

# A New Vision

## for Freeway Park

Seattle, Washington



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Prepared for  
Seattle Parks and Recreation  
and  
Freeway Park Neighborhood Association

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# Part I

## Background

Freeway Park grew out of a vision for Seattle that was both environmental and social. The idea for the park came from a group of public-spirited individuals who wanted to construct a lid over the below-grade portion of Interstate 5 to “heal the scar” of its being built in 1965, and physically mend the residential area of First Hill to the east with Seattle’s financial center to the west. Attorney James R. Ellis, a leader in making the park a reality, was concerned that Seattle had no major downtown passive open space.

In 1968, several important events occurred to help make the park a reality. First the voters of Kings County approved a \$334 million Forward Thrust bond resolution to fund parks: \$65 million of that money went to parks and park facilities in Seattle. Second, the city secured federal and state highway funds to finance the construction of a lid over a portion of the freeway. Third, the developer R.C. Hedreen agreed to place his proposed 21-story building (Park Place) on the western edge of the lot and design a front plaza integrated with the proposed Freeway Park. Finally, the city of Seattle was looking for a development site for its municipal parking garage near the freeway in order to intercept drivers before they got into the city core, hoping to reduce congestion, noise, and air pollution in the downtown. Together, the city, county, state and federal governments, along with a private developer and many public-spirited individuals worked to create Freeway Park. Former Seattle Mayor Wes Uhlman has said that Freeway Park is “one more example of the kind of creative, innovative approach to problems that has made Seattle a quality city from its earliest days.”

The park was designed by the firm of Lawrence Halprin & Associates, with Angela Danadjieva as the project designer. As it was originally envisioned, Freeway Park was to be a downtown “park for all people” as well as a solution to some of the ills created by the freeway. According to local journalist Charles Mudede, “Halprin created the park not by converting its urban environment into a natural environment, but by blending the two into a new landscape, a new nature. Exposed slabs of concrete grow out of the ground like trees; some areas have walls of concrete, others walls of rhododendron. There are concrete canyons and waterfalls that mimic the roar of rushing traffic. It’s as if all the extra concrete from the construction of I-5 had, after years of abandonment,

mutated with the pines, cotoneasters, and Boston ivy to form a futuristic forest” (Mudede). Reflecting on her park design, Danadjieva has said “the elements of the park are designed to show contrast between the geometric architectural forms and the softness and lushness of the plant material” (Maryman and Birkholz, quoting Danadjieva).

Freeway Park was dedicated on July 4th 1976, by some accounts, as the “crown jewel” (Kimble) of Seattle’s bicentennial celebrations. The brochure created for the dedication states that the park “possesses a kind of grandeur one usually associates with natural wonders. It encompasses many moods and balances the extremes of dynamic motion and peaceful reflection. Square elements, boxy overhangs and neat terraces reflect the shapes and textures of the surrounding city.” Since 1976, the park was expanded first with the construction of the Pigott Corridor in 1984 and then after the Washington State Convention Center was built in 1988, it was expanded to connect the Convention Center at its north-west end.

Freeway Park’s history has been both positive and negative. For the first few years of its existence, Freeway Park was considered a success. It was architecturally and structurally innovative, and it established in people’s minds the fact that a city could be knit back together over a freeway. It also showed how to make the most use out of limited urban space. Landscape architects from throughout the world came to see it and it was a popular place for area employees and residents to relax. The well-known “Out to Lunch” concerts occurred in the park and evening performances took place there in the summertime. According to former Seattle Councilmember Phyllis Lamphere, Freeway Park “stimulated people about what could be done.”

Over the years, however, the park’s reputation as a positive place diminished. As the vegetation matured and cut sightlines, the park became darker and more difficult to navigate. Seattle’s growing drug-using and drug-selling population, as well as its homeless population, found a home in Freeway Park, in large part because of the Jensonia Hotel on its eastern edge. The murder of a blind and deaf homeless woman in broad daylight in 2002 spurred a city-wide effort to revitalize and reactivate Freeway Park (see Crime Statistics in Appendix).

After a fire at the Jensonia in March 2004, the illegal activity in the park has lessened and the park is not as threatening a place as it has been. Physical improvements have also been made. Concrete walls have been reduced in some locations and trees pruned to open up views and reduce the dark feeling. Areas of the cut-out sidewalks have been filled in with the goal of making it easier to walk and to maintain (although it is unclear that this strategy has been effective). Security patrols in the park have also improved.



Seattle Parks and Recreation hired Project for Public Spaces, Inc., (PPS) to work with local stakeholders to assess and evaluate the park and to develop a vision and activation plan for Freeway Park. A series of meetings were held with area residents, employees, property owners, building managers and park staff to learn what people think of the park as it exists today, and what they would like the park to look like in the future. PPS also led a public workshop on Thursday October 21. Participants were charged with assessing the assets and liabilities of specific areas of Freeway Park in the Place Evaluation exercise. As a group, they discussed possible short- and long-term improvements to the park and generated a vision for what the park could become. The broad vision and specific recommendations included in the following report are the result of this community-driven process. This report, however, is not definitive. Rather, its purpose is to set the stage for a community-wide conversation about the future of Freeway Park.

# Vision & Objectives

A city needs at least ten “great” places to visit. In Seattle, although there are “great” places, like Pike Place Market and the Waterfront, “great” neighborhoods, like Queen Anne, and “great” commercial districts, like Belltown, International District, Pioneer Square Historic District and Seattle Center, there are no “great” parks, particularly in the downtown.

Freeway Park could be one of Seattle’s great places. It could add economic value to the properties around it and benefit the city as a whole. To achieve this goal, Freeway Park needs to be thought of as the focal point of a larger district that includes residential, office, retail and institutional space, including the Convention Center, One and Two Union Square, the Crowne Plaza Hotel, A Contemporary Theater (ACT), Women’s University Club, YWCA, Horizon House, Virginia Mason Medical Center, Royal Manor, Meridian, Cambridge Apartments, Town Hall, and other adjoining buildings. Freeway Park should be activated in a way that serves all of the park’s potential users: workers from Park Place, One and Two Union Square, Virginia Mason and other nearby office buildings; residents from Horizon House and the First Hill neighborhood; Convention Center attendees; and visitors from the Crowne Plaza and other nearby hotels. The larger district, the “Freeway Park Neighborhood” encompassing part of First Hill and part of downtown, could easily become one of the best places to live, work and play in Seattle during every season.

The current planning effort’s many participants developed a vision for Freeway Park: that the park’s feeling of being an “urban oasis” should be preserved - but that this tranquility should also be balanced with a need for more activities in order to turn this park into a city-wide destination. The edges of the park, in particular, should be enhanced with major, visible anchors to attract visitors and create a positive image for the park. The participants also outlined specific long term as well as short term ideas, both of which are key to establishing confidence that change can and will occur.

In the short term, Freeway Park’s existing assets should be capitalized on, by making small and implementable improvements. One of the best ideas proposed by the community was from the residents of Horizon House who suggested a regular “Walk around the Park” that they were willing to organize as both an exercise and health routine and as a way of establishing a “people presence” in the park. This loop could be enhanced with temporary or permanent art or horticultural displays. Reviving the popular “Out to Lunch” performances and adding a series of daytime concerts and other events during good weather can be accomplished in the short term to begin to activate the park. Physical

improvements can be made in the short term, such as adding pedestrian-scale lighting, colorful benches, movable seating, seasonal horticultural displays, interactive games like chess, bocce and ping pong, and a play area for children from the nearby daycare centers. Maintenance issues such as making the existing fountains operable were also emphasized. These and other ideas are described in detail in the following report.

Many ideas to be implemented in the medium term were also developed, including some very creative suggestions for making Pigott Corridor an even more effective connection to University Street and First Hill. Clearly establishing 6th Avenue and Seneca Street as the main entrance to the park and further enhancing the Convention Center and Plaza as a major anchor in the park are other ideas, along with improving the important connection between the Convention Center and the hotels.

In the long term, to become an important place in Seattle, the park needs to be more closely knit into the surrounding neighborhood on every side. In some locations, this could be accomplished by expanding or modifying the ground floors of existing buildings to physically relate better to the park. In other areas, it could mean developing new properties along the edge that would connect directly into the park. The result would be a safer park that would benefit the larger neighborhood around it. This idea could also provide inspiration for establishing a new name and identity for the park - one that reflects the beauty and importance of the “place” and the neighborhood rather than of the freeway.

In the long term, minimizing the negative and divisive impact of 8th Avenue will be a major challenge, and ways of doing this were discussed among various groups. Eliminating 8th Avenue altogether or bringing it to near grade from Seneca Street to the Convention Center are two possibilities. Doing either would not only mend the divide that the park design originally sought to address, it would also create space for a central focal point in the park that would positively impact safety and security.

Finally, to achieve this vision, in both the short and long term, a strategy must be developed for managing the park more effectively through a nonprofit Freeway Park conservancy organization. There are many advantages to creating such a public/private partnership, including: efficiency and flexibility, advocacy, fundraising and accepting donations, focus, community ties and consistent leadership (see the section on public park management for more information).

To improve Freeway Park, Seattle’s leaders need to be as visionary as their predecessors. Not only do they need to clearly understand the issues faced by the people who use and manage the park daily, but also respect the ideas of the

people who live, work and own property around the park. These people have contributed time and ideas - many of them for years - and we hope that their thoughts are reflected here. Not many places have such a dedicated group of stakeholders, and their involvement is essential as the concept for the future of the park evolves. With change, Freeway Park could become the central focal point and connector within the entire downtown area.

## Objectives

**Ensure that Freeway Park is well managed and funded.** The success of any park depends strongly on management. A plan for the active management of Freeway Park - including fundraising, design and planning of capital improvement projects, event programming, concessions marketing and management, and enhanced grounds maintenance - should be developed.

**Improve the park while respecting its original design elements.** When it was built, Freeway Park was innovative structurally and architecturally. Halprin's philosophy in designing parks was to plan and design "common spaces where human beings can meditate or move about, privately or together" (Forgey). Today, many people still appreciate the park's original design features, but many also acknowledge that Freeway Park needs to be updated to respond to the current needs of park users. Halprin has expressed the belief that his designs are not necessarily static; in a number of cases, he thinks that they could be modified to increase pedestrian traffic (New York Times). Freeway Park should be adapted to current park users' needs, but the original purpose and design of the park should not be abandoned.

**Make Freeway Park a regional destination.** For Halprin and Danadjieva, vegetation was a critical component of the design of Freeway Park. They carefully chose plant species for their ability to reduce pollution, their seasonal texture and their color. The park's original planting plan included annual beds, mounded grass berms for sitting, and a light airy tree canopy. Today, the original planting plan should be respected, but it should also be adapted to become an attraction in itself. Sightlines and plant variety should be improved by the removal of some trees along with the restoration of an annual planting plan. Horticultural displays of Pacific-Northwest plant and flower species could draw visitors from all over Seattle during every season. The plantings could be carried out in a sustainable way, by recycling plantings when they are removed from the park. Partners such as the Seattle Arboretum are important in making this idea a reality.

**Make the park more active more often.** For Freeway Park to become a

magnet for people and development, it needs to be thought of as a series of smaller “places” that are designed and managed to draw people into the park in key “anchor locations” throughout the park. The park needs to include several places to go with several types of activities possible in each place. Activities should be programmed for various times of the day, during the week and on weekends, and year-round.

**Improve access to the park.** Each entrance into Freeway Park needs to be improved in terms of its visibility and the views into the park, by providing better information and adding pedestrian-scaled as well as theatrical lighting. A new lighting concept should be developed for the park that is focused on lighting circulation paths for pedestrians, and on emphasizing, in a theatrical way, the drama of the park structure. A new concept for signage in the park needs to be developed. This concept should focus on clear and identifiable signage and a map at every entrance (perhaps a hand-out map of the park) as well as at every major intersection.

**Enhance the relationship between the “inner” and “outer” park.** Creating connections between the park and the surrounding neighborhoods will make the park more welcoming to residents, workers and visitors. There are several opportunities for redevelopment around the park that would help to better connect the park with the adjacent neighborhoods.

**Expand the park.** This can be done in two key locations. First, by lidding over more of the freeway (between 8th Avenue, the Convention Center and the American Legion Fountain path), the plaza area around the Convention Center could be expanded to better link the Convention Center to the hotels on the other side of the park and to One and Two Union Square. Second, the park could be expanded and significantly improved by bringing 8th Avenue down to grade. This would be a major project, but one that would ultimately be extremely beneficial.

**Begin implementing short-term changes.** In the coming months, Seattle Parks and Recreation should run a series of activity experiments to evaluate the popularity of the ideas proposed by the community. Not only will this help inform which activities to set up permanently, it will also be a demonstration of Seattle Parks and Recreation’s commitment to improving Freeway park.

# Issues

**Lack of activity.** There is little to do in Freeway Park. Office workers use some areas around the Convention Center and around Park Place to smoke, eat lunch on nice days, and to socialize. These “anchor areas” are used because they are open, located near the edge of the park, are sunny during at least part of the day and some amenities are provided. Much of the rest of the park is underused, other than by people walking through.

**Poor perception.** Many people consider the park to be unsafe; to others, it is dark and bleak. Although actual crimes in the park have not been numerous, and security patrols have increased in recent months (from the police, the Convention Center and the Downtown Seattle Association) the presence of people sleeping and using or dealing drugs give the park a poor reputation.

**Poor connection to adjacent buildings.** The park is poorly connected - both physically and visually - to the buildings around it, and as a result, people in these buildings are not providing the much needed “eyes on the street” for the park. Park Place, the Convention Center, Horizon House and the Benaroya building have great potential to provide this informal security.

**Hidden entrances.** Despite the number of entrances into Freeway Park, most are not clearly marked, and the concrete walls and indirect staircases block views into the park. There are, however, several pathways that are well used and that could attract even more people into the park if they were improved. These paths include: from the Pigott Corridor to downtown through the Convention Center; from the corner of 6th Avenue and Seneca Street to the Convention Center or to Pigott Corridor; from the corner of 6th Avenue and University, under Park Place, to Pigott; and from the parking garage to the Convention Center or to 6th Avenue and Seneca.

**Inadequate signage.** Inadequate signage makes orientation within Freeway Park confusing, particularly for first-time visitors. Orientation is further complicated by sightlines to nearby buildings that are often blocked by high walls of concrete and overgrown evergreens. When people don’t know where they are, they feel lost and unsafe.

**Lack of a broad management strategy that goes beyond maintenance.** Currently, there is no entity that has responsibility for managing the activities that need to occur to make Freeway Park into an important place. Much of the success of any park is due to management, and serious considera-



Hidden entrances



Risk and perceived risk



Isolation from adjacent land uses



“Undesirable” activities

tion needs to be given to establishing a well funded and all-encompassing management strategy for the park in the future.

# Park-Wide Recommendations

Included below are short- and long-term recommendations for the park-wide improvement of Freeway Park. The following section of the report outlines recommendations for specific areas of the park.

- **Develop a broad management and funding strategy.** There are several models to consider in developing a strategy for managing the park and the specific solution for Freeway Park can adapt some of the aspects of these models. For example, Central Park's very successful zone gardening program should be considered as a way of establishing a funding stream for various areas of the park. Central Park is divided into several zones, each of which is maintained by its own dedicated, full-time gardener, funded by a long-term endowment to the park. Gardeners are responsible for day-to-day maintenance, cleanup and horticulture in their zone. Because they only work on a small piece of land, they get to know it well. They develop a sense of pride for their zone and become more invested in it. Another advantage of the zone gardening program is that the gardeners become a familiar face to park users. Gardeners develop a relationship with members of the community and can often recruit volunteers to come help them once a week. Several Horizon House residents, for instance, are gardening enthusiasts: they might be interested in helping with the maintenance of plantings in the Pigott Corridor.

Another successful park management model in New York is the Prospect Park Alliance. The organization was created in 1987 to restore the park after years of budget cuts and a steady deterioration of both its natural areas and usership. A full-time parks administrator was hired and paid for in half by the New York City Parks Department and in half by the independent non-profit Prospect Park Alliance. Today, the Parks Department determines park policy, while fundraising and advocacy are the alliance's territory. The Alliance's efforts, combined with the support of many business partners, private donors and Alliance members, have increased Park usership by 300%, while making critical improvements to its fragile ecosystem and preserving its historical and architectural treasures. In 2003, the alliance employed 90 staff and had an annual budget of nearly \$5.5 million.

Other models include Pioneer Courthouse Square in Portland, Oregon. Pioneer Courthouse Square is an all-brick, multi-tiered plaza in the heart of



downtown Portland's retail district. It is one city block in size and is surrounded on three sides by office buildings. It includes places to sit, a large sculpture, a mile post showing the distances to nine sister cities and other destinations, a Starbucks, and shelter for riders waiting for the tramway. It is also the site of frequent events such as concerts and the annual Christmas Tree lighting. The square is owned by the city of Portland but managed by a non-profit organization, which, in turn, contracts with the Downtown BID to provide cleaning and security. Pioneer Courthouse Square and Central Park are both very successful places and good models for public/private management of a public space.

- **Adapt the park's original design concept to accommodate additional activity.** While the "concrete-versus-vegetation" concept of the park's original design should be respected, there are modifications that should be made to the design in order to better support the activities envisioned. For example, some concrete elements which block views at key locations, such as at entrances and fountains, should be removed.
- **Manage the park's plantings to make them a destination.** Consider the original planting plan for Freeway Park, and respectfully adapt it to current needs. The vegetation in the park was originally chosen "for its ability to reduce pollution, its seasonal texture and its color" (Maryman and Birkholz) - those features should be preserved and enhanced. However, Freeway Park could also benefit from seasonal horticultural displays in Park Place Plaza, and Convention Center Plaza extending to the American Legion Fountain, and in other parts of the park where there is adequate sun. These beautiful always-changing displays could become an attraction in themselves and a reason to visit the park from all over the region. Special attention should be given to plantings that children can play with and learn from.
- **Provide the amenities necessary to increase activity in the park.** Workshop attendants explored many short-term ideas that would support and attract activity to places within the park, including places for outdoor dining, play areas for children, gardens with seasonal horticultural displays at strategic points throughout the park, comfortable and colorful chairs and benches, quiet games such as bocce, horseshoes, chess, etc. There are also many opportunities for events during different seasons. In the summer the popular "Out to Lunch" concert program could be revived. During the holiday season, Christmas lighting could occur throughout the park, and a skating rink could be considered in the long term. In any season, groups could participate in a loop walk or run around the park. Select tree pruning

should occur in the areas of the park where most activity can occur (Park Place Plaza and Convention Center Plaza), so as to light up the plazas and keep visitors warm.

- **Improve entrances, lighting and signage.** All the park's entrances could be improved by extending sight lines, minimizing select walls, landscaping and adding art, lights and signage. The 6th Avenue and Seneca Street entrance should be strengthened as the main entrance to the park. This requires improving sight lines and physical access into the Cascade and Canyon Fountain plaza from 6th Avenue and by bringing life and activity to this area of the park. A second key entrance is the Pigott Corridor where improvements could be made in several locations including at the top and bottom to increase use and visibility.

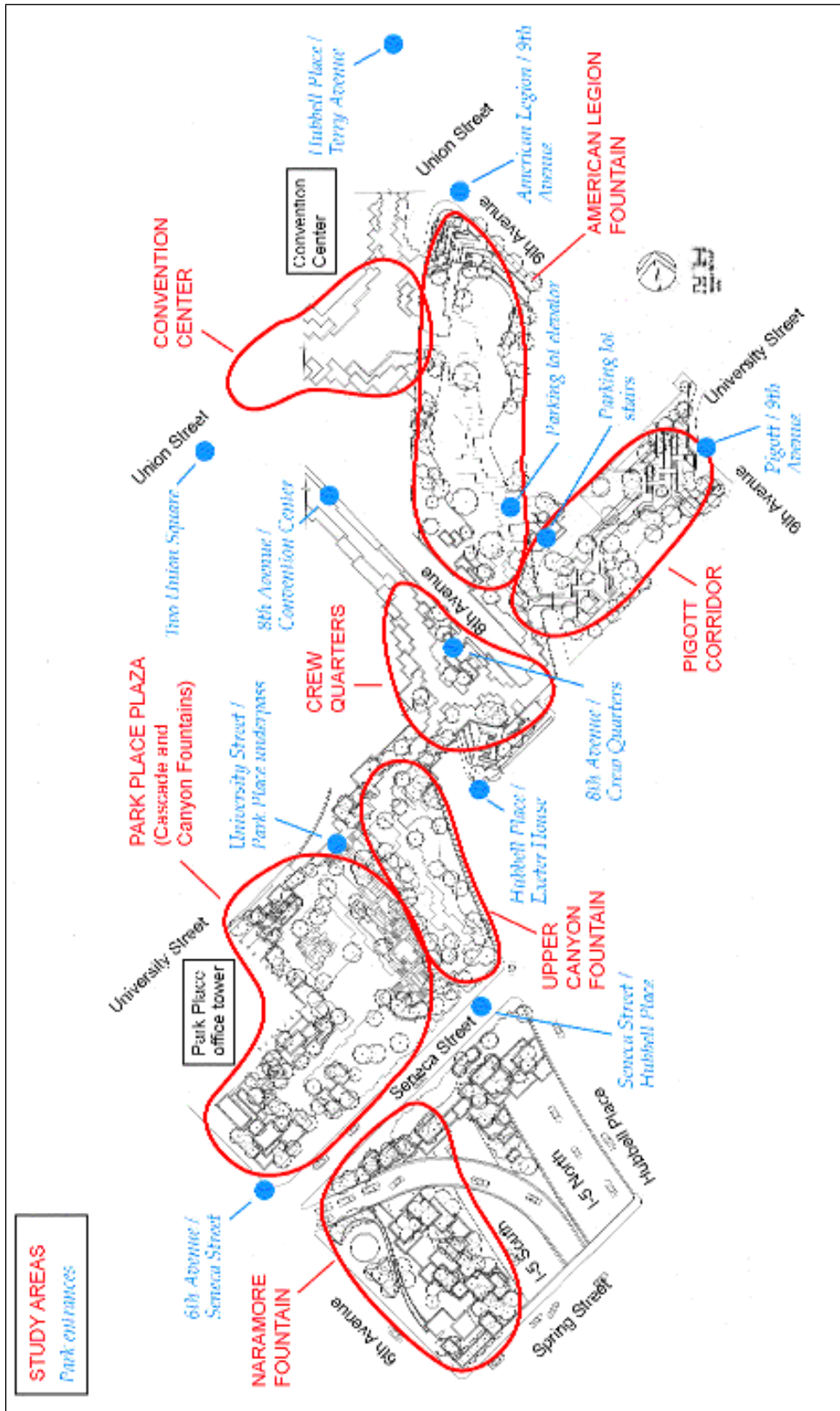
The current lighting in the park, which is provided by 100-foot and 20-foot, highway-style lighting, should be replaced with pedestrian lighting along major pathways, at entrances and to highlight dramatic features such as Canyon fountain (and other fountains) and the trees along Pigott Corridor. Every park entrance and every main intersection in Freeway Park (including at the bottom of Pigott Corridor, at the American Legion Fountain and in Crew Quarters) should include adequate signage with directional posts and/or maps of the park.

- **Target opportunities for future development around the park.** The site occupied by the former Jensonia Hotel, for instance, could be developed with positive ground-level connections into the park. Horizon House could also expand its building westward and better connect with the American Legion Fountain area. Development could also take place above the freeway, between Spring and Seneca Streets, east of 6th Avenue. Such a development could manage and maintain the area that is now the Naramore Fountain. If development were also to occur on the south side of Spring Street, a series of park spaces could extend to Town Hall.
- **Experiment with potential activities.** Vending carts could be used this summer to test the feasibility of creating more permanent cafe structures. Similarly, a smaller, temporary aviary could be set up before committing to building a large one. This is a good system to gauge interest in the various proposed activities. It also begins the process of turning the park around.

# Part II

## Recommendations by Area

The recommendations that are outlined here center around seven distinct “places” in the park. For each of these places, are described the major issues facing the area, a vision for it, and specific short- and long-term recommendations.



Existing park plan showing the seven study areas

# Convention Center Plaza



# placemaking evaluations

## Convention Center Plaza

Community stakeholders and workshop attendants shared the following ideas about the Convention Center Plaza:

### Like best

- Clean and open
- Busy with pedestrian traffic
- Good landscaping

### Short-term improvements

- Remove planters facing the park.
- Install diagonal path from American Legion Fountain area to Convention Plaza.
- Actors, mimes, puppet shows. The area is a natural performance center as it is now.
- Set up a seasonal vending structure outside with move-

able tables and chairs.

- Install a large awning or glass roof over outside seating area.

### Long-term improvements

- Remove 8th avenue ramp from Seneca to the Convention Center.
- Connect park halves to replace 8th avenue and enlarge the park.

### Local partnerships:

- Convention Center
- ACT
- Paramount

## Vision

The Convention Center includes, in addition to its convention functions, a variety of facilities for meetings and retail uses, as well as public spaces, making it a unique place in Seattle and a nationally recognized symbol of innovation. It could also be a major anchor for Freeway Park. Conversely, with some improvement, the park could become a major asset for the Convention Center. If the plaza were more integrated into the rest of the park and the Convention Center played an even larger role in the area's management, the plaza could function even better for its many users, such as people passing through, convention attendees coming from hotels to the south, and employees on their lunch break. Convention Center Plaza could also become the location of other events at different times of day, week and year, for both Seattle residents and out-of-town visitors.

## Issues

The Convention Center's atrium incorporates key elements of Freeway Park's design, and the area of the park right outside the building is very well maintained and landscaped. For the most part, however, the Convention Center turns its back on the park, in part because of the park's negative image. Views of the park from inside are obstructed, reducing the opportunity for convention users and managers to provide "eyes on the plaza."

Access from the convention center to the plaza is also difficult: several doors are currently only used in case of emergency; the main entrance to the plaza and the Park on the western side of the building's main hall is not visible from the plaza; access from the 9th Avenue entrance is indirect because of planters and the overall plaza layout; and the other (western) interior sitting area does not look out onto the plaza.

In addition, the eastern side of the plaza is not connected into the park, in part because the Washington Sculpture and the planter around it form a visual and physical barrier between the plaza and the American Legion Fountain area / 9th Avenue park entrance.

## SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Develop an anchor of activity and focal point in the plaza.** This could include a small café kiosk (which could be satellite retail of the Convention Center) with café tables, chairs and large bright Santa Barbara-style umbrellas (or semi-permanent awnings or glass roofs). The kiosk could sell postcards and other souvenirs for the many visitors to the area.
- **Schedule a series of musical or theatrical events** (acting, miming, puppet shows, art exhibits) in the plaza at lunchtime.
- **Improve the visual connection between the park and the Convention Center.** To achieve this, consideration should be given to emphasizing the entrance, lowering the height of some of the west planters (along the smoking area), or at least thinning some of its landscaping. In the future, consideration should also be given to opening up the atrium space into the park or adding a glass extension for a café.
- **Create a focal point within the plaza.** This could consist of a seasonal flower bed in the center of the plaza, temporary art sculpture, or a small fountain. This would provide a focus around which café tables and umbrellas could be located.



Comfortable outdoor furniture



Moveable chairs



Flower market



Picture opportunities

## MEDIUM-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Open up the area to the east of the plaza** to create a more direct access from the Convention Center Plaza into the rest of the park. Currently, the entrance to the park is so narrow that it is possible not to notice that there is a park behind the sculpture and plantings. Widening the path and opening the line of sight would improve both physical and visual access to and from the park. In the future, as part of this effort to open up the Convention Center plaza, the Seattle-Washington Sculpture could be relocated to a more visible location on the exterior of the park where it can be seen by people passing by.

## LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **In the long term, consideration should be given to expanding the plaza to the west** by covering a larger portion of the freeway. This expansion of the park would connect the Convention Center and One and Two Union Square, open up the park to the lively intersection at 7th Avenue and Union Street, and become an anchor at this end of Freeway Park.



## PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

- The Convention Center could assume greater responsibility both for its plaza and for the opened up area to the east, toward the Seattle-Washington sculpture and the American Legion Fountain (see recommendations for the American Legion Fountain area).
- The Paramount Theater, A Contemporary Theater (ACT) and other theater and music companies could help produce theatrical and musical productions on the Convention Center Plaza.
- One and Two Union Square could become more active gateways into Freeway Park.
- The Downtown Seattle Association could hold some “Out to Lunch” concerts on Convention Center Plaza.



Plan of the proposed improvements at the Convention Center Plaza



Convention Center Plaza, existing



Convention Center Plaza, potential



# American Legion Fountain



# placemaking evaluations

## American Legion Fountain

Community stakeholders and workshop attendants shared the following ideas about the American Legion Fountain:

### Like best:

- New openness from removing shrubs, lines of sight, sunny

### Short-term improvements:

- Convert bathroom structure to a coffee kiosk.
- More lighting for safety
- Run the fountain so it doesn't feel so empty.
- Fill in the fountains.
- Enrich plantings with color.
- Cut back some of the trees.
- Better signage
- Arts and crafts shows
- Permanent artwork (youth art, sculpture)
- Festivals
- Farmers market
- Seating
- Checkerboard games, Game shelter
- Dog run

### Long-term improvements:

- City acquisition of Jensonian property
- Improve transition to Cambridge Apartments.
- Create better connection between convention center and other park areas, visual flow.
- Remove concrete walls and hiding places to improve sight lines.
- Reserve more open space to play sports.

### Local partnerships:

- Art community
- Coyote Junior High
- NW school
- Green Tree Daycare

## Vision

The northern part of the American Legion Fountain pathway should be integrated into the overall Convention Center plaza in order to make the whole area feel like one place. By opening up the plaza in all directions, the American Legion Fountain could either become a special garden/fountain area on the east side of the plaza or it could be modified to become part of the overall plaza. If it became part of the overall plaza, the lawns to the east could be incorporated as well.

Many users of Freeway Park have said that they love the tall, coniferous trees at the southern end of the American Legion Fountain walkway, toward 8th Avenue and Crew Quarters, and the feeling of nature that they create. This area is one of two areas where these trees are most present. In the future, the feeling of being in a “natural oasis in the middle of the city” should be enhanced, and become a reason to go visit that particular area of the park.

Several changes were also recommended that would make this area into a “place” within the park. If it were renovated, the building that houses the restrooms and the entrance to the parking lot could become an “anchor” for the area. In addition, Horizon House and its residents could benefit much more from the park if they had a direct connection. In the future, consideration should be given to expanding Horizon House into the park in the area where the terrace is located so that a more direct connection is formed.

## Issues

The northern end of the American Legion Fountain area is one of the most isolated and underperforming areas of the park even though it is within feet of one of the best places in Freeway Park, the Convention Center Plaza. It is hidden behind the Washington sculpture and many people do not even know that it is there. The fountains are often clogged with leaves and the pathway through it is narrow. The police department refers to such narrow pathways as “fatal funnels” because of the safety risk that they pose. Behind the fountain, there are three concrete walls behind which homeless people sleep. The structures are also sometimes used as a play area for dogs. Even though the east stairway functions as one of the major entrances into the park, it is dark, narrow and does not provide clear visual access from top to bottom. It is perceived as an unsafe entrance by people in the adjacent neighborhood.

The southern end of American Legion is one of the most traveled paths in Freeway Park. People like the openness and sunlight in the area brought by recently removed shrubs and limbed trees, but still, there is little for people to do there but walk through. The restrooms have been closed since a murder took place there, and many people have said that they feel uncomfortable taking the elevators to the parking garage, particularly after dark.

## SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Create a stronger visual and physical link** between the American Legion Fountain and the Convention Center plaza, so that visitors in the plaza are drawn into the park. Many workshop participants recommended that the American Legion Fountain be made operable. Others believed that the fountain was potentially unsafe and should be filled in (put another way: if the American Legion Fountain design were proposed today, it would likely not get built for fear of being unsafe). In the long term, if the American Legion Fountain area is incorporated into an expanded Convention Center plaza, then serious consideration should be given to filling it in.
- **Enhance the lawns to both the west and east sides of the path with colorful planting beds** so that this area becomes known as a “forest walk” with beautiful horticultural displays. Small plaques indicating tree and plant species could become an educational tool for children. To do this, remove concrete plinths on the eastern lawn.
- **Prune some of the trees** to allow for more sunlight and a wider variety of plant species.
- **Consider developing an area for dogs** to run unleashed along this path or in another area of the park. Dog runs have proven to be extremely popular in other places, and it seems that many people who live near Freeway Park have dogs. Make sure to provide benches for people to sit, and ensure that the dog run fencing is of aesthetically appropriate design and materials.



Fountains



Chess tables



Yoga

## MEDIUM-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Reduce the height of the concrete wall** on the perimeter of the park, along 9th Street and the alleyway between the park and Horizon House.
- **Explore the feasibility of modifying the restroom/garage entrance structure** so that it includes a small area in which snacks, beverages and newspapers could be sold, in addition to the other uses. If possible a small indoor seating area with doors leading to the outside should be included.



Tables, chairs, bright umbrellas could be placed around the building, with awnings and heat lamps to protect against inclement weather. The operator of the kiosk could also be in charge of restroom keys and lending out board games. Information about upcoming events in the park could be posted in this central café.

- **Potentially buffer the freeway noise** on the west side of the lawn by adding sound buffering panels such as those found in Seattle's bus tunnels.
- **Widen the path** at the entrances to this area and eliminate the uneven edges to the path to make it easier to navigate and maintain.

## LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **In the long term, the entire area between the American Legion Fountain and the Convention Center Plaza should be modified** so that people using the east stairs come directly into the plaza.
- **Horizon House should consider expanding its facilities** and developing the area above the garage on the east side of Forest Walk in order to connect better to the park. This would provide direct access into the park and toward the Convention Center and downtown, instead of the current circuitous route through the Pigott Corridor.

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

- The Convention Center could oversee the northern end of the American Legion Fountain area, and integrate it with its plaza.
- The American Legion could be in charge of maintaining the fountain and adjacent plantings.
- The café operator could oversee the southern end of the American Legion Fountain area.
- The Washington Park Arboretum, the Horizon House Garden Club and other area residents could help plan or maintain plantings in this area.

HORTICULTURAL DISPLAYS ON EACH  
\* SIDE OF PATH RECREATE MOUNDS TO  
BUFFER FREEWAY NOISE

CHILDREN INTERACTIVE  
SCULPTURES



REMOVE FOUNTAIN-CREATE FOCAL  
POINT WITH TERRACE AND HORTICULTURAL  
DISPLAYS OPEN UP PHYSICALLY AND VISUALLY  
FROM EAST SIDE OF PLAZA

CHILDREN INTERACTIVE SCULPTURES

MODIFY EXISTING BATHROOM/STAIRS  
TO BE USED AS CAFE NEWSSTAND  
WITH OUTDOOR SEATING AND GAMES

Plan of the proposed improvements at the American Legion Fountain

# Pigott Corridor



# placemaking evaluations

## Pigott Corridor

Community stakeholders and workshop attendants shared the following ideas about the Pigott Corridor:

### Like best:

- Accessibility: provides a direct and convenient way for Horizon House residents to get downtown.
- Ramps are comfortable to walk up and down for seniors.

### Short-term improvements:

- Maintain fountains and make sure they run every day.
- Fill unused fountains with soil and plants.
- Add a few benches along the walkway and at the top.
- Fix cracked concrete.
- Improve lighting.
- Illuminate trees in a dramatic way.
- Art work on walls, maybe poems
- Limb the trees, or maybe even take some out, to improve sight lines to top, bottom and neighboring windows. Replace with shrubs.
- Add directional signs both at the top and at the bottom of the steps.
- Playground for children: kids from Park Place child care

center go to Horizon House for Grandparents' day.

- Art shows
- Music shows
- Food vendors
- Coffee shop
- Chess tables
- Farmers market
- Evening community events, bandstand
- Tennis
- Skating rink
- Art show at the top
- Winter festival
- Exercise area

### Long-term improvements:

- Take down cement walls - make stairs open, like the Harbor Steps
- Statuary, create visual gravity points
- Consider redesigning the entire corridor

### Local partnerships:

- Horizon House Garden Committee
- Virginia Mason
- City Light donated project
- Pigott Family

# Vision

From a functional perspective, Pigott Corridor is one of the park's most heavily used paths, providing critical access to downtown from Horizon House, Virginia Mason and the First Hill neighborhood. In addition, the Pigott Corridor offers some of the most beautiful views in Freeway Park, particularly in the fall when the beautifully mature trees along the corridor give passers-by the feeling of walking down into a forest.

For the last 20 years, the Corridor has experienced a great deal of use, the trees have grown and the physical structure of the stair has matured. During these years a lot has also been learned about how the area actually functions. People from Horizon House depend on the corridor to get to downtown, especially the ramped areas. Children from the Green Tree Daycare Center use the fountains for sailing boats during their park walks. Joggers use the park as does the Virginia Mason Hospital for its annual fundraiser. In fact, last year's event was spectacular - the Corridor, parts of the park and the Convention Center plaza were turned into a fairyland. This experience could provide several good ideas for future enhancements especially in terms of events and theatrical lighting.

The vision is that although the corridor is good, it could be made even better! In the short and medium term, with some modifications to the existing structure, the Pigott Corridor could be transformed into not only a magical "canopy walk" experience but also a connector and asset to adjoining developments. In the long term, some of the dead space between the corridor and the adjacent buildings that is so difficult to control should be eliminated. This could mean widening the steps or extending the buildings. The Harbor Steps were cited as examples by workshop attendants of a positive model for stairs.

# Issues

The Pigott Corridor was added to Freeway Park in 1984, as mitigation for the construction of Horizon House. It was partially financed by the Pigott Family. Since that time, the trees along the corridor have grown to extraordinary heights and beauty, changing the once open feeling to one that in some areas feels closed in and isolated. In some areas the lower level trees block the view up and down the steps, and the concrete walls of the stair structure in some areas blocks visibility. From the walkway, it is difficult to see adjacent buildings'

windows; from either end of the walkway, it is difficult to tell where the corridor leads. People from the adjacent buildings said that they felt safe using the Corridor because of its continuous use, although some people do tend to wait at the top for another person to walk with. Some found the complicated structure confusing at first. Lighting along the walkway could also be improved for both perceived and physical safety reasons. Although the fountains are loved by everyone, some of them are expensive to maintain and are often not in operation. Nonetheless this is a loved and well-used area and deserves to be improved into an even better place.

## SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Set up small decorative lights in the trees** in the winter, at least until a longer-term lighting plan is implemented.
- **Prune some trees** to improve visibility.
- **Maintain fountains** and make sure they run every day.
- **Consider developing “staging” areas for joggers and walkers** to stretch or warm up, since the Pigott Corridor is already such a popular place to exercise. Plan this with the runners club. This could be a part of a regular **“Walk around the Park”** that Horizon House residents are willing to organize as both an exercise and health routine and as a way of establishing a “people presence” in the park.



Inviting entrances



Comfortable and original seating

## MEDIUM-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Illuminate some of the trees** on either side of the walkway with carefully planned theatrical lighting at ground level. This could make already impressive trees look dramatic.
- **Develop “places” - areas where people can sit, relax and admire the view** at the top of the corridor; half way down near the fountain area; and at the bottom of the corridor, where it intersects the path from the Convention Center to Park Place. Each of these places should have a different character. At the top of the Pigott Corridor, the concrete wall at the top of the corridor could be removed and a sitting area built to the right of the stairs to capture the view down the stairs from this location (this would not entail removing any fountains). The sitting area could have a short railing so that people sitting can see the view, and potentially a small

trellis or sign to mark the area. This overlook could also be visually and/or physically linked to the Horizon House, and could be the starting point for a daily Walk around the Park.

On the mid level, the plaza could be simplified; and by removing a concrete wall, an expanded area could be created for sitting and relaxing.

On the lower level the area could be opened up. Currently this area is confined both visually and physically, although the past removal of vegetation under the underpass has opened up the area in a positive way. Some of the vegetation and concrete could be removed to create an open space that can function as a connector between the two major paths in the park (Pigott - Convention Center - Park Place). This intersection is also a particularly good point for park information and signage. Special seasonal plantings could be used here.

- **Add pedestrian lighting** to the stair to create a more comfortable walking experience.
- **Remove several of the Pigott Corridor's concrete walls.** This would make it easier to see up and down the corridor. Consider decorative steel or wood rails where it is necessary to have a rail.

## LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **In the long term, the Pigott Corridor should become wider and more open.** It could be even more accessible. A redeveloped building on the Jensonia Hotel property, an expanded Horizon House (see American Legion Fountain long-term recommendations), and the Virginia Mason Medical Center could all have entrances onto the middle island of Pigott Corridor, making it an active and safe place that would be an asset to every property that touches it.

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

- Horizon House and the Benaroya Medical Facility/Virginia Mason Hospital should be closely involved with the management of the area of the park near their properties.
- When the Jensonia property is redeveloped, that development should assume responsibility for the lower part of the Pigott Corridor and Crew Quarters.



Plan of the proposed improvements in the Figott Corridor





Pigott Corridor, existing



Pigott Corridor, potential



# Crew Quarters



# placemaking evaluations

## Crew Quarters

Community stakeholders and workshop attendants shared the following ideas about Crew Quarters:

### Like best:

- Widened underpass below 8th avenue
- Accessible and convenient
- Colorful garden, flowers

### Short-term improvements:

- Provide directional signs, “you are here” maps.
- Improve lighting.
- Close stairwell near Exeter House.
- Emphasize the view of the city from there.
- Dress up 8th avenue overpass with flower baskets.
- Provide activities for seniors, because both Horizon House and the Exeter House are senior housing.
- Coffee shop
- Shuffleboard
- Table games, chess
- Horse shoes
- Provide movable, single chairs comfortable enough to sit and read in.

### Long-term improvements:

- Paint the “Best of Seattle” murals (sail boats, cruise ships, Pike Place market, Boeing planes, mountains, space needle, etc.).
- Add sound barriers on north wall
- Make opening under 8th avenue even wider by making 45 degree cut in the wall at the maintenance shop.
- Expand park into Jensonia property.
- Sink 8th avenue below park.
- Aviary
- Greenhouse with the nursery stock of the park in it

### Local partnerships:

- Art schools
- Local artists

## Vision

Imagine Freeway Park if, in the future, 8th Avenue were brought down to grade. It would open up this major crossroads of the park, add a lot of space to the center of the park and create a setting where positive development could occur along the edge. The former Jensonia Hotel site would become a desirable location along with the building next to it. It would increase both the value of Exeter House and greatly improve access to the park for its occupants. If this area were opened up, it would give focus, provide a central orientation point in the park, and designate space for a variety of activities during different seasons such as farmers markets, temporary art exhibits, and winter events. Short-term improvements are possible but would not have nearly the impact of bringing the road to grade, or even removing it, that is necessary to improve this important area of the park.

## Issues

“Crew Quarters” is the area that is both the geographic center of the park and the intersection of several major paths through the park. The recently planted area just south of the underpass is an asset - it is, in fact, one of the favorite destinations of the Green Tree Daycare children. The rest of Crew Quarters should be just as memorable as this patch. This entrance to the park (on lower 8th Avenue between the former Jensonia Hotel site and Exeter House), is also viewed as one the most dangerous entrances into the park.

The central issue in this area is the extremely negative impact of the 8th Avenue overpass. Even though the underpass has recently been widened, 8th Avenue still divides the park in two and precludes buildings adjacent to the park from connecting visually or physically to it. This lack of “eyes-on-the-park” constitutes a major security problem for both the park and the surrounding area. The pathway along 8th Avenue on its southern side is also unpleasant to use and generally problematic.

## SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Reconfigure the park entrance near Exeter House and the Jensonia.** Although it is not a heavily used entrance, according to the park police it is one of two major problem entrances into the park. The entrance could be reconfigured by opening it up and providing a more formal garden area, in addition to the proposed signage and map.
- **Provide directional signage and a map of the park** to improve the orientation of people who pass through this important crossroads.
- **Open up the area** on the south side at the base of Pigott Corridor as described previously.
- **Decorate the walls of the overpass** with colorful murals or other artwork. In addition to the overpass these murals or artwork could be extended to the large grey walls along the pathway toward the Convention Center, a pathway that many people use but feel especially threatening.
- **Consider setting up a greenhouse** with the nursery stock for the entire park.
- **Improve the walkway** that runs along 8th Avenue to make it more colorful, lighted and pedestrian friendly. This walkway is Convention Center property, and the Convention Center's interior art show could extend outside and into this walkway.



Maps



Directional post

## MEDIUM-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Consider placing the proposed aviary in this location.** This aviary could be a major design statement, and a regional destination. (A smaller, temporary structure could be used for the first season, to gauge interest.) Work with the zoo to implement this idea.
- **Add pedestrian lighting** (possibly with hanging baskets) to the overpass to improve the experience of walking along the raised street and to develop a relationship to the park below.
- **Improve lighting in the underpass.** This could be improved in conjunction with the proposed murals or artwork that is recommended above.
- **Increase the height and effectiveness of the sound barrier** on the west side of the park along the freeway.



Colorful mural

- **Reconfigure the stairway up to 8th Avenue** so that it is more open and visible. This would involve reducing the height of some of the concrete walls and making the stairway more direct.

## LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **In the long term, evaluate the economic benefits of bringing 8th Avenue to grade through the park.** The alternative of eliminating it altogether should also be explored. As described above, this would not only allow the two sides of the park to be knit together but it would also provide a large open area that could be capitalized into increased real estate values for the adjacent properties.

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

- When the Jensonia property is redeveloped, that development could be the leader on the management for the area of the lower part of the Pigott Corridor and Crew Quarters.



Plan of the proposed improvements at Crew Quarters



# Park Place Plaza

Cascade & Canyon Fountains



# placemaking evaluations

## Park Place Plaza

Community stakeholders and workshop attendants shared the following ideas about Park Place Plaza:

### Like best

- Water fountain
- Accessibility
- Landscaping, greenery, trees above the highway
- Potential of becoming a vibrant community entity
- Maintenance, this part of the park is clean
- Proximity to office workers
- Place to eat lunch
- Quiet oasis, hear birds
- Open and uncluttered

### Short-term improvements

- Better maintenance: More frequent pressure washing and picking up garbage
- Maintain the fountain so it is working every day
- Improve and better maintain lighting
- Replace the flag
- Paint the exterior pillars of Park Place
- Illuminate the fountain at night
- Christmas lighting on the fountain in the wintertime
- Some tree and bush trimming and maybe removal, especially around fountain

areas and close to the Park Place building

- Eliminate blind areas which cannot be observed by patrons
- Directional signs, "You Are Here" maps
- Rename the bus stop "Freeway Park"
- Need a visual focal point here
- Play area for children
- Ground chess
- Bandstands
- Coffee kiosk
- Bocce
- Horse shoes
- Bathroom
- Emphasize a place to view the fountain
- Sculpture
- Art show
- Garden show
- Add moveable outdoor furniture
- Espresso stand

### Long-term improvements

- Add height to wall facing One Union to control reflected sound
- Provide a wider variety of

plants, flowers and trees, maybe with some information about species

- Provide bathrooms.
- Remove concrete planting structures next to stairway, next to Park Place.
- Reduce accessibility to the concealed areas by transients for safety.
- Create an amphitheater on the Seneca Street side facing the open cement area. Entails removing lawn, ala Harbor Steps. Would create area for music concerts, puppet shows, etc.

### Local partnerships:

- Local café in Park Place could operate small food kiosk near the small fountain
- Businesses that ring the park
- Lighting consultant, landscape architect or general contractor that specializes in landscaping
- Berger Partnership local landscape architect
- MID

# Vision

The area of Freeway Park adjacent to the Park Place building is one of the most important places in Freeway Park. In fact, many people consider it to be the park's main entrance. Canyon Fountain is certainly the park's major architectural feature, "a metaphor of the Olympic Range" (Maryman and Birkholz, quoting Pastier). Canyon Fountain, however, needs to be re-evaluated both from a safety perspective and in terms of the potential for people to interact with it. Many creative ideas were developed by area stakeholders for making the fountain once again a significant attraction, not only for people who work nearby and enjoy eating lunch outside on nice days, but also for residents of the nearby area, tourists, and children from the numerous daycare centers, and for people walking to and from the hotels to the Convention Center.

Park Place Plaza should be opened up and activated with retail activities like a café with outdoor dining and a view of the fountain. By modifying the fountain, it could become both a visual and physical focal point of the park. Cascade Fountain could also be made more child-friendly, like the wet fountain at the Miller Community Center. Halprin and Danadjieva originally meant this fountain to be a "children's fountain" (Maryman and Birkholz). The Green Tree Daycare Center could remain where it is.

# Issues

When Freeway Park was built, Canyon Fountain was its signature feature. It was the place that appeared in publications and was shown with people perched on the concrete ledges reveling in the drama and danger of their position high above the fountain. It is likely that if Canyon Fountain were proposed today, it would not be considered safe enough to build.

Thanks to the efforts of Jim Ellis, the Park Place tower was set back in its lot, creating a plaza at the corner of 6th Avenue and Seneca that became the main entrance into the park. Unfortunately, several factors prevent this plaza from achieving its full potential. The first is that, well-maintained as it is, it does not feel like either the main entrance to Freeway Park or the main entrance to Park Place. The concrete planters prevent people standing on the corner of 6th and Seneca from seeing the Cascade Fountain plaza and Canyon Fountain in the background. They could easily walk right by not knowing that there was a park there at all! At the same time, the entrance to Park Place and the street presence of the building's small café are compromised by the large concrete

planters which visually block them from the corner.

Another factor is that while the back wall of the Canyon fountain is dramatic, the walls in front of it prevent people from seeing the base of the waterfall from afar. The only way to reach the fountain's water, and experience it first-hand is to step down into the canyon, which could be dangerous and inconvenient for some people. Finally, the concrete "rooms" that are to the north side of the fountain are used for undesirable activities.

## SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Develop seasonal landscaping schemes** that relate to specific themes, creating a sense of a public garden. For example, the Daycare Center staff said that both children and their parents miss the former topiary giraffes that used to be in the planters in front of Park Place. Having at least one of the seasonal displays relate to children was recommended. It might even work to designate a pea patch for the children of Green Tree Daycare.
- **Add an environmental theme** for landscaping and for the fountain. Staff of the Environmental Protection Agency, who occupy a fair amount of the Park Place Building, suggested that a landscaping program be developed to change the landscaping seasonally, and donate the older plants to nearby institutions like churches, senior centers and schools, as a recycling program.
- **Develop an education and marketing program** for the fountain as well as part of an overall concept of Freeway Park as a model for a sustainable park. The EPA staff suggested that the recycled grey water was an opportunity to demonstrate the park's sustainability as well. Include signage to explain the park's water and flower recycling schemes.
- **Locate a café** on the eastern corner of the first floor of Park Place that spills out into the plaza with outdoor tables, moveable chairs and umbrellas (temporary vending carts used for a season would reveal whether more permanent structures are economically viable). This would require cutting back the concrete planters on the exterior of the building and potentially adding on a greenhouse extension so that people who eat there can have a clear view of the fountain and the plaza.
- **Restore the "Out to Lunch" concerts** and invite other music companies to perform.



Outdoor café



Attractive water feature



Child-friendly fountain



Topiaries

- **Reserve a space for bocce, life-size chess or a bandstand.**
- **Power wash the concrete** and keep it clean in the future.
- **Rename the bus stop** on 6th Avenue “Freeway Park.”

## MEDIUM-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Reconfigure the 6th Avenue and Seneca Street entrance** to the park so that there is both improved visual access into the park and a more formal entrance to Park Place. This would require cutting back the concrete planters, lowering the landscaping, and reconfiguring the entrance itself.
- **Restore the original dramatic lighting system** for the Canyon Fountain, so that it again becomes an attractive backdrop for the entire plaza and the proposed café.
- **Add sprays at the top of the waterfall** to make Canyon Fountain more “alive” and attractive.
- **Add height and a sound buffer** to the wall facing One Union Square to control the reflected sound of the freeway.

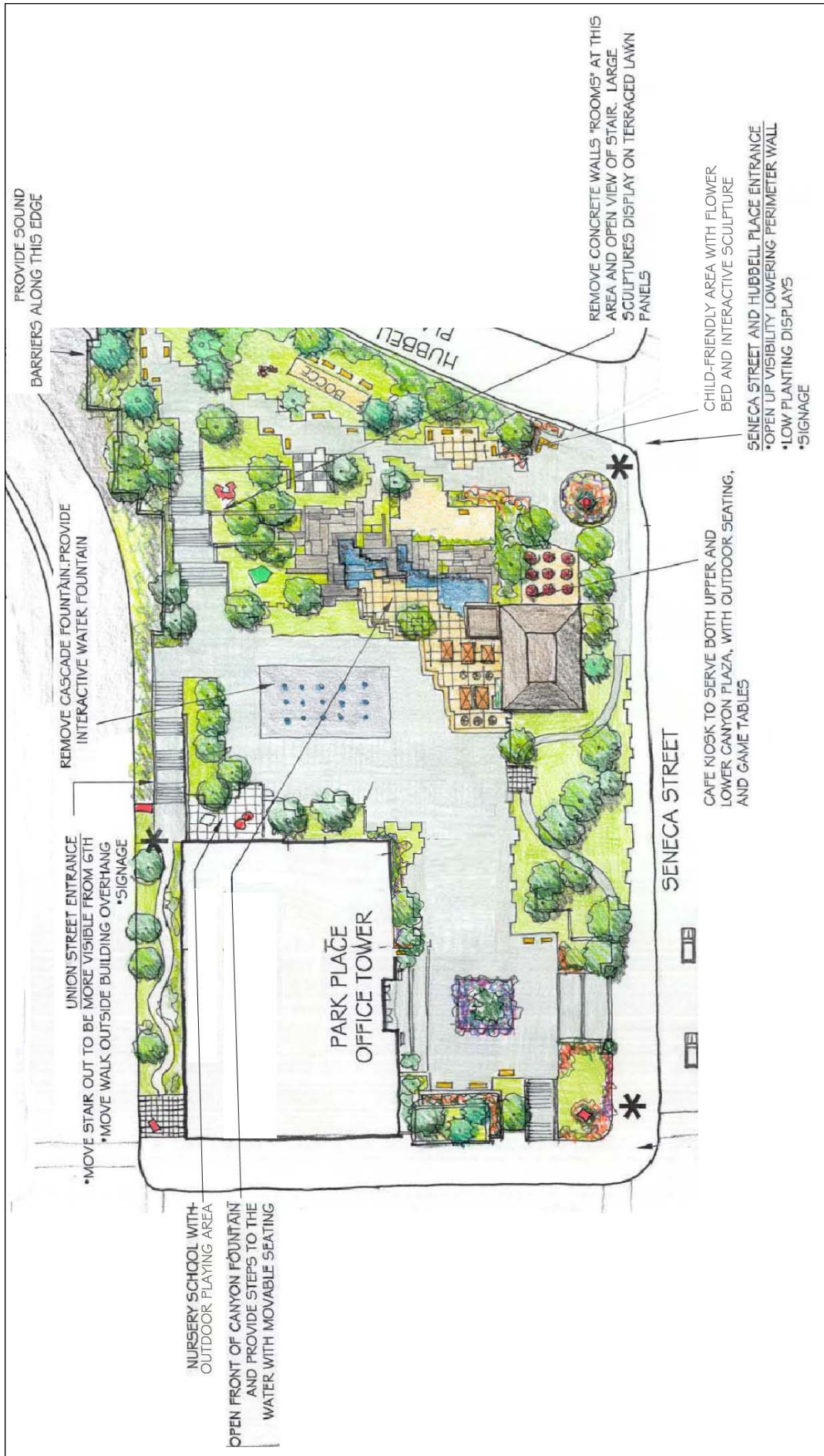
## LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Modify Canyon Fountain to make the waterfall visible** from the plaza. This would entail removing some of the concrete blocks in front of the fountain. Shallow steps could be added to the front edge of the plaza so that people could get closer to and even touch the water in a safer way.
- **Remove the concrete rooms** that currently exist on the north-western side of the fountain. Widen and center the existing steps to provide a more visible and direct connection to 6th Avenue and Seneca. Grass levels could replace the concrete rooms that currently exist. The steps and grass areas could be used as seating for events in the plaza.
- **Consider developing a two-level café kiosk** on the east side of Canyon Fountain to serve both the upper and lower plazas. This outdoor café area could be complemented with games like bocce or chess on one of the two levels.
- **Consider redesigning Cascade Fountain to make it more child-friendly.** A promising idea was to have a “wet” fountain like the one at the

Miller Community Center - a flat surface with sprays of water popping up intermittently. Or consider removing it entirely in order to create a more open and safer plaza.

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

- Park Place should give the entire plaza as much care as it does to the property it owns on the corner of 6th and Seneca.



Plan of the proposed improvements at Park Place Plaza



Park Place Plaza, existing



Park Place Plaza, potential





Sixth Avenue and Seneca Street entrance, existing



Sixth Avenue and Seneca Street entrance, potential



# Upper Area of Canyon Fountain



# placemaking evaluations

## Upper Area of Canyon Fountain

Community stakeholders and workshop attendants shared the following ideas about Canyon Fountain:

### Like best:

- Fountain, sound of water
- Big, beautiful mature trees. Landscaping. Sense of trail.

### Short-term improvements:

- More and better lighting
- Reduce water flow in the fountain.
- Remove some of the fountain structure.
- Provide information about the fountain
- Create a more inviting entrance, with flowers, an archway with vines, information about park history and amenities
- Remove cobblestone path, which is uneven and dangerous for the elderly
- Cut or lower plantings
- Improve signage
- Provide a shelter from the rain
- Permanent chess boards
- Markets - flowers, books, etc. Farmers market
- Flowers
- Exercise programs
- Entertainment, music
- Play area for children, swings, slides, sandbox
- Sculpture garden with

climbable sculptures

- Outdoor chess. Pieces could be stored in coffee shop.
- Bocce ball
- Poetry slam
- Espresso stand
- Moveable chairs

### Long-term improvements:

- Consider removing/redesigning the fountain. The costs of operation and liability do not justify this structure's continued existence.
- Make fountain more "alive" with sprays going up and moving lights. Bring water to the top?
- Create a sense of where the path leads, create natural connections.

### Local partnerships:

- Pike Place market for vendors
- Starbucks
- City of Seattle for lighting, chess, etc.
- ACT for puppet/mime shows
- Buildings like Exeter with café spilling out
- Convention Center could provide the food/coffee vending

# Vision

In the future, this area should remain a quiet and restful place, but also more usable. The entrance at the corner of Seneca and Hubbell could become a more active place leading into the quieter, landscaped area along the top of Canyon Fountain. Seasonal horticultural displays along the walkway could attract visitors into the park. A few climbable sculptures, and maybe a bed of flowers that children could touch or smell, would provide valuable play and educational space for the children at the GreenTree daycare center in Park Place. Games, like life-size chess, could be played in this area as well. They could be managed by a possible cafe adjacent to Canyon Fountain.

# Issues

Thanks to the recent removal of some concrete walls and vegetation along Hubbell Place, the addition of a path directly into the park from the corner and new landscaping on either side of the pathway, this area is relatively accessible, open, bright and pleasant. It has many of the same restful qualities as the area referred to as “Forest Walk.” However, this area is underused.

## SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Consider adding climbable sculpture** in the area to the west of the path for small children (under 6) who can come over from the many daycare centers in the area.
- **Plant seasonal horticultural displays** along both sides of the pathway.

## MEDIUM-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Open up the entrance to the park;** add a map, signage and landscaping at the corner. The recent lowering of the concrete walls and the new path into the park at this location represent a great improvement to this area. However, other improvements could be made that would make it even better.
- **Develop an outdoor seating area** in close proximity to the recommended kiosk outlined under the Canyon Fountain section of this report.

- **Develop an area for games** adjacent to the seating area. This area could have games such as bocce and large-scale chess.
- **Widen and smooth out the pathway** to allow the recommended activities to be located along the path and to make it easier to maintain.

## LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- The two-level kiosk/café that was recommended for the Park Place Plaza area, at the southeastern end of Canyon Fountain, will have significant ramifications for this area. The concept is that the upper level of the kiosk could have an area for outdoor seating that is connected to a games area and across the path to a children’s play area.

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

- Park Place already takes good care of its property at the corner of 6th Avenue and Seneca - it should assume the same level of responsibility for the rest of Park Place Plaza.
- GreenTree staff have expressed great interest in developing a partnership with other area stakeholders to make the park more usable for children. For example, daycare center staff and Seattle Parks and Recreation staff mentioned the idea of having Freeway Park’s gardeners teach the children about plants and grow the specific kinds of plants that children enjoy touching and smelling.



Child-friendly sculptures



Life-size chess



Bocce



Plan of the proposed improvements in the Upper Canyon Fountain area



Seneca Street and Hubbell Place entrance, existing



Seneca Street and Hubbell Place entrance, potential



# Naramore Fountain



# placemaking evaluations

## Naramore Fountain

Community stakeholders and workshop attendants shared the following ideas about Naramore Fountain:

### Like best:

- The fountain itself is very attractive.
- This part of the park will probably never be a destination, but it can be a great place for office workers on their lunch break - even now, people from neighboring buildings like to sit around the fountain on nice days.

### Short-term improvements:

- Improve lighting - there is basically no lighting in this area right now.
- Add decorative lighting underwater in the fountain, maybe colored.
- Fence off the elevated trees and shrub area in southern corner.
- Improve crosswalks, lights timing: right now, the vehicle traffic is too heavy to cross street comfortably.
- Limb trees so that fountain is more visible - can act as a visual anchor.
- "Welcome to Freeway Park" sign.

- Make benches more comfortable to sit on/less comfortable to lie on

### Long-term improvements:

- Remove the plaza entirely. Relocate the fountain to a signature entry to the main park.
- Create a more linear fountain that would better fill up the space, and then relocate the existing fountain to inside the park.
- Remove park and plantings and concrete because they are not used as a park - only as housing for transients.
- Open up the high, dark, wooded area so that people cannot hide/live back there.
- Take out the concrete in the Southern end of the plaza and replace with a dramatic flower bed.
- Or use that space for local art and artists.
- Climbing/exercise course

### Local partnerships:

- Crowne Plaza
- YWCA
- Women's University Club

# Vision

The location of the Naramore Fountain area, stuck in between busy streets, probably prevents it from ever becoming a great place in its own right unless major changes are made. In fact, it was suggested at the workshop that the fountain be moved to a more prominent place in the park where people would interact with it and appreciate it. In the long term, the park area along 6th Avenue could be maintained and managed by a potential new development above the freeway between Spring and Seneca, and even maybe between Spring and Madison. Open space along 6th Avenue would make it feel like Freeway Park extends closer to Town Hall and the new public library to the south-west, following Halprin and Danadjieva's original intent to make this plaza be an entrance to Freeway Park (Maryman and Birkholz).

# Issues

The striking Naramore Fountain and its plaza were built a few years before Freeway Park and many people don't even realize that it is a part of park. Unfortunately, this small triangle of open space, bound by 6th Avenue, Spring Street and I-5, is inaccessible both visually and physically, and it is underused. The concrete rooms at the corner of 6th Avenue and Spring Street and the planters above the freeway are perceived to be so unsafe that plans are being considered to fence off the area.

## SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Time traffic lights** to make it easier for people to reach Naramore Fountain.
- **Consider using this space for temporary markets.** Experiment with farmers' markets, holiday markets, used-book stands, and see what catches on.
- **Light the beautiful Naramore fountain** in a more dramatic way.
- **Limb the trees** around the fountain so it is more visible from a distance. This includes opening up the high, dark wooded area in the back of the plaza, along the freeway, so that people cannot hide there.

- **Replace the concrete room at the southern end with a flower bed** - maybe one that is especially appreciated from the hotel rooms that overlook the park.

## LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- As described above, **develop a new office tower or hotel** above the freeway, between Seneca and Spring Street and/or between Seneca and Madison Street. In exchange for the development rights, the owners of the new building would be in charge of improving and maintaining a public plaza along 6th Avenue (where the park is now).
- **Replace the circular Naramore Fountain with a more linear fountain** that is more appropriate for a long and narrow park space along 6th Avenue.

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

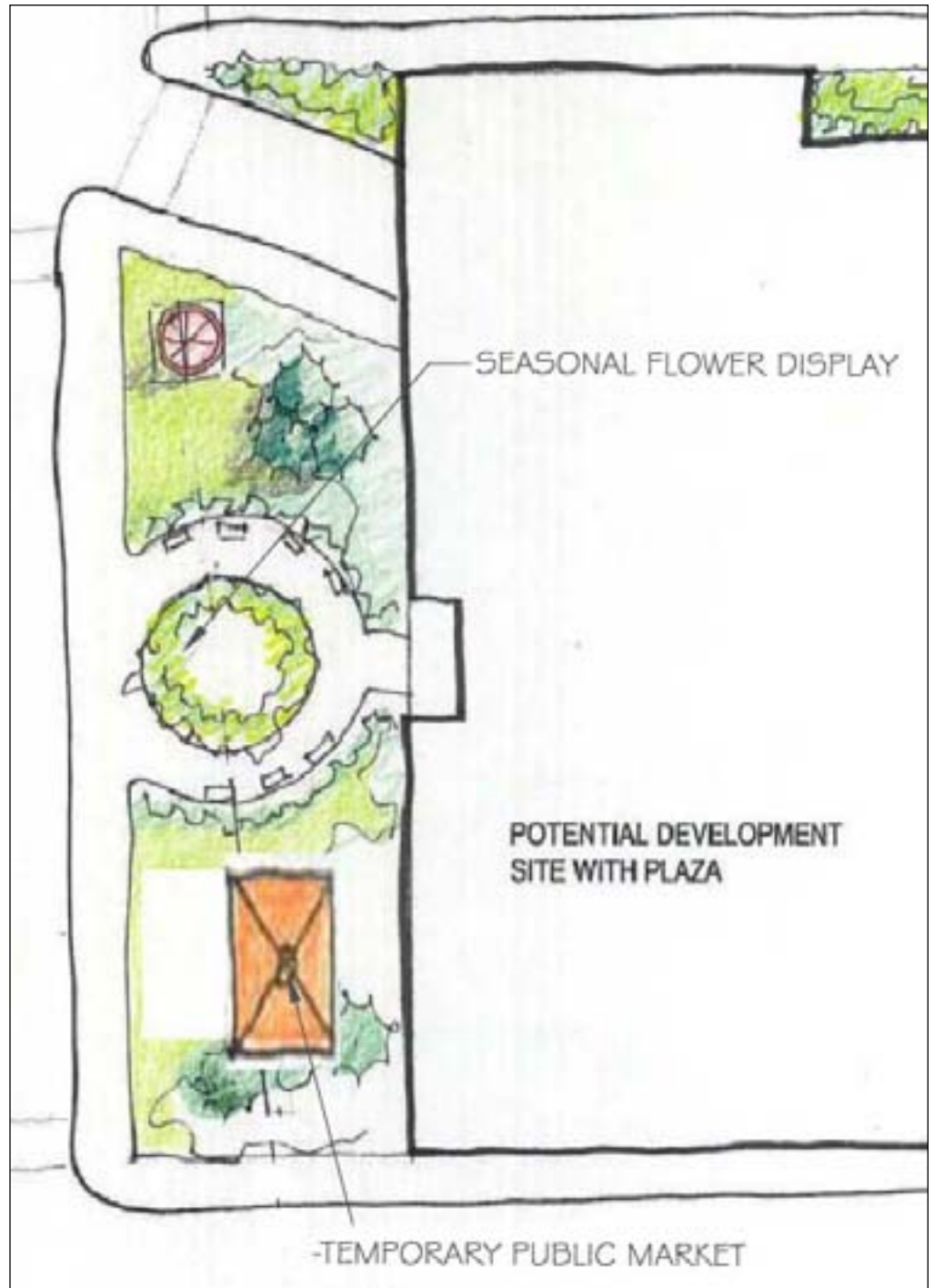
- The potential new development between Seneca and Spring Streets could be responsible for this area as a condition for the right to build over the freeway.
- Other partners could include the Crowne Plaza Hotel, the YWCA and the Women’s University Club.



Comfortable seating



Linear fountain



Plan of the proposed improvements at the Naramore Fountain

Plan of proposed alternatives in the short- to medium-term

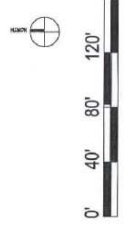




**LEGEND**

- \* PARK ENTRANCE
- SIGNAGE/WAYFINDING

153 Waverly Place  
New York, NY 10014  
T (212) 690-5660  
F (212) 690-3821  
www.pps.org



Project for Public Spaces  
Freeway Park, Seattle, WA

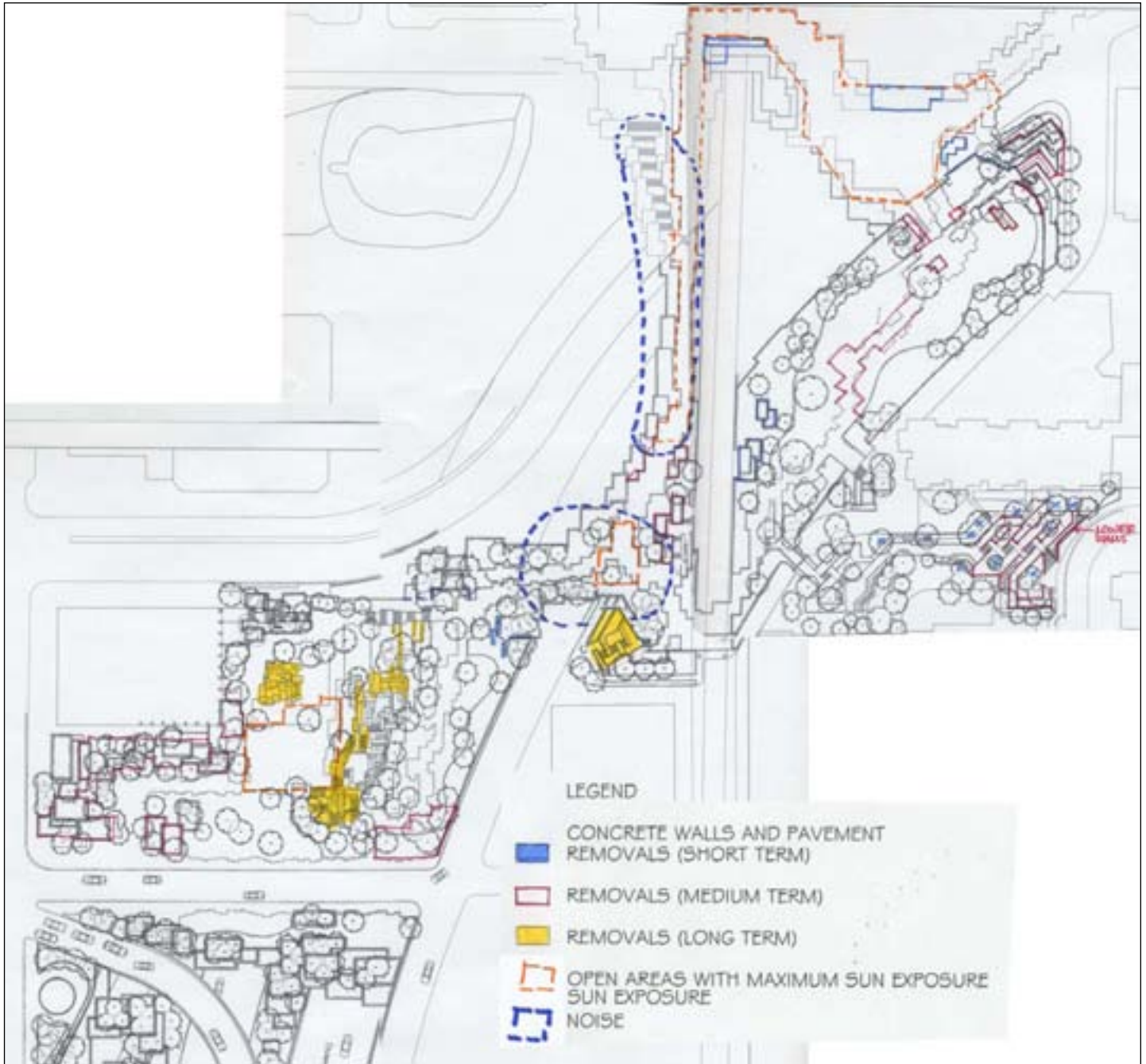
**VISION PLAN-PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS**

Scale 1"=40' Date: 1.15.05



Freeway Park's 10 Great Places, with the Loop through the Park that was proposed by Horizon House residents.





Plan of proposed concrete removal. This plan also shows which areas of Freeway Park get the most sunlight, and which areas are the noisiest.



# Appendix A

## Relevant Park Management Models

Community groups that are organized and vocal can be important forces in establishing the priority for both recreation and open spaces in our cities. And these groups are helping cities transform parks into vital, active centers of urban neighborhoods and downtowns.

### BENEFITS OF NONPROFIT PARK MANAGEMENT

There are several compelling reasons for creating public/private partnerships to manage open spaces and parks, including:

**Efficiency and flexibility:** A private group can act fast and save money – for example by purchasing park equipment or hiring repair crews on an as-needed or emergency basis. It also has the ability to be more flexible with staff and budget lines – being able to reconfigure them more easily in response to changing needs of the park. In addition, private groups are more open to experimenting with new or innovative park programs in an effort to be more responsive to park users.

**Advocacy:** A nonprofit may have the freedom and political will to speak out for budget increases, for increased security, or in favor of acquiring new parkland, while a parks department is constrained by and allied to the city's priorities.

**Fundraising and accepting donations:** Private donors often don't like to give to the public sector because they can't control how their money will be spent. In addition, there is often a distrust of giving money to any government bureaucracy, especially one that already has taxing power. Parks departments and other public entities with a public sector parks portfolio are, as a result, powerfully motivated to participate in or initiate a public/private partnership that can raise money. For their part, nonprofits often benefit from formal ties to a public agency, since it gives them added credentials to assure donors of long-term commitment and accountability to the public.

**Focus:** A nonprofit group that focuses specifically on one park may view that park, greenway, or other open space amenity more holistically than a parks department that has a responsibility to provide basic service to all the parks in a city or metropolitan area. While it is the usual practice of the parks department to treat a park as part of a larger open space system, a nonprofit may see it as part of a neighborhood – a perspective that can be reflected in its role in planning for park improvements. Additionally, public agencies often can't or don't want to manage small discreet projects, such as restoration of historic buildings, whereas private groups can devote the necessary attention to detail.

**Community ties:** A private group often has better credibility with residents and local institutions than the local government does, allowing the nonprofit to facilitate meetings better, and tap key leaders for support and active engagement in the park.

**Consistent leadership:** A mature nonprofit conservancy or friends group sometimes can provide more continuous leadership in a park or open space amenity than public officials can, as they are subject to politics and elections.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARK MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

**Fundraising:** Fundraising is one of the most common activities that nonprofit organizations get involved in, not only because their tax-exempt status makes them eligible for funds from foundations and more attractive to individual donors, but also because it allows them to articulate concrete, visible park needs and goals. Fundraising generally centers around three types of park needs: to supplement annual operating budgets, to implement capital projects, and to establish an endowment to ensure ongoing park maintenance, restoration and management.

**Organizing volunteers:** Nonprofits often organize volunteers to participate in remedial maintenance activities such as weed removal, trail and path upkeep, and park clean-up days. Volunteers also commonly help organize and staff public park events, produce and send newsletters and other organizational mailing, and solicit park donations.

**Design, planning and construction of capital projects:** Nonprofits can get involved in any number of activities related to capital projects: from reviewing projects proposed and developed by the parks department, to contracting out design and implementation, or even to actual in-house design and construction of particular projects.

**Outreach and marketing:** A nonprofit has an obvious rationale for engaging in outreach and marketing. These activities can build usership, educate users, encourage stewardship, and create support – whether financial, volunteer or political – for the park and for park issues. This is also a common way to enhance the image and credibility of the park organization in the community. Marketing also can be used to create new relationships with other institutions through joint publicity and programs as well as promoting and increasing public involvement in park issues and development.

**Programming:** Programming can be the key difference between a well-used park and an empty one, regardless of financial support. It is also an area where the flexibility of a nonprofit can be particularly useful – some city parks departments find it hard to change programs that have been in place for long periods of time but get little use. Nonprofit programming activities are often broad in scope, focusing on environmental issues and education, theater and arts festivals, recreation, after school programs, and summer day camps, to name just a few.

**Advocacy:** Advocacy incorporates a wide range of activities, such as putting pressure on the city for increased park funding, expanding or developing new parks or greenways, preserving historical design, improving basic maintenance, and increasing playground and general park safety. Effective advocacy campaigns often waged in local newspapers and through media events – can help legitimize both the nonprofit and the parks department in the eyes of the general public and potential funders.

**Remedial maintenance:** Many parks require a high level of maintenance, and city parks departments are typically limited in their ability to provide what is required, above a minimum standard. Therefore, parks nonprofits organize maintenance volunteers or contract out maintenance tasks that seem to be beyond the capacity or budget of the primary caretaker. Typically, remedial maintenance work is done in response to a chronic, but critical need such as replanting, path repair, weeding and erosion control. A seasonal “clean-up” day with volunteers is also a typical remedial maintenance function.

**Routine maintenance:** Many nonprofits decide to leave routine maintenance to the public sector, taking on responsibilities for other activities that will free up parks departments to better accomplish the task. Routine maintenance activities include day-to-day tree and lawn care, litter removal, small repairs and painting.

**Security:** Some nonprofit park management organizations provide a measure of official “security” for park users. These activities may take the form of volunteers rangers or professional security staff. They are, however, a small part of the security equation. Access, visibility appearance and use and all more important factors in promoting security.

## Pioneer Courthouse Square in Portland, Oregon

### DESCRIPTION

Pioneer Courthouse Square is an all-brick, multi-tiered plaza in the heart of downtown Portland’s retail district. The Square is located at the hub of Portland’s transit system. A partial lower level includes interior space that houses offices and Powell’s Travel Bookstore. It is one city block in size, about an acre, and is surrounded on three sides by office buildings. Features of the square include: The Bowl, a large sunken seating area; “named” bricks; a Mile Post showing the distances to nine sister-cities and other destinations, and “Allow Me”, a life-sized umbrella-wielding statue by J. Seward Johnson. The square also includes original wrought iron from the famous Portland Hotel; a Weather Machine (three weather symbols, accompanied by musical fanfare, mist, and flashing lights, announce the weather forecast at noon each day) Stoa Columns line Yamhill and Morrison streets, and provide shelter for riders waiting for Max (the light rail system). Tri-Met (buses) utilizes three sides of the square; it has a 40-year lease and

pays one dollar per year to use the space. Max is also located on either side of the square.

## OWNERSHIP/GOVERNING BODY

- The city of Portland legally owns the square
- Pioneer Courthouse Square, a non-profit (501c3) organization, guarantees that the park is a well-cared-for asset to the city and that it fulfills the public service mission to be a “Clean, Safe and Active” space.
- Any changes concerning the physical appearance of the square must be approved by the Parks Department (Not always an easy task. For example, when the Friends wanted to put up additional signage for new vendors, the Parks Dept. wouldn’t agree to the signs because they felt that it represented “visual blight.”)
- The Courthouse opposite the Square, “does not enjoy a visual or spiritual connection to the plaza.” GSA, which manages the Courthouse, is not involved in governing or managing the Square, although they are beginning to cooperate for special events.

## MANAGEMENT

A management contract between the City of Portland and Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc., a non-profit, provides that the City Parks Department will provide landscape services and will be on call to fix any major problems, while Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc., is responsible for all other activities. Any physical changes to the square must be approved by the Parks Department. The square is not part of the downtown BID, but the BID contracts with Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc., to provide cleaning and security. Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc., has a staff of six and a 35-member board composed of community members, business leaders, and a commissioner from the Parks Department.

**Maintenance:** The Parks Department is responsible for maintaining the flowers and trees as an in-kind service. The rest of the cleaning is outsourced through the local BID, and costs \$40,000 per year.

**Security and hospitality:** The city provides a grant that partially funds security, which was contracted out to the same vendor as the one used by the BID, thus creating “seamless security” for the downtown. The role of the “guards” is to enforce park rules.

**Programming:** Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc. provides events such as concerts and the annual Christmas Tree lighting. It operates a system of equipment rentals in which they arrange to rent (at discount) from specific vendors who know in advance what materials will be needed. It also encourages other groups to use the space for their own activities, such as the Festa Italiana. Starbucks and Powell’s Travel Books are presently the only commercial vendors in the square.

**Marketing and promotion:** The Friends group is responsible for marketing, and has a good working relationship with the media. Since the square is a high traffic area, it is an

ideal location for events, most of which are either fun or controversial, and make good stories for the press while generating publicity for the square.

**Staff:** (6 total plus active Board)

- 1 Manager: In charge of Board relations and capital campaigns.
- 1 Director of Operations/Assistant Manager: manages assets, books, human resources, contracts (security and cleaning), and leases.
- 1 Production Manager: manages facilities – leads the marketing of event rentals, and manages the calendar; interfaces with security and cleaning people.
- 1 Assistant Production Manager: does the legwork and paper work for the production manager.
- 1 Marketing Coordinator: in charge of visibility, public relations, and press releases. Also helps the director with capital campaigns and Board relations.
- 1 Front Desk: acts as the public face and office manager for the organization; answers phones, orders supplies, and handles brick inquiries

**Funding:** The annual operating budget of Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc. is close to \$900,000 per year. The 2000-01 budget, not reflecting in-kind contributions from the Park Department, is:

Expenses:		Revenues:	
\$273,615	Salaries & Benefits	\$336,895	City of Portland
\$246,345	Security	\$221,975	Tenant rent
\$44,350	Cleaning	\$155,000	Sponsorships
\$122,600	Sponsored Event Costs	\$148,500	Event rentals
\$71,933	Event Rental Costs	\$870,370	Miscellaneous
\$91,164	Office & Facility Costs		
\$11,494	Miscellaneous		

**Capital Investment:** Pioneer Courthouse Square was completed in 1984 at a cost of \$6.8 million dollars. Financing was provided by the Portland Development Commission, tax increment bond funds, federal grants from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Services, the city of Portland, and an adjacent department store. Additional funds were raised by Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc. through auctioning off parts of the square, such as paving bricks inscribed with a sponsors’ name and design elements like the amphitheater and drinking fountains. Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc., has also carried out several capital campaigns. Since that time, PCS, Inc. has carried out two capital campaigns. One million dollars was raised to repair and renovate the exterior space after 15 years of extensive use. Half of the budget came from Tri-Met, and the City Park Bureau, while the other half was raised from individual and corporate sources. Starbucks completed a 160 square foot expansion of its store in connection with this renovation.

A total of nearly \$2.8 million has been raised for the renovation of the interior-lobby space to create a one-stop visitor Services Center. Tri-Met, the Portland Visitors Association, Ticket Central, and Powell’s Books are principal services. A 75-seat surround theater will show a free, twelve-minute film. A total of 300,000 people are projected to visit in the first year.

# Prospect Park

## in Brooklyn, New York

### DESCRIPTION

Prospect Park is a 526-acre urban oasis located in the heart of Brooklyn, New York City's most populous borough. The masterpiece of famed landscape architects Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, who also designed Central Park, Prospect Park features the 90-acre Long Meadow, the 60-acre Lake and Brooklyn's only forest. The park also includes the nation's first urban Audubon Center, the Prospect Park Zoo, and the Celebrate Brooklyn! Performing Arts Festival.

### MISSION

The Prospect Park Alliance is a public/private partnership with the city of New York, which, through fundraising and advocacy, furthers the restoration and preservation of Prospect Park and the development of the park as a resource for the people of New York City.

### GOVERNING BODY

The Prospect Park Alliance has 38 board members, including five ex-officio members.

### ACTIVITIES

Every year, the Park attracts more than six million visitors for festivals, concerts, sporting events, or simply a peaceful walk through beautiful landscapes.

Programed activities include: educational programs with local high schools, Discover Nature Tours, Introduction to Bird Watching, Hawk Weekend, B'Earthday Celebration, historic tours of Lefferts House, Art in the Arch, Playground programs, and other special cultural, athletic and civic events.

### OPERATING BUDGET

#### Sources of Funds (2003) — \$5,414,522

Individuals	29.7%	1,610,141
Concessions & Revenue	22.7%	1,226,678
Foundations	20.1%	1,087,531
Corporations & Corporate Foundations	12.2%	660,763
Design & Construction	11%	595,877
Government	4%	214,272
Interest, Dividends & Gains	0.4%	19,256



**Use of Funds (2003) — \$5,414,522**

Educational Programs	21%	1,143,180
Woodlands, Horticulture & Park Operations	18%	969,455
Fundraising	13%	717,774
Concessions	13%	700,587
Design & Construction	13%	678,752
General & Administrative	11%	603,373
Public Programs & Volunteers	11%	601,397

# Bryant Park

in New York, New York

## DESCRIPTION:

Five acre park located behind the New York Public Library between 41<sup>st</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. “A spiritual oasis in Midtown Manhattan”

## FEATURES:

Gardens (lawn, flowers, gravel paths, trees), benches, movable chairs, café terrace, restaurant, 6 kiosks, 11 entrances, ornate lighting, 2 monuments, restrooms, tables for chess and backgammon, pétanque area (boules), and a fountain.

## GOVERNING BODY:

Ownership: New York City Parks Department  
Managed by the Bryant Park Restoration Corp., which operates under the auspices of the 34<sup>th</sup> Street Partnership/BID.

## MANAGEMENT TASKS:

### Marketing and promotion:

There is no marketing or promotion done by the park, since it markets itself. In fact, the BPRC’s most difficult problem is deciding which events to host, since they are always bombarded with proposals.

### Maintenance:

- 11-12 sanitation workers in the park during the summer (approx. 8 more work in the rest of the BID)
- 3 horticultural staff in the winter, 4-5 in the summer (paid by the 34<sup>th</sup> Street Partnership)

### Security and hospitality:

- 6 security officers during operating hrs. plus 2-24-hour officers
- During summer: ~ 55 employees: security, sanitation, gardening and special events

**Programming:**

- “7<sup>th</sup> on 6<sup>th</sup>” Fashion shows (for several years); JVC Jazz Festival; “NY Times Young Performers Series;” lunchtime concerts by Juilliard students; Monday night movies in the summer, “HBO Film Fest;” Bryant Park Grill (May 1995); Bryant Park Café (1995); 6 kiosks (food, drink, ice cream); bocce and chess games.
- Each group or organization that contracts with the park to hold an event normally has its own event planner who coordinates the details (timing, number of people, seating, abiding to the rules of conduct, etc.)

**OVERALL ADMINISTRATION:**

- The administration staff has weekly meetings where they often have slide shows of other parks they have visited.

**Staff:**

- 1 Director of events and 1 Coordinating Supervisor
- Maintenance and security staff: see above
- There are approximately 50 staff people that help manage the BPRC. These include administrative staff, interns and support staff. The BPRC also uses the 34<sup>th</sup> Street Partnership’s Design Department for various projects.

**BUDGET:**

Large portion = debt repayment  
Not including debt:  
Maintenance and security = 33%  
General administration = 50%

**Funding:**

\$200,000 from the city  
Revenue:  
33% from events  
33% from concessions  
33% from assessments: 34<sup>th</sup> Street Partnership has ~ 25 members  
(Originally this number was much higher—75%)

**Barriers:**

- The biggest problem for the park is having to turn down events. At times, the city may instruct the park to host an event it would not otherwise choose.
- BPRC encounters some difficulties when it attempts to make significant changes to the park, since they must be approved by the Landmark Commission.

**Capital investment:**

- Restroom renovation: \$160,000.
- Bryant Park Grill: borrowed \$4.2 million loan to build restaurant and paid for \$750,000 worth of tenant improvements
- Chairs: 6-8 chairs are stolen every year and 400 are replaced for wear and tear.

- Replacing blue stone in the park, fixing sidewalks, cleaning drainage system, horticultural improvements, and changing entrances.
- Planning an information kiosk.

**Contact:** Gerome Barth, Coordinating Supervisor for the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation (212) 768-4242

## Post Office Square in Boston, Massachusetts

### DESCRIPTION

Formerly the site of an unattractive 3 story parking garage, Post Office Square is now home to a beautiful, green 1.7 acre street level park as well as a 7 level underground parking garage in the center of Boston's financial district.

**Date opened:**

Friends of Post Office Square formed 1983; Construction started in October 1988; Completed: Garage—October 1990, Park—Summer 1991.

**Features:**

Sculptural fountain; landscaping (trees, bushes and flowers)—several species on permanent loan from the Arnold Arboretum; park pavilion; two gazebo-like structures: one holds a café, the other serves as the escalator entranceway to the garage; benches, sitting walls.

Garage: supplies 30% of area's parking and is now a \$12 million business.

**Size:**

1.7 acres plus 7 floors (or 519,057 sq. ft) of parking

### PARTNERS/GOVERNING BODY

The park and garage at Post Office Square represent a public/private venture between Friends of Post Office Square Inc. (a for-profit development company/civic corporation/"limited dividend corporation") made up of 20 Boston firms and individuals, and the City of Boston.

- Independent board: Bill McCall, Norman Leventhal, Ed Sidman, Jim Young, Ed Johnson, John Hamill, Ron Drucker. (Complete list TBA)
- Profits from the garage are donated to the City of Boston and its Park Trust Fund for the maintenance of the city's neighborhood parks (therefore Friends is "non-profit by agreement, but for-profit by law." – Weinberg)

- Friends of Post Office Square members: Fleet Bank, Olympia & York, NYNEX, Eaton Vance Management, Equitable Life Assurance Society, State Street Bank, Harvard Community Health Plan, and FMR Corp. (Fidelity Investments.), Bank of Boston, Beacon, McCall (comprehensive list TBA)
- The park was purchased from the previous owner who had a 40 year lease on the land. Friends bought the remainder of the lease and the leasehold interest, becoming the sole owners. According to the agreement, the park would be handed over to the city at the end of 40 years.
- Decisions are made at multiple levels: there is always a manager on the site 24 hours/day to make operational decisions, but larger financial decisions need the approval of the board. Since the park is not owned by the city, they do not have to abide by city park policies or report to city officials.
- The Post Office is housed in the Old Federal Courthouse Building, which is catty-corner to the park (Angel Memorial Plaza is actually in between the building and the park). GSA is not an active partner in the park and is not seen (per Mr. Weinberg) as terribly progressive.

## MANAGEMENT

Contracted to Marketplace Development Corporation (a private corporation) by Friends of Post Office Square, Inc. The Corp. handles financing, operation, capital improvements, and marketing of both the garage and park, and provides the staff for Friends of Post Office Square. The garage management is subcontracted to Standard Parking (since Oct. 1990). According to the contract, Friends has the option of “immediate cancellation,” which means that at any time, it can terminate Standard Parking’s contract.

Marketing for the garage is handled by the Marketing Director.

### **Maintenance:**

- Carried out by City of Boston Park Ranger and Standard Parking’s employees. (More info. to come)
- Landscaping is contracted out:
- Original landscape architect – for ongoing adjustments to the site
- Arborist – ongoing
- Landscaping firm (grass, flowers) – ongoing
- Artist: oversees technical repair work – sporadic

### **Security & hospitality:**

- The garage supplies a continuous stream of people in and out of the park throughout the week. The park supports the garage by generating a positive image, contributing to higher occupancy and parking rates.
- Underground: video cameras, backlit walls for better visibility and security, 24-hour staffing.

- No formal security guards: City of Boston Park Ranger (6 days/week), and uniformed garage personnel create a formal presence in the park. The personnel are not trained as ambassadors, per se, but are knowledgeable about the neighborhood.

**Programming:**

- Post Office Square Park is intended to be a passive park – a place where people can escape from the constant activity of downtown.
- There is a café which leases the space from the park. It seats 24 people inside (expands outdoors in good weather). The café also operate additional food carts.
- Twice a week during lunchtime in good weather, Friends provides live music by local musicians. These performances are more as “background music” than entertainment. At Christmas time, Friends has a brass quintet play in the park with Santa hats.
- Underground: car-care services, shoe shine services, a dry cleaner, telephones, clean restrooms, free phone connection to a 24-hr. traffic hotline, and ATM machines.

**Transportation management:**

- There are no bus stops or subway stops at the square, but there is a major bus stop one block away as well as subway stops 2 to 3 blocks away.

**Staff:**

Part-time President, 2 full-time staff: General Manager (handles garage and park), and Garage Manager (employee of Standard Parking). 1 Marketing Director (garage), garage staff, 2 admin. staff, 1 Financial Manager

**BUDGET**

- Operating costs: (1996)
  - Management: \$302,815
  - Repair and Maintenance: \$210,952
  - Property taxes: \$1,000,000
  - Garage and park operations: \$995,808
  - Total: \$2,964,875
- Total budget: \$250, 000 (as of 1991)

**Funding:**

Main revenue: parking garage revenues.  
 Café revenue (lease): \$60,000  
 All other services combined: a couple thousand dollars  
 Total revenue budget: ~\$12 million

The City contributes no money to the operating costs of the park or the garage.

**Capital investment:**

Site acquisition: Acquired site from entrepreneur with 40 yr. lease w/the city who initially refused to sell. Cost: \$4,772,879

- Site improvement costs: \$6,605,278
- Construction costs: \$44,321,268

- Soft Costs (Archit./design/permits/taxes): \$18,811,400  
Total site acquisition and development costs: \$75,510,825  
(According to the final agreement, the city received \$1 million for ownership interest in the site).

**Financing:**

Initial stockholder contributions: \$930,000  
Preferred stock offering: \$29,250,000  
Debt: \$60,000,000  
Total: \$90,180,000

The members of Friends of Post Office Square contributed \$50,000 initially to begin planning. In addition they helped raise ~ \$1 million in annual revenue by preselling monthly passes for the garage and sold shares in the project at \$65,000/share, repayable in 40 yrs. w/an interest of 8%. Each share included a bonus of the right to lease one parking spot in the garage at market rate. For 10 years, from Oct 1988 to Oct 1998, Friends was unable to pay the 8% dividend. In October of 1998, Friends refinanced their loan (20 year amortizing) and is now paying dividends and principal interest on the loan. According to Bob Weinberg, Post Office Square is currently financially stable.

Regular capital projects occur each year and are supported from the general revenue of the garage. The largest capital project is the floor coating program in the garage which costs \$1.5-2 million. Smaller campaigns include replacing trees, sidewalk repair programs and new software for the garage.

**Contact:**

Friends of Post Office Square, Inc.  
50 Federal Street  
Boston, MA 02110  
Paul McGinn, General Manager (617) 423-1500, or Mary Dahl (617) 423-1500  
Bob Weinberg, President of Friends of Post Office Square (Since 1983) and also the Chairman of Marketplace Development Corp. (617) 423-1500.

## Paris Plage

in Paris, France

### DESCRIPTION

Paris Plage is a several week event that draws thousands of people day and night to an in the city “beach.” In 2002 over 2.3 million people participated in the first edition of Paris-Plage. From July 20<sup>th</sup> to August 17<sup>th</sup> the roads on the banks of the Seine offered all of vacation and allowed everyone to retake public spaces and experience the city differently.

In 2003, with the same budget, they wanted to vastly expand on the event:  
3000 tons of sand instead of 1000 in 2000  
Two sand beaches instead of one  
Beaches that are twice as long  
Twice the surface of the beach at City Hall plaza

### **Amenities**

300 deck chairs  
250 sunning cabins  
240 umbrellas  
40 hammocks

### **Water Elements**

3 sprinklers  
1 water playground  
2 misting machines  
1 water labyrinth

### **Planting**

Palm trees  
Interesting plants a children's play areas  
Landscaping at access ramps  
A roman alley at the access area to city hall

### **Children's Activities**

Sand castle area  
Toddler space  
A youth club with activities

### **Sports and Recreation**

Easy gym and Tai Chi area  
Mini stadium with tack at City Hall  
Tennis court at City Hall

## **BUDGET**

### **Expenses**

Total 1,531,084 Euros

#### **General Expenses**

Artistic concept – art and set design	90,342
Technical direction	41,860
Management and partner follow-up	33,631
<b>Total</b>	<b>165,833</b>

#### **Site Amenities**

Provided by various city agencies	<b>598,912</b>
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Activities/Events	
Performances/Shows	200,000
Sports/Recreation	200,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>400,000</b>

Site Management	
Security	150,000
Technical Support	107,042
Staff	50,000
Restroom	30,942
Help Desk	14,712
Control Office	1,794
Insurance	9,844
Misc.	2,004
<b>Total</b>	<b>366,339</b>

### **Revenues**

**Total** **832,720** Euros

Principle partners	
Lafarge	112,000
Danone	100,000
Monoprix	100,000
EDF	81,924
Philips Eclairage	62,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>455,924</b>

Programming Partners	
Universal Music	60,000
Hachette	70,080
Au Vieux Campeur	35,000
Grand Soliel	15,000
Dima Sports	25,000
NOOS	15,600
Institutional Partners	220,680
<b>Total</b>	<b>130,000</b>

Product Sales 26,116



# Appendix B

Plan of potential long-term improvements



# Appendix C

## Crime statistics for Freeway Park, 2003

In 2003, there were: 380 police events (calls and on-views) and 82 police reports written.

The top 10 crimes or incidents that occurred were:

- 38 Parks exclusions
- 7 Downed person (drugs or alcohol)
- 6 Warrant arrest
- 3 Drug possession
- 3 Criminal trespass
- 2 Miscellaneous misdemeanor
- 2 Obstructing police office
- 1 Aggravated assault weapon (felony)
- 1 Aggravated assault – body force (felony)
- 1 Non-aggravated assault – body force

# Appendix D

## 12/14 Community Meeting Comments

### COMMUNITY PRIORITIES (IN NO SPECIFIC ORDER)

- Value Freeway Park for its tranquility – need to balance quiet and safety
- Activity should be on the perimeter vs. inside the park – need to invite people to move through the park with selective commercial magnets.
- Entrance Archway at the major entrance
- Have the fountains up and running
- Lighting throughout the park
- New and appropriate signs
- Sight lines
- Safety
- Selective concrete removal (in accordance with sightlines and safety)
- Vendors
- Having the park have a positive image
- Concerts or other performances

### GAPS IN THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Need a (design) vision, a base line of vision, such as:
  - having activity at the perimeter of the park drawing people in, which would translate into:
    - a reduction of hard edges
    - improving sightlines
    - Working within the parks character
    - Who is the park for? This is an urban park on one side but has a neighborhood character on the other – it's different from Occidental Park, should have different activities.
- The park is a classic design – need to be relating to its original history, forward thrust, etc. Design professionals will be coming to Seattle to view the Library and the park will probably be getting more attention.
- Analysis of micro climates for selective vegetation changes. Need a sun and shadow analysis
- Safety of park personnel – Hubble place entrances
- Restroom facility
- Benches
- View from the freeway

## OTHER CONCERNS/SUGGESTIONS

- Take out 'many' from the Vision and Recommendation bullet #1 and add 'attractive' to bullet #2
- Freeway Park should be a destination with many passive and active recreational uses.
- It should be easily accessible and welcoming
- Naramore fountain area is problematic – possible dog run area along Seneca St.?
- We really must find a "must do" project for the park that people here or visiting will feel they must go to the park to see.
- We have talked about a first class aviary. I don't remember hearing that last night.
- The Jensonia (and its type of development) is the opposite of the WSCTC.
- New signs need to be simple, while also not becoming a graffiti wall

## CASCADE AND CANYON FOUNTAIN

- This area meets the fabric of business and hotels, and is very active
- It is the most visible area – activation of this area is key
- The crossing at 6th and Seneca is difficult and unfriendly, and you don't really know that the park is there until you move up the street.

### Thumbs Up

- Removing some of the concrete walls and hiding places to improve sight lines and to increase the visibility of the water,
- Rename the bus stop to "Freeway Park",
- Use theatrical lighting on the fountains and illuminate the fountain at night,
- Restoring the "out to lunch" concert series or other performances,
- (the community liked the idea of having a performance space that could be activated with different venues)
- Creating a space for a game center, life-size chess, shuffleboard or horse shoes,
- Having vendor handcarts – books, food, news stands,
- (as long as the amount of vendors were limited and of a good caliber)
- Adding a sound buffer on the north wall, facing One Union Square to control the reflected sound of the freeway,

### Thumbs Down

- Bring Park Place's café out onto the southwest corner of the building,
- (the community felt that it was too much to have an inner and an outer café and that Park Place would cast a shadow – along Seneca street would be better, but need a sun and shadow analysis for this)
- Removing Cascade fountain and provide an interactive water fountain and ice skating rink for winter, or roller rink or square dancing, (It was pointed out that the Cascade fountain 'was' the children's play fountain, replacement of this did not get positive support)

## UPPER CANYON FOUNTAIN

With the fountains running this is a more contemplative place and should not be filled up with things

### Thumbs Up

- Removing concrete 'rooms' and open up the views of the staircase.
- Opening up the park entrance at Seneca Street and Hubbell Place,
- A seasonal (or permanent) vending structure with movable tables and chairs,
- (this was eventually a thumbs up, but there was concern over having too much at this upper corner, although the group did agree that having a café nearer the perimeter was a goal)

### Thumbs Down

- Consider the inclusion of children's play equipment or climbable sculptures.
- (the community felt that the children's play structure should be down near the play fountain and daycare center)
- Consider having a putting green or croquet green.

## CONVENTION CENTER PLAZA

Need the plaza to feel more like a plaza with pedestrian scaled lighting

### Thumbs Up

- Seasonal vending structures with movable tables and chairs,
- Scheduling a series of musical or theatrical events.
- Programming the walkway (along 8<sup>th</sup> Ave) connecting to the WSCTC with murals or other artwork,
- Relocating or modifying the Seattle-Washington sculpture to open up that area,
- (There was general consensus that the area around the Washington sculpture and the northeastern portion of the American Legion Fountain area needed to be opened up. There was not consensus on whether or not the sculpture needed to be removed or just adjusted.)
- Extending the lawn area or plaza into the American Legion portion of the park.
- (extended lawn was the preference over more hardscape)
- Using the atrium space differently so that there is an indoor/outdoor relationship,
- (medium thumbs up)
- Extending the lidded portion of I-5 south ward.
- (medium thumbs up – keep on the table)

### Thumbs Down

- Bringing 8th Ave down to grade with the rest of the park, or possibly eliminating it altogether.
- (the community did not feel this was at all realistic or that it would be a positive change for the park)

- Removing or relocating of some of the existing plantings.
- (the community really likes the plantings and thought that they had improved quite a bit this last year when they were thinned out)

## AMERICAN LEGION FOUNTAIN AREA

This area should be a contemplative area, not an area with lots of programming.

### Thumbs Up

- Restoring the original grass berms and enriching plantings with annual color,
- Creating an exercise loop throughout the (whole) park with different stations,
- (there should be small pathways in between some of the berms, more reminiscent of being in a forest. The super wide sidewalk was not considered an improvement)
- Cutting back some of the trees and removing some of the concrete walls and hiding places,(the community did not feel that tree removal was the answer, but some thinning and limbing up might do the trick. Removal of some concrete was seen as positive – the northern area is considered one of the darkest spots since you don't walk through it and opening this area up to the convention center was very positive)

### Thumbs Down

- Consider the placement of a dog run that included benches for people to sit on,
- (big no)
- Conversion of the bathroom structure to a coffee kiosk,
- (the community did not like the 2 story coffee kiosk idea. They did like the idea of putting a greenhouse in the current bathroom space or at the Crew quarters at the 8<sup>th</sup> St. underpass)
- Have (new development) the Horizon House expansion span the alleyway and connect directly into this section of the park,

## PIGOTT CORRIDOR

### Thumbs Up

- Cutting back some of the trees, and removing some of the concrete retaining walls and hiding places to improve sight lines,
- (the community was very much in favor of removing some of the concrete, but did want tree removal to be done cautiously – look at thinning, and some branch removal first)
- Reduction of the concrete staircase walls and replacement with open handrails,
- (very positive)
- Add pedestrian scaled lighting to the staircase and illuminate some of the trees on either side of the walkway.
- Create an exercise loop throughout the park with different stations
- (discussed above)

- Creating better connections with surrounding development. Having the Jensonia, Horizon House and Virginia Mason connect directly onto this corridor.
- (the community could see the pros and cons of this, the reaction was a bit tepid, but keep on the table)

#### Thumbs Down

- Enhancement of the upper entrance by creating an overlook and sitting areas.
- (the community did not want any of the fountains to be taken out to provide for sitting areas. They love these fountains and want them up and running)

#### MAJOR ENTRANCES INCLUDE:

- 6th & Seneca St. (0 steps)
  - Seneca St. & Hubble (0 steps)
  - University St & 9th Ave (58 steps)
  - Union St. & 7<sup>th</sup> (48 & 63 steps)
  - Convention Center (0 & 48 steps)
  - Minor Entrances include:
  - Hubble Place near Exeter house (32 steps) near the Cambridge apartments (45 steps)
  - 8th Ave (20 steps)
  - North of Park Place Tower (29 & 30 steps)
- 
- Where is the major entrance? Should it be at 7<sup>th</sup> and University?
  - Put an elevator at the 7<sup>th</sup> and Union entrance
  - Eliminate or open up the entrance at Exeter House (south Hubbell Pl. entrance)

#### Thumbs Up

- Improving visibility and views into the park
- Developing a new concept for signs in the park
- Theatrical lighting at park entrances and fountain areas
- Pedestrian scaled lighting along pathways

# Appendix E

## Input from Stakeholders

### **Client Group Meetings**

The client group for Freeway Park includes the following members:

- Ken Bounds, Seattle Parks and Recreation Superintendent
- B.J. Brooks, Seattle Parks and Recreation Deputy Superintendent
- Kerry Lasko, Seattle Parks and Recreation Central West Park and Recreation Manager
- Susanne Friedman, Seattle Parks and Recreation Project Manager
- Mike Evans, Freeway Park Neighborhood Association President
- Vic Hawley, Washington State Convention and Trade Center Assistant General Manager
- Iain Robertson, Seattle Design Commission Member and University of Washington Department of Landscape Architecture Professor
- David Brewster, Town Hall Executive Director
- David Dillman, Downtown Seattle Association Vice-President of Operations and Services
- Jordan Royer, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Neighborhood Action Team Manager
- Bob Anderson, Executive Director of Horizon House

### **Placemaking Evaluations**

Representatives from the following organizations completed the PPS Placemaking Evaluation form.

- Washington State Trade & Convention Center
- Benaroya Companies
- EPA
- Green Tree
- Horizon House
- Crowne Plaza Hotel

The Placemaking Evaluation form was also completed by approximately 40 people at the October 21 community meeting.

### **Additional Meetings and Interviews:**

- Washington State Convention and Trade Center President John Christison
- Virginia Mason Hospital Vice-President Todd Johnson
- Former Councilwoman and Current Horizon House Resident Phyllis Lamphere
- Former University of Washington Professor and Current Horizon House Resident Norm Johnston
- Horizon House Administrator for Marketing and Community Relations Joan Carufel



- Park Place Property Manager Estelle Shives
- Washington Real Estate Holdings Property Manager Tim Holt
- Cambridge Apartments Resident Manager Karen Curtis
- Cambridge Apartments Resident Manager Brian Urback,
- Meridian Property Manager Deanna Nelson
- Seattle Police Department Officer Eric Warner
- Seattle Parks and Recreation Gardener Lisa
- Seattle Parks and Recreation Gardener Kristen
- Royal Manor Resident Carlyne Geller

# Appendix F

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