

Waterfront – Main Corridor South of Union St and Kiosks

Ed Murray
Mayor

Diane Sugimura
Director, DPD

Osama Quotah, Chair

Shannon Loew, Vice Chair

Bernie Alonzo

Brodie Bain

Lee Copeland

Thaddeus Egging

Grant Hromas

Martin Regge

Ellen Sollod

Ross Tilghman

Michael Jenkins
Director

Valerie Kinast
Coordinator

Nicolas Welch
Planner

Joan Nieman
Administrative Staff

**Department of Planning
and Development**
700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000
PO Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

TEL 206-615-1349
FAX 206-233-7883
seattle.gov/dpd

Commissioners Present

Osama Quotah, Chair
Shannon Loew, Vice Chair
Lee Copeland
Thaddeus Egging
Grant Hromas
Ellen Sollod
Ross Tilghman

Commissioners Excused

Bernie Alonzo
Brodie Bain
Martin Regge

Project Description

The Main Corridor South of Union St encompasses the area along the central waterfront between the Elliott Bay Seawall and 1st Avenue from King Street in the south to Union Street in the north. The team has divided the project area into three zones: Pioneer Square and Pioneer Square Beach, Transit Hub, and Historic Piers. The project includes a redesigned Alaskan Way, new pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and numerous intersections with east-west downtown streets.

The proposed Alaskan Way varies in scale and design across three segments: S King St to Yesler Way (8 lanes), Yesler Way to Spring St (4 lanes + loading), and Spring St to Union St (4 lanes + parking). The proposal incorporates ferry queuing and loading requirements at Colman Dock among other needed functions. The proposed cycle track would connect with the broader bicycle network in the downtown area, including connections to the Portside Trail to the south and the Elliott Bay Trail to the north.

Four 46- to 48-foot-high kiosks are among the many proposed elements, including seating and landscaping, that would punctuate the corridor.

Meeting Summary

First, the Design Commission reviewed and unanimously approved the schematic design of the Main Corridor of the Waterfront South of Union Street. The Commission had approved the concept design on [November 21, 2013](#). On [September 18, 2014](#), the Commission approved the schematic design for the North of Union Street segment.

Second, the Commission reviewed the concept design for the four proposed kiosks on the waterfront. The Commission approved the kiosk concept design in a separate action since they are at different stage of design than the Main Corridor.

Recusals and Disclosures

There were no recusals or disclosures.

October 16, 2014**9:00 am – 12:30 pm****Type**

CIP project

Phase**Schematic Design**

Main Corridor South of Union St

Concept Design

Kiosks

Previous Reviews[November 21, 2013](#)**Project Team Present****Andrew Barash**

CH2M Hill

Angela Brady

Office of the Waterfront

Tatiana Choulika

James Corner Field Operations

Marshall Foster

Office of the Waterfront

Erik Fredericksen

Office of the Waterfront

Mimi Hoang (via phone)

nARCHITECTS

Matt Martenson

Berger Partnership

Guy Michaelsen

Berger Partnership

Buster Simpson

artist

Andrew tenBrink

James Corner Field Operations

Attendees**Heidi Hughes**

Friends of the Waterfront

Diane Kincaid

Board of Park Commissioners

Martha Lester

Council Central Staff

Jing Sun

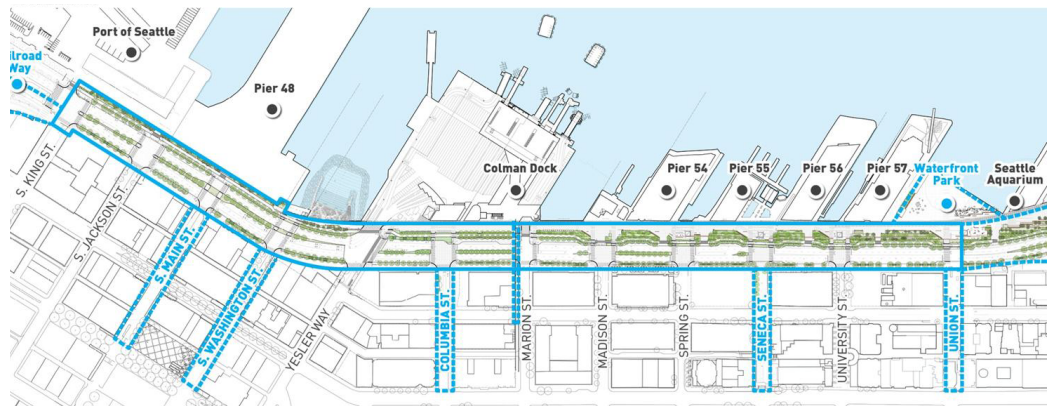
UW visiting scholar

October 16, 2014

Summary of Presentation

Marshall Foster began with a brief discussion of how the Mayor's recent budget proposal would affect implementation of the waterfront design. Mr. Foster said the team is taking a phasing approach that could delay the delivery of certain program elements that the Design Commission has reviewed, such as Pier 62/63 and the Middle Union portion of the Union St connection. Rather than diluting the quality of the design, the team's approach is to delay certain elements for a second phase.

Tatiana Choulika showed a plan of the project area for the Main Corridor South of Union Street, noting its juncture with Railroad Way to the south and the Central Public Open Space to the north, both of which have previously come before the Design Commission for review. Ms. Choulika described the character of each section of the project: Pioneer Square, Pioneer Square Beach, Transit Hub, and Historic Piers. The presentation is [available on the Design Commission website](#).



Ms. Choulika then described the east- and westside public areas for each of these sections in more detail. A plan showed where columns from the existing Alaskan Way Viaduct would be retained as public art. The Washington Street Boat Landing, built in 1920, has already been removed as part of the Seawall project; the waterfront team proposes to restore and replace it to its original location once the promenade is completed. The restoration will equip the structure to have a small concession vendor.

Buster Simpson described his concept for the Anthropocene Beach, an artwork at Pioneer Square Beach that creates wildlife habitat. He described the piece as compensation for human intervention in this natural area since the 1800s. The project would incorporate root wads, concrete sandbags as seating, dolos (complex concrete blocks), and column relics from the Alaskan Way Viaduct. Mr. Simpson made several references to the challenge of climate change and rising sea level as inspiration for the artwork.



Buster Simpson's proposal for an "Anthropocene Beach" artwork.

Ms. Choulika identified the transit stops, bike share, and ferry access that will together create a multimodal transit hub at Columbia St. The kiosk formerly proposed at Columbia St has been eliminated. Mr. Foster said the City is coordinating with the Washington

State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and Washington State Ferries (WSF) on the ongoing design work for Colman Dock and Pier 48. Ms. Choulika also described the team’s approach to treating stormwater, which she will discuss in greater depth at a future briefing on sustainability.

The four proposed kiosks are intended to serve as beacons in the Historic Piers area that identify gathering places at important intersections. Mimi Hoang showed several perspectives of the proposed design and various ways to configure the kiosk space for uses like food and beverage sales, concierge, or equipment rental. Because the proposed materials are metal and glass, the team evaluated potential reflectivity and concluded that topography, trees, and weather conditions would prevent glare. Mr. Foster said implementation of the kiosks would be a partnership between the City and Friends of Waterfront Seattle.



Mimi Hoang presented the concept design for four kiosks along the waterfront promenade.

Mr. Foster concluded with a description of relevant zoning changes included in currently proposed legislation. He identified three major changes that affect the waterfront project:

1. Classification of Alaskan Way and Western Ave as Class 1 Pedestrian Streets
2. Increased floor area ratio (FAR) incentive for hotel and housing
3. Requirements for any new commercial parking to ensure mixed-use development

Agency Comments

none

Public Comments

none

Summary of Discussion

For the Main Corridor South of Union Street, much of the discussion focused on the Colman Dock area, transit, and the Historic Piers. Notwithstanding the complex interagency coordination that has informed the roadway design, the Commission reiterated its concern about the proposed width of Alaskan Way, particularly at Colman Dock and to the south. They recommended the project team continue efforts to narrow the number and width of lanes. The Pioneer Square Beach received strong support from the Commissioners, who said they anticipate it will be very popular. They endorsed the current direction of Buster Simpson’s art, encouraged him to continue exploring how to include columns from the Alaskan Way Viaduct, and suggested more expression of sea level rise in his work and at the beach, including extending the “sand bags” further along the waterfront promenade.

There was strong support for the creation of an integrated multimodal transit hub, though Commissioners felt a higher level of detail would help them understand the experience of transit rider in this area. The next review should better convey the character of the space and clarify how transit operations function, particularly at Columbia St. It should clearly read as a transit hub even with no buses present.

The Commissioners appreciated Mr. Foster’s explanation of ongoing zoning legislation that will encourage certain uses, particularly cultural spaces, along the waterfront. Some cautioned that incentivizing retail should not be at

the expense of the current light industrial uses in the area. This has been a point of discussion at several waterfront reviews, and the Commissioners again expressed a desire to see activation strategies beyond food, beverage, and retail.

The design for the kiosks inspired a wider range of opinions from the Commission, specifically on their height, use, and siting. Most Commissioners were intrigued by the concept and found the scale appropriate; a few Commissioners were skeptical of the height. Though many were encouraged by the proposed metal and glass, there was caution to avoid the kiosk feeling like an Apple Store. The Commissioners posed several questions for further exploration: Could the kiosk opening be twice as high? How will the design address seagulls? How could the design change if not relying on garage doors? They recommended that the design team continue to:

1. refine how the bottom and upper portions of the structure relate in scale and form,
2. further study of a variety of potential programming options, and
3. tailor the design of each kiosk's to its particular site conditions.

Action

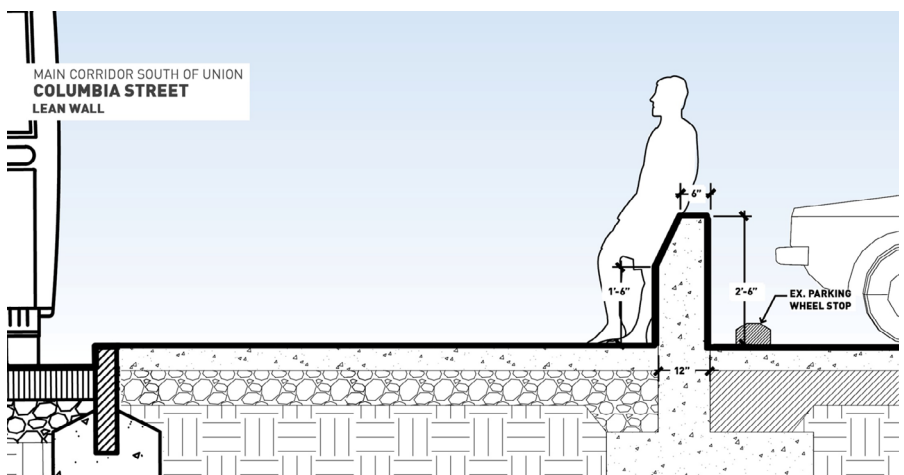
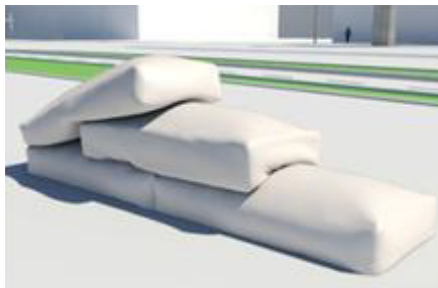
The Seattle Design Commission thanked the waterfront team for the presentation of the schematic design of the Main Corridor South of Union Street and the concept design of the waterfront kiosks. Because these two components of the waterfront project are at different stages of design, the Commission took two separate actions.

MAIN CORRIDOR SOUTH OF UNION

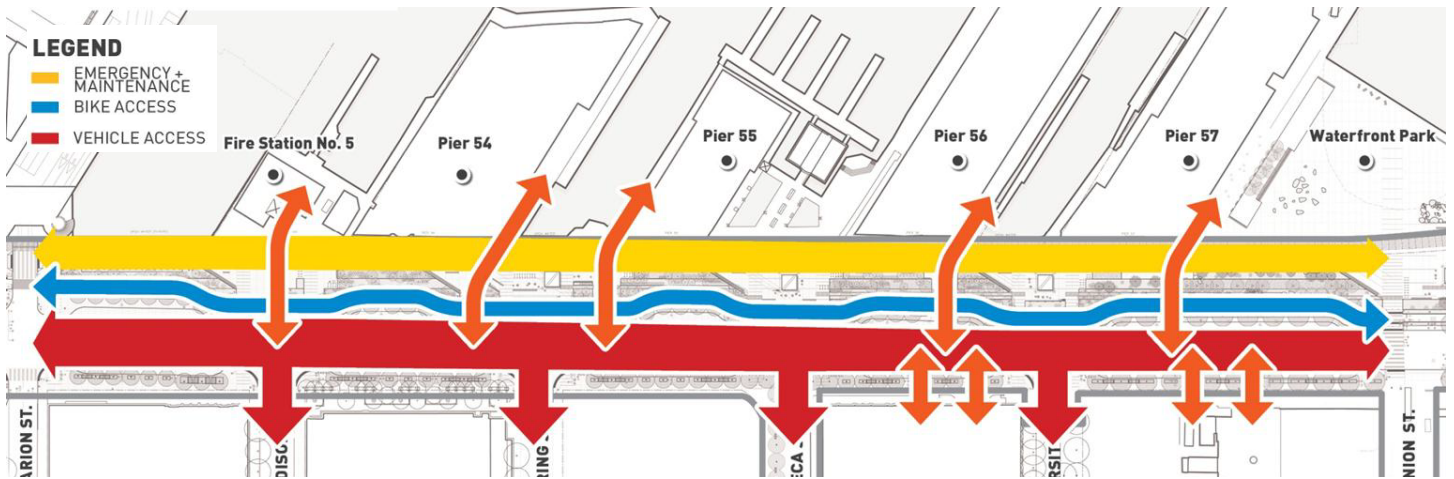
The Design Commission supported the direction of the art and appreciated the proposed reuse of salvaged materials. One area of particular interest is Colman Dock, which the Commission looks forward to reviewing in the future along with related projects such as the Marion Street Pedestrian Bridge.

With a **vote of 7 to 0**, the Design Commission approved the schematic design for the Main Corridor South of Union Street with the following comments and recommendations:

1. The Commission remains concerned about the width of the roadway. Explore ways to reduce the number and/or width of lanes, particularly at the Colman Dock area.
2. The Commission believes the Pioneer Square Beach is a fantastic asset and is encouraged by the integration of art in its design. Encourage Mr. Simpson to address sea level rise even more deeply. The "sandbags" are more successful when less ordered (below left) so that they do not function as a boundary.
3. The Commission supports retaining the Alaskan Way Viaduct columns and, where appropriate, including evidence of the artist's hand in their design.
4. Provide more detail about amenities for transit users at and around the transit hub and explain how people will circulate in this area. We appreciate that the transit hub embraces the street and is not a separate transit facility.
5. Evaluate whether the lean wall on Columbia St is a long-term solution to a short-term problem given the potential for the adjacent surface parking lot to redevelop in the near future.
6. Strive to accommodate service needs with as few access points as necessary in order to improve the pedestrian character of the street.

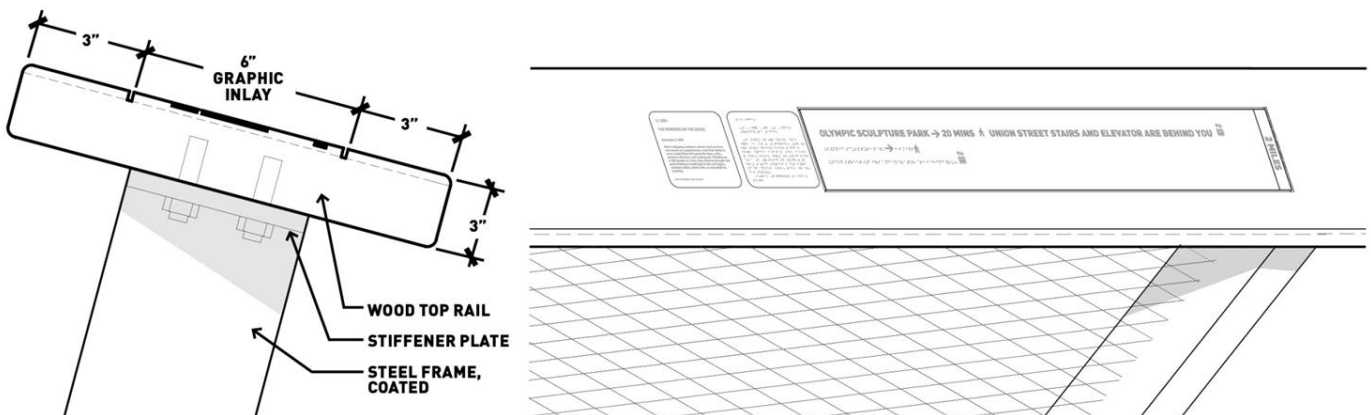


7. The Commission supports maintaining the existing loading docks for outdoor seating and pedestrian circulation.
8. Continue to encourage housing and street-activating uses in the waterfront area. The Commission supports the City’s proposed waterfront legislation in Council Bill 118123.
9. Study more carefully the potential conflicts among vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles in the area of the Historic Piers given the requirement to maintain vehicle access to each pier.



10. The Commission supports the overall direction for materials and in particular the use of wood for the railing. At the next review, provide more detail on the railing design (shown below), especially how the wood interfaces with the metal. Consider modifying the top of the railing in response to the character of each segment of the waterfront rather than a singular solution to the entire project area.

MAIN CORRIDOR SOUTH OF UNION
WATERFRONT RAILING
 HANDRAIL



11. At the design development phase, the Commission requests that the team present the project in segments over multiple meetings so that the review can explore the details of the design in greater depth.

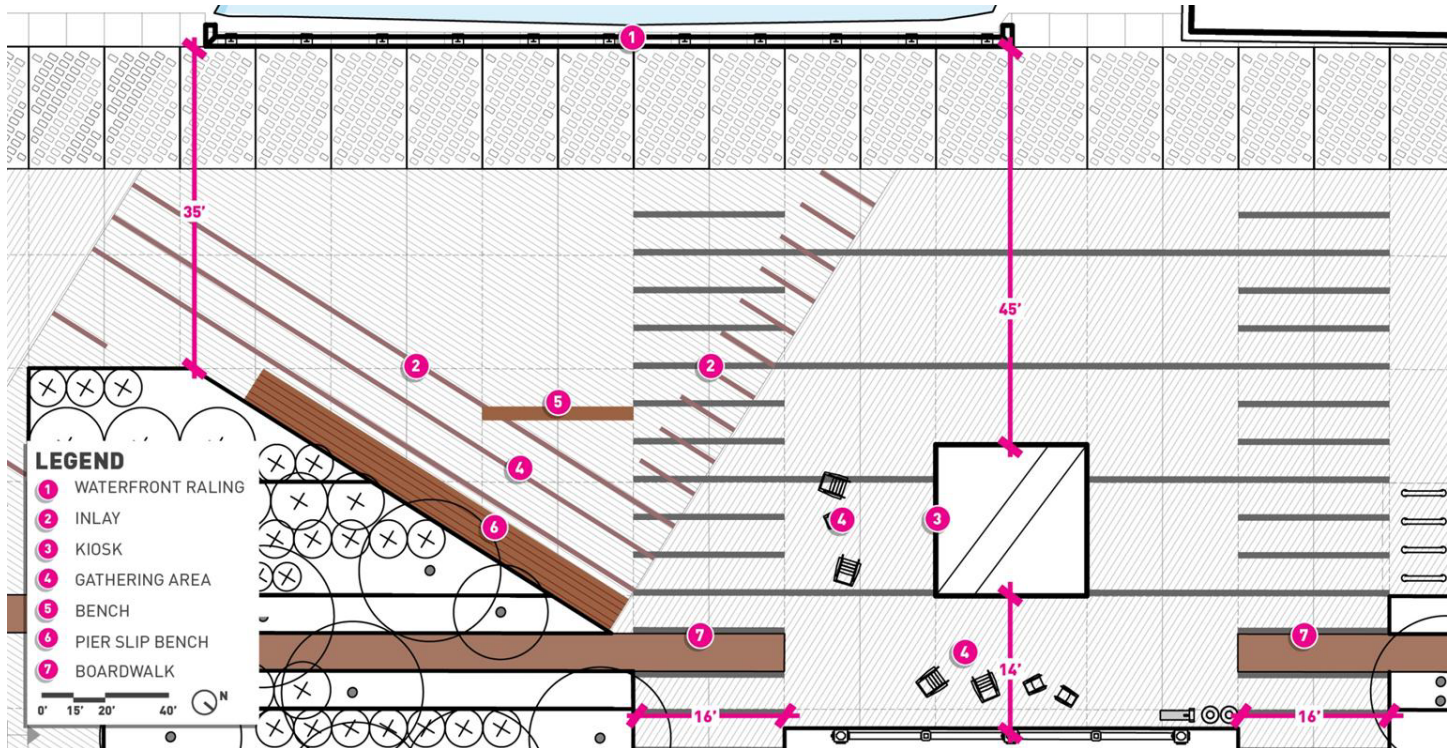
KIOSKS

The Commission appreciates the overall approach to the kiosks as beacons and the translucency and reflectivity of the proposed materials. The Commission supports the design direction and believes it will create an iconic element on the central waterfront.

With a **vote of 6 to 1**, the Design Commission approved the concept design for the waterfront kiosks with the following comments and recommendations:

1. Explore in greater depth the scale of the kiosks, the relationship of the base to the upper portion, and the character of the doors.

2. Explore ways to introduce color into the design, perhaps internally to create a more dynamic presence.
3. Pay close attention to the specific placement of each kiosk, especially at Spring St, to support the notion of these “social intersections” as areas of gathering. At schematic design, illustrate how each kiosk relates to the design, pedestrian circulation, and anticipated uses and activity for the entire intersection space. Evaluate aligning the kiosks with the piers and slips rather than parallel with the downtown street grid.
4. Continue evaluating the potential uses and functions of the kiosks. Provide a greater understanding of how they will operate successfully on the waterfront.



Elements of a “social intersection” along the waterfront promenade.

At the next review, the Commission requests that the project team bring physical models of the kiosk design. Consider presenting several design alternatives.

The reason for the vote against was as follows:

Ellen Sollod: I’m not convinced this is the right design solution for the central waterfront public piers in terms of the overall design and approach. I feel the height is out of scale with the historic piers. The function of the kiosks for food and beverage should be reevaluated to determine whether kiosks might add to the interpretive and interactive activities on the waterfront rather than simply provide additional food and beverage to what is already on offer. I would like to see a more thorough analysis of how and from where the kiosks can be seen if they are to function as “beacons.”