



REVISED DRAFT
JUNE 2002

The Blue Ring

connecting places

100-YEAR VISION



Seattle's Open Space Strategy
for the Center City

A 100-YEAR VISION | BECOMING A REALITY NOW



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Seattle's Open Space Strategy
for the Center City

City of Seattle
Greg Nickels, Mayor

CityDesign



As a reflection of the Seattle's civic identity, the city's 100-Year Open Space Strategy for Center City neighborhoods supports urban vitality, eclecticism, sustainability and equality.

This strategy is dedicated to those many members of the Seattle community who toiled for several years to prepare neighborhood plans, and had the foresight to understand the need for this plan. And to the future citizens of Seattle, who will be its stewards.

The world's great cities have memorable public places—the outdoor spaces and promenades that we all can share, such as Central Park or Fifth Avenue or Times Square in New York, La Rambla in Barcelona and Tiananmen Square in Beijing. Such well-established and recognizable open spaces, whether they are large central parks, tree-lined boulevards, beachfront promenades or great plazas, provide settings for city life. Attractive and accessible open space is desirable in any great city, and is especially important at this time in Seattle's history.

Public open space is vital to the quality of life we desire in a growing city. It provides the shared spaces where we can interact with both neighbors and strangers. In a high-density urban setting, public streets, parks and plazas provide the outdoor spaces that are often privatized elsewhere. They make room for festivals, parades and other special events as well as providing places to relax during a normal day. Safe, well-planned and open spaces can become the “outdoor living rooms” of our neighborhoods.

This 100-year vision is the first part of a strategy for the public spaces for Center City Seattle. This strategy has been drafted to provide a mechanism for coordinating a large number of plans, private developments and capital improvement projects in the Center City, and to shape a coherent system of places into a healthy public realm. The result of years of work by neighborhood advocates, City of Seattle staff, elected officials, and others, the “Blue Ring” Open Space Strategy shapes both a common vision for the long term and an implementation plan (see the second part of this document) for a public realm that is comfortable, beautiful, and teeming with activity.

CityDesign is honored to have prepared this strategy to help shape another century of growth in Center City Seattle. We look forward to continuing as its steward, and we invite the entire Seattle community to share this opportunity with us.

John Rahaim
Executive Director
CityDesign



Creating Open Space Even While Density Increases

The commercial, governmental, and cultural core of Puget Sound, Center City Seattle has become a densely populated area. It is composed of diverse and evolving neighborhoods that accommodate rising employment and visitor and residential density. The Center City, a small basin defined at the edges by hills and bodies of water, covers only 3.2 square miles, yet today it has a population of approximately 40,000 people, and 30,000 more are anticipated in less than 20 years. Counting projected visitors and commuters, the number of daily users is anticipated to reach nearly 500,000 per day in 2020.

Increasing the number of housing units and workers alone will not make a great city. It must be livable and safe, and it must include an accessible public realm—that part of the city composed of open spaces and streets accessible to all. A vibrant city is defined and enlivened by public and private actions and by the buildings and activities which surround public spaces. People are drawn to cities that have an active public life—people attract people. A healthy public realm that supports social and recreational life can be a deciding factor for businesses considering where to locate and invest in a community. In addition, land values are often higher in neighborhoods with attractive and accessible open spaces. One of the most respected real estate forecasting reports, *Emerging Trends in Real Estate 2002* by PriceWaterhouseCoopers, supports this; it recommends that “24-hour cities” are the best places to invest.

Merely increasing the acreage of public open space, however, is not sufficient. Public spaces must be lively people places—there must be activities within the spaces and along their edges. Fostering this depends to a great extent on how and where spaces are created in relation to the built environment and the life surrounding it. For example, open spaces may be at the center of neighborhoods or districts, the places where people meet each other or gather for community events. Or they may serve as transitional spaces between neighborhoods or districts of different character. Open spaces shape the life of the city as much as buildings do.

Using Existing Open Spaces and Streets

While the need for open space is apparent, there are many constraints to creating large urban parks like those from the past. High land values and existing building coverage make it difficult to assemble large tracts of land for public open space. It is important to note, however, that approximately 35 to 40 percent of the total land area in Center City is in public ownership, with the vast majority of that land in street rights-of-way. Although funding and new land for parks may be limited, four types of existing assets could be used as building blocks for a Center City open space system:

- Water
- Public parks, existing and proposed
- Private plazas
- Street rights-of-way

Two of the Center City's greatest open spaces are in the form of water: Elliott Bay and Lake Union. They are often seen from the Center City but are not always directly accessible by land. Both provide scenic views from many vantage points in the Center City. Although Elliott Bay and Lake Union are more easily seen than accessed, they do offer many opportunities for public parks, pedestrian promenades, views and limited beach use. Pedestrian links between the shorelines and upland areas need to be strengthened, and the physical form reconfigured to accommodate the emerging mix of uses.

Public parks established and proposed, though relatively small in size, collectively have the potential to meet the demands of Center City residents, workers and visitors. Coordinated planning and the creation of connections between these parks would increase their usability and their viability over time. Also, under bonus provisions in downtown zoning, many public plazas have been created in individual private and public developments. These can provide open space amenities, but must be designed and located to be usable and available to the public, and not only for the users of individual projects. Coordination of such developments may yield more effective access to and use of private open spaces in the future.

Connecting Places

Much public land exists in the form of city rights-of-way. The dominance of urban transport by automobiles has led to right-of-way designs that accommodate vehicular movement, but pedestrians, sidewalk vendors and cafés could use the right-of-way as much as vehicles, requiring us to reconsider the use of the street as part of a larger public realm. Enhancing the design of these streets can eventually lead to reduced reliance on automobile use, providing pedestrians with a pleasant alternative to driving, and providing more user-friendly connections to the transit system. Sidewalks on certain Center City streets have the potential to become outdoor living rooms through careful programming and design.

An enhanced open space system is integral to the concept of a sustainable city. A well-designed system of gathering places, streets and shorelines will provide a pedestrian-oriented environment, will reduce emissions and use of fossil fuels, and will increase greenery and permeable surfaces. Ultimately, with careful attention to public space, Center City can become a contributing element of the regional ecosystem, rather than a distinct “constructed” part of our landscape.

Building on the Past for the Future: The Blue Ring

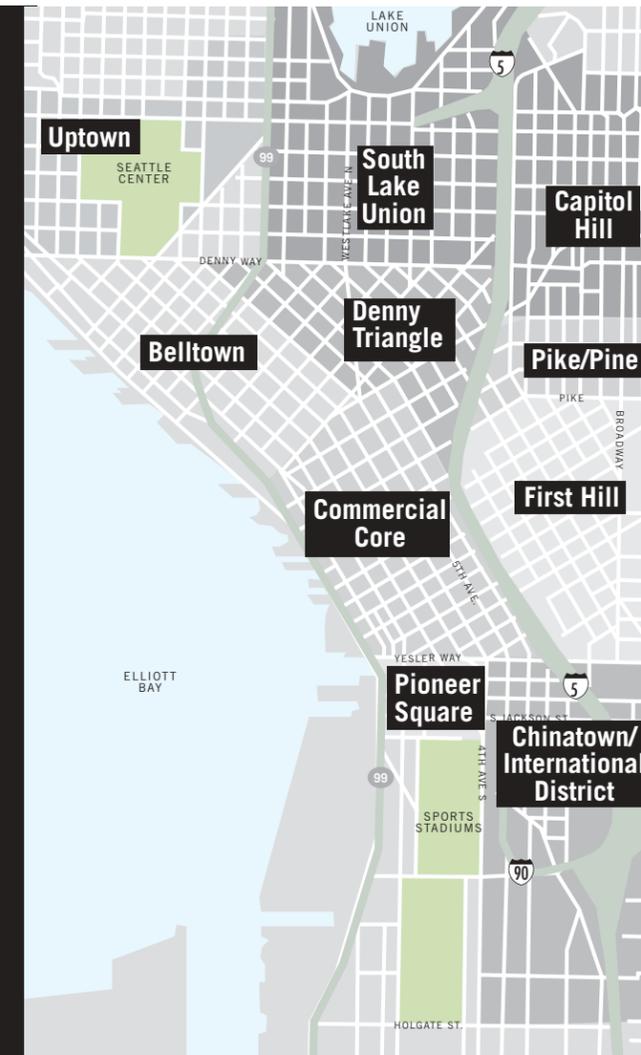
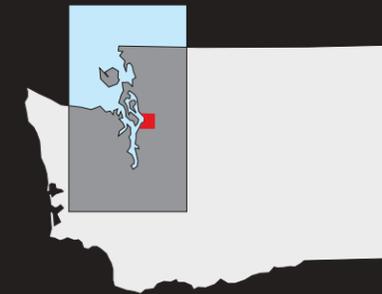
The “Blue Ring” strategy outlined here proposes to meet the changing needs of the Center City by linking water, existing parks, private plazas, and rights-of-way and by strategically adding new open spaces to create a more unified public realm and a wonderful walking experience. Since 1985, Washington citizens and government have been working hard to make our towns and cities comfortable and exciting while preserving our remaining rural lands and forests. During this process, it became apparent that twenty years from now the neighborhoods in Seattle’s Center City will accommodate, by far, the largest number of workers and residents in the region. The crucial next step toward achieving a sustainable and livable core for the Puget Sound region, the Blue Ring Strategy builds upon the past fifteen years of planning efforts by residents and governments.

A timely response to concerns about a variety of rural and urban issues, the state’s Growth Management Act required counties to establish growth boundaries, and required municipalities to develop Comprehensive Plans, that addressed land use, transportation, housing, utilities and capital facilities. In response, Seattle’s 1994 Comprehensive Plan established the Downtown Urban Center of five neighborhoods as well as the Uptown Urban Center and four other adjacent Urban Villages; it also laid the groundwork for thirty-four citizen committees to engage in Seattle’s Neighborhood Planning Program. The development of individual neighborhood plans combined with Seattle’s intense growth in the late 1990s forced the realization that a larger “Center City” extends beyond the old “downtown” core, and showed the need for a comprehensive approach to urban design. This resulted in the use of neighborhood plan implementation funds to help CityDesign develop an Urban Design Strategy for Downtown, and for the Planning and Design Commissions to sponsor the Center City Urban Design Forum in 2000. These activities, in addition to the Downtown Open Space Evaluation of 2001, began to build on and extend neighborhood plans and Seattle’s planning legacy. This history, and many recommendations for the future, will be found in the companion document to this booklet. Titled *The Blue Ring: Connecting Places, The Next Decade*, it contains a 10-year implementation strategy and background analysis, and is a necessary component of this publication for those wishing to fully understand and participate in the Blue Ring strategy for the city’s public realm.

Growth will occur whether we plan for it or not. Seattle’s Open Space Strategy for the Center City presents an opportunity to prepare for growth in the best possible way by establishing a public realm that can be used by all. The city’s core evolved as a place of commerce and industry, but currently lacks usable open space. The challenge will be to provide a quality, pedestrian-focused public realm and open space amenities within a thriving and dense urban center as visitors increase and more people come to live and work in Seattle’s Center City.

Center City Defined

Seattle is at the core of the Puget Sound region. Businesses and in-town residences keep increasing in both number and density, and are spreading out from the original downtown. What is now called the “Center City” stretches from Elliott Bay all the way up to Broadway and from Holgate Street to Lake Union’s south shore. It encompasses ten neighborhoods.



The Green Ring

Built, 1903–now

We submit the following report, embodying our suggestions for a comprehensive scheme of parks and parkways, a portion of which can be executed within the next few years and the remainder of which may be kept in mind, to be accomplished from time to time as circumstances permit.

Seattle possesses extraordinary landscape advantages in having a great abundance and variety of water views and views of wooded hills and distant mountains and snow-capped peaks. It also possesses original evergreen forests which covered the whole country, and which, aside from the grand scale of some of the tress composing them, having a very dense and beautiful undergrowth.

In designing a system of parks and parkways the primary aim should be to secure and preserve for the use of the people as much as possible of these advantages of water and mountain views and of woodlands, well distributed and conveniently located....

Financial limitations will make the complete carrying out of such an ideal impracticable, yet much can be done if public sentiment is aroused favorably, and if owner do not try to obtain every cent possible for the needed land, but are helpful and co-operative.

Preface from the report by the Olmsted Brothers to the Seattle Parks Commission on "A Comprehensive System of Parks and Parkway"

Adopted by the Seattle City Council in October 1903

Monday, October 19, 1903, was the birthdate of Seattle's "Green Ring" of wooded parks and parkways. Since year one, that vision has bloomed in the creation and connection of parks such as Green Lake, Woodland, Volunteer, Lincoln and Seward. The streets that were to link them became elegant parkways, including Lake Washington Boulevard, the Crown of the Hill Loop on Queen Anne, Ravenna Boulevard, and the Magnolia Bluffs Parkway. The citizens of Seattle cherish the fruits of having implemented the grand vision of 1903 during the past 10 decades.



Above: The lighter green shows the parks and parkways proposed by the Olmsted Brothers in 1903. The darker green shows additional parks and greenways that have also been built since 1960.

Left: The original Green Ring proposal shown on a map of the city when the Olmsteds wrote their plan.

The Blue Ring

Proposed, 2003–

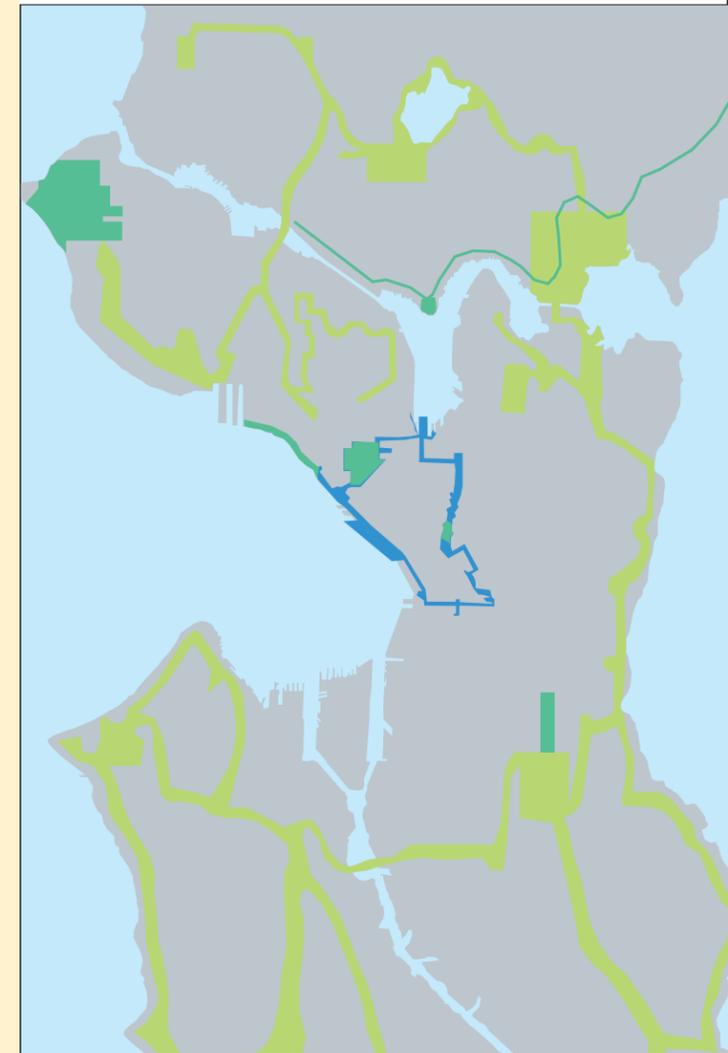
Without well-defined public open space, the Center City will become just another big city with little place for social gathering, recreation or enjoyment of an urban, or especially a Northwest, lifestyle. As growth continues in the Center City, we must be more strategic in providing the open-space amenities needed to make our neighborhoods livable.

Over the last 100 years, the long-range plan adopted by the City of Seattle in 1903 has guided the development of a treasured network of parks and parkways outside of the Center City. During that time, and thanks to the foresight of many civic leaders and community members, a number of significant public open spaces were also created nearer the core, including Freeway Park, Waterfront Park, Myrtle Edwards Park and Denny Park. New projects such as the Civic Center plazas and South Lake Union Park will add more open-space acreage.

Unlike elements in the Olmsted Brothers' Green Ring, however, at this time most open spaces in the Center City remain scattered and disconnected. The Blue Ring strategy will help build a new open space legacy by establishing concepts and implementation strategies for connecting the Center City's assets and amenities. Then the waterfront and urban parks, and some new open spaces, can form a legible and cohesive Blue Ring system much like Olmsted's Green Ring in the outer neighborhoods.

The Blue Ring: Connecting Places is based on years of work by Seattle citizens and government to create a more livable public realm in the center of the city. Its implementation will depend on businesses, developers, residents, planners, and government agencies working together over the next century on projects of various scales—some under way now, others proposed and others yet to be imagined.

The Blue Ring: Connecting Places strategy is an umbrella for open space plans and policies in the Center City; a living document that will be periodically evaluated and updated, as well as expanded as funding is made available. More than a line on the map, the Blue Ring is a comprehensive urban design framework for all downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. It will provide specific design directions to heal gaps and create opportunities for improving the Center City's physical design fabric.



Above
The Blue Ring shown as part of the greater system of Seattle's open spaces. In the last 50 years, Seattle Center, Discovery Park, and Magnusson Park were added to the original Green Ring; Gasworks Park and the Burke-Gilman Trail augmented public open space through conversion; and a lid over Interstate 5 for Freeway Park gave Seattle, and the nation, a radical new way improve the public realm.

The Blue Ring 100-year vision, coming a century after the Olmsted plan, would create a Blue Ring of urban open spaces and connections using water—the bodies of water that geographically define Seattle as well as the rain—as its organizing theme. The Blue Ring would be linked to the suburban Green Ring using streets revamped as City Corridors.

What if?

What if you were in Seattle in the year 2020 . . .

Imagine you lived in Center City, and it's a summer Saturday afternoon— What would you like to do, where in your neighborhood would you go? A sidewalk café across the street? A pick-up game on the next block, where the street is closed to traffic on weekend evenings, and tricycles and basketballs rule?

Imagine you work downtown, and it's Monday morning commute time— And you notice the drive on the revamped City Corridor streets is faster than it was last year, and you have extra time to plan your lunch hour with a friend, when you'll go strolling between the University Street Parklink and the Madison Esplanade, where you spend most of your summer lunches, eating or walking to do errands.

Imagine you and your family have just come to visit Seattle the first time—

Where do you go from your hotel: down the Waterfront Trail through Pioneer Square and the sports complexes before dinner off Jackson Street in the International District? Or up past the Olympic Sculpture Park, across the Bay to Lake Trail, through Seattle Center and over to Lake Union for some kayaking before an open-air dinner?

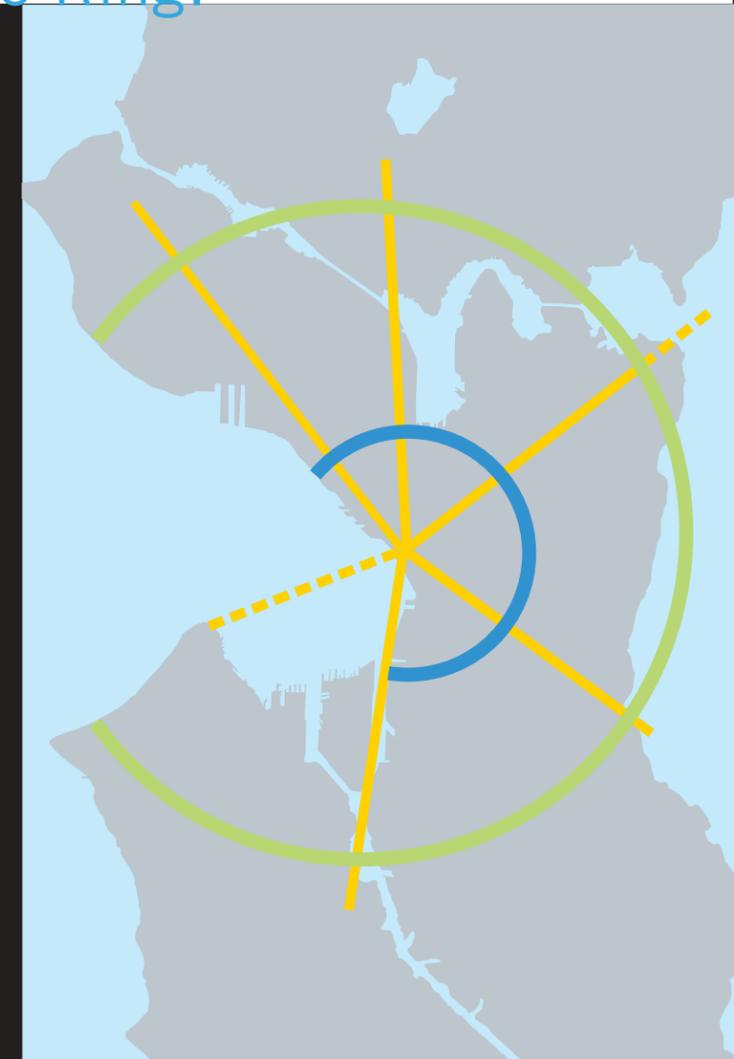
Imagine you and your two top executives are attending a meeting in the Convention Center—

And you're scouting out places to move your company. What if you find that a site you might want to redevelop is on the Blue Ring, and there's a bonus to link a pocket park to the Ring? And that your 45 employees would have plenty of choices to live within walking distance of work and vital services on The Ramble, or would be able to motor in easily on the fast-flowing regional connectors that the people here call Cityspokes.

Projections show that by the year 2020, nearly twice as many people will be living in the Center City and that it will be used or visited by almost half a million people a day. If we embrace imagination, build on the hard work of a lot of people and begin now to implement an overarching vision, this "more crowded" Seattle can be an even better place to be than it is now.

How Do We Make a Blue Ring?

Seattle's 100-Year Open Space Strategy for Center City neighborhoods supports a commitment to urban vitality, eclecticness, sustainability and equality in the urban center community as a reflection of the Seattle's civic identity.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Embrace imagination

Capitalize on the opportunities existing in the public realm

Create an awareness of the relationship between the natural and built environments

Highlight Seattle's defining attributes and natural features in the pedestrian experience

Create public spaces for *all*

Use a pedestrian-first approach to provide desirable outdoor spaces that are within short walking distances for all types of users

Use an integrated approach that incorporates art, science, and landscape in the urban place-making process

Make sustainability a prime value: use sustainable methods and materials to build for the seventh generation

Provide a framework to guide public and private investment opportunities

Develop strategies that implement neighborhood plan recommendations



New Paradigms for Urban Open Space

To achieve urban integration means thinking of urban open space not as an isolated unit – be it a street, park or a square – but as a vital part of the urban landscape with its own specific set of functions. Public space should be conceived of as an outdoor room within a neighbourhood, somewhere to relax and enjoy the urban experience, a venue for a range of different activities, from outdoor eating to street entertainment; from sport and play areas to a venue for civic or political functions; and most importantly of all as a place for walking or sitting-out.

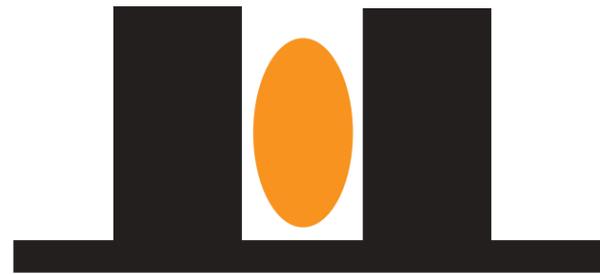
—Towards an Urban Renaissance
Final Report of the Urban Task Force, UK

Parks and plazas are not the only open space resources in the city. Although these provide important recreational and social amenities, we need to think about other ways to create a sense of openness in the Center City. There is great potential for open spaces in the streets and public rights of way, in the spaces between buildings, and in bodies of water. We can also be innovative in using just such places to accommodate a variety of uses at different times of the day and year.



Light and air as open space

The sunlight, wind and the sense of orientation that comes from the sky experienced in the space between buildings provides a continuous connection with nature.



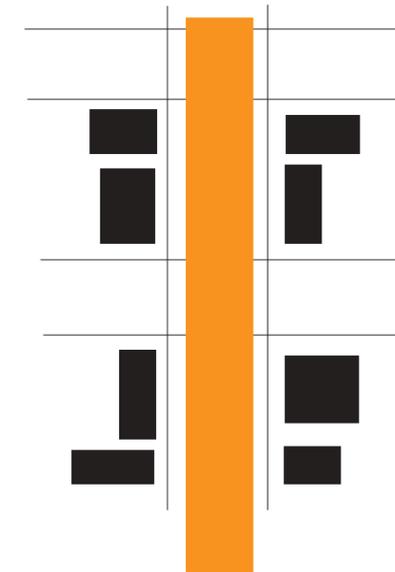
Water as open space

Seattle's character is derived largely from water, both the rainy climate and the large bodies of water that surround it. Panoramic water views and the ability to get out on the water are visual and recreational release valves for everyone in the city.



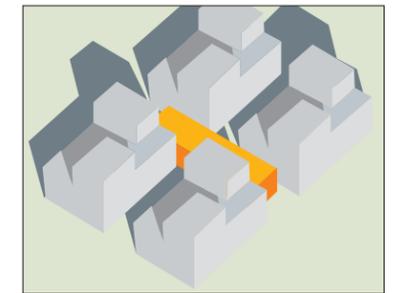
Streets as open space

In America's current urban revival, the value of the pedestrian environment is crucial. The City of Seattle controls about 40 percent of the land in the Center City, most of it in the form of street rights-of way, and can shape the way streets could be reorganized and rededicated. In response to changes in our culture, we can help create a society of pedestrians.

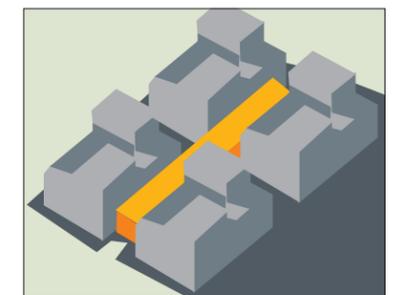


The fourth dimension of open space: time

One way to employ our public resources efficiently is to use the public realm for different purposes at different times of the day, not only for quickly passing festivals and parades but also for the cycle of daily life for the increasing number of Center City residents. A street that carries minimal traffic in the evening could be closed each day for basketball, hopscotch, tricycle riding and strolling. This value can be extended seasonally, as summer light lasts longer. Simple design elements could open up a variety of creative solutions for convertible, multi-functioning streets.



09:00



20:00

Defining the Blue Ring

The Blue Ring consists of public open spaces and civic destinations—places—of regional significance linked by selected public rights-of-way. These places are diverse in form and purpose; some already exist, while others are in the planning stages. The connecting public rights-of-way will be improved to serve as both amenable environments for pedestrians and cyclists and functional streets for vehicles. Large portions of the Blue Ring will help bridge the physical gaps between neighborhoods resulting from I-5 and the Alaskan Way Viaduct. Shoreline improvements to two parts of the Blue Ring, the Waterfront and South Lake Union Park, will provide people with direct access to water. The most challenging improvements will be physical changes to the Waterfront and a lid over I-5.

The Blue Ring may be defined in a number of different ways. It may include a series of features that celebrate water in playful and artful ways. It may include a wayfinding system to provide joggers and cyclists a recreational path encircling Center City. Or it may include special lighting and wide promenades to encourage strolling, vendors and gardens along its path. More than a line on the map, the Blue Ring framework will be developed to provide specific design directions to improve physical design of Seattle's urban center.

The Blue Ring

Connects Center City neighborhoods

Links major civic amenities

Coordinates open space investments

Bridges gaps in the urban fabric

Utilizes water as a placemaker

Illuminates the urban watersheds

Captures important public views

Defining the Blue Ring

Important Public Places on the Blue Ring

EXISTING

Myrtle Edwards Park
Seattle Center
Convention Center
Pike Place Market
Freeway Park
King Street Station

PLANNED

South Lake Union Park
Bay to Lake Trail
Terry Avenue
Olympic Sculpture Park
Waterfront
Yesler Community Center

FUTURE

Harrison Green Street
I-5 Lid
First Hill Connector
Jackson Street



Blue Ring Elements

The Blue Ring is not only a path, but an organizing principle. It is a way of conceiving, designing and creating Center City open spaces that build on each other, and on one of the City's most profound assets—its water. The Blue Ring will not be one continuous place but rather the aggregation of varied and interconnected places and spaces that will add up to the equivalent of a much larger open space. The Blue Ring will be unique to Seattle, our Central Park, our Rambla, our Golden Gate.

Unlike a single contiguous park project, the Blue Ring cannot be built all at once. Its implementation will take time and serious coordination. But neither is it far off in some imaginary future: a number of elements are in place, others are underway or being planned and some are already partially funded. The projects named here are just examples, and they exemplify the value of the Ring as an organizing principle. The Blue Ring strategy is intended to serve as a means to coordinate projects conceived long ago with others yet to come. It will connect these projects to the city fabric, and make the whole far greater than sum of the parts.



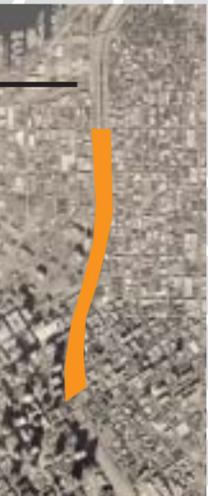
Seattle Center



Westlake Avenue



South Lake Union Park



I-5 Urban Corridor



South Jackson Street

Watersheds are an important part of any ecology, even an urban one. The Puget Sound Watershed is within the Georgia Basin that empties into the Pacific Ocean, as does everything west of the Continental Divide; it encompasses three watersheds in Seattle's Center City. Indicated on the bottom map by the lines over the street grid, these flow to Lake Union, Middle Puget Sound and Lake Washington.

Watersheds are one of many types of systems that the Blue Ring can provide a framework for exploring. Awareness of the urban environment as an integral part of the Puget Sound Watershed is one facet of a comprehensive perspective that would include economic, social and cultural aspects as well as ecological ones. The Blue Ring is a touchstone for this kind of a connected, comprehensive view.



What if?

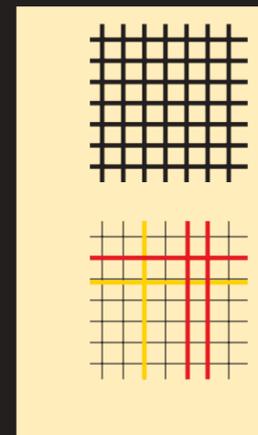
What if you were in Seattle in the year 2020 and . . .

You could stroll Seattle's front porch, the waterfront along the rebuilt Alaskan Way, stop to see the porpoises at the Aquarium, play with your children at the new Pier 62 Park, and then show them a participatory piece at Olympic Sculpture Park, all without getting in your car.

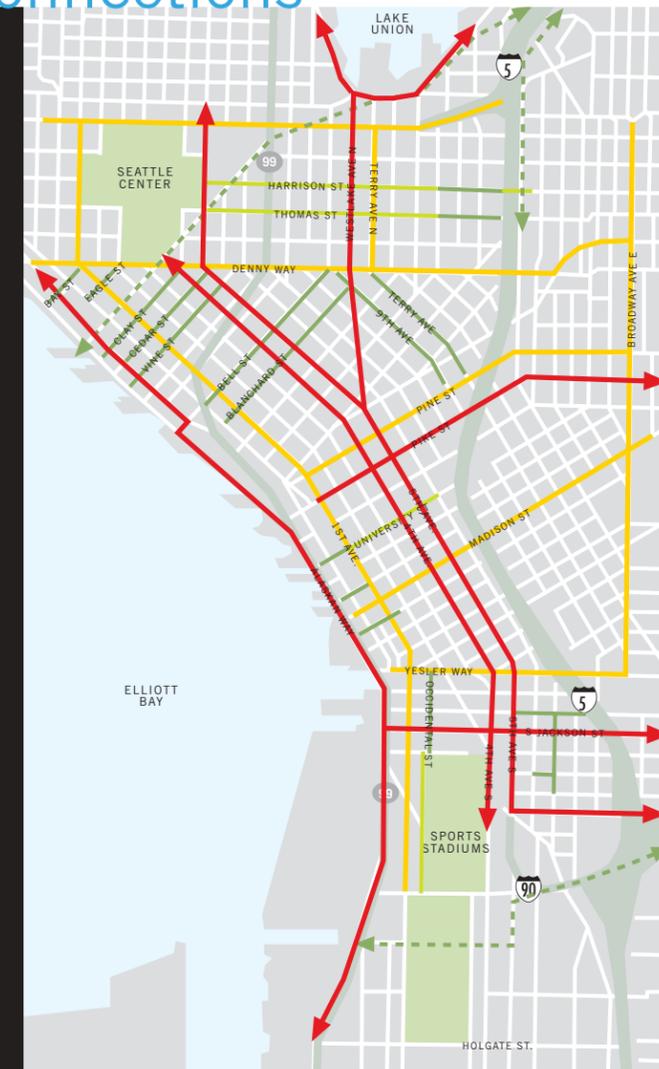
You arrived on the train and exited the King Street Station onto a wonderful civic plaza with a view of the whole city in front of you, hopped a trolley on Jackson Street to a waterfront park, and then decided to stroll up the Jackson Street Walkway to the heart of the Chinatown/International District for a great dinner.

You lived in "home zone" in the Denny Triangle, and could step out your door to Westlake Promenade, grab a coffee, see water from yesterday's rain splashing down to a pool surrounded by trees and butterflies, and before you knew it, were at the tip of Lake Union, in a spectacular new park.

Defining a Hierarchy of Connections



To evolve from freight streets to great streets, we must re-evaluate the use of streets that support the urban core as well as their grid priorities. The Connections Plan identifies a hierarchy of streets with three new types. Each one will have consistent physical characteristics along its entirety and embody particular responses to the adjacent land use, users, scale and neighborhood. In this way streets can become landmarks within the city and reflect the diversity, creativity and character of each neighborhood.



Streets are more than public utilities, more than the equivalent of water lines and sewers and elective cables... more than linear physical spaces that permit people and goods to get from here to there.... The people of cities understand the symbolic, ceremonial, social and political roles of streets, not just those of movement and access.

Allan B. Jacobs

- City Corridors
- Center City Connectors
- Green Streets

City Corridors

Selected streets of regional significance, City Corridors are existing surface streets well known and used by residents, workers and visitors. Major open spaces and civic features are located along or near City Corridors. With phased improvements and connections to streets beyond the Center City, they will eventually span the city and join Elliott Bay to the lakes, the inner urban Blue Ring to the pastoral Olmsted Green Ring, and the Center City with the surrounding urban residential neighborhoods. City Corridors are typically primary arterials with two to four lanes of traffic and parallel parking on one or both sides; most are two-way. Sidewalk widths vary. Adjacent land use is predominantly mixed-use commercial.

Design elements include:

- Increased street-level storefronts facing sidewalks for café/restaurant, retail, sales, service and office uses
- Where possible, sidewalks 20 to 25 feet wide on the east or north (sunny) side of the street to make a “park zone” or active pedestrian space
- Consistent light standards, paving materials and sidewalk furnishings to create a unified civic amenity
- Large street trees
- Pedestrian-scale street lighting
- Increased sidewalk vendor activity in park zones to enhance walking experience

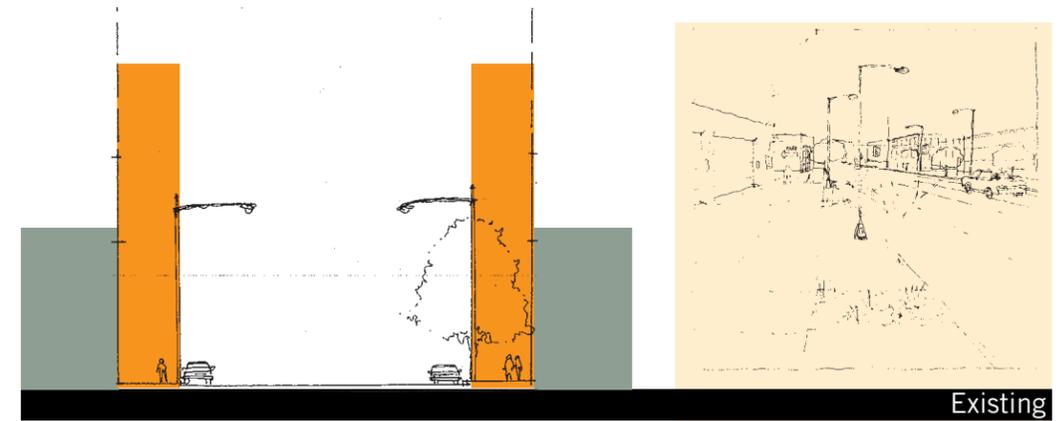


PROPOSED CITY CORRIDORS

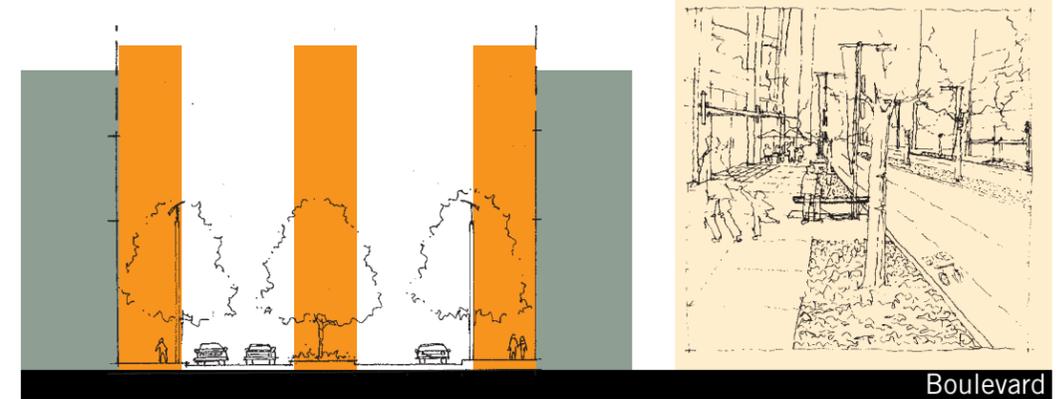
Westlake Avenue
 Alaskan Way (Waterfront)
 Pike Street
 Fourth/Fifth Avenue couplet
 Jackson Street
 Dearborn Street



Fifth Avenue at Rainier Square



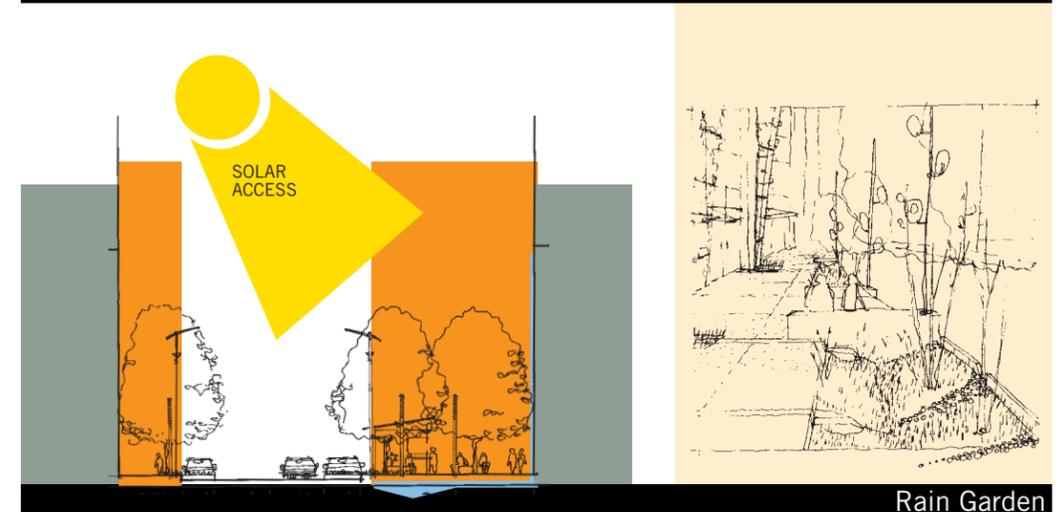
Existing



Boulevard



Park Zone



Rain Garden

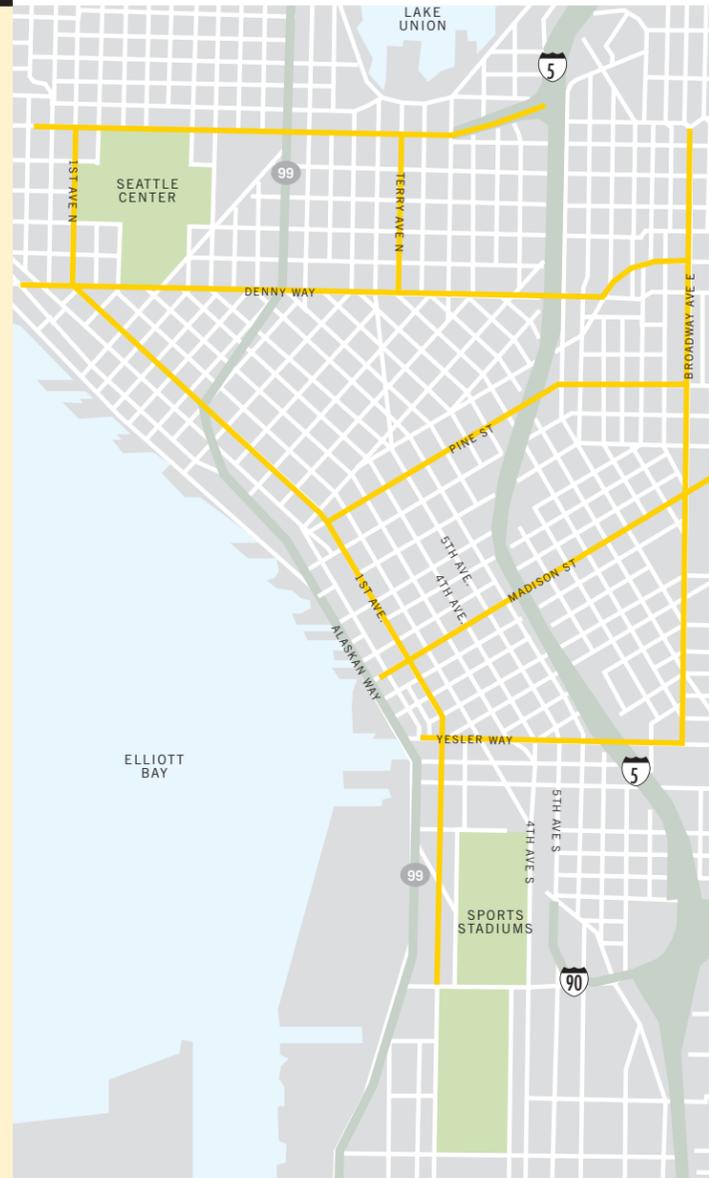
P O S S I B L E A L T E R N A T I V E S

Center City Connectors

Center City Connectors have the visual and physical potential to become “main streets” connecting Center City neighborhoods to each other and connecting City Corridors. They may also become “outdoor living rooms” with a variety of sidewalk activities—cafés, storefront retail, vendors and performers. With improvements and programming, these streets may also become gathering spaces for parades, street fairs and other seasonal or periodic events. Center City Connectors are typically primary or minor arterials, with two lanes of traffic and parallel parking on one or both sides. Most are two-way or part of a one-way couplet. Sidewalk widths vary.

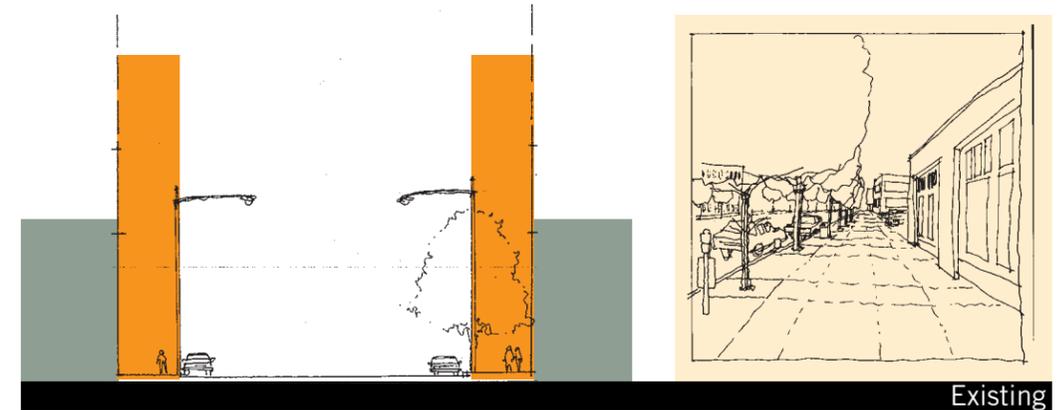
Design elements may include:

- Flexible design and programming (Fourth Avenue is the city’s parade route, and could be improved to better accommodate this civic activity. Denny Way is auto-oriented and could become an identifiable gateway through the use of neon, billboards and high-tech visuals.)
- Widened sidewalks where possible
- Consistent design vocabulary, but with varying details based on neighborhood character and adjacent land use
- Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Medium to large street trees
- Increased vendor, café and other retail activity along sidewalks to enhance walking experience

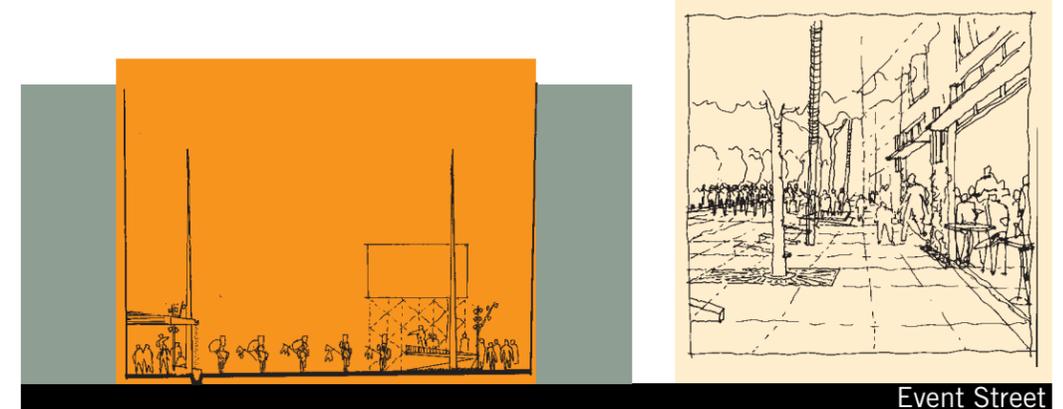


PROPOSED CENTER CITY CONNECTORS

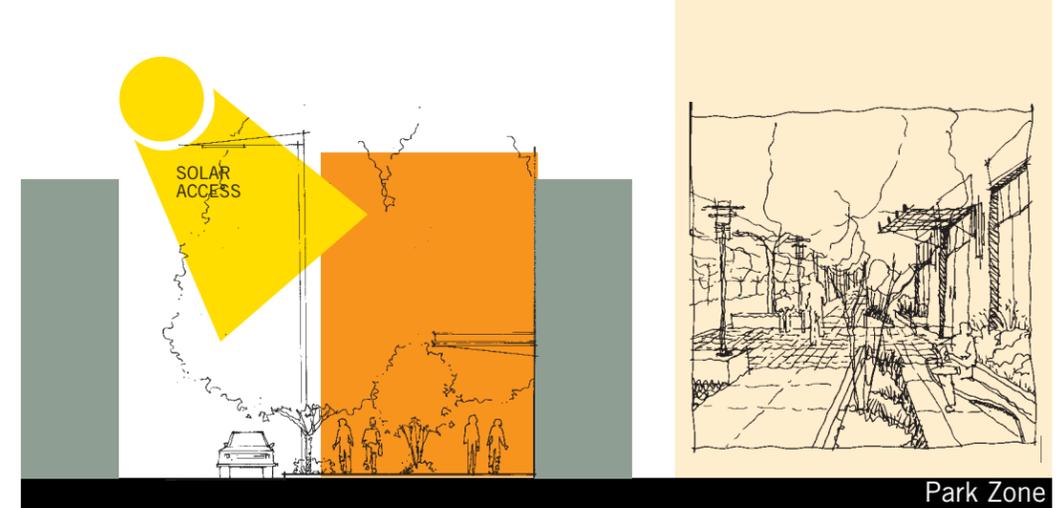
- Denny Way
- Terry Avenue
- First Avenue
- Pine Street
- Madison Street
- Broadway
- Fourth Avenue
- Yesler Way
- Mercer Street



Existing



Event Street



Park Zone



Park Zone: Residential

P O S S I B L E A L T E R N A T I V E S

Green Streets

Green Streets are designated rights-of-way in the Center City where the street is designed to provide open space and enhanced pedestrian circulation. Within a neighborhood they can help expand public open space and improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation. Traffic circulation and parking are secondary functions, and in some cases absent on Green Streets. These streets have the potential for flexible recreational uses at certain times of the day, week, or season, which would be facilitated by design of curbsless rights-of-way or the creation of “home zones” in the surrounding neighborhood.

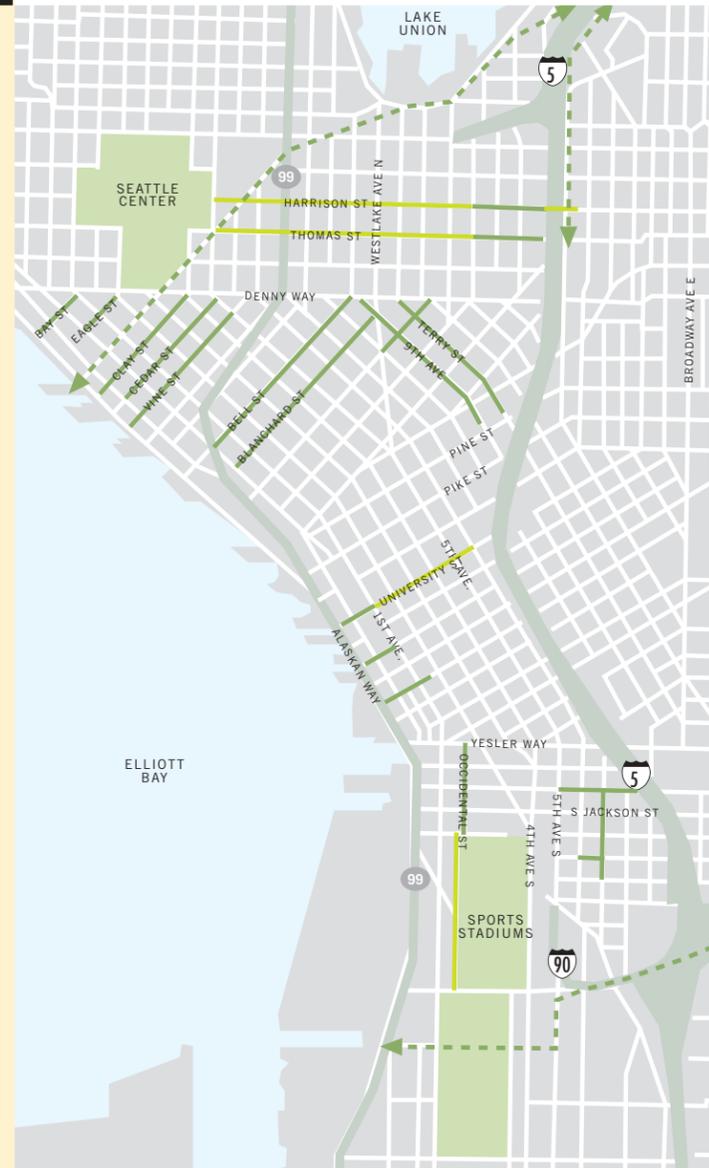
Design elements may include:

- Large open space areas
- Wide sidewalks and pathways for pedestrian and bicycle mobility
- Street furniture (e.g., benches and tables), distinctive pedestrian-oriented lighting and signage, special pavement, public art
- Landscaping elements such as trees, shrubs, planters, groundcover and water features
- Traffic-calming measures (e.g., narrow travel lanes, speed bumps, midblock crossings); in some cases, general traffic is prohibited
- Limited or no on-street parking

Many Green Streets have been designated by the City Council, and improvements have been made to several blocks of Green Streets according to approved plans and guidelines in the Director's Rule.

Several urban trails will run through various parts of Center City.

- Lake to Bay Trail
- Mountains to Sound Trail
- Possible I-5 Trail



PROPOSED/DESIGNATED GREEN STREETS

- Harrison Street, Thomas Street (South Lake Union)
- Terry Avenue, Ninth Avenue, Lenora Street (Denny Triangle)
- Eagle Street, Clay Street, Cedar Street, Vine Street, Blanchard Street (Belltown)
- University Street, Spring Street, Marion Street (Commercial Core)
- Occidental Avenue (Pioneer Square/South Downtown)
- Main Street, Maynard Street, Weller Street (Chinatown/ International District)



Terry Green Street proposal, Nakano Associates



Harbor Steps



Spring Street



Cedar Street

Catalyst Projects

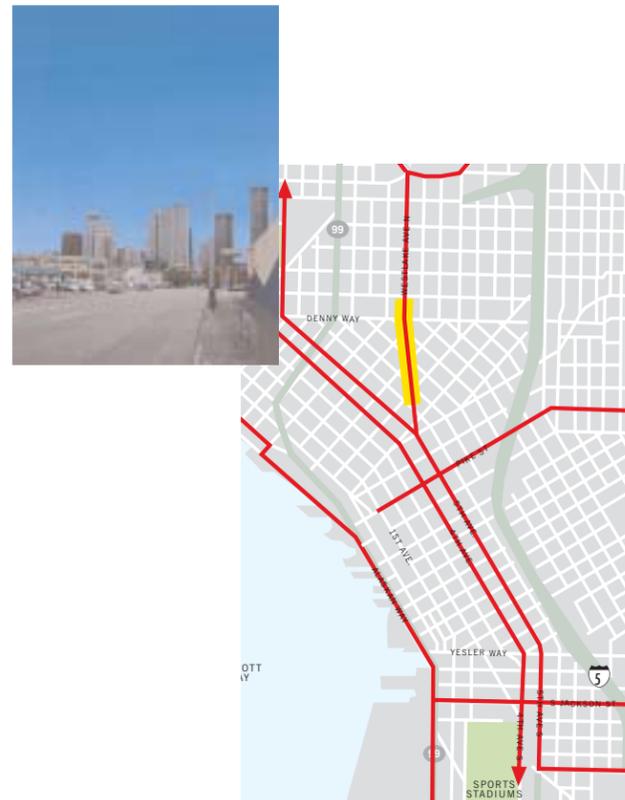
The Blue Ring open space system is already taking shape. Design and planning for South Lake Union Park, Westlake Avenue and the Occidental Corridor have been initiated with City of Seattle funding. These projects are referred to here as catalyst projects since they will help define the character of the Blue Ring and are a significant first step in realizing the 100-year vision. South Lake Union Park is part of the Blue Ring itself, Westlake Avenue is part of a City Corridor and Occidental Way is a Green Street. Each of the catalyst projects could be built within the 10-year implementation timeframe proposed in The Blue Ring strategy provided that funding is available. Coordination among City departments and other stakeholders is essential for completing each of the catalyst projects described in the following pages.

Westlake Avenue

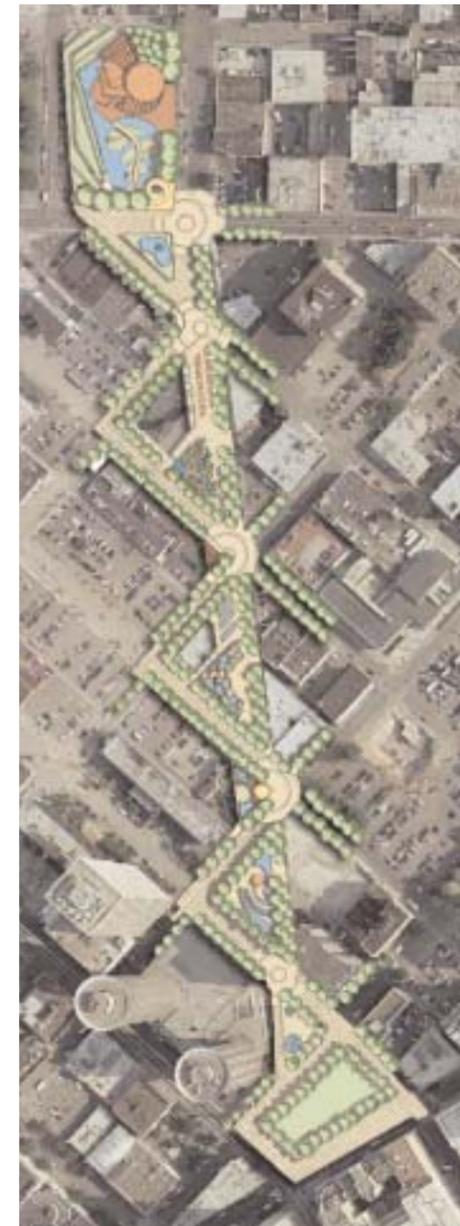
Because Westlake Avenue slices across Seattle's street grid and connects Lake Union directly with the downtown, its potential as a civic amenity has captured the public's imagination for many years. The 1999 Denny Triangle Neighborhood Plan and neighborhood plan implementation funds contributed to two preliminary design proposals as part of the overall Blue Ring Strategy.

One of the City Connectors identified in the Blue Ring Strategy, Westlake Avenue would become the primary retail street as well as an urban garden for the Denny Triangle neighborhood. The designs would help Westlake become a destination in and of itself as well as a street for circulation. Improvement of Westlake Avenue will help achieve:

- Multiple Use of the Right-of-way
- Improved Pedestrian Environment
- Improved Pedestrian Connections to South Lake Union
- Improved Connections to Downtown
- Improved Retail Environment
- Opportunities for Public Art



Westlake Avenue



South Lake Union Park

South Lake Union Park will encompass approximately 12 acres at the south end of Lake Union, with possible expansions to the east and west. The existing Northwest Seaport and Center for Wooden Boats will be enlarged and reconfigured in a Maritime Heritage Center, and changing uses of the former Naval Reserve Armory and adjacent spaces may include moorage for large historic vessels and a Native American Canoe Center.

The area west of the Terry Avenue right-of-way will be designed for use as a recreational public park. The area east of Terry will be used primarily for Maritime Heritage Center facilities and activities. Public access corridors will be designated along the entire lake frontage of the park. Several internal public access and view corridors will also be maintained within the Maritime Heritage Center east of the Terry Avenue alignment.



Conceptual master plan, Hewitt Architects



Project Budget and Proposed Schedule

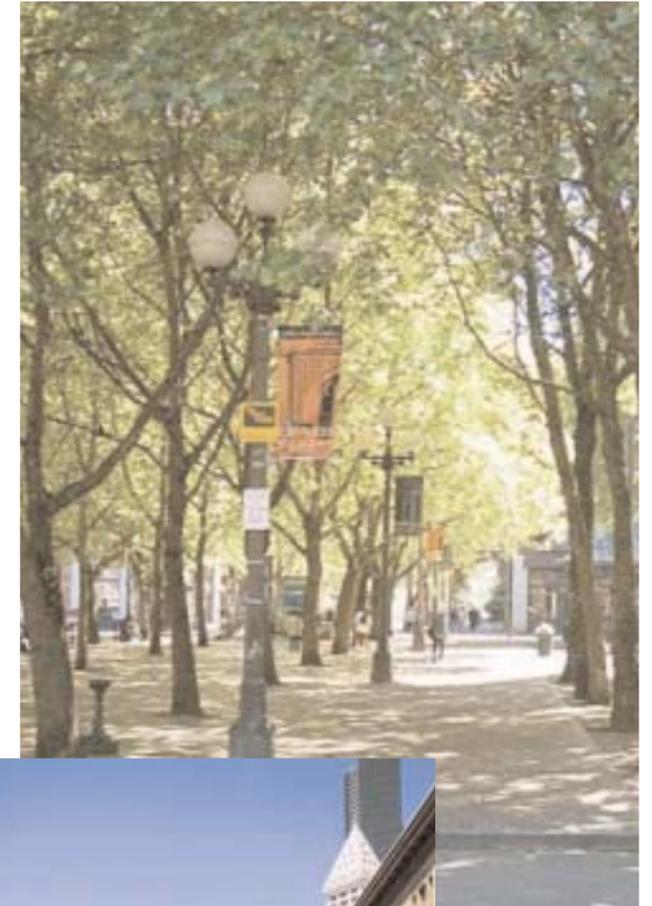
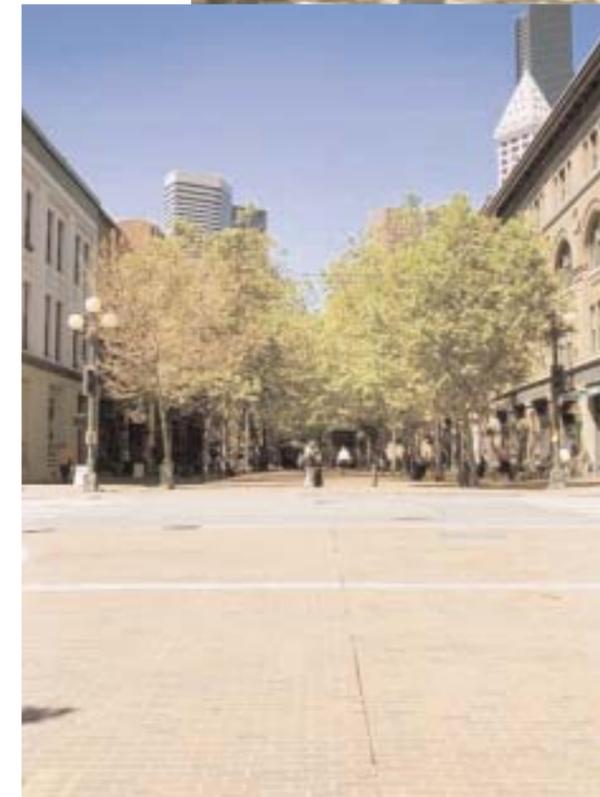
The overall budget for the completed park will fall within the range of \$28M and \$45M. The Pro Parks Levy will provide \$5M in start-up funds between the years of 2001 and 2008. Full development of the park will occur incrementally, as funding allows.

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Schematic Design | May 2002 to May 2003 |
| Design Development | June 2003 to September 2003 |
| Construction Documents | September 2003 to March 2004 |
| Construction Bidding | March 2004 to June 2004 |
| Construction | Beginning June 2004 |

Occidental Corridor

The Occidental Corridor is Pioneer Square's only Green Street. In its neighborhood plan in 1998, the Pioneer Square neighborhood recommended that the Occidental Corridor be extended south of King Street to Royal Brougham by creating a public plaza and a southern terminus at the entry to the baseball field. Improvements below King Street will create a central pedestrian connection between Safeco Field, Seahawk Stadium and the Pioneer Square neighborhood.

In 2002, a design consultant was commissioned to make a site inventory; recommendations for physical improvements, maintenance and site programming; and an implementation plan for the Occidental Corridor.



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Seattle City Council

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Jim Compton
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Jan Drago
Nick Licata
Richard McIver
Judy Nicastro
Margaret Pageler
Heidi Wills

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Downtown Urban Center Planning Group (1995-1999),
Catherine Stanford, Chair
Denny Triangle Neighborhood Association, Scott Species,
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Department of Neighborhoods, Yvonne Sanchez, Director

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Department of Neighborhoods, Yvonne Sanchez, Director
Seattle Arts Commission, Kristine Castleman, Acting
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Seattle Center, Virginia Anderson, Director
Seattle City Light, Gary Zarker, Director
Seattle Design Commission, Don Royse, Chair,
Seattle Parks and Recreation, Ken Bounds,
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Seattle Planning Commission, Chuck Weinstock, Chair
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Lish Whitson, Department of Design, Construction and
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Center City Neighborhoods

Belltown
Capitol Hill
Chinatown/International District
Commercial Core
Denny Triangle
First Hill
Pike/Pine
Pioneer Square
South Lake Union
Uptown

Booklet Production

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Joseph N. Newland, Q.E.D.

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Robert Scully, Urban Designer, Project Manager
Lyle Bicknell, Urban Designer

Growth will occur whether we plan for it or not. Seattle's Open Space Strategy for the Center City presents an opportunity to prepare for growth in the best possible way by establishing a public realm that can be used by all. The city's core has evolved as a place of commerce and industry, but currently lacks usable open space. The challenge will be to provide a quality, pedestrian-focused public realm and open space amenities within a thriving and dense urban center as more people come to live, visit and work in Seattle's Center City.

