

**Seattle
Design
Commission**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
September 6, 2007**

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

South Lander Street
SR-519 Grade Separation- Phase II
Commission Business
Woodland Park Zoo – West Entry
Woodland Park Zoo – Humboldt Penguin Exhibit
Mercer Corridor Improvements

Commissioners Present

Karen Kiest, Chair
Tasha Atchison
Pam Beyette
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
Tom Iurino



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6 September 2007 Project: South Lander Street Grade Separation

Phase: Schematic Design

Last Reviews: none

Presenters: Lorelei Mesic, Seattle Department of Transportation
Abner Gallardo, Seattle Department of Transportation
Susan Bartlett, KPFF
Jim Howard, HBB Landscape

Attendees: Scott MacColl, Council Central Staff

Time: 1.5 hours

(SDC Ref. 169/RS0606)

Disclosures: Commissioner Hoffman announced that HBB Landscape Architects has a working relationship with Perteet, but on other projects not relevant to this review.

Action:

The Commission approves the design team's presentation at 30% design with the following comments:

- **Appreciate the level of detail provided in the presentation and understand the complexity of the project.**
- **For future presentations, would appreciate more east-west cross sections and profiles of the roadway to help illustrate the height and bulk of changes it will have on this area.**
- **Express concern regarding the lack of access to the School District site from Lander and no cross access on Third and encourage team to continue to work with the SSD given the significant changes to the character of their site, especially as this is their headquarters.**
- **Encourage the team to include an artist early on as part of the design team to help integrate more design features into the project and support getting 1% arts funding designated to the project.**
- **Lighting and art could be explored as ways to address the safety concern under the elevated roadway.**
- **Encourage more emphasis on the gateways at 1st and 4th in the overall design approach and on integrating design elements at either end more so than the other sides that are not as visible to the general public.**
- **Encourage team to emphasize the east-west connection for bicycles and pedestrians as this is going to be a vital connection for those users.**
- **Consider creating a resting spot at the top of the overpass for pedestrians and cyclists to enjoy the unique view from this location, perhaps also a shelter from the elements.**
- **Better integrate the railing with the bridge design and approach the railing as part of a unified architectural expression, while meeting the requirements of road and rail.**
- **Consider utilizing the underside of the structure in a creative way, i.e. a skate park. Consult with Seattle Parks Department for ideas.**
- **Green screening could help mitigate some of the views from adjacent properties especially from the school district site.**
- **Recommend that the team plan for a turn restriction sign on 3rd Avenue South well in advance of the Lander Street approach.**
- **Encourage the emphasis of one pedestrian pathway over another if it is what is needed to make the connection between 1st Avenue S. and 4th Avenue S. successful.**
- **Believe there needs to be more design correspondence between this project and others in South Downtown in moving forward with all the improvements that are planned**

and recommends working with other groups within the City of Seattle, such as City Design and the Green Building Team who are responsible for sustainable design and construction to brainstorm ideas and develop design guidelines.

Proponent's Presentation

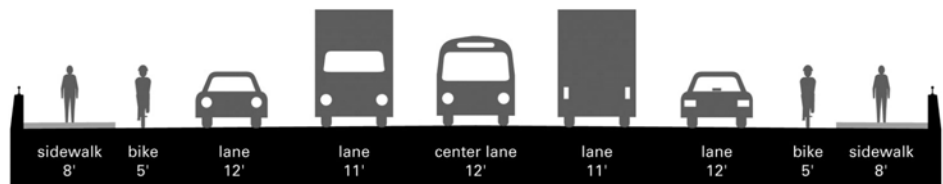
Scope and Schedule

In 2002, a \$260,000 study was conducted with one open house. In November of 2006, the design phase was restarted with Bridging the Gap contributing \$20 million dollars. Goals are to increase safety and traffic flow for pedestrians and motor vehicles on South Lander Street between 1st Avenue South and 4th Avenue South. The 30% design was completed on August 29, 2007, and 60% design will be completed by spring of 2008. The team is currently going through negotiations with property owners, as well as beginning the environmental process. Traffic during construction will be a challenge. Part of the progress is driven by ROW acquisition, so the design will actually be complete by 2009, with a two-year construction process that will require the closing of South Lander Street. Funding Sources could include King County Metro through the Transit Now measure and is included in RTID for ballot this November of 2007.

Background on South Lander Avenue

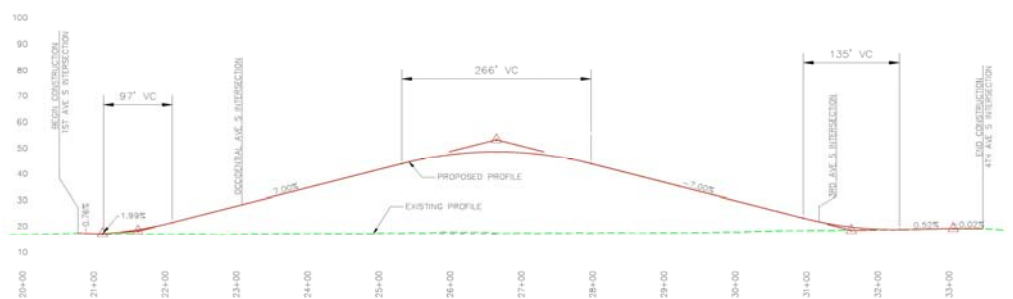
South Lander Street is classified as a Minor Arterial, used by 12,000 vehicles, 10% which are trucks. There are currently four BNSF rail lines across South Lander Street. South Lander Street is also a major utility corridor. Large storm water and large sewer line and many other utilities (including gas, water, and electric) are located underneath the street. The goals of the project are to decrease traffic delays by trains by eliminating the at-grade intersection between rail and street traffic. The objective is to improve operations and safety, and accommodate all modes of transportation across this corridor. In order to address these objectives, the design team proposes to build bridge over the railroad. Some challenges with the design include: the existing area has poor soft soil and foundations would need to go 200 feet deep to get to a solid foundation; the project should not impact 1st and 4th Avenues, provide a maximum grade of 7% on the roadway, as well as planning for six train tracks in the future.

This cross section shows widths of sidewalks, bike lanes, car lanes, and center lanes. There are piers in the north-south direction that will be drilled 100 feet deep into the ground, with bridge spans approximately 115 feet in the west and 108 feet in the east. Walls will be built, and utilities will be avoided whenever possible.



South Lander Street Cross Section

The South Lander Street profile shows that the proposed elevation at Occidental Avenue South is too tall for the streets to intersect. Occidental Avenue South will need to be re-routed underneath the bridge. 3rd Avenue will be able to connect with South Lander Street, however traffic on 3rd Avenue South will allow only right in and right out movements and



South Lander Street Grade Separation

not be allowed to cross South Lander in the North South direction. There are two left turn lanes on westbound South Lander Street to southbound 1st Avenue South. There will be bike lanes on the bridge and two sidewalks for pedestrians on the bridge. For security reasons, the areas under the bridge will be closed off from the public.

The railings and fencing will perhaps use an Edward Martinez Way style and they will be pedestrian height for the majority of the structure and eight to ten feet high over the track crossing. Fencing will be installed under the structure to prohibit east-west pedestrian crossings of the railroad tracks. The City owns 100 feet of roadway where the tracks cross South Lander Street and has a franchise agreement with the railroad. The palette to create enhanced railing and landscape will include street trees, vine screens, artistic fencing options. The design team also suggests the use of environmental design to prevent crime, as well as using artistic or architectural column treatments (i.e. painting, treatment of concrete, lighting). The team also would like to improve ROW access along Occidental Avenue South, to include ADA ramps, as well as relocating and purchasing the entire property for Pacific Galleries. The current route necessitates parking changes and parking along the current corridor will go away and they will not be replaced. A newsletter will be published and an open house is scheduled for October (first appearance to public since restarting the design process).

Key Commissioner Comments and Questions

- How does the team plan to deal with the significant amount of stormwater?
 - There will be scuppers on the structure, which will be tightlined. Water quality standards will be followed, and the stormwater will be channeled to two vaults that will be treated before they get diverted to CSOs.
- Taking into consideration utilities, what are the structures going to be drilled into exactly?
 - The columns for the structure will be located to not impact the two large pipes underneath the street. Other utilities will be relocated onto the structure or will use the existing steel casings under railway tracks
- How do cars get around Third Avenue while the construction is going on?
 - Traffic will be detoured to other east-west streets during construction. Third Avenue will remain accessible from Forest Street and Stacy Street off of 4th Avenue. After construction there will be a traffic curb to deter drivers from crossing South Lander Street
- How visible are the columns?
 - People will be able to see the columns from Occidental Avenue South.
- What is the future use of the tracks (transit, freight, or light rail)?
 - The future BNSF tracks will continue to be used by BNSF, Amtrak and the Sounder commuter train as well as mainline freight traffic. There will be a Sound Transit light rail station at 6th Avenue South,
- Perhaps art is not a solution to provide safety.
- Lane is very important. Perspective is new in this area from the bridge, which can create respite for people (belvedere). The railing is a great opportunity for collaboration. There is also an opportunity for a renegade skate park as part of the public space underneath the bridge.
- Make good signage.
- An architectural approach can make a unified expression to tie in signage, railing, posts, etc.
- Create a bike/pedestrian connection by expanding a sidewalk on one side to get more primary pedestrian connection to emphasize east-west connections. There is much concern for sidewalks between the building and superstructure because of 6 1/2- foot difference; perhaps the team can recreate a ROW or maybe a private courtyard to mitigate this challenge.

- Include longitudinal section (such as an east-west profile to scale). There also needs to be design correspondence to be comprehensive (railing, lighting, signage, etc.) rather than piecemeal the design (this is an area that City Design may need to step in for). Shelter and respite for pedestrians are important. The team can also increase benefits and share costs by partnering with sustainability staff.
- In the next presentation, perhaps SDOT will provide guidelines for state route 519 that this project can glean from.
- Suggest the use of a lighter, more visible six foot sidewalk and 1st Avenue South gateway will make it cohesive.
 - The team will ask Starbucks for help on this matter.

6 September 2007 Project: SR-519 Grade Separation- Phase II

Phase: Preliminary Design

Last Reviews: none

Presenters: Ali Amiri, Washington State Department of Transportation
Richard Patterson, Baillie Associates
Mike Johnson, Seattle Department of Transportation
Steve Pearce, Seattle Department of Transportation
Pietro Potestà, Makers

Attendees: Scott MacColl, Council Central Staff

Time: 1.5 hours

(SDC Ref. 169/RS0606)

Action:

The Commission would like to thank the SR 519 Intermodal Access Team for their comprehensive presentation of a complex collection of projects that involve the city and state as players, and give unanimous approval with the following comments:

- Stick with the primacy and cohesiveness of all the design elements and make sure they stay in the budget during any design build process.
- Concerned about the pedestrian experience from 4th Avenue South along South Atlantic Street now that South Atlantic Street is becoming a major street for freight as well as other traffic.
- Support either a steel or concrete bridge structure for this project to connect it to the area architecture that is already there, which is very strong and industrial.
- Concerned about connectivity between light rail station and the stadiums with the new ramp; there seem to be some compression points along the east-west route, the flow should be more intuitive and the path should have a similar feel at both ends.
- Continue to study the location and integration of the plaza, stair and ramp proposed for the west end of the new Royal Brougham.
- Emphasize that the pedestrian and bike experience needs to be a quality one.
- Emphasize the importance of Royal Brougham as a connector from Marginal Way bike trail and ease of access for cyclists across 4th Avenue South.
- Consider the separation of the bike lane from the cars on the curved ramp section to better protect cyclists from cars.
- Look at the design of stairs in the new Royal Brougham loop. Make sure treads and risers are more consistent for safety.
- Look closely at the plaza area north of Royal Brougham as a potentially more pedestrian friendly crossing.
- Consider better and more sophisticated signal control at 1st Avenue South and South Atlantic Street intersection instead of police control during game days given its new width and increased traffic along Atlantic.
- Keep in mind the larger plan for the streetscape in this evolving and intense pedestrian environment. Attend to design consistency of the entire area to enhance safety and the overall pedestrian experience.
- Keep the streetscape design in design build process. Strongly support consistency in planning and design of the larger area.
- Keep in mind pedestrian and traffic flows on non-game and game days and make sure the new street serves both.
- Ask for larger vision for this important project. It is a major investment and should have a major design idea.

Proponent's Presentation

Background Information

The project is needed now because new design and roadway structures are needed to allow cars, trucks, trains, and pedestrians to reach their destinations safely, quickly, and directly in Seattle's South of Downtown district, while keeping in mind increased future traffic. State Route 519 provides a vital roadway system for east-west traffic through Seattle. SR 519 roadway arrangement is not well suited to present conditions. The purpose of this project is to improve increased traffic mobility and safety by improving connections for I-5 and I-90 and Port of Seattle terminals, Washington State Ferries terminal at Colman Dock, waterfront commercial interests, and the stadium area. The project would allow people to walk safely to and from the stadium area. Various stakeholders are freight (port terminal, BNSF railway completion, SIG yard), freight terminal, SR 99, stadiums, Link Light Rail (operational in 2009). Key issues include mobility, safety, coordination between city and other state projects. Key design parameters include railroad clearances, ADA access needs, roadway design and requirements.

Below is the overall project schedule for Atlantic Corridor:

Milestone	Anticipated Completion Date
Completion of preliminary engineering	March 2008
Completion of environmental documentation	April 2008
Preparation of contractor plans	April 2008-April 2009
Begin construction	August 2009
Operationally complete	June 2012

Between October 2005 and November 2006, three alternative assessments were developed, including Royal Brougham Corridor, Atlantic Corridor, and local improvements. The Atlantic Corridor (Option B) is the design team's preferred alternative. This option includes two components: the eventual change to a SR 519 route and a loop connector to Third Avenue South and Occidental Avenue South. The estimated total cost is \$74.4 million, which includes contingency and risk assessment.

Architectural Character and Compatibility

The current Atlantic Bridge has good connectivity, but still needs improvement at the intersection between First Avenue South and South Atlantic Street since both directions will come together at the intersection. Challenges are to minimize impact on First Avenue South and Manor stadium, the west side of Atlantic, improving traffic analysis for left turn lane and the two lanes on the south side of Atlantic, as well as two additional pedestrian lanes that can be a gathering space. The Atlantic Street Ramp Connection is located at the existing 4th Avenue South westbound ramp, new SR 519 westbound ramp, existing SR 519 eastbound ramp (phase 1), and the existing South Atlantic Street bridge structure (Phase 2). The Royal Brougham Way Over-Crossing includes several alternative pedestrian connections. The first proposal is a pedestrian connection to the Qwest Field Parking structure, with an elevator on the North side of Royal Brougham, The second option is a pedestrian connection to Qwest Field



SR 519 Atlantic Corridor

parking structure and Safeco Field Concourse Level 100 with an elevator on the north side of Royal Brougham. Finally, a third option is a pedestrian connection to Qwest Field Parking structure with stairs on the north side of Royal Brougham and an elevator on the south side of Royal Brougham. Pedestrian features can be located on the eastern side of railroad tracks. On the western side of the tracks, all movements are possible for people, with vehicles along the ramp. There are different grades between car and pedestrian path.

The final Royal Brougham Way configuration and connections still need to be determined. Construction materials are still under consideration. There is a question of whether South Atlantic Street ramp and Royal Brougham Way should be concrete or steel. A concrete structure is cheaper to maintain with tougher grades, steep incline to ground, which creates an issue with structural depth and structural look compared to other projects. Overall, it is an issue of initial investment versus long term maintenance with a limited budget and phasing (there is an \$8.5 million shortfall). Design-build documents and approaches can address these issues, such as the case with the Lander project.

Key Commissioner Comments and Questions

- Make sure design is maintained during the design build approach.
- Focus on pedestrian issues; connectivity is especially important in this case.
- Be careful of the choice in choosing concrete or steel in the maintenance of the structures.
- In Slide 9, northbound I-90 has a narrow weave length, and the general movement moves west.
- The light rail pedestrian connectivity along Royal Brougham is an issue for foot traffic; pedestrians could get into a surge because of funnel points that are not necessarily intuitive. There is a similar treatment on the east and west side. Why is there not a steeper overpass over Royal Brougham?
 - We are trying to meet ADA accessibility and crowds will form on game days and therefore there is not enough room to accommodate massive crowds (We are designing 20-foot wide sidewalks for large groups).
- Glad to see bike lane along Marginal Way and Royal Brougham. However, the bike trail is severed between 4th Avenue South and East Marginal Way.
 - Met with Bicycle Advisory Board who had the same concern. Flared Royal Brougham element (C-curve) and the channelization in midblock are all challenges.
- Why does “Mountains to Sound” greenway not use a better road in the City?
 - The Port of Seattle asked this same question and wanted to move “Mountains to Sound” to Royal Brougham but that bridge going east from Royal Brougham is a 7% grade which does not accommodate bicyclists well.
- There is no left turn from northbound 4th Avenue South and South Atlantic Street, which has a closed hold gate. How does the traffic flow from northbound 4th Avenue South?
 - With the amount of traffic currently turning left off of Atlantic ramp, rerouting to Royal Brougham should not be a problem.
- With the widening of intersection at 1st Avenue South and South Atlantic Street, game day traffic must still be controlled manually? Are there some more sophisticated traffic signs rather than having an officer risk his life?
 - The team has met with the Seahawks and Mariners many times and both sides liked the fact that it can be versatile for event type coordination.
- Within the ramp loop that leads over the tracks to the eastside, integrating the stair tread widths will be more receptive to usage.
- Are you are at a point to make a final pedestrian connection?
 - No, not yet.

- Insecure about sidewalk connection aside from South Atlantic Street and 1st Avenue South. What are the design guidelines/pedestrian plans? The streetscape may not keep up with design-build process.
- Pay attention to day to day safety and conductivity, since it is an area in which many new people were not originally planned for this area. Could a pedestrian crossing occur at the north of Royal Brougham?
- Are there street design guidelines for SODO that are being looked at?
 - Each project looks at this based on a project-by-project basis. No one is looking at comprehensive design elements.
- Commission would urge all of the players to pursue the streetscape design in the design build scenarios (whether they are called guidelines, elements, etc.) for getting consistency if only for the pedestrians and motorists. Otherwise, copious signage will result. The Commission is both excited by ingenuity but concerned about the end result. Keep an eye on non game days as well as when people are there on game days.
- The Commission is looking for the larger vision.

16 August 2007 Project: Commission Business

ACTION ITEMS

- A. Timesheets
- B. Minutes from 08/16/07/Chang

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- C. Outside Commitments/All
- D. SR-520/Atchison

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- E. Council UDP Committee — Confirmations, 9/12, 2pm
- F. DC Annual Site Tours, Thursday, 9.13, 10am – 4pm
- G. DC Farewell and Welcome Reception, October 18th

Time: 0.5 hour

6 September 2007 Project: Woodland Park Zoo – West Entry

Phase: Pre-Concept Design

Last Reviews: none

Presenters: Monica Lake, Woodland Park Zoo
Ed Weinstein, Weinstein AU
Bob Shrosbree, Site Workshop

Attendees: Bill Bernstein, Weinstein AU
Jon Mikhels, Weinstein AU
Jan Oscherwitz, Department of Finance
Scott Ringgold, Department of Planning and Development

Time: 1.0 hours

(SDC Ref. 169/RS0612)

Action:

The Design Commission would like to thank the design team for this considerate and detailed presentation of the pre-concept design for the Zoo's West Entry and would like to recommend approval of the project at this stage with the following general comments:

- There has been considerable discussion on the Commission regarding the garage and its relationship to the proposed plazas and entry components. The Commission encourages integration of the garage with the West Entry project, including possible minor modifications to the garage. One caveat is the need to appreciate and retain architectural values for the garage that were so actively discussed in previous reviews.
- Explore modifications to all the edges and look at limitations on the site; the Commission questions the limitation of the Camp David edge and urges the design team to revisit that edge seeing it as an important tool for resolving siting challenges with the West Entry project.
- Landscaping of Camp David edge needs to be integrated with design of the plaza.
- In terms of sustainability, support use of rainwater and runoff from the adjacent garage and integrating these within the landscape.
- Wonders if the gift shop should be as large as indicated given its close proximity to the penguin exhibit and encourages that its size not subtract from the exhibit and entry experience.
- Resolve the "human scale" of the entry experience at different times, e.g. both regular and peak visitor flows. Concerned about flow in relation to plaza size and also view corridors through to the Penguin Exhibit. Revisit the current attitude towards the view to penguin exhibit and encourage graphics in the next presentation. to illustrate how the design addresses pedestrian flow
- Would like to see attention paid to the use of the slope on the west side of the entry plaza to form an architectural edge, and how that then integrates with the plaza.
- Architectural qualities of the planned garage need to be integrated with the roof forms, treatment and materials of the West Entry complex. Be careful to provide enough space when citing facilities around significant vegetation, such as the oak tree indicated in one of the schemes.

Proponent's Presentation

Design Update

WPZ continues to use LEAN, including the 3P workshop, to guide the capital development projects. As a result the design timeline has been condensed from 18 to 8 months. WPZ Long-Range Plan (LRP)

adopted by Seattle City Council in 2004 links plazas along the main loop trail to better orient guests while immersing them in naturalistic settings. The team has concentrated on understanding and sharing WPZ's ambitions for project. The site study area consists of an area between the proposed parking garage and a relocated Camp David, proximity to North Meadow to east, with links to the 195 parking stalls in the North parking lot. The west entry is an important space. Traffic along Phinney Avenue will see a reception zone. There is a zone of landscaping on the western portion of the space, which is the transition from the urban edge to the precinct of the zoo. This area slopes approximately ten feet from Phinney to the West Entry plaza. There is a circulation network of paths and minor gateways from the parking garage and north parking lot.



Woodland Park Zoo West Entry Site Plan

The space between the elevator “prow” of the parking garage is about 40 feet clear to the proposed location of guest services facilities. The space is characterized in terms of comfort, human scale, etc. The team recognizes several challenges, such as modulating the scale and visibility of the parking garage. The metaphor ‘free flowing river with eddies’ is used to describe the guest’s experience as they move through these spaces. The entry space is important but people will likely not spend much time there. Determining the most gracious geometry of the stairs, coffee shop, ticketing building, guest services, and entry turnstiles will be the focus of the next phase of design work. The current café location is not ideal to activate plaza activity. The design will investigate potentially modifying the orientation of the stairway and elevator portion of the garage. Additionally, the team will investigate the use of green roofs as a “floating element” that provides a continuation of the landscape and weather protection for guests and staff. While looking down from the parking garage these roofs would be interesting to look at from above. Finally the design team is investigating the proposed diagonal layout and how that is influenced by the imperatives of the site. The team will consider the scale of the space, the physical dimensions of space, and the context of the height of the of garage walls. The result will be different potential configurations (some orthogonal, etc.). In terms of landscaping, several defining northwest landscape palettes will be used. Beyond a plant palette, the use of plants (natives to exotic) will be used to address the design challenges presented by Camp David located to the south of the entry plaza.

Key Commissioner Comments and Questions

- Will the arrangement of Camp David be addressed in the future? Can the trailers move more south?
 - The specific arrangement of the trailers has been finalized. Camp David cannot move south as it would impact access to existing buildings. Ultimately, the zoo does not want the entry to move south as it would impact the space reserved for the Desert bioclimatic zone.
- The commission is looking forward to the possible use of green roofs that would “float,” this would allow for the activities in the plaza to “read” over the architecture.
- There is the potential to enhance Camp David through the use of landscape materials.
- In regards to stormwater, there is potential and great opportunity as the design develops.
- The Gift shop should not dominate the guest experience.

- Is the intention to show the penguin exhibit from the entry? The movement pattern through the entry plaza must be maintained.
 - There is still a lot of latitude to influence how people move towards the main route and the penguin exhibit. More weather protection is another element for consideration.
- Where will the current West Entry go?
 - The guests currently entering the zoo from the north and west entries would now use the new west entry. The space at the current west entry will be developed in accordance with the LRP.
- All of the schemes need to address the “human scale” in the entry sequence from the parking garage because it is a compression space.
- Steel material: respond to material for parking garage with landscaping.
 - In order to make it lighter, steel is the primary material for the parking garage. We will be looking for a filter between the parking garage and the spaces in the new entry.
- Examine the spaces in the middle of the project.
 - It is appropriate to consider the edge conditions in these spaces and there is current collaboration between the three projects (garage, penguins and west entry)
- There is concern about words used such as screening, mitigation versus true integration of design, even the parking garage design.

6 September 2007 Project: Woodland Park Zoo – Humboldt Penguin Exhibit**Phase: Schematic Design****Last Reviews:** July 19, 2007**Presenters:** Monica Lake, Woodland Park Zoo
Becca Hanson, Studio Hanson Roberts**Attendees:** Scott Ringgold, Seattle Department of Planning and Development
George Scott, Studio Hanson Roberts

Time: 1.0 hours

(SDC Ref. 169/RS0612)

Action:

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

- **Applaud the evolution of the exhibit design, support the new circulation plans and appreciate coordination with the new West Entry project.**
- **Support the approach of using bio-filtration (a constructed wetland) as a component of the penguin pool filtration system.**
- **Appreciate the experience a child will have and the more subtle environmental programs, but do not lose sight of the exhibit's environmental goals.**
- **Commend the refinement of scale, the new orientation of the exhibit and creation of a more intimate space and entry sequence, but be careful of the ramps.**

Proponent's Presentation*Design Update*

The team has now had a comprehensive workshop with the zoo and the sub consultants. Additionally, Studio Hanson Roberts offers its appreciation for the work that Weinstein's office has done and the participation John Mihkels has had in the workshops. One exciting addition to the design is a natural systems approach to the penguin pool filtration. This system is a constructed wetland targeted for zero-water waste in the filtration system. Since the team's last presentation, research and investigation have been done to test the budget, evaluate the water filtration and energy use options, including bio-filtration, compare settings (desert versus semi-desert), quantify visitor flow and capacity issues, and assess orientation issues: reflection, wind, etc. at the Concept Refinement workshop. The initial cost estimate of the conceptual design was \$5.7 million; after the workshop, the estimate for the work dropped to \$3.2 million. In terms of energy use and water filtration, the team is investigating ground-coupled heat pumps or evaporative cooling and a combined mechanical and bio-filtration system, where a wetland treatment of the sand filter's backwash means no wasted water. In terms of the habitat conditions, the team looked at some examples: Paracas Reserve, Peru; Punta San Juan Reserve, Peru; Pan de Azucar. In terms of visitor capacity and flow adequate for design days, challenges remained with maintaining quality



Penguin Exhibit Site Plan

of the experience and conflicts of flow at entry. Visitation typologies were broken down into several categories: facilitators, explorers, experience seekers, hobbyists, and spiritual pilgrims. The challenges for orientation and siting included views to and from outside the exhibit, shadows, glare, and thermal comfort. A refined concept included context, in which the entry orientation changed. The back of house building has been refined and has decreased in size to 900 square feet. There will be capacity for 60 penguins and 10 birds of another species. The exhibit pedestrian circulation now has a continuous ramp with viewing alcoves. The initial view elevation and water heights have been adjusted to allow for a continuously accessible grade and ultimate underwater view of between 5' and 5'-6". These adjustments have resulted in the volume of water in the exhibit to be within the project's target of under 50,000 gallons.

Key Commissioner Comments and Questions

- Evolution of the pool and path scheme will serve you well and is preferable to the more circuitous path.
 - Yes, especially when the keepers are presenting the exhibit will require capacity for additional visitors.
- A key thing to keep in mind is the relationship to the entry space. The drawing sections were very helpful in demonstrating the 6 foot and 20 foot paths.
- Concentrate on the replication of the tidal and near-tidal zones so that the exhibit can operate more or less independent of vegetation.
- The bio-filtration system is commendable. Don't lose sight of the keeper building as an environmental structure.
- A 5-foot viewing wall is deep enough for children.
- Like the comment of re-orientating the structure to capture the most sunshine.
- Does the water system make noise?
 - At least one dump bucket is used to create surf.

6 September 2007 Project: Mercer Corridor Improvements Project

Phase: Design Development

Last Reviews: August 2, 2007; February 15, 2007; November 02, 2006; and several previous

Presenters: Angela Brady, Seattle Department of Transportation

Mark Hinshaw, LMN Architects

Roger Mason, CH2M Hill

Brian Shinn, CH2M Hill

Colie Hough-Beck, HBB Landscape Architects

Ellen Sollod, Artist

Attendees: Patricia Hopper, OACA

Michelle Kang, SRG Partnership

Peter Steinbrueck, City Council Member

Ginny Zimmerman, Seattle Department of Transportation

Time: 2.0 hours

(SDC Ref. 169/RS0606)

Action:

The Commission thanks SDOT and the extensive project team for the thoughtful presentation that took into consideration previous issues and concerns. The Design Commission gives unanimous support and recommends approval of the 60% design with the following comments:

- **The Commission finds the project is making sufficient design progress and does not need to review the entire project again, but would like a briefing in future that selectively looks at specific elements: pedestrian connectivity, streetscape elements including background poles and wires, and lighting.**
- **Revisit the Westlake intersections at Mercer and Valley as they do not appear to fit design intent for Westlake to also remain a signature boulevard.**
- **Transportation planning for the area must consider the Alaskan Way Viaduct and take into consideration the changes in traffic flow that might result and how they impact this project.**
- **Frame but do not eliminate water views on all north-south streets, especially Westlake.**
- **Appreciate that an artist has been brought in and will follow the integration of her work with the overall design through the Commission's 2 representatives on PAAC**
- **The lighting concept, especially the Mercer lightpoles and Valley fixtures, needs further editing and more exploration and design resolution.**
- **Encourage more collaboration with WSDOT on the I-5 offramp signage and landscape while recognizing that this is a slow process.**
- **Although Mercer Corridor and Valley Street are distinct streets, there should still be a strong palette or character to connect them.**
- **Tree selection on Valley Street needs additional review. Also, reconsider whether different treatment of street trees on parking strips on Valley and Mercer is necessary.**
- **Appreciate how project will inform streetscape frontages on surrounding streets as private development occurs.**
- **Recommends thorough treatment for temporary Broad Street connector, as it may be in place for some time.**
- **Regarding the intersection at Westlake Avenue and 9th Street, Westlake should read as the dominant street and that should be readily apparent in the landscape.**

Proponent's Presentation

The design team has focused on ten points per the suggestions from the Commission during last month's review. These points include: global project view with more plan views and engineering detail, emerging neighborhood, district view with comprehensive design for Mercer, Valley, and north-south streets, characteristics for various streets reflecting different role and context, gateway at WSDOT ramps, signage and signals, transit, final materials (selection), coordination with other projects (Lake Union Park, streetcar, private development), non-motorized facilities (bike lanes, sidewalk widths), and the incorporation of art. A great street connecting neighborhoods and the region is one that connects neighborhoods and regional destinations, safely moves people and goods, and shapes growth by removing barriers.

Schedule and Project Coordination

The schedule targets a 60% design completion by June 2007, 90% by January 2008, and 100% by May 2008. The ROW acquisition is on the schedule's critical path and will not be completed until the end of 2008 or possibly early 2009, with construction commencing in 2009 until 2011. A Broad Street Interim Connection will reconnect westbound traffic to Broad St. at 9th Ave. and eastbound traffic on 8th Ave. as part of the Mercer Corridor project. The Interim Broad St. Connection is intended to be a temporary condition until the ultimate 2-way widening of Mercer St. between Dexter and 5th Ave. is constructed as part of a separate project. The City is currently looking at alternatives to reconnect the street grid at Thomas and Harrison St.'s as part of the overall improvements for this area. Project coordination is ongoing between SDOT, WSDOT, FHWA, City Light, SPU, Metro, SLU Streetcar, Lake Union Park, Private utilities, private developers and local businesses, and the Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs. The Core Design Consultant Team includes CH2M Hill, HBB, and LMN. The Mercer Corridor Stakeholder Committee recommendations have, for the most part, been incorporated into the project. The project meets all requirements listed on the checklist developed as part of the Complete Streets City Council Resolution No. 30902, which was adopted in 2006. The goal of the Complete Streets Ordinance is for City transportation projects "...to provide appropriate provisions for pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and disabled persons while providing safe operation for cars and trucks."

Several studies have been conducted as part of the design phase for the project, these include: freight study, sustainability workshop, and a cost risk assessment workshop. The Project footprint and anticipated pavement types were presented. Also, Valley will be narrowed from Fairview to Dexter, while keeping in mind Lake Union Park and streetcar improvements. In terms of the existing and proposed ROW, widening will occur on the north side of Mercer. Adjacent developments include UW Medicine Phase 2, Interurban exchange 2, Mercer Fairview Building, etc. Aerial utilities will be re-routed underground on Mercer Street. In addition to SCL and SPU utility relocations, the project is coordinating the relocation of twelve private utilities as part of the project. A joint trench for the majority of the SCL distribution and private utilities is included as part of the project. Regarding traffic operations, lane configuration and signal locations have been determined. Traffic signal lights will feature grand boulevard traffic poles with major signage envisioned on I-5 ramp exits and entrances directing traffic to major destinations such as Seattle Center.

Complete Streets: Competing Modes of Transportation

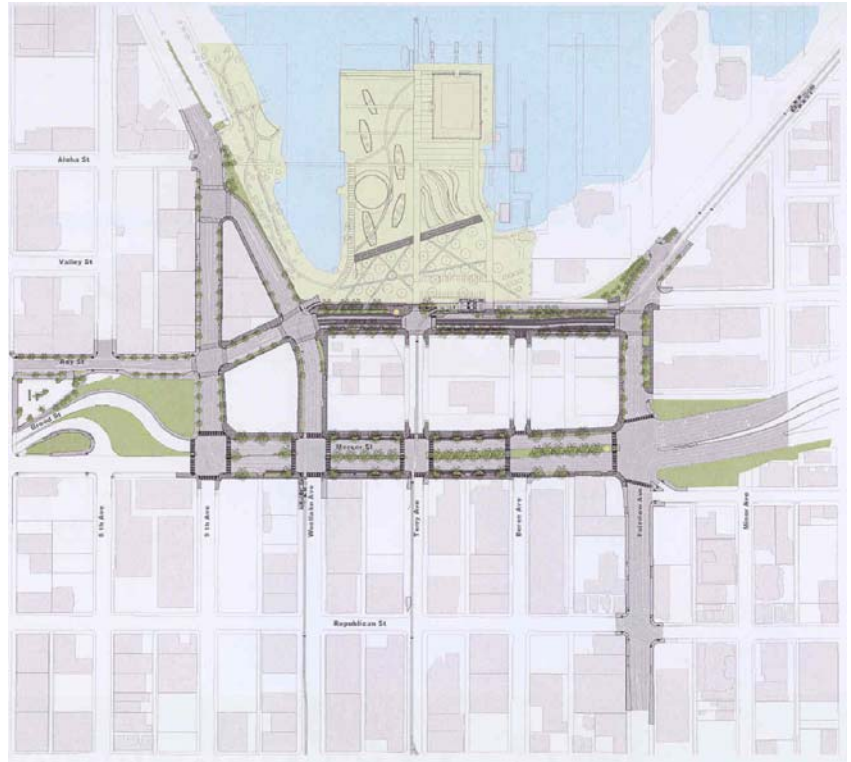
The project will construct new bike lanes on Valley/Roy/Broad and the project will provide a much more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere with wider sidewalks, curb bulbs, and plantings separating vehicles from pedestrians. The project will provide a connection link to the proposed Lake to Sound trail. When feasible, on street parking was provided even though some areas are key transit and freight routes. The urban design approaches for Mercer and Valley are intentionally not the same. Mercer Corridor will become a major two-way boulevard. Valley Street is local, quiet, and intimate, with a lakefront esplanade that visually frames the park and extends it into the public realm. On the south side, more urban character is displayed in response to future buildings and storefronts. The design dramatically tames the traffic,

catering to pedestrians, cyclists and transit users. Trees and sidewalks claim part of the street, blurring the distinction between the pedestrian and vehicular realms. A larger percentage of space is dedicated to pedestrians rather than the vehicles, which emulates a European streetscape design.

Mercer Street

Mercer Street is a regionally oriented street. It is louder and more theatrical in nature with greater width and volume, which calls for a grand design treatment. Design elements include: paving of the sidewalk, amenity zone and parking lane, generously planted landscaping, inlaid street names, street furniture (trash receptacle, bench seat, and bike rack), parking stalls defined by trees, rhythm of trees and lighting poles, and industrial lighting fixtures. The landscape treatment includes large trees. The design features along Fairview Avenue match the existing palette.

Sustainable design is incorporated on the project through the inclusion of wet medians along Mercer and a rain garden on Westlake just north of Valley where street right-of-way abuts Lake Union Park.



Valley Street and Mercer Corridor Site Map

Public Art

The artist was recently selected and has met with the team to identify potential sites for art to enhance the project. A potential location for public art might be the median of Mercer at Fairview to reinforce the gateway concept for this major entrance and exit point to the City. The plaza area on the north side of Valley adjoining Lake Union Park was also mentioned as a potential location for an art piece.

Public Comment

- Councilmember Steinbrueck: Pleased to see the progress with the street design work and eager to see this project going into the construction phase.
- Councilmember Steinbrueck: In the earlier concept plan, the intersection of Mercer and Westlake was not addressed, but there is a design opportunity to make this a node. A monument/centerpiece could be created or special landscape treatment could be given to the edges and corners that would help identify this as an important crossroad.
 - That intersection seemed too busy; could re-examine the possibility.
- Councilmember Steinbrueck: Concerned that the Mercer mess will continue and that this is a temporary solution of crossovers while we wait for the still unfunded lowering of Aurora. There is a potential solution in removing the Viaduct that will redistribute traffic to streets in this area. How is the team contemplating those potentialities? Do not preclude choices now in advance, especially given that this area is a major traffic distribution point.

Key Commissioner Comments and Questions

- What are the relative volumes on Valley to Mercer?

- Mercer experiences 80,000 vehicles per day, but there is no data for Valley Street. Sidewalk dimension on Valley are 12-foot wide.
- Is there access to properties on Mercer?
 - Direct access to buildings will be eliminated unless buildings are already built (eliminate driveways). Alleys will also be eliminated.
- Are there bollards in the middle of Mercer?
 - Only at pause points as human scale element.
- Maintain views while one is on Westlake to water.
 - All north-south streets give views to water.
- Are elements distinguished in trail to lake? Is there special landscaping?
 - Yes.
- Until Aurora is lowered, how would you get to Seattle Center if you go on Roy?
- With Westlake being a boulevard, the continuity of Westlake at 9th for freight movement creates a bulb and should be a special spot since it conceptually laps the corner and gives the opportunity to explore. Bike lanes do not continue past 9th to Roy and therefore the team can invite more activity to that spot.
- Graphics of major signage are needed.
- Signage and lighting poles need more resolution.
- WSDOT land is a gateway and entryway; what is the timeframe and negotiation to have that land as a part of this project?
 - The team has been working with WSDOT. The community group has landscaped the I-5 exit ramp area and need to eliminate it to frame gateway.
- Why is there a different set of light poles on different streets? What are elements of continuity when walking around the neighborhood? There is an opportunity to look at the little pieces to give it more strength (scale, materials are different on Mercer and Valley).
 - The team is waiting for artist suggestions. CityLight standards need to be adhered to and the team will come up with continuity, perhaps in the finish, color, or base element.
- Vertical elements (trees and lights), signage, wayfinding, and parking, may cause clutter. Valley lighting requires poles on either side of streets and is intimate. Think of Valley as a one-sided street, which may not be right place for overhanging lights.
- Trees are vertical elements and are challenges that have to happen. The design is weak on Mercer (between Westlake and 9th). Center trees need to be the same as sidewalk trees.
- Are all of north-south streets going to have trees? How are those streets being treated because they seem neglected? There are currently four blocks of heavily designed blocks, with two blocks of “goodies.” Perhaps the team can expand the design to cover more blocks.
 - The team is waiting for redevelopment of those blocks in order to move forward.
- Is the team making design palettes for private developments in context of the larger district?
 - Design Commission urban form charrette in November for SLU.
- Reduce palette to make overall cohesiveness.
- Sidewalk widths are generous; the tree in the parking strip is vulnerable to car crashes? Why not put in green fingers on Valley?
- Simplify number of measures.
- Appreciate wealth of traffic, pedestrian, bike data; traffic signals on a traditional signal pole.
- The temporary area in the west is a pretty significant area and likely to be there for awhile. The solution should be simple and elegant and should extend to the area in the north (blackberry vines) on WSDOT side with artist because people think that is the gateway. Put this in the budget.
- Westlake and 9th is a boulevard heading north. Would like team to reinforce in the appearance and landscape that Westlake is dominant street with continuity, and 9th is merging street.