

Public Spaces | Public Life for Seattle's Central Waterfront

Scan | Design Master Studio, Autumn 2010 [Larch 504/Arch503]

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Project 03: Framework Plan

DUE: Monday, 11 October (presentation); Wednesday 13 October (posters)

Our first step in envisioning Seattle's new waterfront will be to consider how to strengthen its regional, city and downtown connections, and to provide an overall conceptual urban design framework for the Central Waterfront area. This will require a wider scope of analysis -- getting to know how the waterfront does and can fit into the larger network of open spaces, transport and city districts -- and conceptual thinking that is fresh while also taking into consideration the informed and imaginative planning and design work that has previously been produced. This work is in line with the City of Seattle's RFQ for a Framework Plan, with the goal to:

establish a long-range planning and design framework for a system of public spaces, green connections and related facilities that will integrate the Central Waterfront Project into the overall urban fabric of Seattle. ... The Framework

Plan will identify how the Project can anchor a broader system of improvements that connect the waterfront east through downtown to adjacent Center City neighborhoods, north to Seattle Center, Lake Union and the Ship Canal, and South to West Seattle and the Duwamish River.

This goal supports the broader expressed goals of the City to **Reconnect the city to its waterfront** and **Improve access and mobility** (See text excerpted from the RFQ, below).

Goals

The pedagogical goals of this project are to:

- To develop the habit of considering the multiple scales that influence every project, including how each of those scale shape the social life of the city and region
- To practice working at multiple nested scales, to identify project contextual influences, including social and spatial relationships, needs and opportunities
- To gain better understandings of urban systems and flows, and experience working at the urban planning scale,
- To develop skills in working in small teams on creative proposals
- To develop diagrammatic communication skills

Project

For this project you will work in one of four teams to apply what you know--as well as bring additional considerations to bear--to develop compelling, clear proposals for connecting the Central Waterfront to the City and region, and to propose appropriate frameworks for a cohesive, legible active and functional downtown waterfront. Teams should be interdisciplinary and represent at least two-three areas of site analysis.

At minimum, your team should:

- **Identify human mobility connections with other parts of the city and region, focusing on pedestrian, bike, transit and boat modes (but not ignoring the new motor vehicular boulevard)**
- **Identify flows moving through the waterfront spaces (including social and ecological flows) and how these can be accommodated and, where desired, enhanced or inhibited**
- **Delineate coherent "districts" within the Central Waterfront area, for our future conceptual work**
- **Identify your goals and themes for the Central Waterfront area**
- **Identify major future public space and developable sites (for cultural, commercial, or residential uses), proposed as a connected system**
- **Specify the programmatic activities and qualities of social spaces that you propose to accommodate along the waterfront. Consider 24/7 uses and user groups.**
- **Title your proposed Framework Concept Plan to convey the essence of your approach**

PRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS:

Project 3a: Framework Plan Presentation

You will present your analyses, goals/themes and conceptual diagrams in a **clear, compelling manner, addressing multiple scales** on **MONDAY, 11 OCTOBER**, at the beginning of class. You may use the media of your choice (posters, powerpoint, drama, etc.), keeping in mind the

size of the media and the size of the audience and room (Gould 100).

Project 3b: Framework Plan Poster(s)

You will record your analysis on 24" x 36" sheet(s) that have the class' standard title block but your team's unique graphic layout. This part of the assignment is due on **WEDNESDAY, 13 OCTOBER**, at the beginning of class.

Some resources and considerations:

Seattle Blue Ring

Waterfront Initiative Opportunities and Linkages Diagram

Seattle Center City Public Realm Diagrams

Waterfront Team proposals

Public Space/Public Life (Gehl report), e.g. proposals for First Avenue

Potlatch Trail Proposals

DPD Waterfront Charrette proposals, e.g. Lighthouse to Lighthouse

Open Space Seattle 2100 visions

Mercer/Broad reconfiguration

Washington State Ferry plans

Framework Plan examples:

COBE's Framework Plan for Nordhavn

Gehl Framework Competition Brief for Carlsberg Brewery

BACKGROUND

The Central Waterfront Partnership Committee (CWPC) developed 7 principles for the RFQ for Consultant Services. We supply the text for the two that are most related to this project below. The complete text can be found on the RFQ.

From II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Create a waterfront for all.

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

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.

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.

Develop consistent leadership—from concept to construction to operations.

The RFQ outlined a Scope of Work, including the Framework Plan.

From III. PROJECT ELEMENTS:

B. Phase I Scope of Work – Framework Plan and Conceptual Design

Framework Plan - The goal of the Framework Plan is to establish a long-range planning and design framework for a system of public spaces, green connections and related facilities that will integrate the Central Waterfront Project into the overall urban fabric of Seattle. The scope of the Framework Plan will extend beyond the elements and geographic scope of the Central Waterfront Project itself. The Framework Plan will identify how the Project can anchor a broader system of improvements that connect the waterfront east through downtown to adjacent Center City neighborhoods, north to Seattle Center, Lake Union and the Ship Canal, and South to West Seattle and the Duwamish River. The attached Seattle Waterfront Initiative: Opportunities and Linkages Diagram and the Seattle Center City Public Realm Diagrams (Attachment 3) are intended to capture the general scope to be addressed. The Framework Plan should result in a series of urban design diagrams, analysis, and general design concepts, but not in specific design at the level expected for the Central Waterfront Project as described below.