



## CITY OF TACOMA

URBAN DESIGN PROGRAM GRAPHICS PACKAGE

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
URBAN DESIGN AND PLANNING

URBDP 507B:  
GENERAL URBAN PLANNING LABORATORY

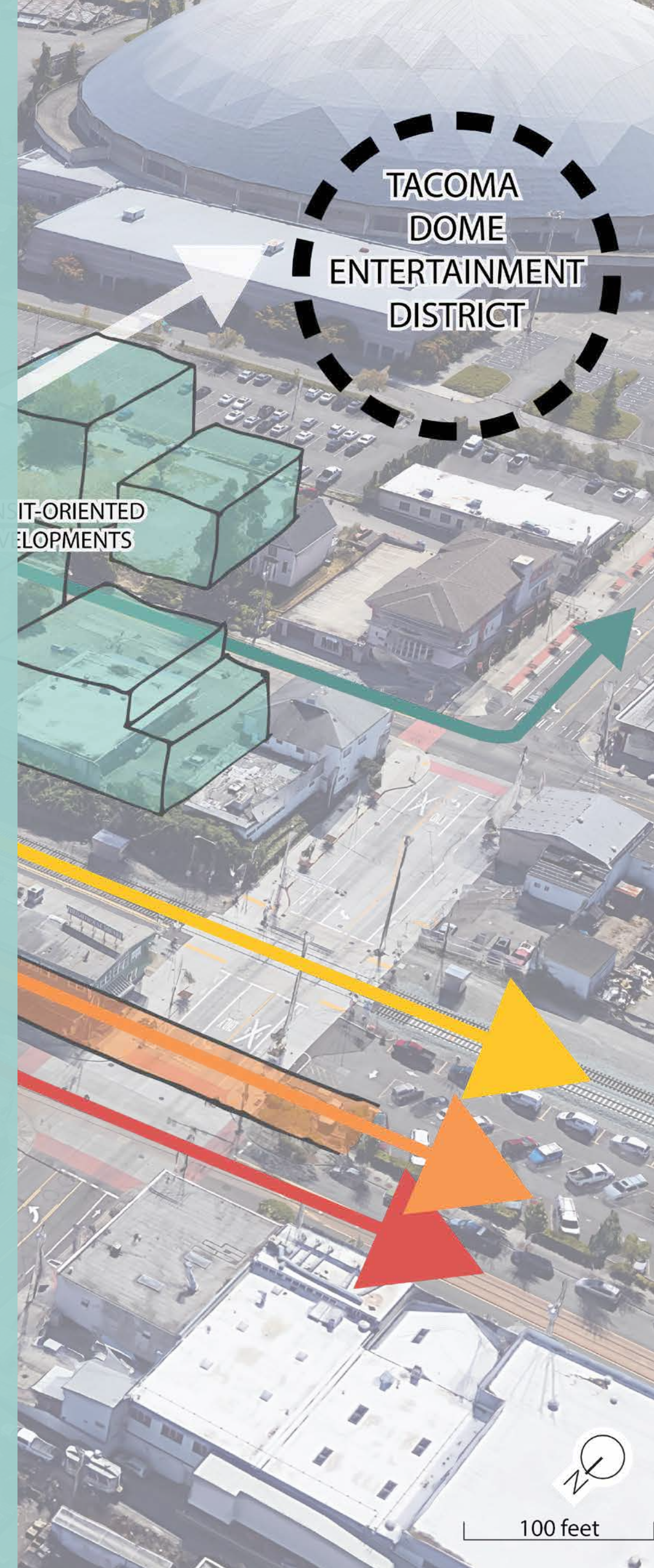
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LIVABLE CITY YEAR 2017-2018  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
CITY OF TACOMA

SPRING 2018







LIVABLE CITY YEAR 2017-2018  
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CITY OF TACOMA

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank the City of Tacoma for providing this unique opportunity for students of the UW Urban Design and Planning program to learn, practice, and refine our urban design thinking and representation. In particular, we would like to thank Lauren Flemister, Senior Planner for the City of Tacoma and the LCY city contact for our project, for her valuable support, guidance and feedback to students throughout the quarter. Leading us on a bus tour of three Tacoma neighborhoods, as well as making multiple trips to Seattle to review our projects and offer feedback, Lauren’s time and energy greatly contributed to the depth of our learning and the quality of our work. Mackenzie Waller, instructor of URBDP 573 Digital Design Program at UW, also offered helpful critique and direction, particularly regarding ways we could improve our graphic representation. Finally, we would like to thank those who listened, asked questions, and provided feedback at our final presentation in Tacoma. Each of your contributions strengthened our projects and fostered a positive, fruitful, and memorable learning experience — we are extremely grateful.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT LIVABLE CITY YEAR	01
ABOUT TACOMA	02
TACOMA 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN	03
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	05
BACKGROUND	07
20-MINUTE NEIGHBORHOOD	09
RESILIENCE	10
TRANSIT	13
GREENWATER INFRASTRUCTURE	15
LEGIBILITY AND WAYFINDING	19
MOBILITY AND RIGHT-OF-WAY	21
BICYCLE	22
PEDESTRIAN	23
TRANSIT	25
BUILT FORM	27
HISTORIC BUILT FORM	27
BLOCK TYPOLOGY AND ADAPTABILITY	29
FACADES	35
PUBLIC SPACE ACTIVATION	37
FLUX SPACE	39
ALLEYWAYS	41
INTANGIBLE HERITAGE PRESERVATION PROCESSES	43
CONCLUSION	45

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# ABOUT LIVABLE CITY YEAR

The University of Washington's Livable City Year (LCY) initiative enables local governments to engage UW faculty and students for one academic year to work on city-defined projects that promote local sustainability and livability goals. The program engages hundreds of students each year in high-priority projects, creating momentum on real-world challenges while enabling the students to serve and learn from communities. Partner cities benefit directly from bold and applied ideas that propel fresh thinking, improve livability for residents and invigorate city staff. Focus areas include environmental sustainability; economic viability; population health; and social equity, inclusion, and access. The program's 2017–2018 partner is the City of Tacoma; this follows a partnership with the City of Auburn in 2016–2017.

The LCY program is led by faculty directors Branden Born (Department of Urban Design and Planning), Jennifer Otten (School of Public Health) and Anne Taufen (Urban Studies Program, UW Tacoma), with support from Program Manager Teri Thomson Randall. The program was launched in 2016 in collaboration with UW Sustainability and Urban@UW, with foundational support from the Association of Washington Cities, the College of Built Environments, the Department of Urban Design and Planning, and Undergraduate Academic Affairs.

LCY is modeled after the University of Oregon's Sustainable City Year Program, and is a member of the Educational Partnerships for Innovation in Communities Network (EPIC-N), the collection of institutions that have successfully adopted this new model for community innovation and change.

For more information, contact the program at [uwlcyl@uw.edu](mailto:uwlcyl@uw.edu).



# ABOUT TACOMA

The third largest city in the state of Washington, Tacoma is a diverse, progressive, international gateway to the Pacific Rim. The port city of nearly 210,000 people has evolved considerably over the last two decades, propelled by significant development including the University of Washington Tacoma, the Tacoma Link light rail system, the restored urban waterfront of the Thea Foss Waterway, the expansions of both the MultiCare and CHI Franciscan health systems, and a significant influx of foreign direct investment in its downtown core.

Washington State's highest density of art and history museums are found in Tacoma, which is home to a flourishing creative community of writers, artists, musicians, photographers, filmmakers, chefs, entrepreneurs, and business owners who each add their unique flair to the city's vibrant commercial landscape. The iconic Tacoma Dome has endured as a high-demand venue for some of the largest names in the entertainment industry.

A magnet for families looking for affordable single-family homes in the Puget Sound area, Tacoma also draws those seeking a more urban downtown setting with competitively priced condos and apartments that feature panoramic mountain and water views. The city's natural beauty and proximity to the Puget Sound and Mount Rainier draws hikers, runners, bicyclists, and maritime enthusiasts to the area, while its lively social scene is infused with energy by thousands of students attending the University of Washington Tacoma and other academic institutions.


The City of Tacoma's strategic plan, Tacoma 2025, was adopted in January 2015 following unprecedented public participation and contribution. The plan articulates the City's core values of opportunity, equity, partnerships, and accountability, and expresses the City's deep commitment to apply these values in all of its decisions and programming. Each Livable City Year project ties into the principles and focus areas of this strategic plan. The City of Tacoma is proud of its 2017–2018 Livable City Year partnership with the University of Washington and of the opportunity this brings to its residents.








# TACOMA 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN


The *Urban Design Program Graphics Package* project supports the Livability goal of the Tacoma 2025 Strategic Plan and was sponsored by the City's Planning and Development Services Department.

- 

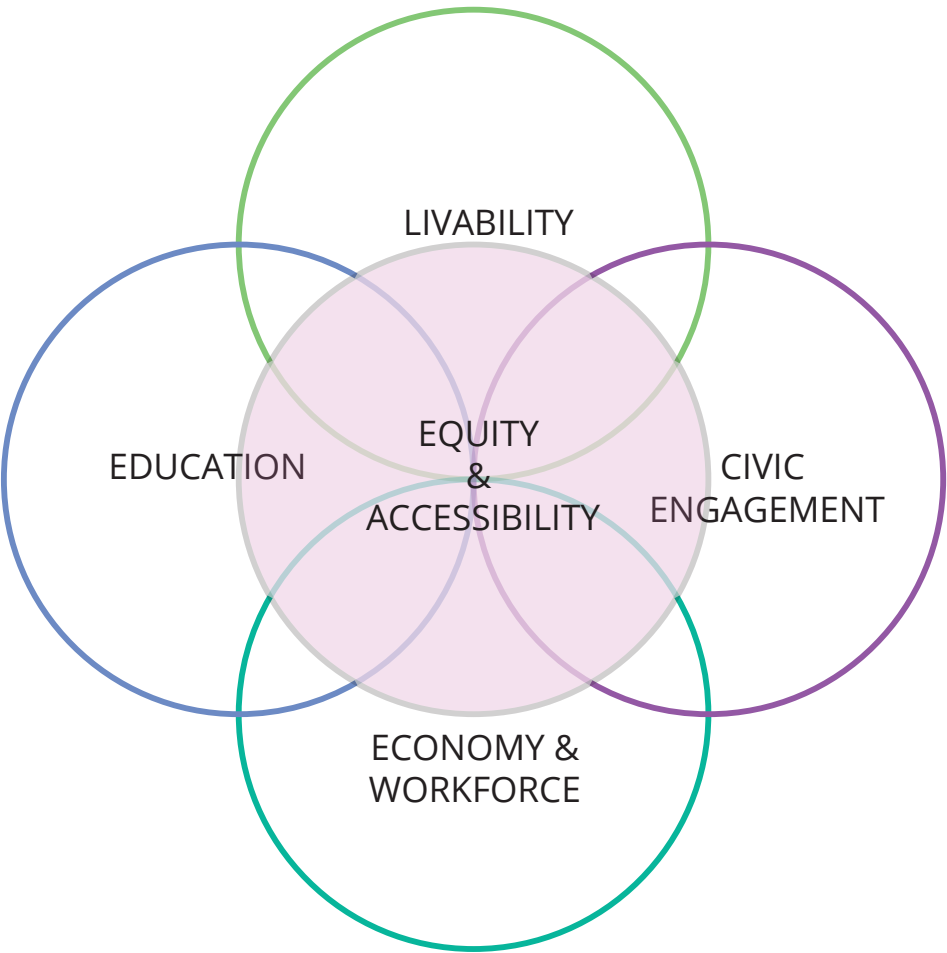
**Goal #1 Livability**  
The City of Tacoma will be a city of choice in the region known for connected neighborhoods, accessible and efficient transportation transit options, and vibrant arts and culture. Residents will be healthy and have access to services and community amenities while maintaining affordability.
- 

**Goal #2 Economy and Workforce**  
By 2025, Tacoma will be a growing economy where Tacoma residents can find livable wage jobs in key industry areas. Tacoma will be a place of choice for employers, professionals, and new graduates.
- 

**Goal #3 Education**  
Tacoma will lead the region in educational attainment amongst youth and adults. In addition to producing more graduates from high school and college, more college graduates will find employment in the region. Lifelong learning and access to education will be prioritized and valued.
- 

**Goal #4 Civic Engagement**  
Tacoma residents will be engaged participants in making Tacoma a well-run city. The leadership of the city, both elected and volunteer, will reflect the diversity of the city and residents and will fully participate in community decision-making.
- 

**Goal #5 Equity and Accessibility**  
Tacoma will ensure that all residents are treated equitably and have access to services, facilities, and financial stability. Disaggregated data will be used to make decisions, direct funding, and develop strategies to address disparate outcomes.



## RESOURCES

- Tacoma 2025 Strategic Plan:** [https://www.cityoftacoma.org/tacoma\\_2025](https://www.cityoftacoma.org/tacoma_2025)
- Department of Planning and Development Services:**  
[https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city\\_departments/planning\\_and\\_development\\_services](https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city_departments/planning_and_development_services)
- Livable City Year:** <https://www.washington.edu/livable-city-year/>
- University of Washington Urban Design and Planning:**  
<http://urbdp.be.washington.edu/>



This project was developed as part of Livable City Year, a cooperative endeavor between the City of Tacoma and the University of Washington. The City of Tacoma requested a graphics package that explains basic concepts of urban design – including zoning, land use, and other spatial planning concepts – to the public using maps, diagrams, sketches, photographs and infographics. The graphics package presented here shows different aspects of the public realm in the context of three Tacoma neighborhoods: Hilltop, Proctor, and South Tacoma. While some graphics represent broader pedestrian, bicycle and transit networks at a citywide scale, others address factors like resilience, green infrastructure, access and identity at the scale of a 20-minute walk radius around mixed-use neighborhood centers. Other graphics consider an even closer site scale, illustrating block typologies, concepts of right-of-way and alley design, façade treatment, and activation of under-utilized spaces.

Finally, some graphics provide a visual representation of a process, for example, how one might change a public space such that it retains the intangible heritage of a neighborhood, or affords temporary uses. Ultimately, these graphics intend to inspire creative contextual problem-solving, and non-prescriptively guide the future development of the public realm in Tacoma. We hope that the City of Tacoma may use them to support future urban design initiatives.



Mid-term review with city staff in Gould Hall, University of Washington, April 26, 2018. TERI THOMSON RANDALL



To enhance the roll-out of The City of Tacoma's Urban Design Program in 2018, the City partnered with a graduate urban design course at the University of Washington, as part of the Livable City Year program, in order to create a graphics package. The City of Tacoma requested graphics to explain basic concepts of urban design, including maps, diagrams, sketches, photographs and infographics. The UW group chose to focus on best design practices for a healthy, vital and resilient urban public realm, especially in the "20-minute neighborhood" walking radius of three of Tacoma's emerging "mixed-use corridors": Proctor, at N 26th St.; Hilltop, along MLK Jr. Way, between Kaiser Permanente and St. Joseph Medical Centers; and along South Tacoma Way near the Sounder commuter train station. From an urban development perspective, these neighborhoods embody the challenges of accommodating growth and investment while also protecting and amplifying community and neighborhood character. The UW group also considered ways to enhance environments for pedestrian, bicycle and transit. While the product delivered to the City was a graphics collection, this document summarizes and describes the graphic content for a wider audience.

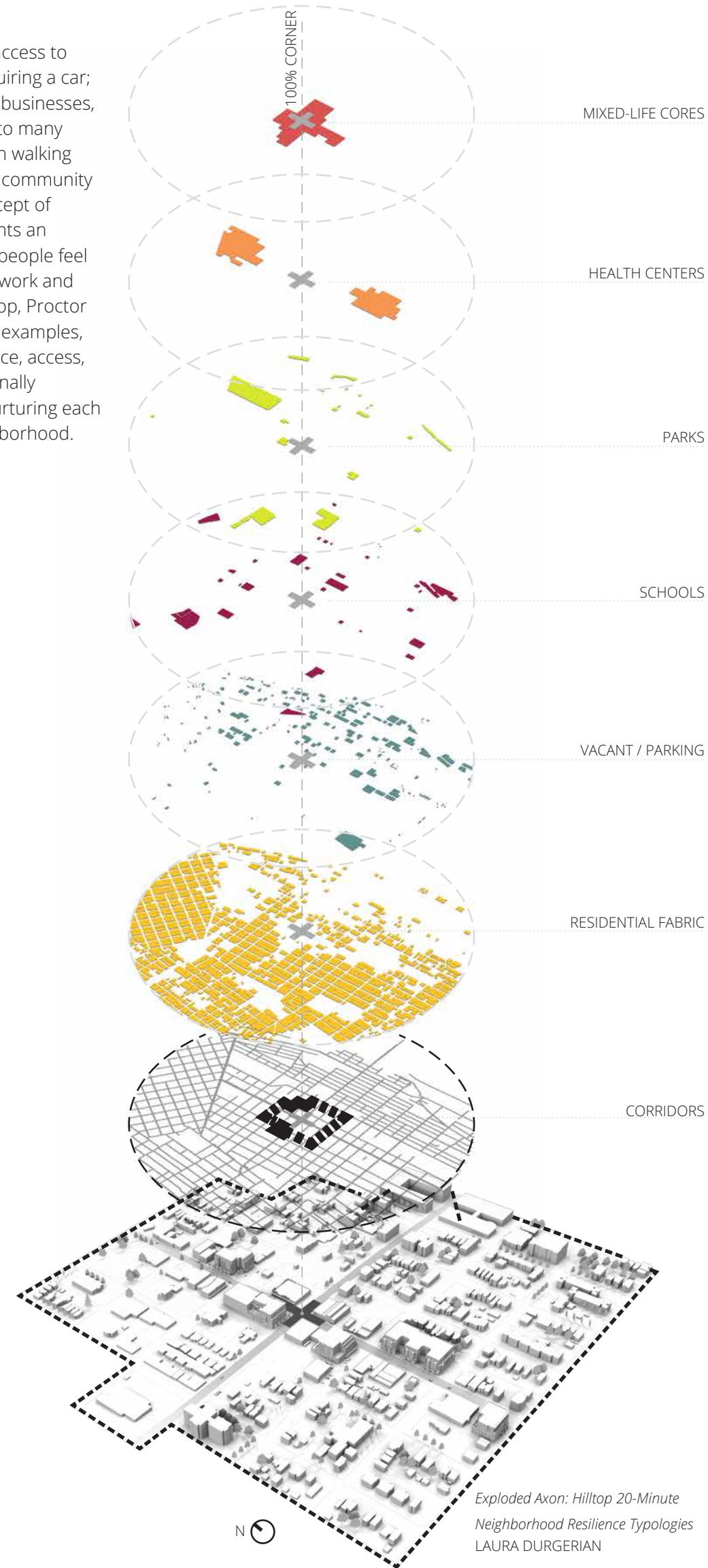


*City of Tacoma planner Stephen Atkinson reviews student work during the final presentation on June 7, 2018.. TERI THOMSON RANDALL*



## INTRODUCTION

A 20-minute neighborhood provides access to most of one's daily needs without requiring a car; schools, grocery stores, local/regional businesses, healthcare, libraries and connections to many different modes of transit are all within walking distance. Particularly in the context of community building and social resilience, the concept of the 20-minute neighborhood represents an opportunity to envision places where people feel welcome, supported, and able to live, work and play far into the future. Using the Hilltop, Proctor and South Tacoma neighborhoods as examples, we consider the ways in which resilience, access, identity and belonging can be intentionally cultivated within the existing fabric, nurturing each place's potential as a 20-minute neighborhood.



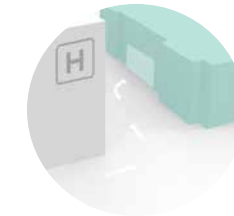
## RESILIENCE

Resilience is the capacity not only to recover after disruptive events, but the ability to adapt and grow stronger in the face of community challenges. Resilience has physical, social, and emotional dimensions, often requiring creative and collaborative thinking to understand and address big-picture vulnerabilities and opportunities. This project explores strategies for resilience and the potential to provide multiple benefits within the different types of space found in the 20-minute neighborhood.



### SAFE GROUND

Simple arrows and painted ground markings can identify safe spots for people to gather in the event of an emergency.



### HEALTH RESOURCE HUBS

Buildings bordering hospitals, such as churches, community centers, and schools, would make effective centers for emergency operations due to their available space and proximity to health services.



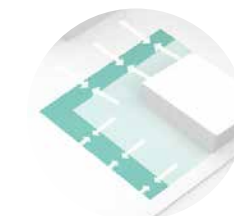
### PARK GATHERING PLACES

Open space that is free of large buildings and potentially dangerous infrastructure makes neighborhood parks prime locations for safe zones in the event of an emergency.



### SCHOOL FOOD PRODUCTION

With open space and an existing social fabric, school playgrounds and adjacent open spaces can serve as community gardens to increase food resilience.



### STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Parking lots provide land area well-suited to stormwater collection, storage, and treatment. See Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) section for more.



### SOLAR ORIENTATION

Orienting buildings to take advantage of solar exposure from the south and west can enable slow growth of a more resilient, decentralized system of solar power.



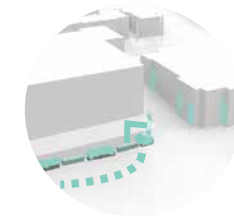
### INTEGRATED WATER SYSTEMS

Street corridors provide another opportunity to deal with stormwater at a community scale. See GSI section for strategies.



### SHARING BULLETIN

Neighborhood bulletins make space to air concerns, express gratitude, and facilitate the sharing resources and experiences in everyday situations as well as times of need.



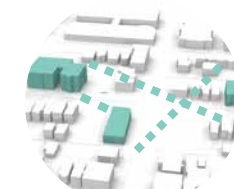
### DESIGN INTEGRATION

Extending common elements of public life into health centers can make them feel accessible to the whole community while still maintaining security.



### DIVERSE EMOTIONAL SPACE

Parks can be designed to meet many needs, providing space for active recreation as well as restorative space for individual contemplation and reflection.



### CHURCH COLLABORATION

Maximize the ability of faith-based institutions to support their communities through enhanced connection to public services and to one another.



### VENUES FOR EXCHANGE

Vacant or open land offers an opportunity for temporary installations and activities, including protests, markets, fairs, and exhibits.



### EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

Communication about preparation for emergency preparation can incentivize and educate residents and families to store water, fuel, and food, reducing the overall impact on the community.



### PUBLIC SOCIAL SEATING

Sidewalk and storefront seating should that accommodates individuals and groups will create spaces for chance encounters and shared experiences.



### IDENTITY REINFORCEMENT

Public and private spaces can serve as points of reference in a strong community. Rooftops offer a unique opportunity to look into and out from a neighborhood.



### CLEAR EMERGENCY ROUTES

Neighborhoods should have clear, simple wayfinding to hospitals within the health centers, at their periphery, and in the surrounding neighborhood.



### CREATIVE PROGRAMMING

Consider underutilized park spaces in tandem with unique community needs, passions, and identity, looking for ways to receive and accommodate feedback.



### THIRD PLACE CHECK-INS

Health consultations in a comfortable community space can enhance wellbeing for those who may not have the resources or feel comfortable enough to go to the doctor.



### URBAN AGRICULTURE

Vacant land can be used temporarily or long term for urban agriculture to grow food security, increasing community self-sufficiency.



### RESIDENTIAL INFILL

Incremental infill in residential neighborhoods opens more housing options to those in need, enhancing emotional resilience.



### STREET TREES

Street trees and other plantings improve air quality, reduce urban heat islands, and increase stormwater infiltration for flood resilience.

A Resilience Typology Toolkit  
LAURA DURGERIAN





South Tacoma



Unknown location  
DAT NGUYEN

South Tacoma



S 56th Street & S Washington Street  
looking north SREYA SREENIVASAN



South Tacoma



S 56th Street looking & S Pine Street.  
DAT NGUYEN

South Tacoma



S 56th Street & S Washington Street  
looking west CANON ZOU

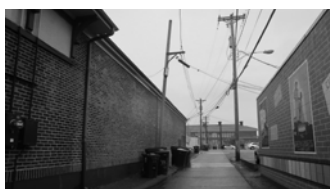


Hilltop

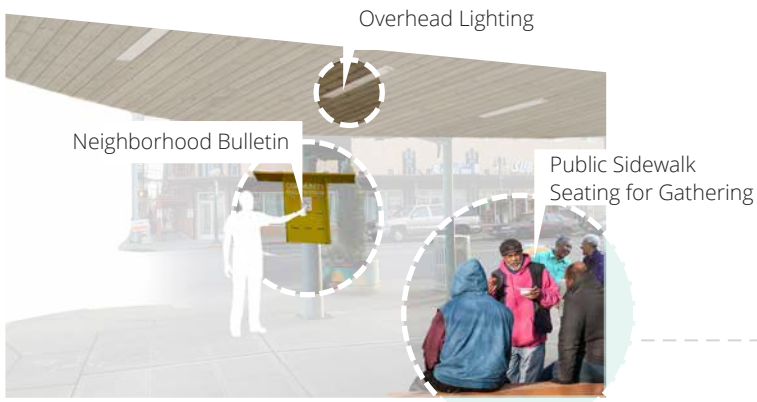


100% corner at S 11th Street and  
MLK Jr Way looking north  
DAT NGUYEN

Proctor



N Proctor Street between N 26th &  
27th Streets looking east  
XUWU PAN



Hilltop

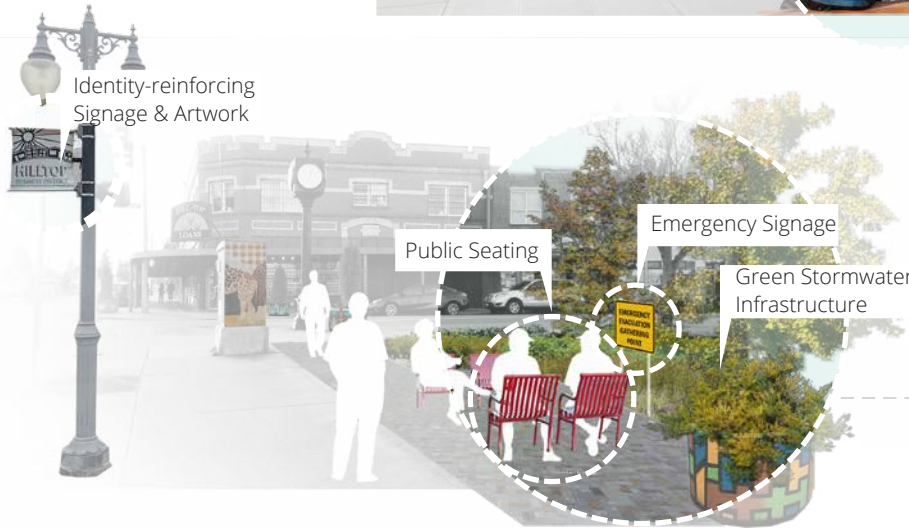
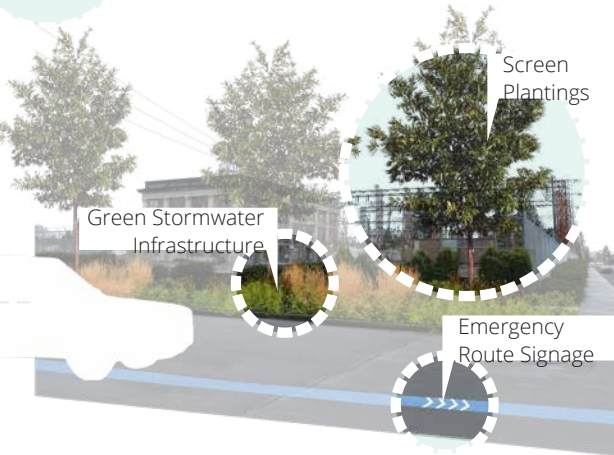


100% corner at S 11th Street and  
MLK Jr Way looking south  
DAT NGUYEN

Proctor



N 21st Street & N Adams Street  
looking south XUWU PAN

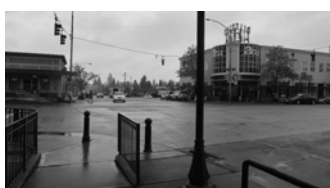


Hilltop



100% corner at S 11th Street and  
MLK Jr Way looking west  
DAT NGUYEN

Proctor



100% corner at N 26th Street and  
N Proctor Street from southeast  
XUWU PAN





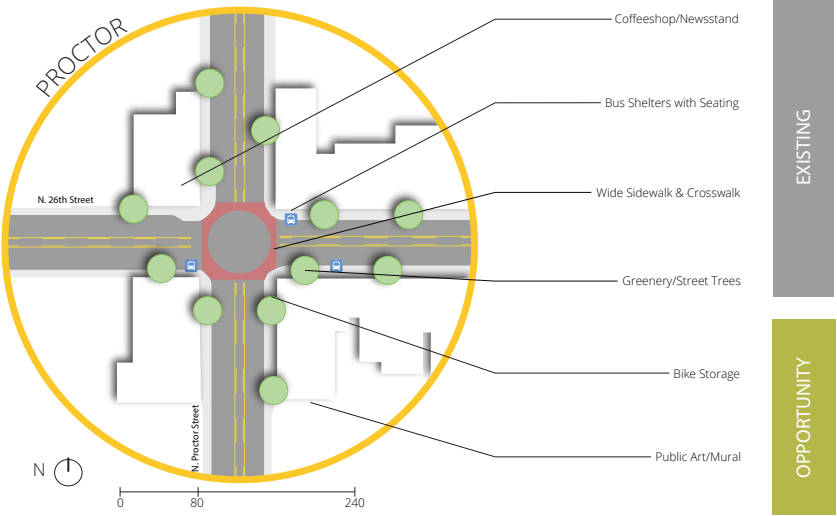
HOW TRANSIT PROMOTES A 20-MINUTE NEIGHBORHOOD



**Why 20 minutes?**  
A 20-minute neighborhood allows individuals to fulfill most daily needs within a 20-minute walkshed of a central point in the neighborhood. Building off of this concept, we explored the idea at multiple scales, specifically around a 1-minute walking radius of bus stops, a 5-minute walking radius of light rail stops, and a 10-minute walking radius of commuter rail stops. A complete system of transit stops that are well equipped and integrated into the community can enhance access and amenities in a 20-minute neighborhood. In this way, combining transit with other needs provides the City with another tool to implement their goals of more walkable, resilient communities. Diagrams show a 20-minute walking radius in the Proctor, Hilltop, and South Tacoma contexts, with 1, 5, and 10 minute walksheds of every current and future transit stop mapped for each neighborhood. The dashed line indicates a mixed-use zone, with the light green indicating transit walksheds within them. These transit walksheds within mixed-use zones show the City of Tacoma where transit investments will have the largest impact in fostering a 20 minute neighborhood.

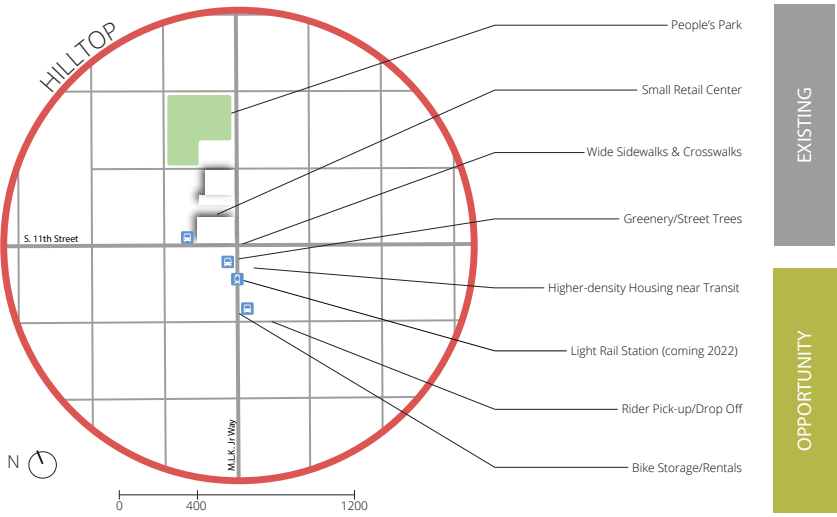
WHY 1 MINUTE?

A 1-minute walk is an ideal distance for grabbing a coffee or newspaper while waiting for a bus or making a transfer.



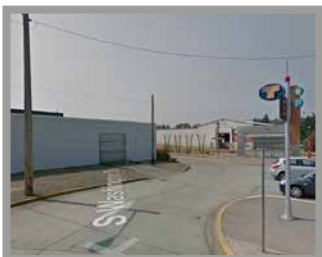
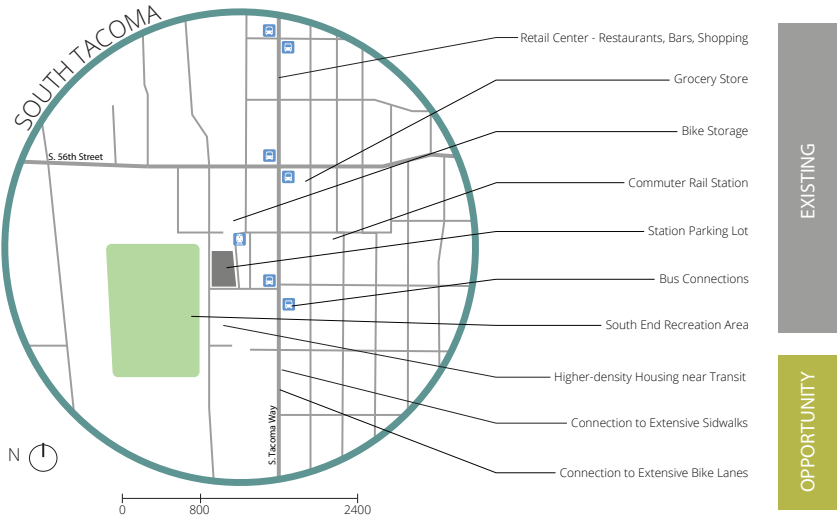
WHY 5 MINUTES?

A 5-minute walk is a preferred distance for the stopping at a corner store, renting a bike, or transferring between transit modes.



WHY 10 MINUTES?

A 10-minute walk is a perfect distance for exploring a park, stopping by a grocery store, or connecting to a commuter rail for a trip through town.



Top Left: Transit Walksheds Within the 20-Minute Neighborhood  
Center: Existing Assets & Opportunities within Three Transit Walksheds. ERIC R. CLUTE

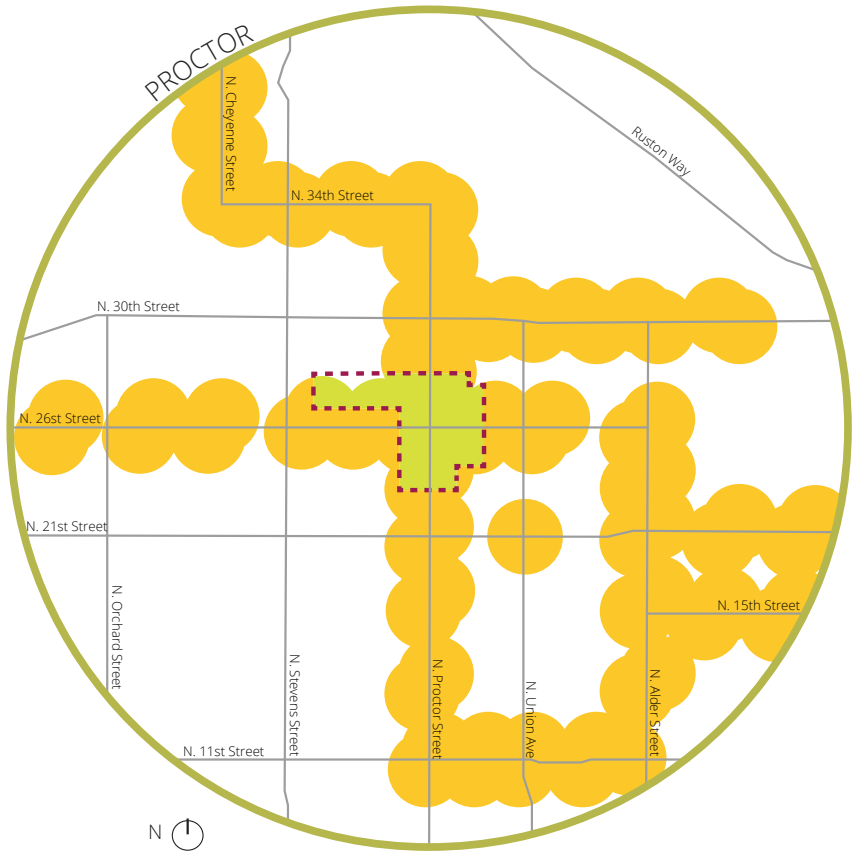
SPACIAL ANALYSIS

A 20 minute neighborhood was applied within the three neighborhoods of Proctor, Hilltop, and South Tacoma. We mapped the 1, 5, and 10 minute walksheds of every transit stop (current and future) within each neighborhood.

The dashed line indicates a mixed-use zone, with the light green indicating transit walksheds within them. These transit walksheds within mixed-use zones show the City of Tacoma where transit investments will have the largest impact in fostering a 20 minute neighborhood.

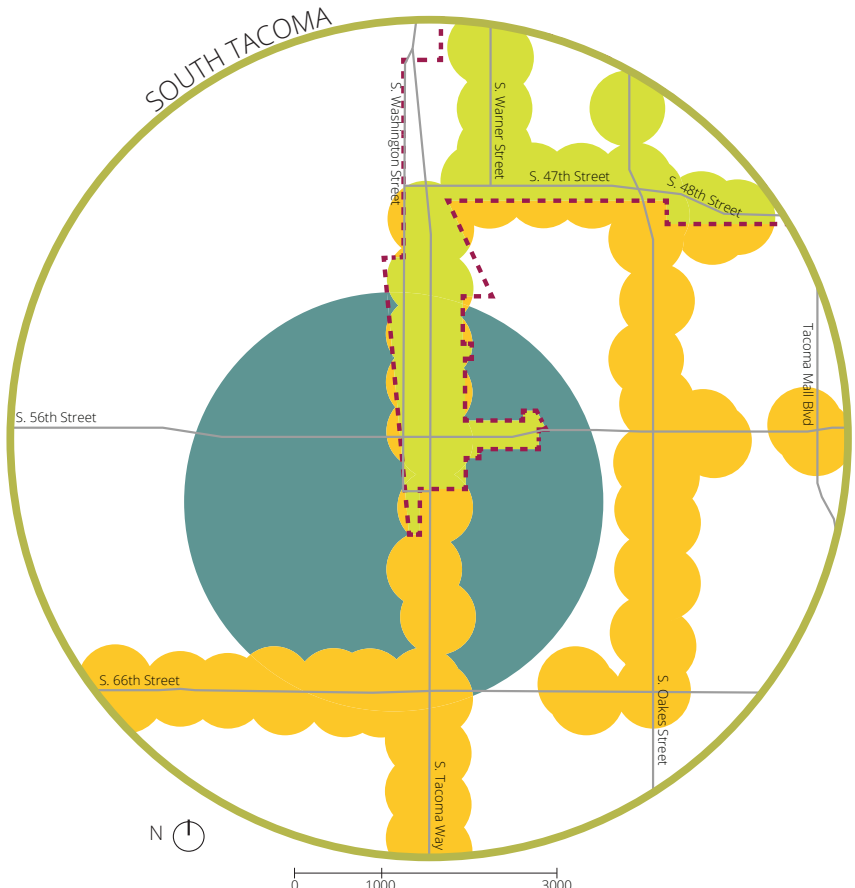
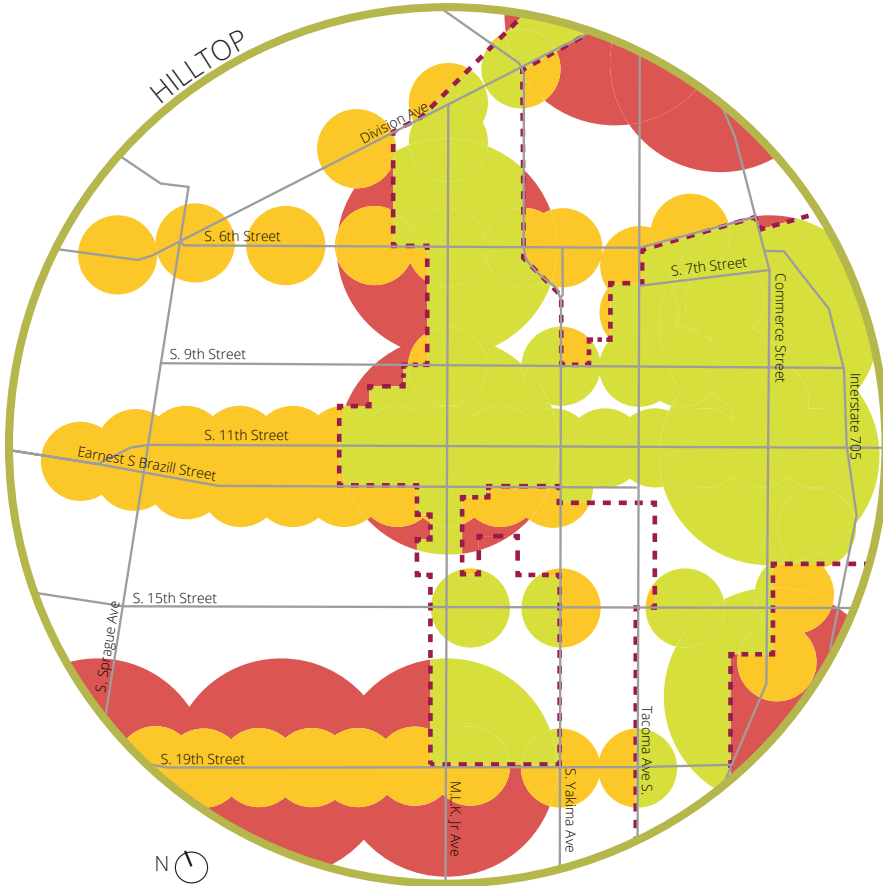
PROCTOR

The mixed-use zone within central Proctor is well serviced by transit and short walksheds, providing the ideal environment to foster a 20-minute neighborhood. The neighborhood could benefit from an expansion of the mixed-use zoning and more extensive transit to ensure these benefits are within reach of all residents.



HILLTOP

The multiple mixed-use zones within Hilltop are extensive, but they lack a central core. The white gaps within the mixed-use zone displays an opportunity for increased transit service foster the 20-minute neighborhood. The remaining green areas show the potential for growth in the neighborhood green areas.



SOUTH TACOMA

The mixed-use zone within central South Tacoma is narrow along S. Tacoma Way but expands near the Tacoma Mall. Transit service is limited in the neighborhood, hindered especially by the large industrial zone to the west. The neighborhood would benefit from an expansion of the mixed-use zone as well as transit.

- 1-minute Walk From a Bus Stop
- 5-minute Walk From a Light Rail Station
- 10-minute Walk From a Commuter Rail Station
- Transit Walksheds within a Mixed-use Zone
- Mixed-use Zones

Spacial Analysis - the Intersection of Mixed-Use Zones & Transit Walksheds ERIC CLUTE

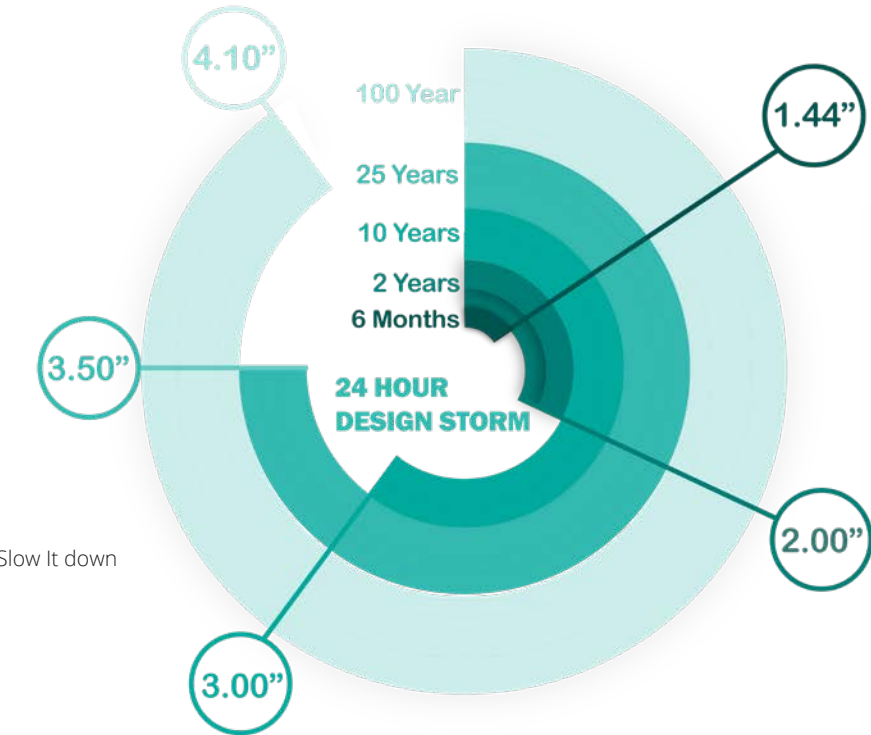


GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

While the City of Tacoma has already conducted extensive research on techniques for green stormwater management, the conceptual strategy suggested here would allow better integration of the green stormwater infrastructure into the city's existing conditions. Presented here are: (i) a flowchart showing the various aspects that would be worth exploring in connection to conventional green stormwater management approaches; (ii) a basic framework for the design, administration, implementation and monitoring of effective GSI; and (iii) a sample toolkit to organize existing and potential innovative green stormwater techniques. Effectively incorporating the urban form aspects of the Green Stormwater Infrastructure strategy can help foster a sense of identity at the 20-minute neighborhood scale while creating opportunities for public participation. Addressing stormwater management in the 20-minute context by designing neighborhood-specific programs fosters trust between members of the public and affords potential economic resource generation. An example is Neighborhood Matching funds.

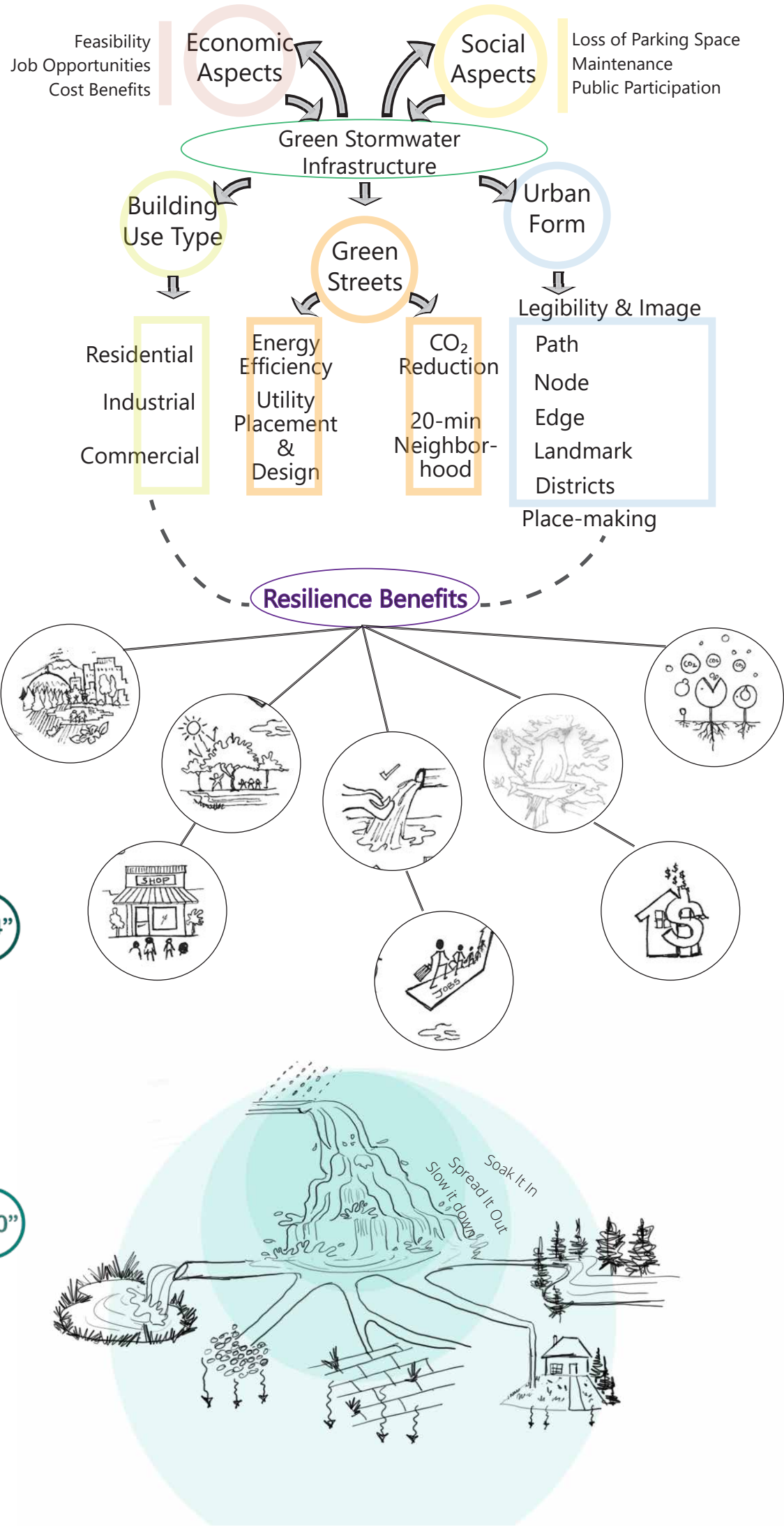
What Would the Future Be Like?

The occurrence of heavy downpours in the Pacific Northwest has increased by 12%. In the Seattle-Tacoma area, the magnitude of a 24-hour storm is projected to increase 14-28% during the next 50 years. In the light of such predictions by the climate models, would the existing design for storm standards prove sufficient? If not, how are we going to step up our game? How do we get ahead of this changing climate scenario?



24-hour Design Storm for City of Tacoma. Information source for the graphic produced: Stormwater Management Manual, CITY OF TACOMA

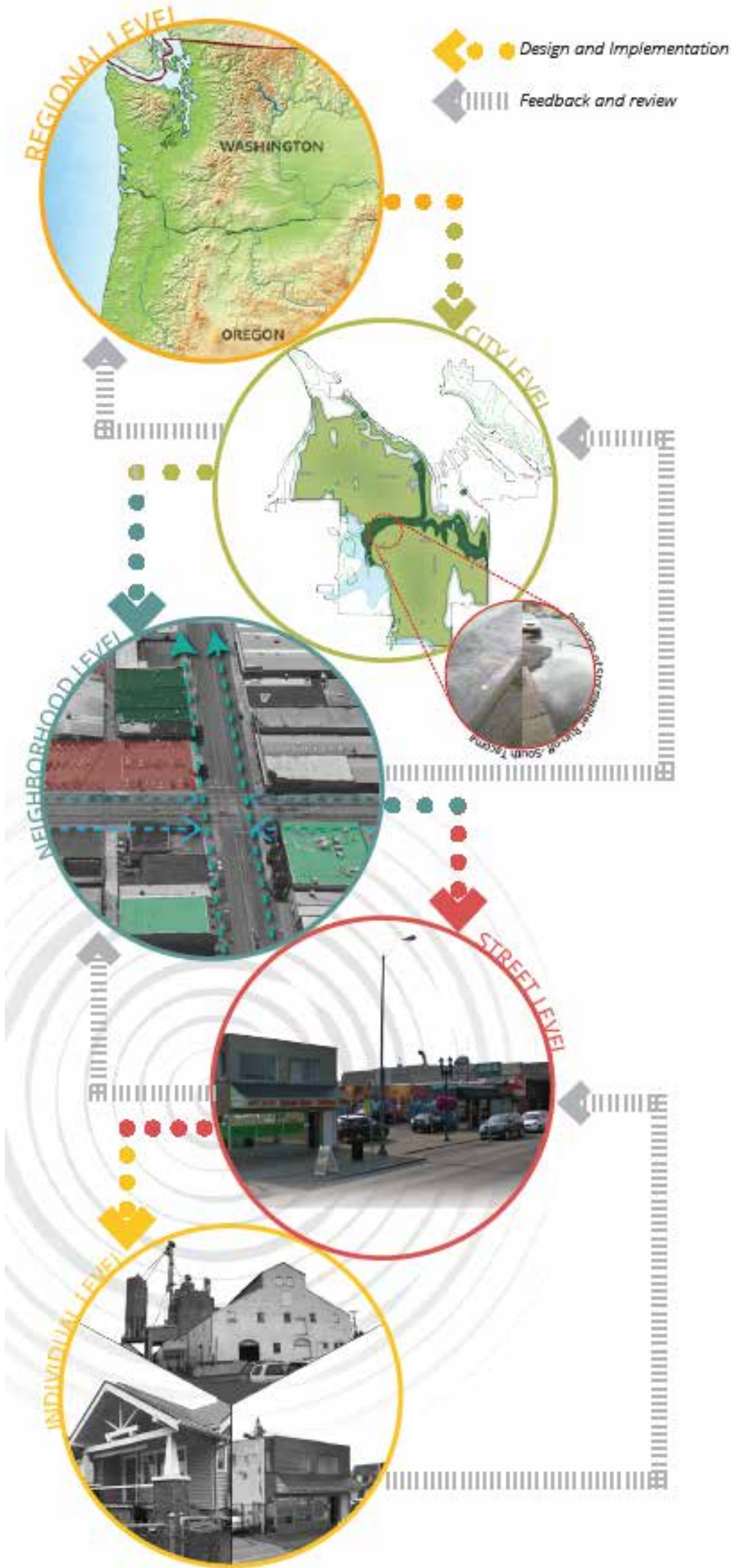
HOW DOES GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FIT IN THE LARGER PICTURE?



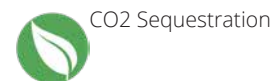
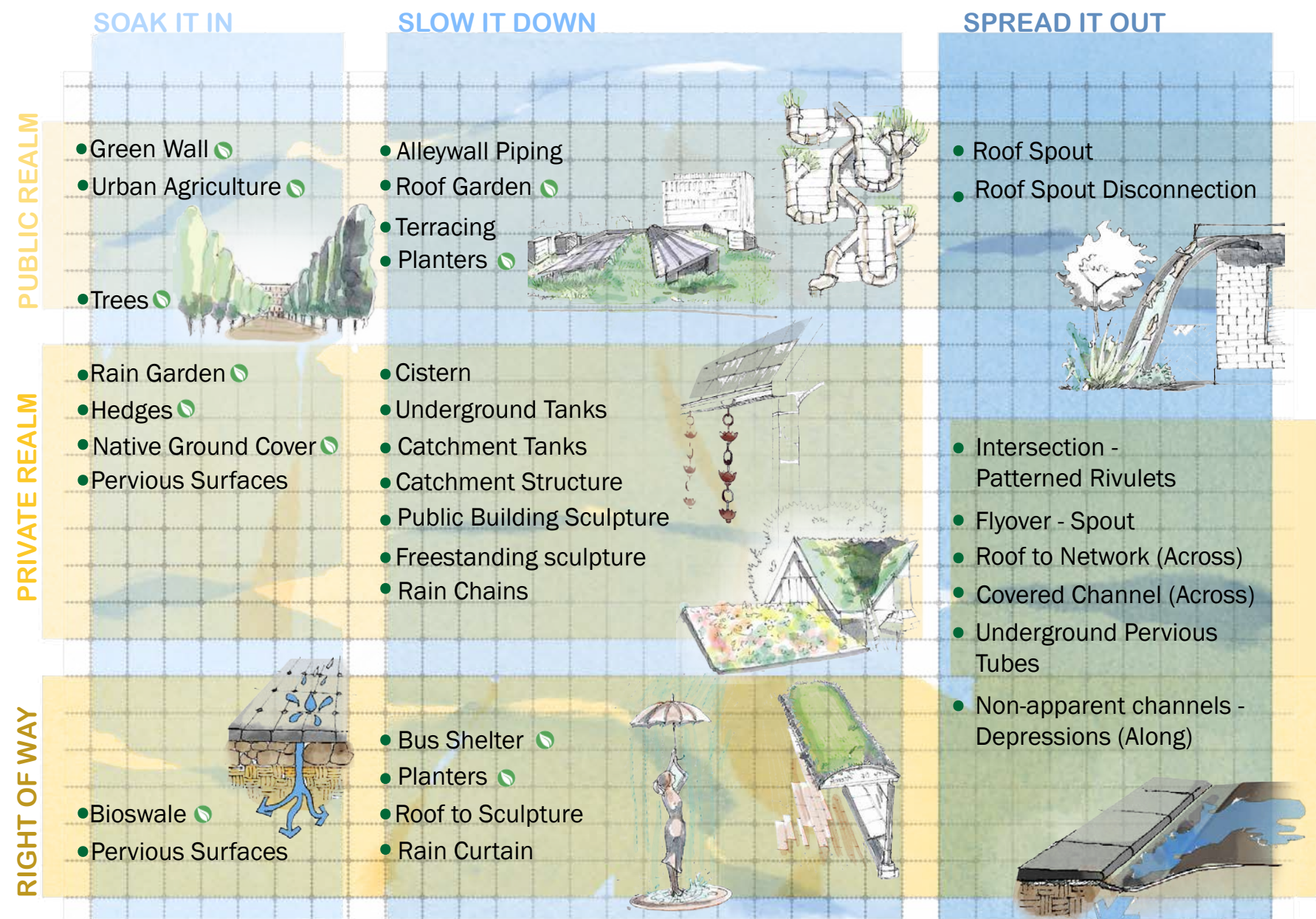
Information source for the graphic produced: U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

FURTHER STUDIES REQUIRED:

- Economic Analyses:
  - Urban Agriculture Value Return
  - Job Generation Statistics
  - Pervious v. Impervious Surfaces
- Energy Cost v. Heat Island Effect
- Implementation Cost v. Combined Sewer Load /Outfall Volume
- Environmental quality Analyses:
  - Air Quality Measurement
  - Aquifer Levels
  - Pollution of Run-off into the Bays, Lakes and Streams
  - Bio-diversity Measures
  - Pedestrian Activity - Improvement



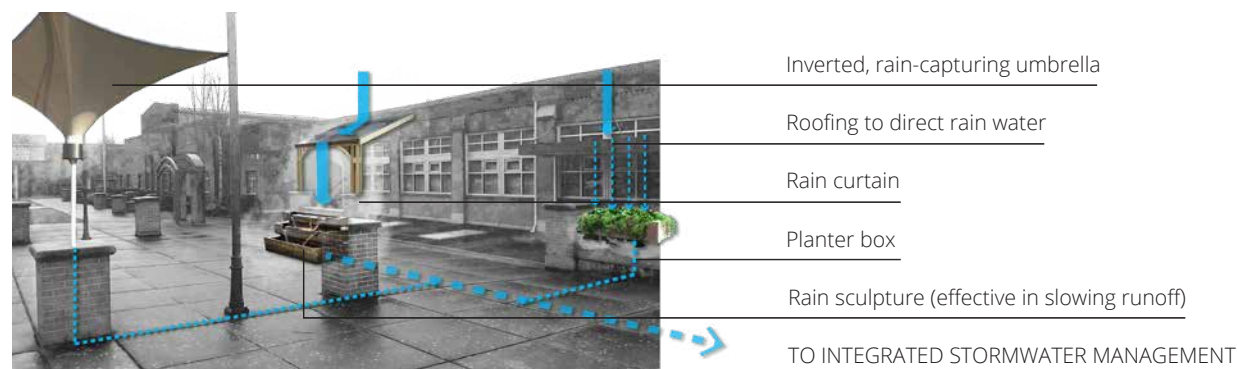




CO2 Sequestration

(iii) Sample tool kit for efficient Green Stormwater Infrastructure.

Example: Pervious Surfaces + Planter + Rain Curtain + Covered Channels =>



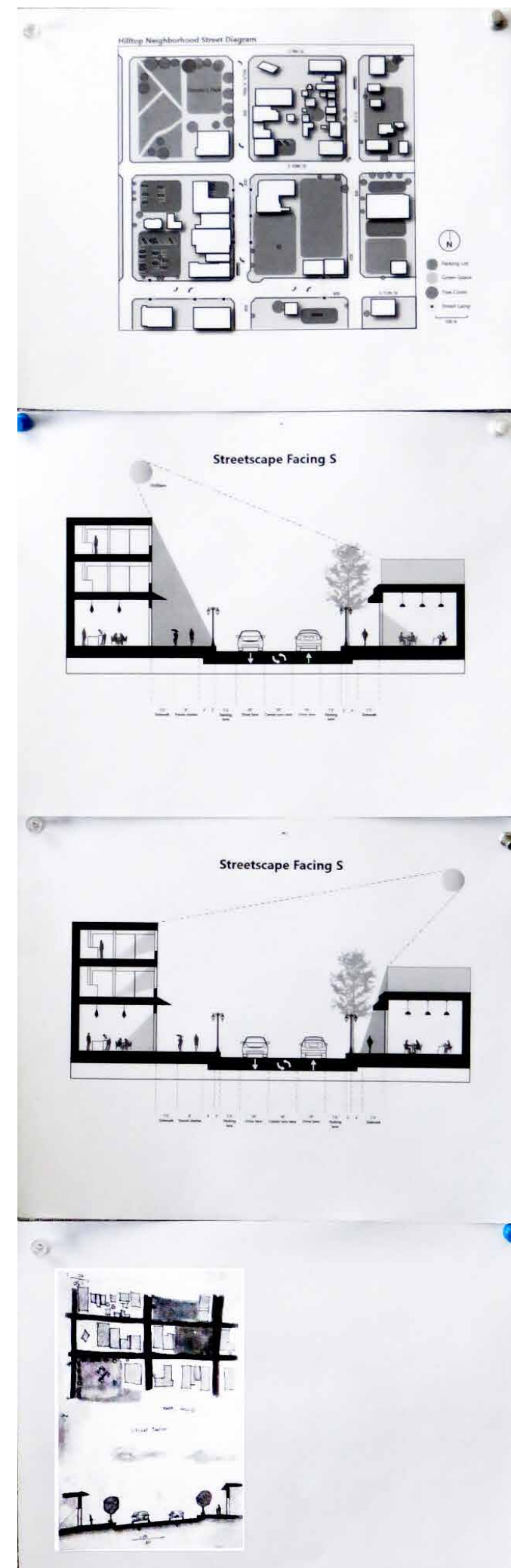
After (Proctor): Example of application of GSI tools.



Before and After (Proctor): example of designing bioswales around existing trees.



Before and After (Hilltop): example of intersection-patterned rivulets.



Class interim presentation April 19, 2018. LAURA DURGERIAN



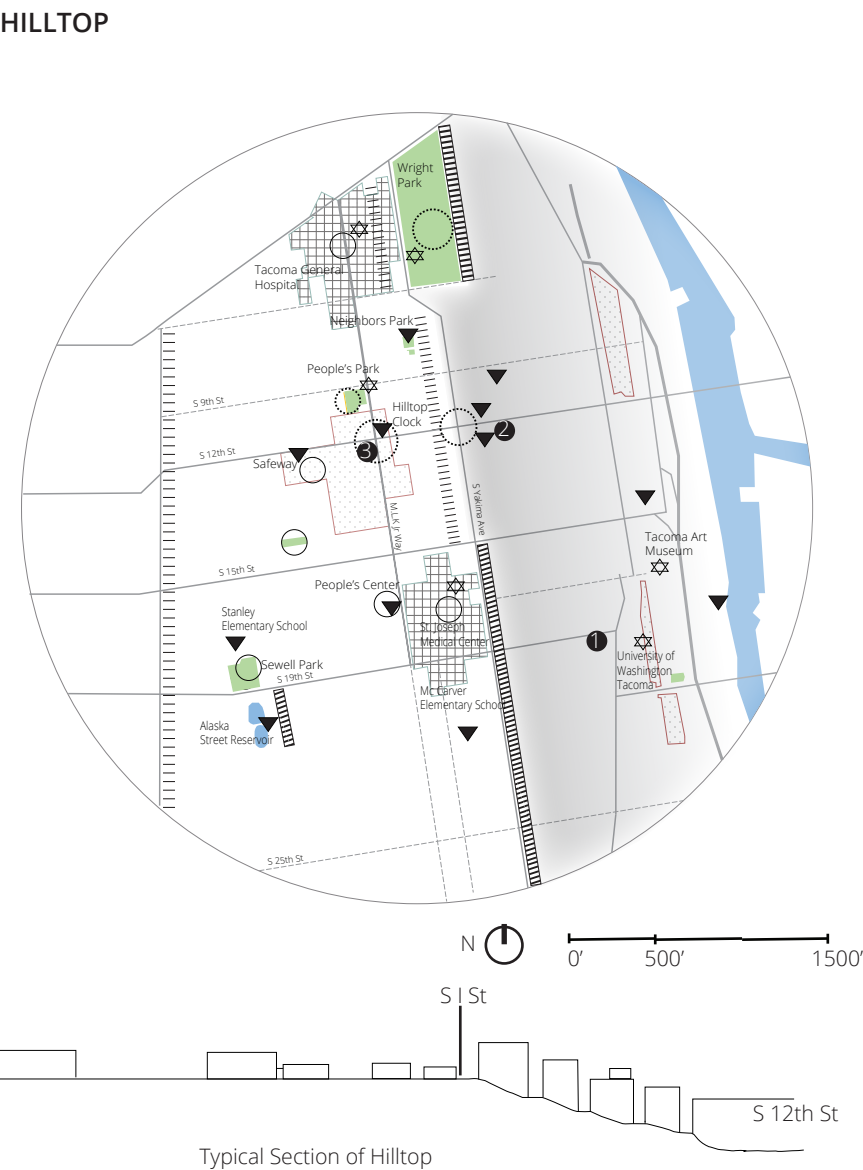
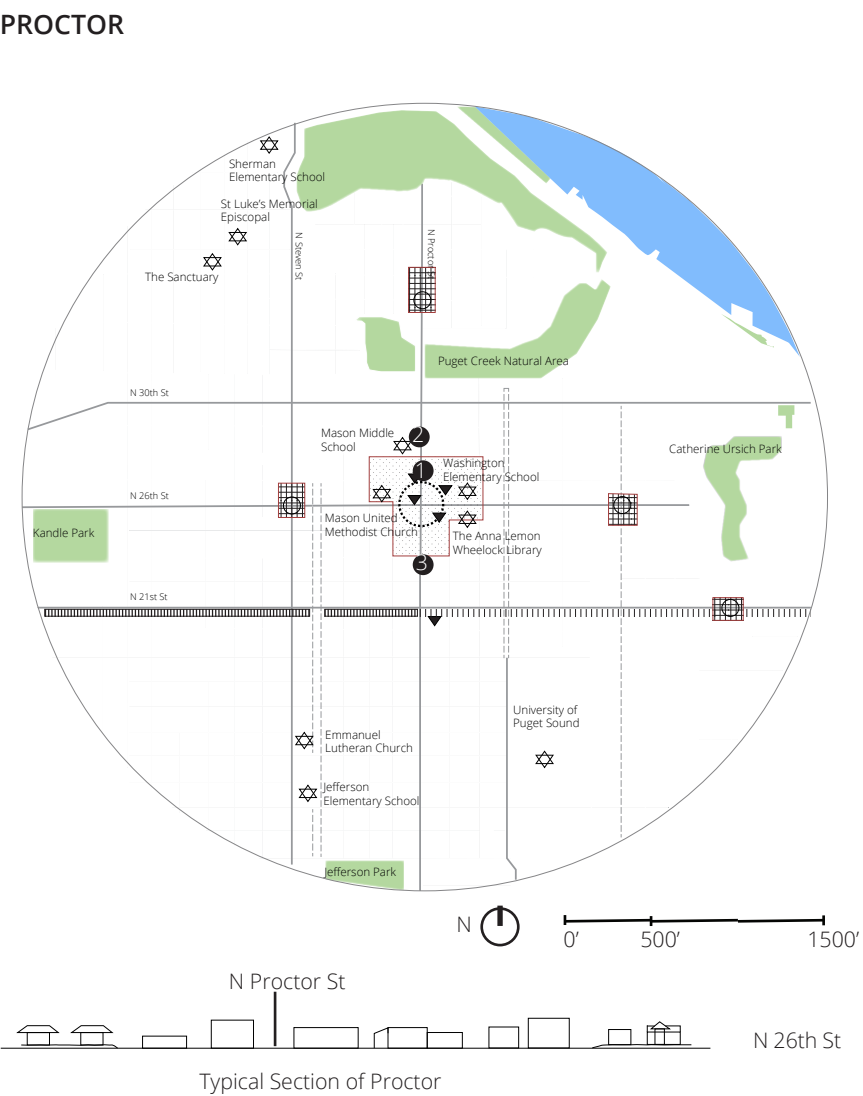


CITY IMAGE AND LEGIBILITY  
The Elements of City Image In Proctor and Hilltop

	Major Element	Minor Element
Path		
Edge		
Node		
District		
Landmark		

The “image of the city” reflects how people perceive a place. A clear image is associated with fast and easy navigation and offers emotional support in that people feel they understand where they are. According to Kevin Lynch, the image of the city is composed with five elements: paths, edges, nodes, districts and landmarks. Through the study of these elements within each 20-minute neighborhood, we can understand and depict existing images, and explore potential improvements for enhanced identity and livability.

Above: Image of 20-minute neighborhood in Proctor  
Below: Image of 20-minute neighborhood in Hilltop  
XUWU PAN



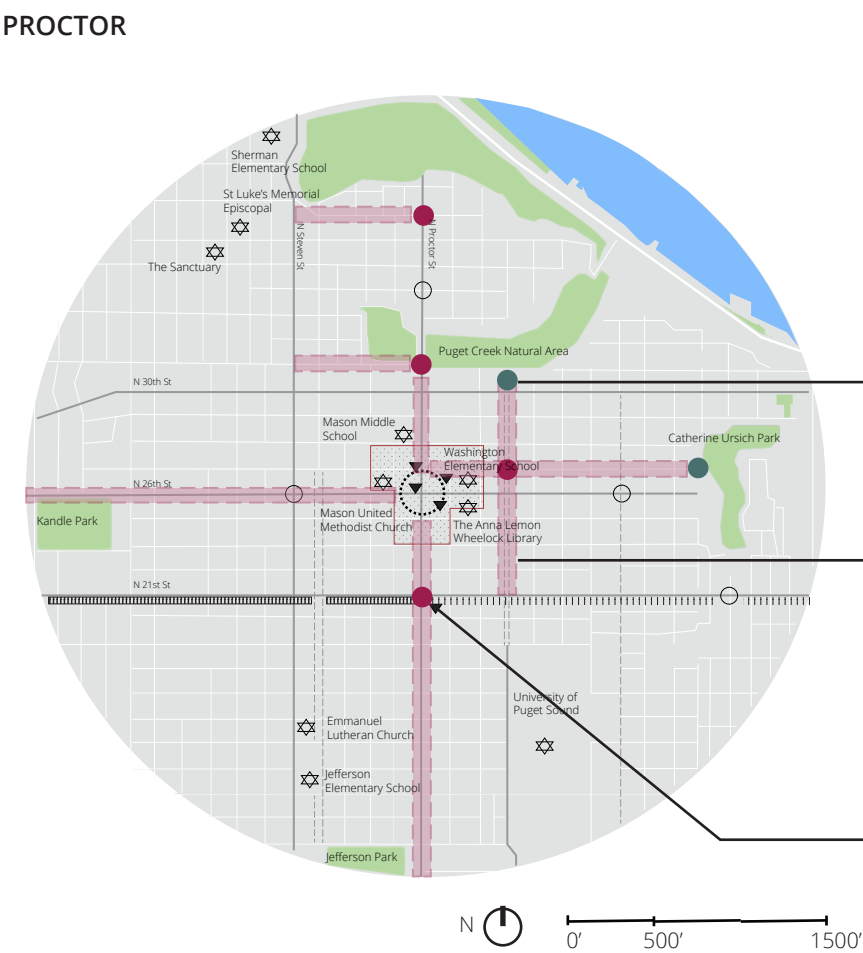
EXISTING SITUATION

Proctor is flat without many obvious disparities in characteristics. Its mixed-use area concentrated in the center and contains many landmarks. The rest of Proctor is mainly residential with little business, and green spaces are located in all directions with major road passing by.

EXISTING SITUATION

Hilltop has a distinct topography change in the east. People can look down from the edge, while people in the lower place can only see the slope. The elements in Hilltop are quite spread out but well-connected.

ENHANCING THE CITY IMAGE OF PROCTOR AND HILLTOP



Above: Possible Consideration in Proctor  
Below: Possible Consideration in Hilltop  
XUWU PAN

**Possible Solutions**  
The mixed-use district is in the center of the Proctor; the key step is to build the connection with its surroundings. Other strategies are to strengthen the existing elements of the city image through minor paths and new nodes .

ISSUE AND CONSIDERATION

Proctor lacks green open spaces, and not all green areas are open to the public.. In order to make better use of existing green land, one method for making better use of existing green land is to create view point around these parks and natural areas.

An absence of distinct characteristics in the residential area makes it easy for people to get lost. Green infrastructure provides a solution by improving connections between the central mixed-use area, surrounding park, nodes, and paths; this will better guide people to major streets and desired spaces.

Proctor is in need of paths that provide better directional guidance. Adding new nodes in the intersection by using different types of pavement will allow more people to navigate efficiently.

**Possible Solutions**  
The edge in Hilltop has two sides where the slopes are distinctly different. The key step for this obvious topography change is to create the connection for both sides. Other strategies are to intensify the sense of edge.

ISSUE AND CONSIDERATION

The grid layout changes from the edge. Adding a greenbelt in the middle of the street will strengthen the sense of that edge.

People on the hilltop might find it difficult to reach the valley below due to limited visibility. This problem can be solved by adding height to buildings on the edges, leading people on both sides to find their way.

People can follow the slope to higher topography, but there are multiple options, such as strengthening the sense of a path by adding a series of new nodes in the intersections. These nodes can be painted with different colors to lead people to the commercial or medical areas.

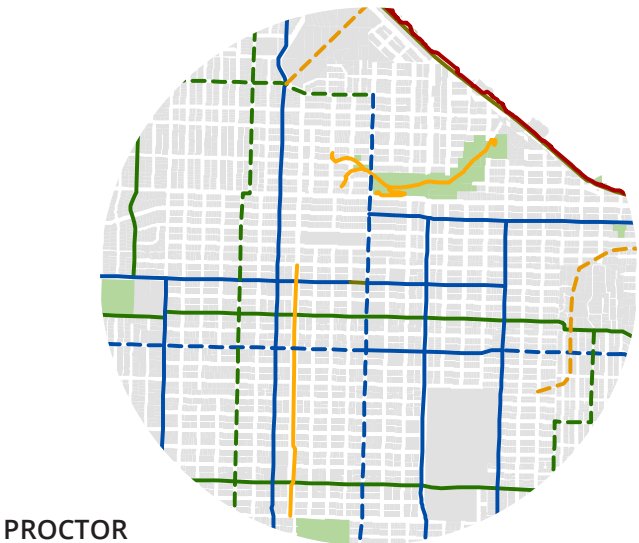
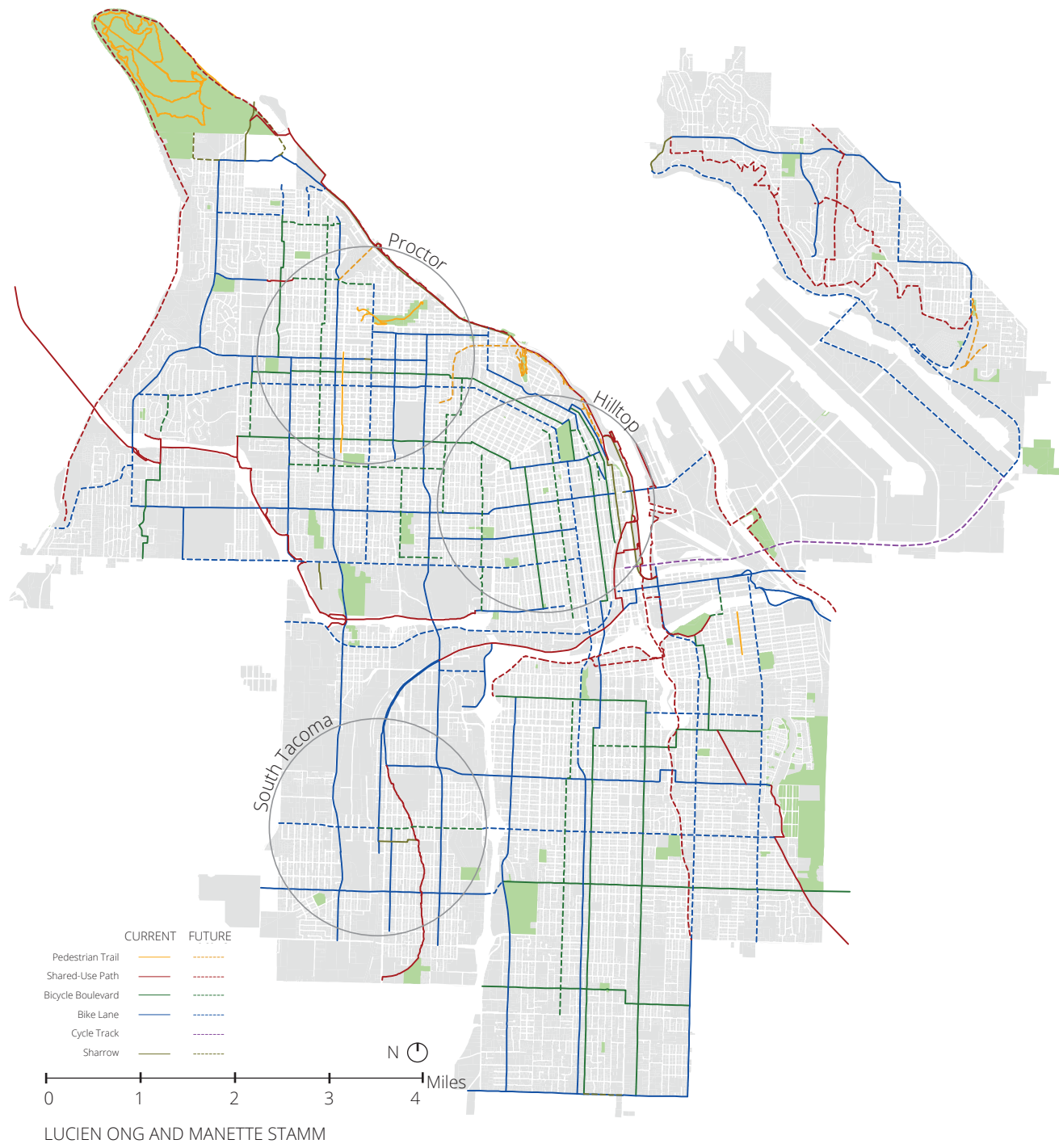
Opportunities for enhancement



PROJECT INTRODUCTION

Mobility is an essential consideration for city development. The public right-of-way, generally the zone between private properties where the street and sidewalk reside, is critical in any discussion of pedestrian, bicycle, vehicle, or public transit mobility. The City of Tacoma is undergoing a significant investment in urban mobility, outlined in the Mobility Master Plan and seen through the proposed bike and pedestrian infrastructure plans and new public transit development. Because of this, we wanted to provide resources for the city to graphically show how these new developments shape the city both geographically and by design. For this project we analyzed the connectivity of Tacoma's right-of-ways for users on their feet, pedals, and public transit, looking at Tacoma as a whole, as well as the three neighborhoods: Proctor, Hilltop, and South Tacoma. The Mobility and Right-of-Way section of this graphic package focuses specifically on bike, pedestrian, and public transportation.

BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAIL NETWORK



PROCTOR

Like the Hilltop neighborhood, Proctor is slated to have a more complete bike way network in the future. There are a few dedicated pedestrian paths in this neighborhood, but they lack connectivity to other mobility networks. Increasing the number of shared-use paths could increase connectivity and take advantage of existing bike systems.



HILLTOP

The Hilltop neighborhood has a fairly developed walking and bicycle network. When taking into consideration proposed pathway development, this neighborhood will have a complete and accessible grid network of bike ways, depicted in the blue and green path colors. However, it will still be lacking dedicated pedestrian and shared-use paths. Increasing the number of sidewalks that include the four sidewalk zones is way to create a more complete and welcoming pedestrian pathway network.



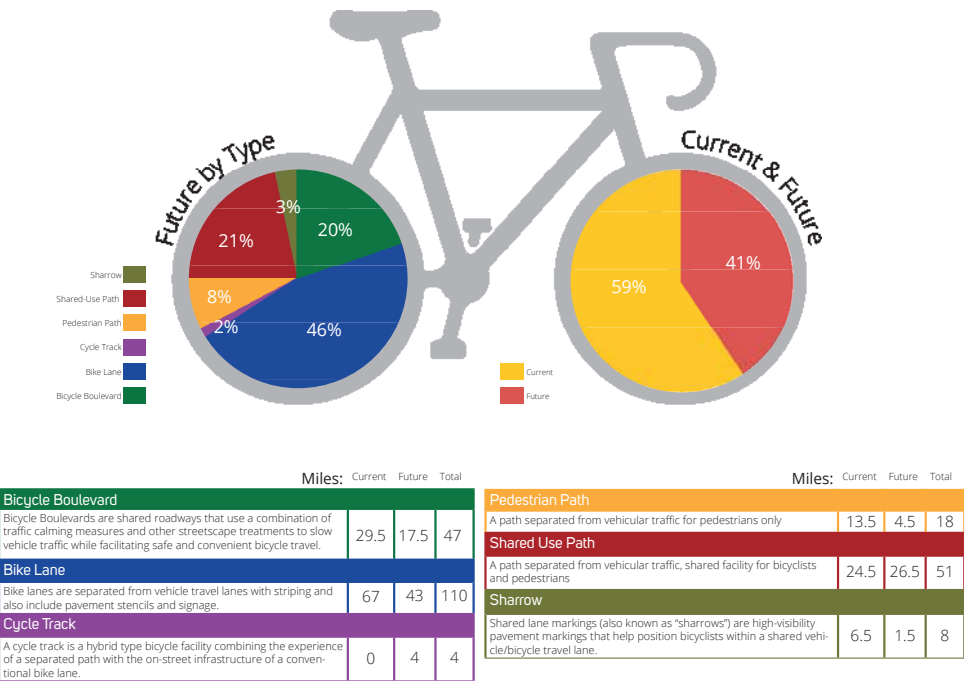
SOUTH TACOMA

This neighborhood has very few bicycle and pedestrian paths. The majority run North-South and do not connect well to the East and West. Proposed future paths will increase this connectivity slightly for bike use. Increasing the number of sidewalks that include the four sidewalk zones would be one solution to providing more complete pedestrian paths. Connectivity to the existing parks in South Tacoma would also benefit the mobility network in this neighborhood.

BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAVEL IN TACOMA

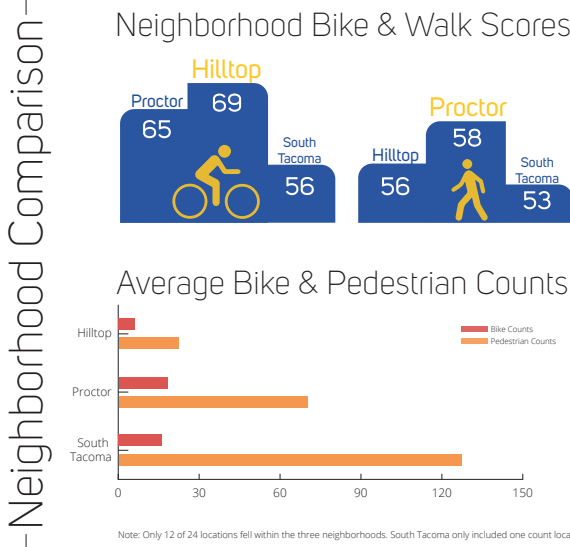
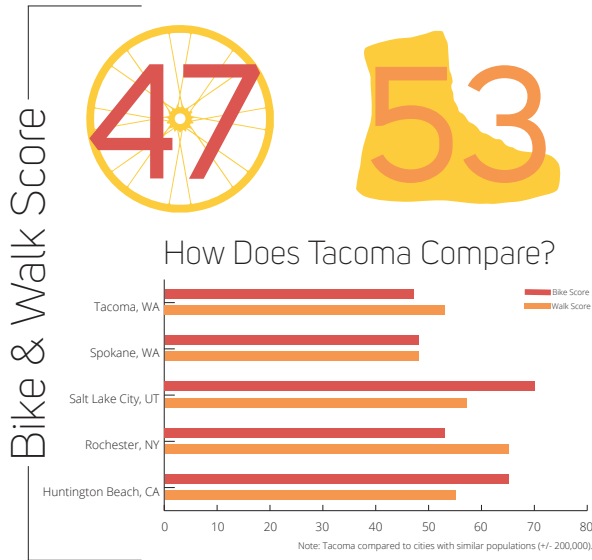
CURRENT AND FUTURE BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAILS

Below is a breakdown of Tacoma's current and future pathways for those walking and biking, along with a brief description of each pathway type.



BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAVEL INFORMATION

What is walking and biking like in Tacoma? How does Tacoma compare to other American cities? Does weather affect those traveling out in the elements? Read below to learn about Tacoma's bike and pedestrian travelers.



JENNIE MEULENBERG AND MANETTE STAMM

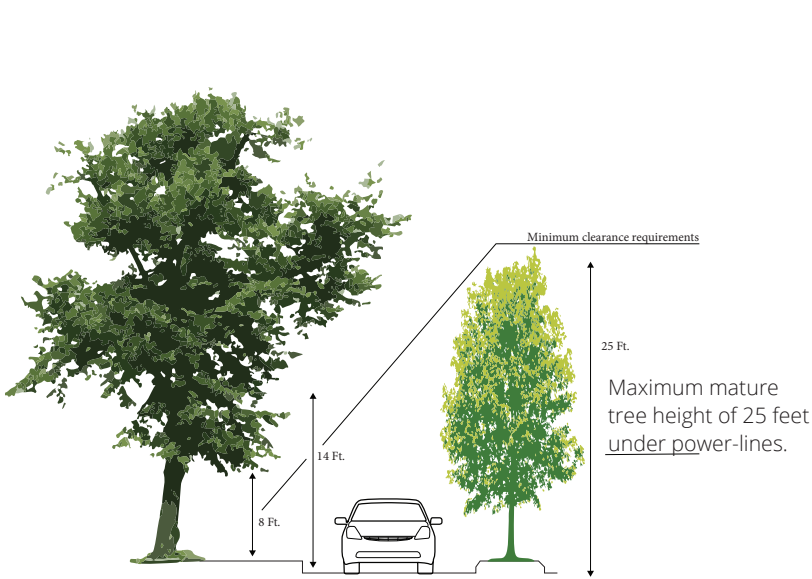


TECHNICAL PEDESTRIAN DESIGN STANDARDS

The City of Tacoma has identified multiple design standards for pedestrian right-of-way corridors. These can be found in the Tacoma Mobility Master Plan Design Guidelines document published in 2009 and in other City publications, such as the “Planting in the Rights-of-Way” online document. The graphics below depict some of these design standards and can be useful in visualizing the standards that the City has in place. The graphics show typical street zones, tree height minimums, and planting setback requirements.

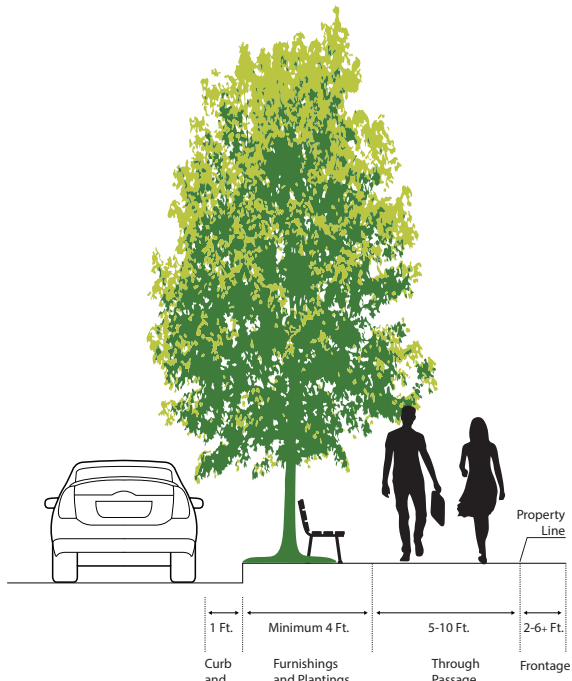
Tree Heights in the Right-of-Way

To prevent interference with pedestrians, cars, or power lines, certain minimum and maximum heights are required for trees along mobility corridors.



Sidewalk Zones

The National Association of City Transportation Officials outlines four sidewalk zones (described in detail below). Designing with these zones in mind can improve pedestrian experience and is especially beneficial in areas with public transportation and in mixed-use districts.



Raised Bed Standards

Greenery and plantings in the right-of-way enhance the attractiveness of an area and can provide valuable services, such as rainwater capture and filtration. Raised bed standards help ensure that these types of plantings are integrated into the right-of-way- without reducing overall mobility.



Putting It All Together

Applying the Sidewalk Zones Concept

Sidewalks that exemplify the four integral zones outlined by NACTO are already in use in certain areas and can be used as guides for other sidewalks in Tacoma. The graphic below shows the four zones in the sidewalk in front of Heritage Bank, 5448 S Tacoma Way.

SREYA SREENIVASAN



**Frontage Zone**  
The frontage zone is the section that functions as an extension of the building, whether through entryways and doors or sidewalk seating. The frontage zone consists of both the structure and facade of the building as well as the space immediately adjacent to the building.

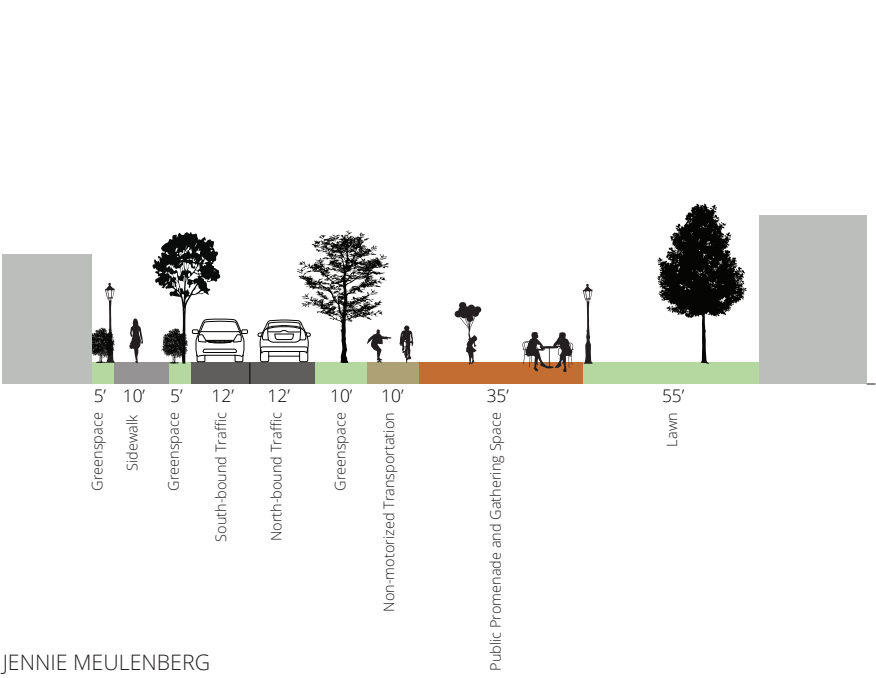
**Pedestrian Through Zone**  
The pedestrian through-zone is the primary, accessible pathway that runs parallel to the street, and it ensures that pedestrians have a safe and adequate place to walk. It should be 5-7 feet wide in residential settings and 8-12 feet wide in commercial areas.

**Street Furniture/Curb Zone**  
The street furniture zone is the area between the curb and the through-zone, and it may include street furniture and amenities like benches, lighting, newspaper kiosks, utility poles, tree pits, and bicycle parking. The street furniture zone may also consist of green infrastructure elements such as rain gardens.

**Enhancement/Buffer Zone**  
The enhancement/ buffer zone is the space immediately next to the roadway and may consist of curb extensions, parklets, stormwater management features, parking, bike racks, bike share stations, and curbside bike lanes or cycle tracks.

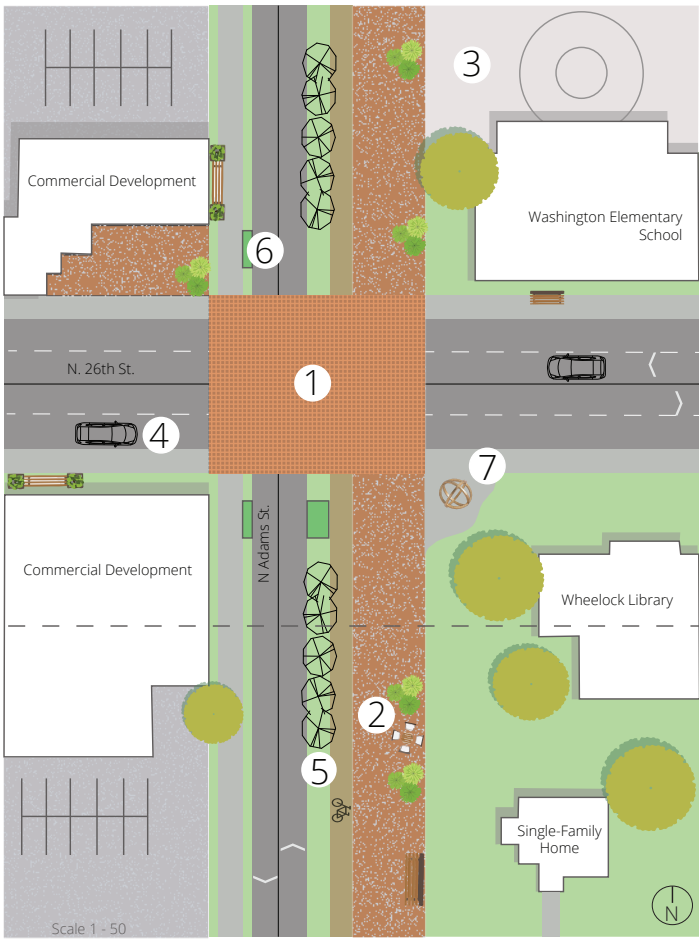
Inclusive Redesign of Proctor Intersection

This diagram shows how the intersection of N Adams St. and N 26th St. can be made more pedestrian- and activity-friendly. The intersection features an elementary school, a library, and small-scale mixed commercial uses, so it is already an important node for the surrounding residential areas. By including more green space and space for non-motorized modes of transportation, it could serve the community even better on an everyday basis and be converted to a festival street for special occasions.



JENNIE MEULENBERG

- Shared intersection with pavers ①
- Public plaza with street furniture ②
- School courtyard ③
- On-street parking ④
- Greenspace and plantings ⑤
- Bioswale ⑥
- Public art ⑦

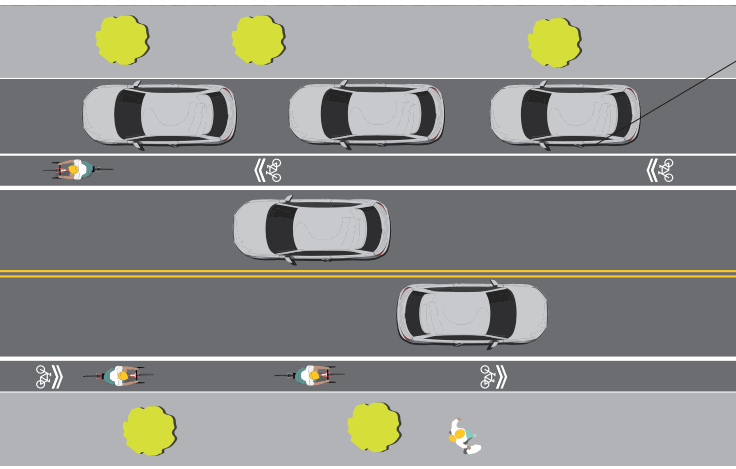


BICYCLE LANE DESIGN STANDARDS

The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) identifies three main types of bike lanes in their Urban Bikeway Design Guide. This guide was created to provide cities with a comprehensive, state-of-the-art design guide and is founded in literature research and real-life examples. The designs are permitted under the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and the Federal Highway Administration has approved all proposed bicycle related treatments. The three examples provided were created based on the NACTO design guidelines and contain elements that are both integral to the bike lane function and add value. Non-integral elements can be added or subtracted from the lane depending on the context in the right-of-way, but most importantly strong consideration of public safety should be applied to all bike lane designs and monitoring is expected to maintain the functionality of the lanes.

Standard Bike Lane

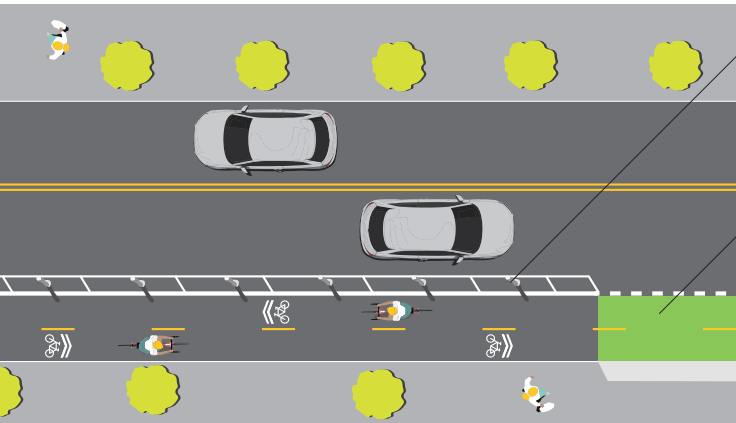
Bike lanes are most helpful on streets with ≥ 3,000 motor vehicle average daily traffic, speeds of 25-35 mph, and streets with high transit volumes.



Separation between parked vehicles and lanes should be maximized to reduce door zone conflicts.

Protected Bike Lane

Protected bike lanes are the gold standard of bike lanes located in the right-of-way. A physical barrier from moving traffic, even if only a three-foot area marked by paint, can inspire weary bicyclists to feel safe on the road and in some cases greatly improve not only the function but also the appearance of the public right-of- of way.

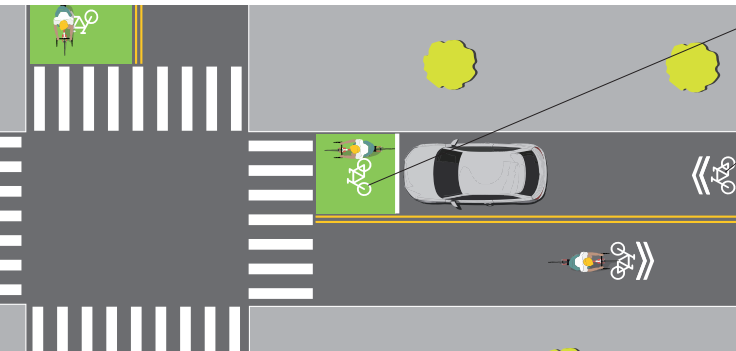


Protection includes bollards, planters, a vehicle parking lane, and raising the lane.

Colored pavement can be used to identify bike lane priority in conflict areas (such as driveways).

Shared-use Bike Lane

Shared-use bike lanes, also called bicycle boulevards or sharrows, while not the safest option for bicyclists, are a comparatively inexpensive bike lane option, specifically on roads not wide enough to accommodate designated bike lanes. Sharrows contain pavement markings that indicate to drivers the presence of bicycles and indicate to cyclists which roads are more suitable for biking. Additional signage containing path names and information can help way-finding.



This colored pavement area, called a bike box, provides an area for bicyclists to safely queue ahead of vehicles at a signalized intersection.

Shared lane marking



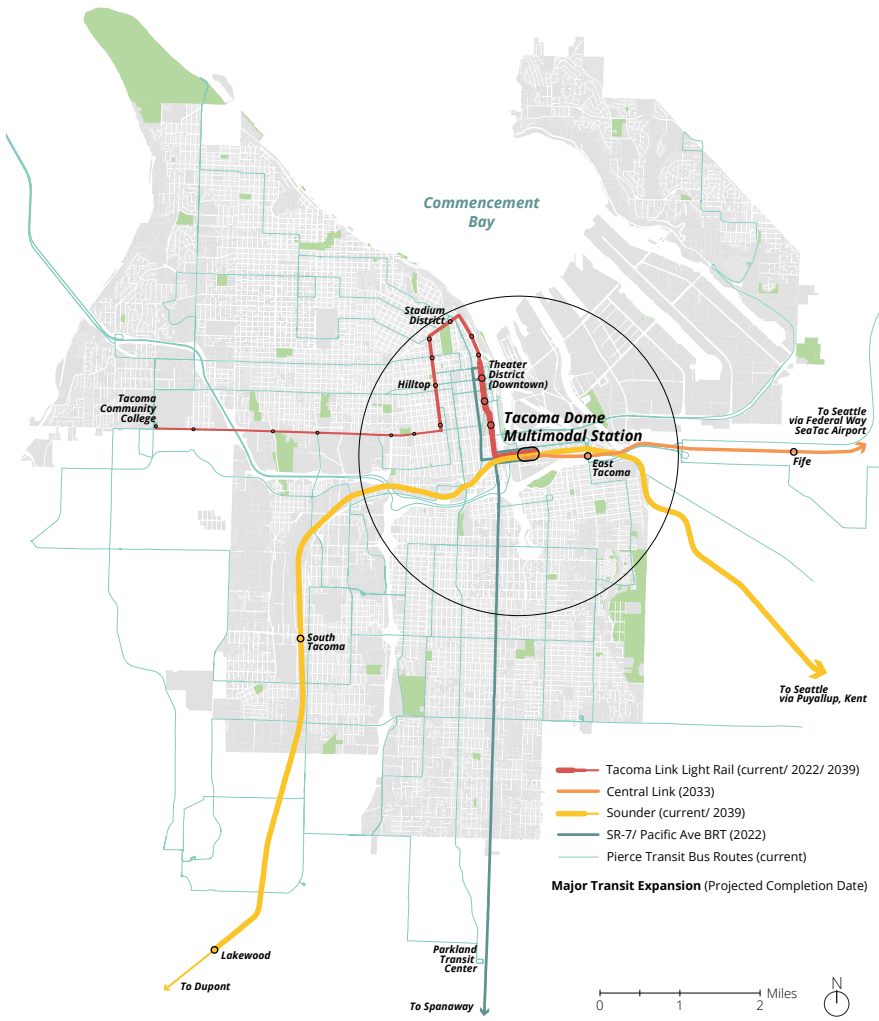
TRANSIT

The passage of Sound Transit 3 in 2016 secured funding for transit expansion in Tacoma. Three main projects are planned: the SR 7/ Pacific Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) that upgrades Pierce County's busiest transit route to frequent, high-quality BRT; the Central Link Light Rail extension that connects the Tacoma Dome to Federal Way, SeaTac Airport, and Seattle in frequent, all-day service via elevated light rail; and the Tacoma Link Light Rail extension that extends the street-running light rail from Hilltop to Tacoma Community College to serve westside residents. The multi-modal Tacoma Dome Station will be the gateway to the city for residents, workers and tourists alike, connecting every mode of public transportation available: Street-running and Elevated Light Rail (Tacoma Link and Central Link), Bus Rapid Transit (Pacific Ave BRT), Commuter Rail (Sounder), and local buses (Pierce Transit). This project uses NACTO's principles of transit streets to guide the potential design and planning of the area surrounding the Tacoma Dome.



East Tacoma Station: Consult with the Puyallup Nation in a station design scheme that respects and incorporates Salishan elements.

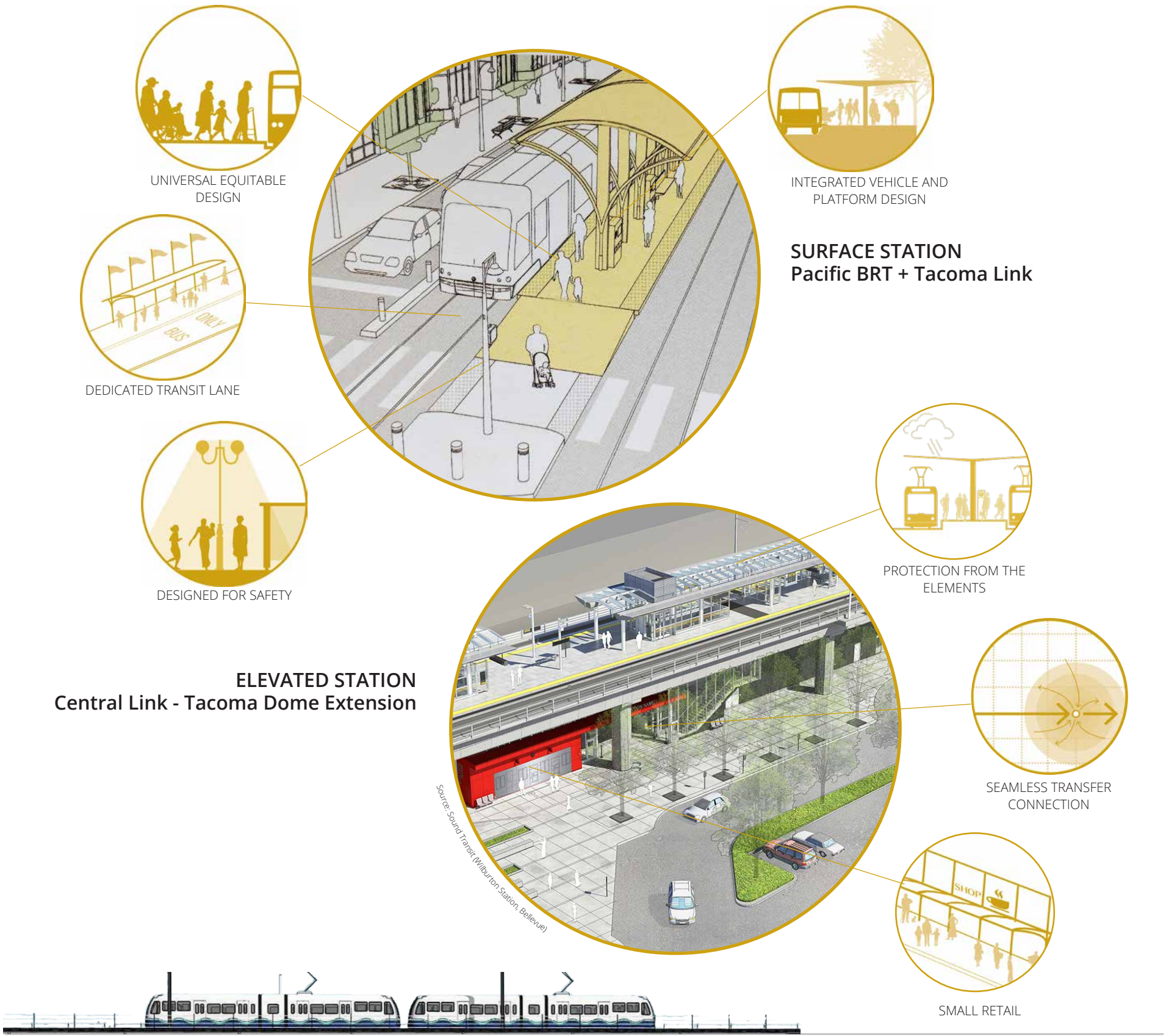
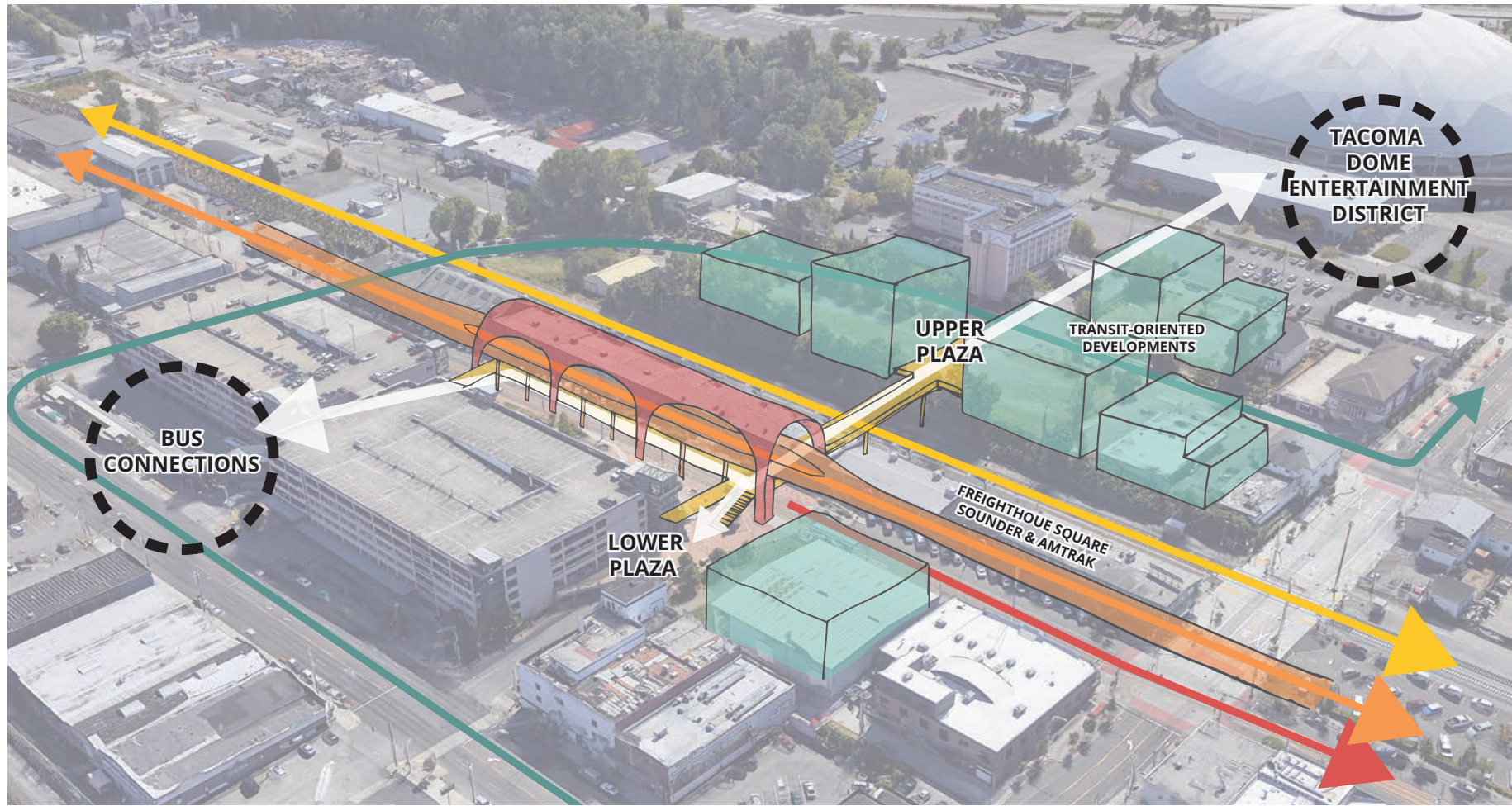
Map represent 2-mile radius from Tacoma Dome Station



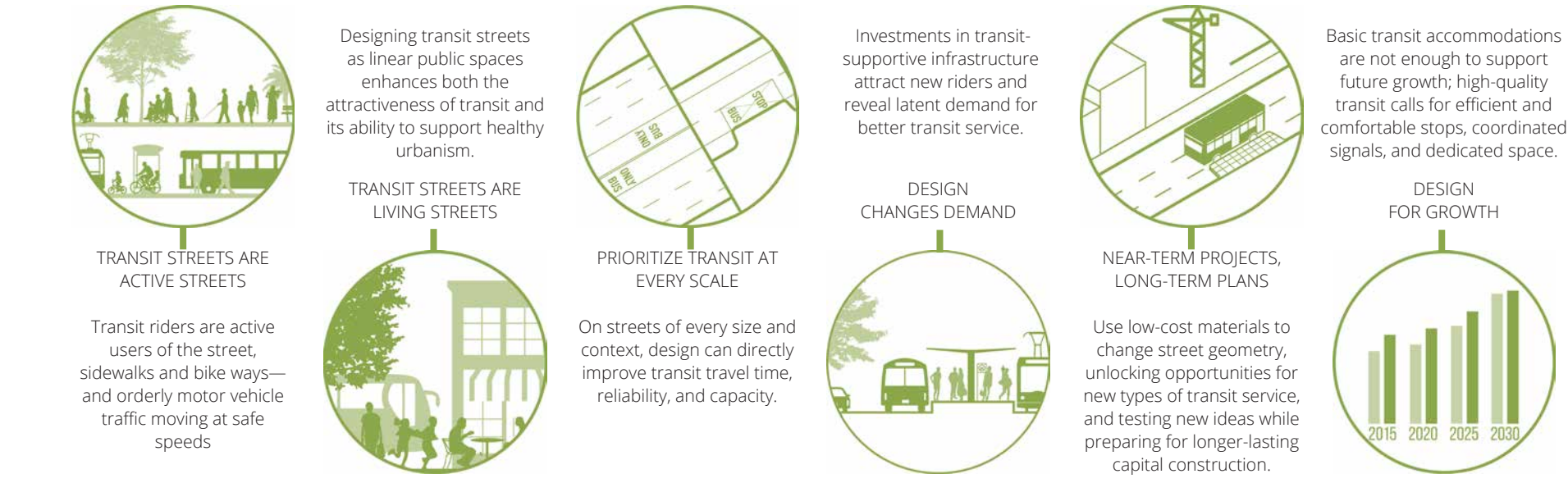
TACOMA DOME STATION  
Multi-modal Gateway

Tacoma Dome Station will be the gateway to the city for residents, workers and tourists alike. The multi-modal station will connect every mode of public transportation available: Street-running and Elevated Light Rail (Tacoma Link and Central Link), Bus Rapid Transit (Pacific Ave BRT), Commuter Rail (Sounder), and local buses (Pierce Transit).

Multi-modal Connections at Tacoma Dome Station



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CITY TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS'  
TRANSIT STREETS PRINCIPLES





## INTRODUCTION

Tacoma is a city of neighborhoods and people who are proud of their communities. This section offers examples of urban design interventions that support the ideal of the 20-minute neighborhood, where one can fulfill the daily necessities of life within a 20-minute walkshed from a central point in the neighborhood. Feasibility studies and community input are critical next steps prior to adoption of any proposed ideas and strategies.

### Looking At History

Historically, development in Tacoma has been pedestrian and transit oriented, moving more towards a suburban car-oriented form. The goal is to be equitable in accommodating building the older sustainable model of development while still accomadating the needs of today. Mixed-use development is popular as ever, but new stock tends to be expensive and rare. Retrofitting older areas to have these characteristics may supplement that supply and foster more sustainable lifestyles.

Residents identified their preferred building types in surveys conducted in the TacHOMEa: Infill tools for a Happy City report. Residents have expressed a general preference for traditional building forms (p. 51)



## ELEMENTS

### Developing Housing

The design and massing of housing should keep with a neighborhood's existing identity and correspond to neighborhood upon goals as well as the needs of the city for the future.

Add "missing middle housing" forms back into the urban fabric by amending the zoning code. (A comprehensive sampling of building types can be found at Opticas Design's website at [missingmiddlehousing.com/category/the-types/](https://missingmiddlehousing.com/category/the-types/))

### Rethinking Parking

The city should study whether all the parking in an area is necessary or compatible with its goals of creating vibrant areas.

The city should consider consolidating parking in order to create better neighborhood environment.

Another options is to repurposing excess parking to be temporary or permanent public open space in places with a lack of public space.



City of Tacoma Project Lead Lauren Flemister reviews student work with colleague Stephen Atkinson during the final presentation on June 7, 2018. TERI THOMSON RANDALL



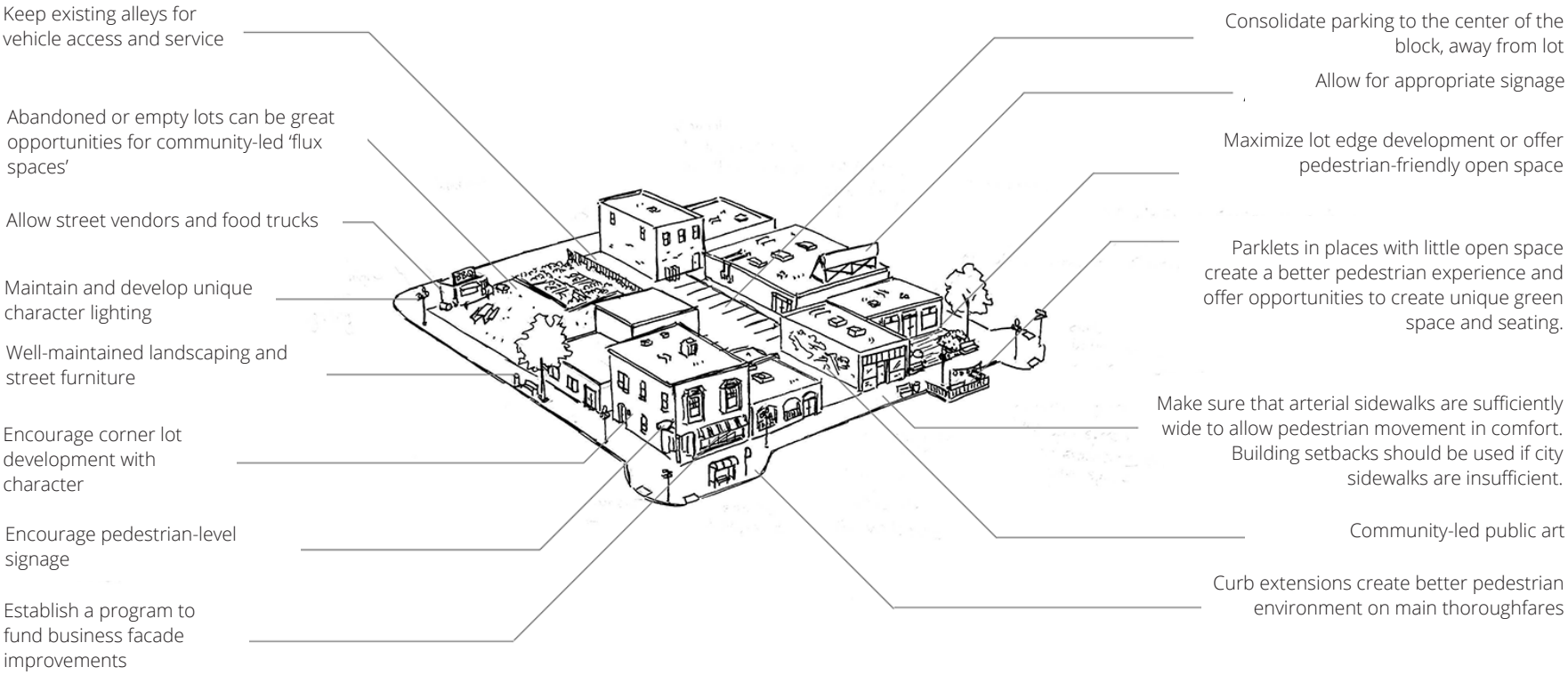
WHOLE BLOCKS FOR TACOMA

The following diagrams illustrate potential block typologies that make good use of space and foster a more walking-oriented lifestyle. (The architectural styles shown are not prescriptive and are only intended to suggest general scale and massing.)

Element	Residential Block	Traditional Commercial Retail Block	Lowrise Mixed-use Block	
Allow for intermittent smaller apartment buildings	•	•	•	Regular transit service could supplement parking needs
Allow for intermittent small retail uses throughout the neighborhood	•	•	•	Curb extensions, bike racks, and wider sidewalks can activate street life
Trees can be put into parking lots to provide shade and green	•	•	•	Mixed-use or retrofitted residential as commercial with compatible street edge development
Utilize alleys for parking and utility access	•	•	•	Abandoned and empty lots could be greet opportunities for community-led 'flux spaces'
Allow for Accessory Dwelling Units to keep neighborhood character while expanding housing supply	•		•	Allow street vendors and food trucks
Trees can provide green cover and privacy	•	•	•	Encourage pedestrian-level signage
Regular street trees and plantings	•	•	•	Establish a program to fund business facade improvements
Encourage residential setbacks to a uniform 10 feet	•		•	Consolidate parking to the center of the block, away from lot frontage
Duplex developments and conversions should keep with neighborhood character	•		•	Allow for appropriate signage
Allow unique storage		•	•	Maximize lot edge development or offer pedestrian-friendly open space
Older or smaller retail spaces should be preserved or added	•	•	•	Add parklets in place with little open space
Continue to add street furniture, plantings, and character lighting		•	•	Make sure that arterial sidewalks are sufficiently wide to allow pedestrian movement in comfort. Building setbacks should be used if city sidewalks are insufficient
Unique corner buildings (new or historic) can serve as landmarks		•	•	Community-led public art
Fill in street frontages. Parking should be on the street or located at the back or in alleys		•	•	Curb extensions create better pedestrian environment



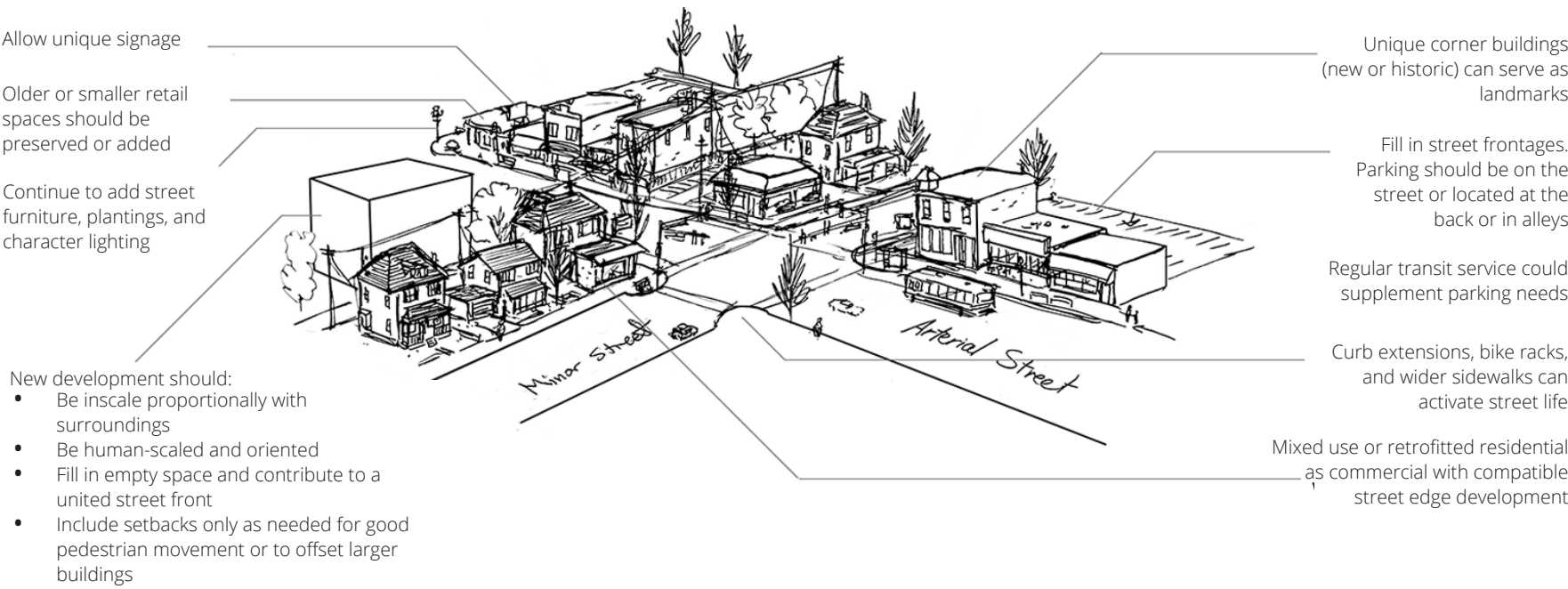
Traditional Commercial Retail Block



Residential Block



Lowrise Mixed-use Block





**HISTORIC BUILT FORM**  
**Introduction**

Historically, development in Tacoma was pedestrian- and transit-oriented but then began to emphasize a suburban car-oriented built form. In a return to this older sustainable model, equity is a key concern. Since new building stock tends to be expensive, retrofitting of older buildings to create walkable mixed-use areas is a potential way to balance these concerns. This project highlights the need to develop housing that fits within the existing identity and goals for the city's future, as well as to rethink parking and abandoned or underused spaces in ways that consider neighborhood vibrancy and temporary use.

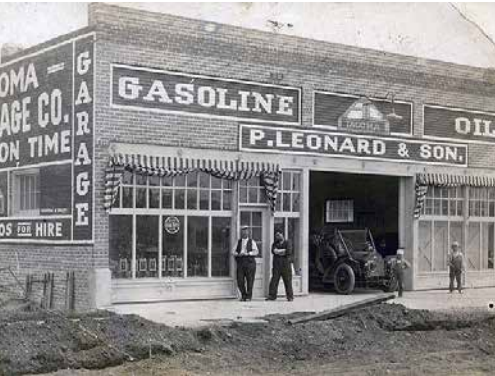
**Proctor - A Streetcar Suburb**



**Hilltop - Tacoma's First Neighborhood**



**South Tacoma - Pacific Northwest Railroad Town**





HISTORIC FORM AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

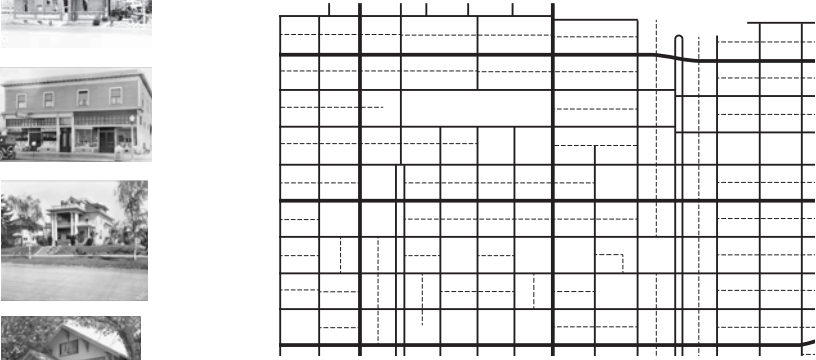
How the Past Informs the Current Urban Fabric

Origin of the Street Grid & Architectural Heritage

The three different neighborhoods in Tacoma have different stories behind their development and their urban fabric.

Proctor - A Streetcar Suburb

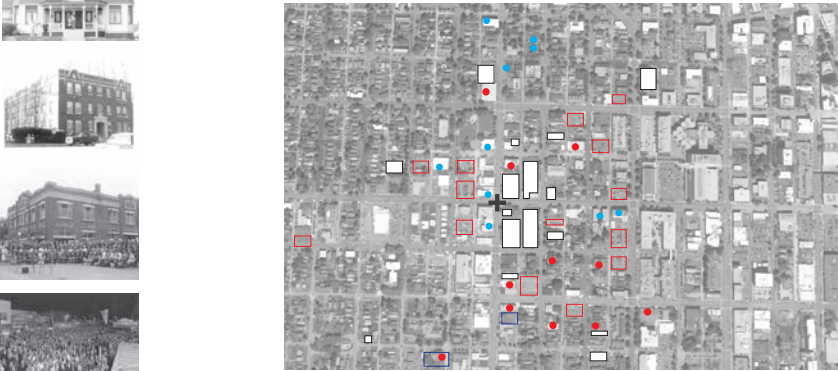
Proctor, one of the oldest business districts in Tacoma, was founded as one of Tacoma's streetcar suburbs at the turn of the 20th century. The neighborhood was a relatively affluent residential neighborhood. The blocks small, square are laid out square with residential green boulevards and large houses all within walking distance of the center at N Proctor St. and N 26th St.



Proctor Street Grid

Hilltop - Tacoma's First Neighborhood

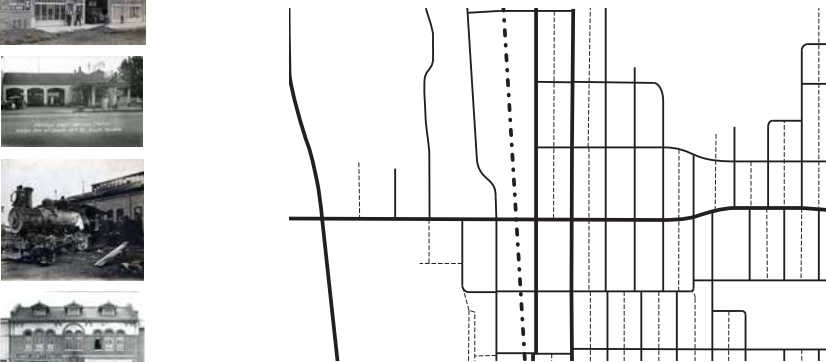
Hilltop, directly adjacent to Tacoma's booming downtown, was a vibrant and diverse commercial district and home to many working class families. Many blocks consisted of both single family and multi-family residential. The blocks are mainly square, with some joined into long rectangles along service alleys. The neighborhood centers around MLK Jr. Way and S 11th St, which was also a streetcar hub in the early 20th century.



Hilltop Street Grid

South Tacoma - Pacific Northwest Railroad Town

South Tacoma, originally farm land in a valley, was founded as a railroad town around the Northern Pacific Railroad. The valley's industrial land centered around the railroad with working class housing east of South Tacoma Way. The blocks are long and rectangular along service alleys. The neighborhood centers around S. Tacoma Way and S 56th St.



South Tacoma Street Grid

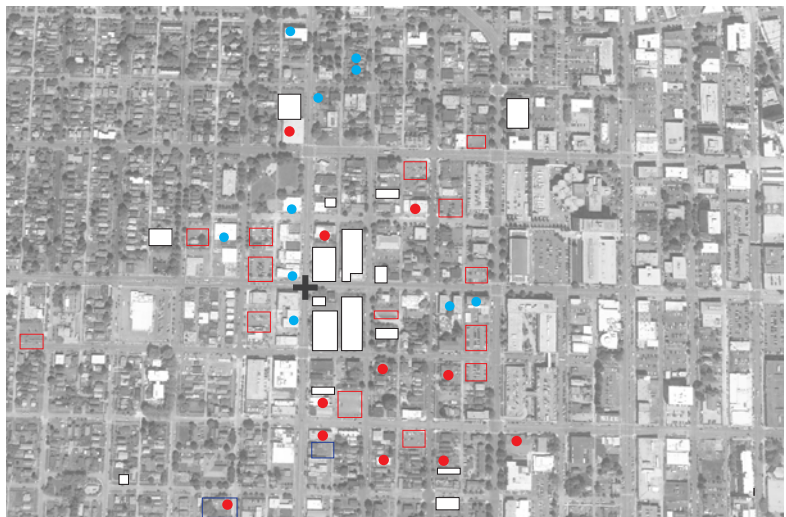
Preservation and Utilization

The maps below depict sites of cultural significance alongside historic sites, infrastructure, and areas of future development.



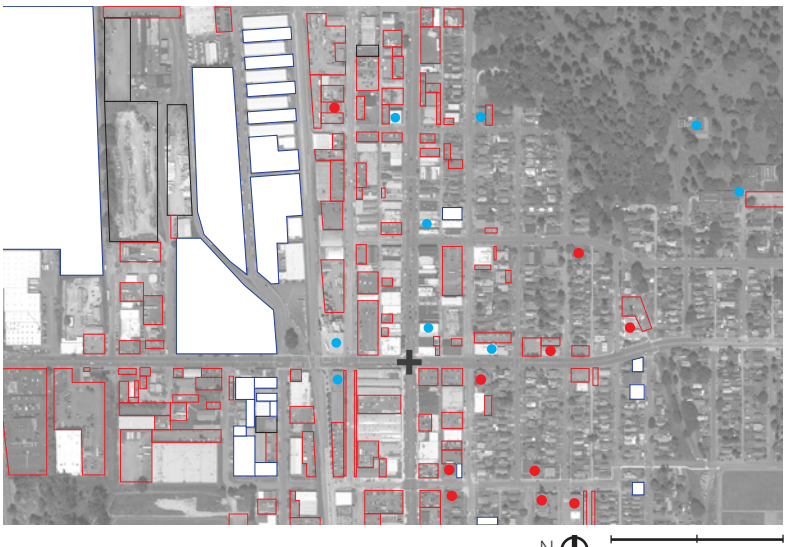
HAYDEN CAMPBELL

- Historically / Culturally Significant
- Church
- Underutilized Parcel
- Vacant Lot / Parcel
- Parking Lot



HAYDEN CAMPBELL

- Historically / Culturally Significant
- Church
- Underutilized Parcel
- Vacant Lot / Parcel
- Parking Lot



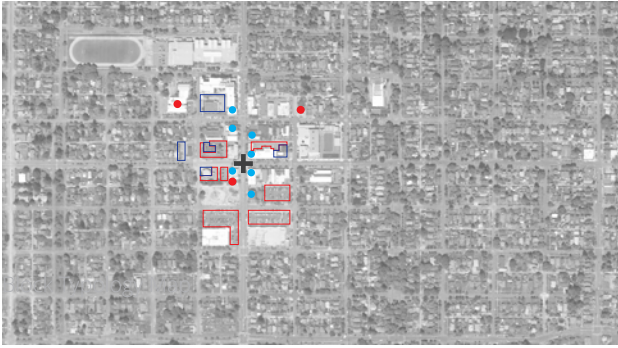
HAYDEN CAMPBELL

- Historically / Culturally Significant
- Church
- Underutilized Parcel
- Vacant Lot / Parcel
- Parking Lot

BLOCK TYPOLOGY AND ADAPTABILITY

The three Tacoma neighborhoods in this project have vastly different stories behind their origination and their urban fabric. Block typology and adaptability around the 20-minute center focuses on preserving character in Proctor, supporting vitality in Hilltop, and attracting amenity in South Tacoma.

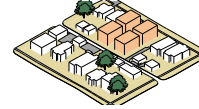
Proctor - Preserving Character



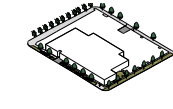
Mixed Residential



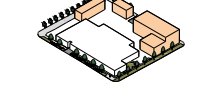
- Courtyard cottages mid-block can be developed into denser multi-family residential.
- Garages located off service alley.
- Vacant lots are scarce.



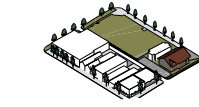
Big Box Commercial



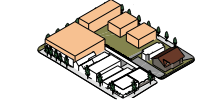
- Single building's are surrounded by parking on perimeter streets.
- Building's are low-rise "Big-Box" commercial.
- Opportunities for infill development are available on underutilized land along perimeter of block.
- The site's multiple densities are compatible with infill.



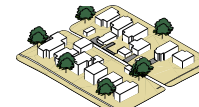
Neighborhood Commercial



- Small storefronts along street accommodate more stores.
- Parking is in rear off service alley or on street.
- Minimal vacant space has potential to be redeveloped.



Single Family Residential



- Homogeneous single family housing has potential to be developed with backyard DADU's, cottages, and carriage houses.
- Consistent setbacks are maintained for residential structures.
- Garages are off service alley
- Vacant lots are scarce in single family blocks.

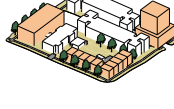


Hilltop - Supporting Vitality

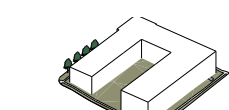
Multi-Family Residential



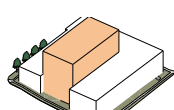
- Original single family residential blocks were demolished during urban renewal of Tacoma.
- Large buildings are clustered around each other on part of blocks with ground level parking. Buildings do not respond to human scale.
- Vacant and underutilized space is common.



Institutional



- Buildings take up most of block and often are attached to parking structures on adjacent blocks. Large scale buildings serve institutional needs over neighborhood vitality.
- Buildings are internally focused with courtyards.
- Potential exists to increase density and develop taller buildings.



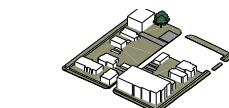
Mixed Residential



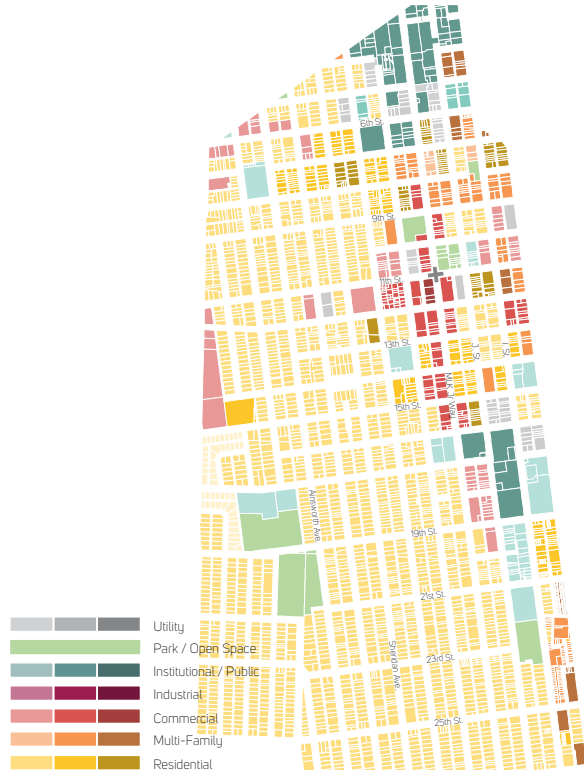
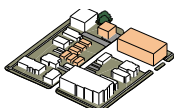
- Blocks have diverse residential building types including both multi-family and single-family structures.
- Vacant lots exist with moderate frequency.
- Land use is dense.
- Service alleys are present, though some have been re-purposed.
- Potential exists to develop infill housing in interior of block.



Mixed Commercial & Residential

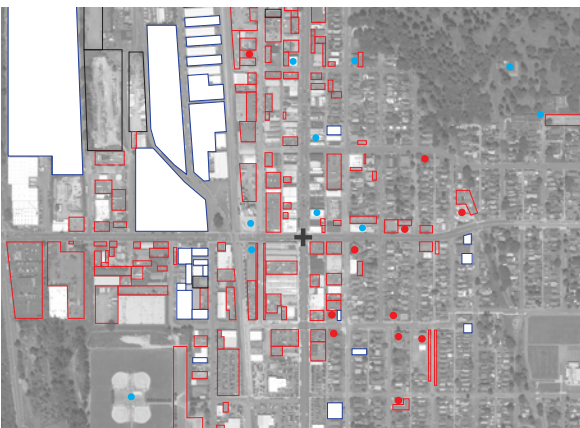


- Blocks have diverse building types including both commercial and residential. Residential can be multi-family or single family.
- Vacant lots exist with moderate frequency.
- Service alleys are present, though some have been re-purposed.
- Potential exists to develop infill housing in interior of block and on vacant lots.

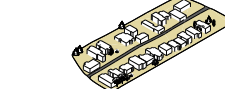


Block Typology Map

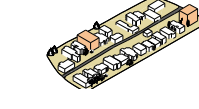
South Tacoma - Attracting Amenity



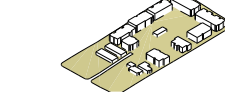
Single Family Residential



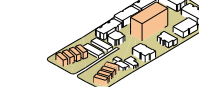
- Long rectangular blocks with single family housing.
- Blocks occasionally have varying uses on ends along arterials.
- Service alleys are common mid-block.
- Churches are regularly interspersed among housing.
- Infill potential exists on vacant lots.



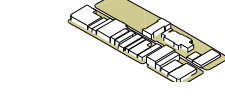
Multi-Family Residential



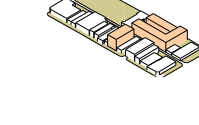
- Long rectangular blocks with multi-family housing.
- Blocks have been combined into mega-blocks.
- Low-rise multi-family housing is arranged around parking lots.
- Development potential on underutilized land.



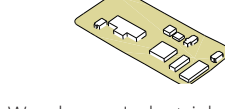
Neighborhood Commercial



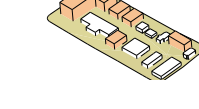
- Zero lot set-backs on low/mid-rise buildings.
- Rectangular blocks and buildings are oriented perpendicular to street-frontage.
- Parking is concentrated in rear off arterial streets.
- Develop vacant and underutilized lots and consolidate parking.



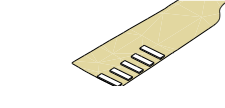
Light Industrial



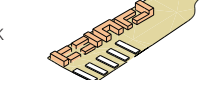
- Low rise buildings on large blocks with high levels of vacancy.
- Variable building sizes.
- Underutilized parking are lots common.
- Larger infill potential development.



Warehouse Industrial



- Large irregularly shaped blocks with high levels of vacancy.
- Low-rise buildings are surrounded by parking lots to facilitate truck loading.
- Potential to develop vacancy.

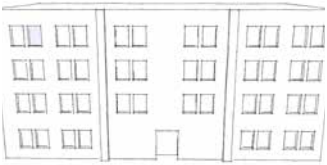




GUIDELINES FOR NEW FACADES

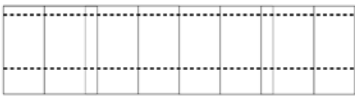
Rhythm

Horizontal Rhythm



A shared pattern in the distribution of openings and bays on the main facade of the building generates visual order and unity.

Vertical Rhythm



A facade of more than 2 levels vertically consists of 3 parts. From bottom to top are the base, the mainbody, and the crown. Legibility of these parts creates a sense of hierarchy. Aligning the divisions with adjacent buildings creates harmony on the block.

Transparency



The more windows a facade has, the more transparent it is. Transparency can create a more inviting pedestrian environment, offer natural light for users inside, and promote “eyes on the street” safety.

Depth

Architectural elements of the facade can help it from looking dull and confer other benefits.



Overhangs provide weather protection for pedestrians. They also create a visual block that prevents the overwhelming feeling created by the overall massing of the building.



Columns, whether against a wall or a corridor, interrupt the facade into discontinuous bays, bringing periodical change to the visual depth of the facade.



Openings enable visual permeability and create a sense of layered facades, especially when visible openings exist behind other openings.



Setbacks separate the facade into multiple parallel planes, bringing in an additional dimension as well as semi-open space which encourages interaction.

Scale

The facade itself and elements on it should be broken down to reduce the oppressive feeling a towering facade might otherwise evoke. Human scale leads design to a pleasant experience for pedestrians.



Massive, blank facades break down



Human scale facade elements

Hilltop



Proctor



South Tacoma



HOW CAN HISTORIC FACADES BE INCORPORATED INTO NEW DEVELOPMENT?

Conservation of Existing Facades

Some old facades in the City of Tacoma have unique value, either from historic importance, or unique features of neighborhood character. Neighborhood adaptation must consider many dimensions of these old buildings: their functions may not conform to the needs of local development and may conflict with land use regulation; their façades may be so worn that they visually detract from neighborhood aesthetics; and their structure may no longer safely support their use. Façade preservation should consider whether the physical form or the function of the structure is to be kept. If the original material is significant, then adaptive reuse could revitalize the building, and if only the façade is important, then new construction could take place with a façade easement. For a façade too worn to stand, reconstruction may be appropriate, while restoration is ideal if the city wishes to retain both the building's use and materiality.



HISTORIC FACADE



ADAPTIVE REUSE



RESTORATION



FACADISM



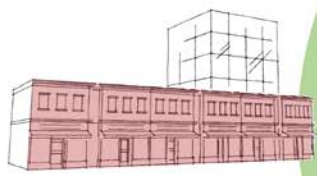
Reconstruction

CONSERVED USE

Compatibility Between Old and New Facades



When new construction takes place next to a building with a facade of value, methods should be taken to keep their facades compatible with each other. Chaos and monotony alike threaten neighborhood character.



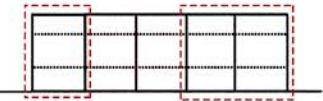
VERTICAL DISCONNECTION

Significant difference between higher and lower levels of the new construction highlights the horizontal conformity along the street rather than the vertical relationship within the building itself.



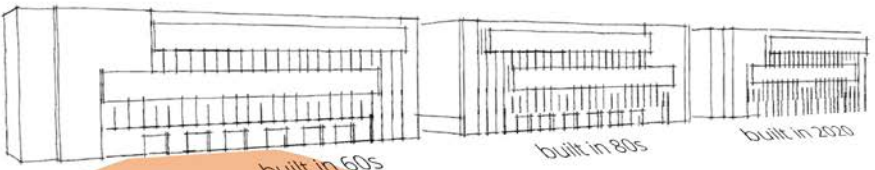
SHARED PATTERN

Similarity in window and bay patterns forges a relationship between new construction and existing facades, despite the difference in their massing.



ALIGNMENT

Aligned window distribution, floor line, and cornice automatically generates a visual continuity along the street from old facades to the new adjacent constructions.



DISTINCTIVE ERAS

The design of some old buildings is deeply influenced by the trends of their times. This can feature help people recognize the age of the structure. Completely mimicking distinctive historical features causes confusion, and detracts from the historic facades' legibility.



UNIQUE ADDITIONS

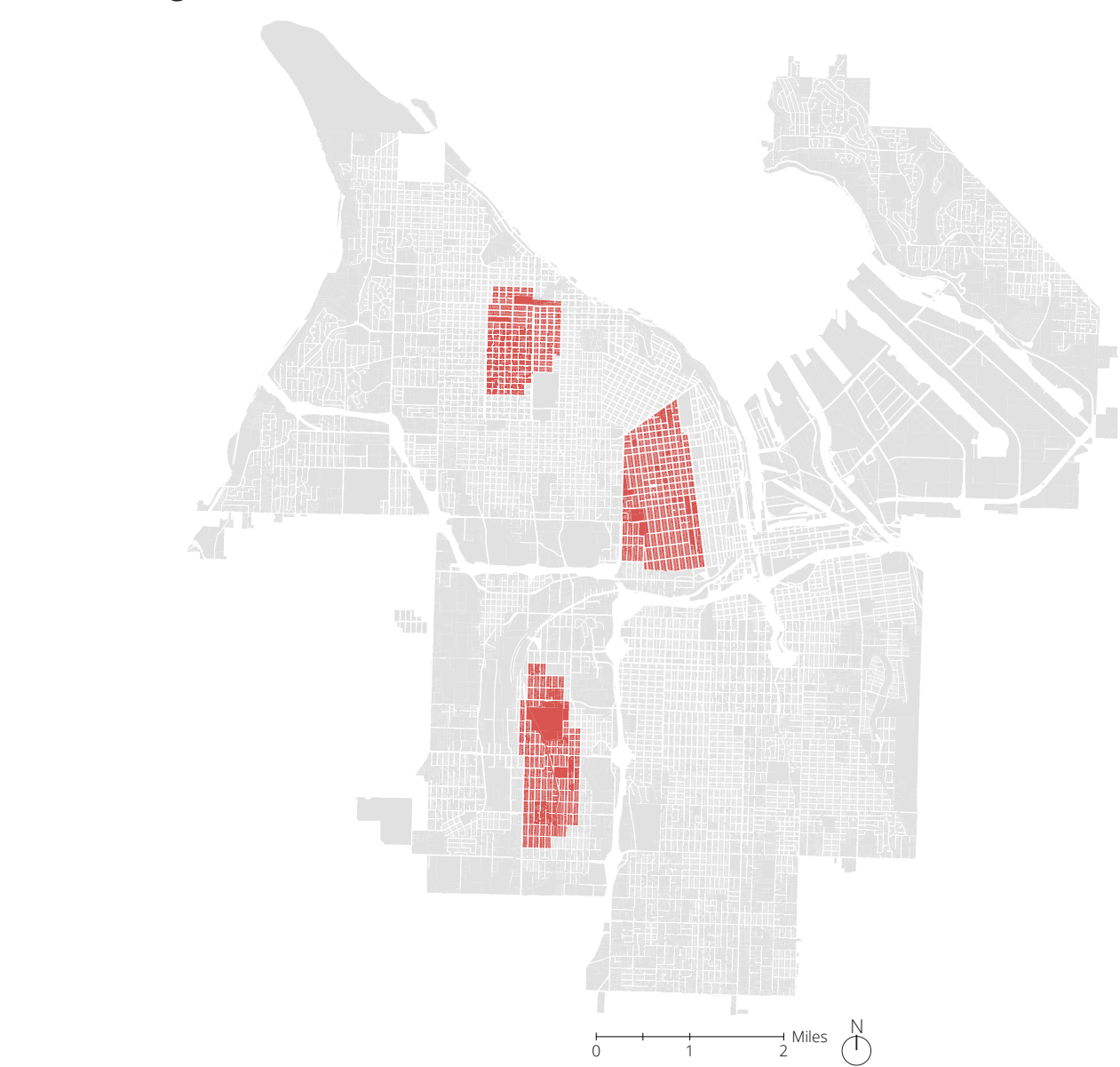
Sometimes historic buildings feature embellishments, such as bell towers. These features are usually the key identity of the building and what make them landmarks. Therefore such features should be used sparingly, adjacent buildings mimicking these features weakens the visual impact of such features.



INTRODUCTION

While intended for public benefit, public space is often not used to its full potential. Reclaiming the public realm in our neighborhoods can build a healthier city experience for residents. Through placemaking, a process of development that prioritizes identity and reinforces place attachments, cities can grow the role of public space as a connector between people and place. In this section, we explore aspects of reshaping under-used space by first identifying those spaces, re-imagining their utilization, and providing creative alternatives that encourage community activation. We hope to guide and revitalize Tacoma's public spaces by identifying opportunities for enhanced public value within our shared spaces.

Tacoma Neighborhoods



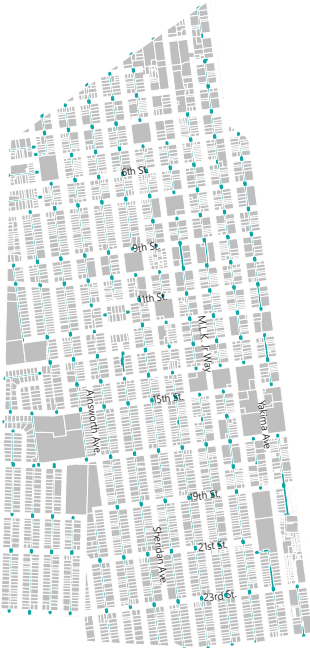
PUBLIC REALM ELEMENTS

HILLTOP

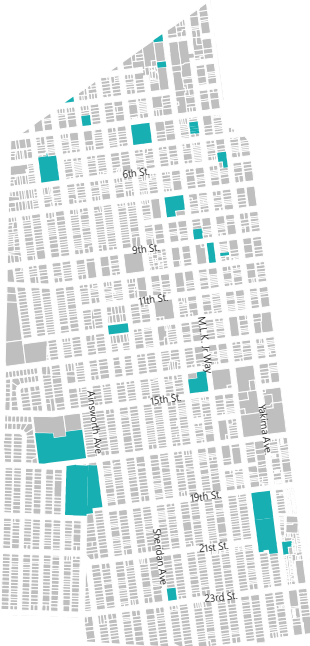
PROCTOR

SOUTH TACOMA

ALLEYWAYS



PLAZAS/OPEN SPACE



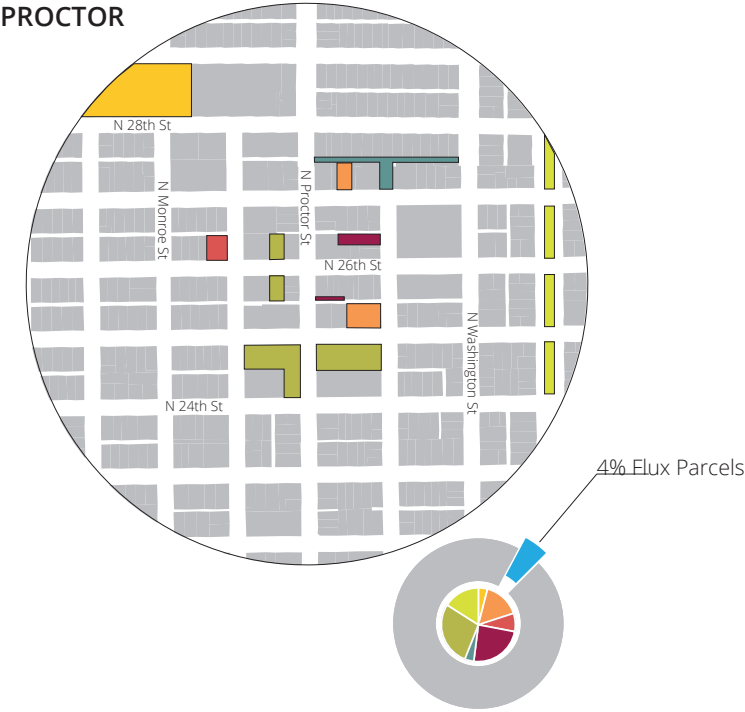
FACADES



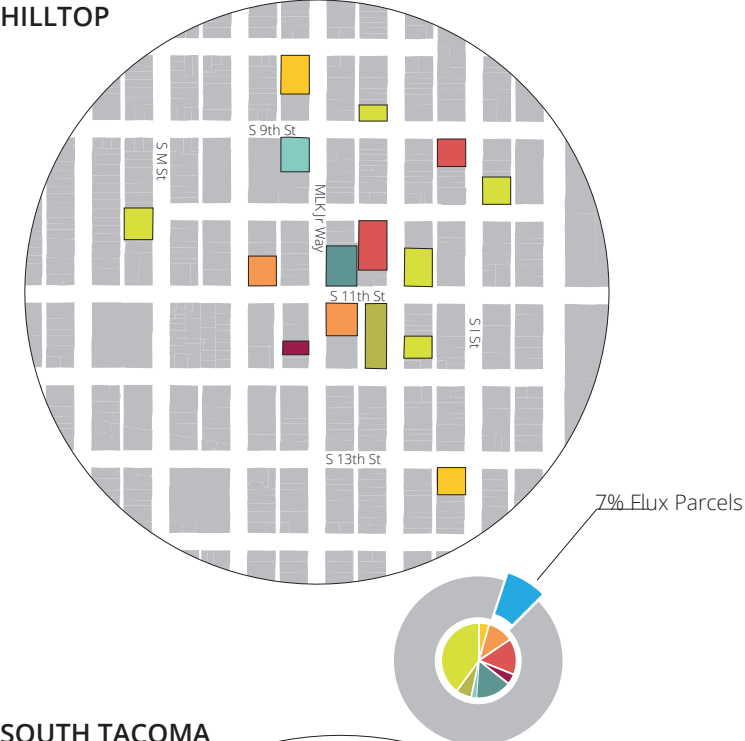


FLUX SPACE FOR INCREMENTAL DEVELOPMENT

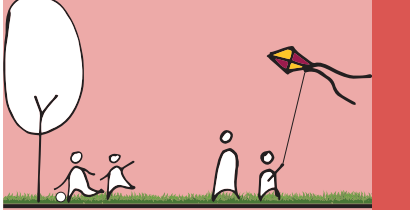
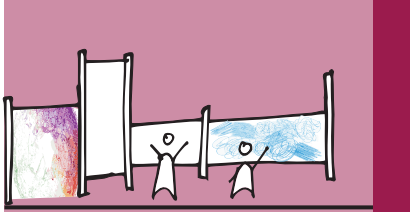
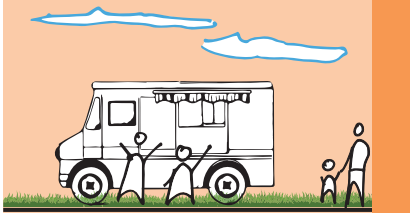
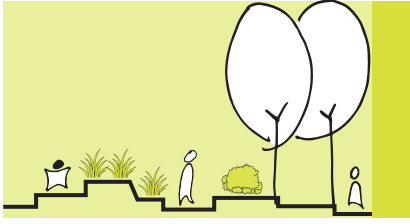
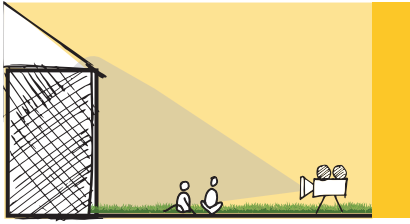
PROCTOR



HILLTOP



SOUTH TACOMA



Pop-up Cinema

Inflatable movie screens make it possible to host pop-up cinemas nearly anywhere. This makes it possible to complete the life cycle of a vacant space by programming a nighttime activity in a parking lot, park, or vacant commercial parcel.

Community Garden

Community gardens vary in size due to land availability. The intention of creating an urban garden is to have a medium to build community and connection to nature. It is best to incorporate a common gathering space in the design to get wider community involvement and build a network of patrons invested in the success of the garden.

Festival Space

Festival spaces are essential for a community to maintain and express its cultural heritage. These spaces generate activity and create a platform to build social capital as well as incite economic activity.

Food Truck Event

Food truck events are best suited for larger open spaces like vacant lots and parking lots where there is easy access for vehicles. These are opportunities to develop local businesses and bring food to existing community assets and events.

Flea Market

Flea markets are opportunities for a community to engage with small or local businesses in an area. Besides the benefits of economic development, they support entrepreneurship at a micro level and create value out of an underutilized space. Flea markets are ideally held on festival streets, fields, or parking lots with space for 30-40 10x10 booths.

Community Mural Wall

Public art serves as a medium for the voice and aesthetics of a community. It can occur on any surface and capture multi-generational values and voices. Public art also creates opportunities to pay homage to important community symbols or leaders.

Playfield

Vacant parcels can easily be transformed into dynamic multi-use spaces that welcome multi-generational use. These interventions are nimble, and can fit many parcel sizes.  
330' x 360' – Soccer field  
94' x 50' – Basketball court  
45' x 50' – Playground

Amphitheater

Amphitheaters function well in spaces that have a natural slope or elevation change, creating a stage or area of focus. Bench seating can be built into a sloped hill to act simultaneously as terraced landscaping, and event seating. A typical stage should be 24' x 12' and have seating arranged in a 130 degree fan arrangement. This allows spectators to sit closer to the performer and promotes a more intimate relationship between the viewer and performer.

HOW DO WE PRESERVE FLUX SPACE TO PROMOTE A MIXED-LIFE NEIGHBORHOOD?  
Through the implementation of productive easements

What is a Productive Easement?

Land owners have a bundle of rights including the right to occupy, lease, sell, develop, and construct buildings on their property. Landowners have the opportunity to cede one or more of those rights while retaining ownership of the remainder of the rights, creating an easement with a negotiable timeline. A productive easement would function as a legal agreement between a landowner and a qualified organization like a local non-profit. As an incentive to conserve these spaces for impermanent uses, the property owner would receive tax deductions in exchange for the use of their property.



Site Selection

The site should be in proximity to a commercial corridor, be either underutilized or vacant, and be physically capable of accommodating impermanent uses.



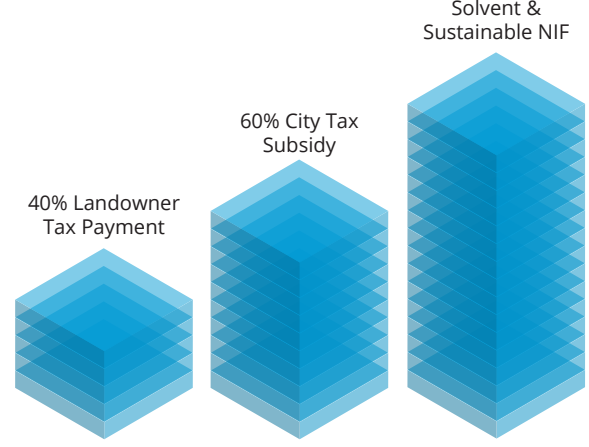
Organization Input

The adopting organization should be prepared to provide a plan for programming and use during the time of the lease. These uses should encourage mixed-life space by developing programming that reaches multi-generational members of the community, and finds diverse uses for a single space.



Application

Pierce County currently has an Application for Classification or Reclassification as Open Space for Current Use Assessment RCW 84.34 that can be adapted to quantify the proposed properties. A document like this would create a public benefit rating system to benchmark the tax reductions for the landowner. As the document is currently written, an impermanent easement would qualify for a 60% market value tax reduction. For Productive Easements this could be increased to 75%, as that would provide a larger incentive to participate in the program.



Why Flux Space?

In a city, some spaces are stable, coherent, and predictable, while others are not. These other spaces are what urban design theorist Gary Hack describes as “flux spaces”. While flux spaces are vulnerable to change, displacement, or undesired uses, they also present an opportunity for positive transformation and community engagement that can guide the future development of a block or neighborhood. With lean and nimble interventions, these transitional areas can be redefined and reincorporated into the public realm. There are opportunities to incorporate mixed life spaces in currently under or un-utilized parcels in the urban fabric. Mixed life spaces are settings, designed or natural, that support a diversity of people, experiences, and meanings. These spaces are “anti-designed” for overlapping and disparate uses, allowing fine-grained relationships to develop. Such spaces are characterized by community ownership and a freedom to choose what uses will occupy the space, including zones of expression where community can be formed and informed.



How Can The Process Create Dynamic Spaces?

By coupling a Neighborhood Investment Fund (NIF) with Productive Easements, money from tax revenues can jumpstart the process of activate flux parcels. The City of Tacoma could subsidize the tax difference saved by the landowner participating in the Productive Easement program, generating a fund that would be able to sustain long-term investment in the neighborhood. A NIF can create reliable funding sources that can be deployed quickly. This will create an environment where development and flux spaces can coexist successfully with the support the City and neighborhood stakeholders.



Flexibility

Preservation easements can be negotiated to fit lots of all sizes and can be tailored to meet the needs of the landowner and leasing party. These spaces can be designed to accomplish nuanced objectives, specific to the neighborhood context, which makes it valuable to communities of different socio-economic makeup.



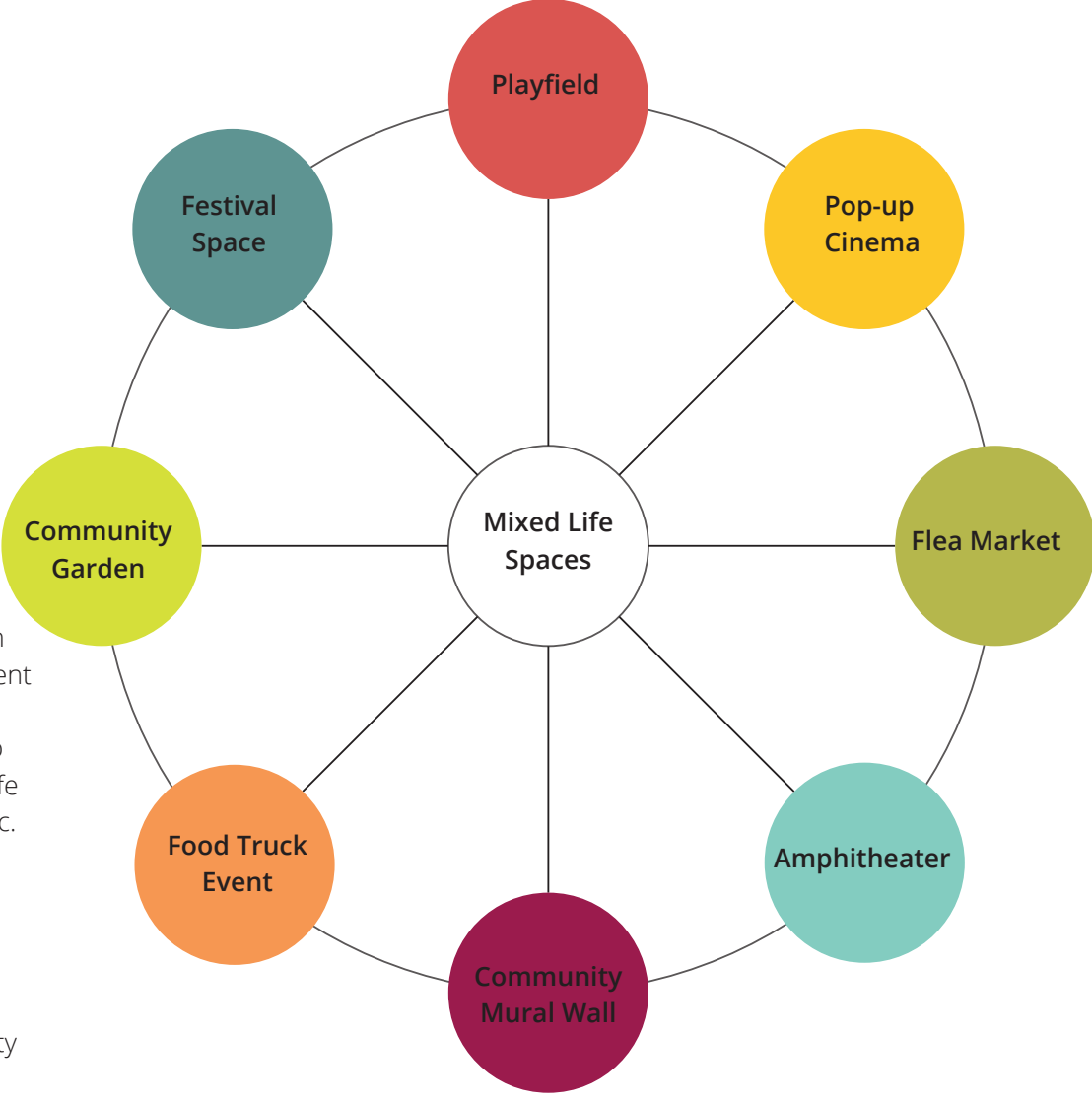
Property Tax

Newly developed lands cost communities more than undeveloped lands because of the increase in property taxes. By making undeveloped land available for use by local organizations, property taxes are not increased by the new use and the property can continue to be productive until it is slated for development. This is a sustainable practice that can make development more thoughtful and responsive to community needs.



Displacement Prevention

A significant public benefit of productive easements is that by earmarking these spaces for local use, they encourage entrepreneurship and civic engagement at a micro level. This provides opportunities for local businesses to develop patrons and serve those in proximity. Privately owned lands can be protected for specific, economically productive uses generating more local revenue and growing the value of the community without external input. This in turn can be a productive space for social capital and economic resilience.





ALLEYWAY COMPONENTS

Alleys and the spaces they encompass can be amazing places. Their narrow, segmented form can be leveraged with treatment of expansive walls and dramatic lighting, while green space and pedestrian activation can enhance their appeal as places for everyday life. Considering lighting, pavement, vegetation and seating, this project focuses on the many benefits alleyways can bring to the public realm, businesses, and the environment.



Categories

Lighting

Lighting goes a long way to creating beautiful and safe places. Alleys can sometimes have the stigma of being unsafe and are often neglected. Better lighting amenities have the potential to reduce those negative characteristics of alleys. Specialized lighting can create an artful and dramatic experience. Regardless of the intended ambiance, alleyway lighting fixtures should be appropriate for the outdoors and avoid light pollution. Eco-friendly options are abundant as well. What lights can Tacoma add to bring new life to its alleyways?

Pavement

Alleys are often among the most under-repaired areas of the city. Newer pavement styles can make substantial differences in terms of maintenance needs, as well as resident experience and environmental impact. Permeable pavers, for example, allow the ground to absorb and filter more water directly, reducing strain on the city's stormwater infrastructure. Such pavers are also more durable and stylish. Choosing the right combination of colors and materials can reduce unwanted side effects like heat retention.

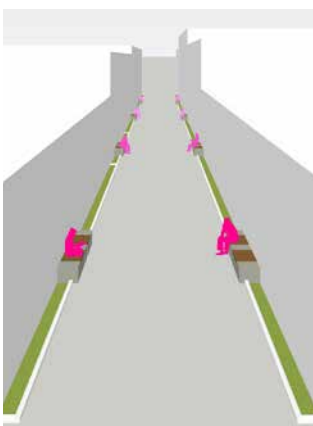
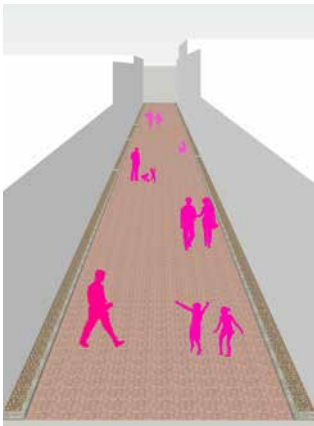
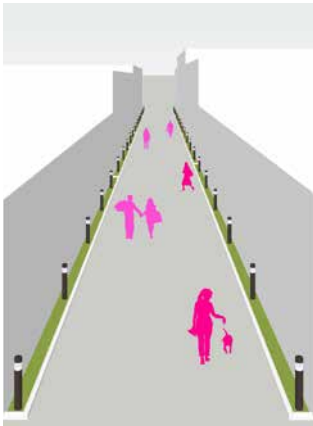
Vegetation

Improving landscaping and adding vegetation are often the surest ways to change public space for the better. Plants have a wide array of benefits, including improving aesthetics, increasing property value, and contributing to environmental quality. Trees and plants have preferences, however, and it is important to identify which plants thrive in which environments, paying attention to sun, shade, and water requirements. Planting appropriately will reduce maintenance costs for the city. Native plants are usually a sure way to provide appropriate, resilient vegetation for an area.

Seating

By providing seating options, a city can help promote recovery of alleyways for pedestrians and other users. Benches and chairs afford opportunities for respite and socializing. Smaller seating options could serve as overflow seating for businesses during busy hours. Through the activation of alleyways, cities have the chance to advance the public right of way and overall quality of life for locals and visitors.

Options



TACOMA TRANSFORMATIONS  
BEFORE + AFTER

Current Public Space Areas

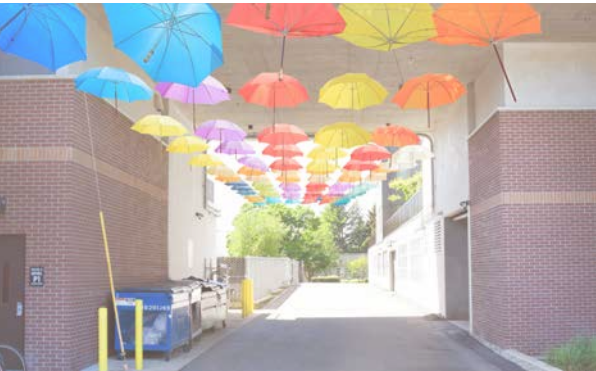
Underutilized Space / Alleyway



This recent development includes a large, gaping entryway that leaves an odd, unoccupied space to face the public commercial area. Given the breadth and high clearance, this space could be a venue for temporary or permanent public art installations. This unused space could be transformed into a refreshing pocket that greets business owners, their patrons, and residents from around the area.

- + Public Art Installation
- + Light Fixtures

Transformed Public Space Areas



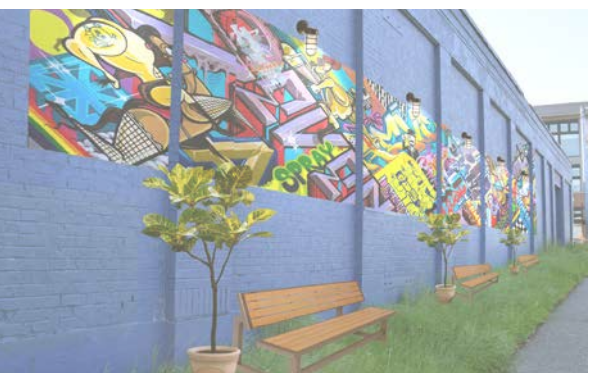
Agitageda Art Festival : Agueda Street Umbrella Art

Underutilized Facade / Wall



This lengthy blue wall is a prime place to have local artists display their talent. Bare facades such as this can create an oppressive environment for pedestrians. In providing a place for creativity, an uninviting space can be transformed into a site for expression reflective of the neighborhood. Additional elements such as light fixtures, planters, and benches can increase comfort even more.

- + Public Art
- + Benches
- + Plants
- + Light Fixtures



Wall Art : Revoke X Detroit

Underutilized Alley



This alleyway is between two parking lots and runs the length of the street. There are many alleyways with these characteristics in the three neighborhoods studied. The entire area is covered with asphalt and absent of amenities. Resurfacing the alley with permeable pavers would improve the appearance of the area and also have benefits for local watersheds and the overall environment. Trees can be added to provide shade for pedestrians or locals looking for a place to rest.

- + Green Permeable Pavement
- + Landscaping Trees



Pavement made by Lunix Eco Company

Underutilized Open Space



IRVING CHU

A barely used parking lot with high walls of similar dimensions can be a perfect spot to add an archway or hanging art pieces. With the addition of heavy-duty wires stretched across the parking lot, this space can have rotating artwork or festival banners to announce community events.

- + Public Art
- + Light Fixtures



Art Installation by Sam Ortiz

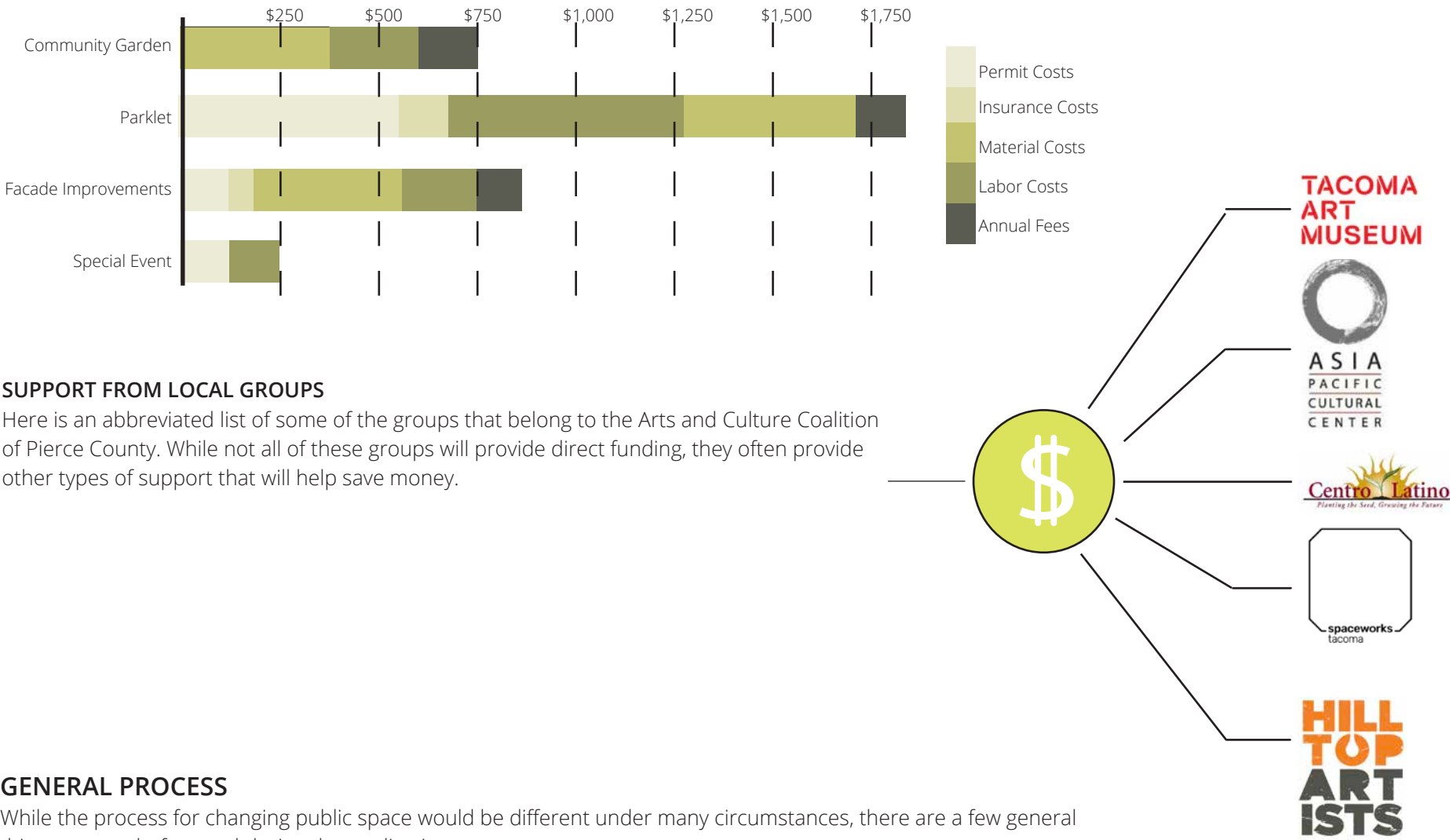


INTANGIBLE HERITAGE PRESERVATION PROCESSES

This project stems from the idea of protecting and promoting intangible heritage within the communities of Tacoma. Intangible heritage encompasses the living expressions and traditions of communities. The importance of intangible heritage within communities cannot be understated as it provides stepping stones for knowledge and acceptance of all types of cultures within cities. There are four main pillars within intangible heritage, including: being traditional and contemporary all at once, being representative, being community based, and creating an inclusive environment. While planners and policy makers within the City of Tacoma have the breadth of knowledge to help cities function, creating and promoting intangible heritage within communities can be a richer experience when community members are able to make impacts on their neighborhood. The purpose of these graphics is to provide the general public of Tacoma with the basic knowledge to transform underutilized public spaces into areas that promote heritage. There are four different processes to show how spaces can be transformed showing the four pillars of intangible heritage. And while this project is by no means a comprehensive set of graphics, it aims to inspire and empower community members to make the changes they want to see in their neighborhoods.

COSTS

Before deciding what type of change an individual or group wishes to make to a space, it is useful to know the what the likely cost of the project will be. In the estimates below, permit costs were taken from the City of Tacoma or nearby cities, and the construction, material, and labor costs were based on national averages. While some of the more permanent changes can be costly, there are different community groups and government programs that can help raise funds or sponsor the project.



SUPPORT FROM LOCAL GROUPS

Here is an abbreviated list of some of the groups that belong to the Arts and Culture Coalition of Pierce County. While not all of these groups will provide direct funding, they often provide other types of support that will help save money.

GENERAL PROCESS

While the process for changing public space would be different under many circumstances, there are a few general things to note before and during the application process.

Identify Location

Identifying a underutilized space is important. A good technique is to survey nearby neighbors for their opinion on the location and proposed development.

Submit Pre Application Request

This application can be done online and is free. Make sure to include a site plan, a description of your projected proposal and any questions you may have.

Wait for Email from the City

You can expect a response within 1-2 business days. The email will include answers to questions and directions on how to proceed with your project or why the pre-approval was denied.

Before Handing in Permit Application

Be sure to make a checklist of all the items you will need and funds to raise before submitting the permit request.

CHANGING PUBLIC SPACE

Here are four examples of how public space can be changed by community members. Important information has been drawn out of the application process.

Inclusive Design

While adding a parklet to a public space is one of the more expensive projects, it invites community members to enjoy the public right-of-way in ways that they haven't before. While the business that the parklet is in front of often oversees the project, since these spaces are in the public right of way they can be enjoyed by anyone, creating a sense of safety and inclusion.



Creating community partnerships when creating a parklet could be very beneficial in raising funds for the construction costs. There are also multiple permits that must be obtained so keeping in contact with city officials is a good idea.



Having blue prints for the parklet is an important piece of the permitting process. It is often requirement that a design professional is consulted during the permitting process.



Traditional and Contemporary Design

As cities continue to evolve, long-time business owners can evolve their storefronts as well. Adding some facade changes such updated signage, better lighting, or an outdoor cafe are ways to help these businesses engage with the public sphere and local community.



Material and labor costs are often the most costly portion of this process. The national average for materials and labor to install new signage varies by almost \$500 so be sure to get multiple quotes.



The permit application for sidewalk cafes is free so if you notice a business that would benefit from outdoor seating, notifying the owner of this permit could be very beneficial.

Representative Design

The most affordable and streamlined project that can effect public spaces is a special event, whether it be a block party, concert, parade, farmers market, or community fundraiser. These events are times when all people from the community have a chance to interact and celebrate one another. Application times are generally very short at 60 days.



An event of 50 or more attendees requires a special permit. The price of the permit depends on how many will be there, however anything less than 1,000 people will be \$25.



Be sure to stop and think about litter management, police presence, barricades, and special signage before turning in the permit application.



Community Based Design

The city of Tacoma has ample resources for creating a community garden. Community gardens are important in Tacoma because besides creating community interaction through teamwork, these gardens can be resources for communities that are under-served and don't have easy access to healthy foods.



A board of six members will need to be appointed to maintain and run the garden. A membership contract will also be required along with a membership fee.



A three-step plan for conflict resolution should be adopted by each garden. First, identify the conflict. Second, attempt to resolve it within the garden. Third, involve the garden manager.



As a collection of graphic resources, this project aims to provide an ongoing resource for the City of Tacoma throughout their implementation of an Urban Design Program. Graphics that detail the 20-Minute Neighborhood concept communicate the city's broad goal to grow the Proctor, Hilltop and South Tacoma neighborhoods into walkable centers for mixed-uses and public life, while also suggesting specific contextual interventions that may enhance neighborhood resilience, identity and wayfinding. Additionally, the graphics identify places adjacent to transit stops where investments in public infrastructure may have the most impact, while charts and matrices can help inform city decisions by weighing the physical, social and economic aspects of Green Stormwater Infrastructure. Mobility and Right-of-way graphics summarize research into existing standards of right-of-way design, while illustrating existing conditions in each of the three focus neighborhoods and detailing unique conditions and future potentials of specific sites, including primary Proctor intersection and Tacoma Dome Station. The Built Form graphics tell the story of architectural heritage and urban formation over time in Proctor, Hilltop and South Tacoma, highlighting opportunities for block-scale adaptation. Graphics also communicate physical aspects of façade design, while discussing tensions between preservation and densification. Finally, graphics that focus on Public Realm Activation present opportunities for both temporary and permanent change. They identify elements of the public realm in each of the three neighborhoods, focusing on the potential for changes in lighting, pavement, vegetation and seating to enhance the quality of alleyways for all, and for temporary changes in use within public “flux” spaces to better contribute to public life. Finally, to facilitate preservation of intangible heritage, the process by which individuals can change a public space in their neighborhood is communicated through a combination of icon graphics and simple text.

By focusing work on these four topics at a variety of scales, we hope these graphics provide useful and meaningful representations of ways that both the City of Tacoma and its community members can be agents of positive change. With these ideas and graphics, we hope the City is better equipped to communicate ideas to the public and facilitate the growth of equitable, vibrant, connected, and self-sufficient Tacoma neighborhoods.

