

3.1 PUBLIC OUTREACH: A WATERFRONT FOR ALL

What does it mean to create a partnership between the City of Seattle and the entire community? In its mission to transform the future of Seattle’s Central Waterfront, the Waterfront Seattle program has committed to innovative and robust public engagement – seeking input from many voices, inviting open and direct dialog, and encouraging participation throughout the design process. This level of community engagement is what is needed to fulfill a principle goal of Waterfront Seattle – creating a Waterfront for All.

TURNING COMMENTS INTO CONCEPTS

Throughout the conceptual design phase, thousands of people from the greater Seattle Community contributed ideas – at public meetings, workshops, briefings, via the project website, by e-mail and many other ways. The diversity and creativity of these community-generated ideas was a key source of insight and priorities for the design team and truly made Seattle’s mark on the concept design. The following are just some of the most common themes and ideas that emerged:

VIEWS Elliott Bay and the waterfront’s outstanding view of this public treasure connect with many people. Whether it’s elevated views simulating current views from the Viaduct, or opportunities for reviews between the historic piers - the view is a community asset to cherish.

CONNECTIONS The future waterfront is envisioned as a place of movement – movement of all types of transportation, including vehicles, parking, pedestrian, bicycle and public transport to better serve those traveling east, west, north and south.

PATHWAYS The waterfront should feature active movement spaces, including pathways for running, walking, biking and other activities, as well as in-water activities like kayaking or places that let people “touch the water.”

PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES The tremendous energy and interest around these new spaces includes a desire for flexibility - a mix of places to gather and “be quiet,” and places to run, play and be active. Flexibility also means spaces that take advantage of the sun and also compliment the variety of weather in the Pacific Northwest.

HABITAT The waterfront is also habitat, and many people connected to the idea of opportunities to interact with and see in-water and upland habitat, and create a shoreline edge with access to beaches, tide pools and places to walk and sit along the water.

ARTS AND CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT To activate a public space, it must attract activity, including places to eat, drink and picnic, outdoor concerts, street markets, festivals, cultural celebrations, and large and small performances. This could also mean showing artists at work, and including art that is interactive and evolving, both temporary and permanent art to create a more dynamic environment.

We also heard valuable feedback on what the design should avoid, such as structures that block views, too much roadway space, or retail that doesn’t feel authentic to Seattle. This input, as much as what the public wants to see, was critical to shaping the design.

In addition, comments not only highlighted the kinds of spaces that people want to see, but also the spaces they already enjoy – such as Pike Place Market, and parks like Olympic Sculpture Park and Myrtle Edwards Park. These reference points of beloved Seattle spaces were also instrumental in creating a truly “Seattle” design.



Soliciting Input at Public Events