



Overlook Walk

2017 public open house and online survey summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On Thursday, July 20, 2017, the Office of the Waterfront hosted a public open house for more than 100 people to share the latest design for the Overlook Walk and provide Waterfront Seattle Program updates. Following the open house, an online survey was launched from July 27 to August 11, 2017 to provide additional opportunities for feedback.

Open house attendees submitted 36 comments on a graffiti board at the public meeting, and the online survey received 449 responses.

Key feedback themes included:

- Need for a legible, easy connections between downtown and the waterfront
- Desire for a design that complements the surrounding area, including Pike Place Market and Seattle Aquarium expansion
- Interest in new public areas that highlight natural surroundings and views, and increase greenery
- Importance of ADA accessibility for wayfinding and access between levels
- Support for space for programming, recreation and relaxation
- Importance of keeping the Overlook Walk clean and comfortable for all



FEEDBACK THEMES

Connections

Respondents indicated a desire for:

- Shortcuts between downtown and the waterfront for commuting, running errands, shopping, recreation and leisure
- Better connections to transit, including ferries, buses and light rail
- Access to waterfront bike paths from downtown
- Better wayfinding to get to the waterfront from Pike Place Market
- Comfortable walking paths

Representative quotes:

- “Good way to walk up to the bus tunnel after work.”
- “Might give better access to Pike Place Market to me, as a walk-on ferry passenger from Bainbridge Island.”
- “I’d visit the waterfront and the market during lunch hours.”
- “It could be my shortcut to the waterfront when biking either north (to Myrtle Edwards and beyond) or south (to the trail to Marginal Way).”
- “Walking east-west, daily shopping and errands, and all of above in more unusual leisure times.”

Overall design

Respondents indicated a desire for:

- Minimizing empty space and hardscape, including providing breaks in stairways
- Buffers from traffic noise
- Design that complements surrounding features, including Pike Place Market and Seattle Aquarium’s Ocean Pavilion expansion
- Covered areas and canopies to provide shade and protection from elements, with permanent seating

Representative quotes

- “Soften it more with vegetation, not so much hardscape! Make a peaceful and pleasant destination - so buffers from traffic noise wherever, however possible.”
- “Try to mitigate looming staircase by having plaza spaces etc. in mid-way of the travels.”
- “Connecting the Overlook Walk project with the Seattle Aquarium Ocean Pavilion expansion is key. It should be seamless!”
- “If you're proposing a new space integrated into Pike Place Market access, it could work out.”



- “Canopies for shade in the summer months/protection from rain during winter months makes it more versatile. Open space to allow movement, but nooks for a more intimate setting.”

Natural surroundings and greenery

Respondents indicated a desire for:

- Design that accentuates existing views of mountains, Elliott Bay and city skyline
- Increased greenery and landscaping, and sufficient landscaping maintenance
- Lighting and increased visibility to enhance natural surrounding
- Areas to sit and enjoy natural beauty

Representative quotes:

- “Open space with unimpeded views.”
- “Lots of transparency and visibility - no hidden corners. Also, beautiful lighting in the evening.”
- “Beautiful landscaping, pathways for walking, places for sitting and enjoying the views.”

Accessibility

Respondents indicated a desire for:

- Elevators and ramps to provide access between levels for people of all ages and abilities
- Accessible wayfinding, including braille signage and multi-lingual signage

Representative quotes:

- “Please make sure there are elevators that are easily accessible for the disabled. Right now it looks like the elevators required crossing busy streets. “
- “Your plan has too many steps, maybe ramps instead.”
- “Make it very easy for people of all ages (strollers, wheelchairs, etc) so that families can walk without any obstacles. Have nice signs up so people understand where it leads.”
- “Please include Braille signage.”

Programming and activation

Respondents indicated a desire for:

- Recreation space for children and families
- Free programming and events, including music, activities and exhibits
- Opportunities for food and dining, including outdoor café seating and food vendors
- Public art installations, especially art that celebrates local Tribes and indigenous cultures



Representative quotes

- “Making sure that the space is activated with public and commercial activities as close to 24/7 as possible! Events, outdoor restaurant seating, etc.”
- “More public space for my family and young kids as we live in downtown Seattle.”
- “I believe it’s important to accommodate a variety of uses. Some parts could have lots of activity, while others would be for more quiet time, like reading or just sitting to enjoy the atmosphere.”
- “It should be eco-friendly with plenty of Native American Artwork to celebrate the people who were here first.”

Comfort and safety

Respondents indicated a desire for:

- Operations and maintenance to keep spaces clean and safe
- Maintaining balance between natural elements and urban setting
- Activation that promotes social activity, including nighttime programming

Representative quotes

- “Keep it safe, keep it clean, keep it maintained.”
- “Keep it clean. That means cleaning up graffiti as it happens, enough trash receptacles to sort and recycle trash. The newest area just opened and I loved the views and the spaciousness of it.”
- “Activating the space so there is always something new going on.”
- “That it provide more public space and easier access to all parts of the city. It must be kept clean and inviting.”