

UPTOWN ANALYSIS + INTERVENTIONS REPORT

PREPARATION FOR UPTOWN URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

PREPARED FOR: **CITY OF SEATTLE DPD**



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON | SEATTLE STUDIO 2014



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was compiled with guidance from numerous community and professional stakeholders. The Uptown Alliance, NBBJ, Seattle Department of Planning and Development, and University of Washington Department of Urban Design and Planning all participated in developing the analysis and design interventions proposed in this document. The following individuals played an active role in providing direction for the project:

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INTRODUCTION

Beginning in November 2013 and extending into 2015, the Uptown urban center is undergoing the process of developing an urban design framework. This plan will guide the physical growth and development of the neighborhood to promote a walkable, livable, and healthy environment. The development of the urban design framework will apply a community-driven approach to translating comprehensive plan goals into a vision for the neighborhood's future urban form.

The Seattle Studio is a collaboration between the Masters of Urban Design and Planning program at the University of Washington and the Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD). The spring 2014 Seattle Studio is the first of three courses in a partnership between the University of Washington and the City. The spring studio produced two analyses; the first at a neighborhood level, building upon DPD's January 2014 Neighborhood Background Report. The second was the identification of three focus areas within the neighborhood that present opportunities for improvement in urban design or the potential to be redeveloped. These analyses are intended to assist the City and the Uptown community as they continue to develop ideas for the neighborhood's urban design framework.

PROJECT TIMELINE

November 2013	DPD - Community Open House
January 2014	DPD - Uptown Background Report Released
April 2014	UW - Seattle Studio 1 Begins Work
May 2014	UW - Presentation with Uptown Alliance
June 2014	UW - Presentation with DPD
June 2014	DPD - Charrette Process Begins
June 2014	UW - Seattle Studio 2 Begins Work
June - Sept. 2014	DPD - UDF Draft
September 2014	UW - Seattle Studio 3 Begins Work
Oct. - Nov. 2014	DPD - Revise UDF Draft per comments
December 2014	DPD - Finalize UDF

PART 1:

ANALYSIS

PART 1: ANALYSIS

The neighborhood analysis built upon existing literature and public comments. The topics of the analysis centered on five themes identified by DPD: connectivity, public realm, living in Uptown, economic vitality, and the Seattle Center.

The connectivity analysis revealed that Uptown is well served by a number of transit lines and major arterials running through the neighborhood, including Denny Way, Aurora Avenue, and Mercer Street, which provide connections to other parts of the city while creating perceived barriers for pedestrians. The many planned transportation projects in Uptown will strengthen and improve its connections with adjacent neighborhoods. The public realm analysis inventoried Uptown's publicly owned assets such as parks, street trees, and public art. Apart from Seattle Center, Uptown is home to two parks: Counterbalance Park and Kinnear Park. The streets in the neighborhood also offer significant opportunities to create activate and inviting public spaces.

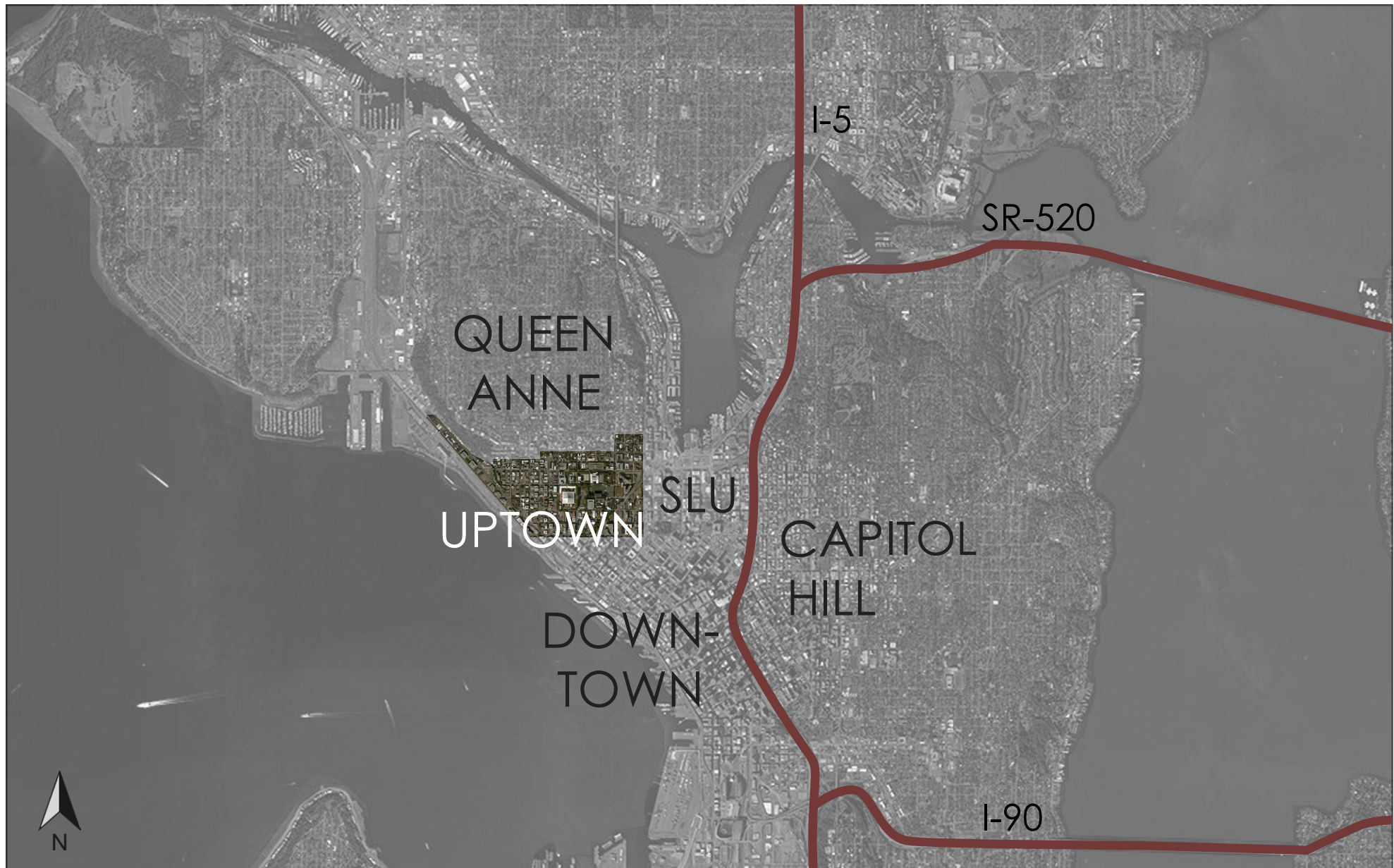
The third section of the analysis was "living in Uptown," which focused on the types and age of housing in the neighborhood. The majority of housing is multifamily residential with few single-family residences remaining. These residential patterns reflect the urban character of this neighborhood, which is expected given its designation as an urban center in Seattle's Comprehensive Plan. The age of these buildings reveals a heterogeneous building stock, underscoring the effects of infill development in the neighborhood.

The economic vitality analysis of Uptown found that the largest category of businesses is Professional Services, which is a broad spectrum of businesses offering products or services primarily to other businesses. The neighborhood is also home to many dining and drinking establishments, which when combined with a significant concentration of arts and entertainment organizations provide this neighborhood with its destination-oriented character.

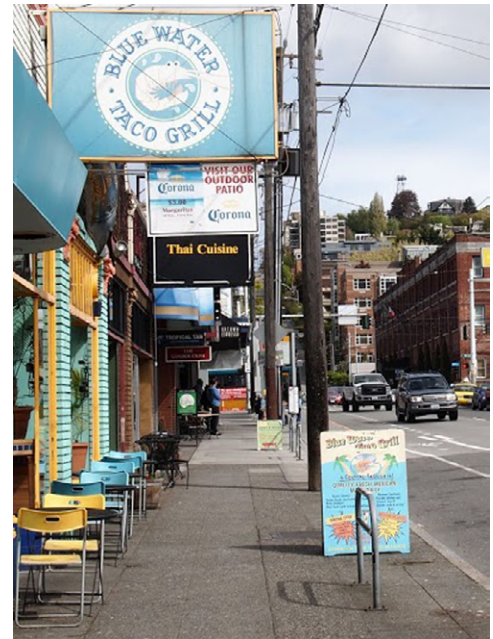
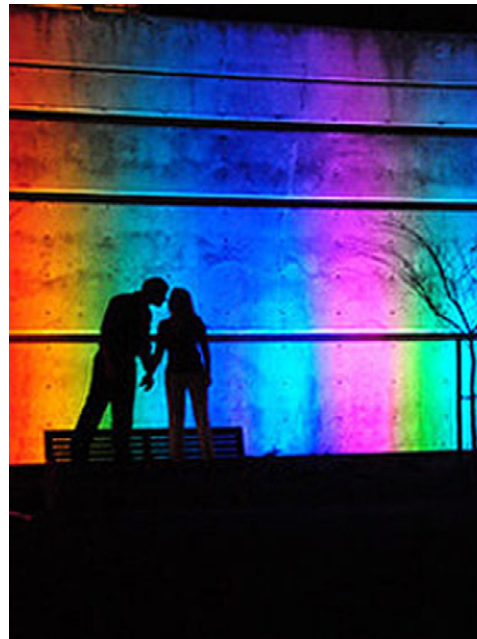
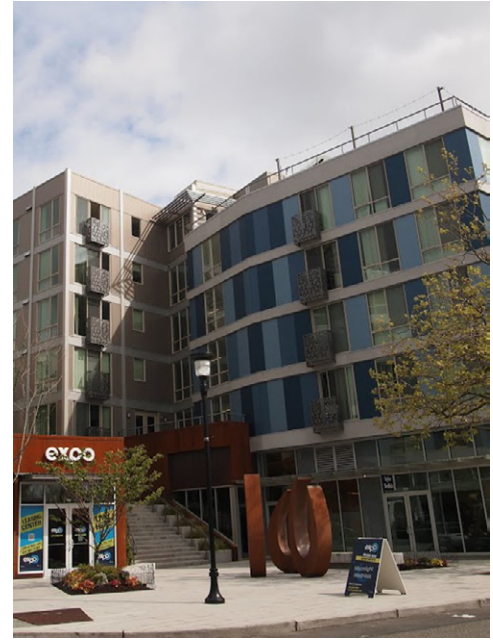
Lastly, the Seattle Center's relationship with the neighborhood was analyzed. This analysis focused on the pedestrian movement across the Seattle Center and into Uptown, examining both internal movements within the campus and external movements of users moving from the campus into the neighborhood. The analysis found multiple opportunities to better connect the Seattle Center campus with the heart of the neighborhood.

1. CONTEXT
2. CONNECTIVITY
3. PUBLIC REALM
4. LIVING IN UPTOWN
5. ECONOMIC VITALITY
6. SEATTLE CENTER

UPTOWN CONTEXT



UPTOWN CHARACTER



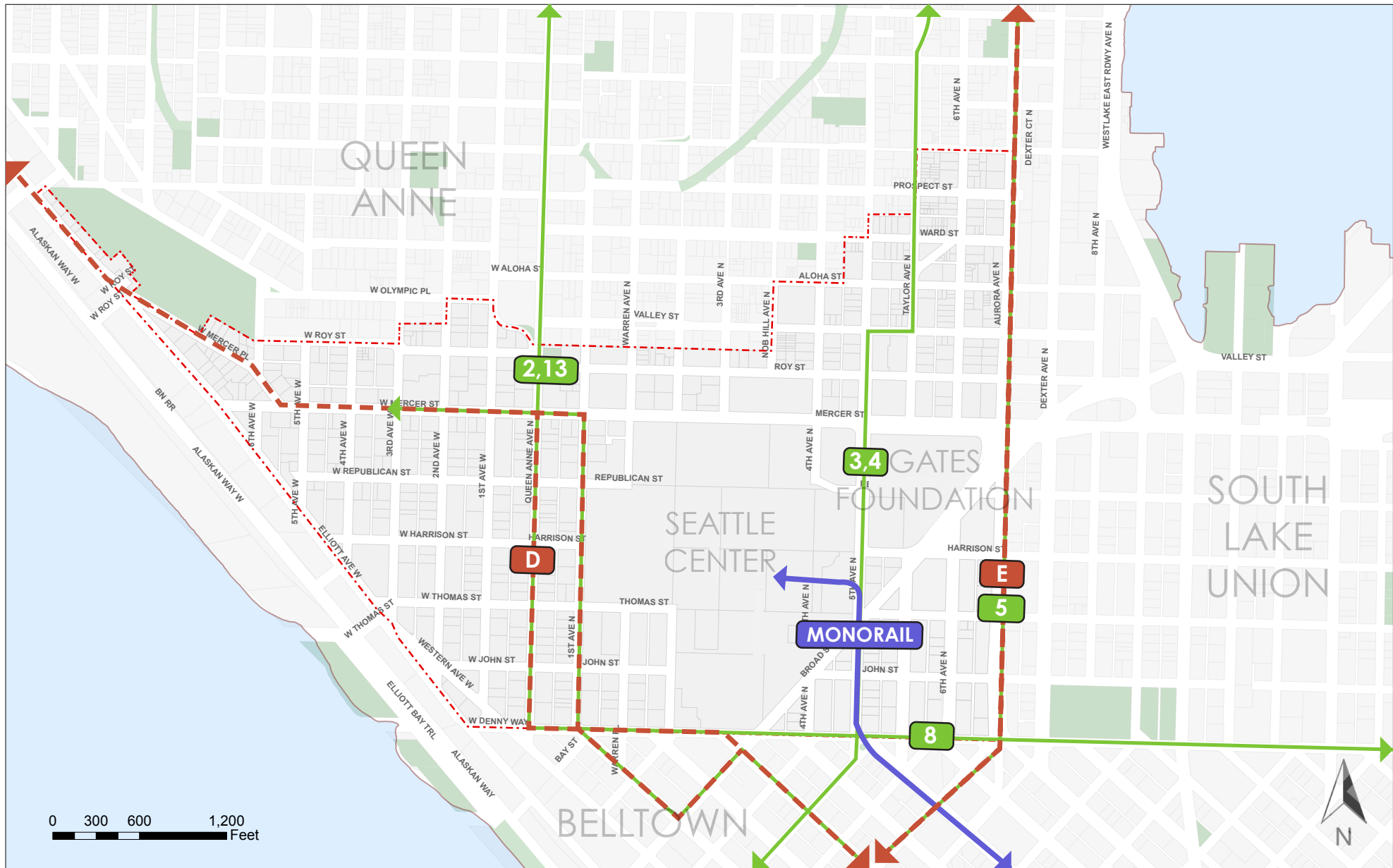
1. CONTEXT
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ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES: Pedestrian Connectivity



The major arterial streets and natural topography surrounding Uptown act as perceived barriers that prevent easy connectivity between the neighborhood and adjacent communities. Additionally, there are poor connections between the enclosed campuses (Seattle Center and the Gates Foundation) and the rest of the neighborhood. Uptown has the opportunity to build on existing connections to facilitate easier access throughout the neighborhood and adjacent urban centers.

CONNECTIVITY: Frequent Transit



This map shows all the transit routes currently serving Uptown that have 15-minute or less headways. The transit network connects Uptown with many other areas of the City and includes two Metro RapidRide routes (D Line and E Line). The Seattle Center Monorail also serves as both a landmark tourist attraction as well as a functional transit system for people living in and visiting Uptown.

LEGEND

- Mercer West Corridor Project
- SR 99 Connection and Exits
- SR 99 Tunnel
- Denny Way Concept Plan
- Recommended Greenway
- Recommended Cycle Track
- Recommended In Street Bike Lane

0 300 600 1,200 Feet

QUEEN ANNE

GATES FOUNDATION

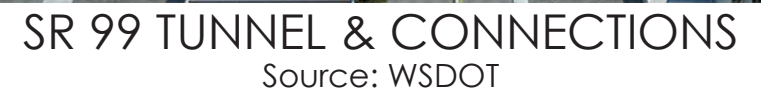
SEATTLE CENTER

SOUTH LAKE UNION

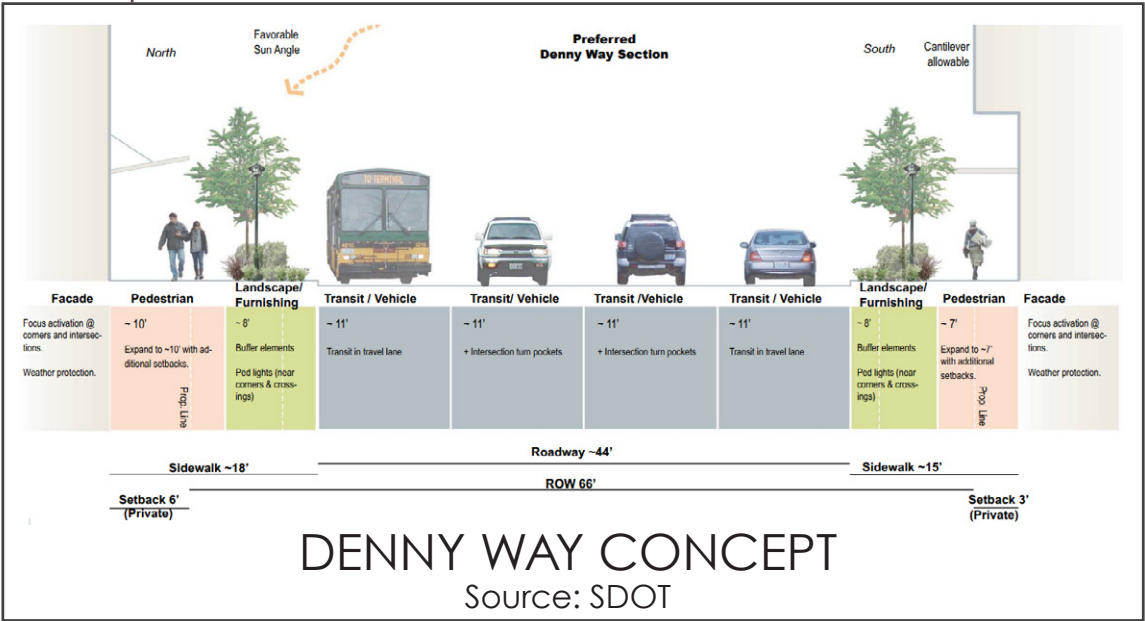
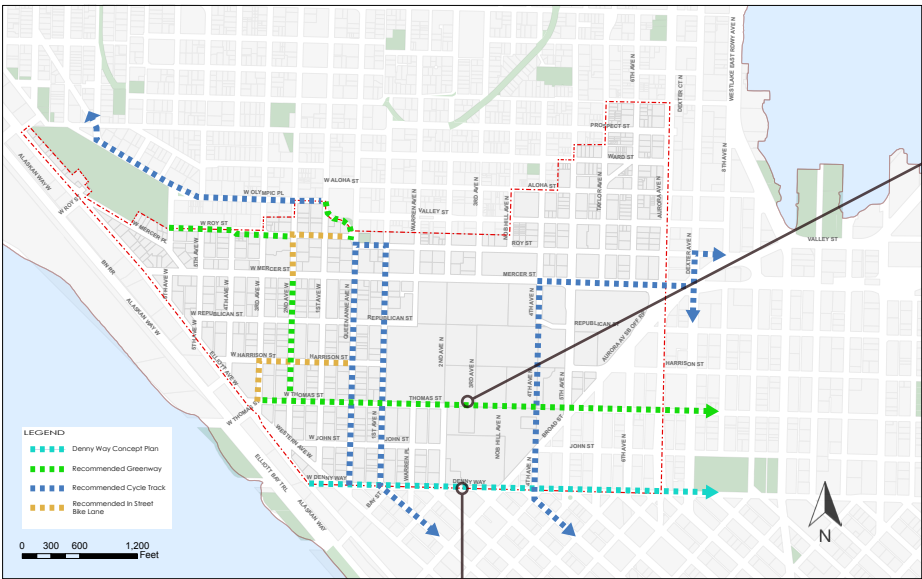
BELLTOWN

Map labels include: ALASKAN WAY W, W ROY ST, W MERCER PL, W OLYMPIC PL, W ALLOHA ST, VALLEY ST, 3RD AVE N, ALOHA ST, ROY ST, NOB HILL AVE N, TAYLOR AVE N, AURORA AVE N, DEXTER CT N, WESTLAKE EAST ROWDY AVE N, 8TH AVE N, 6TH AVE N, W MERCER ST, W REPUBLICAN ST, 5TH AVE W, 4TH AVE W, 3RD AVE W, 2ND AVE W, 1ST AVE W, W HARRISON ST, HARRISON ST, W THOMAS ST, THOMAS ST, W JOHN ST, JOHN ST, W DENNY WAY, DENNY WAY, BAY ST, WARREN PL, NOB HILL AVE N, 4TH AVE N, 5TH AVE N, 6TH AVE N, 8TH AVE N, WESTLAKE EAST ROWDY AVE N, VALLEY ST, SOUTH LAKE UNION, BELLTOWN, SEATTLE CENTER, GATES FOUNDATION, QUEEN ANNE.

Source: seattle.gov

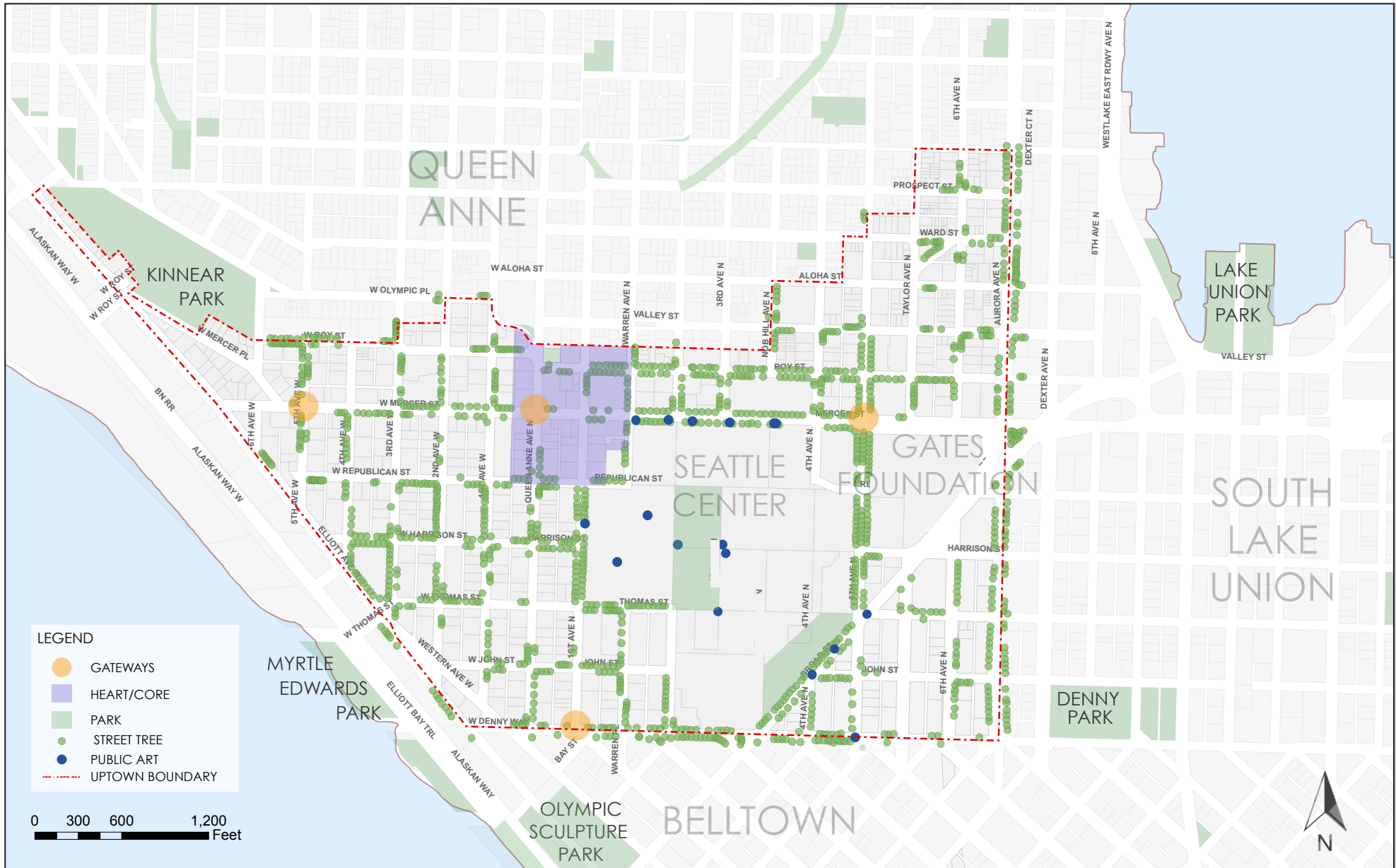


STREETSCAPE CONCEPT PLANS



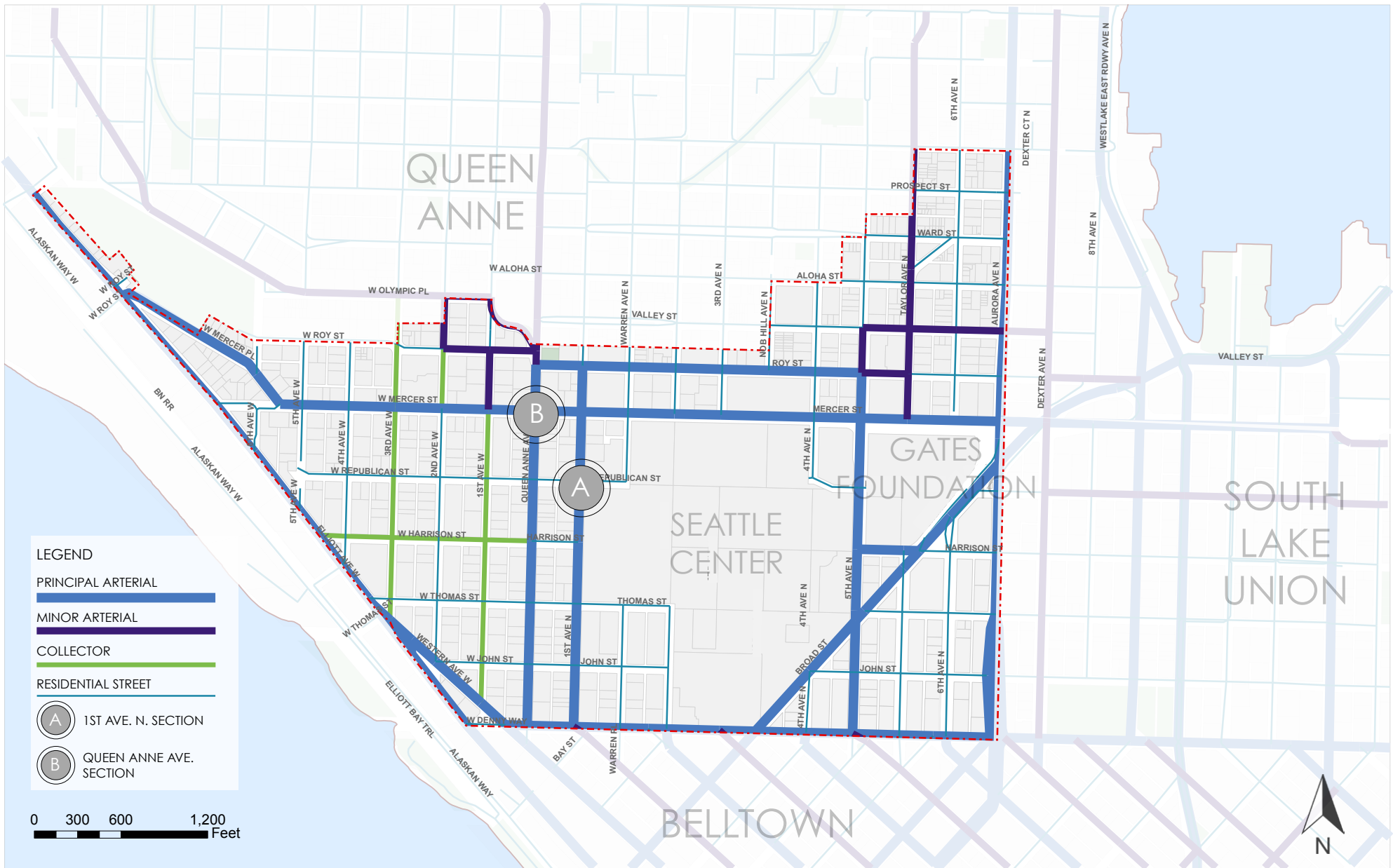
1. CONTEXT
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PUBLIC REALM ELEMENTS



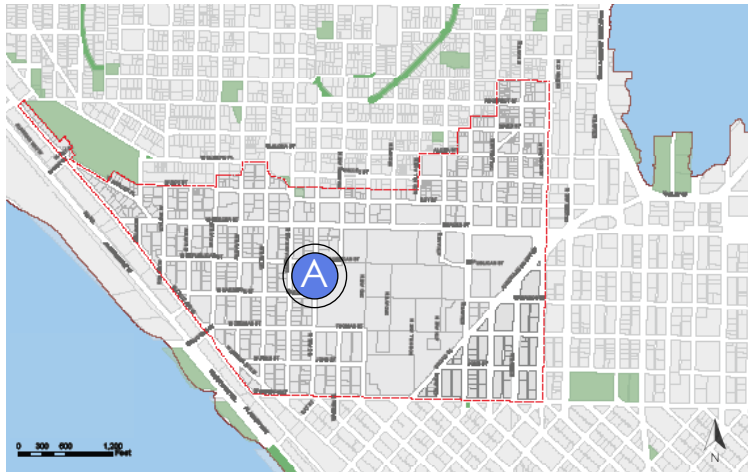
This map identifies elements we included in the public realm of Uptown, areas that the public actively uses like the streets and parks. This map also includes gateways into the community and the heart of the community, which were identified in the neighborhood analysis by DPD,

RIGHT OF WAY

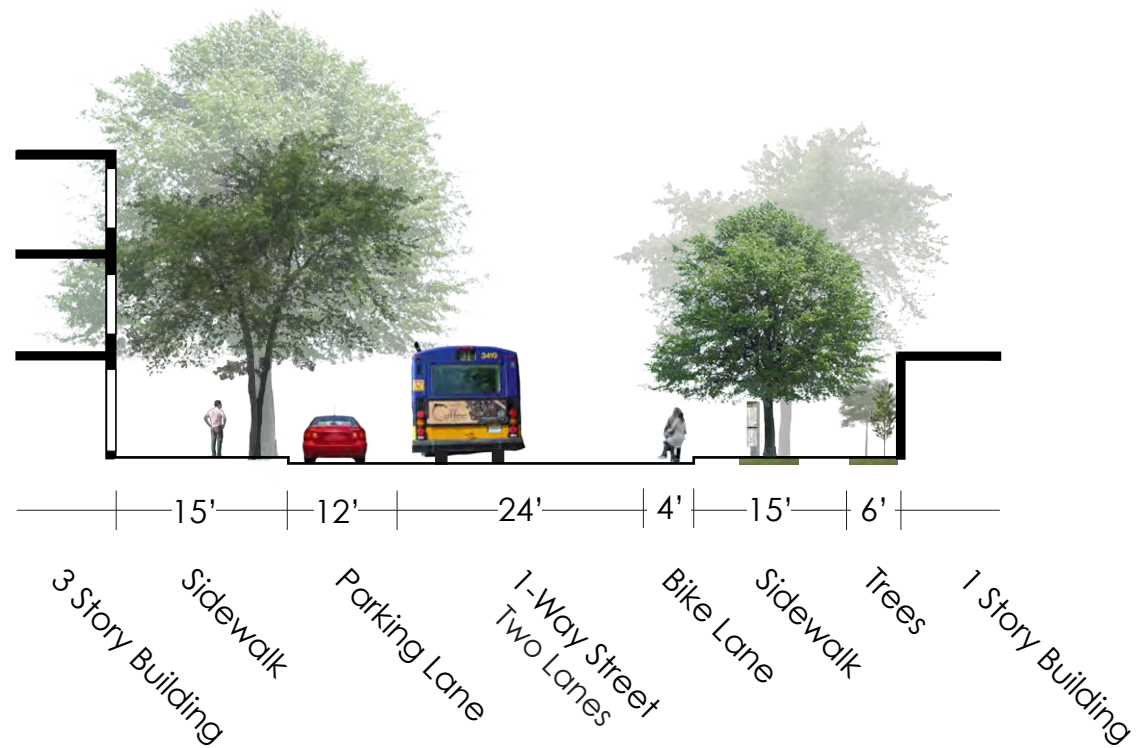


This map identified current right of way hierarchies from principal arterial streets to residential streets as identified by the City of Seattle. Principal arterials have the heaviest flow of vehicular traffic, while residential streets have the least flow of vehicular traffic. Points A and B mark typical street sections that are shown on the following pages.

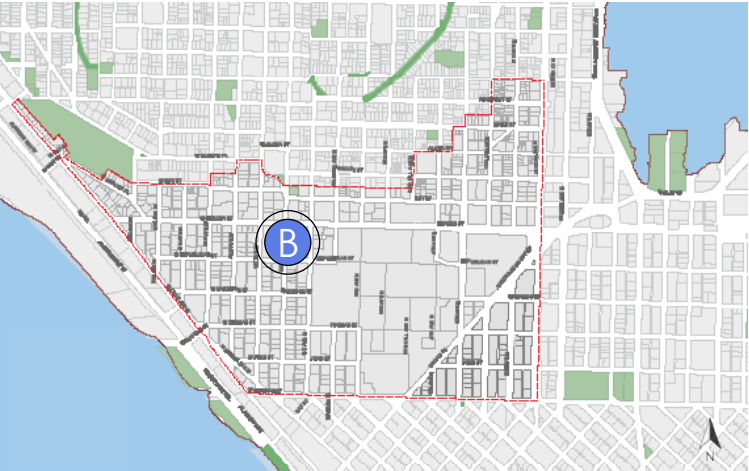
1ST AVE. N. TYPICAL SECTION



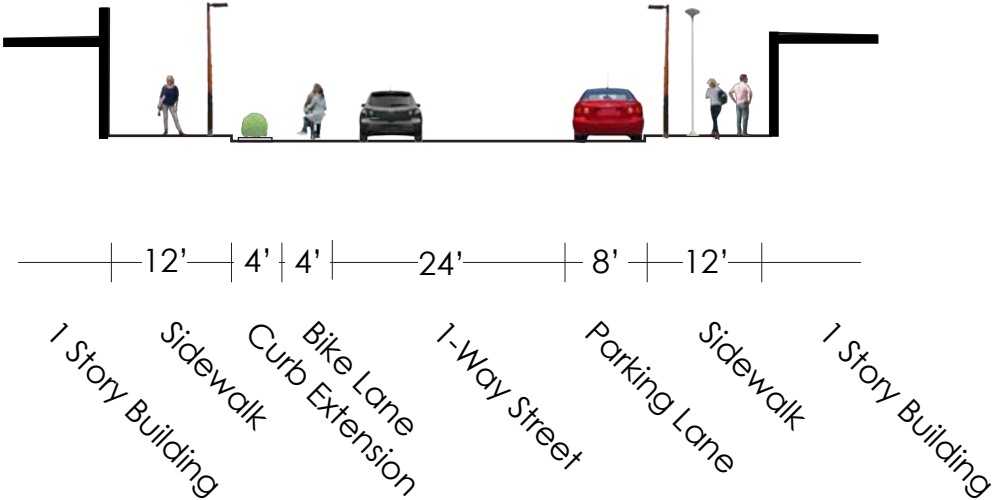
LOOKING NORTH



QUEEN ANNE AVE. TYPICAL SECTION

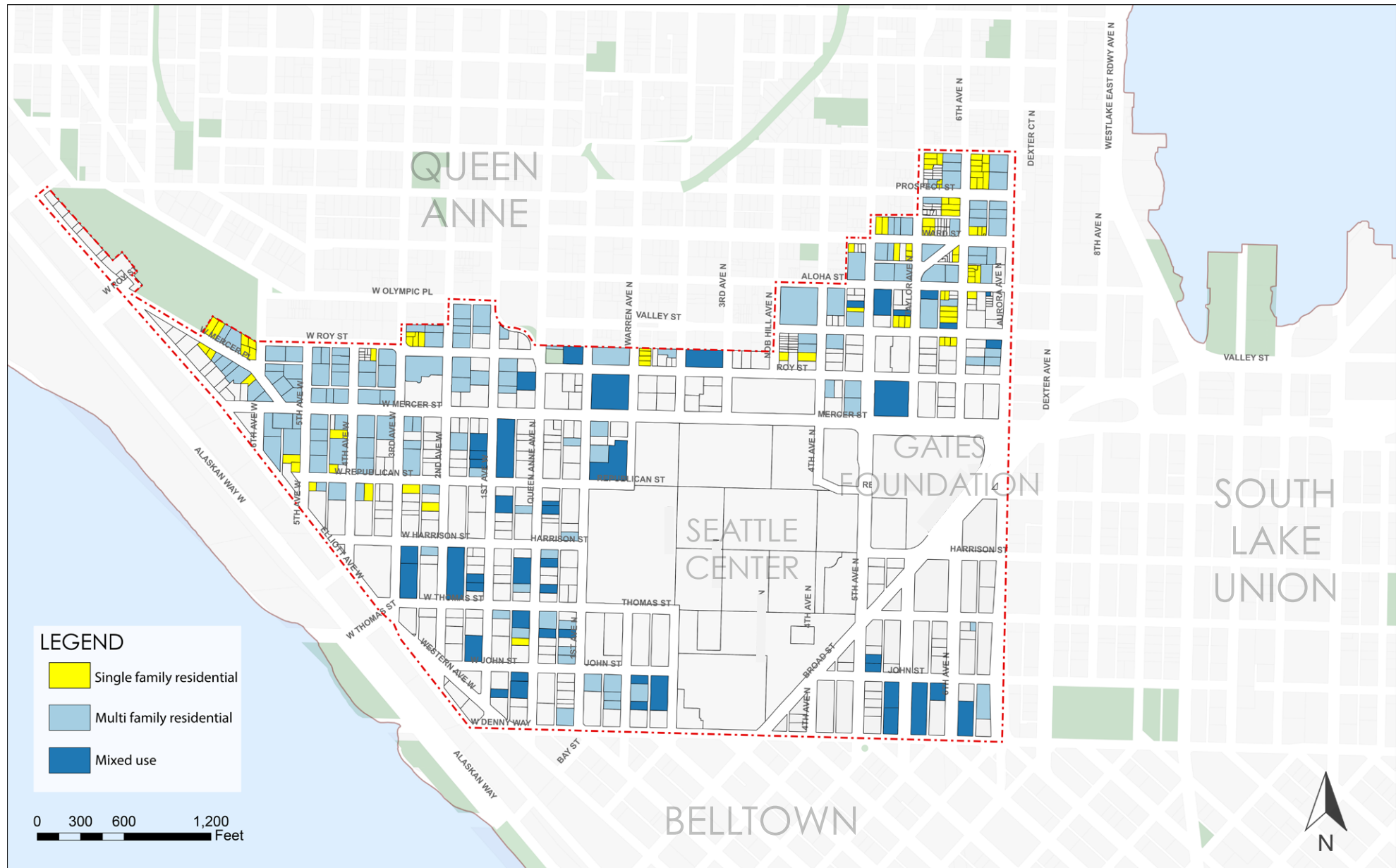


LOOKING SOUTH



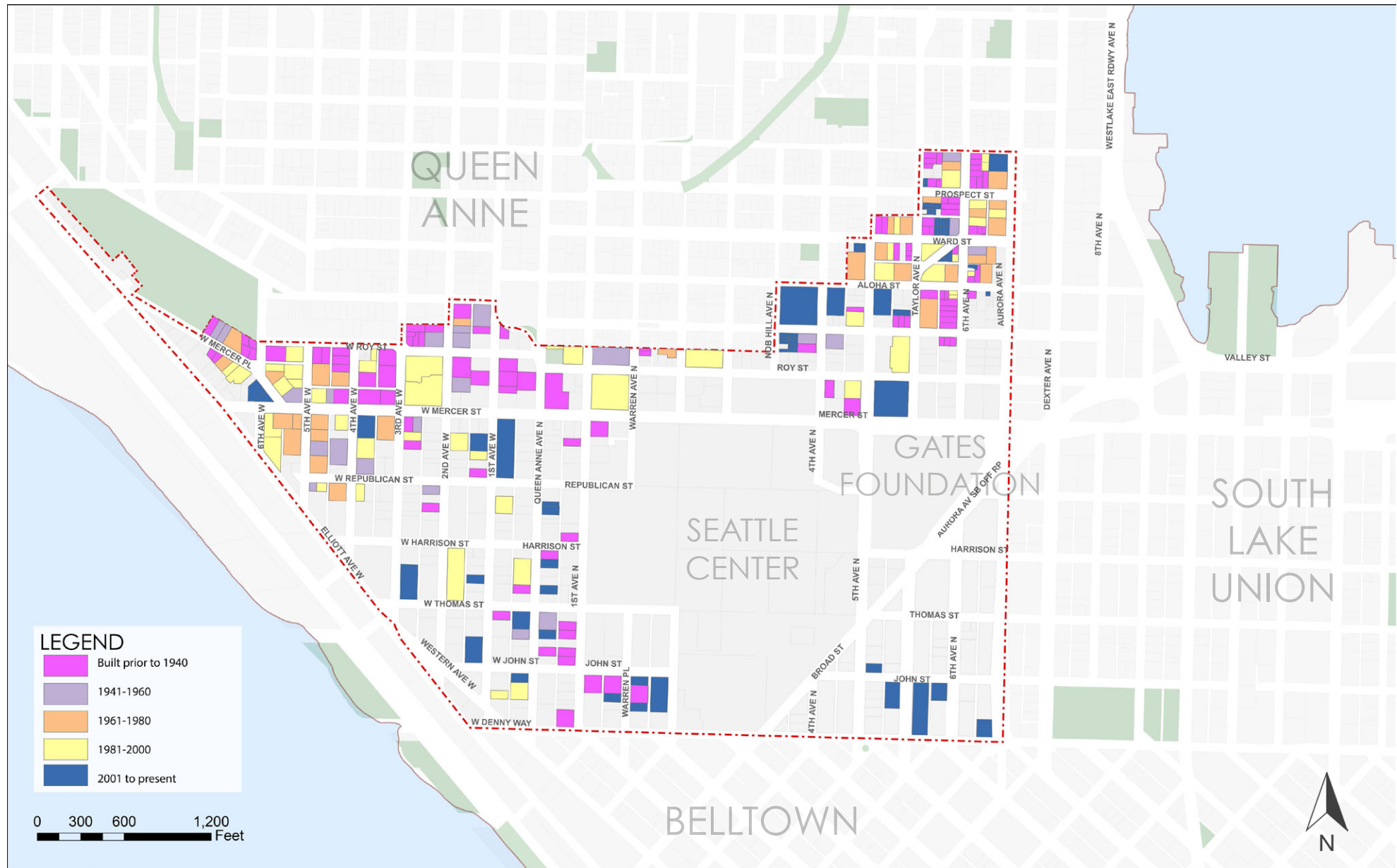
1. CONTEXT
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RESIDENTIAL TYPOLOGY



The majority of the single family residences are clustered in the northeast corner of the neighborhood, while the multi-family units are found in both the NE and NW corners, and on Denny at the border of Belltown. Mixed-use buildings are aligned with the neighborhood's major arterials: Queen Anne Ave N, Mercer and Roy St., and Denny Way.

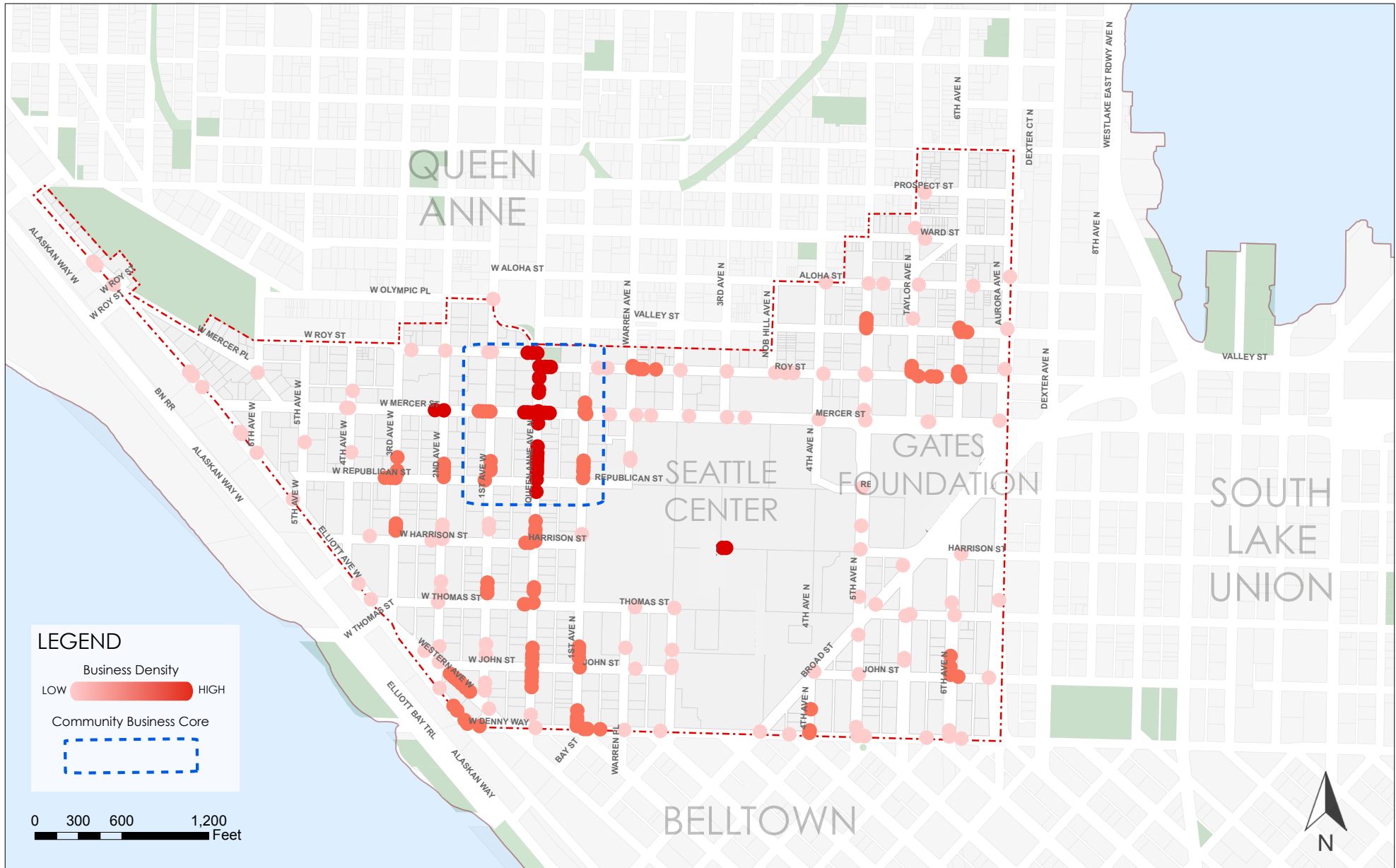
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING AGE



Building ages reveal a heterogeneous building stock, underscoring the effects of infill development on this neighborhood over the past 20 years.

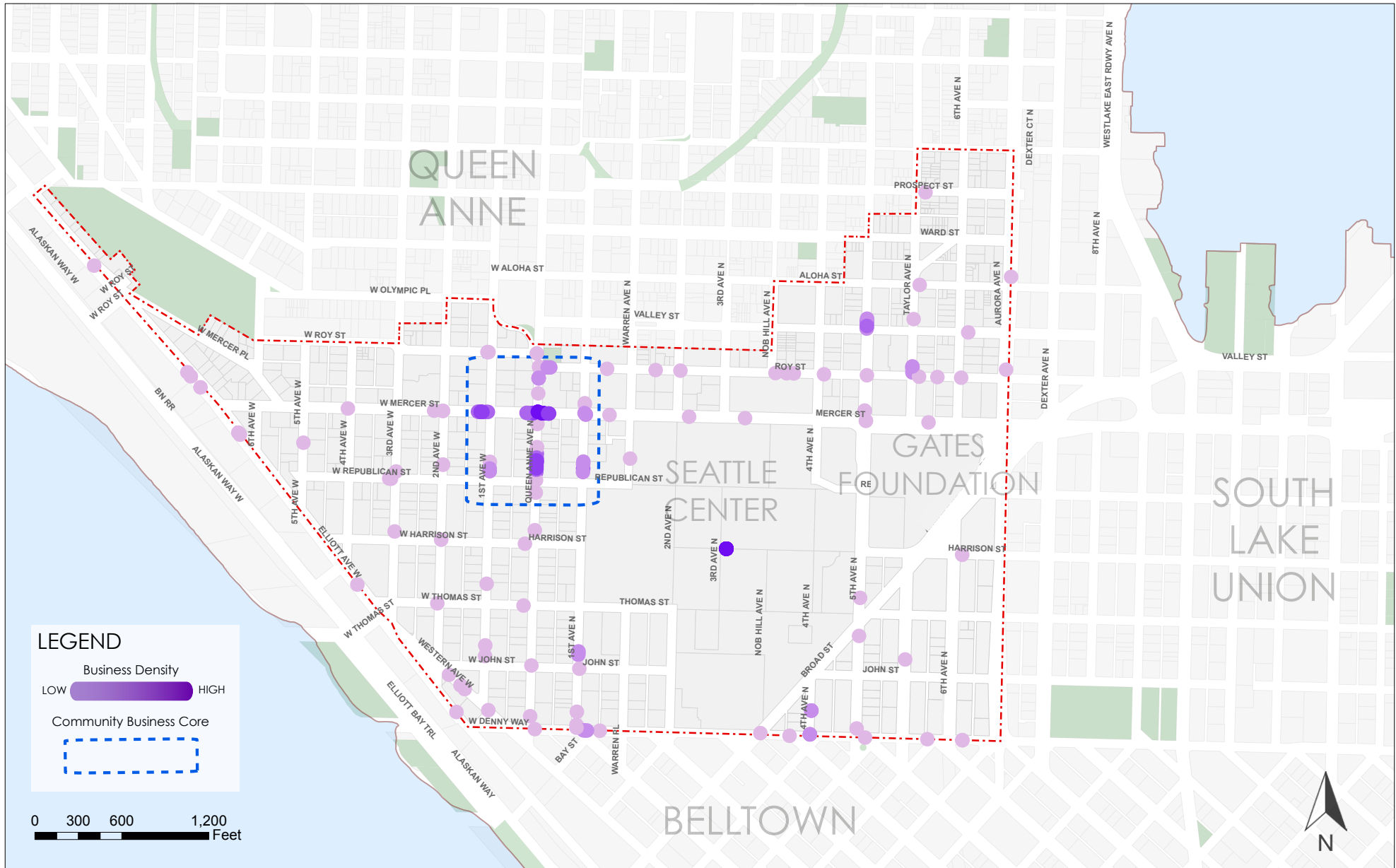
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7. FOCUS AREAS

ECONOMIC VITALITY: Business & Service Density



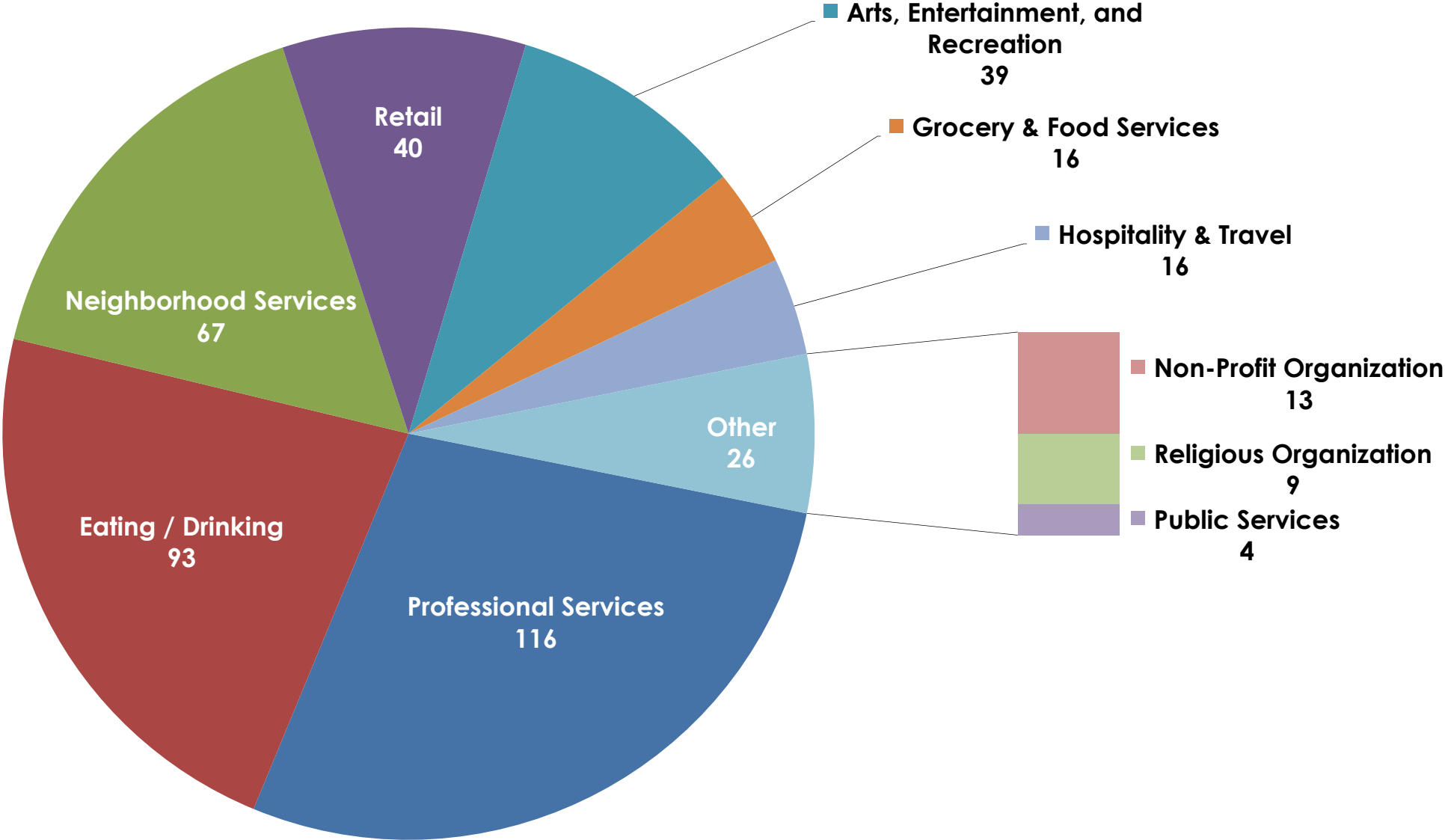
The "Heart of Uptown" contains the neighborhood's dominant cluster of businesses. Secondary groupings are found in the Seattle Center's Armory Building, along Denny Way (including in the Uptown Triangle), and at the eastern end of Roy St.

ECONOMIC VITALITY: Neighborhood Business Density



Neighborhood services include a range of resident-oriented business, including grocery stores, cafes, laundromats, auto-repair garages, and others. The “Heart of Uptown” has the highest concentration of such businesses, making it an important area of focus for planning efforts.

BUSINESS & SERVICE TYPES



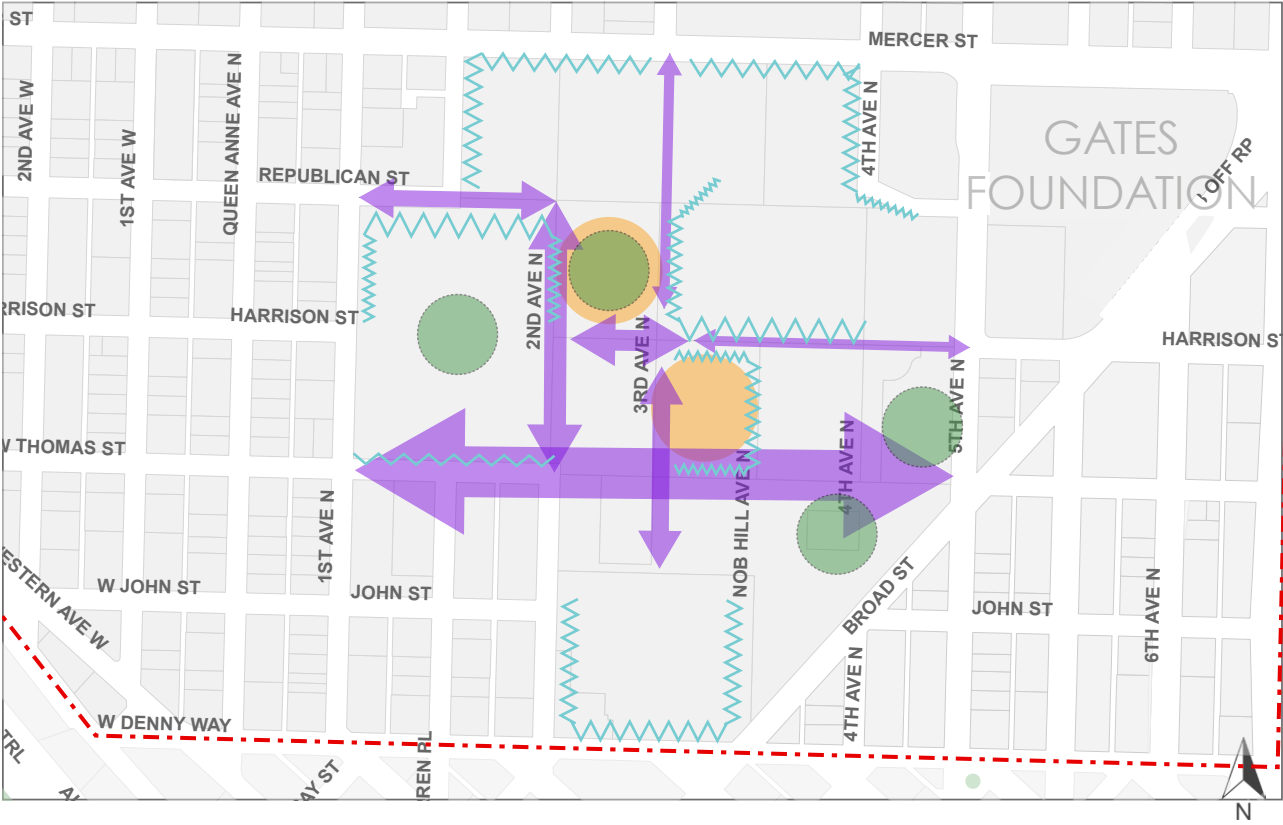
RETAIL CORRIDOR: Urban Design Inventory



Low-slung buildings constructed around the middle of the 20th century provide a distinct architectural character to the neighborhoods retail core. However, some of the urban design elements of the public realm can be improved. These include public trash bins, street furniture, alleyscape design, and the use of buildings frontage to create a comfortable and compelling urban environment.

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SEATTLE CENTER: Pedestrian Flow | Edges | Landmarks



LEGEND



Landmark



Gathering Space



Pedestrian Traffic



Edge

Seattle Center is a major institution within the Uptown. The area's main gathering spaces, the Armory and the International Fountain, and its concentration of landmarks make the area a central attraction for residents and visitors to Seattle. Movement throughout the Center is affected by perceived or physical edges with most pedestrian traffic concentrated along the Thomas Street corridor. These barriers present opportunities to positively affect traffic throughout the Seattle Center and into the Uptown neighborhood.

SEATTLE CENTER: Building Entry Points



LEGEND

Building Entrance

The orientation of the Seattle Center's buildings show the area's original purpose as host of the 1962 World's Fair. Most building fronts and entrances face away from Uptown, catering to pedestrians within the Center.

PART 2:

INTERVENTIONS

PART 2: INTERVENTIONS

The second portion of the analysis explored urban design interventions for three focus areas in Uptown, which were selected through both public input and student analysis. These areas include the “Heart of Uptown,” the Roy Street Corridor, and the Seattle Center (shown on the following page).

The first study area was the “Heart of Uptown” which is currently centered near the intersection of Queen Anne Ave N and Mercer Street. This area is the retail and commercial core of the urban center. The analysis proposed an expansion of the “heart” to capture additional movement through the neighborhood and examined potential long- and short-term public realm design interventions.

The second area of study was the Roy Street Corridor. While not currently defined as a retail district, the Roy Street Corridor refers to Roy Street from Queen Anne Ave N to 5th Ave N. The corridor was selected as an area of opportunity because of its redevelopment potential and opportunity to revitalize the Seattle Center’s Mercer Garage. The analysis looked at three redevelopment alternatives and themes, and three ways of repurposing the parking garage.

The edges, gateways, and connections to the Seattle Center formed the basis of the third set of interventions. This analysis identified improvements to the Seattle Center gateways and proposed strategies to enhance the relationship between the Seattle Center campus and the rest of the Uptown neighborhood.

FOCUS AREAS



Based on the results of the neighborhood analysis, three case study areas were selected for design interventions. These areas exhibit high potential for activating Uptown's public realm, improving its connectivity, and increasing its livability and economic vitality.

1. HEART OF UPTOWN
2. ROY ST. CORRIDOR
3. SEATTLE CENTER

HEART OF UPTOWN: Existing Conditions



Expanding the Heart of Uptown south to Thomas Street would allow the retail core to better interface with Seattle Center and capture visitors traveling east and west along the proposed Thomas Street Greenway. Under this scenario, Key Arena Plaza could also serve as a central public space for the Uptown community.

EXISTING OPPORTUNITIES



Harrison Street at 2nd Ave W



Thomas Street Pedestrian Overpass

EXISTING OPPORTUNITIES

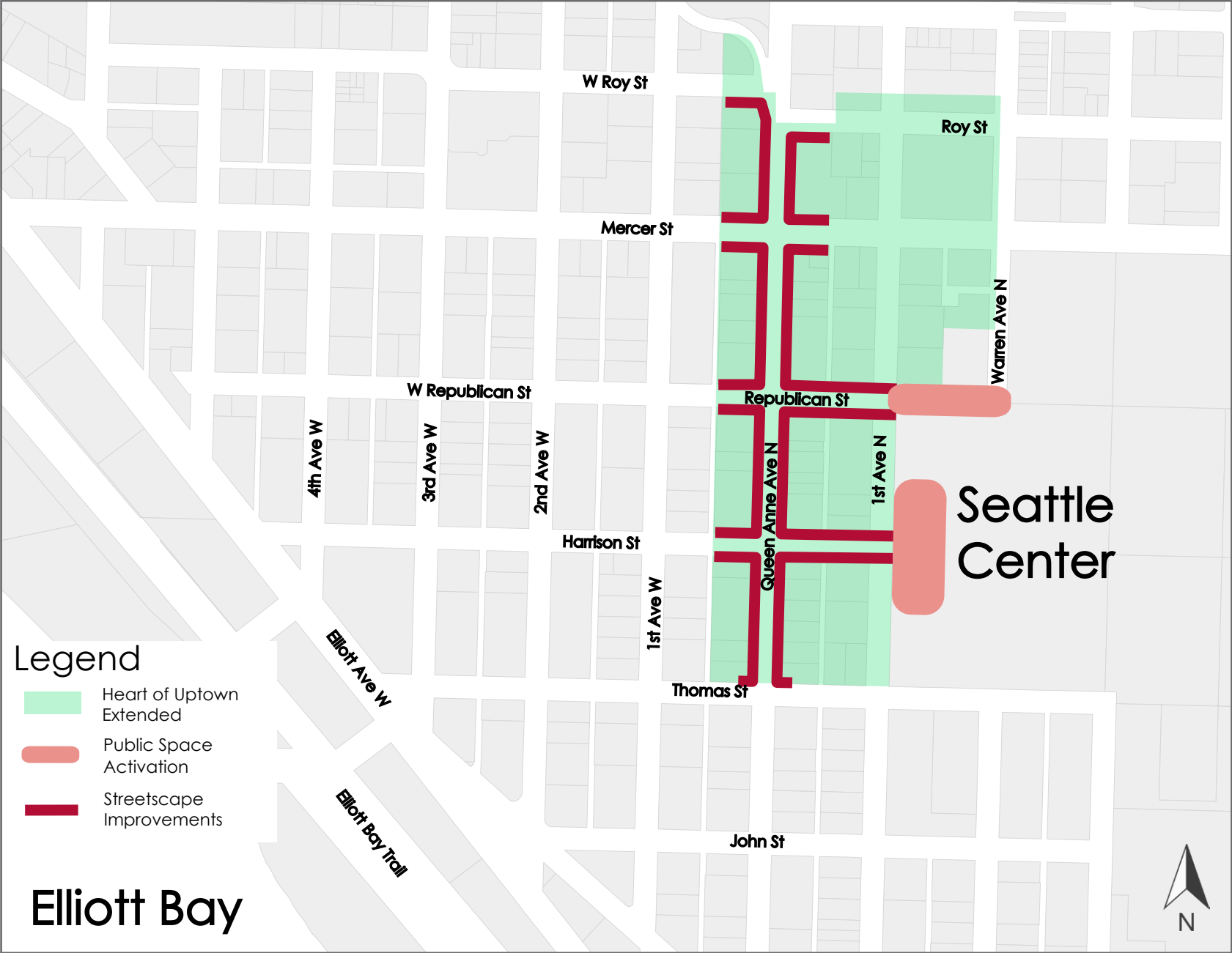


Republican Street at Warren Ave N



Key Arena Plaza

SHORT TERM STRATEGIES



PUBLIC SPACE ACTIVATION



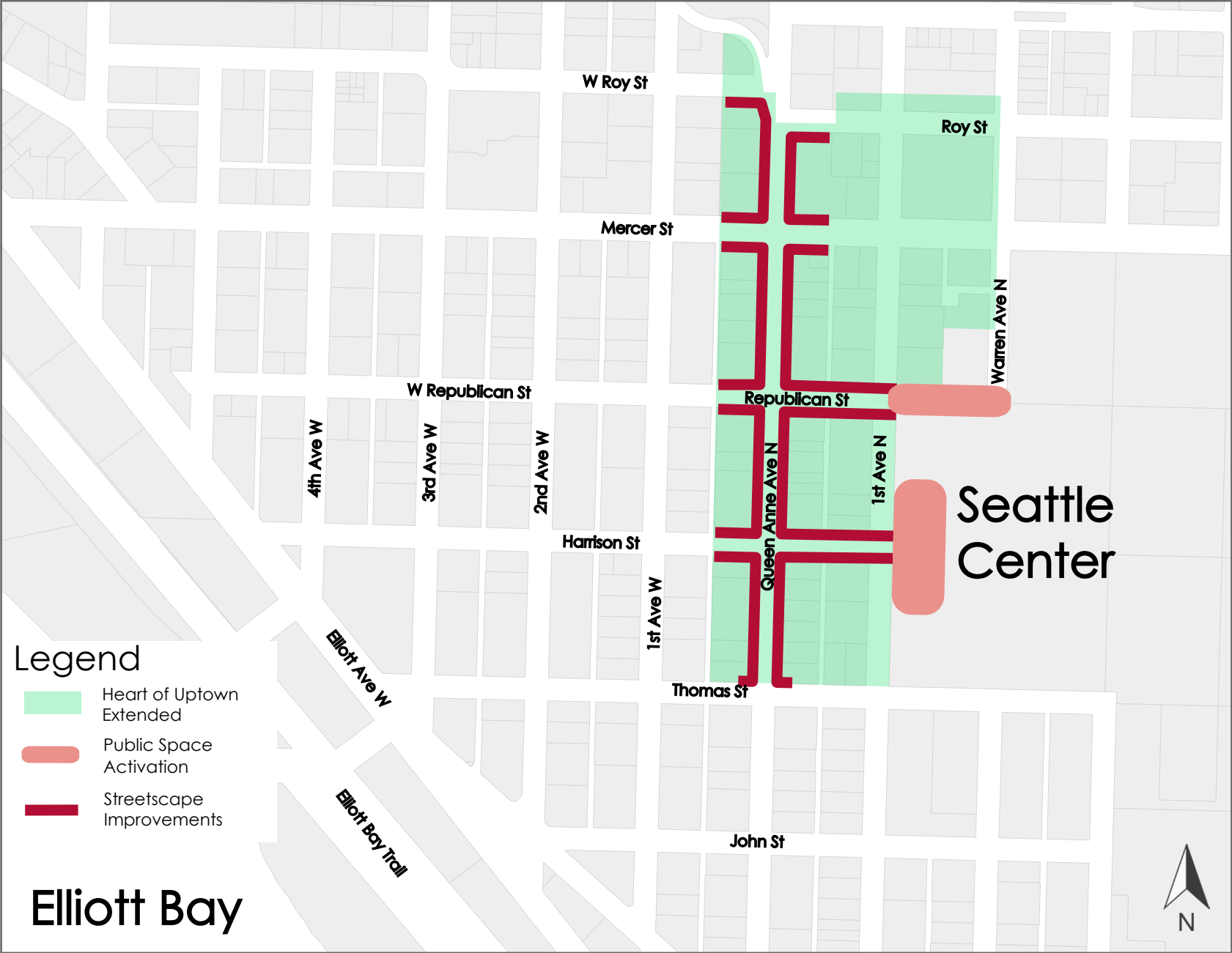
Moonlight Movie Screening - Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia

PUBLIC SPACE ACTIVATION



Yoga - Open Street Festival, Minneapolis

SHORT TERM STRATEGIES



STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS



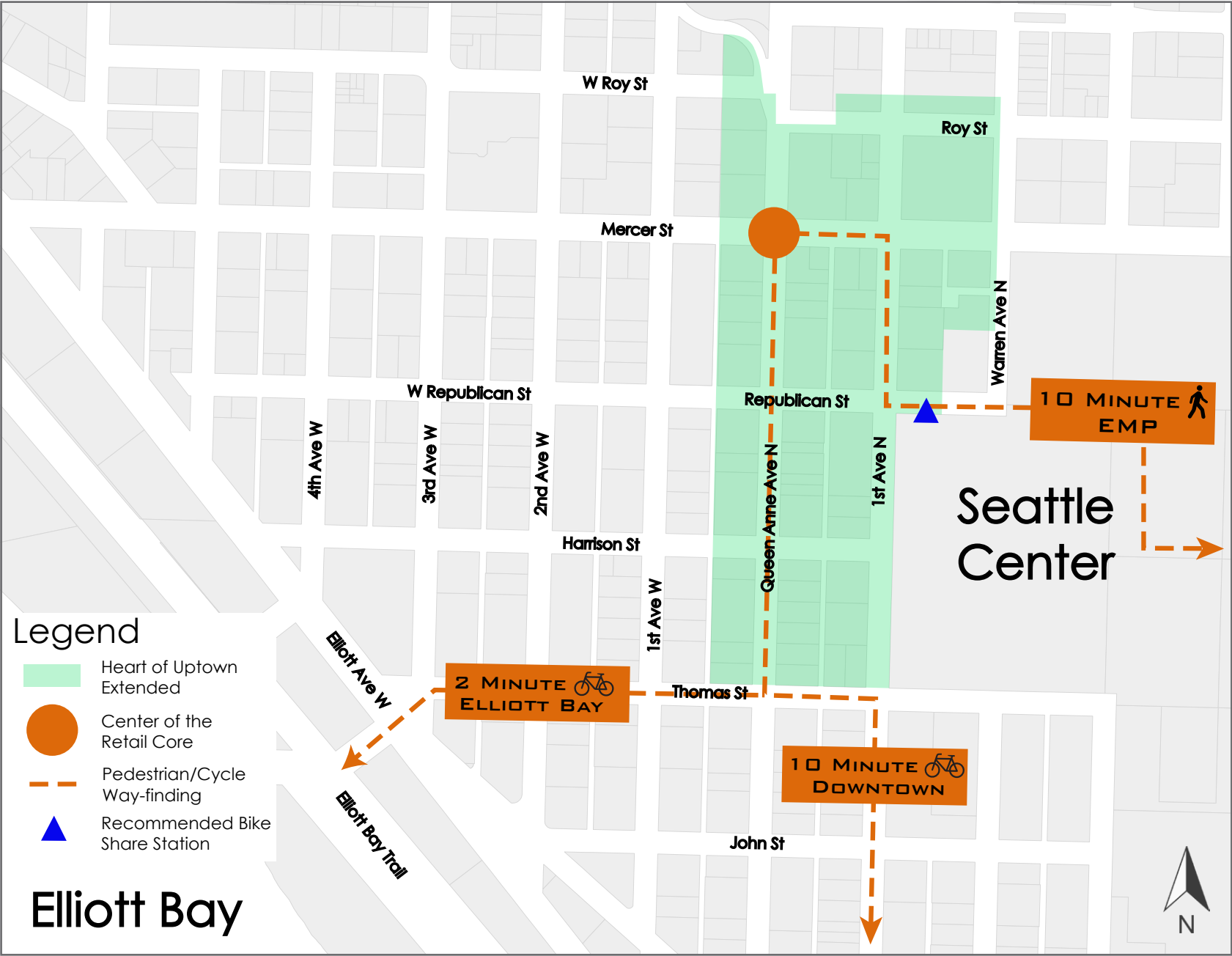
Montana Bar Parklet - Capitol Hill, Seattle

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS



Pole Banner - University District

SHORT TERM STRATEGIES

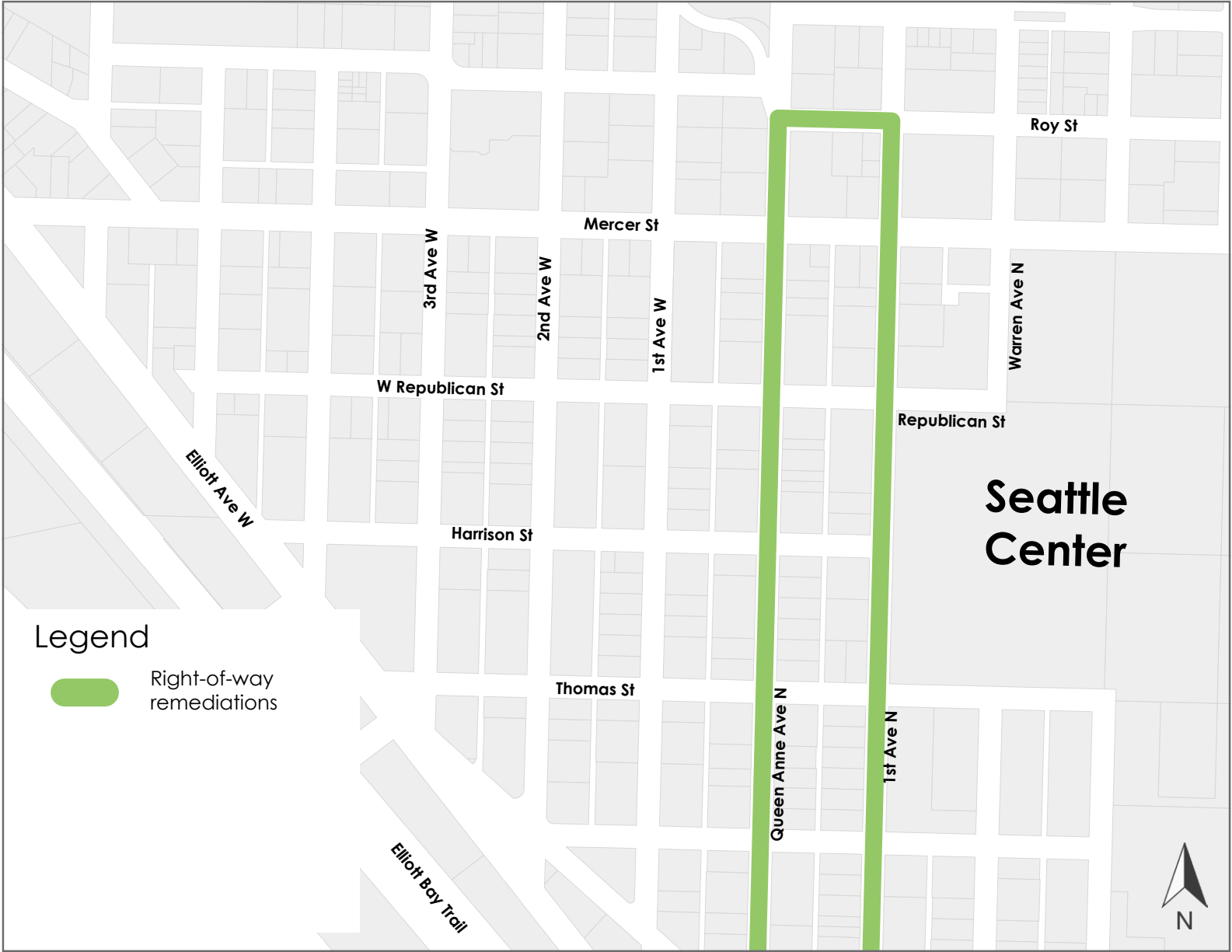


WAYFINDING



“Legible London” Wayfinding Map - London

LONG TERM STRATEGIES



Several changes to the right-of-way are recommended for the green areas. Converting Queen Anne Ave N and 1st Ave N into two-way streets will have a traffic calming effect, improving safety. It should also increase patronage of retail locations.

CYCLE TRACKS



Cycle track in University District, Seattle

Cycle tracks and additional bicycle parking on these streets will improve safety, compliment the bike-share system, and bring more customers to Uptown's retail locations.

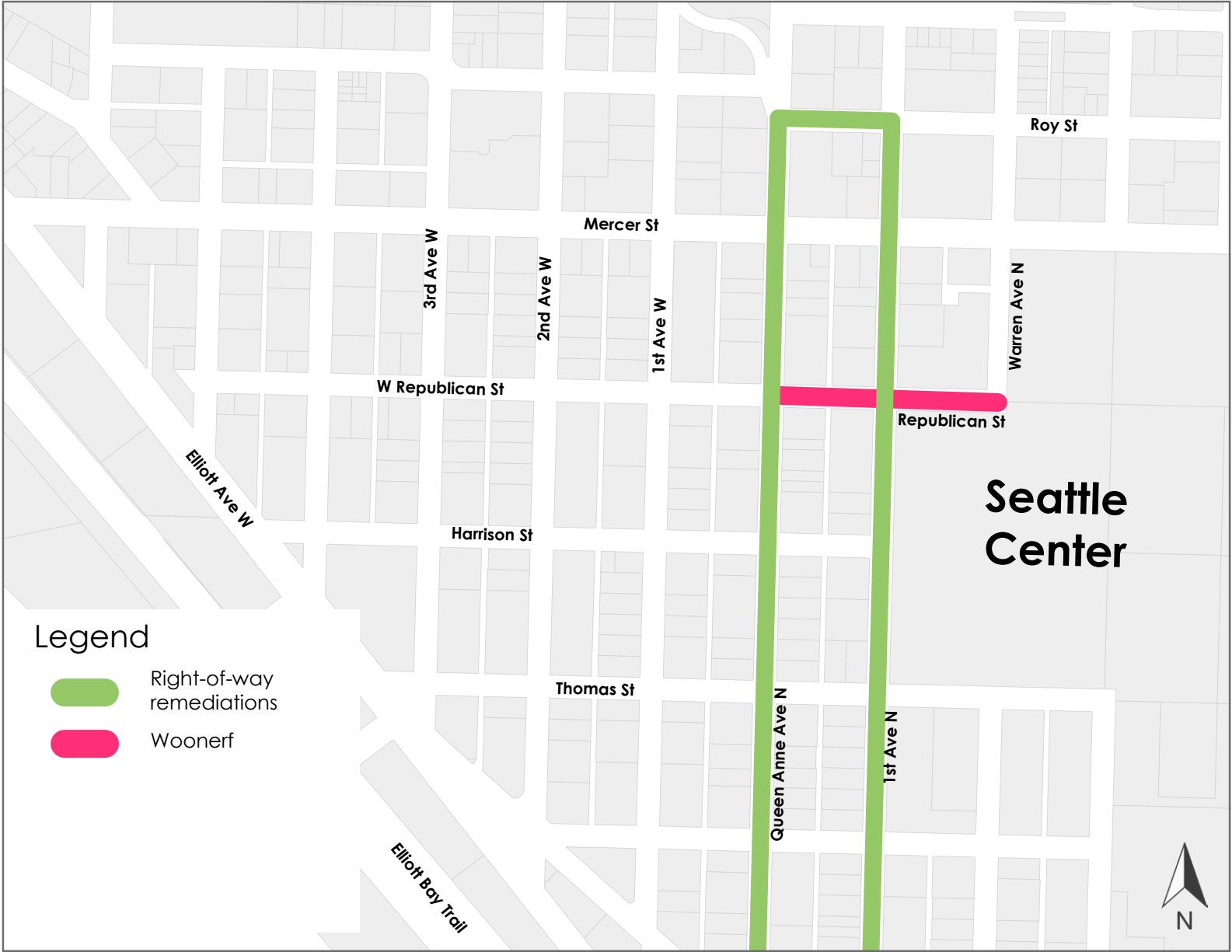
CURB EXTENSIONS



Curb Extension in Long Beach, CA

Curb extensions also have a traffic calming effect, and they improve the safety of pedestrians crossing at intersections by decreasing curb-to-curb distances and improving visibility. They would also provide more sidewalk space to accommodate active environments like these sidewalk cafes in Long Beach.

LONG TERM STRATEGIES



We recommend converting Republican St. into a woonerf between Queen Anne Ave N and Warren Avenue N.

WOONERF



Woonerf in Malmo, Sweden

A woonerf, like this one in Sweden, will enhance pedestrian and cycling experiences by creating a more open and accessible space. It will also strengthen the character of neighborhood events like those mentioned earlier, and increase activity between the Heart of Uptown and Seattle Center.

LONG TERM STRATEGIES



Uptown needs a greater concentration of housing and retail. Areas where new multi-family housing should be concentrated are shown in blue, while new retail should be in the orange areas at the street level. Concentrating Uptown's retail locations to a smaller area and along Seattle Center's edge will create a more compelling destination and draw more visitors from the campus. These retail locations will be supported by the increased housing density.

GROUND-FLOOR RESIDENTIAL

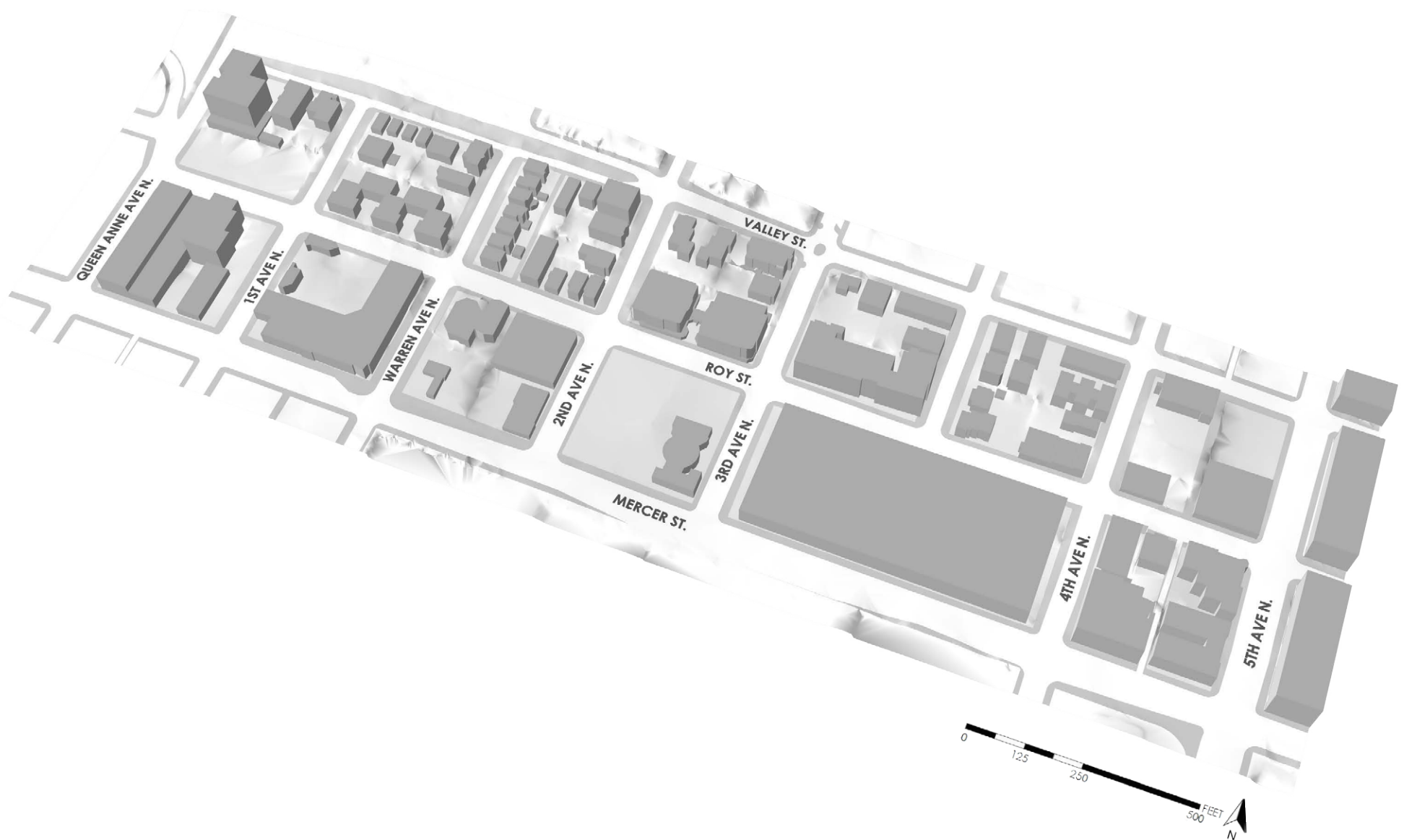


Alley 24's ground-floor residential units in Seattle's Cascade neighborhood

Alley24 in Seattle's Cascade neighborhood is a great example of ground-related housing. These changes will create a more pedestrian- and bike-friendly environment for a more vibrant retail core that will draw visitors from Seattle Center and elsewhere.

1. HEART OF UPTOWN
2. ROY ST. CORRIDOR
3. SEATTLE CENTER

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Existing Condition



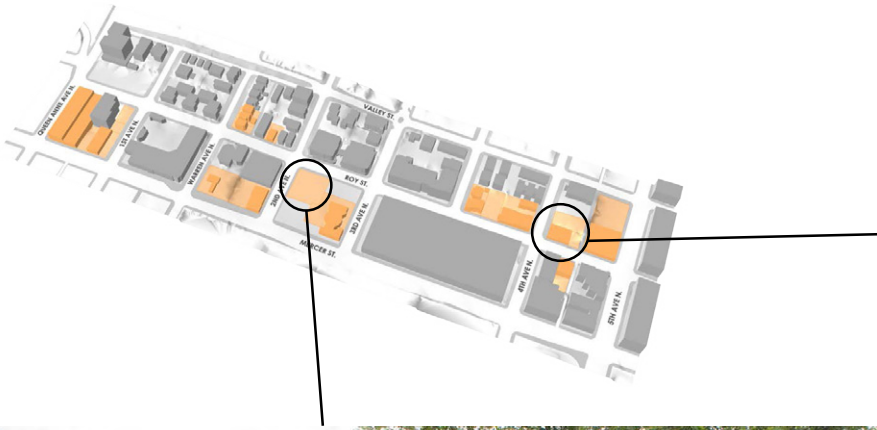
Roy St. is a quieter arterial than Mercer St. The corridor between Queen Anne Ave and 5th Ave N. currently includes a variety of land uses: mixed use, multi-family, hospitality, grocery, and dining. The recent conversation of Roy St.'s traffic pattern from one-way to two-way improves the potential for different types of development.

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Redevelopable Parcels

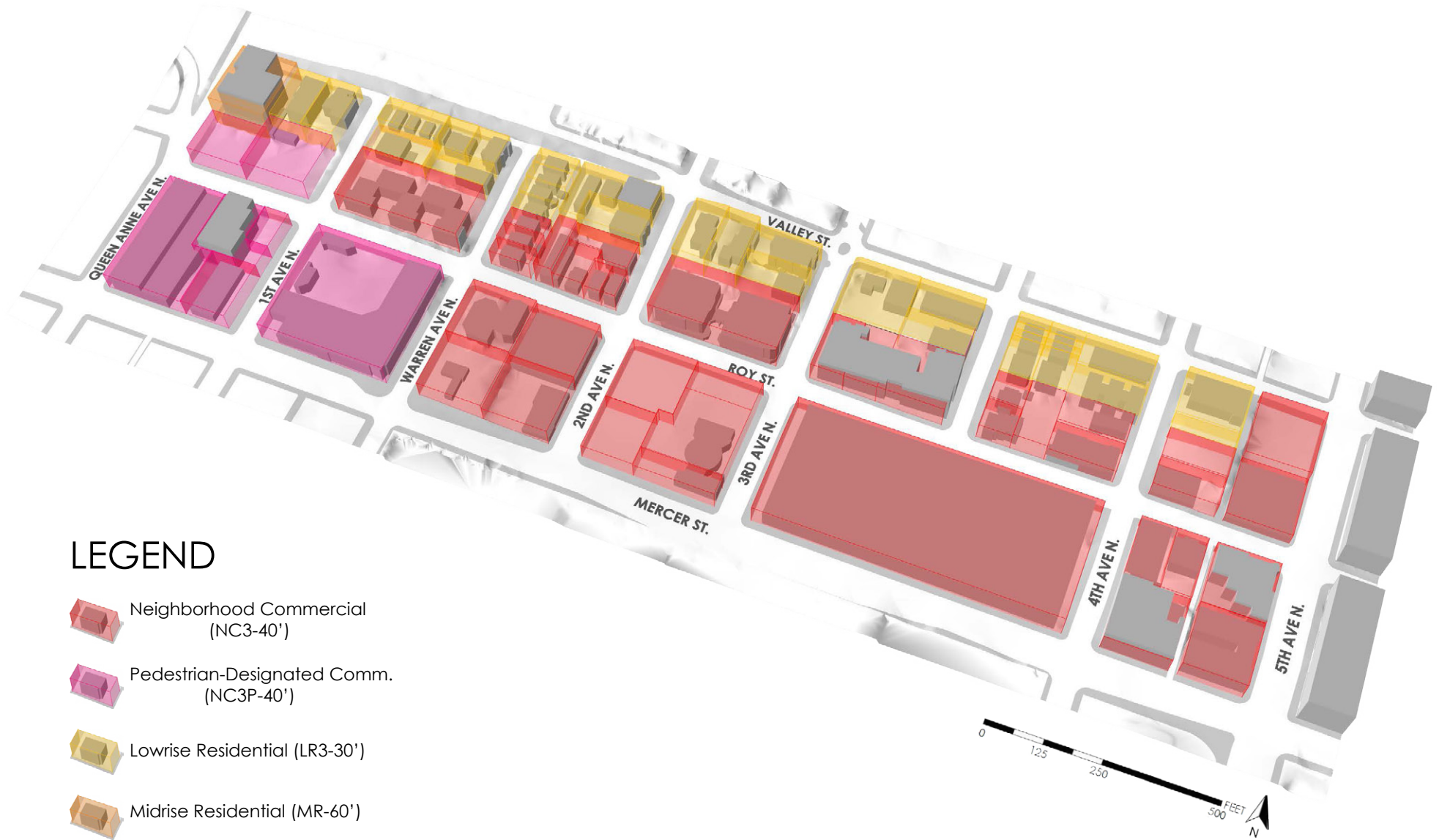


The Seattle DPD's Uptown Background Report (2014) highlights approximately 15 parcels with the potential for redevelopment. This analysis is based on site value and estimated redevelopment costs, not actual owner preferences or current market conditions.

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Examples

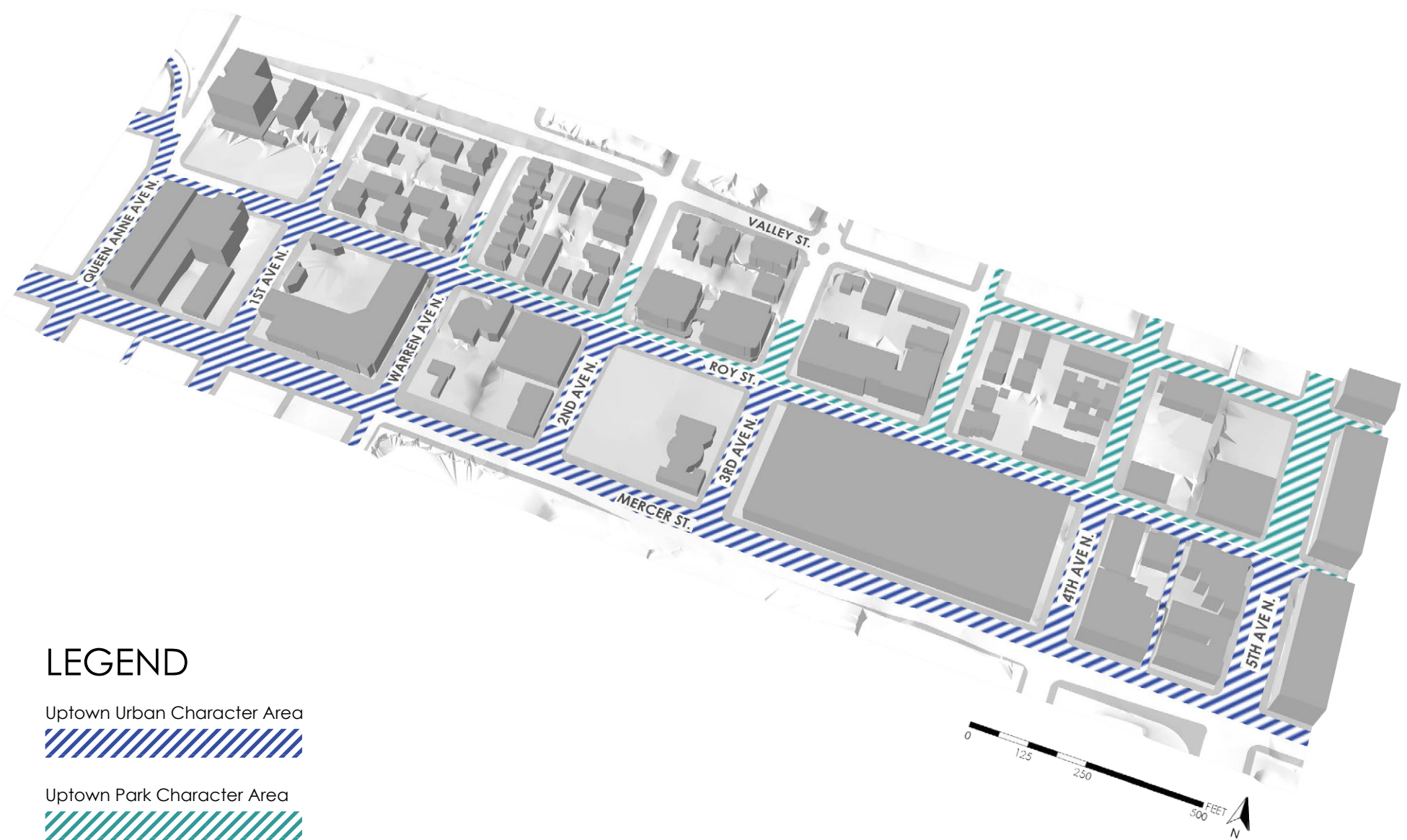


ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Current Zoning - Max. Height Limit



This diagram shows current zoning and height limits in the Roy Street Corridor. Along Roy Street itself, the zoning is Neighborhood Commercial with 40' height limits. As we move up the hill it is Low Rise Residential 3 with 30' height limits. Closer to the "Heart of Uptown" in the southwestern corner of the corridor is a pedestrian designated commercial zone.

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Neighborhood Character



LEGEND

Uptown Urban Character Area

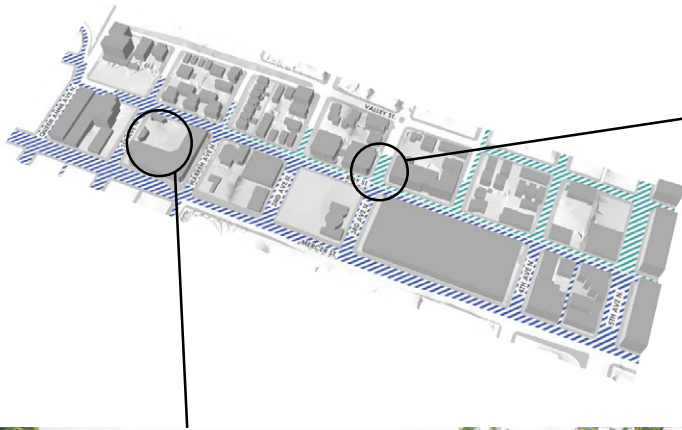


Uptown Park Character Area



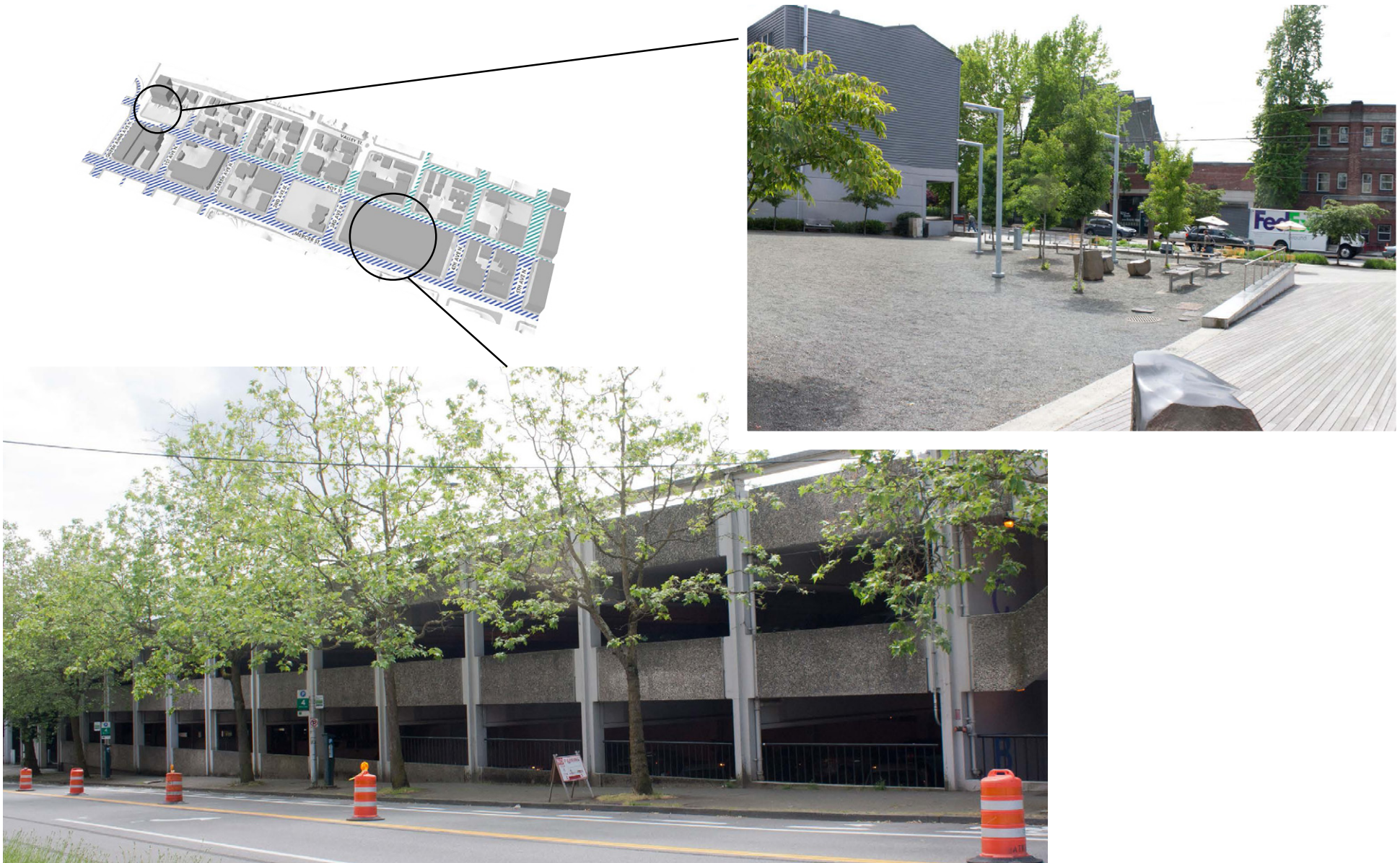
As defined by a January 2014 DPD background report, the Roy Street Corridor has been divided into two neighborhood level districts. To the north is “Uptown Park” an area with a high concentration of 1920s and 30s brick apartment buildings that, “should be preserved and serve as character cues for the design of new development.” The south side of Roy Street is “Uptown Urban,” an area comprised of mostly nonresidential uses including civic, cultural, and commercial uses.

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Neighborhood Character



The north side has many pedestrian attractions, while on the south side of the street, the street is merely a means for vehicles to enter and exit parking lots as seen in the entrance to above ground parking at Metropolitan Market. The image on the right demonstrates how the past has influenced newer development. Here we see the Roy Street Apartments built in 1948 adjacent to a mixed use development built in 2000.

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Opportunities



This slide shows two areas of opportunity in the Roy Street Corridor. Counterbalance Park, currently underutilized by daytime users will hopefully become activated through our alternatives. Second is the Seattle Center's Mercer Garage, taking up two city blocks, the garage effectively deactivates the street along Roy Street. All three of our alternatives contain different proposals in redesigning the Mercer Garage.

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Development Concepts



Seattle Center-Focused



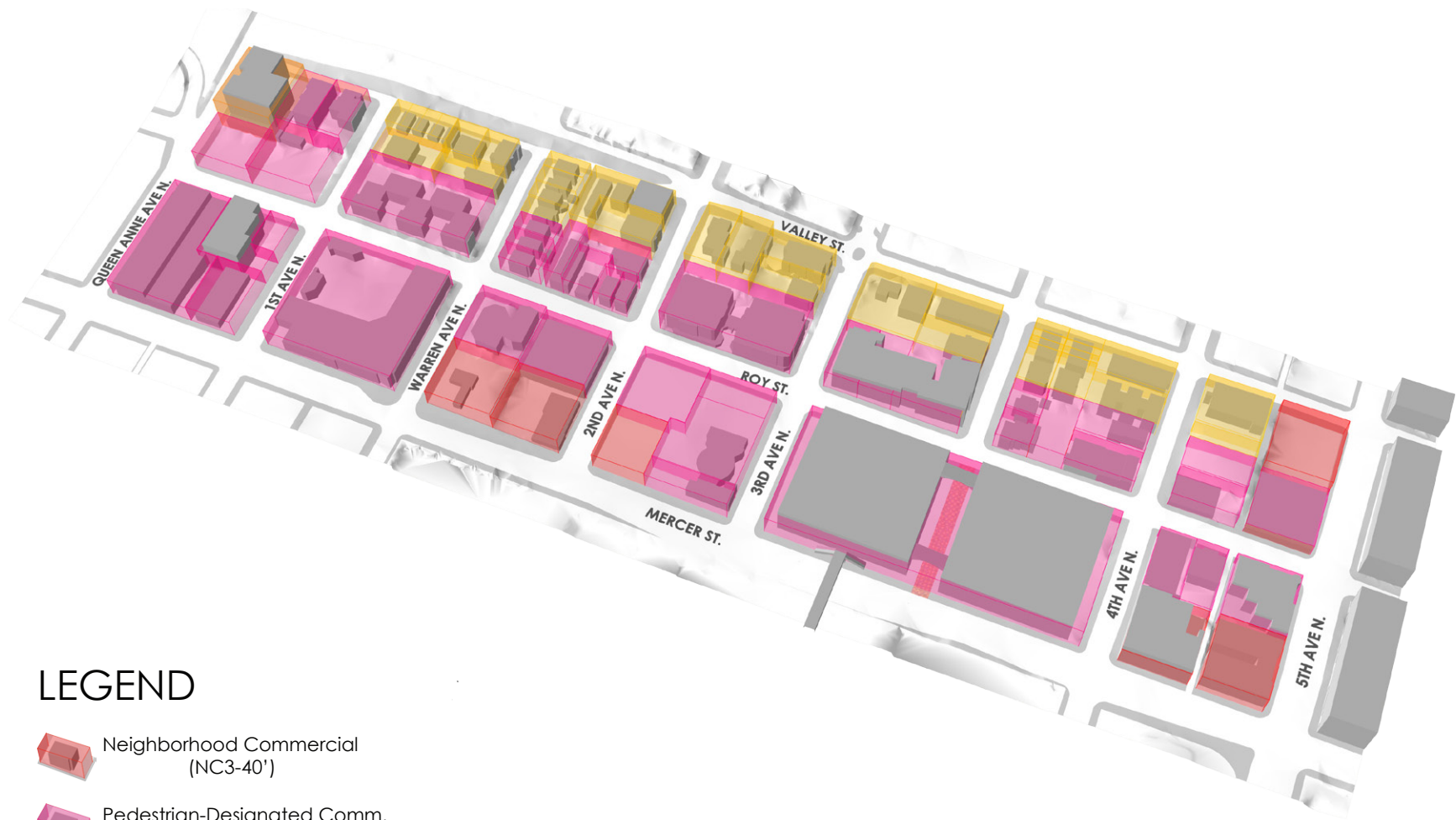
Community



Destination

Our three design alternatives for the Roy St. corridor include: Seattle Center Focused, Community Based, and Destination Based alternatives. These alternatives should be viewed as concepts or themes that will guide future development along the corridor. Our intention is for these themes to serve as discussion points for the urban design framework process. Each of these three alternatives will address possible changes to the Mercer Garage.

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Seattle Center-Focused

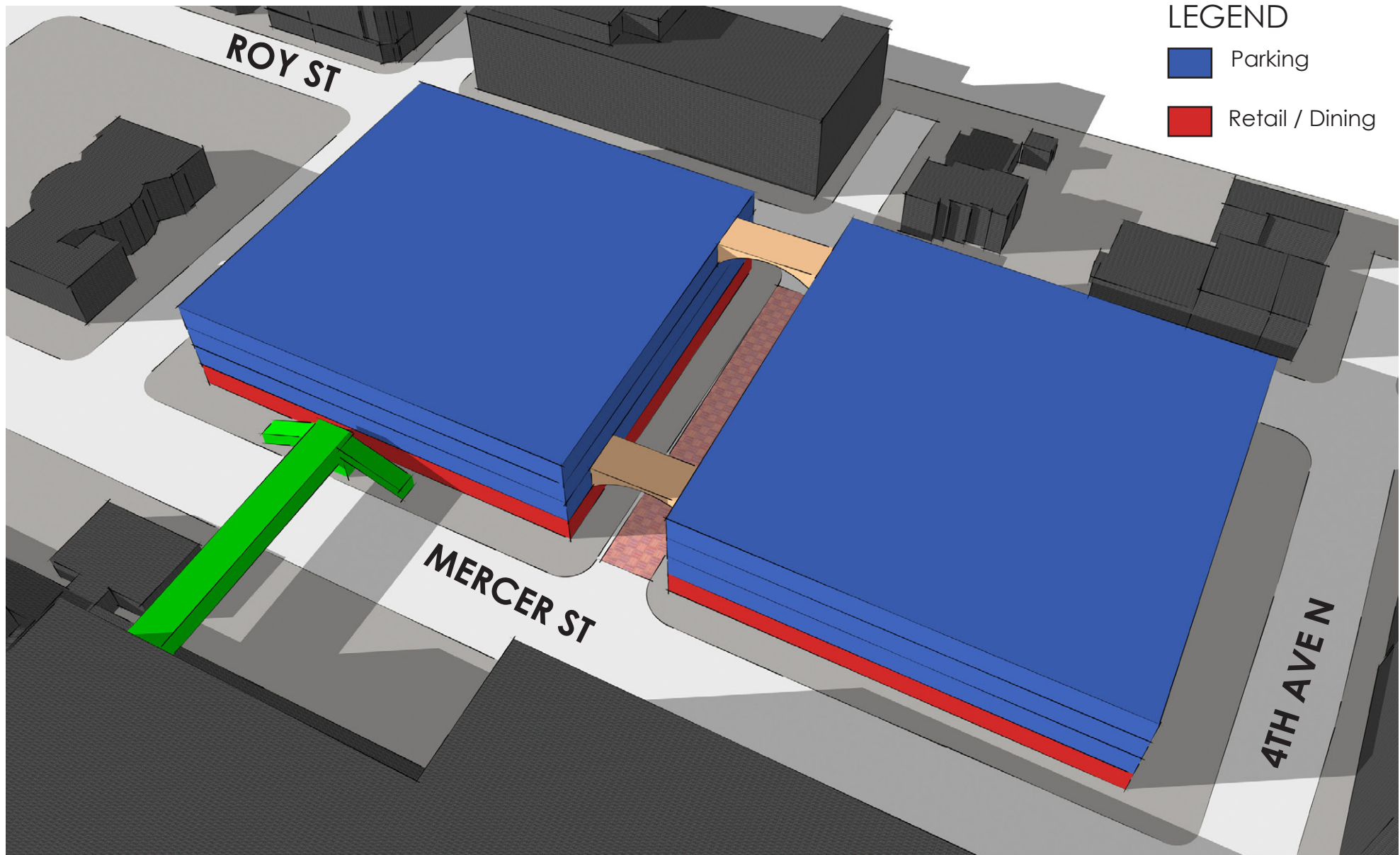


LEGEND

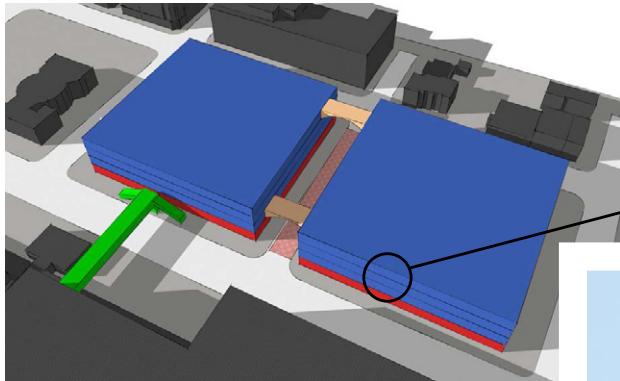
-  Neighborhood Commercial (NC3-40')
-  Pedestrian-Designated Comm. (NC3P-40')
-  Lowrise Residential (LR3-30')
-  Midrise Residential (MR-60')

Located one block north of the Seattle Center, the Roy Street Corridor would take advantage of proximity to the Seattle Center in future development. It would be the Uptown neighborhood extension to the Seattle Center. New development along Roy Street would tailor development to Seattle Center uses such as hotels and restaurants. This alternative would add a pedestrian designated zone to the zoning in the corridor.

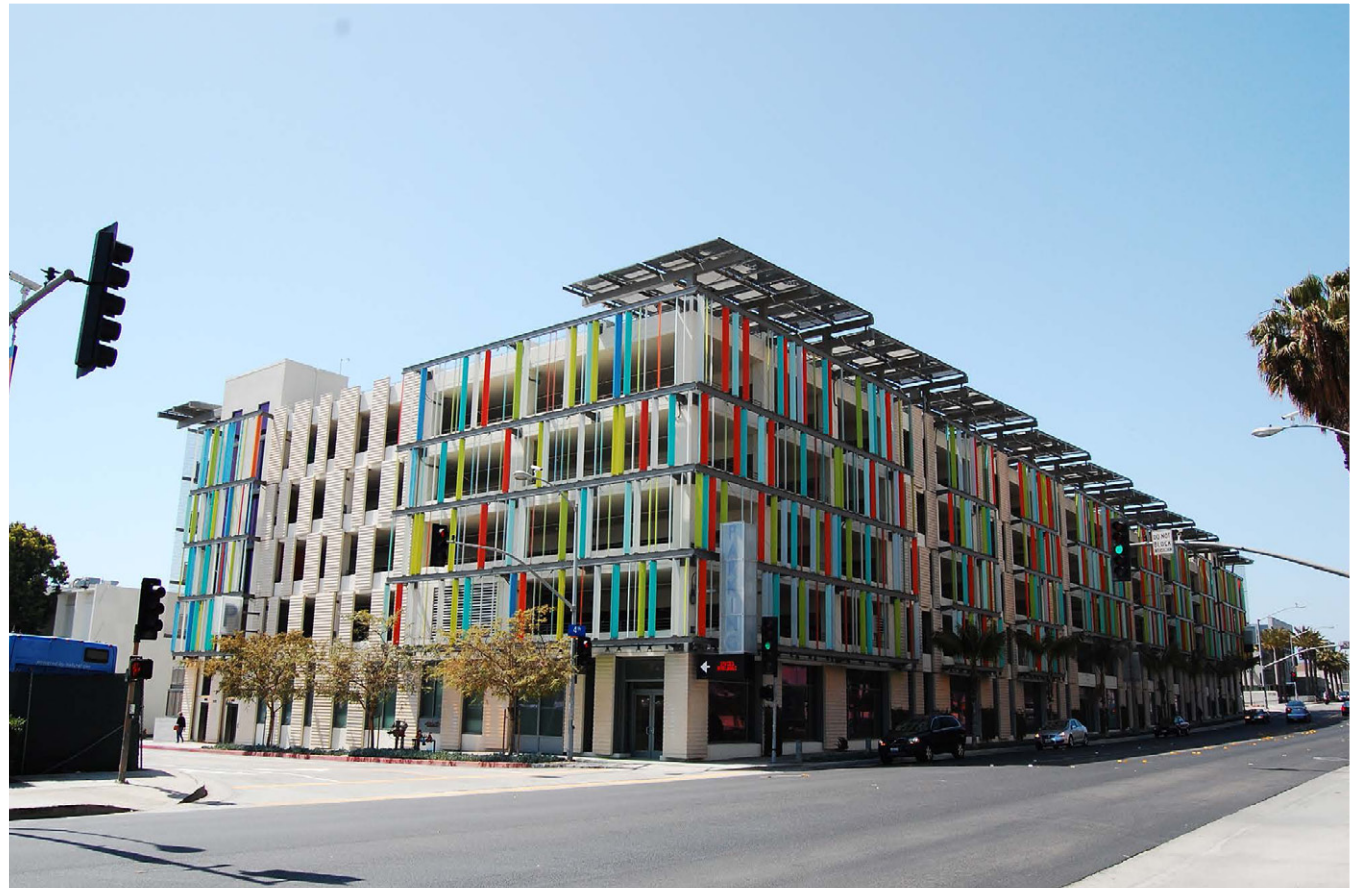
ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Seattle Center-Focused



Under this alternative, the garage would be rebuilt to become a mixed use parking and retail structure. Recognizing the need for parking at the Seattle Center, the parking capacity would remain at approximately 75% of existing capacity. Highlighted in red is commercial space at ground level, and highlighted in blue are parking levels above.

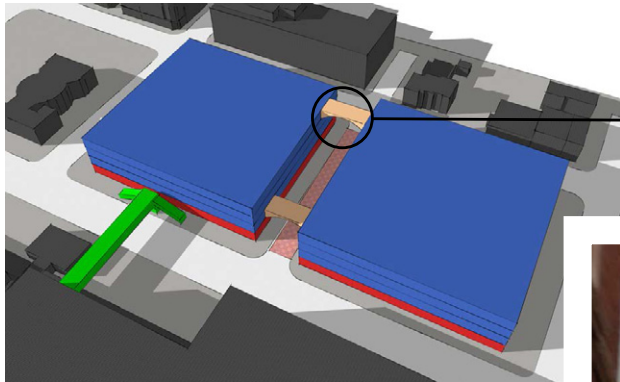


Ground Floor Retail and Dining



Santa Monica Civic Center Parking Garage

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Seattle Center-Focused

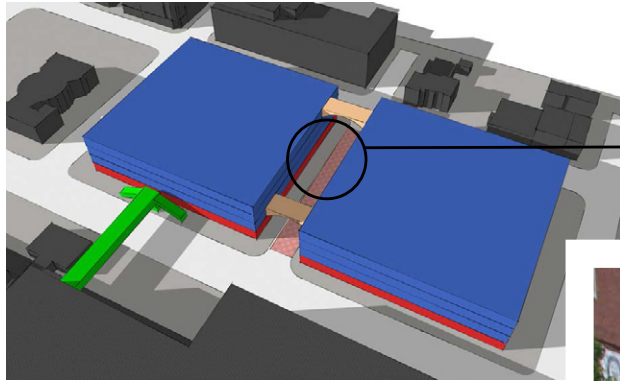


Skybridge Connection



London, England

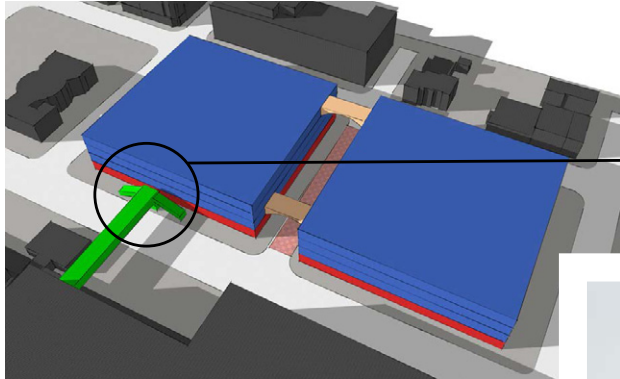
ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Seattle Center-Focused



Pedestrian-Oriented Street



City of Salem, MA

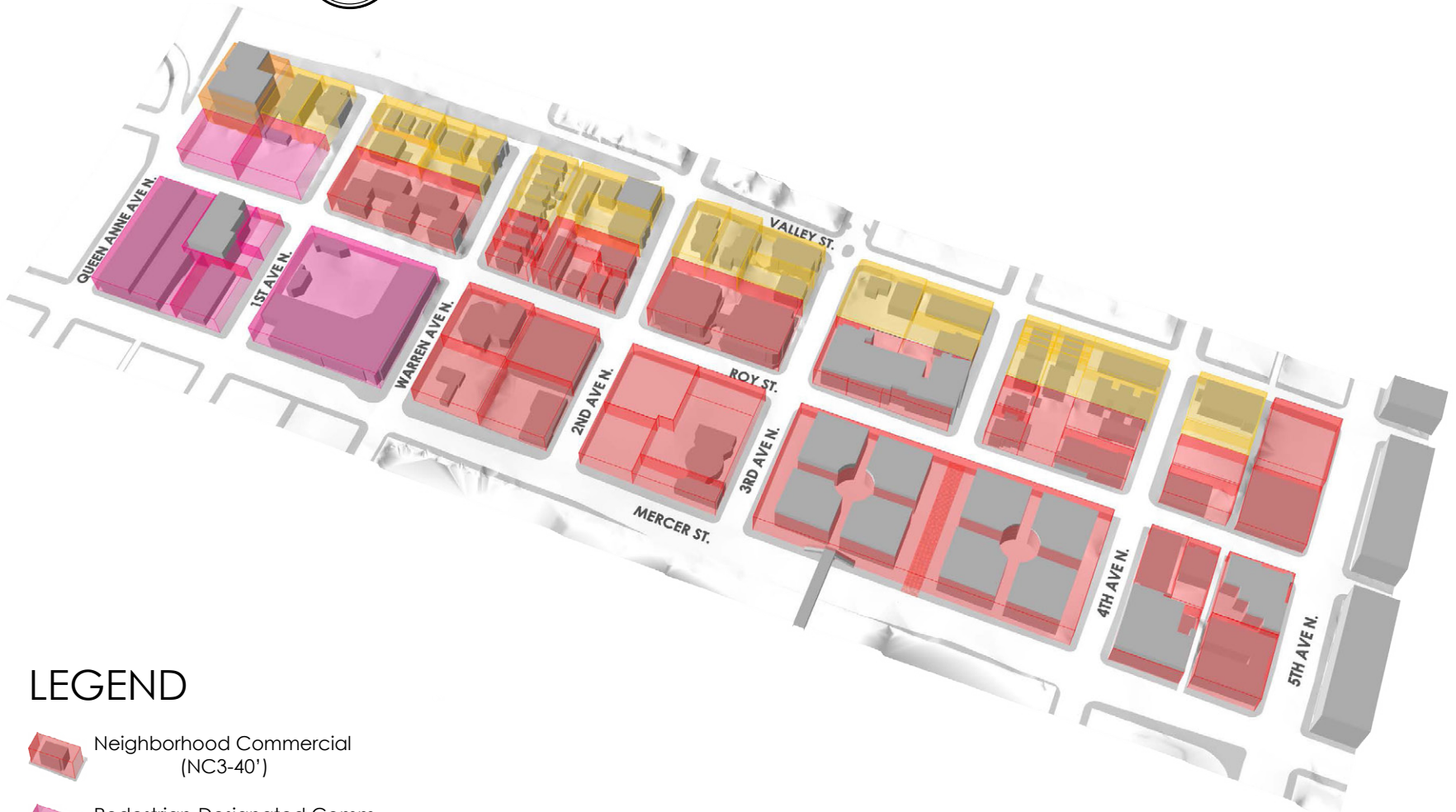


Detached Pedestrian Overpass



Shanghai, China

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Community

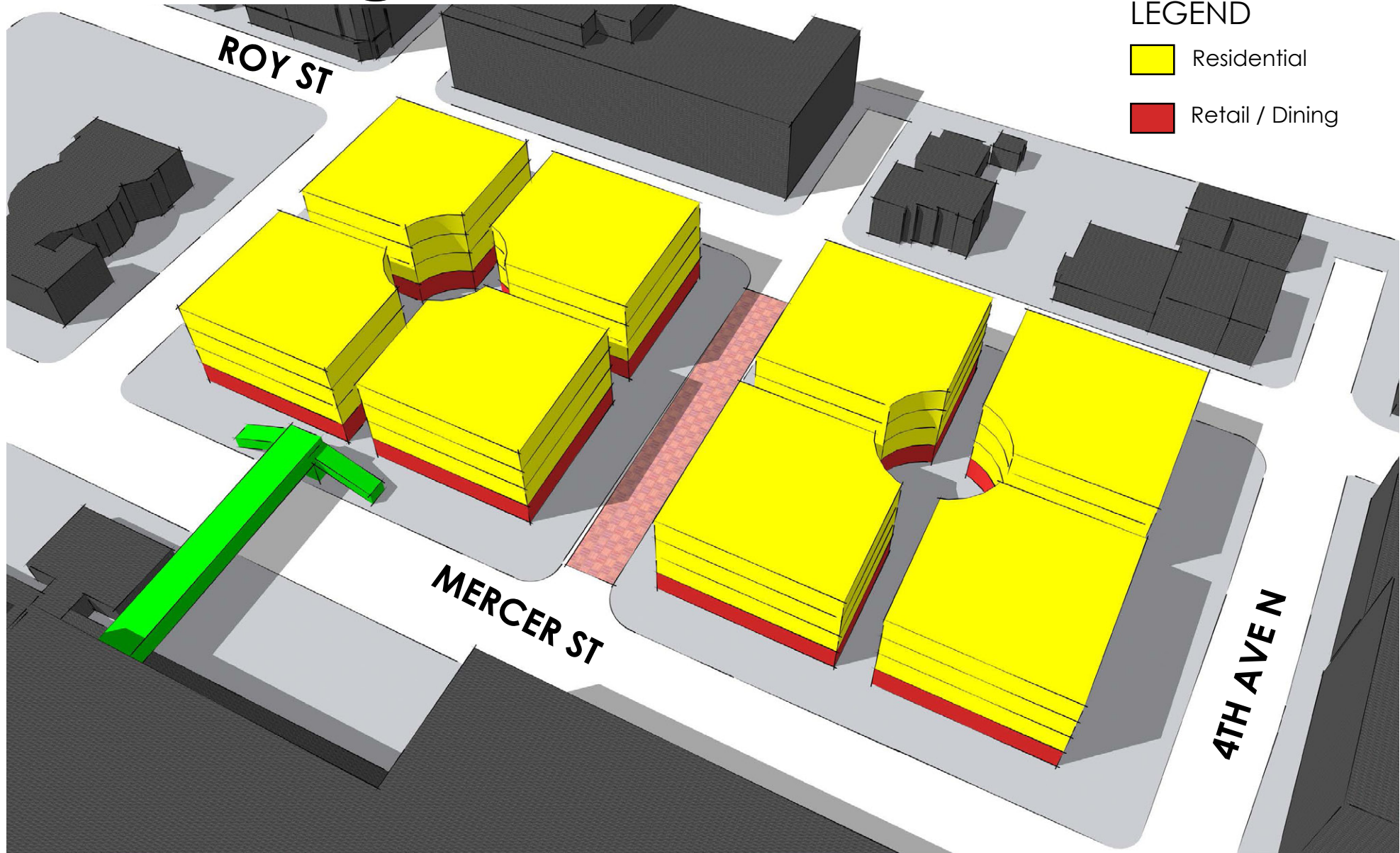


LEGEND

-  Neighborhood Commercial (NC3-40')
-  Pedestrian-Designated Comm. (NC3P-40')
-  Lowrise Residential (LR3-30')
-  Midrise Residential (MR-60')

The second alternative is a Community Based street with future development prioritizing the needs of local residents and businesses. Residential land uses will be prioritized to create a quieter urban atmosphere. Nonresidential uses will center on providing services for nearby residents, businesses, and visitors to the neighborhood. The building heights would remain at four stories. With an emphasis on residential construction, we recommend the inclusion of ground related housing along the arterial.

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Community



Under this alternative, the garage would be redeveloped to become a mixed use development with commercial uses at ground level and multifamily residential above. Highlighted in red is commercial space at ground level, and highlighted in yellow are residential levels above.

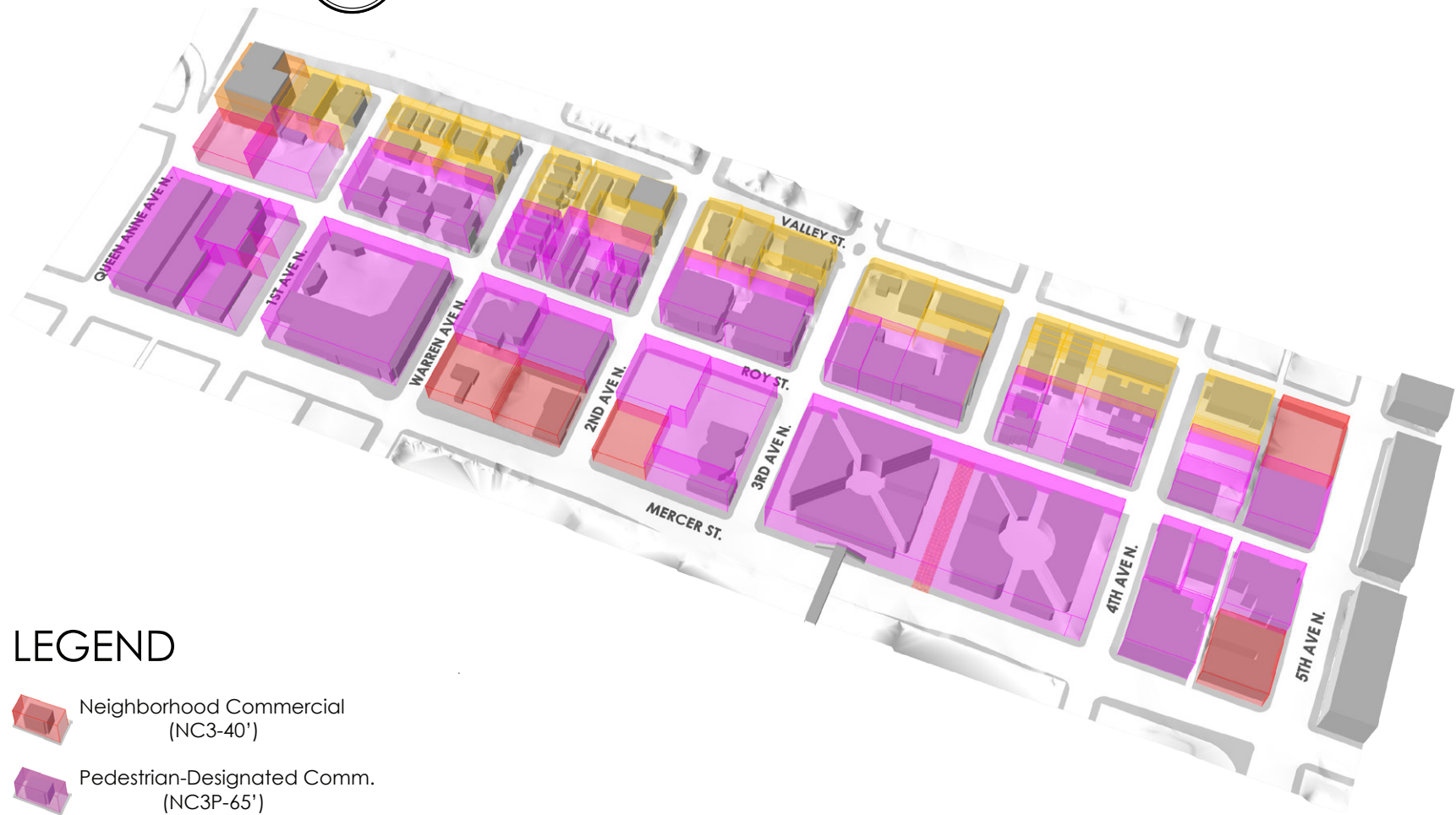


Mixed-Use Development.







Queen Anne Sweetbrier Apartment

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Destination

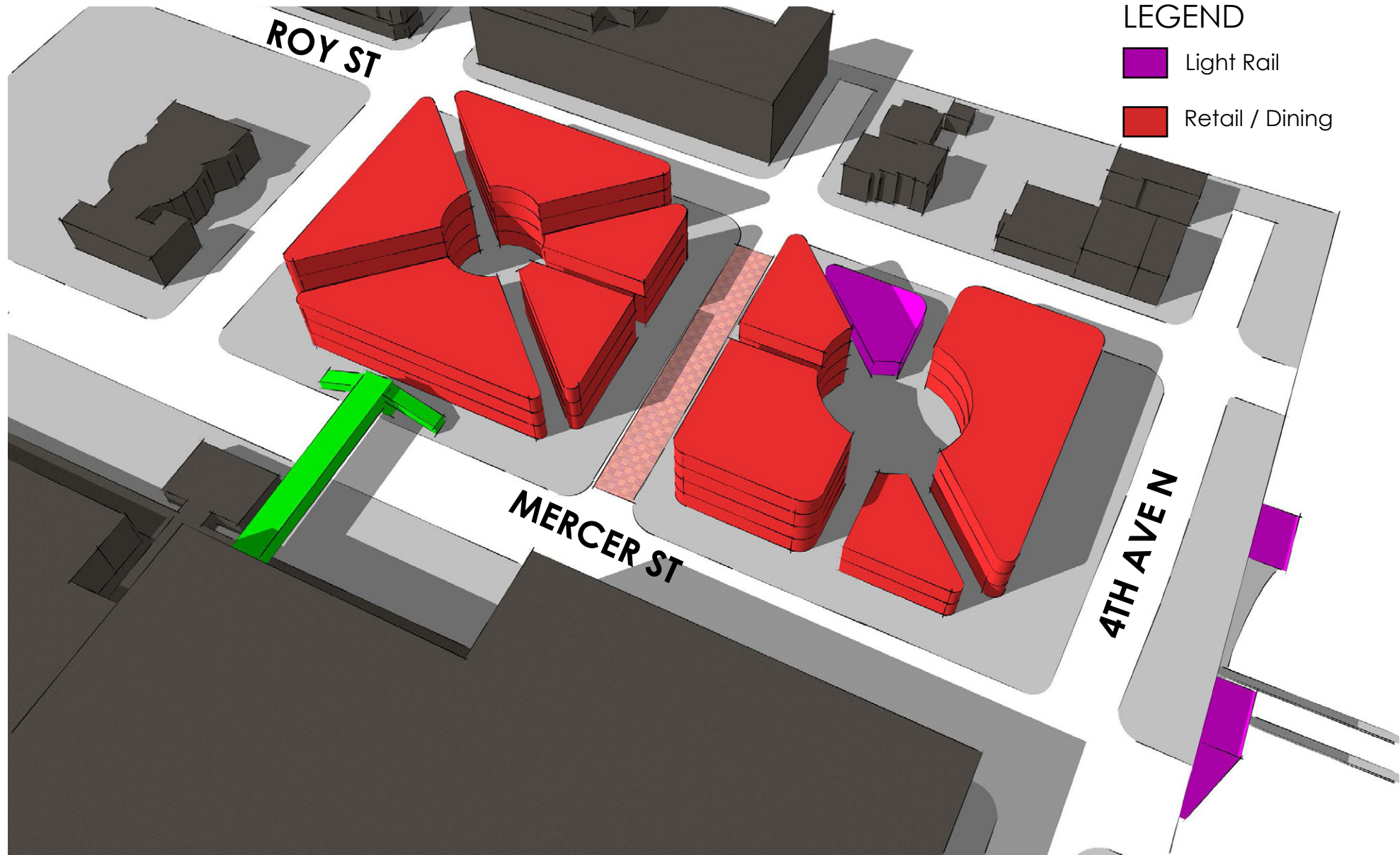


LEGEND

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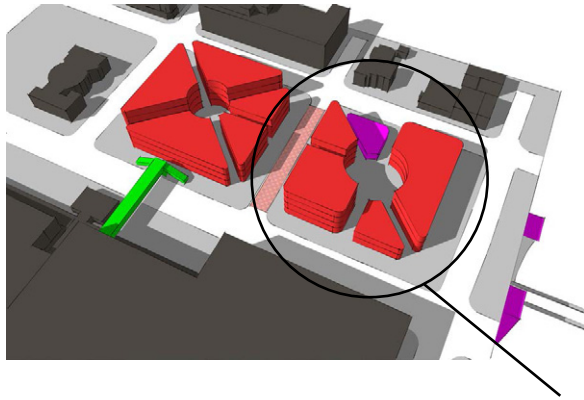
This alternative seeks to turn the Roy Street Corridor into a dining and retail destination, attracting users from other parts of the city and region. A greater emphasis will be placed on creating a more urban feel through a combination of higher FAR and building height allowances from 40' to 65'. We envision the development of five over two development as seen in other portions of the city.

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Destination



Under this alternative, the parking garage is eliminated and turned into mixed use development as seen here. Areas in red indicate possible future retail and dining development, and areas in purple make provisions for a future light rail station.

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Destination



Emphasize Urban Feel

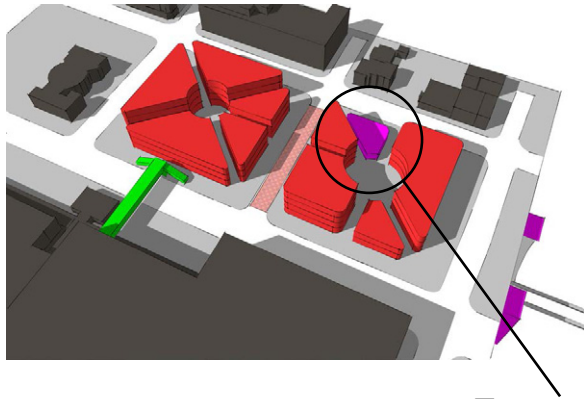


Helsinki, Finland



Rendering

ROY ST. CORRIDOR: Destination



Transit Destination



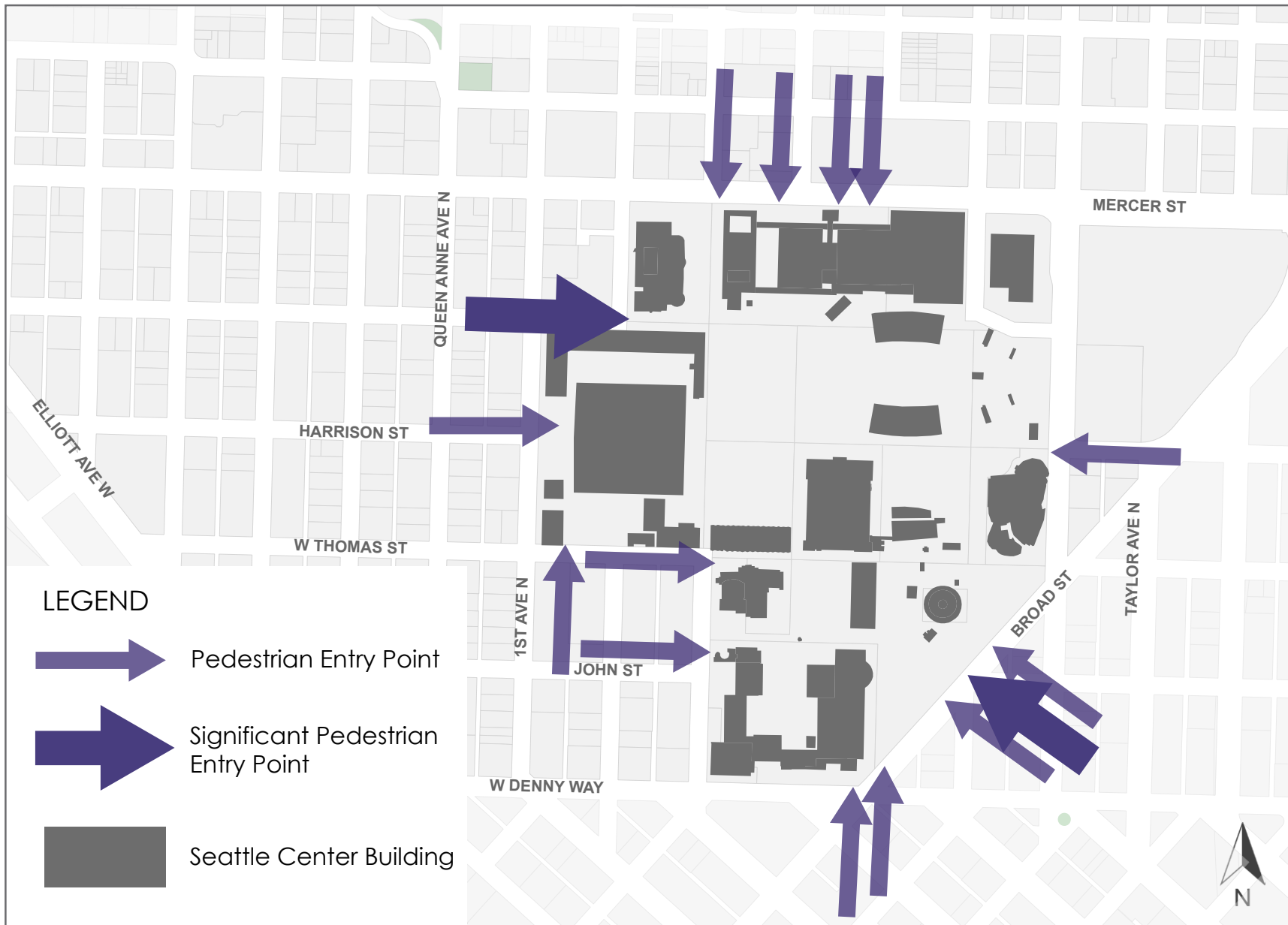
New York City Subway



Pioneer Square Station, Seattle, Washington

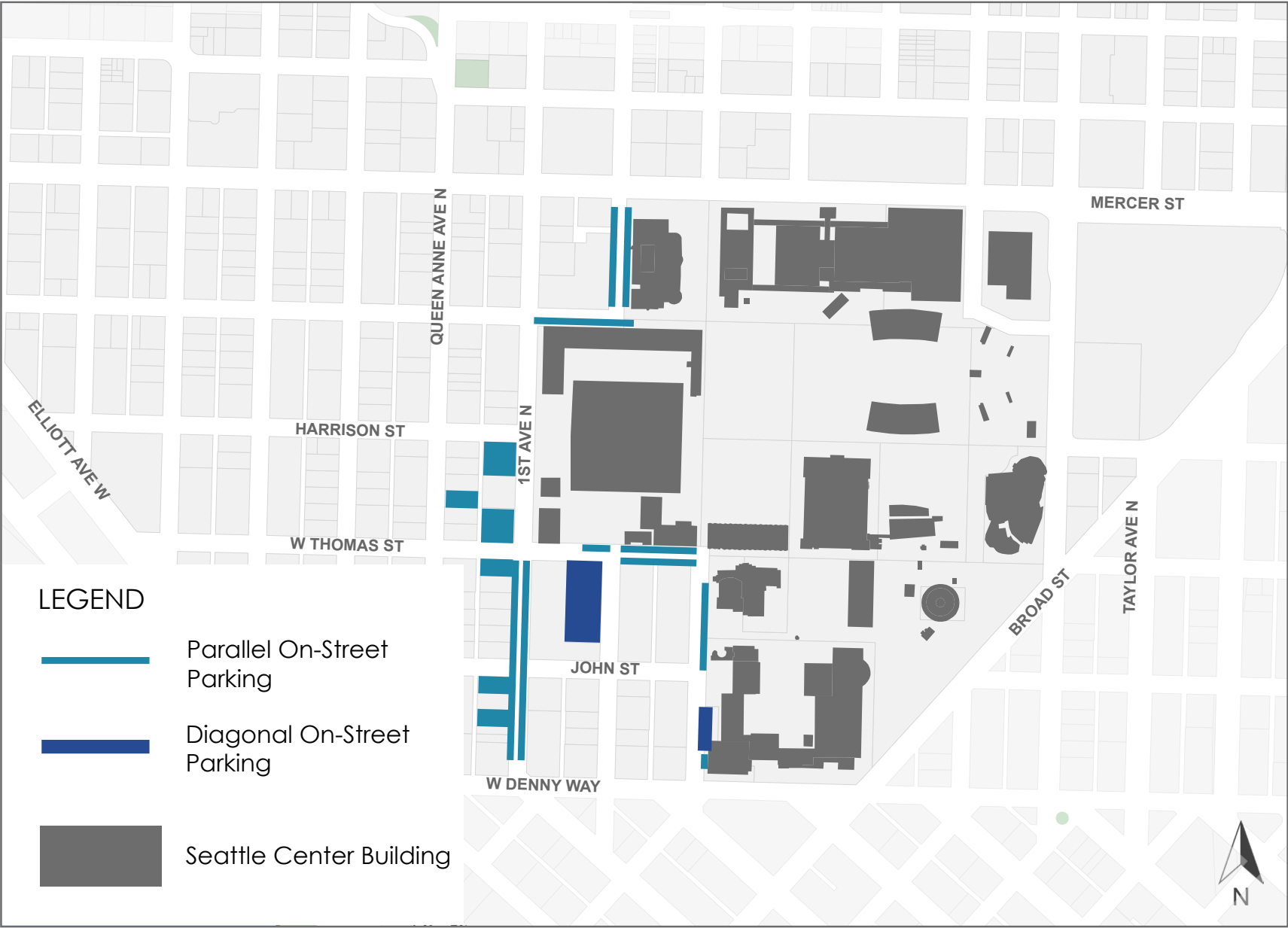
1. HEART OF UPTOWN
2. ROY ST. CORRIDOR
3. SEATTLE CENTER

EXISTING: Entry Points

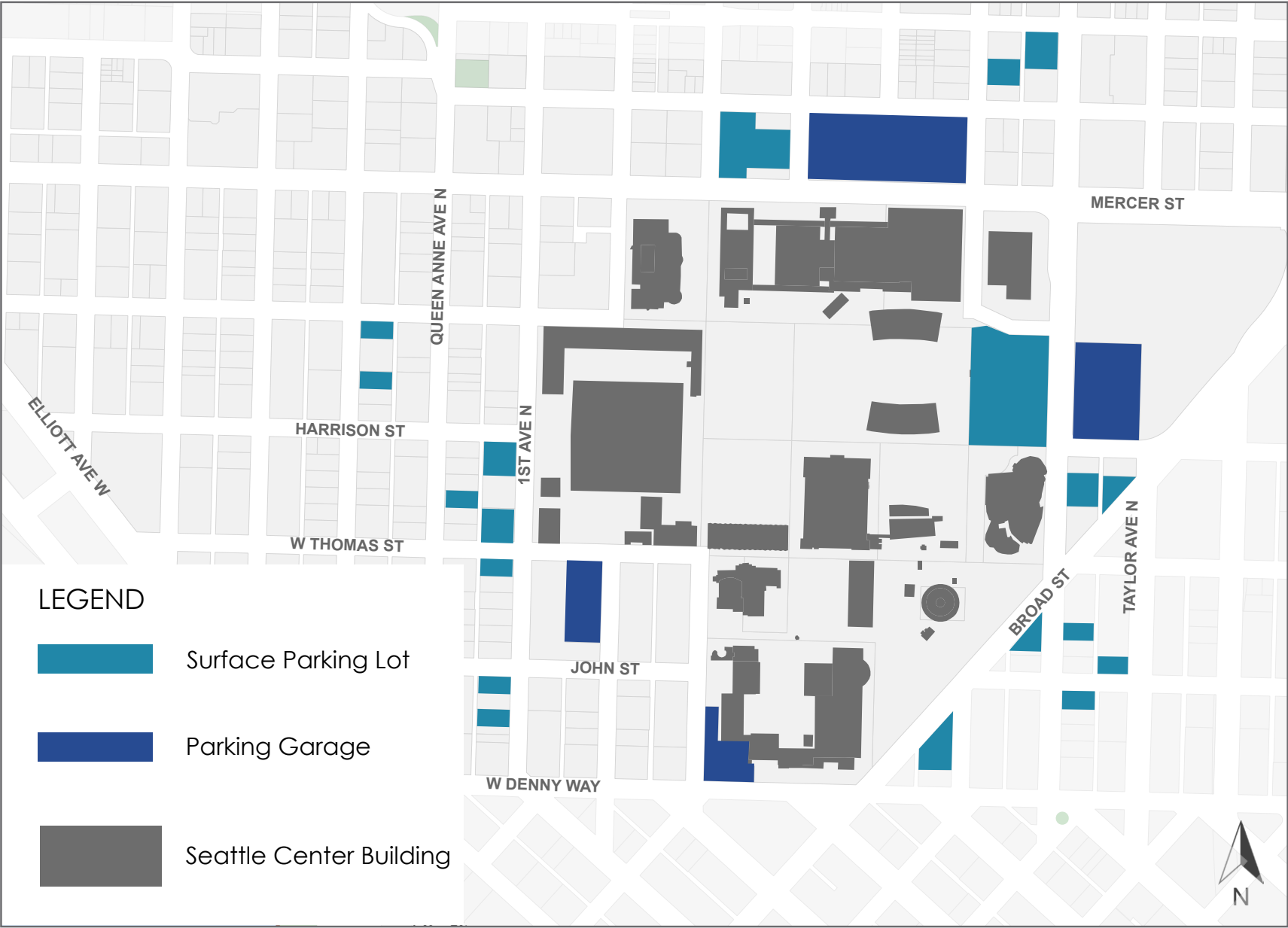


The Seattle Center seems very cut off from the Uptown Community, but upon examination of the edge condition, we can see that there are multiple entry points on all sides of the center. Two of them have been identified as significant places of pedestrian entry, one closest to the Uptown Heart and the other closest to the Space Needle.

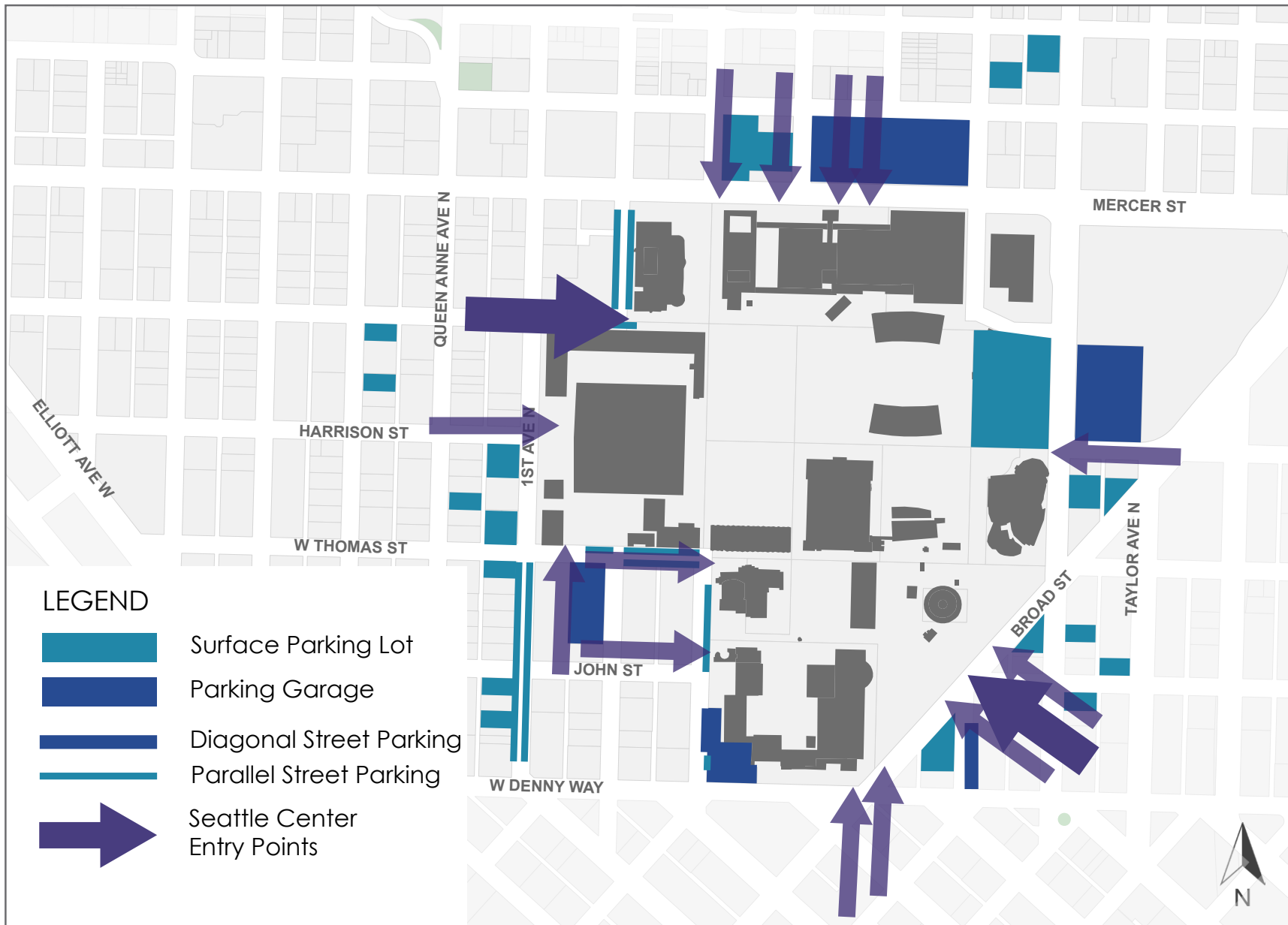
EXISTING: On-Street Parking



EXISTING: Off-Street Parking



EXISTING: All Conditions

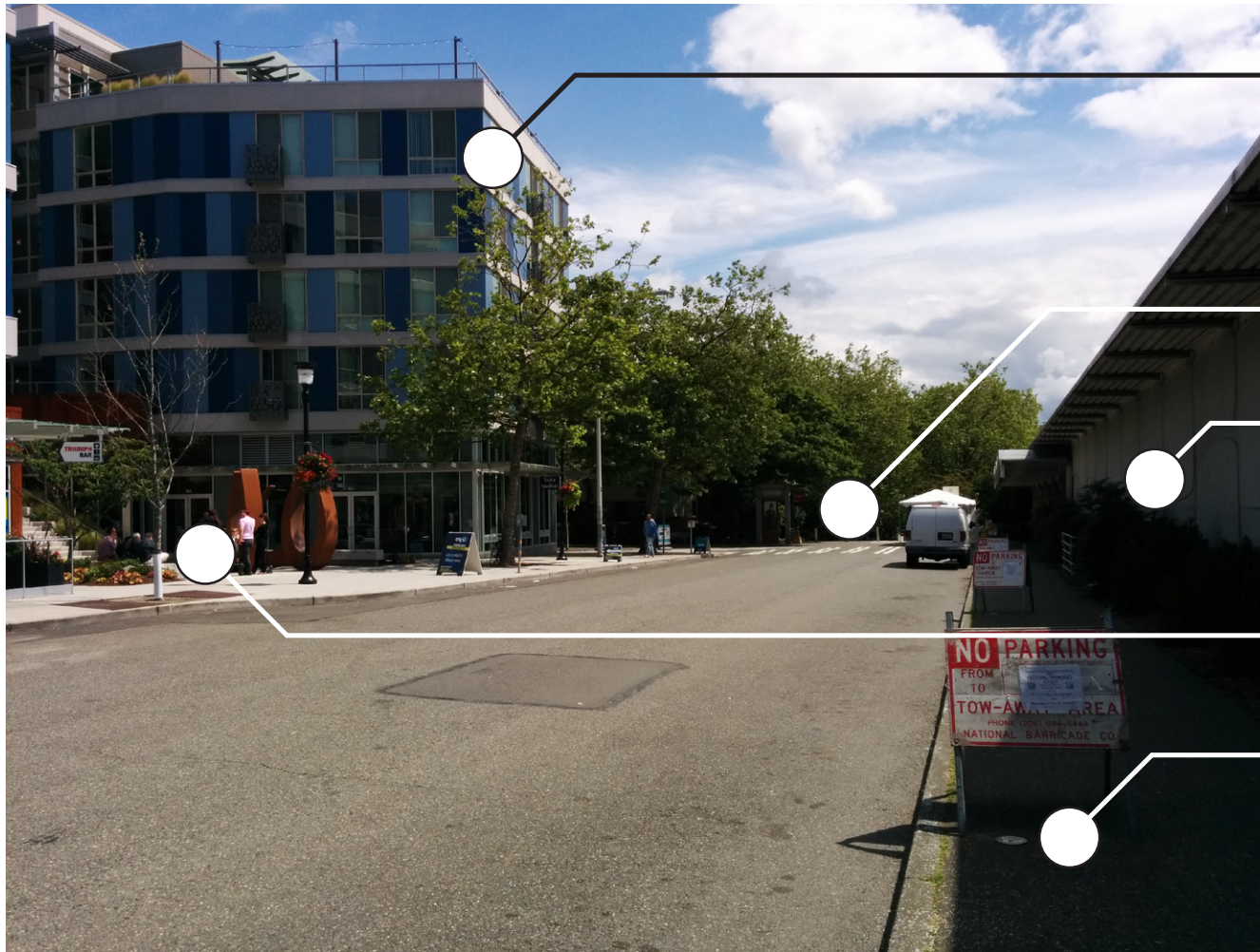


Once the parking conditions are layered on top of the entry points it becomes clear that entrances into the Seattle Center are based on automobile parking places in the surrounding neighborhood. Many of these entrances are from garages mainly on the east side, and fewer lead from the street parking on the west side.

INTERVENTION ENTRIES



NORTHWEST ROOMS: Existing



New Development

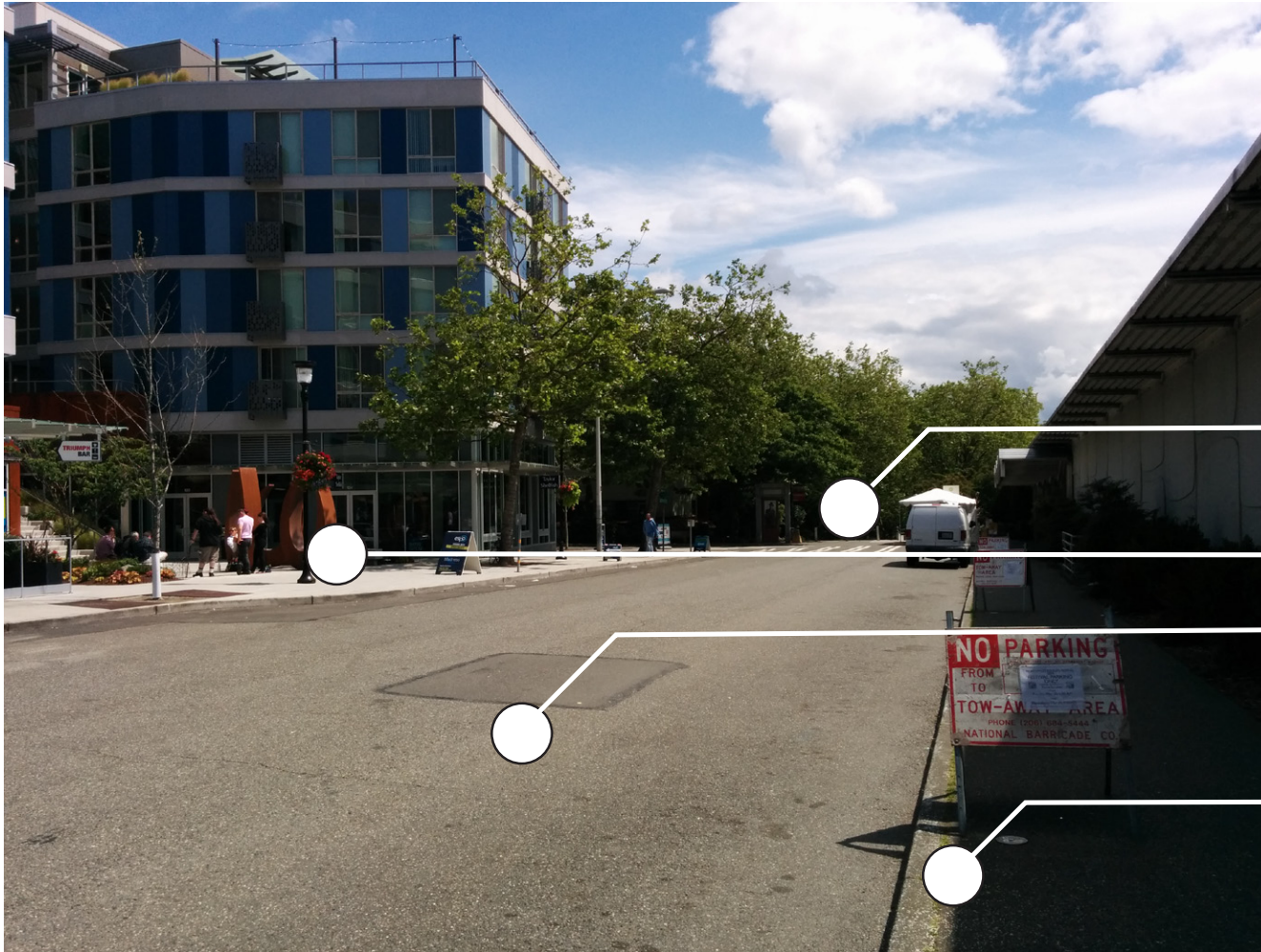
Seattle Center Entry

Northwest Rooms

First Floor Commercial

Narrow Sidewalks

NORTHWEST ROOMS: Proposed



More Pronounced Entry
into Seattle Center
through Uptown

Uptown Wayfinding
Multimodal Street

Improved Sidewalk
Conditions

HARRISON & 5TH: Existing



Garage Wall

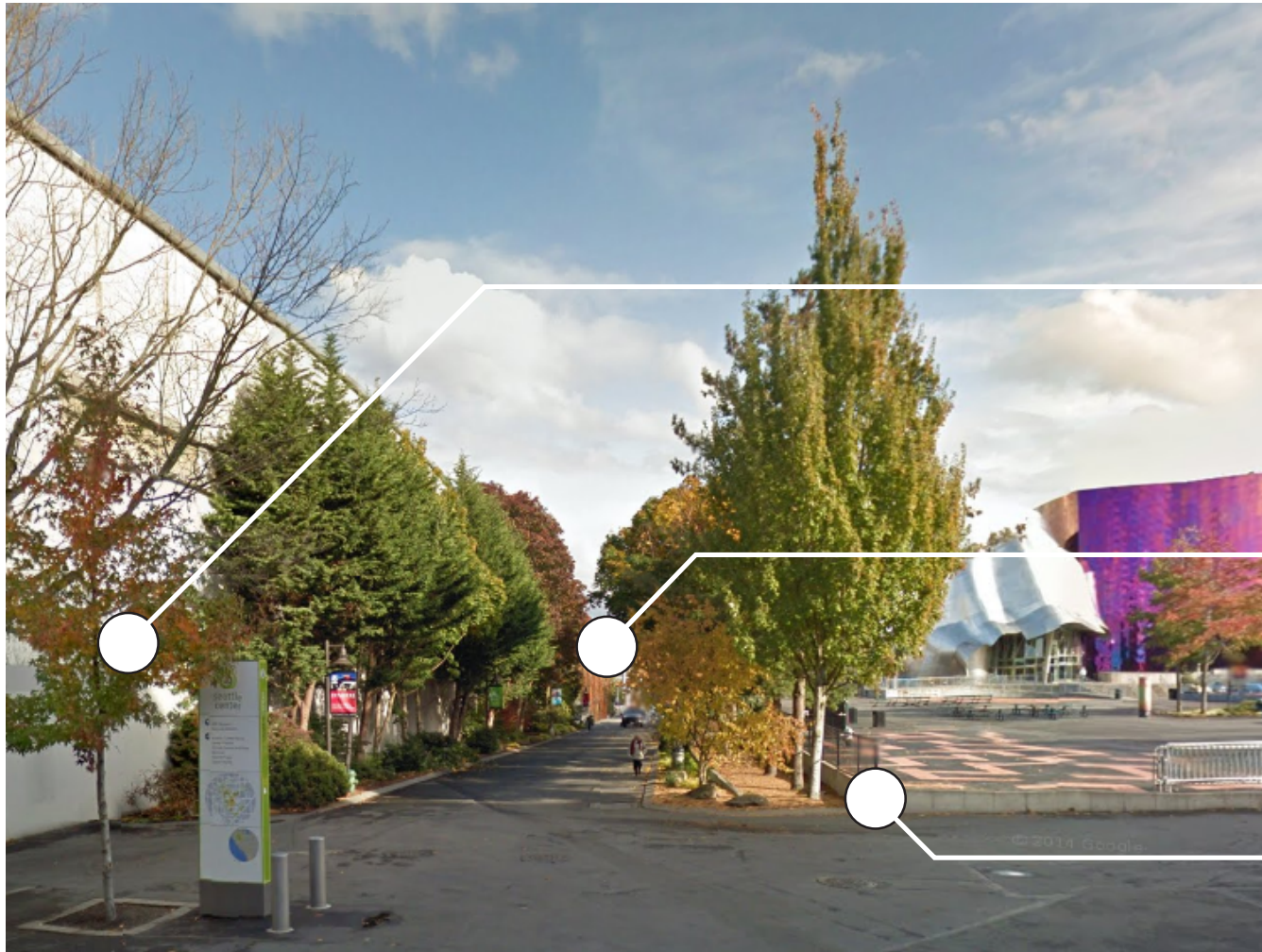
EMP Musuem

5th Ave Garage

Open Plaza

Seattle Center Signage

HARRISON & 5TH: Proposed

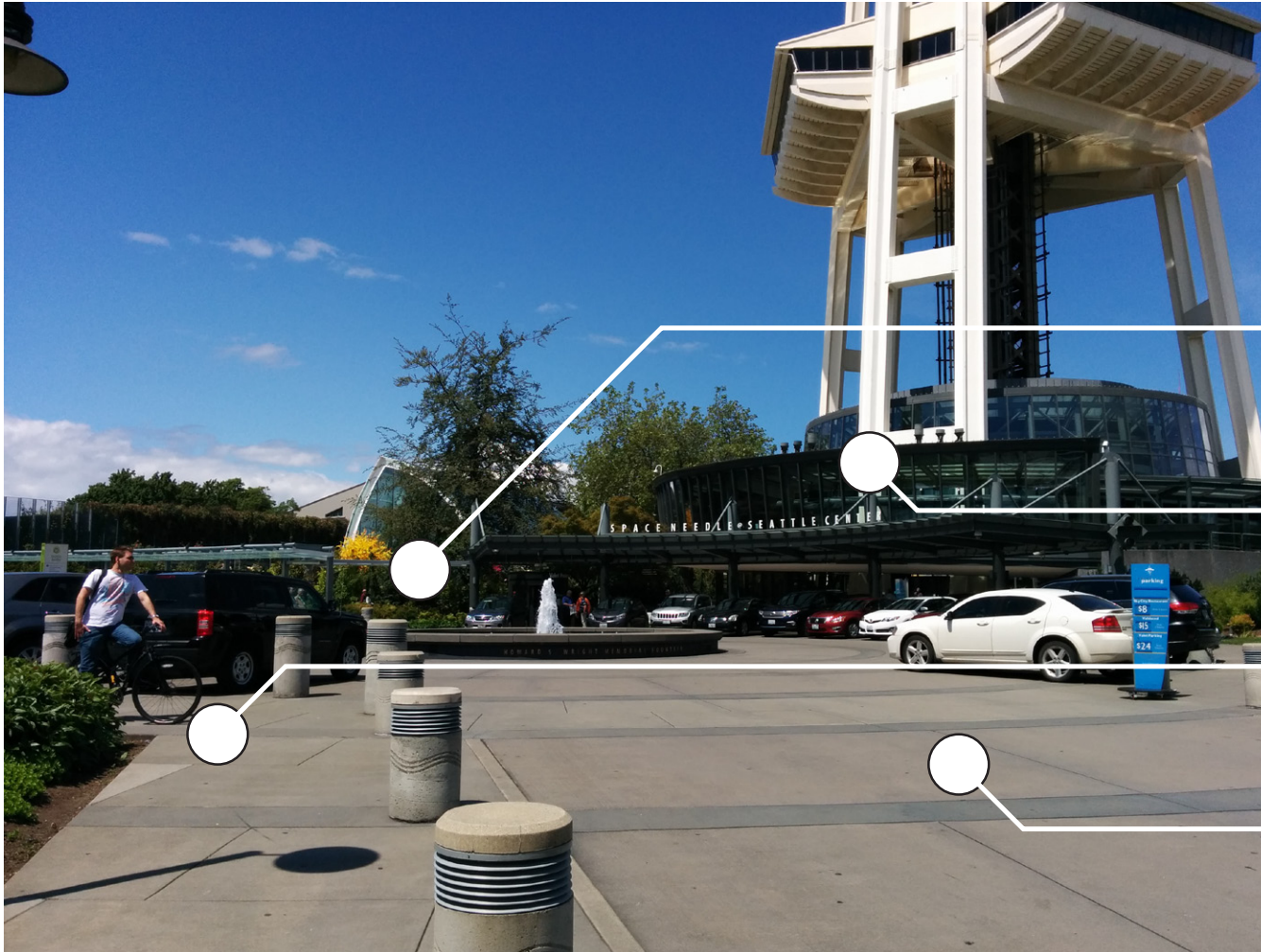


Activate Wall

Connect Garage to Center

Create “place” in Plaza

SPACE NEEDLE: Existing



Path through Seattle Center

Space Needle Entrance

Pedestrian Entry

Drop-off Roundabout

SPACE NEEDLE: Proposed



Connection to Uptown Triangle

“Destination Entryway”

Expanded Pedestrian Right of way

UPTOWN ANALYSIS + INTERVENTIONS REPORT

PREPARATION FOR UPTOWN URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK