

The Grand Connection Framework Plan

Creating a signature urban experience for Bellevue.

Sequence One
Meydenbauer Bay to Civic Center District



The Grand Connection Framework Plan - Sequence One - Meydenbauer Bay to Civic Center District



SNACK



Contact

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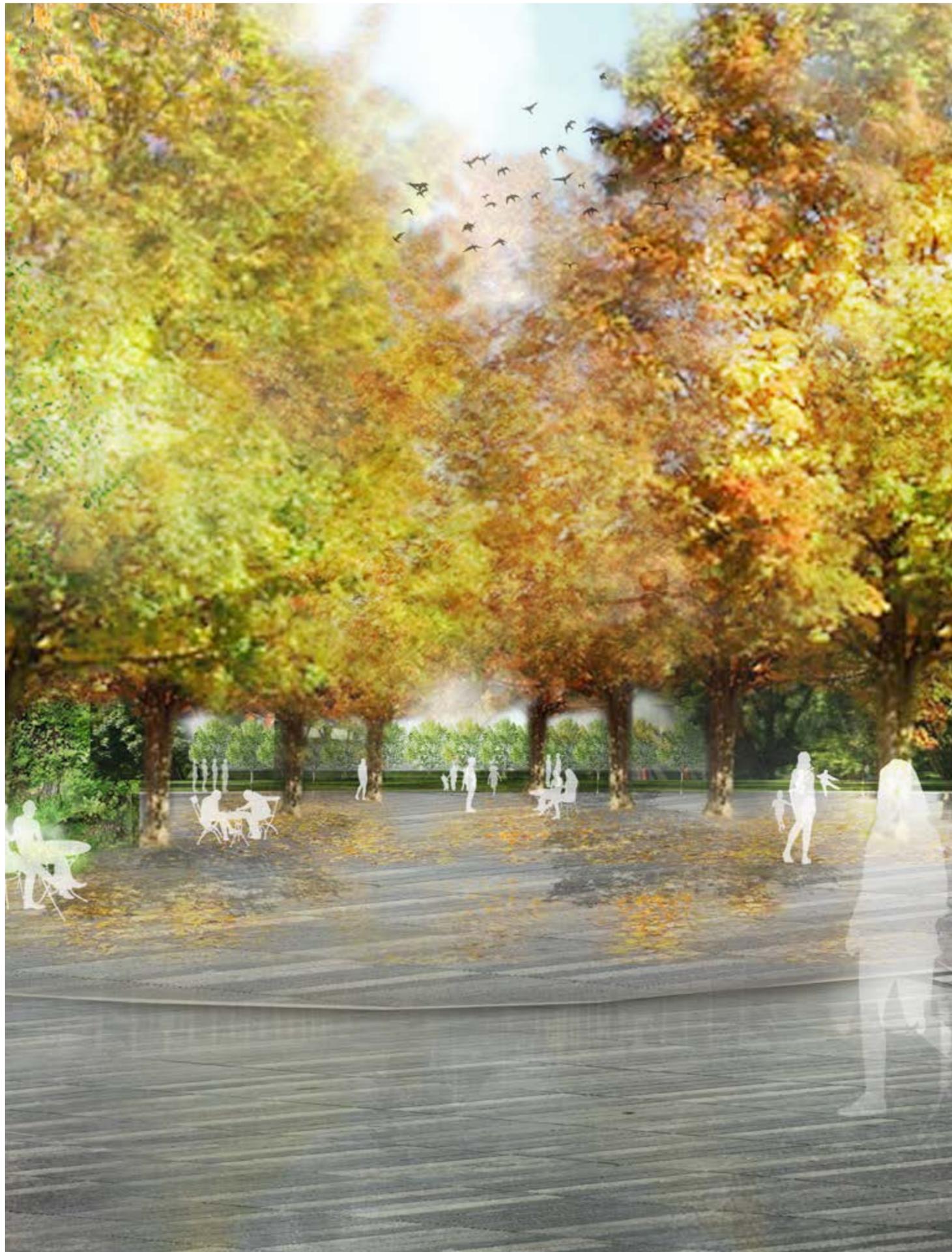
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Compass Plaza Concept - Image by Balmori Associates ▶





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*“The City’s intentions dovetail with what we believe is essential for 21st century cities, connectivity.
Landscape is becoming a principal actor of the urban stage in creating livable cities.”*

Diana Balmori
1932 - 2016

Acknowledgments

Bellevue City Council

Established as a Council priority in 2012, the Bellevue City Council has provided their enthusiastic support and generous funding to advance the vision of the Grand Connection. Council's support and direction has allowed the project to pursue new concepts and ideas that has established a transformational vision and pursuit of opportunities.

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John Stokes - *Mayor*
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Conrad Lee
Jennifer Robertson
Lynne Robinson
Ernie Simas
Kevin Wallace

Past Council Members

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Consultant Team

The ideas set forth through the Grand Connection Visioning process were a result of a collaboration with the City of Bellevue and a world class consultant team of designers, engineers, artists, and transportation experts. The City wishes to thank this team of consultants, profiled on the following pages, for their energy, creativity, and passion for transforming public spaces, connectivity, and the urban environment. Their ideas and concepts will leave a lasting and transformational legacy on the project and the City of Bellevue.

Bellevue Arts Museum

The collaboration between the City and Bellevue Arts Museum for the *Grand Connection Visioning Charrette* created an inspiring event that continues to serve as a pivotal moment in the visioning process. The City wishes to thank the Bellevue Arts Museum staff, as well as all charrette participants, for their inspiring energy and enthusiasm to create an exciting event and inspirational concepts and ideas.

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The *Grand Connection Framework Plan* provides design concepts, recommendations, and implementation strategies to develop a new non-motorized corridor for Bellevue that will become a signature and defining feature in the urban landscape, with an emphasis on placemaking and connectivity.

The visioning process seeks to develop a high level understanding of opportunities, strategies, aesthetics, and improvements to public space along the defined Grand Connection route. The process also seeks to establish a vision for a signature and iconic crossing to heal the divide of Interstate 405 between Downtown Bellevue and the Wilburton Commercial Area.

Cities around the world have begun planning and implementing projects that improve non-motorized connectivity in urban areas through various means. The Indianapolis Cultural Trail combines pedestrian and cyclists improvements into an artistic route that connects the City's cultural assets. The High Line in New York City has transformed the way people use and view public space, and connectivity. And the Atlanta BeltLine has brought new life into neighborhoods while connecting them to employment, amenities, and recreational space. Each have become a defining feature of their city and transformational exercise in placemaking.

Nationwide cities have been attempting repair the divide of interstates bisecting our cities. Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, Denver, New York, Philadelphia, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. are pursuing strategies to bridge these divides with dynamic crossings, lids, and other means of non-motorized access. The combination of dynamic placemaking, improved

connectivity and mobility, and a signature crossing establish an opportunity for a defining vision unique to Bellevue.

The ideas set forth in this plan build upon a foundation of work that seeks to improve non-motorized movement in Downtown. This work includes the 1981 adopted guidelines for the Pedestrian Corridor which sought to create a lively and attractive place for pedestrians between 110th Avenue NE and Bellevue Way. Other work includes the Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan (1993), the Downtown Subarea Plan, and the Downtown Transportation Plan. Each of these plans established a firm foundation to improve pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and safety, which the Grand Connection seeks to build upon and advance by including additional spaces and expansion of the considered area.

The *Grand Connection Framework Plan* is the first of many steps in realizing this transformational project. Refinement, next steps, and implementation, discussed as part of this document, will all be necessary to realize the full potential of this plan.

Principles and Vision

The Grand Connection will provide a sweeping new vision for Bellevue. Envisioned as a signature urban experience and means of connectivity, the Grand Connection will become a defining feature of Bellevue's urban landscape.

Improved connectivity, urban amenities, and experiences will enhance Bellevue's existing infrastructure within Downtown, while a dynamic

crossing over Interstate 405 will usher in a new era and vision for Bellevue's Wilburton Commercial Area.

As a long-term project, the Grand Connection will incorporate smaller placemaking improvements that will "claim the corridor" while establishing the overall vision. In addition to improving aesthetics and placemaking, the Grand Connection will improve overall connectivity and safety for non-motorized transportation. Building upon the framework of the Pedestrian Corridor plan, the Grand Connection will sculpt and frame a new pedestrian and cyclist environment that embraces the urbanity of Downtown Bellevue.

While the visioning process assists in establishing an exciting and transformational vision, it also seeks to remain pragmatic, understanding the constraints of the route. The ideas and concepts presented create a dynamic vision for Bellevue, with achievable goals.

The visioning process was tasked with developing solutions for both the near and the long-term, creating goals and opportunities as Bellevue grows, while capitalizing on early wins and implementable strategies that are budget and time conscious.

Plan Highlights

The *Grand Connection Framework Plan* contains a wide range of improvements for both the near and long term. It considers issues regarding mobility, public space, and programming. These major ideas include:

- **Distinct and unifying identity for the route:** Pursue a common identity along the route that embodies the experience and vision of the Grand Connection.

- **Cohesive design strategies:** Apply multiple design strategies that create aesthetic cohesiveness and achieve a unified experience.
- **Improved connectivity and mobility:** Pursue strategies that improve the overall experience and connectivity while linking Bellevue's , public spaces, and commercial and civic assets.
- **Improved quality and experience of existing and future public spaces:** Improve the design and programming opportunities of Bellevue's key public spaces including the Downtown Park, Compass Plaza, and the Transit Center while creating a new vision for public space and livability.
- **Pursuit of innovative and creative means of placemaking to develop a unique urban experience:** Provide new forms of programming and physical space improvements that are unique to Bellevue and reflect the local culture, businesses, and interests of the community.
- **A signature crossing to reconnect Downtown and the Wilburton Commercial Area:** Establish a vision for the Interstate 405 crossing that is a unique and signature design, as well as experience, that improves the connectivity, safety, and mobility of non-motorized users. The vision for a crossing for Interstate 405 will also assist in serving as a catalyst for a dynamic and new urban neighborhood in the Wilburton Commercial Area.
- **Successful interfacing of the Interstate 405 crossing with the Eastside Rail Corridor:** Capitalize on the regional north-south non-motorized connectivity of the Eastside Rail Corridor by

creating a unique public space and seamless connectivity to Bellevue's urban core.

- **Create a shared vision by stakeholders and the public:** Establish a vision that reflects the interests and values of the public, potential users, businesses, property owners, and other stakeholders.
- **Early Implementation Strategies:** Identify opportunities for early implementation through programming and small scale physical improvements that allows for the identity of the route to take shape early while allowing for opportunities for testing and measuring of other long-term proposed changes.

Next Steps

The *Grand Connection Framework Plan* establishes a dynamic vision that improves the non-motorized experience, the quality of public space, opportunities for programming, arts, and culture; and the overall urban experience. This plan establishes a foundation for early implementation strategies and long term goals. The visions create a framework to pursue further design refinement of larger goals such as the Interstate 405 crossing and Compass Plaza improvements, while providing ideas and concepts for more near term strategies such as raised intersections and art installations.

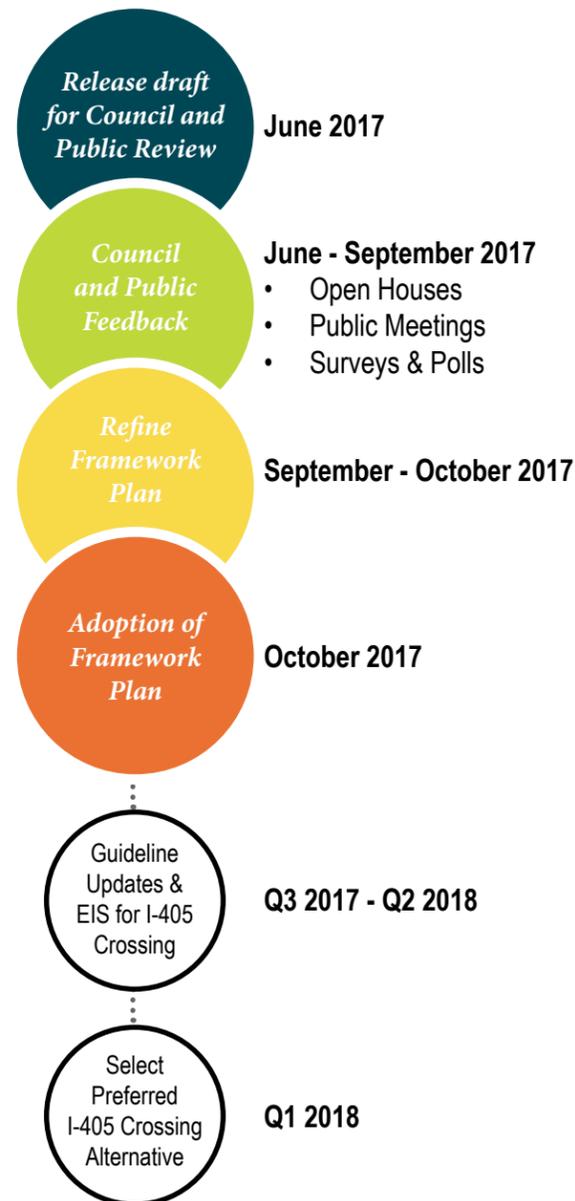
The *Grand Connection Framework Plan* is the first step to creating a unique and defining urban experience. It establishes high level concepts and strategies that set obtainable goals and a unique vision for the corridor. The plan also suggests near term strategies that can assist in making the project a reality and for the initial

vision to take hold in lieu of waiting for the larger scale changes to take effect. Next steps and implementation strategies are outlined as part of this document. As a high level visioning project, many of the elements will require design refinement to better understand impacts and to bring a finer level of detail and understanding to each strategy.

Following this report the City will need to take the following steps towards implementation:

- Adopt a framework for implementation based upon priorities and opportunity.
- Identify near term strategies that can be coordinated with other City and private improvement projects.
- Update applicable codes and guidelines to be consistent with the adopted Grand Connection Framework Plan.
- Pursue design refinements, technical analysis and feasibility for larger, long-term improvements including the Interstate 405 crossing, Compass Plaza, and alternative transportation recommendations.
- Develop a coordinated plan and begin to implement near-term projects such as raised intersections, art installations, and programming events.
- Develop partnerships with stakeholders and civic organizations to strengthen the identity and opportunity for programming and near-term improvements.

Review and Adoption Timeline



Chapters

The *Grand Connection Framework Plan* consists of the following chapters:

1. Introduction
2. Public Engagement
3. The Grand Connection Route
4. Delivering a Distinct Identity
5. Cohesive Design Strategies
6. Art and the Grand Connection
7. Connectivity and Mobility
8. Redefining Public Spaces
9. Interstate 405 Crossing
10. Opportunities for Programming
11. Strategies for Implementation

1 - Introduction

Chapter One discusses the project's history and how it came to being as well as the existing conditions along each distinct segment of the route.

2 - Public Engagement

Chapter Two discusses the strategies for public engagement. This includes a summary of surveys, polls, and public input on their vision for the Grand Connection and their responses to some of the concepts developed to date.

3 - The Grand Connection Route

Chapter Three discusses the short and long-term options for the Grand Connection route. This includes an alternative that expands the route beyond the initial concept in an effort to connect more of Bellevue's green spaces and public assets.

4 - Delivering a Distinct Identity

Chapter Four discusses the alternatives for the route identity. The purpose of the identity is to establish a cohesive design aesthetic for the route that is unique to Bellevue and capitalizes on existing opportunities.

5 - Cohesive Design Strategies

Chapter Five discusses the cohesive design strategies intended to create a consistent design aesthetic through smaller scale improvements such as paving, vegetation, and weather protection. The chapter will present alternatives as well as location and context sensitive concepts.

6 - Art and the Grand Connection

Chapter Six, in support of the cohesive design strategies, will provide a summary of the art and culture plan as it relates to the Grand Connection. It will identify unique opportunities for installations, as well as programming and infrastructure improvements that can work in support of elevating the role of art and culture as part of the Grand Connection route. A supplementary art and culture plan will be released simultaneously with the *Grand Connection Framework Plan*.

7 - Connectivity and Mobility

Chapter Seven discusses improvements to the transportation network and infrastructure that will improve the range, safety, and speed at which non-motorized transportation will navigate the route.

8 - Re-imagining Public Spaces

Chapter Eight will discuss recommendations to key public space locations along the route that will seek to realize the goals and vision of the Grand Connection as a place for people, and in support of flexible and dynamic placemaking and programming.

9 - Interstate 405 Crossing

Chapter Nine will discuss the alternatives for crossing Interstate 405. These alternatives are intended for information and context only, as the Interstate 405 crossing element will be further evaluated through the Environmental Impact Statement process for the Wilburton Commercial Area companion planning initiative.

10 - Opportunities for Programming

Chapter Ten will discuss opportunities for small scale improvements and event programming to activate existing and improved public spaces. These recommendations include installations, art and culture, and event based programming that seeks to engage the public, promote civic and social pride, and re-imagine how public space along the Grand Connection may be used.

11 - Implementation and Next Steps

Chapter Eleven will provide a detailed implementation plan and next steps to further develop, refine, and realize recommendations for the Grand Connection.



Project History

Development of an Idea

The Grand Connection was adopted as a City Council Priority to establish a signature urban experience that prioritized non-motorized connectivity and assist in unlocking the development potential of the Wilburton Commercial Area. In December of 2015 Bellevue City Council approved the work plan and Council Principles for the Wilburton – Grand Connection planning initiative. The project included two distinct efforts, which included the visioning process for the Grand Connection, and seizing the opportunity to re-imagine the Wilburton Commercial Area as Bellevue’s next urban neighborhood.

The project was inspired by a number of other initiatives across the country that have sought to strengthen their non-motorized networks while creating a signature urban design experience and corridor. Additionally, defining projects that sought to bridge the divide that urban interstates have created inspired the concept to connect the route across Interstate 405 and beyond Downtown Bellevue.

The concept of the Grand Connection seeks to connect Bellevue’s waterfront, beginning at Meydenbauer Bay, and through its dynamic Downtown, connecting to the Wilburton Commercial Area across Interstate 405, and interfacing with the Eastside Rail Corridor. Much like its peers and precedents, the Grand Connection seeks to connect a number of public, private, and civic assets through a city defining experience while creating and improving opportunities for public space.



▲ Denver Millennium Bridge - Image by Blaine Harrington III



▲ San Antonio Riverwalk - Image by Brandon Watts



▲ Klyde Warren Park - Image by Dallas and Recreation

Existing Conditions

Overview

The route of the Grand Connection weaves through a complex network of public and private land ownership, in addition to a diverse urban fabric over a route of approximately 1.5 miles. Each segment of the route presents unique opportunities, amenities, uses, and character. While the visioning process sought to identify unifying elements, it was important to recognize the differences in each segment and to celebrate them.

The route connects open space, Old Bellevue, Downtown, and important civic assets such as the Bellevue Transit Center, Meydenbauer Convention Center, and Bellevue City Hall. The conditions west of Interstate 405, including Old Bellevue and Downtown, are comprised of existing infrastructure, while the

conditions east of Interstate 405, connecting to the future Eastside Rail Corridor, will be primarily new infrastructure. Changes, as a result of the Grand Connection, would combine updating of existing infrastructure and plans as well as entirely new infrastructure.

In addition to connecting important public and civic functions, the Grand Connection has an opportunity to be an amenity for Bellevue residents and businesses alike. Over 20,000 residents and over 57,000 jobs are within a half mile of the Grand Connection route. Of the 43,000 jobs within a quarter mile of the route over 15 percent are in the creative economy industries. Of over 57,000 employed within a half mile of the route, over 12 percent are employed creative economy industries.



▲ Under Construction Meydenbauer Bay Park Master Plan



▲ Downtown Park Master Plan

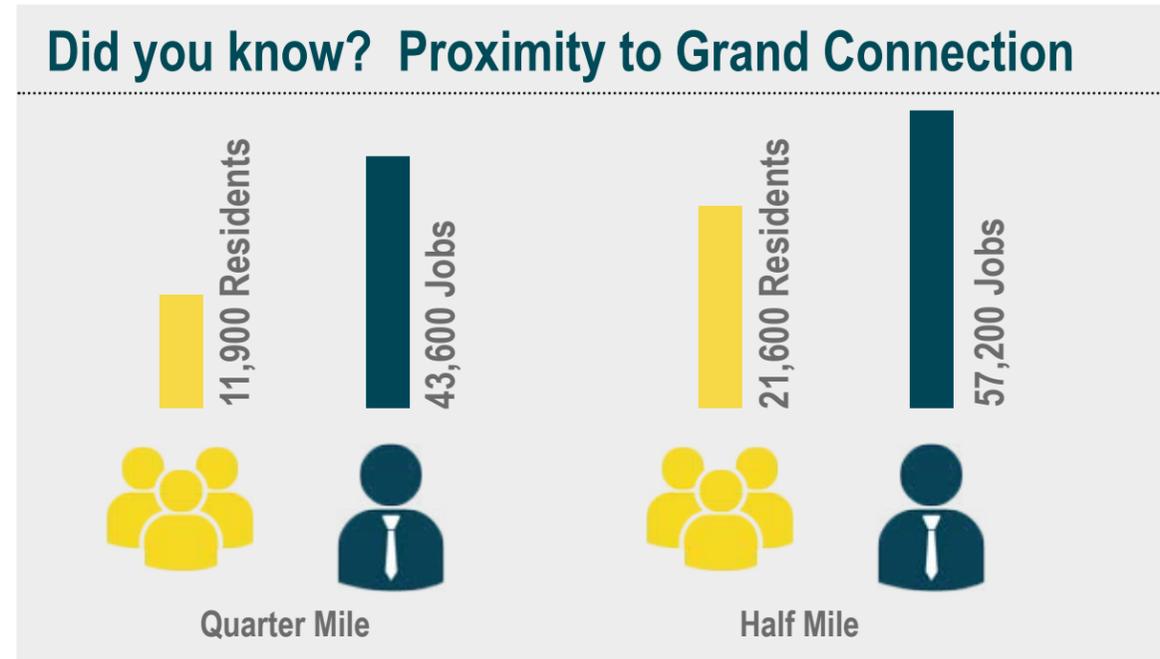
Meydenbauer Bay Park to Downtown Park

Meydenbauer Bay Park serves as the western anchor of the Grand Connection and presents an opportunity to reconnect Bellevue with its waterfront. A plan is currently in place to expand Meydenbauer Bay Park, with a portion of that expansion currently under construction. The plan seeks to significantly expand the park, including new entries, marina, and walking paths. The scope of the Grand Connection Visioning did not include changes to the Meydenbauer Bay Park plan, but does seek to create a seamless connection to the planned improvements of the park, particularly at the intersection of Main Street and 100th Avenue NE.

Old Bellevue, between Meydenbauer Bay Park and the Downtown Park, represents the most intimately scaled area of Downtown Bellevue, including smaller local commercial spaces and residential units. Existing materials speak to an older and more human scaled aesthetic, and a recent increase in density has added to the vibrancy of the community. Traffic volumes,

speed, and the audible impact of traffic are significantly less in Old Bellevue and assist in cultivating a rich and pleasurable pedestrian environment. As such, the Grand Connection Visioning seeks to build upon these successes primarily through urban amenities, identity, cohesive design strategies, and opportunities for art rather than large scale public space improvements. The Downtown Park represents the most significant public space in Downtown Bellevue. It is host to several events throughout the year and is currently undergoing a number of improvements. As part of the Downtown Park Master Plan, the completion of the promenade is currently under construction and is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2017. This improvement will include a water feature, a formal connection between Old Bellevue and the Downtown Park, terraced seating, an event space, new accessible paths, and the completion of the Inspiration Playground.

With a number of improvements internal to the Downtown Park, the Grand Connection Visioning process focused on elements related to the route, art, and the connections of key periphery locations and



entrances between the park and Downtown Bellevue. These improvements seek to improve the overall experience of park users, as well as its relationship and visibility to surrounding properties and Downtown. This included the lack of entrance at the corner of NE 4th and Bellevue Way, the existing entrance mid block on NE 4th between 100th Avenue NE and Bellevue Way, and the parking lot on the western side of the Downtown Park.

Downtown Park to the Pedestrian Corridor

The segment between the Downtown Park and the Pedestrian Corridor is a part of the grand shopping street of Bellevue Way. Recently, the mixed-use Lincoln Square Expansion development was completed. The development includes new restaurants, retail, hotel, residences, and office space in two new high rises at the northeast corner of Bellevue Way and NE 4th. This development will significantly increase the vitality of this major intersection, and segment of the Grand Connection by introducing additional retail, restaurant, and entertainment functions. Anchoring the northwest corner of Lincoln Square Expansion is Bellevue Arts Museum, serving as the art and cultural hub of Bellevue.

To the west is the super regional mall of Bellevue Square serving as a primary destination and anchor to the western portion of Downtown Bellevue. At this intersection modest public spaces exist at the gateway to the Pedestrian Corridor of NE 6th Street. These spaces include the entry to Bellevue Square and Bellevue Arts Museum, as well as those along NE 6th Street, east of Bellevue Way.

Bellevue Way has been enhanced with planted medians and special paving at its intersection with NE 6th Street. This has been successful in improving the quality, comfort, and overall experience of crossing this intersection while creating a gateway effect and appearance to both Bellevue Square and the Pedestrian Corridor.

Pedestrian Corridor

As part of the 1981 Land Use Code adoption, the city defined the Pedestrian Corridor as an important element to the growth and quality of Downtown's pedestrian environment.

The original guidelines for the Pedestrian Corridor sought to create a safe, comfortable, lively, and attractive place for pedestrians. The goal of the Grand Connection is to build upon the principles of the Pedestrian Corridor and unify it as a single vision for the entire route. The original set of guidelines established a series of identities along the route, including "Street as Plaza" (Bellevue Way to 106th Avenue NE), the "Garden Hill Climb" (106th Avenue NE to 108th Avenue NE) and "Transit Central" (108th Avenue NE to 110th Avenue NE).

Several significant developments and public spaces exist today on the Pedestrian Corridor including Bellevue Arts Museum, Lincoln Square, Lincoln Square Expansion, Compass Plaza, and City Center Plaza.

Compass Plaza serves as the geographic center of Downtown Bellevue and one of the largest public spaces in Downtown. Its current configuration consists of a series of terraced spaces in order to accommodate for an accessible path of travel through the change



▲ Restaurant Kiosk at Compass Plaza

in topography. The plaza has a number of movable chairs and tables for outdoor seating in support of a restaurant kiosk. The plaza is also one of the sites of Bellevue Downtown Association's Live at Lunch concert series.

Moving east is the Garden Hill Climb and former "Cattle Chute", a narrow pedestrian path that was recently improved by widening and the addition of decorative lighting and handrail. Directly north of the Cattle Chute is the terraced outdoor and vegetated spaces of the Garden Hill Climb. Upon redevelopment of the properties to the south, the segment would be widened to the full 60' width of the Pedestrian Corridor.

To the east, across 108th Avenue NE, is the Bellevue Transit Center. This bus-only facility is a key entry point and gateway for those employed and visiting Bellevue, a number of express bus routes from other regional cities provide direct access to Downtown Bellevue. The Transit Center is an island with two bus lanes to the north and south.



▲ Wilburton Commercial Area Looking Southwest - Image courtesy of City of Bellevue

South of the Transit Center is City Center Plaza. It is an important open space in Downtown, and provides opportunities for informal gathering, seating, and programming. City Center Plaza is another location for Bellevue Downtown Association's Live at Lunch events.

Continuing east is Bellevue City Hall and the future Downtown East Link light rail station. Directly north of the station, across NE 6th Street, is Meydenbauer Convention Center and the high end retail shopping destination of the Bravern. The existing City Hall Plaza will be replaced with a new hardscaped plaza upon completion of the East Link light rail station.

Interstate 405 & the Wilburton Commercial Area

Wilburton Commercial Area

Historically referred to as "Auto Row" the Wilburton Commercial Area straddles the 116th Avenue NE corridor between SE 5th Street and NE 12th Street. Land uses are commercial in nature, and the intensity

of use is low. The opportunity for this area as a more urban neighborhood is created through local and regional investments in a number of planned transportation infrastructure improvements. By 2023 the Wilburton East Link light rail station will provide service at the northern end of the study area. Additionally the East Main, Downtown, Wilburton, and Spring District stations will ensure that the entire study area will be within a transit walkshed. As a complement to the enhanced transit service, the Eastside Rail Corridor will provide a non-motorized north-south spine through the entire study area and connecting to regional destinations and facilities such as the I-90 Trail/Mountains to Sound Greenway and the SR 520 Trail. The Grand Connection is anticipated to interface with the Eastside Rail Corridor and provide an east-west connection to Downtown.

Combined with the planned transportation improvements, the Wilburton Commercial Area is positioned between two high growth urban areas in Bellevue - Downtown and BelRed. This advantageous context plus exceptional mobility access create the opportunity for the Wilburton Commercial Area to become a new urban neighborhood. To explore opportunities and to capitalize on this unique context, the City has launched a land use, urban design, transportation, and environmental analysis of the study area. This process is intended to create the new vision that will include analysis and recommendations to zoning, urban design, transportation, and open space. The analysis is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2018. The Interstate 405 crossing alternatives, part of the Grand Connection visioning, will be assessed through the Wilburton Commercial Area Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process to assist in selecting a preferred alternative.

The City owns the centrally located parcel known as Lincoln Center. It is located between I-405 and 116th Avenue NE and was the previous home of Impact Hub Bellevue, an entrepreneur and startup facility. Sound Transit will control the northern portion of the site with East Link's aerial guide-way passing through this segment. This property is expected to be the most likely receiver of a leg of the Grand Connection that would seek to connect with 116th Avenue NE.

Interstate 405

Interstate 405 represents a large divide between Downtown Bellevue and the Wilburton Commercial Area. It is an eight lane interstate with two HOV lanes at the center. The HOV lanes, which provide direct access to NE 6th Street create ramps between NE 6th Street and NE 4th Street. This area is seen as the most likely area where the Grand Connection could span, crossing into the Wilburton Commercial Area. In addition to the center HOV ramps and lanes there are on and off ramps for NE 4th Street that also create a challenge in navigating and crossing.

There is currently consideration for extending the NE 6th Street HOV lanes into the Wilburton Commercial Area. This extension would include only 2 lanes and the extension would connect to either 116th Avenue NE or 120th Avenue NE.



▲ Interstate 405, NE 4th Street, & NE 6th Street HOV

East Link Light Rail

Just south of NE 6th Street will be the aerial guide-way for the East Link light rail. The guide-way emerges from the Downtown tunnel and Downtown station and remains south of NE 6th crossing into the Wilburton Commercial Area. As it moves east towards the Eastside Rail Corridor, it turns north onto the Eastside Rail Corridor with a station on the north side of NE 8th Street. It remains an aerial guide-way for this entire segment. East Link is expected to begin revenue operations in 2023 and will provide enhanced high capacity regional transit connections in and around the Wilburton Commercial Area.

Eastside Rail Corridor

The Eastside Rail Corridor is envisioned as a multi-use mobility, utility, and recreational corridor that will serve as a regional asset. A future non-motorized trail that will connect Woodinville to Renton. The segment through the Wilburton Commercial Area is expected to be the most heavily used segment, and represents one of the few urban locations for the trail.

As the spine of the Wilburton Commercial Area, it holds tremendous potential to transform the study area, and to also create new connections to Downtown with its Grand Connection interface. The project, often discussed as a regional version of the Atlanta BeltLine, will assist in unlocking the future potential of the Wilburton Commercial Area. Both the Grand Connection and the Eastside Rail Corridor are heavily influenced by one another, and the visioning work to date has been executed with a strong collaboration with those responsible for planning the Eastside Rail Corridor; King County. The trail is set to be completed in 2023.



▲ Eastside Rail Corridor Route from Woodinville to Renton - Image courtesy of King County



Charrette with Bellevue Arts Museum

In April of 2016 the City of Bellevue and Bellevue Arts Museum partnered to host the *Grand Connection Visioning Charrette*. The charrette capitalized on Bellevue Arts museum's landmark exhibition *Louis Kahn: The Power of Architecture*. As one of only three North American cities to host the exhibit, it served as a unique and landmark opportunity to highlight the transformational potential of design.

The exhibition encompassed an unprecedented and diverse range of architectural models, original drawings, photographs, and films. All of Kahn's important projects were extensively documented - from his early urban planning concepts and single-family houses to monumental late works such as the Roosevelt Memorial in New York City, posthumously completed in October 2012.

Louis Kahn believed the city to be a laboratory. It is through this lens that the City and Museum collaborated to create an event that celebrated design, transformation, and Bellevue as an urban laboratory.

The charrette was a three day event that included over 70 architects, artists, engineers, planners, and urban designers. They were tasked with developing concepts and ideas for the Grand Connection. At the time of the charrette the City possessed very few graphic materials to exhibit the potential of the Grand Connection. The results of the charrette served an important role in helping to visualize concepts and intents, and also planting some of the early seeds of design that would be explored in the visioning process. It provided tangible ideas that the public could respond to, and understand the vision of the project despite being many months away from exhibiting visioning concepts. The charrette also worked to develop early support and constructive feedback from stakeholders and the public to assist in crafting a vision that would

be embraced by the business community and residents alike.

Participants in the charrette were separated into eight teams and were given two assignments. Recognizing the diverse set of challenges that embody the Grand Connection, the assignments reflected the small and large scale challenges that exist. The first assignment separated the route between Meydenbauer Bay and the Meydenbauer Convention Center, into four distinct segments. Each team was asked to develop an identity, cohesive design strategies, and propose public space improvements for their segment of the route.

The second assignment was to consider the new infrastructure that would cross Interstate 405 and interface with the Wilburton Commercial Area and the Eastside Rail Corridor. This assignment considered how to create a connection and place across the interstate and how the non-motorized connections of the Eastside Rail Corridor and Grand Connection would intersect.

Over 70 architects, artists, engineers, planners, and urban designers developed concepts and visions for the Grand Connection.

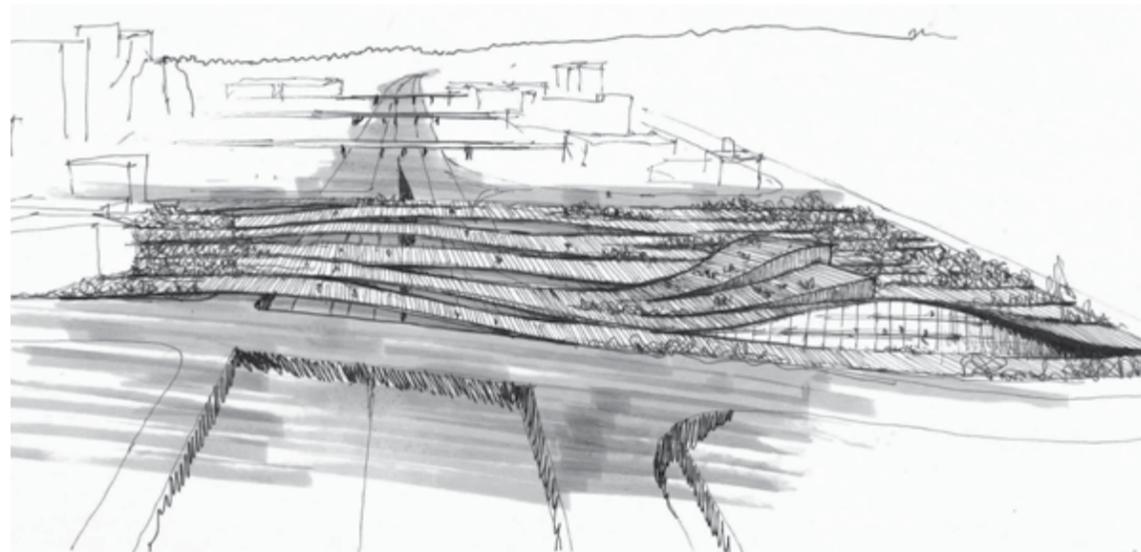
The charrette produced a range of results that pushed the boundaries of what was thought to be possible and re-imagined connectivity and Downtown Bellevue. These ideas provided an opportunity for local input and regional sensitivity to the project while also beginning a dialogue around areas that were previously not considered as part of the project.

The charrette concluded with a public open house that allowed participants to exhibit their work and present to the public and stakeholders. Charles Montgomery, author of the book *Happy City: Transforming Our Lives Through Urban Design*, provided an inspiring speech on the benefits of improving non-motorized connectivity and creating a sense of place and pride in the City of Bellevue.

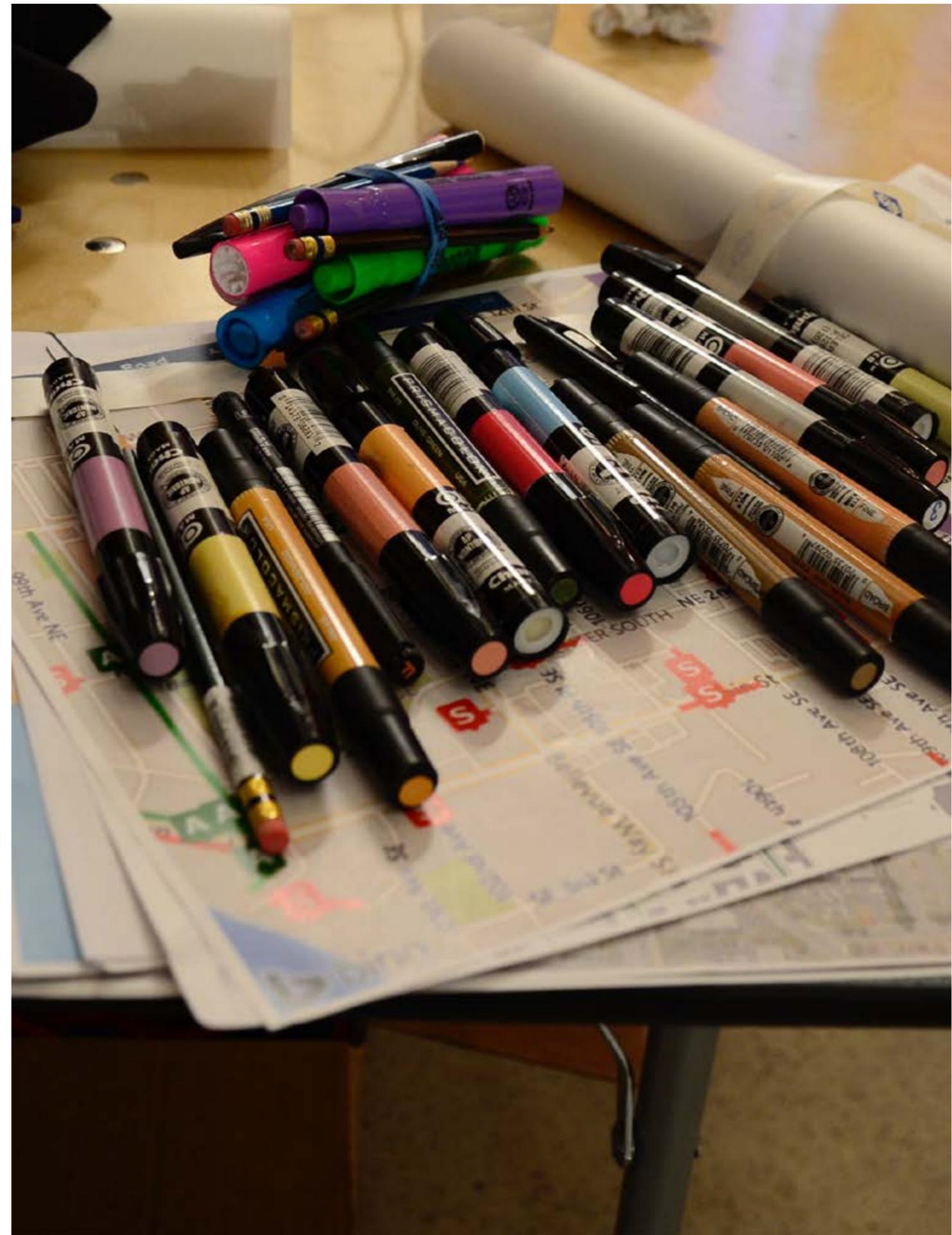
Following the open house a positive dialogue continued with the public and stakeholders. The charrette exhibited the creative nature of the project through a dynamic, flexible, and inspiring visioning process. Stakeholders and the public continued to provide opportunities for collaboration and

constructive ideas that would assist in crafting a vision that earned the buy in and support from the community.

The charrette was an integral moment in the Grand Connection visioning process, providing some of the first illustrative ideas of the project, the production of a book highlighting the ideas developed during the charrette, and the launching of a project specific website. The energy and passion of the charrette participants set the tone of excitement and new ideas for the future of the project. Their ideas and concepts continue to influence future recommendations for the project and the charrette continues to serve as a significant reference point for the project.



▲ Interstate 405 Crossing Concept from the Grand Connection Visioning Charrette - Drawing by Omar Al Hassawi - Washington State University



Public Engagement



Public Engagement

Overview

The Grand Connection is a large scale placemaking and planning initiative that holds the potential for a sweeping new vision for public space and connectivity. It also affects businesses, residents, and visitors to Bellevue. In order to craft a vision that builds community and stakeholder support, a robust public engagement strategy was developed. This strategy included conventional outreach methods of interviews with the public and stakeholders, and also pursued new strategies to reach a broader audience that was representative of Bellevue’s population. Many of the new strategies relied on web and technology distribution in an effort to acquire responses in a timely and efficient manner while reaching the largest audience possible. The City will continue its engagement following the release of this plan by distributing this information via various means and outlets.



Interviews
 Kate Forrester of Herrera Environmental Consultants interviews patrons at the Compass Plaza food trucks to better understand how they would use improved public spaces. Interviews were also conducted at the Downtown Park and Transit Center.



Engagement Map
 A fourteen foot by six foot map in Bellevue City Hall collected hundreds of comments on what residents would like to see incorporated as part of the Grand Connection. The map, featured on *King 5* news, was replicated as an online tool.



Youth Engagement
 Students of Bellevue’s Big Picture High School develop ideas on how they would use the Grand Connection and how to make Downtown a more attractive destination for teenagers.

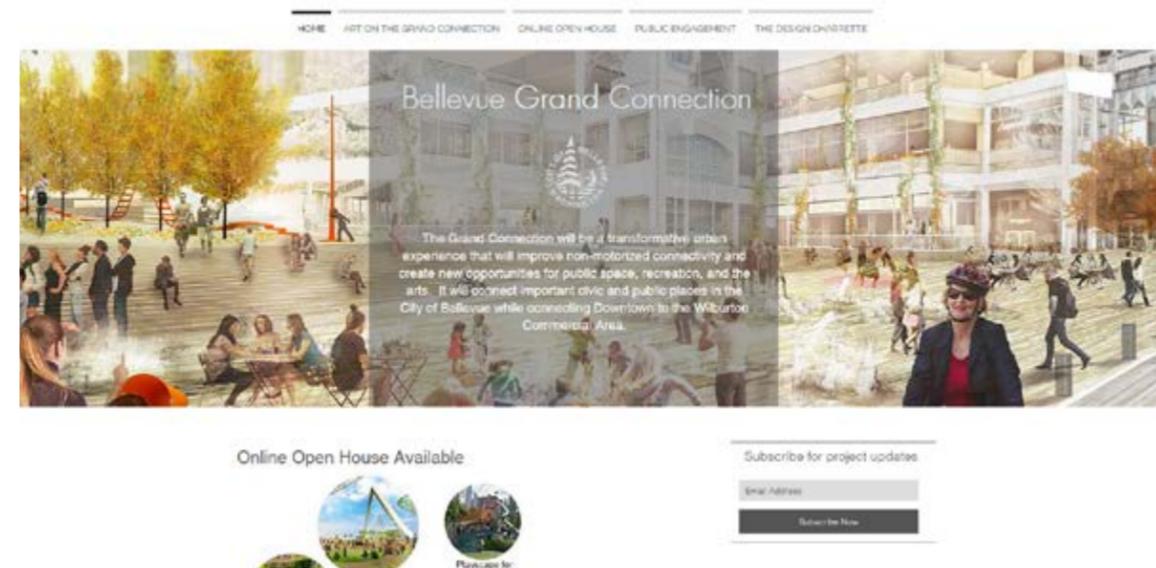


Tactical Urbanism
 Attendees of the *Enliven Wilburton!* event tell the City and King County what they imagine for the future of the Grand Connection, Eastside Rail Corridor, and Wilburton Commercial Area.

Website

As a graphic intensive project, the City launched a project specific website to best illustrate the work. This website began with the intent of showcasing the results of the charrette with Bellevue Arts Museum and as a means to quickly exhibit the creative energy around the event while a print publication was in production. Following the completion of significant work related to the Downtown segment of the Grand Connection the website transitioned to focusing more on the visioning process and became a resource for online open houses, public feedback and input, and surveys.

The website has become an essential part of the visioning process. It became the primary means to showcase the visioning process, while engaging an audience that is less likely to visit City Hall for in person open houses. At the time of this report the website has been viewed over 7,000 times, in 46 different countries, and 40 states. Additionally, nearly 100 comments were submitted in response to the design proposals and recommendations along the route. The City also used the website to distribute online polls and surveys, discussed later in this document.



▲ Grand Connection Website Homepage

Interviews

Throughout the visioning process City staff and consultants employed various forms of engagement that attempted to reach a broad and diverse audience. In support of these efforts it was also important to understand what users of the existing spaces hoped to see from the visioning process. The design team visited strategic locations that are currently heavily used such as Downtown Park, Compass Plaza, the food trucks, and the Bellevue Transit Center to pose a series of questions on how people currently use these spaces, how they would like to see them improved, and what might encourage them to use the spaces at alternative times of the day, week, and seasons.

Interviews were also conducted with key stakeholders along the route to better understand their interests in improving public space and to begin former partnerships and opportunities for collaboration.

Common Interview Responses:

Compass Plaza

- Covered seating areas
- Farmers Market
- Music and live performances
- Child friendly
- Conflict free bicycle route
- Landscaping

Downtown Park

- Weather protection
- Food kiosks
- Food trucks
- Performance space
- More play areas
- Weekend market
- Cultural events
- More seating

Transit Center

- Better wayfinding
- More seating
- Food and beverage options
- Bike share
- Play area
- Art
- Integrated technology



▲ Interviews with Users of Key Public Spaces in Downtown Bellevue - Images courtesy of Herrera

Engagement Map

As part of the charrette open house the consultant team installed a fourteen foot by six foot map in the Bellevue Arts Museum Gallery. The map was installed so that attendees could post comments on their priorities and visions for the Grand Connection. The comments were categorized by; what is needed on the route, what existing elements they like about the route, and places where it is dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists.

Following the charrette, the map was installed in the Bellevue City Hall concourse, capturing a large audience that visits City Hall daily. In support of the physical map an interactive online version was launched on the project website. A combined total of over 300 comments were received on the maps, and the City Hall map received coverage by *King 5* news.

The comments generated via the maps largely related to places that could be improved for pedestrian and cyclist safety, new opportunities for programming, and celebrating some of the existing features that people enjoyed.

A large number of the comments were focused on improving opportunities for programming at the Downtown Park. These comments included festivals, food trucks, and more active uses in and around the park. There were also several comments that wanted to preserve many of the passive features and spaces in the Downtown Park. There was broad support and desire to encourage the Bellevue Arts Museum to engage and open to the existing Pedestrian Corridor, in an effort to better integrate art into the built environment and urban fabric.

The farmer's market was also a highly popular subject on the maps. Those that commented regarding the farmer's market wanted to see a permanent home in Compass Plaza, and in a space that was oriented more towards people. Enhancing the park-like experience of the city through additional vegetation and green space was also a highly popular comment.

Over 300 comments were received from the online and City Hall engagement maps.



▲ Attendees of the Grand Connection Visioning Charrette Leave Comments on the Engagement Map



▲ Grand Connection Engagement Map Installed in Bellevue City Hall

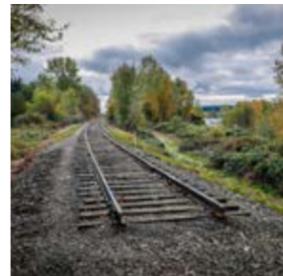


▲ Summary of Engagement Comments by Location - Image by Herrera

Tactical Urbanism and Events

With some elements of the project requiring long term commitments for change it became essential to demonstrate to stakeholders and residents the potential for the project. King County and the City partnered to host the *Enliven Wilburton!* event to demonstrate the potential of the Eastside Rail Corridor and the Grand Connection interface. A late fall cafe was established at this potential intersection for one evening, and nearly 200 residents, stakeholders, and other interested members of the public assisted in activating the trail as a future public space and key intersection.

Despite an evening of rain, attendees filled the space to enjoy music, food, beverage, and exercises that allowed participants to convey their image of the two projects, as well as the future of the Wilburton Commercial Area. The event, intended to become an annual celebration, sparked a number of other concepts for inexpensive programming improvements to public space, discussed in the implementation section of this document.



Existing Conditions

The existing conditions of the Eastside Rail Corridor prior to the event.



Temporary Improvements

The rails were covered to provide accessibility to all attendees and created an experience as they entered the event, showcasing the work completed to date for the Grand Connection, Eastside Rail Corridor, and Wilburton Commercial Area.



Public Participation

The event brought residents, stakeholders, and other interested parties of all ages to realize the potential of the intersection of the two projects.



A Big Party

Attendees enjoyed live music, food, beverage, conversation, and activities that helped to visualize the future of this important intersection.

Surveys and Polls

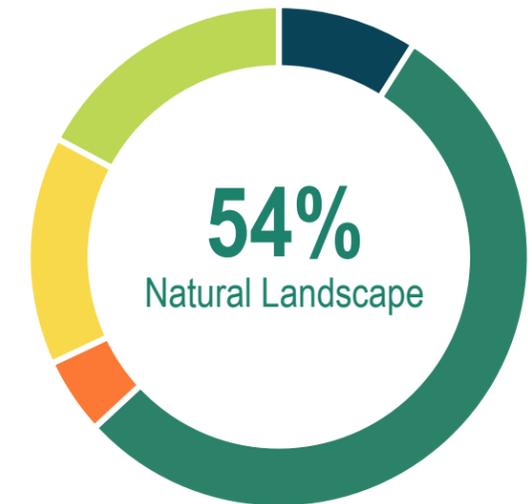
Surveys and polls were administered during the visioning process to help inform the process. These polls and surveys were distributed through the project website and allowed the design team and staff to collect feedback and input from the public in a relatively short amount of time, allowing the design team to be responsive and flexible during the visioning process.

The surveys conducted helped inform ideas related to art and culture, the overall identity of the route, and cohesive design strategies such as paving. Additional surveys will be made available as part of this framework plan.

Route Identity

The route identity will establish the aesthetic quality and experience of the Grand Connection. Three overall route identities were recommended as part of the visioning process, described in Chapter Four. As part of the survey process the City asked respondents to identify their preference for the Grand Connection identity. Respondents selected from the three primary identities established as part of the visioning process; a natural landscape, a playful landscape, and a collaborative historical landscape. Additionally, choices were offered for technology and a category defined as other.

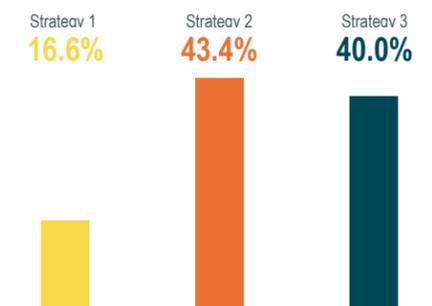
A total of 122 respondents answered the one question poll hosted on the project website for one month. The identity of natural landscape was the overwhelming favorite, earning more than 50 percent of responses. The category of other was a distant second and was a combination of unrelated comments, art, and connectivity. Following other, technology received 15% support and history and playfulness both receiving less than 10% support.



What should be the Grand Connection identity?

Paving Strategies

Similar to the one question poll regarding identity, the City conducted a poll regarding the preference of paving strategies. Described in Chapter Five, each paving strategy seeks to create a distinct contiguous aesthetic quality along the route. The three options presented included a mixture of hardscape and landscape options that responded to the urban and natural surrounding context



Which paving strategy do you prefer?

Art Survey

An essential goal of the Grand Connection is to enhance opportunities for art and culture in Bellevue. To better understand the forms of art and culture residents, workers, visitors, and stakeholders would like to see, the City and consultant launched an online preference survey.

The survey was intended to capture perceptions of public art in Bellevue, where respondents would like to see art installations and events, and the type of installations and events. A preference survey was included that provided a range of images intended to represent various mediums of art and culture, and to capture a snapshot of preferred styles. Additionally the survey sought to better understand what existing cultural events respondents preferred, and that if they were not engaged in existing events, to better understand what the barriers of entry or interest may be.

A total of 321 respondents took the survey during a five week period. A majority of respondents were Bellevue residents, 58 percent, with 24 percent of the respondents being visitors of Bellevue, and 18 percent employed in the city. The City employed multiple subscriber lists, social media outreach, and targeted groups to solicit their input.

The majority of respondents did not feel that Bellevue had strong art and cultural offerings. This was true amongst all age groups with the exception of those over the age of 65. Those under 25 were evenly split on their satisfaction with existing art and cultural offerings. The least satisfied age group were those between the ages of 35 to 44, followed closely by those ages 55 to 65.

Respondents had a strong preference for art to be implemented at the Downtown Park and Pedestrian Corridor (Bellevue Way to 106th Avenue NE). They also voiced a strong support for supporting activities to occur in the park and utilizing the urban landscape as a canvas for art installations.

Respondents were also asked about a number of existing events related to art in Bellevue and whether they attended. They were also asked about their feelings towards the events or why they have not attended. This allowed the City to identify barriers to participation. The most common barriers included:

- The quality or relevance of the art or events;
- Awareness of events
- Overall mobility; including but not limited to transit, parking, or congestion.

A summary of the art and culture plan can be found in Chapter 6 *Art and the Grand Connection* and as a separate, full report.

Do you feel Bellevue has strong art and cultural offerings?

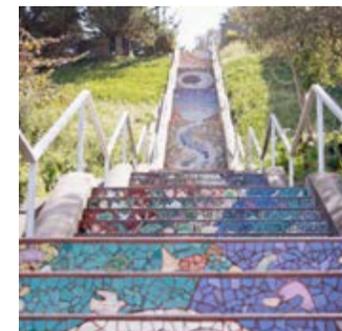
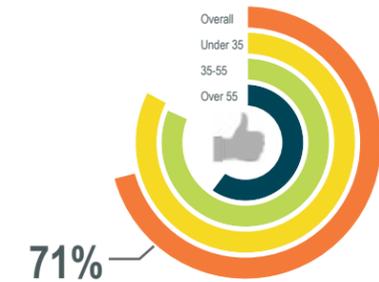


Visual Preference Results



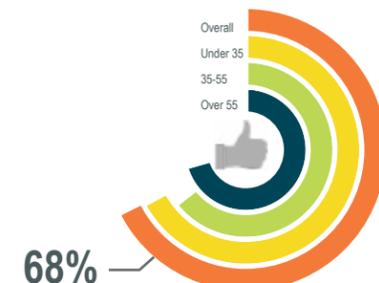
The Sequence
by Arne Quinze

A wooden art installation in Brussels that bridges the gap between the Flemish parliament and the House of Flemish Representatives. The wooden structure engages the buildings on opposing sides while creating a sense of enclosure to the street below. People regularly visit the street and the sculpture to experience how it changes the character of the street and the urban environment.



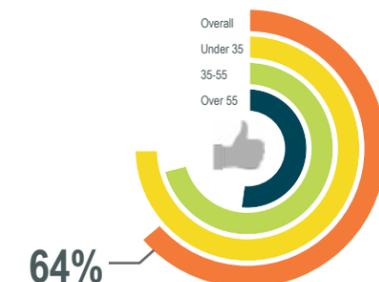
16th Avenue Tiled Stairs
by Aileen Barr and Colette Crutcher

The 163 risers are clad with mosaic tiles that 300 neighbors assisted in creating over a two and a half year period. The sea-to-sky design incorporates 2,000 handmade tiles and over 75,000 fragments of tile. The project was sponsored by the San Francisco Trust and supported by the Golden Gate Heights Neighborhood Association.



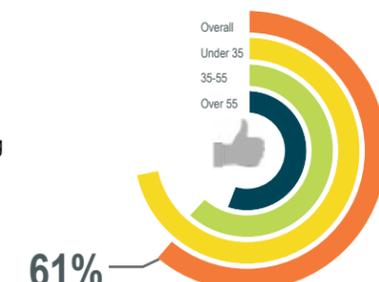
Skies Painted with Unnumbered Sparks
by Janet Echelman

The interactive sculpture was installed at the TED Conference's 30th anniversary in Vancouver, B.C. It spanned 745 feet, and the lighting could be choreographed in real time using physical gestures on participants' mobile devices. The project embodies art and technology and is made of a complex matrix of 145 miles of braided fiber.



Tetris
Tel Aviv City Hall

The Tel Aviv City Hall was outfitted with a 32,000 square foot screen made of 480 LED lights. Two five feet tall joysticks controlled the game of Tetris on the building facade. Other games included *Pong* and *Snake* and was made available for the public to play every Thursday night. The installation was in advance of the DLD Tel Aviv Innovation Festival.



Youth Engagement

Much of the public engagement conducted during the project focused on stakeholders, businesses, and residents of Bellevue. To better understand how the future of Bellevue might use the Grand Connection the City conducted a mini work session with Bellevue's Big Picture High School. This work session provided an opportunity to gain insights from Bellevue's youth and how they experience Downtown Bellevue.

The work session began with a brief presentation, followed by a series of prompting questions related to the students' engagement with Downtown Bellevue and their thoughts on how the Grand Connection can improve the City. This was followed by break out work sessions where students brainstormed ideas. Some of the key ideas that emerged from the work sessions included (ranked by popularity):

- Art
- Food and Food Trucks
- Public Games
- Water Features
- More and Playgrounds
- More Vegetation and Natural Elements

Many of the students' concepts paralleled those of stakeholders and other residents. Additionally the students desired more activities and events that were low or no cost that would encourage them to engage more with Downtown Bellevue.

Following the work sessions with Big Picture School, the City's planning intern, Oliver Tjalve, crafted a survey aimed at soliciting additional responses from Bellevue's High School students. The survey asked questions related to current engagement with

Downtown Bellevue, as well as improvements that the students felt it needed to be more engaging for youth.

Student Survey Responses:

- 42%** Stated there were a lack of things to do in Downtown Bellevue for youth.
- 37%** Stated that activities in Downtown were too expensive for youth.
- 61%** Stated that more activities and more free activities would encourage visits to Downtown.
- 21%** Stated that better pedestrian and cyclist facilities were needed to encourage their visits to Downtown.



▲ Big Picture High School Students sketch and brainstorm their ideas for the Grand Connection

Online Open Houses

To reach the largest audience possible, the City hosted several online open houses to exhibit the work completed during the Grand Connection visioning process. The first online open house focused on elements such as route identity, cohesive design strategies, and public space improvements from Meydenbauer Bay to the Bellevue Transit Center. The second online open house focused on additional public space improvements, alternative transportation and connectivity options, and early concepts for the Interstate 405 crossing. The third online open house for the refined concepts for the Interstate 405 crossing will follow the release of this plan.

Each online open house drew nearly 2,000 views and over 100 public comments. The one question polls were also released simultaneously to capture the open house audience and provide additional feedback. At the end of the visioning process a public open house will be held at Bellevue City Hall and presented to key stakeholder groups and resident associations, along with an abbreviated version of this document.

Sample of public comments received during the online open houses:

- *"I am glad to see the progress of the Grand Connection. It's good to see the city think and act big. We've been a timid sort of town for years that's done things carefully and conservatively...it's encouraging to see the city considering the needs of cyclists, pedestrians, and transit."*
- *"Please add small play areas, especially between the museum and the transit center, and further into Wilburton."*
- *"I think more amenities like this will add a lot of value into Bellevue."*

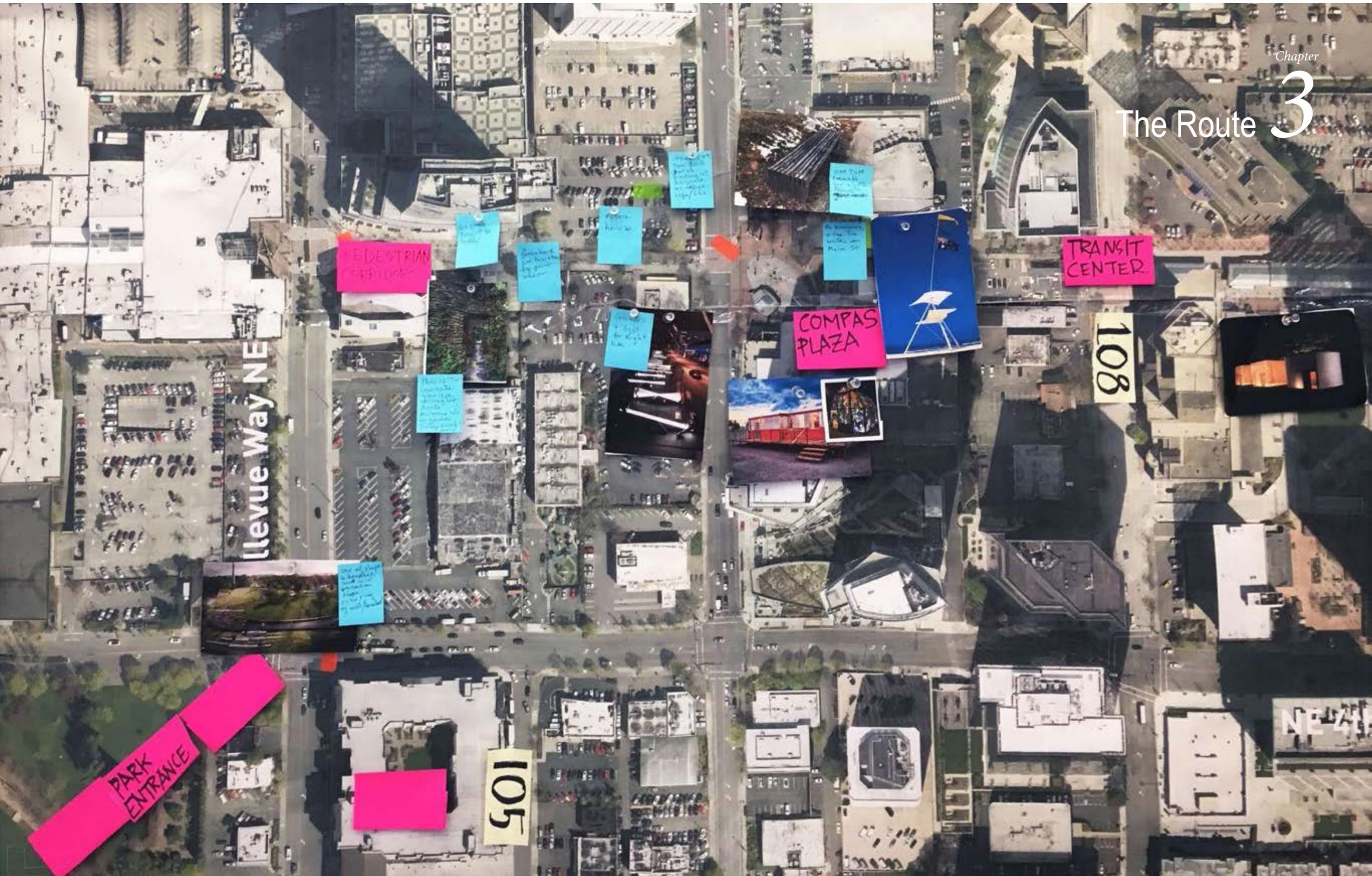
- *"My hope is that it will increase the amount of green space and art, and provide more shared community areas."*
- *"I think that it is important that the citizens take advantage of the Grand Connection 365 days of the year - rain or shine."*
- *"I am excited to see the development of east/west connections in Bellevue as it is currently not possible to cross I-405 by pedestrians and bikes, cutting our city in two."*
- *"One of the major issues I have always had with the overall area is the lack of native trees throughout the city."*
- *"So glad that the Grand Connection could eventually go to the Botanical Gardens!"*
- *"Currently Downtown Bellevue is outright hostile to pedestrians. When designing a solution for this I would love to see mixed uses not unlike a pedestrian zone in European inner cities."*

Other Engagement

The City engaged in a number of other opportunities to speak with and exhibit work to civic organizations, neighborhood associations, media engagements, and other infrastructure and planning initiatives. These included:

- 425 Business
- Bellevue Chamber of Commerce
- Bellevue Downtown Association
- Business and Economic Forums
- Congress for New Urbanism
- Daily Journal of Commerce
- King 5 News
- Puget Sound Business Journal
- Sound Transit Outreach Events
- Woodridge Neighborhood Association

The Route



Llevue Way NE

TRANSIT CENTER

COMPAS PLAZA

108

105

PARK ENTRANCE

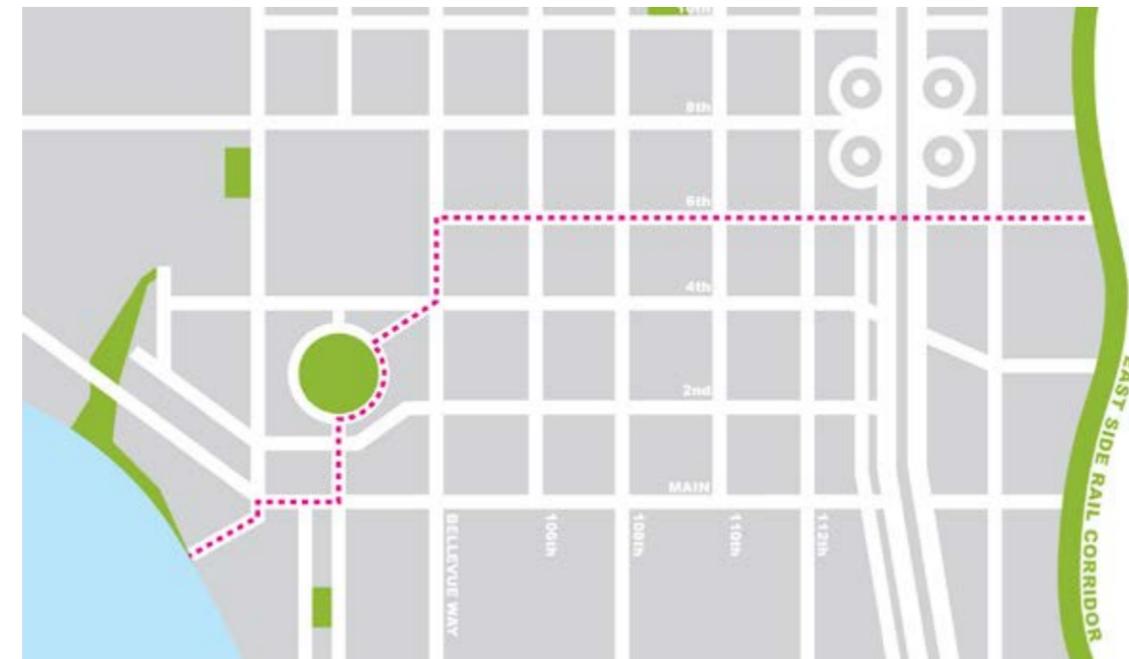
PEDESTRIAN

The Route

Overview

The initial concept for the Grand Connection route is to connect Meydenbauer Bay, Old Bellevue, the Pedestrian Corridor, Downtown Bellevue, and the Wilburton Commercial Area to the Eastside Rail Corridor. The route will link Bellevue's waterfront to Downtown while also connecting important existing and future civic and public assets. The extension across Interstate 405 would heal the divide created by and create new development opportunities for the Wilburton Commercial Area. Its interface with the Eastside Rail Corridor will enhance the network of non-motorized connections and to provide access to Downtown Bellevue from points north and south along the Eastside Rail Corridor.

The early concept of the route addressed important elements to connect and to provide access, but did not address the precise route by streets. The following recommendations offer precise locations for the primary route, connecting Meydenbauer Bay to the Eastside Rail Corridor, as well as a secondary route recommendation that expands and enhances connectivity with other regional trail networks, and pursues a secondary route that links additional assets in Downtown Bellevue and the Wilburton Commercial Area.



▲ Initial Route for the Grand Connection - Image by SuttonBeresCuller

Primary Route

The primary route for the Grand Connection seeks to create a seamless connection between many of Bellevue's important assets. The route begins at Meydenbauer Bay Park and navigates 100th Avenue NE to provide access from the waterfront to Main Street and Old Bellevue. The route continues east on Main Street to 102nd Avenue NE, where it turns north and connects with the primary southern entrance of the Downtown Park. Using the existing promenade of the Downtown Park, the route exits at the northeast corner of the park at the intersection of Bellevue Way and NE 4th Street, where the route continues north on Bellevue Way to NE 6th Street. The route turns east at NE 6th Street and includes the Pedestrian Corridor to the Transit Center. The route continues along the south side of the Transit Center and extends across Interstate 405, ultimately interfacing with the Eastside Rail Corridor.

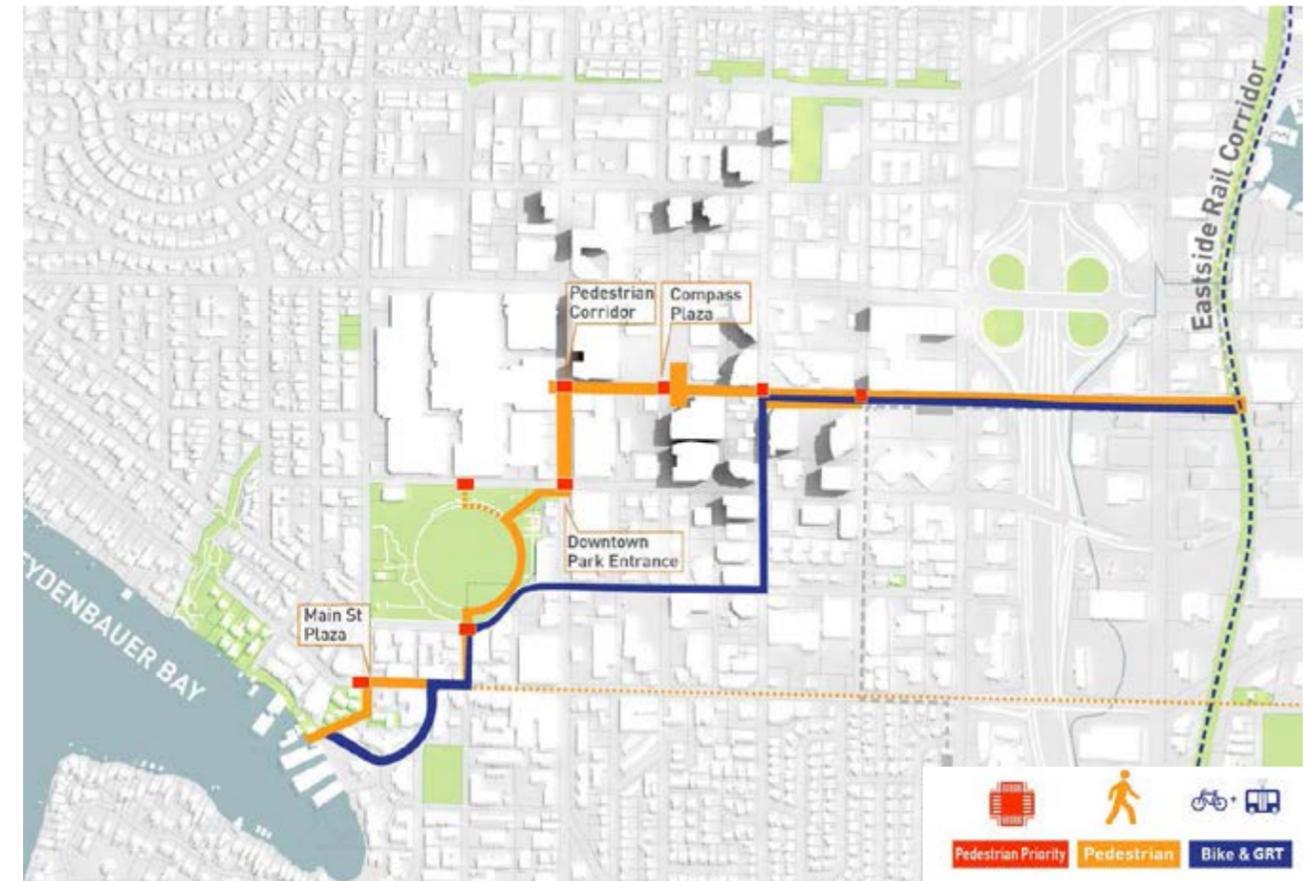
The primary route connects the important assets outlined in the vision for the Grand Connection, including; Meydenbauer Bay Park, Old Bellevue, the

Downtown Park, the Pedestrian Corridor, Bellevue Transit Center, Civic Center District, Wilburton Commercial Area, and the Eastside Rail Corridor.

Significant grade changes exist along much of the route, as well as spatial limitations. In response, the recommendation was made to include a route that deviated from the mainline of the Grand Connection, beginning at 108th Avenue NE. This alternative route would provide access for bicycle commuters and potential alternative modes of transportation covered later in this document. While bicycles would not be prohibited between 108th Avenue NE and the Downtown Park, the alternative route allows for safe and efficient movement of bicycles until the route reconnects with the mainline at 102nd Avenue NE and NE 2nd Street. To address the grade challenges between Old Bellevue and Meydenbauer Bay Park, the route splits again at Meydenbauer Way SE in order to navigate the planned entrance to Meydenbauer Bay Park at 100th Avenue SE and its terraced entry.



▲ Rendering of Meydenbauer Bay Park's Entrance Looking West from 100th Avenue and Main Street



▲ Primary Grand Connection Route - Image by Balmori Associates

Secondary Route

The secondary route seeks to build upon the connectivity of the primary route by linking more of Bellevue's green assets. The most significant change is the inclusion of Main Street as a secondary route. This expansion, first suggested through public comment, would connect with Wilburton Hill Park and the Botanical Garden. Through the online and physical engagement map, the City heard the importance of these green assets and making them part of a larger network or public space. Including Main Street as a secondary route would link the Grand Connection with the Lake to Lake Trail with potential aesthetic and public space improvements that complement the primary route.

To the west, the route is also expanded to include all of the future Meydenbauer Bay Beach Park and extending into the nearby neighborhoods to form a connection along NE 4th Street and the northern entry to the Downtown Park. Ultimately the route would include the entire Downtown Park promenade. The expansions to include all of the future Meydenbauer Bay Park and Main Street also seek to capitalize on future independent City projects such as the park expansion and improvements to Main Street that support the overall vision of the Grand Connection improving mobility and connectivity while linking together Bellevue's public assets.

The expansion of the route was also supported by an Urban Land Institute National Advisory panel that conducted an analysis of the Wilburton Commercial Area in May of 2016. Their recommendation was to expand the route to connect Bellevue's "green assets" that could be enhanced by technology to support and showcase the local economy and businesses.

Public Input

Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety

Improved safety for cyclists and pedestrians was a top priority for public engagement respondents. The expansion of the route, and including a dedicate bike route, creates opportunities to improve the safety of more routes and corridors for cyclists and pedestrians.

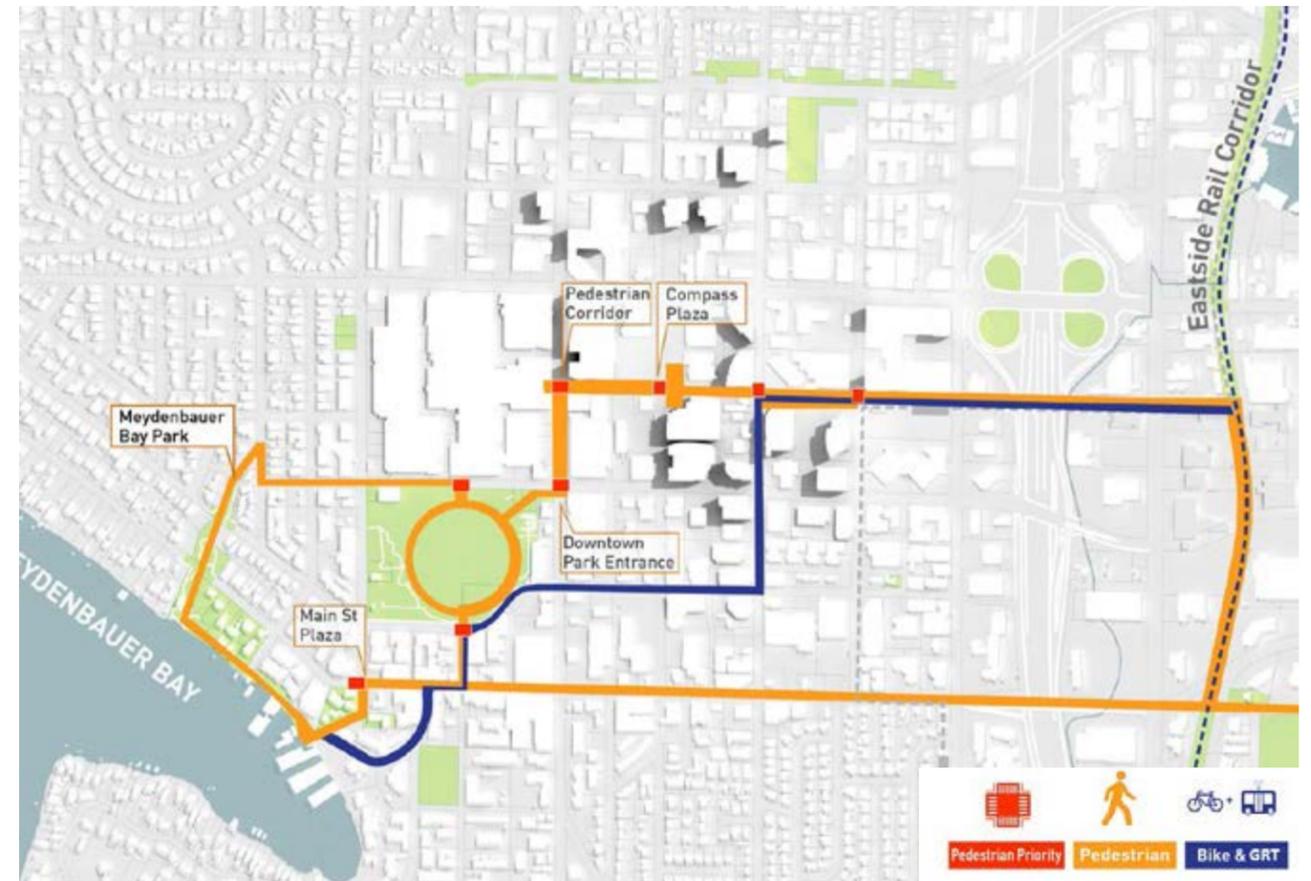
Bellevue Botanical Garden

The Botanical Garden was perceived as a key asset to the City and a unique opportunity to integrate this beloved public space as a destination for the project. Connecting to the Botanical Garden ranked as one of the most frequent comments received during public engagement.



Next Steps:

- Study impacts of the alternative transportation route and its impact on existing and proposed infrastructure and initiatives. Consider other potential alternatives as options for the alternative transportation route.
- Explore feasibility of secondary route on Main Street and its potential impacts and continuity with existing City plans and initiatives such as the Lake to Lake Trail.
- Study impacts of the route expansion north and west of Meydenbauer Bay Park.
- Evaluate potential to connect route to the Wilburton Hill Park and Botanical Garden.



▲ Primary, Secondary and Expanded Grand Connection Route - Image by Balmori Associates

Creating a Distinct Identity



Creating a Distinct Identity

Overview

To craft a contiguous urban experience signature to Bellevue, a goal was established to develop an overarching identity that would seek to unify the route from Meydenbauer Bay to the Eastside Rail Corridor. This unifying identity would establish a foundation for the route that would help define the experience and create a consistent aesthetic.

As a result, three primary identities were developed that would seek to achieve the original Council principles and goals of the Grand Connection. The selection of one of the primary strategies will establish the overarching framework and character of the route, but each identity creates an opportunity to overlay additional strategies that are responsive to context and needs of particular public spaces or goals and visions of the Grand Connection. As such, the selection of one identity does not preclude the application of other elements from the remaining identities.

Each identity was recommended based on feedback from the public engagement process. The identities also seek to extract a character that speaks to the City of Bellevue and reflects elements of local character and principles that can be strengthened and enhanced.

The identity is to also assist in creating the unique urban experience that serves as a core principle to the Grand Connection.



▲ **Natural Landscape - Railroad Park - Birmingham, Alabama - Macknally Land Design**



▲ **Playful Landscape - Boston, Massachusetts - Swing Time by Howeler Yoon**



▲ **Collaborative - Union Street Urban Orchard - London, United Kingdom - Heather Ring**

Natural Landscape (Primary)

The natural landscape seeks to infuse nature into the city. This identity prioritizes natural elements such as vegetation, water retention and runoff, and limited focus on wildlife such as birds.

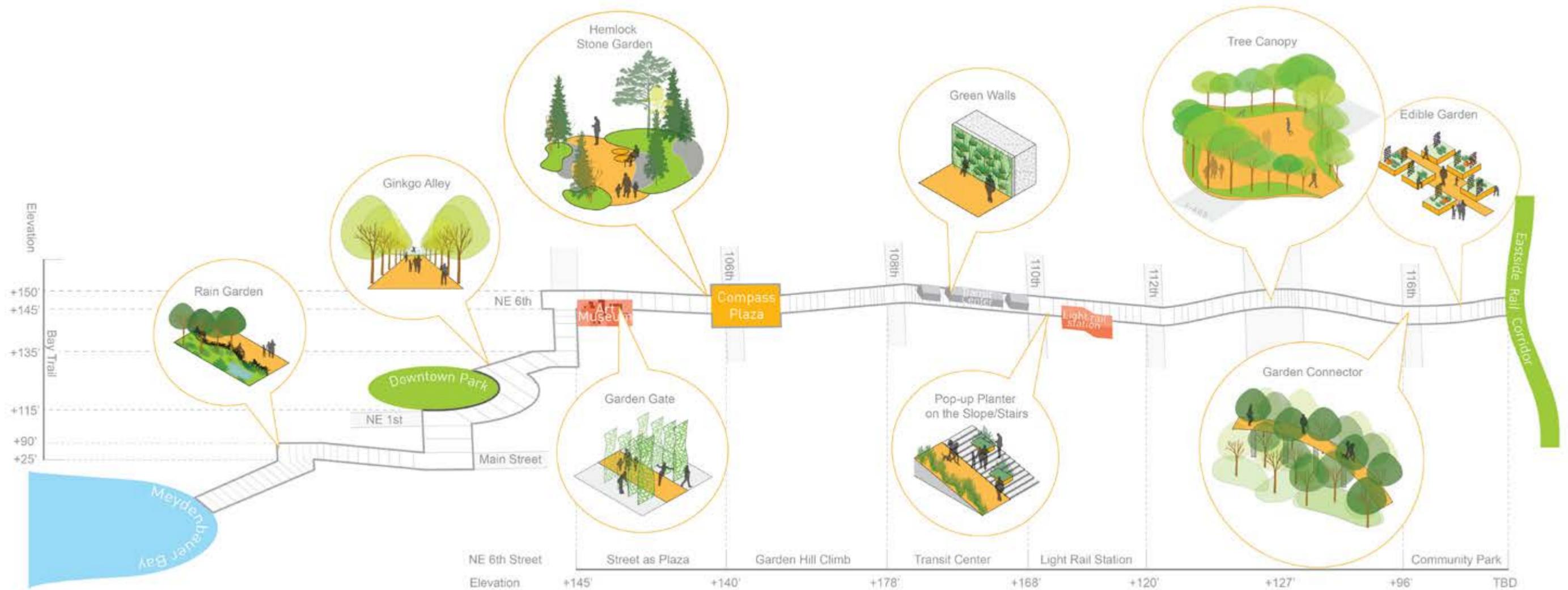
The natural landscape identity seeks to infuse green space and vegetation as a core principle by enhancing public spaces with vegetation and green space, through traditional and more innovative means. It also responds to the confined urban context by considering

vertical implementation of greenscape through walls, trellises and other elements that soften and improve the urban hardscape.

While some green spaces seek to enhance existing urban conditions, others intend to create a respite from the urban environment and create unique public spaces that exhibit the region's natural beauty.

Key Features and Strategies:

- Rain Gardens
- Allee of Trees
- Garden Gateways
- Green Walls
- Enhanced Tree Canopy
- Community Gardens
- Pop-up Vegetation Improvements



Playful Landscape (Supplementary)

The playful landscape seeks to introduce whimsy and delight into the urban environment for users of all ages.

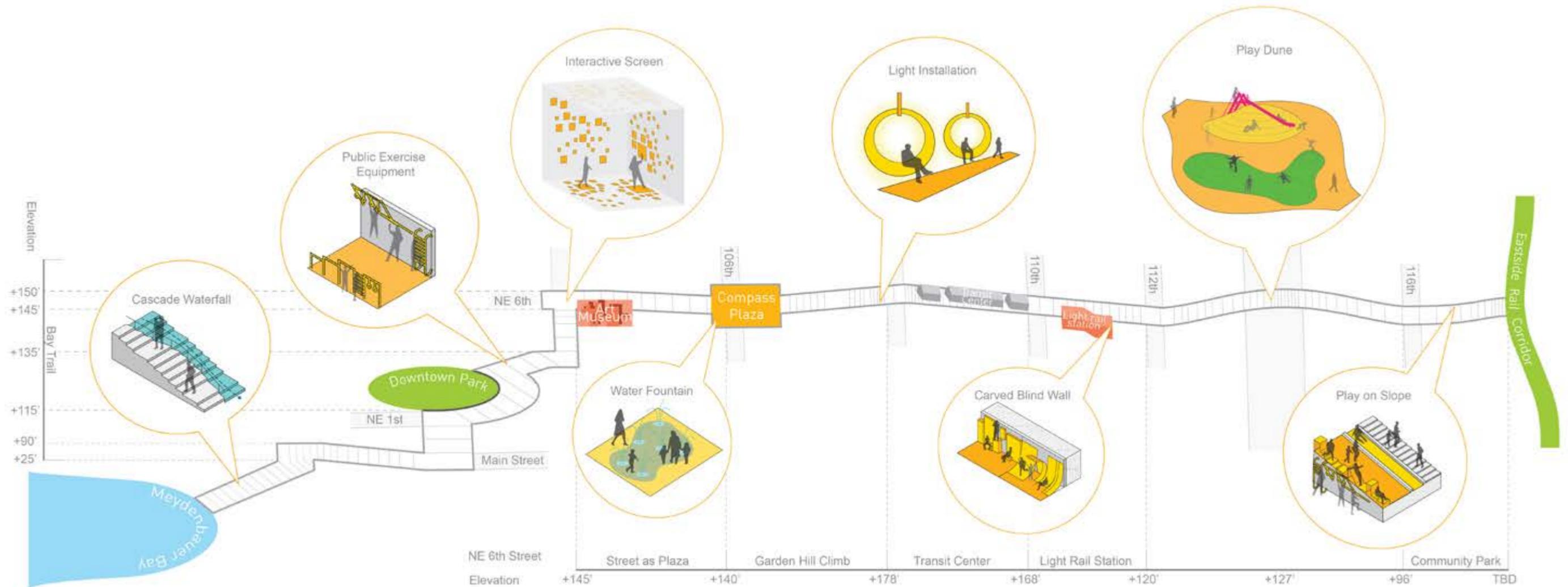
Play would be utilized to enliven spaces and make them more active, while introducing new ways to engage with and participate in the urban environment. Play elements would build upon the existing context such as water based features near Meydenbauer Bay Park, technology and interactive features in the

Downtown core, and installations and improvements that capitalize on Bellevue's topography, while improving public spaces for Bellevue's growing Downtown family population.

Ultimately a playful landscape would seek to activate the public space in a more lively and interactive means, applicable to residents and users of all ages.

Key Features and Strategies:

- Cascade Waterfalls
- Public Exercise Equipment
- Interactive Screens and Projections
- Illuminated Installations
- Water Fountains and Features
- Playgrounds
- Public Swings



Collaborative and Historical Landscape (Supplementary)

The collaborative and historical landscape seeks to create spaces that bring people together in new ways, celebrating elements of Bellevue's history and the history being made. The improved public spaces will create experiences for learning, discovery, and creativity.

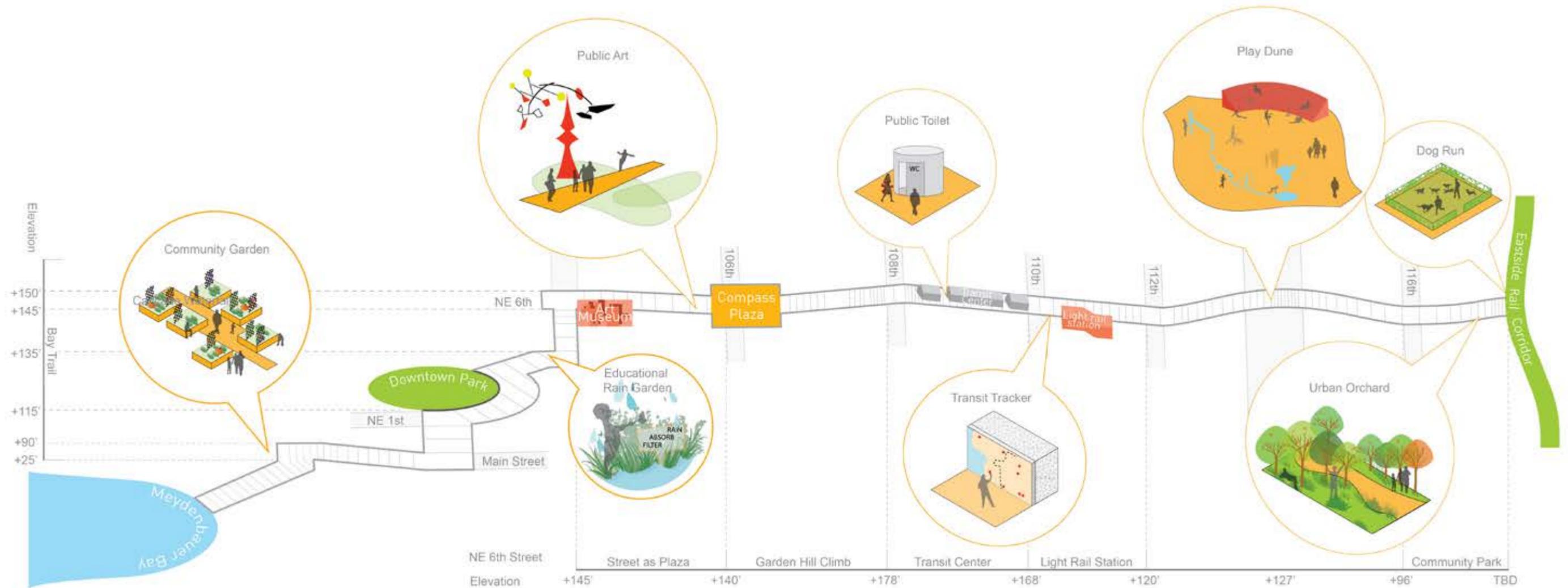
Historical elements would speak to Bellevue's history of agriculture through urban community gardens and orchards. These public spaces would also seek

to educate and create a forum for Bellevue's diverse demographics.

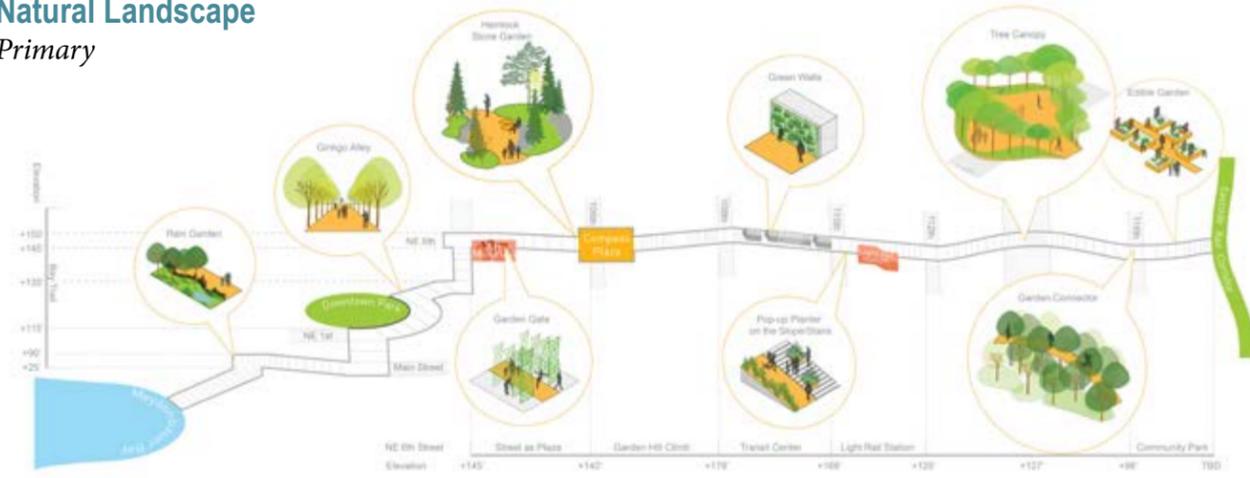
Other public spaces would seek to showcase the technology innovations developing in Bellevue such as gaming, virtual reality, and other advances. These spaces could also include artistic installations that can teach and exhibit Bellevue's creative economy, history, diversity, and environment in unique and innovative ways.

Key Features and Strategies:

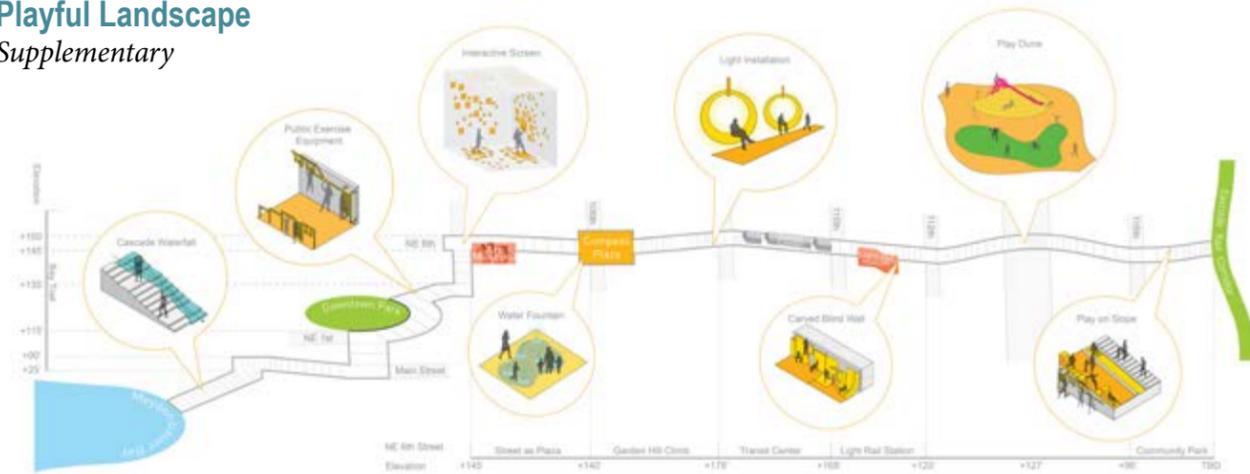
- Art installations that educate about the environment and history
- Community Gardens
- Public Art Displays
- Technology Showcase
- Standard urban amenities that are re-imagined as unique and creative installations



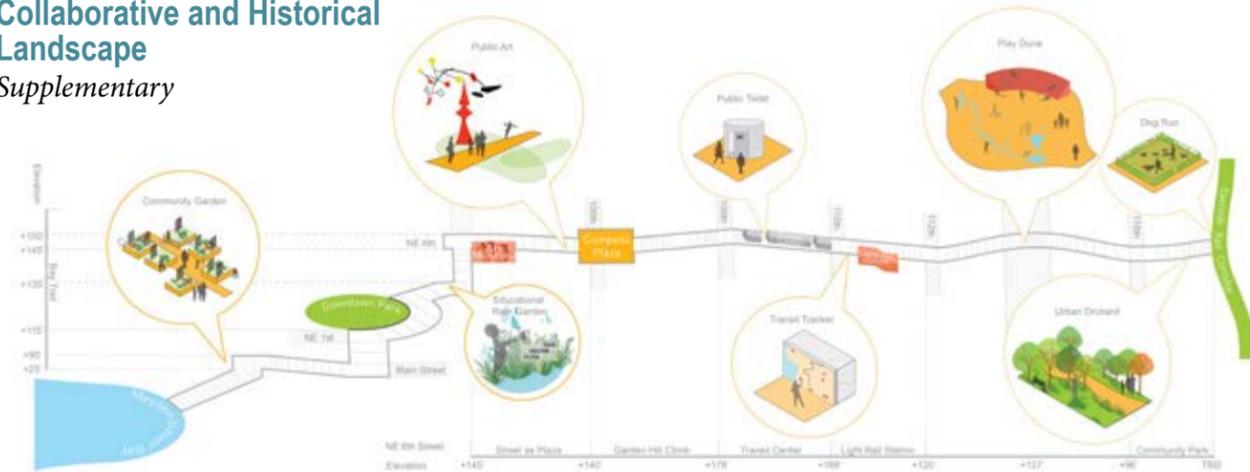
Natural Landscape
Primary



Playful Landscape
Supplementary



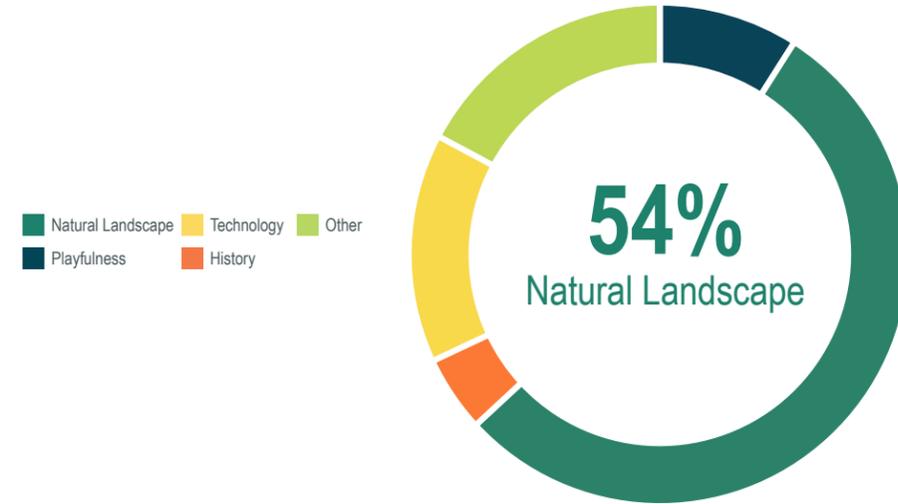
Collaborative and Historical Landscape
Supplementary



Creating a Distinct Identity

Poll Results

What should be the identity of the Grand Connection?



Next Steps: Route Identity

- Identify specific strategies and that support the primary and supplementary identities for the route.
- Identify locations where primary and supplementary identity strategies are applicable.
- Identify other City projects and initiatives where plans collaborate over shared ideas.
Ex. Identify park or public space improvements where play or vegetation improvements are planned and could support the Grand Connection strategies simultaneously.

Cohesive Design Strategies



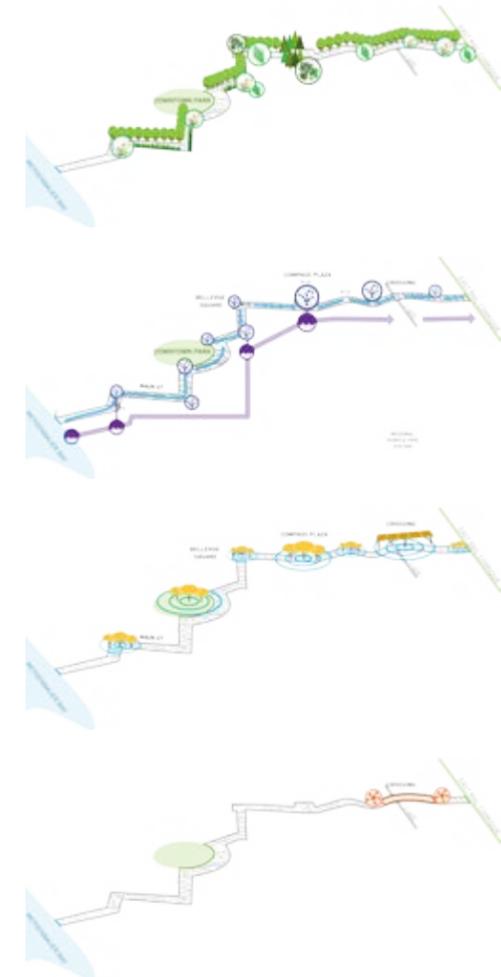
Cohesive Design Strategies

Overview

The proposed cohesive design strategies seek to support the overarching identity of the route, while also providing a consistent and identifiable aesthetic. The design team recommends several opportunities where specific urban elements could form a consistent aesthetic.

- **Paving** – A unifying hardscape and softscape aesthetic, supported by urban amenities such as lighting and seating that is consistently represented along the route.
- **Vegetation and Sustainable Infrastructure** – A planting palette that responds to unique context and conditions while establishing a consistent vocabulary of planting types supportive of Bellevue’s “City in a Park” identity.
- **Weather Protection** – Carefully crafted and selected forms of weather protection that create a consistent aesthetic but are responsive to the needs of the context of installation.
- **Raised Intersections** – A strategy that elevates the priority of non-motorized transportation while creating opportunities for a unique design aesthetic and sense of arrival at strategic gateways and intersections.

When combined, the cohesive strategies layer urban design features, amenities, and aesthetics that stitch the entire route together while recognizing the diverse uses and contexts that exist along the route.



▲ Cohesive Strategy Diagrams - Image by Balmori Associates

Paving Strategies

Paving represents one of the strongest methods to establish a powerful cohesive design strategy. The surface with which people will move on is continuous through the entire route, and creates an opportunity for a single thread that ties the entire route together. Paving also represents one of the most visible aesthetic features for users of the corridor, while complementing and enhancing the surrounding built environment.

With natural landscape playing an essential role in the route, the recommended paving strategies also seek to identify opportunities to integrate landscaping, vegetation, and urban amenities to form an aesthetic quality that unifies the hardscape and softscape of the city.

The recommended strategies seek to deviate from standard sidewalks and paving strategies, as well as more typical planting strips found in urban environments. The three strategies that respond to the urban context, the natural topography, and surrounding uses present opportunities to create an aesthetic specific to the Grand Connection route. It will complement Downtown Bellevue as a whole while emphasizing the route's important role in the urban fabric.



▲ Paseo Vista Alegre - Castello, Spain - Sanahuja & Partners



▲ Songdo Canal Walk - Songdo, Incheon, South Korea
- Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates

Option 1 - Linear to Free

Option One seeks to create a linear form as it moves through the tighter urban environment of Downtown, while creating a free form pattern as it approaches the less intense areas of Downtown Park, Old Bellevue, and Meydenbauer Bay Park. The tighter linear form would create well defined edges between hardscape and softscape, as well as jagged edges that would allow the two to integrate. Seating and other urban amenities would emerge from this linear form, creating a dynamic streetscape and pedestrian environment.

The segment from Downtown Park to Meydenbauer Bay Park would pursue a free form approach by “fading” the edges between hardscape and softscape. Both approaches create a paving strategy that is responsive and speaks to the context of the urban environment.



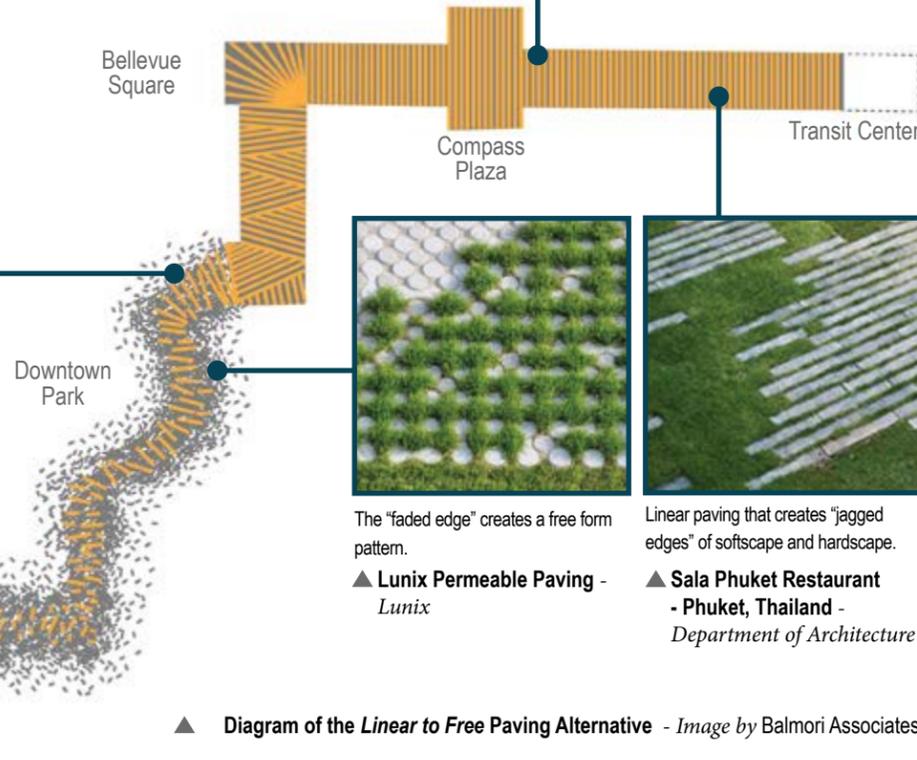
Seating and other urban amenities are woven into the linear softscape and hardscape.

◀ **Beiqijia Business Technology District - Beijing, China** - Martha Schwartz Partners



The free form is responsive to the less urban environment of the Downtown Park, Old Bellevue, and Meydenbauer Bay Park.

▲ **The Lost Tower of Painella** - Silvia Mihaela Diaconu & Bogdan Laurentiu Gogoci



Option 2 - Linear to Curvy

Option Two replicates the tighter urban environment found in Option One, while taking a different approach as the route moves towards the waterfront. Like Option One, the area between the Transit Center and Bellevue Square seeks to create a linear form as it moves through the tighter urban environment of Downtown. The segment between Bellevue Square and Meydenbauer Bay Park seeks to create a more fluid form, that is responsive to the change in topography and the approach to the waterfront.

The tighter linear form would create defined edges between hardscape and softscape, as well as jagged edges that would allow the two to integrate. Seating and other urban amenities would emerge from this linear form, creating a dynamic streetscape and pedestrian environment. The segment from Downtown Park to Meydenbauer Bay Park would visualize the topography with ribbons of landscaping incorporated into the paving.



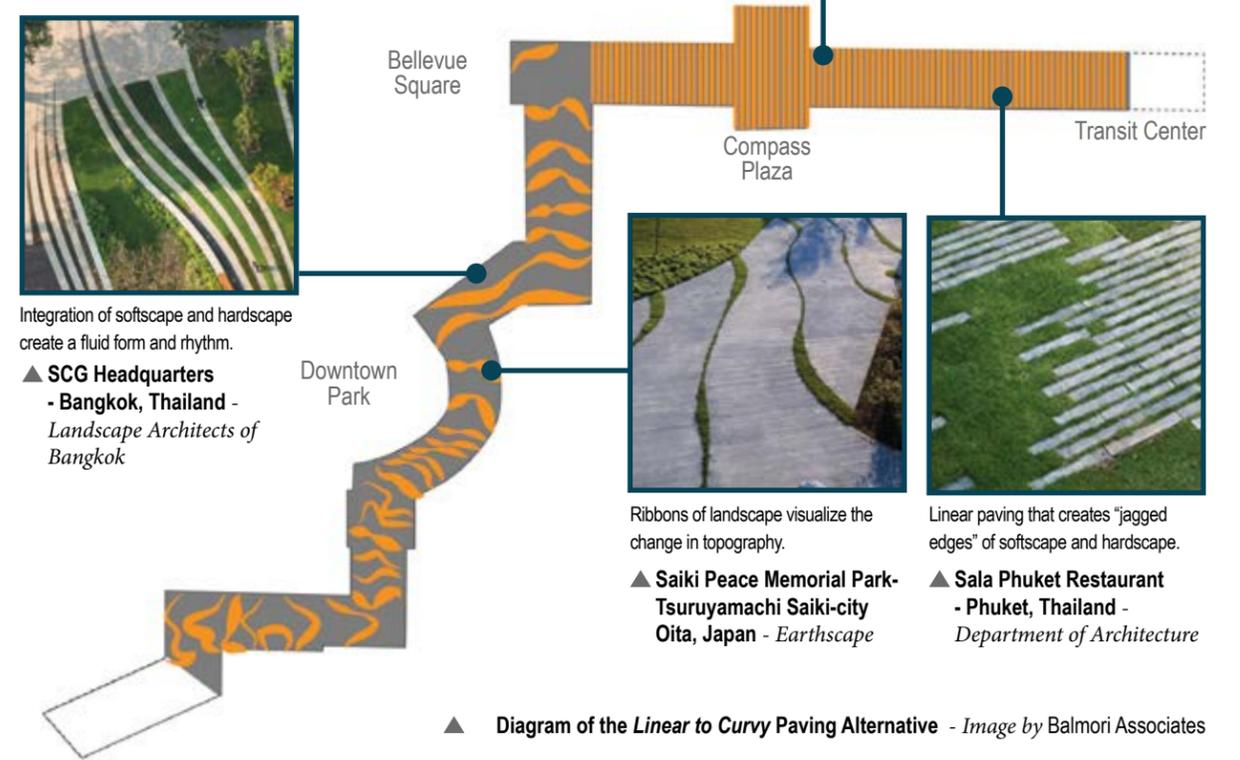
Seating and other urban amenities are woven into the linear softscape and hardscape.

◀ **Beiqijia Business Technology District - Beijing, China** - Martha Schwartz Partners



Integration of softscape and hardscape create a fluid form and rhythm.

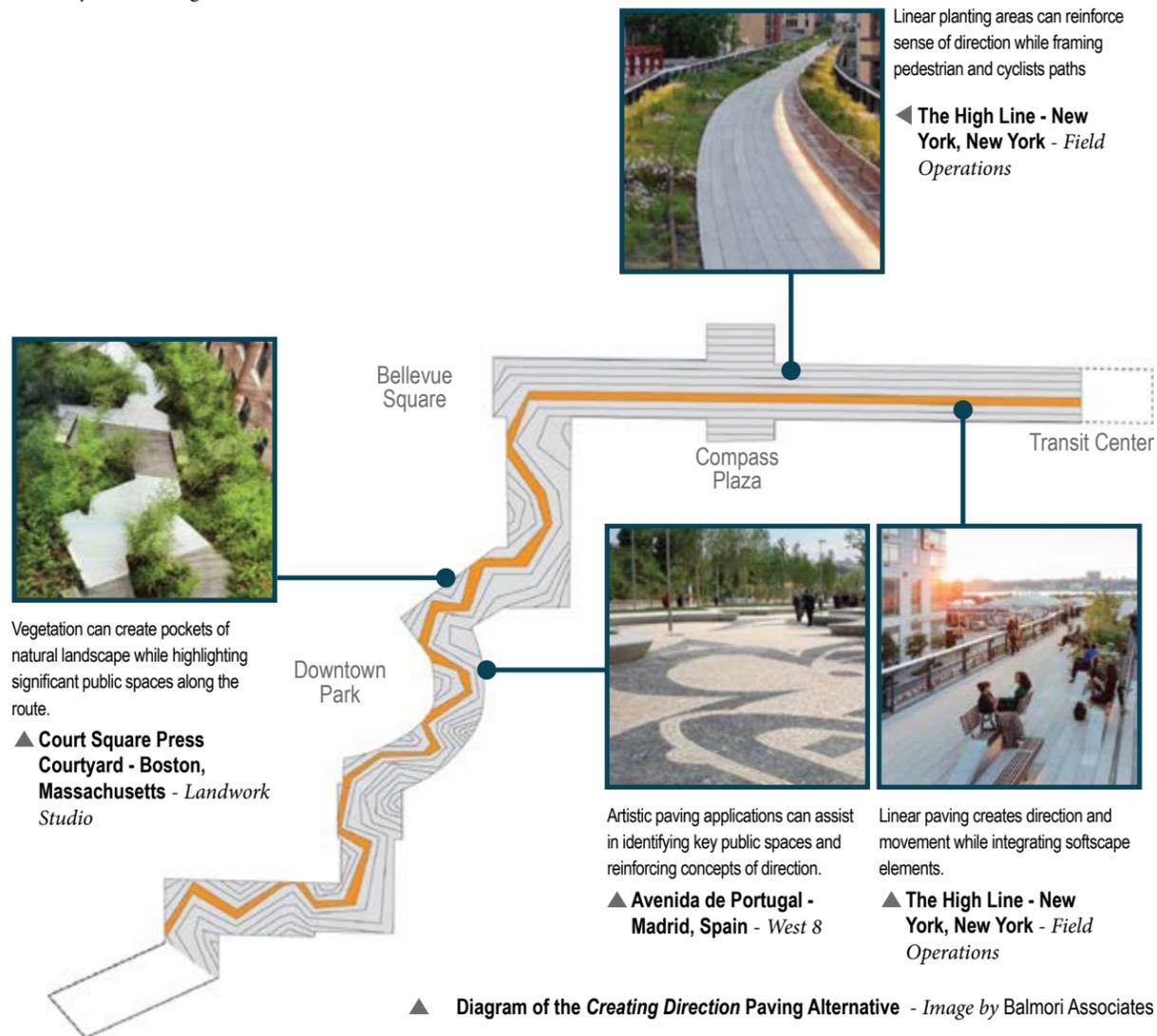
▲ **SCG Headquarters - Bangkok, Thailand** - Landscape Architects of Bangkok



Option 3 - Creating Direction

This paving option seeks to create a directional ribbon of movement on the corridor. The linear pattern echoes the more rigid urban environment of Downtown. Similar to Option Two the ribbon begins to respond to the landforms, visualizing the topography through the form of the ribbon. The ribbon could have a distinct paving pattern or color, serving as a central spine to the aesthetic, and complemented by over patterns, styles, and vegetation.

Colored paving, art, planks, and lighting can assist in reinforcing the linear movement of Downtown. Like Options One and Two, opportunities would exist to allow vegetation and urban amenities to pierce the more rigid form. As the ribbon becomes more dynamic in form it creates opportunities for irregular and unique forms for urban amenities and vegetation.



Next Steps: Paving Strategies

- Select a preferred paving option: *Linear to Free*, *Linear to Curvy*, or *Creating Direction*.
- Refine paving strategies to respond to specific locations and context.
- Develop a material and color palette.
- Develop locations and styles for urban amenities such as seating, lighting, and integrated art installations.
- Coordinate with private developments and City projects to realize visioning and maximize opportunities for implementation.

Vegetation and Sustainable Infrastructure

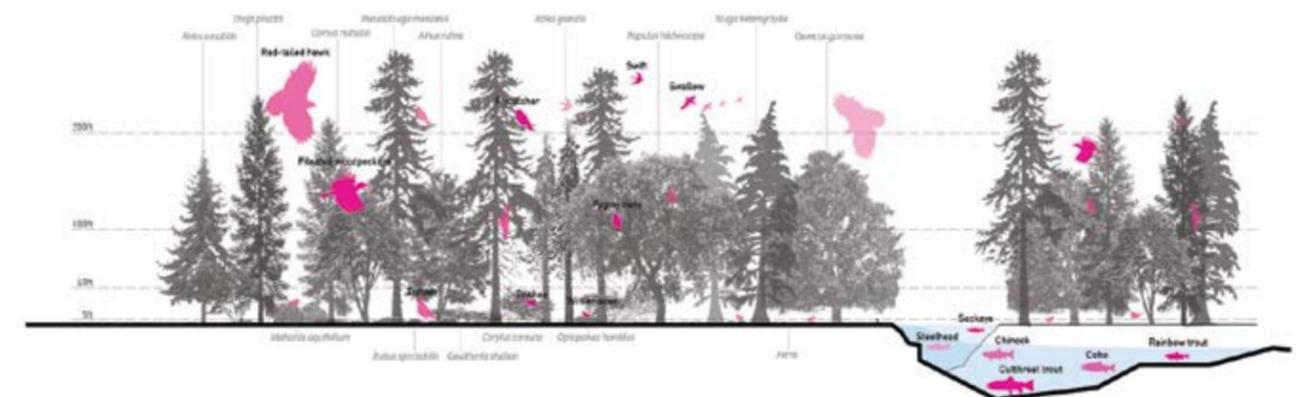
Vegetation and Landscaping

Bellevue is known as the “City in a Park.” Increasing the presence of the natural landscape in the urban context of Downtown Bellevue was approached as an essential strategy. In addition to improving the presence of street trees and other standard urban applications of vegetation, the recommendations seek to infuse more of the Pacific Northwest’s natural habitat while creating moments that provide respite from the urban environment.

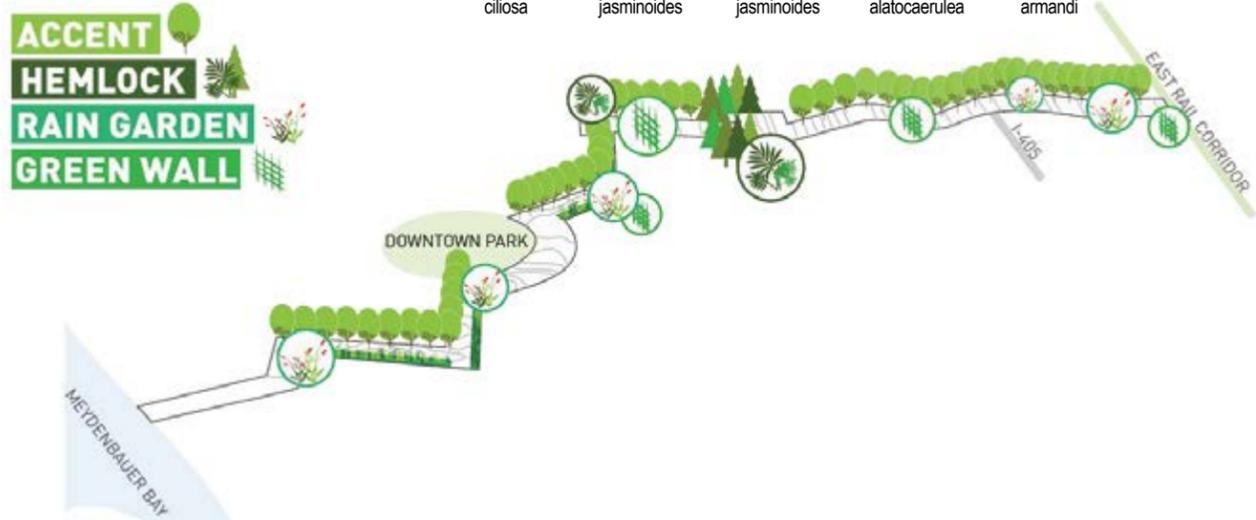
Responding to context, key locations were identified for specific vegetation and planting strategies that would create opportunities for gateways, respite, and overall enhancement and improvement of the environmental performance and aesthetic of the route. Each of these strategies would build upon some of the existing successes of increasing the presence of the natural landscape in Downtown Bellevue.

The design team has recommended a palette of vegetation to create a consistent aesthetic with accent trees. As part of the Compass Plaza recommendation (See Chapter 8 - *Redefining Public Spaces*), a Hemlock grove is proposed to create an opportunity for respite from the urban environment that would include a regional showcase of vegetation.

Accenting the route are a number of strategies such as rain gardens and bio swales that would create diversity and improved sustainability performance of streetscapes along the route. At key locations, including the intersection of NE 6th Street and Bellevue Way, the intersection of the Pedestrian Corridor and 108th Avenue NE, and the intersection of NE 6th and 112th Avenue NE would be trellis or green walls. These features would create a sense



▲ **Ecoregion Species** - Image by Balmori Associates



▲ **Planting Palette** - Image by Balmori Associates

Energy and Sustainable Infrastructure

The design team discovered opportunities in several of the cohesive design strategies to serve a dual function. Strategies such as weather protection, vegetation, and the incorporation of new infrastructure create opportunities for water detention, filtration, and reuse, as well as nodes for energy creation and distribution.

Considering the change and topography and the route's connectivity to Meydenbauer Bay, the design team identified an opportunity to combine proposed landscape and vegetation improvements as a means to filter, detain, and reuse water. The recommendation identifies key locations along the route where rain gardens can provide infiltration by capturing the natural flow of stormwater as it moves towards the bay.

The team also proposed a purple pipe system that could detain water for reuse and ultimately feed into Sturtevant Creek in the Wilburton Commercial Area. Locations identified for detention and reuse could incorporate strategies of art and other installations that could educate residents and visitors on the performance of the system and the natural environment.

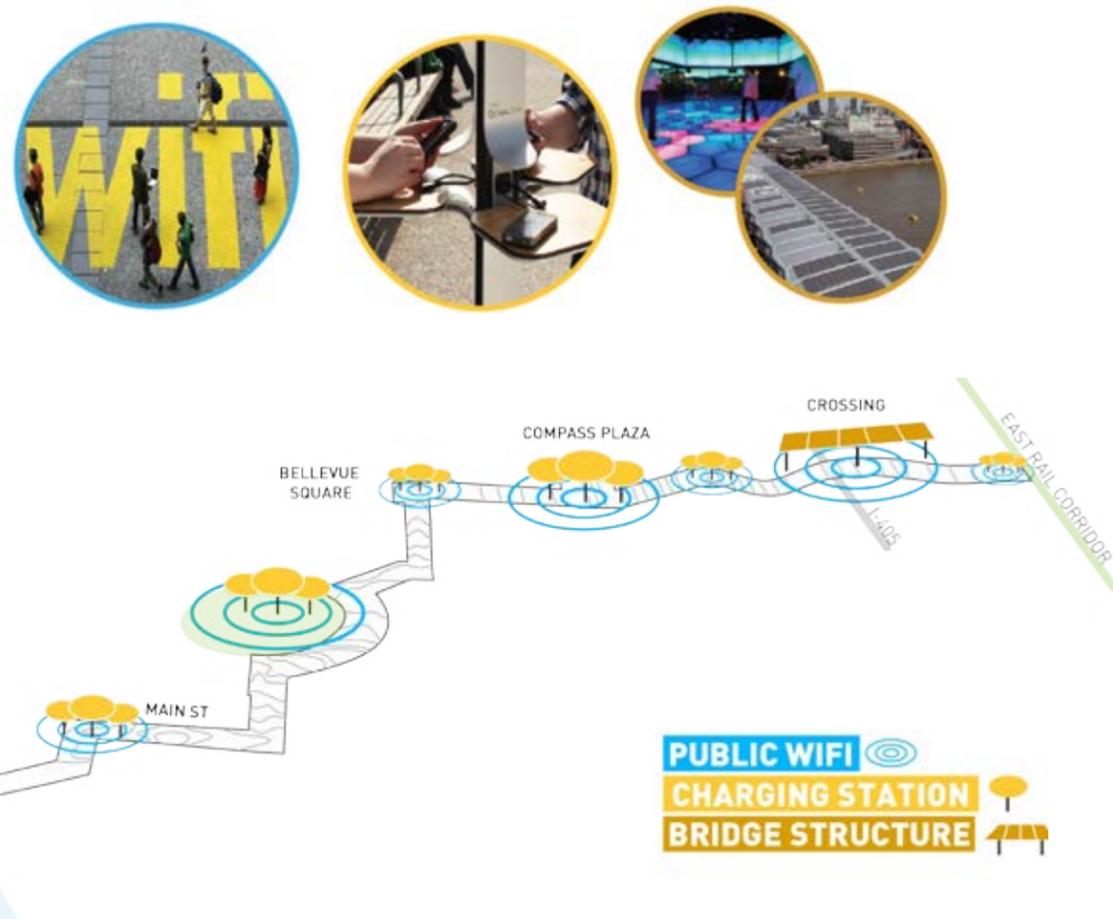


▲ **Sustainable Water Strategy** - Image by Balmori Associates

Energy and Infrastructure

The design team identified opportunities for weather protection to serve a multi-functional purpose by generating and distributing energy. As part of the weather protection strategy, key locations could incorporate solar panels that could then redistribute power at stations for charging or to enhance the City wifi system. As a high-tech city, these multi-functional designs can ensure that Bellevue’s residents and work force can remain connected, while also serving as a public asset.

The Interstate 405 crossing will be a significant infrastructure improvement for the city and presents a number of opportunities to serve as sustainable infrastructure. These elements are further discussed in Chapter 9.



Energy Production and Distribution Strategy - Image by Balmori Associates

Next Steps: Vegetation and Sustainable Infrastructure

- Identify locations for landscape and vegetation improvements consistent with the recommendations and City plans.
- Explore the feasibility of the sustainable water strategy, including collaboration and timing with other City departments and planned improvements.
- Explore the feasibility of using recycled rain water as part of the sustainable water strategy and other City initiatives.
- Coordinate the energy and infrastructure strategy with weather protection improvements.

Weather Protection

The rainy season of the Pacific Northwest can impact outdoor activity and the ability to activate the Grand Connection route. During interviews with participants at the food trucks and Compass Plaza, many respondents expressed an interest and desire for weather protection and other features to ensure that the public spaces and the overall route of the Grand Connection remained usable even in the rainy months.

While making outdoor spaces more usable during the rainy months, weather protection can also serve as an opportunity to identify significant public spaces, programming, and to provide a cohesive design aesthetic. Cohesion can be achieved through color as well as form allowing weather protection to serve different purposes and take different forms but still provide a consistent aesthetic quality that is identifiable to the route.

These opportunities include:

- **Linear Installations:** Linear weather protection installations offer an opportunity to strengthen the sense of direction and movement while making narrow public spaces more usable in inclement weather. Linear installations can also include the improvement of existing building canopies and marquees.
- **Single Installations:** Single installations are intended to highlight strategic and significant public spaces such as play areas, outdoor seating, or programmable features such as festivals and performances. Additionally, they provide a sense of enclosure or the feeling of an “outdoor room”

for flexible and more intimate uses. In addition to single installations these could include pavilions that can serve as forums for seating, markets, performances, and exhibitions.

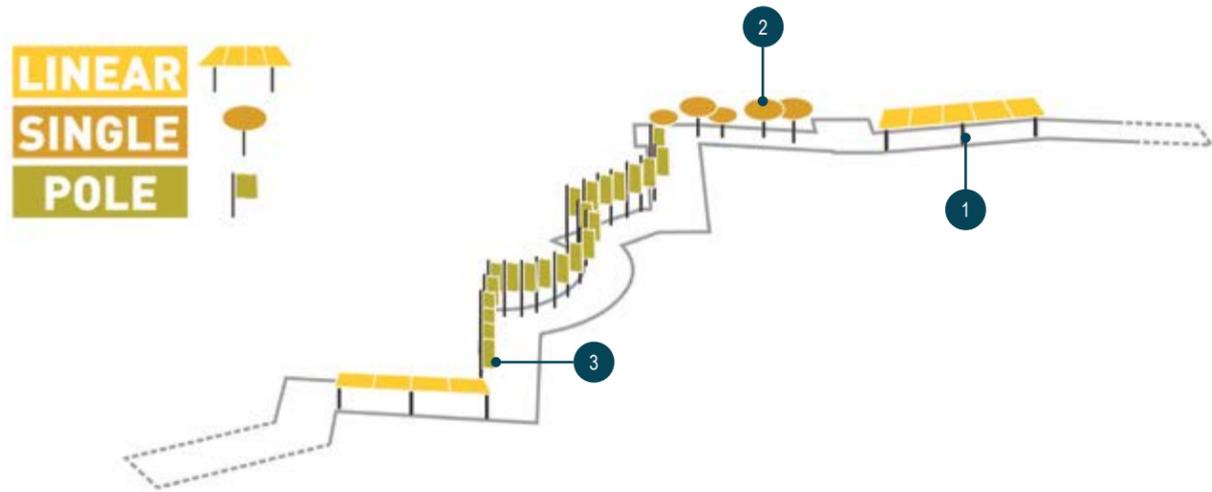
- **Pole Installations:** Pole installations are not intended to serve as weather protection, but to provide design cohesion between the important linear and single installation moments. These can include aesthetic enhancements, artistic installations, and banners that enhance the aesthetic quality and continuity of the weather protection strategy.



▲ North End Park - Boston, Massachusetts - Gustafson Guthrie Nichol and Crosby Schlessinger Smallrid



▲ MPavilion - Melbourne, Australia - Sean Godsell Architects



1 Linear weather protection creates opportunities to highlight important segments of the route.

2 Single canopy installations can highlight important public spaces, programming, and uses. Single installations can be used for playgrounds, outdoor seating areas, and other locations to ensure year round use and activity these can also include pavilions.

3 Banners and pole installations can create an aesthetic bridge between linear and single location weather protection installations to provide aesthetic continuity.



▲ Cielos y Suelos de Badajoz, Spain
- bRijUNi Arquitectos



▲ Indigo Playground - Beijing, China
- Ballistic Architecture Machine (BAM)

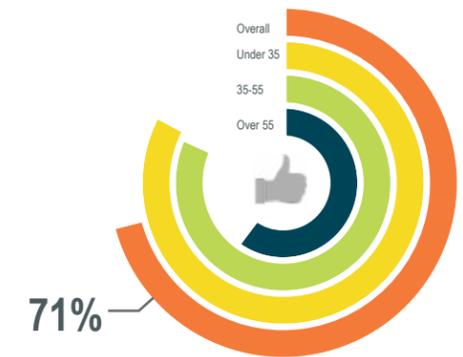


▲ H Street - Washington, District of Columbia



◀ Example of artistic installation also serving as weather protection - *The Sequence* by Arne Quinze

Art Survey Rating



Next Steps: Weather Protection

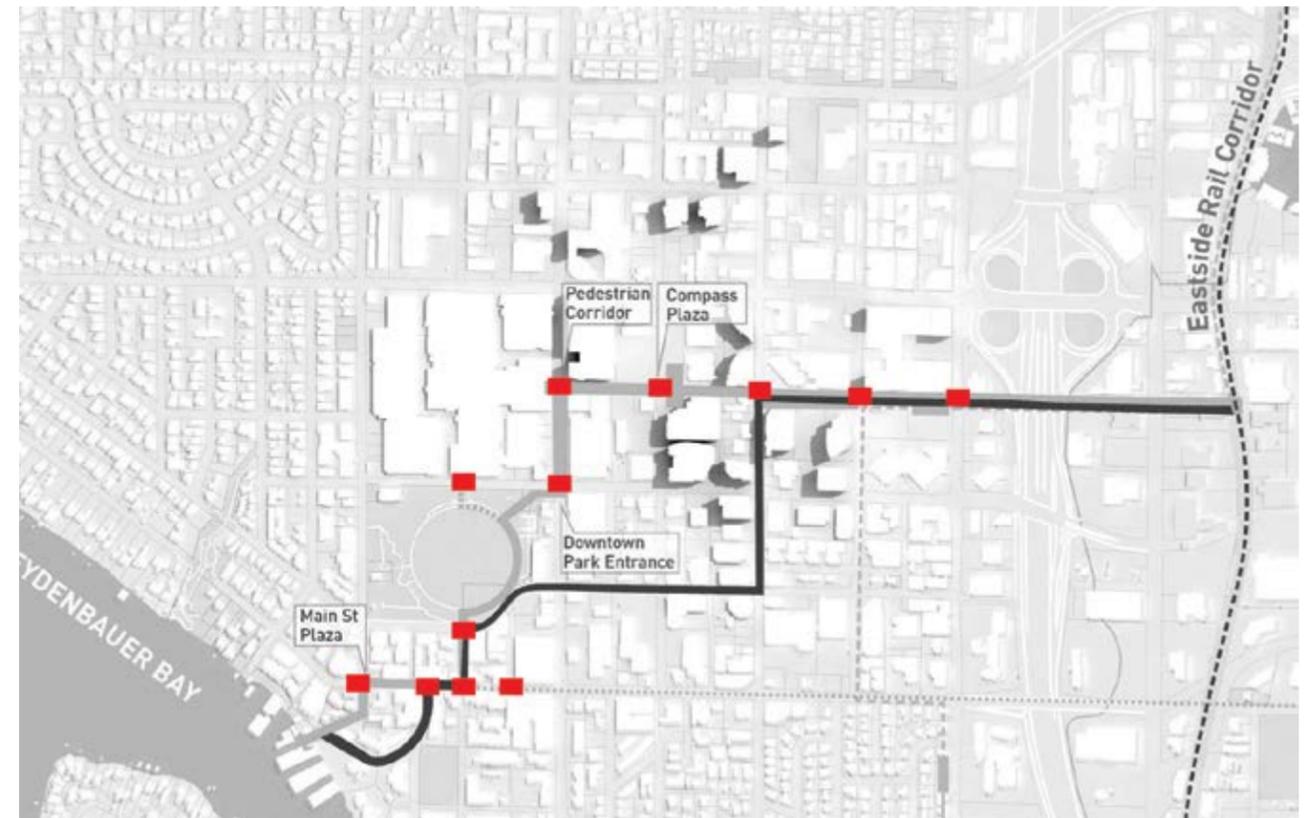
- Identify and refine specific locations for each of the weather protection strategies.
- Develop a consistent aesthetic element that can be applied to each category of the weather protection strategy.
Ex. Color, material, form, etc.
- Identify opportunities to coordinate and collaborate with private development improvements and City initiatives.
- Consider the commissioning of artists to develop unique installations at key locations.

Raised Intersections

Each intersection along the Grand Connection route can act as an interruption to the continuous flow of pedestrians and cyclists. They also present an opportunity to serve as important gateways and nodes to key locations such as the Downtown Park, Bellevue Transit Center, and the Meydenbauer Bay Park. As an effort to highlight their role as a gateway, and to also unify the pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and flow, the intersections were identified as a key cohesive design strategy that can improve the overall experience, aesthetic, safety, and sense of arrival.

To accomplish these goals the recommendation has been made to raise each intersection along the route to be flush with the adjacent curbs and sidewalks. The City has planned to raise several of the existing intersections, and by raising all intersections on the route it will create a unified strategy.

The raised intersections would be accomplished by following the principles of the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) recommendations. Raised intersections hold a variety of benefits including reducing speeds of drivers exceeding the speed limit and encouraging awareness and yielding to pedestrians.



▲ Raised Intersection Locations as Part of the Downtown Transportation and Plan and Expanded - Image by Balmori Associates

Combined with other elements such as bollards, raised intersections create a safe and comfortable environment for pedestrians while causing minimal to no interruption of vehicle movements.

The raised intersections also create an opportunity to establish an aesthetic character that reflects the surrounding context and establishes a continuous aesthetic along the entire Grand Connection route. This aesthetic enhancement could be achieved through paving patterns and color, and through the application of artistic treatment.

The recommendation is to create a material language that complements the selected pedestrian paving, while providing flexibility for artistic treatments such as thermal plastic coverings and temporary painting that can be applied for seasonal, special event, and temporary opportunities.

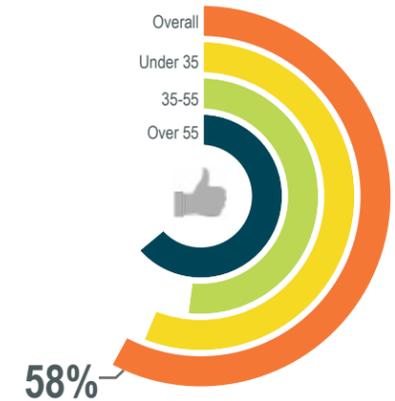


▲ **Standard Raised Intersection** - Image by National Association City Transportation Officials (NACTO)



▲ **Example of an Aesthetically Improved Raised Intersection** From the Grand Connection Art Survey - Rochester, New York

Art Survey Rating



Did you know? Raised Intersections:



85th percentile vehicle speed **decreases by 2 mph**



Exposure risk for pedestrians **decreases by 28%**



Estimated **\$1.7 million** saved over three years in direct and indirect costs



Vehicle **volumes** are not **affected**

Source: *Pedestrian Safety through a Raised Median and Redesigned Intersections - Plainsboro, New Jersey* by Michael King, 2003 Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting. http://nacto.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/pedestrian_safety_through_raised_median_redesigned_intersections_king.pdf

Next Steps: Raised Intersections

- Explore adopting remaining intersections as part of City's *Downtown Transportation Plan* Exceptional Intersections program.
- Continue to pursue grant funding opportunities such as the 106th Avenue NE at NE 6th Street intersection project currently in design.
- Develop an aesthetic quality that is either cohesive to the route, or contextually unique through paving strategies, artistic installations, or other methods.



Art and Culture

Grand Connection Becomes a Cultural Corridor

The Grand Connection is one of the most ambitious, comprehensive efforts to date that aims to establish downtown Bellevue as a place to encounter cultural exchange, innovative immersive art experiences, music, and performance. It serves as a connector as well as destination: a creative spine in the core of the city that draws a public audience—both casual passersby and visitors seeking a community-driven experience. At the core of this vision is the belief that Bellevue’s public art should be an integral part of the city that excites and promotes dialogue across cultural and generational lines. The Grand Connection reflects the City of Bellevue’s diverse identity and an investment in contemporary public art and culture on par with the world’s most innovative cultural centers.

Why a Cultural Corridor?

A cultural corridor is a tool of economic development through the arts that connects nearby cultural attractions along a transportation route. It has its roots in heritage trails whereby tourists could “make a day” of visiting various historical sites by car. North Carolina has been particularly successful with using cultural corridors as a regional tourism strategy by promoting five different cultural trails that crisscross the state including an African American Music Trail and Discover North Carolina Craft.

As the demand for urban cultural tourism increases, the concept of the cultural corridor has been adapted for walkers and bicyclists to experience the city. Opened in 2013, the Indianapolis Cultural Trail features an 8-mile urban trail system with a network of bike-share stations that connect hundreds of

Did you know? Art:



Cultural tourists stay an average of **5.2** nights compared to **3.4** nights by business travelers



65% of travelers will attend arts and culture events when **50+** miles from home



For every **\$1** invested in the arts there is a **\$7** return.



32% will **extend** their trip

Source: Americans for the Arts - *Arts and Economic Prosperity*

cultural attractions in six different cultural districts in Downtown Indianapolis. This cultural trail was made possible after decades of infrastructure investments and the leadership of private philanthropists in the area.

While there is not a standard approach to how to develop a cultural corridor, national research suggests that successful cultural tourism projects focus on 1) a concentration of existing year-round cultural attractions; 2) easy round-trip access; 3) available and committed private investment in tourism development; and 4) sufficient public resources to sustain operations such as staff and marketing.

A String of cultural treasures

The Grand Connection winds through one of the most culture-rich and creative parts of Bellevue and has the potential to be a vibrant cultural corridor. The Bellevue Arts Museum and the Theatre at Meydenbauer Center offer year-round exhibitions and performances to tens of thousands of visitors a year. Bellevue City Hall, Compass Plaza, Downtown Park and Lincoln Square host annual cultural events, independent film screenings, and outdoor concerts. These venues attract hundreds of thousands of people to Downtown Bellevue and contributes to Bellevue's reputation as a "Top 10 Underrated City for Art Lovers" according to the US News and World Report. But while Bellevue is a cultural destination for people in the know, few people are aware of what's further down the road or around the corner. The opportunity is to put Bellevue on the cultural map as a first-rate city for art by connecting these discrete cultural treasures into something truly grand.



Clusters of cultural activity within a half-mile of the Grand Connection

The prospect of a cultural corridor rests not only the cultural attractions along the largely east-west route. Clusters of cultural activities exist around the Grand Connection and are easily accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists. For instance, if a visitor standing at the corner of the Grand Connection and 106th Avenue NE decides to walk five minutes (roughly a quarter mile) south along 106th they could catch a jazz concert at Bakes Place or a classical recital at Resonance at SOMA Towers. However, if visitors decide to walk five minutes north along the same street they would discover a handful of commercial art galleries including Gunnar Nordstrom Gallery and Hall Spassov Gallery. Another five minutes walking northeast and they'd come upon the Bellevue Library and the new Kidsquest Children's Museum.

In the future, visitors to the Grand Connection on the other side of the I-405 freeway to the east will face the same situation. At the point where the Grand Connection meets the Eastside Rail Corridor trail, visitors walking or biking south will have access to the Eastside Heritage Center and the Bellevue Botanical Garden. In total, over 25 cultural institutions, arts venues and public spaces are either on or easily accessible from the Grand Connection.

A hub for creative professionals

Downtown Bellevue is not only a cultural destination for visitors. A ring drawn around the Grand Connection that extends a quarter mile out in any direction would include within it 43,000 workers, about 6,400 of which are considered to be workers at creative firms or 15 percent. Creative firms contribute to the creative economy, or the segment of the economy that uses creative ideas and processes to produce aesthetic and economic value. Overall, 30 percent of US workers are part of the creative economy.

This includes individual artists and musicians as well as architects, museum workers and the range of skilled workers such as graphic designers who contribute to the production of video games.

The top industry with creative economy jobs inside the quarter mile ring around the Grand Connection is software publishers, which includes companies such as Microsoft and video game developers Valve and Bungie. While the total percentage of creative economy jobs in proximity to the Grand Connection is lower than the national average it is still significant.

Good bones: the making of a vibrant cultural district

There is an exciting opportunity to connect these cultural treasures and creative professionals. In fact, a growing body of literature suggests that linking culture and creatives into a larger whole is imperative to contemporary economic development. Research by the Brookings Institution has revealed the preference of creative technology firms to co-locate with each other and in areas with cultural amenities such as cultural districts.

International best practice research on cultural districts suggest that six common features are necessary for sustainable cultural district development:

1. Cluster: the industrial glue able to put together the economic and social actors of the local community;
2. Talent: the presence of a qualified and specialized workforce;
3. Networks: the free circulation of tacit knowledge;
4. Secondary services: the proximity of complementary companies;
5. Culture: the sharing of common values; and
6. Social capital: the mutual trust among local people.

Downtown Bellevue exhibits some of these features but not all. There is clearly a cluster of primary and secondary cultural assets and anchors as well as the presence of creative talent. But the social features of sustainable cultural districts are lacking: networks, shared culture and social capital. Investing in the social aspects of a potential Downtown cultural district could be the most impactful role for art and culture in the Grand Connection.



▲ Indianapolis Cultural Trail - Indianapolis, Indiana - Image source - Indianapolis Cultural Trail

Goals

Goal 1 - The Grand Connection is an easily identifiable, clearly defined, and culturally vibrant route.

The Grand Connection will act as a spine connecting an abundance of cultural offerings for residents and visitors. The route will include cultural elements that bring a sense of discovery and delight to everyday spaces using color, unexpected locations and lighting. The project creates a cohesive, unified aesthetic that emphasizes playfulness and surprise that allows people to imagine the world anew through the eyes of artists. The overlooked and under-looked corners, nooks and crannies of Downtown Bellevue are transformed, framed through text, images, and actions that encourage residents to slow down, take their time, and be filled with wonder.

Goal 2 - Bellevue has a proud and visible identity as an arts and cultural community that embraces regional artists as a unique and vital resource.

Provide economic incentives, varied cultural programming, and opportunities for all demographics. Encourage experimentation, innovation, and risk with an emphasis on diversity, technology and community building.

Implement an “Emerging Artist Program” that will allow underrepresented artists options to exhibit, perform, and to create their work. This will be a distinctive way to cultivate an interest in the arts and establish Bellevue as forward thinking in its artistic programming. Utilize specific Cultural Plinths to showcase and highlight these local artists.

Collaborate and engage with the area’s tech companies and provide a new and unique model for Microsoft and Google to engage with the community it serves. Engage with the gaming community and endorse projects such as PAX that could be held in venues such as Meydenbauer Center and DOXA Church.

Goal 3 - Downtown Bellevue is a culturally inclusive environment that encourages a diverse population to take part in Bellevue’s cultural offerings.

Cultivate a new generation of artists and arts participants. Bellevue’s new and increasing populace will shape its cultural vibrancy. The City’s cultural identity is expressed through community events, shared experiences and common memories. A lively arts environment begets a connected population with more people of all ages and ethnicities coming together to share experiences, ideas, and learn from one another.

Goal 4 - Downtown Bellevue is connected by seven major public artworks.

Culturally and aesthetically significant artworks strengthen Downtown Bellevue’s identity as a destination for creative people and professionals. These new major artworks are envisioned as place-makers, cross-town beacons, and gathering places. They should be commissioned with an emphasis on site specificity, community, and cultural and historical context. When possible and appropriate, these should be viewed as opportunities for public-private partnerships to make the most of limited city owned public space and funding. Working with private developers and neighborhood associations will serve to broaden the range of possibilities and strengthen community driven support for the arts.

Goal 5 - The City of Bellevue commits resources and staff to the development and ongoing operation of an Arts and Cultural Program specific to the Grand Connection and its vision as a flexible, curate-able corridor.

Support the programming and opportunities laid out in the Art and Culture Plan while applying Bellevue’s focus on technology, innovation, and education to arts and cultural programming.



▲ Big Top Grand Stand (2015), Nuit Blanche - Toronto, Ontario - SuttonBeresCuller



▲ **The High Line - New York, New York** - Image by Iwan Baan



▲ **Tiny Stages - San Francisco, California** - Image by Mission Community Market

Strategies

Strategy 1 - Whole Site Approach

In mapping out the placement of works, the corridor will be considered as a whole, with an intent to weave smaller intimate projects with signature, eye-catching works on a large scale. The scale and breadth of the Grand Connection afford a significant opportunity to create new ways to view, interact, and discover art. Projects will be designed to be accessible to a wide range of the public, offering a broad spectrum of cultural experiences.

The Grand Connection will be clearly defined by major points of interest every four to five minutes walking. Major points of interest may include, but not limited to, artist-designed canopies and paving, signature sculptures, amphitheaters, murals, and cultural venues.

Minor points of interest will occur every 15 to 20 seconds walking. These may include projects at cultural plinths, space for buskers and performances, and small discoverable artworks. Other points of interest may include informational kiosks and artist-designed features such as maps, manhole covers, utility boxes, benches, planters, railings, and bicycle racks.

Strategy 2 - Initiate a program that provides ongoing opportunities for the creation and presentation of new works.

Create ongoing opportunities to support local and regional artists in the development of new work. Opportunities include calls for artists to work with design teams on all new developments, Cultural Plinths Program, and venues for emerging artists' exhibitions and performances. The cultivation of new visual art installations, performance arts, and music should include investing and expanding existing programs.

Strategy 3 - Identify specific opportunities to address cultural, historical, and community-driven projects.

Highlight the significance of the natural environment and issues facing the community through sustainable planting and hardscape strategies while incorporating new technologies such as illuminated pathways and solar technologies. Art should also highlight historical elements of Bellevue such as cultural diversity, innovation, agricultural, and Asian-American heritage.

Strategy 4 - Build and reinforce distinct neighborhood identities along the route.

Help build and reinforce distinct neighborhood identities along the route including Wilburton, Eastside Rail Corridor and Old Bellevue. These strategies should enhance and celebrate the existing character and localized history through events and installations.

Strategy 5 - Use art and cultural programming to enhance the civic experience.

Programming should engage the community with a series of intimate, theme-based events. These can include tech-based arts festivals, seasonal events, temporary installations, and performance. The events will be short and flexible in nature to allow for experimentation by a diverse range of artists and curators. These events will increase the number of visitors that engage with Downtown Bellevue.

Strategy 6 - Forge partnerships between artists, government, the private sector, and cultural organizations for the creation and presentation of new works.

Programming will encourage communication and collaboration between existing organizations and community groups that make use of cultural offerings along the Grand Connection. Artists will be integrated into the design process for new public development



▲ **Pollinator Pathway- Seattle, Washington** Image by Minnie Bredouw



▲ **Nuit Blanche - Toronto, Ontario** - Image by Benn Roffelsen

projects. Prioritizing incentives for private developments to engage in similar project planning with local artists will be emphasized and curators working with the Grand Connection will continue to work with property owners and cultural organizations to identify art and programming opportunities.

Pursue, where appropriate, strategies where the City can be flexible in its development standards for the right of way and private development to support the arts and cultural enhancements. Prioritize the enhancement of the street and cultural experience over interior and lobby space installations. Apply the amenities incentive system to cultural value rather than the monetary value of improvements through the engagement of the Arts Commission.

Strategy 7 - Provide incentives and development opportunities for the support of local artists and cultural organizations.

The City takes a leadership role in fostering the arts as a community resource and leverages the arts as a key component in its overall economic development strategies. Long-term strategies include investing in existing and new venues, affordable artist housing, and artist workspace. To realize the scope of the Grand Connection's impact, it is necessary to consider means of attraction artist and cultural services as active members of the City.

Strategy 8 - Initiate a public relations program to communicate, educate, and engage the public.

Creating a network for all of the experiences along the Grand Connection route will help bring awareness to and build upon cultural events in Bellevue. This program should be initiated by the City and developed in partnership with the proposed Cultural Collective (see full Art and Culture plan). This can be achieved through a website, mobile apps, and other standard means of advertising. The program should present all of the arts and cultural offerings clearly and regularly to the greater community.

Strategy 9 - Implement a program that supports a wide range of art projects, which in turn fosters community interaction.

Create a curate-able, flexible program that continues to draw visitors to a continually evolving and changing art scene. Encourage experimentation, innovation, and risk with an emphasis on diversity, technology, and community building. Beginning in 2018, Bellwether should be re-imagined as an annual 10 day curated exhibition and festival. This is a unique opportunity for experimentation and early implementation of the programming vision for the arts and cultural component of the Grand Connection.

Program Opportunities

Many of the stakeholders and public surveys expressed a desire for more public art, especially in the area of performance and music. Another need is more venues available where artists can perform, exhibit, and share their work. One major component to supporting local artists is to provide a place to exhibit. The following program ideas create a flexible Grand Connection Arts Program that continues to draw visitors to a continually evolving and changing, vibrant and exciting art scene that encourages experimentation, innovation, and risk with an emphasis on diversity, technology, and community building.

Bellwether

Re-imagine Bellwether as an annual 10-day curated multi-disciplinary exhibition and festival. Public art as well as public preferences have evolved significantly in the twenty-five years since the beginning of the Bellevue Sculpture Exhibition. While sculpture is still an important discipline, it is becoming an increasingly smaller portion of art in public places as well as inadequate to achieve community goals for public art. Digital art, performance, and social practice are emerging art disciplines that are proving more effective in community engagement and in popularity. The switch from a four-month to a 10-day format will concentrate the action into a smaller time frame, allowing energy and attention to be fully paid to a more vibrant and exciting event. The shorter time-frame is also more conducive to temporary, time-based art works. The first three years of Bellwether can be a laboratory set up to gauge the success of the new format. This time should also be used to encourage deep and meaningful partnerships with Bellevue's cultural institutions, such as the Bellevue Arts Museum, KidsQuest Children's Museum, Bellevue Public Library, and the Theater at Meydenbauer Center. These partners present the opportunity for Bellwether to engage the whole downtown core and host more indoor locations for art works and installations.

Cultural Collective

Build a community of organizations and stakeholders along



▲ *Treasure Hunt - Washington, District of Columbia* - Pete Beeman



▲ *Light City Baltimore - Baltimore, Maryland* - OVO Collective



▲ *Red Ball Project- Taipei, Taiwan* - Kurt Perschke



▲ *Prada Marfa* - Marfa, Texas - Elmgreen and Dragset

the Grand Connection route to grow their audiences, share resources, promote tourism, and increase awareness of the Grand Connection. The Meydenbauer Center, BAM, The Westin, City Hall, Doxa Church, Downtown Park, and Bellevue Square all have adequate and distinctly different opportunities for an engagement with the arts. Many of these venues have available lobby, general facility, and wall space that go unused, even during regular programming. By creating a network for the sharing of physical space and artworks, a broader awareness and cohesiveness of the Grand Connection can be accomplished. Sharing of resources, artworks, information, and space can help further propel the Grand Connection and the cultural programming into a stronger, more vibrant arts destination.



▲ *Nelson's Ship in a Bottle* - Trafalgar Square, London, United Kingdom - Yinka Shonibare

Cultural Plinths Program

Create ongoing opportunities to support local and regional artists in the creation and presentation of new works displayed on designated platforms. These plinths, using the success of the Bellwether program and the art walk format, will allow for creation and display of art in all its forms including sculptures and 3D work, performance, music, and other creative expression. These plinths can be curated and be very flexible, used for one-night events, rotating monthly exhibitions, festivals, and temporal performance. A series of cultural plinths along the route of the Grand Connection will ensure downtown Bellevue a year-round cultural destination.



▲ *Spring Garden Street Bridge Mural* - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania - Betsy Casnas

Mural Program

Murals make a place welcoming and add to the walkability of a city. These public canvases can be highly interactive and have long been a way to explore a larger community story and enhance the built environment. A mural program can create a large impact and can quickly enhance civic spaces through affordable artworks. To utilize unused spaces, incentives could encourage property owners to create "art walls" that can function as cultural plinths for temporary murals as well as other art projects including digital projection, bas-relief sculpture, and wheat paste.

Art Walks

Build upon the Bellevue Arts Museum Free First Friday program and the Bellwether art walks. The art walk should be considered part of programming specific to the Grand Connection. The art walk can be expanded to take place year-round. Following the models of existing Seattle-area art walks, the Bellevue art walk would benefit from changing its hours to late afternoon or early evening, to coincide with the end of the work day, other evening-based cultural events taking place, and to further benefit neighborhood restaurants and cafes wanting to participate and take advantage of the art walk crowds.

Art Fairs

Grow and develop Bellevue's art fairs – Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSFair, Bellevue Festival of the Arts and the 6th Street Fair – into a regionally recognized arts destination by coordinating and pooling marketing resources, centralizing activities along Bellevue Way, integrating more contemporary art and performance into activities and offerings, and providing extended evening hours.

Downtown Concerts

Expand and publicize the Bellevue Downtown Association's Live at Lunch concert series of free live music performances at lunchtime to include evening concerts that connect Downtown residents and employees to a vibrant 18-hour a day neighborhood.

Emerging Artist Program

The opportunity for a unique and flexible program that allows underrepresented artists options to exhibit, perform, display, and to create their work, has the potential to cultivate an interest in the arts and establish Bellevue as forward thinking in its artistic programming. This can be achieved through a variety of genres including visual arts, performing arts, and musical acts that make downtown Bellevue a year-round cultural destination.



▲ *Cell Phone Disco* - Three Rivers Art Festival, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania - Information Lab



▲ *Old Town Art Fair* - Chicago, Illinois

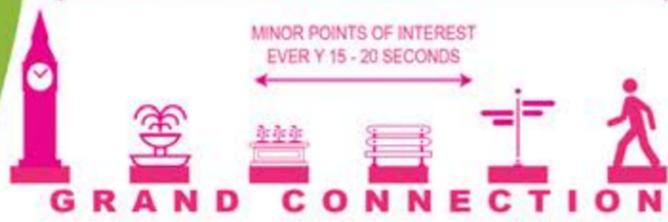


▲ *Old Town Art Fair* - Chicago, Illinois



MAJOR POINTS OF INTEREST
EVER Y 4 - 5 MINUTES

MINOR POINTS OF INTEREST
EVER Y 15 - 20 SECONDS



GRAND CONNECTION

HUB

MAJOR ART OPPORTUNITY

INTEGRATED ARTWORK

CULTURAL PLINTH

FUTURE LIGHT RAIL

WAYFINDING

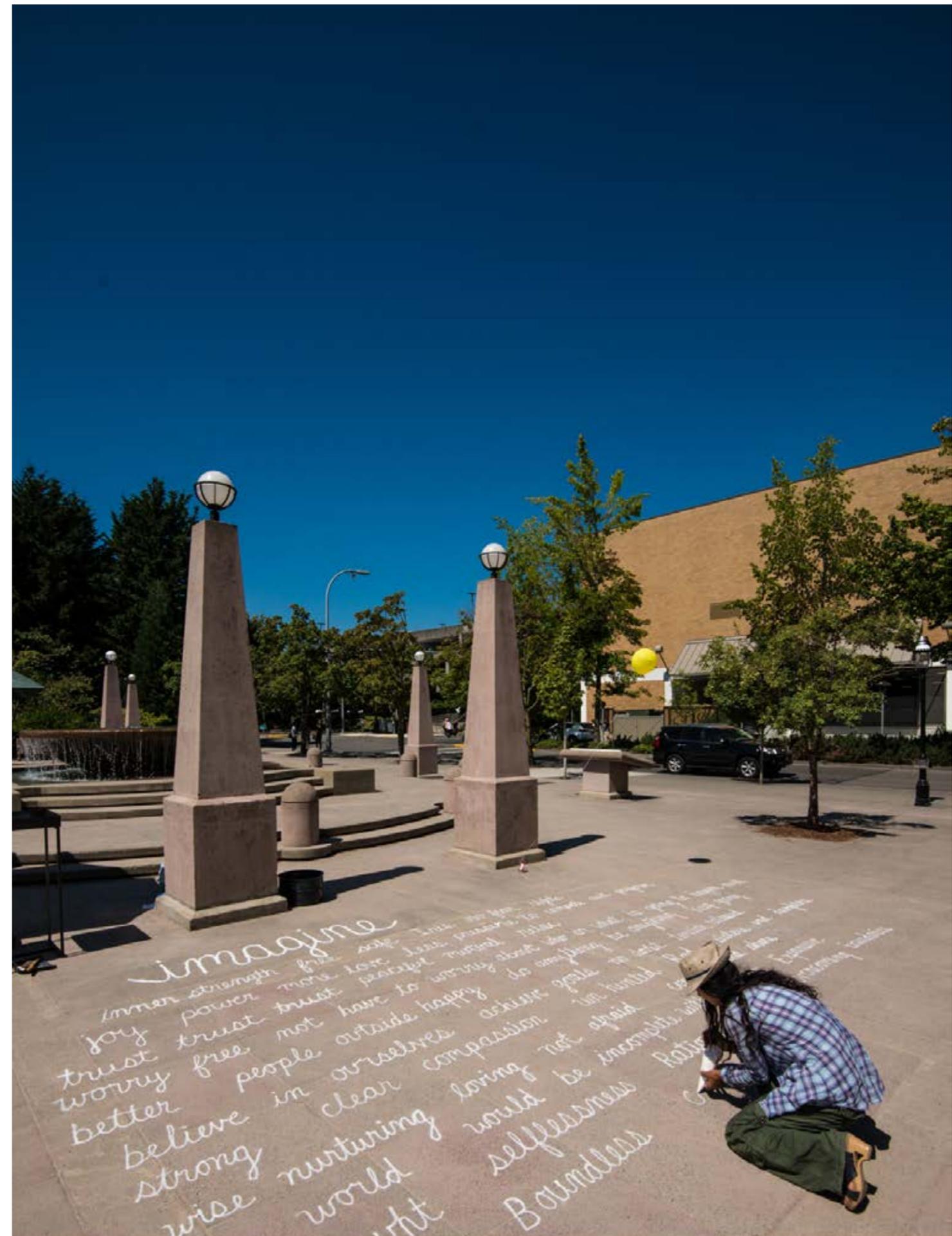
CULTURAL SPACE

- 1 Bellevue City Hall
- 2 Meydenbauer Center
- 3 Doxa Church
- 4 Compass Plaza
- 5 Barnes and Noble
- 6 Classic Pianos
- 7 Bellevue Arts Museum
- 8 Bellevue Collection
- 9 Downtown Park
- 10 Inspiration Playfield
- 11 Rotella Gallery
- 12 Kennelly Keys Music
- 13 Puget Sounds
- 14 Bakes Place
- 15 Resonance at SOMA Towers
- 16 Ballet Arts Center Studio
- 17 GW Fine Art Studio
- 18 Elements Gallery
- 19 Hall Spassov Gallery
- 20 Gunnar Nordstrom Gallery
- 21 University Book Store
- 22 CinemarkLincoln Square Cinemas
- 23 Hyatt Regency Bellevue
- 24 Tateuchi Center
- 25 KidsQuest Children's Museum
- 26 Bellevue Library
- 27 The Legacy Ltd.

▲ Art and Culture Plan - Image by SuttonBeresCuller

Next Steps: Art and Culture Plan

- Adopt the *Grand Connection Art and Culture* plan.
- Identify improvements to existing art opportunities.
- Identify opportunities for partnerships to advance the goals and vision of the *Art and Culture* plan.



Chapter

7

Connectivity and Mobility



Connectivity and Mobility

Improved Range and Connectivity

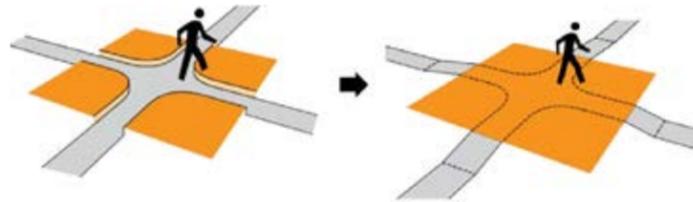
Improving connectivity and mobility is an essential goal of the Grand Connection. Envisioned primarily as a cyclists and pedestrian corridor, the team identified a number of opportunities to improve the range, safety, and overall experience of users. In addition to the improved experience and safety that raised intersections offer, a series of small scale, low cost improvements were proposed to achieve these goals.

The design team produced recommendations that pursued innovative and creative solutions that embrace the latest in transportation technology, and also small scale adjustments that can offer significant improvements to range and experience. These changes are intended to work within the existing infrastructure as well as address challenges related to Bellevue's topography and superblock configuration.

Many of the recommended improvements are best practices to improve the safety and experience for pedestrians and cyclists including improved and priority signal timing at intersections along the Grand Connection, as well as physical improvements such as enhanced bicycle lanes. Embracing Bellevue's high-tech community, the design team also made recommendations that improves last mile connectivity through autonomous group rapid transit.



Low cost improvements can increase pedestrian speed and range by at least 20%.



▲ **Raised Intersections** - Image by Mobility in Chain

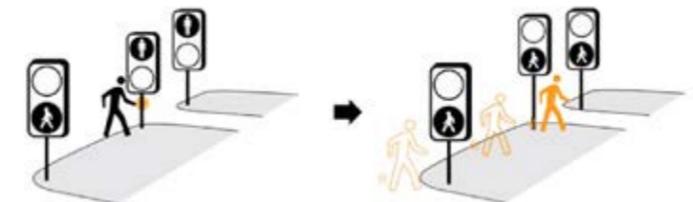
Improved Range and Connectivity

As a non-motorized corridor, the Grand Connection will prioritize the experience and safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Pursuing low cost and low risk solutions that provide a great impact on connectivity and range can represent a significant improvement.

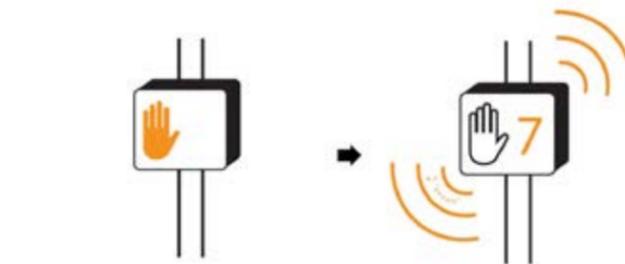
As previously mentioned, raised intersections have an opportunity to improve the aesthetic and experiential quality of the urban environment for pedestrians, and can also improve safety and reduce exposure risk.

The design team also recommends to modify pedestrian signals to be synchronized and with additional crossing time for pedestrians. This presents the opportunity to improve range, and comfort for crossing compared to the existing configuration. With so few conflicting intersections, these minor improvements will greatly enhance the pedestrian experience while potentially having minimal impact on vehicular traffic flow.

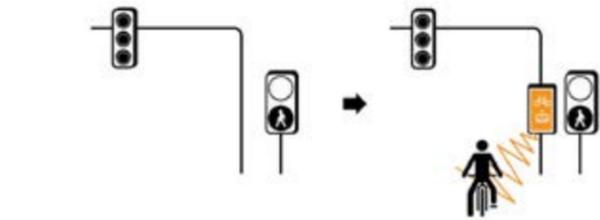
Additionally, improved and priority signal timing for cyclists and other transportation alternatives could encourage non-motorized travel by improving speed, range, and connectivity. Each of these recommendations work with existing infrastructure and require only slight modifications that could be implemented early at little cost.



▲ **Synchronized, No Push Button Pedestrian Signals**
- Image by Mobility in Chain



▲ **Audible and Improved Signal Length for Pedestrians**
- Image by Mobility in Chain



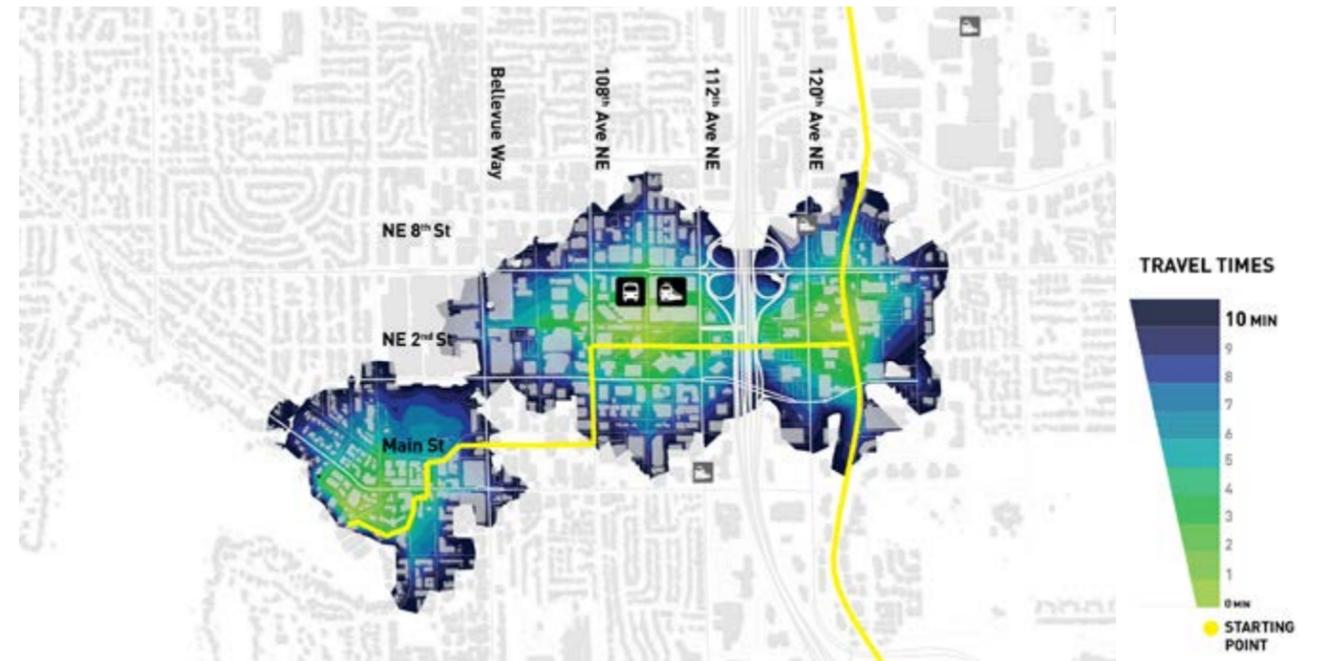
▲ **Prioritized Signals for Cyclists and Alternative Transportation**
- Image by Mobility in Chain

Next Steps:

- Evaluate potential to modify signal timing for pedestrians and cyclists to improve range and connectivity.



▲ **Existing 10 Minute Walking Range from Meydenbauer Bay Park, Bellevue Transit Center, & Wilburton Commercial Area**
- Image by Mobility in Chain



▲ **Improved 10 Minute Walking Range from Meydenbauer Bay Park, Bellevue Transit Center, & Wilburton Commercial Area Base on Signal Timing Improvements** - Image by Mobility in Chain

Group Rapid Transit (GRT's)

To create a route that is safe and accessible to all users the design team turned to the latest in transportation technology to address last-mile connectivity and Bellevue's challenging topography. The emergence of autonomous driving technologies has expanded to small autonomous shuttles that have been used in urban and campus settings around the globe. The design team has identified this as an opportunity to better link the route while improving range and connectivity for those with reduced mobility options.

Group Rapid Transit (GRT) are small shuttles capable of carrying six to twelve passengers at a speed similar to that of cyclists (12 to 18 mph). GRT's offer flexibility in operation mode and their integration into the urban environment. Intended to serve a role as a means of last mile connectivity, they can integrate into existing traffic and infrastructure as well as adapt to type and frequency of use.

The design team has considered a phased approach to integrating GRT's into the existing transportation network. Utilizing the proposed cyclist route, and other changes covered later in this document, GRT's can be introduced into the existing transportation infrastructure and ultimately phased into a dedicated route and infrastructure shared with bicycle lanes.

Flexibility in Operation and Phasing

- Similar to existing ride hailing services such as Uber and Lyft, GRT's can begin as an "on demand" service that can be performed using a smartphone app. This early phase of implementation can provide flexibility in pick up and drop off locations, as well as frequency in early stages of implementation as it integrates into the existing street network.

- As popularity for the system increases, the GRT's can begin operating in a "bus mode" using predefined stops and locations per request of the users. This mode operates similar to an "on demand" service with fixed stop locations. In "bus mode" it would operate as a horizontal lift, back and forth in a single traffic lane. With no predefined front or back, the GRT's can easily change direction without needing a turn.
- The final phase of implementation, when the service has reached optimal use and popularity, GRT's can operate in "metro mode." This allows for the shuttles to operate on a predefined schedule with fixed stops and locations. Operating in enhanced bike lanes, GRT's become bi-directional, traveling in both directions simultaneously.

Autonomous Group Rapid Transit (GRT) has already been deployed in cities such as Las Vegas and Washington, D.C.

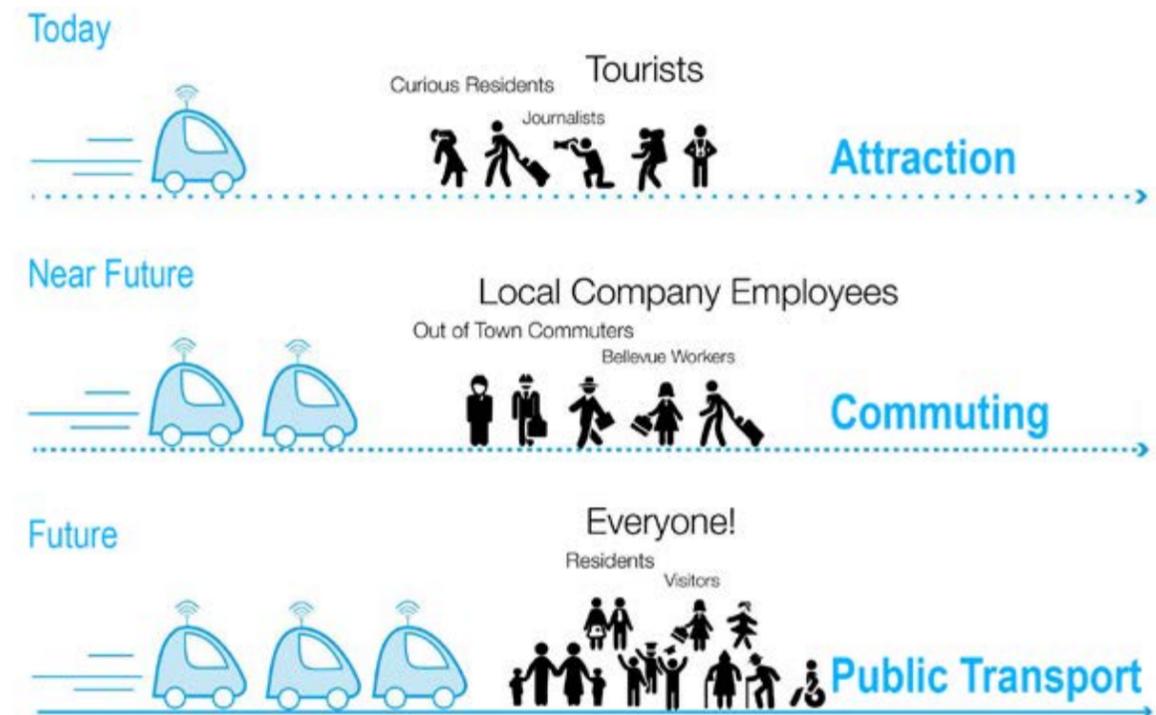
Phasing

As a new technology that would require a period of time to integrate into existing infrastructure, improve and enhance future infrastructure, and user comfortability the design team has recommended a phased approach as outlined in the modes outlined previously. This would allow for a measured integration, allowing both users and other modes of transportation to become comfortable and familiar with the new technology.

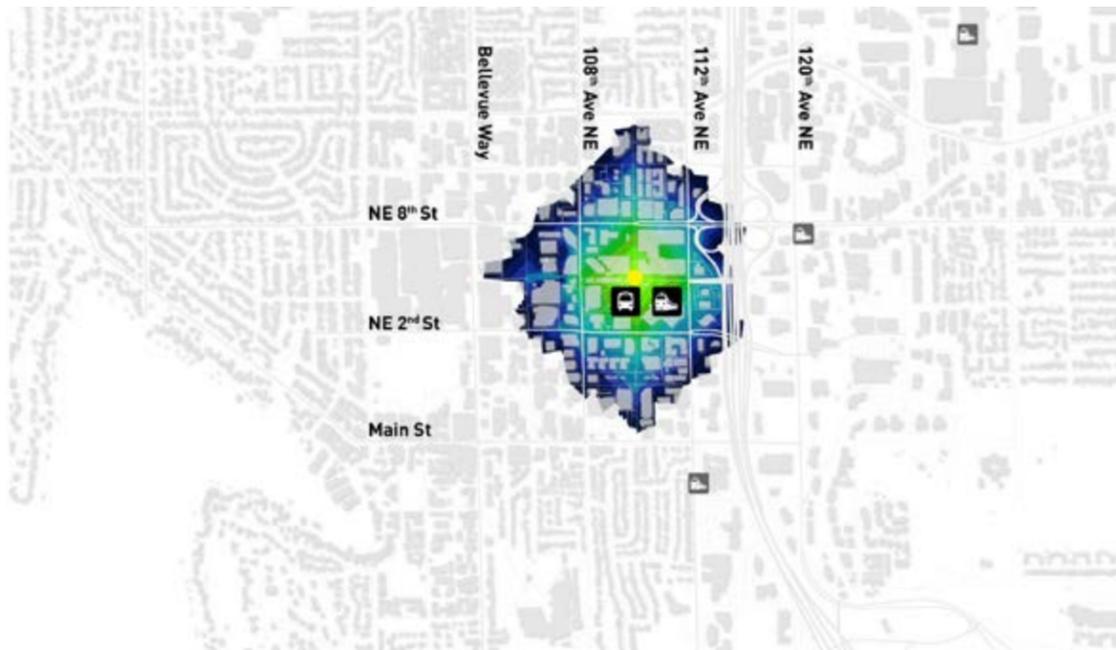
As popularity and use increases the City could identify opportunities to partner with other local and regional technology companies to improve and enhance the system, while also considering the expansion of additional routes in Downtown, and beyond.

Safety

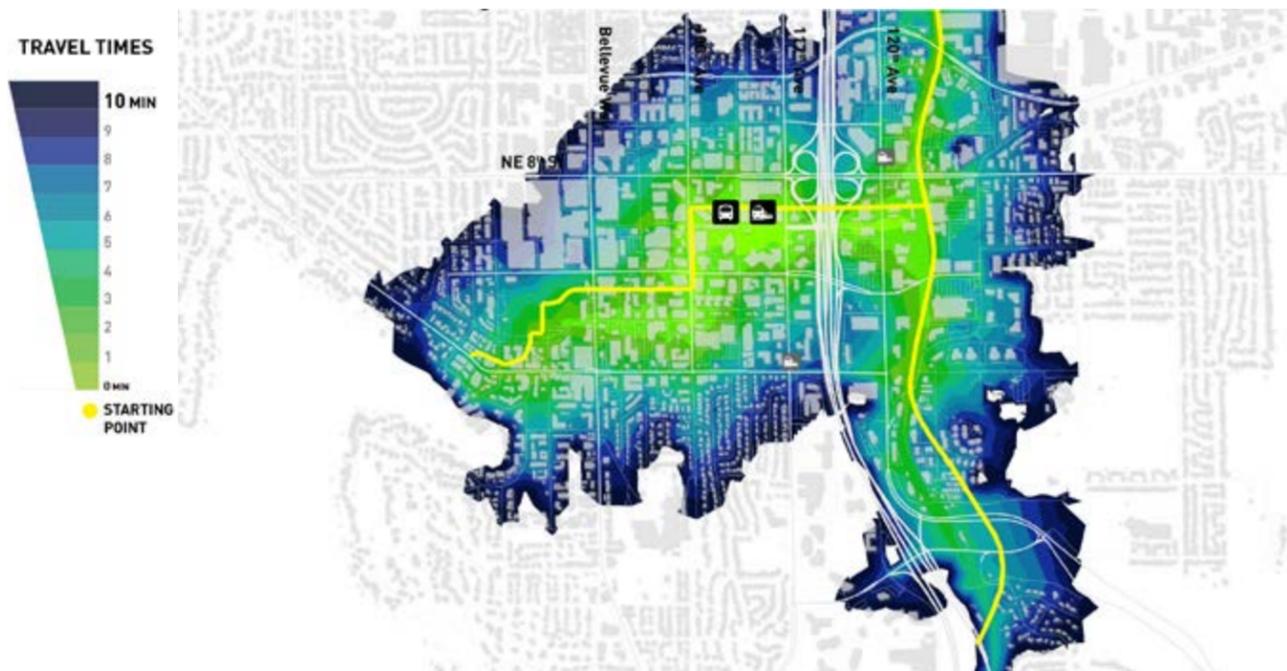
The speed of GRT's matches that of the average cyclist with a cruising speed of approximately 12.5 mph. Sensors allow for the GRT's to adjust speed with cyclists in close proximity, and will even reduce speed as it passes a cyclist from an oncoming direction, prioritizing safety. Such features allow for a safe and successful mix of cyclists and GRT's users within the same environment.



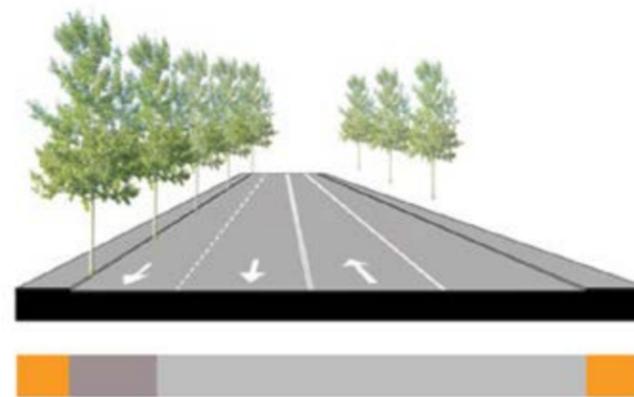
▲ Group Rapid Transit Phasing Strategy - Image by Mobility in Chain



▲ Existing 10 Minute Walking Range from Bellevue Transit Center - Image by Mobility in Chain



▲ Potential 10 Minute Range via GRT's from Bellevue Transit Center - Image by Mobility in Chain



▲ Existing Example Street Section - Image by Balmori Associates

Improved Streets

Group Rapid Transit (GRT) offers opportunities to reconfigure streets to accommodate new transportation options. The example configuration exhibits the improvements that could accompany enhanced bike lanes such as planting strips and buffers from the general purpose traffic lanes. In the example, lanes are not removed to make room for the vegetation, bike lanes, and group rapid transit. Instead the traffic lanes are reduced in width to create space.

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▲ Improved Example Street Section - Image by Balmori Associates



▲ Group Rapid Transit Vehicles Sharing Proposed Bicycle Lanes - Image by Balmori Associates

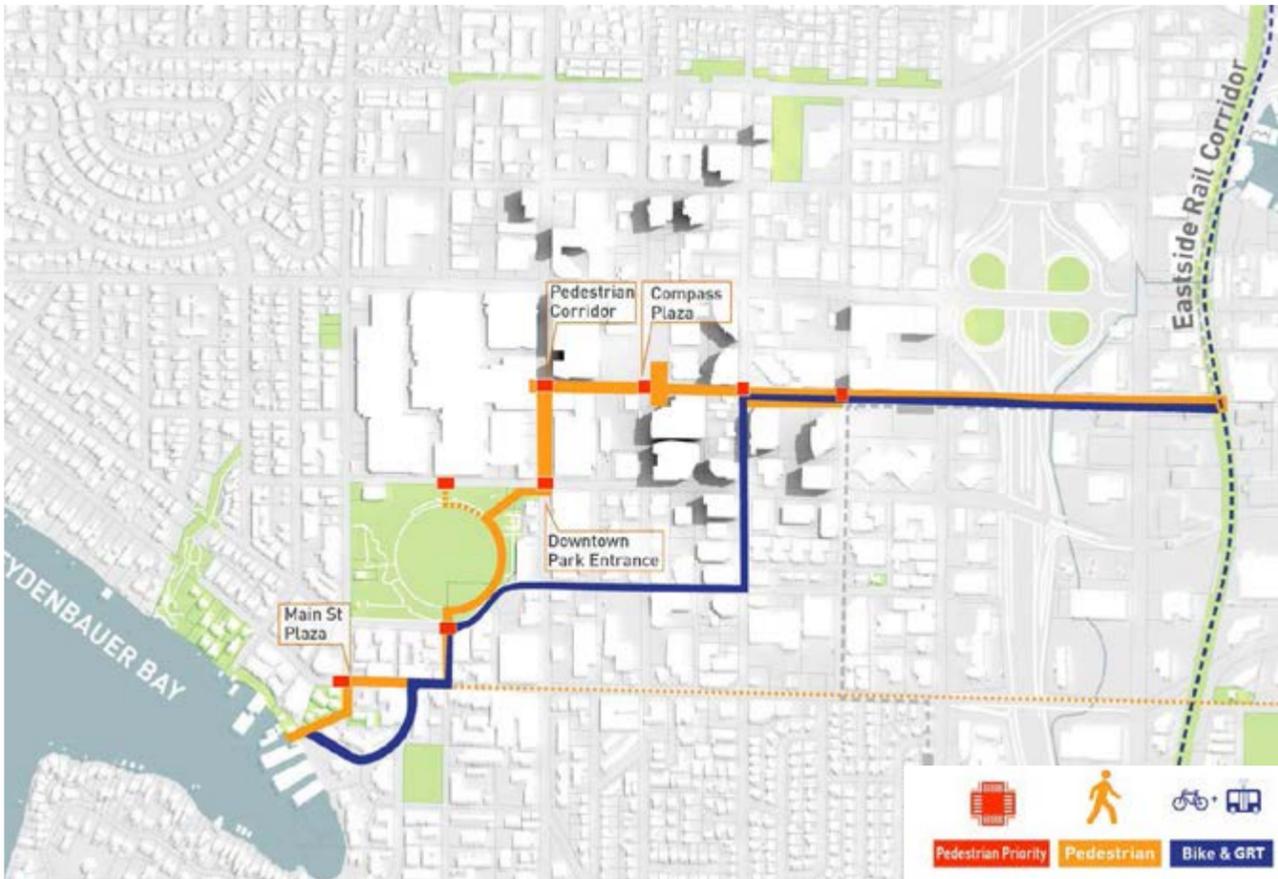
Group Rapid Transit

Group Rapid Transit (GRT) vehicles that can share bicycle lanes can increase mobility and connectivity. Traveling at approximately the same speed as a cyclist (12 - 18 mph) these autonomous transportation alternatives can increase the overall range of users as well as assist in navigating many of the steep hills that exist between Downtown Bellevue and the Wilburton Commercial Area.



▲ Group Rapid Transit in a Pedestrian and Bicycle Mixing Zone
- Image by Mobility in Chain

The design team recommends that west of 108th Avenue NE, the GRT route separates from the mainline of the Grand Connection. The route, pictured in blue in the graphic below, separates from the mainline of the Grand Connection, pictured in orange. This is in response to the tighter urban environment that exists between 108th Avenue NE and Bellevue, but also represents an opportunity to open a new mode of transportation on NE 2nd which presents challenges in topography for non-motorized transportation. The route reconnects south of the Downtown Park with the primary route, and then separates again in order to access Meydenbauer Bay Park.



▲ Primary Grand Connection Route - Image by Balmori Associates

Next Steps: Group Rapid Transit

- Explore the opportunity to implement a transportation alternative solution such as Group Rapid Transit.
- Study the proposed route and consider design and traffic implications as well as potential alternative routes.
- Determine if an Environmental Impact Statement would be needed to implement a Group Rapid Transit strategy.
- Research and explore opportunities for partnerships for implementation.

Re-imagining Public Spaces



100th Avenue NE and Main Street

Overview

The intersection of 100th Avenue NE and Main Street serves as a gateway to Meydenbauer Bay Park, Old Bellevue, and the Grand Connection. It presents an opportunity to integrate the existing intimate urban fabric of Old Bellevue into the new concept of the Grand Connection and expanded Meydenbauer Bay Park. With sweeping changes coming for Meydenbauer Bay Park, and a beloved surrounding context, the improvements proposed for the intersection of 100th Avenue NE and Main Street focus on aesthetics and an enhanced pedestrian and cyclist experience.

The design team recommends a raised intersection that is articulated with art or unique paving design that gives priority to pedestrian and cyclists. Additionally, it is recommended that modest public spaces be incorporated on the north side of Main Street upon future redevelopment. The combination of the raised intersection and corner public spaces provides a sense of arrival to the urban environment of Bellevue, as well as the Grand Connection route. To assist in the navigating the change in topography to the waterfront a group rapid transit stop could be located at the base of the proposed stairs for those with reduced mobility options.



▲ Existing - 100th Avenue NE and Main Street Intersection Conditions - Image by Balmori Associates

▲ Recommended - 100th Avenue NE and Main Street Improvements with Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan - Image by Balmori Associates



▲ Recommended Improvements at the Intersection of 100th Avenue NE and Main Street - Image by Balmori Associates

Art Opportunities - 100th Avenue NE and Main Street

Vision

The artist's hand is most apparent in Old Bellevue. With its small size and scale buildings and streets, artist designed signs, parklets for busking and temporary artworks in side streets and alleyways give the impression that "creatives were here." Bigger moves, such as an integrated sculpture or fountain at the west end of Main Street, suggest there is more to the neighborhood than meets the eye.

Objectives

- Support events and temporary works of art that will unify the street, lending it a focus
- Increase awareness of close proximity to the Meydenbauer Bay and create a clear and well defined route between Meydenbauer Bay Park and Downtown Park

First Move

Develop programming and evening art walks in collaboration with merchants and property owners to activate the neighborhood during Bellwether 2018.



▲ Red Ball Project- Taipei, Taiwan - Kurt Perschke



▲ Grass Patch Wayfinding - Image Source Sustainable Interior Design



▲ Parklet National Park(ing) Day - Rebar Studio



▲ Museum Zeughaus Wayfinding - Berlin, Germany

Major Art Opportunity

Main Street Fountain

Phase II of Meydenbauer Bay Park will develop 100th Ave NE beginning at Main Street. A large sculpture or artist-designed fountain integrated into the streetscape or park at the intersection of Main Street and 100th Ave NE will provide the visual cue to pedestrians and visitors that there is water and more to see around the corner. An artwork should respond to the historic importance of the site where industry, manufacturing, and business retailing began in Bellevue.

Integrated Artwork

Incorporate small artworks into existing infrastructure, such as light poles, street signs, paving, and seating. Pedestrian can also provide visual interest.

Cultural Plinth

Main Street Program

Create partnership between the City of Bellevue, area merchants and private landowners to develop programming and art opportunities that coincide with existing events and infrastructure and activate the area culturally. Music venues, literary and poetry reading in restaurants and cafes, emerging artists displayed in windows and on the walls will all add to the rich fabric of the neighborhood.

Main Street Parklets

Create temporary parklets that could support both restaurants and small street-side public performance and artistic interventions. These could include parking spaces, storefronts, and intersections.

Minor Points of Interest

Develop a list of potential sites and small spaces for placemaking interventions and 2D artworks. Alleyway walls, utility boxes and traffic poles, and planting strips should all be considered for small but interesting artworks.

Wayfinding

Commission an artist to develop unique and cohesive wayfinding that identifies this location on the Grand Connection route, the proximity of Meydenbauer Bay, immediate cultural amenities, and identifies the adjoining hubs.



▲ U Street Corridor - Washington, District of Columbia



▲ UICS Intersection - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania - Megan Elliott

Next Steps: 100th Avenue NE and Main

- Identify timeline for the raised intersection.
- Coordinate with future development at the intersection of Main Street and 100th Avenue NE for the provision of a modest public space.
- Identify opportunities for a gateway artistic installation or aesthetic enhancements to the future raised intersection.
- Begin collaborating with property owners and merchants in advance of Bellwether 2018.

Downtown Park - NE 4th and Bellevue Way

Overview

The northeast corner of the Downtown Park is a key gateway for Bellevue and the Grand Connection route. It marks an important transition from Downtown Bellevue into a more intimate environment of the park and ultimately Old Bellevue. The intersection of NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way is also one of the most significant intersections in the city. Currently this corner is lacking a formal entrance to the park with existing entrances further east, mid-block on NE 4th, and a secondary entrance mid-block on Bellevue Way. The design team saw this as an opportunity to create a gateway between this bustling intersection, while preserving the natural and green elements of the Downtown Park.

The design team recommends a small corner plaza at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way. As a significantly busy intersection this is likely to not be an active public space, so a modest plaza maintains the emphasis on the green elements of the park and avoids introducing excessive hardscape to the urban area. A modest water feature will help to activate the plaza, while also offering a buffer from the sounds of traffic at the intersection. The path into the park is framed by an allee of trees consistent with the existing aesthetic of the park. This concept uses existing city owned land and does not require the acquisition of additional properties.



▲ Existing - Downtown Park Entrance at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way - Image by Balmori Associates

▲ Recommended - Downtown Park Entrance at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way (Enlarged) - Image by Balmori Associates



▲ Recommended Improvements to Downtown Park Entrance at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way - Image by Balmori Associates



▲ Bryant Park - New York, New York - Image by Dandeluca - Flickr

The gateway will provide direct sight lines between Downtown and into the park. The raised intersection at Bellevue Way and NE 4th Street will provide aesthetic continuity between the new plaza, the intersection, and the recently completed minor public open space at the Lincoln Square Expansion development. These strategies will allow the park to serve less as a border to Downtown, but to feel more integrated with the urban fabric.

The allee of trees that form the new entrance to the park will create adjacent spaces that will be more suitable for public gathering and social interaction. These spaces can be programmed and modified to encourage activity that is less passive than the current manicured lawns that exist in these areas. Opportunities exist for seating and gathering that can attract pedestrians from the nearby active urban uses and better integrate into the urban environment.



▲ Entrance Adjacent Areas for Activation

Art Opportunities - Downtown Park

Vision

Art and culture have a designated place in Bellevue's largest urban park. A public art gateway welcomes the world to Bellevue Downtown Park, imprinting the importance of art, culture and design on the thousands of annual visitors that walk through its gates. Diverse neighbors connect with each other at cultural events and art programs at the park's NE entrance throughout the year. Each year, visitors anticipate the temporary artist-designed summer pavilion that provides interactive opportunities to be inspired and build a creative community.

Objectives

- Create a clear and well-marked entrance to Downtown Park at the corner of NE 4th & Bellevue Way NE with a public artwork in the form of a tower or gateway, as an alternative way of marking the entrance to Downtown Park.
- Activate civic space with temporary art exhibitions, performances, music, and other events in the entrance plaza.

First Move

Integrate artists into design team of NE 4th Street entry plaza project to design an entry gateway and raised-intersection at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way. Commission a temporary summer pavilion at the "Setts" for Bellwether 2018.



▲ Capitol Hill Gateway Proposal - Image by SuttonBeresCuller



▲ Conjoined - Madison Square Park, New York - Roxy Paine



▲ Path of Silence - Norway - Jeppe Hein

Major Art Opportunity

Downtown Park Gateway

Design, fabricate, and install a permanent sculptural tower or gateway to Downtown Park to create a significant entrance to the park at the intersection of NE 4th and Bellevue Way. The gateway should serve as a welcoming beacon to the park as well as a recognizable landmark. The artwork should be highly visible from the street and respond to the design Downtown Park and its surrounding area.

Integrated Artwork

Art Crosswalk at NE 4th Street & Bellevue Way

An artist-designed paving or design for new raised intersection at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way will create a safe, slow-speed crossing and public space while enhancing the pedestrian environment. An artwork that responds to and designed with the new NE 4th Street entrance and proposed gateway in mind will extend the welcoming effect of the park.

Cultural Plinth

Gateway Plaza

A public gathering space near to the gateway can provide that neighborhood-park feel by supporting community events and other year-round programming including Bellwether activities. This can be activated with little or no impact on other park activities. Regularly scheduled events can include movies in the park, a night market, light projections, and illuminated artworks in the winter, music, dance, and theatrical performances. Artist-designed features such as sculptural seating and lighting will reinforce the artist feel of the plaza.

The Setts

The setts that mark the old school administration building present a unique opportunity to celebrate design and the history of the site as former school. The raised concrete foundation within the circle promenade could serve as a cultural plinth for temporary installations that focus on the intersection of art and architecture such as a temporary summer pavilion where community events and programs are held in conjunction with the Bellwether exhibition.

Minor Points of Interest

Due to the nature of Downtown Park, there is little need to create additional points of interest along the route. Upon completion of the “circle,” an analysis of the area will be performed to recommend any additional wayfinding elements to help identify the Grand Connection route.

Wayfinding

Provide unique and cohesive wayfinding that identifies this location on the Grand Connection route, the immediate cultural amenities, and identifies the adjoining hubs.



▲ **Modified Social Bench - Brooklyn Bridge Park, New York** - Jeppe Hein

Next Steps: Downtown Park NE Entrance

- Coordinate with other City initiatives.
- Design refinement of the gateway, plaza, and supplementary public areas west of the proposed entrance.
- Gateway art installation as part of the park entrance.
- Evaluate the feasibility of raising the intersection at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way, include design aesthetic.

Downtown Park

Overview

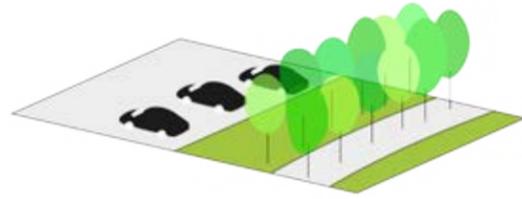
The design team identified several additional long term opportunities to improve the aesthetic and experiential quality of the park, accessibility to the park, and creating a finer grained urban fabric amongst existing uses and the superblock configuration.

- **West Parking Lot** - The west parking lot will be the only remaining surface parking of the Downtown Park. To improve the aesthetic quality and mitigate the visual impacts of the parking lot, the design team recommends creating a berm that would conceal the parking. The berm could become usable green space, while maintaining the existing parking volume.
- **Park Entrance** - The design team studied the park entrance mid-block between Bellevue Way and 100th Avenue NE. Its current configuration creates a visual obstruction to the beauty of open green space of the park with high retaining walls. Additionally there are separate paths into the park for those with reduced mobility options. The recommendation would consolidate all access into the park with an integrated ramp and stair configuration, while removing the wall that diminishes the aesthetic quality of the park's grand expanse and sense of arrival.

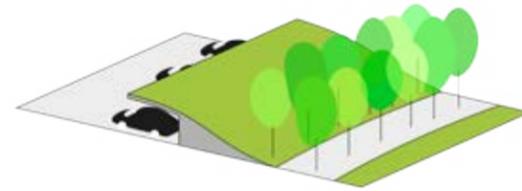


▲ Recommended Long Term Additional Improvements to the Downtown Park - Image by Balmori Associates

West Parking Lot



▲ Existing West Parking Lot Conditions - Downtown Park - Image by Balmori Associates

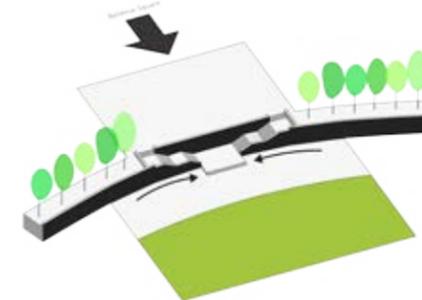


▲ Recommended West Parking Lot Improvement - Downtown Park - Image by Balmori Associates

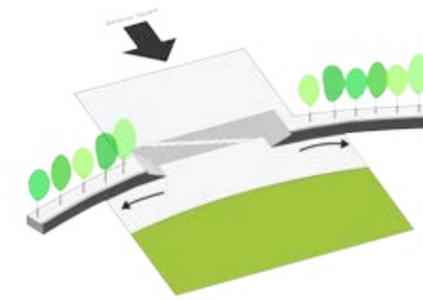


▲ Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust - Los Angeles, California - Belzberg Architects

Downtown Park Entrance Mid-Block Between Bellevue Way and 100th Avenue NE



▲ Existing Downtown Park Entrance - NE 4th Street Mid Block - Image by Balmori Associates



▲ Recommended Downtown Park Entrance - NE 4th Street Mid Block - Image by Balmori Associates



▲ Chicago Riverwalk - Chicago, Illinois - Ross Barney Architects

Next Steps: Downtown Park

- Explore the feasibility of the additional Downtown Park improvement ideas.
- Coordinate with other City initiatives such as park improvements.

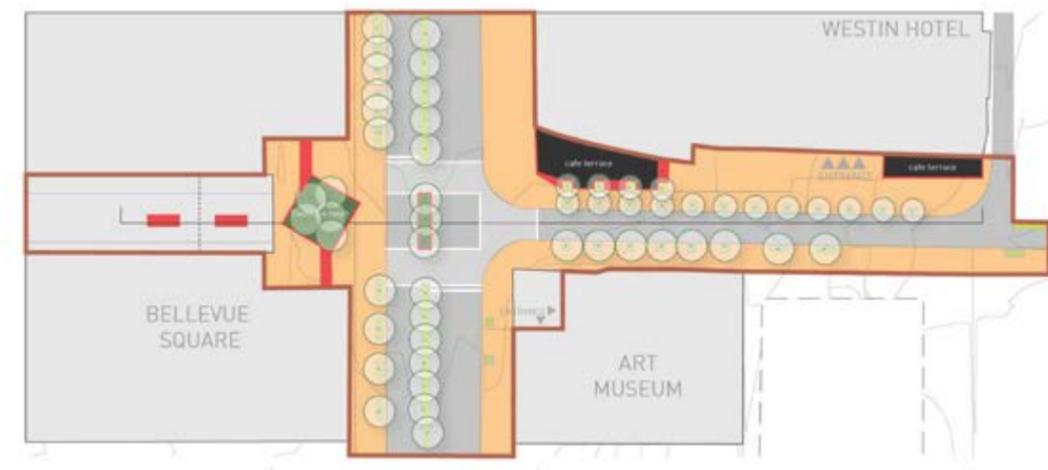
Pedestrian Corridor

Overview

The “Street as Plaza” segment of the Pedestrian Corridor has the potential to be a high energy public space. Assets such as Bellevue Square, Bellevue Arts Museum, and the restaurant, nightlife, and residences of Lincoln Square and Lincoln Square Expansion create tremendous potential for an engaging urban environment. This area is also a key gateway for patrons of Bellevue Square and Bellevue Arts Museum.

The design team approached this area as an opportunity to create a festival style street that is flexible in its use. With existing outdoor dining and cafe opportunities, the design team saw an opportunity to better integrate them into the public realm. As a low volume street, and only one lane east of 105th Avenue NE, a significant amount of space is dedicated to automobile traffic for a predominately pedestrian environment.

The design team provided two options in an effort to address some of the challenges in the immediate area, and to create new opportunities to assist in fulfilling the vision of Street as Plaza. Each strategy attempts to mitigate impact of automobiles and open this segment of the Grand Connection to the high volume of pedestrians that do and will use the space on a daily basis.



▲ Recommended Areas for Improvements on the Pedestrian Corridor - Image by Balmori Associates

Option One

Option one focuses on modest improvements that would improve the transition between public and private space, while creating more area for programming and engagement with the surrounding developments.

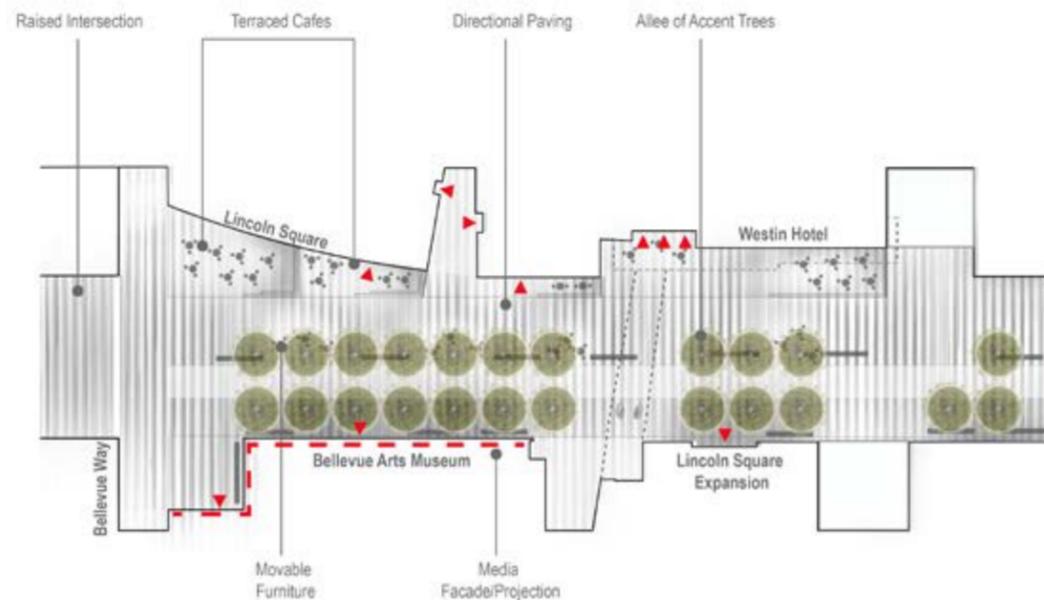
This options seeks to reduce the grade difference between the current terraced cafe and the public realm. As an alternative, the design team has proposed a series of terraced cafes to reduce the amount of blank wall facing the public realm and reduce the grade difference. Much like the raised intersections, it is also recommended that the curbs are removed to create a seamless surface and enhance the sense of a “street as plaza.” The raising of the street will assist in maintaining slow speeds on NE 6th Street and creates opportunities for it to serve as a festival street.

Through public comment and the design charrette, several comments were received regarding the museum engaging with the Pedestrian Corridor. The design team also encourages the activation of the museum’s blank facades through projected media and art. This would create a dynamic installation that is regularly changing, engaging, and responding to the people and energy that this intersection produces.

The paving strategy is consistent with strategies one and two, found in Chapter 5, *Cohesive Design Strategies*, with permeable and directional paving.



▲ Passeig de St. Joan - Barcelona, Spain - Lola Domenech



▲ Option One Recommendation for the Pedestrian Corridor - Plan - Image by Balmori Associates



▲ New Road - Brighton, United Kingdom - Gehl Institute



▲ Directional Paving- Image by Persio Pucci



▲ Option One Recommendation for the Pedestrian Corridor - Section - Image by Balmori Associates



▲ Enlarged Paving Strategy Plan - Image by Balmori Associates

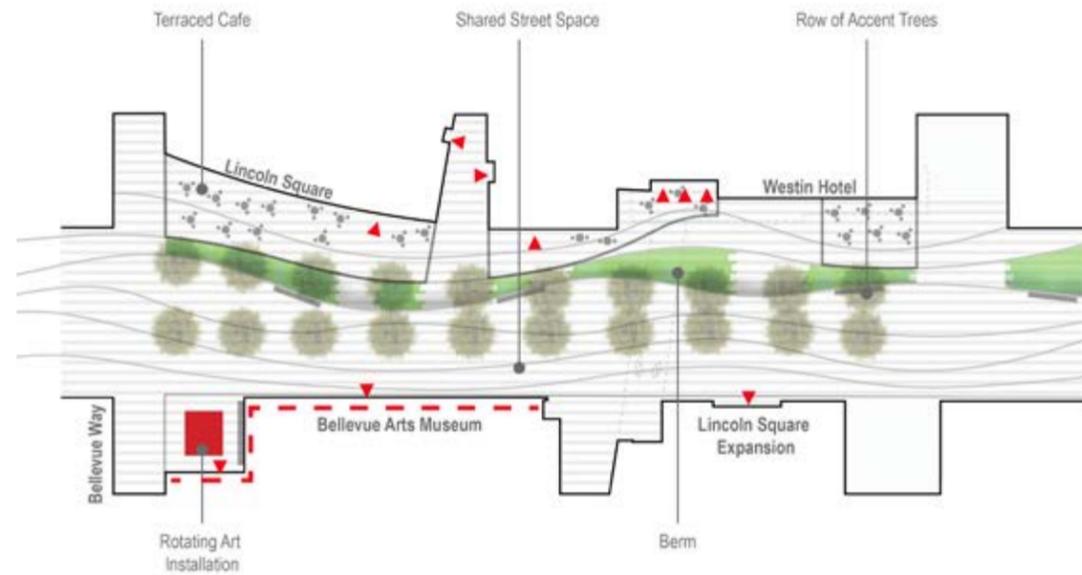
Option Two

The second option considers many of the same strategies as option one, including raising the street surface and softening the transition between the outdoor dining areas and the public realm. The primary difference in the method of addressing the change in grade between the outdoor dining and the paving strategy.

Rather than using stepped terraces the design team created a gentle rolling berm to address the change in grade between the public realm and outdoor activities. The berm creates an opportunity to integrate additional greenspace into the urban environment, while creating a unique aesthetic and experience. This berm would change in width and form as it weaves through the corridor and would integrate hard and softscape. The weaving form also allows for the staggering of street trees, making for a more dynamic visual impact.

The paving strategy for this option uses elements of all three of the previous strategies, found in Chapter 5, *Cohesive Design Strategies*. The berm creates a ribbon of softscape, interrupted by integrated urban amenities and hardscape. The fluidity of the paving pattern and ribbon also create a sense of direction for pedestrian movements.

At the Bellevue Arts Museum, the design team recommended a large scale rotating art installation. This differs from option one in that it relies on an impact art installation on the corner plaza that would be changed periodically, creating a different visual impact than interactive or projected media.



▲ Option Two Recommendation for the Pedestrian Corridor - Plan - Image by Balmori Associates

Next Steps: Pedestrian Corridor

- Select a preferred alternative for the Pedestrian Corridor.
- Refine the design and consider impacts and opportunities with City initiatives and private development improvements.
- Explore location and opportunities for a cultural plinth.



▲ Option Two Recommendation for the Pedestrian Corridor - Section - Image by Balmori Associates



▲ Enlarged Paving Strategy Plan - Image by Balmori Associates

Art Opportunities - Pedestrian Corridor

Vision

The block on NE 6th Street between Bellevue Way and 106th Ave NE is the most active street in Bellevue. It is the center of Downtown Bellevue's cultural life and people come to see and be seen. It is flanked at either end by regional cultural and retail destinations that attract people 18 hours a day with high quality, signature art and cultural events. The Grand Connection is activated by a constant stream of people drawn westward by a new monumental sculpture at the entrance to Bellevue Square Mall while the energy from Compass Plaza and the Transit Center just beyond pulls people to the east.

Objectives

- Create a dynamic, engaging center of the city where people want to be.
- Activate existing infrastructure and plaza with diverse cultural programming.

First Move

Claim the Street as Plaza and turn it into a Cultural Plinth. Build upon the successful Snowflake Lane event held annually in December by relocating the Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSFair held annually in July to Bellevue Way.



▲ Canopy at Centene Plaza - Clayton, Missouri - Liam Gillick



▲ Erie Street Plaza - Milwaukee, Wisconsin - Image by StossLU

Major Art Opportunity

Bellevue Way Beacon

Bellevue's signature art institution – the Bellevue Arts Museum – and event – Snowflake Lane – are located at the corner of Bellway Way and NE 6th Street. A new signature sculpture at the entrance to Bellevue Square Mall will reinforce the cultural importance of this location. The scale of the artwork should be considerable so it can serve a cross-town beacon, easily viewed from the Bellevue Transit Station and the Eastside Rail Corridor.

The NE 6th Street Canopy

As a vital link between the Bellevue Connection and Compass Plaza to the east and Bellevue Arts Museum and Bellevue Square Mall to the West, an artist-designed canopy will turn the current “pass-through” into a signature promenade. This opportunity will need a close partnership with private development as the properties redevelop in the future.

Integrated Artwork

Street Subtleties

While the Street as Plaza will be marked by big art moves that advance the exceptional identity of this area as the center of Downtown Bellevue's cultural life, a series of small scale, discoverable sculptures and artist treatments in the paving and sidewalk provide the fine grain artist touch that make the space feel “lived in” and diverse.

Art Crosswalk at Bellevue Way & NE 6th Street

An artist-designed paving or design for the new raised intersection at NE 6th and Bellevue Way will create a safe, slow-speed crossing and public space while enhancing the pedestrian environment. An artwork that responds to the signature events that occur at this location such

as Snowflake Lane will generate anticipation long before these special events and extend the impact and memories long after they're gone.

Street Furniture

Turn NE 6th Street into a regional center for design with artist-designed street furniture. In conjunction with the NE 6th Street Canopy, new and unique lighting and sculptural seating will turn NE 6th Street into a showroom for design. New partnerships between the City of Bellevue, private land owners and the design community could support ongoing digital art projections on building facades.

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Cultural Plinth

6th Street Market

NE 6th Street itself becomes the cultural plinth with “plug and play” infrastructure to support a diverse range of events and community groups including the Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSFair and the Bellevue Downtown Association Live at Lunch concert series. As surrounding property redevelops, dedicating storefront and lobby spaces to cultural uses such as art galleries, performance space, murals, and public art will make this the cultural heart of Downtown Bellevue.

Compass Plaza

Overview

Compass Plaza is the geographic center of Downtown Bellevue. The plaza is currently used for a number of smaller activities such as the Bellevue Downtown Association's *Live at Lunch* concert series, outdoor seating, a restaurant kiosk, and art installations. Additionally, there are other uses around the area that assist in activating the plaza such as the nearby food trucks and events and activities at the neighboring Doxa Church facility. Seasonal and special events occur in and around Compass Plaza, including the Bellevue Arts Fair and the Saturday farmers market.

The properties that surround Compass Plaza are some of the more underdeveloped parcels in Downtown Bellevue. Bellevue Connection, formerly The Galleria, is a three story retail and office development, adjoining the existing Compass Plaza. To the north are single story large scale developments such as a Barnes & Noble and the Doxa Church facility. To the west are two parking lots, one of which supports the PACCAR corporate headquarters, and a single story California Pizza Kitchen.

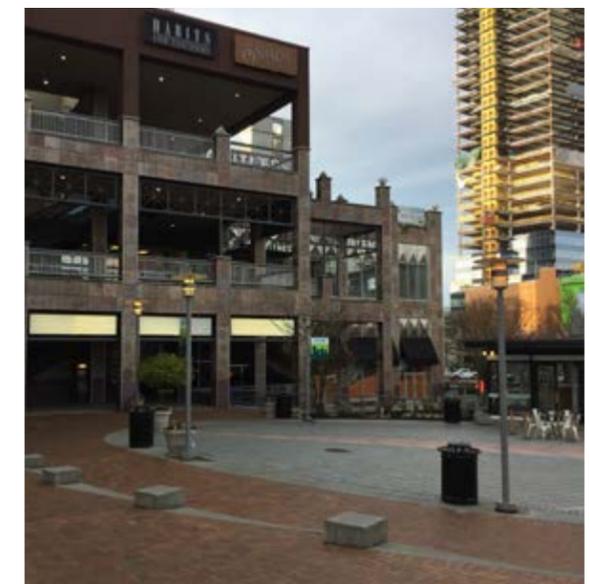
Given the underutilization of the parcels to date, this represents an ideal time to establish a long term vision for Compass Plaza prior to redevelopment. The properties to the east of 106th Avenue NE are conditioned, as part of the Land Use Code and Pedestrian Corridor requirements, to maintain and expand the public realm. Compass Plaza's location and surrounding contextual potential afford tremendous opportunities to revision the plaza as a dynamic and vibrant public space, supportive of a multitude of uses, activities, and programming.

Topography Challenges

The current configuration of Compass Plaza is challenged by its need to address the topographic challenges of the immediate area. A series of terraces, steps, and ramps allow the space to ascend from 106th Avenue NE to 108th Avenue NE. Several paths exist, including the separation of the accessible route for those with limited mobility options.

Fragmented Public Spaces

The existing response to the changes in grade have created a series of spaces that are too large to be intimate and too small to be programmed effectively. The form of the spaces are constricted by the various stairs and ramps, and have also created spaces that are irregular in form, adding to their difficulty of being programmed effectively.



▲ Compass Plaza - Existing

Creating a Fluid and Flexible Space

The design team has proposed a solution that integrates ramp and stair circulation at a single location while creating opportunities for amphitheater style seating.

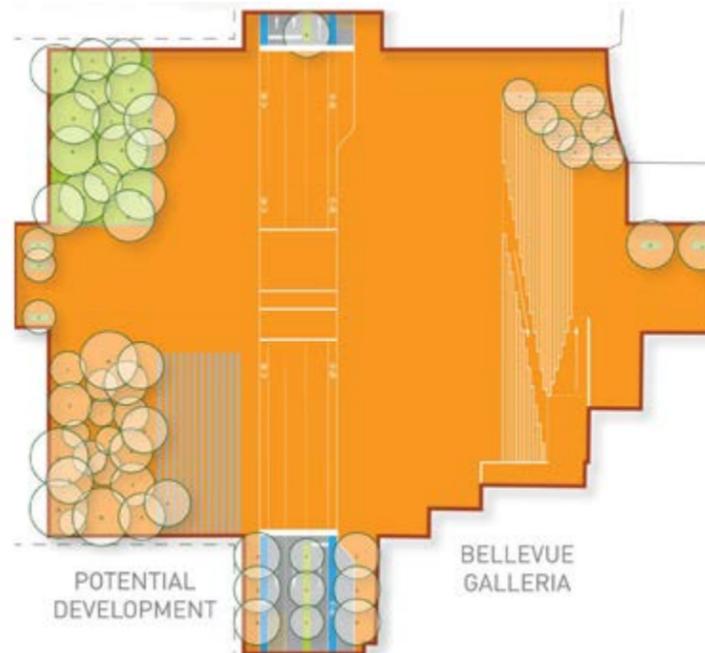
The location of the proposed circulation allows for the development of an open forum for flexible programming, and regular and seasonal events. The proposal expands the plaza to the north, consistent with current redevelopment requirements, and also considers expanding the plaza to the west. The eastern portion creates room and flexibility for a permanent home for the farmer's market, space for the food trucks in a people-oriented forum, and installations for art and water features.

Consistent with the widening of the Pedestrian Corridor, the area to the east of the plaza would integrate linear weather protection and opportunities for enhanced vegetation, seating, and play areas. This could offer a secondary public space to the primary plaza area.

To the west opportunities exist for a regional showcase of vegetation, to provide respite from the urban environment, as well as play structures, seating, and performance or pavilion space to exhibit local art and businesses. The two sides would be seamlessly integrated via a raised intersection so that during events such as the Arts Fair, and 106th Avenue NE is closed to traffic, the entire space would feel and operate as a contiguous public space. A portion of the raised intersection is currently in design as part of an early implementation strategy for the Grand Connection.



▲ Compass Plaza Plan - Existing - Image by Balmori Associates



▲ Compass Plaza Plan - Proposed (Enlarged) - Image by Balmori Associates

The recommendation, in its entirety, could be approached as a phased implementation strategy that is flexible and can be adapted over time as properties transition and new opportunities are identified. As one of the largest and most sweeping changes in the recommendations, it is an opportunity to re-imagine the center of Downtown with a dynamic and flexible public space for events, the arts, and social engagement.

As part of the Downtown Transportation Plan the intersection of NE 6th Street and 106th Avenue NE is in design to be raised. The length of this raised intersection could be extended in the future to be consistent with the width of a future Compass Plaza reconfiguration.



▲ Compass Plaza Plan Aerial - Proposed - Image by Balmori Associates

▼ (Next Page) Compass Plaza Perspective - Proposed - Image by Balmori Associates



Art Opportunities - Compass Plaza and Garden Hill Climb

Vision

Art and cultural programs at Compass Plaza and the Garden Hill Climb are designed to bring the community together and linger awhile. As the heart of Bellevue's most urban neighborhood, a variety of day and nighttime activities turn Compass Plaza from a cultural hub into a cultural and entertainment destination that compliments the "entertainment street" designation of 106th Avenue. New cultural plinths for ongoing temporary small-scale projects and performances make it easy to invite community interaction and build connections.

Objectives

- Construct and maintain 3 new cultural plinths for temporary, event-based art and cultural presentations.
- Create a year-round, 18 hour a day cultural destination by supplementing current daytime activities with nighttime artworks and activities.
- Expand partnerships with private property owners to enhance and activate the pedestrian corridor with visual art, color, and activities.

First Move

Integrate an artist into design team to develop the Art Crosswalk at 106th Avenue. Colorful artistic treatments will enhance Bellevue's identity as a fun, dynamic pedestrian friendly destination. The expected life span of these artworks should be 3-5 years and use appropriately durable materials such as MMA (Methyl Methacrylate) that lasts approximately 7-10 years. Paint is not recommended. This gives an opportunity for a number of artists and artworks over time and supports the programmable, flexible, and curate-able vision of the Grand Connection.



▲ **Doxa Church Area of Activation** - Image by SuttonBeresCuller



▲ **Painted Intersections Project - Fort Lauderdale, Florida** - Robert Haines Merrill



▲ **Skies Painted with Unnumbered Sparks** - Janet Echelman

Major Art Opportunity

The Lights at Compass Plaza

As Compass Plaza redevelops, a new signature sculpture will anchor this public space as a year round, 18 hour a day cultural destination. An artwork that incorporates light and innovative materiality will add to its urban character and could be integrated into the surrounding buildings on the plaza edge or within the public space. If Compass Plaza expands, it will be important to consider an artwork that matches the new scale of the public space.

Integrated Artwork

Art Crosswalk at 106th Avenue NE

An artist-designed paving or design for the new raised intersection at 106th Avenue adjacent to Compass Plaza will create a safe, slow-speed crossing and public space while enhancing the pedestrian environment. A colorful artwork incorporated into this new raised intersection will add to the "outdoor gallery" feel established in the Garden Hill Climb. This also provides a visual, colorful impact when looking down onto the city streets from the office towers above.

Cultural Plinth

Garden Hill Murals

A number of large walls that currently face the Pedestrian Corridor and could host large-scale murals including a semi-permanent installation on the south-facing wall of DOXA Church and a rotating art wall on the north-facing wall of All American Eyeglass Repair building for young and emerging artists. These murals could include a range of mediums from paintings to night-time digital projections.

Art Row

As one of the only sites where the Grand Connection is completely separated from car traffic, the Garden Hill Climb provides a unique opportunity for an intimate public art experience. Empty storefronts at the Bellevue Connection can be activated with artists' studios, performance, and event spaces. Installations and presentation of visual artworks can be displayed in windows, on top of the existing awnings, and in the planting strip. Outdoor display cases could provide emerging artists with a venue to exhibit artwork in rotating exhibitions.

Eastside Kitchen

Turn Compass Plaza into a center for food culture by establishing a year-round farmers and food market. Partnerships with existing kitchens such as the Homegrown Sustainable Sandwiches and the former Rock Bottom Brewery could host guest chefs and cooking demonstrations. A permanent place for food trucks with electrical outlet access and artists-designed seating could extend food options well into the evening hours cultivate a vibrant café culture.

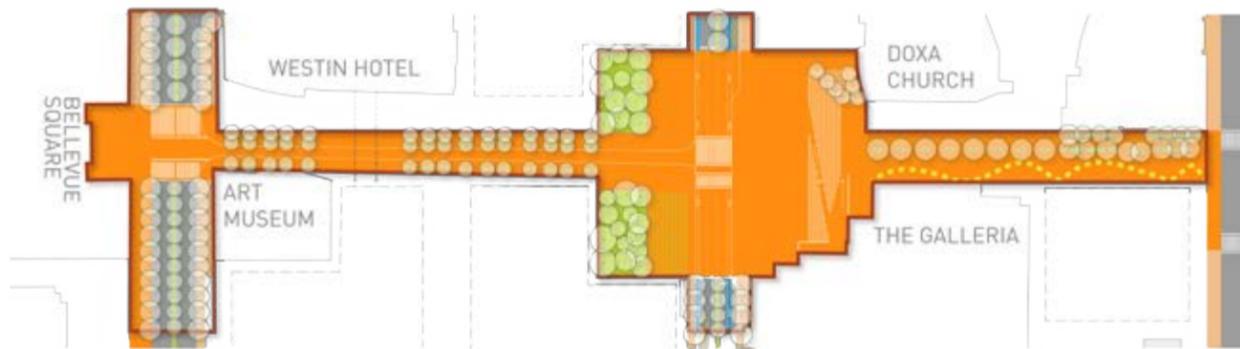
Minor Points of Interest

Art Screen

Install temporary art installations and performance spaces that visually delineate the parking lot at DOXA Church from the pedestrian space.

Wayfinding

Provide unique and cohesive wayfinding that identifies this location on the Grand Connection route, the immediate cultural amenities, and identifies the adjoining hubs.



▲ Pedestrian Corridor from Bellevue Way to 108th Avenue NE - Concept- Image by Balmori Associates

Next Steps: Compass Plaza

- Design refinement and phasing approach for the Compass Plaza reconfiguration, including materials, programming, and art installations.
- Explore the opportunity to expand the plaza to the west as a long-term strategy.
- Explore opportunities to collaborate and partner with private development improvements and City initiatives.
- Engage in tactical urbanism events to test and demonstrate potential future improvements.
- Explore programming and cultural plinth opportunities.

Art Opportunities - Bellevue Transit Center and Civic Center

Vision

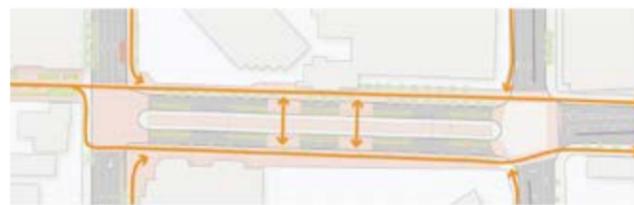
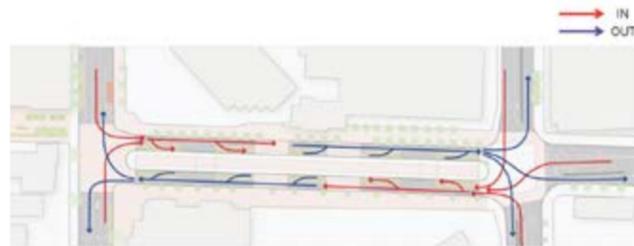
No one ever just waits for a bus or the train; they engage. Bellevue Corporate Plaza, City Hall, Meydenbauer Center, and the Transit Station work together as the city's primary cultural hub, providing a place for civic engagement of all forms and opportunities to experience arts and cultural events year round. Bellevue's story is constantly being explored through many iconic public artworks, rotating community exhibitions, and cultural programs in the lobbies of City Hall and Meydenbauer Center.

Objectives

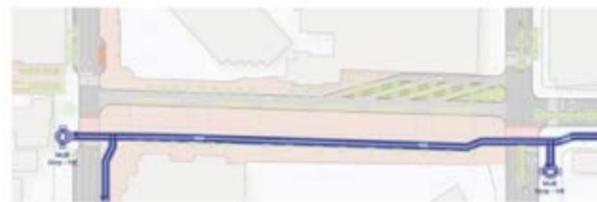
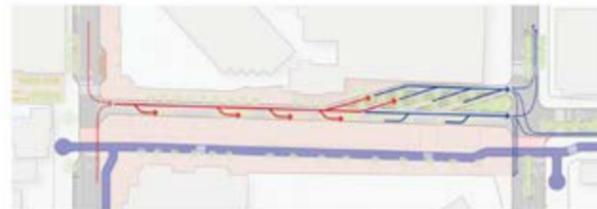
- Utilize artist-designed building elements to create physical and visual distance between sights and sounds of busses.
- Develop the Civic Center as a "people hub" with strong artistic and cultural elements. Reimagine and re-design transit center for the general public while encouraging increased use of public transit.

First Move

Collaborate with Meydenbauer Center to develop the Stoop and programming specific to the Grand Connection within the lobby. Expand Storefronts program at Meydenbauer Center to utilize all of the windows and doors from the parking garage to the corner of NE 6th and 112th NE. The program currently only utilizes a few window mid-block. Between the parking garage entrance and the main steps. The windows and doors on the corner of NE 6th St and 112th Ave NE are additional opportunities.



▲ Existing Movements at the Transit Center - Image by Mobility and Chain



▲ Proposed Movements at the Transit Center - Image by Mobility and Chain



▲ Meydenbauer Convention Center Activation - Image by SuttonBeresCuller



▲ Van Gogh Bike Path - Eindhoven, Netherlands - Studio Roosegaarde



▲ Subterraneum - Seattle, Washington - Leo Saul Berk

Major Art Opportunity

Transit Center Roof

The roofline of the Bellevue Transit Center is a defining feature of the civic center. Artists could illuminate both the interior and exterior of the Transit Center with color and lighting elements that change and respond to the season and important community events in the civic plaza.

Integrated Artwork

Pedestrian art enhancements

Partner with Sound Transit, King County Metro, and other stakeholders to identify opportunities for public art enhancements, such as a new raised intersection or sidewalk treatments for pedestrian crossings to help unify these spaces into one.

The Stoop

Further the identity of Meydenbauer Center as an important public place by incorporating artwork, color, and lighting into a redesigned entryway and steps. Continue to utilize and activate the window space at the Meydenbauer Center along NE 6th Street for rotating exhibitions.

Cultural Plinth

Civic Plaza

Strengthen Bellevue's civic identity by coordinating cultural programming such as night markets, craft vendors, and food trucks at the Bellevue Corporate Plaza, City Hall Plaza, and Microsoft City Center Plaza. Regular events and markets across all three spaces will soften the corporate profile of this important civic place and transform the area into a welcoming destination that celebrates people and culture while encouraging alternative forms of transportation.

Civic Galleries

Utilize the City Hall and Meydenbauer Center lobbies for ongoing exhibitions of community arts, local artists, and area cultural organizations. These spaces are important community spaces that provide the general public a platform to participate in the civic dialogue and excitement of the Grand Connection.

Minor Points of Interest

Small scale, discoverable sculptures, including paving and sidewalk treatments.

Wayfinding

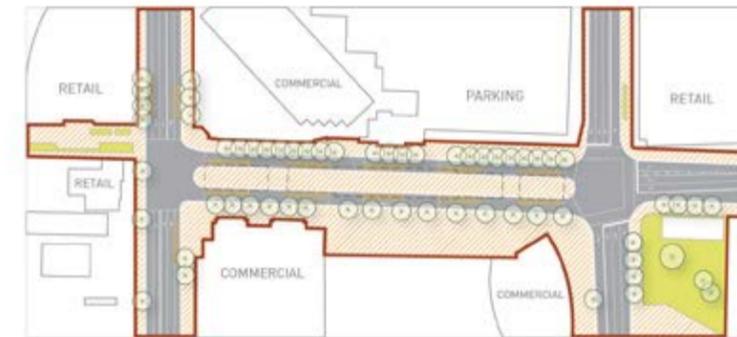
Provide unique and cohesive wayfinding that identifies this location on the Grand Connection route, the immediate cultural amenities, and identifies the adjoining hubs. With the upcoming Sound Transit Light Rail addition this will be a unique opportunity to get people to explore the Grand Connection.



▲ Pioneer Courthouse - Portland, Oregon

Next Steps: Bellevue Transit Center

- Explore opportunity to advance a reconfiguration plan for the Bellevue Transit Center with local and regional transit agencies.
- Study potential impacts of existing and future bus routes.
- Refine the design of the Bellevue Transit Center proposal including cohesive design strategies, interface of cyclist and group rapid transit opportunities, and programming.



▲ Existing Bellevue Transit Center Configuration - Image by Mobility and Chain

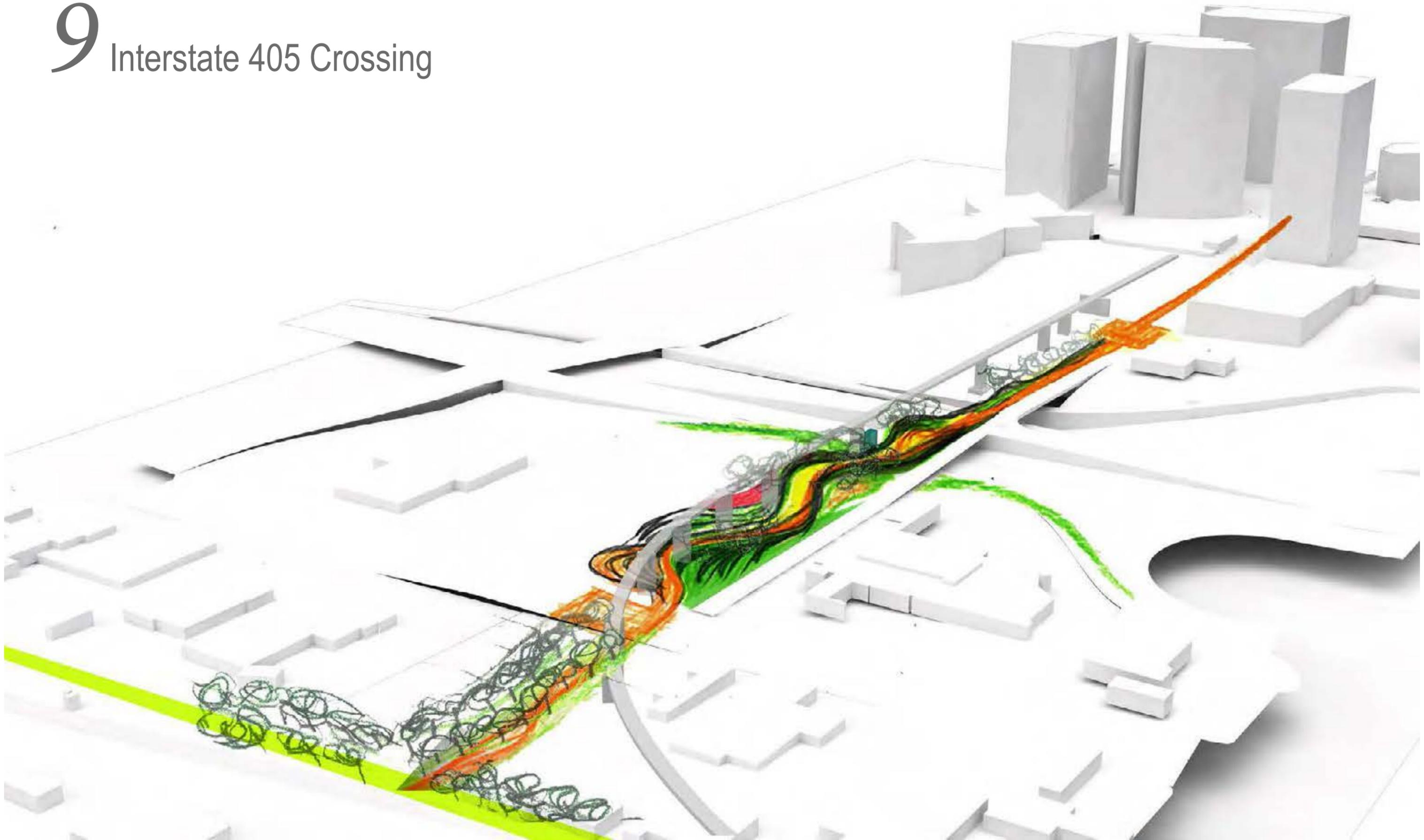


▲ Proposed Bellevue Transit Center Configuration (without angled bays) - Image by Mobility and Chain

Chapter

9

Interstate 405 Crossing



Interstate 405 Crossing

Overview

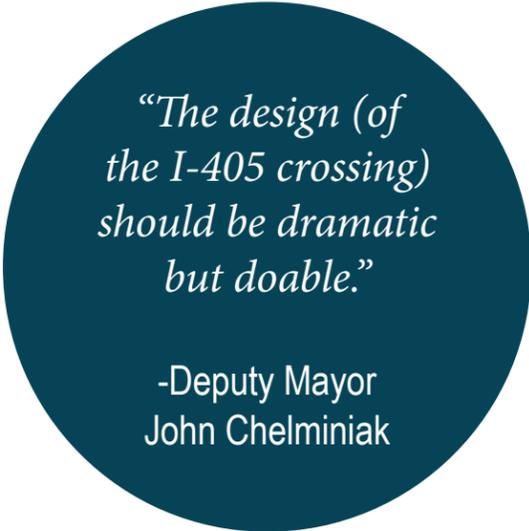
The following information for the Interstate 405 crossing is being offered as information and comment only, and is currently in draft form. No decision will be made on the crossing as part of this framework plan. The Interstate 405 crossing will be evaluated as part of the Wilburton Commercial Area Environmental Impact Statement. Evaluation is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2018 along with the release of a subsequent report highlighting the design intent, strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of each alternative.

The Interstate 405 crossing represents an opportunity to heal the divide created between Downtown Bellevue and the Wilburton Commercial Area. Ambitious as it is in nature, it is not without precedent. Cities across the region and the country have pursued a multitude of strategies to cross interstates, reconnect communities, and serve as a catalyst for new neighborhoods. Strategies to cross interstate and infrastructure have ranged in complexity and scale. Cities such as Atlanta, Dallas, Philadelphia, Washington, and Glendale have and are pursuing strategies to fully cap their infrastructure with new parks and developments. Other cities, such as Denver, Seattle, and Atlanta have created sculptural and non-motorized bridges that mitigate the impacts of infrastructure below, making for a safe, enjoyable, and comfortable crossing. In many cases these dramatic improvements were a catalyst for change in underdeveloped areas, creating new opportunities for urban neighborhoods.

The design team was tasked with developing three distinct alternatives that ranged in scale and complexity. Consistent with Council direction as well as public and stakeholder engagement, each alternative was tasked with developing a safe and comfortable

crossing for non-motorized transportation, pursue opportunities of creating public space, a signature structure or place that is unique to Bellevue, and integration with future land use opportunities in the Wilburton Commercial Area including the Eastside Rail Corridor.

The alternatives range from a sculptural bridge that capitalizes on existing infrastructure assets, a signature stand alone bridge, and the creation of a public space with a partial capping of Interstate 405 between NE 6th Street and NE 4th Street. Careful consideration was given to each alternative to ensure a unique and signature proposal, but recommendations that strive for achievable goals as well as the flexibility to respond to changing development patterns in the immediate area.

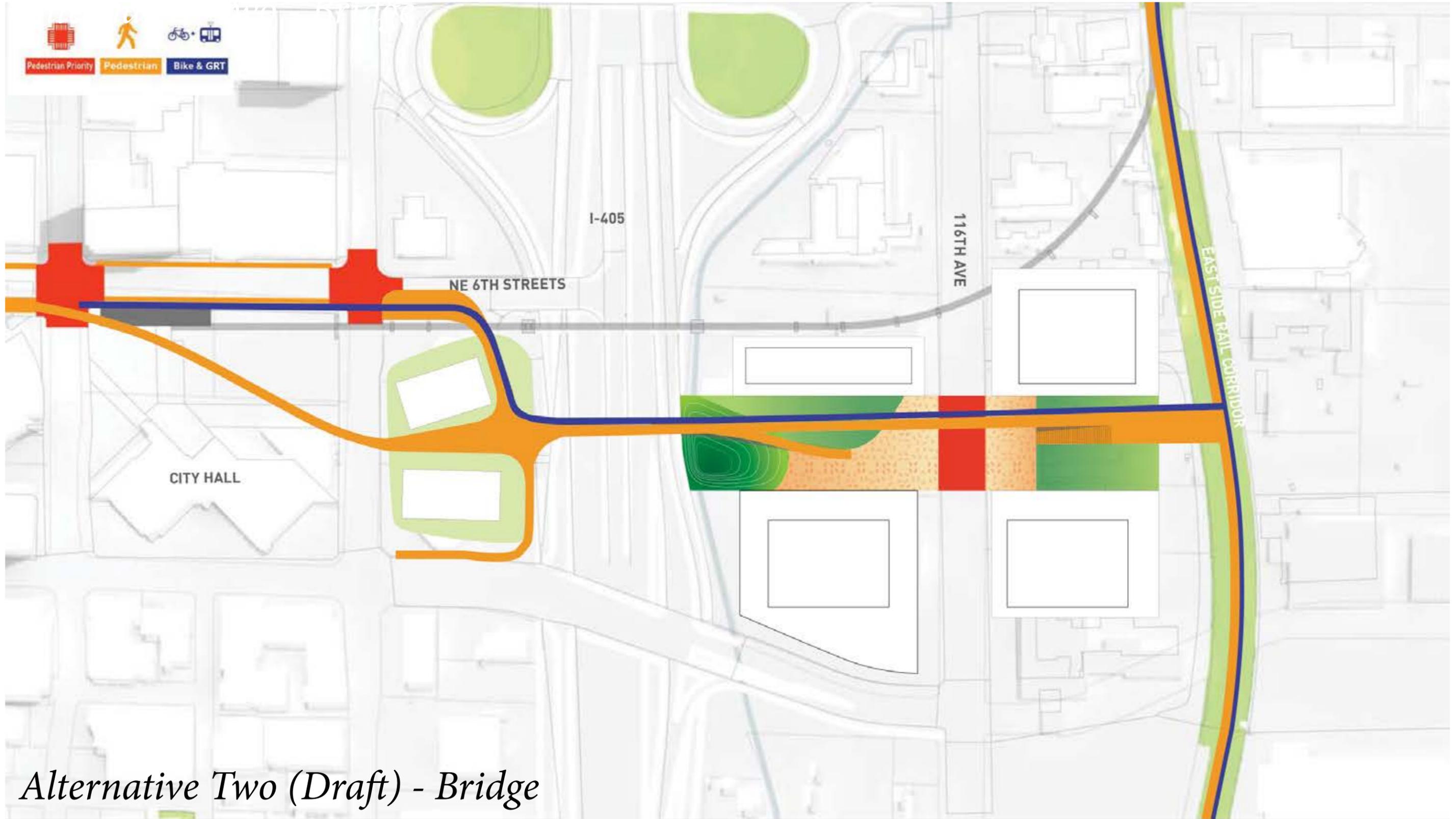


“The design (of the I-405 crossing) should be dramatic but doable.”

-Deputy Mayor
John Chelminiak



Alternative One (Draft) - Sculptural Bridge



Alternative Two (Draft) - Bridge



Alternative Three (Draft) - Lid

Opportunities for Programming



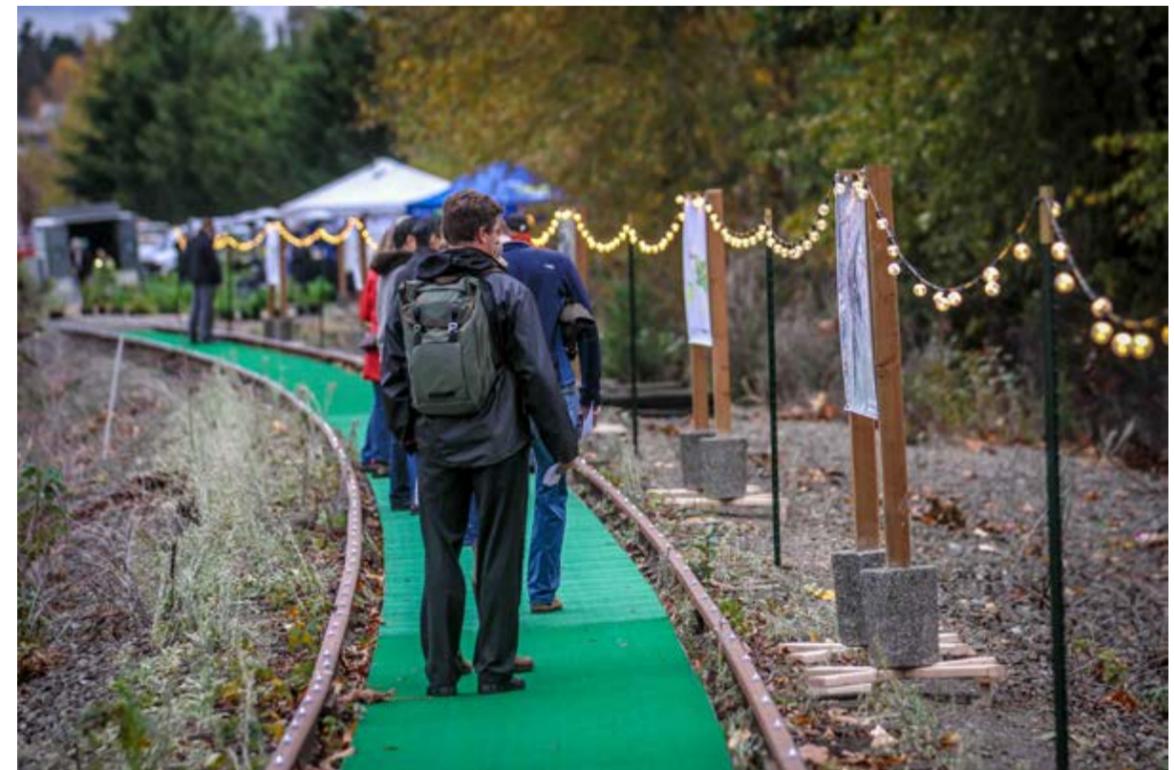
I imagine...
running & hiking
with my buddy Greg

Programming

Overview

Through public engagement, programming was identified as one of the most important elements of the Grand Connection. Interviews at Compass Plaza, the Downtown Park, and Bellevue Transit Center identified a number of existing and potential programming opportunities desired by the public. In support of the physical improvements recommended, the design team has provided a number of recommendations to activate these improved public spaces that support local industry and culture. The recommendations include events, installations, and refinement to existing programming that are attractive to Bellevue's diverse population as well as users of all ages.

Programming opportunities also offer an opportunity for pilot projects, or tactical urbanism, that will allow the City to test long term strategies and concepts with little investment. These strategies are designed to exhibit the potential of projects to users, facilitate further community and business engagement, and offer an opportunity to measure and test the success of potential long term improvements.



▲ King County and the City of Bellevue partnered to create a pop up cafe to exhibit the potential of the intersection of the Grand Connection and Eastside Rail Corridor.

Shipping Containers

The design team identified shipping containers as an opportunity for partnerships, programming, art, education, and showcasing local businesses and technology. A mobile event unit could be created that could serve a diverse set of events and be deployed quickly and inexpensively, functioning similar to a pavilion. Programming for the mobile event unit could include:

- Virtual Reality Demonstration
- Bicycle Repair
- Consumer Technology Testing
- Mobile Library
- Cooking Demonstration and Food Vendors
- Outdoor Education
- Exercise

Artists could also be commissioned to fabricate unique containers that serve both a functional and sculptural use. Similar to the Hanko Ice Cream Kiosk, the container can serve as a vendor by day and a public art installation by night.

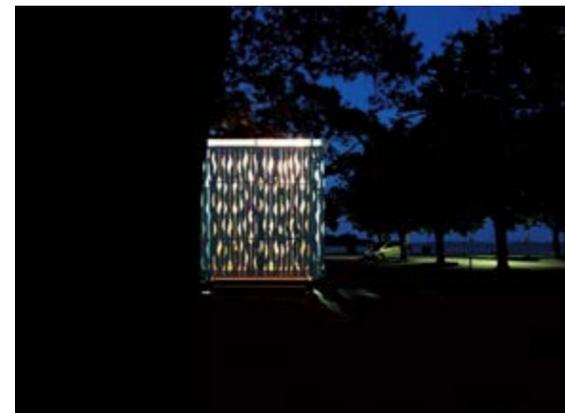
Locations: *Compass Plaza*



▲ **Hanko Ice Cream Kiosk - Helsinki, Finland** - *Satoshi Ohtaki + Working Group*



▲ **Mobile Event Unit - Image by** Balmori Associates



Outdoor Library

With a growing family population in Downtown Bellevue and to ensure public spaces accommodate users of all ages, the design team recommends outdoor library installations. Similar to Little Free Libraries™, outdoor libraries are intended to bring education and reading into the public realm. These can be specifically designed for each installation and include amenities like seating areas and weather protection to create an outdoor reading room.

Locations: *Compass Plaza / Downtown Park / Transit Center / I-405 Crossing*



▲ **Book Project - Moscow, Russia** - *Rueteple Architectural*



▲ **Little Library - Dallas, Texas** - *Leonardo Gonzalez Sangri and Scott Taylor*

Tactical Urbanism & Pilot Projects

Tactical urbanism and pilot projects provide an opportunity to test large scale changes prior to committing to them, while measuring their success. They also allow for the testing of smaller scale new ideas and events based upon new projects or themes.

Some tactical urbanism / pilot projects to consider;

- Narrowing or removal of traffic lanes.
- Activation and future vision of a public space.
- Events that celebrate local industries and commerce.
- Temporary conversion of public spaces in support of seasonal or special events.
- Temporary configuration of re-imagined public spaces.
- Small scale, temporary versions of programming to test their success and attendance.
- Temporary safety improvements such as bike lanes.
- Pop-up and green space.
- Livable Laneways.

Locations: *All Locations*



▲ **Pop Up Green Park - Lima, Peru** - Genaro Alva, Denise Ampuero & Gloria Andrea Rojas



▲ **Livable Laneway - Vancouver, British Columbia** - Project for Public Spaces



▲ **Tetris - Tel Aviv, Israel** - Tel Aviv City Hall



▲ **Enliven Wilburton! - Bellevue, Washington** - Eastside Rail Corridor + Grand Connection

Play Installations & Urban Amenities

Play can introduce whimsy and delight into the urban environment. Consistent with the overall identity of a playful landscape, the design team recommends introducing these impromptu opportunities for fun throughout the Grand Connection.

While large scale playgrounds centrally located in are important, smaller installations create moments that reduce the scale of the route, and consider users of all ages. Small play structure installations are appropriate for larger public spaces such as the re-imagined Compass Plaza, and smaller pop up play installations can activate streetscapes, smaller pockets of public space, and other areas in need of delight and whimsy. In addition to play structures, adult oriented installations that are more whimsical in nature can add to this playful landscape.

These structures may include:

- Pop up swings (children & adult)
- Small climbing structures
- Urban periscopes
- Digital or projected, touch activated screen and walls
- Life-sized board games (children & adult)
- Interactive art installations

Locations: *All Locations*



▲ **Urban Play Structure** - Image by Balmori Associates



▲ **The Porch at 30th Street Station - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** - Groundswell Design



▲ **Kalvebod Waves - Copenhagen, Denmark** - JDS Architects

Farmer's Market and Food Trucks

During public engagement the farmer's market and food trucks ranked as some of the most popular existing features to Downtown Bellevue. Most comments desired a permanent and more frequent home for the farmer's market, and a greater demand for more food trucks in more locations.

The proposed reconfiguration of Compass Plaza creates opportunity for both of those popular features. The current bank of food trucks uses the existing parking lot at the Doxa Church facility directly north of Compass Plaza. Upon a reconfiguration, space exists for a permanent, people-oriented space for the food trucks in Compass Plaza. Additionally, the public wanted to see food options and food trucks in and near the Downtown Park. The design team identified the perimeter of the park, as well as NE 6th Street adjacent to the Bellevue Arts Museum as locations for additional food trucks.

The farmer's market is typically hosted in a downtown parking lot, similar to the weekday food trucks. The reconfigured Compass Plaza creates space and opportunities for an open air market or farmer's market to have a permanent installation. This could also include other market related events or community gardens and urban orchards.

Locations: *Compass Plaza / Downtown Park (Food Trucks) / NE 6th Street and Bellevue Way (Food Trucks)*



▲ Art Box - Bangkok, Thailand



▲ Mundelein Community Market - Mundelein, Illinois



▲ 30th Street Station Flea Market - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Urban Agriculture

Agriculture has deep roots within the Bellevue community. Working in support of a permanent home for Bellevue's farmer's market and food trucks, urban agriculture can activate urban spaces in new and engaging ways.

The design team has identified opportunities for urban orchards, community gardens, and agricultural education as a means to engage and activate public spaces, while also bringing people together. These can take more traditional forms such as P-patches, or more innovative installations such as the Public Farm 1 in New York, New York.

Installations can be partnered with artists and other designers to create unique and iconic urban agriculture while still serving the focus of bringing people together to experience and learn about agriculture and Bellevue's history.

Locations: *Compass Plaza / Downtown Park*



▲ Mill Creek Towne Community Garden - Derwood, Maryland



▲ Community Garden - Wilmington, Delaware



▲ Public Farm 1 - New York, New York - Work Architecture Company

Implementation and Next Steps

Chapter
11



Implementation and Next Steps

Overview

The implementation and next steps provide a framework for future action. It outlines important action items for the City to begin moving forward to realize the vision for the Grand Connection. Following adoption of the framework plan, the City should detail an implementation and work plan. Over time this chapter should be revisited and updated to ensure that all strategies remain relevant as the project evolves.

The *Implementation and Next Steps Chapter* will be updated to reflect the direction provided by City Council upon review and adoption of the recommended strategies.

Immediate (Less Than 1 Year)

1. Develop a Branding Strategy

The City should develop a branding strategy for the project that provides its own identity. A branding strategy is consistent with similar efforts including projects such as the 11th Street Bridge Park (Washington, D.C.), the Stitch (Atlanta, GA) and High Line (New York, NY). The branding strategy should include elements such as logos, aesthetic, web based information, media campaign, and regular outreach.

The branding strategy will assist in creating consistent marketing materials as the project pursues funding and partnership opportunities. The branding strategy will also assist in creating a consistent messaging strategy, making the project easily identifiable and recognizable. On call materials will assist in maintaining the momentum that has been developed during the charrette and visioning stages and can be paired with a detailed outreach program that continues to engage

residents, stakeholders, and businesses in the future planning and implementation of the project. Outreach may include tours, workshops, and regular newsletters.



▲ 11th Street Bridge Park Logo - Image source - 11th Street Bridge Park

2. Update Pedestrian Corridor Design Guidelines

The City should immediately begin updating the Pedestrian Corridor design guidelines with the updated and adopted elements of the Grand Connection framework plan. This should include design references to public spaces, paving, weather protection, urban amenities, programming, art, and overall vision. As part of the Wilburton Commercial

Area land use and transportation study, the city should ensure that the Design Guidelines for the area include elements related to the Grand Connection. Updates to any corresponding and affected codes, plans, and initiatives should also be considered.

3. Measurements of Success and Impact

The City should develop a plan to measure and analyze the success of the Grand Connection from the perspective of physical build out, as well as impact on the quality of life for residents and businesses.

This plan should include yearly surveys of residents, businesses, and tourists. Projects such as the Indianapolis Cultural Trail have developed a robust analysis of the impact of the trail and can serve as a precedent for the City when developing its metrics. Some common elements should include:

- Number of physical improvements completed.
- Change in assessed property values over time.
- Changes in development patterns, particularly in the Wilburton Commercial Area.
- Change in economic activity of surrounding businesses, including sales, hours of operation, and number of patrons.
- Resident and worker surveys that assess the number of hours spent on the route, number of events attended associated with the route, type of usage of the route.
- Measurements and counts of people attending events associated with the route and the use of particular public spaces such as Compass Plaza and the Downtown Park.
- Overall satisfaction survey with the route and needs for improvements.
- Number of safety incidents along the Grand Connection route.



▲ Indianapolis Cultural Trail - Indianapolis, Indiana - Image source - Indianapolis Cultural Trail

4. Capital Improvements Priority Plan

Following adoption and amendment of the framework plan, the City should develop a detailed Grand Connection Capital Improvement Priority Plan. The projects should be prioritized by:

- Identifying initial projects necessary for the advancement of other projects
- Available funds
- Opportunity for redevelopment and partnership
- Coordination with other City departments and private development
- Level of readiness for each initiative

To determine the level of readiness for each adopted recommendation the City should refer to the next steps outlined for each recommendation (i.e. implementation, design refinement, Environmental Impact Analysis).

5. Tactical Urbanism and Pilot Projects

The City should identify and implement pilot projects and tactical urbanism interventions to analyze the readiness of public space improvements and programming to inform the Capital Improvements Priority Plan.

Pilot projects and tactical urbanism events can also be used to build additional project support and momentum. The City should develop annual events that continue to market and promote the project, while also providing updates and new opportunities for engagement. The City should also continue with partnerships such as the *Enliven Wilburton!* event with King County to promote and demonstrate the opportunity of the Grand Connection and other interfacing projects.

6. Raised Intersections

Prior to the visioning process the City had already identified key intersections for raising. The City should continue this initiative and its pursuit of grants to fund these improvements along the route. This should be a continuous process of systematically upgrading the intersections and applying aesthetic and artistic improvements.

7. Identify Partnership Opportunities

The City should identify and pursue partnership opportunities and build relationships to advance improvements and initiatives related to the project. Partnerships and relationships could advance tactical urbanism and pilot project opportunities, and facilitate the study and implementation of projects such as Group Rapid Transit. Partnerships should also inform

the Capital Improvements Priority Plan. Partnerships could include land owners, local businesses, civic organizations, tourism boards, and Bellevue Arts Museum.

8. Art and Culture

Use the 2018 Bellwether program to lay the foundations of the cultural corridor including new cultural plinths at Downtown Park, partnerships for a new mural program along the Garden Hill Climb, and joint programming with the Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSFair at NE 6th Street. Integrate artists onto the design teams to add art features to the new Downtown Park entrance at NE 4th Street and the new raised intersection on 106th Ave NE along Compass Plaza. (See *Art and Culture Plan for detailed implementation*).

Near-Term (1 - 2 Years)

1. NE Downtown Park Entrance

The City has already identified the northeast corner of the Downtown Park as a near term initiative. City departments should collaborate to implement the vision that supports all department initiatives including access and character.

2. Design Refinement of Preferred Interstate 405 Crossing Alternative

Upon selection of a preferred Interstate 405 crossing alternative the City should advance a design refinement and grant ready level proposal. This refinement should address, in greater depth,

- Funding sources
- Engineering

- Property acquisition (where applicable)
- Modification to transportation networks
- Programming
- Final Design

3. Design Refinement of Cohesive Design Strategies

The City should develop finer grained plans for the cohesive design strategies that include context sensitive proposals, refinement of colors, materials, locations, and phasing strategies based on the Capital Improvements Priority Plan and partnership opportunities.

4. Testing, Refinement, Analysis of Group Rapid Transit

The City should explore and evaluate opportunities to implement the group rapid transit recommendation. This work should include determination if an Environmental Impact Statement will be required, identifying partnerships for implementation, design refinement of the route and necessary improvements, and development of a phasing plan if determined to be a feasible strategy.

5. Art and Culture

Explore program partnerships with the King County Library Regional Library’s new maker-space for an Emerging Artist Program and with merchants and property owners along the route for evening art walks. Make upgrades to NE 6th between Bellevue Way and 106th Ave NE to be activated as a festival street including replacing the sidewalk art installation, adding light pole installations and new wayfinding. Develop and support an artist community in

Wilburton by opening an arts incubator at Lincoln Center. (See Art and Culture Plan for detailed implementation).

Mid-Term (2 - 5 Years)

1. Study and Analyze the Secondary Grand Connection Route

If adopted, the City should conduct a visioning and planning study for the secondary route of the Grand Connection. This study should consider:

- Integration with existing City plans and initiatives.
- Improvements to Main Street and route segments west of the Downtown Park.
- Improved and new public spaces as part of the expanded route.
- Integration with non-motorized improvements.
- Connectivity to the Wilburton Hill Park and Botanical Garden.
- Improvements to crossing Interstate 405.

2. Design Refinement of Major Improvements

Based upon the Capital Improvements Priority Plan the City should begin refinement and analysis of key design elements, including feasibility and impact.

These refinements should include:

- “Street as Plaza” segment of the existing Pedestrian Corridor
- Compass Plaza
- Bellevue Transit Center
- Public Space Improvements in the Wilburton Commercial Area related to the adoption of a preferred Interstate 405 crossing alternative.

3. Art and Culture

Refresh Compass Plaza as it redevelops by replacing Bellgate and City Within A City artworks with a major new signature light-based artwork and temporary artist-designed canopies. Partner with Bellevue Square to commission a new major sculpture to act as beacon at the Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street entrance. Commission artistic treatments west of I-405 including along the columns and guideway of future light rail crossing, a cultural plinth and community hub at the redeveloped Lincoln Center Property for events and performances, and a signature gateway artwork at ERC connection to act as entryway to the Grand Connection.

Implementation Plan and Next Steps Matrix

Task	Timescale
Policy and Public Relations	
Develop a Branding Strategy	0-1
Update and create any necessary guidelines, codes, and plans.	0-1
Develop Measurements of Success and Impact	0-1
Capital Improvements Priority Plan	0-1
Identify Partnership Opportunities	0-1
Art & Culture and Programming	
Tactical Urbanism and Pilot Projects	Initiate in Year 0-1 Ongoing
Art and Culture Plan	Initiate in Year 1 -2 Ongoing
Physical Improvements	
Raised Intersections	Initiate in Year 0-1 Ongoing
NE Downtown Park Entrance	1-2
Cohesive Design Strategies (including overall identity)	Initiate in Year 1-2 Ongoing
Design Refinement	
I-405 Crossing	1-2
Group Rapid Transit	1-2
Compass Plaza	2-5
"Street as Plaza"	2-5
Compass Plaza	2-5
Bellevue Transit Center	2-5
Long Term Grand Connection Route	2-5



CITY OF BELLEVUE



G R A N D

CONNECTION

arts & culture

DRAFT JULY 6, 2017



This plan was written by John Sutton, Ben Beres, and Zac Culler of SuttonBeresCuller, with assistance by Joshua Heim and Bradley Calvert of the City of Bellevue.

SuttonBeresCuller is a group of three Seattle based artists—John Sutton, Ben Beres, and Zac Culler—who have worked collaboratively since 2000. The trio's work ranges in presentation from gallery works, to installation, performance, and public projects. Working in and outside of traditional gallery settings, they aim to engage and provoke unsuspecting audiences with their works which are often not what they seem.

1. Vision

1. The purpose of this plan

1-2. What does the community want?

3-4. Why a cultural corridor?

6. Goals for the Grand Connection

- The Grand Connection is an easily identifiable, clearly defined pedestrian route along which visitors will encounter an array of vibrant art, performance, cultural objects and experiences.
- Bellevue has a proud and visible identity as an arts and cultural community that embraces regional artists as a unique and vital resource.
- The Grand Connection provides a platform for cultural inclusivity, further establishing downtown Bellevue as a space that welcomes and sustains diversity, reflecting the community's rich, continually evolving population.
- Downtown Bellevue is connected by seven new major public artworks along the Grand Connection route. The area is remapped and redefined as a cohesive cultural zone that emphasizes pedestrian experience, responds to the natural landscape, and reflects the varied cultures of the community.
- The Grand Connection creates a sustainable and flexible platform for public art that allows the City of Bellevue to dedicate operational resources and staff to the ongoing development of a cultural corridor for decades to come.

7-12. Strategies

- Implement a whole site approach.
- Create multiple sites along the route that are dedicated as platforms and placeholders for the ongoing creation and presentation of new works.
- Identify specific opportunities to address cultural, historical and community-driven projects.
- Build and reinforce distinct neighborhood identities along the route.
- Use art and cultural programming to enhance the pedestrian experience
- Forge partnerships between artists, government, the private sector and cultural organizations.
- Provide economic incentives and development opportunities for the support of local artists and cultural organizations.
- Initiate a public relations program to communicate, educate and engage the public.
- Implement a program that supports a wide range of art projects, which in turn fosters community interaction.

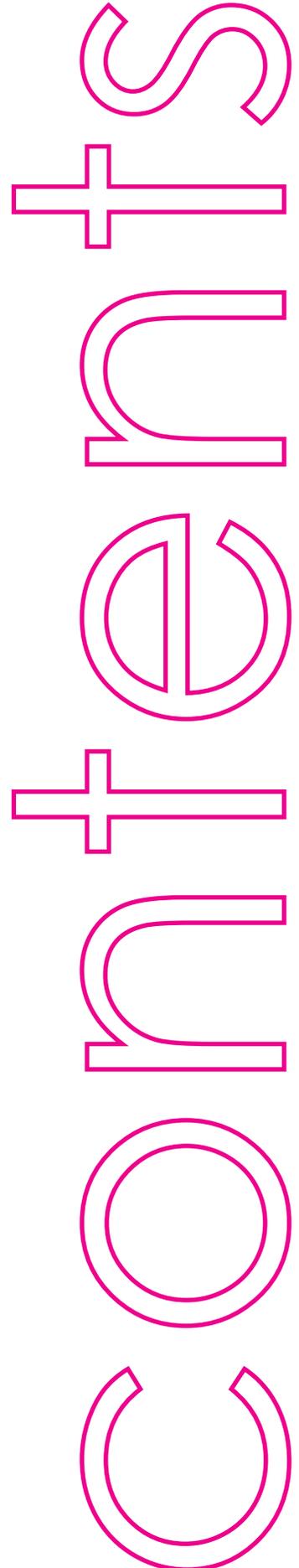
13-21. Opportunities for Events and Programs

- 14. Vision
- 15. Bellwether
- 16. Cultural Collective
- 17. Cultural Plinths Program
- 18. Artwalk
- 19. Downtown Concerts
- 20. Emerging Artist Program
- 21. Mural Program

22-51. Opportunities for Art

- 25-28. Eastside Rail Corridor Trail Connection
- 29-31. Interstate 405 Crossing
- 32-35. Civic Center
- 36-39. Compass Plaza and Garden Hill Climb
- 40-43. Street as Plaza (between Compass Plaza and Bellevue Square)
- 44-47. Downtown Park
- 48-51. Main Street Plaza and Meydenbauer Bay Park

52-54. Action Plan for Implementation



VISION

GRAND CONNECTION BECOMES A CULTURAL CORRIDOR

The Grand Connection is one of Bellevue's most ambitious, efforts to date, aiming to establish Downtown Bellevue as a place to encounter cultural exchange, innovative immersive art experiences, music, and performance. It serves as a connector as well as destination: a creative spine in the core of the city that draws a public audience—both casual passersby and visitors seeking a community-driven experience. At the core of this vision is the belief that Bellevue's public art should be an integral part of the city that excites and promotes dialogue across cultural and generational lines. The Grand Connection reflects the City of Bellevue's diverse identity and an investment in contemporary public art and culture on par with the world's most innovative cultural centers.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

Over the course of the year, SuttonBeresCuller worked with project staff and the Bellevue Arts Commission to develop a comprehensive vision and document of goals, strategies, and opportunities that will unify the linear expanse of the Grand Connection from an art and cultural perspective. The Grand Connection Art and Cultural Element offers a roadmap to an exciting future.

The first part of this plan establishes the vision and framework to integrate art and culture into the Grand Connection project. The scale and breadth of the Grand Connection afford a significant opportunity to create new ways to view, interact with and discover art. This plan offers an approach that considers the site as a whole, with an aim to interweave smaller, intimate projects with signature, eye-catching works on a large scale.

The second part of this plan identifies opportunities for cultural programs and public art along the Grand Connection route. Some of these will include short-term, temporary projects placed for weeks or months at a time, and some will be designed as permanent installations, including signage, way finding guides, and other suggestions for art interventions and ways to experience the site.

These ideas were developed through a robust public engagement process. We asked stakeholders residents about their desires for the Grand Connection and how art can play a role throughout the route. Nearly 400 people had a hand in developing this vision for art and culture in the Grand Connection through interviews, multiple site visits by the consultants, public forums and surveys collected at each stage of the planning process

The overall goal is to impact the everyday coming-and-going of people in numerous ways. Short term projects

may be implemented immediately while larger permanent interventions will be developed over the coming years. These larger projects will need the guidance and partnership of artists, city and county agencies, private landowners, arts organizations and cultural institutions. This plan provides the roadmap for the community to pursue these opportunities that will develop neighborhood character and contribute to a beautiful, sustainable, and livable Bellevue.

WHAT DOES THE COMMUNITY WANT?

After conducting multiple surveys and community outreach, the primary concern is desire for stronger art and cultural offerings. Results indicate that Grand Connection priorities should be to improve the civic experience of Bellevue's public spaces. Art should play multiple roles in the public realm with equal emphasis on defining the identity and use of a space and as a platform for community building. Art should bring a sense of discovery, whimsy and delight to everyday spaces.

Downtown Stakeholder Interviews

Interviews were conducted with representatives of arts and cultural providers along the Grand Connection route including: Bellevue Arts Commission, Bellevue Arts Museum, Downtown Bellevue Association, Doxa Church, King County, Meydenbauer Center, Visit Bellevue, Sound Transit, and the Bellevue Parks and Community Services Department. These groups expressed a need to increase the number of visitors in downtown Bellevue and shared the aspiration for downtown Bellevue to be a cultural destination. Among the common ideas to emerge from these interviews was an emphasis on integrating art into the fabric of the built environment, developing opportunities for evening activities, and refocusing programs to reflect Bellevue's diverse and international community character. Most groups also emphasized the need to work together, cross-pollinate events, and coordinate venues to increase cultural offerings.

Bellevue Grand Connection Art & Culture Survey

A survey conducted for this plan found that most people (59 percent) do not feel that Bellevue has strong art and cultural offerings. This is true for all age groups with the exception of those over the age of 65, who are mostly satisfied. The least satisfied age group are those ages 35-44. Of those respondents who do not feel that Bellevue has strong art and cultural offerings, the three biggest barriers to arts and cultural participation are 1) the quality or relevance of the cultural offering, 2) lack of promotion to create awareness about events, 3) mobility issues, such as parking availability. It should be noted that among 25-34 year old respondents, the lack of promotion and awareness is the biggest barrier to participation. Among the demographic ages of 35-44 and 54-65, the quality or relevance of the cultural offering proved the most significant barrier.

Two-thirds of people across all age groups responded

WHY A CULTURAL CORRIDOR?

What is a cultural corridor?

A cultural corridor is a tool of economic development through the arts that connects nearby cultural attractions along a transportation route. It has its roots in heritage trails whereby tourists could “make a day” of visiting various historical sites by car. North Carolina has been particularly successful with using cultural corridors as a regional tourism strategy by promoting five different cultural trails that crisscross the state including an African American Music Trail and Discover North Carolina Craft.

As the demand for urban cultural tourism increases, the concept of the cultural corridor has been adapted for walkers and bicyclists to experience the city. Opened in 2013, the Indianapolis Cultural Trail features an 8-mile urban trail system with a network of bike-share stations that connect hundreds of cultural attractions in six different cultural districts in Downtown Indianapolis. This cultural trail was made possible after decades of infrastructure investments and the leadership of private philanthropists in the area.

While there is not a standard approach to how to develop a cultural corridor, national research suggests that successful cultural tourism projects focus on 1) a concentration of existing year-round cultural attractions; 2) easy round-trip access; 3) available and committed private investment in tourism development; and 4) sufficient public resources to sustain operations such as staff and marketing.

A string of cultural treasures

The Grand Connection winds through one of the most culture-rich and creative parts of Bellevue and has the potential to be a vibrant cultural corridor. The Bellevue Arts Museum and the Theatre at Meydenbauer Center offer year-round exhibitions and performances to tens of thousands of visitors a year. Bellevue City Hall, Compass Plaza, Downtown Park and Lincoln Square host annual cultural events, independent film screenings, and outdoor concerts. These venues attract hundreds of thousands of people to Downtown Bellevue and contributes to Bellevue’s reputation as a “Top 10 Underrated City for Art Lovers” according to the US News and World Report. But while Bellevue is a cultural destination for people in the know, few people are aware of what’s further down the road or around the corner. The opportunity is to put Bellevue on the cultural map as a first-rate city for art by connecting these discrete cultural treasures into something truly grand.

Clusters of cultural activity within a half-mile of the Grand Connection

The prospect of a cultural corridor rests not only the cultural attractions along the largely east-west route. Clusters of cultural activities exist around the Grand Connection and are easily accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists. For instance, if a visitor standing at the corner of the Grand Connection and 106th Avenue NE decides to walk five minutes (roughly a quarter mile) south along 106th they could catch a jazz concert at Bakes Place or a classical recital at Resonance at SOMA Towers. However, if visitors decide to walk five minutes north along the same street they would discover a handful of commercial art galleries including Gunnar Nordstrom Gallery and Hall Spassov Gallery. Another five minutes walking northeast and they’d come upon the Bellevue Library and the new Kidsquest Children’s Museum.

In the future, visitors to the Grand Connection on the other side of the I-405 freeway to the east will face the same situation. At the point where the Grand Connection meets the Eastside Rail Corridor trail, visitors walking or biking south will have access to the Eastside Heritage Center and the Bellevue Botanical Garden. In total, over 25 cultural institutions, arts venues and public spaces are either on or easily accessible from the Grand Connection.

A hub for creative professionals

Downtown Bellevue is not only a cultural destination for visitors. A ring drawn around the Grand Connection that extends a quarter mile out in any direction would include within it 43,000 workers, about 6,400 of which are considered to be workers at creative firms or 15 percent. Creative firms contribute to the creative economy, or the segment of the economy that uses creative ideas and processes to produce aesthetic and economic value. Overall, 30 percent of US workers are part of the creative economy. This includes individual artists and musicians as well as architects, museum workers and the range of skilled workers such as graphic designers who contribute to the production of video games.

The top industry with creative economy jobs inside the quarter mile ring around the Grand Connection is software publishers, which includes companies such as Microsoft and video game developers Valve and Bungie. This industry has over 5,700 jobs or 89 percent of all creative economy jobs within a quarter mile of the Grand Connection. Internet publishing and broadcasting and web search portal companies follow with another 300 jobs and architectural services with 90 jobs. While the total percentage of creative economy jobs in proximity to the Grand Connection is lower than the national average it is still significant.

Good bones: the making of a vibrant cultural district

There is an exciting opportunity to connect these cultural treasures and creative professionals. In fact, a growing body of literature suggests that linking culture and creatives into a larger whole is imperative to contemporary economic development. Research by the Brookings Institution has revealed the preference of creative technology firms to co-locate with each other and in areas with cultural amenities such as cultural districts.

International best practice research on cultural districts suggest that six common features are necessary for sustainable cultural district development:

1. **Cluster:** the industrial glue able to put together the economic and social actors of the local community;
2. **Talent:** the presence of a qualified and specialized workforce;
3. **Networks:** the free circulation of tacit knowledge;
4. **Secondary services:** the proximity of complementary companies;
5. **Culture:** the sharing of common values; and
6. **Social capital:** the mutual trust among local people.

Downtown Bellevue exhibits some of these features but not all. There is clearly a cluster of primary and secondary cultural assets and anchors as well as the presence of creative talent. But the social features of sustainable cultural districts are lacking: networks, shared culture and social capital. Investing in the social aspects of a potential Downtown cultural district could be the most impactful role for art and culture in the Grand Connection.



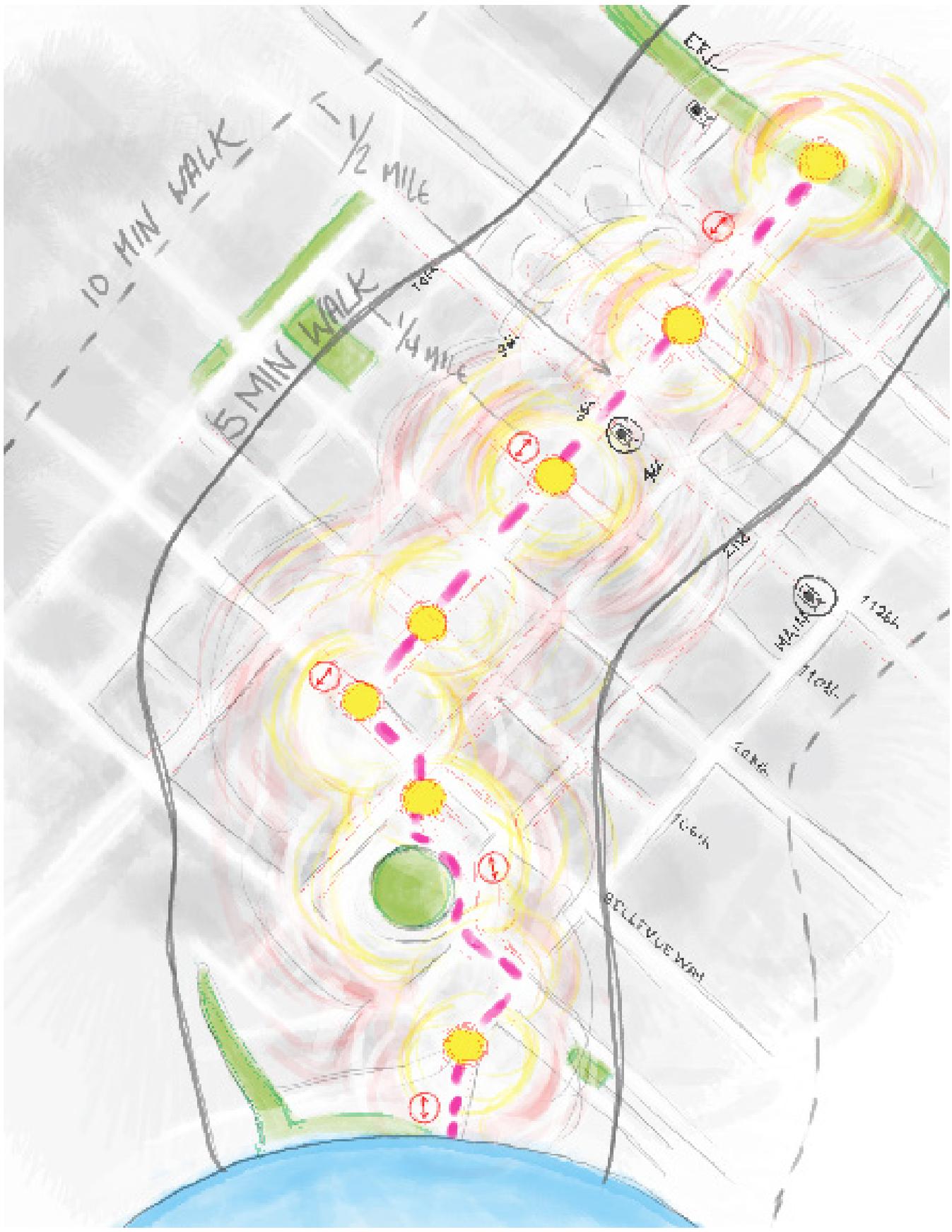
Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Indianapolis, IN



Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Indianapolis, IN



Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Indianapolis, IN



GOALS

GOAL #1 The Grand Connection is an easily identifiable, clearly defined, and culturally vibrant route.

The Grand Connection will act as a spine connecting an abundance of cultural offerings for residents and visitors. The route will include cultural elements that bring a sense of discovery and delight to everyday spaces using color, unexpected locations and lighting. The project creates a cohesive, unified aesthetic that emphasizes playfulness and surprise that allows people to imagine the world anew through the eyes of artists. The overlooked and under-looked corners, nooks and crannies of downtown Bellevue are transformed, framed through text, images and actions that encourage residents to slow down, take their time, and be filled with wonder.



GOAL # 2 Bellevue has a proud and visible identity as an arts and cultural community that embraces regional artists as a unique and vital resource.

Provide economic incentives, varied cultural programming and opportunities for all demographics. Encourage experimentation, innovation, and risk with an emphasis on diversity, technology and community building.



Implement an "Emerging Artist Program" that will allow underrepresented artists options to exhibit, perform, and to create their work. This will be a distinctive way to cultivate an interest in the arts and establish Bellevue as forward thinking in its artistic programming.. Utilize specific Cultural Plinths to showcase and highlight these local artists.

Collaborate and engage with the area's tech companies and provide a new and unique model for Microsoft and Google to engage with the community it serves in person. Engage with the gaming community and endorse projects such as PAX that could be held in venues such as Meydenbauer Center and DOXA Church.



GOAL #3 Downtown Bellevue is a culturally inclusive environment that encourages a diverse population to take part in Bellevue's cultural offerings.

Cultivate a new generation of artists and arts participants. Bellevue's new and increasing populace will shape its cultural vibrancy. The city's cultural identity is expressed through community events, shared experiences and common memories. A lively arts environment begets a connected population with more people of all ages and ethnicities coming together to share experiences, ideas and learn from one another.

GOAL #4 Downtown Bellevue is connected by seven new major public artworks.

Culturally and aesthetically significant artworks strengthen downtown Bellevue's identity as a destination for creative people and companies. These new major artworks are envisioned as place-makers, cross-town beacons and gathering places. They should be commissioned with an emphasis on site specificity, community, and cultural and historical context. When possible and appropriate, these should be viewed as opportunities for public/private partnerships to make the most of limited city owned public space and funding. Working with private developers and neighborhood associations will serve to broaden the range of possibilities and strengthen community driven support for the arts.



GOAL #5 The City of Bellevue commits resources and staff to the development and ongoing operation of an Arts and Cultural Program specific to the Grand Connection and its vision as a flexible, curate-able cultural corridor.

Support the programming and opportunities laid out in this document while applying Bellevue's focus on technology, innovation and education to arts and cultural programming.



STRATEGIES

Strategy #1: Whole Site Approach

In mapping out the placement of works, the corridor will be considered as a whole, with an aim to weave smaller, intimate projects with signature, eye-catching works on a large scale. Some of these will include short-term, temporary projects placed for weeks or months at a time. Others will be designed as permanent installations, including signage, guides, and other suggestions for art interventions that offer ways to experience the site. The scale and breadth of the Grand Connection afford a significant opportunity to create new ways to view, interact with and discover art. It is also imperative to consider the longevity and generative potential of the pieces placed along the route: many pieces and projects will ideally continue to impact the site for generations to come and will allow others to create in the future. Projects will be designed to be accessible to a wide range of the public, offering a broad spectrum of cultural experiences.

The Grand Connection will be clearly defined by major points of interest every 4 to 5 minutes walking. Major points of interest may include but are not limited to artist-designed canopies and paving, signature sculptures, amphitheaters, murals, and cultural venues.

Minor points of interest will occur every 15 to 20 seconds walking. These may include projects at cultural plinths, space for buskers and performances and small discoverable artworks. Other points of interest may include informational kiosks and maps and artist-designed building features such as manhole covers, utility boxes, benches, planters, railings and bike racks.

PRECEDENTS:

Precedents of municipalities incorporating a whole site approach to a cultural corridor include The High Line in New York City and Promenade Plantee in Paris. Both cities have implemented ongoing programs to curate these public spaces, imbuing each with its own distinctive yet cohesive identity.



The High Line, New York, NY

Strategy #2: Initiate a program that provides ongoing opportunities for the creation and presentation of new works

Create ongoing opportunities to support local and regional artists in the creation and presentation of new works. Opportunities should include calls for artists to work with design teams on all new development, requests for proposals for new Cultural Plinths Program, venues and grants for emerging artists' exhibitions and performance.

A wide variety of events—including visual arts, performing arts, and music venues—make Downtown Bellevue a year-round cultural destination. The cultivation of these programs includes investing in and expanding programs and spaces that are already in place.

PRECEDENTS:

- Fourth Plinth, Trafalgar Square in London, UK
- Tiny Stages, San Francisco, CA
- Art Prize, Grand Rapids, MI
- Northern Lights, Minneapolis, MN



Tiny Stages, San Francisco, CA

Strategy # 3: Identify specific opportunities to address cultural, historical and community-driven projects

Draw attention to the natural environment and environmental issues facing the community. Design and install informational planters with an emphasis on native plantings installed to promote education about local biodiversity, pollinator pathways and rain gardens. Use permeable pavers when possible. Incorporate solar technologies to illuminate pathways, bridges and canopy infrastructures.

Highlight the history of Bellevue that includes Auto Row, Asian-American displacement, indigenous history, hemlock forests, strawberries, cultural diversity and innovation.

Offer a broad spectrum of cultural offerings for an increasingly diverse community and create specific opportunities and calls for art to address cultural, historical and community driven projects.

PRECEDENTS:

- Pollinator Pathway, Seattle, WA
- Densho, Seattle, WA



Pollinator Pathway



Evered Mercury, Bellevue, WA, c. 1969



Bellevue Strawberry Festival



Densho, Beginning in 1885, Japanese citizens migrated to the U.S. for work but quickly became the targets of severe and racially exclusive forms of discrimination.



Pearl District, Portland, OR



U-Street Corridor, Washington D.C.

Strategy # 4: Build and reinforce distinct neighborhood identities along the route

Help build and reinforce distinct neighborhood identities along the route, including Wilburton, Eastside Center and Old Bellevue.

The Wilburton Commercial Area is Bellevue's next urban mixed-use community designed to enhance livability, promote healthy living, support economic vitality, and serve the needs of a diverse population. As Bellevue's cultural and innovative hub, it serves as a regional and international destination that connects people and fosters community by leveraging its existing and future assets to define a unique sense of place and character. Throughout this redevelopment, the City should develop and promote cultural programming to help foster the cultural and arts character of the this rapidly changing neighborhood. The future ERC trail connection site and the City owned Lincoln Center property can be utilized in the short term for community-focused cultural events. Establishing a flexible gathering space will help to anchor the community and shape the developing cultural identity of the area. Temporary infrastructure can be met with portable stages, shipping containers, office trailers, generators, and portable bathrooms. These temporary facilities should be enhanced with murals, video projection, temporary sculptural installations, and artistic lighting to provide a safe and vibrant place for the community. Future cultural space and programming will be defined by this early engagement.

The Eastside Center is intended to be the location for the most intense and pedestrian-activated development. Uses range from destination shopping to transit-oriented development along I-405. This area includes all signature streets; The Shopping Street (Bellevue Way,) The Entertainment/Event Street (106th Ave NE), and The Commerce Street (108th Ave NE). The 6th Street Pedestrian Corridor and future Grand Connection across I-405 to Wilburton connects the Bellevue Transit Center and Light Rail Station, Meydenbauer Convention Center and Theater to Bellevue Square through a predominantly office and commercial area. This Corridor, Compass Plaza, and the other accompanying open spaces are key defining elements for the entire downtown. While the Eastside Center encompasses the majority of the Grand Connection route, specific locations and opportunities for each neighborhood are laid out in the sections below. The unique, defining characteristics of each neighborhood will be considered in the overall programming of cultural events placed there.

Old Bellevue's character is largely defined by its lively pedestrian culture and boutiques, as well as by its iconic Downtown Park, proximity to Meydenbauer Bay, and the Lake-to-Lake Trail on Main Street. This makes it an ideal neighborhood for establishing a monthly Bellevue art walk route that coincides with site specific performance and installations along the Grand Connection. Art walks and other neighborhood events will aim to partner with and

engage area merchants and residents to broaden the Old Bellevue's cultural offerings. An expanded monthly artwalk program and temporary use of parking spaces for small boutique pop-ups, performances and presentations will draw more visitors and business to the neighborhood. Small-scale placemaking interventions and intimate artworks will enhance the already strong neighborhood identity.

PRECEDENTS:

Pearl District, Portland, OR – former warehouse district turned arts district
U-Street Corridor, Washington D.C.

Strategy # 5: Use art and cultural programming to enhance the civic experience.

Festivals, art fairs, public art, museums and galleries all contribute to Bellevue becoming a cultural leader and arts destination with year round programming.

The aim of this programming is to engage the community with a series of intimate, theme-based events. Examples may include but are not limited to tech-based arts festivals, seasonal events (holidays, light-based festivals in the winter, etc.), temporary installations, and performances. These events will be short and flexible in nature to allow for experimentation by a diverse range of artists and curators. When surveyed, many members of the community have expressed a desire for art and programming to help define the identity and use of a space as a platform for community building. Stakeholders also expressed a need to increase the number of visitors in downtown Bellevue and shared the aspiration for downtown Bellevue to emerge as a cultural destination. Integrating art into the fabric of the built environment, developing opportunities for evening activities, and refocusing programs to reflect Bellevue's diverse and international community character were common ideas that emerged from community engagement. The need to work together, cross-pollinate events, and coordinate venues to increase cultural offerings was also emphasized.

PRECEDENTS:

Nuit Blanche, Toronto, ON
Bumbershoot, Seattle, WA
TBA, Portland, OR



Nuit Blanche, Toronto, ON



David Eckard on opening night of TBA:11



Recology San Francisco Transfer Station, San Francisco, CA

Strategy # 6: Forge partnerships between artists, government, the private sector and cultural organizations for the creation and presentation of new works.

Programming will encourage communication and collaboration between existing organizations and community groups that make use of cultural offerings along the Grand Connection. Artists will be integrated into the design process and work side-by-side with design teams for all-new public development projects. Prioritizing incentives for private developments to engage in similar project planning with local artists will be emphasized and curators working with the Grand Connection will continue to work with property owners and cultural organizations to identify art and programing opportunities, over time forging lasting working relationships between the local arts community and businesses.

Pursue, where appropriate, ways the City can be flexible in its development standards for the right of way and private development to support arts and cultural enhancements and related programming. Prioritize the enhancement of the street and cultural experience over interior and lobby space in private development. Apply the amenities incentive system to the cultural instead of monetary value of public improvements and involve the Arts Program and Arts Commission in the assessment of public benefit.

PRECEDENTS:

- ZER01, San Jose, CA
- Recology San Francisco Transfer Station, San Francisco, CA
- SDOT Artist In Residence Program, Seattle, WA



ZER01 is a Silicon Valley hybrid arts organization that connects creative explorers in art, science, and technology to provoke and explore new ideas that build engaged and vibrant communities.

Strategy # 7: Provide economic incentives and development opportunities for the support of local artists and cultural organizations

The city takes a leadership role in fostering the arts as a community resource and leverages the arts as a key component in its overall economic development strategies.

Long-term strategies include investing in both existing and new arts venues, affordable artist housing, and artist workspace. In realizing the scope of the Grand Connection’s eventual impact, it is necessary to consider means of attracting artists and cultural services to become active members of the city, investing their time and work, becoming an integral part of the a rapidly expanding downtown culture that has, up to this point, remained heavily retail in nature.

PRECEDENTS:

- Artspace, Minneapolis, MN - (Tashiro Kaplan, Hiawatha Lofts)
- Open Satellite, Bellevue, WA
- FAR Incentive Program, Bellevue, WA



Harvester Artspace Lofts, Council Bluffs, IA

Strategy # 8: Initiate a public relations program to communicate, educate and engage the public

Creating a network for all of the experiences along the Grand Connection route will help bring awareness to and build upon what is happening culturally in Bellevue. This program should be initiated by the city and developed in partnership with the proposed Cultural Collective. This can be achieved through a website, mobile apps, billboards, and standard advertising methods. The program should present all of the arts and cultural offerings clearly and regularly to the greater community. Due to the varied nature of the proposed programming and the route itself, it is vital for these to be viewed by the community as parts of the bigger whole. It should be entertaining and vibrant, draw people in, make them aware, and give them a reason to keep coming back.

PRECEDENTS:

A&O Public: A group of writers, publicists, curators and creators who foster connections between their client's audiences and their message bringing attention to exciting projects. (Art Prize, Grand Rapids, MI; Yerba Buena Center For The Arts, San Francisco, CA; Prizm Art Fair, Miami, FL)

Blue Medium: A public relations group operating within the visual arts, design and architectural communities.

Strategy # 9: Implement a program that supports a wide range of art projects, which in turn fosters community interaction.

Create a curatable, flexible program that continues to draw visitors to a continually evolving and changing art scene. Encourage experimentation, innovation, and risk with an emphasis on diversity, technology and community building.

Beginning in 2018, Bellwether will be reimagined as an annual 10-day curated exhibition and festival. This is a unique opportunity to for experimentation and early implementation of the programing vision for the arts and cultural component of the Grand Connection.

PRECEDENTS:

Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs
The Creatives Project, Atlanta, GA



Jonathas de Andrade, Nostalgia, um sentimento de classe, 2012



LA Promise Zone Arts

OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVENTS AND PROGRAMS



G R A N D CONNECTION

arts & culture

OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVENTS AND PROGRAMS



OVO Collective, OVO, LightCity, Baltimore, 2017

Vision

Downtown Bellevue is a year-round cultural destination. A wide variety of events, including visual arts, performing arts, and music venues draw visitors to an evolving, vibrant, and exciting art scene. Existing programs such as the Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSfair and the Live at Lunch Concerts have grown into regionally recognized arts events through new investments and improved spaces. Coordinated marketing, signage and cross-promotional partnerships among businesses, organizations and venues encourage visitors to lengthen their stays and explore more cultural offerings in Downtown Bellevue. Existing cultural organizations such as the Bellevue Arts Museum are able to heighten their role as community leaders in the neighborhood and an influx of a new generation of artists and arts participants have diversified the arts community. There is something that engages everyone in Downtown Bellevue.

A Grand Connection Arts Program

A new comprehensive yet flexible Grand Connection Arts Program will create the framework for partners to collaborate to foster a lively arts scene. The early years are dedicated to developing program ideas. The City's Bellwether Program will be used to test and refine program ideas listed in this plan. The focus will then shift to developing partnerships and program infrastructure before launching new programs.

Objectives

Many of the stakeholders and public surveys expressed a desire for more public art, especially in the area of performance and music. Another need is more venues available where artists can perform, exhibit, and share their work. One major component to supporting local artists is to provide a place to exhibit. As a whole, these program ideas are designed to achieve the following objectives:

- Build an arts community of artists, organizations and stakeholders along the Grand Connection route to coordinate and share resources.
- Heighten awareness –of and make connections between cultural activities along the entire route.
- Promote tourism and grow new audiences that are increasingly diverse, highly educated and international
- Cultivate a more active and interesting night life, especially for Downtown residents and employees
- Enliven and enhance the streetscape as an active and interesting place to be.
- Encourage experimentation, innovation, and risk-taking with an emphasis on diversity, technology, and community building.
- Support local and regional artists in the creation and presentation of new works.

PROGRAM	OBJECTIVES						
	Build an arts community	Heighten awareness and make connections	Promote tourism and grow new audiences	Cultivate night life	Enliven and enhance the streetscape	Support local and regional artists	Encourage innovation
First move: 2018							
Bellwether	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Short term: 2018-2020							
Cultural Collective	✓	✓	✓				
Cultural Plinths Program	✓					✓	✓
Mid-term: 2021- ongoing							
Art Fairs	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Art Walks	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Downtown Concerts	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Emerging Artist Program	✓				✓	✓	✓
Mural Program	✓				✓	✓	

Bellwether

Re-imagine Bellwether as an annual 10-day curated multi-disciplinary exhibition and festival. Public art as well as public preferences have evolved significantly in the twenty-five years since the city began presenting the biennial Bellevue Sculpture Exhibition. While sculpture is still an important discipline, it is becoming an increasingly smaller portion of art in public places as well as inadequate to achieve community goals for public art. Digital art, performance, and social practice are emerging art disciplines that are proving more popular and effective in community engagement. The switch from a four-month to a 10-day format will concentrate the action into a smaller time frame, allowing energy and attention to be fully paid to a more vibrant and exciting event. The shorter time frame is also more conducive to temporary, time-based art works. The first 3 years of Bellwether can be a laboratory set up to gauge the success of the new format and test other program ideas listed here. This time should also be used to encourage deep and meaningful partnerships with Bellevue's cultural institutions, such as the Bellevue Arts Museum, KidsQuest Children's Museum, Bellevue Public Library, and the Theater at Meydenbauer Center. These partners present the opportunity for Bellwether to engage the whole downtown core and host more indoor locations for art works and installations.

Opportunities

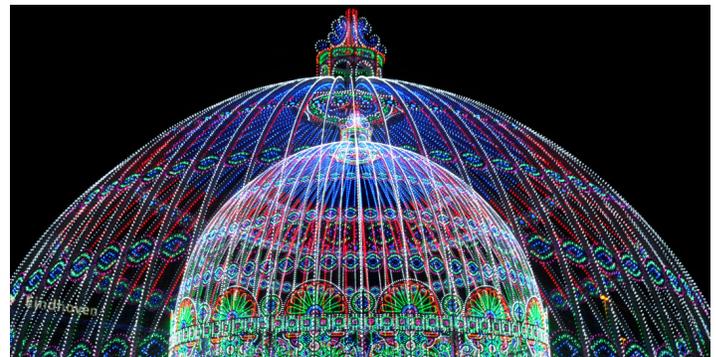
- Re-imagine Bellwether as an annual 10-day curated multi-disciplinary exhibition and festival. The switch from a four-month to a 10-day format will concentrate the action into a smaller time frame, allowing energy and attention to be fully paid to a more vibrant and exciting event. The shorter time frame is also more conducive to temporary, time-based art works. The first 3 years of Bellwether can be a laboratory set up to gauge the success of the new format.
- Encourage deep and meaningful partnerships with Bellevue's cultural institutions, such as the Bellevue Arts Museum, KidsQuest Children's Museum, Bellevue Public Library, and the Theater at Meydenbauer Center. These partners present the opportunity for Bellwether to engage the whole downtown core and host more indoor locations for art works and installations.
- Rely on well-respected local and international curators to develop a broad and diverse visual and performing arts program. While juries have cultivated peer-to-peer legitimacy to participating artists, juries have not helped to express cohesive themes or site-specific proposals to flourish.
- Explore the theme of connection as laid out in the Grand Connection Vision Plan. This varied programming will offer artistic disciplines known for fostering connections, providing the opportunity to engage Bellevue's increasingly diverse population including: performance, movement/dance, theater, music, 2D artwork, new media/tech-based art. This

provides a chance to promote the Grand Connection by utilizing interconnected "hubs" along the route instead of a linear "art walk".

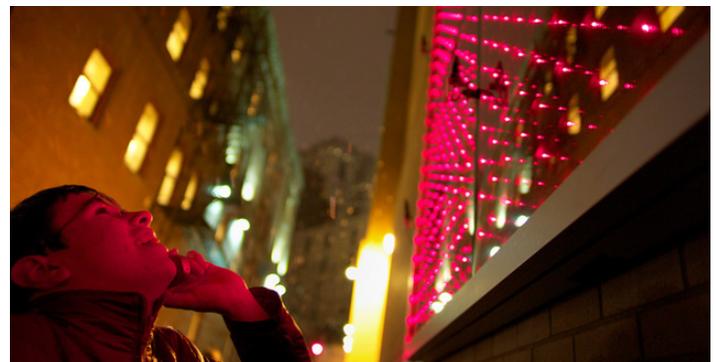
- Add an artist market for local artists and craftsmen to participate, or coordinate with the annual BAM ARTSfair
- Engage with the "Emerging Artist Program" to provide artists with little to no experience exhibiting in festivals the opportunity to take an important first step towards a future in fine art and craft shows
- Special projects and collaborations such as the Red Ball project and Cao Fei's video game installations
- Add visitor amenities to improve the visitor experience, including food trucks.



Light City, Baltimore - lightcity.org
Launched by the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts in 2016, Light City Baltimore is the first large-scale, international light festival in the United States. In its first year, Light City welcomed more than 400,000 people from across the globe over seven nights.



GLOW Eindhoven - gloweindhoven.nl/en
From November 12th – 19th Eindhoven is taken over by the Light Festival GLOW. Around 40 light artists created light installations, sculptures, projections and performances. Together they offered the GLOW visitor a surprisingly new perspective on the city. The light artworks were connected by a walking route.



Three Rivers Arts Festival, Pittsburgh - traf.trustarts.org
Three Rivers Arts Festival is an annual free 10-day festival of music, theater, dance, public art installations, gallery exhibitions, art market, creative activities, and food.

Cultural Collective

Build a community of organizations and stakeholders along the Grand Connection route to grow their audiences, share resources, promote tourism, and increase awareness of the Grand Connection. The Meydenbauer Center, BAM, The Westin, City Hall, Doxa Church, Downtown Park, and Bellevue Square all have adequate and distinctly different opportunities for an engagement with the arts. Many of these venues have available lobby, general facility, and wall space that go unused, even during regular programming. By creating a network for the sharing of physical space and artworks, a broader awareness and cohesiveness of the Grand Connection can be accomplished. Sharing of resources, artworks, information, and space can help further propel the Grand Connection and the cultural programming into a stronger, more vibrant arts destination.

Opportunities

- BAM helps to place artworks in places such as the library, Bellevue Square, Meydenbauer Center, The Westin, Eastside Heritage Center.
- Choral and musical events taking place in BAM foyer, Downtown Park, Library.
- Involve KidsQuest, the Library, and other outlying organizations into projects and other venues along the Grand Connection route.
- Create signage for venues that can be used to help cross promote events and exhibitions.
- Create a standalone Downtown arts website with an events calendar and sustain a social media presence through a partnership with VisitBellevueWashington.com.



Ashland, OR. For 80 year's the Oregon Shakespeare Festival has drawn international acclaim, evolving into a large cultural destination for such in a small town. This has expanded to a thriving literary scene, film festivals and performance art.



Palm Springs, CA. With a first-rate museum, a variety of film festivals and art galleries, this small city is a great example of collaboration and cross-disciplinary projects working together to become a cultural destination.



Elmgreen and Dragset, Prada Marfa, Marfa, TX, 2005

Marfa, TX is a small desert city in west Texas that is known as an arts hub. Foundations, residencies, festivals, and arts centers all contribute to this unique place as an arts destination town.

Cultural Plinths Program

Create ongoing opportunities to support local and regional artists in the creation and presentation of new works displayed on designated platforms. These plinths, using the success of the Bellwether program and the art walk format, will allow for creation and display of art in all its forms including sculptures and 3D work, performance, music, and other creative expression. These plinths can be curated and be very flexible, used for one-night events, rotating monthly exhibitions, festivals, and temporal performance. A series of cultural plinths along the route of the Grand Connection will ensure downtown Bellevue a year-round cultural destination and will serve as essential program infrastructure for all other program ideas listed here.

Opportunities

- Create large to medium scale plinths for sculptures and rotating static works of art.
- Create and designate areas to be “plinths” for performance and temporal works.
- 2D coverings, possible collaboration with area schools and KidsQuest.
- Collaborate with local businesses and property owners to activate storefront vitrines and street-facing windows with art installations, similar to Shunpike Storefronts model.
- Engage historical and cultural groups such as Eastside Heritage Center and Densho for heritage interpretation along the route.



Musician Benjamin Brown on the tiny Street Stage



Tiny Street Stages

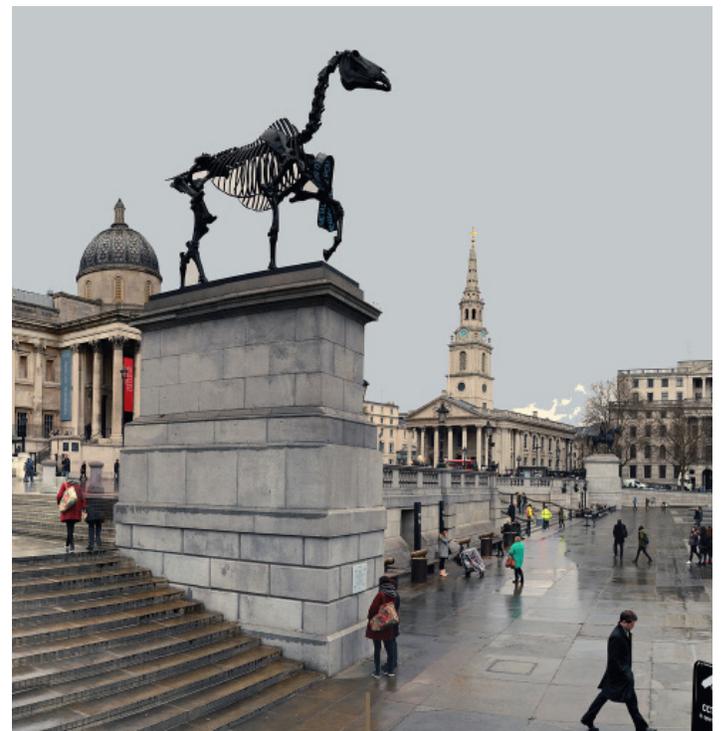
San Francisco, CA
missioncommunitymarket.org
Street Stage, a compact mobile stage that is a twist on parklets, adds a literal and figurative platform for creativity on the street.

4th Plinth, Trafalgar Square

London, England
Located in Trafalgar Square, the Fourth Plinth was built in 1841 and was meant to hold a statue of William IV but, due to insufficient funds, remained empty. Over 150 years later, the Fourth Plinth now hosts a series of commissioned artworks by world-class artists and is the most talked about contemporary art prize in the UK.



Yinka Shonibare, *Nelson's Ship in a Bottle*, Trafalgar Square, London, 2010



Hans Haacke, *Gift Horse*



Elmgreen and Dragset, *Powerless Structures, Fig. 101*

Art Walk

Build upon the Bellevue Arts Museum Free First Friday program and the Bellwether art walks. The art walk should be considered part of programming specific to the Grand Connection. The art walk can be expanded to take place year-round. Following the models of existing Seattle-area art walks, the Bellevue art walk would benefit from changing its hours to late afternoon or early evening, to coincide with the end of the work day, other evening-based cultural events taking place, and to further benefit neighborhood restaurants and cafes wanting to participate and take advantage of the art walk crowds.

Opportunities

- Enhance the performance and music events during summer months to increase turnout
- Install complementary visitor amenities such as food trucks and beer gardens along the route to support the visitor experience
- Explore leadership roles for cultural organizations such as the Bellevue Arts Museum and the Downtown Bellevue Association
- Identify opportunities for commercial galleries located in Downtown Bellevue such as Hall Spassov to participate
- Commission temporary public artworks for display at cultural plinths during art walks
- Expand the reach of advertising to the Puget Sound region
- Integrate a post-5pm “after hours” evening component to the art walk
- Install temporary parklets and pop-ups in parking spaces along Main Street
- Utilize sections along the Compass Plaza, Street as Plaza, Downtown Park Entrance for artist booths

First Thursday Art Walk: Pioneer Square

The Pioneer Square neighborhood welcomes everyone to Seattle's oldest, and USA's first Art Walk. Featuring visual art, music, food and beverage specials, and more! First Thursday events also include free admission to museums in Seattle, including the Seattle Art Museum, Seattle Asian Art Museum and the Wing Luke Museum.



Seattle Art Walk



Los Angeles Art Walk



Wynwood Art Walk

Downtown Concerts

Expand and publicize the Bellevue Downtown Association's Live at Lunch concert series of free live music performances at lunchtime to include evening concerts that connect Downtown residents and employees to a vibrant 18-hour a day neighborhood. Concerts by well-known musicians and the new Downtown Park outdoor amphitheater will anchor the series for a regional audience and help draw connections to other activities and events throughout Downtown.

Opportunities

- Utilize venues along the Grand Connection line, including the Bellevue Arts Museum, Doxa, Meydenbauer Center, and Downtown Park
- Utilize Cultural Plinths along the Grand Connection route
- Create or establish semi-permanent/permanent stage or amphitheater
- Partner with Downtown Bellevue Association to help grow program



Fremont Street Experience is a five-block entertainment district in historic downtown Las Vegas, Nevada. The centerpiece of Fremont Street Experience is Viva Vision, the world's largest video screen. The Viva Vision screen is 1,500 feet long, 90 feet wide and is suspended 90 feet above the pedestrian mall below. The screen has 12.5 million LED lights and a 550,000-watt sound system.

Viva Vision features free light shows, free, every night of the week. Fremont Street Experience also has an extensive schedule of live concerts and entertainment on three stages.



Now in its 39th year, the **Out to Lunch** (OTL) concert series is bigger than ever, with music every day of the week. This free, outdoor series brings live, lunchtime music to 12 downtown locations from July 5 to Sept. 1. All concerts take place from 12-1:30 p.m., except on Mondays, when concerts take place from 4:30-6 p.m.

Emerging Artist Program

The opportunity for a unique and flexible program that allows underrepresented artists options to exhibit, perform, display, and to create their work, has the potential to cultivate an interest in the arts and establish Bellevue as forward thinking in its artistic programming. This can be achieved through a variety of genres including visual arts, performing arts, and musical acts that make downtown Bellevue a year-round cultural destination.

There are abundant opportunities to place and support works by emerging artists, from the Cultural Plinths program, mural projects, to the storefronts and integrated artworks. These artists can be obtained through a call for art, or identified through the curating portion of the Bellwether program.

Opportunities

- Collaborate with Grand Connection partners to offer new venues for projects by emerging artists
- Utilize Cultural Plinths as a presentation site
- Expand the Storefronts Program in Bellevue for temporary artist work/exhibition space
- Develop an Artist in Residence program that provides opportunities to writers, performers and visual artists to create work in response to site specific prompts along the route, local history, etc.
- Utilize existing sites for exhibitions such as City Hall, Meydenbauer, the Bellevue Arts Museum, and Bellevue Square
- Partner with local developers/businesses to contribute to stipends for artists
- Locate artists at the new MakerSpace in the King County Regional Library



Project Row Houses, Houston, TX

Projectrowhouses.org

(PRH) is a community-based arts and culture non-profit organization in Houston's northern Third Ward, one of the city's oldest African American neighborhoods. Founded in 1993 as a result of the vision of local African-American artists wanting a positive creative presence in their own community, PRH shifts the view of art from traditional studio practice to a more conceptual base of transforming the social environment.



Pilchuck Emerging Artists In Residence Program, Stanwood, WA

www.pilchuck.com/residencies/emerging_artists_in_residence_program/

A glass school in northern Washington, Pilchuck's Emerging Artist in Residence Program allows glass artists space, tools, a stipend and more than a month to work on glass focused artworks.



Storefronts Project, Seattle, WA

Storefrontsseattle.com

Storefronts is an innovative arts program that activates communities, neighborhoods and streets by matching the work of local artists with vacant or under-utilized retail space.

Mural Program

Murals make a place welcoming and add to the walkability of a city. These public canvases can be highly interactive and have long been a way to explore a larger community story and enhance the built environment. A mural program can create a large impact and can quickly enhance civic spaces through affordable artworks. To utilize unused spaces, incentives could encourage property owners to create “art walls” that can function as cultural plinths for temporary murals as well as other art projects including digital projection, bas-relief sculpture, and wheat paste.

Opportunities

- Commission one renowned artist for an anchor mural
- Utilize the King County 4Culture mural roster to commission murals by regional artists
- Involve KidsQuest and area schools to create small mural projects, possibly as a part of the Cultural Plinth program
- Create a large scale mural on the south facing wall of Doxa Church
- Re-imagine the north facing All American Eye Glass Repair as an emerging artist mural wall that rotates seasonally or bi-annually
- Partner with Sound Transit smART Program for murals on the construction fencing at the City Hall Plaza



Grand River Creative Corridor, Detroit, MI

4731.com/grccdetroit

GRCC is an art corridor and neighborhood revitalization project that features over 100 murals on 15 buildings.



Open Walls Baltimore, Baltimore, MD

openwallsbaltimore.com

Located in an arts and entertainment district in the heart of the city, over 23 murals were commissioned and installed.



The Wynwood Walls

thewynwoodwalls.com

The Wynwood Walls was conceived by the renowned community revitalizer and placemaker, the late Tony Goldman in 2009. He was looking for something big to transform the warehouse district of Wynwood, and he arrived at a simple idea: “Wynwood’s large stock of warehouse buildings, all with no windows, would be my giant canvases to bring to them the greatest street art ever seen in one place.” Starting with the 25th–26th Street complex of six separate buildings, his goal was to create a center where people could gravitate to and explore, and to develop the area’s pedestrian potential.



Mural Arts Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA

muralarts.org

Since 1984, the nation’s largest public art program, creating 50-100 new projects each year



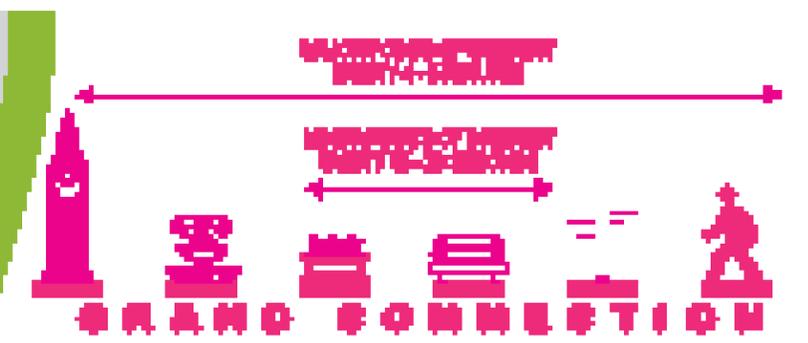
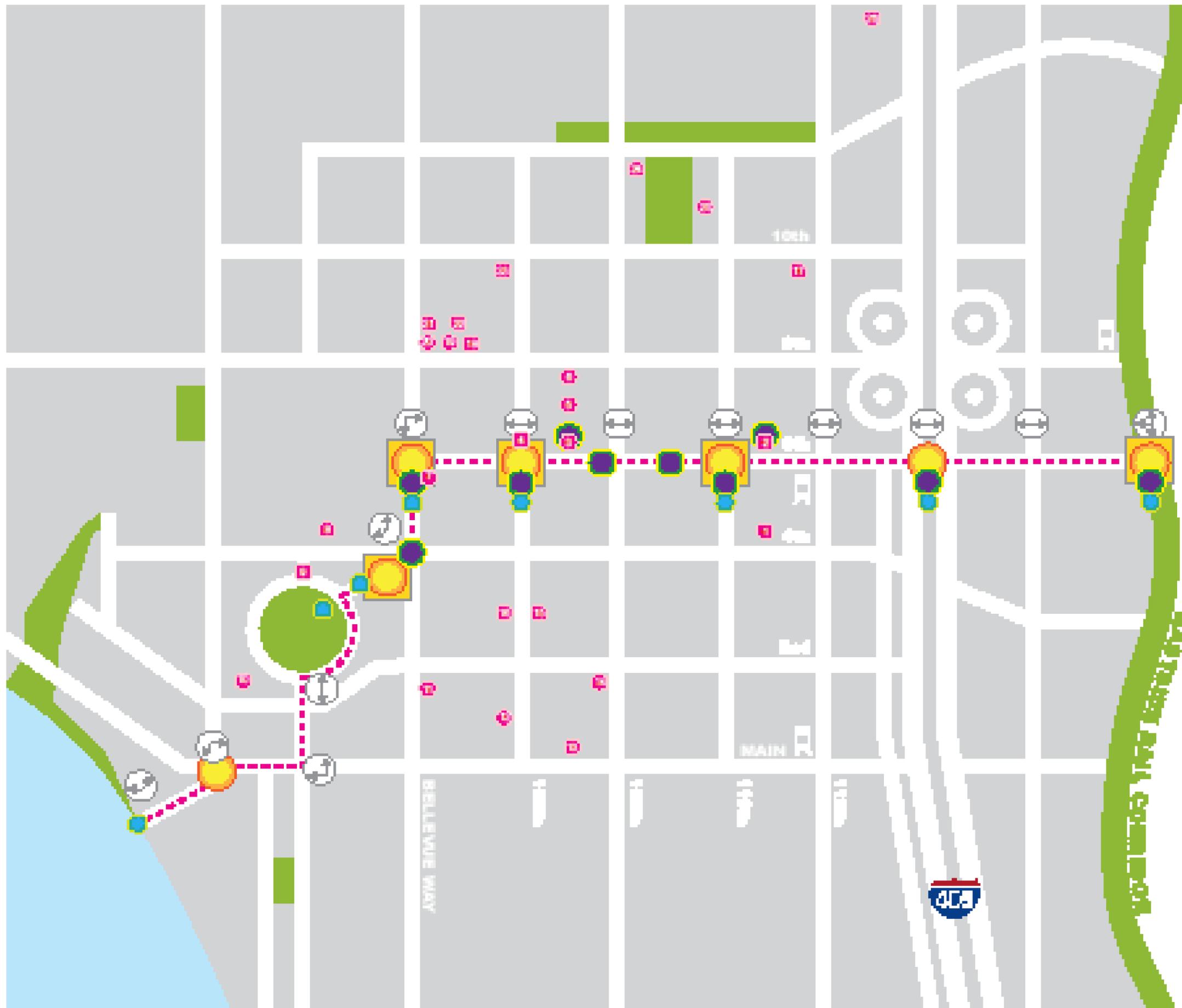
Urban Artworks, Seattle, WA

Urban ArtWorks is a Seattle-based nonprofit organization that provides opportunities for contemporary artists and local youth to work together to create public works of art.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ART



Anish Kapoor, *Cloud Gate*, Chicago, IL 2006



- STAND
- CONNECTION
- EXTENDED ROUTE
- ORIGINAL PLAN
- FUTURE LIGHT RAIL
- STREETCROSSING

- STATION LOCATIONS**
- 1 Wilson City Hall
 - 20 Washington Center
 - 30 Zion Church
 - 40 Cooper Place
 - 50 Broadway Walk
 - 60 Clark Place
 - 70 Wilson City Museum
 - 80 Wilson Station
 - 90 Franklin Park
 - 100 Washington Playfield
 - 110 Wilson Station
 - 120 Wilson Station
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G R A N D CONNECTION arts & culture

EASTSIDE RAIL CORRIDOR TRAIL CONNECTION ART OPPORTUNITIES



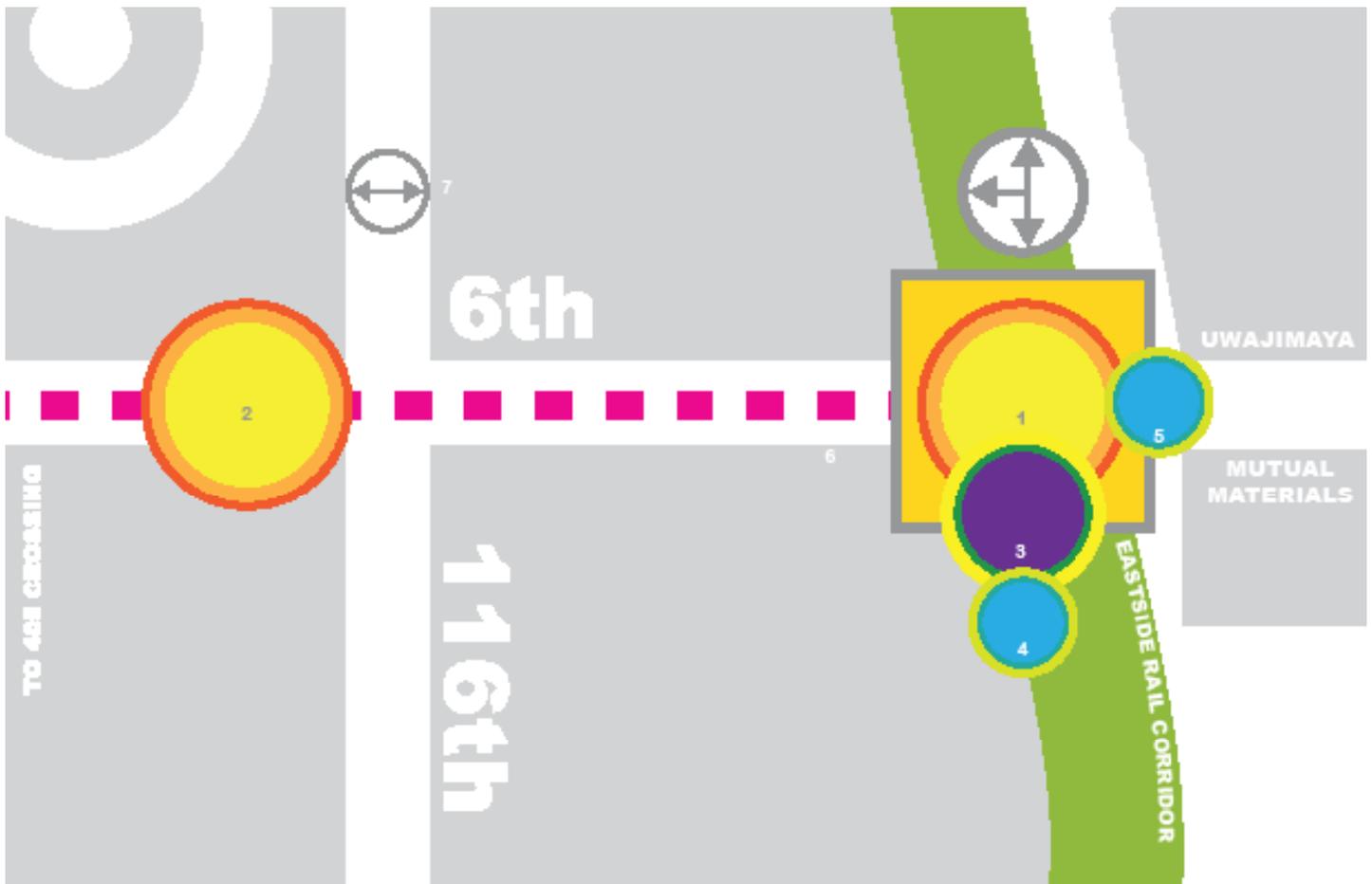
SuttonBeresCuller, *Big Top Grand Stand*, Nuit Blanche, Toronto, ON, 2015

Vision

Wilburton is the center of a new creative community. Temporary infrastructure at the City-owned Lincoln Center property such as portable stages, shipping containers, office trailers, generators, and portable bathrooms serve as a catalyst for community engagement in the short-term. Murals, video projection, temporary sculptural installations, and artistic lighting provide a safe and vibrant place for the community to develop connections and identity. In the long term, an incubator and cultural arts facility anchors the creative neighborhood. A new gateway and entry plaza at the ERC Trail connection bring tens of thousands of people to the neighborhood via the Grand Connection, and one of the first things they encounter will be a sampling of Bellevue's increasingly diverse and vibrant cultural offerings.

Objectives

- Create an urban plaza and cultural hub at the intersection of the ERC Trail to allow for community gathering and arts and cultural offerings.
- Preserve sight lines to and from downtown and the ERC Connection. Visibility along NE 6th from the Transit Center and City Hall to the new 405 crossing and the ERC Trail connection should be emphasized.
- Place large-scale signature artwork visible from the Transit Center and surrounding area.
- Create unique wayfinding opportunities to attract users of King County's regional trail users to Bellevue's cultural corridor.
- Develop an incubator and cultural arts facility to anchor and activate the new neighborhood.



Opportunities

Major Art Opportunity ●

1. City View Gateway & Plaza

Create a unique entrance to the Grand Connection with a large sculptural work and plaza marking the starting point of cultural corridor. This area also provides great opportunities for dramatic views of the downtown Bellevue skyline. King County owns a significant amount of land at this intersection; its width provides unique opportunities for open public space and cultural offerings. There is an opportunity to work with property owners and developers on parcels to the west of the ERC connection to preserve sight lines and incorporate pedestrian space into future development. The site's close proximity to the City owned Lincoln Center Property is also an asset, should that space be redeveloped to incorporate an arts and innovation center.

2. Incubator and Cultural Arts Facility

The purpose of this facility is to create a home for Bellevue's arts and innovation community and provide space for inexpensive offices, a flat-floor public assembly space for 100 to 250 people, independent retail, and a public outdoor area that energizes Wilburton. This space can house artists, multicultural performances, non-profits, pop-up retail, and entrepreneur meet ups, among many civic uses. An interim facility could be sited at Lincoln Center, whereas a permanent facility could be the result of a public-private partnership on the Lincoln Center site or the Civic Center site.

Integrated Artwork ●

3. Traces of the Railroad

Incorporate reclaimed railroad track, spurs, and other historic ERC materials into the plaza design. The design will emphasize the area as a mixing zone inspired by the old railroad spurs of the area and allow for community gathering spaces without impeding pedestrian and bicycle traffic passing through. John Fleming's Redmond Erratic and Signals are great examples of creative re-use of such materials reincorporated into the new identity of the site while highlighting its history.

Cultural Plinths ●

4. Amphitheater

Designate an area of the potential plaza as a cultural plinth with a focus on the cultural hub. Consider a natural amphitheater model for gatherings and performances.



RiverLoop Amphitheater, Waterloo, IA

Amphitheater

The RiverLoop Amphitheater is located adjacent to the Waterloo Center for the Arts along Cedar Street, at the corner of Park Avenue and Jefferson Street in downtown Waterloo. The Riverloop Amphitheater serves as a unique venue, right off the scenic Cedar River in the exciting location of downtown Waterloo, Iowa. The amphitheater can hold approximately 600 people in the general seating area and can accommodate groups of up to approximately 1,000 people.



RiverLoop Amphitheater, Waterloo, IA

Foster partnerships with area stakeholders and businesses such as Uwajimaya and REI to activate this space with programming and cultural offerings. These could include food fairs, Asian cultural events, and opportunities focusing on outdoor recreational activities and non-motorized transportation.

5. Wilburton Art Wall

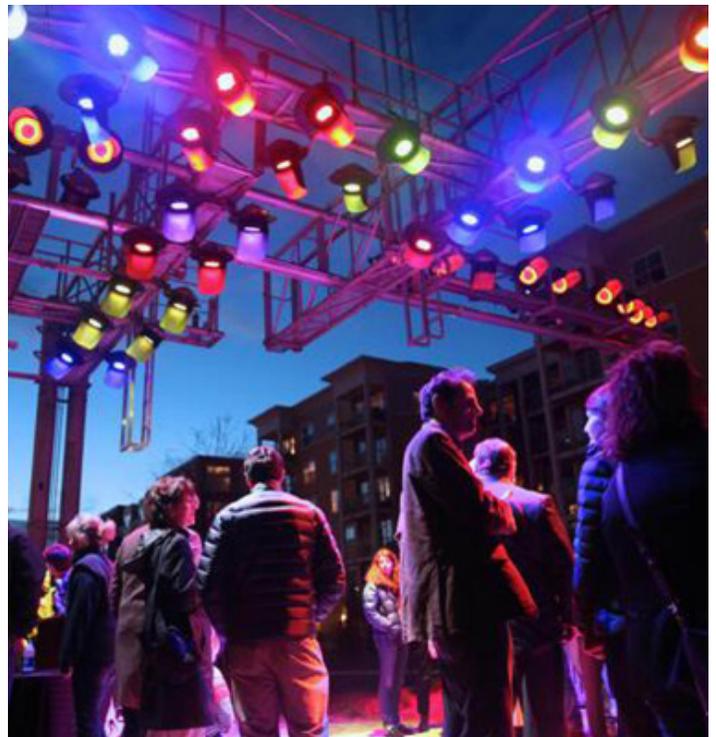
Work with King County Parks Department, Mutual Materials and Uwajimaya to create a programmable “Art Wall” along the eastern edge of the site that can incorporate projection, light, murals, and experimental two-dimensional artwork on an ongoing basis. This should be visible from the Civic Center area.

Minor Points of Interest

6. *Small scale, discoverable sculptures between ERC plaza and I-405 that draw attention to the Grand Connection.*

Wayfinding

7. Provide unique and cohesive wayfinding that identifies this location on the Grand Connection route, the immediate cultural amenities, and identifies the adjoining hubs.



John Fleming, Signals, Redmond, WA, 2014

Action Plan for Implementation

First move: 2018

- Claim the cultural corridor with Big Top Grand Stand by SuttonBeresCuller installed at future plaza site for inspiration and testing. Temporarily activate this space with a large, colorful, highly visible work viewable from civic center area. Host small events targeted to area businesses, residents, and workers with the aim of community building and collaboration.

Short term: 2019 – 2020

- Develop an interim Incubator and Cultural Arts Facility by installing temporary infrastructure to support interim cultural programming, temporary art interventions, and related activities with a focus on community building and cultural identity in or around Lincoln Center. Hold a design competition to elicit proposal for a permanent facility.
- Incorporate the Wilburton Art Wall into the plaza construction and final design. Provide temporary infrastructure for lighting, projection, and sound so that the wall can be programmed for various events and temporal artworks.

Mid term: 2021 – Ongoing

- Commission a City View Gateway to act as entryway to the Grand Connection.
- Develop the Amphitheater to create a cultural plinth and mixing zone at the plaza design and integrate Traces of the Railroad artwork utilizing historical railway materials and develop.
- Commission artist designed wayfinding and incorporate small scale, discoverable sculptures as the route develops between ERC plaza and I-405.
- Develop a permanent Incubator and Cultural Arts Facility.

Case Study: Coney Art Walls

Coney Art Walls is an outdoor museum of street art curated by Joseph Sitt and Jeffrey Deitch. Located at 3050 Stillwell Avenue near the beach and boardwalk in Coney Island, the public art wall project encompasses Greenwood Beach featuring a number of popular food vendors including Dinosaur Bar-B-Que, Calexico and Table 87.

Coney Art Walls presents several of the leading painters and sculptures in New York, in addition to leading artists connected with street culture.

Coney Island has a long history of being the place for New Yorkers to go to escape city life, see the astonishing, or experience something new, if only for a day. Whether that experience came from seeing electric lights for the first time, watching a sideshow performer, or being jostled together with strangers on a ride, Coney Island has been a place to be exposed to the unexpected. These experiences were collectively shared, as spectacle, in a very public way—this is the magic of Coney.

Coney Art Walls continues this tradition. It brings together a large group of some of the best artists who paint outdoor murals to provide an art experience that is open and free to the public. The addition of the Smorgasburg team, which has brought a diverse and fun group of food vendors to the site, and an ongoing music program, fully round out the space into a true Coney Island experience.

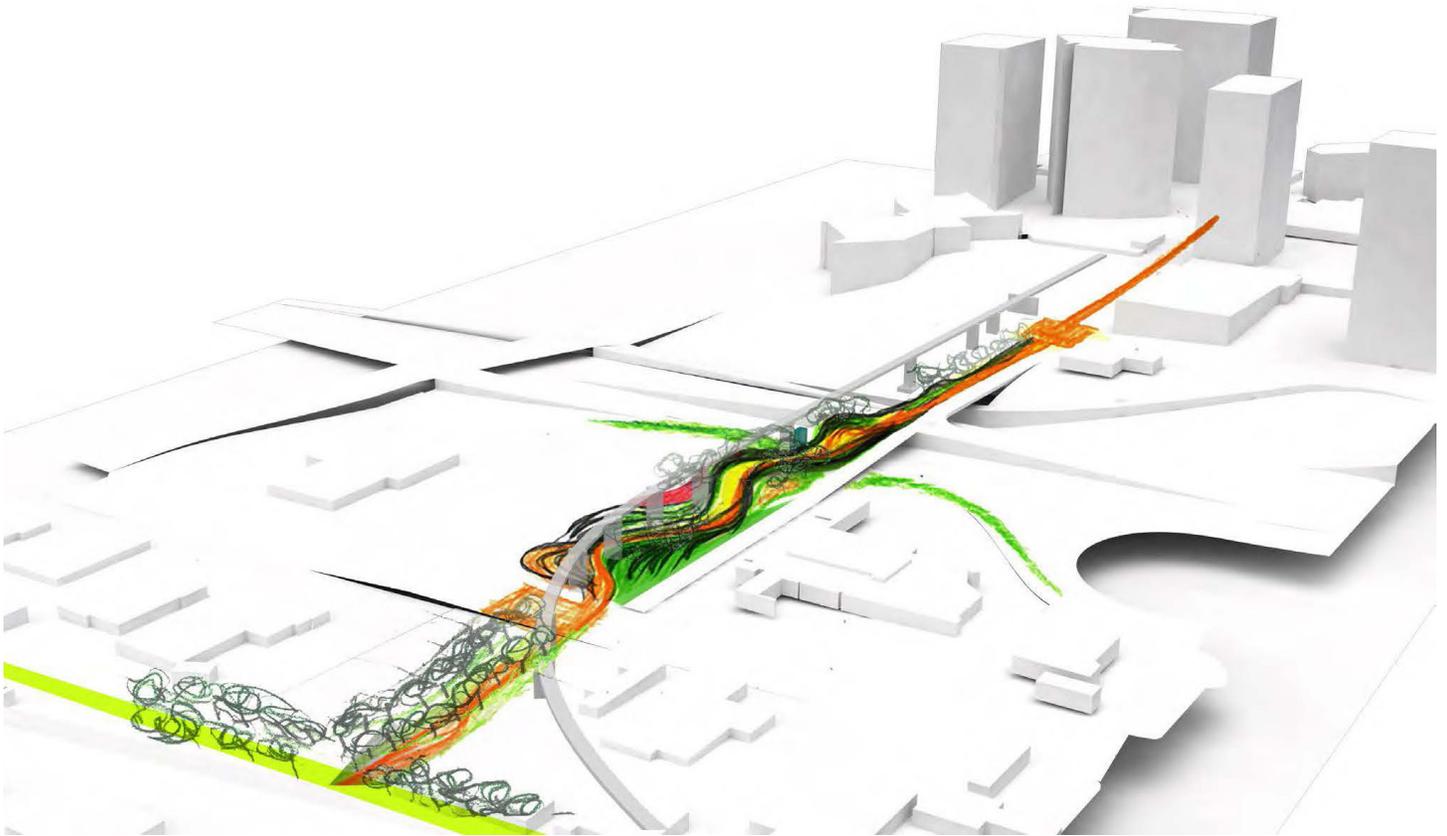
Resources:
<http://www.coneyartwalls.com>



Coney Island Art Walls

G R A N D CONNECTION arts & culture

INTERSTATE 405 CROSSING ART OPPORTUNITIES



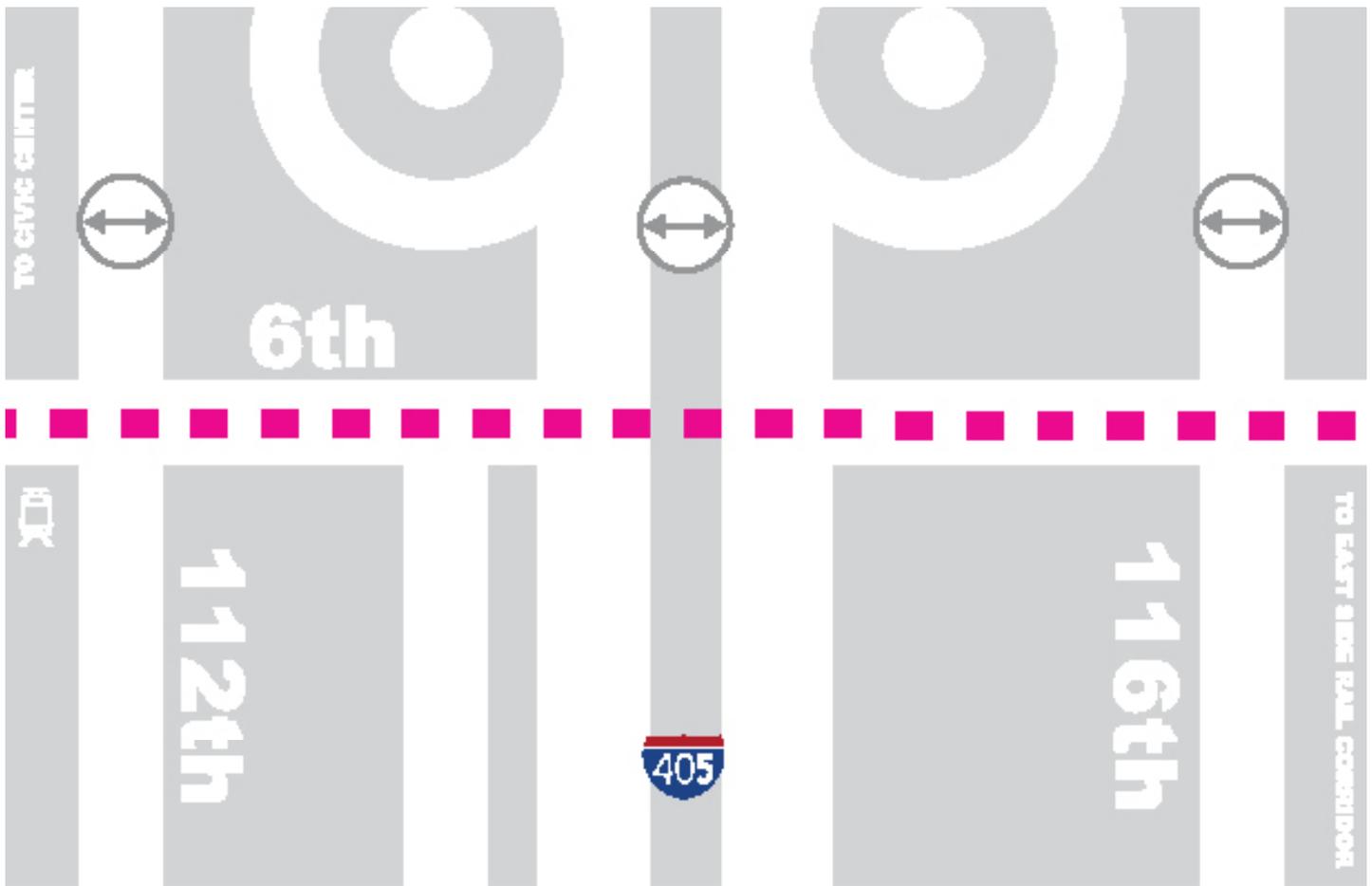
I-405 Crossing Concept, Balmori Associates

Vision

As the three options for the I-405 Crossing are being studied, the opportunity for a significant public work to be incorporated into the final selected option is selected to should be viewed as a vital aspect of this connection. I-405 separates the downtown core from the Wilburton district with a few heavily trafficked overpasses connecting the two. Artwork and artistic treatments are vital to a more connected and pedestrian friendly Bellevue.

Objectives

- Make a visual statement that signifies that Bellevue is a connected and artistic city.
- Incorporate a cultural plinth and community gathering space into future crossing to support cultural programs.



Opportunities

The sculptural bridge option

The Lincoln Center property should be considered as a small park and cultural space with back of house support for events and programming. Utilize the space under the bridge to provide facilities, storage, dressing rooms, and bathrooms. Steps coming down from path to envisioned park space could act as amphitheater style seating. Incorporate sculptural and lighting elements into the design of a grand staircase. Consider the underside of light rail guideways and columns for integrated artworks and mural opportunities.

The bridge option

Integrate artwork above or along the bridge. Precedents such as Chihully's Bridge of Glass in Tacoma and Teresita Fernandez's Seattle Cloud Cover signal to pedestrians and vehicles passing below that this is a vital and artistic connection. Install wayfinding and small scale discoverable along the bridge.

The lid option

Commission a large sculptural work to be incorporated into the main gathering area of the new park space. Siting an artwork with visibility from traffic on I-405 is a unique opportunity. Incorporate a public gathering space and cultural hub in the center should be prioritized.



Sculptural Bridge Option

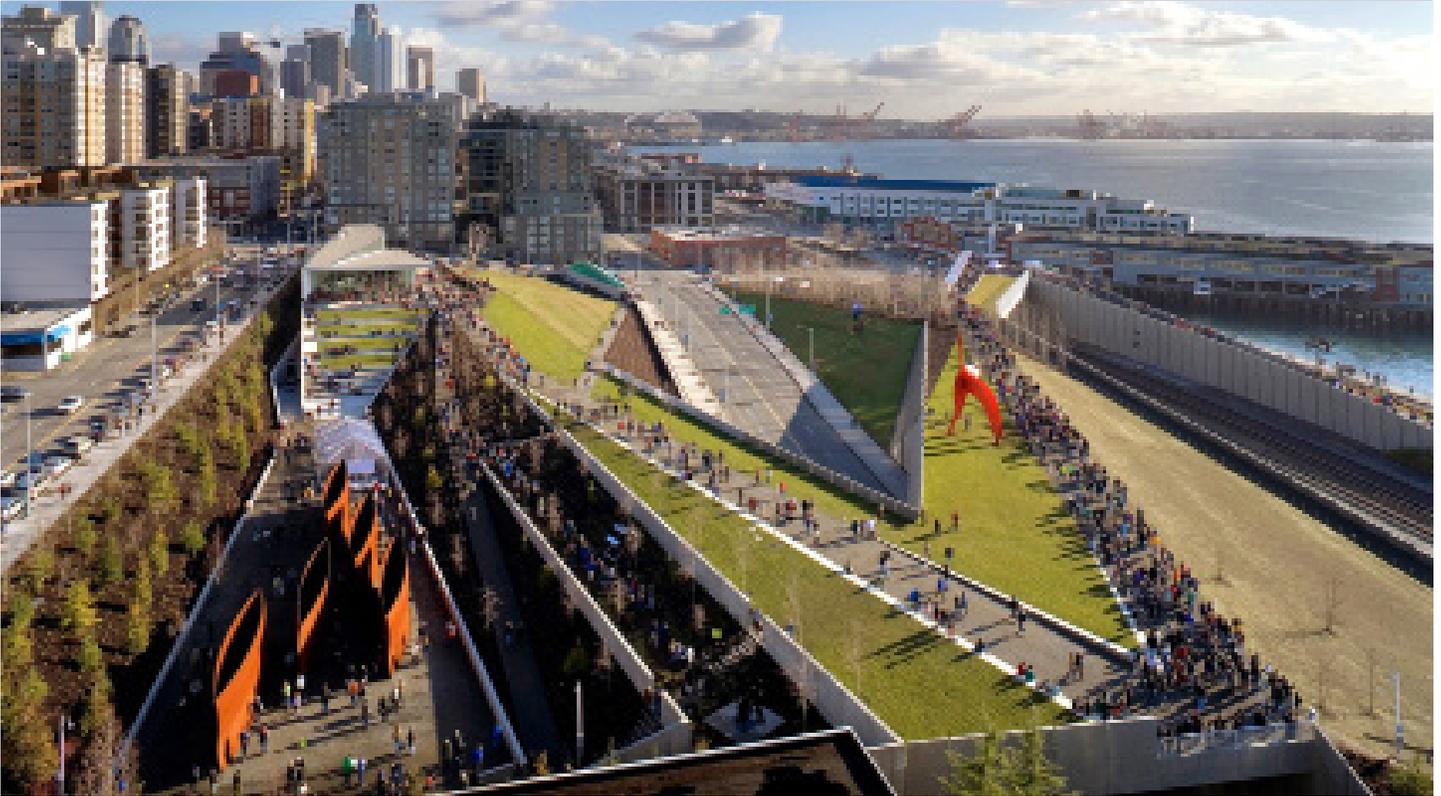


Bridge Option



Lid Option

The Lid

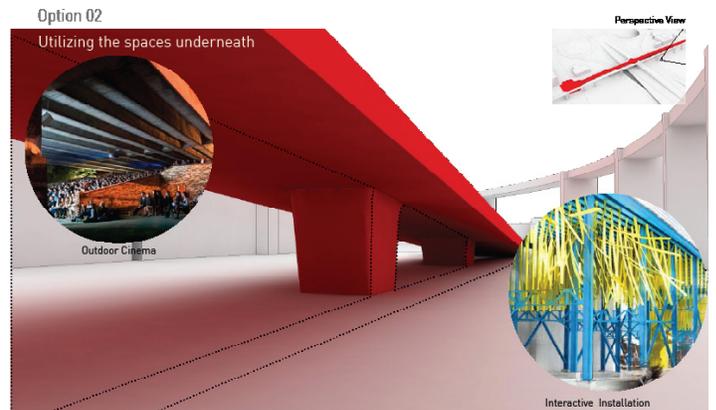


Olympic Sculpture Park

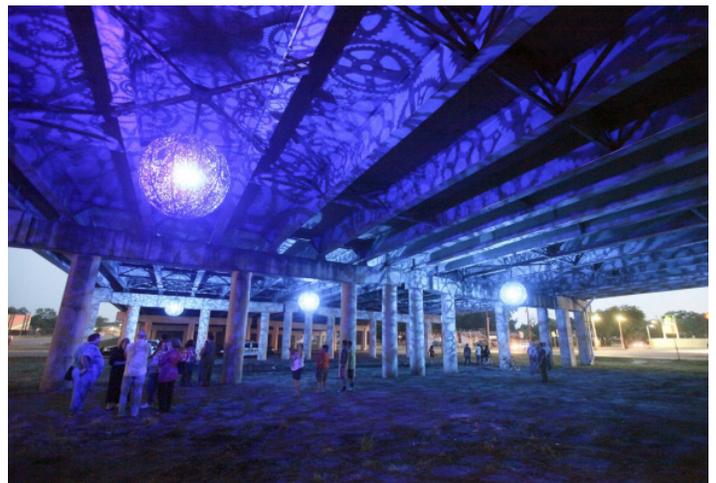
Action Plan for Implementation

Short term: 2018 – 2020

- Integrate artist into design team of future Sculptural Bridge, Bridge or Lid options.
- Partner with Sound Transit to identify opportunities for artistic treatments to underside of guideways and columns at the Lincoln Center Property.
- Activate the Lincoln Center property interim cultural programming, temporary art interventions and related activities with a focus on community building and cultural identity.
- Provide temporary infrastructure to support such events and art interventions.



Laurie Lundquist, *Mountain Pass Pedestrian Bridge*, Phoenix, AZ



Ballroom Luminoso, Joe O'Connell and Blessing Hancock, San Antonio, TX, 2013

G R A N D CONNECTION arts & culture

CIVIC CENTER ART OPPORTUNITIES



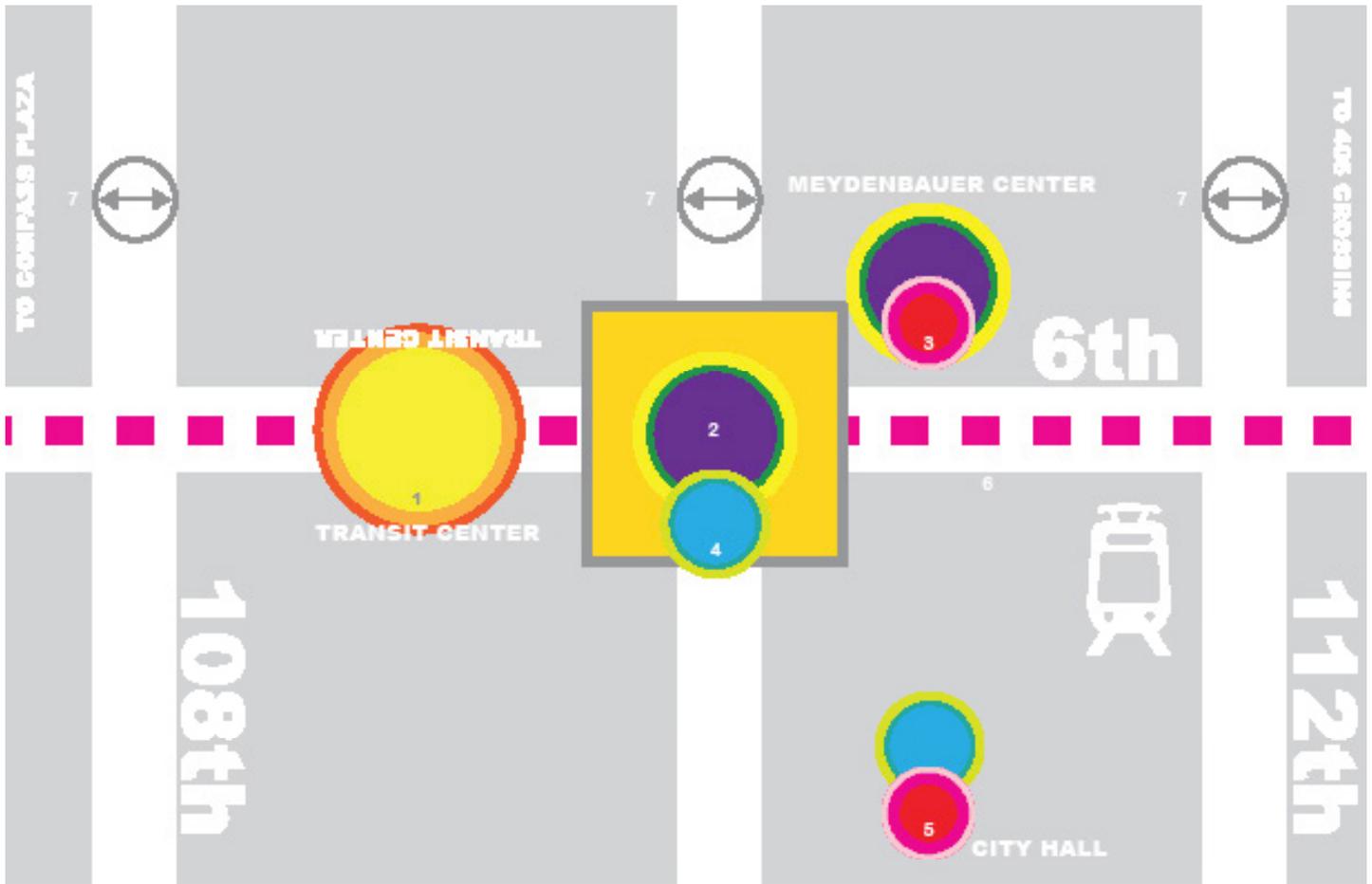
Leo Saul Berk, *Subterraneum*, University of Washington Station, Seattle, 2016

Vision

No one just waits for a bus or the train; they engage. Bellevue Corporate Plaza, City Hall, Meydenbauer Center, and the Transit Station work together as the city's primary cultural hub, providing a place for civic engagement of all forms and opportunities to experience arts and cultural events year round. Bellevue's story is constantly being explored through many iconic public artworks, rotating community exhibitions, and cultural programs in the lobbies of City Hall and Meydenbauer Center.

Objectives

- Utilize artist-designed building elements to create physical and visual distance between sights and sounds of busses.
- Develop the Civic Center as a "people hub" with strong artistic and cultural elements. Re-imagine and re-design transit center for the general public while encouraging increased use of public transit.



Opportunities

Major Art Opportunity ●

1. Transit Center Roof

The roofline of the Bellevue Transit Center is a defining feature of the civic center. Artists could illuminate both the interior and exterior of the Transit Center with color and lighting elements that change and respond to the season and important community events in the civic plaza.

Integrated Artwork ●

2. Pedestrian art enhancements

Partner with Sound Transit, King County Metro, and other stakeholders to identify opportunities for public art enhancements, such as a new raised intersection or sidewalk treatments for pedestrian crossings to help unify these spaces into one.

3. The Stoop

Further the identity of Meydenbauer Center as an important public place by incorporating artwork, color, and lighting into a redesigned entryway and steps. Continue to utilize and activate the window space at the Meydenbauer Center along NE 6th Street for rotating exhibitions and expand the program to the windows and doors on the corner of NE 6th Street and 112th Avenue NE.

Cultural Plinths ●

4. Civic Plaza

Strengthen Bellevue's civic identity by coordinating cultural

programming such as night markets, craft vendors, and food trucks at the Bellevue Corporate Plaza, City Hall Plaza, and Microsoft City Center Plaza. Regular events and markets across all three spaces will soften the corporate profile of this important civic place and transform the area into a welcoming destination that celebrates people and culture while encouraging alternative forms of transportation.

5. Civic Galleries

Utilize the City Hall and Meydenbauer Center lobbies for ongoing exhibitions of community arts, local artists, and area cultural organizations. These spaces are important community spaces that provide the general public a platform to participate in the civic dialogue and excitement of the Grand Connection.



Dekalb Market, Brooklyn, NY

The Stoop



Minor Points of Interest

6. Small scale, discoverable sculptures, including paving and sidewalk treatments.

Wayfinding

7. Provide unique and cohesive wayfinding that identifies this location on the Grand Connection route, the immediate cultural amenities, and identifies the adjoining hubs. With the upcoming Sound Transit Light Rail addition this will be a unique opportunity to get people to explore the Grand Connection.



Art Institute of Chicago



Night Market Philadelphia



Bellevue Transit Center

Action Plan for Implementation

First move: 2018

- Collaborate with Meydenbauer Center to develop The Stoop and programming specific to the Grand Connection within the lobby. Expand Storefronts program at Meydenbauer Center to utilize all of the windows and doors from the parking garage to the corner of NE 6th and 112th NE.

Short term: 2018 – 2020

- Commission artists to create Pedestrian art enhancements and art concepts for enhancements to the Transit Center Roof.
- Activate the City Hall and Meydenbauer Center with new Civic Galleries that display rotating exhibitions, readings and cultural events that coincide with evening art walks.
- Utilize the three plazas surrounding the Transit Center (City Hall Plaza, Bellevue Corporate Plaza and City Center Plaza) with varied programming and events. Small art fair pop-ups, food trucks, and crafts vendors will all bring cultural vibrancy to the area.
- Refresh the existing Topos artist-designed wayfinding.

Long term: 2021 – Ongoing

- Install lighting infrastructure for the Transit Center Roof and begin lighting program.
- Integrated artwork at Transit Center and surrounding intersections.

Case Study:

Sensing WATER is a weather-responding and interactive artwork utilizing light and paint to define a major downtown gateway in San Jose CA. The project is composed of 2 elements, the massive painted sloped wall that abstractly references flowing water, and the overhead evening lighting that illuminates with rippling patterns of light the underpass of I-87. The project uses real-time NOAA weather data to compose different patterns of light on the ceiling. (e.g.: 0-5mph winds vs thunderstorms). The projected light maintains a similar palette to the painted sloped wall, yet becomes dynamic depending on the weather.

In addition to the live weather feed transforming the space, this project is also highly interactive for those players of the Ingress multi-player game. By interacting physically on site with your cell phone, players can transform the space, revealing aspects of the game for a brief amount of time.

Not only do the lighting patterns change based on weather conditions, but they are dynamic- constantly pulsing and chasing, depending on severity of the weather.

Resources:
<http://www.DanCorson.com>



Dan Corson, Sensing WATER, San Jose, CA, 2014

G R A N D CONNECTION arts & culture

COMPASS PLAZA & GARDEN HILL CLIMB ART OPPORTUNITIES



Janet Echelman, *Skies Painted with Unnumbered Sparks*, Vancouver, Canada, 2014

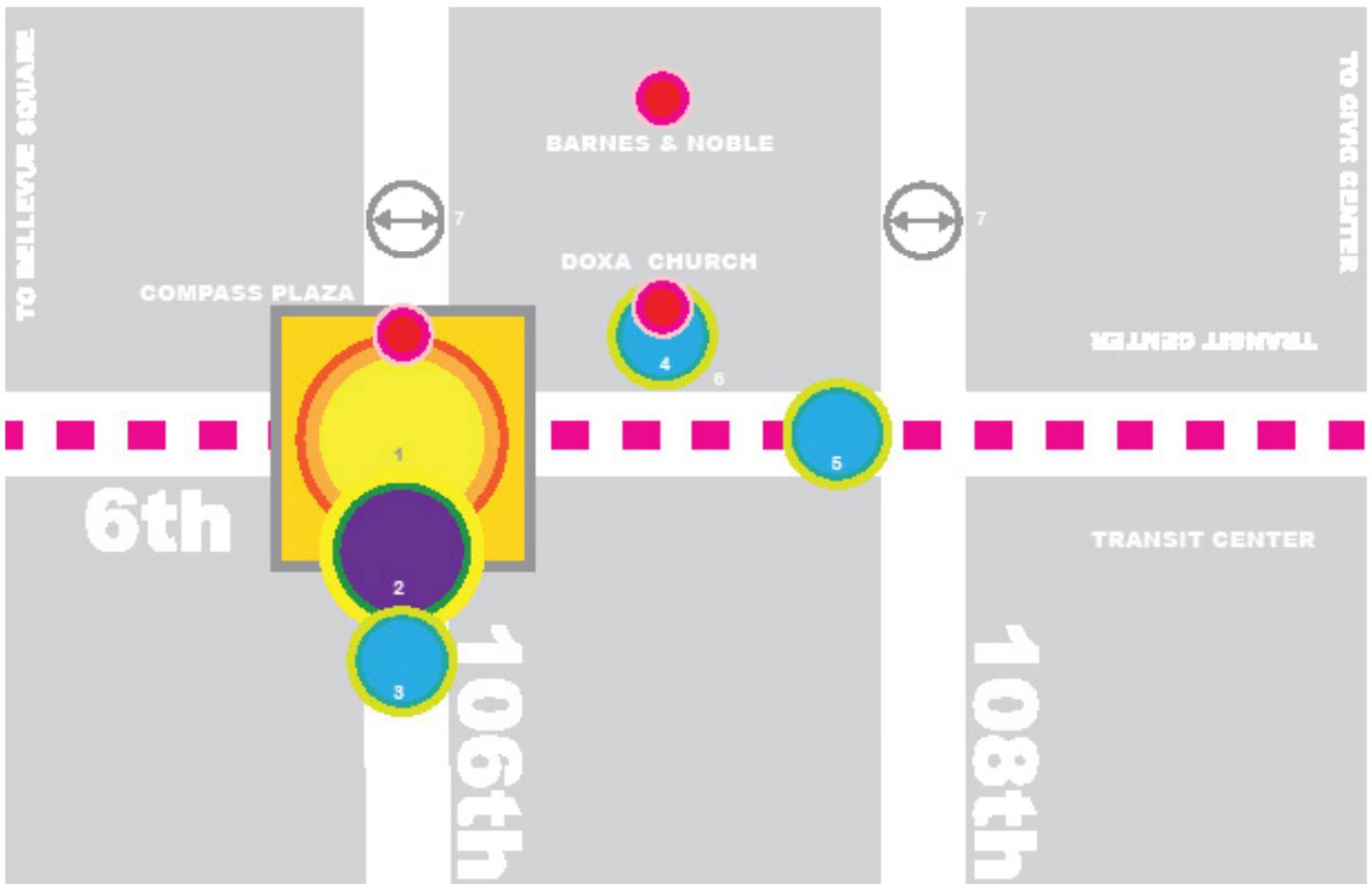
Vision

Art and cultural programs at Compass Plaza and the Garden Hill Climb are designed to bring the community together and linger awhile. As the heart of Bellevue's most urban neighborhood, a variety of day and nighttime activities turn Compass Plaza from a cultural hub into a cultural and entertainment destination that compliments the "entertainment street" designation of 106th Avenue. New cultural plinths for ongoing temporary small-scale projects and performances make it easy to invite community interaction and build connections.

The Garden Hill Climb, currently the most fully realized section of the pedestrian corridor, is an urban laboratory for emerging artists to explore how to enhance the existing infrastructure and built environment with bold visual artworks and installations. Large-scale murals and display cases turn the pedestrian corridor into an open air gallery at all times of the day.

Objectives

- Construct and maintain 3 new cultural plinths for temporary, event-based art and cultural presentations.
- Create a year-round, 18 hour a day cultural destination by supplementing current daytime activities with nighttime artworks and activities.
- Expand partnerships with private property owners to enhance and activate the pedestrian corridor with visual art, color, and activities.



Opportunities

Major Art Opportunity ●

1. *The Lights at Compass Plaza*

As Compass Plaza redevelops, a new signature sculpture will anchor this public space as a year round, 18 hour a day cultural destination. An artwork that incorporates light and innovative materiality will add to its urban character and could be integrated into the surrounding buildings on the plaza edge or within the public space. If Compass Plaza expands, it will be important to consider an artwork that matches the new scale of the public space.

Integrated Artwork ●

2. *Art Crosswalk at 106th Avenue*

An artist-designed paving or design for the new raised intersection at 106th Avenue adjacent to Compass Plaza will create a safe, slow-speed crossing and public space while enhancing the pedestrian environment. A colorful artwork incorporated into this new raised intersection will add to the “outdoor gallery” feel established in the Garden Hill Climb. This also provides a visual, colorful impact when looking down onto the city streets from the office towers above.

Cultural Plinths ●

3. *Eastside Kitchen*

Turn Compass Plaza into a center for food culture by establishing a year-round farmers and food market. Partnerships with existing kitchens such as the

Homegrown Sustainable Sandwiches and the former Rock Bottom Brewery could host guest chefs and cooking demonstrations. A permanent place for food trucks with electrical outlet access and artists-designed seating could extend food options well into the evening hours cultivate a vibrant café culture.

4. *Garden Hill Murals*

A number of large walls that currently face the Pedestrian Corridor and could host large-scale murals including a semi-permanent installation on the south-facing wall of DOXA Church and a rotating art wall on the north-facing wall of All American Eyeglass Repair building for young and emerging artists. These murals could include a range of mediums from paintings to night-time digital projections.



The parking lot and large blank beige wall of DOXA Church adjacent to Compass Plaza and the Pedestrian Corridor. There is a small planting strip and low fence separating the current pedestrian space from the church parking lot.

Art Crosswalk at 106th Avenue

The expected life span of these artworks should be 3-5 years and use appropriately durable materials such as MMA (Methyl Methacrylate) that lasts approximately 7-10 years. Paint is not recommended. This gives an opportunity for a number of artists and artworks over time and supports the programmable, flexible, and curate-able vision of the Grand Connection.



Megan Elliott, UICS Intersection, Philadelphia, PA, 2010



Robin Haines Merril, Painted Intersections Project, Fort Lauderdale, FL

5. Art Row

As one of the few sites where the Grand Connection is completely separated from car traffic, the Garden Hill Climb provides a unique opportunity for an intimate public art experience. Empty storefronts at the Bellevue Connection can be activated with artists' studios, performance, and event spaces. Installations and presentation of visual artworks can be displayed in windows, on top of the existing awnings, and in the planting strip. Outdoor display cases could provide emerging artists with a venue to exhibit artwork in rotating exhibitions.

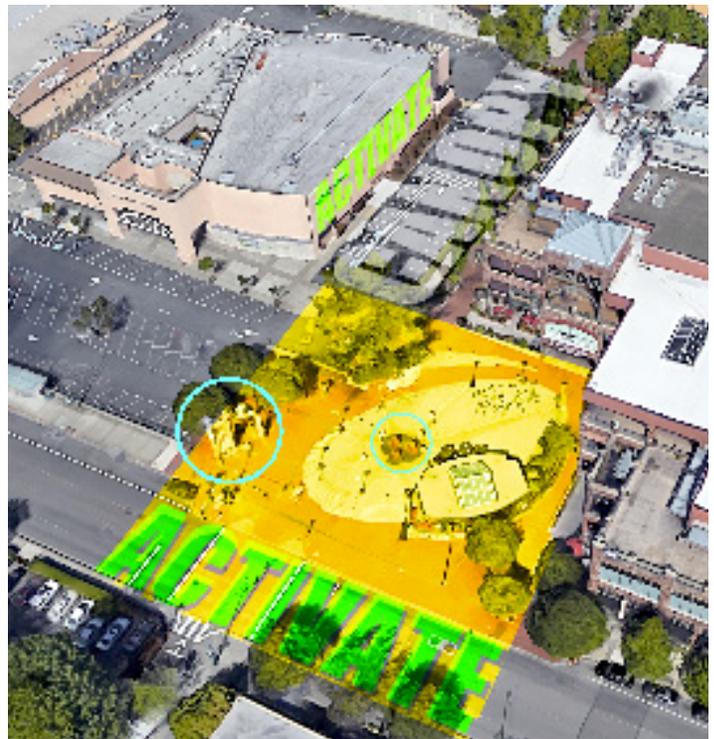
Minor Points of Interest

6. Art Screen

Install temporary art installations and performance spaces that visually delineate the parking lot at DOXA Church from the pedestrian space.

Wayfinding

7. Provide unique and cohesive wayfinding that identifies this location on the Grand Connection route, the immediate cultural amenities, and identifies the adjoining hubs.



Action Plan for Implementation

First move: 2018

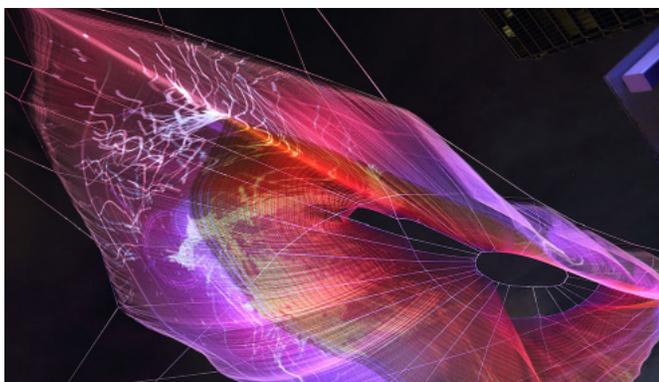
- Integrate an artist into design team to develop the Art Crosswalk at 106th Avenue. Colorful artistic treatments will enhance Bellevue's identity as a fun, dynamic pedestrian friendly destination.

Short term: 2018 – 2020

- Establish the Eastside Kitchen with a year-round farmers and food market. Create the infrastructure to expand food truck programming in conjunction with the raised intersection project.
- Develop partnerships with property owners to install and program the Garden Hill Murals as part of the Bellwether Program.
- Develop partnerships with property owners to install and program Art Row as part of the Bellwether Program and implement the Emerging Artist Program
- Program temporary projects and performances at Compass Plaza for early evening audiences that encourage workers and area residents to stay downtown longer.

Long term: 2021 – Ongoing

- Develop artist-designed wayfinding.
- Commission the Lights at Compass Plaza as the property redevelops.
- Move or de-accession Bellgate and City Within A City to make room for the installation of the Lights at Compass Plaza.
- Identify opportunities for artist designed canopies in future developments at compass plaza.



Case Study:

Art and technology in the middle of the city

Artists Janet Echelman and Aaron Koblin collaborated to create *Unnumbered Sparks*, a monumental interactive sculpture in the sky. The artwork was co-presented by the Burrard Arts Foundation and the City of Vancouver for the 30th Anniversary of the TED Conference. Choreographed by visitors in real time through their mobile devices, at night the sculpture became a crowd-controlled visual artwork on a giant, floating canvas.

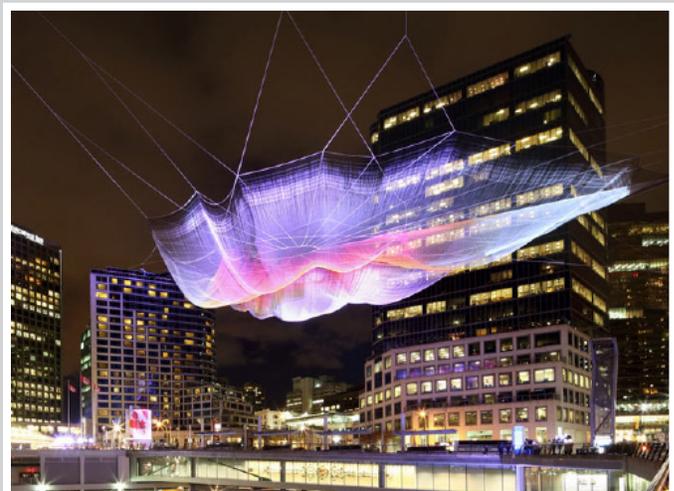
The sculpture spanned 745 feet between the 24-story Fairmont Waterfront and the Vancouver Convention Center in downtown Vancouver, Canada. At night, it came alive with illumination. Visitors with smartphones and tablets were able to paint vibrant beams of light across the sculpture at a remarkable scale: small movements on their phones became hundred foot long trails evolving and combining with fellow participants.

Janet Echelman is an artist who creates experimental sculpture at the scale of buildings that transforms with wind and light. Her innovative netting materials were first developed as a sculpture form in India where she spend time as a Fulbright Fellow. She creates her sculpture nets at a factory in Washington State. Aaron Koblin is the Creative Director of the Data Arts Team in Google's Creative Lab.

Compass Plaza is an example of effective public/private partnerships to create a major public open space for the community's enjoyment. The partnership between private development and the City should serve as a model for ongoing efforts to expand the civic experience and create a destination cultural gathering place in the middle of the city.

Resources:

<http://www.unnumberedsparks.com/>



Janet Echelman, *Skies Painted with Unnumbered Sparks*, Vancouver, Canada, 2014

GRAND CONNECTION

arts & culture

STREET AS PLAZA ART OPPORTUNITIES



David Mesguich, *Lucie*, Poznan, Poland, 2016

Vision

The block on NE 6th Street between Bellevue Way and 106th Ave NE is the most active street in Bellevue. It is the center of Downtown Bellevue's cultural life and people come to see and be seen. It is flanked at either end by regional cultural and retail destinations that attract people 18 hours a day with high quality, signature art and cultural events. The Grand Connection is activated by a constant stream of people drawn westward by a new monumental sculpture at the entrance to Bellevue Square Mall while the energy from Compass Plaza and the Transit Center just beyond pulls people to the east.

Objectives

- Create a dynamic, engaging center of the city where people want to be.
- Activate existing infrastructure and plaza with diverse cultural programming.



Opportunities

Major Art Opportunity ●

1. Bellevue Way Beacon

Bellevue's signature art institution – the Bellevue Arts Museum – and event – Snowflake Lane – are located at the corner of Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street. A new signature sculpture at the entrance to Bellevue Square Mall will reinforce the cultural importance of this location. The scale of the artwork should be considerable so it can serve a cross-town beacon, easily viewed from the Bellevue Transit Station and the Eastside Rail Corridor.

2. The NE 6th Street Canopy

As a vital link between the Bellevue Connection and Compass Plaza to the east and Bellevue Arts Museum and Bellevue Square Mall to the West, an artist-designed canopy will turn the current “pass-through” into a signature promenade. This opportunity will need a close partnership with private development as the properties redevelop in the future.

Integrated Artwork ●

2. Art Crosswalk at Bellevue Way & NE 6th Street

An artist-designed paving or design for the new raised intersection at NE 6th and Bellevue Way will create a safe, slow-speed crossing and public space while enhancing the pedestrian environment. An artwork that responds to the signature events that occur at this location such as Snowflake Lane will generate anticipation long before these special events and extend the impact and memories long after they're gone.



Manhole Covers, Japan

3. Street Furniture

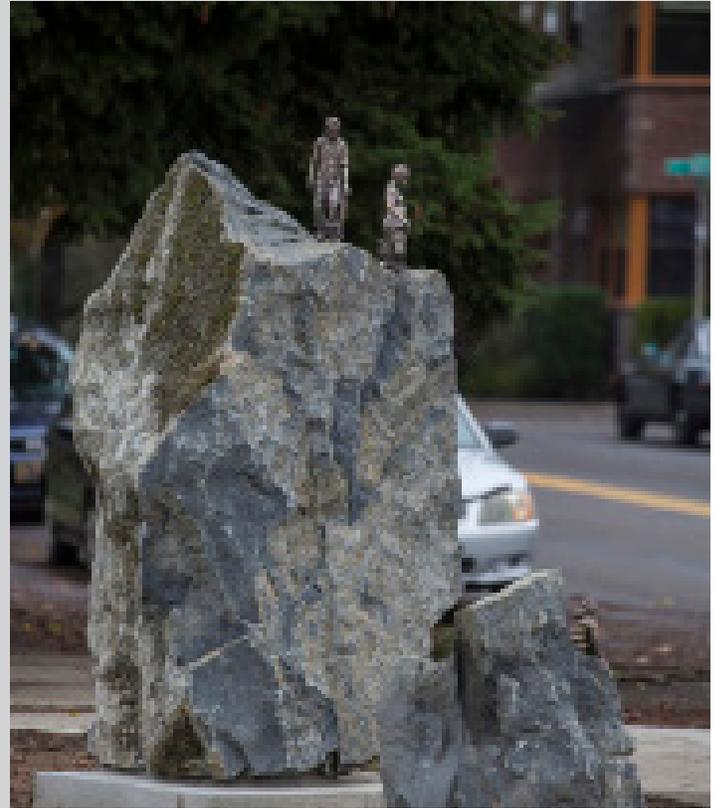
Turn NE 6th Street into a regional center for design with artist-designed street furniture. In conjunction with the NE 6th Street Canopy, new and unique lighting and sculptural seating will turn NE 6th Street into a showroom for design. New partnerships between the City of Bellevue, private land owners and the design community could support ongoing digital art projections on building facades.

Cultural Plinths ●

4. 6th Street Market

NE 6th Street itself becomes the cultural plinth with “plug and play” infrastructure to support a diverse range of events and community groups including the Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSFair and the Bellevue Downtown Association Live at Lunch concert series. As surrounding property redevelops, dedicating storefront and lobby spaces to cultural uses such as art galleries, performance space, murals, and public art will make this the cultural heart of Downtown Bellevue.

STREET SUBTLETIES



Crystal Schenk & Shelby Davis, *This All Happened More Or Less*, 2014

Minor Points of Interest

5. Street Subtleties

While the Street as Plaza will be marked by big art moves that advance the exceptional identity of this area as the center of Downtown Bellevue's cultural life, a series of small scale, discoverable sculptures and artist treatments in the paving and sidewalk provide the fine grain artist touch that make the space feel "lived in" and diverse.

Wayfinding

6. Provide unique and cohesive wayfinding that identifies this location on the Grand Connection route, the immediate cultural amenities, and identifies the adjoining hubs.



Agueda, Portugal



Liam Gillick, Clayton, MO

Action Plan for Implementation

First move: 2018

- Pilot the 6th Street Market concept as a cultural plinth by hosting the Bellevue Arts Museum ARTS Fair on Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street.

Short term: 2019 – 2020

- Commission artist-designed paving treatments and design for new raised intersection at Bellevue Way and 6th. Colorful artistic treatments will enhance Bellevue's identity as a fun, dynamic pedestrian friendly destination.
- De-accession broken glass artworks (blue tiles) along NE 6th and commission new Street Subtleties to serve as minor points of interest along this section of the route.
- Pursue mural opportunities in collaboration with Bellevue Arts Museum as a part of the Mural Program
- Develop artist-designed wayfinding.
- Claim the cultural corridor and turn NE 6th Street into the 6th Street Market. Build upon the successful Snowflake Lane event held annually in December by relocating the Bellevue Arts Museum ARTS Fair held annually in July to Bellevue Way.

Mid term: 2021 – Ongoing

- Partner with the Bellevue Collection to commission the Bellevue Way Beacon in front of Bellevue Square Mall. Relocate existing Steve Jensen sculpture Bellevue Portholes to planting strip across from the Bellevue Arts Museum or general vicinity.
- Partner with private development to commission the NE 6th Street Canopy as property redevelops.
- Develop and commission new Street Furniture for the 6th Street Market.

Case Study

Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley declared the day of the sculpture's dedication, May 15, 2006, to be "Cloud Gate Day". Kapoor attended the celebration, while local jazz trumpeter and band leader Orbert Davis and the Chicago Jazz Philharmonic played "Fanfare for Cloud Gate", which Davis composed. The public took an instant liking to the sculpture, affectionately referring to it as "The Bean". Cloud Gate has become a popular piece of public art and is now a fixture on many souvenirs such as postcards, sweatshirts, and posters. The sculpture has attracted a large number of locals, tourists, and art aficionados from around the world. The sculpture is now the piece by which Kapoor is most identified in the United States.

Time describes the piece as an essential photo opportunity, and more of a destination than a work of art. The New York Times writes that it is both a "tourist magnet" and an "extraordinary art object", while USA Today refers to the sculpture as a monumental abstract work. Chicago art critic Edward Lifson considers Cloud Gate to be among the greatest pieces of public art in the world. The American Welding Society recognized Cloud Gate, MTH Industries and PSI with the group's Extraordinary Welding Award. Time named Millennium Park one of the ten best architectural achievements of 2004, citing Cloud Gate as one of the park's major attractions.

"What I wanted to do in Millennium Park is make something that would engage the Chicago skyline ... so that one will see the clouds kind of floating in, with those very tall buildings reflected in the work. And then, since it is in the form of a gate, the participant, the viewer, will be able to enter into this very deep chamber that does, in a way, the same thing to one's reflection as the exterior of the piece is doing to the reflection of the city around."

—Anish Kapoor

Resources:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cloud_Gate



Anish Kapoor, Cloud Gate, Chicago, IL

GRAND CONNECTION

arts & culture

DOWNTOWN PARK ART OPPORTUNITIES



Albert Paley, Animals Always, St. Louis Zoo, St. Louis, MO, 2006

Vision

Art and culture have a designated place in Bellevue's largest urban park. A public art gateway welcomes the world to Bellevue Downtown Park, imprinting the importance of art, culture and design on the thousands of annual visitors that walk through its gates. Diverse neighbors connect with each other at cultural events and art programs at the park's NE entrance throughout the year. Each year, visitors anticipate the temporary artist-designed summer pavilion that provide interactive opportunities to be inspired and build a creative community.

Objectives

- Create a clear and well-marked entrance to Downtown Park at the corner of NE 4th & Bellevue Way NE with a public artwork in the form of a tower or gateway, as an alternative way of marking the entrance to Downtown Park.
- Activate civic space with temporary art exhibitions, performances, music, and other events in the entrance plaza.



Opportunities

Major Art Opportunity

1. Downtown Park Gateway

Design, fabricate, and install a permanent sculptural tower or gateway to Downtown Park to create a significant entrance to the park at the intersection of NE 4th and Bellevue Way. The gateway should serve as a welcoming beacon to the park as well as a recognizable landmark. The artwork should be highly visible from the street and respond to the design Downtown Park and its surrounding area.

Integrated Artwork

2. Art Crosswalk at NE 4th Street & Bellevue Way

An artist-designed paving or design for new raised intersection at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way will create a safe, slow-speed crossing and public space while enhancing the pedestrian environment. An artwork that responds to and designed with the new NE 4th Street entrance and proposed gateway in mind will extend the welcoming effect of the park.

Cultural Plinths

3. Gateway Plaza

A public gathering space near to the gateway can provide that neighborhood-park feel by supporting community events and other year-round programming including

Bellwether activities. This can be activated with little or no impact on other park activities. Regularly scheduled events can include movies in the park, a night market, light projections, and illuminated artworks in the winter, music, dance, and theatrical performances. Artist-designed features such as sculptural seating and lighting will reinforce the artist feel of the plaza.

4. The Setts

The setts that mark the old school administration building present a unique opportunity to celebrate design and the history of the site as former school. The raised concrete foundation within the circle promenade could serve as a cultural plinth for temporary installations that focus on the intersection of art and architecture such as a temporary summer pavilion where community events and programs are held in conjunction with the Bellwether exhibition.



2013 Serpentine Gallery Pavilion

Gateway Plaza



Minor Points of Interest

5. Small scale, discoverable sculptures, including paving and sidewalk treatments.

Wayfinding

6. Provide unique and cohesive wayfinding that identifies this location on the Grand Connection route, the immediate cultural amenities, and identifies the adjoining hubs. With the upcoming Sound Transit Light Rail addition this will be a unique opportunity to get people to explore the Grand Connection.



Lead Pencil Studio, Non-Sign II, Vancouver, B.C., 2010



Bicycle Arch, Memphis, TN, 2014



Roxy Paine, Conjoined, Madison Square Park, New York

Action Plan for Implementation

First Move: 2018

- Integrate artists into design team of NE 4th Street entry plaza project for the Downtown Park Gateway and raised-intersection at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way. Commission a temporary summer pavilion at the “Setts” for Bellwether 2018.

Short term: 2018 – 2020

- Fabricate and install gateway sculpture
- Utilize The Setts for a summer pavilion for the Bellwether Program and activate with community programs.
- Commission artist-designed paving treatments and design the Art Crosswalk at NE 4th Street & Bellevue Way.
- Develop framework for programming at the Gateway Plaza including community event guidelines and a schedule.
- Develop artist-designed wayfinding.
- Complete a site analysis for any additional “minor points of interest” if needed.

Long term: 2021 – Ongoing

- Evaluate and expand upon programming at Gateway Plaza.

Case Study: Serpentine Gallery Pavilion

Since 2000, the Serpentine Gallery in London’s Kensington Gardens has called on some of the world’s top architects to design summer pavilions – temporary structures that are erected next to the Gallery itself for a three-month period. The Serpentine, which was built in 1934 as a tea pavilion, opened in 1970 as a showplace for exhibitions of modern and contemporary artists ranging from Matthew Barney to Dan Flavin, Ellsworth Kelley, Louise Bourgeois or Rachel Whiteread.

The pavilions in the Program that was conceived in 2000 by the Serpentine Director Julia Peyton-Jones, are the work of international architects or design teams who at the time of the Serpentine’s invitation have not completed a building in England. A maximum of six months from invitation to completion is allotted. The only architecture program of its type in the world, the Serpentine Gallery Pavilions attract up to 250,000 visitors each summer. The Serpentine Pavilion is regularly ranked in the top 5 most attended architecture and design exhibitions worldwide in The Art Newspaper’s annual survey of museums and galleries visitor figures. The architect Richard Rogers has stated, “The pavilions, erected for relatively little money, are unbelievably good. I couldn’t single one out that I have liked more than the others – they have all been masterpieces.

Resources:

<http://www.serpentinegalleries.org>



TAAT, *Khor I, Temporary Theater*, Serpentine Gallery, London, U.K.



KIST Meditation Pavilion, Seoul, Korea, 2016



selgascano, Serpentine Pavilion, Serpentine Gallery, London, U.K. 2015

G R A N D CONNECTION arts & culture

MAIN STREET PLAZA & MEYDENBAUER BAY PARK ART OPPORTUNITIES



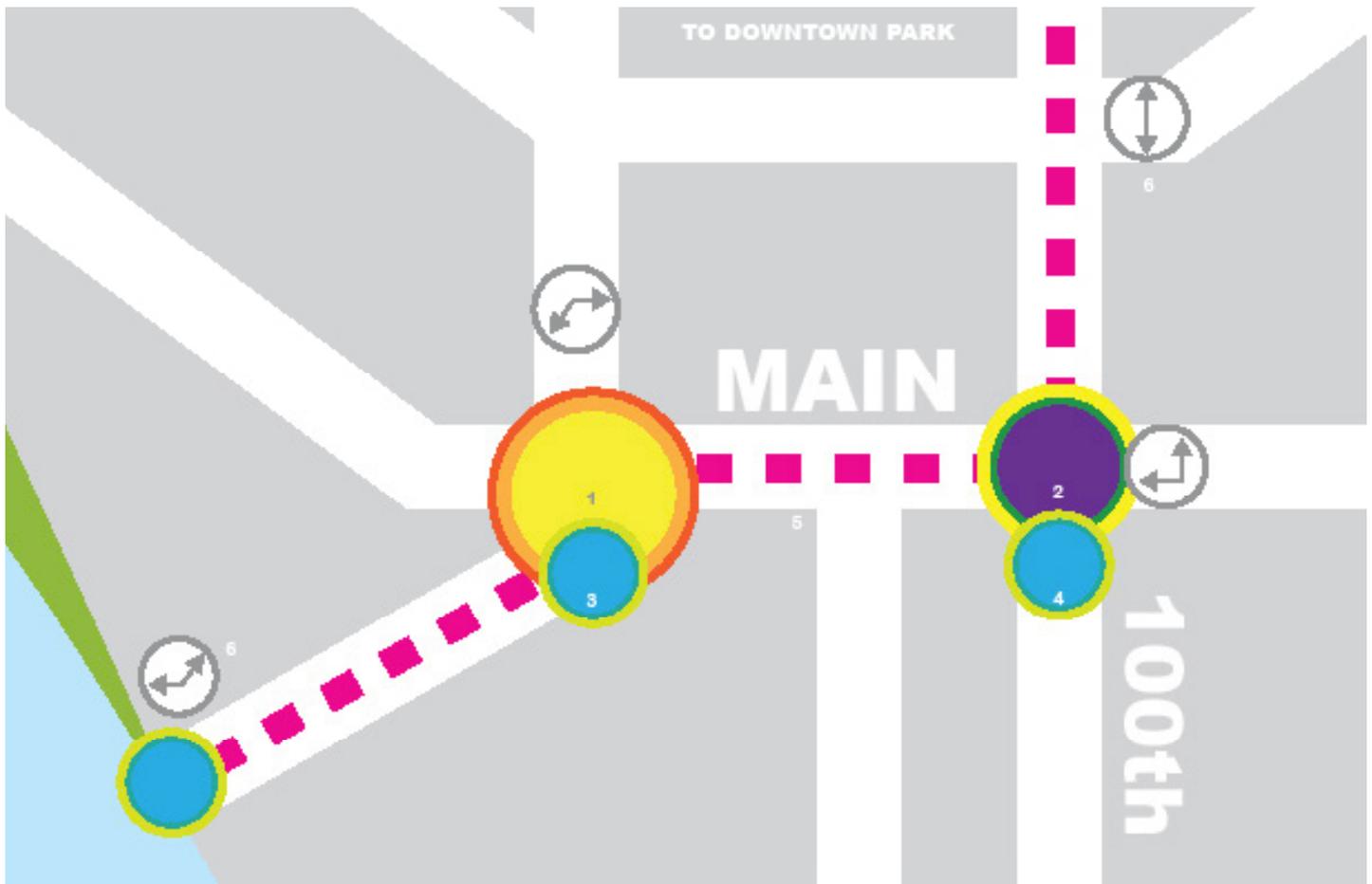
Anish Kapoor, Descension, Brooklyn, NY

Vision

The artist's hand is most apparent in Old Bellevue. With its small size and scale buildings and streets, artist designed signs, parklets for busking and temporary artworks in side streets and alleyways give the impression that "creatives were here." Bigger moves, such as an integrated sculpture or fountain at the west end of Main Street, suggest there is more to the neighborhood than meets the eye.

Objectives

- Support events and temporary works of art that will unify the street, lending it a focus.
- Increase awareness of close proximity to the Meydenbauer Bay and create a clear and well defined route between Meydenbauer Bay Park and Downtown Park.



Opportunities

Major Art Opportunity ●

1. Main Street Fountain

Phase II of Meydenbauer Bay Park will develop 100th Ave NE beginning at Main Street. A large sculpture or artist-designed fountain integrated into the streetscape or park at the intersection of Main Street and 100th Ave NE will provide the visual cue to pedestrians and visitors that there is water and more to see around the corner. An artwork should respond to the historic importance of the site where industry, manufacturing, and business retailing began in Bellevue. This site is also on the Lake-to-Lake Trail.

Integrated Artwork ●

2. Incorporate small artworks into existing infrastructure, such as light poles, street signs, paving, and seating. Pedestrian can also provide visual interest.

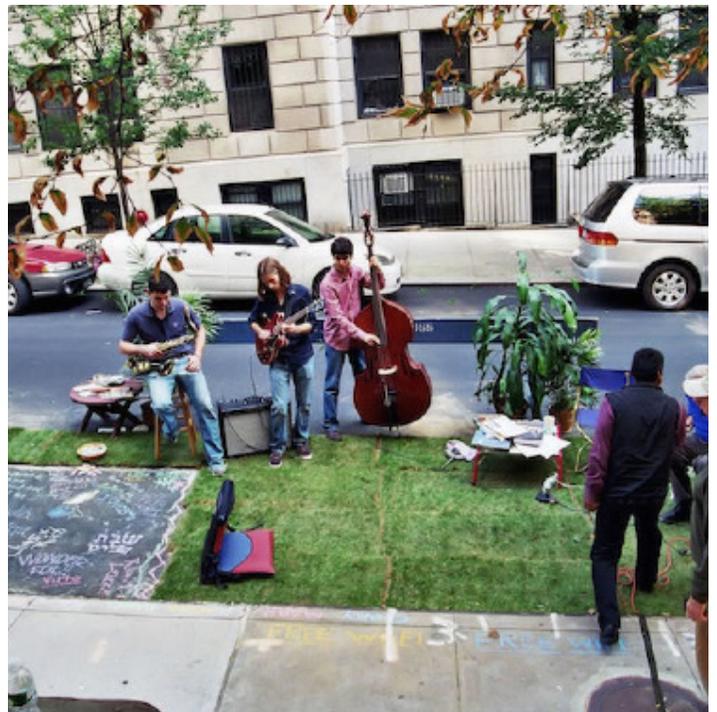
Cultural Plinths ●

3. Main Street Program

Create partnership between the City of Bellevue, area merchants and private landowners to develop programming and art opportunities that coincide with existing events and infrastructure and activate the area culturally. Music venues, literary and poetry reading in restaurants and cafes, emerging artists displayed in windows and on the walls will all add to the rich fabric of the neighborhood.

4. Main Street Parklets

Create temporary parklets that could support both restaurants and small street-side public performance and artistic interventions. These could include parking spaces, storefronts, and intersections.

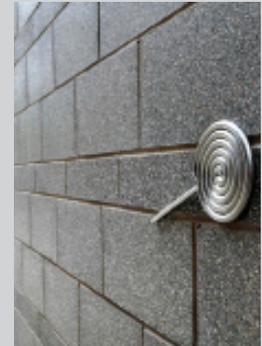
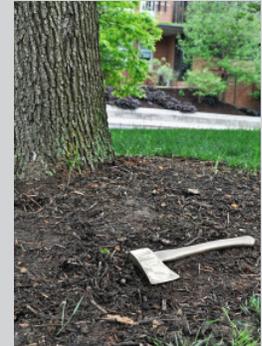


PARK(ing) Day

Main Street Subtleties



A Treasure Hunt
H is a Horse, High on a wall
E is the Earth, no Edge on this ball
A is for Axe, whacking Away
R is a Rubber duck, Ready to play
S is for Skull, just Sitting around
T is for T rex, not To be found
E is the Epee, a sword with no Edge
L is for Log cabin, Lost in a hedge
E is for Elephant, his Ears in the rain
M is a Mouse, Munching some grain
E is for Elf, mischievous to the End
N is a Newt, Nearby is her friend
T is the Taramala, Ticking your toe
A is for Astronaut, in sun all Aglow
R is a Rolling pin, smashing Raw dough
Y is the Yeti, Yes, he's on the go
S is for Starfish, Swimming in green
C is a Claw, Clenching and mean
H is for Helmet, with Horns rather tall
O is an Owl, watching Over you all
O is for Octopus, Out of the water
L is a Lollipop, Licked by a daughter
 by Pete Beeman, 2016



Pete Beeman, *Treasure Hunt*, Washington D.C., 2016

Treasure Hunt

A collection of 22 objects, one for each letter in HEARST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, scattered around the school campus, affixed to the building and grounds. A central poem suggests each object, so students can seek out all of the objects in a permanent treasure hunt. Commissioned by the DGS for Hearst Elementary School in Washington DC.

Minor Points of Interest

5. Main Street Subtleties

Develop a list of potential sites and small spaces for placemaking interventions and 2D artworks. Alleyway walls, utility boxes and traffic poles, and planting strips should all be considered for small but interesting artworks.

Wayfinding



6. Provide unique and cohesive wayfinding that identifies this location on the Grand Connection route, the immediate cultural amenities, and identifies the adjoining hubs.



Grass Patch Wayfinding



Parklet, London, U.K.

Action Plan for Implementation

First move: 2018

- Develop the Main Street Program with performances and evening art walks in collaboration with merchants and property owners to activate the neighborhood for the Bellwether Program.

Short term: 2019 – 2020

- Pursue opportunities for Main Street Subtleties that can be incorporated into existing and planned infrastructure.
- Create Main Street Parklets for performance and artistic interventions to coordinate with exiting events.
- Make artist-designed wayfinding improvements specific to the Grand Connection.

Mid term: 2021 – Ongoing

- Integrate and artist into the design team of the Meydenbauer Park Phase II project.
- Commission artist for the Main Street Foundation to bring awareness to the proximity of the new park.



Case Study: VIVA Vancouver

VIVA Vancouver is a program that transforms road spaces into vibrant pedestrian spaces.

In collaboration with community groups, local businesses, and regional partners, VIVA facilitates short- and long-term street closures throughout the year, creating public spaces for walking, lounging, and lunching.

Each summer Vancouver works to create vibrant pedestrian spaces to help people make the best of the good weather and sunshine. The VIVA Vancouver program supports parklets, hosts concerts and events and also closes down the entire 800-block Robson Street for a pedestrian-only plaza. Each year in this ped-zone is a new custom installation to engage passersby. This year, Urban Reef won the design competition, which included 78 entries from around the world. Local designers, Kaz Bemner, Jeremiah Deutscher, Michael Siy and Kenneth Navarra, are behind the prefab and modular Urban Reef installation.

These spaces enhance the city's sense of community, encourage walking and cycling, and benefit local businesses.

The modular bench seating is built from computer-designed and CNC-cut wooden segments that gradually morph to create a variety of engaging shapes. Sit on the bench segments, lounge on flatter areas or stand next to taller segments to eat street food from nearby vendors. The three benches curve around informal performance spaces and encourage socializing and engagement. The segments were efficiently prefabricated off site to minimize waste, and off-cuts of the locally-sourced wood were donated to a local art school. Once on site, the segments were put together quickly and reduced overall construction time. Once summer is over and Robson Street is returned to the cars, Urban Reef can be moved to another park for permanent installation.

Resources:

<http://www.inhabitat.com>

<http://www.vancouver.ca/streets-transportation>



Kaz Bemner, Jeremiah Deutscher, Michael Siy and Kenneth Navarra, *Urban Reef*, Vancouver, B.C., 2014

ACTION PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Developing a vibrant cultural corridor will need a combination of major and minor investments in people, programs, public art, and publicity. Big Moves are major opportunities that will set the architecture of the cultural corridor and are priorities in the short and long term. First Moves are designed as tactical interventions to quickly express the possibilities of the cultural corridor without significant resources. For detailed information about short term and mid-term actions, please see the opportunities for events and programs and public art sections.

BIG MOVES

Adopt This Plan

This plan represents a bold vision for how art and culture can be integrated into the future of the Grand Connection and integral to its success.

Grand Connection Arts Program

A new standalone arts program will create the framework for partners to collaborate to foster a lively, year-round arts scene. This comprehensive yet flexible program will coordinate partnerships, new programs and joint marketing for arts and events along the route.

City View Gateway & Plaza

Create a unique entrance to the Grand Connection with a large sculptural work and plaza marking the starting point of cultural corridor. This area also provides great opportunities for dramatic views of the downtown Bellevue skyline.

Incubator and Cultural Arts Facility

The purpose of this facility is to create a home for Bellevue's arts and innovation community and provide space for inexpensive offices, a flat-floor public assembly space for 100 to 250 people, independent retail, and a public outdoor area that energizes Wilburton. This space can house artists, multicultural performances, non-profits, pop-up retail, and entrepreneur meetups, among many civic uses.

Transit Center Roof

The roofline of the Bellevue Transit Center is a defining feature of the civic center. Artists could illuminate both the interior and exterior of the Transit Center with color and lighting elements that change and respond to the season and important community events in the civic plaza.

The Lights at Compass Plaza

As Compass Plaza redevelops, a new signature sculpture will anchor this public space as a year round, 18 hour a day cultural destination. An artwork that incorporates light and innovative materiality will add to its urban character and could be integrated into the surrounding buildings on the plaza edge or within the public space.

Bellevue Way Beacon

Bellevue's signature art institution – the Bellevue Arts Museum – and event – Snowflake Lane – are located at the corner of Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street. A new signature sculpture at the entrance to Bellevue Square Mall will reinforce the cultural importance of this location.

The NE 6th Street Canopy

As a vital link between the Bellevue Connection and Compass Plaza to the east and Bellevue Arts Museum and Bellevue Square Mall to the West, an artist-designed canopy will turn the current "pass-through" into a signature promenade.

Downtown Park Gateway

Design, fabricate, and install a permanent sculptural tower or gateway to Downtown Park to create a significant entrance to the park at the intersection of NE 4th and Bellevue Way. The gateway should serve as a welcoming beacon to the park as well as a recognizable landmark.

Main Street Fountain

Phase II of Meydenbauer Bay Park will develop 100th Ave NE beginning at Main Street. A large sculpture or artist-designed fountain integrated into the streetscape or park at the intersection of Main Street and 100th Ave NE will provide the visual cue to pedestrians and visitors that there is water and more to see around the corner.

FIRST MOVES

Bellwether 2018

Re-imagine Bellwether as an annual 10-day curated multi-disciplinary exhibition and festival that explores the theme of connection as laid out in the Grand Connection Vision Plan. Use the program to lay the foundations of a new Grand Connection Arts Program including new cultural plinths at Downtown Park, partnerships for a new mural program along the Garden Hill Climb, and joint programming with the Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSFair at NE 6th Street.

Eastside Rail Corridor Connection

Claim the cultural corridor with Big Top Grand Stand by SuttonBeresCuller installed at future plaza site for inspiration and testing. Temporarily activate this space with a large, colorful, highly visible work viewable from civic center area. Host small events targeted to area businesses, residents, and workers with the aim of community building and collaboration.

Civic Center

Collaborate with Meydenbauer Center to develop The Stoop and programming specific to the Grand Connection within the lobby. Expand Storefronts program at Meydenbauer Center to utilize all of the windows and doors from the parking garage to the corner of NE 6th and 112th NE.

Compass Plaza & Garden Hill Climb

Integrate an artist into design team to develop the Art Crosswalk at 106th Avenue. Colorful artistic treatments will enhance Bellevue's identity as a fun, dynamic pedestrian friendly destination.

Street As Plaza

Pilot the 6th Street Market concept as a cultural plinth by hosting the Bellevue Arts Museum ARTS Fair on Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street.

Downtown Park

Integrate artists into design team of NE 4th Street entry plaza project for the Downtown Park Gateway and raised-intersection at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way. Commission a temporary summer pavilion at the "Setts" for Bellwether 2018.

Main Street Plaza & Meydenbauer Bay Park

Develop the Main Street Program with performances and evening art walks in collaboration with merchants and property owners to activate the neighborhood for the Bellwether Program.

SHORT TERM: 2018 – 2020

Explore program partnerships with the King County Library Regional Library's new maker-space for an Emerging Artist Program and with merchants and property owners along the route for evening art walks. Make upgrades to NE 6th between Bellevue Way and 106th Ave NE to be activated as a festival street including replacing the sidewalk art installation, adding light pole installations and new wayfinding. Develop and support an artist community in Wilburton by opening an arts incubator at Lincoln Center.

MID-TERM: 2021 – Ongoing

Refresh Compass Plaza as it redevelops by replacing Bellgate and City Within A City artworks with a major new signature light-based artwork and temporary artist-designed canopies. Partner with Bellevue Square to commission a new major sculpture to act as beacon at the Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street entrance. Commission artistic treatments west of I-405 including along the columns and guideway of future light rail crossing, a cultural plinth and community hub at the redeveloped Lincoln Center Property for events and performances, and a signature gateway artwork at ERC connection to act as entryway to the Grand Connection.



SuttonBeresCuller, Department Of Bearing and Orientation, Street Musicians Festival, Novi Sad, Serbia, 2016