

Northgate 5th Avenue Streetscape Design Project

Visual Preference Survey Highlights...

The Visual Preference Survey (VPS) is a method of presenting a variety of images in a short period of time to elicit an immediate like/dislike reaction to the features conveyed in each slide. We conducted this survey to collect information to inform the City's designers as they develop different design concepts for 5th Avenue NE, and these results will be used in conjunction with other technical and community-provided information. In addition to providing information for design concepts, another goal of the VPS is to assist members of the Northgate community in determining which components of the built environment contribute to a street's overall image, and which aspects of those elements they prefer.

The VPS was taken by 65 members of the Northgate community including Department of Neighborhood Open House attendees, residents of two senior retirement apartment facilities, and members of the business community. Participants were told that the slides were not intended to represent what 5th Avenue could or should become, and should not be analyzed in how they may or may not apply to 5th Avenue. The intent was simply to provide participants with images of different streetscapes and then have them record their likes and dislikes about the different things they saw in these images.

Streetscape Image Most Preferred

"I like slides with activity (stores and shopping) with parking available on the street."

"Good – variety in store frontages and greenery."



Image Least Preferred

"Blank walls are boring."

"Bad – flat and blank walls, strip malls, uniformity."



Sidewalk Image Most Preferred

"Best when plaza area opens to and enlarges sidewalk."

"I like wide sidewalks that attract pedestrians and are safe for disabled people but not crowded by buildings or businesses."



Image Least Preferred

"Bad sidewalks are narrow and dull"

"An uneven sidewalk or small flat area are hard to walk upon with a walker or a cane."



Landscaping Image Most Preferred

"[[It is] best to combine a variety of shapes and street furniture."

"I like vegetation that is attractive, doesn't unduly restrict sidewalk access, and is easy to maintain."



Image Least Preferred

"I like a lot of greenery but prefer landscaping that gives an open feeling as opposed to dark and fence-like."

"Too much growth seems to take over the sidewalk."



Bus Stops Image Most Preferred

"I prefer neighborhood specific distinctive designs – not just plain brown shelters."

"Given the weather in Seattle, I prefer bus stops with cover."



Image Least Preferred

"Bus stops must have benches and seats. We have retirees in this neighborhood."

"Need shelter from rain and trees for shade. Just a single pole sign doesn't cut it for a major stop."



Amenities Image Most Preferred

"Good – public seating that invites sitting and lingering."

"I like outside seating, plants, and pedestrian-friendly places to be that are attractive."



Image Least Preferred

"I hate banners. They get torn and dirty."

"Bad – silly banners and flags that have nothing to do with the neighborhood."

