

# Broad Street Vacation

**Edward B. Murray**  
Mayor

**Diane Sugimura**  
Director, DPD

**Shannon Loew**, Chair

**Ellen Sollod**, Vice Chair

**Brodie Bain**

**Lee Copeland**

**Thaddeus Egging**

**Rachel Gleeson**

**Grant Hromas**

**Martin Regge**

**John Savo**

**Ross Tilghman**

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## Commissioners Present

Ellen Sollod, Vice Chair  
Brodie Bain  
Lee Copeland  
Thaddeus Egging  
Grant Hromas  
Martin Regge  
John Savo  
Ross Tilghman

## Commissioners Excused

Shannon Loew, Chair  
Rachel Gleeson

## Project Description

The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) proposes vacating approximately 66,811 square feet of Broad Street in the block bounded by Mercer St to the south, Roy St to the north, Dexter Ave N to the west, and 9th Ave N to the east. The irregularly shaped portion of Broad St would be vacated as part of a larger strategy to reconfigure and reconnect the street grid within the framework of the realignment of State Route 99 and related Mercer Street improvements, improvements .

SDOT is requesting the vacation of this segment of Broad St as it is no longer needed for any transportation purposes. The resulting vacation and its consolidation with 4 abutting parcels will allow the City to surplus the expanded property. Proceeds

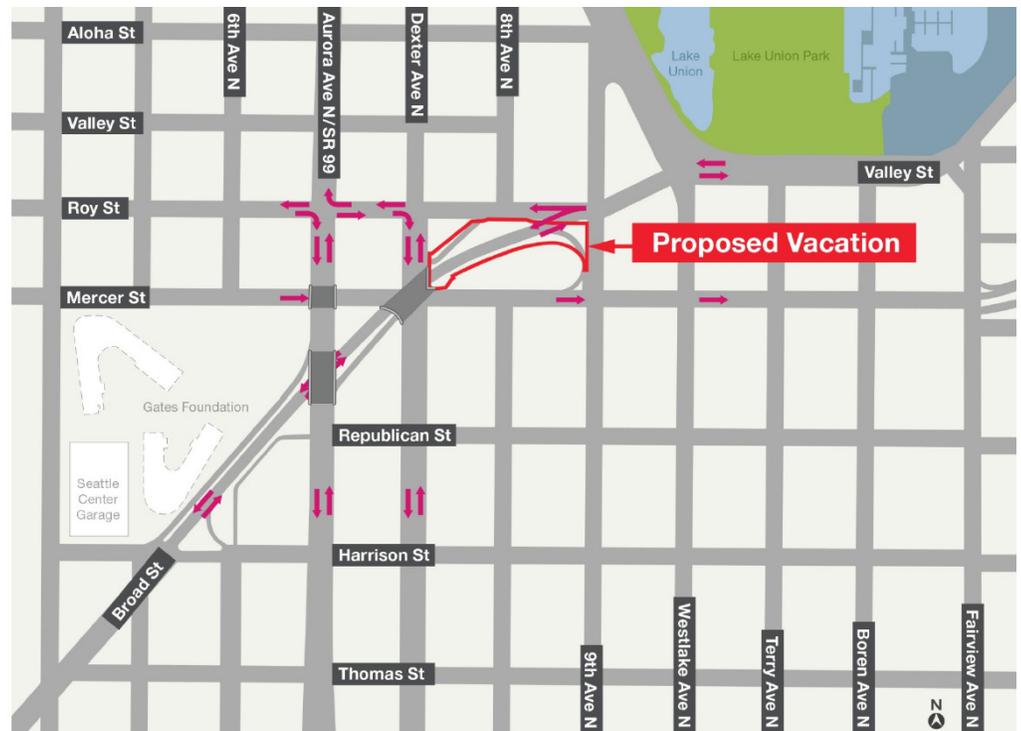


Figure 1. Location of proposed Broad St vacation.

July 16, 2015

9:10 – 10:30 am

**Type**

Street Vacation

**Phase**

Urban Design Merit

**Location**

Block bounded by Roy St, 9th Ave N, Mercer St, and Dexter Ave N in South Lake Union

**Previous Reviews**

none

**Presenters****Eric Tweit**

SDOT

**Dennis Haskell**

SRG Partnership

**Attendees****Beverly Barnett**

SDOT

**Lloyd Douglas**

Cascade Neighborhood Council

**Martha Lester**

Council Staff

**Roy Mann**

Roy Street Group

**John McMillan**

KPFF

**John Pehrson**

SLU Community Council

**Sara Roberts**

KPFF

**Lish Whitson**

Council Staff

from the sale of this property would fund the partial repayment of of a loan for the \$95 million Mercer West project.

SDOT has not proposed specific development for the site. Rather, SDOT has developed a series of alternatives that represent some of the potential development under both the no vacation and vacation alternatives. The proposed scenarios aim to maximize development within the parameters of the Seattle Mixed (SM 160/85-240) zoning, given several development constraints in this location. Some of these constraints include its location within the Lake Union Seaport Flight Corridor, and its proximity to the large King County sewer facility interceptor that lies approximately 50 feet below grade.

**Meeting Summary**

The Seattle Design Commission (SDC) postponed a vote on the project and provided the applicant with a request for further information. The Commission generally supported the idea of vacating the Broad St right-of-way and agreed to review the proposal using development scenarios in the absence of an actual development proposal.

**Recusals and Disclosures**

Thaddeus Egging disclosed that he works at KPFF but is not involved in this project.

**Summary of Presentation**

Eric Tweit SDOT introduced the project and explained the rationale for vacating the right-of-way. Mr. Tweit said the right-of-way is no longer needed for roadway purposes and is part of larger effort to recreate the grid at the point where SR 99 reaches the center city from the north. Mr. Tweit discussed the financial considerations regarding the funding of Mercer West; he explained that in April 2014 the City Council's transportation committee had been briefed on the strategy to use the funds from the sale of the property to repay an interdepartmental loan used for funding the Mercer West project.

Dennis Haskell presented the no vacation and vacation development scenarios. In the first scenario, the right-of-way was retained with two buildings on the adjacent parcels. This scenario resulted in 375,000 square feet of potential development. Mr. Haskell discussed the potential to extend 8th Ave across the site as a through-block connector.

The presentation included three scenarios for potential residential, office, and mixed use development without the right-of-way, as shown below:

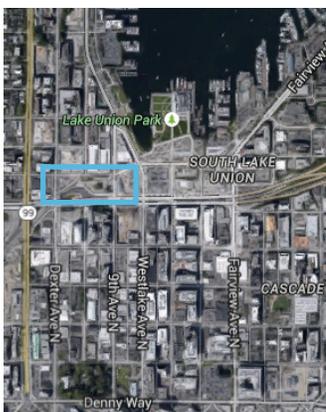
	Residential	Office	Mixed Use
<b># buildings (heights in ft)</b>	2 (235 and 145)	2 (97 and 110)	2 (235 and 110)
<b>Residential (sq ft)</b>	324,500	0	199,500
<b>Retail (sq ft)</b>	92,500	92,500	92,500
<b>Non-residential (sq ft)</b>	185,000	400,000	394,000

A conceptual parking study illustrated a four-level below-grade parking structure extending across the full site. The study indicated 800 stalls for a combined garage and 600 stalls if two garages were developed. Access to the garage(s) was shown via a proposed north/south open space that would generally follow the 8th Ave right of way alignment. The access to the garage would occur through this north/south open space.

Finally, the presenters showed a preview of the public benefit package.

**Agency Comments**

**Beverly Barnett** reported that she is in the process of reviewing the petition. She explained that this is an unusual petition in a number of ways, but that the charge was still to review for consistency with the City Council's Street and Alley Vacation Policies. A central question would be how to condition the decision to achieve the intended development results and ensure through the purchase and sale agreement that the



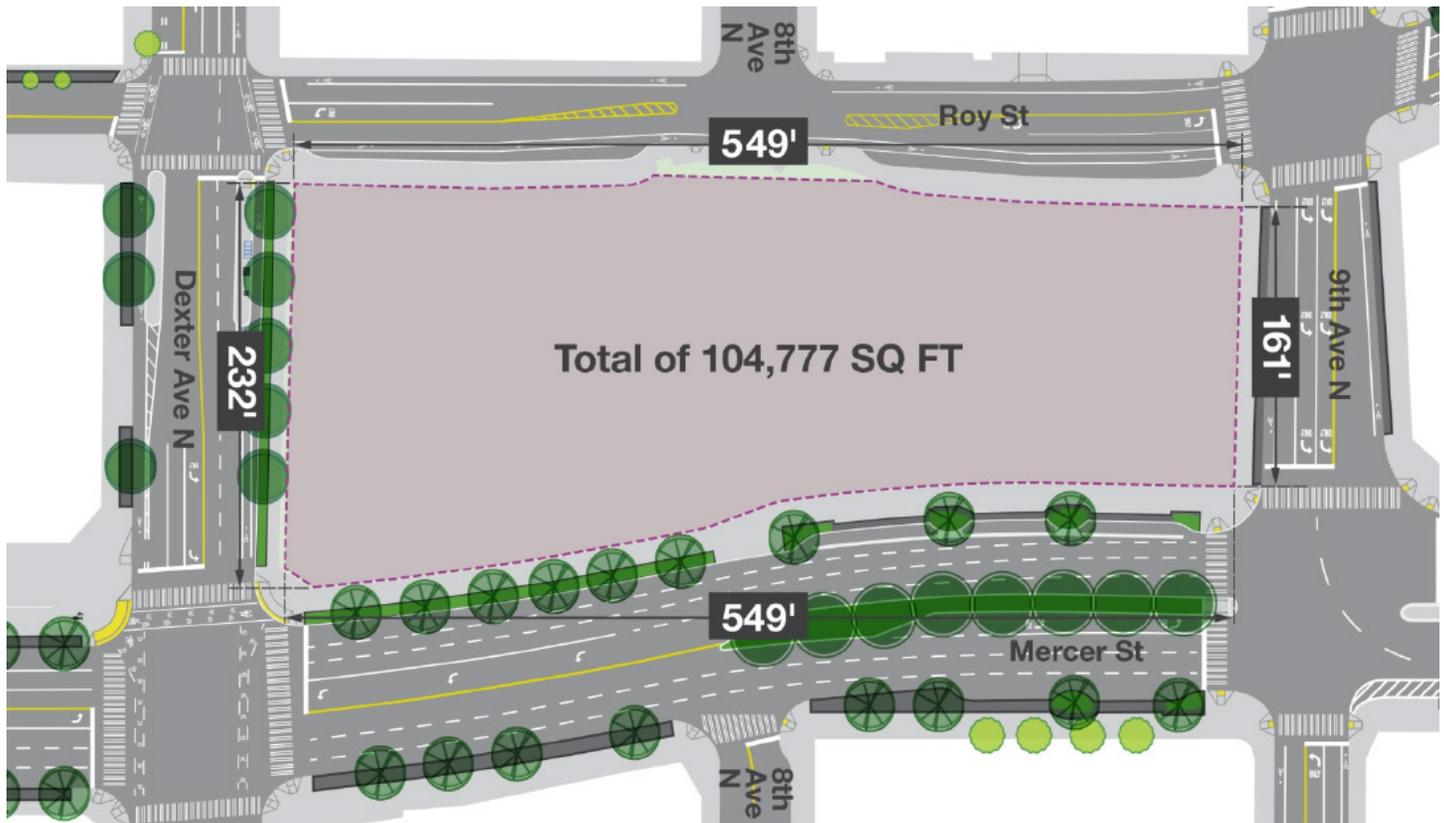


Figure 2. Site plan of potential development site under vacation scenario.

public benefits are delivered on satisfactorily.

### Public Comments

**John Pehrson** said that paying off a loan for the construction of Mercer St was not a public benefit from the community's perspective. He explained that the community had only recently become aware that the vacation was actively underway and would need a couple of weeks to develop a list of items to put forward as potential public benefits. Mr. Pehrson noted a need for affordable housing, a school, and a playground in the area. He questioned the likely success of a woonerf at this location since it would not be part of a network.

**Lloyd Douglas** reported that the community council had been informed the parcel would be sold. The council had not had an opportunity to see the presentation presented the Design Commission but would like to.

**Roy Mann** commented on the necessity to dedicate 8th Ave. He said the value of the vacation was in reconnecting the grid and consolidating parcels for redevelopment.

### Summary of Discussion

The SDC identified the following topics for the purpose of their deliberations:

- Circulation and site access
- Impact on utilities
- Open Space
- Light, air and views

The Commissioners first discussed circulation. They agreed that breaking the site into two blocks by extending 8th Ave made sense from an urban form perspective to avoid an otherwise long continuous building. The Commissioners agreed that further exploration was necessary to decide the value of a woonerf in this location, whether it should be dedicated, and the effects of vehicular use. A central question was whether a pedestrian crossing of Mercer would be possible in order to extend the pedestrian connection along the axis of 8th Ave. The Commissioners also considered the value of additional visual relief given the size of the remaining two blocks, such as by having different firms design each block or by selling to two different developers.

The Commissioners then discussed loading and services. They concluded that, without more detail, the development

scenarios did not show how back-of-house functions would be handled or affect the public realm. Loading and access for trash collection, for example, could potentially occur on just one block or on both.

The Commission strongly recommended providing design guidelines related to the public realm given the abstract nature of development scenarios. They requested to see and review these design guidelines and recommended that fulfilling them be a condition of vacation approval.

The Commissioners determined that they needed greater analysis and a clear open space strategy that considers the network of open space throughout South Lake Union, the Seattle Center, and Lake Union Park. The Commissioners stated there is a need for community space in SLU. They also requested information on how the open space zoning requirements would be being met in order to assess public benefit.

### Action

The SDC postponed the vote on urban design merit and will review the project again at a later date. The SDC provided the following comments to guide further development of the vacation proposal:

1. Provide more analysis on issues related to site access including:
  - Explore the possibility of a pedestrian crossing over Mercer at 8th Ave.
  - Study locations for services and loading dock access to the site.
2. Provide design guidelines concerning public realm improvements
3. Explore requiring multiple developers or architects for the project.