

# King Street Greenway

The community's top priority area is the I-5 underpass on S King St, between 8th Ave S and 10th Ave S. Our second priority area is the intersection at S King St and 5th Ave S.

## Applicant Problem

The I-5 freeway cuts through this historic neighborhood, creating a physical and cultural divide between the Chinatown - International District and Little Saigon. Disconnected regulation of the streets, sidewalks, and embankment makes it challenging for multiple governing bodies to oversee the area under I-5.

The I-5 underpass on S King St is our top priority location for this project because it is a public health and safety issue. In the past 18 months, the health and safety issues under I-5 have been exacerbated by rapidly increasing illegal encampments, hazardous waste, illegal dumping, and crime. This area under I-5 has been problematic for decades and continues to attract illicit activities, discourages pedestrian activity, and undermines the value of this historic neighborhood.

### PROJECT TYPE

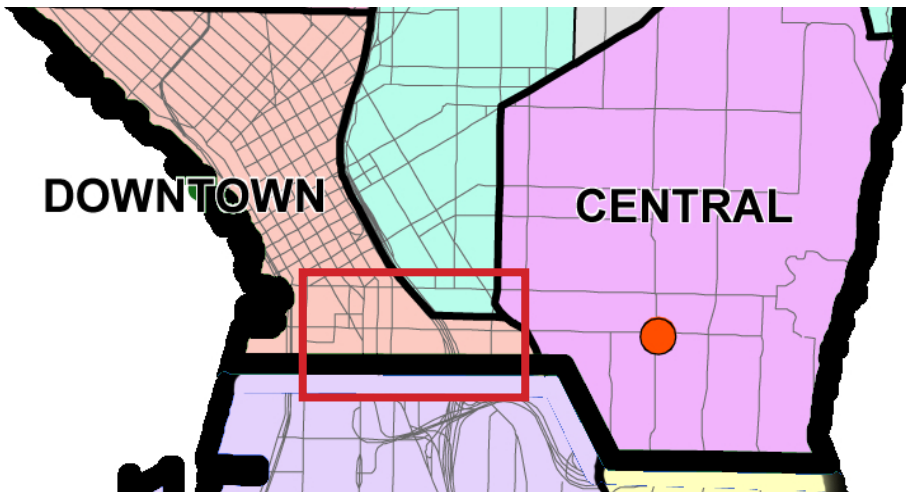
Neighborhood Greenway

### LENGTH

1,200 LF

### COST ESTIMATE

\$1 million



The community has identified a second priority area. The intersection at S King St and 5th Ave S is one of the most important gateways into the Chinatown International District. It is also where the Chinatown Gate is located and serves as an entry into the neighborhood from the transit tunnel, one of the busiest public transportation hubs in the city.

SDOT has recently identified S King St as a 'greenway' and there is currently efforts between the City and community groups in kicking off the design and planning process for implementing traffic-calming greenway features on S King St between 5th Ave S and 20th Ave. This proposed greenway is a two mile stretch spanning between Chinatown International District and Central District. As part of this community process, we have identified the following problems in the aforementioned locations: public safety, cleanliness, accessibility and connectivity.

### **Applicant Solution**

The Chinatown International District community has been working on a number of public open space improvement projects including I-5 underpass, alley reactivation, greenway, and park redevelopment. A clear next step is to physically connect these various streetscape improvement efforts throughout the neighborhood - including connection to Little Saigon (east of I-5) so these amenities can be accessible to all.

With a small grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), InterIm Community Development Association is in its initial stages of convening community members and groups interested in improving the area under I-5. The group is interested in building upon previous under I-5 improvements and taking on placemaking activities in this space.

However, the group recognizes the need to align with the larger context of city and state regulated property for the purpose of sustaining its efforts.

The seed money from the NEA can only support the community engagement and early stage of design and planning process of this project. Additional funding is required to fully complete this design plan and project implementation. The Chinatown International District community has created numerous design plans in the last 20 years to improve this problematic area under I-5, including the Chinatown/International District Strategic Plan (1998) and the Chinatown, Japantown, Little Saigon - International District Urban Design Streetscape and Open Space Master Plan (2004).



*Looking west underneath I-5 underpass*



*Looking east on S King St*

However, most of these plans were not implemented due to the lack of funding to carry out the recommended physical improvements. In addition, we understand the design and planning process must involve various City departments, SDOT, WSDOT, local property owners, and community groups in the very early stage in order to ensure a successful and meaningful outcome. The community has once again picked up momentum in moving the project forward and are reinvesting their time and energies towards working with the City in bringing positive changes to the I-5 underpass.

# Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Review

## Project Description

S King St is a non-arterial street running east-west. Between 8th Ave S and 12th Ave S, King Street is 42 feet wide. It has parallel parking on both sides and can accommodate two directions of traffic simultaneously. S King St has marked shared use lane markings for bicyclists and is currently being reviewed for a neighborhood greenway. This review focused on the segment of S King St from 8th Ave S to 12th Ave S. The intersection of S King St and 5th Ave S is being reviewed separately by SDOT and is not part of this program. The intersections of S King St with 8th Ave S and 10th Ave S are controlled by all-way stops. The intersection of S King St with 12th Ave S is a fully signalized intersection. Existing storm drainage facilities are present along the corridor and at intersections. Utilities along the corridor include water, gas, and overhead electric and communication facilities.

Additional information provided by the project applicants clarified that the main improvements requested are a widened planting strip area and narrower roadway, with sidewalk repair where needed. This concept aligns with existing work underway by SDOT to create a streetscape concept plan which would be adopted into SDOT's ROW Improvements Manual. This concept plan is expected to be adopted by the end of 2016.

This NSF project would implement the final design for this street as contained in the plan, in partnership with private development. The total project cost for implementing the streetscape concept plan on these two blocks work will be well over \$1 million, even considering private development on this street. Therefore the project cost is set at \$1 million, with the final scope of the project established during the design phase.

## Constructability

- Implementing the streetscape concept plan may require utility adjustment, pavement restoration, and upgrades to existing curb ramps.
- Construction under I-5 will require coordination with the Washington State Department of Transportation.

## Impacts

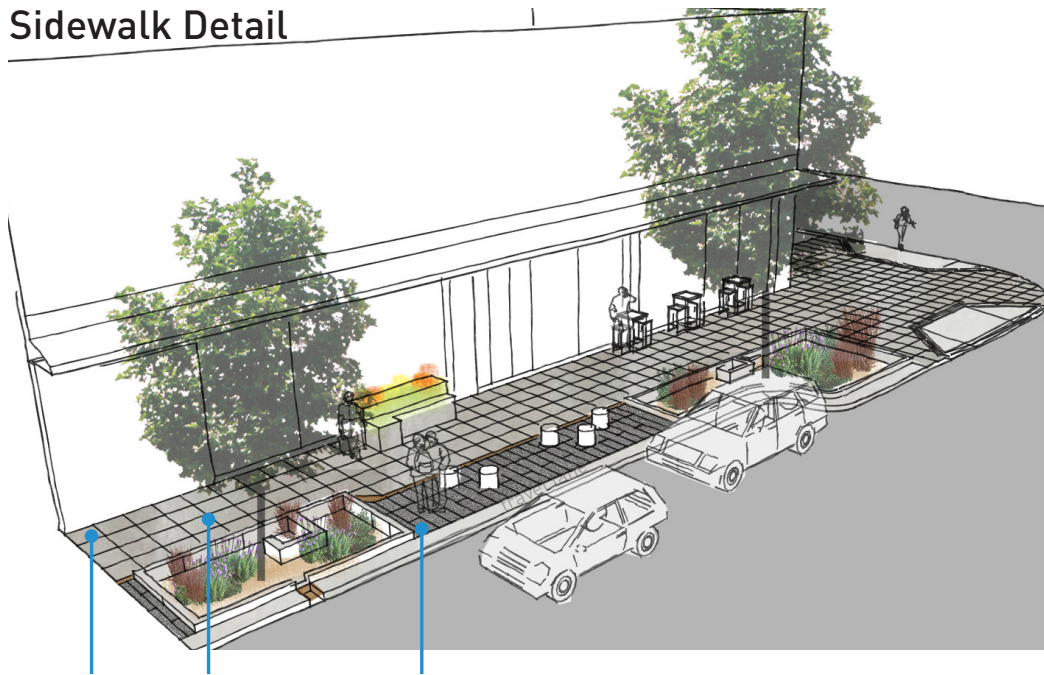
- The reduction in the roadway width may be perceived as a detriment to motorists, however, the overall width will still facilitate two directions of traffic.

## Benefits

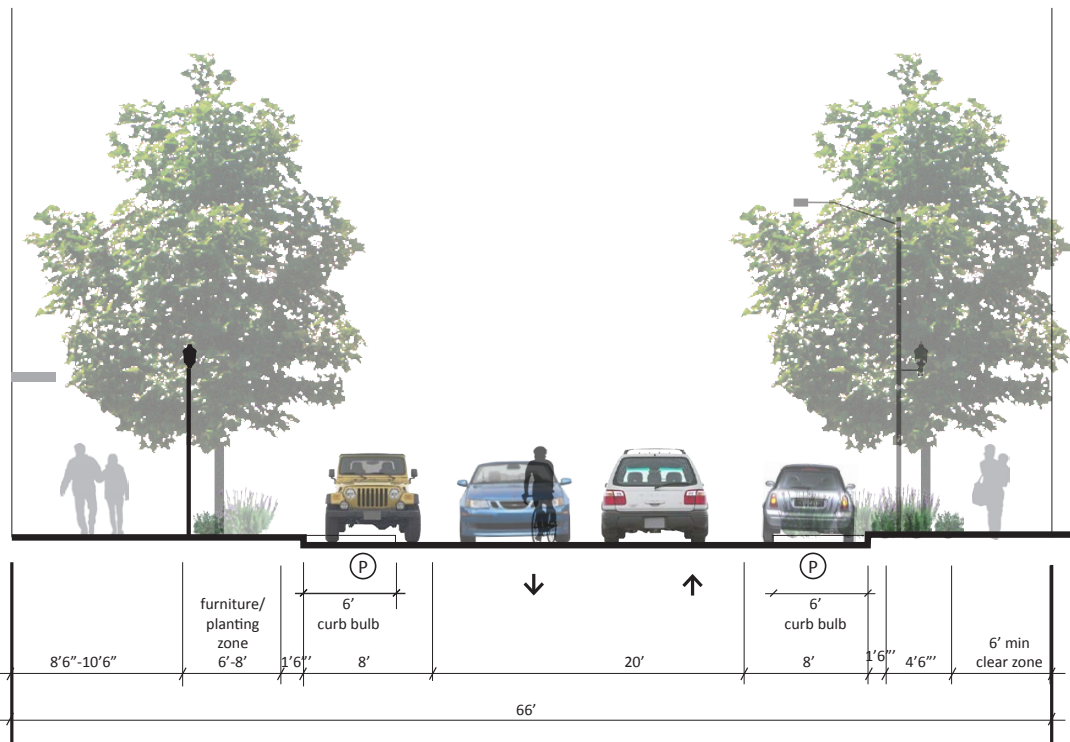
- Enhanced pedestrian environment by addition of planting strip and increased separation of traffic. There is an increased opportunity for community engagement including public art and seating areas.
- Removal of pollution generating surface from the storm water system.
- Reduction in traffic speeds due to narrower roadway.

# Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Review

## Sidewalk Detail



*Draft streetscape plan for King St currently under public review*



*Draft King St cross-section. Feedback on this proposal is being actively solicited from the surrounding community separate from the NSF process.*