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## **APPROVED** **MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**July 2, 2009**

Convened 8:30 am

Adjourned 4:00 pm

### **Projects Reviewed**

Seward Park Play Area  
Universal Design and Public Open Space  
Fire Station 6 – Central District  
Burien Interim Art Space  
Streetcar Network  
DPR Planning and Development Division Update

### **Commissioners Present**

Mary Johnston, Chair  
Andrew Barash  
Julie Bassuk  
Graham Black  
Brendan Connolly  
John Hoffman  
Julie Parrett  
Dennis Ryan  
Norie Sato

### **Excused Commissioners**

Nathan Polanski

### **Staff Present**

Guillermo Romano  
Valerie Kinast  
Tom Iurino  
Jeff Arango

**Celebrating 40 Years 1968-2008**



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**July 2, 2009****Project: Seward Park Play Area****Phase:** Schematic Design**Presenters:** Brian Stark, Johnson Southerland Landscape Architects  
Kristin Tollefson, Artist  
Maggi Johnson, Johnson Southerland Landscape Architects  
Pam Kliment, Department of Parks and Recreation**Attendees:** Bettina Simmons, Seward Park Playground Improvement Foundation  
Emily Fuller, Department of Parks and Recreation**Time:** 1 Hour

(169/RS0605)

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## **ACTION**

The Design Commission thanks Maggi Johnson of Johnson Southerland Landscape Architects and Kristin Tollefson, the artist, for their presentation of the Seward Park Play Area Renovation and unanimously approves the schematic design. The Commission appreciates the good contextual background information that was provided. Commissioners feel that the elements of the play area are nicely balanced and commend the placement of them in the unusual geometries dictated by the site. The Commission also thanks the community for their input and financial assistance to the project.

The Commission has the following comments on the project:

- While it is important to think of the convenience of the adult visitors to the playground, the design should cater to the experience of the children primarily.
- Remember to consider older kids, and push the envelope to allow a feeling of risk and danger. Be safe aware, but not safe driven.
- At the north entrance to the play area, be sure that the route to the playground and the entry to the trail that loops around the outside of the playground are clearly separate.
- Consider the area at the south, where the loop trail is closest to the sidewalk along the southern road, and whether it might be advantageous to connect the loop trail to the road or separate it even more than is already proposed.
- Consider providing a hard surface path connecting the north and south entrances through the play space for parents with strollers or less sure-footed users such as toddlers and grandparents.
- Think of adding more rubber play surface near the play structures in the tot area because it is easier for little ones with unsure footing to maneuver on.
- Commissioners are interested in how the Audubon Building and the playground will interact and recommend that the designers look at how the line between them can be blurred. Perhaps certain elements could “encroach” from one side into the other.
- Think of bike racks for large and small bikes.
- Consider how the great trees on the site might be used better in the design
- We appreciate the differing scales of the artwork, from the large sculptures to the small discovery castings. However, we are concerned about the budget and whether it will support the making of all of the elements.
- The placement of the artworks will help with wayfinding and is great at the north end, but look again at placement of the southern piece and the pathway back up to the play areas and their relationship to

Seward Park is located on the west side of Lake Washington with views of Mount Rainier. Seward Park is part of the Olmsted Brothers 1903 open space plan. It is the southern terminus of the string of open spaces along Lake Washington Boulevard and the largest park in South Seattle. The current plan is to protect the existing old growth forest in the park. The developed area of the park is along the western edge. Seward Park serves Southeast Seattle in the immediate surrounding area and is within one of the most diverse zip codes in the country. Johnston and Southerland recently completed a trails plan for the park.

The existing playground consists of a swing set, an embankment slide and a sand pit. Creating more capacity and diversity in the play experience is a principal goal. The playground will be used as a way to introduce people to the natural amenities in the park. The playground is located on the south end of the main entrance near Lake Washington Boulevard. Better wayfinding is another goal of the project in order to provide better access to the trails. The existing trail through the playground will be rerouted around the playground. The playground area has significant topography that has to be contended with in the design. A complex set of utilities existing underneath the playground site and present a challenge.



a) Gates or entry points for playground  
 Middle head of tree  
 (Stem, canopy, flower)  
  
 - envisioned roughly 6-7' high,  
 root, fabricated  
 - play with scale  
 - indicate prevalent / unique path flow.

A canopy walk and a gateway to the forest areas will promote the forested areas to the north. A cistern will be connected to the roof of the Audubon Building and provide water for the play area.

The low retaining walls (18'-2") will be constructed of rocks to tie in with the rocks and ropes climb. Traditional stick and platform style play structures will be used that are made of timber. Wayfinding posts that match the city standard will be used.

The features of the site influence the artwork. The connections between aesthetics and play as well as typography and the overarching theme of discovery influenced the design. Low, medium and high elements will be developed so that pieces of different scales will be used. The sand pond will have a number of smaller textural elements that can be discovered by kids. Drawing a connection between the flora and fauna is part of the design. The design has to do with animal homes and babies and includes a bird's nest, frog's eggs and a wasp's nest. Round seats of different heights with the top encased with a treasure element will be located around the sand pond play area. The entry sculptures are enlarged plant heads representing the skunk cabbage and a fiddlehead.

## **Commissioners' Comments & Questions**

*What is the budget for this project?*

The maximum budget for the project is \$450k to \$500k. The art budget is \$40k.

*You are doing the plan for the trails and walkways in Seward Park?*

Yes, but the plan is not so much about planning new trails, but to come up with a standard that allows some of the trails primitive and develop better wayfinding to promote use and prevent ad hoc trails from being developed.

*Is lighting part of the plan?*

No, the park is closed at dusk.

*Did you have any places in the park where you wanted to frame the Mount Rainier view?*

The impact the view has had is first and foremost not to block the view. The other small element where the view is considered is the seating for the Audubon and making it multi-dimensional.

*Do you have any information on the users of the park?*

Runners utilize the park, particularly in the morning, but also kids and those from the larger surrounding neighborhood with the majority of people driving to the park.

*Has there been any discussion about the relationship between hardscape and softscape in consideration of people with strollers?*

The paved path piercing the middle of the play area allows stroller access. The area adjacent to the Audubon Society is also paved.

*Have you considered running the trail on the water-side of the picnic shelter?*

Yes, but we concluded that the proposed configuration made more sense.

*I'm wondering about the connection between the Audubon Society and play area. Philosophically how do the two relate?*

Since the beginning of the project we've wanted to help the Audubon Society connect physically and philosophically and enhance the Audubon Society. The flexible outdoor space is one of the attempts to meet their needs and make a connection.

*The fabrication of the artwork needs to be considered because people will be in contact with it.*

I'm really aware of the issue of fabrication and safety. Even if I have the work fabricated by someone else, I do all the finish work.

*In terms of the smaller elements, in order for them to be secure they will require a lot of underground structure, so that needs to be considered.*

*In terms of the overall design from the bird's eye view, the connection to the Audubon Society appears to produce tension to me. It would be nice to see some blurring of the line between the two.*

*Consider making a connection at the bend of the trail around the play area to the sidewalk to the south.*

*The grading change may make it difficult to achieve this.*

*From the entrance by the public shelter, it would seem that a connection from that entrance to the tot's play area will be important to accommodate strollers. In the tot area it looks like the rubber play surface should also be used. Consider not having a log separating the merry-go-round from the rest of the play area. The north entrances to the shore loop and the sculpture entrance appear are too close together and create confusion.*

*A smaller paved area from the south sculpture entry to the tot area should be incorporated.*

*The plan caters to the child play experience and not adult convenience and I like the use of natural materials.*

*The cistern idea is a good one and I like the vertical element.*

*In terms of the hierarchy and the placement of the trees and sculptures, perhaps you could ask the Parks Department for future plans to upgrade areas outside of the play area including potentially another picnic shelter. These answers might provide insights into the design.*

*I encourage you to push the element of safety in the forest play as far as you can.*

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**July 2, 2009****Project:****Universal Design and Public Open Space****Phase:**

Briefing

**Last Reviewed:**

N/A

**Presenters:**

Emory Baldwin, ZAI Inc.

Karen Braitmayer, Studio Pacifica

Jocelyn Freilinger, Keystone Place Solutions/Universal Design Council

**Attendees:**

Seth Geiser, DPD

Don Willott, Bainbridge Island Non-Motorized Transportation Advisory Committee

**Time:** 1 hour

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**ACTION**

The Design Commission thanks Karen Braitmayer, Emory Baldwin, and Jocelyn Freilinger for their very informative and useful briefing. As professionals in the design disciplines the Commissioners will carry the presented ideas with them: Equitable Use, Flexibility in Use, Simple and Intuitive Use, Perceptible Information, Tolerance for Error, Low Physical Effort, Size and Space for Approach and Use, and Beauty (added in the discussion). The Commission agrees with the presenters that ADA should clearly be seen as the bare minimum. Universal Design goes above and beyond this, and professionals should strive to meet such higher potentials.

**Presentation**

Design is profound and influences our daily lives. Variation in ability is ordinary and not special. It affects most of us at some point in our lives.

Universal design is the design of products and environments to be used by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Valerie Fletcher's definition defines universal design as a framework for the design of buildings, products and information technology to be used by the widest range of users.

**Seven Guiding Principal of Universal Design**

Equitable Use – The design is useful and marketable to people of diverse abilities.

Flexibility in Use – The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

Simple and Intuitive Use – Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills or current concentration level.

Perceptible Information – The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

Tolerance for Error – The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

Low Physical Effort – The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

Size and Space for Approach and Use – Approximate size and space is provided for approach, reach manipulation and use regardless

### **Universal Design and the ADA**

The ADA standards for accessibility are limited in application and set minimum design requirements focused largely on mobility aid users.

UD is a framework for rethinking the design of all environments, products, information AND communication for the widest possible spectrum of users.

Human Factors – Humans come in a wide range of abilities, sizes, ages, cognitive and sense acuity. We must embrace designing for the range, not for some narrow portion considered the “norm”.

### **Environment influences ability**

A person with low hearing notices with “impairment” more in noisy environments and may not be able to participate.

A person who uses a wheelchair is restricted by steps or steep slopes and may not be able to get to their chosen location

A person who has low vision is limited by low or no-contrast in surface materials and may inadvertently

### **Universal Design Case Studies**

*Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art Kansas City, MO* – A grand ramp with the ability to look down onto features on the ground in lieu of a grand staircase that is common in many prominent buildings.

*Millennium Park, Chicago, IL* – In the transit stations below the park, they took two different design approaches. The one on the left they created all the ticket booths at one height, with two ticket windows lower. The one on the right has all the ticket booths lower and is more accessible. There are two examples of circulation paths in the park. On the picture on the right they provided a switchback ramp system that provides an accessible access through the park. No grades in the park will exceed 5%. A low seat wall is incorporated. The “BP Bridge” is fully accessible despite the curvilinear design. The Pritzker Pavilion has a wide lawn to watch concerts and events. The paved walkway and the grass are at the same level to allow access to the lawn. The water park feature is fully accessible including a smooth transition from where the water flows to the main surface area.



**Millennium Park Chicago, IL**

*Portland MAX Light Rail Stop* – A very subtle slope is used on the side of the street car to allow universal access to the light rail train.

*Pioneer Square Portland, OR* – A subtle pathway ramp is incorporated that allows universal access that doesn’t require an alternative route.

*Singapore MRT Station* – The truncated domes are used not only as a warning device, but also to navigate the station.

*Ponte de Frati, Venice Italy* – The most heavily used bridges were retrofitted and a wayfinding system was developed to steer people towards the accessible bridges. The solution was to add lifts to allow access up the stairs.

*Rome, Italy* – They raised the street to make it all level and incorporated a smooth pathway through the rough areas that is of the same material.

*Rinku Park, Japan* – Park has an accessible route through the park and wide aisles to access the park furniture.

*Sensory Garden, Osaka, Japan* – The maps and exhibits include audio explanations of the exhibits and are at a height that allows all to touch and feel the exhibits.

*Jennifer Schweiger Playground, Graniteville Park, Staten Island, NY* – Play structures allow universal access to all structures.

The three-legged stool of sustainability – social equity, environmental, economic

Sustainable and Universal. The 2006 Rio Charter on Universal Design for sustainable and Inclusive Development defines the purpose of universal design to “serve needs and make possible social participation and access to goods and services by the widest possible range of users, contributing to both the inclusion of persons who have been prevented from interacting in society and to their development.”

## **Commissioners’ Comments & Questions**

*In designing transportation improvements, I find it hard to find useful guidelines for accessibility. Are there universal design guidelines?*

*Universal design is certainly recognized as important, but I’m not aware of any guidelines that are being developed. The access board website has four videos under the public rights-of-way section that highlight four different ways in which people with various disabilities interact with streets, sidewalks, curb ramps and other design features in the public right-of-way.*

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**July 2, 2009****Project:****Fire Station 6 – Central District****Phase:**

Concept Design

**Last Reviewed:** N/A**Presenters:**

David Jackson, Fleets and Facilities Department  
 Ed Weinstein, Weinstein AU  
 John Mikhels, Weinstein AU

**Attendees:**

Susan Rosenthal, Fire Department  
 Kirsten Wild, Weinstein AU  
 Chief Molly Douce, Fire Department  
 David Kunselman, Fleets and Facilities  
 Jason Huff, Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs  
 Lindsay King, DPD

**Time:** 1 hour

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**ACTION**

The Design Commission thanks the City staff and Weinstein AU designers for their presentation and approves the concept design as presented with a vote of eight to one. The no vote was based on the concern that a civic atmosphere was not being created with the design. The Commission has the following recommendations:

- Provide more attention to the design of the north part of the building. There is potential at this location to create a civic presence that interfaces more dynamically with the community.
- Engage the artist and landscape architect in addressing the interface of the site with the public. The site is difficult, so collaboration will be necessary, and the artist should be allowed into the design process as much as possible.
- Consider that not just the wall along the north property line along S. Jackson St. is blank, but that the fence and gate are an extension of this impenetrable wall.
- Consider that the location of the solid waste receptacles just behind the north wall along S. Jackson St. further contributes to the less attractive nature of this frontage for pedestrians.
- Allowing views into the apparatus bay would afford the north façade more permeation.
- Take a cue from the Capital Hill Library that provides a rhythm of landscaping and views into the building to enliven the façade.
- Consider curb bulbs along S. Jackson St. to expand area for landscaping, art and/or a small plaza.
- Commissioners applaud the location of the more quiet functions in the south part of the building.
- Please bring a model of the project, preferably with context area, to the next review.

**Presentation**

The existing fire station lies at 101 23rd Ave. South and serves the Central District. It was built in 1931 and is too small to serve existing needs. The new fire station's address is 2615 S. Jackson Street and it will include a new 11,000 square foot station. The station will be built in 2012.

Approximately 4,500 square feet of the station will be used for vehicles and equipment and use, a smaller portion for administration and space for exercise, sleeping and food preparation. The program is operationally driven.

An analysis of adaptively reusing the existing facility was done, but ultimately resulted in a decision to cite a new facility.

A drive-through apparatus bay is incorporated into the design of the building as part of the program requirement. There is a big demand for ground level space resulting in a two-story solution for the fire station. Maintaining a 55' setback from the front property line to the apparatus bay is also part of the program. Staff parking will enter from MLK Boulevard.

The second concept alternative has a more desirable drive-through apparatus bay. The alternative does not achieve the 12 parking spaces for staff.

The third concept alternative incorporates the uses that are most suitable to responding to the public realm near the public right-of-way. All the support space will be located along the south end of the building. The apparatus bay will be a drive-through and have a rear entrance. The public entrance will be located to the south of the site and not on the street corner. One of the challenges is determining the pedestrian nature along the S. Jackson St. Everything is driven by the required access to the apparatus bay. The functional imperatives really drive most of the first floor design. The quiet space for sleeping and eating is located along the south side of the property. However, there are some real concerns about the street frontage because of the blank walls created by the side of the apparatus bay. Lighting will be used on the S. Jackson frontage to enliven the streetscape and create an iconic presence. Two stairs with direct access to the apparatus bay without intermediate landings will be part of the design. Departures from the transparency requirements and the floor to height requirements (from 12' to 10.5') on the second floor will be requested. Consideration for removing the parking along S. Jackson to create open space is part of the design process. Meeting the green factor on the site will be a challenge, but a green roof is being considered.



**Project Area**

## Public Comments

**Lindsay King, DPD**

*The height departure and the green factor are the two major issues.*

## Commissioners' Questions and Comments

*You talked about the alley initially, but never went back to it.*

We considered underground parking with access from the alley. However, the secondary uses became less flexible and it substantially increased the cost. A variance is required to build to the south property line. The program can be met with the 3' setback. The turning radius appear to work and it meets our programmatic needs, we've also been involved in the process throughout.

*Why is the drive through required when fire stations have operated with drive in apparatus bays for many years?*

Backing out requires our people to stop traffic and it puts them in a dangerous situation as people don't always stop.

*The key concern is the S. Jackson streetscape. Have you considered putting the apparatus bay in the middle and pushing the office and support functions to the side?*

Yes, it could be done, but it's challenging. It's not as effective. However, under any alternative there is still going to be a significant blank wall along S. Jackson.

*Programmatic relationships and needs make a lot of sense in your proposal. It seems the north edge is the major point of discussion and in order to mitigate the blank wall it seems more space is needed. Have you considered creating more space and utilizing some of the parking proposed on the east side?*

The perfect situation for us would be to widen the sidewalk along S. Jackson to create the space.

*My first reaction to the blank wall is you killed the blank wall, but where would they go across the street? So, the retaining wall has stopped on the next block over. Therefore, the onus is to create the best place you can. A landscape architect needs to consider this along with an artist.*

*I'm looking at the sidewalk on the north side of the site and the sidewalk. It seems people are using the parking as a de facto right turn lane.*

Correct, but during peak hours circulation through here is already difficult. We haven't seen a restricted parking area near the intersection.

*I think we are misconceiving ourselves if we think it's just a blank wall because there is a large gate along the north side as well. There is also a public safety issue here and to get the officers out towards the street.*

Our concept is to have transparency on the south side of the bay to allow some visual access to the street.

*Couldn't the support space for the trucks be moved to the south side to give transparency to the north wall?*

Yes, we could make it work although it wouldn't be quite as efficient. Another option is to create breaks in the north wall to allow for penetration.

*I'm concerned about the art being used as a band-aid for the blank wall and I'm not sure it's a great location for art because it has trees and isn't very visible from afar. There might be other possibilities to use the roof or corners to lift the art up higher and give it more stature. Also, if light is going to be part of the design, (what is great about the old station is the use of light and neon art) perhaps light could be incorporated into the design and the artwork in a very dynamic and fundamental way..*

We agree with you and our attitude is to move to a concept that has more transparency and to leverage some of our architecture budget for the artwork. Philosophically we are inclined to integrate the art better.

*I would urge the team in the next stage of design to use a three dimensional model. The three dimensional design is going to address a lot of these issues.*

*Is there a potential for solar panels?*

We will look at that.

*I would want to reiterate the comment about the pulling back from the S. Jackson to create more space for enhancing the pedestrian environment.*

The programmatic requirements make that difficult in meeting the square footage requirements.

**July 2, 2009****Project:****Burien Interim Art Space****Phase:**

Briefing

**Last Reviewed:**

N/A

**Presenters:**

Bill Gaylord, GGLO

**Time:** 1 hour

(168)

## ACTION

Burien Town Square has interim art installations called the Burien Interim Art Space (B/IAS). This is a very creative public/private partnership and the Design Commission applauds GGLO, the developers, Dane Johnston and Kathy Justin, and Ignition Northwest (the creative brains behind the idea) for undertaking this creative project to bring energy to an area that would have laid fallow otherwise. We are hoping to take some lessons from their experience as we examine some of Seattle's stalled projects.

## Presentation

The Burien/ Interim Art Space (B/ IAS) is a year-long experiment, combining and transforming the concepts of art, temporary green spaces, and community gathering. A special agreement with the developer allowed this to occur, with funding from a variety of sources. The space was intended for mixed-use development. Though Phase 1 of the ambitious development plan has been constructed, subsequent phases have been on hold due to the economic downturn. The parking lot was thus available for this alternative use.

B/ IAS is located just north of Burien Town Square, where their City Hall and Library are located, as well as some commercial establishments. An art p-patch/exhibition area was developed to showcase art installations in an empty parking lot where the development was stalled. In an agreement with the

developers for use of the space for one year, the empty parking area asphalt was partially scraped off and used to mark locations for the art installations. This space not only showcase art, but is an energetic gathering place for Burien's citizens. B/ IAS is a working canvas being transformed by the efforts of both artists and the community throughout the year.



**Site Plan of Art Installations**

The art space celebrated its opening on Saturday, January 24th, 2009 with the installation of "The Passage," Burien's first major temporary art piece. "The Passage," a sculpture depicting a mother and child walking together to share and explore life was first created by Dan Das Mann and Karen Cusolito for the 2005 Burning Man Arts Festival. The figures stand a dramatic 30' and 20' tall and are fabricated out of recycled and scrap metal. Since then, other sculptures have been added and events take place there as well. Some installations have been controversial. The site's parking lot was also used as a canvas for interim art by carving out sections of the pavement and creating a pea patch for art. Other events are held on the space including an outdoor dinner and a lantern festival.

The project will conclude at the end of December when the sculptures are removed.

### **Commissioners' Questions and Comments**

*How have community expectations been managed in terms of people being attached to it?*

Like any community there are a vocal few that have been opposed. There has been some controversy about one of the statutes and safety issues. However, overall there is a sense that it's been a success.

*I know that Burien is one of the first communities for immigrants. Those are folks that don't typically get involved, has that happened?*

Not to my knowledge.

*How is the liability addressed?*

I'm not sure of the details of that, but the private developer in association with the city handles it.

*I believe there is a state law that says if you don't charge people to enter a site you are immune from liability.*

**July 2, 2009****Project:****Streetcar Network****Phase:**

Design Update

**Last Reviewed:**

June 5, 2008

**Presenters:**

Ethan Melone, SDOT

**Time:** 1 hour

(169/RS0606)

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**ACTION**

The Design Commission thanks Ethan Melone for the presentation on the current state of planning for the streetcar network. Commissioners appreciated seeing how the streetcar will fit in with other transportation systems in the city, and how the planning is drawing on lessons learned. The Commission is excited about the plans and looks forward to providing input on the platform design, wayfinding, and interface with other modes at transportation hubs.

**Presentation**

The streetcar network will cover the center city area. The initial segment is the South Lake Union (SLU) line and cost 53 million dollars. Once projects are funded they can come online quickly. The SLU streetcar is 30% above the initial ridership projections. Concurrent development that occurred with the development of the streetcar appears to have increased ridership.

In 2010 more development will be completed in the SLU area and is likely to increase ridership. Amazon headquarters is being developed in SLU.

The Mayor and City Council endorsed the streetcar plan that includes a 15-mile network. The First Hill Line was in the ST-2 measure that was approved by the voters. The city is actively developing funding options for the 2.5 mile central line connecting major center city attractions with a cost of 135 million dollars.

The First Hill Streetcar replaces the First Hill Light Rail Station.

**Key Opportunities**

Emerging streetcar typologies:

- Local Circulator – 203 blocks spacing in stops, 8-12 MPH (SLU, Central City)
- City Shaping
- City Serving
- Rapid Streetcar (Fremont/Ballard)

**First Hill Streetcar Alignment Alternatives**

Two alternatives for the First Hill Streetcar are utilizing Broadway and Yesler or Boren in the Yesler Terrace Neighborhood. Incorporating 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. as part of the alignment was brought up by the community during public meetings.

### **Key Opportunities for the First Hill Streetcar**

- Streetcar typology, city shaping. local circulator
- Shape: Yesler Terrace, Little Saigon, First Hill, Broadway, 12<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- Serve: First Hill and Light Rail Stations

### **Central Line**

The line goes from Seattle Center to King Street Station along 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. The 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. segment is part of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. The 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. streetcar is mostly a city serving line, but also has city shaping opportunities in making 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. a main street, making the downtown more of a neighborhood and shaping public space.

### **Commissioners' Questions and Comments**

*Do you have an urban design and planning element on your team?*

Yes, URS has that resource, as does SDOT in their policy and planning division.

*Have you considered buying an American built streetcar?*

Yes, it is something we are considering, but there are procurement issues.

*What are some initial thoughts on how the streetcar line could make it feel more like a main street?*

I don't see it as necessarily a lot of physical changes, but the connectivity between the neighborhoods would really change the dynamic by providing more and frequent service for short trips.

*What about integrated fares with Metro?*

Metro operates the streetcar for us, and our fares are Metro's peak hour fares. Metro passes work on the streetcar.

*Are there any lessons learned from the SLU streetcar such as the interface between bike lanes and the street car?*

Our new standard is to have the streetcar on the left lane with center platforms unless it's prohibitive. A bike study will be done as part of future concept designs. Other lessons learned are to avoid to the extent possible things like powered switches.

*What happens when the streetcar gets to the end of the block? Does it get signal priority or does it have to follow the traffic signals?*

Some of the signals give priority to the streetcar, but not pre-emption. To the extent possible it will be incorporated into the design of other lines.

*Does it have real time arrival information?*

Yes, it does and it's accessible via mobile phones.

*Who gets to decide what the stations' systems designs will be?*

They will come to the Design Commission.

*Is there any commonality in shelters and signage between the various modes of transportation in the city?*

No, when we developed the SLU shelters it was expressed that the Metro shelters were not acceptable.

*I would encourage the designers to consider the interface between the various modes, particularly at intersections between the various modes.*

If we come to the DC and haven't addressed this issue you should let us know.

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|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>July 2, 2009</b> | <b>Project:</b>       | <b>Department of Parks and Recreation - Planning and Development Division Update</b> |
|                     | <b>Phase:</b>         | Briefing                                                                             |
|                     | <b>Last Reviewed:</b> | N/A                                                                                  |
|                     | <b>Presenters:</b>    | Michael Shiosaki, Department of Parks and Recreation                                 |

Time: 1 hour

(169)

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## ACTION

The Design Commission thanks Michael Shiosaki, Deputy Director of the Planning & Development Division of the Parks Department, for the overview of the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy. The Commission sees parks and open space as important components of the livability of Seattle and appreciates the new ways the department is going in providing such space to the public. The Commission provides the following comments:

- Setting aside funds to have invasive plant species removed from park and greenbelt areas is a great investment. Because much of this work is done by community volunteers this is a good way of leveraging public money.
- Using levy funds to provide open space amenities in the right-of-way in Bell St. is also a good investment. The Commission applauds the Parks Department for investing in this space as a Parks Boulevard in an area where the cost of acquiring land for new open space is prohibitive.
- The Commission appreciates the investment of Parks and Green Spaces money in P-patches, which are under the administration of the Department of Neighborhoods, because the demand for such space is great and the investment picks up on this momentum.
- There is much hope for the role of the Parks Department in creating green spaces along the waterfront when the viaduct is removed.
- In the overall scheme of open space and recreation in the city, the Commission finds the proposed alignment of the Mountains to Sound Trail is not rational.
- The Commission encourages the Parks Department to draw on the resource of the Design Commission as a pool of design professionals with a broad view of the city.

## Presentation

The 146 million dollar property tax that was passed is focused on acquisition and development of parks. The four main categories include acquisitions, development, environment and opportunity fund.

### Acquisition

Two kinds of funding for acquisition include neighborhood parks and green spaces. Neighborhood parks are primarily in urban villages and urban centers. Up to 20 project areas have been identified for neighborhood parks projects, but there is no guarantee parks will be purchased in each area.

Seven project areas have been established for the acquisition of green spaces.

## Development

By far the largest category in the levy is development at 80 million dollars. The sub-categories include playground renovations, reservoir lid parks, skate parks, spray park conversions, off leash areas and neighborhood parks.

Two substantial building projects in the levy include the Seattle Asian Art Museum including seismic and HVAC improvements at 9 million dollars, which will serve as seed money. The Langston Hughes Center will be retrofitted with seismic improvements.

Playfield conversions include Lower Woodland #7, Lower Woodland #2, and Delridge Park.

### *Major Neighborhood Parks*

- Jefferson Park – \$5 Million
- Jefferson Park Skate Park – \$1 Million
- WA Park Arboretum – \$2.5 million
- Magnuson Park Access/ bike path - \$500k
- Childrens' Play Garden - \$950K
- Discovery Park –\$1 Million

### *Trails*

- Burke Gilman - \$3.75 Million
- W. Duwamish - \$2 Million
- Lake to Bay - \$1.5 Million
- Inflation for Development Category \$14 Million

### *Playground Renovations*

- 23 Sites

### *Neighborhood Parks*

- 11 Sites
- Northgate Urban Center, Hing Hay, 7<sup>th</sup> Elect Church Site, Crown Hill Elem., Cedar Park, Chinook Beach, Marra-Desimone, Camp Long, Othello, Queen Anne Blvd., Victor Steinbrueck.

### *Environment*

- Forest/Stream restoration – Green Seattle Partnership - \$3.5 Million
- Forest/Stream Restoration – Kiwanis Ravine - \$600k
- Community Gardens - \$2 Million
- Shoreline Access - \$500k
- Inflation for Environment category - \$1.4 Million

### *Opportunity Fund Category*

- Provides funds for acquisition and development projects identified by neighborhood and community groups
- Criteria
  - Public review process/consistency with approved plans
  - Address a park or open space deficiency or underserved community
  - In an area experiencing growth (urban village or urban center)
- Address and immediate health or safety problem or an opportunity that will be lost.
- Contribute to solving challenges (e.g. climate change, waterways, growth management)
- Potential to leverage other resources

- Does not add significant city operating costs
- Demonstrate new and creative methods to meet parks and open space need
- High degree of neighborhood involvement and support

*Just Completed/Next Steps*

- Held public workshops throughout City to launch Levy Implementation
- Submitted Levy Management Plan to City Council

## **Commissioners' Questions and Comments**

*As part of this levy will you be doing more collaborations with other departments?*

I think the citizens advisory group wanted to look at opportunities to collaborative in projects similar to the Bell Street project.

*Is there a timeframe for when the money has to be spent?*

The property taxes are spent for six years and there's no limit on when the dollars need to be spent.

*Tell us more about the maintenance of greenbelts and removal of invasive species?*

It is a bit of a scorched earth strategy as you have to remove everything but the large trees, but it has to be revisited each year to prevent it from growing back.

*What happened with Thomas Wales Park?*

The latest hurdle is related to our relationship with SDOT. As part of their review of the project relative to their right-of-way they wanted improvements that would've required 60% of the funding, but we've resolved that issue and it will go out to bid in the next 6 months.

*The Mountains to Sound Greenway project goes through Jose Rizal Park near I-5. Does parks and recreation have any involvement in that?*

The current proposal goes through Jose Rizal Park and we have some concerns about the alignment.

*Regarding Bell Street, it's a great concept and opportunity to partner, has Parks established any criteria to look at a potential street opportunity where an alley vacation or utility project is being proposed?*

We sense this is the first of many green street opportunities in the city. The Levy wanted us to look at those opportunities and look at what SDOT has already designated a green street. Purchasing affordable property for parks is a major issue and these opportunities allow the city to add green space at a lower cost.

*For Bell Street, it seems it would be good to be designated a Park Boulevard rather than an SDOT right-of-way?*

I don't know if there is a specific criteria for that, but the designated park boulevards in the Olmsted plan have been under the jurisdiction of Parks and Recreation.

*How is the Parks Department involved in the Alaskan Way Viaduct project and particularly the central waterfront and how it affects Victor Steinbrueck Park?*

We're part of the citywide team, but the emphasis thus far has been on the transportation improvements.

*You have money allocated for each project and if projects come in under budget, how will the excess funding be used?*

It will be kept under the same category and used for other projects in the category and once all projects have been completed, it will go into the opportunity fund.

*You are called Parks and Recreation and it seems like community centers and recreation centers, which we see very seldom, should be more prominent.*

We have many old and tired facilities, but we have some new ones that have been built recently and the pools are very dated. There hasn't been a new pool in 10 years since a new one was developed in Magnolia.