Over the past few years, the City of Seattle has been actively re-imagining the future of its Central Waterfront. The imminent replacement of the Elliott Bay Seawall and removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct now present a tremendous opportunity to turn visions into reality and create a vibrant public realm that will reconnect the city and its people to their waterfront. With a new surface street, and improved East-West connections and enhanced access to the waterfront will allow the vision for Seattle’s Central Waterfront will to extend into the heart of the city and for the City of Seattle to claim a new and authentic front porch on Elliott Bay.

This planning and design document - Waterfront Seattle – represents the culmination of the first 21 months of conceptual work initiated by the City of Seattle’s Guiding Principles. It comprises five volumes summarizing the ideas developed to date by the Waterfront Seattle planning and design team, based on a detailed planning-level analysis of the site, as well as on an extensive outreach effort that engaged civic groups, property owners, stakeholders and the relevant city, state and federal agencies.

This volume – Book 2: Framework Plan – establishes a vision for the future of Seattle’s Central waterfront. This is not a legal or binding document, but a summary of conceptual ideas put forth during the Planning and Concept Design phases of the Central Waterfront Project.
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles were created by a group of citizens working with the city and adopted by the City Council (Resolution #31264), to capture the key civic goals and objectives that should shape the creation of new public spaces on the Central Waterfront project. They expand on established principles from existing city policies and civic efforts.

1. Create a Waterfront for all.
The Waterfront should engage the entire city. It should be a place for locals and visitors alike – a place where everything comes together and co-mingles effortlessly.

2. Put the shoreline and innovative, sustainable design at the forefront.
The Waterfront will bring people to the water’s edge to experience the water and ecology of Elliott Bay. It will improve shoreline ecology while preserving and enhancing maritime activities, and will reflect Seattle’s commitment to sustainability and innovation.

3. Reconnect the city to its Waterfront.
The waterfront should provide a front porch to the downtown neighborhoods and the City. It will build a network of public spaces that connect the waterfront to important destinations, nearby neighborhoods, the city and region.

4. Embrace and celebrate Seattle’s past, present and future.
The Waterfront is a lens through which to understand Seattle – from its natural history and early Native American settlements, to the rich variety of maritime, industrial, commercial and recreational activities today. The Waterfront should tell these stories in ways that are authentic and bring them to life.

5. Improve access and mobility.
The Waterfront is and remains a crossroads. The future waterfront should accommodate safe, comfortable and efficient travel by pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles and freight.

6. Create a bold vision that is adaptable over time.
The vision for the Waterfront should clearly define how the waterfront will take shape and the essential character of key elements. At the same time, the vision must be flexible to adapt over time.

7. Develop consistent leadership—from concept to construction to operations.
It is necessary to have strong leadership tasked with realizing the Waterfront vision. This leadership needs to ensure design excellence and root the process in a broad and transparent civic engagement.
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.

MOBILIZING COMMUNITY INTEREST

To engage an entire community, you first have to reach them. Waterfront Seattle has used a variety of methods to pique interest in the possibilities for the waterfront and convert that interest into active participation. Highlights include:

- Waterfront activation events and activities, including placing a project symbol and yellow chairs on Pier 62/63 for public use, temporary art installations on Pier 62/63 and Waterfront Park, a kids and family photo booth and an upcoming informational kiosk at Waterfront Park in July 2012.
- Connecting new audiences with web and social media presence, including an engaging and accessible project website (waterfrontseattle.org) and active Facebook and Twitter updates and links.
- Establishing community partnerships with more than sixty community organizations, seeking participation and engagement from their memberships and continuing to add new partners.

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SOLICITING MEANINGFUL PUBLIC INPUT

Throughout the design process, the focus has been not only on a high volume of input from diverse sources, but on meaningful, specific input to shape the future of the design. Highlights from these efforts include:

- Three large-scale public meetings with approximately 1,000 attendees, in February, May and October of 2011. A fourth public meeting in July 2012 will present the Concept Design and Framework Plan, and the Waterfront Committee’s Strategic Plan for the waterfront.
- Five workshop-style community forums in the winter of 2012, with more than 750 total attendees, based on topics suggested by the community, such as weather, mobility and access, ecology and habitat opportunities, arts, entertainment, and culture.
- More than 80 briefings and community events, including district and community councils, bicycle, pedestrian and freight groups, historic preservation groups, arts, local businesses, traditional underrepresented populations, and many others.
- A new website – www.waterfrontseattle.org – was launched in 2011 and continues to attract open public comment, discussion and ideas.
The Central Waterfront Project extends nearly 2 miles along the shores of Elliott Bay, from the Stadium District and Pioneer Square in the south to Olympic Sculpture and Myrtle-Edwards Parks in the north. To the west, the project abuts the private piers and includes today’s Waterfront Park and Pier 62/63, both of which are owned by the City of Seattle. The eastern boundary of the site lines the building frontages along Alaskan Way. In addition to the zone along the waterfront, the project includes the area of the existing viaduct, from Pike Street to Battery Street, and the Battery Street Tunnel. 8 east-west streets of Central Seattle complete the project extents, connecting the city’s central neighborhoods to the waterfront.
THREE CONCEPTS AT THREE SCALES

Each scale in the Framework Plan relates to a particular thematic concept:

1. Re-centering Seattle around the Bay, at City scale;
2. Re-connecting neighborhoods to the Waterfront, at the Center City scale; and
3. Creating compelling destinations and journeys along the water’s edge, at the Waterfront scale.
2. THE CENTER CITY SCALE

3. THE WATERFRONT SCALE