

# WENATCHEE SDAT REPORT



WENATCHEE, WA • OCTOBER, 2012

**AIA** Communities by Design

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## INTRODUCTION

## THE DESIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

With nearly 300 state and local chapters and over 76,000 members, the American Institute of Architects serves as the voice of the architecture profession and the resource for its members in service to society. The AIA has a 45-year history of public service work. Through the Center for Communities by Design, the AIA has engaged over 1,000 professionals from more than 30 disciplines, ultimately providing millions of dollars in professional pro bono services to more than 200 communities across the country, and engaging thousands of participants in community-driven planning processes. Its projects have led to some of the most recognizable places in America, such as the Embarcadero in San Francisco and the Santa Fe Railyard Redevelopment. In 2010, the AIA received the *Organization of the Year* Award from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), recognizing its program impact on communities and contributions to the field.



- **Regional and Urban Design Assistance Teams (R/UDAT):** Created in 1967, the AIA's R/UDAT program pioneered the modern charrette process by combining multi-disciplinary teams in dynamic, multi-day grassroots processes to produce community visions, action plans and recommendations.
- **Sustainable Design Assessment Teams (SDAT):** In 2005, in response to growing interest and concern about local sustainability planning, the AIA launched a companion program to the R/UDAT that allowed it to make a major institutional investment in public service work to assist communities in developing policy frameworks and long term sustainability plans. During the first 7 years of the SDAT program, the Center for Communities by Design has worked with over 50 towns, cities and regions.



The Center's Design Assistance Team programs operate with three guiding principles:

- **Multi-disciplinary Expertise.** Each project is designed as a customized approach to community assistance that incorporates local realities and the unique challenges and assets of each community. As a result, each design assistance team includes a multi-disciplinary focus and a systems approach to assessment and recommendations, incorporating and examining cross-cutting topics and relationships between issues. In order to accomplish this task, the Center forms multi-disciplinary teams that combine a range of disciplines and professions in an integrated assessment and design process.
- **Enhanced Objectivity.** The goal of the design assistance team program is to provide communities with a framework for action. Consequently, each project team is constructed with the goal of bringing an objective perspective to the community that is outside of the normal politics of public discussion. Team members are deliberately selected from geographic regions outside of the host community, and national AIA teams are typically representative of a wide range of community settings. Team members all agree to serve pro bono, and do not engage in business development activity in association with their service. They do not serve a particular client. The team's role is to provide an independent analysis and unencumbered technical advice that serves the public interest.
- **Public Participation.** The AIA has a four-decade tradition of designing community-driven processes that incorporate substantial public input through a multi-faceted format that includes public workshops, small group sessions, stakeholder interviews, formal meetings and presentations. This approach allows the national team to build on the substantial local expertise already present and available within the community and leverage the best existing knowledge available in formulating its recommendations.



## THE WENATCHEE SDAT PROCESS

In November 2011, Wenatchee, Washington submitted an application to the American Institute of Architects for a Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) project. As the application stated:

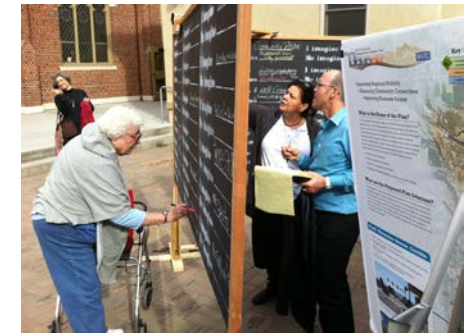


“The goal of this Sustainable Community Assessment would be to provide a vision for south Wenatchee that honors its history as a place for immigrants, culture and industry and provides recommendations for bridging the gaps of the current physical, socio-economic, cultural and commercial barriers allowing the neighborhood and commercial district to become a focal point for sustainability, change and revitalization for the region.”

The application was accepted in November, and in August 2012, an initial visit to the community was conducted to determine the project scope and identify the expertise needed for the project. In October 2012, a six-member SDAT team conducted a three-day charrette

with the community to assess current conditions, listen to resident input, analyze constraints and opportunities, and form a series of key recommendations for the South Wenatchee neighborhood moving forward. The charrette process included tours of the project area, participatory installations and surveys, targeted meetings with public officials and stakeholders, a public workshop, and studio design sessions. Hundreds of residents and local stakeholders participated in the process. At the conclusion of the charrette, the team presented its recommendations at a community meeting.

The following report contains a narrative summary of the team’s findings, with additional information and resources.







## THE WENATCHEE SDAT PROCESS

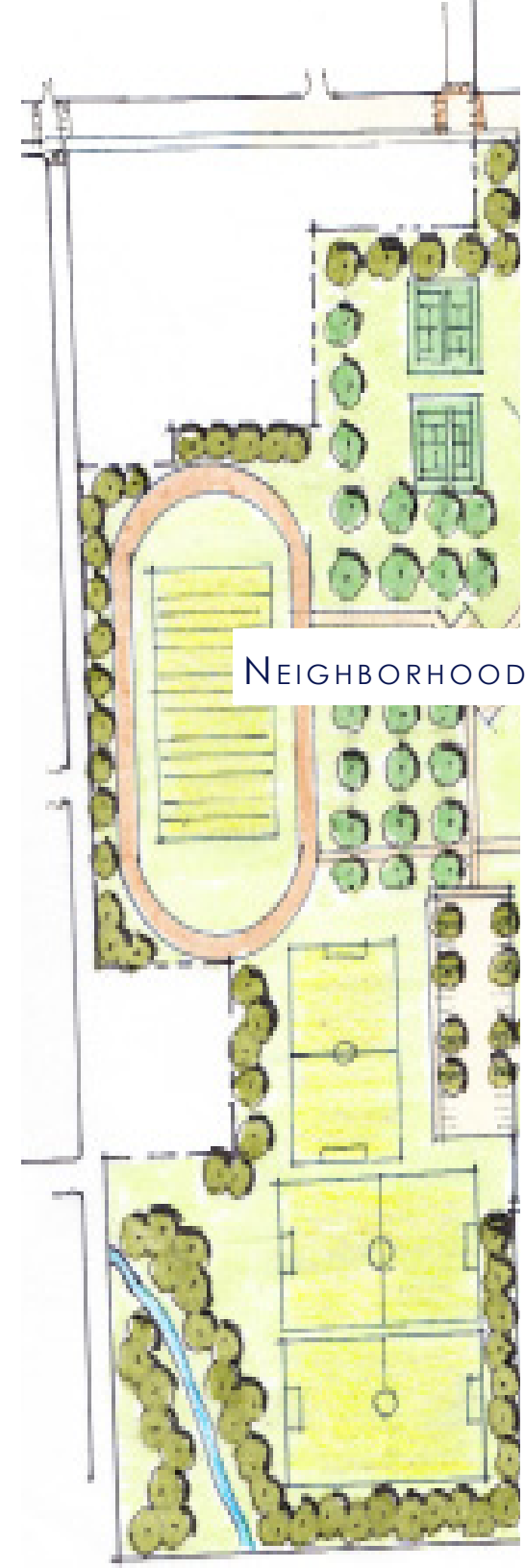
As the Wenatchee SDAT application stated:

“The overarching goal of this process is to develop a vision for sustainability for the South Wenatchee neighborhood that incorporates the following:

- 1) In light of the highway interchange project, provide recommendations for developing connections – physical, economic, social and cultural – to tie the neighborhood together, while acknowledging the importance of this regional transportation improvement.
- 2) Provide a framework for upgrading the residential and commercial areas of south Wenatchee that honors the needs of residents, business owners, property owners and cultural interests and provides a unique sense of place.
- 3) Provide recommendations for resources within the neighborhood that could be leveraged to assist with neighborhood revitalization i.e. programs at the community center, community based improvement efforts, projects for youth engagement and empowerment, entrepreneurial efforts that could reinvigorate the commercial area, and strategies for building leadership within the neighborhood.
- 4) Provide guidance for the sustainable investment of CDBG and homeless funds to address the needs of low income/at risk populations that reside in the neighborhood.
- 5) Provide goal and policy guidance to the city for the development of a sub area plan as a part of the update of the overall comprehensive plan of the city and associated capital improvement programs.”

### ***Sustainability – A Holistic Approach to the Future***

As Wenatchee considers what sustainability means for its community, one thing that must be emphasized is that a comprehensive approach to sustainability involves a great deal more than simply energy efficiency or environmental impact, but rather is a holistic approach to the ongoing vibrant growth and improving quality of life for the community. Balancing the competing interests of the environment (ecology), economics (profit) and the community (people) is a complex dynamic that defines a robust approach to sustainability. Another definition of sustainability that really puts things into perspective is to state that “Sustainability is meeting our current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.” We’re not just doing this for us -we’re trying to make a better future for our kids and grandkids. The following report contains a narrative summary of the team’s findings, with additional information and resources.



NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN

## SOUTH WENATCHEE TODAY

A cursory assessment of South Wenatchee today reveals several fundamental characteristics that are present in the neighborhood. One of the most evident facts about greater Wenatchee is that living in the community typically involves a lot of driving. Because of this, it is important to consider the cost of commuting when looking at the total cost of living in various neighborhoods. A number of areas that appear to be 'affordable' (<30% of median income) actually become less attractive when factoring in commuting costs (>45% of median income). The one area that maintains affordability when considering commuting costs is actually the South Wenatchee neighborhood that was the subject of this study. Review of additional demographic data confirms what had been anecdotally suggested: the neighborhood of South Wenatchee has lower levels of owner-occupied housing than surrounding areas, greater household density per acre, higher levels of transit ridership, and lower vehicle miles traveled. None of these facts are surprising. They are consistent with the denser development patterns of residential neighborhoods developed in the early part of the 20th century.

It should be remembered that the conditions to establish pedestrian-friendly, walkable environments are very nuanced and fine-grained, relying on a number of factors to create the conditions necessary for people to forego their cars and walk instead. This is illustrated by reviewing the walkscores from several different areas within the South Wenatchee community. Based on a scale from 1 (totally automobile dependent) to 100 (walker's paradise), a walkscore measures a location's relative pedestrian friendliness. The South Wenatchee Community Center scored an 85 – 'very walkable', while the intersection of Ferry and Methow Streets scored a 58 – 'somewhat walkable' and the intersection of Mission and Crawford only scored a 42 – 'car dependent', a significant decline in a relatively short distance.

An interesting comparison can be found when analyzing Green House Gas Emissions per acre versus Green House Gas Emissions per household. While the downtown and South Wenatchee core exhibit higher GHG emissions per acre, due to the higher density found in these neighborhoods, the actual GHG Emissions per household are significantly lower in these communities. GHG emissions per household are actually the more significant statistic to consider, as it reflects our individual carbon footprints.



South Wenatchee was originally a working class neighborhood that supported the agricultural and rail industries. The area has continued to grow and is now a very dense community. The homes are typically small single family residential intended to house one family with up to two vehicles per family. The homes often now house several families with many vehicles per household. Over time the neighborhood has deteriorated and the population has grown more diverse. Vandalism, crime, gang activity and code enforcement violations have increased and are higher in this neighborhood than in the rest of the City of Wenatchee. These issues are further complicated by the fact that South Wenatchee is cut off from the rest of the community by highways and the Columbia River.

South Wenatchee lacks basic amenities and other elements that provide places for residents to gather and socialize. Sidewalks are either insufficient or nonexistent and social spaces are not easily accessible. Street lighting is minimal which produces the perception of unsafe streets and neighborhoods. Many of the existing roads are wide with fast traffic creating barriers for pedestrians and bicyclists. The smaller roads in the residential neighborhoods are in poor condition and do not provide sufficient parking. Parking is at a premium as many of the homes house many adults, each with their own vehicle. As a result, residents park on front lawns and sidewalks, further deteriorating the pedestrian environment.



## NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES

South Wenatchee has a number of key issues regarding current neighborhood design and physical infrastructure, including the following:

- Incomplete and insufficient bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
  - Incomplete Sidewalk System
  - Dangerous Pedestrian Crossings
  - Inconsistent provision of ramps, crosswalks, and other amenities
  - Inconsistent Bicycle Facilities
  - Bike Routes Not Clearly Marked in and Around Neighborhood
  - No “Destinations”
  - Infrequent Transit Service, and Insufficient Transit Amenities
- Congested and misplaced automobile parking.
  - High number of Automobiles, Period.
  - And Not All of Them Are Operable
  - Inconsistent On-Street Parking Pattern
  - Some Street Surfaces Paved, Some Not
  - Wavering Pavement Widths
  - Some Parallel Parking, Some Angled, Some Random
  - Unsightly Chaotic Parking on Private Yards
  - Junked Cars Represent Nearly ¼ of All Code Violations
- Undeveloped, dangerous alleyways
  - Poor Maintenance, both Public and Private
  - All Neighborhood Alleyways Currently Unpaved
  - Potholed, Rutted Surfaces Lead to Runoff, Erosion and Ponding After Rain
  - Though Principle Route for Trash Collection, Trash and Debris Accumulate
  - Right-of-Way Undefined
  - Unclear Where Public and Private Properties Meet
  - Lack of Street Lighting Throughout
  - Opportunities for Delinquency
  - Graffiti, Street Crime
- Undeveloped Sense of Identity and Place
  - Lack of Well-Designed Streets Isolates the Neighborhood and Its Residents
  - It’s Hard to Navigate Unless You’re Driving
  - Inconsistent Patterns and Gaps in Streetscape Standards
  - Alleyways Remain Un-Named
  - Opportunities to Capitalize on Views to the City and Mountains Beyond



## DEFINING A NEIGHBORHOOD-WIDE STRATEGY

The following section describes a neighborhood-wide program of investments for South Wenatchee, identifying prioritized elements and specific strategies to address current challenges. The program includes the following central focus areas:

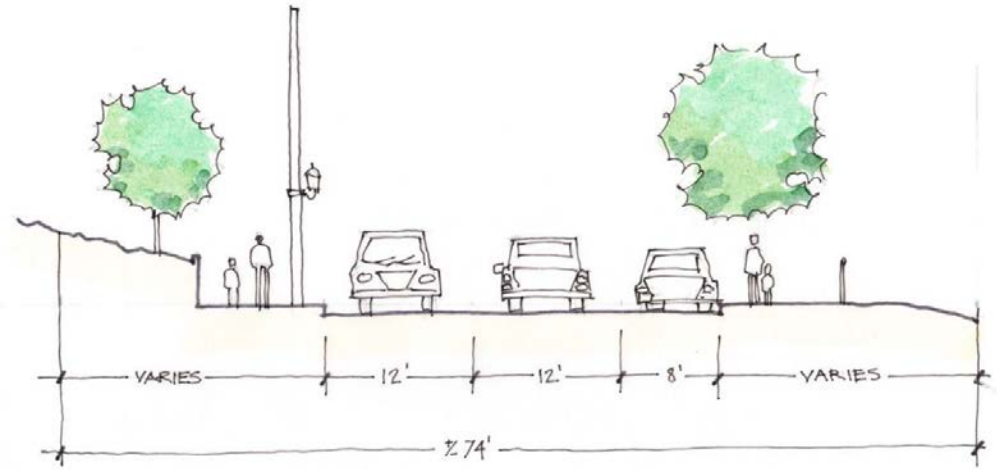
- A Comprehensive Block Enhancement Initiative for the Neighborhood
- Street Design, and the Strengthening of the Pedestrian Realm
- Design Interventions to Address Current Street Conflict Zones in the Neighborhood
- A Parking Strategy which includes an audit, exploration of street parking, and reuse of vacant parcels and alleyways
- A Focus on Alleyways as an opportunity for public and community space, including community gardens
- An exploration of zoning changes to allow accessory dwelling units
- A Connectivity Strategy to link current transit infrastructure and investments for greatest impact
- An Emphasis on key Streets and Corridors that will bring the greatest benefit to the community
- An Emphasis on the Riverfront as a Community Asset
- A Proposal to Re-envision the Lincoln Park area as a mixed-use hub of the Community



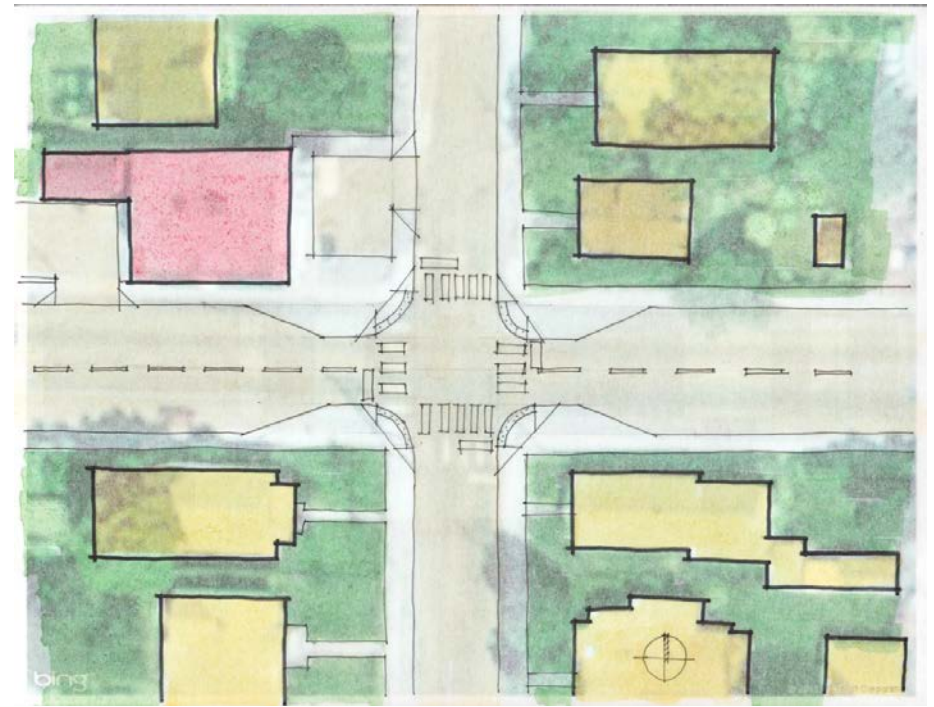
## STREET DESIGN

Opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle access, and other infrastructure elements need to be addressed in South Wenatchee's street design. As the vehicular pressure is lessened on the streets, an opportunity to create great or complete streets will become available to the neighborhood. Great streets (or complete streets) are physically comfortable and provide amenities for all users. Sidewalk infrastructure is currently incomplete and insufficient. Sidewalks need to be provided to create a safe and social pedestrian network. Sidewalks should aim to be 5' wide in residential neighborhoods and 8-10' wide in commercial and retail districts to allow for two or more people to walk side by side. Parkways should be provided between the streets, parking and the sidewalks, providing a safer pedestrian environment by shielding pedestrians from traffic. In addition to sidewalks and parkways other traffic calming mechanisms should be utilized such as bulb outs, enhanced paving at intersections, mid-block chokers and street trees.

The street is a public facility intended to move and connect people. As a consequence, most of the area of the street is devoted for the free movement and parking of private vehicles. However, the primary space of the street is also part of the pedestrian realm. The areas where people walk includes paved areas designated as roadways, and in this proposal is defined by concrete curbs that are no taller than 6 inches and that delimit driveways and parking lanes. The street is also defined by other elements such as street lights, fences and vegetation. A typical residential street in South Wenatchee has a right-of-way of about 75 feet, of which a portion is utilized for people moving and, at present, lacking a clear and consistent curb line and related adequate drainage that allows for blurred lines between the pedestrian and vehicular realms. By defining a 32-foot curb-to-curb paved area demarcated by curbs the pedestrian realm will be better organized.



*Proposed Concept: 32-foot curb-to-curb design*



*Proposed Concept: Improved Intersections*



## STREET TREES

Street trees help to enhance the pedestrian environment by providing shade and cooling in warm seasons. In addition to shade, street trees provide the following benefits:

- Trees provide “community lungs” that clean the air
- Trees cool the streets and the City
- Trees conserve energy
- Trees save water
- Trees help prevent water pollution
- Trees can provide food
- Trees provide a canopy and opportunity for habitat

Street lighting should be provided to allow for safe pedestrian access at night. Levels of street lighting provided should be tailored to the neighborhood and its uses to provide the ability to find ones way, to see stairs, ramps and obstacles and to see other people.

## ADDRESSING STREET CONFLICTS

Streets where there are potential conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians should be treated with “bulb-outs” at the corners. These are extensions of the sidewalks at the places where pedestrians are crossing, thus minimizing the distance pedestrians have to cross and narrowing the travel lanes as a traffic calming device.

Chelan Avenue was given special design attention because there are some problems of urban form that can be solved with relatively small budgets. Chelan Avenue is a one-way arterial (highway 285) that joins Mission Avenue to form a two-way, five-lane arterial. This junction happens at the point where two street grids meet, so there are multiple streets and directions that can be clarified by narrowing the width of the roadway to a minimum standard. The point at which Chelan Avenue diverges is at Chehalis Street. The image attached shows a narrowing of the roadway to allow for more manageable pedestrian crossings and a pedestrian-activated traffic light. The approach of placing pedestrian activated traffic light crossings at critical intersections is recommended for several pedestrian crossings along Mission Street. These include the crossings at Peachy Street, Benton Street and Bridge Street. The intersection at Ferry and Methow Streets is proposed to have a similar treatment with extended bulb-outs, but not necessarily with pedestrian activated traffic lights; instead, here a two-way stop sign is all that is needed.





*Chelan Avenue Existing Conditions*



*Ferry Street and Methow Existing Conditions*



*Future Chelan Avenue Illustrated bulb-outs, street trees and signalization to strengthen the pedestrian realm.*



*Illustrated bulb-outs, street trees and crosswalks*



## A PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AT CHEHALIS

Another street that is specifically recommended for improvement is Chehalis Street from Mission Street to the riverfront. This implies that a new pedestrian bridge be added at the terminus of the street to cross over the rail tracks and to land at the linear park on the waterfront. A signature bridge, a bridge with distinct architectural features, would become an icon and a destination. The intent for Chehalis Street is to improve the landscape quality of the street by lining the street with shade trees and to encourage uses from the building fronting onto the street to extend onto the sidewalk space. This is particularly successful when the adjacent uses are entertainment and food-oriented businesses.



*Chehalis Street Existing Conditions*



*Concept for Chehalis*



## PARKING

The team recommends that Wenatchee conduct a parking study to determine the potential capacity for on-street parking in the area. The intent of this suggestion is not necessarily to maximize the parking potential of the street; rather it shall be conceived as a tool to optimize the use of the street, and therefore, of street parking. On-street parking can be provided primarily when the integrity of the street as a public place is not compromised. It is also suggested as a means to optimize underutilized or non-utilized parcels that have no greater value than parking, and to support greater uses of these parcels by providing required parking.

### General Strategy

- Reduce the total number of cars in the neighborhood by removing junked cars.
- Relocate parking from the street to allow development of sidewalks and bike lanes.
- Eliminate 'Front Yard Parking' on unpaved surfaces; limit to driveways.
- Improve on-street parking by ensuring paved parking spots; limit to one (1) side only.
- Improve alleyways by resurfacing for circulation and additional parking.

### On-Street

- Create and maintain consistent standards for parking lane widths, paving materials, drainage, lighting, sidewalks, and streetscaping.
- Limit parking to one (1) side of the street; use parallel parking only to allow for sidewalk and streetscape development on both sides of the street.

### Off-Street

- Create a City Land Bank strategy to acquire centrally-located neighborhood parcels for off-street surface parking, as "pocket parking lots".
- Lots can be financed by fee-based parking permit system.
- Locate lots so they are accessible either via main streets, alleyways, or both, depending on topography.
- Establish cohesive development standards to ensure that parking lots are paved, lighted, and landscaped to minimize impact on surrounding properties.

### Alleyways

- Survey the alleyways to establish clear boundaries between the public right-of-way and private properties.
- Name the alleyways for clear identification and location, and to create a sense of place.
- Resurface with paving strips to support parking and circulation, and install a center bioswale for stormwater retention and improvement of water quality.
- Establish lighting, landscaping, and fencing standards to ensure a safe and visually attractive public and private space.
- Establish financial incentives for private property improvements, such as fencing and landscaping.
- Explore creation of additional rear-lot housing units specifically designed to take advantage of new alley access.

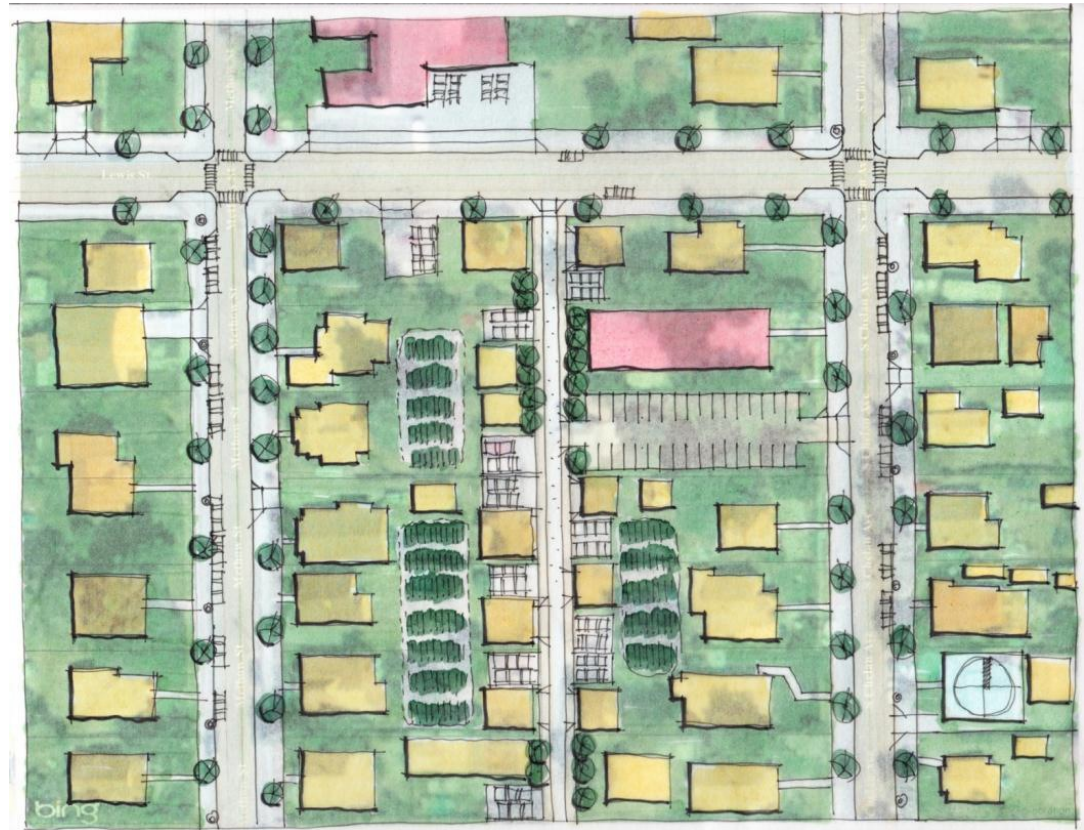


## A COMPREHENSIVE BLOCK ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVE

The team recommends a comprehensive block enhancement initiative for the area. The approach to optimize the typical South Wenatchee block depends on a few strategies, including the following:

- increase parking on the street, alleys and designated parcels where it is adequate;
- improve the landscape quality of the sidewalks by introducing pedestrian scaled vegetation;
- introduce streetlights and clearly defined sidewalks;
- increase the block density by filling vacant parcels and by allowing the development of auxiliary structures fronting the alley as their primary address;
- in addition, it is encouraged to “globalize” certain portions of the backyards by combining parcels to create the opportunity for public space such as community gardens cared and tended by the neighborhood residents.

As part of the strategy for a comprehensive redefinition of the block, the alley becomes as important as the named streets; carriage houses can serve as mother-in-law apartments, while still allowing for parking on the ground level. Alley-fronting housing, especially when built for extended family on the same lot, will alleviate overcrowding in existing housing. Housing units with an at-grade garage have the added benefit of accommodating additional family members’ automobiles. Design guidelines can include parking pads, landscaping, and exterior lighting to illuminate the alleyway and thus provide needed security.



*Illustrating a Comprehensive Block Enhancement Concept*



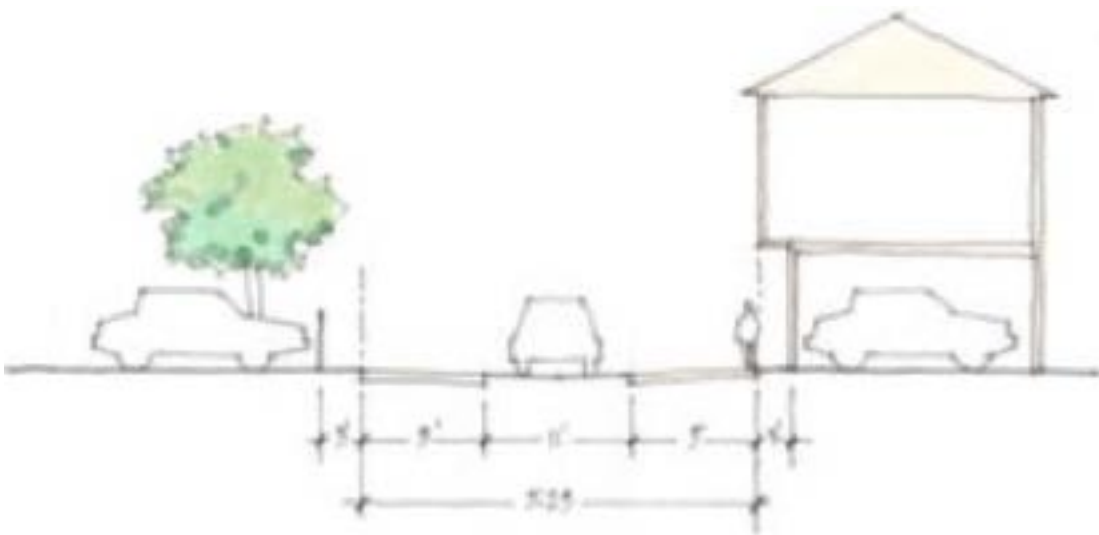
## FOCUS ON ALLEYS

The existing network of alleys are not maintained, underdeveloped and present a dangerous situation. The alleys are unlit, potholed, serve as a location for dumping and provide a place for delinquent behavior. Most of the alleys are not paved and have eroded surfaces.

Alleys can be an important part of infrastructure and can provide South Wenatchee an opportunity for creating a greener, sustainable environment. Alleys can assist with heat reduction during warm weather and assist with stormwater management while providing an inviting vehicular and pedestrian environment. Where possible, alleys should be paved with permeable materials to allow for infiltration. Permeable paving (asphalt, concrete or pavers) allow the water to pass through the material and into the ground plane below. Where permeable surfaces are not viable, high albedo paving should be used to reflect sunlight and reduce the heat island effect. Alleys should also be graded to capture and direct stormwater. Recycled materials such as concrete can be used in various ways. Ground and recycled concrete aggregate can be used as a base under the paving materials. Broken concrete can be used to create low walls defining private versus public property. The placement of trees adjacent to or in alleys will provide shade and help to create a more pleasant pedestrian environment. Alleys have the opportunity to be multiple use spaces, providing rear door access to homes for pedestrians and vehicles alike. This frees up the front of the home for social activities and interaction with neighbors. Alleys can also be places where neighbors can gather, have block parties and neighborhood events.







*An Illustrated Concept for  
Carriage Houses*

## ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

Carriage houses are defined as “Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)” per the Zoning Code: “a dwelling unit that has been added onto, created within, or separated from a single-family detached dwelling for use as a complete independent living unit with provisions for cooking, sanitation and sleeping.”

Accessory Dwelling Units are currently a Prohibited Use in the RH Residential High District. The SDAT team suggests amending the Code to regulate Accessory Dwelling Units as a Permitted Use, or Create a Design Overlay District where ADUs are permitted. This suggestion follows the Housing recommendations of the Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan and helps to promote affordability, equity, flexible land use mixes and densities, maintenance and preservation. ADU development is viewed as an important way to facilitate “cradle to grave” housing options and to promote community stability.



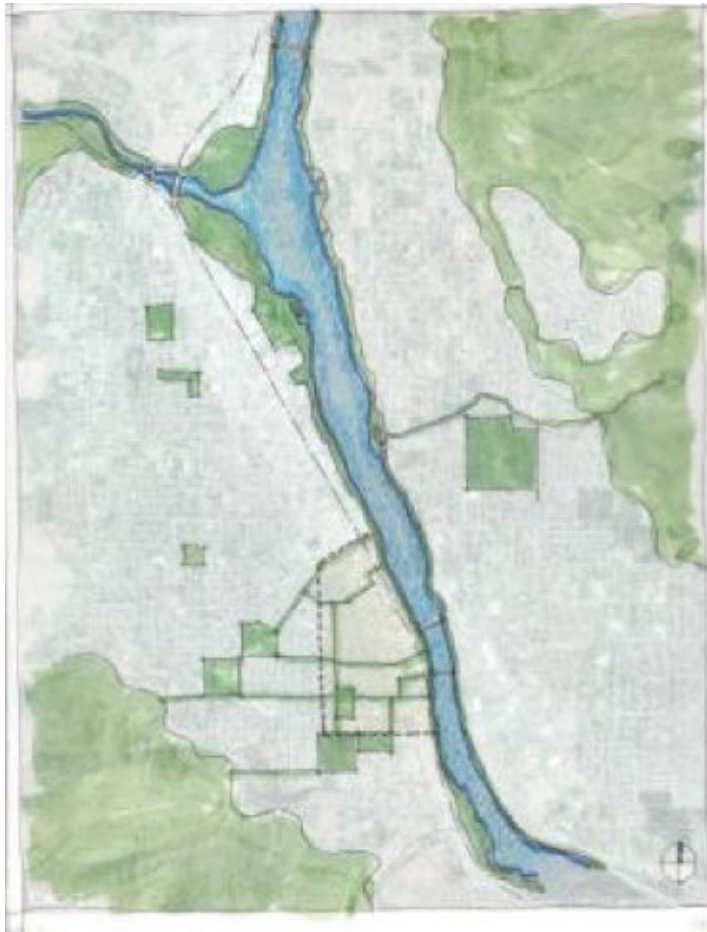
*A Sunflower garden at the Community Center*

## COMMUNITY GARDENS

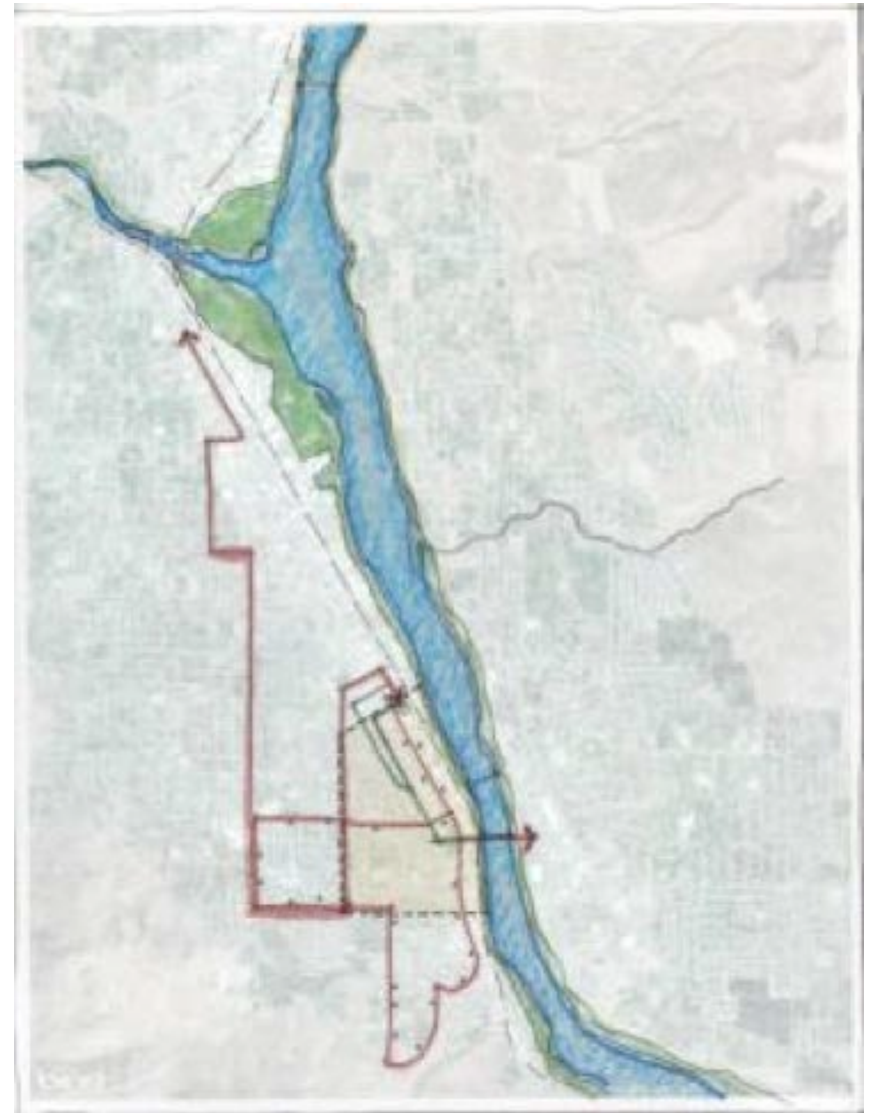
Community gardens improve the quality of life of people who use them by creating a tighter sense of community, and they work as a catalyst for neighborhood and community development. Another benefit is the improvement of the aesthetic quality of the neighborhood. On the economic side, these gardens not only are a local source of food with a much smaller imbedded footprint, they reduce food budgets and can become part-time sources of employment. Community gardens are an opportunity for recreation, exercise, and education at the same that they reduce crime. They also represent an opportunity for intergenerational and cross-cultural connections.

## CONNECTIVITY IN SOUTH WENATCHEE

The importance of mapping transit connections for South Wenatchee cannot be overstated. Mapping these connections will ensure that the transit system serves its intended population. Additionally, mapping the places where the transit system is present helps illustrate where it can be tied or expanded to other modes of transportation. It is especially important to tie the transit system in with the several bike routes and the Loop Trail. Although the focus of the SDAT did not include the transit center, it is worth saying that the combination of the transit system with the Amtrak service and the Loop Trail create an ideal opportunity for Transit-Oriented Development, or as it may be in this case re-development.



*Mapping green connections*



*Mapping transit connections*





The Loop Trail is one of the most important assets for the region and as such it deserves better connections from the neighborhoods and communities that are within its area of influence. In South Wenatchee we have identified at least three, maybe four new connections that need to be added for improving the quality of life of the community and the efficiency of the Loop Trail itself. These connections are from North to South, and Chehalis Street as already mentioned in this document. This connection would be the equivalent of a restaurant-entertainment district with cafes that extend onto the sidewalk. The next point is Bridge Street. The historic pedestrian bridge connection needs to be re-opened, and this action may require some maneuvering since the right of way is currently occupied as a parking facility for adjacent uses. Next is Ferry Street. Although it is one block away from Bridge Street, the potential and the capacity to make this connection is high because the amount of right-of-way impacted and the clearance over the train tracks is minimal. Last is the potential to make a connection to the trail system from the Stevens Street Bridge with a minimal investment, but with the challenge that the right-of-way clearance from the train tracks is quite narrow at this location. Each one of these new connections of the street grid onto the Loop Trail require an improved landscape plan that includes tree-lined streets with adequately landscaped sidewalks to accommodate for new uses that require more pedestrian and bicycle movement. The bridges themselves need to be treated as objects of urban art that become icons and maybe destinations in themselves. There are many opportunities for placemaking with these connections, which will enhance local identity and pride.

*Mapping Bridge Connections*



## LEVERAGE THE RIVER

Throughout history, rivers have been a central feature in the development of human societies – great cities are associated with rivers. This relationship has developed because of their social, recreational and economic value to communities. As societies have become increasingly urbanized the pressures placed on rivers have become ever greater. Too often cities are turning their backs on their rivers instead of valuing them for the asset they are. South Wenatchee faces clear challenges in this regard. Cut off by rail lines, the river is visually and physically difficult to access. Safe and easy access to the river should be a priority and will help in engaging residents. Making the river the focus of activity will foster community and inspire pride.

The Columbia River has the opportunity to be a great benefit to South Wenatchee. The river can be the heart of the City providing open space opportunities, and serving as a green spine that connects communities with each other and with nature. The River can be a continuous greenway that connects neighborhoods to the river, extends open space and creates value. A greener South Wenatchee can be created by the addition of more open space, trees and parks. Using the Columbia River as a green spine provides a series of green street connections to the river and into the neighborhoods. These green streets not only provide environmental benefits to the River and the City but also act as gateways to the River.



## THE LINCOLN PARK AREA: A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY

Lincoln Park and its collateral land represents an optimal opportunity for a redevelopment project that can involve the public and private sectors in creating a mixed-use development incorporating park lands, sports fields, education facilities and housing. Lincoln Park is currently bounded by Crawford Avenue, Parkway Street, Methow Street and Mission Street. To the West of Methow Street is an orchard of over 35 acres that can serve as an excellent opportunity for growth. The design included in this report formalizes the original Lincoln Park into a 'city-beautiful movement' type of park with meadows that can be used for sports and a formal park pavilion. The west parcel is proposed to have a school on the corner of Methow and Crawford Avenue, where the parking facility can be shared with the other uses in the park. Other uses include regulation size soccer/football fields, baseball/softball fields and other sports facilities. To the south of the parcel and in other edges of the parcel residential uses are encouraged.

One of the most important elements to an attractive and healthy environment is a well-designed and well-maintained network of parks. Parks support health, the economy, the environment, education, and community cohesion. They are also critical to workforce development, particularly green career tracks. Parks make our cities sustainable, livable and vibrant. The team recommends the following:

- Continue development of parks especially in underserved neighborhoods
- Develop new parks with community input to determine program elements
- Create a continual greenway connecting neighborhoods to each other, parks, schools and the river
- Conduct a community needs assessment to determine park needs and identify what needs are not being met
- Reprogram parks to meet changing needs and demographics



*Lincoln Park Re-envisioned as a mixed-use hub*





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The set of economic initiatives described in the following section were developed through a series of short analysis activities. These activities included:

- 1) The identification of economic challenges;
- 2) The collection of assets as determined by the South Wenatchee community;
- 3) An outline of community needs; and
- 4) The identification of economic development strategies.

## ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

The challenges facing the community are not insignificant. The area has 20% vacancy in the industrial/commercial section. Business owners want to expand, but face challenges in executing their growth. Residents shop outside their neighborhood because access to quality and affordable goods is not available and the infrastructure does not support shopping in the area. In short, the shopping and business growth patterns are stifled because of a host of factors that encourage residents to go elsewhere, and for external shoppers to pass through. The community's economic development challenges are centered on being seen as a "pass-through" place with little to no "sense of place" that would encourage residents and visitors to shop, or entrepreneurs to locate their business within the study area.

While the economic development challenges confronting South Wenatchee are significant, they are also instrumental in understanding South Wenatchee's community assets. These assets may seem to be indicators for the status quo, but in the context of developing economic initiatives, they become assets to capitalize upon.





South Wenatchee's assets include the following:

- Source of Valley Growth
- Gateway for East Wenatchee
- Retirement Community
- Unmet demand for groceries and basic necessities
- Recreational activities
- Creative Culture
- Interest and willingness to work together
- Informal businesses
- Youth
- Local leaders
- Local Service providers
- Captive purchasing power

The South Wenatchee assets outlined above illustrate the guiding framework from which a series of economic development strategies were developed. These strategies were created through a baseline understanding of the community's economic development needs. These needs were generated through a series of conversations, observations and data review. They fall into three categories:

- 1) Location Challenges;
- 2) Need for Residential Linkages; and
- 3) Support for existing Assets.

#### Location Challenges

The neighborhood's lack of public transportation and current design infrastructure contribute to its treatment as a place to pass through. As shared by residents and businesses alike, along with the retail vacancy along the South Wenatchee Avenue corridor, the area is lacking visual cues to slow down, stay, visit and shop. Basic recommendations for changing this current "pass-through" dynamic are to implement the following:

- 1) develop a series of strategies to activate the South Wenatchee Avenue corridor; and
- 2) increase the food resources for the local population that does not have access to a vehicle.



Initiative	Needs Addressed							
		<div> <div>Activate South Wenatchee Ave.</div> <div>Increase Food Resources</div> <div>Ensure Access</div> <div>Generate Jobs for Youth</div> <div>Assist Existing Business</div> <div>Engage whole community</div> </div>						
							\$	\$\$
Support & Expand corner stores		•	•	•	•	•	•	
Anchor Grocery Store	•	•	•	•		•		•
Food Manufacturing Incubator	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Activate Industrial properties		•	•	•		•		•
Grow Local Business	•		•	•	•	•	•	
\$ = Moderate Political and Resource Investment								
\$\$ = High Level Political and Resource Investment								

#### Need for Residential Linkages

The neighborhood is fairly isolated from the other parts of Wenatchee. The population's general lack of car ownership is exacerbated by few public transportation options. Additionally, because the population has a large senior and youth demographic, the lack of public transportation options further isolates these transit-challenged groups. Recommendations to address the residential linkages are as follows:

- 1) Implement strategies that ensure increased accessibility; and
- 2) Develop job opportunities for the young population in South Wenatchee.

#### Support Existing Assets

Despite the challenges confronting the community, there are several core assets within the South Wenatchee community that should be integrated into implementing any set of economic initiatives. The businesses within the area are interested in growing, but face challenges in doing so. Additionally, the community as a whole is inherently interested in being part of any series of strategies to improve on the status quo. These human-based assets can serve as instrumental ingredients to put towards action.

## ECONOMIC INITIATIVES

The table above outlines five strategies for catalyzing economic development in East Wenatchee. The five strategies were built out of the existing conditions, and by the South Wenatchee community's articulation of their assets and needs. The table illustrates whether the five strategies address key community needs and also provides a basic sense of the political and financial resources required for implementation.





#### Support and Expand Corner stores

The first initiative, to support and expand corner stores, truly builds on a number of needs the community expressed. During the SDAT visit, a few corner-store business owners shared their interest in expanding their businesses. This was in conjunction with a series of statements expressed by the community that there were not enough produce options and the price point of the options was difficult for them to afford at their local stores. A key element of this initiative is that it requires moderate political and resource investment. One of the opportunities that could be applied to this initiative is linking existing business planning support partners in the area to the local corner stores. The area is blessed by groups such as CWHCC, the Scores Central Washington office, NCWEDD, Wenatchee Valley College and the Wenatchee Valley College Continuing Education Center for Entrepreneurship. A partnership between all or a few of these groups with the local corner stores would assist these eager business owners in developing viable business plans to attract additional capital necessary and expand their offerings to meet local demand.

Additionally, supplementary programs that would assist the corner stores in their expansion should be launched. Programs such as the Healthy Corner Stores network (HCSN) are valuable models worth consideration given the challenges that these owners face, alongside the lack of quality and affordable produce found in the immediate neighborhood. These resources can provide a way to increase healthy and affordable options, while ensuring that business owners are expanding through financially viable means. Additionally, loan programs could be developed to incentivize store owners to increase shelf space for healthy and nutritional offerings. Using the HCSN as a starting guide, a number of options await implementation. And lastly, utilizing local design schools to assist in redesign of existing stores to maximize space is another way to leverage local assets for these existing stores. These schools could pair teams of students to each business to evaluate shelf maximization and other design improvements.

### Anchor Grocery Store

In addition to expanding the local corner stores, the South Wenatchee area would benefit from additional grocery options. Ideally efforts would be made to attract a large grocery firm to the area. In order to attract this grocer, a suite of incentives would serve to ensure success. One resource to consider in developing these incentives is the New York Healthy Food and Communities Fund (NYHFCF). NYHFCF reflects a public-private partnership that provides financing to build and expand food markets in underserved areas. For example, the resources that currently support NYHFCF include the Low Income Investment Fund, the Food Trust, the Reinvestment Fund, NY State Development, the NYS Dept. of Agriculture and markets, NYS Health foundation and the Goldman urban investment group. Collectively, these partners provide resources and policy direction to ensure that areas with unmet food resources can be financially induced. Local partners should be identified to create a program similar to the NYHFCF. Additionally, participation in the Healthy Food Financing Initiative would benefit the South Wenatchee effort as the federal legislation may result in additional resources that could be put towards this important community need.

Other methods to attract larger grocers include implementing creative land-use incentives. By modifying permit and zoning restrictions, other tenants might be lured to the area. Programs in New York City, such as the Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH) project, incentivize grocery stores to locate to underserved areas. These incentives include a relaxation of several of the land-use policies that limit the size of a store. Other options worthy of consideration include reducing parking requirements and floor area restrictions. Given that the local population's car ownership rate is low, typical parking requirements may not be as necessary to serve the core customer base. And lastly, a vacant or underutilized lot that would be appropriate for this size and type of use could be identified and marketed to attract the right grocer. A package of information including any financial incentives and zoning relief, along with demographic profiles of the community, could be used to attract temporary grocers similar to the stock box grocery effort in Seattle, a method of testing out market demand through container buildings while something permanent is developed.



*Concept for a stock box grocer in Seattle*

### Food Manufacturing Incubator

Given the City of Wenatchee's recent investment in establishing a large farmer's market, the South Wenatchee expertise on food and agriculture, and the network of informal businesses, the opportunities for developing a food incubator are promising. A two-phase approach to establishing the food manufacturing incubator is recommended. The first phase is to develop a resource guide for the existing food businesses in the area on an informal basis. Additionally, a developing a program that offers assistance in cash flow management, recipe development and marketing would reap benefits. This program's basic business support and planning would help entrepreneurs gain a firm footing when transitioning from informal to formal businesses. Additionally, providing affordable access to commercial kitchens is critical to expanding the pipeline of viable food manufacturing businesses.



Source: Forage Kitchen

During the first phase, a network of local restaurants should be approached and asked to participate in an off-hours kitchen rental program. This program would provide affordable commercial kitchens to emerging entrepreneurs and provide additional revenue to existing restaurants. Lastly, a loan program should be developed that is specific to a food manufacturer's expansion. This loan program would help those businesses ready to expand. During phase 2, a larger facility is recommended for development. This will require a longer planning effort and resource allocation. One critical step is to consider La Cocina incubator based in San Francisco as a model worthy of replicating. A business plan should be developed for the facility and a building should be identified that is in a location close to the new farmers market. Possible buildings would include an older vacant building or a former restaurant ready for activation.



#### Activate Industrial Properties

There are a number of industrial properties in South Wenatchee that are in need of activation. Developing a series of specific and targeted efforts to re-activate the waterfront and business corridor is critical to generating a new sense of place. One initial low-cost way to start is to develop a property listing portal. This would be a web-based system where vacant and available properties could be listed with relevant information describing the assets of the immediate and broader markets. Additionally, the website could feature other new developments taking place within the Wenatchee community. Many cities have utilized these maps as a means to generate interest in attracting business. Those models, including crowd-sourcing, should be evaluated to determine the best model for South Wenatchee. Partnering with a local technology partner could also assist in quickly launching this effort.



An additional element to include in this effort is marketing the key recreational attributes of the community. Given the plethora of recreational activities in the area, these could be marketed as a way to attract relevant businesses that cater to this recreational group. Illustrating these facts on the web-portal would be another important way to utilize the resource.

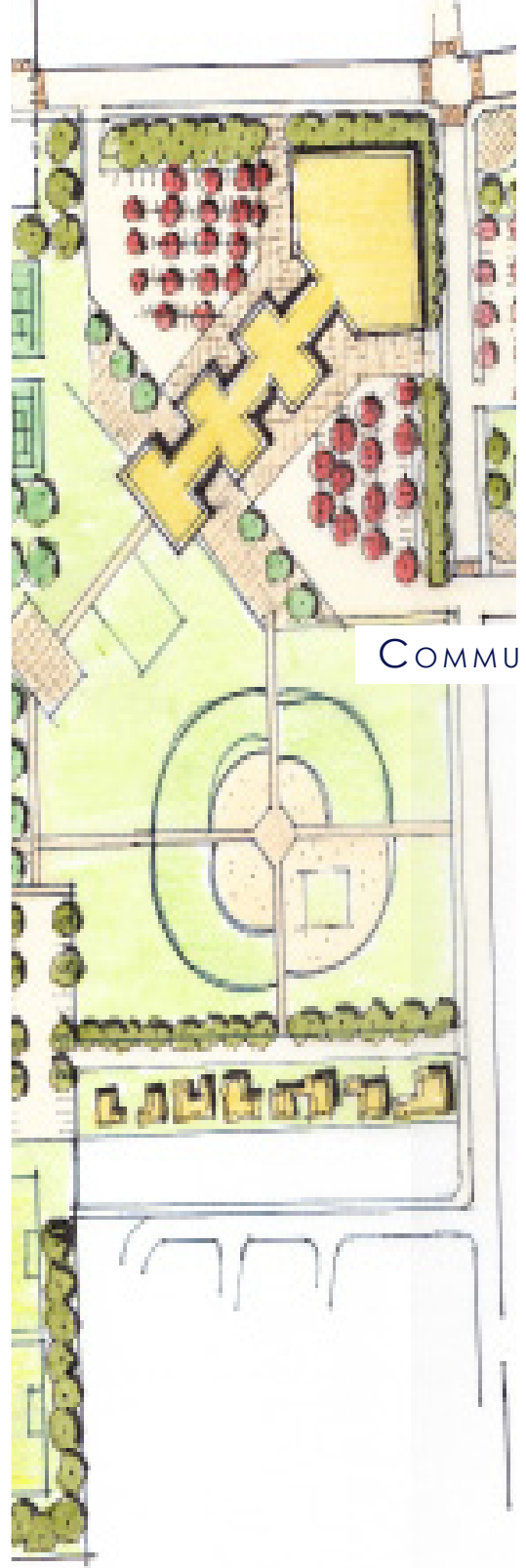
Creating a retail façade and tenant improvement grant program would be instrumental to addressing several businesses' expressed desires to see improvements to the streetscape. These improvements could help increase foot traffic to local shops. The improvement grant program could be developed with a number of local partners, and should be modeled after other existing programs (e.g. City of Oakland façade improvement program).

#### Grow Local Businesses

One of the issues raised by several community members during the SDAT process was frustration with the inability to fix things and make things better in homes and businesses. Developing a local business-owner support center is one approach to address this frustration. First, business support services should be aggregated (e.g. loans, planning) and match that to these businesses seeking assistance. These efforts should be focused on supporting existing firms that are ready and wanting to grow. The second part of these efforts could include creation of a "Do it Yourself: Physical and Façade Improvement" series of workshops. Given that many firms want façade improvements, the program could empower these business owners. Additionally, these workshops could be held at the local Ace hardware store. The repair and community improvement workshops could include the involvement of local youth and members from the retirement community.

An additional strategy to consider would be developing a pop-up retail and artist studio initiative. This would be a very targeted effort to curate independent retailers and other small business to previously vacant storefronts on the main commercial corridor. The curator would negotiate free rent for the temporary tenants. The concept is to structure small-business incubation by revitalizing neighborhoods block by block. Examples such as the Pop-Up Retail Project in Oakland are valuable models worth consideration.





COMMUNITY



## INTRODUCTION

At the heart of the Wenatchee SDAT process, the dialogue centered on community. Several important neighborhood challenges emerged from the public process, which the team has categorized as follows:

- Competing Realities and the Neighborhood Self-image
- Social Capital and Community Health
- Youth as a Focal Point

### ***What is Social Capital?***

Social Capital refers to the bonds of social trust, neighborliness, and feelings of reciprocity that exist in a community. In a neighborhood with high levels of social capital, neighbors not only know one another, but they engage in mutually beneficial activities that contribute to the sense of community and help one another out.

## ASSESSMENT

During the SDAT process, the team was led on an extensive walking tour of the neighborhood, traversing streets and alleys, visiting key community institutions, and engaging a series of site specific visits. Every community communicates a message through its visual appearance and tangible and intangible cues. Casual observation of the South Wenatchee neighborhood reveals existing issues regarding the current level of social capital. For instance, the team observed dozens of signs that indicated neighborhood trust is low. In some cases, entire city blocks were posted with “No Trespassing” and “Beware of the Dog” signs. This was particularly evident in alleyways, where many graffiti incidents have occurred as well, and where there is a pervasive sense of an existing “no man’s land” regarding who is taking ownership of the common space and how the community is using it. Ironically, in the team’s interactions with neighborhood residents, it was noted that strong community values exist and are widely shared across race, class and age, but the pervading perceptions are defining identity in terms of “the other,” rather than uniting diverse cultures and residents in common purpose. As a result, the team found that South Wenatchee is currently a community of conflicted realities. On the one hand, residents do share a common set of community values, but on the other, the neighborhood does not share strong ties, communication, or trust, and the role and place of youth in the community is something the neighborhood is

struggling with. The visual impact of the neighborhood is also presenting a challenge in reinforcing negative perceptions instead of strengthening community values. The visual signs of low social capital include pervasive graffiti.



## SOUTH WENATCHEE IS...

Unsafe

A Traditional Neighborhood

Not a lot of open space

Growing Economically

Unsafe/Dark

Visually Unattractive

Not Inviting

Culturally Diverse

Generationally Diverse

Interdependent

Unattractive

Not Much to Do

Limited Parks

First Place People Move

A Place to Begin

A Sense of Community

Opportunistic/Place of Opportunity

A Different Culture

Industrial

Residential

Rental Housing-Heavy

Residential vs. Commercial

Entry-Level Residential

Not As Accessible

A Focal Point with High Needs

Place with Safety Issues (real and perceived)

A Rough Neighborhood

A mix (positive & negative)

Divided Physically

Neglected

Misunderstood

-Residents judged unfairly

-Appearance/perception vs. real sense of community

A place with lots of Substandard homes

First Place People Move- "Drop Zone"

Where Stuff Is (Schools, Parks, etc)

A Place with few bus routes

A Place with concentrated affordable housing

Frustrating to Drive in

Neglected

A Place with support systems (Community Action Council, Foodbank, etc)

A Place without a cohesive identity



[Citizen Input from a small group exercise during the SDAT process.]

I imagine

*"Generosity, goodness, kindness, gracious, spirit, giving, helpful."*



## BUILDING A COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY

The team believes that the neighborhood needs a sustained campaign to build community by addressing tangible issues in the area together, through partnerships and civic participation. This effort should be led by neighborhood residents foremost, and should include a broad collaborative with representation from local government, business representatives, and the non-profit sector as well.

## GETTING ORGANIZED FOR COLLABORATION

### ***Form a Neighborhood Organization***

Currently, there is no organizational body that represents the South Wenatchee neighborhood or serves as an effective hub for communications among residents and stakeholders. As an initial step, the team recommends that residents and stakeholders of South Wenatchee form an organization, using one of the following models:

- **Homeowner's Association (HOA).** There are currently over 250,000 HOAs in America. An HOA is a group representing property owners that normally is given the legal authority to enforce rules and regulations that focus on restrictions regarding building and safety issues. The HOA also normally owns and maintains public spaces and parks, as well as any civic facilities in a neighborhood. HOA membership is normally a mandatory requirement for homeowners, and HOAs enforce additional rules regarding rented property. HOAs have been used as organizing mechanisms for new residential developments, but are difficult to form in established neighborhoods given the concerns over fees and restrictions that an HOA can enforce.
- **Neighborhood Association.** A Neighborhood Association is a less restrictive organizational mechanism for the neighborhood. Typical neighborhood associations are organized by residents and local businesses to work together for neighborhood beautification, public safety, and increased social activity. They also serve as advocacy organizations for the area. Membership is often voluntary or informal. While HOAs provide legal authority to enforce rules and restrictions, neighborhood associations attempt to use education, peer pressure, and neighbor-to-neighbor communication to enforce community norms.

- **Community Advisory Board Model.** Community Advisory Boards (CABs), are generally applied to build a broad and representative stakeholder group from a community to work with a local institution. Therefore, an advisory board model would be an appropriate mechanism to apply to an organization serving as the umbrella for local area non-profits and social service agencies, to discuss neighborhood concerns and work together on common issues.

- **Voluntary Neighborhood Collaborative.** Forming a voluntary neighborhood collaborative would represent the least formal organizing mechanism, and could provide a loose coalition of area stakeholders a forum to discuss neighborhood issues and work together.

Given the options, the team believes the neighborhood association model is the most appropriate organizing vehicle for South Wenatchee, and it could be used in combination with a community advisory board for non-profit organizations, as well as a larger coalition or collaborative involving area business groups.

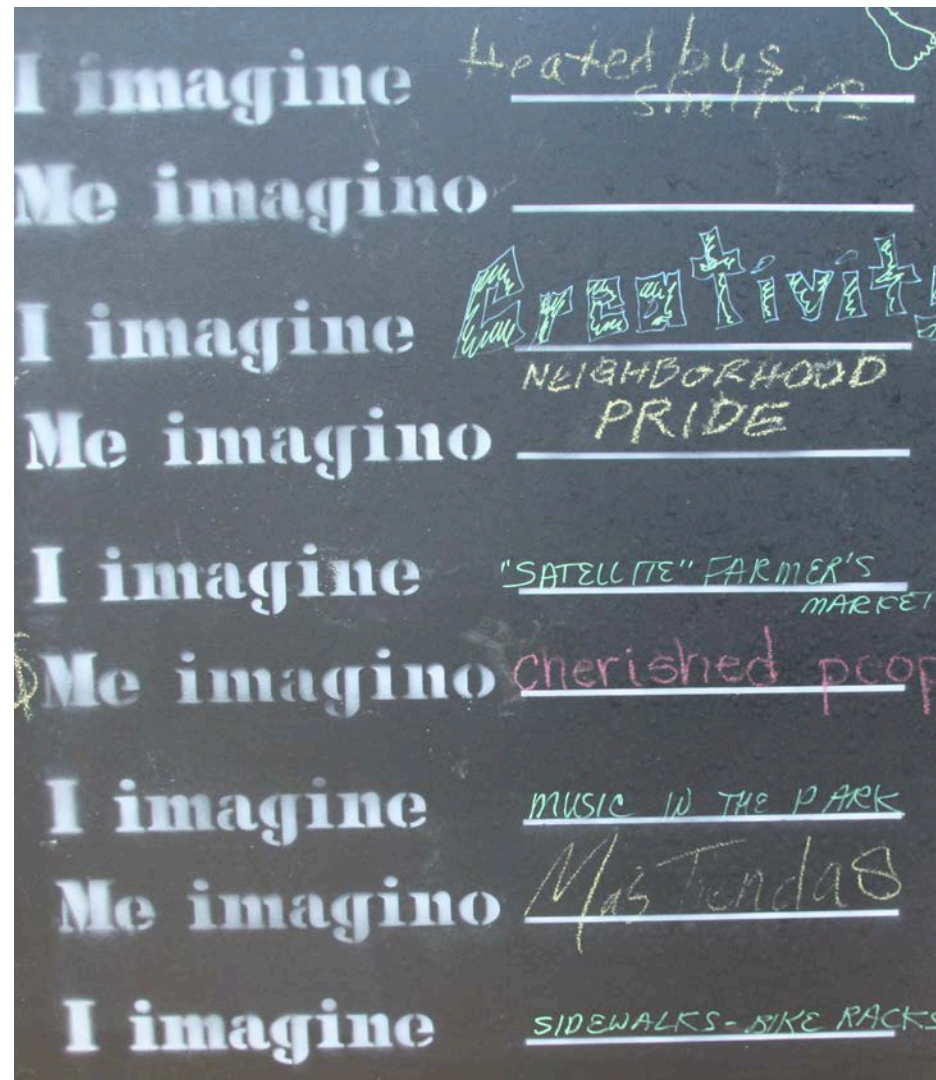
### ***Form a Non-Profit Collaborative***

South Wenatchee is home to a wealth of non-profits and social service agencies. Each entity is striving to make an impact in the community, with the best of intentions and to the best of its abilities. However, communication and coordination among the non-profits and institutions in the area is currently insufficient. The community would benefit from greater communication among nonprofit organizations. There are many hands reaching out to help, but they don't always know what the other hands are doing. The team heard several stories of people not being connected with services that were, in fact, available for them. Perhaps an umbrella organization could act as a clearinghouse for services, pair organizations doing like work to reduce manpower and resource demands for the same or greater impact, and create an effective communication strategy to ensure that those who need help know where to get it. Beyond programming partnerships, local area non-profits could consider partnering with the public sector or other non-profits to pursue future co-location strategies and create a one-stop shop for services under the banner of a Neighborhood Service Center model. This model, which integrates complementary services in one location, has been implemented in hundreds of communities successfully, often with public sector support for leasing space or the provision of staff coordinators.

## IF ANYTHING WERE POSSIBLE, WHAT WOULD YOU CREATE IN SOUTH WENATCHEE?

A Centerpoint/Hub  
 A Community Center Activated with the Arts  
 A Big Employer with Jobs  
 More Affordable Housing  
 A Supermarket with more access/closer  
 Road Safety/Crossings & Sidewalks  
 A Park  
 Community Center as Hub of neighborhood  
 Something Everyone is Proud Of  
 More Parenting Skills  
 Mentoring Programs  
 A Recreational Center/youth Center  
 Affordable Access to Stores  
 More Attractions (Zipline)  
 Recreational Courts and Places for Youth  
 Recreational Places with Access for All Skill Levels  
 Safe Places/Homes  
 Something to Inspire Pride  
 A Centerpoint/Hub with a Park or Plaza  
 Paved Alleys and More Density/Granny Flats  
 Cohesiveness with Bridges to East & West  
 Infrastructure (Curbs, Sidewalks, etc)  
 River Access with Community Areas  
 A Waterpark  
 Something for Older Youth/Park  
 Upgraded Housing  
 Cultural Events/Dances  
 Entrepreneurial Center/Support with Amenities  
 Opening Up the Neighborhood with Pedestrian Access  
 A Pedestrian Overpass/Connection to the Waterfront  
 Wider, well-lit streets  
 A Bigger Shopping Center w/more Variety & Name Brands  
 Culturally Responsive Housing  
 A Place to Live/Play/Work  
 More Trees and Lively places and Pedestrians  
 A Farmers Market with Cafes & Restaurants

[Citizen Input from a small group exercise during the SDAT process.]



### **Explore forming a Neighborhood Business Association**

The Wenatchee Downtown Association has been a successful organizing mechanism for the downtown for over 20 years, winning a “Great American Main Street Award” from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2003. A similar organization for South Wenatchee, particularly as an extension of the existing downtown association, could serve the neighborhood business community well.



*“A friendly looking neighborhood. Welcoming homes. Neighborhood bbq parties. Block watch. No broken fences/weeds.”*

### **GETTING STARTED**

The community message concerning some key immediate issues was clear during the public process. Residents and stakeholders identified three key areas that the neighborhood needs to address moving forward:

- Neighborhood Safety Concerns
- The Neighborhood’s Visual Appearance
- South Wenatchee’s Identity and Image

For instance, many people (both within and outside the neighborhood) believe South Wenatchee has a perception issue that is largely tied to its physical appearance. As one participant noted, “I think South Wenatchee has a bad reputation. We need to get the community involved in helping clean it up.” Another resident stated that, “I feel as if it is an eye sore and really needs to be cleaned up for the better of the community.” In addition, there was significant dialogue regarding public safety in the South Wenatchee area. Again, this conversation was largely colored by and connected to how people perceive of the neighborhood, and not necessarily reflective of a reality on the ground in South Wenatchee. When asked to describe the neighborhood in one word, several residents responded that South Wenatchee is “unsafe,” “dark,” “a rough neighborhood,” and “a place with safety issues – real and perceived.” There are some clear programmatic interventions that South Wenatchee can implement with little or no cost to begin to address these issues. These initiatives only require the volunteerism and community commitment of residents.

The team recommends the following:

### **Institute a Neighborhood Clean Team**

Residents of South Wenatchee have the power to begin changing the image and narrative of their community immediately by uniting to volunteer for regular neighborhood clean-up operations. These events can involve residents, local businesses, and non-profit neighbors in the area. They can be organized as cross-cultural, intergenerational efforts that not only contribute to improved appearance on the streets, but help build relationships across groups and institutions that reside in the area.



*“I picture it picked up (clean) and all tagging taken care of.”*

### **Organize a Neighborhood Watch Program**

The community should consider initiating a neighborhood watch program. The greatest value in neighborhood watch programs don’t come in the resulting reductions in crime and misbehavior (although that is a positive outcome), but rather the promotion of conversations among neighbors. As groups walk through the community they engage residents in conversation and get to know one another better. Once you get to know your neighbors better you are more inclined to help one another out. Multiple representatives of the Wenatchee Police Department, including the Chief of Police, were actively involved in the SDAT process and are strongly supportive of community policing efforts and expanded partnerships in the neighborhood, so this program represents a golden opportunity to build community and address perceptions about South Wenatchee moving forward.



*“I imagine a South Wenatchee where there be no gangs, drugs, violence, or racism. Where we the people can help each other out and our children can study and learn and graduate and have a better future than us.”*



### ***Case Study: The importance of Building Social Capital***

In 2001, a local Community Action Council in Lexington, Kentucky hired the National Civic League to measure social capital in the Winburn neighborhood. The neighborhood, historically African-American, had changed dramatically over the years, developing a population that was 50 percent Latino. The neighborhood residents complained of persistent petty street crime, graffiti, and the perception of safety issues. The consultant team conducted a neighborhood-wide survey of residents, and organized several specific focus groups (including one with youth) to evaluate neighborhood issues. They found that levels of social capital within the African-American community, and levels of social capital within the Latino community, were healthy. However, social trust, reciprocity, and neighborliness across the demographic groups was non-existent. Ironically, both groups shared the same concerns about the overall health of the neighborhood. Furthermore, focus groups with youth revealed that there were no opportunities for local youth to engage in productive activities. As a result, youth were involved in a large majority of the reported crime in the neighborhood. The findings of the study led to three specific recommendations:

- Start an inclusive neighborhood watch group involving both African-American and Latino residents;
- Begin some joint-programming to build neighborhood pride (block parties, neighborhood clean-ups, etc);
- Have the Community Action Council locate a recreation center or YMCA in the Winburn neighborhood (a consensus desire identified in the youth focus groups).

When these actions were taken, crime plummeted in the neighborhood, and communication and collaboration across demographic groups led to increased social capital, feelings of trust and neighborliness, and an enhanced image of the neighborhood both internally and externally.

## **A ROLE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Wenatchee's local government is actively involved in South Wenatchee's neighborhood revitalization efforts through a number of initiatives, from community policing to code enforcement, to transportation and pedestrian safety issues. The Team believes that the city can enhance its current efforts with the following initiatives:

### ***Encourage Positive Community Development***

The City is currently doing an excellent job with code enforcement efforts in South Wenatchee given limited resources. These efforts are helping to resolve issues regarding the state of particular properties and alleviate safety issues. However, it may want to supplement these efforts with low-cost recognition programs that reinforce the community image South Wenatchee desires for its future. For instance, instituting a "Yard of the Month Award" to recognize residents for exemplary efforts to project a positive image for the neighborhood, as well as a "Good Neighbor Award" to highlight extraordinary citizen contributions to the community can reinforce a new neighborhood brand and image, and provide the City Council with an opportunity to highlight positive developments citywide.

### ***Create a Neighborhood College Program***

The SDAT process engaged hundreds of residents in community building ideas concerning the future of South Wenatchee. During the process, it became evident that residents are seeking opportunities to gain access to skills and opportunities that will help them improve the neighborhood and make a contribution to the civic life of the city. One mechanism to support this interest is the Neighborhood College model. There are currently approximately 100 such programs in municipalities across the country. They enroll citizens for terms that can vary from 6-12 weeks typically, with weekly sessions. The curriculum can include "Government 101" content, as well as skill building sessions that range from Cultural Competency, Facilitation, and Mediation to Carpentry and Home Improvement classes. The courses can take place in a civic facility or on site around the city.



*"A place for all cultures to come together and share ideas/skills to build a greater Wenatchee."*

### ***Consider Supporting a Neighborhood Services Center***

Given the ongoing presence of many non-profit service providers in the South Wenatchee area, and the need to enhance coordination and communication about existing services, the team recommends that the city consider creation of a neighborhood services center. Neighborhood Service Centers exist in jurisdictions across the United States, and follow a variety of programming models. In the case of Wenatchee, there are several natural advantages to housing a neighborhood service center in the neighborhood:

- There are several large, vacant properties that could be purposed for such a use in the neighborhood at relatively low cost;
- A host of non-profit service organizations are already present in the neighborhood, and would have incentive to co-locate and integrate public and non-profit services in a seamless, one-stop shop;
- Having a physical presence in South Wenatchee would allow various City departments (code enforcement, community policing, social services) better access to the neighborhood residents, improving communications and the ability to provide a range of services and programming.

### ***Leverage the Community Center***

The SDAT process uncovered the irony that the Community Center in South Wenatchee seems underutilized, despite demand for a range of services in the neighborhood. The team heard area youth express repeated interest in a local recreation center, and seniors also stated that they need a civic space for activities. The Community Center facility could be more fully utilized to address some of these needs. It should also be evaluated as a potential Neighborhood Services Center. Given its size, the Community Center space could be the place for teen basketball games, a homework hangout, and afterschool 4-H and Scout clubs. The daytime hours could be filled with book clubs, knitting/quilting/crochet circles, and cooking/canning clubs. Residents are asking for instruction on how to care for homes made with unfamiliar materials and other basic skills. A Sunday afternoon could be planned once a quarter where volunteers with building, gardening, and landscaping skills demonstrate and teach those skills to their neighbors. There could be stations about drywall repair, basic plumbing, weather stripping and other skills. Perhaps residents would want to add nutrition, food preparation and preservation to the list of skills being shared as well.



**I imagine**

*"I picture a Hispanic museum with authentic items and educational programs for those who want to learn more about this awesome culture. I picture a Hispanic indoor market, a boys and girls club at the community center where kids can go after school. I imagine a place that is so cool the kids will want to hang out there instead of joining a gang."*



### Create Neighborhood Information Kiosks

A series of neighborhood kiosks/bulletin boards could be installed to help South Wenatchee promote conversations and activities within the community. These could possibly be coordinated with the enhanced bus shelters discussed above.

### Consider Charter Reforms to Adopt Councilmanic Districts

One long-term consideration for Wenatchee City Government that the team recommends is the adoption of councilmanic districts. One of the repeated comments that struck the SDAT team during the public dialogue was the notion that members of the community didn't feel that their elected officials were approachable or represented the community's interests, even though the mayor and several members of city council attended the SDAT meetings. One long-term remedy to this sense of disengagement might be to revise the current councilmanic system of seven councilmen elected at-large to a hybrid system of at-large and district-based council elections. This way the community could recognize at least one councilman who is specifically elected to represent their interests.

## ENGAGING WENACHEE'S FUTURE: YOUTH

Youth development was a hot topic during the SDAT process, both because adults focused a lot of dialogue around how to engage youth in productive activities in the community, and because many South Wenatchee youth participated in the process and voiced their opinions as well. Again, the community dialogue had clear themes. As one participant stated, "we need to involve youth in committees to hear their thoughts, ideas and suggestions for the neighborhood."

I imagine

*"More secure streets. More sports for young adults and kids.  
It also could be a better South Wenatchee by supporting and  
educating the young to a better future."*





## RECOMMENDATIONS

The team has two core recommendations regarding youth engagement and development:

### **Create a Youth Advisory Commission to bring Youth into the Dialogue**

A Youth Advisory Commission (YAC) is a body that serves as a bridge between the youth community and the City Council by making suggestions and providing feedback regarding issues affecting and concerning the youth of Wenatchee. The YAC also provides an opportunity for young people to learn more about the role of local government.

### **Explore a Youth Civic Engagement Initiative**

There are several outstanding programmatic models for youth engagement that could be adapted well to Wenatchee. A few instructive case studies follow.



*“Events and activities for youth, children, and adults. Adult basic skills to assist their children with homework/schoolwork. Mentorship for youth.”*

*“The question you (the city) needs to ask is: “what can we do to encourage our youth to stay or come back to Wenatchee to work” and the answer would be “what do you have to offer those kids if they return?” What incentive is out there for our children to stay? Answer: continue to work on safe environments and opportunities to make a living.”*



### ***Case Study: Delray Beach, Florida - Providing Opportunity and Skill Building***

In the 1980s, Delray Beach, Florida faced issues regarding youth crime and gang activity, including leading the nation in stolen cars per capita for a period of time. The community created the Youth Automotive Training Center (YATC) as a response to these issues. The YATC trained at-risk youth in basic automotive repair and provided academic remediation, job readiness, and life management skills. The police department reported that crime fell nearly 60 percent in the neighborhood from which the Center had enrolled kids. The program trained over 500 individuals over the years, and in 2001, Delray Beach, Florida was awarded an All-America City Award for its innovative work in youth development. A 20-year evaluation of the initiative revealed astonishing success rates. Eighty-five percent of the graduates had not experienced any legal trouble since graduation and 88% had not spent time in jail. A quarter of the graduates were active in their chosen religions and 73% reported being very satisfied or satisfied with their lives. Finally, 89% of the students who graduated prior to 1997 were employed full time.



### ***Case Study: Hampton, Virginia - Engaging Youth in Decision-Making***

In 2005, Hampton, Virginia won the prestigious American Government Award for its innovative approach to youth. Through its Youth Civic Engagement initiative, the city “turns the notion of youth as consumers of public services on its head, and instead empowers young people as leaders in their schools, neighborhoods, and city government.” Hampton has a comprehensive approach to youth engagement, involving them as advisers for a Neighborhood Youth Advisory Board, Citizens’ Unity Commission, Teen Advisory Groups for Parks and Recreation, the Superintendent’s Advisory Group, and secondary school advisory teams. Hampton even has Youth Planners in their planning department. The City also has a 24-member Youth Commission, and involves young people on other appointed committees throughout the city. Another youth board, Uth ACT, supported by Alternatives, Inc., promotes youth involvement in the city.

The City describes “three pathways of opportunities for youth” to become involved in their community:

- Service - hundreds of short-term opportunities to volunteer
- Influence - over 300 youth each year serve in some type of advisory capacity providing input into adult decision-making
- Shared Leadership - youth in Hampton have the opportunity to serve as voting members on city boards and commissions, run their own grant program, and have responsibility for their own component of the Community Plan

By allowing youth to have a voice within the process, the city has seen an increase in volunteerism and voting rates among young voters, with many young people returning to the city after college to pursue local careers in a place where they feel valued – and, the ideas that youth participation have brought to the dialogue have resulted in significant savings to public expenditure, as well as improved public services to the community. As the City website explains, “Most importantly, YCE has significantly altered the culture of civic life in Hampton, as adults have grown to expect, rely on, and--most importantly--enjoy active youth participation on civic committees.”



## CREATING A PLACE FOR COMMUNITY

### ***Reclaim Your Alleyways***

A walk down most alleys in South Wenatchee reveals a public space that has been surrendered by the community. Posted “No Trespassing” signs, barriers between private and public space, and pervasive graffiti contribute to a sense that the alleys represent a dangerous “no man’s land,” and contribute to a climate of mistrust, fear, and crime. Design suggestions for a re-interpretation of the current alley structure are included in other sections of this report. Reinterpreted alleyways as public and community space would have a transformative impact on South Wenatchee, and they represent an enormous opportunity to create a vibrant and unique place in the city.

### ***Case Study: Pocket Neighborhoods in Little Rock, Arkansas***

The Pettaway Pocket Neighborhood project in Little Rock, Arkansas provides a perfect example of the enormous opportunity that Wenatchee’s alleys represent. The Pettaway neighborhood is not dissimilar to South Wenatchee, in that it faces perception challenges and has a poverty rate that is twice the rate of Little Rock as a whole. The Pettaway Pocket Neighborhood includes nine homes that share a community space by combining parcels. The design team combined resources typically found in each private parcel to create a public realm, which allowed them to include a community lawn and playground, community gardens, a shared street and a low-impact development stormwater management system.

The project has won several national design awards. However, this project was not the result of a high-priced firm’s work, but a community partnership. The Pettaway Pocket Neighborhood project was a collaboration between fifth-year architecture students in the University of Arkansas School of Architecture and the University’s Community Design Center, and they utilized a Community Advisory Board model so that the community could drive the design process. A citizen advisory committee for the project decided they wanted parking at each home, single-family housing, and no flat roofs or metal siding, as well as other features of the space. The Downtown Little Rock Community Development Corporation commissioned the project with a planning grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and funding from the city of Little Rock.



**I imagine**

*“Safe inviting spaces for community to gather. Parks, cafes, etc.”*

*“Greenspace for organized/chaperoned outside youth activities. An opportunity to enjoy the environment and fresh air.”*

*“Community garden. Rebuild pride by assigning area its own identity. For example, historic, heart of Wenatchee, rebuilding our future, south park. Adopt a block.”*



## TAKE ACTION: NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION

Every community in America is constrained by limited public resources. Successful communities are able to leverage public and private investment for success. One of the biggest trends in urban planning today is the increasing use of tactical urbanism, small-scale projects at the neighborhood level, often implemented at no-cost or low-cost, with donated materials and volunteers that have a tangible impact on the community.

Through partnerships and volunteerism, residents can take control of their own destiny in South Wenatchee and begin making the improvements they've envisioned together. Many of the steps in the community's process moving forward do not require significant resources beyond the collective commitment and collaboration of the stakeholders and citizens living in South Wenatchee. As visual progress begins to take shape, the area will become an attractive place for private investment and more significant resources will become available to implement larger projects.



*"Whatever is decided – I do not want any government financing that relates to Agenda 21 of the UN! We do this on our own."*





CULTURE & ART

## THE BENEFITS OF INCLUDING PUBLIC ART IN A COMPREHENSIVE REVITALIZATION PLAN

Public art humanizes the built environment and energizes public space. It is uniquely positioned to build cultural value and strengthen community identity. This is increasingly important as cities compete to attract employers and visitors, but it matters even more to residents, who become attached to the landmarks that they associate with their city, their community, and their place in the world.

The School of Social Work at the University of Pennsylvania conducted a study called the Social Impact of the Arts Project that looked at what impact cultural experiences have on specific neighborhoods. They found that in any neighborhood where cultural participation became higher than average, that neighborhood saw falling rates of delinquency and truancy and increased quality of life, civic engagement and economic development — these benefits were measurable and they were observed even in the homes of community members who were not involved in the arts, as long as the neighborhood around them had a higher than average participation in some artistic enterprise. The baseline conclusion of the study (and its title) was “culture builds community.” The findings of this study were replicated in other major cities.

These observations are relevant for Wenatchee because they offer insight into how public art and other cultural experiences can help to revitalize and integrate the South Wenatchee neighborhood into the greater Wenatchee area. The arts help to revitalize cities economically, through their bottom lines, but also through their social role. The social benefits derive from the art’s unique ability to cut across divisions of all kinds and foster the development of social capital by building and strengthening the ties that bind, whether it is neighbor-to-neighbor or community-to-community. These social networks translate cultural vitality into economic dynamism.

## A FEW CITIES WHERE PUBLIC ART HAS WORKED

Public art contributes to a community in many ways: economically, socially, educationally, and culturally. Some examples of cities that have used public art effectively:

- Bilbao, Spain, with Frank Ghery’s Bilbao Guggenheim. At a budget of \$26 Million Euros, it seemed crazy. The results, however, speak for themselves: In a decade, 9 million people came to visit the museum. In just 2006, the museum was supporting 4,600 jobs, contributed \$212 million to the GDP and \$29 million to the Treasury. ([www.lord.ca/Media/TheArtNewspaper32-33Museums.pdf](http://www.lord.ca/Media/TheArtNewspaper32-33Museums.pdf))
- New York City, with Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s The Gates in Central Park. This long-planned temporary project, installed in the middle of the winter, brought 1.5 million out-of-town visitors and \$254 million in economic activity in just 16 days. (Estimate by The New York City Economic Development Corp.)





- Chicago, Illinois with Millennium Park. Given the high crime, economically depressed area with abandoned railroad tracks, low expectations of success would be reasonable. Add in schedules left in tatters and a budget that more than tripled, and failure seemed inevitable. Instead, the area around Millennium Park has been named by Forbes as the hottest zip code in the country, and the park is a symbol of a new kind of civic collaboration and cultural philanthropy. The public art in the park attracts millions of visitors annually, making it an economic engine. It has become Chicago's most popular destination and its leading symbol.

But not every town can attract Frank Gehry or Christo, or boasts Chicago's resources. Public art can act as a powerful catalyst on a smaller scale, as well. One example is Community Bridge by William Cochran in Frederick, Maryland.

## THE STORY OF FREDERICK, MD

Frederick, Maryland is a community of approximately 170,000 about an hour from Baltimore, Maryland and also from Washington, DC. Its downtown development was stymied by being in a flood plane. A visionary mayor created a flood control project through the downtown meant to also provide a space for economic development along the waterway. Unfortunately, the ebb and flow of resources along with a lack of agreement about the direction of the linear park caused the project to stall at various stages for about 25 years. Abandoned, and sometimes dangerous, the incomplete linear park provided a consistent community flashpoint. By 1993, the City was out of options for funding and couldn't do any more development on its own, and private developers saw nothing of interest in the area. To try to break the stalemate, the City found \$70,000 to clad a very basic concrete bridge near an old empty mill building with cast stone, a type of pigmented cement. It was to be the "first finished structure" in Carroll Creek Park. At the moment the plan was to go out to bid, a muralist who had painted three well-received murals in the historic downtown came forward with a plan to:

- Use the City money as seed money for a larger project to transform the entire bridge into an artwork
- Paint the bridge in great detail to look like a hand-laid stone bridge
- Get the community involved at unprecedented levels





Although it was quite controversial, spawning letters to the editor with titles like “Painting Won’t Help Carroll Creek Monstrosity” and “Why Paint Ivy When You Can Plant Ivy,” the City ultimately agreed and issued a purchase order for “Quantity: 1, Description: Trompe L’Oeil Bridge.” In spite of a near-fatal stabbing under the bridge, robberies and coming to work in the morning to find their scaffolding thrown in the creek, the artist and his team began work to transform the bridge, beginning with a message to the community spelled out in trompe l’oeil (“fool-the-eye”) letters: “THIS IS A SHARED VISION.”

At the same time, a new nonprofit organization named Shared Vision formed to help the project along, especially by raising the other funds necessary to take the 5-year project to completion. Simultaneously, a “Bridge Builders Guidance Team” of community leaders was brought together to help shape a massive community outreach to get as many people involved in the project as possible.

The artist wanted to ask the community one question — “What object represents the spirit of community to you?” — and to paint some of those objects into the bridge as what looked like stone carvings. The Guidance Team worked for more than a year to come up with a plan, and teams of people fanned out across the county to ask the question in as many ways as possible, including putting up 1,000 posters, creating chalk murals, asking business owners for the use of their electronic signs, handing out brochures in commuter parking lots, talking with the homeless, working with students in classrooms, on sports teams, and in other youth organizations, and many other methods. There was a half hour documentary that aired more than 30 times on the local cable channel and direct mail made its way in to every home in the county.





The symbols started making their way into the painted bridge: the children's rhyme sequence "This is the church; this is the steeple," the all-seeing eye of God that is on our money, the symbol for "unity" in sign language, a gyroscope, the sun and the moon together in one symbol. One child said, "We are each of us a piece of the puzzle." The most often suggested symbol from this town that had most recently been in the national news for embarrassing racial tensions was clasped hands, especially black and white clasped hands. That was front-page news.

The larger, "major features" on the bridge represent the common denominators among the community ideas. [Note: All of these major features, and the entire bridge is a flat painted surface, just like a wall in your home.]

- *The Unfound Door* — a gate with interlaced circles based on a gate at Yale University — shows visually the common denominator from the community ideas about how all our lives are intertwined, whether we realize it or not. Albert Einstein talked about this phenomena when he said, "A human being is part of a whole, called by us the Universe. . . . He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty."

- *The Light Within* depicts a work by neo-classical sculptor William Henry Reinhart of the woman at the well from the Bible. The common denominator it represents is the value of each individual, even those who are despised.

- *The Forgotten Song*, a fountain like those that were often found in the center of towns in America's early years, represents man's connection to the natural world, necessary for our survival.

- *Archangel* is the culminating figure on the Community Bridge. This unusual image is an anamorphic projection, a special type of artistic perspective discovered by Leonardo da Vinci. Artist William Cochran used this technique on Community Bridge to show what he learned during the project: **Where you stand determines what you see.** As a common denominator of the community ideas, the little girl "archangel" represents our connection to a higher power, whatever we think of that power as.





The story of Community Bridge became a popular topic for newspaper and magazine articles, and for several years, at least one major article was published each month somewhere in the world. The Bridge had a website, which was a brand new way to get information out at that time, and it was named one of the top art sites on the web. Ideas started to flow in from all over the globe, as well, and there are symbols from 48 states and 6 continents on the Bridge. Before the Bridge was completed, there were 50,000 visitors coming to see it each month, walking down those long and expansive concrete strips. There were so many visitors that for the last two years of the projects, they had to give tours all day, every day so that the artist could work uninterrupted. Also before it was finished, the artwork was appraised at \$1 million, but it cost a fraction of that amount.

On September 12, 1998, at sunset, about 10,000 people gathered at the still undeveloped park for a ceremony to honor what they had made together. There was a blessing by a well known Native American musician, a message from a South African project that had been inspired by the Bridge was flown over on the Concord for the event, an original song and dances were developed for the event, which was streamed live on the new-fangled internet.

Over the next decade, about \$300-\$350 million in public and private investment occurred in the immediate vicinity of Community Bridge: the flood control project was completed and the park was developed on top as a public amenity, Class A office space with first floor retail and condos at a variety of price points have sprung up in formerly empty lots and rundown buildings, the library expanded and oriented its most interesting architectural features toward the creek instead of toward the street, and all the bridges in this part of the park are art bridges.

***How Does Wenatchee Get From Here to There?***

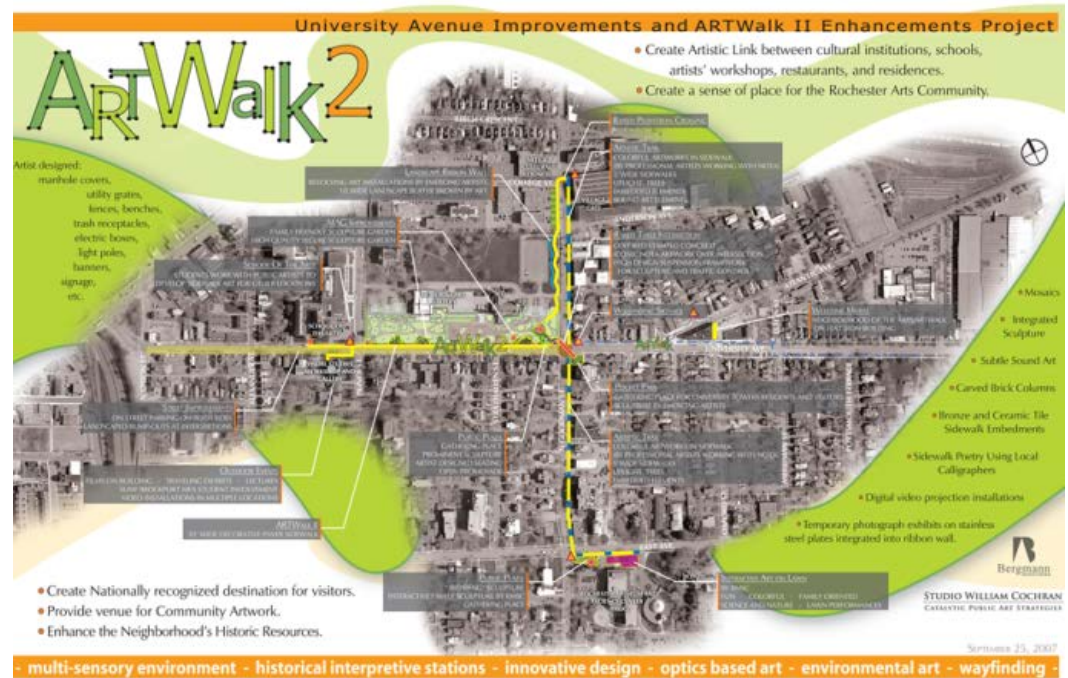


## FOLLOW BEST PRACTICES IN PUBLIC ART

**Craft a comprehensive public art plan.** Think about phases that can be done over time as resources can be found. Include a *mix* of public art:

- temporary and permanent art. Temporary public art is a good way for the community and artists to experiment for a very modest investment.
- a variety of scales, from icon to ground plane. Because so many sidewalks need to be built anyway, the ground plane is a natural place to add visual interest.
- a variety of materials and aesthetics
- a mix of national, regional and local artists
- participatory public art — where the community is somehow involved with professional artists in the creation of the work
- interactive public art — where the finished artwork includes ways for viewers to interact with it
- functional art — like bike racks, man hole covers, seating, fencing and bus shelters. Functional art can make an area look whimsical and artistic, but it can also make it look chaotic and not thought through. Often the aesthetic will be more cohesive if you have one design for all the trash cans for the zone, rather than every trash can having a different design. If you are doing a lot of functional art, it also helps for the various elements to coordinate
- integrate art into public space. Ground plane treatments can be a successful and less expensive way to do this, especially if you are going to be building new sidewalks anyway. Create an artistic environment . . . not just objects.
- move beyond objects on pedestals

*Taken together, an intelligent mix of these elements can create a lively urban art trail that can become a core around which other development occurs.*



## PUBLIC ART GUIDELINES

Find the *best artist for the job* through model Artist Selection Processes.

Make Sure the Art *lasts* with stringent durability criteria.

*Protect* both the city and the artist (and attract better artists) by using the National Model Public Art Contract.

Use what you have. Specifically, Wenatchee has a very educated and experienced public art professional currently running your museum who, properly resourced, could guide you in this process.

Leverage your limited resources – go for a multiplier effect:

- Include artists on design teams. Design team artists look for opportunities to integrate art throughout a development zone. Just like an engineer and an architect look through different lenses at the same project, so too does the artist, creating vision, meaning and efficiencies just like the other professionals. You will get the most benefit from artists who are accustomed to working on design teams and with the other types of professionals.
- Get artists involved early. The earlier the artist is part of the conversation, the more money you are likely to save and the better project you are likely to create.
- Integrate art into infrastructure projects.
- Let artists shape expenditures that will be spent anyway
  - > Patterns in hardscape
  - > Add design to functional streetscape elements
  - > If you're going to put in lightpoles, let your design team artist help find ones that would allow (for instance) for an annual "Light Up The Street" temporary art installation of some sort that could be a yearly competition, a way to celebrate the holidays with art by emerging artists or students, or a summer camp project in collaboration with the Art Museum or Cooperative Extension or some other group.

Commission site specific and relevant public art, including explorations of history, identity, aspirations, and narrative.

Send emphatic messages of inclusion.

Study successful models while developing your own. Consider setting up a public art commission and a design review board. Keep raising the standards.

Educate yourselves about how public art, professionally and properly created, can have a profound impact socially, economically and culturally. Plan in ways that maximize these effects.

Support local/regional artists by:

- Providing training in how to respond to RFQs, build a portfolio, work with fabricators, etc. This will make them even more competitive for local (and national!) public art projects
- Including emerging artist opportunities in your public art plan
- Drawing on the skills of talented local teaching artists in a variety of settings, including partnering with social services organizations *always* choose the *best artist you can afford*, not the most convenient one. *Having significant art by top artists in your town sets design standards and lifts all future work.*



## GETTING STARTED

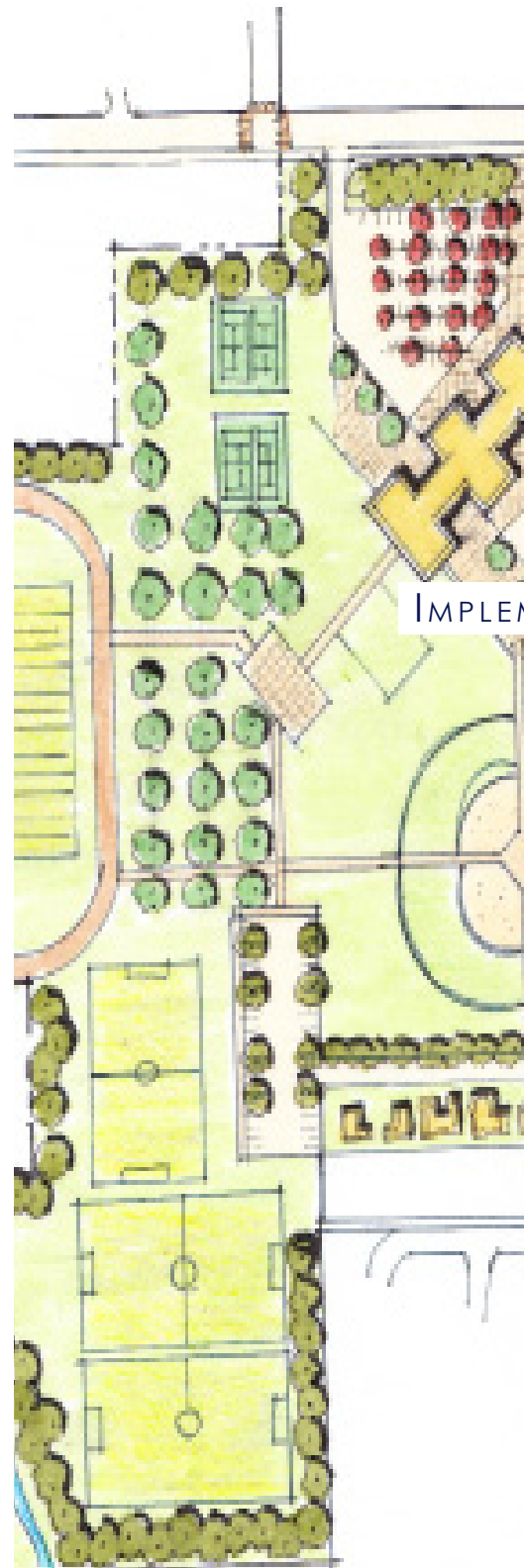
One project that could be a good start for Wenatchee, and that perhaps could become an annual tradition – would be a project similar to the Art-o-matic Model:

- Use empty warehouses
- Artists fill it with art (can be for sale) for 4 – 6 weeks in the fall
- Non-juried –film, environment, handmade books, paintings, pottery, whatever!
- Feature performing arts to create events that encourage broader
- Widely and collaboratively advertised
- Can feature food for sale on special evenings
- Animates space, artist community

Longer term, the South Wenatchee area could become an urban art trail, perhaps with a central plaza for larger outdoor events at one of the parks or near the river by the pedestrian bridge. A free, accessible, participatory urban art trail can connect the public with the cultural organizations, with artists, and with each other. The result will be a magnet for innovation, creativity, talent, education, literacy, economic development, social engagement and life-long learning.

Public art can have a significant role in developing the South Wenatchee area. With a relatively modest initial and ongoing investment, public art reveals a sense of place and can help achieve gains on social, educational, cultural, and economic grounds all at once and for all members of your community.





IMPLEMENTATION



## LESSONS FROM THE DESIGN ASSISTANCE EXPERIENCE

The preceding report contains innumerable examples of design interventions, policy models, and other suggested best practices that can be applied to many components of the South Wenatchee vision for its future. However, the team felt it would also be instructive to offer comparable case studies from the design assistance experience which can help inform the design of an implementation process for South Wenatchee. Each community has overcome challenges with scarce public resources by engaging the whole community in the process of revitalization to achieve success.

### ***Port Angeles, Washington (pop. 17,000)***

#### *Building Community Pride through a Public Revitalization Process*

Port Angeles, Washington provides an example of how to inspire pride in change by creating a truly public revitalization process. Their success has been built around involving everyone in the process.

In 2009, Port Angeles hosted an SDAT to focus on downtown revitalization and waterfront development. Port Angeles had suffered declining fortunes as the result of mill closures and reduced productivity from natural resource industries. The three-day charrette process created enormous civic energy to pursue a vision for the city's future. "Just two weeks after the SDAT presented more than 30 recommendations, the Port Angeles Forward committee unanimously agreed to recommend 10 of those items for immediate action," said Nathan West, the City's Director of Community and Economic Development. "Public investment and commitment inspired private investment, and, less than a month later, the community joined together in an effort to revamp the entire downtown, starting with a physical face-lift. Community members donated paint and equipment, and residents picked up their paintbrushes to start the transformation."





*Before & After for one Building in Port Angeles, Washington*

During the first summer of implementation, over 43 buildings in the downtown received substantial upgrades, including new paint and other improvements. This effort led to a formal façade improvement program that extended the initiative exponentially. The city dedicated \$118,000 in community development block grants (CDBG) for the effort, which catalyzed over \$265,000 in private investment. The city also moved forward with substantial public investment in its waterfront, which had a dramatic impact in inspiring new partnerships and private investment. Three years later, the city had over \$75 million in planned and completed investments and had turned the corner by producing huge civic momentum across the community. In June 2012, Port Angeles was recognized with a state design award for its waterfront master plan, designed by LMN Architects. The city broke ground on construction in the fall.

As West concluded, “The City of Port Angeles SDAT experience was far more than just a planning exercise. This opportunity for our community was a catalyst for action, implementation and improvement. Three years after the SDAT team arrived, the progress and excitement continue. A primary outcome has been that the process awakened community pride and inspired a “together we can” attitude. Today the inspiration remains and the elements and recommendations of the program continue to be the driver for publicly endorsed capital projects and investments in our community. More importantly this sustainable approach has tapped into the core values and priorities of our citizens to ensure a better and more balanced future for our City.”

*“This study will certainly continue to provide us with very positive and visible results for our city to benefit from for many years to come.” – Daniel A. Di Guilio, Mayor, Port Angeles, Washington*

## **Newport, Vermont (pop. 5,000)**

### *The Power of Leveraged Actions*

In 2009, Newport, Vermont brought a Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) to town to help build a revitalization strategy. Patricia Sears, the Executive Director of the Newport Renaissance Corporation, described the town’s dilemma a few years ago: “We were the last city in Vermont to achieve downtown designation from the state. We had some of the highest unemployment in the state. We decided we were done being last. We decided, ‘we are going to be *first*.’” Newport hosted the first R/UDAT in state history. Hundreds of residents and stakeholders participated in the process. As Mayor Paul Monette said, “it wasn’t the usual political process. Everyone was heard during the R/UDAT.”

Within two years of the project, the R/UDAT had built so much momentum that the town had over \$250 million in new and pending investment, including 2,000 new jobs in a town of just 5,000 – an incredible achievement in the midst of a severe national recession. Like Port Angeles, Newport was able to achieve success through broad partnership and involvement. It also leveraged small actions to build momentum for larger investments. For example, the R/UDAT team included a recommendation to create a community garden, something that has been suggested for South Wenatchee’s alleys as a potential action. Newport created a community garden with over 32 organizational partners. They took advantage of existing capacity – a downtown parking lot that was donated – and not only created a garden, but programmed it to have a transformational impact. Out of the community garden, the “Grow a Neighborhood” program was created, teaching neighborhood residents about urban agriculture, providing space for family plots, and engaging local restaurants in a farm to table initiative. Six new restaurants opened in the downtown during the first two years of implementation. Newport also took advantage of widespread community participation in the R/UDAT to engage citizens in code changes, designing a participatory process to create the first form-based code in the state. New investments include boutique hotels, a tasting center featuring regional agriculture, and a waterfront resort. The city also created the state’s first foreign trade zone, attracting a Korean biotechnology firm and other businesses.

The City has undergone a fundamental shift in its thinking since the R/UDAT process. In 2009, the public dialogue was dominated by nostalgia about the city's past. As one resident exclaimed, "I've seen Newport come, and I've seen it go." Two years later, the R/UDAT team conducted a follow up visit to assess progress in the community. As the Mayor stated, "I attribute our success to the successful R/UDAT in 2009 followed by the great public/private partnerships which have developed." The sense of change reaches all levels of the community. A citizen described the civic "attitude adjustment" that had occurred: "When you have people working together, things can happen and do happen. That's the most important change that has occurred – a change in attitude. All of a sudden, nothing is impossible." Today, communities across New England are visiting Newport to learn the 'secrets' of its success.

*"I don't think this is one of those things that will sit on a shelf... This is about stimulating thought about what could happen. Above all, you have to be patient. When you see the right things coming together – and you see that in Newport – it's cause for hope." – Kevin Dorn, Secretary of Commerce and Community Development, Vermont*



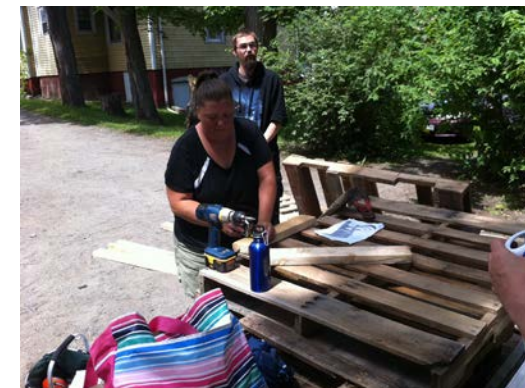
*Construction Kick-Off Party for New Resort Development*



*Family Garden Plot*



*New Vibrancy Downtown*



*'Chairbombing' Volunteers engage in tactical urbanism*



**Dubuque, Iowa. (Pop. 60,000)**

*Creating a Virtuous Cycle through Partnerships*

In 2007, Dubuque, Iowa hosted a national SDAT team to focus on integrating sustainability into its revitalization and land use processes. Following the SDAT, the City launched the Sustainable Dubuque initiative, which seeks to integrate efforts across city departments and throughout the community around a common sustainability goal. It created Dubuque 2.0, a formal initiative to encourage civic partnerships across the community. It also passed a Unified Development Code, which addresses zoning subdivision, site development, preservation, and sign regulations while incorporating sustainable design and low impact development (LID) and meeting the City's smart growth objectives. As Laura Carstens, the City's Planning Services Manager, explained, "Sustainable design is now the expectation for development in Dubuque." Carstens attributes the code "in large part to the Dubuque SDAT process." Sustainable Dubuque and the Unified Development Code have both earned state planning awards from the Iowa Chapter of the American Planning Association. In fact, Dubuque has been widely recognized for a number of its achievements, including being listed as "The Most Livable Small City" (2008), one of the "100 Best Communities for Young People" (2008), and among "America's Top 100 Places to Live." In 2009, IBM also chose Dubuque as the first "Smarter City" partnership in the United States to pilot the development of new technologies and implementation strategies to create an international model of sustainability for communities of 200,000 and under.

**San Angelo, Texas. (Pop. 96,000)**

*Building Sustained Civic Momentum*

"A lot can change in 20 years." That was the conclusion reached in 2012 by the *San Angelo Standard-Times* in looking back at twenty years of accomplishments that have followed San Angelo, Texas' R/UDAT. The paper described a "Snowball Effect" of civic work that was spurred by the process.

Lee Pfluger, who served as the chair of the local R/UDAT Steering Committee 20 years ago, described the conditions twenty years ago: "Back in 1991 you could have shot a cannon in downtown San Angelo on a Saturday night and not hit a soul — it was that dead — not a car in sight. The effort started with Celebration Bridge (with funds raised from the community) and the revitalization of the Paseo de Santa Angela as public space, and each success stimulated new interest in downtown. All the vacant buildings that were underutilized in 1991 have all enhanced their utilization to a higher use."

These early successes each built more momentum for larger investments. In fact, in the last seven years, the total amount of public and private dollars that have been invested in the downtown has reportedly grown from less than \$1 million to more than \$55 million in combined public and private investment through the third quarter of last year. In 2002, the San Angelo Area Foundation was created. The Foundation exemplifies the partnership and civic engagement that have blossomed across the community. In the past decade, it has received more than \$92 million in donations from more than 3,500 different donors, and has distributed over \$38 million in grants. One of its recent grants, to the Performing Arts Coalition, is part of a larger effort to raise \$13.5 million to convert an old Coca-Cola warehouse into the San Angelo Performing Arts Center.



*Dubuque, Iowa*



## IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES

Rick Smith, a columnist with the *San Angelo Times Standard*, captured the community's pride and accomplishments over a two decade period:

"We have followed many of your suggestions. Of the four "architectural icons" you designated, three — Fort Concho, the Cactus Hotel and the railroad depot and warehouse — have received extensive restoration and are in regular use. The fourth, the Texas Theatre, is the exception, though it's in good hands and well-preserved. The new San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, Celebration Bridge, downtown residences, state office buildings in the rebuilt Monarch Tile building, El Paseo de Santa Angela, Old Town, expanded convention center, a new Tom Green County library and improvements along the Concho River all were either suggested or championed by your study. You didn't reshape downtown by yourself, of course. Many San Angeloans worked many years to transform the Historic City Center. But you affirmed our ideas, planted seeds and sketched a possible map for our future. And you gave us hope. Back in 1992, your ideas seemed like dreams. Now we are living those dreams."

*"When I tell my younger friends about the part you played in revitalizing our city, they think it's an urban fairy tale: "Once upon a time, a group of architects, planners and urban design experts from around the nation volunteered to travel to San Angelo and work day and night to find ways to change the future of the city."*  
— Rick Smith, *San Angelo Times-Standard*

The following tools and resources may be important assets to South Wenatchee as it considers long-term implementation as well.

### **New Market Tax Credits**

The New Markets Tax Credit Program (NMTC Program) was established by Congress in 2000 to spur new or increased investments into operating businesses and real estate projects located in low-income communities. The NMTC Program attracts investment capital to low-income communities by permitting individual and corporate investors to receive a tax credit against their Federal income tax return in exchange for making equity investments in specialized financial institutions called Community Development Entities (CDEs). The credit totals 39 percent of the original investment amount and is claimed over a period of seven years (five percent for each of the first three years, and six percent for each of the remaining four years). The investment in the CDE cannot be redeemed before the end of the seven-year period. New Market Tax Credits have been successfully "twinned" with Historic Preservation Tax Credits in older communities, providing for a powerful economic incentive to invest in older low-income communities.

Basic information on New Market Tax Credits can be found at [http://www.cdfifund.gov/what\\_we\\_do/programs\\_id.asp?programID=5](http://www.cdfifund.gov/what_we_do/programs_id.asp?programID=5)

Image from Novogradac & Company LLP

[http://www.novoco.com/new\\_markets/resources/maps\\_data.php](http://www.novoco.com/new_markets/resources/maps_data.php)

### **Historic Preservation Tax Credits**

The Downtown Wenatchee Historic District was established in 2008. Income producing properties within the boundaries of the historic district are eligible for Federal Tax Credits worth 20% of the eligible hard and soft costs expended in the renovation of contributing properties within the district. Typically developers team up with investor partners to monetize these credits to help fund construction activities.

A good primer on qualified expenditures and other relevant information pertaining to historic tax credits can be found at

<http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/taxdocs/about-tax-incentives.pdf>

<http://www1.eere.energy.gov/wip/wap.html>

Basic information on partnering can be found at <http://ntcicfunds.com/tax-credit-basics/federal-tax-credit-basics/turn-into-cash/>

A significant portion of commercial properties within the South Wenatchee neighborhood are not materially different from the downtown structures that qualify for the historic preservation tax credits. An excerpt from the National Register Nomination Form states:

Most of the buildings in the district were constructed between the early 1900s to the late 1920s. Most are vernacular in style and clad in brick. Other architectural styles found in the district include Art Deco and Commercial. These styles reflect the period during which most of the buildings in the district were constructed. Foundations are stone, brick, or concrete. Typically, the ground floor is occupied by small businesses while most upper floors are used for offices and some house hotels/residential apartments. The combination of the generally modest scale of the buildings with the ground floor storefront businesses provides a pedestrian-friendly environment.

The nomination form for the Downtown Wenatchee Historic District can be found at <http://pdfhost.focus.nps.gov/docs/NRHP/Text/08001200.pdf>

It would appear that the boundaries of the existing historic district could be extended southward or a new district could be created that captures the historic commercial structures located in South Wenatchee.

General Guidance on the National Register process can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/guidance.htm>

Combining the 39% New Market Tax Credit, the 20% Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit, and possibly a local property tax credit abatement, PILOT or TIF funding could create a financial environment where fully two-thirds of the cost to redevelop the historic commercial core of South Wenatchee can be subsidized to encourage the private sector to step in and improve these properties.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

There are a number of additional resources that may be appropriate to consider in boosting economic and development activity in South Wenatchee.

### ***National Main Street Program***

<http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/#.ULDr6Yfs5Wo>

### ***Federal Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program***

<http://www1.eere.energy.gov/wip/wap.html>

### ***TEA-21 (Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century) Funds***

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/sumenvir.htm>

### ***United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Funds***

[http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/grant\\_info/](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/grant_info/)

### ***State of Washington, Department of Commerce -Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund***

<http://www.commerce.wa.gov/Programs/Infrastructure/Pages/Brownfields-Revolving-Loan-Fund.aspx>

It should be noted that all of these potential funding sources have very specific guidelines and requirements. Good real estate attorneys and accountants who are well-versed in these types of transactions are an absolute necessity when contemplating a project that might make use of these funds.

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education & Families has several resources available through its website, including the following:

### ***Authentic Youth Civic Engagement: A Guide for Municipal Leaders***

<http://www.nlc.org/Documents/Find%20City%20Solutions/IYEF/Youth%20Civic%20Engagement/authentic-youth-engagement-gid-jul10.pdf>

### ***Building Effective Youth Councils***

<http://www.nlc.org/Documents/Find%20City%20Solutions/IYEF/Youth%20Civic%20Engagement/building-effective-youth-councils-fyi-gid-jul07.pdf>

The Orton Family Foundation also has a relevant guide:

### ***Engaging Youth in Heart & Soul Community Planning***

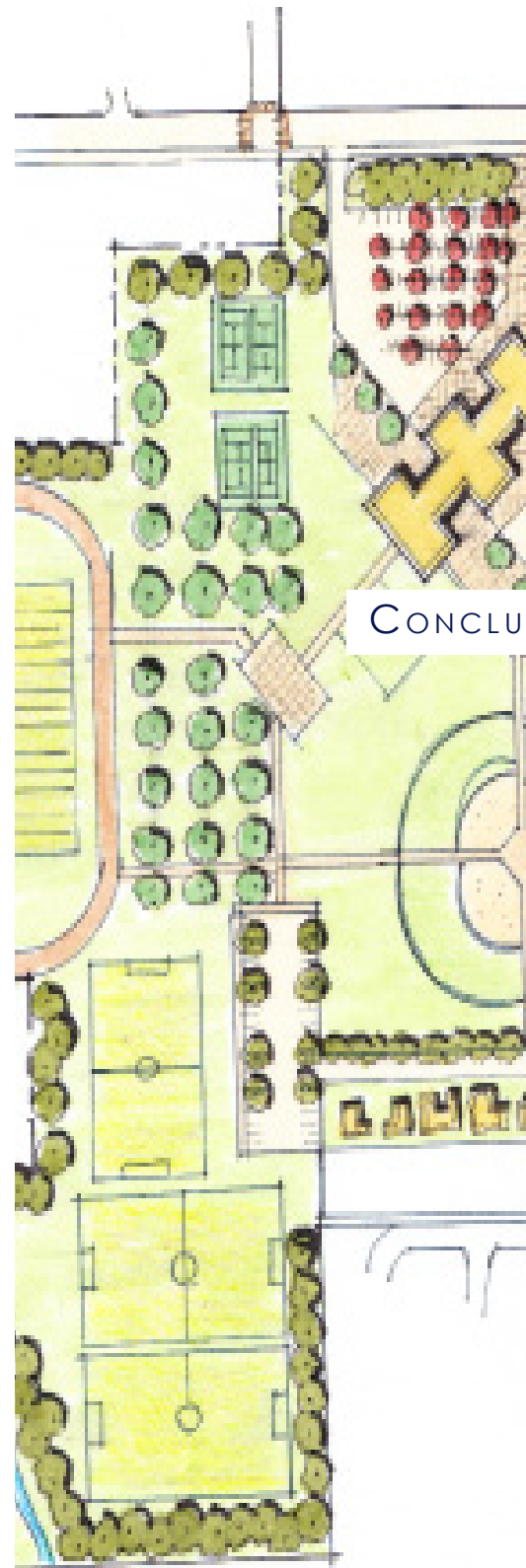
[http://5728452006d458e3e74c2f6bef8b2d7e04086879310a43d837d9.r29.cf1.rackcdn.com/Report\\_OrtonFamilyFoundation\\_EngagingYouthHeartSoulPlanning\\_2011.pdf](http://5728452006d458e3e74c2f6bef8b2d7e04086879310a43d837d9.r29.cf1.rackcdn.com/Report_OrtonFamilyFoundation_EngagingYouthHeartSoulPlanning_2011.pdf)

### ***Social Capital***

Harvard University maintains a social capital benchmark survey, available here:

<http://www.hks.harvard.edu/saguaro/communitysurvey/>





## CONCLUSION

## THINK REGIONALLY

The team was encouraged by the dialogue that is happening regionally in the Greater Wenatchee area. The City of Wenatchee should continue, deepen and extend the ongoing dialogue with adjacent government entities (City of East Wenatchee, Douglas County and Chelan County). The region should contemplate where there are opportunities to reduce the duplication of services or enhance the efficiency of agencies through scale and coordination. With a wide variety of taxing districts with different, overlapping boundaries, it is important that an ongoing conversation be maintained to make sure that the needs of all citizens are being met in an efficient manner.

An expanded series of conversations could also help better promote regional tourism for the Columbia River valley. While Wenatchee is a wonderful community, it may not offer a wide enough variety of recreational opportunities to appeal to tourists who are looking to spend a long weekend in a picturesque locale. The northwest is blessed with a number of great recreational opportunities, and distinguishing a particular location can sometimes be difficult. While there aren't many other population centers within a fifty mile radius of Wenatchee, there are several significant population centers within a 2-3 hour drive (Seattle, Spokane, Portland OR and Vancouver, BC) – perfect for a weekend getaway to Wenatchee. Tourists may not be interested in spending a couple of days just in Wenatchee, but the city could serve as an ideal hub to visit Leavenworth, Chelan, Mission Ridge, and of course scenic downtown Wenatchee.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



## Acknowledgements

The entire SDAT Team would like to thank the citizens of Wenatchee for their hospitality and for all the hard work they put in not only while our team was in town, but more importantly all of the outreach and preparation that took place before our arrival. Special recognition needs to go to the organizing committee who made all of this possible.

Our team was particularly heartened by the fundamental attitude of the community engaged in this endeavor. While there are clearly still opportunities for the citizens of Wenatchee to enhance their community, the fundamentals appear to be in place. Members of the community are engaged in active, productive conversations and display a willingness to take part in the (at times difficult) dialogue necessary to improve upon the status quo and create a better Wenatchee.

Included within this report are a series of observations and specific recommendations that we believe will assist the community in improving the connections into South Wenatchee and the community as a whole. The SDAT team was placed at somewhat of a disadvantage as a number of the typical first steps that we might recommend to start the process of community building have already been implemented in Wenatchee, further validating our impressions that Wenatchee has a lot going for it and is headed in the right direction.

We look forward to returning to Wenatchee in a few years to observe all the great things you have continued to do and to enjoy another week in the *Apple Capital of the World*.

Sincerely,

*Tom Liebel, FAIA, LEED Fellow*  
SDAT Team Leader



The Wenatchee SDAT process represented a community effort involving many organizations and individuals. The team would like to thank the many public officials, civic leaders, business representatives and residents who participated in the process, including the following individuals who helped lead local efforts.

**SDAT Local Steering Committee:**

Jim Bailey, Wenatchee City Council  
Tom Bassett, AIA, Forte Architects, Inc.  
Kristina Stepper, J.Russell Creative Marketing  
Julie Kagele, Chelan Douglas Community Action Council  
Doug Taylor, Wenatchee High School  
Norma Gallegos, Resident  
Jennifer Korfiatis, NCW Economic Development District

**Wenatchee City Staff:**

Allison Williams, Executive Services Director  
Steve King, Public Works Director of Engineering  
Monica Libbey, Planning Manager  
John Ajax, Associate Planner  
David Erickson, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Tom Robbins, Police Chief

The team would also like to thank Gustavo Montoya from El Mundo, and the team of local leaders who provided simultaneous translation services during the process, led the team on walking tours of the neighborhood, and made countless contributions to the SDAT team's understanding of South Wenatchee.









## SDAT TEAM



Tom Liebel, FAIA, LEED FELLOW,  
NCARB – Team Leader  
(Baltimore, Maryland)  
*SDAT Team Leader*

Tom Liebel, FAIA, LEED Fellow is a Principal with Marks, Thomas Architects, a Baltimore-based multi-disciplinary design firm. Recently elevated to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects, Tom was also one of 34 individuals just named to the inaugural class of LEED Fellows. Tom has been involved in integrating sustainable design principles into a variety of groundbreaking adaptive use and historic preservation projects over the past fifteen years, including the innovative mixed-use projects, such as Miller's Court and Union Mill. Projects Tom has worked on have received multiple local, state and national awards for design, smart growth, sustainable design and historic preservation, including national awards from the American Institute of Architects, Urban Land Institute and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Tom is involved in ongoing research exploring the relationship between sustainability, preservation and urban design, and has a particular interest in the use of urban adaptive use projects to promote neighborhood revitalization and civic engagement. Author, critic and mentor, Tom has consulted on green projects nationally and internationally and in 2009 authored a chapter on sustainable design for the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program publication, *Revitalizing Main Street: A Practitioner's Guide to Comprehensive Commercial District Revitalization*. Most recently, Tom was appointed by the Governor of Maryland to Chair the Maryland Green Building Council.



Ignacio Correa-Ortiz, AIA, AICP, LEED AP  
(Denver, Colorado)  
*Urban Design & Planning*

Ignacio Correa-Ortiz is a Senior Architect/Urban Designer with the Regional Transportation District in Denver (RTD), Colorado. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with master's degrees in architecture and in urban planning, and he has a professional degree in architecture from the Universidad Santo Tomas in Colombia, South America. Ignacio is responsible for reviewing, coordinating and giving direction to Denver's transit system on architectural, landscape, urban design, sustainability and development needs; he also supports RTD staff in promoting Transit Oriented Development, and coordinates joint development related to design and construction.

Previous to joining RTD, Ignacio was owner and principal of Urban Designer, an urban design consultancy where he contributed to award-winning projects that span from Aspen, Colorado to the City of Kigali in Rwanda, Central Africa. Ignacio's two decades of experience as a design consultant, sustainability specialist and as a community planner includes transit, comprehensive planning and urban design projects in the Americas, Africa and Asia.



Miquela Craytor  
(New York, New York)  
*Economic Development*

Miquela Craytor is the Director of the Industrial Initiatives for the Center for Economic Transformation Team at the NYC Economic Development Corporation overseeing the city's new policy efforts concerning New York's industrial sector. She was formally the executive director at Sustainable South Bronx. In her former role, she oversaw implementation of several community-based planning, policy and design initiatives. These included expansion of a nationally-recognized green-collar training program, leading a community visioning project where over 500 residents participated, launching the MIT sponsored SSBx FabLab and New York State's first green roof tax incentive.

Ms. Craytor also served as the Senior Planner for Economic Development in the economic arm of the Bronx Borough President's office. She has formerly served on the advisory boards of the NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection's Green Infrastructure Committee, DC Project, Green Jobs Green NY and the NYC Chapter of the Apollo Alliance.

She has over 8 years of urban planning experience. Ms. Craytor is a nationally-recognized advocate for using sustainable development to address reinvestment in under-served communities. Ms. Craytor received her BA in planning, public policy, and management from the Honors College at the University of Oregon and her MS in city and regional planning from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY. She is also a 2010 Catto Fellow of the Aspen Institute and a 2010 BMW Transatlantic Fellow.



Teresa Cochran  
(Frederick, Maryland)  
*Public Art*

Teresa Cochran manages the creation of large-scale, site-specific public artworks in a variety of media, including painting, sculpture, site design and architectural art glass. Responsibilities include contract negotiations, scheduling and coordination, advisory design review, client and public relations, the design and implementation of community engagement processes, educational outreach, administration, project management, writing and editing, public speaking, and billing.

She is a trained specialist in public participation, and facilitates large participation processes that gather stakeholder and public input to shape the development of site-specific public artworks. She has served on numerous design teams, collaborating with government, community-based, corporate, and non-profit organizations on public art and public participation planning and implementation.



Jan Dyer, RLA, ASLA  
(Los Angeles, California)  
*Connectivity & Open Space*

Jan Dyer is a Principal with Mia Lehrer + Associates, an international Planning and Landscape Architectural firm known for its design and development of a wide spectrum of ambitious public and private projects that include urban revitalization developments, large urban parks, and complex commercial projects. Mia Lehrer + Associates (ML+A) is internationally recognized for their progressive landscape designs, working with such natural landmarks as parks, lakes, and rivers, coupled with an advocacy for ecology and people-friendly public space.

ML+A is exploring the changing role of landscape in our contemporary urban environments. We are currently seeing a shift in public attitude toward the importance of open space and the desire of communities and governmental agencies to create natural landmarks such as parks, lakes, and rivers. We have involved ourselves in many of the programs and projects that propel the movement forward. ML+A is a recognized leader in the field of sustainable design and has been responsible for site design on LEED certified projects at all levels. We understand the value of complete, comprehensive construction documents and the parameters of funding guidelines. We pride ourselves on projects that fall within project budgets and goals.

Jan Dyer has led project teams on various watershed, civic master plan, park design and higher education projects, responsible for project design through construction administration. Ms. Dyer provides creative leadership in sustainable design projects and excellent project management skills to all phases of projects. She is committed to the community design process and has facilitated numerous outreach meetings for the firm. She has been the Project Manager for Los Angeles World Airport projects, Jordan Downs Public Housing Master Plan, the Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Needs Assessment, the Compton Creek Earthen Bottom Feasibility Study, the Owens Lake Dust Mitigation Program and many LACCD projects including three currently under construction at Mission College in Sylmar. She is currently working on the Gerald Desmond Bridge for the Port of Long Beach, and the Union Station Master Plan.



James Sonnhalter  
(Euclid, Ohio)  
*Land Use*

James Sonnhalter has served for the last 12 years as the Community Projects Manager for the Department of Community Services & Economic Development for the City of Euclid, Ohio. Trained as an Urban Planner at the University of Cincinnati College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning, Mr. Sonnhalter has over twenty years of planning, design, and economic development experience with private-, public-, and non-profit organizations. He is a Certified Economic Development Finance Professional, and has served as the City's Enterprise Zone/Tax Increment Financing District Manager. Mr. Sonnhalter also administers the CDBG-funded Storefront Renovation and Municipal Beautification Programs, and provides project design review and guidance to the Architectural Review Board and the Planning & Zoning Commission. He also serves as the liaison to the Euclid Landmarks Commission, and was instrumental in obtaining the Certified Local Government status through the Ohio Historic Preservation Office. Mr. Sonnhalter has successfully authored several winning grant applications to secure project funding; current planning work includes collaborations with the Ohio Department of Transportation (Urban Core Preliminary Engineering Program), the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative), the Cuyahoga County Board of Health and the County Planning Commission (Creating Healthy Communities Initiative/Health Impact Assessment), and the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (Transit Waiting Environment Program).



## AIA STAFF:

Joel Mills

*Director, Center for Communities by Design*

Joel Mills serves as Director of the American Institute for Architects' Center for Communities by Design. The Center is a leading provider of pro bono technical assistance and participatory planning for community sustainability. Through its design assistance programs, the Center has worked in 55 communities across 32 states since 2005. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field.

Joel's career in civic health and governance spans over 19 years, and includes community-based technical assistance, process design, facilitation and training across a number of fields. He has worked with over 100 communities during his career. During the 1990s, Mr. Mills spent several years supporting international democratization initiatives by providing technical assistance to parliaments, political parties, local governments, civic and international organizations. His scope of work included constitutional design and governing systems, voter and civic education, election monitoring and administration, political party training and campaign strategy, collaborative governance, human rights and civil society capacity building. His work has been featured on ABC World News Tonight, Nightline, CNN, The Next American City, Smart City Radio, The National Civic Review, Ecostructure Magazine, The Washington Post, and dozens of other media sources.

Erin Simmons

*Director, Design Assistance*

Erin Simmons is the Director of Design Assistance at the Center for Communities by Design at the American Institute of Architects in Washington, DC. Her primary role at the AIA is to provide process expertise, facilitation and support for the Center's Sustainable Design Assistance Team (SDAT) and Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) programs. In this capacity, she works with AIA components, members, partner organizations and community members to provide technical design assistance to communities across the country. Through its design assistance programs, the AIA has worked in 200 communities across 47 states. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field.

To date, Erin has served as staff lead on over 45 design assistance teams. Prior to joining the AIA, Erin worked as senior historic preservationist and architectural historian for an environmental and engineering firm in Georgia, where she practiced preservation planning, created historic district design guidelines and zoning ordinances, conducted historic resource surveys, and wrote property nominations for the National Register of Historic Places. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Florida State University and a Master's degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia.

