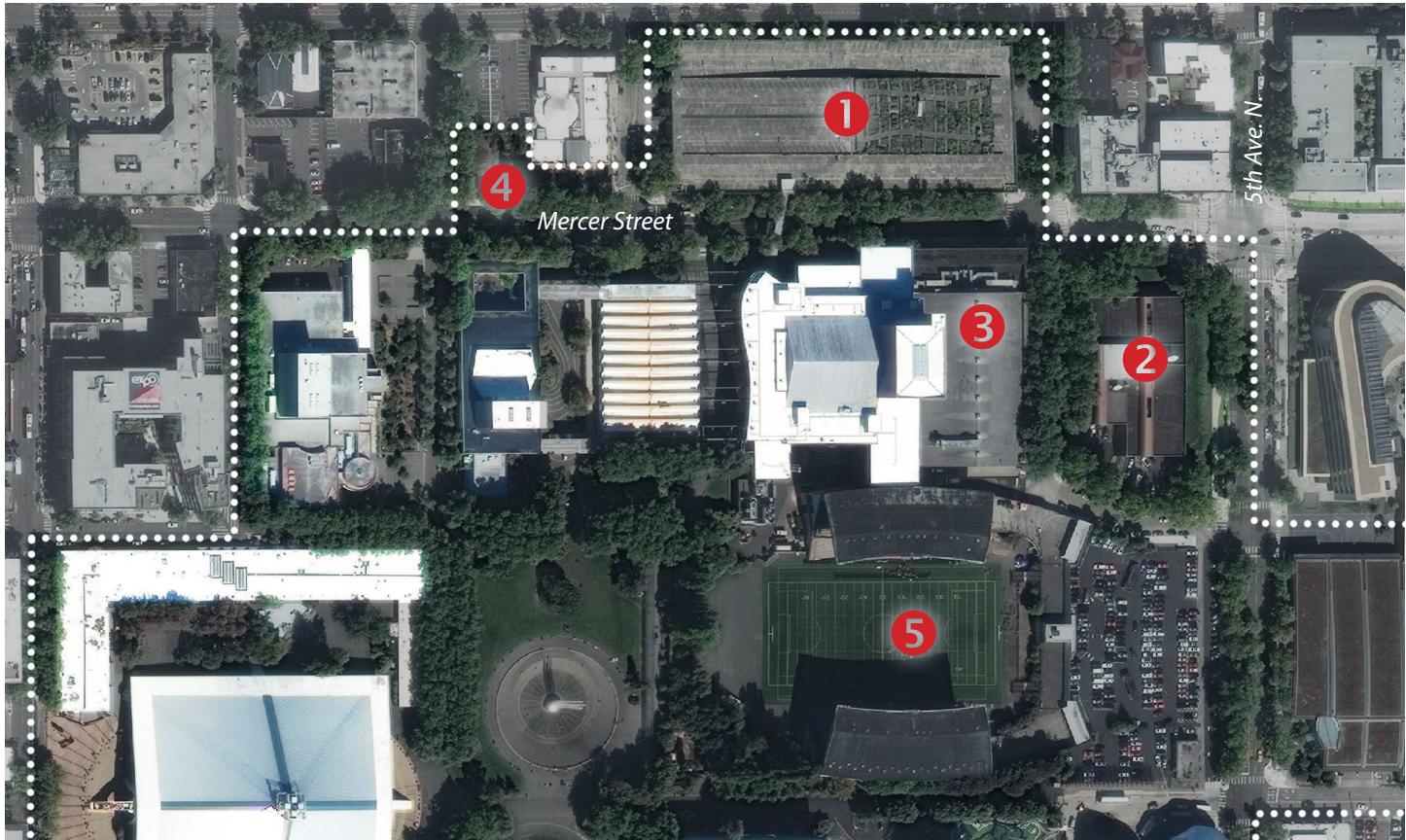


## Feedback: Planning for Change



### Immediate Opportunities

**Sam Assefa**, Director of the Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development, introduced the biggest opportunity for transformative change at Seattle Center: the northeast quadrant of the campus. As Uptown and South Lake Union grow, this will become a more and more important 'face' of the campus to the neighborhood and the city. For the first time in many years, we have an opportunity to consider this area holistically and plan for transformative change that will create social, cultural, and economic value.

### Seattle Public Schools Planning

A significant portion of the northeast quadrant is occupied by Memorial Stadium and its adjacent parking lot — both property of Seattle Public Schools. School District leadership has identified the need for a new high school and athletic facility in their downtown service area. They are beginning a city-wide master planning process to address future growth. Meeting the needs for a new high school and athletic facility will be an important part of planning for this area.

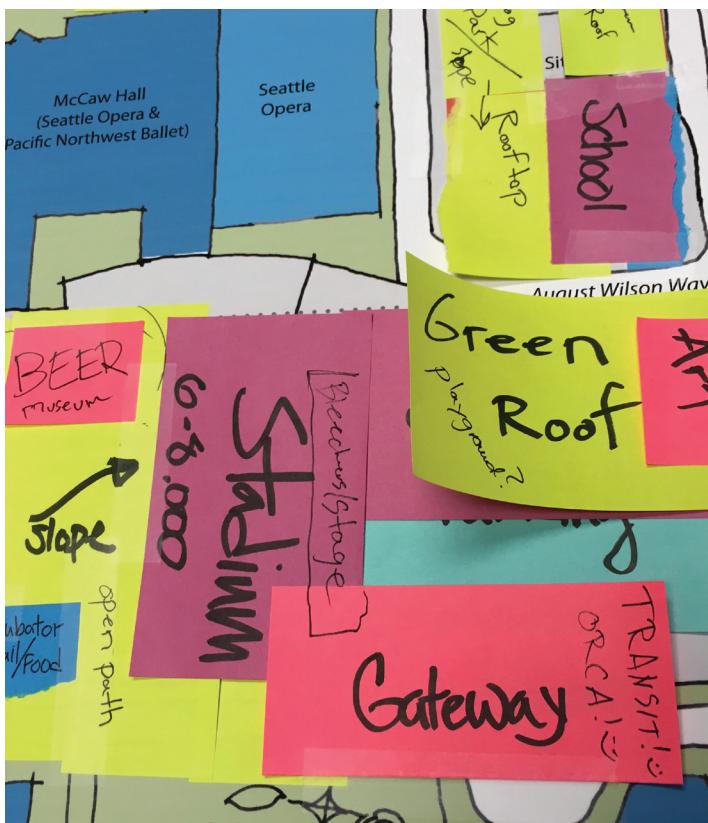
Totaling more than 14 acres, the northeast quadrant includes:

- ① **Mercer Garage:** Neighborhood growth and interest in an active streetscape make this site a great location for uses other than structured parking.
- ② **KCTS:** Advances in media production have rendered the existing building largely obsolete for the KCTS television station. As their 40-year lease draws to a close, it is time to envision a different use for this block.
- ③ **Mercer Arena:** The Seattle Opera's plans for this property could jump start the renewal of the Mercer Corridor as part of Uptown's Arts and Culture district. This project is anticipated to break ground in 2017.
- ④ **Mercer Block:** The City and a private developer are coordinating two projects: a private mixed-use housing and commercial project is being planned for 3/4 of the site, and the City is exploring options for affordable housing on the remaining 1/4.
- ⑤ **Memorial Stadium,** built in 1947, and the adjacent parking lot on 5th Avenue North, are owned by Seattle Public Schools, and are being considered as part of this planning.

# SEATTLE CENTER WHAT'S NEXT?



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## Feedback: Planning for Change

Immediate improvements at Seattle Center will come from investments in these northeast quadrant properties. Participants in the September 13th discussion were asked to propose a mix of changes that would:

- Transform this area of Seattle Center
- Build community dialogue, equal access, and cultural diversity
- Address the needs of Seattle Public Schools for a high school and stadium
- Help sustain Seattle Center's operations, balancing the need for revenue with public value

Attendees considered a range of possible property uses, from parking to commercial development to community and cultural facilities. "Wild card" ideas were encouraged, drawing on inspiration from great public gathering spaces around the world. The result was a wide range of inspiring ideas including a shared outdoor performance space, iconic public art, new community centers, and a market promenade, among many others.

These ideas, and the connections and synergies between them, formed an inspiring basis for developing group schemes. Eleven very different schemes emerged from this group work. Participants worked hard to balance civic and cultural uses with revenue-generating uses and development.

Even with such diversity of responses there were some themes shared by a majority of teams. The most prevalent are described at right, along with the number of teams that suggested each idea.



### Affordable housing and/or artist housing (9)

In a rapidly growing city, affordable housing is understood as an urgent priority. Many teams recommended affordable housing along the Mercer corridor, with several suggesting that artist housing could enhance connections with Seattle Center's cultural activities.

### Location of New High School (10)

The location of a new high school was studied carefully by all the teams. About half (5) teams located the new high school facility on the Memorial Stadium property; 5 other teams chose the KCTS site as the best location, given its adjacency to a new stadium. (One team located a new high school on the Mercer Garage site)

### Underground parking in new projects (10)

Access to Seattle Center through convenient parking, and its associated earned income, was a major consideration for every team. Ten out of eleven teams recommended underground parking as part of any new development. Participants noted that the amount of future parking and associated revenue should be determined based on further analysis.

### Open space east of International Fountain (11)

Every team recommended new open space to the east of International Fountain. This was regarded as a major opportunity for enhancing existing open space and drawing in visitors. Several teams also suggested that the area could be used for large-scale outdoor events and concerts. Each team recommended siting the adjacent School District athletic facility in a way that added open space to this area. All teams recommended removing the wall separating Memorial Stadium from the rest of campus.

### New cultural facilities (8)

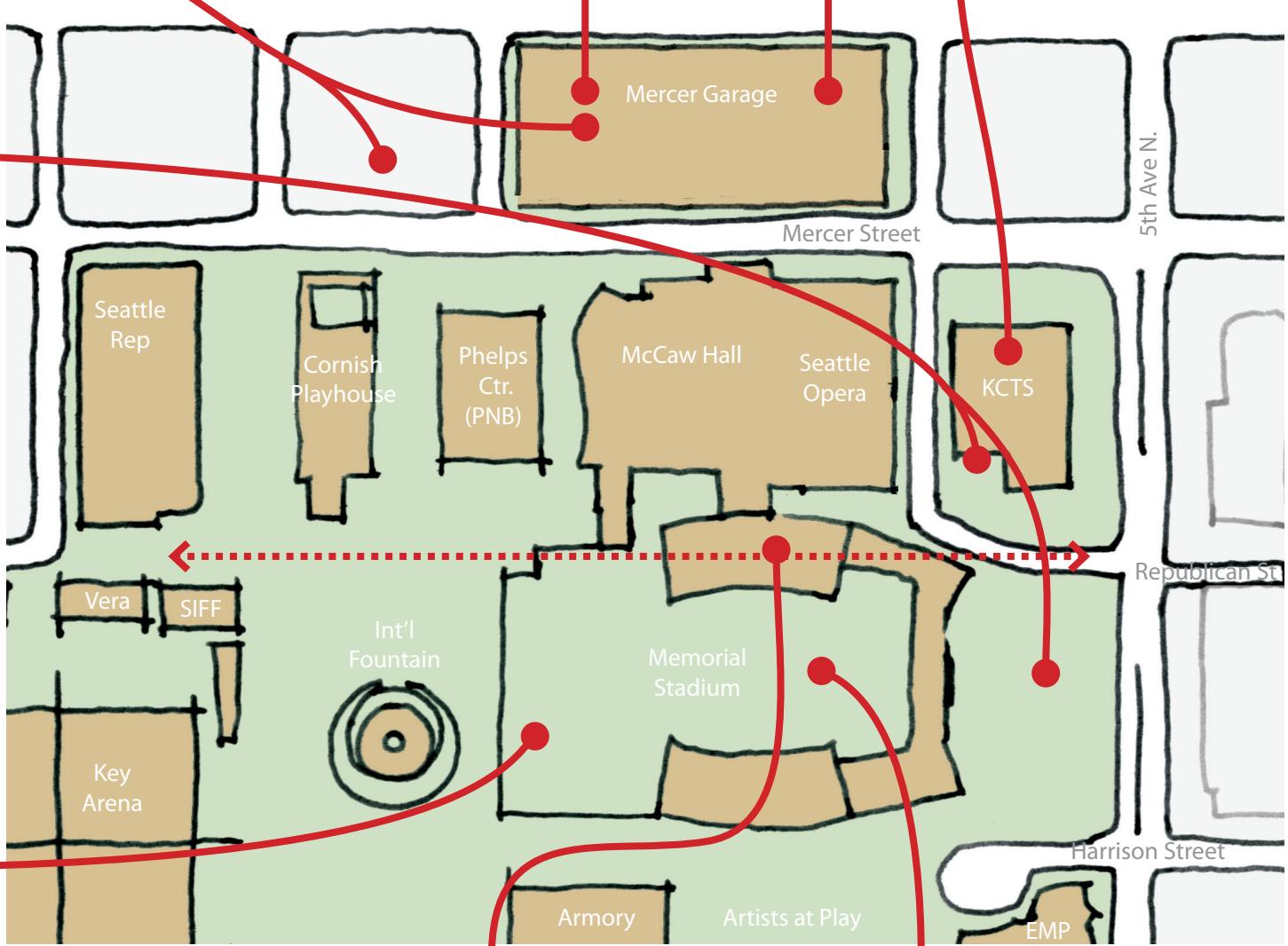
Aspirations for new community and cultural facilities were common to many teams seeking to build on the density of cultural facilities at Seattle Center. Ideas included a new small theatre, a Native American cultural center, and a community center to serve the Uptown neighborhood.

## Retail and mixed use along Mercer Street (8)

For many teams, achieving round the clock activity included street-level retail and mixed-use development along Mercer Street. Restaurants and shops were recommended, facing the Theatre District.

## Hotel or market rate housing at Mercer Street (8)

The commercial development possibilities of market-rate housing or a hotel were also considered by a number of teams for either the Mercer Garage site or the KCTS site. Teams identified that income from ground leases or other agreements resulting from this development would help sustain Seattle Center operations.



## Complete August Wilson Way (8)

Connect Uptown from the east and west through the campus by completing August Wilson Way (the vacated portion of Republican St. named for Seattle's most famous playwright) between International Fountain and 5th Avenue North. Several teams suggested activating this pedestrian and bike corridor with arts activity, public sculpture, or an outdoor marketplace.

## Public access to future stadium (8)

Seattle Public Schools' need for a large athletic facility was a major driver behind land use decisions in this exercise. Many teams expressed the desire to have a publicly accessible stadium that was better integrated, visually and programmatically, into the Seattle Center campus. Views into campus, and the possibility of concerts on the stadium site, were considered.

**SEATTLE CENTER** WHAT'S NEXT?  seattlecenter  
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# **Feedback: Planning for Change**

## **Investing in vibrancy and vitality**

As teams considered property types and uses for different parcels, they also focused on the kinds of activity that new facilities or spaces would accommodate. There was widespread agreement that substantial investment in making both indoor and outdoor spaces exciting places to visit was key to Seattle Center's success. Teams suggested outdoor markets, concert programs, food trucks, and even a beer museum to draw visitors and activity.

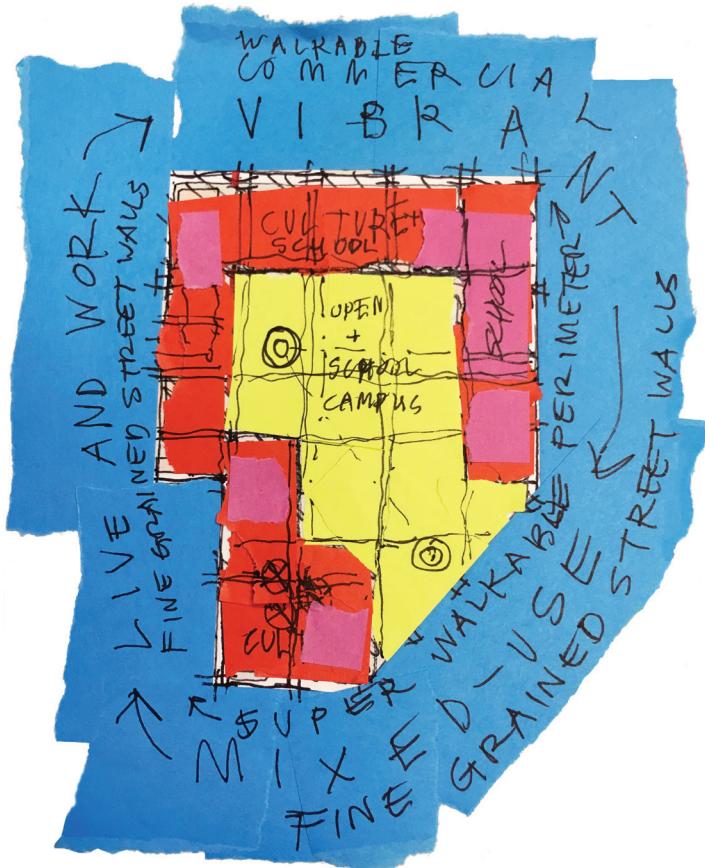
## School partnerships with cultural organizations

The need for a high school was a key driver for a majority of teams. Tasked with integrating a new school and athletic facility on Seattle Public Schools or Seattle Center property, many groups discussed the possibilities of partnerships between the School District and campus cultural organizations and facilities. Some teams suggested the idea of space sharing, or even an arts magnet academy, or a Science Technology Engineering Arts and Math (STEAM) school.

## Porous perimeter with active open space

The character of Seattle Center's edges and open space was a major topic of discussion. Participants expressed a general desire for improved connections including gateways on all sides, clear routes through the campus, and more open space throughout. Open space, pathways, and gateways were seen as the 'connective tissue' that supports dynamic Seattle Center experiences – both indoors and outdoors. The visual character of the campus is expressed through these spaces.

People enjoying public space within the campus and along its edges bring activity and vibrancy. Enhancement of campus gateways, outdoor spaces and active perimeter uses that connect to the surrounding neighborhood can make Seattle Center more 'legible' and inviting to visitors and residents alike.



## Feedback: Priorities

### Specific actions

At the session's conclusion, participants were asked to build on the day's findings by identifying and prioritizing specific actions that will help propel Seattle Center forward in the months ahead.

Analysis of hundreds of individual responses yielded three priorities that rose above the rest:

### Priority 1

#### Establish common ground between the City and Seattle Public Schools

Participants felt that by far the most urgent priority is to cement an agreement between the City of Seattle and Seattle Public Schools regarding the Memorial Stadium property and accommodating a new school.

Attendees were energized by Superintendent Nyland's participation throughout the day, and the openness of School District leadership to explore new ideas. Many suggested creating a Memorandum of Understanding between the two parties for a joint site selection effort to find the best possible location for a new high school.

### Priority 2

#### Engage a broader constituency for feedback

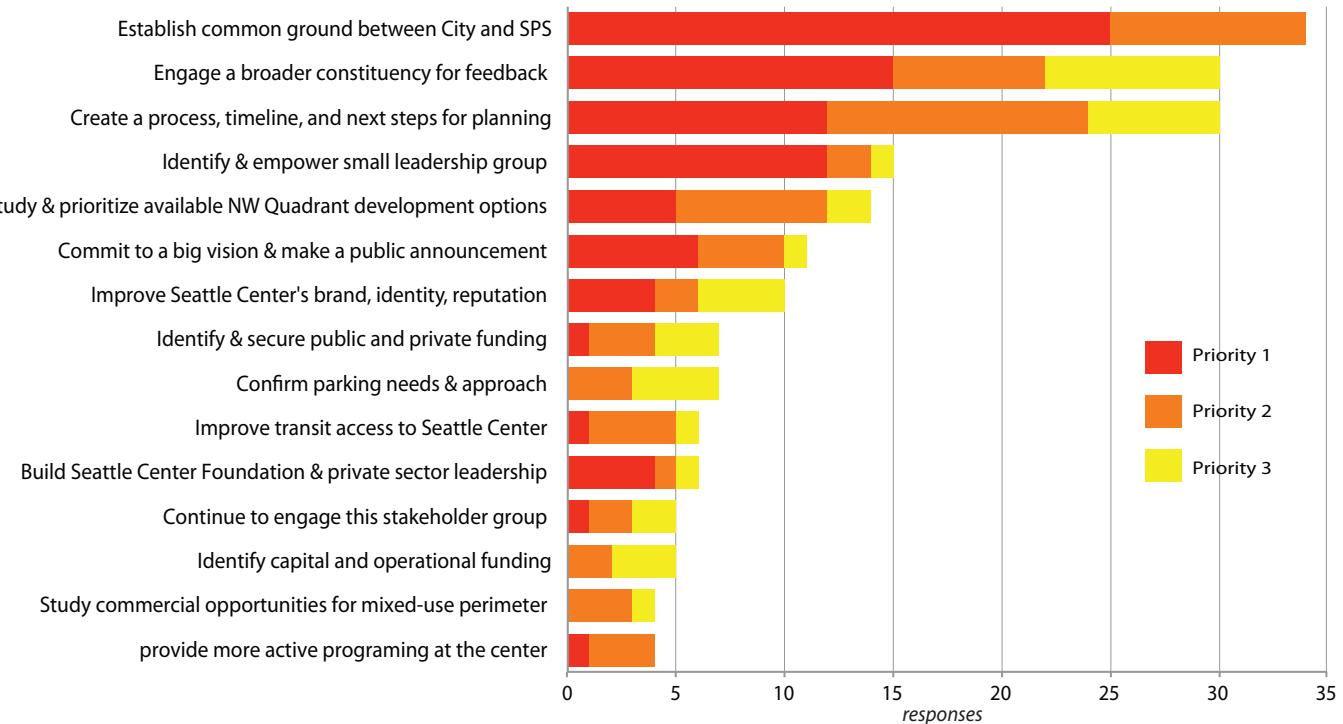
As we work towards broader and deeper social justice and equity in our community, many people saw engaging a greater number of stakeholders as an urgent priority, particularly soliciting input across social, geographic, and economic boundaries. Attendees recognized that they were part of a select group, and recommended engaging youth and students, communities of color, Native Americans, seniors, people with disabilities, as well as citizens from each neighborhood of Seattle.

### Priority 3

#### Create a visionary plan for action

Participants were energized by new ideas and impressed with the political commitment and private leadership to spur transformative change at Seattle Center. A majority believed developing a detailed plan to guide progress would help build momentum, establish credibility, and lead to broader public support. Many people suggested that an update to the Century 21 Master Plan could guide both near- and long-term changes.

### Specific Actions to Help Propel Seattle Center Forward



## Looking Ahead

### Now: Keep the conversation going

To those who participated in the Seattle Center: What's Next session, the event planners want to **thank you** for your time, energy, and ideas. We were impressed and inspired by your creativity, teamwork, and engagement. You were selected to attend the workshop because of your leadership and vision. We hope you will help bring the issues and questions raised back to your organizations, companies, communities, and neighbors to solicit feedback and keep the conversation going.



### Then: A plan to move ahead

Mayor Murray, in partnership with the Seattle Center Foundation and Seattle Public Schools, is developing a plan to transform Seattle Center that will be released in the coming months.

### Next: Engaging broader input

Beginning in November 2016, the Seattle Center: What's Next? team took the discussion about Seattle Center's future on the road. Our team is interviewing people in every part of our City to gather feedback and more ideas. The results of these efforts will be documented as a supplement to this report.



### Staying Involved

Many of you indicated a willingness to remain involved as this project progresses. Please indicate your willingness to participate, send us additional feedback from the workshop, or connect others to the project, by visiting:

[www.seattlecenter.com/whatsnext](http://www.seattlecenter.com/whatsnext)



## Participants

### Presenters

*Edward Murray, Mayor, City of Seattle  
 Dr. Larry Nyland, Superintendent, Seattle Public Schools  
 Martha Choe  
 Patricia Lally, Director, Seattle Office for Civil Rights  
 Robert Nellams, Director, Seattle Center  
 Sam Assefa, Director, Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development  
 Thatcher Bailey, Executive Director, Seattle Parks Foundation  
 Lyle Bicknell, Principal Urban Designer, Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development  
 Jill Crary, Redevelopment Director  
 Marshall Foster, Design Manager, Seattle Office of the Waterfront*

*Flip Herndon, Associate Superintendent of Facilities and Operations, Seattle Public Schools  
 Jim Holmes, Senior Planner, Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development  
 Alana Knaster, Community Relations Project Manager, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
 Julia Levitt, Redevelopment Strategic Advisor, Seattle Center  
 John Merner, Director, Seattle Center Productions  
 Eric Tweit, Senior Transportation Planner, Seattle Department of Transportation  
 Jane Zalutsky, Interim Director, Seattle Center Foundation*

### Attendees

*Alleson Buchanan, Granberg Studios  
 Noah An  
 Kyle Angelo, City Year  
 Sam Assefa, Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development  
 Sally Bagshaw, Seattle City Council  
 John Bahe, NBBJ  
 Thatcher Bailey, Seattle Parks Foundation  
 Pamela Banks, Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle  
 Kayti Barnett-O'Brien, Book-It Repertory Theatre  
 Maria Barrientos, Barrientos, llc, Seattle Center Advisory Commission  
 Sara Belz, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods  
 Richard Best, Seattle Public Schools  
 Marianne Bichsel, Bichsel Public Affairs  
 Lyle Bicknell, Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development  
 Alberta Bleck, City of Seattle  
 Adam Brenneman, Kinzer Partners  
 Michelle Bufano, Chihuly Garden & Glass  
 Amy Carter, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
 Tim Ceis, Ceis Bayne East Strategic  
 Michael Chandler, Northwest Folklife  
 Katherine Cheng, Expedia  
 Lia Chiarelli, Pacific Northwest Ballet  
 Martha Choe  
 Evan Clifborne, Project Belltown  
 Jill Crary, Seattle Center  
 Matthew Curry, UW Medicine  
 Josh Curtis  
 Will Daugherty, Pacific Science Center  
 Michael Davis, Bassetti Architects  
 Thomas Ditty, Seattle Monorail Services  
 Rob Dunlop, KCTS  
 Liz Dunn, Dunn & Hobbes  
 Mercedes Elizalde, City of Seattle  
 Randy Engstrom, Seattle Office of Arts and Culture  
 Marshall Foster, Seattle Office of the Waterfront  
 Debi Frausto, Uptown Alliance  
 Phil Fujii, Vulcan  
 Steve Galatro, Pratt Fine Arts Center*

*Ginny Gilder, Seattle Storm  
 Barbara Gray, Seattle Department of Transportation  
 Marcus Green, South Seattle Emerald  
 Genevieve Hale-Case, UW College of Built Environments  
 Emily Heim, UW College of Built Environments  
 Cheri Hendricks, BroadView Associates Ltd.  
 Flip Herndon, Seattle Public Schools  
 Jim Holmes, Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development  
 Rick Hooper, Uptown Alliance  
 Mari Horita, Arts Fund  
 Heidi Hughes, Friends of Waterfront Seattle  
 Katie Idziorek, Uptown Alliance  
 Patty Isaacson Sabee, EMP Museum, Seattle Center Foundation  
 Kate Joncas, Seattle Mayor's Office  
 Johnpaul Jones, Jones & Jones Architecture  
 Marc Jones, Seattle Center  
 Debora Juarez, Seattle City Council  
 Sandeep Kaushik, KCTS  
 Dakota Keene, Mithun  
 Craig Kinzer, Kinzer Partners  
 Jackie Kirn, Seattle Mayor's Office  
 Cheryl Klotz, UW College of Built Environments  
 Alana Knaster, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
 Patty Lally, Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development  
 Courtney Landoll, Trust for Public Land  
 Aidan Lang, Seattle Opera  
 Kirk Laughlin, Seattle Children's Museum  
 Todd Leber, Seneca Group, Seattle Center Foundation  
 Tim Lennon, The Vera Project  
 Marty Loesch, Challenge Seattle  
 Laura Lohman, Seneca Group  
 Gladys Ly-Au Young, Sundberg Kennedy Ly-Au Young Architects  
 Andres Mantilla, Ceis Bayne East Strategic  
 Galaxy Marshall, Student  
 Tiernan Martin, Futurewise  
 Amalia Martino, Latina Creative Agency  
 Jody May, Festivals Inc.  
 Jack McCullough, Downtown Seattle Association  
 John Merner, Seattle Center  
 Shyla Miller, Boeing  
 Jamie Moses, Seattle University  
 Robert Nellams, Seattle Center  
 Shannon Nichol, Gustafson Guthrie Nichol  
 Stephen Nielson, Seattle Public Schools  
 Ben Noble, Seattle Budget Office  
 Katie Nolan  
 Kathy Nyland, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods  
 Larry Nyland, Seattle Public Schools  
 Julie Parrett, UW College of Built Environments  
 Betty Patu, Seattle Public Schools  
 Sue Peters, Seattle Public Schools  
 Ana Maria Pinto da Silva, Amazon, Pecha Kucha  
 Gundula Proksch, UW College of Built Environments  
 Rico Quirindongo, DLR Group  
 Matt Richter, Seattle Office of Arts and Culture  
 Rachel Robert, Seattle Repertory Theatre  
 Lara Rose, Walker Macy  
 Kristin Ryan, Jonathan Rose Companies  
 Karen Sharp, Seattle Children's Theatre  
 Kevin Shively, Seattle Mayor's Office  
 Tak Stewart, UW College of Built Environments  
 Andrew Storms, ACT Theatre  
 Diane Sugimura, Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development  
 Rob Thomas, AEG Live  
 Brad Tong, Shiels Obletz Johnsen  
 Robert Townsend, NW Folklife  
 Eric Tweit, Seattle Department of Transportation  
 Debra Twersky, 4Culture  
 Cathryn Vandenbrink  
 Chris Weber, One Reel  
 Amy White, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
 Mary Wideman-Williams, Seattle Center  
 M Xochitl Wilder, Youth Commission  
 Jeff Wright, Space Needle  
 Korrynne Wright  
 Sung Yang, King County  
 Jane Zalutsky, Seattle Center Foundation  
 Tamar Zere, Seattle Office for Civil Rights*

Thank you.

