



Seattle Light Rail Review Panel

Handbook

getting good advice



Seattle Light Rail Review Panel

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Dear Reader,

We have prepared this handbook for your use in working with the Light Rail Review Panel. It is based upon a similar Handbook used successfully by the Seattle Design Commission to assist project managers and consultants in preparing for Commission discussions. It is our hope the Handbook will be helpful to you as we work together on the Link light rail project. The handbook describes both the objectives of the Light Rail Review Panel and the process for bringing elements of the project to us for design review and discussion.

To make the process of Panel review clear and easy to access, we have referenced Sound Transit's "milestones" as they correspond with the stages of design at which the Panel would like to be involved in project review. As with all good handbooks, this document is structured for ease of use and includes the tools we believe are needed to develop, present, discuss, and evaluate the project. We look forward to working collaboratively with you toward the goal of design excellence in the development of Link light rail for Seattle.

Join us,

Jon Layzer, Chair

Seattle Light Rail Review Panel

Department of Design
Construction & Land Use

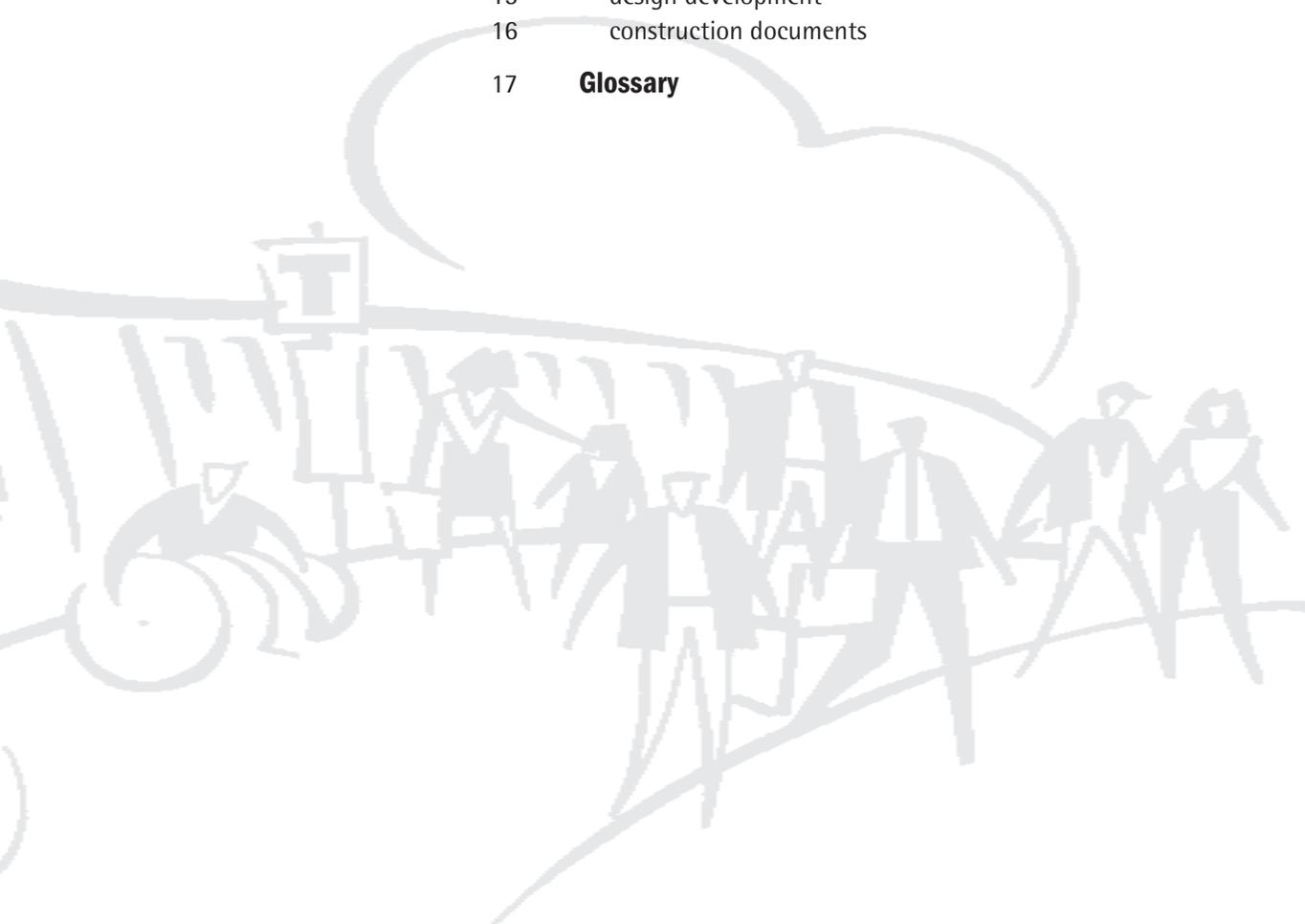
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Light Rail Review Panel

The Seattle Light Rail Review Panel was formed with the express purpose of providing an integrated review of the Link light rail project by the City's Design, Planning, and Arts Commissions. Through the structure of the Panel, the three commissions provide consolidated review and a forum for discussing and resolving urban design issues for the project on an on-going basis. The Panel is also a venue for coordinating with other City departments and relevant City Boards and Commissions such as the Landmarks Board, Special Review District Boards, neighborhood Design Review Boards, the Pedestrian Board, and the Bicycle Board as needed. In this context, design review conducted by the Panel becomes a critical part of the subsequent permitting work by surfacing issues and opportunities early in the process while there is still ample time to address them. The result is a more streamlined and effective design review and permitting process than might occur otherwise. The Panel is advisory to Sound Transit and the City of Seattle.

proactive approach

The Panel's approach to achieving its objectives is one of proactive involvement at the earliest stages of project design with on-going dialogue and follow-through; providing comments directly on materials presented, facilitating interagency and interdepartmental discussions, identifying staff and others who need to be involved, and working collaboratively with project proponents.

multidisciplinary team

The Panel consists of nine members, three each from the Design, Planning, and Arts Commissions. Members were selected by their peers and will serve two year terms. The current membership includes three urban planners, three artists, two architects, and one landscape architect and engineer. The breadth of professional experience, combined with the nonpartisan nature of the group, makes the Panel a valuable resource to both to the City and Sound Transit.

Panel Scope of Work

The scope of work for the Panel was developed jointly by the Design, Planning, and Arts Commissions with input from the City's Regional Transit Manager and Sound Transit. The scope includes:

- participating in the creation of Design Review Objectives, Guidelines, and Criteria for Link light rail, and adopting a design review process based on those Objectives, Guidelines, and Criteria
- conducting early review of proposed project elements including station design, alignment design, and other design features
- advising Sound Transit and the City regarding common design elements and features to be included in the Link light rail project
- highlighting areas needed for further technical review and coordination by City departments prior to formal permit review
- identifying and prioritizing issues needing early resolution of apparent design conflicts, design concerns, or policy matters that would otherwise not be raised until permit review
- calling out emerging opportunities to create a "sense of place" at specific stations in conjunction with station area planning and neighborhood plan implementation
- providing input to the City's Station Area Planning effort regarding urban design issues, and recommendations on the light rail transit project as it relates to adjacent station areas

Benefits of Panel Involvement

Early involvement of the Light Rail Review Panel is the most effective way of realizing the benefits of the Panel's multidisciplinary advice and city agency coordination for the Link light rail project. By working closely with the Panel, Sound Transit project managers, consultants, and City staff can expect efficiencies in project review, the provision of one consistent voice from the three Commissions regarding design review issues, and the highest quality of review at every state of project development. Specifically, the Panel offers:

- Focused discussion among professionals with experience in similar projects;
- access to regular and frequent meetings devoted to review of the Link light rail project;
- a forum for gathering together other relevant Boards and Commissions, key staff, and consultants to discuss particular topics as needed;
- opportunities for coordinating Panel reviews and comments with on-going line department project review and permitting activities;
- Panel members and staff experienced in facilitating design workshops and discussion around complex interdisciplinary projects;
- a written record of all presentations and discussions brought to the Panel, serving as a valuable point of reference for future permit reviews of the project; and
- clear and consistent guidelines for design review of the Link light rail project, as described in this handbook.

All records of Light Rail Review Panel work are available to project staff, consultants, and other interested parties as requested. Additional information about the Panel is available by contacting Cheryl Sizov at 233-7236 or 710 2nd Avenue, Suite 200, Seattle, WA 98104-1703.

Design Principles for Link Light Rail

The Light Rail Review Panel proposes the following principles to guide the design and development of Link Light Rail power facilities, station facilities, rail alignment, and related community investments. The Link light rail system and related community investments should:

- be thoughtful expressions of civic scale and character.
- represent the city and the pluralistic nature of our communities.
- express a “familiarity and recognizability showing concern for everyday life both for the individual and the collective.” (Peter G. Rowe, *Civic Realism*)
- fit within the plans, needs, and context of the surrounding neighborhood, affirming local characteristics and identity without being exclusionary.
- be a conscientious neighbor in scale and character, positively contributing to the neighborhood livability
- promote transit oriented development through siting and design that is both responsive and integral to the physical and social context.
- promote the safety and security of passengers, staff, and facility neighbors through design and programming.
- demonstrate through its architecture and landscape a sense of permanence, exhibited in its physical presence, social significance, and quality of material.
- exemplify environmentally sensitive design and promote environmentally sustainable site and building development.
- assume responsibility for the conservation of significant historic resources and give expression to the unique physical and social context in which they sit
- include an early and thoughtful integration of art in the public realm.
- be developed through a genuine public process.

As one of the largest public infrastructure investments this region has ever experienced, the Link light rail project has the potential to change the face of Seattle's neighborhoods--both through its own facilities and as a catalyst for positive reinvestment and development around specific stations. The Light Rail Review Panel is committed to assisting in making this investment one which will serve as an example of the very best in public projects. As the city of Seattle grows and matures it is imperative that we continue to pursue design excellence as the stewards of enduring and inspiring public projects, beloved by Seattle citizens.

1999 Meeting Calendar

The Light Rail Review Panel meets every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month, from 4:00 to 6:00 pmat Sound Transit offices, 4th floor, 1100 Second Avenue. Members of the public are welcome to attend. Meeting times and agendas are subject to change; to confirm a particular meeting please call Cheryl Sizov at 233-7236.

January 13th and 27th
February 10th and 24th
March 10th and 24th
April 14th and 28th
May 12th and 26th
June 9th and 23rd
July 14th and 28th
August 11th and 25th
September 8th and 22nd
October 13th and 27th
November 10th and 24th



The Light Rail Review Panel Process

Through the Light Rail Review Panel, the City has created a forum for discussing design-related issues and providing integrated design review for the Link light rail project, with the ultimate goal of creating a high quality transit system for the City of Seattle and the region. Key elements to the success of the Panel's review are:

- early review of projects, before design work has begun in earnest, and throughout all phases of design development
- presentations and reviews whereby each presentation and review builds upon the last; responding to comments, concerns, and issues raised, and moving together toward design solutions
- presentations and reviews that are grouped to the extent possible in instances for which common concerns or issues prevail
- regular guidance from the Panel regarding the extent of review needed--some aspects of the project may require interim review between design phases, while other may require less review
- the ability of the Panel to streamline project review by having full Panel participation in the initial review of each aspect of design, after which subsequent reviews may be directed to subcommittees drawing upon additional technical expertise as needed

project review phases

In order to fulfill its mandate, the Panel desires to review the Link light rail project at each of the following phases of development. Each phase is listed below, along with the corresponding Sound Transit nomenclature for design development.

LRRP review phases

scope briefing
concept design
schematic design
design development

Sound Transit design phases

Prel. Engineering Phase (0-30% Design)

*project kick-off (0%)
progress review (15%)*

Design Phase (30-100%)

*project kick-off (30%)
progress review (50%)*

Scope Briefing

The scope briefing is an opportunity for project managers to present background information about an upcoming project and to receive comments on its scope, multidisciplinary advice on general project issues and potential problems, and the necessary review steps for the project. This review should occur just after the preliminary project scope and budget have been established.

advice topics

The following topics demonstrate a range of issues that the Light Rail Review Panel may wish to discuss and comment on:

- project scope and budget,
- site context and neighborhood fit,
- public process and community involvement,
- artist involvement,
- project feasibility and longevity,
- city agency interaction, and
- preliminary discussion of how the proposal meets the Panel's design principles for the Link light rail project.

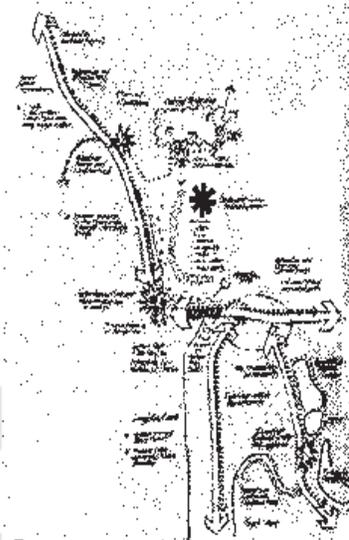
presentation checklist

A scope briefing presentation should include:

- project history;
- scope of work;
- design and construction schedule; overall project timeline;
- general site information; contextual site plan, site photos;
- program requirements; and
- budget for design, construction, and art program.

value added

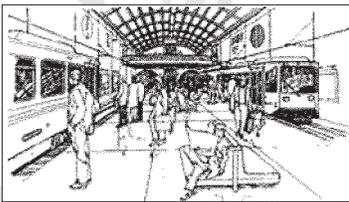
Involvement of the Panel will result in a more comprehensive scope with an adequate design budget, early notice of key design issues, and improved city agency coordination.



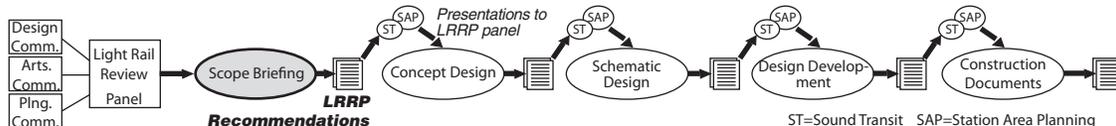
plan showing contextual issues and site impacts



contextual site photo showing character of surrounding area

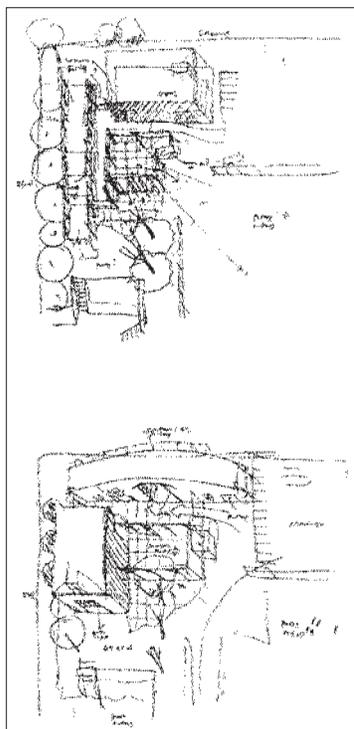


conceptual sketch of at-grade transit platform

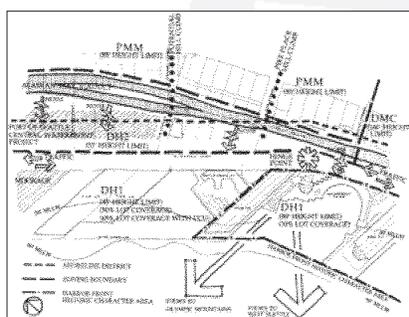


Concept Design

The concept design review is an opportunity for project managers and consultants to present a project analysis that includes urban and historical contexts, social infrastructures, and natural environments. The design approach and objectives for the project, developed from this analysis, should also be presented for discussion and comment.



programmatic design sketches for Garfield Community Center



site conditions for Seattle Aquarium

evaluation methods

The Panel will review initial concept alternatives with regard to the following:

- design principles and objectives,
- programmatic constraints and opportunities,
- contextual, aesthetic, and environmental issues,
- integration with Neighborhood Planning efforts,
- public response and interaction, and
- integration of art program.

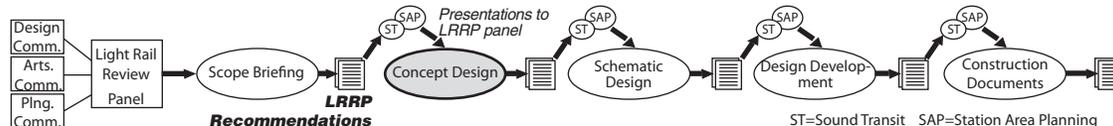
presentation checklist

A concept design presentation should include:

- photos of the site and context;
- vicinity plan;
- conceptual site plan;
- conceptual floor plans and sections with program allocations; and
- study models.

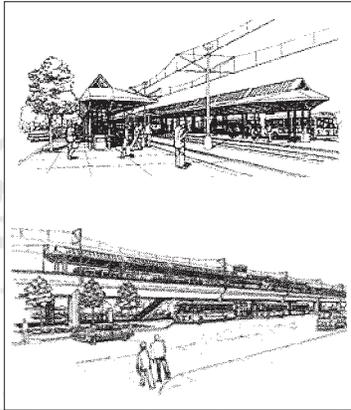
value added

The Panel's broad range of experience will result in a thorough, multidisciplinary discussion of conceptual alternatives. Panel involvement will also facilitate improved city agency coordination and project integration. The Panel will use the principles and objectives refined at this review to evaluate the project's development in subsequent reviews.



Schematic Design

The schematic design review is an opportunity for project managers and consultants to explain how they have developed the conceptual alternatives based on the design principles and objectives established in prior reviews.



east portal options for "Growing Vine Street" project

evaluation methods

The three-dimensional quality and character of a preferred alternative will be discussed with regard to the following:

- design principles and objectives,
- contextual fit,
- massing and scale,
- spatial organization of the site and building,
- neighborhood fit, and
- integration of art program.

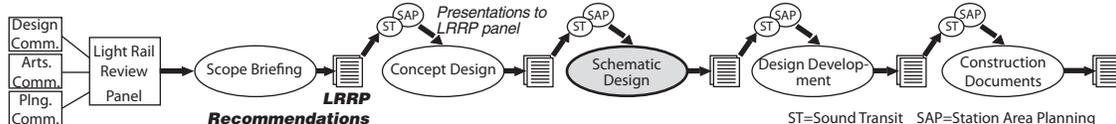
presentation checklist

A schematic design presentation should include:

- site plan, with conceptual landscape plan, and site photos;
- floor plans and elevations;
- a comprehensive description of site conditions;
- perspective sketches or models for each alternative;
- art program opportunities; and
- budget and programmatic elements.

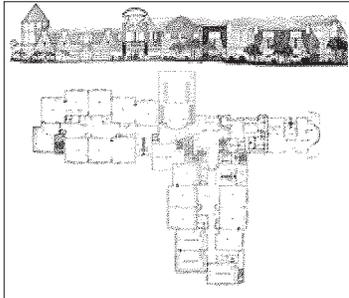
value added

The active participation of the Panel at this stage of design will result in a careful evaluation of how the design principles and objectives have been applied to the conceptual alternatives in terms of site and contextual organization, scale, and art integration.



Design Development

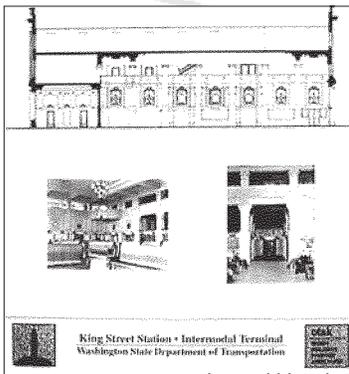
The design development review is an opportunity for project managers and consultants to present the preferred schematic alternative and for the Panel to make recommendations on the final design solution.



plan and elevation for African American Academy



sample lasercut screen for Weller Street Bridge art program



section and historical photos for King Street Station main lobby

evaluation methods

The Panel will review the project with regard to the following:

- site and landscape development,
- building scale, massing, and contextual fit,
- selection of materials,
- site and architectural details, and
- implementation of art program.

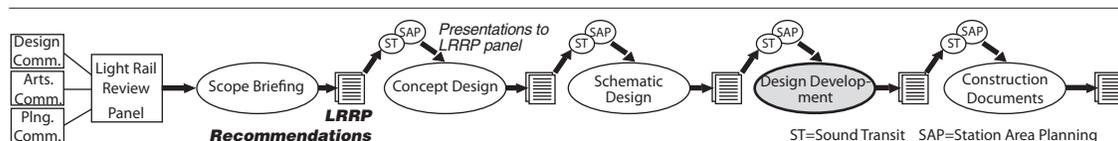
presentation checklist

A design development presentation should include:

- project budget;
- site plan and contextual photos;
- floor and landscape plans;
- elevations and perspectives;
- art components and budget; and
- model (if available).

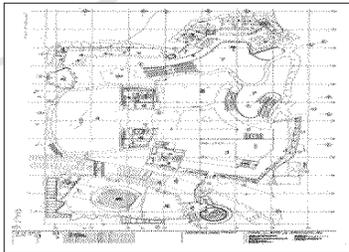
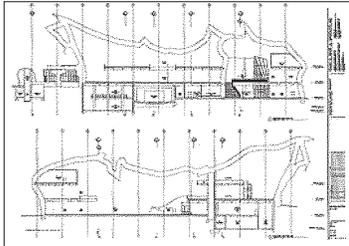
value added

The Panel's broad range of professional experience will result in a multidisciplinary discussion of contextual, architectural, and landscape issues. Panel involvement will yield a thorough review of design issues regarding the preferred alternative as well as advice on issues and opportunities not yet considered.



Construction Documents

The construction documents review is an opportunity for the project managers and consultants to present the final design solution and explain any deviations from previous Panel comments and recommendations. It is also appropriate to present the comments of other review bodies that resulted in significant design changes.



sections and floor plan for EMP

evaluation methods

The Panel will review the construction documents for their compliance or deviance from the following:

- design principles or objectives, and
- previous Panel recommendations.

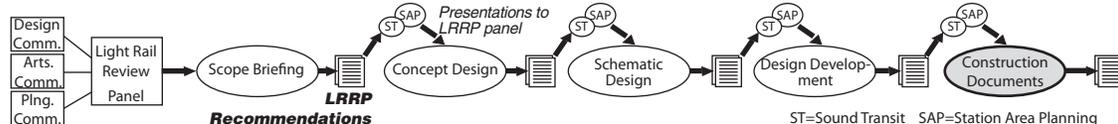
presentation checklist

A construction documents presentation should include:

- a written summary of previous Panel recommendations and how they have been addressed;
- visual materials necessary to review deviations from Panel recommendations; and
- a model (if available).

value added

A construction documents review is only necessary if Panel recommendations in the design development phase have not been followed.



Glossary

design principle 1. a fundamental truth, law, doctrine, or motivating force, upon which design decisions are based. 2. an essential objective that provides a theoretical framework for design decisions.

design guidelines standards of design or aesthetics that are used to guide development projects in a particular city, community, or neighborhood. Design guidelines are used by design review boards in evaluating new development projects in a particular city or neighborhood

massing three dimensional bulk of a structure: height, width, and depth

multidisciplinary of or combining the disciplines of many different branches of learning or research

neighborhood plan a plan adopted by the city council and consistent with the Comprehensive Plan to guide development in a neighborhood and possibly addressing related issues such as housing, major institutions, transportation, economic development, and other community development activities

right-of-way (ROW) a strip of land, including the space above and below the surface, that is platted, dedicated, condemned, established by prescription or otherwise legally established for the use of pedestrians, vehicles, or utilities

scale the spatial relationship among structures along a street or block front, including height, bulk, and yard relationships. proportional relationship of the size of parts to one another and to the human figure – architectural: the perceived relative height and bulk of a building relative to that of neighboring buildings – pedestrian: the perceived size of a building relative to a human being.

scope 1. the range or extent of action, inquiry, etc., or of an activity, concept, etc. 2. room or opportunity for freedom of action or thought

site context 1. the whole situation, background, or surrounding environment relevant to a particular site, project, etc. 2. having to do with historic and social infrastructures, natural and built environments

streetscape the visual character of a street as determined by elements such as structures, access, greenery, open space, view, etc. The scene as may be observed along a public street composed of natural and man-made components, including buildings, paving, planting, street hardware, and miscellaneous structures

urban design amenities elements of a project that provide clear public benefit and enhance the pedestrian experience within the public realm adjacent to the project

vision 1. a mental image; an imaginative contemplation (*to have visions of power*) 2. a) the ability to perceive something not actually visible, as through mental acuteness or keen foresight (*a project made possible by one person's vision*) b) force or power of imagination (*a statesman of great vision*)



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