



# GREEN THE STREETS

RE/imagining  
Summit Ave.

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Melissa Torres

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***Green the Streets: Re/imagining Summit Ave.***

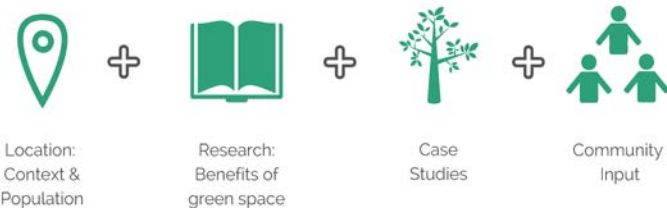
**Abstract**

As Seattle continues to grow and densify it is critical to consider the importance of green space in the urban environment. Green space is essential to the urban environment because it provides environmental, human health and wellness, and economic benefits. We must reconsider how we define green space and include it in the design of our cityscapes. Green space has long been isolated to areas designated for aesthetic uses such as parks and gardens. The core of Seattle has already become densely urbanized, therefore it is vital to design our streets more creatively if we want to add more green space. A significant amount of space in the public realm is covered in asphalt, reserved exclusively for automobiles. Redesigning our streets to take advantage of areas where there is unused asphalt could be an innovative method for adding green space in Seattle. The 1700 block of Summit Ave. in the Capitol Hill neighborhood is a particularly wide street with an excess of unused asphalt. Through community outreach I found that the residents of Summit Ave. would like to see a street redesign to remove a sections of asphalt to be replaced with a small area of green space. Using research about the benefits of green space in the public realm combined with community input, I have constructed a robust proposal for a redesign of the 1700 block of Summit Ave. to add more green space.

## Introduction

As Seattle continues to grow and densify it is critical to consider the importance of green space in the urban environment. Green space is essential to the urban environment because it provides environmental, human health and wellness, and economic benefits. We must reconsider how we define green space and include it in the design of our cityscapes. Green space has long been isolated to areas designated for aesthetic uses such as parks and gardens. The core of Seattle has already become densely urbanized, therefore it is vital to design our streets more creatively if we want to add more green space. A significant amount of space in the public realm is covered in asphalt, reserved exclusively for automobiles. Redesigning our streets to take advantage of areas where there is unused asphalt could be an innovative method for adding green space in Seattle.

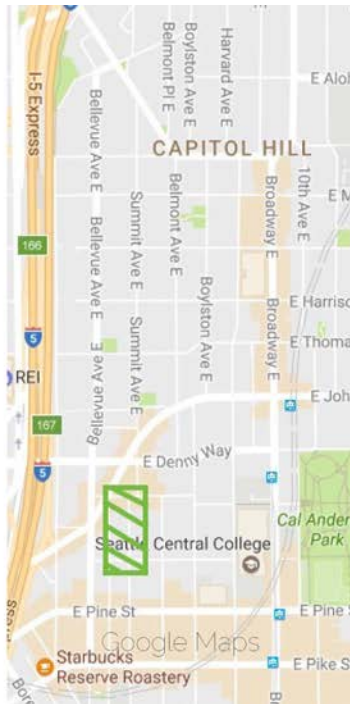
### Process



For my senior project, I approached this project by first selected my location, then researched what we already know about the benefits of green space in the urban environment, collected information from two case studies, approached the community for their input, and then finally designed two solutions.

The focus of my senior project was to help solve some issues on the 1700 block of Summit Ave. in the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Seattle by proposing added green space through a sidewalk redesign. The 1700 block is one that if mentioned to most Capitol Hill

residents, they would know exactly where you are speaking of because of its unique condition. It is one, if not the only, remaining block in Capitol Hill that has had minimal investment in construction of new buildings or infrastructure.



## Location

- 1700 block Summit Ave. in Capitol Hill
- Center of most populous area of Washington
- Framed by arterial streets and 5 fwy
- 1/2 mile from Cal Anderson

It has become evident because the sidewalks and asphalt are broken, a majority of the buildings appear to be in disrepair, and the area is heavily littered with garbage. The 1700 block of Summit Ave. is particularly interesting because it is also home to two low-income buildings and two transitional buildings. A number of the residents are at risk for different reasons, and living in such conditions is unhealthy and does not promote recovery or wellness.

The purpose of a sidewalk redesign would be to add green space in place of access asphalt.

Green space can be defined as anything from a vast city park to a simple garden or tree. It is proven that even the smallest addition of green space can have profound positive effects for the people that live and function around it.



## Context

- History
- Housing style
- Population

In the case of Summit Ave., it would not necessarily be a penetrable public space, but a simple addition of trees and plants along the street. This particular block was chosen to be the center of my project because it is a prime example of an existing

urbanized block that could profoundly benefit from this form of green space because of the vulnerable population and their lack of accessible green space.

To learn what we already understand are the benefit of green space in the urban environment, I looked into the environmental, human, and economical benefits of such spaces. I will also explored case studies from similar projects executed in Seattle to see how they approached adding more green space to the built environment. I will also critically analyze the obstacles, successes, and struggles of each case study to help fully develop my understanding of how similar projects have been realized in Seattle. Once I have gathered that information, I approached the community to allow them to participate in the process. The outreach was executed through a Park(ing) Day site in September, 2016.

### **Benefits of Green Space**

My research began with exploring the ecological benefits of green space within the urban environment. Through my research I discovered the Green Seattle Partnership<sup>1</sup> and Project Evergreen. Both organizations understand and value the role that green spaces play in our lives and our environment. They are committed to helping improve and enhance our forested areas within existing communities.



## Environment

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- Rainwater retention/filtration
- Clean air
- Interurban island heat
- Habitat

Project Evergreen has developed a fact sheet that illustrates the environmental benefits of green space. The fact sheet claims that green space is capable of providing the following benefits: Natural stormwater management, natural resource conservation, reduced soil erosion, improved air quality, and reduced temperatures.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Green Seattle Partnership*. N.p., n.d. Web.

<sup>2</sup> "Environmental Benefits of Green Space." *Project Evergreen*. N.p., 12 June 2016. Web.

Additional studies have shown that green spaces also have the ability to support our local pollinators. Endangered, pollinators are essential for our food systems and urban biodiversity.<sup>3</sup> According to a study performed in Northampton, England in 2015; Urban green spaces that include diverse pollinating plants can be just as, if not more, favorable for the survival of bumble bees, solitary bees, hoverflies, moths, and butterflies. In agricultural settings pollinators are often subjected to insecticides used to maintain crops. Urban green spaces, such as roadside verges, parks, rooftop gardens, and even simple hanging plants can easily be adapted to be prime habitats for pollinators by adding native pollinating plants. Incorporating plants in this manner to the urban environment also has profound effects for overall human health and wellness.

When researching the benefits of green space to human health, it was common to encounter a lot of overlap with the environmental benefits. Themes such as clean water, cooler temperatures, and cleaner air are all things that plants provide that create a healthy ecosystem and allow humans to thrive.

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<sup>3</sup> "Can Cities save Bees? How Can Urban Habitats Be Made to Serve Pollinator Conservation? How Can That Story Be Better Told?" *The Nature of Cities*



# Human Health & Wellness

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- E.O. Wilson's "Biophilia" theory
- Physical fitness
- Stress reduction
- Mental health

It is well known that physical exercise improves the physiological and psychological state of human beings. Further studies have proven that exercise in outdoor green spaces can greatly expand these benefits in a number of ways. Research from the National Center for Biotechnology Information has shown that green space often promotes physical fitness by inspiring people to get outside and move around. Additional research conducted by the US National Library of Medicine has found that participating in physical fitness in green spaces can further help people destress, protect against mental health issues, and reduce cardiovascular disease in a way indoor activity cannot.<sup>4</sup> Outdoor exercise is much more successful in reducing stress, depressive symptoms, and quickening recovery time because plants are visually calming

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<sup>4</sup> "Exposure to Neighborhood Green Space and Mental Health: Evidence from the Survey of the Health of Wisconsin." *National Center for Biotechnology Information*. U.S. National Library of Medicine, n.d. Web.



and protect from pollutants.<sup>5</sup> Because green space protects against mental health issues, depression, physical fitness, and cardiovascular diseases, it also serves as a valuable source for stress reduction.

Stress is a common symptom for many city dwellers as a result of the everyday hustle and bustle. Research brief titled, *Feeling Stressed? Take Time Out In Nature*<sup>6</sup>, produced by the University of Washington's Kathleen Wolf explains some key findings behind the connection with nature and stress recovery. Wolfe found that the stress reducing effects can appear when in green space or even simply having a view of green space from a window. These findings were a result of study conducted where the subjects were shown a stressful film and then one of six different videos that displayed everything from dense urban hardscapes and natural environments. While viewing the videos, the subjects heart rates, muscle tension, skin conductance, and pulse rate were monitored as a way to measure stress levels. The subjects that were shown the natural environments after the stressful film recovered much faster than the subjects shown the urban hardscapes.

The study conducted by Wolfe further supports what has become known as the biophilia hypothesis. The biophilia hypothesis claims that it is a general human trait to be drawn to green spaces and natural systems. This idea was introduced by E.O.Wilson in his book *Biophilia*, in 1984.<sup>7</sup> Many "green" building organizations use this terminology when referring to sustainable

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<sup>5</sup> Wolf, Kathleen. "Stress, Wellness & Physiology." *Wellness :: Green Cities: Good Health*. N.p., n.d. Web.

<sup>6</sup> Wolf, Kathleen. *FEELING STRESSED? Take a Time Out in Nature* | Kathleen Wolf, PH.D.; Elizabeth Housley, M.A. (2013)

<sup>7</sup> Wilson, Edward O. *Biophilia*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1984. Print.

design. It is an easy way to quantify environmental services, which are typically considered to be priceless because they are irreplaceable.

We can see this theory coming to life in Downtown Seattle with the construction of the Amazon Spheres. The Amazon Spheres are an architecturally significant project that is directly inspired by E.O. Wilson's biophilic hypothesis. The NBBJ architecture firm has designed the Spheres to redefine how we consider our workspace. It will provide a dose of natural benefits to Amazon employees by surrounding them with an elaborate system of plants and recycled rainwater. This is expected to be the most dramatic example of biophilic design in the world.<sup>8</sup> The success of the Amazon Spheres project can be the a significant example for how biophilic design can be the way of future while having direct economic impact.

### Economic:

I did not intend to research economic benefits of green space within the city, but my previous research made it clear that it was a significant component. If the Amazon Spheres prove to be successful, it could inspire the city to invest in more biophilic design. This type of design can be both healthy and financially valuable. Project Evergreen, the organization I mentioned before under the Environmental Benefits section, also created a fact sheet about the economical benefits of green spaces, which claims the following: Increased property value, protected drainage and water systems, business benefit, decrease in air conditioning use, increased tourism, and increased productivity.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Sears, Kelton, Sara Bernard, Daniel Person, Casey Jaywork, Danny Sullivan, and Jacob Uitti. "Using Nature as Inspiration, Architects and Designers Are Building Seattle's Biofuture." *Seattle Weekly*. N.p., 18 Mar. 2016.

<sup>9</sup> Schuster, Rudy, and Katie Walters. "Social and Economic Analysis Branch: Integrating Policy, Social, Economic, and Natural Science." *Fact Sheet* (2015)



## Economic

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- Property value
- Business
- Productivity

It is easy to identify the patterns and overlap with the economic benefits with those mentioned under the Human Health and Wellbeing. When the people within the urban environment are happy and healthy, they are much more likely to perform better and be more active within their local economy. These findings support the idea that green spaces can improve the environment, human health and wellness, and the economy in urban environments. Next I will be showing some real life examples through case studies of realized projects in Seattle.

### **Case Studies**

#### **Pollinator pathway**

\_\_\_\_\_It turns out that Seattle is somewhat famous for it's Pollinator Pathway.<sup>10</sup> A pollinator pathway is a concept that can redefine how we consider the placement and role of greenspace and the built environment by weaving them together. The idea is to create an actual pathway for pollinators to travel safely through the city, from park to park and garden to garden. Ideally, it would be a long, continuous garden of pollinating plants that connects one large green space to another. This promotes a healthy ecosystem and creates a supportive habitat for pollinators without minimal effort.



## Pollinator Pathway



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Where: Central District

Why: Habitat for pollinators from Seattle U to Nora Woods

Who: Lead by local artist, Sarah Bergmann and community

How: Community participation and ownership

The Pollinator Pathway project in Seattle was initiated by local artist, Sarah Bergmann. The pathway is located in Central Seattle running along Columbia Street from Seattle University on 12th Ave to Nora Woods on 29th Ave. This project is particularly interesting in comparison to the Summit Ave. project because it created a non-traditional green space in an already developed

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<sup>10</sup> "The Pilot: Seattle's Pollinator Pathway." *Pollinator Pathway*. N.p., n.d. Web.

area in Central Seattle. The route of the pathway flows along a street high traffic from both cars and pedestrians.

This project required no major infrastructure changes because they were able to use the existing width of the sidewalk. The extra width of the sidewalk was transformed from neglected dirt spaces into a thin, but flourishing green space by simply adding in pollinating plants along Columbia Ave. The continuous garden varies slightly from block to block. Some portions include seating and interpretation of the project or plant species, others are more simple. All together, the long garden supports the local pollinators while helping the local ecosystems by clearing the air of pollutants from car traffic, collecting stormwater, and providing human health and wellness support.

In an interview with Bergmann's supportive non-profit Xerces Society, Scott Black, she mentions that starting small projects like this can be the way we can create connecting habitats that work together in a larger scale.<sup>11</sup> Meaning that smaller areas of green space like the pollinator pathway can connect larger areas of green space, like parks, to each other. This makes it easier for both flora and fauna to exist in the city, while also providing the beneficial human elements.

To learn more about the process of how the Pollinator Pathway came to be, I spoke with Capitol Hill Ecodistrict Director Joel Sisolak<sup>12</sup>. The Ecodistrict was a strong supporter for Sarah Bergmann's vision. He informed me that early on in planning and developing the pathways, there was a lot of community enthusiasm and participation. The participation from the community is

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<sup>11</sup> "Part Science, Part Art, Pollinator Pathway Connects Seattle Green Spaces." *NPR*.

<sup>12</sup> Interview, Joel Sisolak, Director, Capitol Hill Ecodistrict

ultimately what helped make this project a reality. The struggle, however, has been maintenance and ownership of the pathway over time. As the years have gone by, people have moved in and out of homes along Columbia, leaving portions of the pathway neglected and forgotten.

To use this case study to support the Summit Ave. redesign proposal moving forward, I must first address the differences between the two projects and how I might address them. The two main differences between the location on Summit Ave. in comparison to the Pollinator Pathway are the type of housing and the layout of the actual street.

It was much easier to connect with the community on Columbia simply because it is primarily single family homes that run up and down the pathway. Summit was more challenging to get in contact with the residents because the housing is only large, impenetrable apartment buildings. To get around this barrier, we decided to participate in Seattle's Park(ing) Day event that happens every September. This allowed the residents to express their concerns about their block and have a say in what may happen with it. The feedback from this event was extremely helpful and positive, but I found that I may need to participate in further surveying.

The second difference is the existing layout of the street. The Pollinator Pathway was able to execute their project by taking advantage of the space on the sidewalk that was already there. The Summit Ave. project would require a much larger change of infrastructure to be realized. This will require additional research into funding of such products and a partnership with SDOT.

Swale on Yale

The Swale on Yale project is a four-block, 270 feet long bioswale located on Yale Ave. North and Pontius Ave. North in the South Lake Union Neighborhood of Seattle. The swale collects millions of gallons of rainwater from the Capitol Hill neighborhood, which is located just uphill to the east of South Lake Union, and filters out pollutants before moving on into Lake Union and Puget Sound. It was a passion project heavily pursued by Rachel Ben-Shmuel, who serves as the Director of Capitol Hill Housing Improvement Program. She originally developed the concept for the bioswale project when she first began working for Vulcan Real Estate in 2005.



## Swale on Yale

Where: South Lake Union

Why: Filters rainwater from North Capitol Hill

Who: Former Vulcan developer, Rachel Ben-Shmuel

How: Supported & funded by Vulcan

Most of the South Lake Union neighborhood is owned and developed by Vulcan, the private company owned by Paul Allen. As many local Seattleites know, this area could have become the Seattle commons. It was intended to be a large 60-acre park in the center of Seattle,

essentially our Central Park. In the 1990s Paul Allen had made a deal with the city: He would loan them \$20 million to help acquire the property needed to make the park a reality, the remainder, \$100 million, would have to come from property taxes.<sup>13</sup> Ultimately, the park was voted down by Seattle voters at the time because it many felt it was expensive and pretentious. Now, this is likely one of the city's biggest regrets, as it has gone on to become the home of Amazon's extremely dense campus with little connection to the surrounding communities.

In 2005 while working for Vulcan, Rachel, a environmental and garden enthusiast, saw a great opportunity to include some environmentally beneficial space in an area that was anticipated to develop rapidly and soon. I spoke with Rachel to ask her about how the Swale on Yale came to be. She spoke about how much of her free time and effort she put into making the project a reality<sup>14</sup>. It was no easy sale to Vulcan, but after some long, researched explanations about how environmentally and economically beneficial the swale could be, they eventually agreed.

The largest obstacles that the Swale on Yale faced was getting Vulcan on board the market crash in 2009. Shortly after the Swale was approved by Vulcan, the housing crisis of 2009 put a halt to all the planned development in South Lake Union. It was not until April 2012 after the market had recovered some that the project actually broke ground. Since the swale has been in place, it has successfully filtered stormwater from about 435 acres of Capitol Hill.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> "South Lake Union Could Have Been Seattle's Central Park", *Crosscut*

<sup>14</sup> Interview, Rachel Ben-Shmuel

<sup>15</sup> Swale on Yale, [Seattle.gov](http://Seattle.gov)



The main difference with the Swale on Yale and Summit Ave. is the surrounding buildings. While Summit Ave. is a collection of different residential buildings, South Lake Union was all Vulcan properties. There will be a greater challenge with getting multiple owners of properties on board. There is much to take away from the Swale on Yale project, and we are lucky enough to have enlisted Rachel Ben-Shmuel's expertise to help us make this a reality. Her first hand experience in making a similar project happen in Seattle will be immensely beneficial.

In conclusion, reviewing this literature about the benefits of green space will help support my argument to the City of Seattle as to why a sidewalk redesign is necessary for Summit Ave. Critically analyzing the pros and cons of each case study has significantly strengthened the proposal and approach to the overall project. The case studies have deepened my understanding for how Seattle has dealt with similar design efforts in the past. This has helped me to better understand how to approach this proposal based on the successes and struggles of each project.

### **Community Outreach: Seattle Park(ing) Day**

The purpose of this project is to address the growing need for additional green space in the densest areas of Seattle. The 1700 block of Summit Ave. was selected because of the location, unique needs, and width. It is located in the southend of Capitol Hill, the most densely populated neighborhood in Seattle, about a half mile away from any city parks. This block has particularly special needs because it houses multiple low income and transitional living buildings. Many of the residents within these buildings are from marginalized backgrounds and communities that would considerably benefit from added green space on their street.



# Community Outreach & Participation

## Challenges/Opprotunities:

- Multi-family buildings
- Low-income and transitional housing

## Desired Outcomes

- Get to know community
- Collaborate

Additionally, Summit Ave. is a strong candidate for this consideration because of its unusual width. According to old Seattle City maps, the Seattle streetcar that ran from 1915 and 1930 travelled through this block.<sup>16</sup> This makes it possible to add more green space along the road without the need to sacrifice all street parking.

In order to go forward with this project, I felt that it was imperative to provide the residents of the 1700 block of Summit Ave. with the opportunity to participate. All of the buildings on this portion of Summit Ave. are multi-family homes, which presents an additional challenge when reaching out to residents. Marisa Hagney, the Living Community Challenge Manager from the International Living Institute suggested that we use Seattle's Park(ing) Day event as our means of community participation.

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<sup>16</sup> "Seattle Streetcar Map 1915." *Seattle.gov*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. N. pag. Print.

Park(ing) Day is an event that takes place in cities worldwide on the second weekend of September. The idea is to allow designers, artists, and community members to transform parking spots into temporary public parks.<sup>17</sup> To participate in this event, any individual, group, business, or organization can apply through the Seattle Department of Transportation. You must list a preferred location, a scale design for your park, and what activities will take place. I designed my own park concept specifically for the 1700 block of Summit Ave. and requested that the park be located on two mid-block parking spots on the east side of the street.

## GREEN THE STREETS

### PARK(ING) DAY+ 2016

An annual event in Seattle that temporarily turns on-street parking spots into public spaces. Come visit our four locations that are all focused on #removingthegrey as we explore ways to #bringbackthegreen.

**Visit pop-up  
places  
to reimagine  
Seattle streets.**

#removingthegrey  
#bringbackthegreen

Friday, Sept 16<sup>th</sup>  
Saturday, Sept 17<sup>th</sup>  
10:00am - 7:00pm

#### Locations

**Capitol Hill**  
12th Ave Arts (1620 12th Ave)

**Pike/Pine**  
Summit Avenue (Howell and Olive)

**Int. District/Chinatown**  
S. King Street below I-5

**Little Saigon**  
12th and Jackson

[living-future.org/events](http://living-future.org/events)

## Park(ing) Day

- Method of outreach
- Sample concept at location
- Neighborhood Matching Fund



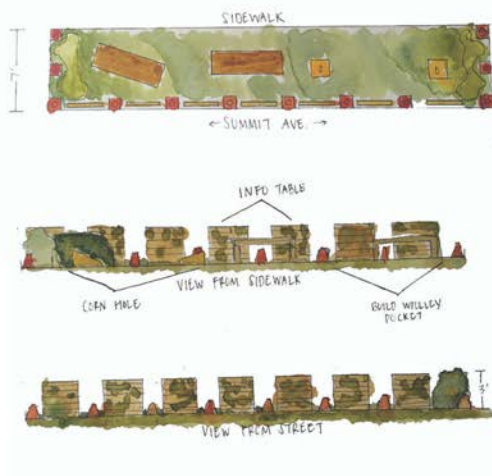
Park(ing) Day 2016 poster/design by Melissa Torres

The park was designed to include sod to cover the asphalt and enough plants to create a sort of barrier between the park and passing traffic. This was to create the feeling of a pop-up lush green space in the middle of a very urban street. The activities included a make-your-own

<sup>17</sup> [parkingday.org](http://parkingday.org)

woolly pocket station, a corn hole game, and an interactive map activity. The map activity was a large print of the 1700 Summit Ave. block with a key. The key had images of possible improvements for the street, such as seating, lighting, gardens, and crosswalks. The map activity was developed to ignite the imaginations of the residents and help them recognize the potential of their street.

## Site Design



Park(ing) Day 2016

Every single person that participated in the map activity marked the desire for trees and gardens along the entire block. I can recall two women telling me they didn't feel the need to add to the map because their neighbors had already represented them well. Two people felt that a crosswalk on the north end could be helpful in controlling traffic and work to improve the block's sense of place. No one expressed the need for additional lighting on the block, but that may have been different if the survey was given at night.

The map activity also worked as an effective conversation starter. About 60 residents were drawn to the park because they were unsure what it was. Every one of them almost immediately exclaimed how good the added greenery felt, and how it was something that is missing from the block. Not all of those visitors participated in the map activity, but those that did identified the need for green space. Their enthusiasm made it really easy to chat with them about their experiences and perceptions of the block, what they liked, what they didn't like, and how it might be better.

The first resident I spoke with, David, had lived on Summit Ave. for 8 years. He told me about how he moved to Seattle to have the ability to walk from place to place, something he was unable to do in his hometown in Orange County, California. David went on to explain how he does consider moving back, because he does not enjoy walking around Seattle as he once did., saying "This block (1700 Summit Ave.) is just really unpleasant. There's garbage everywhere, the sidewalks are blocked by thrown out fridges and there's drugs everywhere...it would be really nice to see plants like this on this street. I usually have to walk to a different area to enjoy being outside."

# Activities

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Park(ing) Day 2016

Another resident I spoke with, Bruce, has lived on the block for about 18 years, and he explained to me that the concern for most of the residents is the undesirable activity. Specifically the drug use, littered needles, and garbage scattered along the block. I had met and spoken with Bruce twice before the Park(ing) Day event, and he was initially skeptical that green space could do much for his block. The day of the event, I was thrilled to see Bruce and his wife come out to the temporary park. After experiencing the feeling of green space on their street, they realized how the simple change could make such a big difference for their well-being. Bruce claimed that maybe the addition of plants would influence to respect their block more, and be less inclined to “trash it”.

The results from the Park(ing) Day event were overwhelmingly positive, so I felt comfortable moving forward with the project. To support the concept of green space in urban

environments, I had to then research the proven benefits of green space and how it could be approached in this particular location. I found that green space is substantial supporter of environmental, human and economic well-being in the built environment. To understand how this project could become a reality, it is necessary to develop some case studies. I chose to research similar concepts that have been realized in Seattle. By choosing local projects, it is more relevant to Summit Ave. because it serves a similar community and functions under the same city ordinance.

I have worked with members of the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict to research the Real Estate for the Summit Ave. area to figure out how the transitional and low-income buildings might be secured. Street improvement is always a threat to displacement, and I would not want to displace those that I am working to serve.

### **Proposal/Conclusion**

Combining my research on the already understood benefits of green space with the understanding from the case studies and the community input, I was able to design two solutions for the 1700 block of Summit Ave. The long term solution illustrates the initial concept for the block. The second solution, short term, developed as a result of the discoveries from the long term solution.

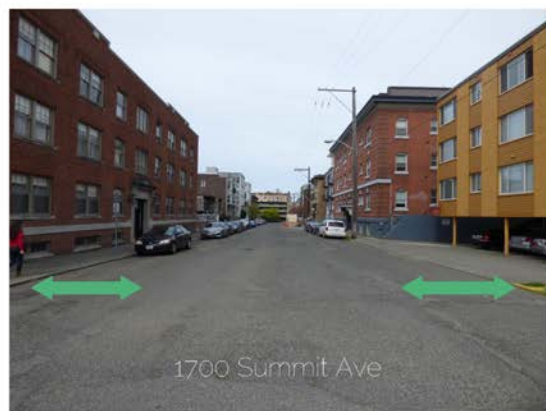
The long term solution builds off of the size the street has to provide. As I discovered, the 1700 block of Summit Ave. was once the location for the original Seattle Streetcar, so the lots on the block were built around this infrastructure. While the streetcar is long gone, the street itself

remains unusually wide for the scale of the neighborhood. This presents an opportunity to extend the curbline further out on both sides of the street to include a green belt. This would provide significantly more green space for the residents of 1700 Summit Ave. without having to designate an entire lot or more to create a park.

## Long Term Solution



looking south



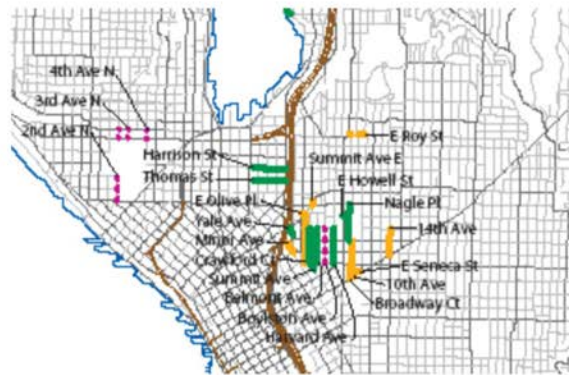
looking north

There were a number of issues that arose with this solution. When speaking with the Seattle Department of Transportation, they agreed that there is a need for green space in this particular area. The problem is that there are other areas within the City of Seattle that currently do not have sidewalks, so those areas would take priority over redesigning a street that already has them.

Members of the International Future Living Institute had another idea, they suggested that as a group, we propose the extension of the Seattle Green Streets Initiative. There are two types of “Green Streets”, one designated for downtown, and one focused on the neighborhood



scale. According to the Seattle.gov the following bullet points are the purpose of the neighborhood green street:



#### LEGEND

- Land Use Code, Ordinance, or Neighborhood Plan adoption
- Neighborhood Plan recommendation
- Tentative



MAP: SEATTLE.GOV

## Seattle Green Streets

- Reflect a local community's desire for pedestrian or open space enhancement.
- Enhance the pedestrian environment and attract pedestrians.
- Create open space opportunities in residential neighborhoods.
- Retain unique street features

The purpose of the neighborhood green space fits almost flawlessly with what I envision for the 1700 block of Summit Ave. The portion of Summit Ave. located just south of the 1700 block on the other side of Olive Street is already designated as a Green Street as a continuation of the Pike/Pine Corridor. So including this block would not be an unusual or random placement of a green street, simply an extension of an already existing one.

The issue with a green street extension is that it is an incremental adaptation. This means that if the block does become a designated green street, it does not mean any immediate changes. The requirements of a green street are only enforced with new or updated developments because it is very expensive and requires a lot of infrastructural changes. Because most of the buildings

on this block are aging without much attention or repair, the likelihood of these building being demolished and replaced with new construction is likely. This alone should be a reason enough for 1700 Summit Ave. to be a green street for the future developments. However, it does equate to the current population to becoming displaced, meaning that the population I am intending to serve would no longer live on this block.

These discoveries lead me to develop an additional short term solution: simple de-paving. There are sections of sidewalk along the entryways to the 1700 block of Summit Ave. that have unnecessarily paved sections. These sections could potentially be de-paved and replaced with soil and plants, providing the vulnerable population with the much needed green space. Below is a map illustrating where these locations are, and some images demonstrating what they would look like:



1700 Summit Ave

## Short Term Solution

- De-pave sections of existing sidewalk
- Cheaper, quicker, faster
- Community Driven

# Before

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1700 Summit Ave. entry points

# After

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1700 Summit Ave. entry points

While these sections are not on the exact block, they mark the entry to the block. This addition, while the added green space may be small, it has the ability to administer the same benefits as larger green space. The short term option is quick, cheap, and easy. It is something that could be done in a weekend and has the potential to be driven by the community members. If the community were able to participate, it would allow them to take similar ownership over their neighborhood the same way property owners have the ability to do. The residents can take control of their space and define it as their own.



# Thank you!

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- Capitol Hill EcoDistrict (CHED)
- Carlson Center & Jackson Munro Foundation
- City Peoples
- International Living Institute (ILFI)
- Seattle Department of Neighborhoods
- Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)
- Seattle Parks Foundation

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