

## THE BELL STREET "PARK BOULEVARD" PROPOSAL

The City of Seattle, working with the Belltown community, proposes to transform Bell Street from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue into a "Park Boulevard." This project would create 17,000 SF of new park space to serve the Belltown community by converting a traffic lane and reconfiguring parking to create a wide linear open space with landscaping, lighting and pedestrian amenities. This would make a vital connection through Belltown from the Waterfront to Regrade Park and on to Denny Park. The project would be managed by Seattle's Department of Parks and Recreation (Parks), in coordination with the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). The project would use \$2.5M in funding from the 2008 voter-approved Parks and Green Spaces Levy. It would be built in 2010 following a community engagement process to finalize the design later this year.

### Community and City Support

The project addresses Belltown's long-standing need for open space. A "Green Street" designation for Bell Street was first adopted in the 1985 Downtown Plan, which called for landscaped, pedestrian-priority connections through Belltown and other neighborhoods as a way to encourage residential growth and improve livability. This desire for linear open space connections within the neighborhood was later confirmed as part of the 1998 Denny Regrade/Belltown Neighborhood Plan. More recently, Belltown organizations have requested that the City take action to create a park boulevard on Bell Street to provide open space and improve connections to existing parks. The City of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan calls for "Green Streets" to meet open space needs in built-out neighborhoods, and Bell is designated as a Green Street in the Seattle's Right-of-Way Improvement Manual.

SDOT has carefully reviewed the proposed design and approved the necessary traffic changes. The street would provide one travel lane and parking adequate to meet traffic demand.

### Public Safety and Comfort

Ensuring public safety is a top priority. Improvements will ensure open sightlines, and high-quality pedestrian lighting will discourage anti-social behavior and avoid glare to upper-story residents. Bell Street will be designated a "Park Boulevard" which brings with it a staffed presence from the Parks Department's Park Rangers and allows both the Rangers and the Seattle Police Department (SPD) to issue "Park Exclusions" for offensive behavior. SPD's Belltown Bike Squad will be a public safety presence when the project opens to set the right tone for safe community enjoyment.

### Sidewalks, Utilities, and Access and Landscaping

Existing sidewalks, utilities, driveways and alleys will be maintained in their current location and rebuilt to current standards as needed at no cost to the adjacent property owner. There will be no changes to building access as part of the project. Landscaping, lighting and other improvements will be provided and maintained by the City.

### Why Now?

Seattle City Light (SCL) is currently replacing utilities in Bell Street from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues. This work provides the opportunity to rebuild the street in a different way, consistent with the "Park Boulevard" concept. By "piggy-backing" on SCL's work, we are able to realize significant cost savings.

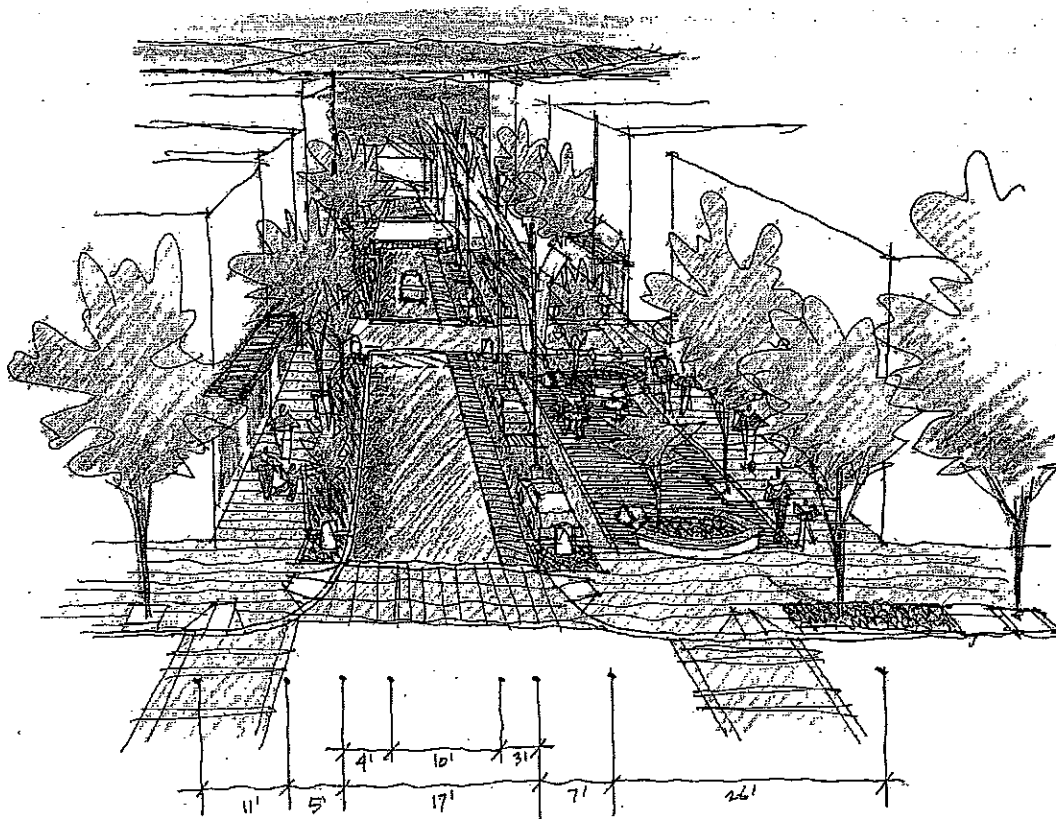
### How Can I Get Involved?

The City will be hosting an open house to present the conceptual plans, to be followed by design workshops in the fall. Please attend and make your voice heard!

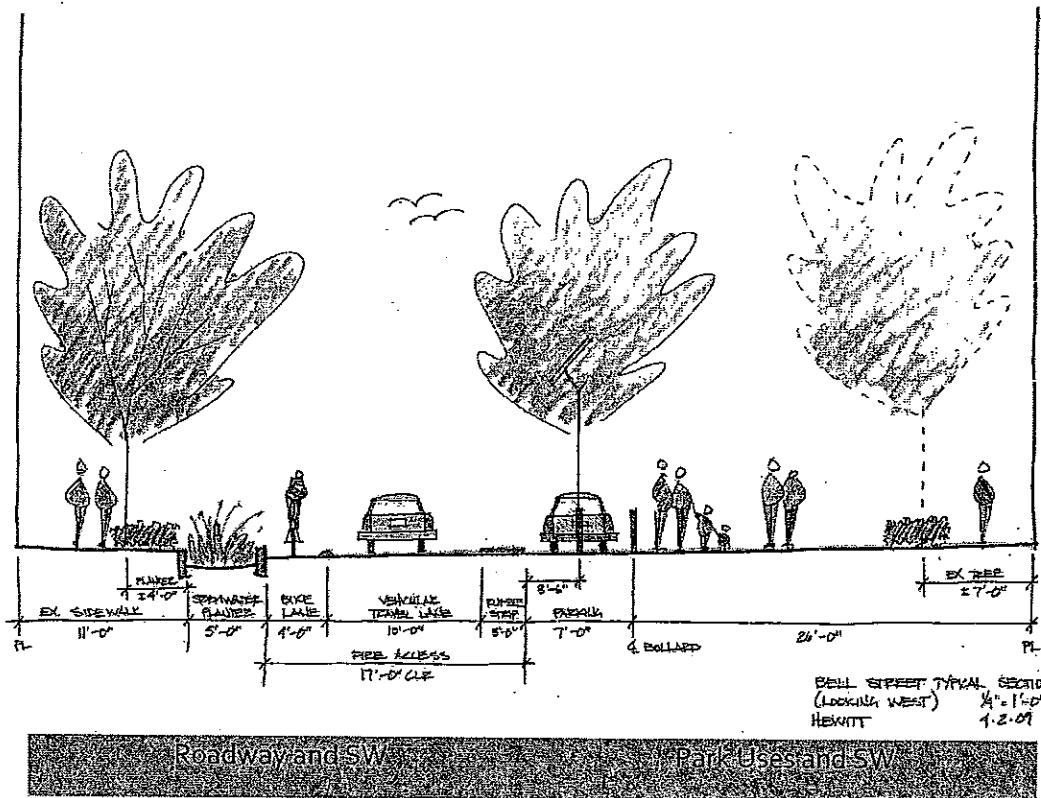


Bell Street Park Boulevard Open House  
June 4, 2009 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.  
Intersection of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. and Bell (we'll be easy to spot)  
Contact: Gary Johnson at 206.615.0787 or at  
gary.johnson@seattle.gov





Bell Street Green Street – Typical Section (Preliminary Concept)



## **Proposed Priority for Parks and Open Space in Belltown**

12/13/2006

1. Based upon the Belltown Neighborhood Plan, past work and studies, our current interests and the environment, we should put top priority on Green Streets and quality streetscape, with initial priority on Bell Street as a Street Park and the streetscape work on 3rd Avenue.
2. In parallel, we should work with the city to develop incentives for private developers to incorporate pocket parks in their new developments.
3. Support current city efforts to make downtown parks more functional, and as that occurs to continue to push for a centrally located, people park (square) of one-half to a full block in Belltown in the future.

Endorsed by:

Belltown Community Council

Belltown Business Association

Belltown Housing and Land Use Committee (BHLUS)

## Belltown's Green Streets and Their Connections

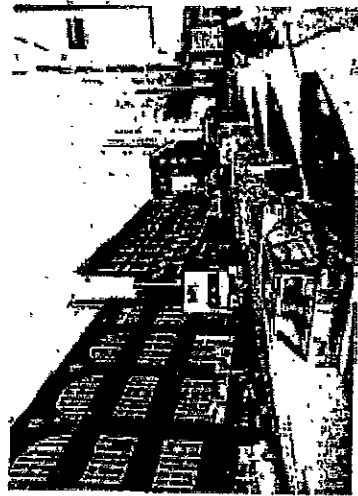
### Bell and Blanchard Region

#### *Business and Retail*

The Bell and Blanchard bioregion weave the mixed business and residential zones of the Regrade together. Heavy pedestrian activity is centered around 1st and 2nd Avenues, with the 2nd Avenue improvements forming a pedestrian oriented north south connection into downtown.

The intersection at 1st Avenue (Historically Front Street) serves as a key piece to the puzzle of Seattle's History.

William Bell, for whom Belltown is named, built a hotel that stood next his



home at the intersection of 1st, Bell and Blanchard. Today, the facade of the Austin A. Bell Building, which stood next to the Bell Hotel, is all that is left of these historic buildings. Currently, the Austin Bell building is being renovated into studio lofts. One of Seattle's first public works projects included linking Belltown along Front Street (1st Avenue), to Pike via a boardwalk. This became one of Seattle's favorite Sunday and Sunset Promenades. Bell and Blanchard also run through the historic peak of Denny Hill before it was washed into the bay, and stand as a testimony to a "historic urban archeology", compared to the "urban archeology" proposed by the Growing Vine Street plan:

### Green Street Types for Bell and Blanchard

The current designation for Bell and Blanchard Street call for either a Class I or Class II Green Street. In determining that both streets will become transit streets, these classifications may not be appropriate for the amount of traffic that will be present on the street.

A Class III classification will handle continuous through traffic, making transit routes possible within the Green Street designation. An electric bus line may be appropriate to help keep pollution and noise down. This designation will still provide wider sidewalks and pedestrian amenities, such as street furniture, and artistic elements, while slowing and limiting the amount of traffic on the street.

#### Recommendations:

- Designs within this region need to address a character that is oriented toward the business and retail connections of the neighborhood. These items may include:
  - Benches and street amenities that occur from 4th Avenue to 1st Avenue should take on the unique character of those cross streets.
  - Providing spaces for pedestrians to sit down for lunch, or to take a break within a garden setting.
  - Design for a higher concentration of pedestrian who will be walking to work or going to the waterfront for lunch.
  - Highlight business entrances with hardscape elements, leaving the garden spaces to the entrances of residential buildings.
  - Bell and Blanchard are designated from 1st Avenue through to Denny Way. This connection into the Denny Triangle neighborhood should be coordinated to help tie the concepts, or the identities, of the neighborhoods together.