

“Industrial Strength” Natural Drainage

Improving industrial land through collaboration

8th Avenue South – Seattle, WA

A collaborative project of the Georgetown Community Council, Markey Machinery, the Seattle Department of Transportation, and Tom Knoblauch Fine Landscaping.

Property owner:
Bob Lecoque, Markey Machinery



Project Manager:
Cari Simson, Urban Systems Design, with the Georgetown Community



The project was made possible through funding from Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, and hundreds of hours of volunteer time from residents and businesses in the Georgetown area.

Project location: 7266 8th Avenue South in Seattle

- Historic street in Georgetown neighborhood; Interurban Trolley line once went along 8th Avenue to South Park and points south; 100-foot wide right-of-way
- No street stormdrains; No improvement to street since 1930s
- Runoff formed in puddles, evaporated, or flowed in groundwater to Duwamish River, a Superfund site



Historical street view



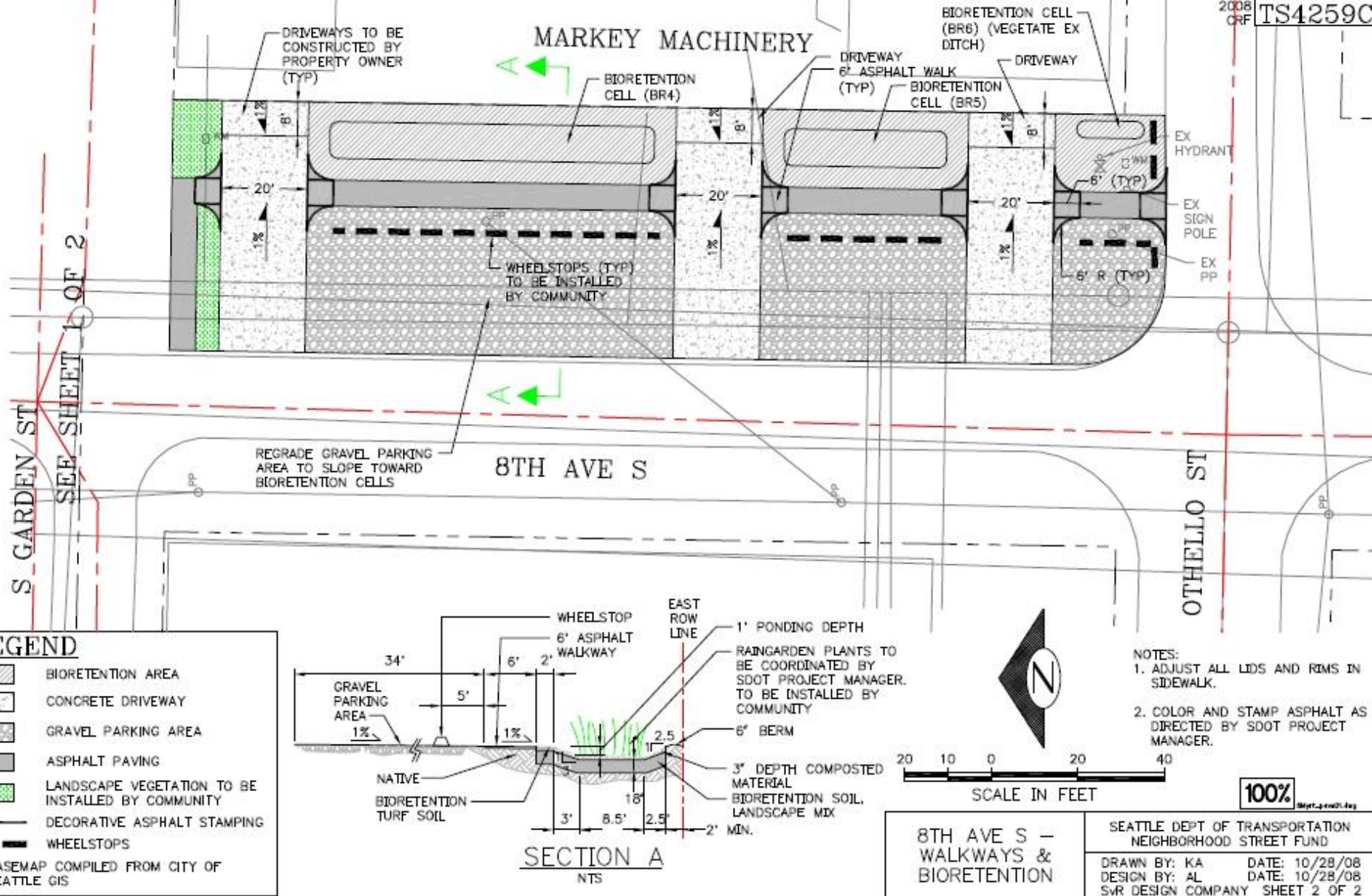
Prior to the natural drainage project, the conditions in front of Markey Machinery were the same going back to 1930s: mud in the winter and dust in the summer

Project challenges

- Markey Machinery was upgrading their entire site; needed to pave driveways across City-owned, unimproved dirt right-of-way to access to their facility with heavy equipment, forklifts
- Community wanted to improve access to 8th Avenue street end park on the Duwamish River; safe walking on sidewalk, improve drainage, show green infrastructure possibilities as pilot
- No clear permitting process for property owners or community organizations to improve right-of-way with LID or green infrastructure

Collaborative Successes

- Community wrote a series of grants (Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Matching Fund, Puget Soundkeeper Alliance funding, SDOT Neighborhood Street Fund) and engaged City staff, businesses, students
- Markey Machinery's Bob Lecoque enlisted help from the Manufacturing and Industrial Council which raised his concerns to higher levels in City
- Seattle Department of Transportation staff Shauna Walgren was sympathetic and found ways to work behind-the-scenes to make project feasible
- Bob Lecoque and community never gave up!



The engineering design: October 2008



The original planting plan – some modifications occurred due to plant availability and seasonal weather conditions

December 4, 2009:

The site in the morning, prior to the addition of bioretention soil and mulch



December 4, 2009:

**Delivery of
bioretention soil**







December 5, 2009:

**Volunteers shoveling
mulch onto the swale
edges**





December 5, 2009:
First round of planting is complete, and swales are working effectively after the rain. Note “truck-sized” wheel stops purchased by community’s grant and installed by property owner.

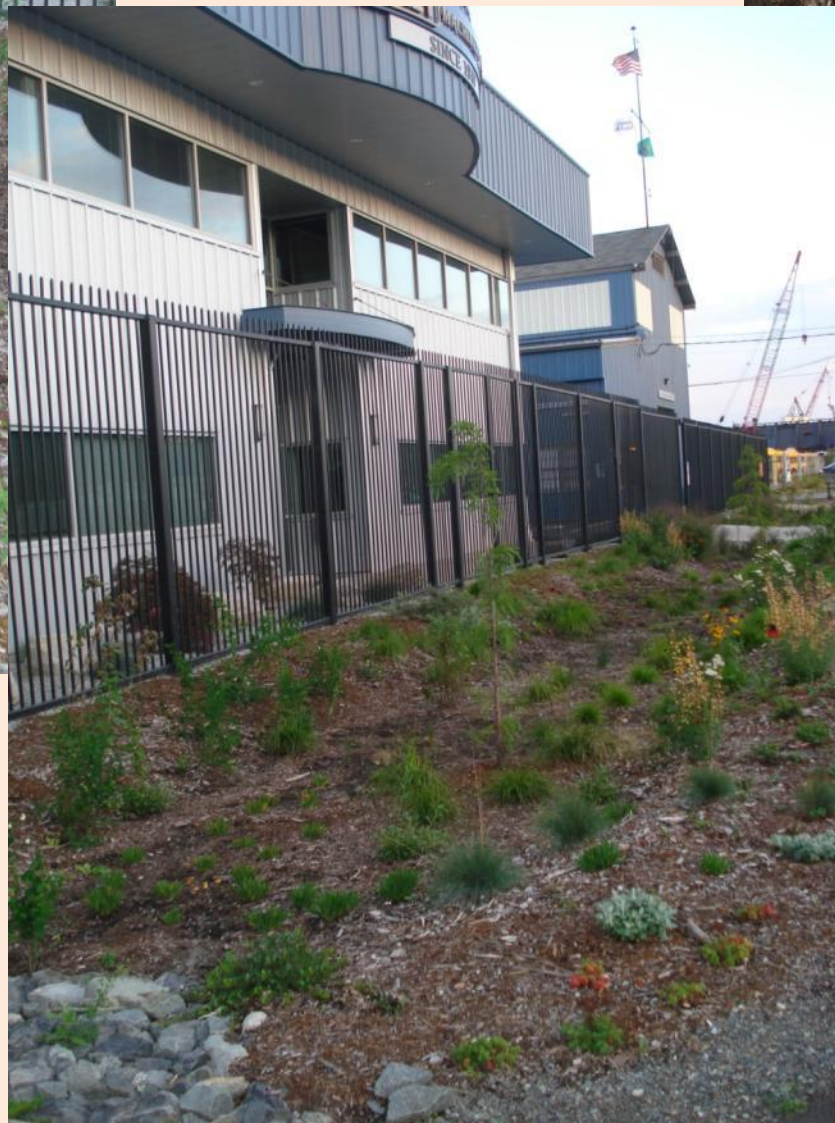


April 17, 2010 “Earth Day - Duwamish Alive” work day, about 50 volunteers, many from the CleanScapes company from the neighborhood, worked at the swales and along the street. Hosted the official ribbon-cutting with Seattle City Councilmember Richard Conlin for the swales’ completion.



**August 2010:
The swales have
matured well
through the summer**





**September 30,
2010:
The swales start
showing off their
fall foliage**



December 2010:
A two-photo “panorama” of the swales working well after a heavy rain on the right, and large ponds on the left around the railroad tracks.

November 2011



June 2012



Continued collaboration needed...

- Property owners and businesses and community organizations need a streamlined process to improve the right-of-way (parking or planting strips, gravel shoulders, etc.) using LID or green infrastructure
- Partnerships between Government department staff, grantors, NGOs; establish programs to offer technical assistance
- Grant funding for more pilot projects and outreach/education programs to test processes, make changes, host tours, workshops, etc.
- Maintenance agreements, assistance, education



Thank you!

Questions or Comments?

Bob LeCoque, Markey Machinery: Bobbyl@markeymachinery.com

**Cari Simson, Urban Systems Design: 206-234-5102 or
cari@urbansystemsdesign.com**