#### Henderson Corridor

Create a safe, distinctive walking corridor.



## Recreating Henderson Street Report

Recreating S Henderson St as a beautiful neighborhood street that reflects community values, history, and identity

October 31, 2023

Prepared for: Link2Lake by the Recreating Henderson Street Planning Team



Rainier Beach Action Coalition 9013 Martin Luther King Jr. Way South Seattle, WA 98118 205.420.1010 www.rbcoalition.org Rainier Beach Action Coalition (RBAC) prepared this report for <u>Rainier Beach Link2Lake</u>
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Special thanks to original dreamers and visionaries in Rainier Beach who crafted the Rainier Beach 2014 Neighborhood Plan...we see you.

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## Introduction

This excerpt from the Rainier 2014 Neighborhood Plan (circa 1994) sets the vision and dreams of Rainier Beach residents that is driving us to this day<sup>1</sup>

Today, Rainier Beach can be seen through two different looking glasses: one of a neighborhood with tranquil views, beauty, friendliness, and a positive vibe, and another, perceiving it as a place beset with urban decay, crime, and lack of basic City services. Stretching less than half a mile from Rainier Avenue S to MLK, Jr. Way, present day Henderson Street and its immediate surroundings articulate these two viewpoints dramatically. Located in Figure 6: Illustration of Henderson Street Improvement. A combination of transportation, streetscape. housing. and economic development proposals will change Henderson Street the heart of the neighborhood. There are street houses, community-serving uses and a vista to Lake Washington, yet also is a hotspot, poorly maintained, and unfriendly to pedestrians. The community-at-large has identified its importance to Rainier Beach as a focal point for housing and economic redevelopment, but perhaps more importantly as a multi-use, transportation gateway connecting the proposed regional light rail station at MLK, Jr. Way to the community's commercial and civic core at Rainier Avenue S. The future vision focuses on building a better boulevard, accessible and attractive to transit riders, pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists, while also facilitating opportunities to transportation departments, and recommendations based on resident/stakeholder feedback and a few twists from those in the future with great ideas too..

Having a say in what goes on in your neighborhood is a critical part of community efficacy. Community (Youth and neighborhood) engagement, because of community efficacy, contributes to a sense of safety and actual safety. Recreating Henderson Street Planning Team thanks to the support of Link2Lake via Seattle Parks Foundation, is having a say. This project started out named "Reimagining Henderson Street" but that, according to the young people in the team, seemed the type of project that would never get finished. This moniker also showed up too many times as a name others were using. "Re-do Henderson Street" surfaced as a potential name but it does not roll smoothly enough over the tongue. "Recreating Henderson Street" was eventually identified by the young adults because it had the word creative in it and it dictates a finished line. As you have read, The Henderson Street Corridor has been a project originally called out in the original Rainier Beach 2014 Neighborhood Plan approved by Seattle City Council in 1997, so it's not new. The time, however has come to realize its promise. With heightened traffic concerns such as auto drivers driving too fast in school zones, failing painted crosswalks and needing a project to complement the wonderful work occurring in Be'er Sheva Park by way of Link2Lake, the Recreating Henderson Planning Team along with the myriad list of stakeholders are collectively setting out to make Henderson Street a beautiful neighborhood street that reflects community values, history and identity.

In this report you will find a description of Timelines, Tasks and Deliverables, a roster of people involved, street outreach findings obtained through three levels of surveys and direct public interaction, meeting notes from sessions with municipal based (SDOT, Metro, Sound Transit) and recommendations for the Rainier Beach Recreating Henderson Street Corridor Project Implementation Team.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Rainier Beach Neighborhood Plan 2014

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Making Connections: Collective Efficacy and Community Engagement.

## **Key Themes**

- A safe and walkable thoroughfare with priority on pedestrians and cyclists
- Sidewalk-accessible cafes and shopping
- Public art
- Public gathering spaces
- Mixed-use buildings for businesses and affordable housing
- The need for Henderson to reflect the demographics and history of Rainier Beach

## **Timeline & Deliverables**

**April 2023 Tasks:** 1. Illuminate, resurface, revisit the 2012 Henderson Corridor Plan and the 2020 survey **Deliverable:** 1. Recap of lesson plan or reflections from youth on their understanding of these documents. Draft of survey and other collection methods

**May-June 2023** Tasks: 1. Develop survey and other methods for gathering stakeholder input **Deliverables:** 

- 1. Add additional Survey questions.
- 2. Develop an Outreach Plan and identify all stakeholders who will be connected, who will contact, etc. Stakeholders should include: SDOT, SPR, SPS, all Business & Property owners on Henderson.

July-August 2023 Tasks: 1. Outreach & information gathering

**Deliverables**: 1. Documentation of outreach and attempts on spreadsheet

**September 2023** Tasks: 1. Analysis of survey. 2. Report with compilation of outreach findings, maps in one place with detailed visuals of Corridor with parcel ownership and ideas from the community for each section. Report should build a case for philanthropic investment in the next stage of projects along the Henderson Corridor.

#### **Deliverables:**

- 1. Detailed visual, identifying property/parcel ownership, identified opportunities for lights, planting, art, crosswalks, etc., all results of community input gathering.
- 2. Report including findings from outreach, detailed visual (including property/parcel ownership, opportunities for lights, planting, art, crosswalks, etc.)
- 3. Proposal for next steps in the context of RCO grant. Include suggestions for consultant roles.
- 4. Include stakeholder interest and list of recommendations/commitments for Rainier Beach Recreating Henderson Street Corridor Project Implementation Team.

## **Street Outreach Survey Findings**

Three outreach efforts over the span of three years (2020-2023) have taken place in Rainier Beach to learn the interest of residents and other stakeholders regarding Henderson Street. The findings from the surveys are represented below in narrative and graphic forms. The December 2020 and April 2023 Street outreach survey findings, while about 3 years apart, still hold to the same interest - placemaking, community being prioritized in all developments and maintenance and beautification.

## December 2020 Link2Lake Next Steps Findings

#### 10 people completed the survey:

- Ten said Place-making (i.e., Public Art, Activating Vacant Space, Painted Crosswalks) was their preferred activity for Henderson Street
- Ten said COVID mutual aid/community support and resource stations were preferred.
- Seven of ten wanted to ensure the community is prioritized in all development along Henderson.
- Seven of the ten said maintenance and beautification was their preferred activity.
- Seven want to continue getting regular updates.
- Five said they want to be a part of the team that supports community outreach and engagement.
- Five wanted to help with planning if the project continues.

## April 2023 Recreating Henderson Street Town Hall Findings

#### 31 people completed the survey:

- Twenty-five of the thirty-one said Place-making (i.e. Public Art, Activating Vacant Space, Painted Crosswalks) was their preferred activity for Henderson Street
- Fifteen of the thirty-one said maintenance and beautification was their preferred activity
- Nineteen of the thirty-one wanted to ensure the community is prioritized in all development along Henderson

## July 2023-September 2023 Recreating Henderson Street Survey Findings

This survey set was built from the results of the December '20 and April '23 surveys. They represent the next evolutionary step picking up where December '20 and April '23 left off. Where December '20 and April '23 responses started to be repetitive and community desires became apparent the August 2023 - September 2023 survey sought more details of the community's desires. The survey questions below are what was asked and the graphs below reflect responses, 150 people were surveyed.

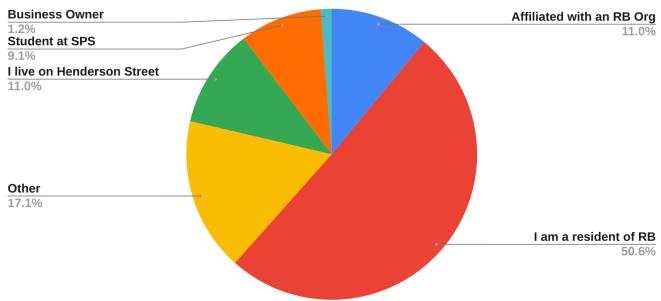
### Survey questions:

- 1. What is something you like about Henderson Street?
- 2. What makes you feel safe walking along Henderson Street?
- 3. Would anything make you feel more safe walking along Henderson Street?
- 4. What would you like to see in the vacant lots along Henderson Street?
- 5. How would you like to engage and recreate with people along Henderson Street?
- 6. What type of art can you imagine along Henderson Street?
- 7. What images or visuals do you think represent Rainier Beach?
- 8. If Henderson Street were perfect, what would it look like?
- 9. If Henderson Street were perfect, what would you want to feel while walking or riding through?
- 10. What is something you like about living on Henderson Street?
- 11. Is there anything difficult about living on Henderson Street
- 12. How does your business or organization engage with Henderson Street?
- 13. What kind of improvements along the Henderson Corridor would be of benefit to your business or organization?
- 14. What do you like about going to school on or near Henderson Street?
- 15. Do you feel safe going to school on or near Henderson Street?
- 16. If you don't, or sometimes don't feel safe going to school on or near Henderson Street, Why and what would make you feel safer?
- 17. Would you be interested in serving on the Henderson Street Steering Committee? This committee would support and uplift the community's design for the Henderson Corridor through coordinating feasibility studies, community engagement, activation events and more!

## Respondents' Relationships to Henderson Street

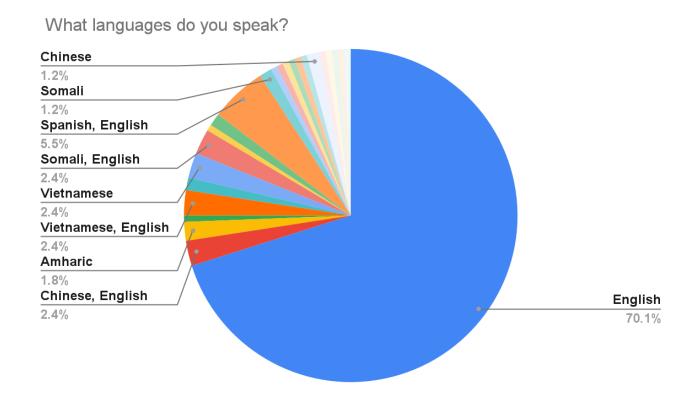
It was important to the Recreating Henderson Street Planning Team that the respondents to the survey represent the community. Below you will find respondents included residents, (50.6%), affiliated Rainier Beach organizations (11%), people who cited they live on Henderson Street (11%), students (9%) and business owners (1.2%). We will need to continue engaging business more in the next phase.





## Languages Spoken

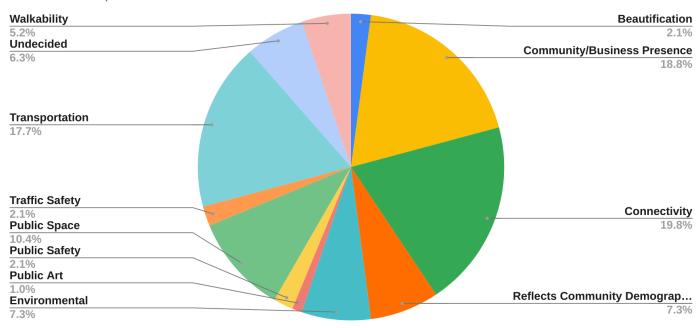
Rainier Beach is proud of having multiple languages spoken within its borders. This reflects the diversity of communities and cultures among us reinforcing the mantra of "the world calls Rainier Beach home". The majority of the survey respondents spoke English, but a variety of other language speakers were included including Chinese (1.2%), Somali (1.2%), Spanish (7.2%), Vietnamese (2.4%), Amharic (1.8%)



## What Respondents Want Attention On

The pie chart below shows a ranking, by importance, of what respondents want attention on in the recreating of Henderson Street. Connectivity, community/business presence and transportation amenities for all were the top three interests.





## Alignment with Rainier Beach Neighborhood Design Guidelines

The categories below represent the alignment of the Henderson Street Data with Rainier Beach Neighborhood Design Guideline Categories. The categories were selected by a committee of individuals currently working to develop the overall Design Guidelines for Rainier Beach, in support of the City of Seattle Design Guideline Requirements. From those recommended categories, the raw survey data (Questions & Answers) were sorted into the following categories: *Context and Site, Public Life, Design Concept*. The qualitative responses <u>linked here</u> are aligned with the design guidelines shown below.

#### **Context and Site (CS)** <u>Seattle Design Guideline Definition:</u>

Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

#### CS1. Natural Systems and Site Features

Use natural systems and features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

#### CS2. Urban Pattern and Form -

Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

<u>CS3. Architectural Context and Character -</u> Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

#### Public Life (PL) Seattle Design Guideline:

Open space should complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

<u>PL1. Open Space Connectivity:</u> Open space should complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

<u>PL2. Walkability:</u> Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

<u>PL3. Street-Level Interaction:</u> Encourage human interaction & activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

## Design Concept (DC)Seattle Design Guideline:

Design concept is the core idea driving the design, explained via a collection of sketches, images, and written statements. This helps designers and developers stay on track throughout the creative process.

<u>DC2</u>. <u>Architectural Concept</u> - Develop an architectural concept that will result in a functional and harmonious design.

<u>DC3. Open Space Concept</u> - Integrate open space with the building design.

<u>DC4. Exterior Elements and Finishes</u> - Use appropriate and high-quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

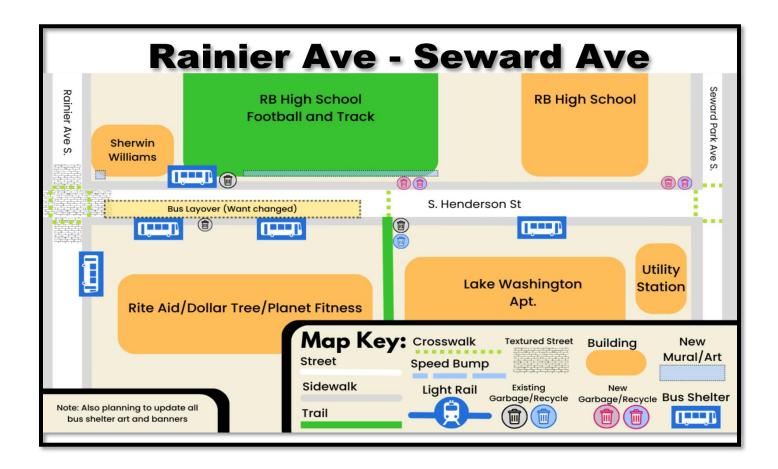
## **Visual Renderings From Community Input**

The Recreating Henderson Street Planning Team wanted a street rendering reflecting the team's initial ideas, based on the current amenities and status of the street. This started as a physically drawn map that was used at outreach events for community members to add ideas to, and then made into the digital renderings below. The renderings show existing and desired amenities in three segments: Segment #1 - Henderson Street from Martin Luther King Jr Way So, east to Renton Avenue South (encompassing the Chief Sealth Trail and Rainier Beach Light Rail Station); Segment #2 - Henderson Street from Renton Ave So east to Rainier Avenue South (encompassing 47th Ave South, 48th Avenue South and 50th Avenue South); Segment #3 - Rainier Avenue South east to Seward Park Avenue South (encompassing RBHS, 52nd Avenue So Walkway/Mapes Creek and Lake Washington Apartments) Amenities of note that span Henderson Street are locations for new trash cans, murals, art, textured streets, etc.

#### **SEGMENT #1 & #2:**



#### **SEGMENT #3:**



## Stakeholder Gatherings

It was natural for RBAC, as a Neighborhood Plan steward, to engage the local municipalities and transportation agencies that impact the neighborhood. Each of these agencies have plans of their own, that may or may not include the voices of the neighborhood or take the Neighborhood Plan in consideration. An interest exists to coordinate these agency plans and align them with the Rainier Beach Neighborhood Plan.

#### Stakeholders Engaged:

- Seattle Department of Transportation James Le <u>Vision Zero team</u>, Joshua Gawne & Aditi Kambuj, <u>Urban</u> Design Team Diane Walsh & Sarah Colling, Safe Routes to School
- 2. King County Metro Dale Cumins, Program Manager, Bus Shelters; Lucas Smith, Planning Department.
- 3. South Shore K-8 PTSA Kathyrn Loeffler, Co-President
- 4. **Sound Transit** David Wright, Chief Safety Officer; Andrea A. Stuart-Lehalle, Chief of Staff Safety Department; Jennifer M. Lemus, Director System Engagement
- 5. Rainier Beach Action Coalition Growth Center Mod Squad Arts Workgroup Jerrell Davis, Lead
- 6. Rainier Beach Residents, Visitors, Property owners and Business owners

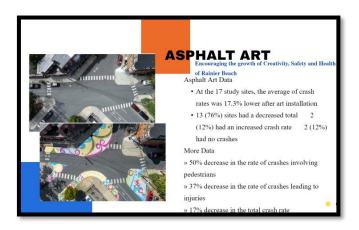
To begin most of these sessions The Recreating Henderson Street Planning Team produced a slide deck to reveal goals and interest. Notes from these meetings are included in the Reference and Resources page.



















#### Stakeholder Plans

## Seattle Department of Transportation Plans

- 46th Ave S and S Henderson St signs and markings and intersection daylighting (complete)
- 53rd Ave S and S Henderson St ADA ramps and RRFB (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons) at crosswalks
- 52nd Ave S at S Henderson St RRFB at crosswalks
- Installing C-curb on the center double yellow line between 53rd Ave S and 52nd Ave S along S Henderson St
- 50th Ave S at S Henderson St RRFB- at west leg of the intersection
- Speed Cushions along S Henderson St 3 sets between Renton Ave S and Rainier Ave S and 2 sets between Rainier Ave S and Seward Park Ave S (complete)
- Install basic westbound bike lane on S Henderson St between Rainier Ave S and 50th Ave S
- Recommended a phased approach.
  - Phase 1 (this year): immediate safety measures like speed cushions and more push button flashing beacon crossings.
  - Phase 2 (likely 2025): walking and biking improvements like protected bike lanes and community art in the street
  - Phase 3 (TBD): plan for additional transformative changes
- Launching a student design competition through the Safe Routes to School program and are kicking it off in Rainier Beach. They are teaming up with Dunlap Elementary School, South Shore K-8, Rainier Beach Action Coalition, and the Rainier Beach Branch of the Seattle Public Library to hold a super cool design contest for students! The contest is all about creating fun and creative designs for bike symbols (and maybe walking symbols, too!) that SDOT crews will install along Healthy Street leading to both schools. The path runs for 1.2 miles from Othello Park to the Seattle Public Library and will have space for about 15 different designs.
- \$300k in 2023-24 Levy/implementation funds is available specifically for public realm place-based investments & enhancements, i.e., art, custom benches, sidewalks, bike racks,
  - Won't pay: Curveballs, raised/redoing intersections.
  - o Catalog of Public Realm Enhancements

## Metro (a Martin Luther King Jr County agency) Plans

- Bus shelters should all have trash bins and pickup service, but Metro does not supply recycle
  bins. (Dale Cummins is the program manager for bus shelters and can be contacted if a shelter
  doesn't have a bin) <u>Bus Mural Program</u>
- A recommendation was made to connect with SEED who can be helpful with community art projects.
- Metro is studying realigning Route 7 with RB light rail they will not consider moving the bus layover location between Rainier Avenue So and Seward Park Ave So until then. A safety plan is needed in the short term. The current layover is on a "trolley route" with overhead wires and passing tracks, which is likely necessary in an alternate location, preliminarily identified to be on Henderson between MLK Jr Way So and Renton Avenue South..
- Route 7 will be turning into Rapid Ride R in 2028. The alpha order of naming Rapid Rides was altered as an equity so that Rainier Valley's Rapid Ride has the letter "R" designation, future conversion of layover similar issue as with Route 7 with RB Light Rail. Upgrades to get the busses through intersections more easily and to help deal with bikes
- Metro staff attending the meeting where not aware of the aware of the RBHS rebuild and its impacts.
- Raised intersections would need to include Metro Engineering especially with regard to electric buses and any impact on bus contact with overhead wires

## South Shore K-8 School Plans

- RBAC attended three meetings involving the South Shore Middle School
  - o PSTA Meeting, March 2023 To share RBAC's plan to reimagine Henderson Street
  - Family Literacy Night, April 28, 2023 Attendees participated in identifying priorities that followed the view of surveys from December 2020 and August 2024 surveying
  - Check in with PTSA and Tammy Morales, District 2 City Council member. This resulted in speed cushions and crosswalk lighting on Henderson Street in proximity being

#### Seattle Public Schools Plans

- A "bike bus" and walking group to Dunlap and Southshore every Wednesday starting in May 2023 during Bike and Walk to School Month. – A bike bus is where students and families all ride to school together with trained leaders. The goal is to create a safe welcoming, and JOYOUS way for students to try out biking to school.
- A Crossing Guard recruitment campaign was started in May
- The School Traffic Safety Committee has applications open for new members who work closely with City and Council representatives.

#### Sound Transit Plans

- Sound Transit and Seattle Department of Transportation sighed a Partnership Agreement in August 2022 to identify a framework to improve at grade crossing safety along the Martin Luther King Corridor
- Completed a platform reconstruction and tile replacement project at the Rainier Beach Light Rail Station platform
- Painted "look both ways" markers at crosswalks of Station area platform

#### Rainier Beach Action Coalition Rainier Beach Growth Center Plans

- RBAC Growth Center Modification Team has a workgroup preparing an art concept call Trail of Breadcrumbs intended to serve as direction indicators from Henderson Street to the RBAC Growth Center. Plans to include:
  - 2 Crosswalk Murals
  - Sidewalk Painting 2300 sf or 230 linear feet
  - Outward facing Fence Painting 360 sf (60'Lx6' H)
  - Inward facing fence painting (105'L x 6'H)
  - Building Mural (920 sf)

# Takeaways and recommendations for Rainier Beach Recreating Henderson Street Corridor Project Implementation Team

A key takeaway from surveys of stakeholders was that multiple themes surfaced - Placemaking, Connections have been revealed to be prominent themes in the results of interaction with residents and stakeholders. With Henderson Street as the artery, residents and other stakeholders have cited schools' connections to it, residents' connections with each other through it, art that helps pedestrians connect to neighborhood amenities, art that connects people to each other and the connection of neighborhood libraries through bicycles as important to them.

Below are a few takeaways as gleaned from all of the data gathered by the Recreating Henderson Street Planning Team.

- 1. Art along the entirety of Henderson Street.
- 2. The presence of live greenery pollinator corridor, raised bed vegetable gardens (<a href="https://ronfinley.com/">https://ronfinley.com/</a> along the entirety of Henderson Street.
- 3. Places for people to gather, connect & recreate.
- 4. Pedestrian Safety light and walkable.
- 5. Connected and accessible transportation.
- 6. Retain the neighborhood character.

#### Recommendations:

- Populations who were not included and need further engagement:
  - Schools PTSA's, District 2 Representative
  - Artists
  - Businesses on Henderson
  - Folks who speak other languages than English
  - o Children and Community Elders
- Challenge Metro's Rainier Beach Bus Layover practice
- Pursue textured intersections to create a sense of place and promote traffic slowing
- Collaborate with the Design Standards team (Rainier Beach Economic Development Roundtable), and RBAC Growths Center' Mural Team and the RBAC Economic Development Team on aligning the art work along Henderson Street.
- Support a community-based transportation strategist to monitor and engage transportation institution
- Utilize Seattle Department of Transportation's 2023/2024 Levy Implementation Funds (\$350K to be spent by February 2024)
- Factor in how to connect people to the recreational amenities adjacent to Henderson Corridor e.g., Chief Sealth Trail, Rainier Beach Playground, Alan Sugiyama HS Basketball Courts, Rainier Beach Community Center, Northwest Tap Connection Dance Studio, Rainier Beach Library, Detective Cookie Chess Park, Beer Sheva Park

#### Stakeholder interest

- Thirty-two have said they are interested in joining a Henderson Street Steering Committee
- Sixty seven people who completed survey said they needed more information before they were willing to join the Henderson Street Steering Committee

#### References & Resources

Making Connections: Collective Efficacy and Community Engagement.

Rainier Beach Neighborhood Plan 2014

Rainier Beach Neighborhood Plan Update

Daylighting of Mapes Creeks Wins Awarded

So Henderson Street Improvements 2016

Henderson Street Stairwell Project 2023

Recreating Henderson Street Planning Team Meeting Notes

SDOT Street Design Concept Plan

SouthShore K-8 Safety Meetings

Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Meeting Notes

King County Metro Meeting Notes