



## 2015 WATERFRONT SEATTLE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

### PURPOSE

This public engagement plan includes goals, supported by specific strategies, which build on the Waterfront Seattle culture of robust engagement, supporting the guiding principle of a Waterfront for All.

The main objective of public engagement in 2015, especially early in the year, will be to provide clear information about recent changes to the Waterfront scope and schedule – helping people understand what has changed and what is happening. Each of the engagement activities in this plan will support this objective.

### GOALS

1. Create genuine public engagement opportunities that are aligned with the project schedule and needs; be able to clearly articulate how community input fits into project design, delivery and decision making, and how conflicting needs will be resolved.
2. Broaden engagement and increase inclusivity, in support of the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative; particularly addressing communities' racial, cultural and socio-economic complexities.
3. Ensure that the public has easy access to the project, and maintain a high level of responsiveness and transparency.

### OUTREACH STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT EACH GOAL

**Goal #1:** Create genuine public engagement opportunities that are aligned with the project schedule and needs; be able to clearly articulate how community input fits into project design, delivery and decision making and how conflicting needs will be resolved.

#### Supporting strategies

At this stage in the project, it is important to define real opportunities for the public to influence decisions on design, policy, etc. Engagement activities need to respond to those concrete opportunities. Allowing the public to clearly see how their input fits into the process fosters more productive engagement and helps people see the waterfront as a tangible reality that they can weigh in on.

#### *Community forums: in-person and online format (Q1-Q2 2015)*

Convene a series of 7 community forums in neighborhoods and districts throughout Seattle, building on the success of the 2012 forum series at Town Hall. The forums will provide opportunity for public dialogue and meaningful feedback on project elements being actively designed in 2015/2016 (for example, roadway and promenade) and topics of importance to the community; topics will be informed by community input. The Office of Arts and Culture will be a key partner to develop a follow-up forum



based on their past Square Feet events that allows the public to further engage on design of a specific project element.

To increase opportunities for participation and broaden access, an online version of the forums will occur simultaneously, allowing for participation without time, location, language or mobility constraints.

*Informal panel discussions (Q2-Q3 2015)*

Develop a series of 4-5 panel discussions hosted by key partner organizations relevant to specific topics. Panel discussions will be advertised as a series to maximize interest and attendance. Potential topics include: operations and maintenance/long-term stewardship, sustainability, history, play and art. Likely partner organizations include: Friends of Waterfront Seattle, Office of Arts and Culture, HistoryLink, Downtown Seattle Families, Waterfront Steering Committee. Panel discussions are envisioned as similar to the Allied Arts “Beer and Culture” nights and will be interactive in style.

*Meetings with organizations and community groups (Q1-Q4 2015)*

Join existing meetings and events hosted by local groups and organizations to engage their membership in two-way dialog about the waterfront. These meetings will be focused less on presenting design details, and more on sharing relevant issues and seeking specific input.

*Youth and family engagement in playground design (2015, TBD based on artist timeline)*

Create an opportunity for youth to help design the promenade playground, engaging with Waterfront designers and artists. Likely groups to involve include: Downtown Seattle Families, Seattle Architecture Foundation Youth Program, El Centro De La Raza Child Development Center, Pike Place Market Childcare and Preschool, Boys and Girls Clubs of King County.

**Goal #2:** Broaden engagement and increase inclusivity, in support of the City’s Race and Social Justice Initiative; particularly addressing communities’ racial, cultural and socioeconomic complexities.

**Supporting strategies**

In order to create waterfront for all that is truly a destination for people throughout Seattle, it is important to understand what “destination” means for people throughout the city. A critical part of engagement in 2015 will be broadening inclusivity to reach people that have been missing from the conversation.

*Community forums: in-person and online formats (Q1-Q2 2015)*

Described above under Goal #1. This strategy also supports Goal #2.

*MindMixer digital conversations (Q1-Q4 2015; monthly)*

Foster a robust digital conversation that’s accessible to all. MindMixer allows Seattle residents and people from across Puget Sound to discuss issues and share ideas related to the future waterfront without time, location or mobility constraints. A variety of feedback formats, including surveys, polls,



photo Q&A, maps and open-ended questions will be used. This tool may be used to generate topics for the community forums and panel discussions described under Goal #2.

#### *Roundtables (Q1-Q4 2015)*

Convene leaders in hard to reach communities to identify community values and barriers to entry that need to be addressed to allow for more inclusive engagement. Continuing the roundtable series will build on the momentum gained through roundtables in 2013 and 2014, and will help strengthen broader participation among hard to reach communities. In 2015, 5-6 roundtables will be convened to engage traditionally underrepresented populations including:

- Minority/immigrant/refugee communities
- Disabilities community (deaf, blind, disabled)
- Low-income communities

#### *Tribal engagement (Q1-Q4 2015)*

Continue efforts to engage local tribes and the Urban Indian community. Build on past successes with visits to the tribes to engage with elders, leaders and community members. 2015 activities will include a City-hosted workshop with leaders from local tribes in January 2015, continued meetings to refine design and program, and culturally appropriate activities to engage tribal members.

#### *Fairs and festivals (Q2-Q4 2015, majority in Q3)*

Participate in a wide variety of community fairs, festivals and events to continue broadening engagement throughout Seattle communities. Draw new audiences with the kids and family photo booth activity and additional interactive booth features. Includes participation in previously successful events, including Umoja Festival, Rainier Summer Streets, and Salmon Return Family Festival among others.

#### *Mainstream and ethnic media (Q1-Q4 2015)*

Consistent media coverage from a variety of sources is a critical channel for broadening public awareness of the program. In 2015, Waterfront will coordinate with media sources to provide key updates, graphics and access to project staff to ensure quality coverage on a variety of topics including design progress, public engagement and waterfront activation. As an integrated part of the approach to working with local media, use of ethnic media outlets will be strengthened to support consistent coverage and to ensure the broadest access to information.

#### *Waterfront model (Q1-Q4 2015)*

Place the waterfront model in geographically diverse locations throughout Seattle. To date the model has had great success in downtown high-traffic locations including the Seattle Library and City Hall. To support the goal of broadening access to the waterfront program, moving the model throughout Seattle neighborhoods will ensure that more people have a point of access to learn about the project.



**Goal #3:** Ensure that the public has easy access to the project, and maintain a high level of responsiveness and transparency.

**Supporting strategies**

A fundamental principle of ensuring access to information is establishing and maintaining consistent channels of communication, including careful review of and periodic improvements. In 2015, existing Waterfront communication channels will continue to be used and will be improved and refreshed to keep them relevant and accessible.

*Website (Q1-Q4 2015; ongoing)*

Continue use of [waterfrontseattle.org](http://waterfrontseattle.org) as a main information channel for project updates, documents, upcoming events (including Waterfront Steering Committee meetings), and Seawall maps and construction updates. In late 2014-early 2015, the website navigation and key sections will be refreshed to improve overall usability, including a stronger project updates feature on the homepage, improved document library, and a new funding and cost estimate page.

*Information line and email address (Q1-Q4 2015; daily)*

Continue use of established phone and email communications channels to invite public inquires and respond promptly. In 2015, these direct lines of communication will continue to build trust with stakeholders by responding to their questions and comments thoroughly and providing transparent project information.

*Email updates (Q1-Q4 2015; monthly)*

Provide regular email updates to more than 6,700 contacts. Consistent email updates demonstrate progress and invite engagement with waterfront-related activities and events. In 2015, email updates will be sent monthly as a way to share program progress and momentum, and to spur participation in public involvement opportunities including community forums, panel discussions, and MindMixer digital conversation.

*Social media (Q1-Q4 2015; daily)*

Continue using social media as a way to share project information, connect with audiences and respond to questions and comments. Social media platforms provide the public with a direct point of connection to the project. In 2015, posts will continue to focus on a variety of topic including Seawall construction progress, happenings on the waterfront, history and design, as well as exploring emerging social media tools such as online polls, photo-sharing, boosted posts and others. Analytics will continue to be used to increase reach and relevance.

*Mainstream and ethnic media (Q1-Q4 2015)*

Described under Goal #2. This strategy also supports Goal #3.



*Waterfront Steering Committee meetings (Q1-Q4 2015; bi-monthly)*

The committee will continue to be a source of transparency and project information for the public. Further, committee members will continue to serve as community liaisons on behalf of the program. In 2015, public engagement opportunities – such as community forums – will involve committee members whenever possible in order to continue build upon their community connections.

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS**

Informational materials that support outreach will be developed to be accessible and culturally sensitive, and will be translated as appropriate. Print materials will also be formatted to be available on the website and accessible to those with vision impairment. Key materials include an updated project folio/fact sheet, project overview rack cards, and informational boards to support fairs and festivals and community events.

**MEASUREABLE OUTCOMES**

Outcomes associated with the public engagement strategies in this plan will be regularly monitored and documented. Where necessary, changes will be made to better achieve goals and improve participation. Examples of outcomes to be tracked include:

- Diversity of attendees/number of first time attendees at events
- Increased self-select participation in hard to reach communities; increased coverage in ethnic media
- Number of participants and comments submitted in on-line public meetings and MindMixer
- Growth, open rates, visitation rates and other analytics in social media web and email
- Tone, tenor and substance of comments via all communication channels
- Increase in project support that results in action