Seattle Department of Transportation

PUBLIC LIFE ACTION PLAN: YESLER CRESCENT

January 2020

Seattle Department of Transportation

Seattle Parks & Recreation

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The project team extends our sincerest appreciation to the many individuals that contributed their time to volunteer for a public life observation shift and join us for a focus group session. This work wouldn't have been possible without you!

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PURPOSE OF PUBLIC LIFE ACTION PLAN

- Document how the public spaces of Yesler Crescent are used and perceived, as well as how well the public realm meets human needs associated with protection, comfort, and enjoyment.
- Identify design and programming opportunities to optimize use and improve the experience for public space users.
- Develop a plan of action for public agencies and private partners to fund and implement recommendations.
- Establish framework for neighborhood- and district-level analysis of public spaces to be replicated in other Seattle communities with a data-informed approach to public space improvements.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document summarizes the findings and recommendations resulting from an inquiry into public life in the Yesler Crescent area of Pioneer Square. The approach is centered on users' experience, gleaned from observed activity and input received through surveys and focus groups.

The Yesler Crescent Public Life Action Plan proposes a new approach to public space planning with the primary focus on "people data" as the basis for design interventions. The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), in partnership with Seattle Parks and Recreation, is proud to present this Public Life Action Plan to support strategic investment decisions that will result in positive public life transformations in Pioneer Square.

Findings

- While these spaces are utilized by a diverse group of users, including a high proportion of people of color, the spaces host very few women, youth, and elderly. Data indicates there is an opportunity to make Yesler Crescent's spaces appealing to a wider set of users to reflect the area's potential to be a central, inclusive public space for the Puget Sound region.
- The highest concentration of people hanging out was observed around busy transit locations, sometimes to the detriment of people moving through the area, like at Prefontaine Place. There is a lack of proportional staying activity in the area's largest public space, City Hall Park, indicating an opportunity to make it a more of a destination for the downtown area, encourage more utilization, and relieve congestion in other parts of the area.
- Stakeholders reported that these public spaces lack identity and sense of place and do not function as a cohesive network of public spaces. There is an opportunity to make the spaces inviting to more people and foster connections between the spaces to optimize the area as a whole for people both moving and staying.

Recommendations

- Prefontaine Place: Investigate design solutions that promote mobility, improve sight lines, and strengthen connection with City Hall Park to encourage utilization.
- City Hall Park: Develop a plan to improve circulation through the park, enhance desire lines, meet the basic needs of park users, and explore design strategies that focus on attracting people to utilize the park for a variety of uses.
- 3rd Ave Connection: Study operations on 3rd Ave such as re-channelization, intersection efficiencies, and crossing improvements to improve the connection between City Hall Park and Prefontaine Place.
- Fortson Square: Implement plaza redesign in coordination with Chief Seattle Club redevelopment.
- Metropole Block Face: Add streetscape elements to improve transit user experience.
- 2nd Ave Ext S: Add streetscape elements to improve user comfort and enjoyment, including pedestrian-scale lighting, shade opportunities, landscape buffer, and seating options.

INTRODUCTION

The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) believes that streets, sidewalks, parks, and plazas full of social and commercial activity have the power to improve the city's health, prosperity, and happiness. As such, SDOT has a strong interest in making sure our public spaces are places for people that enhance livability. In 2019, SDOT partnered with Seattle Parks and Recreation to develop this Public Life Action Plan—a first of its type for the City of Seattle—to guide and inform investment in the Yesler Crescent area.

What is public life?
The Gehl Institute defines public life as the "activity that takes place in everyday public spaces—on streets, in parks and plazas, and in spaces between buildings." Public life consists of all the interactions in public spaces, whether they are necessary (e.g., walking to work) or recreational (e.g., watching a street performer). As such, public life can take many forms, such as eating at a street café, reading on a bench, window shopping, or talking to others while waiting for a bus. The types of activities and number of people who engage in public life can illuminate the degree to which a community is social, livable, and prosperous.

What is a public life study?
A specific type of research—called a public life study—measures the number of people using our public spaces, demographic information about public space users, and the types of activities they are engaged in. When combined with an assessment of the urban design conditions in the area, a public life study allows for consideration of both the social and physical elements of place to understand how the public space experience could be improved for users.

Why does the City of Seattle study public life?
SDOT developed the Public Life Program in 2017 to collect and elevate "people data" through public life studies to understand how spaces are used and by whom through observational research methods. The results of a public life study provide SDOT with people-centered data to make investment decisions, evaluate designs and interventions, and understand what makes a successful public space.

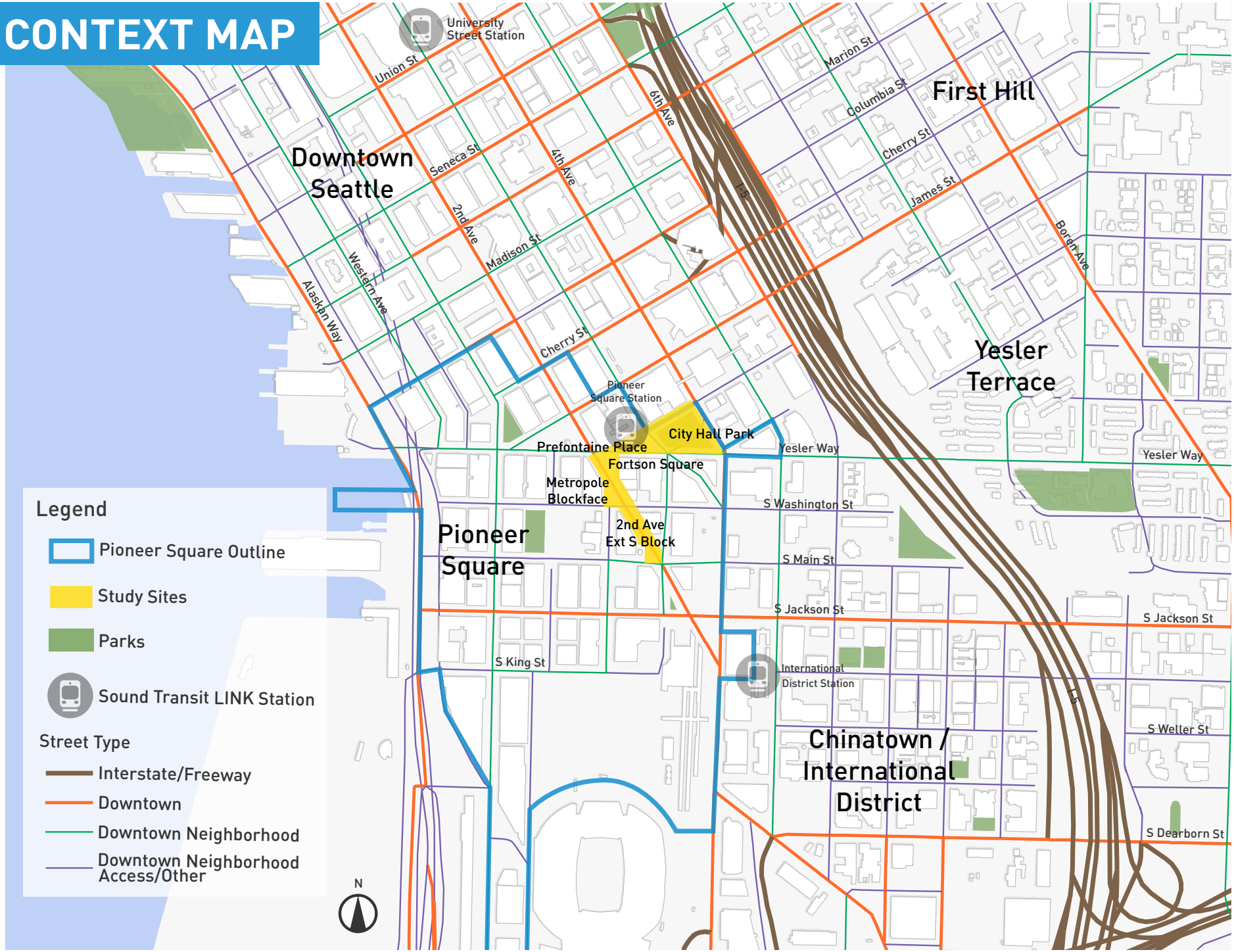
PEOPLE PLACES

With more than one quarter of Seattle's land devoted to streets, sidewalks, and other transportation-related public space, these spaces present a significant opportunity to enhance our city's livability. Especially now, at a time of population growth and increasing density, the city must grapple with the challenges of balancing various and growing demands on limited right-of-way. This precious space should be designed to encourage socializing, building community, and supporting economic development to meet our vision of a livable city.

The Seattle Department of Transportation envisions a public realm that prioritizes people places with:

- Opportunities to connect with others and build community
- Infrastructure designed to support everyday life experiences
- Community-driven spaces that invite use year-round
- Safe, active, and inclusive spaces to foster public life and enhance livability

CONTEXT MAP


University Street Station
Union St
Seneca St
Downtown Seattle
2nd Ave
4th Ave
6th Ave
Marion St
Columbia St
Cherry St
James St
First Hill
Boren Ave
I-5
Madison St
Western Ave
Alaskan Way
Cherry St
Pioneer Square Station
City Hall Park
Prefontaine Place
Fortson Square
Metropole Blockface
2nd Ave Ext S Block
Pioneer Square
Yesler Terrace
Yesler Way
S Washington St
S Main St
S Jackson St
S King St
International District Station
Chinatown / International District
S Weller St
S Dearborn St
Legend
Pioneer Square Outline
Study Sites
Parks
Sound Transit LINK Station
Street Type
Interstate/Freeway
Downtown
Downtown Neighborhood
Downtown Neighborhood Access/Other
N

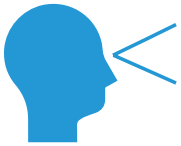
STUDY OBJECTIVES

In 2019, we set out to study the public spaces of Yesler Crescent, an area of the Pioneer Square neighborhood. This study area consists of a variety of public spaces, including City Hall Park, Prefontaine Place, Fortson Square, and three block faces along 2nd Ave Ext S. While each space is distinct in character, there is an opportunity to improve each space individually as well as improve the combined network of spaces. To identify recommendations to enhance Yesler Crescent spaces, the study went about addressing the following objectives:

- Observe and collect public life data to understand how Yesler Crescent's public spaces are used, including how many people pass through, how many people hang out, and what activities take place.
- Document and assess the physical condition of the public realm to identify opportunities for making the public spaces more conducive to public life.
- Collect the perspective of users of the spaces and local community stakeholders to understand their experiences and opinions about what should be improved and prioritized.
- Use an approach centered on user experience to inform future strategies and designs to meet the needs of users—both current and potential—of our public spaces.

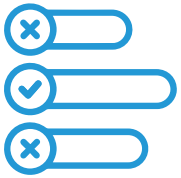
METHODOLOGY

To reach these study objectives, we undertook a mixed methods approach, including observation of social and physical realms, surveys with public space users, and focus groups with stakeholders. More details on each of these methods can be found in Appendices A-E.



Public Life Observation

This study collected data on the current state of public life using observational research practices established by Jan Gehl and refined by the City of San Francisco, among others. The study collected data on both people moving and staying using analog tools (e.g., paper, pen, clipboard, stopwatch) over four weekdays in May and July during peak period hours in the morning, midday, and evening. It is worth noting that we did not collect data over the weekend or after 6pm. More details on how observational data is collected can be found in SDOT's Data Collectors Guide used for the summer 2018 study. The data collected complies with the Public Life Data Protocol—a standardized way of classifying and measuring observational data related to activity in the public realm—to facilitate comparison across different sites in Seattle and areas beyond.[1] Observational instruments can be found in Appendix A. Site level findings can be found in Appendix E.



Intercept Surveys

Observation alone cannot provide us with enough information to fully understand how public spaces function. It was also critical for us to speak with users of the space to understand how they use the spaces and their perceptions of the spaces. We collected 204 intercept surveys in October and November 2019. The survey instrument can be found in Appendix D.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were conducted in October 2019 with 46 stakeholders with specific and local knowledge of these public spaces, including local business owners, local property owners, social service providers, and public sector employees. These focus groups discussed the observational public life data, their experiences with these public spaces, and opportunities and challenges moving forward.

Urban Design Assessment

SDOT created a framework and tool for evaluating the public realm, based on the 12 criteria of urban quality established by Jan Gehl. See page 9 for a full list of these criteria. This framework considers a variety of elements of the public realm which directly impact the experience of place and serves as the basis for the tool that uses a rating system to assess public spaces. Specifically, it assesses their ability to meet the fundamental and hierarchical human needs in public space associated with **protection**, **comfort**, and **enjoyment**. Each of the sites in the study area were evaluated by multiple SDOT staff using this tool (Appendix B) and summarized for this report. Site-specific scores can be found in Appendix C.

[1] While the Public Life Data Protocol was used to guide the study design to make objective distinctions between various data categories to reduce subjectivity, it is ultimately impossible to eradicate all forms of bias in a study of this nature. Demographic data collected through observational methods— such as gender, age, and race/ethnicity—is less reliable than self-report data because people do not always present these demographic categories in ways that can be reliably and accurately recorded through observation.

12 CRITERIA OF URBAN QUALITY

PROTECTION	**Protection against traffic and accidents.** Do groups across age and ability experience traffic safety in the public space? Can one safely bike and walk without fear of being hit by a driver?	**Protection against harm by others.** Is the public space perceived to be safe both day and night? Are there people and activities at all hours of the day because the area has, for example, both residences and offices? Does the lighting provide safety at night as well as a good atmosphere?	**Protection against unpleasant sensory experience.** Are there noises, dust, smells, or other pollution? Does the public space function well when it's windy? Is there shelter from strong sun, rain, or minor flooding?
COMFORT	**Options for seeing.** Are seating options placed so there are interesting things to look at?	**Options for talking, listening, and hearing.** Is it possible to have a conversation here? Is it evident that you have the option to sit together and have a conversation?	**Options for play, exercise, and activities.** Are there options to be active at multiple times of the day and year?
	Options for mobility. Is this space accessible? Are there physical elements that might limit or enhance personal mobility in the forms of walking, using of a wheelchair, or pushing a stroller? Is it evident how to move through the space without having to take an illogical detour?	**Options to stop and stay.** Does the place have features you can stay and lean on, like a façade that invites one to spend time next to it, a bus stop, a bench, a tree, or a small ledge or niche?	**Options for sitting.** Are there good primary seating options such as benches or chairs? Or is there only secondary seating such as a stair, seat wall, or the edge of a fountain? Are there adequate non-commercial seating options so that sitting does not require spending money?
ENJOYMENT	**Dimensions of human scale.** Is the public space and the building that surrounds it at a human scale? If people are at the edges of the space, can we still relate to them as people or are they lost in their surroundings?	**Opportunities to enjoy the positive aspects of climate.** Are local climatic aspects such as wind and sun considered? Are there varied conditions for spending time in public spaces at different times of year? Where are the seating options placed? Are they located entirely in the shadows or the sun? Are they protected?	**Experience of aesthetic qualities and positive sensory experiences.** Is the public space beautiful? Is it evident that there is good design both in terms of how things are shaped, as well as their durability?

Source: Gehl Architects

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

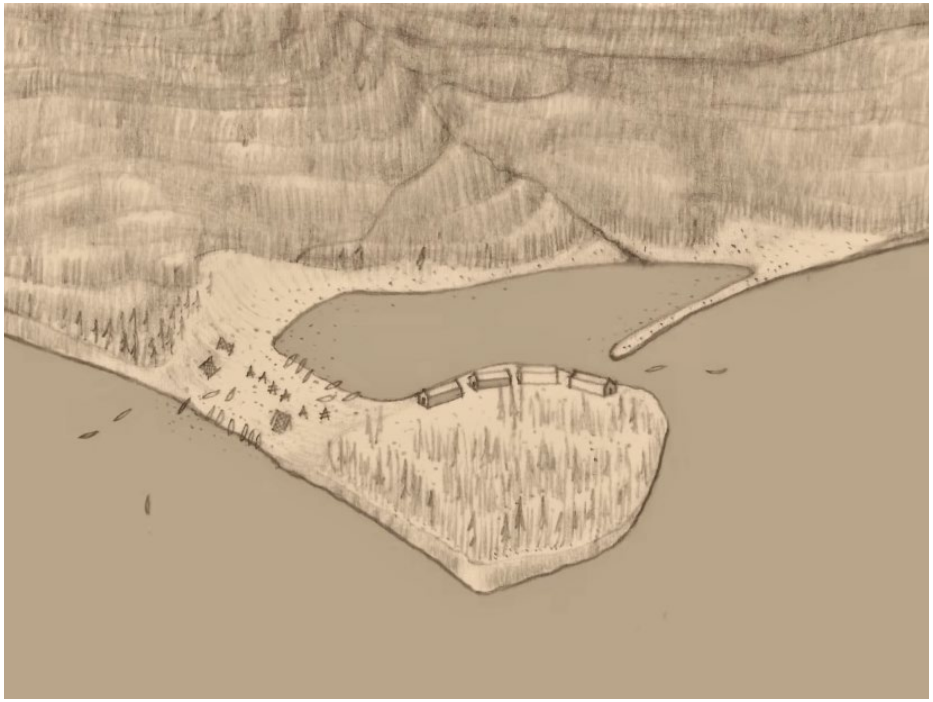
The Yesler Crescent area has a rich and extensive history that long predates, and continuously affects, development of our city as we know it today. As we set out to understand and improve our public spaces, we recognize that we are on Indigenous land, the current and ancestral homelands of the Central Coast Salish People. The vitality of our shared spaces is dependent on learning from and working with our partners from the Native American community to create a more equitable future for all.

Pre-colonial landscape of Seattle before shorelines were extended, lagoons filled, and rivers rerouted. The place names in Southern Lushootseed identify historic locations of known Indigenous settlements and significant places.

SITE HISTORY

The Yesler Crescent is located on what was once a wooded area close to the shores of a tidal lagoon and the Coast Salish village called dzidzəlalič, or "little crossing over place" in Lushootseed, language of the Coast Salish people. In 1852, Euro-American settlers started an outpost on land between the tidal lagoon and deep-water bay in the area now called Pioneer Square, to be named the City of Seattle. Soon after, the native Coast Salish were systematically pressured to cede lands and subject to aggressive treaty-making and further displacement. In 1865, City Ordinance No. 5 formally excluded the Coast Salish from the new city, and by the early 1900s the native population had essentially disappeared from Seattle.

Seattle expanded out of this area under settlers like Henry Yesler, who milled the area's lumber and shipped it from Elliott Bay. Early Seattle's City Hall was located on 3rd Avenue and Yesler Way, until it was demolished in advance of the Alaska Yukon Exposition in 1909. Afterwards, the space was established as City Hall Park, the city's first downtown park in 1911. Across 3rd Ave from City Hall Park, a small triangular site was named Prefontaine Place after Monsignor F.X. Prefontaine, Seattle's first Catholic priest to establish a parish. A fountain honoring him was installed at this site in 1925 and remains to this day.



Adapted from "Djidjila'letch to Pioneer Square" produced by The Waterlines Project, Burke Museum (courtesy WSDOT).

City Hall Park, 1916
www.washingtonhistory.org/collections/item.aspx?irn=114417&record=92

Fortson Square, at the southeast intersection of 2nd Avenue and Yesler Way, was dedicated in 1901 and functioned as a busy transportation hub surrounded by retail, restaurants and lodging. The area south of the Square, the city's original Chinatown prior to the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, was dramatically altered by the 1928-1929 Second Avenue Extension South project. This new street cut a direct route from Yesler Way and 2nd Avenue diagonally southeast to S Jackson Street and 4th Ave S, to Union and King Street train stations.

The public spaces in the Yesler Crescent continued to change with the neighborhood around them. Pathways and landscaping in City Hall Park went through different layouts over the years, and the park lost its primary focal point when the original entrance to the King County Courthouse was replaced by a loading dock in 1967. As part of the Downtown Seattle Transit Project in 1990, the Pioneer Square Station headhouse was installed adjacent to the fountain at Prefontaine Place. To enliven Fortson Square, an art installation of brick and "sculptural ruins" was installed in 1999, where it stands today.

Fortson Square, 1916
www.washingtonhistory.org/collections/item.aspx?irn=114417&record=9

2nd Ave Ext S, 1929
https://i1.wp.com/pauldorpat.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/kurt-2nd-ave-extension-after-fm-smith-tower-web.jpg

ACTIVE DEVELOPMENT

Chief Seattle Club Expansion (2021)

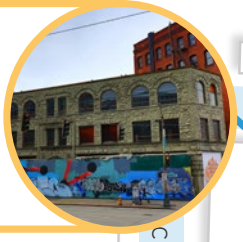
- 80 affordable studio units
- Street front art-gallery and café, primary care clinic
- Status: Breaking ground in 2020

Canton Lofts (2020)

- 80 units of workforce housing & ground floor retail
- Opportunity Zone development
- Broke ground in August 2019, open Fall 2020

Metropole Building

- 3-story historic building from 1890
- Gutted by fire in 2007, vacant until 2019
- Status: Predevelopment & community engagement process (2019)

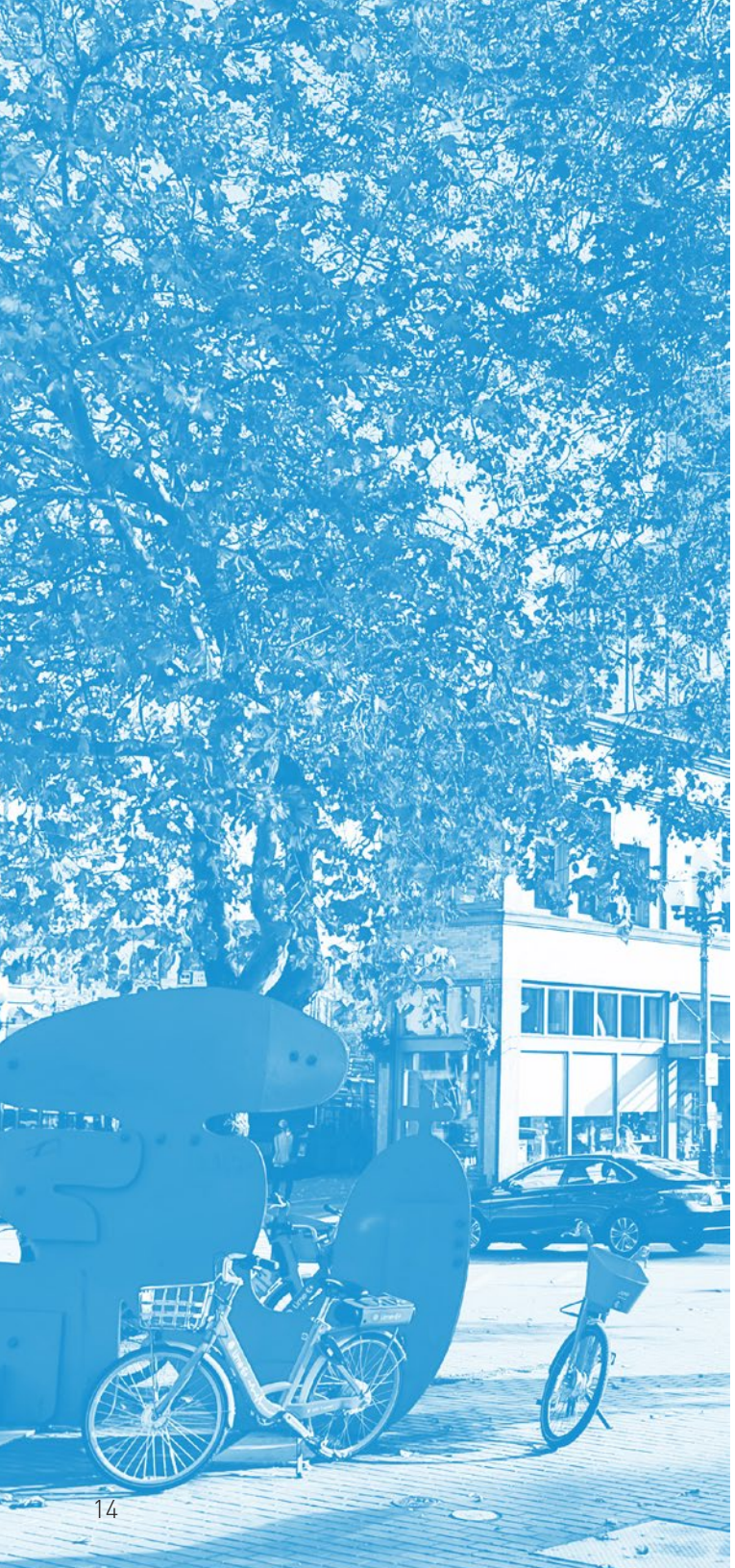


Impact Hub/Masins Building

- Currently houses local co-work and office spaces
- Under new ownership (As of Summer 2019)

Old Cannery Building

- Historic home of the Cannery Workers of ILWU
- Vacant for over 30 years
- Status: Predevelopment & community engagement process (2019)



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STUDYWIDE FINDINGS

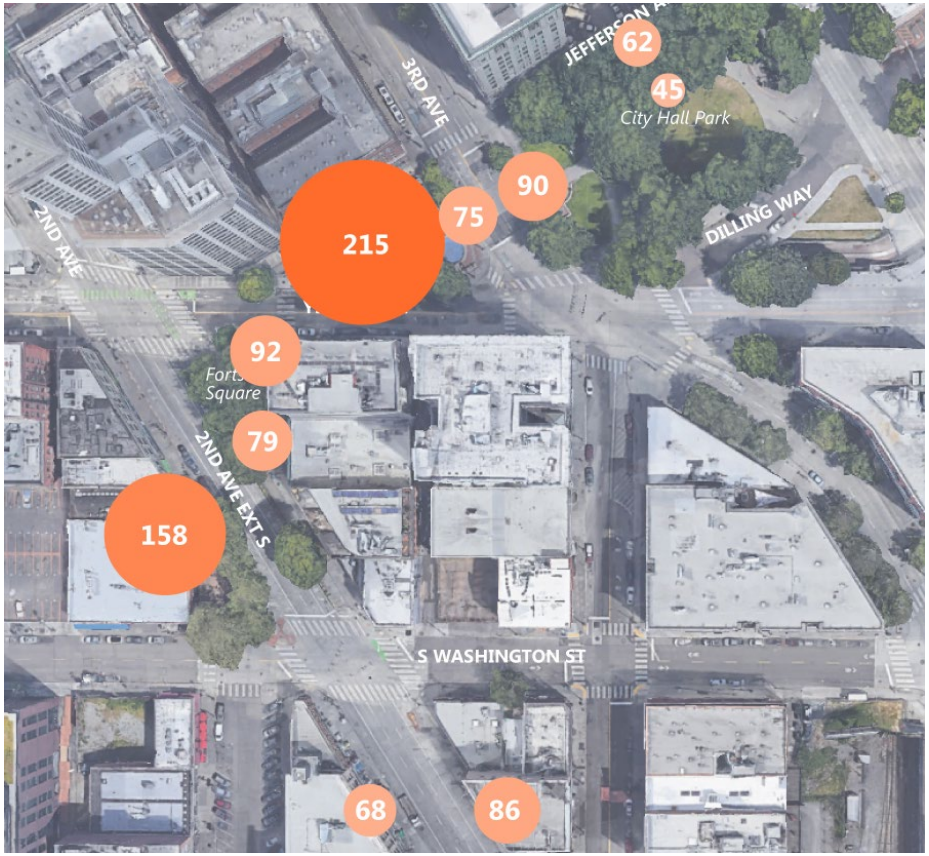
WHAT WE SAW

1. **While there are varying trends in the amount of activity of people moving and people staying in the Yesler Crescent area, total volumes are high.**

On average across the study area, **97 pedestrians** were observed per 20 minutes, compared to an average of 114 observed in the center city (SDOT 2018 citywide study).

The busiest site—outside of the Pioneer Square transit tunnel entrance—had an average of 215 pedestrians. This is higher than the averages recorded at sites in busy neighborhoods like Capitol Hill (102), Belltown (102), South Lake Union (100), and Chinatown/International District (80).

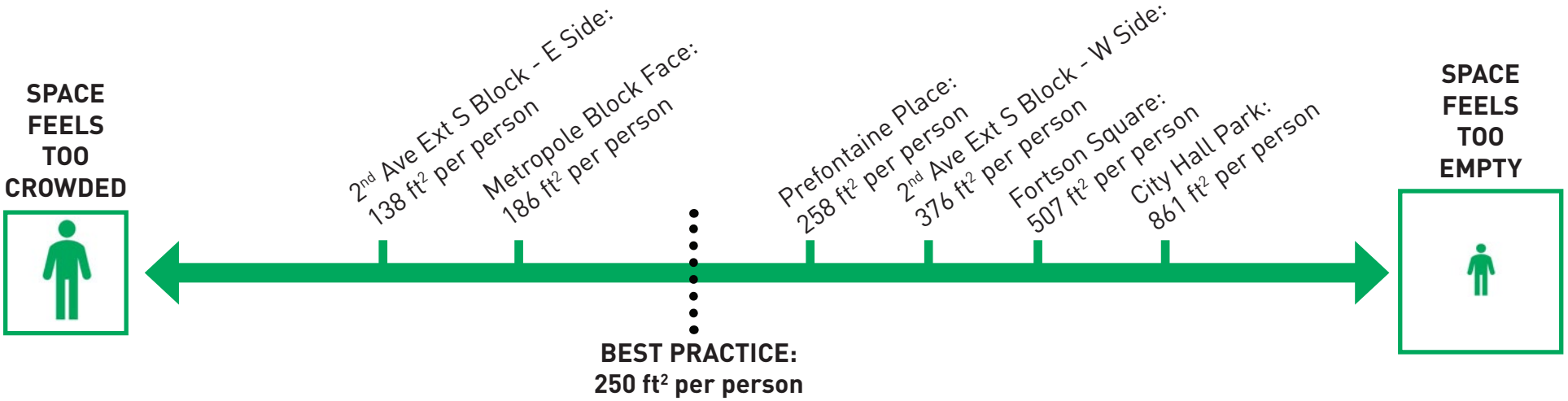
PEOPLE MOVING (average per 20 minutes)



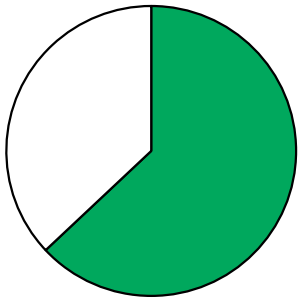
PEOPLE STAYING (average per 20 minutes)

2. **Each of these public spaces provides different experiences for their users, especially when considering how relatively busy each space is and how much space is available to linger and hang out.**

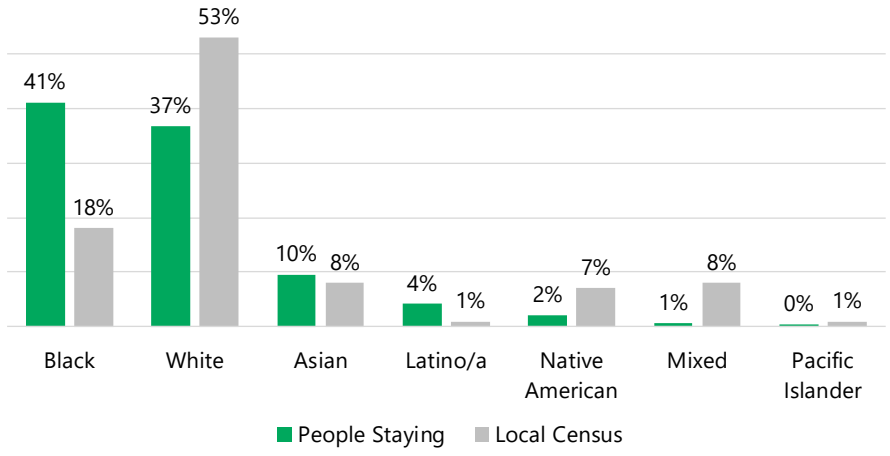
These public spaces are inherently different, spanning typologies of parks, plazas, squares, and block faces. To compare across sites, it's important to factor in the amount of space available to users. Data indicates that City Hall Park is too unpopulated to be comfortable, while some of the block faces on 2nd Ave Ext S may be too crowded to be pleasant spaces.



3. **The public spaces in Yesler Crescent are home to a very diverse set of users, including a high proportion of people of color.**

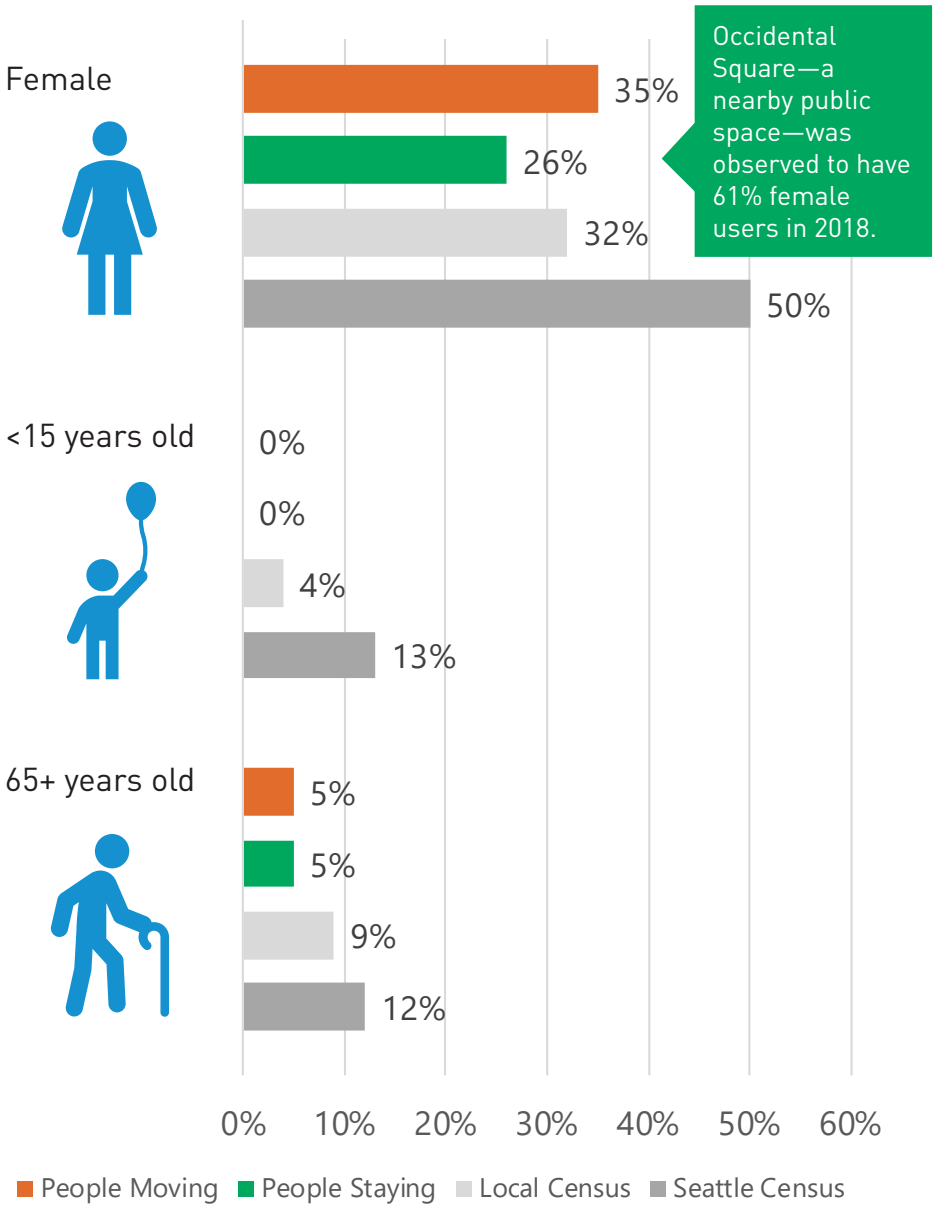


63%
observed to be people of color



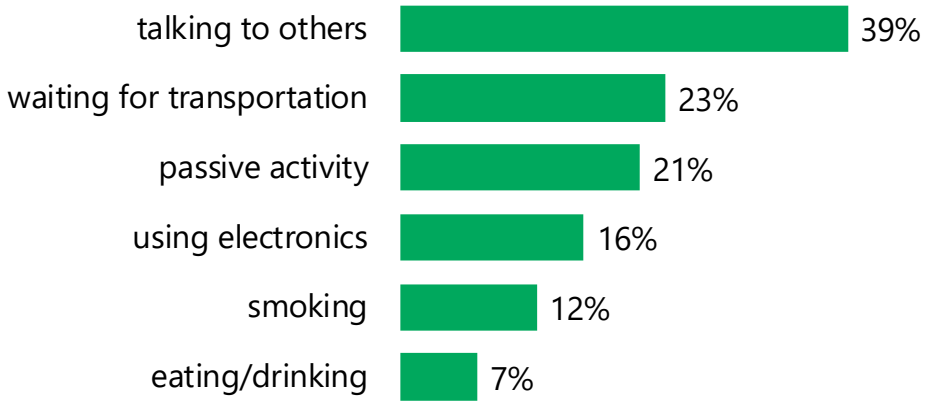
Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimate 2013-2017 (US Census Bureau)

4. There are very few women, youth, and elderly in Yesler Crescent's public spaces, which aligns with local residential demographics, but is not reflective of its potential as a central, inclusive public space for the Puget Sound region.



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimate 2013-2017 (US Census Bureau)

5. Yesler Crescent is a very social area, with the most frequently documented activity being people talking to others when staying in these public spaces.



Other activities documented in 3% or less of all users include: living in public, civic work, commercial activity, active recreation, cultural activity, soliciting, and disruptive activity.

WHAT WE HEARD

1. These public spaces lack identity and sense of place—and do not function as a cohesive network of public spaces.

Focus group participants said the Yesler Crescent public spaces lack a common identity and sense of place. Many said there is no anchor to provide a reason to go there or to linger. Participants identified the power of making a network of spaces—specifically, City Hall Park, Prefontaine Place, and Fortson Square—that are coordinated, that strike a good balance between spaces that provide opportunities for moving and for staying, and that reflect the assets of the local community, including indigenous culture and the local artist community. Consistency in legibility between the spaces is important for people passing through, and each of these spaces can provide a different yet cohesive experience.

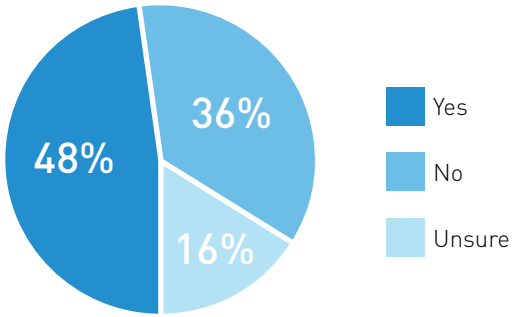
> There's not a natural connection between these arc of parks. For a pedestrian who wants that access, you have to cross a four lane street with unpredictable traffic at the intersections... That's a huge psychological barrier.
>
> - focus group participant

2. These spaces are frequented by a diverse group of users that come often—yet there is room for improvement to make it inclusive to all users.

Intercept surveys of people moving through and staying in Yesler Crescent public spaces represented a mix of neighborhood residents, workers, tourists, and people visiting medical, shelter, and other services provided by organizations in the immediate area. Most of the people we talked to were very familiar with the area and chose to regularly pass through it; nearly three out of four people said they come to Yesler Crescent at least once a week, with most of those visiting multiple times.

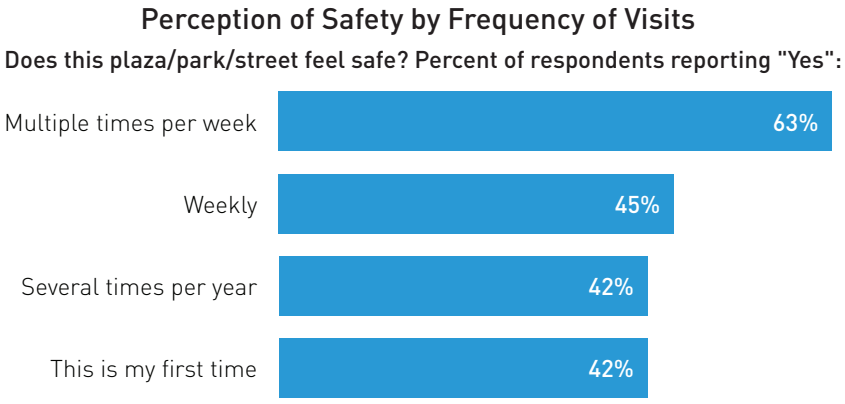
This area is very racially diverse, reflected by the fact that the majority of respondents (51%) self-reported as people of color. Of all respondents, 65% were male and 83% were adults between the ages of 25 and 64. These levels are nearly equal to the percentages reflected in the observational data, reinforcing the evident lack of appeal of these spaces among women, children, and the elderly. In fact, less than half of all survey respondents believed the Yesler Crescent public spaces feel welcoming, inviting, and inclusive to all.

Does this space feel welcoming, inviting, and inclusive to all?



3. Perceptions of safety play an important role in how people experience this space and should be an emphasis in future designs.

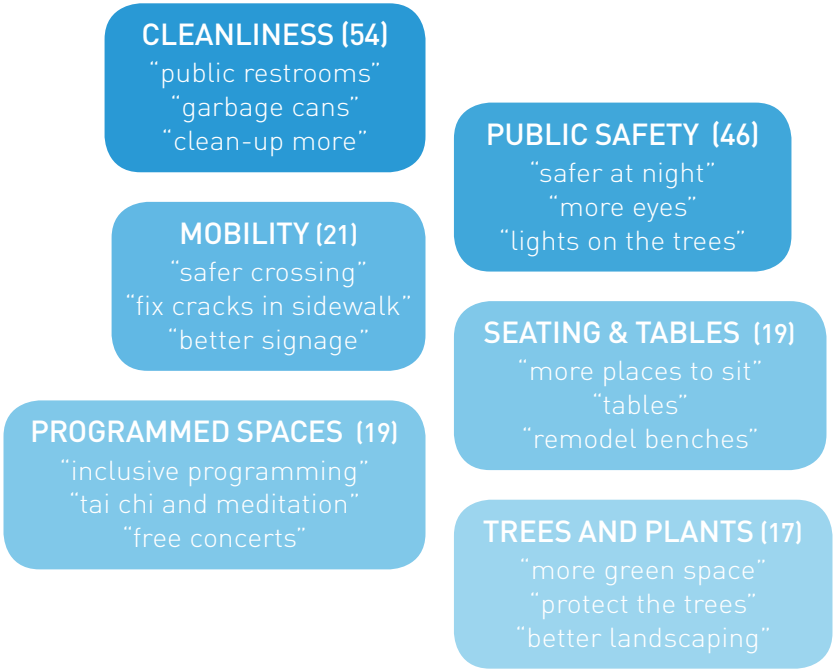
Overall, 61% of survey respondents reported the Yesler Crescent spaces to feel safe. Survey data trends indicate that the more frequently a person visited the area, the more safe they felt. This indicates that visitors to the area may not feel comfortable in this space.



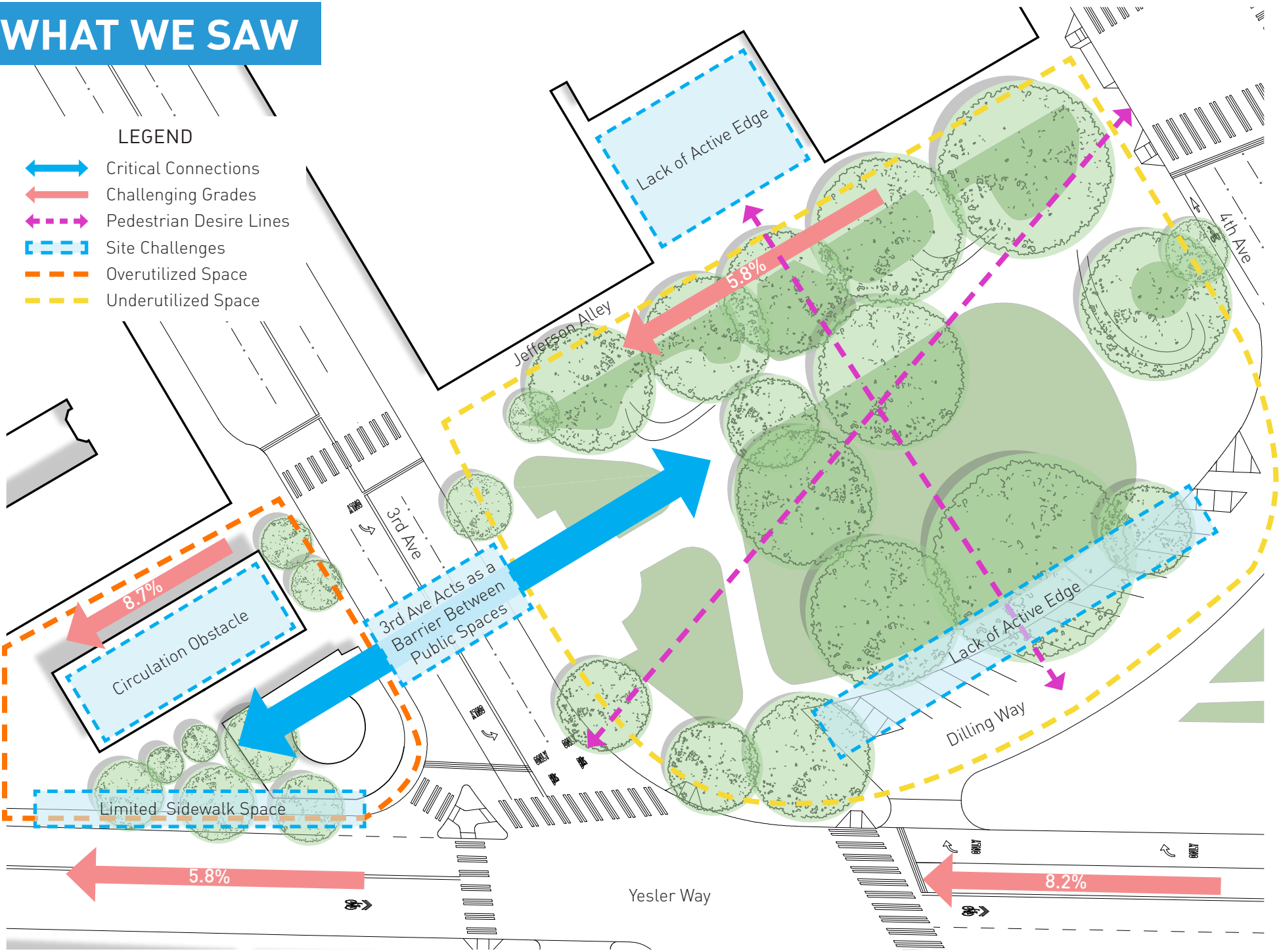
Focus group participants frequently discussed concerns around safety as a key aspect of the experience of Yesler Crescent public spaces. Participants talked about dangerous situations they have experienced in this area, precautions they take navigating these areas, and also how perceptions of safety impact their businesses. Participants suggested solutions to these problems, including: encouraging more activity in the area, more police presence, and design solutions focusing on improving sight lines to deter negative behavior.

4. Ideas for improving these public spaces focused on meeting the basic needs of users—with less of an emphasis on specific design ideas.

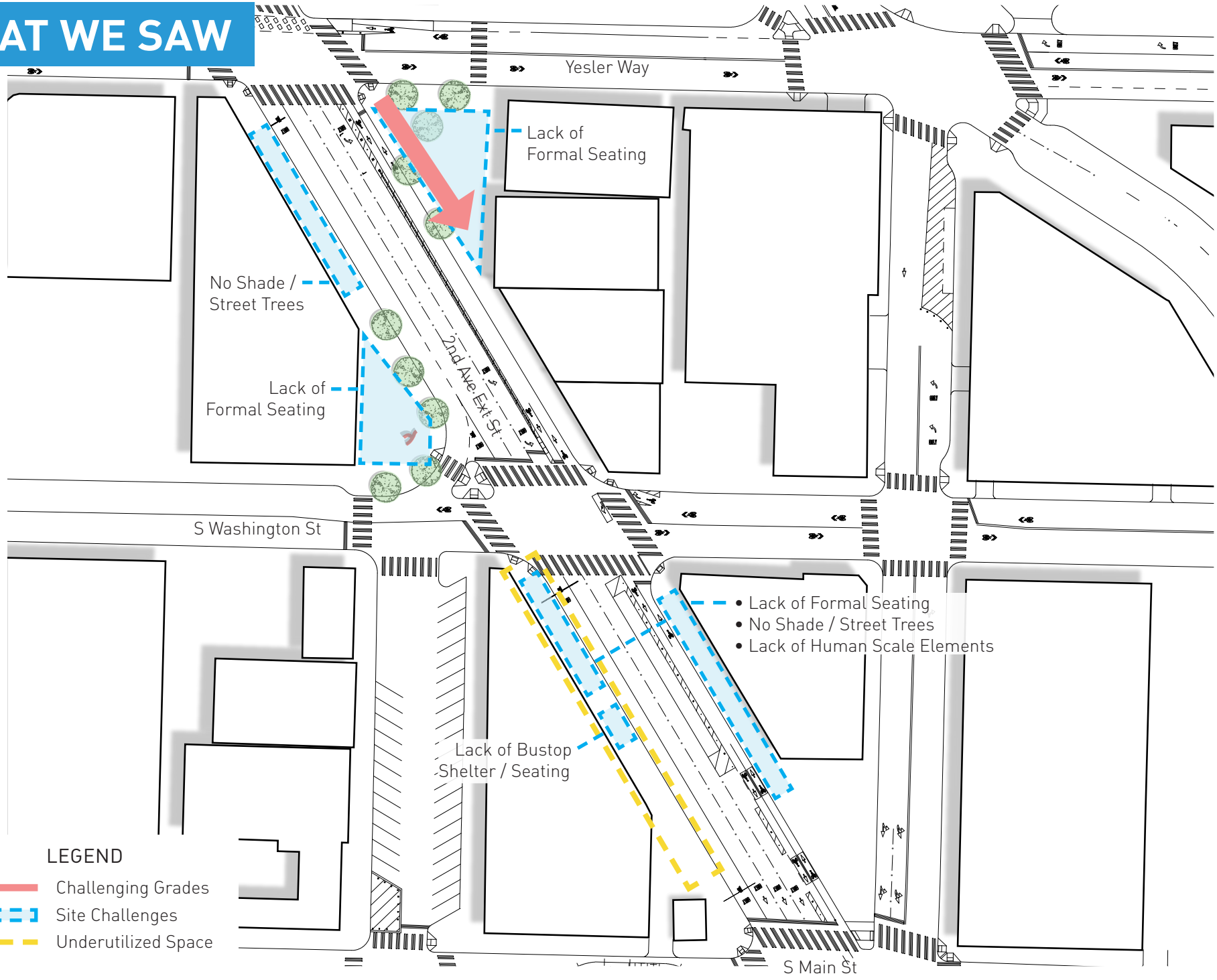
While a majority of survey respondents (54%) found these public spaces to be enjoyable, there are still opportunities to enhance the area through new design and amenities. When asked to provide ideas for improving the area, the most common themes mentioned were safety, cleanliness, and services for the unsheltered population living in the area. Respondents frequently mentioned the need for public restrooms and more garbage cans, increasing police presence in the area, providing better seating and tables, and improving crossings and sidewalks. This emphasis on meeting basic human needs in these spaces aligns with the focus group participants' understanding of the dominant function of these spaces as "waiting rooms" and "front yards," particularly for the unsheltered population.



WHAT WE SAW

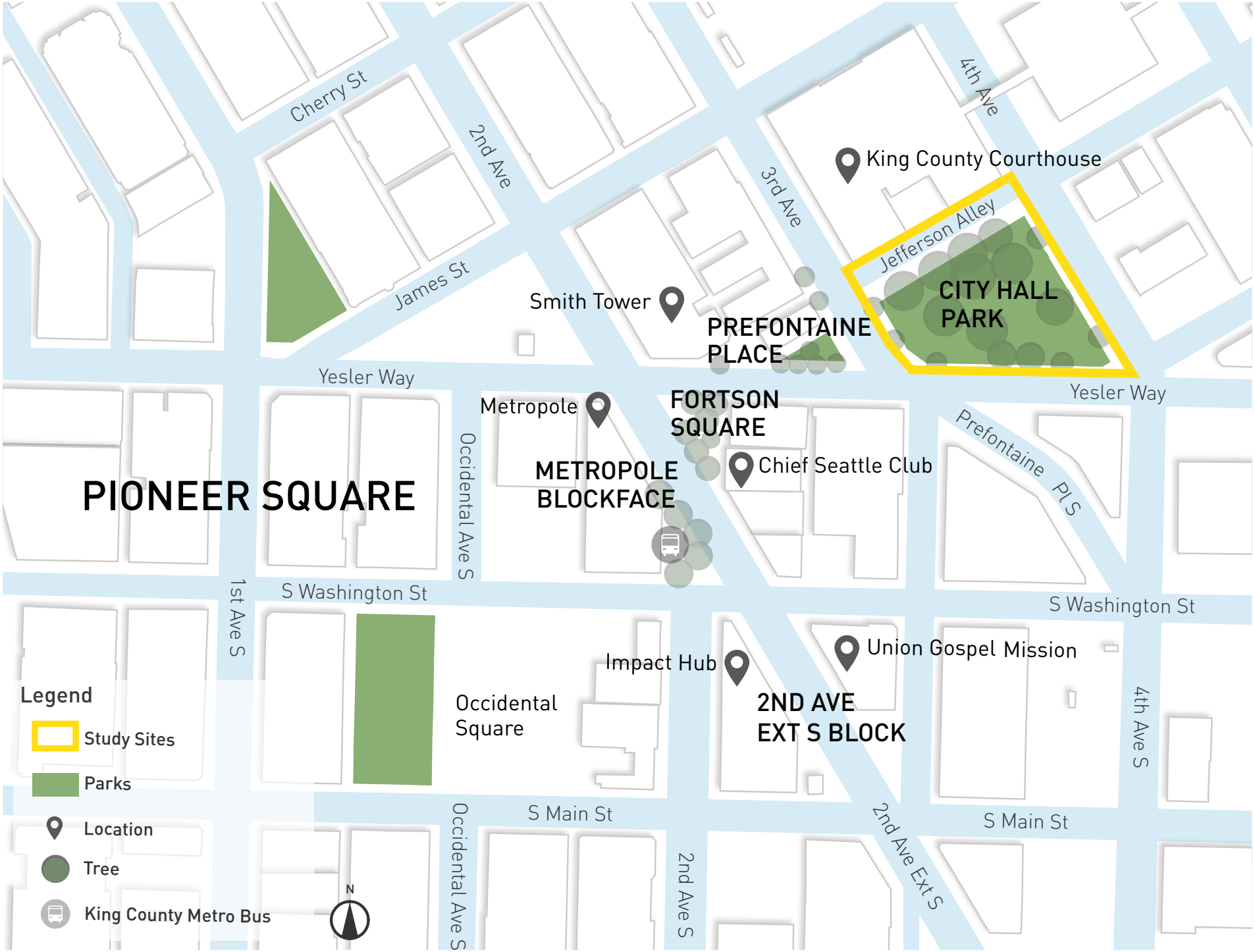

LEGEND
Critical Connections
Challenging Grades
Pedestrian Desire Lines
Site Challenges
Overutilized Space
Underutilized Space
Lack of Active Edge
5.8%
Jefferson Alley
4th Ave
3rd Ave
8.7%
Circulation Obstacle
3rd Ave Acts as a Barrier Between Public Spaces
Lack of Active Edge
Dilling Way
Limited Sidewalk Space
5.8%
Yesler Way
8.2%

WHAT WE SAW


Yesler Way
Lack of
Formal Seating
No Shade /
Street Trees
Lack of
Formal Seating
2nd Ave Ext St
S Washington St
• Lack of Formal Seating
• No Shade / Street Trees
• Lack of Human Scale Elements
Lack of Bustop
Shelter / Seating
S Main St
LEGEND
Challenging Grades
Site Challenges
Underutilized Space

2

CITY HALL PARK

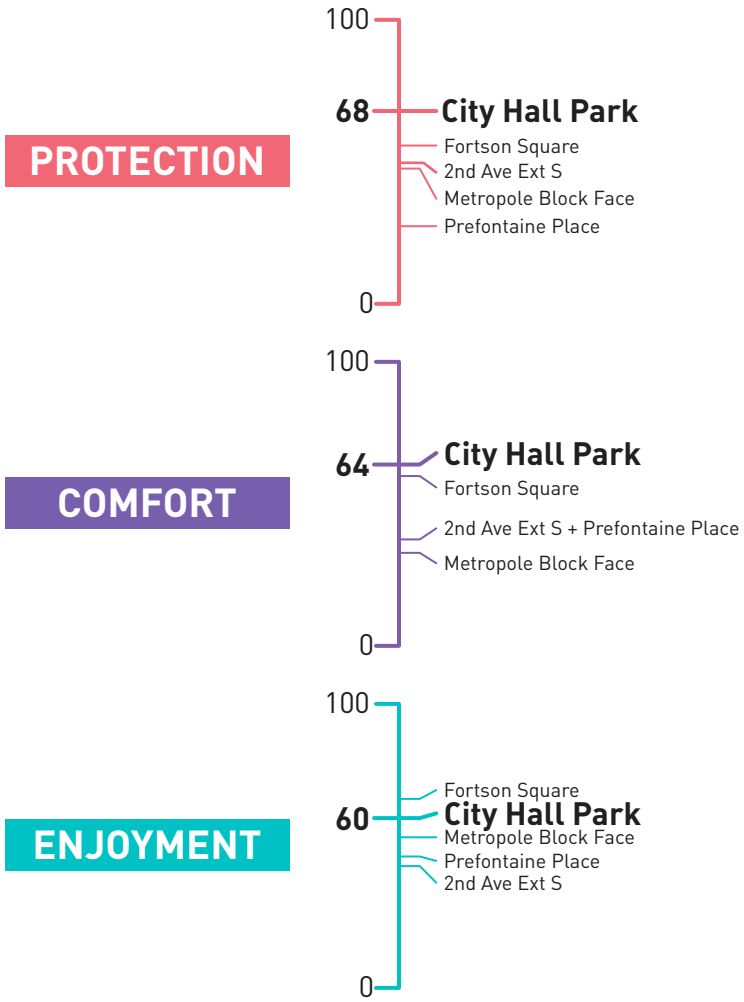

Cherry St
2nd Ave
James St
3rd Ave
4th Ave
King County Courthouse
Jefferson Alley
CITY HALL PARK
Smith Tower
PREFONTAINE PLACE
Yesler Way
Metropole
FORTSON SQUARE
Chief Seattle Club
METROPOLE BLOCKFACE
PIONEER SQUARE
Occidental Ave S
Prefontaine Pl S
1st Ave S
S Washington St
Impact Hub
Union Gospel Mission
Occidental Square
2ND AVE EXT S BLOCK
4th Ave S
S Main St
2nd Ave Ext S
2nd Ave S
Legend
Study Sites
Parks
Location
Tree
King County Metro Bus
N

URBAN DESIGN EXISTING CONDITIONS
City Hall Park


PIONEER SQUARE
EST. 1852
PIONEER SQUARE

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT
City Hall Park

City Hall Park Urban Design Assessment Scoring: These scores are based upon the 12 criteria of urban quality introduced in the methodology. These criteria, which consider a variety of elements within the public realm that directly impact user experience, are used to rate and assess public spaces. Individual scores can be found in Appendix C.



This space benefits from many options to sit, rest or play within the 2nd largest green space in Downtown Seattle, yet it suffers from unprotected exposure to busy thoroughfares, parking and a loading dock on its edges, as well as a lack of a central feature to attract and retain users.

Strengths:

1. Good lighting and visibility (Protection against harm by others)
2. Seating oriented toward park (Options for seeing)
3. Regular programming (Options for play, exercise, and activities)
4. Benches, seat walls, moveable chairs (Options for sitting)
5. Shade from mature trees (Opportunities to enjoy the positive aspects of climate)
6. Iconic setting (Experience of aesthetic qualities and positive sensory experiences)

Challenges:

7. Exposure to traffic (Protection against traffic and accidents)
8. High noise levels (Protection against unpleasant sensory experiences)
9. Minimal social seating provided (Options for talking, listening, and hearing)
10. Low quality pedestrian experience (Options for mobility)
11. No central focal point (Options to stop and stay)
12. Imposing, inaccessible buildings (Dimensions of human scale)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Jefferson Alley
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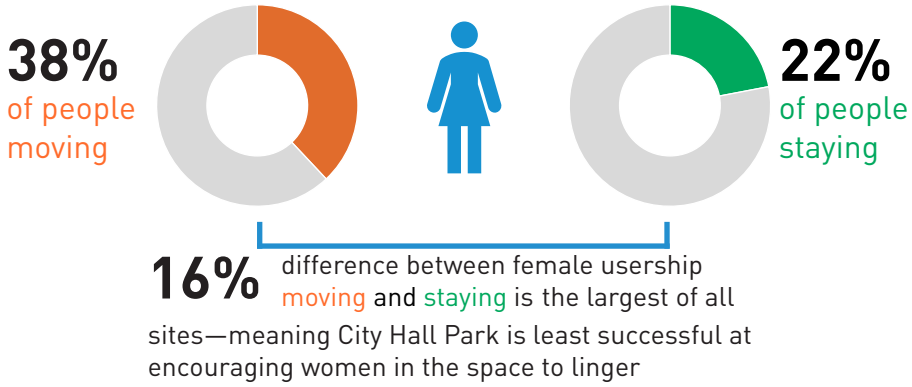
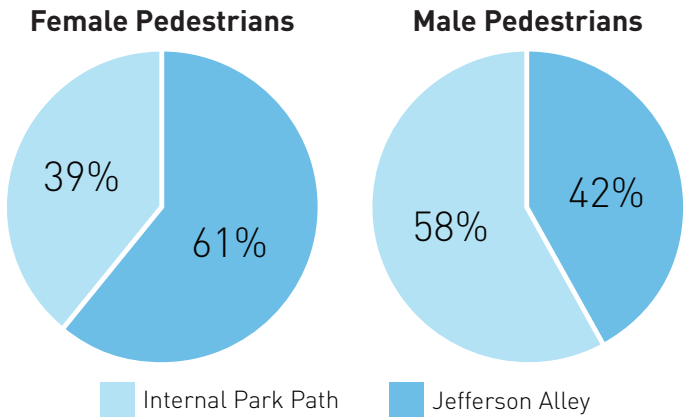
WHAT WE SAW
City Hall Park

1. Women and men experience City Hall Park differently.

Proportion of public space users who are female:

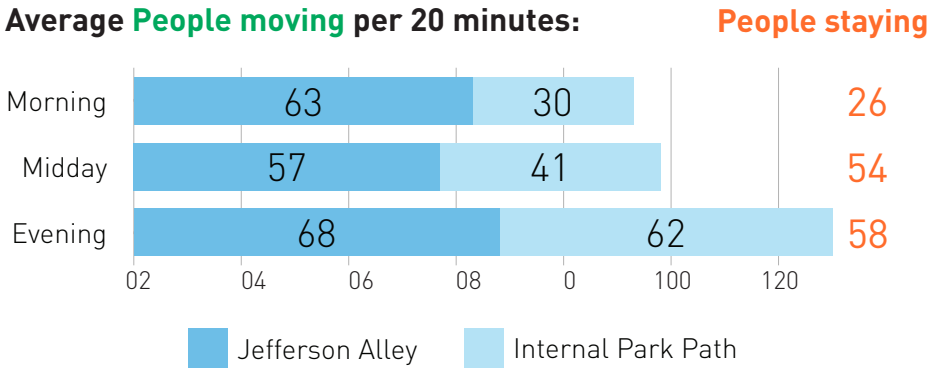


Additionally, women and men took different routes when traveling East-West through City Hall Park. Women were more likely to bypass the park through **Jefferson Alley**, while men were more likely to take the **internal park path.**



2. Circulation patterns of people passing through the space on an East-West path are variable and related to the amount of staying activity in the park.

Data indicates that more people pass through the **internal park path**—as opposed to bypassing the park via **Jefferson Alley**—when more people are using the park, thus underscoring William H Whyte's observation that "what attracts people most...is other people."

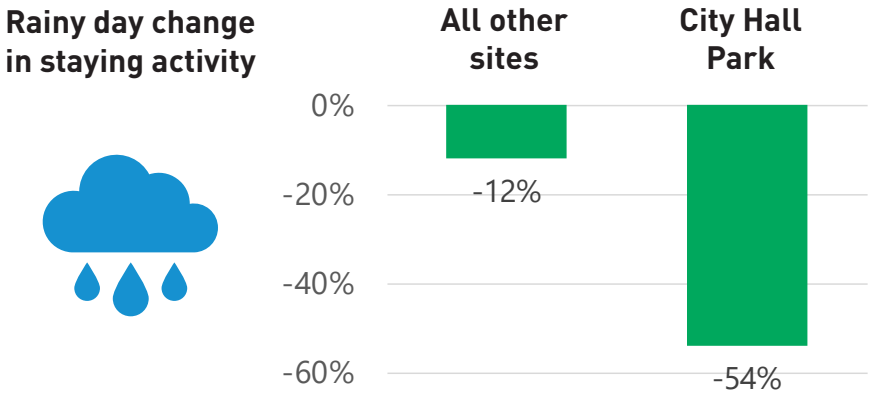


3. **The distribution of staying activity in City Hall Park is largely focused where there is seating provided, which is clustered along the eastern, northern, and western edges of the park.**

Dots represent average 20 minute period
- standing
- sitting on bench
- sitting on seat wall
- sitting on moveable chair
- sitting informally
- laying down

4. **Usage of the space is highly dependent on the level of activation present and the weather.**

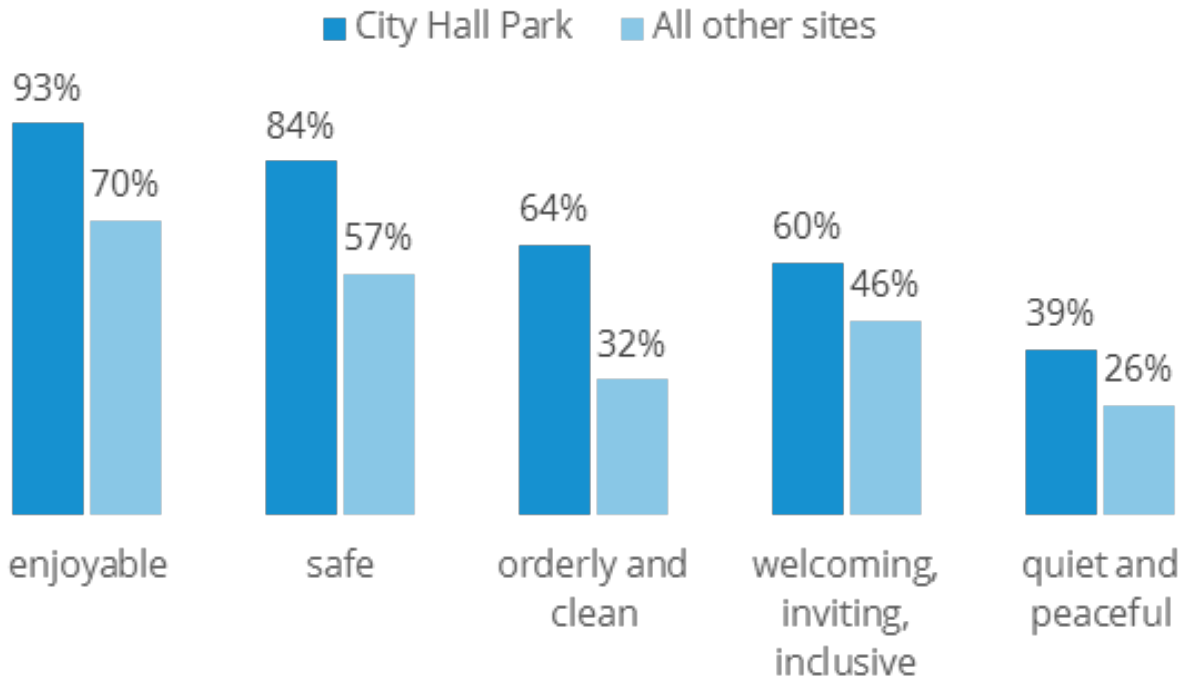
On the one day of observation with rainy weather, all staying activity across the study area was down 12%. City Hall Park saw a 54% decrease in average use, by far the site most affected by inclement weather.



WHAT WE HEARD
City Hall Park

1. People have positive opinions about City Hall Park.

Surveys from City Hall Park indicate that people have more positive experiences and opinions of this space compared to all other areas of Yesler Crescent. When asked about the park's enjoyability, safety, and cleanliness, a larger proportion of people reported positive experiences compared to all other sites.



Focus group respondents specifically mentioned the park's openness and lushness contributing to making it an enjoyable space. They also attributed these characteristics to be a unique and special asset for the City, particularly in the downtown urban core. However, only 39% of respondents reported it to be quiet and peaceful, indicating that it is not a relaxing space despite its greenness.

2. While activation efforts have been a positive addition, the park still has not reached its full potential.

Focus group participants universally applauded the efforts by Seattle Parks and Recreation to bring activity to the park and provide amenities. This has in turn made it more enjoyable to spend time there and less intimidating to walk through. Activation efforts have also improved the experience for frequent users of the space, who have become stewards of this space in their own right.

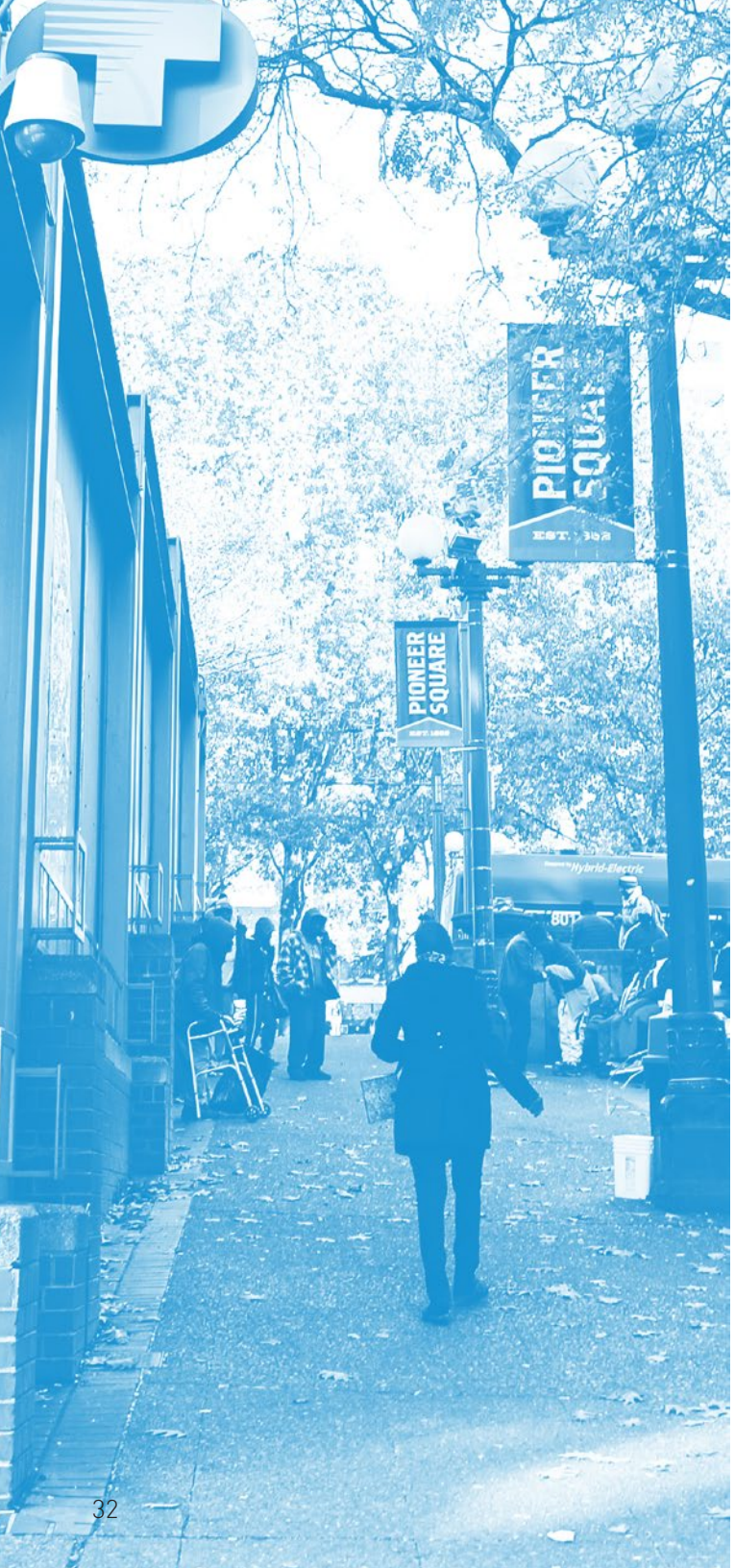
Despite the overall positivity attributed with the park, people commented that there is currently not enough provided nearby or in the park to make it a destination for visitors. A number of focus group participants commented on the fact that there is no "natural reason" for people to come to the park because of the surrounding land uses and orientation of the King County Courthouse.

> Currently in City Hall Park, everything has it's back turned to it. Nothing draws people from the buildings around it...nothing connects that park to activity around it, which makes it a dead space.
>
> - focus group participant

3. Ideas for improvement.

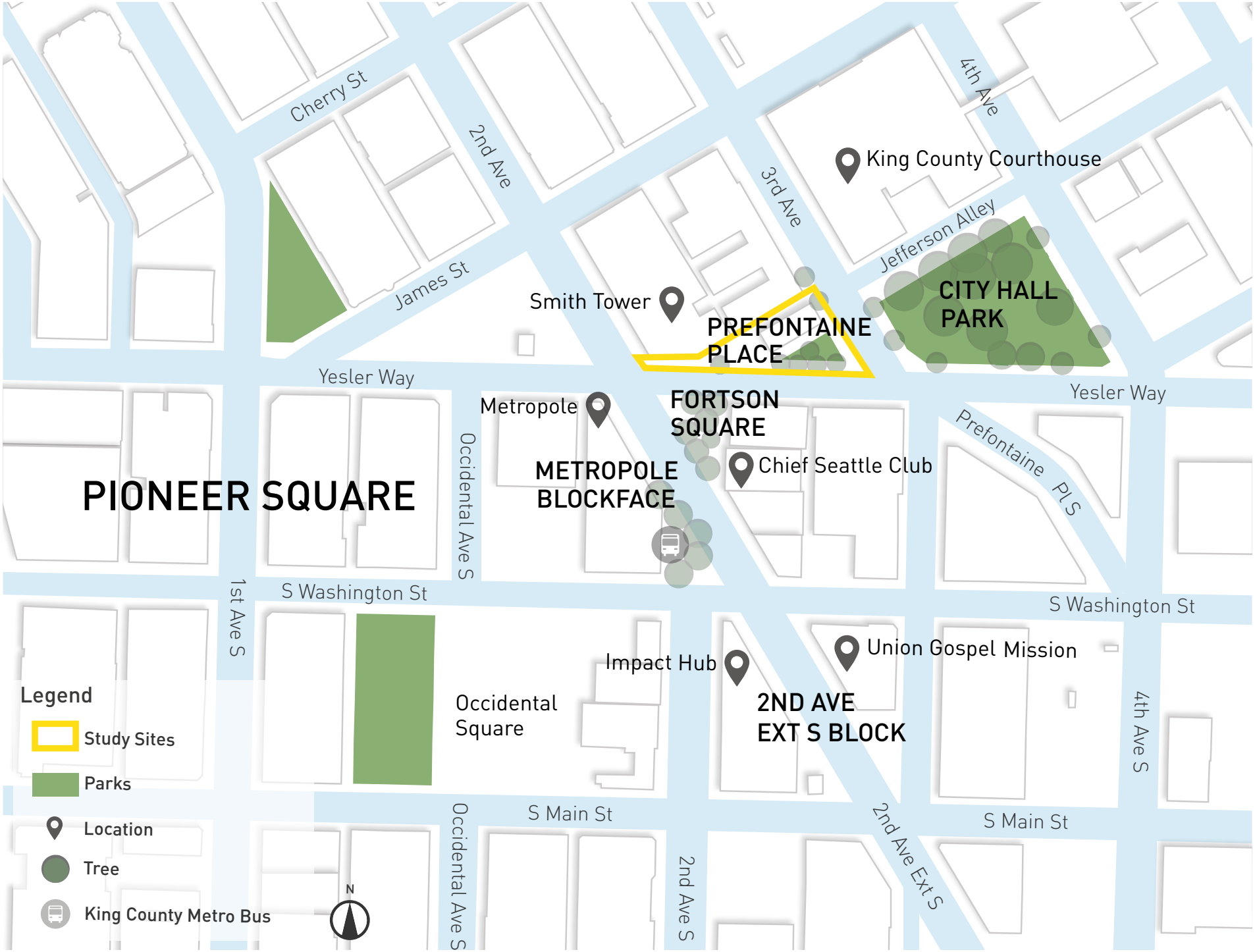
Survey respondents echoed a sense of satisfaction when asked about what improvements could be made to space, with nearly 1 in 5 respondents saying that they like it as it is. Other improvements commonly suggested on the survey included public restrooms, more programmed activities, more seating, and pet amenities.

Focus group participants underscored the challenges with improving the park given the current lack of sense of place. Suggested improvements included: establishing complementary uses in and near the park that encourage people to come as a destination, and reconfiguring circulation through the park to make Jefferson Alley less appealing as a thoroughfare.



3

PREFONTAINE PLACE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James St
Smith Tower
PREFONTAINE PLACE
CITY HALL PARK
Yesler Way
Yesler Way
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4th Ave S
S Main St
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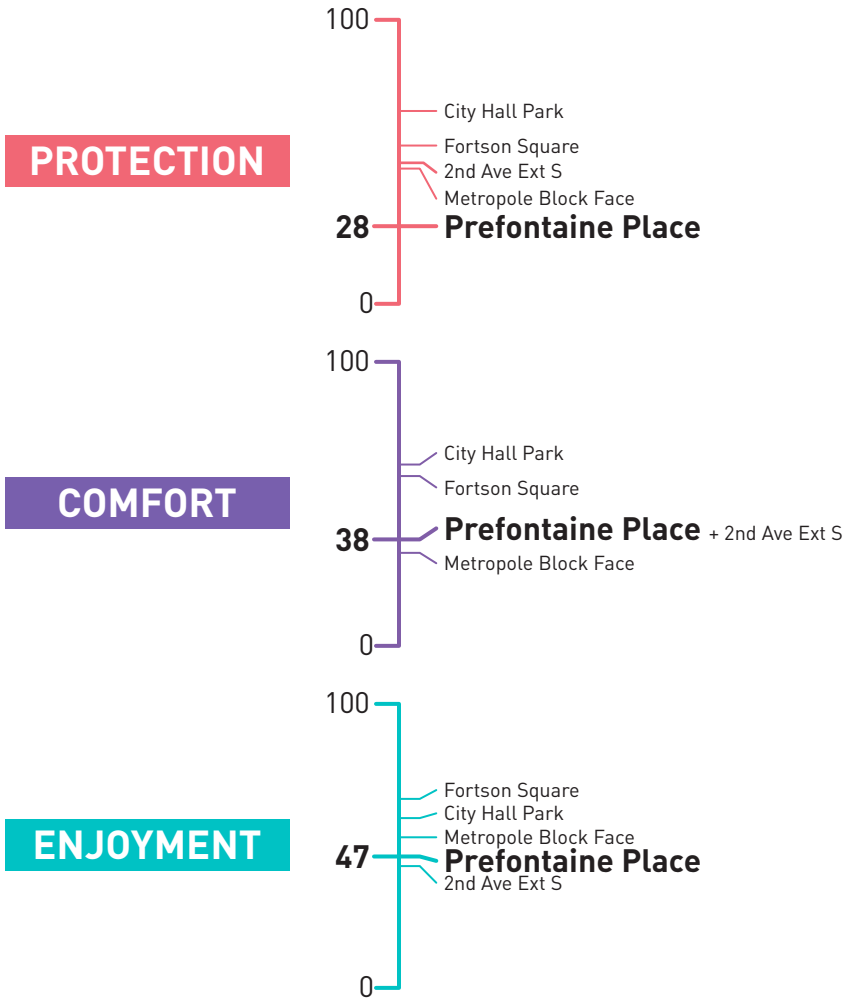
URBAN DESIGN EXISTING CONDITIONS
Prefontaine Place

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

Prefontaine Place

Prefontaine Place Urban Design Assessment Scoring: These scores are based upon the 12 criteria of urban quality introduced in the methodology. These criteria, which consider a variety of elements within the public realm that directly impact user experience, are used to rate and assess public spaces. Individual scores can be found in Appendix C.



The structure of Prefontaine Fountain provides the only bench and ledge seating in the space, but also significantly obstructs visibility and pedestrian access - diminishing the perception of safety and comfort. The overall experience is further negatively impacted by traffic noise, inactive building edges, and lack of cleanliness in the space.

Strengths:

1. Seating around fountain (Options for sitting)
2. Ledge seating and leaning options (Options to stop and stay)

Challenges:

3. Proximity to traffic (Protection against traffic and accidents)
4. Enclosed spaces, low visibility (Protection against harm by others)
5. Cleanliness (Protection against unpleasant sensory experiences)
6. Seating oriented toward streets (Options for seeing)
7. No social seating (Options for talking, listening, and hearing)
8. Obstructed pedestrian passage (Options for mobility)
9. Inactive building edges (Dimensions of human scale)
10. Heavy Shade (Opportunities to enjoy the positive aspects of climate)
11. Non-functioning fountain, obstructing flow (Experience of aesthetic qualities and positive sensory experiences)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3rd Ave
Yesler Way
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WHAT WE SAW
Prefontaine Place

1. Prefontaine is the busiest area of Yesler Crescent.

One third of people observed passing through the study area were counted at Prefontaine Place. The Sound Transit tunnel entrance for the Pioneer Square station saw over **2.5 times** the average level of activity compared to all other sites.

Of people staying, Prefontaine Place had **4 times** the concentration of activity compared to City Hall Park. Prefontaine Place saw nearly as many people staying still (41 per 20 minute period) as City Hall Park (46 per 20 minute time period), even though it is only a third of the size and has fewer seating opportunities.

2. Prefontaine Place is the most social space in the study area, and a large proportion of people also engage in passive activity, indicating a demand for a variety of seating or perching options to meet the needs of users.

58% of people spending time in Prefontaine Place were **in groups of 2+** (all other sites had an average of 37%)

of those people talking to others, **over half were standing**, indicating opportunities to design the space to accommodate this activity

24% of people spending time in Prefontaine Place were engaged in **passive activity**, like relaxing, people watching, and hanging out

3. **Prefontaine Fountain in particular presents challenges in meeting the demands of both people passing through and people hanging out. Data indicates there is inadequate space for both types of users, making for a low-quality environment.**

Most staying activity was observed around the Prefontaine Fountain. Very little staying activity was observed near the transit tunnel entrance, despite the high pedestrian volumes. There are so many people hanging out at the fountain area, that on average each user has **109 square feet of space on average**, which is far below the ideal dimension of 250 square feet per person.

When pedestrian flow was analyzed along Yesler Way, in comparison to the amount of space available for people moving, the sidewalk received a level of service grade of E. Staying activity also spills onto the sidewalk along Yesler Way, further impacting the constrained site conditions with implications on mobility and safety in the area.

Pedestrian level of service for Yesler Way:

☺ A B C D **E** F ☹

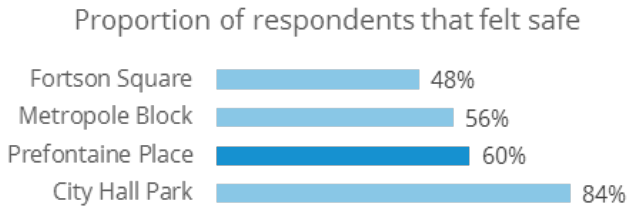
Virtually all pedestrians restrict their normal walking speed. Forward movement is possible only by shuffling. Design volumes approach the limit of walkway capacity, with stoppages and interruptions to flow.

Source: Highway Capacity Manual

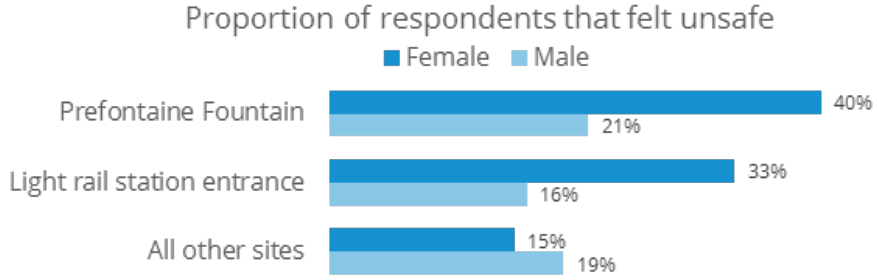
WHAT WE HEARD
Prefontaine Place

1. Perceptions of safety and inclusion are complex in this public space.

While many focus group participants indicated feeling unsafe in this space, survey respondents on the other hand reported the opposite. In fact, with 60% of survey respondents at Prefontaine Place reporting feeling safe, this space ranked second after City Hall Park.



However, data indicates that not everyone experiences the space the same, with women reporting lower rates of feeling safe. In the entire study area, the largest proportion of women reported feeling unsafe at this location (37%) compared to all other survey locations (15%); the difference in sense of safety is worse at the fountain for women compared to the light rail station entrance.



Focus groups and surveys indicate that while the space is not seen as inviting or inclusive to the general public, it is an enjoyable space for those who frequent it often. In fact, 56% of people surveyed at the fountain found it to be welcoming and inclusive, compared to only 37% at the light rail station.

2. This public space has an impact on Seattle's reputation given its prominence.

Across the board, the value of Prefontaine Place as a popular and prominent downtown gathering space underpinned serious concerns about the space's reputation for condoning illicit activity. Focus group participants said that the lack of maintenance and upkeep, signaled primarily by the non-functioning fountain, may send a message to users that illicit activity may occur in a space that isn't largely cared for.

> It's a weird little area that no one has a stake in or wants to care about. It is a no man's land.
>
> - focus group participant

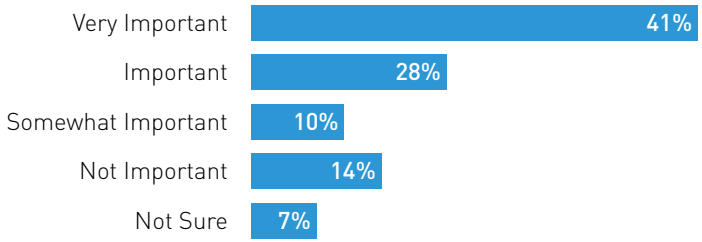
Additionally, the space itself lacks an identifiable character to make it a landmark for visitors to the area, particularly those hoping to access the Sound Transit tunnel entrance. Many focus group participants said that when interacting with visitors, they provide directions to the International District station instead of Pioneer Square because of the unsavory activity at the fountain and wayfinding challenges in the area.

3. There is no consensus of opinion on the fountain design.

As the central feature of the space, Prefontaine Fountain resonated deeply with survey respondents and focus group participants alike, but opinions about it varied.

Of the people that we surveyed at the fountain, two out of three said that it is either important or very important to their enjoyment of the space; only 14% said the fountain was not important.

Fountain users' reported importance of fountain to enjoyment of Prefontaine Place



Unlike survey respondents, focus group participants were largely negative about the fountain. Many commented on the challenges of passing through the space due to the activity around the fountain area and its current configuration that leaves a narrow sidewalk between the fountain seat wall and the tree wells. This bottleneck, combined with the high volume of pedestrians in the small space and little to no wayfinding, creates congestion and confusion in the space. Sense of safety is also lessened with the impeded sight lines through the space, due to the fountain structure, the head house, and significant grade.

> Trying to make your way up the corner there, you have to dodge piles of bikes and stuff. There's mud in the tree well, and so I usually decide to walk in the street instead. It's rough.
>
> - focus group participant

4. Ideas for improvement.

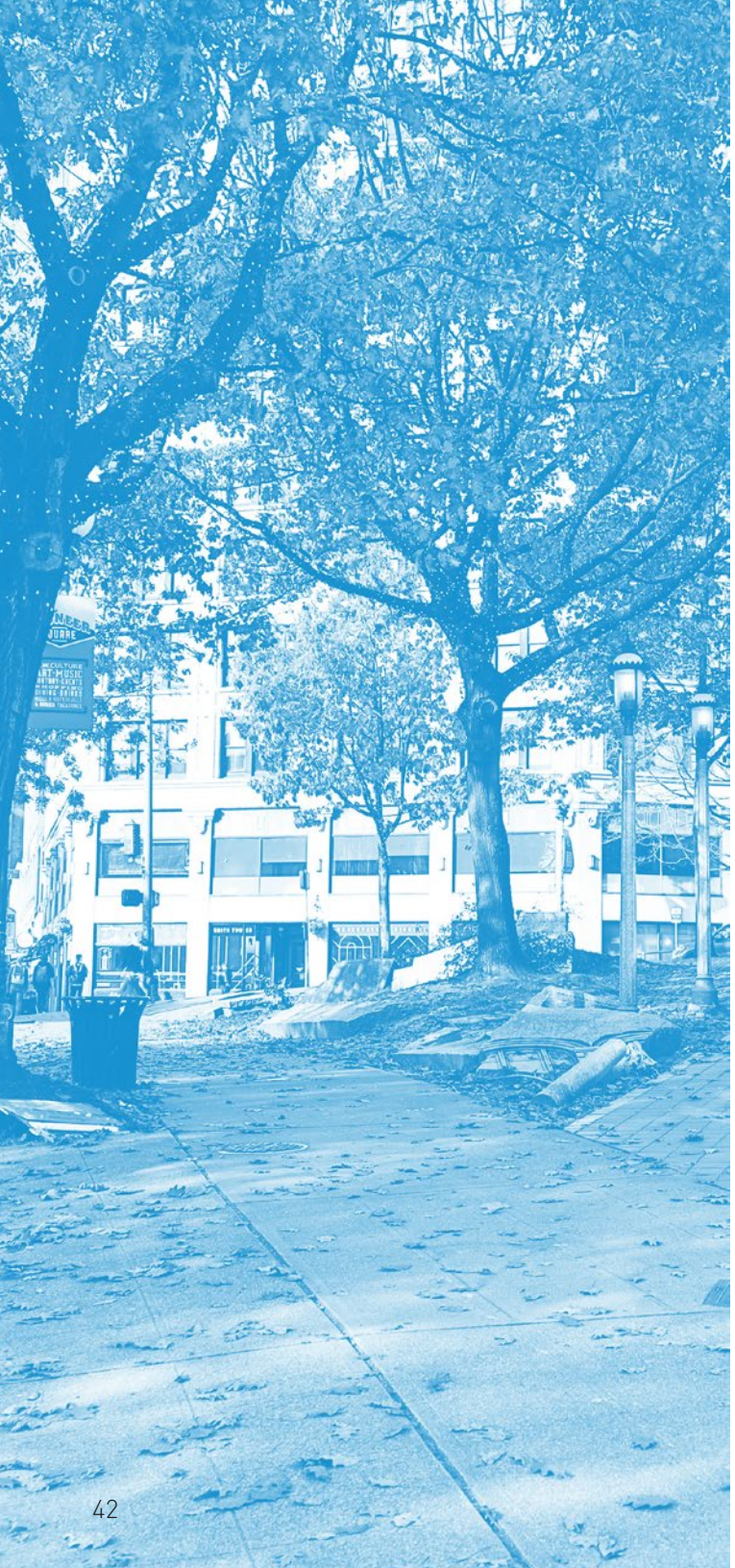
Most participants felt that the current condition of Prefontaine Place needed improving, but ideas on how to approach it diverged.

> There has to be change there, period.
>
> - focus group participant

When asked about potential changes to the space, survey respondents were split on whether to redesign the space or leave it as it is. When asked specifically about relocation of the fountain, more than half (56%) of respondents thought the fountain itself should not be moved.

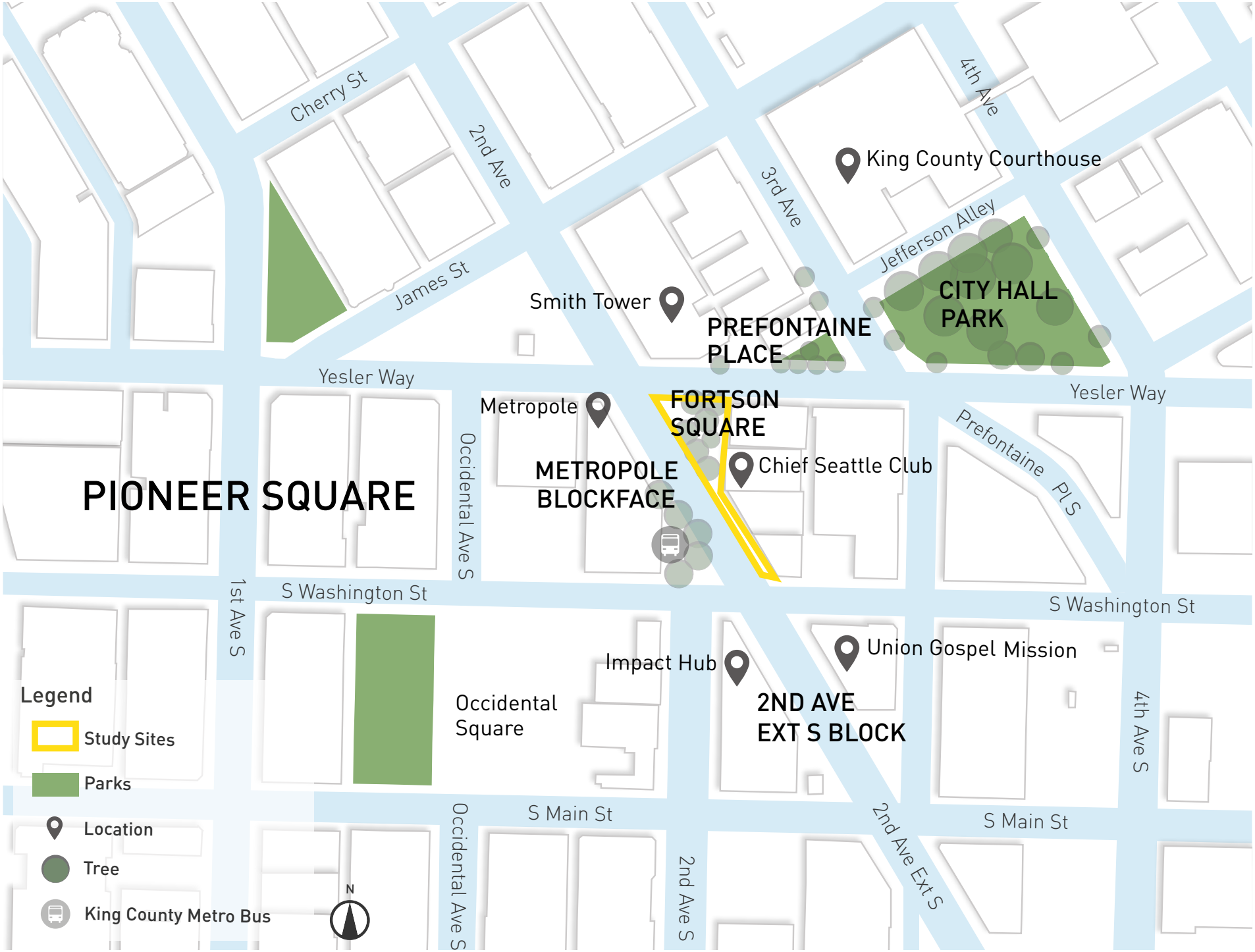
Of the focus group participants that provided input on the future of the fountain, **10** said it should be removed while **5** wanted to see it improved; the remaining participants didn't provide an opinion either way. Many participants communicated the value of the fountain as an important landmark that should be preserved either in its current location or in a new space.

When asked for ideas on improving the space more generally, 22% of survey respondents suggested improving public safety there by adding more police presence, the second highest suggestion after sanitary amenities like public bathrooms and garbage cans (36%).



4

FORTSON SQUARE


Cherry St
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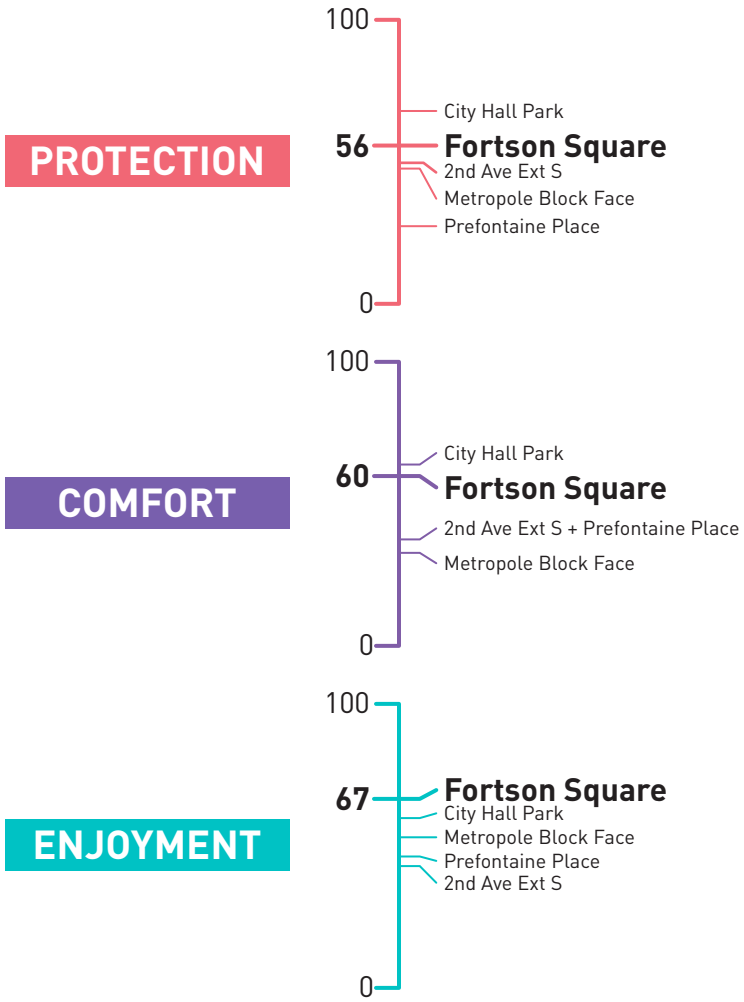
URBAN DESIGN EXISTING CONDITIONS
Fortson Square


PIONEER
SQUARE
EST. 1852

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

Fortson Square

Fortson Square Urban Design Assessment Scoring: These scores are based upon the 12 criteria of urban quality introduced in the methodology. These criteria, which consider a variety of elements within the public realm that directly impact user experience, are used to rate and assess public spaces. Individual scores can be found in Appendix C.



Fortson Square is bordered by active building façades, wide sidewalks, and a protected bike lane along its longest edge. There are no formal seating options, with the stairs and concrete art pieces frequently used as makeshift seating. Pedestrian access through the inside of the space is diminished by uneven brick pavers, lending little to no opportunity for visitors to comfortably stay in the space.

Strengths:

1. Distanced from street (Protection against traffic and accidents)
2. Good visibility (Protection against harm by others)
3. Shelter from mature trees (Protection against unpleasant sensory experiences)
4. Wide sidewalks and access to protected bike lane (Options for mobility)
5. Stairs provide informal opportunity to perch (Options for seeing)
6. Active building edges (Dimensions of human scale)
7. Iconic views (Experience of aesthetic qualities and positive sensory experiences)

Challenges:

8. No social seating provided (Options for talking, listening, and hearing)
9. Use of "Sculptural ruins" unintuitive (Options to stop and stay)
10. No seating provided (Options for sitting)
11. Feels dark during the day (Opportunities to enjoy the positive aspects of climate)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WHAT WE SAW
Fortson Square

1. **The current plaza design does not support or encourage lingering social activity, even though this is the most commonly observed activity in the space.**

Nearly half (48%) of the people who use Fortson Square engage in social activity, making it the dominant activity in the space. There is no seating provided, so people who want to chat do not have seating or other design features to comfortably support that activity for long time periods. Of the people engaging in social activity, 74% were standing or leaning, while 20% were sitting on things not designed to be seating, such as the curb, a step, or artwork.

2. There is demand for places for rest and respite, particularly for elderly public space users.

This site had the largest proportion of users observed to be over 65 years old.

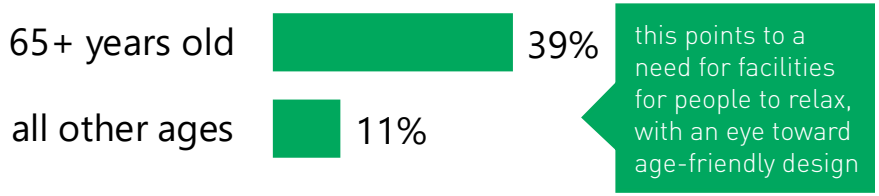
7% of people **moving through**

9% of people **staying and hanging out**

Public space users over 65 years old were **more likely to sit**, and **less likely to stand**, compared to users of other age groups.

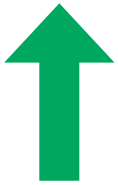
One in ten people used this space to rest, relax, and hang out. People over 65 years old were much more likely to use this space for this purpose than people of other age groups.

Proportion of people resting, relaxing, or engaging in passive activity by age group



3. There is a likely sizeable influence of the Chief Seattle Club on the use of the space.

When Chief Seattle Club was closed, we observed far fewer people using Fortson Square.



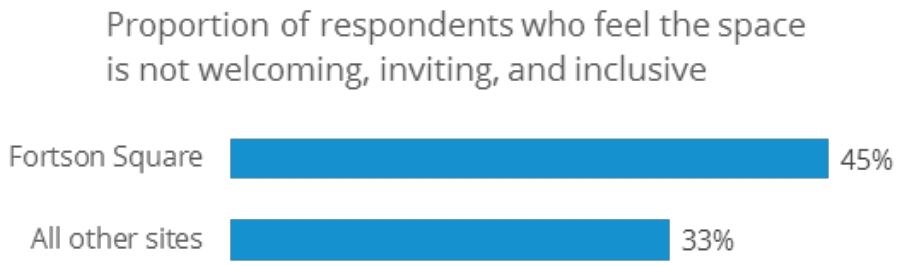
55% more **people hanging out** in the square and on the sidewalk when the facility was open.

Chief Seattle Club's direct interaction with and influence on this public space underscores the need for the space to be designed to meet the needs of those who frequent the organization in addition to the general public; to resonate with those public space users; and to encourage ongoing stewardship of the space.

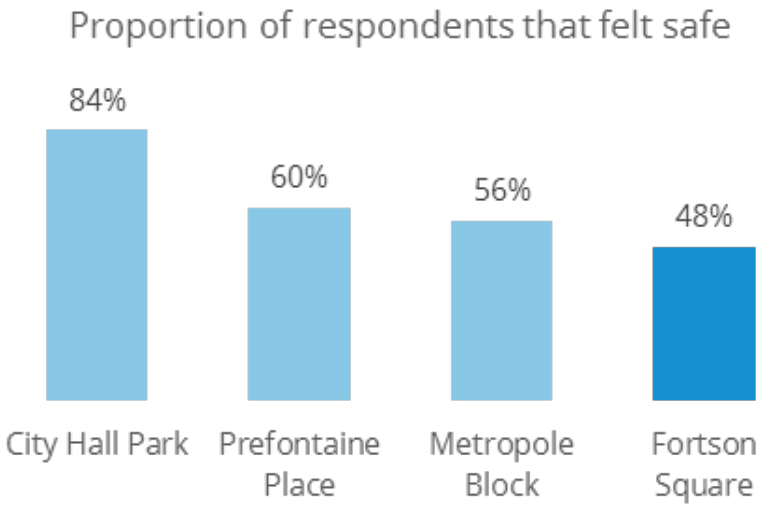
WHAT WE HEARD
Fortson Square

1. People do not feel Fortson Square is a safe or inviting space.

Survey respondents reported that Fortson Square was the least inclusive, inviting, and welcoming site of all surveyed. Focus group participants discussed the fact that there is a need to create more opportunities for people to linger and enjoy the space in the form of seating or activity.

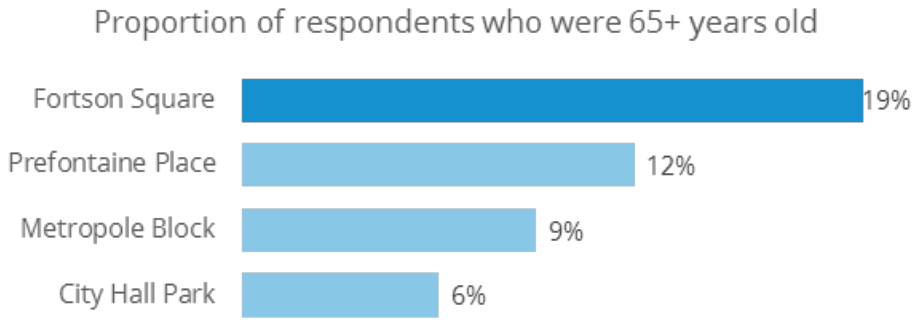


Additionally, users of Fortson Square reported the lowest levels of feeling safe compared to other sites in the study area, with just less than half saying the space felt safe. Focus group participants opined that safety has improved in the area in recent years, particularly with the bike lane coming in, but there is still spillover illegal activity from Prefontaine Fountain, which contributes to their feeling unsafe in the area.



2. There was a larger proportion of elderly respondents in Fortson Square.

Similar to the observational data, there was a higher proportion of intercept survey respondents in older age categories compared to other sites in the study area. One in five people surveyed here reported being over 65 years old. These disproportionate number of elderly users suggests that the space should be designed for people of all ages and abilities, and in particular be made more comfortable for those who may have mobility issues.



3. Ideas for improvement.

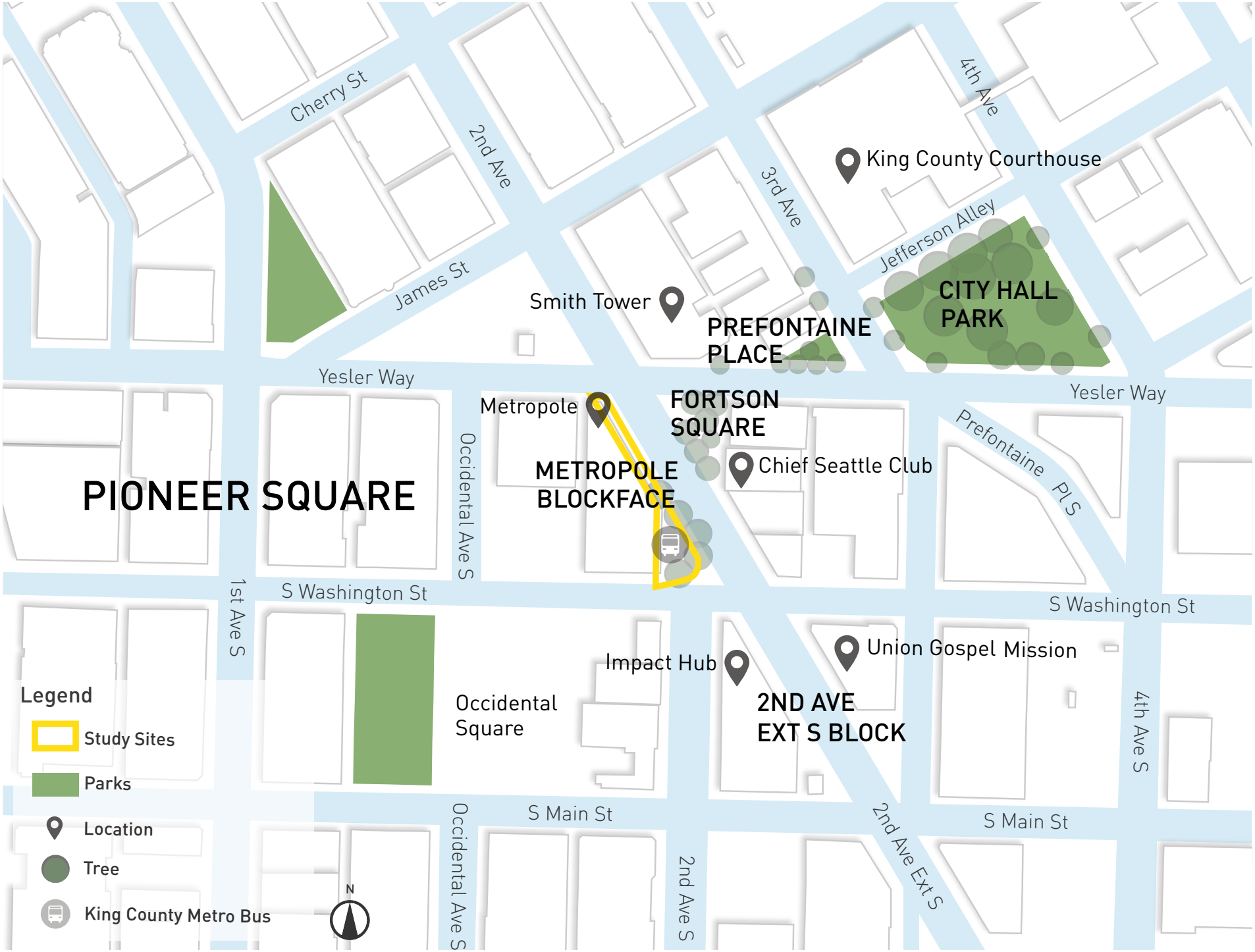
Improving design features that inhibit mobility at Fortson Square was a common suggestion from both survey respondents and focus group participants. One in five of survey respondents mentioned mobility improvements like "more accessibility," to "fix the cracks in the sidewalk," "safer crossing," and "keeping the bike lane clear." Many people mentioned the brick surface as being a challenge for accessibility in the space.

Focus group participants suggested improving the condition of the tree wells, installing an awning for people waiting for the bus along Yesler Way, and improving visibility in the plaza by adding more pedestrian-scale lights or thinning the tree canopy.

Focus group participants also highlighted the opportunity to make it a small but meaningful public space. There was stated interest in bringing in more art or interactive elements to the space.

5

METROPOLE BLOCK FACE


Cherry St
2nd Ave
4th Ave
3rd Ave
King County Courthouse
Jefferson Alley
James St
Smith Tower
PREFONTAINE PLACE
CITY HALL PARK
Yesler Way
Yesler Way
Metropole
FORTSON SQUARE
Prefontaine PL S
Chief Seattle Club
METROPOLE BLOCKFACE
PIONEER SQUARE
Occidental Ave S
1st Ave S
S Washington St
S Washington St
Union Gospel Mission
Impact Hub
Occidental Square
2ND AVE EXT S BLOCK
4th Ave S
S Main St
S Main St
2nd Ave Ext S
2nd Ave S
Occidental Ave S
Legend
Study Sites
Parks
Location
Tree
King County Metro Bus
N

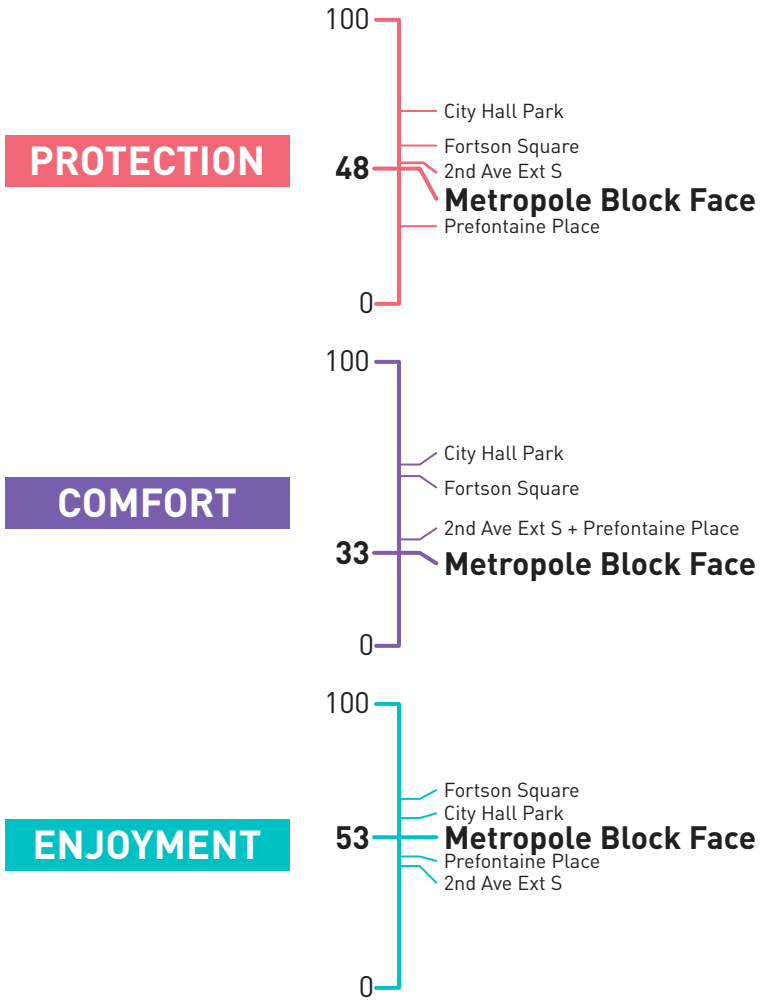
URBAN DESIGN EXISTING CONDITIONS
Metropole Block Face


DEE...
EM...
EL...
KAY...
ONE WAY

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

Metropole Block Face

Metropole Block Face Urban Design Assessment Scoring: These scores are based upon the 12 criteria of urban quality introduced in the methodology. These criteria, which consider a variety of elements within the public realm that directly impact user experience, are used to rate and assess public spaces. Individual scores can be found in Appendix C.



The lack of seating, unprotected proximity to the busy roadway, and inactive building edge inhibits users from enjoying this space, relegating it as a purely pedestrian walkway and transit stop with no other reason to stop and stay.

Strengths:

1. Good visibility (Protection against harm by others)
2. Wide, even sidewalks (Options for mobility)
3. Iconic views (Experience of aesthetic qualities and positive sensory experiences)
4. Southern exposure (Opportunities to enjoy the positive aspects of climate)

Challenges:

5. Proximity to traffic (Protection against traffic and accidents)
6. Vehicle exhaust (Protection against unpleasant sensory experiences)
7. High noise levels (Options for talking, listening, and hearing)
8. Artwork is purely aesthetic (Options to stop and stay)
9. No opportunities to enjoy views (Options for seeing)
10. No seating provided (Options for sitting)
11. Boarded up buildings (Dimensions of human scale)


2nd Ave Ext S
2
11
5
6
7
10
1
4
8
3
Feet
0
15
30
60
90
120

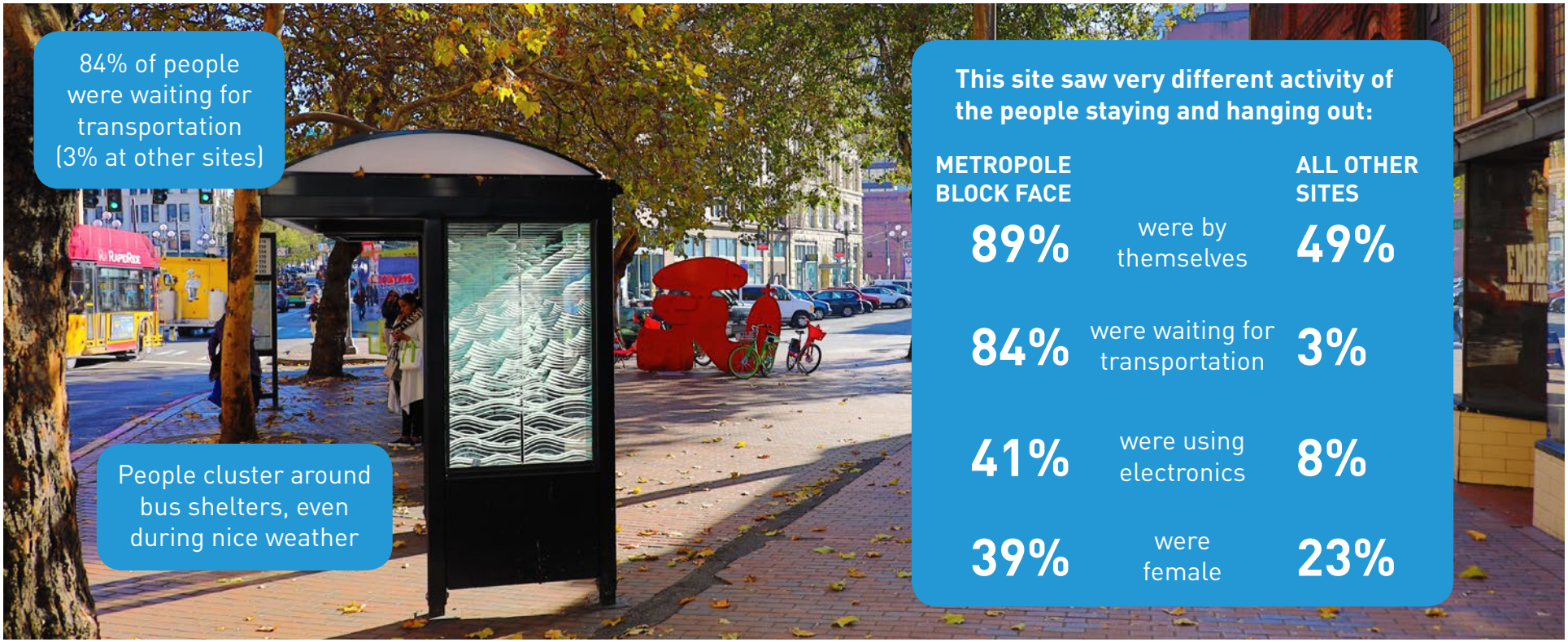
WHAT WE SAW
Metropole Block Face

1. **This site is the busiest in terms of the number of people staying due to the transit stop on the block - visits to this site were short, focused on waiting for the buses serving the site.**

The site is over capacity from a staying perspective, with only 186 square feet available to each person, which is much lower than the 250 square feet ideal. This is particularly true because people tend to cluster near the bus shelter or line up in closer proximity parallel to the curb, rather than evenly dispersing throughout the space.

2. **This site is very distinct in terms of its use and user profile, when compared to the other sites in the study area.**

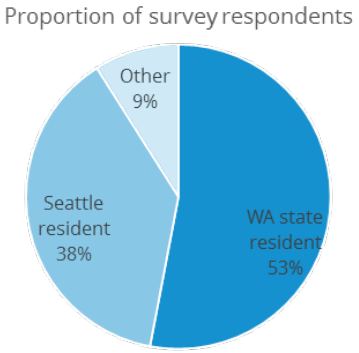
The dominant activity at the site was waiting for transportation, while also often using electronics. All other activity was rarely observed, indicating that the character of public life is dominated by transit queuing, with no clear alternative reason for using the space. Additionally, people in this space were more likely to be female, and by themselves.



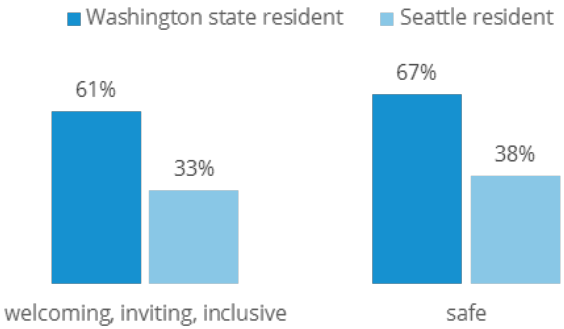
WHAT WE HEARD:
Metropole Block Face

1. Activity is dominated by commuters moving through or waiting for transit.

As this site hosts a transit stop with buses primarily heading to the Seattle suburbs, it was no surprise to find that 53% of survey respondents here were Washington state residents that live outside Seattle. This represented the highest percentage of non-Seattle residents of all the sites.



Of those residents outside Seattle, only a quarter reported that the space is enjoyable (28%). More than half of this same group also did not consider the space orderly or clean, or quiet and peaceful. Interestingly, residents from outside of Seattle were more positive than Seattle residents about how safe and welcoming the Metropole block face was.



2. Ideas for improvement.

Respondents in this space most commonly mentioned public safety improvements like more police presence and better lights at night, better sanitation efforts, and more services for the unsheltered.

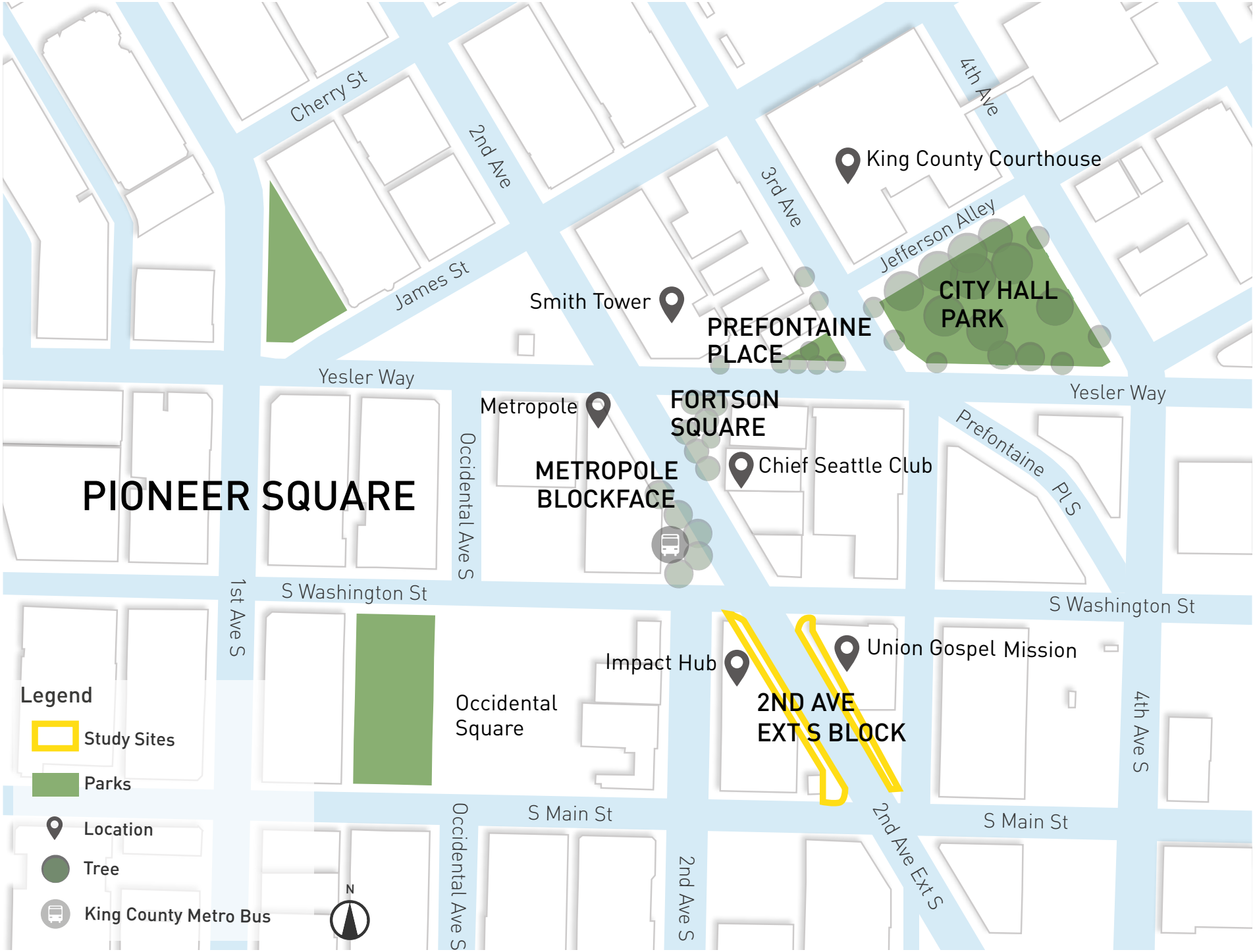
Focus group participants in general found that this block face functions well, feels safe, and there is little need to change it substantially. The trees and brick were noted as aesthetically pleasing aspects of the space. However, it lacks distinctive features:

> There's been no push to program that space for activities. It is a mini park. It doesn't have a name. It's just kind of a space people rush through.
>
> - focus group participant

Small improvements that were suggested included trimming trees to let in more light, more active engagement of the street from the businesses on the block, and bringing more interest to the bus stop. A number of focus group participants suggested adding some design elements to provide resting opportunities for people waiting for transit but not encourage longer term use, including lean rails or block seating.

6

2ND AVE EXT S BLOCK


Cherry St
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3rd Ave
King County Courthouse
Jefferson Alley
James St
Smith Tower
PREFONTAINE PLACE
CITY HALL PARK
Yesler Way
Yesler Way
Metropole
FORTSON SQUARE
Prefontaine PL S
Chief Seattle Club
METROPOLE BLOCKFACE
PIONEER SQUARE
Occidental Ave S
1st Ave S
S Washington St
S Washington St
Union Gospel Mission
Impact Hub
Occidental Square
2ND AVE EXT S BLOCK
4th Ave S
S Main St
S Main St
2nd Ave Ext S
2nd Ave S
Occidental Ave S
Legend
Study Sites
Parks
Location
Tree
King County Metro Bus
N

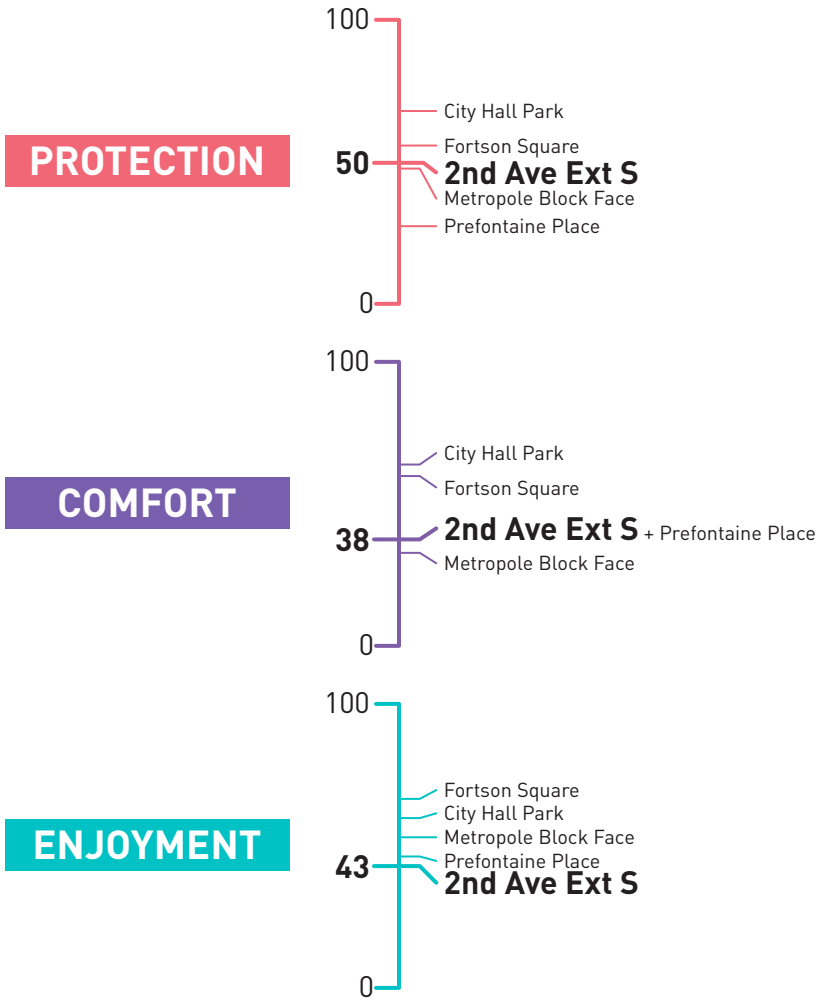
URBAN DESIGN EXISTING CONDITIONS
2ND AVE EXT S BLOCK


UNION GOSPEL
MISSION
PIONEER SQUARE
NO PARKING
NO PARKING

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

2nd Ave Ext S Block

2nd Ave Ext S Block Urban Design Assessment Scoring: These scores are based upon the 12 criteria of urban quality introduced in the methodology. These criteria, which consider a variety of elements within the public realm that directly impact user experience, are used to rate and assess public spaces. Individual scores can be found in Appendix C.



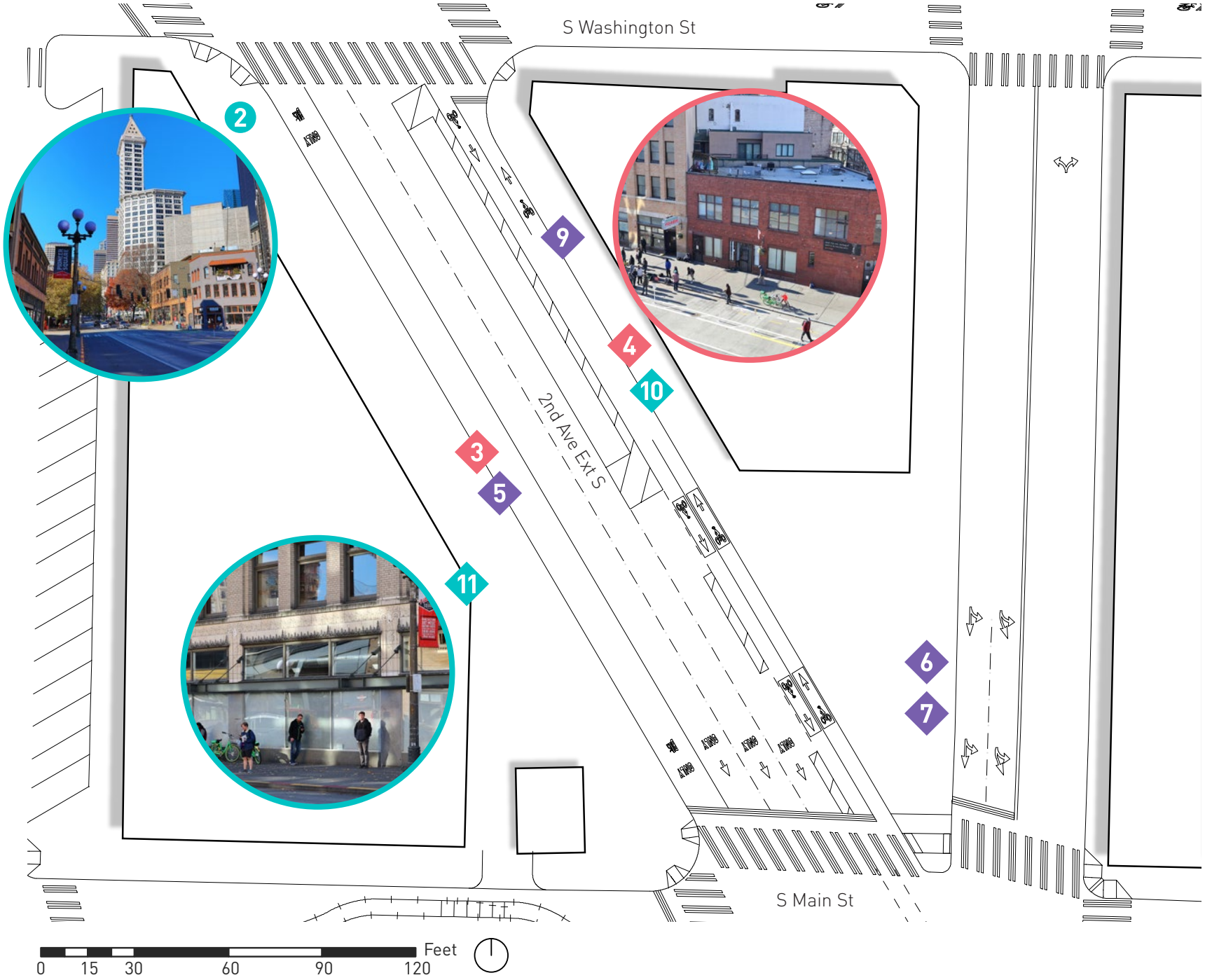
On this block, there are no trees, plantings, public seating, bike racks, or shelter, and only minimal lighting for users on the sidewalk. A protected bike lane separates the sidewalk from the three-lane street on the east side, providing a small buffer between the heavily trafficked roadway and users of this space.

Strengths:

1. Visibility (Protection against harm by others)
2. Iconic perspective of downtown skyline (Experience of aesthetic qualities and positive sensory experiences)

Challenges:

3. Proximity to traffic (Protection against traffic and accidents)
4. No shelter from sun / rain (Protection against unpleasant sensory experiences)
5. High noise levels (Options for talking, listening, and hearing)
6. No anchor in space (Options to stop and stay)
7. No seating provided (Options for sitting)
8. No opportunities to enjoy views (Options for seeing)
9. Obstructed sidewalks, users engaging in stationary behavior (Options for mobility)
10. No shade provided (Opportunities to enjoy the positive aspects of climate)
11. Inactive building edges (Dimensions of human scale)


S Washington St
2nd Ave Ext S
S Main St
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Feet

WHAT WE SAW
2nd Ave Ext S Block

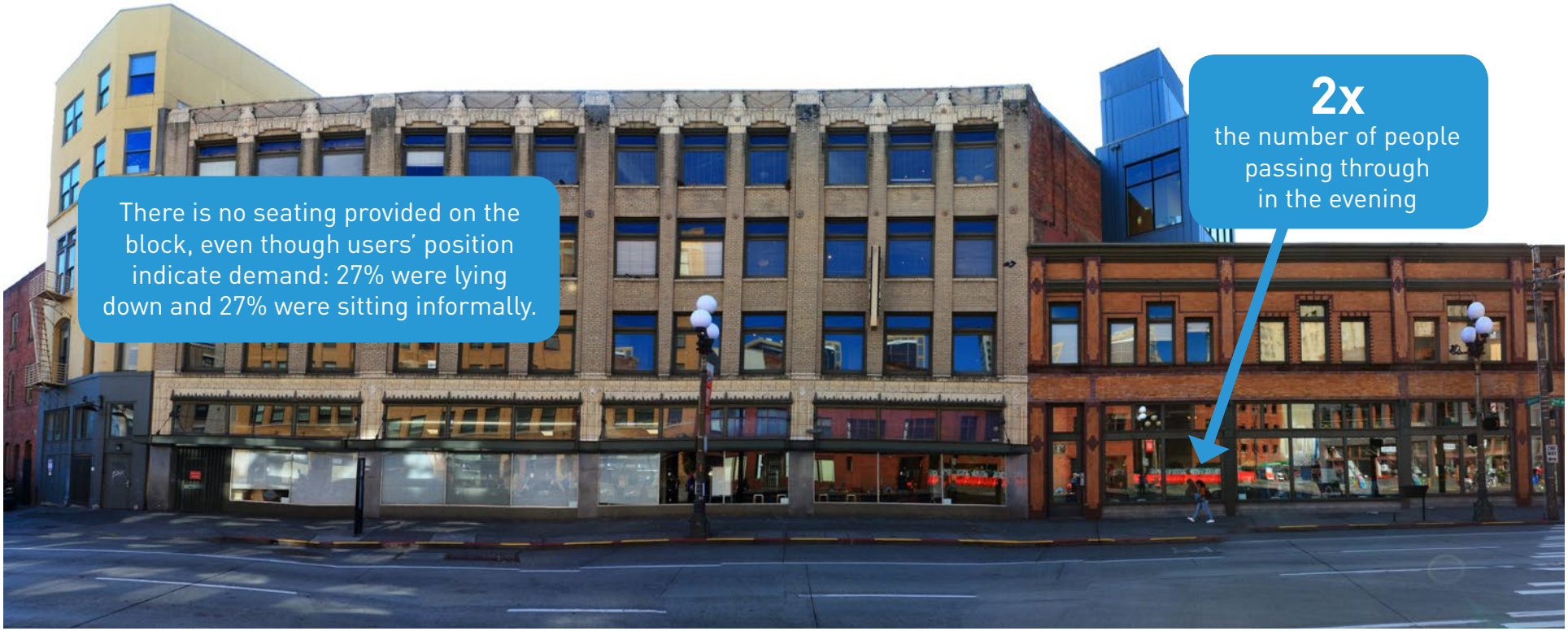
WEST BLOCK FACE

1. **The west side of the block saw the least amount of activity, with the fewest number of people staying and moving through in the entire study area.**

Although overall pedestrian volumes are low, the number of people moving through this site skyrocketed during the evening hours, likely due to commuting patterns.

2. **The staying activity observed at this site was mostly solitary and focused on rest. It was also the least social site.**

Of all of the sites, this block face had the highest proportion of passive activity (32%) and living in public (19%), yet the smallest proportion of people talking to others (27%).



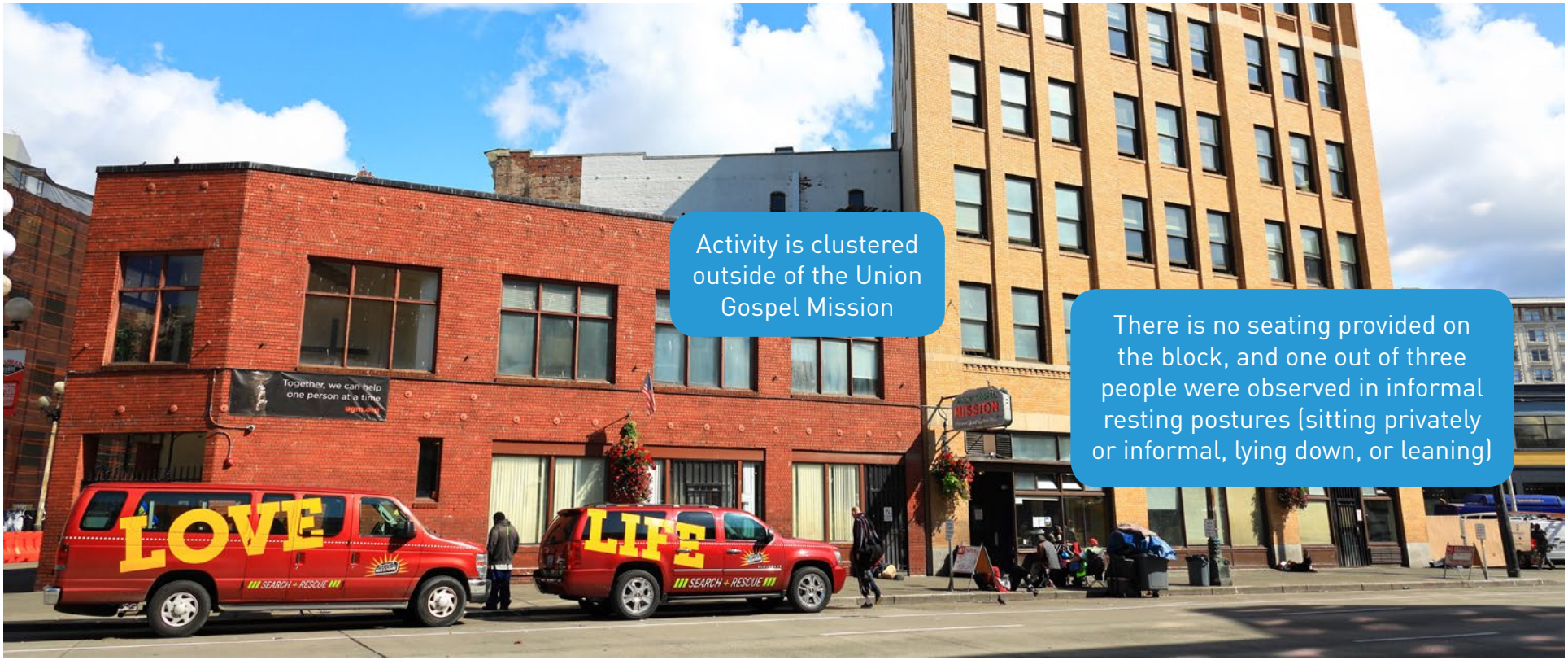
EAST BLOCK FACE

1. **This sidewalk hosts a lot of activity, despite its relative small size and lack of pedestrian-oriented infrastructure to encourage lingering.**

This site was observed to be over capacity from a staying perspective, with only 138 square feet per person, much lower than the 250 square feet ideal. Activity was clustered right outside of the Union Gospel Mission and stretched across the entire sidewalk, making it difficult for people to pass through.

2. **This site had the smallest proportion of female public space users, pointing to concerns about perceived safety and inclusivity of the space.**

Only 17% of the people passing through the space and 16% of people hanging out were observed to be women, making it the most male-prevalent site of the study area.



WHAT WE HEARD
2nd Ave Ext S Block

1. The character of public life on the block is directly impacted by nearby services.

Focus groups provided insight into who uses these spaces. Participants shared that the east side of the block is used for hanging out on the sidewalk outside of Union Gospel Mission. The sidewalk serves as the waiting room, especially for people waiting for one of the five meals the Union Gospel Mission serves every day. The west side of the block also hosts people waiting for Union Gospel Mission services, but for individuals who are seeking a space for quiet and solitude, as opposed to the east block face, which is very social and densely populated. The west block face also provides shade from the nearby building in the summer, since the east side right outside of Union Gospel Mission has no overhead protection.

2. These spaces are not pleasant for pedestrians looking to pass through.

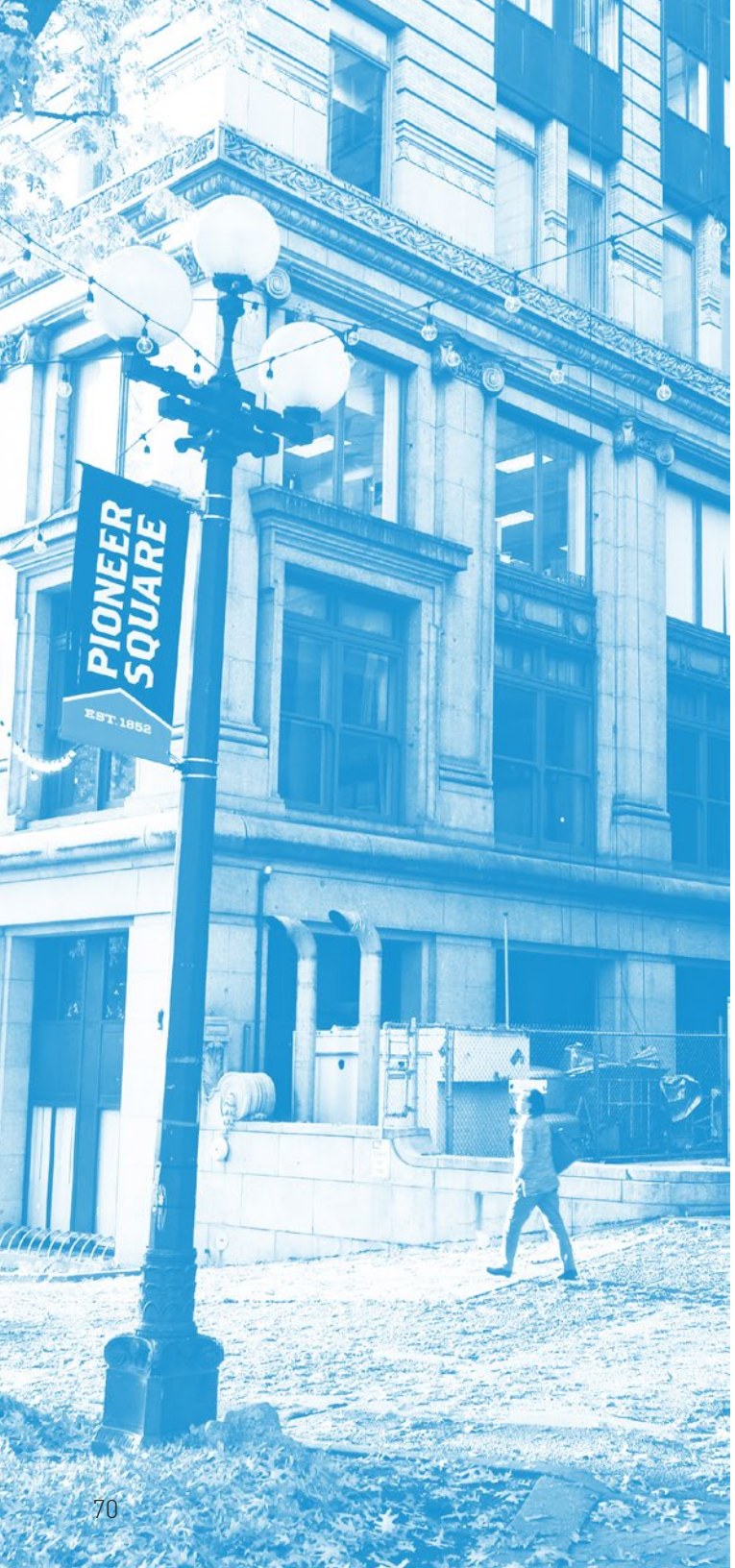
Focus group participants agreed that these spaces do not offer much to make for a pleasant experience as a pedestrian. On the east side of the block, the number of people hanging out on the street impacts the mobility on the sidewalk, and perhaps as a result, people said they noticed that this block is avoided, particularly by commuters and visitors. In fact, some participants reported walking in the street—and seeing others do the same—to avoid activity or obstructions on the sidewalk.

> It feels safest to walk in the middle of the road with the cars, rather than the sidewalk.
>
> - focus group participant

3. Ideas for improvement.

Many people suggested that continuing greenery and vegetation would help to bring character to both block faces. Street trees could serve a valuable function of also providing shade and overhead weather protection. Other ideas included additional lighting, especially pedestrian-oriented lighting in the same style as the festival lighting seen throughout Pioneer Square.

Most people—including staff from the Union Gospel Mission—were opposed to providing seating on the east side of the block so as not to encourage increased loitering. Most people were supportive of installing seating or other design options for resting on the west side of the block, particularly to serve transit riders. Participants wanted this done in a thoughtful manner, with a priority on mitigating mobility impacts on the sidewalk.



7

RECOMMENDATIONS

STUDYWIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE: PLANNING & DESIGN	FUNDING SOURCE: CONSTRUCTION	FULLY FUNDED?	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	TIMELINE
City Hall Park Develop a plan to improve circulation through the park, enhance desire lines, meet the basic needs of park users, and explore design strategies that attract people to utilize the park for a variety of uses.	Seattle Parks and Recreation funding (funded through Design Development)	Not identified	No	Seattle Parks Department	Consultants solicited and selected for Planning and Design Development scope of work – 2019 Consultant completes scope of work – 2020
Prefontaine Place Investigate design solutions that promote mobility, improve sight lines, and strengthen connection with City Hall Park to encourage utilization.	Seattle Parks and Recreation funding (funded through Design Development)	Not identified	No	Seattle Parks Department	Consultants solicited and selected for Planning and Design Development scope of work – 2019 Consultant completes scope of work – 2020
3rd Avenue Connection Study operations on 3rd Avenue such as re-channelization, intersection efficiencies, and crossing improvements to improve the connection between City Hall Park and Prefontaine Place.	Seattle Parks and Recreation funding (funded through Design Development) 3rd Ave Transit Corridor Project	3rd Ave Transit Corridor Project Implementation funds for One Center City Near Term Action Plan	No	Seattle Department of Transportation King County Metro	Consultants solicited and selected for Planning and Design Development scope of work – 2019 Consultant completes scope of work – 2020
Fortson Square Implement plaza redesign in coordination with Chief Seattle Club redevelopment.	Funded by the community and Historic South Downtown	2020 City Council funding	Yes	Seattle Department of Transportation	Construction - 2020-2021
Metropole Block Face Add streetscape elements to improve transit user experience.	Implementation funds for One Center City Near Term Action Plan	Implementation funds for One Center City Near Term Action Plan	Yes	Seattle Department of Transportation	Construction - 2020-2021
2nd Ave Ext S Add streetscape elements to improve user comfort and enjoyment, including pedestrian-scale lighting, shade opportunities, landscape buffer, and seating options.	Implementation funds for One Center City Near Term Action Plan	Implementation funds for One Center City Near Term Action Plan	Yes	Seattle Department of Transportation	Planning & construction - 2020

RECOMMENDATIONS
City Hall Park

Develop a plan to improve circulation through the park, enhance desire lines, meet the basic needs of park users, and explore design strategies that attract people to utilize the park for a variety of uses.

The immediate priority for this space is to utilize the ample space in the park area to meet the basic needs of people in Yesler Crescent, with an emphasis on finding opportunities for a comfort station and bathroom facilities. Staff should leverage the recent mobile bathroom facilities funded by the 2020 budget as a first step in evaluating the success of bathroom facilities in the area. A longer-term priority should be to develop a plan for a City Hall Park redesign that intends to bring more people to the space both to stay and linger and to move through. In particular, design strategies should attract more people to the southern side of the park, including repurposing Dilling Way to provide an anchor for this activity. The redesign effort should establish uses of the park that make it a destination and provide reasons for people to be there beyond passive enjoyment.

To attract more people to the area, the redesign should:

1. Consider addition of a central design feature to serve as an anchor to the park and contributes to a sense of place. Emphasis should be to improve the visibility of gathering areas.

2. Develop a stronger sense of edge on the southern boundary to expand and balance the use of the whole space. The adjacent portion of right-of-way (Dilling Way) should be reimagined to respond more directly to the assets of City Hall Park beyond to provide for parking. This could be a built form solution that invests directly in stewardship opportunities, such as makerspaces, play areas, or performance spaces. This may also be an appropriate location for a comfort station and bathroom facilities.

3. Identify appropriate locations for seating areas, given the proposed designs of surrounding public spaces (Prefontaine Place, 3rd Avenue Connection, and Fortson Square).

4. Identify desire lines through and past the park to inform reconfiguration of internal circulation patterns.

5. Improve comfort and safety of Jefferson Alley for pedestrian use by considering the following interventions: remove fencing between alley and park; improve surface treatment; uplight the King County Courthouse façade; add art to the Sound Transit vent stack.

6. Assess the state of trees and vegetation in the park and strike a balance between keeping the space characteristically green and maintaining light and sight lines for users of the space. Thin the tree canopy where appropriate.

7. Restore the historic entry to King County Courthouse to encourage additional use of City Hall Park.

RECOMMENDATIONS

City Hall Park

RECOMMENDATIONS
Prefontaine Place

Investigate design solutions that promote mobility, improve sight lines, and strengthen connection with City Hall Park to encourage utilization.

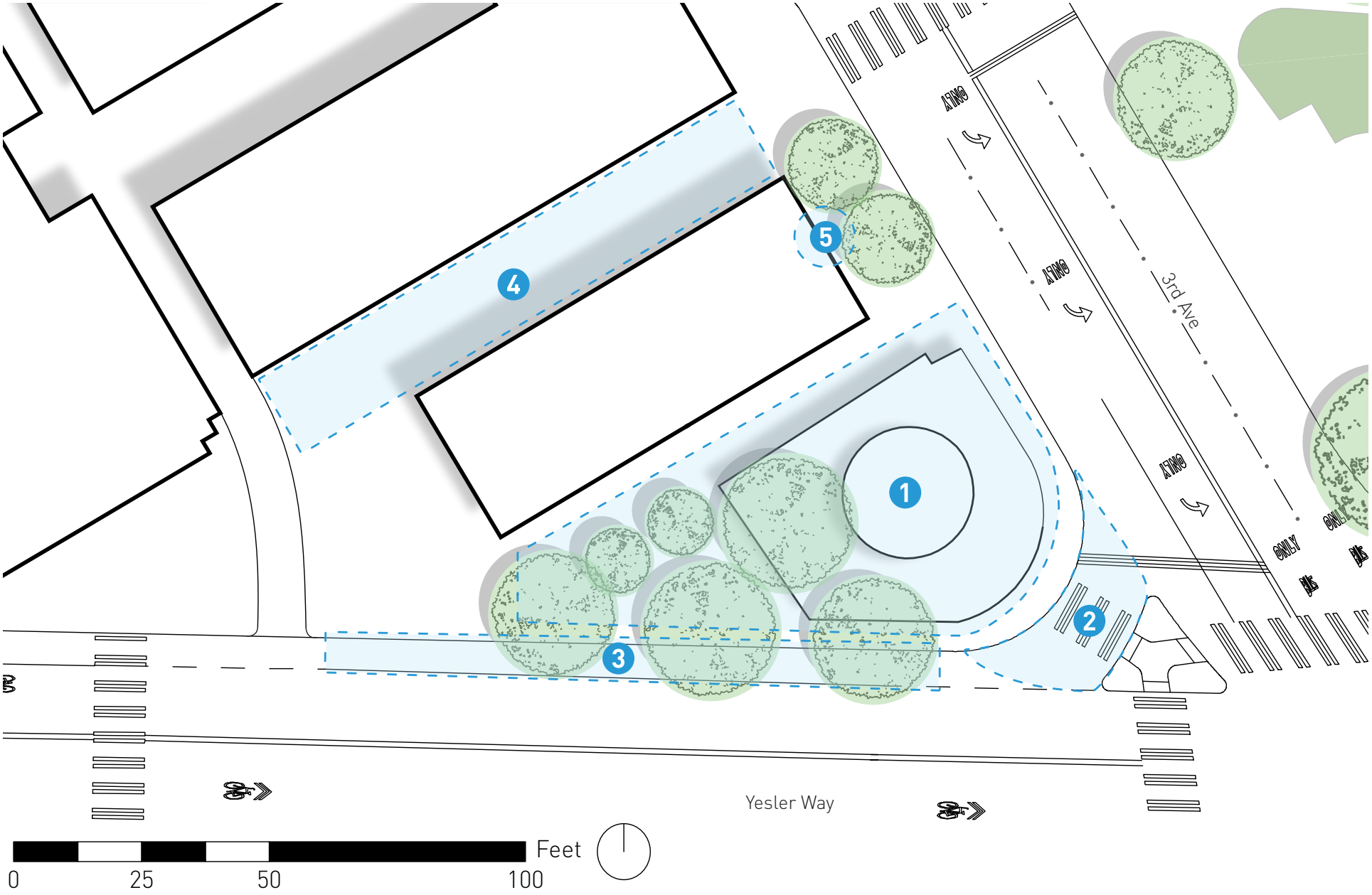
Conduct a planning, schematic, and design development process to improve Prefontaine Place by addressing space constraints that inhibit mobility and utilization of this small public space. Design solutions should better meet the demands traveling to and from the transit tunnel. The design should improve site visibility, utilizing principles of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). The design process will analyze opportunities for gathering spaces and how they should be designed and furnished to be meaningful and useful to users of the space.

Ideas to explore include:

1. Develop alternative design of the plaza to potentially restore, remove, or repurpose elements of Prefontaine Fountain. Add pedestrian infrastructure to the plaza to support movement through the space, including a wayfinding kiosk, or allée design to encourage movement and enhance pedestrian experience.
2. Remove slip lane on 3rd Ave to improve pedestrian safety and provide a small but meaningful increase in space.
3. Widen sidewalk into curb space along Yesler Way to extend pedestrian realm and improve current conditions associated with street parking.
4. Improve the conditions of the pedestrian walkway on the north side of the site, to make it more inviting and aesthetically pleasing, including possible festival lighting, seating, public art, and micro-retail opportunities.
5. Re-orient the Sound Transit tunnel entrance toward 3rd Avenue and explore ways to minimize at-grade infrastructure to open plaza space in order to improve circulation and pedestrian experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Prefontaine Place



RECOMMENDATIONS
3rd Ave Connection

Study operations on 3rd Avenue such as re-channelization, intersection efficiencies, and crossing improvements to improve the connection between City Hall Park and Prefontaine Place.

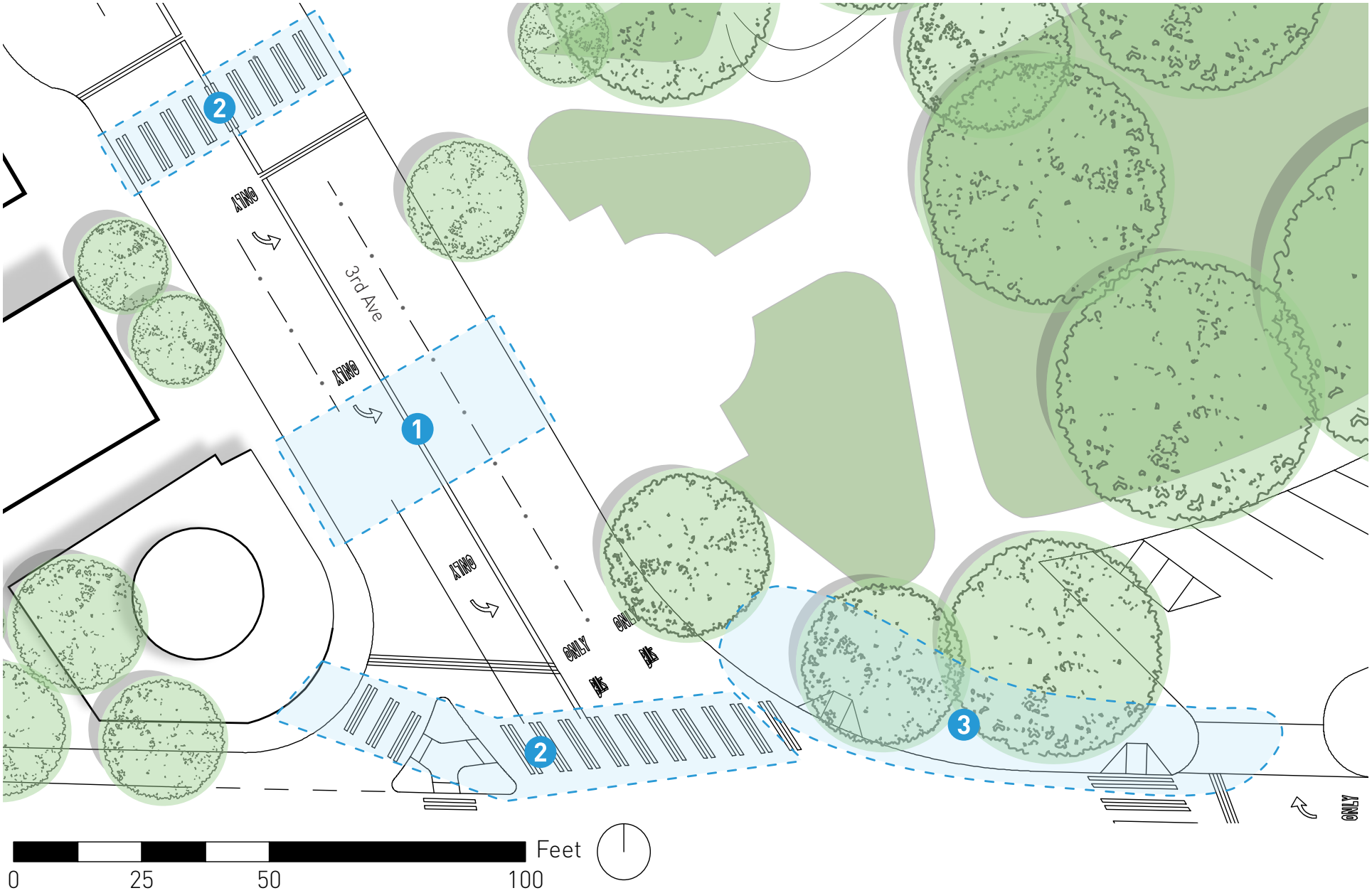
Explore potential changes to 3rd Avenue between Yesler Way and Jefferson Street to better facilitate pedestrian movement between City Hall Park and Prefontaine Place to connect the two spaces and encourage use of City Hall Park.

Ideas to explore include:

1. Conduct channelization study to determine if the roadway can be reduced and not adversely impact King County Metro and Sound Transit operations.
2. Optimize intersection for pedestrians. Explore crosswalk improvements such as: expanded/widened crossing zone at Yesler Way and/or raised table between Yesler Way and Jefferson Alley. Identify appropriate crosswalk placement relative to City Hall Park and Prefontaine redesigns.
3. Improve sidewalk condition along Yesler Way, particularly on the south end of City Hall Park.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3rd Ave Connection



RECOMMENDATIONS
Fortson Square + Metropole Block Face

Fortson Square

Implement plaza redesign in coordination with Chief Seattle Club redevelopment.

The Chief Seattle redevelopment presents a unique opportunity for a plaza redesign that is complementary to the new building. The design should improve mobility and access through the site to meet the needs of people who pass through the space, particularly to/from the mid-block crosswalk on Yesler Way and the Sound Transit tunnel entrance. The design should also emphasize features that support rest and respite, as well as positive activation of the space that encourages social activity and ongoing stewardship, like café seating.

The plaza redesign process is underway as of 2019. There are additional elements to explore outside of the scope of that design process, including:

- Expand Fortson Square footprint by eliminating the parking and turn lane.
- Add continuous landscaping along 2nd Ave Ext S. to discourage mid-block pedestrian crossings.

Metropole Block Face

Add streetscape elements to improve transit user experience.

The Metropole Block Face and stands to benefit from enhancements to the streetscape that improve user experience from the perspective of comfort and enjoyment.

Ideas to explore include:

- Add street trees for shade and a green barrier between sidewalk and road for safety and comfort.
- Add intriguing seating for transit users that can accommodate individuals of all ages; consider seating that is designed to encourage social behavior at the bus stops.
- Consider new shelter and bus stop that incorporate lighting and visibility improvements.
- Improve pedestrian-scale lighting along the block faces to improve visibility.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Fortson Square + Metropole Block Face

RECOMMENDATIONS
2nd Ave Ext S Block Faces

Add streetscape elements to improve user comfort and enjoyment, including pedestrian-scale lighting, shade opportunities, green barriers, and seating options.

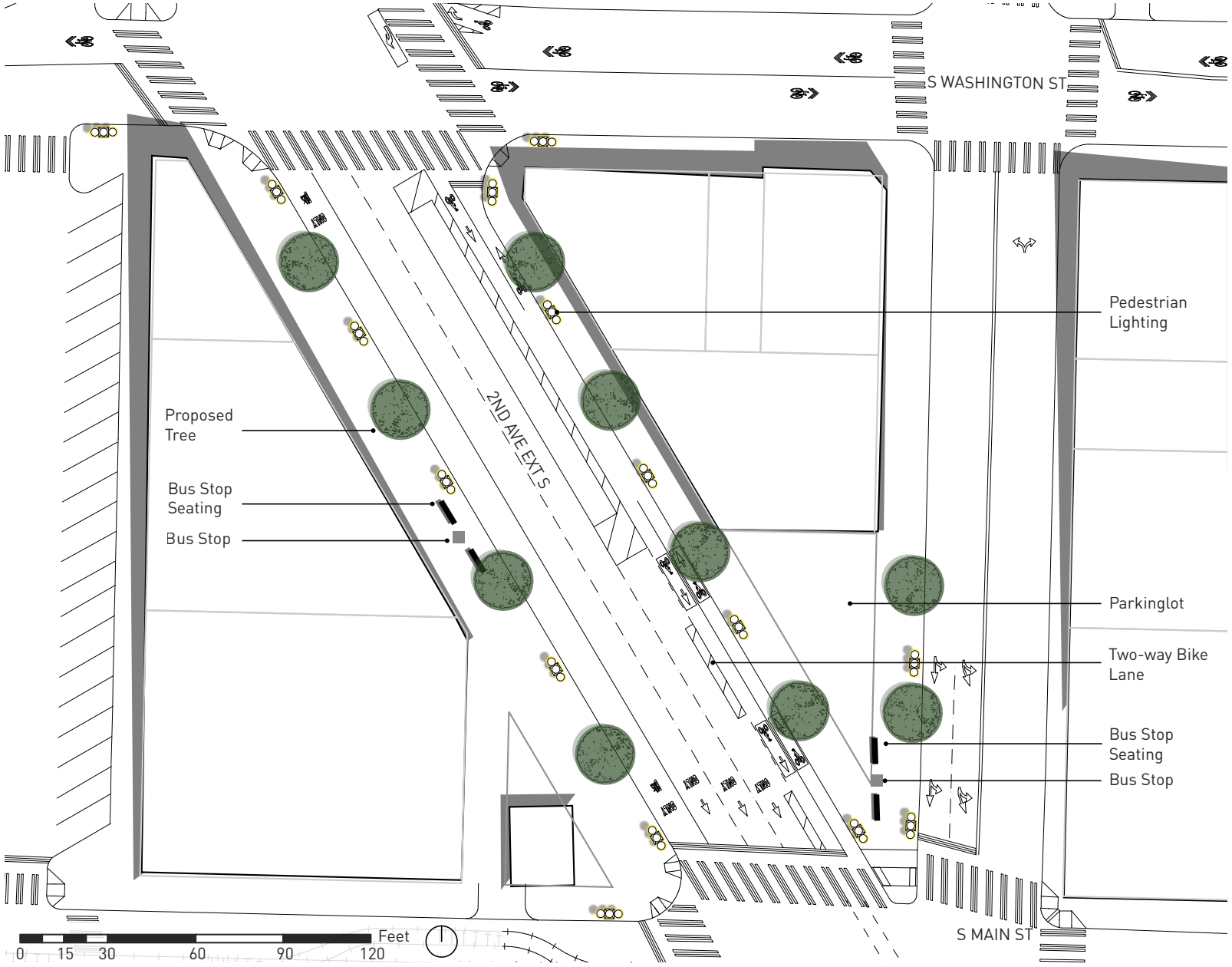
The two block faces between S Main St and S Washington St stand to benefit from enhancements to the streetscape that improve user experience from the perspective of comfort and enjoyment. Users of these spaces either pass through during transit, or stay for long periods of time while waiting for services. Both user groups could benefit from additional lighting, landscaping, and seating.

Ideas to explore include:

- Add street trees for shade and a green barrier between sidewalk and road for safety and comfort.
- Add intriguing seating for transit users that can accommodate individuals of all ages; consider seating that is designed to encourage social behavior at the bus stops.
- Consider new shelter and bus stop that incorporate lighting and visibility improvements.
- Improve pedestrian-scale lighting along the block faces to improve visibility.
- Add additional art to bring visual interest and human dimension to the space.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2nd Ave Ext S Block Faces



8

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Public Life Observation Forms: Stationary Activity and Pedestrian Counts

pioneer square public life study

PEOPLE STAYING STILL

Site number:_____ Surveyor: _____

Date: _____ Start time: _____

Day of week:_____

PAGE ___ OF ___

				age						posture								obj	activities																	
number	group size	race/ethnicity*	gender*	0-4 years	5-14 years	15-24 years	25-44 years	45-64 years	65+ years	standing	leaning	sitting - public (bench)	sitting - public (seat wall)	sitting - public (chair)	sitting - commercial	sitting - private	sitting - informal	lying down	mobility assist device	talking to others	smoking	using electronics	eating/drinking	passive recreation	active recreation	cultural activity	commercial - formal	commercial - informal	waiting for transport	civic work	disruptive	living in public	soliciting
1																																		
2																																		
3																																		
4																																		
5																																		
6																																		
7																																		
8																																		
9																																		
10																																		
11																																		
12																																		
13																																		
14																																		
15																																		
16																																		
17																																		
18																																		
19																																		
20																																		

Notes:

***KEY**

race/ethnicity
- **W** = white
- **B** = black
- **A** = asian
- **L** = latino/hispanic
- **N** = native american
- **P** = pacific islander/native hawaiian
- **M** = multiple
- **U** = unsure

gender
- **M** = male
- **F** = female
- **U** = unsure

Seattle Department of Transportation

pioneer square public life study

PEOPLE MOVING THROUGH

Site number: _____

Date: _____

Day of week: _____

Surveyor: _____

Seattle Department of Transportation

Count 1.

10 minutes. Tally the number of pedestrians, split by age. Total column should be number of people per age category.

Start time: _____

AGE	TALLY	TOTAL
<5 years old		
5-14 years old		
15-24 years old		
25-44 years old		
45-64 years old		
65+ years old		
	TOTAL:	

pioneer square public life study

PEOPLE MOVING THROUGH

Site number: _____

Date: _____

Day of week: _____

Surveyor: _____

Seattle Department of Transportation

Count 2.

10 minutes. Tally the number of pedestrians, split by gender and mobility status. If someone uses a mobility assistance device (e.g., wheelchair, walker, cane), mark them in the second row; everyone else should be marked in the "not mobility assisted" row.

Start time: _____

	MALE	FEMALE	UNSURE	SUB-TOTALS
Not mobility assisted				
Mobility assisted				
SUB-TOTALS				TOTAL

APPENDIX B
Urban Design Assessment – Data Collection Form

PROTECTION

Protection against traffic

1. Are there physical or plant barriers between the road and the sidewalk?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

2. Does the pedestrian space feel too close to the travelway? (Measure the sidewalk with any free measuring application.)
_____

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

Protection against crime

3. Is there clear visibility at all points?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

4. What is the average level of light for the site? (Use a Lux meter measurer to gauge Lux. One lux is one lumen per square meter-levels.) _____

5. What is the quality of lighting?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

Protection against sensory experiences

6. Is there weather protection?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

OVERALL SECTION SCORE FOR PROTECTION: _____

COMFORT

Opportunities to walk/cycle

7. Is the pedestrian clear zone straight and clear?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

8. Are there obstructions in the sidewalk?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

Opportunities to stop and stay

9. Does the space have areas to spend time/sit and rest?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

10. Are the seats movable or stationary?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

11. Does the seating facilitate social behavior?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

Opportunities to sit

12. What is the seating capacity of public _____ and private/commercial seating _____?

13. How clean and well maintained are the seating options?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

Opportunities to see

14. Are the views obstructed?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

15. Are there areas to perch?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

Opportunities to talk and listen

16. Does the noise level distract from your experience?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

Opportunities for play and exercise

17. Does the space have areas to be active/play?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

18. Is there enough variety in these opportunities?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

OVERALL SECTION SCORE FOR COMFORT: _____

ENJOYMENT

Dimensioned at human scale

19. Is the scale of buildings human scale? (Number of floors/size of buildings for the block? _____)

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

20. How many entrances are on the block? _____

Opportunities to enjoy climate

21. Does the space have areas that provide shade/shelter?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

22. Does the space provide opportunities to enjoy the sun?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

Aesthetic qualities

23. Does the block have a variety in building facades?

1 2 3 4 5
Bad Good

24. How many different facades are in one block? _____

25. If park or plaza, describe visual intrigue throughout the space?

OVERALL SECTION SCORE FOR ENJOYMENT: _____

APPENDIX C
Urban Design Assessment – Site Scores

SUMMARY

		City Hall Park	Prefontaine Place	Fortson Square	Metropole Block Face	2nd Ave Ext S Block: East Side	2nd Ave Ext S Block: West Side
Total Score	TOTAL POINTS	58	31	51	35	35	37
	POINTS POSSIBLE	90	85	85	85	85	85
	PERCENT RECEIVED	64%	36%	60%	41%	41%	44%
Protection	TOTAL POINTS	17	7	14	12	13	12
	POINTS POSSIBLE	25	25	25	25	25	25
	PERCENT RECEIVED	68%	28%	56%	48%	52%	48%
Comfort	TOTAL POINTS	32	17	27	15	15	19
	POINTS POSSIBLE	50	45	45	45	45	45
	PERCENT RECEIVED	64%	38%	60%	33%	33%	42%
Enjoyment	TOTAL POINTS	9	7	10	8	7	6
	POINTS POSSIBLE	15	15	15	15	15	15
	PERCENT RECEIVED	60%	47%	67%	53%	47%	40%

INDIVIDUAL SCORES

	City Hall Park	Prefontaine Place	Fortson Square	Metropole Block Face	2nd Ave Ext S Block: East Side	2nd Ave Ext S Block: West Side
Protection against traffic and accidents - physical barriers	3	1	3	2	2	1
Protection against traffic and accidents - distance between pedestrian and road	3	2	4	3	3	3
Protection against harm by others - clear visibility	4	1	3	3	4	4
Protection against harm by others - good lighting	4	2	2	2	3	3
Protection against unpleasant sensory experience	3	1	2	2	1	1
Opportunities to walk/cycle - straight sidewalks and bike lanes	3	2	5	4	4	4
Opportunities to walk/cycle - clear from obstructions	3	3	5	2	1	1
Options to stop and stay - features to stay and lean on	4	2	2	1	1	2
Options to stop and stay - features that facilitate social behavior	3	2	2	2	1	2
Options for sitting - good, prmary clean seating	2	1	1	0	0	1
Options for sitting - moveable and stationary options	3	0	0	0	0	2
Opportunities to see - unobstructed views	4	1	4	3	3	4
Opportunities to see - areas to perch	3	3	4	1	1	1
Opportunities to talk and listen	3	3	4	2	4	2
Options for play, exercise, and activities	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dimensions of human scale	2	2	4	3	3	2
Opportunities to enjoy the postive aspects of climate	4	3	2	2	2	2
Experience of aesthetic qualities	3	2	4	3	2	2

APPENDIX D
Intercept Survey Form

PIONEER SQUARE PUBLIC SPACES SURVEY

Seattle Department of Transportation

The City of Seattle is currently collecting feedback on some of the public spaces in Pioneer Square. We'd like to understand how you use these spaces and how they can be improved. Thanks for your time!

1. Why are you in Pioneer Square today? (select all that apply)

- ☐ I live in the neighborhood
- ☐ I work in the neighborhood
- ☐ I visit services in the neighborhood
- ☐ Shopping
- ☐ Dining
- ☐ Entertainment (bar, music, sports, art)
- ☐ Sightseeing
- ☐ Hanging out
- ☐ On my way somewhere else
- ☐ Other: _____

2. How often do you visit this plaza/park/street?

- ☐ Multiple times per week
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Several times per year
- ☐ This is my first time

3. Does this plaza/park/street feel...

...safe?	yes / no / unsure
...welcoming, inviting, and inclusive to all?	yes / no / unsure
...like a place you'd like to return to?	yes / no / unsure

4. Do you consider this park/plaza/street to be...

...busy and dynamic?	yes / no / unsure
...orderly and clean?	yes / no / unsure
...quiet and peaceful?	yes / no / unsure
...stressful and unpleasant?	yes / no / unsure
...enjoyable?	yes / no / unsure

Personal information entered on this form is subject to the Washington Public Records Act and may be subject to disclosure to a third-party requestor. At the City of Seattle, we are committed to protecting your privacy, and will ensure that any disclosures are done according to law.

5. What would you like from public spaces nearby? A place to... (select all that apply)

- ☐ Sit and rest
- ☐ Hang out with friends
- ☐ Enjoy public art
- ☐ Work up a sweat
- ☐ Use the restroom
- ☐ Take my kid to play
- ☐ Take my dog to exercise
- ☐ Buy and eat a meal
- ☐ Other: _____

6. Do you have ideas for improving this plaza/park/street?

7. Please tell us a little bit about yourself:

I am a...

- ☐ Pioneer Square resident
- ☐ Seattle resident
- ☐ Washington State resident
- ☐ Tourist / visitor
- ☐ Other:_____

Gender identity:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe: _____
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Age: ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-44 ☐ 45-64 ☐ 65+

Race/Ethnicity (select all that apply):

- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Latino/a or Hispanic
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other:_____

FOR STAFF USE: Date:
Location: City Hall Park Prefontaine Place Fortson Square Barney's UGM Impact Hub

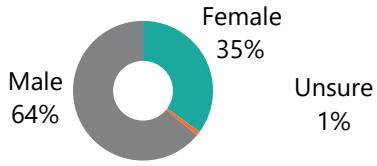
APPENDIX E
Public Life Observational Data

All Sites

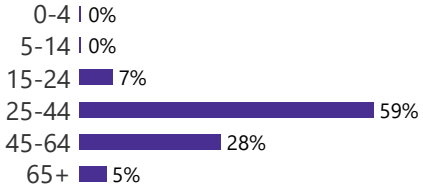
People Moving

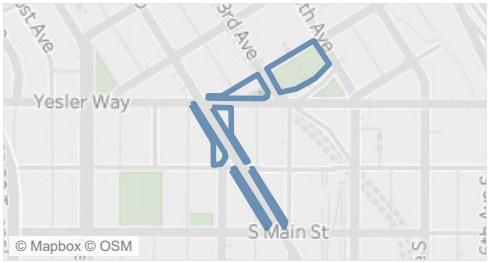
Total Observed 17,789 **Avg/20 Minutes** 106

Gender



Age

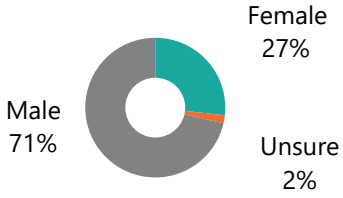




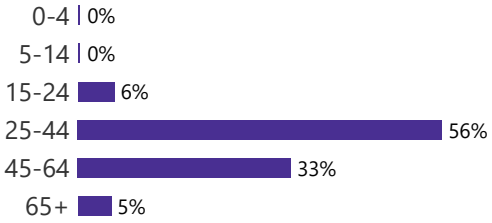
People Staying

Total Observed 4,014 **Avg/20 Minutes** 24

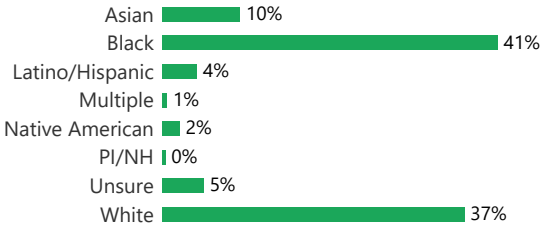
Gender



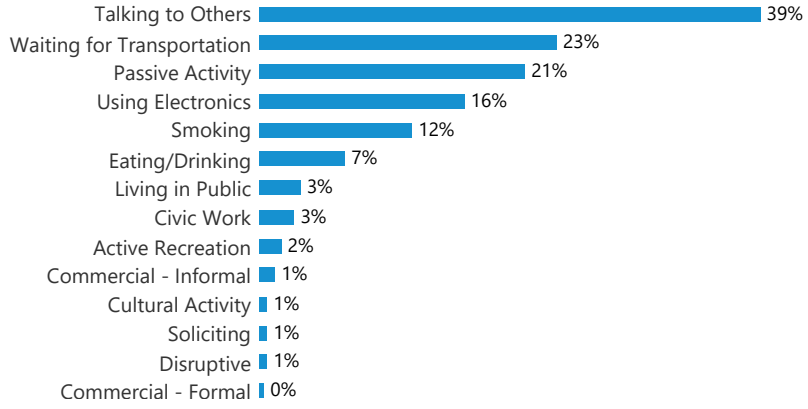
Age



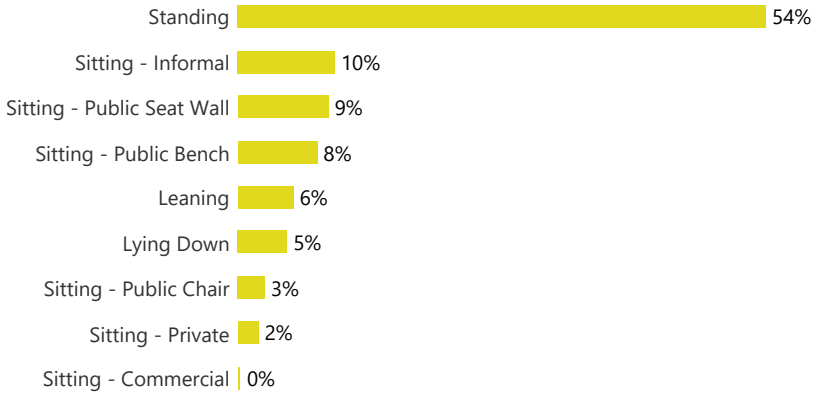
Race



Activities



Postures

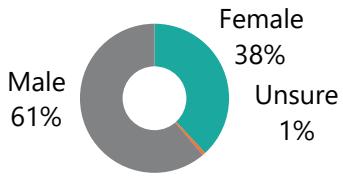


City Hall Park

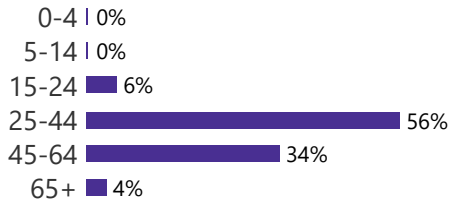
People Moving

Total Observed 2,236 **Avg/20 Minutes** 65

Gender



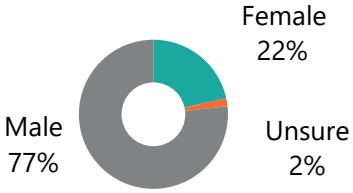
Age



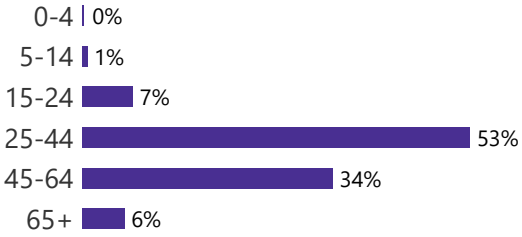
People Staying

Total Observed 1,101 **Avg/20 Minutes** 23

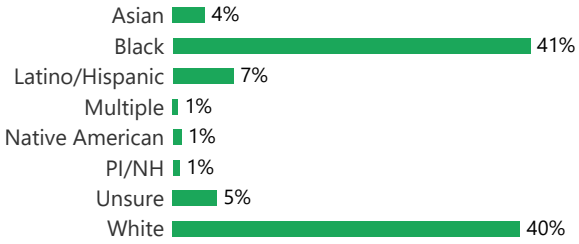
Gender



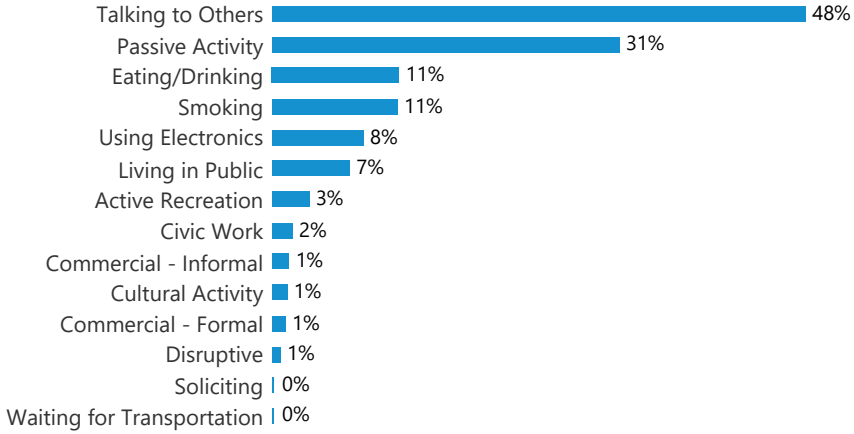
Age



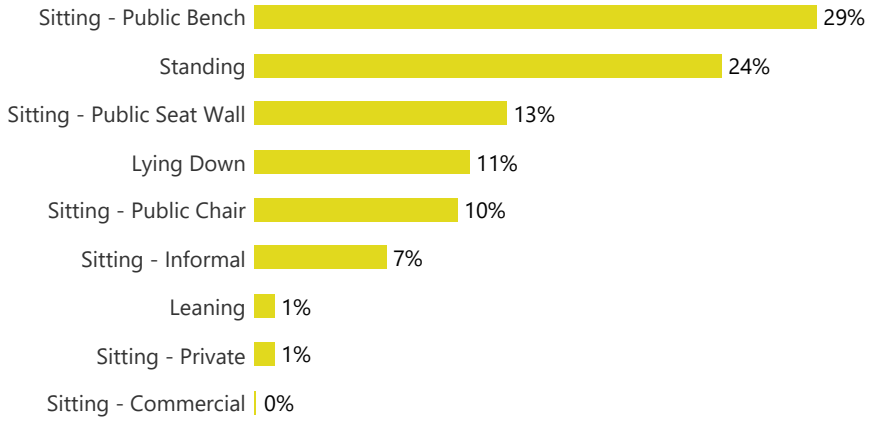
Race



Activities



Postures

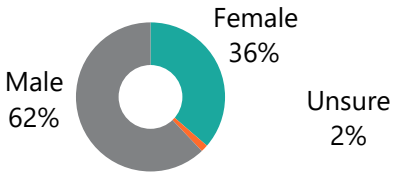


Prefontaine Place

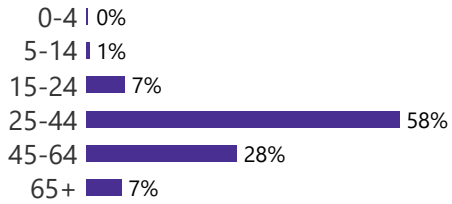
People Moving

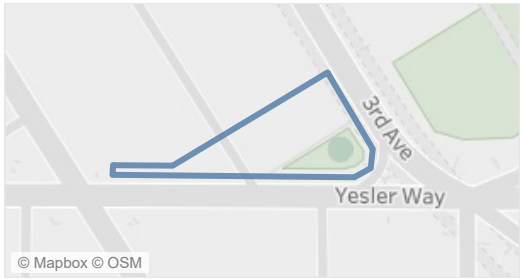
Total Observed 5,847 **Avg/20 Minutes** 167

Gender



Age

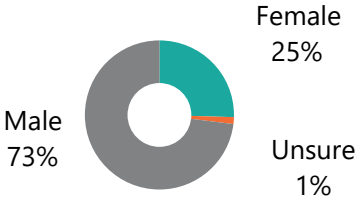




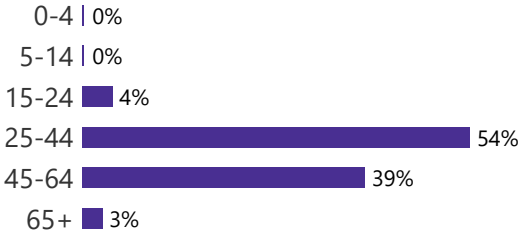
People Staying

Total Observed 946 **Avg/20 Minutes** 21

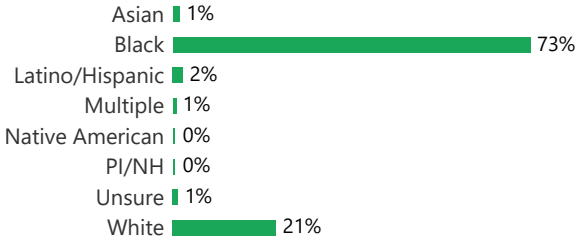
Gender



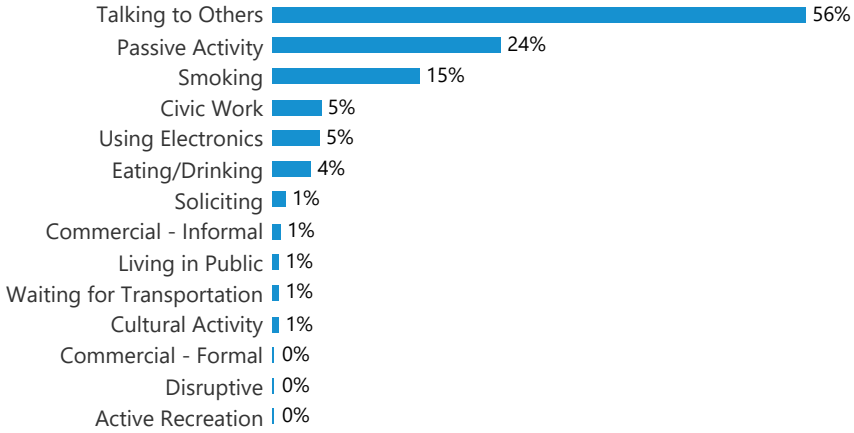
Age



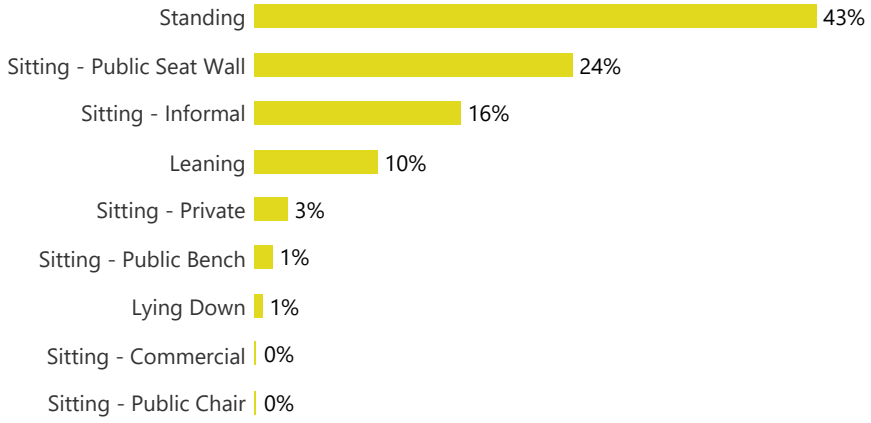
Race



Activities



Postures

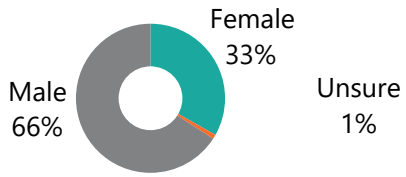


Fortson Square

People Moving

Total Observed 4,160 **Avg/20 Minutes** 81

Gender



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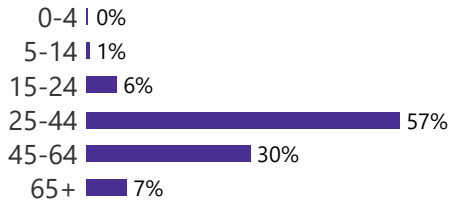
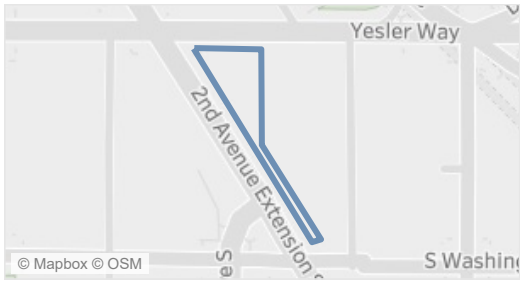
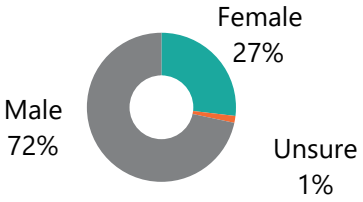




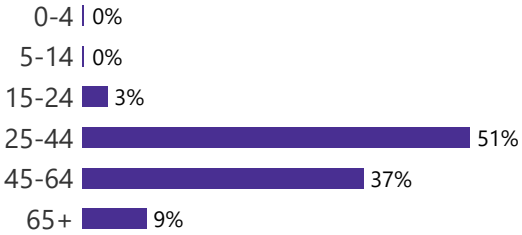
People Staying

Total Observed 402 **Avg/20 Minutes** 17

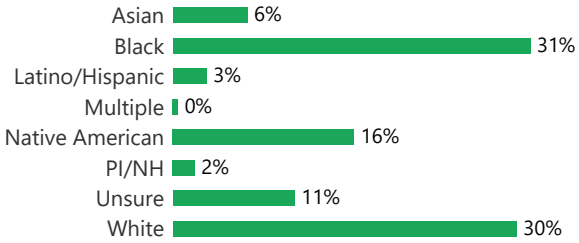
Gender



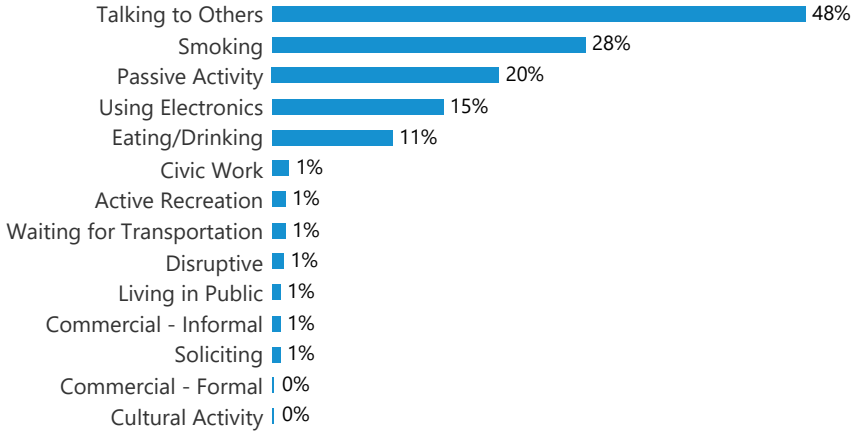
Age



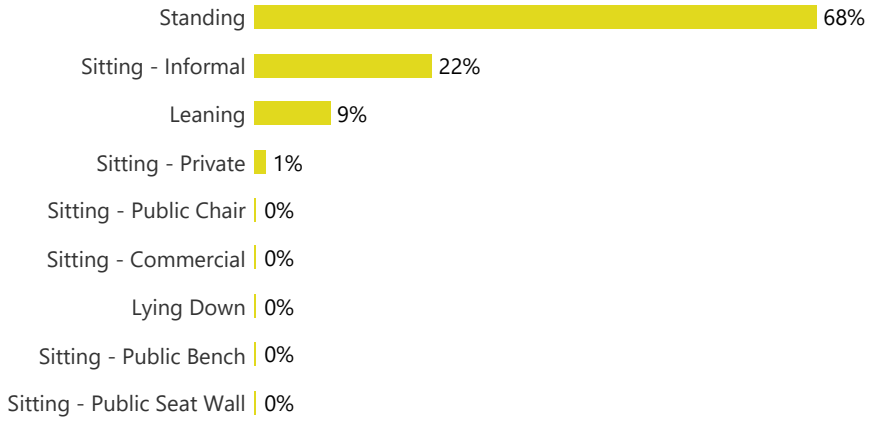
Race



Activities



Postures

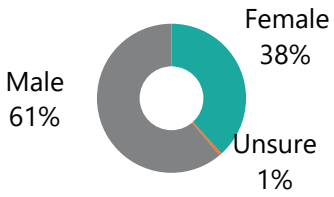


2nd Ave Ext S between Yesler St and S Washington St - W

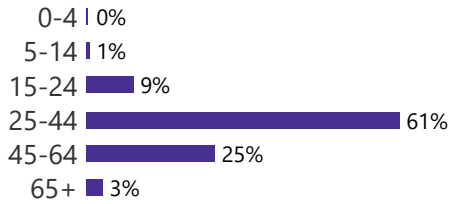
People Moving

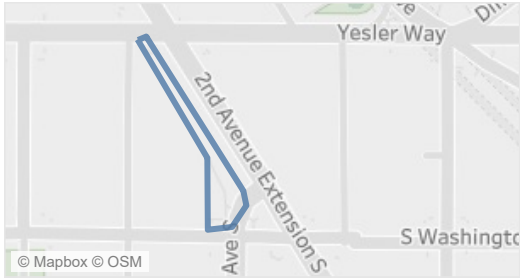
Total Observed 3,706 **Avg/20 Minutes** 158

Gender



Age

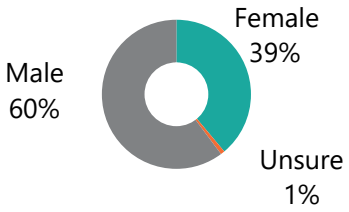




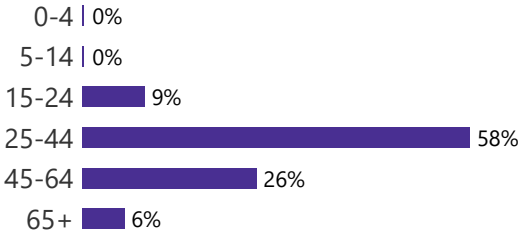
People Staying

Total Observed 1,020 **Avg/20 Minutes** 43

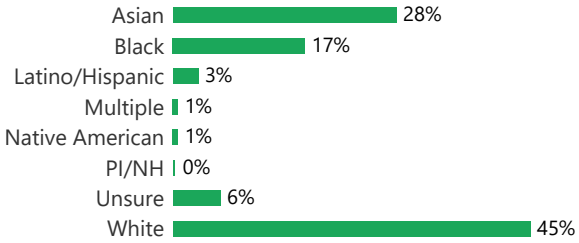
Gender



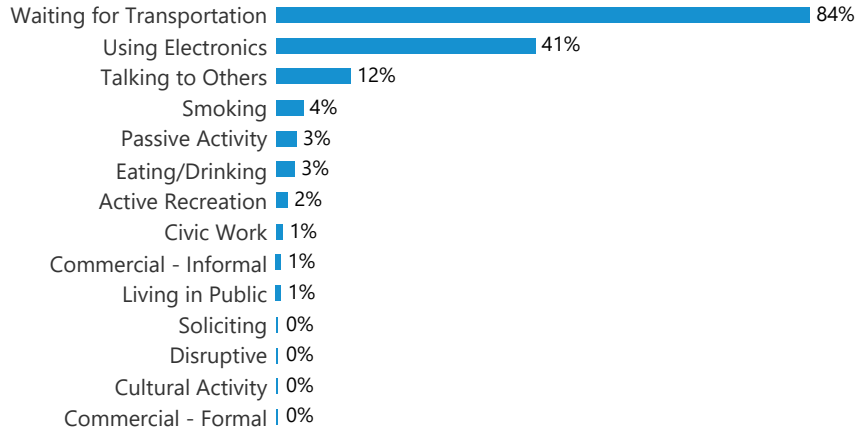
Age



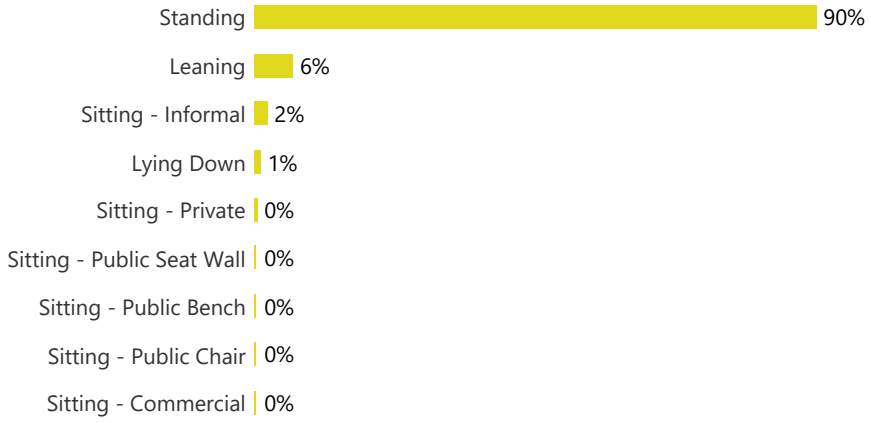
Race



Activities



Postures



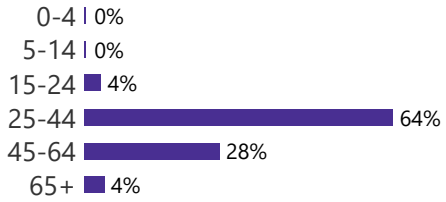
2nd Ave Ext S between S Washington St and S Main St - E

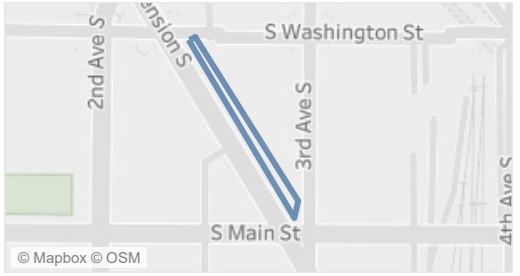
People Moving

Total Observed 1,028 **Avg/20 Minutes** 86

Gender

Age

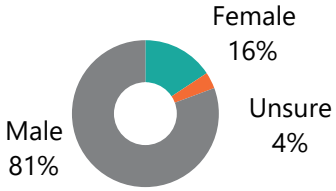




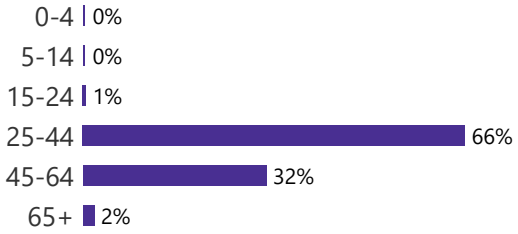
People Staying

Total Observed 414 **Avg/20 Minutes** 35

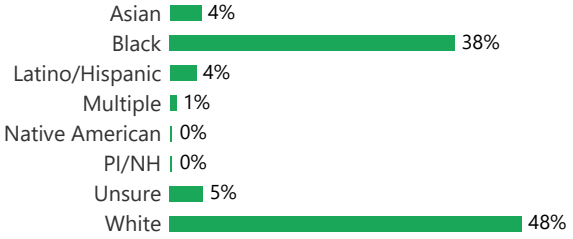
Gender



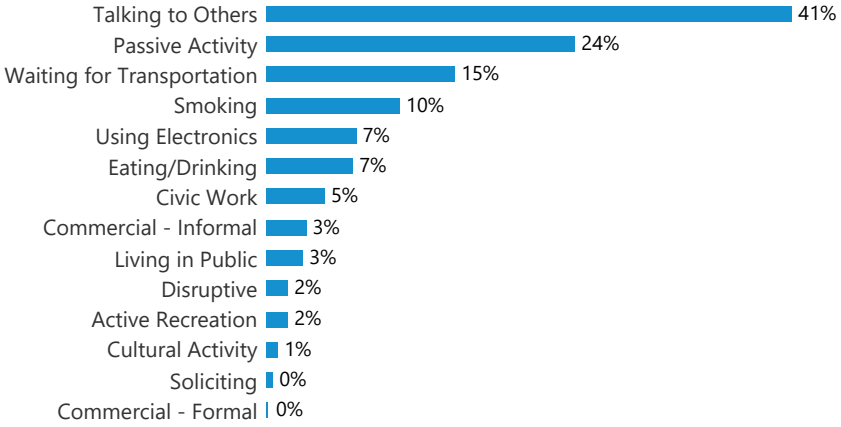
Age



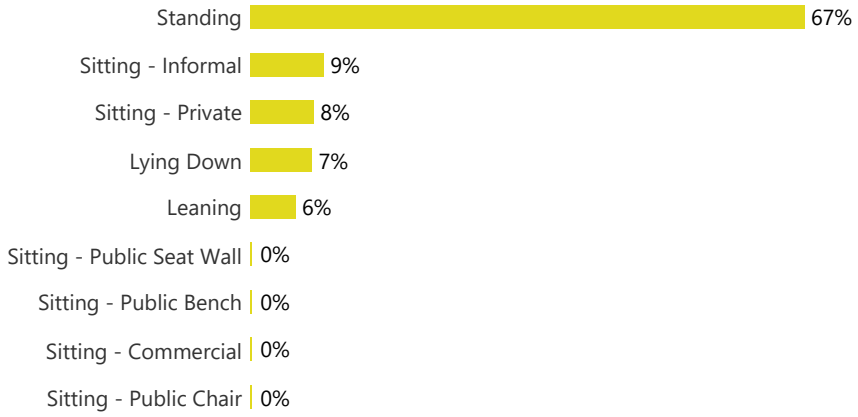
Race



Activities



Postures

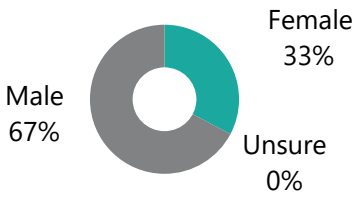


2nd Ave Ext S between S Washington St and S Main St - W

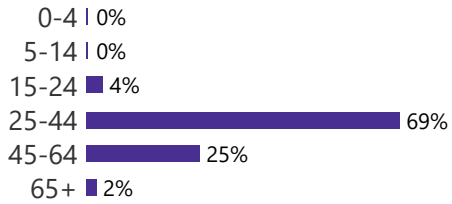
People Moving

Total Observed 812 **Avg/20 Minutes** 68

Gender



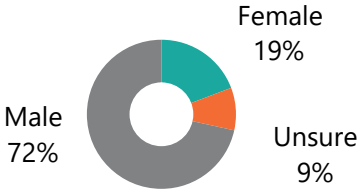
Age



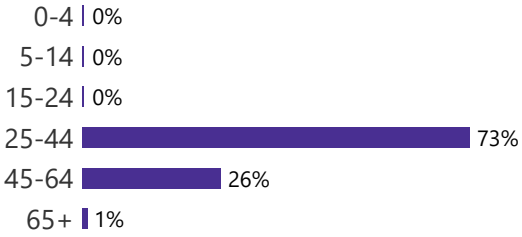
People Staying

Total Observed 131 **Avg/20 Minutes** 11

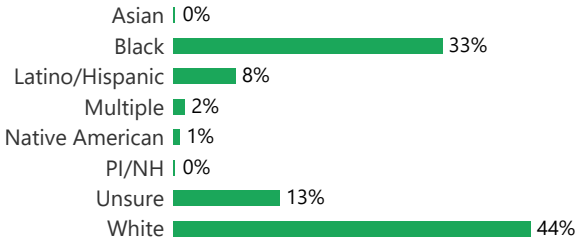
Gender



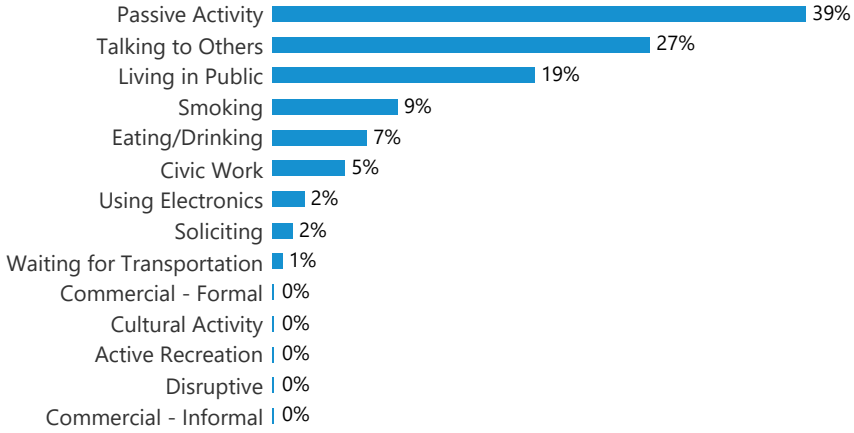
Age



Race



Activities



Postures