3.6 ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY DESIGN

STREET DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The design and engineering of the street must balance many different expectations in order to support travel needs and place-making of the new waterfront. The recommended framework was designed with all of the following considerations in mind.

**Design Alaskan Way to function as a good urban street for all users**
- Design for 30-mph traffic, with signalized intersections and convenient east-west pedestrian crossings at every intersection
- Provide for local vehicular access and circulation along the waterfront
- Provide strong east-west connections to the waterfront for all modes
- Provide attractive and generous sidewalks on both sides of Alaskan Way to provide a high quality pedestrian environment and to support anticipated activities and uses
- Provide for passenger and truck loading in the right of way where needed
- Include on-street short-term parking to provide local business access and improve the pedestrian experience
- Provide grade-separated pedestrian crossing of Alaskan Way at Colman Dock given the large daily volumes, supplementing but not replacing at-grade crossings
- Provide transit along the waterfront serving the local waterfront market

**Provide effective regional transportation connections**
- Provide a functional and reliable street connection from the SR99 stadium area ramps to Northwest Seattle
- Provide access to downtown from Southwest Seattle via the SR99 stadium area ramps to Alaskan Way to reduce pressure on Pioneer Square
- Provide efficient access to and from the ferry terminal (access primarily from the south, exiting primarily to the east and south); avoid ferry queues blocking north-south mobility for other traffic
- Accommodate both through and local freight connections, including oversize loads
- Provide dedicated north-south bicycle facilities on the waterfront that link seamlessly to the City’s broader bicycle network and appeal to a broad group of users
- Provide for frequent, reliable and time competitive RapidRide and other transit service to downtown from the Southwest Seattle/KC area

**Integrate the street into the overall design for the waterfront and city center circulation**
- Accommodate transportation functions in an efficient and compact footprint to allow significant public gathering space in the public right of way
- Unify design of materials, landscaping and other details between all project elements
- Integrate local green stormwater management where possible/feasible
- Provide frequent and attractive Center City transit circulation on First Avenue with streetcar or bus trolley service connecting from Pioneer Square to Seattle Center
- Provide strong east-west pedestrian connections to transit on First Avenue, including hillclimb assists in locations where topography presents a significant barrier
- Provide direct east-west transit service from Colman Dock to First Hill
ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY DESIGN

ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY SEGMENTS

The design of the new Alaskan Way and Elliot Way varies in character as it extends along the Seattle central waterfront. The following section identifies, and examines segments that have unique design considerations.

Segment A: South King St. to Yesler Way
Segment B: Yesler Way to Spring St.
Segment C: Spring St. to Pine St.
Segment D: Pine St. to Lenora St.
Segment E: Elliott Way Pine St. to Bell St.

Century
Link Field

Pier 48
Colman Dock
Historic Piers
Seattle Aquarium
Pier 62/63
Bell Harbor
Cruise Ship Terminal

1000 FT.
ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY DESIGN

ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY ACCESS

Pier Access
Each pier along the waterfront has a need for access – whether for employment, patronage, service or maintenance. Vehicles must be able to access the piers from Alaskan Way. Vehicles will travel across a bike path, and through the promenade area to access their destination. This connection will be carefully designed to balance the needs for function, safety and aesthetics. In some cases (such as Colman Dock), this access connection will resemble a typical city street. In other areas, access would be more driveway-like, and blended into the surrounding improvements.

East Side Access
On the east side of Alaskan Way, vehicles must also be able to access existing businesses and residences, as well as parking and service needs. Access on this side of the street will be similar to other city arterials. Unlike the west side, where the piers are considerably removed from the street, in this area, building entrances are relatively close to the parking/loading lanes on the east side of the new Alaskan Way. Existing loading dock access and operations will need to adapt to the new street edge. Access to the Market Parking garage will be reconfigured to allow access on the southern face of the building.
ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY DESIGN

ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY PARKING AND LOADING

Historically, people accessing the waterfront by car have either parked beneath the Alaskan Way Viaduct, or parked in nearby garages. With the removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct – and the parking below – the central waterfront design will employ a number of strategies to address this change in parking conditions. Parking availability will remain an important factor for attracting and retaining businesses along the waterfront, and ensuring visitors from throughout the region can enjoy waterfront attractions.

The new Alaskan Way will include space for convenient short-term, on-street parking and loading on each block. It is estimated that between 60 and 120 parking stalls can be created in the All Day parking/loading zones, and an additional 50 to 100 stalls could be available during Off-Peak periods (9AM – 3PM, nights and weekends). Allocation of available space for parking or loading functions could potentially vary during the day and per block. Designation will be determined through close coordination with adjacent uses. The diagram below shows the location of All Day and Off-Peak parking/loading space along the new Alaskan Way.

PARKING AND LOADING DESIGNATION

- **All Day**
- **Off-Peak (9AM-3PM, Nights + Weekends)**

![Concept Design](image-url)
**ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY DESIGN**

**ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY STREET FUNCTIONS**

A flexible solution

The design of the new Alaskan Way and Elliot Way varies in character as it extends along the Seattle central waterfront. Conditions change considerably from South King Street at the southern end to Bell Street at the northern extent of the project.

The below diagram illustrates the various demands of the street and how the demands vary by location. Demand at the southern end is greater due to a convergence of uses, including:

- Freight traffic traveling between Duwamish industrial area and northwest Seattle
- Vehicles traveling between Northwest Seattle and the SR 99 stadium area ramps and other destinations south of Downtown.
- Ferry traffic accessing Colman Dock to/from the south
- The Southwest Transit Pathway serving southwest Seattle and King County to/from downtown

While the new SR 99 tunnel will provide an efficient bypass of the downtown core for regional traffic, those accessing downtown from SR 99 will be primarily use Alaskan Way for this purpose. Two through lanes are provided in each direction along Alaskan Way and Elliott Way. Center turn pockets are provided on some blocks to allow left turns into downtown Seattle. Between King and Yesler, special purpose lanes (known as "Flex Lanes") are provided to accommodate ferry traffic and dedicated transit lanes. Center turn pockets are included on some blocks to facilitate southbound left turns into the city center.

Parking or loading is provided along the majority of Alaskan Way, though on some blocks, parking is not allowed during peak periods. Bicyclists are provided with a separated bike facility, and pedestrians will have generous sidewalks and promenade space to stroll. The new street is optimized to balance the needs for all users, whether in vehicles, on bikes, using transit, or walking; and was developed in close collaboration with urban design elements to create a cohesive vision for the waterfront.
ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY DESIGN

S. KING STREET TO YESLER WAY

Segment A must accommodate traffic to/from SR-99, ferry queuing for Colman Dock and transit serving communities south of downtown Seattle as well as through traffic. In this segment, medians are provided on several blocks, and range in width between 8 and 18 feet. Medians provide a refuge area for pedestrians and a landscape opportunity that can soften the appearance and enhance the experience of a street of this size.

To meet the demands of the street at different times of day, a flexible solution was applied. The Flex Lanes illustration (below) shows how the lane configuration and usage would change during the course of a day.

**FLEX LANES: SECTION AT MAIN STREET**

The Flex Lanes would operate as follows:

- During Off-Peak times (9AM-3PM weekdays, nights and weekends), there would be parking/loading on each side of Alaskan Way.
- During AM Peak periods (6AM-9AM weekdays), the outside lanes would be used as Transit Only lanes.
- During PM Peak periods (3PM-7PM weekdays), the outside southbound lane would be used as a Transit Only lane. In the northbound direction, a second Ferry Only lane would be added and the outside lane would convert to a through lane.

Variable lane assignment — the concept behind the Flex Lanes — has been used successfully in Seattle, and in other cities for years. Two examples are shown below that designate transit-only use during specified hours. The extent and manner to which the concept of flex will be applied along Alaskan Way is more complex due to additional elements such as ferry-only lanes, but follows the same principles.
SEGMENT A

Pier 48

Vehicle Lane
Ferry Lane
Flex Lane
Driveway Access
Median
Bike Path
Sidewalk / Promenade

Key Map

[Map with key map and scale]
ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY DESIGN

YESLER WAY TO SPRING STREET

Segment B serves as a transition between the larger south segment and the narrower northern segments. A northbound outside Flex lane would be included on up to two blocks, with full-time parking/loading provided on most blocks on the west side of the street. Center turn lanes or medians are included in this segment to facilitate southbound left turns into downtown Seattle. North of Marion Street, curb bulbs are included at the intersections to reduce the distance across Alaskan Way for pedestrians. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street.
ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY DESIGN

SPRING STREET TO PIKE STREET

**Segment C** is the most narrow segment of the new Alaskan Way, roughly matching the width of today’s street. In this area, turn lanes are not needed between Pike and Seneca Streets. The more compact street section allows more area for the promenade and public gathering spaces. Full time parking/loading is provided on both sides of the street. Curb bulbs are included at the intersections to reduce the distance across Alaskan Way for pedestrians. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street.

SECTION AT UNIVERSITY STREET

![Diagram of street section at University Street]
ALASKAN WAY AND ELLIOTT WAY DESIGN

PIKE STREET TO LENORA STREET

Segment D. In this area, the new street must elevate to cross over the BNSF railroad tracks on its way up to Belltown. At Pike Street, Alaskan Way begins its ascent. A new extension of Pine Street will intersect with Alaskan Way at a raised intersection. Pine Street will provide a connection for traffic bound for the north waterfront and a continuation of the bike path. This portion of the street will be supported on fill material. North of this intersection, the new street will be known as Elliott Way, and will rise to clear the tracks. This portion of the street includes an uphill, northbound bike lane and generous sidewalks on each side, and will be supported by structural columns to provide space for vehicle access below. Elliott Way will cross over the BNSF tracks with a single span bridge. Once north of the tracks, the street will cut into the existing hill side for support. This section of Elliott Way closely follows the Alaskan Way Viaduct’s footprint, though it will be approximately 15-20 feet lower than the existing AWV.

SECTION AT VIRGINIA STREET

![Diagram of street layout at Virginia Street](location)
SEGMENT D

1. Piers 62/63
2. Seattle Aquarium

Key Map:
- Vehicle Lane
- Driveway Access
- Median
- Parking / Loading
- Bike Path / Lane
- Sidewalk / Promenade

Concept Design
**LENORA STREET TO BELL STREET**

**Segment E** is where the waterfront improvements tie into the existing street network at the north end of the project. The new Elliott Way is a two-way arterial with sidewalks and an uphill northbound bike lane. In the downhill direction, bikes will use a shared lane before tying into the bike path at Pine Street. The new street ties into the existing one-way street combination of Elliott and Western Avenues.

At Lenora Street, a new intersection will be created where the new street intercepts the existing pedestrian bridge. This bridge will be rebuilt as part of the waterfront improvements. In addition to sidewalks, the street improvements in this area will match into the existing bike lanes on Elliott and Western Avenues. The southern portion of this segment passes over steep hillside and must be structurally supported with retaining walls. As the improvements continue to the north, the new street will match into the existing topography and tie into the existing street network. This area is currently occupied by the SR 99 interchange ramps. Once these ramps are removed, a new urban arterial connection between the waterfront and destinations north can be constructed.