



**COMMISSION  
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

**Item No.** 11a

**BRIEFING ITEM**

**Date of Meeting** June 25, 2024

**DATE:** June 17, 2024

**TO:** Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director

**FROM:** Pearse Edwards, Sr. Director, External Relations  
Rosie Courtney, Sr. Manager, External Relations

**SUBJECT:** **Seattle Waterfront Update on Projects and Partnerships**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Today's briefing provides an update on several downtown waterfront projects that will transform Seattle's central shoreline. Partner organizations will share final milestones to implement a community vision to reconnect the waterfront to downtown. The decades-long effort made possible with the demolition of the Alaskan Way Viaduct includes the park promenade along the water with a new roadway, east-west connections and dramatic new public spaces including the new Overlook Walk. The Seattle Aquarium's new Ocean Pavilion and the privately funded Elliott Bay Connections project contribute to the new waterfront experience with a focus on our ocean, and Puget Sound vistas, pedestrian and bicycle greenways and enhancements to Centennial and Myrtle Edwards parks at the north end of the waterfront.

In addition to those investments along the Seattle waterfront, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) is working with the waterfront business community, including the Port of Seattle, and bike enthusiasts to construct a protected bike lane along Alaskan Way from Broad Street to the Seattle Aquarium. There the protected bike lane will merge with an existing bike lane along Elliott Way. The project begins construction later this year. We intend to invite SDOT staff to brief the Commission on this project and the transportation levy in September.

**BACKGROUND**

The Port has invested in Seattle's central waterfront for decades. In the late 1990s, as part of its economic development strategy and mission to foster maritime uses, the Port's waterfront plan included moving its headquarters from its original address at Pier 66 to a recycled cannery at Pier 69 in 1994. Pier 66 then became the focus of an 11-acre mixed-use development that spanned the waterside and uplands. The waterside complex opened in 1996 with a recreational marina, international conference center, museum, restaurants, cruise terminal, public plaza and rooftop viewpoint. The development was named Bell Street Pier in tribute to the Port's first wharf. The Port-developed uplands included office and retail space with the World Trade Center Seattle as its anchor and two parking garages. To spur private development in the corridor, the Port offered

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additional uplands parcels which resulted in the Waterfront Landings residential units and the Seattle Waterfront Marriott Hotel.

The Port’s leadership to create a thriving waterfront continued as the community rallied to remove the Alaskan Way Viaduct and create a world-class shoreline connected to the Port’s development at the north end. In August 2013, the Port and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) entered into an agreement for a Port contribution of \$281 million to the Viaduct Replacement Program to achieve the best balance of retaining and creating jobs, sustaining regional economic vitality, and benefiting the environment. Other direct funding to the waterfront redevelopment included a \$755k contribution as part of the Local Improvement District levy for the new park in 2022. Additional Port investments in the central waterfront include:

\$281 million	Viaduct Replacement Program (2013)
\$755k	Local Improvement District levy for waterfront park (2022).
\$100k annually	Metropolitan Improvement District (MID) administered by the Downtown Seattle Association for since 2002.
\$5 million	Seattle Aquarium Ocean Pavilion with Port exhibit (2022)
\$270k	Flaggers at the City’s delayed Pine Street Connector to support Pier 66 cruise operations for 8 weeks (2024)

In addition, the Port continues to negotiate a partnership agreement with the City of Seattle’s Office of the Waterfront and Friends of the Waterfront. We hope to conclude that agreement in the coming weeks.

In August 2023 a private donation of \$45 million driven by Melinda French Gates and MacKenzie Scott established the Elliott Bay Connections project to connect, restore and revitalize public parks along the Elliott Bay waterfront from Pier 62 (just north of the Seattle Aquarium) to The Beach at Expedia Group.

**ATTACHMENTS TO THIS BRIEFING**

- (1) Presentation slides –Office of the Waterfront and Civic Project – City of Seattle, Friends of Waterfront Seattle, Seattle Aquarium, and Elliott Bay Connections

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**PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS**

July 25, 2023 – The Commission was briefed Joy Shigaki, Executive Director, Friends of Waterfront Seattle and Angela Brady, Director, Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects – City of Seattle on status of the Seattle’s downtown waterfront park and the City’s Waterfront program.