

Central Waterfront Partnerships Committee Draft Guiding Principles

These principles were developed by the Committee to capture the key civic goals and objectives that should shape the creation of new public spaces on the Central Waterfront project. They expand on established principles from existing city policies, and civic efforts.

Create a waterfront for all.

The Central Waterfront should engage the entire city. It is a public asset and should remain focused on public use and activities that attract people from all walks of life. It should be a place for locals and visitors alike – a place where everything comes together and co-mingles effortlessly. The process for developing a waterfront design should, in fact must, draw on the talents and dreams of the entire city. The resulting public spaces and surrounding development will engage us through a range of activities throughout the day and year.

Put the shoreline and innovative, sustainable design at the forefront.

To succeed, the waterfront must bring people to the water's edge—allowing them to experience the water itself and the unique geography and ecology of Elliott Bay. At the same time, we must take bold steps to improve the natural shoreline ecology while also preserving and enhancing the maritime activities that remain central to the Central Waterfront. The waterfront should, in its design, construction and operation, reflect Seattle's commitment to sustainability, innovation and responding to climate change

Reconnect the city to its waterfront.

The waterfront should provide a front door to the downtown neighborhoods and the City. It will build a network of green connections and public spaces that connect visually and physically to the water, to vital civic and commercial destinations, nearby neighborhoods and the larger fabric of downtown, city and regional open spaces. This will require a phased approach that is implemented over a longer horizon, but the full picture needs to be in view from the beginning.

Embrace and celebrate Seattle's past, present and future.

The waterfront is a lens through which to understand Seattle's past, present and future—from its rich geologic and natural history and early Native American settlements, to the founding of the region's maritime and resource economy, to maritime, industrial, commercial and recreational activities today. . The waterfront is and should continue to support these activities, to provide essential connections and access to the waterfront and to surrounding neighborhoods. New waterfront public spaces should tell these stories in ways that are authentic and bring them to life for people today and preserve these connections into the future.

Improve Access and Mobility

The waterfront is and will remain a crossroads. Waterfront users rely on safe and efficient access to the piers both from water and land, thousands of commuters use Colman Dock each day, and Alaskan Way will continue to provide an important connection for moving people and goods between the south and north of downtown. At the same time, the waterfront will be an increasingly attractive place for walkers, bicyclists,

joggers, recreational boaters and others. The future waterfront should accommodate safe, comfortable and efficient travel by pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles and freight. The interactions among these many parties must be designed carefully for safety, comfort, and efficiency for all.

Create a bold vision that is adaptable over time.

The waterfront will come together over time, with many complex infrastructure and engineering projects that must be completed before permanent public space improvements can be made. The vision developed now should clearly define an overall framework for how the waterfront will take shape, what the key elements will be, and define their essential character. At the same time, the vision must be flexible enough to adapt as conditions inevitably change.

Develop consistent leadership—from concept to construction to operations.

To succeed, strong leadership is necessary from an independent body tasked with realizing the waterfront vision. This leadership needs to be apolitical and start early—ensuring design excellence, rooting the process in a broad and transparent public outreach, and based on the realities of maintaining and programming the project once it is complete.