

Center City Connector

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Thaddeus Egging

Rachel Gleeson

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Commissioners Present

Ross Tilghman, Chair
John Savo, Vice Chair - excused after 2:30
Lee Copeland
Ben de Rubertis
Thaddeus Egging
Rachel Gleeson
Brianna Holan
Rick Krochalis
Jescelle Major

Commissioners Excused

Laura Haddad

Project Description

The Center City Connector (CCC) is a proposed streetcar route linking the First Hill Streetcar at its International District terminus to the existing South Lake Union streetcar line. The CCC is a part of the Seattle streetcar system and will connect with the First Hill Streetcar line at 5th and Jackson, pass through Pioneer Square and along First Avenue, before connecting with the South Lake Union streetcar at 5th and Stewart.

Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) third review of the Center City Connector project. The purpose of this meeting was to review the design development phase. After the presentation and discussion, the SDC voted, 8-0, to approve the design development phase for the Center City Connector project with one condition and several recommendations. The project team will return for a subcommittee meeting to address the condition.

Recusals and Disclosures

Rick Krochalis disclosed that he helped in the revision and approval of the projects' environmental assessment and review of other project justifications while working for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Brianna Holan disclosed that her employer, LMN, was involved with very early renderings of the CCC.

July 20, 2017**1:00 – 3:30 pm****Type**

CIP

Phase

Design Development

Previous Reviews[3/16/17, 11/5/15](#)**Presenters****CJ Holt**

SDOT

Roland Genick

Parsons

Tess Shiovone

GGN

Attendees**Susan Bartlett**

Parsons

Summary of Presentation

CJ Holt, of Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), and Roland Genick, of Parsons, presented the design development phase for the Center City Connector project. CJ Holt provided background information, site context, and project updates. The project team then addressed the eight recommendations given at the previous SDC meeting held on March 16th, 2017. The project team has met with several boards, commissions, community organizations, and residents in order to coordinate with other plans and projects occurring within the downtown area.

All station shelters, except the Pike Place Market Station, will include seating and station area maps, which will provide information about alternative transit modes and facilities throughout the area. Each station, except the Pike Place Market Station, will include materials and color palette that are consistent throughout the system. System wide materials and color palette elements include station shelter, seating, ticket vending machine, waste receptacles, safety hand rails, and pedestrian activated crossing button, which is located at the end of stations located within the center median. Proposed stations also include design elements that are unique to the surrounding neighborhood.

The overarching vision for the project is to integrate the streetcar line within the surrounding neighborhood character. The streetcar line will pass through three zones including the Pioneer Square Boulevard, 1st Ave Balcony, and Stewart Street Room. The Pioneer Square Boulevard will include stations at Jackson Street, near 1st Ave, and the Intersection of Cherry St and 1st Ave. Materials unique to the zone include the use of stone pavers and stone delineators along the transitway as well as placement of Red Oak trees at the Cherry St. Station. This section of the streetcar line will also include two traditional intersections, three partially raised intersections and one scramble intersection. The scramble intersection will include pedestrian scaled pavers throughout the intersection, while the raised and traditional intersections will use pedestrian scaled pavers and striping to demarcate the crosswalk areas. See figure 2 for more detail. A bicycle route along Jackson street will include a mixed vehicular and cyclist zone in the westbound traffic lane, which will safely cross the transitway, and a dedicated bicycle lane heading eastbound, which will not cross the transitway.

The 1st Ave Balcony zone includes stations at the intersections of Madison St and Pike St along 1st Ave. Materials unique to this zone include the use of concrete transitway and cast-iron delineator. The Madison St station will also serve as a RapidRide station for the proposed Madison Ave bus rapid transit line. The Project

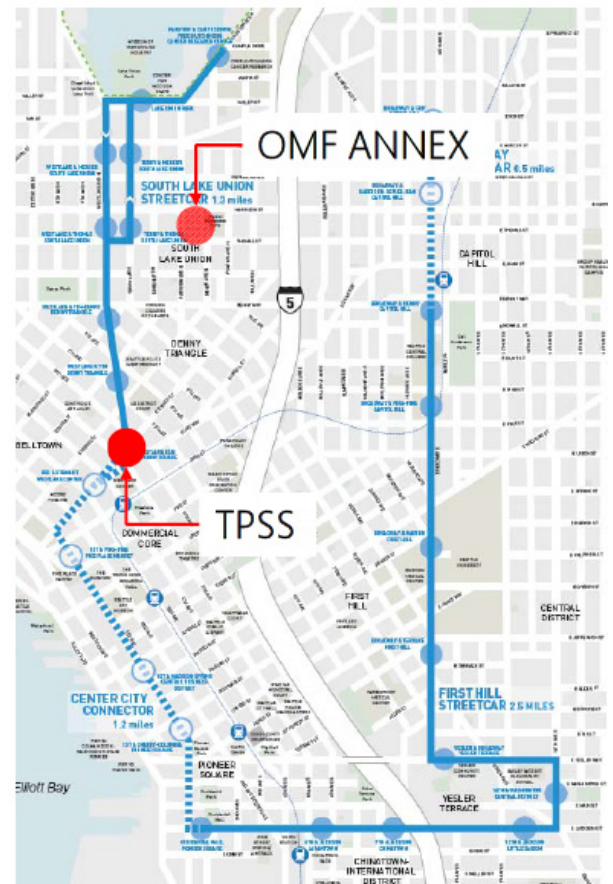


Figure 1: Proposed line with operations and maintenance facility annex and transfer power substation

team is still coordinating with local organizations on the design of the Pike Place Market station platform. This section of the streetcar line includes four traditional intersections, three fully raised intersections, and one scramble intersection. Wrap around curb ramps will be used at Union St, University St, and Seneca St intersections. The existing brick pavers used at scramble intersection located at Pike Place Market will be replaced to increase accessibility and address drainage issues.

The Stewart Street Room zone includes a station at the intersection of Stewart St and 4th Ave prior to the line terminating at the existing Westlake station. The Stewart St station will include two separated station platforms for northbound and southbound trains. Station platforms will include single sided shelters. This section of the streetcar line includes five traditional intersections. The design proposal includes a bicycle and pedestrian mixing zone in order to increase bicycle safety at the intersection of 1st Ave and Stewart St. A bicycle crossing signal will be located at the intersection of Stewart St and Westlake Ave.

The design proposal also includes an operations and maintenance facility annex and transfer power substation (TPSS) facility. The operations and maintenance facility annex will be located with the existing operations facility near the intersection of Fairview Ave N and Harrison St. The annex includes support space for employees and storage for four street cars. The annex entrance is located along Fairview Ave, while streetcars to be serviced will enter the site along Harrison St. A low lying vegetated buffer, street trees, and steel fence will separate the facility from the sidewalk along Fairview Ave. See figure 3 for more detail. The TPSS facility is expected to be located below grade beneath McGraw Square. The project team provided an at-grade alternative if placing the TPSS facility below grade is not feasible. The alternative includes located the TPSS facility in Westlake Plaza. See figure 4 for more detail.

Agency Comments

None.

Public Comments

None

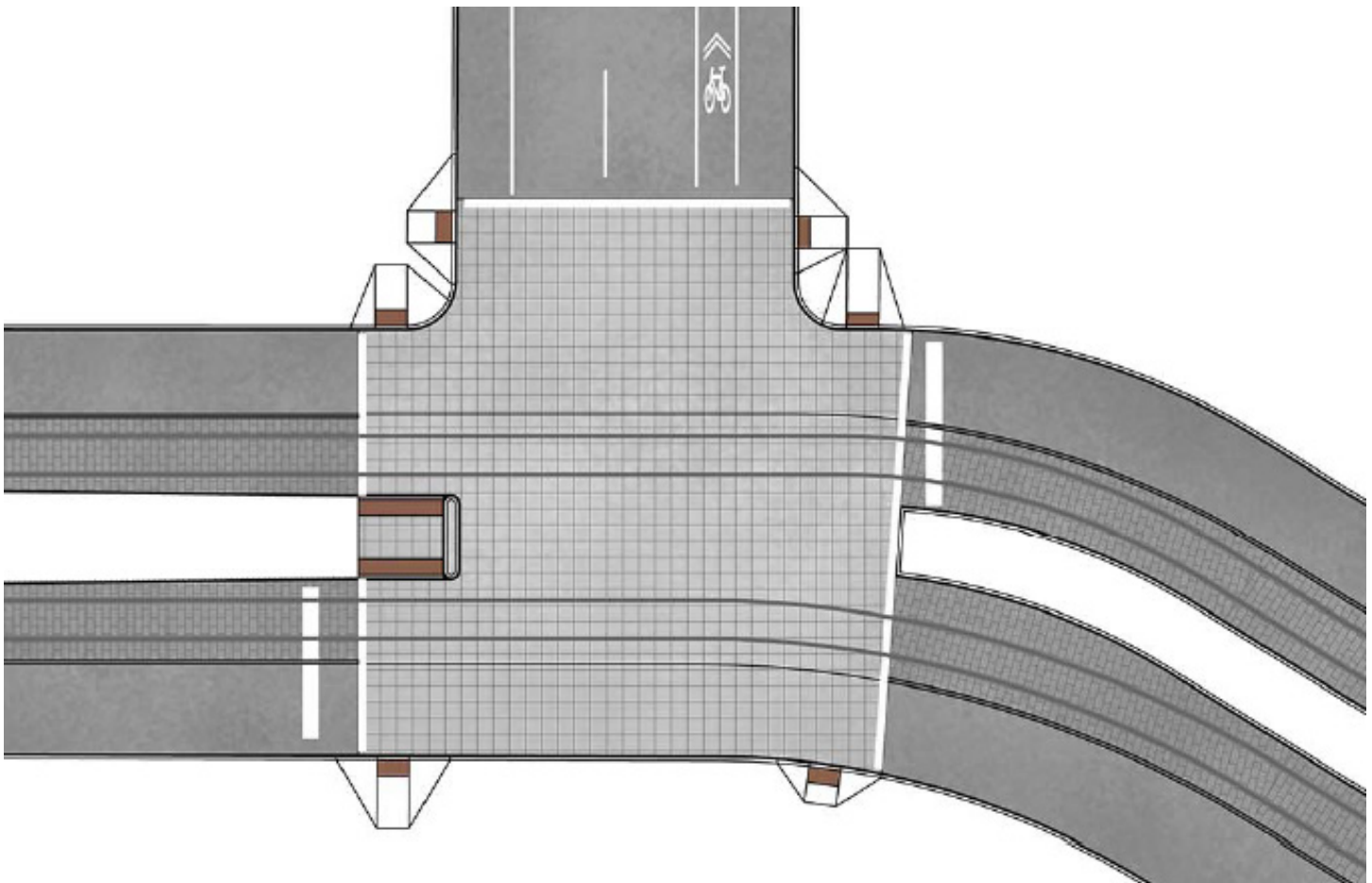


Figure 2: Scrambled intersection at Cherry St and 1st Ave



Figure 3: Rendering of operations and maintenance facility annex



Figure 4: Rendering of "screen" concept for the TPSS

Summary of Discussion

The commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- TPSS Facility
- SLU maintenance and facility expansion
- Wayfinding and urban context
- Station design and sustainability
- Intersection design, pedestrian and bicycle circulation
- Equity

TPSS Facility

The SDC strongly supports the proposal to locate the TPSS facility below grade in McGraw Square. The Commission will review future design proposals for McGraw Square.

SLU maintenance and facility expansion

The SDC appreciated the project team placing emphasis on infrastructure within a highly trafficked, urban area, rather than attempting to conceal the facility and adjacent railyard. The commission is concerned with the narrow width of the landscaped buffer between the sidewalk and fence along Fairview Ave. Commissioners are also concerned with the lack of depth and variation as well as the proposed materials for the fence. The SDC recommended the project team increase the width of the landscaped buffer, create visual relief along the length of the fence, and use materials that are sustainably sourced. Commissioners mentioned the fence could serve as an educational opportunity for pedestrians passing by the facility.

Commissioners recommended including a weather protection canopy above the building entrance. The commission also recommended the project team explore extending the horizontal line, located at the facility entrance along Fairview Ave, the entire length of the building façade. The SDC then encouraged the project team to explore the possibility of reducing the number of tracks crossing the sidewalk along Harrison St. from three to two.

Wayfinding and urban context

The SDC recommend incorporating wayfinding elements on or near the ground plane at each station to enhance arrival and departure elements from each station. Commissioners also encouraged combining proposed wayfinding for the streetcar line with wayfinding elements that currently exist.

Station designs and sustainability

The SDC appreciated and supported the use of quality materials at each station. Commissioners requested further information about where new and reused materials are being sourced. The commission recommended the elimination of proposed handrails between the station platform and adjacent vehicular lanes. The SDC also recommended station feel safe and accommodating to users at all levels of lighting.

Intersection design, pedestrian and bicycle circulation

The SDC commended the design team for using pedestrian scaled pavers at identified scramble intersections.

Equity

The SDC appreciated the involvement of local housing groups during the outreach process as well as the location of the pedestrian activated crosswalk button at both ends of each station located within the center median. Commissioners also appreciated the proposal to replace brick pavers at the intersection of Pike St. and 1st Ave in order to increase accessibility.

Action

The SDC thanked the project team for their presentation of design development phase for the Center City Connector. The SDC appreciated the level of detail provided for each design element as well as the overall thoroughness of the presentation. The SDC strongly supports the proposal to locate the TPSS facility below grade in McGraw Square and is under the assumption that it will not be located above grade. The SDC voted, 8-0, to approve the design development phase for the Center City Connector with the following condition:

1. Return for a subcommittee meeting to review the design for the TPSS facility and for the design of McGraw Square.

The SDC also provided the following recommendations:

1. Include wayfinding signage at each station that will emphasize arrival and departure elements
2. Consider the integration of wayfinding elements into ground plane as well as the within the existing wayfinding system used throughout Downtown Seattle
3. Consider using materials throughout the project that contribute to increasing sustainability goals
4. Evaluate the need for hand rails for each station design where they are proposed