

The Pioneer Square Revitalization Committee Updated January 2012

PIONEER SQUARE 2015

A Strategy for Seattle's First Neighborhood



Pioneer Square 2015

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(Overview)

The Pioneer Square Commercial District Revitalization Project is an initiative to improve the overall business health of Pioneer Square.

The project began in December 2009 with an analysis of Pioneer Square's economy and the neighborhood's major business needs and opportunities. Over the next six months, members of the Pioneer Square business community met to discuss these priorities and the actions needed to create a vibrant and robust commercial business district.

The outcome was a set of actionable Community and City strategies to address key issues around business retention and growth, retail mix, and business capacity in Pioneer Square, released June 2010 as *Pioneer Square 2015, A Strategy for Seattle's First Neighborhood*.

This is a highlight of the 2011 progress to date by both the Community and City in the following goal areas, and lays out the City's priorities for the rest of 2012:

Community Actions:

- 1) Actively Engage Businesses in Supporting Economic Growth
- 2) Build the Neighborhood's Organizational Development and Advocacy Capacity
- 3) Focus on the District's Historic Building Assets and Enhance the Build Environment
- 4) Effectively Market, Brand and Promote Pioneer Square

City Actions:

- 1) Support Pioneer Square's Historic Buildings and a Positive Development Environment
- 2) Provide Economic Development Support and Investment
- 3) Provide Supportive Utility, Parking, and Transportation Infrastructure
- 4) Ensure an Environment of Public Safety and Civility
- 5) Looking Ahead

1

Community Actions

Actively Engage Businesses in Supporting Economic Growth

A. Support Existing and Emerging Economic Clusters

- Increased communication and outreach to businesses and residents
- Increased use of social media and advertising
- Increased marketing, advertising and First Thursday promotion; November & December bus and billboard campaign
- Phase 1 of Retail Recruitment project launched November 1st; building neighborhood capacity to recruit and retain independent retail
- In partnership with WSDOT opened Milepost 31; tourist/project information center December 1st

B. Research and Inventory the Businesses and Nonprofit Organizations to Understand “Who is in Pioneer Square” and Accurately Characterize the Economy

- Comprehensive business inventory completed during December 2011
- Analysis of tech cluster completed in June 2011 and report distributed

C. Meet with Businesses Individually and In Groups to Engage Them, Solicit Their Needs for Business Retention and Expansion

- Alliance and Pioneer Square BIA hosted quarterly business mixers
- Alliance and tech companies started quarterly tech mixers
- Alliance staff and volunteers meet regularly with new and existing businesses
- More frequent and formal neighborhood updates have begun

COMMUNITY ACTIONS



2

Community Actions

Build the Neighborhood's Organizational Development and Advocacy Capacity

COMMUNITY ACTIONS

A. Support Public Civility Improvement Efforts

- Civility steering committee working on access, signage, and development of public restroom facilities for the neighborhood. Public restrooms included on 2011 Map & Guide. Restroom feasibility study proceeding
- Alliance working with interdepartmental team to address issues of street civility and public safety



B. Address Mismatched Boundaries

- Doubled size of BIA Ratepayer Board
- In partnership with OED, working with BIA consultant; implement plan for assessment and boundary changes during 2012



C. Host Forums and Events to Hear Ideas and Generate Discussion in Support of Economic Development

- Business and Tech mixers
- Alliance hosted numerous neighborhood forums including parking and construction impacts
- Web site technical assistance provided in collaboration with Google

D. Develop Relationships with the Nightclubs

- Nightclubs represented on Pioneer Square BIA board

3

Community Actions

Focus on the District's Historic Building Assets and Enhance the Built Environment

COMMUNITY ACTIONS

A. Increase Residential Development and Density in Pioneer Square

- North Lot Development broke ground; work continues
- Alliance provided support to 200 Occidental development
- On-going support and collaboration with residents council

B. Address Vacant, Dilapidated, and Underused Buildings

- Storefronts Seattle program to activate vacant storefronts continues
- Completed inventory and map of dilapidated and neglected buildings; outreach to owners on-going
- Graffiti audit conducted and reported to City January 2012

C. Support Implementation of the Livable South Downtown Plan

- Livable South Downtown Plan passed

D. Advocate for the Maintenance, Improvement, and Activation of Public Spaces

- Alliance Design Committee meets monthly to address issues of built environment and public space
- Partnership with Center City Parks for Occidental Square Park activation and staffing
- Partnership with DSA/MID on neighborhood clean and safe activities
- Partnership with Alley Network for creating more pedestrian friendly, usable green ways in the neighborhood
- Alliance obtained 4Culture funding for a shovel ready model of repair and maintenance of sidewalk prism glass



4

Community Actions

Effectively Market, Brand, and Promote Pioneer Square



COMMUNITY ACTIONS

A. Develop a Comprehensive PR, Marketing and Branding Strategy for Pioneer Square

- New branding for the neighborhood, Pioneer Square BIA, and the Alliance launched July 2011
- Advertising campaign
- Holiday promotions and events in collaboration with DSA/MID

B. Develop a Communications Plan that Builds on the Square's Unique Mix of Assets

- Increased positive relationships with the media; telling a new story about Pioneer Square

C. Support the Trails to Treasure Program

- Trail to Treasure guided walking tours during summer 2011
- Trail to Treasure kiosks for neighborhood under design
- Content for next layer of history and stories being developed for audio tours and others adaptations

1

City Actions

Support Pioneer Square's Historic Buildings and a Positive Development Environment

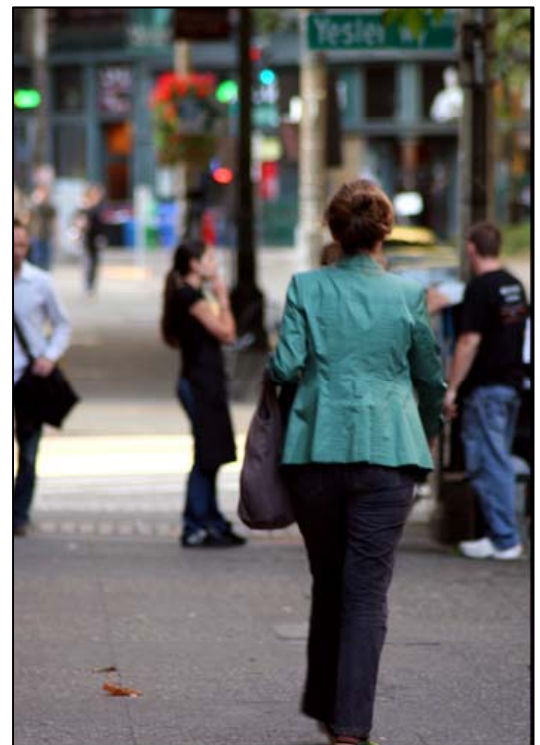
CITY ACTIONS

A. Facilitate Development and Adaptive Reuse Incentives

- North Lot Project (Stadium Place) is under construction. The first phase will produce 513 units of housing. The east block project is under design and is slated to be developed as a hotel and office project. The City's Office of Economic Development (OED) is investing federal New Markets Tax Credits to support the commercial portion of the North Lot project. The credits will result in \$1.7 million in equity and \$7.2 million in low-cost debt financing to help move the project forward. City staff worked with King County and the Public Stadium Authority to resolve remaining issues preventing the project from moving forward.
- The City's Department of Transportation (SDOT) and Department of Neighborhoods (DON) worked with the Alliance for Pioneer Square to support a student project that inventoried all sidewalk glass prisms above areaways. The Alliance received funding from 4Culture to create a model for repair and maintenance of prism glass.
- Pioneer Square Preservation Board staff reviewed and approved 23 projects in 2011.
- City staff resolved eight code violation issues in 2011 and initiated 10 new cases.

B. Address Vacant and Blighted Buildings

- The Storefront Seattle project received a \$20,000 Neighborhood Matching Fund award. The Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs (OACA), the Department of Planning and Development (DPD), and the Alliance are project steering committee members.



2

City Actions

Provide Economic Development Support and Investment

A. Identify New and Emerging Clusters; Recruit Complementary Businesses

- New businesses that have recently located to Pioneer Square include digital storage company Isilon, online retailer Blue Nile, game developer Zynga, and Jones Soda.

B. Align the City's Business and Economic Development Activities to Support Pioneer Square's Business Climate and Activity

- For 2012, OED will invest \$120,000 in the Alliance to support retail recruitment, neighborhood marketing during viaduct replacement construction, and expansion of the current "Business Improvement Area" boundaries.
- In addition to the direct investment, OED will feature Pioneer Square in its *Only in Seattle* neighborhood marketing campaign.
- The City worked with artists displaced from the 619 Western Building, and funded the Artist Space Assistance Program (ASAP) to provide relocation and placement services for artists and arts organizations seeking affordable studio, live/work, exhibition, performance and/or rehearsal space.
- The Seattle Square market operated in Occidental Park during July and August. The City invested \$6,000 in Neighborhood Matching Funds in the project.



CITY ACTIONS

3

City Actions

Provide Supportive Utility, Parking, and Transportation Infrastructure

CITY ACTIONS

A. Ensure Effective Utility and Technology Systems

- City departments collaborated to provide an opportunity to upgrade broadband capabilities along 1st Ave. S. The chosen service provider, Comcast, is working with the owners of 14 buildings along 1st Ave. S. in order to gain access to building tenants via the areaways. If successful, Comcast anticipates providing broadband service to 50 new customers.
- Over the summer, Seattle City Light (SCL) constructed a new duct bank along 1st Ave through Pioneer Square and rebuilt a vault on 2nd Ave Extension and Main Street. The duct bank construction on 1st Ave is complete and paving by SDOT is also complete.

B. Support Transportation Improvements and Mitigation

- City has reaffirmed that the new streetcar will serve Pioneer Square with a stop at S. Jackson St. and 2nd Ave. S. Construction begins this year.
- The City acquired King Street Station in 2008 and has been making continuous improvements. The next phase of construction will consist of building and clock tower seismic retrofit, mechanical/electrical/plumbing systems distribution, and select interior and exterior restoration, including the restoration of the ornamental plaster in the main waiting room. Construction began in March 2011 and will be completed in 2Q 2013.
- The King Street Station transportation hub area planning project is completed, and has won a Seattle Design Commission award.
- The City continues to support alley activation activities. “Nord Alley” is in the process of being designated as a Festival Street, which will significantly streamline the permitting process for events. City staff are also supporting the ongoing Alley Network project.
- A Neighborhood Project Fund award will allow installation of two pedestrian activated crossings on 1st Ave. S.
- City staff participated in the federal “Section 106” process related to mitigation for impacts from the Deep Bore Tunnel project, and a “Memorandum of Agreement” has been executed. The “Milepost 31” project information center is open on 1st Ave. S.
- A stakeholder group work session is being scheduled to provide community input on connections to the Central Waterfront

C. Effectively Manage Parking Supply and Demand

- The City has approved a community request that parking be allowed on Pier 48 until March 2012 when the pier will then be used for construction staging by Seattle Tunnel Partners.
- To address community concerns related to long periods where on-street parking is taken out of service for construction or other activities, SDOT will use no parking easels, with exact dates and hours of no parking listed. This will allow parking spaces to reopen more quickly when construction activities are not taking place.
- The Deep Bore Tunnel project has significant impacts on neighborhood parking resources. WSDOT and SDOT are working with the Alliance and other neighborhood stakeholders to implement parking strategies to mitigate these impacts, such as short-term parking on Pier 48 and in the garage at 1st and Columbia; marketing to promote that businesses are open during construction; and vehicle wayfinding along Alaskan Way to aid motorists looking for parking and other waterfront/Pioneer Square destinations.

4

City Actions

Ensure an Environment of Public Safety and Civility

CITY ACTIONS

A. Improve Public Safety Experience and Perceptions

- City staff are working with community partners to analyze the feasibility of developing safe, accessible public restroom facilities for Pioneer Square. Two sites currently under consideration include the Fire Station Headquarters building and the development of a kiosk in Occidental Park.
- City departments are working with Pioneer Square partners to explore a Restorative Justice Pilot program that would bring a special enforcement focus on individuals committing civility infractions. The Municipal Court's Community Court program can connect individuals cited for low level civility infractions to needed services.
- SCL completed a patrol of street lighting in Pioneer Square area and identified 18 lights that were out and need to be repaired.
- The Seattle Police Department (SPD) has deployed four dedicated footbeat officers to Pioneer Square for 2nd watch. These are augmented by regular car patrols and bike patrols. On 3rd watch, patrol officers are also directed to stop and patrol problem areas on foot. Anti Crime Teams (ACT) have recently targeted the area for buy-bust operations to address drug dealing problems. SPD has worked in concert with the City's Human Services Department (HSD) and SDOT to address the encampment issues. Prior to any enforcement action, extensive outreach was done for those persons living on the street to find them alternatives to camping under the freeway, particularly along James and Cherry Streets. Many individuals took the opportunity to accept services and the areas were cleaned up and remain tent-free. SPD continues to work with the City's HSD Director to use a holistic approach in dealing with the homeless population, as well as those individuals who are constantly involved in civility type crimes.

B. Improve Human Services Programs and Strategies

- HSD will introduce enhanced requirements for service provider responsibility for the behavior of their clients outside of service facilities.



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(Looking Ahead)

City leaders from key departments are partnering with Pioneer Square representatives in exploring initiatives intended to address chronic street environment issues:

Fortson Square

- Examine how changes in the design of the park may deter illegal, aggressive activity
- Use this project to test approach with similar properties – multiple jurisdictions/ownership (Washington Street Boat Landing and others)
- Move beyond the ownership constraints/barriers to what the vision or end state should look like

Parks

- Explore models of shared responsibility and management with the community. For example a “park conservancy model” that could be managed by the Alliance.
- Address community concerns related to outdoor meals programs.

Stadium Events Management

- Develop alternatives/solutions to better manage tailgating and other community impacts (fan behaviors).

Center City Initiative

- The Mayor's Office is launching a new program to better coordinate efforts to address street environment public safety issues across downtown. Pioneer Square will be a key part of the effort.