



Seattle
Office of Planning &
Community Development

Seattle Downtown

REGIONAL CENTER PLAN

DRAFT | December 2025

Photograph by Old Army Jacket Photography



Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the City of Seattle, including Downtown, is situated on the ancestral lands of the dxʷdəwʔabš (Duwamish people), who were the original stewards of this land. Many were relocated to be on or near the area's federally established tribal reservations after being displaced from their homeland, while continuing to exercise their traditional fishing, hunting, and gathering activities in their usual and accustomed territories.

We recognize that planning decisions must be mindfully deliberated as they may have lasting impacts on our Indigenous community, their land base, and their treaty-protected rights to fish, hunt, and gather. We recognize the importance of and encourage regular, meaningful consultation with the Duwamish people over land use decisions while preserving tribal treaty rights and supporting tribal self-determination and sovereignty.

We acknowledge that the descendants of the dxʷdəwʔabš are enrolled members of the region's federally recognized Tribes, including bæqəlšul (Muckleshoot Indian Tribe), suqʷabš (Suquamish Indian Tribe), sdukʷalbixʷ (Snoqualmie Indian Tribe), dxʷlilap (Tulalip Tribes), spuyaləpəpəš (Puyallup Tribe of Indians), Lhaqʷtemish (Lummi Nation), and other Puget Sound Tribes. We further acknowledge that the descendants of these original inhabitants are the recognized stewards of this land today.

Like their dxʷdəwʔabš ancestors, members of these and other Salish Sea Tribes are expert fishers, hunters, gatherers, canoe builders, and basket weavers, and continue to live in harmony with the lands and waterways as they have for thousands of years. Here, they continue to live on and protect the land and waters of their ancestors for future generations, as promised by the Point Elliott Treaty of 1855. The City of Seattle affirms our government-to-government relationships with federally recognized Tribes and strives to uphold trust, treaty, and racial equity obligations with Tribal and urban Native communities.

For this plan and others in Seattle's urban neighborhoods, the City will continue to seek consultation from local Indigenous consultants, urban-dwelling Indigenous communities and organizations, and other Indigenous groups in Seattle to ensure that Tribal sovereignty and treaty rights are recognized and respected throughout the many City policies, plans, projects, programs, and actions that impact, or may impact, Tribal interests. We seek to engage our region's Indigenous community, the recognized stewards of the natural and cultural resources in and around the City of Seattle, and we will engage the Indigenous Advisory Council as culturally-grounded advisors to the City of Seattle. This acknowledgment serves only as a first step in honoring the land that we occupy and the first peoples of this land. The City recognizes that this will be long and evolving work to build and repair relationships with Native communities, and we are committed to doing this work.

Plan Contributions

Our community was invaluable in offering their time, wisdom, and insight that guided this work. This plan is a vision created by hundreds of conversations. Thank you to everyone who shaped this its direction!

The Seattle Downtown Regional Center Plan is the outcome of a multi-year process between the City of Seattle’s (the City’s) Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD), residents, workers, and business owners in Seattle’s Downtown neighborhood, and in partnership with **Tahoma Peak Solutions**, and various representatives of the Coast Salish peoples. All Indigenous-related recommendations and intellectual property, including the plan theme “steward our home for the next seven generations,” shared within this project are owned by Tahoma Peak Solutions and the Muckleshoot and Suquamish Tribes.

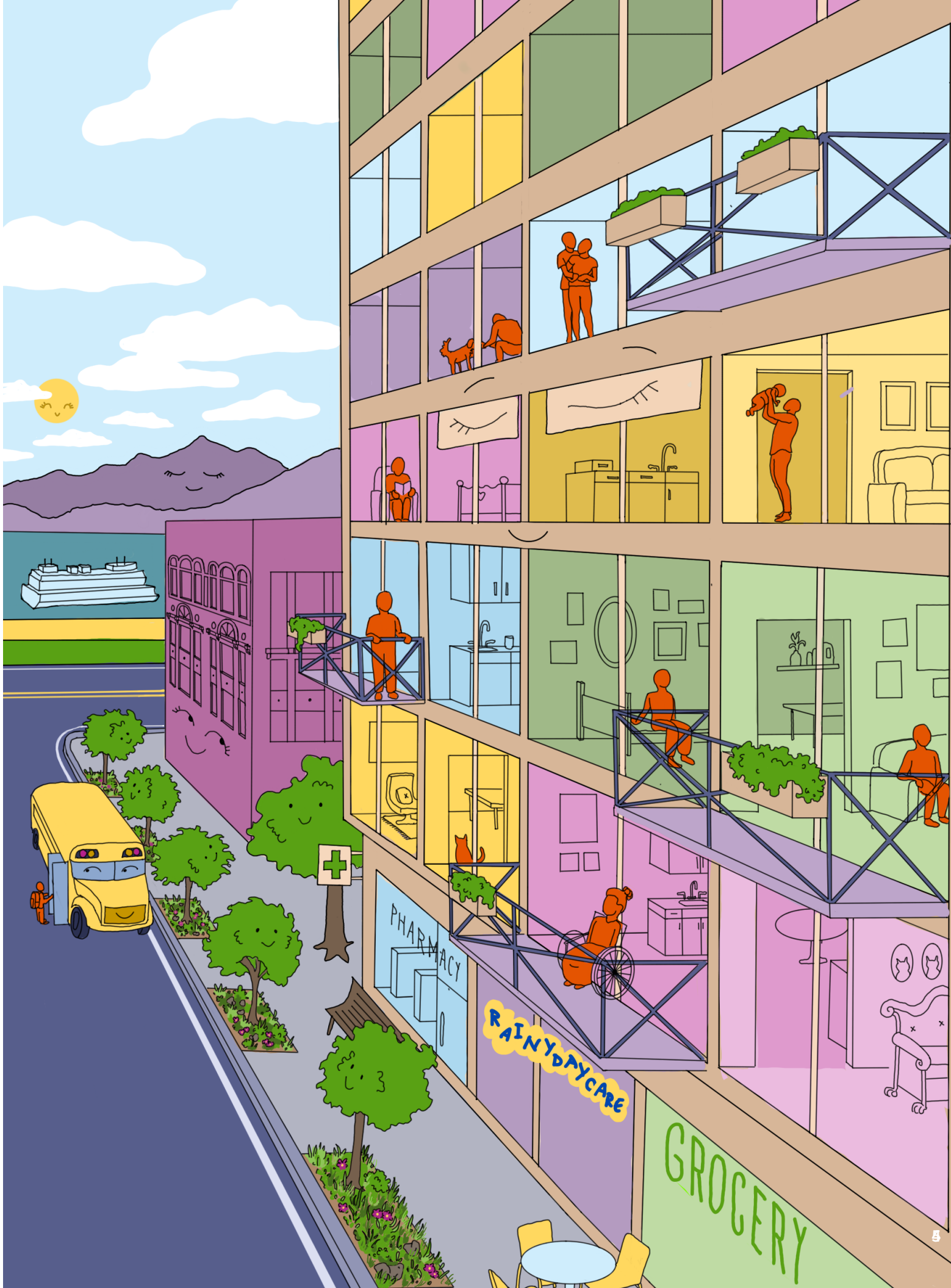
The plan was also made possible by the contributions of **LeLeita McKILL**, who photographed and engaged with the artist community to gain their perspectives, and the technical planning team, led by **Agency Landscape + Planning** with **BAE Urban Economics**, **Biederman Redevelopment Ventures**, **SEVA Workshop**, the **University of Washington**, and the **Seattle Department of Transportation**.

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- Community Assisted Response & Engagement (CARE)
- Office of Housing (OH)
- Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC)
- Seattle City Attorney's Office (LAW)
- Office of Economic Development (OED)
- Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD)
- Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE)
- Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR)
- Seattle City Light (SCL)
- Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection (SDCI)
- Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)
- Seattle Fire Department (SFD)
- Seattle Police Department (SPD)
- Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)





5 Downtown Seattle Regional Center Plan

Introduction



Photo Credit: Caribbean Sea Fest, Old Army Jacket Photography

Downtown Seattle is the heart of the Pacific Northwest region's largest city, set within a landscape that is rich with culture, history, natural beauty, and opportunity. Downtown is Seattle's second largest housing center and the largest employment center. Seattle's many economic, educational, and recreational opportunities continually attract more people each year, amplifying housing affordability challenges and the demand for livable neighborhoods. To prepare for future growth

and to better support the needs of current residents, the City must address issues of housing affordability and access to necessary amenities.

The Seattle Downtown Regional Center Plan articulates place-specific policies and actions to ensure that our centers can successfully accommodate future growth and become more equitable, vibrant, and resilient.

Seattleites shared...

“

More housing in downtown will lead to increased economic activity in the regional center. The housing should be for people of all ages and backgrounds to create a more equitable downtown.

“

More green space, more areas where sunshine can access the streets.

“

A major issue facing downtown is the number of vacant or partially vacant apartment units. This results in a low density of people actually living downtown.

“

Downtown residency continues to grow and it seems we need more accommodations for families with children. Also, the arts are critical for both residents and visitors. None of this is really possible to succeed without finding solutions to downtown drug sales and use, lots of graffiti and vacant buildings.

“

[Downtown] needs more arts and cultural activities and spaces that people want to be in.

“

Downtown needs to focus on being a truly world-class city, which means clean and safe, embracing nature, and full of events to draw people in.

“

Downtown needs to be a place for everyone - where locals and tourists can walk and feel safe, and also where those in need can find services and support.

“

I would spend more time downtown if the following were true: I could do more of my errands during and after work, there were safe, continuous bike routes; there was more to do than the tourist shuffle, and in general, the streets felt more inviting and SAFE.



Photo Credit: Alaskan Way Construction, City of Seattle and Tim Rice Aerials

Planning Context

The Seattle Downtown Regional Center Plan is an element of the greater Comprehensive Plan which denotes how the City will grow and invest in its communities over the next twenty years and beyond this plan is a roadmap for how the City will retain its valuable assets, overcome current challenges, and set forth an equitable, sustainable, and resilient future for the residential and job growth that is expected over the coming two decades.

The Seattle Downtown Regional Center Plan is designated as a "Regional Growth Center" by the Puget Sound Regional Council. These centers are expected to accommodate significant growth, including new housing and jobs, over the next 20 years. Once adopted, this plan will be an appendix to the One Seattle Plan. The diagram to the right shows how these plans are connected—each level includes supporting policies that become increasingly place-specific, with the regional center plans providing the most detailed, location-based guidance.

The vision presented within this plan is followed by policies and actions the City of Seattle can take to achieve that vision. Policies and actions included within elevate historically under-represented voices in support of advancing interrelated goals of racial and social justice, health outcomes, economic growth and resilience, environmental sustainability, housing, transit access, and an increased integration of Indigenous process and perspective.

The plan reflects community priorities, and actions noted within will be implemented by many City departments that advised on this planning effort. The Downtown Regional Center Plan is the first of its kind but builds on the holistic citywide effort of the One Seattle Plan and the previous 1999 Downtown Seattle Neighborhood Plan. This Plan address how Downtown responds to the four key moves presented in the Comprehensive Plan, developed to respond to issues emphasized by community members and organizations across the city.



Comprehensive Plan Alignment

Housing and Affordability:

Expand housing opportunities across the city.

This Plan supports the citywide housing goals of the Comprehensive Plan, which includes a target for at least 13,500 new housing units to be added in the Downtown Regional Center by 2044. It emphasizes expanding housing opportunities for middle- and lower-income families, particularly within Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities that have historically had less access to intergenerational wealth than white communities. This plan also calls for the provision of the necessary amenities that coincide with that growth and a wider variety of housing options. Downtown Seattle has outpaced its expected growth over the last decade and is expected to become the largest residential center in Seattle by 2035—but the housing it has created has been almost entirely supportive of single, high-income earning individuals. This plan explores what it will take to expand housing options in Downtown to all people irrespective of income, age, or physical ability.

As the economic and cultural engine of our region, Downtown Seattle must serve residents, workers, and visitors alike, while also responding to its own residential base and the basic needs and experiences those residents deserve to easily access. This plan articulates where the greatest gaps for Downtown exist in meeting the needs of a growing population by focusing on additional access to green and recreational spaces as well as educational opportunities.

Equity and Opportunity:

Promote a more equitable Seattle as we grow.

Over generations, growth and change in Seattle have not provided equal benefits to all communities. There is significant work ahead to support Downtown’s recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic and to adapt the built environment to changing needs, including reduced demand for commercial space. This plan outlines equitable strategies to address these shifts, emphasizing the need for both new affordable housing and expanded job opportunities to support inclusive economic growth Downtown.

Further, due to the economic challenges of today’s development environment, new creative pathways are needed to bring affordable housing online. There is no area where that is more crucial than Downtown, where land values are not favorable for traditional affordable housing development.

Today, Downtown Seattle serves two ends of our socioeconomic spectrum: high-income earners and extreme low-income earners. Downtown is home to a disproportionate number of our higher-need residents, as 24% of Downtown residents are extremely low-income compared to a Seattle average of 14%. South Downtown residents face a high risk of displacement, and the neighborhood needs investment to preserve its existing housing, industries, and local economies. To maintain a balanced and healthy economic base, Downtown must provide housing and employment opportunities for people at all stages of life.

Climate and Sustainability:

Meet the challenges of climate change for a resilient future.

This plan articulates a focus on environmental stewardship, collaboration with Indigenous Tribes, and bold climate action. This plan identifies opportunities to care for Downtown’s natural resources and better connect to nature and water while celebrating the neighborhood’s Indigenous heritage. This element of the Seattle Downtown Regional Center Plan is premised on considerable research and insight from a local Indigenous consultant, Tahoma Peak Solutions, including the concept of multi-generational environmental responsibility. From protecting Puget Sound views and expanding urban tree canopies to fostering traditional food production and promoting renewable energy solutions, this plan emphasizes a Downtown that honors its past and builds sustainably to enable future generations to thrive. The goals and policies included in this plan outline ways for Downtown to support growth that balances density while stewarding and caring for Downtown’s finite resources.

Community and Neighborhoods:

Focus growth and investment in complete, walkable communities.

Downtown Seattle is already poised to support growth near transit, including light rail and high-quality bus service, so residents can meet their everyday needs nearby without needing a car. Transportation choices are also where the City can make the greatest gains in achieving its sustainability goals. While Downtown may be the City’s best example of a pedestrian and transit-oriented environment today, there remains significantly more to do to support a Downtown that puts people first and foremost. The transportation projects presented in this plan, developed in partnership with the Seattle Department of Transportation, found pathways to adapting shared spaces, including streets, transportation hubs, and gathering spaces to achieve goals presented in the Seattle Transportation Plan. These goals align with the need to shift travel decisions and make Downtown more enjoyable and safer for the thousands of people who spend time there now, and to provide an environment in which more desire to spend time in the future.



Who is behind this vision?

The planning process for the Seattle Downtown Regional Center Plan was a deeply considered process. The plan uses the City’s Racial Equity Toolkit and Indigenous Inclusivity Guide to define an approach that elevates the voices of many folks impacted by planning decisions who have historically been left out of these processes, including our Indigenous community, artists, housing advocates, youth, and social service providers. The plan details the process and the ways in which the voices heard informed the policies and solutions included in these pages.

How can this plan be used?

The Office of Planning and Community Development recognizes that achieving this vision of Downtown will take the collective effort of all sectors – from community partners to small and large employers to the many departments in the City of Seattle (the City). As such, this subarea plan informs, supports, and builds on the work of multiple public and private partners engaged in the future of Downtown.



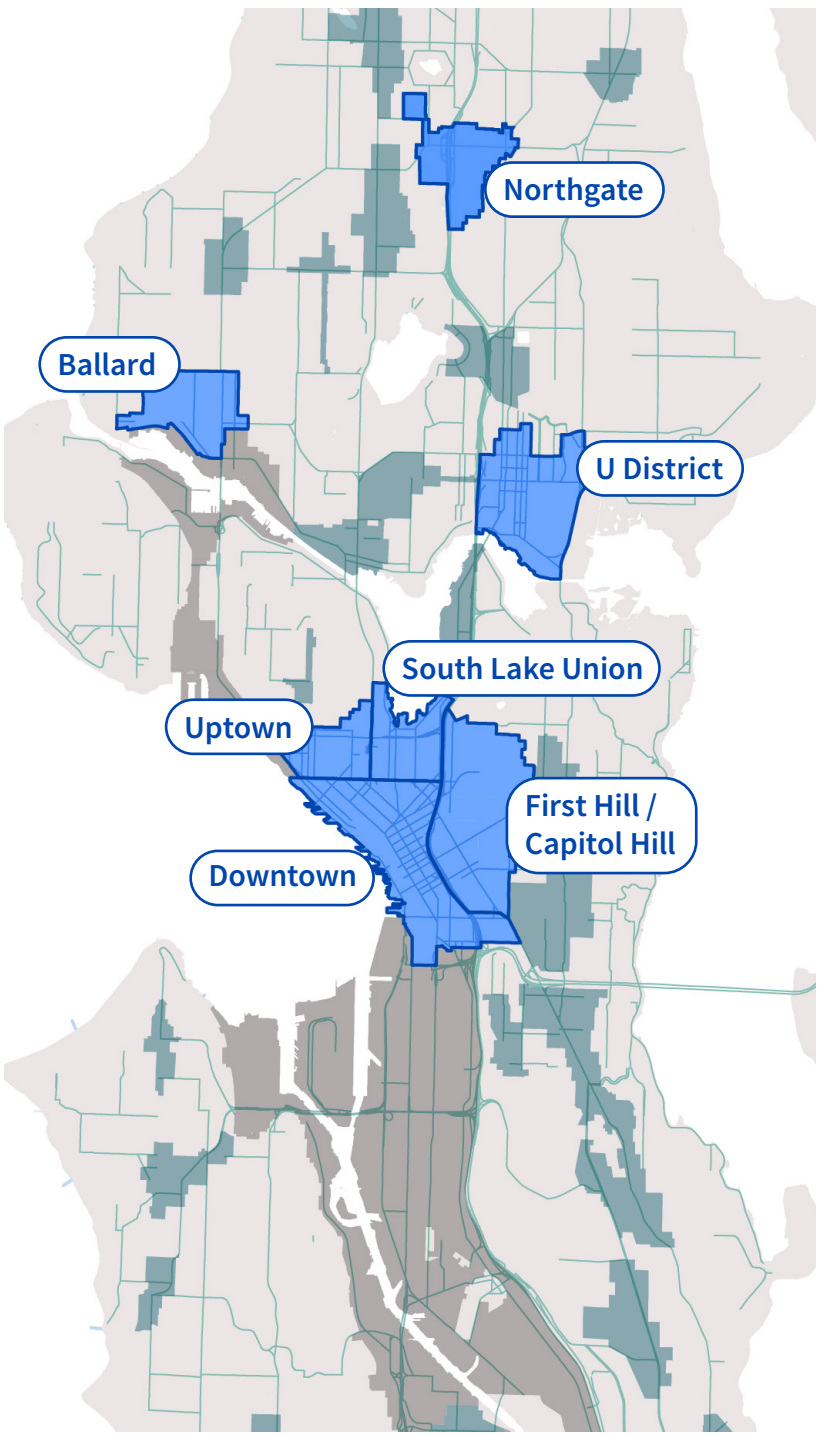
Photo Credit: Caribbean Sea Fest, Old Army Jacket Photography

The Seattle Downtown Regional Center Plan is one of Seattle’s seven regional center plans.

The One Seattle Plan designates seven Regional Centers, which are defined as dense mixed-use districts that are walkable and served by regional transit. Regional Centers are planned to accommodate a significant share of Seattle’s housing and job growth over the next 20 years. The Growth Strategy element includes high-level goals and policies for these centers. Regional Center subarea plans are adopted as sections within the overall Comprehensive Plan. They address in much more detail how these important districts within the city will grow and develop.

Regional Centers are designated regionally by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC). The subarea plans satisfy requirements that cities adopt dedicated plans for these regionally designated places. Subarea plans also address in a more focused and community-informed way a roadmap for growth and investment to ensure that the centers can accommodate housing and jobs while protecting and enhancing the conditions that make these neighborhoods great places to live and work.

This plan provides a framework to focus investment and implementation tools, guided by each community’s interests and visions for its own future, to respond to community-identified needs. This includes, but is not limited to, economic development, transportation, capital facilities, services, and public realm.



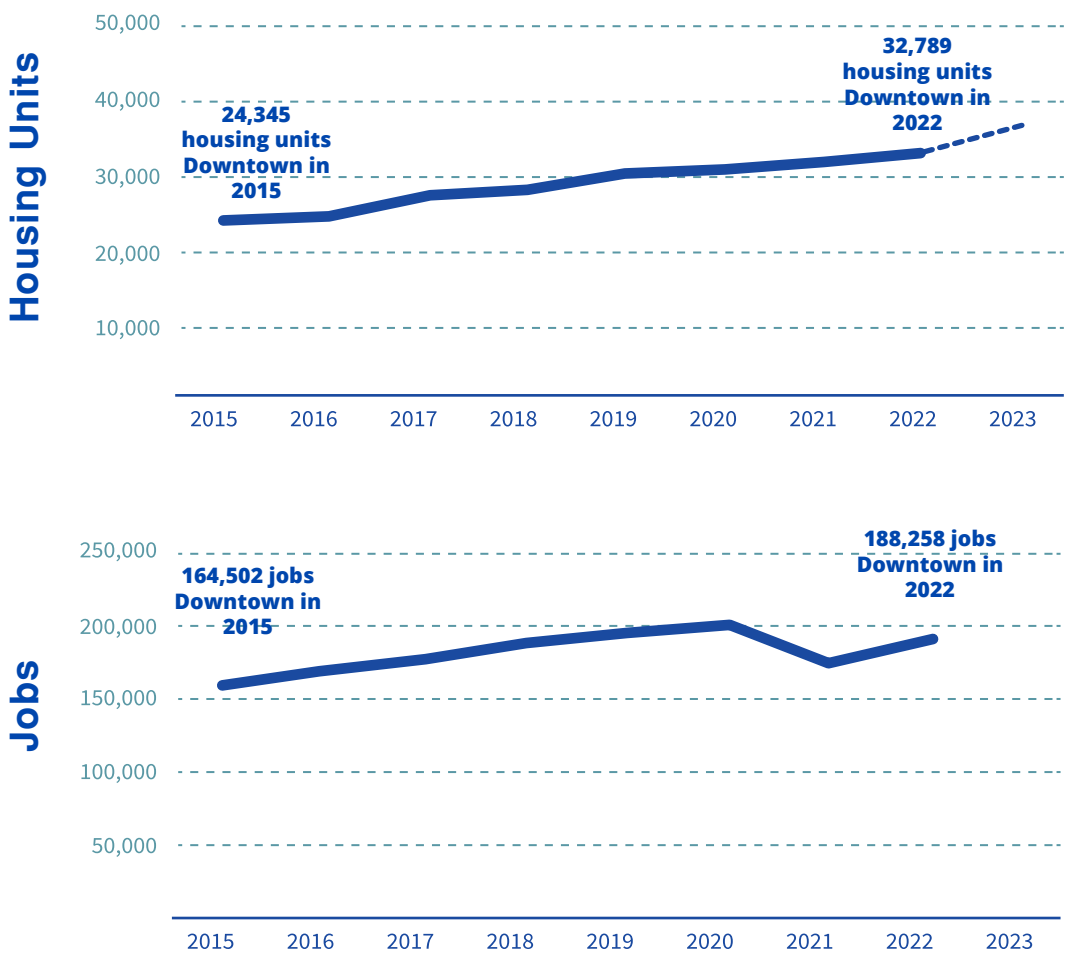
Seattle Regional Centers

- Regional Center
- Urban Center
- Manufacturing and Industrial Center

Downtown Study Area

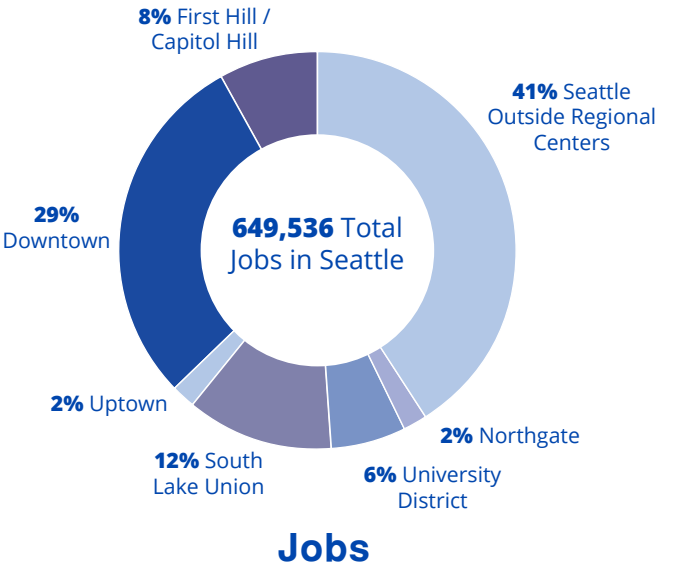
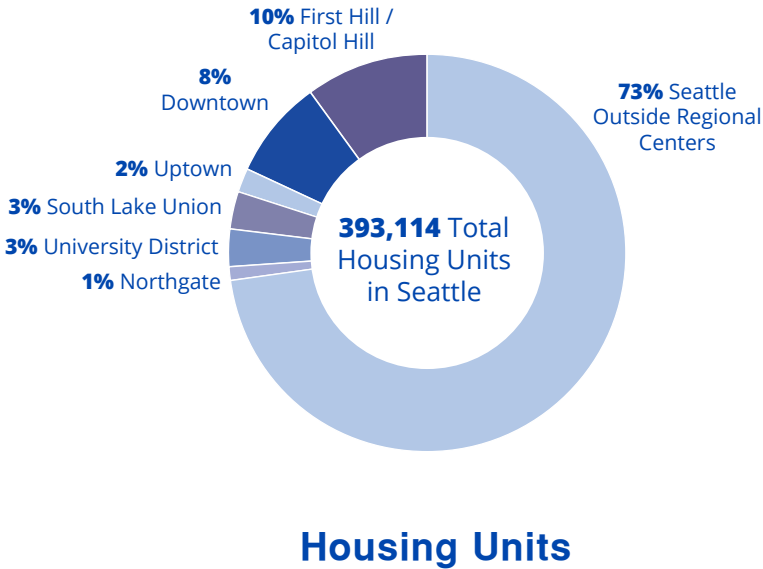
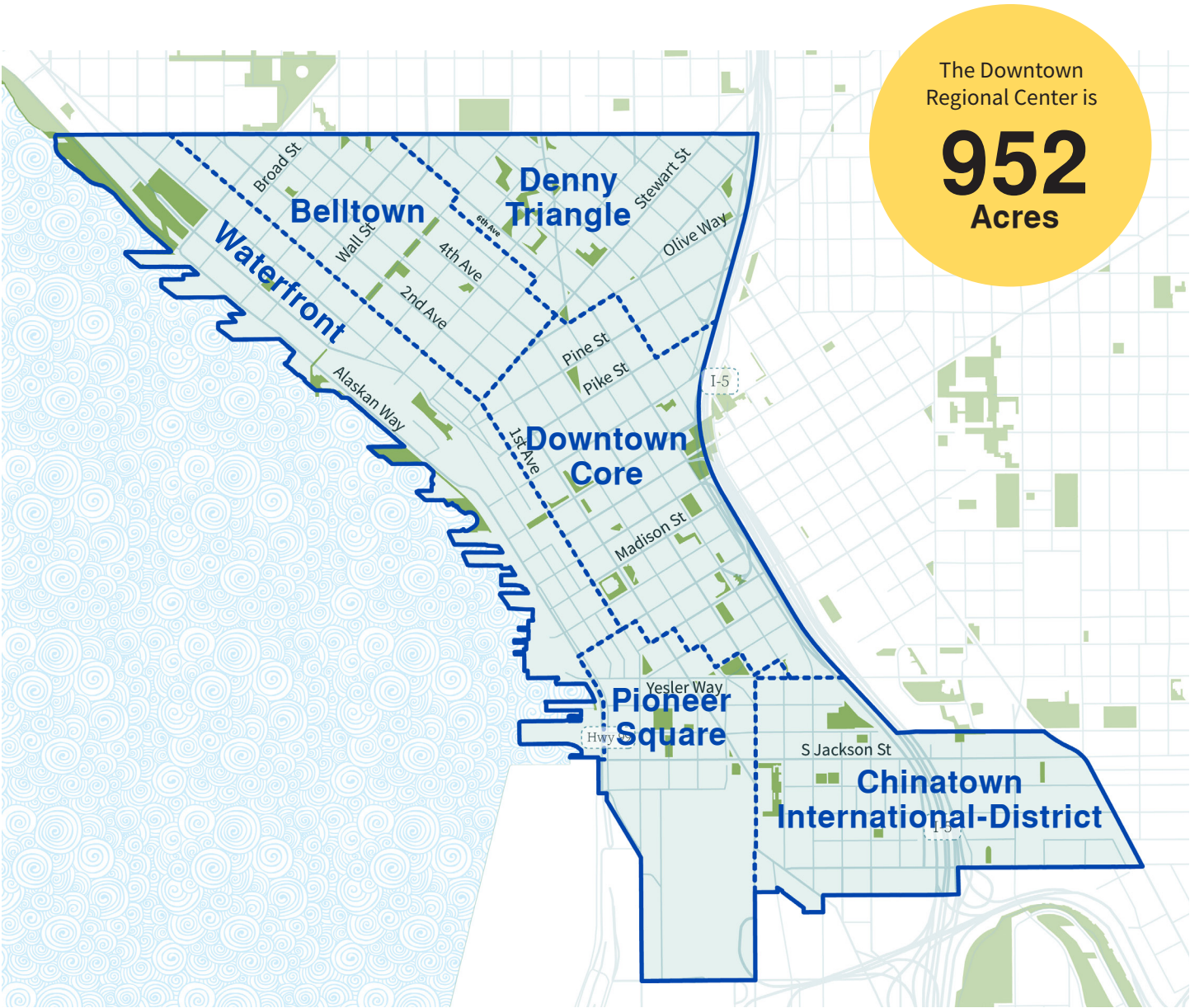
Downtown Seattle cover 952 acres and is defined by the City of Seattle as the area shown on the next page. The City has designated Downtown as one of seven Regional Centers—areas planned to accommodate higher-density housing and employment growth. These areas act as hubs for jobs, culture, and entertainment, and are increasingly important housing centers. Five neighborhoods comprise Downtown Seattle: Belltown, Denny Triangle, Downtown Core, Pioneer Square, and the Chinatown-International District (CID); the Waterfront is an emerging, evolving neighborhood as well. Downtown is bounded by the waterfront

along the west and generally by Interstate 5 to the east. Interstate 5 splits and crosses over the Downtown area through the Chinatown-International District neighborhood, with Little Saigon situated east of the Interstate. Three Downtown neighborhoods, Belltown, Downtown Core, and the northern portion of Pioneer Square, lie along the waterfront. Denny Way acts as the region’s northern boundary. To the south lies the Duwamish Industrial Center, and the Lumen Field site defines the southern boundary in Pioneer Square. Royal Brougham Way, Charles Street, and Dearborn Street form the southern boundary.



Housing Downtown has grown **35%** since 2015

29% of all of Seattle's jobs are based out of Downtown



Source: City of Seattle UCUV Growth Reports, 2022

Downtown is a collection of neighborhoods.

Downtown Seattle is not one single, uniform place; it is a collection of distinct neighborhoods with their own land use patterns, cultural identities, population characteristics, and history. This plan recognizes that neighborhood identity is one of the things that makes Downtown Seattle so special. The unique and characteristic attributes of each area must be fostered and supported into the future through land use strategies and place-based actions. With their many differences, each neighborhood necessitates a close look in order to address the challenges and opportunities present within each area.

This plan recognizes the Waterfront as its own distinct neighborhood and renames the former Commercial Core to Downtown Core to better reflect the area's increasing mixed-uses. For more information about each neighborhood's amenities and opportunities, see the Neighborhood Snapshots section.

Waterfront



Build on the downtown waterfront's recent transformation to create a welcoming, new neighborhood that fully embraces the water's edge and creates strong connections into the heart of the city.

Pioneer Square



Layer Pioneer Square's rich history with new investments that support a vibrant arts and cultural scene, protect the neighborhood from flooding and climate-related disasters, and better link it to the stadium area.

Belltown



Bring new energy to Belltown's neighborhood fabric by ensuring local businesses thrive, maximizing affordability for residents, and improving transportation corridors.

Chinatown-International District



Celebrate and protect the Chinatown-International District's community, cultural history, and environment by investing in public spaces, air quality, community health, residential support, and business success.

Denny Triangle



Reimagine Denny Triangle as a walkable, livable neighborhood, by rethinking bus routes, providing more places for families, and working to improve I-5 crossings.

Downtown Core



Transform the Downtown Core into a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood destination for residents, workers, and visitors by curating arts and events, growing housing around regional transit centers, and creating an active pedestrian experience.

Downtown Today

Downtown Seattle and the city have experienced significant growth and change over the last decade, although the pace slowed down after the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. From 2010 to 2020, Seattle’s population jumped by 21%, more than double the growth of the previous two decades. This high rate of growth placed Seattle alongside only 14 other cities in the United States that added over 100,000 people during that time.

Today, 42,788 people live in Downtown Seattle. Over half of Downtown’s population (55%) identifies as people of color, reflecting the area’s diversity. Asian residents comprise 34.5%, followed by Black or African American residents at 6.3%. Hispanic or Latino individuals account for 7.7% of the population, while those identifying as two or more races make up 5.4%. Under 1% of Downtown residents identify as Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native.

Seattle’s growth has reshaped its neighborhoods, while COVID-19 has shifted Downtown’s patterns. The momentum in growth has continuously reshaped the Downtown skyline and waterfront. Steady housing growth brought 8,400 new units to market from 2015 to 2022 in Seattle. From 2015 to 2022, Downtown added 23,700 jobs, encouraging office and retail development as well. The development momentum has contributed to new office buildings and

cultural and retail destinations, including an expansion of over 1.5 million square feet with the Seattle Convention Center Summit building and plans for a new King County Civic Campus, which will unlock four sites in the Downtown Core for future development.

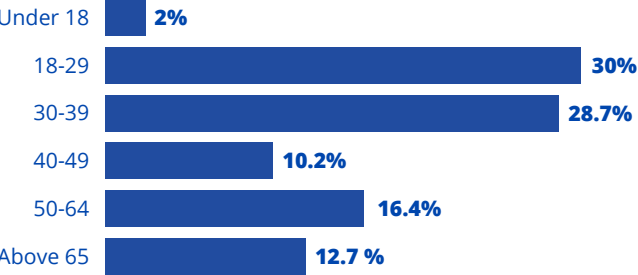
The One Seattle Plan calls for at least 80,000 new housing units citywide to support Seattle’s growing population, with much of this growth concentrated in the regional centers. Planning for an even greater and more diverse housing supply is necessary due to past growth rates, rising housing costs, affordability challenges, and displacement pressures.

Even with job loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, the number of jobs in the City still outpace the jobs target set via the 2015 Comprehensive Plan by more than 40,000. Looking ahead, the One Seattle Plan identifies the need to accommodate 159,000 jobs citywide by 2044. For Downtown, this plan has a target of 13,500 housing units and 60,000 jobs. However, growth above what is projected will aid in meeting social and cultural goals, affordability goals, and the Racial Equity Outcomes (RET Outcomes) for this plan.



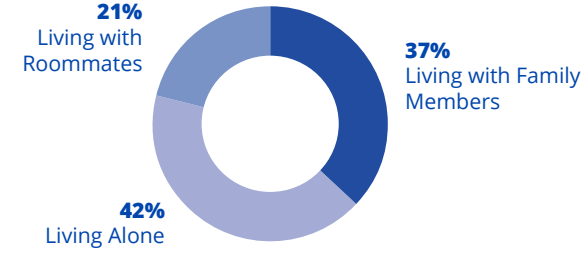
Age Downtown

Source: 2018-2023 American Community Survey



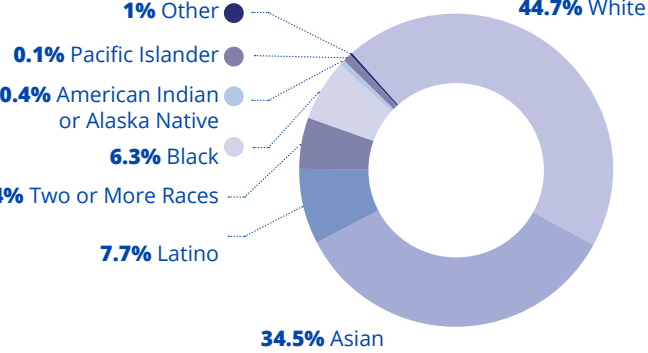
Living Arrangements Downtown

Source: 2018-2023 American Community Survey



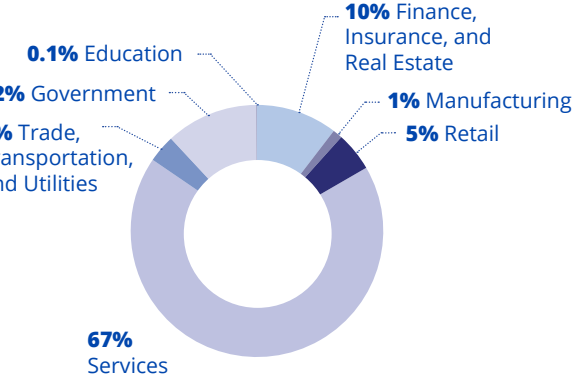
Race / Ethnicity Downtown

Source: 2018-2023 American Community Survey

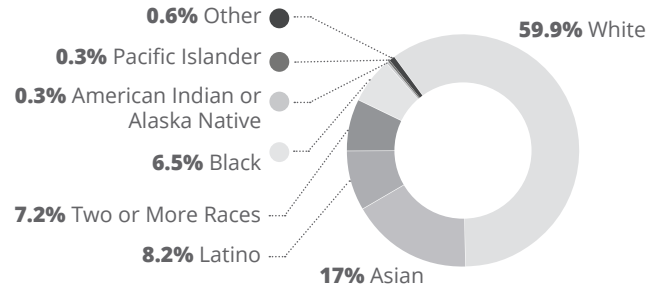


Jobs by Sector Downtown

Source: 2018-2023 American Community Survey

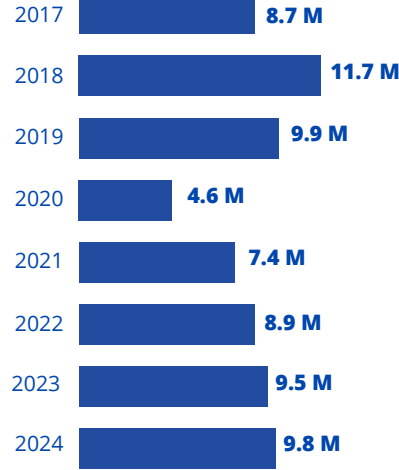


Race / Ethnicity Citywide



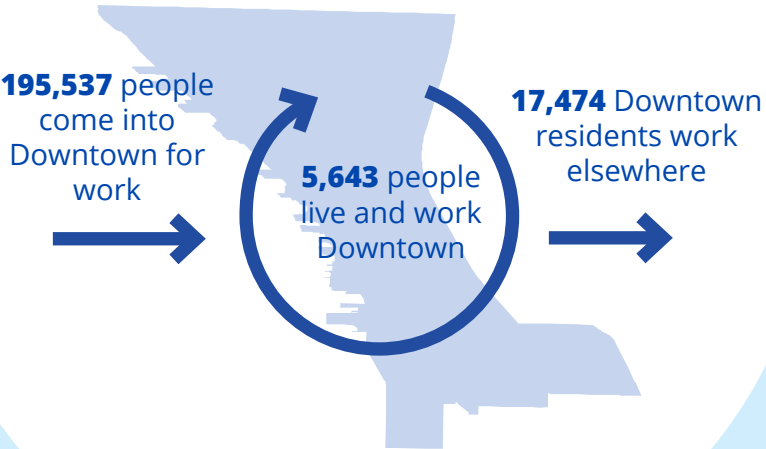
Visitors Downtown

Source: Downtown Seattle Association



Commutes Downtown

Source: 2022 U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, LEHD



Your Voice, Your Plan

The following presents a series of themes that were elevated during the robust community engagement process. These themes form the Plan's vision.

Within each of the five **themes**, the Plan also notes **goals, policies, and actions** which have been formed in collaboration with City staff, the community, and previous planning efforts.

Goals represent the results that the City hopes to realize over time, generally within the 20-year life of the plan. Goals are aspirations, not guarantees or mandates.

Policies should be read as if preceded by the words "It is the City's general policy to...". A policy helps to guide the creation of or changes to specific rules or strategies (such as development regulations, budgets, or program plans). City officials will generally make decisions by following ordinances, resolutions, budgets, or program plans that reflect relevant plan policies, rather than by referring directly to this plan.

Actions are steps that the City will consider taking within the 20-year planning period to achieve the goals and implement the policies in this subarea plan. When and how to move forward with each action will depend on the availability of financial and staff resources, coordination with more specific plans and programs developed by City departments, and opportunities and challenges that emerge in and around the Downtown Regional Center over time.

Implementation of most policies involves a range of actions over time, so one cannot simply ask whether a specific action or project would fulfill a particular plan policy. For example, a policy that states that the City will give priority to a particular need indicates that the City will treat the need as important, not that it will take precedence in every City decision. Some policies use the words ensure, encourage, and so forth. In general, such words describe the emphasis that the policy places on the action but do not necessarily establish a specific legal duty to perform a particular act, to undertake a program or project, or to achieve a specific result.

WHAT YOUR NEIGHBORS SHARED

Pop-up events, small group conversations, and open workshops led to over **3,500** community comments.

“Downtown needs to be a community of people who are able to live, work, and play together with the type of housing, commuting, and support services that make this possible.”

“Kid-friendly spaces in part also means housing with more family-sized units.”

“It shouldn't be hard to make our streets safe, accommodating, and walkable.”

“Public art that reflects and represents the people who live and work nearby.”

“We need affordable housing choices that create diversity in the neighborhood for a vibrant city. The vitality of the city is enhanced when everyone is welcomed.”

“A diverse community can only thrive if/when the needs of people of all income types are met.”

“What downtown needs most is an improved public realm.”

UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community comments can be distilled down to a series of key topics and ideas.

Diverse Housing Types

Pop-ups and Activations

Housing for All Incomes

Love and Care

Sustainable Systems of Funding

Space for Art

Supportive Services

People-Focused Streets

Family-Focused Amenities

PLAN THEMES

Downtown is Home

Make Downtown Safe and Welcoming

Make Use of Every Square Foot

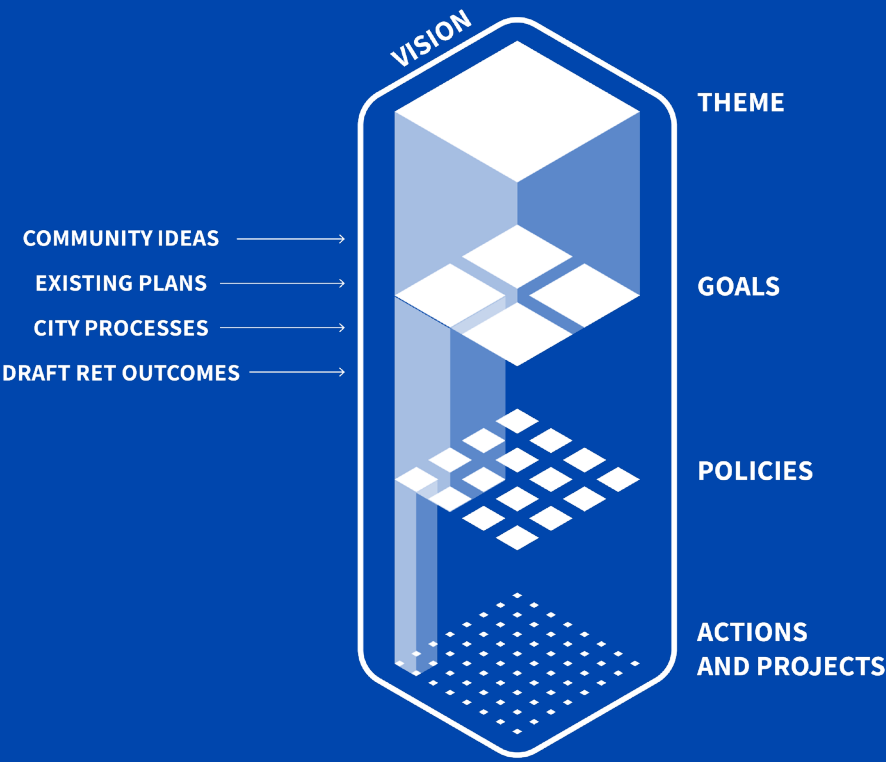
Steward Our Home for the Next "Seven Generations"

Find Our Way

Vision

In Downtown Seattle, **everyone feels welcome, safe, and at home**. Around each corner, **we find our way** to and through spaces where **every square foot** is full of vibrancy, economic opportunity, and beauty.

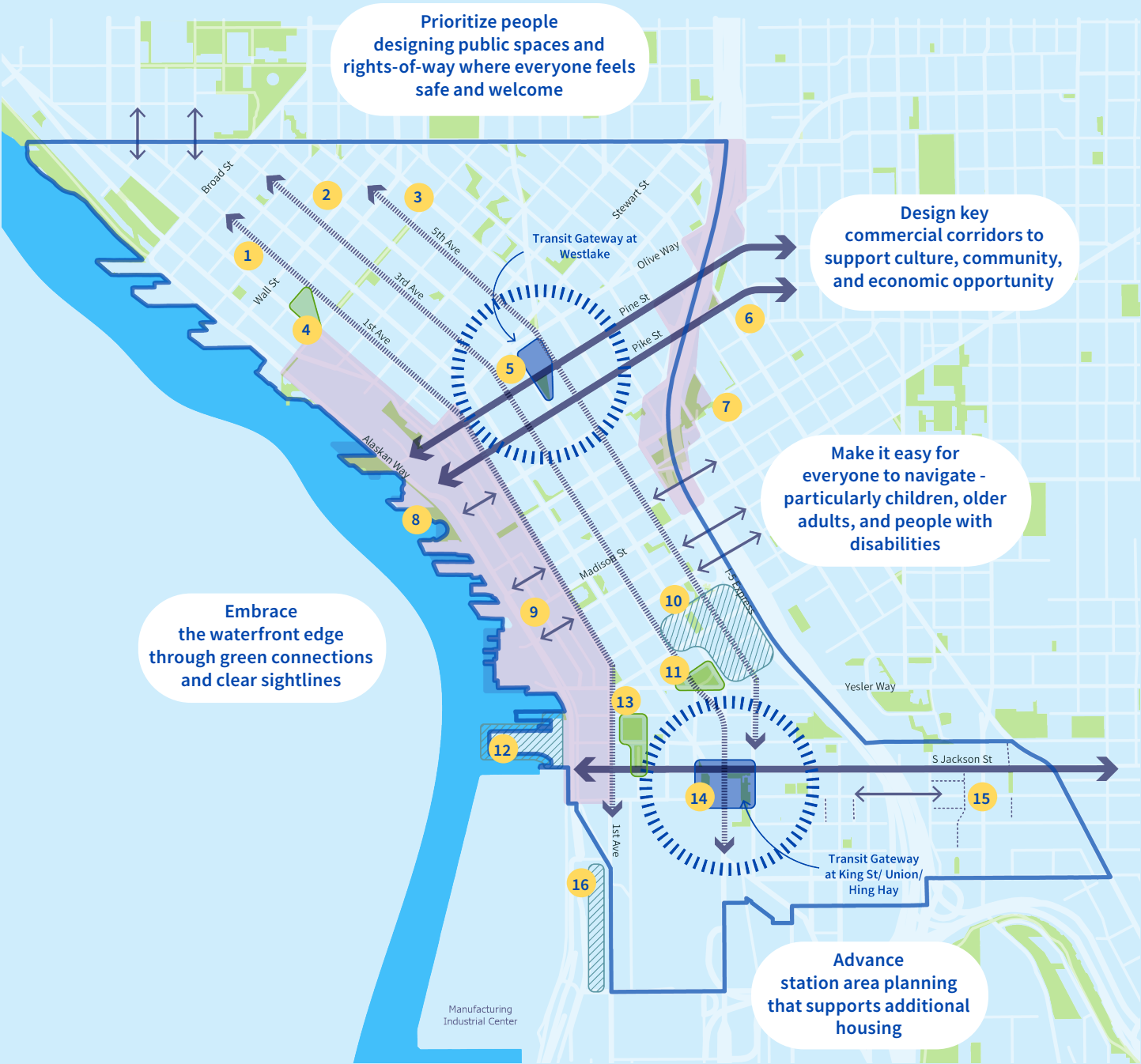
Together we have found means of stewarding Downtown not just in the moment, but with dedication and consideration for the **next “seven generations.”**



The Seattle Downtown Regional Center Plan is framed by the ideas and dreams shared by neighbors, visitors, and people who study and work in Downtown, along with comprehensive research and data. Together, listening and research shaped a shared vision for the future. Supporting goals, policy directions, and actions help set a path for the vision to become a long-term reality. The plan and the vision are organized to pair the outcomes of engagement and technical documentation through five themes:

Downtown is Home	3 Goals	17 Policies	46 Actions
Make Downtown Safe and Welcoming	6 Goals	29 Policies	84 Actions
Make Use of Every Square Foot	6 Goals	21 Policies	82 Actions
Steward Our Home for the Next 7 Generations	4 Goals	19 Policies	65 Actions
Find Our Way	6 Goals	22 Policies	97 Actions

Big Ideas for Downtown



Big Ideas

The following ideas are the plan’s key infrastructure and public realm initiatives. They cut across all themes and connect directly to the actions outlined throughout the Plan.

- 1

1st Avenue Retail Corridor
Embrace First Avenue’s role as an important retail destination and strengthen commercial ground-floor uses in Belltown.
- 2

3rd Avenue Mobility Corridor
Transform Downtown into Seattle’s largest housing center by building on revitalization efforts, enhancing the transit experience, and adapting underused commercial space into vibrant housing along 3rd Avenue.
- 3

5th Avenue Green Corridor
Leverage 5th Avenue’s development potential to accommodate sustainable growth while advancing key community priorities across housing, mobility, economic vitality, and community togetherness.
- 4

Portal Park
Invest in a park space on the former Battery Street Tunnel site that serves as a gateway to the waterfront, a community hub, and a model for innovative and inclusive design in Belltown.
- 5

Westlake Park Improvements
Transform Westlake into a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood destination for residents, workers, and visitors by curating a range of experiences around Westlake as a regional center.
- 6

Pike / Pine Retail Corridor
Continue to build on streetscape improvements completed in 2025 connecting Pike and Pine streets between Pike Place Market and Capitol Hill with activated ground floors, vibrant businesses and other dynamic programming opportunities.
- 7

Lid I-5 Project
Continue to support community-led conversations about the feasibility of the long-term improvement of connectivity.
- 8

Waterfront Improvements
Activate Alaskan Way’s ground floors and encourage new experiences within Downtown’s newest neighborhood.
- 9

Hill Climb Assists
Improve visibility of existing and install new hill climb assist pathways to make it easier for people of all ages and abilities to navigate Downtown.
- 10

King County Campus
Continue to work closely with King County partners on the implementation of a community-serving use of the existing civic campus.
- 11

City Hall Park
Reinvest in City Hall Park as a permanent fixture in Downtown for gathering, play, and relaxation.
- 12

Pier 48
Continue to partner with Washington State Department of Transportation to rehabilitate and reuse Pier 48 to enhance public access, usage, and connection to the water.
- 13

Occidental Square
Invest in green connections between unique Downtown destinations, like City Hall Park, Pioneer Square, and Occidental Square.
- 14

King St / Union Station
Fully implement and activate King St/Union Station with community-centered spaces and events.
- 15

Little Saigon Alleyway Improvements
Create safe, welcoming pedestrian connections along Little Saigon’s alleyways.
- 16

WOSCA Site Development
Continue to partner with Washington State Department of Transportation on the development of a community-focused innovative utilization of this site to anchor downtown.

Recent Relevant Planning Efforts

The last regional center plan for Downtown, the Downtown Urban Center Plan, was completed in 1999. Since then, plans of all shapes and sizes have informed decision-making across Downtown. These recent reports, studies, and initiatives have been undertaken by a variety of authors, many by the City, other government entities, and partners. This is the first City-initiated effort since 1999 that identifies actions across recent, relevant plans and aligns them with the goals and policy direction of citywide plans.

Four regional and citywide plans directly inform the goals and policies of this document. **VISION 2050** is a multi-county plan for the Puget Sound region. It includes planning policies, actions, and regional growth strategies that guide how and where the region grows through 2050. This plan also guides the City of Seattle's local comprehensive plan. The **One Seattle Plan** is a significant update to the Comprehensive Plan and will guide the City's growth through 2044. The **Seattle Parks and Recreation Plan** (2024) and the **Seattle Transportation Plan** (2024) also set citywide priorities and projects that are identified within this plan. **Imagine Greater Downtown** (2019) and the **Seattle Downtown Activation Plan** (2023) outlined a vision and strategies to foster a vibrant and active Downtown while addressing issues of safety, affordability, and economic activity. Neighborhood and district scale planning efforts across Downtown also informed and inspired many of the plan's actions, and several of those plans are highlighted here. One example is the **Jackson Hub Concept**



Vison 2050



One Seattle Plan

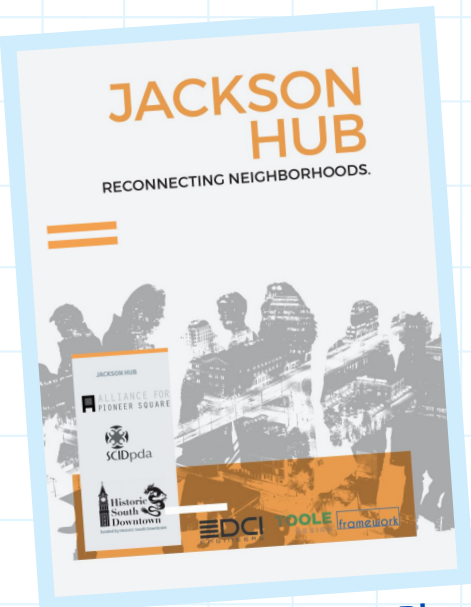


Seattle Transportation Plan

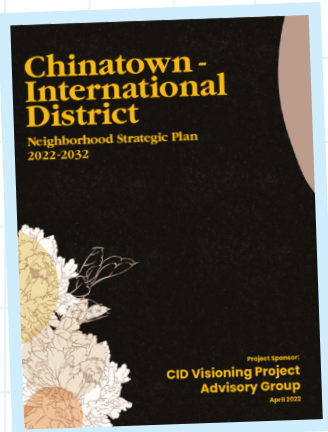


Imagine Greater Downtown

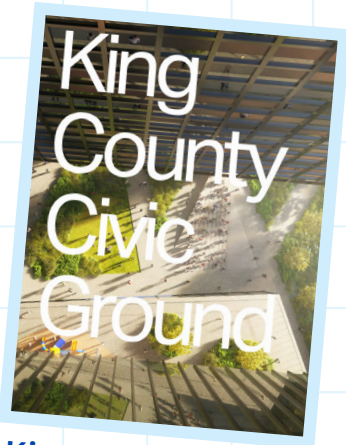
Plan (2019), which addresses systemic injustices enacted through large public infrastructure projects, namely in the Pioneer Square and Chinatown-International District. This community-led plan seeks to center and uplift marginalized voices. Another example of this is the **Pioneer Square Streetscape Concept Plan** (2016), **Stadium District Concept Plan** (2012), **King County Civic Campus Initiative Strategic Plan** (2020), and **Industrial and Maritime Strategy** (2023) each focus on reinvestments or improvements to respective study areas. The **Chinatown-International District Neighborhood Strategic Plan** (2022), **Northeast Pioneer Square Framework Plan** (2022), **Little Saigon Action Plan** (2022), and **Pike Place Market Master Plan** (2024) respond to the impacts of the COVID Pandemic on community cohesion, neighborhood safety and stability, and economic development.



Jackson Hub Concept Plan



Chinatown International-District Neighborhood Strategic Plan



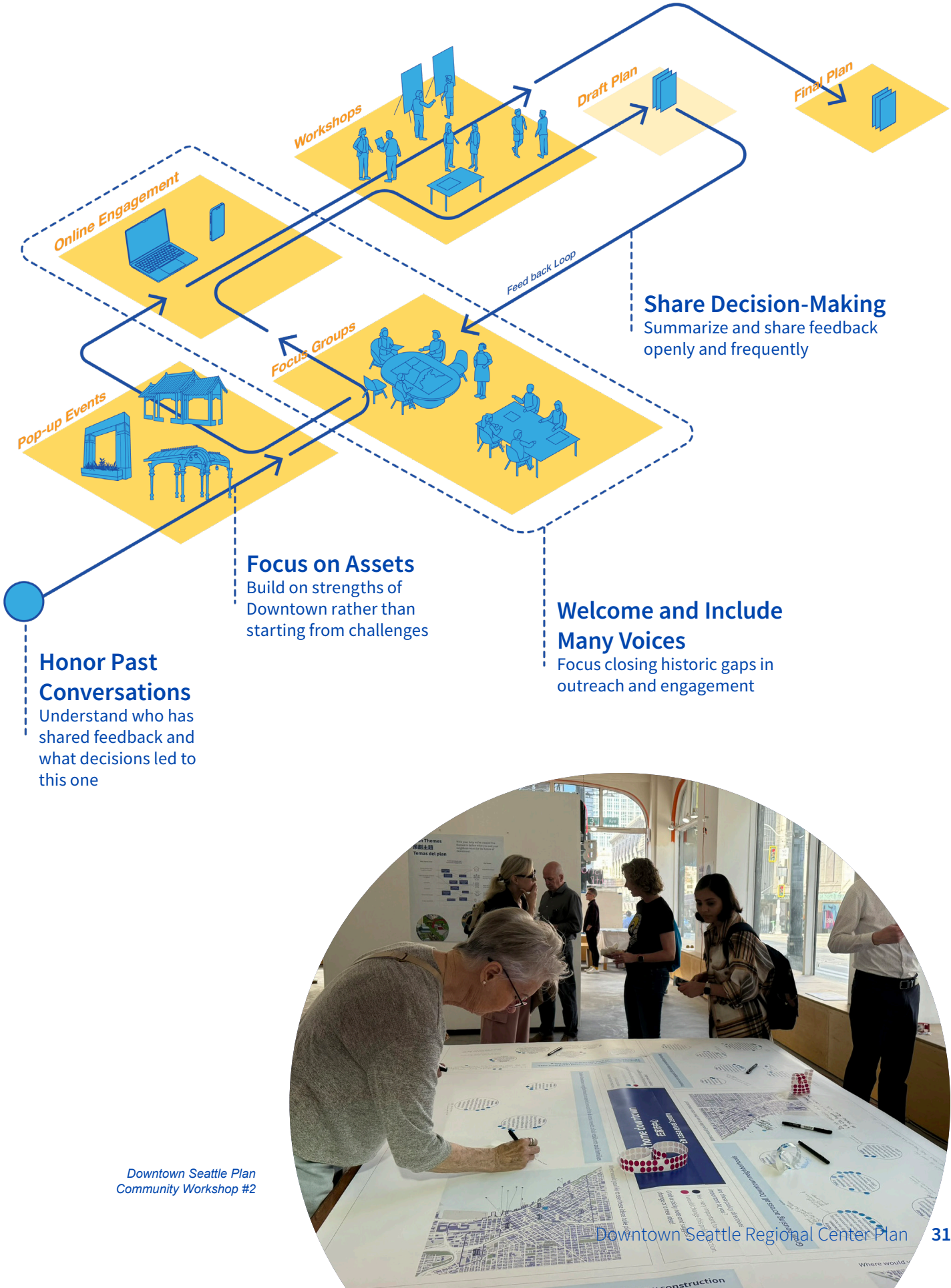
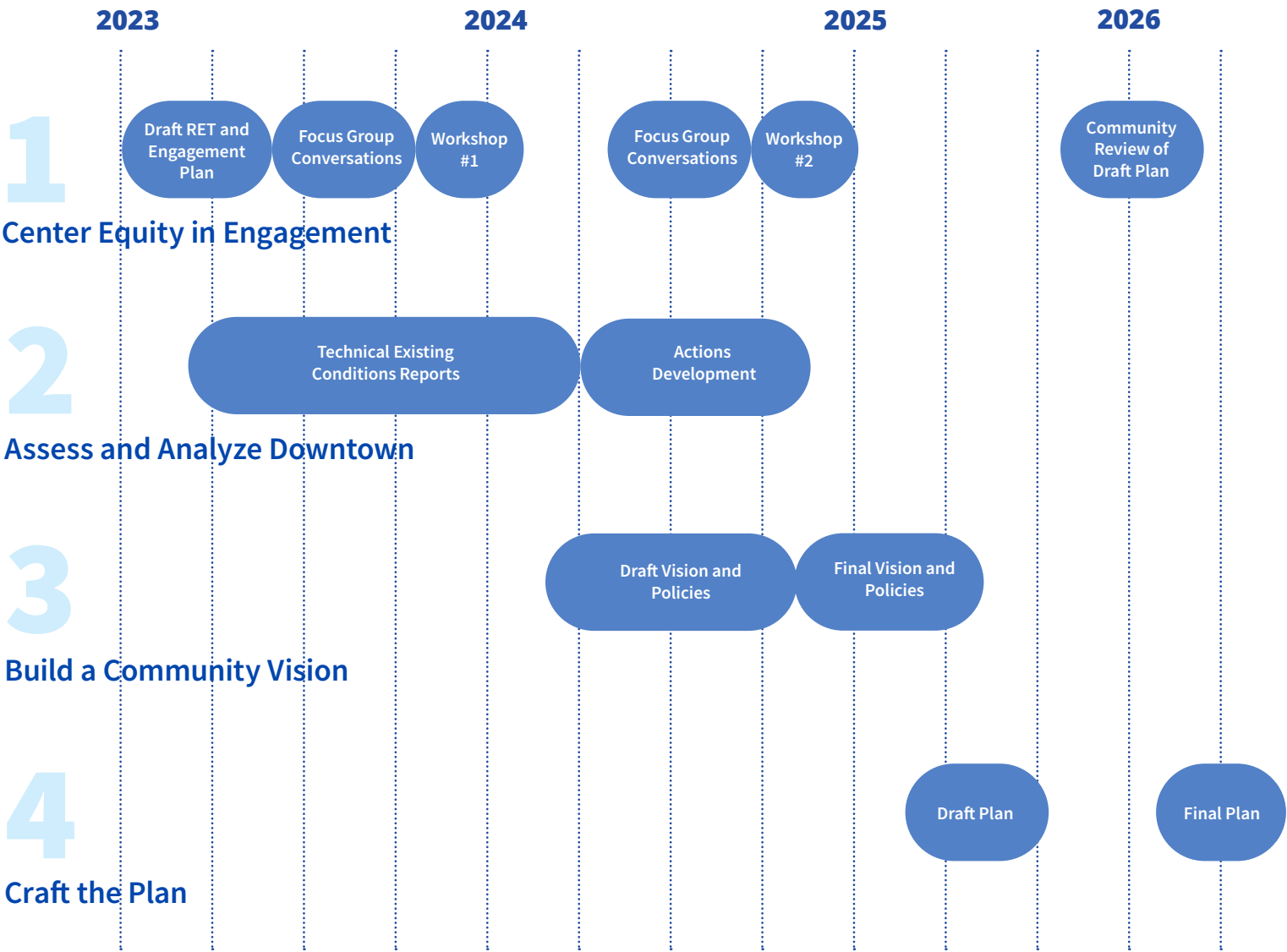
King County Civic Campus



Pike Place Market Plan

Plan Process

The Seattle Downtown Regional Center Plan reflects a three-year planning process that began in early 2023 and concluded at the end of 2025. The plan included several coordinated technical studies that covered land use, housing, economic development, open space, the environment and climate change, public facilities, and transportation, as well as a comprehensive community engagement and communications strategy.



Downtown Seattle Plan Community Workshop #2

1

Center Equity in Engagement

Using tools like the City’s Racial Equity Toolkit (RET), the engagement process emphasized under-represented voices through co-created plans, tailored outreach to diverse communities, and coordination with stakeholders, including Native people, community organizations, and government agencies. Key milestones included public pop-ups, online surveys, focused conversation, participation in neighborhood meetings, and public workshops.

“
We have GOT to make social services abundantly available for people who are disadvantaged or in need of help.”

“
The best thing about this neighborhood is its diversity.”

“
Diversity and equity across the board!”

Advancing Racial Equity

The Downtown Plan is using a tool created by the City’s Office of Civil Rights called the Racial Equity Toolkit (RET). The plan set four RET outcomes using this toolkit to guide the plan’s development, ensure that the plan engaged organizations and voices that represent key relevant topics and historically marginalized communities, and ensure that Downtown Seattle is an equitable place to live, work, create, and participate in civic life. The RET outcomes for Downtown are listed on the next page.

Racial Equity Toolkit

The City of Seattle’s Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) uses the Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) to make sure planning processes and policies actively address racial disparities and prioritize the needs of communities most impacted by systemic inequities. The toolkit provides a clear process and guiding questions to help evaluate how policies, programs, and budget decisions affect racial equity. OPCD applies the RET to efforts like neighborhood planning, zoning updates, and public investments—using data, community input, and coordination with other departments to support more equitable and inclusive outcomes.

Process

There are clear and direct connections between the diverse lived experiences of Downtowners and the plan recommendations.

The Downtown Plan policies and projects prioritize historically excluded communities.

Arts and Culture Representation

A thriving, creative community lives in, works in, and shapes the Downtown experience.

Access to Housing

Downtown offers diverse housing options that support where people are in their lives without creating a cost burden.

Access to Employment and Creating Businesses

Downtown is a center for businesses - of all sizes - that create financial opportunity and stability for entrepreneurs, owners, and employees.

“
Support new and existing small business.”

“
We need more housing for all types of people everywhere downtown.”

“
Support for BIPOC businesses should be wrapped into every other goal for transforming downtown.”

Downtown Seattle Plan Focus
Group Discussions



Engagement Methods

The Seattle Downtown Regional Center Plan was shaped by a process that involved the community every step of the way. More than 500 people participated in two public workshops, neighborhood meetings, and pop-up conversations, and 800 people completed online surveys. The goal was to give everyone in the Downtown community a chance to share their ideas and vision for the future. In total, over 1,500 people took part in the planning process, helping to define the community vision and prioritize the recommendations. A full engagement summary is available as an appendix to this document.



“
Make portal park a park!

Downtown Seattle Plan Community Workshop #1

“
A home for the arts. I would love to see the downtown with a thriving arts culture woven into its corridors.



“
Make downtown a neighborhood, a place to work and destination to visit, not a place to drive through.

Downtown Seattle Plan Community Workshop #2

Public Workshops and Pop-ups

Three community workshops were held Downtown. The first was held at Hirabayashi Place in the Chinatown-International District where the focus was to understand community goals, unmet needs, and ideas for the future. The second was a youth-focused workshop, and the third was an open workshop was held at Base Camp Studios 2 in Belltown where the community gave feedback to the draft vision and helped revise the plan goals and actions. In total over 250 people attended the workshops. Additionally, almost 100 comments about the plan were shared at pop-up events held in Westlake Park, Hing Hay Park, the Lantern Festival, Freeway Park, and a Transportation Plan event. These pop-ups were intended to reach Downtowners who otherwise would not have been able to participate in the planning process.

Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

The City of Seattle uses a RET process to ensure City-led plans and projects prioritize outreach to communities of color and engage their voices to inform the project's outcomes. For Downtown, the City engaged more than 125 people who participated in one-on-one interviews or one of five focus groups from historically underrepresented communities in plan engagement. These conversations centered the voices of Downtown's Indigenous community, residents, business owners, employees, local leaders, non-profits, institutions, City representatives, developers, architects, and advocates who represent communities of color in Downtown.

Surveys

Over 800 people completed an online survey, sharing their thoughts and ideas. Participants included residents, workers, and visitors.

Artist-led Interviews

Local photographer LeLeita McKILL conducted interviews and documented the contributions of artists Downtown at the Seattle Arts Fair 2023 and Vivid Matter Collectives “Subway Cypher” event in Occidental Square. Conversations with artists focused on the need for more permanent space to create art, general city improvements, and the importance of activations to draw people in.

“
More space for people to create art and gather.



Artist Interviews
One Army Jacket Photography

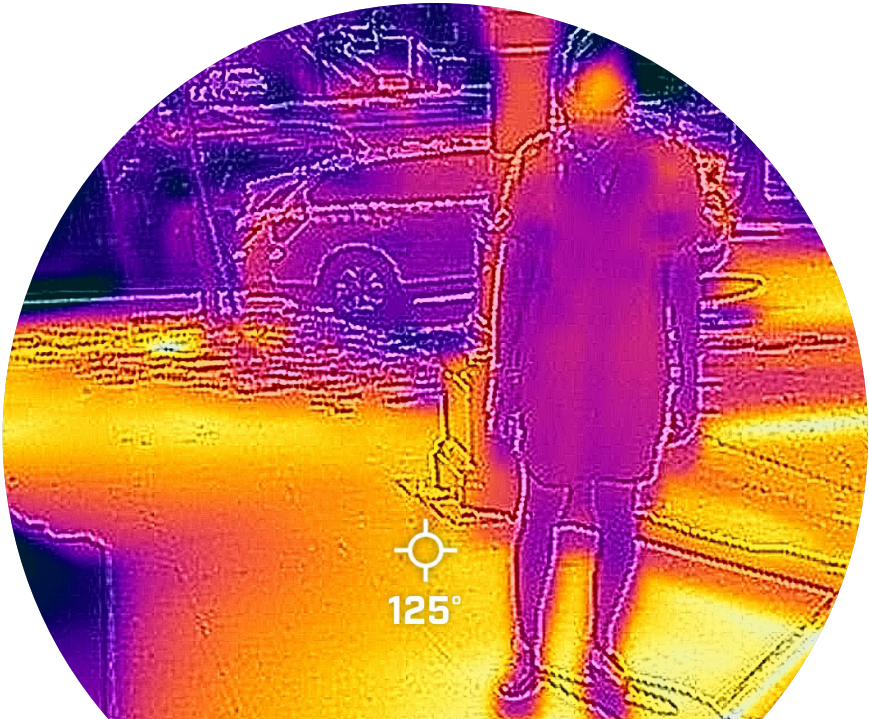
Assess and Analyze Downtown

Alongside conversations with community members about their needs and ideas for Downtown’s future, the plan also reviewed the history and existing conditions of Downtown through the topics outlined by the Puget Sound Regional Council and assembled technical reports to summarize findings from past plans and projects and establish paths forward. The technical reports, available in full in the appendix, include evaluations of the following:

- A review of environmental impacts, promoting green infrastructure, reducing emissions, and increasing equitable access to parks.
- Land use research to examine policies and plans that encourage mixed-use development, pedestrian-friendly design, and infill projects.
- A review of recent housing growth and a summary of housing policies aimed to prevent displacement, convert unused spaces into homes, and expand affordable housing.
- Research into economic strategies that are focused on supporting local businesses, preventing commercial displacement, and creating workforce opportunities.
- A review of the recent Seattle Transportation Plan and an evaluation of various policies and projects aimed at enhancing and expanding multimodal transit connections, safety, and sustainable infrastructure.
- An inventory of public services and facilities to ensure that infrastructure meets growth targets and supports essential utilities and access to education.



ARTS at King Street Station Gallery



Thermal Heat Mapping

Build a Community Vision

Drawing on engagement insights, the Plan engaged stakeholders to articulate a vision and goals for Downtown’s future, addressing critical issues like displacement, sense of safety, housing, creative arts, and climate resilience. Themes emerging from technical analyses and community feedback informed draft policies and actions. Interactive workshops and charrettes enabled the community to evaluate options, and findings were visualized to ensure accessibility.



Downtown Seattle Plan Community Workshop #1

“
Downtown is the doorstep of Seattle, where we welcome our city's guests.”

“
The vision needs to be something that is measurable and achievable.”

“
It is essential that this vision includes support for downtown business. Downtown residents want to be able to walk to the grocery store, drug store, library, etc.”

“
I appreciate how this vision captures both the broad, holistic perspective of inclusivity and vibrancy for all, while also focusing on the intimate, personal feeling of belonging.”

Craft the Plan

The planning process concluded with a comprehensive, graphically-rich plan document, including an executive summary. The plan employed inclusive communication strategies to share updates and celebrate the area’s stories through art and media. Final recommendations integrated technical priorities and community values, offering a clear roadmap for implementation.

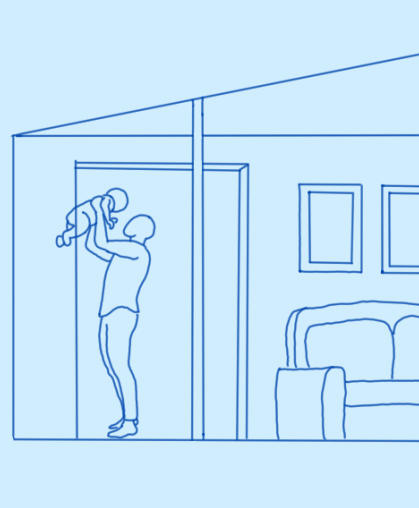
By centering equity and fostering transparent engagement, the process achieved a shared vision for a thriving, resilient, and inclusive Downtown Seattle.

Plan Themes

DH

Downtown is Home

Downtown is transformed into Seattle's largest hub of diverse housing options, supported by station area planning and innovative affordability approaches. It also invests in neighborhood supporting services and places that meet the needs of people at all income levels and life stages.



Make Use of Every Square Foot

Streets and buildings support a rich mix of uses, elevating the creative ventures and maximizing the utility of the built environment. Underutilized spaces are reimagined to support culture, community, and economic opportunity.



SF

SW

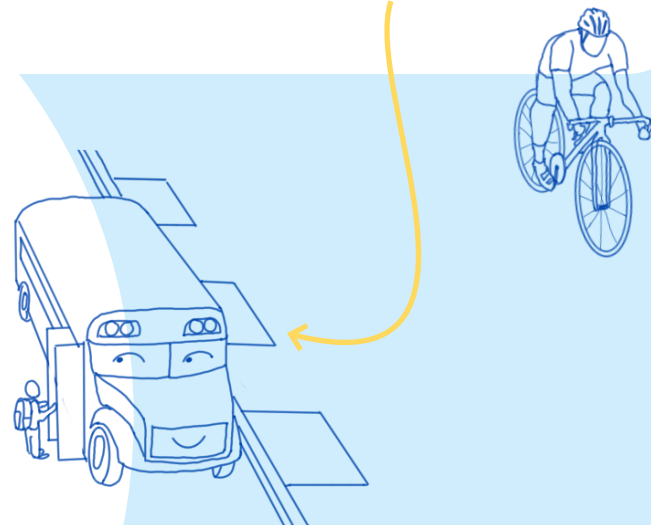
Make Downtown Safe and Welcoming

Downtown centers public spaces and rights-of-way for people, creating environments where all feel safe, welcome, and at ease. In this theme, greener, more inclusive public spaces thrive through bold, equity-driven investment and management practices.

FW

Find Our Way

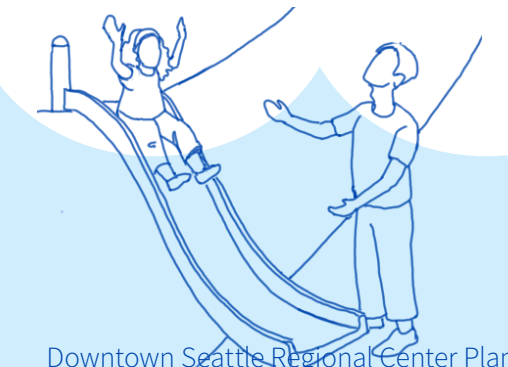
Downtown is easily navigable for children, older adults, and people with disabilities through thoughtful amenities like seating, hill climb assists, and shade. Major nodes serve as dynamic, inclusive hubs that spark broader transformation across downtown.



SG

Steward Our Home for the Next 7 Generations

Indigenous principles guide design, fostering deep connections to land and water across downtown. The energy of the waterfront radiates into adjacent neighborhoods through visual corridors and green linkages.



How To Use This Document

The policies and actions in the Downtown Regional Center Plan are organized by theme. Each theme begins with an introduction that outlines its goals and highlights key takeaways and existing conditions, based on the technical analysis and community feedback.

GOALS

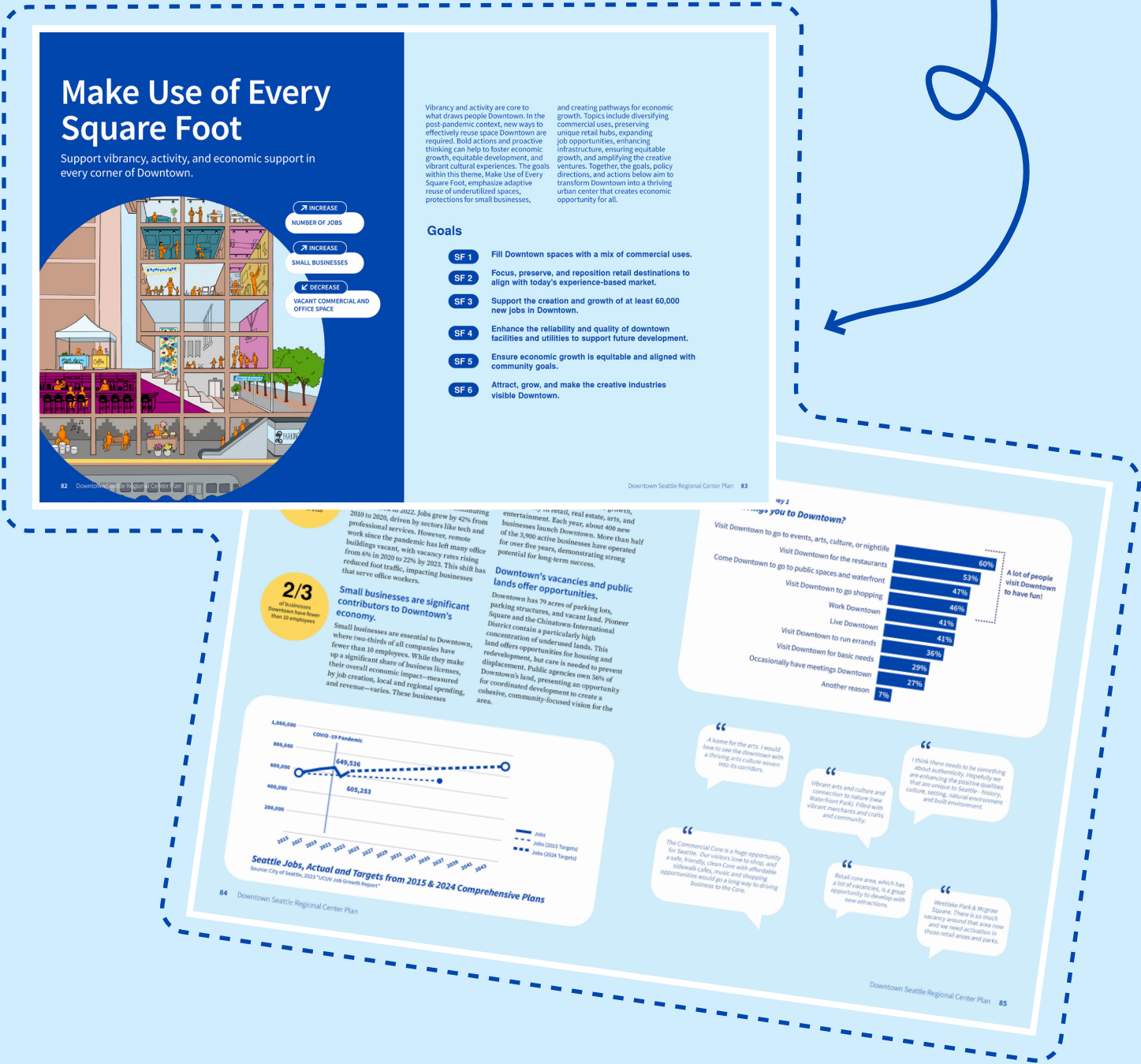
Each theme includes a set of goals that describe the desired future for Downtown Seattle.

POLICIES

Each goal is supported by a set of policies that provide overall guidance for future decisions across the Regional Center.

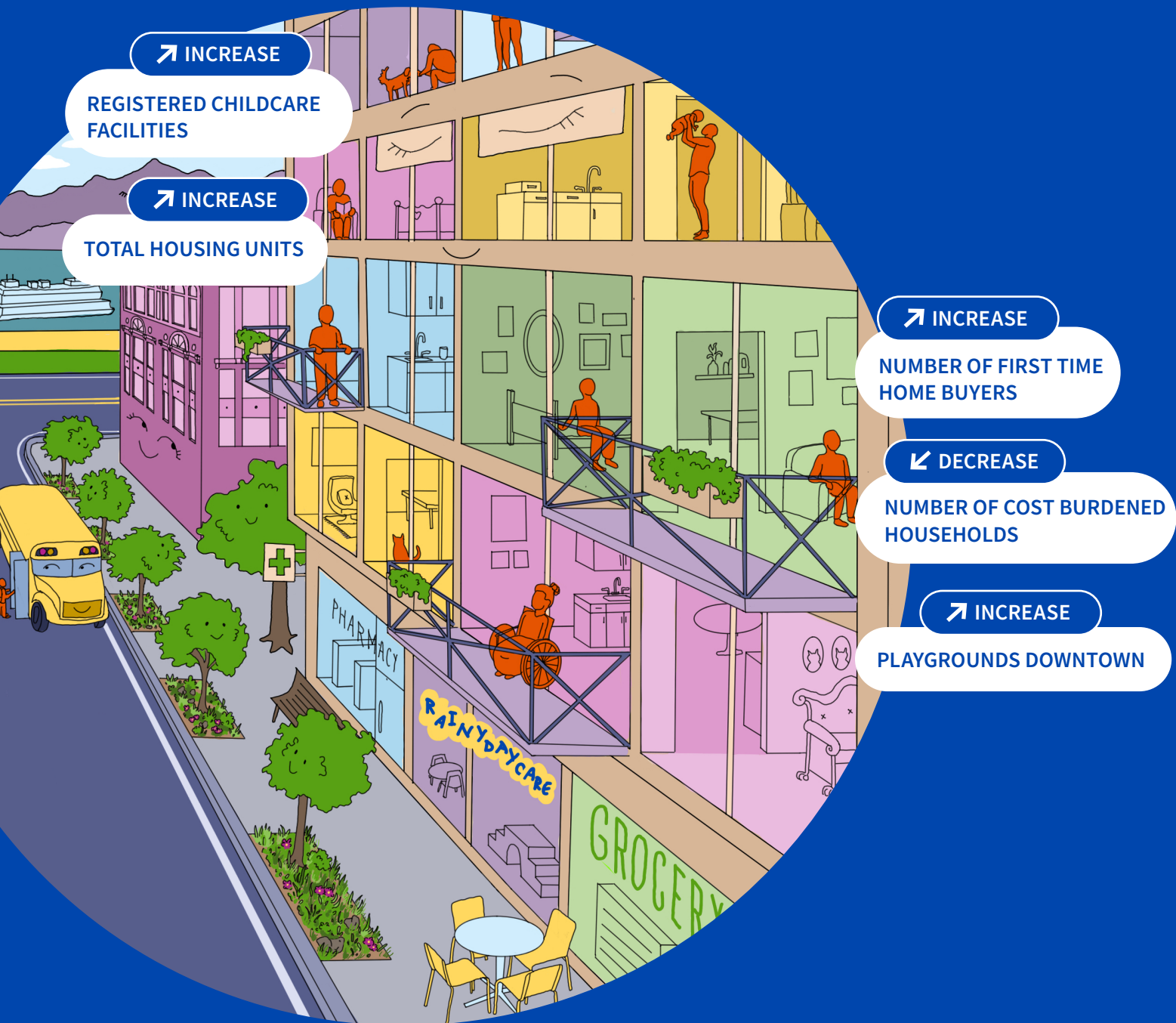
ACTIONS

Each policy is supported by a set of identified actions. Additional information about the actions, including lead departments, is included in the Implementation Chapter.



Downtown is Home

Support the new and existing households to thrive in the core of the city as Downtown grows to become Seattle’s largest residential neighborhood.



As the heart of the City, Downtown is home to a growing population. Yet, the experiences, services, and housing that are currently provided are not supportive of people at all stages of their lives. This theme focuses on a series of goals, policy directions, and actions designed to create a thriving, inclusive, and accessible urban core. By expanding housing opportunities,

promoting equitable development, preserving affordability, and fostering unique neighborhood identities, the actions within this chapter aim to ensure Downtown serves the diverse housing needs of its residents. The goals for this chapter are below. Each goal has a series of policies and actions described in more detail on the following pages.

Goals

- DH 1** Add at least 13,500 new housing units across Downtown.
- DH 2** Preserve and expand housing that is accessible to a range of incomes.
- DH 3** Evolve Downtown neighborhoods to better meet the diverse needs of all residents and families.

Key Findings

With anticipated growth, Downtown is poised to become Seattle's largest center of housing. Yet today, the area does not have the amenities, and services to support a thriving residential community.

Continued growth is projected over the next two decades, which will make Downtown the city's largest housing center (eclipsing First Hill/Capitol Hill). The City is planning for at least 13,500 new housing units to be added Downtown by 2044. Already, as of March 2024, seventeen buildings with 4,016 units are under construction, signaling a steady pace of development.

Since the adoption of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, Downtown added 8,444 new housing units, with over 75% of its total housing stock built after 2000 and 10% constructed since 2020. Neighborhoods like Belltown and Denny Triangle are leading growth, with the latter transforming from a light industrial zone into a burgeoning residential area, while office-heavy areas like the Downtown Core show high office and retail vacancies and limited

residential growth. Downtown is currently over-invested in office uses and a significant proportion of those office uses are vacant or underutilized. One of the primary initiatives of this plan is to shift the balance of uses to position Downtown as the region's housing hub.

Housing disparities have widened as Downtown has grown. Growth will bring changes that require investments in community infrastructure, amenities, and affordable housing. Despite its growth, Downtown's housing landscape reflects stark economic disparities. While the tech boom has attracted high-income households, 24% of residents are classified as extremely low-income—significantly higher than the citywide average of 14.6%. Many of these residents face severe housing cost burdens, spending over half their income on rent. This divide is particularly pronounced in the Chinatown-International District (CID), where high social vulnerability overlaps with housing development capacity, and Pioneer Square, where there is a concentration of low-income households, making displacement a key concern.

Residents and Downtown advocates desire more family-centered services and amenities.

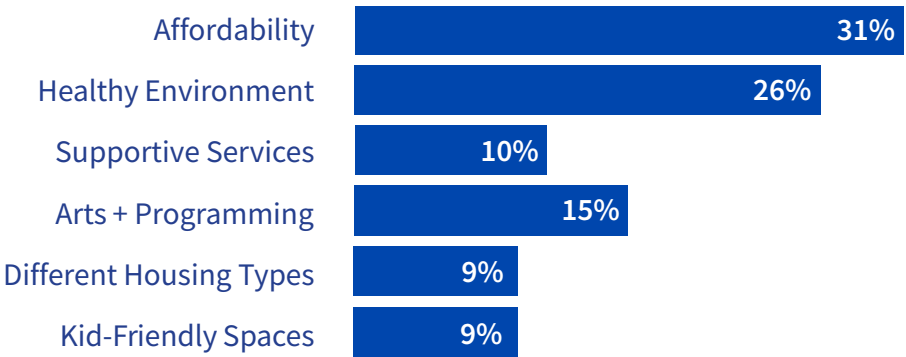
Yet, amenities essential for creating a livable neighborhood remain limited. Housing providers and community advocates emphasize the need for more family-oriented services, including playgrounds, grocery stores, daycare facilities, and open spaces. These gaps limit households with children and challenge Downtown's evolution into a vibrant, multi-generational community.

“We are leaving behind aging, refugee, elderly, and low-income workforce (50-80% AMI).”

“Everything is tied to Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, but that doesn't meet all needs.”

Question from Public Meeting 1

What does Downtown need to be a great place to live?



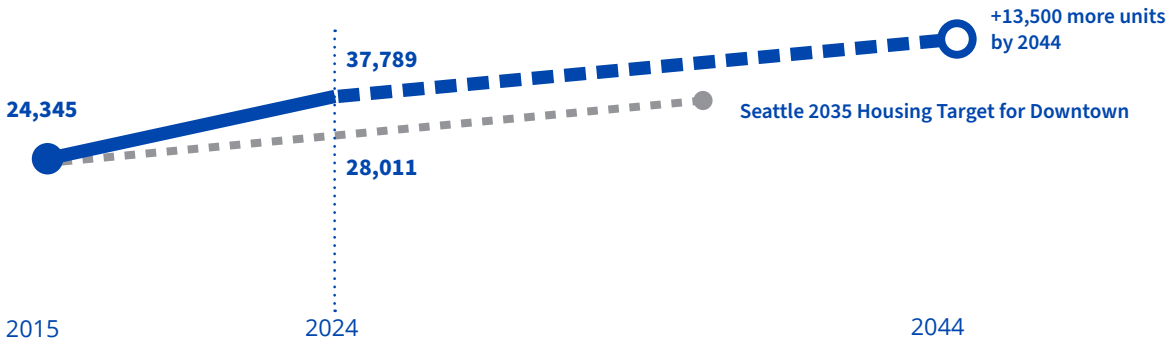
“I would personally prioritize livability, the environment and providing housing across the economic spectrum.”

“Allow daycare and family sized units to share outdoor space in buildings. Daycares need outdoor space during weekdays, families on nights and weekends.”

“There also needs to be focus on incentivizing family sized housing.”

75%
of housing Downtown has been built since 2000

4
Public Open Spaces with Recreational Amenities



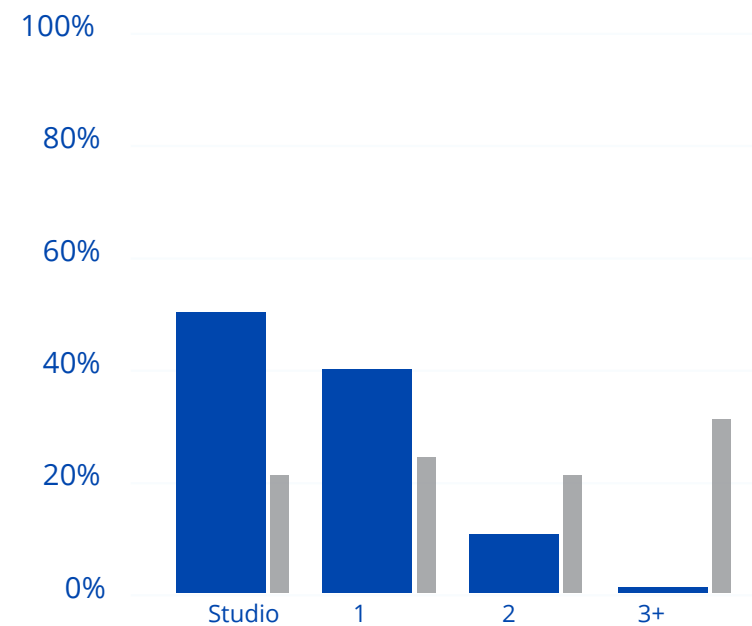
Downtown Actual vs Projected Housing Growth

81%

of Downtown's population are renters

High land and building development costs make it difficult to create more housing at a variety of price points and unit sizes.

New housing developments built over the last decade mostly consist of smaller studio and one bedroom market-rate rental units, which are considered to be more profitable than two-to-three-bedroom units, affordable housing offerings, and condo buildings, especially as the cost for land, building supplies, labor, and financing tools continue to increase. Today, renters comprise 81% of Downtown residents, compared to 56% citywide.



Housing Unit Size

■ Downtown
■ Citywide

Source: 2010 Decennial Census, 2020 Decennial Census

Downtown has sufficient capacity to accommodate future growth, but investments in affordable housing, community amenities, and basic infrastructure are critical to ensuring equitable growth.

According to the Land Use Technical Analysis for the Seattle Downtown Regional Center Plan (see appendix for full details), Downtown already has sufficient land capacity to meet future growth targets. However, given the city's persistent housing affordability crisis, adding more housing capacity Downtown can further support affordability by increasing supply and reducing market pressure. In addition, investments in the public realm, essential infrastructure, and community amenities will be necessary to ensure that future development is equitable, inclusive, and supportive of existing residents, businesses, and community institutions.

“

Require new tower developments to build a certain percentage of 3 bedroom units suitable for a family.

74%

of housing units in Downtown are studios or one-bedroom apartments

97%

of housing units built in the last ten years are studio or one-bedroom apartments

The housing market in Downtown Seattle is relatively robust despite current challenges to development feasibility.

Both rental and for-sale housing remain in comparatively high demand in Downtown Seattle, and the cost of housing Downtown is generally higher than elsewhere in the city, particularly in terms of rental rates in multifamily residential properties. Incentives to encourage more varied and affordable development, like the Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE) and inclusionary zoning policies, have spurred some more inclusive and diverse housing development, but significant barriers persist.

A significant number of publicly-funded housing developments face expiring affordability restrictions.

Downtown Seattle has a substantial existing inventory of affordable residential properties. According to HUD data, there are 76 projects within the Downtown Regional Center that have been financed in part with low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC). These projects are primarily concentrated in Belltown, Pioneer Square, and the CID. The 76 housing properties include a total of 6,163 total units, 94 percent of which are affordable. Of the 76 projects Downtown, 15 have expired rent restrictions, with another ten projects' rent restrictions expiring in the next five years.

Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) requirements for Downtown will add to the future inventory of affordable housing.

MHA requirements for new development will aid in expanding the affordable housing inventory Downtown and throughout the city. New multifamily residential development in Seattle must either include affordable units in the development (performance option) or contribute to the Office of Housing's affordable housing development fund (payment option). However, the funding raised by MHA requirements is sensitive to the broader development landscape. In 2023 the program brought in \$67 million, 15 percent below the \$75 million in 2022, due to a private development slowdown in the face of increasing construction costs and high interest rates.

76

projects Downtown have been financed with low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC)

“

Unlock more development and use currently unused land to build housing and parks.

“

The city must address affordability in the downtown area. Right now, it feels like we have extremely low income housing and services (30% of median income or less) and extremely expensive new construction. We need more mid-range housing for balance.

“

Land acquisition and development costs are just too high to make many projects Downtown seem feasible.

Policies and Actions



DH 1 Add at least 13,500 new housing units across Downtown.

Policy DH 1.1 Regularly review, simplify, and optimize permitting regulations and processes that affect Downtown residential development.

ACTIONS

- 1 Analyze the development of funding programs that provide gap financing to offset housing development costs driven by city processes that currently make conversions or new construction prohibitive.
- 2 Extend the design review exemption period and waiver of development standards for residential conversions by an additional one to two years in areas that can support more housing production.

Policy DH 1.2 Prioritize residential development in the Downtown Core.

ACTIONS

- 1 Prioritize Third Avenue to allow for more housing types, promote family-friendly housing, and advance affordability.
- 2 Rename the Downtown Commercial Core zone as the Downtown Core to reflect its more mixed-use, residential status and aspirations.
- 3 Remove retail frontage requirements along some parts of Downtown corridors to reduce development costs.
- 4 Rezone from Union to Virginia Street with greater density and allow for more affordable homes.
- 5 Update zoning policies to allow for taller residential buildings from Union Street north to Stewart Street, east on Pike Street and Union Street toward 4th Avenue, and along Third Avenue.
- 6 Continue to support and refine development incentives—such as height allowances tied to meaningful community benefits—to encourage housing production.
- 7 Evaluate updating allowances for residential use on existing Seattle Waterfront Pier.

Policy DH 1.3 Increase flexibility in new commercial building designs to plan ahead for future conversions to residential use.

ACTIONS

- 1 Update Street Use Designations to support additional activated frontages including ground floor residential access (Future figure found in Land Use Map section).

Policy DH 1.4 Partner with the private sector to advance innovations in new housing construction.
(Aligned with Comprehensive Plan policy H 7.2)

ACTIONS

- 1 Continue to partner with Mass Timber Accelerator (MasSTac) to accelerate the development of mass timber projects and explore comparative advantages of application of Mass Timber for industrial buildings in liquefaction zones versus other uses.

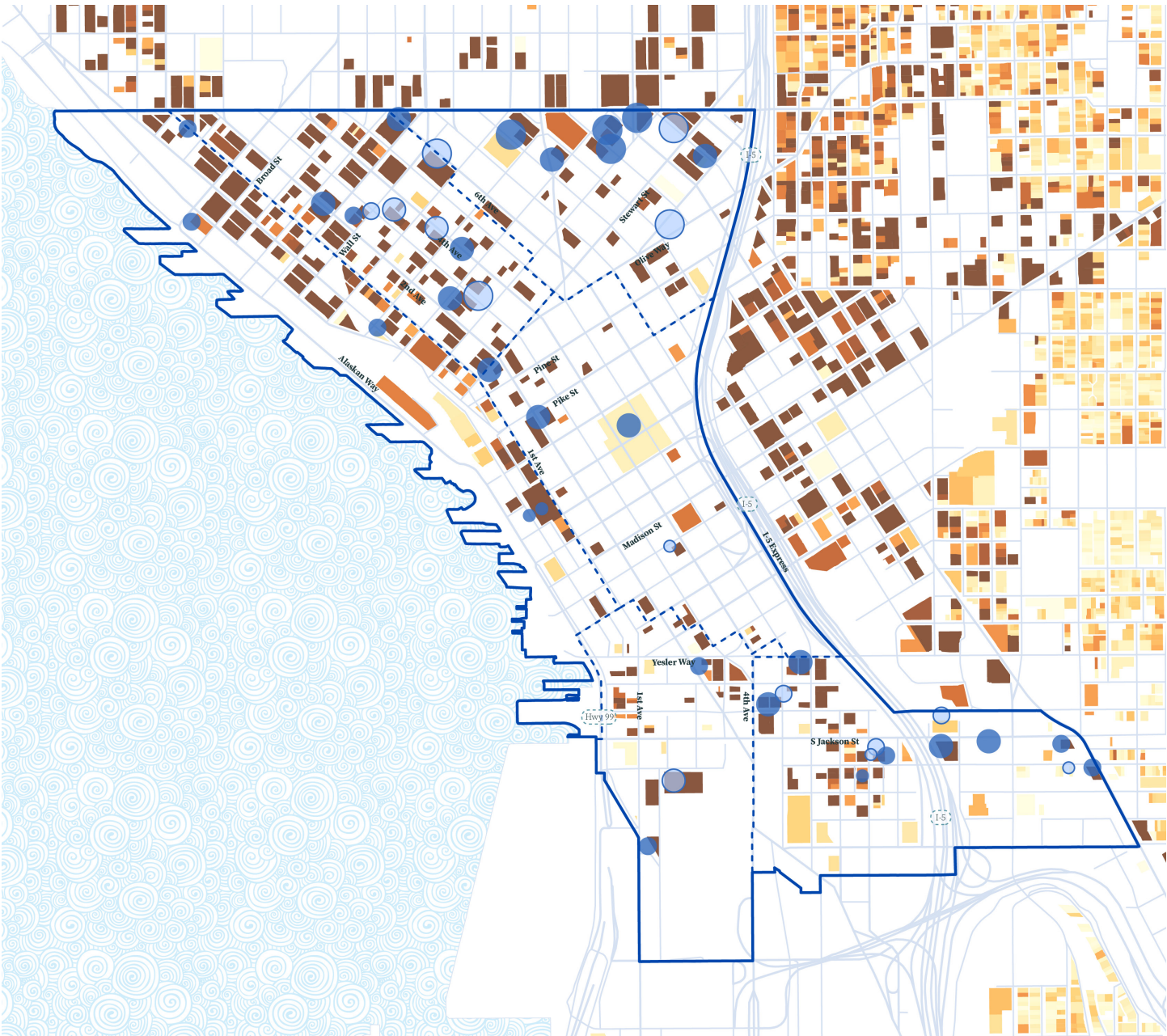
Policy DH 1.5 Support programs that increase the financial feasibility of sustainable building practices.

ACTIONS

- 1 Encourage construction techniques and materials that are cost-effective and efficient to build (Cross-laminated timber buildings, volumetric modular, pre-fab).
- 2 Evaluate development standards and construction codes to identify opportunities to provide flexibility and remove code barriers to Mass Timber and carbon neutral development projects.
- 3 Expand current green building incentives to include new or emerging green building and sustainable development practices, such as mass timber construction.

Case Study
Downtown Housing Assistance
Louisville, KY

A fund created in 2001, through the partnership of local banks and corporations, helps stimulate housing production and activity in Downtown Louisville. This fund provides financial support to residential developments in and adjacent to Downtown Louisville, strengthening the residential population in the area. This program has directly funded over 779 housing units. In addition to increasing housing supply, the supported development projects have helped advance other City priorities, including high-quality, high-density housing; infill development; adaptive reuse and historic preservation; and energy efficiency and sustainability.



Existing Housing in Seattle

- Units built since (2018)
- Units under construction (2025)
- 0 Residential Density (Floor Area Ratio)
- 3

0 mi 0.5 mi
Source: City of Seattle

Policy DH 1.6 Explore additional programs or actions that provide incentives for office-to-income-restricted residential conversion proposals, in addition to the State sales tax exemption. Programs or actions could be a temporary or permanent change.

Policy DH 1.7 Encourage the conversion of existing downtown buildings to allow for a wider variety of uses, with an emphasis on securing long-term income-restricted housing.
(Aligned with Comprehensive Plan policy H 7.6.)

ACTIONS

- 1 Explore incentivizing more office-to-residential conversions that provide affordable housing through the Office of Housing’s annual funding process.
- 2 Continue to evaluate development standards and construction codes to identify opportunities to provide flexibility and remove code barriers to adaptive reuse projects.
- 3 Explore partnerships with the King County Department of Assessments for a payment in lieu of taxes agreement that will abate a percentage of fair market assessed residential value for a certain term in office-to-residential conversion projects.

Policy DH 1.8 Reduce the barriers (regulatory, financial, and informational) to making updates required by construction and energy codes when retrofitting historic buildings.

ACTIONS

- 1 Help connect owners of unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings to funding and financing programs, builders and contractors, and other information to support simultaneous energy, occupancy, and seismic upgrades.
- 2 Explore possible financial incentives to encourage new building owners to retrofit unreinforced masonry buildings. Incentives could include waiving of building permit fees for seismic upgrades, removing street use fees for construction vehicles and laydown space, low-interest or no-interest financing from publicly issued bonds or redevelopment district revenue, and acquiring federal grant money for subsidizing retrofits.
- 3 Provide marketing and communications to Downtown business owners, building owners, and residents with language isolation about incentives and free or low-cost access to heating conversion from oil to electric heat and stoves from natural gas to electric.
- 4 Create a toolkit about incorporating solar or green technologies on rooftops, focusing on mitigating urban heat island effect.
- 5 Help build connections between non-profits and developers to protect and retrofit culturally and historically significant buildings.

Case Study

Columbus United Cooperative

San Francisco, CA

The Columbus United Cooperative is a 21-unit, mixed-use building in San Francisco’s Chinatown that was saved from demolition in the early 2000s through community organizing by low-income Chinese American tenants and local advocacy groups. Now owned by the San Francisco Community Land Trust, the building operates as a limited equity co-op, allowing residents to build equity while ensuring long-term affordability through resale price caps. This project highlights how cooperative housing, paired with community land ownership, can protect vulnerable residents from displacement and provide stable, affordable homeownership in historic urban neighborhoods facing displacement pressures.



Case Study

Tashiro Kaplan Artist Lofts

Pioneer Square, Seattle, WA

Rising costs drove artists out of Pioneer Square in the 1990s, highlighting a need to support housing for creatives and their families. The Tashiro Kaplan Artist Lofts converted the historic building into 50 units of permanently affordable housing and studio spaces. With commercial space on the ground floor, this increased sidewalk life, reviving this area of Pioneer Square.



DH 2

Preserve and expand housing that is accessible to a range of incomes.

Policy DH 2.1 Protect low income renters from increased risk of displacement by focusing on those with incomes at or below 50% of the area median income (AMI).

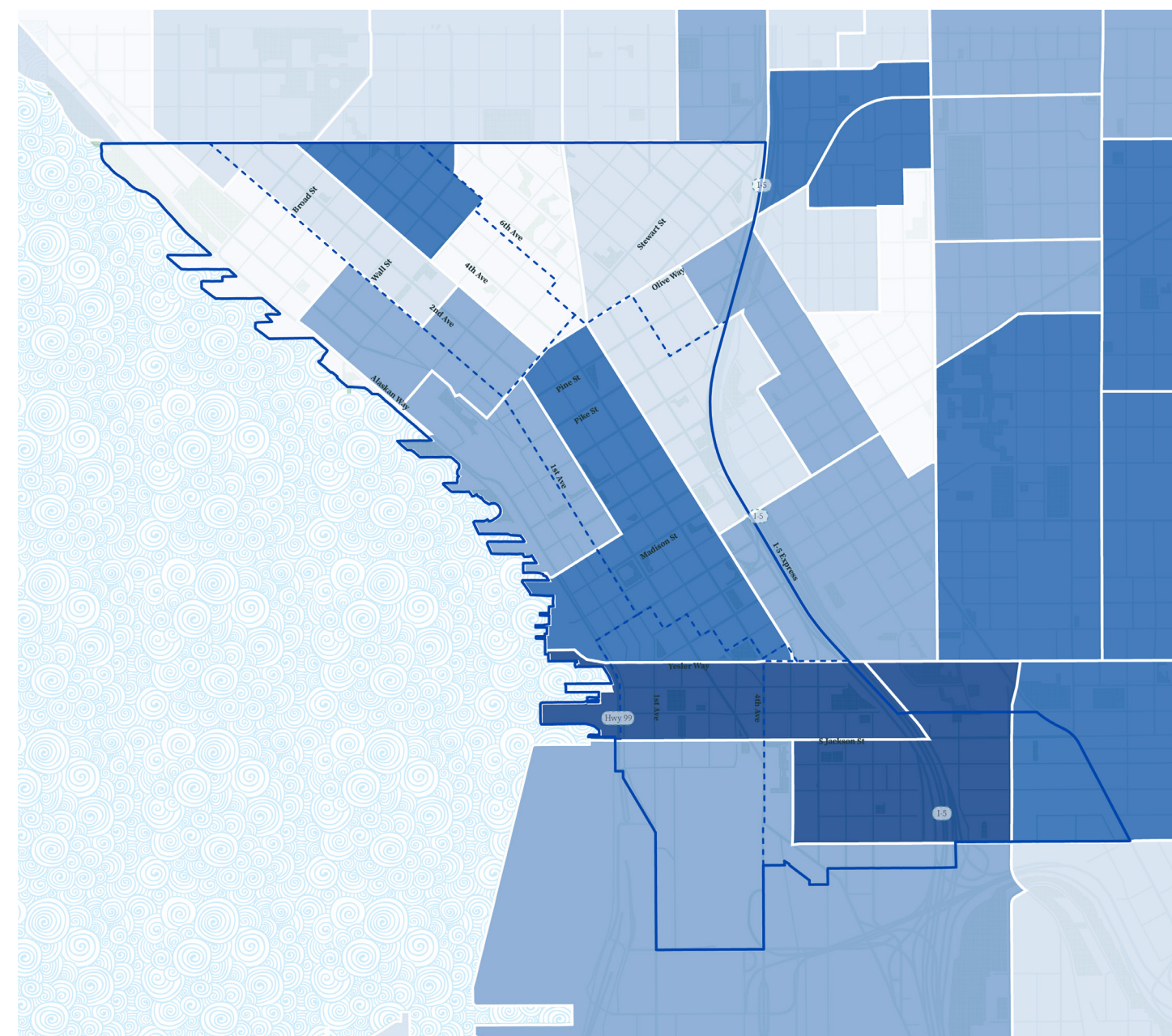
ACTIONS

- 1 Deploy the City's existing displacement mitigation strategies and resources as needed, taking into account particularly vulnerable populations in the Chinatown–International District (CID) and Pioneer Square districts.
- 2 Monitor displacement risk using the City's displacement risk dashboard, and develop proactive strategies to increase access to and awareness of City resources that help prevent displacement and housing instability for low-income households.
- 3 Continue to support tenant counseling and education programs for low-income renters. Connect tenants to subsidy programs like housing choice vouchers, tax abatements, and relocation assistance services.
- 4 Work with Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), the Amazon Housing Equity Fund, the Black Home Initiative, and other partners to expand outreach to lower-income owner households at risk of displacement.
- 5 Explore the feasibility of creating a targeted loan and/or grant program for lower-income homeowners and building owners who offer below-market units in high-risk neighborhoods—such as the CID and Pioneer Square—to support additional housing within existing buildings and to help preserve affordable housing.
- 6 Given the number of vacant upper-level spaces in areas such as the CID, explore developing a program to help long-time property owners bring the upper floors of their buildings up to code.
- 7 Create a strategy under the City's Equitable Development Initiative (EDI) program to prevent displacement and support equitable development in communities affected by the I-5 project.

Policy DH 2.2 Increase opportunities and capacity for tenants to move into home ownership.

ACTIONS

- 1 Encourage the use of right-of-first refusal programs as part of lease agreements to give tenants the first chance to purchase the property they occupy.
- 2 Tie the implementation of the right-of-first refusal programs to low-income homeownership financing programs.



People Whose Income is Below 200% Poverty Level

Percent of Population by Census Tract

- Less than 10%
- 10-20%
- 20-30%
- 30-45%
- More than 45%

0 mi 0.5 mi

Source: American Community Survey (5-Year) 2023

Policy DH 2.3 Help ensure adequate funding for long-term income-restricted housing.

ACTIONS

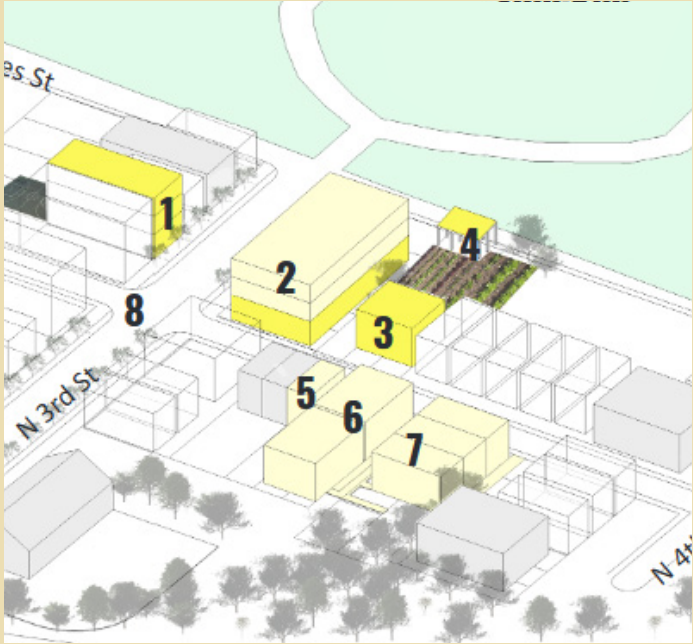
- 1 Work with the state, other public funders, foundations, major employers, community-based organizations, and Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) to explore the feasibility of new grant and/or loan funds for income-restricted housing developments serving Downtown areas with the highest socioeconomic needs.
- 2 Explore creating and supporting the permanent preservation of income-restricted affordable housing through tools such as a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, a land trust, or cooperative ownership models.
- 3 Increase Office of Housing rental investments Downtown and pilot an Office of Housing-funded homeownership project, focusing on existing housing stock.
- 4 Expand the capacity of existing housing organizations to receive and distribute philanthropic funding.

Policy DH 2.4 Explore additional funding sources to support the development of additional permanent supportive housing.

Case Study

Richmond Land Trust and Bank
Richmond, VA

Richmond’s Maggie Walker Community Land Trust (MWCLT) acts as a land trust, land bank, and housing developer in one. By procuring and managing vacant and tax-delinquent properties it decreases their development projects’ competition, timeline, and expenses. The MWCLM maintains land ownership beneath homes, selling just the house to reduce purchasing costs. Resale restrictions on these homes create enduring affordability for future buyers. The MWCLM also runs lease-to-own programs that further their goal of creating affordable opportunities to those who experience systemic barriers to homeownership.



DH 3

Evolve Downtown neighborhoods to better meet the diverse needs of all residents and families.

Policy DH 3.1 Increase housing that supports residents in all different life stages (family-friendly housing, live-work housing, accessible senior housing).

ACTIONS

- 1 Explore ways to incentivize accessible and inclusive housing design Downtown.
- 2 Explore allowing ground-floor ADA-accessible units in lieu of ground-floor retail requirements on streets with slopes of less than 8% and lower pedestrian traffic designations. Study this in concert with planned changes to retail-related zoning requirements and street type designations.
- 3 Create incentives for additional at-grade residential unit access in larger mixed-use and residential development projects.
- 4 Create a new street type designation within the land use code that requires direct access to individual street-level residential units in order to activate streetscapes.
- 5 Encourage developers to include more two- and three-bedroom units. Consider incentives—such as increased floor-area ratio (FAR) or building height—for projects that provide larger units in high-growth areas, such as Denny Triangle.

Policy DH 3.2 Simplify the housing production process thereby reducing upfront development costs.

Policy DH 3.3 Support new models of income-restricted and market-rate homeownership (community land trusts, cooperative or shared equity models, and co-housing).

Policy DH 3.4 Expand family-focused services and experiences, particularly around housing and transit.

ACTIONS

- 1 Expand affordable preschool options in Downtown neighborhoods—particularly in areas with growing young populations such as Belltown, the Downtown Core, and Denny Triangle.
- 2 Ensure the Safe Routes to Schools program is coordinated with routes to nearby parks and healthy food destinations to improve pedestrian safety around parks and playgrounds.
- 3 Identify sites or existing structures that are feasible for new childcare and after-school supportive facilities in areas where there are gaps.

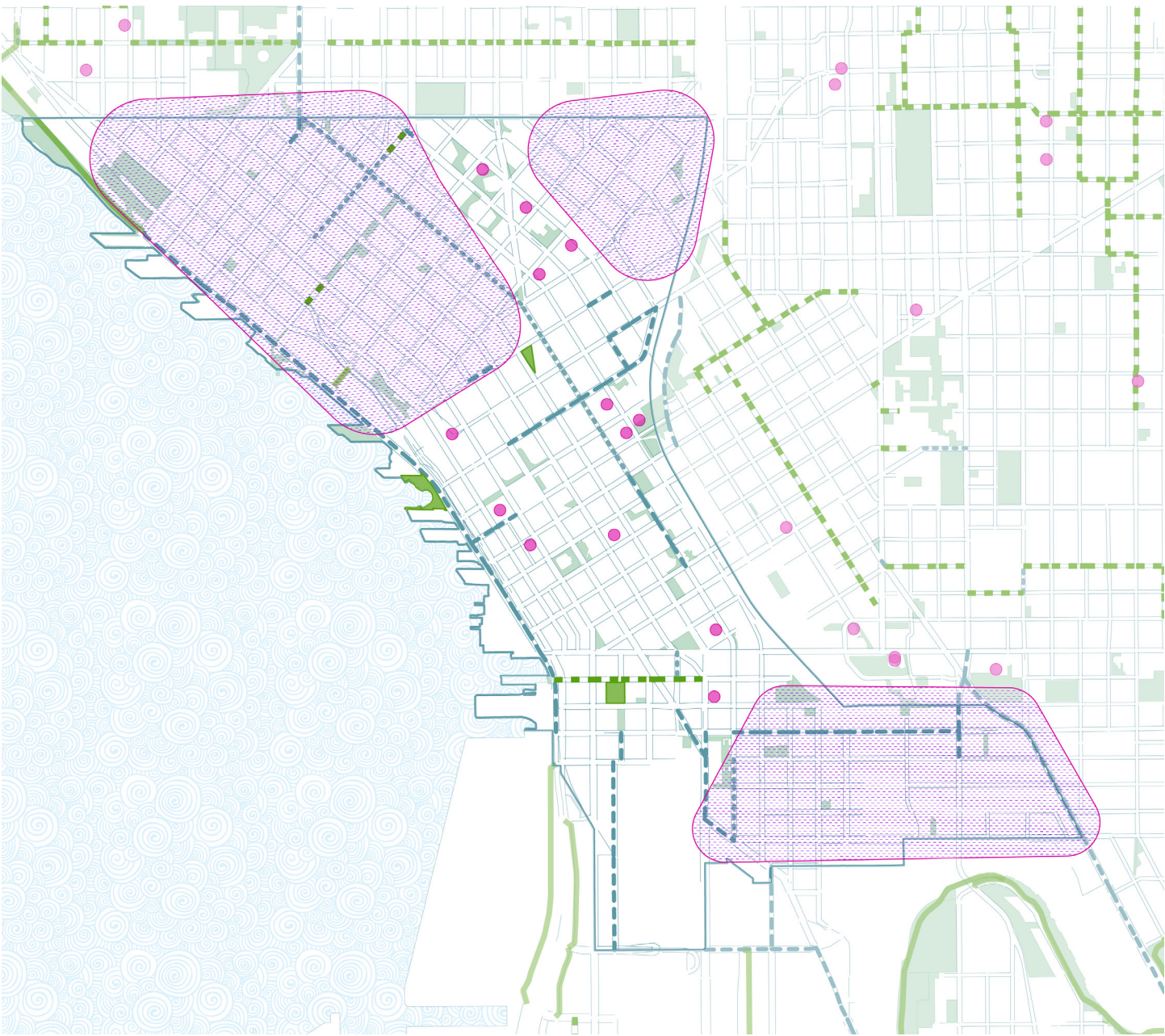
Policy DH 3.5 Encourage childcare facilities, public restrooms, indoor open play spaces, or children-focused educational programs as part of incentives programs.

ACTIONS

- 1. Revise zoning to incentivize indoor open play and gathering facilities on the ground floor of commercial, residential, and mixed-use buildings. Enact standards for on-site amenities for these uses, including drop-off and pick-up zones, access to play areas, and security.
- 2. Explore expanding the types of child-friendly facilities that qualify as a public benefit under the incentive zoning program.
- 3. Increase incentives for child-friendly roof decks in existing and new developments to expand access to the outdoors.

Case Study
El Centro de la Raza
Beacon Hill, Seattle, WA

El Centro de la Raza is a historic community and cultural center founded in 1972 by Chicano activists who occupied a vacant school building to demand space for Latinx community services. Today, it provides a wide range of programs including affordable housing, education, food access, and civil rights advocacy for communities of color. El Centro remains a powerful symbol of grassroots activism and continues to serve as a vital hub for cultural celebration, social justice, and community empowerment in Seattle.



Registered Childcare Options and Bike Lanes

- Registered Childcare Centers
- Area without Childcare Centers
- Parks with Playgrounds
- All Open Spaces, Parks, and Plazas
- Painted Bike Lane
- Protected Bike Lane
- Neighborhood Greenway
- Multi-use Trails

0 mi 0.5 mi
Source: City of Seattle
Department of Transportation,
City of Seattle Department of
Education and Early Learning

Make Downtown Safe and Welcoming

Celebrate Downtown’s culture and history and invest in public spaces that support diverse needs.

- INCREASE
OUTDOOR SPACE FOR YOUTH
- INCREASE
ACCESSIBILITY
- INCREASE
PARK ACCESS
- DECREASE
VIOLENT CRIME



A Safe and Welcoming Downtown envisions vibrancy and inclusion that honors the area's rich culture and history while meeting the needs of a growing, diverse community. The goals focus on creating safe, welcoming spaces accessible to everyone throughout the day. By embracing and enhancing green spaces, Downtown will become a hub for recreation and connections,

offering experiences that enrich daily life. As the area evolves, we aim to expand park access, activate public spaces with community-wide events, and protect the historical and cultural fabric that defines Downtown. Together, these efforts will ensure Downtown thrives as a dynamic, equitable, and celebrated destination for all.

Goals

- SW 1 Make Downtown safe for everyone, all hours of the day.
- SW 2 Make Downtown welcoming and inclusive, treating all with respect and dignity.
- SW 3 Wrap Downtown in a green embrace.
- SW 4 Increase parks, plazas, and greenspaces as Downtown grows.
- SW 5 Provide a variety of recreational experiences throughout of the year for Downtown residents and visitors.
- SW 6 Reveal, celebrate, and protect Downtown's history and culture.

Key Findings

40%
of open space
Downtown is
privately-owned

Safe environments for all require care.

Care and stewardship are essential for a vibrant Downtown where people of all ages, abilities, backgrounds, and income levels—including unhoused people—feel welcome, safe, and treated with dignity. This requires intentional stewardship of public spaces, honoring the area’s rich culture, and fostering belonging through inclusive, community-centered programming. With 40% of open spaces privately-owned, collaboration between the City, private entities, and non-profits is crucial to ensuring equitable access and effective management of these shared spaces.

“
Perception of safety is just as important as actual safety. This is also the root of "welcoming," access to recreation, the ability to use parks, etc.

“
I want there to be a higher emphasis on public safety and sanitation.

Questions from the Chamber's Fall 2024 Polling What are the issues facing Seattle that you are most frustrated or concerned about?



Safety is a top priority for Seattleites.

Safety remains a top concern and barrier for people in Downtown. The community survey revealed its importance for residents and businesses, which are burdened in maintaining secure environments. Small businesses report spending substantial time and resources to maintain clean and safe environments. This effort often comes at the expense of focusing on their primary operations. The Downtown Activation Plan underscores safety as a critical factor for economic revitalization and community activation. Addressing safety and accessibility through thoughtful design, programming, and management is essential to making Downtown Seattle an inclusive, thriving urban space.

Downtown parks meet many needs, but gaps remain.

Downtown’s parks serve diverse needs, acting as event venues, outdoor "backyards" for high-density housing, and essential resources for unhoused individuals. These spaces provide critical amenities including shelter, cooling, and social connections, as well as significant environmental benefits like improved air quality and heat mitigation. However, gaps persist. The design and programming of existing parks are not conducive to use by youth and families. Downtown lacks playgrounds, recreational courts, and other amenities essential for a livable urban environment, creating challenges for attracting and retaining young residents and families. Downtown also doesn't have small pocket parks, areas for a break from the sights and sounds of a busy city, or secure spaces for children and caregivers to move around safely and freely.

Destinations can be challenging to reach.

Downtown’s size, topography, and street grid cause challenges to accessing and moving through the area. Steep inclines complicate accessibility, separating neighborhoods and limiting connections to key destinations like the Waterfront. While some ADA-compliant pathways exist, they were reported to be poorly marked and pass through private properties, reducing usability.

Youth need safe and welcoming spaces.

Teens frequently feel unwelcome or uncomfortable in public spaces, particularly in retail areas where spending money is often expected. This creates barriers for youth with limited financial resources to access and enjoy public environments.



9%
of Streets Downtown
are steep (over 8%
grade)

James Street incline looking East towards I-5

“
Investing in Downtown's parks is a worthy & significant investment that allows for people to access tree-canopied, outdoor spaces that is free & can make for a great space to orient certain public services around.

“
There are probably a number of east-west streets that could be converted to public park space (pavement to parks).

“
If Seattle made safety a priority, everything would flourish - new businesses, growing businesses, families enjoying the new waterfront/Market, employment opportunities.

“
I would expand on 'providing recreation amenities for Downtown residents' by including programs that engage youth in the design process.

Policies and Actions

SW 1 Make Downtown safe for everyone, all hours of the day.

Policy SW 1.1 Ensure outdoor spaces are accessible, well-lit, comfortable, and clean.

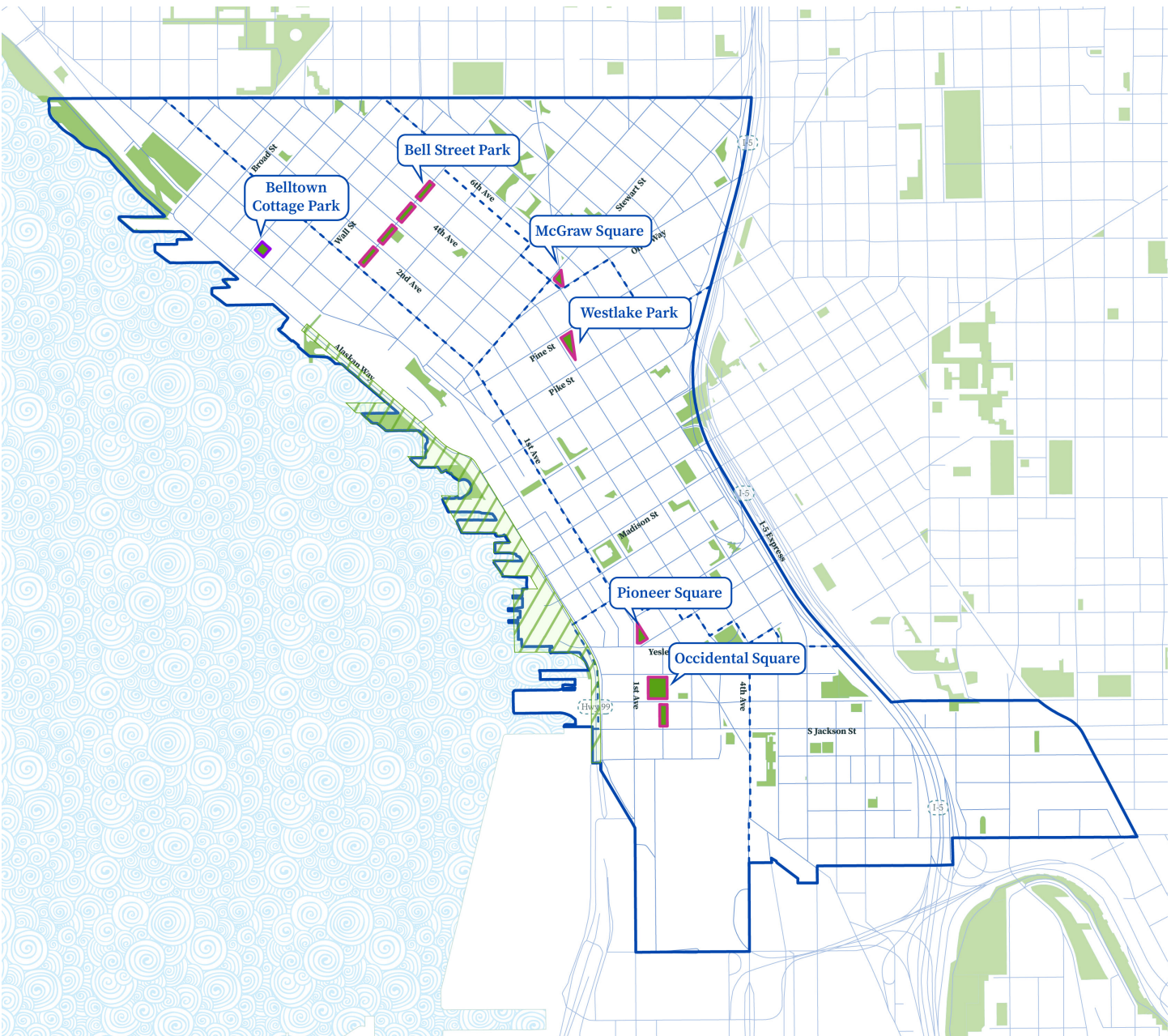
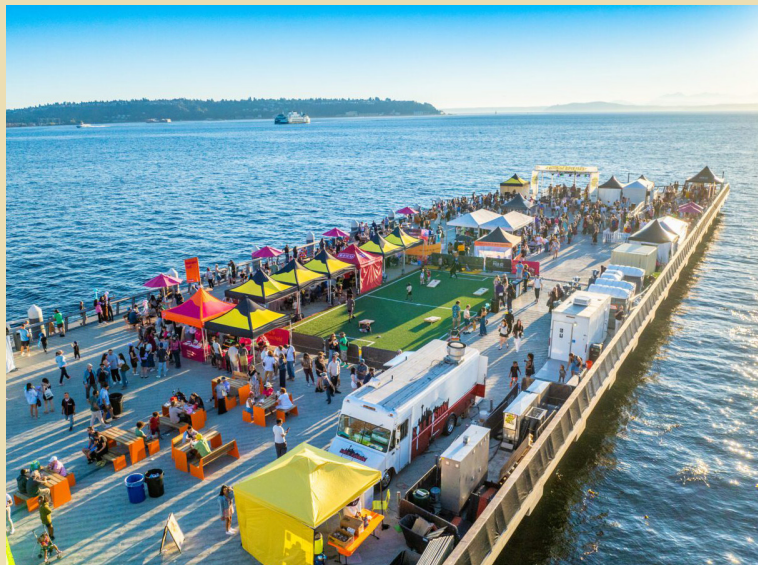
ACTIONS

- 1 Provide durable, well-designed seating adjacent to transit stations and City-owned parks and plazas, as well as at other key resting areas throughout Downtown.
- 2 Focus lighting investments and regular lighting maintenance in areas that support restaurants and nightlife activity, and to support a safe pedestrian route to transit services and other amenities.
- 3 Activate the streets and public spaces between King Street and Jackson Street, and between the 4th Ave S and 12th Ave S intersections.
- 4 Implement the Public Life Action Plan for Yesler Crescent to enhance public spaces and sidewalks along 2nd Avenue between Yesler Way, South Main Street, and City Hall Park.
- 5 Continue to identify opportunities to expand cleaning, safety, and hospitality services during major national and international events Downtown in coordination with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs).
- 6 Support public-private partnerships to create active uses on underutilized parcels while waiting for future development.

Case Study

Waterfront Park Ambassadors Seattle, WA

At the Seattle Waterfront, staff hired to maintain public facilities have taken on broader Park Ambassador roles, rotating between maintenance, park activation, and public programming. This rotation limits time spent on routine or demanding tasks to about three hours, helping prevent burnout while improving staff satisfaction and the overall visitor experience through a more dynamic, engaged presence.



Open Spaces, Parks, and Plazas

- Open Spaces, Parks, and Plazas
- Seattle Center at Waterfront Park Management
- Downtown Seattle Association (DSA) Managed Parks
- P-Patch Community Gardens

0 mi 0.5 mi
Source: City of Seattle Parks and Recreation

Policy SW 1.2 Create a comfortable and convenient transit experience for everyone, including while waiting for buses and making transfers.

ACTIONS

- 1 Continue implementing the Seamless Seattle pedestrian wayfinding signage at Westlake and Jackson Hub and expand the system around other transit stations.
- 2 Provide security, maintenance, and operations resources to ensure transit stops and stations feel safe, clean, uncluttered, and inviting. (Imagine Greater Downtown)
- 3 Continue implementing a focused approach to respond to safety and environmental concerns along 3rd Avenue.

Policy SW 1.3 Maintain public spaces through dedicated resources and continued partnerships with local communities and businesses, to reduce the burden of public space maintenance on historically underinvested communities.

ACTIONS

- 1 Build on existing partnerships with Downtown BIAs to expand resources for community-based organizations to support “clean and safe” programming.
- 2 Assemble an interdepartmental working group to share lessons learned from successful waterfront management programs.

Policy SW 1.4 Enhance community policing services and alternative response programs.

ACTIONS

- 1 Expand Community Crisis Responder (CCR) coverage to 24/7; which includes additional staffing numbers to account for the coverage.
- 2 Establish partnerships with Downtown community groups, retailers, and other non-profit entities to educate people about behavioral and public health awareness and the availability of alternative, civilian-based response resources.

Policy SW 1.5 Provide programs and services for youth experiencing barriers to housing, employment and education.

Policy SW 1.6 Support Downtown Parks with wrap-around response teams that provide a range of services and skillsets.

ACTIONS

- 1 Adapt existing parks partnership agreements to include support from response teams.

SW 2 Make Downtown welcoming and inclusive, treating all with respect and dignity.

Policy SW 2.1 Partner with Indigenous communities to reflect their histories and futures in Downtown land use, signage, and wayfinding systems.

ACTIONS

- 1 Support the growth of Urban Indian organizations working to expand their cultural corridor with updated healthcare facilities, housing, childcare, and small business opportunities. Engage directly with Indigenous organizations to better understand their land use needs.
- 2 Create multilingual signage and communications in Downtown spaces, with an emphasis on Indigenous naming, that guides people to ADA-accessible routes through buildings, along streets, and on paths.

Policy SW 2.2 Plan for additional primary and urgent healthcare facilities to provide local support to Downtown residents.

ACTIONS

- 1 Remove any existing and/or proposed land use and zoning regulations that could hinder building professional medical, laboratory, and urgent care space Downtown, including in mixed-use buildings.

Policy SW 2.3 Adopt an inclusive management approach to Downtown public spaces, with the intention to accommodate everyone’s needs within public spaces.

ACTIONS

- 1 Increase the number of all-gender public restrooms in Downtown Parks.
- 2 Identify opportunities to expand access to public restrooms along existing ADA-accessible routes and provide clear wayfinding to restrooms, transit stops, arts and cultural amenities.

Policy SW 2.4 Keep public amenities open to the public, except during active construction or renovation processes.

Policy SW 2.5 Focus a coordinated care planning process to serve populations who most predictably enter homelessness.

Policy SW 2.6 Provide resources and investments to connect people experiencing homelessness to appropriate services and assistance.

ACTIONS

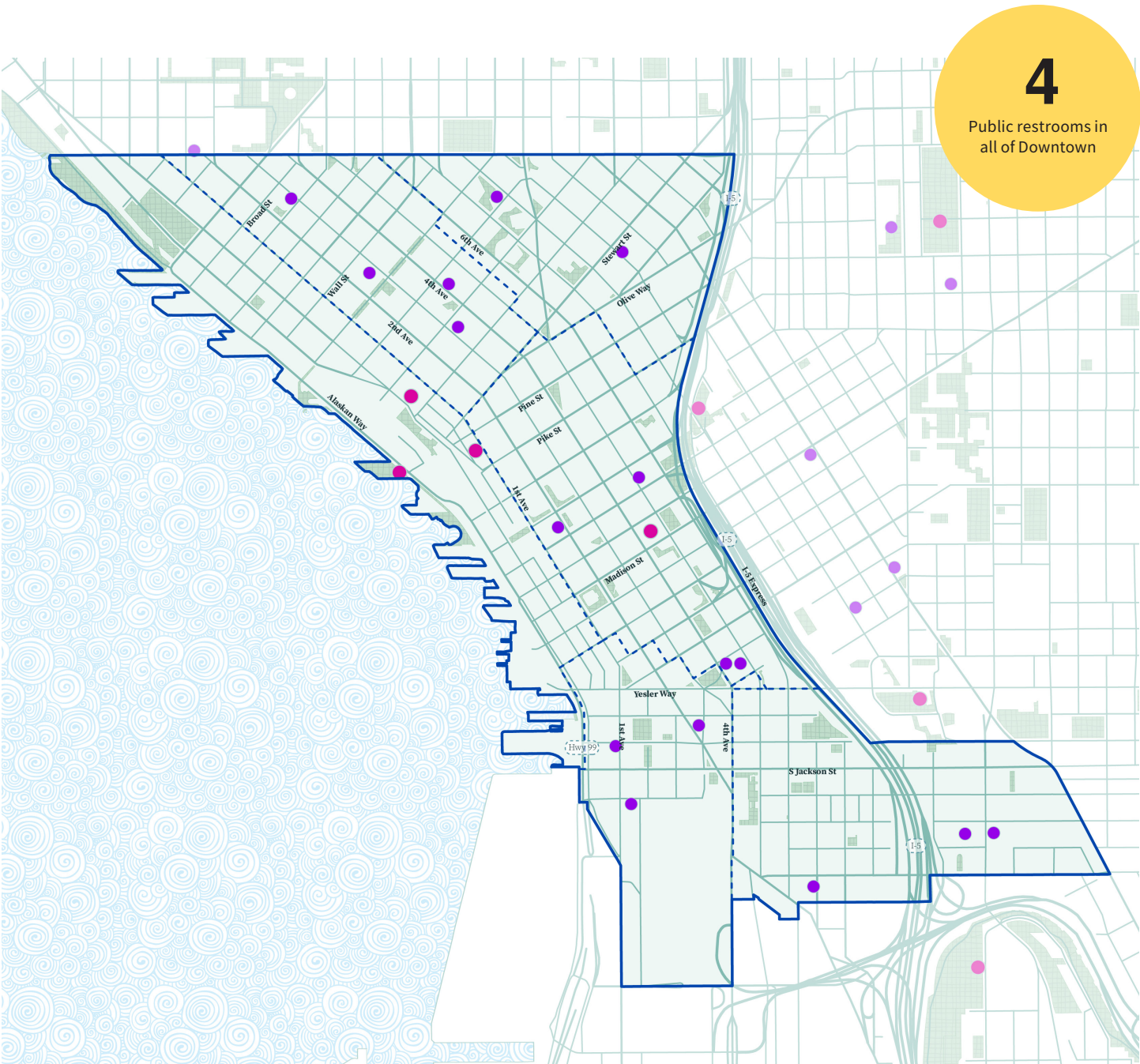
- 1 Increase coordination and build capacity with existing resource centers to ensure comprehensive services and meet the basic needs of all individuals and families experiencing homelessness across Downtown on a 24/7 basis.
- 2 Fund smaller neighborhood-specific resource centers or augment existing providers to alleviate pressure on larger centers and the impacts of serving a larger community.
- 3 Continue to provide de-escalation training for retail workers, hotel staff, and other staff who work in publicly accessible ground floors.
- 4 Continue to track and evaluate the success of partnerships with state organizations in training additional mental health workers.
- 5 Engage Seattle’s CARE team to provide consistent, timely responses to safety-related incidents, particularly when individuals are in crisis or experiencing behavioral health challenges.
- 6 Invest in a unified emergency 911 center that houses all major City of Seattle public safety and utility dispatch resources.
- 7 Ensure that first response expands relative to emergency call types and Downtown jobs and housing growth, including additional 911 staff.
- 8 Support a coordinated effort with King County to integrate substance abuse treatment and support into the criminal court and jail system.

Policy SW 2.7 Focus new resources and investments on an approach that brings people indoors first and integrates treatment and services to resolve homelessness among individuals and families.

Policy SW 2.8 Continue to advocate for the investment of State funds to train more mental-health workers and to increase capacity for emergency and ongoing mental health treatment.

ACTIONS

- 1 Partner with major medical providers to provide additional medical services for chemical dependency and mental health facilities in Downtown, including through community health clinics in underserved areas. Encourage the use of upper floors for medical offices, reserving street level for active uses with transparency.
- 2 Explore opportunities for increasing mental health resources through area hospitals and healthcare providers.
- 3 Augment and coordinate with county wide crisis care centers to reduce reliance on emergency rooms or the City’s jail system to serve individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.



Public Restrooms & Supportive Services in Downtown Seattle

- Public Restrooms
- Supportive Services
(Housing assistance, case management, food programs and mental health support)

0 mi 0.5 mi
Source: Seattle Parks and Rec, Google Maps

SW 3 Wrap Downtown in a Green Embrace.

Policy SW 3.1 Improve accessibility and connectivity across major roads and rail lines that divide downtown neighborhoods, expose people to harmful emissions, and create barriers between communities.

ACTIONS

- 1 Support development over the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) tracks in South Downtown.
- 2 Complete the I-5 Lid feasibility study.
- 3 Develop a community vision plan that defines goals and urban design priorities for freeway lids in the project area.
- 4 Partner with Friends of Lid I-5 Steering Committee to explore short-term improvement opportunities.
- 5 Expand the Downtown I-5 lid project area to include I-5 and all adjacent blocks from Thomas St to S Dearborn St.
- 6 Engage a diverse group of community members, business owners, and local leaders in a visioning process for new freeway lids and integrated structures, such as parks, pavilions, and buildings.

Policy SW 3.2 Improve underpass connections within the Chinatown-International District.

ACTIONS

- 1 Support efforts by the Friends of the I-5 CID Action Group.

Policy SW 3.3 Improve the walking experience from the waterfront to other neighborhoods, especially along steep slopes.

ACTIONS

- 1 Enhance streetscapes by adding more street trees, plantings, and green spaces along streets.
- 2 Improve the Seneca and Blanchard Street connections between the waterfront and neighborhoods to the west.

Policy SW 3.4 Further adapt land use regulations to support the activation of ground floors, storefronts, and landscaping and loading adjacent to the waterfront along Alaskan Way.

ACTIONS

- 1 Expand the Downtown Pedestrian Zone classification to include the extent of the Downtown Waterfront, from Pike Place Market south along Alaskan Way to King Street.
- 2 Study “Blank Facade Limits” within the Seattle Municipal Code to understand how to better support more transparency between indoor and outdoor uses along the waterfront.

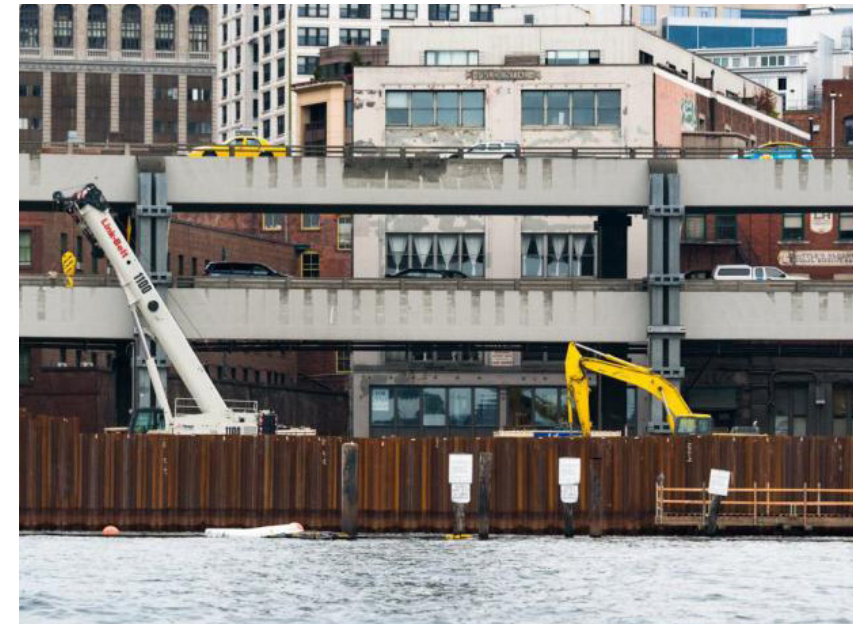


Photo Credit: Seattle Waterfront Study #1, Eirik Johnson, Office of Arts and Culture

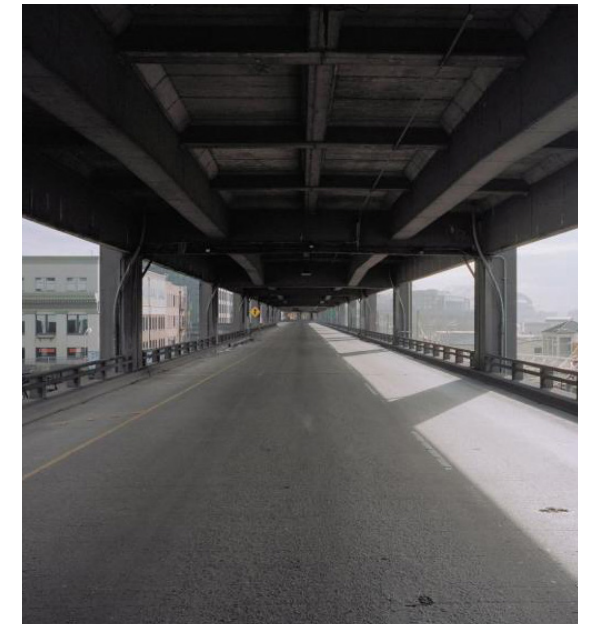


Photo Credit: Viaduct I, Eirik Johnson, Office of Arts and Culture



Aerial view of improved waterfront, Waterfront Seattle

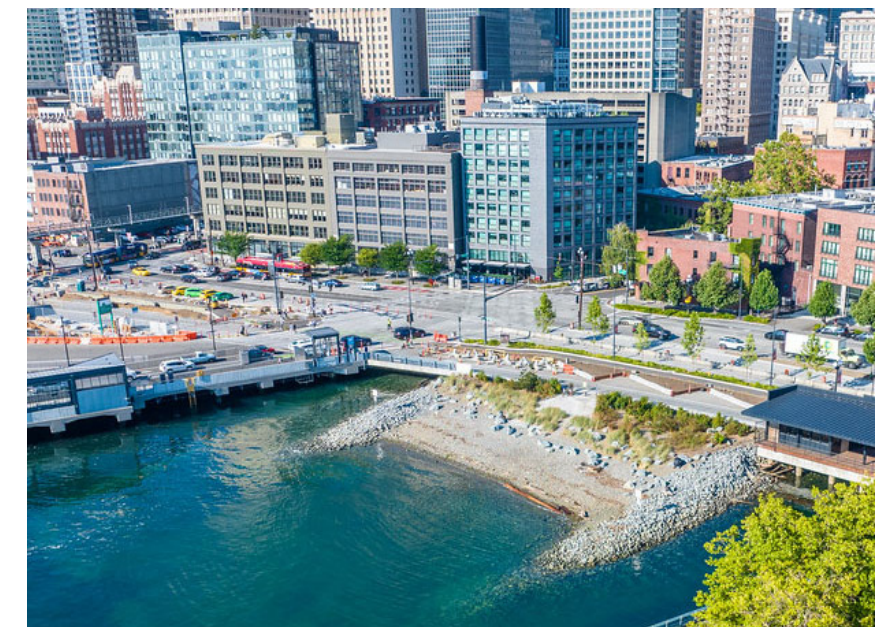


Photo Credit: Habitat Beach, Erik Holsather, Waterfront Seattle

SW 4

Increase parks, plazas, and greenspaces as Downtown grows.

Policy SW 4.1 Expand access to park space in areas with gaps, and in communities that were disproportionately affected by past planning actions.

ACTIONS

- 1 Consider changes to the incentive zoning and the Downtown Amenity Standards for future private development of publicly accessible spaces to better align with the Racial Equity Toolkit outcomes.
- 2 Continue incentive zoning for open space, and explore program improvements to support higher-quality on-site spaces as well as off-site options and a workable system for in-lieu payment.
- 3 Partner with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and community groups to seek funding for small-scale green and active private or City-owned park and plaza amenities in underserved areas.
- 4 Establish a City fund to receive and track cash-in-lieu contributions for the creation and maintenance of new green spaces.
- 5 Balance the public allocation of funding to respond to deferred maintenance projects in existing parks and historic properties alongside new park investments.
- 6 Continue planning for and allocating resources to the Lid-5 project.
- 7 Dedicate resources to invest in Pier 48 site to support park uses.

Policy SW 4.2 Focus on new park space creation where service gaps are identified by Seattle Parks and Recreation in the Chinatown-International District, Belltown, and Denny Triangle.

ACTIONS

- 1 Dedicate resources to invest in the Portal site to support park uses.

Policy SW 4.3 Create and advance new Gateway Parks, near transit stations and arrival moments from other neighborhoods into Downtown.

ACTIONS

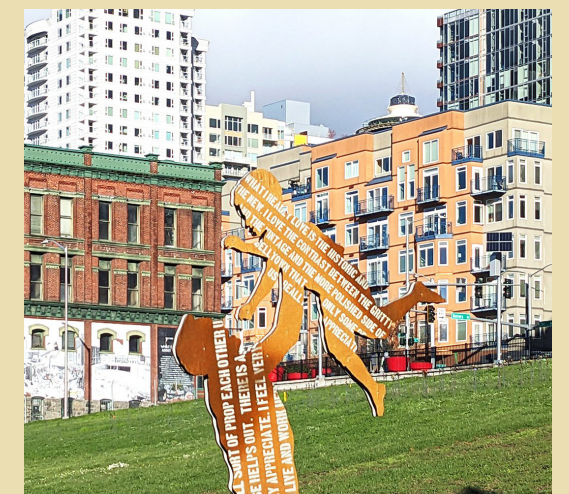
- 1 Create a new typology that delineates City-owned park spaces as “Downtown Gateway Parks,” or parks located near major transit stations and gateways, from other neighborhoods to Downtown, to respond to their unique activation and maintenance needs.
- 2 Include specific standards for wayfinding, seating, accessibility, activation, and ongoing maintenance and operations to create more welcoming spaces for visitors.
- 3 Invest in green connections between unique Downtown destinations, like City Hall Park, Pioneer Square, and Occidental Square.

Case Study

Portal Park

Seattle, WA

Located between 1st and Western, Battery and Bell, on the former Battery Street Tunnel site, Portal Park sits at the intersection of downtown neighborhoods and the waterfront. Currently animated by temporary art installations and new plantings, the space is already inviting community interaction and sparking imagination. This site has the potential to become a distinctive civic green—serving as a gateway to the waterfront, a community hub, a catalyst for economic activity, and a model for innovative and inclusive landscape design in Seattle’s densest neighborhood.



Policy SW 4.4 Seek opportunities to repurpose or activate the right of way for recreational opportunities.

ACTIONS

- 1 Identify sites across Downtown where under-utilized rights-of-way can be depaved and re-allocated for green space with increased frequency closer to Puget Sound.
- 2 Incentivize additional pedestrian access options to ground floor amenities along alleyways as buildings along alleyways are redeveloped.
- 3 Activate Downtown alleyways with public art, lighting, and other pedestrian-supporting amenities, while accommodating necessary critical access (e.g. loading and unloading).
- 4 Adapt the Second Avenue Extension S intersection with South Jackson Street to better serve multimodal access to South Downtown Transportation Hub and create additional public realm space. (South Jackson Street Connections Plan)
- 5 Develop an analysis of rights-of-way where the roadway has more capacity than is currently used, and prioritize converting those areas into park or plaza space. Implement those conversions where feasible and in communities with a greater need for park space.

Policy SW 4.5 Continue supporting community-led conversations and planning efforts to shape open space in ways that reflect local needs, with a focus on ecological resilience and access to fresh, healthy food.

Policy SW 4.6 Collaborate with commercial property owners and other non-City partners to expand access to high-quality amenities.

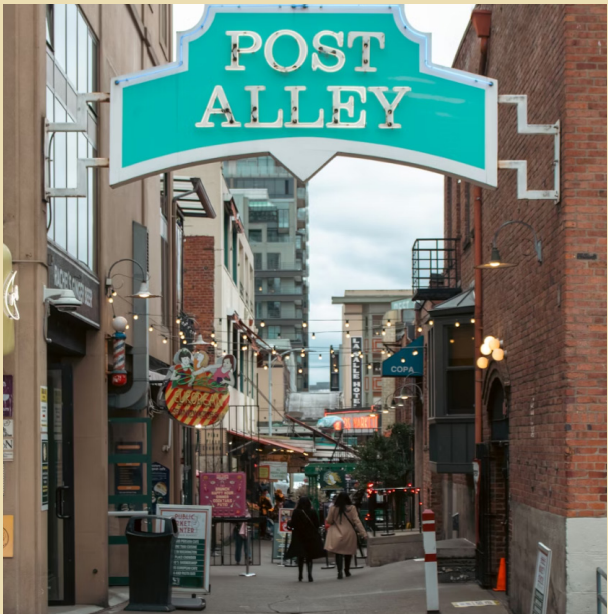
ACTIONS

- 1 Partner with commercial property owners to update, improve, and enhance accessibility to existing and new Privately Owned Public Space (POPS), including in underutilized commercial centers where these amenities may no longer serve their original function.
- 2 Incentivize the investment or reinvestment of POPS that include interactive water features, including the conversion of existing fountains to spray parks, to encourage use and visibility.
- 3 Identify consistent funding for city partnerships with local non-profit organizations to maintain existing and developed green spaces.

Case Study

Post Alley
Seattle, WA

Before COVID-19, Post Alley in Seattle was a vibrant pedestrian-oriented space that fostered walkability and outdoor gathering. Its narrow, curving layout naturally slowed movement and created an inviting environment for small restaurants and shops to spill out into the alley with outdoor seating. This human-scaled design, combined with its intimate atmosphere and visibility from Pike Place Market, made it a lively destination that prioritized people over cars.



Case Study

Grids and Greenery Strategy
Melbourne, Australia

Melbourne began the Grids and Greenery strategy in the 1990s to activate the many laneways that break up Melbourne’s large city blocks. Melbourne prioritized active and mixed-uses in the laneways by collaborating with building owners to move building services such as parking, waste collection, and loading off-street. This made way for the public art installations, seating, dining, and lighting that transformed these alleys from dull and unwelcoming to bustling, people-centered places. Today, Melbourne’s vibrant laneways attract locals and tourists alike, providing a sense of intimacy and discovery within the City’s blocks.



SW 5

Provide a variety of recreational experiences throughout the year for Downtown residents and visitors.

Policy SW 5.1 Increase youth and all ages cultural, arts, and recreation amenities in existing and new Downtown parks and community facilities, focusing first on areas that are taking on more residential units.

ACTIONS

- 1 Create opportunities for more play spaces and flexible recreation amenities for children and teens in existing Downtown parks and plazas.
- 2 Make all existing water features in Downtown Parks operational.
- 3 Improve public water access and cooling areas by exploring the installation of spray pads or water features in high-use existing parks and plazas close to residential areas.

Case Study

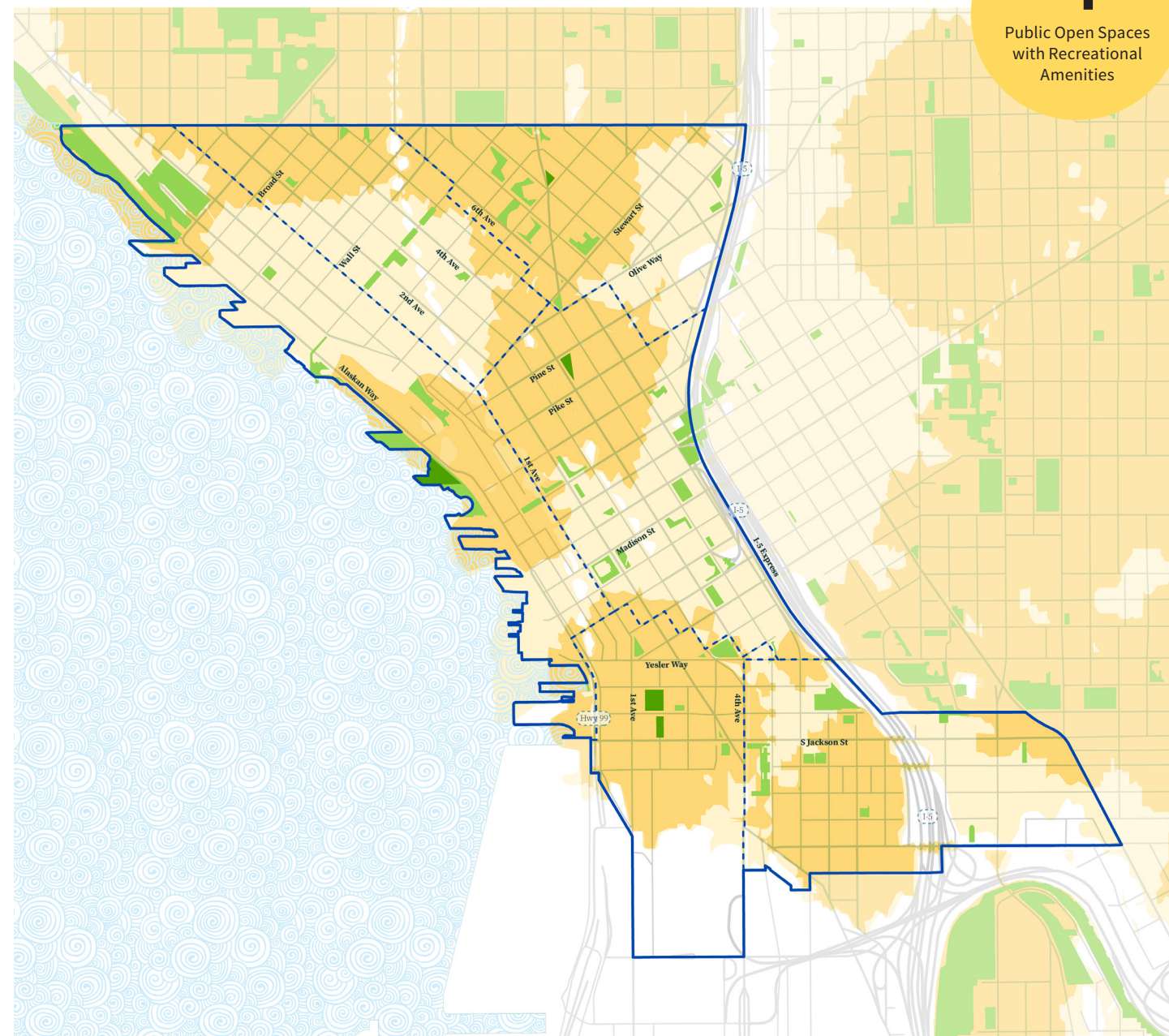
Spaces for Teen Girls Art Project Skarpnäck Sweden

80% of users of public spaces over the age of eight are boys. Swedish architecture firm White Arkitekter collaborated with UngaTur, a group of teenage girls from Sweden's Skarpnäck Municipality, to create an art project highlighting disparities that girls experience in the built environment. Through theatrical performances and models of public spaces, the girls highlighted their perspectives and preferences for gathering spaces, protection from elements, and a sense of intimacy missing from many public spaces.



4

Public Open Spaces
with Recreational
Amenities



Recreational Amenities and Playgrounds with Walksheds

5-Minute Walksheds

- to Public Open Space with Recreational Amenities
- to all Open Space
- Public Open Space with Recreational Amenities
- Public Open Space

0 mi 0.5 mi
Source: City of Seattle Parks and Recreation

Policy SW 5.2 Activate Downtown parks for neighborhood-wide events.

ACTIONS

- 1 Continue to partner with organizations outside of the City to offer free, family-friendly programming at the Waterfront and in neighborhood public spaces.
- 2 Work with long-term vacant retail property owners, focusing on the Pike and Pine corridor, to lease their spaces with uses serving the neighborhood and identified in the Pike-Pine retail study.
- 3 Work with property owners and businesses with retail spaces adjacent to large parks to develop solutions to issues causing vacancy.
- 4 Support community-driven activations and cultural celebrations Downtown including nightlife.
- 5 Adapt and develop parks with flexible programming and events infrastructure (access to power, lawns, or flexible space).

Policy SW 5.3 Complete planned improvements to Downtown public spaces.

ACTIONS

- 1 Allocate funds to implement recently completed master plans for Downtown public spaces.
- 2 Identify appropriate responsible city staff to oversee the implementation of completed master plans for Downtown public spaces.
- 3 Implement the City Hall Park and Vicinity Study to include repurposing and reopening Prefontaine Place.
- 4 Complete upgrades to Westlake Park and Pioneer Square Park.

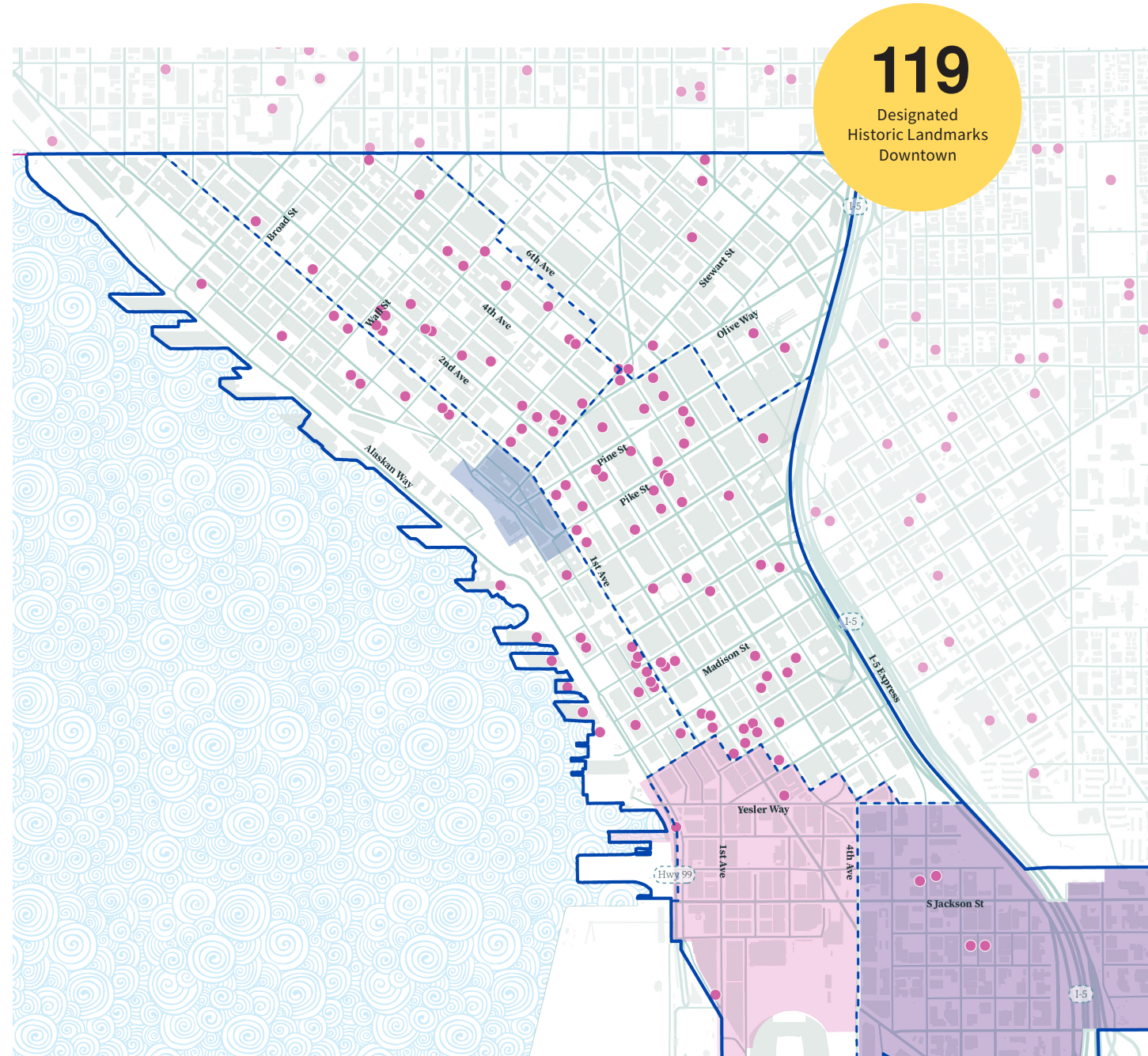


Photo Credit: 50th Anniversary of Hip Hop, Old Army Jacket Photography



Photo Credit: Caribbean Seafest, Old Army Jacket Photography





City Landmarks Map

- Historic Landmark
- Pike Place Market Historic District
- Pioneer Square Preservation District
- International Special Review District

0 mi 0.5 mi

Source: City of Seattle
Department of Neighborhoods

SW 6

Reveal, celebrate, and protect Downtown's history and culture.

Policy SW 6.1 Communicate and share Downtown's untold and unique stories, people, and places.

ACTIONS

- 1 Explore developing and implementing a cultural plan for South Jackson Street as a "story street." (South Jackson Street Connections Report)
- 2 Expand storytelling in parks to include history of Indigenous people and other communities of color who have shaped Downtown.
- 3 Expand opportunities for musical and theatrical performances and other performance art across Downtown.

Policy SW 6.2 Preserve Downtown's built history while enabling contemporary evolution.

ACTIONS

- 1 Update city landmark-listed properties throughout Downtown in partnership with the Seattle Landmarks Commission, Landmarks Preservation Board, and building owners.
- 2 Provide incentives to modernize and/or adapt buildings within Downtown's three landmark districts.
- 3 Communicate grants and other incentives for appropriate maintenance and investment by building owners of listed historic properties.
- 4 Explore the creation of a new Creative Core overlay from Queen Anne and Lake Union Park in the north, to T-Mobile Park in the south, and from the Seattle Waterfront east to Interstate 5. (Cultural Strategies for Downtown Revitalization Report)

Policy DH 6.3 Reinforce and celebrate each Downtown neighborhood's unique identity.

ACTIONS

- 1 Establish Little Saigon as a regional and national attraction. (Little Saigon Public Realm Design Plan)
- 2 Work with the local Business Improvement District Associations and other Business Improvement Areas (BIA) in the Downtown regional center to market the unique identities of each neighborhood.
- 3 Explore ways to align our design review and historic preservation policies to better support and maintain the character and culture of neighborhoods over time.
- 4 Increase flexibility to allow shop owners to activate sidewalks in front of their businesses using signage, furnishings, and sidewalk merchandise displays.
- 5 Integrate culturally appropriate public art into the streetscape, including lighting and ground treatments.

Make Use of Every Square Foot

Support vibrancy, activity, and economic support in every corner of Downtown.



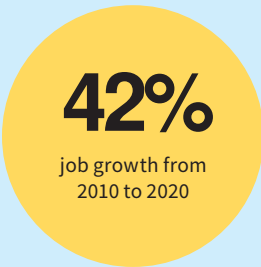
Vibrancy and activity are core to what draws people Downtown. In the post-pandemic context, new ways to effectively reuse space Downtown are required. Bold actions and proactive thinking can help to foster economic growth, equitable development, and vibrant cultural experiences. The goals within this theme, Make Use of Every Square Foot, emphasize adaptive reuse of underutilized spaces, protections for small businesses,

and creating pathways for economic growth. Topics include diversifying commercial uses, preserving unique retail hubs, expanding job opportunities, enhancing infrastructure, ensuring equitable growth, and amplifying the creative ventures. Together, the goals, policy directions, and actions below aim to transform Downtown into a thriving urban center that creates economic opportunity for all.

Goals

- SF 1** Fill Downtown spaces with a mix of commercial uses.
- SF 2** Focus, preserve, and reposition retail destinations to align with today's experience-based market.
- SF 3** Support the creation and growth of at least 60,000 new jobs in Downtown.
- SF 4** Enhance the reliability and quality of downtown facilities and utilities to support future development.
- SF 5** Ensure economic growth is equitable and aligned with community goals.
- SF 6** Attract, grow, and make the creative industries visible Downtown.

Key Findings



Downtown is a changing job hub.

Downtown is Seattle's largest job center, with more than 210,000 workers commuting into the area in 2022. Jobs grew by 42% from 2010 to 2020, driven by sectors like tech and professional services. However, remote work since the pandemic has left many office buildings vacant, with vacancy rates rising from 6% in 2020 to 22% by 2023. This shift has reduced foot traffic, impacting businesses that serve office workers.



Small businesses are significant contributors to Downtown's economy.

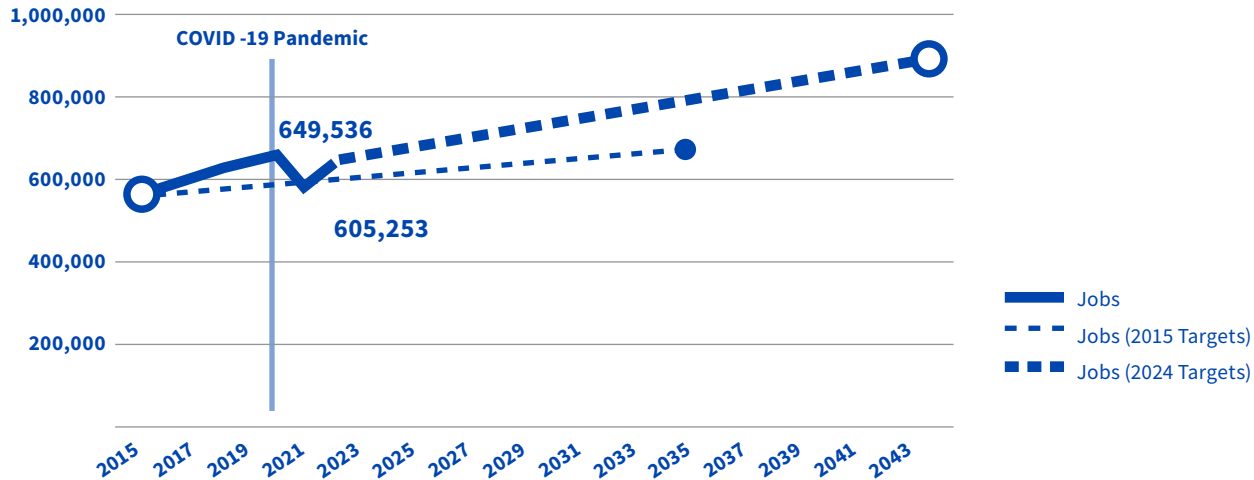
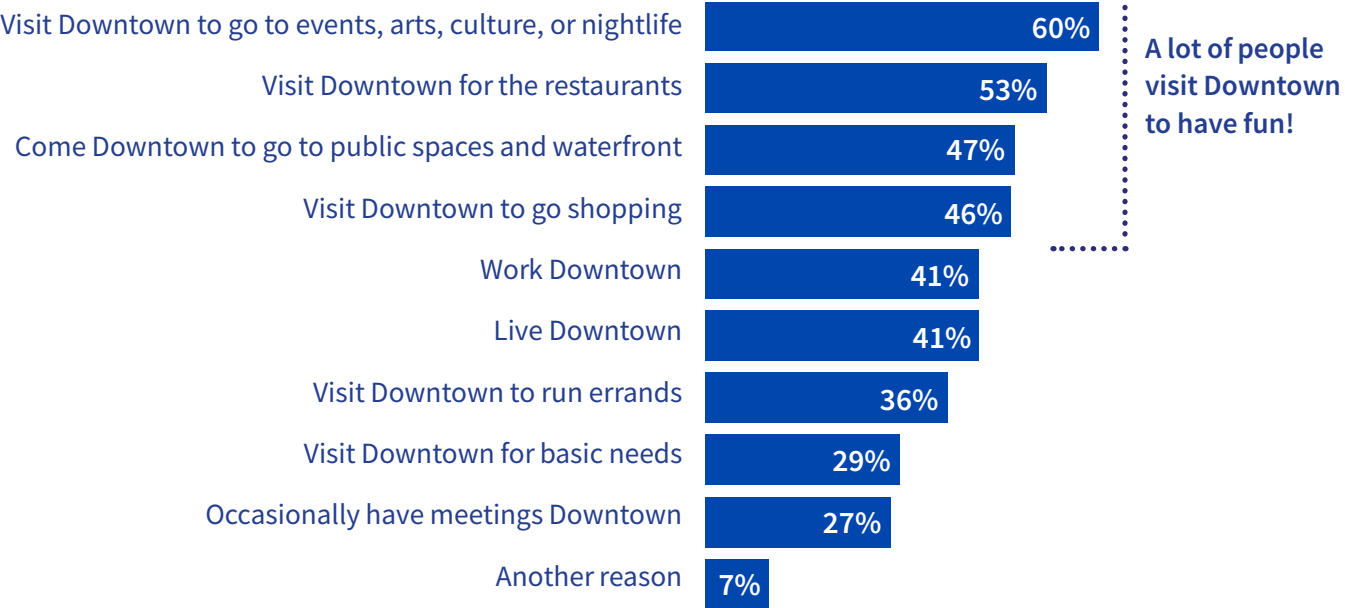
Small businesses are essential to Downtown, where two-thirds of all companies have fewer than 10 employees. While they make up a significant share of business licenses, their overall economic impact—measured by job creation, local and regional spending, and revenue—varies. These businesses

foster community and economic growth, particularly in retail, real estate, arts, and entertainment. Each year, about 400 new businesses launch Downtown. More than half of the 3,900 active businesses have operated for over five years, demonstrating strong potential for long-term success.

Downtown's vacancies and public lands offer opportunities.

Downtown has 79 acres of parking lots, parking structures, and vacant land. Pioneer Square and the Chinatown-International District contain a particularly high concentration of underused lands. This land offers opportunities for housing and redevelopment, but care is needed to prevent displacement. Public agencies own 56% of Downtown's land, presenting an opportunity for coordinated development to create a cohesive, community-focused vision for the area.

Question from Survey 1 What brings you to Downtown?



Seattle Jobs, Actual and Targets from 2015 & 2024 Comprehensive Plans
Source: City of Seattle, 2023 "UCUV Job Growth Report"

“
A home for the arts. I would love to see the downtown with a thriving arts culture woven into its corridors.”

“
Vibrant arts and culture and connection to nature (new Waterfront Park). Filled with vibrant merchants and crafts and community.”

“
I think there needs to be something about authenticity. Hopefully we are enhancing the positive qualities that are unique to Seattle - history, culture, setting, natural environment and built environment.”

“
The Commercial Core is a huge opportunity for Seattle. Our visitors love to shop, and a safe, friendly, clean Core with affordable sidewalk cafes, music and shopping opportunities would go a long way to driving business to the Core.”

“
Retail core area, which has a lot of vacancies, is a great opportunity to develop with new attractions.”

“
Westlake Park & McGraw Square. There is so much vacancy around that area now and we need activation in those retail areas and parks.”

Policies and Actions

SF 1 Fill Downtown spaces with a mix of commercial uses.

Policy SF 1.1 Adapt underutilized Downtown office spaces and upper floors to new uses.

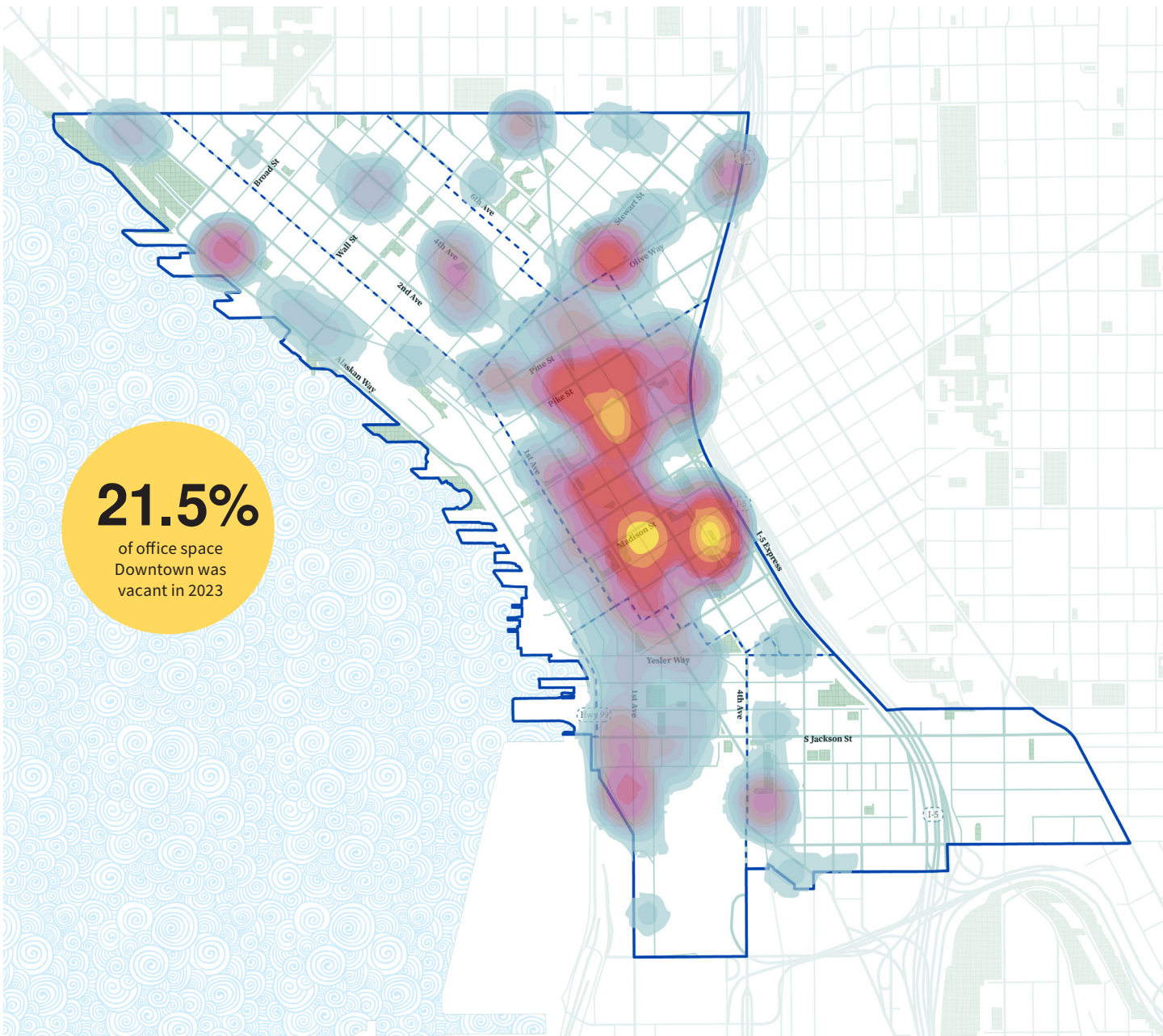
ACTIONS

- 1 Encourage the development of office space that provides flexible, open configurations with increased access to communications technologies to support hybrid work schedules, social distancing, improved ventilation, childcare, and other needs of the modern workplace.
- 2 Update zoning and development standards to remove administrative and regulatory barriers to the reuse of office properties for other commercial uses/types of workplaces.
- 3 Tailor adaptive reuse policies and programs to the specific needs of small, heritage, and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)-owned businesses, in close partnership with organizations such as the Alliance for Pioneer Square, the Chinatown-International District Business Improvement Area, and others.

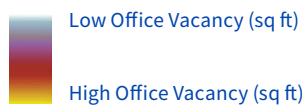
Policy SF 1.2 Leverage vacant or underutilized publicly-owned properties for redevelopment with community benefits.

ACTIONS

- 1 Explore the acquisition and assembly of underutilized or vacant sites, and their potential for developing community-serving residential, commercial and civic uses. Begin with a feasibility study of public land.
- 2 Conduct outreach to foundations, Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and other private- and public-sector partners to evaluate the feasibility of establishing an acquisition fund for underutilized vacant sites.
- 3 Continue funding commercial space and business consulting programs and work with CDFIs to increase access to capital.
- 4 Revisit existing City policies on disposal of City-owned property to consider a wider variety of community serving uses beyond affordable housing, such as education, cultural, and supportive services.
- 5 Continue to work with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and C40 to implement a coordinated, sustainable master planned redevelopment of the 5-acre WOSCA site that complements goals for downtown while integrating maritime uses.



Office Vacancy



0 mi 0.5 mi
Source: CoStar, 2024

Policy SF 1.3 Encourage the transformation of privately-owned vacant land into uses that contribute to Downtown’s growth.

ACTIONS

- 1 Identify and implement policy and regulatory changes that incentivize private property owners to fill vacant spaces.
- 2 Create a program to share data on Downtown vacancy with the development and business community.
- 3 Explore the potential to financially incentivize reinvestment or activation of long-standing vacancies.
- 4 Explore and support short-term environmental uses for vacant lots, like planting trees, installing rain gardens, or creating wildlife-friendly spaces, until permanent development begins.

SF 2 Focus, preserve, and reposition retail destinations to align with today’s experience-based market.

Policy SF 2.1 Protect and enhance Downtown’s unique retail destinations.

ACTIONS

- 1 Consider restricting formula businesses (retail with a standardized array of services and/or merchandise) in some areas of Downtown at elevated risk of commercial displacement, particularly Pioneer Square and the Chinatown-International District, to preserve the unique character of diverse commercial nodes and corridors.
- 2 Continue placemaking events that activate public spaces, support community well-being, and strengthen neighborhood identity with focus on the Downtown core and surrounding areas, including Pioneer Square, Westlake Center, the former King County Campus, and Third Avenue.
- 3 Partner with Pike Place Market to implement the Pike Place Market Strategic Plan.
- 4 Allow interim occupation and use of previously vacant retail space while final permits are being reviewed for tenancy and occupation.

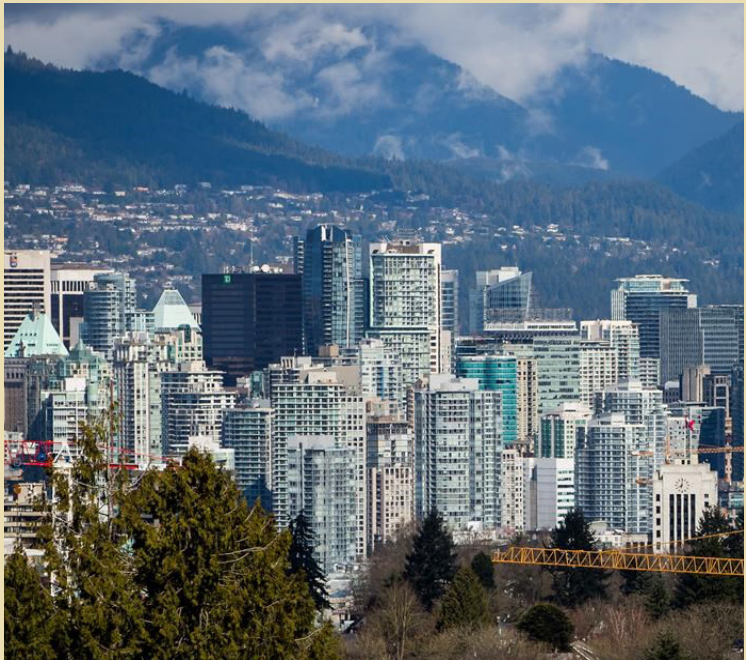
Policy SF 2.2 Strengthen commercial character and visual appeal.

ACTIONS

- 1 Expand support to businesses for commercial facade improvements through matching grants and loans, tax abatements, and design assistance.
- 2 Pursue additional public and private funding to expand the existing facade improvement programs for small businesses in Pioneer Square, the Chinatown-International District, and the waterfront.
- 3 Partner with Office of Economic Development and the Downtown Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) to offer a facade improvement loan and/or grant program for small businesses in commercial nodes and corridors in all five Downtown subareas.

Case Study
Vacancy Tax
British Columbia, Canada

The Province of British Columbia has introduced a speculation and vacancy tax that encourages property owners to begin building activity in a timely manner. This has resulted in expedited development timelines while discouraging property speculation which drives costs up. Those who leave property vacant generate funding for their municipalities within British Columbia.



Policy SF 2.3 Protect and expand small and legacy business technical assistance.

ACTIONS

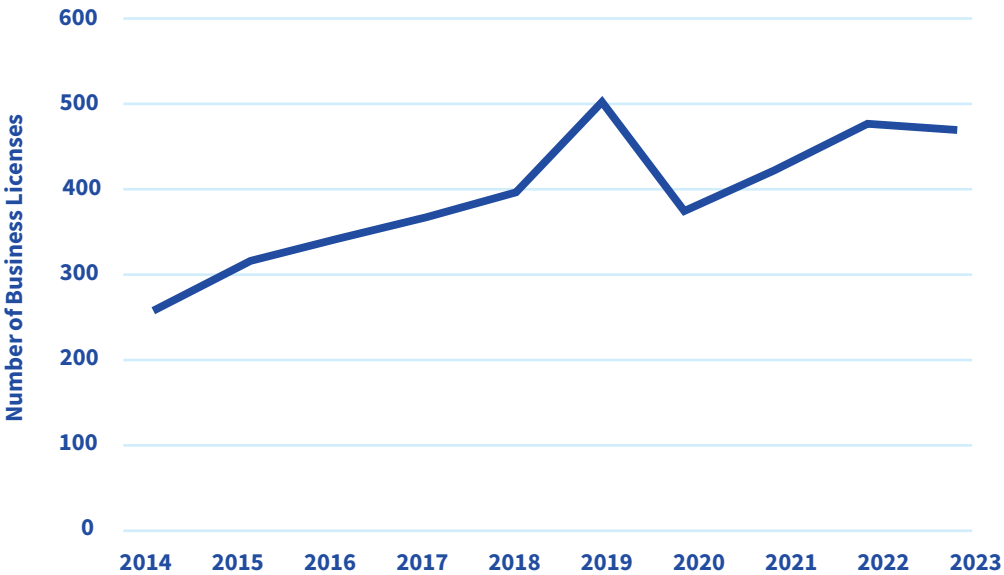
- 1 Prioritize support for existing and future small retailers in key hubs such as Pioneer Square.
- 2 Continue retail and business support services reaching underserved businesses.
- 3 Work with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and community organizations to support retail recruitment and retention through staff and consulting resources.
- 4 Work with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) downtown to continue commercial affordability programs and resources.

SF 3 Support the creation and growth of at least 60,000 new jobs in Downtown.

Policy SF 3.1 Ensure Downtown offers an adequate supply of suitable commercial space for small- and medium-sized businesses.

ACTIONS

- 1 Work with property owners and developers to promote and deliver new small-scale office space options, such as co-working and short-term lease options.
- 2 Encourage flexible, adaptable ground-floor commercial layouts in mixed-use buildings that allow for a variety of sizes and types of retail, food service, and entertainment uses, including small or micro-businesses.
- 3 Explore the feasibility of creating a food incubator and/or commercial kitchen Downtown. Partner with food policy advocates, the Office of Planning and Community Development's Equitable Development Initiative, and regional operators of food incubators/shared kitchens such as the Food Innovation Network.
- 4 Support the preservation and improvement of existing warehouse, distribution, production, and repair spaces in areas of Downtown where these uses continue to fulfill an important economic function, like Little Saigon which has a high proportion of heritage and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) owned businesses.



~400

new businesses start
Downtown each year

18.1%

of Seattle's retail
space is Downtown

Business Starts per year in Downtown Seattle

Source: City of Seattle Business License Database, 2024



Photo Credit: Sairen, Chinatown-International District



Photo Credit: The Lemon Grove Collective, Pioneer Square



Photo Credit: Pike Street Press, Downtown Core

Policy SF 3.2 Retain Downtown industries and increase their diversity.

ACTIONS

- 1 Support existing and future key industry clusters including maritime, tourism, information technology, professional services, arts, and green economy.
- 2 Invest and direct Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (WDC) to establish and staff industry leadership tables in key sectors to identify the most in-demand skills, job shortages, joint workforce development programs, and industry partnerships.
- 3 Leverage the citywide workforce development strategy and agency partners to create accessible pathways to high-wage careers in key industries and city lines of business.

Policy SF 3.3 Increase education and workforce training resources, including access to locally driven, non-traditional educational routes.

Policy SF 3.4 Provide technical assistance and support to pop-up businesses, new small businesses, and legacy businesses.

ACTIONS

- 1 Work with the Chinatown-International District to develop anti-displacement strategies to maintain, or, if possible, increase availability of affordable commercial space in Chinatown, Japantown, and Little Saigon areas. (Seattle Comprehensive Plan 2035, ID-P8)
- 2 Continue to provide small business support through Office of Economic Development's small business division existing programming. Work with Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections to support businesses on navigating permitting for businesses.
- 3 Continue programs supporting tenant improvements, commercial affordability consulting, and storefront repair. Leverage City resources with those raised by community-based partners.
- 4 Create a website with a step-by-step guide to creative use permitting. (Downtown Seattle Association Arts and Culture Coalition).
- 5 Review existing home-based business rules and identify refinements that can be made to encourage new start-ups and small businesses.
- 6 Work with Office of Economic Development and existing Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) in Pioneer Square and the Chinatown-International District to provide financial and technical support for small businesses, including but not limited to: rent support and mitigation; renovations and improvements; and special events and attractions to draw increased visitation and spending.
- 7 Continue to provide technical assistance and training to entrepreneurs and small businesses through the existing Office of Economic Development and partner economic development agencies. Provide mentorship and funding assistance, including permitting coaching, in small business programs.

Policy SF 3.5 Align City regulations to support new retail trends, successful pilot programs, and the strengths of existing commercial areas.

ACTIONS

- 1 Extend timelines for interim occupation and use of previously vacant retail space to include broader uses and longer time limits of interim use.
- 2 Continue to identify and remove zoning constraints on retail, food service, and entertainment uses. Examples include restrictions or permitting barriers on outdoor food trucks, outdoor seating, pop-up retail, outdoor kiosks, music, and other special events. As needed, update the zoning code to provide greater flexibility for these uses and provide dedicated support for businesses seeking to activate underutilized commercial space.
- 3 Work with city partners to review zoning standards to allow experiential retail uses such as temporary pop-up retail, kiosks, artisanal retail, outdoor events, and maker/craft businesses.

	2010	2020	Change %
Construction/Resources	1,545	3,449	123.2%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	20,323	20,819	2.4%
Manufacturing	2,482	2,457	-1.0%
Retail	7,193	10,010	39.2%
Services	82,569	135,787	64.5%
Wholesale Trade, Transportation, Utilities	5,124	7,072	38%
Government	23,891	23,705	-0.8%
Education	110	134	21.8%
Total	143,237	203,477	42.1%

Jobs by Industry 2010-2020

Source: City of Seattle, 2020

SF 4

Enhance the reliability and quality of downtown facilities and utilities to support future development.

Policy SF 4.1 Ensure there is a long-term utilities plan in place and sufficient resources for ongoing reinvestment.

ACTIONS

- 1 Ensure electrical infrastructure has capacity to support new development.
- 2 Maintain and upgrade infrastructure to ensure safety, reliability, long-term functionality, and reduce strain.
- 3 Improve Downtown's stormwater infrastructure.
- 4 Encourage investment in green stormwater infrastructure improvements to address existing system deficiencies and accommodate new planned residential and commercial growth.

Policy SF 4.2 Explore establishing funding districts to finance infrastructure improvements, support community benefits, and maintain public spaces.

ACTIONS

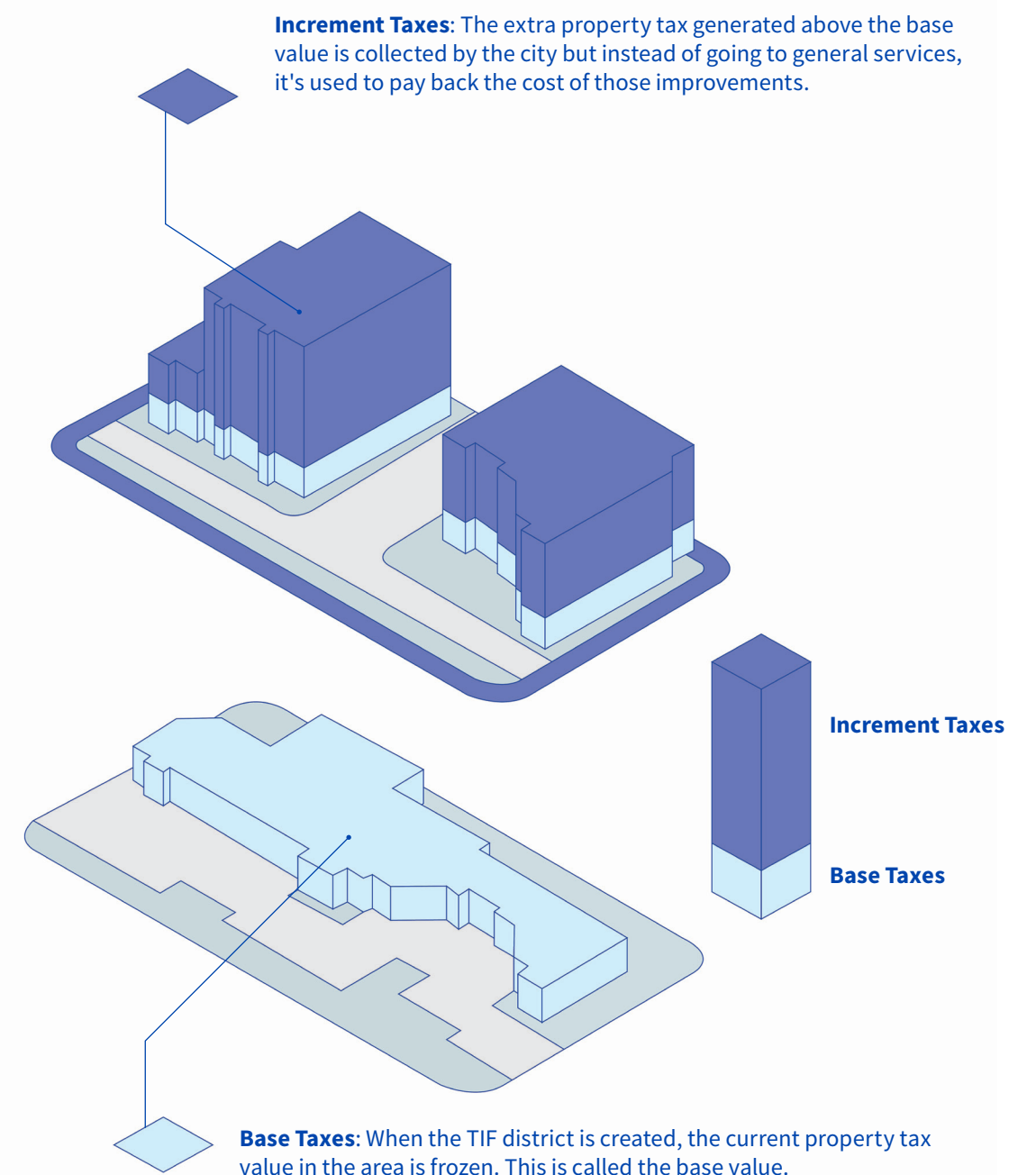
- 1 Convene a working group to study the feasibility of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district to create a funding stream for future improvements or maintenance, consistent with recent State legislation. This action will require coordination with King County and various private and public landowners within Downtown.

Policy SF 4.3 Consolidate and right-size Downtown parking.

ACTIONS

- 1 Explore ways to offer equitable, shared parking strategies to reduce project development costs and manage parking holistically.
- 2 Seek to actively reduce and re-allocate existing surface level parking or vacant land to more active uses.
- 3 Recalibrate costs for on-street parking to encourage the use of existing off-street parking facilities, using the Center City Off-Street Parking Survey parking rates as a guide.
- 4 Work with off-street parking lot operators to explore shared parking arrangements between residential and commercial developments.
- 5 Consider proposing amending Chapter 82.92 RCW to allow the City of Seattle to offer a sales and use tax deferral for redevelopment projects that (1) convert surface parking lots into multifamily housing and (2) include a meaningful share of family-size affordable units as part of the City's state legislative agenda.

TIF stands for **Tax Increment Financing**. A **TIF** district is a special area a city or local government sets up to help pay for improvements—like roads, parks, or public buildings—that encourage private development (like housing, shops, or offices) in places that are underused or need investment.



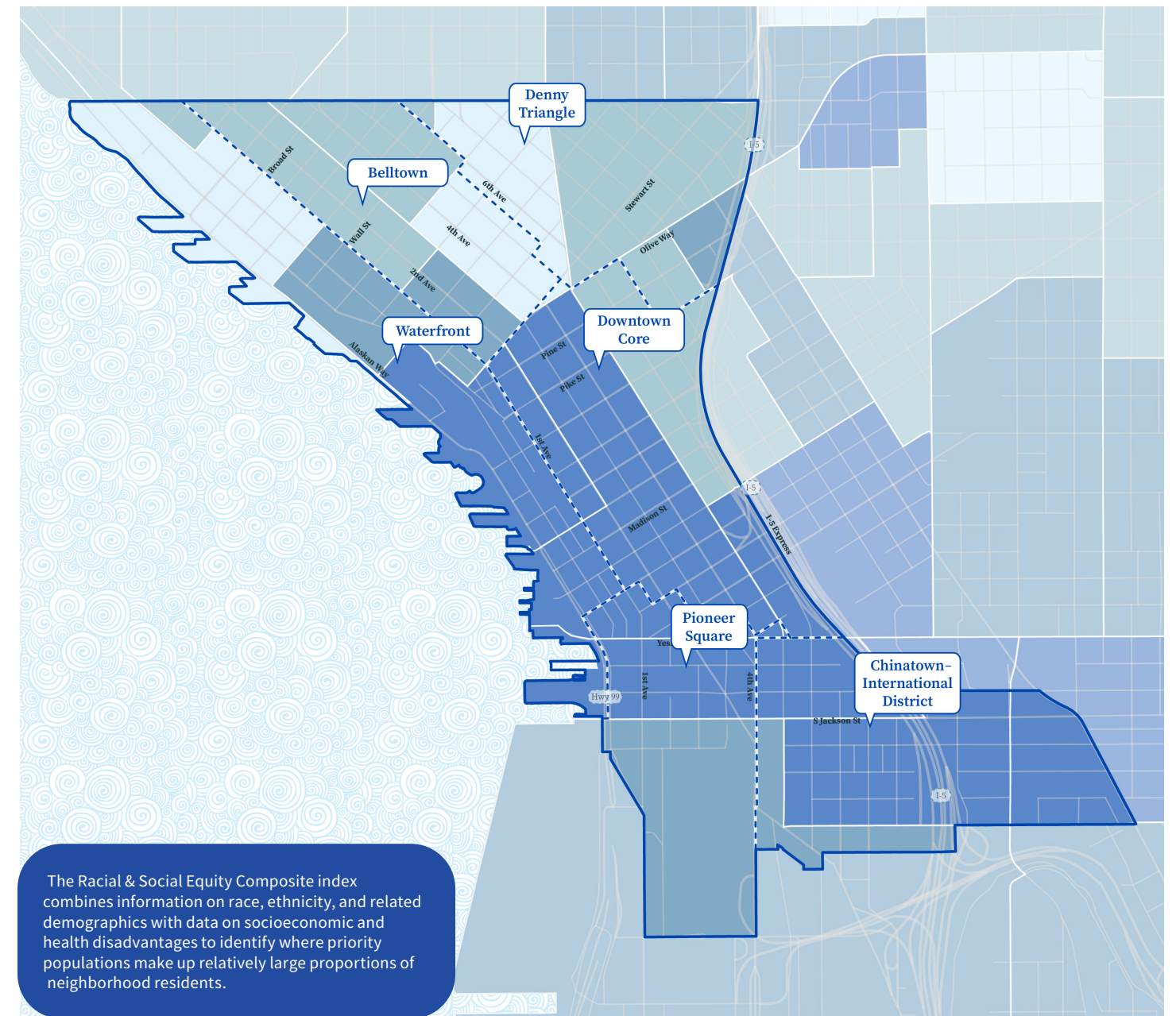
SF 5

Ensure economic growth is equitable and aligned with community goals.

Policy SF 5.1 Protect existing businesses and at-risk commercial districts from displacement, particularly when improvements are being made.

ACTIONS

- 1 Prioritize business assistance efforts to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and immigrant-owned businesses.
- 2 Explore adopting commercial preservation zones for business districts and corridors at high-risk of displacement.
- 3 Continue to partner with Sound Transit, other public sector agencies, and private funders to create a comprehensive business assistance and anti-displacement program.
- 4 Design a tailored program to provide small businesses and community institutions with support such as legal assistance, marketing assistance, new signage, and financial resources such as grants or forgivable loans.
- 5 Maintain funding and support for existing Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and non-profits serving at-risk neighborhood business districts.
- 6 Convene a working group of existing organizations to study the feasibility of community land trusts and/or other community development financing tools to acquire and improve existing commercial properties.
- 7 Conduct a study to determine the feasibility and economic impacts of commercial preservation zones in the Chinatown-International District generally and Little Saigon specifically.
- 8 Work with commercial property owners of underutilized warehouse and light industrial buildings to consider the feasibility and economic impacts of preserving these buildings for future use as other zoning appropriate uses aligned with the Industrial & Maritime Strategy.
- 9 Explore the efficacy of a food distribution overlay district or other tools in Little Saigon with community organizations to preserve cultural food distribution.



Racial & Social Equity Composite Index

- Highest Equity Priority
- Second Highest Equity Priority
- Middle Equity Priority
- Second Lowest Equity Priority
- Lowest Equity Priority

0 mi 0.5 mi

Source: City of Seattle

Policy SF 5.2 Leverage growth to create community benefits for Downtown’s low-income, formerly incarcerated, and immigrant communities.

ACTIONS

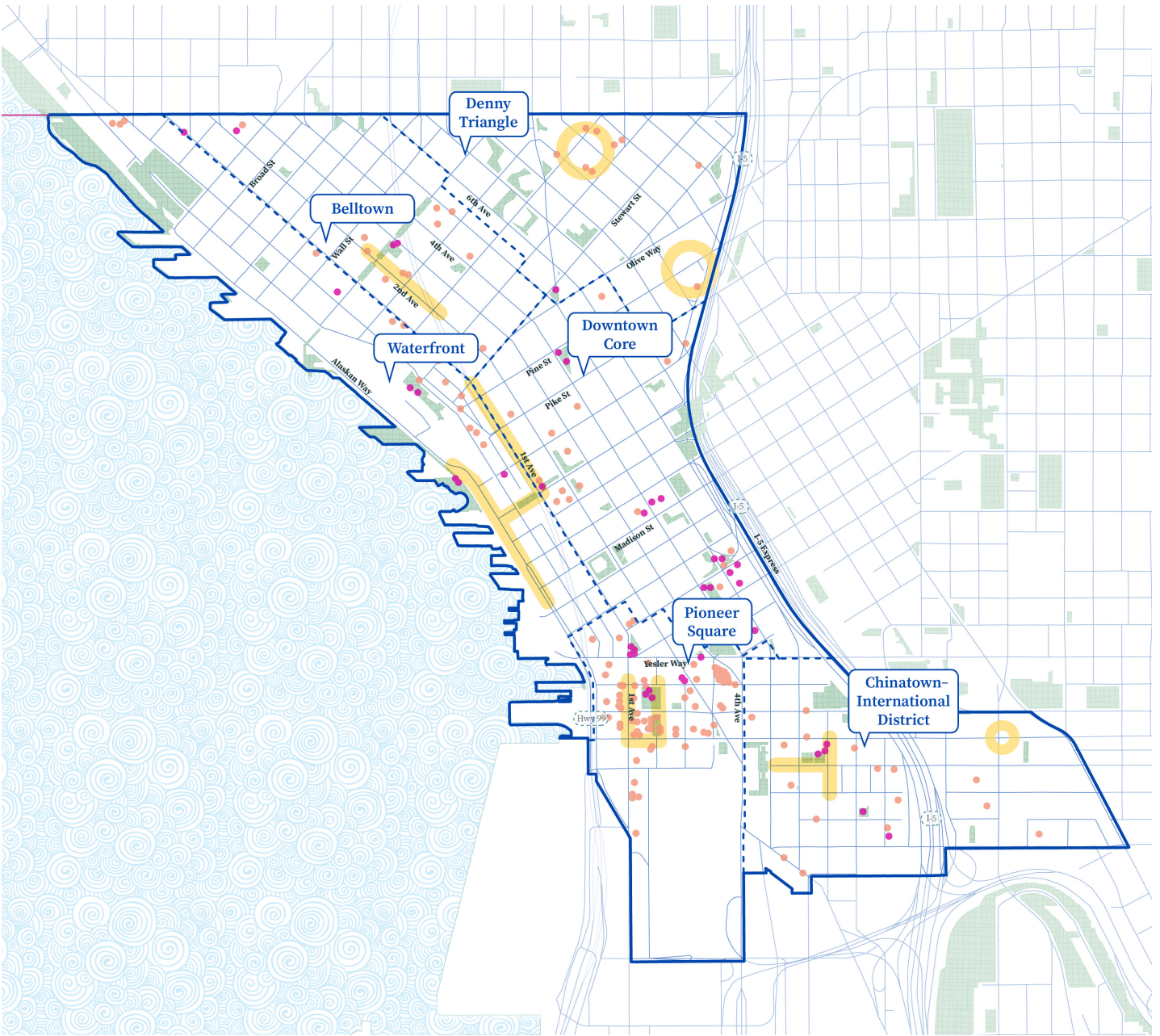
- 1 Continue to provide resources and wrap-around services to Downtown areas that rank highest on the City’s Racial and Social Equity Composite Index (designate these areas as Community Resource Areas). Include a focus on re-entry programs or justice-involved youth.
- 2 Ensure Transit-Oriented Development projects maximize co-benefits such as improved transportation and utility infrastructure, job creation, and new public spaces.
- 3 Establish a Small Business Assistance program to support businesses ahead of planned transit and infrastructure improvements.
- 4 Expand language access online and in-person for all planning and development processes Downtown.

SF 6 Attract, grow, and make the creative industries visible Downtown.

Policy SF 6.1 Increase events and activities in public and private spaces near cultural hubs in each neighborhood to make these areas more vibrant, welcoming, and connected to the community.

ACTIONS

- 1 Explore developing a neighborhood main streets program (for neighborhoods like Chinatown-International District) to accept money from statewide Beverage and Occupancy tax credit programs.
- 2 Continue support for pop-up events, festivals and conferences, such as the Belltown Mural Festival and Dragon Fest in the Chinatown-International District.
- 3 Expand the share of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) artist commissions participating in the percent-for-art ordinance in Downtown.



Public Art and Cultural Hubs

- Hubs of Art, Culture, Character
- Cultural Spaces
- Public Art

0 mi 0.5 mi
Source: City of Seattle Office of Arts and Culture



Vivid Matter Collective, Old Army Jacket Photography

Policy SF 6.2 Expand opportunities for public art to be appreciated and celebrated in public gathering spaces.

Policy SF 6.3 Make it easier to participate in the Downtown creative economy.

ACTIONS

- 1 Retain and expand access to affordable retail rents and spaces for cultural arts use.
- 2 Create a website with a step-by-step guide and designate a Seattle Department of Construction & Inspections contact to help guide the permitting process for creative and cultural industries and organizations. (Downtown Seattle Association Arts and Culture Coalition)
- 3 To the extent feasible, implement aspects of the Cultural Strategies for Downtown Revitalization action plan.
- 4 Simplify the process for special events requirements or funding opportunities to help BIPOC and emerging artists and performers participate more.
- 5 Use City funding for micro-loans, pro-bono architect/lawyer funds, and other investments in downtown spaces.

Policy SF 6.4 Grow and support Downtown’s arts and culture, entertainment, and sports districts.

ACTIONS

- 1 Streamline permitting packages for arts and cultural organizations, including temporary pop-ups. (Downtown Seattle Association Arts and Culture Coalition)
- 2 Study the feasibility of preserving existing underutilized warehouse and light industrial buildings in the Downtown core for arts and entertainment and fitness uses such as rehearsal studios, nightlife venues, climbing gyms, and other uses that require a relatively large footprint and/or require noise insulation and other physical amenities that these older buildings may provide.
- 3 Complete capitol improvements to Benaroya Hall, a City-owned arts facility.
- 4 Pilot a temporary 30-day Change of Use process for arts & cultural venues and other temporary activations such as an arts and cultural designation pilot program, with a specific use code for galleries and temporary pop-ups. (Downtown Seattle Association arts and culture coalition)
- 5 Leverage underutilized commercial spaces to support community groups and cultural agencies, including night life venues. Launch The Liberty Project supporting underserved, particularly Black-owned businesses.

Policy SF 6.5 Boost and sustain a robust creative sector with innovative and engaged cultural and creative enterprises throughout Downtown.
(Cultural Strategies for Downtown Revitalization Plan)

ACTIONS

- 1 Support the implementation of the Cultural Strategies for Downtown Revitalization Plan.
- 2 Convene private, corporate, and philanthropic partners to explore creation of financial and funding tools to create initiatives in support of attraction, growth, and retention of businesses in key industries.
- 3 Establish a Citywide external training program investment plan to maximize the impact of City investments in accessible training programs.
- 4 Explore new business and revenue models for traditional major cultural institutions, arts organizations, and music venues.
- 5 Provide direct funding for marketing, events, and activation through existing community organizations, including Business Improvement Associations.



“
Even artists that don't have a studio in Pioneer Square can still think of it as their artistic home.”



“
We need sustainable systems put in place for artists throughout the City.”



“
More space for people to create art and gather.”



“
The thing that I need most is space to create our art. There is a lot of equipment, materials, and tools that go into the things that we make and we need space for those things.”



“
We need to have clean streets so that it is inviting for folks to want to come in.”



“
It's great to see people utilizing the sidewalks and taking transit.”

Credit: Artist Interviews (Video and Photography), Old Army Jacket Photography

Steward our Home for the Next Seven Generations

Foster long term stewardship of Downtown’s urban ecology and natural environment.

↗ INCREASE

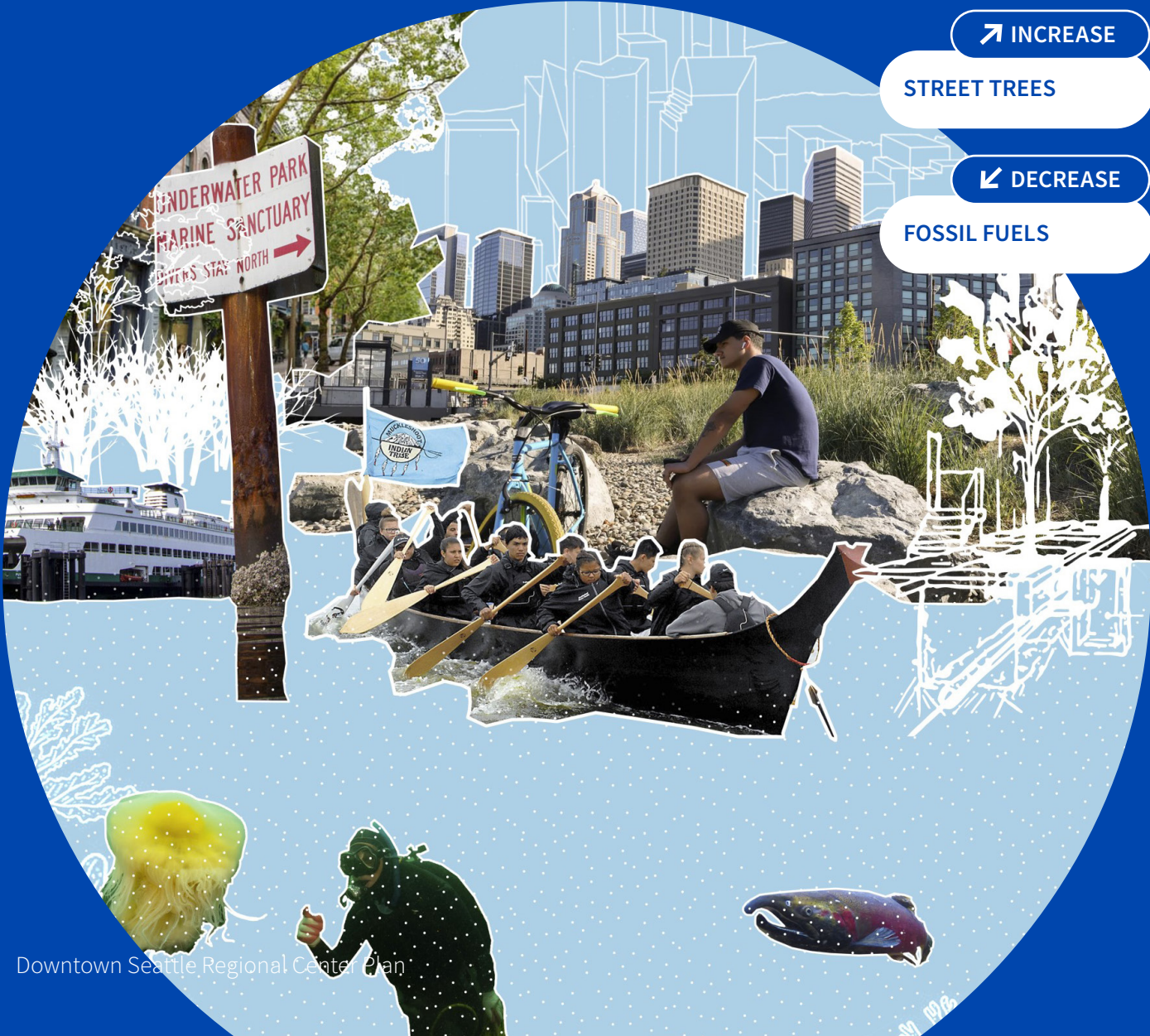
ACCESS TO THE WATERFRONT

↗ INCREASE

STREET TREES

↘ DECREASE

FOSSIL FUELS



With a focus on environmental stewardship, collaboration with Indigenous Tribes, and bold climate action, this theme identifies opportunities to care for Downtown’s natural resources and better connect Downtown to nature and water while celebrating its Indigenous heritage. Many concepts in this theme draw on support from Tahoma Peak Solutions, including the concept of multi-generational environmental responsibility. From protecting Puget

Sound views and expanding urban tree canopies to fostering traditional food production and promoting renewable energy solutions, this theme emphasizes a Downtown that honors its past and builds sustainably to enable future generations to thrive. The following goals outline ways for Downtown to support growth that balances density while stewarding and caring for Downtown’s finite resources.

Goals

- SG 1** Connect people to nature through views, experiences, and physical connections.
- SG 2** Care for Downtown’s water, land, and natural resources.
- SG 3** Reduce Downtown’s reliance on fossil fuels.
- SG 4** Ensure Downtown is resilient to natural disasters and climate change.

Key Findings

324
unreinforced
masonry buildings

93%
of Downtown is
impervious surfaces

Today’s Downtown form was shaped by years of human interventions.

Downtown Seattle’s waterfront, now a densely urbanized area, was originally a tidal marshland. Tribal Nations continue to uphold treaty rights and practice sovereignty to protect and restore the cultural and natural resources of these waters and shorelines. Recent projects like Habitat Beach and the Waterfront Seattle Program aim to restore natural space and expand green infrastructure, but challenges persist. The downtown area has lost 32 acres of tree canopy between 2016 and 2021, exacerbating heat retention and limiting natural cooling. With over 93% of the area covered by impervious surfaces, reconnecting with nature remains vital for environmental and community resilience.



Denny Hill Regrade, 1910, Seattle Municipal Archives

“
The waterfront is a gem for this city and we should play it up as much as possible.

“
I would like to see a commitment to maintaining and adding to the tree canopy downtown.

“
Rather than simply using nature for our benefit, the goal should be to inspire people to respect and protect it by designing Downtown with nature’s original presence in mind.

Downtown is particularly vulnerable to earthquakes and water-based hazards.

Downtown Seattle’s history of building on regraded and filled lands and the concentration of historic structures built before seismic construction codes has left it vulnerable to natural disasters. Many areas sit within liquefaction or peat settlement zones, prone to movement during earthquakes. With 324 unreinforced masonry buildings in Pioneer Square and the Central Business District, the risk of structural damage and displacement is high. In conversations during the plan process, community members have expressed the need for assistance to ensure these buildings are safe and sustainable. Additionally, national weather models show tsunami flooding could reach up to one mile inland, underscoring the urgency of proactive planning and structural retrofits.

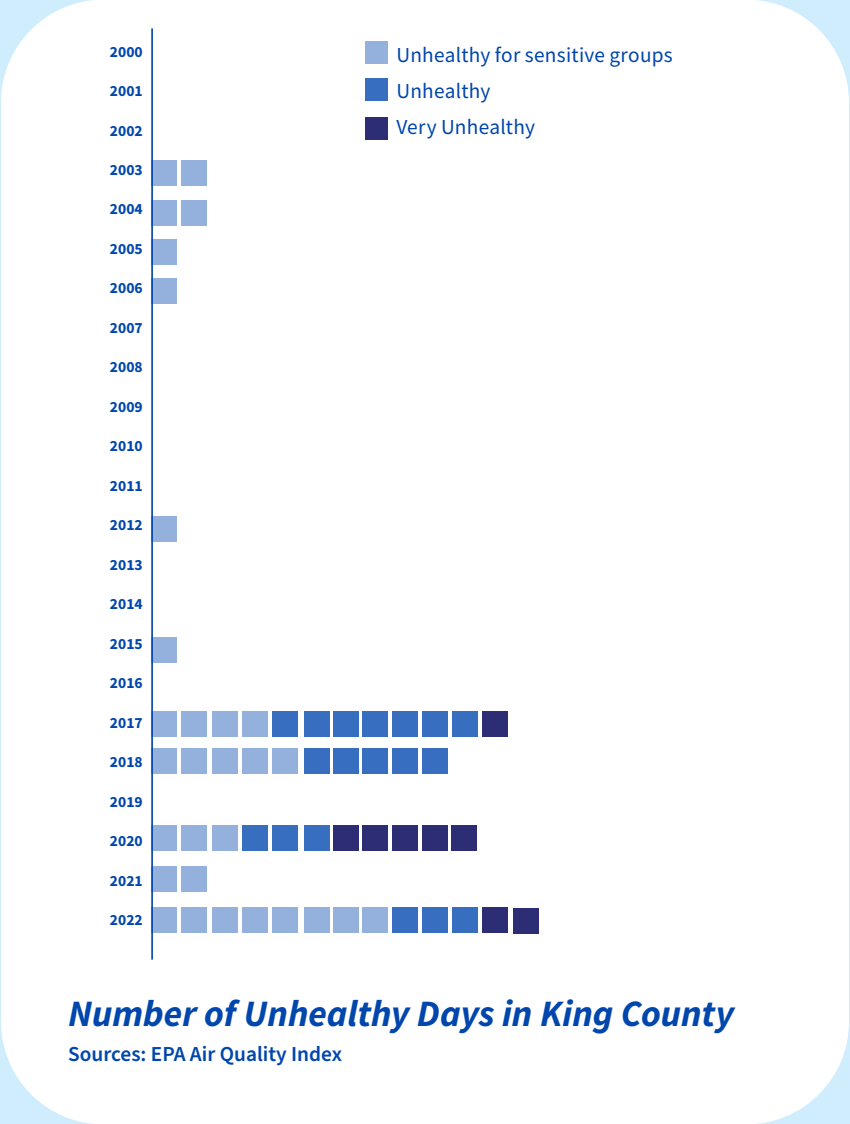
Partnerships are vital to creating a greener, more resilient, and inclusive future.

While many Seattleites are drawn to the region for its proximity to nature and water, Downtown often feels disconnected from this experience. With the removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct, there is an opportunity for Downtown Seattle to reconnect with and fully embrace its waterfront and green corridors. Participants at the second community meeting emphasized how important the removal of the Viaduct was in addressing these goals. They acknowledged that continued investment requires contributions from construction, transportation, and waste management, as no single sector can achieve these goals alone.

Water and air quality are key concerns.

As temperatures are rising, there has been an increase in wildfire smoke days and an increased urban heat island effect in Seattle. Since 2015, there have been many more registered “unhealthy” days by the EPA air quality index. While these can be unhealthy for everyone, they are particularly challenging for sensitive groups, such as children or people with asthma. Similarly, the amount of impervious surfaces, lack of tree canopy or open space, and the frequency and length of heat waves in the City are contributing to Downtown’s urban heat island. While the presence of Elliott Bay may partially mitigate heat by providing a cooling effect through evaporation, thus lessening the intensity of the urban heat island effect, prolonged heat still makes parts of Downtown

uncomfortable during the summer months. Water infrastructure is also strained due to aging infrastructure and development patterns. Over 80% of Downtown’s infrastructure uses combined sewers that collect both stormwater and wastewater. During heavy rainfall, these systems can become overwhelmed, discharging untreated sewage into Elliott Bay and other water bodies. Downtown has three Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs). Strengthening these systems is critical to public health and environmental stewardship.



Policies and Actions

SG 1

Connect people to nature through views, experiences, and physical connections.

Policy SG 1.1 Amplify and protect Downtown views of Puget Sound and surrounding mountain ranges.

ACTIONS

- 1 Review and update existing view corridors protections and consider expanding viewshed protections to include views from the Pike Place Market.
- 2 Celebrate view corridors by aligning with Seattle Department of Transportation Urban Forestry program and other special street designations, as well as areas with projected new development.
- 3 Expand pedestrian right of ways on streets with views of Elliott Bay and Lake Washington to allow for additional seating capacity. (Imagine Greater Downtown)

Policy SG 1.2 Collaborate with representatives of Tribal Nations, urban Indian communities, and local non-profits to deepen storytelling and wayfinding that honor the cultural and ecological significance of water.

ACTIONS

- 1 Highlight Indigenous perspectives and traditional ecological knowledge of the Duwamish and Coast Salish peoples to communicate the historical connections with the area's land and water resources in Downtown storytelling, such as public art and interpretive wayfinding elements.
- 2 Work with Tribal Nations and Native communities to identify opportunities for art, programming, events, cultural spaces, and other features that honor Native cultures, traditions, and practices rooted in their deep relationship to the restoration and enhancement of the water and shoreline. (Imagine Greater Downtown)
- 3 Continue to support the Salmon Homecoming and the Tribal Interpretive Center on the waterfront.
- 4 Create memorials to the Chinese Expulsion, Japanese Internment, and the Native American presence at the waterfront. (Jackson Hub Concept Plan)

Policy SG 1.3 Facilitate waterfront access for Indigenous communities and honor treaty rights and cultural practices. (Designing a Native Neighborhood)

ACTIONS

- 1 Ensure that Indigenous Tribes and Indigenous organizations participate in the decision-making process regarding the future investments and activation of Pier 48.



Photo Credit: Salmon Homecoming 2023, Jo Cosme

Policy SG 1.4 Communicate the value of water resources, urban habitat, tree canopy, and ecological systems that uniquely reinforce Downtown’s slopes, green spaces, and waterfront conditions.

ACTIONS

- 1 Reduce impervious surface area across Downtown to meet sustainability goals, increase green space, and integrate additional green stormwater infrastructure.
- 2 Use signage to showcase Green Street projects in highly visible and well-trafficked areas to demonstrate how green infrastructure helps manage stormwater and enhance urban habitats.
- 3 Incorporate more environment-focused events and programs throughout neighborhoods and on the waterfront.
- 4 Explore expanding existing recognition programs and awards for organizations or individuals actively promoting or protecting water resources and urban ecology.
- 5 Collaborate with local universities or schools to measure the impact of urban environmental projects.
- 6 Explore establishing artist residency programs centered on creating artwork that highlights water quality.
- 7 Commission local artists to create murals, sculptures, or exhibits that depict the connection between Seattle’s water resources, urban habitat, and ecological systems.

Policy SG 1.5 Leverage the waterfront’s economic development value by enhancing public waterfront access and experiences.

ACTIONS

- 1 Create a destination open space at the south end of the waterfront to complement the Olympic Sculpture Park to the north. (Stadium District Concept Plan)
- 2 Complete Seattle’s Waterfront Park project.
- 3 Explore movable destinations similar to those on Lake Washington, such as floating playgrounds or performance spaces, that allow people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the water on the Elliott Bay. (Imagine Greater Downtown)

Policy SG 1.5 Make arrival to Downtown from Puget Sound feel welcoming.

ACTIONS

- 1 Facilitate better opportunities for kayak, canoe, or paddle-board access in Elliott Bay from Downtown locations.
- 2 Improve landside connections from large vessel landings, including ferries, and create new landings for small boats along the waterfront. (Imagine Greater Downtown)

Case Study

Ghost Rivers,
Baltimore, MD

In 2023, Baltimore artist Bruce Willen launched a public art installation highlighting the City of Baltimore’s “Ghost Rivers.” The early 20th-century development of Baltimore’s sewer system buried many miles of streams and creeks below the new infrastructure. Willen installed winding blue overlays at the sites above these streams throughout the Remington neighborhood, highlighting the history of the landscape and natural environment.



Case Study

New York Canals Kayak Program
Erie Canal, NY

The Free Kayak Rental Program on the New York State Canal System is a state-supported initiative that encourages public access and recreation along the historic Erie Canal and other canal waterways. Operated in partnership with local community organizations, the program offers free hourly kayak rentals at various sites, making water-based activities more accessible to residents and visitors. It promotes environmental stewardship, heritage tourism, and local economic development by activating underused canalfront areas. This model demonstrates how small-scale, low-cost infrastructure investments can create meaningful public engagement with historic and natural resources.



SG 2 Care for Downtown’s water, land, and natural resources.

Policy SG 2.1 Manage stormwater responsibly by cleaning and minimizing run-off into Puget Sound and reducing the strain on Downtown’s combined sewer overflow facilities.

ACTIONS

- 1 Continue implementing the Green Streets program, focusing on priority areas identified by SDOT and in Belltown, Pioneer Square, and the Chinatown-International District.
- 2 Coordinate enhanced Downtown street cleaning efforts to capture pollutants before they enter the stormwater system.
- 3 Explore alternative stormwater management approaches in Downtown areas where implementing Green Stormwater Infrastructure may be challenging.

Policy SG 2.2 Ensure new development is sustainable and responsive to Downtown’s waterfront environment.

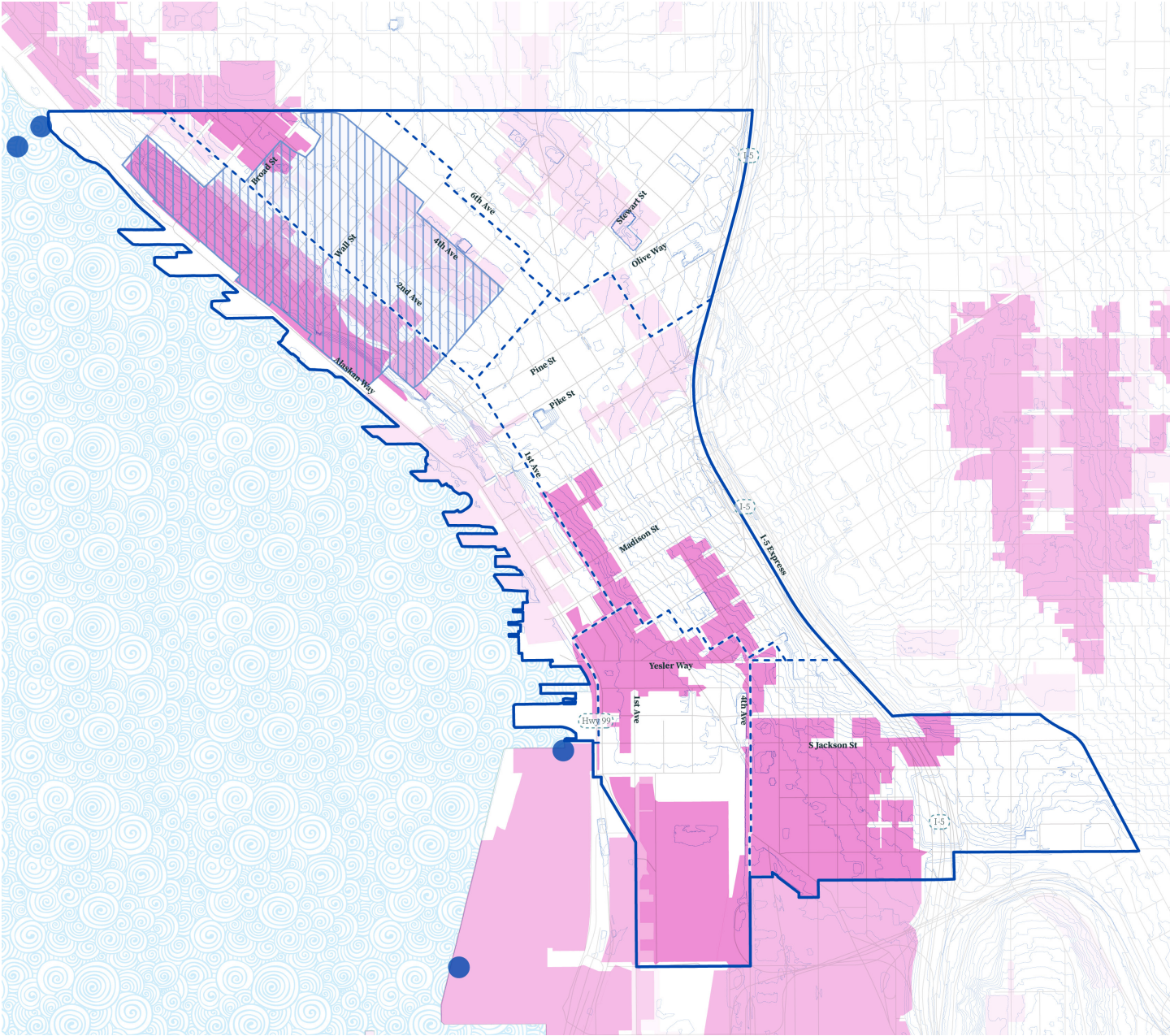
ACTIONS

- 1 Integrate green stormwater and traditional indigenous land management practices, like native planting and permaculture practices. (Indigenous Inclusivity Guide)
- 2 Partner with SPU to prioritize resilient stormwater infrastructure investments in areas of the highest need such as Pioneer Square and the Chinatown-International District.
- 3 Encourage investment in green and green/blue stormwater infrastructure improvements to address existing system deficiencies and accommodate new planned residential and commercial growth.
- 4 Explore ways to adapt existing stormwater mitigation partnership programs with landowners and developers to Downtown’s urban context. Support SPU’s ability to partner with developers to construct new developments “beyond code improvements.”

Policy SG 2.3 Effectively maintain existing water features and integrate new water-based design features, water play, and rain-based installations into public space projects.

ACTIONS

- 1 To extent feasible, consider selective, strategic conversions of wading pools or fountains to spray parks to create more places to cool off and play. Focus these amenities near existing or growing residential areas.
- 2 Integrate drinking water fountains and water bottle filling stations in public parks.
- 3 Seek to incorporate new water features into underutilized public spaces and areas with limited tree canopy to enhance aesthetic and functional value and provide a range of benefits for visitors.



Stormwater Risk Areas and CSOs

Drainage and Wastewater Capacity

- Low-Medium
- Medium
- High
- Critical

Combined Sewer Overflow Risk Area

Combined Sewer Overflows

0 mi 0.5 mi

Source: City of Seattle Public Utilities

Policy SG 2.4 Protect and expand Downtown’s tree canopy.

ACTIONS

- 1 Support appropriate resource allocation to enforce the maintenance of street trees and their tree canopy by private property owners.
- 2 Expand tree canopy to have the most direct benefit to Downtown areas with the greatest vulnerabilities, as identified by the City’s climate vulnerability assessment.
- 3 Maintain street trees within view corridors.
- 4 Consider piloting tree planting projects on unbuildable city-owned lots or P-Patches, like a Miyawaki forest (dense, native, and biodiverse mini-forests.)
- 5 Explore the integration of planted medians along Downtown’s wider corridors.

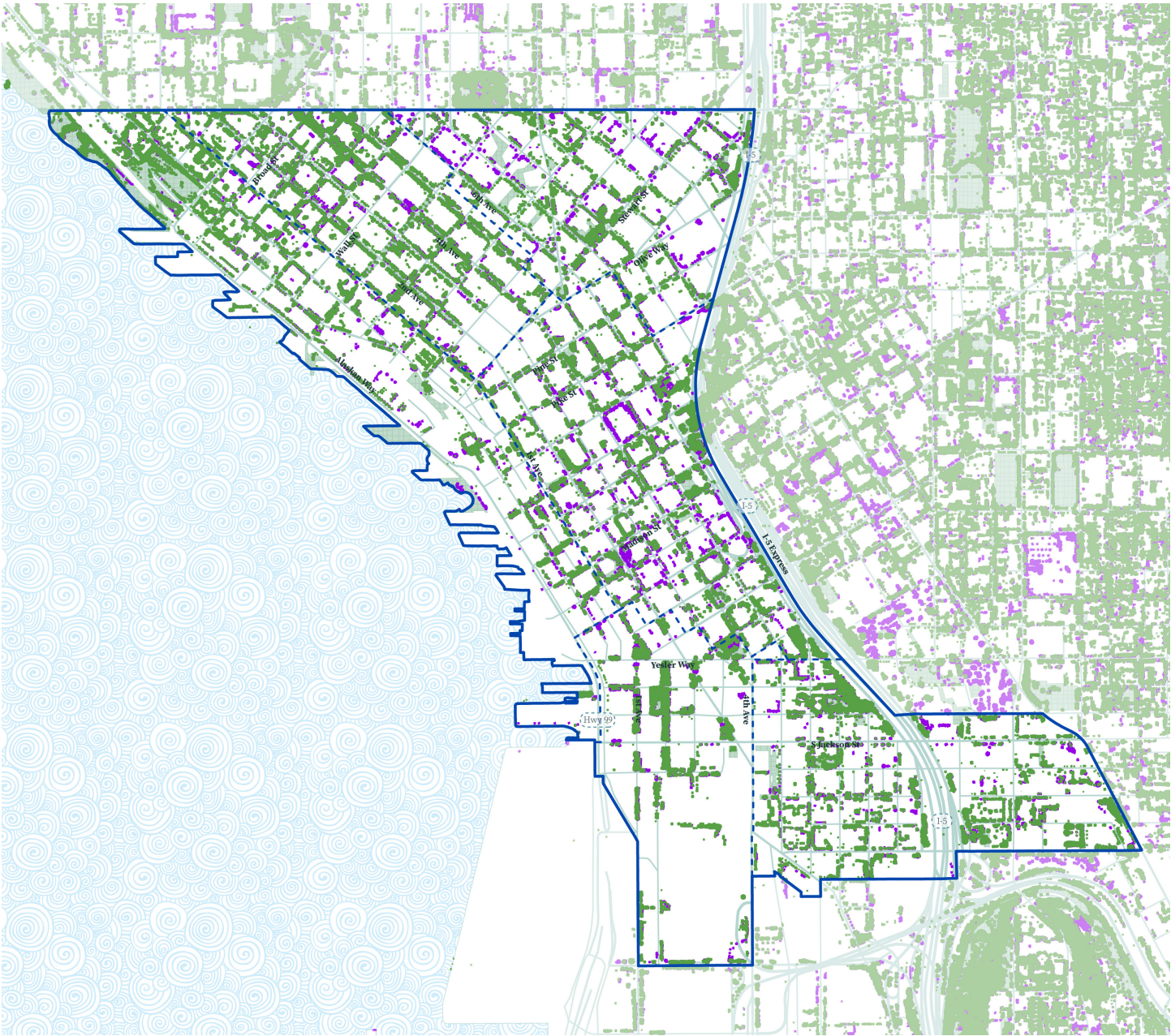
Policy SG 2.5 Support policies that protect Puget Sound as an essential resource for the food systems, cultures, and economies of Tribal Nations.

ACTIONS

- 1 Strengthen and maintain ongoing communication with Tribal Nations regarding Puget Sound and waterfront access Downtown.

Case Study
Miyawaki Forest
Cambridge, MA

The City of Cambridge planted its first Miyawaki forest in Danehy Park in 2022, transforming a small plot of land into a dense, fast-growing mini-forest using native species. Based on a Japanese method developed by Dr. Akira Miyawaki, the approach layers canopy, understory, and ground vegetation to mimic natural forest ecosystems. This method accelerates biodiversity and carbon capture in urban areas while engaging community members in planting and stewardship. The forest has become both a climate resilience tool and a living classroom for environmental education.



Tree Canopy Coverage in Downtown Seattle

- 2021 Tree Canopy
- Tree Canopy Loss from 2016-2021

0 mi 0.5 mi
Source: City of Seattle

SG 3 Reduce Downtown’s reliance on fossil fuels.

Policy SG 3.1 Explore and expand local power generation/district energy approaches and employ a low-pollution neighborhood model.

ACTIONS

- 1 Establish low-emission delivery programs in support of low-pollution neighborhoods. (Downtown Activation Plan)
- 2 Use zoning tools, such as incentives, to encourage large developments to conduct studies on low-emission district energy systems.
- 3 Consider a technical assistance or pilot neighborhood-scale building decarbonization program or developer decarbonization incentive that utilizes the Seattle Building Emissions Performance Standard regulations and Clean Buildings Accelerator program to exceed City and State requirements for emissions and carbon waste.
- 4 Encourage smaller building owners to participate in Seattle’s Building Emissions Performance Standards. Currently, the minimum required building size is 20,000 square feet.
- 5 Explore feasibility of developing a low-emission, resilient district energy system to support Downtown buildings and seek to connect City and other publicly owned buildings to connect into the system.
- 6 Leverage unique opportunities in Downtown, including the existing Seattle Steam network and the presence of the Elliott Bay interceptor, which provides potential for sewer waste heat recovery.
- 7 Consider alternative sites to provide redundancy and a long-term relocation strategy for critical public works infrastructure.

Policy SG 3.2 Achieve and maintain fully electrified public sector vehicle and vessel fleets.

ACTIONS

- 1 Collaborate with the Port of Seattle, Washington State Department of Transportation, and private maritime industries to support a transition to a complete network of electrical shorepower on the Downtown waterfront.
- 2 Provide support and collaboration by the City of Seattle to Washington State Ferries (WSF) Kitsap Transit Fast Ferries and the King County Water Taxi agencies to pursue electrification of all ferry vessels that land on the Seattle waterfront.

Policy SG 3.3 Expand sustainable building practices, including the promotion of adaptive reuse.

Policy SG 3.3 Ensure renovated and new construction buildings achieve high environmental and emissions standards.

ACTIONS

- 1 Provide multilingual outreach regarding incentives for low-cost oil-to-electric heating and stove conversion.
- 2 Implement the Building Emissions Performance Standards (BEPS) for existing buildings.
- 3 Allow construction projects in all areas to use existing green building incentives.
- 4 Explore options for incorporating solar or green technologies on rooftops, focusing on mitigating urban heat island effect.
- 5 Deploy a communications campaign to business owners, building owners, and residents with language isolation about free or low-cost access to heating conversion from oil to electric heat, and stoves from natural gas to electric.
- 6 Increase participation in food waste prevention and in the existing composting program (by large institutional/commercial partners and individual residences) to reduce emissions from food waste. (In alignment with the Food Action Plan’s priority to “Partner with institutional food services, grocers, manufacturers, distributors, and consumer-facing food service businesses to prevent food waste.)

Case Study Green Lake Branch Library Retrofit Seattle, WA

The Green Lake Branch of the Seattle Public Library, a historic Carnegie building from 1910, underwent a major energy retrofit in 2020 as part of the City’s push to reduce emissions from municipal buildings. The project replaced its gas heating system with high-efficiency electric heat pumps and added new ventilation and controls, cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 63% and overall energy use by 17%. Supported by the City’s Municipal Energy Efficiency Program and Seattle City Light, the library has operated fossil fuel-free since 2021—showing how climate goals and historic preservation can go hand in hand.



SG 4 **Ensure Downtown is resilient to natural disasters and climate change.**

Policy SG 4.1 Address Chinatown-International District and Pioneer Square’s high concentration of unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings in need of seismic retrofits.

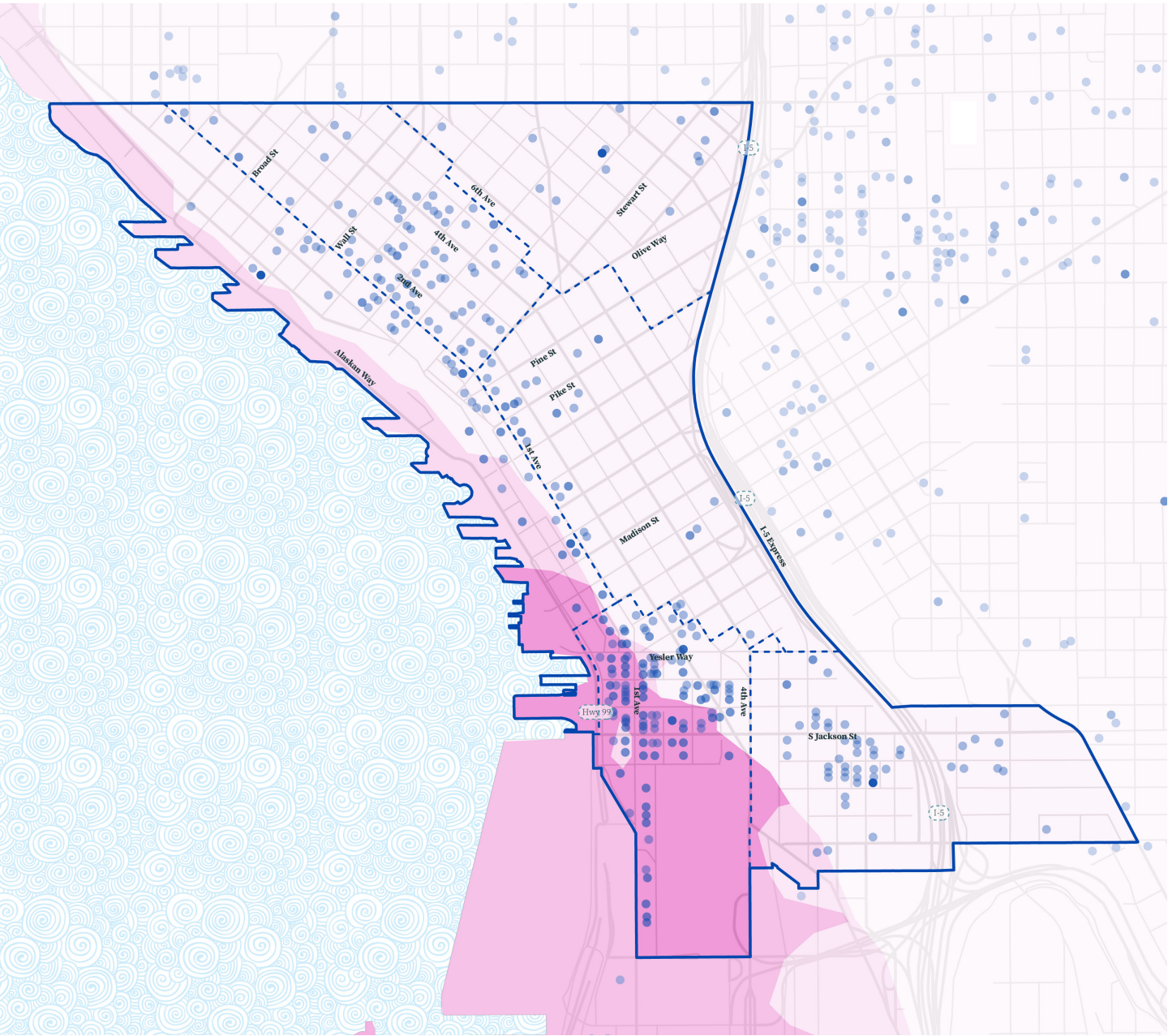
ACTIONS

- 1 Communicate the importance of the upcoming mandatory unreinforced masonry (URM) retrofit legislation and provide clear technical assistance to property owners.
- 2 Use an equitable approach to providing funding for seismic retrofits of buildings.
- 3 Continue to explore a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program or zoning incentive program that can provide owners of URM structures a market-based funding source to support seismic retrofits of their buildings. Prioritize investments in Chinatown/ID and Pioneer Square for the program.

Policy SG 4.2 Continue supporting resilient infrastructure and facilities that provide assistance across Downtown neighborhoods before, during, and after emergencies and severe weather events.

ACTIONS

- 1 Develop a roadmap for post-event recovery in every neighborhood.
- 2 Continue supporting partnerships that empower community gathering places—particularly in the International District and South Downtown (SODO)—to serve as resilience hubs, in alignment with the climate vulnerability assessment.
- 3 Implement Seattle’s Climate Action Plan.



Unreinforced Masonry Building in Downtown Seattle

- Critical Risk (Unreinforced Masonry Building)
 - High Risk (Unreinforced Masonry Building)
 - Low Risk (Unreinforced Masonry Building)
- Low Earthquake Shaking Severity



0 mi 0.5 mi
Source: Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections

Policy SG 4.3 Upgrade infrastructure to reduce existing sewer capacity risks and to mitigate future risks.

ACTIONS

- 1 Use buildings and land more effectively to decrease the amount of rainfall draining to downtown’s combined sewer system, reducing the future risks posed by climate-perturbed rainfall.
- 2 Reduce the volume and speed of stormwater entering the combined sewer system through better on-site management. This could include rainwater harvesting and reuse, underground detention, green roofs, bioretention, and other stormwater management best practices. Consider achieving through a mix of code requirements and incentive programs.
- 3 Take advantage of major capital projects to upsize sewer mains in areas with known capacity risks.

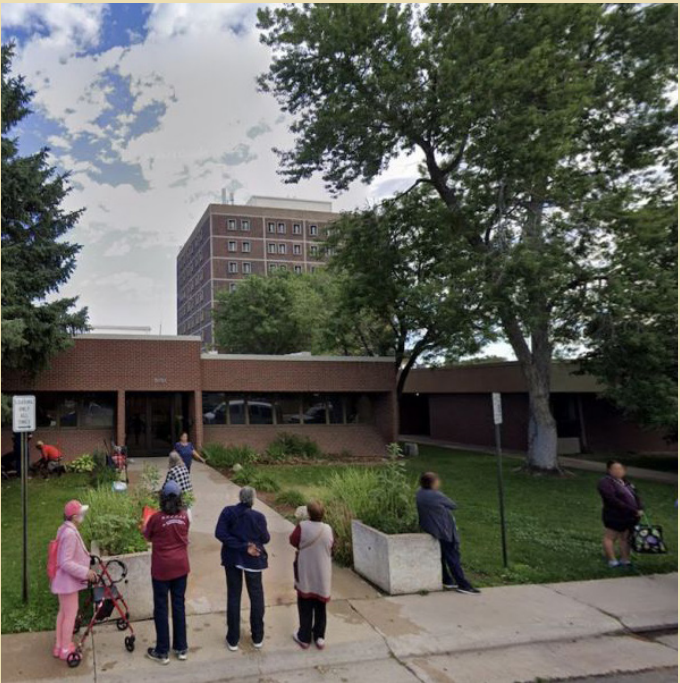
Policy SG 4.4 Protect and expand access to healthy food, food cultivation, harvesting, and sharing.

ACTIONS

- 1 Attract additional affordable grocery stores Downtown.
- 2 Consistent with Seattle’s Food Action Plan priorities, identify opportunities to use Downtown’s public or private open spaces to increase access to community growing space/community gardens.
- 3 Consistent with Seattle’s Food Action Plan, use public land and open space to advance the Food Action Plan’s priority to “Increase the number of low-maintenance or passive food production (food forests, fruit trees) and foraging opportunities within Seattle. Increase engagement with Native and Indigenous communities and other community partners in the ongoing stewardship of these spaces.
- 4 Encourage property owners to convert underutilized privately-owned public spaces (POPS) into places for urban agricultural uses.
- 5 Pursue opportunities presented in the Food Desert Statement of Legislative Intent to increase food access in Downtown.

Case Study
Green and Resilient Retrofit Program
Denver, CO

Northeast Denver Housing Center utilized the Housing and Urban Development’s Green and Resilient Retrofit funds to maintain over 1,000 affordable housing units throughout Denver. These funds, passed as part of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, allowed NDHC to retrofit the buildings for energy efficiency, water efficiency, and climate resilience, reducing the strain of rising costs of utilities both for the NDHC and tenants alike.



Case Study
Urban Food Systems Program
Seattle, WA

The Urban Food Systems (UFS) program works to ensure that all Seattle residents—especially those in underserved communities—have equitable access to locally grown, nutritious food. It does this by partnering with community-based organizations (CBOs) to manage and care for community gardens, public orchards, and urban agriculture sites on public land. Organizations selected as UFS Community Partners receive funding, technical assistance, land access, materials, and ongoing support from Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) to help them grow food, build community, and support food justice across the city.



Find Our Way

Encourage new ways to travel and explore that are not only efficient, but also inspiring, educational, and enjoyable.



The Find Our Way theme identifies goals and actions that support a vibrant community where everyone can move safely and comfortably. In keeping with themes from community engagement, this theme prioritizes walking, biking, rolling, and public transit, while keeping streets less congested so deliveries can occur and businesses can thrive. It also identifies opportunities to create spaces that support movement and gathering. Key areas like the Pike Place Market and the Chinatown-International District will offer more pedestrian-focused experiences.

By rethinking intersections, calming traffic, and improving pedestrian visibility, Downtown will make every journey safer and more enjoyable. Innovative green design treatments and expanded transit options will advance climate goals and connect visitors and locals alike. Streets will come alive with art, history, and local commerce, reflecting the rich diversity of Downtown's neighborhoods. Whether navigating scenic hills or enjoying reimagined alleys, Downtown will be a welcoming, connected destination for all.

Goals

- FW 1** Rethink and re-allocate space on streets to put people first.
- FW 2** Make traveling through Downtown a safe and comfortable experience.
- FW 3** Celebrate Downtown's unique cultures and histories - especially its Indigenous population - throughout its transportation system and public spaces.
- FW 4** Create a sustainable and resilient Downtown transportation system.
- FW 5** Design Downtown streets to support innovation and a thriving local economy.
- FW 6** Use streets to help people navigate and find their way through a legible Downtown.

Key Findings

85%
is Downtown's goal
for walk-bike-transit
modeshare

45%
of Downtown is used
for car and truck
movement

Downtown is a regional transportation hub.

Downtown Seattle functions as the region’s primary transportation hub, serving as a central crossroads for people traveling throughout the broader area—whether by train, bus, plane, or ferry. It is also a major destination for workers from beyond the regional center, with more than 190,000 people employed Downtown who commute from other areas. At the same time, Downtown residents rely on a well-connected transportation system to meet their daily needs, a demand that will continue to grow alongside future development. Significant progress has already been made in car reduction: only 25% of Downtown workers commute by driving alone—one of the lowest rates in the nation for a major city.

Over the past 15 years, major investments in light rail, five new RapidRide lines, expanded bus service, the Seattle Waterfront, and a network of protected bike lanes have strengthened Downtown’s role as a vibrant, accessible regional hub. Change will continue as the light rail system expands significantly over the next 20 years. While this construction will have temporary impacts, it will ultimately provide much greater access to Downtown.

Downtown must balance different types of mobility needs.

Currently, 45% of Downtown’s street right-of-way is dedicated to vehicle movement, limiting opportunities for people-centered public spaces and encouraging car usage as the most convenient and efficient way to navigate through Downtown. The propensity for people to move around Downtown by car is misaligned with the City’s goals for balanced mobility. To track how people are moving through Downtown, the City of Seattle assesses what is called "mode split," which is the percentage of people who use different forms of transportation to get around. Seattle has lofty goals for what methods people use to get around Downtown and it will take adapting our built environment to make those goals a reality.

The City’s recently completed Seattle Transportation Plan and Imagine Greater Downtown (IGD) Plan set the stage for reimagining Downtown’s streets with a focus on walkability, accessibility, and vibrant public spaces. Today, Downtown’s walk-bike-transit modeshare is 48% with a target of 85%, while driving is 52% with a target of 15%.

Investing in safe movement is a priority.

In community conversations, the word “safety” was a frequently referenced, used often to describe personal comfort navigating around Downtown. Crossing streets as a pedestrian, the ability to bike down crowded arteries as a cyclist, and visibility for motorists were centered in the comments from Downtowners related to mobility. Research by the Seattle Department of Transportation confirmed community concerns. The Seattle Department of Transportation has implemented a wide range of safety improvements throughout Downtown, including giving pedestrians a head start at signals, no right on red restrictions, protected bike lanes, and curb bulbouts. But more work remains, and the Seattle Transportation Plan's projects work to reduce serious and fatal crashes by reallocating space for multimodal travel and prioritizing pedestrian and cyclist safety.

Planned Downtown investments need to be aligned with The Seattle Transportation Plan priorities.

The Seattle Transportation Plan envisions a robust People Streets and Public Spaces program, with Downtown as a key area for intervention. Future investments—ranging from major redesigns to lighter, tactical improvements—can transform Downtown into a more welcoming, inclusive, and engaging environment for all.

The Seattle Transportation Plan identifies 81 major capital projects, including 11 within the Downtown Regional Center. The transportation levy, passed in 2024, is the first big step towards implementing the Seattle Transportation Plan and includes funding for a range of capital projects and programs to help strengthen our regional centers.



“
Freight and mobility are critical to business and residential uses.

“
Downtown needs to become less automotive-friendly and car-reliant. This reduces the carbon load of downtown and helps with other environmental and quality of life goals.

In the Transit Survey, When asked why Downtowners Drive...

Top reasons	52% said they liked the convenience
	51% Shared that their commutes are much faster/shorter
	31% Referenced family or daily needs obligations
<hr/>	
Lowest reasons	8% Job requires the use of a car
	3% It is less expensive

“
As someone who does not own a car, I feel like we have a sustainable and resilient transportation system downtown. What we don't have is easy and safe pathways for pedestrians.

“
Emphasis on non car forms of mobility.

“
The biggest safety issue downtown is pedestrian safety.

Policies and Actions

FW 1 Rethink and re-allocate space on streets to put people first.

Policy FW 1.1 Pursue street transformations to create more space for walking, rolling, biking, transit, and lingering or gathering.

ACTIONS

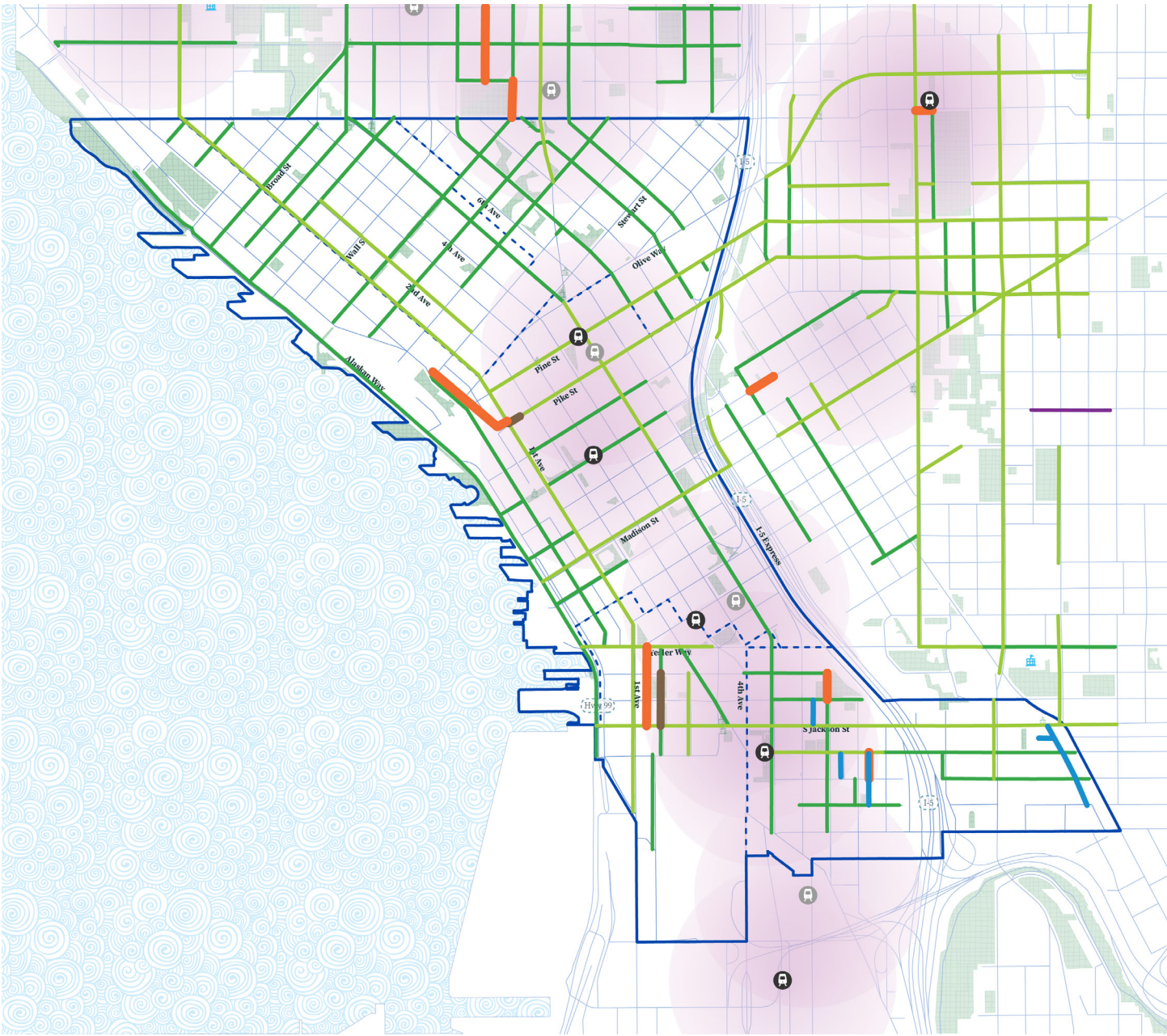
- 1 Pursue planned corridor transformations and investments subject to available funding and guided by the Seattle Transportation Plan.
- 2 Provide dedicated places for people to walk, bike, or roll safely separated from vehicles by using context-appropriate treatments, such as protected bike lanes or “complete street” corridors, especially on major truck routes. (Seattle Transportation Plan)
- 3 Prioritize climate-friendly, multimodal street uses when transit pathways are no longer needed due to reduced bus volumes, and support reallocating right-of-way as transit service needs evolve.
- 4 Ensure that major downtown corridor projects, such as the Denny Way improvements, incorporate opportunities to maintain and expand pedestrian space.
- 5 Analyze and implement the Shared Streets Law (SB 5595) on appropriate streets Downtown.

Case Study

Center City Street Closure Program

Philadelphia, PA

In 2023, the Center City District (CCD) instituted a temporary street closure program with the City of Philadelphia. Walnut Street, a major retail corridor that connects to Rittenhouse Square, was closed on Sundays as a street closure pilot program. During four road closures in September, nearly 90% of nearby businesses reported increased foot traffic and about 79% saw higher sales. Some also reported less shoplifting. Visitor patterns shifted from local to regional over the weeks.



People Streets and Public Spaces

- Special Alley**
Historic and special alleys with community destinations or retail density that generate human-scale spaces and accommodate essential service functions.
- Event Street**
Streets designed to host intermittent community events. Streets may close movement of all vehicles, except emergency access, on a frequent basis.
- Pedestrianized Street**
Streets where people walking take priority that are permanently or intermittently closed to motorized vehicles.

- Destination Street**
Streets in the heart of a neighborhood with a high density of destinations—shops, restaurants, cultural centers.
- Strolling Street**
Streets designed as linear park-like streets for recreation, exercise, connecting with nature or community, or traveling to specific destinations.

Future Neighborhood Study

0 mi 0.5 mi
Source: Seattle Department of Transportation

Policy FW 1.2 Leverage large events to introduce people-forward streets and flexible street transformations.

Policy FW 1.3 Advance a mix of seasonal, weekend, and in some cases, permanent restrictions for personal vehicle traffic to make areas of Downtown car-free or “car-lite.”

ACTIONS

- 1 Work with businesses to understand delivery and access needs and ensure that any street transformations result in thriving local downtown economies.
- 2 Study outcomes of vehicle traffic restrictions and open streets concepts.
- 3 Provide ample information, activation and programming, and evaluation tools to set these programs up for success and grow them over time.
- 4 Activate Downtown with more frequent and large scale “Open Streets” events. Temporarily restrict through-traffic and promote sustainable transportation, climate action, local business activations, and programming on our streets and sidewalks.
- 5 Pilot short-term street transformations throughout Downtown. Explore restrictions in locations with already high pedestrian foot traffic such as near the Pike Place Market, along 1st Avenue, and within Pioneer Square, and Chinatown-International District.
- 6 Pursue major expansions of car-free gathering spaces in partnership with local venues, and alongside community groups.

Policy FW 1.4 When providing maintenance, update the street to reflect right-of-way allocation needs that support adjacent land uses and planned transportation networks.

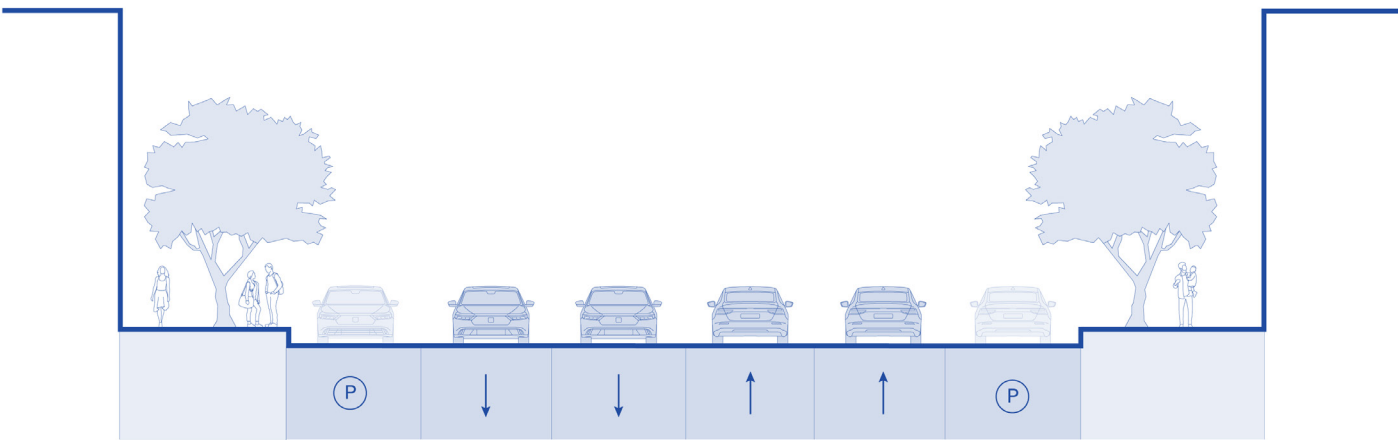
ACTIONS

- 1 Utilize a “Maintain & Modernize” approach by leveraging our maintenance projects to include right-of-way reallocation and improvements that benefit safety, sustainability, and transportation equity.

Policy FW 1.5 Update design standards to better support people streets and public spaces that enhance community health and improve safety.

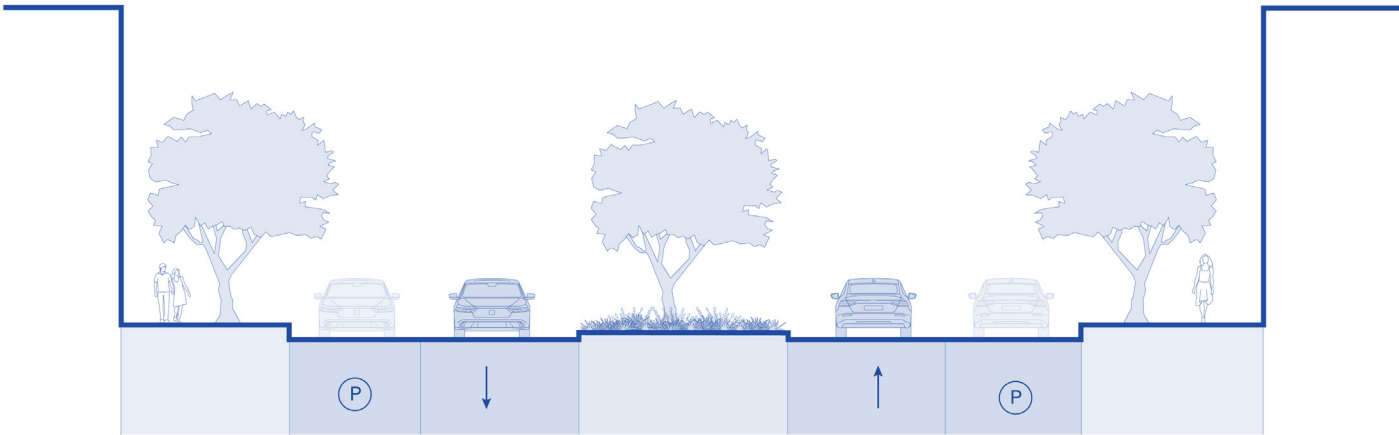
ACTIONS

- 1 Update Streets Illustrated Downtown design standards to reflect policy goals and strategies outlined in this plan. Include design guidance that demonstrates different allocations of pedestrian space that support adjacent land uses and our downtown greening goals.
- 2 Review existing street concept plans for Downtown streets and assess the need to update or archive based on updated Streets Illustrated standards.



1st Avenue (Existing)

*North of Stewart Street



1st Avenue (Conceptual)

*North of Stewart Street

Source: Seattle Department of Transportation

FW 2

Make traveling through Downtown a safe and comfortable experience.

Policy FW 2.1 Prioritize pedestrian safety and visibility at crossings throughout Downtown.

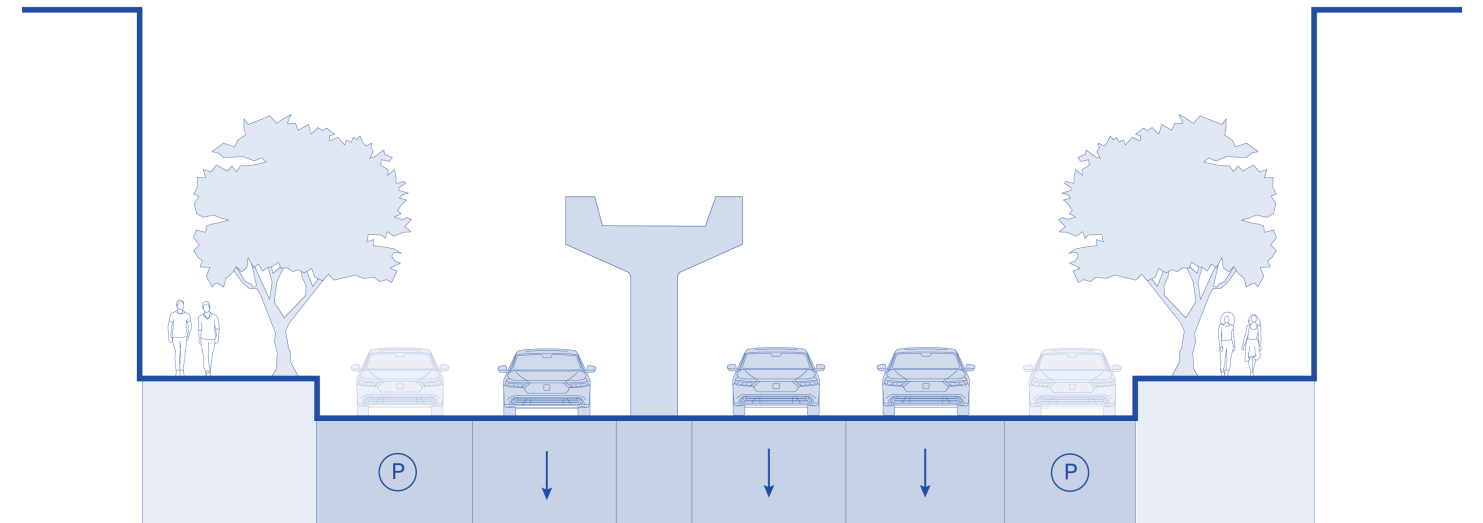
ACTIONS

- 1 Operate signals at intersections to maximize pedestrian comfort and safety, through Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs), adequate crossing times, and innovative treatments such as flashing yellow turn signals for turning vehicles.
- 2 Improve conditions and comfort for people walking across I-5 on all underpasses and overpasses. (Dearborn Street to Denny Way)
- 3 Consider expanding No Turn on Red program in Downtown.
- 4 “Daylight” every intersection in Downtown, by making people walking, biking, and rolling more visible by improving sight lines at intersections through treatments like curb bulbs, micromobility parking, and plantings.
- 5 Advance implementation through coordinated efforts among agencies on projects identified in the multi-agency South Downtown Hub plan.

Policy FW 2.2 Apply strategies to reduce collisions and vehicle speeding in pedestrian-rich Downtown neighborhoods.

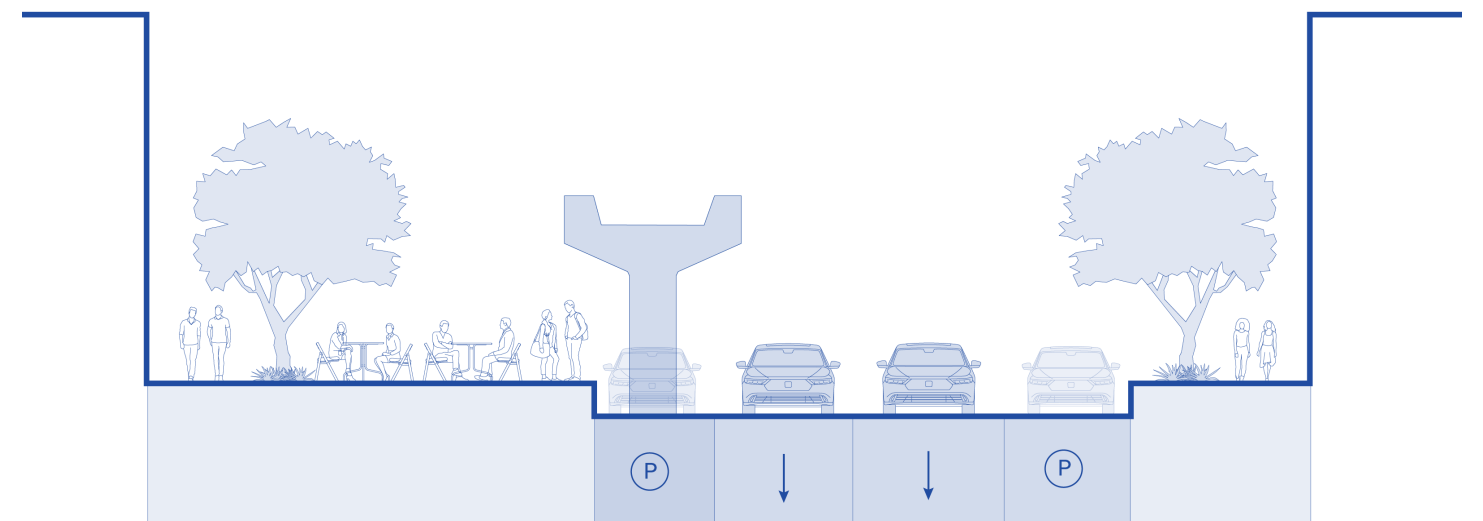
ACTIONS

- 1 Use High Injury Network (HIN) + Bike Pedestrian Safety Analysis (BPSA) data to inform investments and programming to calm traffic, reduce collisions, and slow down speeding vehicles on downtown arterial streets.
- 2 Separate pedestrians from moving vehicles by physical barriers such as trees, parklets, and vehicle or bike parking to create a buffer between pedestrian spaces and moving traffic.
- 3 Apply Complete Streets policies to re-prioritize our Downtown rights-of-way to achieve our mobility, access, livability, and safety goals. Consider policy recommendation options for one-way streets Downtown.
- 4 Re-imagine the spaces where the grids change to increase visibility, decrease pedestrian crossing distances, and other interventions to help prevent vehicles from turning at high rates of speed.
- 5 Improve pedestrian safety and comfort at signalized intersections where highway ramps meet city street.
- 6 Explore eliminating free-flow and high-speed on and off ramps throughout the City Center.
- 7 Design streets with elements that reduce speeding from highway off-ramps as vehicles enter the Downtown street network.



5th Avenue (Existing)

*North of Stewart Street



5th Avenue (Conceptual)

*North of Stewart Street

Source: Seattle Department of Transportation

FW 3

Celebrate Downtown’s unique cultures and histories – especially its Indigenous population – throughout its transportation system and public spaces.

Policy FW 3.1 Reflect Indigenous art, culture, language, and gathering spaces throughout Downtown’s streets and public spaces, especially on the shoreline, to honor Native cultures and our deep relationship with the water.

ACTIONS

- 1 Continue to use the 1% for Arts program, coordinated between the Office of Arts and Culture and the Seattle Department of Transportation, to better highlight and connect with Indigenous art and culture.
- 2 Work in partnership with local tribes and native people on opportunities for interpretation, honorary renaming or other ways to honor Indigenous culture and language.
- 3 Continue to coordinate with Washington State Department of Transportation to invest in future planning to transform Pier 48 for public use.

Policy FW 3.2 Encourage self-expression and neighborhood identity in the right-of-way.

ACTIONS

- 1 Collaboratively plan with communities to identify opportunities for People Streets and Public Spaces in each of the Downtown neighborhoods. (Seattle Transportation Plan)
- 2 Explore opportunities to transform streets near light rail stations to advance people-centered spaces, advance PSPS goals, support public life and commerce, and add trees and greening.
- 3 Support community-driven activation and permits for Festival Streets.
- 4 Encourage more flexible uses for waterfront sidewalks. Allow and encourage café seating and sidewalk activation on the east side of Alaskan Way through permitting.

Policy FW 3.3 Use transportation and public space investments to help repair past and current harms to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) groups, in concert with Seattle’s transportation equity strategy.

ACTIONS

- 1 Normalize the practice of making decisions about policies and right-of-way allocations with input from vulnerable communities. (Seattle Transportation Plan)
- 2 Compensate community partners for their valuable work to connect and communicate with their networks and uplift community-driven initiatives, planning processes, and existing structures. (Seattle Transportation Plan)
- 3 Design transit facilities that reflect the history and cultural identities of the neighborhoods they serve, while maintaining systemwide legibility. (Imagine Greater Downtown)
- 4 Collaborate with municipal, county, regional, and state transportation partners to consider the transportation needs of people who have been displaced from Seattle. (Seattle Transportation Plan)

Case Study

Seattle Public Space Management

Seattle’s Public Space Management team permits food and flower vending in public streets, sidewalks, and plazas. Vendors must hold a City business license, obtain a Street Use Vending Permit (site-specific for carts, trucks, or temporary events), and comply with health, fire, and insurance requirements.

Currently active vending sites in curb spaces and on sidewalks (as of June 2024) are concentrated on the north side of Downtown.



FW 4 Create a sustainable and resilient Downtown transportation system.

Policy FW 4.1 Deliver projects and operate the transportation system to advance our climate goals.

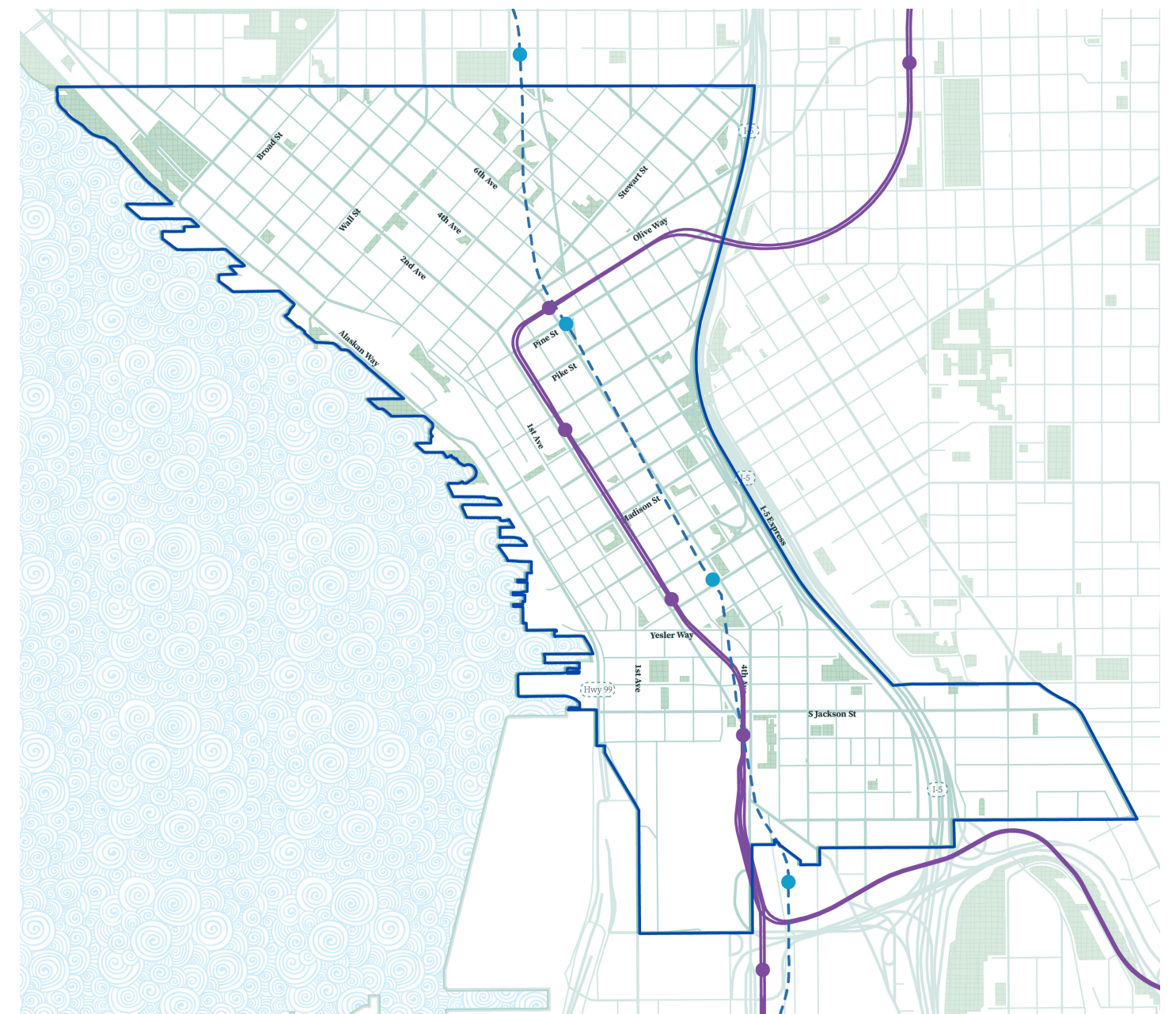
ACTIONS

- 1 Implement more green streets designations with a particular focus on areas deficient in park space and tree canopy.
- 2 Operate the transportation system—signals, markings, signage, and right-of-way allocation—to encourage sustainable travel choices.
- 3 Advance build-out of the planned networks of the Seattle Transportation Plan, including the pedestrian, bicycle and e-mobility, transit, and freight networks.
- 4 Explore consolidated or reconfigured transit service pathways through Belltown and Denny Triangle as transit is restructured.
- 5 Upgrade bikeways over and under the interstate including South Dearborn Street, King Street, Yesler Way, Spring Street, Seneca Street, Pike Street, and Pine Street.
- 6 Upgrade bikeways as they interact with nearby on and off ramps including at 7th Avenue, Hubbell Place, Melrose Avenue, and Howell Street.

Policy FW 4.2 Make frequent service corridors the backbone of Downtown’s surface transit network (buses, bus rapid transit, and streetcar). (Imagine Greater Downtown)

ACTIONS

- 1 Invest in high quality accessible bus service and facilities. (Imagine Greater Downtown)
- 2 Provide priority for buses at bottlenecks entering and exiting Greater Downtown. (Imagine Greater Downtown)
- 3 Plan streets and service so that transit travel is reliable and not significantly more time consuming than car travel. (Imagine Greater Downtown)
- 4 Improve travel time reliability for transit approaching and across I-5 including crossings on Jackson St, James St, Madison & Spring Streets, Pike & Pine Streets, and Denny Way.
- 5 Provide security, maintenance, and operations resources to ensure transit stops and stations feel safe, clean, uncluttered, and inviting with ample weather protection, lighting, and seating. (Imagine Greater Downtown)



Light Rail

- Existing Light Rail Line
- Existing Light Rail Stop
- Proposed Light Rail Alignment
- ◆ Proposed Light Rail Stop

0 mi 0.5 mi

Source: Seattle Department of Transportation

Policy FW 4.3 Provide programmatic support to promote clean, sustainable travel options.

ACTIONS

- 1 Influence Downtown commuters to “flip their trips” away from personal vehicles to more efficient and sustainable travel options through existing and new programs.
- 2 Expand programming that welcomes visitors to Downtown Seattle and encourages them to travel by walking, rolling, and public transit as much as possible. Partner with local Business Improvement Associations and Visit Seattle to expand programs, especially the lead-up to major national and international events.
- 3 Continue to communicate to the public on impacts of regional construction projects (such as “Revive I-5”) and apply communications strategies and engagement, and partnership with large employers and institutions to encourage sustainable and efficient travel behavior.

Policy FW 4.4 Explore innovative strategies to foster neighborhood vitality and improved community health.

ACTIONS

- 1 Aim to improve transit speed and reliability by examining opportunities to consolidate transit operations onto fewer streets with transit priority and enhanced passenger facilities while maintaining access to Greater Downtown. (Imagine Greater Downtown)
- 2 Explore opportunities to increase permeable surface area, the tree canopy, and green stormwater infrastructure.
- 3 Explore mobility partnerships among public organizations, private firms, and foundations to accelerate sustainable mobility innovations.
- 4 Support prompt incident response times through operational or land use strategies, such as use of smaller emergency response vehicles that better fit in urban environments and increased service coverage by adding fire stations or battalions. (Seattle Transportation Plan)

Policy FW 4.5 Advance multimodal access to create connected, people-centered places that reflect community visions and support equitable, vibrant growth.

ACTIONS

- 1 Build on community driven efforts to improve public realm and streetscapes to meet the unique, place specific needs and desires for creative outlets and commerce.
- 2 Explore opportunities to transform streets around light rail stations to advance people-centered spaces and People Streets and Public Spaces (PSPS) goals.
- 3 Support communities in developing and documenting their future visions, goals, and needs so that as the City develops plans and capital projects, they have existing work and documentation to refer to.
- 4 Explore strategies to prioritize and encourage inclusion of community-serving uses in new development adjacent to stations—including affordable housing, childcare, cultural space, and gathering space—to support communities who most depend on transit to get where they need to go.
- 4 Explore strategies to create a connected and thoughtful pedestrian-focused public realm within the immediate vicinity of light rail stations, incorporating features that reflect local context and cultures and that provide multi-generational gathering spaces for youth, elders, and families.
- 5 Rights of way within the immediate proximity of light rail stations should be designed and allocated to prioritize safe and convenient access and multimodal connections for transit, pedestrians, bicyclists, freight and urban goods.

FW 5

Design Downtown streets to support innovation and a thriving local economy.

Policy FW 5.1 Pair local land uses with dynamic transportation needs.

ACTIONS

- 1 Adapt curb lanes for the benefit of local commerce, such as critical access needs, café seating, vending, and other programming.
- 2 Repurpose “slip lanes” and other irregular street grid locations for local activities.

Policy FW 5.2 Support economic vitality through the movement of goods and services on our city streets.

ACTIONS

- 1 Ensure the important roles of the Port of Seattle and related freight movement and logistics are considered as we maintain and modernize Downtown.
- 2 Use right-sized vehicles, such as e-cargo bikes, to showcase innovation in freight movement for “final 50 feet” urban deliveries.
- 3 Minimize stress on potentially vulnerable areaways by implementing curb lane restrictions for heavy vehicles where appropriate, while strengthening and maintaining vulnerable areaways, where possible, to support critical curb access.

Policy FW 5.3 Plan for and support dedicated spaces that accommodate freight and logistics activities.

ACTIONS

- 1 Develop welcoming mobility and logistics hubs that accommodate freight needs and are coordinated with other planned investments.
- 2 Pilot logistics hubs to advance sustainable first/last mile delivery solutions.
- 3 Explore launching pilots of Mobility and Logistics Hubs — work with local businesses and freight operators to pilot first/last mile logistics hubs. Consider how interim use of vacant retail and/or vacant parcels and/or underutilized parking areas can accommodate such concepts.
- 4 Implement Community & Mobility Hub improvements at Colman Dock and all Link light rails stations.

FW 6

Use streets to help people navigate and find their way through a legible Downtown.

Policy FW 6.1 Celebrate downtown Seattle’s unique geography.

ACTIONS

- 1 Stitch neighborhood divides through ground floor activations, re-design of spaces under I-5, enhanced crossings over I-5, and potential lidding of I-5 and BNSF railway tracks.
- 2 Capitalize on the Downtown street grid’s views of Puget Sound, pursue new pocket parks, and enhanced view corridors.
- 3 Install temporary and permanent features to trace historic water lines, and integrate water history, shoreline habitats, and stories into public space Downtown. Illustrate how water has shaped the city.
- 4 Identify opportunities and expand publicly accessible “hill climbs.”
- 5 Improve visibility of existing and install new hill climb assist pathways in concert with redevelopment.
- 6 Use existing slopes and access points to minimize vertical transitions or the need to use elevators where possible, while considering access for all ages and abilities. (Imagine Greater Downtown)

Case Study

Urban Freight Lab

Seattle, WA

The Urban Freight Lab acts as a researcher and facilitator, bringing together a network of interconnected stakeholders from both the private and public sectors to collaborate with its research team. This partnership advances emerging last-mile delivery and sustainable urban logistics. The Lab has completed comprehensive research into the “Final 50 Feet” of the goods delivery system, a pivotal segment for improving urban delivery efficiency. Working between industry and policy, the Lab uses its research to create practical solutions that make cities more sustainable, livable, and efficient.



Policy FW 6.3 Provide clear, consistent, and accessible wayfinding and signage throughout Downtown.

ACTIONS

- 1 Create directional signage to communicate how someone with accessibility needs can safely navigate slopes.
- 2 Invest in more wayfinding along the southern portion of Alaskan Way to better facilitate connections between the waterfront and Lumen Field and T-Mobile Park.
- 3 Focus wayfinding information and communications campaigns to welcome visitors to Downtown Seattle and provide them clear and useful guidance on finding their way around, primarily through sustainable travel options.
- 4 Continue to install Seamless Seattle wayfinding columns and kiosks to aid navigation Downtown.
- 5 Implement cohesive wayfinding for people using bicycles and e-mobility on legible pathways throughout Downtown.

Policy FW 6.4 Prepare for dynamic changes in transportation.

ACTIONS

- 1 Create frequent and reliable transit service corridors as bus service is restructured Downtown in concert with light rail system expansion.
- 2 Develop a holistic plan for managing light rail construction-related travel disruptions.
- 3 As bus service is restructured in concert with light rail expansion, reallocate unneeded bus-only lanes to support businesses, meet critical access needs, and improve safety.
- 4 Work with King County Metro to reduce the amount of on-street layover space, especially in the Pioneer Square, Belltown, and Denny Triangle neighborhoods and reprioritize the space for people and commerce.
- 5 Test sustainable, zero-emission autonomous vehicle technology in conjunction with large events.

Case Study
Seamless Seattle
Seattle, WA

Seamless Seattle is the city’s pedestrian wayfinding program, designed to make walking easier and more intuitive across neighborhoods. The system uses consistent signage with heads-up maps, walking times, and a unified design standard to connect people to transit, cultural destinations, and visitor attractions. It helps residents and visitors move on foot, supports accessibility, and strengthens neighborhood identity. With continued installations across the city, Seamless Seattle is establishing a consistent system that will guide pedestrians for years to come.



Case Study
10th Avenue South Hill Climb
Seattle, WA

The 10th Avenue South Hill Climb in Seattle connects Yesler Terrace to the International District by combining a stairway with a parallel, ADA-accessible ramp. It was designed to make a steep slope walkable and inclusive, with resting areas, railings, and lighting for comfort and safety. This project supports walkability in a hilly neighborhood while meeting the needs of people with limited mobility.



Future Land Use

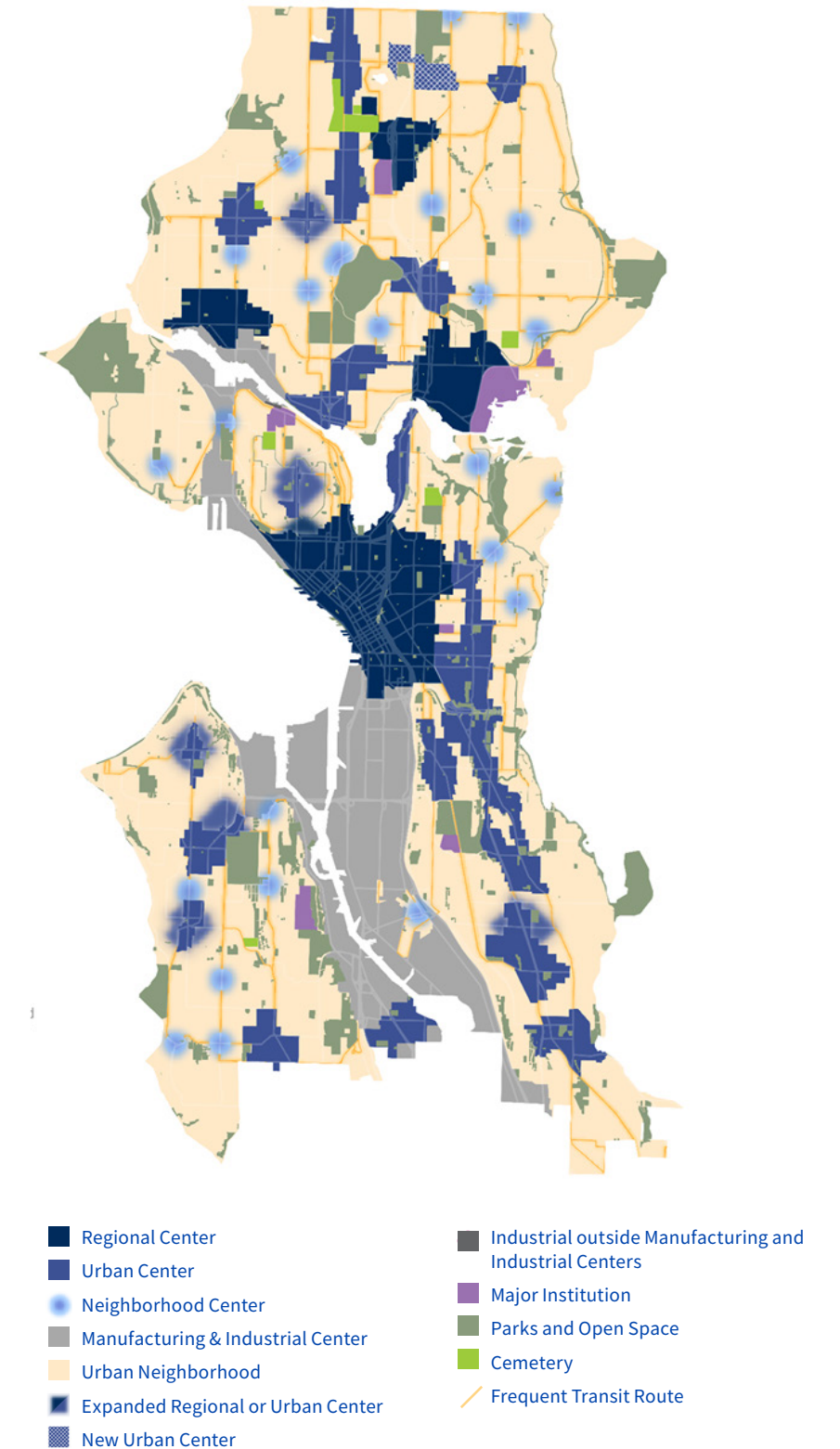


The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) provides direction on how zoning and development regulations should guide Downtown's growth and evolution. The FLUM supports a range of City priorities, with a particular focus on implementing the growth strategy outlined in the Growth Strategy element and illustrated in the One Seattle Plan's FLUM to the right.

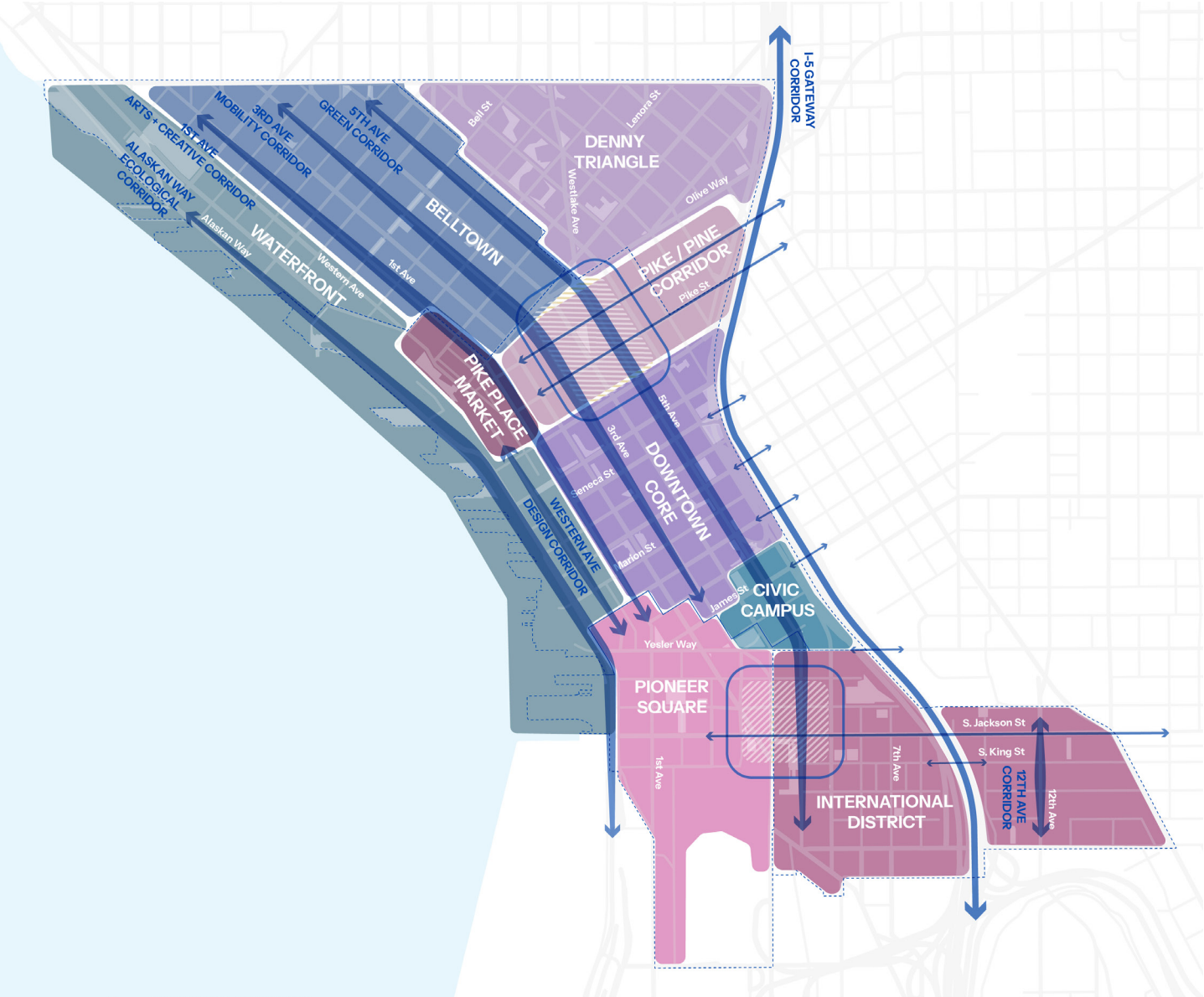
The FLUM identifies how different areas within Downtown can support growth, and the type of residential, commercial, and industrial buildings that are appropriate in Downtown's neighborhoods. Specifically, this section describes and maps different place types.

The FLUM accommodates the growth that is planned for Downtown and advances the broader vision of this subarea plan. It includes new concepts in planning for growth and development Downtown, including a new Waterfront neighborhood and key corridors with distinct land use and design approaches.

City of Seattle Future Land Use Map
(One Seattle Plan)



Downtown Districts



Future Land Use Map

- Major Corridor
- Improved Connections
- Transportation Hub

Waterfront

This new district is defined by marquee open spaces, public amenities, and cultural landmarks that serve both residents and visitors. In the future, active frontages along the waterfront and thoughtful building massing will preserve key views, while mixed-use development integrates retail, commercial, and residential spaces to provide more public amenities that enhance daily life. Commercial spaces on the eastern side of Alaskan Way should be designed to spill out onto the sidewalk, providing an engaging experience and connection to Puget Sound.

Belltown

The intent of this Land Use map is to support diverse residential development in Belltown, including towers and infill townhouses, alongside compatible retail, office, service, and institutional uses. Market rental housing will be encouraged, with priority given to residential uses and higher density in new buildings. The neighborhood will remain primarily residential, while also accommodating hospitality and lodging. Sustainable practices should focus on redeveloping surface parking lots into infill housing. Development will respect view corridors of the Space Needle and Downtown, while supporting walkability, arts-based activities, small-scale retail, open spaces, sunlight access, and privacy. Family-friendly housing with access to cultural and educational amenities should also be encouraged.

Denny Triangle

Denny Triangle will continue to evolve with a mix of high-density commercial, employment, and residential uses. As the neighborhood changes, the focus will be on sustainable practices and supporting amenities for families who live and work in the area. Development should leverage opportunities to create green streets, providing a comfortable tree canopy for residents and visitors alike. The larger-scale modern environment should be designed to support an active ground floor experience and visibility into some of Seattle’s newest buildings.



Pier 62



1st Ave and Battery St



Urban Triangle Park

Pike/Pine District

The Pike/Pine area will focus on supporting gatherings, attractions, and activations. Future changes will encourage a high concentration of active retail and commercial uses, particularly at key corners and important building frontages, to create a vibrant and engaging experience. Thoughtful design and development standards will support compatible, high-quality redevelopment. Commercial spaces will support a wide variety of experiences with a focus on performance and cultural events.

Pike Place Market

By prioritizing local entrepreneurship and fostering a lively, walkable atmosphere, Pike Place Market will continue to be a vital part of the City’s identity and a major attraction for visitors. The area will focus on creating a pedestrian-friendly environment with clear wayfinding from surrounding districts, improved accessibility and sustained vibrancy. Lower-scale building heights on 1st Avenue will be maintained in order to protect historic views, draw sunlight into the Market, and act as a buffer between the Market and the Downtown Core. This will ensure the Market remains a welcoming space for both locals and tourists.

Downtown Core

This area will transition into a diverse mix of uses, including an increase in high-density residential development that takes advantage of the area’s unique topography and views. Future changes will promote adaptive reuse and conversion of existing structures into residential spaces. Future development should be leveraged through design to create high-quality multimodal connections and pedestrian infrastructure that furthers social equity goals and housing needs. Over time, combined with planned light rail and additional stations, these strategies will decrease the area’s dependence on cars and increase transportation options. The continued transformation of Westlake Park will better allow it to serve its important role as a gathering place and site of expression, enhanced by additional local residential growth and community life.



Pine St and 5th Ave



Pike Place Market



4th Ave and Madison St

Pioneer Square

A focus on historic preservation and adaptive reuse will maintain and celebrate the Pioneer Square neighborhood’s rich cultural heritage. Support will be provided to small, local businesses, especially those in the cultural and arts sectors, fostering a vibrant community of creators and entrepreneurs. Historic open spaces will be enhanced and updated to better serve the needs of the community. Similar to the Downtown Core, opportunity sites near transportation will create higher density development and further social equity goals and housing needs.

Civic Campus

Downtown’s Civic Campus will present a refreshed presence for King County, Seattle, and other government hubs, while introducing high-density development, particularly housing, supported by high-capacity transit. Building heights here will be among the tallest in the region, and this increased density and reinvestment will also create new public spaces, while broadening the district’s current focus on criminal justice functions.

Chinatown-International District

The Chinatown-International District will support a vibrant mix of uses that honor its cultural heritage while strengthening its small business, restaurant, and retail economy. Infill residential development will be prioritized near the light rail station, particularly in the southern portion of the area, with a focus on meeting the multi-generational housing needs of the community. New development will be thoughtfully integrated to respect the district’s history and cultural significance while fostering a diverse and dynamic neighborhood. In Little Saigon, east of I-5, light industrial, production, distribution, and repair uses will continue to be supported, recognizing their importance to the local economy. Additionally, the reallocation of public rights-of-way will be explored to improve access to green space and create more areas for cultural expression and community celebrations.



Occidental Square



City Hall Park



King St and 6th Ave S

Downtown Corridors and Hubs

Complete Corridors in the Downtown Core

North-south transportation within the Commercial Core is relatively limited between Elliott Bay and Interstate-5. To address this, Downtown Seattle’s north-south avenues work together, along with the Link light rail tunnel, to meet the district’s mobility and access needs—a strategy we call the “Complete Corridors” approach. When all functions cannot fit on a single street, nearby parallel streets are used to accommodate the remaining needs.

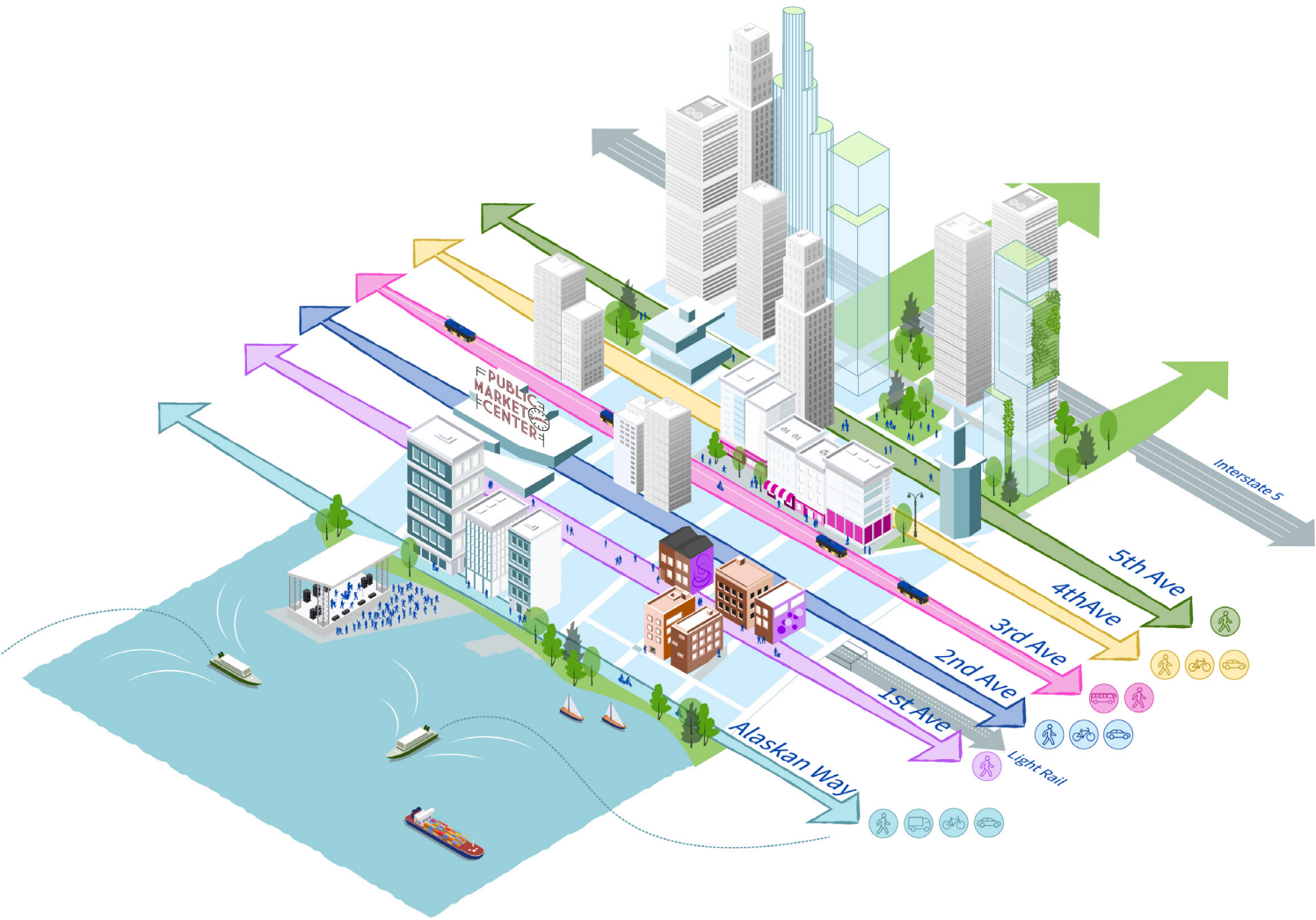
The table shows the modal priorities for the six north-south streets, illustrating how pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, freight, and vehicles are served and prioritized. Most streets also provide space for essential district access, including loading and short-term parking, while alleys support commercial deliveries.

Looking ahead, plans include a second Link light rail tunnel east of the existing tunnel and the addition of the Center City Connector streetcar on 1st Avenue beyond 2026.

Modal Priorities

Source: Seattle Department of Transportation

	 Pedestrian	 Bicycle	 Transit	 Freight	 Vehicle
Alaskan Way	✓	✓		✓	✓
Post St / Western Ave	✓				
1st Ave	✓				
2nd Ave	✓	✓			✓
3rd Ave	✓		✓		
4th Ave	✓	✓			✓
5th Ave	✓				
6th Ave					✓



Alaskan Way Waterfront

The recently completed reconstruction of Alaskan Way is oriented towards the waterfront, maximizing views and sight lines. The corridor includes two new pier parks, multi-modal promenade, and new salmon-friendly seawall. The project included a series of new connections to the neighborhoods to the east, including the new Overlook Walk between Pike Place Market and the Aquarium.

3rd Ave Mobility Corridor

3rd Ave is Seattle premier transit street. As an all-day bus-only street, the street is focused on maintaining bus travel time and reliability within the congested Downtown Core. The street is also the focus of bus stop improvements such as shelters and real time arrival information. Along 3rd Ave’s multimodal corridor, housing density will capitalize on transit investments, with active ground-floor spaces providing essential amenities and resources for commuters and residents.



Alaskan Way



3rd Ave and Virginia St

1st Ave / Western Arts and Culture Corridor

The Western Ave Cultural Corridor is a compact warehouse district largely developed in the early 1900s and preserved inadvertently by its proximity to elevated Route 99 viaduct. Its special character is created by the corridor’s collection of buildings—constructed of heavy timber, brick and concrete—and its narrow road width. The naturally sloping, ADA-accessible streetscape encourages walkability and easy connections between the waterfront and the Pike Place Market. Buildings that were built property line to property line, together with the similarities of style, scale and exterior finishes, give Western Avenue between the Pike Place Market and Pioneer Square its unique, unified character which is ideal for supporting Seattle’s strong design and maker culture.

The delineation of 1st Ave / Western Ave as an arts and culture corridor is intended to encourage the conversion and renovation of existing warehouse buildings and the construction of compatible new buildings, in a way that will produce a contemporary mix of commercial, industrial, and dwelling uses, and will introduce more active uses that support the design sector. Emphasis will be placed on requiring the external design of buildings to follow the proportions, rhythm and details of the predominant circa 1900 architectural features, whether renovating or constructing a new building.



1st Ave and Washington St



Western Ave Looking North from Marion St Pedestrian Bridge

2nd and 4th Ave One-Way Pair

2nd Ave and 4th Ave serve a critical multi-modal and access function through Downtown. As a one-way pair, they are part of the National Highway System and serve as the primary vehicular corridor in Downtown. These two corridors also both have a two-way protected bike lane, which is the primary bicycle pathway serving the Commercial Core and access to Downtown beyond the Waterfront. Additionally, both streets have Business Access Transit lanes, which serve peak hour regional bus routes and off-peak meet some of the short-term parking and loading needs of the district.

5th Ave Green Corridor

Development along 5th Avenue will prioritize pedestrian-friendly improvements, emphasizing increased vegetation and expanded tree canopy to enhance the urban environment. This corridor is a key route for Downtown wayfinding, connecting the Seattle Center to the Chinatown-International District. New Link stations on 5th Avenue would further strengthen this connection between Seattle Center and the Chinatown-International District.

I-5 Corridor Connectivity

Improving pedestrian safety through safe crossings, underpass enhancements, and traffic calming measures will create more accessible connections to the East of Downtown. Strategic investments in building frontages, transparency, rights-of-way, public spaces, and infrastructure can transform the corridor into a more integrated, walkable link between communities.



2nd Ave and Marion St



5th Ave and Lenora St



Cherry St I-5 Underpass

Westlake Hub

This regional transit destination serves as a landing site for thousands of visitors, workers and residents of Seattle. The site will offer a 24/7 safe and reliable regional connection and orientation to Downtown Seattle as the heart of the Puget Sound Region. The future of this modern civic square will be supported by high density housing and experience-based retail that is accessible throughout the daytime and evening.

South Downtown Hub

Coordinated citywide initiatives have prioritized the area around King Street and Union Station for community members to safely come together, connect with one another, and access regional transit of all forms. Transit-oriented development in the South Downtown Hub will meet the plan’s goals for increased affordability and amenities.



Westlake Park



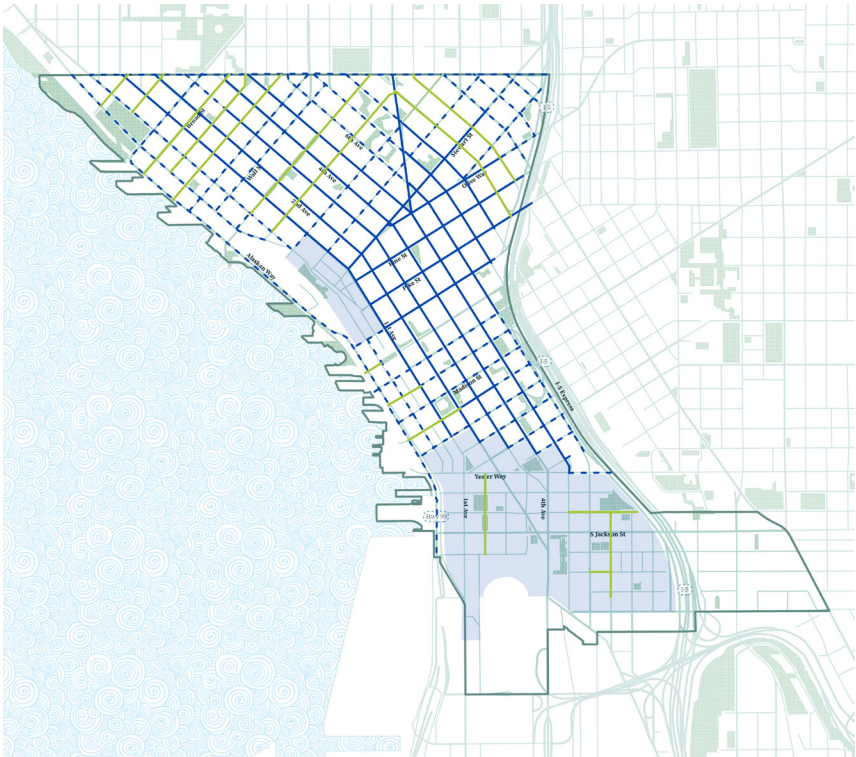
Pedestrian Streets

Since the last Downtown Planning effort, many major changes to the streets and rights-of-way have occurred in Downtown. The Alaskan Way Viaduct has been removed, and our Waterfront Park has come to fruition. Adding residential capacity Downtown, while maintaining select concentrations of retail activity and enhancing pedestrian experience, has emerged as a priority. These adaptations of a large portion of our Downtown necessitates our land use code and street frontage requirements to adapt to these needs.

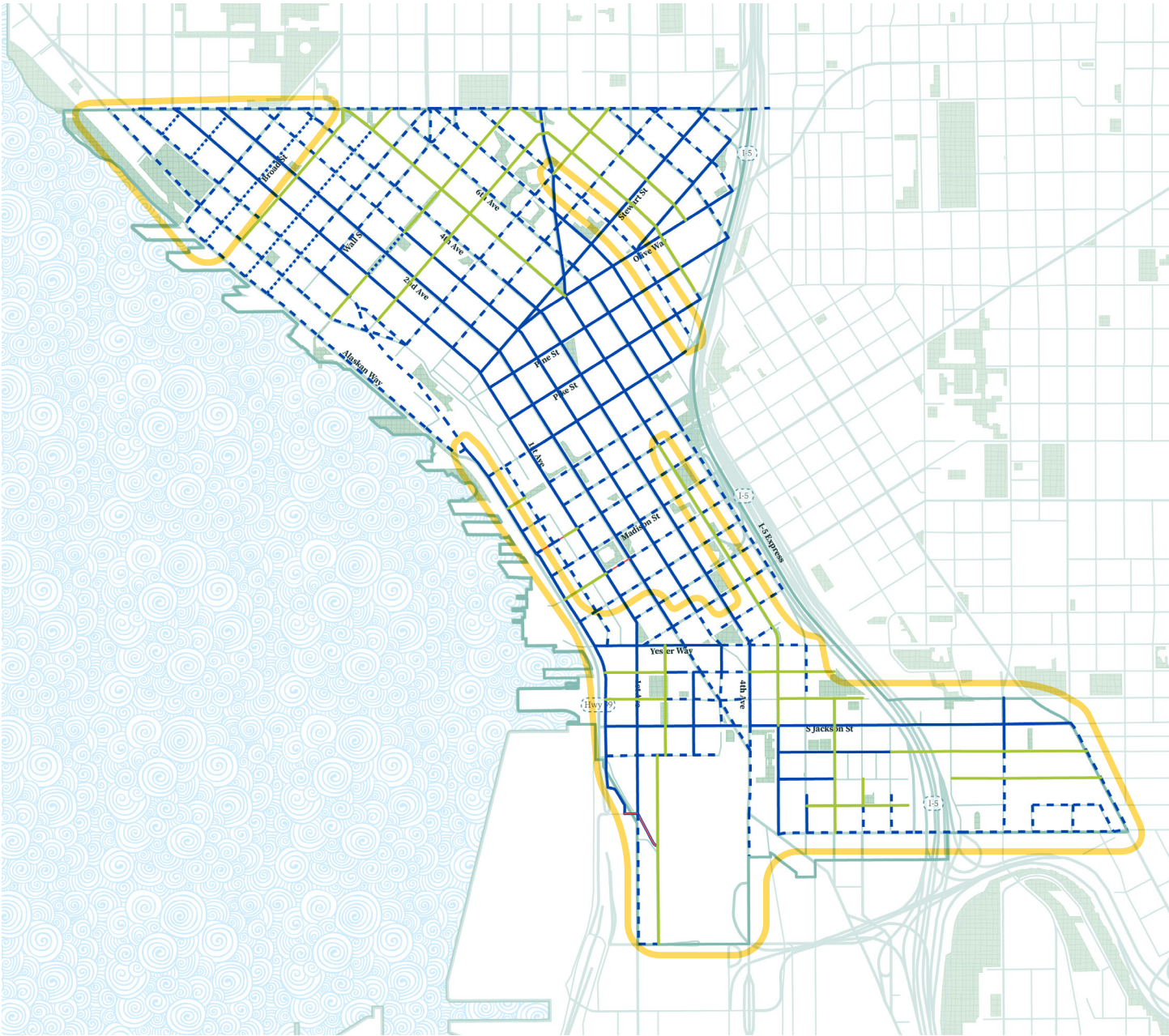
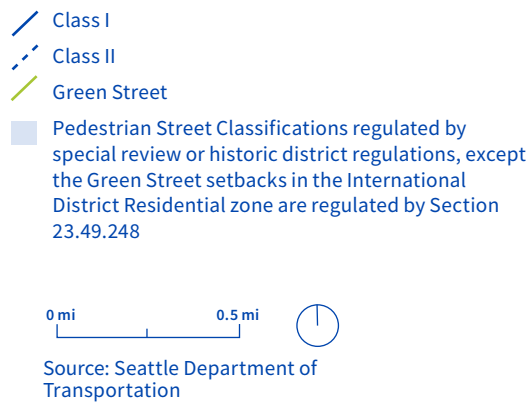
Pedestrian Street Classifications

Pedestrian Street Classifications serve to support an active and pedestrian focused environment throughout or most densely populated portions of Seattle. In alignment with the greater residential focus in numerous areas around Downtown, this plan outlines recommendations to adapt our existing pedestrian street classifications.

- Along the Waterfront, this plan adds street frontage requirements to support a cohesive and continuous retail and food service environment.
- There is a reduction of retail frontage requirements in the northern portion of 3rd Ave to allow for increased residential use.
- There is additional frontage requirements noted adjacent to new open space and streetscapes created by the viaduct's removal.
- Inclusion of updated pedestrian street classification to support active building frontage and create a more comfortable walking environment.



Pedestrian Street Classifications Downtown (Existing)



Pedestrian Street Classifications Downtown (Proposed)



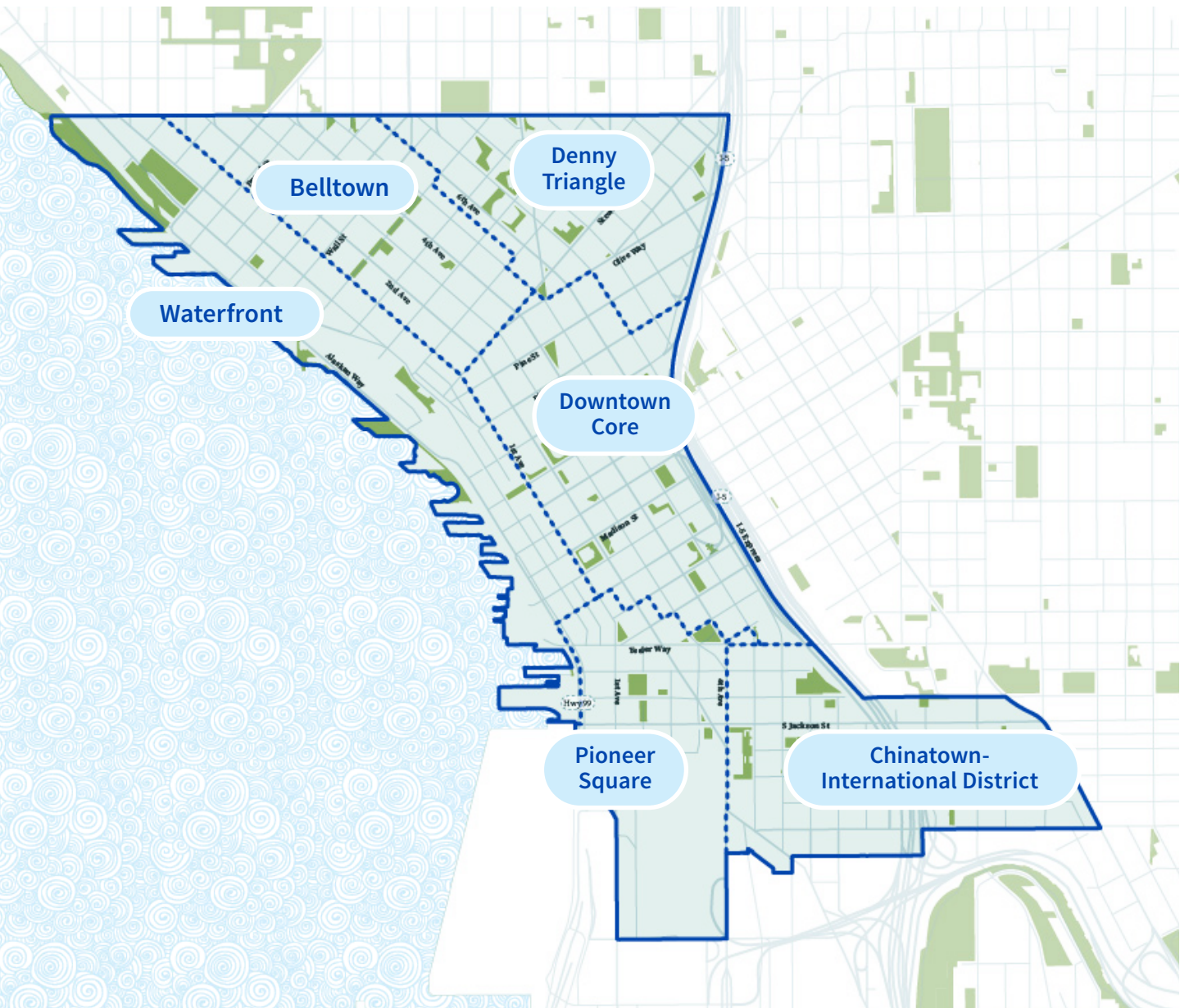
Neighborhood Snapshots



Network of Neighborhoods

The following pages provide snapshots of Downtown’s neighborhoods, highlighting existing amenities and assets, as well as opportunities identified through the Plan’s themed actions.

Sources for Snapshots Data
Population is calculated from Washington Office of Financial Management (OFM) estimates for 2023. Jobs are calculated from Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Data using the OnTheMap tool for 2022. Housing units are calculated from King County Parcel data. Land area is calculated from City of Seattle Regional Center shapefiles.

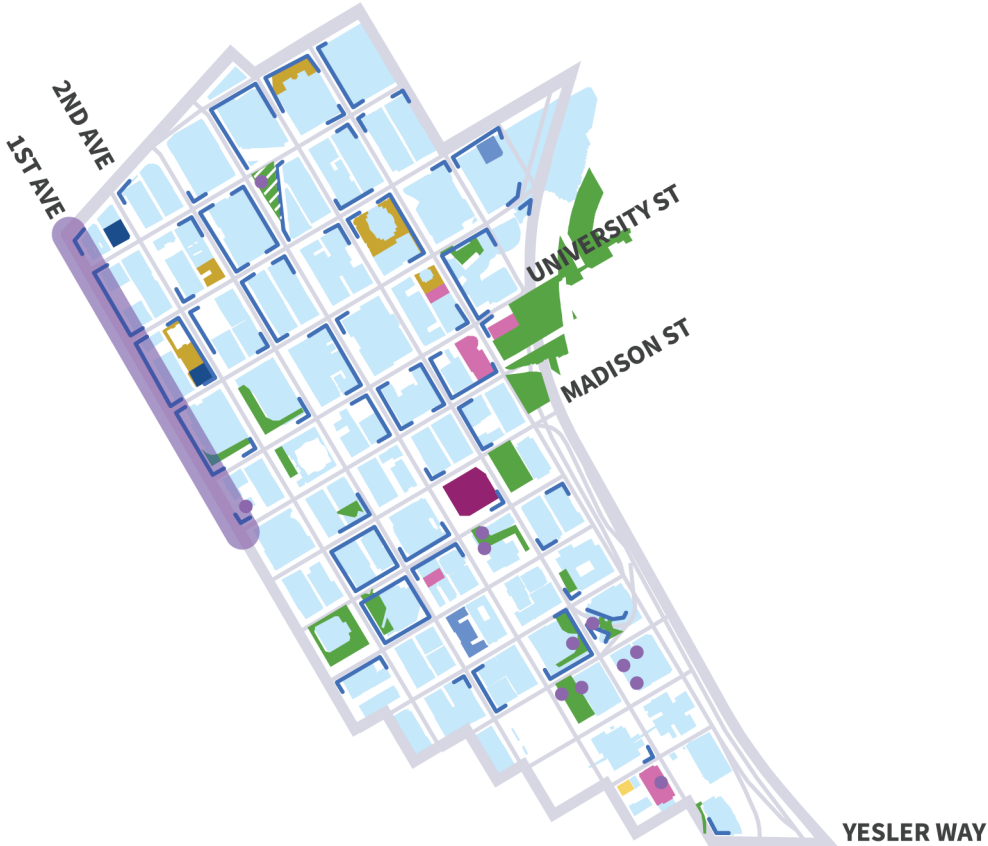
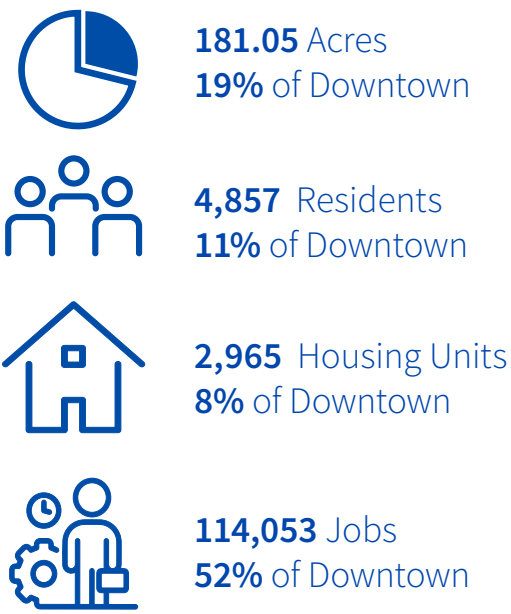


Downtown Core

Amenities

The Downtown Core is the heart of Seattle, encompassing the city's retail and financial centers, and hubs of government. It is bordered by Interstate 5 to the east, 1st Avenue to the west, and the historic districts of Pioneer Square and the Chinatown-International District (CID) to the south. For thousands of residents, workers, and visitors, this area defines Downtown Seattle. As retail trends shift away from national chains, large vacant ground-floor spaces have altered the public realm. Despite these changes, the Downtown Core remains home to internationally recognized cultural landmarks, museums, and spaces for celebration, innovation, and exchange.

The district also faces significant connectivity challenges. Interstate 5 creates a barrier between Downtown and Capitol Hill, while the steep slopes between Downtown and the waterfront make pedestrian access difficult.



Open Space & Recreation

- Parks & Public Spaces
- Parks with Active Recreation

Health

- Healthcare or Pharmacies
- Supportive Services

Food

- Full Service Grocery
- Small Grocery/Convenience
- Block with Restaurants

Cultural Spaces

- Public Art
- Cultural Core

Learning

- Public Libraries
- Licensed Childcare Facilities

Downtown Core

Opportunities

Transform the Downtown Core into a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood destination for residents, workers, and visitors by curating arts and events, growing housing around regional transit centers, and creating an active pedestrian experience.

Downtown is Home

- **DH.1.1.1** Analyze the development of funding programs that provide gap financing to offset housing development costs.
- **DH.1.2.2** Rename the Downtown Commercial Core zone as the Downtown Core to reflect its more mixed use, residential status and aspirations.
- **DH.1.2.4** Rezone from Union to Virginia Street with greater density and allow for more affordable homes.
- **DH.1.2.6** Continue to support and refine development incentives—such as height allowances tied to meaningful community benefits—to encourage housing production.
- **DH.2.1.7** Create a strategy under the City’s EDI program to prevent displacement and support equitable development in communities affected by the lid I-5 project..
- **DH.3.4.1** Expand affordable preschool options in Downtown neighborhoods—particularly in areas with growing young populations
- **DH.3.5.1** Revise zoning to incentivize indoor open play and gathering facilities on the ground floor of commercial, residential, and mixed-use buildings. Enact standards for on-site amenities for these uses, including drop-off and pick-up zones, access to play areas, and security.
- **DH.3.6.4** Increase flexibility to allow shop owners to activate sidewalks in front of their businesses using signage, furnishings, and sidewalk merchandise displays.

Make Everyone Feel Safe and Welcome

- **SW.1.1.3** Focus lighting investments and regular lighting maintenance in areas that support restaurants and nightlife activity, and to support a safe pedestrian route to transit services and other amenities.

- **SW.1.2.1** Continue implementing the Seamless Seattle pedestrian wayfinding signage at Westlake and Jackson Hub and expand the system around other transit stations.
- **SW.3.3.2** Improve the Seneca and Blanchard Street connections between the waterfront and neighborhoods to the west.
- **SW.4.3.1** Create a new typology that delineates City-owned park spaces as “Downtown Gateway Parks,” or parks located near major transit stations and gateways, from other neighborhoods to Downtown, to respond to their unique activation and maintenance needs.
- **SW.4.6.1** Partner with commercial property owners to update, improve, and enhance accessibility to existing and new Privately Owned Public Space (POPS), including in underutilized commercial centers where these amenities may no longer serve their original function.
- **SW.5.3.4** Complete upgrades to Westlake Park and Pioneer Square Park.

Make Use of Every Square Foot

- **SF.2.1.2** Continue placemaking events that activate public spaces, support community well-being, and strengthen neighborhood identity with focus on the Downtown core and surrounding areas, including Pioneer Square, Westlake Center, the former King County Campus, and Third Avenue.
- **SF.6.3.3** To the extent feasible, implement aspects of the Cultural Strategies for Downtown Revitalization action plan.
- **SF.6.4.2** Study the feasibility of preserving existing underutilized warehouse and light industrial buildings in the Downtown core for arts and entertainment and fitness uses such as rehearsal studios, nightlife venues, climbing gyms and other uses that require a relatively large footprint and/or require noise insulation and other physical amenities that these older buildings may provide.
- **SF.6.4.3** Complete capitol improvements to Benaroya Hall, a City-owned arts facility.
- **SF.6.4.4** Pilot a temporary 30-day change of use process for arts & cultural venues and other temporary activations - arts and cultural designation pilot program, with a specific use code for galleries and temporary pop-ups.



Steward Our Home for the Next Seven Generations

- **SG.2.4.3** Maintain street trees within view corridors.
- **SG.4.2.3** Implement Seattle’s Climate Action Plan.
- **SG.4.3.3** Take advantage of major capital projects to upsize sewer mains in areas with known capacity risks.

Find Our Way

- **FW.4.1.5** Upgrade bikeways over and under the interstate including South Dearborn Street, King Street, Yesler Way, Spring Street, Seneca Street, Pike Street, and Pine Street.

Advance these Seattle Transportation Plan projects (see Appendix for more details)

- (15) E Yesler Way Multimodal Improvements
- (16) 3rd Ave Multimodal Improvements
- (17) 1st Ave S Multimodal Improvements
- (28) I-5 Under and Overpass Improvements

Waterfront

Amenities

Seattle’s waterfront has undergone major pedestrian-focused improvements over the past decade, transforming it from an industrial harbor into a vibrant destination that connects visitors and residents to the water. Now a key tourist attraction and a major transportation hub, the waterfront serves as a gateway to nearby islands and other regions via ferry.

The removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct created space for a redesigned waterfront featuring wider sidewalks, new bike lanes, a direct connection to the water at Habitat Beach, and improved access into Downtown. The Waterfront Park adds green spaces, seating areas, and pedestrian-friendly promenades, further enhancing the experience for all. At the Pike Place Market, the Market Front expansion provides public space with stunning views and safer, more walkable connections between the historic market and the waterfront, despite the steep grade. These improvements prioritize walkability and public access, making the waterfront more dynamic while celebrating Seattle’s natural beauty.



196.41 Acres
21% of Downtown



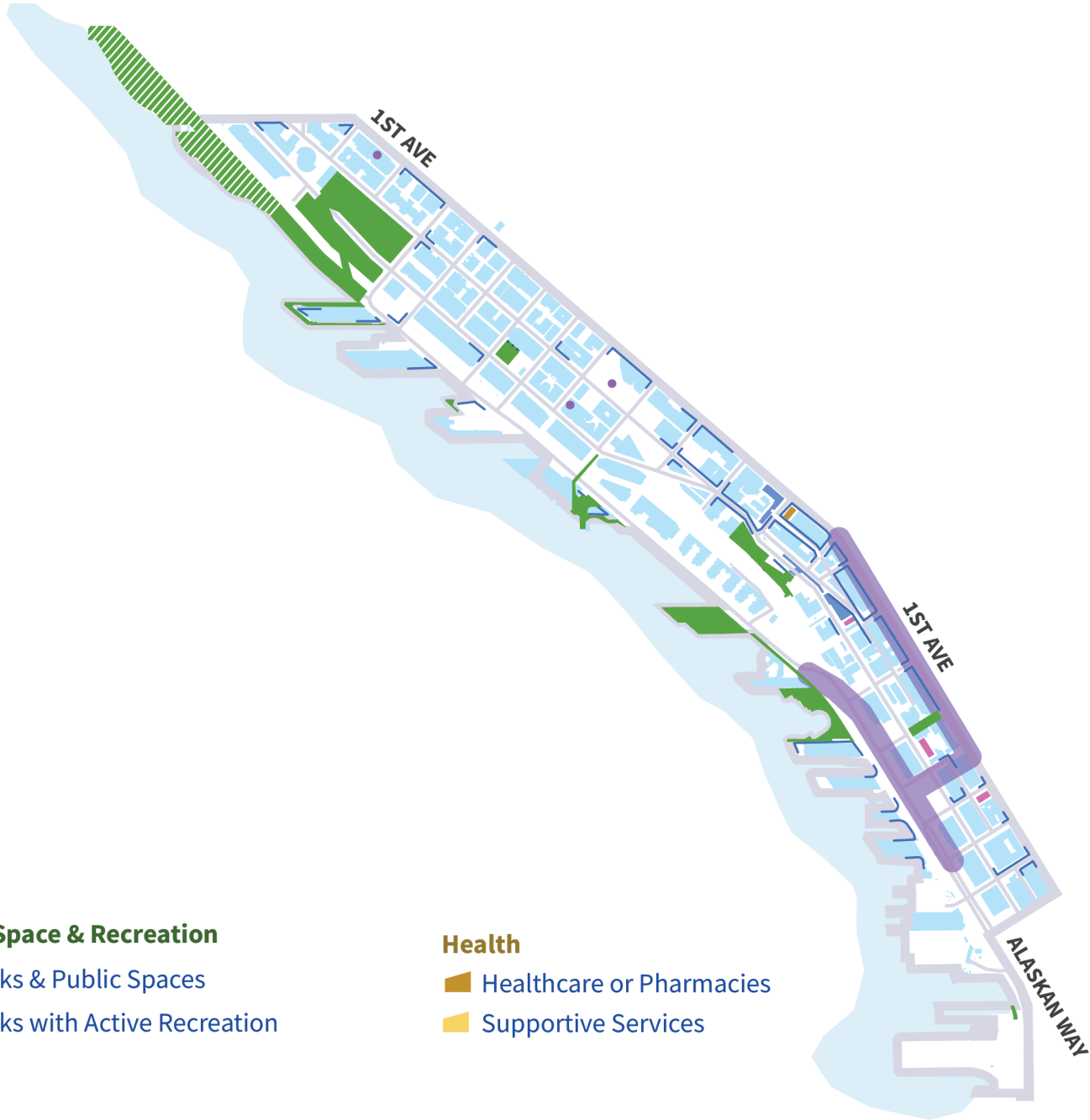
8,471 Residents
18% of Downtown



6,601 Housing Units
19% of Downtown



19,605 Jobs
9% of Downtown



Open Space & Recreation

- Parks & Public Spaces
- Parks with Active Recreation

Food

- Full Service Grocery
- Small Grocery/Convenience
- Block with Restaurants
- Urban Agriculture

Health

- Healthcare or Pharmacies
- Supportive Services

Cultural Spaces

- Public Art
- Cultural Core

Waterfront

Opportunities

Build on the Downtown waterfront’s recent transformation to create a welcoming, new neighborhood that fully embraces the water’s edge and creates strong connections into the heart of the city.

At Home Downtown

- **DH.1.2.7** Evaluate updating allowances for residential use on existing Seattle Waterfront Pier.

Make Everyone Feel Safe and Welcome

- **SW.1.4.2** Assemble an interdepartmental working group to share lessons learned from successful waterfront management programs.
- **SW.3.4.1** Expand the Downtown Pedestrian Zone classification to include the extent of the Downtown Waterfront, from Pike Place Market south along Alaskan Way to King Street.
- **SW.4.1.2** Dedicate resources to invest in the Portal site to support park uses.
- **SW.4.1.7** Dedicate resources to invest in Pier 48 site to support park uses.
- **SW.3.4.2** Study “Blank Facade Limits” within the Seattle Municipal Code to understand how to better support more transparency between indoor and outdoor uses along the waterfront.
- **SW.4.6.2** Incentivize the investment or reinvestment of Privately Owned Public Space (POPS) that include interactive water features, including the conversion of existing fountains to spray parks, to encourage use and visibility.

Make Use of Every Square Foot

- **SF.2.1.3** Partner with Pike Place Market to implement the Pike Place Strategic Plan.
- **SF.2.2.3** Pursue additional public and private funding to expand the existing façade improvement programs for small businesses in Pioneer Square, the Chinatown-International District, and the waterfront.

Steward Our Home for the Next Seven Generations

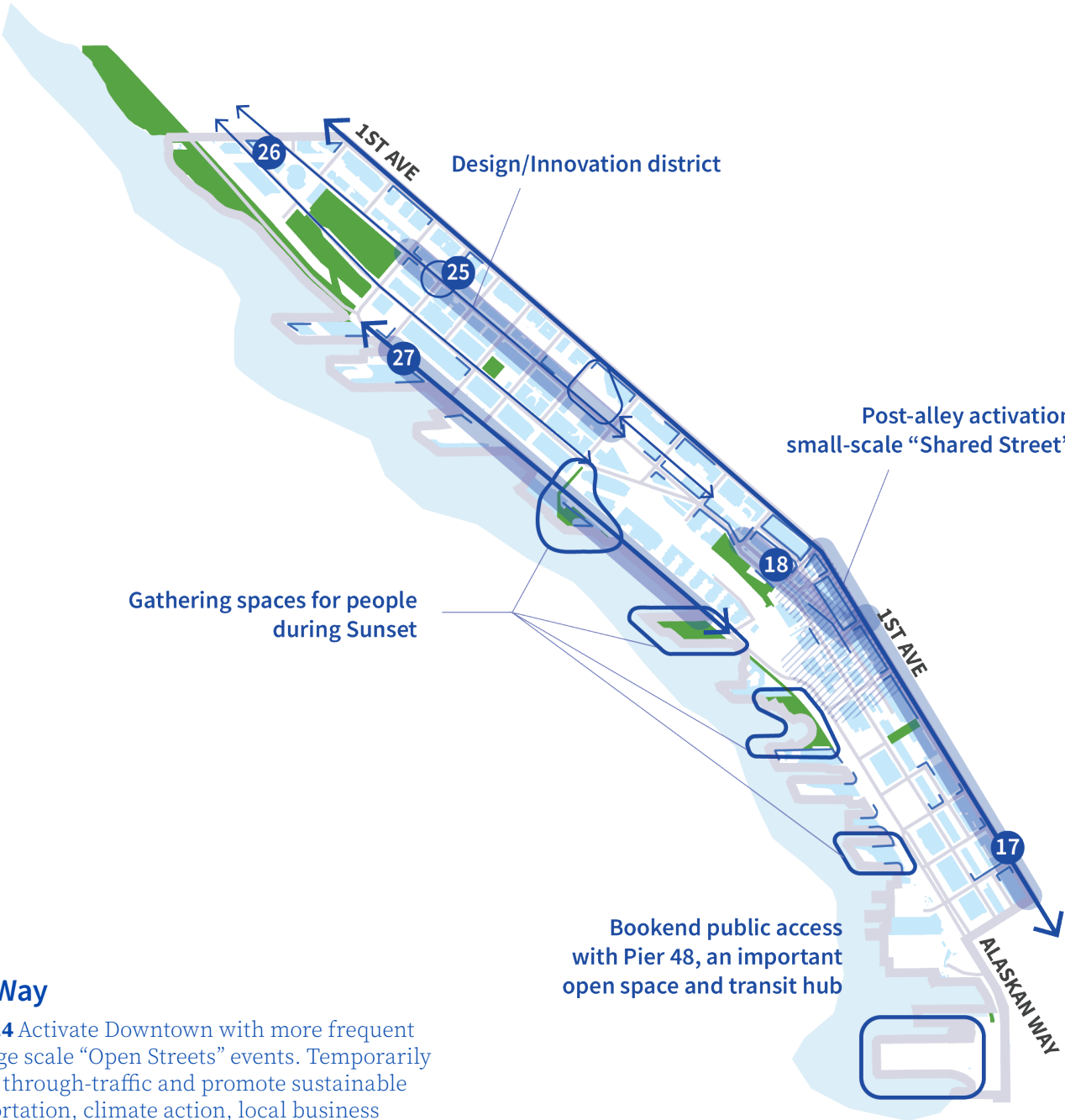
- **SG.1.1.1** Review and update existing view corridors protections and consider expanding viewshed protections to include views from the Pike Place Market.
- **SG.1.2.2** Work with Tribal Nations and Native communities to identify opportunities for art, programming, events, cultural spaces, and other features that honor Native cultures, traditions, and practices rooted in their deep relationship to the restoration and enhancement of the water and shoreline.
- **SG.1.2.3** Continue to support the Salmon Homecoming and the Tribal Interpretive Center on the waterfront.
- **SG.1.4.3** Incorporate more environment-focused events and programs throughout neighborhoods and on the waterfront.
- **SG.1.6.2** Improve landside connections from large vessel landings, including ferries, and create new landings for small boats along the waterfront.
- **SG.1.5.3** Explore moveable destinations similar to those on Lake Washington, such as floating playgrounds or performance spaces, that allow people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the water on the Bay.
- **SG.2.5.1** Strengthen and maintain ongoing communication with Tribal Nations regarding Puget Sound and waterfront access Downtown.
- **SG.3.2.1** Collaborate with the Port of Seattle, Washington State Department of Transportation, and private maritime industries to support a transition to a complete network of electrical shorepower on the Downtown waterfront.
- **SG.3.2.2** Provide support and collaboration by the City of Seattle to Washington State Ferries (WSF) Kitsap Transit Fast Ferries and the King County Water Taxi agencies to pursue electrification of all ferry vessels that land on the Seattle waterfront.

Find Our Way

- **FW.1.3.4** Activate Downtown with more frequent and large scale “Open Streets” events. Temporarily restrict through-traffic and promote sustainable transportation, climate action, local business activations, and programming on our streets and sidewalks.
- **FW.1.3.5** Pilot short-term street transformations throughout Downtown. Explore restrictions in locations with already high pedestrian foot traffic such as near the Pike Place Market, along 1st Avenue, and within Pioneer Square, and Chinatown-International District.
- **FW.3.1.3** Continue to coordinate with Washington State Department of Transportation to invest in future planning to transform Pier 48 for public use.
- **FW.6.3.3** Invest in more wayfinding along the southern portion of Alaskan Way.

Advance these Seattle Transportation Plan projects (see Appendix for more details)

- (17) 1st Ave S Multimodal Improvements
- (18) Pike Place Events Street
- (25) Vine St and Clay St Multimodal Improvements
- (26) Elliot Ave and Western Ave Multimodal Improvements
- (27) Waterfront Promenade and Seawall



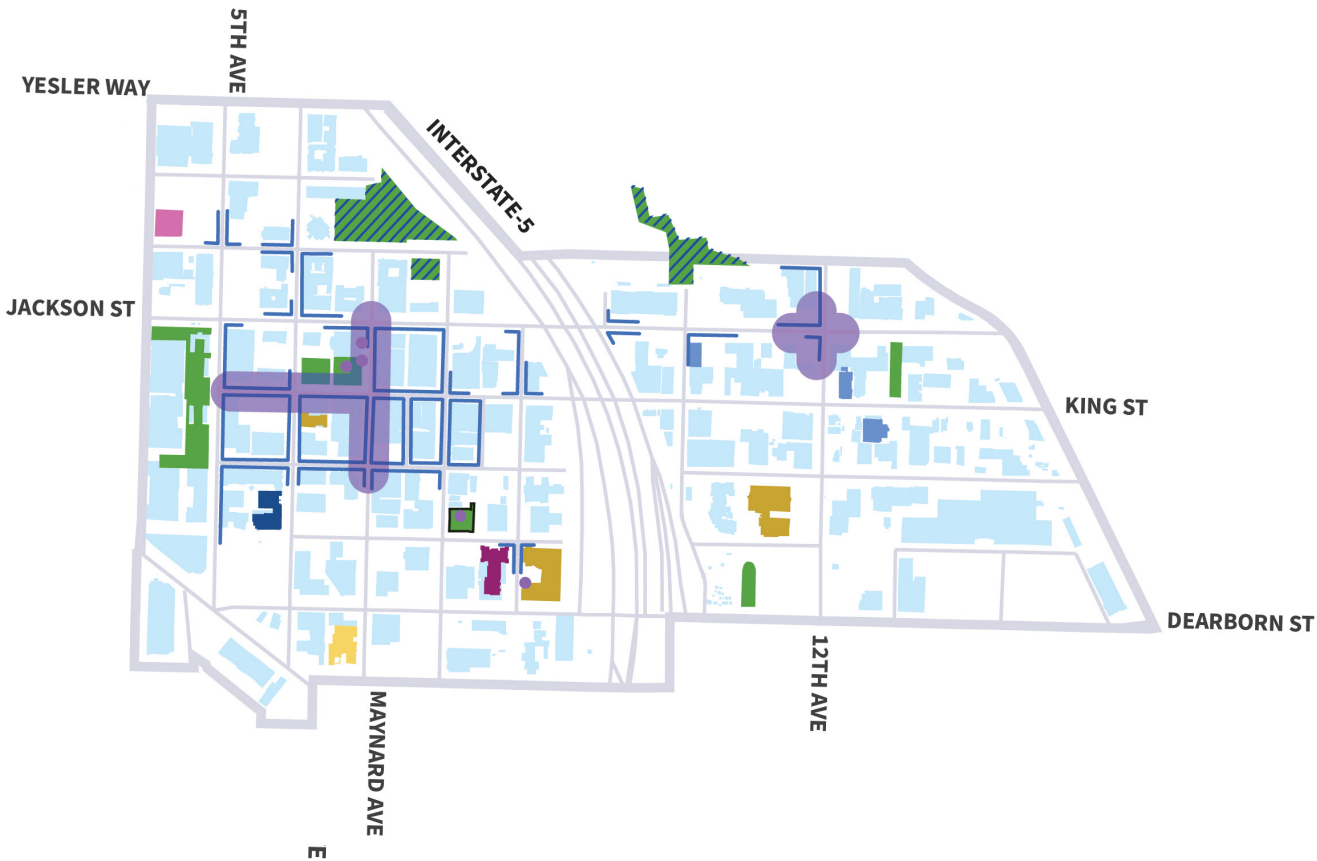
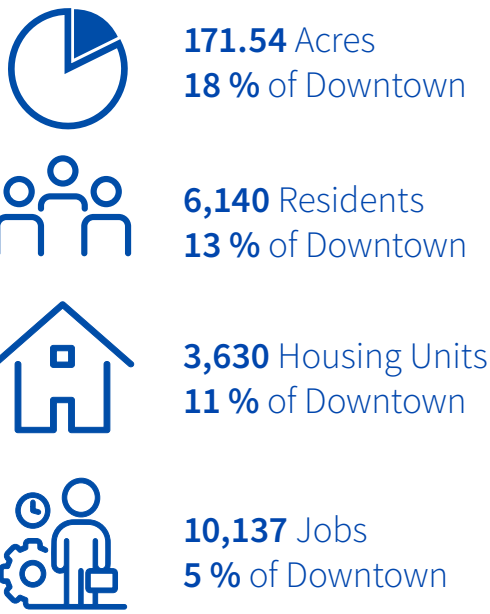
Chinatown-International District

Amenities

The Chinatown-International District (CID) is Seattle’s historic and cultural hub for Asian American communities, encompassing Chinatown, Japantown, and Little Saigon. Home to generations of Chinese, Japanese, and Vietnamese residents, the neighborhood remains a vital cultural center for Asian Americans throughout the region.

Established as a historic district in 1999, the Chinatown-International District features a dynamic mix of residences, businesses, and cultural landmarks. It is well known for its many restaurants, markets, and community events that celebrate its rich heritage while attracting both locals and visitors.

However, the neighborhood is physically divided by Interstate 5, creating challenges for wayfinding and pedestrian connectivity. To the east of I-5, Little Saigon is a key extension of the district, home to many Vietnamese businesses as well as light industrial and production spaces that are essential to the neighborhood’s economy and identity.



- Open Space & Recreation**
 - Parks & Public Spaces
 - Parks with Active Recreation
 - Community Centers
- Food**
 - Full Service Grocery
 - Small Grocery/Convenience
 - Block with Restaurants
 - Urban Agriculture
- Learning**
 - Public Libraries
 - Licensed Childcare Facilities
- Health**
 - Healthcare or Pharmacies
 - Supportive Services
- Cultural Spaces**
 - Public Art
 - Cultural Core



Chinatown-International District

Opportunities

Celebrate and protect the Chinatown-International District’s community, cultural history, and environment by investing in public spaces, air quality, community health, residential support, and business success.

At Home Downtown

- **DH.2.1.2** Monitor displacement risk using the City’s displacement risk dashboard, and develop proactive strategies to increase access to and awareness of City resources.
- **DH.2.1.5** Explore the feasibility of creating a targeted loan and/or grant program for lower-income homeowners and building owners who offer below-market units in high-risk neighborhoods to support additional housing within existing buildings and to help preserve affordable housing.

Make Everyone Feel Safe and Welcome

- **SW 3.2.1.**Support efforts by the Friends of the I-5 CID Action Group.
- **SW 6.1.2** Explore developing and implementing a cultural plan for South Jackson Street as a “story street.”

Make Use of Every Square Foot

- **SF.2.2.2** Pursue additional public and private funding to expand the existing façade improvement programs for small businesses in Pioneer Square, the Chinatown-International District, and the waterfront.
- **SF.2.3.4** Work with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) downtown to continue commercial affordability programs and resources.
- **SF.2.2.3** Work with OED and existing Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) in Pioneer Square and the Chinatown-International District to provide increased financial and technical support for small businesses, including but not limited to: rent support and mitigation; renovations and improvements; and special events and attractions to draw increased visitation and spending.

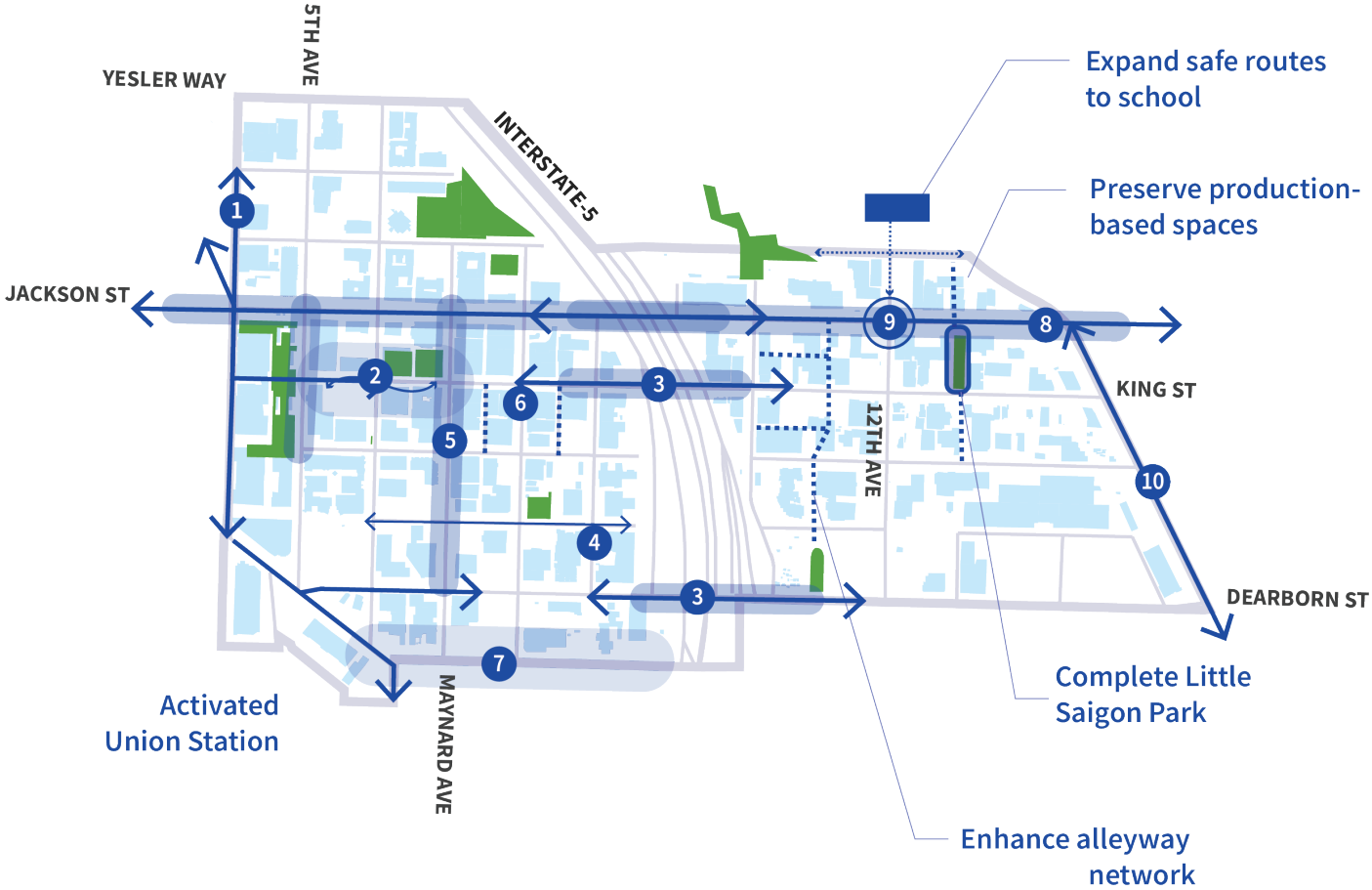
- **SF.3.1.4** Support the preservation and improvement of existing warehouse, distribution, production, and repair spaces in areas of Downtown where these uses continue to fulfill an important economic function, like Little Saigon which has a high proportion of heritage and BIPOC-owned businesses.
- **SF.5.1.7** Conduct a study to determine the feasibility and economic impacts of commercial preservation zones in the Chinatown-International District generally and Little Saigon specifically.
- **SF.5.1.9** Explore the efficacy of a food distribution overlay district or other tools in Little Saigon with community organizations to preserve cultural food distribution.
- **SF.6.1.2** Continue support for pop-up events, festivals and conferences, such as the Belltown Mural Festival and Dragon Fest in the Chinatown-International District.

Steward Our Home for the Next Seven Generations

- **SG.2.1.1** Continue implementing the Green Streets program, focusing on priority areas identified by SDOT and in Belltown, Pioneer Square, and the Chinatown-International District.
- **SG.2.2.1** Partner with SPU to prioritize resilient stormwater infrastructure investments in areas of the highest need such as Pioneer Square and the Chinatown-International District..
- **SG.4.1.3** Continue to explore a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program or zoning incentive program that can provide owners of URM structures a market-based funding source to support seismic retrofits of their buildings. Prioritize investments in Chinatown/ID and Pioneer Square for the program.

Find Our Way

- **FW.1.3.5** Introduce short-term street transformations throughout Downtown. Explore restrictions in locations with already high pedestrian foot traffic such as near the Pike Place Market, along 1st Avenue, and within Pioneer Square, and Chinatown-International District.
- **FW.1.3.6** Pursue major expansions of car-free gathering spaces in partnership with local venues, and alongside community groups.



Advance these Seattle Transportation Plan projects (see Appendix for more details)

- (6) Jackson Street Corridor Multimodal Improvement
- (1) 2nd Ave Ext / 4th / Jackson Multimodal Improvements
- (2) King Street Festival Street
- (3) S Jackson St, S King St, and S Dearborn St at I-5 Underpass Multimodal Improvements
- (4) Lane Street Multimodal Improvements
- (5) Maynard St Multimodal Improvements
- (6) CID Special Alley Improvements
- (7) Dearborn Station Street Grid Changes
- (8) Jackson St Multimodal Improvements
- (9) S Jackson St and 12 Ave S Multimodal Improvements
- (10) Rainier Ave S Multimodal Improvements

Pioneer Square

Amenities

Pioneer Square is one of Downtown Seattle’s oldest neighborhoods, known for its rich history, vibrant arts scene, and strong small business community. The neighborhood attracts artists and entrepreneurs with its relatively affordable rents and flexible ground-floor spaces. It is bordered by Alaskan Way Street, South King Street, and 5th Avenue South, extending slightly north of Yesler Way. The northern boundary follows a zigzagging pattern due to misaligned street grids, reflecting differences in historical plans.

Pioneer Square is home to a remarkable collection of historic buildings, giving the district a distinct character. It also features a high concentration of cultural spaces and several beloved public parks and landscapes, including Occidental Square, Pioneer Park, and City Hall Park. These green spaces, alongside its historic charm and creative energy, make Pioneer Square a dynamic and evolving part of Downtown Seattle.



133.97 Acres
14% of Downtown



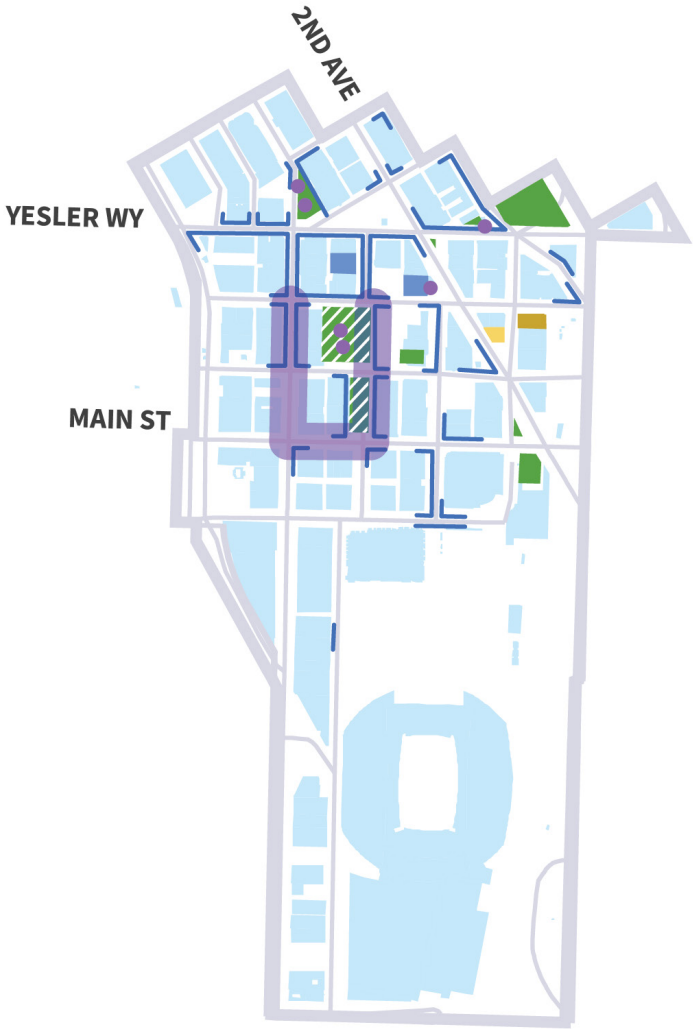
3,171 Residents
7 % of Downtown



1,971 Housing Units
6 % of Downtown





18,592 Jobs
9 % of Downtown



Open Space & Recreation

-  Parks & Public Spaces
-  Parks with Active Recreation

Health

-  Healthcare or Pharmacies
-  Supportive Services

Food

-  Full Service Grocery
-  Small Grocery/Convenience
-  Block with Restaurants

Cultural Spaces

-  Public Art
-  Cultural Core



Pioneer Square

Opportunities

Layer Pioneer Square’s rich history with new investments that support a vibrant arts and cultural scene, protect the neighborhood from flooding and climate-related disasters, and better link it to the stadium area.

At Home Downtown

- **DH.2.1.5** Explore the feasibility of creating a targeted loan and/or grant program for lower-income homeowners and building owners who offer below-market units in high-risk neighborhoods—such as the CID and Pioneer Square—to support additional housing within existing buildings and to help preserve affordable housing.

Make Everyone Feel Safe and Welcome

- **SW.1.4.1** Build on existing partnerships with Downtown BIAs (CID, Pioneer Square, Seattle Center, and the Downtown Metropolitan Improvement District) to expand resources for community-based organizations to support “clean and safe” programming.
- **SW.4.3.3** Invest in green connections between unique Downtown destinations, like City Hall Park, Pioneer Square, and Occidental Square.
- **SW.5.3.3** Implement the City Hall Park and Vicinity Study to include repurposing and reopening Prefontaine Place.
- **SW.5.3.4** Complete upgrades to Westlake Park and Pioneer Square Park.
- **SW.6.1.3** Expand storytelling in parks to include history of Indigenous people and other communities of color who have shaped Downtown.
- **SW.6.2.2** Provide incentives to modernize and/or adapt buildings within Downtown’s three landmark districts.

Make Use of Every Square Foot

- **SF.2.1.2** Continue placemaking events that activate public spaces, support community well-being, and strengthen neighborhood identity with focus on the Downtown core and surrounding areas, including Pioneer Square, Westlake Center, the former King County Campus, and Third Avenue..

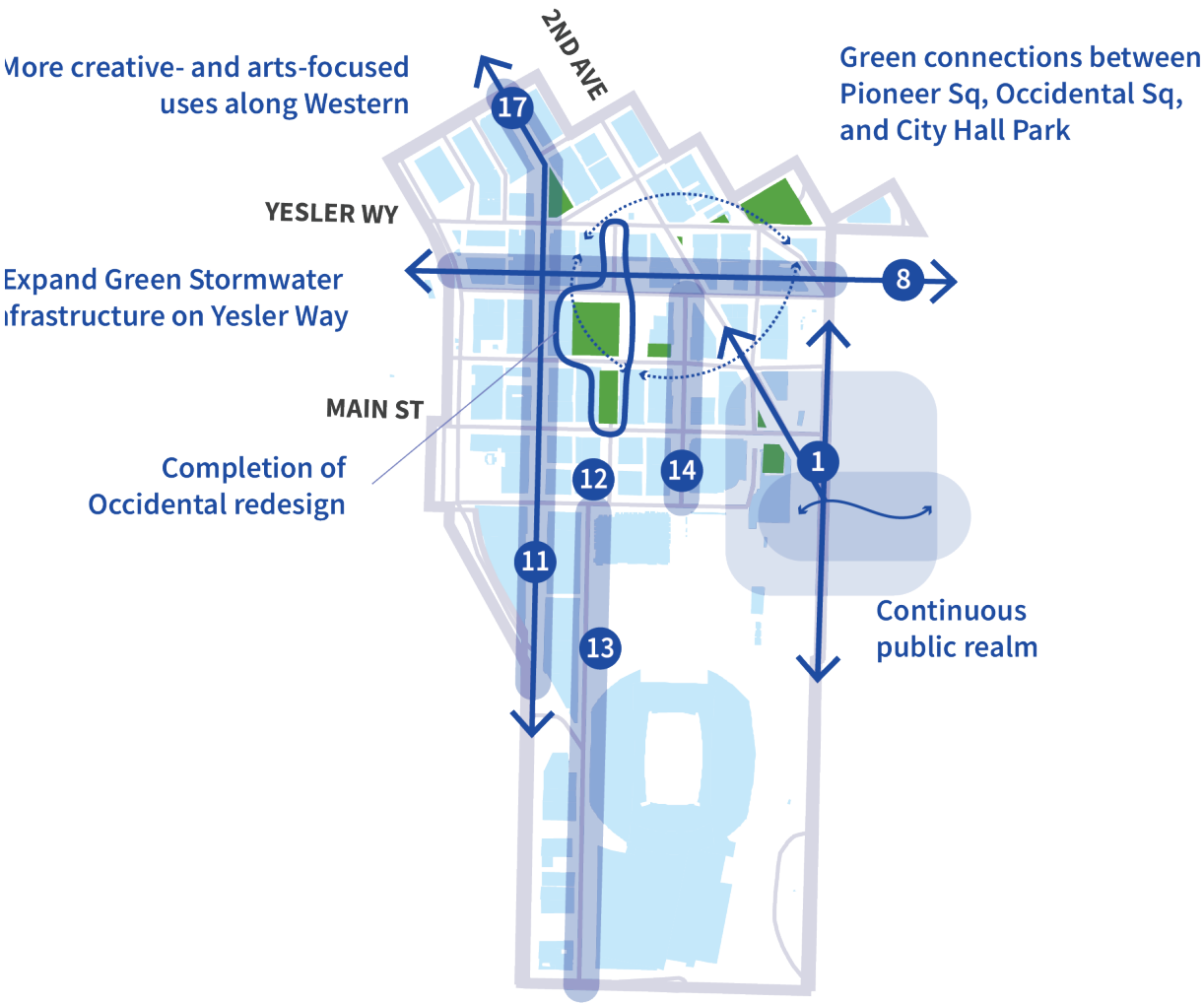
- **SF.2.2.2** Pursue additional public and private funding to expand the existing façade improvement programs for small businesses in Pioneer Square, the Chinatown-International District, and the waterfront.
- **SF.2.2.3** Partner with Office of Economic Development and the Downtown Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) to offer a façade improvement loan and/or grant program for small businesses in commercial nodes and corridors in all five Downtown subareas.
- **SF.2.3.4** Work with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) downtown to continue commercial affordability programs and resources.

Steward Our Home for the Next Seven Generations

- **SG.1.2.4** Create memorials to the Chinese Expulsion, Japanese Internment, and the Native American presence at the waterfront (Jackson Hub Concept Plan).
- **SG.2.1.1** Continue implementing the Green Streets program, focusing on priority areas identified by SDOT and in Belltown, Pioneer Square, and the Chinatown-International District.
- **SG.2.2.2** Partner with SPU to prioritize resilient stormwater infrastructure investments in areas of the highest need such as Pioneer Square and the Chinatown-International District.
- **SG.4.1.3** Continue to explore a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program or zoning incentive program that can provide owners of URM structures a market-based funding source to support seismic retrofits of their buildings. Prioritize investments in Chinatown/ID and Pioneer Square for the program.

Find Our Way

- **FW.1.3.5** Pilot short-term street transformations throughout Downtown. Explore restrictions in locations with already high pedestrian foot traffic such as near the Pike Place Market, along 1st Avenue, and within Pioneer Square, and Chinatown-International District.



Advance these Seattle Transportation Plan projects (see Appendix for more details)

- (1) 2nd Ave Ext / 4th / Jackson Multimodal Improvements
- (8) Jackson St Multimodal Improvements
- (11) 1st Ave S Multimodal Improvements
- (12) S King St and Occidental Ave S Multimodal Improvements
- (13) Occidental Ave Promenade
- (14) 2nd Ave S Multimodal Improvements
- (17) 1st Ave S Multimodal Improvements

Belldtown

Amenities

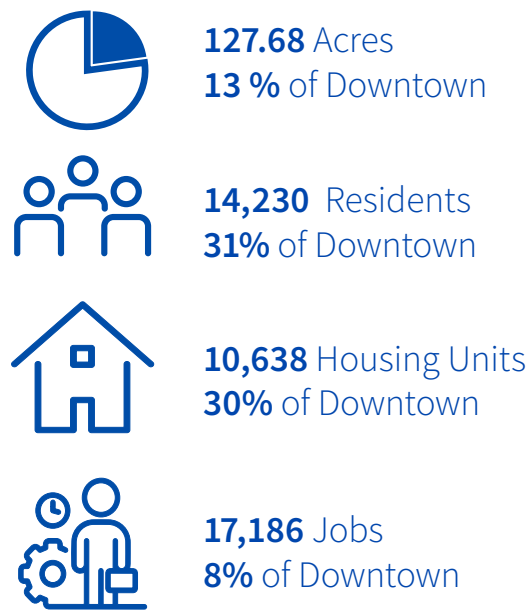
Belldtown is Seattle’s most densely populated neighborhood, shaped by a massive regrading project in the early 1900s to create developable land. Once a low-rent, semi-industrial arts district, it has evolved into a vibrant mix of residential towers, restaurants, retail, nightclubs, and art galleries. Despite its mid-century look and feel, many of Belldtown’s buildings are relatively new – 48% of the its buildings were built after 1990.

Belldtown is located inland from the waterfront, bounded by Denny Way to the north, 1st Avenue to the west, Virginia Street to the south, and 5th Avenue/Denny Triangle to the east. Despite its proximity, a steep grade change and train tracks create a significant barrier to direct access.

Key features of Belldtown today include active ground floors, boutique grocery stores, and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, with Bell Street standing out as a model for pedestrian-first design. Notably, the neighborhood lacks playgrounds and active recreation spaces.



Downtown Seattle Regional Center Plan



Open Space & Recreation

- Parks & Public Spaces
- Parks with Active Recreation

Food

- Full Service Grocery
- Small Grocery/Convenience
- Block with Restaurants
- Urban Agriculture

Health

- Healthcare or Pharmacies
- Supportive Services

Cultural Spaces

- Public Art
- Cultural Core

Belldtown

Opportunities

Bring new energy to Belldtown’s neighborhood fabric by ensuring local businesses thrive, maximizing affordability for residents, and improving transportation corridors.

At Home Downtown

- **DH.3.1.3** Create incentives for additional at-grade residential unit access in larger mixed use and residential development projects.
- **DH.3.4.1** Expand affordable preschool options in Downtown neighborhoods—particularly in areas with growing young populations such as Belldtown, the Downtown Core, and Denny Triangle.

Make Everyone Feel Safe and Welcome

- **SW.1.2.3** Continue implementing a focused approach to respond to safety and environmental concerns along 3rd Avenue.
- **SW.1.4.1** Build on existing partnerships with Downtown BIAs (CID, Pioneer Square, Seattle Center, and the Downtown Metropolitan Improvement District) to expand resources for community-based organizations to support “clean and safe” programming.
- **SW.4.4.5** Develop an analysis of rights-of-way where the roadway has more capacity than is currently used, and prioritize converting those areas into park or plaza space. Implement those conversions where feasible and in communities with a greater need for park space.
- **SW.6.1.4** Expand opportunities for musical and theatrical performances and other performance art across Downtown.

Make Use of Every Square Foot

- **SF.2.1.4** Allow interim occupation and use of previously vacant retail space while final permits are being reviewed for tenancy and occupation.
- **SF.2.2.3** Partner with OED and the Downtown BIAs to offer a façade improvement loan and/or grant program for small businesses in commercial nodes and corridors in all five Downtown sub areas.

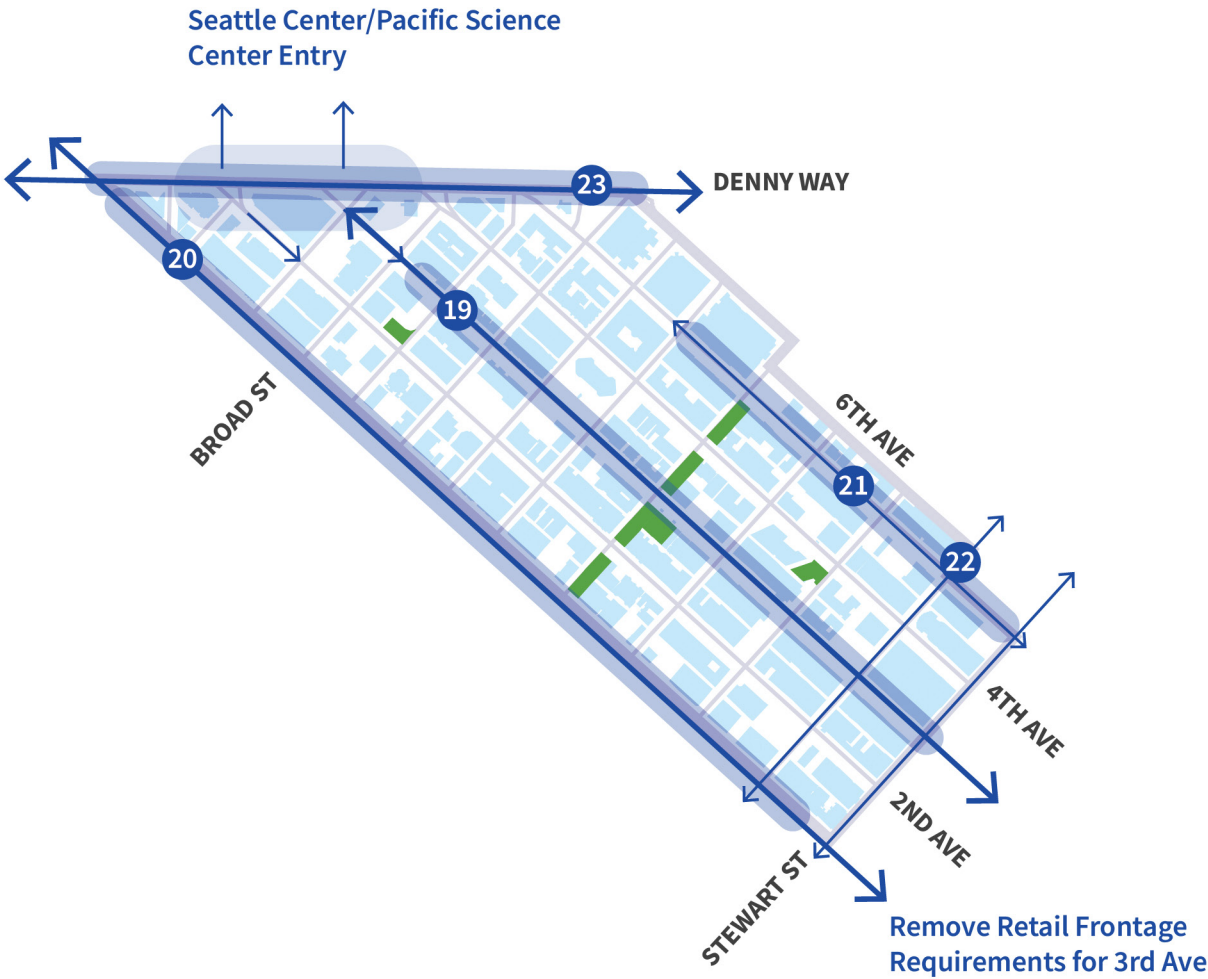
- **SF.2.3.4** Work with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) downtown to continue commercial affordability programs and resources..
- **SF.6.1.2** Continue support for pop-up events, festivals and conferences, such as the Belldtown Mural Festival and Dragon Fest in the Chinatown-International District.
- **SF.6.5.4** Explore new business and revenue models for traditional major cultural institutions, arts organizations, and music venues.
- **SF.6.5.5** Convene private, corporate, and philanthropic partners to explore creation of financial and funding tools to create initiatives in support of attraction, growth, and retention of businesses in key industries.

Steward Our Home for the Next Seven Generations

- **SG.1.1.2** Celebrate view corridors by aligning with SDOT Urban Forestry program, and other special street designations, as well as areas with projected new development.
- **SG.1.4.7** Commission local artists to create murals, sculptures, or exhibits that depict the connection between Seattle’s water resources, urban habitat, and ecological systems.
- **SG.2.1.1** Continue implementing the Green Streets program, focusing on priority areas identified by SDOT and in Belldtown, Pioneer Square, and the Chinatown-International District.
- **SG.3.1.4** Encourage smaller building owners to participate in Seattle’s Building Emissions Performance Standards.
- **SG.4.3.3** Take advantage of major capital projects to upsize sewer mains in areas with known capacity risks.

Find Our Way

- **FW.1.1.4** Ensure that major downtown corridor projects, such as the Denny Way improvements, incorporate opportunities to maintain and expand pedestrian space.
- **FW.3.2.3** Support community-driven activation and permits for Festival Streets.



- **FW.4.1.1** Implement more green streets designations with a particular focus on areas deficient in park space and tree canopy.
- **FW.6.3.5** Continue to install Seamless Seattle wayfinding columns and kiosks to aid navigation Downtown.

Advance these Seattle Transportation Plan projects (see Appendix for more details)

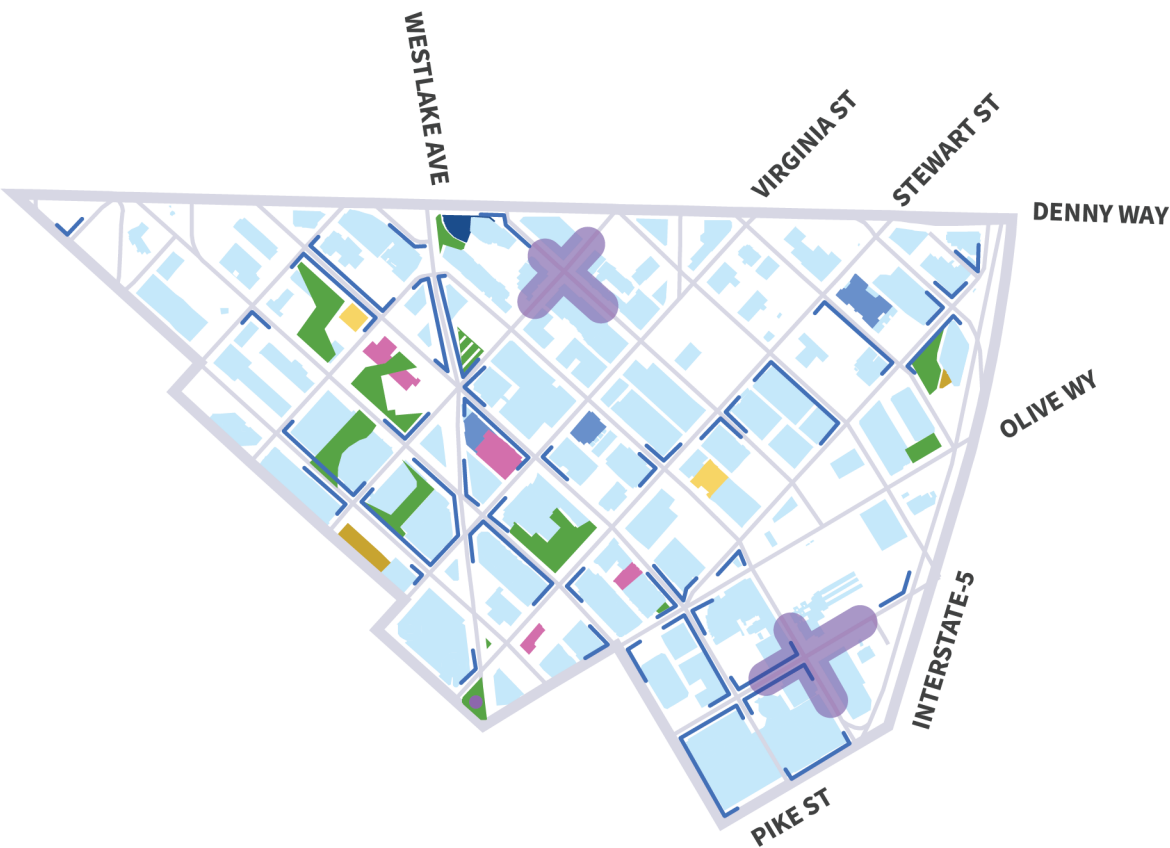
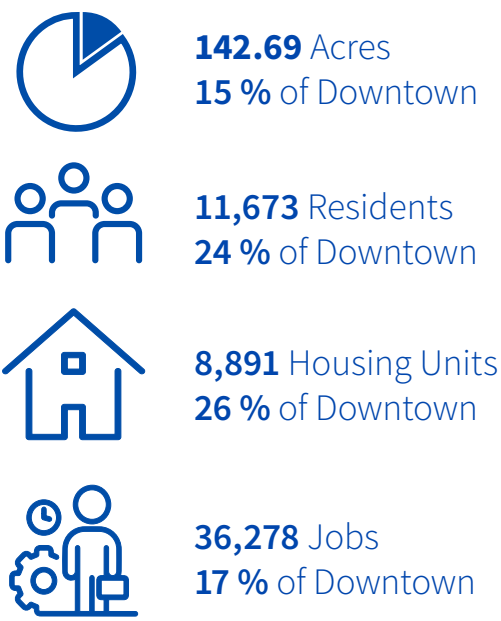
- (19) Belldtown 3rd Ave Multimodal Improvements
- (20) 1st Ave S Multimodal Improvements
- (21) 5th Ave Multimodal Improvements
- (22) Virginia and Stewart Multimodal Improvements
- (23) Denny Way Multimodal Improvements

Denny Triangle

Amenities

Denny Triangle is one of Downtown Seattle’s most diverse and fastest-growing neighborhoods, with the highest concentration of households with children under 18 in the regional center. Recent growth has spurred new neighborhood amenities, including expanded childcare services. Development is primarily mixed-use, with residential and office spaces on upper floors. Most open spaces in the neighborhood are privately owned, including those on Amazon’s campus, except for the publicly owned Urban Triangle Park and McGraw Square.

Once situated on a steep hill, the area was leveled during the Denny Regrade to enhance transportation and commercial development. Westlake Avenue, a historic thoroughfare, runs diagonally through the neighborhood. Formerly home to public utilities such as the Seattle Electric Company and Puget Sound Traction, Light & Power, Denny Triangle’s utilitarian architecture reflects its industrial past.



Open Space & Recreation

- Parks & Public Spaces
- Parks with Active Recreation

Food

- Full Service Grocery
- Small Grocery/Convenience
- Block with Restaurants

Learning

- Licensed Childcare Facilities

Health

- Healthcare or Pharmacies
- Supportive Services

Cultural Spaces

- Public Art
- Cultural Core



Denny Triangle

Opportunities

Reimagine Denny Triangle as a walkable, livable neighborhood, by rethinking bus routes, providing more places for families, and working to improve I-5 crossings.

At Home Downtown

- **DH.1.2.4** Rezone from Union to Virginia Street with greater density and allow for more affordable homes.
- **DH.1.5.3** Expand current green building incentives to include new or emerging green building and sustainable development practices, such as Mass Timber Construction.
- **DH.2.1.4** Work with Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), the Amazon Housing Equity Fund, the Black Home Initiative and other partners to expand outreach to lower-income owner households at risk of displacement.
- **DH.3.1.3** Create incentives for additional at-grade residential unit access in larger mixed use and residential development projects.
- **DH.3.4.1** Expand affordable preschool options in Downtown neighborhoods—particularly in areas with growing young populations such as Belltown, the Downtown Core, and Denny Triangle.

Make Everyone Feel Safe and Welcome

- **SW.3.2.1** Support efforts by the Friends of the I-5 CID Action Group.
- **SW.4.1.4** Establish a City fund to receive and track cash-in-lieu contributions for the creation and maintenance of new green spaces.

Make Use of Every Square Foot

- **SF.3.5.2** Continue to identify and remove zoning constraints on retail, food service, and entertainment usess. As needed, update the zoning code to provide greater flexibility for these uses and provide dedicated support for businesses seeking to activate underutilized commercial space.
- **SF.6.5.2** Convene private, corporate, and philanthropic partners to explore creation of financial and funding tools to create initiatives in support of attraction, growth, and retention of businesses in key industries.

Steward Our Home for the Next Seven Generations

- **SG.2.2.5** Explore ways to adapt existing stormwater mitigation partnership programs with landowners and developers to Downtown’s urban context. Support SPU’s ability to partner with developers to construct new developments “beyond code improvements.”

Find Our Way

- **FW.1.1.4** Ensure that major downtown corridor projects, such as the Denny Way improvements, incorporate opportunities to maintain and expand pedestrian space.
- **FW.2.2.4** Re-imagine spaces where the grids change Downtown (e.g., Denny Way, Yesler Way), to increase visibility, decrease pedestrian crossing distances, and other interventions to help prevent vehicles from turning at high rates of speed. Improve pedestrian safety and comfort at signalized intersections where highway ramps meet city streets.
- **FW.4.1.4** Explore consolidated or reconfigured transit service pathways through Belltown and Denny Triangle as transit is restructured.
- **FW.4.2.4** Improve travel time reliability for transit approaching and across I-5 including crossings on Jackson St, James St, Madison & Spring Streets, Pike & Pine Streets, and Denny Way.
- **FW.6.3.5** Continue to install Seamless Seattle wayfinding columns and kiosks to aid navigation Downtown.



Advance these Seattle Transportation Plan projects (see Appendix for more details)

- (21) 5th Avenue Multimodal Improvements
- (22) Virginia and Stewart St Multimodal Improvements
- (23) Denny Way Multimodal Improvements
- (24) Bell Street Multimodal Improvements

Implementation

Seattle’s Downtown Regional Center Plan is a community-driven plan, which will require the work, commitment and collaboration of many departments, stakeholders, leaders, and organizations to realize its recommendations over the coming years. Just as the plan was created through the contributions of many people in an iterative process, no single person or office will implement it alone, or overnight.

The following table outlines the anticipated timelines (near-term, mid-term, or long-term) for each action in the plan, as well as identifies the main partners required to make it happen. While OPCD will remain the plan’s key champion, a city steward has been identified for each action. The city steward is one or more departments or agencies responsible for leading and orchestrating the implementation for that action. When additional supporting partners are known, they are identified as important stakeholders to be included in future steps. Given that the plan will unfold over time, alongside many other local and regional initiatives, it is likely that new priorities and opportunities will emerge that may rearrange the sequence of actions or welcome in new partners. The implementation table is a starting point for future funding, policy changes, and capital improvements. The plan’s vision, themes and goals should remain resilient to change and evolution over time.

- ACRONYMS LIST**
- Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS)
 - Community Assisted Response & Engagement (CARE)
 - Office of Housing (OH)
 - Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC)
 - Seattle City Attorney (LAW)
 - Office of Economic Development (OED)
 - Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD)
 - Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE)
 - Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR)
 - Seattle City Light (SCL)
 - Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection (SDCI)
 - Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)
 - Seattle Fire Department (SFD)
 - Seattle Human Services Department (HSD)
 - Seattle Police Department (SPD)
 - Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)
 - Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (WDC)

Theme 1: Downtown is Home (DH)

See more information in the Downtown is Home chapter (page 42)

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Goal DH 1	Add at least 13,500 new housing units across Downtown.			
Policy DH 1.1	Regularly review, simplify, and optimize permitting regulations and processes that affect Downtown residential development.			
DH 1.1.1	Analyze the development of funding programs that provide gap financing to offset housing development costs driven by city processes that currently make conversions or new construction prohibitive.	OH		Mid-term
DH 1.1.2	Extend the design review exemption period and waiver of development standards for residential conversions by an additional one to two years in areas that can support more housing production.	SDCI	Mayor's Office	Near-term
Policy DH 1.2	Prioritize residential development in the Downtown Core.			
DH 1.2.1	Prioritize Third Avenue to allow for more housing types, promote family-friendly housing, and advance affordability.	OPCD	OH, SDCI, SDOT	Near-term
DH 1.2.2	Rename the Downtown Commercial Core zone as the Downtown Core to reflect its more mixed-use, residential status and aspirations.	OPCD		Near-term
DH 1.2.3	Remove retail frontage requirements along some parts of Downtown corridors to reduce development costs.	OPCD	SDOT, OED	Near-term
DH 1.2.4	Rezone from Union to Virginia Street with greater density and allow for more affordable homes.	OPCD		Near-term
DH 1.2.5	Update zoning policies to allow for taller residential buildings from Union Street north to Stewart Street, east on Pike Street and Union Street toward 4th Avenue, and along Third Avenue.	OPCD		Near-term
DH 1.2.6	Continue to support and refine development incentives—such as height allowances tied to meaningful community benefits—to encourage housing production.	OPCD	SDCI	Mid-term
DH 1.2.7	Evaluate updating allowances for residential use on existing Seattle Waterfront Pier.	OPCD	SDCI	Near-term
Policy DH 1.3	Increase flexibility in new commercial building designs to plan ahead for future conversions to residential use.			
DH 1.3.1	Update Street Use Designations to support additional activated frontages including ground floor residential access (Future figure found in Land Use Map section).	SDOT	OPCD	Near-term
Policy DH 1.4	Partner with the private sector to advance innovations in new housing construction. (Aligned with Comprehensive Plan policy H 7.2)			
DH 1.4.1	Continue to partner with Mass Timber Accelerator (MassTAC) to accelerate the development of mass timber projects and explore comparative advantages of application of Mass Timber for industrial buildings in liquefaction zones versus other uses.	OED	OPCD	Near-term
Policy DH 1.5	Support programs that increase the financial feasibility of sustainable building practices.			
DH 1.5.1	Encourage construction techniques and materials that are cost-effective and efficient to build (Cross-laminated timber buildings, volumetric modular, pre-fab).	SDCI	OSE, OPCD	Near-term
DH 1.5.2	Evaluate development standards and construction codes to identify opportunities to provide flexibility and remove code barriers to Mass Timber and carbon neutral development projects.	SDCI	OSE, OPCD	Near-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
DH 1.5.3	Expand current green building incentives to include new or emerging green building and sustainable development practices, such as mass timber construction.	OSE		Near-term
Policy DH 1.6	Explore additional programs or actions that provide incentives for office-to-income-restricted residential conversion proposals, in addition to the State sales tax exemption. Programs or actions could be a temporary or permanent change.			
Policy DH 1.7	Encourage the conversion of existing downtown buildings to allow for a wider variety of uses, with an emphasis on securing long-term income-restricted housing. (Aligned with Comprehensive Plan policy H 7.6.)			
DH 1.7.1	Explore incentivizing more office-to-residential conversions that provide affordable housing through the Office of Housing's annual funding process.	OH	OPCD	Ongoing
DH 1.7.2	Continue to evaluate development standards and construction codes to identify opportunities to provide flexibility and remove code barriers to adaptive reuse projects.	OPCD	SDCI	Ongoing
DH 1.7.3	Explore partnerships with the King County Department of Assessments for a payment in lieu of taxes agreement that will abate a percentage of fair market assessed residential value for a certain term in office-to-residential conversion projects.	SDCI	King County	Near-term
Policy DH 1.8	Reduce the barriers (regulatory, financial, and informational) to making updates required by construction and energy codes when retrofitting historic buildings.			
DH 1.8.1	Help connect owners of unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings to funding and financing programs, builders and contractors, and other information to support simultaneous energy, occupancy, and seismic upgrades.	SDCI	OSE	Near-term
DH 1.8.2	Explore possible financial incentives to encourage new building owners to retrofit unreinforced masonry buildings. Incentives could include waiving of building permit fees for seismic upgrades, removing street use fees for construction vehicles and laydown space, low-interest or no-interest financing from publicly issued bonds or redevelopment district revenue, and acquiring federal grant money for subsidizing retrofits.	SDCI	SDOT	Near-term
DH 1.8.3	Provide marketing and communications to Downtown business owners, building owners, and residents with language isolation about incentives and free or low-cost access to heating conversion from oil to electric heat and stoves from natural gas to electric.	OSE	OED, OH, HomeWise Team	Near-term
DH 1.8.4	Create a toolkit about incorporating solar or green technologies on rooftops, focusing on mitigating urban heat island effect.	OSE	SDCI, SCL	Near-term
DH 1.8.5	Help build connections between non-profits and developers to protect and retrofit culturally and historically significant buildings.	Historic Preservation	Landmarks Preservation Board	Near-term
Goal DH 2	Preserve and expand housing that is accessible to a range of incomes.			
Policy DH 2.1	Protect low income renters from increased risk of displacement by focusing on those with incomes at or below 50% of the area median income (AMI).			
DH 2.1.1	Deploy the City's existing displacement mitigation strategies and resources as needed, taking into account particularly vulnerable populations in the Chinatown–International District (CID) and Pioneer Square districts.	OPCD	OH	Near-term
DH 2.1.2	Monitor displacement risk using the City's displacement risk dashboard, and develop proactive strategies to increase access to and awareness of City resources that help prevent displacement and housing instability for low-income households.	OPCD	OH, HSD, IP, SPU, SCL	Near-term
DH 2.1.3	Continue to support tenant counseling and education programs for low-income renters. Connect tenants to subsidy programs like housing choice vouchers, tax abatements, and relocation assistance services.	OH, SDCI	HSD, SPU, SCL, IP	Near-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
DH 2.1.4	Work with Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), the Amazon Housing Equity Fund, the Black Home Initiative, and other partners to expand outreach to lower-income owner households at risk of displacement.	OPCD		Near-term
DH 2.1.5	Explore the feasibility of creating a targeted loan and/or grant program for lower-income homeowners and building owners who offer below-market units in high-risk neighborhoods—such as the CID and Pioneer Square—to support additional housing within existing buildings and to help preserve affordable housing.	OH		Near-term
DH 2.1.6	Given the number of vacant upper-level spaces in areas such as the CID, explore developing a program to help long-time property owners bring the upper floors of their buildings up to code.	OH	SDCI, DON	Near-term
DH 2.1.7	Create a strategy under the City's Equitable Development Initiative (EDI) program to prevent displacement and support equitable development in communities affected by the lid I-5 project.	OPCD		Near-term
Policy DH 2.2	Increase opportunities and capacity for tenants to move into home ownership.			
DH 2.2.1	Encourage the use of right-of-first refusal programs as part of lease agreements to give tenants the first chance to purchase the property they occupy.	OH		Near-term
DH 2.2.2	Tie the implementation of the right-of-first refusal programs to low-income homeownership financing programs.	OH		Near-term
Policy DH 2.3	Help ensure adequate funding for long-term income-restricted housing.			
DH 2.3.1	Work with the state, other public funders, foundations, major employers, community-based organizations, and Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) to explore the feasibility of new grant and/or loan funds for income-restricted housing developments serving Downtown areas with the highest socioeconomic needs.	OH	OPCD, CDFIs, Major Employers, Community Organizations	Mid-term
DH 2.3.2	Explore creating and supporting the permanent preservation of income-restricted affordable housing through tools such as a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, a land trust, or cooperative ownership models.	OPCD	OH	Mid-term
DH 2.3.3	Increase Office of Housing rental investments Downtown and pilot an Office of Housing-funded homeownership project, focusing on existing housing stock.	OH		Near-term
DH 2.3.4	Expand the capacity of existing housing organizations to receive and distribute philanthropic funding.	OH		Near-term
Goal DH 3	Evolve Downtown neighborhoods to better meet the diverse needs of all residents and families.			
Policy DH 3.1	Increase housing that supports residents in all different life stages (family-friendly housing, live-work housing, accessible senior housing).			
DH 3.1.1	Explore ways to incentivize accessible and inclusive housing design Downtown.	OH	OPCD	Near-term
DH 3.1.2	Explore allowing ground-floor ADA-accessible units in lieu of ground-floor retail requirements on streets with slopes of less than 8% and lower pedestrian traffic designations. Study this in concert with planned changes to retail-related zoning requirements and street type designations.	SDCI	OH, OPCD, HSD	Mid-term
DH 3.1.3	Create incentives for additional at-grade residential unit access in larger mixed-use and residential development projects.	SDCI		Near-term
DH 3.1.4	Create a new street type designation within the land use code that requires direct access to individual street-level residential units in order to activate streetscapes.	SDOT, OPCD		Mid-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
DH 3.1.5	Encourage developers to include more two- and three-bedroom units. Consider incentives—such as increased floor-area ratio (FAR) or building height—for projects that provide larger units in high-growth areas, such as Denny Triangle.	OPCD	OH, SDCI	Near-term
Policy DH 3.2	Simplify the housing production process thereby reducing upfront development costs.			
Policy DH 3.3	Support new models of income-restricted and market-rate homeownership (community land trusts, cooperative or shared equity models, and co-housing).			
Policy DH 3.4	Expand family-focused services and experiences, particularly around housing and transit.			
DH 3.4.1	Expand affordable preschool options in Downtown neighborhoods—particularly in areas with growing young populations such as Belltown, the Downtown Core, and Denny Triangle.	SPS		Near-term
DH 3.4.2	Ensure the Safe Routes to Schools program is coordinated with routes to nearby parks and healthy food destinations to improve pedestrian safety around parks and playgrounds.	SDOT	SPS	Near-term
DH 3.4.3	Identify sites or existing structures that are feasible for new childcare and after-school supportive facilities in areas where there are gaps.	OPCD	OED	Near-term
Policy DH 3.5	Encourage childcare facilities, public restrooms, indoor open play spaces, or children-focused educational programs as part of incentives programs.			
DH 3.5.1	Revise zoning to incentivize indoor open play and gathering facilities on the ground floor of commercial, residential, and mixed-use buildings. Enact standards for on-site amenities for these uses, including drop-off and pick-up zones, access to play areas, and security.	OPCD	SDCI	Mid-term
DH 3.5.2	Explore expanding the types of child-friendly facilities that qualify as a public benefit under the incentive zoning program.	OPCD	SDCI	Mid-term
DH 3.5.3	Increase incentives for child-friendly roof decks in existing and new developments to expand access to the outdoors.	SDCI		Mid-term

Theme 2: Make Everyone Feel Safe and Welcome (SW)

See more information in the Make Everyone Feel Safe and Welcome chapter (page 60)

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Goal SW 1	Make Downtown safe for everyone, all hours of the day.			
Policy SW 1.1	Ensure outdoor spaces are accessible, well-lit, comfortable, and clean.			
SW 1.1.2	Provide durable, well-designed seating adjacent to transit stations and City-owned parks and plazas, as well as at other key resting areas throughout Downtown.	SPR, SDOT	OPCD	Near-term
SW 1.1.3	Focus lighting investments and regular lighting maintenance in areas that support restaurants and nightlife activity, and to support a safe pedestrian route to transit services and other amenities.	SCL	SDOT	Mid-term
SW 1.1.4	Activate the streets and public spaces between King Street and Jackson Street, and between the 4th Ave S and 12th Ave S intersections.	SPR, SDOT	OPCD, SCL	Near-term
SW 1.1.5	Implement the Public Life Action Plan for Yesler Crescent to enhance public spaces and sidewalks along 2nd Avenue between Yesler Way, South Main Street, and City Hall Park.	SPR	SDOT	Mid-term
SW 1.1.6	Continue to identify opportunities to expand cleaning, safety, and hospitality services during major national and international events Downtown in coordination with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs).	OED	DSA	Mid-term
SW 1.1.7	Support public-private partnerships to create active uses on underutilized parcels while waiting for future development.	OPCD	SPR, SDCI	Ongoing
Policy SW 1.2	Create a comfortable and convenient transit experience for everyone, including while waiting for buses and making transfers.			
SW 1.2.1	Continue implementing the Seamless Seattle pedestrian wayfinding signage at Westlake and Jackson Hub and expand the system around other transit stations.	SDOT		Ongoing
SW 1.2.2	Provide security, maintenance, and operations resources to ensure transit stops and stations feel safe, clean, uncluttered, and inviting. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	SDOT		Ongoing
SW 1.2.3	Continue implementing a focused approach to respond to safety and environmental concerns along 3rd Avenue.	HSD	SDOT, SPU, CARE	Ongoing
Policy SW 1.3	Maintain public spaces through dedicated resources and continued partnerships with local communities and businesses, to reduce the burden of public space maintenance on historically underinvested communities.			
SW 1.3.1	Build on existing partnerships with Downtown BIAs to expand resources for community-based organizations to support “clean and safe” programming.	HSD		Near-term
SW 1.3.2	Assemble an interdepartmental working group to share lessons learned from successful waterfront management programs.	OPCD	Waterfront Seattle	Near-term
Policy SW 1.4	Enhance community policing services and alternative response programs.			
SW 1.4.1	Expand Community Crisis Responder (CCR) coverage to 24/7; which includes additional staffing numbers to account for the coverage.	CARE		Ongoing
SW 1.4.2	Establish partnerships with Downtown community groups, retailers, and other non-profit entities to educate people about behavioral and public health awareness and the availability of alternative, civilian-based response resources.	CARE, SFD, SPD		Ongoing
Policy SW 1.5	Provide programs and services for youth experiencing barriers to housing, employment and education.			
Policy SW 1.6	Support Downtown Parks with wrap-around response teams that provide a range of services and skillsets.			
SW 1.6.1	Adapt existing parks partnership agreements to include support from response teams.	SPR, CARE		Near-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Goal SW 2	Make Downtown welcoming and inclusive, treating all with respect and dignity.			
Policy SW 2.1	Partner with Indigenous communities to reflect their histories and futures in Downtown land use, signage, and wayfinding systems.			
SW 2.1.1	Support the growth of Urban Indian organizations working to expand their cultural corridor with updated healthcare facilities, housing, childcare, and small business opportunities. Engage directly with Indigenous organizations to better understand their land use needs.	OPCD	OIR, OED	Near-term
SW 2.1.2	Create multilingual signage and communications in Downtown spaces, with an emphasis on Indigenous naming, that guides people to ADA-accessible routes through buildings, along streets, and on paths.	SDOT, OPCD	OIR	Mid-term
Policy SW 2.2	Plan for additional primary and urgent healthcare facilities to provide local support to Downtown residents.			
SW 2.2.1	Remove any existing and/or proposed land use and zoning regulations that could hinder building professional medical, laboratory, and urgent care space Downtown, including in mixed-use buildings.	OPCD, SDCI		Mid-term
Policy SW 2.3	Adopt an inclusive management approach to Downtown public spaces, with the intention to accommodate everyone’s needs within public spaces.			
SW 2.3.1	Increase the number of all-gender public restrooms in Downtown Parks.	SPR		Near-term
SW 2.3.2	Identify opportunities to expand access to public restrooms along existing ADA-accessible routes and provide clear wayfinding to restrooms, transit stops, arts and cultural amenities.	SPR	SDOT	Mid-term
Policy SW 2.4	Keep public amenities open to the public, except during active construction or renovation processes.			
Policy SW 2.5	Focus a coordinated care planning process to serve populations who most predictably enter homelessness.			
Policy SW 2.6	Provide resources and investments to connect people experiencing homelessness to appropriate services and assistance.			
SW 2.6.1	Increase coordination and build capacity with existing resource centers to ensure comprehensive services and meet the basic needs of all individuals and families experiencing homelessness across Downtown on a 24/7 basis.	CARE		Near-term
SW 2.6.2	Fund smaller neighborhood-specific resource centers or augment existing providers to alleviate pressure on larger centers and the impacts of serving a larger community.	CARE		Near-term
SW 2.6.3	Continue to provide de-escalation training for retail workers, hotel staff, and other staff who work in publicly accessible ground floors.	CARE	OED	Ongoing
SW 2.6.4	Continue to track and evaluate the success of partnerships with state organizations in training additional mental health workers.	HSD		Mid-term
SW 2.6.5	Engage Seattle’s CARE team to provide consistent, timely responses to safety-related incidents, particularly when individuals are in crisis or experiencing behavioral health challenges.	CARE	KCH	Near-term
SW 2.6.6	Invest in a unified emergency 911 center that houses all major City of Seattle public safety and utility dispatch resources.	CARE, SDOT, SFD, SCL, SPU, OEM		Mid to Long-term
SW 2.6.7	Ensure that first response expands relative to emergency call types and Downtown jobs and housing growth, including additional 911 staff.	CARE		Ongoing
SW 2.6.8	Support a coordinated effort with King County to integrate substance abuse treatment and support into the criminal court and jail system.	CARE	King County	Near-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Policy SW 2.7	Focus new resources and investments on an approach that brings people indoors first and integrates treatment and services to resolve homelessness among individuals and families.			
Policy SW 2.8	Continue to advocate for the investment of State funds to train more mental-health workers and to increase capacity for emergency and ongoing mental health treatment.			
SW 2.8.1	Partner with major medical providers to provide additional medical services for chemical dependency and mental health facilities in Downtown, including through community health clinics in underserved areas. Encourage the use of upper floors for medical offices, reserving street level for active uses with transparency.	CARE	OPCD	Mid-term
SW 2.8.2	Explore opportunities for increasing mental health resources through area hospitals and healthcare providers.	CARE	OPCD	Near-term
SW 2.8.3	Augment and coordinate with county wide crisis care centers to reduce reliance on emergency rooms or the City's jail system to serve individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.	CARE	OPCD	Mid-term
Goal SW 3	Wrap Downtown in a Green Embrace.			
Policy SW 3.1	Improve accessibility and connectivity across major roads and rail lines that divide downtown neighborhoods, expose people to harmful emissions, and create barriers between communities.			
SW 3.1.1	Support development over the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) tracks in South Downtown.	OPCD, SDOT	Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway	Mid-term
SW 3.1.2	Complete the I-5 Lid feasibility study.	OPCD	WSDOT	Near-term
SW 3.1.3	Develop a community vision plan that defines goals and urban design priorities for freeway lids in the project area.	OPCD	Friends of Lid I-5	Mid-term
SW 3.1.4	Partner with Friends of Lid I-5 Steering Committee to explore short-term improvement opportunities.	SDOT	Friends of Lid I-5	Near-term
SW 3.1.5	Expand the Downtown I-5 lid project area to include I-5 and all adjacent blocks from Thomas St to S Dearborn St.	OPCD		Mid-term
SW 3.1.6	Engage a diverse group of community members, business owners, and local leaders in a visioning process for new freeway lids and integrated structures, such as parks, pavilions, and buildings.	OPCD		Mid-term
Policy SW 3.2	Improve underpass connections within the Chinatown-International District.			
SW 3.2.1	Support efforts by the Friends of the I-5 CID Action Group.	SDOT	WSDOT	Mid-term
Policy SW 3.3	Improve the walking experience from the waterfront to other neighborhoods, especially along steep slopes.			
SW 3.3.1	Enhance streetscapes by adding more street trees, plantings, and green spaces along streets.	SDOT	SPU, Property Owners	Near-term
SW 3.3.2	Improve the Seneca and Blanchard Street connections between the waterfront and neighborhoods to the west.	SDOT		Mid-term
Policy SW 3.4	Further adapt land use regulations to support the activation of ground floors, storefronts, and landscaping and loading adjacent to the waterfront along Alaskan Way.			
SW 3.4.1	Expand the Downtown Pedestrian Zone classification to include the extent of the Downtown Waterfront, from Pike Place Market south along Alaskan Way to King Street.	OPCD		Mid-term
SW 3.4.2	Study “Blank Facade Limits” within the Seattle Municipal Code to understand how to better support more transparency between indoor and outdoor uses along the waterfront.	OPCD		Long-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Goal SW 4	Increase parks, plazas, and greenspaces as Downtown grows.			
Policy SW 4.1	Expand access to park space in areas with gaps, and in communities that were disproportionately affected by past planning actions.			
SW 4.1.1	Consider changes to the incentive zoning and the Downtown Amenity Standards for future private development of publicly accessible spaces to better align with the Racial Equity Toolkit outcomes.	OPCD		Long-term
SW 4.1.2	Continue incentive zoning for open space, and explore program improvements to support higher-quality on-site spaces as well as off-site options and a workable system for in-lieu payment.	OPCD	SDCI	Ongoing
SW 4.1.3	Partner with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and community groups to seek funding for small-scale green and active private or City-owned park and plaza amenities in underserved areas.	SPR	CBOs, OED	Mid-term
SW 4.1.4	Establish a City fund to receive and track cash-in-lieu contributions for the creation and maintenance of new green spaces.	SPR		Near-term
SW 4.1.5	Balance the public allocation of funding to respond to deferred maintenance projects in existing parks and historic properties alongside new park investments.	SPR		Mid-term
SW 4.1.6	Continue planning for and allocating resources to the Lid-5 project.	SPR, WSDOT, OPCD		Long-term
SW 4.1.7	Dedicate resources to invest in Pier 48 site to support park uses.	SPR, OPCD	SDOT	Long-term
Policy SW 4.2	Focus on new park space creation where service gaps are identified by Seattle Parks and Recreation in the Chinatown-International District, Belltown, and Denny Triangle.			
SW 4.2.1	Dedicate resources to invest in the Portal site to support park uses.	SDOT, SPR	Belltown United	Long-term
Policy SW 4.3	Create and advance new Gateway Parks, near transit stations and arrival moments from other neighborhoods into Downtown.			
SW 4.3.1	Create a new typology that delineates City-owned park spaces as “Downtown Gateway Parks,” or parks located near major transit stations and gateways, from other neighborhoods to Downtown, to respond to their unique activation and maintenance needs.	SPR		Mid-term
SW 4.3.2	Include specific standards for wayfinding, seating, accessibility, activation, and ongoing maintenance and operations to create more welcoming spaces for visitors.	SPR		Mid-term
SW 4.3.3	Invest in green connections between unique Downtown destinations, like City Hall Park, Pioneer Square, and Occidental Square.	SPR		Mid-term
Policy SW 4.4	Seek opportunities to repurpose or activate the right of way for recreational opportunities.			
SW 4.4.1	Identify sites across Downtown where under-utilized rights-of-way can be depaved and re-allocated for green space with increased frequency closer to Puget Sound.	SDOT		Long-term
SW 4.4.2	Incentivize additional pedestrian access options to ground floor amenities along alleyways as buildings along alleyways are redeveloped.	SDOT, OED	SDCI	Long-term
SW 4.4.3	Activate Downtown alleyways with public art, lighting, and other pedestrian-supporting amenities, while accommodating necessary critical access (e.g. loading and unloading).	SDOT, ARTS	CBOs	Long-term
SW 4.4.4	Adapt the Second Avenue Extension S intersection with South Jackson Street to better serve multimodal access to South Downtown Transportation Hub and create additional public realm space. (South Jackson Street Connections Plan)	SDOT		Long-term
SW 4.4.5	Develop an analysis of rights-of-way where the roadway has more capacity than is currently used, and prioritize converting those areas into park or plaza space. Implement those conversions where feasible and in communities with a greater need for park space.	SDOT	OPCD	Long-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Policy SW 4.5	Continue supporting community-led conversations and planning efforts to shape open space in ways that reflect local needs, with a focus on ecological resilience and access to fresh, healthy food.			
Policy SW 4.6	Collaborate with commercial property owners and other non-City partners to expand access to high-quality amenities.			
SW 4.6.1	Partner with commercial property owners to update, improve, and enhance accessibility to existing and new Privately Owned Public Space (POPS), including in underutilized commercial centers where these amenities may no longer serve their original function.	OED	OPCD	Mid-term
SW 4.6.2	Incentivize the investment or reinvestment of POPS that include interactive water features, including the conversion of existing fountains to spray parks, to encourage use and visibility.	OPCD	SPR	Long-term
SW 4.6.3	Identify consistent funding for city partnerships with local non-profit organizations to maintain existing and developed green spaces.	SPR, SDOT		Near-term
Goal SW 5	Provide a variety of recreational experiences throughout the year for Downtown residents and visitors.			
Policy SW 5.1	Increase youth and all ages cultural, arts, and recreation amenities in existing and new Downtown parks and community facilities, focusing first on areas that are taking on more residential units.			
SW 5.1.1	Create opportunities for more play spaces and flexible recreation amenities for children and teens in existing Downtown parks and plazas.	SPR		Near-term
SW 5.1.2	Make all existing water features in Downtown Parks operational.	SPR		Mid-term
SW 5.1.3	Improve public water access and cooling areas by exploring the installation of spray pads or water features in high-use existing parks and plazas close to residential areas.	SPR		Long-term
Policy SW 5.2	Activate Downtown parks for neighborhood-wide events.			
SW 5.2.1	Continue to partner with organizations outside of the City to offer free, family-friendly programming at the Waterfront and in neighborhood public spaces.	Waterfront Seattle	SPR	Ongoing
SW 5.2.2	Work with long-term vacant retail property owners, focusing on the Pike and Pine corridor, to lease their spaces with uses serving the neighborhood and identified in the Pike-Pine retail study.	OED	DON, OPCD, DSA, SDCI	Mid-term
SW 5.2.3	Work with property owners and businesses with retail spaces adjacent to large parks to develop solutions to issues causing vacancy.	OPCD	OED, SDCI	Long-term
SW 5.2.4	Support community-driven activations and cultural celebrations Downtown including nightlife.	OED	OPCD	Ongoing
SW 5.2.5	Adapt and develop parks with flexible programming and events infrastructure (access to power, lawns, or flexible space).	SPR		Near-term
Policy SW 5.3	Complete planned improvements to Downtown public spaces.			
SW 5.3.1	Allocate funds to implement recently completed master plans for Downtown public spaces.	SPR, SDOT		Near-term
SW 5.3.2	Identify appropriate responsible city staff to oversee the implementation of completed master plans for Downtown public spaces.	SPR, SDOT		Near-term
SW 5.3.3	Implement the City Hall Park and Vicinity Study to include repurposing and reopening Prefontaine Place.	SPR	SDOT	Long-term
SW 5.3.4	Complete upgrades to Westlake Park and Pioneer Square Park.	SPR		Long-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Goal SW 6	Reveal, celebrate, and protect Downtown’s history and culture.			
Policy SW 6.1	Communicate and share Downtown’s untold and unique stories, people, and places.			
SW 6.1.1	Explore developing and implementing a cultural plan for South Jackson Street as a “story street.” (South Jackson Street Connections Report)	SDOT	ARTS	Mid-term
SW 6.1.2	Expand storytelling in parks to include history of Indigenous people and other communities of color who have shaped Downtown.	ARTS	Indigenous Tribes and Indigenous organizations, OIR	Near-term
SW 6.1.3	Expand opportunities for musical and theatrical performances and other performance art across Downtown.	ARTS	Seattle Center, DSA	Mid-term
Policy SW 6.2	Preserve Downtown’s built history while enabling contemporary evolution.			
SW 6.2.1	Update city landmark-listed properties throughout Downtown in partnership with the Seattle Landmarks Commission, Landmarks Preservation Board, and building owners.	Historic Preservation	Seattle Landmarks Commission, Landmarks Preservation Board	Near-term
SW 6.2.2	Provide incentives to modernize and/or adapt buildings within Downtown’s three landmark districts.	OPCD	OH, SDCI, DON	Long-term
SW 6.2.3	Communicate grants and other incentives for appropriate maintenance and investment by building owners of listed historic properties.	Historic Preservation	Landmarks Preservation Board	Near-term
SW 6.2.4	Explore the creation of a new Creative Core overlay from Queen Anne and Lake Union Park in the north, to T-Mobile Park in the south, and from the Seattle Waterfront east to Interstate 5. (Cultural Strategies for Downtown Revitalization Report)	OPCD, ARTS	DSA	Mid-term
Policy SW 6.3	Reinforce and celebrate each Downtown neighborhood’s unique identity.			
SW 6.3.1	Establish Little Saigon as a regional and national attraction. (Little Saigon Public Realm Design Plan)	OPCD	Friends of Little Saigon, OED, DON	Mid-term
SW 6.3.2	Work with the local Business Improvement District Associations and other Business Improvement Areas (BIA) in the Downtown regional center to market the unique identities of each neighborhood.	OPCD	OED, DSA, BIAs, DON	Near-term
SW 6.3.3	Explore ways to align our design review and historic preservation policies to better support and maintain the character and culture of neighborhoods over time.	OPCD		Near-term
SW 6.3.4	Increase flexibility to allow shop owners to activate sidewalks in front of their businesses using signage, furnishings, and sidewalk merchandise displays.	SDOT	OED	Near-term
SW 6.3.5	Integrate culturally appropriate public art into the streetscape, including lighting and ground treatments.	ARTS	SDOT	Near-term

Theme 3: Make Use of Every Square Foot (SF)

See more information in the Make Use of Every Square Foot chapter (page 82)

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Goal SF 1	Fill Downtown spaces with a mix of commercial uses.			
Policy SF 1.1	Adapt underutilized Downtown office spaces and upper floors to new uses.			
SF 1.1.1	Encourage the development of office space that provides flexible, open configurations with increased access to communications technologies to support hybrid work schedules, social distancing, improved ventilation, childcare, and other needs of the modern workplace.	OED	OPCD, SDCI	Mid-term
SF 1.1.2	Update zoning and development standards to remove administrative and regulatory barriers to the reuse of office properties for other commercial uses/types of workplaces.	OPCD	SDCI	Mid-term
SF 1.1.3	Tailor adaptive reuse policies and programs to the specific needs of small, heritage, and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)-owned businesses, in close partnership with organizations such as the Alliance for Pioneer Square, the Chinatown-International District Business Improvement Area, and others.	OPCD	OIR, Alliance for Pioneer Square, Chinatown-International District Business Improvement Area	Mid-term
Policy SF 1.2	Leverage vacant or underutilized publicly-owned properties for redevelopment with community benefits.			
SF 1.2.1	Explore the acquisition and assembly of underutilized or vacant sites, and their potential for developing community-serving residential, commercial and civic uses. Begin with a feasibility study of public land.	OPCD	OED	Mid-term
SF 1.2.2	Conduct outreach to foundations, Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and other private- and public-sector partners to evaluate the feasibility of establishing an acquisition fund for underutilized vacant sites.	OPCD	CDFIs	Near-term
SF 1.2.3	Continue funding commercial space and business consulting programs and work with CDFIs to increase access to capital.	OED		Ongoing
SF 1.2.4	Revisit existing City policies on disposal of City-owned property to consider a wider variety of community serving uses beyond affordable housing, such as education, cultural, and supportive services.	OPCD		Mid-term
SF 1.2.5	Continue to work with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and C40 to implement a coordinated, sustainable master planned redevelopment of the 5-acre WOSCA site that complements goals for downtown while integrating maritime uses.	OPCD	WSDOT, C40	Ongoing
Policy SF 1.3	Encourage the transformation of privately-owned vacant land into uses that contribute to Downtown’s growth.			
SF 1.3.1	Identify and implement policy and regulatory changes that incentivize private property owners to fill vacant spaces.	SDCI	OPCD	Near-term
SF 1.3.2	Create a program to share data on Downtown vacancy with the development and business community.	OPCD		Near-term
SF 1.3.3	Explore the potential to financially incentivize reinvestment or activation of long-standing vacancies.	OED	OPCD	Long-term
SF 1.3.4	Explore and support short-term environmental uses for vacant lots, like planting trees, installing rain gardens, or creating wildlife-friendly spaces, until permanent development begins.	OPCD, SPR		Mid-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Goal SF 2	Focus, preserve, and reposition retail destinations to align with today’s experience-based market.			
Policy SF 2.1	Protect and enhance Downtown’s unique retail destinations.			
SF 2.1.1	Consider restricting formula businesses (retail with a standardized array of services and/or merchandise) in some areas of Downtown at elevated risk of commercial displacement, particularly Pioneer Square and the Chinatown-International District, to preserve the unique character of diverse commercial nodes and corridors.	OED	SDCI, OPCD	Mid-term
SF 2.1.2	Continue placemaking events that activate public spaces, support community well-being, and strengthen neighborhood identity with focus on the Downtown core and surrounding areas, including Pioneer Square, Westlake Center, the former King County Campus, and Third Avenue.	SPR		Ongoing
SF 2.1.3	Partner with Pike Place Market to implement the Pike Place Market Strategic Plan.	OPCD	Pike Place Market	Near-term
SF 2.1.4	Allow interim occupation and use of previously vacant retail space while final permits are being reviewed for tenancy and occupation.	OED	SDCI	Near-term
Policy SF 2.2	Strengthen commercial character and visual appeal.			
SF 2.2.1	Expand support to businesses for commercial facade improvements through matching grants and loans, tax abatements, and design assistance.	OED	OPCD, Historic Preservation	Near-term
SF 2.2.2	Pursue additional public and private funding to expand the existing facade improvement programs for small businesses in Pioneer Square, the Chinatown-International District, and the waterfront.	OED	OPCD, Historic Preservation	Near-term
SF 2.2.3	Partner with Office of Economic Development and the Downtown Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) to offer a facade improvement loan and/or grant program for small businesses in commercial nodes and corridors in all five Downtown subareas.	OPCD	OED, BIA	Mid-term
Policy SF 2.3	Protect and expand small and legacy business technical assistance.			
SF 2.3.1	Prioritize support for existing and future small retailers in key hubs such as Pioneer Square.	OED	OPCD	Near-term
SF 2.3.2	Continue retail and business support services reaching underserved businesses.	OED		Near-term
SF 2.3.3	Work with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and community organizations to support retail recruitment and retention through staff and consulting resources.	OED	OPCD, BIA	Mid-term
SF 2.3.4	Work with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) downtown to continue commercial affordability programs and resources.	OED	Downtown BIAs and business focused community organizations downtown	Near-term
Goal SF 3	Support the creation and growth of at least 60,000 new jobs in Downtown.			
Policy SF 3.1	Ensure Downtown offers an adequate supply of suitable commercial space for small- and medium-sized businesses.			
SF 3.1.1	Work with property owners and developers to promote and deliver new small-scale office space options, such as co-working and short-term lease options.	OED		Near-term
SF 3.1.2	Encourage flexible, adaptable ground-floor commercial layouts in mixed-use buildings that allow for a variety of sizes and types of retail, food service, and entertainment uses, including small or micro-businesses.	OED	OPCD	Near-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
SF 3.1.3	Explore the feasibility of creating a food incubator and/or commercial kitchen Downtown. Partner with food policy advocates, the Office of Planning and Community Development's Equitable Development Initiative, and regional operators of food incubators/shared kitchens such as the Food Innovation Network.	OPCD	SDCI, OED	Mid-term
SF 3.1.4	Support the preservation and improvement of existing warehouse, distribution, production, and repair spaces in areas of Downtown where these uses continue to fulfill an important economic function, like Little Saigon which has a high proportion of heritage and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) owned businesses.	OPCD	SDCI, OED	Ongoing
Policy SF 3.2	Retain Downtown industries and increase their diversity.			
SF 3.2.1	Support existing and future key industry clusters including maritime, tourism, information technology, professional services, arts, and green economy.	OED	WDC	Near-term
SF 3.2.2	Invest and direct Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (WDC) to establish and staff industry leadership tables in key sectors to identify the most in-demand skills, job shortages, joint workforce development programs, and industry partnerships.	OED	WDC	Mid-term
SF 3.2.3	Leverage the citywide workforce development strategy and agency partners to create accessible pathways to high-wage careers in key industries and city lines of business.	OED	WDC	Mid-term
Policy SF 3.3	Increase education and workforce training resources, including access to locally driven, non-traditional educational routes.			
Policy SF 3.4	Provide technical assistance and support to pop-up businesses, new small businesses, and legacy businesses.			
SF 3.4.1	Work with the Chinatown-International District to develop anti-displacement strategies to maintain, or, if possible, increase availability of affordable commercial space in Chinatown, Japantown, and Little Saigon areas. (Seattle Comprehensive Plan 2035, ID-P8)	OED	OPCD	Near-term
SF 3.4.2	Continue to provide small business support through Office of Economic Development's small business division existing programming. Work with Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections to support businesses on navigating permitting for businesses.	OED	SDCI	Near-term
SF 3.4.3	Continue programs supporting tenant improvements, commercial affordability consulting, and storefront repair. Leverage City resources with those raised by community-based partners.	OED		Mid-term
SF 3.4.4	Create a website with a step-by-step guide to creative use permitting. (Downtown Seattle Association Arts and Culture Coalition).	OED	WDC, DSA	Mid-term
SF 3.4.5	Review existing home-based business rules and identify refinements that can be made to encourage new start-ups and small businesses.	OED	OPCD	Near-term
SF 3.4.6	Work with Office of Economic Development and existing Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) in Pioneer Square and the Chinatown-International District to provide financial and technical support for small businesses, including but not limited to: rent support and mitigation; renovations and improvements; and special events and attractions to draw increased visitation and spending.	OED	OPCD	Near-term
SF 3.4.7	Continue to provide technical assistance and training to entrepreneurs and small businesses through the existing Office of Economic Development and partner economic development agencies. Provide mentorship and funding assistance, including permitting coaching, in small business programs.	OED	SDCI	Ongoing
Policy SF 3.5	Align City regulations to support new retail trends, successful pilot programs, and the strengths of existing commercial areas.			
SF 3.5.1	Extend timelines for interim occupation and use of previously vacant retail space to include broader uses and longer time limits of interim use.	OED		Near-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
SF 3.5.2	Continue to identify and remove zoning constraints on retail, food service, and entertainment uses. Examples include restrictions or permitting barriers on outdoor food trucks, outdoor seating, pop-up retail, outdoor kiosks, music, and other special events. As needed, update the zoning code to provide greater flexibility for these uses and provide dedicated support for businesses seeking to activate underutilized commercial space.	OED	OPCD, SDCI	Ongoing
SF 3.5.3	Work with city partners to review zoning standards to allow experiential retail uses such as temporary pop-up retail, kiosks, artisanal retail, outdoor events, and maker/craft businesses.	OED	OPCD, SDCI	Near-term
Goal SF 4	Enhance the reliability and quality of downtown facilities and utilities to support future development.			
Policy SF 4.1	Ensure there is a long-term utilities plan in place and sufficient resources for ongoing reinvestment.			
SF 4.1.1	Ensure electrical infrastructure has capacity to support new development.	SPU	OPCD	Near-term
SF 4.1.2	Maintain and upgrade infrastructure to ensure safety, reliability, long-term functionality, and reduce strain.	SPU		Ongoing
SF 4.1.3	Improve Downtown's stormwater infrastructure.	SPU		Ongoing
SF 4.1.4	Encourage investment in green stormwater infrastructure improvements to address existing system deficiencies and accommodate new planned residential and commercial growth.	SPU	SDOT	Mid-term
Policy SF 4.2	Explore establishing funding districts to finance infrastructure improvements, support community benefits, and maintain public spaces.			
SF 4.2.1	Convene a working group to study the feasibility of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district to create a funding stream for future improvements or maintenance, consistent with recent State legislation. This action will require coordination with King County and various private and public landowners within Downtown.	OPCD	OED	Near-term
Policy SF 4.3	Consolidate and right-size Downtown parking.			
SF 4.3.1	Explore ways to offer equitable, shared parking strategies to reduce project development costs and manage parking holistically.	SDOT		Near-term
SF 4.3.2	Seek to actively reduce and re-allocate existing surface level parking or vacant land to more active uses.	SDOT	OPCD	Near-term
SF 4.3.3	Recalibrate costs for on-street parking to encourage the use of existing off-street parking facilities, using the Center City Off-Street Parking Survey parking rates as a guide.	SDOT		Near-term
SF 4.3.4	Work with off-street parking lot operators to explore shared parking arrangements between residential and commercial developments.	SDOT	SDCI	Mid-term
SF 4.3.5	Consider proposing amending Chapter 82.92 RCW to allow the City of Seattle to offer a sales and use tax deferral for redevelopment projects that (1) convert surface parking lots into multifamily housing and (2) include a meaningful share of family-size affordable units as part of the City's state legislative agenda.	OIR	OPCD, SDCI	Mid-term
Goal SF 5	Ensure economic growth is equitable and aligned with community goals.			
Policy SF 5.1	Protect existing businesses and at-risk commercial districts from displacement, particularly when improvements are being made.			
SF 5.1.1	Prioritize business assistance efforts to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and immigrant-owned businesses.	OED	OPCD, OIR	Near-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
SF 5.1.2	Explore adopting commercial preservation zones for business districts and corridors at high-risk of displacement.	OPCD	OED	Near-term
SF 5.1.3	Continue to partner with Sound Transit, other public sector agencies, and private funders to create a comprehensive business assistance and anti-displacement program.	SDOT	Sound Transit	Mid-term
SF 5.1.4	Design a tailored program to provide small businesses and community institutions with support such as legal assistance, marketing assistance, new signage, and financial resources such as grants or forgivable loans.	OED		Mid-term
SF 5.1.5	Maintain funding and support for existing Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and non-profits serving at-risk neighborhood business districts.	OED		Mid-term
SF 5.1.6	Convene a working group of existing organizations to study the feasibility of community land trusts and/or other community development financing tools to acquire and improve existing commercial properties.	OPCD		Mid-term
SF 5.1.7	Conduct a study to determine the feasibility and economic impacts of commercial preservation zones in the Chinatown-International District generally and Little Saigon specifically.	OED		Mid-term
SF 5.1.8	Work with commercial property owners of underutilized warehouse and light industrial buildings to consider the feasibility and economic impacts of preserving these buildings for future use as other zoning appropriate uses aligned with the Industrial & Maritime Strategy.	OED		Mid-term
SF 5.1.9	Explore the efficacy of a food distribution overlay district or other tools in Little Saigon with community organizations to preserve cultural food distribution.	OPCD	OED	Mid-term
Policy SF 5.2	Leverage growth to create community benefits for Downtown’s low-income, formerly incarcerated, and immigrant communities.			
SF 5.2.1	Continue to provide resources and wrap-around services to Downtown areas that rank highest on the City’s Racial and Social Equity Composite Index (designate these areas as Community Resource Areas). Include a focus on re-entry programs or justice-involved youth.	OPCD		Mid-term
SF 5.2.2	Ensure Transit-Oriented Development projects maximize co-benefits such as improved transportation and utility infrastructure, job creation, and new public spaces.	OPCD		Mid-term
SF 5.2.3	Establish a Small Business Assistance program to support businesses ahead of planned transit and infrastructure improvements.	OPCD		Near-term
SF 5.2.4	Expand language access online and in-person for all planning and development processes Downtown.	OPCD	SDCI	Near-term
Goal SF 6	Attract, grow, and make the creative industries visible Downtown.			
Policy SF 6.1	Increase events and activities in public and private spaces near cultural hubs in each neighborhood to make these areas more vibrant, welcoming, and connected to the community.			
SF 6.1.1	Explore developing a neighborhood main streets program (for neighborhoods like Chinatown- International District) to accept money from statewide Beverage and Occupancy tax credit programs.	OPCD	DON, OED	Mid-term
SF 6.1.2	Continue support for pop-up events, festivals and conferences, such as the Belltown Mural Festival and Dragon Fest in the Chinatown-International District.	ARTS		Ongoing
SF 6.1.3	Expand the share of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) artist commissions participating in the percent-for-art ordinance in Downtown.	ARTS		Mid-term
Policy SF 6.2	Expand opportunities for public art to be appreciated and celebrated in public gathering spaces.			

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Policy SF 6.3	Make it easier to participate in the Downtown creative economy.			
SF 6.3.1	Retain and expand access to affordable retail rents and spaces for cultural arts use.	ARTS	OED	Mid-term
SF 6.3.2	Create a website with a step-by-step guide and designate a Seattle Department of Construction & Inspections contact to help guide the permitting process for creative and cultural industries and organizations. (Downtown Seattle Association Arts and Culture Coalition)	SDCI	ARTS	Mid-term
SF 6.3.3	To the extent feasible, implement aspects of the Cultural Strategies for Downtown Revitalization action plan.	ARTS		Mid-term
SF 6.3.4	Simplify the process for special events requirements or funding opportunities to help BIPOC and emerging artists and performers participate more.	Special Events Office		Mid-term
SF 6.3.5	Use City funding for micro-loans, pro-bono architect/lawyer funds, and other investments in downtown spaces.	OED		Mid-term
Policy SF 6.4	Grow and support Downtown’s arts and culture, entertainment, and sports districts.			
SF 6.4.1	Streamline permitting packages for arts and cultural organizations, including temporary pop-ups. (Downtown Seattle Association Arts and Culture Coalition)	SDCI	ARTS	Near-term
SF 6.4.2	Study the feasibility of preserving existing underutilized warehouse and light industrial buildings in the Downtown core for arts and entertainment and fitness uses such as rehearsal studios, nightlife venues, climbing gyms, and other uses that require a relatively large footprint and/or require noise insulation and other physical amenities that these older buildings may provide.	OPCD	SDCI	Mid-term
SF 6.4.3	Complete capitol improvements to Benaroya Hall, a City-owned arts facility.	Mayor's Office	City Council	Mid-term
SF 6.4.4	Pilot a temporary 30-day Change of Use process for arts & cultural venues and other temporary activations such as an arts and cultural designation pilot program, with a specific use code for galleries and temporary pop-ups. (Downtown Seattle Association arts and culture coalition)	Special Events, ARTS	DSA	Mid-term
SF 6.4.5	Leverage underutilized commercial spaces to support community groups and cultural agencies, including night life venues. Launch The Liberty Project supporting underserved, particularly Black-owned businesses.	OED	ARTS, EDI	Mid-term
Policy SF 6.5	Boost and sustain a robust creative sector with innovative and engaged cultural and creative enterprises throughout Downtown. (Cultural Strategies for Downtown Revitalization Plan)			
SF 6.5.1	Support the implementation of the Cultural Strategies for Downtown Revitalization Plan.	ARTS	OPCD, OED	Near-term
SF 6.5.2	Convene private, corporate, and philanthropic partners to explore creation of financial and funding tools to create initiatives in support of attraction, growth, and retention of businesses in key industries.	OED		Near-term
SF 6.5.3	Establish a Citywide external training program investment plan to maximize the impact of City investments in accessible training programs.	OED		Long-term
SF 6.5.4	Explore new business and revenue models for traditional major cultural institutions, arts organizations, and music venues.	ARTS	Seattle Center	Long-term
SF 6.5.5	Provide direct funding for marketing, events, and activation through existing community organizations, including Business Improvement Associations.	ARTS	BIAs	Mid-term

Theme 4: Steward our Home for the Next Seven Generations (SG)

See more information in the Steward our Home for the Next Seven Generations chapter (page 104)

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Goal SG 1	Connect people to nature through views, experiences, and physical connections.			
Policy SG 1.1	Amplify and protect Downtown views of Puget Sound and surrounding mountain ranges.			
SG 1.1.1	Review and update existing view corridors protections and consider expanding viewshed protections to include views from the Pike Place Market.	OPCD	City Council	Mid-term
SG 1.1.2	Celebrate view corridors by aligning with Seattle Department of Transportation Urban Forestry program and other special street designations, as well as areas with projected new development.	SPU	OPCD	Near-term
SG 1.1.4	Expand pedestrian right of ways on streets with views of Elliott Bay and Lake Washington to allow for additional seating capacity. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	SDOT	OPCD	Long-term
Policy SG 1.2	Collaborate with representatives of Tribal Nations, urban Indian communities, and local non-profits to deepen storytelling and wayfinding that honor the cultural and ecological significance of water.			
SG 1.2.1	Highlight Indigenous perspectives and traditional ecological knowledge of the Duwamish and Coast Salish peoples to communicate the historical connections with the area's land and water resources in Downtown storytelling, such as public art and interpretive wayfinding elements.	OIR	ARTS	Near-term
SG 1.2.2	Work with Tribal Nations and Native communities to identify opportunities for art, programming, events, cultural spaces, and other features that honor Native cultures, traditions, and practices rooted in their deep relationship to the restoration and enhancement of the water and shoreline. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	OPCD	OIR, Waterfront Seattle, Indigenous Tribes and Indigenous organizations	Mid-term
SG 1.2.3	Continue to support the Salmon Homecoming and the Tribal Interpretive Center on the waterfront.	OPCD	Waterfront Seattle, Indigenous Tribes and Indigenous organizations	Ongoing
SG 1.2.4	Create memorials to the Chinese Expulsion, Japanese Internment, and the Native American presence at the waterfront. (Jackson Hub Concept Plan)	ARTS	Waterfront Seattle, Indigenous Tribes and Indigenous organizations	Mid-term
Policy SG 1.3	Facilitate waterfront access for Indigenous communities and honor treaty rights and cultural practices. (Designing a Native Neighborhood)			
SG 1.3.1	Ensure that Indigenous Tribes and Indigenous organizations participate in the decision-making process regarding the future investments and activation of Pier 48.	OPCD	OIR, Indigenous Tribes and Indigenous organizations	Near-term
Policy SG 1.4	Communicate the value of water resources, urban habitat, tree canopy, and ecological systems that uniquely reinforce Downtown's slopes, green spaces, and waterfront conditions.			
SG 1.4.1	Reduce impervious surface area across Downtown to meet sustainability goals, increase green space, and integrate additional green stormwater infrastructure.	SDOT, SPU		Mid-term
SG 1.4.2	Use signage to showcase Green Street projects in highly visible and well-trafficked areas to demonstrate how green infrastructure helps manage stormwater and enhance urban habitats.	SDOT	SPU	Mid-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
SG 1.4.3	Incorporate more environment-focused events and programs throughout neighborhoods and on the waterfront.	SPR	SPU	Near-term
SG 1.4.4	Explore expanding existing recognition programs and awards for organizations or individuals actively promoting or protecting water resources and urban ecology.	OPCD	SPU	Mid-term
SG 1.4.5	Collaborate with local universities or schools to measure the impact of urban environmental projects.	OPCD	SPS, University of Washington, Seattle University, Seattle Central College	Near-term
SG 1.4.6	Explore establishing artist residency programs centered on creating artwork that highlights water quality.	ARTS		Mid-term
SG 1.4.7	Commission local artists to create murals, sculptures, or exhibits that depict the connection between Seattle's water resources, urban habitat, and ecological systems.	ARTS	SPU	Mid-term
Policy SG 1.5	Leverage the waterfront's economic development value by enhancing public waterfront access and experiences.			
SG 1.5.1	Create a destination open space at the south end of the waterfront to complement the Olympic Sculpture Park to the north. (Stadium District Concept Plan)	OPCD	SPR	Mid-term
SG 1.5.2	Complete Seattle's Waterfront Park project.	Waterfront Seattle		Ongoing
SG 1.5.3	Explore movable destinations similar to those on Lake Washington, such as floating playgrounds or performance spaces, that allow people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the water on the Elliott Bay. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	OPCD		Mid-term
Policy SG 1.6	Make arrival to Downtown from Puget Sound feel welcoming.			
SG 1.6.1	Facilitate better opportunities for kayak, canoe, or paddle-board access in Elliott Bay from Downtown locations.	SPR	Port of Seattle	Long-term
SG 1.6.2	Improve landside connections from large vessel landings, including ferries, and create new landings for small boats along the waterfront. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	Port of Seattle	WSDOT, Kitsap Ferries	Mid-term
Goal SG 2	Care for Downtown's water, land, and natural resources.			
Policy SG 2.1	Manage stormwater responsibly by cleaning and minimizing run-off into Puget Sound and reducing the strain on Downtown's combined sewer overflow facilities.			
SG 2.1.1	Continue implementing the Green Streets program, focusing on priority areas identified by SDOT and in Belltown, Pioneer Square, and the Chinatown-International District.	SDOT	SPU	Ongoing
SG 2.1.2	Coordinate enhanced Downtown street cleaning efforts to capture pollutants before they enter the stormwater system.	SPU		Near-term
SG 2.1.3	Explore alternative stormwater management approaches in Downtown areas where implementing Green Stormwater Infrastructure may be challenging.	SPU, King County		Near-term
Policy SG 2.2	Ensure new development is sustainable and responsive to Downtown's waterfront environment.			
SG 2.2.1	Integrate green stormwater and traditional indigenous land management practices, like native planting and permaculture practices. (Indigenous Inclusivity Guide)	SDOT	OIR, SPU	Mid-term
SG 2.2.2	Partner with SPU to prioritize resilient stormwater infrastructure investments in areas of the highest need such as Pioneer Square and the Chinatown-International District.	SDOT	SPU	Mid-term
SG 2.2.3	Encourage investment in green and green/blue stormwater infrastructure improvements to address existing system deficiencies and accommodate new planned residential and commercial growth.	SPU		Mid-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
SG 2.2.4	Explore ways to adapt existing stormwater mitigation partnership programs with landowners and developers to Downtown’s urban context. Support SPU’s ability to partner with developers to construct new developments “beyond code improvements.”	OPCD	SPU	Mid-term
Policy SG 2.3	Effectively maintain existing water features and integrate new water-based design features, water play, and rain-based installations into public space projects.			
SG 2.3.1	To extent feasible, consider selective, strategic conversions of wading pools or fountains to spray parks to create more places to cool off and play. Focus these amenities near existing or growing residential areas.	SPR		Mid-term
SG 2.3.2	Integrate drinking water fountains and water bottle filling stations in public parks.	SPR		Mid-term
SG 2.3.3	Seek to incorporate new water features into underutilized public spaces and areas with limited tree canopy to enhance aesthetic and functional value and provide a range of benefits for visitors.	SPR		Mid-term
Policy SG 2.4	Protect and expand Downtown’s tree canopy.			
SG 2.4.1	Support appropriate resource allocation to enforce the maintenance of street trees and their tree canopy by private property owners.	SDOT	SPU, SDCI	Near-term
SG 2.4.2	Expand tree canopy to have the most direct benefit to Downtown areas with the greatest vulnerabilities, as identified by the City’s climate vulnerability assessment.	SDOT	OPCD	Mid-term
SG 2.4.3	Maintain street trees within view corridors.	SDOT	SPR, SCL	Mid-term
SG 2.4.4	Consider piloting tree planting projects on unbuildable city-owned lots or P-Patches, like a Miyawaki forest (dense, native, and biodiverse mini-forests.)	SPR	SDOT, DON, SPU, SCL, FAS	Mid-term
SG 2.4.5	Explore the integration of planted medians along Downtown’s wider corridors.	SDOT	SPU	Mid-term
Policy SG 2.5	Support policies that protect Puget Sound as an essential resource for the food systems, cultures, and economies of Tribal Nations.			
SG 2.5.1	Strengthen and maintain ongoing communication with Tribal Nations regarding Puget Sound and waterfront access Downtown.	OPCD	OIR	Mid-term
Goal SG 3	Reduce Downtown’s reliance on fossil fuels.			
Policy SG 3.1	Explore and expand local power generation/district energy approaches and employ a low-pollution neighborhood model.			
SG 3.1.1	Establish low-emission delivery programs in support of low-pollution neighborhoods. (Downtown Activation Plan)	SDOT, OSE	OPCD	Mid-term
SG 3.1.2	Use zoning tools, such as incentives, to encourage large developments to conduct studies on low-emission district energy systems.	OPCD, OSE	SDCI	Mid-term
SG 3.1.3	Consider a technical assistance or pilot neighborhood-scale building decarbonization program or developer decarbonization incentive that utilizes the Seattle Building Emissions Performance Standard regulations and Clean Buildings Accelerator program to exceed City and State requirements for emissions and carbon waste.	OSE	OPCD	Mid-term
SG 3.1.4	Encourage smaller building owners to participate in Seattle’s Building Emissions Performance Standards. Currently, the minimum required building size is 20,000 square feet.	OSE	OPCD	Near-term
SG 3.1.5	Explore feasibility of developing a low-emission, resilient district energy system to support Downtown buildings and seek to connect City and other publicly owned buildings to connect into the system.	OSE	SPU, SCL	Long-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
SG 3.1.6	Leverage unique opportunities in Downtown, including the existing Seattle Steam network and the presence of the Elliott Bay interceptor, which provides potential for sewer waste heat recovery.	SCL	SDCI	Mid-term
SG 3.1.7	Consider alternative sites to provide redundancy and a long-term relocation strategy for critical public works infrastructure.	SCL	OPCD	Long-term
Policy SG 3.2	Achieve and maintain fully electrified public sector vehicle and vessel fleets.			
SG 3.2.1	Collaborate with the Port of Seattle, Washington State Department of Transportation, and private maritime industries to support a transition to a complete network of electrical shorepower on the Downtown waterfront.	SDOT, OSE, SCL	Port of Seattle, WSDOT, Maritime Industries	Mid-term
SG 3.2.2	Provide support and collaboration by the City of Seattle to Washington State Ferries (WSF) Kitsap Transit Fast Ferries and the King County Water Taxi agencies to pursue electrification of all ferry vessels that land on the Seattle waterfront.	SDOT, SCL, OSE	WSDOT, Washington State Ferries (WSF), Kitsap Transit Fast Ferries, King County Water Taxi agencies	Mid-term
Policy SG 3.3	Expand sustainable building practices, including the promotion of adaptive reuse.			
Policy SG 3.4	Ensure renovated and new construction buildings achieve high environmental and emissions standards.			
SG 3.3.1	Provide multilingual outreach regarding incentives for low-cost oil-to-electric heating and stove conversion.	SDCI	DON	Near-term
SG 3.3.2	Implement the Building Emissions Performance Standards (BEPS) for existing buildings.	OSE		Mid-term
SG 3.3.3	Allow construction projects in all areas to use existing green building incentives.	SDCI		Near-term
SG 3.3.4	Explore options for incorporating solar or green technologies on rooftops, focusing on mitigating urban heat island effect.	OSE, SDCI		Mid-term
SG 3.3.5	Deploy a communications campaign to business owners, building owners, and residents with language isolation about free or low-cost access to heating conversion from oil to electric heat, and stoves from natural gas to electric.	OSE		Near-term
SG 3.3.6	Increase participation in food waste prevention and in the existing composting program (by large institutional/commercial partners and individual residences) to reduce emissions from food waste. (In alignment with the Food Action Plan’s priority to “Partner with institutional food services, grocers, manufacturers, distributors, and consumer-facing food service businesses to prevent food waste.)	OSE		Near-term
Goal SG 4	Ensure Downtown is resilient to natural disasters and climate change.			
Policy SG 4.1	Address Chinatown-International District and Pioneer Square’s high concentration of unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings in need of seismic retrofits.			
SG 4.1.1	Communicate the importance of the upcoming mandatory unreinforced masonry (URM) retrofit legislation and provide clear technical assistance to property owners.	SDCI	OPCD	Near-term
SG 4.1.2	Use an equitable approach to providing funding for seismic retrofits of buildings.	SDCI	OPCD	Near-term
SG 4.1.3	Continue to explore a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program or zoning incentive program that can provide owners of URM structures a market-based funding source to support seismic retrofits of their buildings. Prioritize investments in Chinatown/ID and Pioneer Square for the program.	OPCD	SDCI	Ongoing

Theme 5: Find Our Way (FW)

See more information in the Find Our Way chapter (page 122)

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Policy SG 4.2	Continue supporting resilient infrastructure and facilities that provide assistance across Downtown neighborhoods before, during, and after emergencies and severe weather events.			
SG 4.2.1	Develop a roadmap for post-event recovery in every neighborhood.	OSE	DON, OPCD	Near-term
SG 4.2.2	Continue supporting partnerships that empower community gathering places—particularly in the International District and South Downtown (SODO)—to serve as resilience hubs, in alignment with the climate vulnerability assessment.	OSE	SDCI, SPR, OPCD, SPL	Mid-term
SG 4.2.3	Implement Seattle’s Climate Action Plan.	OSE	SDCI, SPR, OPCD, SPL	Near-term
Policy SG 4.3	Upgrade infrastructure to reduce existing sewer capacity risks and to mitigate future risks.			
SG 4.3.1	Use buildings and land more effectively to decrease the amount of rainfall draining to downtown’s combined sewer system, reducing the future risks posed by climate-perturbed rainfall.	OPCD	SPU	Long-term
SG 4.3.2	Reduce the volume and speed of stormwater entering the combined sewer system through better on-site management. This could include rainwater harvesting and reuse, underground detention, green roofs, bioretention, and other stormwater management best practices. Consider achieving through a mix of code requirements and incentive programs.	SPU, SDCI		Long-term
SG 4.3.3	Take advantage of major capital projects to upsize sewer mains in areas with known capacity risks.	SPU, SDCI	SDOT	Long-term
Policy SG 4.4	Protect and expand access to healthy food, food cultivation, harvesting, and sharing.			
SG 4.4.1	Attract additional affordable grocery stores Downtown.	OED	OPCD	Mid-term
SG 4.4.2	Consistent with Seattle’s Food Action Plan priorities, identify opportunities to use Downtown’s public or private open spaces to increase access to community growing space/community gardens.	OPCD	SPR	Mid-term
SG 4.4.3	Consistent with Seattle’s Food Action Plan, use public land and open space to advance the Food Action Plan’s priority to “Increase the number of low-maintenance or passive food production (food forests, fruit trees) and foraging opportunities within Seattle. Increase engagement with Native and Indigenous communities and other community partners in the ongoing stewardship of these spaces.	OPCD	OIR, DON	Mid-term
SG 4.4.4	Encourage property owners to convert underutilized privately-owned public spaces (POPS) into places for urban agricultural uses.	SDCI	OPCD, SPR	Near-term
SG 4.4.5	Pursue opportunities presented in the Food Desert Statement of Legislative Intent to increase food access in Downtown.	OSE		Near-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Goal FW 1	Rethink and re-allocate space on streets to put people first.			
Policy FW 1.1	Pursue street transformations to create more space for walking, rolling, biking, transit, and lingering or gathering.			
FW 1.1.1	Pursue planned corridor transformations and investments subject to available funding and guided by the Seattle Transportation Plan.	SDOT		Near-term
FW 1.1.2	Provide dedicated places for people to walk, bike, or roll safely separated from vehicles by using context-appropriate treatments, such as protected bike lanes or “complete street” corridors, especially on major truck routes. (Seattle Transportation Plan)	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 1.1.3	Prioritize climate-friendly, multimodal street uses when transit pathways are no longer needed due to reduced bus volumes, and support reallocating right-of-way as transit service needs evolve.	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 1.1.4	Ensure that major downtown corridor projects, such as the Denny Way improvements, incorporate opportunities to maintain and expand pedestrian space.	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 1.1.5	Analyze and implement the Shared Streets Law (SB 5595) on appropriate streets Downtown.	SDOT		Near-term
Policy FW 1.2	Leverage large events to introduce people-forward streets and flexible street transformations.			
Policy FW 1.3	Advance a mix of seasonal, weekend, and in some cases, permanent restrictions for personal vehicle traffic to make areas of Downtown car-free or “car-lite.”			
FW 1.3.1	Work with businesses to understand delivery and access needs and ensure that any street transformations result in thriving local downtown economies.	OED	SDOT	Near-term
FW 1.3.2	Study outcomes of vehicle traffic restrictions and open streets concepts.	SDOT		Near-term
FW 1.3.3	Provide ample information, activation and programming, and evaluation tools to set these programs up for success and grow them over time.	SDOT	OED	Near-term
FW 1.3.4	Activate Downtown with more frequent and large scale “Open Streets” events. Temporarily restrict through-traffic and promote sustainable transportation, climate action, local business activations, and programming on our streets and sidewalks.	SDOT	OED	Near-term
FW 1.3.5	Pilot short-term street transformations throughout Downtown. Explore restrictions in locations with already high pedestrian foot traffic such as near the Pike Place Market, along 1st Avenue, and within Pioneer Square, and Chinatown-International District.	OPCD	SDOT	Near-term
FW 1.3.6	Pursue major expansions of car-free gathering spaces in partnership with local venues, and alongside community groups.	SDOT	Local venues, entertainment districts	Mid-term
Policy FW 1.4	When providing maintenance, update the street to reflect right-of-way allocation needs that support adjacent land uses and planned transportation networks.			
FW 1.4.1	Utilize a “Maintain & Modernize” approach by leveraging our maintenance projects to include right-of-way reallocation and improvements that benefit safety, sustainability, and transportation equity.	SDOT		Mid-term
Policy FW 1.5	Update design standards to better support people streets and public spaces that enhance community health and improve safety.			
FW 1.5.1	Update Streets Illustrated Downtown design standards to reflect policy goals and strategies outlined in this plan. Include design guidance that demonstrates different allocations of pedestrian space that support adjacent land uses and our downtown greening goals.	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 1.5.2	Review existing street concept plans for Downtown streets and assess the need to update or archive based on updated Streets Illustrated standards.	SDOT		Mid-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Goal FW 2	Make traveling through Downtown a safe and comfortable experience.			
Policy FW 2.1	Prioritize pedestrian safety and visibility at crossings throughout Downtown.			
FW 2.1.1	Operate signals at intersections to maximize pedestrian comfort and safety, through Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs), adequate crossing times, and innovative treatments such as flashing yellow turn signals for turning vehicles.	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 2.1.2	Improve conditions and comfort for people walking across I-5 on all underpasses and overpasses. (Dearborn Street to Denny Way)	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 2.1.3	Consider expanding No Turn on Red program in Downtown.	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 2.1.4	“Daylight” every intersection in Downtown, by making people walking, biking, and rolling more visible by improving sight lines at intersections through treatments like curb bulbs, micromobility parking, and plantings.	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 2.1.5	Advance implementation through coordinated efforts among agencies on projects identified in the multi-agency South Downtown Hub plan.	Sound Transit	SDOT	Mid-term
Policy FW 2.2	Apply strategies to reduce collisions and vehicle speeding in pedestrian-rich Downtown neighborhoods.			
FW 2.2.1	Use High Injury Network (HIN) + Bike Pedestrian Safety Analysis (BPSA) data to inform investments and programming to calm traffic, reduce collisions, and slow down speeding vehicles on downtown arterial streets.	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 2.2.2	Separate pedestrians from moving vehicles by physical barriers such as trees, parklets, and vehicle or bike parking to create a buffer between pedestrian spaces and moving traffic.	SDOT		Long-term
FW 2.2.3	Apply Complete Streets policies to re-prioritize our Downtown rights-of-way to achieve our mobility, access, livability, and safety goals. Consider policy recommendation options for one-way streets Downtown.	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 2.2.4	Re-imagine the spaces where the grids change to increase visibility, decrease pedestrian crossing distances, and other interventions to help prevent vehicles from turning at high rates of speed.	SDOT		Long-term
FW 2.2.5	Improve pedestrian safety and comfort at signalized intersections where highway ramps meet city street.	SDOT		Long-term
FW 2.2.6	Explore eliminating free-flow and high-speed on and off ramps throughout the City Center.	SDOT	WSDOT	Mid-term
FW 2.2.7	Design streets with elements that reduce speeding from highway off-ramps as vehicles enter the Downtown street network.	SDOT	WSDOT	Mid-term
Goal FW 3	Celebrate Downtown’s unique cultures and histories – especially its Indigenous population – throughout its transportation system and public spaces.			
Policy FW 3.1	Reflect Indigenous art, culture, language, and gathering spaces throughout Downtown’s streets and public spaces, especially on the shoreline, to honor Native cultures and our deep relationship with the water.			
FW 3.1.1	Continue to use the 1% for Arts program, coordinated between the Office of Arts and Culture and the Seattle Department of Transportation, to better highlight and connect with Indigenous art and culture.	SDOT, ARTS		Ongoing
FW 3.1.2	Work in partnership with local tribes and native people on opportunities for interpretation, honorary renaming or other ways to honor Indigenous culture and language.	SDOT, ARTS	OIR, Indigenous Tribes and Indigenous organizations	Mid-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
FW 3.1.3	Continue to coordinate with Washington State Department of Transportation to invest in future planning to transform Pier 48 for public use.	SDOT, SPR	WSDOT, Indigenous Tribes and Indigenous organizations, OIR, OPCD, SDOT, MO	Ongoing
Policy FW 3.2	Encourage self-expression and neighborhood identity in the right-of-way.			
FW 3.2.1	Collaboratively plan with communities to identify opportunities for People Streets and Public Spaces in each of the Downtown neighborhoods. (Seattle Transportation Plan)	SDOT		Near-term
FW 3.2.2	Explore opportunities to transform streets near light rail stations to advance people-centered spaces, advance PSPS goals, support public life and commerce, and add trees and greening.	SDOT	OPCD	Near-term
FW 3.2.3	Support community-driven activation and permits for Festival Streets.	OED	SDOT	Mid-term
FW 3.2.4	Encourage more flexible uses for waterfront sidewalks. Allow and encourage café seating and sidewalk activation on the east side of Alaskan Way through permitting.	SDOT	SDCI, OED	Mid-term
Policy FW 3.3	Use transportation and public space investments to help repair past and current harms to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) groups, in concert with Seattle’s transportation equity strategy.			
FW 3.3.1	Normalize the practice of making decisions about policies and right-of-way allocations with input from vulnerable communities. (Seattle Transportation Plan)	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 3.3.2	Compensate community partners for their valuable work to connect and communicate with their networks and uplift community-driven initiatives, planning processes, and existing structures. (Seattle Transportation Plan)	SDOT		Near-term
FW 3.3.3	Design transit facilities that reflect the history and cultural identities of the neighborhoods they serve, while maintaining systemwide legibility. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	SDOT	DON	Mid-term
FW 3.3.4	Collaborate with municipal, county, regional, and state transportation partners to consider the transportation needs of people who have been displaced from Seattle. (Seattle Transportation Plan)	SDOT	WSDOT	Mid-term
Goal FW 4	Create a sustainable and resilient Downtown transportation system.			
Policy FW 4.1	Deliver projects and operate the transportation system to advance our climate goals.			
FW 4.1.1	Implement more green streets designations with a particular focus on areas deficient in park space and tree canopy.	OPCD, SDOT		Mid-term
FW 4.1.2	Operate the transportation system—signals, markings, signage, and right-of-way allocation—to encourage sustainable travel choices.	SDOT		Long-term
FW 4.1.3	Advance build-out of the planned networks of the Seattle Transportation Plan, including the pedestrian, bicycle and e-mobility, transit, and freight networks.	SDOT	King County Metro	Long-term
FW 4.1.4	Explore consolidated or reconfigured transit service pathways through Belltown and Denny Triangle as transit is restructured.	SDOT	King County Metro	Mid-term
FW 4.1.5	Upgrade bikeways over and under the interstate including South Dearborn Street, King Street, Yesler Way, Spring Street, Seneca Street, Pike Street, and Pine Street.	SDOT	WSDOT	Long-term
FW 4.1.6	Upgrade bikeways as they interact with nearby on and off ramps including at 7th Avenue, Hubbell Place, Melrose Avenue, and Howell Street.	SDOT	WSDOT	Mid-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Policy FW 4.2	Make frequent service corridors the backbone of Downtown’s surface transit network (buses, bus rapid transit, and streetcar). (Imagine Greater Downtown)			
FW 4.2.1	Invest in high quality accessible bus service and facilities. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 4.2.2	Provide priority for buses at bottlenecks entering and exiting Greater Downtown. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 4.2.3	Plan streets and service so that transit travel is reliable and not significantly more time consuming than car travel. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	SDOT	King County Metro	Long-term
FW 4.2.4	Improve travel time reliability for transit approaching and across I-5 including crossings on Jackson St, James St, Madison & Spring Streets, Pike & Pine Streets, and Denny Way.	SDOT	WSDOT, King County Metro	Mid-term
FW 4.2.5	Provide security, maintenance, and operations resources to ensure transit stops and stations feel safe, clean, uncluttered, and inviting with ample weather protection, lighting, and seating. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	SDOT	King County Metro, Sound Transit	Mid-term
Policy FW 4.3	Provide programmatic support to promote clean, sustainable travel options.			
FW 4.3.1	Influence Downtown commuters to “flip their trips” away from personal vehicles to more efficient and sustainable travel options through existing and new programs.	SDOT	OPCD	Near-term
FW 4.3.2	Expand programming that welcomes visitors to Downtown Seattle and encourages them to travel by walking, rolling, and public transit as much as possible. Partner with local Business Improvement Associations and Visit Seattle to expand programs, especially the lead-up to major national and international events.	ARTS, OED	BIAs, DSA	Near-term
FW 4.3.3	Continue to communicate to the public on impacts of regional construction projects (such as “Revive I-5”) and apply communications strategies and engagement, and partnership with large employers and institutions to encourage sustainable and efficient travel behavior.	SDOT	WSDOT	Ongoing
Policy FW 4.4	Explore innovative strategies to foster neighborhood vitality and improved community health.			
FW 4.4.1	Aim to improve transit speed and reliability by examining opportunities to consolidate transit operations onto fewer streets with transit priority and enhanced passenger facilities while maintaining access to Greater Downtown. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 4.4.2	Explore opportunities to increase permeable surface area, the tree canopy, and green stormwater infrastructure.	SPU	SDOT	Near-term
FW 4.4.3	Explore mobility partnerships among public organizations, private firms, and foundations to accelerate sustainable mobility innovations.	SDOT		Near-term
FW 4.4.4	Support prompt incident response times through operational or land use strategies, such as use of smaller emergency response vehicles that better fit in urban environments and increased service coverage by adding fire stations or battalions. (Seattle Transportation Plan)	OPCD, FAS, SFD, SPD		Mid-term
Policy FW 4.5	Advance multimodal access to create connected, people-centered places that reflect community visions and support equitable, vibrant growth.			
FW 4.5.1	Build on community driven efforts to improve public realm and streetscapes to meet the unique, place specific needs and desires for creative outlets and commerce.	SDOT	DON, OED	Near-term
FW 4.5.2	Explore opportunities to transform streets around light rail stations to advance people-centered spaces and People Streets and Public Spaces (PSPS) goals.	SDOT, OPCD		Near-term
FW 4.5.3	Support communities in developing and documenting their future visions, goals, and needs so that as the City develops plans and capital projects, they have existing work and documentation to refer to.	Sound Transit, OPCD, SDOT		Ongoing

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
FW 4.5.4	Explore strategies to prioritize and encourage inclusion of community-serving uses in new development adjacent to stations—including affordable housing, childcare, cultural space, and gathering space—to support communities who most depend on transit to get where they need to go.	Sound Transit		Mid-term
FW 4.5.5	Explore strategies to create a connected and thoughtful pedestrian-focused public realm within the immediate vicinity of light rail stations, incorporating features that reflect local context and cultures and that provide multi-generational gathering spaces for youth, elders, and families.	Sound Transit, OPCD		Long-term
FW 4.5.6	Rights of way within the immediate proximity of light rail stations should be designed and allocated to prioritize safe and convenient access and multimodal connections for transit, pedestrians, bicyclists, freight and urban goods.	Sound Transit SDOT		Mid-term
Goal FW 5	Design Downtown streets to support innovation and a thriving local economy.			
Policy FW 5.1	Pair local land uses with dynamic transportation needs.			
FW 5.1.1	Adapt curb lanes for the benefit of local commerce, such as critical access needs, café seating, vending, and other programming.	SDOT	OED	Mid-term
FW 5.1.2	Repurpose “slip lanes” and other irregular street grid locations for local activities.	SDOT		Mid-term
Policy FW 5.2	Support economic vitality through the movement of goods and services on our city streets.			
FW 5.2.1	Ensure the important roles of the Port of Seattle and related freight movement and logistics are considered as we maintain and modernize Downtown.	SDOT	Port of Seattle, OPCD	Mid-term
FW 5.2.2	Use right-sized vehicles, such as e-cargo bikes, to showcase innovation in freight movement for “final 50 feet” urban deliveries.	SDOT		Ongoing
FW 5.2.3	Minimize stress on potentially vulnerable areaways by implementing curb lane restrictions for heavy vehicles where appropriate, while strengthening and maintaining vulnerable areaways, where possible, to support critical curb access.	SDOT		Mid-term
Policy FW 5.3	Plan for and support dedicated spaces that accommodate freight and logistics activities.			
FW 5.3.1	Develop welcoming mobility and logistics hubs that accommodate freight needs and are coordinated with other planned investments.	SDOT	OPCD	Mid-term
FW 5.3.2	Pilot logistics hubs to advance sustainable first/last mile delivery solutions.	SDOT	OED	Mid-term
FW 5.3.3	Explore launching pilots of Mobility and Logistics Hubs — work with local businesses and freight operators to pilot first/last mile logistics hubs. Consider how interim use of vacant retail and/or vacant parcels and/or underutilized parking areas can accommodate such concepts.	SDOT	OED, SDCI	Mid-term
FW 5.3.4	Implement Community & Mobility Hub improvements at Colman Dock and all Link light rails stations.	SDOT		Mid-term
Goal FW 6	Use streets to help people navigate and find their way through a legible Downtown.			
Policy FW 6.1	Celebrate downtown Seattle’s unique geography.			
FW 6.1.1	Stitch neighborhood divides through ground floor activations, re-design of spaces under I-5, enhanced crossings over I-5, and potential lidding of I-5 and BNSF railway tracks.	OPCD	SDOT, WSDOT	Long-term
FW 6.1.2	Capitalize on the Downtown street grid’s views of Puget Sound, pursue new pocket parks, and enhanced view corridors.	SDOT, SPR		Long-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
FW 6.1.3	Install temporary and permanent features to trace historic water lines, and integrate water history, shoreline habitats, and stories into public space Downtown. Illustrate how water has shaped the city.	SDOT, ARTS		Mid-term
FW 6.1.4	Identify opportunities and expand publicly accessible “hill climbs.”	SDOT, SDCI		Mid-term
FW 6.1.5	Improve visibility of existing and install new hill climb assist pathways in concert with redevelopment.	OPCD, SDCI		Mid-term
FW 6.1.6	Use existing slopes and access points to minimize vertical transitions or the need to use elevators where possible, while considering access for all ages and abilities. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	SDOT, SDCI		Near-term
Policy FW 6.2	Design and maintain Downtown streets to be safe and accessible for people of all ages and abilities.			
FW 6.2.1	Focus investment to make Downtown more navigable to children, older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers through solutions like seating, hill-climb assists, pedestrian lighting, shade, and curb improvements.	SDOT, SCL		Long-term
FW 6.2.2	Activate and maintain an age-friendly travel experience and public realm.	SDOT	SPR	Mid-term
FW 6.2.3	Design transit station vicinities including bus and streetcar stops to make them informative, well-lit, and interesting places to wait. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	SDOT	SCL	Mid-term
FW 6.2.4	Incorporate art and play into urban design elements in the right-of-way.	SDOT	ARTS, OPCD	Mid-term
FW 6.2.5	Install street furniture that encourages public life and communal activity. (Imagine Greater Downtown)	SDOT		Ongoing
FW 6.2.6	Explore adding charging stations along key routes or main hubs for people to charge electric mobility devices.	SDOT	SCL, HSD	Near-term
FW 6.2.7	Explore measures to keep walking paths clear of micromobility devices, improving walking safety for older adults and people with mobility or sensory challenges.	SDCI	HSD	Mid-term
FW 6.2.8	Incorporate accessibility-focused design guidance within the Streets Illustrated guide.	SDOT	HSD	Mid-term
FW 6.2.9	Accelerate the implementation of the ADA transition plan for city streets and public spaces.	SDOT	HSD	Near-term
FW 6.2.10	Make sidewalks ADA-accessible along city-identified accessibility routes.	SDOT	HSD	Near-term
Policy FW 6.3	Provide clear, consistent, and accessible wayfinding and signage throughout Downtown.			
FW 6.3.2	Create directional signage to communicate how someone with accessibility needs can safely navigate slopes.	SDOT	HSD	Mid-term
FW 6.3.3	Invest in more wayfinding along the southern portion of Alaskan Way to better facilitate connections between the waterfront and Lumen Field and T-Mobile Park.	SDOT	Stadiums	Long-term
FW 6.3.4	Focus wayfinding information and communications campaigns to welcome visitors to Downtown Seattle and provide them clear and useful guidance on finding their way around, primarily through sustainable travel options.	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 6.3.5	Continue to install Seamless Seattle wayfinding columns and kiosks to aid navigation Downtown.	SDOT		Ongoing
FW 6.3.6	Implement cohesive wayfinding for people using bicycles and e-mobility on legible pathways throughout Downtown.	SDOT		Mid-term

#	STRATEGIES	CITY STEWARD	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Policy FW 6.4	Prepare for dynamic changes in transportation.			
FW 6.4.1	Create frequent and reliable transit service corridors as bus service is restructured Downtown in concert with light rail system expansion.	Sound Transit	SDOT	Mid-term
FW 6.4.2	Develop a holistic plan for managing light rail construction-related travel disruptions.	Sound Transit	SDOT, OPCD	Mid-term
FW 6.4.3	As bus service is restructured in concert with light rail expansion, reallocate unneeded bus-only lanes to support businesses, meet critical access needs, and improve safety.	SDOT		Mid-term
FW 6.4.4	Work with King County Metro to reduce the amount of on-street layover space, especially in the Pioneer Square, Belltown, and Denny Triangle neighborhoods and reprioritize the space for people and commerce.	SDOT	King County	Mid-term
FW 6.4.5	Test sustainable, zero-emission autonomous vehicle technology in conjunction with large events.	SDOT		Near-term

Definitions

Area Median Income (AMI)

The midpoint income for a specific region, where half of the households earn more and half earn less. AMI is used to determine eligibility for affordable housing programs.

At-risk neighborhoods

Communities vulnerable to displacement, economic decline, environmental hazards, or lack of access to essential services, often due to systemic inequities or underinvestment.

Base Tax

When a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District is created, the current property tax value in the area is frozen. This is called the base value.

BIPOC

An acronym for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. It highlights the unique experiences of these communities, particularly in the context of systemic racism and social justice.

“Car-lite”

An approach to urban design that reduces reliance on private vehicles by encouraging walking, biking, and public transit, without fully banning cars.

“Daylight” intersections

A street design strategy that removes parked cars near corners to increase visibility between drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians, improving safety.

Destination Street

Streets in the heart of a neighborhood with a high density of destinations - shops, restaurants, cultural centers.

Event Street

Streets Designed to host intermittent community events. Streets may close movement of all vehicles, except emergency access, on a frequent basis.

Housing First

A policy approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness before requiring sobriety, employment, or participation in services.

Pedestrian Streets

Streets where people walking take priority that are permanently or intermittently closed to motorized vehicles.

People Streets

Streets or street segments reimagined for public use—such as plazas, parklets, or play streets—designed to enhance pedestrian activity, safety, and community interaction.

Privately Owned Public Space (POPS)

Spaces that are privately owned but legally required to be open and accessible to the public, often created through zoning incentives in exchange for added building height or density.

Regional Centers

Regional Centers are Seattle’s highest-density neighborhoods, designated in the One Seattle Comprehensive Plan for significant housing, jobs, retail, cultural uses, and major transit access. They are intended to absorb future growth and are officially certified as Regional Growth Centers by regional planning agencies.

Slip Lanes

A traffic design feature allowing vehicles to turn (usually right) without entering an intersection, often criticized for prioritizing vehicle speed over pedestrian safety.

Special Alley

Historic and special alleys with community destinations or retail density that generate human-scale spaces and accommodate essential service functions.

Strolling Street

Streets designed as linear park-like streets for recreation, exercise, connecting with nature or community, or traveling to specific destinations.

Subareas

A subarea is a smaller, clearly defined geographic section within a larger city, region, or planning district. It is typically used in planning to focus on the unique needs, goals, and policies of that specific area.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

A TIF district is a special area a city or local government sets up to help pay for improvements—like roads, parks, or public buildings—that encourage private development (like housing, shops, or offices) in places that are underused or need investment.

Underserved

Communities or populations lacking adequate access to resources, services, or opportunities—often due to historic disinvestment or discrimination.