

# WSCC Expansion

**Edward B. Murray**  
Mayor

**Samuel Assefa**  
Director, OPCD

**Ross Tilghman**, Chair

**John Savo**, Vice Chair

**Lee Copeland**

**Ben de Rubertis**

**Thaddeus Egging**

**Rachel Gleeson**

**Laura Haddad**

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## Commissioners Present

Shannon Loew, Chair\*  
Ross Tilghman, Vice Chair  
Brodie Bain\*  
Lee Copeland  
Laura Haddad  
Jescelle Major  
John Savo

*\*Term ended March 1, 2017*

## Commissioners Excused

Ben de Rubertis  
Thaddeus Egging  
Rachel Gleeson

## Non-voting Commissioners

Rick Krochalis

## Project Description

The WSCC is proposing to vacate three alleys and two streets below grade 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 has also modified their initial vacation petition to change the vacation of Terry between Olive and Howell to a subterranean-only vacation. The request for a subterranean vacation for Olive Way, between 9th Ave and Boren Ave, has not been modified.

The preferred scheme includes approximately 2.385 million square feet (sf) of development on three sites. The WSCC expansion would occur above grade on Site A only, and extend to a below grade loading dock on Sites B and C. These remaining two sites will include co-developments above grade. The preferred proposal includes 1,165,000 square feet dedicated to the convention center expansion, 385 residential units, 575,000 square feet of office space, 42,000 square feet dedicated to street-level uses, below-grade parking for 700-800 vehicles, and below-grade loading services.

## Meeting Summary

The SDC was briefed on the Washington State Convention Center's (WSCC) proposed public benefit package. The purpose of this meeting was to provide feedback on individual elements as well as the totality of the public benefit package. The SDC did not take an action at this meeting and will not take an action until the final environmental impact statement (FEIS) is released.

## Recusals and Disclosures

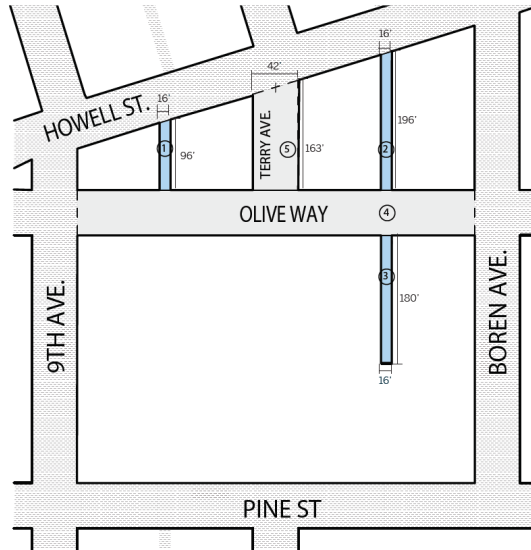
There were no recusals or disclosures.

**February 16, 2017****9:00 am – 12:00 pm****Type**

Street and Alley Vacation

**Phase**

Briefing - Public Benefit

**Previous Reviews**[01/19/17](#), [09/15/16](#), [04/21/16](#), [02/04/16](#)**Presenters****Matt Griffin** Pine Street Group**Shannon Nichol** GGN**Mark Reddington** LMN Architects**Attendees****Margery Aronson** Art Advisor**Beverly Barnett** SDOT**Lyle Bicknell** OPCD**Alberta Bleck** Office of Councilmember Bagshaw**Scott Bonjukian** PPUNC**Alex Brennan** Capitol Hill Housing**Betsy Braun** FHIA**Mary Jo Burns** Citizen**Riisa Conklin** Freeway Park Assoc.**Linnea Cook** LMN Architects**McCaella Daffern** Capitol Hill Housing**Jim Erickson** FHIA**Therese Graf** GGN**Pat Hansen-Lund** MKA**Alex Hudson** FHIA**Doug Holtom** FHIA**Bryn Kepler** GGN**Abby Lawlor**, Unite Here Local 8**Jane Lewis** Pine Street Group**Jack Mackie** Citizen**Katherine Mackinnon** NYHUS**Tiernan Martin** Future Wise**Kelsey Mesher** Cascade Bicycle Club**Jessica Miller** LMN Architects**Gordon Padelford** Seattle Neighborhood Greenways**Steve Pearce** Office of Waterfront**Sal Ponce** IATSE Local 15**Paige Premseelaar** Citizen**Kim Sanchez** NYHUS**Victoria Shoenburg** SPR**Martin Sicotte** LMN Architects**Bryan Stevens** SDCI**Doug Trumm** The Urbanist

FULL VACATION

SUBTERRANEAN VACATION

- ① BLOCK 33 - MID BLOCK ALLEY (MUP PROJECT # 3018096)  
1,601 SQ. FT.
- ② BLOCK 43 - MID BLOCK ALLEY (MUP PROJECT # 3020177)  
3,186 SQ. FT.
- ③ BLOCK 44 - MID BLOCK ALLEY SEGMENT (MUP PROJECT 3020177)  
2,879 SQ. FT.
- ④ OLIVE WAY (MUP PROJECT # 3020176, 3018096, AND 3020177)  
38,109 SQ. FT.
- ⑤ TERRY AVE (MUP PROJECT # 3020176 AND 3018096)  
9,874 SQ. FT.

Figure 1: Proposed vacation petitions

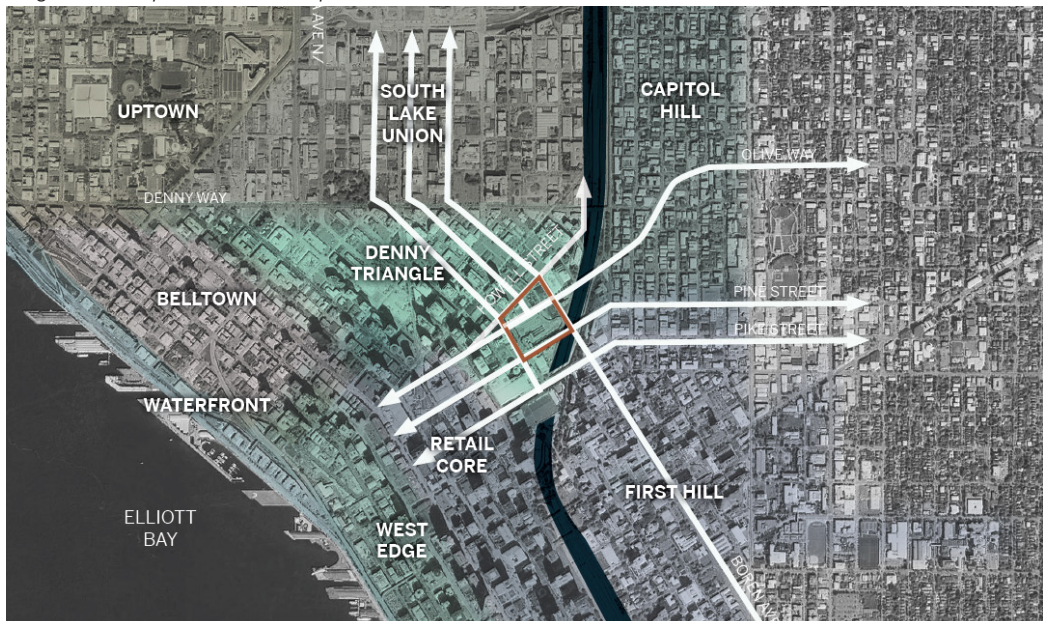


Figure 2: Project site location

**Summary of Presentation**

Matt Griffin, of Pine Street Group (PSG), and Mark Reddington, of LMN, presented the briefing on the proposed public benefit package. Matt Griffin provided information related to the street and alley vacation process and public outreach process. Several surrounding businesses, neighborhood organizations, and community members provided an extensive list of priorities that should be addressed in the proposed public benefit package. Mark Reddington then provided an overview of the proposed public benefit package. See figures 1- 3 for more detail.

The proposed public benefit package is divided into the following three categories:

1. Affordable housing contribution
2. Off-site physical improvements
3. Funding implementation of community projects

**Affordable housing contribution**

In addition to providing \$5 million for affordable housing as part of a purchase and sale agreement with King County to buy the Convention Place Station site for the

- 1 AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONTRIBUTION**
- 2 CITY OF SEATTLE PIKE PINE RENAISSANCE IMPROVEMENTS**
  - A. PINE STREET IMPROVEMENTS**
  - B. PIKE STREET IMPROVEMENTS**
  - C. PIKE/PINE 9TH AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS**
  - D. HISTORIC BUILDING LIGHTING**
  - E. PUBLIC ART**
- 3 FUNDING IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY PROJECTS**
  - A. LID I-5 STUDY**
  - B. FREEWAY PARK ASSOCIATION / SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION**
  - C. BICYCLE IMPROVEMENTS DOWNTOWN**

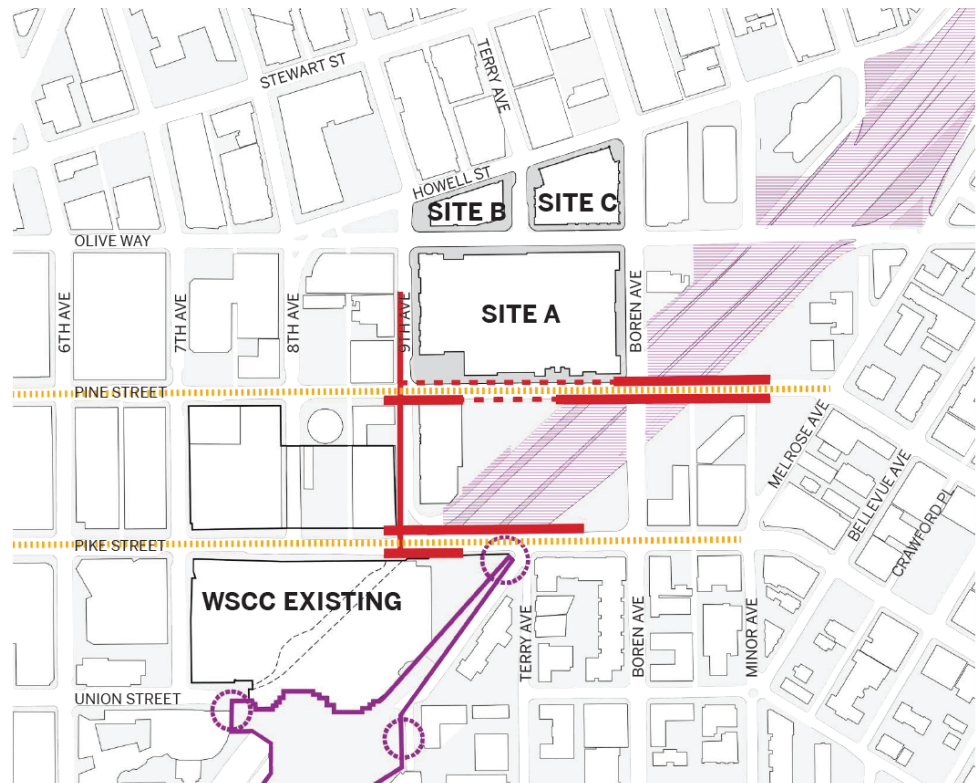


Figure 3: Proposed public benefit package

WSCC development, the project team has committed to providing an additional \$5 million for off-site affordable housing for their public benefit obligations.

#### *Off-site physical improvements*

Proposed off-site public benefit elements include improvements along Pike St, Pine St, and 9th Ave as well as updated lighting for two historic buildings and public art. See figure 4 for more detail. Improvements along Pine St and Pike St are meant to strengthen the connection between the Downtown and Capitol Hill neighborhoods. These improvements are designed, in part, to implement the Pike Pine Renaissance plan currently under development with the Office of the Waterfront. Improvements proposed for Pine St include updated pedestrian railings with integrated lighting on the segment over I-5, along with improved crosswalks, additional curb bulbs, and landscaping throughout this corridor. Proposed improvements along Pike St include raised planter beds, landscaping, and additional curb bulbs and crosswalks. Improvements on the segment of Pike over I-5 would provide similar enhancements (lighting, planters, etc.).

For both segments of Pike and Pine over I-5, the proposed designs are reflective of the challenges posed by updating portions of right-of-way over a freeway. These challenges include structural limitations, safety and security over a highway, and the extent to which any improvements require approval by federal agencies.

Improvements proposed for 9th, between Pike St and Olive Way, include additional landscaping, improved crosswalks, increased curb radii, and increased sidewalk widths at specific locations. The proposal also includes additional canopy coverage and a new decorative garage entry door for an existing building located between Pike St and Pine St.

The public benefit package also includes an updated lighting plan for the historic Paramount Theatre and Camlin buildings as well as an elevated art mural, located on the existing WSCC facility at the intersection of 9th Ave and Pike St. Lighting on the Paramount and Camlin Hotel are subject to approval by the City of Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board.

#### *Funding implementation of community projects*

The project team has committed to provide funding for renovations to Freeway Park, downtown bicycle improvements, and a feasibility study to lid segments of Interstate-5. The Interstate-5 lid would reconnect areas between the Downtown, Capitol Hill, and First Hill neighborhoods and provide open space, pedestrian connections and other amenities. The proposed funding would contribute to a feasibility analysis for lidding over segments of I-5, not actual



- STREET CROSSINGS**
  - 5 ADDITIONAL / IMPROVED INTERSECTION CROSSINGS
- LANDSCAPE**
  - 8,000 SF ADDITIONAL / ENHANCED LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS
- LIGHTING**
  - 495 LF ENHANCED BUILDING FRONTAGE LIGHTING
- BUILT ELEMENTS**
  - 635 LF ADDITIONAL / ENHANCED OVERPASS PEDESTRIAN RAIL
  - 8,250 SF ADDITIONAL / ENHANCED SIDEWALK SURFACE
  - 550 SF ADDITIONAL OVERHEAD CANOPY COVERAGE
  - 2,535 SF NEW PUBLIC ART MURAL
  - 470 SF NEW DECORATIVE VEHICLE ENTRY DOOR

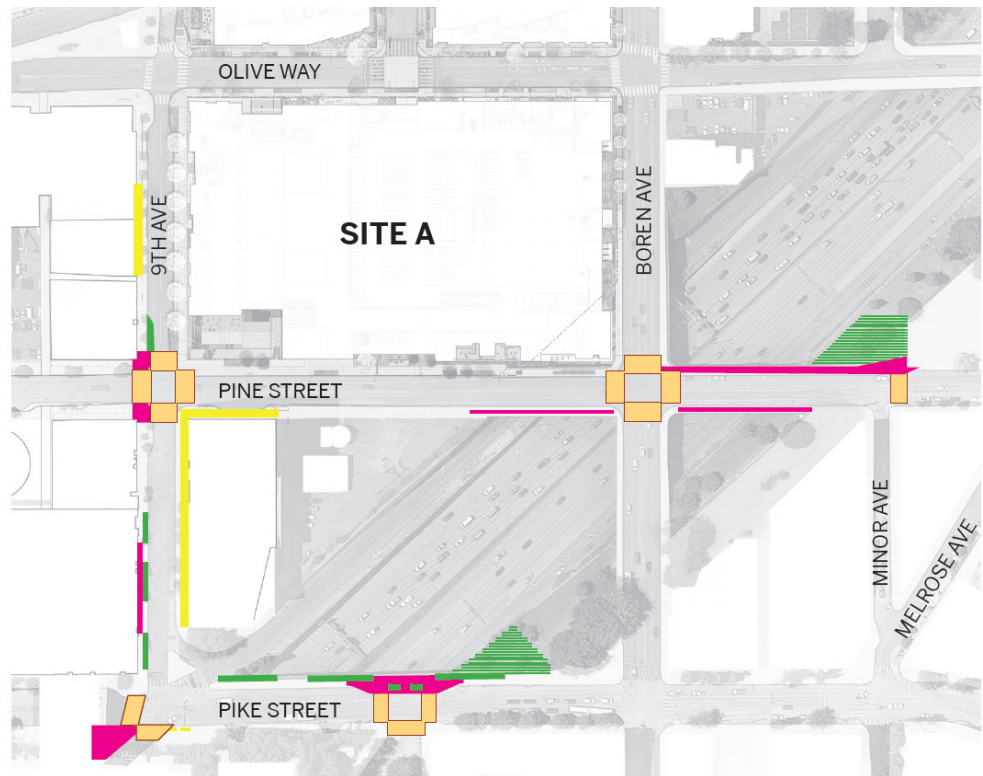


Figure 4: Proposed off-site improvements

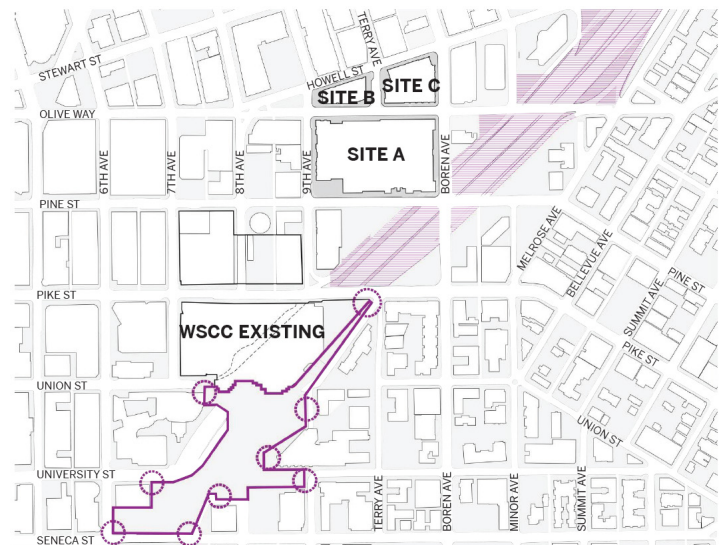


Figure 5: Proposed community project funding opportunities - bicycle improvements (bottom left) freeway park and I-5 lid (bottom right)

construction of a lid. Funding for Freeway Park improvements would contribute to park improvements, potentially focusing on the entry on Pike Street. The specific nature of these proposed improvements would be informed by a community design process planned to occur over the next several months, led by the Freeway Park Association. The proposed public benefit package will also include funding for additional downtown bicycle improvements as identified in the Bicycle Master Plan, focusing on Pike/Pine. See figure 5 for more detail.

### Agency Comments

**Beverly Barnett**, SDOT, mentioned that this meeting was important in understanding how complicated the project is. Ms. Barnett stated that it is important not to review the public benefit package until we understand how the project has completed the environmental review process. Ms. Barnett does not want the SDC to lose sight of the fact that this needs to be a well-designed project that fits in with the surrounding communities as well as addresses its own impacts through mitigation. Ms. Barnett stated she needs a better understanding of the proposed onsite and offsite public benefit elements. She mentioned that the public benefit package should address how we will move around the site. Ms. Barnett is concerned because the public benefit package does not appear commensurate with the vacation

petitions. Ms. Barnett again stated that in order to better understand what is commensurate, she needs to first understand what the project team will be required to do by code as well as with the agreement with King County.

**Sara Sodt**, City Historic Preservation Officer, mentioned that although she has had preliminary meetings about the proposed lighting plan, the proposed elements will still need to be reviewed by the Landmarks Preservation Board. Ms. Sodt also mentioned that Freeway Park was designed by Lawrence Halprin and any design proposals need to take into consideration that it is a culturally significant space.

### Public Comments

**Alex Hudson**, FHIA, explained she is speaking on behalf of a coalition of 9 organizations within the neighborhoods adjacent to the proposed project, called The Community Package Coalition. The Coalition is dedicated to creating a more attractive, safe, livable and affordable city center. Ms. Hudson stated that a project of this size, location and extensive request of the public ROW and public ownership, compels the WSCC to offer a large-scale investment within the surrounding communities. Ms. Hudson then stated that the proposed public benefit package is nowhere near fair nor commensurate to what the petitioner is requesting from the public. She mentioned that at least \$79 million in investments would be commensurate to the petition request, which will ensure that the project improves the surrounding neighborhoods. Ms. Hudson said the coalition is in support of a full adoption of the package of public benefits proposed by the Coalition in a letter dated February 16, 2017, which is comparable in scale to the proposed vacation petition. Ms. Hudson strongly encouraged the SDC to consider the Community Package as a starting point for further discussion of public benefit. Ms. Hudson finished by saying the community has a vested interest in seeing the success of the project and will continue to follow this project closely.

**Jack Mackie**, 4Culture representative, read an excerpt of the conditions for land sale as set by King County, which include conditions for the deaccession of art at Convention Place Station. The conditions include the establishment of a budget for commissioning new artwork that is at least \$4.5 million; mitigation for lost artwork by adding \$100,000 to the budget for public art; the establishment of a fully public process for administration of a public art program which includes hiring an artist to develop an art master plan for the site; employing a qualified art professional or organization to manage the process; and developing an interpretive framework onsite that makes the documentation of the lost artwork open and accessible to the public.

**Jim Kelly**, Executive director 4Culture, stated that the purchase of sale agreement between King County and PSG has been agreed upon. Mr. Kelly appreciated working with PSG and is happy with the outcome.

**Sal Ponce**, IATSE Local 15, commented that the loading dock facilities for the Paramount should remain accessible during construction of the project.

**Abby Lawlor**, Unite Here Local 8, stated that Unite Here Local 8 represents food and service workers throughout the downtown hospitably community. Ms. Lawlor mentioned that while the project team should lead in values on equity and inclusion, it continues to undermine the city and county on those values. Ms. Lawlor then stated the WSCC continues to refuse to protect its workers. She said that the proposed public benefit package falls short of creating affordable housing for low- and working-wage employees. Ms. Lawlor then stated that the project team should create a true net gain in affordable housing, and call for greater protection of its workers before thinking of allocating more public resources to the project.

### Summary of Discussion

The commission organized its discussion around the following issues:

- Overall concept
- Individual elements of the proposal
  - Pike and Pine Bridge Improvements
  - I-5 Lid concept
  - 9th Ave, Lighting, and Public Art
  - Freeway park entries and bicycle infrastructure
- Commensurate value
- Affordable housing

#### *Overall concept*

The SDC provided comments and recommendations about the connectivity, neighborhood enhancement, and provision

of public space within the proposed public benefit package. Commissioners agreed the concept is consistent with other city plans that address connectivity along Pine St, Pike St, and 9th Ave. Commissioners indicated that any plan for connectivity to Capitol Hill needed to include enhancements to Olive Way, which serves an important connection between downtown and the Capitol Hill Neighborhood. The Commission is concerned about the design of on-site and off-site elements. Specifically, Commissioners are concerned that the proposed design of elements meant to provide connectivity between downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods are not as successful as elements meant to attract pedestrians to the proposed development.

The SDC strongly recommended the project team take responsibility for improving areas in the public realm adjacent to the project site, in addition to throughout the surrounding neighborhoods, to strengthen connectivity. The commission would like to see public benefit proposed for the blocks directly affected by the project. Commissioners suggested that the team should not just commit to funding for planning studies and projects like Pike Pine Renaissance, Freeway Park improvements, and the I-5 Lid, but that they should commit to implementing specific design elements for the right-of-way in the short term.

#### *Individual elements of the proposal*

The SDC recommended the project team continue to improve physical and visual connections along Pine St and Pike St as well as Olive Way. The commission cautioned the project team from providing too much focus on small scale items such as railing height and lighting placement rather than larger scale items such as curb alignment, proposed street rights-of-way reconfiguration, and other connectivity issues. The SDC highly recommended the project team coordinate with the appropriate local and state agencies, plans, and policies prior to addressing the proposed elements such as the historical lighting, lid I-5 study, Freeway Park entrances, and bicycle improvements as well as Pine St, Pike St, and 9th Ave street improvements before they return to the commission.

The commission also encouraged the project team to provide community focused programming, specifically along Pine St and Olive Way, as a way to create a vibrant and successful corridor.

#### *I-5 lid concept*

The SDC is concerned with the limited details provided by the project team. Commissioners requested further details about the lid study including the project lead and the scope of the proposed lid study; as well as the cost, outcome deliverables, and development strategies for evaluating the feasibility of the lid proposal; and what portion of a study they would be funding. Several commissioners questioned if this element should be included in the public benefit package, requesting funding be provided for near term, tangible elements instead.

#### *9th Ave design*

The SDC appreciated the proposed design for 9th Ave. Specifically, commissioners thought the proposed art mural could serve as a strong visual anchor. The commission is concerned that the project team has yet to select an artist. The SDC recommended the team select an artist and allow them flexibility for all aspects of the project, including size, materials, and content for the proposed artwork. The commission also recommended the project team incorporate art along the street level in order to increase visibility and value as experienced by pedestrians.

#### *Freeway Park entries and bicycle infrastructure*

The SDC is concerned with the lack of detail provided for both proposed elements. Commissioners requested further detail related to the design and value of each element.

#### *Commensurate value*

The SDC provided comments about the commensurate value of the public benefit package as it relates to the street and alley vacation requests. Commissioners do not feel the total value of the individual elements proposed in the public benefit package are commensurate in value to the proposed vacation requests. The commission recommended the project team show in greater detail how the proposed public benefit package is better than what is being lost as a result of the street and alley vacations, taking into consideration other types of developments that could occur at the site. The SDC highly encouraged the project team to focus on taking ownership of increasing the quality of the urban environment and neighborhoods surrounding the project.

#### *Affordable housing*

The SDC is in full support of including affordable housing as a public benefit element. The Commission requested further information as to whether affordable housing would occur on or off the project site and how that might affect

the public realm and any further public benefit elements that might occur in conjunction with the proposed housing.

### Action

The SDC did not take an action during today's meeting. The Commission provided the following recommendations that should be addressed prior to its next review of the public benefit package:

1. Provide design details to enhance pedestrian connections on Olive Way between the Capitol Hill and Downtown neighborhoods
2. Show commitment for improving areas in the public realm within and adjacent to the project site as well as throughout the surrounding neighborhoods
3. Commit to implementing public benefit items within the right-of-way independent of any obligations for right-of-way planning efforts including Pike Pine Renaissance and One Center City
4. Demonstrate that proposed public benefit elements are tangible and implementable
5. Provide community focused programming as a means to activate the streetscape surrounding the project
6. Consider placemaking strategies in the public realm as a means of achieving connectivity, in addition to creating tentacles out to surrounding neighborhoods
7. Provide additional details about the I-5 lid feasibility study and your funding commitment, including:
  - the project lead
  - the project scope and cost
  - deliverables, outcomes, and implementation strategy
8. Select an artist to be a part of the project team and allow them flexibility with the design, size, and materiality of the proposed mural along 9th Ave. Consider providing art in the streetscape along the 9th Avenue corridor in order to increase its visibility and value in relation to both pedestrians and the mural
9. Provide additional details for funding and implementation of individual elements related to Freeway Park and downtown bicycle infrastructure
10. Further show how the proposed public benefit elements are commensurate with the street and alley vacation requests