

# Connecting the Visions: Harborview Medical Center



Public Benefits Charrettes  
February 24, 2001 & March 14, 2001

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## Overview

Harborview Medical Center held two public charrettes intended to connect multiple visions for the future and to identify the most needed public benefits. This document summarizes the process and resulting design principles and guidelines.

## Background

The City of Seattle City Design group is in the process of directing a comprehensive urban design framework planning effort that addresses places, connections and conflicts. An initial milestone was the issuance of the City Center Mosaic, a summary report of plans, gaps, and outcomes since 1985. The broad perspective of the center city including downtown and all adjacent neighborhoods identifies common themes and issues for urban design. The First Hill Neighborhood Plan, adopted by the City Council in November 1998, set the vision, goals and specific recommended strategies. This neighborhood plan is also part of the City's comprehensive plan.

Harborview Medical Center is also planning for the future with its major institution master plan adopted by the City Council in August 2000. Two decades of development are included and Harborview seeks to implement planned projects largely funded by a recent voter approved bond. One part of the Harborview plan is a proposed street vacation that must still be considered and approved by the City Council. The Seattle Design Commission has expressed the importance of the provision of public benefits to the city and to the neighborhood. Harborview, in coordination with the City of Seattle, took the initiative to explore these needs and to directly involve those most affected along with a broader city representation. The charrettes sought to understand and connect the City, First Hill and Harborview visions in the best public interest.

## What is a charrette?

A charrette is an intensive, participatory worksession. Literally, it is the French word for 'cart'. The worksession meaning was derived from the Ecole de Beaux Arts where the professor collected students' projects on a cart, the students literally jumped on to add finishing touches and to help each other. Today, it means an efficient way to involve key participants, to focus collaborative brainstorming, and to formulate creative ideas.

## Charrette #1 purpose

The purpose of the first charrette was:

- ☐ To further define and focus the First Hill/Harborview neighborhood vision within the larger public context, and
- ☐ To identify issues, opportunities and appropriate actions

## Participants

A diverse group of individuals volunteered their insights at charrette #1. Local residents, community activists, former patients, business, health, religious and social service representatives, artists and others with an interest in First Hill's future participated.

## The charrette process

The charrette was exhausting but produced amazing results within a short period of time. Advance preparation organized and distilled relevant information. A facilitator orchestrated the charrette topics and helped to bring out extraordinary ideas from all participants. Expectations and an agenda were clearly stated at the start. Both large group and small breakout group exercises occurred. The smaller groups reported back to all and prompted open discussion. The process addressed the Place, the Visions and Hurdles, and the most needed Public Benefits. A summary of the day and identification of the next steps concluded the worksession.

## What happened next?

The ideas from the first charrette were the basis for design and arts professionals at a second charrette. That group sought to integrate the multiple visions, to resolve outstanding issues and to capture identified opportunities. They defined design principles, guidelines, programs and other ideas that reinforce and connect the previous long-term public interest.



# Charrette #1 Summary

## The Place

An initial step was to explore perceptions of the unique location and its most important characteristics. Participants were asked to map their neighborhood experience, and include what is important and special as well as what is missing. A wonderful series of sketches provides insights that include sensory, visual, and personal features. The pedestrian experience, finding one's way around and the wide mixture of activities were common themes. The geographic extent ranged from what can be seen (mountains and the bay) to most immediate details of trees, bus stops and parking.

## Visions, Hurdles and Public Benefits

A briefing of key background information included the citywide urban design initiative for improving connections and places through a Center City open-space strategy. The vision and actions of the First Hill Plan and Harborview Master plan were described. The role of the King County Arts program was also presented. Breakout groups then brainstormed ideas for the future and came together for a group discussion.

### The preferred visions were most stated as:

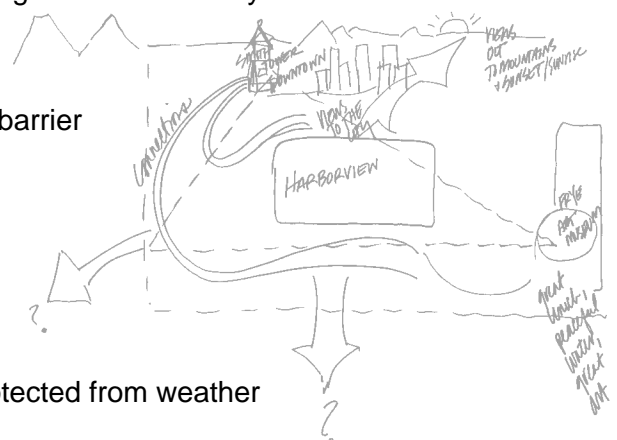
- ❑ To continue the Harborview role; important to the city and the region
- ❑ To create a beautiful place, clearly accessible, responsive to diverse needs and a neighborhood resource
- ❑ To establish design principles and an armature
- ❑ Provide continuity and compatibility of multiple experiences to provide connections throughout the area, and to soften any separating edges
- ❑ To consider Harborview development as a catalyst to the neighborhood and city

### The biggest hurdles were identified to include:

- ❑ To make the institution 'porous', light and inviting and not a barrier
- ❑ Implementing and funding all initiatives
- ❑ The mass and density and limiting a large institution
- ❑ Mitigating noise through vegetation, water and buffers
- ❑ Parking and traffic, including the clarity of navigation

### Common ideas for the most needed public benefits were:

- ❑ Open space, a park, a place to gather, both outside and protected from weather
- ❑ Community facilities for adults and children alike
- ❑ Pedestrian amenities for a safe and comfortable street environment
- ❑ Improved way-finding, such as with signage and orienting landmarks or places
- ❑ Street level retail particularly that serve the local resident's needs
- ❑ Parking to reduce the spill-over parking impacts to the neighborhood



# Charrette #2 Summary

## The Challenge

A select and varied group of design professionals, artists, and futurists came together with the intent of integrating the multiple visions for the city, First Hill and Harborview, by defining specific public benefits in the form of design principles and guidelines.

The charrette was grounded by a briefing on background information, including the City's urban design strategy, the King County arts program, highlights of the First Hill Plan, the results from the first neighborhood charrette, and highlights of the Harborview master plan and related street/alley vacation policies. Breakout groups focused on creating design precepts and came together to discuss the ideas and for more brainstorming. The designers were not to design buildings, but rather, to design the future framework.

## Design Principles

The ideas to reinforce the visions, to resolve issues, and to direct change by providing long-term public benefit in the best public interest were expressed in words, sketches, models and photos. The wide range of insights includes many specifics, but in general, the design ideas encompass four dominant themes:

### 1. Street Life Quality

The mixed-use axiom with extended times of activity, attracting young and old, must be achieved in valued human-scaled amenities. The quality of conditions of the street and adjacent improvements is a key priority. Street sides can be asymmetrical and can distinguish the sun and special places. The grid and intersections are fertile realms for identity and experience, such as with art walks, restaurant rows and groves of light. The distinction between institution and other community uses needs to be softened and merged.

*The exposures of the street level environment must be pedestrian oriented, delicately scaled, and life enriching.*

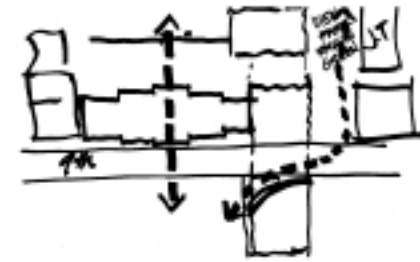




## 2. Orientation and Linkages

The intermittent rhythm of experience enhancing improvements should be extended and reinforced along 9<sup>th</sup>, Terry, and James. Experiences for orientation might include icon landmarks, a storytelling path, formal project identity as well as private places. Decision nodes are at James/I-5 and James/9<sup>th</sup>. Signage should almost be unnecessary and serve only as a punctuating finishing touch. Distinguish places. Serve all who participate in the place. Stimulate along the way to here and to there, rather than aimlessly going nowhere.

*Barriers and separations must be erased. Directions must be obvious. Places must be experience enhancing.*



## 3. Green Places and Healing

The symbolic landscape 'green' theme can have many faces with the changing sun exposure, varied sub-places, and by being habitable in all weather conditions. Sustainability and conservation are desirable goals that give preciousness to light, water, energy, nature and health interrelationships. View park is a reflective place. New park spaces can be active and alive as a neighborhood heart, accessible and connected by clear routes. Conscious relationships of buildings and neighborhood transitions with the open-space erase boundaries. A community garden or identifiable types of landscape in specific areas are ideas. Bringing outside in, and inside out, such as with terraces and greenhouses, offers therapeutic qualities of the landscape and a softening of the institution. Both horizontal and vertical integration of green space adds layers and dynamic spaces. Water features can be invigorating.

*The landscaped park greens bring the refreshing dimension of nature to the urban density and can help to nurture and heal the soul.*



## 4. Inspirational Use of Light

A key design direction is embracing light as a spiritual and metaphorical element in addition to its functional aspects. Capturing light and emitting light in buildings may suggest transparency and translucence. Light embodies hope. Principles include sculptural pedestrian lighting, lighting icons, lantern images, and emphasizing the time dimension.

*Lighting design and art can be deliberate in marking, linking, defining, welcoming, celebrating, and leading.*



# Design Principles and Guidelines

## 1. Street Life Quality

### ❑ Art of Linkage: Intermittent Rhythm

- Do not reinforce bilateral symmetry. Allow both sides of the street to be distinguished, the light side (solar exposed) from the dark side
- Based on the clustering of street trees for views and delighting, and the clustering of street lighting to create emphasis and pacing (not a continuous linear spacing; too many trees can obscure and darken; linear lighting becomes monotonous)
- Nodes of activity to punctuate the street rhythm
- Embrace asymmetry, recognizes that over a 50-100 year span, things will change
- Creates continuity in perspective and allows for daylight

### ❑ Quality of Street Life

- Reinforce/mandate mixed-uses at street level and 7am-11pm activities
- Integrate safety
- Street shops that attract a mix of ages
- At times, favor one side of the street; relate to sun/shade
- Wider blocks of trees and light on the priority side

### ❑ Beauty of Science

- Make teaching hospital technology and science visible

### ❑ Life Stories

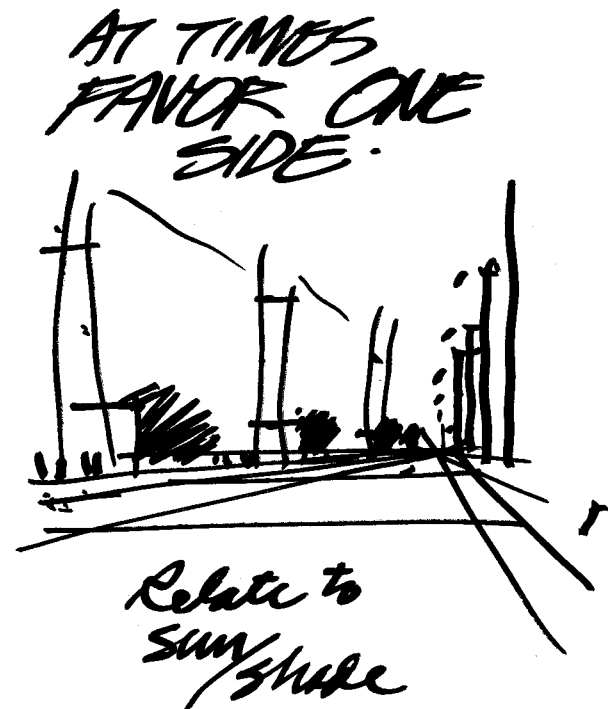
- Themes of people, relationships, heroics, tragedies, healing
- Social and mental health

### ❑ Live Arts

- Organized public events
- Music

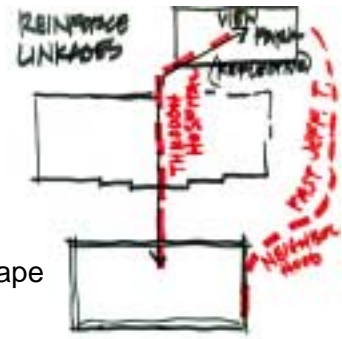
### ❑ Soften Streetscape

- More green

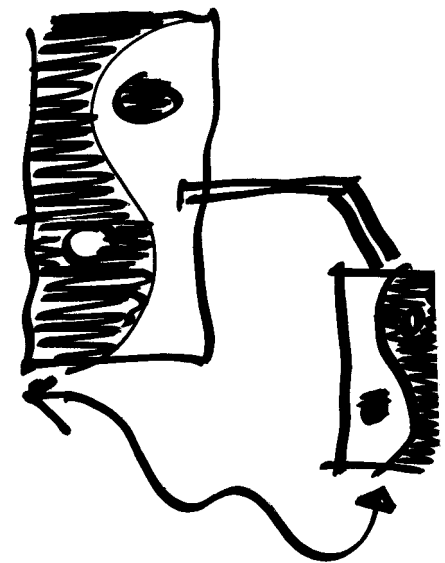


## 2. Orientation and Linkages

- ❑ **Link Green Space Through Harborview**
- ❑ **Unite the Campus at Pedestrian and Regional Levels**
  - Allow each element to build the whole
  - Create defining open space
  - Roofscape is macro cityscape identity and pedestrian realm is streetscape



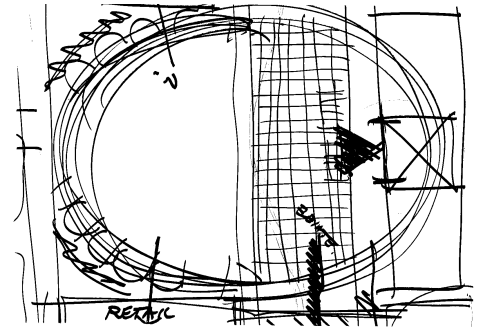
- ❑ **Orientation**
  - Extend and reinforce continuity of intermittent rhythm along 9<sup>th</sup>, Terry, James, and Jefferson
  - Decision node at James/I-5 and at James /9th
  - Connect and balance (Ying-Yang) the active and the passive Greens
  - Create landmarks and pathways to orient visitors
  - Create experiences for orientation (icon landmarks, formal storytelling path to View Park, interpretative art walk, restaurants/light/active, private places, and formal project identity)





### 3. Green Places and Healing

- ❑ **Visually Enlarge the Natural Park Space**
  - Elevate the platform
  - Enliven and connect with adjacent buildings
- ❑ **Healing Gardens**
  - Water: movement, sound cooling, healing, soothing, reuse
  - Light: movement, color, wayfinding
  - Landscape: color, fragrance, growth, seasonal, texture, patterns, wayfinding, edges, destinations, shade, alternate meeting places, nature, contrast, screening, building veil
  - Children: yes
  - Hardscape: gathering, pattern, color, definition, circulation, special place, food services
  - Art: form, color, texture, wayfinding, movement



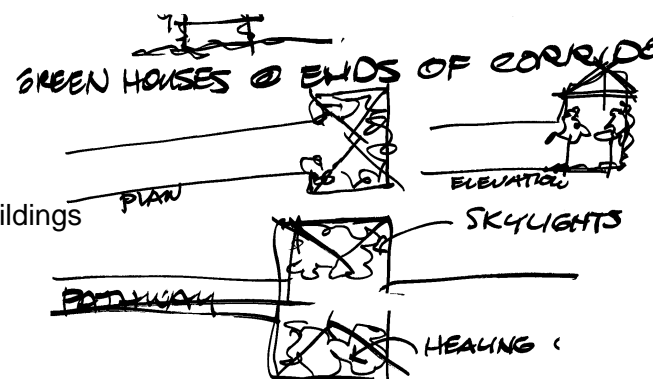
- ❑ **Pocket Park Open Spaces**
  - High Quality, small size
- ❑ **Semi-formal Community Garden**
  - Gathering place
- ❑ **Passive Activity View Park**
  - Contemplative environment with distant views



- ❑ **Alive Neighborhood Heart**
  - Not just grass, 3-dimensional



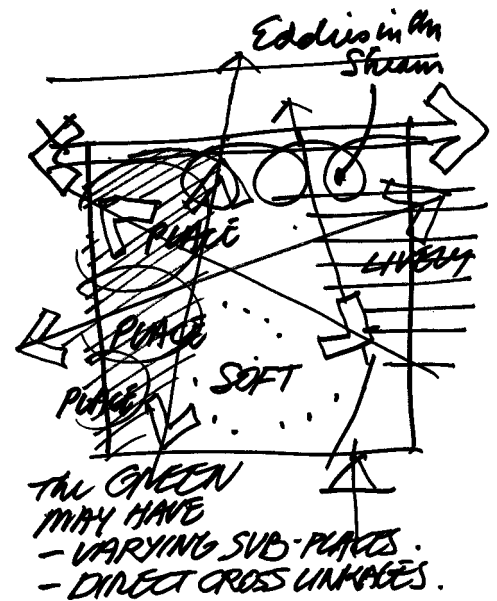
- ❑ **Mix of Public and Private Spaces**
  - Direct Accessibility
- ❑ **Landscape to Reinforce the Street Grid**
  - Objects along the way; artwork at intersections
  - Pedestrian light as icon element
- ❑ **Corridor Ends in Greenhouses**
  - Pathways to healing gardens and take plantings into buildings





## □ The Green(s)

- A square of different faces; formal on one side; light and lively at the sunny side; open and permeable; connecting and inviting the neighborhood to use it; a contrasting function that takes advantage of the shaded side to the south
- It is a 'green' literally and symbolically, not merely plaza
- Parts habitable in all weather conditions (inside glass-enclosed habitation)
- Serves all who participate in the place (in a hurry through, staff on a break, all ages including children)
- Reinforce linkages between major greens; through hospital connection and neighborhood routes
- Varying sub-places; eddies in a stream, lively, soft, direct cross linkages
- Variable levels (not flat)



## ❑ Systems Conservation and Reuse

- Water: chillers to water feature, to irrigation/landscape, to infiltration/recharge
- Heat: greenhouse opportunities (solar, therapy, public space, destination)
- Capture roof water runoff and direct into natural recharge system
- Work with 'green architecture' and green space
- Natural light and ventilation
- Sustainable Design Strategies

Encourage green buildings concepts by utilizing LEED rating system during future design projects at Harborview. This will further enhance Harborview's reputation as steward to the community and environment.



Establish life cycle costing, as part of the design process, to justify the purchase of more expensive systems or design concepts.



#### 4. Inspirational Use of Light

##### □ Light Beacons

- Light as a functional, metaphorical, inspirational element
- Skylights, light scoops, underside of Bridge Building as sky
- Rotundas use massing of buildings to capture light
- Sculptural pedestrian lighting

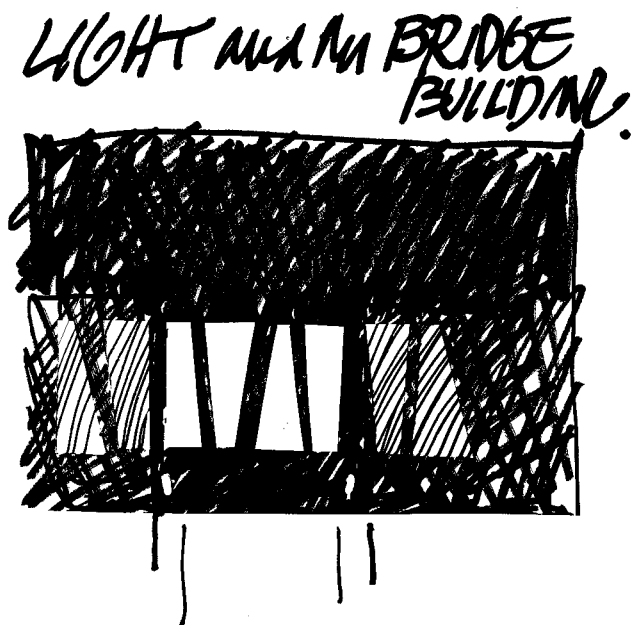


##### □ Light for Safety and Aesthetics

- Pedestrian scaled

##### □ Nighttime Experience

- All lighting as deliberate art of marking, linking, defining destinations, emphasizing various qualities, welcoming, celebrating, brightening, leading along the way
- Certain street openings can be lanterns at night
- Use light fixtures like trees, i.e. groves of light carrying the line of trees in place of trees



nbbj



Harborview Medical Center





# Charrette #1 Attendees

(February 24, 2001)

Martha Boes  
Laurence Brouse  
Carol Brown  
Cath Brunner  
Nancy Buchanan  
Nancy Chambers  
Elise Chayet  
T.J. Close  
Ed Cole  
A.J. Culver  
Rich Dallam  
John Dolan  
Daisy Eriksson  
Jean Gardner  
Barbara Gray  
Leslie Harper-Miles  
Kristen Hill  
Ellen Kissman  
Terrie Martin  
Maureen McCarry  
Mike Miller  
Jim Napolitano  
Darla O'Brian  
Kristin O'Donnell  
John Owen  
John Pangrazio  
Esta Pekow  
John Rahaim  
Efram Seydum  
Steve Sheppard  
Mr. & Mrs. Mark Sigfrinius  
Andrew Taylor  
Vince Vergel de Dios  
Margi Wadden  
Leslie Watson  
Nancy Westrick

NBBJ Design  
Standing Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)  
Jefferson Terrace Representative  
King County Arts  
King County Council member Larry Gossett's office  
Harborview Arts Committee  
Harborview  
Visiting Committee  
Jefferson Terrace Representative  
Harborview Facilities Committee/Board Member  
NBBJ Design  
Standing CAC  
Hilltop House  
Visiting Committee  
Seattle Strategic Planning Office (First Hill Light-Rail Station Area Manager)  
King County Executive's Office  
Harborview Arts Committee  
Standing Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)  
NBBJ Design  
Harborview  
NBBJ Design  
King County Executive's office  
Hilltop House  
Standing CAC  
Historic Preservation Consultant  
NBBJ Design  
First Hill Representative  
City Design/Seattle Design Commission  
Neighborhood House  
Seattle Department of Neighborhoods  
Visiting Committee  
Former Patient  
NBBJ Design  
Harborview Arts Committee  
Standing CAC  
Former Patient

