

# S Lander Street Bridge

**Edward B. Murray**  
Mayor

**Samuel Assefa**  
Director, OPCD

**Ross Tilghman**, Chair

**John Savo**, Vice Chair

**Lee Copeland**

**Ben de Rubertis**

**Thaddeus Egging**

**Rachel Gleeson**

**Laura Haddad**

**Brianna Holan**

**Rick Krochalis**

**Jescelle Major**

**Michael Jenkins**  
Director

**Aaron Hursey**  
Planner

**Juliet Acevedo**  
Administrative Staff

**Diana Settlemyer**  
Intern

**Office of Planning and  
Community Development**  
700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000  
PO Box 34019  
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**TEL** 206-615-1349  
**FAX** 206-233-7883  
seattle.gov/dpd/cityplanning/

## Commissioners Present

Ross Tilghman, Chair

John Savo, Vice Chair

Lee Copeland

Thaddeus Egging

Rachel Gleeson

Laura Haddad

Brianna Holan

Rick Krochalis

Jescelle Major

## Commissioners Excused

Ben de Rubertis

## Project Description

The project is located on S Lander St between 1st Ave S and 4th Ave S in the South Downtown (SODO) Neighborhood. S Lander is one of three at-grade east-west connections in SODO. The proposed bridge will rise above an existing at-grade railroad crossing between Occidental and 3rd Ave S. The goal of the project is to reduce travel time and increasing safety for users, due to increased rail activity. The bridge will be constructed within the existing right-of-way (ROW) and will include vehicular travel lanes as well as a multi-use bike and pedestrian facility. The project was initially before the commission in September 2007. However, following that initial review the project was put on hold until 2015. The current project has received additional funding from the Move Seattle Levy, WSDOT, and the US Department of Transportation.

## Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) second review of the S Lander St Bridge project since the project was reactivated in 2015. The purpose of this meeting was to review the design development phase. After the presentation and discussion, the SDC voted, 7-2, to approve the design development phase of the S Lander St Bridge project with conditions and recommendations. The SDC will review the project's sustainability strategy at an upcoming subcommittee meeting.

## Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures.

**April 20, 2017**  
 9:00 – 10:30 am

**Type**  
 CIP

**Phase**  
 Design Development

**Previous Reviews**  
[1/5/17](#)

**Presenters**  
**Jim Howard**  
 HBB Landscape Architecture  
**Eric Strauch**  
 SDOT

**Attendees**  
**Barbara Moffat**  
 SDOT  
**Merit Oviir**  
 HBB Landscape Architecture  
**Richard Patterson**  
 COWI

**Summary of Presentation**

Eric Strauch, of SDOT, and Jim Howard, of HBB Landscape Architecture, presented the design development phase of the S Lander Street Bridge project. Eric Strauch provided project history, site context, project goals, and community outreach efforts prior to presenting the updated bridge design. Community outreach included mailers, social media updates, and phone calls to local businesses and community members as well as in-person and online open houses. Community input influenced the design of architectural detailing on railings and fences, wall patterns, multi-use pathway, lighting, and surrounding landscape.

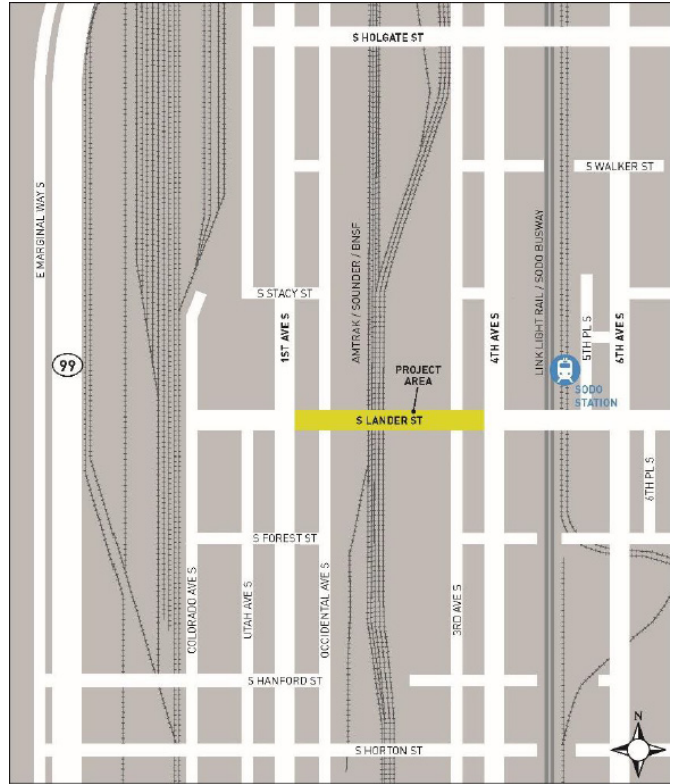


Figure 1: Project site location

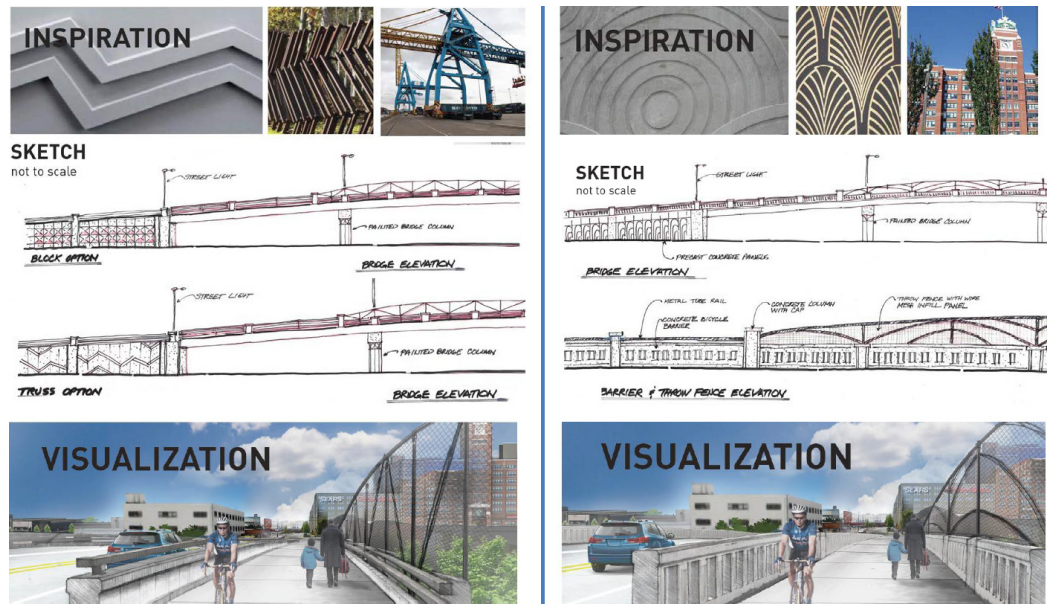
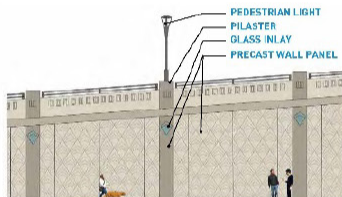
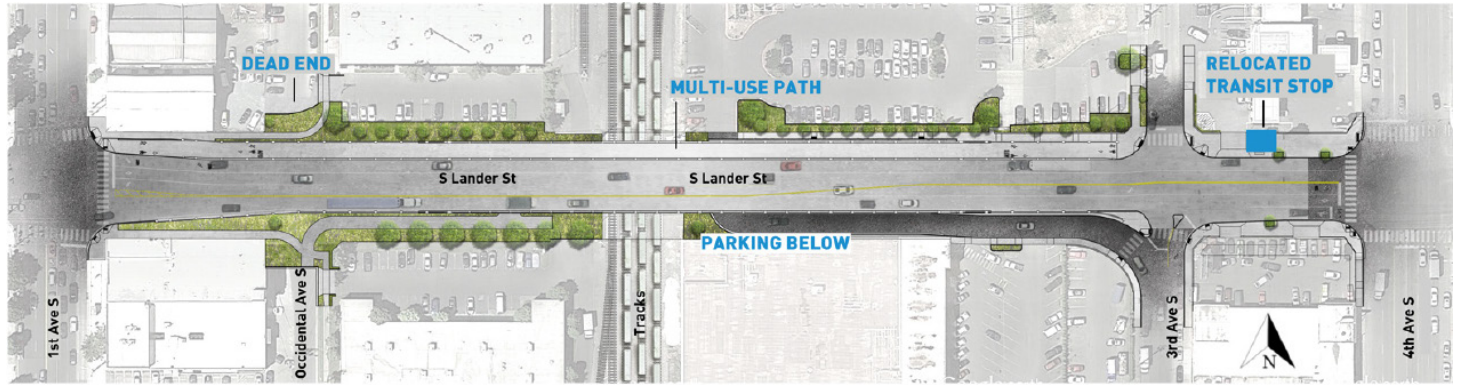


Figure 2: Previous urban design concepts

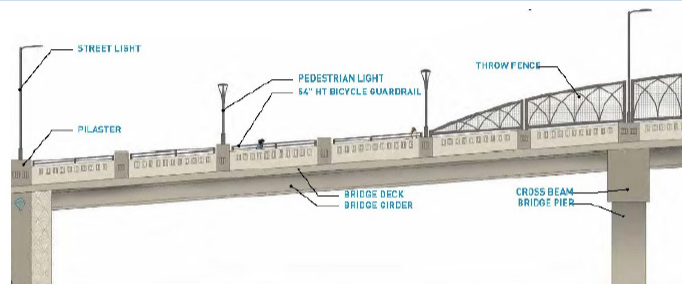
Initial urban design concepts for the bridge design included an Industrial and Art Deco theme. The updated design concept was influenced through engagement with a local artist, incorporation of SDC recommendations, and continued community outreach. The design is meant to reflect the character of the SODO neighborhood, incorporating design motifs found on nearby iconic buildings like the Sears/Starbucks Center, the nearby stadiums, and bridge guardrails. The proposed bridge will incorporate Art Deco themes in the throw fence, exterior guardrails, a guardrail between vehicular lanes and multi-use pathway, vehicular lighting, and precast concrete wall panels. See figures 1 & 2 for more detail.

Pedestrian lighting will be incorporated into the design of the guardrail on the northern edge of the bridge if funding becomes available. lighting, street trees, and

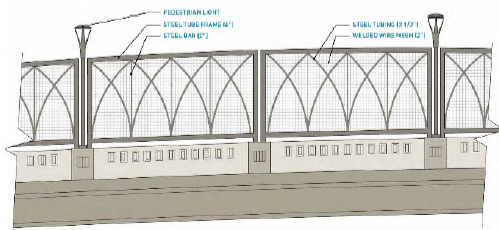




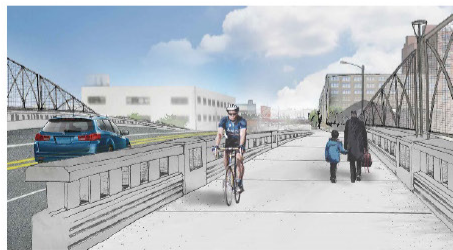
PRE-CAST WALL PANEL



BRIDGE ELEVATION DETAIL



THROW FENCE DETAIL



BRIDGE PERSPECTIVE

Figure 3: Proposed site plan (above), lighting plan (center), and bridge design details (below)

low-lying vegetation are included on pedestrian pathways between 1st Ave S and Occidental Ave S. See figure 3 for more detail.

The updated design does not include a tunnel connecting Occidental Ave S for non-motorized movement. Due to constraints that include the location of existing utilities and the height of the bridge at this location, the tunnel would not align with Occidental Ave S. The effect of this would be to significantly reduce visibility and sight lines for pedestrians and cyclists. Accordingly, pedestrians traveling along Occidental Ave S will be redirected to 1st Ave S using an existing sidewalk.

## Agency Comments

None

## Public Comments

None

## Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Circulation and wayfinding (Pedestrian and bike movements)
- Lighting
- Design motif and materials
- Sustainability

### *Circulation and wayfinding*

The SDC appreciated the location and width of the multi-use pathway. Commissioners mentioned that the design of mixing zones, where cyclists and pedestrians intersect, will be critical to the success of the pathway. The commission recommended the addition of physical and audible elements to slow cyclists as they approach a mixing zone, in particular at the northeast corner of 1st Ave S and S Lander. The SDC is concerned with the limited design elements addressing pedestrian use. The commission recommended the design team be more deliberate in their design of pedestrian spaces and movement throughout the site, specifically where Occidental Ave S terminates, through the use of signage, landscape, hardscape materials, and lighting.

### *Lighting*

The SDC is concerned with the lack of funding for pedestrian lighting. The commission recommended the project team prioritize pedestrian lighting over other design elements that will have a limited exposure to the pedestrian environment.

### *Design motif and materials*

Although the SDC appreciated the project team's response to community preference, commissioners are concerned with the absence of a cohesive design overall. The commission recommended the design team provide greater consistency in the design of individual elements. Commissioners recommended the design team simplify the design of the guardrail between westbound traffic lanes and the multi-use pathway to save money and use those funds for pedestrian lighting. The SDC approved of the design of the retaining wall, but recommended the joints align with the proposed design on each wall panel. Commissioners also recommended the design team continue to refine the design of the throw barrier.

### *Sustainability*

The SDC is highly concerned with the lack of a sustainability strategy. Commissioners agreed this was a missed opportunity to incorporate storm water mitigation and material reuse strategies. The SDC will review the project's sustainability strategy during a subcommittee meeting.

## Action

The SDC thanked the project team for presenting the design development phase for the S Lander Street Bridge project. The SDC voted, 7-2, to approve the design development phase for the S Lander Street Bridge project with the following condition:

1. Return for a subcommittee meeting to review the project's sustainability strategy

The SDC also provided the following recommendations:

1. Study the pedestrian and bicyclist mixing zone near the intersection of 1st Ave and S Lander St to increase safety, including where the adjacent at-grade sidewalk meets the bridge pathway
2. Reconsider the design details of the guardrail between westbound traffic lanes and multi-use pathway to save money and reuse those funds to include pedestrian lighting in the based project bid
3. Strive for greater consistency in the design of bridge elements
4. Improve pedestrian mobility options that will create more informal transitions where Occidental Ave S terminates.

The following are comments from commissioners who voted against the project:

**Jescelle Major**- A bridge is a system and its effects should be systemic. The pedestrian, cyclist, and environmental networks are essential parts of this bridge and I don't see any details that explain how these elements are thoughtfully incorporated into the bridge design. This was an opportunity to show how important infrastructure is and to showcase the benefits our city could receive by constructing bridges like this. If this project is supposed to serve as an example then I don't think it is successful in highlighting those issues. Also, lighting, wayfinding, and circulation should not be recommendations but should be embedded in the design proposal.

**Laura Haddad**- I questioned the necessity of the proposed bridge during the previous meeting but feel that the team has since then better demonstrated the need for the bridge. There is a lack of coherence with many details addressing transitions at intersections, such as at 1st Ave S and Lander, and Occidental Ave S and Lander; as well as transitions of material elements and joints throughout the bridge design. There are a lot elements and design details that should be more refined at 90% design development, including the design of a sustainability strategy.