

**FINAL REPORT ON THE 2015-2016 PLANNING AND DESIGN STUDY
FOR IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE I-5 COLONNADE OPEN SPACE**

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INTRODUCTION

This is the final report on a planning and design study for the improvement and expansion of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space (its official name, although it is informally often called Colonnade). The report accompanies three documents--a schematic long-range plan, a set of planning-level preliminary cost estimates, and a final design concept memo--that J.A. Brennan Associates Landscape Architects and Planners produced in 2016 for the Colonnade Steering Committee. These and many other documents and further background about the study can be found on the project web page, <http://eastlakeseattle.org/?page=colonnade>.

Colonnade is 7.5 acres of land very close to the geographic center and population center of Seattle. It is located between Downtown, South Lake Union, Eastlake, the University District, and Capitol Hill—all among the fastest growing areas in the state if not the nation. The street address is 1701 Lakeview Blvd., E, Seattle, WA 98102. Colonnade is managed by the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation, which leases the land from the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Colonnade is ranked by the internationally regarded CityLab web site as among the world’s nine “cool parks under freeway overpasses.” And yet probably no other plot of land this large and this

close to downtown and the rapidly densifying areas has such potential for increased pedestrian, bicycle, and recreational opportunities.

With Colonnade celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2015 as a part of Seattle's park system, it was time to look at possible improvements within the existing boundaries and to consider possible expansions. Toward that end, the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods awarded the Eastlake Community Council \$24,575 in Small and Simple Neighborhood Matching Funds for the current planning and design study that ECC managed in 2015 and 2016 on behalf of the Colonnade Steering Committee.

SUMMARY OF THE SCHEMATIC LONG-RANGE PLAN

The 2016 schematic long-range plan produced by the current process lays out many improvements for within Colonnade's existing 7.5 acres, and additional improvements for a four acre expansion area to the south of the existing boundary. The plan also envisions improvements outside the current and expanded boundaries, to enable Colonnade to be better connected to the surrounding area.

A central new element will be a multi-use pedestrian and bicycle pathway running north and south through the current Colonnade and then further south through an expansion area, branching on the west of I-5 to E. Aloha Street (near the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance), and on the east of I-5 to the Lakeview Blvd. overpass near Belmont Avenue and WSDOT's Lakeview-Melrose connector pathway. Another central element will be an east-west corridor of pathways and stairs under I-5 in line with the Blaine Street stairway that climbs Capitol Hill. Many other new pathways and stairways are also planned.

The existing mountain bike area will be substantially redesigned to have more cross-country rails, new features fitting a wide range of skill levels, and a pump track that is likely to be paved and protected from the rain. There will also be new facilities (lighted and sheltered from the rain) for skateboards, bouldering/climbing, parkour/freerunning, and an outdoor gym/all-ages movement playground. There will be new flat spaces for public events and for exercise such as yoga and Pilates. And there will be a restroom.

The four-acre expansion to the south will include (in addition to the north-south pathway and other pathway and stairway connections) a P-Patch/community garden, children's play area, and labyrinth for walking and wheelchairs. Both the existing and expanded areas will have public art, landscaping, smaller scale recreational features, and improved signage and wayfinding. Connections to and from Colonnade will be improved with new entries, sidewalks on adjacent streets where some are missing, and improved parking for those arriving by motor vehicle.

HISTORY AND CONTEXT

A link to a detailed year-by-year history of the Colonnade area and of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space can be found on the planning and design study's web page as listed above. Following are some brief highlights.

Connections wax and wane. Once a conifer-covered hillside traversed only by Native Americans, in the 1880s the Colonnade vicinity was logged over by settlers who began to build homes and establish businesses. One of Seattle's first bicycle paths was built here in the 1890s, and by 1900 a network of public streets, sidewalks, and public stairways began to serve a thriving neighborhood. All that was to be changed forever by the construction of Interstate 5, which opened in 1962. Through transfer of Seattle City street rights of way and private land purchases made under threat of eminent domain, the state took a 200-foot wide swath of highway right of way. In the Colonnade area that is the subject of the current planning and design study, an estimated 300 homes and apartment houses were demolished, along with businesses, a church and parochial school, as well as public streets, sidewalks, and stairways.

An unfortunate impact of the I-5 construction was to cut and not replace most of the historic connections between the east and west sides of what became the I-5 right-of-way. Although for the one mile between Newton and Galer streets, I -5 was on a high viaduct with ample space underneath, no pathways or stairways were provided except along a motorized underpass or overpass. The I-5 right-of-way was marked "no trespassing," an exclusion reinforced in some places by fences.

In the four miles between the Denny Way bridge across I-5 and the E. Allison Street crossing under the I-5 Ship Canal bridge, the freeway as opened in 1962 provided no crossings specifically for pedestrians and bicyclists, who could cross only at three points along with motor vehicles: the Lakeview Blvd. overpass over I-5 near Belmont Avenue; the Lakeview Blvd. underpass I-5 near Howe and Newton Streets; and the Roanoke Street bridge.

Efforts to restore pedestrian and bicycle connections. Almost forty years after the I-5 construction closed off pedestrian and bicycle connections through the Colonnade area, the 1998 *Eastlake Neighborhood Plan* (done by a coalition of stakeholders under a contract between the City of Seattle and the Eastlake Community Council) called for re-establishing pedestrian and bicycle connections through the Colonnade area and other improvements: "Currently, this vast, littered, and overgrown space beneath I-5 is intimidating and hazardous." The neighborhood plan, in a recommendation that was endorsed by the Mayor and City Council in their approval and adoption resolution, called on the City to "maximize this monumental space...for passive and active recreation" with "steps, pathways, public art, lighting, police call boxes...an exercise loop and [connections to] facilitate travel to Capitol Hill."

In the year 2000, the Seattle City Council took two additional actions toward reclaiming and reconnecting the Colonnade area: (1) in the Comprehensive Plan amending ordinance it added to the Seattle Comprehensive Plan's Urban Trails map an east-west pedestrian/bicycle connection under the freeway in the Colonnade area; and (2) in the parks and recreation levy ordinance that was approved when the voters passed the levy in November of that year, it designated \$1,824,870 for the "I-5 Open Space" project.

These actions by the City Council, supported strongly by then Mayor Paul Schell, responded to a pro-Colonnade coalition of non-profit organizations, neighborhood residents and businesses, users of the nearby Blaine St. and Howe St. public stairways, bicyclists, skateboarders, and others. This coalition also worked with then state legislator (now Seattle Mayor) Ed Murray to ensure that WSDOT would lease the right-of-way to the City.

Although some City Councilmembers, the Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board, and the Eastlake Neighborhood Plan Stewardship Committee urged that the Colonnade design be for about 20 acres of I-5 right-of-way, the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation chose an initial size of 7.5 acres, with the Superintendent committing that the Department would consider its expansion in the future.

Even at 7.5 acres, Colonnade's funding was stretched very thin. The \$1.824 million spent to plan, design and build Colonnade as it opened in 2005 amounted to \$243,316 per acre, probably one of the lower amounts per acre for producing any unit of the Seattle parks system.

Planning and design for the current I-5 Colonnade Open Space. The Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation conducted public meetings and workshops in 2003 to identify possible features of Colonnade. Once all the proposals had been received, Department officials estimated that accepting all of them would cost about three times the \$1.75 million that were then available from the 2000 levy for planning, design, and construction at Colonnade.

Difficult choices had to be made in spending the funds available to Colonnade. Not included when it opened in 2005 were some improvements that had received much support in the planning process such as a restroom, drinking fountain, extensive lighting, full access for people who are disabled, and facilities for skateboards, bouldering (climbing), and children's play. Instead, the 2005 build-out left large parts of Colonnade unprogrammed. The unmet needs and the opportunities were left to reappear in the current 2015-16 planning and design process.

The I-5 Colonnade Open Space that opened in 2005 includes: (1) a central east-west stairway extending fully under I-5 along the E. Howe Street alignment with grassy entry areas at each end and a circular entry plaza at the east end; (2) a pathway under the freeway and the southbound on-ramp that links the plaza with an entry at Colonnade's northwest corner; (3) an ADA-accessible switchback pathway from the northwest entry down toward the west entry at the corner of E. Blaine St. and Franklin Avenue E., although lacking ADA accessibility to and from the west entry itself; (4) benches and a picnic table; (5) an off-leash area; (6) a mountain bike area; and (7) a public art installation by California artist John Roloff. The Department of Parks and Recreation funds would not have gone as far if the mountain biking area had not been largely self-funded by the bicycle community; for more about it, see the mountain biking section below.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

A powerful impression for any visitor is of the Colonnade area's monumental scale. The gigantic "roof" of the freeway largely shelters this huge public space from rain. Visual texture is provided by the striated concrete I-beams that run north and south on the underside of the freeway; and the light admitted from above by four long slots between the lanes (north and south lanes, express lanes, on-ramp, and off-ramp). These slots also admit some rain.

The I-5 freeway provides a ceiling well over 100 feet wide that is up to 80 feet high. The grand space approaches the dignity of a cathedral. Being on a hillside that faces west, it is also charmingly open to breezes, natural light, sunsets and views of the lake, city, and mountains. This orientation is a particular asset for the long sunny days that Seattle enjoys in late spring, summer, and early fall.

Balancing the grandeur of the overall space is the intimacy afforded by the columns. A colonnade is a series of regularly spaced columns, and these are four feet in diameter, mostly spaced 14 feet on center and 10 feet from edge to edge (a much smaller number of columns are spaced 20 feet on center). The columns march north-south in rows that are spaced 90 feet on center, creating a succession of “rooms”. As commented by a respondent to this study’s Colonnade on-line survey, “Part of the greatness of the park is its ‘hidden’ and compartmentalized feel.” The column-separated “rooms” allow different activities to co-exist while Colonnade still feels like an integral whole. The columns also help reduce noise from the freeway and beneath from the various recreational activities.

A further defining signature of Colonnade is a row of California redwood trees on three blocks of its west perimeter between E. Blaine and E. Galer streets. These trees were perfectly chosen for WSDOT in 1962 by renowned landscape architect Richard Haag. Later enhancements added in Colonnade’s design as it opened in 2005 are small lawns and landscaping at the east and west end of the Howe St. alignment as one enters respectively from Lakeview Blvd. and E. Howe Street.

Although those unfamiliar with Colonnade often assume that freeway noise would render it unusable, most of that noise goes up and out, not down, and is hardly noticeable in the I-5 Colonnade Open Space itself—or at least most visitors get used to the noise, if they notice it at all. Noise was not mentioned as a problem even once in this study by any of the hundreds of people who filled out surveys or attended public meetings or open houses.

A limiting factor for the Colonnade site is that much of it is steep terrain. Flat areas are limited in size and number, and for the most part were already committed to specific uses in the 2005 Colonnade design. Creating additional flat areas is expensive and requires care to protect the stability of I-5. Activities such as mountain biking that not only tolerate but welcome steep topography are an obvious use; most of the Colonnade acreage currently used or proposed for mountain biking is not suitable for any other use.

While they grandly define Colonnade, the columns are also a limiting factor. The columns are not solid all the way through, but rather are hollow “ring columns” whose concrete is about five inches thick. Any recreational or travel feature must adjust to the columns’ location, and cannot undermine them. Attachments to the columns can be done only with express WSDOT permission.

Access roads needed by WSDOT and the Department of Parks and Recreation must remain and be incorporated into the overall design, and in the 2005 design they double as pathways that unfortunately are uncomfortably steep in places.

Potential expansion area. In the current planning and design study, the study area is 20 acres, comprised of the current 7.5 acres that are now under lease by WSDOT to the City Seattle; plus 12.5 acres of WSDOT land south to E. Aloha Street, much of it now fenced off and marked “no trespassing.” Part of it is quite steep — steeper than in much of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space itself.

At the north end of the potential expansion area along Franklin Avenue East are about two acres of somewhat sloped units that are paved and fenced. The large unit to the north is leased for parking to Alexandria Real Estate Equities, Inc., which owns most of the nearby office and research and

development properties. To the south a smaller fenced and paved unit, formerly with leased small buildings that were demolished in 2016, was leased by WSDOT to a parking company in 2016.

To the south of these paved units, the potential expansion area on WSDOT right-of-way topographically rises toward the overhead freeway, whose northbound lanes come to ground while the southbound lanes continue on a viaduct structure that continues to overhang part of the right-of-way south to just north of E. Aloha Street; to the west, part of the right-of-way is out from under the freeway and is lushly vegetated, in contrast to the bareness of ground anywhere the freeway prevents rain. A WSDOT maintenance road extends north and south, partly under the freeway and partly out from under it. About halfway between E. Galer Street and E. Nelson Place is about one acre of WSDOT land (called here Eastlake Slope), a parcel that extends from the freeway west to Eastlake Avenue, as does the narrower triangle of WSDOT right of way near E. Aloha St.

Just north of where the I-5 northbound lanes touch ground and prevent east-west passage underneath I-5 further south, there is fairly level ground under I-5 that connects the west side of the right-of-way to the east side. Here, the east side of the I-5 right-of-way consists of woods and then further south a three-block long grassy slope whose southern end is the Lakeview Blvd. overpass over I-5. Just south of this overpass is the Lakeview-Melrose connector pathway that WSDOT installed in 1994, restoring a historic connection between the Colonnade area and the south Capitol Hill/Melrose/downtown area that was blocked by the original I-5 construction.

ABOUT THIS PLANNING AND DESIGN PROCESS

With Colonnade celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2015, it was time for a fresh look. How to improve Colonnade? Whether to expand it? How to make it more accessible on foot or bicycle to and from the surrounding area? To address these questions, the Eastlake Community Council contracted with the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods for \$24,575 in Neighborhood Matching Funds to hire planning and design consultants and to bring together disparate user groups, stakeholders (residents, businesses, nonprofits) and public agencies.

Project management and consultants. Management support was provided by the Eastlake Community Council under the direction of a Steering Committee. Volunteer Chris Leman was the project manager, with the paid assistance of Art Tuftee as the community design liaison. Through an advertised request for proposal process, J.A. Brennan Associates Landscape Architects and Planners were selected as the project consultants. The Steering Committee and the Eastlake Community Council deeply appreciate the high quality and volume of work received from J.A. Brennan Associates and Art Tuftee, far better than what the modest compensation should have occasioned.

The Colonnade planning and design project web page is hosted on the Eastlake Community Council web site at <http://eastlakeseattle.org/?page=colonnade>, and will remain there for the foreseeable future. ECC can be reached at info@eastlakeseattle.org or c/o Lake Union Mail, 117 E. Louisa St. #1, Seattle, WA 98102-3278.

Steering Committee. Project oversight was by a Steering Committee, which met five times, always at the Agora Conference Center (1551 Eastlake Avenue; its use was donated by owner Alexandria Real Estate Equities Inc.):

April 14 (14 participants)
May 28 (11 participants)
June 15 (14 participants)
October 1 (11 participants)
December 1 (18 participants)

The Steering Committee membership included a wide variety of stakeholders:

Cascade Bicycle Club – Robin Randels
Citizens for Off-Leash Areas -- Sharon LeVine
Climbing/bouldering community -- Nathan Pauli
Eastlake homeowners -- Jens Madsen, Barbara Heather, Kurt Abe, Lynn Poser, Karen Murray,
Chris Leman (the latter five were also Eastlake Community Council board members)
Eastlake renters – Kelsey Sizemore, Taylor Sizemore, Eric Suni, Zach Williams (all also Eastlake
Community Council board members)
Eastlake homeowners adjacent to Colonnade – Brent Binge, Frank Gonzalez
Eastlake apartment building owner -- Robert Breskovich
Eastlake commercial property owner -- John Cox, Alexandria Real Estate Equities, Inc.
Emerald City Corridors -- Emily Perchlik (a runner through Colonnade and an architect in the
Pike-Pine area)
Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance -- Graham Turnage, Mike Sidwell, Mike Westra
Feet First (pedestrian advocacy group) – James Davis, Eliza Pan, John Stewart
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center -- Shelly DaRonche
Melrose area -- Mike Kent
Houseboat resident -- Bonnie Tabb (also pedestrian commuter through Colonnade)
International Living Future Institute -- Adam Paul Amrhein
Movement playground/all-ages gym community -- Nathan Arnold, Farley Harding
Parkour Visions -- Tyson Cecka, Colin MacDonald
Skateboard community -- Nancy Chang, Tobias Coughlin, Sean Kelly, Jedd Olmstead, Micah
Shapiro

INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION

It was a top priority throughout this planning and design study to cooperate fully with every public agency with any stake in the Colonnade area. From the beginning, the following agencies and their contact people were invited to the Steering Committee meetings and other public events and were sent links to document drafts for comment:

Washington State Department of Transportation (Lorena Eng)
Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (Ed Pottharst)
Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation (Pam Kliment)
Seattle Department of Transportation (Susan McLaughlin, Sandra Woods)
Seattle Department of Planning and Development, now the Office of Planning and Community
Development (Aditi Kambuj)
Seattle Department of Financial and Administrative Services (Joy Jacobson)

Once the planning and design process got underway, three citizen commissions were added as cooperating agencies, invited to the remaining Steering Committee meetings and other public events, and sent links to document drafts for comment:

Seattle Design Commission (Valerie Kinast)
Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board (Howard Wu)
Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board (Emily Ehlers)

The application by the Eastlake Community Council for Neighborhood Matching Funds from the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods was successful in part because of written endorsements from the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation and the Washington State Department of Transportation. Representatives of all three agencies attended most of the Steering Committee meetings and also provided other forms of comment and assistance without which this planning and design project would not have been possible.

WSDOT is the owner of virtually all the land of the current I-5 Colonnade Open Space and the potential expansion area. Its support and participation have been crucial to success of this planning and design project and is deeply appreciated by all. Equally crucial and appreciated has been the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation's support and participation throughout.

Also valuable for the evolution of this planning and design study was the urging of the Department of Planning and Development (now the Office of Planning and Community Development) in its comment on the application that the planning and design process examine not only Colonnade itself, but also opportunities to improve its pedestrian and bicycle connections with the surrounding area. That goal became fundamental to the current project.

This planning and design project's consultant, J.A. Brennan Associates Landscape Architects and Planners, made presentations at the June 9 and June 30, 2015 meetings of the Parks Department's ProView Committee. The presentations were of the alternatives and then of the proposed preferred alternative for a schematic long-range plan, in both cases along with subarea plans. The Pro-View Committee made various suggestions, but none of them required a fundamental change.

Seattle Department of Neighborhoods staff played an absolutely crucial role in the success of the project, both in the application process and in negotiating and implementing the award agreement. Without their help and advice, the application and agreement would have been faulty, and the project would not have worked out well, or indeed might never have been completed.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Public events. The Colonnade planning and design study held eleven public events in a variety of formats with a total of 299 registered participants. Summaries of the public input received at each event are provided on the Colonnade web page. Five public meetings and two public workshops were held at the Agora Conference Center, whose use was donated by owner Alexandria Real Estate Equities, Inc. A public tour and three open houses were held outdoors at Colonnade. Following are the events, all held in 2015:

April 19 Public tour at Colonnade (32 participants)
April 23 Public meeting (17 participants)
April 30 Skateboard workshop (24 participants)
May 7 Bicycle workshop (16 participants)
May 9 Fitness day open house at Colonnade (64 participants)
May 17 Off-leash open house at Colonnade (9 participants)
May 20 Public meeting (30 participants)
June 10 Public meeting (20 participants)
July 8 Public meeting (25 participants)
July 19 Open house at Colonnade (46 participants)
Sept. 24 Public meeting (16 participants)

On the following specific events, the Eastlake Community Council thanks the following non-profit groups for their assistance: May 7 (Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance); May 9 (Emerald City Corridors); and May 17 (Citizens for Off-Leash Areas).

J.A. Brennan Associates presented and received public comments about the design alternatives at the May 20 public meeting and about the proposed preferred alternative at the June 10 public meeting. The respective documents were posted prior to these public meetings, and public and agency comments were in person and electronically, including through an on-line survey.

In the University of Washington's summer 2016 term, Landscape Architecture faculty member Elizabeth Umbanhowar chose Colonnade to be the focus of her course, L498 Neighborhood Design Studio. Eastlake Community Council representative Chris Leman was among the reviewers who attended and commented on the student presentations.

On-line survey. Kurt Abe, then ECC board Secretary and an Eastlake resident who managed on-line surveys for Nordstrom, donated the design of two successive versions of the Colonnade on-line survey which received a total of 118 responses. The first version of the survey was activated on May 7, 2015 and received 71 responses until it was deactivated on July 5. The second version of the survey (expanded to incorporate proposals that had not been developed at the time of the earlier version) was activated on July 5, 2015; it received 47 responses, with the last one received on April 4, 2016.

Respondents to the on-line survey reported a quite high level of use in response to the question, "In the last year, about how many visits have you made to the I-5 Colonnade Open Space?" In the "last year", only seven respondents had made zero visits to Colonnade; 42 had made between 1 and 9 visits each; 29 had made between 10 and 99 visits each; and 12 had made over 100 visits each, including one with 500 visits to Colonnade in the past year—that person averaged well over one visit a day!

About half of the on-line survey respondents had home addresses beyond Eastlake and North Capitol Hill, with the other half being from throughout Seattle and even from outside the city (including from Edmonds, Ellensburg, Lynnwood, Renton, and Shoreline; and beyond Washington state from Bend and Portland, Oregon; and San Francisco, California). A similar diversity of home addresses from all over Seattle and beyond was found in the attendance sheets of the Colonnade public events. Those

from Washington outside Seattle included Covington, Edmonds, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Maple Valley, Renton, Shoreline, Stanton, and Vashon Island. Those from outside Washington included Bozeman, Montana; Denver, Colorado; and again Portland and San Francisco.

As an example of the high engagement that many people have with Colonnade, consider one respondent who resides on 14th Avenue E. well east of Broadway. He reported 100+ visits to Colonnade in the last year, and on the survey checked off no fewer than six different uses: bicycled through Colonnade on my way elsewhere; bicycled in Colonnade's mountain biking area; walked through Colonnade on my way elsewhere; walked or ran for exercise on the Colonnade stairs or pathways; and skateboarded in Colonnade. His comment: "I love this area, use it frequently and am supportive of additional activity additions and improvements."

Handwritten surveys. Paper surveys handed out at public meetings also brought in 15 responses.

E-mail. All Colonnade publicity encouraged questions and comments, and listed info@eastlakeseattle.org as the e-mail address to send them to. Many e-mail messages with suggestions or comments were received.

Posters. To publicize the public events and the opportunity to fill out the on-line survey and to comment in other ways, more than 1000 copies of a full-color 11x17 poster in three successive versions were posted not only at Colonnade but at hundreds of other locations throughout Seattle, including at all Seattle Public Library and all King County Library locations. The poster, whose design was donated by Lucy Carpenter of Amazon, can be viewed as a link on the Colonnade web page.

Another 11x17 poster publicized the May 9, 2015 fitness day and open house at Colonnade. Its design was donated by Emily Perchlik, a member of the Colonnade steering committee who is an architect and co-founder of the non-profit Emerald City Corridors.

Several successive Eastlake Community Council posters (each printed and posted in amounts of 200 or more) that publicized upcoming public events in the neighborhood included a listing of the Colonnade public events and notification about the opportunity to fill out the on-line survey and to comment by e-mail or by U.S. mail.

Postal mailings. The Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation issued two U.S. Postal Service mailings to addresses in the vicinity, publicizing the May 20 and July 8, 2015 public meetings as well as other ways to comment about the alternatives and the draft schematic plan.

Signboard at site. Facing Lakeview Blvd. side near the east plaza, the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation built and installed an impressive wooden signboard publicizing the process, with plastic containers for copies of the drawings for members of the public to take.

Colonnade web page. Throughout the planning and design process, a Colonnade web page, <http://eastlakeseattle.org/?page=colonnade>, was (and will continue to be) maintained on the Eastlake Community Council web site. During the planning process, the web site stated: "The Eastlake Community Council and the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods invite everyone, wherever they

live or work (and also students, retired, homeless or jobless), to get involved in this very public process to help plan and design possible improvements and expansion of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space.” The web site provided background about the I-5 Colonnade Open Space and the planning and design process, a listing of upcoming public events, a link to the on-line survey, and links to draft documents for public review including the site analysis, alternatives, and draft schematic plan. The web page stated: “To fill in your responses to the Colonnade on-line survey, click here. Or send us an e-mail or letter, to info@eastlakeseattle.org or c/o Eastlake Community Council, 117 E. Louisa St. #1, Seattle, WA 98102-3278. In whatever way, we want to hear your ideas!”

Eastlake News. The quarterly newsletter of the Eastlake Community Council is delivered (4000+ copies) by 40+ volunteers to every residential and business address in the Eastlake neighborhood. An electronic version of each issue is also posted on the ECC web site at <http://eastlakeseattle.org/?page=newsletters>. The *Eastlake News* issues published in 2015 and early 2016 featured articles about the Colonnade planning and design process and also listed upcoming Colonnade events on the front-page calendar.

On-site public events. The April 19 tour, and the May 9, May 17, and July 19 open houses were held outdoors at Colonnade itself. Many attendees at these public events were those who came upon the event without having seen the publicity that was put out beforehand.

Doorbellling. In addition to the above means of outreach, door-to-door efforts were made to ensure that adjacent residents and property owners were aware of the planning and design process and felt welcome to be involved. Prior to the April 19 public tour and June 10 public meeting, a volunteer knocked on the doors of all those who live directly abutting the current I-5 Colonnade Open Space, speaking to anyone who answered and, whether or not anyone was home, hand-delivering information including an invitation to attend these public events and the Steering Committee meetings and/or to comment in other ways. This invitation also went out by e-mail and phone.

CONNECTIONS OUTSIDE COLONNADE

Colonnade as it now exists is somewhat of an island—difficult to get to from most directions, and in need of safer and more convenient pedestrian and bicycle connections. The Seattle Department of Planning and Development letter commenting on the Eastlake Community Council’s 2014 Neighborhood Matching Fund application urged a particular effort to assess and improve Colonnade’s pedestrian and bicycle connections with the surrounding area. Accordingly, pedestrian and bicycle connections with the rest of Seattle became a significant focus for the planning and design process, and the 2016 schematic long-range plan envisions many improvements.

New entries to Colonnade. As outlined in the section below on entries, the schematic long-range plan will dramatically improve connections to and from Colonnade by adding many new entries where none exist. Connections are particularly lacking to the southeast despite extensive pedestrian and bicycle travel on Lakeview Blvd. to and from Capitol Hill, the Melrose area, and downtown, and despite the availability of on-street parking on Lakeview Blvd. that could be useful for Colonnade users if there were a convenient way to reach it on foot or bicycle.

Sidewalks where they are missing. As J.A. Brennan Associates observes in its Final Design Concept Memo (p. 3), “Getting to the site can...be challenging because many adjacent streets are missing segments of sidewalk. Adding these sections of sidewalk will increase the number of people who can easily access and enjoy Colonnade.” Following are sidewalks that the schematic long-range plan recommends where they are missing.

Franklin Avenue E. missing sidewalk. There is no sidewalk on the east side of the two blocks of Franklin Avenue E. that abut the west edge of the current I-5 Colonnade Open Space and the WSDOT right-of-way to its south, between E. Blaine Street and E. Galer Street. The lack of a sidewalk requires that whether arriving by foot or by car, pedestrians must walk in the street. The plan is to install the sidewalk. It is not known whether it was present before the I-5 construction.

Franklin Place E. missing sidewalk. This steep street abuts the western edge of Colonnade’s NW corner for one block between E. Howe Street and E. Newton Street. A sidewalk on the east side of Franklin Place E. seems to have been there before but was removed by the I-5 construction. The plan is to bring it back. The sidewalk that is on the west side has raised concrete ridges designed to give traction in walking. These ridges are problematic for a person with a wheelchair or stroller.

Missing sidewalk on east side of Lakeview Blvd. between Blaine and Howe streets. The schematic long-range plan proposes to install a sidewalk where one is missing on the east side of Lakeview Blvd. between the E. Blaine and E. Howe street stairs. Its absence is a risk and barrier to those who enter or leave Colonnade on the east, to users of these stairs, and also to those who walk along Lakeview Blvd.

Lakeview Blvd is a principal arterial and a major walking route southbound to the Melrose area and northbound to Eastlake, Roanoke Park, Montlake, and the University District. It is highly unusual for an arterial of this significance to lack a sidewalk, particularly in such close proximity to major nodes of pedestrian activity and major recreation sites.

To traverse the east side of this block of Lakeview Blvd., pedestrians must either walk in the roadway’s east side, or make two crossings of the arterial to use the sidewalk on the west side. Either way, they face fast-moving traffic, including from the I-5 northbound off-ramp. The Seattle Department of Transportation has studied installing 340 feet of 6-foot sidewalk, concrete curb and gutter (planting strips would be omitted in order to minimize costs). One of SDOT’s options uses a retaining wall; the other would narrow Lakeview Blvd. by extending the sidewalk into the current roadway.

With or without the proposed sidewalk, a retaining wall is likely needed, as the hillside has already slumped across the curb into the roadway, forcing pedestrians further into the street (in fact some believe that the sidewalk is there, just covered with landslide material). A sidewalk without a retaining wall is unlikely to be sustainable either for landslide safety, for pedestrian safety, or for preserving on-street parking near the steps and Colonnade.

Replacing this missing sidewalk received a great many endorsements in the on-line survey and at open houses at Colonnade. An example: “The one sidewalk I feel most strongly needs to be added is a sidewalk on the east side of Lakeview Blvd where right now there is a ‘missing link’ between the two stairways.”

Missing sidewalk on the west side of Harvard Avenue E. north of Lakeview Blvd. The barriers of topography and Interstate 5 make Harvard Avenue E. north of Lakeview Blvd. the only direct walking route between Colonnade and parts of North Capitol Hill, Roanoke Park, and Montlake.

Unfortunately, the sidewalk that for almost a century was on the west side of Harvard Ave. E. north of the Lakeview Blvd. intersection was removed by the I-5 construction and was not replaced when I-5 opened in 1962. This omission magnified the problem that for 300 feet to the north, the sidewalk on the east side of Harvard Ave. E. is steeply elevated (precluding access between the street and sidewalk) and is reachable only via stairs near Lakeview Blvd.—and thus inaccessible for those with disabilities or baby strollers.

In bringing back the missing sidewalk on the west side of Harvard Avenue, the most urgent need is just north of Lakeview Blvd. for 300 feet to where the sidewalk on the east side of Harvard Avenue E. comes down to street level. Pedestrians on the new west sidewalk would need to cross Harvard Ave. E. to the east sidewalk but at least they would have that option. In the long run, this “new” sidewalk on the west side of Harvard Avenue E. should be continued for the full five blocks it used to run north to E. Miller St., giving safe access to a spectacular viewing area that was opened up by I-5 west to Lake Union, the Olympic Mountains, the downtown skyline, waterscapes, and sunsets.

East of Lakeview Blvd., install a pathway connection east-west through the St. Mark's greenbelt. Other than by SDOT’s Blaine Street stairs, access to this area from the west is limited and poorly marked. A new or better marked pathway east from Lakeview Blvd. will greatly improve access from the Colonnade area into the greenbelt, and also to Colonnade from central Capitol Hill through the greenbelt.

Lighting. All of the existing or proposed new connections lack adequate lighting, which will be an important element in enhancing their safety and usability. See the separate section on lighting.

PAVED PATHWAYS

The current I-5 Colonnade Open Space has two purpose-built, paved, ADA-compliant pedestrian and bicycle pathways that are in its northern section, but none in its central or southern section. A major feature of the schematic long-range plan is to expand the ADA-compliant paved pathways at Colonnade.

Diagonal NW-NE pathway. Currently the most heavily used pathway is probably the one that diagonally connects Colonnade’s NW and NE entries (the NW entrance is near the intersection of Newton St. and Franklin Place East; the NE entrance is on Lakeview Blvd. just south of the Howe St. alignment). Many bicyclists and pedestrians use it either to get to and from Colonnade, or to pass through on their way to other destinations. This route has an easier grade than E. Newton Street. Of greatest importance, it offers a safe alternative to passing across the dangerous intersection of Newton and Lakeview, which is bisected by the I-5 on-ramp with its onrushing traffic. By going under I-5, bicyclists and pedestrians avoid this danger.

Switchback pathway south from the NW corner. The other existing ADA-compliant pathway extends via switchbacks from Colonnade’s NW entry downhill to the west entry at E. Blaine Street. A

drawback of this pathway's current design is that although there is a direct, level route leading from its northwestern elbow to Colonnade's NW entry, pedestrian and bicycle access is blocked by a railing, requiring unnecessary continuation uphill through another switchback before reaching an exit essentially to the same location. Simply removing part of the railing at the elbow of the lower switchback would give pedestrians the option to enter and leave the pathway here or at the top of this switchback pathway.

Planned ADA-accessible pathway at west entry to Colonnade on the Blaine Street alignment. The current pathway entry near the corner of Franklin Avenue E. and E. Blaine Street uses a steep maintenance road that is not ADA-accessible nor is it comfortable for most pedestrians or bicyclists even though it is the only west access to the north end of the off-leash area and the only west access to Colonnade's central portion. The 2016 schematic long-range plan envisions an ADA accessible pathway that, to avoid disrupting the maintenance road, would achieve its gradual slope by a turn under the redwood trees, a beautiful dividend for users. (See also the section on entries and the section on access for people who are disabled).

Maintenance roads. The longest current pathways were not purpose-built, but use WSDOT maintenance roads north-south and east-west. Unfortunately, both road/pathways are too steep to be ADA-compliant, and indeed are uncomfortably steep for most pedestrians and bicyclists whether going up or downhill. A typical comment received in the on-line survey was: "In addition to walking, it's worth noting that taking a (commuter) bike through (either east-to-west or north-to-south) is almost impossible due to the slippery slopes." The east-west pathway/steps on the Blaine Street alignment and the north-south multi-use pathway would both provide safer and more comfortable pedestrian and bicycle alternatives to maintenance roads.

Planned north-south multi-use pathway west branch. The I-5 Colonnade Open Space as originally built in 2005 has a north-south paved multi-use pathway only for a few hundred feet at the far north end, not for the additional third of a mile north-south length of Colonnade. The south half of Colonnade (south of Blaine St., of the granite gathering area and of the north end of the off-leash area) lacks any north-south pathway for bicycles or pedestrians.

The 2016 Colonnade schematic long-range plan envisions a north-south multi-use pathway (multi-use in the sense that it is for pedestrians and bicyclists, and for commuting and recreation). This new pathway would span the current half mile length of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space and would continue into the expansion area for another three-quarter mile south on currently fenced-off WSDOT land, splitting in the vicinity of E. Galer Street into east and west branches that would emerge on either side of I-5.

The I-5 columns that are north of Galer Street are fourteen feet apart on center, making the actual space between the columns ten feet, so some reduction would be necessary from the 12-foot width that is standard for a multi-use pathway. This pathway would be paved, but south of E. Blaine St. it would be paralleled by a "flowy" (winding) narrow dirt trail specifically for mountain bikes. This dirt trail would be one or more columns away from the paved pathway.

Planned north-south multi-use pathway west and east branches. The west branch would, to the south, emerge near the intersection of E. Aloha Street and Eastlake Avenue East. The pathway's east branch

would diverge from the main stem roughly at Galer Street and would emerge from under I-5 at about E. Nelson Place, continuing south across the Lakeview Meadow (a spectacular sloped grassy area between I-5 and Lakeview Blvd.), and reach Lakeview Boulevard just north of the Lakeview overpass near Belmont Avenue.

At the Lakeview overpass, bicyclists and pedestrians would have four choices: (1) continue south on WSDOT's Lakeview-Melrose connector pathway to the Melrose area, Capitol Hill, and downtown; (2) head SW on the Lakeview Blvd. overpass over I-5 toward South Lake Union and downtown; (3) head east on Belmont Ave.; or (4) head north on Lakeview Blvd., with access to the St. Marks Greenbelt and the Blaine and Howe Street stairs that climb Capitol Hill.

Support for the north-south multi-use pathway. The proposal for a north-south multi-use pathway was resoundingly supported in public comments received at public meetings, in e-mails, and in the on-line survey. Following are four of the comments received:

“I would love to see commuter north-south and east west pathways through this area and would use them regularly. If possible, I'd suggest separating bike and walking traffic, as they move at different speeds, especially during rush hour for commutes.”

“I would use that path every single day to walk my dog, and many other days to walk from Cap Hill to Eastlake. This path would make my experience of the park and my neighborhood so much better! I can't wait!”

“Would definitely use as a better way to get into the city.”

"If I could work it into my Lake Union loop (entering from Lakeview Blvd and exiting to E Newton St. [and the other way around on the way home]), I would use it at least a couple times a week.”

Pathway to Lakeview Blvd. from the southeast corner of the current I-5 Colonnade Open Space. Because of its steep terrain, this area does not have any pedestrian connection east toward Capitol Hill or south toward the Melrose area. While stairs are planned (see below), a paved pathway may be feasible, although perhaps not one that would be gradual enough to meet ADA standards.

Lighting. All of the planned new paved pathways should be fully lighted at night, as should the current paved pathways, which are not currently lighted. See the separate section on lighting.

STAIRWAYS

The steep topography in the I-5 Colonnade Open Space and its possible expansion area make stairways essential for pedestrian mobility, especially because of the limited space for switchbacks and other means of keeping to the gentle slope needed by ADA-accessible pathways. Some of the existing pathways follow WSDOT/City maintenance roads that are steeper than allowed by ADA standards, and indeed are uncomfortably steep for virtually all pedestrians and bicyclists. As one person commented in the on-line survey, “Several trails are steep and slippery without stairs.”

Almost certainly the most-used feature of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space—and since the day it opened in 2005—is the stairway that extends east-west under I-5 between Lakeview Blvd. and Franklin Avenue East, on the alignment of East Howe St. This stairway re-established an ages-old pedestrian connection that was closed by the construction of Interstate 5. Open at all hours, it allows a pedestrian connection west to the Eastlake/Lake Union area and east to Capitol Hill via the Seattle Department of Transportation’s stairways at Howe Street and Blaine St. that are east of Lakeview Blvd. Many pedestrians are there for the exercise, sometimes using all three of these stairways as a loop.

Stairway/pathway crossing under I-5 on the Blaine Street alignment. To parallel the existing Howe St. stairway, the 2016 Colonnade schematic long-range plan envisions an additional east-west connection combining stairs and paths under I-5 between Franklin Ave. E. and Lakeview Blvd. on the Blaine St. alignment. This new stairway/pathway would connect to SDOT’s Blaine St. stairs that, from the east side of Lakeview Blvd, continue east up Capitol Hill to 10th Ave. E.

The new Blaine St. stairway/pathway would improve east-west travel through the I-5 Colonnade Open Space and be a safety improvement, as the east-west maintenance road (which WSDOT must retain) that crosses the middle of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space north-south along the Blaine St. alignment has many steep parts (20 to 25 percent grade) that are not a comfortable climb or descent even for a fit pedestrian. An ADA-compliant route would be challenging to design, but for parts of it an easier grade pathway with some switchbacks may be possible.

The new Blaine St. stairway/pathway will also be a recreational asset, creating an exercise loop with the adjacent Howe St. stairs similar to the one widely used on SDOT’s Blaine and Howe St. stairs that are east of Lakeview Blvd. Doubling the number of stairways will also spread the current load of exercisers. Adding to the stairway loop’s recreational attraction would be the outdoor gym/all-ages movement playground (see separate section below) that would be next to the Blaine St. stairway on Colonnade’s east slope.

Two supportive on-line survey comments:

“This could become a stairway Mecca as safe street crossings, good lighting and loop routes evolve.”

“I like the linking of E. Howe and E. Blaine stairs and would definitely use. A running loop for fitness so you could run and do stairs and maybe mile markers, areas to do pull ups, etc. as a fitness circuit would be well used.”

Stairway crossing under I-5 just south of the Garfield St. alignment. A block south of the Blaine St. stairway/pathway just discussed will be another east-west stairway south of Garfield St. connecting Franklin Ave. E. and Lakeview Blvd. and on the way, connecting with the east and west branches of the north-south multi-use bicycle and pedestrian pathway. This stairway will provide not only east-west passage under I-5, but also access to the southeast corner of the current I-5 Colonnade Open Space. This area currently does not have any pedestrian connection to Lakeview Blvd., needed to get further east to Capitol Hill or further south to the Melrose area. The steep topography makes a public stairway the most feasible and affordable way to re-establish this historic connection.

Stairway between Lakeview Blvd. and the north-south multi-use pathway, just south of the Galer St. alignment. Just north of where the I-5 northbound lanes touch ground, a new stairway will connect the east and west branches of the north-south multi-use pathway and will also connect to Lakeview Blvd.

Stairway for entry to Colonnade at east end of E. Nelson Place. The planned multi-use pedestrian and bicycle pathway that will extend from the existing Colonnade south to E. Aloha Street will benefit from the planned access to Eastlake Avenue via a stairway (and ADA-accessible pathway) at the east dead end of East Nelson Place.

Stairway on the Eastlake Slope. The WSDOT land parcel known as the Eastlake Slope is between I-5 and Eastlake Avenue, halfway between E. Galer St. and E. Nelson Place. Here the plan is for a stairway combined with a switchback pathway (and a P-Patch/community garden and children's play area).

Lighting. All of the planned new stairways should be fully lit at night, to enhance their safety and usability. Lighting should not be dim, as it currently is on the east-west stairway on the Howe Street alignment. See the separate section on lighting.

Rain covers. Rain covers would protect stairway users from the drenching they get from rain coming through the gaps between the freeway lanes.

ENTRIES

Attractive and well-located entries around its edges are essential to make Colonnade known and easy to reach. The 2016 schematic long-range plan envisions improvements to the six existing entries to Colonnade and the addition of nine new entries--two to the existing Colonnade boundaries and seven where Colonnade would be expanded to the south. The current six entries have little or no lighting, and this omission would be remedied.

Howe Street entry on the east side. Colonnade's east entry adjoining Lakeview Boulevard on the E. Howe St. alignment is probably its most heavily used. Many people are first introduced to Colonnade here because Lakeview Blvd. is a busy arterial and an important pedestrian and bicycle street, and because just east of Lakeview Blvd. additionally large numbers use SDOT's Howe St. and Blaine St. stairs up Capitol Hill.

Those who approach this entry from the east find a Colonnade sign, pleasing landscaping, a wide plaza, benches, a great view, an ADA-accessible pathway, and grand steps. The 2016 schematic long-range plan would enhance it further by enlarging the paved plaza and replacing the current makeshift bulletin board with a more extensive kiosk to include interpretation about the area, wayfinding, and information about how to get involved (such as in upcoming volunteer work parties). An additional possibility that came up in public discussions is a wayfinding mural painted on the surface of the plaza.

Howe Street entry on the west side. Colonnade’s west side entry from E. Howe St. has landscaping and picnic tables, but is not as visible or as easy to reach because it is at the dead end of Howe Street. Here the access is only by stairs. The 2016 schematic long-range plan envisions adding an ADA-accessible pathway to this entry, requiring careful design so as not to detract from the current landscaping and picnic area.

Northwest entry at Franklin Place East and E. Newton Street. Newton Street is a northern boundary of Colonnade, and just south of it, Franklin Place E. abuts Colonnade’s western edge. The northwest entry here is wide with a sign and an inviting view ahead of Colonnade’s interior. It offers a relatively flat ADA-compliant route to and from upper parts of the Eastlake neighborhood. The entry also offers a safe and peaceful route for pedestrians and bicycles, who to cross I-5 must otherwise climb a steeper segment of Newton Street and cross the fast-moving traffic that is heading toward the southbound I-5 on-ramp. This entry requires little improvement except wayfinding and regular removal of brush.

Blaine Street entry on the west side. The west entry from the corner of Franklin Avenue E. and E. Blaine Street is important but, as currently built, extremely problematic. It is the only west access to the north end of the off-leash area and the only west access to the central portion of the current I-5 Colonnade Open Space. Yet this entry is not ADA-accessible, and its steepness makes it uncomfortable or unsafe for most pedestrians and bicyclists. It would be greatly enhanced by an ADA-accessible pathway with a necessary but scenic turn under the redwood trees (see more in the section above on paved pathways and the section below on access for people who are disabled).

Blaine Street entry on the east side. The current east entry from Lakeview Blvd. on the E. Blaine St. alignment faces the pedestrian with the unenviable options of dangerous rock “steps” (a mountain bike feature planned for decommissioning) or an uncomfortably steep maintenance road. To remedy this inhospitable situation, the schematic long-range plan has a major new public stairway. The entry from Lakeview Blvd. would be enhanced with a plaza, landscaping, wayfinding, and signage. And either here or on the Howe St. east entry plaza there will be an interpretive kiosk introducing visitors to the area’s history and what Colonnade offers.

Entry on the west side just south of Garfield Street. This entry from Franklin Avenue E. is at the southwest corner of the current I-5 Colonnade Open Space and is the only access to the south end of the off-leash area. The schematic long-range plan calls for the entry to be paved and made ADA-accessible, and marked with signs and public art (see section on the off-leash area).

New entry at the proposed skatespot. The proposed skatespot (see separate section) to be located just south of Lakeview Blvd underpass will, in a currently vacant and inaccessible part of Colonnade that is nevertheless quite visible, be a major new attraction to skateboarders and spectators alike. The skatespot design includes a new entry to Colonnade, where the current slope now precludes access from the northernmost block of Lakeview Blvd. It is hoped that an ADA-accessible pathway is possible here, but at the least there will be stairs.

Four new entries on the west side of I-5 south of the current Colonnade boundary. The 2016 schematic long-range plan envisions a north-south multi-use pedestrian and bicycle pathway under and next to I-5 that would go through the existing Colonnade and continue south in expansion areas

on both sides of I-5 (see above section on paved pathways). On the west side, there would be four entries to the new Colonnade area: Eastlake Slope; the east dead end of E. Nelson Place; the dead end of Franklin Avenue E. just south of E. Galer St.; and near the intersection of Eastlake Avenue and E. Aloha St.

The entry at the south dead end of Franklin Avenue E. would be created simply by unlocking or removing the current WSDOT gate. The 2016 schematic long-range plan (see section on the P-Patch/community garden) envisions public garden plots, a children's play area and a switchback pathway and stairs, all on a WSDOT land parcel known as Eastlake Slope that is between I-5 and Eastlake Avenue, halfway between E. Galer St. and E. Nelson Place. This entry and the one at E. Aloha St. would for the first time provide entries to Colonnade that are visible to the many who drive, walk, or bicycle on Eastlake Avenue.

Three new entries on the east side of I-5 along Lakeview Blvd. A major omission in the current southeast I-5 Colonnade Open Space is access at Lakeview Blvd. with its extensive pedestrian and bicycle routes to and from Capitol Hill, the Melrose area, and downtown; as well as its available motor vehicle parking. The 2016 schematic long-range plan envisions three new entries along Lakeview Blvd. -- one to the existing Colonnade, and two that would be south of it to the expansion area.

Lighting. All of the existing entries lack adequate lighting. These entries and those planned should be fully lighted at night, an important element in enhancing their safety and usability.

ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE DISABLED

The 2016 Colonnade schematic long-range plan proposes many improvements within and outside of Colonnade to meet accessibility standards under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Benefiting will be not only people who use wheelchairs or mobility scooters and others who are disabled, but also people who use walkers or child strollers. The improvements will also benefit seniors, children, many other pedestrians and even bicyclists. While stairways are not accessible to those with wheelchairs or strollers, in this hilly part of Seattle they will always be recognized as a mode of transportation, in part because there is frequently no room for pathways with an ADA compliant slope.

ADA accessibility was a significant priority in the public meetings organized by the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation in 2003 about the forthcoming design of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space, citing the ADA priorities of the *Eastlake Neighborhood Plan* and the Department's Urban Trails Plan. But construction funds were limited, and only two ADA features were included as Colonnade opened in 2005. One is the excellent diagonal paved pathway between the NW and NE entries respectively at Franklin Place East/E. Newton Street and the Lakeview Blvd. plaza. The other is the switchback pathway from the NW entry down to the central west entry near the corner of E. Blaine St. and Franklin Avenue E.; unfortunately, this pathway dead ends as described in the next paragraph. Neither ADA facility is lighted.

Missing ADA accessible pathway at and near the E. Blaine St. entry on Colonnade's west side. The ADA-accessible switchback pathway that is accessible from Colonnade's NW and NE entries effectively ends to the southwest at a dead end for wheelchair users. Although this pathway continues

southwest to the Blaine St. entry, its short continuation to the southwest is far too steep for anyone with a disability, and is uncomfortably steep for the majority of pedestrians and bicyclists.

Also lacking in ADA accessibility and uncomfortably steep even for most pedestrians and bicyclists is the east-west maintenance road that provides a pathway to and from Colonnade's E. Blaine St. entries on Colonnade's west side. This route is the only east or west access to the granite gathering area and to the north end of the off-leash area, and it is at the south end of the ADA-accessible switchback pathway. ECC first heard about this accessibility issue from a dog owner who is disabled and can't reach the north end of the off-leash area.

To solve the ADA-accessibility gap just described (and without interfering with the maintenance road), the 2016 schematic long-range plan envisions a gradually sloped ADA-accessible pathway under the redwood trees, slightly raised above the ground so as not to damage their roots. All pedestrians would benefit from the easier slope and from the beauty amidst the redwoods, without getting wet feet.

Possible ADA accessible pathway to parallel the maintenance road east toward Lakeview Blvd. The east-west maintenance road on the Blaine St. alignment that is steep at the Franklin Ave. E. entry (see above) is just as steep as it continues eastward up to Lakeview Blvd. Not only is this road/pathway not ADA-accessible, but it is too steep to be satisfactory for pedestrians. The 2016 schematic long-range plan calls for a combination of stairs and pathways east-west under I-5 along this Blaine St. alignment. Given the likelihood that that corridor would become part of an exercise loop, a pathway and stairs that parallel each other in would be desirable where there is room. People who prefer to use the stairs for exercise would leave the pathway users in peace.

Improve and extend eastward the Colonnade entry that is near the south end of the off-leash area. This Colonnade entry (located between Garfield and Galer streets) that is just south of the off-leash area is not as steep as the one at the north end of the off-leash area. But it is short of being ADA-accessible, and some additional engineering could reduce its slope to ADA standards. It may also be possible to continue this newly ADA-accessible pathway eastward to connect to the planned north-south multi-use pathway, enhancing the value of the north-south pathway for those who cannot negotiate stairs or non-ADA compliant slopes at some other entry points.

Parking. People who are disabled tend more than others to arrive at Colonnade by car, and public parking is important for them. Currently there are no parking spaces in the Colonnade area specifically reserved for those with disabled parking permits. Any public parking should set aside some spaces specifically for this purpose.

DOG OFF-LEASH AREA

The City funds that supported the current planning and design study were obtained in part through the support of Citizens for Off-Leash Areas (COLA), and its co-founder Sharon LeVine served on our study's steering committee. LeVine and COLA chair Ellen Escarega participated in the May 17, 2015 outdoor open house at the off-leash area to discuss needed improvements. The Eastlake Community Council hopes to work with COLA and the Department of Parks and Recreation toward

obtaining Neighborhood Matching Funds to enable additional planning, design, and engineering for improvements in the off-leash area.

Background. Although the formal purpose of an off-leash area is for dogs to socialize and exercise, it is also a place where the owners socialize and where they are exercised by their dogs. Opened in 2005 along with the rest of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space, the half-acre Colonnade off-leash area was a high priority for the Department of Parks and Recreation as a replacement for the Volunteer Park off-leash area, which was closed for environmental reasons. A significant fraction of the \$1.82 million spent on planning, design and construction of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space went to build the off-leash area.

The nearest other off-leash areas are at Denny Park and at Plymouth Pillars Park. Among Seattle's off-leash areas, Colonnade has the unique advantage of being protected from the rain by having the freeway overhead.

From the beginning, dog owners have not come to the Colonnade off-leash area in the hoped-for numbers, and its visitation is among the lowest to any Seattle off-leash area. The current planning and design process focused especially on ways to attract more sustained use.

Layout and location. Unlike the squarish shape of most of the city's other off-leash areas, the one at Colonnade is long and narrow, with a row of separate yards, some with a smaller upper level. It is located on Colonnade's west edge between Blaine and Garfield streets, east of Franklin Avenue East. The off-leash area is separated from Franklin Ave. by a WSDOT maintenance road and a row of large redwood trees.

Because this part of Colonnade has a slope up from the west, the main level of the off-leash area is about 10 feet higher in elevation than Franklin Avenue East, making it more difficult to walk to and reducing its visibility from the street. The south yard and entrance are at a lower elevation that is just a few feet above Franklin Avenue E. and are the only part of the off-leash area that is accessible to people with disabilities, because the rest of the off-leash area is reached from the south by steps up, and from the north up from Franklin Avenue E. by a maintenance road that is far steeper than is standard under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Drainage issues. Even in the best of circumstances, grass in off-leash areas faces damage as dogs romp, dig, urinate, and defecate. Dogs are carnivores, and the protein they ingest is broken down into a high concentration of nitrogen that, when excreted, is damaging to grass. Efforts to remove feces from an off-leash area are not always successful, and it is not possible to remove urine. Even under the best of circumstances, rain may incompletely clean away this waste, even in an off-leash area that is open to the weather.

In recognition of these problems and the lack of rain under the freeway, Colonnade's was the first off-leash area in Seattle to have a different surface than dirt, grass or artificial turf. The design is a concrete enclosure filled with gravel, and an irrigation system to rinse the gravel, with the wastewater drained away to the City sewer. The original foundation layer of gravel is composed of three-quarter (3/4) inch round rock, and on top of it the original surface layer is one half (1/2) inch clear crushed rock.

It has become clear since the Colonnade off-leash area opened in 2005 that some features of its original design need to be redone. Some in the Department of Parks and Recreation believe that the drainage is not operating as fully as intended. It may be necessary to remove all the gravel, clean and repair the inside of the enclosure, and start over with new fill. In doing so, there will be an opportunity to introduce a surface that is easier on the dogs' paws, and to create some larger spaces, thus addressing two major reasons why more dog owners do not visit Colonnade.

Need for a new surface. When the Colonnade off-leash area opened in 2005, many dog owners (certainly not all, as some were happy) expressed dissatisfaction with the gravel surface. The round rock that was originally on the surface is part of the problem because it does not pack down well and so does not provide steady or comfortable footing for dog or human alike.

The complaints from dog owners seem to have increased over the years, probably because the mixing impact of use has brought to the surface some of the foundation layer of crushed rock that is more jagged and can be quite painful to the paws. As a part of the off-leash area's 18-month trial review, Seattle's Animal Control officer wrote to the Department of Parks and Recreation on July 16, 2007, "The only input I have is the obvious. We rarely see anyone using this off-leash area and the common complaint I hear is that the coarse gravel is too rough on their dog's paws."

Pea gravel as an alternative surface. Beginning in 2011, the Department of Parks and Recreation started experimenting with spreading paws-friendly pea gravel on top of the layers of round rock and clear crushed rock. This experiment was tried in the yards at the north and south ends, in part because they are accessible by truck; bringing gravel to the yards in between would require use of a wheeled loader like a Bobcat, or a system of conveyer belts. Pea gravel is also used in the off-leash area of Plymouth Pillars Park and in a few other Seattle off-leash areas.

Dogs and their owners have responded well to the introduction of pea gravel at the Colonnade off-leash area. Unfortunately, with use much of the pea gravel has settled into the coarser gravel, and the coarser gravel including jagged crushed rock has worked its way to the surface, and so the current surface is only very partially pea gravel and again not satisfactory to many dogs.

Granolithic as an alternative. Some off-leash areas (probably those over soil) in other parts of the world use a crushed granite product called granolithic whose pieces are smaller than pea gravel but larger than sand. Granolithic is considered to be durable and paws-friendly. However, some in the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation believe that granolithic would sift into the coarse gravel and gum up the drainage of the Colonnade off-leash area.

Artificial turf. Artificial turf on sports fields has been controversial in Seattle because of health concerns, but is encountering acceptance from some users as the science evolves. Some companies market artificial turf specifically for off-leash areas. Concern about the health implications of rubber in playfield turf may be less if artificial turf used in off-leash applications were to have less rubber content. At the Colonnade off-leash area as a pilot project, artificial turf could be tried in one of the yards that is not on the main walking route, to make it easier for those who wish to avoid it.

Creating larger yards. The Colonnade off-leash area's yards are each of fairly small size, with none large enough for a dog to run very far, such as to retrieve a ball. As one respondent to the on-line survey requested, "more open space (all the fencing and sections aren't appealing)."

Creating larger yards at the Colonnade off-leash area is difficult because it is on a hill which, along most of its length, precludes much widening in the east-west direction. The east frontage faces a slope that would require a major retaining wall. The west frontage faces a maintenance road needed by WSDOT and the City.

The best opportunity for expansion is at the north and south ends, each of which could be expanded in two directions. The yards in between would be difficult to expand to the east or west, but one or two could be expanded north-south through combination with one or more adjoining yard, yielding a yard about two or three times as long as it is wide.

Signs. The off-leash area is not easily noticed from Franklin Avenue E. Signs could help draw more attention. One response to the on-line survey suggested an additional kind of sign: "Placing new larger and/or additional signs regarding dog park rules and etiquette, specifically, encouraging dog owners to be mindful of the incessant barking that may be disturbing for nearby apartment community members. For example, on multiple occasions people living in the apartment complex across the street have yelled out of their apartment windows asking dog owners to correct their dogs from constant barking. As a veterinary medical student and animal rights advocate I think a note about noise disturbances is reasonable."

Public art. Dog-themed public art in and near the off-leash area could enhance the visitor's experience while also making the off-leash area more identifiable to those passing by. Particular locations for the art would be the off-leash area's north and south entrances, its west frontage as seen from Franklin Avenue E., and within it the currently blank retaining walls. A possibility are large dog outlines such as in the Blue Dog Pond off-leash area in Seattle's Westcrest Park. Another possibility is to use the cyclone fence itself for see-through dog themes. Within the Colonnade off-leash area, some large retaining walls could also become dog-themed murals.

Small/shy dogs area. Some small or shy dogs and their owners would like a yard set aside for them. Enough separate yards are in the current off-leash area to devote one of them for this purpose.

Dog agility course and dog playground. Some dogs and their owners would like an agility course and playground. As a sport, dog agility involves the handler directing the dog through various obstacles such as a hurdle, plank, incline, tunnel, and table. Separately or in combination, there could be dog playground features such as a fire hydrant, hill, hoop, and so on.

Parking. The shortage of parking is a particular barrier to greater use of the off-leash area. Many potential users of the off-leash area who would arrive by car are discouraged by the lack of parking. On-street parking was ample in the early years, but the nearby construction of huge residential and commercial buildings has brought new parking demand and a shortage of available parking spaces. Strategies for increasing the supply of parking are discussed in the below section on parking and loading.

Lighting at night. The complete lack of lighting in the Colonnade off-leash area presents issues of public safety. It also severely limits use during Seattle's during the winter when the off-leash area's protection from the rain would otherwise be a major attraction.

Public safety issues. Fear of crime is a deterrent to some potential users of the off-leash area. As one on-line survey participant commented: "On a few occasions, there have been groups of people smoking and drinking outside the dog park, making it unwelcoming. I've had to call the police because there have been confrontational people using various drugs outside the dog park. I think keeping the area better lit and more visible (most of it is blocked off from the street) would help discourage people from congregating there." See the later section on public safety for further discussion.

Water supply. In its early years, the Colonnade off-leash area's running water was much appreciated by the dogs and their owners. Vandalism and misuse of the water tap forced the City and COLA to turn the water off. Dog owners want it back on somehow (in the on-line survey, one complained, "no water for the dogs"). Possible solutions include to provide the water only at ground level as a dog drinking fountain; and a timer to shut the water off at certain times or after a certain amount of use. If a restroom is established just north of the off-leash area (one of the potential sites identified in the 2016 schematic long-range plan), it could have on its exterior a flowing drinking dish for dogs.

Maintenance. The need for improved maintenance at the off-leash area was cited by the public, as in this comment from the on-line survey: "Poo and trash everywhere, poo bag dispensers empty, too few trash cans... dogs get caught on blackberry vine weeds that are overgrown in several areas." Another person commented that "Placing more dog waste bag receptacles throughout colonnade area would remind dog owners to pick up pet waste and dispose of it properly."

The large amount of dog feces in the trash cans makes their regular emptying an important priority. Unfortunately, the illegal use of these cans for personal trash, sometimes to overflowing, has occasionally caused the Department of Parks and Recreation to get behind on emptying them.

Citizens for Off-Leash Areas (COLA) have an agreement with the Department to provide a volunteer steward for Colonnade and other off-leash areas. These volunteers are not easy to find or keep, but have contributed greatly.

MOUNTAIN BIKING

As a part of the current planning process, the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance (EMBA) proposed and the Colonnade Steering Committee endorsed a master plan for redesigning the mountain bike area, including a half acre reduction in size to 3.5 acres. The planned redesign can be seen on the EMBA web site (for link, see bibliography at end of this document or <http://eastlakeseattle.org/colonnade>). The proposals are described below, after some background on the current mountain bike area and its condition and use.

Background. Mountain bikers are among the few users who not only tolerate but welcome sloping topography, and much of the current four acres of Colonnade mountain bike area is so steep as not to be usable for almost any other recreational use.

The \$1.82 million that the Department of Parks and Recreation spent on the original planning, design, engineering, and construction of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space was a fairly limited investment for the 7.5 acres that were developed. To stretch the funds, the Department turned to EMBA (then called the Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club) to build the initial two acres of mountain bike area; grand opening was in September 2008. Another two acres were added between 2009 and 2012. EMBA contractors, employees, or volunteers supervised hundreds of work parties of volunteers who did most of the construction.

The four current acres of Colonnade's mountain biking area were built with only a small amount (about \$50,000) of Department of Parks and Recreation funds—3 percent of the total construction, for an area that is about 53 percent of Colonnade's acreage. That Colonnade's mountain biking features were built largely with funds and other resources from outside the Department is a remarkable story, one which will hopefully inspire similar efforts from other user groups whose new features are in the schematic long-range plan but not yet funded.

EMBA raised an estimated \$350,000 in funds and in-kind donations for the 2005-2008 design and construction, and an additional amount for the work done since. Funds from outside the Department of Parks and Recreation included grants from the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods and the King County Parks Department. Corporate donors included REI, Starbucks, Vulcan, Whistler-Blackcomb, and Stevens Pass. Donations of \$200 or more from individuals and \$300 or more from corporations were recognized by engravings on small rocks that can be seen just off Lakeview Blvd. about halfway between Blaine and Howe streets.

Recent decline in usage. Contrary to its early years' popularity, Colonnade's mountain bike area in recent years has declined in usage. Several factors are at work:

- (1) Expansion of mountain biking opportunities elsewhere. Even before Colonnade, EMBA had pioneered mountain biking pathways on Finn Hill near Kirkland and Tiger Mountain near Issaquah, and continued to expand them after Colonnade opened. Under an agreement with King County, EMBA built trails and features at Duthie Hill Park (located between the towns of Sammamish and Fall City), with the first opened in 2010, and completion in 2012. Mountain bikers now have far more alternatives than when Colonnade was one of the very few. Many who formerly used Colonnade now prefer these other sites, where trees grow and where rain gives the trail better tread; these other sites also have design features not found at Colonnade (see below).
- (2) Few features for the average skilled or for beginners. Many users consider most of the mountain bike features currently at Colonnade to be too difficult or dangerous to use. Among the challenges: (a) those seeking the most extreme experiences are more likely to frequent the new venues; (b) some potential users, especially parents with children, prefer features for moderate or beginner skills; and (c) most features added in the 2009-12 period are for the highest difficulty level. Some comments from the on-line survey:

“The trails are too challenging for most. Addition of more beginner, intermediate and kid friendly trails would increase use and traffic.”

“I’m a decent mountain biker and I would say 80% of the features scare the crap out of me. Additionally I don’t want to try something difficult and fall off a cinder block cliff.”

“Many Seattle mountain bikers are frustrated by the current Colonnade Park because it is extremely difficult to the point of being prohibitive if not dangerous for 90-99% of riders. Consequently, Colonnade is underutilized and most Seattle mountain bikers favor driving to Duthie Hill in Issaquah which offers a variety of safe, easy-to-moderate trails. ... Please consider designing/building trails for the majority of mountain bikers; that is, easy-to-moderate trails that are flowy, fun and safe and cater to the strong majority of users. A simple flow trail, like Duthie’s Boot Camp or Voodoo Child, would definitely get more traffic than all the tall skinnies, plunges and jump lines standing at Colonnade today.”

“I was one of the many original volunteers that helped build the park, from clearing the blackberry bushes, mattresses and needles to putting the biking features in place. ... I support the improvements being suggested for the area but hope that progressive jump lines, drops and skinnies can be kept.”

- (3) Decline in maintenance. Litter and waste have grown at Colonnade, even as EMBA has had fewer volunteers to draw upon to groom Colonnade’s trails, keep facilities in repair, and clean up litter. Comments from the on-line survey:

“Frankly I stopped riding bikes there a few years ago when there was human waste and broke liquor bottles on the trail. I had my kids with me and considered it far too unsafe for them. Have never been back.”

“I would like to see general maintenance of the trails and trash picked up. There were many trails that were unrideable because of the amount of trash on them.”

- (4) Increase in occupation and camping. Recent years have seen an increase in the number of people occupying the mountain bike area and even camping there (a trend also seen in other parts of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space and in the adjacent fenced-off WSDOT rights of way). This occupation has to some extent filled a void from the decline in mountain bikers, but also has discouraged mountain bikers from coming. Without garbage removal or sanitation services, these outdoor occupants have little choice but to leave litter and human waste. A comment from the on-line survey:

"I have not been to the Colonnade in two years. What a difference a couple of years makes. What used to be a hidden gem is now a run down, filthy homeless camp full of graffiti, garbage, human excrement, currently occupied and abandoned homeless camps and a hodge podge of poorly designed mountain bike features and trails that are in a total state of disrepair.”

Maintenance agreement. In Colonnade’s early years, impressive maintenance of Colonnade’s mountain biking areas was conducted by volunteers organized by the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance. Hundreds of work parties and tens of thousands of volunteer hours not only built retaining

walls, trails, structures, etc., but also cleaned and maintained what was there. In 2009, EMBA signed a three-year agreement with the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation for maintenance of the mountain bike area. The agreement expired in 2012 and was not renewed, although occasional EMBA work parties have continued. EMBA and the Department both now state that they wish to negotiate a maintenance agreement.

Soils, dust, and water. It is almost the definition of mountain biking to ride on dirt trails, a challenging and exhilarating experience. Unlike paved pathways, dirt trails need to be kept moist or they break down and kick up dust that is tough for breathing and gets on mountain bikers and other users. The native clay soils in Colonnade are flaky when dry, and slippery when wet. The Colonnade page of the EMBA web site warns: “When water hits the local moon dust, things can get pretty slimy... so be careful after a heavy rain.” Three comments from the on-line survey note the challenges:

“What needs to be changed is how dusty all of the trails are. With all of the dust this causes the dirt to erode ... and make[s] the trails less safe.”

“The dirt has turned to moon dust. Not sure if different/new dirt would make a difference due to the lack of moisture.”

“I was happy to be involved with the building of the original mountain bike park. The same issues we hit with the soil quality and water management have ultimately driven many riders away.”

During construction of the mountain bike area, WSDOT and the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation freely allowed EMBA volunteers to use City water, but the departments are said to have been resistant to the installation of more spigots and the burying of pipes. This limitation was one that mountain bikers lived with so long as Colonnade was one of the few nearby mountain biking destinations, but the inconvenience of dealing with long hoses hampers volunteers who would otherwise maintain the trails.

Trails and other features that have a dirt surface require hand watering to lay the dust down and keep their shape, which tends to deteriorate without water. Part of the decline in use of Colonnade by mountain bikers is probably attributable to the emergence of alternative locations that are watered by the rain. In addition, some of these locations (such as the lower Woodland Park mountain bike dirt jump area) have water supply and easily available hoses that encourage hand watering.

It is hoped that WSDOT and the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation will be receptive to installation of water spigots and some buried water lines at Colonnade (buried water lines resist freezing, reduce vandalism, and minimize the risk that bicyclists and pedestrians will trip on long hoses). Some kind of security is probably necessary to reduce the risk of vandalism and flooding. A possible solution is a combination lock and a timer to shut the water off after a certain time or amount of use.

The demand for water on dirt features could be moderated by bringing in soil that is absorbent and that when moist is not slippery and holds its form. An impressive model is the red soil being used for the dirt jumps in lower Woodland Park.

Changes planned for trails and technical features. The table below presents the major elements in the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance’s draft 2015 master plan, which has been endorsed in principle by the Colonnade Steering Committee. Some of the most dangerous and difficult current features are to be decommissioned in favor of dirt jumps and cross country riding, and to make room for the north-south multi-use pathway. The no longer used “trials” area is to be decommissioned to make room for the outdoor gym/all-ages movement playground.

PLANNED CHANGES IN MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS AND TECHNICAL FEATURES			
Existing trail or technical feature	Current location within Colonnade	Status in EMBA plan	Notes
Limestone Loop	N. of Blaine St. on east side	Keep this popular trail but rebuild foundation and tread	
Tqualu Skills Zone	N. of Blaine St. on west side	Keep but also become new location for Novice Loop	
Dirt jumps	W. of Lakeview Blvd. and off-ramp	Relocate to north of off-ramp and greatly expand	
Pump Track	Near middle of off-ramp	Expand and move to former location of Novice Loop	Possibly paved; if so, should be under I-5
Practice Area	Near end of off-ramp	De-commission	Replaced by some progressive dirt jumps
Trials Area	Bisected by Blaine St. west of novice loop	De-commission	Location for new outdoor gym
Novice Loop	Bisected by Blaine St. on Lakeview Blvd.	Move to combine with Tqualu Skills Zone	
Fisher Trail	North of Blaine St. on far west side	Consider yield sign at crossing of Blaine St. alignment	
“The Waterfall” steep rock chute	Blaine St. alignment east from Lakeview	De-commission	Location for new stairway
Nick’s Kicks free ride jump line	SW of current Pump Track	Keep but needs rebuild	Free ride for beginners --high use
AWOL free ride jump line	SW of current Pump Track	Needs rebuild	Free ride for intermediate—very low use
K-Line free ride jump line	SW of current Pump Track	Last priority to modify	Free ride for advanced – highest use
Pip’s Hips	Far SE corner	Decommission	New location for part of N-S multi-use & cross country trails
Octagon of Death	S of Blaine St. near NE corner of off-leash area	Decommission	New location for part of N-S multi-use & cross country trails
Holy Chute	SE sector	Decommission	

The entire concrete “Holy Chute” would also be decommissioned. Its current flat ending zone would become the southwest edge of the new progressive dirt jumps. As EMBA commented in July 2016: “The top of the Holy Chute has always been the biggest attraction for camps and dumping because it is tucked up close under the freeway deck and mostly out of sight. The site may need to be entirely blocked off to prevent unwanted use.”

Dirt Jumps. Dirt jumps such as those at lower Woodland Park are very popular now with mountain bikers and BMX riders. They can be designed to give the rider a progression of different sizes and angles. With a shovel and some water, the user can make custom adjustments. The EMBA plan envisions a larger dirt jumps area in the space currently occupied by the novice loop, adjacent to Lakeview Blvd. Because this location is open to the rain, the dirt jumps would be kept naturally watered during much of the year.

Pump track. The current pump track which is located near the off-ramp and partially under the freeway cover, is in very poor condition and is rarely used. In 2015 as a part of the current planning and design process, EMBA proposed roughly at this site a larger and more sustainably designed pump track that would continue to have a dirt surface, and the Colonnade steering committee accepted this proposal.

In 2016 after the current planning and design study’s public outreach had concluded, EMBA began to consider options for a paved pump track. Paved pump tracks are a relatively new idea; the first one in Washington state opened in 2016 in Leavenworth. The web site of its donor, the Blue Lotus Foundation, provides the following useful background:

A pump track is a continuous loop of berms and rollers that cyclists ride by “pumping” or shifting their weight in conjunction with the contours of the course, with the goal of not having to pedal. Pump tracks help build bike handling skills, are a good workout, and most importantly are just plain fun for young and old alike. All abilities from a small child on a push bike to an adult expert mountain biker can enjoy the same pump track. Though most pump tracks are made with dirt, solid surface pump tracks are a new innovation. Compared to dirt-surface pump tracks, asphalt pump tracks have less environmental impact due to less erosion and decreased watering and maintenance requirements. They can be enjoyed as long as there is no snow or ice on the track and can also be used by scooters, skateboards and roller skates.

It is likely that a paved and lighted pump track at Colonnade would be a popular feature, as there is nothing like it in Seattle or nearby. A paved pump track would have the advantages of being easy to maintain, and being usable not just by mountain bikes but also by BMX bikes, skateboards, non-motorized scooters, and roller skaters. “Longboard” skateboarders who have use for a traditional skate park can enjoy a paved pump track. Pump track action can be interesting to watch (for videos, see the web site of the Blue Lotus Foundation, or do a web search). The design should include places for spectators to sit or stand.

If the new pump track is to be paved, it would not need the rain enjoyed by the current proposed location for a dirt pump track. Paved pump tracks elsewhere are generally open to the rain, but a covered pump track would undoubtedly attract more use and more spectators. Still, the more important need is for a flat site, because the principle is to avoid pedaling as much as possible.

A paved pump track would be much more expensive to build but also much simpler to maintain than a dirt pump track. Given the uncertainty that a paved pump track can be funded, the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance in July 2016 communicated to the Colonnade planning and design study the following interim position:

A small dirt pump track off of Lakeview Blvd could be mostly built by volunteers and would still be a hit for kids. If we're going to go for the paved pump track and we're confident we can get permission and funding, then we should eliminate the small dirt track off Lakeview Blvd. If we're unsure or don't know if we can find a space or don't know if neighbors will support a paved pump track, then we would still recommend building the outdoor dirt track as the first step.

Also in July 2016, EMBA submitted a drawing (posted on the Colonnade web site) identifying four alternative Colonnade locations (all under freeway cover) for the pump track: (1) an area near the freeway off-ramp that is now occupied by a dirt pump track and had been proposed for an improved new dirt pump track; (2) an area just downhill from Lakeview Blvd. and south of the E-W WSDOT maintenance road that is now a mountain bike trials area and which EMBA had formerly told the planning process it was giving up an interest in, leading the Colonnade Steering Committee and J.A. Brennan Associates to designate it for an outdoor gym/movement playground; (3) an area near Colonnade's west boundary and just north of the Blaine St. alignment now occupied by most of the Tqualu mountain bike skills area, and which the draft schematic long-range plan designates for a novice mountain bike area; and (4) an area just east of the north half of the off-leash area that is now occupied by little-used mountain bike features and which EMBA had proposed to convert to a cross-country loop trail and/or jump lines.

If a paved pump track is to be sited at Colonnade, a new public outreach process will be essential, as this possibility came up too late to be addressed by the Steering Committee and consultants or by the previous public outreach. This is not to discourage the exciting possibility of a paved pump track, but to ensure that the right siting decision is made.

Simplest for the planning process would be for the paved pump track to be located at site #1 above, as it is where the dirt pump track is now and the improved dirt pump track is now proposed; however, a dirt pump track would need to be either dropped or a new location found for it at Colonnade. Site #2 would pose serious conflict with the proposed use there of an outdoor gym/movement playground. Site #3 could pose conflicts over its proximity to the backyards of the adjacent townhomes, as users and spectators of the paved pump track would likely be much more numerous than those regarding the current Tqualu mountain bike skills area or the novice area proposed there. Site #4 may be problematic because it is narrow and sloped, could be make it more difficult to site the proposed N-S multi-use pathway, and could bring more noise and activity potentially distracting to dogs at the off-leash area.

North-south multi-use bicycle and pedestrian pathway, paralleled by a dirt trail. Especially as it would be paralleled by a narrow dirt cross-country trail south of Galer Street, mountain bikers welcome the proposal in the 2016 schematic long-range plan for a paved multi-use bicycle and pedestrian pathway that would run north-south along the length of Colonnade. EMBA plans to decommission the trails and technical features that currently are in the way of the multi-use pathway

and the dirt cross-country trail that would parallel it. The pathway would be accompanied with occasional technical features for mountain bikers, as reflected in this comment from the on-line survey: "I would prefer there to be some interesting obstacles along the sides of the trail (so they are optional for people using the trail)."

Other small features for mountain bikes. To enhance the experience, other scattered features could be provided. Currently much of Colonnade's slope retention is with gabions (wire enclosures filled with rocks). Replacing some of the gabions with concrete retaining walls would provide new opportunities for stunts on mountain bikes and BMX bikes (see also the section on "Scattered features for exercise, viewing, etc.")

Cross country trails. Mountain bikers desire more cross-country trails whose appeal is distance and a "flowy" (winding) experience. In fact, some see cross country as the true type of mountain riding. Cross-country trails have a dirt surface and normally are only a foot or two wide.

Lighting. The current lack of lighting severely limits use of the mountain bike area and risks public safety. Timers or motion sensors could help reduce the use of lighting except when it is truly needed. Lights could be set so that they cannot be turned on past a certain time each night. Bright lighting is not necessarily preferred in mountain biking areas. Subdued, downward directed lighting would be welcomed by some mountain bikers, especially on cross-country trails. However, the pump track would probably be more brightly lit.

Parking. As many mountain bikers come to Colonnade from far away, motor vehicle parking is a definite issue, especially as expanded business and residential development nearby has increased the competition for on-street parking spaces. For steps toward improvement, see the section below on parking and loading.

Signs. Some of Colonnade's best current signs are in the mountain bike area. Especially well done are the colorful animal-themed interpretive signs in the Tqualu/novice area. Also professional are the signs that announce the mountain bike area and include safety and liability warnings. However, their references to this area as being the "Colonnade Mountain Bike Skills Park" should be reworded to remove the word "park" and make it clear that the mountain bike area is part of the multi-use I-5 Colonnade Open Space. WSDOT's lease of Colonnade to the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation requires the City not to refer to it as a "park." Many references to Colonnade on the worldwide web are as a mountain bike area only, rather than as a multi-use open space in which the mountain bike area is one of several uses.

SKATEBOARDING

Skateboarding continues to grow in popularity. Although young skateboarders and their parents helped in the successful effort to include Colonnade into the 2000 parks levy, the 2005 Colonnade opening design lacked any features specifically designed for skateboarding.

In 2007 with the help of consultants and a volunteer task force, the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation adopted a *Citywide Skatepark Plan* that called for a skate feature close to Eastlake, north Capitol Hill, and South Lake Union. Nine years later, the park system still lacks a skate feature in the

vicinity, with the closest being a skate park at Woodland Park (about five miles from Colonnade) and a skatespot at Judkins Park (about seven miles from Colonnade). Seattle Center also has a skate park, about 3.5 miles from Colonnade. [Distances are as the crow flies, and would be considerably more by ground transport.]

The *Citywide Skatepark Plan* considered Colonnade as a possible site, but the plan's Appendix J erroneously stated that Colonnade was fully programmed and did not have room for a skate feature. The present Colonnade planning and design study's schematic long-range plan designates several previously unprogrammed spaces for new uses, with one being for skateboards.

In previously un-programmed sloped terrain next to Lakeview Blvd. at the north end of Colonnade, there is room for a skatespot. Using the size criteria in the *Citywide Skatepark Plan* that define a "regional" facility as being 30,000 square feet or more, the roughly 9,000 square foot Colonnade skate feature would be called a skatespot rather than a skate park. Although the Citywide plan states that a facility of this size would be of only "district" scope, this facility is likely to be a regional draw because of its central location, protection from the rain, and lighting at night.

Early in the planning and design process, the Colonnade Steering Committee and consultants agreed on this location for the skatespot, and it is in the 2016 schematic long-range plan. A design (available on the Colonnade web page, <http://eastlakeseattle.org/?page=colonnade>) was donated by two Steering Committee members (architect Sean Kelly and civil engineer Micah Shapiro) who have extensive experience with designing skate features.

The skatespot will have two bowls, two ledges, a hip (two ramps at a 90 degree angle from each other rising to a shared deck), a "manny pad" (a long low platform allowing skateboarders to make small jumps where the level changes), and what the skateboarders understandably call "flatground." The skatespot would have handrails to avoid passersby falling in; and places from which to watch the action, whether the spectator is standing or sitting. Some benches would be designed to be skated upon. Lights would be recessed beneath the stairs and benches to create a striated appearance (similar to the freeway I-beams above).

The design has joint benefits beyond skateboarding. It creates a new entry from the half-block of Lakeview Blvd. underpass where the topography currently denies any access into Colonnade. As currently planned, the entry would use stairs to reach the diagonal pathway in Colonnade's north interior. Further study will see if an ADA-accessible pathway could also be included. The design also takes advantage of how the southwest wall drops off down the hillside, including on it bouldering/climbing features.

The public comments about this design were numerous and uniformly enthusiastic. Here are three:

"My GREATEST wish—a dream come true actually, among all features considered is to have a multi-depth (3 foot/5 foot/8 foot/10 foot) multi-bowl skate pool. ... I would just love to walk three minutes down the stairs to a world-class skate pool 24 hours."

"I fully support this proposal. We currently have no covered skateparks in Seattle, which limits skateboarding during the often rainy days. We also only have one lit skatepark (Jefferson

Skatepark), which limits skateboarding to weekends for many 9-5pm employed workers during the many dark months.”

“We are very interested in a safe, well lit, sheltered skate park with up-to-date features, rails, seating areas, etc. SUPER IMPORTANT!!!”

Additional features for skateboards. Skate features could be scattered elsewhere in Colonnade to diversify the skateboard experience. The new paved pathways would certainly benefit skateboards. Even just a flat dry space of smooth concrete is usable by skaters. Benches should be designed to be durable enough to weather use by skateboards.

BOULDERING/CLIMBING

The 2016 Colonnade schematic long-range plan includes a facility for bouldering and climbing. Steering Committee member Nathan Pauli was liaison with the bouldering and climbing communities. Ryan Spence of the company Elevate Climbing Walls donated a design, which can be seen on the Colonnade planning and design project web page at <http://eastlakeseattle.org/?page=colonnade>.

As defined nowadays, “climbing” implies the use of ropes, pitons, and other equipment. Some classic climbing rocks that are free to use (examples being near the UW Waterfront Activities Center and in the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation’s Camp Long in West Seattle) are nevertheless underused because of the need for equipment. “Bouldering” does not require such equipment, and thus is more widely practiced. Most bouldering opportunities are indoors and not free, with the closest free bouldering feature being in a park in Kent, Washington.

Support. The on-line survey registered wide support for a bouldering/climbing feature at Colonnade:

“Bouldering is extremely popular in Seattle as evidenced by the crowds at the Seattle Bouldering Project. An outdoor public bouldering area would be really appreciated and best if located under the cover of the freeway.”

“I, and many of my friends, would definitely climb in the Colonnade area. Climbing is vastly increasing in popularity and should be prioritized.”

“My brother and I would love for a climbing wall to be built here.”

“This would be an awesome addition to the park! This would get used often and gather a community of climbers year round.”

“It's close to my office. I would use it frequently. I've traversed on the Volunteer Park water tower for 40 years and really miss it being available for bouldering and traversing.”

“It would be nice to have a free place to go and play.”

Design. Commenters in the on-line survey offered the following suggestions for design of the bouldering/climbing facility:

“Top ropable crack climbs would be a great feature.”

“Flat planar surfaces with embedded rocks where people can make up problems would be awesome. Architectural style fake boulders don't get used. Pea gravel landing is great, rubber chips or pads or wood chips are much worse than pea gravel. ... UW rock has almost no cobbles but a few cobbles could be nice.”

“I'd like to have a tall, bolted climbing wall as well. Also a crack system in the wall would be nice. Having it mimic a rock wall experience instead of just a gym experience.”

“Set it up to allow for progression, include routes with all difficulty levels.”

Maintenance. Maintenance could be an issue. The on-line survey received this comment: “Other parks that have provided artificial climbing terrain have tended to let their maintenance lapse and go unattended. Please build an excellent resource for this historically great and active climbing community, and ensure it is adequately maintained.”

Bouldering elsewhere in Colonnade. Retaining walls that are needed in some parts of Colonnade to create flatter areas for new features (such as for the skatespot and the outdoor gym/movement playground) will also be designed to provide on their outside surface some new climbing/bouldering opportunities. Note that WSDOT quite reasonably prohibits any bouldering or climbing on the columns themselves.

PARKOUR/FREERUNNING

The 2016 Colonnade schematic long-range plan includes a parkour/freerunning facility on the previously unprogrammed slope just southwest of the entry plaza. Parkour and freerunning are fluid, strenuous running/gymnastic styles that originated in Europe and are becoming popular in the United States. Seattle currently lacks such a setup that is free.

Parkour Visions, a Seattle-based non-profit organization, donated a design that was accepted in principle by Colonnade steering committee. It can be seen on the Colonnade planning and design study web page, <http://eastlakeseattle.org/?page=colonnade>. The design includes facilities favored by parkour and freerunning enthusiasts but also useful to others – chinning bars, dip bars, sit-up ramps, push-up ramps, railings and walls along stairways and pathways, and additional pathways and stairways further improving public access. (Parkour users will also make episodic use of the bouldering facility described above.)

The Colonnade on-line survey registered enthusiastic public support for the parkour/freerunning facility, as with these comments:

“Critical to have this type of activity...to foster fitness, community, outside enjoyment.”

“I've been doing parkour for 7 years and I'm very excited at the prospect of an outdoor parkour park! It's great that it would be covered (under the Colonnade) because Seattle's weather makes it

hard to practice parkour outside much of the year. Parkour classes can be very expensive, so having an outdoor space to train makes the sport more accessible to all. Having a dedicated parkour park means adult athletes won't get in children's way at other playgrounds/parks.”

“I'm too old but I love to watch!”

OUTDOOR GYM/MOVEMENT PLAYGROUND

The 2016 schematic long-range plan includes an outdoor gym/all-ages movement playground, to be located below Lakeview Blvd. just south of the maintenance road in the Blaine St. alignment, in the former mountain bike trials area (planned for decommissioning by the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance). Its design was donated by artist Nathan Arnold, on his behalf and that of Farley Harding. The design can be seen on the Colonnade planning and design study web page at <http://eastlakeseattle.org/?page=colonnade>. It was accepted in principle by the Colonnade steering committee.

This kind of facility is growing in popularity nationwide. Design features are drawn from the worlds of exercise studios, playgrounds, gymnastics, acrobatics, and even circuses. Such activities were going on in a vintage building at Gas Works Park when the Department of Parks and Recreation decided to refocus that area for a children’s playground, and encouraged Harding and Arnold to contact the Colonnade planning and design study.

The outdoor gym/all-ages movement playground design for Colonnade includes monkey bars; chinning bars; parallel bars; traveling rings; still rings; vertical ropes, Chinese poles; and a metal framework overhead allowing custom rigging such as for a slack line or hanging aerial silks. A number of these features would be offered in both adult and child size.

P-PATCH/COMMUNITY GARDEN

Urban gardening is increasing in popularity as growing numbers of apartments and condominiums are being built that lack any yards. The closest P-patches/ community gardens to the Colonnade area are miles away and have waiting lists that are years long and lengthening.

The 2016 Colonnade schematic long-range plan envisions a P-patch/community garden south of the existing I-5 Colonnade Open Space on a piece of WSDOT land known as Eastlake Slope which is about halfway between E. Galer Street and E. Nelson Place. It is a sunny slope that could accommodate many garden plots. Interwoven with the P-patch/community garden would be public stairs and a switchback pathway providing ADA access between Eastlake Avenue and the I-5 right-of-way (and thus the planned north-south multi-use pathway).

In Seattle, a “P-patch” is one that is administered by the Department of Neighborhoods; a “community garden” can be administered by the Department of Parks and Recreation or some other agency or by a non-profit organization. The current planning and design study has not determined which jurisdiction would be in charge.

CHILDREN’S PLAY

A children’s play area was discussed in the 2003 Colonnade planning process but was dropped because construction funds were so tight. The 2016 schematic long-range plan envisions a children’s play area on the Eastlake Slope (the same general vicinity as the P-Patch/community garden, discussed just above). The play area could be sited along Eastlake Avenue or closer to the south dead end of Franklin Avenue E. just south of E. Galer St. (the latter location has more on-street parking available). In either case, it would benefit from nearby on-street parking.

The schematic long-range plan also envisions that additional smaller opportunities for children’s play would be integrated with other parts of Colonnade.

LABYRINTH

The 2016 Colonnade schematic long-range plan envisions well south of the current I-5 Colonnade Open Space a labyrinth suitable for walking and wheelchairs. This location is about a half block north of E. Aloha Street, and along the planned multi-use pedestrian and bicycle pathway that will extend the length of the expanded Colonnade. Subdued lighting for the labyrinth would be provided.

In the planning process, two members of the public independently proposed a labyrinth—one by e-mail, the other by the on-line survey. As one stated, “I would love to see a labyrinth walking path added to this space. Something peaceful and contemplative to balance out all the routes for bikes/dogs/skateboards/stair runners.”

A labyrinth is a flat maze of concentric pathways (traditionally a perfect circle about 35 feet in diameter, but could be an oval or other topographically adaptive shape, as would be needed for the Colonnade site). The user enters from the outside and eventually reaches the center, combining exercise and contemplation. The Colonnade labyrinth would be designed to accommodate those on foot or in a wheelchair.

Labyrinths are becoming more common in public parks nationwide. Significant use is being experienced by the labyrinths installed in recent years in Seattle’s Denny Park and at Seattle Center (just NW of the Experience Music Project).

The Steering Committee rejected the labyrinth site initially presented to it (on Colonnade’s west edge below Colonnade’s NW entry near E. Newton Street and the north end of Franklin Place E.). The Committee was more receptive to a suggestion by the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center representative for a south end labyrinth location that would be near the Fred Hutch campus and the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance hospital.

FLAT SPACES FOR EXERCISE AND EVENTS

Although scarce amidst Colonnade’s often steep topography, flat spaces are needed for events, stretching, calisthenics, Pilates, yoga, etc. Presently the only developed flat spaces available (and used) for such activities are the granite gathering area; the lawn at the west entry from E. Howe Street; and the lawn and paved plaza at the entries from the east on Lakeview Blvd. The latter lawn

was used twice and very successfully for open houses in our own Colonnade planning and design study.

The 2016 Colonnade schematic long-range plan envisions more paved flat places for exercise and events. To reduce potential conflict with the east entry plaza's overriding purpose as Colonnade's most important intersection for pedestrian and bicycle routes, the plaza would be expanded slightly to the north and south. Also, new multipurpose flat multipurpose spaces would be created near the middle and lower landings of the existing steps (Howe Street alignment) and possibly adjacent to other parts of these steps.

The granite gathering area is a circular seating feature (donated by EMBA) that is a popular informal gathering place which has been used for impromptu meetings and performances. It needs repairs, including having anti-graffiti sealer applied to the stone work. The current planning and design process found no other location for a small amphitheater in which gatherings would not interfere with a current or planned stairway or path or disturb Colonnade's neighbors. The schematic long-range plan envisions enhancing the granite gathering area by adding an outer circle of additional seating to expand its capacity for meetings and performances.

DISPERSED FEATURES FOR EXERCISE, VIEWING, ETC.

While the 2016 Colonnade schematic long-range plan envisions various kinds of relatively intensive recreational activity (see sections above), it also recognizes the importance of scattering smaller features, many of them multi-purpose, throughout Colonnade to provide additional opportunities for exercise, viewing, rest, and other uses.

This decentralized pattern was begun in the design for the 2005 I-5 Colonnade opening with a picnic table near the west entry along the Howe Street alignment. There is a need for more such small activity areas, such as the flat areas mentioned in the section above. Sturdy concrete benches can be designed for multiple uses---not just for resting, but also for various forms of stretching and exercise, as well as for parkour, bicycle and skateboard stunts.

In construction by the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance that produced the current Colonnade, much of the slope retention was accomplished with gabions (wire enclosures filled with rocks), a far less expensive measure than concrete retaining walls. While still intact, some of the gabions are showing signs of wear, most of it from people bicycling on them. The gabions were a major cost savings in the original Colonnade construction, but they provide limited recreational opportunities. As one on-line survey participant commented: "I really don't like all the rocks wrapped in wire. Those kind of features really don't invite one to climb/sit/rest."

Replacing some of these gabions with concrete retaining walls would significantly expand Colonnade's recreational offerings. Concrete retaining walls would provide new places to sit down as well as safer and more durable surfaces for mountain biking, skateboarding, parkour, stretching, and calisthenics.

Those who directly use the mountain biking and off-leash areas and will use the planned areas for skateboarding, parkour/freerunning, outdoor gym/ movement playground, children's play area, and P-Patch/community garden are not the only people who can enjoy these improvements. The on-line survey comment about the planned parkour area--"I'm too old but I love to watch!"-- could just as easily have been about the other specialized areas, all of which will host activities that others enjoy watching. Important therefore to all the designs are well-located and comfortable places for spectators, especially places to sit, but also places to stand, such as leaning on a bollard or ledge.

RESTROOMS AND DRINKING FOUNTAINS

The I-5 Colonnade Open Space currently does not have restrooms, but the schematic long-range plan calls for them to be added. The Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation planning standards adopted in 2011 (p. 22) state: "Park restrooms are desirable in conjunction with larger parks, and normally only in those parks serving scheduled/programmed activities or those with a significant number of drop-in users." This statement is repeated in the 2016 Seattle Recreation Demand Study (p. 43). The regular users of the current 7.5 acre Colonnade definitely qualify as a "significant number." With its proposed expansion to 11.5 acres, Colonnade would rank about 60th in size among Seattle's 400+ parks.

In the planning process for the current I-5 Colonnade Open Space, significant support for restrooms was voiced [see the minutes of the 2003 public planning meetings organized by the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation]. However, as construction funds were very limited for the size of the park, the restroom was one of the desired features that were not included.

J.A. Brennan Associates' Final Design Concept Memo, done for the current planning and design project, stresses that:

a restroom is a crucial amenity for this site. When the open space fulfills its potential as a regional draw for many different types of activities, a restroom will allow families a place to use the facilities, exercisers a source for drinking water, and support services for the playground, skatespot and parkour events.

After looking at several potential sites, Brennan and Associates' 2016 schematic long-range plan located the restrooms on Colonnade's west edge just northeast of the entry that is at the corner of Franklin Avenue E. and E. Blaine Street.

Currently the closest public restrooms are at Rogers Playfield, more than five blocks north of Colonnade's northernmost edge. Restrooms at Colonnade would serve not only its own users, but also the many pedestrians who use the Blaine and Howe Street stairs that extend up and down Capitol Hill above Lakeview Blvd. A particular advantage of the west restroom location would be to serve not only this population to the east, but also the pedestrians and bicyclists to the west who use the Cheshiahud Loop that goes around Lake Union. A restroom building would have outside of it a drinking fountain and a faucet for filling up containers.

A public restroom at Colonnade had the support of many in the on-line survey and at open houses held at Colonnade. Of the 60 people who signed in to the May 9 Colonnade Fitness Day open house

and were given the opportunity to paste a limited number of colored dots on various possible features, half (the most for any feature) chose a restroom. Comments received from homeless people also support the need for a restroom, as they are no happier than other users about contamination by human waste at the current Colonnade and the WSDOT right-of-way south of it.

Following are comments from five respondents to the on-line survey:

“If you want good activities to happen and encourage families to recreate in their community, the City of Seattle needs to actually stand behind that and provide a bathroom.”

“It’s a basic human need to spend a comfortable period of time anywhere. Successful societies recognize human needs and provide for them. ... People will go no matter what. Provide them with a safe clean place to go, or they’ll go everywhere they choose.”

“What am I supposed to do if I'm there riding my bike for an hour and I need a bathroom...? Parks need bathrooms.”

“People who exercise like to drink water, and at some point our bodies need to get rid of that water. If you want people to pee on the concrete supports for the highway, or in a bottle, or in a bush, and get charged for public indecency, then go ahead and save costs on a bathroom, but at least make an effort to leave a sign behind pointing to the nearest public restroom.”

“Toilets are a human need and humane response to the homeless/transient population.”

Many of those responding to the on-line survey said that they had relieved themselves at Colonnade, seen others do so, or happened upon the results. At the May 9 open house, a female in an expensive track suit confided that she had no choice but to urinate between parked cars along Lakeview Blvd.; and a man said he had been charged with indecent exposure for doing so (although apparently not at Colonnade). Comments from four other respondents:

“Human waste found all over the park.”

“Sometimes I have to go and it's better than using the bushes or a rock.”

“We see people peeing in the bushes all the time when we're looking out our kitchen window.”

“I'm tired of even the joggers and some homeless 'residents' urinating on the trails!”

Yet a substantial minority of the public is either skeptical of a restroom at Colonnade or conditions their support on it being designed to deter misuse. There is concern that a restroom would attract uncivil behavior and be difficult to maintain. An on-line survey respondent commented: “I may be biased since I live right by the park (so don't need a public restroom), but my main concern would be with keeping it clean, free from drug use and other crime. If there was a good way to do that, then I would be in favor.” Another: “Unless the facility locks at night, a restroom should not be installed.” Several commenters recommended new designs they have seen elsewhere that make a restroom easier to clean and more difficult to misuse.

Drinking fountains. The 2015-16 planning and design process received requests for drinking fountains, of which there are currently none in the I-5 Colonnade Open Space despite the large number of people who exercise there and on SDOT's adjacent Blaine and Howe St. stairs. It is assumed that there would be a drinking fountain on the exterior of the rest room. As the restroom would be on the west edge of Colonnade, a freestanding drinking fountain should be placed on the east edge of Colonnade. But as it may be some years before a restroom is funded and constructed, it would be best to begin by installing freestanding drinking fountains on the east and west edges of Colonnade.

PUBLIC ART

Public art was probably the topic that the Colonnade Steering Committee discussed the most, yet agreed on the least. Following is a summary of the discussions and public input.

The columns: canvas or art? There was much debate but no consensus at public and steering committee meetings regarding the possibility of decorating the columns. Examples cited include the Chinese dragons on the I-5 columns along Jackson Street in the Chinatown/the International District; the abstract designs under I-5 on Ravenna Blvd.; and the barcodes and icons under the Spokane Street Viaduct between Sixth Avenue South and East Marginal Way South. A proposed alternative to wholesale decoration of the columns was the suggestion to assign certain columns to different artists.

A very different philosophy was reflected in the comment by some that Colonnade is itself a monumental piece of art that draws strength from repetition, with its columns no more to be a canvas for art than are the columns in a Greek temple or the trees in a forest.

A possible middle ground is the proposal to project light art onto the columns—to “paint the columns with light,” as artist Robert Rudine suggested at the July 8, 2015 public meeting. Rather than commit to a single artist or art scheme, the columns would be preserved as a canvas for visual creations that could change with the minutes, hour, week, month, etc.

Seventh Climate art installation. Colonnade's main public art, funded by Seattle's percent for the arts program, is “Seventh Climate (Paradise Reconsidered)”, a 2006 installation by San Francisco artist John Roloff. Here are some excerpts from the artist's statement which is available on his web site at <http://www.johnroloff.com/seattle>:

The installation of freeway in the early 1960's necessitated the removal and dislocation of a portion of the Eastlake neighborhood; there are no recognizable remains of the streets, houses or biota of that neighborhood except the several streets dead ending into the freeway's under space. Seventh Climate (Paradise Reconsidered), 2006, creates a meta-system that brings together the interaction of global representatives in the form of selected tree species and a symbolic dissolution of a section of the I-5 freeway through a simulation/mimicry of ... pre-freeway precipitation, sunlight and moonlight cycles... of the 1960 Seattle. ...

A complex electronic program activates an elevated mist/rain emission system and solar and moonlight simulation lighting. The ground plane within the zone of altered climate is of recycled

concrete, a reflection of the overhead freeway and missing neighborhood's construction/deconstruction. Four trees, optimally with a 'white/ghost' element (flower, trunk, or foliage) each representing a different climate, biome/terrain, tightly planted in the center of the site forming a single arboreal structure. The lighting system is aimed at the top 1/2 of the tree group, the rain system is in two linear, overhead elements on either side and above the tree group.

A cumulative effect of the year-long light and moisture simulation of the 1960 external Seattle environment in this zone is to "remove" or "make transparent" the section of freeway and its metaphorical darkness, directly overhead, as in 1960, a year before the freeway was built. The sun, moon and rain that had nourished the site before the freeway was built are symbolically reconstructed. Within the interactive context and conditions created by the freeway site, cycling light, intermittent rain and arboreal growth, these elements are asked to reconcile, adapt and engage with each other, forming new relationships and questions across bio-geographic, meta-ecological boundaries/languages, cultural, industrial and natural interdependency, collaboration and production.

This art installation's ethereal blue lighting is scheduled for conceptual purposes, causing it sometimes to be lit in the middle of the day when barely discernible, or in the middle of the night when few are there to benefit. The schedule is not tailored to seasons or evenings of darkness when the lighting would most benefit Colonnade users and would show off the art installation to its best effect. The Colonnade Steering Committee suggests a request to artist John Roloff to modify the lighting schedule to better serve current public needs. While those whose homes and access were taken by I-5 should be memorialized, it would be fitting to do so in a way that helps reclaim this long-blighted area for public use and enjoyment.

Roloff's art installation is a part of the City of Seattle's public art collection. As such, special care must be taken to preserve it, such as in siting and constructing the north-south multi-used pathway that is a central element of the schematic long-range plan. An additional issue for Seattle's Office of Arts and Culture is how to address vandalism and wear that compromise its lighting and misting systems.

Kraken sculpture? Although not considered high art, the Fremont Troll is among America's best known pieces of public art, and is perfectly suited to its location under the SR 99 bridge. Colonnade is an even bigger stage for a sculpture that could be that of another mythical creature such as the "kraken" (a huge squid or octopus). This idea was advanced by proponents of both the parkour area and the outdoor gym/movement playground. The latter facility is already proposed to include a metal framework which, it happens, could also support such a sculpture without needing to touch the I-5 columns (WSDOT prefers that nothing be attached to the columns).

Integral art. The 2016 schematic long-range plan envisions integrating art and design into functional objects or structures already needed for wayfinding, signs, railings, walls, and the various specialized areas and decentralized, scattered features.

Art theme. Some suggest that a theme unite not only art pieces, but other facilities at Colonnade. At the June 2016 University of Washington design studio, a post-apocalyptic theme was suggested.

Sector art and design. Additional art could be commissioned for use in specialized areas of Colonnade such as the current ones for mountain biking and dogs off-leash, and planned ones for skateboards, parkour, outdoor gym/movement playground, bouldering/ climbing, P-Patch/community garden, and the labyrinth. An as yet unresolved issue will be the proper balance between any Colonnade-wide art theme versus defining the different use areas uniquely by their art.

Art for bicycle area. An unusual natural/sculpted 5-foot tall wooden hand (later stolen) once signified the mountain bike area. A monumental wooden foot by the same sculptor is still present in the current novice mountain biking area (lower north section), and should be kept or relocated. More secure replacements for the hand and foot could be commissioned.

The sign artwork incorporated with the bike features on the Tqalu trail is important and should be retained even if the features are relocated.

Additional commissioned art in the mountain biking area or along the multi-use pedestrian and bicycle pathway could have a bicycle theme, make use of found bicycle parts, and/or be designed to accommodate bicycle riding and stunts.

Art for skateboard area. The site currently proposed for a skatespot is compact and visible from all sides, offering the possibility of distinctive art that could also be functional for those doing stunts or watching them.

Street art. In the on-line survey, response was overwhelmingly positive to this question: “It has been suggested to dedicate one or more walls where street art would be allowed and encouraged. Do you support this idea?”

Sites at Colonnade could be specified where street art is encouraged. Some very creative street art is painted on an ongoing basis onto WSDOT retaining walls that are hidden in fenced-off portions of the right-of-way. This street art (freeway art?) is entirely different from the (sometimes gang-related) graffiti being scrawled in the most publicly visible parts of I-5 Colonnade Open Space and elsewhere in Seattle.

Temporary art. Some have proposed locations for display of temporary art at Colonnade. One on-line survey responded said, “There are site-specific sculptures that are installed temporarily in Carkeek Park every summer/fall that are fantastic. It would be great to have some sort of art exhibits/sculpture pieces at this park, too.”

WAYFINDING, INTERPRETATION, AND SIGNAGE

The 2016 schematic long-range plan envisions improvements in wayfinding, interpretation, and signage. These improvements are much needed. The steep topography and the columns partially block views into and within Colonnade. An on-line survey participant commented that Colonnade “doesn't look like a park. It still looks like an area under a flyover.” Well-designed and easily understood wayfinding information would attract more users and enhance the recreational experience and nonmotorized travel. Signs with a common design will provide a theme while allowing each of the different parts of Colonnade its own distinction.

The schematic long-range plan envisions an interpretive kiosk to introduce visitors to the history of the Colonnade area and make them aware of the recreational and travel opportunities. The kiosk could include space for announcements and information for potential volunteers.

Two ideas from the public worth exploring further: (1) The east entry plaza by Lakeview Blvd. could be painted with a map of Colonnade to assist in wayfinding. (2) The freeway columns could be a valuable medium for wayfinding through the use of distinctive color and design, identifying to the public different use sectors. As the columns are quite high, they would allow the wayfinding information to be seen from far away. However, painting the columns would be expensive and maintenance would be difficult.

PARKING AND LOADING

Although many visitors to the I-5 Colonnade Open Space come on foot, by bicycle, or by bus, many also come by car, some from very far away. The 2003 planning for the original Colonnade Construction considered including a parking lot just off Lakeview Blvd., but the parking lot was rejected in favor of the current landscaping and entry plaza.

When Colonnade opened in 2005, the land nearby was lightly developed, and on-street parking was fairly easy to find—but no longer. Since that time, redevelopment has brought new offices, laboratories, condominiums, and apartments with about a thousand new workers and several hundred new residents, and along with them greatly increased demand for on-street parking.

An indication of the importance of parking was this on-line survey comment that valued parking over sidewalks: “In general I agree with adding more sidewalks, however, I would be opposed to adding any sidewalks that would remove street parking. E.g., adding a sidewalk on the east side of Franklin Place should be done in a way that allows for street parking to continue on the east side of Franklin Place.”

With no current on-site parking at Colonnade, the main option for parking or loading is on-street, where users compete with nearby residents and office workers, some of whom park on the street because they are unwilling to pay for spaces available in their own building. Property owners and employers need to address this issue, which hampers public enjoyment of Colonnade. “Hide-and-rides” also use the free parking and then bus or carpool to such places as downtown, the University District, or even out of town.

Time limits for on-street parking. Currently the on-street parking is not limited in duration. Placing a one or two hour limit on parking would discourage all-day parking by office and laboratory workers and “hide and ride” users, helping free up on-street parking for more Colonnade visitors.

RPZ. For block faces that abut residential uses, a restricted parking zone that allows two-hour parking without a permit could favor both residents and Colonnade users while discouraging office and laboratory workers and “hide-and-rides”.

Reclaim parking on the east side of Lakeview Blvd. Although parking is allowed on the east side of Lakeview Blvd. between Blaine and Howe streets, it is effectively unavailable because of soil sliding. A retaining wall and sidewalk (as planned in the section above on connections) would make it possible to park, while also providing a safer walking route along the east side of Lakeview Blvd., as this is the only block of Lakeview Blvd. that lacks a sidewalk.

Parking on Franklin Ave. E. south of Galer St. A current 23 marked head-in parking spaces are on both sides of the dead end of Franklin Avenue E. south of E. Galer Street, right by the WSDOT gate leading to the planned north-south multi-use pathway and the Eastlake slope improvements (P-patch/community garden, children's play area, steps and switchback pathway). Some or all of these spaces could be restricted to either one or two hour parking, and/or to Colonnade users.

Parking on WSDOT right-of-way. South of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space on WSDOT right-of-way under I-5 are two paved parking lots adjoining Franklin Avenue E. that are a possible source for spaces for Colonnade users. One of these lots (the much smaller one) was recently leased by WSDOT to a parking business. The other is directly north of it, directly south of the off-leash area, and is under WSDOT lease to Alexandria Real Estate Equities, Inc. To make room for some of these spaces to be used by Colonnade visitors, both companies could be requested to slightly reduce the number of their leased parking spaces, or rearrange their parking to include part of the adjoining lot. These changes would, at the least, involve moving eastward their lots' security gate and west fence.

Four or five head-in parking spaces are just off the east side of Franklin Avenue E., facing the Alexandria lot and thus are quite close to the off-leash area. These parking spaces could be restricted to either one or two hour parking, and/or to Colonnade users.

Improved access to parking on Lakeview Blvd. On-street parking is available on Lakeview Blvd. south of the I-5 off-ramp, but is difficult to reach from Colonnade. Colonnade users will have better access to this parking with the planned stairways and possible paved pathway between this area and the southeast corner of Colonnade (see above sections on stairways and paved pathways).

ADJACENT RESIDENTS AND OWNERS

Special efforts (see section on public outreach and engagement) were made throughout the planning and design process to inform adjacent residents and property owners about the Colonnade planning and design process and to involve them in it. Several participated in the public meetings, workshops, and open houses. The 2016 schematic long-range plan is designed to be compatible with their needs, such as in the location of uses and lighting. In none of the input received have any adjacent residents or property owners opposed anything now in the plan.

OUTDOOR OCCUPANTS (INCLUDES HOMELESS)

In the decades before establishment of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space, the area (then posted "no trespassing") was being occupied in daytime and/or overnight for sleeping and various other purposes, some illegal (e.g. drug use and sales). With the greatly increased visitation upon Colonnade's 2005 opening, most of this occupation moved just nearby to the remaining WSDOT right-of-way south to E. Aloha Street, an area that was and is fenced and posted "no trespassing".

Beginning perhaps with the 2008 recession, a growing level of occupation has been occurring in the I-5 Colonnade Open Space itself along with an increase in the remaining fenced-off WSDOT right-of-way. Individual and non-profit donors increasingly have been handing out free tents, sleeping bags, and air mattresses, and distributing food and water to unofficial homeless encampments.

Tents have been seen in almost all parts of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space including under the on-ramp, and in the granite gathering area. The occupiers have been most numerous at the south end in parts of the mountain bike area that have been unused in recent years, with frequent camping and the area sometimes strewn with garbage, used hypodermic needles, and human waste. Misuse of the faucet at the off-leash area (such as for human showers) caused the Department of Parks and Recreation and Citizens for Off-leash Areas to shut off the water supply several years ago.

As reflected in some of the public comments below, the increased daytime and overnight occupation is off-putting to other users out of concern for litter, sanitation, and actual or potential crimes and misdemeanors. Some in the Police Department believe that the number of occupiers has increased with the 2016 closure of the “Jungle” encampment area five miles south under I-5 between Beacon Hill and Georgetown.

The improvements envisioned by the 2016 schematic long-range plan for the mountain bike area, off-leash area and throughout Colonnade are expected to bring in many more recreational users and nonmotorized travelers. Those who choose to occupy Colonnade in daytime or overnight value their privacy highly, and are unlikely to remain in areas with major visitation. Of course, some outdoor occupants/homeless are attracted to Colonnade for the same reasons and purposes as other visitors. A couple who live in their car came to the May 7, 2015 bicycle workshop because they enjoy mountain biking at Colonnade and had suggestions for improvements.

The outreach effort of the Colonnade planning and design study reached many outdoor occupants (including homeless people), some of whom provided comments. The most common comment was support for adding a public restroom. Without any public restroom, those occupying Colonnade have little choice but to urinate or defecate on the ground. There also is concern about a shortage of garbage cans and the need to regularly empty the existing ones, which can overflow quickly.

A concern expressed by some of those occupying the WSDOT right-of-way south of Colonnade is their possible loss of their place to camp. Planned stairways and pathways, including the north-south multi-use pathway, will require only about four acres of the 8.5 acres that are south of the current I-5 Colonnade Open Space, but those now camping in the area may prefer not to if more people are walking or bicycling nearby. No occupiers have been seen in the well-fenced Eastlake Slope WSDOT parcel between Eastlake Avenue and I-5 that is planned for a P-Patch/community garden, children’s play area, pathway and steps.

Many comments from people who use Colonnade for recreation or travel expressed concern about the daytime or overnight occupation:

“I would ask the team and advocates to be very cautious and judicious. Let's expand recreational uses and commuter corridor if feasible. But if this is only going to lead to an expansion of areas

where the homeless can spend many hours during the day, it will become an unwelcome place for the casual commuter visitor and recreational user"

"Maybe provide a designated camping area next to the park, give homeless folks a bit of space, and then strictly enforce no camping in the park itself?"

"I eventually stopped going there early in the morning because people would still be sleeping there from the night before."

PUBLIC SAFETY AND HEALTH

The original proposal in the 1998 *Eastlake Neighborhood Plan* to open Colonnade to public use cited as one of several reasons that the area (then marked "no trespassing") was "intimidating and hazardous." The 1998 Plan called for installation of lighting and of emergency call stations. When opened in 2005 the I-5 Colonnade Open Space included some lighting and an emergency call station, both along the stairway on the Howe Street alignment.

The opening of Colonnade seems to have occasioned a reduction in crime, probably most attributable to the "eyes on the street" of the many people using the central stairway and pathways and the mountain biking area. However, as discussed in sections above, significant parts of Colonnade do not yet have programmed uses, use of the off-leash area has never been high, and mountain biking at Colonnade has declined in recent years.

Survey results. The 2015 Colonnade on-line survey and other public input show a definite public perception that the risk of crime has increased, with some saying that they avoid the area, especially at night, and even when Colonnade's stairs or pathways offer the most direct route.

The on-line survey asked "Have there been any times in the I-5 Colonnade Open Space when you did not feel safe from potential crime?" Of those who answered, 49 (56 percent) said "yes", there had been times when they did not feel safe from potential crime, and 39 said that "no", there had been no such times. The two versions of the survey had different results, with the first survey (conducted primarily in the spring 2015) being 38-24 (more "yes"), and the second survey (conducted primarily in summer 2015) being 11-15 (more "no").

These different results between spring and summer may reflect the general lack of artificial lighting at Colonnade. Fear for personal safety is greater in months of greater darkness, and less in months of long sunny days. Even a woman who professed to feel safe at Colonnade added: "But I don't walk at dark which would scare me." Those who answered "yes" to feeling unsafe in the park gave a number of answers, with the large majority mentioning people occupying Colonnade or using drugs there. Here are 17 of the comments received, each from a different person:

"I have had my car broken into & bike stolen from this area."

"During the evening and nighttime hours this area seems to see greatly reduced foot traffic from Eastlake residents and I believe this is due to physical safety concerns. I have seen the police come to the area during the day and night responding to calls concerning violence, drug/alcohol related

disturbances, indecent exposure, and human urination and defecation at the entrance of the dog run.”

“Over the past year, there's been an increase in graffiti and small gatherings of folks that look like they may be involved in trouble. Additionally, I've seen criminal elements being chased into/out of the park by police after being involved in petty crime up in Capitol Hill or in Eastlake.”

“There are cigarette butts, sometimes hypodermic needles and broken glass that accompany the more aggressive homeless folks who glare at people who just simply walk through minding their own business.”

“Not a place my girlfriend felt safe riding alone.”

“I avoid walking through there at night because of the poor lighting and vagrant population.”

“I'm a tiny little white girl and there are drug addicts and bums everywhere.”

“Don't feel safe parking car. Human feces on path. Needles and trash.”

“I'm not sure that I have any recommendations to improve the safety while balancing the needs of the homeless or at-risk people who sleep there. I do know that during the fall/winter it gets pretty sketchy at night.”

“While I personally have not felt unsafe, I know my girlfriend does due to the darkness.”

“Was there just before dusk and saw a drug deal go down, have also witnessed people shooting up on some of the perimeter trails.”

“There were homeless people sleeping under jumps and a guy was shooting up and urinating on a bench.”

“There is a lot of trash and I worry about drug paraphernalia in the bushes.”

“I have called in fires and people beating up a man back there. I have witnessed a few interesting exchanges which I would classify as a drug buy.”

“Having more connections to the Eastlake and Capitol Hill neighborhoods would help. In general, if lots of people are attracted to the area, it will go from feeling secluded and creepy at night to safe and fun.”

“More people is key. The more people we can attract to the park, the safer it will feel. ... The more people who are around, the safer the park will be.”

“If it's more inviting and more people use it, the homeless won't camp there.”

“Blue light” emergency call station. In the original 2005 Colonnade construction, an emergency phone was installed on a pedestal at the midpoint landing of the stairs on the Howe Street alignment with a connection underground to a telephone line. The phone would automatically call 911 when activated. Unfortunately, the installation has long since ceased to function.

The schematic long-range plan envisions the reactivation or replacement of this emergency call station and the addition of four more. Available formats include pedestals, poles, or wall-mount boxes. A new option are solar electric panels. The web sites of two of the companies that manufacture emergency call stations are <http://www.rathsecurity.com> and <http://talkaphone.com>.

Police patrols. Occasional police patrols, especially in periods of darkness, would contribute greatly to public confidence, attracting greater use that would make everyone safer. In the on-line survey, one respondent wrote: “I’ve never seen any police there. Foot or bike patrols would be great.” Another asked for “regular or nightly patrols by police or neighborhood group, particularly if users of the park notice/report people in the park engaging in suspicious activity, drug usage, harassment, etc.”

Graffiti. As public use of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space has declined in recent years, graffiti seems to have grown. It seems to be greatest in the fenced-off areas to the south, suggesting that it might be reduced by opening up these areas to public use such as via the north-south multi-use pedestrian and bicycle pathway envisioned in the schematic long-range plan. In the fenced-off area south of the current Colonnade, the large wall that has attracted street art is relatively free of traditional graffiti. As discussed in the above section on public art, encouraging street art in one or more specific Colonnade locations might be another way to discourage graffiti.

Garbage and human waste. As reflected in the public comments quoted above, garbage (including hypodermic needles) and human waste are too often found in the I-5 Colonnade Open Space and in the WSDOT right-of-way to the south. The risk to public health is unacceptable. The City should take action.

For the 7.5 acre I-5 Colonnade Open Space, there are only four trash cans, a number that seems inadequate. In particular, the trash can at the south end of the off-leash area fills up quickly and can overflow before it is emptied. Because the lack of rain in most of Colonnade so greatly reduces the need for weeding and pruning, maintenance costs in Colonnade are quite low, and it is hoped that some of the funds saved could go into more trash cans and regular emptying.

For years, the WSDOT right-of-way south of Colonnade has had a kind of surface cesspit with hundreds of pounds of rotting human waste, not far from some of the planned pathways and stairs. A restroom in Colonnade is important for public health of all—the occupiers, and those using the area for recreation or non-motorized travel.

LIGHTING

The J.A. Brennan Associates Final Design Concept Memo observes (p. 3):

Lighting is both a safety concern and also a huge opportunity to extend the hours of use and occupation of the Open Space. Especially in the dark winter months, a covered, lit space will be a unique asset for this region. Light can also be used artistically within the space.

The more widespread and brighter lighting that the 2016 schematic long-range plan envisions is one of the most important steps to increasing public use and enjoyment of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space. Currently the only lighting (some of it insufficiently bright) within the I-5 Colonnade Open Space is along the Howe St. stairs. Because the original construction budget was small for the acreage to be developed, only wiring and the bases for lighting standards were installed along the ADA-accessible diagonal pathway between the East entry plaza and the NW entry in 2005. The light poles and the lights themselves were never purchased or installed.

Lighting along all pathways is a must. Other current Colonnade features that should have lighting, but do not, include the mountain biking area, off-leash area, and the entries. New features envisioned in the 2016 schematic long-range plan that should have lighting include the skatespot, parkour/freerunning area, bouldering/climbing area; outdoor gym/movement playground; P-patch/community garden; children's play area; and labyrinth.

It is important to minimize lighting spillover to nearby residences. Timers or motion sensors could help reduce the use of lighting except when it is truly needed. Lights could be set so that they cannot be turned on past a certain time each night.

The need for improved lighting, especially as a way to improve public safety, was a frequent theme in responses to the on-line survey. Here are ten comments:

“Better lighting and overgrowth removal to allow for clear vision near the bottom of the stairs where they pass the small picnic table area.”

“More and better lighting would help a great deal.”

“More lighting, make it hard to camp out.”

“Lighting will increase use and discourage crime.”

“We need more lighting around the park to make it welcoming. In particular the lighting on the street connecting Boylston and Lakeview (under the bridge) is not enough.”

“We need more lighting in the off-leash area”

“We need the path to the off-leash area also well lit.”

“I think it would be a good idea to have lighting along all of the larger/well-used pathways at the very least.”

“Currently there is lighting in only a few areas of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space. According to one respondent in the on-line survey:

“The vast majority of the time I am using the park it is running the lower stairs since they stay semi-lit and covered. The current lighting there isn't quite sufficient and makes for an unnerving environment.”

Seventh Climate art installation. As discussed above in the section on public art, the Colonnade art installation “Seventh Climate” features ethereal blue lights on a complex schedule. Unfortunately, the lighting is not on during most evenings, and it is on during some bright days when it can barely be seen. It is hoped that artist John Roloff will be receptive to modifying the schedule so that the lights are on during the periods when the installation’s lighting can be best appreciated and when it is most needed by those visiting Colonnade.

TREES AND LANDSCAPING

Prior to the 2005 opening of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space, the major landscaping in the area consisted of trees planted in 1962 for WSDOT under the direction of Professor Richard Haag, founder and first chair of the University of Washington’s Department of Landscape Architecture, and among the best known in his field worldwide. On the west side of I-5 where it abuts Franklin Avenue are California redwoods, and on the east side along Lakeview Blvd. are Japanese elms.

The redwoods lend beauty and drama both as seen from within Colonnade and in looking toward it. Unfortunately, they are currently infested with clematis and ivy vines, maple trees, and blackberries all of which the 2016 schematic long-range plan calls for removing. Removing these invasives will greatly improve lines of sight between the off-leash area and Franklin Avenue East. Later, a public process could explore whether to remove lower limbs of the redwoods. These limbs are an integral part of the landscape and should not be removed unless as a result of a public process that explores the alternatives to doing so.

Much of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space is protected from rain by the freeway, and in those areas, shrubs and weeds are virtually absent, helping minimize the City’s maintenance costs. However, rain does reach Colonnade along the edges and through slot openings in the freeway structure as well as from the expansion joints and leaks in the drain pipes (on the latter, see the next section on drainage and runoff), fostering some invasive shrubs and weeds that can be a concern for visibility and security. Several respondents to the on-line survey commented on the safety issues from a lack of pruning of bushes.

In building the 7.5 acre Colonnade, only about a quarter acre received new landscape plants, undoubtedly one of the lowest fractions for a unit of City park system. On the Howe Street alignment, small areas of grass and flowers grace the east and west entries to Colonnade. The 2016 schematic long-range plan envisions very few additional landscape plants in the current Colonnade, but suggests a modest addition in the areas of expansion, especially those (such as the Eastlake Slope) that are out from under the freeway and receive rain.

DRAINAGE AND RUNOFF

In protecting much of Colonnade and its expansion area from rain, Interstate 5 collects huge amounts of runoff, most of which is piped into Lake Union. Because of holes and disconnections in the drain pipes, some of this runoff falls into Colonnade. Additional runoff falls into Colonnade through the freeway structure's expansion joints.

Some have proposed deliberately applying the I-5 runoff to the Colonnade trails or to swales. Without extensive pre-treatment, doing so would be unwise because of the many toxic metals and organic hydrocarbons that it contains. There is no room for grassy swales, but wet vaults that settle and strain the water might work and could have subsidiary benefits such as a flat concrete surface for other uses. But the volume of I-5 runoff is so huge that sufficient wet vaults could squeeze out recreational and non-motorized travel uses, and also threaten the stability of the hillside which supports I-5.

JOINT BENEFITS TO WSDOT

What has so far been achieved in the 7.5 acre I-5 Colonnade Open Space would not have been possible without a lease from the Washington State Department of Transportation. And what is envisioned in the 2016 schematic long-range plan would not have been possible without WSDOT's support for the Neighborhood Matching Fund application and for the planning and design process. Also be impossible without WSDOT openness, such as to the proposed four acre expansion. Everyone who benefits from Colonnade now and in the future has WSDOT to thank for its cooperation, which it can grant only within the limits of its required stewardship of I-5 as part of the Interstate Highway System.

A condition of the U.S. federal funding of WSDOT's original acquisition of the I-5 right-of way-and its construction of I-5 is that transportation shall be the priority use. WSDOT's current lease of 7.5 acres of right-of-way to the City, and its lease or permit of any increased acreage for Colonnade, will always be with this understanding, including WSDOT's right to take back the land for its priority use whenever needed. The current Colonnade and the proposals in the 2016 draft schematic long-range plan are designed to accommodate WSDOT's needs, foremost being not to interfere with maintenance roads or with the structural integrity of the I-5 columns.

The planned new pedestrian and bicycle features within the current Colonnade and the expansion area will have significant benefits for WSDOT, especially in helping realize goals and policies in its 2015 *Washington State Transportation Plan* that encourage bicycle and pedestrian networks and facilities. The case for such improvements is made very well on page 70 of that plan:

Expanding accessibility to non-motorized transportation opportunities serves more than the recreation and tourism markets and the economic benefits that accrue from those expenditures. In addition to providing mobility options for a cross-section of the population that has limited or no access to transit or an automobile, safe and convenient access to schools, jobs, and everyday errand destinations by walking and bicycling benefits the broader community through improved health and reduced personal transportation costs.

In addition to the primary recreational and transportation purposes of the various improvements planned for the Colonnade area, these improvements will have some engineering benefits at no cost to WSDOT in helping preserve and maintain the I-5 viaduct structure that shelters the Colonnade area. Whatever is done at Colonnade must respect or enhance the columns' structural integrity.

The various pathway, stair, and recreational projects will harden the area around the I-5 columns, improving their stability. Also, replacement of some of the gabions (wire enclosures filled with rocks) with concrete retaining walls will improve slope retention. Improved and new pathways on or near WSDOT maintenance roads will occasion upgrading and lengthening of these roads.

IMPROVEMENT VS. EXPANSION

In supporting funding for the current planning and design study, the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation requested consideration of the relative merits of improving the existing I-5 Colonnade Open Space versus expanding it beyond the current 7.5 acres. In deciding on that size in 2003 (against the urging for up to 20 acres by some City Councilmembers, the Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board, and others), the Parks Superintendent promised to consider Colonnade's expansion in the future.

In cooperation with the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation, the Washington State Department of Transportation, and other agencies and stakeholders, the current planning and design study looked at a total of 20 acres of WSDOT right-of-way, including the current 7.5 acres now under lease to the City and a potential expansion area of 12.5 acres. The study recognized that construction and maintenance would be lower if kept within the existing boundary rather than expanded beyond it.

The current study finds that significant spaces in the existing Colonnade are unprogrammed, an opportunity for new uses also slightly increased by the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance proposal to redesign the mountain bike area and reduce its size by about half an acre. The current study was able to keep most of the major additions within the existing Colonnade boundaries: skatespot, parkour/freerunning, bouldering/climbing, outdoor gym/movement playground, and many new pathways and stairways.

The planning and design study finds that much of the potential expansion area is steeper than Colonnade and not suited for recreational or travel purposes; and parts (two fenced parking lots) are leased to businesses. The study does find that a few important new features are not possible without expanding onto about four acres of WSDOT right-of-way south of the existing Colonnade boundaries, where the schematic long-range plan places the following features:

- (1) New north-south multi-use pedestrian and bicycle pathway through the current Colonnade and then south of it on WSDOT right-of-way under and branching on both sides of I-5 (to East Aloha Street on the west, to the Lakeview Blvd. overpass on the east), plus steps and pathways connecting it to Eastlake Avenue and Lakeview Blvd. Estimated area: 2 acres.
- (2) Children's play area, P-Patch/community garden, stairs, and switchback pathway for the Eastlake Slope (a WSDOT land parcel that lies between I-5 and Eastlake Avenue, about halfway between E. Galer St. and E. Nelson Place.) Estimated area: 1.5 acres.

- (3) A labyrinth at the south end of the right-of-way, about a half block north of E. Aloha Street. Estimated area: .25 acre.
- (4) For Colonnade users, motor vehicle parking that would be located on two parcels of WSDOT right-of-way that adjoin Franklin Avenue E. just south of the current Colonnade. Estimated area: .25 acre.

Would this modest expansion in Colonnade be a burden on the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation? It would not be, especially considering the likelihood of bringing in construction funds and maintenance resources from outside the Department’s budget. Consider:

- (1) The 1.5 acre Eastlake Slope expansion with its children’s play area and P-Patch/community garden would be a reasonable addition to the responsibilities of the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation, and promising sources of outside funding offer hope that the Department would pay only a fraction of the cost of construction and maintenance.
- (2) The north-south multi-use pedestrian and bicycle pathway could be by WSDOT lease to the Department of Parks and Recreation, but if the latter department prefers, the lease could be to the Seattle Department of Transportation, or the pathway could be hosted by WSDOT without need for a lease, with the funding from outside the Department of Parks and Recreation. Also, maintenance could be done by one of these departments or by a non-profit organization or business under a cooperative agreement with WSDOT.
- (3) The labyrinth could be constructed under a WSDOT lease or permit to either the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, or another non-profit.
- (4) The small amount of parking on WSDOT right-of-way could be leased to the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation, or it could be hosted by WSDOT or by one or both of the businesses that now lease this parking.

COST ESTIMATES

As a part of the Colonnade planning and design process, J.A. Brennan Landscape Architects and Planners produced planning level preliminary cost estimates for the various components of the schematic long-range plan. The full document is available on the Colonnade web site (see bibliography). The key estimates are adapted here as the following two tables which respectively provide estimates for projects and for improvements that are repeated in different use sectors or are areawide or dispersed throughout Colonnade. The estimates provided by J.A. Brennan are base costs; actual costs would need to add another 84.5% that consists of: 35% estimating and design contingency, 10% construction contingency, 10% permitting, 20% design fee, and 9.5% sales tax. An additional column is provided here to allow the calculation of adjusted cost.

Estimated costs of projects in the 2016 schematic long-range plan for the I-5 Colonnade Open Space (alphabetical order)	Base cost	Adjusted cost (includes 84.5% in contingencies, fees, permitting, and sales tax)*
ADA pathway for the west entry at E. Blaine St.	\$8,600	

ADA pathway for the west entry at E. Howe St.	6,160	
Bouldering/climbing area	290,000	
Children's play area	160,000	
E. Blaine St. alignment (east-west pathway, stairs, east plaza)	248,520	
Eastlake Slope hill climb and P-Patch/community garden	287,360	
Entry at Lakeview/Blaine (plaza, landscaping, amenities)	157,920	
Interpretive kiosk	15,000	
Labyrinth with landscaping, amenities	95,000	
Mountain bike trails/features, dirt jumps, paved pump track	330,000	
Off-leash area improvements	210,000	
Outdoor gym/all-ages movement playground	200,000	
Parkour/freerunning area	400,000	
Pathway N-S between Lakeview underpass and E. Galer St.	424,800	
Pathway N-S from current Colonnade south boundary south to E. Aloha on west side of I-5	93,600	
Pathway south of E. Galer St.	13,860	
Pathway and stairs south of E. Garfield St.	89,160	
Pathway through Lakeview Meadow	115,920	
Plaza expansion at Howe St. east entry	7,920	
Restroom	175,000	
Sidewalk on east side of Franklin Ave. E. between E. Blaine St. and E. Galer St. (2.25 blocks)	30,960	
Sidewalk on east side of Franklin Place E. between Newton and Howe streets (one block)	11,520	
Sidewalk and retaining wall on east side of Lakeview Blvd. between Blaine and Howe St. stairs (one block)	70,800	
Sidewalk on west side of Harvard Ave. E. north of Lakeview	12,240	
Skatespot and Colonnade entry stairs by Lakeview underpass	435,000	
Stairs from Lakeview underpass to existing N-S pathway	12,000	

Estimated costs of areawide, dispersed, or parallel improvements in the 2016 schematic long-range plan for the I-5 Colonnade Open Space (alphabetical order)	Cost estimate	
Additional site features	\$181,920	
Exercise nodes (6) & associated landscaping and amenities	90,000	
Fencing for WSDOT no-access areas	54,600	
Irrigation	317,000	
Lighting (\$40,000 within the current Colonnade boundaries)	70,000	
Mobilization (preparatory to any construction)	490,862	
Planting (see consultant estimates for details)	669,000	
Signage and wayfinding (see also kiosk in above table)	45,000	
Site furniture (benches, picnic tables, etc.)	45,000	

Subtotal	\$5,593,282	
Sales Tax (9.6%)	536,955	
Estimating and Design Contingency (35%)	1,957,649	
Construction Contingency (10%)	559,328	
Contaminated Soil Contingency	100,000	
Permits (Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection, Street Improvement Permit, Etc.-- 10%)	559,328	
Design Fee (20%)	1,118,656	
Grand total	\$10,425,199	

[Adapted from the planning level preliminary budget estimates by J.A. Brennan Associates Landscape Architects and Planners (see bibliography). Public Art is to be included in the project. However the scope of the installation of art has not been determined and is therefore not included in this cost estimate.] * Adjusted cost includes the following expected 84.5% additional costs: 35% estimating and design contingency, 10% construction contingency, 10% permitting, 20% design fee, and 9.6% sales tax.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Full funding of the 2016 schematic long-range plan would have large and positive impacts. Colonnade is virtually at the geographic center and population center of Seattle, and is already ranked by the internationally regarded CityLab web site as among the world’s nine “cool parks under freeway overpasses.”

But Colonnade has arguably been undercapitalized so far. At \$1.824 million for 7.5 acres, just \$243,316 per acre in Department of Parks and Recreation funds went to plan, design, engineer and construct what opened in 2005. Many features in the 2016 schematic long-range plan first came up in the 2003 planning exercise but could not be constructed for lack of funds.

More funds will go very far to improve the current 7.5 acre Colonnade and moderately expand it by 4 acres. No other public land parcel this large and close to fast-growing areas like Downtown, South Lake Union, Eastlake, the University District, and Capitol Hill has the potential, from modest additional investment, for such large increases in recreational, pedestrian, and bicycle opportunities.

But a new funding challenge for Colonnade is a puzzling bias against funding projects that, like Colonnade, the City does not own but rather leases. This bias did not exist when the 2000 Seattle parks levy ordinance specified \$1,824,870 to fund the 2005 establishment of the I-5 Colonnade Open Space. But times had changed in 2016 when the Seattle Parks District Challenge Fund flatly turned down the Eastlake Community Council's application to fund the skatespot called for in the Colonnade schematic long-range plan and whose need in the general area is documented by Parks Department's own skatepark master plan.

The reason given for the skatespot being ineligible for the Challenge Fund was not that the skatespot isn't needed, but because Colonnade is on leased rather than owned land. Somehow the Seattle Parks District has prohibited the Challenge Fund from being spent on leased land. The result is to block

worthy and well-documented projects serving diverse clienteles, especially in areas deeply impacted by highways, and located in areas with high population density and high property values where the City's purchase of new park land is infeasible.

While Seattle's Department of Parks and Recreation should be an important source for the needed funds, the case is strong for funding also from other government agencies, and from businesses, non-profit groups, and individuals. Today there is more citywide competition than ever for the Park Department funds. It is a reality that any desired improvement will come sooner if funds and in-kind donations come also from outside the Park Department budget. These outside sources make up for shortages in Park Department funds, and by multiplying the value of Department spending, they strengthen the case for it.

The mountain bike area is Colonnade's largest component, and yet has been and will continue to be built largely with funds from outside the budget of the Department of Parks and Recreation. This is because the mountain bike community committed early to bring in funds and in-kind donations from other government agencies, businesses, foundations, and individuals, thus minimizing the Park Department's direct expenses.

User groups. Enthusiastic user groups are an important source of funds and sweat equity. While the mountain bike community was Colonnade's earliest star, the current planning and design study has involved energetic advocates from the bouldering/climbing, parkour/freerunning, and skateboard communities. It is hoped that the remarkable story of the mountain biking area will inspire these user groups to bring in financial and in-kind support for the features they, too, want built at Colonnade.

Businesses. Over the years, construction of the mountain bike area has been financially supported by Starbucks, REI, Whistler-Blackcomb, Stevens Pass, and other companies. There is some hope that businesses, especially those that serve a particular user base, will contribute to the construction costs of other Colonnade features now planned.

Foundations and non-profit groups. Various foundations and non-profit organizations sponsor improvements for a particular kind of recreational improvement such as bouldering/climbing (Access Fund), parkour (Parkour Visions), and skateboarding (Tony Hawk Foundation).

Government agencies. In addition to the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation, several other government agencies are potential funders for Colonnade. The mountain bike area previously received funds from the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods' Neighborhood Matching Fund and from the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks' Youth in Parks fund. The Seattle Department of Transportation has several funding sources that could fund the sidewalks called for in the schematic long-range plan.

ADA funding. With no wheelchair accessibility at any of Colonnade's three west entries from Franklin Avenue East, Howe, Blaine, and Garfield street gateways to and from Colonnade's west side, the City's Americans with Disabilities Act funds may be available for the pathway proposed for the E. Blaine St. west entry and the ADA pathway proposed for the E. Howe St. west entry

Individual donations. Fundraising from individuals seems promising because of the enthusiasm that many people have for the I-5 Colonnade Open Space and current or proposed features there. Crowdfunding web sites make it easier to reach many people, including those not in the immediate Colonnade area. The Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance raised funds from individuals by engraving each donor's name on rock pavers that now adjoin the sidewalk along Lakeview Blvd.

Contact. Offers of financial support for Colonnade improvements, and advice on potential sources and means for fundraising, are welcome and needed. Please contact the Eastlake Community Council, info@eastlakeseattle.org.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The I-5 Colonnade Open Space already deserves its international ranking by the CityLab web site as being among the world's nine "cool parks under freeway overpasses." But the planning and design study for which this document is the final report, finds that Colonnade can be so much more with the vision of improvements outlined in the 2016 schematic long-range plan produced for us by the J.A. Brennan Associates landscape architecture firm with support from Seattle's Neighborhood Matching Fund.

A finding of this planning and design study is that Colonnade's current 7.5 acres include significant unprogrammed areas, and that many of the needed improvements are best achieved within the current boundaries. The study also finds that unique and substantial added value to recreational and transportation purposes will be achieved by Colonnade's expansion onto about four acres of WSDOT right-of-way to the south.

Elements of the schematic long-range plan. Among the many elements to be added to Colonnade by the schematic long-range plan, one of the most important is a multi-use pedestrian and bicycle pathway to run north and south along the current full length and then further south through the expansion area, branching on the west of I-5 to E. Aloha Street (near the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance), and on the east of I-5 to the Lakeview Blvd. overpass near Belmont Avenue. Many other new pathways will be added, and existing ones will be improved.

Colonnade is on a hillside, and many new stairways also will be added in areas where steep topography currently makes access difficult or impossible. The longest will be east-west under I-5 to connect with SDOT's Blaine Street stairs that extend to the east of Lakeview Blvd.

The off-leash area will be reengineered and remodeled to attract more users. The existing mountain bike area will also be substantially redesigned to have more cross-country trails, new features to fit a wider range of skill levels, and a pump track that is likely to be paved and protected from the rain.

Added also within the current Colonnade boundaries will be new facilities (lighted and sheltered from the rain) for skateboards, bouldering/climbing, parkour/freerunning, and an outdoor gym/all-ages movement playground. There will be new flat spaces for public events and for exercise such as yoga and Pilates. And there will be a restroom.

On a parcel of WSDOT land that is between I-5 and Eastlake Avenue, there will be a P-Patch/community garden and a children's play area. Further south near the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance there will be a labyrinth. Both the existing and expanded areas will have public art, landscaping, smaller scale recreational features scattered throughout, seating, places for the public to view recreational activities in progress, and improved signs and wayfinding.

The schematic long-range plan also envisions greatly improved pedestrian and bicycle connections to and from Colonnade. Many new entries to Colonnade will be created, and the existing ones will be improved, especially to provide access to people with disabilities. Sidewalks on nearby streets will be installed where they are missing, and parking and loading spaces will be increased for those arriving by motor vehicle.

To turn the plan into reality. It is hoped that Department of Parks and Recreation funds will embrace and advance the planned improvements. Of course, there is much competition citywide for the Department's funds, and these improvements will be best and most quickly achieved with outside funds from other government agencies and from businesses, foundations, and individuals.

Construction and maintenance of the mountain bike area was and will continue to be with minimal Park Department funds because of funds and volunteers brought in by the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance. This example should inspire other user groups to bring in financial and in-kind support to make their parts of the schematic long-range plan happen sooner rather than later.

An achievement of this planning and process has been to bring into dialogue a remarkable range of publics, stakeholders, user groups, and government agencies to produce a consensus on the schematic long-range plan. Colonnade will advance only if the commitment and cooperation that prevailed in this study continues into the implementation phase.

As manager of this planning and design study, the Eastlake Community Council thanks all who participated, and welcomes further questions, comments, and offers of help to find the resources to help Colonnade become all that it can be.

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Eastlake Community Council
117 E. Louisa St. #1
Seattle, WA 98102-3278

info@eastlakeseattle.org
<http://eastlakeseattle.org>

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GUIDE TO ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
BBTC	Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club (later renamed EMBA)
Blvd.	Boulevard
DCI	Department of Construction and Inspections (Seattle)
DPD	Department of Planning and Development (later split into DCI and OPCD)
ECC	Eastlake Community Council
EMBA	Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance
OPCD	Office of Planning and Community Development (Seattle)
SDOT	Seattle Department of Transportation
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation