**WALKABLE WASHINGTON**

Transformation towards walkability is taking place all over the state of Washington. From urban, suburban and small town initiatives, the program showcases the effects of a renewed focus on creating great places for people to walk. The case studies are exceptional projects and programs showcasing how cities, counties, school districts, and community organizations throughout the state are making it safer, easier, and more inviting for people to walk.

**WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO**

We promote walkable communities and empower people throughout Washington to connect to the world by foot.

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**CASE STUDY**

**GEORGETOWN FESTIVAL STREET**

**SEATTLE, WA**

**DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE:** The Georgetown Festival Street is a short street in the historically industrial and freight corridor-dependent neighborhood of Georgetown, the purpose of which is to integrate traffic calming and to create more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly public space that can be easily closed to allow for neighborhood and community festivals throughout the year.

The street itself is a short section of 12th Avenue between South Vale and South Bailey streets. Design features of the Festival Street include a raised concrete section of the roadway that is level with the sidewalk, improved pedestrian lighting, fully new greatly expanded sidewalks, space for public art, and back-in angle parking to discourage cut-through traffic and reduce vehicle speed. Additionally, the project provided new bike racks, an outdoor power source for use during events, and the relocation of one street tree.

**CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS:** The site provided a few particular technical challenges including:
- Minimize excavation as possible to avoid possible contaminated soils
- Careful routing of storm drain pipes
- In-depth historical research to understand risks associated with removing railroad tracks that could significantly impact drainage and accessibility

**COSTS AND FUNDING:** The project was funded in the fall of 2013 with funding from Seattle’s Neighborhood Street
Fund program, which was a part of the city’s now-expired Bridging the Gap levy. In fall 2013 the Bridging the Gap Oversight Committee provided the project with $1,130,00. The project came in within the provided budget.

**IMPLEMENTATION TIME-FRAME:** Otak, the winning design team, had a short time to finish the project once their bid was accepted at the end of January 2014. Intensive outreach and collaboration with the community made the time line tighter than it may have been otherwise, but the project was finished by June of 2015, with construction taking place between March 9th and June 12th.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:** The project was proposed by the Georgetown Community Council in December 2012. The Georgetown community was deeply involved in the design of the project, working closely with Otak, the design firm. The purpose throughout the collaborative process was to design a useful, community and neighborhood-friendly public space and to support the community’s values. The community and local businesses wanted the resulting space to reflect the values of Georgetown’s history, business community, and the activism of its residents and artists.

**BENEFITS AND RESULTS:** With the project completed, Georgetown now has a safe, pedestrian and bike-friendly outdoor space that also serves the purpose of providing festival space a few times a year. Though there is little or no empirical data available, feedback from residents has been positive, and qualitative observations point to heavy use of the new bike rack and an overall increased use of the space as new businesses open in the neighborhood.