Observations & Recommendations

Early one Tuesday morning in February, more than 40 people, representing residents, business, property owners and city departments, gathered in Occidental Park. Their goal: to understand what makes Pioneer Square a terrific place to be and to identify the opportunities for making it better. Their method: audit the streets and alleys of Pioneer Square.

They set out on three different routes with a map, clipboard, a list of questions and a camera. They covered every corner of Pioneer Square, and they were prolific observers. These long-term residents and business owners created more than 40 pages of notes and took hundreds of photographs. Participants scored each route in three categories: getting there (finding your way and accessibility), wanting to stay (quality of public spaces and appearance) and feeling comfortable (quality of sidewalks and feeling of safety). Scores range from 1 representing poor to 5 being excellent.

The result is an unprecedented inventory of Pioneer Square’s promises and challenges. The International Sustainability culled from this data what’s most important to those who work, live and play in Pioneer Square. You’ll find lots of quick wins and short term projects to support an economically vibrant neighborhood.

If you have additional comments or ideas, please email liz@isiseattle.org.
Pioneer Square Walking Audit | ROUTE 1

Transit & Neighborhood Connections: **Occidental Park to Chinatown/ID and Transit Hub**

**Assets & Promise**
- **Great Connection:** between Chinatown/ID & Pioneer Square
- **Transit Hub:** brings people into Pioneer Square via numerous transit options (train, bus and light rail)
- **Accessible Grocery:** path to major grocery store (Uwajimaya)
- **Inviting Public Spaces:** Jackson Street Plaza, future entrance into King Street Station

**Opportunities & Issues**
- **Difficult Walking:** sidewalks uneven and poor quality, barriers to people with disabilities and parents with strollers
- **Traffic Barriers:** 4th Ave S & S Jackson St intersection creates long waiting times and unpleasant noise levels
- **Confusing Signs:** difficult to find one’s way to the train station and bus tunnel, confusing with many bus stops around 4th Ave S & S Jackson St; inconsistent and confusing signs
- **Uninviting Public Spaces:** Jackson Street Plaza - unclean, no trash cans or lighting; ID Tunnel Plaza - empty, lack of greenery, people and activity
- **Safety Issues:** high number of bike and pedestrian collisions on 2nd Avenue Extension S & Jackson Street

**Quick Wins & Short Term Projects**

1. **Reduce Walking Hazards, Improve ADA Accessibility.**
   - **location:** btw 2nd & 3rd Ave S on north side of S Jackson St (photo)
     - Make a temporary ramp
     - Install ADA ramps mid-block
     - Improve severely slanting sidewalk

2. **Make Public Spaces More Inviting.**
   - **locations:** (1) Jackson Street Plaza (photo) (2) ID Tunnel entrance Plaza (3) Great Northern Railway Park
     - Keep public spaces clean
     - Add trash cans @ Jackson Street Plaza
     - Add dog waste bag system
     - Add lighting @ Jackson Street Plaza to create an inviting space and entrance to King St Station.

3. **Connect Jackson Street Plaza to Pioneer Square.**
   - **location:** 2nd Ave Ext S & S Jackson St crosswalk (photo)
     - Re-align the crossing @ 2nd Ave Ext S & Jackson St to make inviting entry to King Street Station*

4. **Guide People to Transit, Shops and Restaurants.**
   - **location:** Occidental Park kiosk (photo)
     - Reorient kiosk @ Occidental Park
   - **location:** Add signage in the 2nd-4th Ave S & S Jackson St vicinity
     - Improve and add signage helping connect people from the train station, Occidental Park, ferries, etc

5. **Activate Public Spaces.**
   - **location:** International District Tunnel entrance (photo)
     - Create outdoor farmers market, produce stands or flower stands
     - Add amenities (benches, plants, art, etc. that invite people to stay)

*Recommendations from King St Station Transportation Hub Strategy.
Transit & Neighborhood Connections: 5th Ave S & S Weller St to 1st Ave S & S King St

Assets & Promise
- **Great Connection**: between Chinatown/ID and Pioneer Square (stadiums, the Waterfront, 1st Ave)
- **Transit Hub**: brings people into Pioneer Square via numerous transit options (train, bus and light rail)
- **Accessible Grocery**: path to major grocery store (Uwajimaya)
- **Inviting Public Spaces**: 505 Union Station Plaza well-maintained, places to sit, greenery and open

Opportunities & Issues
- **Difficult Walking**: sidewalks uneven and poor quality, barriers to people with disabilities, parents with strollers and people with luggage
- **Traffic Barriers**: 4th Ave S & S Weller St intersection - long waiting times, short signal and unpleasant noise levels
- **Confusing Signs**: difficult to find one’s way to the train station, Pioneer Square and Chinatown/ID
- **Uninviting Connections**: lack of greenery and poor connection from Weller Street Overpass to King Street Station

Quick Wins & Short Terms Projects

1. **Guide People to Transit, Shops and Restaurants.**  
   Location: 505 Union Station Plaza (photo)  
   - Improve and add signage at 5th Avenue plaza to guide people to Pioneer Square and transit  
   - Add more greenery; use as neighborhood identifier for wayfinding

2. **Reduce Pedestrian and Auto Conflicts.**  
   Location: 4th Ave S and S Weller St (photo)  
   - Improve pedestrian signal by shortening wait time and lengthening crossing time

3. **Create Safe Pedestrian Routes.**  
   Location: Weller Street Overpass (photo)  
   - Add more lighting to Weller St Bridge

4. **Guide Pedestrians Through King Street Station.**  
   Location: King Street Station to Weller St Bridge  
   - Make a defined path between King Street Station & Weller St Bridge with lighting, plants, art and murals
Pioneer Square Walking Audit | ROUTE 1

Retail Connection: **1st Ave S from S King St to Yesler Way**

**Assets & Promise**
- **Great Walk**: 1st Ave S is one of the best walks in Seattle (historic buildings, trees, hanging baskets, relatively clean)
- **Retail**: many storefronts with shops and restaurants, few vacancies north of S Main St
- **Great Connection**: between Downtown core, Stadium District and Chinatown/ID to Pioneer Square

**Opportunities & Issues**
- **Difficult Walking**: inconsistent quality, poor ADA accessibility at crossings creates barriers for people with disabilities, parents with strollers and people with luggage
- **Confusing Signs**: difficult to find one’s way to the Waterfront and ferries, transit, Chinatown/ID
- **Uninviting Blocks**: more retail diversity needed, some dark/tinted storefronts, most vacancies south of S Main St
- **Lack of Regular Median Maintenance**: no regular scheduled maintenance for medians (ad-hoc, community-driven)

### Quick Wins & Short Terms Projects

1. **Reduce Walking Hazards, Improve ADA Accessibility.**
   - **Locations**: (1) 1st Ave S & S Washington St, NW, NE, SW, SE (photo)
   - (2) 1st Ave S & Yesler Way, SE and SW corner
   - (3) 1st Ave S & S Jackson St, SE and NW corner
   - (4) 1st Ave S & S Main St, SW corner
   - □ Install ADA ramps at all 1st Ave S intersections where missing or in need of realignment

2. **Makes Storefronts More Inviting.**
   - **Location**: along 1st Ave S, sandwich board in front of Pioneer Building (photo)
   - □ Educate business owners about having clear pathways in sidewalks - move sandwich boards
   - □ Educate business owners about attractive storefronts - encourage blade signs, discourage rough handmade signs in windows
   - □ Promote more outdoor cafes

3. **Make Safe Pedestrian Crossings.**
   - **Location**: 1st Ave S & Yesler Way (photo)
   - □ Study feasibility of All-Way Walk at busiest pedestrian crossing

4. **Guide People to Transit, Shops and Restaurants.**
   - **Locations**: (1) add signage at 1st Ave S & Yesler Way (photo)
   - (2) add signage at 1st Ave S & S Main St
   - □ Improve and add signage to guide people to waterfront, Chinatown/ID and transit. Currently, signage only present on 1st Avenue at S Jackson St & S Washington St intersections

5. **Create Inviting Pedestrian Route.**
   - **Location**: 1st Ave S median (photo)
   - □ Start adopt-a-block median program along 1st Ave S (weeding, planting)
   - □ Improve SDOT maintenance of 1st Ave S medians (regular weeding and pruning)

### Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Getting There</th>
<th>3.6 Wanting to Stay</th>
<th>3.6 Feeling Comfortable</th>
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**3.6**
Alley Route: **Yesler Way to S King St**

**Assets & Promise**
- **Great Connections**: secondary pedestrian route from Pioneer Park to Occidental Park, to future First Hill streetcar on S Jackson Street and stadiums
- **Active**: monthly events, planter boxes and art
- **Retail**: potential for shops and entrances (new bike shop opened in Nord Alley, February 2012)
- **Dumpster Free**: most dumpsters removed from alleys resulting in fewer hidden places and more regular cleaning
- **Visually alluring path for pedestrians**: arches, brick and human scale make alleys a terrific walking path

**Opportunities & Issues**
- **Difficult Walking**: uneven ground and standing water
- **Uninviting Public Spaces**: not consistently clean - tagging, strewn trash and public urination
- **Safety Issues**: inconsistent crosswalk markings connecting alleys
- **Dumpsters**: remaining dumpsters on private property attract loitering and unsanitary conditions

**Quick Wins & Short Terms Projects**

1. **Make Safe Crossings Between Alleys.**
   - **location**: Main St btw 1st Ave S & Occidental Ave S (photo)
     - Restripe alley crossings
     - Add the one missing new marked crossing to complete alley crossing network

2. **Improve Alley Surfaces for Safety and Drainage.**
   - **location**: all alleys, choose demonstration alley
     - Develop master plan for alley resurfacing: assessment, design and cost estimates (Phase 1)
     - Resurface demonstration alley (Phase 2)

3. **Beautify Alleys.**
   - **location**: all Pioneer Square alleys
     - Identify remaining dumpsters and find ways to encourage removal, SPU enforce if necessary
     - Clean back doors, add plants, expose historic elements, paint downspouts

4. **Encourage Active Use of Alley Entrances to Buildings.**
   - **location**: all Pioneer Square alleys, potential at Globe Building for new shops, Nord Alley Back Alley Bike Shop (photo)
     - Identify retailers and other active uses that require small footprints (400-750 sq feet)
     - Add signage on buildings on back entrances
     - Activate alley entrance to Globe Building

5. **Put People in Alleys with Regular Gatherings.**
   - **location**: all Pioneer Square alleys
     - Park food trucks in alleys with temporary seating at lunch
     - Plan alley events (Art Walk, lunchtime events)
     - Distribute Alley Handbook (planning & permitting)

*Note: Only alleys located along the Alley Network spine from Yesler to King were evaluated on the Walking Audit. These recommendations should also be considered for all alleys in Pioneer Square.*
East | West Connections: **S Main St from Alaskan Way to 4th Ave S**

### Assets & Promise
- **Great Connections:** pedestrian route to waterfront, Japantown, Chinatown/ID and transit
- **Great Public Spaces:** Occidental Park, Waterfall Garden Park and Nord Alley
- **Dramatic Views:** views to the waterfront, train tunnel opening and tall buildings
- **Easy Walking Grade:** easy to walk east and west (more gradual than Washington or Yesler)

### Opportunities & Issues
- **Difficult Walking:** uneven and poor quality, prism glass holes, barriers to people with disabilities and parents with strollers
- **Traffic Barriers:** 2nd Ave Ext S intersection creates long waiting times and unpleasant noise levels
- **Uninviting Public Spaces:** not consistently clean under the Viaduct, public urination
- **Confusing Signs:** difficult to find one’s way to the train station, Pioneer Square and Chinatown/ID
- **Lack of Active Storefronts:** few open storefronts and retail (vacancies and parking lots)
- **Bike Parking:** Main Street forces cyclists to park at poles and railings

### Quick Wins & Short Terms Projects

1. **Reduce Walking Hazards, Improve ADA Accessibility.**
   - locations: (1) S Main St btw Alaskan Way and 1st Ave S, N & S sides of street at alleys (photo) (2) S Main St btw 2nd Ave S and 2nd Ave Ext, N & S sides of street at alleys (3) 1st Ave S & S Main St, SW corner
   - □ Install ADA ramps

2. **Reduce Walking Hazards.**
   - locations: 2nd Ave & Main St, N side of street (photo)
   - □ Repair missing prism glass

3. **Create Inviting Pedestrian Route.**
   - location: S Main St under the Viaduct (photo)
   - □ Prioritize cleaning under the Viaduct: work with WSDOT and MID during construction
   - location: Occidental Park Vicinity
   - □ Install public room facility in Occidental Park vicinity

4. **Guide People to Transit, Shops and Restaurants.**
   - location: 4th Ave S & S Main St (photo)
   - □ Improve and add signage to guide people to Pioneer Square and Chinatown/ID
   - location: 1st Ave S & S Main St
   - □ Improve and add signage to guide people to the Waterfront

5. **Provide Bike Parking.**
   - location: S Main St btw Alaskan Way & 1st Ave S, next to Bread of Life Mission (photo)
   - □ Add bike racks at locations where cyclists are using street signs. Coordinate with SDOT, Pioneer Square Preservation Board and the Bicycle Alliance to evaluate locations
   - □ Identify bike corral parking spot

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**Pioneer Square Walking Audit | ROUTE 2**

**SCORES**

1.6 getting there
1.9 wanting to stay
2.5 feeling comfortable
East | West Connections: **S Washington St from Alaskan Way to 4th Ave S**

**Assets & Promise**
- **Great Connections**: pedestrian route to the Waterfront, Chinatown/ID and transit
- **Great Public Spaces**: Occidental Park
- **Dramatic Views**: views to the waterfront, train tunnel opening and tall buildings
- **Active Street**: Washington has great architecture, retail and street life (less active around 2nd Ave Ext S)

**Opportunities & Issues**
- **Difficult Walking**: uneven and poor quality, barriers to people with disabilities and parents with strollers
- **Traffic Barriers**: 2nd Ave Ext S intersection creates long waiting times and unpleasant noise levels
- **Uninviting Public Spaces**: trash under the Viaduct and Washington Street Boat Landing makes an unpleasant walk
- **Confusing Signs**: difficult to find one’s way to the train station, Pioneer Square and Chinatown/ID
- **Bike Parking**: Washington Street forces cyclists to park at poles and railings

**Quick Wins & Short Term Projects**

1. **Reduce Walking Hazards, Improve ADA Accessibility.**
   - **locations**: (1) 1st Ave S & S Washington St - all corners
   - (2) S Washington St btw 1st Ave S and Occidental Ave S, N & S side of street, E & W side of alley
   - (3) S Washington St btw Occidental Ave S and 2nd Ave S on N side of street, E & W side of alley
   - **Install ADA ramps**

2. **Make Safe Crossings Between Alleys.**
   - **location**: repaint existing crossings that connect Occidental Park and alley between 1st Ave S and Occidental Ave S
   - **Restripe mid-block crossing**

3. **Create Inviting Pedestrian Route.**
   - **location**: S Washington St under the Viaduct
   - **Prioritize cleaning under the Viaduct**: work with WSDOT and MID during construction

4. **Guide People to Transit, Shops and Restaurants.**
   - **locations**: 4th Ave S & S Washington St
   - **Install ADA ramps**
   - **Improve and add signage to guide people to Pioneer Square and Chinatown/ID**

5. **Provide Bike Parking.**
   - **location**: S Washington S between 1st Ave S & Occidental, next to Occidental Park
   - **Add bike racks at locations where cyclists are using street signs. Coordinate with SDOT, Pioneer Square Preservation Board and the Bicycle Alliance to evaluate locations**
   - **Identify bike corral parking spot**
East | West Connections: **Yesler Way from Alaskan Way to 4th Ave S**

**Assets & Promise**
+ **Great Connections**: connects people to and from the Waterfront and to the Pioneer Square transit tunnel
+ **Dramatic Views**: views of the waterfront and Smith Tower
+ **Active Street**: inviting shops and restaurants from 2nd Ave Ext S west to Alaskan Way

**Opportunities & Issues**
- **Difficult Walking**: uneven and poor quality, high curbs, barriers to people with disabilities and parents with strollers
- **Traffic Barriers**: 2nd Ave Ext S intersection - long waiting times, high noise levels, Alaskan Way crossing - long wait time, difficult to reach water taxi
- **Uninviting Public Spaces**: trash, loitering and illegal activity at Fortson Square, Fountain Park, Courthouse Park
- **Confusing Signs**: difficult to find one’s way to King Street Station, transit tunnel and Chinatown/ID
- **Perceived high crime**: few shops and ‘eyes on street’ around 2nd Ave Ext S and Yesler Way intersection
- **Unsafe crossings**: problematic mid-block crossing on Yelser between 2nd Ave Ext S and 3rd Ave S
- **Confusing Construction Detours**: poorly marked mid-block crossing between Alaskan Way & Western

**Quick Wins & Short Terms Projects**

1. **Reduce Walking Hazards, Improve ADA Accessibility.**
   - **location**: Yesler Way and Occidental Ave S intersection (photo)
   - **location**: 1st Ave S & Yesler Way, SE and SW corner
     - □ Install ADA ramps

2. **Safely Mitigate Construction Detours.**
   - **location**: Yesler Way mid-block - Alaskan Way to Western Ave
     - □ Improve construction detour with clear route, high visibility for pedestrians and improved ADA access

3. **Make Safe Crossings.**
   - **location**: Yesler Way between 2nd Ave Ext S and 3rd Ave S (photo)
     - □ Add safety features at mid-block crossing (flashing lights, push button, etc.)

4. **Make Safe and Efficient Crossings.**
   - **location**: Yesler Way and Alaskan Way (photo)
     - □ Reduce pedestrian crossing time to reach ferry and water taxi
     - □ Create a more straightforward crossing from the passenger ferry to Pioneer Square

5. **Guide People to Transit, Shops and Restaurants.**
   - **location**: 3rd Ave and Prefontaine, 4Culture (photo)
   - **location**: 2nd Ave Ext S and Yesler Way
   - **location**: 1st Ave S & Yesler Way
     - □ Improve and add signage to guide people to transit tunnel, King St Station, Pioneer Square, Chinatown/ID and Waterfront
Stadium District Connection: **Occidental Park to Railroad Way S**

**Assets & Promise**
- **Great Connections**: pedestrian route to stadiums and transit
- **Historic Features**: ghost mural, historic clock and brick road (Occidental, between S Jackson St & S King St)
- **Active Street**: many shops from Occidental Park to S King St
- **Inviting Street**: wide sidewalks, tree canopy, sidewalk cafe in Occidental Mall

**Opportunities & Issues**
- **Difficult Walking**: uneven and poor quality sidewalks, confusing pedestrian route, barriers to people with disabilities and parents with strollers, vehicles are in conflict with pedestrians (Occidental Ave S, south of S King St)
- **Lack of Bike Storage**: Occidental Mall forces cyclists to park at poles and railings
- **Confusing Signs**: difficult to find one’s way to King Street Station, transit tunnel, Chinatown/ID and Waterfront
- **Inactive storefronts**: few shops open in the evening, few shops south of S King St, several vacancies
- **Unsafe crossings**: long wait times at S Jackson St lead to jaywalking
- **Confusing Construction Detours**: Stadium Place construction detours confusing for people

**Quick Wins & Short Terms Projects**

1. **Reduce Walking Hazards, Improve ADA Accessibility.**
   - **Locations**: Occidental Ave S & S King St (photo)
   - **Install ADA ramps**

2. **Safely Mitigate Construction Detours.**
   - **Location**: Occidental Ave S & S King St intersection (photo)
   - **Improve construction detour with clear route, high visibility for pedestrians and improved ADA access**

3. **Make Safe Crossings.**
   - **Location**: Occidental Ave S between S King St & Railroad Way S
   - **Add mid-block crossing to reduce confusion and conflict with cars and trucks**

4. **Add Bike Storage.**
   - **Location**: Occidental Mall (photo)
   - **Add bike racks; cyclists use railings and street poles to park bikes. Coordinate with SDOT, Pioneer Square Preservation Board and the Bicycle Alliance to evaluate locations.**

5. **Improve Lighting.**
   - **Location**: Occidental Mall
   - **Assess lighting in Occidental Mall to ensure there sufficient lighting in the evening**
Waterfront Connection: **Railroad Way S to S Columbia St**

**Assets & Promise**
- **Great Connections:** pedestrian route to stadiums, Pioneer Square, 1st Ave S and the Waterfront
- **Historic Features:** Washington Street Boat Landing
- **Inviting Street:** 1st Ave S from Railroad Way S to S King St is a nice walk, active on east side only, tree lined median, attractive facades with many active storefronts

**Opportunities & Issues**
- **Difficult Walking:** uneven and poor quality sidewalks, not consistently ADA accessible
- **Uninviting Public Spaces:** Washington Street Boat Landing and Viaduct are filled with trash and dark
- **Confusing Signs:** difficult to find one’s way to ferries, Pioneer Square, and Chinatown/ID
- **Inactive storefronts:** west side of 1st Ave between King St & Railroad Way
- **Problematic Construction Detours:** crossing Alaskan Way & King St
- **Challenging Crossings:** long wait times to cross east/west for ferry connections

**Quick Wins & Short Terms Projects**

1. **Reduce Walking Hazards, Improve ADA Accessibility.**
   - locations: Alaskan Way & Yesler Way (photo)
   - [ ] Install ADA ramps

2. **Safely Mitigate Construction Detours.**
   - location: under the Viaduct (photo)
   - [ ] Improve construction detour with temporary lighting, high visibility for pedestrians and improved ADA access

3. **Make Efficient and Safe Crossings.**
   - location: Alaskan Way from S King St to S Columbia St (photo)
   - [ ] Make traffic signals shorter to cross east to west Alaskan Way

4. **Create Inviting Pedestrian Route.**
   - locations: (1) Washington Street Boat Landing (photo) (2) Along the Waterfront
   - [ ] Work with WSDOT and MID to maintain the Waterfront with additional trash cans and regular clean-up of Washington Street Boat Landing.

5. **Make Safe Bicycle and Pedestrian Detour Route.**
   - location: west side of Alaskan Way, north of Yesler Way
   - [ ] Find a solution for providing separate detour route for pedestrians and cyclist (recommend for WSDOT, SDOT, Feet First and Bicycle Alliance of Washington to work together)
Waterfront and Transit Connection: S Columbia St to King Street Station

Assets & Promise

+ **Great Connections:** pedestrian route from the Waterfront to 1st Ave S, transit tunnel and train station
+ **Historic Features:** building architecture, historic Pergola
+ **Active Street:** 1st Ave S, Columbia Tower - future housing and shops
+ **Great Public Spaces:** Pioneer Park
+ **Safe Crossings:** all-way walk at 1st Ave S & S Cherry St

Opportunities & Issues

× **Difficult Walking:** uneven and poor quality sidewalks, excessive A-Boards, barriers to people with disabilities and parents with strollers
× **Confusing Signs:** difficult to find one’s way to King Street Station Transportation Hub along 2nd Ave Ext S
× **Inactive storefronts:** few active shops along 2nd Ave Ext S
× **Confusing Construction Detours:** Alaskan Way S and S Columbia St
× **Traffic Barriers:** 2nd Ave Ext S is wide street with fast moving one-way traffic, noisy and pedestrian gap

Quick Wins & Short Term Projects

1. **Reduce Walking Hazards, Improve ADA Accessibility**
   locations (1) all crossings at 3-way crossing - James St, Yesler Way and 1st Ave S cobblestone is a barrier for ADA accessibility (photo)
   (2) Yesler Way and Occidental Ave S intersection
   □ Install ADA ramps

2. **Make inviting streetscape**
   location: continue tree canopy south of on 2nd Ave Ext S to S Jackson St
   □ Plant trees to complete tree canopy, add greenery where lacking

3. **Guide People to Transit, Shops and Restaurants**
   locations (1) 1st Ave S & Yesler Way (2) 2nd Ave Ext S & Yesler Way
   □ Add signage to guide people to transit, Chinatown/Id and Waterfront
   □ Use additional greenery as neighborhood wayfinding identifier