



FIRST HILL

IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

FIRST HILL COMMUNITY NEWS

October 2026

PROJECT UPDATES



Swedish Development Brings New Benefits

The photo above is a rendering of improvements planned for Minor & Seneca.

The Seattle City Council has approved a revised ordinance for [Swedish's](#) planned development on Block 95 (the vacant lot on Boren across from the Frye Art Museum). There is currently no timeline to begin construction on Block 95. Instead, Swedish is focused on completing its new Hughes Tower at the corner of Minor and Marion, a project whose cost has risen to approximately \$1.4 billion—significantly more than originally anticipated.

Even without a construction timeline for Block 95, the revised ordinance requires the [\\$2.825M public benefits package](#) associated with the block's alley vacation to be completed by August 2028. Improvements include:

- \$500,000 for First Hill Park improvements (already invested)

- \$1.3 million for the First Hill Mile walking loop improvements including sidewalks, landscaping, street trees, and wayfinding
- \$300,000 for public art along the First Hill Mile
- Additional pedestrian space and improved streetscapes along Minor, Boren, Columbia, and Cherry
- New pedestrian signals at Boren & Cherry and Minor & James

The neighborhood is grateful to Skyline and the City Council for prioritizing these investments in First Hill, and we look forward to seeing the improvements take shape over the next two years.



Skyline's Skybridge Work to Begin Soon

The photo above is a rendering of the completed sky bridge on 8th Avenue.

We are also grateful for the [Skyline](#) retirement community's contributions to the neighborhood as part of their sky bridge construction. The project will bring benefits to First Hill including curb improvements at 8th and Marion, public art by artist Georgia Gerber (known for the bears at First Hill Park and Rachel the pig at Pike Place Market), and early design work for wayfinding along the [Park to Park Walking Loop](#).

The pedestrian bridge is expected to be complete by March 2027, making it safer and easier for Skyline residents to get between the two towers on their campus by not having to cross 8th Avenue below.

Skyline is awaiting final approval from SDOT to begin construction on the sky bridge. Once underway, the project will require the street closure of 8th Avenue between Columbia and Cherry from 7am-5pm on weekdays. One lane of traffic will be open outside construction hours, signage will reroute vehicles, and pedestrian access will be impacted. Please see the attached [construction notice](#) for more details.



Horizon House's Tower Foundation Pour

The image above is a rendering of the completed West Tower (photo credit Mithun).

The foundation of [Horizon House's](#) 33-story West Tower will be poured on Saturday, October 31, rain or shine. Concrete trucks will mobilize at 2:00 a.m. and pour through the day, completing around 5:00 p.m. Once the pour starts, it will not stop until 560 trucks have delivered concrete and the foundation is 10 feet thick!

Neighbors can anticipate truck traffic, concrete pumping operations, associated job site noise, and one lane road closures on 9th Avenue (beginning at 7am on October 29th) to accommodate the large number of concrete trucks orchestrating this pour. Pigott Corridor will remain open to pedestrians passing through, and onlookers are welcome to observe project operations from Freeway Park.

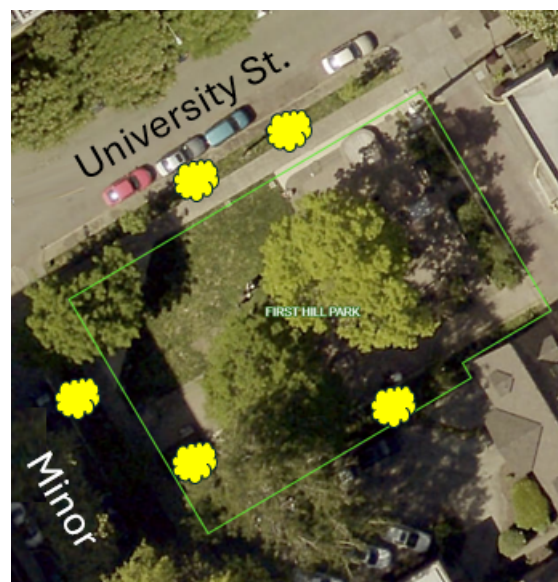


CenTrio to Decarbonize Seattle's Steam

[CenTrio](#) supplies steam to buildings across Downtown, the Central Business District, First Hill, and parts of Capitol Hill. They recently [released news](#) of plans for a major step toward cleaner energy with a new 25-megawatt electric boiler at the Western Avenue plant (pictured above).

Did you know? CenTrio's steam system expanded to First Hill in the early 1960s. Today, two steam lines serve our neighborhood: one runs through a utility corridor and Freeway Park, and the other is buried along and beneath Cherry Street. These separate routes provide important redundancy and help ensure reliable service.

The system serves a total of 140 buildings in Seattle, including the hospitals. This new boiler project will help institutions reduce emissions without costly, building-by-building upgrades. It will also improve air quality in Seattle's dense, urban core with the reduction of greenhouse emissions by up to 60%, or 42,000 tons, annually. Supported by \$4M in state grants, construction is expected to begin in 2027, with the boiler operational about two years later.



More Trees Coming to First Hill Park

Council President Hollingsworth secured a \$20,000 proviso in the City's 2025 budget for First Hill Park maintenance - we're grateful for her support and excited to see the benefits come to fruition! A big thank-you also to Seattle Parks and Recreation for pruning the park's greenery last fall and continuing the work this fall with plans to add five new trees—three along the streets surrounding the park and two inside the park itself. (The yellow dots in the picture above show where the new trees will be planted.) These improvements are a welcome investment in our treasured, little neighborhood park.

FHIA is now a *Friends of First Hill Park* group and can help organize volunteers, support stewardship projects, provide community input, and

work with Parks staff to help keep the park clean, welcoming, and vibrant. Do you love First Hill Park? [Click here to sign-up](#) and stay in-the-know about upcoming opportunities to get involved!



EXTENDED to OCT 30!

The Farmers Market has been a huge success this year, thanks to shoppers like you! Several vendors have agreed to sell for a couple more weeks to keep the Market going a bit longer.

Drop by Terry Avenue (near Hotel Sorrento) between 10am-2pm on Fridays through the end of the month - and grab lunch nearby to support a First Hill eatery. We love local!

VOLUNTEER THANKS



Seattle's Day of Service: A Success!

Look who showed up on First Hill for Seattle's Day of Service! The [First Hill Improvement Association](#) partnered with [Freeway Park Association](#) to host this year's event. With supplies from the Adopt-a-Street program and the generous help of lots of volunteers, we picked up dozens of bags of trash from around the neighborhood. Thank you to all those who helped get First Hill glistening!



Thank you, Mortenson!

Volunteers from [Mortenson](#), the construction company who is building Swedish's new tower, also helped get the neighborhood gussied up recently. In addition to picking up trash, they painted over graffiti and wiped off tags from trash cans and street signs. Thank you, friends at Mortenson, for your work in - and volunteering for - First Hill!

EVENTS



A Party for WHEEL Women's Shelter

Date: October 25th

Time: 4-6pm

Location: Trinity Parish Hall (609 8th)

Each night on First Hill, WHEEL's shelters bring over 100 women inside. [WHEEL](#) is a unique, grassroots organizing effort of homeless and formerly homeless women, founded in 1993 by women wishing to advocate, speak for themselves, and to gain dignity, shelter, justice, and housing. In 2001, at the invitation of the City of Seattle, WHEEL started operating a Severe Weather Women's Shelter that's now grown into a network of three shelters for women in our neighborhood.

To celebrate WHEEL's 10th year of women's shelter at Trinity Church, the First Hill Improvement Association is helping host a free, family-friendly event full of food, games, prizes, and activities for all! Let's pack the house for this party to show our solidarity and support! To RSVP, please click the link below and join us. Can't make it? [Donations to WHEEL](#) are also welcome to support this critical work.

RSVP Here!



Lantern Festival at Freeway Park

Date: Friday, October 23rd

Time: 5-7:30pm

Location: Freeway Park's Upper Lawns (700 Seneca St.)

Join [Freeway Park Association](#) to celebrate the creativity of our community and embrace the changing of seasons with light, art, and music! This event closes their 50th Anniversary art installation. Artists will be onsite with art-making activities and park history learning opportunities. Come enjoy FREE food & drinks, live music, crafts, games, and a photo booth. All are welcome!



The First Hill Pet Parade Returns!

Date: Friday, October 31st

Time: 6-8pm

Location: Begin and end at First Hill Park (1201 University)

Dress up your pet and/or yourselves (or simply join us for the parade - all are welcome!) to walk through the neighborhood on Halloween night. We'll be meeting at First Hill Park at 6:00pm and parade around with our furry, feathery, fun families to do some "tricks for treating" before returning to the park for warm drinks and spooky snacks. It's bound to be a howling good time...rain or shine! That's right, this event has historically been a walk of "Soggy Doggies" under the guise of the "Pet Parade" - hopefully we'll get better weather this year, but we're ready for a wet walk too!



FIRST HILL'S Pop-Up Petting Zoo

This year's Petting Zoo was full of furry fun! We loved the opportunity to gather the community together with farm animals in the city! Couldn't make it? Or just want to relive the magic of petting a chicken? Click the button below for photos!

[CLICK HERE FOR EVENT PHOTOS](#)



First Hill Final Friday

Date: October 30th
Time: 5:00-7:00 PM
Location: Sushi Kanpai

Bring your friends and join neighbors and colleagues from 5pm to 7pm on the last Friday in October for socializing and to support a local, First Hill establishment. This month we're meeting at [Sushi Kanpai](#) to share some delicious Japanese cuisine and drinks. Join us to enjoy fine friends, food, and fun! We can't wait to see you there.

More Upcoming Events

Click on the events below for details:

- October 21 - [Mindfulness Meditation](#) at The Frye
- October 22 - [Murder Mystery Dinner](#) at Hotel Sorrento
- October 23 - [Fall Lantern Festival](#) at Freeway Park
- October 23 - [Murder Mystery Soiree](#) at the Mansion
- October 24 - [Poetry Marathon for Peace](#) at Seattle First Baptist
- October 25 - [A Party for WHEEL](#) at Trinity
- October 27 - [Magic Show & Spiritualism Lecture](#) at the Mansion
- October 29 - [Drop-in Studio](#) at The Frye
- October 29 - [Ghost Tour](#) at the Mansion
- October 30 - [First Hill Final Friday](#) at Sushi Kanpai
- October 30 - [Dia de Muertos Concert](#) at St. James
- October 31 - [First Hill Pet Parade](#) at First Hill Park
- October 31 - [All Hallow's Eve Cocktail Affair](#) at Sorrento

~ Click the button below to check out more events happening on First Hill ~

PRO TIP: Click "Google Calendar ICS" on event listings to add events directly from our calendar to yours!

NEIGHBORHOOD EVENT CALENDAR



FIRST HILL
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

The First Hill Improvement Association serves the First Hill community through advocacy, information dissemination, event programming, and stewardship of resources. Our mission is to make First Hill a connected, vibrant, and welcoming place for all. Learn more about FHIA at firsthill.org and join us on social media.



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