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## **Abstract**

Every city around the world has a different urban history with specific social, political, and economical cultures along with it. However, we have reached a point in urbanization where cities all share the same challenges when it comes to urban planning. The common goal for them is to become more livable and people friendly. One method to address this urbanism issue is to look at the street design and how the building facades are connected to the general urban space. The goal of this project is to find new urban design ideas that focus on improving the connection between the facade and the sidewalk in order to ultimately create pedestrian friendly streets. To do so I compared the street design of the cities of Seattle, WA and Paris, France. Looking at specific streets at both places, it will target Eastlake Ave E in Seattle and different boulevards and streets in Paris, France. By comparing these streets in terms of urban design and regulations, as well as the work of designers who got inspired by overseas ideas as well, we can find new solutions to address the many challenges Eastlake Ave E is currently facing as a mixed development street. To present my findings in my presentation, I created a video documentary that shows how similarly Paris and Seattle regulate their street façade but design them differently. My final product is to give some recommendations for Eastlake Ave E shown through paintings. The project accomplished, people can realize that we can find urban planning solutions in other city concepts. We can find new design solutions for our streets by getting inspired by other culture's ideas.

## **Introduction**

Streets are the direct connection between buildings and the rest of the urban environment. It is the link between the private built environment with the public realm. If American streets are very much emphasized on commuting more than leisure, streets are the ones carrying the continuous flow of people or automobiles which gives them even more importance in a city. While comparing an American city to a foreign one it is always interesting to see how it can affect people who have once experienced the two places. It is by analyzing and understanding the urban planning of a city that we can finally realize how planning has so much more impact than just the built environment on us. Urban planning is about constructing buildings that are connected to the economic, political and social pattern of the city they belong into. Studying two cities belonging to two different cultures is even more interesting since it can help understand the different social ideologies between the two. Studying two cities where one is European and the other one is American can reveal even more about their social and political pattern since America and Europe share a lot of history. Relating urban planning and history, for example, can help us understand why some differences and similarities exist at both places. In the case of this senior project, we can observe the differences of partnership between the city hall and the private developers, where it seems more disconnected in the United States than it is in Europe. This directly affects the whole landscape and process of the built environment. Globalization has pushed a lot of people to travel around the world or completely relocate from one culture to another. In the process of acculturation, people always try to compare their new home with the previous one. It is a process of making new habits within a new society but also trying to keep a similar life as their previous one. I am part of this group of people who once relocated from one country to another and tried to understand the new culture they were exposed to through the built environment.

I moved from Paris, France to Seattle, WA four years ago. I couldn't understand why while walking down a street Seattle downtown was so different than walking down a street in Paris. A few

months later I had to realize that even though people shared the same habits in both cities I had to plan my day a different way here in Seattle than when I was living in Paris. It isn't until I started to study urban planning that I finally understood these differences of landscape design at both cities which were influencing my everyday life. Choosing to compare Seattle to Paris in this project is not random. This analysis is a way for me to share acculturation frustration and answers with people who have also moved from France to the United States. Looking at overseas ideas to solve urban planning issues is a way for me to create bridges between cultures. We live in a very complex world where we are all directly influenced by our built environment. Getting inspired by successful overseas urban planning ideas is a way to solve present and future challenges but also to create more open minded cities and societies.

Despite my biculturalism, I am also an artist in oil painting. My goal while creating this project was to use these different parts of my life. Therefore, I chose to present my recommendations for Eastlake Ave E using oil paintings. Since I wanted this project to be very visual I also chose to present my findings through a video documentary during my presentation.

## **Context, Background, History**

European and American cities have been planned differently in regard to urban morphology. American cities have been designed in a gridded system and have sprawled over the years creating gigantic suburban areas. Common transportation infrastructure is almost nonexistent in some parts of the country. Traveling state to state or city to city is very limited in regard of the number of commuters, their different destinations and the transportation mode availability. Busses, street cars, light rails, subways, and biking trails are being developed but still have a long way to go. Currently, it is genuine to say that cities in America have been designed for cars and not for people.

Europe is facing similar issues to the US. It is also fighting the car dependency and tries to facilitate a shift from cars to a more sustainable way of transportation like public transport or bikes. Plus, in addition to the car dependency issue, cities are also trying to enhance their general urban design to become more livable. These two challenges are important because they are shared by both the United States and Europe. People have to be able to feel safe, invited and comfortable in a city. America has to work on building human scale cities despite the rise of density and urban dwellers. People have taken the habits of going from one place to another by car or bus because the general urban space of the city is so disconnected. This way of life creates continuous traffic and social disconnections among inhabitants, which does not create a feeling of security within the urban environment.

You cannot feel safe in a city you physically don't recognize and among people you do not or cannot interact with. Street design is a way to connect cities and society together, most notably in how buildings (the private environment) are linked to the public realm. Essentially, there is a huge barrier between the private and the public environment in the United States. Car dependency is not only an air pollution issue, it also disconnects people from their surrounding environment. People spend all of their commuting time in a confined and private space that takes them to a destination that is also a private space. In a city, this way of life has created noisy highways that run through city centers, parking lots everywhere in the streets. Economically, it also tends to stop business activities in city centers and socially it developed individualism among people.

Meanwhile in Europe, cities have learned to get people outside of their private space. Most people commute by common transportation. Europeans are not more aware of sustainability; the general planning of the city simply makes it easier to commute this way than taking a car. Public transportation is fast and efficient. No matter what the climate is, people find the city street design interesting and pleasant to spend time there, more than in their private environment. European cities like Paris also have issues with connecting suburban areas to the city center. Their solution is to work on physical connectivity. After centuries of planning, cities have understood that attracting people in the streets solves a lot of social, economic and environmental issues. When people are walking in a street, they are directly connected to their surrounding environment. Therefore, they are able to identify people around them and interact directly between one another. It is a huge improvement safety wise. Also, if people are willing to walk around instead of using the bus or their cars, it would radically diminish air and noise pollution within the city. Finally, many case studies have proven that pedestrian zones encourage more people to shop because they can walk freely in and out of surrounding businesses.

Paris is a world city but it is characteristically composed of several urban villages that are similar to Seattle. In term of history, it is one of the rare cities in Europe that haven't been touched by World War Two bombing and has kept intact its successful thousand year old urban design. Moreover, Paris is very particular because of its large boulevards and avenues designed by the Baron Henri Haussmann in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It created a very similar set up as American streets with wide car lanes and wide sidewalks. Though, both places have obviously very different densities and urbanism history or morphology, this study only focuses on design and particularly the façade design. Getting people outside of their private environment is the common goal; however Paris has had more time to think of creating enjoyable and welcoming streets. This is the reason, why, Seattle should try to see it as a valuable and feasible example.

## **Product, Goals and Significance**

In the past century, the United States has seen its cities grow to the point where city centers, neighborhoods, urban villages and green spaces have become disconnected from one another. This disconnection impacts transportation infrastructure, social cohesion, economic development and environmental sustainability. American city planners have come to realize this urban planning issue has many other negative externalities associated with the general city atmosphere. One solution is to address the general urban design of the city. We need to start thinking of cities designed for people, at human scale, in order to create more livable and safer cities. How can a street be redesigned in order to connect the façade and the walkway and create a welcoming environment for people?

In order to create an attractive public realm, it is important to understand the context of the place: "How can public and private spaces be connected?", "What is the historical context of this place?", "Why would people want to spend time here?", "What is the purpose of this place?" or "How people will commute there? It seems almost impossible to gather all of these factors in one space but yet, some cities, and most notably European cities, have come up with successful solutions. Europe has had to think about city planning and street planning for centuries. There, cities have had the time to test, fail and find success in street design. Most American cities are just starting to think of urban design as a solution for social, economic and planning issues. Despite the many differences in urban morphology, both American and European cities have very similar issues when it comes to urbanism.

However, American cities are very new and still have the ability to change in order to adapt and face future challenges.

This senior project studies the streets of Paris, France and Seattle, WA. It specifically gives recommendations for the intersection of Eastlake Ave E and E Lynn St in Seattle, WA. This neighborhood of Seattle has a lot of potential. It is meant to become one of the most mixed use development areas of the city. Moreover, it is located by the lake Union and offers some of the most beautiful views for its residents and visitors. My observations through both cities take into account the context of the place including transportation and economic development or zoning, but most importantly addresses improving the connection between the building facade and street sidewalk. I chose this specific part of the street because it represents the connection between the public and the private part of the street, a gap that needs to be filled in order to create better urban spaces.

The goal of this project is to show the importance of our visual experience in our daily life. I emphasized this idea by focusing on the design of street facade but also by creating a video documentary and show my recommendations through oil paintings. It allowed me to physically walk my audience through the two urban design cultures. I based my insights on articles, research and interviews from urban designers, architects and urban planners who have worked on or studied both continents. Mixing technical explanations and clear illustrations people understand the street life in Paris and Seattle and can observe the differences in urban atmosphere at both places but also the many similarities in regulations.

This project is motivated by personal and professional interests. I moved from Paris to Seattle when I was eighteen years old with almost no previous travel to American cities. As I walked through downtown Seattle for the first time I noticed it had a human-scaled city center, but I felt something was very different from the European cities I had visited. It wasn't until I started to study urban planning that I understood how the political, economic and historic context shapes cities differently. After four years of studying in Seattle and eighteen years living in France, I understand both places now. While neither city is perfect though, going back and forth from the United States to France has made me realize that both cities have so much to learn from each other. Moving to the United States has expanded my view of the world and how cities are being designed. I am very much interested in the built environment through the lens of architecture and urban design. Taking into account my biculturalism, I want my professional career to help create a bridge between the American built environment known for its flexibility for development and the genius of the Europeans in terms of urban design and placemaking. Planners in Europe and the United States can learn from one another in order to achieve better results. Because of this project, I will have developed a concrete analysis of this issue, and reflect on both cities in regard of their historical, social and cultural context, architecture, economic development, planning policies and transportation infrastructures. For anybody who experiences the cultural change or wants to work in these countries, this analysis is important to adapt and understand the surrounding world. After all, urban planning is one of the few topics that anybody can relate to, because it is the study of the world we all live in. Moreover, this project taught me video-making and editing skills which I will need in my future career in both countries. This project will be helpful to me but may also inspire others to compare different cities in the world and learn from each of them.

## Methodology

To find new urban design ideas that improve the street designs of American cities like Seattle through the successful ideas of foreign cities like Paris; I needed to base my theories onto the work of others. I chose urban planners, architects, designers that have been studying and working at both places. Adding to my readings I also went to consult professionals currently working for both cities. I needed their explanations to support the urban design and placemaking theories of others in the current situation of both cities. It is only after gathering all those information that I started to make the video documentary to finally be able to explain the differences in landscape and regulations in Seattle and Paris. I quickly targeted the streets that I wanted since I knew both cities very well. For Seattle, I needed to find a street that had not reached its complete potential so I would be able to give some recommendations at the end. At the same time this street needed to have a zoning of mix used development since it is the general zoning of Paris and its streets. Eastlake Ave E became my first choice since it was matching all of these requirements and was very accessible transportation wise. As for Paris, I chose a variety of streets always commercial with a continuous traffic just like Eastlake pattern: boulevard Saint Michel, boulevard Saint Germain, rue de Rennes, rue de Passy and other diverse “typical” streets that follow Paris urbanism principles. However, I only had the time to talk about a couple of them during the video and I chose to keep the most important ones: Rue de Rennes, Blvd St Michel and Bld St Germain. To videotape my videos I used a simple camera and walked down the street at a pedestrian pace. I wanted for people who will watch the video to feel like they were, themselves, walking down that street. At the beginning of each street, I gave a 360 degree view onto the space so people could feel the street atmosphere and then started to walk only looking at facades. Throughout the video, after editing it using Adobe Premiere, I regularly stopped the video and visually pointed out things I wanted my audience to pay attention to. All of my analysis comes from my lit review where I studied both city urban design process and different known designer theories on how to design better streets.

To reach out at professionals, I contacted the architect Lyle Bicknell at the City Hall of Seattle and Serida Zaid at the “APUR”(Atelier Parisien d’Urbanisme) in Paris. In Paris, I was given a document explaining and illustrating all the different regulations of street facades which are conveniently applied to the whole city.<sup>1</sup> In Seattle, Lyle, explained me the way guidelines were applied to building projects and what they are made of.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, I needed to think of the way I wanted to present my redesign recommendations for the block in Eastlake Ave E. This part was difficult because it came right after my video during the presentation and therefore needed to be as visual as the video was. My result also had to convey my main idea; that we can create better street environment by enhancing the connection between the private and public part of the sidewalk. Therefore, my second goal was to use art to present my ideas. Therefore, I chose to use my skills in oil paintings and my interest in impressionism to convey the right message. Impressionism his very unique because it is based on very realistic ideas like people daily life or typical landscapes; but at the same time it abstracts the picture as to convey feelings/ story from the scene to the viewer. A video works the same way; it capture the real but as opposed to

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<sup>1</sup> Annex #1

<sup>2</sup> "Design Review." *Design Review - Design Guidelines - Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections*. N.p., n.d. Web. 04 June 2017.

a regular picture it brings people in and convey way more than pictures. Impressionism and videos convey atmosphere more than a visual and this perfectly matches with what I wanted for a visual senior project.

## Literature Review

Paris and Seattle are assumed to be very different in the landscape design of their streets. It is true in some way but an opinion shift has already started, changing the way some urban designers perceive future American cities. The video documentary witnesses the similarities in landscape of Eastlake Ave E and Paris streets. It demonstrates that despite the differences we can still believe in an urbanism shift where some ideas from Paris could be implemented in Seattle. Many urban designers of America and Europe have already started to create a bridge of urban design ideas by getting inspired from both cultures. This senior project is first interested in their theories on how to create better streets for people.

### *Urban Design Theories and Projects*

“Think of a city and what comes to mind? It’s streets. If a city’s streets look interesting, the city looks interesting; if they look dull, the city looks dull”<sup>3</sup> Just as the famous American urban planner Jane Jacobs says here, streets are the direct representation of a city to its people. To become more people-friendly and dynamic, she states that American cities have to improve their street design. Paris city Hall affirms that it is the key to “support the cultural identity of cities and it is a good leverage for urban renewals politics”<sup>4</sup> (support de l’identite des villes et levier pour les politiques de renouveau urbain). After all, streets are the immediate connection between a building and its surrounding neighborhood. If this project wants to find a model that better designs our streets, it must also focus on the connection between the façade and the sidewalk and how urban designers have already thought of it.

To create a better integration of the building and its facade to the public realm, we have to understand the general context of the place being studied. David Sucher and Kevin Kane were some of the first in the 1950’s to come up with the theory of “urban villages”<sup>5</sup>. Part of their analysis was to understand what the purpose of these special urban aspects could be for people. To them it is a place where, while driving by it, people want to stop because of attractive businesses and welcoming spaces to discover and wander throughout. Therefore, they had already thought of methods to get people to spend time in an urban space and the social consequences that would come with it. A place of repose, tranquility, intimacy and familiarity needs to provide: different activities, opportunity, diversity, business and anonymity. By comparing Seattle and Paris we can see both cities have applied this principle in different ways. The street “Rue de Passy” in Paris<sup>6</sup> is an example of an urban village. It is comprised of buildings of mixed use where the ground floor is either a shop, a restaurant or a cafe. A miniature mall covering about a block of the street offers more shops and a grocery store underneath. About two blocks away from the main street, there is the “Balzac house”, a historical and cultural asset in the area as well as a public park offering many benches. In general, in America, malls are the

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<sup>3</sup> Jacobs, Jane. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Random House, 1961. Print, chapter 2, p.29

<sup>4</sup> Decembrement des trottoirs

<sup>5</sup> Sucher, David, and Kevin Kane. *City Comforts: How to Build an Urban Village*. Seattle: City Comforts, 1995, p.50

<sup>6</sup> Annex#2



equivalent of these kinds of Parisian streets welcoming anyone in the city. Eastlake Avenue is not very different. It is bordered by mix used buildings offering retails, cafés, restaurants and offices on the bottom floor. Plus, it runs along the Lake Union offering panoramic views. However, it is less connected to the rest of the city. The rue de Passy, as an example, has buses as well as two metro stations bordering street. This kind of Parisian street can be considered as an outdoor shopping center. University Village is also located in Seattle and is a rare example of a mall with an outdoor design. Typically, people are meant to park their car outside of the building and then wander around the different shops, restaurants and grocery stores inside. The only problem is that the set up of this malls is organized so that people have to wonder around always being surrounded by cars either running or cars. Malls in general are very disconnected from the rest of the city as opposed to the different streets studied in Paris which can be more considered as an “urban village” or like Eastlake Ave could become. In general, they are all located right at the center of a residential area and at walking distance from many schools. Sucher and Kane do not overlook the importance of the easy access of these urban villages from people. The main argument of these authors is the importance of being aware of your environment to create a feeling of security. The more people are attracted to a place, the more the likelihood that they will stop and encounter someone and interact with people surrounding them. Eastlake Ave E is right now above the national total crime list average.<sup>7</sup> This is where the importance of having people out in the streets emerges.

In many ways, Jane Jacobs agrees with the role of safety that streets have within the city environment. In her book, “The Death and Life of Great American cities”, she states: “To keep the city safe is a fundamental task of a city's streets and its sidewalks.”<sup>8</sup> Jane Jacobs gives three main recommendations to create a safe and welcoming atmosphere in a city. She specifically states that these are good recommendations for cities containing a lot of foreign and local people (like Seattle and Paris have). She discusses the three main characteristics that streets must have:

“First, there must be a clear demarcation between what is public space and what is private space. Public and private spaces cannot ooze into each other as they do typically in suburban settings or in projects.

Second, there must be eyes upon the street, eyes belonging to those we might call the natural proprietor of the street. The buildings on a street equipped to handle strangers and to insure the safety of both residents and strangers, must be oriented to the street. They cannot turn their backs or blank sides on it and leave it blind.

And third, the sidewalks must have users on it fairly continuously, both to add to the number of effective eyes on the street and to induce people in buildings along the street to watch the sidewalk in sufficient number”<sup>9</sup>.

Therefore, it is clear to her that a connection between the facade and the sidewalk is key for a good street design. While comparing American cities like Seattle with a European city like Paris, it seems more recurrent in Seattle to see empty streets running along tall, white concrete walls with no

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<sup>7</sup> "Point2 Homes." Demographics & Statistics - Employment, Education, Income Averages, Crime in Eastlake - Point2 Homes. n.d. Web. 31 Jan. 2017.

<sup>8</sup> Jane Jacobs, p.35

<sup>9</sup> Jacobs, Jane. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Random House, 1961. Print, Chapter 2, p.35

windows. In the construction process, we have to start thinking of the surrounding environment of the building rather than only focusing on its interior architecture.

Some American architects have started in this transition. Nicolai Ouroussoff, an architect and architecture critic for the New York Time, has analyzed the new academic building at the Cooper Union in NYC for the Advancement of Science and Art.<sup>10</sup> The architect of this building was Thom Mayne of the Los Angeles firm Morphosis. The building emphasizes the connection between the private space of a building and the public space of a street. He states “This strategy is social as well as aesthetic. There the big V-shaped columns that line the sidewalk not only support the building, but they also create small pockets of space where students can hang out along the street.” Mayne also got inspired by the theory of using small scale design in order to create welcoming and comfortable spaces. With his work, he proves that it is possible to play with the building and the façade to create a better urban design. “The idea is to create a series of interlocking social spaces, many undefined, and to allow for the kind of casual encounter that is a central part of urban life.” From this statement he demonstrates that urban design and architecture are very closely related. With this article, he demonstrates that the United States is making the switch and architects are starting to think of building individually as much as part of an harmonious environment.

The city of Paris appeared to agree with this idea in 2014 when they organized a competition in which different sites of the city were targeted to be remodeled. The project was called “Reinventing Paris”. The mayor believed in the importance of using urban design and architecture to solve future urban planning issues. “Particularly in terms of housing and everything relating to density, desegregation, energy and resilience.”<sup>11</sup> Notably, the project of Morland at 17 boulevard Morland<sup>12</sup>. It is one of the projects that won, and like the Cooper Union building, plays with its facade and the streets. The firms David Chipperfield Architects and Calq Architecture have placed large columns in the front to support the building. In the sense of urban design, it looks like they also cover the sidewalk and integrate this public space within the private part of the streets. Therefore, European as well as American architects and urban designers think of this connection between the façade and the building to foster better streets and create a feeling of security within the city.

Since both regions of the world are starting to share the same urbanism ideal, it would be relevant for them to get inspired from each other. Jan Gehl is an example of this urbanism culture share. He is a Danish architect and urban designer that also worked with foreign cities including American cities. In an interview for New York city, he pointed out the two key elements for a good urban center. “high building density and good urban qualities in the streets of the new urban area.”<sup>13</sup>

While attending a lecture at his office in Copenhagen, Denmark, Gehl stated that “the built environment is directly connected to people’s quality of life.”<sup>14</sup> He talked about how the people of Copenhagen have seen their city design remodeled in the last decade putting pedestrians first. As an example, the main street of the city used to be a heavy traffic arterial and became a 100% pedestrian zone. Whereas businesses protested thinking this would kill their jobs, it actually created a huge boost for the economy of the city. Eastlake Ave E could benefit a lot from this way of thinking. Trying to

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<sup>10</sup> OROUSSOFF, NICOLAI. "The Civic Value of a Bold Statement." *The New York Times*. 4 June 2009. Web. 25 Oct. 2016.

<sup>11</sup> Missika, Jean-Louis. "Reinventer.paris." *Reinventing.paris / Competition for Innovative Urban Projects*. Mairie De Paris, 3 Nov. 2014. Web. 07 Dec. 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Annex#3

<sup>13</sup> "Jan Gehl's 5 Rules for Designing Great Cities." *ArchDaily*. Chap4, 16 Dec. 2016. Web. 02 June 2017.

<sup>14</sup> Jan Gehl architect – lecture in his office in Copenhagen, Denmark, August 2016

separate the cars from people and creating more pedestrian space would follow Gehl's theory. Talking about the importance of "eye contact", Jane Jacobs says "The basic requisite for such surveillance is a substantial quantity of stores and other public places sprinkled along the sidewalks of a district; enterprises and public places that are used by evening and night must be among them especially. Stores, bars and restaurants, as the chief example work in several different and complex ways to abet sidewalk safety."<sup>15</sup> More than the design, the kinds of activities that are being offered in a street are very important. This is an example of the importance of understanding the context of a place in order to better design it; here in particular, looking at the economic context.

Gehl studies the connection between the façade and the walkway by labeling façades.<sup>16</sup> The best active façade has a change in design every 6 meters. Then he categorizes them into: friendly façade, mixture of activities, boring façade, and inactive façade. He fosters the idea that façades should have active edges and corners. To activate the frontier between a building and a street, or a plaza, he encourages the use of movable furniture and benches as it promotes social activities and comfort. Furthermore, perspective is important. "The view of other attractions such as water, trees, flowers, fountains and architecture should also be part of city planners' considerations." The main ideas of the lecture were to create better public spaces balancing quality and quantity with sustainability within the building environment and to create small scale spaces. This idea is very much linked to his book *Cities for People* where scale is the key to create a sense of space in a street. Jacobs, Sucher, and Kane emphasize that we need to socially connect with our environment. Gehl is in agreement as he studied the behavior of eye contact and its different distances. The distance in which people can identify other people is at 100m, but you cannot tell their gender until about 70m and facial expressions at 25m. Therefore, a good street design displays a balance between scale and perspective in order to gather a variety of activities in one place and also have people aware of their building environment and individuals surrounding them.

Jan Gehl and Jacobs have proven that linking the façade to the street involves architecture skills but Whyte, in his movie: *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, explains that it needs more than that. It is still very restrictive to use only retail and restaurants to open the building to the walkway. It narrows down the variety of people that would be interested in entering that street. Not everybody wants to use the excuse of buying a lunch, a coffee or going shopping to hang out in a street. People should not have to spend money to feel welcomed. Movable furniture are a good way to make everybody welcomed in a street or a public space. Whyte studies a public place in New York City where he observes people's behavior and activities. He states that people's main activity in life is watching other people.<sup>17</sup> The results show that no matter the number of people present, their main activity is to watch others. This movie also shows how people feel more comfortable in a space they can personally shape. Indeed, he videotaped people sitting on movable furniture. The same behavior happens for everyone: people always move their chair before sitting. They need to shape their space. Though, movable furniture seems to work because people feel interested to sit and watch. Therefore, it can only work if the design of the space attracts people's curiosity or if it offers a restful atmosphere.

Finally, Allan Jacobs is an American urban designer who also found interest in studying how other cities around the world design their streets to find new ideas for American cities. He notably

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<sup>15</sup> Jacobs, Jane. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Random House, 1961. Print. Chapter 2, p.36

<sup>16</sup> Gehl, Jan. *Cities for People*. Washington, DC: Island, 2010, p.148

<sup>17</sup> Whyte, William Hollingsworth. 2005. *The social life of small urban spaces*. Santa Monica, CA: Direct Cinema Ltd.

classifies the streets to compare them, and chose to look at the Boulevard Saint Michel in Paris<sup>18</sup>, part of the streets studied by this research. It is located in the south portion of the city. It is a wide and high volume traffic boulevard that mixes pedestrians with vehicles. There are two car lanes going one direction and two bus/bike lanes going both directions. The sidewalks are very large, about 20ft width<sup>19</sup>. This layout is meant to solve the issue of noise pollution in the street. Cars going the other direction can circulate on a parallel boulevard which is also a one way street. He describes what can be found on the sidewalk such as “kiosks, benches, bus shelters, clothes and book racks and tables and chairs at cafes, light poles, trees, many, many people, and, for long stretches, not so portable metal crowd control fences, presumably there to keep people from spilling over into the street or crossing where that may not be the thing to do.”<sup>20</sup> He shows here how the display of the street, even a busy street, can help to secure the environment. Therefore, it is very likely that American cities are not the only ones facing urban design issues and it is possible that they can find solutions by looking at other cultures.

Throughout these different urban designer’s theories and conceptions we can observe a starting shift in the design of street landscape in American streets by designers. This change in landscape is the start of an urban renewal or at least a change in the conception of what is an urban space that is very much inspired by a European way of thinking. It is also clear that both America and Europe, and especially Paris and Seattle are trying to find new ideas to improve their urban environment. Paris is a city that has put into place an urban regulation system a long time ago to organize its streets. Until now, this research was taking an overlook onto the differences and similarities of *landscape* in both cultures. However, we need to know what are the differences and similarities in *the regulations* of both places in order to find valid and feasible solutions to enhance the street design in Seattle.

### ***The administrations***

In Paris, the city hall is the one in deciding of the different regulations and launch new projects; it involves different actors. For example, any regulations onto the right of way has to be accepted by the Police department as well as the organization “Les Batiments de France” (The French Buildings) because Paris is a historical site and needs to be protected and preserved. The city hall of Paris releases projects and either leaves it to private parts through competitions, or it can also take care of it by itself. In 1901, the city council of Paris created an association called “APUR” (Parisian Atelier of Urbanism) to help with urbanism issues. Its role is to “document, analyze, and develop potential strategies concerning urban and social evolutions”<sup>21</sup> (“documenter, analyser et développer des stratégies prospectives concernant les évolutions urbaines et sociétales”). Seattle works a little differently but following the same pattern. Almost all of the street regulations are handled by SDOT (Seattle Department of Transportation); different from the specific urbanism office at the city hall of Paris. However, alike Paris, different agencies are involved when it comes to new projects. SDOT is the main one but some projects require different parties. The “green streets” for example, have their project proposals going through the DPD (Department of Planning Development), or the Department of Neighborhoods (DON)<sup>22</sup>. Or, when it comes to right of way improvement activities, it has to go

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<sup>18</sup> Annex#4

<sup>19</sup> google earth

<sup>20</sup> Jacobs, Allan B. *Great Streets*. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1993. Print. p. 45

<sup>21</sup> APUR. "Atelier Parisien D'Urbanisme." Apur. N.p., n.d. Web. 31 Jan. 2017.

<sup>22</sup> City of Seattle. "Seattle Right-of-Way Improvement Manual - Latest Online Manual." *Seattle.gov - Seattle Right-of-Way Improvement Manual - Latest Online Manual*. N.p., n.d. Web. 31 Jan. 2017. Chap 6

through the Park and Recreation Department.<sup>23</sup> Same with the lighting policies where “SDOT is responsible for ensuring that recommended light levels are achieved and reviews street and pedestrian lighting requests.”<sup>24</sup> where Seattle City Light is the one in charge of maintenance. Concerning the historical preservation, Seattle also has defined certain parts of the city to be preserved which are following different urban design regulations like Pike and Pine streets in Capitol Hill. Paris has also separate two districts from the rest of the city in term of regulations.

France and the United States both use a plan for the different urbanism projects and challenges to come in the future. Seattle bases its projects according to the 20 years “Comprehensive plan” accredited by the city council. It is “the framework for most of Seattle’s big-picture decisions on how to grow while preserving and improving [their] our neighborhoods.”<sup>25</sup> The comprehensive plan takes every neighborhood separately and makes different regulations for each of them. The United States uses a tool called “zoning” to assign each land a purpose. It is very useful when dealing with a large urban area like we can find in the US. The comprehensive plan has a lot of urban recommendations in resemblances with the different neighborhoods. However, their zoning affects the way the area is meant to grow: one can be more residential than the other for example. Following the same strategy, France uses what they call an “urbanism plan” (“Plan d’Urbanisme”). This is a document that “defines the general urban organization for the next 15 years to come. It is a regulating document which manages the land code, notably looking at construction, demolition permits. It states the different directions to take or rules to implement for the urbanism decisions public and private parties need to take” (qui définit les orientations générales d’aménagement et d’urbanisme pour les 15 années à venir, et un document réglementaire, qui régit l’évolution des parcelles notamment à travers l’instruction des permis de construire, d’aménager, de démolir ou des déclarations préalables. C’est en quelque sorte un “projet de ville”, fixant les orientations et les règles sur lesquelles se fondent les décisions publiques et privées en matière d’urbanisme. »).<sup>26</sup> France also uses the « zoning » tool in its urbanism plan. The “zoning rules contained in the French Local Plan of Urbanism are juridically binding”<sup>27</sup> Therefore, even though the general belief tends to show that both places have very differences in terms of regulations, the administration behind them are quite similar. The only main difference in regard of the zoning will be the type of zoning Paris has chosen in most of the city compared to Seattle which has a more diverse zoning. It is called “SM”, and stands for “mix used development zoning”. If Paris is seen as a successful urban center, the mix used development zoning they adopted is certainly one of the main reasons and follows on with Jan Gehl perspective on creating density in urban centers.

If we want to enhance the façade design of Seattle and notably Eastlake Ave E, we need to understand what can be the limits of Seattle’s urban design decision making. Zoning has a lot more power in the US as lands are still very disconnected to one another as opposed to Paris where pretty much the whole city is a mix used development. Zoning is a possible limit to urban design enhancements because it regulates land use by block and not by parcels, at least most of the time. Beside the incredible density of Paris, one of its biggest strength is its zoning flexibility where you

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<sup>23</sup> City of Seattle. "Seattle Right-of-Way Improvement Manual - Latest Online Manual." *Seattle.gov - Seattle Right-of-Way Improvement Manual - Latest Online Manual*. N.p., n.d. Web. 31 Jan. 2017. chap 2

<sup>24</sup> City of Seattle. "Seattle Right-of-Way Improvement Manual - Latest Online Manual." *Seattle.gov - Seattle Right-of-Way Improvement Manual - Latest Online Manual*. N.p., n.d. Web. 31 Jan. 2017. chap 4

<sup>25</sup> City of Seattle. "Seattle's Comprehensive Plan." *Seattle's Comprehensive Plan - What & Why - Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development*. N.p., n.d. Web. 31 Jan. 2017.

<sup>26</sup> "Le Plan Local D’urbanisme (PLU)." *Retour à L’accueil - Paris*. Mairie De Paris, n.d. Web. 02 June 2017.

<sup>27</sup> PLU

can see many different types of construction in one block. Different types of building involve more variety of activities in streets.

Despite the zoning, even though Seattle and Paris share the same administrative pattern, we can question the types of offices that deal with the planning of each city. Seattle urban planning is handled through the transportation department whereas Paris's is handled by the urbanism department which is separated from the transportation office. That difference in administration proves that, until now, American cities were focusing on the commuting but not the placemaking aspect of their urban environment. This can also be noticed in the way both cities wrote their urban design regulations. Paris chose to apply unique regulations for the whole city with a lot of design specificities. The Seattle comprehensive plan targets specific areas but does not offer as much details as Paris does for the city in general.

This leads us to a second point to be studied: the differences and similarities in the design of the street itself and the regulations behind it.

### ***Street Right of Way***

The Seattle improvement right of way manual shows that Seattle sidewalks are being designed according to a strict zoning with specific measurements. "The streetscape is broken into three parts, the Frontage Zone, Pedestrian Zone and Landscape/Furniture Zone plus Curb."<sup>28</sup> Paris follows the same principle with "the three strip rules" ("la regle des trois bandes")<sup>29</sup> with these same three zones. However, when looking at the street general picture, having a "zoned design" is not appealing for an "interesting design". It is better to have different design possibilities depending on the type of street. Therefore, even though both cities share the same principles, Paris makes this street zoning more specific using a table.<sup>30</sup> There, we can see a range of different sidewalk widths. According to each "strip" or "zone" the city hall has labeled which design was accepted or encouraged according to the flow of people, the green spaces, the furniture and terrace organization etc. SDOT has created a model that only focuses on "the use of a public place for a sidewalk café"<sup>31, 32</sup>. Despite the fact that it is safer for cities to have a strict sidewalk zoning; Paris proves here there is more to develop with zoned regulations in order to be more adaptable to the street environment.

In this project, we are especially interested by the "Frontage Zone". In Seattle, it is defined as "the area between the property line and walkway. Where sufficient right-of-way exists, a frontage zone should be provided that is a minimum of 2 feet wide, except in locations adjacent to high and intermediate capacity transit stations. Frontage zones can accommodate sidewalk cafes, store entrances, retail display or landscaping. A frontage zone is not needed if the sidewalk corridor is adjacent to a landscaped space."<sup>33</sup> While this gives a very short description, it basically means that every streets of Seattle should leave 5 to 6 ft clearance for pedestrians, a measure that Paris also adopted.

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<sup>28</sup> City of Seattle. "Seattle Right-of-Way Improvement Manual - chap 4

<sup>29</sup> Mairie de Paris. "Desemcombement des Voies"

<sup>30</sup> Annex#5

<sup>31</sup> City of Seattle. "Municode Library." *Municode Library*. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 Feb. 2017.

<sup>32</sup> Annex#6

<sup>33</sup> City of Seattle. "Seattle Right-of-Way Improvement Manual - Latest Online Manual." *Seattle.gov - Seattle Right-of-Way Improvement Manual - Latest Online Manual*. N.p., n.d. Web. 31 Jan. 2017. chap 3

### *Façade regulations on transparency*

In Seattle, DPD has released a “Design Review”<sup>34</sup> which wants to promote the activation of Seattle downtown streets. This document encourages front windows to give visibility to the building interior, use of different designs on the storefront with various colors and shapes, a canopy or something to protect from unpredictable weather or some plants to hide blank walls. A façade is defined as blank if it does not include at least one of the following: “Windows; Entryways or doorways; Stairs, stoops, or porticos; Decks or balconies; or Screening and landscaping on the facade itself.” Plus, “The total of all blank facade segments may not exceed 40 percent of the width of the facade of the structure along the street.”<sup>35</sup> Therefore, Seattle based most of its design regulations onto the transparency of facades. However, these are more recommendations than regulation: “The guidelines provide all parties with a clear understanding of what the City urges project applicants to strive for in designing new development.”<sup>36</sup> Lyle Bicknell explained to me that guidelines are used by the neighborhood based Design Review Boards in their review of private commercial and residential projects. It is the board that determines which guidelines apply and whether they are sufficiently met. Regarding the façade transparency, the Seattle Land Code is very specific. It states that: “Sixty percent of the street-facing facade between 2 feet and 8 feet above the sidewalk shall be transparent.” Furthermore, “transparent areas of facades shall be designed and maintained to provide views into and out of the structure [...] no permanent signage, window tinting or treatments, shelving, other furnishings, fixtures, equipment, or stored items shall completely block views into and out of the structure between 4 feet and 7 feet above adjacent grade.”<sup>37</sup> Even though Paris also encourages transparency on street facades it implements its regulations in a very different way.

The City Hall of Paris has released a similar document as DPD’s guidelines explaining the design possibilities with details for Paris facades. As the project is mainly focusing on commercial façades we can see that the Eastlake neighborhood and Paris share a lot of these urban design regulations. However, in Paris, these are seen as rules in the design process more than recommendations like in Seattle. “This guide, a real handful tool, lists the rules to be respected in order to success in your project and make your storefront more noticeable. » (“Ce guide, véritable outil pratique, est le mode d’emploi des règles à respecter et des conseils à suivre pour réussir votre projet et valoriser votre devanture commerciale et son enseigne. »)<sup>38</sup> This simple introduction perfectly demonstrates the will of Paris to connect the private and the public parties where in respecting the regulations made by the city, private parties like businesses can gain a lot. Meeting with Serida Zaid who works at APUR documentation department, she gave me different regulations texts about Paris street right of ways, stalls, terraces, front window and sidewalk. For transparency of the business facade, the city asks to play with the light on the facade to attract customer’s eyes. The sidewalk should be continuously bordered by transparent façades to keep a unity in the architecture “La présence permanente des vitrages est indispensable pour préserver la continuité du front bâti”<sup>39</sup>. However, as opposed to Seattle, it is required that these transparent storefronts have to cover the façade from the top to the bottom of the structure. Though, it is not said that the whole façade should be transparent like we can see sometimes in Seattle. The document encourages storefront to mix glass

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<sup>34</sup> City of Seattle. "Neighborhood Planning Element." *DPD Seattle - Design Review Guidelines for Downtown Development* (n.d.): n. pag. *Seattle Comprehensive Plan*. Web. 31 Jan. 2017.

<sup>35</sup> "Design Review." *Design Review - Design Guidelines - Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections*. N.p., n.d. Web. 04 June 2017.

<sup>36</sup> *Design Review Guidelines*

<sup>37</sup> "Land Use Code." *Land Use Code - Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections*. N.p., n.d. Web. 04 June 2017.

<sup>38</sup> Mairie de Paris. "Règlement Devantures"

<sup>39</sup> Mairie de Paris. "Règlement Devantures"

and any plain material because it helps the eyes to identify the different stores. If every stores of the street are just a continuous row of window nobody can differentiate the stores from one another.

### ***Furnishing the Street***

Paris is very famous for its cafes and terraces, urban design tools can be underrated on a bad weather. However, like previously demonstrated, they are very important to connect the site with the building. It seems that despite the bad weather, Paris has made its street furniture successful enough to continuously attract people.

The city hall of Paris carefully defines what a stall and a terrace are. A stall is adjacent to the shop and leaves 3.3 ft (1m) for pedestrians use. SDOT leaves 5 to 6ft for pedestrians (1m80). A terrace can be either closed or opened and can only be furnished by tables and chairs. If the sidewalk is wide enough (19.6ft or 6m), businesses can have a second stall or terraces leaving the same space for pedestrians in between.<sup>40</sup> It is stated that “ a closed terrace is a delimited occupations located in a public space which is covered and closed, reserved to serve drinks, restaurants, ice cream seller, tea saloons for the business’s clients” (“Une terrasse fermée est une occupation délimitée du domaine public de voirie couverte et close destinée limitativement, aux exploitants de débits de boissons, restaurants, glaciers et salons de thé, pour la restauration sur place de leur clientèle.”) It is also stated that it should be transparent and easily retractable.<sup>41</sup> The Washington State’s law says that restaurants and bars cannot sell alcohol on a terrace that is not fenced and adjacent to the business.<sup>42</sup> This kind of terrace fits with this regulations; Paddy Coyne’s in Bellevue<sup>43</sup> is an example of a bar which used this option. Another trick that Parisian cafes have found is to heat their terraces. For sustainability purposes Paris has forbidden gaz heater for extended terraces and in presence of soft tarpaulins. The point of stalls and terraces is to diversify the sidewalk activities and perspectives. It changes the dynamic of pedestrian motion without blocking the view from the crowd.

### ***Façade Design regulations***

Coming back to facade designs, Paris uses a very specific document<sup>44</sup> stating every façade option in terms of front window layout, architecture of the front wall and building facade, signage and awnings. Paris city Hall states that “the dynamism of the façade’s, with their colors and signs, represents and express the uniqueness of their city location, it brings it to life” «Leur animation, leurs couleurs et leurs enseignes expriment pleinement ces morceaux de ville et de vie.»<sup>45</sup>

Overall, the city promotes the preservation of old facades for a better integration in its urban context. (“Restaurer les anciennes devantures, bien intégrées dans leur contexte.”)<sup>46</sup> The goal is to respect the general architecture of the space as well as its history. Within Paris’s façade regulations, two types are considered: the ones incorporated within the building facade and the ones covering the facade. For facades covering the existing building, the business has the choice of either wood or metal. For the one incorporated, it is forbidden to change the architecture, the building has already been shaped for this matter. The goal here is to keep a built environment unity within the street. There is also the possibility of the two levels front windows where the top front window can choose either one of the two designs.

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<sup>40</sup> Mairie de Paris. “Reglement Terrasses”

<sup>41</sup> Mairie de Paris. “Reglement Terrasses”

<sup>42</sup> City of Seattle. “Municode Library.” *Municode Library*. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 Feb. 2017.

<sup>43</sup> Annex#7

<sup>44</sup> Regulations facade annex

<sup>45</sup> Mairie de Paris. “Reglement Devantures”

<sup>46</sup> Mairie de Paris. “Reglement Devantures”



Awnings have to be movable and cannot have sides falling to the floor because that would block the view of pedestrians and disregard the “eye on the street” theory of Jane Jacobs. Instead, awnings falling to the floor have to be transparent. In Seattle, awnings are defined as continuous overhead weather protection like “canopies, awnings, marquees, and arcade” and it “is required along at least 60 percent of the street frontage of a structure on a principal pedestrian street with a minimum of 6ft width”<sup>47</sup>

Every business has to have closing railings as well as protected glass. The city encourages many lightings at night with ramps, projectors but no blinding lights. Finally, signage is very important as to create a sense of identity. Signs can be incorporated to the front window, they can also pop out of the facade like a flag and they should play with different graphics.<sup>48</sup> While Paris has a whole section on signage, Seattle’s recommendations on that matter states “Each live-work unit must include an exterior sign with the name of the business associated with the live-work unit. Such signage shall be clearly associated with the unit and visible to pedestrians outside of the building.”<sup>49</sup>

Therefore, even though Paris and Seattle have similar regulations onto urban design tools they do not implement them the same way. The main difference is that Paris applies all of these regulations to the whole city whereas Seattle has different regulations for each kind of zoning. In Paris, these rules have to be adopted by anyone who wants to open a store, cafe, bar or restaurant within the city in general. It is to be noted, that, while adopting unique regulations for the whole capital, Paris also has to make exceptions for specific sites. The city has placed “Six of the capital prestigious corridors [are considered] out of category: place de l’opera[...].”<sup>50</sup> (“Six voies prestigieuses de la capitale sont actuellement répertoriées en hors - catégorie : place de l’Opéra). Therefore, even if Paris seems to have very specific and strict urban design regulations, it is also adaptable for the best of its urban environment. Seattle is more flexible thanks to the comprehensive plan that targets specific places in the city. This is a good method for a city which is still developing like Seattle is currently but the city will need to shift to more general regulations in the future in order to unify the city and its streets like Paris did.

## **Result-Video Documentary**

After studying street designs of Paris and Seattle we understand that even though the landscape of both cities is very different, the regulations shaping their built environment are quite similar. The main difference is the way both city implement their regulations/ guidelines in the construction process. I chose to create a visual senior project because studying the regulations of two cities and analyzing theories of designers needed to be supported by a visual proof. This is where the video came from. The video helps understand how these theories of famous designers are incorporated into the building environment of both cities without us noticing it. It is also meant to observe specific streets at both places in revealing the regulations behind their building facades.

### ***Case Studies***

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<sup>47</sup> "Design Review." *Design Review - Design Guidelines - Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections*. N.p., n.d. Web. 04 June 2017.

<sup>48</sup> Mairie de Paris. “Reglement Devantures”

<sup>49</sup> "Land Use Code." *Land Use Code - Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections*. N.p., n.d. Web. 04 June 2017.

<sup>50</sup> Mairie De Paris. "Droit De Voierie." *Direction De L'urbanisme*. N.p., 2011. Web.

Eastlake Avenue E and specifically the intersection with E Lynn Street was selected. The intersection has a lot of mix used development with residencies/ offices and cafes, shop, restaurants. Eastlake is meant to grow with a great mix of retails and residencies and is experiencing a lot of new construction projects following this path. Therefore, it has a lot of potential and is to be developed in the next couple of years. The comprehensive plan of Seattle has a section for Eastlake neighborhood.<sup>51</sup> This document simply gives an idea of what the city would want it to look like. It encourages the use of vegetations to improve the pedestrian experience as well as mix used developments and open spaces. Getting into the zoning of Eastlake, it seems that the avenue is currently zoned as an “NC2P-40, which typically allows buildings up to 40 feet in height with a mix of residential and commercial uses. The P, Pedestrian, designation specifically requires retail and active commercial uses along the ground floor where applicable”<sup>52</sup> for pedestrian uses. Furthermore, “The Eastlake Tomorrow-Draft Approval and Adoption Matrix recommends the promotion of a pedestrian-supportive environment along the corridor [...] maintaining the existing neighborhood character, including its scale of development”. To do so Eastlake Tomorrow Options Guide wants an “Eastlake Facade and Storefront Character” design guideline.<sup>53</sup> This storefront guideline can very much relates to the one described earlier in Paris. Therefore, since my goal was to redesign a street in Seattle that had a growth potential as well as could fit with the Paris pattern Eastlake Ave E was the perfect fit.

The Parisian streets selected for the movie are: the Boulevard St Michel along with the boulevard Saint Germain and the rue de Rennes. Doing my research, I also included the commercial street of the rue de Passy, as well as diverse streets with urban design key elements found in the 10<sup>th</sup> arrondissement<sup>54</sup> and the oldest neighborhood “Le Marais”<sup>55</sup>. First, the Boulevard St Michel and the Boulevard Saint Germain are two high traffic volume streets, very noisy but also very popular commercial boulevards offering a lot of pedestrian activities. Like the rest of Paris these streets are bordered by buildings that are “integrated mix use development”. This kind of organization offers in each building, retails on bottom floors and offices and residencies on top floors. Then, the rue de Rennes very similar to the rue de Passy in term of activities are two very commercial areas mixing pedestrians and cars which are less touristic than the two previous boulevards. They are one of the most attractive streets for locals because they offer a wide diversity of businesses. The rue de Rennes is a very high traffic corridor with traffic going both directions and two lanes each side. It also has bus and bike lanes and it is very accessible by the subway. The rue de Passy is located in a quieter neighborhood, more residential that could relates to what Eastlake offers in terms of activity. Both streets offer a “mini mall” where people can find covered areas and parking spots with many shops. Eastlake’s malls are more a combination of shops next to one another but follow the same principles as the rue de Passy. These “street malls” complete the on street businesses network by having there entrance right at the middle of it.

The key to these successful streets is the mix used developments and the mix between covered and open areas gathered on one street. It is to be noticed that Eastlake Ave E also follows the street organizations of Paris where you always have the main boulevard with all the shopping activities on it and smaller streets running along the side. These smaller streets are not all activated in

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<sup>51</sup> City of Seattle. "Neighborhood Planning Element." *DPD Seattle - Design Review Guidelines for Downtown Development* (n.d.): n. pag. *Seattle Comprehensive Plan*. Web. 31 Jan. 2017.

<sup>52</sup> Fesler, Stephen. "Eastlake Property Rezoned, Two Structures Designated Historic Landmarks » The Urbanist." *The Urbanist*. N.p., 13 Apr. 2016. Web. 08 Mar. 2017.

<sup>53</sup> City of Seattle. *Eastlake*. Seattle: n.p., 1997. PDF.

<sup>54</sup> Annex #8

<sup>55</sup> Annex #9

Eastlake Ave E whereas Paris use them as assets for restaurants and terraces since they are apart from the noise of the traffic and more pedestrian friendly than wide boulevards.

Moving into the neighborhood of the 10<sup>th</sup> arrondissement and Le Marais, my point was to show the different kind of businesses that are part of these very residential areas. Serida Zaid from APUR, explained to me that the city of Paris is able to “choose” the kinds of businesses it wants in one area by making it easier for certain kinds of businesses to settle there. Effectively, one of Paris biggest strength is to follow the theory of the “urban village”. In each neighborhood or even small district of Paris, people can find convenience stores including a bakery, a small grocery store, a pharmacy, a hairdresser etc... This is the way of thinking Parisian urban planners adopted to make this capital city, a human scale city. People don’t take their car to pick up their groceries for the day or get their pills at the pharmacy. They have all of these places at walking distance from their home or office. These shops are the ones everybody needs and utilize daily. The city uses them to reconnect people with their built environment but with one another by interacting with people from the same neighborhood or colleagues.

### *The Video*

The video documentary presented Eastlake Ave E, the rue de Rennes, the Boulevard Saint Michel and the Boulevard Saint Germain. The overall goal was to present a visual “Literature Review”.

I started my montage at the beginning of the Rue de Rennes in Paris. I gave an overview of the street starting by the general situation: high traffic and big intersection, to a road description with 2 car lanes, bus lines, bike lanes and a 16ft sidewalk. I chose this street as my main comparison with Eastlake ave E since both are very wide streets with residential and commercial uses as well as important traffic corridors of each city. Before going into the façade regulations, I jumped into Eastlake Ave E at Lynn street<sup>56</sup>. In this part of the video, people start walking through the avenue where I point out these similarities with the Rue de Rennes.

### *Eastlake Ave E and E Lynn Street*

Continuing our walk we then understand the differences in landscape and regulations. First, the video points out the transparency problem where stores have windows but it is still very difficult to look through the building with opaque windows or just not enough glass on the façade. Then, it turns to the parking problem. Eastlake Ave E is bordered by more parking entrances or lots than commercial building facades. Even though the P of NC2P-40 stands for pedestrians, the whole organization of the streets looks like it has been designed for the comfort of cars and not people. The Eastlake Market and the couple restaurants next to it are surrounded by parking lots for example.<sup>57</sup> Finally, the video points out the corner problems where restaurants only care about their façade on the main commercial street and past one foot around the corner the restaurant turns into a blank façade.<sup>58</sup> These un-activated streets are considered dangerous at night or just boring to walk by during the day for pedestrians. The last thing pointed out in the avenue is the terraces. Open terraces are almost not existing. The restaurants have designed “hidden terraces” instead where they bordered them with tall plain fences squeezed in between their building and the one next to it.

### *Rue de Rennes*

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<sup>56</sup> Annex# 10

<sup>57</sup> Annex# 11

<sup>58</sup> Annex# 12

After stating the urban design problems and potential of Eastlake Ave E, we jump back into Paris with the Rue de Rennes. The first thing we see is a smaller street like E Lynn street running along the main street but in this city very much activated with a variety of businesses and large signage to attract people's attention.<sup>59</sup> Going down the street, the video points out the "frontage zone" and how it actually works in Paris. Defining this zone enabled me to introduce de façade regulations of the continuous commercial facades to follow. There, I explained all the signage, front window, store window and lighting regulations of Paris facades.

Going a little north from there, we then move toward the Boulevards St Michel and Saint Germain; two adjacent corridors of Paris.

### *Boulevard Saint Michel*

The goal of showing this street is to study the landscape tricks Parisian urban planners thought of while designing a pedestrian friendly street. This boulevard was also a good target since it had been studied by Allan Jacobs in terms of street furnishing. The first thing we see while walking in the boulevard is a "newspaper kiosk". These are very popular in Paris. They are placed on the other side of the sidewalk leaving 5 ft for pedestrians and blocking the noise from the road. It is also a very open structure which is very enjoyable for people to walk by. It follows Jan Gehl theory on trying to attract people in shops and "getting them to buy things they don't want."<sup>60</sup> Walking further up the street we see more open structures like a bakery<sup>61</sup> that displays all of its pastries outside which groups people around and attracts people attention in the streets. A book store<sup>62</sup> uses the same method. They display their book shelves outside but still covered by a large awning falling on the sides with a transparent plastic. That way people can see and as for the shops it is able to have some weather protection for their goods. This boulevard also plays a lot with terraces as to activate corners. In our promenade we pass by a terrace<sup>63</sup> that mixes close and open terraces. The close terrace is completely surrounded by glass so people can see in and out of the structure like Seattle requires. Paris also allows them to be heated for the better comfort of customers. These terraces are useful because it changes the dynamic of the sidewalk and break the continuous row of commercial facades. For the parking entrances, Paris has chosen to hide them as much as possible. Parking entrances are very rarely located on the main commercial streets. It is always placed on smaller streets so it doesn't disturb the flow of people.

### *Boulevard Saint Germain*

I used this boulevard as to show the result of these urban design tools on people. It is a less commercial boulevard and more of a high traffic corridor. Still its facades are covered by stores and other businesses. Starting our walk on this street we follow a woman and what she is looking at. While passing by a closed and transparent terrace she thoughtlessly looks inside and people eating unconsciously also look at her. This is the whole theory of Jane Jacobs' "Eye on the Street" where here you are able to interact with your whole environment and therefore feel safe. The video continues and points out more people like this woman, randomly walking down the street and looking at shops and restaurants. This proves how urban design can benefit shops by attracting more customers. We end our walk by turning around the corner into a smaller adjacent street more pedestrian and completing the analysis of Paris urban design successes. These smaller streets follow Jan Gehl theory

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<sup>59</sup> Annex# 13

<sup>60</sup> Jan Gehl

<sup>61</sup> Annex# 14

<sup>62</sup> Annex# 15

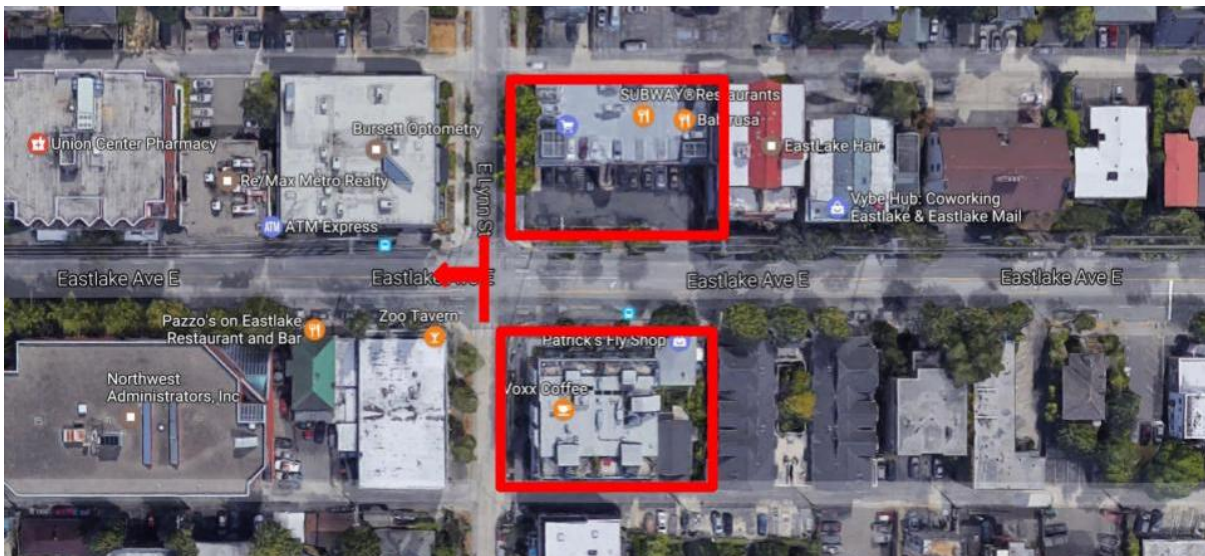
<sup>63</sup> Annex # 16

of the “Change of Façade every 6m” that wants to give more character and dynamism to a street. People feel more interested in a street offering a variety of visuals and activities than a half empty one. At the end the video stops on a small street that is privileging pedestrians over cars without forbidding vehicles to come in. It is in the middle of the winter and we are only 30 seconds away from the big boulevard. However we see terraces full of people and stalls all over the sidewalks.

Paris and Seattle surely have differences in street design but beside some differences in landscape, their regulations and administrations are pretty similar. It is just the way they implement them that varies from one city to the other. Regulations do not take into account the past history or the culture of places. A regulation applies to the present situation where, here, Paris and Seattle are trying to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. If the regulations are quite similar then there is an opportunity to get inspired from a city like Paris to design a street like Eastlake Ave E. It only needs to take a look at Paris and point out the relevant information for Eastlake, which was the point of this video documentary.

### Results\_Eastlake Redesign and Paintings

Focusing on the corner of Eastlake Ave E and E Lynn Street, I chose three views: the Voxx café, the Eastlake Market with the couple restaurants next to it, and the view looking north of the Zoo café and the parking entrance with offices on the other side of the street.



Starting with the VoxX Café I wanted to focus on activating the corner of that street using a terrace. Right now, the café only opens up on the avenue. The entrance offers a couple of chairs and is very dog friendly. Their façade follows the Seattle rules onto transparency but still does not give a good transparency by the opacity of the glass. They do not have weather protection and share the bottom of the building with another shop. The problem here is that we barely can make the difference between the shop and the café. The façade front is the same for both of them. The other thing to think of is the location of the café. It is right at the corner of the street that has one of the most beautiful views on the Lake Union. However, no windows actually have the view on it or not even a chair placed toward it.



BEFORE

In my redesign, I decided to give priority to pedestrians and take over the road to enlarge the sidewalk. Doing so, I was able to place a terrace going around the corner of the building. This terrace has a yellow awning that helps separate the restaurant space from the shop space which has a red awning. I placed two closed terraces. One is next to the shop where I changed the volume of the café and copied the Boulevard Saint Michel café. It creates dynamism in the street and defined the structure for the better understanding of the space of people. I placed the other one on Lynn street. It is a separated terrace, leaving 5 ft clearance for pedestrians and giving the most beautiful view on the



lake. These kinds of closed and transparent terraces apart from the main building are very popular in Paris. It allows to takes over the street and create a barrier with the traffic noise.



AFTER

### *Eastlake Market Corner*

Then comes the Eastlake Market and the restaurants aside of it. The main problem of these businesses is the parking omnipresence. It seems that some of the restaurants have already made some moves to take over the parking spots in front by placing a couple of tables and chairs in front of their facade. The Eastlake Market is completely closed from the outside. Pedestrians cannot see what is inside and the shop is about. For restaurants, it is the same problem as the Voxx Café corner. It is impossible to tell which restaurant is which by looking at the façade.



## BEFORE

My redesign reclaims the space of the parking lots for stall and terrace uses. It is notably feasible since there is extra parking on top of the building. The market could have stalls taking over the whole space in order to open the shop to the street like the bakery or the bookstore of Boulevard Saint Michel did. Since the market offers a wide variety of goods to purchase it would be easy for the business to promote their retail by simply displaying the different things they sell in front of their shop. On the other side, the restaurants could have a change of facades instead of simply using signs to delimitate their property. Doing so, it would help people to identify the kind of businesses located there and also make them more attractive to people's eyes. Having a large sidewalk like this would give an amazing placemaking opportunity by furnishing the space with terraces as well as more plants like the Comprehensive Plan has promoted for this neighborhood.





AFTER

*Northern View of Eastlake Ave E*

This view gives a good perspective on what the avenue currently looks like in general and therefore what it could look like in the future in getting inspired by Paris. Right now, the corner of the Zoo Café is not at all activated at E Lynn Street. On one side, the façade is just made by blank walls. On the avenue, it is covered by windows that are completely blocked by furniture inside or simply too opaque to be able to look through them. There are two benches but getting in the way of people. On the other side, there is an office building where the bottom floor is only parking. This completely disrupts the continuity of retail facades with the main entrance of the parking right on the avenue.



## BEFORE

In my redesign, I started by emphasizing the importance of *integrated* mix use development. I added two stories on top of the Zoo café that can be either offices or residencies. To deal with the corner I used the same system as the Voxx Café and simply created a terrace that would run along the building and take over Lynn Street. It would activate the corner and give a quieter space for customers with a beautiful view. On the avenue, all windows will be transparent where people can see in and out of the structure. The restaurant usually offers ice cream or other take away food during the summer right outside the building. I decided to keep such idea as yearly thing. It joined the idea of the open bakery where people don't even have to enter the shop and simply buy something quickly. This is feasible if the sidewalk could take over the road. On the other side of the street, the parking entrance has to be replaced by another business. The entrance should be in the back alley just like Boulevard Saint Michel does. In my redesign, we can see a store where the window front covers the façade from the top to the bottom but is still framed by a different design than the rest of the building. This trick allows people to walk by and identify directly what is commercial from what is private living space.



## AFTER

### Conclusion

To conclude, it is very obvious that Eastlake Ave E has a lot of potential in becoming a successful pedestrian friendly street. It is also clear that every cities of the world are experiencing the same challenges and when it comes to design it is very easy to get inspired by other culture successful ideas. It seems that Paris and Seattle share more similarities than most of people believe. Paris and Seattle are two very different cities that are still managed by the same kind of administrations. Moreover, they have identified the same design tools to create better street environment for people. It seems that the main difference is the way both city are implementing their regulations. The main difference is scale. Paris has organized its streets so people don't have to drive. Meanwhile, Seattle is a city very disconnected and where people have to leave their neighborhood to answer their daily

basic shopping needs. The other difference is the way regulations are applied within the city. Paris applies its rule at the city scale with only a few exceptions while Seattle plans each of its neighborhoods with different guidelines. Unifying a city is a key to connect people from another. Our routines and life styles depend on our built environment and streets are at the center of this urban net. They are the connectors, but what if they were more than a commuting space? What if we could walk, bike, bus, drive and suddenly decide to stop and spend our leisure time there. This is the new shift American cities will need to adopt in the next centuries in order to attract people back into city downtowns.





*Annex #2 – Rue de Passy, Paris France (View of the street with the entrance of the mall)*



*Annex #3 – Morland Project, Paris France*





*Annex #4 – Boulevard Saint Michel, Paris France*



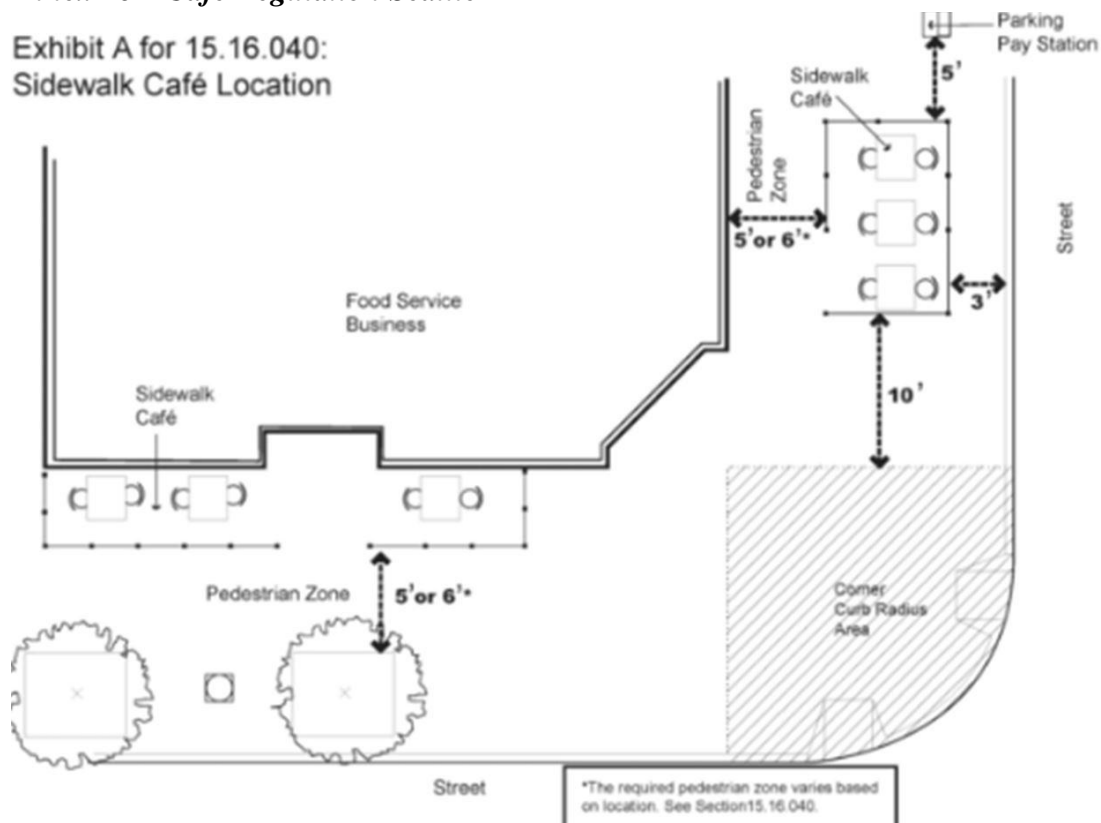
### Annex #5- Street Zoning Table Paris

		LARGEUR DE TROTTOIR				
		moins de 2.40 m	comprise entre 2.40m et 6.00m		plus de 6.00m	
			moins de 3.60 m	plus de 3.60 m	alignement côté façade	alignement côté chaussée
<b>BANDE DE CONCESSION</b>		pas de terrasse au plus 1/3 de la largeur du trottoir jusqu'au premier obstacle et à 2m minimum des arbres				
<b>BANDE PIÉTONNE</b>	flux faible	1.40 m	1/3 et 1.80 m mini	1/3 de la largeur du trottoir		
	flux fort	1.80 m	2.40m	1/3 et 2.40m minimum		
<b>BANDE FONCTIONNELLE</b>		préférer l'im-plantation en façade	toléré ou souhaité	toléré ou souhaité	toléré	souhaité
	position du mobilier	dans la ligne des mobiliers de protection	/	axée/arbres	axée/arbres	axée/arbres
	largeur maximale	0.40 m	0.60m	1.40m	1.90m	1.90m
	distance au nez de bordure	0.40 m	0.60m	0.60m		0.60m
	hauteur maximale	1.50 m sauf horodateur	3.00m	3.00m sauf mat porte-affiche		
	distance mini. aux terrasses	pas de mobilier	pas de mobilier	une fois et demi la profondeur de la terrasse et au moins 2.40m		
	distance mini. à l'axe du tronc	/	/	2.60m	2.60m	2.60m
	distance mini. à la grille d'arbre	/	/	2.00m	2.00m	2.00m
<b>MOBILIER DE MOINS DE 0.50M EN APPLIQUE OU ADOSSÉ EN FAÇADE</b>		souhaité	souhaité	toléré	toléré	toléré

La règle des « trois bandes » d'après le GADEP, *Le Mobilier urbain à Paris*, 1994, p. 20

### Annex #6 – Cafe Regulation Seattle

Exhibit A for 15.16.040:  
Sidewalk Café Location

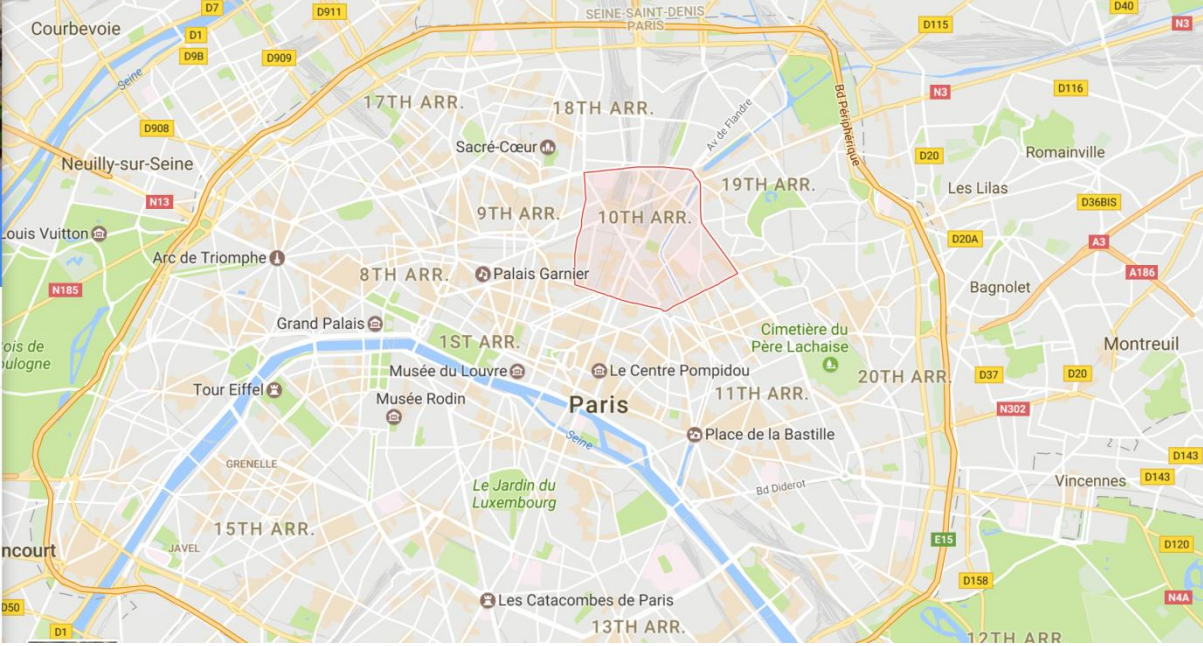




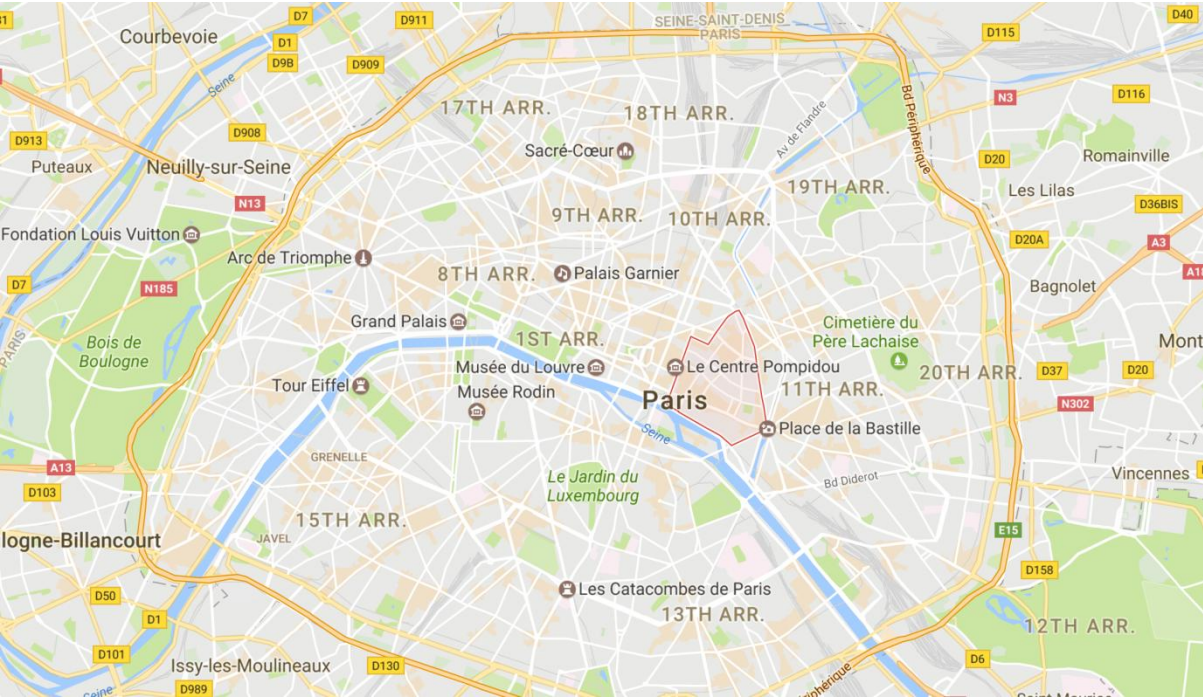
*Annex #7 – Paddy Coyne’s, Bellevue WA*



*Annex #8 – 10th Arrondissement, Paris France*

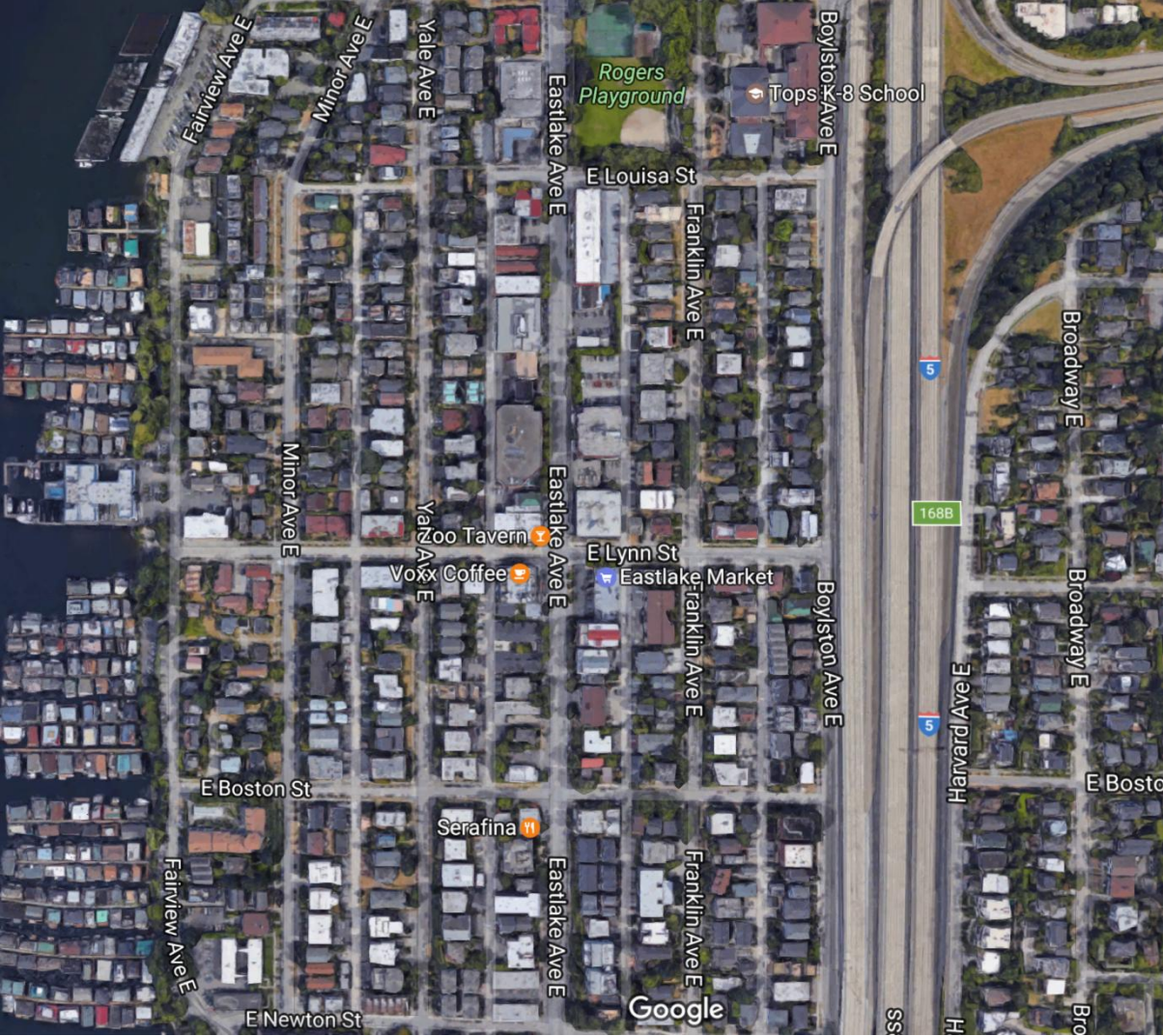


*Annex #9 – Le Marais, Paris France*





Annex #10 – E Lynn Street & Eastlake Ave E



*Annex #11 – Parking Lot Eastlake Market, Seattle WA*





*Annex #12 – Corner Blank Facade Eastlake Ave E, Seattle WA*



*Annex #13 – Small street aside Rue de Rennes, Paris France*



*Annex #14 – Open Bakery Boulevard Saint Michel, Paris France*





*Annex #15 – Bookstore Boulevard Saint Michel, Paris France*



*Annex #16 – Terrace on corner, Boulevard Saint Michel, Paris France*





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