



Advisory Group Meeting and Open House Summary

February 28, 2019
Seattle City Hall

Welcome and introductions:

Penny Mabie, facilitator, welcomed members of the Imagine Greater Downtown Advisory Group and led a round of introductions. Penny reviewed the meeting agenda with the Advisory Group and provided a brief overview of the meeting purpose and format. She reminded group members that the public open house would follow this final meeting from 6:30 – 8 p.m.

Thank you to the Advisory Group

Sam Assefa, Director of the Office of Planning and Community Development, attended the last Advisory Group meeting to thank the members for their dedication and time. Sam stated that the Advisory Group was an incredible resource, with most of the group having been involved with One Center City and now on Imagine Greater Downtown. Sam shared how the Advisory Group's input shaped the Big Ideas, and on behalf of Executive Steering Committee, extended a big thank you. The Advisory Group brought multiple perspectives and represented many interests. Sam described how the Advisory Group held the project team accountable to a process that aimed to be more inclusive. He acknowledged that streets are one of the greatest assets any city has, and how they are designed and managed is critically important. Sam highlighted how all these agencies came together to create a shared vision and collaborate, and the Advisory Group's input was incredibly helpful.

Updated Big Ideas

Tom Brennan, Nelson\Nygaard, presented the updated draft Big Ideas with the Advisory Group and shared the following highlights:

- There are now seven big framing ideas with several strategic moves for each.
 - Connect us to the Water
 - Regarding the Waterfront Seattle Project, many parts of that project are unfunded, and this plan supports the project.
 - It is important to trace the historic waterline and intervene and create remembrances to honor the history.
 - Stitch the I-5 Divide

- The Lid I-5 Project just chose their project team, and many more projects and lids could come.
 - This idea suggests focusing on the Chinatown-International District (CID) and how to use the space under freeways is important.
 - In the future, more projects could stitch these divided neighborhoods.
- Greening Greater Downtown
 - Park space is limited downtown, and tree canopy is too. How can we get more tree canopy and get a sense of nature into greater downtown? By connecting park assets with green streets, you can be in density but feel like you're in nature.
- Great Places for Community Life
 - It is important to find a heart in each neighborhood and invest in those areas.
- Streets We Love, Streets That Work
 - This focuses on creating streets with space for multi-use, but people-first streets.
 - This looks at how to take back some street space for all uses.
 - There is an idea for a blue loop – or a way to connect streets with a branded experience that is attractive to visitors and bikeshare.
 - This also includes addressing climate stressors and creating fossil fuel-free streets.
- Excellent Transit Experience
 - In the next 5-20 years with Sound Transit's build outs, transit will be the way most people get downtown.
 - This idea celebrates transit arrivals of all modes.
 - We need to increase water transit and use of the bay and lake.
- Major Hubs, Great Places
 - As light rail is built, arrivals at hubs should be celebrated as gateways to other parts of the city.
 - The Westlake and Jackson hubs are two important gateways.
 - An idea is to create complete places and town squares around these hubs.
 - These will help with east to west travel.

Tom shared the project team's status and anticipated next steps:

- The project team refined the Big Ideas based on feedback heard from the Advisory Group and through outreach with different communities. There is still work to do to continue to refine the draft Big Ideas, which will be a part of the next steps.
- Next, the project team will be talking to the Executive Steering Committee to determine what next steps could be for each agency.
- They will try to identify some potentially cross-cutting projects that could address many of the Big Ideas.
- Members of the Advisory Group are invited to continue in the next phase of the vision framework development, if they are interested.

Final Thoughts from the Advisory Group

Penny Mabie asked each member of the advisory group to share their final thoughts after hearing where the draft Big Ideas are now and what's next.

Comment: A lot of these Big Ideas are familiar as we've been talking about these. I wasn't here for the last couple meetings, so the specific all out of the Lid I-5 as a solution surprised me. It was an idea at first, so now I'm surprised to see this is a specific idea recommendation.

Comment: I will read this more fully later, but I am always looking for specific calls for accessibility, and I want to ensure this is included in each idea.

Comment: I also missed the last meeting, and I get that we want amazing places. But, I'm still struggling with how do we get there? From the perspective of the people I represent, how things get to places using freight is important and people are still stressed about this.

Comment: We have a lack of green space, and we have a rare opportunity with the lid I-5 project to infuse open green space.

Comment: With the issue of open space, the most compelling open space we have is Elliott Bay. We used to wall ourselves off from it. I appreciate Tom saying that the connection is critical, and it will change. Lake union is just as important, and we need to do more to open it up.

Comment: Great streets are compelling to me, and First – Fifth Avenues, even Sixth, these are critical avenues, so how can you pick just two to focus on? All avenues need to be strong. And focusing on east to west travel is ok, but the north/south avenues are compelling and need importance and you can't drop them out of the plan.

Comment: I like all of it, and what we have done is come up with things Seattle as a whole says we want to do. Every one of these are a feel-good ideas and mirrors enjoyable places. The proof is in doing something about it though. What people are bringing up with details, that's important. More public engagement is needed. I really want to know where the group goes, and what the executive team does to ensure this isn't just a feel-good exercise.

Comment: I appreciate how many ideas there were originally, and there were many, and now there are just seven. A lot of effort went in to think through how to group them and keep ideas together. I would like to support a big idea that isn't here: Maintenance. It should happen now and, in the future, and before we get to all the Big Ideas, we need to take care of what we have now. We should think of future projects with the lens of maintenance and how we steward this in the future. I'm happy to see Pier 48 called out as an unfunded project on the waterfront that this plan supports.

Comment: I appreciate the previous comment on maintenance. The Downtown Seattle Association (DSA) task force produced a new report that came out of One Center City's evaluation of Fifth Avenue as transit only. The response was no, look at Third Avenue instead. Now, it's not just maintenance, public safety, retail, but instead it's a 7-layer dip. The Third Avenue task force is now going to evaluate giving less space to traffic lanes, and more pedestrian space. But, what do you do with that space and how will

it function with all modes? I encourage synergy between DSA and other groups on what's next and how to execute the plan. Are there some quick win things that can happen in the next six months?

Comment: I have concerns about now what? How do we get there? I'm overwhelmed, but the ideas and pictures look beautiful, but these are many dollars and time away from being a reality. We have urgent problems that are regional not just downtown, and they need to be addressed to be sustained and to address these Big Ideas. It's hard to think big with these. We need to figure out a way to link arms and stick together for the Imagine Greater Downtown plan. How do we all push for this plan together? Another thing missing in this plan is housing.

Comment: I do not have a lot to add to what's been said, but I echo the what now? There are parts of this that I love, and they have gotten stronger recently, specifically the Greening Greater Downtown idea.

Comment: The Stitch the I-5 Divide idea is great. First Hill hasn't recovered since I-5 was built. The Harborview overlook might not be around for much longer. It may turn into a redevelopment, so you should consider an alternative, possibly Harborview Park.

Questions

Tom responded to questions from the Advisory Group and provided clarity.

- Q: What's next?
 - A: The project team is thinking about that, and we recognize that this document will represent billions of dollars in effort and development.
- Q: What can we do to seed the next Big Ideas?
 - A: Try to find your focus within the vision document. The project team will try to develop the next steps to show where the City and agencies can put in some effort and work plans to move on these Big Ideas.
- Q: There is a wayfinding pilot project with Seattle Department of Transportation, in the Westlake area and Jackson transit hub area. There are so many projects running concurrently, are you guys connected on that?
 - A: Yes, and longer term, the wayfinding piece is related to the Excellent Transit Experience Big Idea and the walking experience.
- Q: What came from the specific conversations we had about equity considerations in each of these Big Ideas?
 - A: We took that input from you and other communities we reached out to and incorporated that into the Big Ideas. We've heard from folks that feel excluded and have taken that feedback to heart and try to represent that in each Big idea. There is some concrete work we can do around inclusion and displacement, and we're trying to capture that thinking.
- Q: Is there time to provide additional comments on these draft Big Ideas?
 - A: Yes.
- Q: Will there be a formal adoption piece to this plan?

- A: I'm not aware of official adoptions, but this is a city-owned plan. We're asking the Executives what resources they need to commit to this plan. There may be a future City Council approval, but not all agencies will need to approve of this plan. They advised throughout the process, so there is a mutual agreement for the vision.

What's Next

Sam Assefa shared his final thoughts after hearing from the Advisory Group. He thanked members again for their feedback and advancing this portion of the work. The group's comments will feed into staff's work to shape the final plan and define next steps.

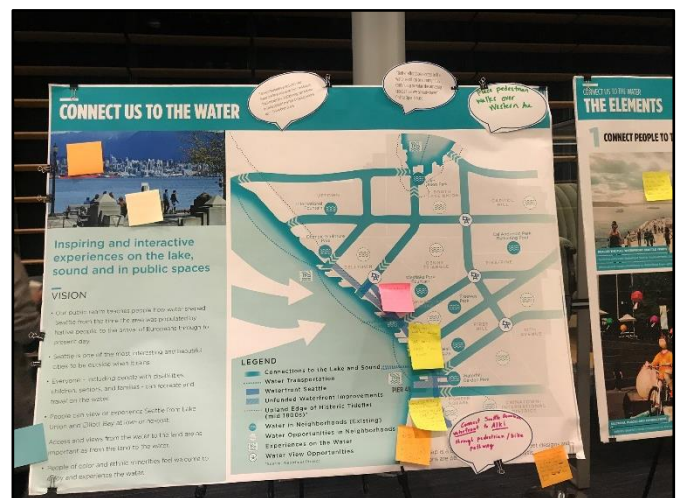
Over the next couple of months, the project team will continue to collect feedback, and maybe identify the quick wins in the process. The work that the Advisory Group did here is going to have a long-term impact on how this city develops over time. Sam invited the Advisory Group to come back and celebrate with the project team later. Sam stressed that the group's involvement is critical to move these Big Ideas forward.

Penny Mabie then closed the Advisory Group meeting with a few points:

- The project team will share a post-open house survey with the group. This is so the Advisory Group can relay the feedback they heard at the open house, share how the overall process worked for them, and identify how they want to stay involved as the plan moves forward.
- The open house is right after this meeting, and she encouraged members to stay for the meeting and pick a Big Idea they're interested in speaking with the public about.
 - Four members of the Advisory Group stayed for the open house.

Summary of Open House Feedback

Community members who attended the open house had discussions with Advisory Group members, city staff, and each other and left comments on the display boards with their feedback for the draft Big Ideas and their elements. Over 50 members of the public attended the open house. The following highlights



what was heard at the open house. A full transcribed record of comments is also included in the appendix.

- Major Hubs, Great Places
 - Celebrate entrances to stations and activate surrounding areas to create connected hubs
 - “I like human-centered stations full of shops and food choice, convenient for busy commuters”
 - “Celebrate entrances to the station. It’s hard to find them”
 - “Make Jackson Hub a suitable environment and public place to match its importance”
 - “Lid the track along King Street station (Fourth Avenue between Jackson and King) to improve connections”
 - “Put Madison Station on 6th and Lid I-5 then to create hub”
 - “Transit has seams, it cannot be seamless. The best we can do is to minimize seams. They can be of distance, time or information. Long walks for transfers are distance. King Street Station is not seamless!”
 - “Give the major hubs Lushootseed names in addition to their English ones.”
- Excellent Transit Experience
 - Wayfinding and art are important parts of the transit experience
 - “Use each stop as an opportunity to engage the local arts community, beyond murals on the stops. These can be beautiful beyond just being functional! Let people be creative”
 - “Need better user-oriented design for much of our transit network, i.e. buses, signage, wayfinding, transfers”
 - Bring back ride-free zones
 - “We need ride-free zones!”
 - “Bring back free bus zone in downtown!”
 - Interest for bathroom facilities
 - “We need bathrooms and hygiene facilities for homeless and unhoused folks!”
 - “Public restrooms?”
- Connect us to the water
 - Support connections between modes of transit to get to and in the water
 - “Seamless water transit. Do: SeaBus in Vancouver, Don’t: KCM water taxi”
 - “Make connections to streetcar on 1st very good – e.g. outdoor escalators”
 - “Bring back waterfront streetcar”
 - “Place pedestrian walks over Western Avenue”
 - “Connect Seattle downtown waterfront to Alki through pedestrian/bike pathway”
 - Go beyond transit and tourist views and recognize cultural values and uses and the natural water cycle
 - “Honestly, this still looks to me to be a place primarily for tourists/vendors. Needs a pull beyond just view”

- “Clearly mark, designate and name the spaces for native boat landings using lots of collaboration w/tribes”
 - “Support development of Pier 48 with tribes, Port, CID to connect to water”
 - “Connecting us to the water can go beyond views and fountains. Can we show the journey water takes to the Sound? Perhaps transparent storm drains?”
- Stitch the I-5 Divide
 - Support for the I-5 lid with art and green space
 - “Looking forward to seeing this in Seattle soon [Stitching I-5]!”
 - “Go big! Lid a big area to reap the most benefits and reconnect the city. Mercer Island lid is ½ mile long, we can do that here and have a wide variety of uses and address social equity”
 - “We need safe access to all our public spaces for all of our communities”
 - “This needs to be filled with people-friendly places!”
 - “Since what we need downtown is green park, would be better have whole lid be a park, rather than plop on ugly building in the middle. Concession kiosks are good enough”
- Streets We Love, Streets That Work
 - Support for walkable pedestrian only spaces and streets with public art
 - Pedestrian only spaces should have space for lots of public art and performance. Love this!
 - Please street without cars!! Pedestrians, bikers, skateboards only
 - I really like the walkable downtown, this is the downtown that I want
 - Please please please create pedestrian only streets and spaces! Badly needed public space!
 - Love the pedestrian only mega blocks
 - Love the idea of 3 x 3 pedestrian mega blocks but is Seattle ready?
 - Dedicate planning and space for each mode of transportation
 - “Can we just build the basic bike network already? I’m risking my life out here just to get to work and the lack of chutzpah around safety is going to get me killed.”
 - “Finish the street car loop”
 - “Build out a robust, equitable accessible public transportation system before, or simultaneously with increasing parking prices and reducing some car access to city core”
- Great Places for Community Life
 - Public art and spaces for all people, celebrating cultures and history
 - Where is the downtown longhouse? Coastal Salish Welcoming! Potlatch area? Pier 48!
 - As much public art as possible!
 - More discovery and free access to the arts in public spaces, especially for youth!!
 - Cultural centers to provide space for immigrants and safety to all minority groups

- Community gathering spaces/social events, cultural events (night markets, festivals, concerts)
 - More open spaces for all people to celebrate cultures
- Greening Greater Downtown
 - Greening is more than just parks
 - “The ugly convention center expansion badly needs a major green roof to cover up its grey expanse. Would be great way to make use of a barren surface”
 - “More community gardens and employment opportunities for low-income and homeless populations, can learn skills to grow own food, greenhouses, too for year-round use!”
 - “More community gardens to connect people with people, and people with nature”
 - “Greening the area is more than parks. It is setbacks, tree wells, etc. that have trees, plants, shrubs. Want to see green walking on all the streets – not having to go to a park to see green”
 - “Connect green network with water features to showcase both”

Appendix – Full comments received at open house

Major Hubs, Great Places

1. Activate union station and the surrounding area (hubs)
2. Lid the track along King Street station (Fourth Avenue between Jackson and King) to improve connections
3. Involve local artists in the design of transit spaces. Give it form and function
4. Celebrate entrances to the station. It’s hard to find them
5. I like human-centered stations full of shops and food choice, convenient for busy commuters
6. Hope that street car stop/station can be post as closer as the Link light rail station
7. Lid the railroad tracks!
8. Put Madison Station on 6th and Lid I-5 then to create hub
9. Allow small corner grocery stores to happen (only essentials), but available early/late bakeries; flower shops for people living in downtown an essential need that forces them to meet
10. I like colorful and stylish station! Looking forward to seeing how we’re going to build different ones!
11. More plazas at stations, visible entrances
12. Transit has seams, it cannot be seamless. The best we can do is to minimize seams. They can be of distance, time or information. Long walks for transfers are distance. King Street Station is not seamless!
13. Give the major hubs Lushootseed names in addition to their English ones.
14. Elementary school
15. Make Jackson Hub a suitable environment and public place to match its importance

Excellent Transit Experience

16. Use each stop as an opportunity to engage the local arts community, beyond murals on the stops. These can be beautiful beyond just being functional! Let people be creative
17. Make integration between bike and transit (max mode) commuting easier. More space for bikers to utilize space on buses and light rails
18. More transparency into real-time KCM data to empower the public to make informed, efficient commuting decisions
19. We need ride-free zones!
20. Bring back free bus zone in downtown!
21. Proposed (and pictured) CCC streetcar is not frequent enough to be hop on/hop off. See Denver; See 3rd Avenue. Streetcar is very costly way to provide city transit circulation.
22. We need bathrooms and hygiene facilities for homeless and unhoused folks!
23. 3rd Ave from Denny to just before Jackson should be transit only 6 am – 8 pm
24. Incorporate Jackson Hub plans into station area design
25. City hall must prioritize finishing and developing the civic plaza tower and square, and connect the plaza to grand Pioneer Square subway station
26. Public restrooms?
27. As the link light rail extends north, I hope that a metro bus route between Ballard/Fremont area and “NE 145th St Station – Light rail” can be added. The route should go through 145th St westbound and Greenwood Ave N southbound. Thanks!
28. Bring back ride free zones!
29. Need better user-oriented design for much of our transit network, i.e. buses, signage, wayfinding, transfers
30. However, Uber/Lyft have been taking more trips from transit than SOVs. How will we ensure transit is the most convenient way to get around, not just the cheapest

Connect Us To The Water

31. Seamless water transit. Do: SeaBus in Vancouver, Don't: KCM water taxi
32. Clearly mark, designate and name the spaces for native boat landings use lots of collaboration w/tribes
33. Support development of Pier 48 with tribes, Port, CID to connect to water.
34. Make connections to streetcar on 1st very good – e.g. outdoor escalators
35. Bring back waterfront streetcar
36. Have public concerts/public events
37. Honestly, this still looks to me to be a place primarily for tourists/vendors. Needs a pull beyond just view
38. Place pedestrian walks over Western Avenue
39. Connect us to the water – Please ask city to pay for cuts in the curb (ADA) in the 4 east-west streets in Pioneer Square rather than take that out of Lid \$.

40. 6 to 8 lanes on a walkway is not a good idea
41. Connect Seattle downtown waterfront to Alki through pedestrian/bike pathway
42. Connecting us to the water can go beyond views and fountains. Can we show the journey water takes to the Sound? Perhaps transparent storm drains?

Stitch the I-5 Divide

43. Looking forward to seeing this in Seattle soon [Stitching I-5]!
44. Go big! Lid a big area to reap the most benefits and reconnect the city. Mercer Island lid is ½ mile long, we can do that here and have a wide variety of uses and address social equity
45. We need safe access to all our public spaces for all of our communities
46. Better lighting – use white LED
47. Lots of space for public art, space for performance, sculpture, murals, etc.
48. Running/biking trails
49. Please also heal the BNSF divide in Pioneer Square and CID
50. Lidding I-5 should include very frequent transit service between 3rd Avenue Spine and First Hill, Yesler Way and 8th/9th avenues. Waits should be very short. SU, Harborview, Swedish, and Yesler Terrace need frequency of connectivity
51. This needs to be filled with people-friendly places!
52. Since what we need downtown is green park, would be better have whole lid be a park, rather than plop on ugly building in the middle. Concession kiosks are good enough
53. The BNSF divide impacts CID ad Pioneer Square while it tunnels under the rest of downtown

Streets We Love, Streets That Work

54. Be specific. Wheelchairs? Cyclists? Blind? Children? Who are you trying to protect?
55. Embrace local planning, downtown neighborhoods are making great ideas
56. Pedestrian only spaces should have space for lots of public art and performance. Love this!
57. Transit streets! Separate lanes for buses and trains/light rail
58. Build out a robust, equitable accessible public transportation system before, or simultaneously with increasing parking prices and reducing some car access to city core
59. Public restrooms
60. Please street without cars!! Pedestrians, bikers, skateboards only
61. I really like the walkable downtown, this is the downtown that I want
62. I don't like driving, I don't like biking, I like public transit because they figure it out
63. Yes!
64. Please please please create pedestrian only streets and spaces! Badly needed public space!
65. Superblocks, but only in tandem w/public transportation options and use of internal blocks, otherwise the inner core kind of dies...
66. Love the pedestrian only mega blocks
67. Pass to park/enter restricted zone by job - can't be cumbersome, not accessible
68. Love the idea of 3 x 3 pedestrian mega blocks but is Seattle ready?
69. Unhoused people want safe spaces where they can be dry, warm, protected, and able to connect with social services
70. This is a poor example [referring to picture], lots of overlapping ROW leads to conflict

71. Activate the alleys, particularly between Pike and Pine
72. Another mega block could be around Melrose between Pike and Pine. Make Melrose/Minor pedestrian street and get car traffic to circulate on Boren and Bellevue
73. Give the streets Lushootseed names in addition to their English ones
74. Hills make this area difficult [Belltown] to cross. Add pedestrian access to Battery Street Tunnel.
75. Finish the street car loop
76. Can we just build the basic bike network already? I'm risking my life out here just to get to work and the lack of chutzpah around safety is going to get me killed.

Great Places for Community Life

77. As much public art as possible!
78. Public kiosk for social services
79. More discovery and free access to the arts in public spaces, especially for youth!!
80. Downtown and other central neighborhoods need 1 or 2 public community centers with a variety of programming!
81. Cultural centers to provide space for immigrants and safety to all minority groups
82. Place for summer outdoor concerts like in Chicago Millennium Park
83. What happened to west edge?
84. Community gathering spaces/social events, cultural events (night markets, festivals, concerts)
85. More open spaces for all people to celebrate cultures
86. All weather usability, covered spaces, resilient surfaces, maintained and inviting restrooms, lighting, evening activities, and areas for dogs, dog friendly
87. How about space for family friendly evening activities? Night market, etc
88. Create running/biking trails that bring you through each of the neighborhoods
89. Improve smell on street! Public restroom please!
90. Where is the downtown longhouse? Coastal Salish Welcoming! Potlach area? Pier 48!
91. City should provide \$ to low income housing for this

Greening Greater Downtown

92. Connect local food production with food insecure groups, people and areas!
93. The ugly convention center expansion badly needs a major green roof to cover up its grey expanse. Would be great way to make use of a barren surface
94. Really like this idea! Use trees and rooftops to grow green canopy
95. More community gardens and employment opportunities for low-income and homeless populations, can learn skills to grow own food, greenhouses, too for year-round use!
96. More community gardens to connect people with people, and people with nature
97. Greening the area is more than parks. It is setbacks, tree wells, etc. that have trees, plants, shrubs. Want to see green walking on all the streets – not having to go to a park to see green
98. Meditation spaces for all backgrounds, religions, socioeconomic status, etc.
99. Opportunities to infuse educational spaces for all backgrounds and walks of life
100. Lid the BNSF track at Jackson & Fourth
101. Connect green network with water features to showcase both
102. Warm covered spaces in parks and more public restrooms