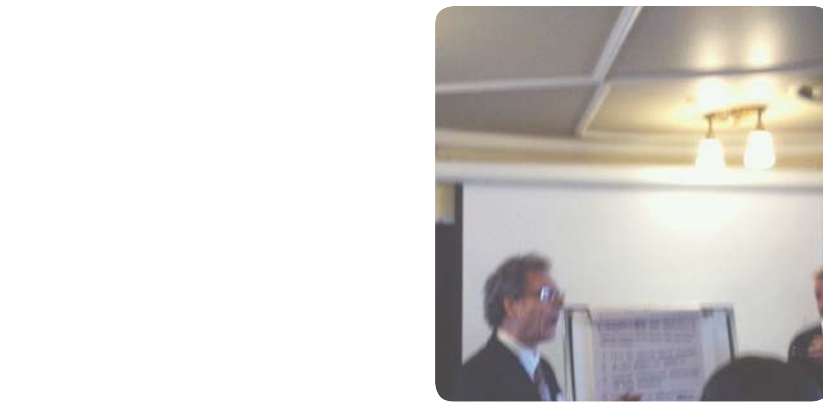
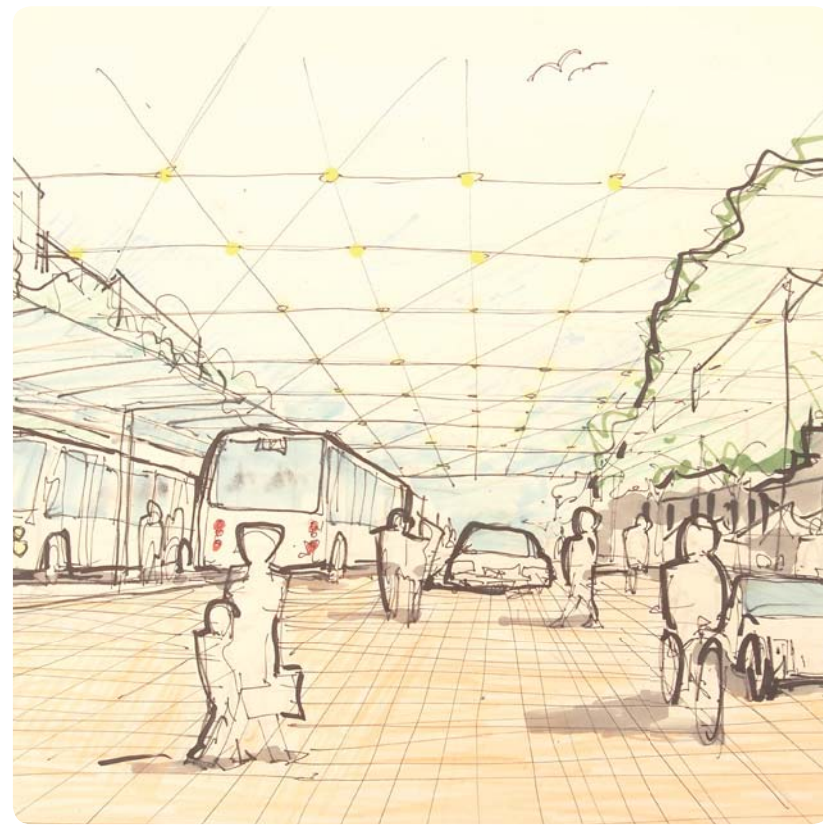
An aerial photograph of a city street, likely in Victoria, British Columbia. The street is shown from a high angle, curving from the top left towards the bottom right. A semi-transparent, colorful overlay is applied to the street, showing a proposed urban design. This overlay includes a wide, multi-colored pedestrian walkway with geometric patterns, a green-painted bicycle lane, and a green-painted transit lane. The surrounding city is dense with various buildings, including residential houses and commercial structures. The text 'Arriving At Douglas Street' is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

Arriving At Douglas Street

Prepared for the Downtown
Victoria Business Association by
Cascadia Architects





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 - Charrette-ing

Thank You!

We would like to thank all of the participants who contributed to the work in this report.

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We would also like to particularly thank Grant Olson and the Strathcona Hotel staff for hosting the charrette.

Cascadia Architects Team

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Introduction

As a gateway, and as the site of vital activity for locals and visitors alike, the section of Douglas Street running from Hillside to Belleville is of critical importance to Victoria as a whole. This document is the result of an initiative by the Downtown Victoria Business Association (DVBA) to find opportunities for improving the quality of Douglas Street along this length.

This is being undertaken within the context of Victoria's Official Community Plan and the regional importance of Douglas as a transit corridor. This area has been divided into three parts, which have different conditions necessitating varied design responses. Each study has an accompanying response that frames the solutions as what we can do in the short, medium, and long term to make improvements.

A charrette was undertaken to discuss Douglas Street with the local business community who are located along the stretch of the street under study.



Summary of Charrette Process

Charrette Schedule

Part 1

9:00 **Hello!**

Check in and introduction by
Ken Kelly, General Manager of DVBA

9:10 **Presentations - The Big Picture**

Robert Batallas

C o V - History &
OCP Summary
BC Transit Update
Charette Outline

James Wadsworth
Greg Damant

Followed by 5 min. break.

10:30 **Workshop #1: The Big Picture**

Break into three groups for explorations of
large scale issues on Douglas Street.

11:30 **Big Picture Summary**

Report back to whole group on session activity.

12:00 **Break**

Don't forget to use up your stickers!

Part 2

12:30 **Presentation - Zooming In...**

Introduction to afternoon session with
case studies

1:00 **Workshop 2: Zooming In...**

Break into three groups for detailed
explorations of specific locations on
Douglas Street.

2:30 **Zooming In... Summary**

Report back to whole group on session activity.

3:00 **Finished**

Thanks for spending the day with us!

The morning started with presentations from the City of Victoria and BC Transit on the history and future of Douglas. This was followed by a presentation of design guideline case studies setting out a framework for what makes a great street.

A morning session followed where participants were broken into three groups depending on their location along Douglas and guided through a series of questions regarding their present experience and future hopes for Douglas. The four questions were:

- What are the current pros and cons with this section of Douglas?
- What is Douglas Street in the Victoria or Regional context?
- What are the priorities for Douglas?
- What would your ideal Douglas Street be?

In the afternoon a second presentation of case studies was given with a focus on specific things that can be done to improve streets. This was followed by the three groups working on a design intervention at a specific intersection in their length of Douglas Street.

Key Objective

Create a unified identity for Douglas Street expressing its role as the central corridor into the heart of Victoria.

This objective will be fulfilled through the implementation of four concepts. These concepts are combined to achieve this vision of a consistent and vibrant street. They are:

LIGHTING

Establish a consistent lighting 'canopy' over the street that can be implemented as development occurs. The intensity, density and constitution of the light canopy responds to the activity happening along the street; particularly instances of intensified pedestrian activity.

PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY

Increase the feelings of welcoming, safety, and interest for pedestrians. Strategies for achieving this are diverse but commonly include changes in paving, additional lighting,

TRAFFIC

Facilitate the transition to sustainable modes of transportation as outlined by BC Transit and Victoria's OCP while ensuring that the street remains an important artery within the city.

CYCLING

The provision of safe and convenient cycling infrastructure is a device for the realignment of Douglas Street traffic lanes in preparation for the established imperative to have regional dedicated transit corridor.

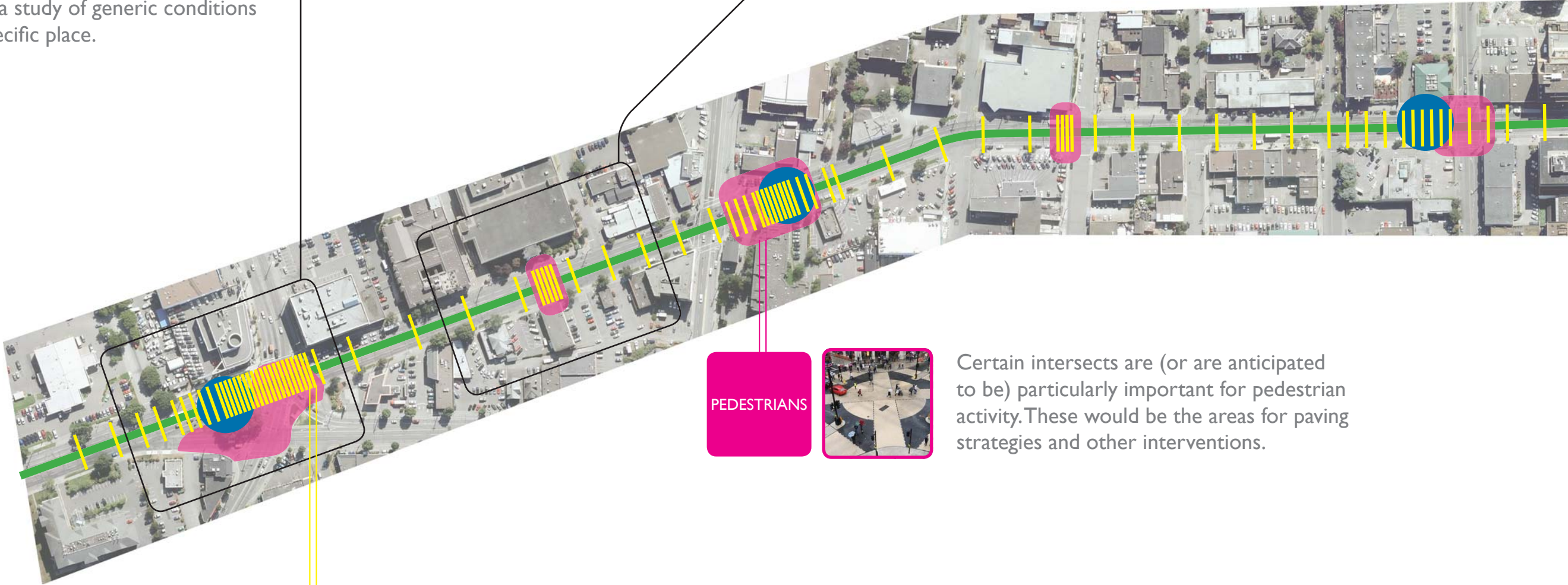
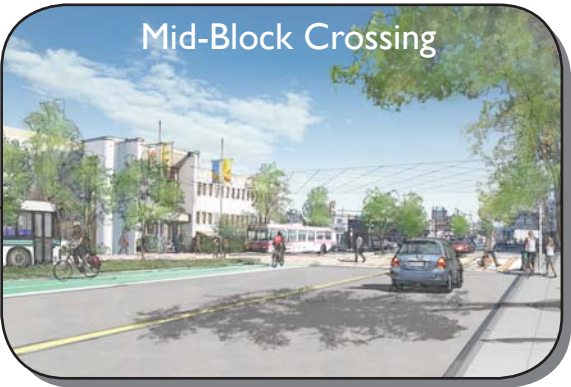
Douglas has a well articulated and important role in the future transit plans for Victoria and the entire CRD, and is planned for a large amount of anticipated growth. These large scale plans will take years and decades to unfold. Yet Victoria, and Douglas Street in particular, does not need to wait for the big pictures plans to come to fruition before things can be done to improve the quality of the streets.

Putting It All Together

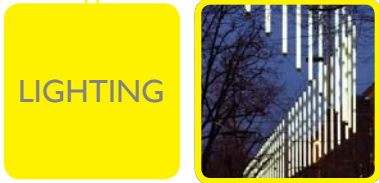
The 20 Year Plan

Douglas Street is particularly ripe for strategic interventions that will have an enormous impact on the image and experience of Victoria. The renderings to the right illustrate a vision of Douglas Street in the decades to come, and the following pages outline a plan for how to get there.

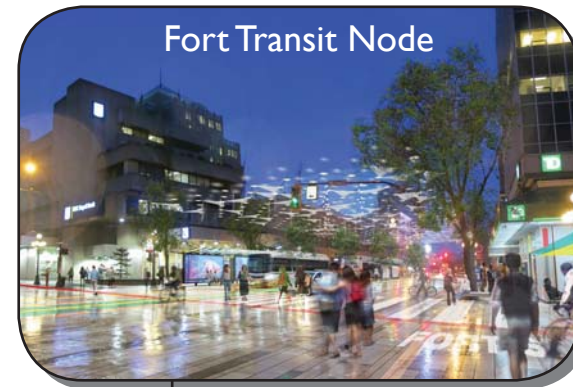
While attention is focused on the four highlighted areas, they are conceived as being applicable to many areas along Douglas. In this way each example is as much a study of generic conditions as it is about the specific place.



Certain intersects are (or are anticipated to be) particularly important for pedestrian activity. These would be the areas for paving strategies and other interventions.



The frequency and intensity of lighting corresponds to the pedestrian activity on the street, here diagrammed as yellow dashes on the plan.



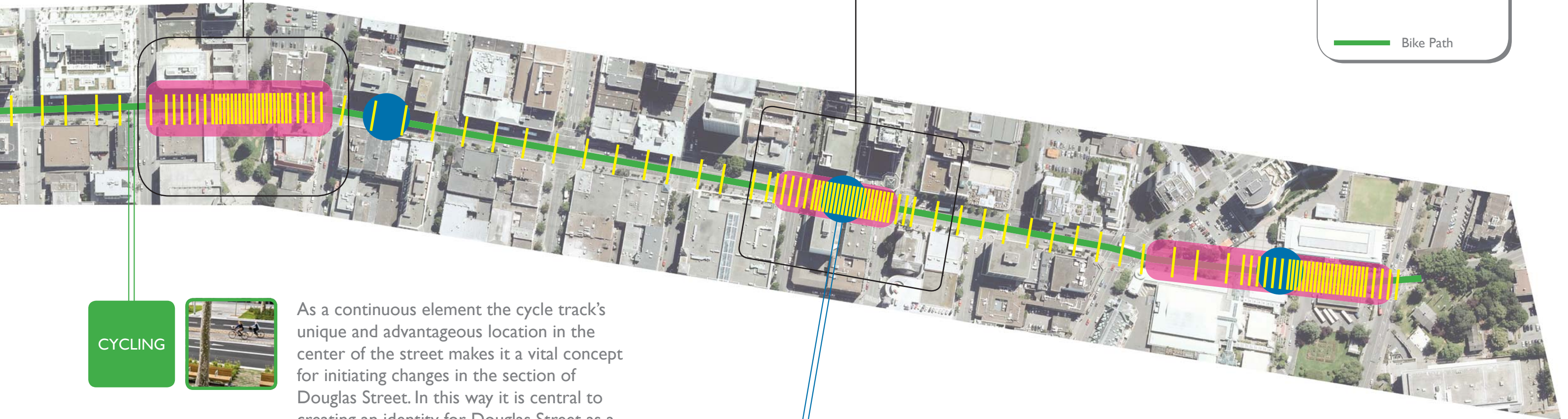
LEGEND

Lighting

Transit Station

Pedestrian Zone

Bike Path



CYCLING



As a continuous element the cycle track's unique and advantageous location in the center of the street makes it a vital concept for initiating changes in the section of Douglas Street. In this way it is central to creating an identity for Douglas Street as a functional and welcoming urban place.

VEHICLES



For cars, buses and commercial vehicles, Douglas Street is an essential corridor, and any plan must make sure it still functions well. High quality transit infrastructure is key to enable Douglas Street to transition into an urban destination where cars are still welcome, but are not the preferred mode of accessing Victoria.

Putting It All Together

In Time

The proposals that are part of this vision operate on a particular portion of Douglas Street and within a time-line between present day and the eventual implementation of the long terms plans. Our approach to each intervention is to take the long term plans as a ‘given’, then operate in possible increments toward that eventual future. This approach is focused on starting with low-risk, low-cost, and high impact interventions that are steps toward the street that Douglas is anticipated to become.

0 TO 2 YEARS

These interventions can take place with relatively little planning and overhead, and are often of a temporary or event type installations. They allow for the testing of an idea before more permanent interventions.

2 TO 5 YEARS

These interventions are more permanent and will take a little more planning and effort to put in place. Often these are improvements that are of a transitional nature in anticipation of a final planned outcome but are well worth the investment in their own right.

10 TO 20 YEARS

These will require time and significant capital to put in place and are the fruition of long term planning processes meant to make Douglas Street the best it can be.

LIGHTING



PEDESTRIANS



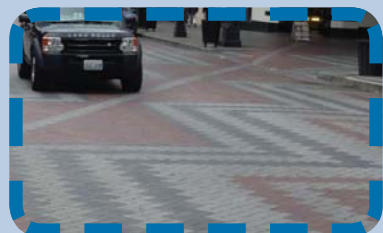
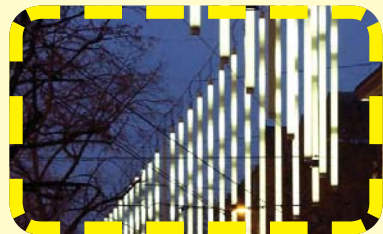
VEHICLES



CYCLING



0-2 YEARS



2-5 YEARS

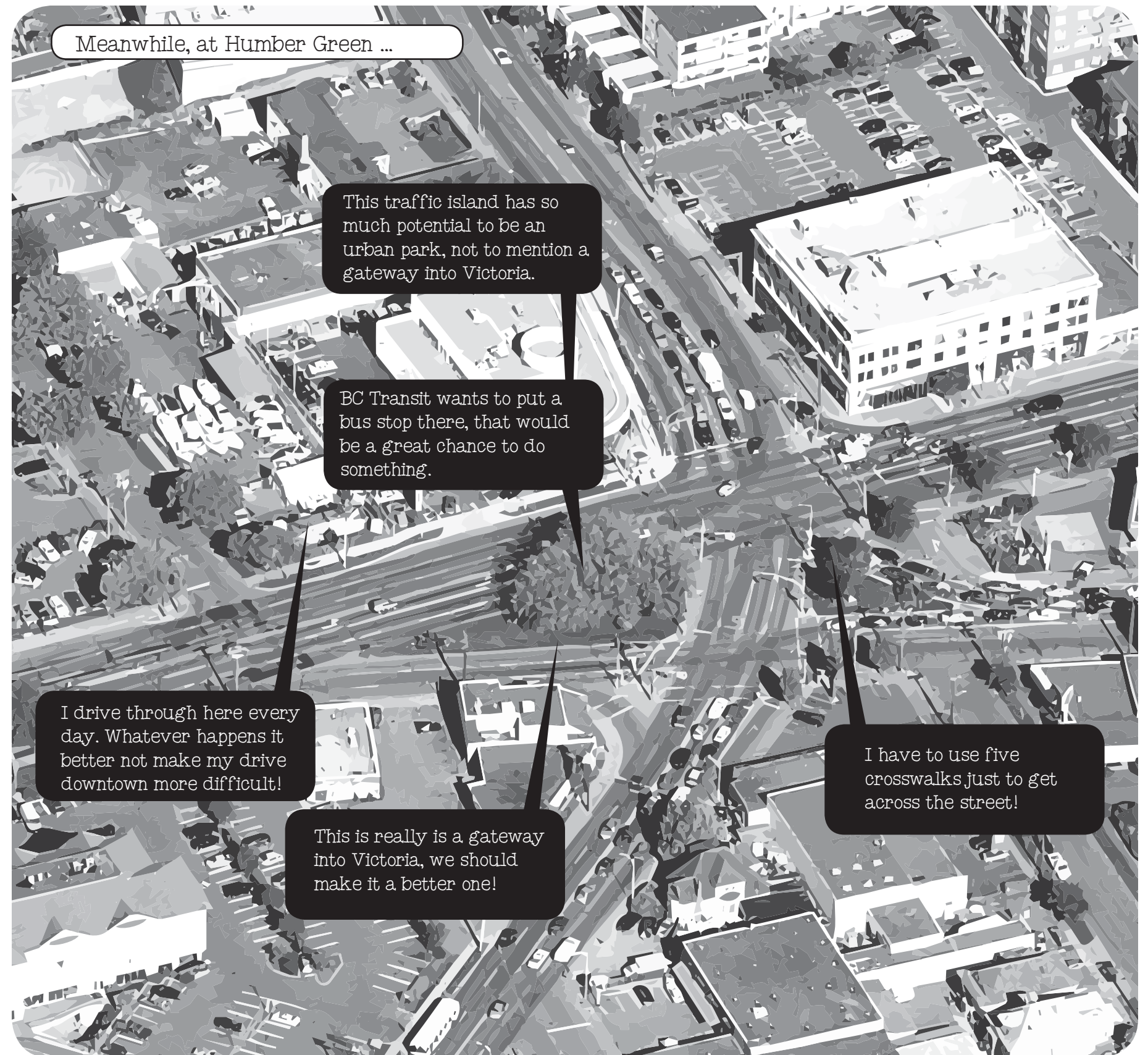
10-20 YEARS

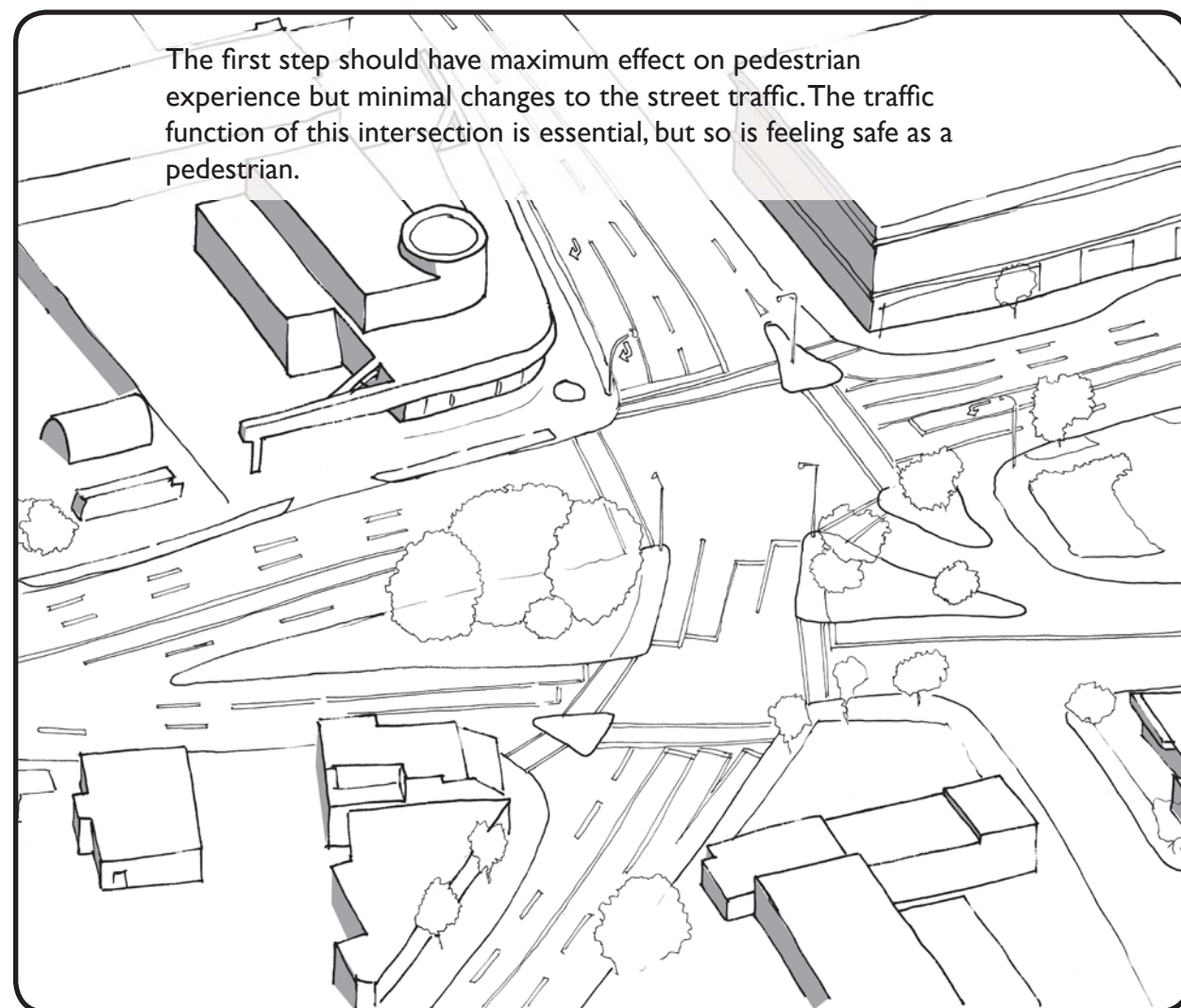
All of the following visioning panels use combinations of colour and dash type to illustrate this spectrum. In the following portion of the report, the vision for Douglas Street is supported by examples from all corners of the spectrum put forward here. The cases shown by no means represent a comprehensive or even cursory example of the variety of exemplary projects already finished or being planned and implemented around the world. They are each used as a signifier for the use of a particular concept within a certain time-frame, where the actual intervention would have similar qualities.

What follows is an exploration of the four specific sites outlined above to work through a vision for Arriving at Douglas Street.

Getting There from Here

Starting at the Northern end of the study area and working toward downtown, the first example is known as Humber Green at the intersection of Hillside Ave., Government St., Douglas St., and Gorge Rd. E. This section of the report adopts a comic narrative style to keep the proposals simple, legible, and process oriented. This allows for the integration of voices from the charrette (shown in comic font) with synthesis coming from the designers to illustrate some of the issues while at the same time proposing some solutions. Each comic is finished with some case studies showing examples of some of the ideas being implemented in other cities. Finally there is a more polished view showing what that eventual future Douglas Street could look like.





The first step should have maximum effect on pedestrian experience but minimal changes to the street traffic. The traffic function of this intersection is essential, but so is feeling safe as a pedestrian.



Changing the colour of the road surfaces with paint would provide a psychological change for drivers while leaving the road as it is.

Try it out in chalk for a weekend during the summer!

With Transit proposing a bus stop on Humber Green, it would be a good idea to pair those interventions.

0-2 YEARS



Next add a center cycle track and include the priority bus lanes.

The cycle track could be trialled with movable barriers to gauge the impact.

2-5 YEARS



In the eventual future on that same Douglas Street...

The last intervention is the reinforcement of this intersection as an important nexus and gateway within Victoria. The particular expression is less important than the recognizing the need for a design that can contribute to the experience of both pedestrians and vehicles as they enter / leave / walk in Victoria.

It could be tied to the construction of something more permanent in the park to create a great public space out of what is currently a traffic median.

10-20 YEARS



While waiting for the lights to change, talk to someone across the intersection with this devise by Karl-Johan Ekeröth.



Activate this space with lights and fabric, such as the ENfold Pavilion by Perkins +Will, and it will lead to something more permanent.



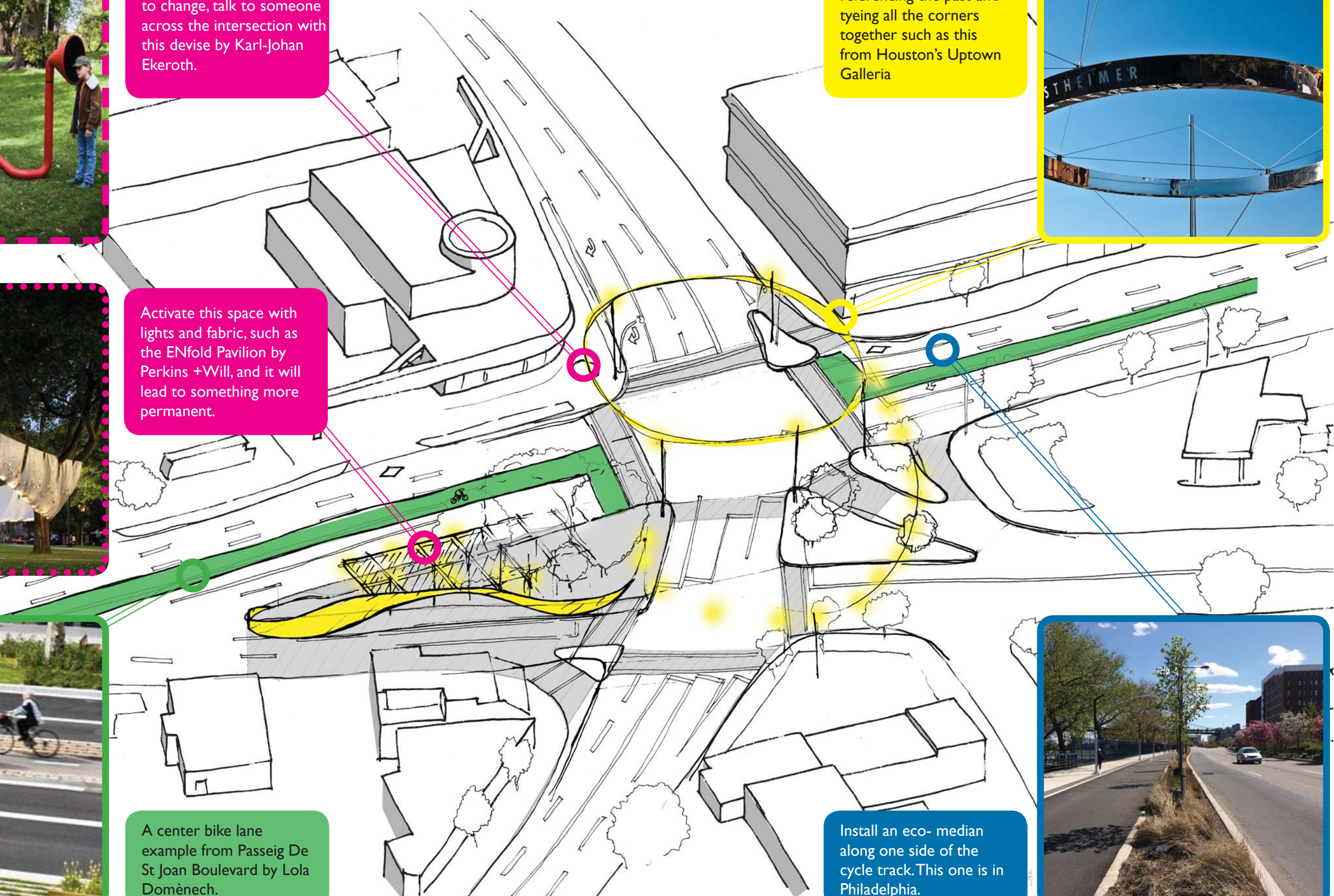
A center bike lane example from Passeig De St Joan Boulevard by Lola Domènech.



A circular lighting element referencing the past and tying all the corners together such as this from Houston's Uptown Galleria



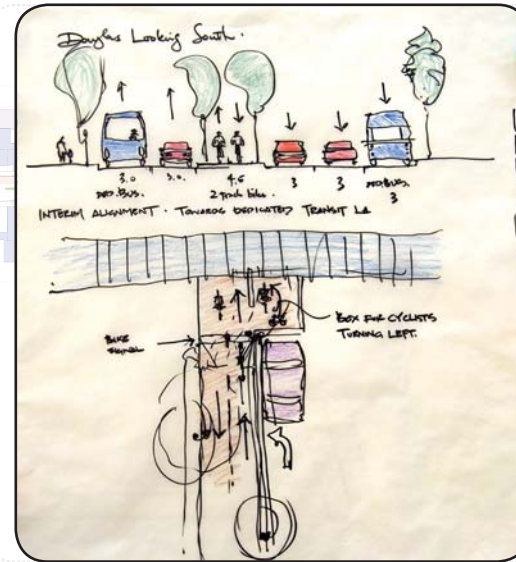
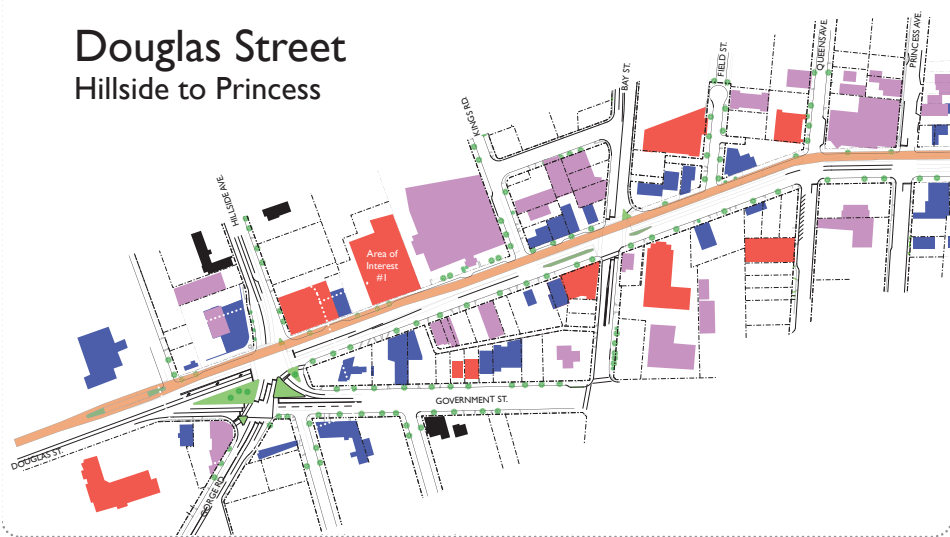
Install an eco- median along one side of the cycle track. This one is in Philadelphia.



In the eventual future at Humber Green...



Douglas Street Hillside to Princess



Characterized by low density commercial and light-industrial uses this area is likely going to change the most over the next 20 years.

With all of the official plans calling for significant increases in density, what can be done today to make the street ready for all of that increased pedestrian activity while enabling a gradual change in travel modes as the regional transit plans are put in place?

KEY INTERVENTIONS

- Mid-block crossing
- Lighting
- Center cycle track
- Separated bus lanes

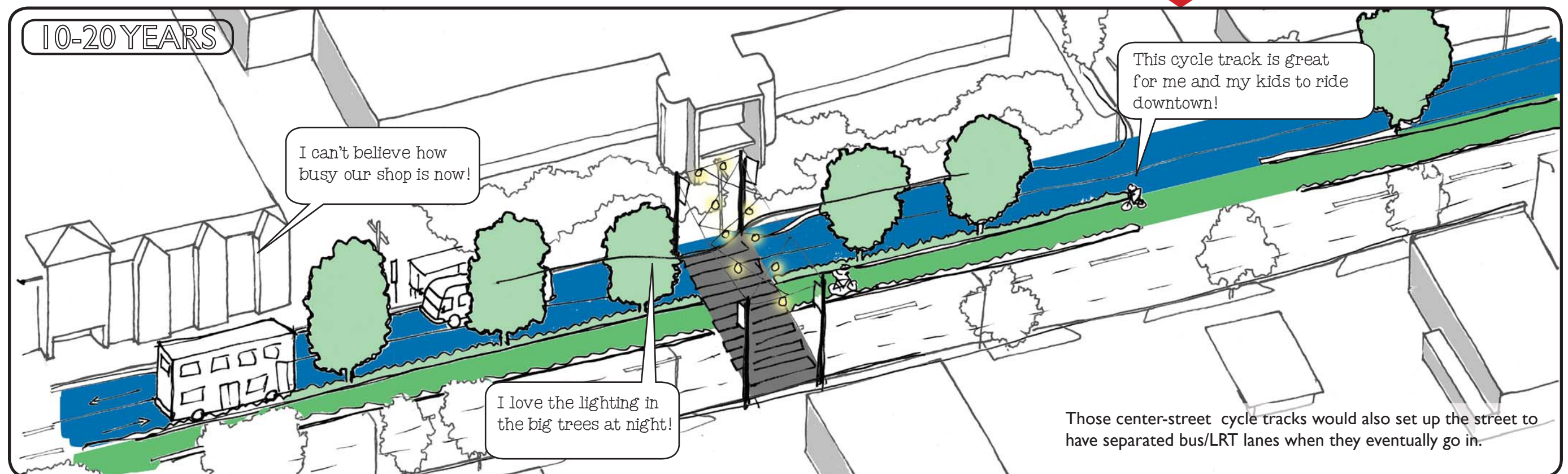
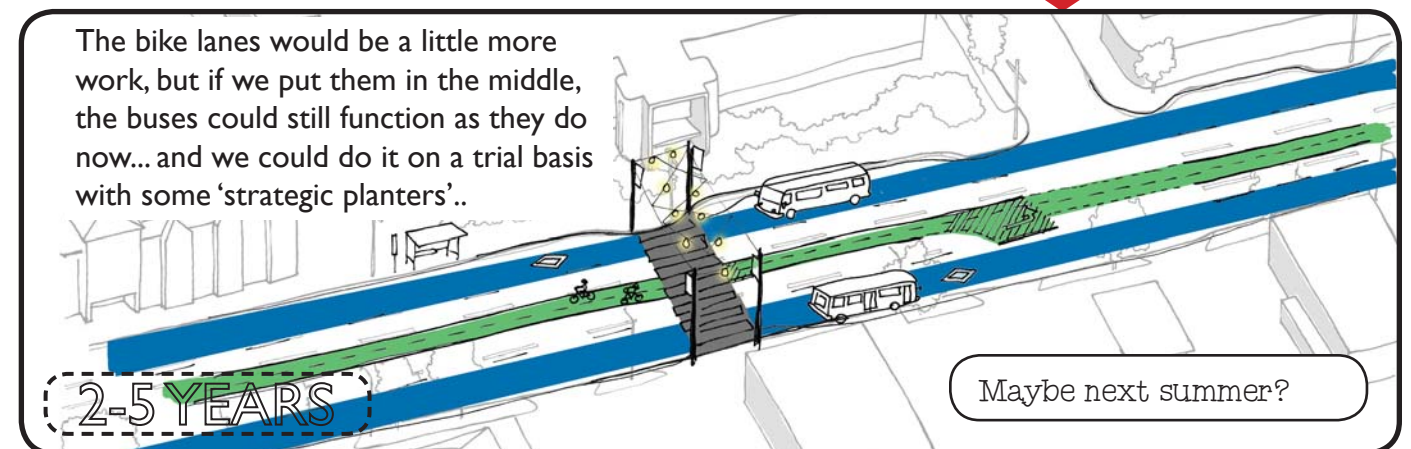
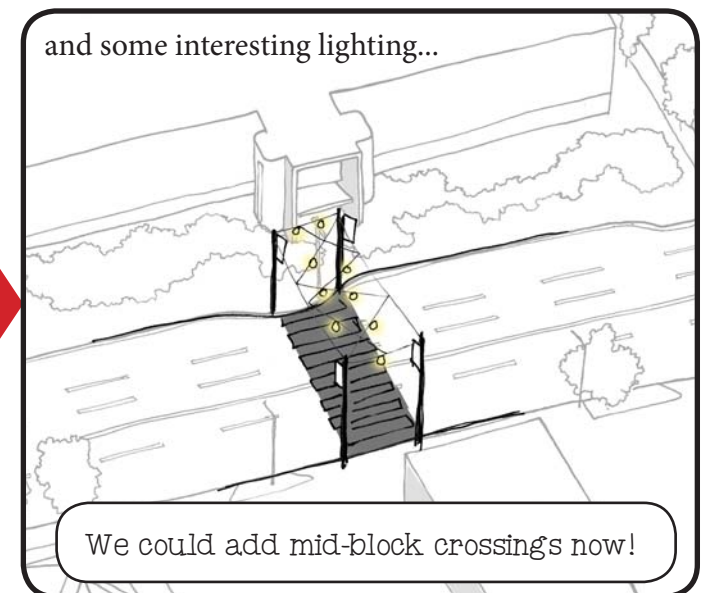
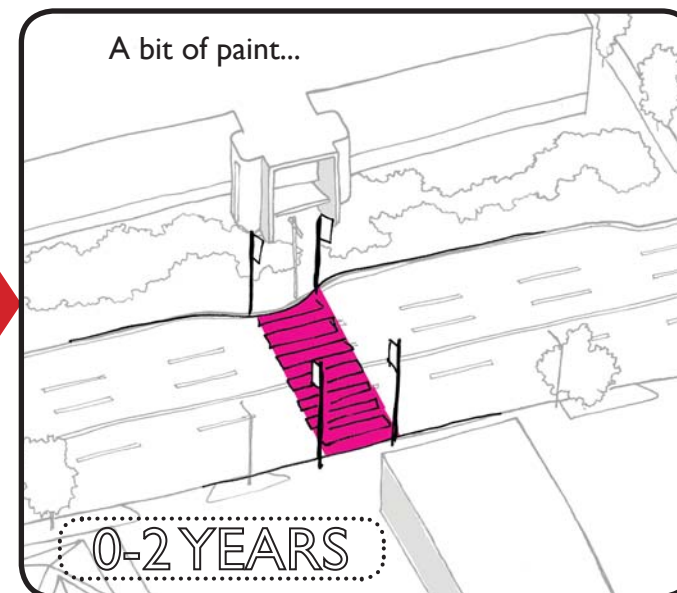
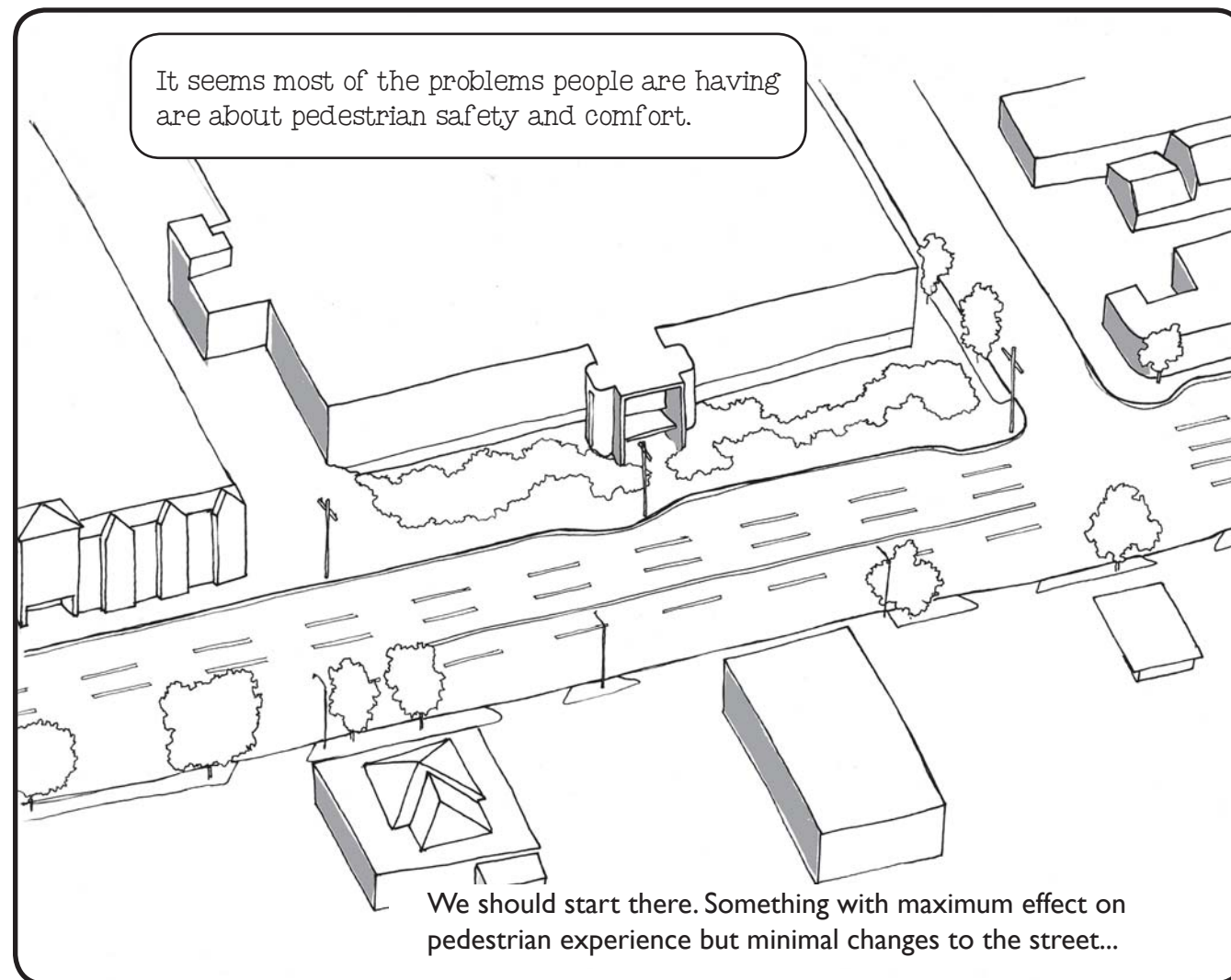
Meanwhile, on Douglas Street ...

This is such an important transit hub, and there are some great plans for the future growth. How can we take steps toward that future without disrupting my business too much?

The Block is too long! The traffic moves so fast, and what if I need to cross in the middle!

I like to ride my bike but dodging buses is scary. How about some separated cycle tracks!?

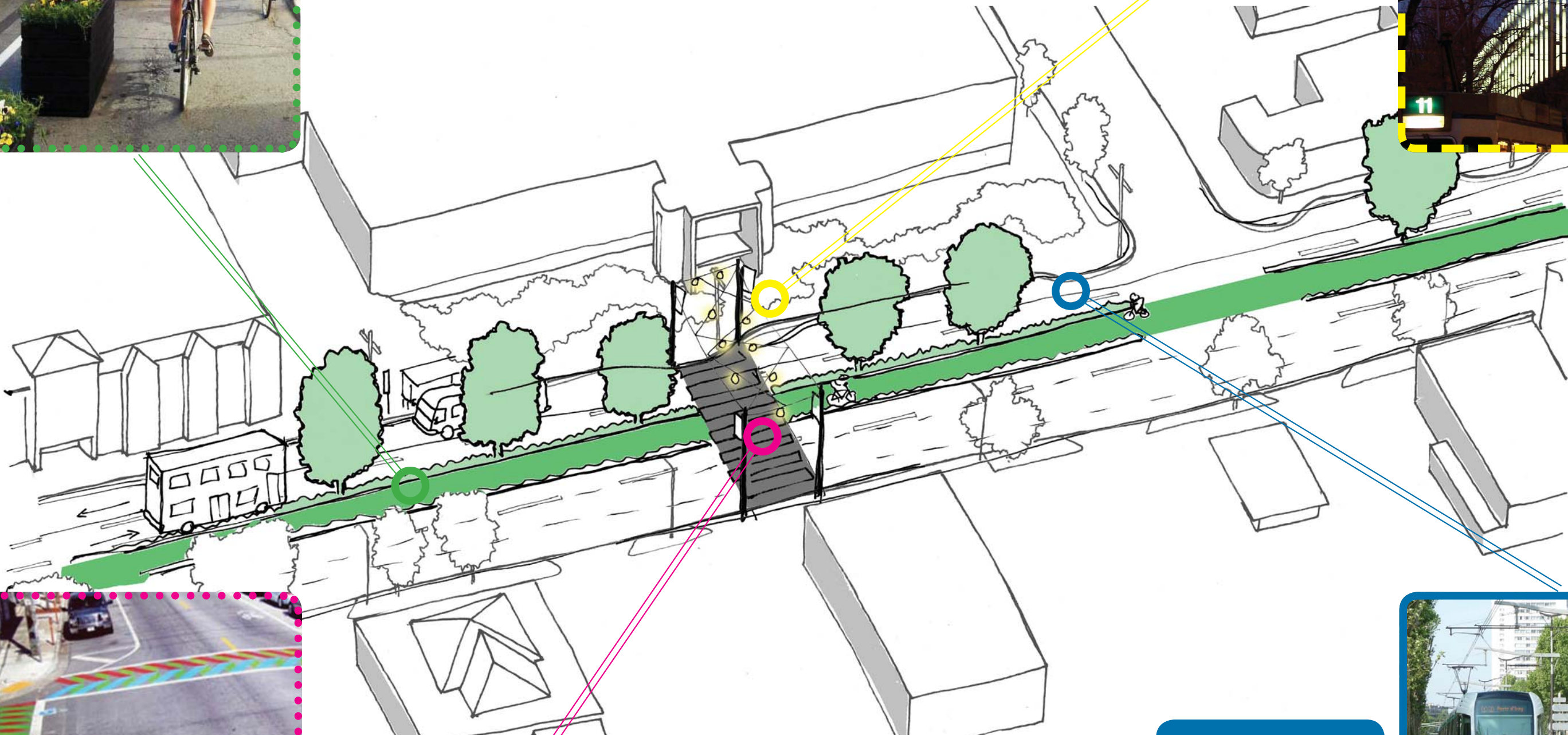
We need more lighting, I don't feel safe crossing this traffic, particularly at night.





Install a temporary cycle track to test the effects on vehicles and cycle ridership.

Light the crosswalks like the Bahnhofstrasse in Zurich, providing interest and safety.



Painted Crosswalk by Carlos Cruz-Diez.
<http://popupcity.net/colorful-crosswalks-make-you-dizzy-and-stagger/>

While this dedicated lane would work just as well for buses, green-ways can come with LRT tracks like in Lyon.
<http://citytransport.info/Lawn.htm>

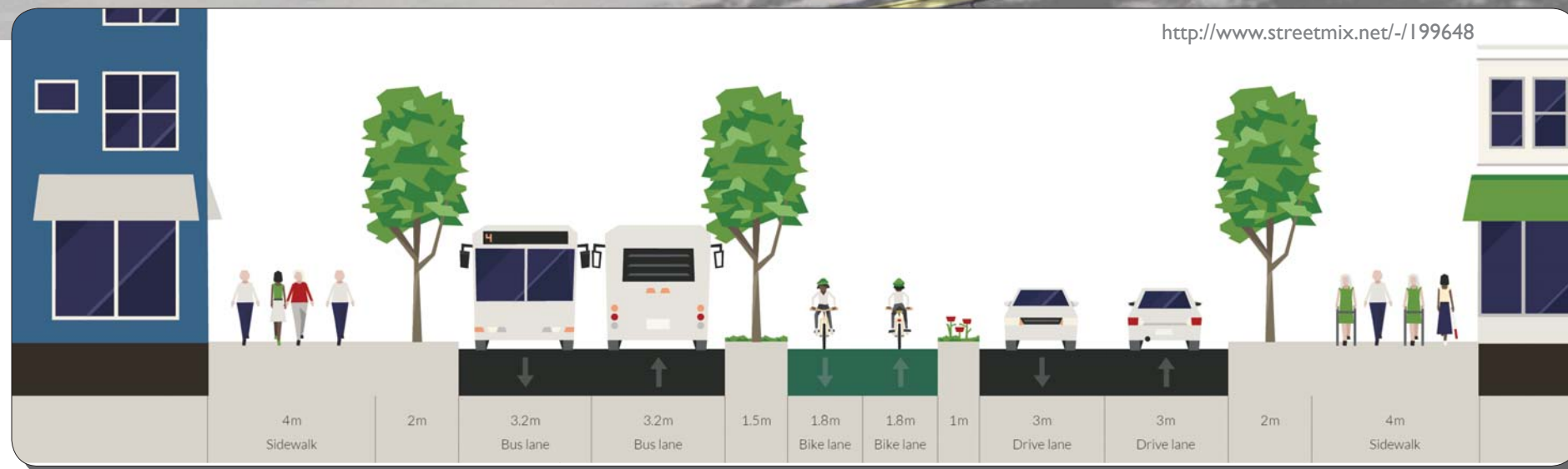


In the future on the same Douglas Street...



Rendering by Chris Foyd

<http://www.streetmix.net/-/199648>





The clear area of importance along this section of Douglas is Centennial Square and City Hall. The focus of this area was what could be changed to make the square more present on Douglas while using the civic importance of the area as a catalyst for extending those qualities to the street itself.



Douglas Street
Princess to Yates

KEY INTERVENTIONS

- Wider crossings
- Urbanizing the square
- Lighting canopy
- Drive-through pedestrian zone
- Separated bus lanes

Meanwhile, on Douglas Street at Centennial Square...

Centennial Square

I love to use the square for a quiet moment away from the street. Or for some food truck eats during the summer

There is a real sense of arrival when passing Caledonia Street on the way into town. It would be great to tie that to Centennial Square!

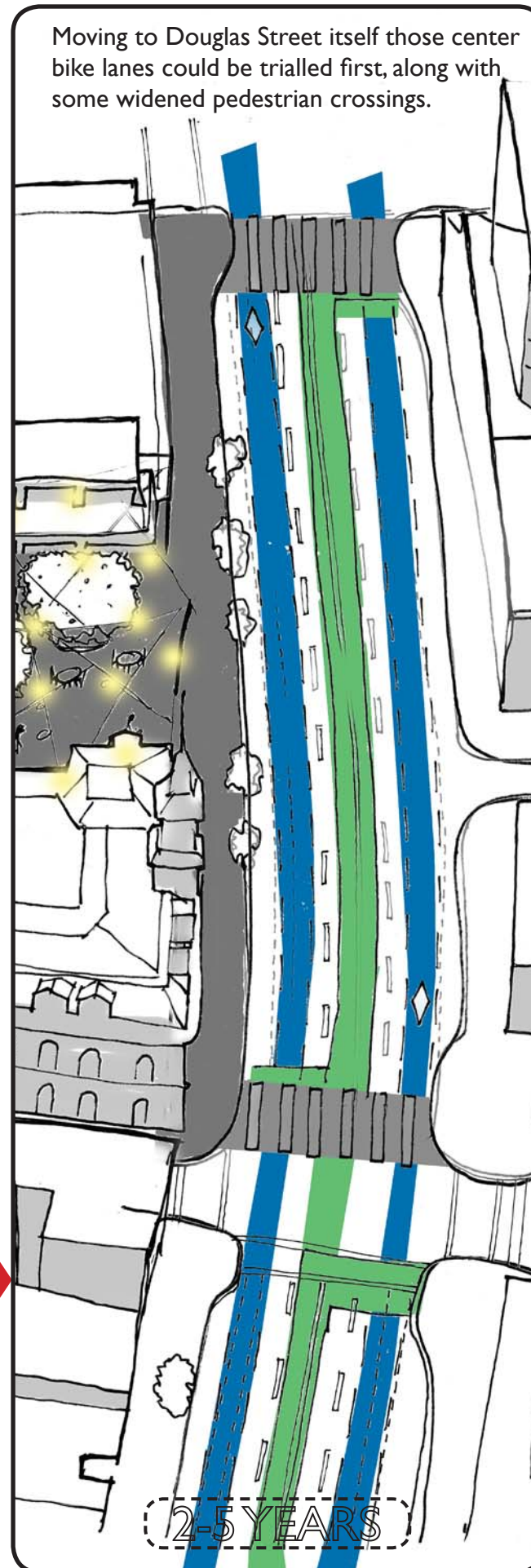
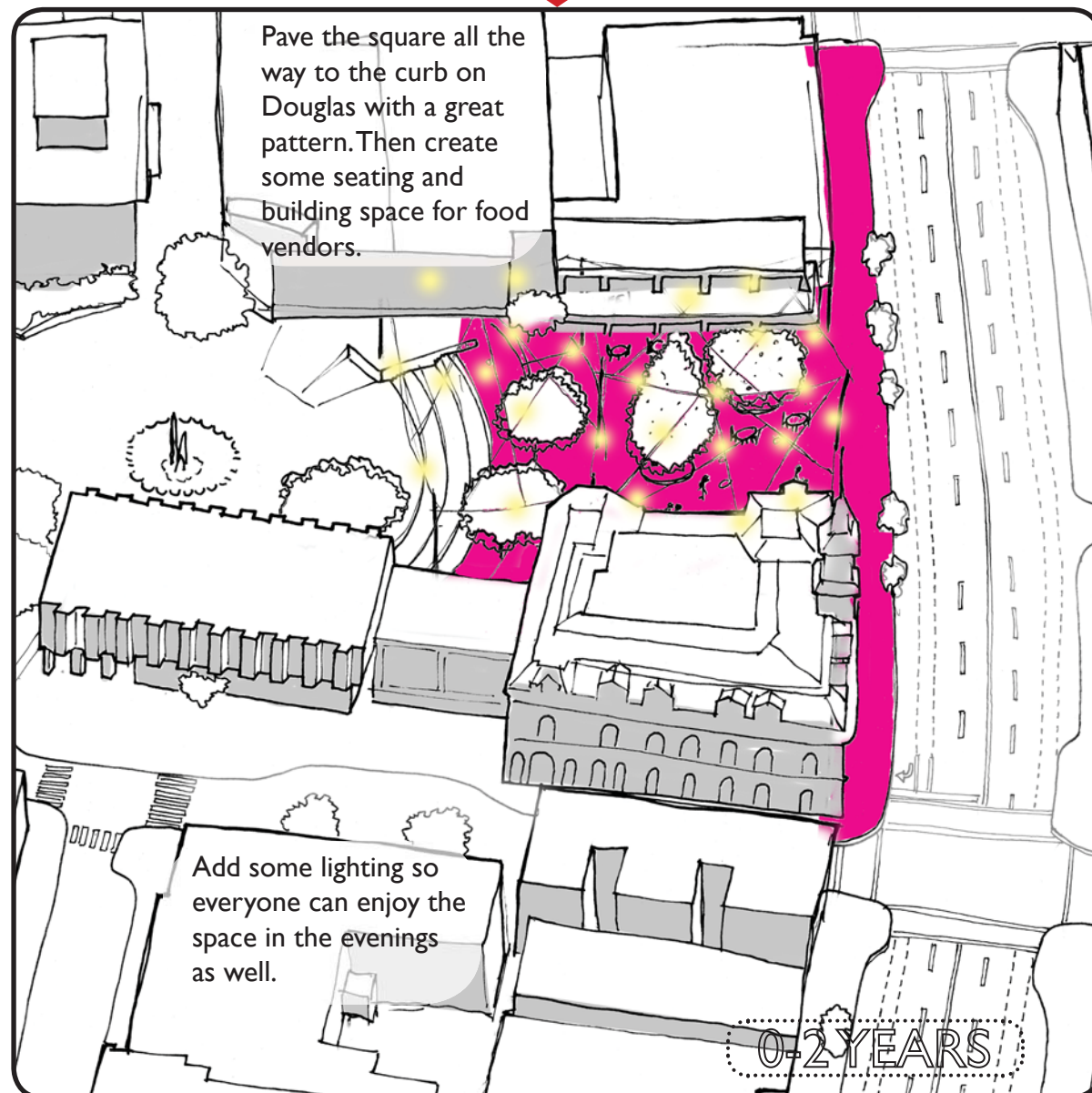
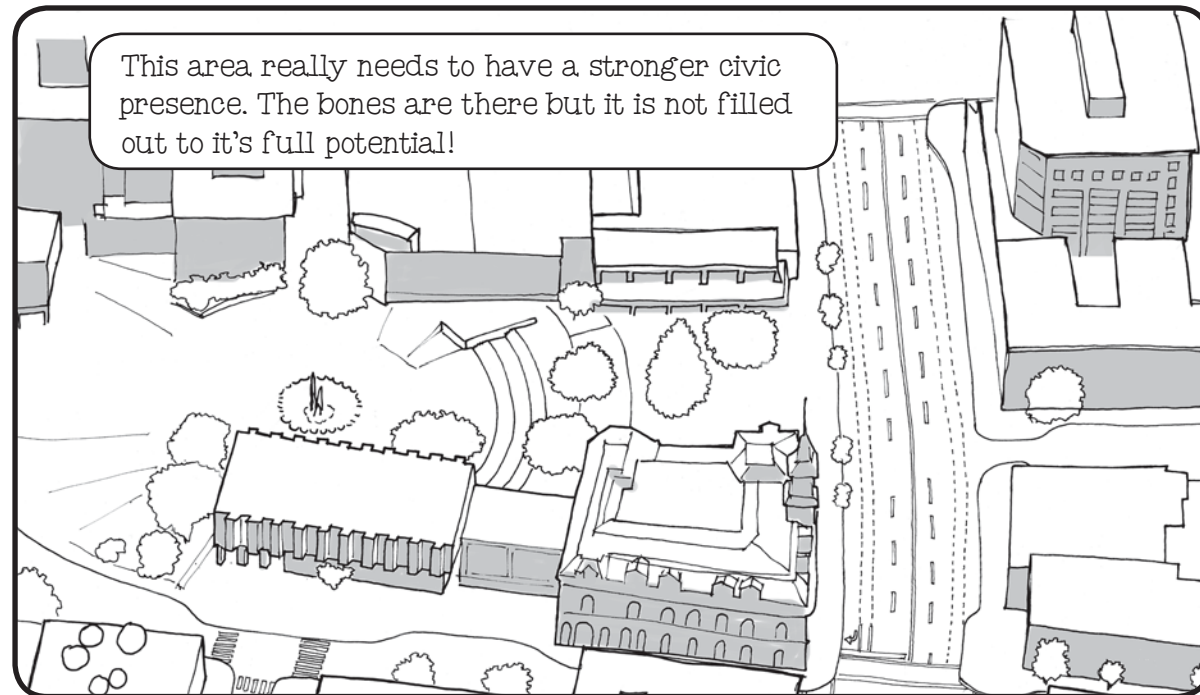
The square is almost invisible from Douglas Street because of the lawn and bus stop. It would also be great to have some cafes facing the square to draw more people in.

City Hall

City Hall needs more space in front to create a more urban civic space.

That new 1515 Douglas Street Development could play a part to catalyze a new forecourt for City Hall. Maybe the square can extend across the street?

This view is looking North with Douglas Street running vertically up the page starting right here.





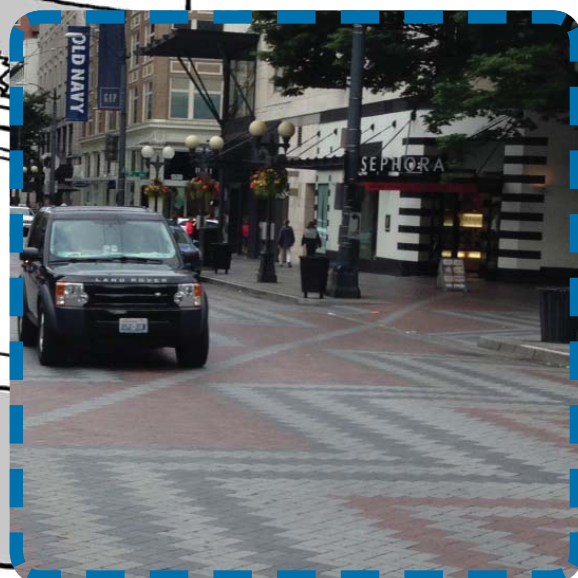
The space for the cars and buses divided by bollards, keep the traffic in it's place while letting it still feel open for pedestrian movement. This is Kensington High Street in London



Federation Square Cafe at night, Melbourne Australia



Fantastic tree lighting from Rice Park in St. Paul, Minnesota

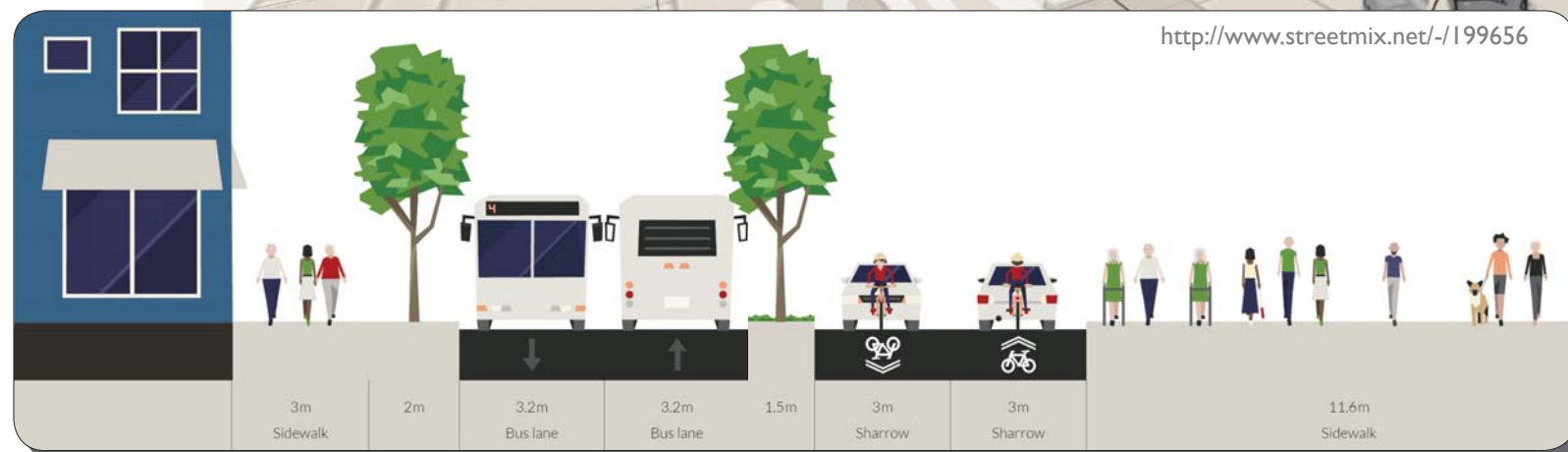


Continuous surface treatment (from building to building) at 4th and Pine in Seattle works well for calming traffic.

In the eventual future on Centennial Square...



Rendering by Chris Foyd





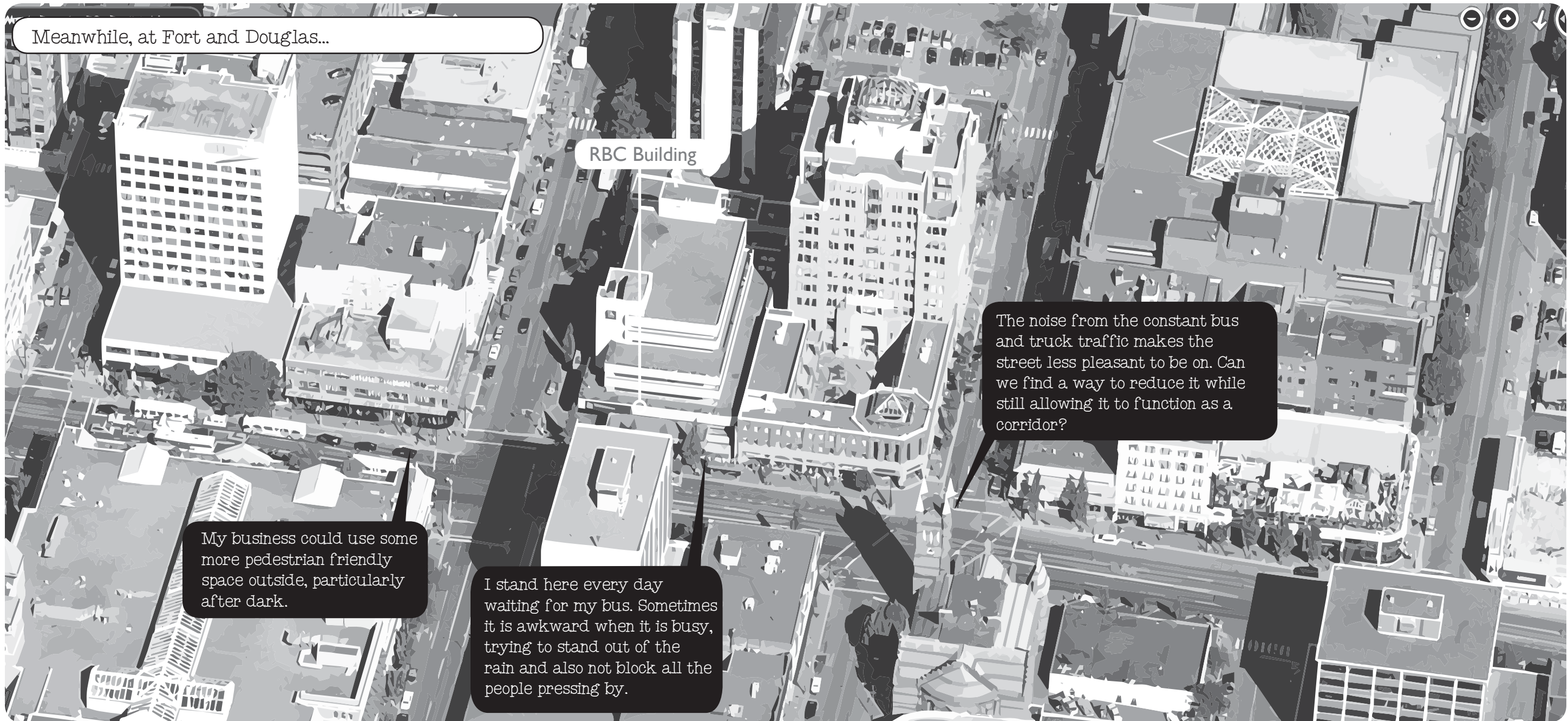
Characterized by a well defined mature street frontage, this area is at the heart of the business district of Victoria. Close to the conference venues and highest density buildings in Victoria. With the density and urban street edge come different potentials for intervention on Douglas Street.

KEY INTERVENTIONS

- Scramble intersection
- Urbanizing the square
- Lighting canopy
- Drive-through pedestrian zone
- Separated bus lanes



Meanwhile, at Fort and Douglas...

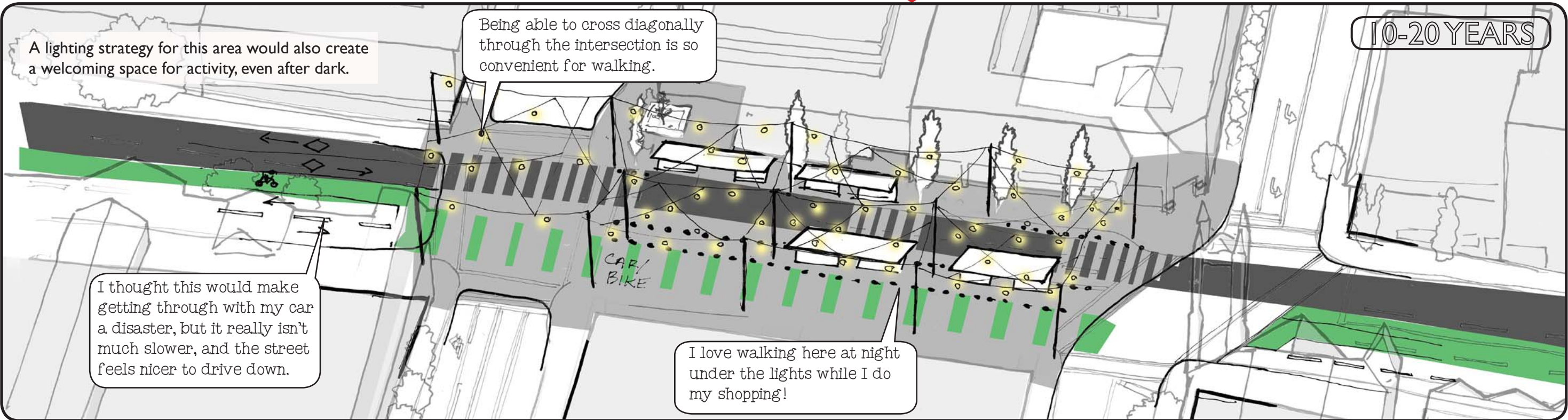
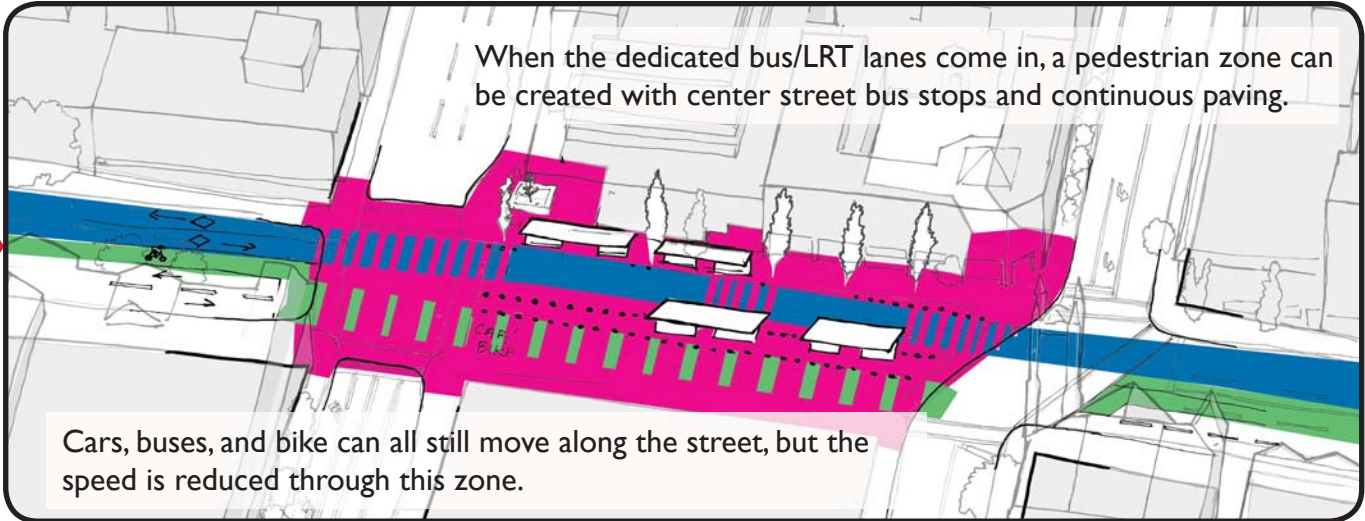
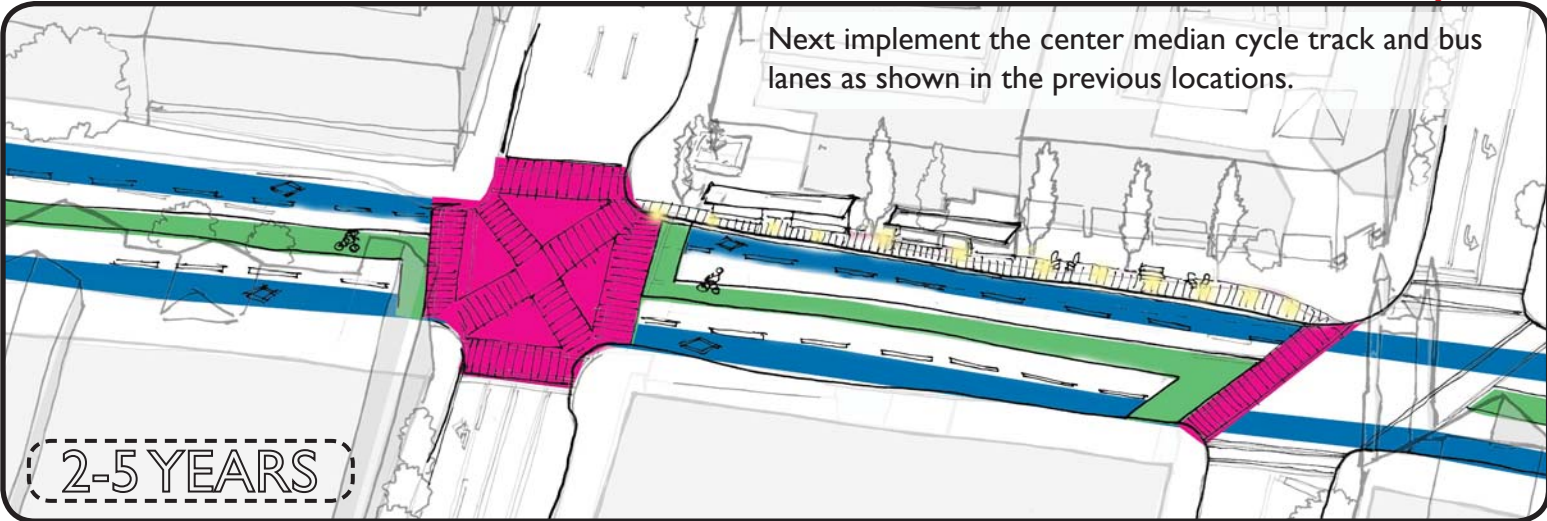
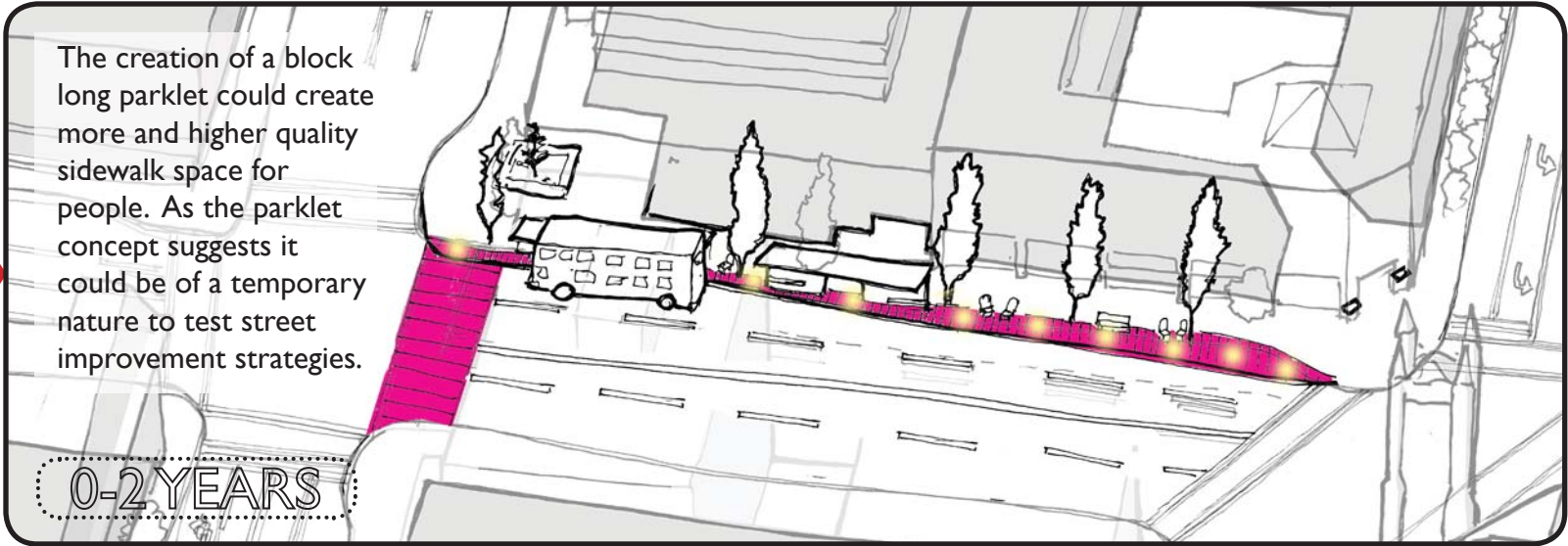
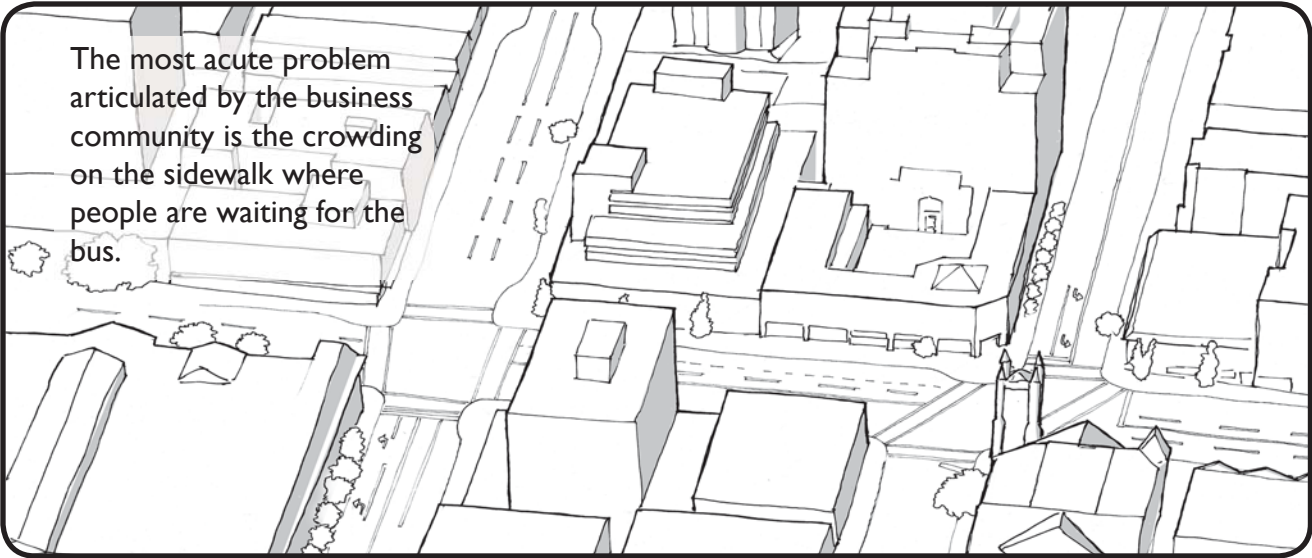


RBC Building

My business could use some more pedestrian friendly space outside, particularly after dark.

I stand here every day waiting for my bus. Sometimes it is awkward when it is busy, trying to stand out of the rain and also not block all the people pressing by.

The noise from the constant bus and truck traffic makes the street less pleasant to be on. Can we find a way to reduce it while still allowing it to function as a corridor?





Put in a scramble intersection such as the Oxford Circus where a busy vehicular street takes time for pedestrian crossings during peak walking hours.



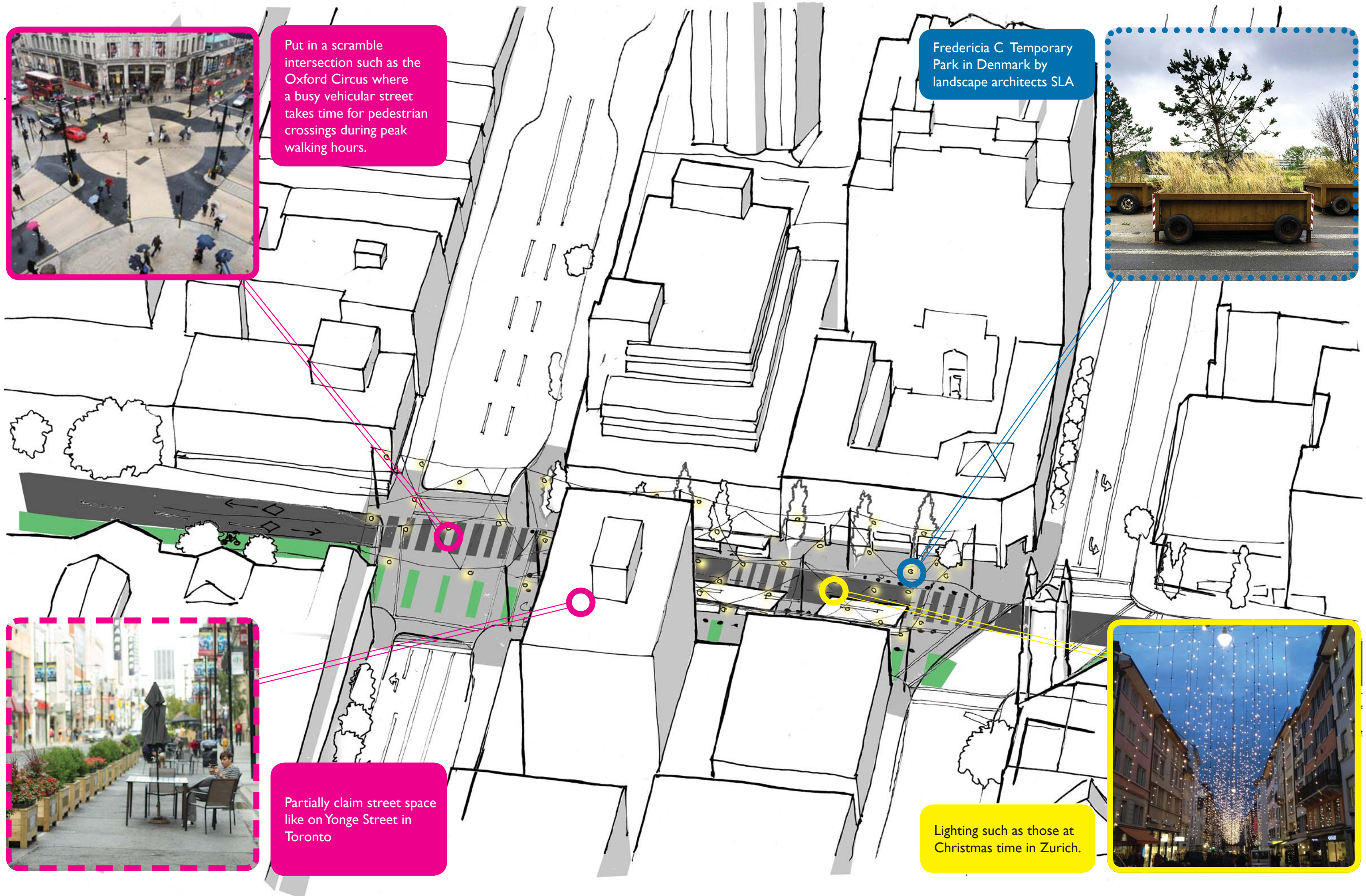
Fredericia C Temporary Park in Denmark by landscape architects SLA



Partially claim street space like on Yonge Street in Toronto



Lighting such as those at Christmas time in Zurich.



In the eventual future at that same bus stop...



Rendering by Chris Foyd

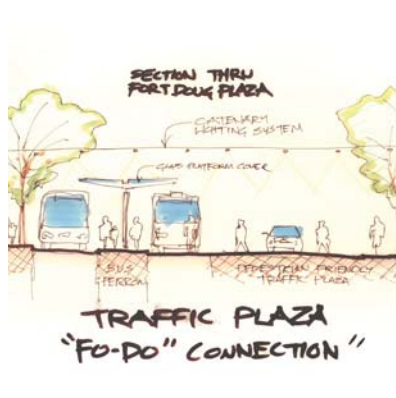
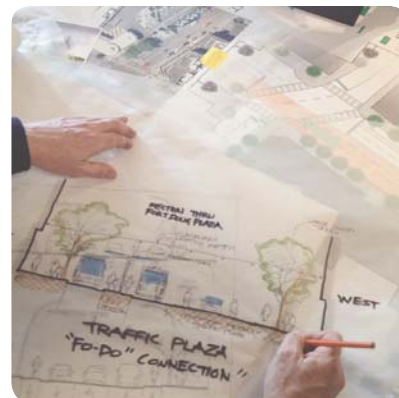
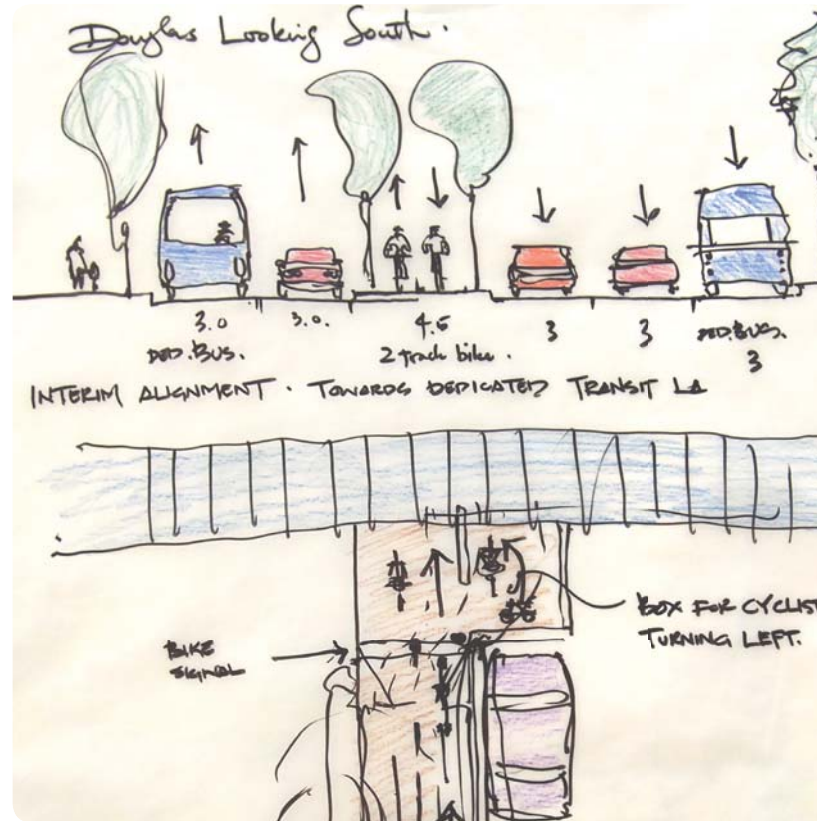
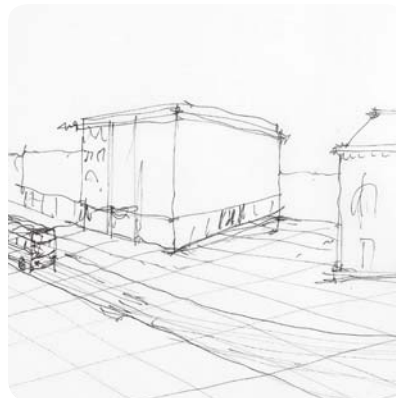




Conceptual rendering of future Douglas Street looking showing the cumulative implementation of the concepts put forward in this vision.

Appendix

Douglas Street: Today and Tomorrow
Points of Reference
Street Preference
Charrette-ing



Douglas Street: Today and Tomorrow

City of Victoria

The work in this study is predicated on a number of previous studies and official documents produced for or by the City of Victoria. These include:

The City of Victoria Official Community Plan

<http://www.shapeyourfuturevictoria.ca/>

Downtown Core Area Plan

http://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Planning~Development/Community~Planning/Documents/Downtown~Core~Area~Plan/DTCP_book_web.pdf

Victoria Bicycle Master Plan Update

<http://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/community/cycling/update-to-the-bicycle-master-plan.html>

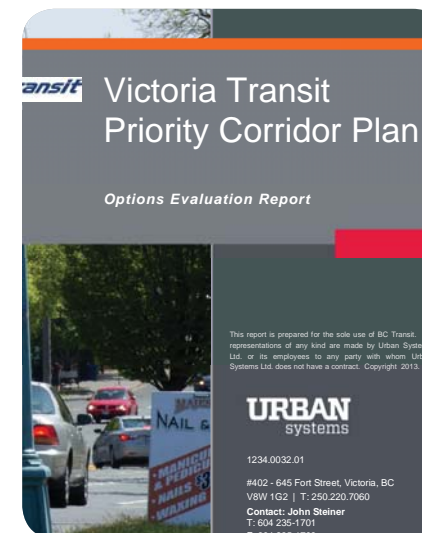
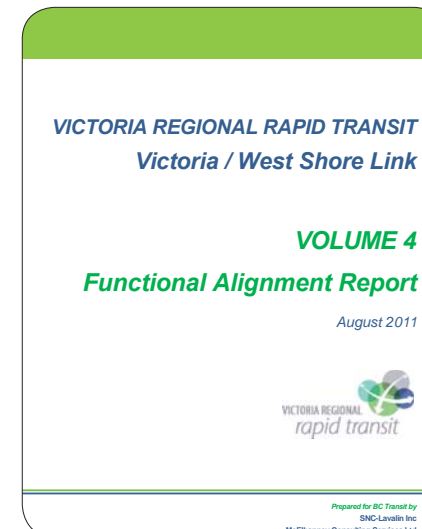
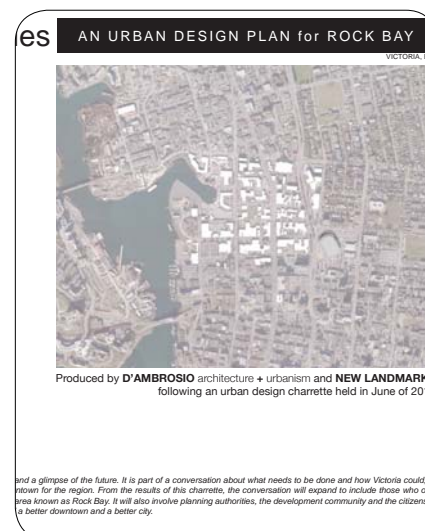
Crossing Boundaries: An Urban Plan for Oak Bay

D'Ambrosio Architecture + Urbanism and New Landmarks

http://www.fdarcc.ca/links/rock_bay/rockbayudp.pdf

Burnside Local Area Plan

http://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Planning~Development/Community~Planning/Documents/Local%20Area%20Planning%20Priority%201%20Approach_PLUC%20June%2010%20doc.pdf



BC Transit

As a terminus to transit from around the region, we are also working with consideration to the extensive work done by BC Transit. Reference documents include:

Victoria Regional Rapid Transit Victoria / West Shore Link: Volume 4 Functional Alignment Report (SNC-Lavalin Inc, 2011)

<http://bctransit.com/servlet/documents/1403640684205>

Victoria Transit Priority Corridor Plan: Options Evaluation Report (Urban Systems, 2013)

<http://bctransit.com/servlet/documents/1403640646765>

Feedback from Participants during Charrette Session #1

Hillside to Princess

PROS

- The right of way is more flexible than further south on Douglas
- Most of the current building stock is ‘disposable’
- It is an important connection for transit to Camosun and UVic
- Transit Hub is #1
- Sidewalk widths are currently enough.

CONS

- Stretches between pedestrian crossings is too long
- Appears like a highway
- No sense of being downtown
- No way-finding – Complicated 5 way intersection
- Many at grade parking lots / Too much asphalt
- Conflicts between bus/bike
- Drug use/safety aspect

WHAT IS DOUGLAS STREET?

- Access corridor
- Buffer between Rock Bay and Residential area to the East
- It is different in that way from other sections
- Education and employment uses
- Transitional neighbourhood as city is growing north
- Still looks like a highway
- Point of Entrance – leads to the heart of Victoria

WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES ON DOUGLAS STREET?

- Transit Hub at Hillside for crosstown routes
- Facilitate pedestrian crossings mid-block
- Make links to Government Street mid-block

WHAT IS THE IDEAL DOUGLAS STREET?

- Nicer looking bus/LRT stations
- Bike Friendly
- A higher level of intervention than other streets
- Re-craft with interventions like high tree canopy and intermittent welcoming elements
- More way-finding
- higher quality sidewalk experience
- bury hydro lines

Princess to Yates

PROS

- Centennial Square has lots of potential to become a better space
- The Square is a nice quiet retreat from the city street during the day
- Area is a mixer for all people of Victoria, and can be strengthened with more diverse uses

CONS

- Centennial Square is currently underutilized – It needs a consistent draw (program)
- At night it is not that inviting
- The Square is invisible from Douglas Street
- The street is too noisy – too many large trucks
- Buildings often show a lack of maintenance on the frontage
- The cost of upgrading built infrastructure is too much for current uses
- It is hard for businesses to stay open late as the street feels dangerous after dark.

WHAT IS DOUGLAS STREET?

- A Node – but needs strengthening and investment
- A business Centre for Victoria
- A hub of often antisocial behaviour, although it has been improving
- It is a mix of a lot of different people and uses

WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES ON DOUGLAS STREET?

- Create better connection of pedestrians to civic spaces (walking)
- Provide more reasons to go there (all times of day)
- Put in traffic calming measures (currently too much like a highway)
- Connect north to extend the ‘city feeling’
- de-prioritize vehicles AND transit for quality pedestrian environment

WHAT IS THE IDEAL DOUGLAS STREET?

- Create a great consumer experience
- Make it Big Beautiful and Busy
- Slower traffic – pedestrian friendly speed and behaviour
- More trees (and bigger)
- lighting in trees (like St Paul Minnesota)
- Less street parking

Yates to Belleville

PROS

- Well-functioning transit corridor
- The core is a destination
- Shopping Center Hub / Conference Hub
- The pedestrian experience is improving
- The built form is well defined and positive

CONS

- There are social issues on the street
- The speed and volume of traffic is too high
- Too much emphasis on vehicular traffic
- There are too many one-way streets
- Confusion of View Street traffic at the intersection
- Lacks a consistent identity
- The street is too wide to cross (limited public realm)

WHAT IS DOUGLAS STREET?

- Transit corridor
- Main Street
- Contested Area/Conflict Zone between business and antisocial behaviour on the street
- Commercial/Service area (not so much retail)
- Core financial Center

WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES ON DOUGLAS STREET?

- More growth
- 2-way Yates Street
- Improve vibrancy and safety of the public realm
- Soften bank ‘interface’ at Fort bus stop
- Development of Budget Rental and PCL Site – Mixed use residential
- implement a parking guidance system

WHAT IS THE IDEAL DOUGLAS STREET?

- A higher diversity of uses
- Narrower street frontages (smaller shop fronts)
- Open to street / spill out
- Strathcona and Cactus Club
- Create identifiable nodes at each intersection
- Safe, well lit, welcoming, vibrant public realm
- redevelopment of underutilized sites
- implement a parking guidance system

Points of Reference

What makes a ‘Great Street’?

To move forward with Douglas Street it is useful to look at what other cities and citizens are doing in similar situations. This spread has just a few examples that were researched as precedents for the design exercises.



Adaptive Streets

This document provides a great overview of working with existing fabric to create better urban spaces within city right-of-ways.

It’s contents cover:

Remix you street: Strategies:
Retrofitting spaces, Parking spaces, Street spaces, Residual spaces

2. Activate your space: Tools:
Site considerations, Physical elements, Activity programming, Case studies

http://issuu.com/schwin/docs/14_04_26_adaptivestreets_final/1

	Quality of the physical environment	
	Poor	Good
Necessary activities	●	●
Optional activities	●	●
“Resultant” activities (Social activities)	●	●

Life Between Buildings

Using Public Space

A seminal work in humanist urban design principles by urban designer Jan Gehl. Published in 2011 it lays out the distilled knowledge of a lifetime spent studying the way people live in cities. It outlines a way of thinking about and design for urban space focused on how people use such spaces, and considers various categories of activity and scale.

What is particularly relevant to this process is the concept of the three types of activity and the types of spaces that enable them (image above).

Published by Island Press, Washington DC.

TACTICS

TACTICAL URBANISM	01
BUILD A BETTER BLOCK	03
PARKING DAY	04
PLAY STREETS	05
OPEN STREETS	06
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POP-UP SHOPS	09
CHAIR BOMBING	10
GUERRILLA GARDENING	11
STREET FAIRS	12
FOOD CARTS/TRUCKS	13
MOBILE VENDORS	14
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Tactical Urbanism

This and its companion document Tactical Urbanism 2 outline tactics for improving city streets that range from official municipal processes to so called guerrilla activities by everyday citizens.

http://issuu.com/streetplanscollaborative/docs/tactical_urbanism_vol.1

http://issuu.com/streetplanscollaborative/docs/tactical_urbanism_vol_2_final

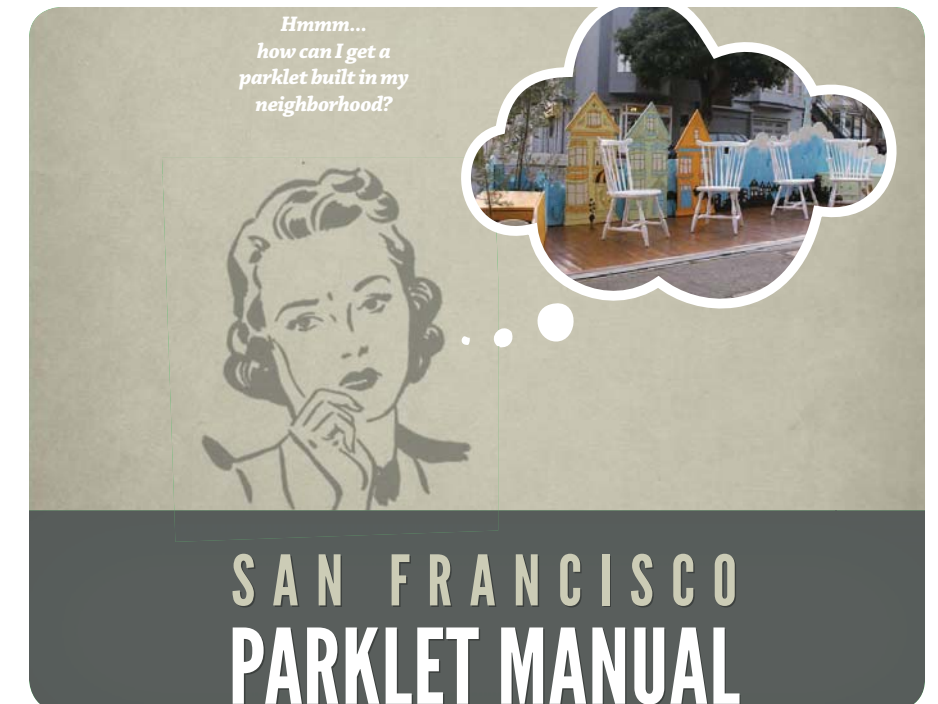


Making Safer Streets

Produced by the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) in 2013, This is a great visual comparison of before and after of some of the city intersections. They are grouped in a few categories:

1. Make the Street Easy to Use
2. Create Safety in Numbers
3. Make the Invisible Visible
4. Choose Quality over Quantity
5. Look Beyond the immediate problem

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/dot-making-safer-streets.pdf>



San Francisco Parklet Manual

Part of the Pavement to Parks initiative of the San Francisco Planning Department, "The San Francisco Parklet Manual is a comprehensive overview of the goals, policies, process, procedures and guidelines for creating a parklet in San Francisco. The Manual is also a resource for those outside of San Francisco working to establish parklet programs in their own cities."

<http://pavementtoparks.sfplanning.org/>

Street Preferences

Charrette participants were asked to mark variety of options for elements they would like to see on Douglas Street. This is what was recorded.

Cycling Facilities



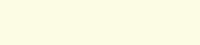
Separated Lanes



Secure Parking



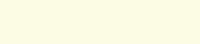
Bus/Bike



Center Lanes



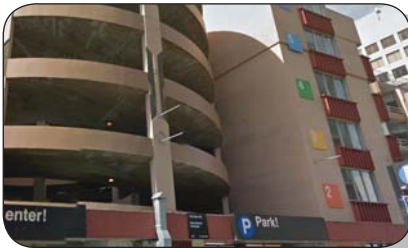
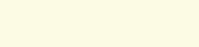
Side Lanes



Parking



In-Front Lot



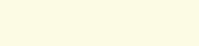
Garage



Side Street



Parallel



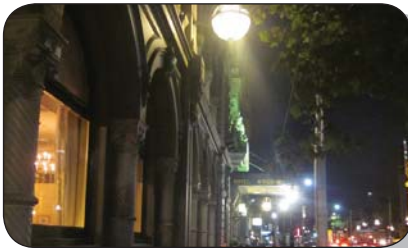
Bike Parking



Street Lighting



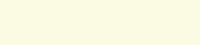
Low Level Lighting



Mid-level Lighting



High Level Lighting



Artistic Lighting



Storefront



As the red dots below illustrate well, there is a particularly strong interest from local businesses for improvements to the pedestrian realm, ranging from lighting and landscaping to public events and parklets.

Landscape



Sidewalk Eco-buffer



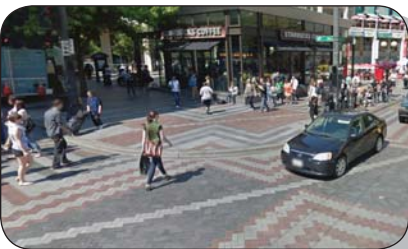
Center Eco-median



Innovative Surfaces



Big trees



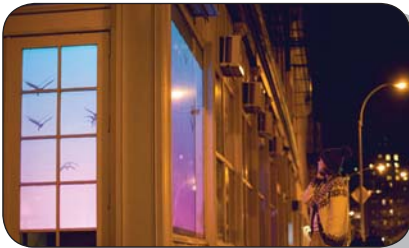
Patterned Paving



Public Space



Interactive Facades



Off Hours Use



Side Park



Patio/Parklet



Art Themes



Events



Car Free Day



Sidewalk Sale



After Hours



Festivals



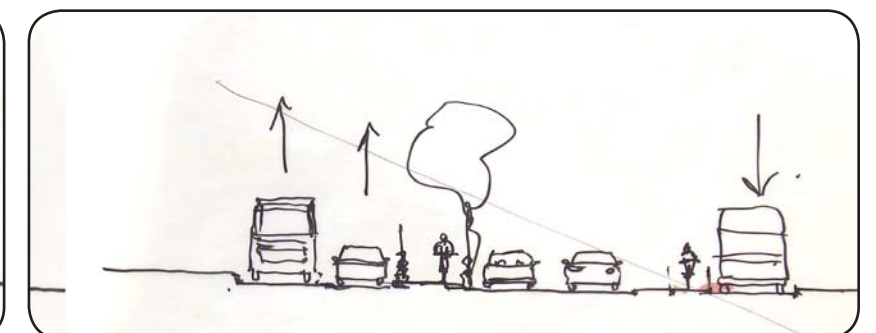
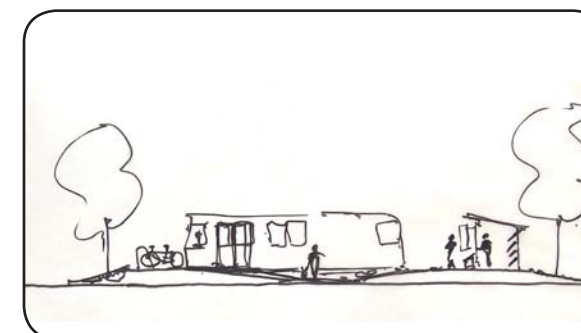
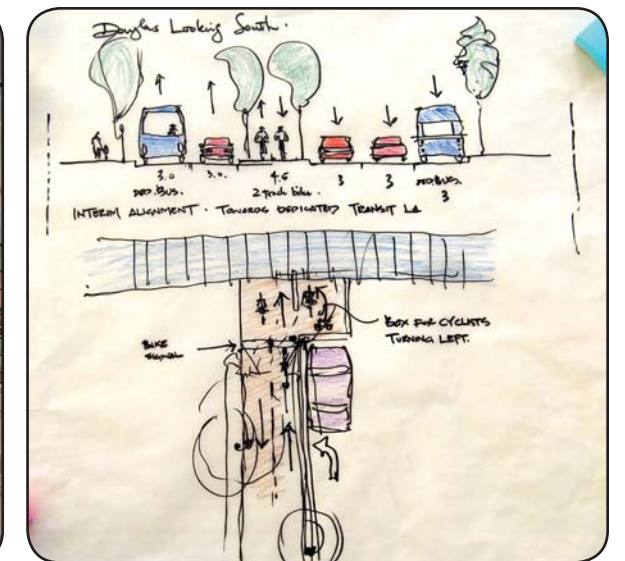
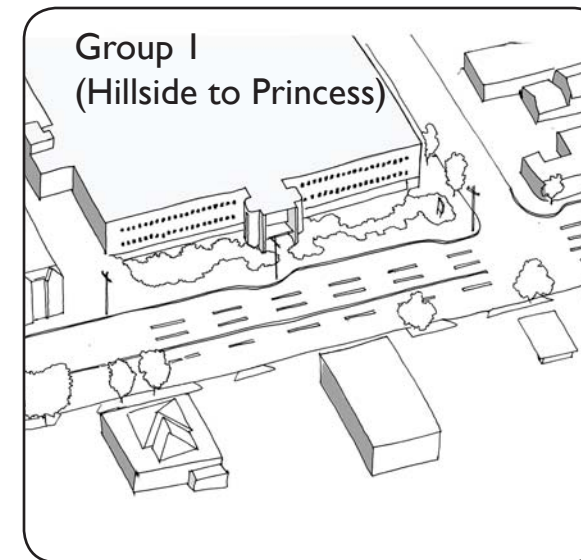
Food Truck



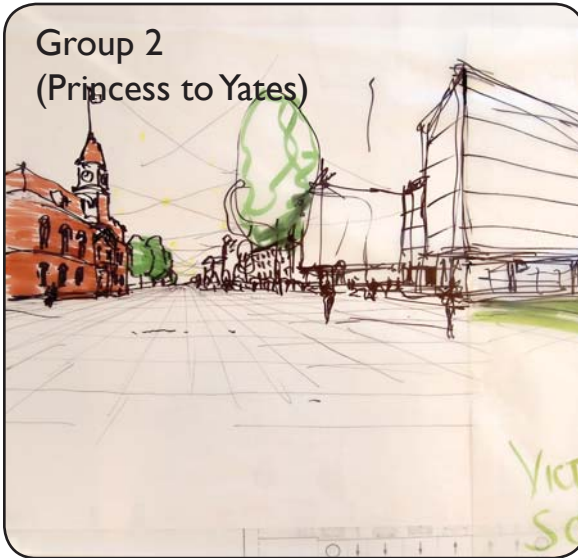
Charrette-ing

During the afternoon session of the charrette the feedback from the first session was applied to some of the case study concepts to specific sites in each of the three areas along Douglas Street in a visioning session. Each section came up with a number of possible interventions and with ideas about how to phase in implementation of these concepts. The vision articulated in this report comes directly from these sessions.

This spread contains some of the actual sketches from the sessions. The following pages distill both the morning and afternoon sessions to create three connected narratives about how to arrive at a much improved Douglas Street.



Group 2
(Princess to Yates)



CENTENNIAL SQ.



Group 3
(Yates to Belleville)

