



COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOP

BELLTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD SEATTLE, WA

BRIEFING BOOKLET
Workshop: Saturday, April 18, 2015



American Planning Association
Making Great Communities Happen

■ The American Planning Association provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in planning, promoting education and citizen empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change.

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APA Community Assistance Program

Please visit:
www.planning.org/communityassistance/

Community Planning Workshops

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Community Planning Assistance Teams | CPAT

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www.planning.org/communityassistance/teams

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PREFACE

The American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), in coordination with the Seattle Local Host Committee, prepared this briefing booklet to prepare participants for the Community Planning Workshop during the 2015 APA National Planning Conference.

The following experts from the AICP Community Planning Workshop Committee were instrumental in workshop planning and provided content and review of this book:

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THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The purpose of the Community Assistance Program is to serve communities facing limited resources by helping them address planning issues such as social equity and affordability, economic development, sustainability, consensus building, and urban design, among others. By pairing expert urban planning professionals from around the country with residents and other stakeholders from local communities, the program seeks to foster education, engagement, and empowerment. As part of each project's goals, a community develops a vision that promotes a safe, ecologically sustainable, economically vibrant, and healthy environment.

Through both the Community Planning Workshop held during the APA National Planning Conference every year, and Community Planning Assistance Teams (CPAT) projects conducted throughout the year in communities across the country, APA works with its members, local residents, business owners, civic organizations and other stakeholders, elected officials, allied organizations, universities and other community partners to engage citizens and provide tools, knowledge-sharing, and increased opportunities to plan for their future.

GUIDING VALUES

APA's professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), is responsible for the annual Community Planning Workshop, as well as 4-to-5-person CPATs that provide longer, more intensive assistance to communities in need. Addressing issues of social equity in planning and development is a priority of APA and AICP. The Community Assistance Program was created to express this value through service to communities in need across the United States and abroad.

Community assistance is built into the professional role of a planner. One principle of the *AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* states that certified planners shall aspire to "seek social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration. Another principle is that certified planners should aspire to "contribute time and effort to groups lacking in adequate planning resources and to voluntary pro-

fessional activities.”

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

In recognition of the key role urban and regional planners play in shaping vibrant, sustainable, and equitable communities, the APA Board of Directors established the “Community Planning Team” initiative in 1995. This initiative resulted in a pro bono effort to assist an economically struggling African American community in Greensboro, North Carolina. APA has continued to develop a pro bono planning program that provides assistance to communities in need.

Another Community Assistance Program initiative is the Community Planning Workshop, which is held in the host city of APA’s National Planning Conference every year. The workshop is a one-day event that engages community leaders, citizens, and guest planners from around the country (and abroad) in discussing and proposing specific solutions to urban planning challenges. Workshops typically begin with an introduction of individuals involved and a tour of the community, neighborhood, or site. Participants form breakout groups that begin by discussing existing issues, then participants brainstorm new ideas based on community needs and sound planning techniques. Each breakout group “reports out” on its results to the entire group. Facilitators then lead a discussion to form consensus around future goals and ways to achieve these goals. Upon the conclusion of the workshop, the local community composes a final report that incorporates workshop results and specific actions that local officials could take to turn the project vision into reality. More information about this and previous workshops is available at:

<https://www.planning.org/communityassistance/workshops.htm>

In 2005, program efforts were notably increased after the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina in the Gulf Coast region. APA immediately embarked on a number of initiatives and projects including Planning Assistance Teams in the affected cities of Henderson Point, Mississippi, and New Orleans, Mandeville and Slidell in Louisiana. Another Gulf Coast recovery project included the Dutch Dialogues, which brought American planners together with Dutch experts to transform the way that Louisiana relates to and manages its water resources.

AICP broadened the scope of the CPAT program with its 2009 project in Buzzard Point, a neighborhood in Southwest Washington, D.C. Over the course of the site visit, the team met with more than 40 neighborhood groups, government agencies, residents, and other stakeholders. The team advised community leaders on long-range strategies to strengthen existing and proposed transit links and increase accessibility, improve affordable housing developments, position the area as a major gateway to the city, and to deal with dominant industrial areas within the neighborhood.

The last several years of completed CPAT projects in Matthews, North Carolina; Story County, Iowa; Maricopa, Arizona; Wakulla County, Florida; Dubuque County, Iowa; La Feria, Texas; Franklin, Tennessee; South Hartsville, South Carolina; Helena, Montana; Lyons, Colorado and others are important landmarks in the development of the CPAT program. They mark the inauguration of CPAT as an ongoing programmatic effort. More information on CPAT projects, including full downloadable reports, is available at:

www.planning.org/communityassistance/teams

The Community Assistance Program is an integrated part of APA’s service, outreach, and professional development activities. More information about APA’s Community Assistance Program is available here:

www.planning.org/communityassistance/



The American Planning Association's
Professional Institute

**American Institute
of Certified Planners**

Making Great Communities Happen

BEYOND COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOPS AT THE NATIONAL PLANNING CONFERENCE

The APA Board and the AICP Commission are committed to the Community Assistance Program (CAP), and the organization hopes that additional resources might be secured to send Community Planning Assistance Teams (CPAT) to cities and towns struggling with issues of social equity. Like APA's Great Places in America program, CAP has the potential to capture public attention and increase understanding of how planning can inspire communities and spur stakeholders into action. Tomorrow's Great Place could well be the neighborhood hosting today's CPAT.

As we work to create a broader and more robust program, it is important that we distinguish our efforts from the pro bono efforts of other organizations. What we bring to the table is different and, in many ways, more valuable. Our program will not be the right fit for every community, but for those that are committed to dealing with issues of social equity, CPAT can help crystallize their visions and propose methods and means for ultimately achieving them.

Along with AICP, a few of APA's Chapters currently have pro bono planning assistance programs of their own. The Illinois, New Jersey, and Washington Chapters operate thriving pro bono programs that send teams of planners into communities within their states. Their successes have set a standard that is inspiring other chapters to consider establishing organized pro bono planning programs of their own. Community by community, we are working to diminish inequities in the distribution of public investment; improve the quality of and access to facilities; create more sustainable neighborhoods; improve access to transportation, health care, and social services; create jobs and stronger commercial districts; and enhance safety and environmental quality.

Watch out for opportunities to volunteer in your chapter or in the expanding Community Assistance Program. The potential benefits — to you, to our organization, and to CAP communities — are inestimable. To learn more about the 2015 program and view reports from previous projects, please visit:

www.planning.org/communityassistance/teams

APA Chapter Pro Bono Assistance Programs:



APA-Illinois | www.ilapa.org/probono



APA-New Jersey | <http://njplanning.org/about/community-planning-assistance-program>



APA-Washington | www.washington-apa.org/community-planning-assistance-teams

GROUND RULES

ALL DAY

In order for the day to go smoothly and effectively, the following are ground rules for the workshop:

- There are no observers. This is a participation exercise. Everyone is encouraged and welcome to join in and everyone has something to contribute.
- There are no right or wrong answers as we think about the future of the sites.
- Respect the opinion of others. Encourage others to participate.
- Commit yourself to a team approach—together we can generate ideas and options.
- Think in terms of how to make things happen.

BREAKOUT GROUP WORK SESSIONS

1. Everyone should introduce themselves, quickly.

- Stakeholder volunteers include your association or role in the study area, how long you have been active in the area, what resource you bring or role you play in the Workshop and what you hope to achieve by participating.
- AICP Participant/Planners identify where you come from, where you work, what you do in your profession and what you hope to achieve by participating.

2. Select both a record keeper and a spokesperson:

- The record keeper's job is to accurately capture and record the major points of discussion. The record keeper needs to be a good listener and be able to quickly record key points.
- The spokesperson's responsibility will be to report back to the entire group of attendees after reconvening on the idea of each breakout group during report out sessions.
- The spokespersons from the breakout groups should be ready to report when the time comes. If they need some help in clearly presenting the findings of your group, please do help them along.

3. Also, as a breakout group participant:

- Take some time to clearly state the issue for discussion.
- If you do not understand anything presented—do ask for clarification.
- Challenge your fellow participants to think outside the box.
- Do not dominate the discussion.
- Think in terms of doable steps in recommending approaches and setting priorities.

4. Also, during the report out sessions:

- Listen to the presentation.
- Contribute to the general discussion.
- Ask for clarification as needed. There are no dumb questions!
- Be respectful of other's perspectives.
- Try not to be repetitive but build on the discussion of others.

FOLLOW-UP AND OUTCOMES

Following the workshop, the Committee and APA staff will work to produce a final report that captures the project background, recommendations, phasing and implementation strategies. In the past, participants have used the workshop as an opportunity to organize additional work on the project. These efforts included:

- Identifying a strong team of speakers to present the workshop recommendations to elected officials and city agencies (e.g. planning department, economic development agency).
- Identifying a select group of planners to keep in touch with the community for follow up consultation and advice for implementation.

If you have a specific interest in any of the follow-up activities, please contact a member of the Committee during the Workshop.

AICP CERTIFICATION MAINTENANCE (CM) CREDIT

Participants in the full 2015 AICP Community Planning Workshop are eligible for 4 CM credits.

SUMMARY OF 2015 AICP COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOP

WORKSHOP DATE AND LOCATION

The Workshop will take place on Saturday, April 18th, 2015. Workshop participants should meet at the Washington State Convention Center, Level One, South Galleria (or the “mobile workshop departure area”) **NO LATER THAN 7:50 AM.**

We will depart by foot promptly at 8:00 AM to the Belltown Community Center (415 Bell St – at the south corner of Bell and 5th). *If for some reason you are late to meet the group at the convention center in the morning, please proceed to the community center on your own.* The 6,000 square foot community center was established in the center of the Belltown neighborhood in 2012 after an exhaustive planning process involving years of work and numerous alternative sites. The site is adjacent to Bell Street and its recent park improvements. Free wifi is available in the center.

PARTICIPANTS

The Workshop will involve approximately 25 urban planning professionals from around the country, as well as approximately 10-20 local stakeholders and planners who will serve as tour guides and knowledge resources to the Workshop participants throughout the day.

SCHEDULE

7:50 AM

Meet at convention center and walk to Belltown Community Center | This is about a 10-minute walk and will provide good context for visitors about Belltown and its relationship with downtown. Workshop leaders and community members will point out key sites and notable information along the way.

8:30 AM

Opening remarks/background presentation | Members of the AICP Workshop Committee will provide participants with an overview of Belltown, including its rich planning history, notable demographics, and a discussion of the topics to be addressed in breakout group sessions throughout the day.

Bob Bengford, AICP, Workshop chair and partner at MAKERS architecture and urban design, whose firm is located within the neighborhood and has been involved in streetscape design efforts on 2nd and 3rd Avenue. Bob will provide opening remarks, discuss the workshop agenda, goals, and instructions.

Lyle Bicknel, Senior Urban Designer for the City of Seattle’s Department of Planning and Development, will provide an overview of the neighborhood’s planning history and background on key issues.

Tom Graf, an active community member, will provide additional background on the neighborhood and thoughts on each of the issues from a community member’s perspective.

9:00 AM

Divide into groups and walking tour of study area | After the opening presentation, participants can choose from one of four topical groups to participate in:

- Neighborhood parks, recreation, and public realm improvements

- Affordable/workforce housing strategies
- Community services, public safety, nuisance strategies
- Sound Transit 3 opportunities and challenges for Belltown

Committee members and/or community members will guide the tours. Facilitators will explain the significant features, points of interest, and resources along the way that are most closely related to the topic for which each break out group will undertake special exercises during the day. Participants are encouraged to take photos and ask questions of the facilitator during the tour.

10:15 AM

Return to center into breakout groups

10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Breakout session #1: Scoping the problem and preliminary alternatives

Each Breakout Group will move to assigned tables where they will identify a leader and scribe from among participants. Each Breakout Group will have a Facilitator who will guide the breakout session exercises and keep the group focused on the workshop's goal:

WORKSHOP GOAL: TO IDENTIFY ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES THAT MEET COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES FOR ADDRESSING THESE PLANNING CHALLENGES. The expected outcomes could include:

- **Immediate action** | Short range, priority projects to address the immediate needs of quality of life and character/identity of Belltown. This could include policy and regulatory changes, as well as low or modest cost public improvements.
- **List of top priority actions/strategies** | Beyond any possible immediate actions, the groups may identify subsequent steps that will be important to address the various issues and opportunities facing the neighborhood.
- **New concepts for future consideration** | This could include new concepts or variations of existing concepts developed by the group based on the context and opportunities of Belltown and suggestions of participants.

Questions to guide the group's discussion will be provided at each table. Background information on the topics is available in the Appendices. Resource persons from the community will be available to answer questions and provide more background information.

The objectives of this session are to:

1. Outline the scope of the issue/problem;
2. Point out barriers to implementation; and
3. Suggest alternative approaches for overcoming the most important barrier; and
4. Identify best practice examples and models that Belltown should be aware of and research.

A spokesperson for each group will prepare an oral summary of the group's discussion.

12:00 PM

Working lunch | Lunch will be available for everyone. While everyone enjoys their lunch, a spokesperson from each group will make a 5-minute presentation to the entire workshop group and

encourage feedback from participants of other groups. Pay special attention to common themes among the Breakout Groups.

1:30 PM

Breakout session #2: Meaningful action | Facilitators for each Breakout Group will help the group use the feedback from the plenary session to refine and prioritize their proposed concepts over the next 90 minutes. A spokesperson for each group will prepare slides and/or a flip chart and oral summary to present the group's action plan.

3:00 PM

Break

3:15 PM

Presentations | Groups present actions, strategies, and concepts to the plenary.

4:15 PM

Discussion | Follow-up planner/stakeholder summary and discussion.

5:00 PM

Workshop complete

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Planners from around the country and abroad are attending the American Planning Association's 2015 National Planning Conference in Seattle, Washington, April 18-21. APA offers a wide range of education sessions, mobile workshops, orientation tours, and many other professional networking and development opportunities throughout the conference. Since 2001, APA's professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), has organized the Community Planning Workshop in the host city of the conference. The workshop allows planners attending the conference the chance to assist a community with a focused planning issue.

The Local Host Committee, a group of APA's Washington Chapter members, work with APA staff throughout the year on organizing the conference, including the Community Planning Workshop. A subset of Committee members identify a community, then work with local planners, civic groups, and other stakeholders to organize a day-long workshop to focus on specific issues and goals. In general, the AICP Community Planning Workshop is designed to:

- Provide transferable assistance regarding a planning issue of critical importance to the designated community;
- Provide training on techniques for conducting a successful workshop or charrette;
- Serve as a legacy of the national planning conference for the host city and local community;
- Highlight the capabilities of the planning profession;
- Visibly demonstrate planning to the public; and
- Provide training for both the practitioners and the community on public consensus while honing skills in community participation and problem solving.

At this year's AICP Community Planning Workshop, planners will be tackling a number of pressing issues facing Seattle's evolving Belltown neighborhood. This workshop, with the participation of planners from all over the country and beyond, presents opportunities to view these issues with a set of fresh eyes. APA planners will collaborate with City staff, local community members, and other local planning volunteers in examining these issues and identifying short term, immediate actions, neighborhood priorities, and concepts for future consideration.

BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Belltown is a bustling area of Seattle known for its trendy, young professional crowd — and the restaurants, coffee shops, and boutiques that come with it. Due to its proximity to downtown, it's one of the most densely populated (and highly popular) areas of the city. The residents of the area enjoy an urban lifestyle, which is embodied in the many lofts, high-rises, and renovated warehouses re-purposed into studios that line the streets.

Belltown holds many great assets and features, but the community hosts a number of challenges.

- It is home to multiple social service agencies that serve the poor and homeless.
- Major transportation corridors traverse the area, creating safety, circulation, and design character challenges.
- The popularity of the nightlife creates conflicts with the residential population.
- The neighborhood features very limited parks and open space.
- There's an interest in creating greater housing diversity (i.e. families with children).
- There's a desire to improve the neighborhood's connection to the waterfront.

GOALS OF THE WORKSHOP

As a participant in this year's Community Planning Workshop, you are being asked to help the Belltown neighborhood generate new ideas to tough challenges in Seattle's largest downtown residential neighborhood. Four topic areas, scoped by City of Seattle planning staff, form the framework for this workshop:

- Parks & public realm
- Livability issues including public safety, social services & community amenities
- Affordable and workforce housing
- Transit & mobility

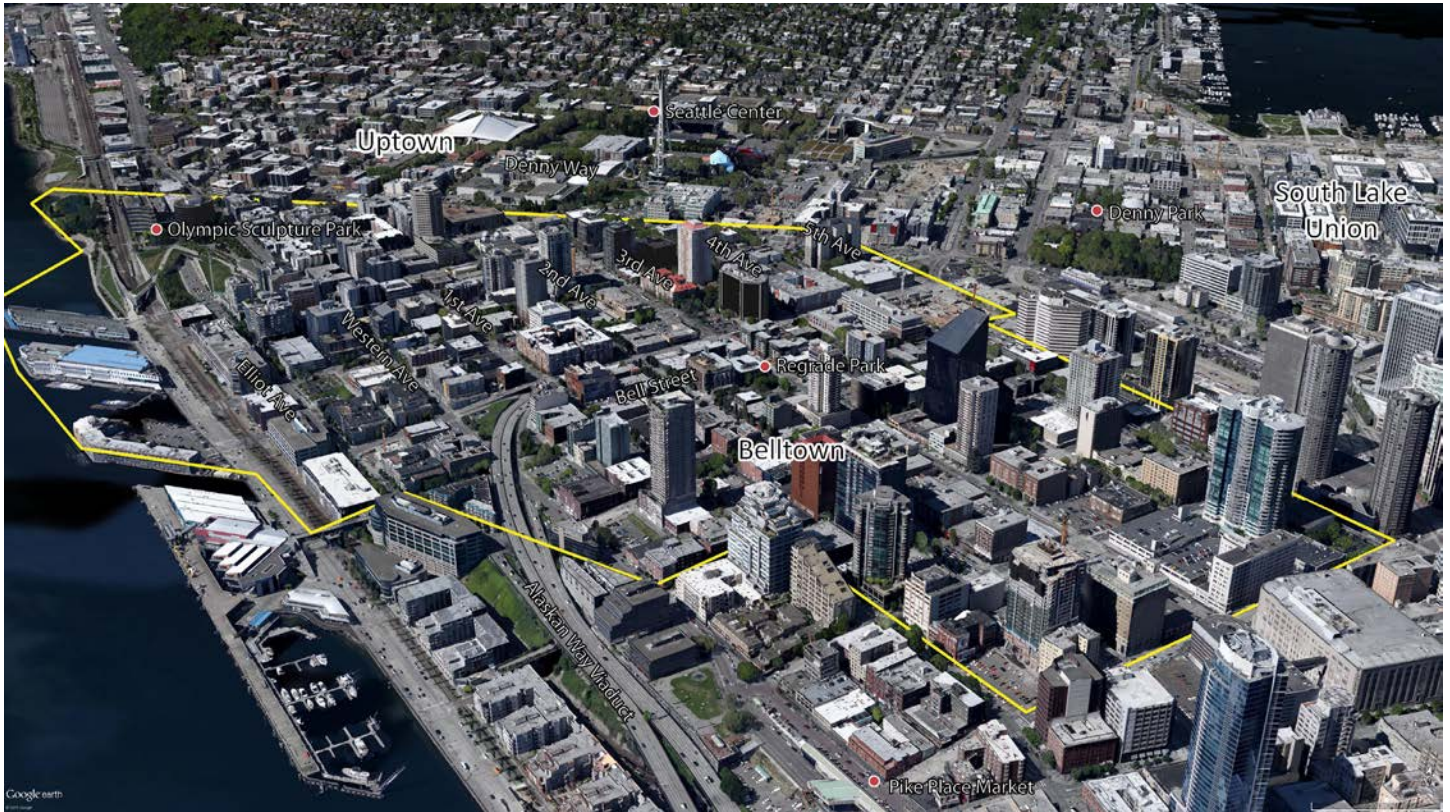
You will hear from Seattle planning staff and Belltown community members about the previous successes and existing challenges Belltown faces in these four topic areas. Participants will then split up into one of four groups based on individual interest and expertise in tackling Belltown's key issues. After a brief walking tour of key sites, participants will roll up their sleeves and brainstorm actions to address these issues.

The expected outcome of this AICP Workshop will be to focus on:

- **Immediate action**
Short range, priority projects to address the immediate needs of quality of life and character/identity of Belltown. This could include policy and regulatory changes, as well as low or modest cost public improvements.
- **List of top priority actions/strategies**
Beyond any possible immediate actions, the groups may identify subsequent steps that will be important to address the various issues and opportunities facing the neighborhood.
- **New concepts for future consideration**
This could include new concepts or variations of existing concepts developed by the group based on the context and opportunities of Belltown and suggestions of participants.

BELLTOWN IS...

Today, Belltown is a thriving residential neighborhood with upscale bars, nightclubs, restaurants, and shops. Yet, it is also the residential heart of downtown Seattle with housing for a wide mix of incomes and lifestyles. You will hear from local residents and stakeholders about the challenges of keeping Belltown open to all, improving connections within the neighborhood, and developing more neighborhood resources and a stronger sense of place.



Map 1: Belltown neighborhood boundaries. Source: Google Earth



Image 1: Belltown Community Center. Source: Google Earth

NEIGHBORHOOD SNAPSHOT

AREA AND GEOGRAPHY

Belltown is a 220-acre neighborhood situated at the north end of the Seattle Downtown Urban Center. Belltown is bounded by Elliott Bay and Puget Sound to the west, Denny Way to the north, 6th Avenue to the northeast, and Stewart Street to the southeast. Nearby neighborhoods include Uptown Queen Anne to the north, the Denny Triangle to the east, and Seattle's Commercial Core to the south (see Map 2 below).

BELLTOWN AND SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS



Map 2: Vicinity map showing the location of Belltown with respect to other center city neighborhoods. Source: City of Seattle

POPULATION

Belltown today has approximately 12,000 residents, triple the 1985 population when the current downtown mixed residential zoning (DMR) was put into place. At 55 people per acre, the 220-acre neighborhood is the densest urban village in the city. While only a small portion of the 960 acres of the Downtown Urban Center, the 12,000 residents are almost half of downtown's total residential population of 26,844 people.

With a large assortment of older, iconic structures, early 1980's era residential towers, and present day mixed-use residential buildings, Belltown has a well-established feel. However, over 70% of the existing 7,000+ housing units were built since 1980. Further, 90% of residents have moved into their units after 1999. The median age is also slightly younger than the city as a whole: 35.1 years versus the rest of Seattle at 36.1 years. Households are small, at only 1.32 persons and usually comprise just one person.

EMPLOYMENT

In 2013, approximately 18,298 jobs were in Belltown, about 12% of the entire downtown total. This is an increase of about 1,000 jobs since 1995, but a decrease from a high of 23,703 jobs in 2001. The types of jobs have also changed significantly – indicating the neighborhoods shift from a predominantly working-class warehouse district to a higher-end technology and service sector employment base. The greatest drop was in wholesale trade/transportation and utilities, from 3,260 jobs in 1995 to 999 jobs in 2013. Interestingly manufacturing jobs have actually increased from 443 jobs to 1,338 in 2013.

Today the job mix is dominated by service sector employment. The largest share of this sector is 4,676 classified as information or professional scientific, and professional services followed by 2,546 jobs in accommodation and food service, and another 2,164 jobs classified as health care and social assistance services. The next three largest sectors are finance/insurance/real estate, the previously mentioned manufacturing sector, and the government sector.

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHICS, HOUSING, & JOBS

	1990	2000	2010	2014
TOTAL POPULATION	4,116	8,504	11,961	14,098 ^A
WHITE	3,490	6,384	8,404	-
BLACK	300	718	871	-
AMERICAN INDIAN, ESKIMO, ALEUT	105	156	166	-
ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	168	720	1,750	-
OTHER RACES	53	172	206	-
POPULATION UNDER 18	62	216	242	-
POPULATION OVER 18	4,054	8,288	11,719	-
HOUSING UNITS	Not Available	4,266	5,932	7,380 ^B
RENTED	Not Available	73%	69%	75%
OWNED	Not Available	27%	31%	25%
*MEDIAN INCOME	Not Available	33,954	55,919	58,804
**NUMBER OF JOBS	Not Available	23,526	17,988	18,298

PARKS & OPEN SPACES

	2014
ACRES OF PARKS & OPEN SPACE	9.19 Acres
***USABLE OPEN SPACE NEEDED TO MEET 2024 GOAL	13.34 Acres
2024 OPEN SPACE GOAL CAP	4.15 Acres
PARKS & OPEN SPACE WITHIN 1/8th OF A MILE	34.61 Acres

^A Extrapolated from 2000 to 2010 Census Growth Figures

^B Downtown Seattle Association 2014 Belltown Profile

* Derived from 2000 Census blocks 80.01 and 80.02

** Urban Center/Village Employment Growth Report

*** Seattle Parks & Recreation, An Assessment of Gaps in Seattle's Open Space Network: The 2011 Gap Report Update. May 13, 2011

A LITTLE BELLTOWN PLANNING HISTORY

To understand why a community and place is the way it is, it is helpful to look back at its history. This is as true for planning as any other discipline and reveals how a neighborhood like Belltown came to be the way it is today.

The timeline to the right shows the major developments in Belltown's planning history. Only the most significant and most recent plans will be covered in this brief.

THE "DENNY REGRADE"

Belltown was once dominated by Denny Hill, north of Seattle's downtown. To allow downtown development to expand northwards, Denny Hill was removed in phases over three decades from the 1900s to the 1930s, creating the current, relatively flat topography of Belltown and the neighboring Denny Regrade to the east.

From the 1960's until the mid-1970s, Belltown and the Denny Regrade was primarily zoned Commercial General (CG), reflecting the notion that the regrade area was to be a northern extension of downtown Seattle's commercial core. During this time, Manufacturing (M) zoning extended along the waterfront and north of Broad Street, providing "backup space" for uses supporting port and industrial activities, such as the Belltown Barrel Factory.



Image 2: An early picture of Denny Hill before it was removed in phases in the early part of the 1900s.

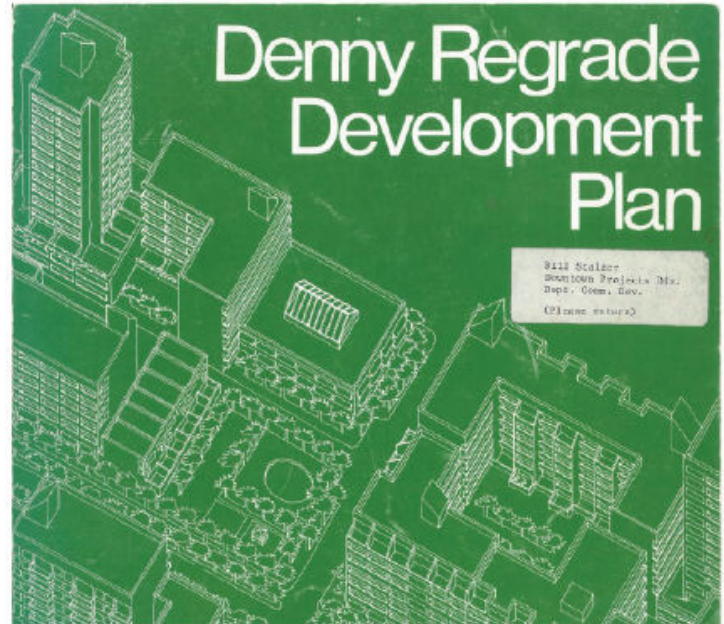
1960s TO 1970s:

AN EXTENSION OF DOWNTOWN

From the 1960s until the mid-1970s, the Denny Re-grade was primarily zoned Commercial General (CG), reflecting the notion that the regrade area was to be a northern extension of downtown Seattle's commercial core.

During this time, Manufacturing (M) zoning extended along the waterfront and north of Broad Street, providing "backup space" for uses supporting port and industrial activities, such as the Belltown Barrel Factory, and later the Union Oil Terminal on what is today the Olympic Sculpture Park.

In the mid-1970s there was a growing interest in creating a high density residential neighborhood downtown, in the regrade area. To implement this policy, most of the area zoned for Commercial General, was rezoned to encourage mid and high-rise residential development (RM-MD).



1975 - 1985:

A SHIFT IN FOCUS TO HOUSING

In the early 1980s, the area now occupied by the Olympic Sculpture Park was rezoned from Manufacturing (M) to allow residential development where it had been prohibited, reflecting a decline in the working waterfront in this area.

In most of Belltown the RM-MD zoning was structured to encourage housing, but allowed for non-residential development too. Broad flexibilities were in place for mixed use projects to increase buildable area, and achieve height increases from a base of 65 feet to as much as 350 feet. Although guidelines were in place for desired variations in scale, a disconnect between the guidelines and some actual development ultimately lead to criticisms that the provisions failed to provide predictability.

During a roughly 10-year period when the RM-MD zoning was in place, a number of residential highrises were built. These structures were generally characterized by a base structure, often occupied by parking, with a residential tower above.

In addition to high-rise residential projects, between 1975 and 1985, five midrise office buildings, four midrise residential projects, and four midrise public housing projects were constructed, resulting in the addition of about 1,000 housing units to the then-existing stock of 3,000 units.

By the early 1980's a weak housing market combined with booming downtown office market led to land speculation in the area. Residential development tapered off and speculation discouraged both the preservation of existing buildings and new construction of more affordable low-scale residential buildings.

1985 DOWNTOWN PLAN

Development of the Downtown Land Use and Transportation Plan in the early 1980s generated interest in a greater emphasis on residential use, promoting housing development and preservation to accommodate the full range of household incomes, and more specific development standards for height and bulk of new projects.

There was a lengthy debate about the area's viability for residential use, especially among property owners speculating on prospects for future commercial development. Ultimately, the community supported an urban form concept referred to as the "Crescent Alternative." The concept called for lower heights along the waterfront edge and historic Belltown core to encourage preservation and more affordable low-scale development, with higher heights wrapping around the northern, southern, and eastern edges to accommodate residential towers with heights ranging between 125 and 240 feet.

In 1985, Seattle adopted the Downtown Plan which recognized Belltown (then known as the Denny Regrade) as downtown's principal residential neighborhood. With the Downtown Plan came new zoning for the area and a neighborhood development strategy focused on a newly created Belltown Community Development Area. Notable actions intended by the plan:

- **A new downtown residential zone was developed** --Downtown Mixed Residential (DMR) – to establish housing as the primary use for most of the area.
- **Green Streets.** 4 east/west streets (Blanchard, Bell, Cedar and Vine Streets) were designated for improvement as "Street Parks" (now known as Green Streets) with increased sidewalk area, landscaping, and other pedestrian amenities.
- **Building Design.** Standards address bulk of towers, tower spacing, street level use, streetscape treatment, and view corridors. To encourage housing development in the area, parking requirements for residential uses were eliminated.
- **Fire safety provisions** in the Building Code were revised to allow additional floors for residential structures with wood frame construction above a concrete base.
- **Zoning Incentives.** Amendments to Downtown zoning for commercial development established floor area bonus and transfer of development rights (TDR) incentives to generate resources and provide additional tools for developing and preserving affordable housing and other amenities in the downtown area.
- **Community Development.** A "Belltown Community Development Program Area" was established to attract investment and provide a catalyst for housing development in the area.

CITIZENS ALTERNATIVE PLAN “CAP” 1989

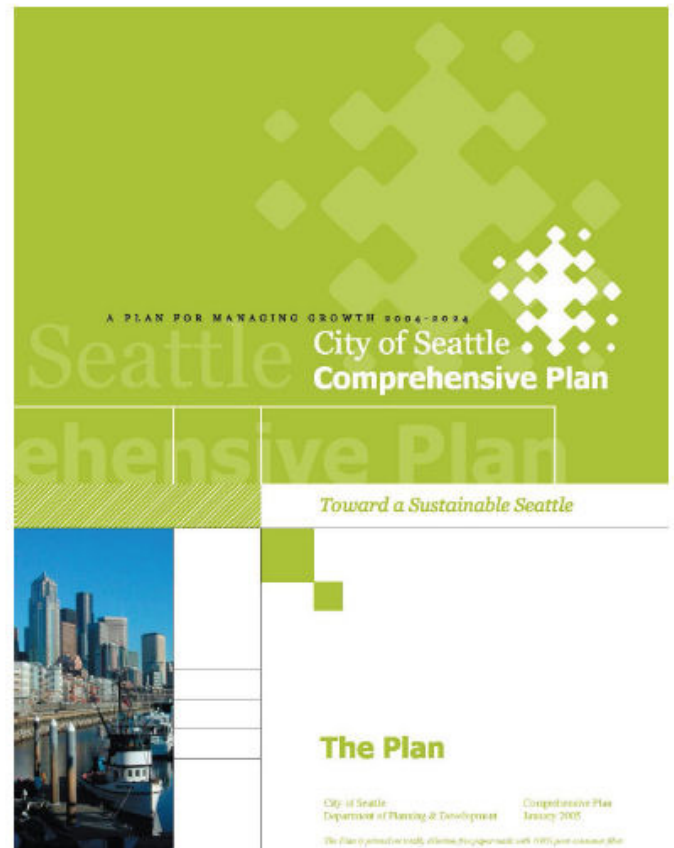
Downtown Seattle experienced tremendous growth during the 1980’s, which included unprecedented private development as well as major public infrastructure projects, such as the downtown transit tunnel and construction of the Washington State Convention and Trade Center across I-5. Many of downtown’s largest office projects, vested under the Code in effect prior to the 1985 zoning, were under construction after the plan’s adoption. The public reacted to this growth by attempting to curb downtown commercial development through the CAP initiative in 1989. Although CAP established an annual limit on the amount of floor area allowed in large commercial projects throughout downtown, for the most part, it had little effect on Belltown. Also, the reductions in height and commercial density limits enacted by the initiative only applied to the office core zones (DOC1 and DOC2) and the retail core zone (DRC). The incentive programs were also adjusted in these zones to increase the emphasis on affordable housing. For the decade that CAP was in effect (1989-1999), due to a sluggish economy, the limited amount of development activity downtown never actually triggered the annual limits. However, over this time period developers began to direct attention to the emerging market for housing in Belltown.

1990s COMPREHENSIVE & NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

Following creation of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) in 1990, the City adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 1994. In the Plan Belltown was designated an Urban Center Village, which expanded the area previously known as the Denny Regrade a little further west of 5th Avenue, to share a boundary with the Denny Triangle Urban Center Village, and south to Stewart Street, abutting the Commercial Core Urban Center Village. Under the Plan’s growth strategy, Belltown was assigned one of the largest growth targets for housing in the city—calling for an additional 6,500 households in the area between 1994 and 2014; a target that was ultimately achieved.

1999 BELLTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

As part of the neighborhood planning initiative undertaken to support the Comprehensive Plan, Belltown prepared its own neighborhood plan, which was subsequently approved by the City Council in 1999. The plan included goals for the area’s continued development and identified desired improvements. While there were no significant changes proposed to the existing zoning, some proposals did result in amendments to the Code, including the designation of Bay, Eagle, and Clay Streets as green streets and the requirement for street level uses along 2nd Avenue. As part of the City’s ongoing efforts to implement neighborhood plan proposals, new neighborhood design guidelines to further reinforce the neighborhood plan vision were adopted for Belltown in 2004.



2000s CODE CHANGES TO IMPLEMENT PLANS

2001: RESTRUCTURING DOWNTOWN INCENTIVES

In 2001, the Downtown Code was amended to implement changes to the bonus and TDR incentive programs recommended in downtown neighborhood plans. The major thrust was a reprioritization of incentives to emphasize affordable housing and to simplify the programs by eliminating incentives that were no longer regarded as viable and by requiring developers to provide some features in a project that previously had been encouraged through incentives.

These amendments had limited implications for Belltown. The Landmark TDR program was modified to allow designated Landmark properties north of Virginia Street to sell development rights, although the amount available to sell was reduced by being based on the amount of commercial FAR permitted on the lot. A new form of TDR was created, open space TDR, which was used to help fund the development of the Olympic Sculpture Park. The 2001 amendments included some modest height increases, but in Belltown the increases only applied to the two blocks of the DOC2 zone in the southeast corner of the neighborhood. Given the limited opportunities for commercial development under Belltown's zoning, few projects in the neighborhood used the incentives. However, the resources generated by development using the incentives in other parts of downtown helped to fund affordable housing projects and other improvements in the neighborhood.

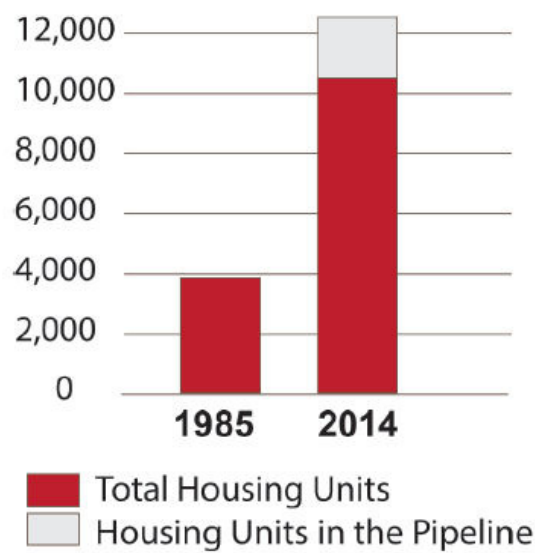
2006: HEIGHT AND DENSITY INCREASES

After the 2001 amendments were adopted, the City committed to reviewing proposals for height and density increases recommended in specific neighborhood plans to complement the updated incentive programs adopted in 2001--the theory being that the increase in development potential would promote greater use of the incentives. Since the Belltown Neighborhood Plan did not recommend changes to height and density limits, most of this effort was focused on the Commercial Core and Denny Triangle. However, in these other areas, the changes were affecting the DMC zones with height limits of 240 feet and the DOC 2 zone, both of which extended into the Belltown neighborhood. There was also interest in including bulk controls and tower spacing requirements in these zones, as well as a new incentive program for residential projects to provide affordable housing that could potentially benefit Belltown. Belltown residents were concerned about the potential for bulkier residential buildings under the current regulations in these zones as larger projects like the Cristalla and Escala were being built on the neighborhood's southern edge. Consequently, the DOC2 and DMC 240 zones on the northern and southern edges of Belltown were included in this zoning initiative.

In 2006, the height limit for residential use was increased from 240 feet to 400 feet in the DMC zone, and the height limit for all uses was increased from 300 feet to 500 feet in the DOC2 zone. In both zones, residential projects were required to participate in the affordable housing incentive programs to build to the maximum height limits. Overall, with the 2006 amendments, the height and density permitted in downtown zones now matched or exceeded the pre-CAP limits.

USEFUL BELLTOWN MAPS & DATA

Residential Growth in Belltown



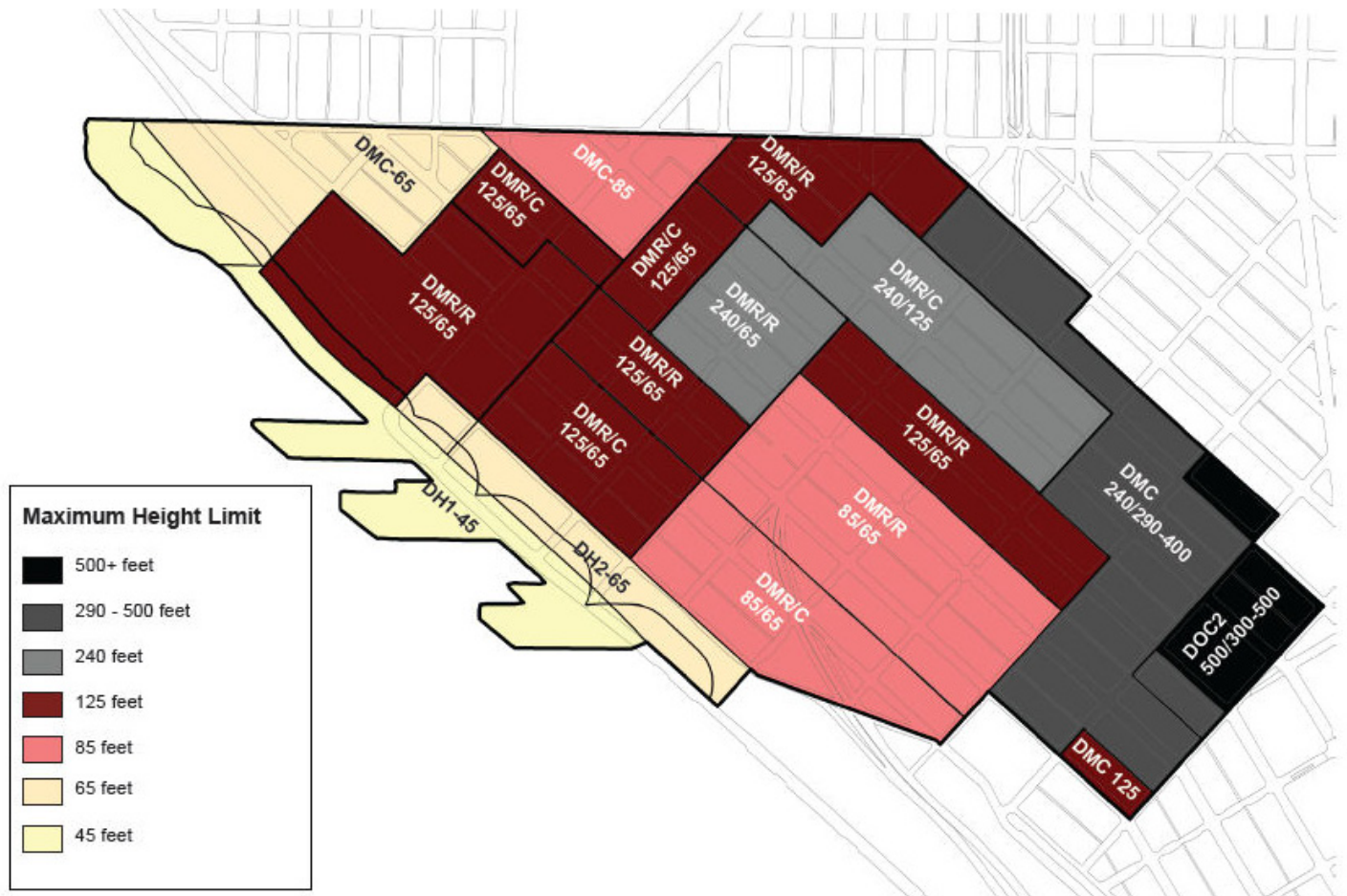
Belltown Court was one of the first full black market rate mixed use developments to take place in Belltown's Core. It contains six stories and has a great brakery at the ground floor.



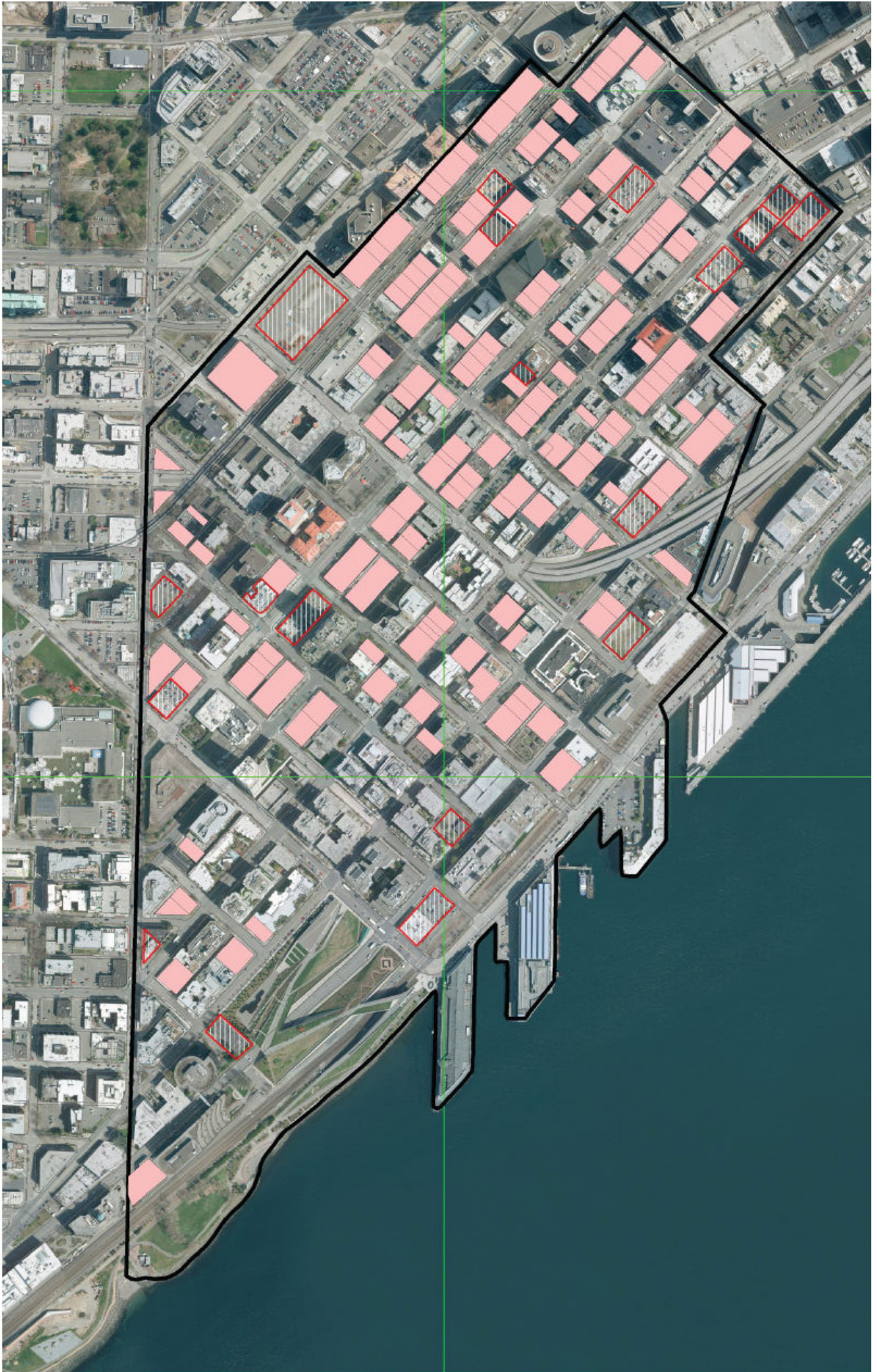
ZONING

Zoning regulates the types of buildings and uses that can be added to a neighborhood. Zoning in Belltown is meant to achieve planning objectives. Several of the basic concepts embodied in Belltown's zoning include:

- Protect the 'Core' of the neighborhood
- Provide transitions
- Greater intensity of development at the edge of downtown
- Residential focus
- Step down to the waterfront



DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY



APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A: BELLTOWN PARKS & PUBLIC REALM

Workshop coordinators are developing a walking route and a list of questions that workshop participants could address related to the improvement of Belltown's public realm. The obvious initial questions are:

- Identify actions/strategies to improve Belltown's existing public spaces.
- Look at some of the planned, proposed or other prospective open spaces and/or public improvements (e.g., Green Streets, Lake to Bay project, or Battery Street Portal Park) and identify priorities and/or design concepts.
- Identify other actions/strategies to enhance Belltown's open space resources and public realm (e.g., perhaps participants think some concepts that have worked in their home towns could work here?).

BELLTOWN CONTEXT

As an area cleared to accommodate commercial expansion, there were few early investments in public improvements to serve a dense residential population in Belltown. More recent planning for the area recognizes the historic shortcomings, and with the high cost of land and limited opportunities to develop traditional park spaces, attention has been directed to the public area of street rights-of-way as an alternative for addressing neighborhood open space needs. For Belltown, the streets provide the opportunities for public space and placemaking. The map below shows existing public open spaces, private open spaces and ongoing projects in Belltown neighborhood, prepared by the City of Seattle in 2009 and edited in 2015



OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

EXISTING PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

NAME	LOCATION	AREA (acre)	DEVELOPMENT PERIOD & STATUS
Belltown Cottage Park and Belltown P-Patch	2520 Elliott Ave.	0.33	Planning started 2002; Completed 2003
Regrade Dog Park	2251 3rd Ave.	0.3	Purchased 1976; Completed 2005
Bell Street Park	1st to 5th Ave.	1.33	Planning started 2009; Completed 2014
Green Streets	Blanchard, Bell, Cedar, Vine, Clay, Eagle and Bay Streets, Alaskan Way Boulevard	N/A	Plan adopted 1985; Completed: some portions of Bay, Clay, Cedar, Vine, Bell and Blanchard Streets has been completed; Others in development
Olympic Sculpture Park	2901 Western Ave.	9.0	Launched in 2007
McGraw Square	Westlake Ave. N & Stewart St	0.01	Launched 2007
Westlake Square	1900 Westlake Ave.	0.01	A bus stop shelter in 1917; Demolished and filled in 1964
Tilikum Place	2701 5th Ave.	0.01	Designated as city landmark May, 6, 1985

MAJOR PRIVATE OPEN SPACES

Grange Insurance Plaza	NE corner of 2nd Ave. and Cedar St.	0.252	1981
Facebook Corporate Office	1730 Minor Ave.		
Virginia Mason Institute	100 Olive Way		
Parking Lot (owner?)			

MINOR PRIVATE OPEN SPACE

Sedgwick James Building Plaza	NW corner of 4th Ave. and Lenora St.	0.229	1978
Kiro Building	3rd Ave. between Clay and Broad St.		1968

ADDITIONAL / OTHER OPEN SPACES

Belltown Community Center	415 Bell St.	0.13	Launched in 2012
Lake to Bay Trail	Part of Terry Ave., Thomas St., Broad St., and Alaskan Way	N/A	Current status: In development
Waterfront Seattle 2020 / Waterfront Connections	Connections from Bell, Blanchard, and Lenora St.		Current status: In development

MAJOR PUBLIC/PRIVATE OPEN SPACES IN BELLTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

- **Belltown Cottage Park and Belltown P-Patch**

Belltown Cottage Park is adjacent to the Belltown P-Patch. In 2000, the three historic cottages on the site were designated as Seattle Landmarks. They are the last of 11 homes on the land and represent a residential housing style that dominated the waterfront and Denny Regrade from the 1850s to the 1920s.

- **Regrade Dog Park**

A small park tucked in the heart of the densely populated Belltown neighborhood. It provides an in-city off-leash experience for the many condo-dwelling dogs in Belltown.

- **Bell Street Park**

A park like corridor from 1st to 5th avenue of Bell Street with wide side walks, improved landscaping, better lighting, and more open space.

- **Olympic Sculpture Park**

The Olympic Sculpture Park is owned and maintained by the Seattle Art Museum. The Olympic Sculpture Park transforms a nine-acre industrial site into open and vibrant green space for art. This new waterfront park gives Seattle residents and visitors the opportunity to experience a variety of sculpture in an outdoor setting.

- **McGraw Square**

McGraw Square is a triangular plaza in downtown on Stewart & 5th avenue. It is an historic site dedicated to the former governor and designated as a Landmark in 1985.

- **Westlake Square**

Westlake Park lies in the heart of the downtown-shopping district. It's the perfect spot to take a break and admire the fountain, or watch shoppers as they visit the Westlake Mall and the surrounding retail stores. This square has close proximity to monorail, Seattle Center, Pike Place Market, the Seattle Art Museum and many other attractions.

- **Tilikum Place**

This small square is located in the northwest corner of the central business district and its main attraction is a life-size statue of Chief Seattle, for whom the city was named.

- **Grange Insurance Plaza (1981)**

An urban plaza of about 11,000 square feet covering ¼ block at the northeast corner of 2nd Avenue and Cedar Street (green street).

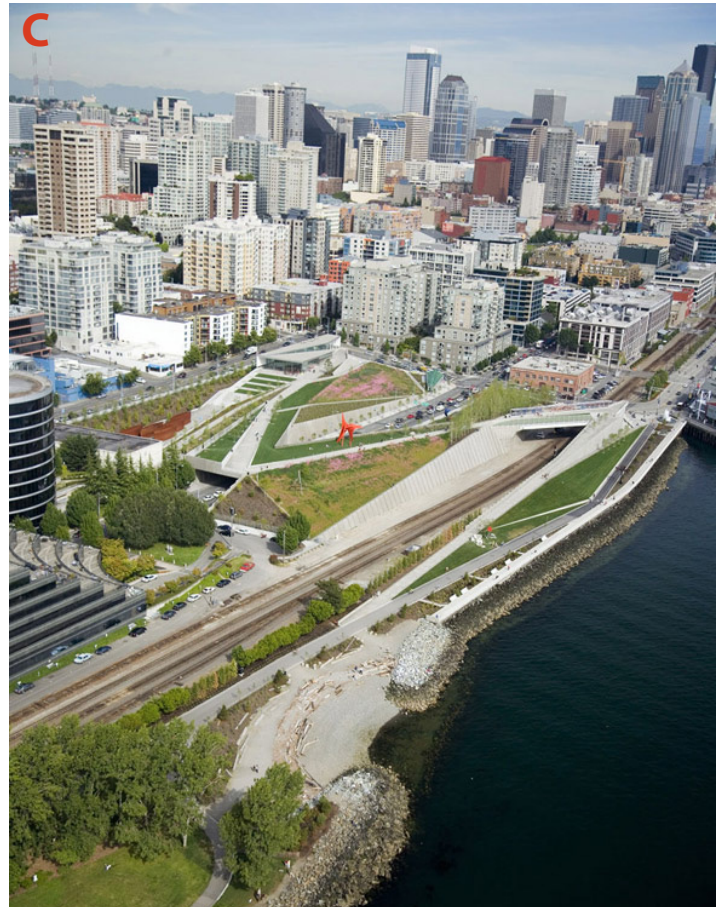
- **Sedgwick James Building Plaza (1978)**

Northwest corner of 4th Avenue and Lenora Street. An urban garden of about 10,000 square feet with large shade tree, planter terraces, walkways and open plaza spaces, benches and public art.

- **KIRO Building (1968)**

3rd Avenue between Clay and Broad Streets. A midblock entry /driveway plaza and urban garden space.

OPEN SPACES: IMAGES



- A:** Belltown P-Patch and Belltown Cottage Park
- B:** Regrade Dog Park
- C:** Olympic Sculpture Park
- D:** Sedgwick James Building Plaza
- E:** Kiro Building
- F:** Grange Insurance Plaza

RECENT PARK & PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

BELL STREET PARKS

Bell Street Park is a park like corridor through the heart of Belltown. This project transforms four blocks of Bell Street (1st to 5th Avenue) into a 56,000 square foot new street park. The continuous level pavement encourages pedestrians, cyclists, and automobiles to share the space. The project was proposed in the 1998 Belltown Neighborhood Plan and has been endorsed by a range of community organizations including Belltown Housing and Land Use Committee and the Belltown Community Council. The project has been completed recently in March 2014. The project converts one traffic lane and reconfigures parking to create a park like corridor through the heart of Belltown. The four-block area is improved with landscaping, better lighting, and more open space.



Opening celebration of Bell Street Park on April 12th, 2014.

3RD AVENUE

- 1985 Downtown Plan proposed a landscape transit/pedestrian boulevard with widened sidewalks, was proposed for 3rd Avenue through the Denny Regrade (Belltown) as an extension of the Downtown Transit Corridor on 3rd Avenue to the south. Because of its central location and access to transit, 3rd Avenue was envisioned as developing into the “commercial spine” serving the surrounding neighborhood. To support this function, new development was required to provide active street-level uses along 3rd Avenue front-ages.
- 2004 Design Guidelines for Belltown proposed street furniture Installations on 3rd Avenue that should reflect its character as a major bus route.

Progress to date: 3rd Avenue continues to function as a major transit corridor and is being considered as an alternative route in Sound Transit’s plans for expanding light rail. However, even with the requirement for street-level uses, the desired neighborhood commercial spine has not materialized.

2ND AVENUE

- 1985 downtown plan proposed improving 2nd Avenue to reduce traffic speed and create a more pleasant environment for pedestrians and street-oriented housing.
- 2004 design Guidelines for Belltown proposed to continue the style of “limited edition” street arts on 2nd avenue.

Progress to date: Street improvements were implemented, maintaining the street as a one-way thoroughfare, but improved with widened sidewalks and landscaping. More recently, a neighborhood plan proposal resulted in requiring active street-level uses along the length of 2nd Avenue, reflecting a less residential emphasis for the pedestrian environment.

1ST AVENUE

- In 1978, a concept called “First Avenue” was originated when the artists, Buster Simpson, Jack Mackie and Paul and Deborah Rhinehart began to develop and design artwork for First Avenue that would provide a welcoming, aesthetically pleasing environment for Belltown residents and visitors. Work was initially funded through the local community council and area merchants until 1985, when the project received financial support from the city. In succeeding years, the project continued to grow, eventually incorporating 11 bus stops and an urban arboretum. A second phase funded in 1988 allowed for the integration of other artistic elements into the streetscape.
- 1985 downtown plan proposed streetscape improvements on 1st Avenue to promote residential development.

Progress to date: The sidewalk offers an opportunity to engage with functional art pieces including tree support systems, sandstone benches and recycled stone steps in a neighborhood setting. Purple plum trees at bus stops liven up the view for commuters while rough boulders and split-sandstone slabs add interest to an otherwise basic city street. Together these visually appealing elements coalesce into an engaging streetscape, which pays tribute to the area’s blue-collar history while also contributing to Belltown’s urban renewal.

4TH AVENUE & 5TH AVENUE

- 2004 Design Guidelines proposed street furnishings on 4th Avenue that should be “off-the- shelf”/catalogue modern to reflect the high-rise land uses existing or permitted along that corridor.
- 2004 Design Guidelines proposed Installations on 5th Avenue to have a futuristic or “google” architectural theme to reflect the presence of the monorail as part of the streetscape.

GREEN STREETS: IMPROVEMENTS TO DATE



GREEN STREET CONCEPT

The 1985 Plan included the designation of Cedar, Vine, Blanchard and Bell Streets within the Belltown neighborhood as “street parks.” The two pairs of street parks were to be improved to create subareas with a strong residential neighborhood identity. Afterwards, given the context of a highly developed, urban neighborhood with limited public open space and high land values, the 1999 Belltown Neighborhood Plan recognizes the importance of the public rights-of-way as an open space resource. In addition to the four greens streets designated in the 1985 Downtown Plan (Blanchard, Bell, Cedar, and Vine), the Belltown Neighborhood Plan recommended three additional green streets; Eagle, Bay, and Clay Streets and extending the Vine Street green street an additional block to Denny Way. Proposals in the plan seek to provide a framework for integrating greens streets and open spaces into an urban open space network that encourages a pedestrian-friendly environment. One major objective of the open space network is to reintroduce natural processes into the urban environment. Preparing design concepts for green streets was seen as the initial step in developing overall neighborhood design concepts and a design framework for establishing a unique character for Belltown. Recently, some portions of Bay, Clay, Cedar, Vine, Bell and Blanchard Streets have been completed according to the plan while others are in progress. The Plan identifies the special character and function of each Green Street, with the following recommendations for improvements and design:

BLANCHARD STREET

- Encourage garden spaces near building entrances; provide outdoor activities for residences to enrich potential for street level uses.
- Emphasize crossings of the “retail” and “commercial” streets as activity centers.

BELL STREET

- Emphasize waterfront connection along entire length with street long design strategy; provide for high pedestrian use associated with mixed-use development.
- Integrate current design from Western to 1st Avenue with design strategy for entire street to create a continuum of open space.
- Develop strategies to facilitate pedestrian movement on steep slopes.

CEDAR STREET

- Create green links as part of a network of alleys connecting Cedar Street with Clay and Vine Streets.
- Develop strategies to facilitate pedestrian movement on steep slopes.
- Create green links to Vine and Clay Streets at Elliott Avenue to make a pedestrian connection to the waterfront.

VINE STREET

- Recognize special character of Vine Street among green streets and implement vision of “Growing Vine Street project.”

CLAY STREET

- Establish theme that is unique to the industrial and commercial character of Clay Street, coordinated with design of Cedar and Vine Streets.
- Create green links as part of a network of alleys connecting Clay Street with Cedar and Vine Streets.
- Guide development of vacant lots to maintain views of Elliott Bay and to integrate lots with Green Street design.
- Preserve and highlight exposed historic cobbles; use as traffic calming device.

EAGLE STREET

- Coordinate development of vacant lots on the eastern end of Eagle to extend pedestrian connection to the waterfront.

BAY STREET

- Improve pedestrian connection from the end of Bay Street to the Waterfront Promenade and Myrtle Edwards.
- Consider necessity of pedestrian crossing over railroad.
- Consider restricting or narrowing street area for vehicles on block between Denny Way and 1st Avenue to increase landscaping and pedestrian use.



Cedar Street and 3rd Avenue intersection



Vine Street corner step conceptual design



Blanchard Street improvements: landscaping and street level uses



Clay Street: preserve historic cobbles



Art installation, Bell Street



Lack of connection to the waterfront from Bay Street

PARKS & PUBLIC REALM IN PAST PLANNING INITIATIVES

1985 DOWNTOWN PLAN

When the 1985 Downtown Plan was adopted, the existing open spaces in Belltown included Tillicum Place and Regrade Park (now Belltown Park), with Myrtle Edwards Park touching the far northwestern corner of the neighborhood. The Plan recognized both the lack of existing open space throughout downtown and the importance of providing new open space to support increased development and higher densities in the area. An open space system consisting of two general categories was proposed. The categories included major public open spaces; downtown parks, plazas, and street parks (now green streets), which were identified in the plan to serve as the “keystones” of the open space system, along with a variety of open space amenities that would be provided incrementally through incentives in conjunction with private development. Major proposals under the 1985 plan are given below:

- A Harborfront Community Development Area was proposed in the plan, for creating a pedestrian promenade along Alaskan Way between Myrtle Edwards Park and Pier 48. Some proposals implemented after the Harborfront Improvement plan prepared in 1987. Among them, including roof deck and pier level open spaces near Bell Street Pier, improved pedestrian connections between Bell and Stewart Street, Bell Street pedestrian bridge crossing the BNSF railroad mainline and Alaskan Way to connect to Pier 66/Bell Harbor, and the Lenora Street pedestrian hillclimb were noticeable.
- The 1985 plan included the designation of Cedar, Vine, Blanchard and Bell Streets within the Belltown neighborhood as “street parks” to reinforce a strong residential identity.
- Established a “common recreation area” requirement for residential projects. This requirement was modified in 2006 to encourage developers to provide space that is visible and accessible at street level.
- The 1985 Plan expanded the menu of bonusable amenities (bonus provisions that allows increased floor area for projects, which include certain amenities in the form of open space, plaza or landscape setback) as tailoring them to serve the different types of activities encouraged in different downtown areas. For Belltown, new bonus features included Residential Parcel Parks, Streets Parks, Hillside Terraces, Harborfront Open Spaces.

Failed initiatives: Two parks were proposed but not moved forward. “The Denny Regrade Commons” was proposed to provide a neighborhood focus amenity to ensure sufficient recreational space for the 20,000 residents that were expected to live in the neighborhood. The proposal was not moved further, due to the community concerns about public safety in parks. Another park, “Belltown Overlook” (Battery Street) was proposed that would create a small viewpoint for enjoying views of Elliott Bay and the historic buildings along the 1st Avenue. Although, this proposal did not move forward, but the idea of a community open space at this location has resurfaced in the Waterfront Seattle planning initiative now underway.

1994 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of open space in densely developed areas and includes goals for the amount, types, and distribution of open space in Urban Center Villages like Belltown. The Comprehensive Plan establishes the following goals for open space in Urban Center Villages. In addition to an overall amount of open space that is desirable in an urban center village, there are also goals for locating open space so that it is accessible to all residents within a short distance, and to also provide certain types of open space that serve as a community “heart.” These goals are aspirational, and under current conditions, Belltown, at least for the time being, has achieved the population and village commons goals, but not the distribution goals.

- **Qualifying Criteria for Village Open Space:** Dedicated open spaces of at least 10,000 square feet in size, publicly accessible, and usable for recreation and social activities.

Belltown performance: The six open spaces that qualify as village open space are shown on the chart

above, and total about 9.2 acres.

- **Urban Village Population-Based Goal:** One acre of Village Open Space per 1,000 households and one acre of Village Open Space per 10,000 jobs in each urban center, or in the four contiguous urban centers that comprise the center city, considered.

Belltown performance: Per the Comprehensive Plan's goals for open space, with 8,421 households (2010 Census data) the neighborhood should have 8.42 acres of open space now, and 13.34 acres by 2024. If the 8,421 household count from the 2010 census also included the 1,563 vacant units also counted at that time, the resulting total of 9,984 households would mean that the area fell short of meeting the population-based open space goal.

- **Urban Village Open Space Distribution Goal:** All locations in the village within approximately 1/8 mile of Village Open Space.

Belltown performance: Regrade Park, Myrtle Edwards Park, Belltown P-Patch and Cottage Park sites, Seattle Center, Victor Steinbrueck Park, Denny Park and the new Bell Street Park Boulevard provide more than half the Belltown Urban Center Village with Village Open Space.

- **Village Commons, Recreation Facility and Community Garden Goals:** At least one usable open space of at least one acre in size (Village Commons) where the existing and target households total 2,500 or more. One indoor and multiple-use recreation facility serving each Urban Center. One dedicated community garden for each 2,500 households in the village with at least one dedicated garden site.

Belltown performance: Myrtle Edwards Park and the new Bell Street Boulevard meet the Village Commons criteria for the Belltown Urban Center Village.

1999 BELLTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

The Belltown Neighborhood Plan recognizes the importance of the public rights-of-way as an open space resource to respond to the limited public open space in Belltown neighborhood.

In addition, considering improved connections to large open spaces on the neighborhood's edges, such as Denny Park, Seattle Center, the Waterfront Promenade, and Myrtle Edwards Park, could make current and future resources more accessible to the growing residential population. Following are the key proposals in 1999 plan:

- Efforts for providing more open space and green space within the neighborhood are to be concentrated on the green streets. In addition to the four greens streets designated in the 1985 Downtown Plan (Blanchard, Bell, Cedar, and Vine), the Belltown Neighborhood Plan recommended three additional green streets - Eagle, Bay, and Clay Streets. Recommendations are provided based on the special character and function of each Green Streets were also discussed on the plan.
- The Central Waterfront Plan (July, 2012) included the following waterfront connections in Belltown neighborhood
 - > Blanchard Street Square and Blanchard Street Overlook: With the realignment of Western and Elliott Avenues to converge into the new Elliott Way/Alaskan Way surface street, access from Blanchard Street will be eliminated, freeing up the portion of right-of-way west of Western Avenue for use as public open space (Blanchard Street Square). Current design work is considering improvements for the area as a children's play area.
 - > Battery Street Tunnel Decommissioning and Battery Street Portal Park: Decommissioning of the viaduct, the Battery Street tunnel and related right-of-way area between Bell and Battery Streets along the east side of Western Avenue will create opportunities for open space and is proposed to be improved as Battery Street Portal Park.

2004 DESIGN GUIDELINES

2004 design guidelines will help to reinforce existing character and protect the qualities that the Belltown neighborhood values most in the face of change. The following guidelines were proposed to help implement these visions and goals:

- **Promote pedestrian interaction:** Spaces for street level uses should be designed to engage pedestrians with the activities occurring within them. Sidewalk- related spaces should appear safe, welcoming, and open to the general public.
- **Encourage overhead weather protection:** Project applicants are encouraged to provide continuous, well- lit, overhead weather protection to improve pedestrian comfort and safety along major pedestrian routes.
- **Develop the alley façade:** To increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest, develop portions of the alley facade in response to the unique conditions of the site or project.
- **Provide inviting & usable open space:** Design public open spaces to promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment for workers, residents, and visitors. Views and solar access from the principal area of the open space should be especially emphasized.
- **Enhance the building with landscaping:** Enhance the building and site with generous landscaping, which includes special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, and site furniture, as well as living plant material.
- **Provide elements that define the place:** Provide special elements on the facades, within public open spaces, or on the sidewalk to create a distinct, attractive, and memorable “sense of place” associated with the building.
- **Provide appropriate signage:** Design signage appropriate for the scale and character of the project and immediate neighborhood. All signs should be oriented to pedestrians and/or persons in vehicles on streets within the immediate neighborhood.
- **Provide adequate lighting:** To promote a sense of security for people downtown during nighttime hours, provide appropriate levels of lighting on the building facade, on the underside of overhead weather protection on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and on signage.

ONGOING PLANNING PROJECTS

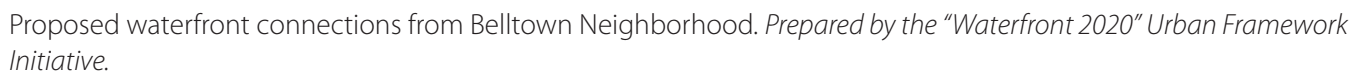
SEATTLE WATERFRONT

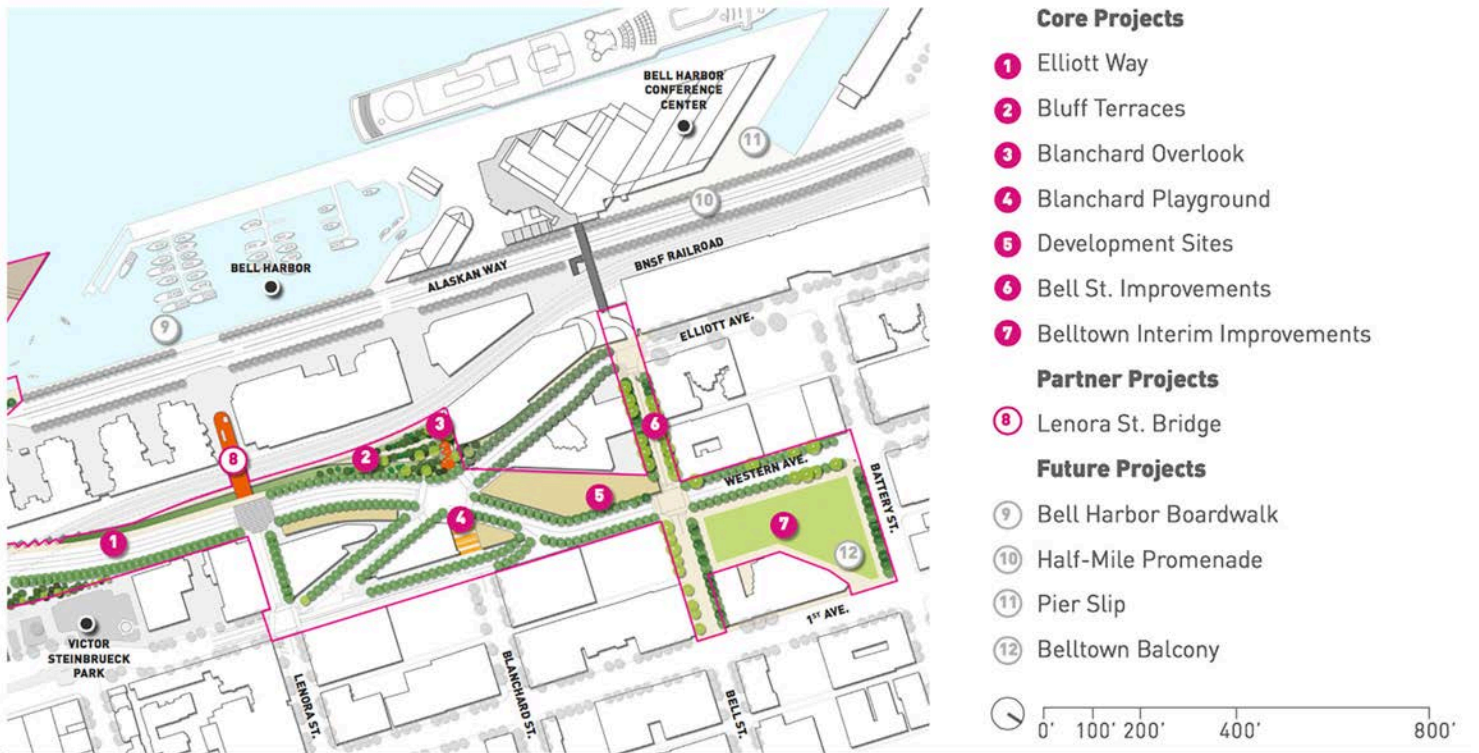
The Waterfront Seattle Program will transform Seattle’s central waterfront, capitalizing on the opportunity created by the removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and the replacement of the Elliott Bay Seawall. The program spans the waterfront from Pioneer Square to Belltown.

THE BELLTOWN BLUFF

The Belltown Bluff is conceived as a series of small destinations within a web of streets, stairs, elevators, bridges, overlooks and vegetation. Future projects in this area include a boardwalk along Bell Harbor, which would widen the promenade to allow for generous seating and viewing of marine activity, and the Belltown Balcony, a community-focused neighborhood destination at the former Battery Street Tunnel site.

With the removal of the viaduct, the Battery Street tunnel and related right-of-way area between Bell and Battery Streets along Western Avenue will no longer be needed for transportation use. The area is proposed to be improved as community open space—Battery Street Portal Park.





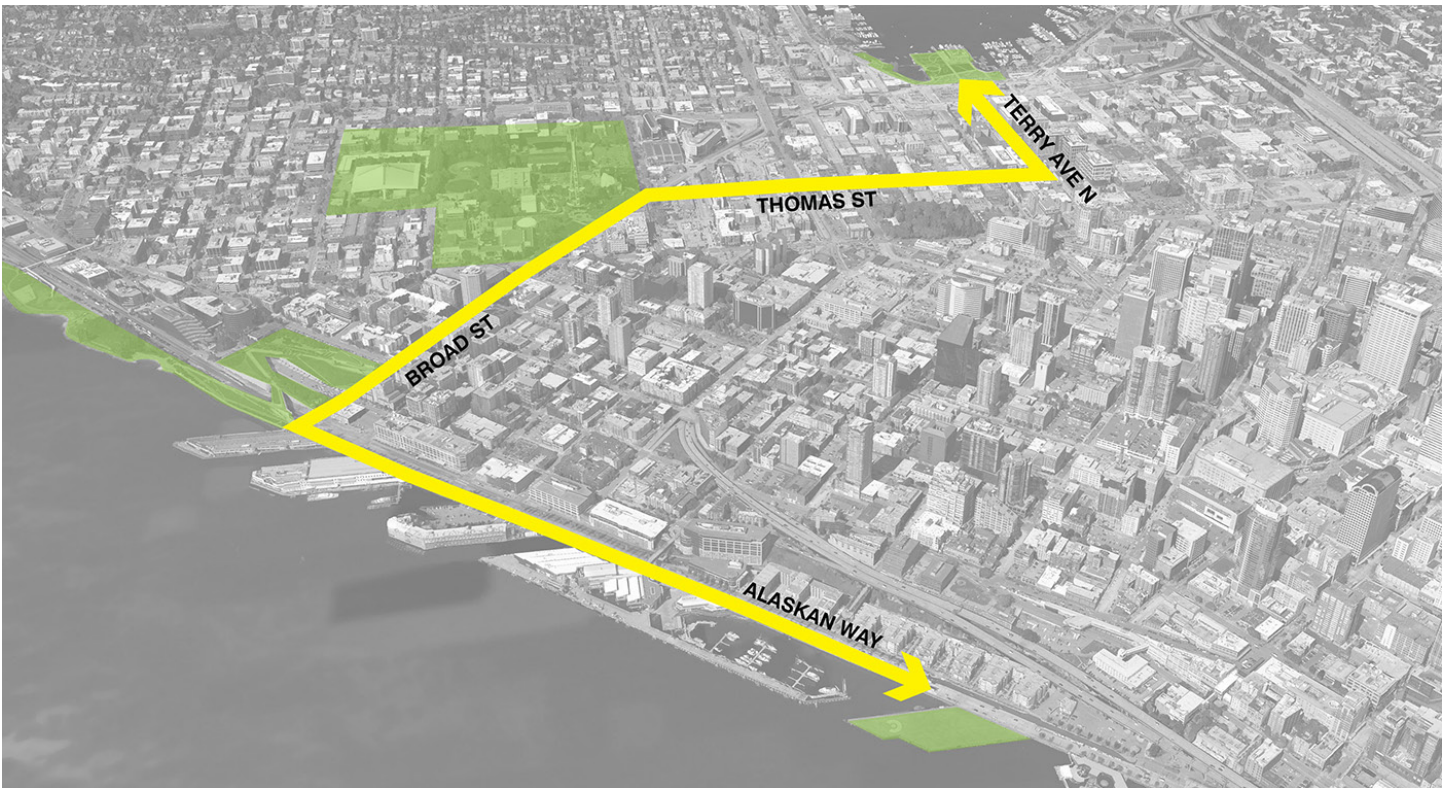
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Proposed projects connecting Belltown Neighborhood to the Waterfront and the Battery Street Portal Park location, shown as site #7.

LAKE TO BAY

The Lake to Bay project is an effort to reconnect Lake Union to Elliott Bay. Originally imagined as the Potlatch trail, this 3.2 mile pedestrian and bike route between Lake Union and Elliott Bay creates a vital and safe connection to some of Seattle's civic treasures – Lake Union Park, Seattle Center, the Olympic Sculpture Park and Myrtle Edwards Park. While only separated by a mile, these attractions have remained divided by SR 99 and Mercer Street. The proposed Lake to Bay route reconnects these neighborhoods with a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists. Within Belltown, the trail would follow Broad Street, providing the link between Seattle Center and the Olympic Sculpture Park.

Progress to date: Broad Street was permanently closed last year between Fifth and Ninth avenues. The street grid is undergoing a massive revision to improve connections to Interstate 5 from South Lake Union, and also to reconnect Thomas Street over state Route 99 as it emerges from the yet-to-be-dug tunnel.



Proposed Lake to Bay connections. Within Belltown Neighborhood, the trail would follow Broad Street, providing a link between Seattle Center and the Olympic Sculpture Park.



Broad Street connecting the Lake Union, Seattle Center, Olympic Sculpture Park and the Waterfront.

FUTURE LAKE TO BAY CONNECTIONS



Illustration showing future Lake to Bay connections from Lake Union Park to the Waterfront through Belltown Neighborhood.

APPENDIX B: AFFORDABLE & WORKFORCE HOUSING

Belltown, like all of Seattle's urban neighborhoods, faces an increasing challenge in providing affordable and workforce housing. With the current economic boom and influx of Amazon.com workers in neighboring Denny Triangle and South Lake Union, this issue is expected to become even more challenging.

Workshop coordinators are developing a walking route and a list of questions that workshop participants could address related to affordable and workforce housing. Some initial questions are:

- Identify actions/strategies to provide more housing for those that fall in the gap between affordable and high-end market rate housing.
- Identify ways to maintain a viable commercial area along 1st Avenue while still making Belltown livable for affordable housing residents.
- Suggest strategies or policy tweaks to encourage increased developers uptake of the Multifamily Housing Tax Exemption and Incentive Zoning.

Below is a summary of the neighborhood's housing context.

"Since 2000, 95 percent of new households in King County have been either rich or poor. A mere 5 percent could be considered middle income."

- Dow Constantine, King County Executive

CITY WIDE CONTEXT

Seattle is in the midst of an economic boom with steady population growth driven by high-salary, high-tech employment (such as Amazon, Microsoft, and new entries into the tech market). But this boom has also led to a housing problem for Seattle's middle and low-income residents. The drivers of the housing challenge are many:

- High tech employment opportunities are attracting more high wage earners to Seattle.
- Every high tech job creates 4 additional jobs in other sectors.
- Not enough housing is being built to meet middle-income demand.
- Many middle class resident incomes are too high to be eligible for affordable housing subsidies.

NOT ENOUGH AFFORDABLE, MARKET-RATE HOUSING

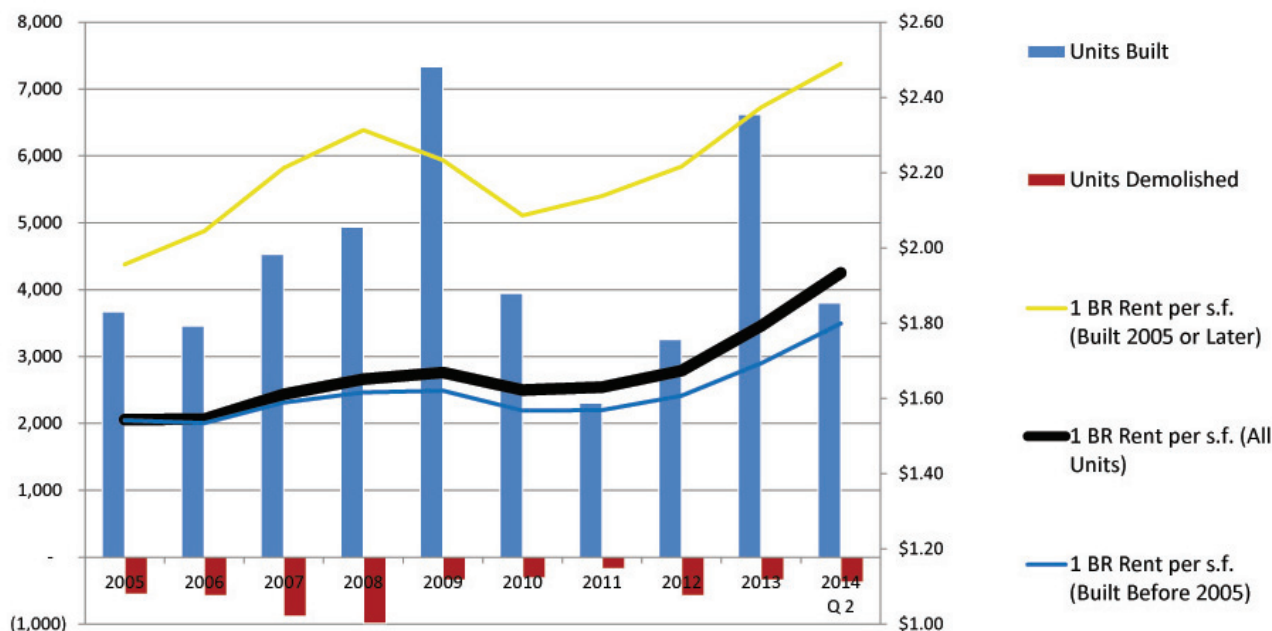
Seattle does not have enough affordable housing - a subject of the recently formed Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) - initiated by Mayor Ed Murray. Many new units are in the development pipeline, but not enough are affordable for low- and middle-income residents.

Some key figures:

- 21,000 units currently in the pipeline. Most rents average \$1,836 per month. *(Colliers International)*
- Existing rental units cost on average \$1,488 per month. *(HALA data)*
- Roughly 58,000 new units are needed at prices affordable to individuals making less than 100% AMI. *(HALA data)*
- Since 2005, average rents in Seattle neighborhoods grew by at least 13%, many by 20% or more. *(HALA data)*

Rent Trends

In the last few years, housing development has accelerated but rents continue to climb, driven by rapidly growing demand. Rental rates for new units are higher and housing that is demolished tends to be older affordable housing stock in varying conditions.



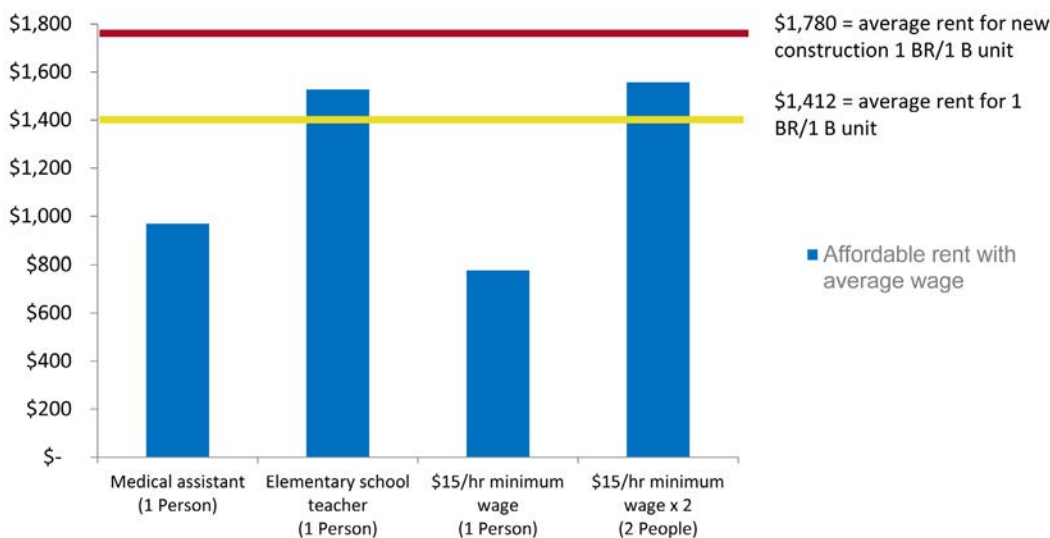
Sources: Seattle Residential Permit Report, DPD Permit Warehouse, 2nd Q 2014; Dupre+Scott Apartment Advisors, Apartment Vacancy Report, 20+ unit buildings, Fall 2014, Seattle-14 market areas.

Rent Trends: Housing development has accelerated, but rents continue to climb, driven by rapidly growing demand. *Source: HALA Background Binder*

The result is that housing supply in Seattle is shaped like a “barbell.” Affordable housing is being developed for households under 30% AMI and a lot of market-rate housing is being built for incomes above 100% of AMI. Though a few programs, such as the Multifamily Tax Exemption target households with incomes greater than 50% AMI, support for low- and moderate-income individuals is not meeting demand. Specifically, individuals making from \$31,400 to \$62,800 have few housing options that are within their means.

Housing Affordability for Working Households – 1 Bedrooms

Average rent for 1 bedroom apartments in Seattle is not affordable to people working in some of the region's most common occupations.



Sources: Dupre+Scott Apartment Advisors, Apartment Vacancy Report, 20+ unit buildings, Fall 2014, Seattle-14 market areas; WA Employment Security Department, Occupational Employment & Wage Estimates, Seattle-Bellevue-Everett, WA MD, 2014.

Housing Affordability for Working Households:

Average rent for 1 bedroom apartments in Seattle is not affordable to people working in some of the region's most common occupations. *Source: HALA Background Binder*

BELLTOWN - A MICROCOSM OF SEATTLE

Belltown used to be a middle class neighborhood with ties to the nautical trades and became a strong working class neighborhood through the 1980's. By the 1980's, Belltown had become a rough and tumble neighborhood of working class homeowners and artists. With community interest in making Belltown an urban residential neighborhood in the 1980's, multifamily units began displacing single-family units and Belltown's population increased three-fold. Since the 1990's, Belltown has had both strong population and income growth.

Some quick facts about Belltown's housing and households:

- **Many more renters:** 75% of households in Belltown compared to 52% city-wide.
- **Most workforce housing is subsidized:** 2,221 of 3,000 affordable units in Belltown.
- **Household incomes:** Incomes skew lower with nearly 50% making less than \$50,000 per year.
- **Most employment in information sciences, professional, and technical services**
- **None of Belltown is Zoned for Single-Family:** Predominantly Downtown Mixed Zone.
- **Plans encourage a mix of housing:** Seeks to preserve affordable historical apartments while adding new condos and high-end apartments.



Photo credit: Seattle.Curbed.com

CURRENT HOUSING POLICY

The City of Seattle along with Washington State and the federal government have enacted policies to encourage and directly subsidize workforce and affordable housing. These policies include tax incentives, trust funds, and funding levies. Many target certain income ranges such as households making less than 30% or 50% of the Area Median Income. The following policies are broadly outlined, including the policy name, type, implementing agency, description, and target population (if any).

CITY OF SEATTLE

- **Multifamily Property Tax Exemption**
Tax Incentive, Office of Housing. This exemption allows developers to receive a property tax exemption on the residential portion of a development for 12 years. In exchange, a certain number of the housing units must be affordable for moderate-wage workers.
- **Incentive Zoning**
Land Use Incentive Policy, Department of Planning and Development. A density bonus that provides multifamily and mixed-use developments with increased height (in areas zoned <85 feet) in exchange for housing units affordable for households up to 80% AMI (rental) or 100% AMI (ownership).
- **Seattle Housing Levy**
Funding Levy, Office of Housing. A unique Seattle program started in 1981 and renewed periodically. The levy has funded over 11,000 affordable apartments, rental assistance for over 4,000 households, and provided down-payment loans for 600 first time homebuyers. The 2009 levy provides funding for five pro-

grams: Rental Production & Preservation, Operating & Maintenance Fund, Rental Assistance, Homebuyer Assistance, Acquisition & Opportunity Loan Fund.

- **Down-Payment Assistance Program**
Subsidy Program, Office of Housing. Funded by the housing levy, the down-payment assistance program works through five non-profits: Habitat for Humanity, Homesight, Homestead Community Land Trust, House Key Plus Seattle, and Parkview Services to provide between \$60,000 and \$127,000 in down-payment assistance.



Sylvia's Place - Innovative Homeless Transition Housing in Belltown

STATE OF WASHINGTON

- **Washington State Housing Trust Fund**
Provides funds for affordable housing projects through a competitive process. Since 1987 the trust fund has awarded nearly \$1 billion to build or maintain 40,000 units of affordable housing statewide.
- **Washington State Housing Finance Commission**
Provides a variety of programs focused on federal tax credits, bond financing, non-profit financing, and land acquisition assistance.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- **See Washington State Housing Finance Commission Above**
The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) is administered at the state level by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS & THE FUTURE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN BELLTOWN

- **Affordable Housing Linkage Fee Proposal**

Councilmember O'Brien is proposing a fee on multifamily development that would pay for an equivalent of 3-5% of the units to be affordable. Developers can build the affordable units in their projects and forgo the fee, or pay the fee. This proposal would replace Incentive Zoning.

- **Controversial micro-housing filling a gap**

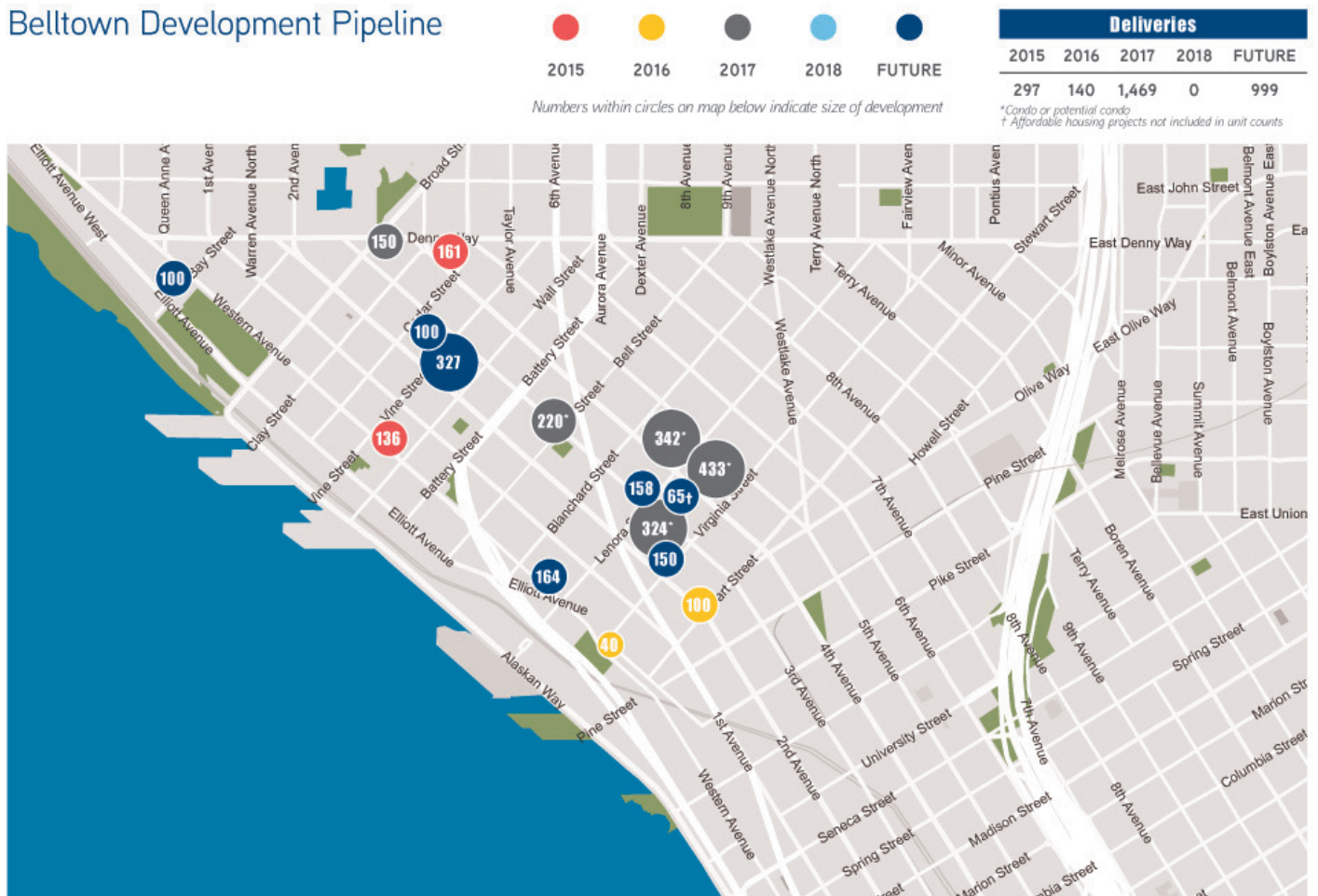
In 2008, the first "apodment" was built in the Capitol Hill neighborhood and since then, 780 units are now occupied with 1,598 in development. They are controversial for several reasons – their size, some coming in at only 150 square feet, rental cost, many are still upwards of \$800 to \$1,000 per month. Finally, single-family homeowners are upset because micro-housing exploits a gap in the Seattle development code allowing "apodments" to be built without the usual multifamily development review.

- **Mayor Murray's Housing and Livability Agenda (HALA)**

In response to the housing crunch in Seattle, Mayor Ed Murray convened 28 Seattle housing experts to understand and propose approaches to tackling Seattle's housing affordability challenges. The HALA members met first in the summer of 2014 and have produced an insightful document that can be accessed online at:

<http://murray.seattle.gov/housing/seattle-housing-data/#sthash.18AZa0k4.z1M6GJ5F.dpbs>

Belltown Development Pipeline



Belltown Residential Housing in Development Pipeline. Source: Colliers International

APPENDIX C: AFFORDABILITY ISSUES:

Including Public Safety, Social Services, & Community Amenities

While Belltown is Seattle's most densely populated neighborhood, the community faces a number of issues that affect its livability. This topic includes public safety/disorder, social services, homelessness, and community amenities. This appendix provides a brief overview on these topics, starting with applicable vision and goal statements from the 1998 Belltown Neighborhood Plan.

Workshop coordinators are developing a walking route and a list of questions that workshop participants could address related to Belltown's livability. Some initial questions for the group:

- Look at ways to improve public safety, and to address the perception by residents that neighborhood streets are lacking in safety.
- Identify actions/strategies to encouraging development of amenities and facilities to support families in/moving to Belltown
- Identify ways to break down barriers that stand in the way of a pathway out of homelessness (though recognizing this is a much bigger issue than just in Belltown).

PLANS AND POLICIES

PUBLIC SAFETY AND NEIGHBORLY REGULATIONS

Vision: Create a neighborhood that is safe to live, work and play.

Goal: A neighborhood where it is safe to live work and play.

- *Policy:* Promote awareness of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).
- *Policy:* Encourage the development of amenities and facilities which support youth and families.
- *Policy:* Promote safe neighborhood environment to encourage day/night and weekend pedestrian oriented activity.

COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Vision: Develop a plan based on creative collective ideas to enrich the community resources available to residents. This will include as major projects creating an elementary school in the central community as well as a Community Center. Belltown is home to many social service providers. We shall aim to make the efforts of this subcommittee facilitate increased inter-communication between these service providers and the community at large.

Goal: A thriving, integrated community that takes a stewardship role in the community.

- *Policy:* Encourage increased communication between social service providers and the community at large.

Goal: A neighborhood with a neighborhood center that provides facilities and services for neighborhood residents.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The local Community Services Office (CSO) for the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is located in Belltown at 2nd Ave and Lenora St. They provide a variety of support services, including medical, food and cash assistance programs. Their presence there has meant that over the years, additional service providers (often non-profit organizations) have popped up to fill the gap in DSHS services in particular

around homelessness, addiction treatment, and mental health services. Many of these organizations operate countywide, but have programs that are developed in partnership with the community and the City of Seattle that operate in Belltown.

BELLTOWN COMMUNITY CENTER

One of the things the Belltown neighborhood was most interested in was a community center, something that was realized in 2012 with the opening of the Belltown Community Center. \$2.02 million was provided through the 1999 Community Center Levy. The facility, operated by Seattle Parks and Recreation, provides programming, events, meeting spaces and 24 hour desk space for the Seattle Police Department. More details can be found at:

http://www.seattle.gov/parks/centers/current/Belltown_Neighborhood_Center.htm

PUBLIC SAFETY/DISORDER

There has been a persistent perception by residents that the level safety on neighborhood streets is lacking, especially at night. This was recognized in the last neighborhood plan in 1998. Addressing the issue will require increasing individual confidence through community programs. Some of the recommendations that came out of that plan include improved lighting, development of a neighborhood community center.

CRIME

Some work has been done to reduce crime through CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design). Some efforts include having better lighting in Bell Street Park. The MID has also been recently expanded its services into Belltown including sidewalk and curb cleaning, graffiti removal, a retail recruitment program to fill street-level storefront vacancies, foot and bike patrols by MID Downtown ambassadors, and outreach services to homeless people and others in need.

LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion) (<http://leadingcounty.org/>) is an innovative pilot program funded via nearly \$1 million in private grants, and developed with law enforcement agencies, public officials, and community groups to address low-level drug and prostitution crimes in Belltown by redirecting offenders to community-based services instead of jail and persecution. By incorporating a more holistic approach that includes services like drug and alcohol treatment, mental-health services, and housing, the program has helped to improve public safety and public order by reducing the criminal behavior of program participants.

NIGHTLIFE

Belltown is known for its thriving nightlife, and while that helps bring pedestrian activity to the street, at different times of day, particularly late at night, this can be a nuisance to neighborhood residents. The Seattle Nightlife Initiative is a comprehensive approach to creating a safe and vibrant nighttime economy, with the goals of increasing public safety, growing the local economy and improving urban vibrancy. With an emphasis on integrated action, the plan requires nightlife establishments, patrons, the City and residents to work together in increasing safety, and the economic and social benefits provided by nighttime businesses, and has eight priority areas:

1. Code compliance enforcement
2. Flexible liquor service hours
3. Noise ordinance enforcement
4. Security training requirements
5. Precinct community outreach
6. Professional development
7. Late-night transportation alternatives
8. Targeting public nuisances

NIGHTLIFE ORDINANCE

Seattle Nightlife Initiative weblink:

<http://www.seattle.gov/economicdevelopment/key-industries/nightlife>

HOMELESSNESS

King County's One Night Count is one of the nation's best-established "point-in-time" counts of people that are homeless. Counting both individuals staying in shelters, and those sleeping outdoors without shelter between 2 and 5a.m., In King County, 33.6% of homeless individuals are on the street (3123 of 9294 individuals). In the City of Seattle, according to the preliminary findings of King County's 2015 One Night Count, at least 2,813 men, women, and children were counted during that three hour period. While this count does not get into specific numbers for Belltown itself, shelters across the city are often operating at maximum capacity, meaning that there are significant populations of individuals that are without shelter. There are a large number of service providers located in Belltown that deal with issues around homelessness.

In 2005, a coalition of more than 30 housing and service providers, faith organizations, businesses, county and city governments, homeless people and homeless advocates created the Committee to End Homelessness in King County, and developed a ten-year plan to end homelessness in King County (<http://www.seattle.gov/humanservices/emergencyservices/tenyearplan.htm>)

SERVICES & PROGRAMS

Services and programs that are funded by the City of Seattle that provide a pathway out of homelessness include:

- Hygiene facilities and day centers (i.e. LIHI's Urban Rest Stop <http://www.lihi.org/urbanRestStop.html>)
- Meal programs
- Eviction prevention and rental assistance
- Shelter beds
- Transitional housing
- Permanent supportive housing.
- Safe Harbors, a data collection system that will help us end homelessness.
- Long term housing
- Transitional Housing

One novel approach to homelessness is the Millionair Club Charity (<http://www.millionairclub.org/>), by addressing homelessness in the community "by providing programs that develop economic opportunities for individuals while building their self-reliance through job placements/training coupled with access to food, housing and other essential services like showers and laundry facilities.



©2015 SEATTLE/KING COUNTY COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS

One service that has been identified as a need for people are homeless is a secure storage area for their belongings. Obviously, there are related security and logistical issues that would first need to be addressed.

ENCAMPMENTS

Encampments are groups of three or more unauthorized structures in proximity to each other which appears to be used for unauthorized camping on public and private property. These encampments present public safety and health problems including sanitation, illegal behavior, disturbance of other users of private and public spaces, large quantities of garbage and property of destruction.

Alleys have been a preferred location of homeless encampments, particularly in Belltown, as it affords homeless individuals greater privacy and reduced visibility from others. However, the problems posed by these encampments have led the City fencing off certain alleyways as a means of deterrence. The city also has put in place procedures to provide a consistent and humane approach to removing encampments on city-owned land that includes posting notice, providing outreach and referral services prior to removal, and the storage of any personal property left behind after encampment removal, for 60 days.

One issue that has been brought up is that the storage facility currently used to hold property removed from encampments is not located on a bus line, and not accessible for people that are homeless.

OTHER QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES

In general, Belltown's neighborhood amenities are located along its edges, rather in the center of the community.

LACK OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Despite being one of the fastest growing neighborhoods in the city, there is only one elementary school in Belltown, and most primary education students go to schools in other neighborhoods of Seattle, making it a barrier to families thinking about moving there.

LACK OF PLAYGROUND

One amenity that has been high on the list of things residents would like to see is a playground.

APPENDIX D: TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

As the city's densest residential neighborhood, and with its proximity to downtown, Belltown's mobility characteristics are unique among Seattle neighborhoods. Only 41 percent of Belltown commuters drive to work alone, compared to 53.2 percent citywide, while 33 percent walk (8.7 percent citywide) and 12 percent use public transit (18.8 percent citywide). Furthermore, about 36 percent of all households do not have a car, compared to 15.5 percent citywide. While Belltown residents may rely less on automobiles than residents in other neighborhoods, Belltown shares many of the same problems of congestion and safety as elsewhere because of the amount of traffic from other locations passing through the area and because of the local commercial activity attracting visitors to the neighborhood.

Given the number of major transportation corridors passing through the area on the way to downtown, the challenge for Belltown has been to create a viable residential environment that can coexist with the high-volumes of through traffic. In general, the north-south avenues, including Western, Elliott, 2nd, and 4th Avenues, have evolved as high volume arterials, while the east-west streets, many of which are designated as green streets, have provided opportunities for creating a quieter, calmer residential orientation.

A number of major transportation initiatives are in the works that will dramatically reshape the neighborhood (more detailed summaries are provided later in the Appendix):

- Sound Transit, the regional transportation agency is examining a series of options in extending light rail through the neighborhood to the Ballard Neighborhood several miles northwest. There are plans to trim these options down to a preferred alternative by next fall to place the 3rd phase of light rail on the regional ballot for approval. Light rail facilities and stations bring significant mobility and land use implications that are being examined.
- Street car extension plans. The Center City Connector project now underway aims improve north-south transit mobility and link the First Hill and South Lake Union streetcars through downtown. The proposed alignment runs along the perimeter of the district.
- Transit and bicycle master planning. The City recently undertook master planning processes for citywide transit and bicycle systems, each with a number of concepts for the Belltown neighborhood.

Workshop coordinators are developing a walking route and a list of questions associated with neighborhood transportation & mobility issues that participants could tackle in the workshop. The summary below provides some background on the transportation & mobility history and context as well as current issues. Some key initial questions that could be explored by the group:

- Consider Sound Transit 3 initiative (future light rail route and station(s) within neighborhood) and provide recommended actions, strategies, and/or land use/design concepts.
- Consider existing bus routes and street car initiatives and provide recommended actions, strategies, and/or design concepts that help to resolve problems and meet community goals.
- Consider the neighborhood multi-modal network and provide other actions/strategies that help to resolve problems and meet community goals (e.g., improving bicycle circulation, more efficient vehicular movement, improved pedestrian connections).

PLANNING BACKGROUND

1985 DOWNTOWN LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The transportation framework envisioned for the area in the 1985 Downtown Plan included the following elements:

TRANSIT

- A Denny Regrade Boulevard was proposed for 3rd Avenue to extend the transit priority thoroughfare above the downtown transit tunnel north through the Denny Regrade.
- As part of a downtown circulation system, an off-peak link was recommended connecting the Denny Regrade, Pike Place Market, First Avenue Corridor, Pioneer Square, and the International District. The link was shown along 1st Avenue, extending as far north as Broad Street, and looping down Broad to Elliott Avenue then returning to 1st Avenue on Cedar Street.
- A Belltown monorail station was recommended in the vicinity of Bell Street, to be provided as part of a private development.
- 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th Avenues and Lenora north of 2nd Avenue are all designated as Major Transit Streets, while 3rd Avenue is a Principal Transit Street. Portions of Cedar, Wall, Bell, Blanchard, and Virginia Streets are designated as Minor Transit Streets.

VEHICULAR ACCESS

- 6th Avenue was proposed to be converted to a two-way street between Denny Way and Westlake Avenue to rout traffic around the Denny Regrade residential neighborhood.
- Additional planning was recommended to de-emphasize the use of Alaskan Way by through traffic between the Ferry Terminal and Pier 70.
- Elliott, Western, 2nd, 4th, and 6th Avenues were designated as Principal Arterials, while 1st, 3rd, and 5th Avenues, Virginia, Lenora, Battery and Wall Streets were designated as Minor Arterials.

BICYCLE CIRCULATION

- A bicycle corridor was recommended to be established, generally along 3rd Avenue through Belltown, to link Seattle Center with the retail and office cores.
- A bicycle lane was recommended for consideration along Alaskan Way between Myrtle Edwards Park and Pier 48.

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

- 1st, 3rd, and 5th Avenues were designated as Class I Pedestrian Streets to recognize their function as major links in the downtown pedestrian circulation system.
- Blanchard, Bell, Cedar, and Vine Streets were designated Street Parks (now green streets) to recognize their function as links in the neighborhood pedestrian network and elements of the open space system.

BELLTOWN URBAN CENTER VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN (1999)

Highlights of recommendations from the Transportation Chapter of the neighborhood plan include:

- Consolidate transit on a few major corridors; with 1st and 3rd Avenues recommended candidates.
- Create pedestrian multi-modal hubs to accommodate convenient transfers between different transportation modes.
- Improve transit service to the waterfront, Capitol Hill, the University District, and Southeast Seattle.
- Support future light rail/street car service on 3rd Avenue.
- Remove minor transit street classification from Vine Street and designate Broad and Cedar Streets as minor transit streets.
- Improve pedestrian crossings at key intersections (many of the highest priority intersections are those on routers to the waterfront).

- Do not recommend 3rd Avenue as “bicycle corridor” between Seattle Center and Downtown due to neighborhood’s highest priority for transit and pedestrian use of this thoroughfare. The highest priority for a bicycle trail is to complete the connection between the Elliott Bay Trail and the trail along Alaskan Way. Priority for bicycle lanes include: 4th Avenue, Vine Street, Clay Street, Lenora Street, Bell Street, and Blanchard Street.
- Limit growth of through traffic in Belltown.
- Address need for short term parking, especially with loss of surface parking lots through redevelopment.
- Consolidate on-street loading zones; rely on alleys for freight deliveries and garbage pick-up.
- Improve pedestrian environment. (For discussion of specific pedestrian environment improvements, see discussion of neighborhood plan proposals in Belltown Open Space and Public Realm Improvements section.)

CURRENT TRANSPORTATION PLANNING INITIATIVES

TRANSIT MASTER PLAN

The Seattle Department of Transportation has developed the city’s next generation Transit Master Plan (TMP). The TMP is a comprehensive and 20-year look ahead to the type of transit system that will be required to meet Seattle’s transit needs through 2030. Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, nationally acclaimed experts in transit planning, assisted SDOT in developing the TMP. *Site link:* <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/transitmasterplan.htm>

The Transit Master Plan is an extensive update to the *2005 Seattle Transit Plan*, which identified key corridors linking urban villages and established performance standards for transit service. The TMP expanded on that work and included evaluation of rail modes, rapid bus services, station design, and capital infrastructure. The City Council approved and adopted the Transit Master Plan in April 2012. Since then, SDOT has started implementing some of the plan’s recommendations.

The Transit Master Plan addressed many critical issues:

- Identification of the city’s most important transit corridors that carry high ridership today, as well as potential new ridership markets that will emerge as Seattle grows in jobs and new residents
- Selection of transit modes —such as bus rapid transit, light rail, or street car—that would work best on those corridors
- Integration of transit capital facilities and services with walking and biking infrastructure, and using transit to make great places
- Enhancement of bus transit performance through roadway investments such as bus bulbs and traffic signal priority
- Coordination with Metro and Sound Transit to create a seamless, fully integrated, and user friendly network of transit services

The Transit Master Plan (TMP) prioritized four corridors with the highest ridership potential and the greatest need for higher capacity transit service. One of SDOT’s first TMP projects is the Center City Connector Transit Alternatives Analysis, funded by a \$900,000 grant from the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) and \$300,000 in local funding, including the Center City Connector.

With \$900,000 from the Federal Transit Administration and \$300,000 in local funding, the City is moving forward on a transit study that will look at different street alignment and technology mode (bus, rail) options. The Transit Master Plan identified two potential alignment options. We will be asking the public for more

ideas on a broad range of options.

The outcome of the study will be the selection of a locally preferred alternative (LPA) that has stakeholder support and is backed by a viable financial and implementation plan. This will position the city well for future funding opportunities that will help us design a build a project.

EXISTING & PLANNED TRANSIT SERVICES & FACILITIES



Notable Belltown transit projects include:

- **Bell Street Traffic Revisions**

In response to community concerns about traffic on Bell Street, the Seattle Department of Transportation is planning to make revisions to reduce the speed and volume of traffic. With the recent revisions to a single lane of travel on Bell Street, buses and all other traffic experiences significant delays, particularly during the afternoon commute period. King County Metro currently operates three all day, seven days a week bus routes that serve Belltown via Bell Street. Metro also operates several weekday-only commuter routes serving South and East King County which begin on Bell Street between the hours of 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm. To maintain efficient bus and traffic operations, SDOT is planning to restrict non-transit vehicles on Bell Street between 2nd and 5th Avenues. Beginning fall 2014, Bell Street will be restricted to local access only. Transit riders and bicyclists will continue to have access through Bell Street.

- **1st and Denny Transit Improvements**

SDOT has recently made several transit service improvements along Denny Way, 1st Ave and Broad St.

- New signal operations at northbound 1st Ave & Denny Way. New traffic signal hardware and a longer bus-only signal phase will allow more buses, including local service to Magnolia and express service to Ballard and northwest Seattle, to turn left from the existing bus-only curb lane.

- New signal operations at northbound 1st Ave & Denny Way

- New traffic signal hardware and a longer bus-only signal phase will allow more buses, including local service to Magnolia and express service to Ballard and northwest Seattle, to turn left from the existing bus-only curb lane.

- Revised Parking Restriction for Transit Speed and Reliability on 1st Ave. Existing parking restrictions on 1st Ave between Denny Way and Broad St will expand to provide a bus-only lane for longer periods of the day and match other bus lane operation in the city.

CENTER CITY CONNECTOR

The goal of the Center City Connector project is to improve north-south transit mobility and link the First Hill and South Lake Union streetcars through downtown. The Center City Connector is a proposed modern streetcar line that will link over a dozen Seattle neighborhoods, running through downtown and connecting the South Lake Union and First Hill Streetcar lines. By linking existing streetcar investments, the Connector will provide a streetcar system that is highly legible, easy-to-use for a variety of trip purposes, and that serves major visitor destinations, employment centers, and areas where the city is experiencing significant growth. The system is projected to carry up to 30,000 average weekday riders. The 10 neighborhoods within Seattle's Center City currently contain over 158,000 workers and 24,500 residents. Center City neighborhoods – including Uptown, South Lake Union, Belltown, the Denny Triangle, the Commercial Core, Pioneer Square, and the Chinatown/International District – have the highest employment and population density citywide. By 2030, growth targeted for the area is expected to result in a 60% increase in jobs and a 97% increase in residents, with an estimated total population of over 300,000 people living or working in the Center City. Between 2004 and 2010, development in the South Lake Union neighborhood exceeded projections developed for the City in 2002, with over 13,000 jobs added (74% of the City's 2024 comprehensive plan goal for South Lake Union) despite the impact of the economic downturn.⁷

The Center City is projected to account for over 44% of overall population growth and 63% of overall job growth within the City of Seattle between 2008 and 2030. The Denny Triangle, Downtown Commercial Core, and South Lake Union are targeted for substantial employment growth. Significant residential growth is planned in Belltown, Denny Triangle, First Hill, and South Lake Union. Belltown – a neighborhood at the center of the Center City Connector study corridor – is expected to experience the highest projected population growth of any city neighborhood between 2008 and 2030.

The Center City Connector will serve the City of Seattle's three intermodal hub areas including Westlake Intermodal Hub, Colman Dock Intermodal Hub, and King Street Intermodal Hub. The Connector will provide convenient transfers to the 3rd Avenue Transit Spine at both ends of Downtown, to Link Light Rail via multiple Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel (DSTT) station entries, and to Sounder Commuter Rail at King Street Station. The Seattle City Council approved the Locally Preferred Alternative for the Center City Connector via **Resolution 31526**. Next steps for the Center City Connector streetcar project include environmental review, additional community outreach and input on preliminary and final design.

Project link: <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/centercityconnector.htm>

BALLARD TO DOWNTOWN HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT STUDY

The City is also working with Sound Transit to begin a high-capacity transit planning study that examines the Ballard-to-Downtown corridor, also highlighted in the TMP. Of the five corridors being studied, four would have an alignment, either as a tunnel or at grade, with stations in Belltown.

Ballard to Downtown Seattle Transit Expansion Study



Five lightrail alignment/station options.

Project link: <http://www.soundtransit.org/Projects-and-Plans/Ballard-transit-expansion-study>

BALLARD TO DOWNTOWN HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT STUDY

The Central Waterfront Project extends along the Elliott Bay waterfront from the Stadium District and Pioneer Square to the Olympic Sculpture Park. A Waterfront Concept Plan was completed in 2006, anticipating future replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Elliott Bay Seawall. More detailed design concepts for the central waterfront were included in a Concept Design and Framework Plan (July, 2012). The plan's transit framework includes a proposed streetcar or trolley bus on 1st Avenue, depending on the alignment selected in the Center City Connector Transit Study.



Components of the Waterfront Plan.

Link to details: <http://waterfrontseattle.org/overview>

Proposals of the Plan directly related to Belltown include:

New (rebuilt) Alaskan Way with new connections to Elliott and Western Avenues

As part of the overall improvements to the waterfront and removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct, a new Alaskan Way surface street will be developed. Once the tunnel replaces the viaduct as the major downtown through route, the new surface street will provide for local access to downtown that will no longer be available from the viaduct, as well as maintaining links to Interbay and Ballard.

Near Pine Street and the Waterfront Place condominiums, the new Alaskan Way will jog to the west and continue along the waterfront's edge. Traffic volumes on the stretch of Alaskan Way north of Pine Street will be significantly reduced, which is consistent with recommendations in the Belltown Neighborhood Plan for the waterfront. Also north of Pine Street, a new route, Elliott Way, will climb in elevation as a two-way street along the western edge of the Pike Place Market to carry the greater volume of traffic up along the Belltown bluff. Near Blanchard Street, this two-way street will split to connect to the existing pair of one-way streets, Elliott Avenue southbound and Western Avenue northbound.

Bell Street Improvements

An extension of the Bell Street Park corridor to include the blocks between First Avenue and Elliott Avenue, adding landscaping, lighting, and more open space.

Blanchard Street Square and Blanchard Street Overlook

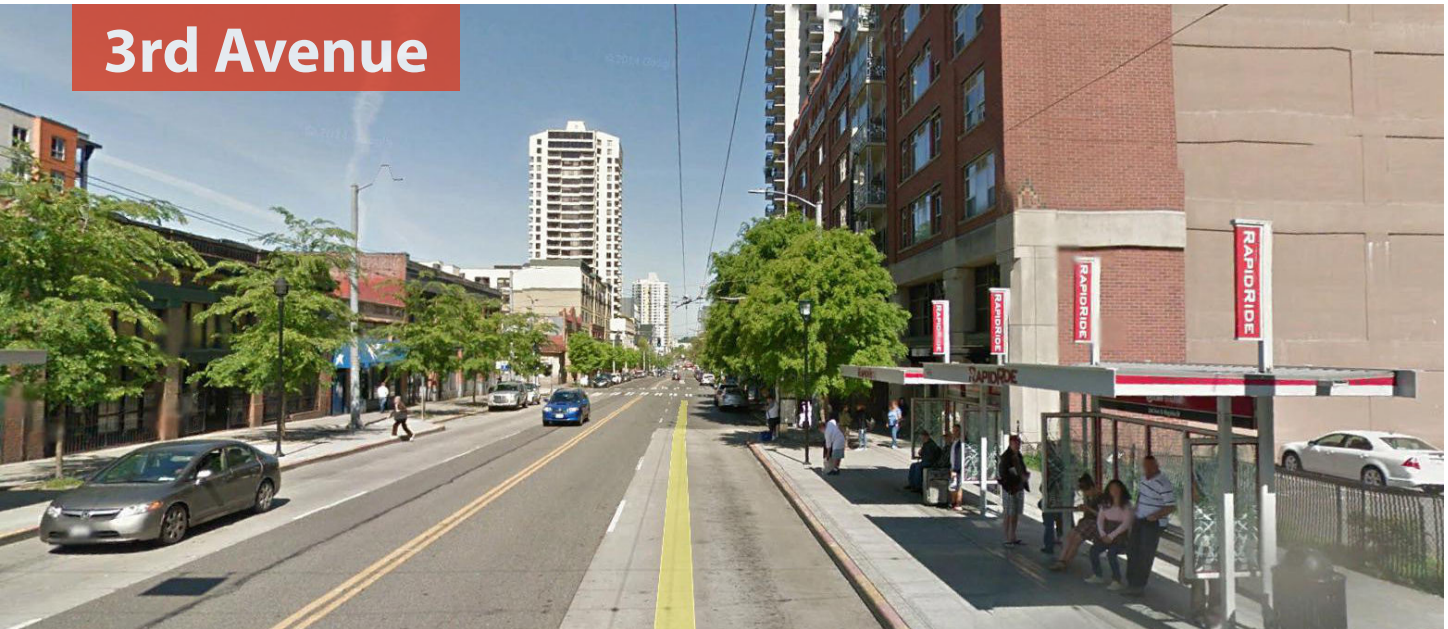
As the realigned Western and Elliott Avenue extensions converge to form the new Elliott Way, access will no longer be provided to Blanchard Street, freeing up the portion of right-of-way west of Western Avenue for use as public open space (Blanchard Street Square), which is currently being considered for improvement as a children's play area.

Battery Street Tunnel Decommissioning and Battery Street Portal Park

With the removal of the viaduct, the Battery Street tunnel and related right-of-way area between Bell and Battery Streets along Western Avenue will no longer be needed for transportation use. The area is proposed to be improved as community open space—Battery Street Portal Park



Existing Bell Street Portal - future community open space opportunity.



3rd Avenue image showing recent “Rapid Ride” BRT improvements.

COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOP

Belltown Neighborhood
Seattle, Washington
Briefing Booklet
Workshop: Saturday, April 18, 2015



American Planning Association

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