



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**August 16, 2007**

**Seattle  
Design  
Commission**

**Greg Nickels**  
*Mayor*

**Karen Kiest**  
*Chair*

**Tasha Atchison**

**Pam Beyette**

**Evan Bourquard**

**Brendan Connolly**

**John Hoffman**

**Mary Johnston**

**Dennis Ryan**

**Darrell Vange**

**Guillermo Romano**  
*Executive Director*

**Layne Cubell**  
*Senior Staff*

Projects Reviewed

DPD Planning Department Update  
CityDesign Report- Part 2  
Arboretum – Japanese Garden Entry Improvements  
Commission Business  
SR 520 Improvements and HOV Corridor Project  
Sound Transit Link Light Rail/University Link

Commissioners Present

Karen Kiest, Chair  
Tasha Atchison  
Evan Bourquard  
Brendan Connolly  
Mary Johnston  
John Hoffman  
Dennis Ryan  
Darrell Vange

Convened: 8:30am  
Adjourned: 5:00pm

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano  
Layne Cubell  
Vivian Chang



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**16 August 2007 Project:** **DPD Planning Department Update**  
**Phase:** **Bi-Monthly Update**  
**Last Reviews:** 21 June 2007, 17 May 2007, 15 February 2007  
**Presenters:** John Rahaim, Department of Planning and Development  
Scott Dvorak, Department of Planning and Development  
Steve Moddemeyer, Department of Planning and Development  
**Attendees:** Mike Fong, Council Central Staff  
Bob Corwin, APA/Guest

Time: 1.0 hours

(SDC Ref. #220)

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**Action:**

**The Commission thanks the Planning Department for a thorough and thoughtful set of presentations with the following comments:**

- **Encourage DPD staff to further investigate the potential for on-site stormwater treatment of Seattle Center and nearby surface streets.**
- **Support the case study approach and coordinated, long term vision behind the sustainable infrastructure initiative.**
- **Suggest that the Urban Forest Management plan be addressed by geographic sectors or topography.**
- **Encourage developers to preserve trees by providing incentives.**
- **Encourage the team to examine the financial value of existing trees on development sites and provide that information to the public.**
- **Recommend that the team look at trade-offs between trees and on site development objectives.**
- **Investigate efforts to support the healthy establishment of street trees since the biggest challenge is to get them growing.**

**Proponent's Presentation**

*Neighborhood Planning Overview*

Neighborhood planning may become a permanent function for DPD. DPD's scope of work includes defining a list of elements that all neighborhood plans should have with optional elements, such as public safety. Neighborhood planning is proposed to be done by six geographic sectors, with seven or eight urban villages within each sector. DPD plans to work on one sector per year over the next seven to eight years, with the first six months spent on making a citywide report to capture baseline data, and to train city staff and neighborhood participants. Some of the neighborhood plans made in the past were not comprehensive enough, or focused on singular topics. Around 25 percent to 30 percent of the recommendations were very ill defined and therefore require more planning. The Department of Neighborhood documents all projects in a matrix. Around 80 percent of projects were implemented. A budget proposal has been submitted to the mayor, which includes new staff support.

*"Sustainable Infrastructure" Overview*

"To move towards true sustainability will require decades of incremental change. Early adopters are ready. Cities need to respond." The idea behind sustainable infrastructure is to manage all public urban lands as an integrated urban ecosystem that provides mobility, open space, recreation, habitat, and aesthetic beauty, maximize service delivery with thoughtful mix of decentralized and centralized systems, seek passive energy and thermal systems that cool, soften and invigorate urban forms, create partnerships between public/private agencies charged with management of water/energy resources and across jurisdictions, and shrink one's ecological footprint. There is currently no sustainable infrastructure plan because city departments are very fragmented in their approach to capital projects. Seattle owns 27 square

miles of land. Currently, the city spends \$650 million each year allocated to its CIP to maintain and improve its infrastructure, and the city tends to spend that money with a “silo” perspective because of tradition and funding restrictions. Under a sustainable alternatives and asset management approach, the city needs to ask itself is it is missing opportunities for sustainable investments because it does not look broadly enough at alternatives. Also, is it possible for the city to apply asset management tools to sustainable projects to get more value per dollar spent? There are six projects that have been chosen for evaluation, including: 1) stormwater swap (Seattle Center), 2) energy conservation with a focus on shore to ships (South Waterfront), 3) underground void stormwater collections (Pioneer Square), 4) stormwater treatment facilities at parks (Northgate), 5) mobility strategies (Linden Avenue), and 6) re-purposing water supply reservoirs. Currently, DPD staff in collaboration with SPU and CityLight is doing an analysis of these six projects, and will provide recommendations for capital improvements. A preliminary report is due out in November 2007 and a final action plan in February 2008.

For example, Seattle Center’s rainwater goes straight into pipes for stormwater treatment, whereas I-5 stormwater runoff flows directly into Lake Union, so a water swap seems like a good idea. Seattle Center buys \$400,000 of water annually from SPU, and 80% of that water is used to flush toilets but new alternatives are being studied to retain stormwater on site for reuse that would save money. Also, in South Lake Union if a swale was built in this area, water could be treated from Capitol Hill. SPU currently spends \$50,000 per acre for stormwater treatment but that does little to improve environmental factors for Capitol Hill and I-5 run-off. Another example is the use of underground areaways, which can capture runoff from buildings to reuse water and could be an element of a CSO strategy, although there are structural issues with ability of areaways to support weight of stored water. Also, stormwater in new parks can be utilized as another strategy for water conservation, such as the Northgate Park-N-Ride parking lot, which has adjacent stormwater pipes nearby. This parking lot will become a new park, as suggested by the community.



Non-storm flow schematic for Seattle Center and Capitol Hill

Another example is the use of underground areaways, which can capture runoff from buildings to reuse water and could be an element of a CSO strategy, although there are structural issues with ability of areaways to support weight of stored water. Also, stormwater in new parks can be utilized as another strategy for water conservation, such as the Northgate Park-N-Ride parking lot, which has adjacent stormwater pipes nearby. This parking lot will become a new park, as suggested by the community.

### *Urban Forest Management Plan Overview*

The Urban Forest is defined as every private and public tree in the city. The Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE) was established in 2000 with a small staff and is working with DPD and nine other departments on drafting an Urban Forest Management Plan. The key impetus has been the realization that the city’s tree canopy has decreased significantly from 40% in 1970 to 18% in 2007. The goal is to restore tree canopies to 30% over next 30 years, which translates to roughly 650,000 trees. A key strategy is to identify canopy goals for all land use types (private and public such as residential units, industrial, parks, etc.). All departments are reviewing their tree inventories. DPD reviews and enforces tree regulations for private development in residential and commercial zones, single-family units make up 65% of this area. DPD has convened the “Emerald City Task Force” which consists of ten citizens that represent arborists, landscape architects, developers, etc. and provides focused critique of land use requirements and offers ideas to improve tree regulations to reach the targeted goal. There will be five meetings, the last one being in September. The set of recommendations to staff will likely have different aspects. DPD will put

together new tree regulations this fall, partly based on the taskforce's recommendations. The final proposal will be completed by the end of the year, with legislation targeted for early 2008. OSE also plans to organize a new body made up of citizens to advise city officials more generally on the Urban Forest Management Plan.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Questions**

- In regards to neighborhood planning, which neighborhood is most deficient?
  - There are some neighborhoods that are above or below growth or ones that have not participated much.
- The process to form neighborhood plans in the past have been very laborious and extended. How will this plan fit the targeted one-year window?
  - DPD has spent a lot of time thinking about how to fit the process into one year. This is just an update; we are not making new plans. We will focus the whole year on just two or three items that the neighborhood wants to change. Also, key interests and new residents may change direction from original goals of neighborhood.
- For better or worse, neighborhood planning is the best feature of the Seattle process, so it is important that it be highlighted as such.
- Regarding sustainable infrastructure, about 27 percent of the public land is roadbed, so there is an issue with oils and having the technology to treat the surfaces.
  - Yes, there is currently technology to treat surface oils, but this requires more funding.
- Regarding the Urban Forest Management Plan, are there areas that may have greater success?
  - The challenge is not being able to regulate developed parcels that do not have development regulations. These areas can only be preserved. The department can regulate new development construction more successfully than trees. One idea is to focus on topographical criteria such as an ACEC since people have criticized that and ensure the public sees a measurable quantity and better quality.
- It is easy to plant trees, but maintaining them is the issue. Are there ways to trade-off utility for trees compared to green roofs in the new Green Factor?
  - Yes, those statistics are being worked on.
- The tree program is vulnerable and needs proscriptive approach to address impacts and incentives. There needs to be a champion on City Council to make this sustainable program truly sustainable.
- Task Force makes good sense. Are Emerald City Taskforce meetings open to the public?
  - Yes, they are. Also, see the website: [www.seattle.gov/ose/trees](http://www.seattle.gov/ose/trees) for the full Urban Forest Management Plan.
- There is a financial value of trees, so a financial incentive for preservation of existing trees should be part of DPD's new regulations; High Point did a great job with the idea of putting price tags on trees.
- Looking at regulations seems to pale in comparison in light of benefits that trees provide.

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**16 August 2007 Project:** **CityDesign Report - Part 2**  
**Phase:** *Design Update*  
**Previous Reviews:** August 2, 2007  
**Presenters:** Guillermo Romano, Department of Planning and Development  
Lyle Bicknell, Department of Planning and Development  
**Attendees:** Bob Corwin, APA/Guest

Time: 1.0 hour

(SDC Ref. ##220)

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**Action:**

**The Commission thanks CityDesign staff for their return with another thoughtful briefing on recent work and offers the following comments:**

- **The Commission recognizes that one of the important aspects of total street design is to provide a comprehensive look and feel**
- **Look forward to seeing Bell Street design again in more detail if funding is approved**
- **Appreciate that Taylor Avenue design has basis in the Blue Ring Strategy**
- **Ninth and Westlake design was more episodic which is of concern**
- **Appreciate hearing about Lander Square design which will provide improved pedestrian connections near Beacon Hill station**
- **The Commission commends the interaction between CityDesign staff and a variety of city agencies and the sea change in getting departments to work together.**
- **The Commission is impressed by impact of the small group at CityDesign and understands that development permits help fund CityDesign's work.**
- **The largest concern is the role of oversight in the right of way and clarifying what kinds of projects should be reviewed by the Commission.**
- **The Commission understands the concern for overlapping process and the balancing act between review and potential for actualization**
- **Recognize that Green Street projects are not CIP projects and thus subject to design review by Neighborhood Design Review Board, but not necessarily review by the Design Commission.**
- **Recommend revisiting thresholds and if there is an appearance in the loss of public use, then the project should be presented in front of the Commission**

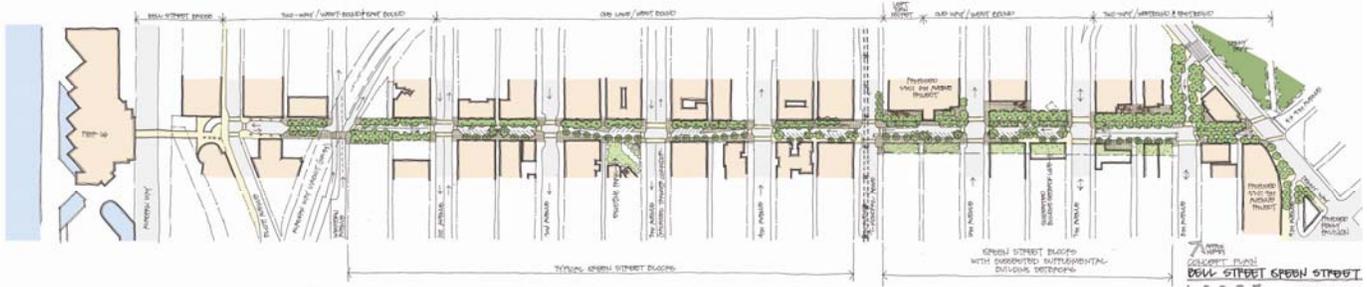
**Proponent's Presentation**

*CityDesign Report*

CityDesign staff provides development facilitation, help with streetscape design and guidance on CIP open space projects. Projects include Bell Street Green Street design which may become a formal CIP in its own right in 2009 and South Lander Street open space which provides a neighborhood connection to the Beacon Hill light rail station. Eighteen streets were identified in 1985 in Center City where there was sufficient extra capacity to make ROWs greener but interests were not placed in those areas.

Neighborhood green streets also have been designated, but these do not have the same incentives as those downtown. Some green streets include Bell Street (connecting Elliot Bay to Denny Park), 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Stewart (which bisects Denny Triangle), and 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Denny Way (a narrowed street from 5 lanes to one lane). CityDesign tries to make street architecture seem public and not as private entries to building. A new key hub is around 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Westlake, where a new open space is being developed along with a new streetcar stop across from Whole Foods and near Denny Park. Green streets need elements of contrast to make them work for pedestrians. Bell Street needs more detail, but has already been roughly planned out as a complete street design. Belltown has no quality open space, it has many amenities but they are all located on the periphery. Pedestrian connectivity is important. Traffic control decreases from

Denny to the water. The Bell Street preliminary drawings show more diagonal parking, a wider and more generous pedestrian realm, and more trees on the west. On Taylor Avenue, there was very little traffic with lots of wasted space from diagonal parking. There is now a 35-foot corridor for pedestrians. This project won the 2005 ASLA Merit Award for connectivity, sustainability, and green streets. In terms of new open space, Lander Street (Beacon Hill Light Rail Station) experienced a change after



Bell Street Green Street Design

King County Public Health partnered with DPD to promote walkability, which is defined by active living by design, and compact, complete, and connected community access to destinations/public features. When Lander Street was closed for light rail construction, the community asked to close it permanently for open space. The solution was to occasionally close the street for street fairs, a farmers market, and other public events. Lander Street was reduced in width on the west side and the level of the street was raised to have more of an open space.

**Key Commissioner Questions and Comments**

- Bell Street project has an amazing scope, and is imaginative with such potential.
  - SDOT is very important as a partner and they need to hear that they are doing a great job.
- There is a caution and concern about right of way projects like Beacon Hill and Westlake. What is the right use between two public places? In the case of Westlake, two private investments are getting huge benefits from public improvements. The Commission is charged with review of alley and street vacations and matters of the right of way. It seems that this project has been seen by everyone else, but the Commission. The Commission is often seen to have approved these projects, such as the Bell Street and Lander Square plans, when that has not been the case. Oversight is key.
  - The 9<sup>th</sup> and Terry Avenue Street Plan was brought six years ago before the Commission. Other challenges include the fact that these projects often are done voluntarily and are very tentative. When a project is to be brought before the Commission, the department fears it may lose many developers. CityDesign risks getting information taken the wrong way by developers which is tricky since most projects ask for participation, so there is a balancing act between reviews versus more direct facilitation for improvement of the public realm.
- The bottom line is who provides design oversight?
- Green Street program is not a CIP project at this point, but rather driven by private development, consequently Design Review Boards see these incremental projects rather than the Design Commission
- With some of these projects, there is a question of whether ROW is being publicized versus privatized, and the Commission represents public voice. If there is an appearance of conflict or being overly generous to developers with an evident loss of public use, then the Commission should review that project.
- Design Commission has clear responsibility to review ROW projects.
- CityDesign should bring a staff briefing memo on what all other departments have done for project to assist with the Commission’s design review.

- CityDesign should build other capacity by giving credit to other departments. Steve Moddemeyer's research on sustainable infrastructure offers a good example to bring design into broader perspective that could be worthwhile to build more capacity; details need to be balanced with broader visioning/longer range design efforts that go hand in hand with smaller projects.
- Could we have Commissioners sit in on Design Review Board meetings for those private projects where the public ROW is also at issue?
- Perhaps the chair can review projects, as was done previously?

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**16 August 2007 Project:** Arboretum – Japanese Garden Entry Improvements

**Phase:** *Design Development*

**Previous Reviews:** 4 May 2006

**Presenters:** Andy Sheffer, Department of Parks and Recreation  
Bob Hoshide, Hoshide Williams Architects  
Kenichi Nakano, Nakano Associates

**Attendees:** Don Harris, Department of Parks and Recreation

Time: 1.0 hour

(SDC Ref. #169/RS0605)

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**Action:**

The Commission thanks the project team for an eloquent and thoughtful presentation, and gives unanimous approval with the following comments:

- The structure is very appropriate in overall design, details materials, and palette.
- The Commission remains concerned about visual access of the facility from Lake Washington Boulevard, which is linked to the inherent difficulties in accessing the arboretum. The Commission would like to lend its support to providing improved and safe access into the arboretum.
- The Commission would like some attention paid towards signage and wayfinding needs for the Japanese Garden, perhaps by using wall or lighting elements and extending a language to other parts of the garden or the larger arboretum.
- The Commission encourages the team to consider how walls can be integrated into the rest of the garden and see the courtyard as an extension of the entire garden north of the walls.
- The Commission still has some questions about the entry sequence experience from the parking lot to the front of the gate.
- Encourage the team to look again at the materials in the courtyard and whether the proposed design is consistent with the entry, but appreciates the selection of materials to deter vandalism.
- Understands that the copper roof, although beautiful, may not be the most sustainable alternative – roof runoff needs to be treated and recommends that the team consider the environmental impact of heavy metal run-off associated with this type of roof.

**Proponent’s Presentation**

*Project Description*

The site plan has been kept the same since the last review in front of the Commission, but the building plan has changed. This project is funded through seed money and private donations and is part of the Washington Park Arboretum’s new master plan. The Japanese Garden Neighborhood Group has collected \$500,000 in secured donations. \$100,000 in money raised through fundraising will go towards landscaping, which includes hardscape with lawn, scored concrete in immediate area around building, cut-stone for main entry way, a small courtyard, and a low wall for seating. Next steps include staking, getting the arborist to make sure trees are out of the drip



Proposed Site Plan for Japanese Garden Entry Structure

line, and finishing the landscape plan. The low wall has sleeves for placement of festival flags, which will help passersby see the entry, which will be fairly open for security. The team will tag trees that will be removed this fall for construction.

The building plan has changed in character, programmatic elements and materials. The basic plan shows an L-shaped building. The gate is the main element, with lower, flat roofed elements and stucco walls on either side enclosing support spaces, including a meeting room and maintenance room. There is a ticketing booth on the east side, with storage area behind the booth. There will also be a very small gift shop, which can also be a future foundation or committee space. Other rooms include the meeting room (for foundation activities), bathrooms, a maintenance room, and a vestibule which provides access to different functions. The roof ridge has a wood ridge-cap, with metal shingles, integrated gutters, and the eaves have exposed rafters, purlins and board sheathing. The wall will be oak or cream colored stucco, with a little detail on trellis. The foundation has columns with elevated bases, wall base and landscaped grounds. The opening contains pole columns and exposed framing, steel gates which are both decorative and secure, and other gates with wood trim. Elevations indicate some of the finished materials. The roof will use a copper shingle, and the wood is quite weathered.

### **Key Commissioner Questions and Comments**

- There is a problem in just getting to and through the arboretum, and also a larger problem in crossing Lake Washington Boulevard. The traffic currently does not slow down as drivers approach the entrance, so maybe striping the crosswalk can mitigate this.
  - There is a proposed overpass that can solve this problem.
- Will there be signage for a right turn?
  - Right now, there is a placard when there is an event.
- The team should be able to get more pavers for entry to enhance the entry sequence. The courtyard is stone, then concrete. What are low walls made of?
  - Low seating walls have slight berm on the backside made of concrete and that is chased with Enumclaw stone on the south.
- Landscaping materials are really important, where you getting them from?
  - We are getting them from another funding source.
- Did you think about a gabled roof over gift shop?
- Have you considered vandalism (graffiti) and security fence?
- Signage is a consideration. Is there a wayfinding plan for the arboretum since this area is related, but also rather distinct?
- Have you considered security lighting?
  - We are trying to avoid flood lighting.
- Roofing material may cause copper runoff.
- The walls have a symbiotic relationship between buildings and walls. The team can make a more collective effort to show the architecture of the plan. Is the low flag-wall accessible for seating?
  - Yes.
- Pay more attention to integrating the building wall and landscaping walls. There may be an opportunity to extend building walls to help improve access from Lake Washington. You can add 40' of low wall as signage.

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**16 August 2007 Project: Commission Business**

**ACTION ITEMS**

- A. Timesheets
- B. Minutes from 08/02/07/Chang

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- C. Outside Commitments and Upcoming Workshops/Cubell
- D. Design Awards 2007/Kiest

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- E. AK Way Viaduct Open House – Pioneer Square, 8/22, 6-8pm
- F. Civic Square DRB/DC Meeting, 8/28, 5:30-8:30pm, BKLandes
- G. Mayor and YMCA Get Engaged Reception, 9/5, 5:30pm, City Hall
- H. Council UDP Committee – Confirmations, 9/12 or 9/26, 2pm
- I. DC Annual Site Tours, Thursday, 9/13, 9am-3pm (tentative)
- J. DC Farewell and Welcome Reception, October - TBD

Time: 1.0 hour

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**16 August 2007 Project:** SR 520 Improvement and HOV Corridor Project  
**Phase:** *Design Update*  
**Previous Reviews:** 17 May 2006; several previous  
**Presenters:** Julie Meredith, Washington State Department of Transportation  
Daniel Babuca, Washington State Department of Transportation  
Susan Wessman, Parametrix  
**Attendees:** Rebecca Sadinsky, EnviroIssues  
Chelsea Tennyson, EnviroIssues

Time: 1.0 hour

(SDC Ref. #169/RS0609)

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**Action:**

**The Commission thanks the project team for a thorough and thoughtful presentation with the following comments:**

- **Find there is a consensus of approval on the human element that has been brought to the design, specifically the wider path for pedestrians and bicyclists**
- **Hope to see further design exploration of the bridge design, including the floating structure and spans and fringes, and hope the design will remain simple and elegant**
- **Look forward to seeing the design elements that the team comes up with in response to the corridor aesthetics handbook, and encourage the team to look to other areas outside Seattle for good examples, such as Denver’s highway walls.**
- **Encourage the design team to think of innovative ways to use space between pontoons and the bridge structure, but also appreciate concern for security, so may have to focus on more passive uses for that space**
- **Appreciate involvement of the different disciplines this early in the design process, think that there can be an opportunity to use those different skills to make the decisions easier and to expedite the process**
- **Encourage more use of real bridge structural elements and real materials in presentation materials**
- **Appreciate seeing the eastside design plan in large format**
- **Hopes the team will return to the Commission more often**

**Disclosures:** Commissioner Kiest disclosed that she remains under contract to Sound Transit Link Light Rail and Commissioners Ryan and Johnston both disclosed that they are employed by the University of Washington.

**Proponent’s Presentation**

*Design Update*

A draft EIS was released in August 2006 and 1,700 comments were received. A supplemental draft EIS will need to be completed to analyze new and or refined six lane design options, how and where to potentially construct floating bridge pontoons, construction methods, and mitigation measures. Bridge pontoons are large, hollow concrete structures that float. Forty-four of these pontoons measuring 75 feet by 360 feet by 26 feet, and weighing 10,000 tons each, will have a contracting method to marry the design of structure with ultimate contractor to leverage private industry. Funding for the six-lane alternative will cost \$4.3 billion and a key portion has been put



forward in RTID. The Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6099 requires the state to prepare a finance plan which competes for funds with the Alaskan Way Viaduct. The legislation also directs OFM and WSDOT to hire a mediator selected by the governor's office to work on: a multimodal transportation plan, a finance plan, and a complete health impact assessment. The 4+2 corridor includes 2 general-purpose lanes each way, and 2 transit lanes. The bike path will extend from the west side at the Montlake facility to interface with other trails, lake, and local connections on the east side. There will be dedicated HOV lanes (carpool, public buses). The pontoons can take the weight of a future light rail train if it is built.

The bridge design will focus on a narrow footprint with modified design elements and narrow lanes, vertical elements with on/off ramps that affect local streets, new designs for bridge maintenance facilities on either side, minimized effects on private property, and respect cultural resources (i.e. the arboretum) on the west side. The SR 520 Community Design schedule includes two additional series of workshops since last year's presentation. The corridor design theme will be natural and contemporary. The urban design vision focuses on context, character, and connections. WSDOT and Eastside jurisdictions are already collaborating to identify design opportunities and create solutions for the 4 + 2 configuration. Topics include mainline design, interchange options, transit options, lids, pedestrian and bike paths, retaining walls, roadside and landscape, and sound walls. Next steps for the Eastside Collaboration Team include Council briefings and town hall meetings. The floating bridge design concepts for the East side are shown today in a large format plan and include lids along 520, a round-about in Clyde Hill, a direct access connection to serve Kirkland Park'N'Ride while keeping in mind wetlands within the Yaro Creek bay system, half diamond footprints at key interchanges, stream restoration/realignment, better environment for pedestrians and bikers, and widened on/off ramp structures. The design team has softened edges and narrowed bands from inside and outside perspective, assuming that the roadway can stay within the existing ROW and allowing it to maximize existing lanes.



SR 520 Floating Bridge Design Concept

There is also a new catastrophic failure planning element to the bridge replacement plan. The planning process for that involves 3 phases. Phase 1 covers the preliminary draft plan development which has been completed. Phase 2 is focused on jurisdictional outreach and draft plan development. August 2<sup>nd</sup> was the kick-off, and the team received lots of positive response. A tabletop meeting is planned for Oct. 2007 and will focus on what works, what doesn't, and how to work together. Then, Phase 3 will allow the team to revise and issue final plan. Next steps include: a complete finance plan by January 2008, a high capacity transit study draft to be completed by October 2007, a finalized eastside design collaboration, continued pontoon construction site planning, table top exercise in catastrophic failure planning in October 2007, and continued environmental review work, including work with the regulatory agency collaboration (RAC) workgroups.

### **Key Commissioner Questions and Comments**

- Commend the large map which serves as a great visual tool, the amount of collaboration that has gone into this project, and the continued focus on the human element of the bridge (the pedestrian and bike path).

- Is express lane part of 4+2?
  - Only at I-5 connections.
- In regards to the eastside interchanges, removing loop ramps is great by Bellevue Way, but do you see degradation in traffic in service?
  - This reflects a change in methodology and requires a long left turn lane, and other operational modes.
- Why is the transit hub in Clyde Hill and not in Bellevue?
  - Jurisdictions have expressed that it is important to retain existing hub. Bellevue will have new access lanes.
- Should light rail come in, where would it go?
  - Lids do not preclude construction of future light rail, which can go around, over, or under lids. Light rail could replace HOV lanes.
- Why elevate the floating bridge?
  - To afford maintenance access, avoid wave action, I-90 has width in the middle, helps with rainwater, better to route water to land.
- Appreciate the attention to pedestrians and bikes. What is the width relative to pedestrian/bike trails along I-90?
  - They are 14 feet wide on 520 vs. 8 feet wide on I-90.
- Encourage an elegant, clean and simple design for bridge.
- Prefer the arch concept since it takes eyes off pontoon, but it is still not quite right. We appreciate the scheme that accentuates the horizontal line of the upper road and bike path edges. A scheme that allows the upper deck to conceptually “float” above the pontoons, minimizing the presence of the vertical supports, seems promising.
- Walls can be utilized, look at Denver walls as an example, an artist did those.
- Is there any way for creatively using pontoon surface as amenity for bridge?
- Maybe collaborative effort on west side can follow lead of eastside and design work can be shown in richer visual format in order to reduce the time of debate about design; scale models could help decisions more efficiently.
  - Fly through animations are in the process.
- Understand there was a community process that determined themes of “natural” and “contemporary”, but these terms are too watered down. The Commission needs to understand real design concepts along with the engineering challenges. Need to make the design concepts real with real world examples.
  - The packet given to citizens did include photos from around the world.
- What is the report going to be used for?
  - Partly about education, but not so much about design. It is a shared vision, which the team can go back in to revisit and go into more detail.
- Maybe driving surface should be cantilevered out, so let roadway float above.
- Concepts can be taken to a much braver and exciting level.
- Tolling is a likely reality, so are there tollbooth designs and locations?
  - No tollbooths are envisioned in 2020 since the future will have only electronic transponder toll collection (like the Good-to-Go pass on Tacoma Narrows Bridge).
- Will there be quiet pavement demonstration?
  - Yes, they are underway already on the eastside and include different materials, polymer asphalt and rubberized asphalt, which are being evaluated for pavement durability and acoustic tests.

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**16 August 2007 Project:** **Sound Transit Link Light Rail/University Link**  
**Phase:** *Initial Briefing and Overview*  
**Previous Reviews:** none  
**Presenters:** Debora Ashland, Sound Transit  
Ron Endlich, Sound Transit  
John Baggs, Seattle Department of Transportation  
Lisa Rutzick, Seattle Department of Planning and Development  
**Guests:** Mahlon Clements, Kirsten Pennington, Kevin MacDonald, Seattle Planning Commission  
Richard Andrews and Catherine Hillenbrand, Seattle Arts Commission  
**Attendees:** Michelle Ginder, Sound Transit  
Ruri Yampolsky, Seattle Arts Commission  
Martha Lester, Council Central Staff  
Rebecca Herzfeld, Council Central Staff

Time: 2.0 hours

(SDC Ref. #121/RS06015)

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**Action:**

**The Commission thanks Sound Transit (ST) and staff at SDOT and DPD for a thorough and thoughtful introductory presentation on the University Link Light Rail project with the following comments:**

- **For the record, the Design Commission is conducting University Link review with representatives of the Arts Commission and Planning Commission in a modified version of Light Rail Review Panel (LRRP)**
- **The Commission commends ST for getting ahead and recognizing the TOD development opportunity, especially for the Capitol Hill Station.**
- **It was suggested that pedestrian tunnels with turns and doglegs can be perceived to restrict sightlines and present public safety concerns, so more study of the tunnels at the Capitol Hill Station is encouraged.**
- **Recommend that the team conducts a study on the impacts the pedestrian bridge at Husky Stadium will have. A general understanding and coordinated reviews should be worked out in advance with UW to address impacts of the bridge.**
- **Recommend that the team conduct a study of bike transit near UW Stadium Station and estimate bike traffic to accommodate ridership, also that the design should anticipate riders to bring their bicycles on the light rail system (elevator frequency, etc.).**
- **Consider pedestrian links to the UW Medical Center and encourage a strong pedestrian corridor be established between UW station and UW Medical Center in addition to the skybridge.**
- **Commission looks forward to 30% design work on specific stations, with responses to questions raised in today's presentation.**
- **Would like a better understanding of the impacts of station construction on UW Stadium, the UW Medical Center, 520 Project with all its variations, and Capitol Hill businesses and residents**
- **Capitol Hill Station entrances at grade should find the right balance and appropriate scale for the Broadway streetscape.**
- **Look forward to close participation of artist in 30% design review.**
- **Helpful to see more information on station design context in next set of presentations.**

**Note on Disclosures:** Design Commissioner Hoffman disclosed his firm's ongoing involvement in TOD work for Sound Transit and Design Commissioner Kiest disclosed her firm's ongoing

**involvement in other aspects of Sound Transit Link Light Rail. Design Commissioners Ryan and Johnston noted they were employed by University of Washington. Planning Commissioner McDonald disclosed involvement in the development of the Capitol Hill Design Guidelines and Planning Commissioner Clements disclosed his firm's previous involvement in ST Link Light Rail projects. Arts Commissioner Andrews disclosed that he is employed by the University of Washington.**

### **Proponent's Presentation**

#### *SoundTransit Link Light Rail*

The City is a transportation partner and regulator. Aside from design review and construction oversight, the city is obligated to insure that ST complies with City rules and regulations. About nine years ago, an interagency agreement was adopted for City review and permitting of the Link Light Rail Initial Segment. This agreement was supplemented in 2007 to include the University Link segment. The agreement provides for design review at 30%, 60%, and 90% completion. It looks at specific aspects of the project, orchestrates all the design review comments, and SDOT then coordinates approvals, including issuing ROW Use Permits, which then allows for construction. ST will be applying for and obtaining all permits including master use permits for the stations and will be presenting to and seeking guidance from the Design Commission who will be assisted by representatives of the Planning and Arts Commissions in a modified version of the Light Rail Review Panel (LRRP). Key City staff include John Layzer (SDOT, ST Program Manager), Joe Mathieu (SDOT, ST Assistant Program Manager), and Lisa Rutzick (DPD's Land Use Planner, a key conduit to the interdepartmental review team). Lisa will attend all meetings and ensure that LRRP's recommendations are carried through design development for internal consistency.

Sound Transit facilities include Sounder Commuter Rail and ST Express Buses in addition to Link Light Rail. The Sounder commuter rail connects Tacoma, Seattle, Everett, and express buses carry 30,000 people a day. The Link Light Rail (LR) includes both Tacoma Link and Central Link. The Central Link is divided into the Initial Segment (Tukwila to Westlake), Airport Link (Tukwila to SeaTac), and the University Link (Westlake to Husky Stadium). Construction is currently underway on the Initial Segment and Airport Link. Future ST2 projects include the North Link (to Northgate) and East Link with connections to Bellevue, Redmond, and Issaquah. LR is versatile; it can operate at-grade, elevated or in tunnels. LR is an electrically powered vehicle run on railroad tracks with power delivered by Overhead Contact System. Central Link stations are designed for up to four vehicles, whereas the Tacoma Link is designed for one vehicle (90-foot platforms). LR basics include support infrastructure which consists of: traction power substations, signal buildings and communications cabinets. The team has formed a balanced approach to design, in which elements of continuity focus on station layout and families of parts/materials, including standard glazing sizes, paving/wayfinding, light fixtures, signage, and color palette. Then, the elements of differentiation include type of station, community input, and the STart Program. System-wide procurements include a girder rail, station signage, tactile pavers, and vehicles. The initial segment of link light rail has a capital budget of \$2.07 billion (YOES), with a construction budget of \$1.28 billion. Construction began in 2003 and will finish in 2009.

#### *University Link*

The University Link (U-Link) will be operational by 2016 with a 3.15-mile extension of the Initial Segment. The Capitol Hill Station will be ready for a 30% review next month. The schedule includes a two year design phase, six year construction phase, and six month system testing. The capital cost to complete U-Link is approximately \$1.6 billion (YOE). Ridership for 2030 daily boarding is projected to be 70,000 on U-Link to UW and 114,000 from UW to the airport. A Community Open House for Capitol Hill Station will be held on September 26<sup>th</sup> from 5 to 8 pm at the Seattle Central Community College, in Room 1110.

The U-Link schedule has a final design target for late 2008. Property acquisitions and relocations are underway. Early design activities to refine station/alignment have been completed. There have been on-going meetings with the City, UW, and other stakeholders. Major station design completion milestones are 30% by fall 2007, 60% by spring 2008, and 90% by fall 2008. Open Houses will allow the public to review design at each milestone. The Capitol Hill Station 30% design will be reviewed at the Design Commission on September 20, 2007, and the UW station 30% design review will take place on December 6<sup>th</sup>. The Capitol Hill Station site will be used as a construction staging area and material excavated from the station box and tunnel will be removed from the site. The Capitol Hill Station will be built using cut and cover construction (four to five years of construction) but some infrastructure needs to be relocated first. In regards to the UW Stadium Station, the Husky Stadium may expand to the north; the expansion may conflict with the proposed pedestrian bridge near Rainier Vista. Final design for the stadium expansion project is still to be announced.



University Link Light Rail Route

### *North Link*

The North Link (Husky Stadium to Northgate) is the first light rail extension in ST2 program and includes three stations (Brooklyn/45<sup>th</sup>, Roosevelt, Northgate) and has 4.3 miles of track. Part of the ST2 funding will be via the Roads and Transit ballot measure in November. The ballot measure will also include a streetcar from 5<sup>th</sup>/Jackson to Broadway/Aloha connecting First Hill with Capitol Hill and ID Station in downtown Seattle. The streetcar replaces the relatively deep First Hill Station which was deleted due to cost. The conceptual engineering on the streetcar was completed in 2006 and the ST2 plan assumes streetcar operation by 2018. If ST2 passes, a more detailed schedule and plan for design/construction of the streetcar will be developed.

### **Key Commissioner Questions and Comments**

- Congratulations to ST and the Capitol Hill community for early planning for TOD
  - ST has had a series of meetings with Capitol Hill residents in the property acquisition process.
- In terms of station design, what are the plans to deal with potential graffiti?
  - Try to get durable materials, which depend on how quickly they can be fixed.
- What are the TOD opportunities for other stations besides Capitol Hill?
  - Many exist – especially at other tunnel station sites. Beacon Hill, MLK station is already under construction. We also need to find out which developer is interested in TOD. Each station is at a completely different stage and some developers are looking at zoning changes.
  - There are 3 potential sites for TOD at Capitol Hill; this is best opportunity for TOD that ST has ever had.
- In terms of UW Stadium Station, are there any coordination efforts with Metro?
  - ST2 project, I-90 corridor may need re-routing for Metro. Regarding the station itself, the question is how to accommodate layover.
- First Hill/Capitol Hill streetcar route is mostly served already by Metro.
  - Could tie into Waterfront streetcar line.
- For the Capitol Hill Station where the tunnel goes underneath street, focus on the sightlines, because the narrow tunnel is not safe.
- The day to day impacts on environs of the tunnel stations has a 5-year construction phase. What are the likely community impacts on Capitol Hill and UW Stadium Station?

- Truck traffic that exports concrete will occur and to mitigate this, a noise wall is planned around construction staging areas. There will also be emergency access to hospitals, market business mitigation, noise variance and other requirements, and materials going in and out of site.
- What is the timeline for the SR-520 mediation process?
  - One report on HCT (high capacity transit) is due by October 2008 and another on December 2008.
- Has there been a design review with UW?
  - The Architectural Review Commission has reviewed landscaping diagrams and will review station design later this fall and the Board of Regents needs to approve the final design.
- Is there research information on the number of bikes and the form and nature of the impact on the Burke-Gillman Trail? At the UW station especially, the amount of space for a bicycle park and ride will need to be incorporated into the design.
  - There will be a “bike and ride” lot near the Burke-Gilman Trail as well as underground access for bikes.
- How does the design anticipate and accommodate bicycles being brought on the light rail system (rather than left at the bicycle park and rides?)
  - There is hope that most people will use the bicycle parking rather than bringing their bikes on the system. Unsure about the frequency of the elevators, although that is how people would get their bikes on the system. The 30% review will add more information.
- Is there an improved entry to UW Medical Center?
  - Most medical staff park at the stadium on weekdays. The Burke-Gilman Trail is also used to access the hospital. These users need to inform the design.
- How is the connection of pedestrians improved with the bridge?
  - There is a design challenge in providing ADA accessibility.
- Does the landing at the UW triangle plaza connect to parking garage?
  - UW does not want to introduce pedestrians to parking garage because of limited sight limits.
- Why is the station entrance in green?
  - Need to update graphic to entrances. We are calling them entrances but the station platform is the main mezzanine where ticketing occurs.
- More City reps are needed to advocate for TOD station areas.
- Capitol Hill entries are at grade and are more of a design issue than the station itself and the size and scale of entries need to be worked out to balance with the Broadway streetscape.
  - Signage to entries will be put up.
- How does cut and cover tunnel work at Capitol Hill station?
  - The station has all the land they need for staging. Tunnel will be 70’ deep.