

# Yesler Terrace Pocket Park

**Edward B. Murray**  
Mayor

**Sam Assefa**  
Director, OPCD

**Shannon Loew**, Chair

**Ross Tilghman**, Vice Chair

**Brodie Bain**

**Lee Copeland**

**Ben de Rubertis**

**Thaddeus Egging**

**Rachel Gleeson**

**Laura Haddad**

**Jescelle Major**

**John Savo**

**Michael Jenkins**  
Director

**Valerie Kinast**  
Coordinator

**Aaron Hursey**  
Planner

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## Commissioners Present

Shannon Loew, Chair  
Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair  
Brodie Bain  
Lee Copeland  
Thaddeus Egging  
Laura Haddad  
John Savo

## Non-voting Commissioners Present

Jescelle Major

## Commissioners Excused

Ben de Rubertis  
Rachel Gleeson

## Project Description

In 2006, Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) began planning for the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace. The new 31-acre master planned community will include replacement low-income housing, market-rate housing, two community centers, 2.5 acres of open space, and other neighborhood improvements. More than 12,000 people will live at Yesler Terrace when fully built out.

As part of the redevelopment, SHA petitioned to vacate (permanently close) several streets. In the vacation petition, SHA proposed several public benefits, including three pocket parks. The pocket parks are part of the Green Loop, a connected network of public open spaces included in the redevelopment master plan.

From 2009 to 2011, the Seattle Design Commission (SDC) reviewed SHA's petition to vacate streets in Yesler Terrace. At that time, SHA identified the locations of the pocket parks but not specifics about configuration, programming, and design. The street vacation conditions did outline key features of the pocket parks:

- each must be 12,000 square feet;
- have 70 linear feet of frontage on a public street, and
- accommodate both active and passive uses.

## Meeting Summary

This was the Seattle Design Commission's (SDC) second review of the Yesler Terrace Pocket Park project. At this meeting, SDC reviewed the schematic design phase for proposed plan, which has changed significantly since the concept design phase. At this meeting, the SDC voted, 7-0, to approve the schematic design for the Yesler Terrace Pocket Park with one condition and several recommendations.

## Recusals and Disclosures

Lee Copeland disclosed that he is working with Kris Snider on an unrelated project.

September 1, 2016

1:30 - 3:00 pm

**Type**

Vacation

**Phase**

Schematic Design

**Previous Reviews**

[05/07/2015](#)

**Project Team Present**

Mark Hinshaw

Seattle Housing Authority

George Lee

Artist

Kris Snider

HEWITT

**Attendees**

Kathryn Armstrong

Seattle Housing Authority

Mike Woo

Vulcan

September 1, 2016

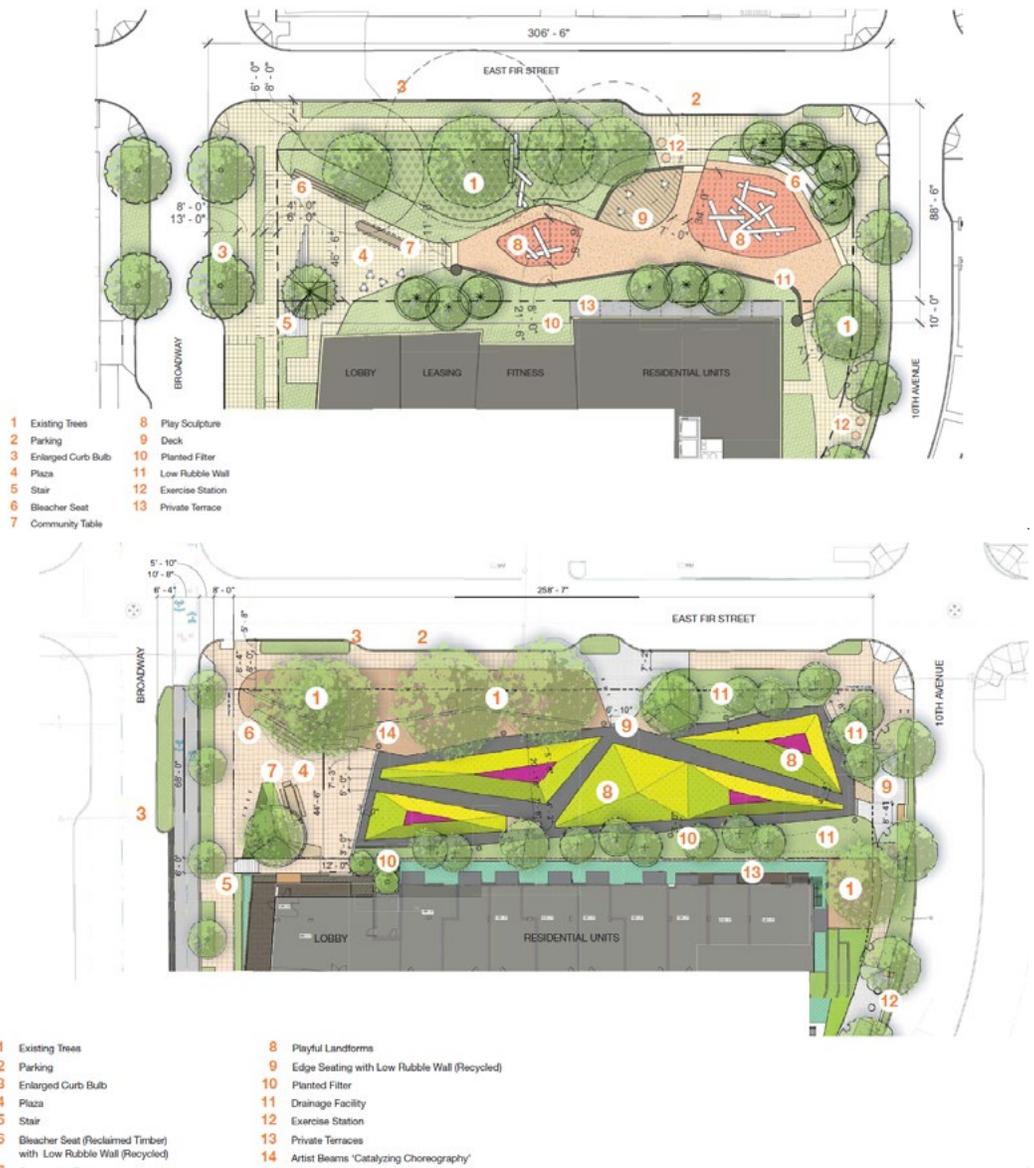


Figure 1: Previous concept plan (above) and current concept plan (below)

**Summary of Presentation**

Mark Hinshaw, of Seattle Housing Authority, Kris Snider, of HEWITT, and George Lee, project artist, presented the schematic design proposal for Yesler Terrace Pocket Park. Mark Hinshaw provided an overview of the Yesler Terrace redevelopment project and explained how the pocket park fits within the project. This pocket park, located between Broadway and 10th Ave along E Fir St, is one of four parks planned throughout the site, all of which will serve as key public spaces.

The proposed design has changed significantly since the concept design phase (see figure 1). The updated design will include the retention of several mature trees throughout the site, an entry plaza along Broadway, interactive land mounds, landscaping, on street parking, seating, rain gardens and a community table. The interactive land mounds will be brightly colored artificial turf and will vary in height. Pathways meandering between the mounds will be constructed out of flexi-pave and turf material. Salvaged timbers will serve as bench seating throughout the site. Two plant palettes will be used to define the streetscape and park edge. The northwestern edge of the site will include a small grove of mature trees. See figure 2 for more detail.

The artwork program will include two permanent installations. A series of interactive wood beams will be located throughout the grove, meandering underneath the



Figure 2: Views facing east (left) and west (right)

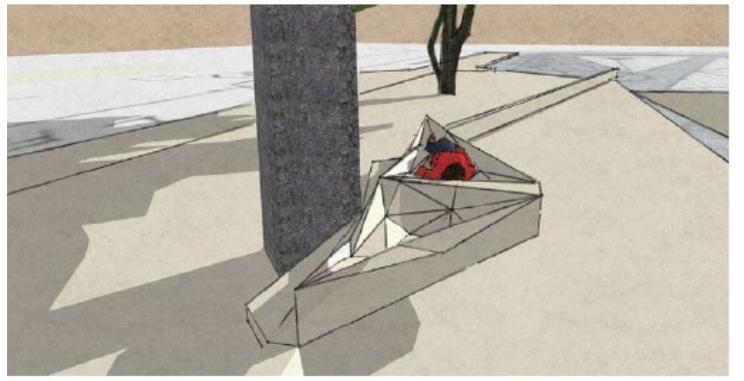
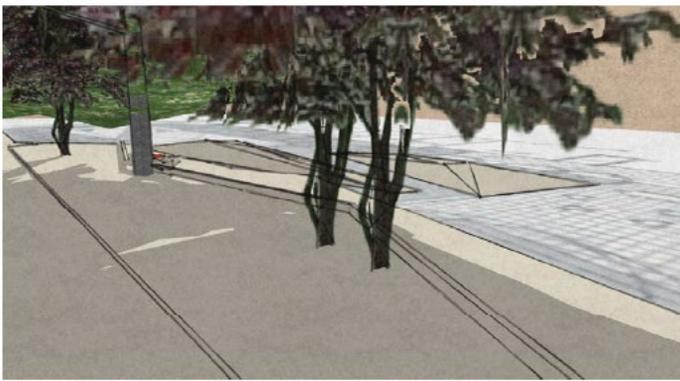


Figure 3: Elements of the proposed artwork program

canopy of mature trees. Beams will be placed in 20 foot sections raised 16 inches above ground. The second installation includes interactive wood carvings that will be located near the base of several trees within the grove. Users will be invited to climb, stand, and rest on the wood carvings. See figure 3 for more detail.

### Agency Comments

None

### Public Comments

None

### Summary of Discussion

The Commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Layout and circulation
- Materials and landscape
- Art and lighting

- Sustainability and equity

*Layout and circulation*

The SDC provided positive feedback about the overall park design. Commissioners recommended that the design team continue to blend the edges of the pathways with the mounded areas in order to create a cohesive landscape that is integrated with overall feel of park design. The Commission provided positive feedback about the community gathering table. Commissioners recommended the gathering table become more of a focal point within the overall design.

*Materials and landscape*

The SDC is concerned with the variety of material palettes presented for such a small site. Commissioners encouraged the design team to provide a cohesive material palette, which will enhance the programming that will be provided.

*Art and lighting*

The SDC appreciated the cohesive design of light fixtures throughout the park. Commissioners commended the project team for including the artist throughout the planning and design process for all aspects of the park. Commissioners encouraged the artist to further integrate art with the playforms as well as the surrounding landscape, creating a unique experience throughout the park. The artist was also encouraged to deepen the conceptual meaning of the art.

*Sustainability and equity*

The SDC encouraged the design team to continue to understand how to incorporate storm water infrastructure within its sustainability plan. Commissioners appreciated the project team's commitment to preserving existing trees, which will provide positive balance between the building and proposed mounds. The Commission highly recommended the design team place artwork elements in a way that will not damage preserved trees. Commissioners recommended the project team design pathways that are accessible for all users. The SDC recommended the design team continue to provide community outreach during the planning and design process.

**Action**

The SDC thanked the project team for presenting the schematic design for Yesler Terrace Pocket Park. The Commission appreciated the community focus of the design, retention of the historic tree, and unique approach to materials. The SDC voted to approve, 7-0, the schematic design for Yesler Terrace Pocket Park with the following condition:

1. Moving forward, continue to show how community outreach has influenced the design

The SDC also provided the following recommendations:

1. Continued refinement of the art program to further integrate it with the overall park design
2. Continue to integrate the pathways and mounds within the overall park design