



The 4th & Willis Gateway and Greenways project transformed Willis Street from an auto-centric route into a welcoming city entrance, providing open space, enhancing safety, and improving connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians in the surrounding community.





The project sits at the nexus of Downtown Kent, residential neighborhoods, schools, senior housing, and an industrial area. Improving multi-modal safety and connectivity, including linking to the regional Interurban Trail to the west, was a key goal of the project.





The gateway sculpture's sinuous forms organize the spatial geometry of the roundabout and echo a skeleton blueprint of an aerospace turbine engine. The intricate pattern cutouts were inspired by the textile patterns of the local multicultural community.





The previous intersection, spanning six lanes with high vehicle speeds and wide crosswalks, lacked safety and comfort. The new roundabout shortened the crossing distances, added crosswalks and upgraded ADA ramps on all legs, and RRFBs for improved visibility and safety.





At dawn, the gateway sculpture is lit with a customizable LED illumination system, which is programmed with different seasonal color schemes to celebrate multicultural and national holidays throughout the year, providing a warm and inviting welcome to commuters and visitors.





The corollary gateway feature echos the form and materials of the central roundabout gateway and is nestled within a large planted stormwater raingarden.



The north greenway features a generous gathering space instilling a sense of place with sculptural pieces commissioned by the City's public art program, decorative and pervious pavement, and ornamental plantings.





The north greenway abuts an elementary school and multiple senior housing complexes. A major goal of the project was to provide more inviting outdoor public spaces for these neighbors.





A new gathering and seating space within the north greenway provides an area of respite with bench seating pedestrian lighting, lighted bollards, pervious and decorative pavement and ornamental plantings.





Extending along the north greenway from 4th to the UPRR tracks, a new shared-use-path brings non-motorized users into the City from the Interurban Trail, preserving existing mature trees along the greenway; a pervious-concrete infiltration trench along the trail captures stormwater.





Youth groups in the neighborhood and school nearby take advantage of the north greenway which features more informal paths for strolling and play, as well as benches to rest and enjoy the seasonal ornamental plantings.





The south greenway features more informal paths for strolling among the mature trees.



New digital message board signs within the north and south greenways were added to provide important community and emergency announcements in the many different languages spoken within the City of Kent.





The south greenway also features small seating areas and gravel pathway that complete the strolling loop between the north and south greenways.





Large planted stormwater raingardens infiltrate runoff from the new roundabout and sidewalk connections as well as soften the expanse of pavement for neighboring businesses and residents.