4. THREE CONCEPTS AT THREE SCALES

Waterfront Seattle is a comprehensive vision which considers the planning and design of the central waterfront across a range of scales: the city scale, the center city scale, and the waterfront scale. Each scale carries a particular thematic concept that will transform the image, character and identity of the central waterfront and redefine its relationship to the city as a whole.

1. THE CITY SCALE
THREE CONCEPTS AT THREE SCALES

THE CITY SCALE

At the city scale, the central waterfront can be seen as part of a larger ring circling Elliott Bay. The central waterfront needs to be connected to trails, neighborhoods and destinations along the shores of Elliott Bay, both north of Broad Street and south of King Street, to complete the journey around Seattle’s Elliott Bay waterfront. Echoing Olmsted’s Green Ring of parks encompassing central Seattle, the waterfront Bay Ring will provide a continuous public amenity that embraces Elliott Bay as the heart of the city.
THREE CONCEPTS AT THREE SCALES

THE CENTER CITY SCALE

At the center city scale, eight character zones distinguish themselves along the waterfront. These zones are defined by physical characteristics of the site, such as converging grid systems, topography, and urban form, as well as the cultural characteristics of the working waterfront and its adjacent neighborhoods. Hence, the waterfront character zones are named, from south to north, Port & Stadiums, Pioneer Square, Colman Dock, Historic Piers, Public Piers, Bell Harbor, Belltown Bluff, and the North End.

Key east-west streets are identified as vital links between existing destinations within the center city and attractions along the waterfront. An extensive mobility and access network will allow pedestrians, cyclists, transit and vehicles to access and move along the waterfront easily and safely. The removal of the viaduct and the re-orientation of the center city towards the water, will unify and open the central waterfront, establishing it as Seattle’s front porch on the bay.
At the waterfront scale, the concept establishes a continuous public waterfront, connecting the Stadium District and Pioneer Square to Belltown, the Olympic Sculpture Park and Myrtle-Edwards Park. The continuous waterfront includes a new surface street, pedestrian promenade, and bike path. Overlaid on this urban fabric are a series of open spaces, ranging in scale from small and intimate to large and civic, which will draw visitors to the waterfront for a variety of events and activities throughout the year. These places relate to nearby existing destinations to form synergies of audience and program. Together, these elements create a dynamic urban district, filled with cultural, social and recreational activity on the waterfront.
A LONG-TERM VISION FOR SEATTLE’S WATERFRONT

Together, the three scales create the Framework Plan, a long term vision for Seattle’s waterfront that will be realized over the coming decades.

Within the Framework Plan, are several Core Projects that collectively make up an early phase of waterfront redevelopment, likely to be complete in the next 5 to 8 years. These projects can move forward more quickly because they are owned by the City, have identified funding sources and are directly related to the removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and replacement of the Elliott Bay Seawall.