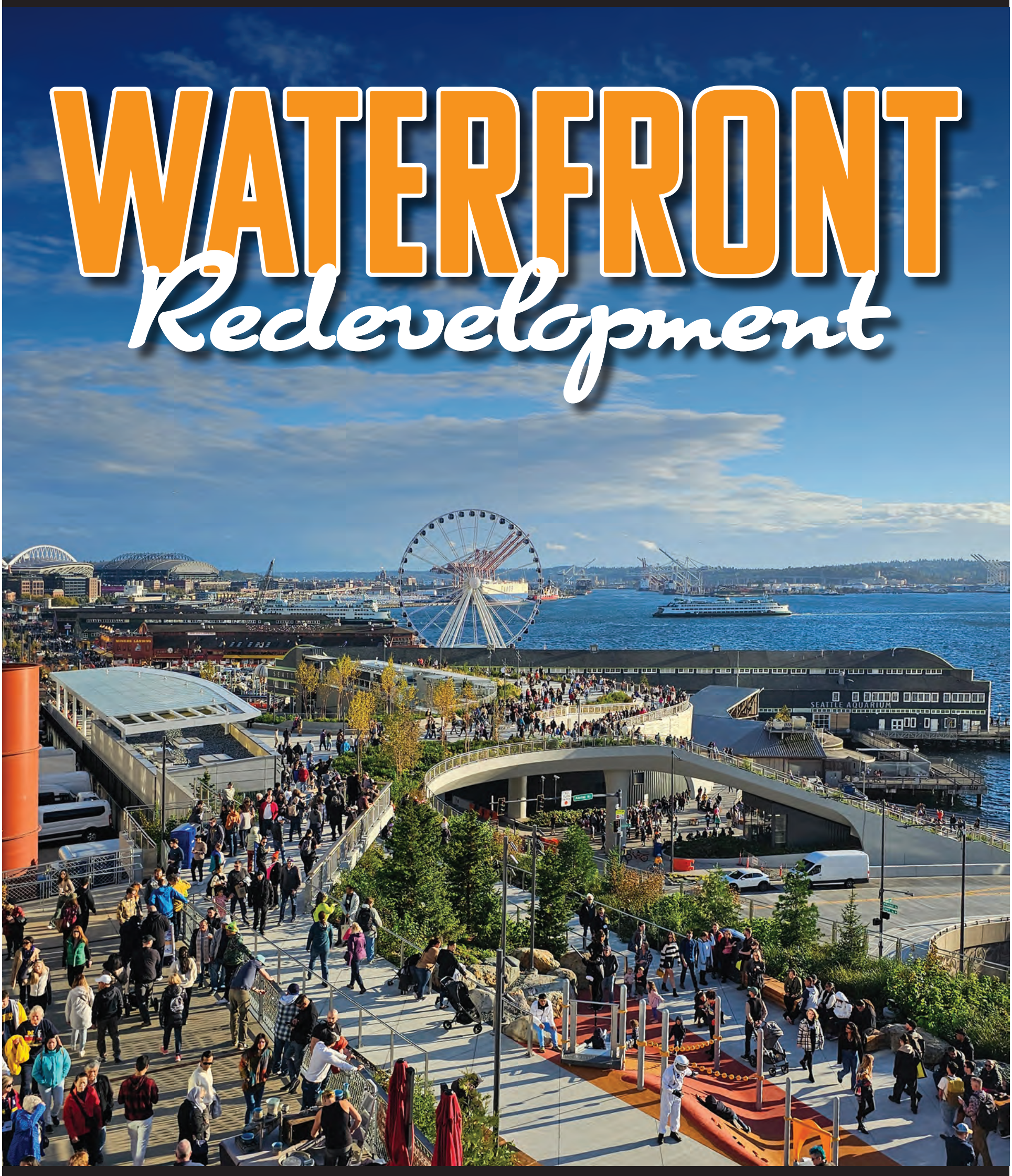
Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce

WATERFRONT Redevelopment



October 31, 2024

CONNECTING FORM WITH FUNCTION

From the Olympic Sculpture Park in 2007 to the Overlook Walk that opened earlier this month, project engineers reflect on Seattle's waterfront redevelopment.

BY HANNAH BONOTTO, RITA GREENE AND MATT JONES
MAGNUSSON KLEMENCIC ASSOCIATES

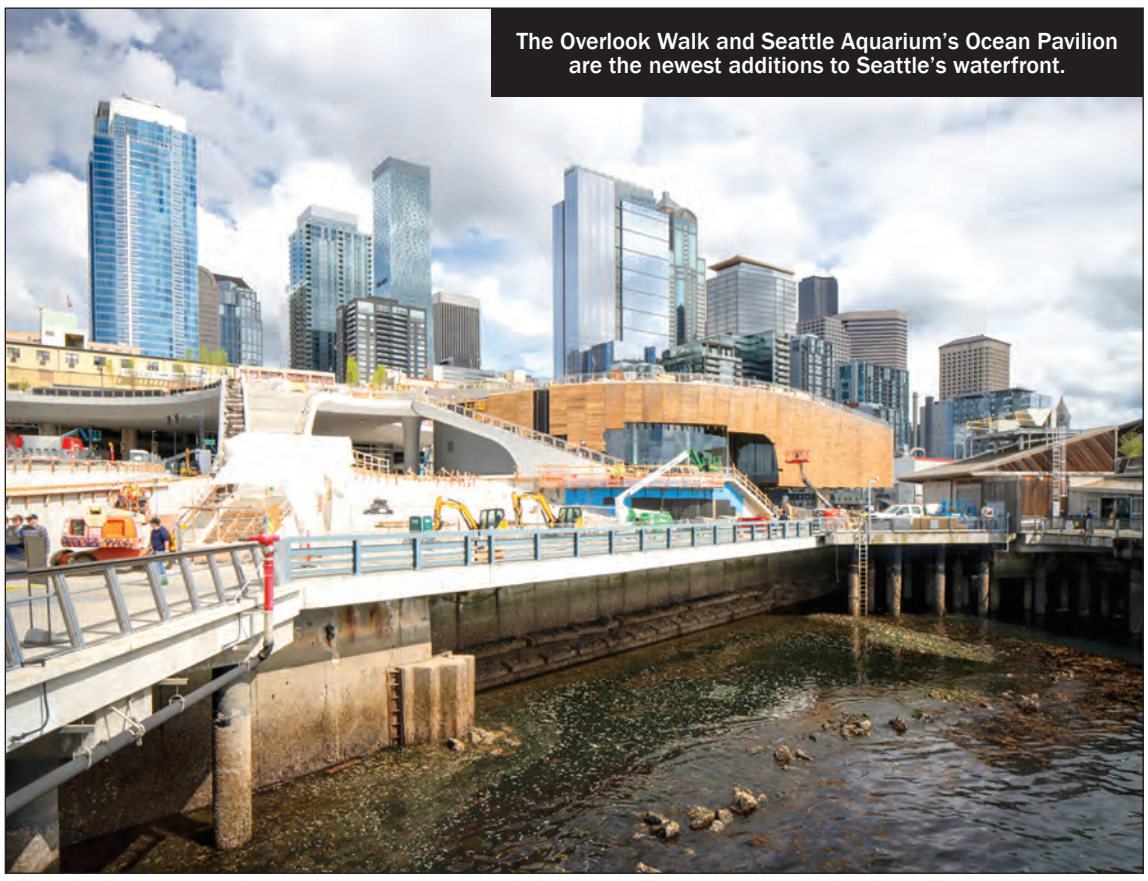
Visitors roaming the steps below Pike Place Market's MarketFront entrance.

PHOTO BY MKA

The physical removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct in 2019 made many Seattleites' long-held dream of a connected cityscape suddenly seem possible — but for Magnusson Klemencic Associates (MKA), one of the engineering firms tasked with making it a reality, the transformation of Seattle's waterfront has been decades in the making.

"Our engineers have been working on Seattle waterfront projects for more than 20 years," said MKA Senior Principal and Civil Engineering Practice leader Matt Jones. "With the opening of the Seattle Aquarium's Ocean Pavilion in August followed by the Overlook Walk this month, the public can finally enjoy a direct, fully accessible connection between Pike Place Market and the waters of Elliott Bay. We feel honored to be part of the wonderful teams that made this dream a reality."

MKA, a century-old, Seattle-based structural and civil engineering firm, has helped shepherd numerous visionary projects to completion in Seattle, starting with the Olympic Sculpture Park, which opened in 2007. In addition to its marine views and jaw-dropping art displays, the park connects Western Avenue to the water via an ADA-compliant series of switchbacks designed to tackle the site's steep grade and the crossing of Elliott Avenue and the railroad.



The Overlook Walk and Seattle Aquarium's Ocean Pavilion are the newest additions to Seattle's waterfront.

PHOTO BY KIRK HOSTETTER

"The elevation change between the waterfront and the park entrance is more than 40 feet," said MKA Principal Rita Greene. "That's like climbing the stairs of a four-story building. People are looking for a more gradual route."

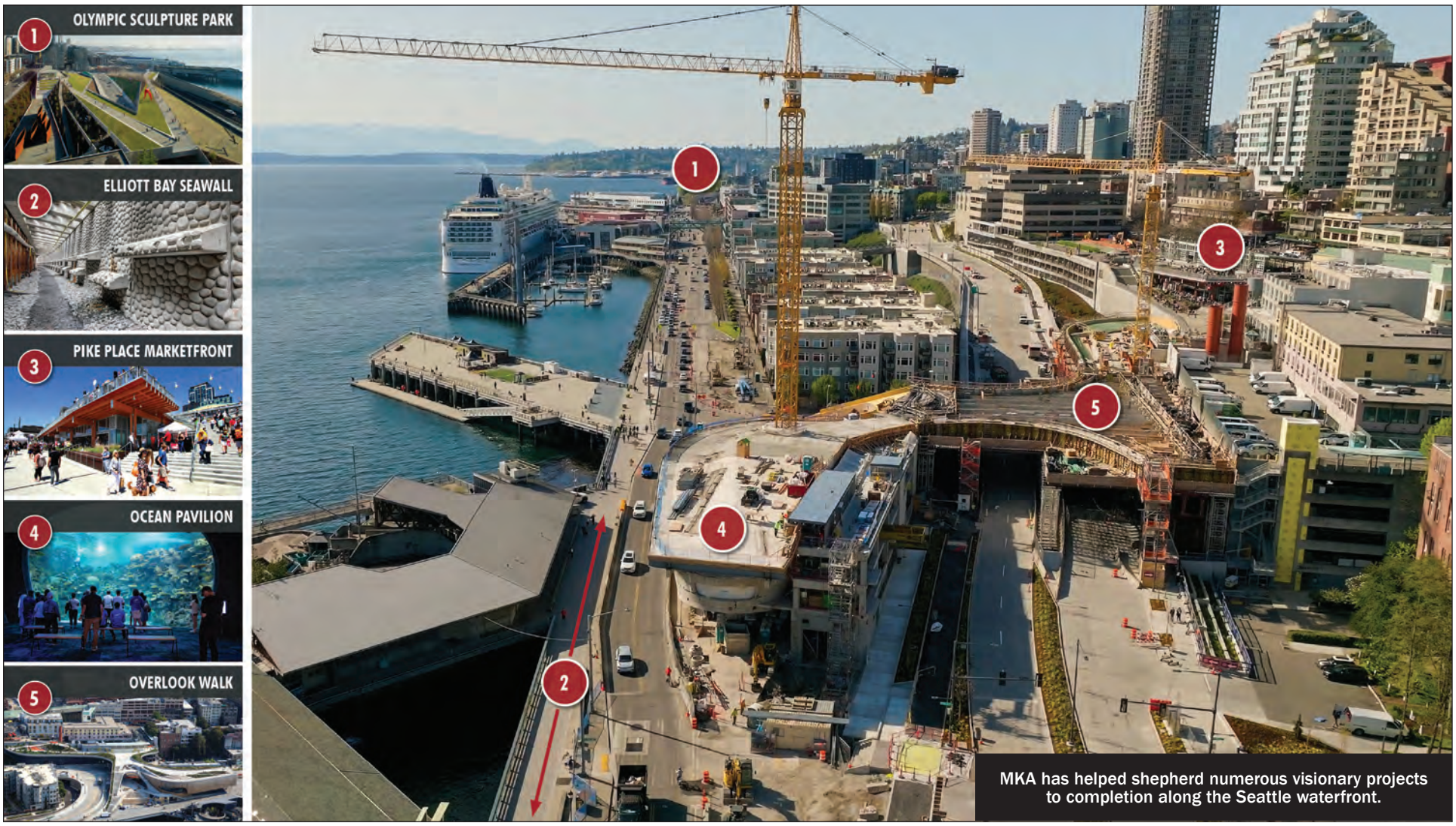
During her 36-year career with MKA, Greene has been a civil engineer on many of the firm's waterfront redevelopment projects—the Elliott Bay Central Seawall, Harbor Steps, Ocean Pavilion, Pike Place Market's MarketFront entrance, Pike Place Market Garage, and, most recently, the Overlook Walk—in addition to being the civil engineering project manager for Olympic Sculpture Park.

"From a design standpoint, one of the biggest challenges for the team was how to create a direct route long enough to make the slope accessible for everyone," Greene said.

MKA's innovative design of the Olympic Sculpture Park resulted in the American Council of Engineering Companies' highest national honor, the Grand Conceptor Award. Ten years later, another Seattle waterfront project opened in 2017, Elliott Bay Central Seawall. MKA designed a light-penetrating surface into the new cantilevered sidewalk to bring natural light into the water below to encourage juvenile salmon migration. Additional site improvements included a new habitat beach and temporary and permanent pedestrian amenities behind the wall.

"The Seawall was the start of what we now understand to be the reimagined waterfront, as the previous seawall had reached the end of its useful life after protecting the city for more than 70 years," Jones continued. "The new Seawall was designed to protect the city for the next century as it was brought up to current seismic standards, accounts for projected sea level rise, and provides marine habitat."

Concurrent with the Seawall's design and construction, the landscape architectural firm Field Opera-



MKA has helped shepherd numerous visionary projects to completion along the Seattle waterfront.

GRAPHIC BY MKA, SIDEBAR IMAGES: LARA SWIMMER, MKA, TIM RICE

tions shared its sweeping vision for the waterfront. The firm's vision soon gave way to an official Master Plan detailing a new pedestrian-centric, north-south promenade with strategic connections to downtown that reconnect the urban core with the waterfront. Field Operations envisioned the most prominent of these connections as an elevated path to Pike Place Market. After designing Pike Place's new MarketFront Entrance, MKA's structural and civil engineering teams were thrilled to complete the downtown-to-waterfront connection through two additional projects: the Overlook Walk and the Ocean Pavilion.

A WALK 20 YEARS IN THE MAKING

The story of Seattle's new Overlook Walk, an elevated, pedestrian public walkway structurally connected to the new Aquarium Ocean Pavilion, began in 2001 and has taken more than 20 years to come to fruition. MKA is the Structural and Civil Engineer of Record (EOR) on the Ocean Pavilion and one of the EORs on the Overlook Walk. With the Overlook Walk predating the Ocean Pavilion, MKA worked with the design teams to seamlessly integrate the Pavilion into the projects already underway.

"Originally, the Overlook Walk, promenade, and sidewalks were designed as if the Ocean Pavilion wasn't there," Greene said. "It's hard to imagine looking at it now. We were able to advise on the Alaskan Way efforts and construction drawings to help make sense of what

CONNECTING — PAGE 28

Overlook Walk Project Team

Owner: City of Seattle Office of the Waterfront
Project Manager: Jacobs
Landscape Architect/ Urban Design: Field Operations
Architect: The Miller Hull Partnership (café, canopy)
Civil Engineer: Magnusson Klemencic Associates (MKA)
Structural Engineer: Jacobs (bridge structures)
Structural Engineer: MKA (café, canopy, Salish plaza, and Salish steps)
Structural Engineer: Green Facades (storage area facades)
Geotechnical Engineer: Shannon & Wilson
Materials Engineer: The Greenbusch Group
Contractor: Hoffman Construction
Electrical: WSP
Waterproofing: Green Facades

Main Corridor Project Team:

Contractor: Gary Merlino Construction

Ocean Pavilion Project Team

Client: Seattle Aquarium Society (SEAS)
Owner's Representative: Shiels Obletz Johnsen
Architect: LMN Architects
Exhibit Designer: Thinc Design
Landscape Architect: Field Operations
Structural/Civil Engineer: Magnusson Klemencic Associates
Geotechnical Engineer: Shannon & Wilson
Contractor: Turner Construction

INSIDE

ON THE COVER

The new Overlook Walk seen here from the Pike Place MarketFront, looking out toward the Great Wheel and Elliott Bay.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FIELD OPERATIONS

DJC TEAM

SECTION EDITOR: SHAWNA GAMACHE • SECTION DESIGN: JEFFREY MILLER
WEB DESIGN: LISA LANNIGAN • ADVERTISING: MATT BROWN

At the northern terminus of the pier, a transparent restaurant space defined by sweeping lake views and operable glass walls replaces an enclosed, reflective glass octagon that formerly existed.

PHOTO BY PATRICK BENNETT

LAKE UNION PIERS REIMAGINED: SEATTLE'S SUSTAINABLE WATERFRONT REVIVAL

A collaborative transformation by owner, contractor and architect honors the site's rich history while pioneering sustainable and community-focused development.

BY CORY MATTHEIS, KIKI GRAM AND ANDREW BRY
SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

Lake Union has witnessed many transformations as Seattle's population and industries have evolved. Founded by the Duwamish, the land was cherished and preserved in its natural state for centuries, even as European settlers began to encroach on the area. Chief Cheshiahud, also known as Lake Union John, played a pivotal role in protecting the region, and his efforts were recognized in 2008 when Seattle Parks created the Cheshiahud Loop, a trail encircling the lake in his honor.

Throughout the 20th century, Lake Union became increasingly industrialized. Gas plants, lumber mills and shipbuilding facilities gradually overtook the shoreline, turning it into an industrial no-man's-land. This persisted until the 1980s when the Seattle Shoreline Management Act shifted the South Lake Union area's land use from industrial to commercial. This change led to the development of Chandler's Cove, which, despite good intentions, struggled with confusing pedestrian access and complicated connections to Lake Union Park.

Today, Chandler's Cove is renamed Lake Union Piers, a five-acre waterfront property at the southern edge of Lake Union, revitalized by Vulcan Real Estate, designed by The Miller Hull Partnership, and built by Abbott Construction. This transformative project illustrates the power of like-minded partners coming together to prioritize community and environmental stewardship, and serves as an inspiring example of how impactful waterfront development can be achieved through teamwork and innovative design.

A WELCOMING WATERFRONT

Vulcan Real Estate acquired the property in 2000 and began planning its future soon after. Nearly two decades later, and with the surrounding lakefront area anchored by Amazon, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, Google, Allen Institute, and Facebook, the timing was right for this unique waterfront destination to be updated and reimagined. Vulcan retained architecture firm Miller Hull to modernize the property and enhance the site, better connecting visitors to the adjacent park and waterfront.

The project team explored a range of solutions to achieve these goals, from complete demolition and new construction to light-handed renovations of the existing structures. Ultimately, Vulcan elected to renovate the three 1980s buildings at Lake Union Piers East to accommodate a mix of maritime, dining, and entertainment tenants, reactivating the waterfront for public enjoyment.

The buildings were in need of repair, outdated, and lacked meaningful engagement with their surround-

A new colonnade made of steel and wood provides weather protection and material warmth to the site.

PHOTO BY BENJAMIN BENSCHNIEDER

The project team simplified the bulky, mid-80s stucco buildings and introduced a modern, maritime material palette.

PHOTO BY MILLER HULL

ings. It quickly became clear that this would not be a typical reuse project, especially because zoning prevented expanding the existing footprint of the structures per the shoreline setback requirements.

Working within these constraints, the design team carved away at the existing massing to redefine the language of the project and better connect the indoor spaces to the exterior. The project team was able to simplify the bulky, mid-80s stucco buildings and introduce a modern, maritime material palette. Walls and roof geometry that follow the configuration of the existing building are clad in metal panels, while new subtractive moves at key elements are highlighted with wood and glass.

Strategic design elements were incorporated at prominent entries and along the public promenade. At the northern terminus of the pier, a new "lantern"—a transparent restaurant space defined by sweeping lake views and operable glass walls—replaces an enclosed and reflective glass octagon that formerly existed. The buildings front a central plaza activated by small-scale businesses that cater to marine clientele. These suites are accessed via a new colonnade made of steel and wood, which provides weather protection and material warmth to the site. The buildings and extensive site improvements work in concert to create a new identity for the site, extending an active public invitation to enjoy the lakefront.

The sustainable approach to reuse these buildings was estimated to generate approximately half of the emissions that would be produced through new construction, positioning the project as the first to achieve the owner/contractor/architect decarbonization component of EMission Zero, Miller Hull's initiative targeting the elimination of greenhouse gas emissions in the built environment.

ACHIEVING AN EMISSION ZERO MILESTONE

Founded on the objectives to Educate, Advocate, and Offset, EMission Zero achieves environmental impact through Design, ultimately resulting in a commitment between the owner, contractor and architect to offset a project's A1-A3 emissions related to superstructure, substructure, envelope and fixed interior building elements. Since 2021, Miller Hull has offset one-third of the embodied carbon emissions from 26 of its built projects, totaling 41,360 tons of carbon. Lake Union Piers is the first project where the owner and contractor have joined in this commitment.

For individual projects like Lake Union Piers, Miller Hull prioritizes Design and Offset. Under Design, Miller Hull works with the client and contractor to reduce or eliminate both future operational emissions and embodied emissions. At Lake Union Piers, Vulcan sought to substantially renovate and upgrade the existing buildings to meet the latest Seattle Energy Code, transforming them into high-performing, energy-efficient, all-electric facilities that generate minimal emissions in operation. Opting for renovation over new construction significantly reduced the embodied emissions by about 50%.

Through Offset, Vulcan, Abbott, and Miller Hull each purchased certified offsets to cover their one-third share of the buildings' upfront construction emissions, collectively offsetting 100% of the project's upfront embodied emissions.

The total upfront embodied carbon impact of Lake Union Piers' structure, enclosure, and interiors was calculated at 495 tons of carbon — equivalent to the impact of driving an average passenger vehicle between Seattle and San Diego 989 times. Miller Hull, Vulcan, and Abbott each offset 165 tons of carbon, with offsets funding HFC emissions reduction in spray foam insulation and wind energy development.

Lake Union Piers has always been a place distinctly "Seattle." From its historical roots in Duwamish culture to its role as a shipbuilding hub, this section of shoreline has remained central to the city's identity. Today, it hosts public events like the annual Fourth of July fireworks, and serves as a gateway to the high-tech South Lake Union neighborhood. Now fully leased, with tenant improvements underway, the revitalized development enhances the area's maritime culture, reactivates the waterfront and strengthens the connection between land and water—while showcasing a clear path toward carbon neutrality in the built environment.

Cory Mattheis is a senior associate at The Miller Hull Partnership. Kiki Gram is a senior development manager at Vulcan Real Estate. Andrew Bry is a project executive at Abbott Construction.

A GRAND NEW CONNECTION TO THE WATERFRONT AT OVERLOOK WALK

Linking downtown to Seattle's waterfront has been years in the making, requiring an immense planning, design and construction effort.

BY ANDREW TENBRINK & ANDREW BARASH
SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

The new Overlook Walk seen here from the Pike Place MarketFront, looking out toward the Great Wheel and Elliott Bay.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FIELD OPERATIONS

Thousands of Seattleites showed up on Friday, October 4, to celebrate the city of Seattle's public opening of an iconic new connection between Pike Place Market and the waterfront. The grand new connection, named Overlook Walk, links the MarketFront with the new Seattle Aquarium Ocean Pavilion and is a key part of the city's complete overhaul of Seattle's waterfront. The design and development of this project has been long imagined, and included years of public input, planning, design and engineering and guidance from the city of Seattle.

MARKET, WATERFRONT CONNECTION IN 2010

In 2010, if you were to walk along the Pike Place Market through the arcade of crafts, flowers, fruit and fish, north toward Victor Steinbrueck Park, you would come to the Desimone Bridge. That bridge connected the North Arcade of the Market to a parking lot just across from Western Avenue through a set of wooden stairs. The terminus of the bridge had a wonderful overlook to Elliott Bay over the Alaskan Way Viaduct.

If, on that journey you wanted to stroll further out to the beckoning water and the view beyond, you would walk down a set of wooden steps, through a gravel parking lot and continue down nearly 70 vertical feet of stairs through the hillside beneath the Alaskan Way Viaduct, landing sandwiched between a large residential building and office building. From there you would arrive at the Seattle Aquarium and the waterfront and the splendor of the Puget Sound with the mist and mountains beyond.

While this was one of multiple circuitous pathways between the Pike Place Market and the waterfront, this location presented an opportunity to create a more seamless link between the Market and the Puget Sound, long desired by many Seattleites.

A NEW FOCUS ON PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

In the fall of 2010, the future of this important connection would change with the city of Seattle assembling a team to create a vision for the Seattle waterfront. The city created a new office (Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects) to oversee and deliver this immense design and construction effort. The city selected a unique team, pairing urban design and engineering firms as co-leads for this transformative program.

These efforts included a reimagination of the connection between Pike Place Market and the Seattle Aquarium. Together with the city of Seattle, valuable public input, and boards and commissions, this team envisioned and delivered Overlook Walk, which is open to the public today.

The demolition of the Alaskan Way Viaduct, which was damaged in the 2001 Nisqually earthquake and is now replaced by a tunnel beneath the city, was a part of this plan. It gave room for Overlook Walk and the waterfront to be built.

Overlook Walk has pathways that lead down to Pier 62 and the rest of the waterfront.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FIELD OPERATIONS

The Alaskan Way Viaduct was a structure built in 1953 and was both beloved and hated by Seattleites. It was beloved for its views of the Puget Sound, downtown Seattle and the mountains beyond. It was hated for the real and perceived wall it created between Belltown, Pioneer Square, Downtown Seattle and the waterfront.

In 2012, the city of Seattle approved a concept design that stretched between South Dearborn Street in the Stadium District to Bell Street in the Belltown neighborhood. This plan established the Overlook Walk project as a new grand connection between the Pike Place Market and the waterfront that would be a park as well as a pathway.

It would be a place to stay that included a playground, overlooks and plazas, as well as a network of three buildings to anchor the park to Pike Place Market and the waterfront. At the early stages of the Concept Design, these buildings were referred to as buildings "A", "B" and "C".

Building A was realized as the MarketFront, providing a pedestrian connection from the Desimone Bridge, Victor Steinbrueck Park and Western Avenue to Overlook Walk. Building B sits on the new Overlook Walk Bridge as the Café Pavilion. Building "C" became the Seattle Aquarium's Ocean Pavilion (SAOP).

Overlook Walk binds these buildings together in a continuous pedestrian park that

2012 aerial view of Pike Place Market and Desimone Bridge and 2024 aerial view of Pike Place Market, Overlook Walk, Seattle Aquarium Ocean Pavilion and Pier 62.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE AND TIM RICE

brings people down from the MarketFront to the waterfront through a series of gardens, playgrounds, plazas, overlooks, stairs and elevators. This walk helps pedestrians navigate 100 vertical feet from Pike Place Market and down the bluff that was in the past only accessible through a set of wood stairs. This new connection was the result of extensive coordination and detailed urban design and engineering solutions to achieve the welcoming and accessible connection it is today.

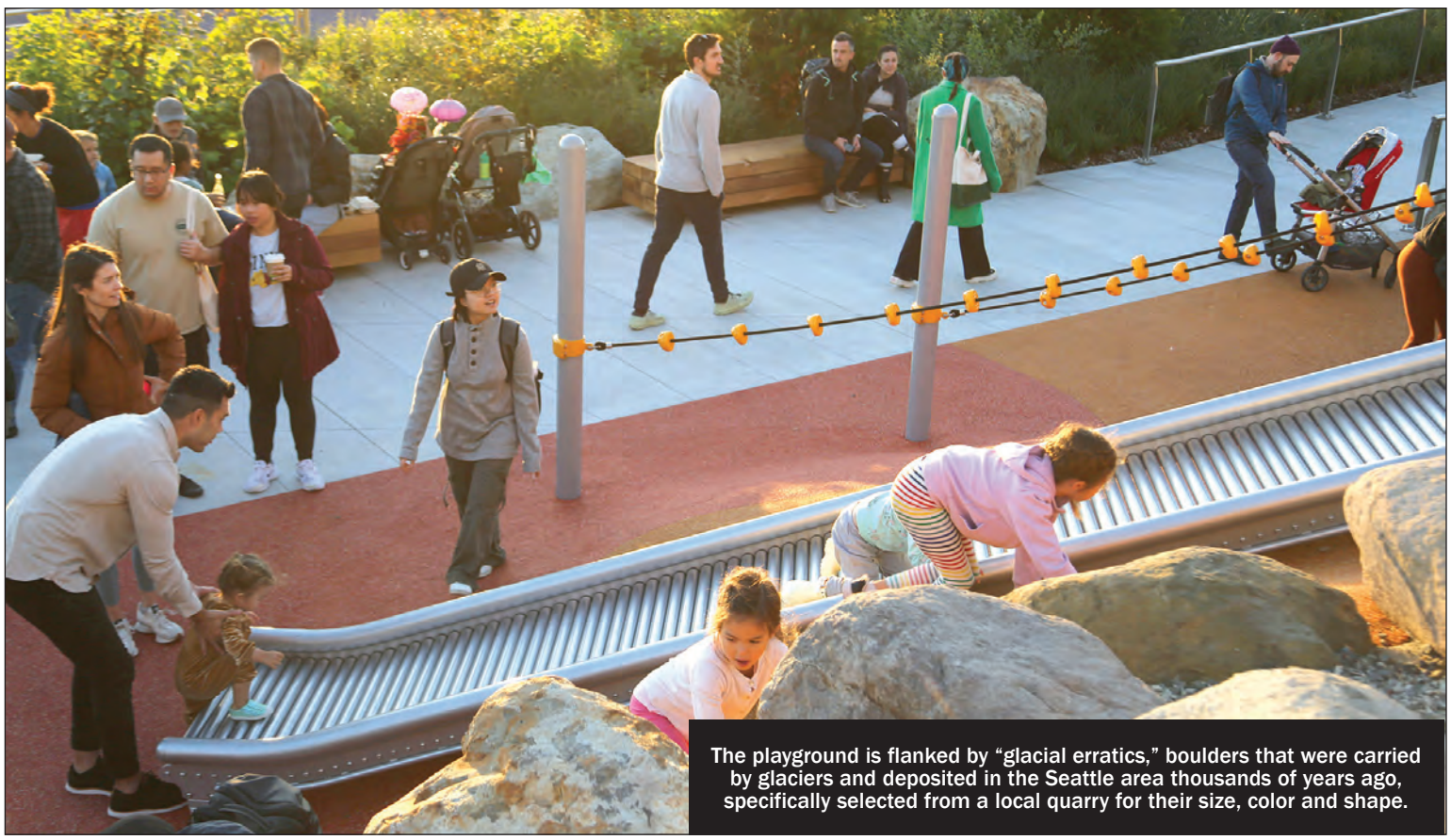
PIKE PLACE MARKET, WATERFRONT CONNECTION TODAY

If you were to walk along the Pike Place Market today, north toward Victor Steinbrueck Park, you would come to the Desimone Bridge, the MarketFront and the new Overlook Walk.

When entering Overlook Walk from MarketFront, there is a new overlook with 360-degree views projecting out from a planted bluff that has views of the downtown Seattle skyline, the mountains, the bay, the stadiums and Mount Rainier. From there you can take a staircase down or you can turn north to the Bluff Walk.

This walk is surrounded by plantings you might see on a mountain hike. Ferns and evergreen trees lie to your right and as you look toward the water you see something surprising, a red and orange slope down the hillside. This is the Bluff Walk play area nestled on the slope between two walkways.

If you walk down the path further, you'll arrive at the northernmost viewpoint, the Bluff Viewpoint, and an overlook to the BNSF tunnel portal and the new Elliott Way multi-modal street that includes street trees and neighborhood gardens providing new connections from the waterfront into the Belltown neighborhood.



The playground is flanked by "glacial erratics," boulders that were carried by glaciers and deposited in the Seattle area thousands of years ago, specifically selected from a local quarry for their size, color and shape.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FIELD OPERATIONS

Turning south from that overlook, you'll continue to descend the bluff, and you'll reach the base of the playground. Flanking the playground are magnificent "glacial erratics," boulders that were carried by glaciers and deposited in the Seattle area thousands of years ago, specifically selected from a local quarry for their size, color and shape. Just south of the Bluff Walk is the Overlook Pavilion, a space for a future concessionaire, and the Pavilion Canopy which provides an opportunity for rest and rain cover. The public seating under the canopy has wonderful views to Elliott Bay framed by two gracefully arched planters that guide your view to the water and sunset with a large plaza space between them.

This plaza sits atop the bridge; an elegantly tapered, hour-glass shaped structure that clear-spans over 100 feet across the Alaskan Way roadway and sidewalks below. This larger space beckons you westward to another overlook, where there are smaller, more intimate gathering spaces, with less noise and bustle.

From this overlook, you can go south to more public park space over the top of the Seattle Aquarium's Ocean Pavilion, or west where you descend to the Salish Plaza. Behind the Salish Plaza, east of the roadway, is a new screen wall enclosing the space that will be the home to a forthcoming art installation by Ann Hamilton. The Salish Plaza itself will be home to a new indigenous art installation by MTK Matriarch nestled between two planters with ferns and salal and seating.

The Salish Plaza leads out to the Salish Steps, which cascade down to Waterfront Park where you have open views to Elliott Bay and Pier 62. These seating steps and all the wood used on Overlook Walk are sourced from local Western Red Cedars reclaimed from the forest floor and lake beds.

With the recent completion of Overlook Walk, residents and visitors alike now have a new and exciting way to walk between the Pike Place Market, the Seattle Aquarium, Waterfront Park, Pier 62 and destinations beyond. The opening of Overlook Walk is a significant milestone in the city's long-standing efforts to connect downtown Seattle with its waterfront.

Andrew tenBrink is a landscape and urban designer with Field Operations. Andrew Barash is a civil engineer and project manager with Jacobs Engineering. They both have been working on the Seattle Waterfront project since 2010.

LIGHTING THE SEATTLE CENTRAL WATERFRONT: CREATING TRANSFORMATIVE SPACES AFTER DARK

By creating distinct nighttime experiences, the new waterfront's lighting highlights key features, encourages gathering, and ensures public spaces are safe, welcoming and accessible at night.

Seattle's Central Waterfront revitalization hinges on lighting that transforms the space into a vibrant destination after dark. Beyond providing visibility, the lighting design enhances safety, supports social interaction and integrates with the waterfront's urban design.

As Seattle's Central Waterfront undergoes a transformative revitalization, the role of lighting becomes crucial in shaping the experience of the waterfront's variety of spaces after dark. By carefully crafting a lighting design that not only supports safety but also enhances the user experience, the waterfront becomes more than just a transportation corridor or recreational area. It becomes an immersive nighttime destination, where lighting plays a pivotal role in creating social spaces and highlighting the design elements that define the waterfront's new identity.

BY JILL CODY
DARK LIGHT DESIGN

The Salish Steps' integrated lighting enhances placemaking by creating a welcoming atmosphere for social gathering and relaxation, transforming the space into a vibrant evening destination.

PHOTOS BY DARK LIGHT DESIGN

SHIFTING FROM DAY TO NIGHT

The lighting strategy for the Seattle Central Waterfront is centered on offering a distinct experience after dark, different from daytime activities. During the day, the waterfront thrives with natural light, animated by its connection to the water and the city's urban landscape. However, as the sun sets, lighting becomes the key medium that reinterprets space. It accentuates design elements, supports social activities, and creates a sense of place that is distinct from the daytime experience.

The lighting design achieves this transformation by creating a layered and dynamic illuminated environment. For instance, during the day, sunlight uniformly lights trees and lower-level plantings along the promenade, but the after-dark experience illuminates selected trees and highlights plantings with lantern-like elements.

While views to Elliott Bay dominate during the day, the water's edge is a tranquil place at night, with lower light levels to support a quiet connection to the water while also reducing the impacts of lighting to shoreline habitats. Art installations are brought into a different focus through accent lighting, highlighting their important place in the waterfront landscape.

ENHANCING SAFETY AND SECURITY

Addressing safety and security are at the core of the waterfront lighting design. Knowing that "more light" isn't necessarily "better light," different lighting solutions are employed to address the varied needs of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers, ensuring that all users feel secure while navigating the area at night.

For pedestrians, light levels were carefully tuned to support a variety of lighting conditions for different activities, such as gathering, strolling, or pausing to enjoy the view. Lighting of selected trees in the Promenade planters prevent the creation of dark walls of vegetation between the pedestrian circulation and Alaskan Way.

Providing adequate illumination for navigation is supported by layers of lighting at social zones to support gathering and the natural surveillance of public spaces, enhancing perceptions of safety and security.

SUPPORTING GATHERING, COMMUNITY INTERACTION

One of the key goals of the waterfront lighting plan is to foster social interaction and create comfortable spaces for people to gather, both formally and informally. As the waterfront is designed to be a place of activity and relaxation, the lighting design supports this by ensuring that gathering spaces are well-lit, comfortable and welcoming after dark.

Areas such as the promenade and Overlook Walk are designed to encourage gathering and social interaction. These spaces are illuminated with pedestrian-scale lighting that creates intimate zones for socializing, while also providing enough visibility for safe navigation. The lighting is carefully modulated to create varying light levels for different spaces, offering a variety of environments for people to choose from, whether they are pausing to take in the view or sitting with friends in one of the public plazas.

Lighting in these social areas is also designed to support flexibility. For example, in open plaza spaces, the lighting fixtures are designed to provide ample illumination without obstructing the open space. This allows the open areas to be used for a variety of activities, from evening strolls to large public events. The lighting design ensures that these spaces remain functional after dark while maintaining the welcoming atmosphere that encourages community interaction.

INTEGRATING LIGHTING WITH URBAN DESIGN

One of the main drivers of the lighting design is to integrate into the urban design elements of the waterfront. From highlighting the architectural features of new public spaces, to illuminating landscape elements and highlighting key art installations, lighting reinforces the waterfront's identity as a social and cultural destination. The lighting plan employs subtle techniques, such as integrating lighting into plantings and pathways,

to ensure the design remains cohesive while enhancing visibility and comfort.

For example, the promenade's design differentiates between higher activity plazas at intersections with the east-west street grid and the connecting walkways along each block. Plazas are defined with luminous pedestrian scaled columns that provide higher light levels and uniform illumination, while quieter, lower scaled bollards define Promenade pathways.

These different techniques create a consistent rhythm and patterning of light along the length of the Promenade, creating a clear circulation route that feels safe and inviting. Illumination of selected trees between the promenade and Alaskan Way helps to prevent the creation of dark, isolated spaces, while enhancing the natural beauty of the landscape.

The lighting plan also strategically places light at varying heights and intensities to ensure that the waterfront's features are illuminated in ways that add depth, texture and interest, without overwhelming the experience.

ENHANCING WAYFINDING AND NAVIGATION

Clear and intuitive wayfinding is essential for any urban environment, especially one as expansive as the Seattle Central Waterfront. The lighting design supports this by creating a hierarchy of light that helps guide users through space and ensures that pathways and transitions between zones are easily navigable.

In pedestrian areas, the lighting is designed to provide both clear directional cues and a sense of safety. The design enhances the visual interest of pathways while maintaining visibility using lower lighting levels, while at major intersections and transition points, brighter, more prominent lighting fixtures are used to signal direction and draw attention to key circulation routes and decision points. s

The lighting plan also creates clear visual connections between the waterfront and the city beyond. By carefully illuminating east-west connector streets and major pedestrian routes, the lighting design ensures that the waterfront feels accessible from the city, encouraging people to move freely between the urban core and the water's edge, even after dark.

The lighting strategy for the Seattle Central Waterfront plays a crucial role in transforming the space into a vibrant and engaging destination after dark. By focusing on the creation of different experiences between daytime and nighttime, integrating lighting into the urban design and supporting social gathering, the lighting design ensures that the waterfront remains a dynamic public space for all.

Jill Cody is a principal at Dark Light Design, with 28 years of project experience and a passion for designing for the public realm. Her projects include the Pike Place MarketFront, Seattle Ferry Terminal and Seattle Central Waterfront.

Focused lighting on plantings enhances both the natural beauty and visibility of the landscape, contributing to a safe and secure environment after dark.

THE TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL FOR REVITALIZING SODO AND THE STADIUM DISTRICT

Seattle's new waterfront offers significant opportunity to reimagine the neighborhood near the stadiums, but will the city finally step up?

Seattle's Stadium District could become a vibrant new mixed-use neighborhood.

IMAGE COURTESY OF COLLINS WOERMAN AND SODO ARENA GROUP

Seattle now ranks with the many cities across the country that have made major efforts to revitalize their downtown waterfronts. The striking new Overlook Walk and the Seattle Aquarium's Ocean Pavilion are part of an $806 million investment in new public spaces and cultural facilities along Seattle's central waterfront.

BY SCOTT SURDYKE
SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

With the anticipation of millions of new visitors, this decades-long project has the potential to be truly transformational at a time when downtown Seattle really needs it. However, in spite of tremendous economic potential, restrictive zoning is still in place that prioritizes traditional industrial uses and prohibits residential, which could leave some areas around downtown blighted and underutilized for years to come.

If city leaders want to leverage the new Waterfront Park as a catalyst to help revitalize downtown, it needs to consider adopting more inclusionary zoning that promotes new jobs as well as providing more housing options and new spaces for entertainment-oriented retail, arts and cultural facilities.

TACOMA: LEADING THE URBAN WATERFRONT TRANSFORMATION

In the last 20 years, cities throughout the Pacific Northwest have made great strides in redeveloping their central waterfronts. Cities such as Tacoma, Bremerton, Bellingham, Vancouver and Everett have invested hundreds of millions of dollars on the cleanup, master-planning and ultimately the transformation of formerly blighted, contaminated and underutilized industrial lands into vibrant new neighborhoods.

In most cases, water and rail-dependent industrial uses have been both preserved and prioritized. But in addition, a wider and more inclusive mix of uses has been introduced to provide better public access, increased economic development, more housing options and new jobs that also foster tourism.

The most impressive and complete example is Tacoma's Foss Waterway. The city of Tacoma partnered with the Port of Tacoma to transform underutilized surplus railyards into a thriving new neighborhood that puts public access, culture and recreation at the forefront. The Museum of Glass provides the cultural anchor, connecting to the UW Tacoma campus and the museum district that also includes the Washington State History Museum and Tacoma Art Museum.

In addition, hundreds of new housing units have opened, as well as new businesses and business incubators. During the 20-year transformation of this once blighted area, the Port of Tacoma has also maintained and increased its investment and commitment to Tacoma's maritime industries. The once highly-contaminated Foss Waterway has now become a national model for environmental stewardship and sustainability, and the strong partnership between the city and the port has helped foster a collaborative success and provided a new front door to the city.

Tacoma's Foss Waterway is a great example of strategic mixed-use waterfront development.

IMAGE BY REID MIDDLETON

SODO AND THE STADIUM DISTRICT

Ironically, back in Seattle, the downtown neighborhood that would likely benefit the most from our new waterfront is also the one that currently has some of the most restrictive zoning. The area near the stadiums, just south of Pioneer Square on the north edge of SoDo, is a kind of a no-man's land when it's not Game Day. In spite of $1 billion worth of stadium investment (T-Mobile Park and Lumen Field), Seattle's so-called Stadium District has languished for decades. New development has been anemic, with the exception of the Silver Cloud Hotel and two mid-rise office buildings. And yet, while Seattle's Stadium District sits relatively quiet and undeveloped, most other U.S. Cities capitalized on the tremendous economic

impact of new stadiums by developing new mixed-use neighborhoods, capitalizing on sports and entertainment retail.

Lively and welcoming, these new Stadium Districts are showcasing how fun downtowns can be, with entertainment venues, small businesses, restaurants, hotels and yes, multiple housing options. Cities such as Oakland, Denver, Milwaukie, San Diego, Anaheim, Tampa, Jacksonville and Kansas City have all experienced major transformations within their stadium districts.

"With the completion of the new waterfront, I believe that there is a tremendous opportunity to further revitalize downtown Seattle with a vibrant new stadium district," says economist Matthew Gardner. "However, be assured that, without a unifying vision or leadership, current zoning will offer extremely limited opportunities and will likely result in minimal economic development."

Denver's LoDo is a thriving mixed-use stadium district.

IMAGE COURTESY OF STANTEC

AN EXTRAORDINARY OPPORTUNITY FOR SEATTLE

To any urban economist, planner or enthusiast, the neighborhood near Seattle's stadiums provides an extraordinary opportunity for economic growth, new jobs and downtown revitalization. The stadiums themselves bring millions of visitors each year, generating substantial pedestrian traffic. And with the new pedestrian-oriented Railroad Way serving as the south terminus of Waterfront Park, the area is easily accessible to the Seattle Ferry Terminal, LINK light rail and multiple bus routes.

In spite of this tremendous potential, the city has maintained "Urban Industrial" zoning that prohibits any type of housing, instead encouraging industrial and office, retail and hotel uses. Residential was proposed and supported by most of the area property owners but was ultimately excluded by the City Council two years ago.

Since then, no new projects have been proposed in this neighborhood. Instead, property owners are planning for mixed-use projects that do include residential, which they believe will help transform this underutilized area into a more complete, safe and vibrant neighborhood.

"We believe a reimagined Stadium District that includes a modest amount of mixed housing and spaces for light industrial businesses would complement and help to buoy the development of commercial and hotel spaces near the two stadia and improve the area's public safety," says Joshua Curtis, Executive Director for the Washington State Ballpark Public Facilities District. "The addition of residents and workers to this area would boost the economic activity of struggling businesses in the Chinatown International District and Pioneer Square."

In addition to thousands of square feet of new light-industrial "maker spaces," entertainment-oriented retail and hotels, property owners near the stadiums have proposed more than 900 units of workforce and market-rate housing. All of this planning indicates that tremendous momentum is building, however there's still one major catch: no housing is currently allowed.

Considering that almost every other stadium district in the country is thriving with all of the above uses, considering that downtown Seattle is in trouble, and considering that we are experiencing a major housing shortage, shouldn't the city consider a compromise that allows a more inclusive mix of uses?

Driven by Mayor Harrell's Downtown Activation Plan, city leaders and planners are starting to think outside the box in efforts to revitalize our downtown. One sign of progress is the WOSCA site, a 5-acre parcel just west of Lumen Field that is going through a city-sponsored RFP process. The development of this site could serve as a catalyst that incorporates Seattle's maritime industrial heritage while also including a more appropriate mix of uses that reflects the site's proximity to the stadiums.

To its credit, the city of Seattle has done more to preserve its maritime industries than most cities. While there's no doubt that water-dependent uses must be close to the shoreline, other industrial uses such as warehouse storage and fulfillment centers do not need prime locations near the heart of downtown.

Cities are organic in nature, and change is inevitable. The fact that in the last 20 years the Kent Valley and other more affordable suburban industrial areas have thrived, while Seattle's Stadium District has languished, is a call to pause and consider what's the best way to promote a

STADIUM DISTRICT — PAGE 28

RECLAIMING PUGET SOUND: HOW COMMUNITIES ARE REIMAGINING THEIR WATERFRONTS

Local communities are revitalizing waterfronts to support industry, recreation and resilience in a changing environment.

The movement by Puget Sound communities to reclaim their waterfronts is gaining momentum. From the mega-project on the Seattle waterfront to communities around the Sound with long, historic connections to the water, bold visions are emerging to reconnect with the iconic shorelines of the Pacific Northwest.

BY CHRISTOPHER PATANO
EHDD

At EHDD, we have been designing waterfront projects up and down the West Coast for the past 50 years. In the Puget Sound region, three key factors are driving community investment in, and commitment to, reimagining our waterfronts.

As our economy continues to grow and diversify, the maritime industry remains a vital backbone, providing jobs and training. Second, as our population expands, communities are increasingly seeking recreational opportunities close to home. Investing in cultural and recreational spaces enhances our communities and provides everyday opportunities to connect with the natural environment. Finally, as we've seen in recent years, climate change-induced challenges such as extreme weather and rising sea levels are realities we must confront; Our shorelines and waterfronts are at the front lines of resilience.

EHDD is currently collaborating with the Port of Tacoma to reimagine the Earley Business Center site on the Hylebos Peninsula.

RENDERING BY EHDD

EHDD is working with the Port of Silverdale to design a new Waterfront Center with retail space, offices for the port, a community shed for events, and an assembly space for crew shells and sailboats.

RENDERING BY EHDD

TRADE & JOBS: A MARITIME BACKBONE

The maritime industry is a robust, diverse sector that includes fishing, boat and shipbuilding, component fabrication, logistics, and the emerging sectors of energy and offshore wind component fabrication. Our local ports play an essential role in supporting maritime trade, developing the skilled workforce needed to maintain one of the world's largest trading and shipping networks. Local ports and waterfront communities have identified underutilized waterfront properties with potential for development in industries like boat and shipbuilding.

EHDD is currently collaborating with the Port of Tacoma to reimagine the Earley Business Center site on the Hylebos Peninsula. Originally a vital shipbuilding hub during WWII, the site now hosts remnants of those facilities, which are used by small boat-building companies, the Army Corps of Engineers, seafood and fishing operations, as well as shipping companies.

EHDD and the Port of Tacoma have developed a preferred scenario that brings boat and shipbuilding back to the site, laying the groundwork for long-term investment in this water-dependent industry. This approach makes the highest and best use of our limited shoreline resources, ensuring the creation and sustainability of the

EHDD and MIG recently completed upgrades to Lake Sammamish State Park's stormwater management, established new connections with pathways and created areas for gathering with mass timber picnic shelters.

PHOTO BY ED SOZINHO

next generation of maritime jobs.

RECREATION: CONNECTING COMMUNITIES TO THE WATER

The Pacific Northwest's natural landscape amplifies our communities' love of nature and draws us toward our lakes and waterways. Cities and ports are increasingly identifying underutilized and transitional sites as opportunities to rehabilitate outdated parks and build new, vibrant connections to our waterfronts.

EHDD recently completed new mass timber picnic shelters at Sunset Beach, marking the latest phase of our 20+ year effort to transform Lake Sammamish State Park in Issaquah in collaboration with Washington State Parks. When we first began work in 2001, Lake Sammamish State Park was underutilized, with an overgrown shoreline, outdated facilities and little activity. Working closely with Washington State Parks, EHDD developed a master plan and began the phased implementation of key improvements.

A new bathhouse was built using reclaimed wood siding and photovoltaic panels, with an intensive green roof that mitigates stormwater. This bathhouse serves as an educational example of sustainability and energy self-sufficiency. At the same time, the beach was restored, and a new promenade was constructed. Over the following years, we added a boardwalk, a new playground, and, in August 2024, five new picnic shelters, along with new pathways, plantings and stormwater management infrastructure.

The revitalized park has been a hub of activity for the past decade. As the connection to the community continues to strengthen, you'll find morning cycling clubs, runners, bird watchers, windsurfers, and families gathering to enjoy the lake and beach. Special events, such as the Pro Volleyball Tour, fill the calendar and bring new visitors year-round.

RESILIENCE: ADAPTING TO A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Building along the water's edge and rehabilitating existing facilities presents unique challenges, which are further intensified by rising sea levels, more intense storms, and increased seismic risks. New shoreline projects are not for the faint of heart — designing and planning these projects requires a specialized team with unique expertise.

The soils along the edges of Puget Sound likely consist of materials from Mt. Rainier's last eruption. Earthquakes can turn these materials into liquid. Tsunami risks in the Salish Sea are becoming better understood, and planning for areas of refuge from surging waters is critical. Rising sea levels demand careful planning, from reinforcing existing shorelines to determining the elevation of new structures so that these investments remain functional well into the future.

EHDD is currently working with the Port of Silverdale to design a new Waterfront Center for the community. This 13,000-square-foot facility will include retail space along historic Silverdale's main street, offices for the port, a community shed for events such as a farmers' market, and an assembly space for crew shells and sailboats.

The upper level will feature a community room with a large terrace overlooking the waterfront. The project is intertwined with shoreline restoration, the rehabilitation of an existing waterfront park, and an extension of a regional trail system in collaboration with Kitsap County. This type of complexity is not uncommon in waterfront projects and requires a great deal of coordination and long-term thinking.

These challenges also present opportunities for communities to fortify their shorelines while enhancing public access to recreation. By rehabilitating polluted, disused tracts of land, we can support the emerging industries that will power the next generation of maritime jobs.

As Puget Sound communities reimagine their waterfronts, they're embracing opportunities for growth, recreation and resilience. By investing in sustainable infrastructure and revitalizing historic maritime hubs, we can strengthen local economies, foster deeper connections to nature, and prepare for the challenges ahead — ensuring vibrant, resilient waterfronts for future generations.

Christopher Patano leads EHDD's Pacific Northwest practice in Seattle, focusing on waterfront redevelopment, parks and interpretive centers.

Millworks, built on the former Georgia-Pacific pulp mill site and owned by Mercy Housing Northwest, contains 83 units of affordable housing as well as an early childhood education center.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

THE REMAKING OF BELLINGHAM BAY

Two decades of cleanup lead to new affordable housing, community parks and economic development of land once contaminated by heavy industry.

More than 20 years of work to clean up Bellingham Bay is paying off, with the opening of new affordable housing, parks and other redevelopment on land previously contaminated by heavy industry.

The Washington Department of Ecology, the Port of Bellingham, the city of Bellingham, local tribes, and other government agencies began a partnership to clean up several industrial sites along Bellingham's waterfront, signing on to a comprehensive strategy in 2000. The collection of properties had seen a variety of land uses and industries for more than a century, before modern environmental laws were in place. As a result, the related contamination also had a range of types, locations and risks to human health and the environment.

BY SCARLET TANG
WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

TWELVE CLEANUP SITES UNDER ONE UMBRELLA

Cleaning up contamination in Bellingham Bay and along the waterfront has been a long-term, complex puzzle. The area has 12 different priority sites on the state cleanup list, each with unique histories, contaminants and cleanup needs. The typical approach is to focus on one individual cleanup at a time.

However, the Bellingham Bay partner agencies, now known as the Bellingham Bay Action Team, brought the cleanup of all the sites under one umbrella. The big-picture approach allowed the partners to prioritize the cleanup work and find efficiencies, as well as address overarching goals of habitat restoration, controlling pollution sources, and aquatic land use, said

The Port of Bellingham's Brian Gouran leads a talk on the Bellingham Bay cleanup at Waypoint Park in October. The large metal structure, the Acid Ball, was part of pulp digestion machinery and has been transformed into public art.

Kim Wooten, regional section manager of Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Program, which oversees the cleanup of contaminated sites.

"When this effort started, there were a lot of different factors that we needed to take into account," Wooten said. "In addition to the cleanup work itself, we also had partners managing navigation, treaty rights, stormwater, fish and wildlife habitat, and so on. For example, deciding where to dredge or contain contaminated sediments might have an impact on navigation channels and aquatic habitat. Having all the parties at the table has been crucial to integrating all these different issues, prioritizing the sites, and ensuring the cleanup will be protective of the environment in the long run."

MAKING HEADWAY ON CLEANUP

Since 2000, Bellingham Bay cleanup has progressed steadily. Depending on the specifics of an individual site, cleanup work can involve dredging in-water sediments, excavating on land, treating contamination on-site, capping with clean material and/or restricting types of future land use.

A number of areas have been cleaned up and converted into parks and open space, quickly becoming favorite amenities for the community. The Taylor Avenue boardwalk, the first phase of Waypoint Park, the Portal container village, a pump track and a portion of Little Squalicum Park are all located on former cleanup sites.

Several in-water areas have been cleaned up and restored as fish and wildlife habitat. For example, at one location, creosote pilings and contaminated sediment were removed, allowing for the creation of two acres of intertidal habitat.

AN UNEXPECTED SUCCESS: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Bellingham Bay cleanup's framework has allowed for greater flexibility in how cleanups are conducted when unexpected opportunities emerge. The partners were able to take advantage of a new initiative to transform cleanup sites into affordable housing, Ecology's Affordable Housing Cleanup Grant Program.

Kim Wooten from Ecology explained that the high cost of contamination cleanup means developers often end up building market-rate housing on brownfields, which prices out existing residents and contributes to gentrification.

Ecology's new grant program pays for housing developers to plan and implement cleanups of contaminated sites. In return, the developers make at least 20% of their units affordable for a minimum of 30 years.

"Contaminated properties are often in neighborhoods that have a disproportionate share of environmental problems," Wooten said. "And then when the contamination does get cleaned up, the neighbors can't afford to live there anymore. The goal of our grant program is to relieve that environmental burden while making it possible for people to stay and enjoy the benefits of a cleaner and revitalized neighborhood."

One of the first projects to receive funding from the grant program is Millworks, built on the former Georgia-Pacific pulp mill site on Bellingham Bay. Owned by Mercy Housing Northwest, Millworks has 83 units of permanently affordable housing as well as an early childhood education center that can care for about 100 children.

A future phase of the project plans to include a food campus that will support local farmers, food businesses and meal programs such as Meals on Wheels.

Ecology provided a $200,000 grant in 2019 to the Port of Bellingham to explore the feasibility of redeveloping the property into affordable housing, as well as a $2.8 million grant in 2021 for design and cleanup. After the cleanup, Mercy Housing Northwest purchased the property from the port and constructed the project.

Millworks welcomed its first residents this spring. It joins the Maddux in south Seattle as the first two projects funded by Ecology affordable housing cleanup grants to open their doors.

Affordable housing cleanup grants are awarded every two years, and applications for the next round of funding will open in 2026. For more information, visit ecology.wa.gov/grants-AHCG.

For more information on the Bellingham Bay cleanup, visit ecology.wa.gov/BellinghamBay.

Scarlet Tang is the communications manager for the Washington Department of Ecology's Northwest Region.

EVERETT'S WATERFRONT REIMAGINED

The Port of Everett will leverage an expected $1 billion in public/private investment to redevelop and reimagine its waterfront in a way that embraces and pays tribute the city's rich history and industry.

BY ERIK GERKING & DYLAN FRAZER
SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

The port and partners removed nearly 200,000 tons of contaminated soil, remediated several contaminated groundwater plumes, dredged contaminated sediment, and removed failing bulkheads and old creosote-treated wood structures.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE PORT OF EVERETT

For more than a century, the Port of Everett has been a major economic driver in Snohomish County and Washington State. Through the operation of our international shipping terminals, the largest public marina on the West Coast, and real estate development, the Port of Everett supports more than 40,000 jobs in the region and contributes $433 million to state and local taxes.

The port strives to deliver and support quality family-wage jobs, and business and tourism opportunities to its local and surrounding communities. The port is also committed to enhancing, restoring and preserving the overall environmental health of the waterfront.

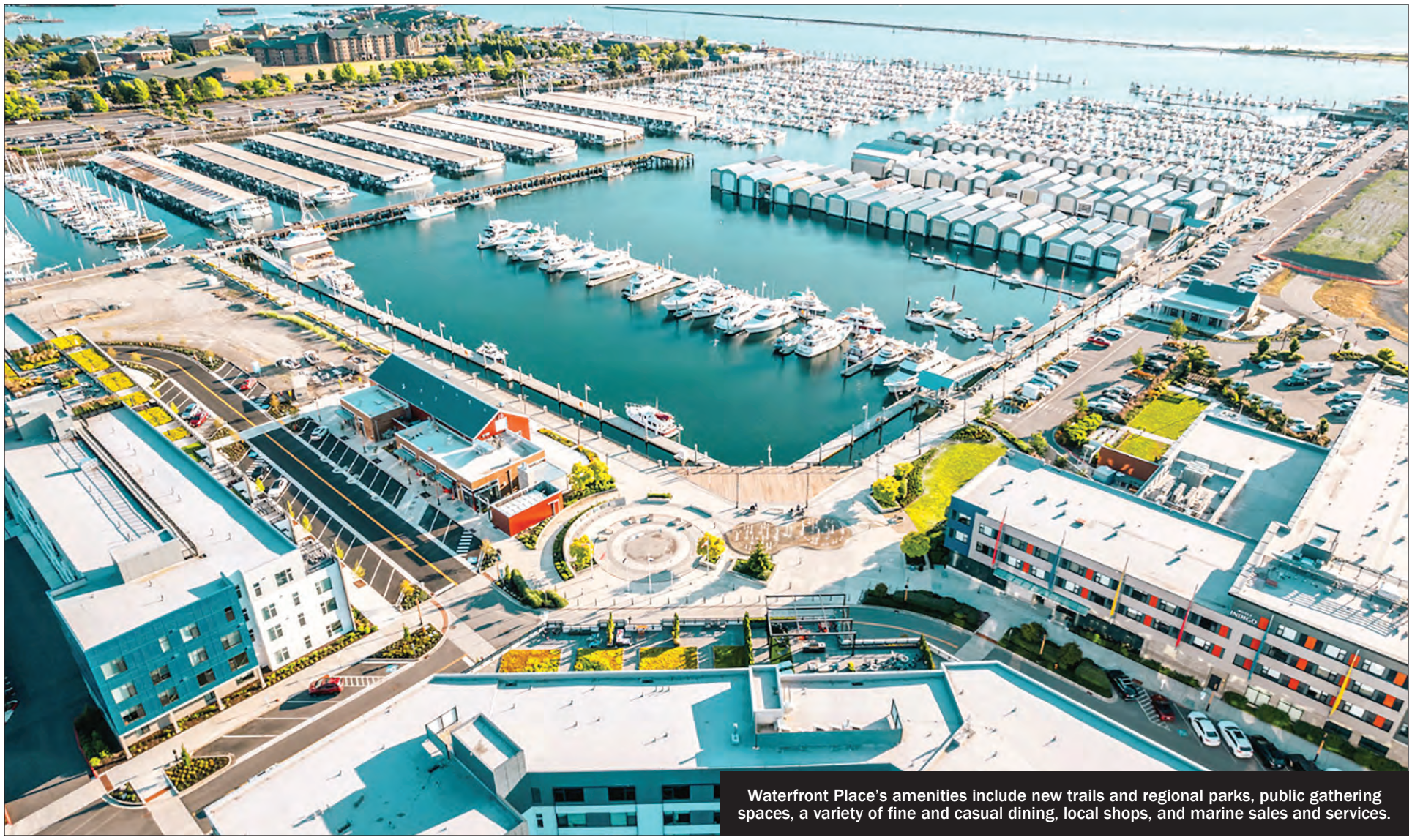
Today, as the port enhances its critical connection to global commerce and national security in the area known as the working waterfront, it's also transforming a 65-acre property known as Waterfront Place into a modern commercial mixed-use and recreation centered development. It is estimated that the port will leverage an expected $1 billion in public/private investment to redevelop and reimagine this new waterfront destination in a way that feels authentically Everett, embracing and paying tribute the city's rich history and industry.

Waterfront Place is a new 1.5-million-square-foot mixed-use development located at our waterfront near the downtown core in Everett. The development has spectacular views, waterfront access, recreational amenities and a world-class marina – the largest public Marina on the West Coast – with 2,300 slips and 5,000 linear feet of guest moorage. At full build-out, Waterfront Place will include 63,000 square feet of retail/restaurant space, another 20,000 square feet of marine retail, 447,500 square feet of office space, two waterfront hotels and up to 660 waterfront housing units. Featured amenities include new trails and regional parks, public gathering spaces, a variety of fine and casual dining, local shops, and marine sales and services. The project's investments in public/private investment is estimated to support nearly 2,100 family-wage jobs and generate $8.6 million annually in state and local sales taxes. To date, the port has facilitated more than $350 million in public/private investment here, with more to come.

The transformation of this area started with a comprehensive environmental cleanup. Waterfront Place is located within a Puget Sound Initiative priority area (Port Gardner Bay) and included six environmental cleanup sites impacted by historical industrial contamination. The Port of Everett and Landau Associates partnered with the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) to complete a comprehensive, innovative cleanup program between 2006 and 2021 across the 65-acres to remove this obstacle and to facilitate the redevelopment.

The former Everett Shipyard cleanup site is now home to Fisherman's Harbor, including a splash fountain and public dock walk, the 142-room Hotel Indigo, 266 residential units at the new Waterfront Place Apartments along with new restaurant/retail spaces.

The approximately $30 million investment, including more than $10 million in Ecology cleanup grants private party settlements and port funds, resulted in the removal and disposal of nearly 200,000 tons of contaminated soil, remediation of several contaminated groundwater plumes, dredging of contaminated sediment from the bay, and removal of failing bulkheads and old creosote-treated wood structures. This innovative environmental cleanup effort has earned industry recognition, including Environmental Project of the Year Award



Waterfront Place's amenities include new trails and regional parks, public gathering spaces, a variety of fine and casual dining, local shops, and marine sales and services.

in 2015 from the Washington Public Ports Association, and a Gold Award from the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) in the Social, Economic, and Sustainable Design category.

The most visual transformation took place at the former Everett Shipyard cleanup site, now home to Fisherman's Harbor – the first phase of Waterfront Place. Here the Port and private partners have built out new public access, including a splash fountain and public dock walk, the 142-room Hotel Indigo, 266 residential units at the new Waterfront Place Apartments along with new restaurant/retail spaces.

The port broke ground on its next two restaurant buildings in July 2024 at Fisherman's Harbor Restaurant Row. One of the two new buildings is being constructed next door to the Asian-fusion Fisherman Jack's restaurant and South Fork Baking Co., which opened last year at Restaurant Row along Seiner Drive. The 12,000-square-foot building will soon be home to Rustic Cork Wine Bar, Menchie's @ the Marina, Alexa's Cafe and Tapped Public House. The other building will add another 6,000 square feet at the corner of Seiner and West Marine View drives near the city's Grand Avenue Park Bridge. It will house The Net Sheds, a new fish-and-chips bar and fish market, with the balance of the building seeking a Mexican restaurant.

The port is forging forward on the next phase of development at the Millwright District — the second and largest phase of the Port of Everett's Waterfront Place mixed-use project, totaling about 10 acres. The Millwright District, situated in the uplands between the port's Central and North Docks, will feature 60,000+ square feet of new retail/restaurant space and 200,000+ square feet of commercial/office space, along with more than 250 residential units. The port's development partner for this phase, Lincoln Properties, is anticipated to break ground in 2025.

Erik Gerking serves as the chief of Planning & Development at the Port of Everett, where he oversees a range of long-term planning efforts, environmental initiatives and real estate development projects. Dylan Frazer is a senior associate geologist in the environmental remediation group at Landau Associates supporting his public and private sector clients with environmental cleanup and compliance.

RETURNING VIBRANCY TO HARBOR STEPS

Harbor Steps serves as a rare conduit between the waterfront and downtown, and the redesign team incorporated key design elements to connect them.

The redesign team conducted detailed studies to better understand the way residents and visitors used the public space connecting downtown with the waterfront that was created in 1994.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF EQUITY RESIDENTIAL

BY MARK SINDELL & DAVID MARSHALL
GGLO

The Harbor Steps is a vital link between two of Seattle's iconic destinations - the waterfront and the downtown core. Much like its original inspiration of the Spanish Steps in Rome, the Harbor Steps are a destination for residents, workers and tourists looking for a place to enjoy the sun and views of the Sound.

Restaurants and retail spaces have historically contributed to life on the steps, but started to languish before and going into the pandemic. First completed in 1994, this public space was in need of a refresh to return its vibrancy in the age of Seattle's redeveloping waterfront.

USER EXPERIENCE

The design team conducted detailed studies to better understand use by residents and visitors, revealing how people moved through, used, and hung out on the steps. What we learned – the bottom of the steps was underutilized, the top functioned well for events, people walked on the edges, sought out the sun, and there was a general lack of comfortable seating, warmth of any kind, and depth perception issues with the homogonous grey tone of the materials.

In response, we incorporated a series of weathered steel planters with tiered wood seating draped over the central area of the steps to host office workers on their lunch breaks, tourists taking a break from the climb up from the waterfront, and concert-goers attending one of the summer music events. A diversity of fixed and moveable seating allows for lounging in the sun or shade. These seating clusters, along with dedicated outdoor dining areas, support the eateries that are now thriving again at Harbor Steps.

LINKING DOWNTOWN AND THE WATERFRONT

Established downtown character at First & University and emerging waterfront upgrades inspired the renovation of Harbor Steps. The implied water course beginning at the Garden of Remembrance is continued through the steps by repeating the garden's dark natural stone.

Water spouts and cascades of varying heights delight the senses with sound and motion before landing on Western Avenue, gesturing on to the waterfront. The wood and weathered steel so prominent along the waterfront's promenade were used to contrast the natural concrete that defined the original palette of the Harbor Steps. These warmer materials were placed where people congregate and linger.

The dual influence of city and water also influenced the planting design. The upper

and eastern half of the steps is defined by a civic and ornamental planting palette that features exciting foliage and blooms, including a revival of the beloved flowering cherry trees formerly on site. The lower western half of the steps is inspired by the waterfront with birches, ferns, and sedges recalling the historical shoreline.

With the removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and opening of the promenade, increased pedestrian traffic was eagerly anticipated to energize the open space of the steps and adjoining restaurants. The Harbor Steps is a rare conduit between the waterfront and downtown that offers lush relief and places to stop and rest on the way up and down.

Opening just as adjacent portions of the waterfront redevelopment were completed has proved very beneficial for the steps and its restaurants. As soon as the construction fences came down, every bench and chair was occupied with locals and tourists passing through. Also observed were people stopping to frame and capture moments along the steps in selfies and family photos.

Often featuring in these photos is the new and iconic signage that punctuates the steps. These wayfinding elements are critical to making the connection between city and waterfront and guiding people to all points between. Special attention was paid to creating visibility from a block or two away as visitors approach from each end. A careful balance was also struck between reenergizing the area with bold and modern signage while paying homage to historical roots as in the newest incarnation of the Post Alley sign.

The redesign team incorporated wood and weathered steel, prominent along the waterfront's promenade, to contrast the natural concrete that defined the original palette of the Harbor Steps.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

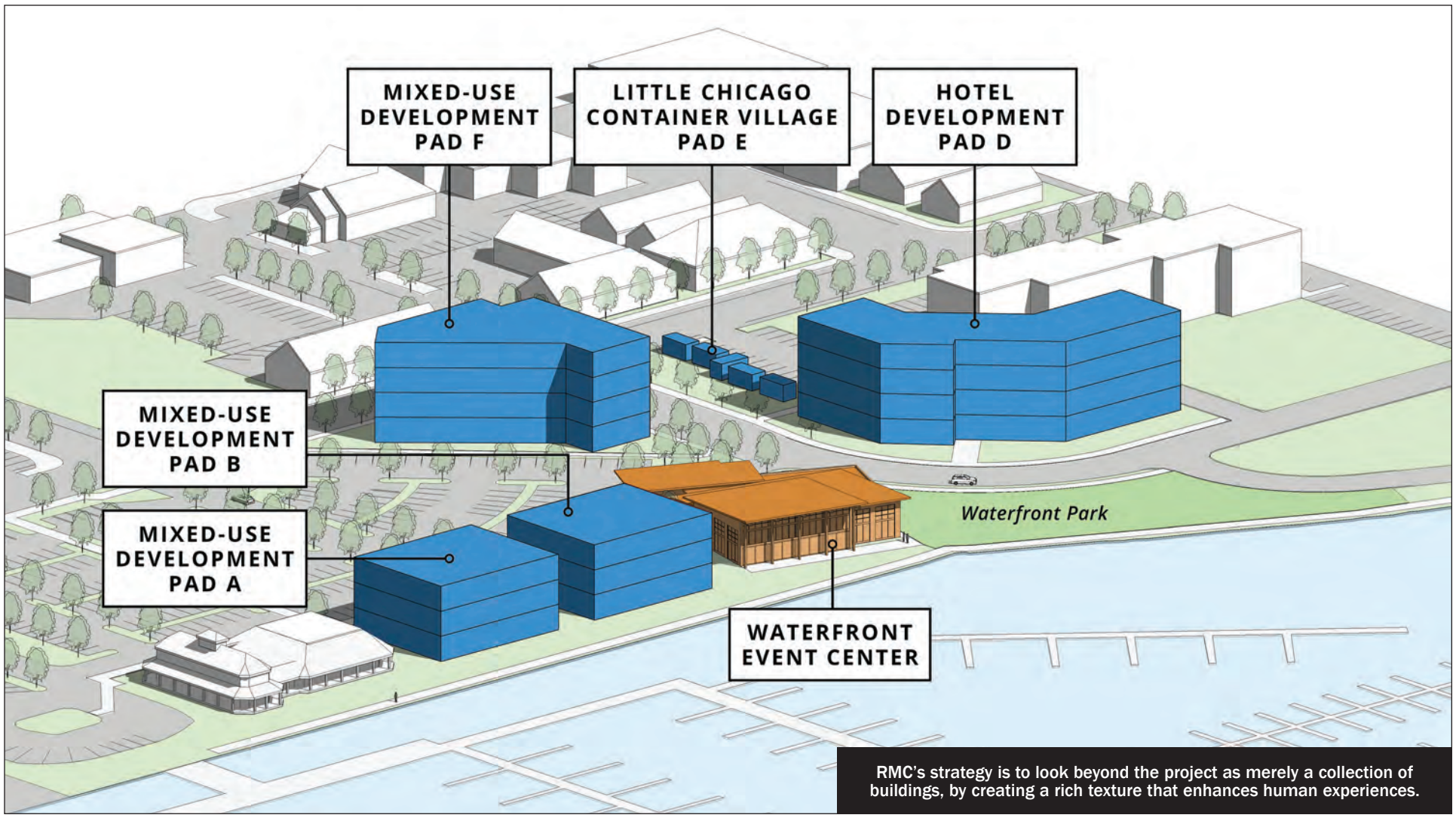
As a renovation project, the Harbor Steps had to rely on more subtle sustainability strategies than seen on many newer projects. By looking for ways to refresh many of the features of the existing plaza rather than total demolition, the project cut down on unnecessary materials, emissions, and construction waste. Numerous concrete planters, seatwalls, stair treads, handrails, and a metal trellis were preserved and either painted or cladded in new materials.

The project utilizes energy-efficient LED lights controlled by smart timers and Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs) on the water feature pumps allow the power delivered to each pump to be minimized. Planted area was increased nearly 350% from existing conditions and a variety of native and adaptive plants provide habitat for urban wildlife. New trees shade paved surfaces as well as keep visitors more comfortable in hot weather. These trees and shrubs sequester carbon from the atmosphere and greater areas of plantings and soil volume hold stormwater and release it slowly, helping to protect downstream environments. The decking and cladding used in the plaza is made of rapidly-renewable and durable bamboo.

LOOKING AHEAD

With a fresh face and stronger connections to vibrant and engaging areas of the city, the Harbor Steps welcomes all to spend an hour or an afternoon enjoying the beauty of water, blooms, or a meal with friends.

Mark Sindell is a principal at GGLO and led the Harbor Steps design effort. David Marshall is a senior associate at GGLO and led the delivery of the project.



RMC's strategy is to look beyond the project as merely a collection of buildings, by creating a rich texture that enhances human experiences.

IMAGES COURTESY OF RMC ARCHITECTS

MASTER PLANNING A FIDALGO ISLAND COMMUNITY FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE

The Subarea Master Plan for the Port of Anacortes prioritizes accessing nature, considers the surrounding context, and is mindful of the community and tourists who will be part of determining this project's success.

BY JEFF MCCLURE
RMC ARCHITECTS

On Fidalgo Island in Northwest Washington sits the beautiful waterfront city of Anacortes. The town is well-known as both a gateway to the San Juan Islands and a destination for a wealth of outdoor activities, including numerous year-round festivals and events. RMC Architects was hired by the Port of Anacortes to create a subarea master plan that will energize currently underused property at Cap Sante Marina and strengthen and enliven the connection between the city's historic downtown and waterfront through pedestrian and road improvements. Ultimately the master plan will accommodate the kinds of mixed-use commercial/retail/residential buildings that draw people (and initially, developers) to these areas.

The master plan is ideally situated one block east from downtown and adjacent to the Cap Sante Marina. Surrounding amenities include the busy Cap Sante Marina RV Park, the Maritime Heritage Center and WT Preston Steamboat, and the Waterfront Esplanade. We know that master planning plays a vital role in transforming cities by linking buildings, social settings, and the surrounding environment. We are inspired by the opportunities and challenges of reinventing this area, while preserving its uniqueness and local heritage. By leveraging its rich history, we create a sense of place — an important component of the master planning process.

RMC's strategy is to look beyond the project as merely a collection of buildings, by creating a rich texture that enhances human experiences. To develop these memorable moments, we look at the project from a variety of angles: accessing nature through open spaces and pedestrian connections; consideration of the surrounding context of scale, form, and materials; and bringing our understanding of the community and tourists who will be part of determining this project's success. With that in mind, the development pads are organized around two locations: the waterfront, and the pedestrian path along Ninth Street between the waterfront and downtown.

Development Pads A, B, and C are intentionally located to take advantage of ocean views and proposed as commercial/retail/office buildings (Pads A and B) and an event center (Pad C). We are currently designing the event center for the Port and city of Anacortes. Development Pad D is proposed as the first seaside hotel in the city and is situated to literally maximize views. While most double-loaded waterfront hotels wind up with rooms on the backside that look over parking lots, this one is configured so that everyone has natural light and water or mountain views. Pads E and F focus on attracting pedestrian traffic. Fondly known as Little Chicago, Development Pad E is proposed as a cargo container village populated with 10 x 20 moveable units envisioned as food stands and retail. Development Pad F is also proposed as retail on the lower level with three stories of multifamily housing units above.

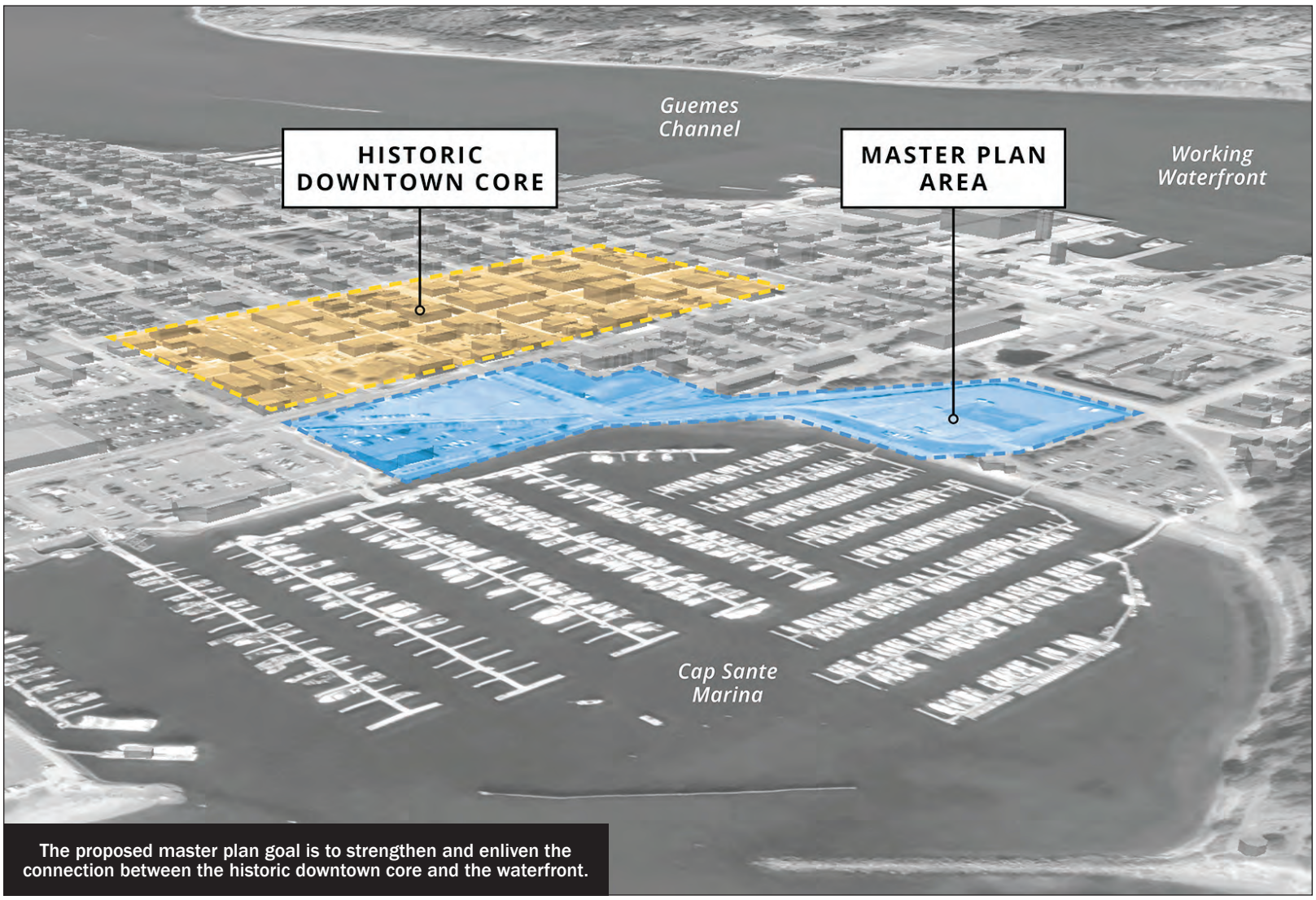
The event center, with a current working title as The Loft at Cap Sante Marina, is oriented towards the water and designed to accommodate 400 users, including a dance floor, stage, buffet, green room with a separate bathroom, warming kitchen for outside caterers, enclosed storage for equipment and patron restrooms. Run by the port, the event center will be open year-round and available for both public and private use. To keep the area activated, the design includes an additional space for lease anticipated as an art gallery, coffee shop, or small chandlery.

Of course, the pragmatic side of master planning is

equally important. A confusing five-way intersection near the site provided a bit of a challenge. The project scope included realigning the road in that location to create a simplified intersection, better pedestrian access, and an outdoor public space that connects visually to downtown. This outdoor space can extend the event center's capacity during some of the city's biggest festivals, including their annual wine tasting event.

The wonderful geographic presence of Anacortes combined with its robust community spirit provided RMC with the perfect tools for creating a master plan that will carry the city into a successful future, ripe with opportunities.

Jeff McClure co-established RMC Architects in 1986 and focuses his practice on projects that build community through context-sensitive design.



The proposed master plan goal is to strengthen and enliven the connection between the historic downtown core and the waterfront.

Dickman Mill Park offers a unique opportunity to experience an interpretation of Tacoma's working waterfront history.

PHOTOS BY ANCHOR QEA

REVIVING TACOMA'S HISTORIC WATERFRONT: THE EXPANSION OF DICKMAN MILL PARK

Tacoma's lumber mill-turned-park offers a blueprint for creating a public space that honors an industrial past while advancing efforts to restore and promote the ecological health and recreational benefits of its shoreline.

A stop along Tacoma's revitalized Ruston Way, the expansion of Dickman Mill Park serves as a testament to how waterfront development can balance history, environmental resilience and community engagement. Once home to the longest-operating sawmill on Tacoma's waterfront, the park now features restored artifacts, enhanced ecological habitats and design strategies that counter the pressing challenges of sea level rise. As waterfront redevelopment continues to shape the Pacific Northwest, Dickman Mill Park offers a compelling case study in how cities can blend industrial heritage with modern environmental goals.

BY ANNA HOOK SPOONER
ANCHOR QEA

A GLIMPSE INTO TACOMA'S INDUSTRIAL PAST

The Dickman Mill site, established as a lumber mill in 1889 and operational until 1977, hosted one of the most significant players in Tacoma's thriving timber industry. Situated along Commencement Bay, the mill was part of a bustling waterfront filled with sawmills and other industrial enterprises. Today, while the hum of machinery has long faded, the restored head saw— a 15-ton mechanical marvel —stands as a centerpiece of the park, offering visitors a tangible link to the city's past.

However, this restoration isn't merely about preserving history; it also serves as a critical environmental and educational project. The Dickman Mill Park expansion, completed in 2021, was driven by the vision of Metro Parks Tacoma and a multidisciplinary team led by landscape architects. The goal: to create a public space that honors Tacoma's industrial roots while advancing efforts to restore and promote the ecological health and recreational benefits of its shoreline.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE AND RESTORATION

The design team prime consultant was Anchor QEA, whose services included landscape architecture, geotechnical and civil engineering, environmental permitting and mitigation, natural resources and investigation, public outreach and construction management. The team also included architect and historic preservation specialist Ron Wright Architects/Associates, structural engineering subconsultant WSP, electrical engineering subconsultant Cross Engineers and contractor Redside Construction.

The site's waterfront location is environmentally sensitive, and its history of industrial uses created the need to address environmental concerns. From nearshore debris removal to habitat restoration, the team designed each step in the process to mitigate human impact on the surrounding environment, building off previous shoreline cleanup efforts.

The design focused on restoring nearshore, beach backshore, and riparian habitats, which are crucial for supporting local wildlife, including salmon populations. Crews removed old industrial debris, such as bricks and concrete, and introduced native plants like

The Ghost Log sits upon the restored carriage amidst mill remnant walls and foundations. It morphs from old-growth timber to cedar boughs, evoking the site's long site history and use.

dune grass and gumweed to enhance the coastal marsh . Some of the bricks recovered from the shoreline had historical significance and markings, so the team used them in the head saw's foundation. DNR is removing hundreds of creosote piles just offshore of the project site — another plus for ecological restoration.

By removing sections of vertical walls in the nearshore area to improve tidal exchange and ensuring overwater decking was grated to allow light penetration, the design helped restore critical nearshore habitat that supports juvenile salmon.

RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF SEA LEVEL RISE

One of the key resilience strategies was elevating the park's decking and plaza areas. Informed by coastal engineering evaluations, construction crews raised the head saw plaza three feet above the surrounding ground level to account for projected rising waters. This elevation not only protects the park's current infrastructure, it also ensures that public access to the waterfront will continue in the future. Gradually sloped ramps connect the elevated deck to the surrounding beach and park.

The choice of materials was another important consideration. Steel used in construction was either stainless or marine-coated to avoid using galvanized steel, which contains zinc — a substance harmful to salmon and other aquatic species. By carefully selecting materials that can withstand the harsh marine environment without causing ecological harm, the project illustrates how waterfront development can co-exist with environmental sustainability.

ENHANCING PUBLIC ACCESS AND INTERPRETATION

Beyond its environmental and historical significance, Dickman Mill Park offers an inviting and educational space for the public. The park's layout and interpretive elements allow visitors to explore the natural beauty of Commencement Bay while learning about the long history of the Coastal Salish people – specifically the local Puyallup Tribe – and learning about the site's industrial history. The restored head saw, for example, is positioned in its original location, offering a direct link to the past. Visitors can stroll along an elevated catwalk that runs parallel to the historic log carriage, providing a close-up view of the industrial process that once defined the site.

One of the park's most striking features is the Ghost Log, a weathering steel sculpture that pays homage to the old-growth timber processed at the mill. Created by artist Mary Coss, the sculpture represents an old growth cedar log that unravels into cedar boughs, a sacred symbol of the Puyallup Tribe's cultural connection to the land. Metal strands bend to form words for cedar tree, bark, branch and basket in English and Twulshootseed, the Puyallup tribal language. This blending of industrial and cultural history creates a unique experience for visitors, who can scan nearby QR codes to hear stories from Puyallup tribal members and former mill workers.

A landmarked historic artifact on state and local heritage registers, the restored head saw and log carriage returned to its original location in 2021.

The expansion also emphasizes accessibility. ADA-compliant ramps and surfacing ensure that visitors of all ages and abilities can explore the full extent of the park's offerings. Interpretive signage, designed by Dahn Design and strategically placed along the viewing areas, provides additional context for those interested in learning more about the site's historical and environmental significance.

A MODEL FOR FUTURE WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

The revival of Dickman Mill Park represents more than just a nod to Tacoma's past and another destination along Ruston Way's chain of waterfront parks. It's a forward-thinking project that addresses some of the most pressing challenges facing waterfront developments today: environmental degradation, climate resilience, and public access. By integrating historical preservation with modern environmental techniques, the park offers a blueprint for how coastal cities like Tacoma can continue to revitalize their waterfronts while respecting their industrial and cultural heritage, as well as their ecological future.

Anna Hook Spooner is principal landscape architect with Anchor QEA, an environmental science and engineering consulting firm specializing in aquatic, shoreline, and water resource projects for public agencies and private industry.

MAKING PUBLIC EDUCATION A FOCAL POINT OF WATERFRONT PARK REDESIGN

Educating the public about the importance of shoreline habitat restoration is a critical aspect of waterfront redevelopment design, building support for future habitat restoration initiatives.

An aerial view of the Port of Seattle's Terminal 117 Early Action Area Cleanup project (People's Park).

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE PORT OF SEATTLE

BY SCOTT MAHARRY
GRETTE ASSOCIATES

Development along the shorelines of Washington state often requires restoration of habitat to offset the impacts associated with the development. The requirements for this restoration are meant to protect and preserve the habitat essential for wildlife that live in the aquatic environment, such as salmon, Orca, crabs and other species. An often overlooked aspect to this shoreline restoration, particularly in the urban environment, is public education.

Public education as a component of shoreline development is particularly important with respect to the development or redevelopment of public parks. Park designs often include signage and other educational opportunities to educate users on the importance of the habitat on and near the park. Educating the public about the importance of shoreline habitat restoration is a critical aspect of public engagement to build support for future habitat restoration initiatives.

Farallon Consulting has been involved in numerous park development projects where public education has been a focal point of design.

FRITZ HEDGES WATERWAY PARK

This entire site at the north side of Portage Bay just south of the Waterfront was redeveloped from 2018 to 2020 from a warehouse and parking lot to a public park that provides fish habitat, interpretive trails, and public access with piers and beachfront area. This project for Seattle Parks and Recreation combines restorative elements including habitat and contamination cleanup and increased public access.

Historically, the site contained a large warehouse building and associated private marina, along with upland storage and parking and a dilapidated pier. The warehouse, known as the Bryant Building, was an historic building that required coordination with other agencies to remove. In addition, permits and approvals from local, state, and federal agencies were necessary to conduct the shoreline and in-water portions of the project.

Work on the project included:

- Shoreline surveys assessing riparian and aquatic vegetation, habitat function, and wetland delineation
- Preparing permit application documents for local, state, and federal permits
- Capping contaminated sediment with beach fill that functioned as a physical barrier to the contaminated sediment and also provided habitat function
- Creating a naturally-sloped beach with water access
- Shoreline plantings and restoration
- Installing large woody debris and riparian plantings to provide increased habitat function
- Installing grated decking on a pier to allow sunlight to penetrate to the beach
- Preserving wetland area with aquatic vegetation along the shoreline
- Creating a mitigation plan to offset impacts from the project, including removal of bulkheads and invasive shoreline vegetation

The plan documented the corresponding removal of prior overwater coverage and the installation of native shoreline vegetation, large woody debris, and habitat fill as compensation.

This park was designed so the habitat restoration elements of the park are front and center to the user, providing the public with unobstructed views of the large woody debris and native vegetation installed along the shoreline. Interpretive elements in the park's design educate visitors on the importance of these restored habitats.

POINT NO POINT

A king tide event coinciding with a storm in 2021 resulted in major flooding that severely damaged this park. Kitsap County Parks and Recreation began emergency repairs on the park to stabilize the land before the next winter. The nearby houses were flooded, and the storm created a big channel through the park.

Under Phase 1 of this project, the county brought in sand to fill the scoured portions of the park and restored the access road and parking lot.

Our work is still ongoing. Phase 2 of the project will include construction of a shoreline berm to protect the park against future King Tides and sea level rise. Native shoreline and beach vegetation will also be installed to further protect the backshore from tidal erosion.

The project will result in improvements to habitat with public access so that the public can continue to use the park and enjoy the beach, and also learn a little bit about the environment and shoreline ecology.

The project will also protect the park, the estuarine wetlands, and the nearby residential structures from future impacts of sea level rise and storm events. Phase 2 of the project will also include enhancement

of a revetment protecting an historic lighthouse, and other improvements to the beach to protect against sea level rise, such as rebuilding the berm for king tide resiliency while also incorporating habitat benefits.

Work on the project included and will include:

- Permitting and design assistance for Phase I
- Emergency sand placement to fill eroded areas of the park and protect nearby residences
- Restoration of the access road and parking lot
- Phase II restoration (in process now)
- Berm installation for king tide resiliency and habitat benefits
- Planting and habitat restoration (installing native plants, beach substrates and large wood)
- Infrastructure to protect the historic lighthouse
- Project design resulting in preservation and enhancement of habitat and ecological functions

Looking east toward the Duwamish River over newly-constructed off-channel habitat and a pedestrian viewing pier for the People's Park.

DUWAMISH RIVER – PEOPLE'S PARK

The site along the lower Duwamish Waterway, formerly called Terminal 117, was a long-time asphalt plant and was designated as an Early Action Area within the EPA's Lower Duwamish Waterway Superfund Site. Cleanup of the site involved extensive coordination with the permitting agencies to protect the riverine ecosystem.

An involved local community, South Park, was engaged from the early stages of the cleanup design. Frequent community planning and engagement sessions along with project website updates kept the community up to date on project progress.

Once cleanup was complete, a public park was constructed at the site, including a public viewing platform, a public pier, and a kayak launch along with extensive intertidal marsh and native vegetation installation. Coupled with the habitat restoration elements are a public art installation and interpretive signage, educating park users on the habitat restoration and the history of the site.

Work on the project included:

- Permitting the cleanup of the site along with construction of an overlook pier
- Permitting and installing a giant sheet pile wall because the site was so dirty the Port of Seattle and the resource agencies didn't want to expose the contaminated soil to the Duwamish River. This involved in-water construction activity outside of the allowable work window, resulting in extensive consultation with multiple federal agencies under the Endangered Species Act.
- Monitoring underwater noise levels during installation of the steel piling for the overlook pier and debris deflector to ensure noise levels were not injurious to fish and marine mammals.

Extensive public outreach and collaboration occurred during the initial design and cleanup of the site. Once cleanup was complete, the port constructed the park amenities, including the viewing platform and public pier, hand-carry boat launch, and habitat restoration elements.

Acknowledging the importance of the site to the South Park community, interpretive signage and a public art display were installed to further educate the public on the importance of the habitat restoration along this industrialized shoreline of the Duwamish River.

Scott Maharry is a principal scientist with Grette Associates, a division of Farallon Consulting, with extensive expertise in shoreline ecology, wetland and riparian systems, and fisheries and wildlife ecology and he manages large, complex projects in both marine and freshwater environments.

Looking west toward the Bryant Building and degraded shoreline bulkhead at Fritz Hedges Waterway Park prior to construction.

PHOTO BY GRETTE ASSOCIATES

REIMAGINING SEATTLE'S DOWNTOWN, WATERFRONT CONNECTIVITY WITH A 'STRING OF PEARLS' APPROACH

How strategic planning can transform the city's waterfronts, parks, museums and other entertainment districts and unlock even greater potential.

Seattle is a vibrant city with deep historical and cultural richness. From its captivating waterfronts to its myriad entertainment venues and destinations, this city truly offers something for residents and visitors alike. However, when looking at the connection between the city's many 'pearls,' one crucial component is missing – the string itself.

BY DOUG DEMERS
HKS SEATTLE

In this case, the string includes examining how one gets from point A to point B through investing in more robust public transportation and rethinking highway infrastructure to connect the city's waterfronts, parks, museums and other entertainment districts. The string is also made up of better zoning solutions and an increase in thoughtful development partnerships to energize the city and promote expansion opportunities.

Link Light Rail expansions like the new line to Lynnwood promote more connectivity between the city's core and further-flung areas. But some of Seattle's most popular destinations lack this level of public transportation.

PHOTO BY SKANSKA USA

INVESTING IN MORE ROBUST PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Seattle has made significant strides over the past decade with regards to public transportation. For example, the Link Light Rail expansions have promoted more connectivity between the city's core to the Eastside and as far north as Lynnwood. And more expansion is anticipated over the next few decades, which will result in a more connected city.

However, there are still many areas lacking this level of public transportation, with some of them even being Seattle's most popular destinations. This includes the Elliott Bay waterfront, which is home to Seattle's iconic Pike Place Market. Despite its prominence, it can feel disconnected from the Space Needle and the other attractions Seattle Center has to offer. While the monorail connects Seattle Center to the urban core, tourists and even residents must walk a few blocks before reaching the market, causing the city to feel fragmented.

Additionally, the Elliott Bay Waterfront benefits from proximity to entertainment venues like T-Mobile Park and Lumen Field, which promotes an opportunity for alternative public transportation offerings to connect these two districts. While the Link Light Rail can be viewed as a solution, it's not as intuitive of an option for the many tourists Seattle welcomes each year. Furthermore, the closest Link station is still about a 30-minute walk to either sports facility, thus creating a significant transportation gap.

While increased public transportation further connects Seattle's landmarks, it also results in a decreased reliance on highways, which promotes an opportunity to completely reinvigorate that category of infrastructure.

HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE REIMAGINED

When it comes to rethinking a highway's purpose within a city center, there are ultimately two solutions – highway mitigation versus complete highway removal. Though deemed a bit radical, completely removing highways from city centers can promote long-term results such as enhanced revitalization and more space to develop affordable housing. On the contrary, highway mitigation can promote some of these same results in the short-term while being more politically obtainable.

Seattle has been progressive with its mitigation efforts. The Alaskan Way Viaduct removal and underground repositioning of the highway is seen as a positive step for the city's waterfront redevelopment. It has completely opened the waterfront along Elliott Bay, making it feel far more linked and accessible to the rest of the city. It has also redirected corresponding traffic elsewhere, which makes the area more pedestrian-friendly.

There are other areas in Seattle, though, that could benefit from these same mitigation efforts. The area surrounding Lake Union, particularly Mercer Street, often experiences severe congestion because of its proximity to I-5. Repositioning the stretch of I-5 that cuts through the city would not only redirect that traffic and alleviate some of the congestion on Mercer, but it could also make way for more accessibility between South Lake Union and Seattle's eastern neighborhoods.

Additionally, the viaduct's removal has unlocked further potential for real estate and public use in that area. This has created significant opportunities for alternative zoning solutions and more waterfront development as that land has continued to rise in value.

INNOVATIVE ZONING SOLUTIONS, THOUGHTFUL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Many of Seattle's waterfront properties are currently zoned for industrial purposes and as land value continues to increase, there's been more discussion around repurposing these plots for urban development such as housing, retail or office space. However, industrial zoning heavily values the marine industry, which in turn drives the city's economic health.

While this zoning remains restrictive, and for good reason, there are compromises that allow for more of a hybrid solution. This approach suggests enhanced collaboration and public-private partnerships on a project-by-project basis to create adaptable district plans – enter zoning overlays, otherwise known as "micro-zoning." Micro-zoning provides opportunities for creative, mixed-use development tailored to each individual property, rather than one uniform solution for a plot of land.

One shining example of effective micro-zoning is along the Ballard Locks, where the city of Seattle recently allowed the development of multi-story projects that combine industrial with non-conventional assets such as retail, workforce housing and other residential offerings.

This innovative solution and the thoughtful partnerships that made it possible enable manufacturing to coexist with other property types in an area that has long been home to underutilized docks and waterfronts. The end result is a cohesive development that revitalizes the surrounding neighborhood by addressing both industrial needs and the city's increasing demand for housing.

Future micro-zoning and transit solutions require holistic planning and development to create more vibrant and energized districts that focus on both people's experiences and economic revitalization. A 'string of pearls' strategy that integrates all the above elements is crucial to consider as we look towards the next wave of development around Seattle's waterfronts and beyond.

Doug Demers is a principal and office director at HKS Seattle and an advisory board member of the UW College of Built Environment's Runstad Department of Real Estate.

CONNECTING

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needed to be done to insert the Ocean Pavilion into an existing design."

Working on separate yet comingled projects is always complicated. The Overlook Walk sits over back-of-house space for the Ocean Pavilion. To incorporate the Overlook Walk's bridge column locations and storm drain piping into the design of the Ocean Pavilion, MKA designed openings large enough to prevent the columns that penetrate the pavilion from touching the slab in a major earthquake. The high roof of the Aquarium is connected to the Overlook Walk by a seismic joint measuring approximately one foot across, allowing the two buildings to move independently and not impose force on each other during an earthquake. Another seismic joint separates the Overlook Walk from the Market. MKA worked with Jacobs, EOR for the Overlook Walk Bridges, and LMN Architects, the Architect of Record for the Ocean Pavilion, to detail the joint.

"With different lateral systems at the two structures, team collaboration and communication were critical to prevent building interaction during a seismic event," said MKA Associate Hannah Bonotto, the Pavilion's structural engineering project manager.

MKA's structural engineers also designed the café, service building, Salish Plaza and Salish steps.

"People might not realize it, but they are standing not only on the roof of the Ocean Pavilion but also overtop the main habitat and the various creatures swimming below," Bonotto explained.

The Ocean Pavilion's eastern retaining walls also support the main corridor project and are designed to accommodate the American Society of Civil Engineers' required design loads, as well as the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials loads. MKA's civil team worked to assist the bridge engineers with finish grades for the bridge sidewalks and plazas, designed the grading and drainage improvements of the Overlook Walk's Salish Plaza and steps, and integrated the Ocean Pavilion into the Alaskan Way promenade and sidewalk design that had already been completed.

"The final product looks beautifully cohesive, but these projects were designed separately," Greene concluded. "It's a testament to the skills of all our team members that we could work together and have all the various projects come together in such a unified way."

Hannah Bonotto is an associate at MKA and structural engineering project manager for the Ocean Pavilion and Overlook Walk. Rita Greene is a principal at MKA and civil engineering project manager for the Olympic Sculpture Park, Ocean Pavilion, and Overlook Walk. Matt Jones is a senior principal and civil engineering practice leader at MKA.

STADIUM DISTRICT

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healthy and vibrant downtown.

With the upcoming completion of the new Waterfront Park, a mixed-use Stadium District that includes housing offers a unique opportunity to integrate Seattle's thriving maritime industries with the rest of its downtown.

A new neighborhood that preserves Seattle's industrial heritage while celebrating sports and entertainment could result in a safe, thriving destination, creating hundreds of new jobs, multiple opportunities for small businesses and much-needed housing for all income levels. This could be a win-win situation for Downtown Seattle, and our underdeveloped Stadium District would finally be allowed to flourish.

Scott Surdyke is a development manager and land use consultant specializing in transit-oriented and mixed-use development.