

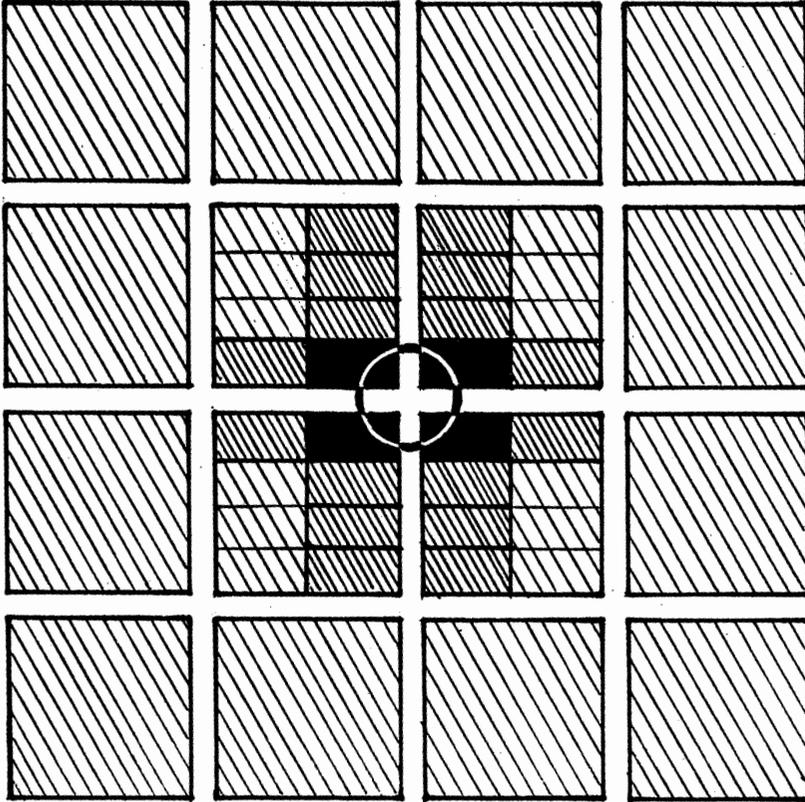
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# Exhibit

# A

● **Exhibit A**

172207



*Intersection Repair  
Community At A Crossroads  
S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett  
March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1998*

*Vision, Guidelines, &  
Decision Making*

**A**

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# The Share-It Square

*"The project is itself a process"*

*Heather Cass, FAIA, Washington D.C.*

*Juror 1997 AIA Design Awards, regarding the  
Intersection Repair Project.*

## Introduction

We the Friends of the Intersection Repair Project proudly submit this document, prepared on behalf of the Sellwood neighbors who initiated the Intersection Repair Project at SE 9th and Sherrett in the fall of 1996, and more recently a larger group of residents of Sellwood who have participated in several meetings to refine the project. Since the September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1997, completion of the six-month Intersection Repair Pilot Project, five public forums have been held. These have included two slide presentations, one public discussion at the site of the project, and two design workshops. The group has identified ways to refine and improve the original concept and to create a decision-making framework to guide the evolving process of community building at and around the site of the Intersection Repair.

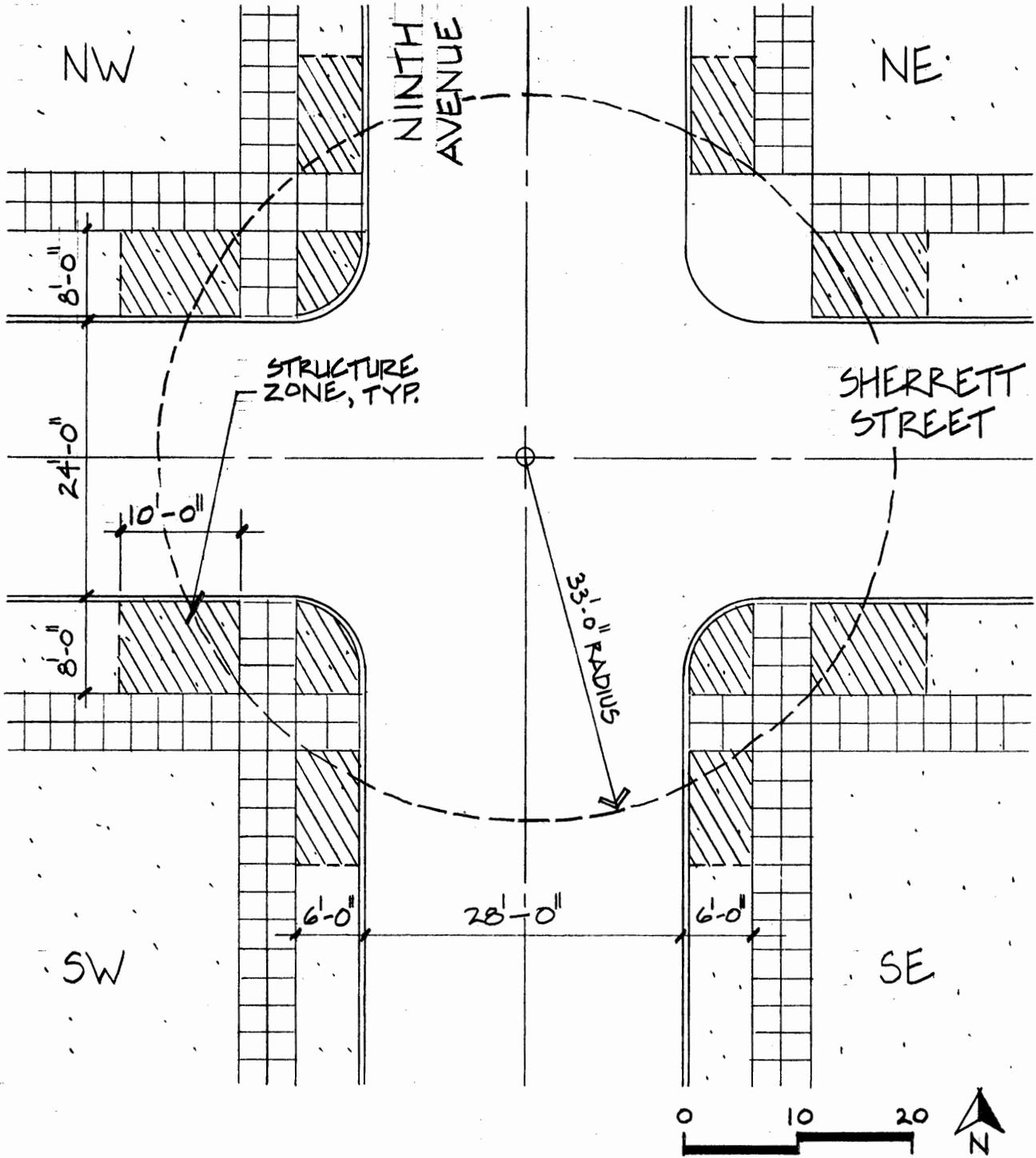
The process of this open dialogue has been offered in order to achieve mutual understanding and, if possible, reach consensus about an urban innovation that asks people to make mutual accommodations for the sake of their community. Our goal is to obtain an indefinite permit for the continued use of the public right-of-way at S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett for a social as well as a transportation function: a neighborhood public square. We also hope that, for the benefit of our fellow neighborhoods and families, this project creates a precedent and establishes guidelines that other suitable locations can adapt to their own circumstances, to create local gathering places with their own character and identity.

Submitted March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1998

Friends of S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> and Sherrett

(Also see Part B: Documentation of project history, neighborhood impact and resulting opportunities & community building projects).

# Site Map, S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett



## Intersection Repair Project

A prototype for conversion of selected street or intersection locations for use as local public squares, to be developed within an innovative process that builds local community. The prototype includes guidelines for:

- understanding the *spatial* structure of participation,
- creating the *social* structure of participation - a responsible council to guide evolution and stewardship, and
- addressing four key issue areas - the creation of a successful public square, safety, aesthetics, and the public process.

The prototype model includes periodic review of the project and reconsideration of its permit status by the Portland City Council.

### **Vision Statement: The Share-It Square**

To recreate the public environment at S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett in order to vitalize neighborhood culture and community by a combination of processes and built environments that:

- Build community by fostering communication, sharing and collaboration.
- Provide a gathering place and neighborhood forum.
- Enhance safety and livability.
- Calm traffic.
- Beautify.
- Provide an adaptable model for suitable locations in other neighborhoods.

Process through the period of the Pilot Project, March 23<sup>rd</sup>-Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>, 1997

As a concept built upon direct personal responsibility, the Intersection Repair Project has established important precedents that will help citizens in other locations to adapt the model for their own use. It has been developed in a cooperative partnership among private individuals gathering for a common cause, neighborhood organizations whose interests it furthers, the Bureau of Transportation Management which oversees the public right-of-way, private insurance companies representing all four corners, and the Mayor and City Council who are empowered to grant permits for innovative community projects.

The pilot project has:

- Reinterpreted the public right-of-way at an appropriate location for a timely public use.
- Established a dynamic, social common space with demonstrated transforming effects.
- Established elements to support the space which represent functions normally present in public squares, such as a café, market, bookstore, seating, information exchange, and other things.
- Been created cooperatively by area residents themselves, developing a local expression that may be considered "indigenous."
- Required no additional insurance monies because surveys in the immediate area have demonstrated that:
  - ◆ 62% of residents perceive an increase in safety and reduction in crime.
  - ◆ 78% perceive that traffic speed has decreased.
  - ◆ 70% perceive that traffic safety in the intersection has increased.
  - ◆ 78% say that communication between neighbors has increased.
  - ◆ 62% say that livability has increased.
  - ◆ 89% say that they are happy with the results of Intersection Repair.
  - ◆ 91% say that visitors' comments are positive.
- The Intersection Repair Project also has provided a local venue for cooperatively created cultural celebrations, the apex events of community life.

## Geographic Setting

### Five levels of Involvement:

The Heart, Core, Perimeter, District & Neighborhood.

During the 5 public discussions held in Sellwood since September, a conceptual spatial model of leadership and participation has been identified which maps the relationships and dynamics which have already emerged at the site of S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett.

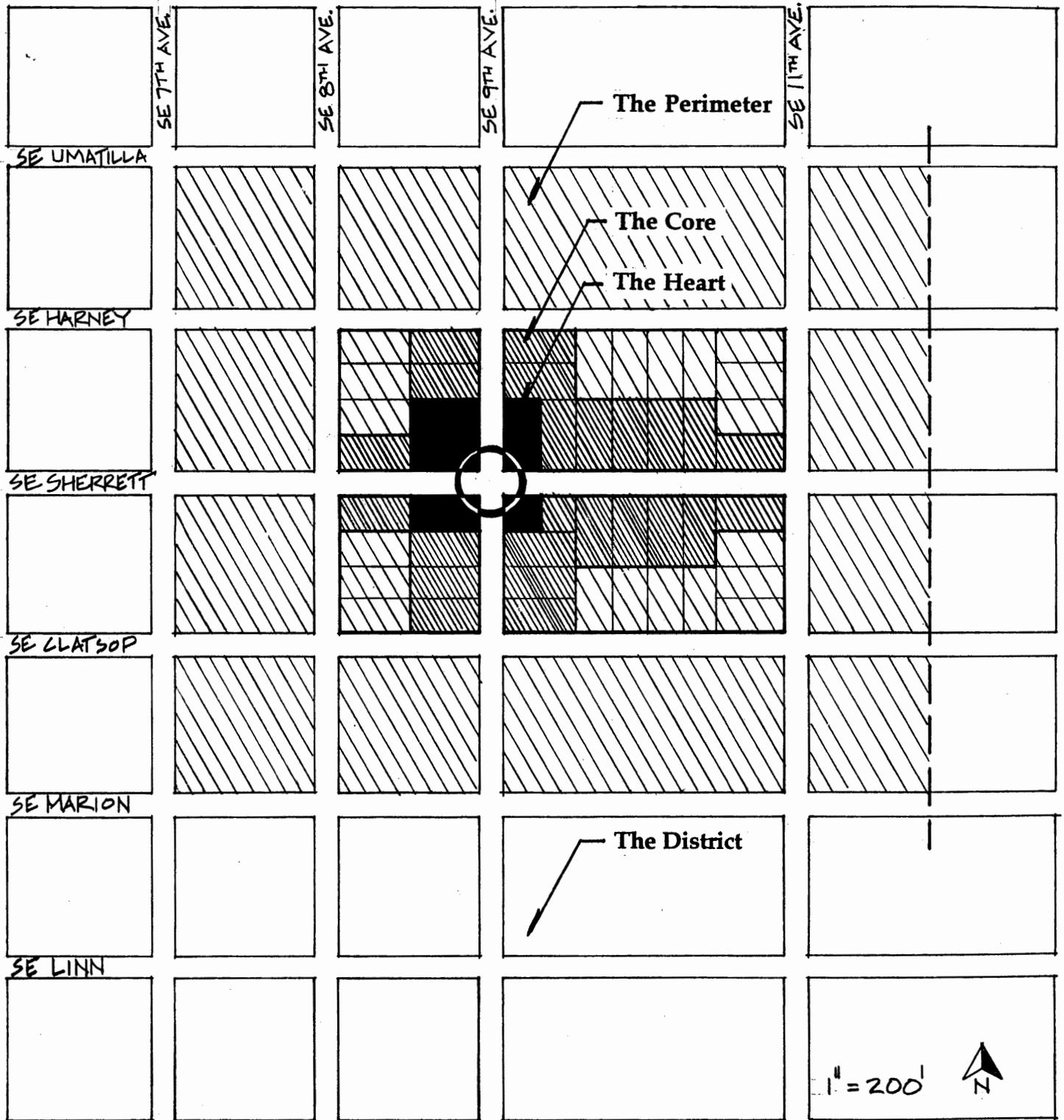
This model has been extended to an overall diagram that establishes the relationship of the square to its larger context within the overall neighborhood. Based on ownership and proximity, responsibility & involvement starts at the four corners defining the site, progressing outward into the larger neighborhood. The map on the following page illustrates a concentric concept, which reflects the general trend of involvement to date.

The most active participants live at or near the site of the public square, but many in the neighborhood also pass through or use the space on a daily basis.

The Five Levels of Involvement are identified as follows:

- The Heart ~ Corner Property owners and residents
- The Core ~ the four blocks around the public square, particularly on the two rights-of-way that intersect at the Heart.
- The Perimeter ~ The Blocks immediately surrounding the four core blocks, typically numbering twelve.
- The District ~ The area within approximately ¼ mile from the intersection, generally corresponding to a five-minute walking distance.
- The Neighborhood ~ The area of the City-recognized neighborhood association within which the public square is to be located.

# Geographic Involvement Map



## The Heart

Consisting of the four corner properties at the project intersection, the owners and residents will have final say and ultimate decision-making authority within the design, construction, and maintenance processes that are developing for the square. This is appropriate because:

- These owner/residents are granting the immediate right-of-way usage for the larger neighborhood,
- They bear the immediate impacts of noise and activity, and
- Their homeowners insurance programs cover liability concerns at the corner in concert with city policy.

They have the right to discontinue their participation for any reason.

The process will involve formation of a citizen group, most likely comprised primarily of residents within the core area, which will form to oversee and direct design, construction, and maintenance issues. All residents and homeowners at the Heart shall have access to all these processes. Decision-making authority and influence will proceed outward from the Heart, located at the center, to the Core of adjacent residents, with access and influence then extending to the Perimeter, the District, and finally the larger Neighborhood.

## The Core

The residents who live along the streets crossing at the Intersection Repair project, in the four blocks immediately surrounding the intersection, make up the Core. To date, these have been the neighbors most involved with the Heart in the development and maintenance of Share-It Square. They will probably also form the primary working groups for the project, with help from people within the perimeter and district.

## The Perimeter

This area surrounds the four-block Core, and will consist of twelve blocks. Many residents in the perimeter already help out and participate. Like the Core, they shall have access to decision-making, and active, creative, and maintenance roles.

## The District

This level surrounds the twelve perimeter blocks and extends a quarter mile from the public square, or approximately a five-minute walk. These residents' perspectives and concerns must be considered in decision making, particularly with respect to driver visibility and safety issues, and aesthetics.

### **The Neighborhood**

This is the area outside a quarter mile radius or a five-minute walk. These residents are least likely to participate regularly, but are welcome to become involved through their commitment of time or resources. Their concerns approximate those of the Perimeter.

### **Friends of Share-it Square**

While Share-It Square is presently supplied, maintained and used primarily by the community located nearest S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett, many of its most active users and supporters also live beyond the core area. Since the geographically-based Five Levels of Involvement only represent conditions spatially, a socially-based Friends of Share-It Square has been established to reflect the existing social structure, which is based on levels of personal commitment rather than location.

The origins of Share-It Square began as a Teahouse gathering place within one hundred feet of the intersection. This was the "jump start" for the social involvement that led to the initial work to establish the Intersection Repair. Throughout the early process, and the legal pilot project, most of the community-building work occurred within the designated Core area. However, during and since that time, many more Sellwood residents have introduced themselves and become actively involved. A structure of leadership and responsibility has developed, which we have named The Friends of Share-It Square. This structure of decision-making and organization will be responsible for project development, maintenance, and communication within the neighborhood and with the bureau of Transportation Management, the Sellwood-Moreland neighborhood association (SMILE), the City Council and the Mayor's office. It relates to, but does not fall exactly into the geographic Levels of Involvement framework, instead attracting from a broader area individuals seeking opportunities for community involvement and cultural creation.

There are 3 levels of involvement in the network that makes up the Friends of Share-It Square. The "Friends" do not include occasional visitors to the square and informal participants in community celebrations.

The three levels of involvement are:

- \* **The Hosts** ~ Corner Property Owners and Residents.
- \* **The Council** ~ The most active residents who, in consultation with the Hosts, oversee daily maintenance, project development, communications, and celebration planning. The Council coordinates the activities of the Stewards.
- \* **The Stewards** ~ Residents who support the project but participate less frequently.

The Network is elaborated as follows:

The Hosts ~ Corner property owners and residents, (See The Heart) who are involved with, or at a minimum consulted in all important decisions, including design developments and event planning. They receive daily assistance from the network of Friends of Share-It Square in maintenance and communication issues. As residents in the Heart, they have final authority in all decisions made with respect to the development and proper use of the square.

The Council ~ Consisting of 3 to 5 persons, these are the most active members of the networked community. Presently consisting of members from the core, perimeter, and district, this body can also include Hosts who live in the Heart. With 'cooperative simplicity' as a goal, these residents work closely with the Hosts, oversee project development, address maintenance concerns, and interface with city agencies, the neighborhood association and the City Council. These responsibilities also include coordination of financial and legal matters, neighborhood communication, and neighborhood outreach for project development and special events. Dissemination of information within the District will be by telephone contacts, flyers, postings at Share-It Square, and via the Sellwood Bee Neighborhood Newspaper. These persons are the points of

contact for the Share-It Square, to be called for information and assistance. Means of succession is by invitation and voluntary involvement.

The Stewards ~ This group consists of residents of the Core, as well as of the perimeter and district, and several from the larger neighborhood. This group supports the square in a number of ways, including active contributions of maintenance, donations, design and construction assistance, event planning, flyering, and support at meetings or by petition signatures. This group is open to anyone who wishes to support and participate in the project.

### Share-It Square Development Guidelines

During the five neighborhood meetings, residents originally involved with the Intersection Repair met with representatives of neighbors to the south who had consistently voiced concerns regarding the project. During these talks, four areas of specific concern were identified. The first is the question, "What constitutes a vital community square?" The second, third, and fourth, Aesthetics, Safety, and Community Process, will help in development of the first.

The following summaries and list of concerns are as stated by representatives from each of the 5 geographic areas. These shall form guidelines for the future development of the square, its architectural parts as they become more refined, and the street surface, which may in the future become another, more permanent treatment such as brick or stone. In this process, all changes in the design and construction of Share-It Square shall be made in coordination with representatives of the Bureau of Transportation Management, with a yearly review by the City Council.

#### The Guideline Summaries:

##### 1) A Public Square: Characteristics of a Successful Place.

A public square occurs at the crossing of active, daily trodden pathways. It occurs in the midst of community, acting as a focal point of activity and as a social destination. The flow of movement into the space, whether by

car or foot, gives the space its vitality. This pattern and mixture occurs all over the world where city, village and neighborhood squares exist, so it is possible in advance to see examples of this cooperation already in place. Other aspects and elements of a successful square are:

- ✧ An open space, interesting and rich in design, around which functions are clustered, usually in buildings that attract people to the space.
- ✧ A place to obtain food or drink, such as a café.
- ✧ Seating for passive observation and/or conversation.
- ✧ Shelter; places to sit protected from the elements.
- ✧ Places to obtain goods or services, to obtain or leave information.
- ✧ The culturally uplifting presence of artwork, as expressed through architecture or as freestanding objects. This offers a means, called "triangulation," for people to meet and interact in relation to an object, subject, or event of interest.
- ✧ Water features, which may be man-made sculptural elements or water fountains; natural elements such as rivers, creeks, or ponds; or even symbolic representations of water. (Indeed, water features bear reference to watering places that naturally cause people to converge.)
- ✧ Places of historical or cultural merit or instruction.
- ✧ Periodic or spontaneous locally inspired and created cultural celebrations.
- ✧ A primarily informal atmosphere that varies seasonally.
- ✧ Structures built of durable materials with interesting and sometimes humorous aspects.

These features contribute to the essential functions that facilitate community building itself, especially when located in the midst of an environment where people live. In this way, people naturally interact, come to know, and want to help their neighbors.

The functional objects now located at the SE 9th & Sherrett intersection modestly approximate these functions. Constructed of natural and recycled materials, they have demonstrated an ethic of material efficiency and reuse, and also represent an appreciation for natural forms by echoing the forms of other freestanding elements at the site, notably trees. In the

process of further development these elements can be refined and changed, to be more permanent in nature.

## 2) Aesthetics

To attract people and support activity, a public square should convey a sense of identity with the people who use it. This is best accomplished when local people are able to imprint their personal creativity upon the space. This ensures that, from the beginning, people take possession of, care about, and use the place. Therefore it is important the intersection at S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett be able to develop in ways that enhance its uniqueness as a place. Some aesthetic aspects of successful public squares, which will characterize S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett, include:

- ✧ A local character unique to and created by the inhabitants of the place.
- ✧ An artistic emphasis that harmonizes with surrounding built and natural features.
- ✧ A sense of permanence that projects an atmosphere of stability and security for the people living in and around the space.
- ✧ Subtle and overt expressions of community goodwill, by artistic, practical, or other social means.

The evolution of S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett will occur through a process of communication, use, trial and error, and the building of mutual understanding and relationships as well as of physical, literal structures. The objectives of a community spirit need not seem at odds with real estate development interests and real property values. In fact, several families have purchased homes in Sellwood in order to locate near the public square at S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett.

## 3) Safety

A public square is a place of safety. Located at the heart of the community, people can go to the square to find other people, to use the space where others can see them, to linger or read knowing they will be safe. Communities care a great deal about their public squares, for squares

symbolize people in community together. A place where everyone belongs- a place of meeting and communication- is the beginning of a deeper sense of community. A place of such value deserves and invites respect from people: for the place, and for each other.

At S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett, people pass through by walking, riding a bike, and by driving. These activities have already been carefully accommodated, and the intersection can be made even safer. During the public discussions in Sellwood, we have identified the following safety points for continued development:

- ❑ Increase communication within the neighborhood, particularly regarding the goals and intentions of the Intersection Repair Project.
- ❑ Post signage that more clearly notifies motorists that the Intersection has a strong “people” orientation as well as a traffic function.
- ❑ Possibly implement additional strategies for traffic calming, including curb extensions, stop signs, or speed bumps, if appropriate and in consultation with Portland Department of Transportation staff.
- ❑ Ensure that motorists have sufficient visibility when they are approaching the intersection so they are able to see people and vehicles if they are present. For this reason, the corner objects should continue to be “transparent” in design; that is, offering views around and through them to enable motorists to detect people, vehicles, or other objects that may be behind them.
- ❑ Just as drivers need to be cognizant that pedestrians have the right of way, pedestrians should not use the public square without regard to motorists. Children in particular need to be taught how to be safe while around or crossing through the public square.
- ❑ Maintain clear graphics that delineate the extent of the people-space, and that also work to slow traffic by adapting crosswalk graphics into the design.

#### 4) Process

Consultation and broad neighborhood participation are essential. The public square represents the community creating itself.

From its beginnings, the Intersection Repair concept has been a "pulling up by the bootstraps" process by the S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett community, for itself and the benefit of others. As of March 19<sup>th</sup>, 1997, when it became a pilot project, conceptual parameters were established to guide the development of the place-making, traffic-calming street graphics and the stations located on the corners of the intersection. These parameters are general and flexible in nature, allowing the project's development and construction to include adults, seniors and children who initially had minimal experience in design or the use of tools. This has also facilitated the expression of an aesthetic that is indigenous and responsive to core residents who participated, thereby establishing their strong identification with a space-in-common.

The goal of the work has been to create a Heart For Community by weaving together functional objects at a key functional place of gathering: the intersection of pathways. So far, the street graphic design has proven effective in slowing traffic, especially for those residents who travel from the perimeter area, and the functional structures have served to inspire much communication and social interaction.

As established in the Pilot Project, no structural elements in the future shall be designed so that they would require permits. They shall be "transparent" in nature so as to not unduly obstruct traffic views. Consistent with obtaining an indefinite permit, the project should develop a more permanent aesthetic in order to alleviate concerns regarding property values. As the Intersection Repair matures, Share-It Square will continue to meet or exceed its Vision Statement and Goals, as inspired by the following Geographic Area Guideline Lists:

The Heart-Specific Concerns. The concerns of residents at the Heart include those of all the surrounding areas. In addition:

- ❑ This is their "front porch;" visitors must respect noise considerations at all hours.
- ❑ A decision-making and action taking body needs to be formed to oversee the evolving design, construction, and ongoing maintenance of the square. This body will include residents from outside the Heart, primarily from within the Core.
- ❑ As hosts, residents of the Heart should be entrusted with the primary vision of the place, its aesthetics and its features.

- ❑ Motorists respect the social aspects of the square and slow accordingly
- ❑ That other locations develop so that 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett not be an anomaly for hordes of the curious.

The Core-Specific Concerns. The concerns of residents at the Core include those of all the surrounding areas, plus:

- ❑ Respect for privacy
- ❑ Enhance and develop intimacy in relation to the square.
- ❑ Ability to self-manage Core area
- ❑ Noise control during normal use.
- ❑ To always have access to the common space.
- ❑ Motorists reduce speeds to proper, respectful levels, and recognize the needs of people living at the Heart and Core.

The Perimeter-Specific Concerns. The concerns of residents at the Perimeter include those of all the surrounding areas, plus:

- ❑ Involvement in design, construction, and maintenance activities.
- ❑ That the Square be safe, beautiful, and inviting.
- ❑ The Perimeter shares with the Heart, Core, District, and Neighborhood the concerns that we all maintain proper noise levels, traffic speed, pick up litter, and help each other address crime and safety issues.

The District-Specific Concerns: (which includes neighborhood concerns)

- ❑ Visibility and safety for motorists be considered in the process of design and construction of corner objects on the site.
- ❑ Street graphics assist and encourage an understanding of proper motorist and pedestrian behavior on the site.
- ❑ Pedestrian activities not endanger people or motorists.
- ❑ District residents receive notification of events and activities in order to be able to participate.
- ❑ District residents should feel welcome to participate in the square and feel part of the common space.
- ❑ Long-term maintenance and upkeep be assured.
- ❑ The project not grows beyond certain boundaries.

- The question, "What are the rules for use, and how do people know them?" are addressed.
- Management and financial responsibility be a shared burden, with district residents able to help, and know how they can help.
- An emphasis on inclusion, with concerns for property values and aesthetics.

## Endorsements

Friends of Share-It Square

### Council Members

Mark Lakeman	8512 S.E. 8 <sup>th</sup>	230.1293
Robert Jones	814 S.E. Sherrett	231.7544
Ann Callanan Madden	8525 S.E. 11 <sup>th</sup>	736.1309
Dan & Helen Burke	945 S.E. Sherrett	232.6640

### Hosts

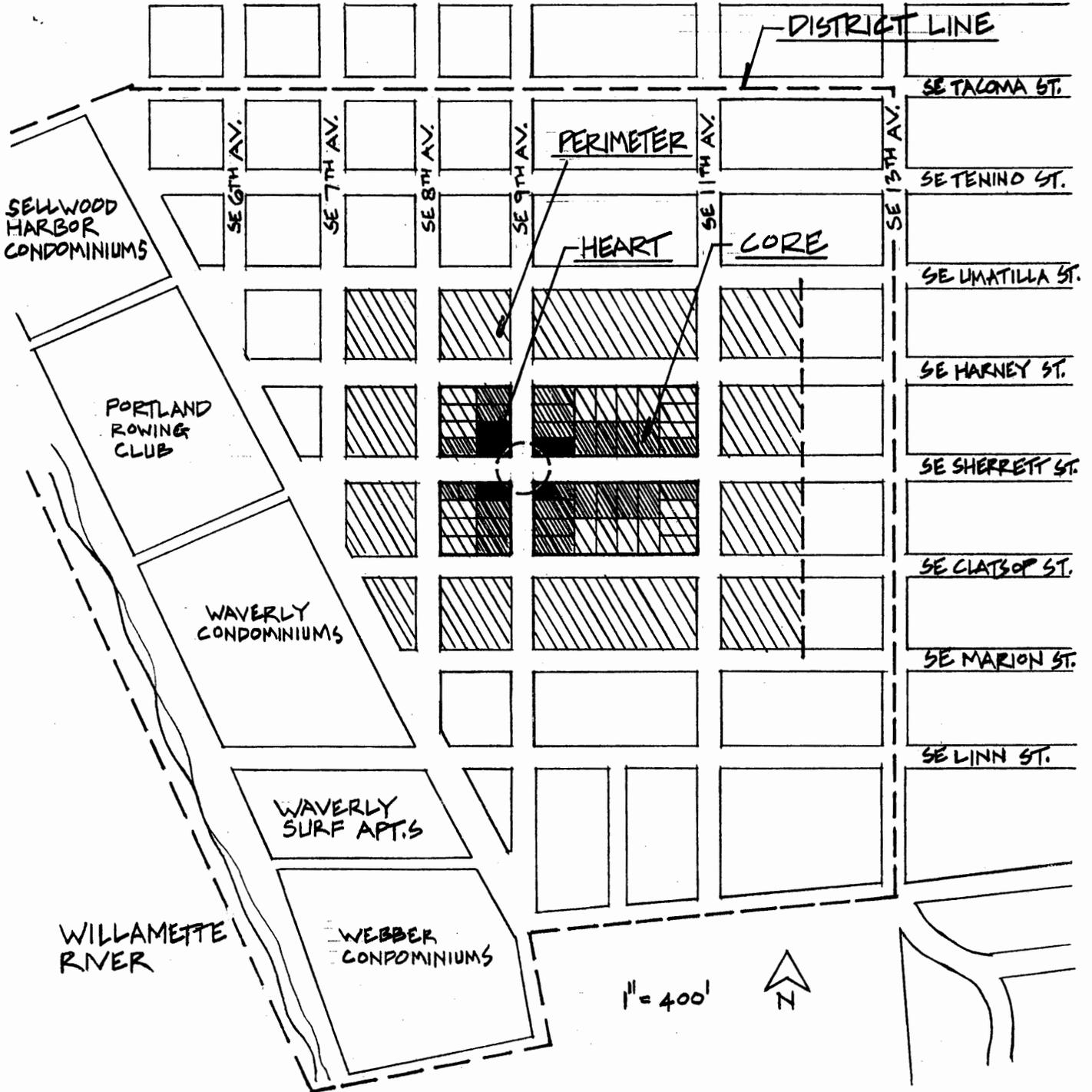
Annmarie Wright	8503 S.E. 9 <sup>th</sup>	235.3874
Megan Terwillegar	8423 S.E. 9 <sup>th</sup>	235.1860
Steve Reily	909 S.E. Sherrett	233.7969
Brian, Jeri and Jason Shaw	8504 S.E. 9 <sup>th</sup>	238.4514
Vern Van Horn	Owner of: 909 S.E. Sherrett	
Don Kingborough	19380 S. Nixon Ave, W.Linn 97068 Owner of: 8503 S.E. 9th	636-2514

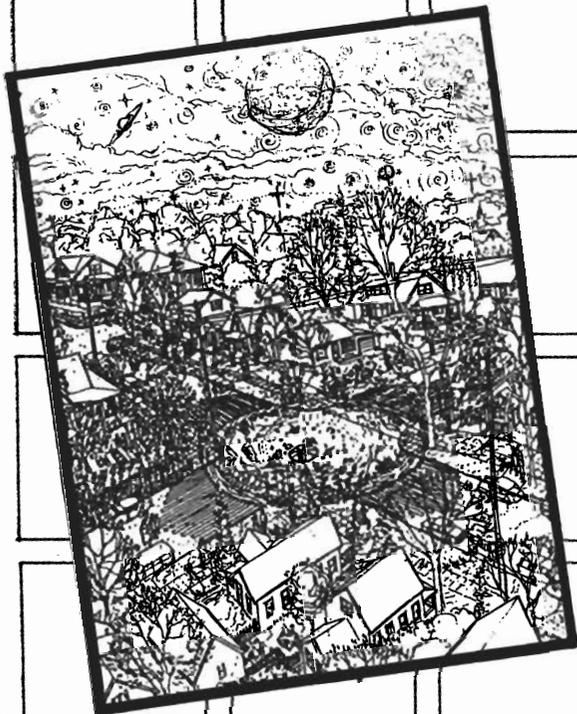
### Stewards

Elisabeth Beale, James, Morgan, Lilly Hynson	8511 S.E. 9 <sup>th</sup>	232.9959
Meredith Burke	945 S.E. Sherrett	232.6640
Mark Griswold Wilson	1123 S.E. Harney	236-2366
Mike & Sandy Stone	600 S.E. Marrion	232-1859
Michael D'Angelo	1016 S.E. Umatilla	233.7916
Janet Nikkari	8512 S.E. 8 <sup>th</sup>	230.1293
Mary Avalon	8512 S.E. 8 <sup>th</sup>	230.1293
Ann Callanan Madden	8525 S.E. 11 <sup>th</sup>	736.1309
Belinda Koski	1122 S.E. Sherrett	239.7962
Nora Hooker	1016 S.E. Umatilla	233.7916
Kevin Condron	1016 S.E. Umatilla	233.7916
Gretchen Mahlberg	8423 S.E. Sherrett	235.1860
Thomas Lannom	923 S.E. 9 <sup>th</sup>	230.0833
Jorge Martinez	923 S.E. 9 <sup>th</sup>	230.0833
Bill Gollihur	923 S.E. 9 <sup>th</sup>	230.0833
Emily Bridewell	8007 S.E. 16 <sup>th</sup>	

Sheila Strachan	8633 S.E. 11 <sup>th</sup>	239.7716
David Collins	8633 S.E. 11 <sup>th</sup>	239.7716
Donald, Linda, Tyler, Logan Danenger	1553 S.E. Clatsop	234.0454
Dan, Helen, Sioban, Tim Burke	945 S.E. Sherrett	232.6640
Paul, Shirley, Emily Montgomery	935 S.E. Sherrett	235.3730
John Henry and Zack	1021 S.E. Sherrett	
Heather Olsen	1014 S.E. Sherrett	
Joel Wilson	1014 S.E. Sherrett	
Maxine Schwartz	8325 S.E. 11 <sup>th</sup>	231.0478
Lee Leighton	6113 S.E. 17 <sup>th</sup>	238.1675
Maureen Quinn	1556 S.E. Malden	
Jerri England	1005 S.E. Marion	233.1108
Dave Christensen	639-B S.E. Linn	233.3979
Susanna Marriner	1123 S.E. Harney	236.2366
Mark Wilson	1123 S.E. Harney	236.2366
Robert, Sharon, Cheyenne Jones	814 S.E. Sherrett	231.7544
Suzie Zeigler	8504 S.E. Sherrett	233.8986
Damon Ogden	8504 S.E. Sherrett	233.8986
Mary Hearth	8525 S.E. 9 <sup>th</sup>	
Natasha Stevens	8736 S.E. 9 <sup>th</sup>	
Susanna Marriner		

# Map of Share-It Square District Extent





*Intersection Repair*  
*Community At A Crossroads*  
*S.E. 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett*  
*March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1998*

*History of a Process*

**B**

# **The Intersection Repair**

## **Pilot Project Report**



March 23 - September 23, 1997

Presented by the Sellwood Neighborhood at SE 9<sup>th</sup> & Sherrett

*"This is not a time of grandiose projects. Our job  
is to create jobs, build affordable housing and  
make neighborhoods vibrant with little in the way of resources."*

*-Mayor Vera Katz*

*All the work  
on behalf of the Intersection Repair  
is dedicated to every person who helped  
make Pioneer Courthouse Square  
more than a dream.*

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<b>*Also see attached packet for petitions, letters &amp; articles</b>	

## **Introduction: The Value of Place**

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Just what is a place to live?

A "place" for living is somehow distinct and memorable, describable and humane.

For people, the best and most livable places are comfortable, simple, safe, and available. For a city to be a place to live, these characteristics must form, and exist in, all of the places where our families live, work, and play. Historically speaking, **for these qualities to be present, people must participate in the making of their own landscape.**

Sixty years ago, a majority of Americans participated directly in the creation of their home-places. Now, more than 95% of all "homes" are built by speculator companies. As our society has become more specialized, the growing scale of urban life seems to have exceeded our individual capacity to comprehend. As James Howard Kunstler has observed, "The culture of good place-making, like the culture of farming or agriculture, is a body of knowledge and acquired skills. It is not bred in the bone, and if it is not transmitted from one generation to the next, it is lost." So it seems, that in our placeless landscape, we may already have forgotten how to make a habitat for ourselves - a place to live.

We know from our history that enduring human culture forms its architecture around places of gathering - places which are distinct, humane, safe, and available. These are places in common, and we lack them in the vast "placeless" residential zones of our cities. The sub-division of the typical American city into compartments of commerce, residential, and industrial zones has made our nation an industrial giant, but at the same time it has unwoven our communities. With the omission of public squares, the effects of this compartmentalization are now unweaving even our families and our individual selves.

If we are to "build community", we should build it to last. Scheduled meetings and activities at community centers, public assistance programs, or block parties, do not compensate for the absence of public squares. Community health and sustained cultural expression require a continuous common presence and flow of life which local public squares provide. It is in these places that culture teaches the young by example. If people create this space together, where they live, and have responsibility for it, seeds of recovery will root. They will have a place for interaction in their midst.

## Overview & Goals

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Two years have passed since the opening of the Sellwood T-Hows project. Much growth has occurred since that time, for residents of Sellwood, and also for many people in the larger city. Awareness has been rising about the need communities have for open, non-exclusive gathering places, and the need that individuals have to be a part of a group or culture that makes sense to them. These are good things.

The proponents of this process, through the work of the T-Hows, Intersection Repair, and T-Horse projects, are also learning a great deal. The awareness that our landscape was laid out and claimed so quickly, that social dynamics had little chance to physically establish common communication nodes, casts a new spectrum of light on our city's condition as a whole. We may ask: Is there a connection between our "placeless" landscape and our shared sense of isolation? Is our lack of community gathering places reflected in our crime rates, which are many times greater than in comparable industrialized nations with such gathering places? It is time to stop pondering these questions, to become personally involved and to act.

*But how will we become involved?*

This isolation is virtually bred in Americans now. We are used to it, and we see ourselves as separate, in competition, though we must cooperate in order to accomplish almost everything we do. Perhaps we need another emphasis.

A public square emphasizes community values by making a place for community. Though it is human nature to begin villages, towns and cities by first establishing common spaces, within grid-cities this tendency is almost always frustrated. This is because the grid is laid down at once, establishing an order that is not necessarily responsive to human nature, or to nature itself. In grids, always used as a colonial or expansion plan, the landscape is flattened, streams are subsumed, and a placeless order is established which historically omits neighborhood public squares.

If it is human nature to plan cultural roots around local gathering places, then clearly our human nature is frustrated without them. Proximity is everything. In order to know one's neighbors, there must be a social place close by where you can meet, that can be identified with, where you can linger for free, in order to know and to care about each other. If such places can be retroactively installed in the places where we live, where they are presently absent, our human natures will again respond, in spite of how much we have "forgotten".

How will we do this when the geometries of law and land, and our separated lives, have excluded so many creative possibilities? In some places more things are

becoming possible. In Portland, we are leaders of urban innovation: other cities look to us for inspiration and help. In our city, we have exceeded a critical mass of creative will and courage necessary to transcend lines and structures of division, which are frustrating us. The progress of the Intersection Repair, a conceptual project, is yet more proof that, from neighborhoods to our city leadership, we are ready for a more creative future.

The overall goal of the project called City Repair is to sprinkle seeds of ideas that Portland is already prepared for, in order to inspire more ideas, excitement, and a sense of possibility and to activate the sea of creative human potential all around us. If the urgency of social and environmental issues overwhelms us individually, perhaps creative visions of possibility can be another way, by inspiring us to begin by making places to come together.

We need everyone! Each person holds a piece of what it is we need to do to step beyond problems, issues and management, and into possibility. We need flexibility and energy, imagination and patience, we need to expand our ways of seeing and thinking.

Perhaps by envisioning and taking steps toward our potential we may at the same time transcend our problems. The Intersection Repair represents a step along this path.

*"The battle for Quality is won or lost at the small scale"*

*-Jan Gehl, Life Between Buildings*

## T-Hows (Tea House)

### *Neighborhood Gathering Place & Recycled Materials Demonstration Project*

Temporary permit: March 21 - September 21, 1996

#### Overview

The Goal: to build and provide a safe neighborhood gathering place without fees, spoken themes, or expectations.

Built during the Winter of 1995-96, the Sellwood T-Hows (Tea House) opened the first day of Spring, 1996. Made of natural and recycled materials, it was about the size of a small house, and might be described as a tree-house on the ground. Natural wood from alder trees was used to weave a framework of walls and ceilings, and stone pathways wound throughout. Each of the rooms that clustered around the center, contained comfortable candlelit seating and artistic decor. Visitors enjoyed exploring the structure, meeting neighbors, sharing free tea and desserts, and music-making.

#### Process

From March 21<sup>st</sup> to August 19<sup>th</sup>, the T-Hows was open every Monday evening (on the NW corner lot of SE 9<sup>th</sup> and Sherrett). There was regular attendance by numerous Sellwood neighbors, as well as visitors from other communities, states, and countries. Initially attended by a group of 25 friends and neighbors, nightly attendance of the T-Hows reached over 500 people by the time of its closing on August 19<sup>th</sup>.

The T-Hows was a re-introduction of a thing long absent and unavailable, and which perhaps many had felt an unidentifiable longing for: an unregulated place of community and safety. Before it opened, Randy Gragg, Arts & Architecture reporter for The Oregonian, had called it "a restatement of the original hut", or primordial human dwelling structure.

As a whole, the T-Hows structure was meant to subtly replicate a womb-like environment, interpenetrated by living trees, rhododendron bushes, flowers, and vines. The ten rooms were thematically designed to individually represent ten distinct aspects of the human self. In entering the space, people could share with others the re-experience of something we have all previously known within our

mothers: openness, acceptance, safety, and security – before we learned fear and prejudice. With a café-like atmosphere, and no set agenda, each experience for each person was unique.



## **Background**

The concept of a public gathering place is primordial in human history. There are a few simple behavioral patterns, which help the emergence of community, and very successful gathering places are those that support and enhance these patterns: communication and sharing.

The best naturally occurring gathering places are those that occur at a natural confluence of pathways, usually at a water source where there is open space. The most successful human-made public squares and public meeting houses across the world, are those that: A.) provide a constant or frequent presence of beverage and food, and B.) provide an open space where people are free to interact which is not exclusive or dominated by a specific theme.

The Sellwood T-Hows was simply a re-statement of these basic dynamics, in a form and context that was unique, and perhaps appealed most specifically to Portlanders. Much more important than the physical and architectural concepts of the T-Hows, however, are the social and economic concepts.

Based upon the potluck, or Native American "Potlatch" festival, the social and economic basis of the T-Hows was free giving and receiving. Without the presence of money dynamics, the ordinary separation of served and servant is eliminated. It is difficult to describe the sensation of openness to be experience, how human behavior changes so dramatically, and how much easier it is for people to talk with each other for the first time when their environment and economy is based upon mutual acceptance and support.

Concepts like "love of neighbor" form the philosophical foundations of every culture, including our own, but actually tend to scare us when they resurface occasionally. It is important, however, to understand that such themes are actually the active daily modes for many indigenous peoples, and remain with Portlanders still because we too are indigenous to the earth.

It is important to briefly discuss a few examples of such meeting places as they have appeared throughout history, in order to understand their significance as centers and sustainers of community life, and also in order to know why we no longer have these places in our midst.

Because the most vital gathering places arise from the daily activities of people who live in very close contact, today's community centers are difficult to compare. Parks also do not compensate for the absence of dynamic meeting places because they are primarily created for recreation and relief.



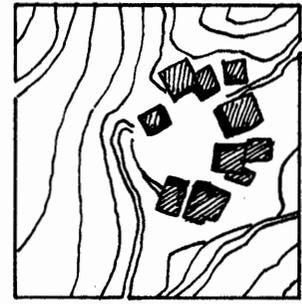
Italian Piazza



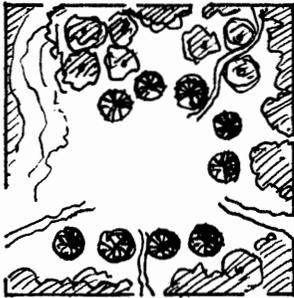
Boston



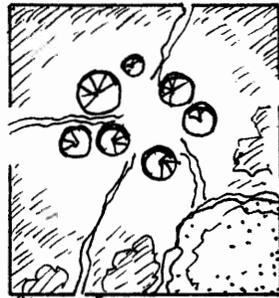
Native American



Tibetan



Hawaiian



Bedouin Nomads



Greek

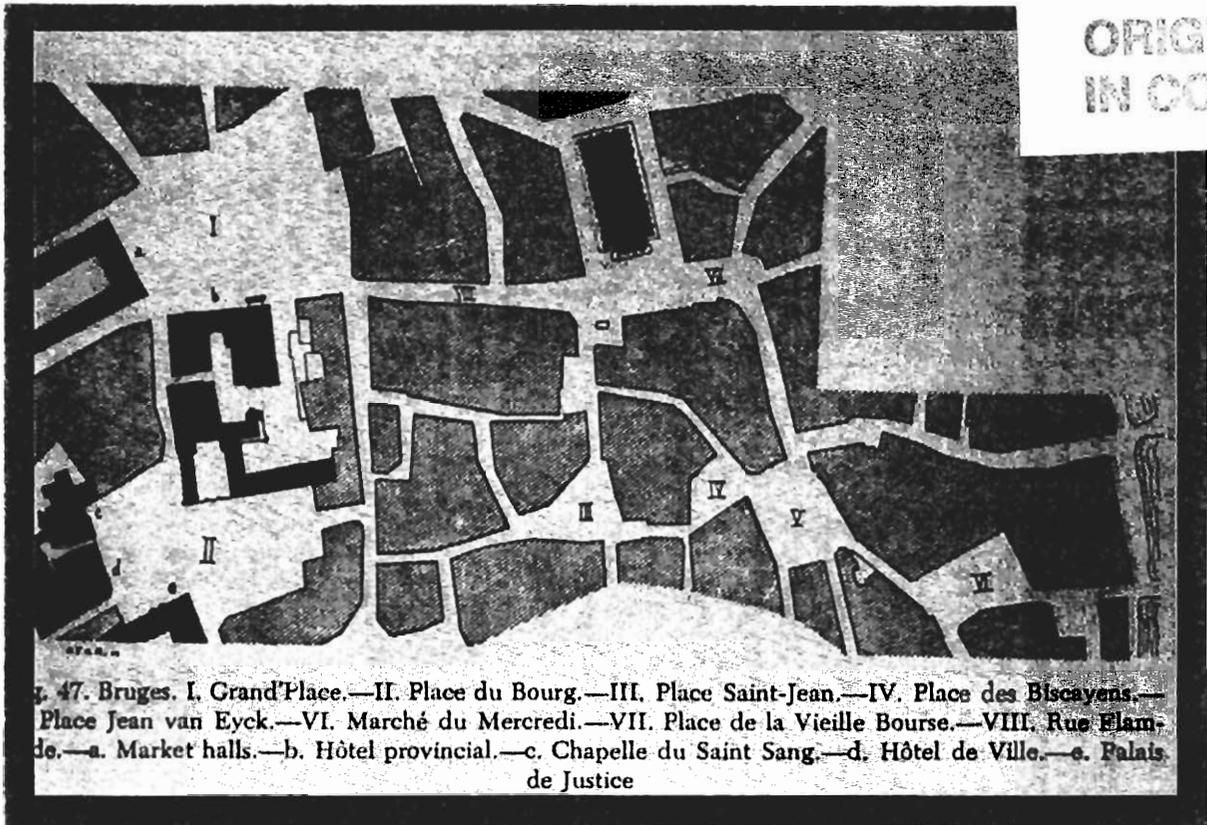


Ethopian Village

The types of gathering places pictured above, represent the most successful places of vital community support, economic exchange, planned and spontaneous celebrations, and other daily life activities. It is inconsequential if these places are permanently imbedded in an urban fabric, such as in an Italian hilltown, or if they are ephemeral structures, such as the temporary circle of teepees, built & un-built by the native tribes of the western plains. What is crucial to the community in every case is that the common space is local and accessible to its users, and not dominated or regulated by an institution external to the community.

Why are such spaces absent now in our communities? The answer lies in history. A simplified explanation is that in the familial history of every person, at one time, a dominant culture subsumed their indigenous community life, usually by force, erasing cultural patterns and destroying essential places of gathering. We know that this is the history of native peoples in the Americas and Africa. What is not yet widely realized is that this is also true for all of us.

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Public squares happen where pathways converge



Neighborhood squares are family places, Piazza in Italy

## **Challenges & Support**

Because the T-Hows was built of non-industrially processed materials, and without a building permit, the Building Bureau was forced to issue a violation notice. (It should be noted that the inspector was apologetic.) After a set of drawings and letters of support from architects and engineers were submitted to the Bureau, a temporary permit was issued that would allow the T-Hows to stand for six months, as a Temporary Recycling Demonstration Project.

News of the T-Hows spread, mostly by word of mouth. Since people already knew how a potluck works, and because there were no thematic strings attached, the T-Hows was readily embraced by nearly all of the neighbors living immediately around the site.

Because of the nature of its design, the T-Hows could accommodate increasing numbers and yet cost nothing additional to operate and maintain. In fact, many people began to assist in various aspects of preparation, including: cleaning, washing dishes, arranging, serving, performance, and errands. Tea and food arrived freely from various sources, usually hand-made, and of a delightful and ever-changing variety.

## **Measuring Progress**

After the T-Hows closed on August 19<sup>th</sup>, the structure was broken into 10 pieces and redistributed (by request) to various neighborhoods around Portland. In October, the T-Hows won an American Institute of Architects "People's Choice" Award.

The T-Hows made a dramatic impact on the neighborhood, and to some extent, the larger city. For some people, it was a mysterious phenomenon that seemed to arise out of a fairytale. Many felt that it helped them remember something distant, comforting, and child-like - which was nearly forgotten. For some, it seemed a threat. No one in the immediate neighborhood was impartial to it. More than a few recognized in it something deeper, that they knew they had been missing in their lives, something called a community gathering place.

The T-Hows was an expression, which resulted from an intense process of travel, study, and experience. Though built primarily by one person, it amounted to a realization that is cumulative, and that has been the work of many people. While the T-Hows was apparently the emergence of something *new*, it was actually the return to our midst of a very ancient, simple, necessary part of life.

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The Heart of the  
Sellwood T-Hows



Last evening of  
the Sellwood T-Hows,  
August 19, 1996



Many new friendships formed, and discussions developed as an awareness grew, probably in everyone, of how simple it might be to sow the seeds of community and of personal transformation. We began to understand, beyond words, that we had been living in isolation, and that a local gathering place had made a great difference in how we now perceived each other. People began to socialize and do projects together. As some of us learned for the first time that each of us is incomplete when separated from community, there arose in the community a desire to have a daily gathering place on common ground, and we had found the will to make one.

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Bringing flowers to the T-Hows



Intersection Repair, September, 1996

*"If Western cities are dying, it is not from too many automobiles or too few housing projects, but because of too little urbanity and too little opportunity for participation."*

*-Sybil Maholy-Nagy, Matrix of Man*

## **Intersection Repair**

### **Neighborhood Public Square & Legal Pilot Project**

**Initiated: September 8, 1996**

**Pilot Project: March 23 - September 23, 1997**

#### **Overview; The Share-It Square**

The Goal: To create a public square and gathering place for neighbors, and reduce the separation and isolation that the Roman military grid engenders.

#### **Process**

Even before the close of the Monday T-Hows, the neighborhood had begun to plant flower gardens on each corner of the intersection at SE 9<sup>th</sup> and Sherrett. The flowers were planted in a way that suggested a large *living circle* connecting the four corners—a circle which would eventually be completed by a colorful, graphic pattern applied to the street surface.

In addition, a functional object was located on each corner, suggestive of functions that are typically found on European Public Squares, such as a café, a vegetable market, or bookshop. The functional objects, built by children, acted for the neighborhood as a café (tea station), market (24-hour produce station), bookshop (24-hour book post), and art school (24-hour chalk station).

Although the objects were mere fragments of what they represented, their presence made an immediate impact on the neighborhood. Where before, the T-Hows had been a once-a-week event, now in the intersection there was a daily presence of a community and exchange. As the T-Hows came to a close, neighbors began to discuss how the intersection could be further transformed.

A number of small meetings were held to discuss the ideas and to talk about the importance of common space. A short, conceptual manifesto was created which briefly stated various issues from the history of the military grid, which forms the basic structure overlaid on Portland (and other cities) as a planning device. In realizing the inherent tendency that the grid has to divide and separate people, the group of neighbors most directly involved, became determined to create a common space, somehow.

## The Risk

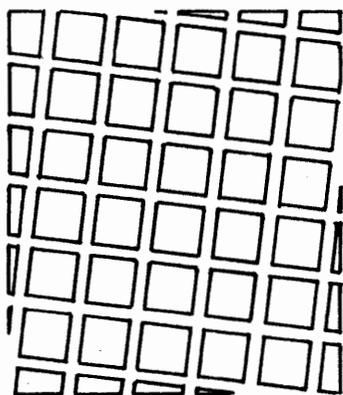
The group identified that public squares inherently occur at the crossing of pathways, or intersections, and that human communities universally originate around common space. After a survey of this simple pattern, it was obvious that in the planning of our community, our public square had been overlooked. The intersection was the obvious location for what would come to be called "Intersection Repair", the return of something very important.

As the concept of Intersection Repair clarified, inquiries were made to the Department of Transportation regarding the idea of a graphic installation. The reply was that the graphic language of traffic signaling is simplified and consistent across the country, and that no variations could be permitted, especially considering liability issues. Despite the absence of public squares, no appeals could be filed or presentations made. "No precedents exist, so it cannot be done."

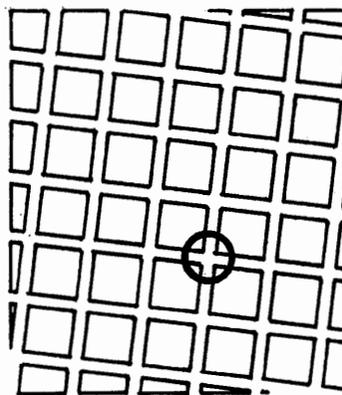
In the neighborhood, it was decided that a creative demonstration had become important if our discovery was to be understood.

Indeed, it was an informed, organic process of discovery, but hardly inconsistent with the current understanding of crises in communities, especially as those crises relate to public space. Books such as "The Geography of Nowhere" by James Howard Kunstler, make powerful observations that the absence of public space, and the dominance of neighborhoods by car-ways actually works to de-construct the very fabric and life of communities. The community at SE 9<sup>th</sup> and Sherrett had found a local issue relevant to a larger scale.

The design of the intersection was refined, and preparations were made to paint the street during a block party. Unfortunately, the Department of Transportation management could not be informed in advance, and so they were surprised when, on September 8<sup>th</sup>, we wove our four divided corners together with concentric circles of color installed on the asphalt of the intersection.



context



concept



creation

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There are many examples  
of street graphics which establish  
a sense of place and also calm  
and direct traffic



All generations participate in culture



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James in the Intersection Repair



24-hour Book Post



24-hour Produce Station

## **The Legalization**

The following is a summary of the next events, which led to the legalization of the Intersection Repair as a Pilot Project:

1. Installation of painted circles on intersection, and structures on corners—imbeds local community identity and begins traditional and cultural roots. Having put a foot forward, the neighborhood initiates a dialogue with the Dept. of Transportation Management.
2. Dept. of Transportation Management issues warnings to all corner property owners to remove corner objects. Informs principal organizer of responsibility to remove paint, and that there will be a fine for failure to comply. Half of the corner structures are removed.
3. Neighborhood offers presentation to explain concept. P.D.O.T. declines and reiterates warnings. Tone of discussions remains polite, and P.D.O.T. extends deadline (to accommodate request by principal organizer to visit ill mother.)
4. The community initiates a petition and letter drive, also enlisting the support of SE Uplift Neighborhood Coalition. Efforts to present ideas continue to fail until contact with Mayor Katz. Explanatory packets forwarded to all City Councilors, two days before deadline to remove street paint. Slide presentation delivered to representatives of Commissioners. Result: suspension of the deconstruction order.
5. Many discussions held with key individuals and decision-makers. Common objectives identified and clarified.
6. Community Survey conducted: 87% feel safer and say there is less crime in neighborhood; 90% say traffic speed in intersection has decreased; 81% say livability has improved; 96% say they are happy with the results of Intersection Repair.
7. Intersection Repair Proposal prepared. City Council Ordinance 171012 for Pilot Project prepared for council vote.
8. With testimony mostly in support, Mayor & City Council members vote unanimously to issue permit for Intersection Repair Pilot Project to commence first day of Spring, 1997, and to last six months until the first day of Autumn.

9. Pilot period commences. Intersection Repair remade on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, amidst great celebrations of music, dance, creativity, and food. Many more functions installed on corners, and newly painted graphics on street, creating a modest Oregon-style village square.
10. Inspired by the progress of the Intersection Repair, many new opportunities arise (see T-Horse & Related projects).
11. A celebration on September 14, 1997 marks the end of the pilot period (September 23<sup>rd</sup>). After this period, inquiries are made concerning the possibility of obtaining indefinite status.
12. Opposition to the Intersection Repair arises in the form of two separate petitions sent to P.D.O.T. and the City Council. A dialogue process ensues that establishes communication between supporters & opponents. Facilitated by Lee Leighton, SMILE Board President, this process results in an improved project, and offers the opportunity for broader support and consensus.
13. April 15, 1998 is set as the date for the Portland City Council to consider permanent status for the Intersection Repair, now called the Share-It Square.



Robert and Sheri



Annmarie

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**Emmett**



**Liley and Siobhan**