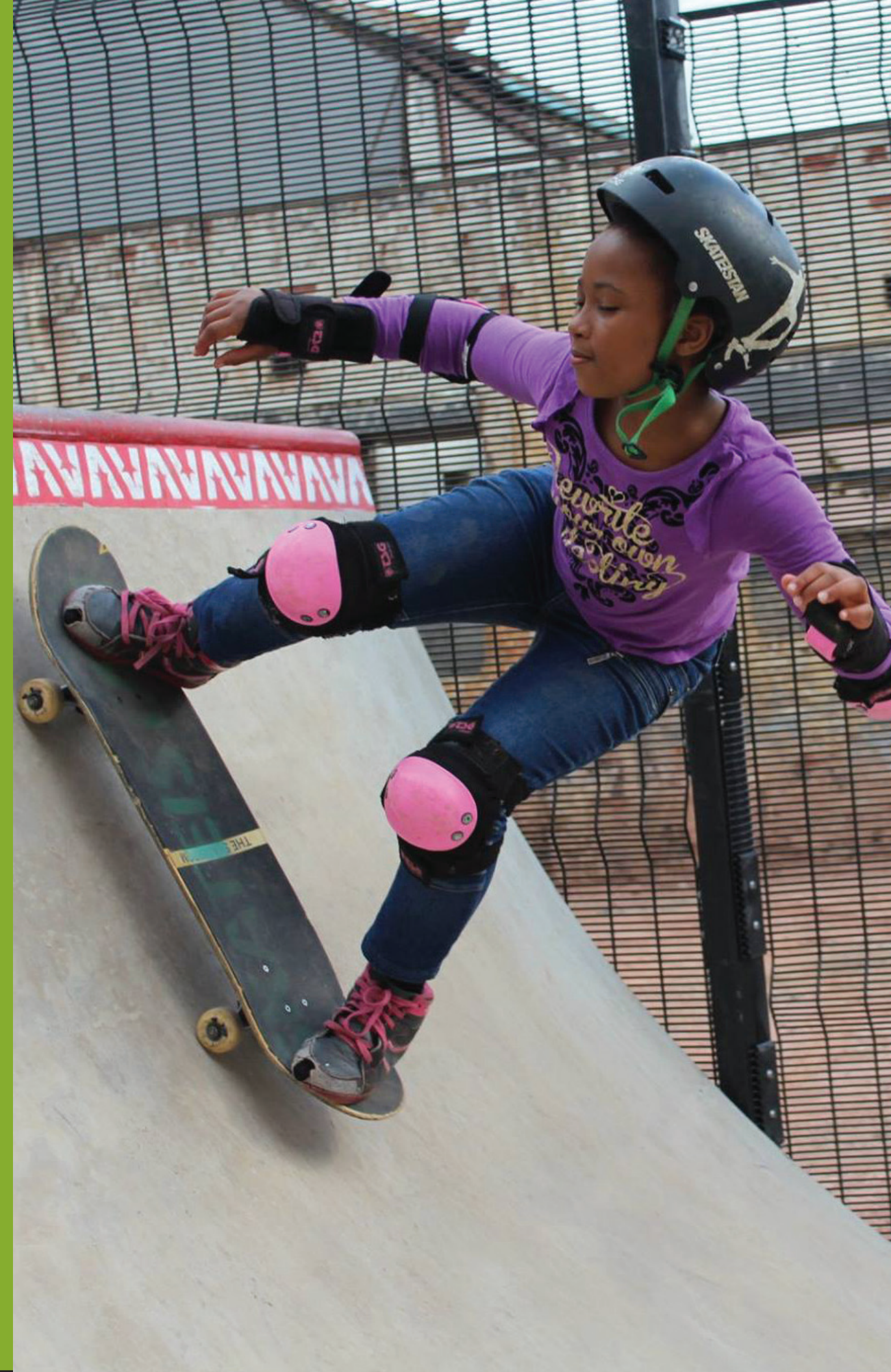


# DESIGN COMMISSION PACKET SEATTLE CENTER SKATE PLAZA





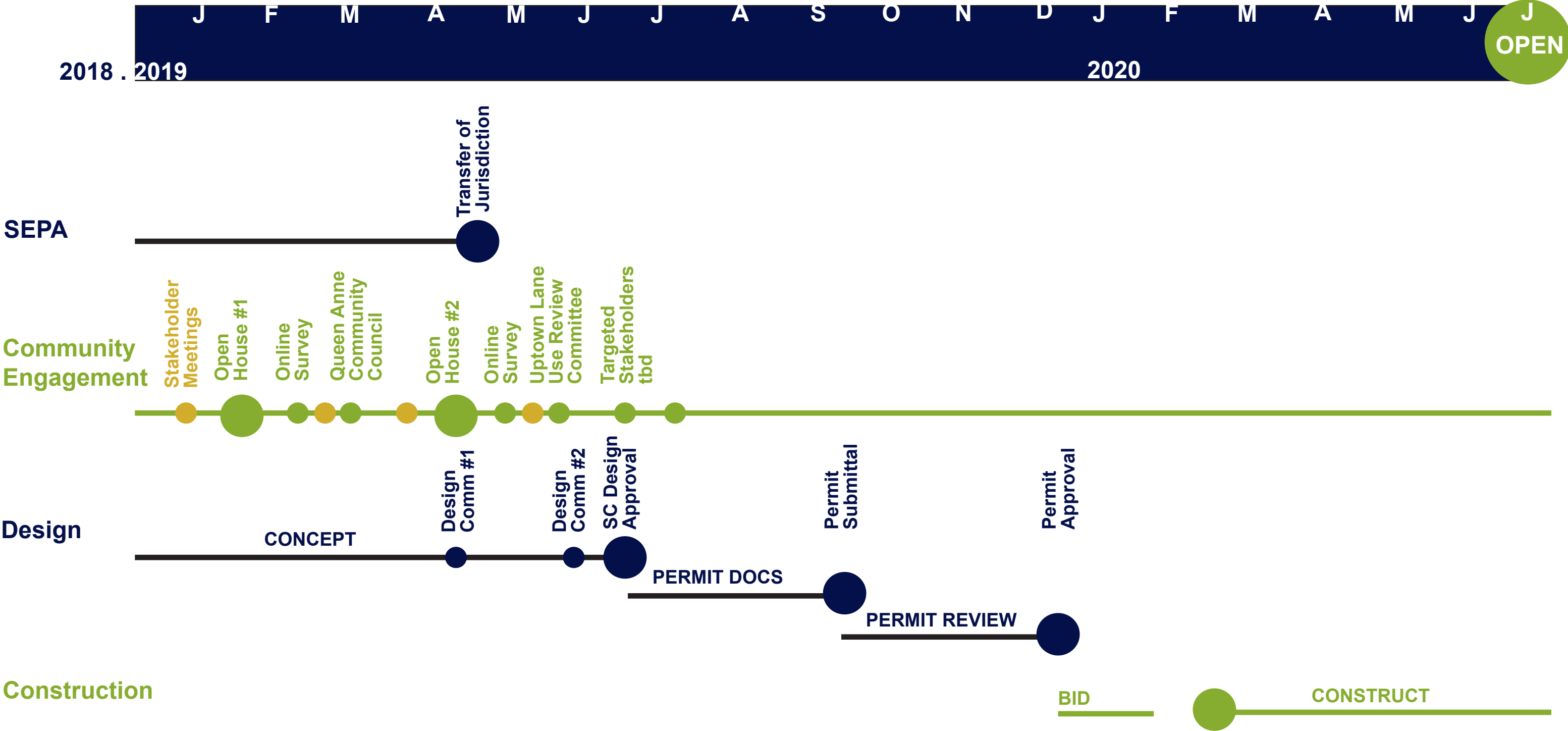
# Project Background



- Existing skatepark (completed in 2009) will be removed to accommodate Seattle Center Arena renovation
- City staff, together with skateboarding community, conducted a feasibility study to find a nearby location for replacement
- 10,000 sf of skatable area will be replaced in Broad Street right-of-way



# Schedule





# Stakeholders

## *2009-2018*

*Skate Like a Girl has been a resident organization, tenant and partner of Seattle Center since the previous SeaSk8 skatepark opened in 2009. Skate Like A Girl's positive presence and programming has helped to make SeaSk8 a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for skaters of all ages, identities and abilities.*

## *2017-2018*

*SLAG and SCAC leadership joined City staff from City Council, Seattle Center, OWCP, Parks and SDOT to plan for a replacement skate facility, including engaging Grindline Skateparks to perform a feasibility study of three potential sites for the skatepark. Based on the results of the feasibility study, stakeholders and City together agreed to focus on the Broad Street site as the preferred location.*

## *October 2018*

*SLAG hosted a farewell/closing party for the SeaSk8 skatepark on the final weekend it was open for skateboarding.*

## *September-November 2018*

*SLAG and SCAC worked with the City to issue an RFP for a design team for the new skate plaza, and served as members of the design team selection committee.*

## *January 2019-Present*

*SLAG and SCAC engage in regular meetings with Seattle Center project management and the VDZ+A team to provide in-process feedback on design and as full partners in public outreach.*





# Team



## • Vdz+A and New Line

### SKATE FEATURE DESIGN AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Collaborating since 2000, we have completed over 300 high profile municipal skatepark projects throughout Canada, the United States, Europe, and South America – establishing ourselves as one of the world's preeminent urban skate plaza designbuild teams.

## • Framework

### ARCHITECTURE & URBAN DESIGN

Collaborator with Vdz + A and New Line on the previous skatepark and architect for several projects at Seattle Center

## • Mayfly Engineering

### CIVIL ENGINEERING

Emphasis on green stormwater solutions

## • Fast + Epp

### STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING

Creative designers based in Vancouver and Seattle

## • Darklight Design

### LIGHTING DESIGN

Specializing in public space



# Team Experience

- Designing plaza style skate facilities
- Incorporating art + landscape





# Team Experience

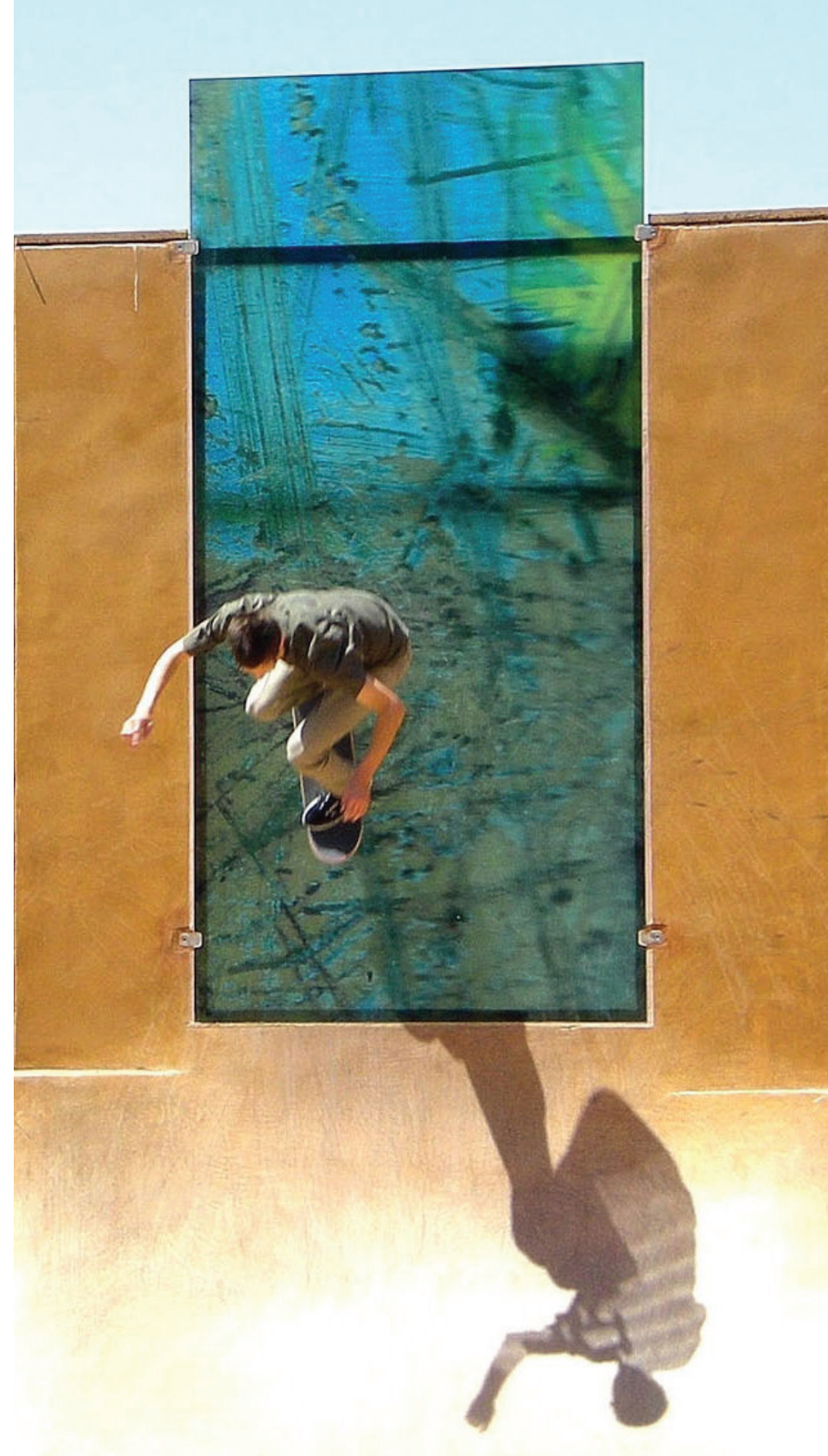
- Designing skate facilities for youth
- Collaborating with community





# Reusing the Skatepark Art

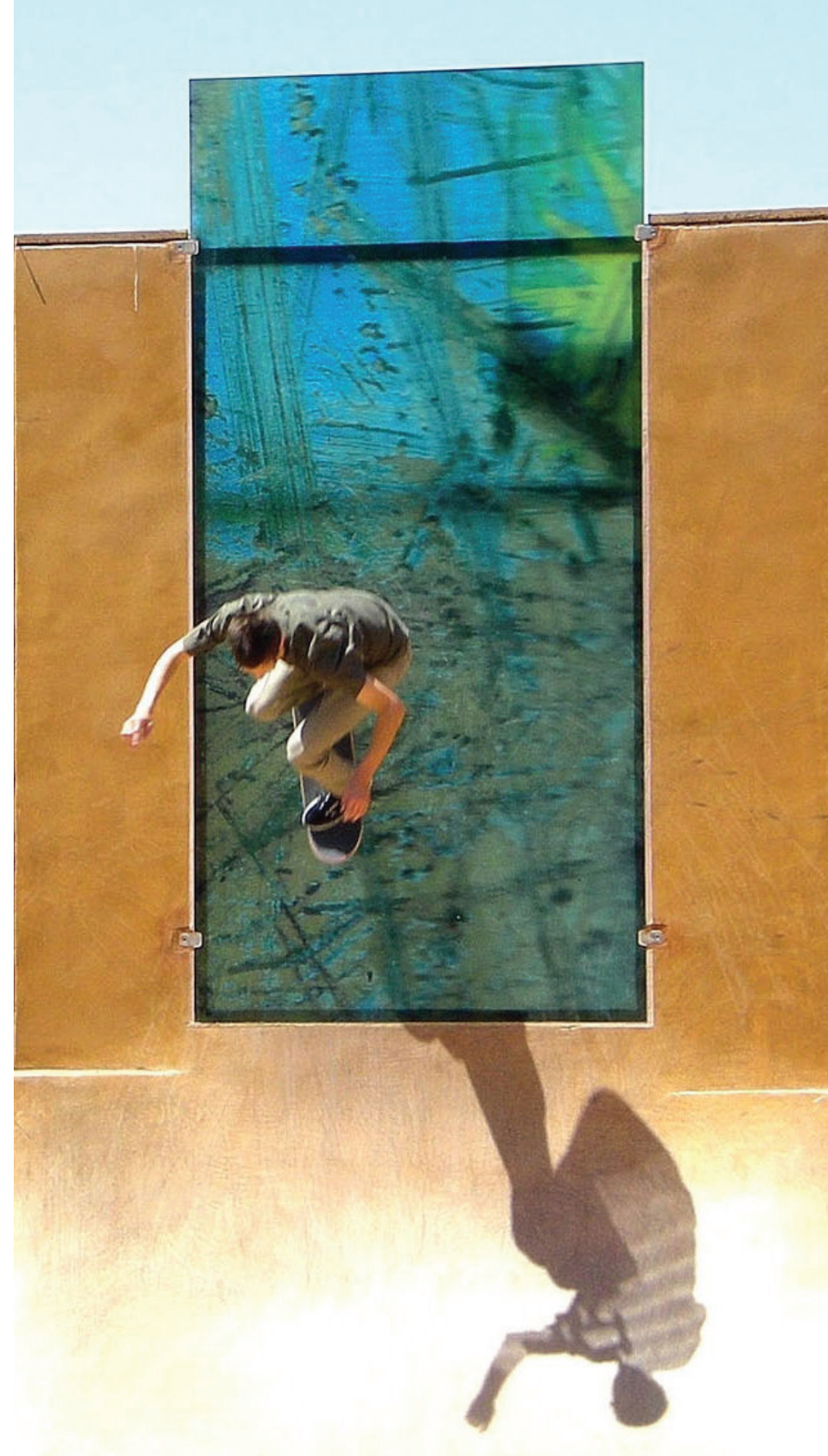
- Art glass with images from skateboards
- Bronze skater silhouettes from previous skatepark at current Gates Foundation site





# Reusing the Skatepark Art

- Moving from edges (fence) to center of space
- Technicalities of glass reuse
- Support system
- Seattle Center is working with Office of Arts & Culture to apply 1% for Arts funding to design the re-contextualized artwork.





# Program

- Taking cues from Citywide Skatepark Plan (2007), we are working with today's skateboarding community to help address the remaining gaps in Seattle's citywide network of skateparks





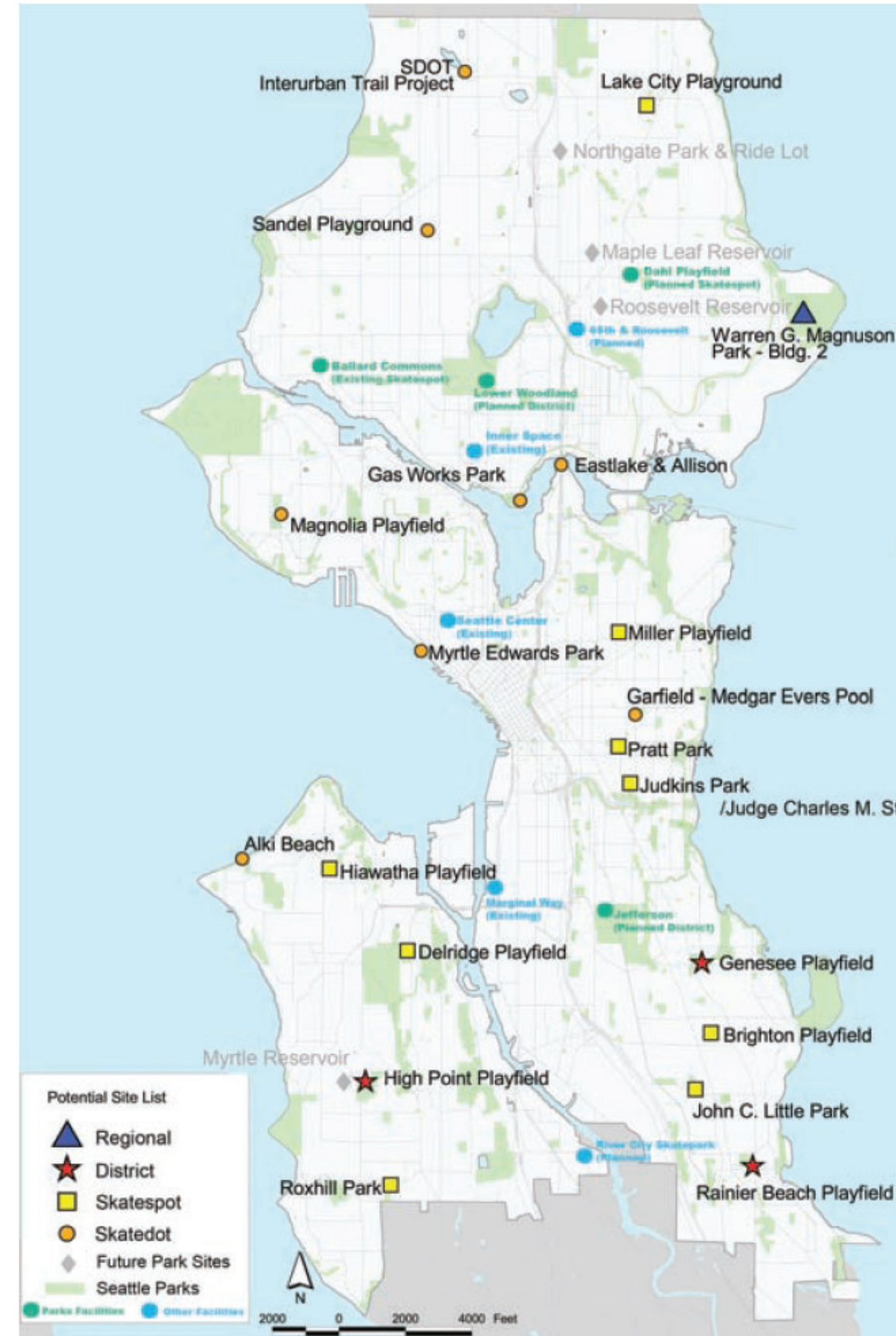
# Program

## Gaps include:

- Facilities in the center of the city
- Skate facilities designed for youth
- Weather protection

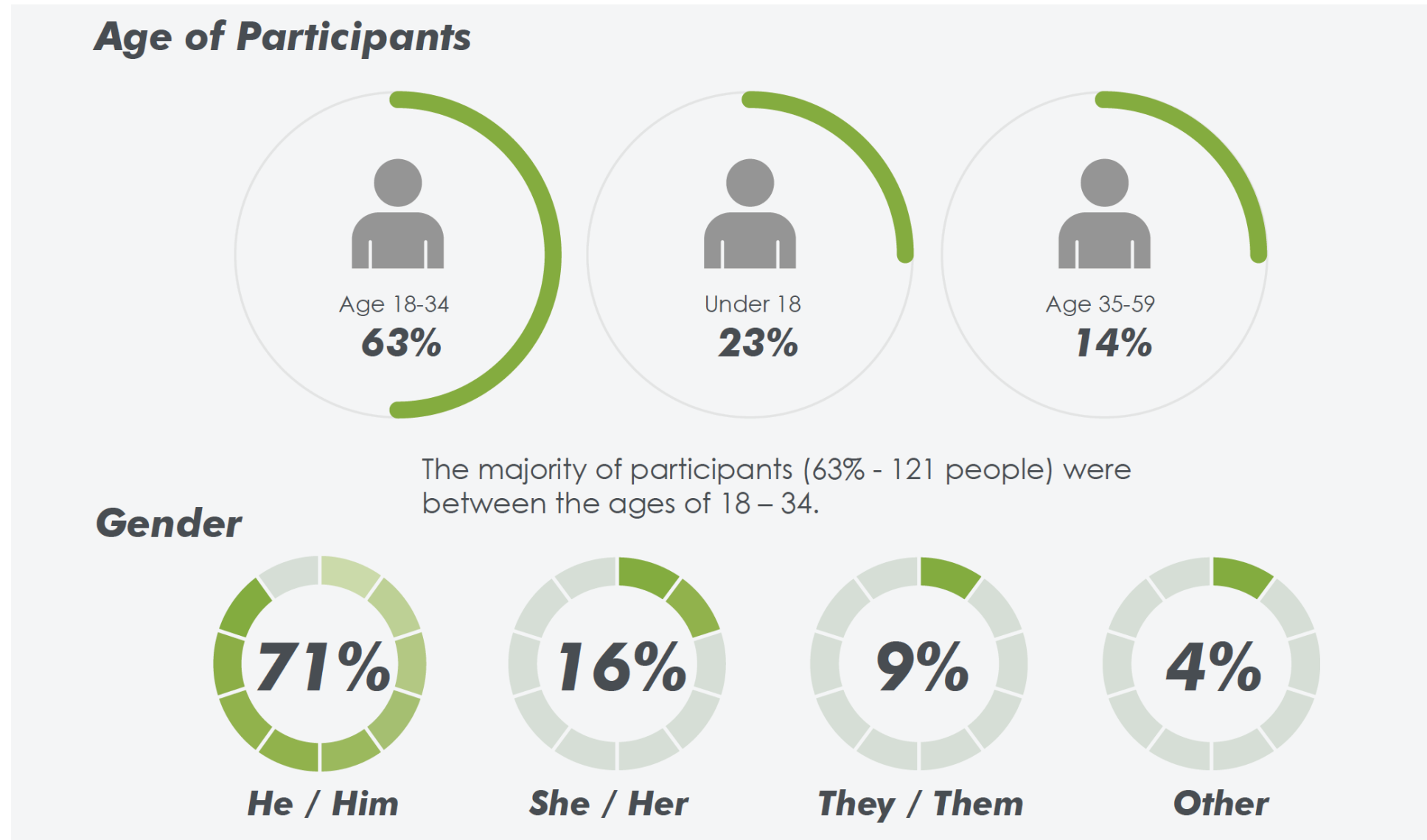
## Opportunity:

- Focus on inclusive design





# Public Input

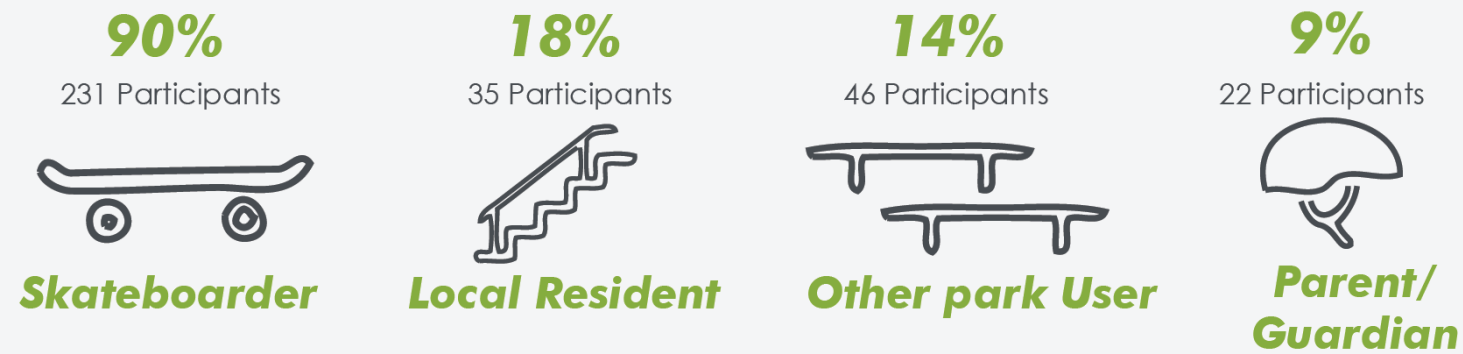


- Public Open House #1 held on January 19, 2019, including site visits
- Survey was available to take at the Open House or on-line with 257 participants



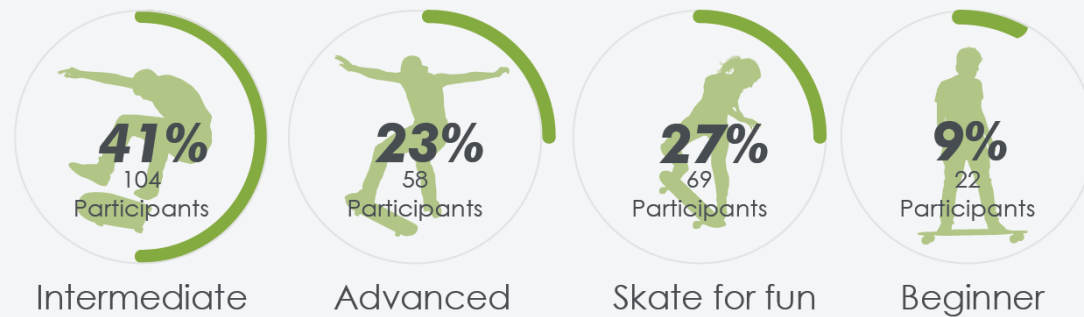


# Public Input

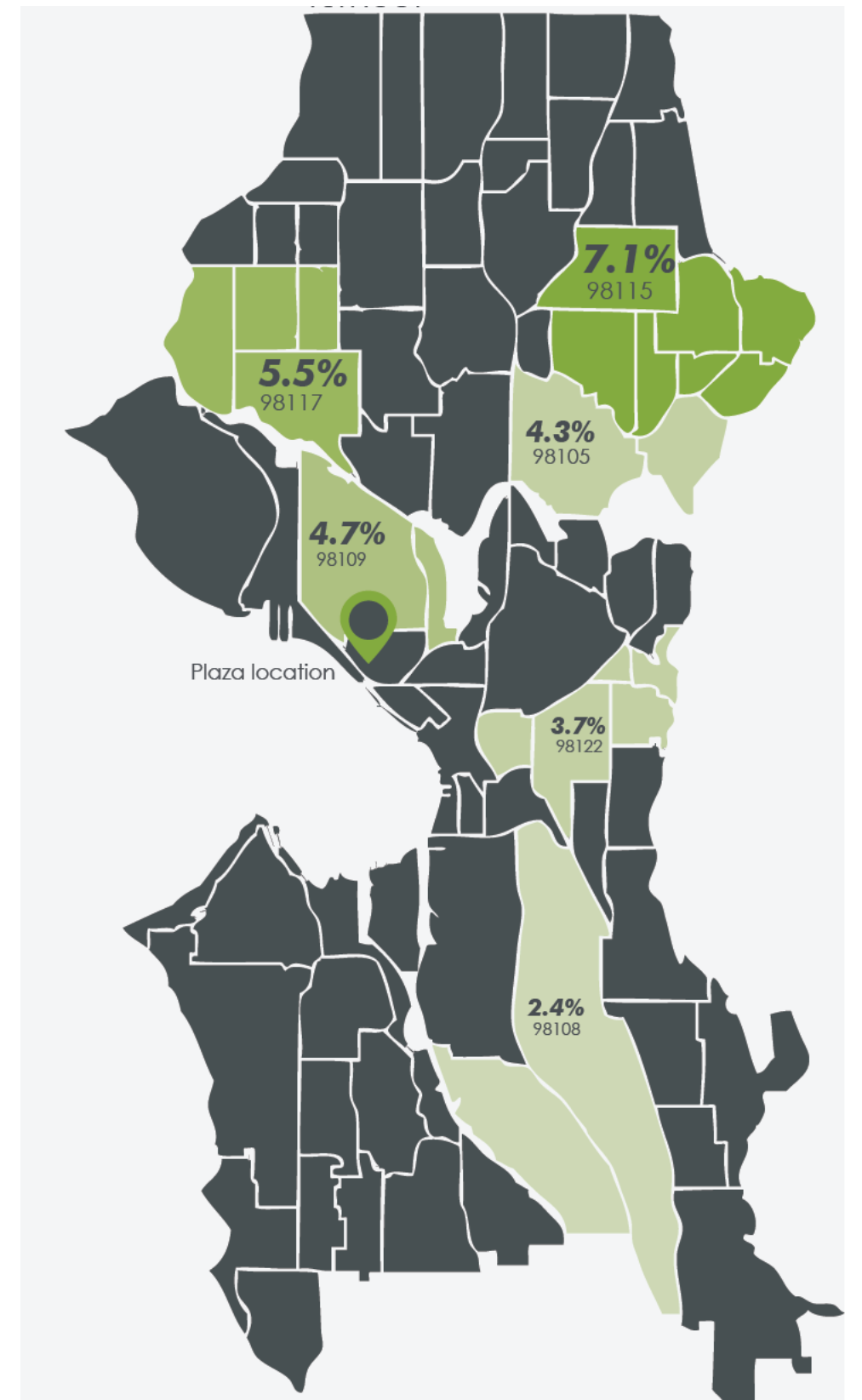
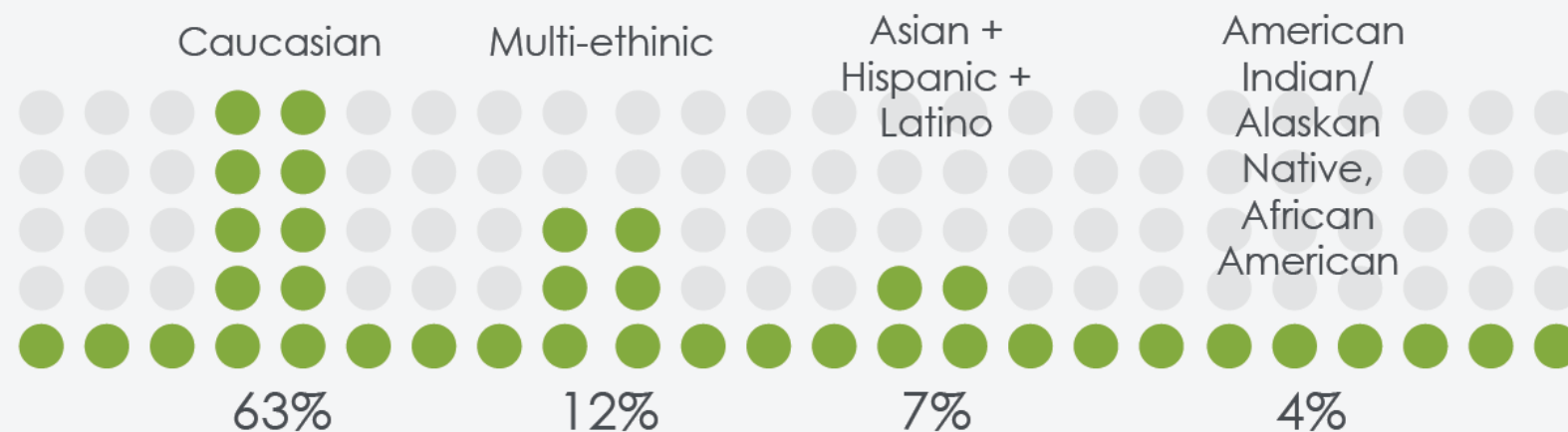


## Riding Ability

- Participants were asked what their experience level with skateboarding is. Seattle is a skilled city when it comes to skateboarding. 41% (104 people) stated they are intermediate level skaters, meaning they are working on flip tricks, grinds, and other technical tricks.



## Ethnicity

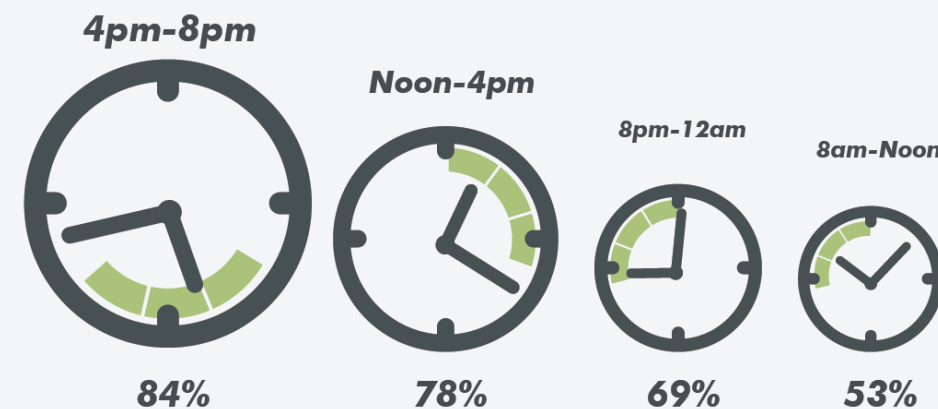
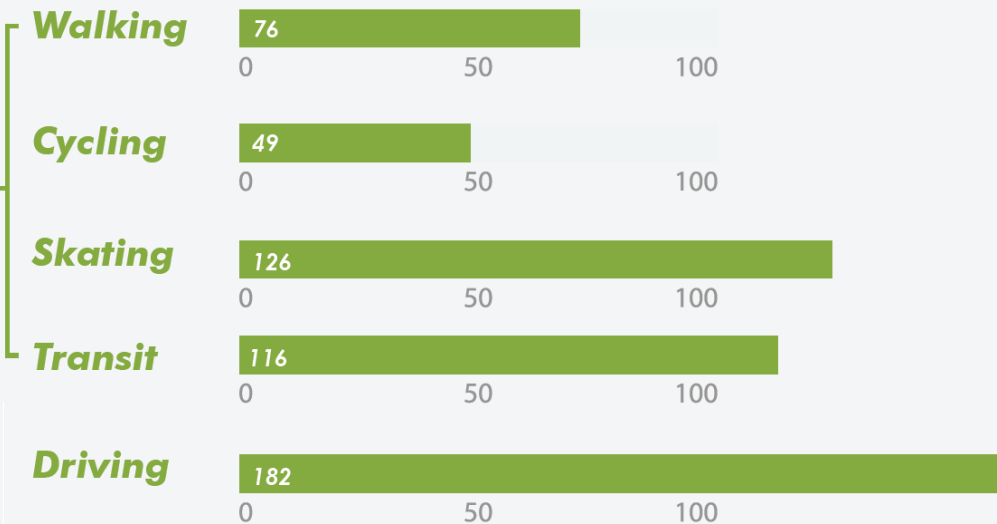




# Public Input

## Transportation

**7 out of 10 participants choose sustainable mobility to get to the skatepark**



## Times of Day + Frequency

- People use all modes of travel to get to the skate plaza; a majority come by means other than driving
- Afternoon and early evening are the most popular times to skate



# Public Input



- The majority of respondents feel safe
- For the respondents that feel unsafe: lighting, increased diversity and acceptance of diverse users were desired



# Public Input

## Specific Skate Features

Top 3



Ledges  
and  
Benches



Miniramp



Flat Bars

## Landscape Design Features

Top 3



Night Lighting



Restrooms



Water  
Fountains

## Programming Interest

Top 3



Skate  
Competitions



Skate Camps



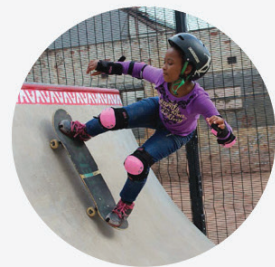
Ladies\* Night

- Skaters are most interested in plaza-style elements
- Amenities such as lighting, drinking fountain and restrooms are priorities
- Desired programs include competitions, camps and ladies' night



# Public Input

## Specific Skate Features By Skill



Miniramp  
65%

#1 Rated  
by Skill

**Beginner**  
[20 Participants]



Ledges  
and  
Benches  
47%

#1 Rated  
by Skill

**Intermediate**  
[78 Participants]



Ledges  
and  
Benches  
69%

#1 Rated  
by Skill

**Advanced**  
[36 Participants]

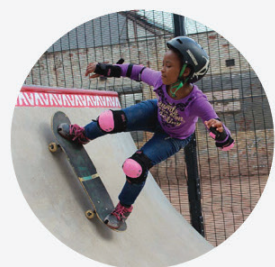


Quarter  
pipe  
53%

#1 Rated  
by Skill

**Skate for fun**  
[45 Participants]

## Specific Skate Features By Age



Miniramp  
43%

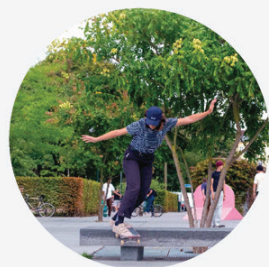
#1 Rated  
by Age

**Under 18** [40 Participants]



Ledges  
and  
Benches  
43%

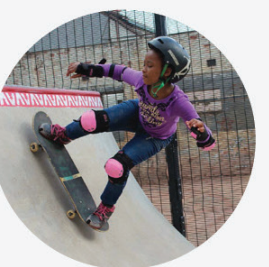
#2 Rated  
by Age



Ledges  
and  
Benches  
52%

#1 Rated  
by Age

**18 and Over** [140 Participants]



Miniramp  
45%

#2 Rated  
by Age

- Skaters of various skill levels and ages are interested in ledges and benches, mini-ramps and quarter pipes



# Overarching Goals

- Provide a high-quality, inclusive skating facility that best meets the needs of skate community
- In the spirit of the Uptown UDF goals for the Uptown Triangle, activate Thomas Street and Lake 2 Bay corridors, and improve open spaces in an area of growing height and density
- Embody the Seattle Center Master Plan aspiration to enrich and connect to adjacent neighborhoods through welcoming design, programming and operations





# Guiding Principles

- Base the design on input from the skate community and the City-wide Skatepark Plan
  - Design the skate plaza for multiple simultaneous users, classes/kids, general users.
  - Integrate spaces where classes can be held
  - Design the pick-up/drop-off on Taylor to be convenient, functional, and integrated for Skate Like a Girl and other programs
  - Take advantage of the slope and views to Lake Union and uphill to the Space Needle
- Provide a high-quality, inclusive skating facility that best meets the needs of skate community





# Guiding Principles

- Create safe and attractive pedestrian routes through the skate plaza
- Express the movement of water and infiltration in new landscape
- Make art an integral part of the skate plaza design
- Use lighting to highlight features of the plaza and make a more comfortable pedestrian environment along adjacent streets and through the plaza
- Think 3-dimensionally about how the plaza is perceived, including how a future covered area would fit into views to Lake Union and future development
- Create defining, attractive edges for the skate plaza that will work in the near and longer term

- In the spirit of the Uptown UDF goals for the Uptown Triangle, activate Thomas Street and Lake 2 Bay corridors, and improve open spaces in an area of growing height and density





# Guiding Principles

- Fit the design of the plaza into the larger context, including Lake 2 Bay and an extended edge/entry to Seattle Center
- Design 5th and Thomas as a prominent entry point and viewing spot for the general public as they queue to enter Seattle Center
- Consider views of the park from the monorail, the Space Needle and future adjacent development

- Enrich and connect to adjacent neighborhoods through welcoming design, programming and operations





# Site: Larger Context



- Site is located in a prominent area with good access
- Site draws from center city neighborhoods
- Site is part of the Lake to Bay connection
- The Olympic Sculpture Park and the Broad Street Green offer a linkage of world-class sculptures that the skate plaza could continue



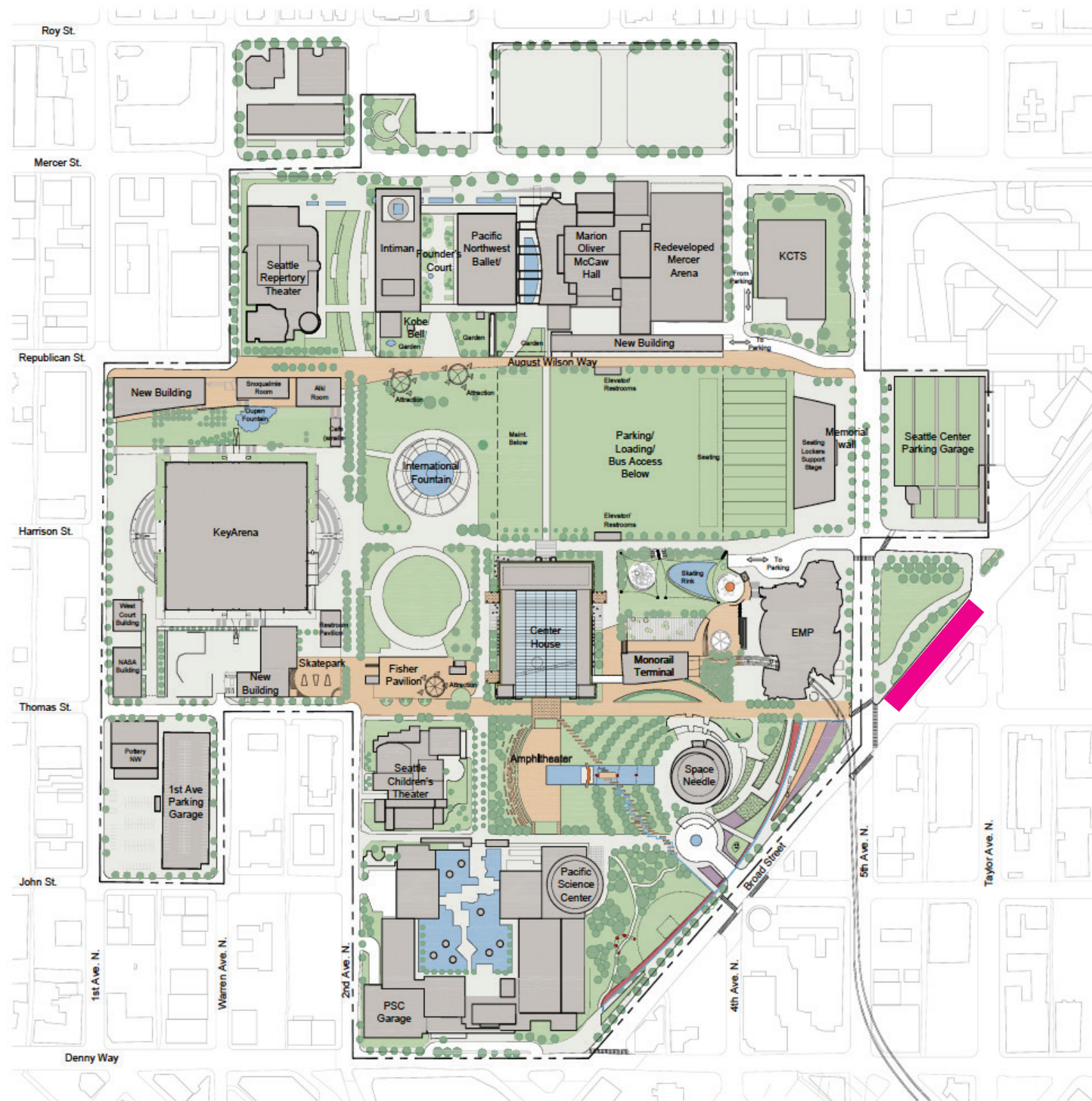
# Site: Larger Context



New Skate Plaza at Seattle Center



# Site: Seattle Center



Century 21 Master Plan



## Century 21 Master Plan:

- Break down the edges of Seattle Center
- Thomas is a key route within and through the Center

*“Enrich and connect to the fabric of adjacent neighborhoods through welcoming design, programming and operations”*

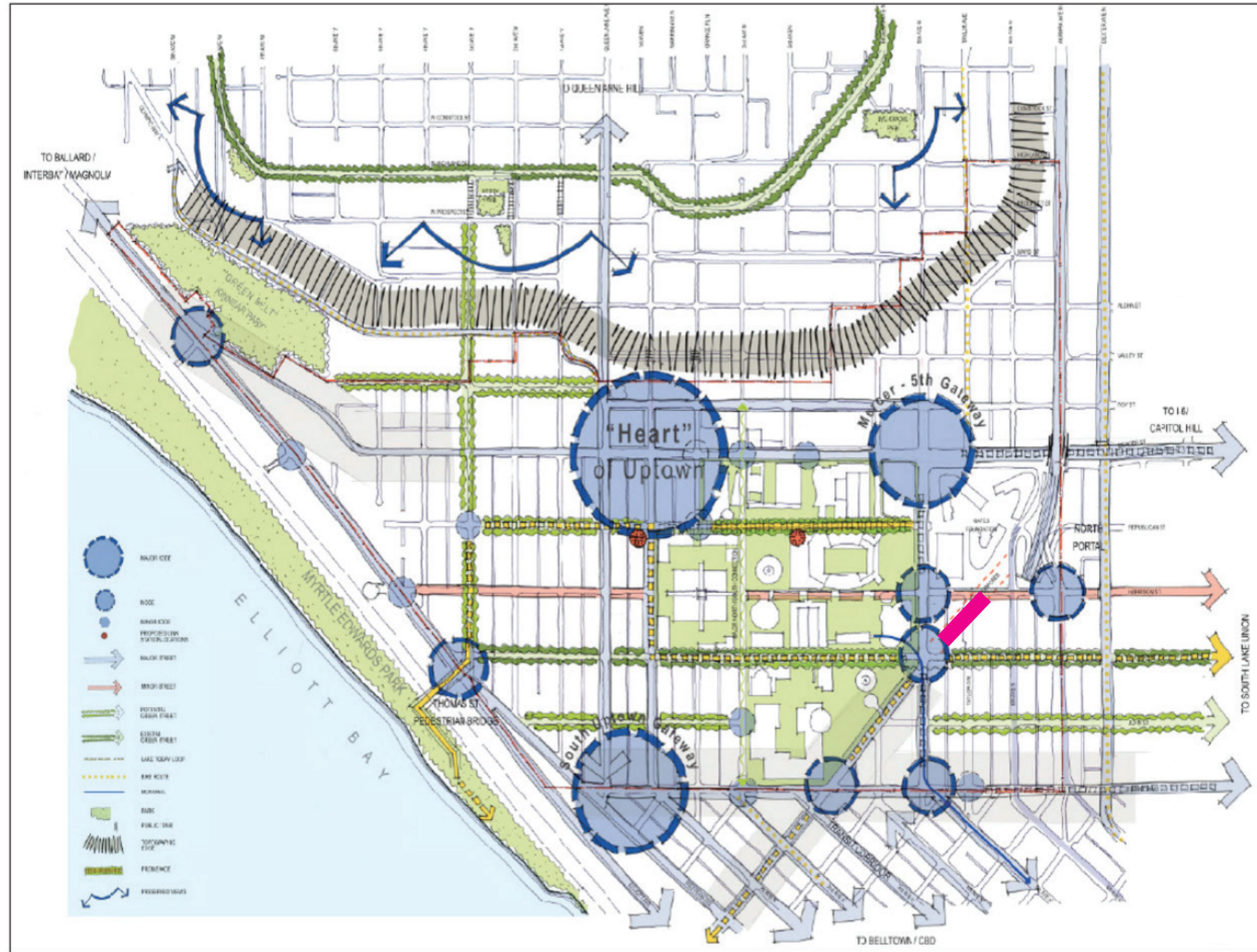
*—Century 21 Master Plan*

*“Provide the programs and destinations to attract a larger and increasingly diverse number of visitors”*

*—Century 21 Master Plan*



# Site: Neighborhood Context



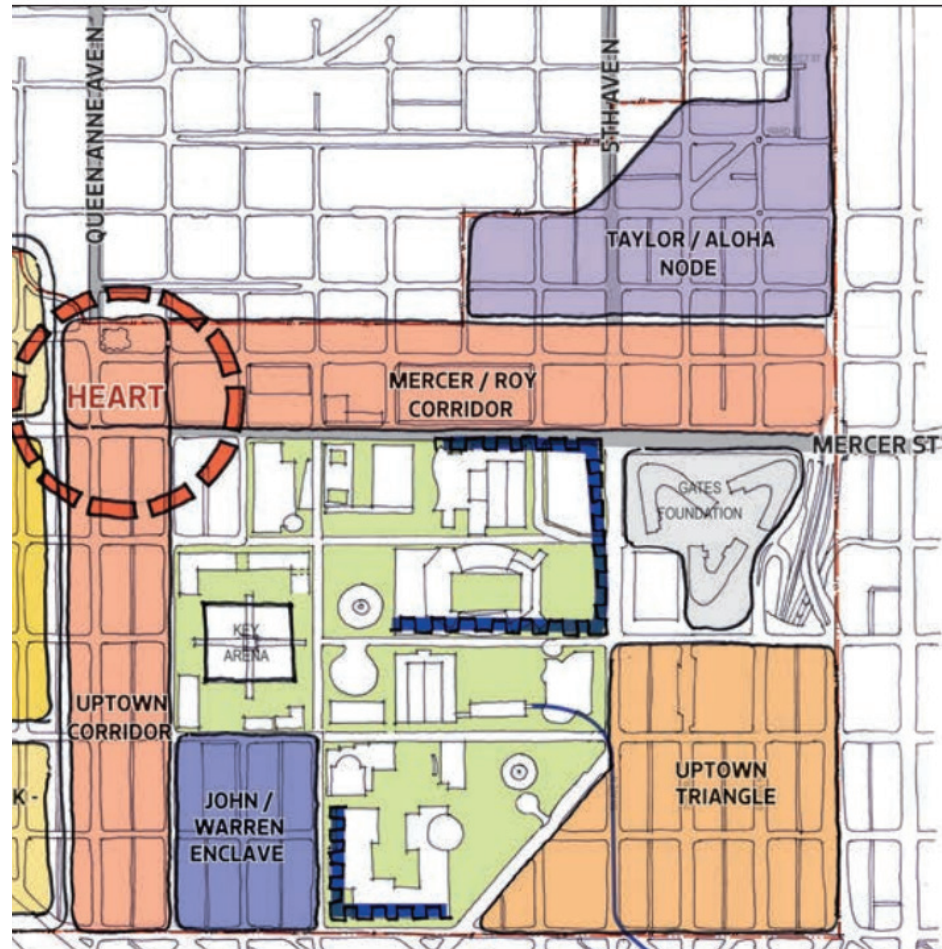
## Uptown planning:

- Attract a diversity of ages
- Activate the public realm to help make them friendly and welcoming
- Enhance connections to the Seattle Center
- Make more permeable edge of Seattle Center

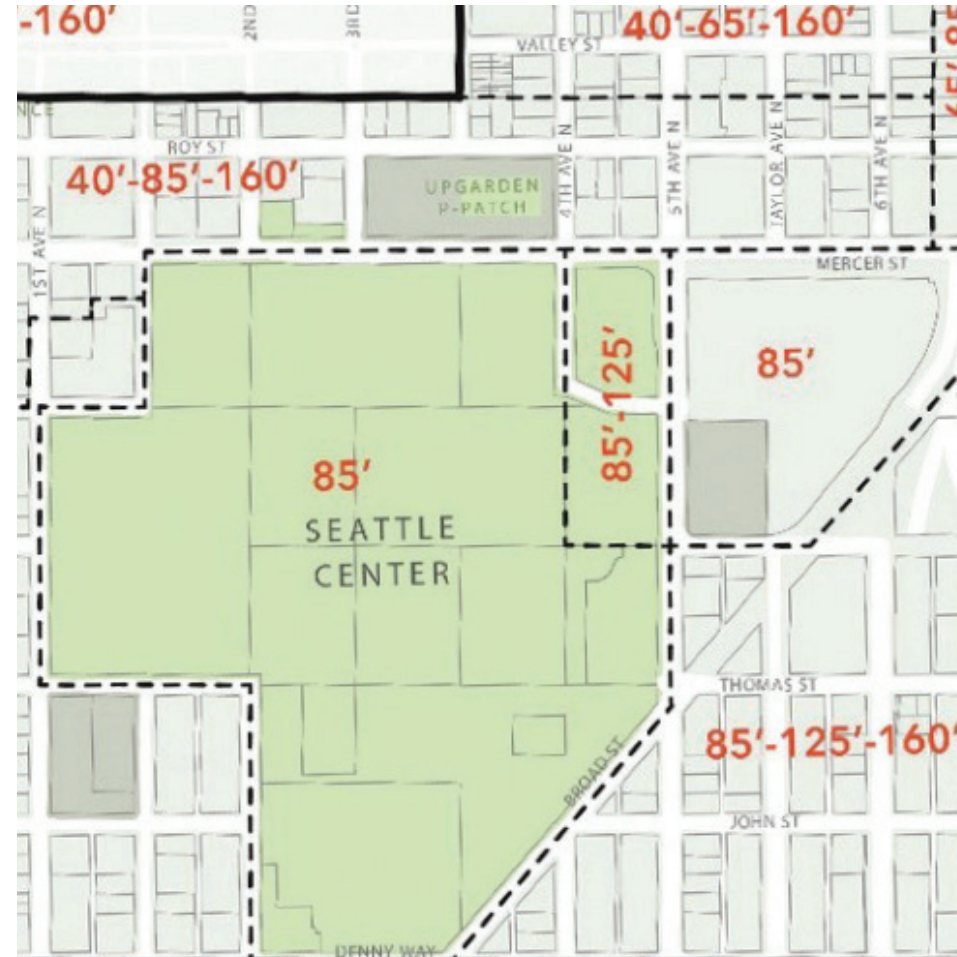
*Relevant concepts: public input in the Uptown Rezone*



# Site: Urban Design Framework



The Skatepark is in the Uptown Triangle area of Uptown



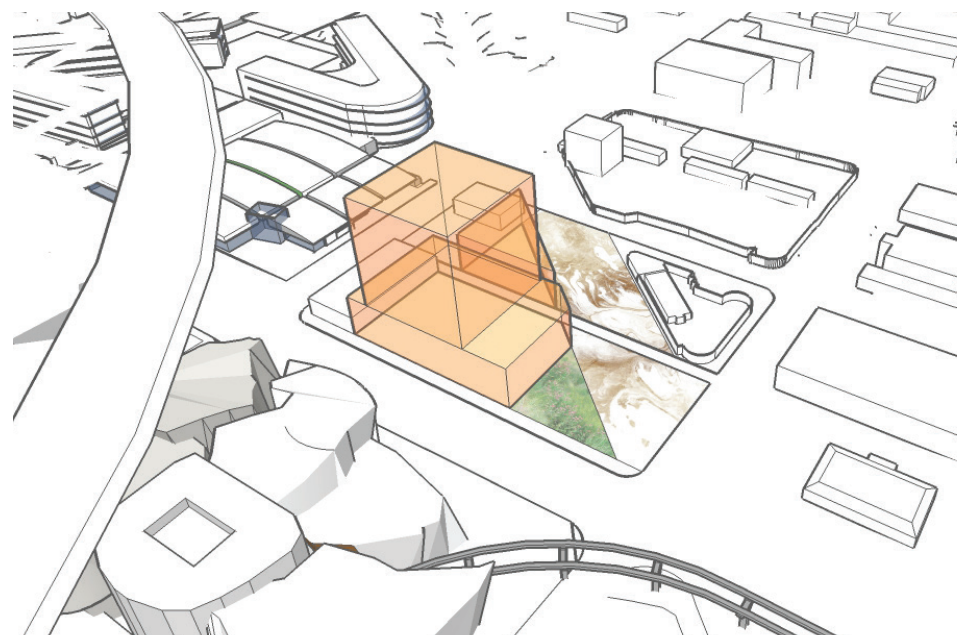
Zoning was recently changed to taller buildings with podia

*Thomas Street will provide a strong pedestrian connection from Eastlake Ave East to Myrtle Edwards Park. The Thomas street connection is also part of the Lake 2 Bay trail that provides a connection from Lake Union to the Waterfront. This area's proximity to South Lake Union, particularly when the street grid is reconnected, and downtown may make it attractive for commercial development.*

*This recommendation is to increase height limits in this area from 85 feet to a choice of 125 feet or 160 feet. For those buildings that use the 160-foot height limit, floor plates would be limited after first 3 to 4 floors to 12,500 square feet and only one structure may be built to this height on a block. The 125 feet height limit would allow larger floor plates and be more attractive to commercial development.*



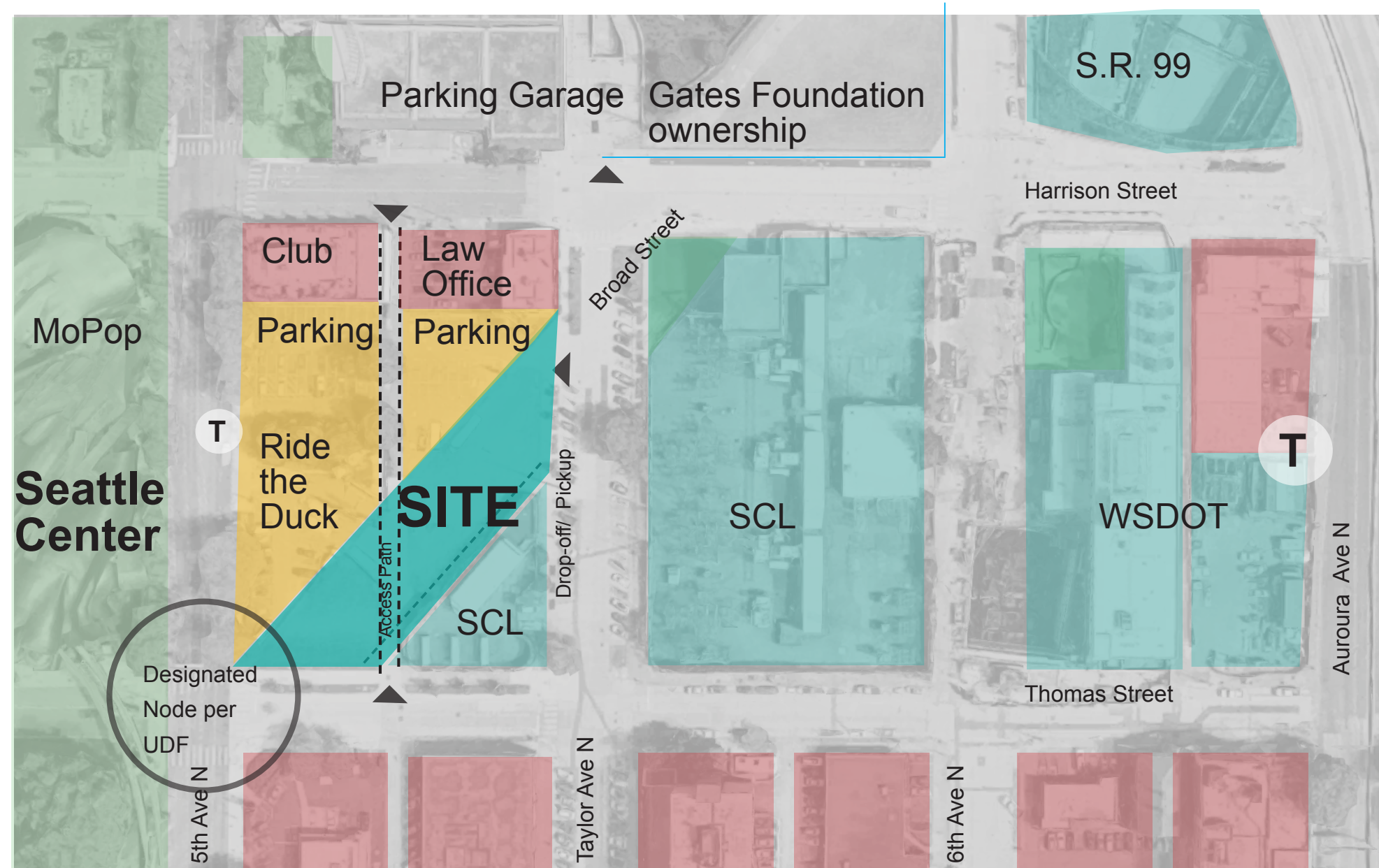
Thomas Street is an important green ped bike link



Potential massing for neighboring building



# Site: Closer Context



- Entry to Seattle Center is key
- The property on the north side of Thomas is City Light or WSDOT. The skate plaza will provide needed activation along an important green street
- Thomas and Harrison will be pedestrian routes to transit; lighting will help transit patrons feel more comfortable
- The adjacent property with Ride The Duck is very likely to redevelop



- Entry at Thomas will be very visible from street level and above, and busy with pedestrians
- Pedestrian routes through the site needed
- Good solar access from south and east long-term
- Truck access to SCL required; access through site may be needed at least near term
- Drop off/Pick up works well on Taylor
- Take advantage of views



# Site



Skate plaza entry at  
5th & Thomas

- Do we add an “entry element” or let the icons reign?



# Site



Looking toward the  
Space Needle

- How do we make this view a signature of the plaza?



# Site



Near the Taylor Avenue entry, looking uphill

- Designing on a slope: What might terracing look like?
- Treatment for SCL wall? Edge along the west is temporary but ragged
- Drop off location on Taylor is a good spot for gathering/classes



# Site



View to MoPop  
(at least for near term)

- Could we take cues from the lapped colored glass?



# Site



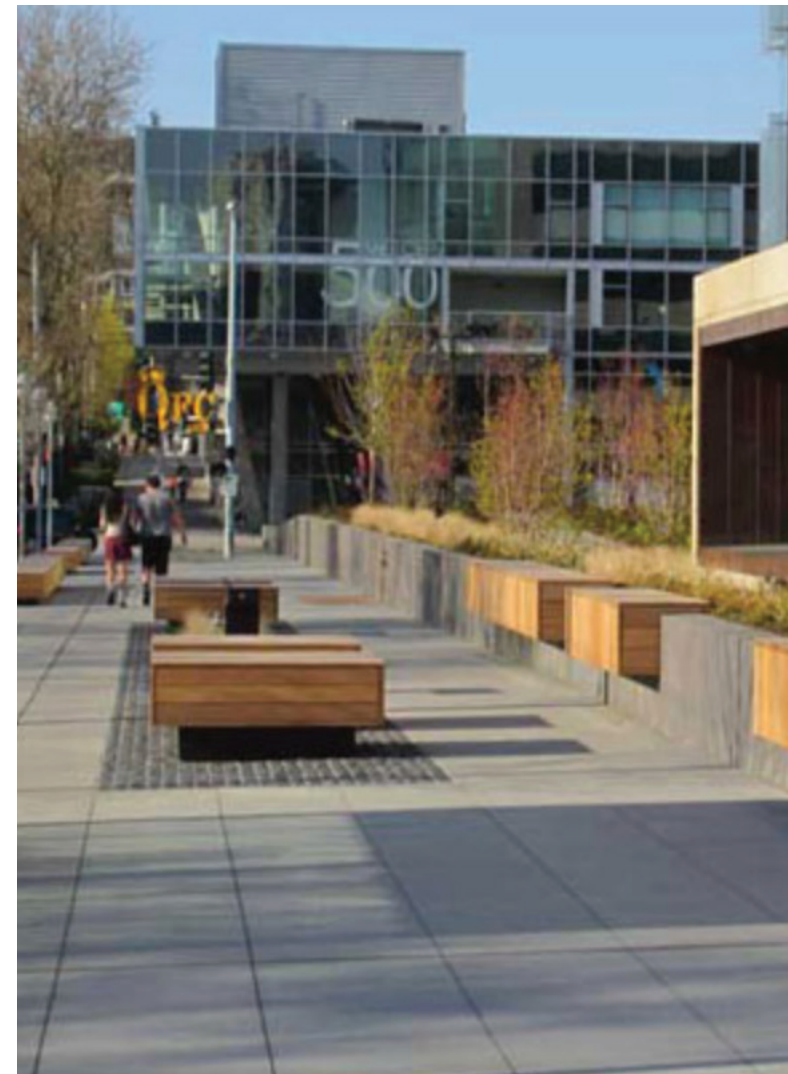
- Seattle City Light has truck access requirements
- Can we plant along the fence/art?
- Access treatment: near-term vs long-term



# Design Context



Broad Street Green



Gates Foundation Streetscape



# Design Themes: Northwest Garden



Robust edges



Material changes



Integrated landscape



Visible sustainability / water

VDZ+A

framework





# Civil Engineering + Green Stormwater



We are excited to find innovative ways to combine stormwater treatment with skate-able elements and site furnishing to create fun, cost efficient and multimodal solutions.

## Local Stormwater Code Requirements:

- Local stormwater code requires Onsite Stormwater Management (OSM) that mimics natural systems and Flow Control to minimize combined sewer overflows into the Puget Sound.

## Onsite Stormwater Management (OSM): mimic natural systems

- Bioretention is the one way to provide OSM. Initial Calculations indicate a total bioretention facility bottom area of 1,225 square feet that can be broken up into multiple features.
- Permeable pavement, landscape areas and trees also provide OSM. The more we provide, the smaller the bioretention area.

## Flow Control- minimize combined sewer overflows into the Puget Sound

- Initial flow modeling indicates we can get double duty from the bioretention features and use them to meet flow control requirements as well as OSM.





# On-going Discussions

## SDOT

- Access path status and requirements
- Near-term vs long-term conditions
- Safety and comfort for non-skaters integrated into design

## SCL

- Verifying Seattle City Light truck access requirements
- Requirements for art along the SCL fence
- Buffer along SCL property





# Lighting



## Skateboard Lighting

- Functional lighting for skating best on poles (+/- 30') with well-shielded adjustable fixtures.
- Lights could be interesting architectural features



# Lighting



## Pedestrian Lighting

- Many options
- Create a rhythmic progression and a clearly defined pathway





# Lighting



## Experience Lighting

- Human-scaled elements that create interest and texture can be highlighted
- Could be integrated into ground plane, stairs, furnishings and edges
- Create comfortable and inviting spaces after dark that encourage pedestrians and positive uses



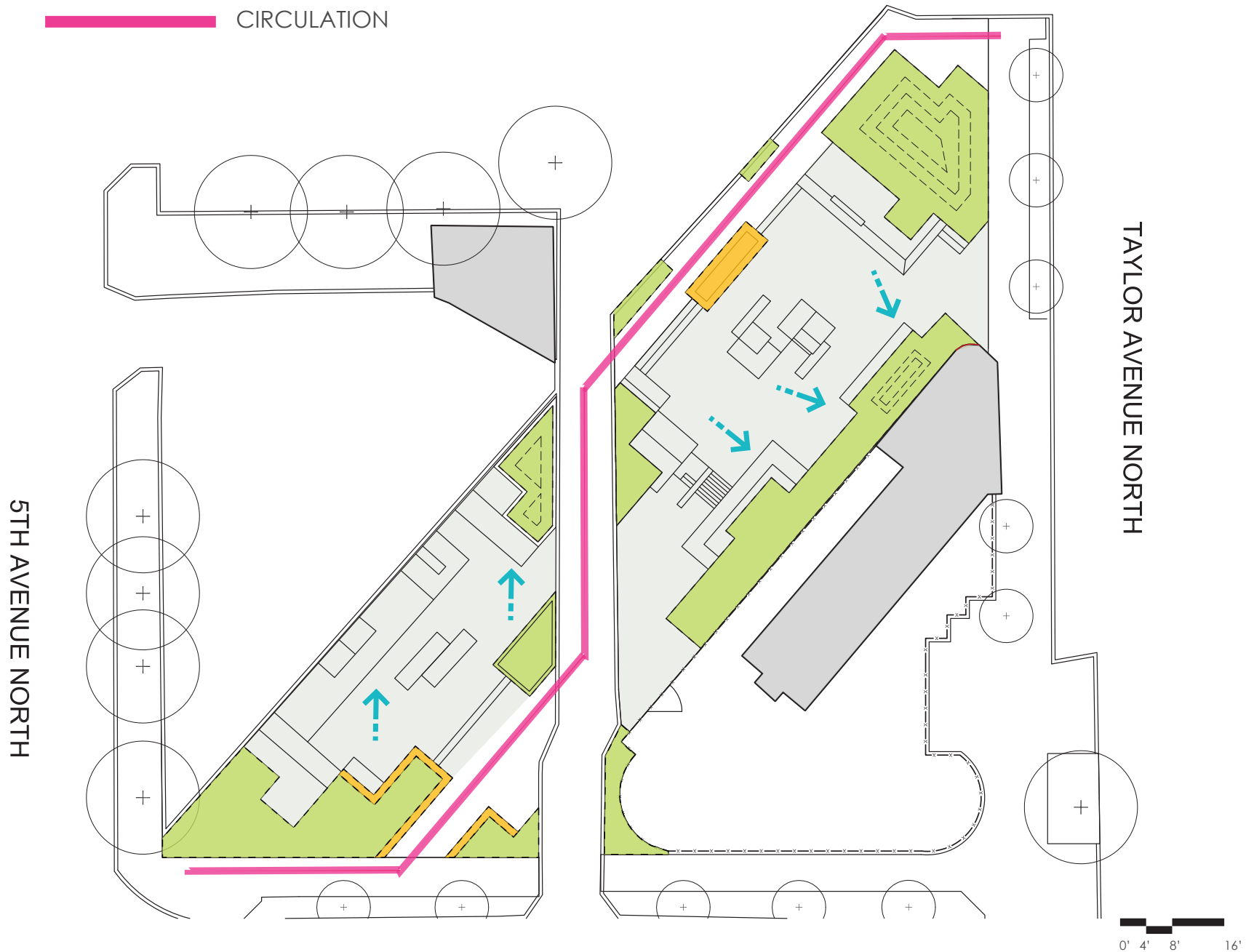
# SAWTOOTH

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN DIRECTIONS

### SPATIAL DIAGRAM LEGEND



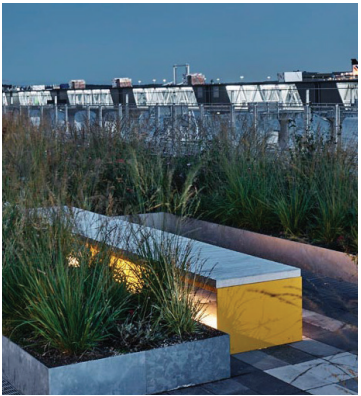
CIRCULATION (pink solid line)



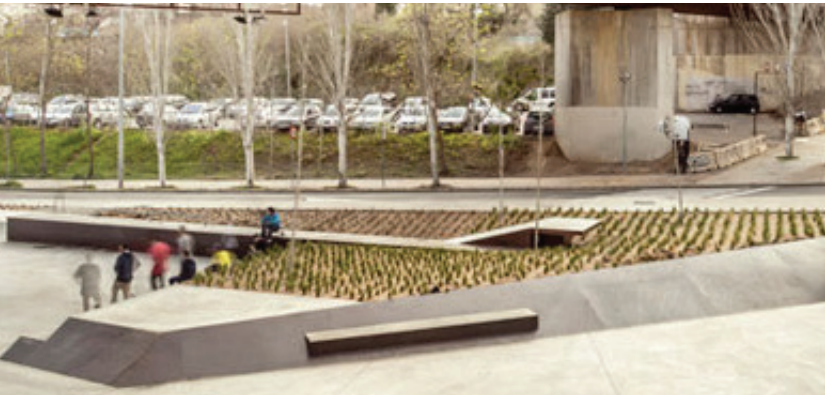
LINEAR PLANTING POCKETS



DIRECTIONAL PAVING TO SHOW WATER DRAINAGE



SEATING NODES ALONG PATH



VDZ+A

framework





# SAWTOOTH

## SKATEPLAZA DESIGN DIRECTIONS

Skate Terrain Options



Skate Terrain Images



Thomas Street

Taylor Avenue North

5th Avenue North



0' 4' 8' 16'



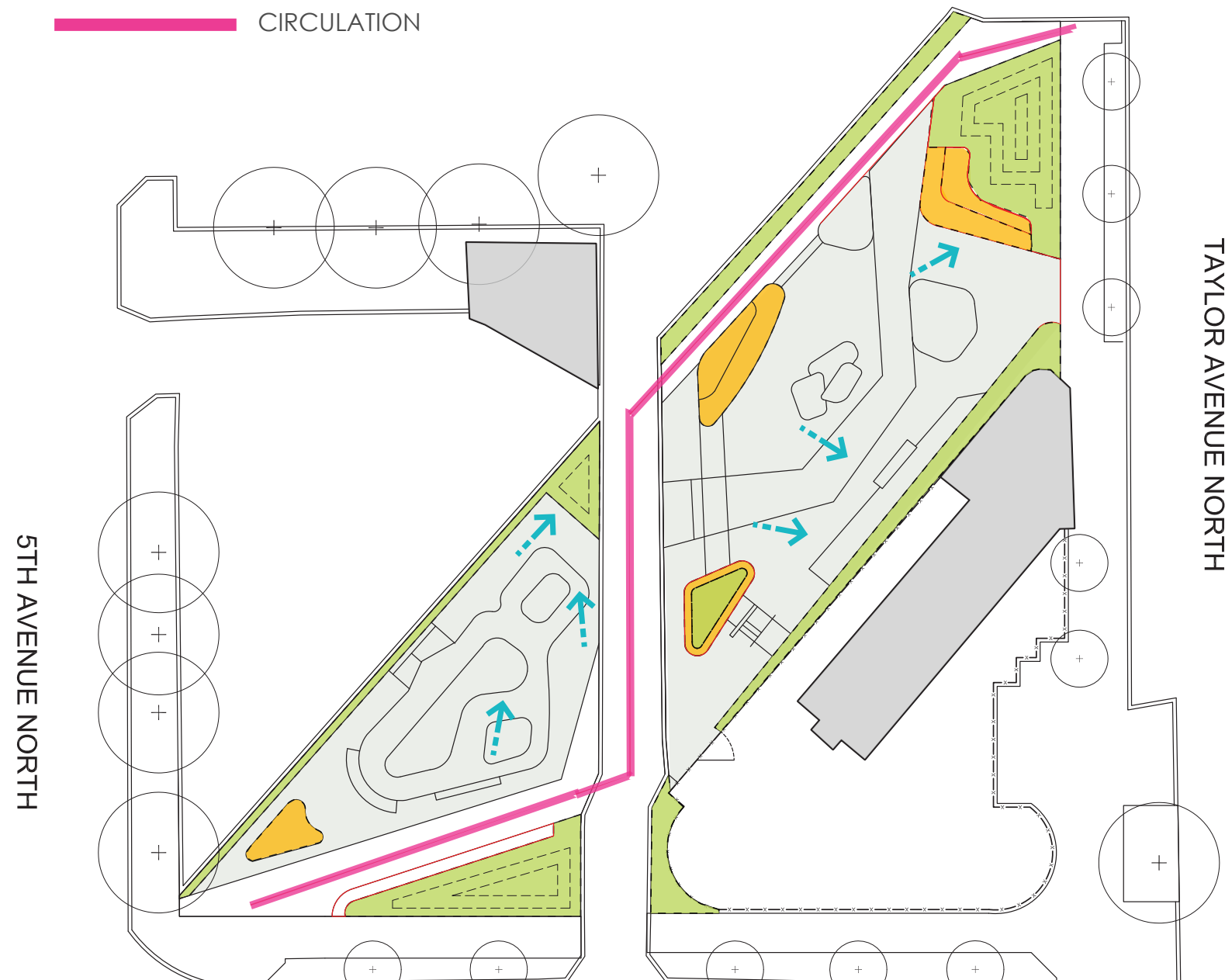
# DICHOTOMY

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN DIRECTIONS

### SPATIAL DIAGRAM LEGEND



CIRCULATION



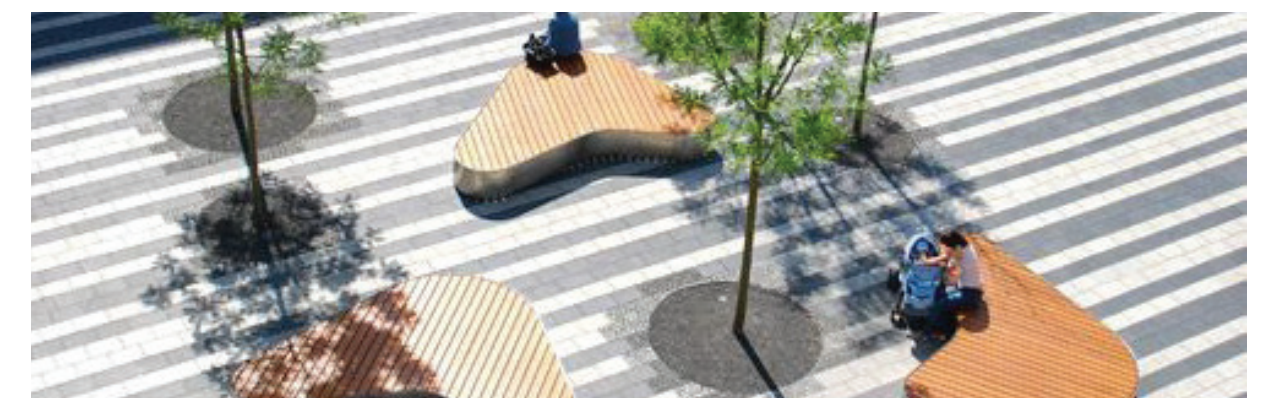
### PRECEDENT IMAGES



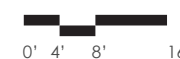
PLANTING POCKETS TO RESEMBLE 'EXPLODING GUITAR'



CENTRAL 'ZIGZAG' CORRIDOR WITH SKATE ELEMENTS AND DRAINAGE



SEATING NODES / PLATFORMS SCATTERED THROUGHOUT



VDZ+A

framework



# New Skate Plaza at Seattle Center



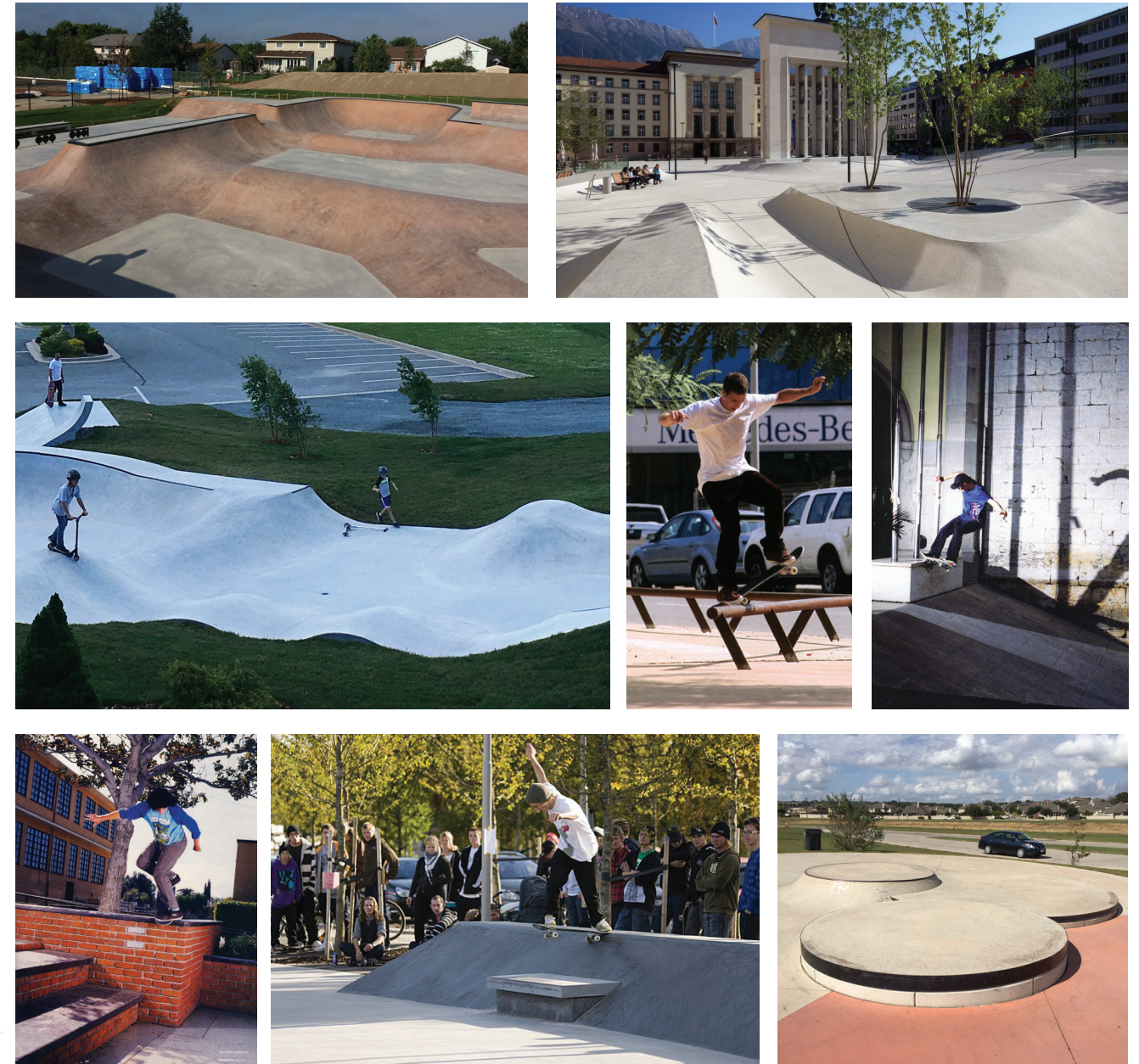
# DICHOTOMY

## SKATEPLAZA DESIGN DIRECTIONS

Skate Terrain Options



Skate Terrain Images





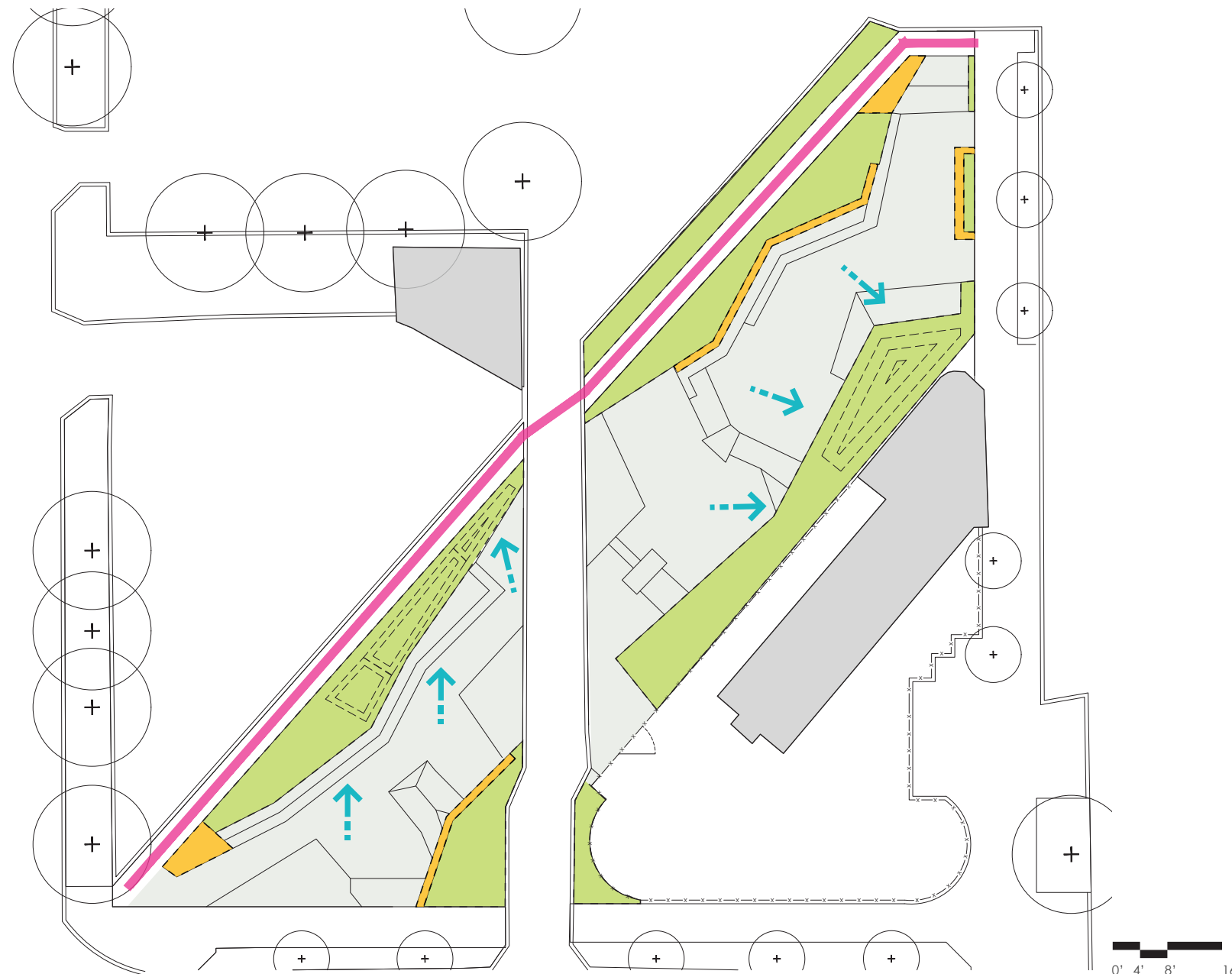
# HILLTOP

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN DIRECTIONS

### SPATIAL DIAGRAM LEGEND



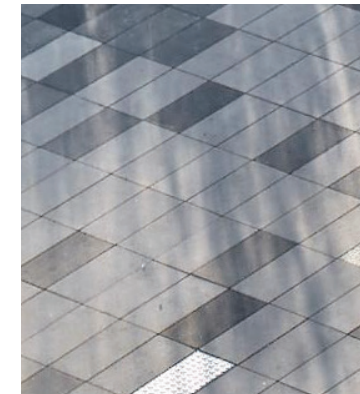
CIRCULATION



### PRECEDENT IMAGES



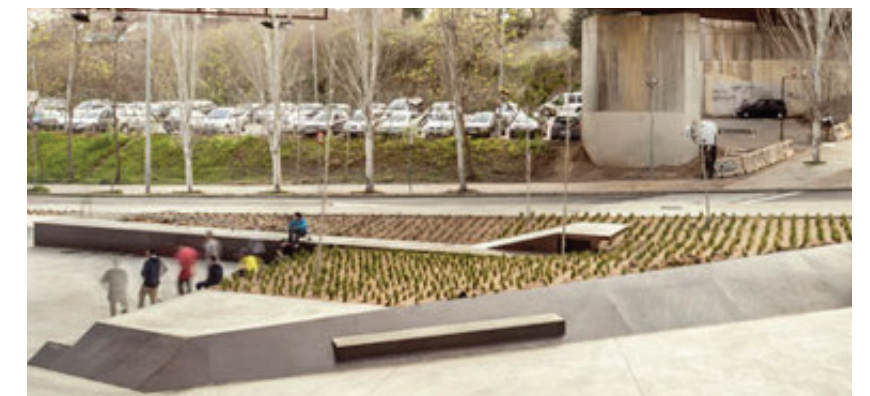
ANGULAR RAIN GARDENS



PIXEL HARDSCAPE



ANGULAR BENCHES



VDZ+A

framework



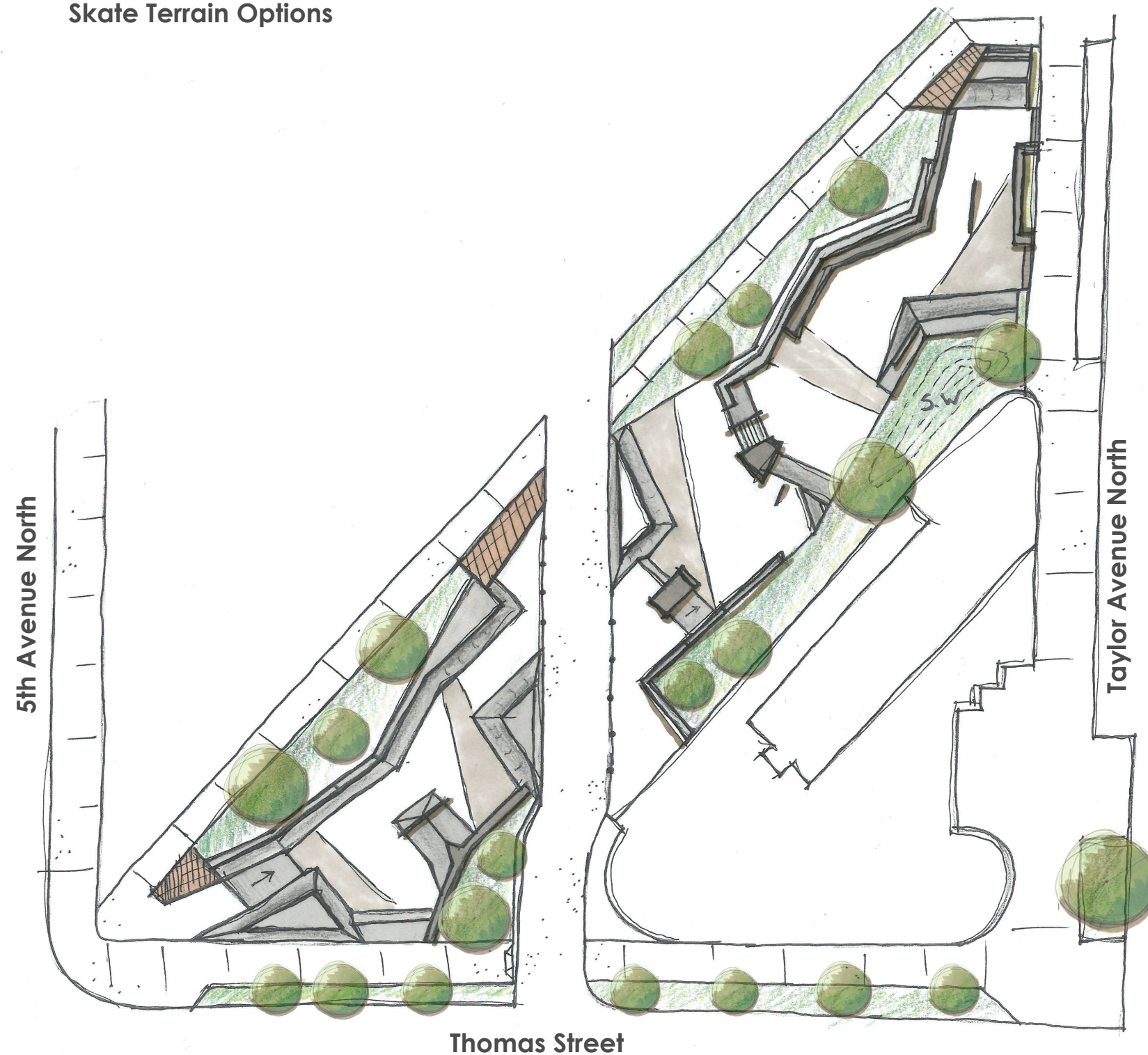
# New Skate Plaza at Seattle Center



# HILLTOP

## SKATEPLAZA DESIGN DIRECTIONS

Skate Terrain Options



Skate Terrain Images

