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# *A City to Love*

Auckland's Visions  
of a Public Realm

ISSUE 35.2

FEATURE BY THE  
2015-2016 RUNSTAD  
AFFILIATE FELLOWS

**PERSPECTIVE**

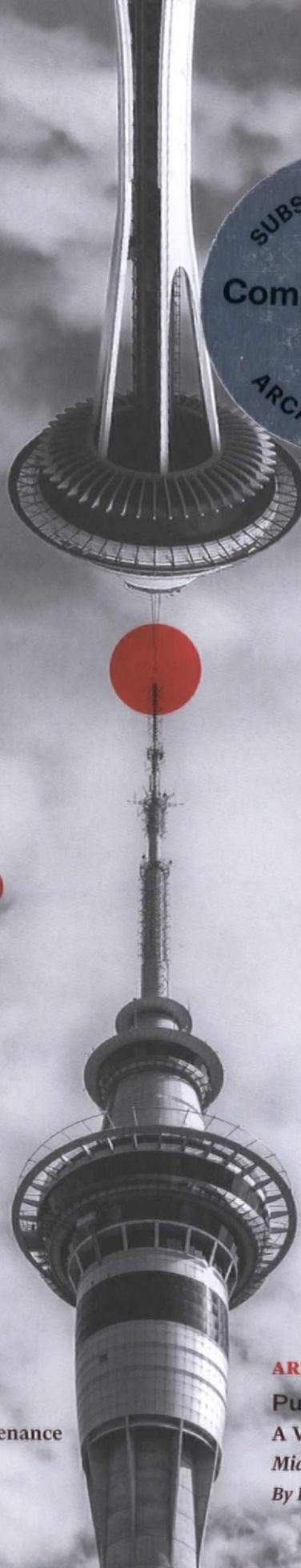
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How Ethics Will Change the  
Conversation About AI  
By Ruth Kikin-Gil

**PRACTICE**

**Restoring Kirk**  
Lessons in Midcentury Maintenance  
By Dale Kutzera

**ART MATTERS**

**Pull Me Closer**  
A View Inside John Grade's  
*Middle Fork*  
By Erin Langner





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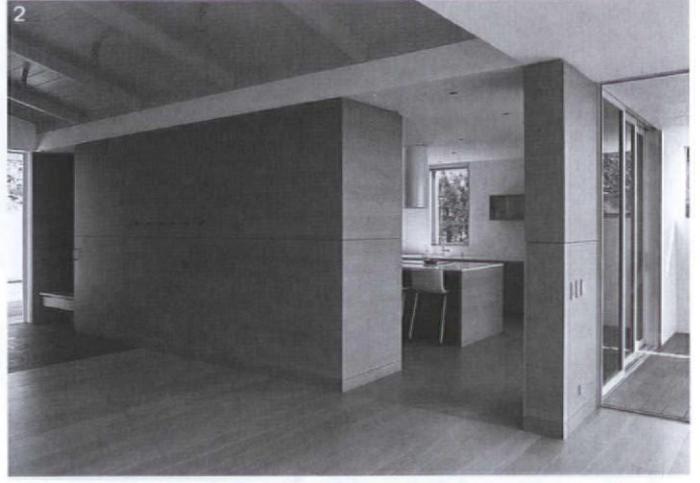
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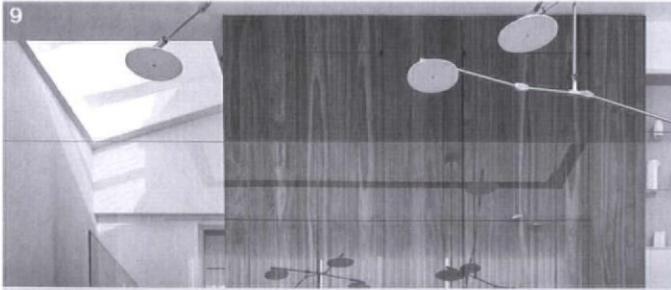


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A View Inside John Grade's Middle Fork BY ERIN LANGNER

One Saturday morning in January, I sat at a worktable surrounded by piles of tiny wood pieces and paper cups half-filled with glue. I'd been given a simple set of instructions to arrange and adhere certain groupings of wood into ring-shaped structures, but otherwise, I was left to my own devices. This made me nervous. I'm not a designer, an artist, or a fabricator. And yet, I was in the studio of the internationally exhibited artist John Grade, putting together parts of a tree sculpture that would be shown at the Seattle Art Museum a few months later.

I was one of hundreds of volunteers Grade enlisted to assemble *Middle Fork*, the massive installation that stretches across the museum's lobby. The blocks of salvaged old-growth cedar I glued in the artist's studio were only small handfuls of the nearly one million pieces that comprise the tree-shaped shell suspended within the cavernous space at SAM. Beginning in 2014 as a 40-foot piece at the MadArt Studio in South Lake Union, *Middle Fork* has since traveled to the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. The sculpture has grown to fill its space within each exhi-

bition. The 105-foot version at SAM is the largest yet, though the artist hopes it will eventually reach 140 feet, the height of its model: a 140-year-old western hemlock he found near the middle fork of Washington's Snoqualmie River.

When discussing the genesis of his work in a video made by the University of Wyoming Art Museum, Grade points to his impetus to understand the world kinesthetically. The inspiration to create *Middle Fork* came during a walk through the forest, when he encountered a large nurse log and envisioned his body moving through its interior. His desire to explore a physical experience of closeness comes up again in SAM's video about the work, as the artist describes the way he and several arborists covered the original hemlock in foil and then cast it in plaster to create

I was one of hundreds of volunteers Grade enlisted to assemble *Middle Fork*, the massive installation that stretches across the museum's lobby.

the mold for *Middle Fork*'s final wood form. After spending nearly two weeks

working, often physically suspended between the evergreen's branches, Grade talks about experiencing a sense of "intimacy" with the tree. The language he uses to describe the distinctive features he encountered—"limbs" that turn towards the sunlight and "wounds" in the bark's surface—makes it sound like he spent those weeks trying to better understand another human rather than a conifer.

Meanwhile, my own humanness marked my experience working on *Middle Fork*. As I assembled my pieces with several other volunteers, I only realized the depths of my immersion in the tree-making process when I had to stop to check which wood wedges on the table were mine; this usually happened as

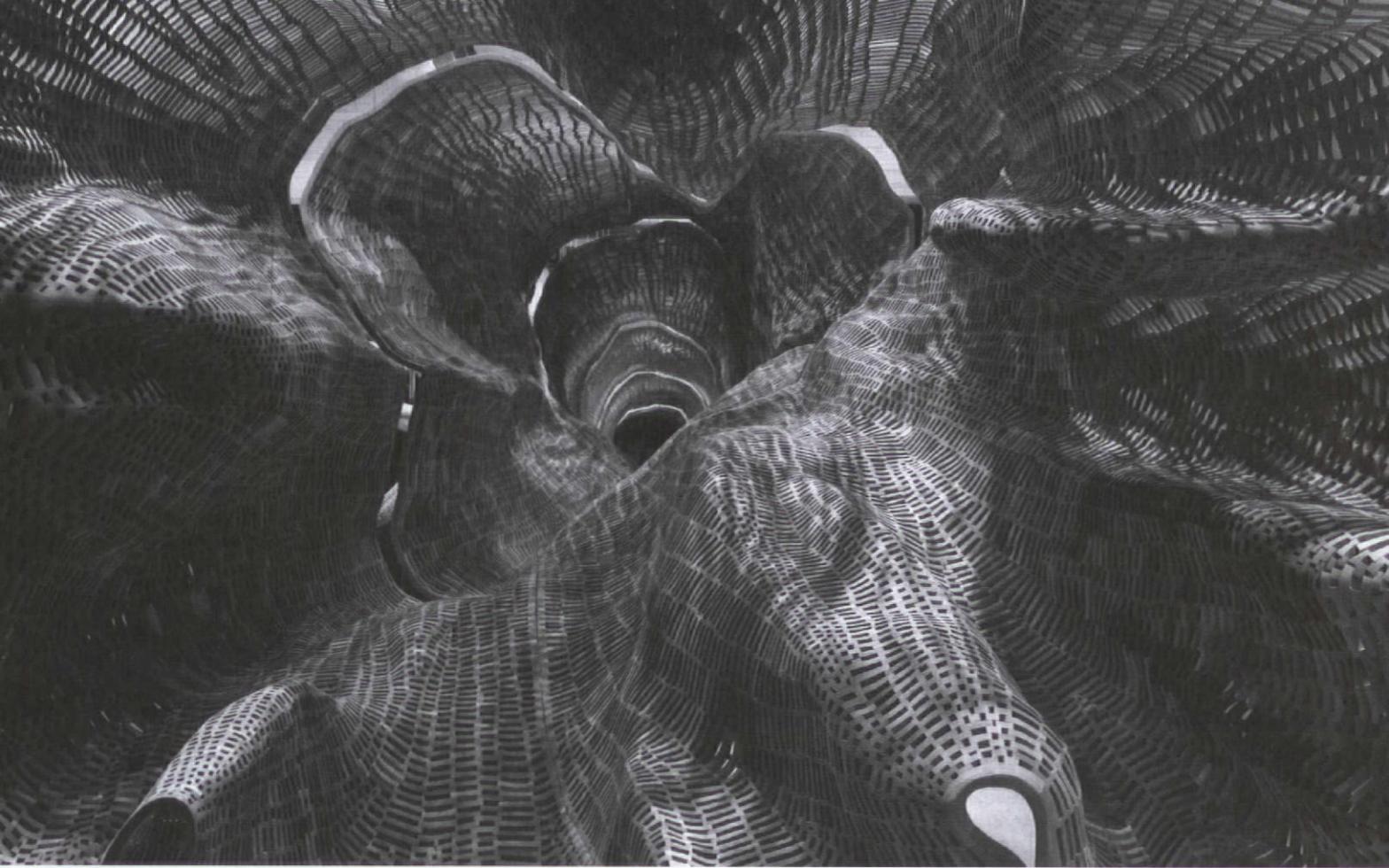


Photo by Natali Wiseman

Erin Langner is a writer based in Seattle. Her work has appeared in *Hyperallergic*, *Art Ltd.*, and *the Stranger* and can be found at [www.erinlangner.com](http://www.erinlangner.com).



Installation view of  
*John Grade: Middle  
Fork* at the Seattle Art  
Museum. © Seattle Art  
Museum, Photo: Benja-  
min Benschneider



I was on the brink of inadvertently stealing from someone else's stack. Towards the end of my shift, I was horrified to find a cedar block from a group I'd set to dry had strayed from its section and become lost among dozens of others, buried beyond any hope of recognition and repair. I didn't know yet that the artist and his studio would sand down the edges after the gluing was complete, creating a sheen of uniformity that would likely erase signs of human error.

When I later asked the artist about the importance of the volunteer contributions to his greater vision for the sculpture, he surprised me by saying he was eager to have volunteers even more involved in future projects, possibly even to the point that his name and theirs would be associat-

ed with the work in equal measure. Grade explained, "Even before I started bringing other people to help me with the work, I found that I was making things well but that an element of chance was missing. When you bring in other people, you really let go."

When I experienced *Middle Fork* in SAM's Brotman Forum a few months after, I noticed the less predictable elements embedded in the sculpture—the trunk's rippling surface, the branches' meandering structures. The familiar pieces came together to form an uncannily true-to-life tree form, sprawling and reaching wildly as if its centuries-old wood were still alive, stretching towards the sun. Any mistakes were

imperceptible in the "skin" of the tree, as Grade has called it. Although I momentarily tried to find my misshapen branch, the distance between *Middle Fork* and its viewers in the lobby is vast—a strange realization for someone used to feeling a sense of closeness with art in museums. In this case, *Middle Fork* appeared much more stunning from afar but out of reach, as if it were a person I'd once known and was now seeing in a movie. It will eventually return to ground level, not in the museum but back in the Cascades at the foot of the original tree. Grade plans to bring the sculpture there to decompose—the ultimate exercise in allowing nature to reclaim its offspring. §

*Middle Fork appeared much more stunning from afar but out of reach, as if it were a person I'd once known and was now seeing in a movie.*

*Middle Fork, Detail,*  
2016, John Grade,  
American, b. 1970,  
wood, 30 x 28 x 105 ft.,  
Collection of the artist.

*Middle Fork is on view in the Seattle Art Museum's Brotman Forum.*



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# Anecdotal Objects

*How Stories Give Meaning to the Things We Make*

BY SALLYANN CORN AND JOE KENT

The best design experiences exist when material, function, and quality overlap, and when designer, manufacturer, and merchant all believe deeply in the products they offer. The objects within this space are imbued with meaning, and understanding the narrative of an object's creation helps give it context and make it yours. When we founded our design studio in 2008, these overlapping ideas weren't yet a fully formed manifesto but values we used as anchors. Since then, the role of storytelling in the creation of objects with meaning is something we have been reminded of time and time again.

## MAKING WITH MEANING

While on a business trip to San Francisco in 2015 we found ourselves questioning our chosen path; we were in the middle of a sourcing project nightmare and forced to ask ourselves hard questions about staying true to our self-imposed commitment to work exclusively with US manu-

Sallyann Corn and Joe Kent are the duo behind Seattle-based studio *fruitsuper* ([www.fruitsuper.com](http://www.fruitsuper.com)). They are owners of JOIN Shop ([www.join-design.com/shop](http://www.join-design.com/shop)), managing members of JOIN Design, and faculty at Cornish College of the Arts. You will often find them scheming, dreaming, and drawing over cocktails or lost behind a teetering pile of books.

facturers. Exhausted by the decisions we were facing, and subconsciously searching for a sign to guide us, we took a break one afternoon and visited the Heath Ceramics tile factory. The factory guide was a third-generation Heath craftsman, obviously passionate and proud about the products he helped produce. We heard story after story as we toured the factory, learning the names of the skilled makers and the tricks of their trade. Suddenly we were looking at so much more than tiles—we were seeing the intersections that come together to give “things” meaning. Hearing the pride in our guide's voice, we were overcome with the feeling that this was the encouraging sign we didn't know we needed telling us to keep going.

That day, we were reminded that as humans, we want to surround ourselves with objects that become heirlooms for the next generation—objects with stories and meaning. And as makers, these are the objects we want to create.

## FROM MAKERS TO MERCHANTS

The exchange that happens when an object is purchased provides an opportunity for the transmission of stories and the generation of meaning. Two of our favorite brick-and-mortar stores are perfect examples of this philosophy—one a record shop and the other a bookstore. Both were founded in the 1970s, prior to online purchasing and digitized media, and both remain incredibly valuable to their local communities. Hot Poop, located in Walla Walla, Washington, was founded by Jim McGuinn, and Peter Miller Books, located in Seattle, was founded by Peter Miller. Record shops and bookstores have seen huge declines in both small and large retail capacities

We heard story after story as we toured the factory, learning the names of the skilled makers and the tricks of their trade.

over the last few decades due to the increasing competi-

tion from both digital devices and online sales outlets. But these two stores create an experience where a purchase is almost always partnered with a story. It might be an observation or anecdote related to the content of the purchase or a tangential story—a suggestion for a similar record or book or simply a recommendation for a local restaurant that must be visited. In addition, both Jim and Peter give back tenfold to their local communities and are so obviously passionate about what they sell that the energy is contagious. How have these two businesses managed to not only survive but thrive in an ever-changing retail landscape? Because a simple anecdote gives an object meaning.

Our design studio is dedicated to our community of makers and strives to create collaborative opportunities for independent designers with like-minded values. In Seattle, we recently opened a brick-and-mortar store, JOIN Shop, to showcase wares created by our maker community. Our objective is to create an atmosphere similar to a farmers market where patrons talk with vendors, choose their products with purpose, and make connections that go beyond consumption. We passionately believe that the stories behind the objects we sell are as beautiful as the objects themselves, and we want to share them with others.

Meaning is the reason we travel, read, buy souvenirs, hold on to heirlooms, treasure gifts, and go to farmers markets seeking farm-to-table experiences. We're creating and collecting our own anecdotes. We are gathering not simply objects but physical manifestations of our own unique stories. §



Photos by Krista Welch



# Humanity-Centered Design

How Ethics Will Change the Conversation About AI BY RUTH KIKIN-GIL

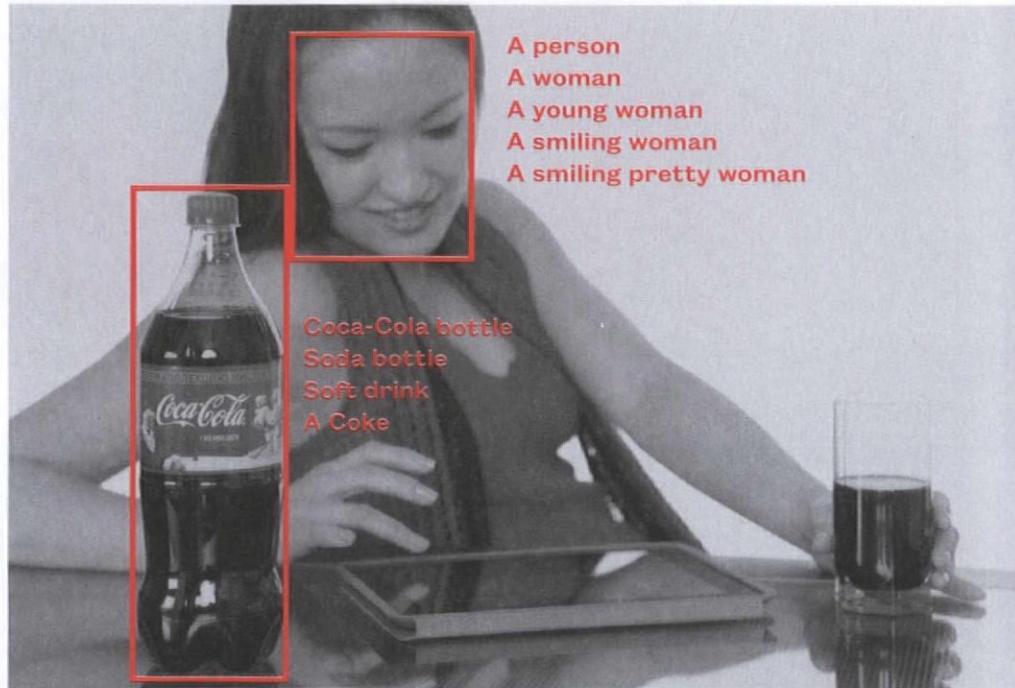
Technological change is not additive; it is ecological, which means it changes everything and is, therefore, too important to be left entirely in the hands of [technologists].

—“Five Things We Need to Know About Technological Change” by Neil Postman

AI is coming to get us, and everyone knows that. The *singularity*—the moment when computer intelligence far surpasses human intelligence—is right around the corner, and when it arrives we’ll be jobless and living in an apocalyptic era whose nature we can only guess. Welcome to the future.

But here’s the thing: we don’t need to wait for the singularity to live in a dystopian age. We might be bringing it on ourselves little by little, every time we design a product that uses AI and don’t think about how it’ll impact society.

Today, we are using a type of AI called artificial narrow intelligence (ANI). ANI can generally do one thing very well, sometimes better than humans can—like the AI that defeated the world’s best Go player—but if asked to perform a task outside of its specified function, it wouldn’t be able to. We are surrounded by instances of ANI: autonomous cars, Cortana or



Alexa, even some of the news we read is generated by AI.

ANI may have limits, but it’s powerful, useful, and everywhere. As a result, a growing number of designers will be working on AI-driven technology. Will it be technology that improves life and makes our world better? Or will it reinforce negative

An AI may describe an image in various ways. Nothing is neutral: an AI that interprets the world is an AI that creates a worldview. Photo: DoublePHOTO studio/ Shutterstock.com

Ruth Kikin-Gil is a UX expert, a design strategist, an educator, and a practical dreamer who focuses on product innovation at Microsoft. She’s interested in the interplay between society and technology, and the ways in which people appro-

priate technology in unexpected ways. She explores how existing social interactions and behaviors can be supported or transformed by technology and influence the creation of new products and services. Opinions expressed in this article are her own.

behaviors, strengthen biases, and increase inequality?

Today, we generally talk about AI only from a technological perspective: What's powering its functionality? Is it machine learning, computer vision, or a bot? Instead, let's shift the conversation from technology and features to how AI changes lives. Viewing AI through a lens that focuses on its impact on humans can highlight what using that AI really means to us. And changing the language we use to talk about AI can expose important ethical issues. New vocabulary that classifies AI by what it does, rather than how it works, may have terms like "AI that interprets reality," "AI that augments senses," or "AI that remembers for humans."

#### NOTHING IS NEUTRAL

Microsoft's "Seeing AI" is an app and glasses-like device that helps blind people "see" the world around them by hearing descriptions of it. It's an amazing and helpful invention, and an example of inclusive technology. If we view it through a technological lens, we see a product that uses computer vision and facial recognition as well as natural language generation. Now, let's focus less on how it works

Changing the language we use to talk about AI can expose important ethical issues.

and more on what it does. If we evaluate how the AI impacts humans, we see it as an "AI that interprets reality." Suddenly, it's clear that we need to pay attention.

Look at the image to the left. What do you see?

This is a hypothetical example of how an AI could be programmed to interpret an image. All the descriptions are correct, but the AI's choice of words determines how the blind person experiences the world. What if Coca-Cola were to offer to sponsor the device so that it's free but ask for one thing: whenever the AI sees a Coca-Cola product, it mentions it explicitly, while it uses generic terms for any of their competitors? There's a dramatic difference between "a woman drinking a soft drink" and "a smiling, pretty woman drinking a Coke," though both phrases correctly describe the same situation. We need to think through these kinds of scenarios when we design products.

#### THE RISE OF THE PRODUCT ETHICIST

With this shifted focus on how we view AI, a new profession should also emerge: the "product ethicist." Someone in that role would aim to keep the product design

honest. While not only one person should think or care about ethics, a "product ethicist" could provide more nuanced thinking to guide the design process and hold everyone accountable.

Further, communicating an AI's potential impact to its users is as important as designing an ethical product—it's actually part of being ethical. Food products have labels with ingredients and nutritional facts to help consumers choose what to buy. What labeling system could help them decide on the right AI product?

Designers put people first. They empathize, observe, and listen. They find problems to solve not because they are technically difficult, but because they are hard human issues. How to use AI is one of these challenges—and humanity-centered design could be the solution. §

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# Restoring Kirk

Lessons in Midcentury Maintenance BY DALE KUTZERA

Rarely has wood been put to more artful use than in the midcentury architecture of Paul Hayden Kirk. His designs of the '50s and '60s featured rambling floor plans, sweeping roofs, and exposed wooden structure, typically stained to reveal the natural grain of old-growth beams. As a sole practitioner and later in partnership with Donald Wallace and David McKinley, Kirk established a respected career designing medical clinics, churches, and residences all proudly displaying the latest in design using the oldest of materials.

These buildings are still admired for their exposed structure, human scale, and abundant glass. After 60 years, however, they also show the effects of climate and gravity on designs built in an era of less-stringent building codes.

"Kirk was very efficient with his use of wood, and there is an economy of structure in his work," said architect Helen Hald, who has not only restored Kirk homes but owns one herself. "But codes have changed since then."

Among the changes are different ways floors, walls, and roofs are built. A typical floor today would place joists at 16-inch intervals topped with a layer of plywood. Kirk's homes of the 1950s often used heavier four-by-six-inch joists at four-foot intervals, topped with a more robust deck of tongue-and-groove two-by-six-inch boards. Today's codes also require thicker walls for increased insulation and roofs that will carry a snow load of 25 pounds per square foot.

Architect Tom Kundig, who restored

These buildings are still admired for their exposed structure, human scale, and abundant glass.

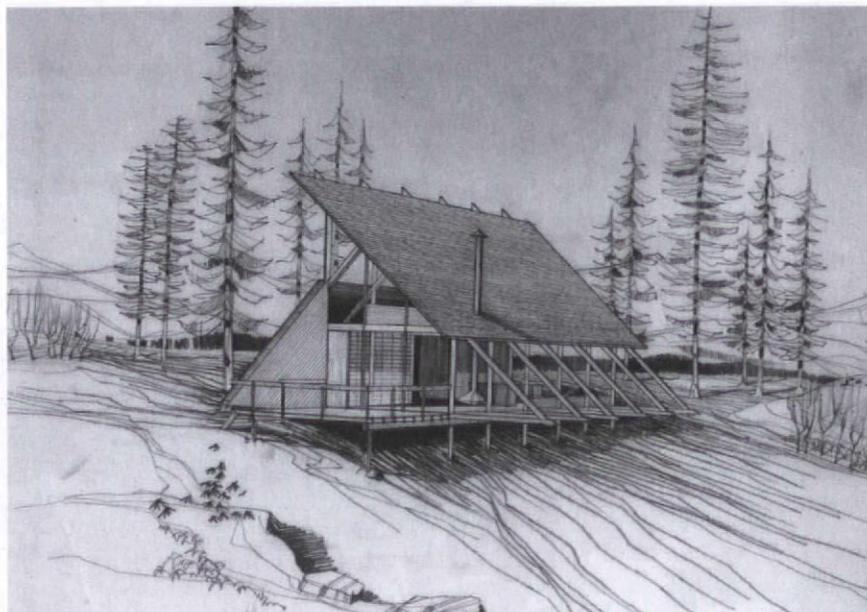
Kirk's Dowell Residence near Seattle's Seward Park, noted that architects of Kirk's generation "were exploring lighter and thinner building elements as a reaction to the somewhat heavier architecture that preceded the modern movement. There are certainly challenges working with architecture coming out of the mid-century era."

## CHALLENGE #1: EXPOSED STRUCTURE

"It can be difficult when the structure goes from inside to outside," said Hald, "because if the wood isn't protected and sealed and resealed over time—which a lot of people don't do—it's going to rot."

This is the exact situation facing Blake Williams, whose family co-owns a Kirk A-frame cabin on the Olympic Peninsula.

Sequim Cabin, Olympic Peninsula, WA. Drawing by Don Johnson of Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates, courtesy of the University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, UW38888



The exposed rafters and joists of the A-frame design have led to rot issues around bolted joints. Photo by Dale Kutzera

Dale Kutzera is a writer and novelist in Seattle. He has worked in the Los Angeles film industry and is currently writing a book about the work of Kirk, Wallace, McKinley & Associates.

One set of roof beams extends beyond the other, with both connected to floor joists outside the building and exposed to the elements. "This was a terrible idea," said Williams, who is also an architect. "Sixty years later, water has crept in where steel bolts connect the rafter beams to the horizontal beams, and the wood is rotting."

The solution was to transfer the weight of the roof away from the exterior joints. "We changed the path to the vertical posts by adding some steel structure under the whole cabin," explained Williams. "In effect we changed the way the structure carried the load."

A similar problem arose with the University Unitarian Church, one of Kirk's most famous designs. To strengthen the structure after the 2001 Nisqually earthquake, each joint was reinforced with metal brackets, and exposed beams were capped with metal flashing. Tom Kundig utilized similar techniques for the Dowell Residence. "Some of the historical references we used from Japanese architecture dealt with exposed beams by either using paint to seal the beam ends or a steel plate. We certainly added that to deal with wood rot issues that were beginning to develop."

#### CHALLENGE #2: FLAT ROOFS

Managing water is even more challenging when dealing with the flat roofs Kirk often designed in the 1950s.

"There is nothing wrong with a flat roof," noted Hald, "but you need a little



positive drainage. Over time they can pond, and that adds weight and the structure sags. Then you have a permanent pond. If you have a heavy snow year, that can also cause some settlement."

New roofing systems can provide insulation and positive drainage while still maintaining a narrow profile. "Kirk wanted a thin profile on the roof edge," said Hald. "So one thing we use today is tapered rigid insulation so you still have the thin [fascia] line, and then as you move back, you start the taper so you don't see the thickness."

Paul Kirk's residential designs often feature flat roofs with thin profiles. Photo by Helen Hald



#### CHALLENGE #3: ALL THAT GLASS

Kirk designed entire walls of glass to take advantage of the region's hills and views. Every square foot is a testimony to the indoor/outdoor aesthetic ... and the low cost of heating oil in the 1950s.

According to Tom Kundig, "The technology of that time was single-pane plate glass. Of course, today we have energy related concerns, so we need to work with double-pane glass at a minimum. This means [replacement] glass is very heavy and cumbersome.

"On the Dowell Residence, we faced challenges addressing the frames of windows, details around the windows and roof, detailing around roof fascias, and roof corner details."

#### CHALLENGE #4: RESPECT THE DESIGN

With Kirk designs, structure and aesthetics are one and the same. A thicker roofline or window frame can throw the entire composition out of balance. Repairs and upgrades are therefore complicated by the desire to maintain the original proportions. The added effort, however, is worth it.

"People are drawn to these buildings whether they realize it or not," said Hald. "Kirk was a structure-is-primary kind of guy, so his houses have a structural order to them, which is the beauty and grace of the building. A layperson may not understand that, but there is an emotional response when people see the scale, the proportion, and the connection to the outdoors."

The Dowell Residence, Seattle, WA. This Paul Kirk masterpiece was sensitively renovated and restored by Tom Kundig / Olson Kundig. Photo by Benjamin Benschneider

"It is a pleasure and an honor to work on historic projects like the Dowell Residence, which, in my opinion, is one of Paul Hayden Kirk's masterworks," added Kundig. "We were humbled by the thoughtfulness that Kirk put into it on many levels, including form, his conceptual thinking, and proportions in particular." §

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PHOTO: TERRY AVENUE BUILDING + TOM DOUGLAS RESTAURANTS, © LARA SWIMMER PHOTOGRAPHY

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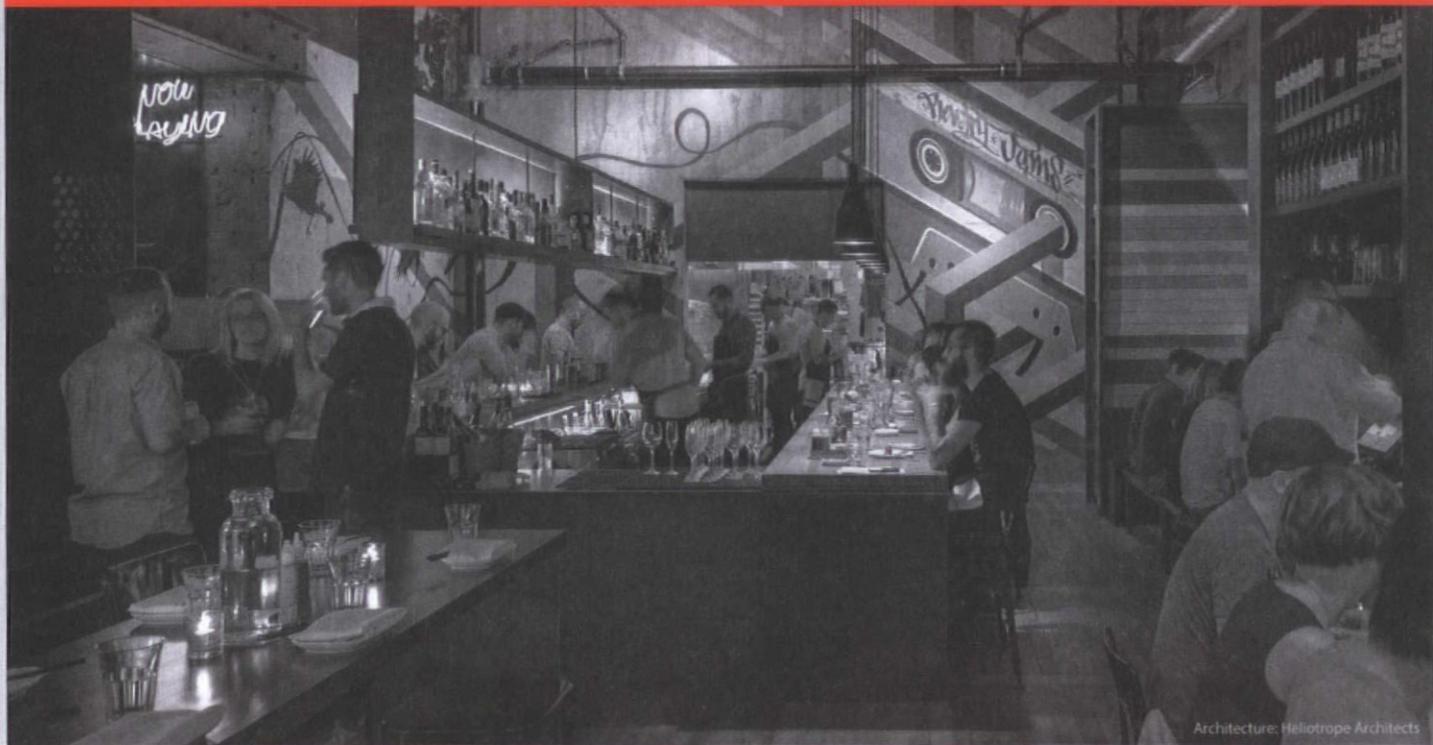
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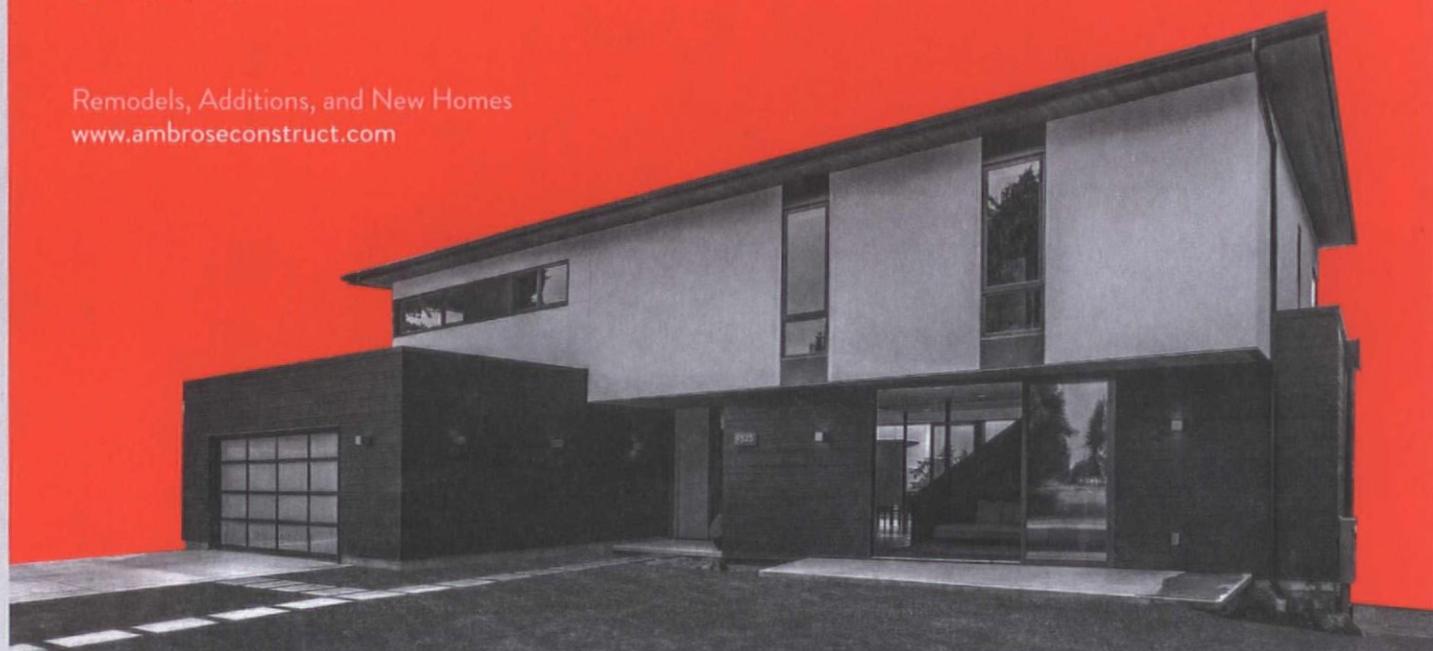


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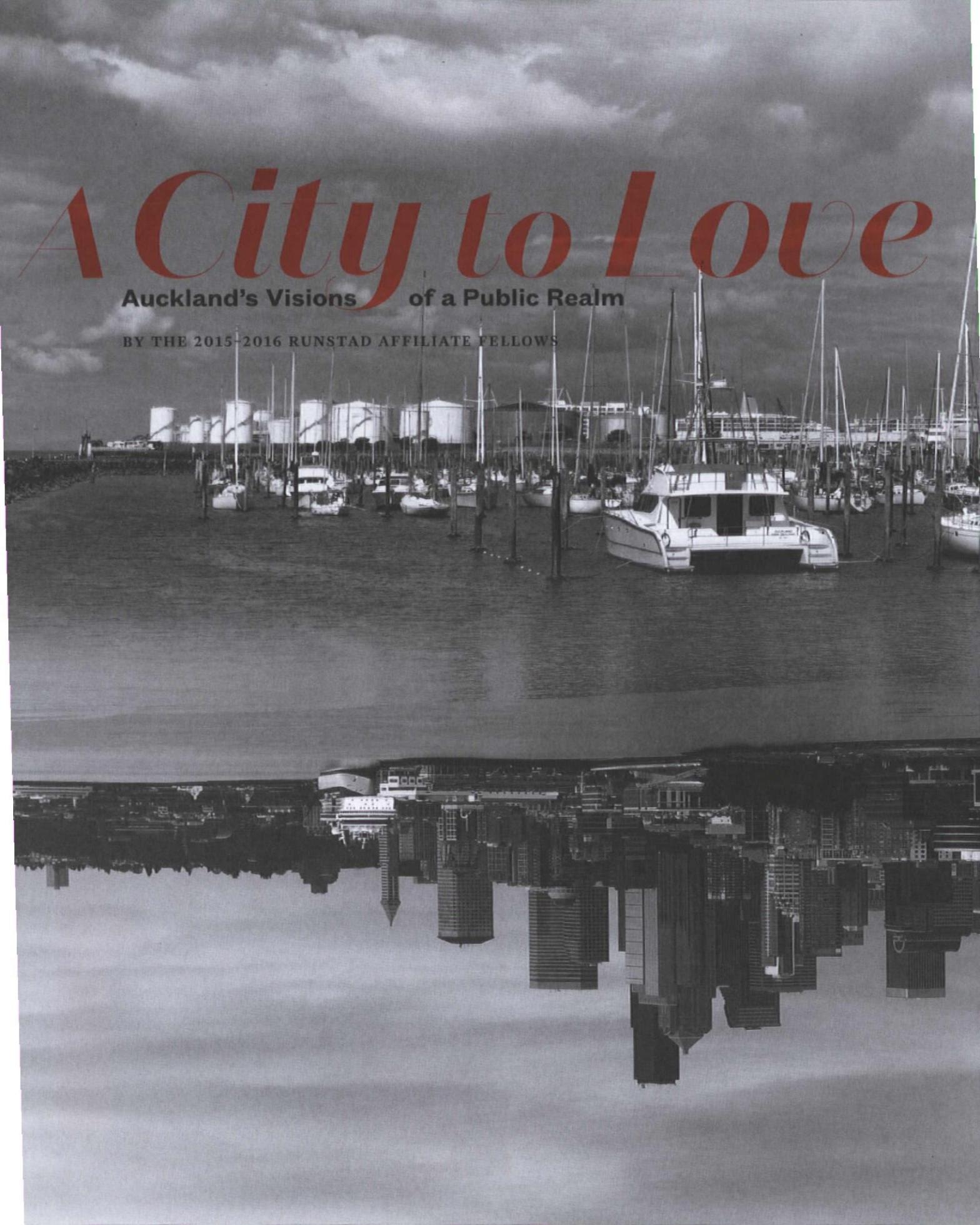
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# *A City to Love*

**Auckland's Visions of a Public Realm**

BY THE 2015-2016 RUNSTAD AFFILIATE FELLOWS





## This is a love story— a story about a city and region remaking itself with the goal of being a place that its citizens will love, a story about a dialog between a city and the people who live there. A powerful story to learn from, it describes a city committed to creating the most livable place in the world for all its residents.



**The University of Washington Runstad Center Affiliate Fellows Program** brings together faculty from the college, leaders shaping Seattle's built environment, and students from the Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies to create research projects on the topic of sustainability.

This ARCADE feature is presented by the **2015-2016 Runstad Affiliate Fellows:**

**Ben Broesamle** is a recent graduate of the master of science in real estate program at UW and works in the commercial real estate investment field.

**Joe David** served as project manager at Point32 at the time of the fellowship. He recently joined Google's Real Estate and Workplace Services [e]Team where he focuses on environmental sustainability initiatives.

**Genevieve Hale-Case** is a recent graduate of the master of urban planning and master of science in real estate programs at UW.

**Amy Hartman** works in real estate consulting and is a graduate of the master of science in real estate program at the University of Washington. She has always been fascinated by the way the physical shape of cities impacts human behavior and well-being.

**Rick Mohler** is a practicing architect, UW professor, urban and community advocate, and occasional rabble rouser.

**Barbara Swift** is the founding principal of Swift Company, a landscape architecture and urban design practice working in the west; an educator; and committed community member.

Thank you to 2015-2016 Runstad Affiliate Fellow **Giovanni Migliaccio**, a professor in the UW Department of Construction Management. While Giovanni did not contribute directly to this feature, his research related to the project on Auckland was of great value.

All photos courtesy the 2015-2016 Runstad Affiliate Fellows unless otherwise noted.

### **Auckland, New Zealand, is a lot like Seattle.**

It is in a temperate climatic zone and defined by its relationship to water and topography. Auckland's age, size, urban form, and relationship to adjacent communities are also similar to Seattle's. Beyond Auckland's city center, clearly defined neighborhoods with small-scale commercial districts are surrounded by well-scaled multifamily and single family housing as in the Northwest. Auckland's diversity of transit modes—train, light rail, bus, and ferry—is also similar, and it too is car centric and striving to wean itself off auto dependency. While New Zealand is a commonwealth with a stronger tradition of top-down planning than the US, the political climate in Auckland is very similar to ours. And like Seattle, Auckland is experiencing rapid growth, creating pressures on transportation systems, housing supply, public amenities, and livability.

To address these stresses, since 2007 Auckland has been charting a new course for itself, streamlining its governmental structure to improve integration and effi-

Previous pages:  
Auckland Harbour  
by Tero Hakala/  
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Seattle waterfront  
by Don Fink/  
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Above:  
A waterfront for  
everyone in down-  
town Auckland.

ciency at a regional scale; developing inspirational plans to transform the urban fabric and create personal connections between residents and their city; and coordinating cost-effective district-scale streetscape improvements to enhance the pedestrian experience, safety, transportation options, and neighborhood character. These and other accomplishments illustrate that Auckland is an exemplar with lessons to share with Seattle.

#### FROM SEATTLE TO AUCKLAND

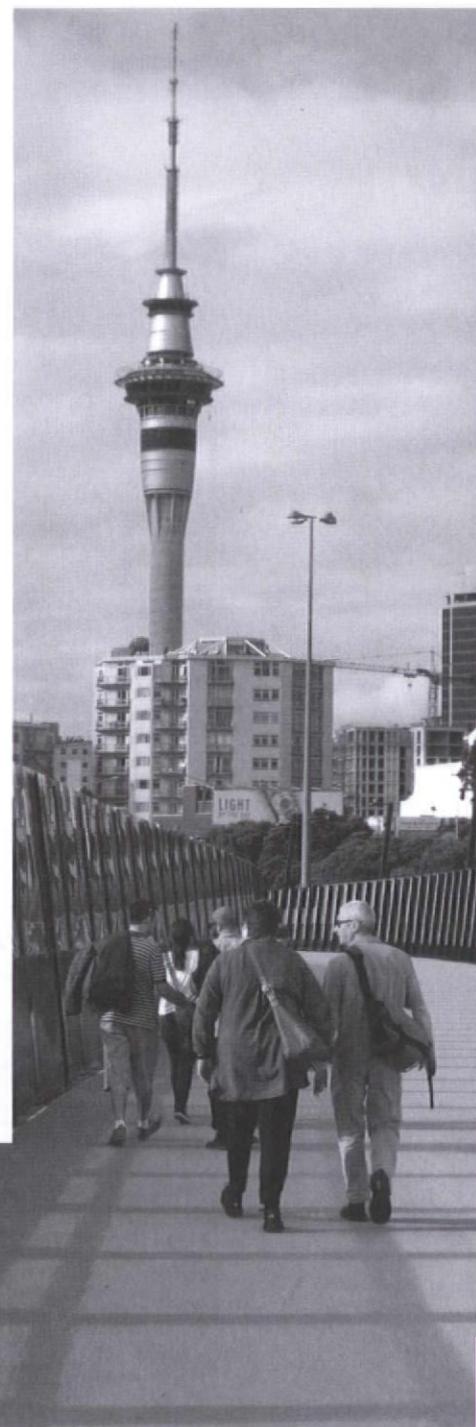
In late 2015, as affiliate fellows of the Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies at the University of Washington's College of Built Environments, we identified a research project under the broad rubric of sustainability. After our evaluation process pointed to Auckland as a subject (see next page), we traveled there in March 2016 with the generous assistance of the Runstad Center Affiliate Fellows Program to study the city's methods and accomplishments.

The visit provided our group of college faculty, students, and leaders from Seattle's environmental design community with a long week of intensive work and conversations running late into the nights. Our daily schedule was filled with meetings and walking tours with leaders from city departments, representatives from city council, leading architecture and planning firms, innovative private

developers and development agencies, urbanists and neighborhood activists. Our hosts in Auckland were incredibly generous with their time and expertise, and we found a consistent shared vision and approach to proactively taking the future of the region in hand.

Over the last year, we have shared our research, observations, findings, and lessons learned a dozen times with public agencies, professional organizations and civic groups. We've been impressed by the degree to which the story resonates and the expressed appetite for an integrated, proactive approach. Hard questions have led to more research, and we continue to be impressed by Auckland's ambitions and their pursuit of *a city to love*. We believe this is a powerful example that is deeply relevant to our current circumstances. **Auckland's strategy is comprehensive, integrated, and visionary—and it works.** The question to the Northwest is, in this period of remarkable and rich growth, can we take our destiny in hand?

In the subsequent articles we present Auckland's innovative approaches to governance structure, visioning process, and control of the public right-of-way. This is followed by case studies illustrating its approaches to transportation, public/private development partnerships and urban design. Auckland is a remarkable touchstone, as our observations show. §



Te Ara I Whiti, a freeway off ramp repurposed as bike/pedestrian path.

## Choosing Auckland

Early conversations in our search for a study topic focused on the public right-of-way (broadly speaking, the public spaces—streets, sidewalks, and associated areas—that make up the city's streetscape) and its role in enhancing the quality of life in cities as they grow denser. This is an essential topic—and a transformational opportunity—for Seattle and cities throughout the Pacific Northwest given their growth and the anxiety about sustained quality of life.

The public right-of-way occupies nearly a third of all land in Auckland and Seattle, and a good portion of this is used to store private property: parked cars. Through the remaining space people, vehicles, and resources move from point A to B. However, this space must serve as a *place* for people.

We evaluated cities that were transforming the right-of-way and public realm

through innovations in governance and design, both of which we felt deserved attention, to identify a city that offered compelling lessons relevant to Seattle. We systematically analyzed 15 cities using eight characteristics to avoid preconceptions and settled on Auckland.

Once in Auckland, we realized that the right-of-way was only a small element of the city's stunningly successful interdisciplinary place-making approach. But it was enough to indicate Aucklanders' mastery of the subject and the benefit of learning from them.



Part of Auckland's network of laneways and shared spaces.

# Auckland's Vision

Building a Design-Led City BY RICK MOHLER

Auckland's vision is *to be the world's most livable city*. This audacious goal, first proclaimed by Mayor Len Brown in 2012, once seemed out of reach given Auckland's notorious reputation as "the city of cars" (Auckland has among the highest number of cars per capita of any city) and what New Zealand planners call the "Auckland disease," a mix of short-term thinking and parochial disagreement.

**Yet great strides have been made in a remarkably brief time to transform Auckland into a design-led city taking hold of its destiny.**

The city has done so with a creative and coordinated effort consisting of rigorous research, visionary plans, public outreach, post-occupancy assessment, and a willingness to take risks. This has yielded increased economic revenue and transit ridership, an enhanced public realm, and a fundamental shift in the way Aucklanders view themselves and their city.

## THE NEW ZEALAND URBAN DESIGN PROTOCOL

Before Auckland set out to become a paradigm of livability, the 2005 *New Zealand Urban Design Protocol* laid the foundation for the city's transformation. This national government document outlines a "sustainable development program of action" in response to the rapid growth of

New Zealand's urban areas and the mandate to grow more compactly. The protocol identifies seven essential qualities of great urban design: context, character, choice, connections, creativity, custodianship, and collaboration.

The protocol established a set of values for urban planning in New Zealand, including the importance of a shared vision, the need for transparent monitoring and reporting on plan implementation as works progress, and the need for design champions to inspire and educate the citizenry about the value of a design-led city-building process. The protocol also identified the need for stronger urban design education at the university level and for the academy to work in collaboration with public and private partners.

In addition to issuing the protocol, New Zealand's national government provided several companion resources to help local planning offices apply it. The *Urban Design Case Studies* include practical examples of urban design. An *Urban*



Swimming on the downtown waterfront.

*Design Toolkit* provides a compendium of tools and mechanisms to foster great cities. The document *Urban Design Research* covers current knowledge on urban design and environments. Most impressively, the *Value Case* report illustrates the link between quality urban design and environmental, social, cultural, and economic value; it shows that while a miniscule portion of a project's life-cycle cost is devoted to design, the benefits of good design are enormous. This fundamentally shifts design's role from an add-on to an essential tool for creating value.

#### THE AUCKLAND PLAN

Building upon the *Urban Design Protocol*, the *Auckland Plan* was released in 2012 to guide Auckland's future over the following 30 years. Inspired by best practices in cities such as Melbourne, New York, Vancouver, Barcelona, Bilbao, and London, the plan was developed in partnership with government, business, indigenous Maori tribes, nongovernment organizations, and more than 15,000 Aucklanders. The plan is an incredibly comprehensive and integrated document covering everything from transportation and land use to economic development, job growth, education, housing, and social conditions.

More impressive is the plan's unique aspirational, inspirational, and transformational tone. This is best represented by the section covering its City Centre Masterplan, which received 95% public approval and won the New Zealand Institute of Architecture Supreme Urban Design Award. The document is exem-

plary in its organizational clarity and use of compelling language, imaginative and inspirational themes, and evocative imagery. Complex data, conditions, and urban design principles are described through diagrams and bullet points that are easily understood by city officials, professionals, and the citizenry at large.

The document calls for "Transformational Moves" in the city centre, not merely strategies for improvement. A city edge connection is referred to as the "East-West Stitch," the central business district is the "Engine Room," and the university district is the "Innovation Cradle." In one section of the plan, the city asks its citizenry a simple question: *Do you love me?* This bold, simple statement makes the relationship between citizen and city personal. It shifts attention away from individual stakeholders and special interest groups by positioning the city as an animate being and establishing a direct relationship between city design and collective experience.

**Auckland officials understand the need to convey complex information and they do so brilliantly.**

They also recognize that a city's citizenry needs to be engaged on an *emotional* level. This is what a plan should do.

#### BRINGING THE VISION TO LIFE

In addition to providing clear and compelling planning documents, the city of Auckland combines the *Auckland Plan* with an ongoing, carefully choreographed program of advocacy and education to encourage public engagement. This includes the "Auckland Conversations," a program

with events and online content exploring international best practices for transportation, climate change, housing, urban design, and more.

Cultivating community interest in good urban design helps Auckland's mayor and city council set the vision for the city with citizen support. To implement plans, the city recruits and empowers extraordinary leaders at multiple levels to bolster and advance its ambitious goals for a livable future with consistent funding over sustained periods. In researching Auckland, we spent time with leaders from agencies as diverse as transportation, public development, urban design, and water management. All spoke a common language of place and design. Regardless of their disciplinary background and affiliation they clearly understand that their primary responsibility is to create places that Aucklanders will love. Equally impressive are their consistently passionate and outspoken views regarding their mission, which has been supported and empowered over multiple mayoral administrations.

One outcome of this design-led city approach is the dissolving of disciplinary silos and political divides. Auckland has adopted an integrated approach that is driven first by a shared understanding of place making and design. Auckland's ambitious and transformative vision, supported by extraordinary plans, design champions, and choreographed public outreach, is one that the Pacific Northwest region can learn from. §

## Our Take on Auckland's Strategy

A design-led city:

- Recognizes design's power to bridge professional and political divides and unleash creativity.
- Embeds design into the DNA of the city's plans, policies, products, and consciousness of the people.
- Empowers and excites everyone!
- Uses and pushes beyond best practices.
- Enables collaboration, including between the private and public sectors.
- Challenges preconceptions and resistance to change with data, monitoring, and benchmarking—and always shares publicly and between agencies.
- Recognizes and celebrates cultural difference as a community value.
- Builds adaptability and resilience to foster positive change.
- Embraces context and sense of place with the smart use of standards.



Above: Downtown walkway and stormwater reuse.

Right: Page from the *City Centre Masterplan 2012*. Courtesy of Auckland Council

10 THE CITY CENTRE'S REGIONAL RELEVANCE



Auckland is a polycentric region. It is a hub of urban centres among their own communities, but as the focus for economic, cultural and entertainment activity, the city centre is important to the wider region's success.

Investing in the city centre is an investment in the region's future growth. The success of each of a successful city centre will lead to agglomeration productivity gains for Auckland's businesses. We must support development, care for making the city centre more vibrant in cultural and entertainment terms.

We need Aucklanders to fall in love with their city centre again, and for going to work to be a part of everyone's Auckland experience as it was for previous generations.

DO YOU LOVE ME?

YOU WANT TO BE IN LOVE WITH THE PLACE WHERE YOU SPEND A LOT OF YOUR TIME, WHETHER IT IS TO LIVE, WORK, OR PLAY.

# Governance and the Super City

## Auckland's Political Transformation

BY BARBARA SWIFT

On November 1, 2010, the largest and most complex amalgamation of local and regional governments in New Zealand occurred with the formation of the Auckland Council.

**Eight local government authorities became the council governing the Auckland "super city" of 272,530 acres.**

In comparison, the King County Urban Growth Area contains 294,400 acres and 37 cities.

Why is this important? Rather than react to rapid geopolitical and economic change and an ineffective, complex bureaucracy with Band-Aid solutions, Auckland and New Zealand took the future in hand with diligence and lightning speed, establishing an entirely new governmental structure for the region. Auckland was the heart of the national economy, with 35% of national GDP in the 1980s and 33% of the national population by 2011, and it was an established international economic node. To grow and compete, Auckland's government needed to focus energy on forward movement instead of local squabbling within a layered bureaucracy.

Changes began in 2007, when the national government established the Royal Commission on Auckland Governance to develop recommendations for governmental restructuring. Delivery of findings in March 2009 followed extensive public participation, including over 3,500 written submissions and testimony from over 550 individuals. The process built a consensus for proposed reforms: a mayor would be elected at large, with Auckland Council members elected on a ward ba-

sis. The Council would provide integrated citywide services and focus on regional policies and projects. Ward boards would have decision-making power over nonregulatory matters and responsibility for "place making" activities such as physical improvements and community engagement. Auckland Council would be the city government as a whole.

The Council would deliver basic services through an innovative network of seven Council-controlled, quasi-private corporations that are more typically used to manage focused business functions:

- Auckland Council Investments Ltd. would manage investments including the Port of Auckland Ltd. and a share of the international airport.
- Auckland Transport would be responsible for all transport except state highways.
- Watercare Services Ltd. would be responsible for water and wastewater.
- Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development Ltd. would coordinate events and economic development.
- Auckland Council Property Ltd. would manage and advise on the Council's nonessential services and provide strategic advice on the Council property portfolio.

- Auckland Waterfront Development Agency would be responsible for leading the development of Auckland's waterfront.
- Regional Facilities Auckland would manage arts, cultural, and recreational facilities.

Additionally, the new Independent Māori Statutory Board would provide advice on cultural, economic, environmental, and social issues significant for the Māori community and statutory provisions referencing the Treaty of Waitangi. (The Auckland Council Property Ltd. and Auckland Waterfront Development Agency were subsequently consolidated into Panuku Development Auckland.)

In May 2009, the government tasked

the Auckland Transition Agency with establishing the proposed Auckland Council, an extraordinary undertaking completed by the October 2010 election. This process was not without controversy, and pre-election debate focused on a variety of contentious issues—loss of local control and voice, accountability, rural areas' fears of "being swallowed up" or ignored, ward size, population distribution, Council controlled corporations, and unelected Māori participation. But in the end, "day one" for the super city was November 1, 2010.

**This streamlined government structure integrates efforts to enhance economics, livability, sustainability strategies, and growth management, saving \$66 million NZD annually.** This allows for coordinated, cost-effective service delivery by removing redundant

efforts and helps implement a shared vision for the region. One example: land use planning was previously divided between the regional council and territorial authorities, hampering coordinated growth management, infrastructure development, environmental stewardship and other aspects of livability in a rapidly growing area.

Amalgamation is a risky experiment that requires constant work. A monitoring system is in place, and the government is remarkably transparent, with a

robust and user-friendly website, consistent communication, clear planning

documents, ongoing public education and debate, a process for gathering feedback, and rigorous evaluation of results. The implementation of consistent feedback loops is essential to success and building a foundation of trust. When asked how it is working, the response has generally been positive, and voters in the 2016 election stayed the course.

Effective governance has enabled Auckland to transform itself in an astoundingly short time. Government streamlining has allowed the development of a strong service delivery system and efforts to resolve cultural issues related to increased density and implementation of a vision for the city. This is a story to learn from. §



An Auckland Transport representative explains AT's proposed light rail expansion.

# Streets for People

The Benefits of Public Control BY JOE DAVID



Seattle at 1st and Virginia.

Sidewalks, roadways, alleys, corners, and parks all serve as a background for the daily events contributing to a city's identity. For this reason, it is essential that the design and implementation of these spaces are responsibly managed. How improvements to the public right-of-way—the public space of a city's streetscape—are financed, designed, implemented, and maintained impacts the physical condition of these areas, the sense of place they provide, and the quality of experience and livability for all. Cities handle this in various ways, with different outcomes.

In Seattle, most improvements to the pedestrian right-of-way are the responsibility of the private sector, and these updates are typically linked to individual construction projects as they arise. For instance, when a property owner constructs a new building or improves an existing structure beyond a "substantial alteration," the City requires that they also hire professionals to design and construct the street frontage adjacent to their property and pay for associated utility infrastructure modifications.

While this arrangement provides a funding source for public right-of-way improvements, it is tied to economic cycles and yields a number of unintended impacts on the walkability and continuity of the streetscapes that define a city's character. Anyone navigating Seattle's urban core experiences a patchwork of disparate street conditions that change with nearly every passing address. Property owners install paving details, trash

receptacles, bike racks, street trees, and signage to fulfill a minimum set of guidelines, but these features vary wildly in age, quality, and implementation. In this way, private property lines are telegraphed into the right-of-way, yielding a public realm without a cohesive sense of *place*. These spaces lack a clear hierarchy of scale, program, and service that would exist if the right-of-way were designed and implemented as a single continuous system.

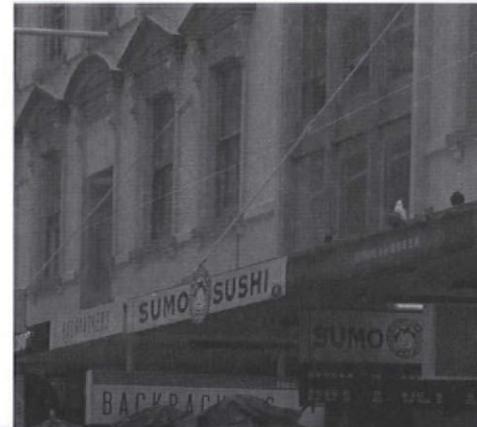
Auckland does things differently. In the past the city employed a funding strategy similar to Seattle's for its improvements to the right-of-way, or road reserve, as they call it. But it abandoned the approach in the 1980s when their downtown began to lack cohesion and identity, becoming a "dog's breakfast," as one Auckland official put it. Now Auckland takes road reserve improvements out of the hands of private landowners, providing the city with more design oversight and control. When a new building is constructed, the owner is obligated to repair any damage to the road reserve but not totally redevelop it. Changes are handled by the Auckland Design Office and Auckland Transport instead, which strategically identify district-scale projects that contribute to the City Centre Masterplan or other initiatives, and they use general tax funds for road reserve design, construction, and maintenance. The city has also empowered many of its other agencies, including its public development authority, Panuku, to design, fund, build, and manage large sections of the road reserve.

**In Auckland, giving the city more control of the road reserve enables it to create fully integrated design action-plans that can effect fundamental change.**

A recent example is the Te Ara Mua Future Streets project that involves changes to roads, pedestrian paths, and cycling connections within Auckland's Māngere Central district to make walking and biking easier and safer. Of Auckland's 275 neighborhoods, this community, home to an underserved population, has the fourth highest number of traffic accidents involving pedestrians. Auckland Council realizes that improving pedestrian safety and livability in this neighborhood is an important social equity issue. The primary objective of this road reserve improvement is to eliminate safety problems, including life-threatening hazards affecting children, but the Future Streets project also has a broader vision. The project transforms the urban environment through changes to local roads and connections throughout the Māngere Central district to provide better pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and enhances the neighborhood's character and identity. This will increase safety while promoting health, recreation, and social benefits at a neighborhood level. Funding for the project was supported by metrics demonstrating that the reduction in accidents would yield a social cost savings of \$18 million to \$25 million NZD over a 10-year period, a good example of using data to make the argument for funding and positive change. The project is slated for completion this year.

Imagine how Seattle could be improved if we chose to think about pedestrian experience and

movement at the same multi-block scale that we use for vehicle corridors. Imagine a downtown with the same district-level identity that is experienced at Pike Place Market. This begins to approach Auckland's success with the road reserve. The result is a cohesive and generous public place provided for all. §



Early morning laneway in Auckland.

# The Auckland Design Office

A Powerhouse for  
People, Place, and Design

BY BARBARA SWIFT

The Auckland Design Office (ADO) is an essential tool driving the design-led vision for Auckland. It embeds design thinking into the DNA of the city, unleashing action to build a place that Aucklanders will love. In today's Auckland it seems natural that such an agency would exist, but how did it come about and what has it meant for the city?

The ADO is an outgrowth of national and city leadership that values putting people and design first. In 2005 the New Zealand Ministry for the Environment established the *Urban Design Protocol*, which identified the long-term economic importance of a quality urban experience for a predominantly urban nation. This strategy promoted resilience, good planning, and economic vitality by creating quality, urban environments that are recognized internationally, allowing New Zealand to compete on the world stage.

The protocol focuses on making successful places that work for people and recognizes that quality urban design takes the long view. It builds on context and results in a spatial organization that optimizes a constantly evolving, interlocked system of relationships involving place, people, culture, environment, and economics. The initiative was funded to support local action. That same year, the Auckland Mayoral Task Force on Urban Design developed "Designing Auckland: A Springboard for Action," a brilliant

strategy to accelerate the creation of a design-led city. This strategy ended the laissez-faire approach toward design and positioned Auckland for transformation. The poorly functioning and uninspiring urban environment would no longer compromise Auckland as the national economic engine.

The role of urban design increased with the 2010 amalgamation, which created today's Auckland from a collection of smaller jurisdictions and facilitated more coordinated governance. This led to the expansion of the city's Built Environment Unit and the creation of a separate department—the ADO. It is now a multidisciplinary team of over 30 exceptionally talented design professionals. Leadership rests with the "design champion," Ludo Campbell-Reid, who is responsible for relentlessly driving the design agenda at all levels. This includes the visioning, planning, design, implementation, and programming of the city.

**Auckland Council's understanding that good design is good economics is reflected in all the city's work but particularly in that of the ADO.**

Its activities touch both public and private sectors, and its message is that this benefits everyone. This is essential to understand when considering the ADO's accomplishments, which have been rapid and remarkable as the following list shows.



The ADO team on the job.

## A VISION FOR THE CITY

The ADO is responsible for the 2012 City Centre Masterplan and its implementation. This 20-year vision document contains all the data and tools needed to carry out the plan but also speaks to the heart with powerful, evocative language. It addresses a full spectrum of places for people, an expansive transit system, and further commitment to unlocking the waterfront. It also establishes a stable funding strategy spanning election cycles by using private development to generate long-term revenue. The plan is clear, compelling, and inspiring, and provides a practical, visionary approach that gets results.

## WATERFRONT ACCESS

The Wynyard Quarter waterfront, previously an industrial area off-limits to Aucklanders, is now central to the city's identity. This vibrant public realm is humane and beautifully designed—communicating through activities, materials, and details that citizens are valued and urban life is a source of joy (see page 41 for more information).

## SHARED SPACES

The city understands that Aucklanders are the focus. The creation of “shared spaces” in a city centre 5.5-kilometer laneway loop has significantly improved the quality of urban life. To promote behavioral change, designers have removed

conventional street elements such as curbs, signs, and markings from these reconfigured streets and alleys. And this creation of ambiguity between pedestrian and vehicular spaces has worked, forcing pedestrians and drivers to interact, prioritizing those on foot, increasing caution, and enhancing safety. Auckland took a risk and made a big move, and it has paid off. The 30-year design life of the laneway project illustrates the city's commitment as does the quiet and timeless design, beautiful materials, exquisite detailing, and provisions for ongoing care and management.

Initial resistance has been replaced with enthusiastic support and pressure to implement faster. Central to building support has been rigorous postconstruction evaluation, documenting growth in land value and retail sales, a lack of injuries from vehicle crashes, and huge increases in the number of pedestrians.

## PUBLIC REALM INNOVATIONS

Auckland takes an innovative and practical approach to city stewardship. Theater professionals are responsible for programming the city's public realm: A parking lot became a “pop-up Globe Theatre” wrapped in Tyvek. A defunct freeway off-ramp was transformed into a shared cycling and pedestrian path, and its hot pink surface, reputedly visible from outer space, is a source of identity. If an idea

doesn't work, it is evaluated, redesigned, and evaluated again. The city understands that you must relentlessly steward, care for, and support public life.

## CITY BUILDING LESSONS

A design-led strategy requires an educated community. To that end, the Auckland Conversations—a series of live streams, in-person events, and online videos started in 2007—has brought international experts to speak on topics including transportation, climate change, housing, and urban design. With over 90,000 attendees, this program has made good on its goals of creating a paradigm shift in thinking, a shared language, and behavioral change at the metropolitan scale by helping to create a sophisticated community conversant in the fine points of building a city to love. §



Wynyard Quarter  
mid-afternoon.



## Laneway Financials—Making It Happen

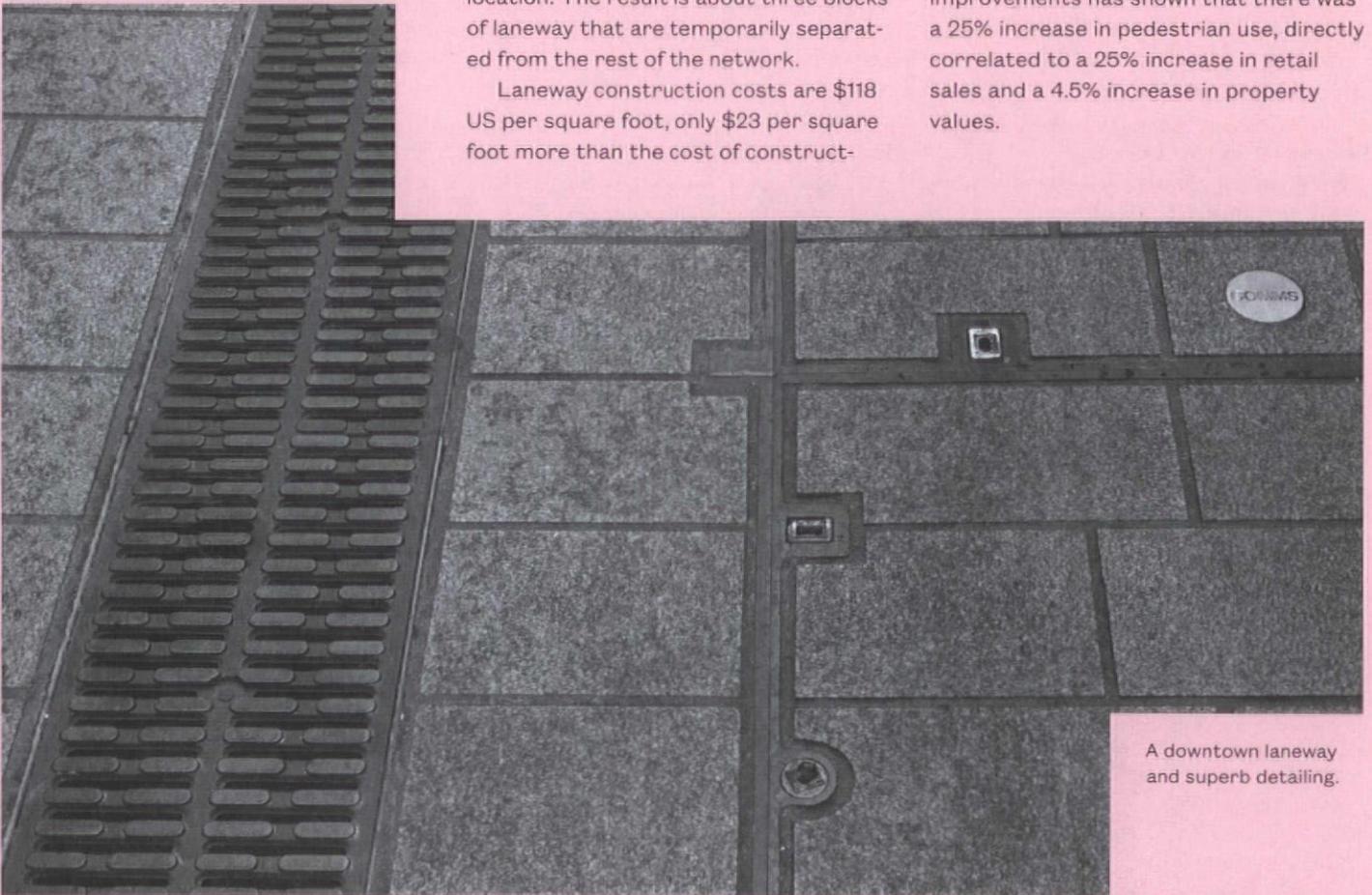
By Ben Broesamle

The implementation of Auckland's laneway loop is funded by a "targeted rate," or taxing district overlay, on property in the city centre, similar to capital improvement funding through local improvement districts. The result is \$10 million annually. (Maintenance is funded by regular property taxes.) However, in one case, property owner SkyCity contributed funds directly to prioritize the improvements at its Federal Street location. The result is about three blocks of laneway that are temporarily separated from the rest of the network.

Laneway construction costs are \$118 US per square foot, only \$23 per square foot more than the cost of construct-

ing an asphalt road bed in Seattle. The additional cost covers features including a below grade utilidor (utility tunnel), a subgrade concrete slab, stone paving, trench drains, remarkable detailing, furnishings, and lighting.

In all, the laneway improvements provide a great return on investment over their 30-year design life and other documented benefits: the ADO's post-construction evaluation of laneway improvements has shown that there was a 25% increase in pedestrian use, directly correlated to a 25% increase in retail sales and a 4.5% increase in property values.



A downtown laneway and superb detailing.

# Revitalizing Wynyard Quarter

Value Creation Through Successful Public Space

BY BEN BROESAMLE AND GENEVIEVE HALE-CASE

The value that Auckland places on livability and place making is particularly apparent in the work of Panuku, a public agency setting the tone for new development in the city.

Panuku is a Council-controlled corporation much like the quasi-governmental public development agencies (PDAs), we have here in Seattle that manage the Pike Place Market and International District. Unlike Seattle, where PDAs have been useful in gaining public support to preserve our cherished places, Auckland has used this tool to leverage thoughtful development throughout the city. Panuku is charged with buying, selling and managing all of the land owned by Auckland Council. In doing so, Panuku takes on both community development and asset management roles for the Council, acting as “master developer” in strategic partnerships with private developers and public and nonprofit organizations to deliver projects. The three simple, clear pillars of Panuku’s mission are: *Transform* through urban regeneration; *unlock* development potential for investors, and *support* value creation through economic development and intensification.

## WYNYARD QUARTER

Panuku’s current and largest project is the redevelopment of a 91-acre site on Auckland’s downtown waterfront called

Wynyard Quarter. Panuku’s charge is to transform the area from a formerly off-limits and relatively unknown part of the city into a vibrant new residential community. Panuku recruited some of the world’s best and brightest in the arena of public-private partnerships to work on it. Through Panuku, Auckland Council contributed the site and \$167 million NZD in direct funding for public realm infrastructure and improvements, and \$83 million in national debt were received from the national government to put towards the project. Panuku retains permanent ownership of the land for the Auckland Council, while ground-leasing individual development sites to private developers.

## CULTURAL PROGRAMMING AS DESIGN

**Panuku uses cultural programming as a strategic tool to create value, place, and public identity in Wynyard Quarter.**

Before any shovels were in the ground, Panuku provided programming for the site, working hard to redefine and create a public realm Aucklanders would know and love before neighborhood development took place. Frith Walker, Panuku’s manager of place making, spearheaded this effort. With a background in theater, Frith was able to carefully stage a series of temporary public amenities throughout Wynyard Quarter’s public spaces and watch the way that Aucklanders interacted with them. These amenities were

Silo Cinema at Silo Park in Wynyard Quarter. Photo courtesy of Auckland Council



## Timeline—Development of Wynyard Quarter

2004 – Central Area District Plan created

2007 – Wynyard Quarter Urban Design Framework established

2011 – Rugby World Cup (begin 30-year plan implementation)

2012 – Focused effort to develop and program the public realm

2012 – Public and private money invested for the development of Wynyard Quarter

2013 – First private development in Wynyard Quarter completed with curated ground-level uses

2016 – First private housing development under construction

everything from pianos to garden plots to pop-up markets to games printed onto squares of AstroTurf. If the public seemed disinterested in a particular amenity, it was altered or replaced.

With Wynyard Quarter, Panuku has done an exceptional job of incorporating some of the existing industrial infrastructure into their place-making efforts. Large concrete water towers have been transformed into an outdoor movie theater, and the formerly industrial waterfront is being opened up to allow access and places for children to play. In this way, the history of the area's place is integrated and repurposed into the future, keeping an authentic context alive within its transformation.

### FINANCIAL STRUCTURE AND SUCCESS

An appropriate financial structure is pivotal to any development effort's sustained success, and Wynyard Quarter is a clear case study.

As an agency ultimately responsible for creating value in Auckland's public assets, Panuku makes no apologies for the fact that all of their place-making initiatives in Wynyard Quarter are fundamentally done in an effort to attract private investment to the area. They have been extremely successful in doing so. Panuku has created and will continue to control investments in Wynyard Quarter, starting with the initial investments by developers and continuing as future capital investments are made, cultivating a virtuous cycle of improvement of the formerly

industrial waterfront. Panuku's team for Wynyard Quarter focused on one aspect of redevelopment that the public sector in the US often neglects: branding. With remarkable business savvy, Panuku set a goal to be the "Apple" of public development authorities, with Wynyard Quarter as its "iPhone"—its primary product that everyone would want.

Auckland Savings Bank relocated its headquarters to Wynyard Quarter before any other private investment in the area had been committed. They did so with great faith in Panuku's ability to deliver a desirable and vibrant place. Wynyard Quarter is now being transformed into a livable, family-oriented community with apartments, shopping, a new home for the Auckland Theatre Company, and a luxury hotel. Panuku is even working to bring a school to Wynyard Quarter, demonstrating a clear understanding of what it takes to build a resilient city.

In Wynyard Quarter, office, hotel, and mixed-use multifamily residential and retail developers each sign 120-year ground leases requiring that they pay all expenses for property development in addition to their lease payments to Panuku. The amount of these lease payments is based on valuation of the land at multiple points in time throughout the development process, as well as at intervals throughout the term of the lease. In total, Panuku has unlocked an estimated \$1 billion in net new land value with increased

economic productivity from the properties in Wynyard Quarter. The value of the potential revenues from the development of Wynyard Quarter will accrue to Auckland Council and the tax-paying public. These revenues support Panuku's work in the short term and Auckland Council's budget in the long-term. The activity of thriving places goes hand-in-hand with financial success. The financial reality of Wynyard Quarter is a successful, well-designed place that will help create a self-reinforcing cycle of investment.

Each of the developers and future lessees of individual parcels agrees to pay into a community fund that supports the public realm of Wynyard Quarter. This fund costs each of the private sector investors about \$0.12 USD per parcel square foot per year. The funds are never deposited in the Auckland Council general fund, but remain in a separate budget directly tied to the Wynyard Quarter. The budget is used for maintenance, programming, and continued improvements to the public realm for Wynyard Quarter.

Panuku is a public agency that is run with professionalism and efficiency. But more importantly, this profit-driven agency has prioritized place, design excellence, and action and has astutely connected lovability with livability. Their efforts have attracted both people and capital to transform an industrial waterfront into a new neighborhood. §

Opposite:  
Britomart Station.

# Auckland Transport

**One Agency, All Transportation,  
Integrated Mobility**

BY AMY HARTMAN

Auckland's success in reducing car dependency offers lessons for other regions, including the Seattle area. While Auckland's use of public transportation still lags behind that of denser formerly auto-dependent cities, its growth has been remarkably strong over the past 10 years. Regional public transit ridership has grown by 5 to 10 percent annually, with rail ridership increasing fivefold since 2005 according to the *Greater Auckland* transportation blog. Much of this success can be attributed to the organization and culture of the city's transportation agency, Auckland Transport.

**TRANSPORTATION IS MANAGED AS AN INTEGRATED REGIONAL SYSTEM** Auckland Transport, the Council-controlled organization responsible for mobility planning and operations, was established as part of the Auckland region's amalgamation into one super city in 2010

(see page 34). This gave Auckland Transport jurisdiction over the mobility needs of the entire Auckland region. This includes everything from the rail, bus, ferry, and road networks, to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, to parking policies. **Auckland Transport is responsible for the planning and management of all transportation other than state highways. In contrast, the Seattle area has over 30 agencies responsible for at least one facet or mode of our region's transportation.** For example, Seattle's bus, rail, and streetcar systems are controlled by three different agencies under separate jurisdictions: King County Metro, Sound Transit, and the Seattle Department of Transportation, respectively.

As a result, Auckland is able to more easily deliver integrated solutions to transportation issues. For example, new mass transportation stations are planned concurrently with improvements to other aspects of the transportation system.

When the city creates a new transit station, they also build pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, connect the station to the bus network, and reduce the number of nearby parking spaces. Around the station, super blocks are subdivided and traffic calming is practiced on adjacent streets. Each portion of the transportation network complements rather than competes with the other, and this provides Aucklanders with multiple integrated mobility options.



#### DESIGN SPURS PATRONAGE

Transportation planners in Auckland make no secret of the fact that providing quality infrastructure is part of their strategy for promoting its use. As Darren Davis, a senior transport planner at Auckland Transport, put it, “We want public transit riders to feel like first-class citizens.” The beautiful design of Auckland’s public transit stations, sidewalks, cycle paths, and other public infrastructure accomplishes this by showing that the government values the users of these systems. In turn, this also lessens the stereotype that public transportation, biking, and walking are only for people unable to drive. Auckland’s transportation infrastructure is also well designed from a functional perspective: stations are well lit, protected from the elements, include restrooms, and are furnished with comfortable seating. These humane gestures communicate thoughtful understanding,

showing citizens they are valued. Creativity also enhances functionality. For example, Auckland’s New Lynn Transport Interchange provides not only covered bicycle parking and restrooms but shopping-cart parking as well, making it easier for riders to grocery shop on the way home from work.

#### STRIVE TO SERVE PEOPLE RATHER THAN DRIVERS

“People are the economic powerhouse of a city, not the car,” says Ludo Campbell-Reid, Auckland’s design champion (his official title). Nowhere is this distinction more important than in the way a city approaches transportation planning. A significant factor in Auckland Transport’s success is that transportation planners focus on serving the mobility needs of people generally rather than just drivers. This is due to both the emphasis on people-centered planning from city leaders

and the enthusiasm for transportation options other than cars among Auckland Transport planners. Many planners are not only regular bikers, walkers, and public-transit riders, but they see themselves as advocates for those who use these modes of transportation. Many contribute to platforms that discuss public transit, such as the *Greater Auckland* blog.

The lessons from Auckland are simple. Design and manage a region’s transportation infrastructure as an integrated system. Plan and design for mobility, not modes of transportation. Communicate that users are valued and trusted. This is smart and shows returns with rapid adoption of public transit and fewer drivers on the road. §



Super blocks give way to transit area development, housing, shared spaces, and stormwater collection.

# Be Bold, Transparent, Relentless

Takeaway Lessons from Auckland BY THE 2015-2016 RUNSTAD AFFILIATE FELLOWS

Over the course of our fellowship, the political landscape in our country has shifted dramatically. Emerging federal policies view cities and climate change as irrelevant to long-term resilience, civil life, joy, and economic health. But we in the Northwest have taken a strong stance against these policies, galvanizing our commitment to shared values and action. We can use these trying times to articulate what we value and act on it. There is a silver lining in this turmoil: we are no longer

fighting amongst ourselves but collectively fighting against something larger—for a glorious place to live and a resilient region, to create a Seattle that we all love.

**The Auckland story is one of relevant strategies linking design, place, and long-term resilience with economic vitality and vibrant urban life.**

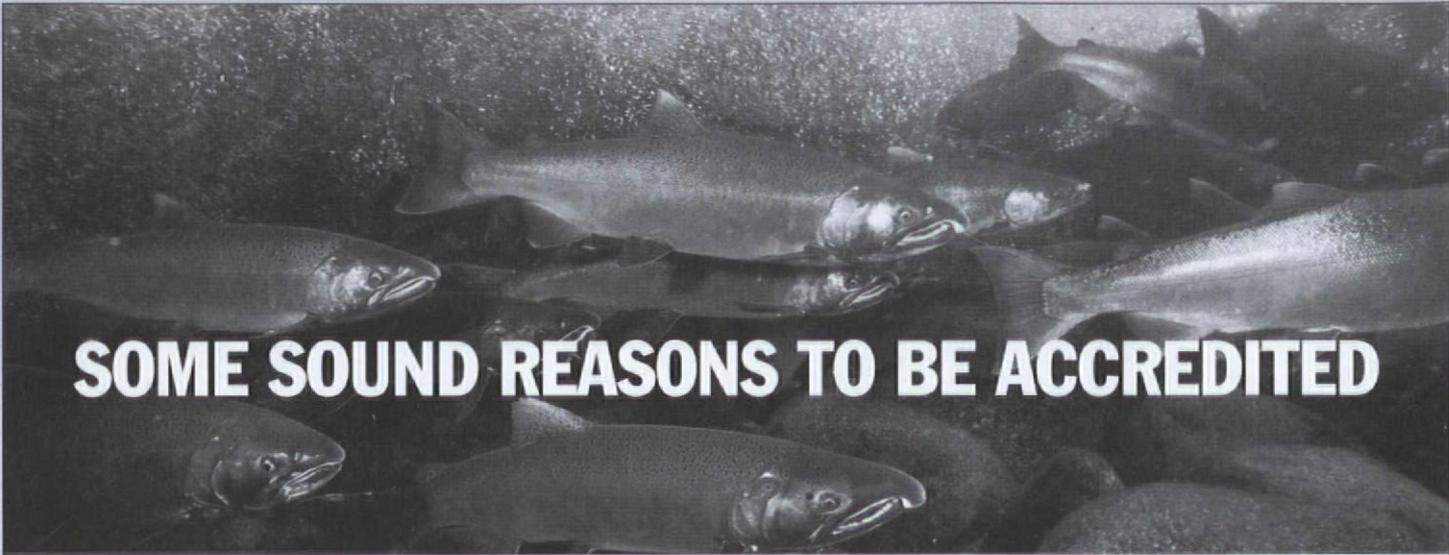
It demonstrates that love is a valid planning construct and it demands action!

What can be learned from this? Here are some lessons:

- Require transparent, consistent leadership, and set the bar high.
- Build a shared vision. Shift the “we can’t” myth toward one of action, optimism, and smart risk taking.
- Emotionally connect the city and citizenry—love is a planning construct.
- Have a vision that design matters for everyone and that everyone is a first-class citizen.
- To create a city to love, educate everyone and engage them in the collective effort of a design-led agenda.
- Recruit and hire design champions who work relentlessly as change agents.
- Tie design excellence to good economics.
- Commit to the long game with stable financial support.
- Challenge, take smart risks, evaluate, benchmark, share your findings, and create feedback loops to build trust.
- Activate and steward the city to create and sustain places where people want to be.
- As emblazoned on the Auckland City seal ... **ADVANCE!** §

Laneways allow people to be the focus of the city.





# SOME SOUND REASONS TO BE ACCREDITED

If you build around the Seattle area, you want to make sure that Puget Sound stays as beautiful as your construction project. These six construction firms are the first to be Salmon-Safe accredited for pollution prevention in large-scale construction. Which means zero sediment runoff. A round of high fins and kudos to these leading Puget Sound Contractors.



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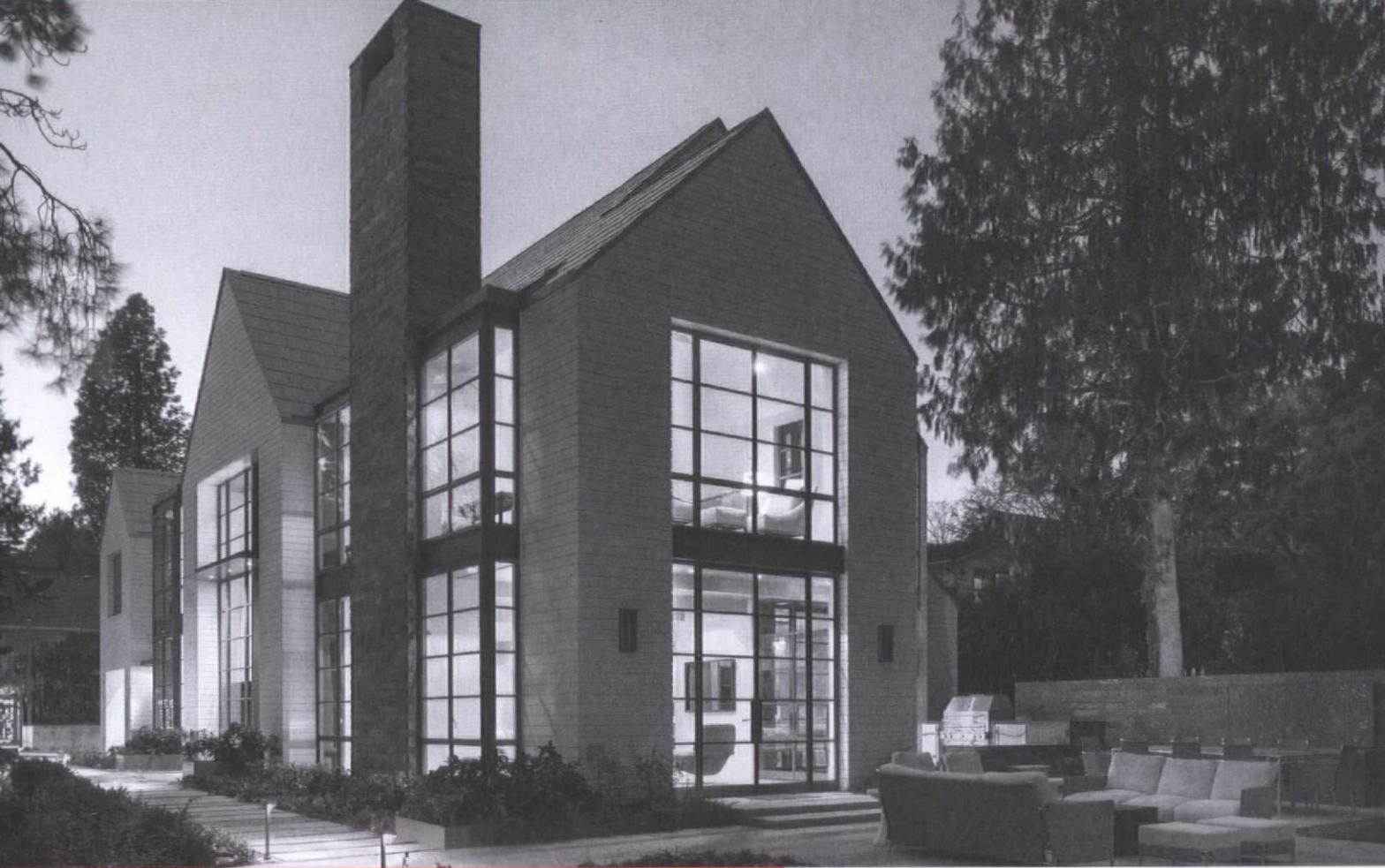


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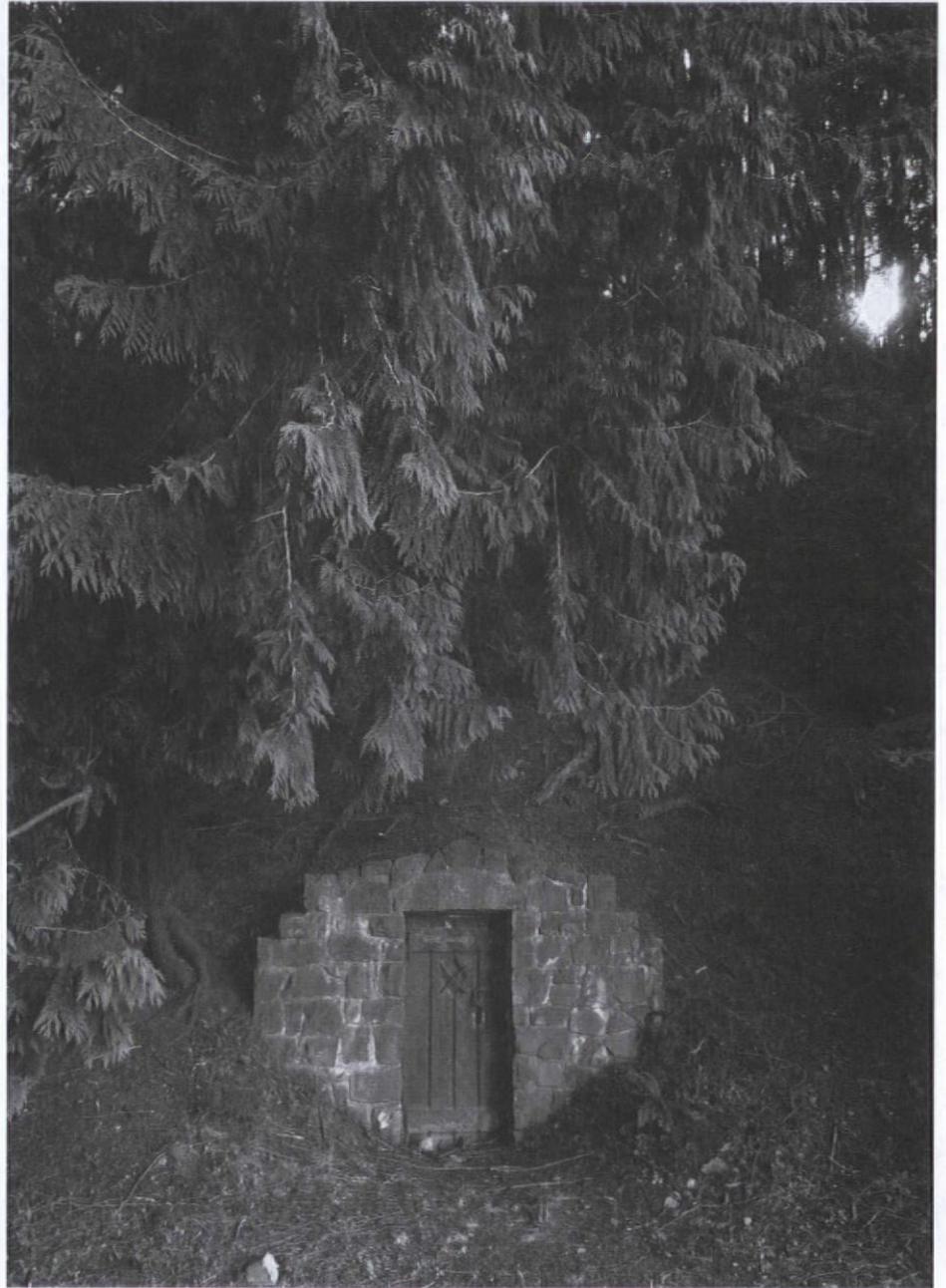
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PHOTOGRAPHY BY EIRIK JOHNSON

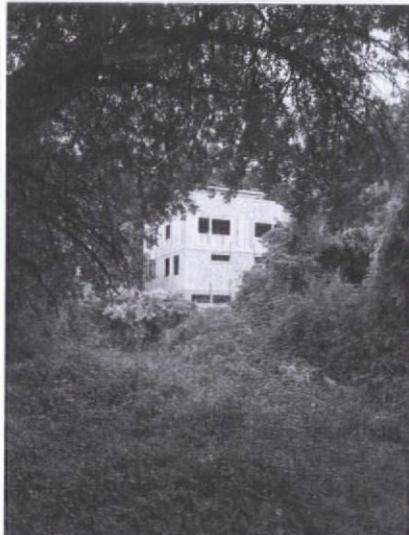
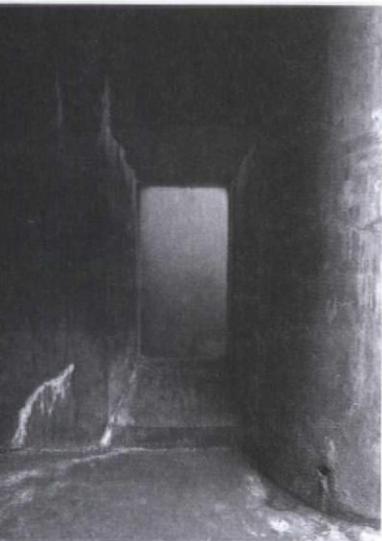
“There is a moment which follows pride in the boundless extension of the territories we have conquered, and the melancholy and relief of knowing we shall soon give up any thoughts of knowing and understanding them ... It is the desperate moment when we discover that this empire, which had seemed to us the sum of all wonders, is an endless, formless ruin.”

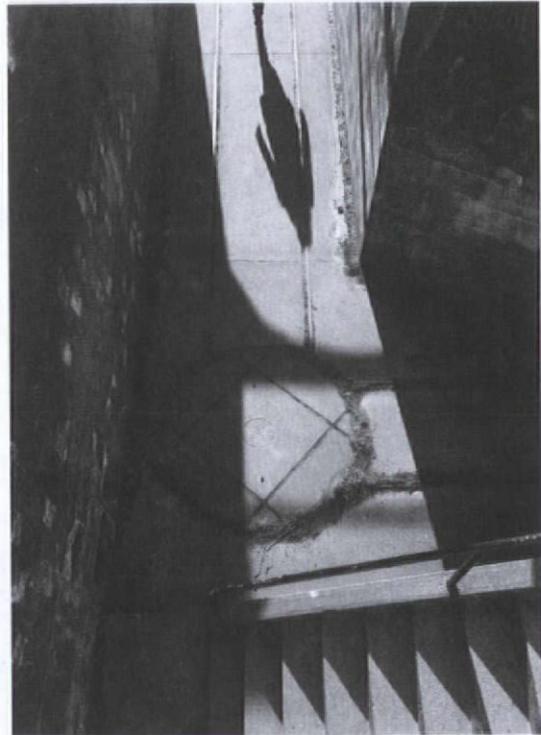
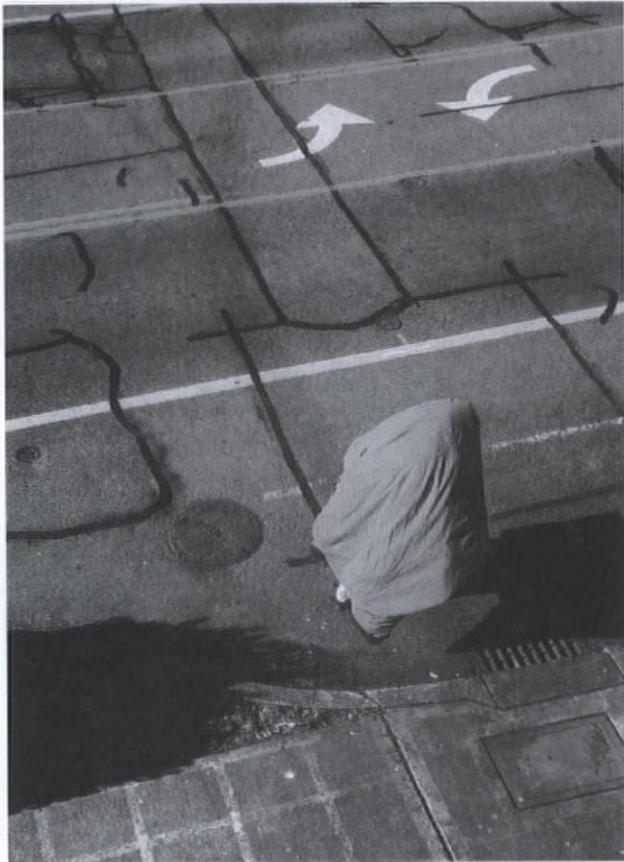
—Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*



Seattle-based photographic artist **Eirik Johnson** has exhibited his work at institutions including the Aperture Foundation, New York; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; and the Henry Art Gallery, Seattle. His monographs include *Borderlands* (Twin Palms Publishers) and *Sawdust Mountain* (Aperture). Johnson's work is in the permanent collections of institutions including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Seattle Art Museum; the International Center of Photography, New York; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Johnson is represented by G. Gibson Gallery, Seattle.

Photography courtesy Eirik Johnson ([www.eirikjohnson.com](http://www.eirikjohnson.com)) and G. Gibson Gallery ([www.ggibsongallery.com](http://www.ggibsongallery.com))







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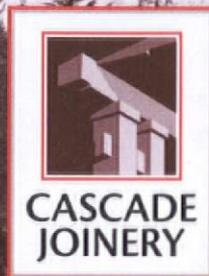
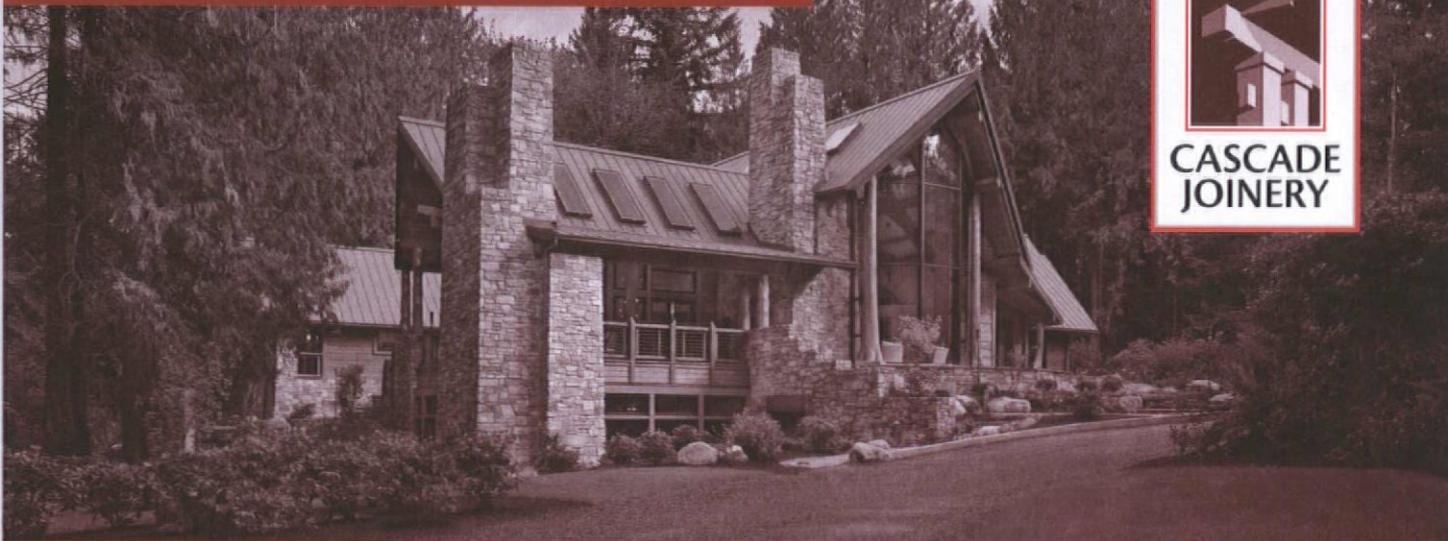


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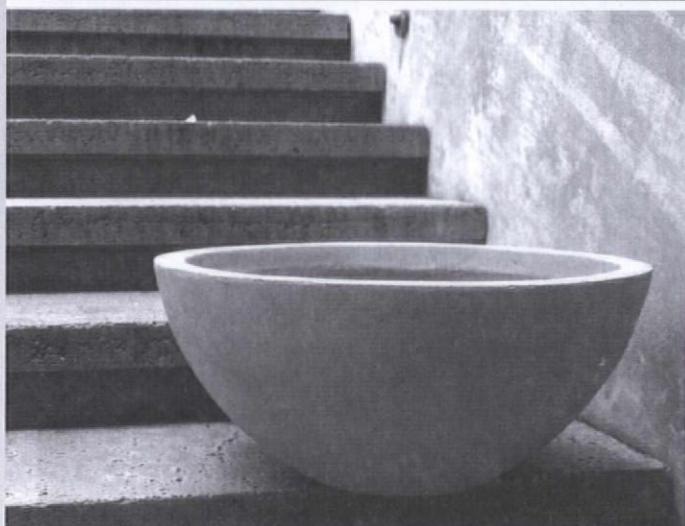
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# Time, Place, and Culture

An Interview with Dean Sakamoto on the Work of Vladimir Ossipoff BY BUILD LLC

Last winter, BUILD met with architect Dean Sakamoto on Oahu to talk about the late Hawaiian modernist architect Vladimir Ossipoff (1907–1998). Sakamoto operates an architecture practice in Honolulu and guest curated the 2007–2008 exhibit *Hawaiian Modern: The Architecture of Vladimir Ossipoff* at the Honolulu Museum of Art. Sakamoto is widely recognized as the world's leading expert on Ossipoff, known as the master of Hawaiian architecture within the postwar phenomenon of tropical modernism. We talked about the challenges of getting to know Ossipoff's work, the architect's life, and his design response to the Hawaiian environment.

**Dean Sakamoto**, FAIA, is principal of Dean Sakamoto Architects LLC and partner of the SHADE group, an alliance of professionals who share expertise and interest in the built environments of the tropical and subtropical regions of the world. He was guest curator of *Hawaiian Modern: The Architecture of Vladimir Ossipoff* and editor of the accompanying book of the same title (published by Yale University Press in association with the Honolulu Museum of Art).

**BUILD llc** is an industrious design-build firm in Seattle run by Kevin Eckert, Andrew van Leeuwen, Sandy Ha, and Bart Gibson. The firm's work focuses on effective, sustainable, and sensible design. BUILD llc operates an architectural office, contributes to ARCADE with an ongoing interview series, and is most known for their cultural leadership on the *BUILD Blog* ([blog.buildllc.com](http://blog.buildllc.com)), where you can find part two of this interview.

**BUILD: What first sparked your interest in Vladimir Ossipoff's work?**

Dean Sakamoto: If you lived in Hawaii and were interested in architecture, you would hear his name, but if you didn't know Ossipoff personally, he was a myth, a living legend. My work on Ossipoff started when I was on Yale's faculty in the late '90s. I was designing houses in Hawaii from my New Haven office and looking for a precedent for good residential architecture in the area. Naturally, Ossipoff's name came up, but since there were no books on his work, I had difficulty finding information on his projects. It wasn't until I began researching older periodicals that the breadth of his portfolio became clear. He was all over magazines during the '50s and '60s.

This interview took place at Ossipoff's outstanding Liljestrand house (b. 1952). BUILD would like to thank the Liljestrand Foundation's Bob Liljestrand, the son of the original owners, for opening up the house for the interview and contributing to the discussion.

While Ossipoff was designing in the spirit of the international style, he also wanted to make it clear that his was a different kind of modernism.

The next time I visited Hawaii in 2001, I met with his business partner, Sidney Snyder Jr., who

mentioned that since Ossipoff's passing in 1998, people had been asking him how to best honor his life and work. At the time, I was the director of the architecture gallery at Yale, and Sid introduced me to the director of the Honolulu Museum of Art. I put together a proposal for an exhibit on Ossipoff. Until then, no one had formally researched his work, as tropical architecture had been marginal in academia when Ossipoff was completing many of his notable projects in the '50s and '60s.

**Given Ossipoff's background—born in Russia, raised in Japan, and educated at Berkeley—what were his primary influences?**

Global events shaped his life and career. He was born in 1907 in Vladivostok, Russia, near Korea and Japan. After the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese emperor invited Tsar Nicholas to open an embassy in Tokyo, and Ossipoff's father, a Russian diplomat, was assigned to this assembly. This became Ossipoff's ticket to Tokyo and Yokohama from 1909 up through his early teens. His family left after the Great Kanto earthquake in 1923, but because of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, they couldn't go back to Russia. Instead, they migrated to California. He saw Hawaii for the first time on a one-night stopover while traveling there by way of steam ship.

He finished high school in California, and in 1931 he graduated from UC Berkeley with his architecture degree, trained



Exterior view of the Liljestrand House. Photo by Bob Liljestrand

in the Beaux-Arts style. It was the Great Depression, and a friend wrote to him that there was work in Hawaii because the sugar industry was strong. He hopped on a ship and arrived in Honolulu that same year to build his life and career.

During his first six months in Hawaii, he was employed by local architect Charles Dickey, and he eventually found a job in the design and construction department of C. Brewer, a major sugar cane plantation corporation. The architecture at the time was eclectic, and the predominant design approach was most similar to the Mediterranean style.

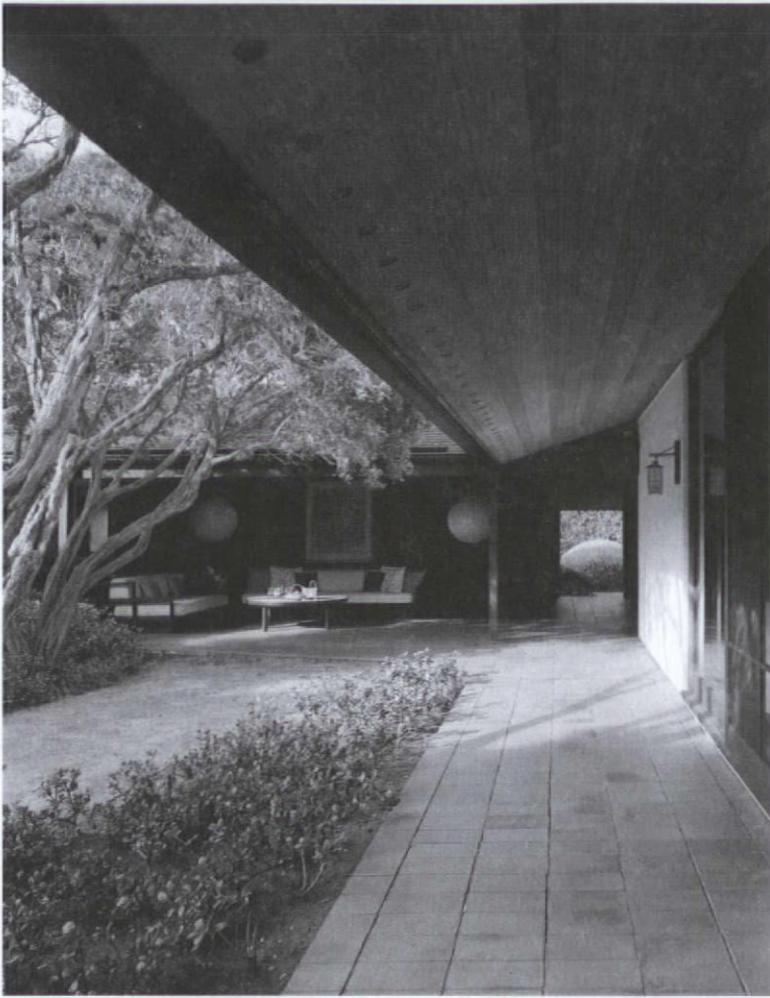
In Ossipoff's own words, he came to

Hawaii knowing nothing and learned from the Japanese-American draftsmen he worked with, who were very knowledgeable about how buildings go together. When Ossipoff opened his own office in 1936, he took one capable draftsman, Harry Onomoto (a second-generation Japanese American), with him and continued to recruit talented architects with an eye for modernism.

At first, his work was more cottage-like. His understanding of the organization of a typical Japanese-style house was always present in his design sensibility though, and after some time, his work became radically modern.

**Despite weathering and the general wear and tear on the built environment, Ossipoff's work is holding up well. What do you attribute this to?**

While Ossipoff was designing in the spirit of the international style, he also wanted to make it clear that his was a different kind of modernism. His was a regional architecture responsive to the particularities of the place. A good example is how in most of his projects he designed deep overhangs that protect his buildings from rain and strong sunlight. Ideas like this connect with the conditions of Hawaii and have upheld the aesthetics and function of his projects over time.



Long overhangs and deep shadows of the Goodsell House. Photo by Victoria Sambunaris

Ossipoff is known for bringing the indigenous lanai—an open-sided, post and beam, lightly roofed structure—from residential applications to larger-scale civic projects. How have these spaces performed over time?

Reinterpreting the lanai into modern design might be his greatest contribution to Hawaiian architecture. It blends in with nature rather than trying to dominate it. His most well-known lanai on Oahu is at Honolulu's Daniel K. Inouye International Airport, which Ossipoff modernized in the '70s. However, his best example is most likely at the Blanche Hill House built in 1961, where the client told Os-

sipoff that she wanted a lanai to live in. The collection of lanais designed into the Outrigger Canoe Club is also a particularly good example. The Outrigger Club exists to perpetuate the Hawaiian water sports of paddling and surfing, and the lanais create excellent spaces for gathering.

Ossipoff understood the subtle considerations regarding the design of lanais. Because they are open to the weather, they inform the materials around them, such as the adjacent floors. The structures also continue to perform well as Ossipoff understood the trade winds and the daily weather patterns.

**What did sustainable design look like in Ossipoff's eyes?**

He was very responsive not only to environmental issues but the politics of the time. In the '70s, when the oil crisis became a household concern, Ossipoff decried the presumptive need for air conditioners and designed natural ventilation into his projects where possible. He predicted an energy crisis and was adamant about looking at natural solutions before mechanical ones. This thinking informed his design philosophy.

**Can you speak to the importance of darkness in Ossipoff's work?**

Ossipoff was a master of darkness and air. In the West, we always think about the quality of light, but in Japanese culture, darkness is equally important. It would seem that he was aware of the writing of Japanese author Junichiro Tanizaki, who published the novella *In Praise of Shadows* in 1933. Like Tanizaki, Ossipoff appreciated that the natural material of something could be better understood in the shadows, as opposed to putting lacquer over it and exposing it to direct sunlight. Its richness becomes visible in the shadows.

**Can you speak a bit about Ossipoff's concern with large-scale development?**

When Ossipoff arrived in 1931, there was very little development on Oahu. There were no real zoning codes there until 1967, and as development began, he and many other architects felt like they needed more control over the type and

quality of work that was occurring. It was around 1964, when he was elected president of AIA Hawaii, that Ossipoff began what he termed his “war on ugliness.”

When Hawaii became a state in 1959, the first Boeing 707 full of tourists landed almost simultaneously. Up until that point, during the Territorial era, Hawaii was an exclusive destination for wealthy people with the time to travel by ship, but with the jet age of tourism, Hawaii (Waikiki Beach in particular) became a budget vacation spot. At that time, anyone who owned a piece of land on Waikiki could put up a hotel, and many of the architects and developers on the island

Ossipoff was a master of darkness and air.

seized the opportunity to capitalize on the new demand for budget holiday accommodations.

The “war on ugliness” you mention indicates Ossipoff’s struggle to counter what he felt was poor design and the unrestricted development of Honolulu. How is the battle going?

Ossipoff would say that with regulation you still need design. Design requires taste and skill that not every architect has.

This is one of the reasons that I became interested in putting together the exhibit, book, and film on Ossipoff—he’s

the protagonist of the Hawaiian modern project. Every time I would come back to Oahu after living abroad, it seemed so odd to me that we have such a beautiful natural environment here, but the built environment is such a contradiction.

What is the most important aspect of Ossipoff’s work that visitors to the island should take away?

Architecture is a product of its time, place, and culture. There is also a productive balance of push and pull between an architect and client. Architecture can complement its environment—it doesn’t have to be invisible or dominate. §

Living room of the Liljestrand House overlooking Honolulu below. Photo by Bob Liljestrand



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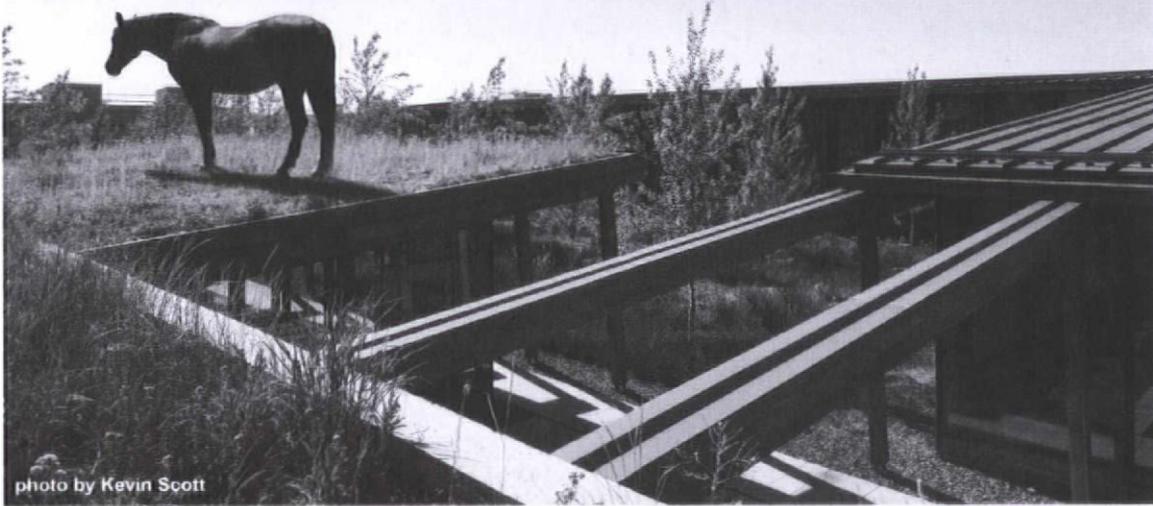


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# Mapping the Policy Landscape

Visualizing Nutrition Regulations in Early Childhood Care and Education

BY JENNIFER J. OTTEN AND TAD HIRSCH  
Information graphic by Chad P. Hall,  
Tad Hirsch, and Jennifer J. Otten

In recent years US federal, state, and local governments have been increasing focus on developing and refining policies to improve the nutritional health of young children enrolled in child care. Yet little attention has been devoted to understanding the complex ways in which regulatory structures already affect child care food practices. In Washington State policy makers, public health agencies, child care professionals, and other stakeholders are driving discussions about how early childhood care and education (ECE) providers are experiencing and implementing a complicated array of nutritional policies. With Chad P. Hall, we designed the information graphic on the following pages to map the layers of federal, state, and local nutrition-related policies that Washington State child care providers must navigate.

## UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

Young children establish many dietary behaviors before they reach kindergarten, with taste preferences largely formed by

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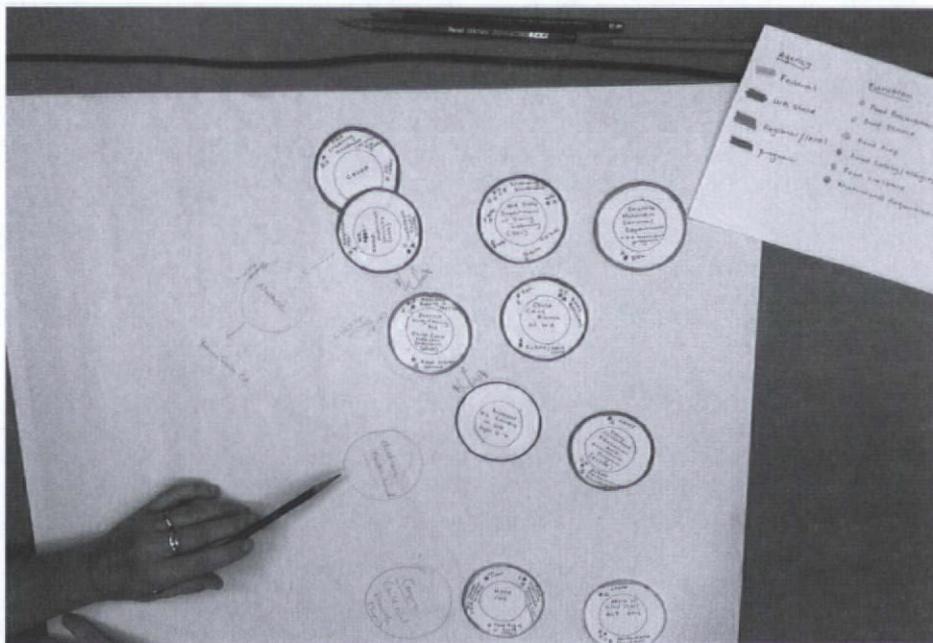
**Chad P. Hall** is a graduate of the M.Design program at the University of Washington Division of Design (2016) and a senior designer at Cognition Studio in Seattle.

This work was supported by the University of Washington Royalty Research Fund no. A88593 and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation via Healthy Eating Research.

age five. In a report titled *Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements*, the Census Bureau states that over the past 30 years, early childhood care and education settings have become major, if not primary, learning and eating environments for an estimated 11 million children under age five in the US. A 2011 American Dietetic Association position paper *Benchmarks for Nutrition in Child Care* estimates that young children enrolled in ECE receive up to two-thirds of their daily nutrition in these environments.

States vary markedly in the ways they regulate nutrition in licensed child care settings. Due to overlapping policy programs, they may inadvertently establish

regulations that contradict each other. For example, the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regulates and reimburses for food served in ECE settings. It is an important policy lever for improving the nutritional quality of food in child care environments, and states often apply enhanced (CACFP) standards or offer incentives for participation in the program. In addition, recently the federal government has also provided states with new Child Care and Development Block Grants, which fund child care subsidies for low-income working families. When states use these block grants, they may require child care providers that receive these funds to adhere to additional nutritional criteria



During a design session, a participant diagrams policies that influence nutrition in ECE. Photo by Jennifer J. Otten

Policy visualizations are needed to illustrate the system's complexity and enable strategic decision making.

or policies. Often the nutrition standards established through the block grants are inconsistent with CACFP's. Providers are tasked with sorting through and managing these policies, regulations, and programs.

Those trying to improve ECE nutrition often do not realize how complicated the regulations currently are, how policies overlap, or how the improvement of one policy or standard might affect another. Policy visualizations are needed to illustrate the system's complexity and enable strategic decision making.

#### MAPPING POLICIES TO VISUALIZE SOLUTIONS

A wide array of people and groups have interest in or are affected by ECE nutritional regulations, including public agencies, advocacy groups, professional organizations, parents and families, service providers and educators, healthcare practitioners, and more. The following visual-

ization helps these stakeholders understand and communicate how regulatory complexity affects

ECE nutrition. Policy visualizations such as this can serve as centerpieces for discussions among these stakeholders and starting points for considering the system as a whole.

To create this information graphic, we conducted participatory design sessions with child care providers, representatives of local and state public health agencies, and state early learning agencies. In early sessions, participants drew diagrams that illustrated their understanding of the regulatory policies that influence nutrition at ECE centers. These diagrams—which varied widely—were compared with our own research about ECE policies (i.e., the policies themselves; peer-reviewed manuscripts; online federal, state, or local materials; and documents such as white papers or technical reports). We then created several “policy maps” that depicted

relationships between agencies, policies, funding, and child care centers and held focus groups where we presented initial drafts to stakeholders. Participants were asked which maps made the most sense, to identify what was wrong or missing in the maps, and to describe with whom or in what ways they might use them. Based on their feedback, we created a refined information graphic, which was then circulated via email back to the stakeholder group for additional comments or edits.

While no doubt incomplete, the visualization that emerged seems to offer the best available picture of the institutions, policies, and resources that influence child care food service. Through our work, it has become clear that no individual or group seems to have a full grasp of all the relevant policies, and that even among experts there is not a single shared understanding. Our hope is that visualizations like this can facilitate dialogue among stakeholders and build capacity for change. §

Sources for “Mapping Washington State's Child Care Nutrition Policies” (following page):

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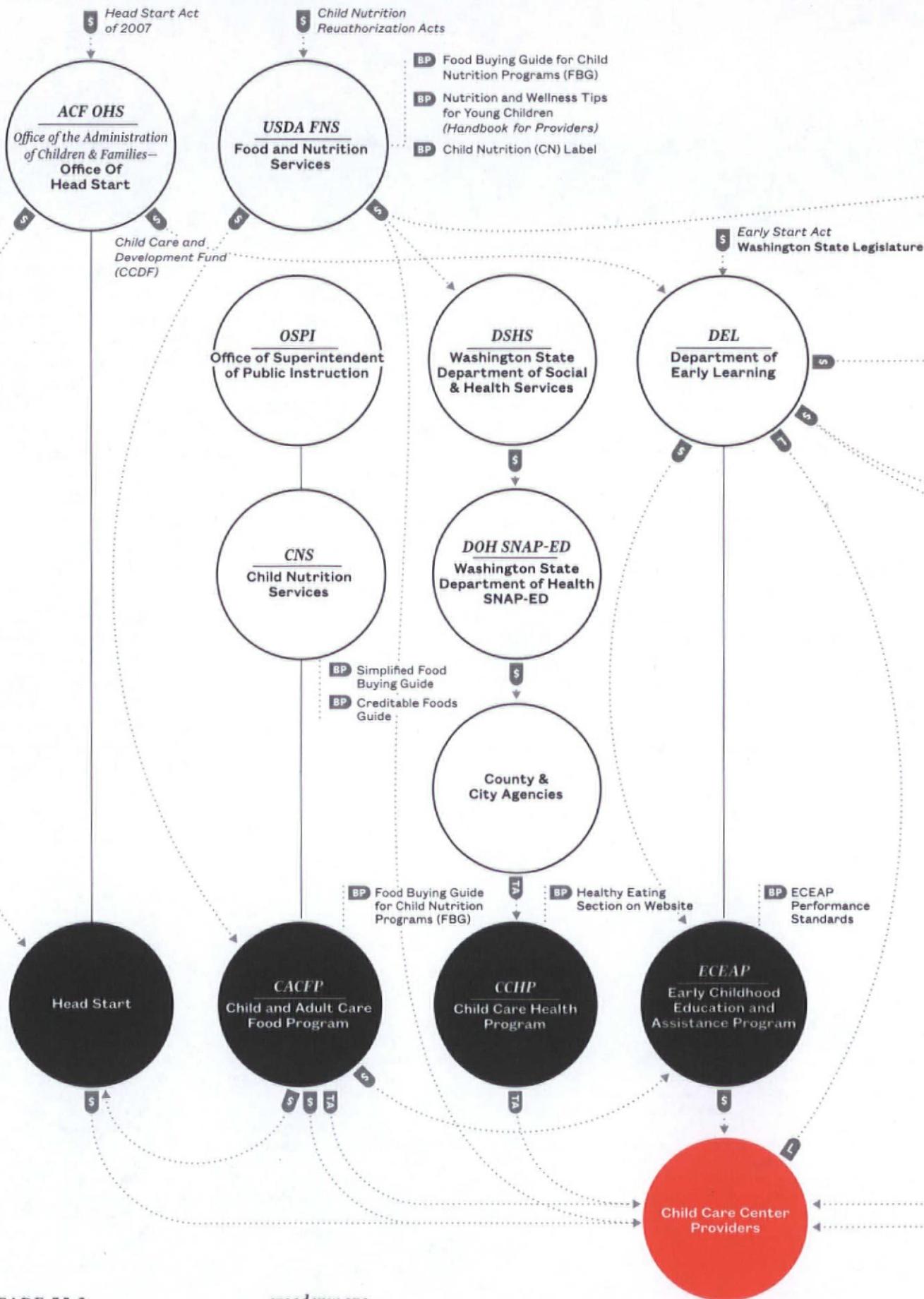
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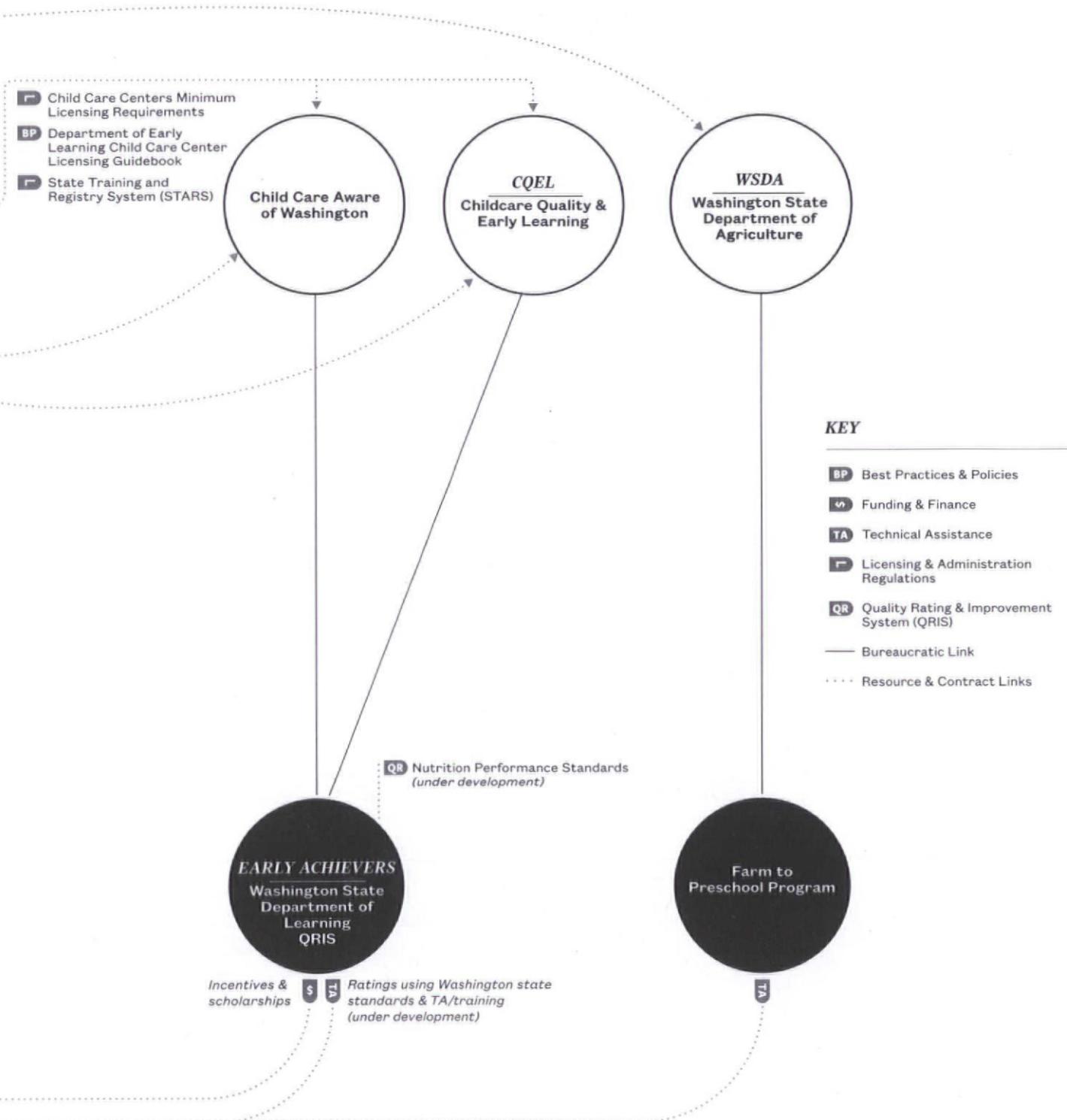
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# Mapping Washington State's Child Care Nutrition Policies



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