Ave'

By POLLY LANE

Property owners in the University District will be asked to sign petitions this week calling for the formation of a local-improvement district to finance a mall development along "The Ave."

The proposal, following nearly three years of planning and discussion led by the University District Development Council, would close three blocks of University Way Northeast to nearly all traffic and eliminate on-street parking.

The idea is to transform the street into a space for people by changing the scale to favor pedestrians rather than cars.

**THE INITIAL** stages would provide a mall, with a meandering route for casual traffic between Northeast 42nd and 47th Streets. Northeast 45th Street, a major arterial, and possibly Northeast 43rd Street, would remain open to east-west traffic but other cross streets would be closed to the alley on either side of the mall.

First-stage construction is estimated at \$584,000 by The Richardson Associates, hired to prepare a concept for the mall. This would pay to repave about 83,000 square feet of street with paving units scaled to pedestrian size; raise existing manholes and storm-sewer outlets; install a new water line to serve landscaped areas; pave the Northeast 45th Street intersection; provide 40 large trees and 100 large shrubs; develop an outdoor market and display system with cover and utilities, and provide an outdoor play area, benches, fountain and other public art, utility vaults and other street furniture.

The figure does not include any street lighting or relocation of existing electrical service except for service to the outdoor market. Costs of removal of and modification to traffic and parking devices might be absorbed by the city. If not, these costs could add up to \$200,000 more to the cost of the project.

Owners of 50 per cent of the property will have to favor the L. I. D. proposal before a project is established. The City Engineering Department, after determining the validity of petition signatures, would estimate the cost to each owner. Then the City Council would be asked to determine if a local-improvement district should be created.

Estimated costs to the property owners range from \$20 to \$80 a front foot, payable over 10 years. The difference depends on distance from the mall. Higher assessments would be levied on property fronting on University Way Northeast.

**Concern for parking in the already crowded University District has been one of the major worries about the project. The plan would eliminate 75 on-street spaces along University Way Northeast and Northeast 43rd Street.**

Angle parking on the blocks above and below the mall is suggested as one alternative. More efficient use of off-street parking space, by enforcing a one-hour limit, also is suggested, and construction of parking garages is seen as a long-term requirement.

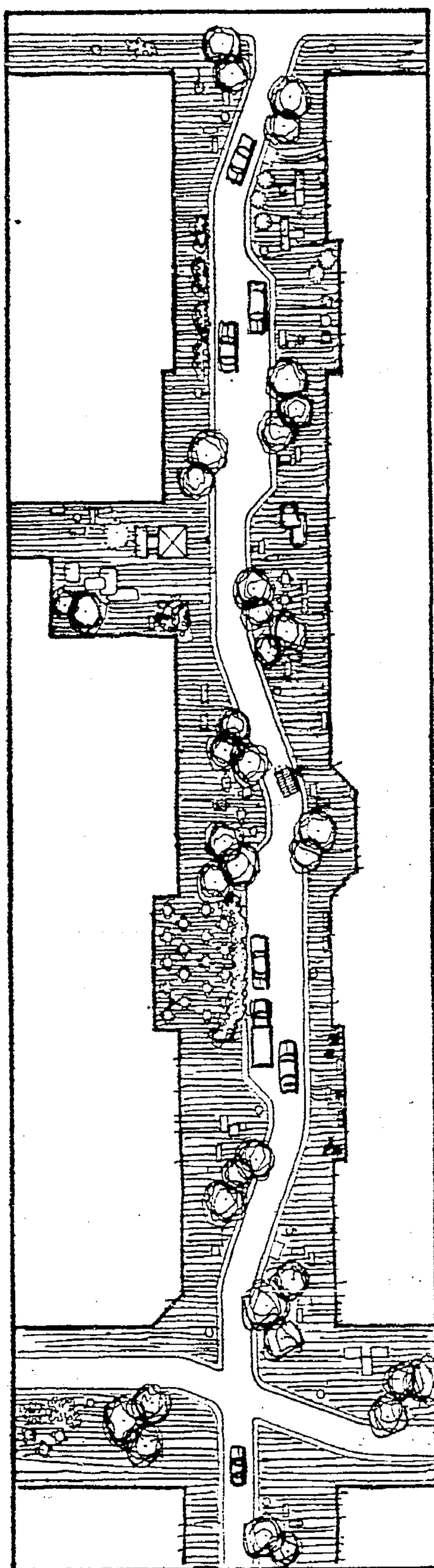
Minibus service along the mall, plus the rerouting of arterial and bus traffic, are other major aspects of the plan.

Cal M. McCune, president of the development council, said that his group hopes to have the necessary signatures by the end of the month with completion of the project set for the spring of 1974.

The council was formed three years ago to establish planning objectives for the retail core of the University District. This was at a time when the drug situation was critical and the future of retail operations along the "Ave" was gloomy.

Now, McCune said, there are no store vacancies, some rents are as high as downtown and drugs have ceased to be a major problem.

**PLANNING FOR THE** mall has involved hundreds of public meetings and citizen participation, he said. An initial plan to close the street to all vehicles has been modified as a result. Besides permitting cars, turnouts would be provided to allow pas-



A typical block plan

senger loading and unloading and package pickups.

Opponents criticize the plan for the lack of adjacent street and other parking and claim the mall will hurt business. Their alternatives, as outlined in a circular distributed by Don Kennedy, a realty broker, call for the addition of awnings on all store fronts on University Way, widening of sidewalks, planting a row of trees, adding drinking fountains and waste receptacles, repaving sidewalks, free bicycle parking, quick-stop zones for passenger pickups and a "hired" people mover.

**A PETITION** against the project now being circulated does not list alternatives, however, McCune said.

The development council believes such a "cosmetic" approach would do little to benefit pedestrians and preserve the district as a retail center. The council and other mall supporters believe that a mall would encourage quality specialty-shop operations, and also private development for parking, shopping and residential uses nearby.

It is expected that the University of Washington would continue the mall development south of Northeast 41st Street to Lake Union as part of the urban-renewal district.

The project also would link new development now under way by Safeco and possible redevelopment on the A & P market site, the University Methodist Church parking lot and at the University Book Store property.

**Design control is recommended so all aspects of the project could be coordinated by the management group for the mall.**

Copies of the concept prepared by The Richardson Associates and other information about the proposal are available from the council at 4545 15th Ave. N. E.

Other council officers are Donald A. Lockwood, vice president; Ernest M. Conrad, treasurer, and Dillis W. Knapp, executive vice president.