



Downtown  
Seattle  
Association

# Third Avenue Vision

Transforming Downtown's  
Most Traveled Corridor



# A Long-term Vision to Create an Inviting and Attractive Third Avenue for All

Successful cities have great streets that balance the competing needs of users, encourage social interaction, and are well-maintained and memorable.

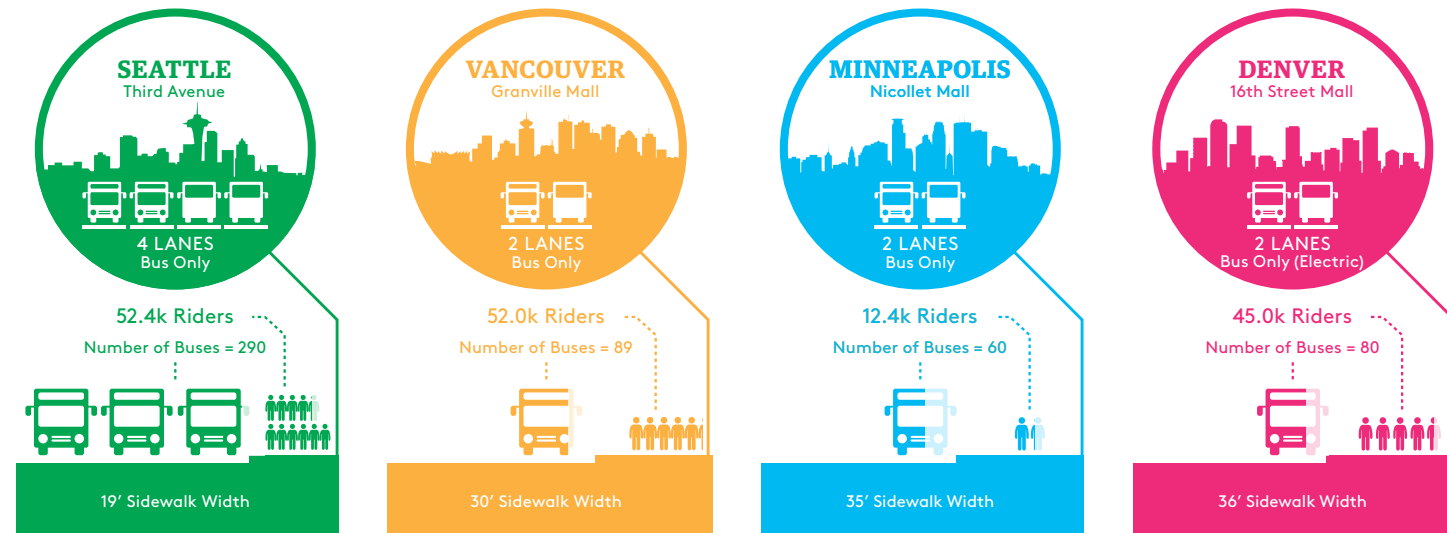
## A Street for Everyone

Third Avenue is one of the busiest transit corridors in the country. It serves as a gateway to downtown Seattle, carrying approximately 52,000 people per day. It faces many challenges, however, from public safety concerns and bus congestion to limited sidewalk space, inadequate retail options and a general lack of stewardship. Over the past decade, several planning efforts yielded incremental improvements to Third Avenue. However, underlying issues persist, and conditions are inconsistent and often feel unwelcoming and unsafe. That's why in 2018, the Downtown Seattle Association convened more than 70 business owners, property owners, residents and government agencies to chart a new vision for Third Avenue.



Third Avenue and Pike Street

## How Third Avenue Compares



City	Number of Riders	Daily On-boardings	Number of Buses	Per P.M. Peak Hour
SEATTLE	52,400	290	290	Third Avenue
VANCOUVER	52,000	89	89	Granville Mall
MINNEAPOLIS	12,400	60	60	Nicollet Mall
DENVER	45,000	80	80	16th Street Mall
SAN FRANCISCO	40,000	170	170	Market Street
NEW YORK CITY	115,000	150	150	5th Avenue
LOS ANGELES	55,000	72	72	Wilshire Corridor

## Strategies for Success

The Third Avenue Vision is a comprehensive approach to transform this busy urban corridor into one of America's great streets.

### Urban Design

Third Avenue will be reimagined as a distinct and iconic street, incorporating high-quality materials and design emphasizing its importance to downtown. Transparency, color, light and greenery will enhance the sidewalks and invite foot traffic. Reducing clutter and sightline obstacles will boost storefront visibility and create a positive urban atmosphere.

### Transportation

Third Avenue is an essential hub for downtown transit, acting as an arrival and departure gateway for tens of thousands of people every day. This vision preserves transportation capacity to and through the heart of the city while providing a safe and welcoming pedestrian environment.

### Private Properties & Retail

Buildings with lively ground floors add energy and dynamism to their neighborhoods. A shared understanding of the need with property owners will help activate the Third Avenue streetscape through improvements like façade upgrades and pedestrian-friendly enhancements.

### Parks & Public Space

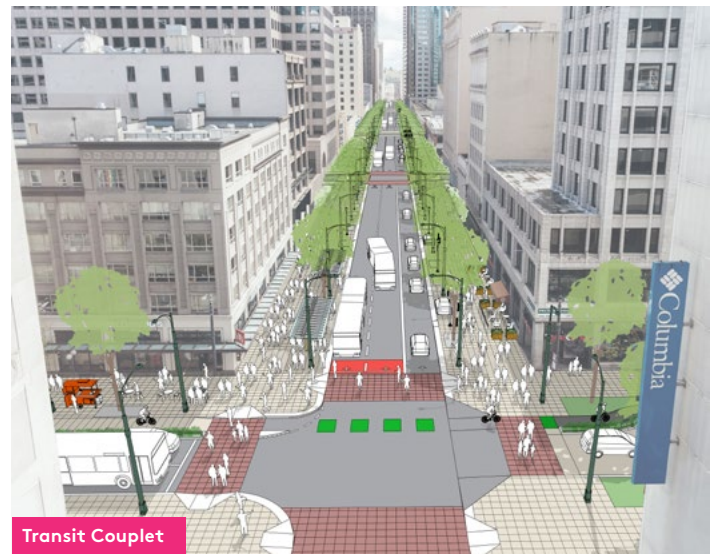
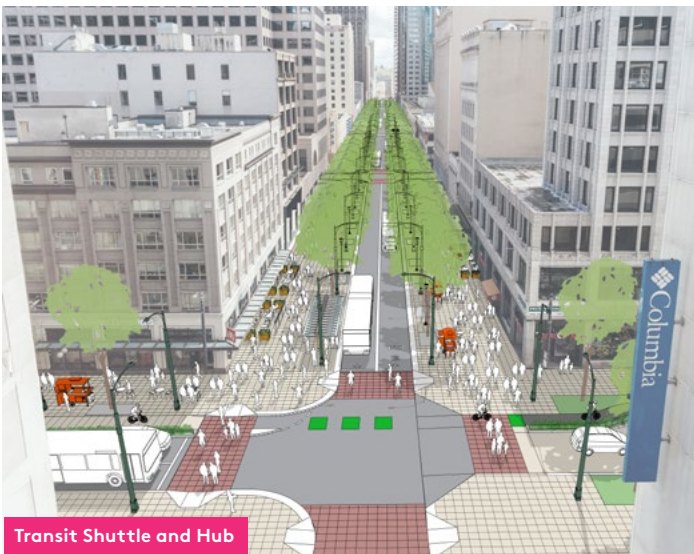
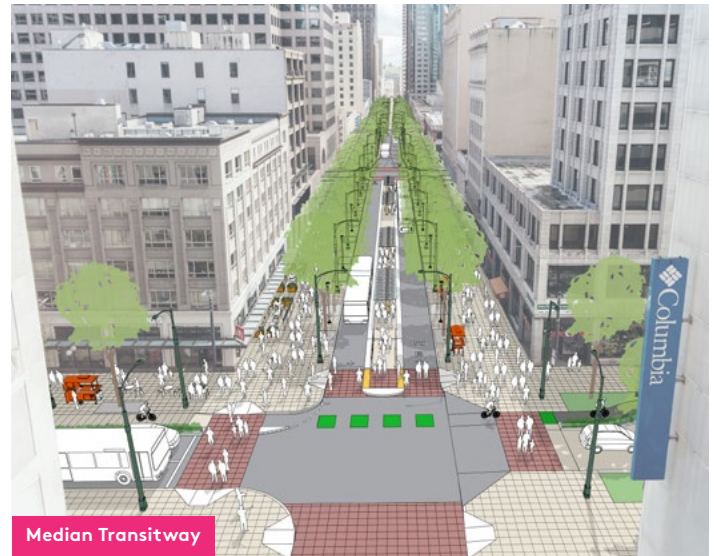
Well-managed public spaces cultivate a welcoming atmosphere and attract a wide range of people during more hours of the day. Leveraging parks and plazas along Third Avenue and improving underutilized spaces foster vibrant public life.

### Management & Stewardship

The Vision sets a common approach across government and the private sector. The project identifies opportunities to make rapid, visible changes via smaller projects and major improvements through long-term initiatives. Investments to upgrade infrastructure pair with coordinated management and maintenance to support long-term success.

# Future Scenarios

Third Avenue suffers from a lack of sidewalk space, the expanse of the street and the sheer volume of bus traffic. These scenarios reimagine a street where bus traffic is optimized to provide space for pedestrians and amenities, such as retail and services.



*For more information, contact*  
Jacqueline Gruber, AICP  
206.613.3235  
jacquelineg@downtownseattle.org  
downtownseattle.org

*To learn more about the Third Avenue vision and to read the full report, visit:*  
[downtownseattle.org/third](http://downtownseattle.org/third)