

# BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY

ENVISIONING  
THRIVING FUTURES  
FOR BLACK CHURCHES IN  
SEATTLE'S CENTRAL DISTRICT

MCKINLEY FUTURES  
NEHEMIAH STUDIO

at the  
University of Washington  
College of Built Environments

in partnership with  
The Nehemiah Initiative

University Instructors:  
Rachel Berney, UDP  
Renée Cheng, CBE  
Donald King, ARCH  
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Autumn 2019



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**2019 MCKINLEY FUTURES NEHEMIAH STUDIO**  
a partnership of  
The Nehemiah Initiative &  
The McKinley Futures Studio at the  
University of Washington, College of Built Environments (CBE)



*Dr. Mark Jones, Dean Renée Cheng, Executive Director Greg Lewis, and Pastor Ezra Maize listening to final studio presentations*  
TARA BROWN

## THE MCKINLEY FUTURES NEHEMIAH STUDIO

The Nehemiah Studio was the 2019 McKinley Futures Studio at the College of Built Environments (CBE) at the University of Washington. This studio book showcases the work of graduate and undergraduate students of architecture, landscape architecture, real estate, urban design, and planning. Working in teams, the students were challenged to speculate about how to envision, design, and finance the highest and best “Beloved Community use” for three Black churches and their properties in Seattle’s Central District.

Our thanks to David and Jan McKinley for their endowment to the CBE, which supports the McKinley Futures Studio and other work in the college. We dedicate this book to David McKinley, 1930-2019.

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**Available at:** [nehemiahinitiativeseattle.org](http://nehemiahinitiativeseattle.org)

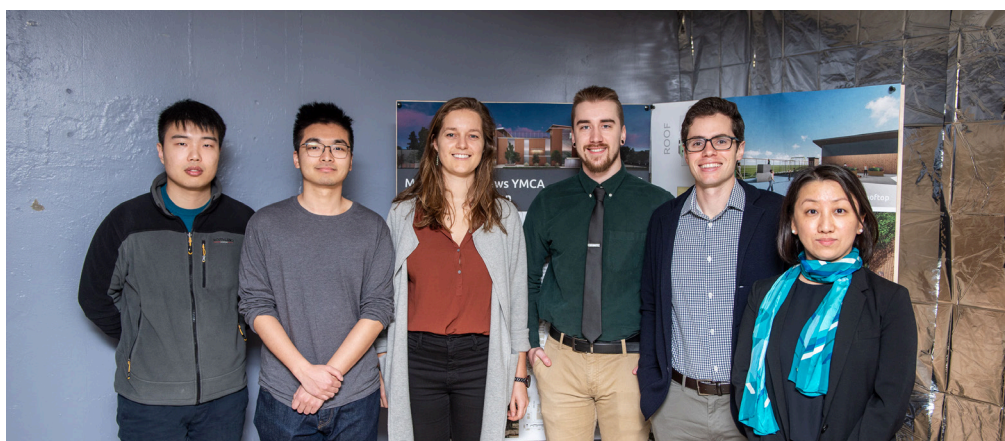
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*Goodwill student team with Bishop and First Lady Tyson* TARA BROWN



*Mt. Baker student team* TARA BROWN



*Ebenezer/Y student team* TARA BROWN

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Greater Mt. Baker Baptist Church  
Pastor Kenneth J. Ransfer, Sr.  
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Al Levine, RE



*Jim Suehiro and Rachel Berney* TEACHING TEAM

## ***Teaching Assistant***

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank **Jan** and **David McKinley** for making this studio possible through their generosity in creating the Jeanette and David McKinley Endowment and for inspiring futures dialogues at the College.

In the **College of Built Environments**, we would like to express our gratitude to the Dean's Office: Renée Cheng, Dean of the College; Brittany Faulkner, Assistant to the Dean; and Rachel Ward, Assistant Dean of Finance. We greatly appreciate the flexibility and support of the Department Chairs, especially Christopher Campbell and Pike Oliver, as this studio quickly morphed into being. From the Advancement Office, we would like to thank Edgar Gonzalez, former Assistant Dean for Advancement and External Relations; Alexandra Haslam, Assistant Dean for Advancement and External Relations; and Erika Harris, Director of Marketing and Communications.

Thank you to our **client partners** and their networks: Bishop Garry L. Tyson of Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church, Pastor Kenneth J. Ransfer Sr. of Greater Mt. Baker Baptist Church, Pastor Ezra Maize of Ebenezer AME Zion Church, and Executive Director Greg Lewis of the Meredith Mathews East Madison YMCA. Thank you to the members of **The Nehemiah Initiative** for their enthusiastic support.

The studio and seminar would not have been possible without the support of many public servants, professionals, church members, and scholars. Their generosity greatly enhanced the knowledge, experience, and, ultimately, the work of the students.

Thank you to these **friends of the Nehemiah Studio**: Team members from the Greater Seattle YMCA Executive Leadership Office, especially Loria Yeadon, President & CEO; Branden Born, UW Dept. of Urban Design & Planning; Catherine De Almeida and Julie Parrett, UW Dept. of Landscape Architecture; Hal Ferris, Spectrum Development Solutions; Ubax Gardheere, Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development; Kathleen Hosfeld, Homestead CLT; Julie Howe, Urban Evolution; Quanlin Hu, Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development; Dr. Mark R. Jones, Sunyata Group; Grace Kim and Margaret Knight, Schemata Workshop; Ellen Kissman, Yesler Community Collaborative; Scott Matthews, Vulcan; Dan Miller, Intracrop Homes; Ishmael Nuñez, BDS Associates; and Jim Suehiro, architect and friend of the McKinleys and CBE.

We thank the **students** for their dedication, risk-taking, and hard work across the quarter. Their energy and imaginations are apparent in the work they produced and the futures they envision. Thank you to our wonderful **TA**, Yuyi Wang, doctoral student in the Built Environment Ph.D. program

Thank you to the **graphics and editing team**: Cheryl Klotz, Liza Higbee-Robinson, Mila Fakhrutdinova, and Elizabeth Lange.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this studio and the client projects a reality.



The Nehemiah Initiative was first described to me as a group of Black church leaders and community advocates who gathered to discuss how they could preserve and build upon the cultural importance of their communities in the context of Seattle's rapidly gentrifying Central District. When I met with Initiative members, I was struck by the palpability of their energy, camaraderie, commitment, and expertise. As Dean of the College of Built Environments, I realized what a wonderful opportunity it would be to bring our students and faculty into their community, as well as the contribution I could make by bringing my research interests in equity and design to the table.

I was honored to be included as part of the Nehemiah Studio faculty team. I taught the seminar, Equitable Practices, which accompanied the studio. An important topic of discourse for our students was gentrification as it impacts Seattle's historically Black neighborhoods, and, more specifically, how its unfolding in the Central District threatens the survival of the Black church. We know that the impacts of gentrification are not all negative and that many of the adverse outcomes were not intentionally created. However, our commitment is to the creation of pathways for communities to heal from past inequities and thrive in an equitable and inclusive future. For our College, this begins with equipping our graduates with the requisite cultural understanding and intercultural fluency to use their financial, design, and planning expertise in service of an equitable and inclusive future. We train students to be aware of how their cultural mindsets affected the way that they listened to and perceived the needs of the church leaders and others who visited the classroom.

We are grateful to The Nehemiah Initiative and to all community members who opened their doors and welcomed us so warmly. The work documented in this book is the start of what is building as a sustained effort, one that involves several groups of students and faculty from our College, as well as others at the University of Washington. This work would not have been possible without the vision of David and Jan McKinley. Their support of the McKinley Futures Studio was essential for providing the resources required to deepen our engagement at the College. Though we sadly lost David shortly after the final review of this work, we are grateful that we could share the impact of his vision for a positive social future, represented by the Nehemiah Studio.

***Renée Cheng, FAIA, DPACSA, NOMA, is an architect, educator, and researcher who focuses on building equity, diversity, and inclusion through her work. She is Dean of the College of Built Environments and enjoys teaching when her schedule allows.***

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# STUDIO & SEMINAR OVERVIEW



Donald King leading class on a site visit TEACHING TEAM

## STUDIO

This autumn 2019 interdisciplinary studio involved faculty and students from Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Real Estate, and Urban Design & Planning in the College of Built Environments (CBE) at the University of Washington. The studio became the first of several CBE studios during the 2019-2020 school year to collaborate with The Nehemiah Initiative (NI).



Development panel answering student questions in the studio TEACHING TEAM

## NEHEMIAH INITIATIVE

Through the leadership of Bishop Garry L. Tyson of Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church, The Nehemiah Initiative formed in 2018 to regenerate and support the Central District community. The vision includes retaining Black churches in their historic locations, maintaining ownership of church properties, developing the properties to generate a financially sustainable future, and bringing their members back to the neighborhood to live, play, and pray.



Goodwill team in studio TEACHING TEAM

Black churches have been the community's heart, providing safe spaces for gathering, activism, education, social services, and spiritual uplift. The Nehemiah Initiative envisions a future where Black churches continue to fulfill these vital functions for their communities in their church homes in the Central District.

With NI members and four client partners who represent significant institutions on three sites—Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church, Greater Mt. Baker Baptist Church, and Ebenezer AME Zion Church/ Meredith Mathews East Madison Y—three student teams developed scenarios based on both “highest and best use” and community- and church-focused agendas.



Goodwill team members at the whiteboard TEACHING TEAM

## BELOVED COMMUNITY USE

The process led us to create an approach we call “highest and best Beloved Community use” that merges market considerations with client needs and desires, site constraints, zoning, neighborhood needs, and stakeholder input within the framework of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr’s vision of Beloved Community.

## SEMINAR

Dean Renée Cheng taught an integrated seminar to improve students’ intercultural communication abilities. Using the CBE’s Equity Diversity and Inclusion program, students completed training and participated in discussion to develop their communication skills across disciplines and with client partners and stakeholders. In-class sessions included presentations on Beloved Community development by Dr. Mark Jones and creating Black-affirming public spaces by Ishmael Nuñez (MUP 2019).

## OBJECTIVES

The studio objectives coordinated with the three major assignments.

1. Conduct an analysis for the site, including a market and cost analysis.
2. Draft a preliminary development proposal that prioritizes client feedback, including a suitability and development analysis.
3. Develop a final development proposal including phasing to present the team’s recommendations for “highest and best Beloved Community use.”

At each step, the teams presented a graphic and oral presentation to the clients, faculty, and studio mentors and guests.

**Rachel Berney, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Urban Design & Planning, served as the coordinator of the 2019 McKinley Futures Nehemiah Studio.**



Ishmael Nuñez and Dean Renée Cheng teaching class TEACHING TEAM



EbenezerY team brainstorming TEACHING TEAM



Mt. Baker team presenting their final proposal TARA BROWN

# THE NEHEMIAH INITIATIVE

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Many churches succumb to selling without considering other options to stay.

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More than a dozen churches in the Central District have sold and moved or sold and closed over the last 10 years.

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## VISION

Nehemiah is the sixteenth book of the Old Testament; it draws on the teachings and traditions of a regenerated community. In this spirit, a group of church leaders and community advocates formed The Nehemiah Initiative in 2018 to regenerate Seattle's Central District amid rampant gentrification and displacement of the African American population. The Nehemiah Initiative's aim is to build a Beloved Community in accord with the vision of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., himself a Baptist preacher who organized in predominantly Black churches. King envisioned the Beloved Community as a society based on justice, equal opportunity, and love of one's fellow human beings. The Initiative supports retaining church members as residents in the neighborhoods of their churches and works to entice members who have moved away to return to the Central District through new housing developed by the churches.

## THE CHALLENGE TO REMAIN IN SEATTLE'S CENTRAL DISTRICT

There's little doubt that members of The Nehemiah Initiative face immense challenge in their efforts to combat displacement of African Americans from Seattle's Central District. When you drive through the Central District today, you see gentrification in its stark reality. New market-rate apartment buildings line the intersections of 23rd Ave & E Union St and 23rd Ave & S Jackson St. Rising property values and higher property taxes have forced the sale of formerly affordable homes and businesses in what was once a redlined section of the city. The attractiveness of the Central District's proximity to downtown, its historic housing stock, and its mature tree-lined streets further contribute to the pressures that push many Black families to sell their homes and leave the neighborhood.

As is the case with many Black churches in Seattle, gentrification has been both a blessing and a curse, leaving churches property-rich and cash-poor. To elaborate on this point, The Nehemiah Initiative estimates that the seven largest Black churches in Seattle own more than seven acres of property, with a total appraised value of more than \$65 million. However, as church members sell their homes and move south to homes they can afford, churches suffer financially—the result of shrinking tithings and Sunday offerings. Subsequently, many churches succumb to selling without considering other options to stay, such as leveraging underdeveloped portions of their properties.

## THE NEHEMIAH INITIATIVE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH UW COLLEGE OF BUILT ENVIRONMENTS

The Nehemiah Initiative launched in 2018 and has met every week for over a year to explore options for historically Black churches to retain ownership of their properties throughout the Central District. According to the Initiative's leader, Bishop Garry Tyson of Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church, more than a dozen churches in the Central District have sold and moved or sold and closed over the last 10 years.

The Initiative proposes development strategies that avoid removal of churches, such as repurposing underused portions of church properties (e.g., surface parking lots). Such strategies will require churches to rethink their business models while exploring new means of income generation. New income-generating sources may take the form of rents from rental housing, sale of condominiums, and leasing of land for housing and commercial development per city of Seattle zoning ordinances and affordable housing production incentives.

With the help of graduate students from the University of Washington's College of Built Environments, the Initiative explored the future of three church sites: Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church, Greater Mt. Baker Baptist Church, and Ebenezer AME Zion Church/Meredith Mathews East Madison YMCA. The McKinley Futures Nehemiah Studio, made up of students and faculty from nearly every department in the College, supported the real estate, urban design, and planning needs of The Nehemiah Initiative in its preliminary work-scoping phase. The variety of development options created by the students for the three sites can serve as a template for churches seeking to develop in order to survive. Community-based development of Central District church properties is a hopeful alternative to their displacement, and may be their last stand.

**Donald I. King, FAIA, NOMA, is an architect and 35-year resident of the Central District. He is an Affiliate Professor of Architecture in the University of Washington's College of Built Environments.**

This piece first appeared in a slightly different form in *Crosscut* on December 9, 2019.

## DISPARITY THREATENS RETENTION OF SEATTLE'S BLACK POPULATION

The Central District has been the historic home to Seattle's African Americans for over 130 years, representing the largest enclave of African Americans on the west coast north of California. In the 1970s, more than 70% of the Central District was Black; today, less than 14% of the neighborhood is Black. The average annual income of Black families in Seattle is \$37,696, compared to \$125,824 for White families. About 24% of Seattle's Black families own their homes, compared to 50% of the city's White families.

This disparity reflects a systemic inequity that makes it incredibly difficult for Black families to build wealth in real estate in Seattle, which consistently ranks among the country's most expensive housing markets. These economic pressures also make it exceedingly difficult for Black worship centers to maintain their former status as places of Black social cohesion and community activism. These markers of disparity combined with gentrification of the Central District threaten to displace Seattle's Black population.

# THE BLACK CHURCH IN SEATTLE

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Circumstances reveal a causal relationship between the decline of Seattle's African American population and the loss of once thriving, predominantly Black churches.

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At the 74th anniversary service of Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church in the Central District of Seattle, Ezra Maize, senior pastor of the local Ebenezer AME Zion Church, invited four people from the service up to the front of the church to play the roles of the Lion, Tin Man, Scarecrow, and Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz. Pastor Maize then demonstrated that the Oz story portrays how we can all recognize our innate strengths and abilities, vanquish evil, and reveal false prophets. The theatrical performance highlights spiritual principles of the contemporary Black church and its congregants.

Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church is one of the more than twenty-five churches in Central Seattle with predominantly African American congregants. Most of us are familiar with the music, choir, and lively congregational interactions characteristic of the traditional Black church. Pastor Maize's staging during the anniversary service represented another distinction of the contemporary Black church—its utilization of theater as a means for delivering sermons of faith, hope, joy, self-improvement, and social justice.

Bishop Garry Tyson, senior pastor of Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church, has proclaimed his church no longer just a church in the community, but a "community church." This distinction alludes to the role of the Black church in the building and maintaining of community in Seattle's Central District.



*Members of the Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church congregation sing together during a morning service on Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019. DOROTHY EDWARDS, CROSSCUT*

## BLACK CHURCHES MATTER

Many churches throughout Seattle face shrinking congregations and changes in their community demographics, which reflect challenges posed by gentrification and displacement. However, past and current circumstances reveal a causal relationship between the decline of Seattle's African American population and the loss of once thriving, predominantly Black churches. These churches matter.

Bishop Tyson says that "God is being gentrified out of the Central District." According to the Bishop, over a dozen Black churches have sold and closed or sold and moved within the past 10 years. However, there is a general lack of awareness of the unique place occupied by churches in the history of African American communities. More specifically, few grasp the connection of these closures as another bellwether of Black displacement from Central Seattle.

Pastor Maize is newly-arrived to Seattle. He relocated from New York City last year to head a church steeped in 90 years of Central District history: Ebenezer AME Zion Church. He recognizes the challenges gentrification presents to him and his church members. In spite of this, he and his congregation are committed to remaining in the Central District and to continuing their mission there:

*"To increase our love for God and to help meet the needs of humankind by loving God with all our heart, all our soul and all our mind, and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves."*

## BUILDING COMMUNITY

Historically, Black churches have been the nexus of African American communities. As places of social confluence that helped African Americans cope with the impacts of slavery and racial segregation, these religious institutions serve as more than worship centers. They are the social gathering places that historically facilitated community-building in neighborhoods established by Black populations migrating from the south during post-Civil-War and Jim-Crow-era repression.

Over the decades, the Black church has become a safe haven for African Americans to organize events and empower themselves through the sharing of information on jobs, housing, and political action not available to them elsewhere. Urban churches in particular have offered an array of outreach services, encouraging congregants to help reform prison inmates, visit hospitals to assist the sick, and provide food and clothing for the indigent. The Black church has been the "go to" place for resettlement of the newly arrived.

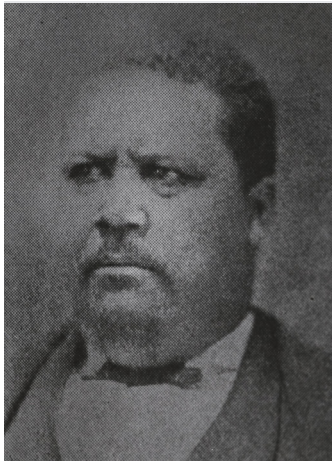
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They are the social gathering places that historically facilitated community-building in neighborhoods.

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## FOUNDING OF SEATTLE'S FIRST BLACK CHURCHES

The first Black resident of Seattle was Manuel Lopez, a merchant seaman, who arrived in Seattle from New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1858. The second pioneering Black resident was William Grose, who arrived in 1861. Each established himself as a property and business owner.



*William Grose, circa 1870*  
SEATTLE TIMES

William Grose purchased 12 acres of land and opened a hotel and restaurant near today's E Madison St and 23rd Ave area, including the site of Ebenezer AME Zion and the Meredith Mathews East Madison YMCA. This neighborhood became known as Grose Farm, an area in Seattle characterized by the settlement of Black residents during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

At this time, Seattle's predominantly White population practiced racial tolerance, though many cautioned that the growth of the Black community could be problematic. The population did not view limited opportunities for African Americans as a problem. Meanwhile, the Black population felt itself too small for self-definition as a Black community. As a result, Black community building relied upon nationally-networked organizations and institutions, including nationally-associated churches.

The first Black church in Seattle was the Jones Street African Methodist Episcopal Church (now First AME Church). It was founded in 1891 by the Reverend L.S. Blakeney, Seaborn Collins, Alfred Freeman, and George Grose, the son of William Grose. Owing its strength to the national network of AME churches, Seattle's First AME Church went on to become a community hub for the next 129 years. The local AME network of churches included congregations in several cities across the Pacific Northwest.



*African American homesteaders settling the west, late 1800s* NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



Equally significant, the second Black church founded in Seattle was Mt. Zion Baptist Church, on E Madison St. The Reverend Heseekiah Rice, along with eight original members, established the church in 1894. Until the first church building was constructed in downtown Seattle, they rented a hall on the University of Washington campus.

Although the members of these early churches came from predominantly White churches, the Black churches they formed distinguished themselves through their lively service style of hand-clapping, instrumental music, and singing.



*Seattle's Mt. Zion Baptist Church, circa 1906* MT. ZION

## ORIGINS OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



The national African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church was founded in 1816 by Bishop Richard Allen, a member of the predominantly White Methodist church.

On August 12, 1792 Allen and members of the Free African Society established The African Church of Philadelphia. They did so to free themselves from the racial intolerance of the Methodist Church.

After several iterations, members of the Free African Church established the African Methodist Episcopal Church which eventually grew into a national network of 7,000 congregations.

*Richard Allen, circa 1820* PARTNERSHIP FOR PROGRESS

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Social justice and political activism became the hallmark of the Black church.

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## CHURCHES AS CENTERS FOR EMPOWERMENT, ADVANCEMENT & ACTIVISM

Seattle's small, isolated African American community of the 1890s relied on churches as spaces for self-expression and as centers of empowerment, wherein their unrestricted political activism and self-governance could occur. The church was instrumental and essential in Black community building; churches formed the nexus of the self-defined neighborhood.

Regardless of denomination or ecclesiastic leadership, social justice and political activism became the hallmark of the Black church throughout Seattle and across the United States. Community organizations, including Masonic Lodges, political clubs, and social service centers, like the Sojourner Truth Home for single women, sprang from the churches. Early in the twentieth century, the four largest Black churches in Seattle, First AME, Mt. Zion, Ebenezer AME Zion, and Grace Presbyterian, were centers for public forums and political rallies.

Throughout the twentieth century, the Black church played the role of convener and center for advancement of African Americans. Following the end of World War I and the Great Migration, the Black church, in both the north and south, joined in the fight for equal rights with support of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Urban League, the Congress of Racial Equality, and other civil rights groups.

By mid-century, the Black church had become the epicenter of the civil rights movement, with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) as the national leader. The work of the SCLC was championed by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., himself a Baptist minister. He utilized Black churches nationally as launching pads for rallies, marches, and protests organized in the struggle to overcome racial injustice.



*Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* AFRICH ROYALE



Protesters at Atlas Grocery, 14th & Yesler, Seattle, 1947 MOHAI

Seattle's churches mirrored the SCLC effort locally, with the leadership of the Reverend Samuel McKinney of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church. Notably, McKinney was a Morehouse University classmate of Dr. King's and hosted him on his 1961 visit to Seattle.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Seattle's Black churches attended to the struggle for racial equality, even in the face of violence against activist churches, which included burnings, bombings, and assassinations. The stance taken by church leadership, as well as by congregants, was that of fearlessness.

In the 1980s, Central District churches engaged in protests of South African Apartheid, police brutality, and economic disparity. The Black church was the venue for political aspirants to reach large groups of Black voters and was influential in organizing local, state, and national political campaigns.

Now, as we enter the second decade of the new millennium, Central District churches face their ultimate challenge: survival. Will they remain the nexus for urban community building and activism, when their very livelihood is in jeopardy? Will they summon the courage, so present in the past 200 years, to persevere in the face of gentrification and displacement of their congregants? This is where The Nehemiah Initiative steps in, as a crucial last stand for Seattle's Black community.

**Donald I. King**, FAIA, NOMA, is an architect and 35-year resident of the Central District. He is an Affiliate Professor of Architecture in the University of Washington's College of Built Environments.

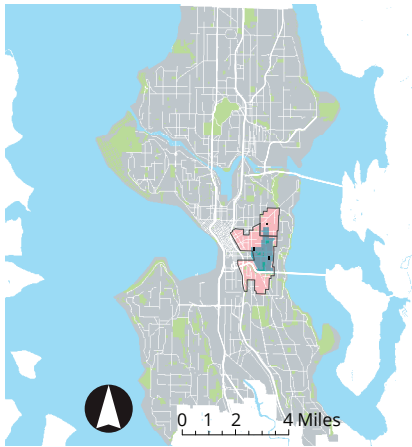
References are cited on page 77.

# COMMUNITY CONTEXT

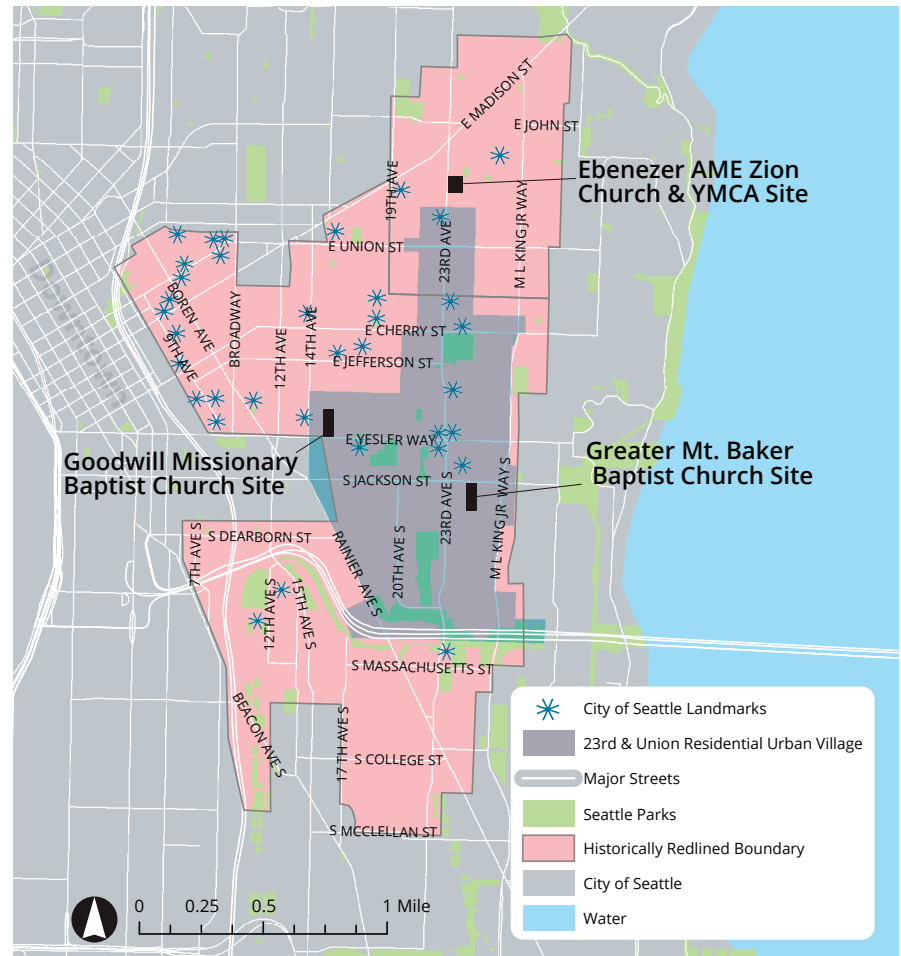
## THE CENTRAL DISTRICT

Seattle's Central District (CD), also known as the Central Area, has long been home to the majority of Seattle's African American population. The CD is one of the oldest residential areas in Seattle and is located east of downtown and in the central part of the city. Due to racially restrictive covenants, the area has been home to the majority of Seattle's racial and ethnic minorities. In 1970, 73% of the Central District's population was African American.

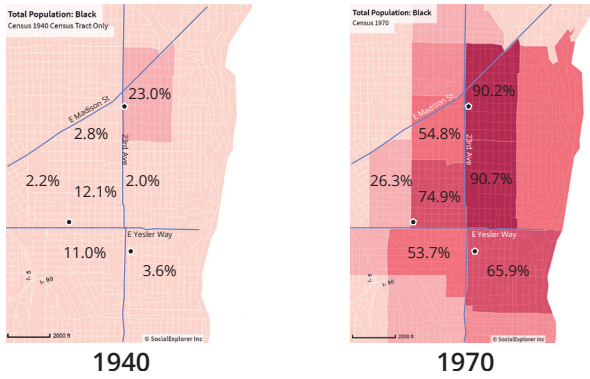
With its easy access to the downtown core, and its historic architecture and tree-lined streets, the CD has been pressured by gentrification and development for many years. In 2019, the African American population of the CD was just 14%. Demographic changes, development pressures, and property tax increases are forcing Black churches out of the Central District.



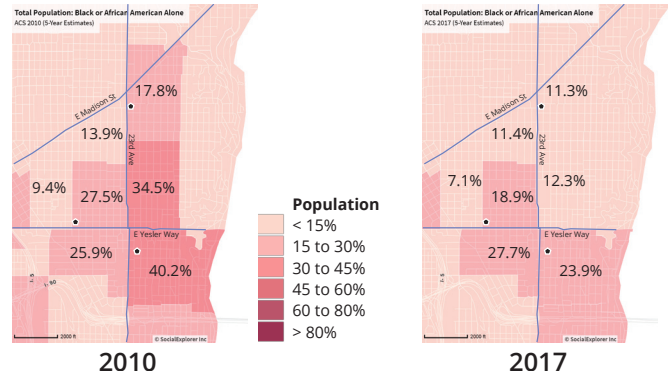
The Central District's location within Seattle  
MT. BAKER TEAM



Locations of the 3 studio sites in the Central District MT. BAKER TEAM



**POPULATION IDENTIFYING AS BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN**



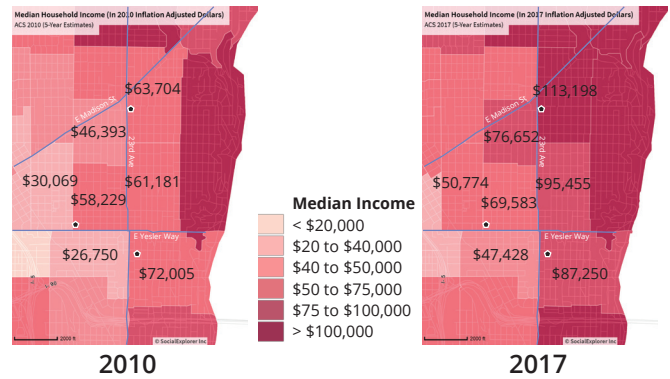
**POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS**

Racial demographics have changed dramatically in the Central District. Though African Americans have lived in the area since the mid-1800s, the CD's African American population surged in the 1940s-1970s, due to discriminatory housing practices. In 1970, the CD contained census tracts where more than 90% of the population was African American. Passage of the Fair Housing Act in 1968 meant that it was no longer legal to refuse or discriminate based on race when renting or selling housing. This influenced the subsequent dispersal of the area's African American population. The CD has been an essential social, cultural, and political center for the African American community. Yet, the dispersal has accelerated in recent decades due to gentrification and displacement.

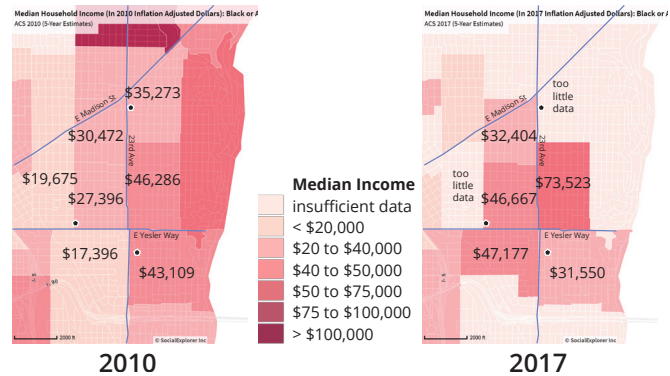
Analysis of 2010-2017 American Community Survey data reveals several changes. The overall median household income in the CD increased in every census tract, and African American median household income increased in all but one. However, comparing overall and African American median household income shows that income inequality is a significant issue in the CD. In all census tracts with data available, African American median household income was less than the overall median household income. In 2017, only one tract was nearly identical in comparison. Remaining tracts showed African American median household income at 36% to 77% of the overall median income. (Note: retired households on fixed income were not examined here).

Despite income growth, African American poverty in the CD increased, sometimes dramatically. This change indicates the economic struggles that African American households in the CD are dealing with due to rapidly rising costs of living.

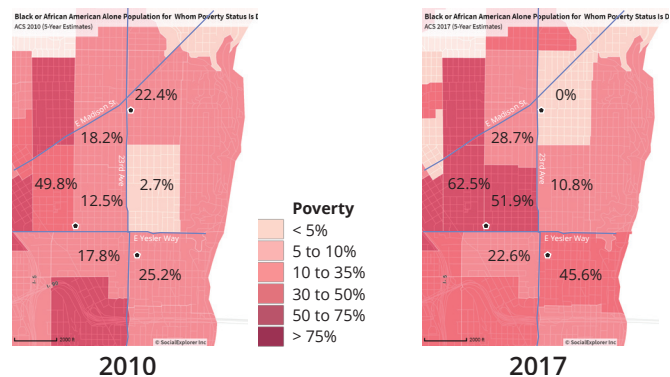
**OVERALL MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**



**BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**



**BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN POVERTY RATE**



Census and American Community Survey maps showing recent demographic changes for Central District Black and African American residents SOCIAL EXPLORER

# HISTORIC CONTEXT

Before settlers arrived in Seattle, the studio study area was part of the land belonging to the Duwamish Tribe. The study area later became a historic center for many settlers, including Black, Jewish, Japanese, and Scandinavian populations. Logging in the area and the 1888 streetcar opened the area to settlement. In 1882, African American pioneer William Grose purchased 12 acres near Madison St, which attracted African American residents. Between the 1880s and early 1900s, Japanese immigrants established homes and businesses in the Yesler area, Jewish residents had shops and synagogues along Yesler Way's "Kosher Canyon," and jazz clubs flourished on Jackson St.



Before 1850 - Duwamish Villages



1882 - William Grose



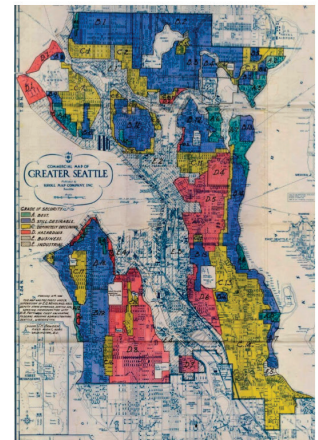
1888 - Yesler Streetcar



1940 - Yesler Terrace Public Housing



1931 - Seattle University



1936 - HOLC Redlining Map



1852 - Land Claims



1920s-1960s - Jazz on Jackson



1880s-1942 - Japantown



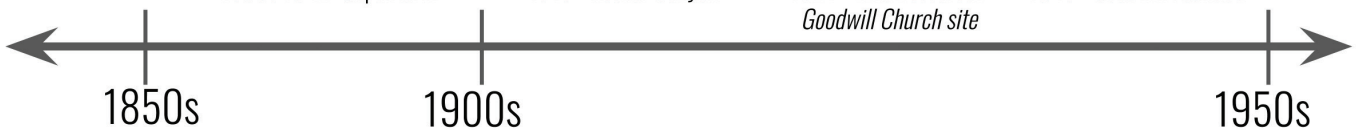
1916 - Kosher Canyon



1924 - Ezra Bessaroth  
*Goodwill Church site*



1946 - Goodwill Founded



Historic timelines created by the Goodwill Team for their project GOODWILL TEAM

During the 1930s and 1940s, Seattle University construction began, the Central District was redlined, and the churches were founded: Ebenezer AME Zion Church (1930), Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church (1946), and Greater Mt. Baker Baptist Church (1950). The 1960s and 1970s saw local impacts from the Urban Renewal and Model Cities programs. In recent decades, the Great Recession and mortgage crisis disproportionately affected African American residents, while upzoning introduced speculation and townhouse development. Despite adversity, the Central District's residents have built strong communities, businesses, and significant social and religious institutions. The Central District remains Seattle's oldest surviving residential area.



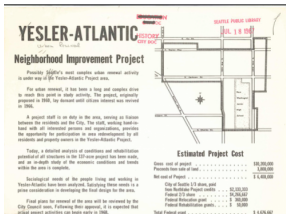
1968-1975 - Model Cities



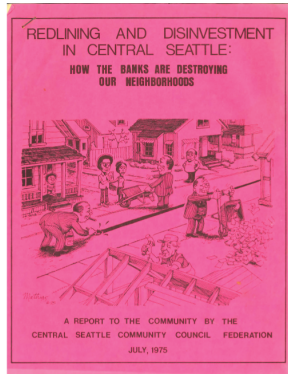
1994 - Neighborhood Planning



2019 - Building for the Future



1967 - Urban Renewal



1975 - Disinvestment Report



2013 - Yesler Terrace Redevelopment



2016 - City recognizes Equity Need



2008 - Recession



2018 - Design Guidelines



2018 - Cherry Hill Baptist Church Demolished



1968 - Goodwill Groundbreaking



Goodwill Church Services



2010 - Old and New



2018 - Townhouse Proposal at Cherry Hill Site



# LOCAL INSTITUTIONS SERVING THE CD

Rich in institutions and amenities, the Central District is served by many churches, community centers, parks, and educational institutions. When working to mitigate displacement of people in the Central District, it is also important to consider the role and importance of these long-standing facilities and the social networks they support in the life of the area. The Nehemiah Initiative seeks to counter displacement through the redevelopment of church properties. Complementary protection and support for neighborhood institutions and amenities is another priority.



1 First AME Church



2 Mt. Zion Baptist Church

- CHURCH
- INSTITUTION
- COMMUNITY/REC CENTER
- STUDIO SITE



3 Byrd Barr Place / Cornerstone



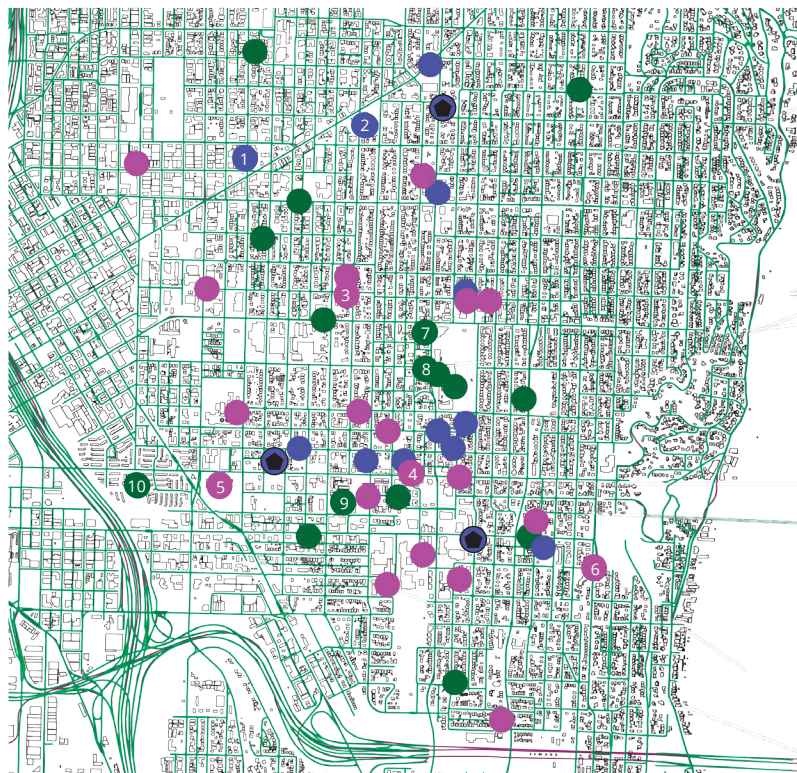
4 Odessa Brown Clinic



5 Bailey Gatzert Elementary



6 Central Area Senior Center



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles



7 Garfield Community Center



8 Medger Evers Pool



9 Pratt Park



10 Yesler Community Center

Map of neighborhood amenities including churches, parks, community centers, schools and other institutions supporting local community GOODWILL TEAM



## CHURCHES

The Central District has been the nucleus of Black church life since the early 1900s, forming a network of spiritual safe havens. Over the past decade more than a dozen churches have closed or sold their properties and moved out of the Central District. Two church buildings have received City of Seattle Landmark status: First African Methodist Episcopal Church and Mount Zion Baptist Church. Landmark status preserves the physical structures of these places of worship. The Nehemiah Initiative is exploring property development as an alternative means of church preservation.



The 118-year-old Cherry Hill Baptist Church at 22nd Ave & E Cherry St was sold and demolished in 2018 to be replaced by townhouses, which were then not built. CITY OF SEATTLE

## INSTITUTIONS & SOCIAL SERVICES

The studio sites are located in close proximity to numerous institutions and social services. Public schools such as Bailey Gatzert Elementary, Washington Middle, and nationally recognized Garfield High School are all within the area. Seattle University, Seattle Central College's Wood Technology Center, Seattle Vocational Institute, and the Pratt Fine Arts Center offer further educational opportunities. Swedish Cherry Hill is a significant hospital, a medical services and employment provider. The Seattle Children's Odessa Brown Clinic offers culturally competent health services to the community.

## PARKS, RECREATION CENTERS & COMMUNITY CENTERS

The area contains many parks, recreation, and community centers. These facilities offer public amenities and are assets that attract community members to the Central District.

*Community Context information was compiled from the work of all three student teams. A special thank you is due to the Goodwill Team for their comprehensive site history and context.*



*A vision for church-based redevelopment can contribute to the vitality of both the churches and the neighborhood. MT. BAKER TEAM*

# GOODWILL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH



*A bird's-eye view of the two Goodwill sites showing all three project phases*



UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL IMAGES WERE CREATED BY THE STUDENT TEAM MEMBERS.

## GOODWILL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

126 15th Ave, Seattle, WA 98122

Bishop Garry L. Tyson

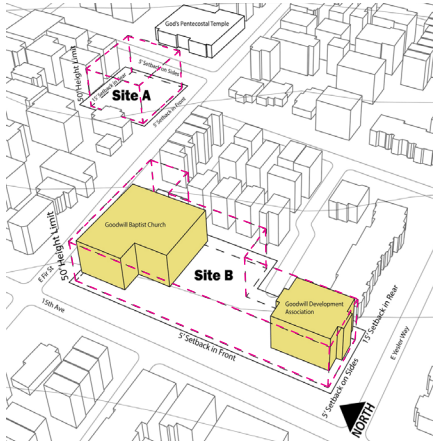
- Julie Aune, MSRE
- Will Devault-Weaver, MARCH-MSRE
- Xiao Ding, MSRE
- Emily Haines, MSRE
- Jamie Merriman-Cohen, MUP
- Sarah Pullman, MUP
- Jason Steinberg, MUP

### ***Becoming a Community Church***

Rather than a church in the community, Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church seeks to be a community church and to maintain its role in the Central District. Goodwill's vision focuses on nurturing Beloved Community with spaces for worship, service, culture, play, gathering, and living in a spiritually-uplifting, multi-generational, and abundant environment. The church is planning for the future with aspirations to redevelop its property and to generate income through housing, commercial space, and facility rentals.



Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church Site GOOGLE EARTH



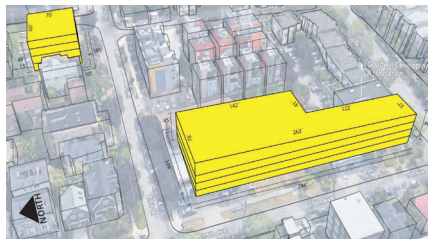
Existing built environment and zoning envelopes showing Site A and Site B, with existing buildings shown in yellow

## SITE & PROPERTY CONDITIONS

### CLIENT'S VISION

The team's proposal was developed with the client's overarching goals as guiding principles. From interviews with Bishop and First Lady Tyson and their team, we learned that church members now live all around the region and still return to their church home in the Central District. The Church has changed from being a church in a community, to a community church.

Our client's guiding vision is to maintain a vibrant church in the Central District, to have long term financial sustainability by retaining and developing its land, to generate income through housing, commercial, and facility rentals, and to nurture Beloved Community with spaces for worship, service, culture, gathering, playing, and living in a spiritually uplifting, multi-generational, abundant environment.



Maximum building envelopes given existing zoning

### THE SITE

Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church is located close to the western edge of Seattle's Central District on E Yesler Way, which provides easy connections to downtown, First Hill, and Capitol Hill—all urban centers. The site is part of a transitional multi-family zone that includes higher-intensity commercial, institutional, and industrial uses, and lower-intensity single-family uses within a five-block radius. The church is currently surrounded by a mix of single-family homes, townhomes, and apartments.

Goodwill owns two properties. Site A is located at the corner of E Fir St & 16th Ave. Site B is a half-block site containing the existing church; it fronts 15th St and stretches from E Fir St to E Yesler Way.

### DESIRED PROGRAMMING

For Site A, the client requested parking, residential units, and, potentially, childcare facilities.

For Site B, the client asked for the sanctuary to be located on the corner of E Fir St & 15th Ave with adjacent fellowship hall, childcare facilities, residential units, and parking.

## EXISTING ZONING

Goodwill's two properties are located in an LR3 Zone with a high Mandatory Housing Affordability requirement due to their location in a high displacement risk area. The sites are in an Opportunity Zone, which allows investors to defer paying taxes on capital gains on investments in distressed communities. The area may experience heightened investor interest as a result. The Central Area Neighborhood Design Guidelines apply to the project.

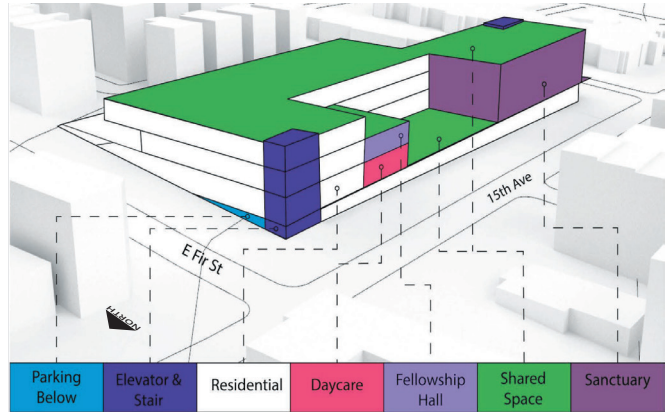
## PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Our preliminary proposal suggested fully developing Site B with a single mixed-use building containing a new church, childcare facilities, offices, residential units, parking, and open space. Based on our initial calculations, Site A could be sold to generate capital to develop Site B.

This proposal was later reimagined as we further explored financing options and the client's vision for maintaining property ownership and offering engaging and empowering community facilities.

## PROPOSED UPZONE FOR SITE B

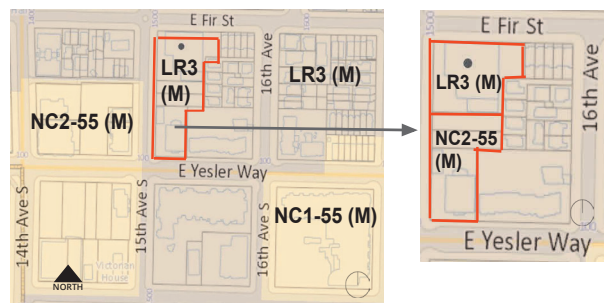
In the team's final proposal, the second phase of the project at E Yesler Way & 15th St (Site B) would require a "parcel specific" contract rezone. The rezone site is currently the Aridell Mitchell Building and grassy area south of the Church. A "contract rezone" from Low-rise 3 to Neighborhood Commercial 2-55 will give the Church commercial space, extra height, and floor area. Our client suggested a rezone to NC-65, which allows a 65' tall building, however, the NC zoning in the area all has a 55-foot height limit, so we think that this will have the best chance of getting City approval. The rezone boundary matches the NC-55 zoning across the street.



Early plans and massing diagram (later revised) showing client-requested program contained to Site B



Early proposal building section facing east along 15th Ave showing courtyard relationship to surrounding uses



Existing Zoning: Context

Proposed Contract Rezone:  
LR3 (M) / NC2-55 (M)

Existing and proposed zoning categories and their locations on Site B



*“Residential units provided with individual, private outdoor spaces, a shared, semi-public walk with seating, and landscape buffer next to the public sidewalk.”* SCHEMATA WORKSHOP, CANDG



*“Frequent stoops accompanying ground floor entrances to residential units provide a place for social interactions.”* SCHEMATA WORKSHOP, CANDG



*“Ground floor retail space with high ceilings and clerestory windows.”* SCHEMATA WORKSHOP, CANDG

## NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Central Area Neighborhood Design Guidelines (CANDG) shaped our vision for site and architectural design. To enhance the pedestrian realm, we set back the buildings to create space for a generous sidewalk that will be protected from the street by a landscaped curbside buffer. We also concentrated pedestrian amenities—larger green areas, street furniture, and patios—at the corners closest to the church and E Yesler Way to encourage interaction. Our project referenced these guidelines in particular:

### **Garden & Farm**

- When providing vegetation at the roof level, consider edible urban agriculture instead of a passive green roof.
- Provide vegetated spaces throughout the project. Vertical green walls are encouraged in addition to landscape beds.
- Consider utilizing rooftops as an opportunity for family gathering and gardening.
- Consider how each facade may respond to climate conditions such as solar shading and prevailing winds.

### **Lounge**

- When providing open gathering spaces for the community, include weather protection to ensure the space can remain active all year long.
- Provide cultural and place-specific open spaces for social gathering, festivals, and other larger celebrations.
- Provide opportunities to honor African and Black American presence in the neighborhood. Create pockets of culture to represent both the Black American identity as well as other heritages that have had a large impact on the Central Area’s past.

### **Play Area**

- Provide safe areas for children to play where they can be seen. Incorporate seating areas nearby for parents, guardians, and other community members to congregate.
- Provide multi-generational public gathering spaces for young and old to recreate and converse together.
- Not all open spaces need to be landscaped; hardscapes are encouraged when sized and designed to encourage active use.

### **Exercise Area**

- Provide amenities appropriate to the community, such as basketball hoops, chess boards, or other family-oriented activities.

*Established  
human-scale  
neighborhood corridor*



## DESIGN PROCESS

Our process was iterative and based on input and feedback from the client, studio professors, and reviews by real estate, design, and planning professionals. In particular, we valued our conversations with Bishop and First Lady Tyson of Goodwill about their vision and goals for the project.

*Shared ground-floor  
common spaces*



## CLIENT GOALS

- Keep the church and Christian education in the Central District
- Create economic empowerment
- Engage the community

*Overhangs provide  
extra coverage for  
residents and give  
privacy to families*



## TEAM GOALS

- Design a new church for worship, fellowship, education, and service
- Maintain church land ownership
- Generate church income via residential, commercial, and preschool leasing and facility rentals
- Activate the streetscape and community gathering spaces for health and enjoyment

*Street-front entrances  
next to each other  
to promote social  
capital*



We also incorporated ongoing feedback from the studio faculty and mentors, as well as from critics at three reviews. Our final development proposal is our vision of the highest and best Beloved Community use for our site.

*Many different  
materials used as  
an expressive way to  
create boundaries*



*Open and engaging  
front facing facades*



*Planting strips to  
protect garden units  
from traffic*



*Cafe frontage  
that spills onto  
public space*



*Protected sidewalks  
create a "room" for  
pedestrians*



*Engaging pedestrian  
furniture*



*Vegetative buffers  
between sidewalk  
and street*



*Neighborhood design guidelines for streetscapes and exterior spaces*

## BELOVED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT A 3-PHASE ARCHITECTURAL PLAN

The project would be built in three phases.

**Phase 1 (Site A—4-Story Residential Building)** allows for three years to design, permit, construct, and lease the multifamily development. This includes application for a Master Use Permit (MUP) for Site A and a contract rezone for Site B2 (built in Phase 2). We expect Site A construction to last approximately one year, and lease-up would overlap the final three months of construction. After Phase 1 is built and stabilized, a cash-out refinance at the end of that three-year period plus future years of cash flow would help fund Phase 2.

**Phase 2 (Site B—5-Story Residential Building with Commercial on ground floor, Roof Garden)** begins with relocating the Aridell Mitchell tenants. While this is taking place, the MUP for Sites B1 and B2 would begin and is expected to require approximately 18 months. Construction would follow for 18 months with lease-up overlapping at the end. A second cash-out refi plus a year's cash flow would fund Phase 3.

**Phase 3 (Site B—Church Sanctuary & Community Spaces, Active Roof)** begins with the temporary relocation of the congregation to another location in the Central District. Once services are relocated, Phase 3 moves into construction of the new church and its associated spaces. Construction would last approximately one year; lease-up would occur in advance by securing a preschool operator.



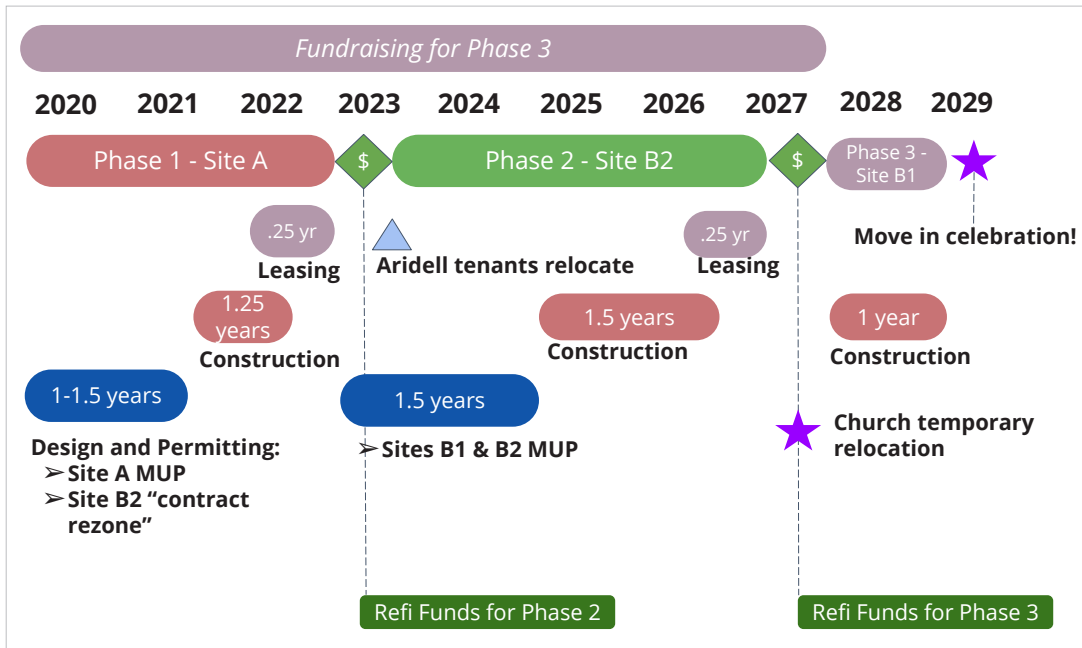
Ground floor full-site plan



View of all three phases complete (viewed from 15th Ave, looking east)

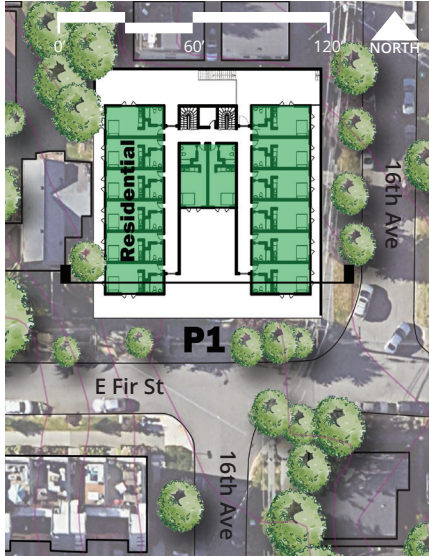


## GOODWILL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL TIMELINE



*Timing of proposed phases and actions needed to complete the Goodwill project*





Phase 1 building plan for floors 1-4: 14 studio housing units on each level



Phase 1 studio apartment housing (section-elevation view looking north)



Phase 1 exterior of residential building (elevation view looking west)

## SITE A: PHASE 1 MARKET-RATE RENTAL HOUSING

The success of the Goodwill project hinged on Site A, and we proposed its development as Phase 1 of the project. In our vision, the value and rental revenue generated by Site A would be used to fund the Site B/Phases 2 and 3 part of the project, which includes the new church facilities and several other desired uses. To generate income for Goodwill over time, we proposed developing Site A with market-rate studio rental apartments. Per the City's HALA/MHA requirements, four of the units would be reserved for tenants making 60 percent of the Area Median Income or lower.

In our design, the building wraps around a south-facing courtyard that opens onto E Fir St. This creates a sunny shared courtyard for tenants. Our site design proposal links the housing on Site A with the majority of the church functions on Site B through a re-designed and landscaped streetscape along E Fir St, which connects the sites. The Site A building is conveniently located one block north of E Yesler Way where several public transportation options connect to downtown and to other areas of the city.

Parking and childcare move to the Site B/Phase 2 part of the project because of space, topography, and cost considerations.

## SITE B

On Site B, the larger of the Goodwill properties, the church asked for church facilities (sanctuary, fellowship hall, offices, meeting rooms), childcare facilities, residential and commercial units, and parking. A key design consideration was Goodwill's desire to maintain the sanctuary location at the corner of E Fir St & 15th Ave. Our building design responds with a beautiful sanctuary on the corner and generously-sized windows for visual and physical connections between the space and the neighborhood.

## SITE B: PHASE 2 MARKET-RATE RENTAL HOUSING & COMMERCIAL SPACE

Phase 2 provides a commercial space on the ground floor that faces E Yesler Way, along with residential units with individual entrances that face 15th Ave. The remainder of the building is designed to provide four additional floors of market-rate residential rental units on double-loaded corridors accessed via stairs and elevators.

## SITE B: PHASE 3 CHURCH FACILITIES

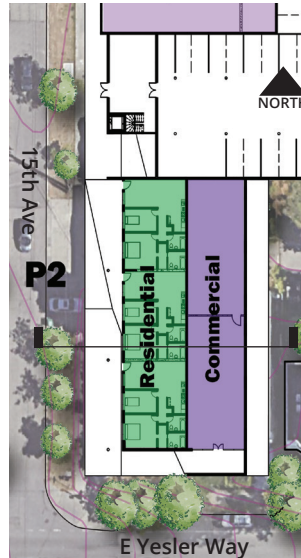
Phase 3 focuses on the redesign of the church facilities. The sanctuary and fellowship hall are located adjacent to one another directly off of 15th Ave with offices and a flexible childcare/classroom space on the second floor.

## ACTIVE ROOFTOP

In response to Goodwill's desire for community-oriented amenities, we incorporated exercise, kids' play, and lounge spaces on the expansive rooftop. The design includes a community garden, basketball court, and a walking track.

## PARKING

Located behind residential and church uses on the ground floor, the garage is well-screened from the street. More than thirty parking spaces are provided at-grade with access from 15th Ave. To improve project feasibility, we do not recommend incurring the expense of excavating additional underground parking levels. The budget includes funding for a complimentary valet/shuttle service for high demand periods.



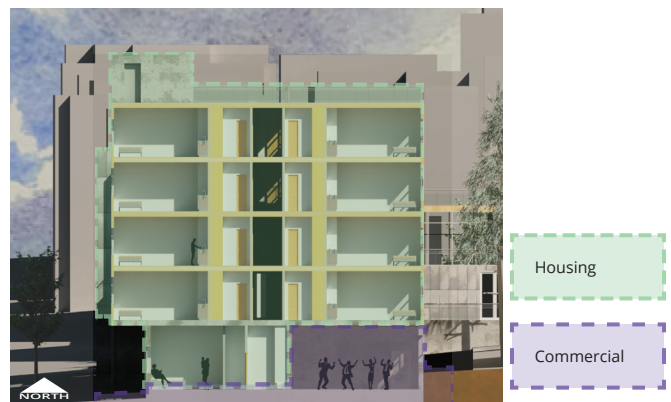
Phase 2 ground floor: 1 retail space and 3 two-bedroom units



Phase 2 floors 2-5: 18 studio housing units on each level



Phase 2 mixed use housing/commercial (viewed from across E Yesler Way, looking northeast)



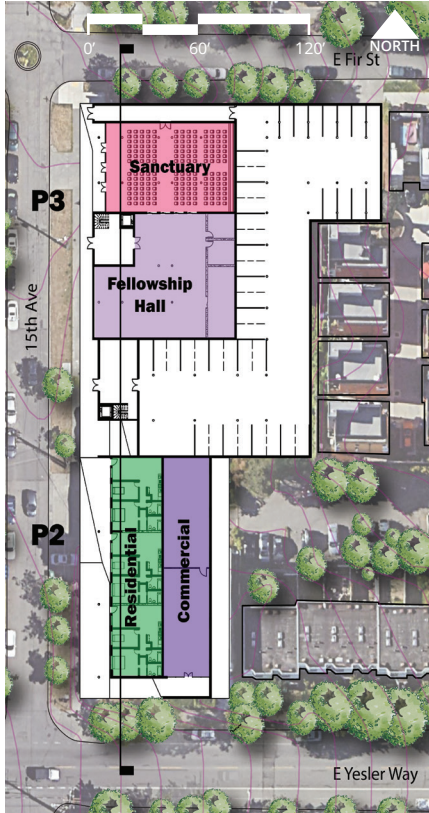
Phase 2 mixed use housing/commercial (section view looking north from E Yesler Way)

## SITE B: PHASE 3 SANCTUARY & COMMUNITY SPACES

Our client's desired program focused on a smaller, more modern sanctuary, office space for administrative activities, a fellowship hall, a kitchen for community events, and childcare facilities. We have designed these spaces to serve the immediate church community and the broader community.

The fellowship hall is located directly off 15th Ave, adjacent to the sanctuary's lower level. The hall and lower level of the sanctuary are convertible into a single space. The fellowship hall contains a generous kitchen. One elevator and stairwell sit across from the kitchen, making it easy to provide service between the kitchen and events on the upper levels.

The balcony level of the sanctuary connects with the second floor childcare/classroom space, and the two spaces can be combined to create a larger flexible space for events and other functions.



Ground level plan showing Phase 2 & 3 spaces with direct sidewalk connection



Phase 2 & 3 Longitudinal section showing the sanctuary at the corner of 15th Ave & E Fir St and other uses that front on 15th Ave

### **Sanctuary**

The sanctuary is designed to seat 150, and the adjoining overflow space can increase seating capacity to 195. The sanctuary can flexibly accommodate a range of events, from church services to banquets, workshops, classes, and dances. The space has 22-foot ceilings, a carpeted floor, air conditioning, a stage, and state-of-the-art sound and lighting systems.

### **Fellowship Hall & Kitchen**

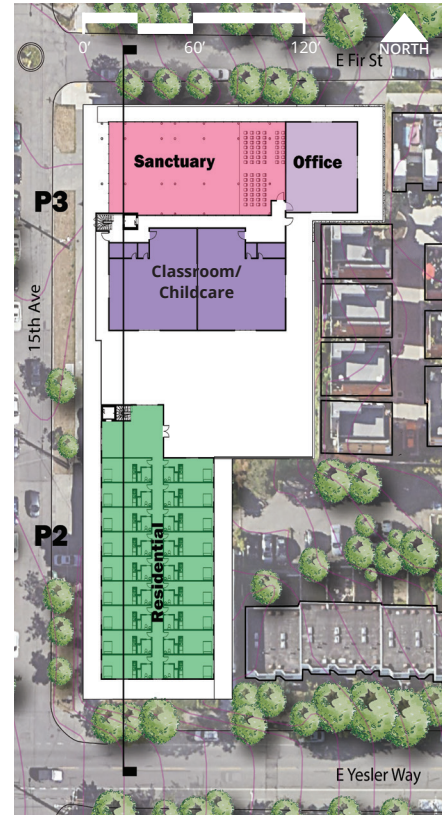
The fellowship area on the first floor can accommodate 70 people seated at 4-foot round tables or 125 people with no tables or 100 people in seated rows. There is a full kitchen, a side room for buffet service, and two bathrooms. The fellowship hall has a separate entrance. A sound system is available for public meetings/forums.

### **Classroom**

The 17-by-30-foot classroom on the second floor can accommodate up to 40 people seated in rows. The classroom has a separate entrance and adjacent bathroom, and it serves as the overflow space for the sanctuary.

### **Renting church spaces**

The client asked us to explore potential revenue sources from renting church spaces. Based on a search of comparable spaces in Seattle, we established a rental rate of \$125/hour for the sanctuary. Other rentable spaces include the classroom, fellowship hall, kitchen, and childcare space.



Second level plan showing (phase 3) 2nd floor church spaces and (phase 2) residential floor plan for floors 2-5





*Viewed from above, the rooftop design provides many active spaces for play, exercise and gathering.*

## **SITE B: PHASE 2 & 3 ROOFTOP SPACES: GROW & GATHER**

Activated rooftops on Phase 2 and Phase 3 buildings provide many activities for people from Goodwill, the preschool, and the residential units on this site. These rooftops are designed to facilitate community connection and are well-connected, safe, and accessible to all ages and abilities. The varied uses on the rooftops foster many types of active play, gathering, and growth.



*Rooftop community garden and urban farm (looking south)*



*The community garden/urban farm includes sheltered gathering spaces (looking north).*

Long-time Central District residents face challenges associated with drastic neighborhood changes, some of which have contributed to the erosion of strong cultural connections, such as links to many important musical artists and clubs in the Central District's history. An important foundational motivation of this design proposal is to solidify both a strong community and a strong culture. Bringing people together through games, events, exercise, food, school, church, and music in a development with significantly increased housing is a strategy for a healthy growth of all that makes the Central District great.

**Community Garden & Urban Farm**

The community garden/urban farm is a space for church members, residents, and local families to raise flowers, grow their own food, grow food for the community kitchen below or for sale, or to use in other ways. Fantastic views of Seattle and surrounding nature are visible from this height. The community garden/urban farm is a place to gather as well as a place for quiet and calm reflection.

**Outdoor Lounge**

The lounge is an area to cook, gather, eat, and relax. There are a vast array of possible social activities on this roof, including getting together after Sunday services. A fire pit, covered seating, and open walking paths represent a spectrum of activities that will be possible to enjoy in a variety of weather conditions.



*Seattle lounge space precedent*



*Seattle lounge space precedent*

Gathering Spaces      Comfortable, Movable Outdoor Furniture      BBQ area      Weather Protection



*Rooftop lounge area with fire table (looking east)*



*Rooftop lounge area and BBQ (looking west toward downtown views)*



Recreation and play areas on roof of Phase 3 building (looking east)

Exercise Equipment

Active-Use Hardscape Areas

Full-Size Basketball Court

ADA Accessible Loop Path



Rooftop exercise area next to basketball court (looking northeast)



Rooftop basketball court provides hardscaped play surface (looking west)



## SITE B: PHASE 3 ROOFTOP SPACES: EXERCISE & PLAY

### Exercise

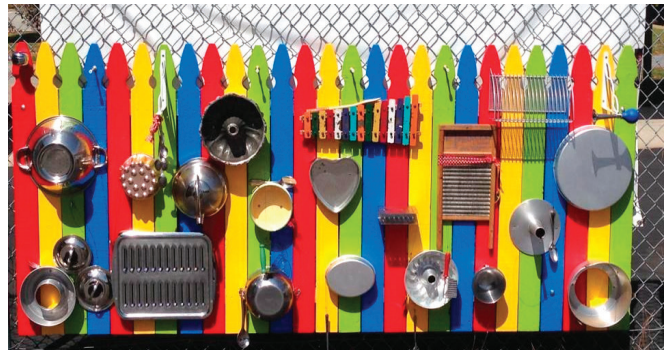
Exercise facilities provide ways to become stronger both personally and as a community. The pathway which traverses the entire set of roofs loops around the exercise area to allow for exercise as well as stimulation and social engagement. Part of the bishop's vision for Goodwill is to have a basketball court. This provides opportunities for basketball and other games, just as the play area on the roof below encourages fun ideas.

### Play

With a mix of sun and shade, the play area is the "valley" of the rooftops; this position gives the feeling of a central communal hub and allows playing children to be safely located and visible. The play area's many facilities include a playground, children's fountain, and plentiful seating for parents and other community members. A "music wall" on the side of the preschool would foster children's creativity, add to the vibrancy of the play area, and honor the musical history of the Central District.



Play fountain precedent



Music wall precedent GEARBUBBLE

Rec Level Overlooks  
Play Area

Seating Near Play  
Areas

Vegetated  
Spaces

Play  
Fountain

Shade & Wind  
Shelter



Rooftop children's play area (looking west)



Rooftop seating area sheltered between taller buildings looking east toward children's fountain and play area

## **FINANCING**

To fund the Site A and B2 developments, Goodwill will likely acquire construction and permanent loans to finance a portion of the total project cost (TPC). Additional funding sources will be sought to cover the gap between the TPC and the primary loan amount.

## **FUNDING MARKET-RATE HOUSING**

In addition to construction and permanent loans, other funding sources and financing for multi-family housing include philanthropic donations and impact investments with the expectation of payback at below-market returns. Investors should check on the potential for Economic Opportunity Zone benefits.

## **FUNDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

1. City of Seattle Office of Housing.
2. Enterprise Community Loan Fund (ECLF): This fund is a U.S. Treasury Department-certified Community Development Financial Institution. In WA State, ECLF funds are provided by the Capital Magnet Fund.
3. Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC): LISC funds support investments in community infrastructure to catalyze economic, health, safety, and educational mobility.
4. King County Housing Finance Program.
5. City of Seattle Equitable Development Fund. This fund can be used for project feasibility and development.

## **FUNDING THE CHURCH BUILDING**

Goodwill may consider obtaining a loan to finance construction and long-term debt for the church, preschool, and parking. Or, they could find a loan geared specifically toward church institutions. BCLC is one example of non-profit lending specifically to churches.

## **FUNDING THE PRESCHOOL**

The church can access grants and loans designed to assist in the construction of childcare facilities if the preschool is financed separately from the church and parking. Funding sources include the Washington State's Early Learning Facilities Grant program, Enterprise Community's Loan Fund, and Impact Capital's Short-term Predevelopment loans. Impact Capital is a Northwest institution that provides loans and technical assistance to help nonprofits develop essential community services.

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Goodwill had an initial goal to increase homeownership among the Black community. However, they needed to balance that desire against retaining ownership of the church properties, which meant constructing residential units that will bring in cash flow. Therefore, we did not design or budget affordable housing units above what is required by zoning. Seattle's MHA requires that 7% of the building's gross square footage in the LR3 zone be made affordable to people making up to 40% of AMI. Based on the unit size on Site A, this resulted in 4 units of affordable housing. By retaining ownership and cash flow, Goodwill supports its ability to contribute more to affordable housing down the road.

## **JOINT VENTURE PARTNERSHIP**

Goodwill stated a desire to work with a private developer partner to gain resources and expertise on entitlements, financing, and construction as well as sharing the risk of project development. The developer partner will be required to act as a mentor to an aspiring Black developer to increase their knowledge and experience in the field. The goal is to prepare more Black real estate developers to take on future projects on their own. Goodwill will need to think through its objectives and comfort level for risk and sharing project control, among other issues, before it pursues this course.

Choosing the best partner available is also a key consideration as real estate development is complicated even without managing a partnership.

## **CONDOMINIUM STRUCTURE**

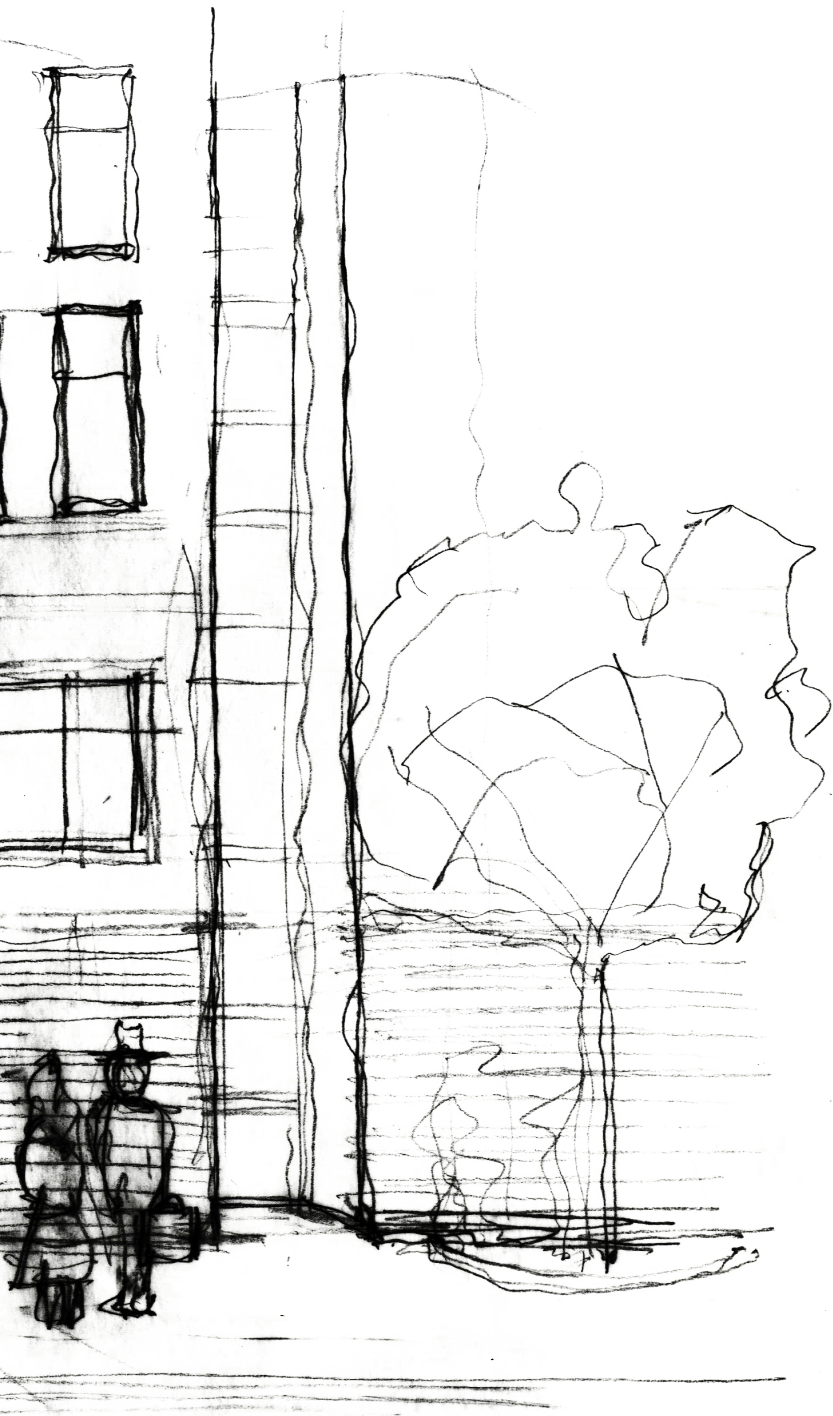
A joint venture with a contractor could also be undertaken using a condominium structure. In the event of a condominium, there would still be a single construction loan. Moving into construction would require either a guarantee for the entire construction loan or secure "takeout" funding for each condominium. Separate condominium ownerships could be established for the church, preschool, parking, and related spaces.

Condominiums add a level of complexity to the development but also have the advantage of providing ownership opportunities for specific uses such as the preschool.

# GREATER MT. BAKER BAPTIST CHURCH



*Envisioning the new church building with an active street, and apartment housing behind*



UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL IMAGES WERE CREATED BY THE STUDENT TEAM MEMBERS.

## GREATER MT. BAKER BAPTIST CHURCH

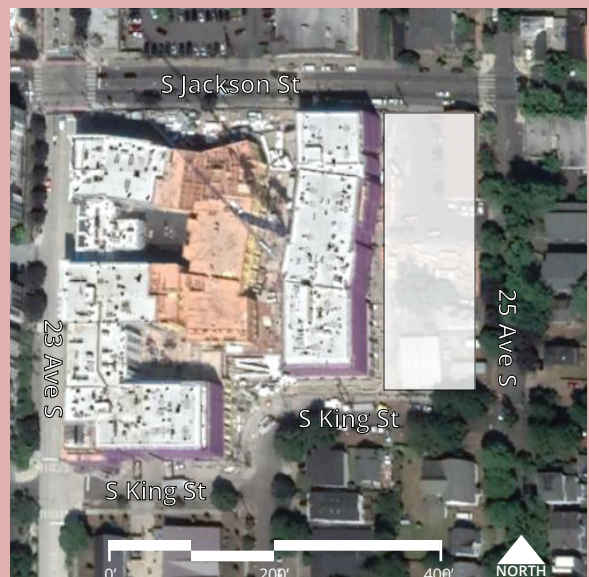
2425 S Jackson St, Seattle, WA 98144

Pastor Kenneth J. Ransfer, Sr.

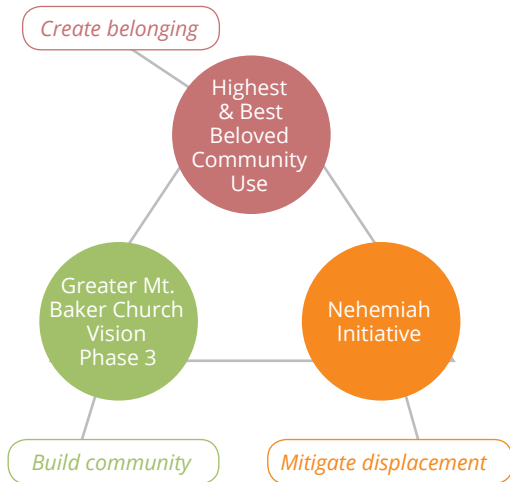
Ogun Arslan, MSRE  
Sara Bago, MSRE  
Asela Chavez Basurto, MUP  
Linya Cheng, MUP  
Joseph Gray, MUP  
Rawan Hasan, MUP  
Stefanie Hindmarch, MUP  
Charlie Simpson, MUP  
Rebecca Spencer, MSRE

### ***Designing for a Community Here to Stay***

Greater Mt. Baker Baptist Church began a visioning process in the 1990s, which brought the church in 2019 to consider how best to redevelop its property. The church wants to mitigate displacement, create belonging, and develop community. As part of one of Seattle's urban villages. Mt. Baker has a locational advantage. Because of this, redevelopment of the church site can accommodate affordable housing units and support community and arts events along with ongoing church activities.



Mt. Baker Baptist Church Site GOOGLE EARTH



Three sets of guiding values contribute to Mt. Baker's project vision

## SITE & PROPERTY CONDITIONS PROJECT VISION

Greater Mt. Baker Baptist Church began a visioning process in the 1990s, which brought the church in 2019 to the point of readiness to consider how best to redevelop their church site. During the studio, the vision and values were honed to reflect the following:

- Mitigate displacement through the Nehemiah Initiative
- Create belonging through Beloved Community
- Develop community through Greater Mt. Baker Church Vision Phase 3

The team's concept and response became:



## DESIRED PROGRAMMING

1. Replace or renovate the church
2. Create affordable housing
3. Provide food bank and homeless services
4. Provide parking for congregants
5. Offer education and youth programs
6. Host community events such as weddings and funerals
7. Provide meeting spaces
8. Host arts and cultural events

## THE SITE

Greater Mt. Baker Baptist Church is located on S Jackson St, near the corner of S Jackson St & 23rd Ave S. Historically, Jackson St has been a major cultural hub and a center of African American culture in Seattle. The site is located in a neighborhood commercial zone with enhanced pedestrian focus and it borders a low-rise multi-family area with apartments and single-family homes. The area is home to parks, schools, museums, and a library and is in close proximity to transit. Next door is a new Vulcan development.

Mt. Baker owns two properties. Site A is located at the corner of S Jackson St & 25th Ave S; Site B is located directly south of A, along 25th Ave S. The surrounding area is part of a Residential Urban Village, and part of the 23rd Avenue Union-Cherry-Jackson Action Plan.



Elements for a new Mt. Baker design

## DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

### Neighborhood Strategic Plan

- Race and Social Equity
- Culture
- Mobility

### Central Area Neighborhood Design Guidelines

- Interior Use
- Facade
- Movement/Street

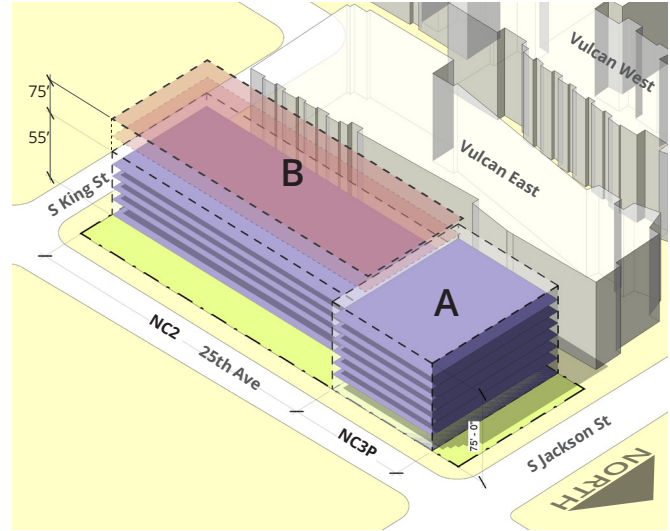
## ZONING

### Zoning Regulations

- Upzoning
- Setbacks/Height
- Floor Area Ratio

### Proposed Upzone for site B

We proposed an upzone for Site B to match site A, moving B from 55 feet to 75 feet in height. The added height is in keeping with the Vulcan development’s size next door, and would better allow the team to fulfill the client’s wishes of maximizing housing on site.



A	B	B
NC-3P	NC-2	NC-3P
(current zoning)	(current zoning)	(if upzoned)
Max Ht: 75 Ft	Max Ht: 55 Ft	Max Ht: 75 Ft
Max FAR: 5.5	Max FAR: 3.75	Max FAR: 5.5
Max SqFt: 79,200	Max SqFt: 108,000	Max SqFt: 158,400

*Allowable maximum building envelope under current zoning versus with proposed upzone. An upzone of Site B to match Site A’s NC-3P zoning (75 ft height allowance and pedestrian zone) would match neighboring buildings.*

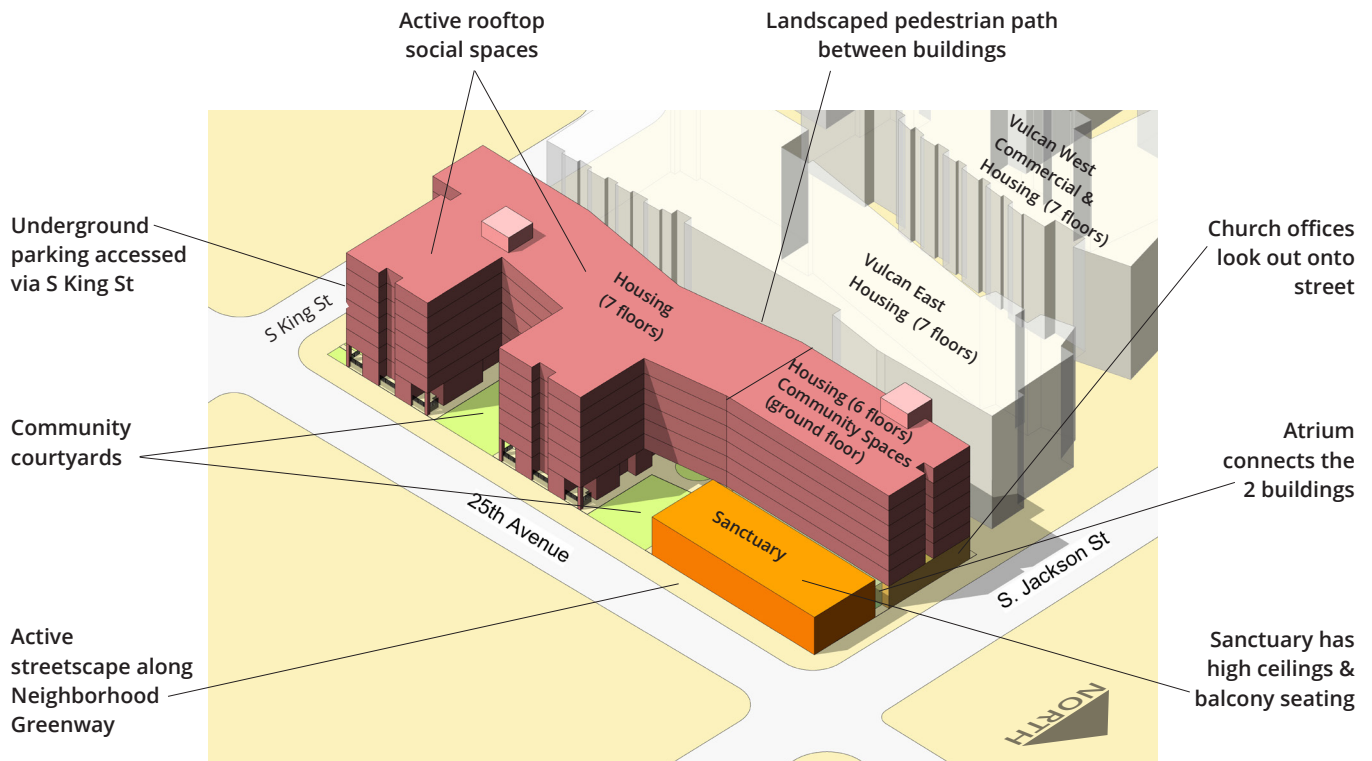
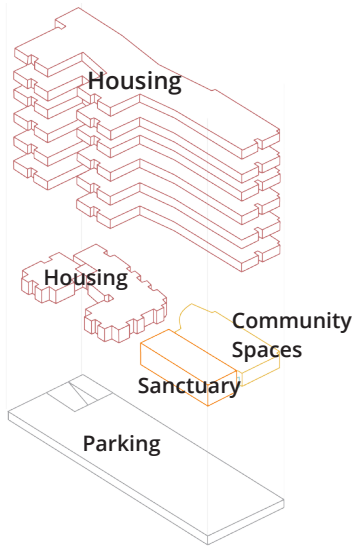
## APPLYING NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES

Interior / Use	Exterior / Facade	Mobility / Street
Family-size Apartments	Weather Protection	Multi-generational Spaces
Grade level Businesses	Porches & Stoops	Play Areas
Common Areas	Urban Farming	Neighborhood Nodes (corner church)
Ground Plane	Active Frontage & Frequent Entrances	Ample & Protected Sidewalks
Art Expression	Transparency	Bicycle Parking
	Setbacks	Landscape Buffers
	Art Expression	Landscaping
	Usable Rooftops	

The Central Area Neighborhood Design Guidelines (CANDG), adopted in 2018, help ensure that development suits local context and needs. Seattle’s Central District is growing rapidly. New development especially affects existing small businesses and residents. The CANDG direct neighborhood investment by suggesting uses, architecture, and site design and mobility options.

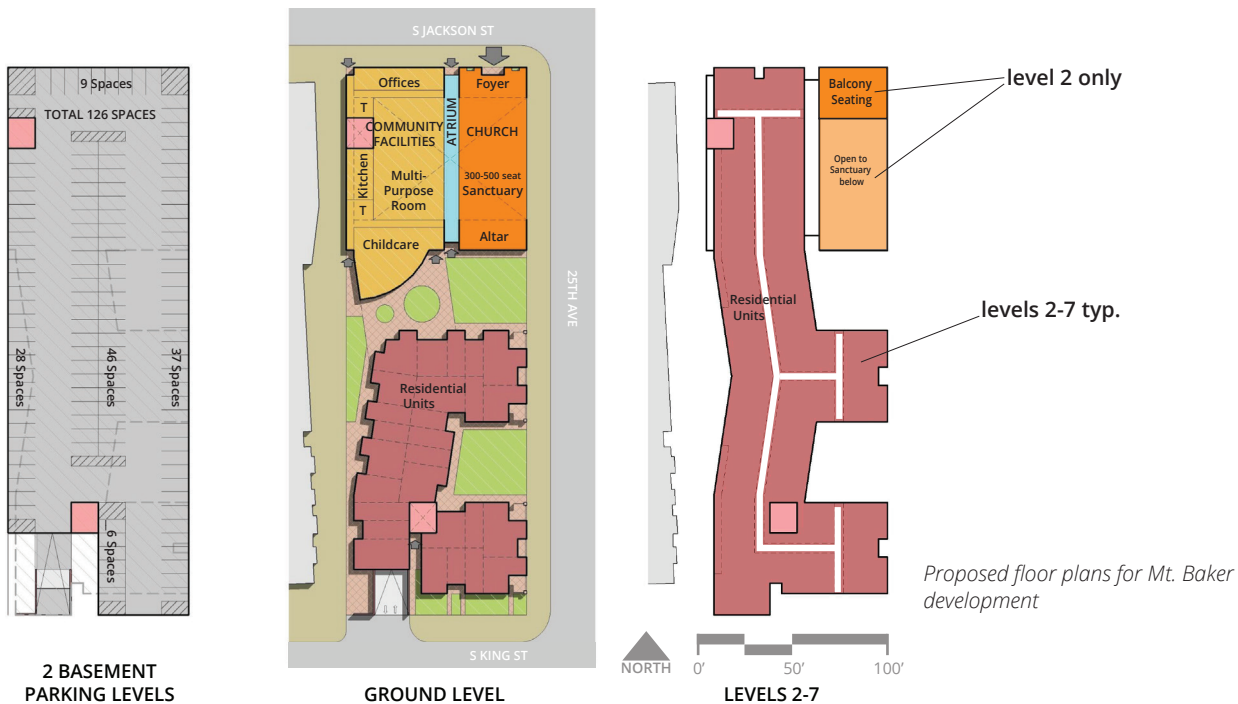
## PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

The essential action in this proposal is to place the new sanctuary in its historical location and footprint on a prominent corner along the S Jackson St corridor, at 25th Ave S. As a sacred space, the sanctuary is freestanding, and has no development proposed above it, despite the zoning to do so. This decision maintains the church's legacy and tradition on S Jackson St and ensures excellent visibility and accessibility. To help connect the church offices and sanctuary to S Jackson St, we promote transparency in the form of building material choices and window placements, and framed views in and out of the site along the atrium. The main entrances will be highlighted by color and material differentiation to activate the streetscape. The sanctuary is connected on the south to a church and community green space and on the west to childcare, office, and community spaces in the new apartment building. In response to client goals, we developed 301 units of apartment housing for seniors and others. Other project highlights include a second green space for the apartment residents and a green roof. We also proposed using 25th Ave S at select times as a play street or festival street.



Massing diagram of the proposed Mt. Baker development showing the sanctuary (orange), open spaces (green), and apartment building (pink) (viewed from the corner of S Jackson St & 25th Ave S looking SW).





## PROGRAM

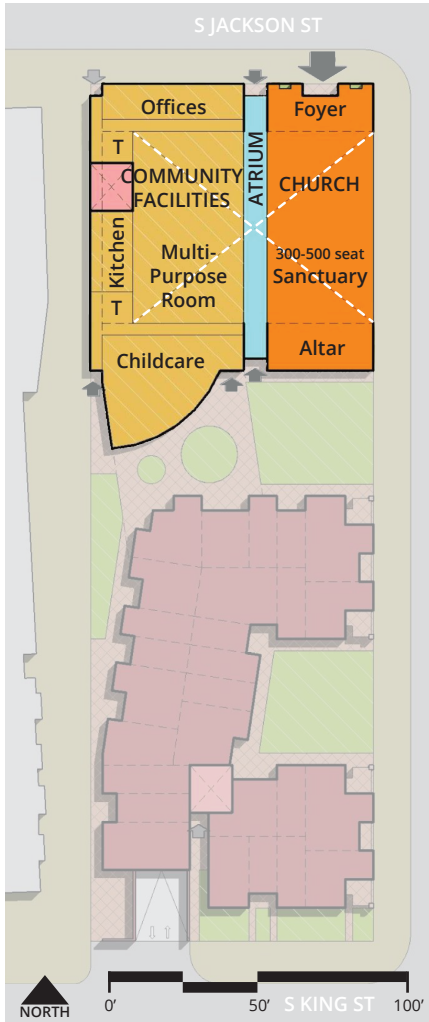
The first floor (ground level) has direct sidewalk access. It includes the sanctuary, church offices, classroom/childcare room, and community spaces in the northern part of the site and residential units in the south. Floors two through seven are apartments served by a double-loaded corridor (apartments on both sides of the hallway). The basement floor provides 126 underground parking stalls, accessible by vehicle from S King St, and by stairs or elevator at two locations in the building. The pink squares represent vertical circulation cores containing the elevators and stairs.

The apartment building design responds to the Vulcan development on the west by creating front porches and building's overall shape. On the east side, the building design meets the lower-density part of the neighborhood with two green open spaces. The open spaces are primary sources of green space for congregants and residents and connect to the secondary open spaces of the sidewalk and 25th Ave S, a low-volume street.

*Desired project uses and their projected sizes*

## SPATIAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Use	Square Footage	Units
Indoor-Total Floor Area	195,685 SF	
Church Sanctuary	6,885 SF	
Community Spaces	9,800 SF	
Multi-purpose Room	3,760 SF	
Classroom/ Preschool	2,030 SF	
Event Space / Restrooms/ Circulation	2,600 SF	
Admin / Offices	800 SF	
Kitchen	610 SF	
<b>Residential</b>	<b>178,960 SF</b>	<b>301 units</b>
Studio	432 SF/unit	237 units
One-Bedroom	612 SF/unit	48 units
Two-Bedroom	900 SF/unit	16 units
Outdoor spaces		
Parking	43,200 SF	126 stalls
Landscaped	12,600 SF	
Green Roof	5,400 SF	

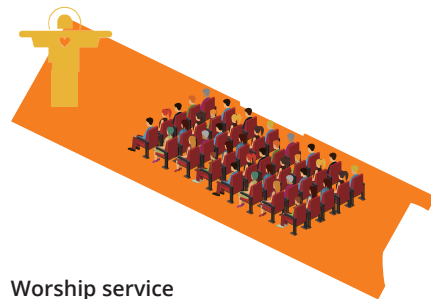


Ground floor plan showing sacred and community spaces

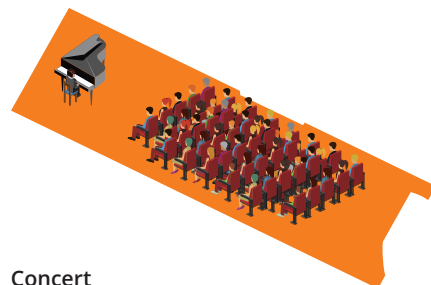
## SACRED SPACE

One can enter the sanctuary (shown in orange) via a foyer directly from the S Jackson St sidewalk, or through an atrium space (shown in blue) that links the sanctuary with the church community space. The south end of the sanctuary contains the altar, beyond which lies the church green open space. A balcony in the sanctuary increases seating capacity, allowing for 300-500 seats. The church offices are located directly off the S Jackson St sidewalk. In addition to the sanctuary, they provide physical and visual connections between the church and the neighborhood. Adjacent to the offices lies a flexible, multi-purpose space that includes a kitchen and a childcare facility. The versatile space (shown in yellow) is designed in parallel to the church sanctuary.

For large events, the multifunctional space, atrium, and sanctuary can function as one grand space, as shown by the white X. Mt. Baker serves the broader community as a site for significant life events, including funerals and weddings. The new design provides optimal flexibility for different activities to meet community needs, while also offering the possibility of revenue to the church to support operations and maintenance.



Worship service



Concert

# FLEXIBLE COMMUNITY SPACE

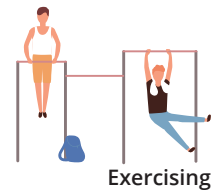
The flexible community space responds directly to the Greater Mt. Baker Church Vision Phase 3. It does so by providing space to gather people together, being adaptable for multiple uses, generating revenue, and being accessible to the broader community. The multi-purpose space is an open plan that allows activities to flow freely and connect to the atrium, sanctuary, and open green space. The atrium links the multi-purpose space and the sanctuary. It is a light-filled gallery-like space that can be used for study and small meetings. It also allows people to move from the sidewalk to the open green space and back again.

Part of the multi-purpose space is used during the week as a preschool for indoor play. Weather permitting, the childcare room can open up directly to the green open area, and activities can be separated from the sidewalk. The church would use the preschool spaces during weekends for Sunday School and meetings. The preschool tenant would provide approximately \$34,000 in rent annually.

The multi-purpose community space is available for event rentals. There are modular walls that can be used to create space for meetings and classes. The team estimated approximately two and a half events per month at \$1,100 per event, which would generate \$33,000 annually. A warming kitchen is provided in this space to be shared by the church, preschool, and event users.



Meeting



Exercising



Sharing food



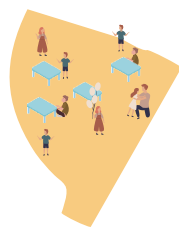
Working



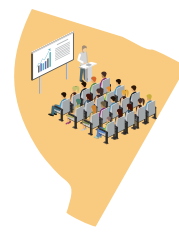
Socializing



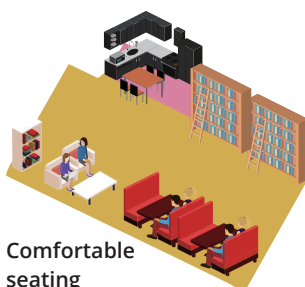
Smaller rooms



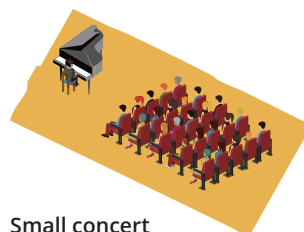
Childcare



Sunday school



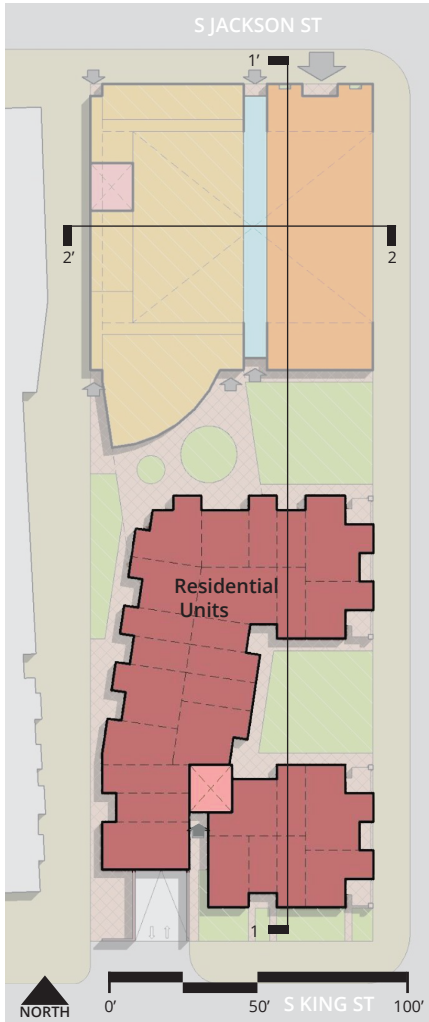
Comfortable seating



Small concert



Learning



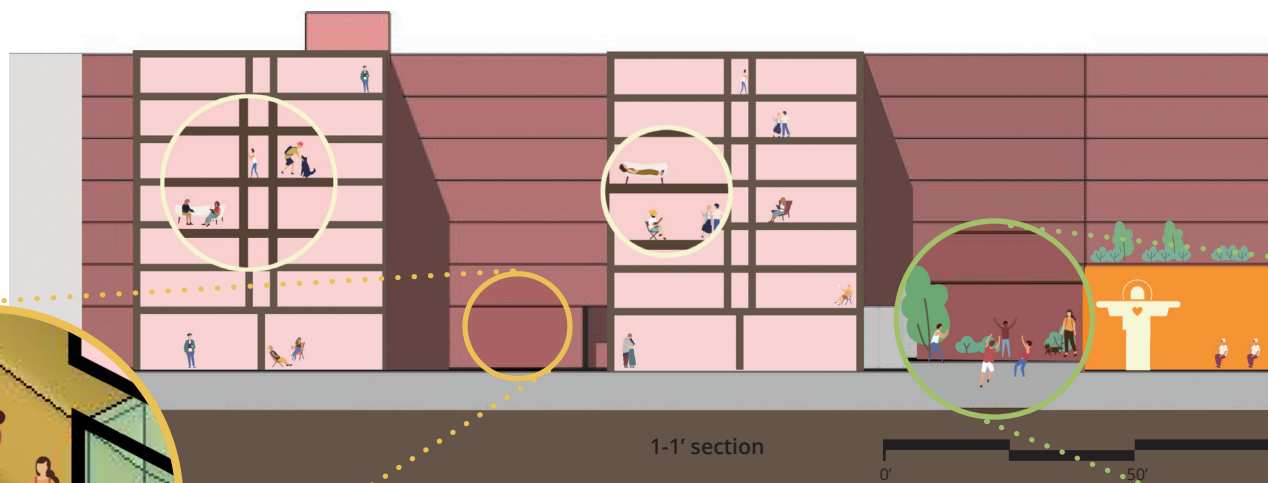
Ground floor residential floor plan showing individual porches

## HOUSING LEGACY & NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

Providing housing in the Mt. Baker project is the key to supporting the church's ongoing legacy. This part of the development makes the rest of the project possible. The rents will provide a revenue source to help fund the project. The housing creates density and opportunities for many church congregants to live in the Central District. The residential portion of the project includes seven floors of housing pending the successful rezone of Site B to match the 75-foot height of Site A along S Jackson St. The overall project reflects the neighborhood design guidelines and the neighborhood strategic plan. People who come to live at Mt. Baker will benefit from a highly "walkable" neighborhood that has nearby transit, shopping, open space, and other amenities.

## UNIT MIX & AFFORDABILITY

The residential portion of the project provides 301 units of housing. The mix of units includes studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units. Nineteen units, including 16 studios, 2 one-bedrooms, and 1 two-bedroom apartments, are affordable under Seattle's MHA requirements to those earning less than 60 percent of the area median income. The team discovered that there is less interest than expected in three-bedroom units in the city's rental population. So, we chose to focus on a range of smaller units to maximize the number of apartments.



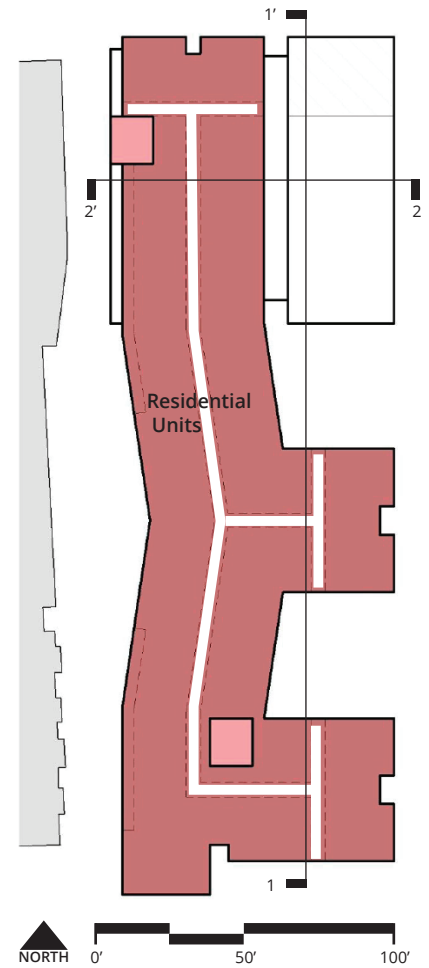
Section view facing west into the building, shows apartments and sanctuary. Behind the sanctuary (so not visible in this image), the first floor has community facilities and the second floor has apartments. Closeups feature active courtyards tucked in along the east side of the building.

## RELATIONSHIP TO THE SITE

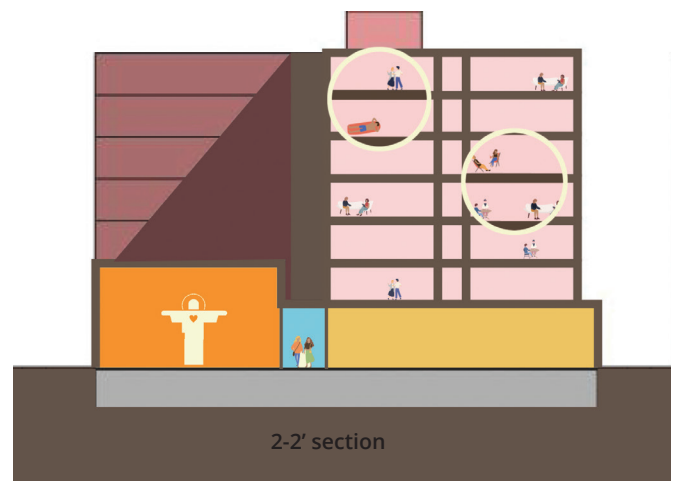
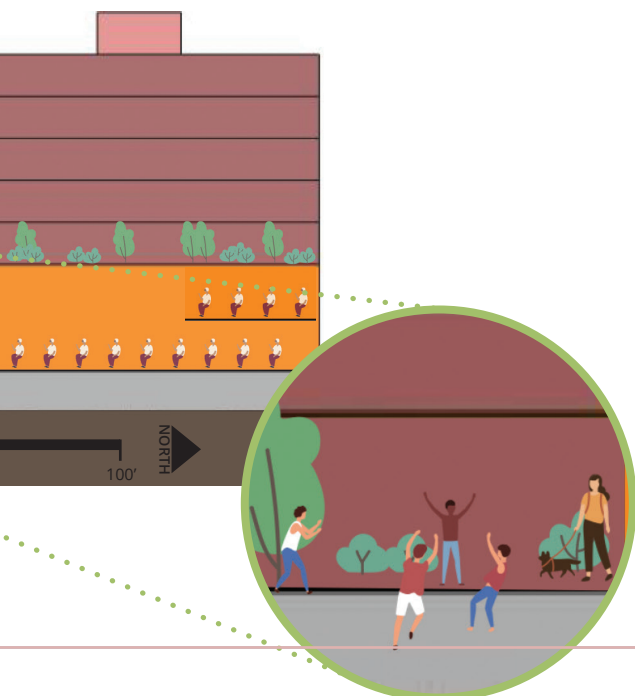
The residential development is deliberately not located over the sanctuary. Instead, it is situated over the multi-purpose space to create sheltered outdoor green space for the preschool and church. All ground-level residential units are designed with porches to create comfortable places to sit outdoors. The porches provide a welcoming space and a transition from the more public area to the private space of the units. Along the west side of the ground-floor residences, the porches echo those of the Vulcan development units located directly across from the pedestrian walkway that runs between the Mt. Baker and Vulcan sites. The upper six levels of apartments share the same layout, using double-loaded corridors (a central hallway with units on both sides). Double-loading the units creates an efficient floor plan (floor plate). This efficiency allows us to maximize the number of units the projects can provide, and decreases the construction and operation costs, allowing for more affordable units.

## PARKING

Of the 126 parking spaces provided one level below ground, 60 are for residential use. We provide a further 60 spaces for congregational and public parking. A final six spaces are permanently designated for the pastor, church elders, and the church's commuter van.



Residential floor plan for upper floors 2-7



Section view facing south showing the sanctuary and community spaces, connected by the atrium. Six stories of apartments are shown above the community spaces, but not above the sanctuary. Beyond the community spaces, the rest of the building has apartments on all 7 floors.

## PUBLIC SPACES



*Streetscape along S Jackson St in front of the church looking south*

*Plan view sketch showing landscaped walking path between Mt. Baker and Vulcan buildings that leads to neighborly porches of ground floor apartments of both buildings.*



## STREETSCAPE

We proposed two additional things to support the integration of the project into the neighborhood. The first is to suggest church-specific uses of 25th Ave S at certain times of the week and year. The other is to augment the local site design (sidewalk planting strips and a roundabout) to beautify the streetscape and connect to the range of mobility options in the neighborhood.

The City of Seattle designates 25th Ave S as a neighborhood greenway, a local street chosen and signed to prioritize walking and biking. The city also has various programs and permits that would allow Mt. Baker to temporarily close down the road for community gatherings such as play streets, festivals, and block parties. We envision 25th Ave S as a spacious “outdoor room” that can augment the project’s green open spaces at certain times. 25th Ave S also provides limited short-term parking and a quiet drop-off and pick-up location to come and go from childcare.



Plan view of the Mt. Baker site design showing streetscape improvements, landscape design, and people-friendly courtyards



A peek into the semi-public north courtyard used by the church congregation as well as by building residents and neighbors



A peek into the semi-private south courtyard used primarily by building residents

## COURTYARDS FOR MULTIPLE COMMUNITIES

We proposed two flexible green outdoor spaces that respond to church desires. The northern one is a multi-purpose space for use by the church community, the preschool, and for special events. The southern one is a green open space created for the residents. These spaces can accommodate BBQs, kids' play, sports, performances, and other community gatherings. Both outdoor spaces are open to the sidewalk along 25th Ave S, which is a quiet local street.



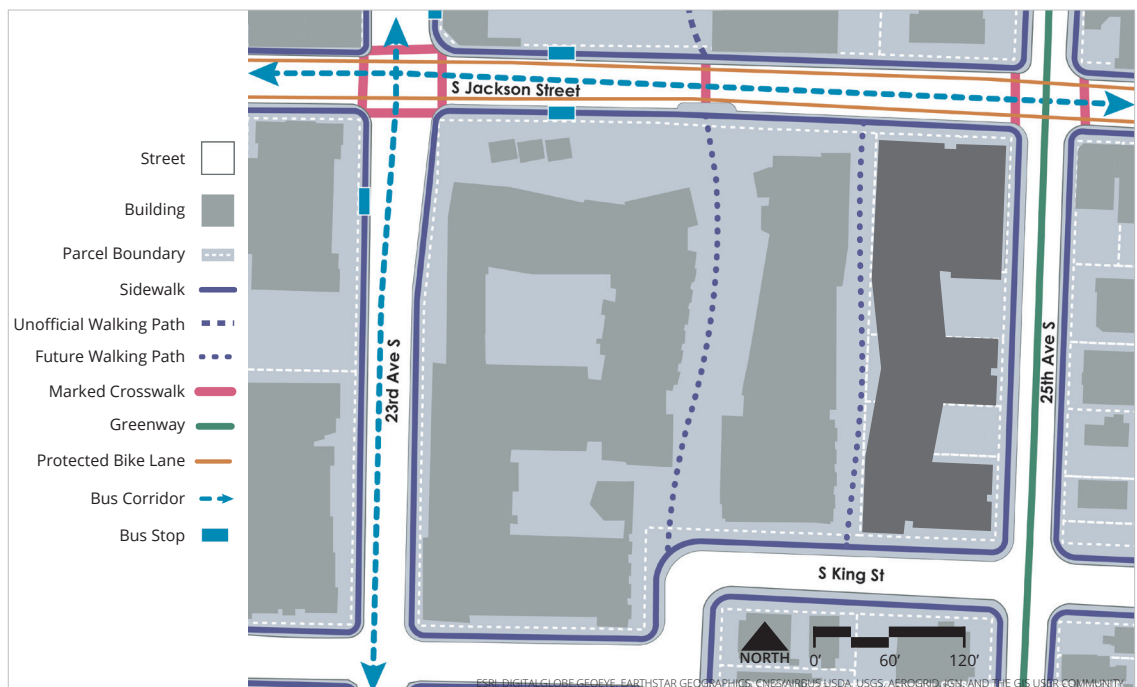
Green roof provides outdoor spaces for active use by building residents

## MOBILITY & CIRCULATION

Maintaining the church's presence on the corner of S Jackson St & 25th Ave S was essential to our client. As a result, the church building and its main entry are located there.

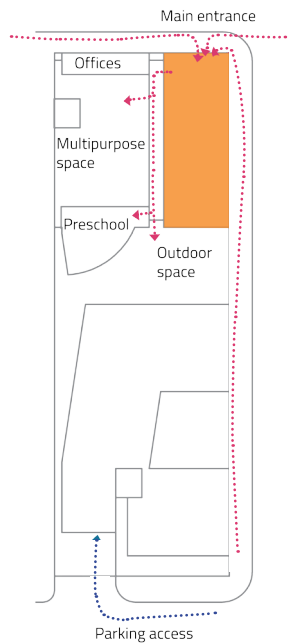
Because the project lies within an urban village and a neighborhood commercial zone with enhanced pedestrian focus, many mobility options including sidewalks, walkways, and bike lanes connect the site to neighborhood amenities. We also included several pedestrian realm design elements including protective overhangs, multiple entrances, windows to create a visual connection between inside and outside, and porches for the ground-floor apartments to provide visual interest and a transition from public to private space.

The childcare room and other church facilities are accessible from the atrium or the north courtyard. Residents access their home via one of two stairwells or elevators. Residents living on the ground floor enter their homes directly through their front doors.

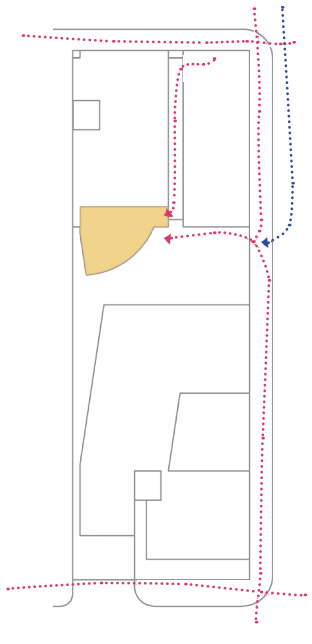


Mobility map showing the many modes and routes of travel near the site

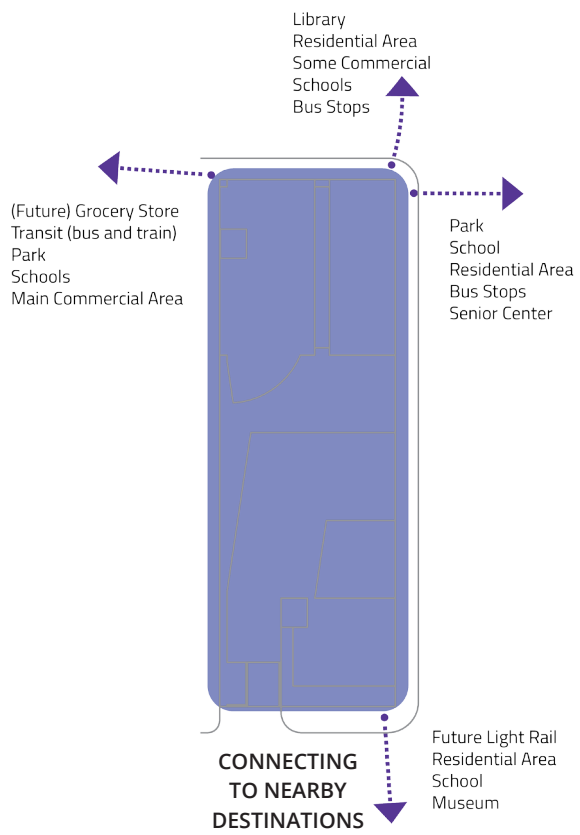




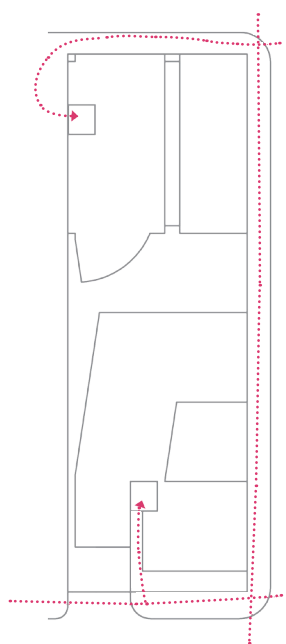
**CHURCH ACCESS**



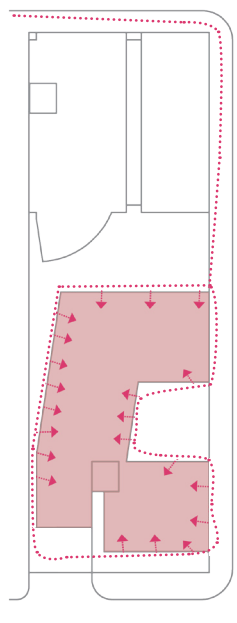
**CLASSROOM/CHILDCARE ACCESS**



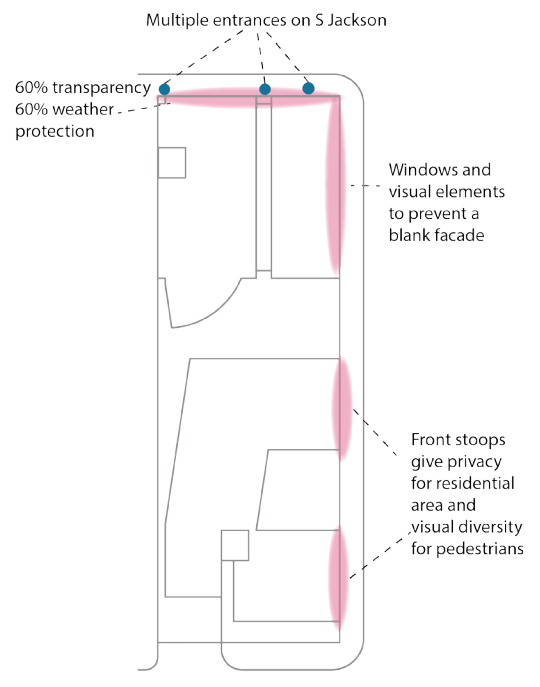
**CONNECTING TO NEARBY DESTINATIONS**



**UPPER FLOOR RESIDENT ACCESS**



**GROUND FLOOR RESIDENT ACCESS**



**PEDESTRIAN REALM CONSIDERATIONS**

Access and site circulation diagrams showing how people get to and move through the site

## FINANCING

To fund this project, Mt. Baker will likely acquire construction and permanent loans to finance a portion of the total project cost. The church has property equity and can use that to their advantage in the financing process. We suggest seeking out additional funding sources that are targeted to particular uses including those for affordable housing, multi-family housing, childcare, and church facility development. In addition, we believe the church will be well positioned to secure some financing through fundraising, philanthropy, and/or social impact investors.

Projected rental income from the apartments, preschool, and special events should allow the church to secure substantial long-term financing.

## LEGAL STRUCTURES

To support flexibility, we propose the property be divided into four commercial condominiums by use. The community and childcare spaces would comprise one condominium, and the other three would be the sanctuary, the residential spaces, and parking. This has the added benefit that lenders are typically more willing to finance with the uses broken out and funded separately.

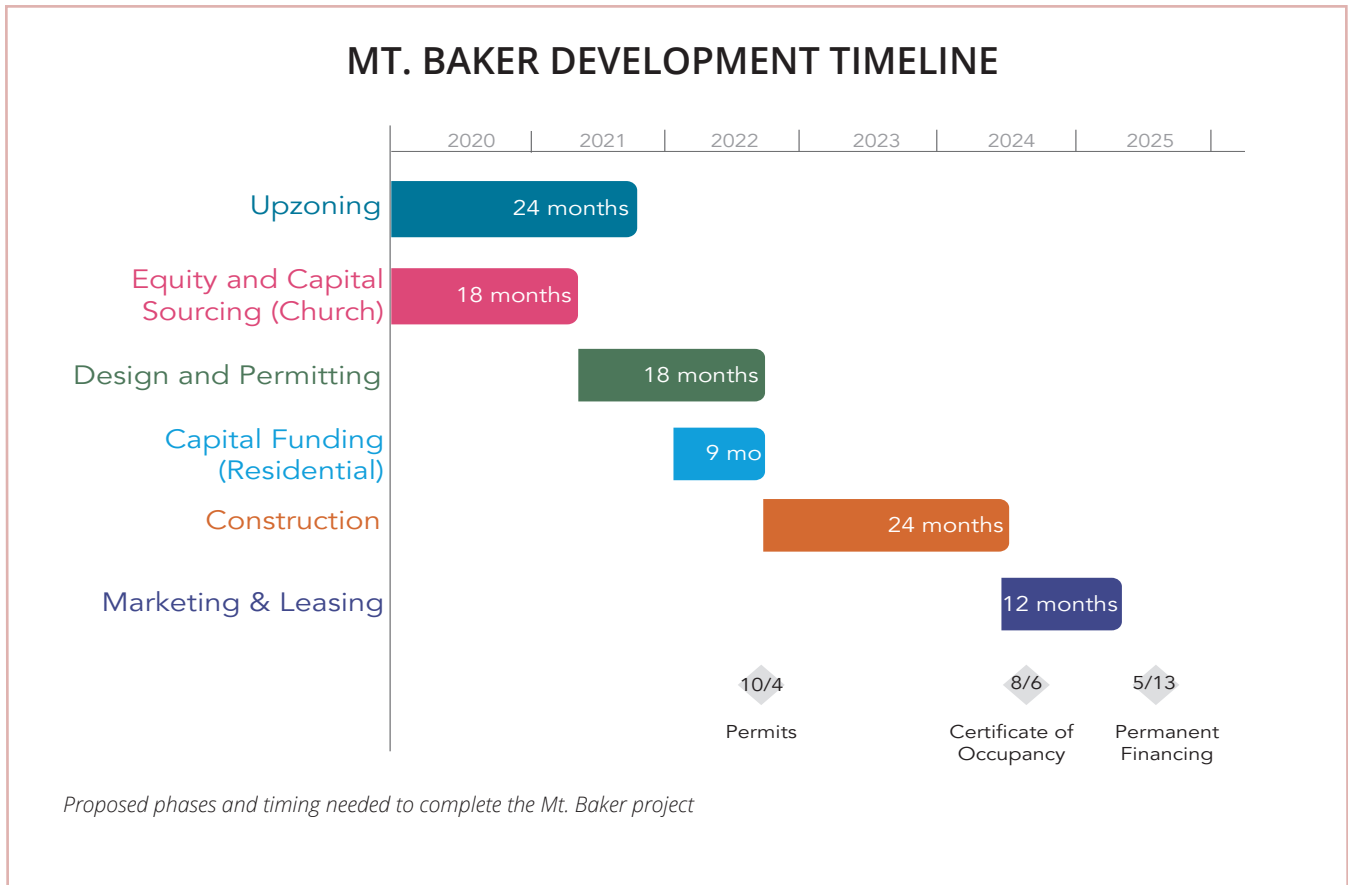


*Team working with studio mentor Julie Howe* TEACHING TEAM

# TIMELINE

We believe that the Site B upzone application and process should be started immediately and will take approximately 24 months to complete. At the same time, the church can begin to work on financing for the sanctuary and community spaces, which we estimate will take 18 months to fully secure. Following capital sourcing for the church, design and permitting for the overall project will commence and will take approximately 18 months to complete. During the second half of the design and permitting phase, financing for the residential portion of the project including the parking, should be advanced.

Once construction financing, design, and permitting are complete, construction can begin. We estimate that construction will take 24 months. As the project nears the end of construction, marketing and leasing can begin. After the project is complete, the church should move all construction financing into permanent financing.



# EBENEZER ZION AME CHURCH/ MEREDITH MATHEWS YMCA



*A view looking northeast of the combined Ebenezer/Y building with its shared plaza prominently placed at the corner of 23rd Ave & E Olive St*



UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL IMAGES WERE CREATED BY THE STUDENT TEAM MEMBERS.

## EBENEZER AME ZION CHURCH

1716 23rd Ave, Seattle, WA 98122

Pastor Ezra Maize

## MEREDITH MATHEWS EAST MADISON YMCA

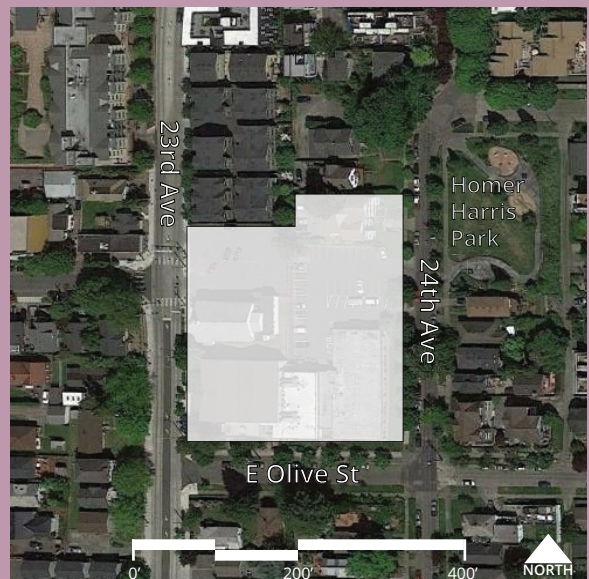
1700 23rd Ave, Seattle, WA 98122

Executive Director Greg Lewis

Drew Cunningham, MUP  
 Krista Doersch, MLA  
 Weston Hambleton, MARCH  
 Yichao Hu, MUP  
 Yang Liu, MUP  
 Yanli Lu, MSRE  
 Clifton Stratton, MSRE

### ***Working Together, Growing Together***

The church and the Y are neighboring institutions with a good working relationship who appreciate the beneficial synergies of sharing their facilities. They are moving forward together to develop a new shared structure with more space and amenities. While each would own their parts of the building, they benefit from flexible and shareable spaces.



Ebenezer/ Y site GOOGLE EARTH

## SITE & PROPERTY CONDITIONS

### TWO HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD INSTITUTIONS

Ebenezer AME Zion Church was founded in 1930. Ebenezer means “stone of hope.” It has a long history of serving the African American community. It supported a WPA sewing room during the Great Depression. It hosted Black service members from Fort Lewis when they stayed overnight in Seattle.

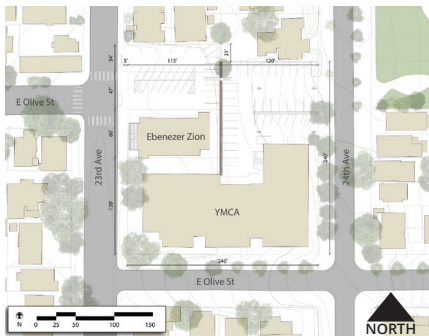
Meredith Mathews East Madison YMCA was founded in 1936. It is one of two local Ys to be designated as historic buildings. Leon Bridges, FAIA, an acclaimed African American architect, designed the existing building in 1965. The Y has been a hub for the Black community for decades.

### ON NEIGHBORING PROPERTIES

The church and the Y are located next to one another at the corner of 23rd Ave & E Olive St in the northeast part of the Central District. Just north of the site are major streets that feature several bus lines, the proposed G Bus Rapid Transit line that will connect the neighborhood with downtown (along Madison), and several restaurants and a Safeway. Directly east of the site lies Homer Harris Park. The topography rapidly slopes down from 23rd Ave through both sites to 24th Ave.

Both sites are located in a low-rise multi-family zone. The Ebenezer AME Zion Church site is addressed off of 23rd Ave and is zoned Low-rise 3. The Meredith Mathews YMCA site is addressed off of E Olive St and is zoned Low-rise 2. Both sites are located in the Madison-Miller Residential Urban Village.

Currently, the church and the Y informally share parking. Surface parking occupies approximately 40 percent of their combined lot area. A 6-8-foot-high rock wall separates the parking lots, and a stair connects the upper



*Plan of existing site showing separate church and Y buildings and their surface parking lots*



*Existing Ebenezer AME Zion Church and Meredith Mathews East Madison YMCA seen from 23rd Ave* AUBREE NICHOLS

and lower parking lots. A popular east-west pedestrian route passes through both parking lots.

Surrounding the site is a mix of housing types including apartments on 23rd Ave, townhomes to the north, and a mix of primarily single-family with some apartment buildings mixed in to the south and east.

## SHARING THEIR GOALS

This project was unique in the studio because it had two properties and two clients, Pastor Ezra Maize and the Ebenezer AME Zion Church and Executive Director Greg Lewis and the Meredith Mathews East Madison YMCA. The two institutions have a good working relationship and currently share some informal co-use of their sites.

In particular, the clients had the following goals:

### ***Ebenezer AME Zion Church***

The church sought more sanctuary space to accommodate existing members and planned-for congregational growth. Pastor Maize also wanted to retain classroom space and have flexible space for support group meetings and community activities.

### ***Meredith Mathews East Madison YMCA***

The Y wanted to retain their pool facilities including a lap pool, and a pool for swim lessons and programs like "Safety Around Water." The Y wanted more studio and meeting space. ED Lewis also wanted to accommodate a daycare, teenage outreach space and programs, and a business incubator.

### ***Shared Space***

The church and the Y were interested in sharing spaces where it made sense, such as a community kitchen, a multi-purpose room, and increased parking. They also requested that the shared space have clear ownership to simplify legal and business matters.

## CREATING ONE VISION TOGETHER

- Build one shared structure to achieve both clients' goals
- Increase overall indoor and outdoor activity space
- Ebenezer land contribution to raise funds
- Optional Y land sale to raise funds
- Phase project to minimize disruption for clients during construction

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“Loving God with all our heart, all our soul and all our mind, and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.”

— *Ebenezer mission excerpt*

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“Dedicated to youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility”

— *The Y*

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Ground floor entries provide places for social interaction SCHEMATA WORKSHOP, CANDG

## NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Central Area Neighborhood Design Guidelines direct designers and project reviewers to look closely at the neighborhood and its character to design new buildings that enhance their surroundings. The intent is to help reinforce existing character and protect the qualities that neighborhood residents value most in the face of change.



Open entrances; Transparent frontage CANDG



Green space; Sidewalk protected by vegetation CANDG



Open space for various uses; Hardscapes for active use CANDG



Safe, comfortable pedestrian environment; Open space for community CANDG

### Key Considerations

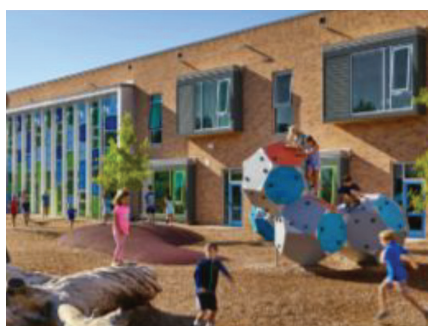
These images show examples from the Central Area Neighborhood Design Guidelines of design features the team decided were important to incorporate in their proposal for a new Ebenezer/Y facility.



Screening as artistic opportunity CANDG



Opportunity for gathering & gardening CANDG



Safe area for families CANDG



Farming opportunity CANDG



## PRECEDENTS

The team drew inspiration from the recently completed University of Washington Tacoma (UW-T) Y, the Chicago Temple Building, and play and exercise-focused building design that creatively uses rooftops and stairs.

The new Tacoma Y provides an example of shared programming and space for the Y and UW-T in one building and the latest in facility design.

The Chicago Temple Building is a historic skyscraper that is home to the First United Methodist Church of Chicago. It inspired us through its multi-story design that gives the top space to the church (in addition to other spaces in the building).

The Gangjin Children's Centre in Maryang, South Korea, inspired ideas for active play and exercise for our rooftop design.

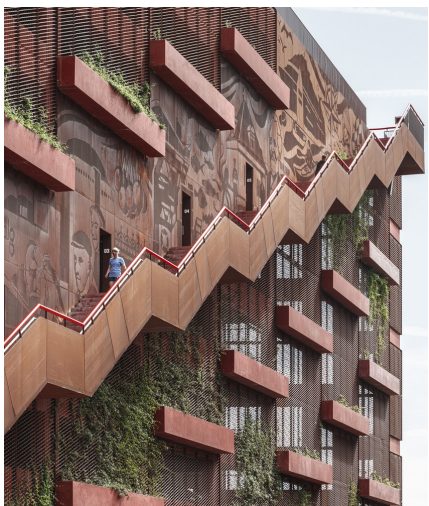
The Nordhavn District parking garage in Copenhagen likewise inspired our rooftop proposal and our plan for an exercise stair along the east side of our building.



*Exterior of the University of Washington Tacoma Y UW TACOMA*



*Cassie Campbell Community Center, Brampton, Ontario LISA LOGAN*



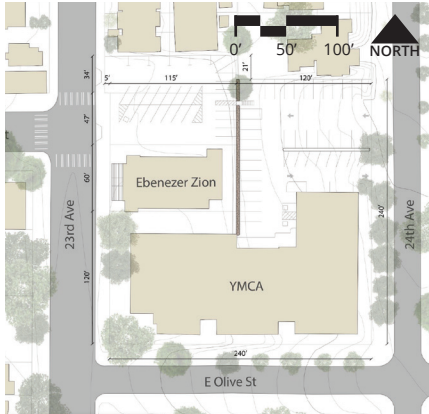
*Parking garage with playground and exterior stair in the Nordhavn District of Copenhagen, Denmark JAJA ARCHITECTS*



*Gangjin Children's Centre in Maryang, South Korea JYA-RCHITECTS*



*The Chicago Temple Building is home to the First United Methodist Church of Chicago. FIRST UNITED METHODIST*



Plan view of existing site showing neighboring church and Y buildings



Proposed site plan shows one shared building on the west half of site, allowing potential sale or separate development of open eastern half.

## DESIGN PROPOSAL

With Ebenezer and the Y willing to work together, it created an opportunity for the team to develop a synergistic project. Our focus was to create an engaging, community-focused, and highly client-responsive design. We created one shared structure to address both clients' goals and oriented the building to 23rd Ave for visibility. We located a shared plaza on the prominent southwest corner of the site. Siting the building and plaza in this way contributes to the overall streetscape and urban design quality of 23rd Ave. We focused on increasing the overall amount of space for indoor and outdoor activities for both clients per their needs. While some of the building's spaces are shared, each client also has its own discrete area. This relationship plays out in the physical design of the space as well as the ownership structure.



Proposed building to house both Ebenezer AME Zion Church and Meredith Mathews East Madison YMCA, seen from 23rd Ave

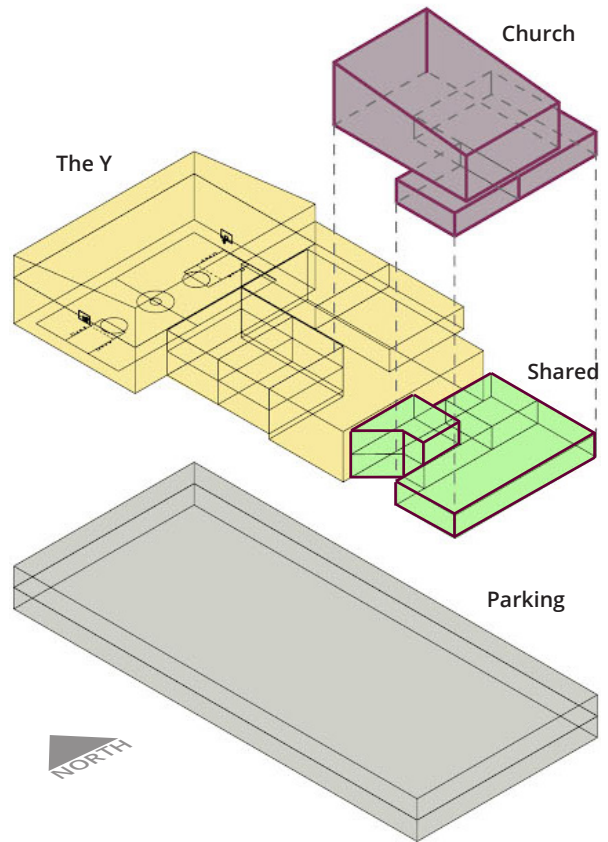
## SEPARATE OWNERSHIP, SHARED SPACES

Given our clients' interest and willingness to share space and work together, we proposed a shared building for Ebenezer and the Y. In the design, we express the shared space in multiple ways. These include a communal plaza at the corner of 23rd Ave & E Olive St and vertically stacked spaces.

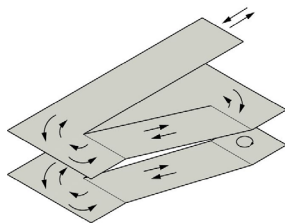
We located the sanctuary at the very top of the building, with additional church facilities situated directly below. Spaces for the Y and the shared spaces—childcare, kitchen, and multi-purpose room—occupy the next levels down. At the base of the building are two levels of parking that serve everyone.

## PARKING

Because of the change in grade between 23rd Ave and 24th Ave, we were able to propose two levels of parking with minimal excavation. We provided 160 spaces in 56,000 square feet of parking. The team located the vehicle entry and exit on E Olive St. There are two additional pedestrian connections made via stairs and elevators to the building and the site.

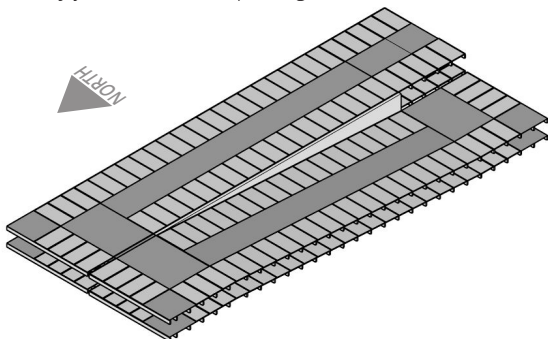


Exploded axon diagram of the proposed Ebenezer/Y building showing jointly and separately used spaces



Two way flow, double-helix parking

- 1 entry on Olive St
- 2 pedestrian egress methods
- 2 levels
- 160 parking spaces
- 56,000 square feet



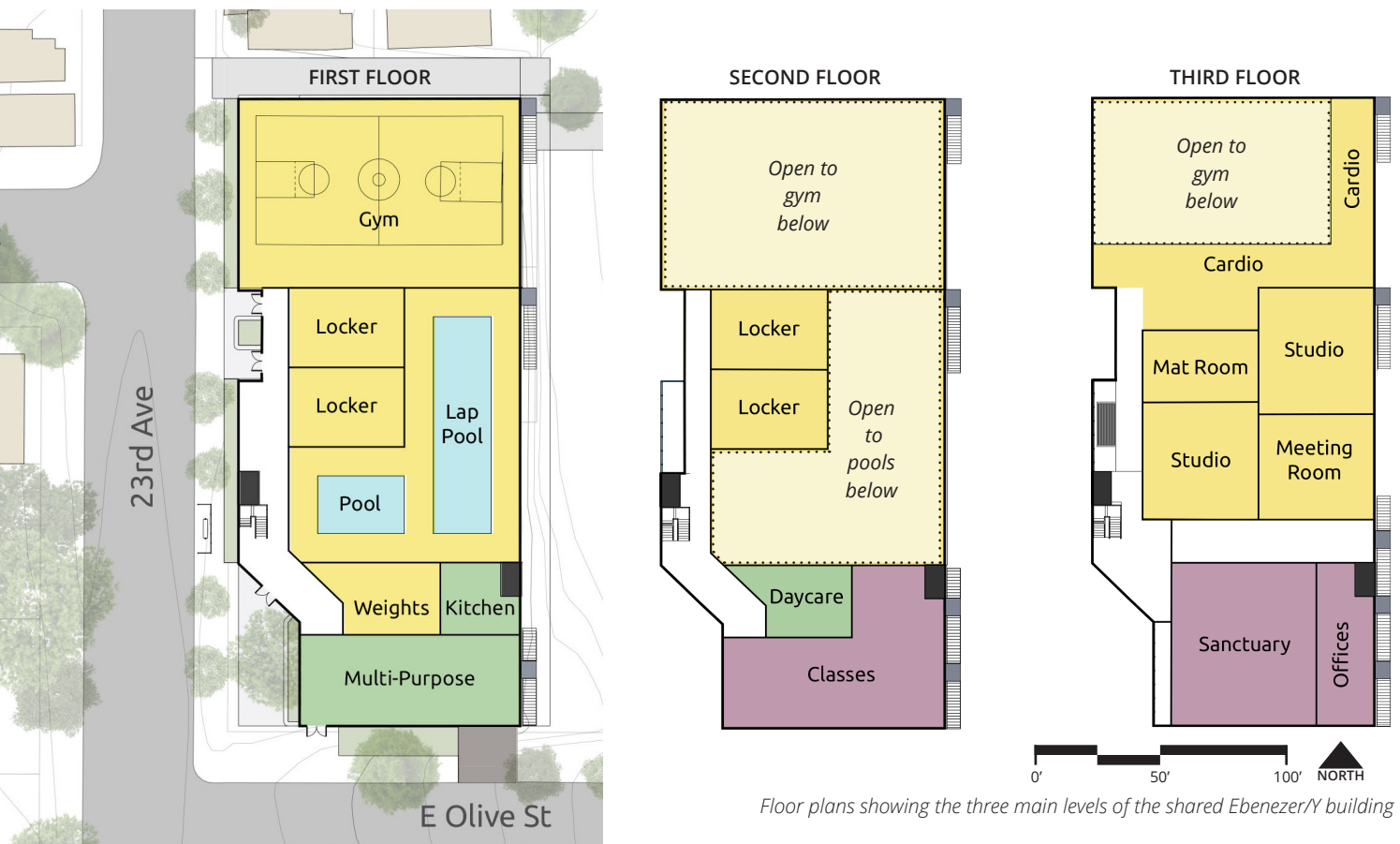
Parking stall layout for underground garage

## PROGRAM

### *More Space & New Facilities*

The Y's existing facility is approximately 22,600 square feet (SF). The proposed Y facility is 42,000 SF, an increase of 19,400 SF. Ebenezer's existing facility is approximately 5,900 SF. The proposed church facility is 9,200, an increase of 3,300 SF.

The floor plans, shown below, and the section view looking east, shown below right, depict how the team envisions sharing and integrating the space within the building. Note the double- and triple-height spaces of the gym, pool area, and sanctuary. The yellow zone is the Y's space, while the purple zone is the church's space. Shared space is shown in green, and the parking levels are shown in gray. In the section view, E Olive St is on the right side of the building.



Floor plans showing the three main levels of the shared Ebenezer/Y building

### Third Floor—Y & Church Spaces

The third floor includes the Y’s cardio area, mat room, two studios, and a meeting room (shown in yellow). The cardio area is open to the gymnasium below. The church sanctuary and offices are located on the south side of the building (shown in purple).

### Second Floor—Y, Church & Shared Spaces

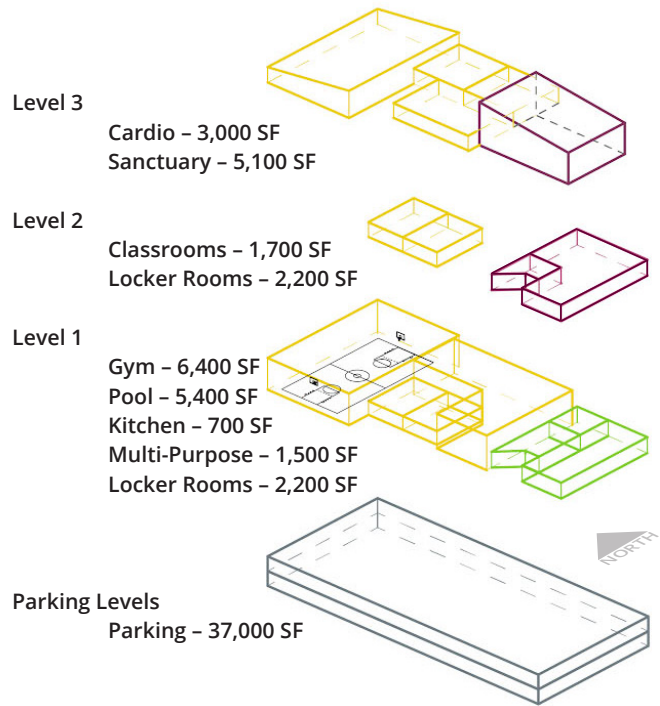
The second floor contains the church’s classroom space (shown in purple), a shared childcare space (shown in green), and the second level of locker rooms for the Y (shown in yellow). This floor is open to the first floor in the pool and gym areas.

### First Floor—Y & Shared Spaces

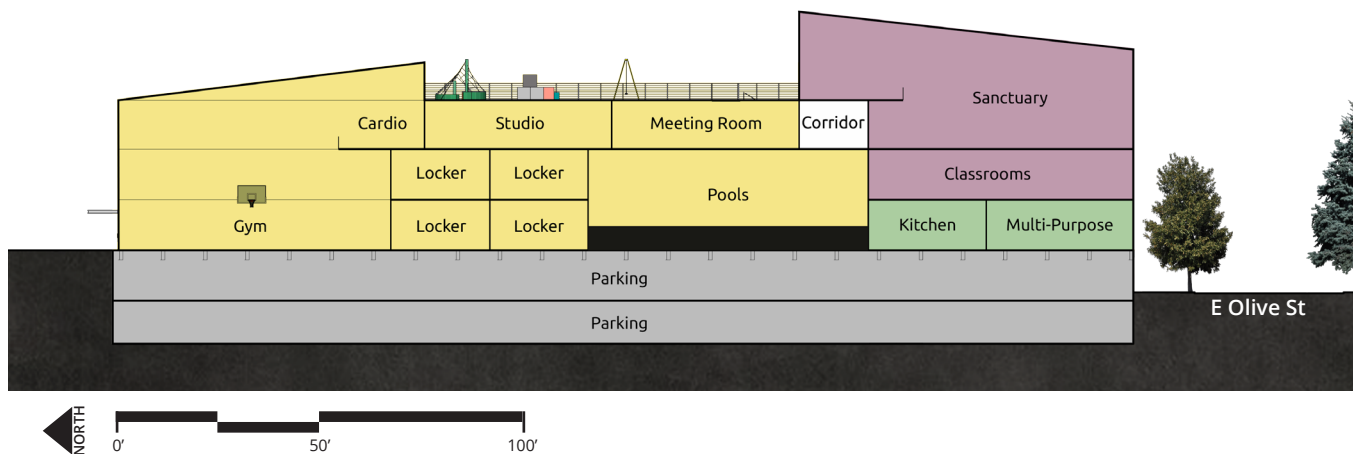
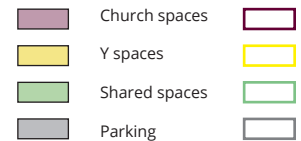
The first floor of the new shared facility directly connects to the street, sidewalk, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. This floor contains the new Y gym, locker rooms, weight room, and pools (shown in yellow). Spaces shared with the church include the kitchen and multi-purpose room (shown in green).

### 2 Underground Floors—Parking

The 160 parking spaces under the building can be accessed via the entrance on E Olive St.



Exploded view of spatial program showing square footage of facilities for different uses

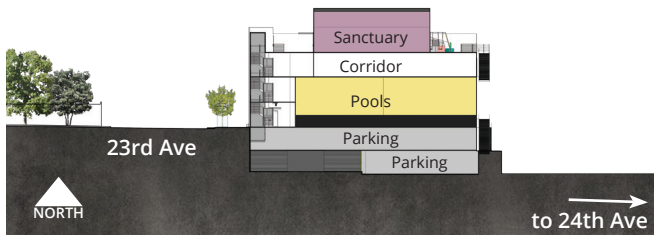


Section view looking east from 23rd Ave

## RELATIONSHIP TO THE STREET

This view looking north shows the relationship of the building to the different levels of 23rd Ave and 24th Ave. 23rd Ave is located on the left side of the building and is shown with street trees and a bus shelter. The right side of the building connects with the ground at the level of 24th Ave.

Inside the building, the internal vertical circulation (stairs and elevators) can be seen on the left connecting all levels of the building to the street and on the right side, the exterior stairs connect the rooftop to ground level. The pool area is a double-height space that occupies the first and second floors with two levels of underground parking below. On the third floor, above the pools, the corridor shown here separates Y and church areas. The church sanctuary's double-height space is visible at the top.



Site section (looking north) showing the levels of the building in relation to change in ground level, which slopes steeply down from west to east



Connection to transit and dynamic street edge along 23rd Ave (looking south)

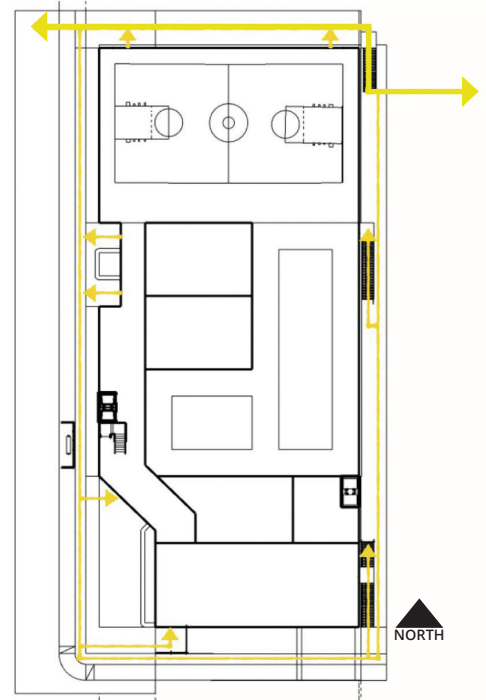
## NEIGHBORHOOD MOBILITY & SITE DESIGN

We focused on designing transparency into the building and sidewalk designs through the use of glass to visually connect inside and outside, and open public entrances connecting the interior to surrounding sidewalks. We further strengthened the public space design with plantings along the sidewalk, and opportunities for community gardening.

In the diagrams at right, pedestrian circulation around the building is shown in yellow, while bicycle circulation and parking are shown in blue.

At the north end of the site (at the top of the diagrams), there is a ramp for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross the site, connecting the section of E. Olive St that lies west (left) of 23rd Ave to Homer Harris Park east of the site.

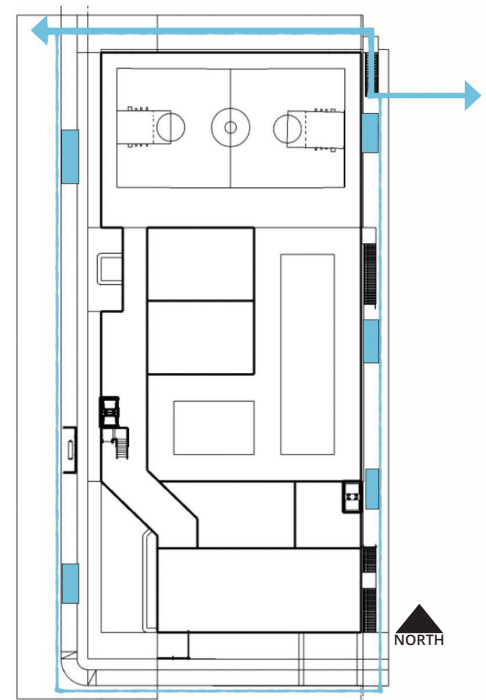
The bicycle and pedestrian ramp, sidewalk, and the rooftop can be thought of as small open green spaces that create opportunities for active use and relaxation for the community.



*Pedestrian travel, building entrance and egress plan (shown in yellow)*



*Bus stop on 23rd Ave near the Y entrance and the corner plaza. Daylit interior staircase provides access to all levels including active rooftop. Glass-front stairwell overlook the street provides a sheltered indoor vantage point to watch for rides or friends. (looking southeast toward E Olive St)*



*Bicycle mobility and bike parking plan (shown in blue)*



*The Y and the church have distinct separate entrances that share a plaza where they meet at the corner of 23rd Ave & E Olive St (looking northeast)*

## INVITING ENTRANCES

Welcoming people was a high priority for the team. Because of this, we focused on engaging community members directly through the site and building design. We prioritized making inviting entrances, created visual connections between inside and out, and enhanced peoples' comfort and visual engagement with the site design and the building facade.



*Entrance plaza invites street level activity and gathering at the corner of 23rd Ave & E Olive St (looking north)*

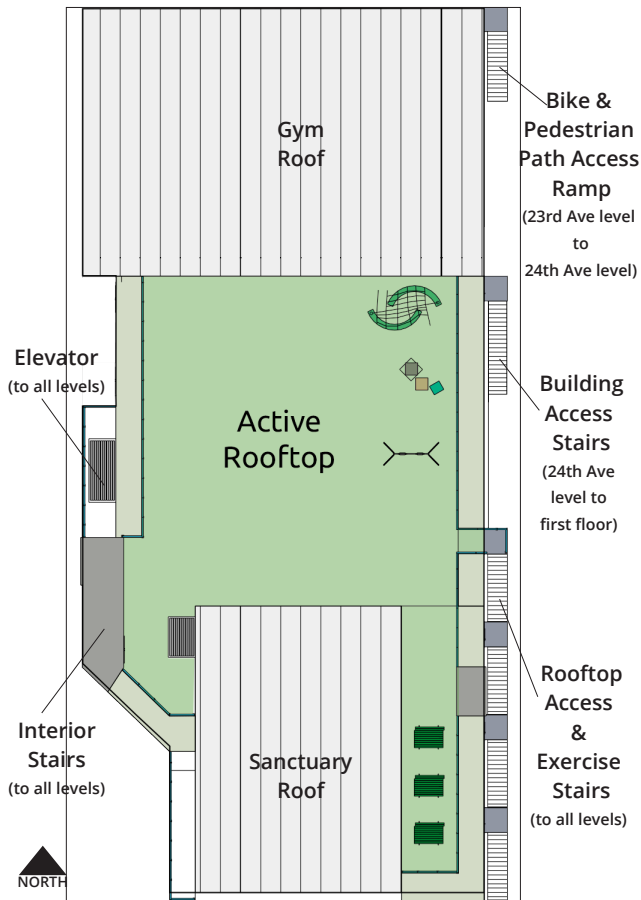


## ACTIVE ROOFTOP

The rooftop is designed to be an active-use space. It is a sunny and protected space located between the upper level of the church sanctuary to the south and the Y to the north. This shared space includes areas for kid's play activities as well as for relaxing and exercise. The exercise stair that runs along the east side of the building from the roof to ground can be accessed from this area.



*Bird's-eye view of the west facade and the active rooftop space for play and gathering*



*Rooftop plan*



*Rooftop activity area (looking south)*



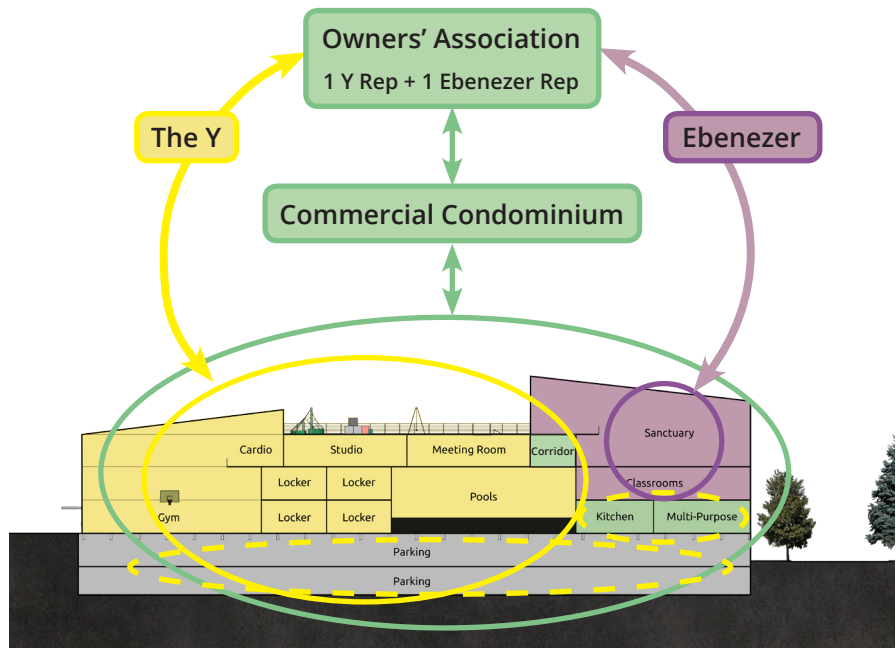
*View of the east facade with its combined egress and workout stairs over bike parking*

## CONSTRUCTION & FUNDING

The Y will take the lead on construction efforts. To fund the project, Ebenezer will contribute its property in exchange for the construction of the church unit and any remaining proceeds. The Y could fund its share of the project through an optional land sale of the east half of the overall combined site, and with fundraising efforts for the remainder. Ebenezer will lease parking spots from the Y. Ebenezer may have the opportunity to lease some of its space to the Seattle School for Boys (an existing tenant), the Y, and other possible future uses.

## OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE

While Ebenezer and the Y will share several spaces, each desires to maintain distinct ownership of their parts of the building. To serve the clients' needs, we proposed a commercial condominium structure that contains the Y unit, church unit, and limited shared space that would be part of the Y unit. Parking will be owned by the Y, and some of the parking can be leased by the church. We propose that the building be managed by an owner's association composed of one Ebenezer and one Y representative.



*Project is financed as one commercial condominium with two separate units, each owned and controlled independently. Parking and shared spaces are part of the Y unit. Owners Association manages shared spaces. Church has option to lease parking from the Y.*

# PROJECT PHASES

## PRECONSTRUCTION

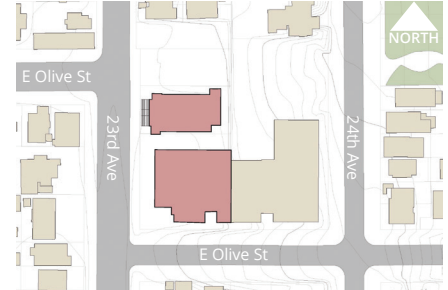
We anticipate the design process to take nine months, followed by 12 months for project permitting.

## PHASE ONE—CONSTRUCTION

We expect Phase One to take approximately 21 months. During Phase One, Ebenezer will operate in a temporary location. At the Y, the pool and cardio spaces will be available; the gym will be closed. At this time, the existing church building and Y gymnasium will be demolished (estimated time is three months), and the new shared facility construction will begin. The team anticipates construction to last 18 months.

## PHASE TWO—GRAND OPENING & DECOMMISSIONING OF OLD Y POOL

During the final three months of the project, the combined Ebenezer/Y community will celebrate the grand opening of their building. Following this, the old Y pool will be demolished.



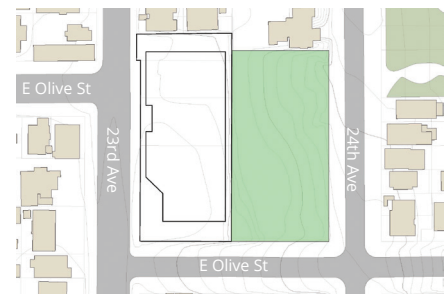
Phase 1—Demolish existing church and west end of the Y.



Phase 1—Construct new building to house both church and Y. Existing pool and cardio remain in use.



Phase 2—Open new building. Demolish old Y.



Future opportunity—Open site could be developed into housing or sold.

## EBENEZER/Y PROJECT TIMELINE

Phase	Task	2020				2021				2022				2023		
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Preconstruction	Design	■	■	■												
	Building Permit				■	■	■	■								
Phase One	Demo Church & Gym								■							
	Construction									■	■	■	■	■	■	
Phase Two	Grand Opening															■
	Close & Demo Old Pool															■

Timing of proposed phases and actions to complete the Ebenezer/Y project

# THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The McKinley Futures Nehemiah Studio simulated a real-world experience for students that far exceeded anything I could have imagined at the beginning of our studio discussions in July and August of 2019. Students found in their work that many factors contribute to constantly evolving projects. For example, the accumulation of new information from multiple sources caused clients, instructors, and students to reevaluate their directions.

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**“Highest Beloved Community use” is a holistic solution that responds to client program, site constraints, zoning, presumed neighborhood needs, and stakeholder input.**

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The most exciting evolution arose from our assumption/requirement that for the studio to achieve its maximum value, the Master of Science in Real Estate students should solve each site for “highest and best market value” as well as client needs and preferences. Over time this progressed into what we referred to as the “highest Beloved Community use,” a term that captured a holistic solution for each site that responded to the client program as well as the reality of site constraints, zoning, presumed neighborhood needs, and stakeholder input.

Remarkably, the solutions developed in the studio passed the test of “financial feasibility.” The three projects gave students a genuine opportunity to test their creativity in addressing the myriad requirements put before them. Each of the teams dealt with a level of complexity rarely addressed in “real” projects, including split sites and zoning, existing users who desire to remain in “business” throughout construction, competing programmatic needs, parking requirements with extraordinary peak time demand and little demand otherwise, creation and replacement of “affordable housing,” rapidly changing neighborhood dynamics, and limited capital beyond property value. These nuances challenged students to define “feasibility” in its broadest sense. Through multiple iterations drafting “solutions” for each site, each team achieved a financially feasible design that met client requirements.

Moving forward, there are still many questions to answer. For these efforts to be successful, the clients and their development consultants will need to engage in fundraising and sourcing strategies to meet the challenge of developing housing in Seattle’s current construction market.

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**Clients and their development consultants will need to engage in fundraising and sourcing strategies to meet the challenge of developing housing in Seattle.**

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While market-rate developers have benefited from increasing household incomes with tenants able to pay whatever the market will support in rent, the non-profit developer has exactly the opposite problem. Their challenge is to keep up with increasing construction costs while serving households with fixed or falling incomes relative to the cost of living.

As a result, for the projects explored in this studio to move forward, it is necessary to access government, philanthropic, and social equity funding sources to fill in the gaps between development cost and the ability of low-income and workforce households to pay rent. Already, the number of cost-burdened households (paying more than 30% of their income for housing) has reached critical levels in Seattle; and the lower a household's income, the greater their cost burden.

Unfortunately, government sources to assist in the production of housing are severely limited, and most come with priorities (e.g., serving the unsheltered and households below 30% area median income (AMI), which may not entirely align with client objectives).

Social equity (the raising of funds for medium-length loan commitments from high-wealth individuals, corporations, and philanthropists at low interest rates without amortization) is only in its nascent stage and has yet to demonstrate sufficient volume to provide anything beyond gap-fillers in financing plans.

Church and religious funds from local congregations and national organizations are a necessary financing source (preferably in the form of patient capital available for equity in addition to the underlying land value). These types of funds will undoubtedly be required to make these projects work.

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To move forward,  
it is necessary  
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philanthropic,  
and social equity  
funding sources.

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*Ebenezer team presenting their proposal to Nehemiah Initiative, church leaders, and professional developers who could work together to carry the ideas forward into a realized development* TARA BROWN

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## Church and religious funds are a necessary financing source, preferably in the form of patient capital.

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The Ebenezer/Y project has its own set of financing requirements, which will require about \$25 million in donor support to be feasible, with the majority of those funds provided by a named sponsor. It is unclear whether the Y has the capacity to achieve that level of donor funding.

Each of the three sites studied within this studio presented challenges in regard to program, financing, and phasing. Specific programs addressed by the students require further evaluation against financing realities in order to determine their feasibility within the context of client resources (both available and projected). Identification of compatible partners with experience in affordable housing as well as verified contacts within Seattle's robust housing construction industry are also a must.

The feasibility of these aspirational projects cannot be fully ascertained without first addressing phasing since all clients expressed the desire to remain on site during construction. In general, this approach adds considerable complexity and cost to development projects, which may not be sustainable. Constraints like these, however, may also serve as catalysts for creative, out-of-the-box problem solving.

Finally, the issue of parking is paramount. How it is ultimately addressed will be one of the single most significant determinants for each project's feasibility. For the Y, in particular, this poses a daunting challenge since a new facility will likely attract additional users, many of whom will expect or prefer to drive to the facility.

These projects will be challenging, with successful outcomes requiring laser-like focus on the ultimate goal of retaining the Black church and its members as residents of the Central District.

***Al Levine served as the Deputy Executive Director of the Seattle Housing Authority from 2003 until his retirement in 2013 where he led the Development, Construction and Asset Management programs. He currently sits on several local development and real estate advisory boards. He is an Affiliate Instructor of Real Estate in the University of Washington's College of Built Environments.***

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Bishop Garry Tyson TARA BROWN

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**COLLEGE OF BUILT ENVIRONMENTS**

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UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

**2019 MCKINLEY FUTURES NEHEMIAH STUDIO**

a partnership of

The Nehemiah Initiative &

The McKinley Futures Studio at the

University of Washington, College of Built Environments (CBE)