

# HUSKY STADIUM RENOVATION PROPOSAL

## What is the problem with Husky Stadium?

Husky Stadium was originally constructed in 1920 and, after almost 90 years, is in dire need of extensive preservation and life safety work. While this work is going on, it is highly economical to make targeted upgrades to improve the fan experience and build modern football facilities to help recruit top football players and coaches.



## What is the proposal to renovate Husky Stadium?

The University is seeking public funding for one-half of the total \$300 million project construction budget. Public funding would primarily support the following preservation, renovation and maintenance items. The other half of the stadium project cost would be paid for with new UW local revenues from premium seating and donations from Husky supporters.

### Preservation, Renovation and Maintenance (\$150 Million Public)

- Replace the lower bowl seating (originally built in 1920).
- Seismic reinforcements of the south upper stands, replace the press box and add new elevators.
- Disability (ADA) improvements and renovation to existing concourses, restrooms, and concession areas.
- Site and utility upgrades.

### Improve Fan Experience/Upgrade Football Facilities (\$150 Million UW)

- New premium seating and a club room (generates new revenues).
- Lower the field and remove the track to allow lower bowl seating replacement closer to the field to improve visibility for fans.
- Improvements to concourses, restrooms and concession areas and a new sound system.
- New football operations and support building.

## What public financing is the University requesting?

The University is asking the state to consider repurposing some of the revenues which are currently being used to pay the public financing portions of professional stadiums in King County which will not longer be needed when those bonds are retired. This could also be combined with a sales tax deferral on the construction portions of the Husky stadium renovation.

## How does the Husky Stadium funding request compare with other stadium financing packages and proposals?

The amount of public investment being requested for Husky Stadium is **less than half** of the dollar amount either provided or requested for the three major professional sports teams in Seattle. In addition, the amount of public funding being requested for the Husky Stadium project is the **lowest percentage share** of the stadium projects or proposals listed below.

SAFECO FIELD (1995)	QWEST FIELD (1997)	SUPERSONICS ARENA*	HUSKY STADIUM
\$517 million total cost	\$400 million total cost	\$500 million total cost	\$300 million total cost
\$372 million public (72% of total)	\$300 million public (75% of total)	\$300 million public (60% of total)	\$150 million public (50% of total)
\$145 million Mariners (28% of total)	\$100 million Seahawks (25% of total)	\$200 million unknown (40% of total)	\$150 million UW (50% of total)

\* (2007 PROPOSAL)



## Why should the state help financially with the renovation of Husky Stadium?

- ❖ Husky Stadium is part of the University of Washington – a public entity of the State of Washington. The facility is an icon of the Pacific Northwest and is considered one of the top venues in the country for college football. Generations of Washingtonians have enjoyed football and other athletic contests at Husky Stadium.
- ❖ Husky Stadium is a resource for the community as it is used for more than just UW athletic contests. More than 50 non-athletic events involving more than 70,000 individuals were held at Husky Stadium last year including annual commencement exercises, American Cancer Society Relay for Life, Multiple Sclerosis Society Walk, community youth soccer practices, Washington State Patrol training, Seattle Public School Board Walk, and high school football practices. Youth sports participation is also an important activity with thousands of young people attending sports and band camps each year. Once renovations are complete, the University plans to expand the uses of Husky Stadium for even broader community purposes such as high school football and soccer playoffs, art and drama events, concerts and other community-wide celebrations.
- ❖ Football games at Husky Stadium generate significant revenues for the city, county and the state. A recent analysis conducted by UW Professor William Beyers estimated that the UW athletic program supports more than 2,500 jobs, generates \$211 million in annual sales by Washington businesses, and creates \$83 million annually in labor income. Husky athletics also lead to about \$12.5 million annually in tax revenue, about \$8.2 million of which accrues to the state and \$4.3 million to local governments, primarily King County.
- ❖ Moving Husky football games to Qwest Field (as some have suggested) is not a viable option. First, Qwest Field is smaller than Husky Stadium, having 5,300 fewer seats for home games which results in lower revenues from ticket sales. Second, because the University does not own the facility, rent must be paid and revenues from concession sales and parking are uncertain. Since the UW athletic department does not receive any general fund support and operates with very tight margins, the department is heavily dependent on revenues from the football program to support all other men's and women's athletic programs. Third, moving games downtown to Qwest Field would significantly change the game day experience for Husky students and fans. Student attendance would likely drop off and the tailgating experience would be compromised. Perhaps most importantly, the nostalgic value of coming back to campus (by bus, car, foot, and even boat) for alumni and friends of the UW would be lost.

