



The City of Seattle

Pioneer Square Preservation Board

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PSB 30/26

PIONEER SQUARE PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Hybrid Meeting via Webex or Room L2-80 Boards and Commission

Board Members

Maureen Elenga, Chair, (ME)
Sage Kim (SK)
Sean O'Brien (SO)
Maya Spotted Bear (MSB)
Jose Lorenzo Torres, Vice-Chair, (JLT)
Catherine Walker (CW)
Henry Watson (HW)

Staff

Genna Nashem (GN)
Nelson Pesigan (NP)

Absent:

Montana Houston (MH)
Katrina Plewinski (KP)

Key:

BM: Board Member
SM: Staff Member
AP: Applicant

Chair Maureen Elenga called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

021826.1 ROLL CALL

021826.2 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Parker Dawson, speaking on behalf of Lime and as a Pioneer Square resident, commented on Lime's significant ridership growth in Seattle, including a 75% increase in 2025 and record usage during major events. He emphasized that most riders use Lime to avoid driving and to connect with public transit,

contributing to reduced congestion in dense neighborhoods like Pioneer Square. Parker expressed strong support for expanding on-street bike and scooter parking to reduce sidewalk clutter and improve safety, noting SDOT's efforts to balance mobility needs with input from residents and businesses and encouraged the board to support the 34 proposed parking locations as part of the city's broader shift toward sustainable transportation.

Anahi Bendeck, Design and Planning Manager for the Alliance for Pioneer Square, commented that while the Alliance supports improving safety for all users of the public right-of-way, including pedestrians, cyclists, and micromobility riders, they believe daylighting and micromobility parking should be evaluated separately, as they serve different purposes and require distinct analysis and community input. She emphasized that Pioneer Square's historic character and unique physical conditions make the proposed citywide, standardized treatments particularly the materials and signage ill-suited for the neighborhood. Anahi expressed concern that neighborhood feedback has not been meaningfully incorporated, that the design appears predetermined, and that the accelerated timeline tied to the World Cup risks creating long-term interventions that do not reflect daily neighborhood needs.

Rachel Schaeffer, speaking on behalf of Cascade Bicycle Club, voiced support for the proposed bike and scooter parking corrals for both shared and privately owned devices and noted that the proposed locations use existing furniture zones to improve intersection visibility through daylighting. Rachel concluded by urging the board to advance the proposal and continue supporting safe, connected streets in Pioneer Square.

Lissa Kramer of the National Park Service expressed appreciation for the outreach conducted by the Occidental Promenade project team and noted that the National Park Service has been actively engaged in discussions. Lissa explained that the Park Service was asked about existing documentation of historic resources in the project area but, as an urban park that does not manage most local resources, they rely on the city to complete such documentation. Lissa highlighted that available materials from the State Historic Preservation Office indicate significant gaps in archaeological testing and cultural resource inventories throughout Pioneer Square, including known buried historic features. Lissa emphasized that applicants should provide thorough documentation of historic and archaeological resources, as required by preservation guidelines and National Park Service standards, before projects advance and suggested that SDOT, as the applicant, supply this information to support the board's review and to benefit future neighborhood projects.

Written Comments received and forwarded to the Board prior to the meeting:

Lissa Kramer, Klondike Gold Rush National Park does not support the Artwork/sign at King Street Station, says it is not compatible with the historic district.

Lissa Kramer, Klondike Gold Rush National Park does not support the bike corrals, says it is not compatible with the historic district.

Ryan Smith Martin Smith (corrected from Urban Visions) does not support the bike corrals

Alley Weber, Friend Museum, does not support the bike corrals

The Alliance for Pioneer Square does not support the bike corrals

Pamela Powers, Majic Mouse Toys does not support the bike corrals

Sam Luckins supported the bike corrals

David Raybel supported the bike corrals

021826.3 MEETING MINUTES

January 7, 2026

MM/SC/CW/SO

6:0:1

The motion passed. BM Henry Watson abstained.

021826.4 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

021826.41 King Street Station

303 S. Jackson St.

Applicant: Kate Fernandez, Office of Arts and Culture, Jemma Radick, Studio SC

Proposed: Installation of artwork/sign

Presenter Kate Fernandez, Office of Arts & Culture, introduced the project as a new monument sign for the King Street Station Plaza, located at the corner of Second Avenue Extension and South Jackson Street. The plaza is over the ground floor occupied by Amtrack.

The project aims to improve wayfinding, highlight the collective work happening within King Street Station, and create a welcoming gateway to the Pioneer Square Arts District. She said visibility of the arts organizations and

what they offer to the public ,tucked back in the building is an issue. She said the arts sculpture also memorializes the collective work of the community. It is an entrance to their building but also a gateway to the greater Pioneer Square arts district.

Presenter Jemma Radick, Studio SC, presented an overview of the collaborative effort between the Office of Arts & Culture and Studio SC to conceptualize a sculptural artwork that visually links King Street Station with the arts identity of Pioneer Square and explained that the design uses color and sculptural forms to evoke shifting perspectives, encouraging viewers to reconsider how they interpret art.

Presenter Radick shared reference examples including a sculpture in Pioneer Square and renderings of the proposed installation, noting that its shapes draw inspiration from King Street Station's architecture and its color palette complements existing King Street Station signage and reviewed multiple viewing angles, highlighting how the abstract letterforms come into focus depending on approach.

Presenter Radick also detailed ADA considerations, including a continuous cane-detection rail and placement outside pedestrian circulation paths and described the durable materials, structural mounting to the deck and planters, and anti-graffiti coating. She noted the letters are four feet six inches tall.

Presenter Radick outlined the proposed low-level, focused lighting to softly illuminate the sculpture without creating light pollution while enhancing safety within the plaza landscaping.

Chair Maureen Elenga reiterated that, based on the board's previous briefing, there was broad agreement that the piece should be understood as a sculptural artwork rather than signage and emphasized that the installation appropriately relates to the activities within King Street Station, which now serves as a cultural and arts-focused hub.

Vice Chair Jose Lorenzo Torres acknowledged the concerns raised by the Klondike Museum but affirmed his agreement with the board's earlier conclusion that the installation is a contemporary sculpture rather than typical branded signage and emphasized the importance of balancing being mindful of preservation of the district's historic character with the realities of a modern, evolving urban environment.

Vice Chair Torres noted that while the district's heritage must be respected, contemporary elements are necessary for a vibrant community, and the

artwork helps communicate the presence of the arts organizations to visitors who may not otherwise know it is in the building.

Chair Elenga agreed and noted that the Pioneer Square district identity now includes its role as an arts community, which is relevant when evaluating contemporary interventions.

Referring to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, Chair Elenga explained that the proposed artwork is a modern addition to the property attached to the building plaza that is not historic material and importantly does not attempt to mimic or appear historic, the standards discourage making something appear historic if it is not.

Vice Chair Torres added that it is also removable without detriment to the historic building.

Action:

I move to recommend granting a Certificate of Approval for installation of artwork/sign. All per the applicant's submittal.

The Board directs staff to prepare a written recommendation of approval based on considering the application submittal and Board discussion at the Feb 18, 2026 public meeting and forward this written recommendation to the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

Code Citations:

Seattle Municipal Code

23.66.030 Certificates of Approval required

Certificate of approval required. No person shall alter, demolish, construct, reconstruct, restore, remodel, make any visible change to the exterior appearance of any structure, or to the public rights-of-way or other public spaces in a special review district, and no one shall remove or substantially alter any existing sign or erect or place any new sign or change the principal use of any building, or any portion of a building, structure or lot in a special review district, and no permit for such activity shall be issued unless a certificate of approval has been issued by the Department of Neighborhoods Director.

23.66.160 Signs

B. To ensure that flags, banners and signs are of a scale, color, shape and type compatible with the Pioneer Square Preservation District

objectives stated in Section 23.66.100 and with the character of the District and the buildings in the District, to reduce driver distraction and visual blight, to ensure that the messages of signs are not lost through undue proliferation, and to enhance views and sight lines into and down streets, the overall design of a sign, flag, or banner, including size, shape, typeface, texture, method of attachment, color, graphics and lighting, and the number and location of signs, flags, and banners, shall be reviewed by the Board and are regulated as set out in this Section 23.66.160. Building owners are encouraged to develop an overall signage plan for their buildings.

C. In determining the appropriateness of signs, including flags and banners used as signs as defined in Section 23.84A.036, the Preservation Board shall consider the following:

1. Signs Attached or Applied to Structures.

- a. The relationship of the shape of the proposed sign to the architecture of the building and with the shape of other approved signs located on the building or in proximity to the proposed sign;
- b. The relationship of the texture of the proposed sign to the building for which it is proposed, and with other approved signs located on the building or in proximity to the proposed sign;
- c. The possibility of physical damage to the structure and the degree to which the method of attachment would conceal or disfigure desirable architectural features or details of the structure (the method of attachment shall be approved by the Director);
- d. The relationship of the proposed colors and graphics with the colors of the building and with other approved signs on the building or in proximity to the proposed sign;
- e. The relationship of the proposed sign with existing lights and lighting standards, and with the architectural and design motifs of the building;
- f. Whether the proposed sign lighting will detract from the character of the building; and
- g. The compatibility of the colors and graphics of the proposed sign with the character of the District.

Rules for the Pioneer Square Preservation District

III. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a

compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

XX. RULES FOR TRANSPARENCY, SIGNS, AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

The Pioneer Square Preservation Ordinance reflects a policy to focus on structures, individually and collectively, so that they can be seen and appreciated. Sign proliferation or inconsistent paint colors, for example, are incompatible with this focus, and are expressly to be avoided. (8/93)

B. General Signage Regulations

The intent of sign regulations is to ensure that signs relate physically and visually to their location; that signs not hide, damage or obscure the architectural elements of the building; that signs be oriented toward and promote a pedestrian environment; and that the products or services offered be the focus, rather than signs. (8/93)

Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

MM/SC/JLT/SK

6:0:1

The motion passed.

BM Catherine Walker was not able to verbally vote due to technical difficulties with audio after switching devices while attending virtually.

021826.5 BRIEFING

021826.51 Occidental Promenade

Occidental Ave South from S King Street to Royal Brougham

Briefing on proposed alterations to public right of way

Presenters: Ian Macek, Claudia Sackett Hennem, Beth Purcell

Ian Macek, Principal Urban Designer at SDOT and project manager, reintroduced the project, noting that the team last presented in October and included background materials for new board members and explained that SDOT is collaborating with the Alliance for Pioneer Square, the Seattle Parks Foundation, and consultants at MIG.

Ian Macek provided a baseline update on the project's status, highlighting extensive stakeholder engagement and recent public outreach, including an open house and survey and noted that the team will return to the board later with Certificate of Approval requests as the project advances.

Presenter Claudia Sackett Hennum, a landscape architect at MIG, presented on near-term improvements for the Occidental Avenue South corridor between King Street and Royal Brougham. The project, which began in 2024, employs a tactical urbanism approach to test temporary improvements before implementing long-term changes that would update the existing 2015 street concept plan.

Presenter Hennum highlighted the proposed near-term improvements: Safety and Public Realm Enhancements, Infrastructure Additions, and Cultural Enhancement.

These temporary, reversible improvements aim to quickly enhance the street environment while testing approaches for long-term permanent changes, with ongoing stakeholder coordination and future certificate of approval presentations planned.

Chair Elenga emphasized the value of robust, ongoing engagement with stakeholders and the broader community and noted that such involvement is especially important given the neighborhood's unique characteristics and vulnerabilities.

Chair Elenga noted that the proposed renderings are helpful, particularly in illustrating temporary elements such as catenary lighting and how they would appear along Occidental and added that additional detail on long-term maintenance plans and communication with business owners especially as businesses change over time would be valuable.

BM Sean O'Brien requested a more detailed or zoomed-in plan view of the proposal, noting that while the overall direction looks promising, the current zoomed-out colored-line graphics make it difficult to fully understand the specifics.

SM Genna Nashem suggested summarizing the items that will be included in the upcoming application so the board can provide targeted feedback and identify any additional information needed before the next review.

Beth Purcell explained that two items will be coming forward soon: the lighting proposal including potential locations, attachment methods, and supporting images, and the mural planned for the Silver Cloud Hotel.

Beth Purcell noted that both are on accelerated timelines and will return to the board with detailed information in the coming months and added that the broader project work continues in coordination with Seattle Public Utilities on waste management and micromobility efforts, as well as vendor-related improvements.

021826.52

Bike Scooter Parking Corrals

34 locations around Pioneer Square

Briefing on proposed installation of marked parking areas and bike racks.

Presenters: Kim Pearson, Jess Kim

Presenter Kim Pearson of SDOT introduced the bike and scooter parking corral project for Pioneer Square, noting that the focus is on 28 specific locations, with additional sites to be addressed through other efforts such as the Occidental Promenade project and the International District Link Station bike parking initiative.

Presenter Kim outlined that the project is a collaboration between Vision Zero and Shared Mobility, aiming to improve safety and access through treatments such as daylighting, which enhances sightlines, slows turning vehicles, and formalizes existing parking restrictions.

Presenter Kim acknowledged extensive cross-department coordination and ongoing engagement with neighborhood partners to refine the project's scope and design.

Note: Vice-Chair Jose LorenzoTorres, BM Sage Kim, BM Catherine Walker, BM Maya Spotted Bear left the meeting after the presentation.

BM Henry Watson noted that community members and local business owners have expressed a desire for more outreach and support regarding the project and emphasized that stakeholders want meaningful engagement rather than feeling as though decisions are being made without sufficient input.

Chair Elenga noted that the board has received an unusually high volume of public comments on the project, reflecting deep community concern and

emphasized that many stakeholders feel additional outreach and communication are needed, particularly regarding how specific locations were selected.

Chair Elenga expressed concern about the visual impact of placing corrals in front of prominent historic sites such as the Pioneer Pergola and the Mutual Life Building and questioned whether the proposed plastic delineator posts are compatible with the neighborhood's character.

Chair Elenga also asked for clarification on the need for additional bike parking given the existing capacity for more than 200 bikes, especially since shared-use devices are typically not locked.

BM O'Brien asked for clarification on the project team's ongoing coordination with the Alliance for Pioneer Square and noted that public comments from the Alliance suggested a desire to pause the project for additional feedback.

Presenter Pearson explained that the project team has been meeting with the Alliance for Pioneer Square since early last year, incorporating their feedback on materials and exploring alternatives to the required vertical delineators and noted that options such as concrete hardscaping and planters were discussed but were not feasible due to cost, maintenance, and effectiveness.

Presenter Pearson added that the team has documented meetings, continues to welcome feedback, and has conducted outreach to adjacent businesses, receiving largely positive responses.

SM Nashem read BM Sage Kim's submitted comments noting that she did not have additional questions or comments at this time, explaining that she would like more time to review the public comments and the presentation materials and plans to return to the next meeting with more fully developed questions and feedback.

SM Nashem read BM Catherine Walker's submitted comments, noting she is persuaded by comments from Pioneer Square businesses and the National Park Service that the proposal is incompatible with the character of the historic district and added that the City faces broader challenges related to bike and scooter management that should be addressed through a citywide or downtown-wide community process rather than through isolated, site-specific solutions.

021826.6 BOARD BUSINESS

021826.7 REPORT OF THE CHAIR

021826.8 STAFF REPORT

SM Nashem noted that there is no administrative review summary to report.

Meeting adjourned at 11:19 a.m.