

WSSCC Expansion

Edward B. Murray

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Brodie Bain

Lee Copeland

Ben de Rubertis

Thaddeus Egging

Rachel Gleeson

Laura Haddad

Theo Lim

John Savo

Michael Jenkins

Director

Valerie Kinast

Coordinator

Aaron Hursey

Planner

Juliet Acevedo

Administrative Staff

**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

Commissioners Present

Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair

Brodie Bain

Lee Copeland

Ben de Rubertis

Thaddeus Egging

Rachel Gleeson

Laura Haddad

Theo Lim

John Savo

Commissioners Excused

Shannon Loew, Chair

Project Description

The Washington State Convention Center (WSSCC) is proposing to vacate three alleys and two streets on three blocks bounded by Pine St, 9th Ave, Howell St, and Boren Ave. The petitioner is requesting the full vacation of the following three mid-block alleys:

- Block 33 (Site B) - bounded by 9th Ave, Howell St, Terry Ave, and Olive way
- Block 43 (Site C) - bounded by Terry Ave, Howell St, Boren Ave, and Olive Way
- Block 44 (Site A) - bounded by 9th Ave, Olive Way, Boren Ave, and Pine St

The petitioner is also requesting a full street vacation of Terry Ave, between Olive Way and Howell St, as well as a subterranean street vacation of Olive Way, between 9th Ave and Boren Ave.

The preferred scheme includes approximately 2.385 million square feet (sf) of development on three sites. The WSSCC expansion would occur on Site A and extend through the subterranean vacations of Olive and the Terry Avenue vacation. The remaining two sites will include co-developments. The preferred proposal includes:

- 1,499,700 square foot building located on Site A
- 29 story, approximately 400 unit residential tower located on Site B
- 16 story, 515,700 sf office tower located on Site C
- 43,000 sf of developable space dedicated to street-level uses
- Partially below-grade parking for 700-800 vehicles
- Below-grade loading services

Meeting Summary

The SDC was briefed on the Washington State Convention Center's (WSSCC) proposal as it relates to the proposed street and alley vacations. The purpose of the meeting was to have the SDC receive a presentation of the overall environmental impacts specifically related to the vacations and to provide initial feedback to WSSCC regarding the project and the vacation impacts. The WSSCC and its public development authority are the lead agency for environmental review; they have prepared a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS). The City and its various departments are providing comment on that document as part of the environmental review process.

April 21, 2016

1:00 - 3:30 PM

Type

Vacation

Phase

Briefing

Previous Reviews

02/04/16

Project Team Present

Chris Eseman
LMN Architects

Terry McCann
EA Engineering

Mike Swenson
Transpo Group

Attendees

Chris Degracia

Act Theatre

Emily Ehlers

SDOT

Kurt Gahnberg

HCNP

Lindsay King

SDCI

Bruno Lambert

PPUNC

Michele Sarlitto

EA Engineering

John Shaw

SDCI

Steven Wood

Paramount Theatre

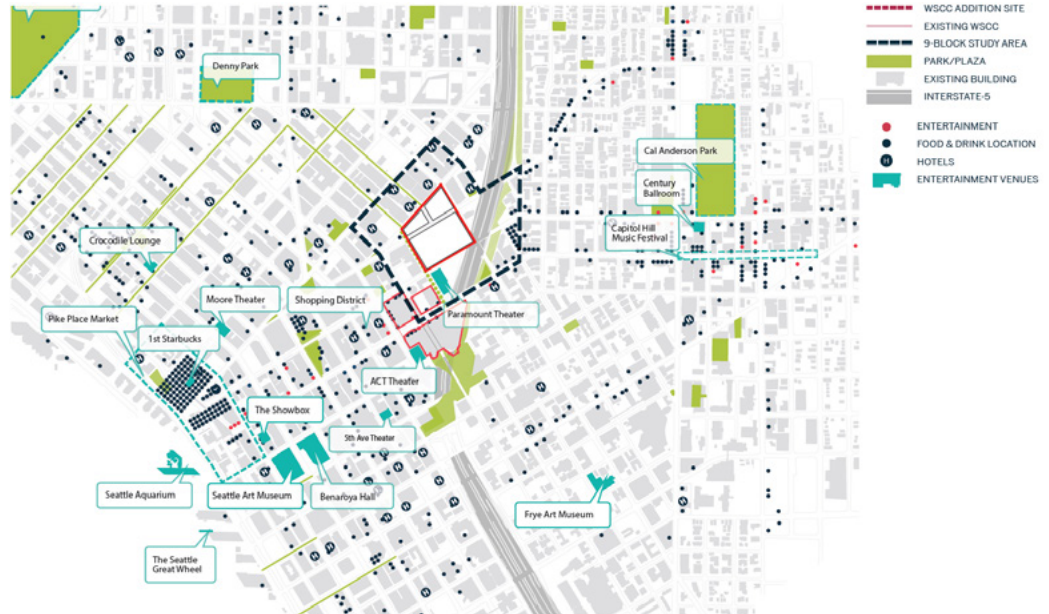


Figure 1: Project site location

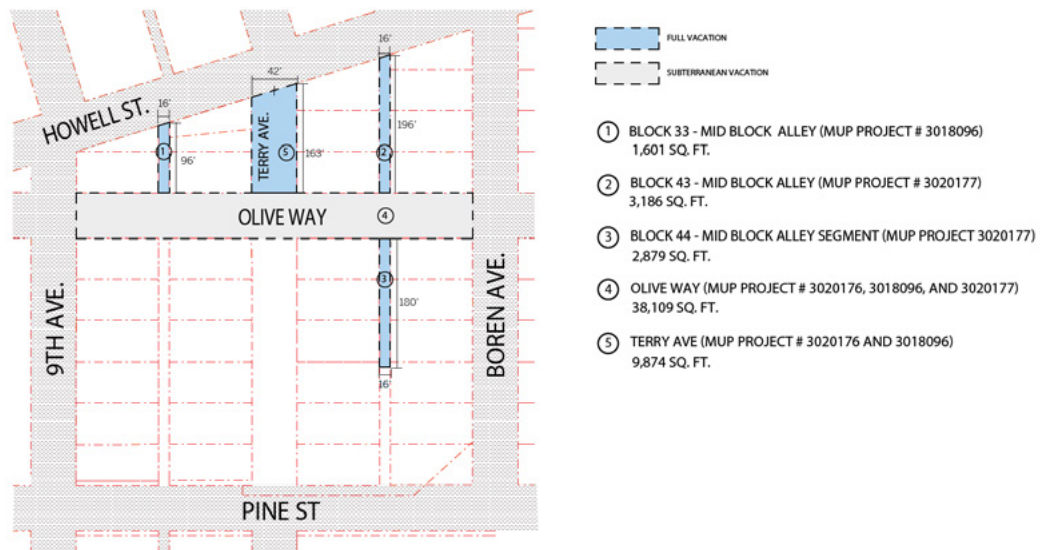


Figure 2: Proposed vacation petitions

Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures.

Summary of Presentation

Chris Eseman, of LMN Architects, Terry McCann, of EA Engineering, and Mike Swenson, of Transpo Group, presented information about the DEIS process and potential impacts the development will have on the surrounding area (see figures 1 & 2). The DEIS provides a base level for mitigation measures required to offset impacts created by the development. After providing an overview of the project, Chris Eseman and Terry McCann presented information on the DEIS process and project development alternatives. Elements evaluated in the DEIS include the development’s effect on the natural environment, land use, natural light, transportation, public utilities and services.

The DEIS included seven alternatives, all of which included the development of the convention center expansion on Site A. Each alternative also included the option of co-developing site B and/or site C. For this presentation, the project team focused on the impacts of two development alternatives, alternative 5 and alternative 4.1. Development alternative 5, a no vacation scenario, will not include co-developing

WITHOUT VACATIONS

WITH VACATIONS

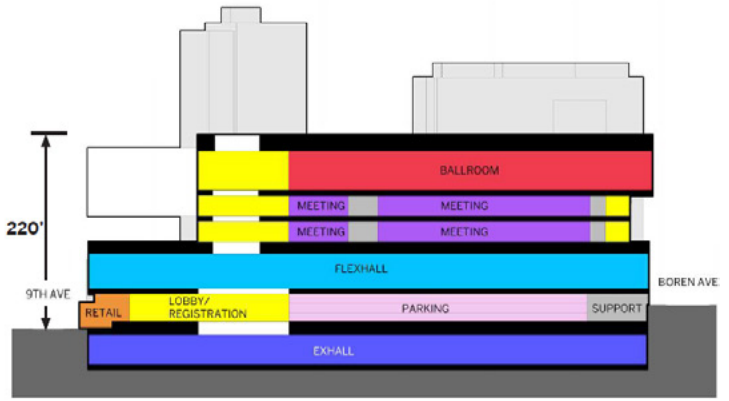
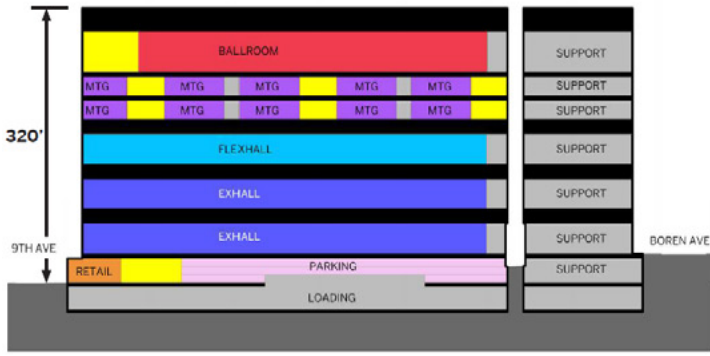


Figure 3: Proposed building height without (left) and with (right) a vacation

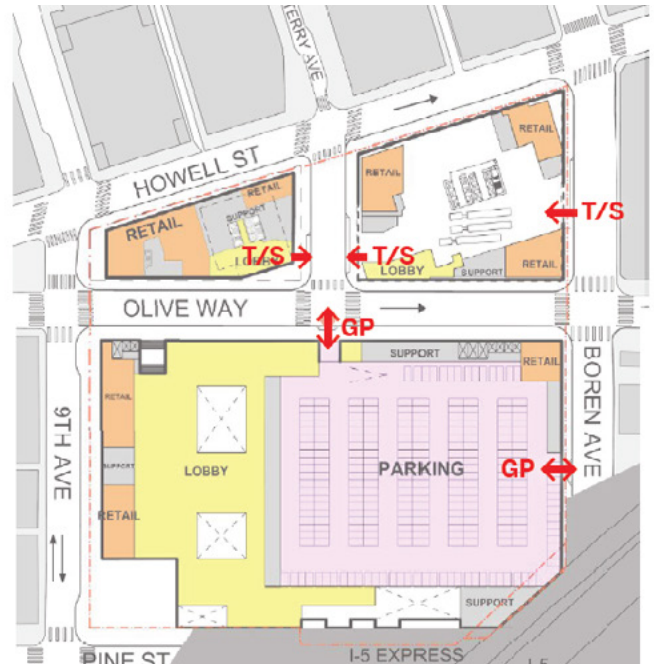
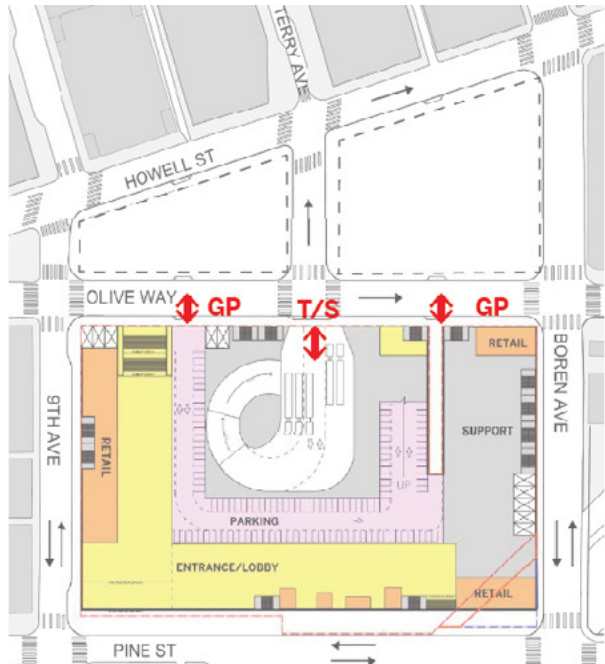


Figure 4: Proposed vehicle entrances without (left) and with (right) a vacation. T/S = truck/service GP= general purpose

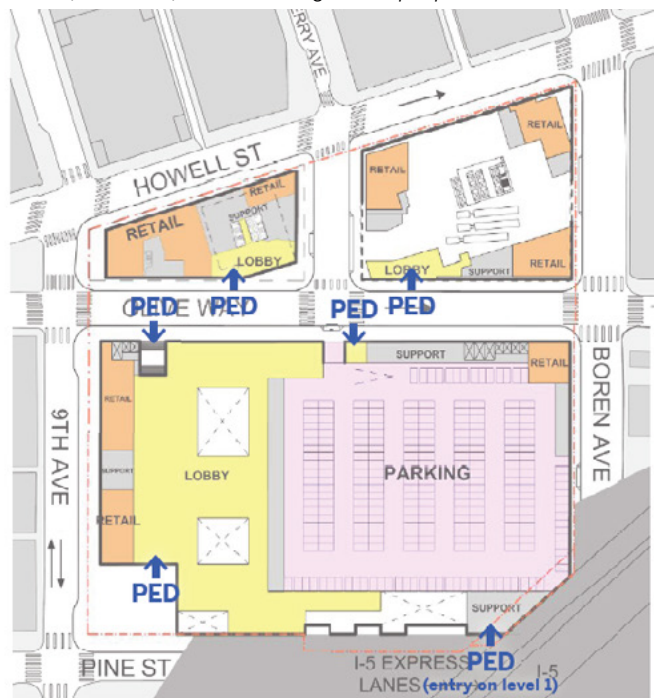
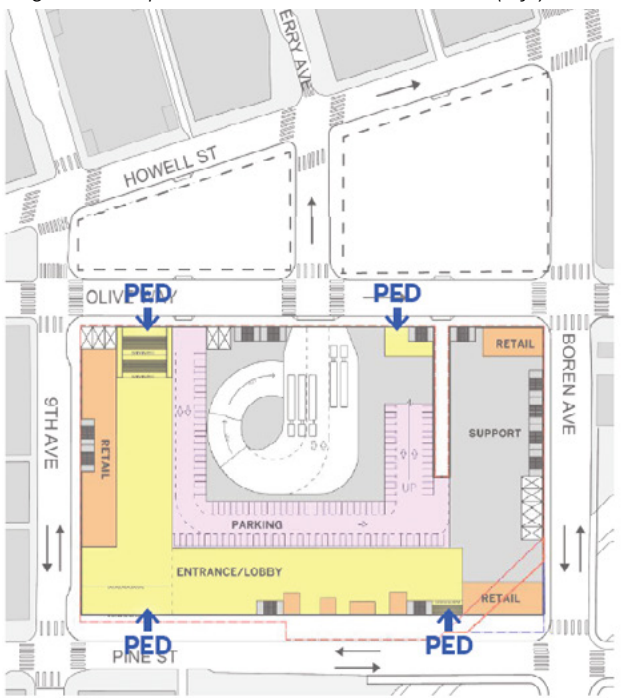


Figure 5: Proposed pedestrian entrances without (left) and with (right) a vacation

Site B and Site C. Development alternative 4.1, the vacation scenario, will include the development of Site B and Site C. The alternatives that were presented generally reflect those that are in the right of way vacation petition that the SDC is evaluating.

The project team focused on how both scenarios will affect the development program, light, air, open space, views, and transportation. The transportation study area includes 4 primary corridors and 35 intersections and focuses on the impacts the development will have on public transit, pedestrian movement, traffic safety, parking, and trip generation.

Under the no vacation scenario, the proposed development will include two additional levels to accommodate on site loading services, and few opportunities for publicly accessible open space. The no vacation scenario will also require truck and service access as well as two access locations for vehicles along Olive Way, while pedestrian access points are located along Olive Way and Pine St. Under a no vacation scenario, in bound trucks will service the facility by traveling down Fairview Ave, Stewart St, and 9th Ave before entering the service area along Olive Way. Outbound trucks will exit at the intersection of Olive Way and Terry Ave, traveling down Howell St. and Olive Way to access Interstate 5 during off-peak hours. During peak hours, trucks will exit at Olive Way, travelling north along Terry Ave and Fairview Ave. See figures 3-5 for more detail.

The vacation scenario will consolidate service access for all three developments, providing truck and service access along Boren Ave and Terry Ave. Vehicular access will be located along Olive Way and Boren Ave, while pedestrian access is located along Olive Way and Pine St. Under a vacation scenario, in bound trucks will service the facilities by traveling down Fairview Ave and Boren Ave before entering the service area along Boren Ave. Outbound trucks will exit at Terry Ave, traveling down Howell St. and Olive Way to access Interstate 5 during off-peak hours. During peak hours, trucks will exit at Terry Ave, travelling north along Fairview Ave.

Agency Comments

Lindsay King, SDCI, has reviewed the DEIS along with other City departments. Ms. King stated that the city provided extensive comments regarding the content and depth of analysis included in the DEIS. Both SDCI and SDOT have requested additional analysis related to transportation impacts.

Public Comments

None

Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Urban form
- Access and circulation

Urban form

The SDC cautioned the design team from compromising the urban form created from a vacation. Commissioners encouraged the team to understand fully how a vacation will affect the surrounding area, ensuring that the team does not simply transfer issues from one block to another rather than solving them. The Commission recommended the project team continue designing the Boren façade to facilitate programming services while not negatively affecting the pedestrian environment.

Access and circulation

The Commission recommend the design team consider limiting on-site truck access to off-peak vehicular and pedestrian travel times.

Action

The SDC thanked the project team for the presentation on the DEIS. The Commission understands the value associated with the building form as a result of the vacation alternative. Commissioners continue to have questions regarding how the proposed vacations will affect the pedestrian realm and surrounding urban form. The SDC would also like to understand fully how the team addressed issues associated with equity.

The SDC did not take an action at this meeting. The SDC will not take an action on Urban Design Merit until after the Final Environmental Impact Statement has been published.