PUBLIC LIFE COUNTS!

A PUBLIC LIFE STUDY ON CAPITOL HILL

CAPITOL HILL ECODISTRICT

Capitol Hill Housing

Board & Vellum

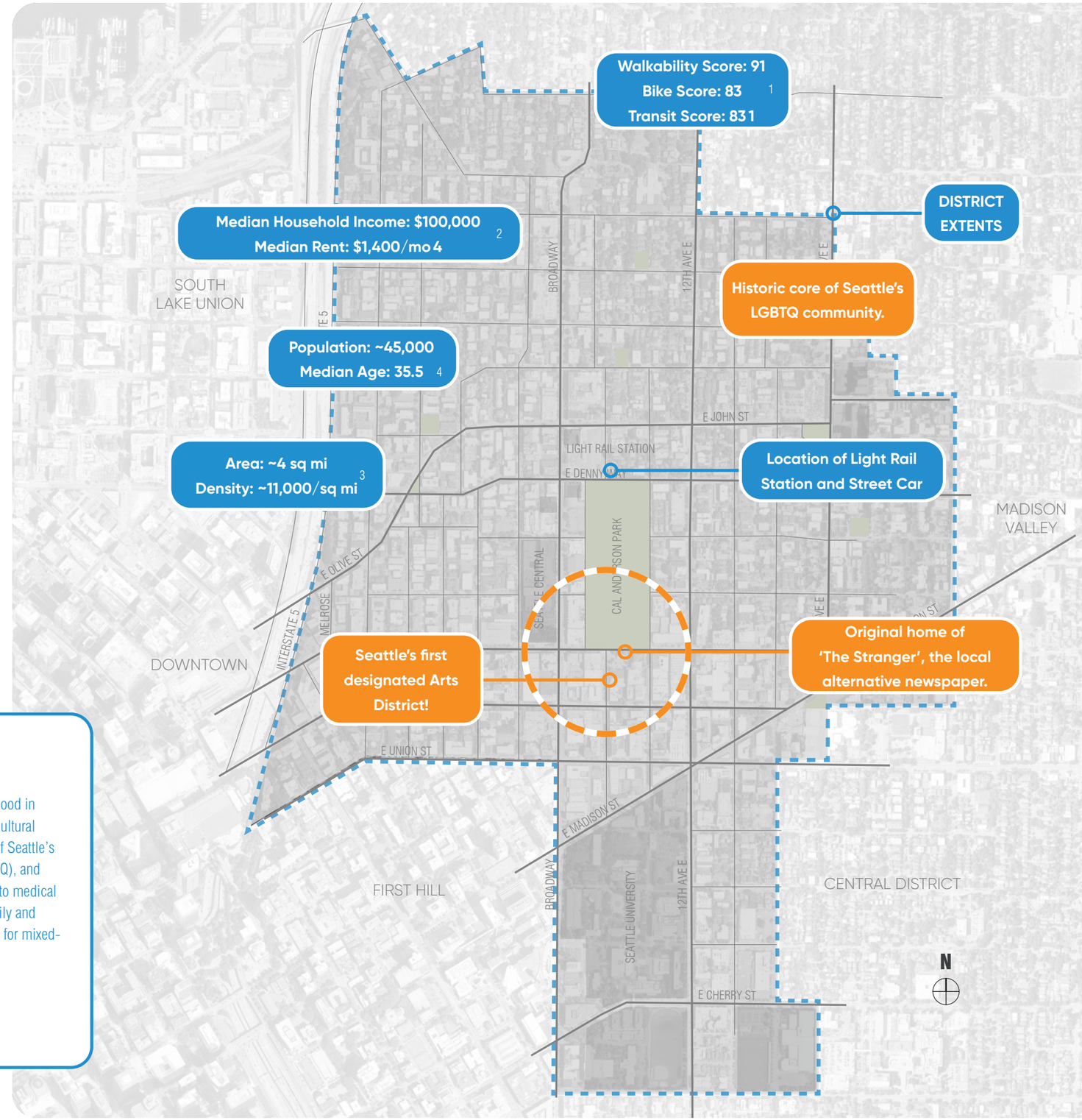
City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

Seattle Department of Transportation

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

THANK YOU!

This project was made possible through the support, enthusiasm, and commitment of our wonderful volunteers without whom we would not have a complete data set. Thank you to the EcoDistrict Steering Committee for helping to guide this effort; the Seattle Department of Transportation for their support in shaping our methodology and for setting the important precedent of public life study in Seattle; the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods for providing funding to study civic life in our neighborhood; and Capitol Hill Housing for providing the material resources and staffing that made this study possible. Thank you also to the University of Washington 2019 Scan|Design Master Studio, to Green Futures Lab interns, and to Professor Nancy Rottle for their continual engagement and support. We are particularly grateful to the Urban Livability MasterClass, to CoUrban, and to the Scan|Design Foundation for identifying the need for a public life study and subsequent planning process on Capitol Hill.



CAPITOL HILL ECODISTRICT

Capitol Hill is the most densely populated neighborhood in the Pacific Northwest. It is a popular destination for cultural venues, bars, restaurants, and retail, and the center of Seattle's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ), and creative arts communities. Capitol Hill is also home to medical and educational institutions, and a mix of single-family and multifamily residences. Capitol Hill is a major center for mixed-use, multifamily, and transit oriented development.

1 - walkscore.com
2 - city-data.com
3 - Seattle Times, openstreetmap.org
4 - city-data.com

Within the urban context, public space is the convergence zone for humans, animals, transportation, and plant life.

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Many come to Capitol Hill from other areas to enjoy the night life through its diversity of shops, restaurants and bars.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

STUDY OBJECTIVES

WHAT IS PUBLIC LIFE?

According to the Gehl Institute, public life is "activity that takes place in everyday spaces - on streets, in parks and plazas, and in the spaces between buildings." Public life often goes unnoticed, as it creates the background of our lives as we commute, shop for groceries, relax in a park, or enjoy coffee at a cafe. Public life is created by the activities we perform in public space and the daily interactions and experiences we have when we are outside home or work.

Enjoy window shopping?
People watching?
Ever sat and enjoyed a sidewalk cafe?
These are examples of public life!

Under utilized plaza with people living in public.

Public life in front of Melrose Market.

Example of neighborhood culture and events.

WHAT IS A PUBLIC LIFE STUDY?

Public life studies create metrics that measure human activity and help us better understand how a particular public setting is used. The study area is usually a small urban space, like a city block or plaza, where the volume of users and variety of activities may be observed and recorded to answer a specific question like, "How many people play soccer here?" Public life studies provide information that helps build an understanding of how and why a public space is used.

WHY DO WE STUDY PUBLIC LIFE?

We study public life to better understand the relationships between people and public space. Studying how humans use public spaces - places outside home, work and commercial settings - enables designers, planners, and elected officials to better plan infrastructure like roads, sidewalks, and transit, and compare the function of areas that are well-used and beloved by the community with areas that may feel underused or even unsafe. Using public life data to design for existing uses, and plan for missing or future uses, puts people first by understanding how people are using these spaces today, so we can design intentionally for tomorrow.

We consider this part of data-driven design.

STUDY BACKGROUND

Public Life Counts! is a participatory public life study performed in the fall and winter of 2019 in the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict area. The study is part of a larger planning effort that grew from the Urban Livability MasterClass Delegation that visited Copenhagen, Denmark and Malmo, Sweden in summer 2019 to observe the vibrant public realms and urban design strategies, and people-centered public spaces. After the Delegation's initial trip, the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict hosted a series of workshops to determine how lessons learned in Copenhagen could be applied to Seattle's densest neighborhood to enhance and enliven existing patterns of public life.

Before the Delegation could apply planning concepts from Copenhagen, they first needed to establish a baseline understanding of how people are currently using public space on Capitol Hill. Building on an existing qualitative public space study of Capitol Hill performed by interns from the University of Washington Green Futures Lab in summer 2019, the need for a quantitative study of public life was established.

In fall 2019, Board & Vellum and Capitol Hill Housing began developing a unique public life study for the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict using an existing framework developed by the Gehl Institute and Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). With the guidance and support of SDOT and the EcoDistrict Steering Committee, the Public Life Counts! team began mapping study areas based on previous work by the U of W Green Futures Lab interns to determine where data would be collected. Concurrent with site

selection, the team began outreach to local community members, organizations and school groups to recruit a group of volunteers that would be integral to collecting data in several areas across Capitol Hill.

Standards established by Gehl and SDOT for public life research were used to assess study goals and establish study parameters. Basic data to be collected focused on two categories of data collection: counts of people moving through public spaces and counts of people staying within public spaces. Within these categories, observational parameters, like age and mobility type, were included to increase the depth of data to support the project goals and objectives while keeping the data collection format accessible to volunteers who would be trained in data collection.

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE STUDY?

The goal of data collection is to observe how people are using the public realm on Capitol Hill to start building a better understanding of how many people are using those spaces, what time of day those spaces are in use, and what activities appear most common.

This document should be used alongside the U of W Green Futures Lab intern qualitative study, Capitol Hill: Public Spaces + Public Life, and other research on Capitol Hill, to inform more nuanced questions, like how the physical qualities of public space and their proximity to businesses and transit may influence use.

WHAT ARE THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS?

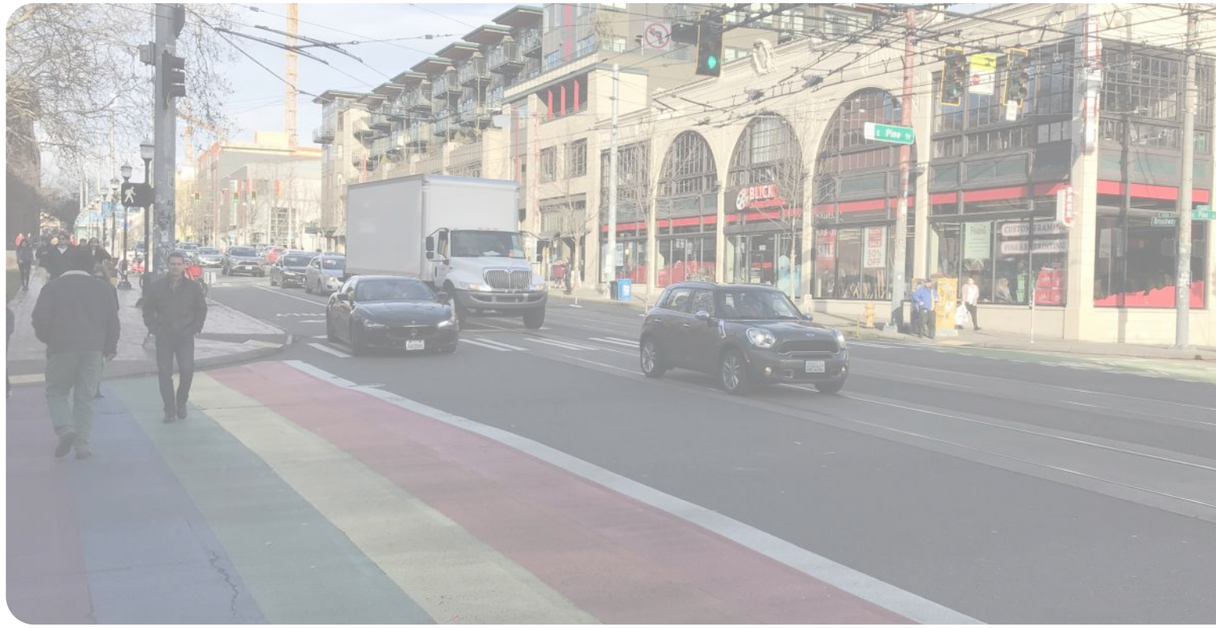
The objective of this study is to observe how people are using the public realm on Capitol Hill. The selection of observation sites and methods of data collection will be described in detail in the following section. We began with the questions:

- HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE PASSING THROUGH?
- HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE STAYING IN PLACE?
- WHAT ARE THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS?
- WHO IS THERE BY AGE, GROUP SIZE, ETC?
- WHAT KINDS OF ACTIVITIES ARE PEOPLE DOING?

NEXT STEPS

With the goal of establishing a baseline metric of public life on Capitol Hill, the project was timed to support the Public Life Visioning and Implementation Plan/Planning Process scheduled for development in 2020. Directed by the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict, the Public Life Visioning and Implementation Plan/Planning Process aims to create a participatory urban design document that puts people first. This means understanding public space from the user's perspective in order to design for the people who use, enjoy, and rely on our public spaces. As part of that process, aligning with existing and planned development in the study area is a critical tool for leveraging incoming investment in the neighborhood toward the creation of more vibrant, equitable public spaces.

Connecting lessons learned from Copenhagen with qualitative spatial analysis from U of W Green Futures Lab interns, and quantitative use metrics from this study will enable the EcoDistrict to develop a Public Life Plan that puts people first and establishes a path toward improved public life for all.



Community Crosswalks give a strong sense of place to the Pike/Pine Corridor.

Transit corridors like Broadway and Pine Street support a dense population and bring many visitors to the neighborhood.

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

THE GEHL METHOD

Originally developed by renowned Danish urban studies professor, Jan Gehl, the Gehl Method has set the standard for studying public life in cities around the world. The Gehl Method has established a common set of metrics allowing municipalities to record public life data that can be analyzed and implemented toward the strategic design of urban public spaces. Gehl's qualitative and quantitative research methods have been applied for over three decades in public life studies in more than 100 cities around the world to help city planners design public spaces that put people first, and ultimately help create cities for people.

PUBLIC LIFE DATA PROTOCOL

In 2016, Gehl collaborated with the City of San Francisco, the Municipality of Copenhagen, and the Seattle Department of Transportation to develop the open source *Public Life Data Protocol*. The Protocol standardized the Gehl Method into a defined set of metrics that can be adapted across a range of public life studies while maintaining data consistency and research flexibility. The goal of the Protocol is to make the Gehl Method for public life research accessible to all.

> "Urban designers may use the Protocol to create benchmarks for good design; politicians may use the Protocol to target their initiatives; citizens may use the Protocol to build cases for community improvements; researchers may use the Protocol to provide valuable insights into the impact of public life on, for example, public health, the economy, the environment, and democratic participation"
> - Public Life Data Protocol, 2017

GUIDE FOR DATA COLLECTORS

After participating in the development of the *Public Life Data Protocol*, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) refined the Protocol into a visual, easy to use Guide for Data Collectors to facilitate public life studies in the City of Seattle. The *Public Life Study 2018 Guide for Data Collectors* provides examples of local public life studies, and makes the more complex Protocol accessible through a series of easy-to-use instructions, graphics, and worksheets. *The Guide* creates a flexible set of tools intended to help communities and neighborhood groups develop their own public life studies for their areas.

PUBLIC LIFE COUNTS!

In summer 2019, the EcoDistrict, SDOT and the U of W Green Futures Lab interns combined their knowledge of Capitol Hill to create the *Public Life Study Design Alternatives*, an outline of public life study alternatives that would become the guiding rubric for data collection. The *Study Design Alternatives*, along with the project brief, defined potential levels of effort, number of hours required, and determined that data would be collected by a combination of volunteers and staff. In fall 2019, Board & Vellum and the Public Life Counts! (PLC!) team started with the initial data collection locations, study objectives, and priority levels established in the outline and project brief, and began mapping proposed locations and assessing the number of sites volunteers and staff could cover in a 2-hour time frame, including time for breaks and walking between sites.

Parameters for the number and duration of data collection shifts, times of day and days of week when data would be collected, and types of data to be collected (in addition to moving and staying counts) were based on the *Public Life Protocol* and the *2018 Guide for Data Collectors*. Adjustments were made to fit the study objectives, the unique neighborhood context, and the time volunteers would have to be trained and record data. Some parameters were removed in the interest of streamlining data collection toward addressing the research questions.

Alternatives	Locations	Number of sites	Times	Number of volunteer hours needed
Alternative 1: low effort	• Institutions • Light Rail Station Area	~16	2 days (1 weekday, 1 weekend) • Morning (weekday only) • Midday • Evening	~80 hours (40 volunteer shifts)
Alternative 2: middle effort	• Institutions • Light Rail Station Area • Commercial Areas / Pedestrian Zones	~44	2 days (1 weekday, 1 weekend) • Morning (weekday only) • Midday • Evening • Night	~308 hours (154 volunteer shifts)
Alternative 3: high effort	• Institutions • Light Rail Station Area • Commercial Areas / Pedestrian Zones • Pocket Parks	~54	3 days (2 weekdays, 1 weekend) • Morning (weekday only) • Midday • Evening • Night • Late Night (weekend only)	~648 hours (324 volunteer shifts)

The *Public Life Study Design Alternatives* established the baseline for study objectives and locations.

Pike/Pine was determined to be a high-priority area.

METHODOLOGY

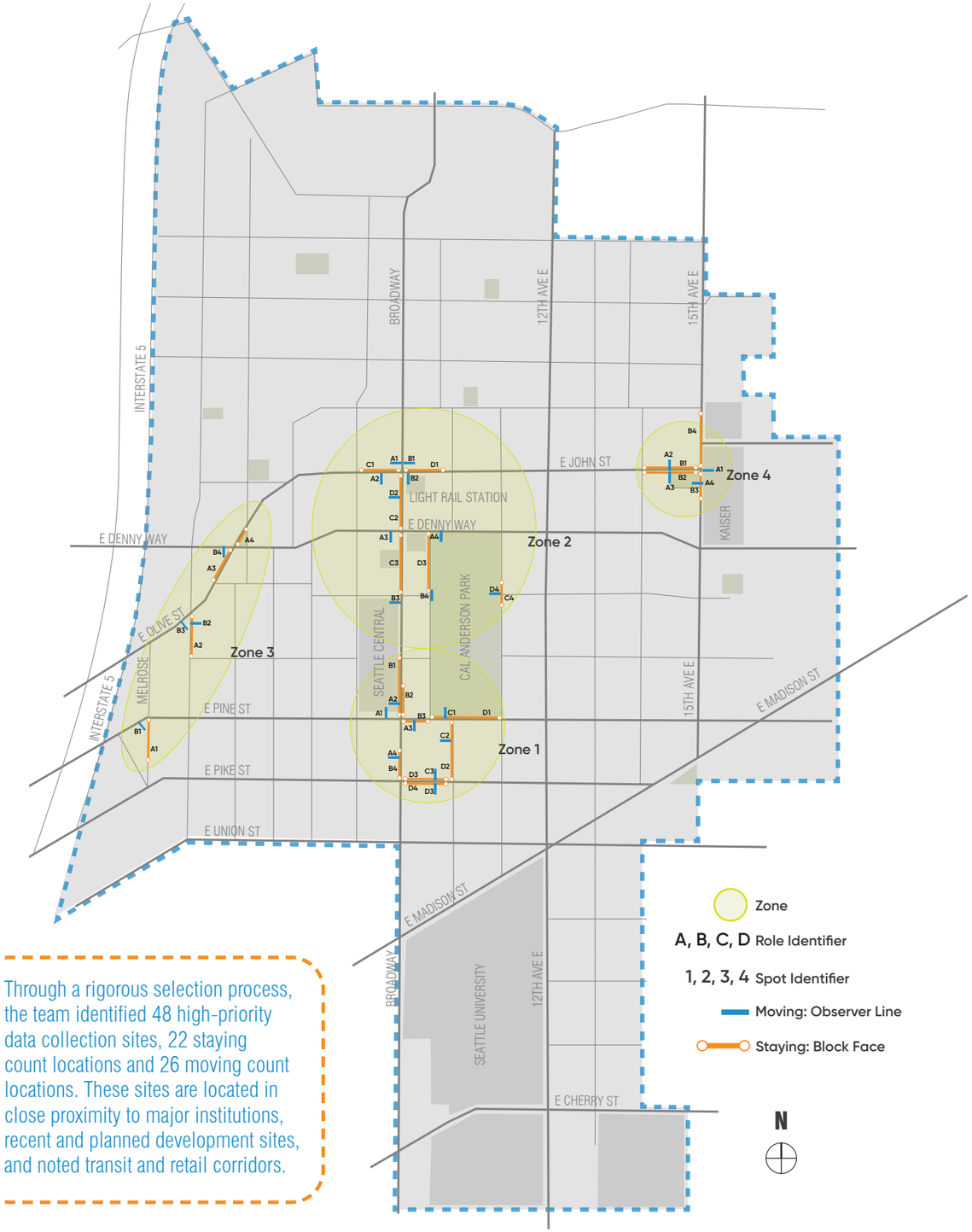
SITE SELECTION

Working in tandem with the EcoDistrict, and using the outline created by the EcoDistrict, SDOT and the U of W Green Futures Lab interns, the PLC! team mapped all potential locations outlined in the Public Life Study Design Alternatives. Mapping potential sites helped visualize the connections between sites and determine walking distances to ensure accessibility. Setting parameters for walking distances between potential sites allowed the team to plan for volunteers to collect data at multiple sites during one shift. This approach streamlined volunteer effort and allowed data to be collected at more sites with fewer volunteers.

After mapping all of the potential sites, assessing the level effort, and the total number of volunteers and staff required to collect data at each site, the team prioritized locations based on proximity to recent and planned development, proximity to major institutions, noted retail and transit corridors, and feasible walking distances between high priority sites. Prioritizing locations and data to be collected helped create a flexible list of data collection sites that allowed the team to adapt study areas based on the number of volunteer participants collecting data during each shift.

Once final priority sites were determined, each location was assigned a zone, and a role and spot identifier to help staff assign volunteers clear locations to collect data. Sites in close proximity were grouped into sets of four and given a role identifier - A, B, C, or D - and a spot identifier: 1, 2, 3, and 4. The role and spot identifiers helped volunteers locate their data collection sites on the provided maps, and distinguish their collection sites from the sites assigned to other volunteers. One role with four corresponding spots was assigned to each data collector. Role identifiers determined whether the data collector was performing "staying" or "moving" counts. The four spots assigned to each role determined the distinct locations where data would be collected in a 2-hour time frame.

In an effort to ensure volunteer safety, roles assigned to volunteers were paired into groups of two so that the buddy system could be used in case of an emergency. Data collection locations for both roles were located in close proximity to one another for the duration of the data collection shifts. Other concerns for feelings of safety were addressed by eliminating a few sites that are perceived as dark or unsafe from the data collection shifts that took place during late evening hours. Staff were also circulating throughout the zones during volunteer shifts to check-in with volunteers and be available for questions and concerns.



Through a rigorous selection process, the team identified 48 high-priority data collection sites, 22 staying count locations and 26 moving count locations. These sites are located in close proximity to major institutions, recent and planned development sites, and noted transit and retail corridors.

METHODOLOGY

VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION

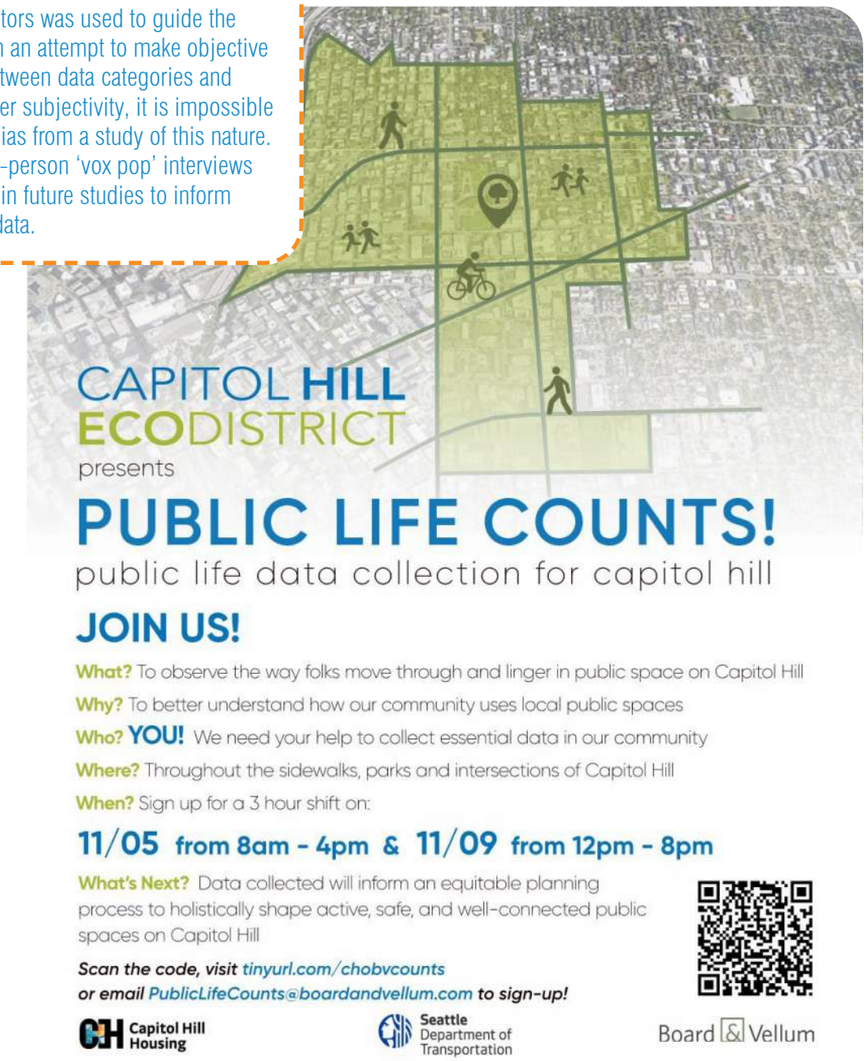
Originally identified in the Public Life Study Design Alternatives, the support of a large volunteer group was integral to completing the scope of the study. Aspects of the study design that deviate from the standard set by the Guide for Data Collectors were driven by the need to make data collection as streamlined as possible for volunteers. The feasibility of recruiting and training many volunteers, the time frame volunteers could commit to shifts, and the safety of volunteers during their data collection shifts largely shaped the logistics of the study.

Simplifying the data parameters for perceived personal identifiers and activities was intended to ease data collection for volunteers who may not have prior experience collecting observational data and could be overwhelmed by the amount of data to be recorded at each spot, with four spots to be recorded twice during each shift. Reducing detailed data collection of personal identifiers, such as perceived gender and perceived race/ethnicity, was intended to protect occupants of Capitol Hill from unwarranted identity assignment, and to relieve volunteers from having to make assumptions about an individual's personal identity.

Volunteers were recruited across Capitol Hill through outreach efforts at the local Farmer's Market, locally-posted fliers, and directly contacting community groups and organizations. As the team began refining data collection locations, they also maintained contact with volunteers and continued to recruit data collectors until the day of collection events in an effort to maximize data collected by volunteers. In addition to posting project fliers across Capitol Hill, the project engaged more than 40 agencies, school groups, and organizations to spread the word about the study and data collection events.

Ultimately, over two days and six shifts of data collection, the team trained 68 volunteers and 6 staff members in the Gehl Method of observational data collection, and supported volunteers as they collected data on site. Once the Public Life Counts! study is concluded, the EcoDistrict hopes to maintain engagement with volunteers throughout the development of a Public Life Strategy and Implementation Plan to fully engage a people-centered planning process. The potential of performing an additional study in warmer months, to compare data between public life in the fall/winter and spring/summer, could also engage volunteers to collect additional data.

While the Public Life Data Protocol and Guide for Data Collectors was used to guide the study design in an attempt to make objective distinctions between data categories and reduce volunteer subjectivity, it is impossible to remove all bias from a study of this nature. Surveys and in-person 'vox pop' interviews could be used in future studies to inform observational data.



Fliers with links to sign-up for a volunteer shift were used to recruit volunteers.

METHODOLOGY

FINAL STUDY DESIGN

While the study design was based on the standards and tools established in the Guide for Data Collectors, the final study logistics were a product of the unique conditions and constraints of the project. The dates chosen for data collection were selected based on a projected timeline to complete volunteer recruitment, days when the weather would be best based on historic seasonal weather patterns, and balancing the study objectives and reliance on primarily volunteer data collectors. The preparation of worksheets to record data and maps to help volunteers locate data collection sites were key aspects of the study design. Worksheets were directly adapted from the SDOT Guide for Data Collectors, while maps and walking directions were created specifically for each data collection location. Packets containing training materials, maps, written directions, and worksheets were compiled on a clipboard for each volunteer. Each volunteer received a total of eight worksheets to record data at four sites each hour. The same four sites visited in the first hour would be revisited during the second hour for the same duration, providing two data collection worksheets per site, per volunteer shift. Example worksheets are included on the next page, full size copies of the worksheets are available at th end of this document.

Project Timeline

- **September 27 2019** Project kick-off, initial study design
- **October 11** Volunteer engagement, site mapping
- **October 29** Final priority locations, worksheets approved
- **November 5, 9** Data collection events
- **December** Data entry, analysis
- **January 2020** Document development
- **February 14** Final presentation of study to EcoDistrict

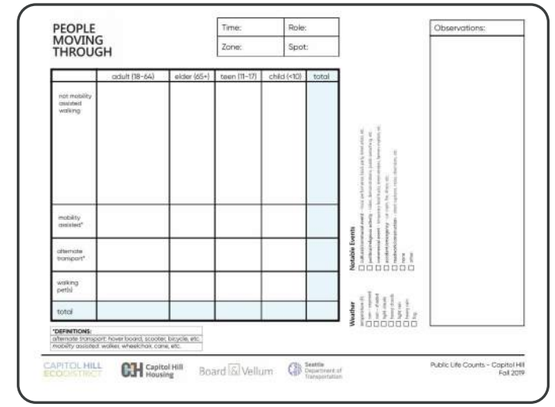
Data Collection Shifts

Shifts	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning		8am-11am				
Midday		12pm-3pm				12pm-3pm
Evening		4pm-7pm				4pm-7pm
Night						8pm-11pm

Hour 1: Data collection training, practice round
Hour 2: First round of data collection, 4 sites per person
Hour 3: Second round data collection, repeat 4 sites

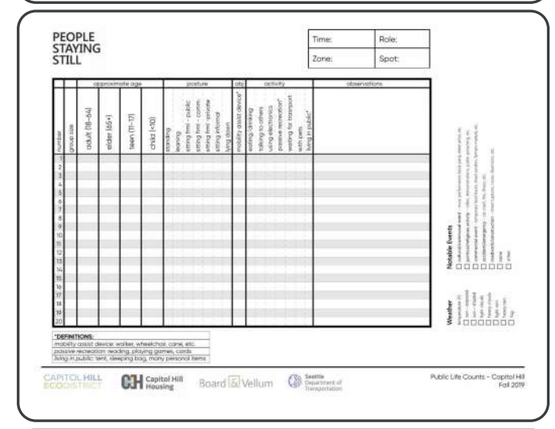
Data To Be Collected

Data Collected	People Moving	People Staying Still	Environmental Conditions
Research questions	How many people walk here? Who walks here?	How many people stay still here? Who stays here? What are they doing?	What are the current weather conditions? Is there protection from weather? Are there any notable events happening nearby?
Study area	Observer line	Block face	Block face
Length of time	10 minutes	10 minutes	Note during counts



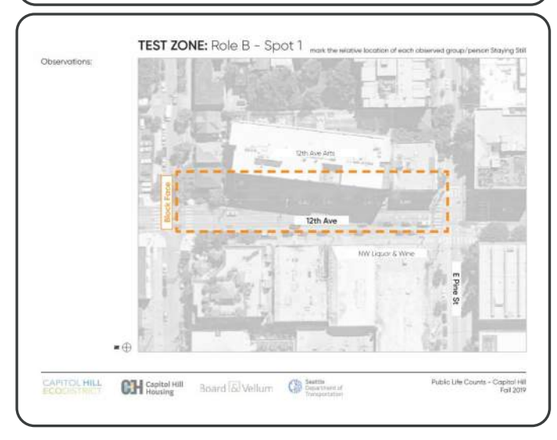
Worksheets to record moving counts at each location.

- Moving counts were collected using the observer line method, counting each person crossing a predetermined line with a tally mark in the appropriate column and row.
- Definitions for identifiers are included at the bottom of the sheet.
- Zone, role, spot and shift time, observations and environmental conditions, should be noted in the spaces provided.



Worksheets to record staying counts at each location.

- Staying counts were collected using the block face method, counting one person (per worksheet row) staying on the block for more than 30 seconds.
- Additional information was recorded about people staying with tally marks in labeled rows and columns.
- Zone, role, spot and shift time, observations and environmental conditions, should be noted in the spaces provided.
- An aerial view of each data collection site was also provided so the location of each person staying on the block face could be recorded.



Observations of people experiencing homelessness in public spaces throughout Capitol Hill is an inevitable outcome of an equitable public life study at this time. The activity 'Living in Public' was included in the study as a necessary category to help us understand how people are using public spaces.

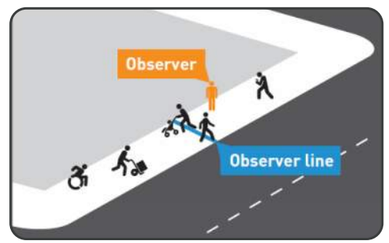
Music venues and other cultural attractions make Capitol Hill a desirable neighborhood to live in, as well as a destination for night life.

DATA COLLECTION

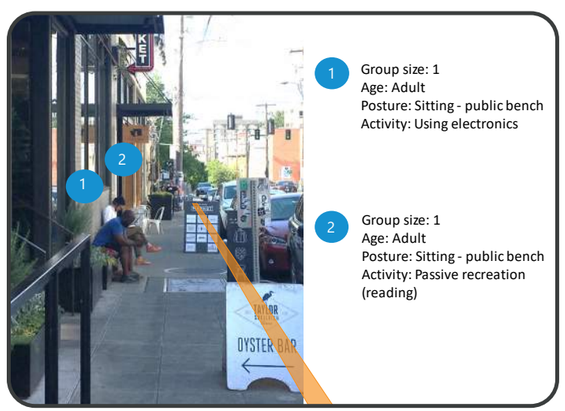
DATA COLLECTION

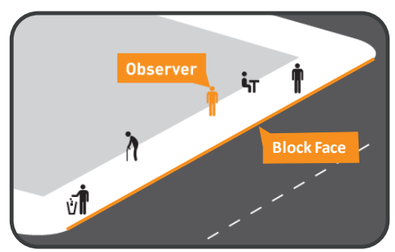
VOLUNTEER TRAINING

On the day of data collection of events, Capitol Hill Housing hosted staff and volunteers for three volunteer trainings and data collection shifts. Each training began with volunteers checking-in with staff to receive their role and location assignment along with a clipboard containing training materials, data collection worksheets and site-specific maps. High-priority data collection roles and locations were assigned first to ensure key areas were covered, even if volunteer turnout did not meet the anticipated number of data collectors. A presentation of the project background, study goals, and training on how to collect data and fill out the provided worksheets gave the volunteers a strong baseline for collecting observational data. After the presentation, volunteers tested what they had learned with 10 minutes of test data collection in front of the training location at 12th Ave Arts.

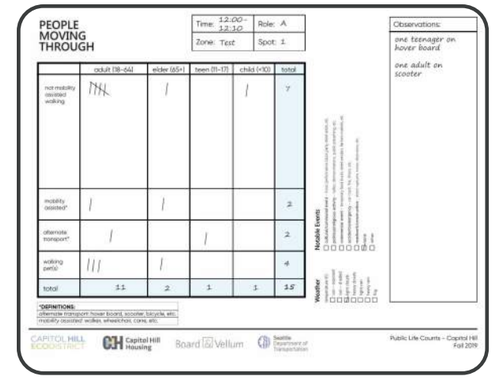


Exercise demonstrating how to count and categorize people moving past an observer line. *(Images courtesy of SDOT)*



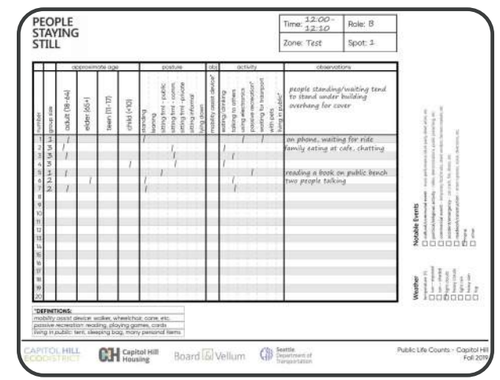


Exercise demonstrating how to count and categorize people staying within the block face,and how to document group size, posture, and activity. *(Images courtesy of SDOT)*



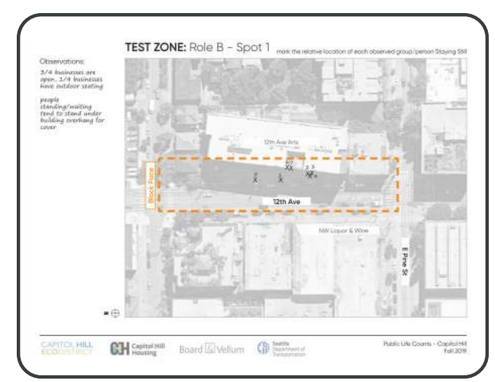
Example of a filled out moving count worksheet.

In-person training presentations reviewed methods and worksheets.



Example of a filled-out staying count worksheet.

Test data collection gave volunteers a chance to ask questions about the process.



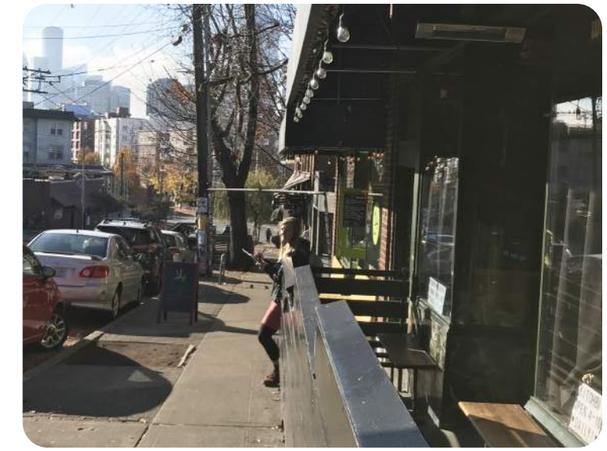
Example of a filled-out staying count location aerial map.

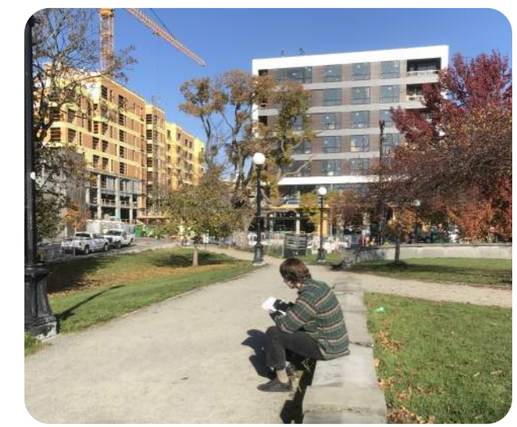
Volunteers practice what they learned in the training prior to collecting data.

DATA COLLECTION

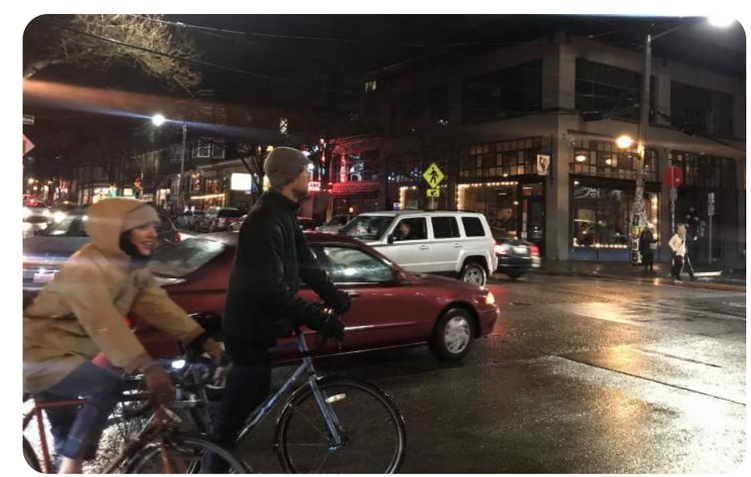
IMAGES FROM THE EVENTS

After participating in an hour-long training, volunteers and staff used the maps and walking directions included with their worksheets to disperse to their data collection sites and begin their 2-hour data collection shifts. Each volunteer collected data at four sites for the first hour, repeating the same four sites during the second hour. The schedule developed by the PLC! team, determined that volunteers would collect data for 10 minutes, have 5 minutes to walk to the next site and take a break, collect data for 10 minutes, repeat, and begin again at the first site at the top of the second hour.





Weather conditions in Seattle in November tend to be chilly and wet, with an average high temperature of 51° F. Due to the nature of Seattle's climate, this study was performed with the understanding that fall and winter are not the peak seasons for public life. This study is intended to form a fall/winter public life baseline.



DATA COLLECTION

DATA ENTRY & ANALYSIS

As volunteers turned in their worksheets at the end of each shift, staff collected and filed all worksheets by Zone and Spot. After both data collection events were concluded, the worksheets were scanned into the computer. Once worksheets were collated into PDFs and filed in the computer, Excel spreadsheets for each zone and each type of worksheet were set up to reflect the categories of data collected. Staff then meticulously transferred the data from the spreadsheets into the Excel files. Basic Excel functions and formulas, like filters, could be used to assess preliminary bulk levels of data at District, Zone and Spot levels on both data collection days. In order to understand and represent more detailed levels data, the PLC! team utilized pivot tables.

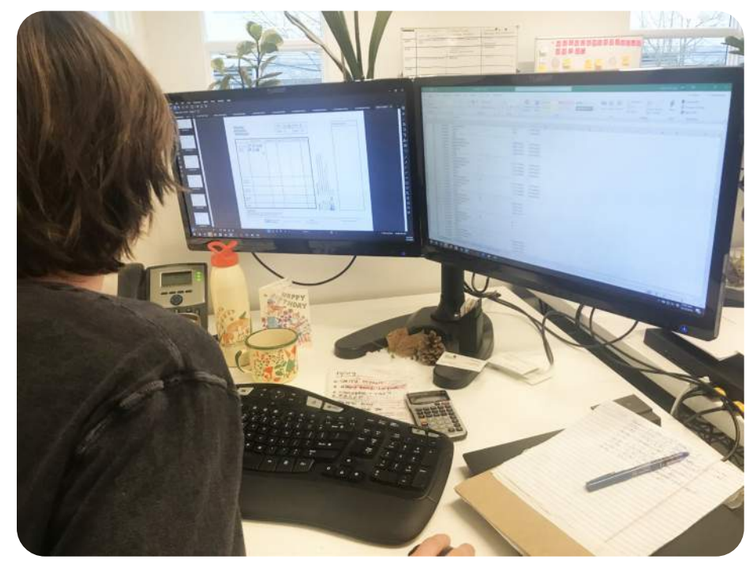
Pivot tables are a data processing technique used to summarize statistical data entered in more extensive tables. Pivot table summaries can be sums, averages, or other statistics that are grouped and filtered to output detailed data for specific times of day, spot locations, age ranges, mobility types, environmental conditions, and any other category (or set of categories) used on the worksheets. Pivot tables were also used to create graphic representations of data summaries. Bulk data collected by volunteers was summarized by staff using pivot tables, and visualized as graphs and charts that are included in the next chapter of this document.

All collected data (compiled worksheets, Excel files, pivot tables and summary graphics) have been organized into a database and shared with the EcoDistrict through a cloud folder. With full access to all data collected, the EcoDistrict can use the pivot tables to find and summarize data needed during the Public Life Strategy and Implementation process. Data can be used to inform district and zone scale planning questions, make decisions about potential pilot projects, and gain further insight into specific spots where design guidelines may be applied.

Data summarized in this document, and in the database, should be viewed alongside the qualitative built environment analysis of public space performed by the U of W Green Futures lab interns in summer 2019. Their document, Capitol Hill: Public Spaces + Public Life, outlines their approach and findings, and will be published in 2020. Additional site-level data about several locations within the district can be found in the SDOT 2018 Public Life Study Summary Report Appendix A on pages 31-32, 38. The SDOT 2018 Public Life Study should also be reviewed to provide essential context for how that data can be interpreted and used alongside the summaries found in this document.

Worksheets filed and scanned by Zone and Spot helped the team keep data organized as it was entered into the computer.

Due to the nature of how data was collected, and the time frame of data collection, it is important to keep study limitations in mind when interpreting the results. Rather than observe a few sites for the entire duration of the study, sites were observed during 10 minute intervals to maximize the number of locations that could be visited during each shift. As such, the data should be interpreted as a sample of public life during the times data was collected and not wholly representative of all public life activity present at any given time, or in any given weather condition.



Once worksheets were collated and filed in the database, data was transferred from worksheets to Excel files for analysis.

Notable constraints:

- Data was not collected at some spots around Cal Anderson Park during the night shift (9-11pm) to ensure volunteers felt safe. This may effect the appearance of total night shift counts in Zone 2.
- Data was collected during the evening shift (5-7pm) twice, during the weekday and the weekend counts.
- Morning shift data collection only occurred once, during the weekday count. Evening shift data collection only occurred once, during the weekend count. This may effect the appearance of total count numbers when combined for both days.

Historic buildings, Community Crosswalks, art posters, murals, and graffiti are part of Capitol Hill's gritty and colorful aesthetic that make it vibrant and unique.

THE DATA

DISTRICT DATA

OVERVIEW METRICS

ENVIRONMENT

6:33 AM sunrise
5:35 PM sunset
42% shifts after sunset
54 high/44 low temp.
46.5% clouds
32.5% rain
29.5% sun

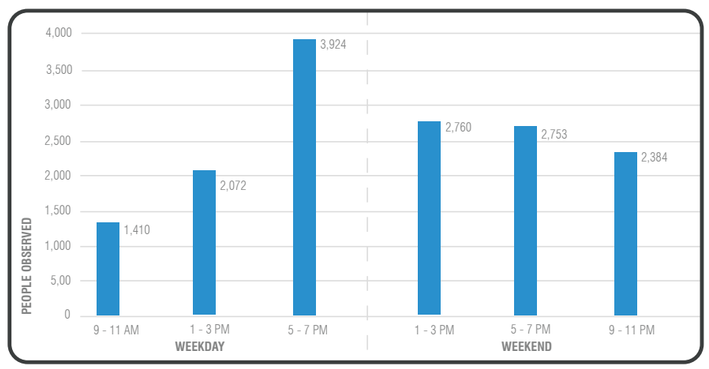
MOBILITY

95.6% unassisted
2.2% w/ pets
1.4% alt. transportation (bicycle, skateboard)
0.6% mobility assisted (walker, wheelchair)

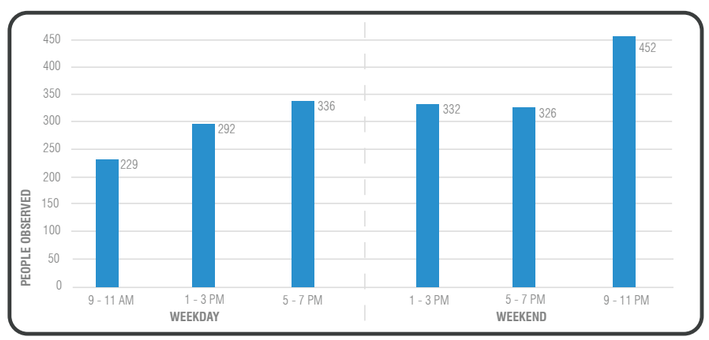
AGE

92.0% adults
2.5% teens
4.4% elders
0.9% children

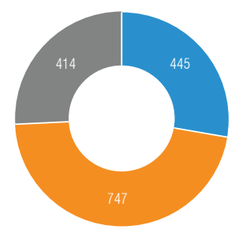
MOVING COUNTS



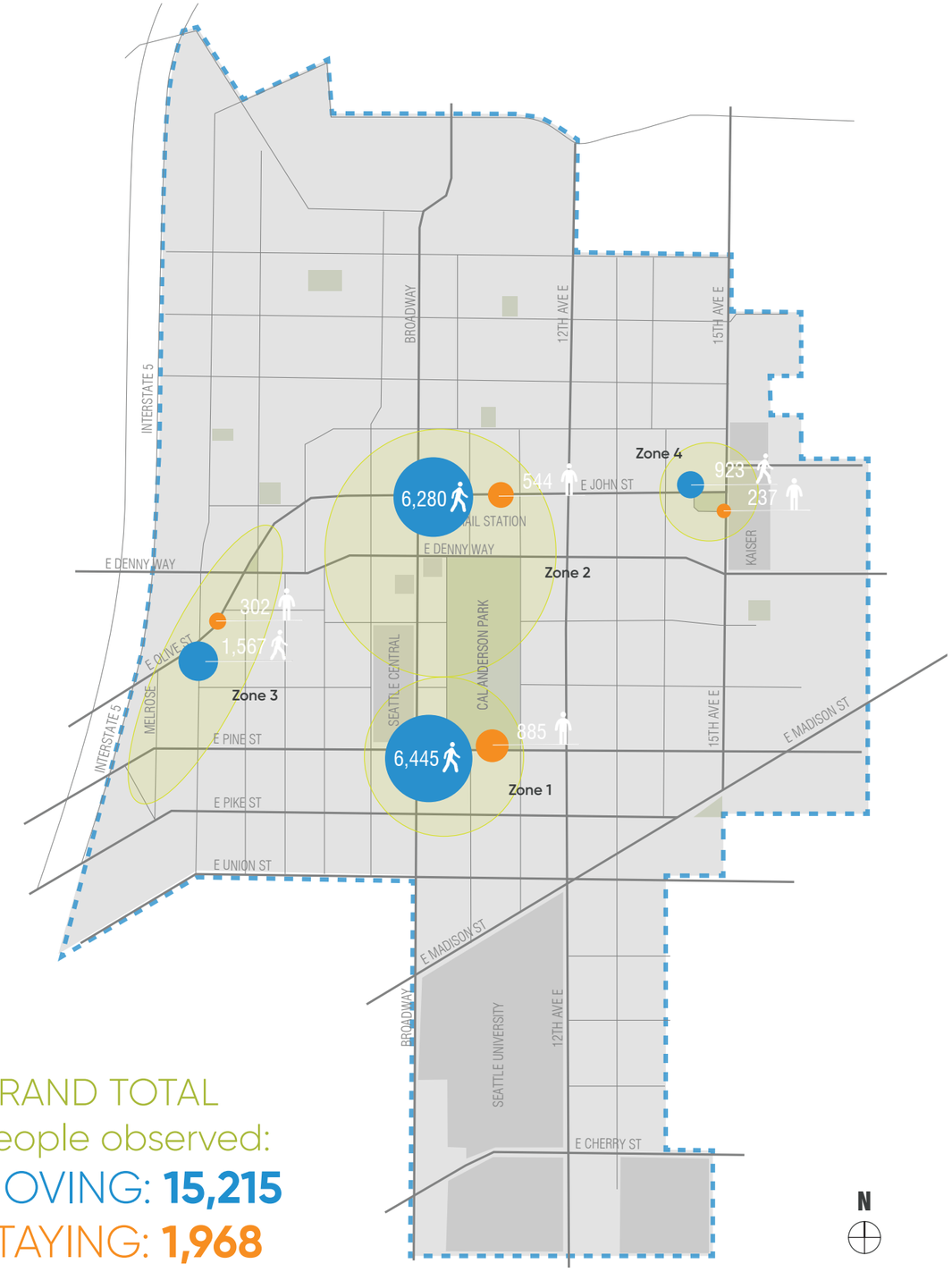
STAYING COUNTS



TOP 3 ACTIVITIES



TALKING TO OTHERS
USING ELECTRONICS
WAITING FOR TRANSPORT



GRAND TOTAL
people observed:
MOVING: **15,215**
STAYING: **1,968**

ZONE 1 DATA

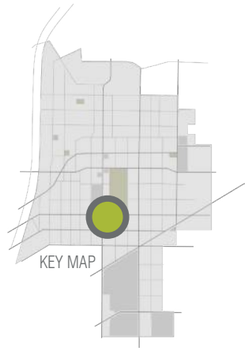
PIKE + PINE ST AREA

OVERVIEW METRICS

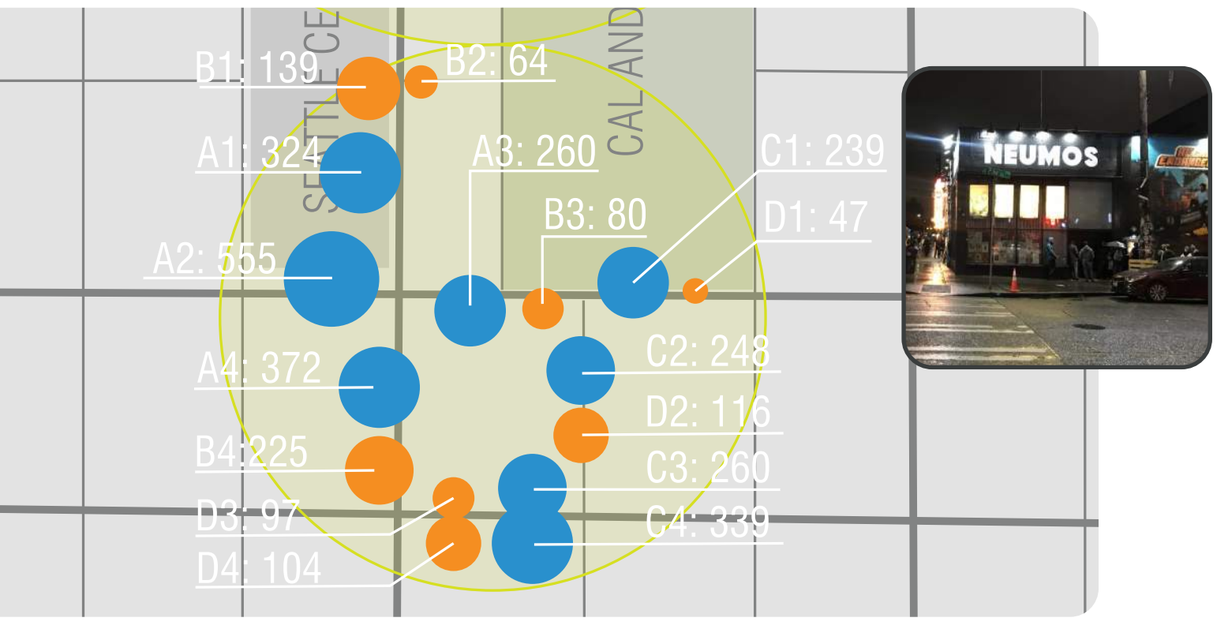
TOTAL PEOPLE OBSERVED:

MOVING: **6,446**

STAYING: **885**



SPOT METRICS



highest number of

PEOPLE OBSERVED IN GROUPS

2.3 PEOPLE average group size

highest number of

PEOPLE OBSERVED IN ANY ZONE

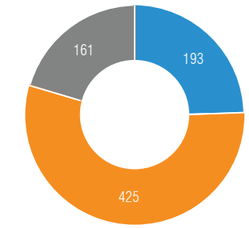
The Pike/Pine St area observed primarily evening and night-life activity. Higher levels of activity were observed on the weekend than the weekday. This area is home to two major educational institutions (Seattle Central College & Seattle University), a large park, and many bars, restaurants, and arts and cultural venues. Mixed-use developments have increased the density of this area in recent years.

WEEKEND VS. WEEKDAY

MOVING: 32% MORE people observed on weekend than weekday

STAYING: 46% MORE people observed on weekend than weekday

TOP 3 ACTIVITIES

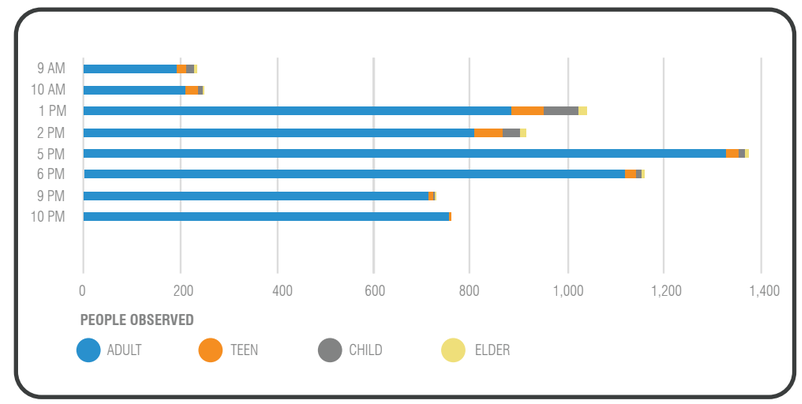


TALKING TO OTHERS

USING ELECTRONICS

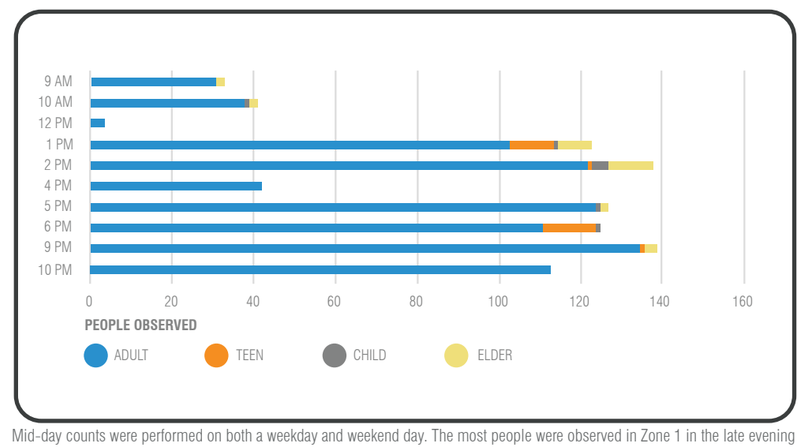
WAITING FOR TRANSPORT

AGE & TIME OF DAY - MOVING



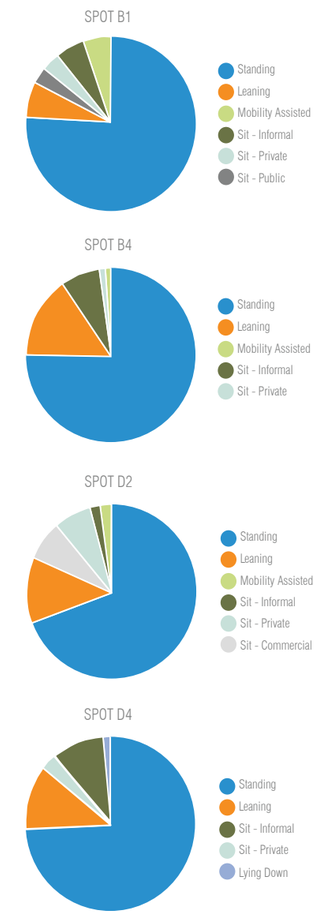
Mid-day counts were performed on both a weekday and weekend day. The most people were observed in Zone 1 in the late evening hours, primarily adults were observed.

AGE & TIME OF DAY - STAYING



Mid-day counts were performed on both a weekday and weekend day. The most people were observed in Zone 1 in the late evening hours, primarily adults were observed with the next highest level being teens and elders.

STAYING POSTURES



ZONE 2 DATA

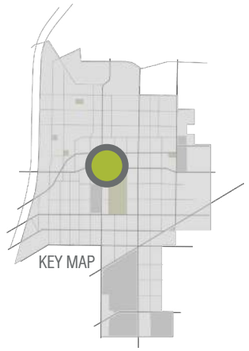
BROADWAY + JOHN ST AREA

OVERVIEW METRICS

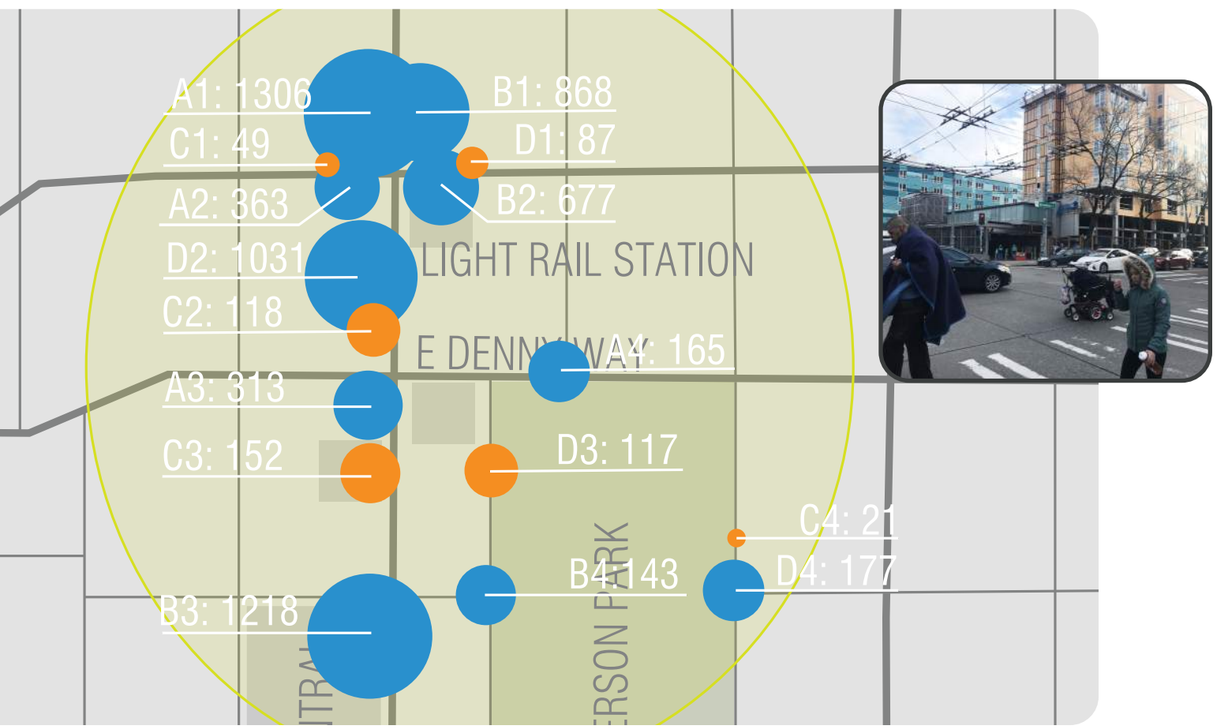
TOTAL PEOPLE OBSERVED:

MOVING: **6,261**

STAYING: **544**



SPOT METRICS



highest number of people observed

MOVING NORTH-SOUTH

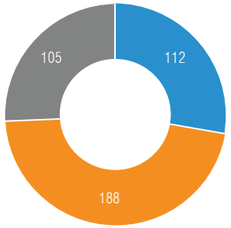
Broadway is home to a dense mixed-use retail corridor and light rail station. More mixed-use developments in this area will increase density in the coming years. Fewer people were observed moving through on the weekend than the weekday. See pages 37-38 of this document for design recommendations based on data.

WEEKEND VS. WEEKDAY

MOVING: 18% LESS people observed on weekend than weekday

STAYING: 6% MORE people observed on weekend than weekday

TOP 3 ACTIVITIES

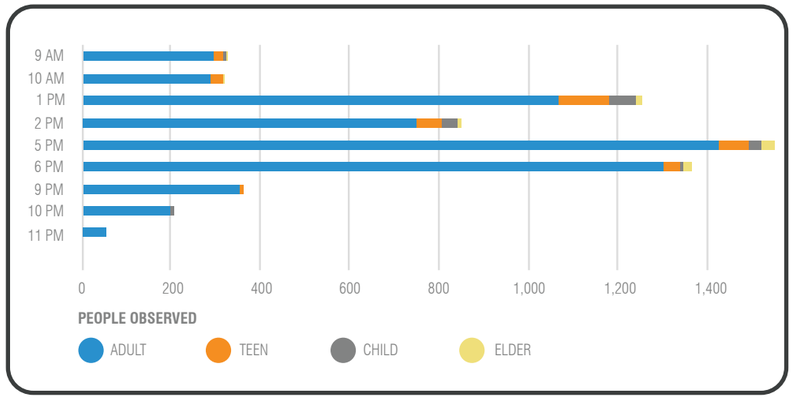


TALKING TO OTHERS

USING ELECTRONICS

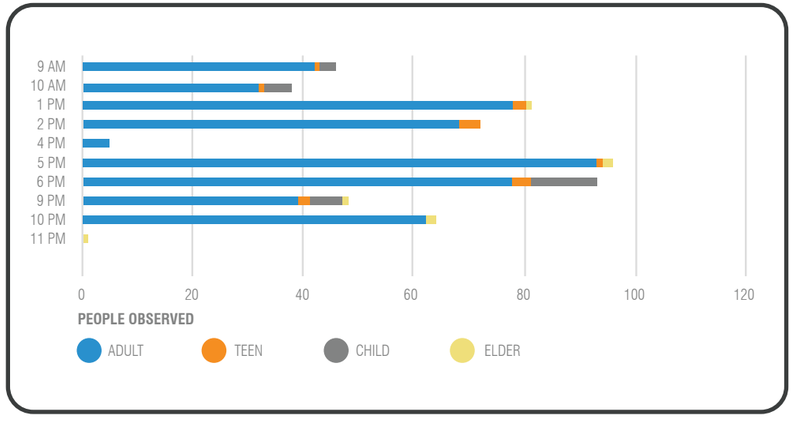
WAITING FOR TRANSPORT

AGE & TIME OF DAY - MOVING



Mid-day counts were performed on both a weekday and weekend day. The highest number of people were observed between 5-6pm.

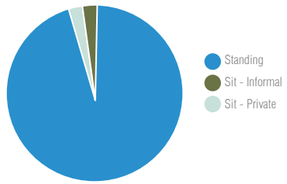
AGE & TIME OF DAY - STAYING



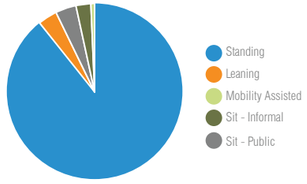
Mid-day counts were performed on both a weekday and weekend day. The highest number of people were observed between 5-6pm.

STAYING POSTURES

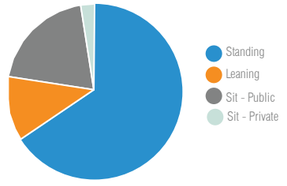
SPOT C2



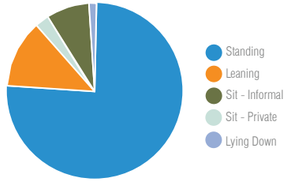
SPOT C3



SPOT D1



SPOT D3



ZONE 3 DATA

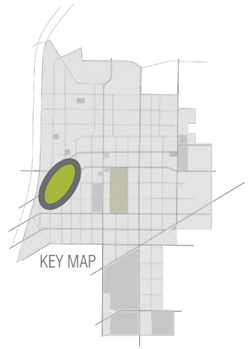
OLIVE + DENNY WAY AREA

OVERVIEW METRICS

TOTAL PEOPLE OBSERVED:

MOVING: **1,567**

STAYING: **302**



SPOT METRICS

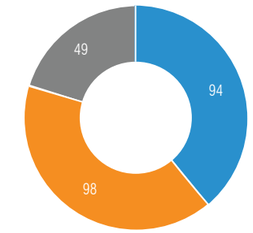
An entry point to Capitol Hill from downtown, the Olive-Denny area observed commuters and lunch and dinner rushes at quirky restaurants and bars. See pages 37-38 of this document for design recommendations based on data.

WEEKEND VS. WEEKDAY

MOVING: 2.4% MORE people observed on weekend than weekday

STAYING: 1.3% LESS people observed on weekend than weekday

TOP 3 ACTIVITIES

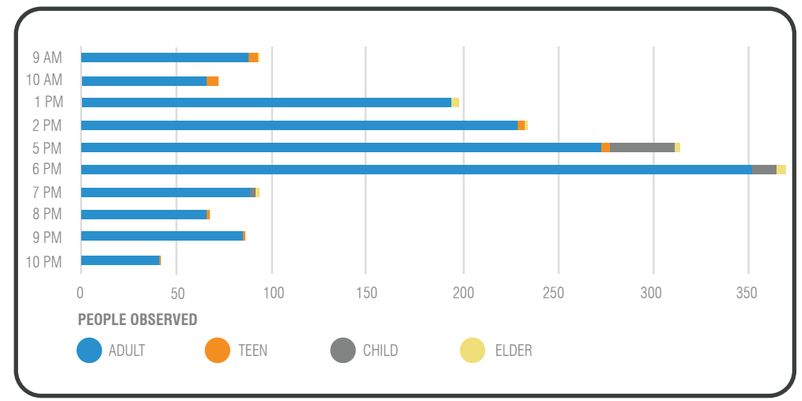


TALKING TO OTHERS

USING ELECTRONICS

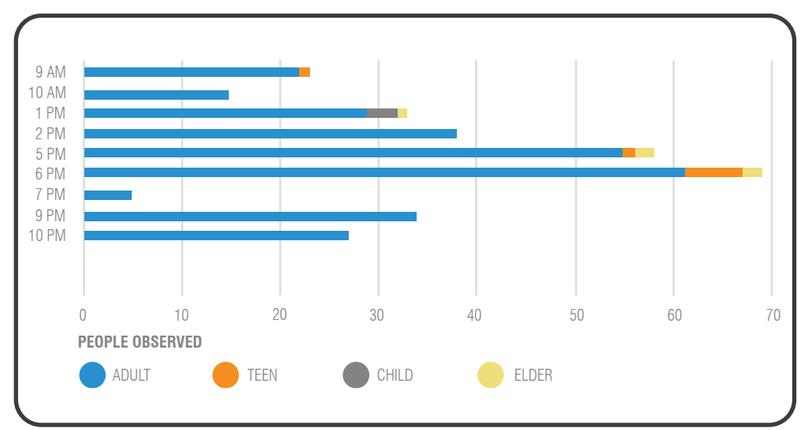
EATING/DRINKING

AGE & TIME OF DAY - MOVING



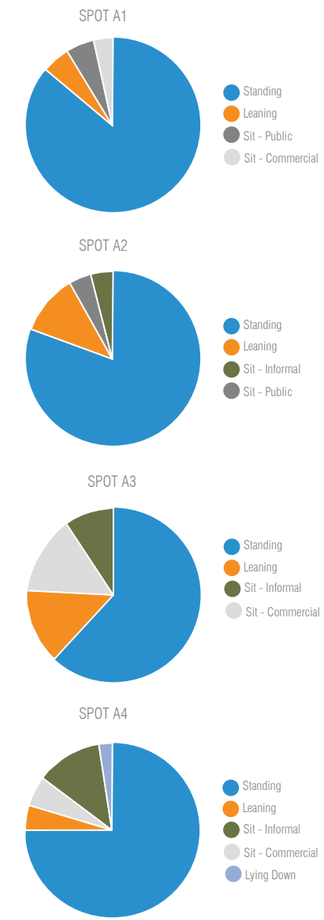
Mid-day counts were performed on both a weekday and weekend day. The highest number of people were observed between 5-6pm.

AGE & TIME OF DAY - STAYING



Mid-day counts were performed on both a weekday and weekend day. The highest number of people were observed between 5-6pm, with the second highest in the afternoon and late evening hours.

STAYING POSTURES



ZONE 4 DATA

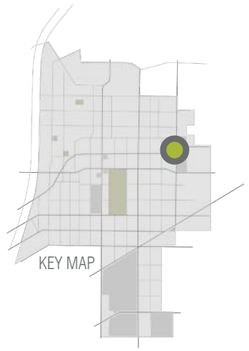
15TH AVE + JOHN ST AREA

OVERVIEW METRICS

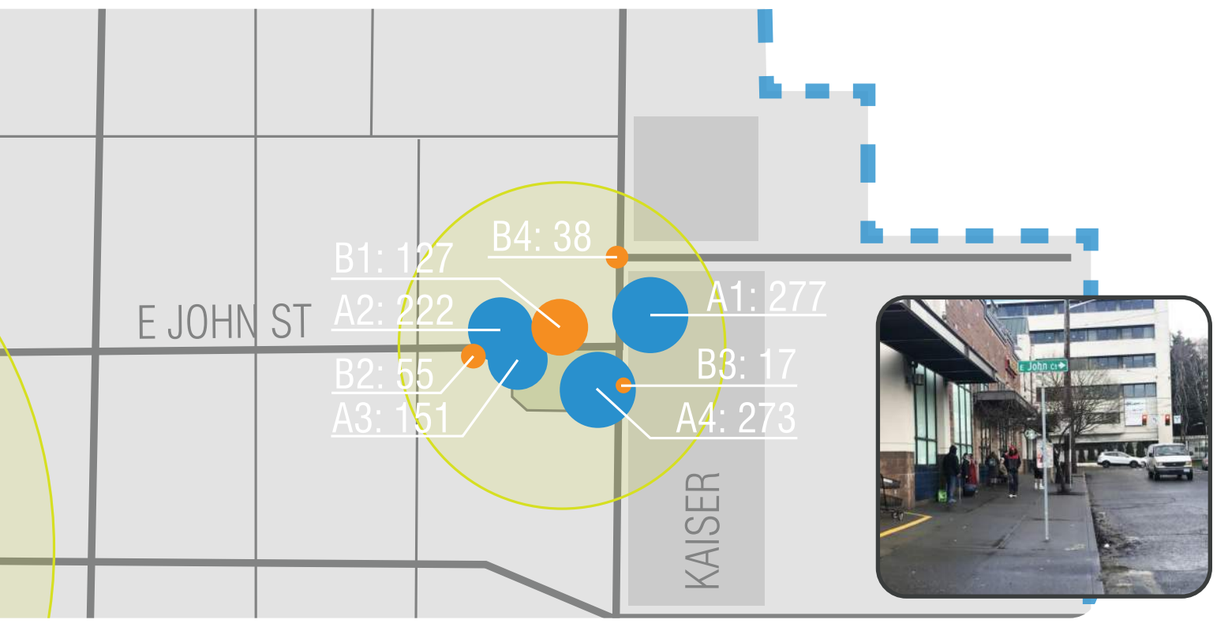
TOTAL PEOPLE OBSERVED:

MOVING: **923**

STAYING: **237**



SPOT METRICS



A quiet, primarily residential and small-scale retail area of Capitol Hill, the counts from 15th Ave and John St reflect the proximity of transit, people commuting, and waiting for the bus. Most people observed staying in the area were waiting for transportation. See pages 37-38 of this document for design recommendations based on data.

highest number of people observed

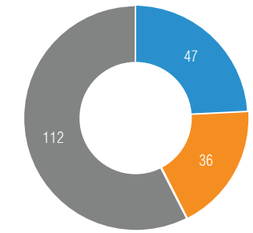
WAITING FOR TRANSPORTATION (BUS)

WEEKEND VS. WEEKDAY

MOVING: 39% LESS people observed on weekend than weekday

STAYING: 2% LESS people observed on weekend than weekday

TOP 3 ACTIVITIES

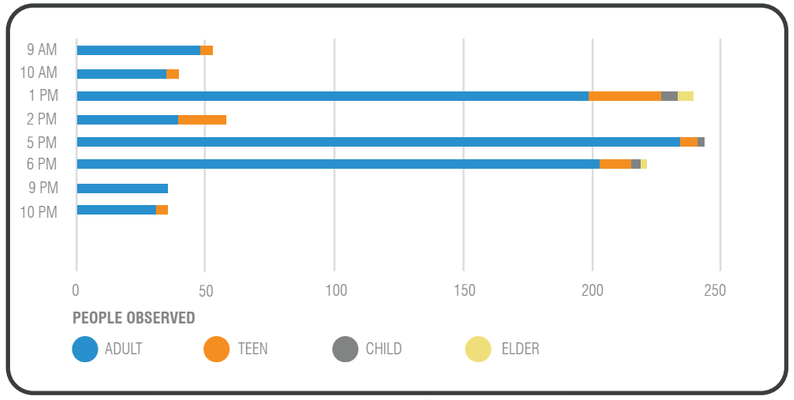


WAITING FOR TRANSPORT

USING ELECTRONICS

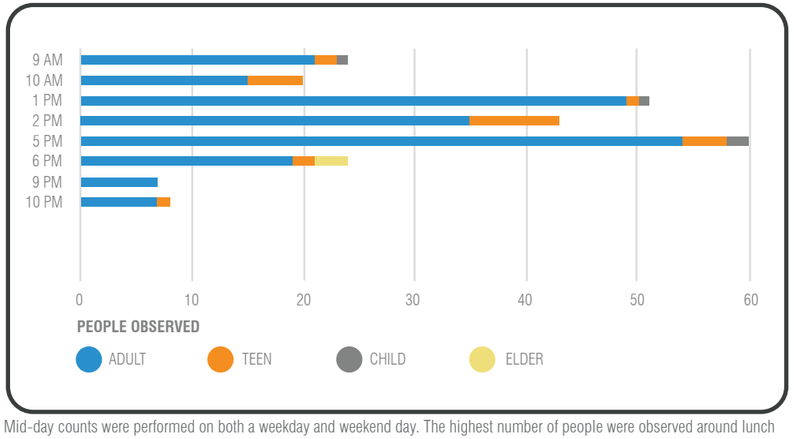
TALKING TO OTHERS

AGE & TIME OF DAY - MOVING



Mid-day counts were performed on both a weekday and weekend day. The highest number of people were observed around lunch time and between 5-6pm.

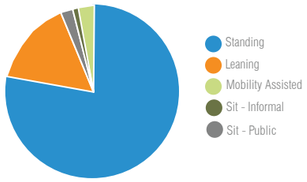
AGE & TIME OF DAY - STAYING



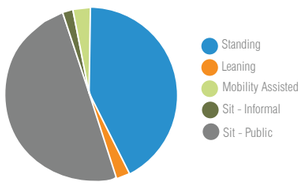
Mid-day counts were performed on both a weekday and weekend day. The highest number of people were observed around lunch time and between 5-6pm.

STAYING POSTURES

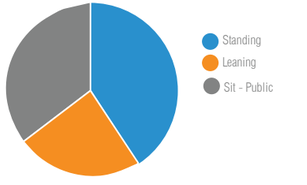
SPOT B1



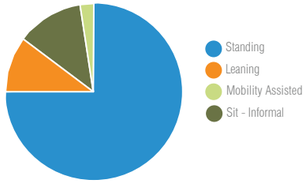
SPOT B2



SPOT B3



SPOT B4



OVERALL FINDINGS

DISTRICT

The highest volume of people were observed during rush hour and in late evening hours, 7x more people were observed moving than staying in public space. More people were generally observed on weekends than weekdays, except in Zone 3 and Zone 4.

92% ADULTS of all people observed

15,215 MOVING vs. **1,968 STAYING**

58% of staying counts observed people **LIVING IN PUBLIC***

(*114/196 staying count worksheets noted people living in public)

ZONE 1

Few people out during the day, primarily commuters and night life observed. This zone has many popular bars, restaurants, and cultural activities, like music venues where people were observed out in groups.

highest number of

PEOPLE OBSERVED IN GROUPS

ZONE 2

Highest volume of people observed at the north and south ends of this zone. This area has three light rail entry/exit points, a large mixed-use project under development, and an existing mixed-use corridor.

highest number of people observed

MOVING NORTH-SOUTH

ZONE 3

People observed staying were higher in the late evening hours than people observed moving. Small, quirky bars and restaurants with outdoor seating are an attraction in the evening hours.

highest number of people observed

MOVING EAST-WEST ON PINE ST

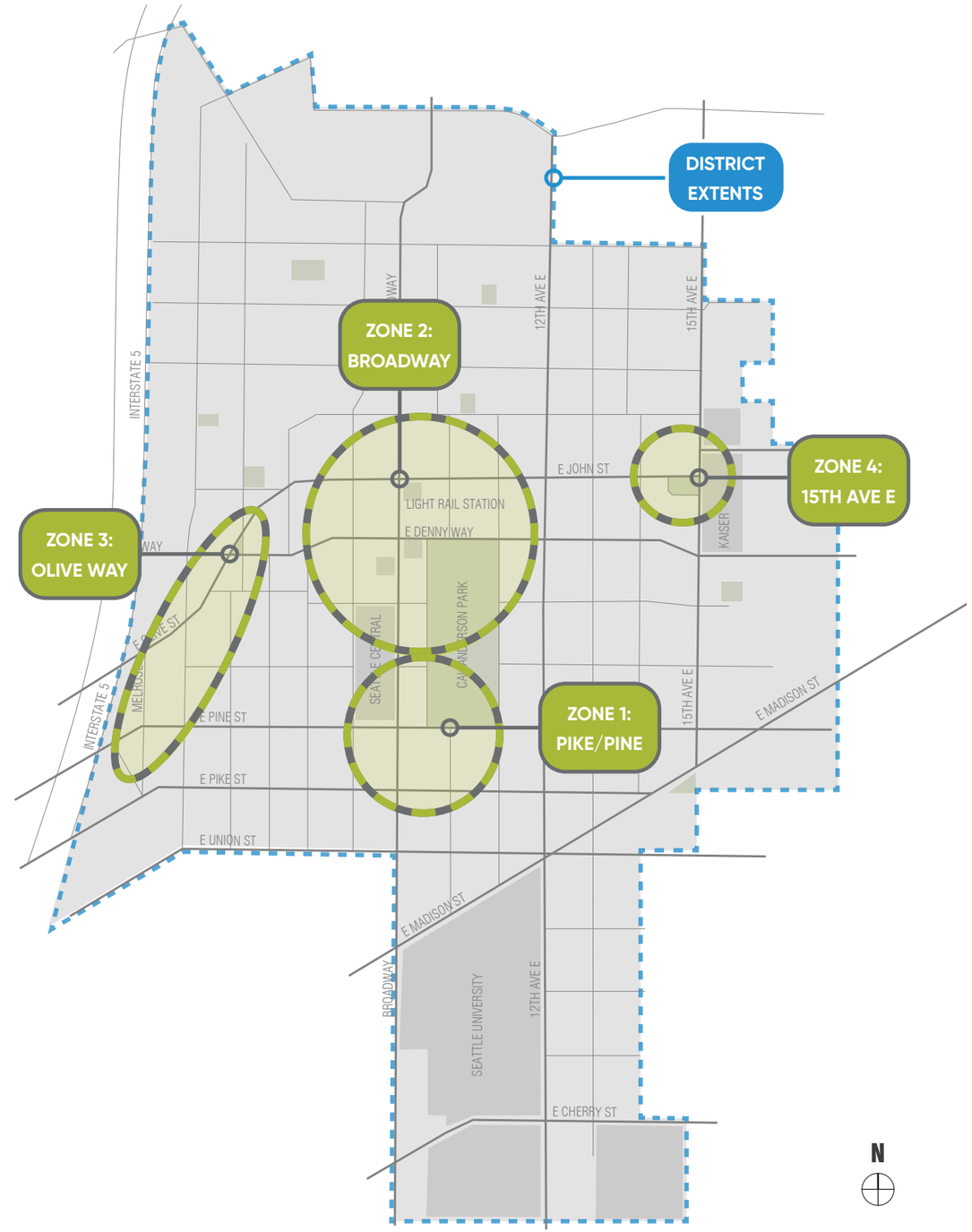
(2x more than on Denny or Olive Way)

ZONE 4

Primarily commuters observed, very few people observed staying in the zone. A large grocery store, medical campus, two bus stops, and small park make up this 3-way intersection.

highest number of people observed

WAITING FOR TRANSPORTATION (BUS)



Residents of Capitol Hill's many small-scale residential neighborhoods depend on the proximity of major instituions and transit corridors that keep the neighborhood walkable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

DATA-DRIVEN DESIGN

Public space should be equitable and responsive. Data-driven design can be used to enhance existing uses and explore different ways public space can support public life. By working in partnership with community members, local business owners, and developers, designers can shape our urban edges to fit the social, economic and environmental needs of the neighborhood. The following sketches outline ideas for study areas where data and observations suggest public life can be improved through simple, site-specific design.

ZONE 1

CAL ANDERSON PARK
SOUTH ENTRANCE

- Very few people were observed staying on this block face despite being a high foot traffic area in proximity to businesses.
- The south entrance to the park feels closed-off, with little space to linger.
- Removing visual barriers to create a permeable plaza could open up the entrance and provide space for gathering, temporary food stands, and create seat walls to take advantage of solar exposure and people-watching.

ZONE 2

CAL ANDERSON PARK
NORTH ENTRANCE

- Close to a new Light Rail Station, staying and moving counts were low on this block face compared to other areas in this zone.
- The west parcel parallel to the park is undergoing major development and the park edge may need to adapt to better facilitate public life along Nagle Pl.
- Creating a tabled slow street makes Nagle Pl more pedestrian friendly and enhances the park edge, while an informal seating edge and more green space invite visitors to linger.

ZONE 3

OLIVE WAY

- A high foot traffic intersection, few people were observed lingering, despite south and west solar exposure.
- While the sidewalk is narrow, the local businesses and solar gain make this a missed opportunity for public life.
- Adding a bench to the edge of the building creates a comfortable spot to sit. A curb bulb out or building setback could further expand the potential of this space.

ZONE 4

JOHN STREET

- This block face had the highest number of people staying in this zone. Most were observed waiting for the bus. High numbers of pedestrians were also observed here.
- A wide sidewalk and blank building facade offer little comfort to people waiting for the bus, standing and leaning were the two most observed staying postures.
- Adding lean bars, trash cans, and delineating walking space from the bus stop creates a functional transit stop for many users.

Seattle icons and historically significant landmarks are critical to maintaining public life and neighborhood character.

EXAMPLE WORKSHEETS

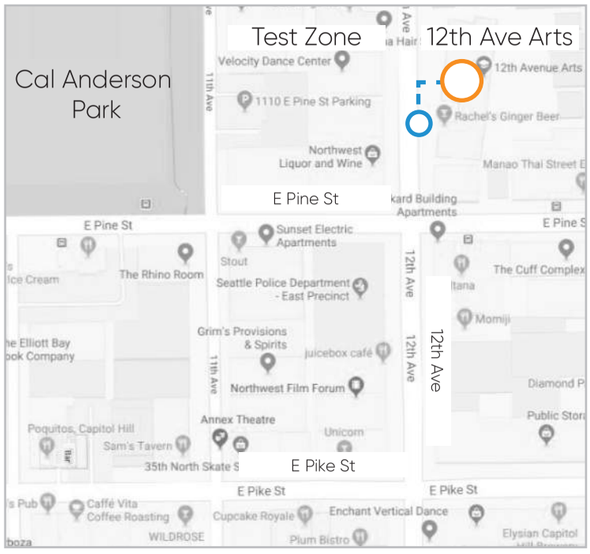
DIRECTIONS: TEST ZONE - 12TH Ave

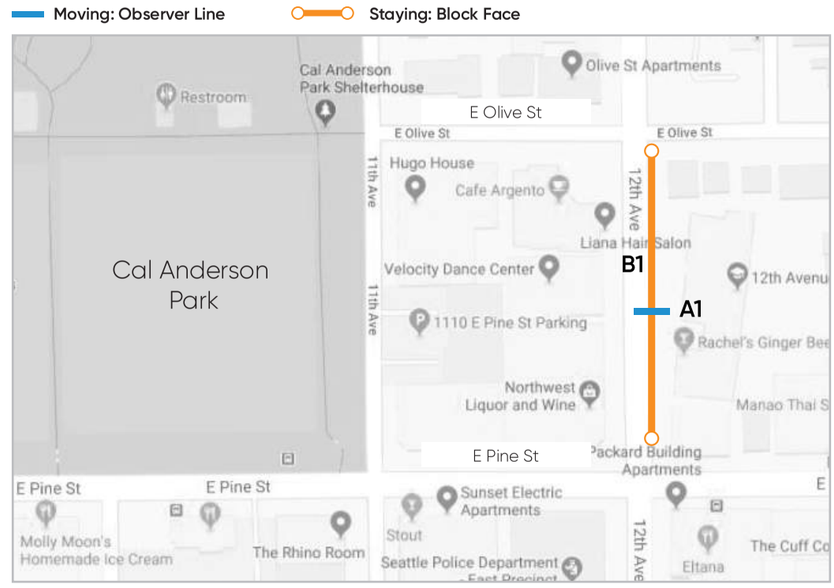
Walking directions from 12th Avenue Arts to Test Zone

- Walk downstairs
- Exit through front doors
- Arrive at Test Zone - 12th Ave
- 1 minute walk

Test Zone data collection instructions

- **Role A - People Moving Through**
- **Role B - People Staying Still**
- Move to Spot "1" for your Role per the diagram below, standing out of the way of activity, approximately mid block.
- Record data for ten (10) minutes on the appropriate data collection form.
- Regroup to ask questions.
- Go to your Zone and find your first data collection Spot on the map to get started!





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Public Life Counts - Capitol Hill
Fall 2019

PEOPLE MOVING THROUGH

Time:	Role:
Zone:	Spot:

	adult (18-64)	elder (65+)	teen (11-17)	child (<10)	total
not mobility assisted walking					
mobility assisted*					
alternate transport*					
walking pet(s)					
total					

Notable Events

- ☐ cultural/communal event - music performance, block party, street artists, etc.
- ☐ political/religious activity - rallies, demonstrations, public preaching, etc.
- ☐ commercial event - temporary food trucks, street vendors, farmers markets, etc.
- ☐ accident/emergency - car crash, fire, illness, etc.
- ☐ roadwork/construction - street ruptures, noise, diversions, etc.
- ☐ none
- ☐ other:

Weather

temperature (F):

- ☐ sun – exposed
- ☐ sun – shaded
- ☐ light clouds
- ☐ heavy clouds
- ☐ light rain
- ☐ heavy rain
- ☐ fog

Observations:

***DEFINITIONS:**

alternate transport: hover board, scooter, bicycle, etc.
mobility assisted: walker, wheelchair, cane, etc.

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Public Life Counts - Capitol Hill
Fall 2019

PEOPLE STAYING STILL

Time:	Role:
Zone:	Spot:

		approximate age				posture							obj	activity							observations
number	group size	adult (18-64)	elder (65+)	teen (11-17)	child (<10)	standing	leaning	sitting frml - public	sitting frml - comm.	sitting frml -private	sitting informal	lying down	mobility assist device*	eating/drinking	talking to others	using electronics	passive recreation*	waiting for trasnport	with pets	living in public*	
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- ☐ other:

Weather

temperature (F):

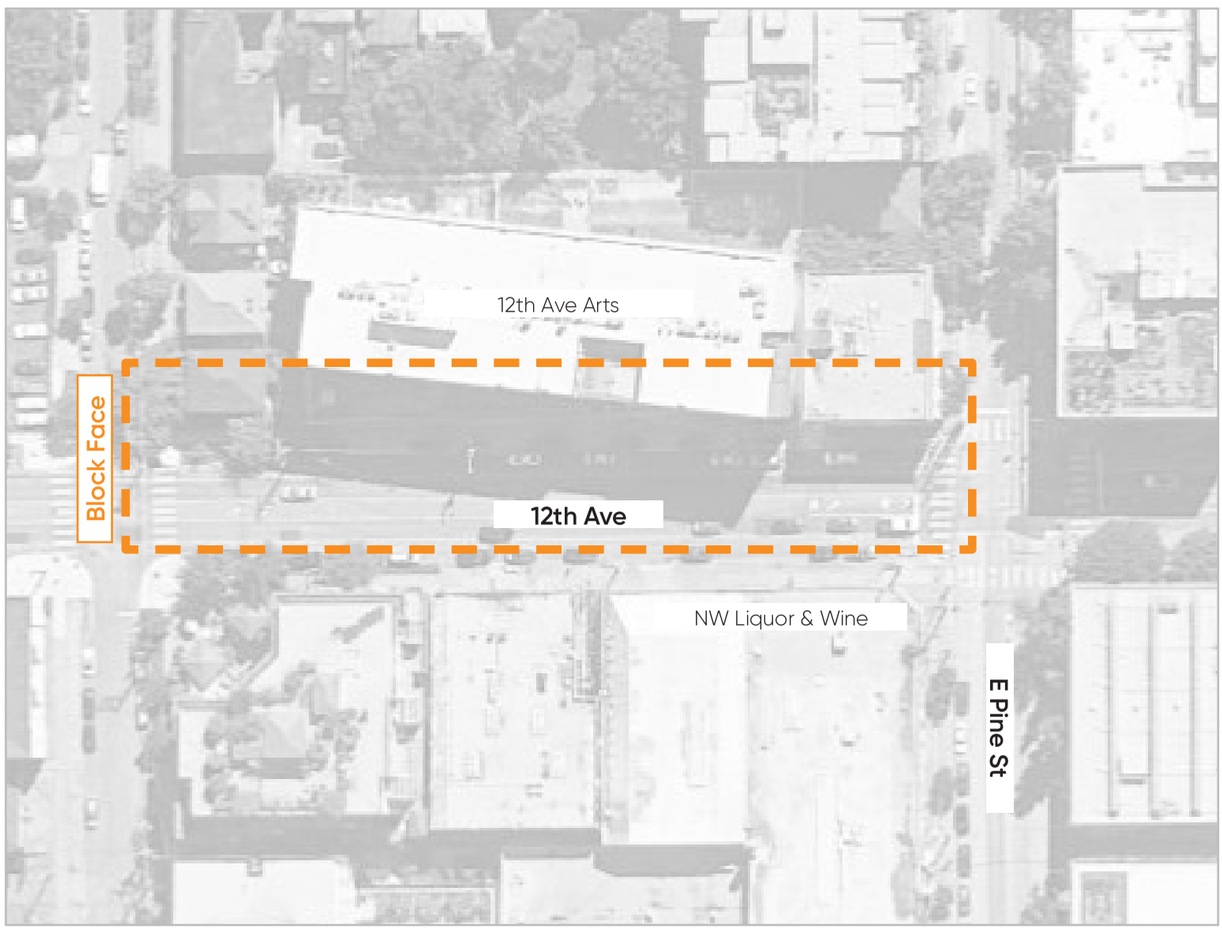
- ☐ sun – exposed
- ☐ sun – shaded
- ☐ light clouds
- ☐ heavy clouds
- ☐ light rain
- ☐ heavy rain
- ☐ fog

***DEFINITIONS:**
mobility assist device: walker, wheelchair, cane, etc.
passive recreation: reading, playing games, cards
living in public: tent, sleeping bag, many personal items

TEST ZONE: Role B - Spot 1

mark the relative location of each observed group/person Staying Still

Observations:



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