

Swedish First Hill Skybridge

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Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair

Brodie Bain

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Ben de Rubertis

Thaddeus Egging

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Commissioners Present

Shannon Loew, Chair
Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair
Lee Copeland
Ben de Rubertis
Thaddeus Egging
Laura Haddad
Theo Lim
John Savo

Commissioners Excused

Brodie Bain
Rachel Gleeson

Project Description

Swedish is proposing to construct a skybridge over Minor Ave between Columbia Street and Cherry Street. The 220 foot long skybridge will connect the existing hospital, located east of Minor Ave, with a proposed medical office tower, which will serve as the primary supply and logistics center for the Swedish campus. The skybridge is a part of larger proposal that will include the proposed medical office tower (separate petition) and below-grade loading docks with a service tunnel (separate permit).

Because it is located within the public ROW, the Seattle Design Commission (SDC) is required to review projects requesting the authorization of a proposed skybridge. The SDC will then provide a recommendation to SDOT and City Council regarding the applicant's request, including a public benefit package to mitigate the impact of the skybridge on the ROW.

In Swedish's 2006 approved Major Institution Master Plan (MIMP), this block is identified as the location for a skybridge. The MIMP was completed in 2005 and approved by the City Council in 2006. As required under the MIMP, a Standing Advisory Committee has reviewed the proposal, including improvements to the public realm. Projects developed under a MIMP are not subject to the City's Design Review Board. However, City staff reviews these projects for MIMP compliance.

Meeting Summary

This was the SDC's second review of the skybridge proposal. Following the presentation, SDC review, and deliberation, the SDC voted 8-0 in favor of the merit and public benefit package, with several conditions and recommendations.

Recusals and Disclosures

Brodie Bain recused herself, as she is an employee of Perkins+Will, the architecture firm designing this project.

Shannon Loew disclosed that he co-presented with Mark Brands at the 2016 WASLA conference in Lynwood, WA

April 7, 2016**9:00 - 11:00 am****Type**

Skybridge

Phase

Merit and Public Benefit

Previous Reviews[03/17/16](#)**Project Team Present****Mark Brands**

SiteWorkshop

Brad Hinthorne

Perkins + Will

Daria Supp

Perkins + Will

Attendees**June Altaras**

Swedish First Hill

Beverly Barnett

SDOT

Gina Gage

Perkins + Will

Amy Gray

SDOT

Eric Olnier

Providence Health & Services

Gordon Padelford

Seattle Neighborhood Greenways

Kelly Pajek

4 Culture

Nancy Rogers

Cairncross & Hemplemann

Maureen Sheehan

DON

Aubrey Weeks

SiteWorkshop

April 7, 2016

Summary of Presentation

Mark Brands, of SiteWorkshop, and Brad Hinthorne and Daria Supp, of Perkins + Will, presented the project proposal. Mr. Hinthorne began by providing a summary of the skybridge proposal as it relates to the overall vision for the Swedish First Hill Campus. He then invited June Altaras, Chief Executive of Seattle Swedish campuses, to talk about the need for the skybridge, specifically in the transferring of patients and specialized equipment between the hospital and proposed office medical building. (see figures 1 & 2 for more detail).

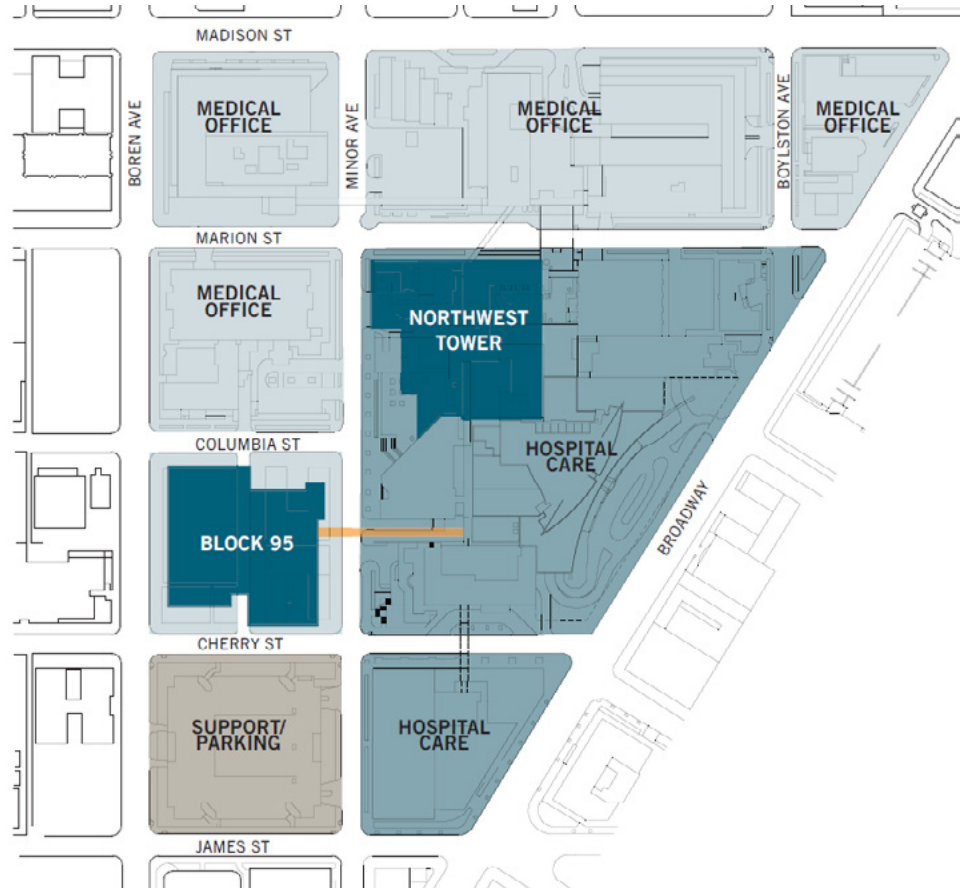


Figure 1: Proposed skybridge location

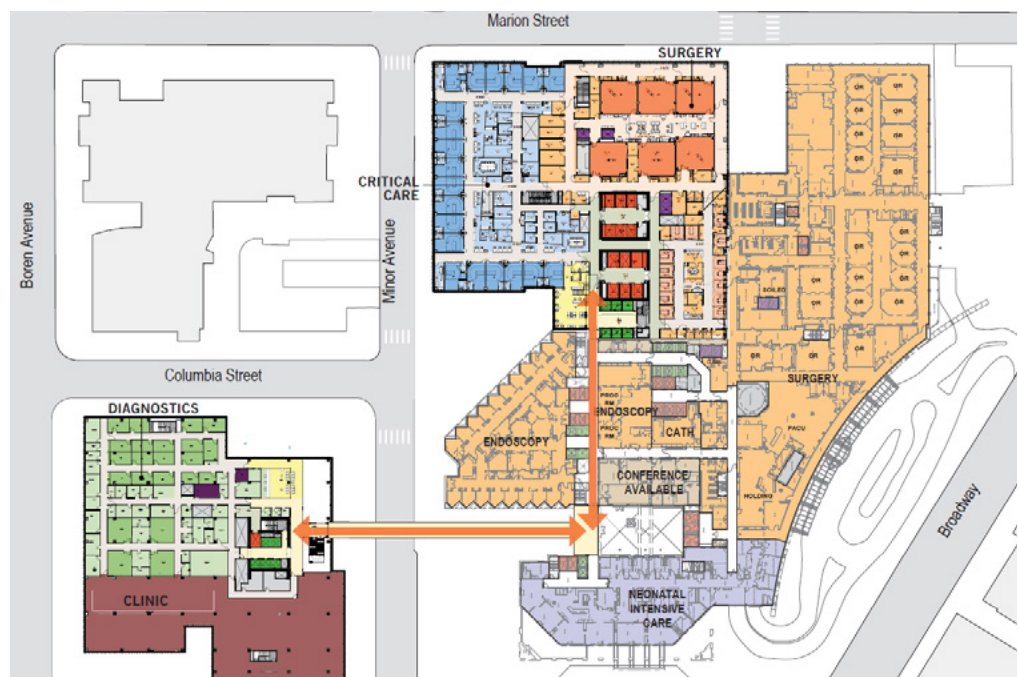


Figure 2: Existing and proposed facility programming

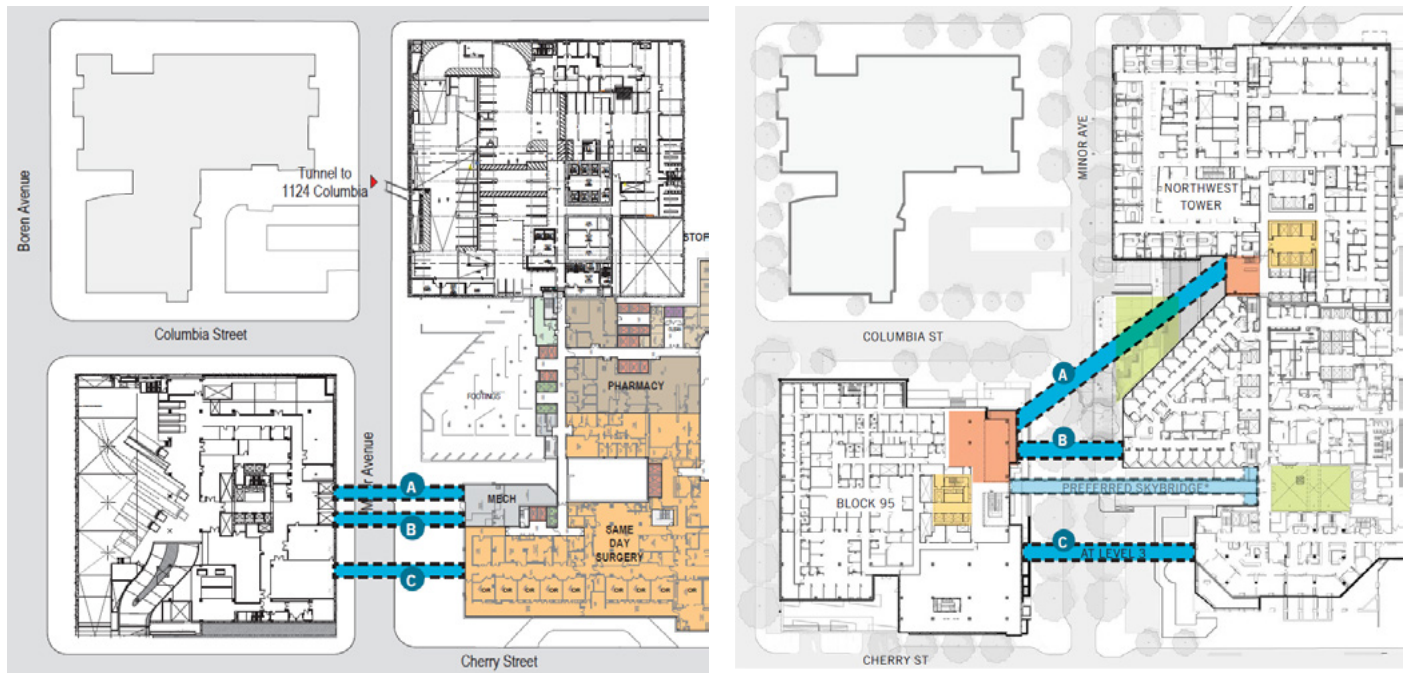


Figure 3: Proposed bridge alternatives - below grade (left) and above grade (right)

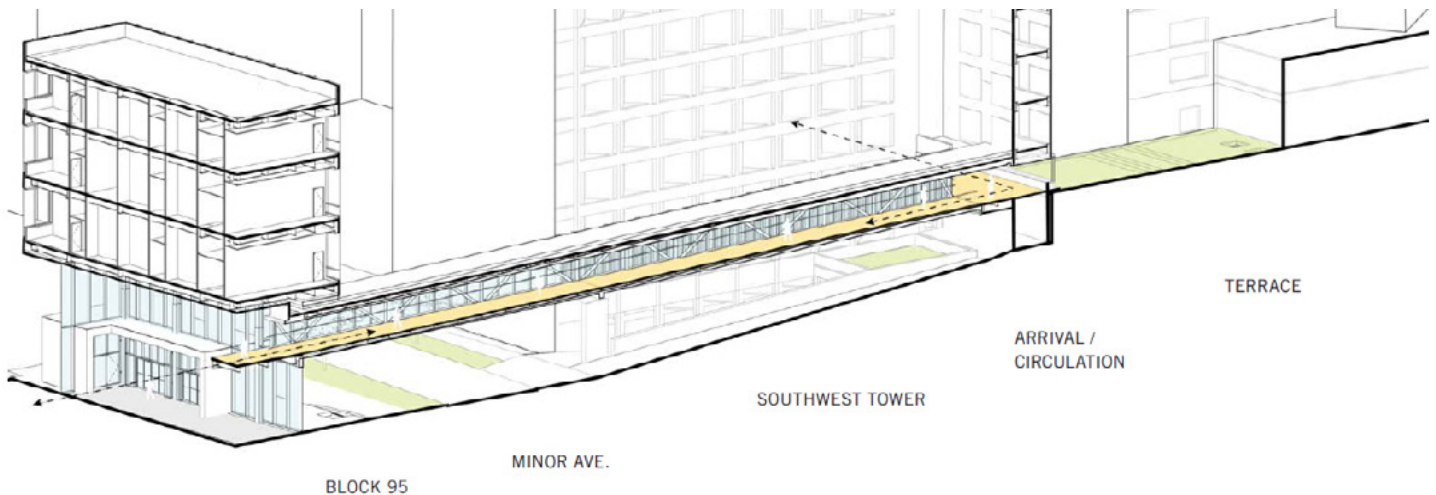


Figure 4: Proposed skybridge

Prior to presenting the public benefit package, Brad Hinthorne and Daria Supp presented information about alternative solutions, existing conditions, circulation and bridge design. The project team presented at grade, above grade, and below grade alternatives to the current skybridge proposal. The at-grade alternative included transporting patients and specialized equipment across the Minor Ave right of way (ROW) as well as providing ambulance transportation services between the hospital and proposed medical office building for critical patients. Proposed above and below grade alternatives would interfere with existing programming in the main hospital building. (see figure 3 for more detail)

The skybridge will connect to the 2nd level of each building, providing access to diagnostics in the proposed medical office building and existing patient care facilities within the main hospital (see figure 4). The bridge will be constructed using a steel truss system with concrete support columns. Glass fins will be attached to the north facing side of the skybridge to ensure privacy for patients using adjacent endoscopy rooms located within the main hospital. Signage and wayfinding will be visible to guide pedestrians and patients using the skybridge. The main hospital terminus of the skybridge is proposed to include views onto a rooftop garden, which will include lightweight material, stones, mounded planting, and will not be accessible for use by the public.

Mark Brands presented the following elements of the public benefit package:

- Minor Ave Garden

- Public Art
- Minor and Columbia St intersection improvements
- Minor Ave ROW improvements

Minor Ave Garden

The Minor Ave Garden is located at the intersection of Minor Ave and Columbia St. Although the garden is located adjacent to the public entry for the Northwest Tower, it will not provide direct access to the hospital entrance. The garden will provide 3,200 square feet (sf) of open space that will include sculptures, crushed rock paving, wood garden benches, seasonal medicinal plants, and a low lying stone feature wall.

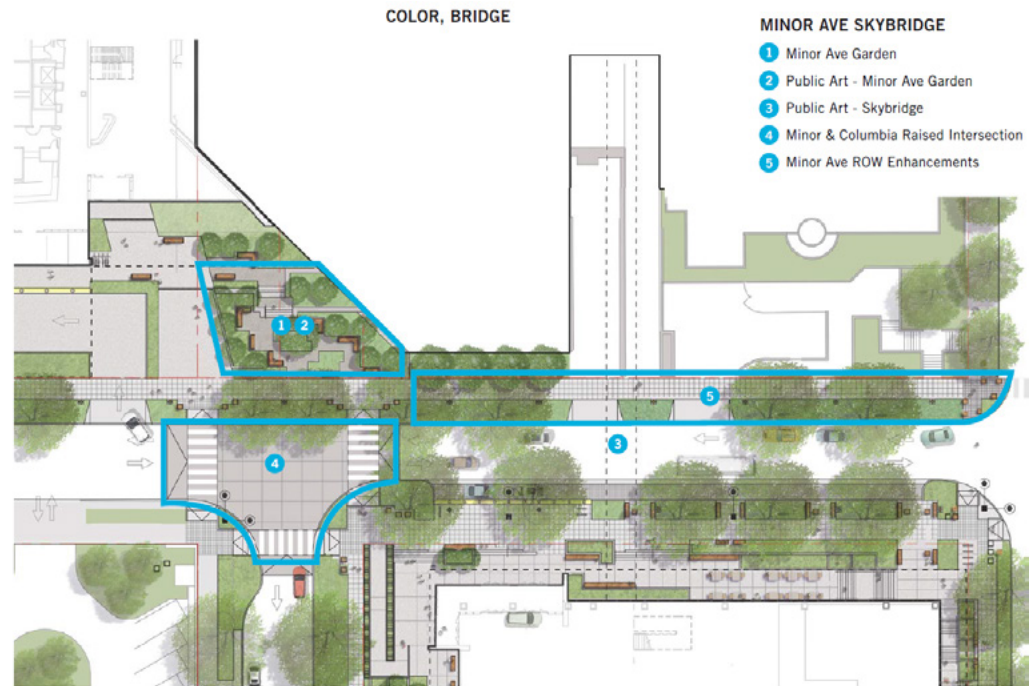


Figure 5: Proposed public benefits

Public Art

The project team has designated two locations for public art – Minor Ave Garden and the skybridge- and has allocated \$500,000 for the program. \$150,000 will be used to finance cultivated artwork within the Minor Ave Garden while \$350,000 will be used to engage an artist on the skybridge. Public art located within the Minor Ave Garden will include sculptures purchased by Swedish, which will support the overall idea of providing a garden for healing, reflection, and respite. The design team will collaborate with Pacific Northwest artist in providing artwork on the skybridge. The artist will be chosen by the Swedish Public Art Advisory Committee (SPAAC).

Minor and Columbia St intersection improvements

Proposed improvements include a partially raised intersection, ADA accessible ramps, and crosswalk striping.

Minor Ave ROW improvements

Street ROW improvements along Minor Ave between Cherry and Columbia St will include new paving, curbs, sidewalk, curb ramps, landscaping, and pedestrian scale lights

Agency Comments

Beverly Barnett, SDOT, appreciated the project team showing how the public benefit package fit within the overall project. Ms. Barnett mentioned that SDOT some of the information presented today would have been helpful while the Skybridge Review Committee drafted their recommendation. After today's presentation, Ms. Barnett mentioned that the SRC is comfortable proceeding.

Amy Gray, SRC, SDOT, stated that the SRC reviewed the materials and, finding no significant issues with the proposal, approved the project for a 10-year term with two renewal 10-year terms. Ms. Gray mentioned that the SRC found the public benefit package to be adequate, but recommended the project team provide a sign at the garden in order to welcome public use. The SRC recommended the artistic elements related to the skybridge proposal be completed before our referral to council to approve.

Public Comments

None

Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Rational and need
- Design characteristics of the bridge
- Art integration at the pedestrian level
- Pedestrian experience

Rational and need

The SDC thanked the design team for providing a detailed explanation of the critical need for the skybridge. Specifically, Commissioners appreciated the design team explaining how the skybridge will not directly compete with the streetscape for pedestrian activity.

Design characteristics of the bridge

The SDC encouraged the design team to continue developing the bridge design in a way that will emphasize structural elements such as steel truss, railing, and connection points with the concrete base supports. Commissioners support the proposal to expand the landing area in the existing Hospital and the conversion of a rooftop into a garden space that can be viewed from the point where the skybridge lands at the existing hospital.

Art and integration at the pedestrian level

The SDC appreciated the level of consideration given to including art in the public benefit package. Commissioners recommended the artist work closely with the design team in creating an art proposal for the skybridge. The SDC also recommended the proposed art be visible from the streetscape and correlate with artwork along the First Hill Mile project that was included in the companion public benefit package for the related alley vacation.

Pedestrian experience

Although the SDC appreciated the accessible location of the Minor Avenue garden, Commissioners recommended the garden include signage stating that the garden is publically accessible to everyone. The commission appreciated the design and location of seating and recommended the design team blend paving patterns used within the Minor Ave ROW and garden in order to create a more open and inviting space. By blending the material in the right of way into the garden, it provides additional visual cues that the space is for the public. The SDC cautioned the design team to think critically about the placement of sculptures within the garden as to not interfere with sightlines into and through the space.

Action

The SDC thanked the project team for the presentation on merit and public benefit. The Commission appreciated level of detail presented regarding the need for the skybridge.

The SDC approved, 8-0, the merit and public benefit package for the Swedish First Hill Skybridge with the following conditions:

1. SDC agreement to the art approval process as modified to include representation of SDC member(s) on the Swedish Public Art Advisory Committee's review of artist proposals for the skybridge

The SDC also provided the following recommendations:

1. To the extent possible, place emphasis on the skybridge's structural elements including hand rails, steel truss system, and concrete base
2. Provide attention to the integration of architectural detail and artist expression on the skybridge
3. All artwork included with the public benefit package should be experienced from the street
4. Create an artwork program which corresponds with artwork along the First Hill Mile while reflecting the identity of the First Hill Community
5. Develop design strategies that includes the public's visual and physical access to the Minor Ave Garden