



NEW METHODS FOR PRIORITIZING PARK SYSTEM INVESTMENT

2025 Annual Conference, APA –Washington State Chapter
October 8-10, 2025

Jonathan Garner, Seattle Parks & Recreation

Joseph Gellings, Port of Seattle

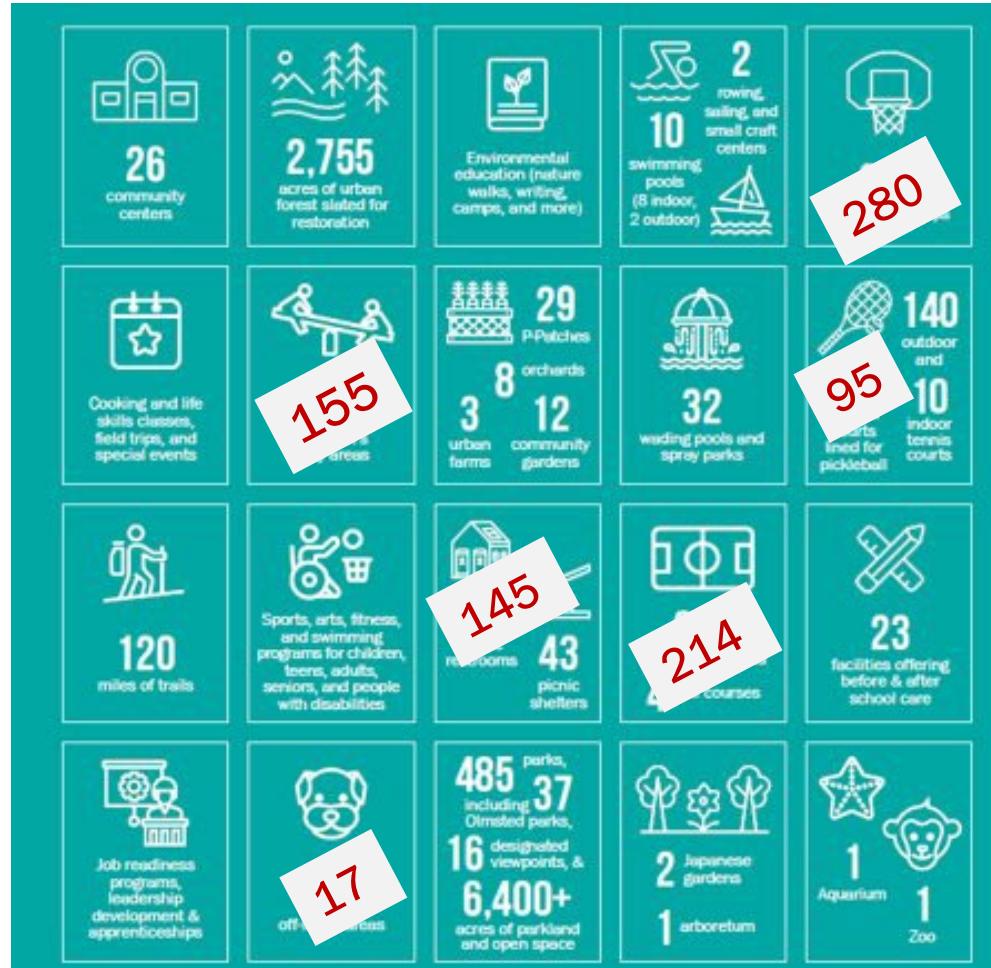
Laura Wolfe, Port of Seattle



Seattle
Parks & Recreation



SEATTLE BY THE NUMBERS



487 SPR – Owned Sites

6,481 Acres

#8 - Trust for Public Land

95% of Pop w/in 10-min Walk

\$280M+ Avg Annual SPR Spending

\$90M+ for Capital Projects

AND GROWING

MAJOR MAINTENANCE BACKLOG

Various levies for new work; no predictable source for maintenance

\$267M backlog

2014 voters approve Park District

- ~\$80M for regular maintenance
- ~\$50M for MAJOR maintenance

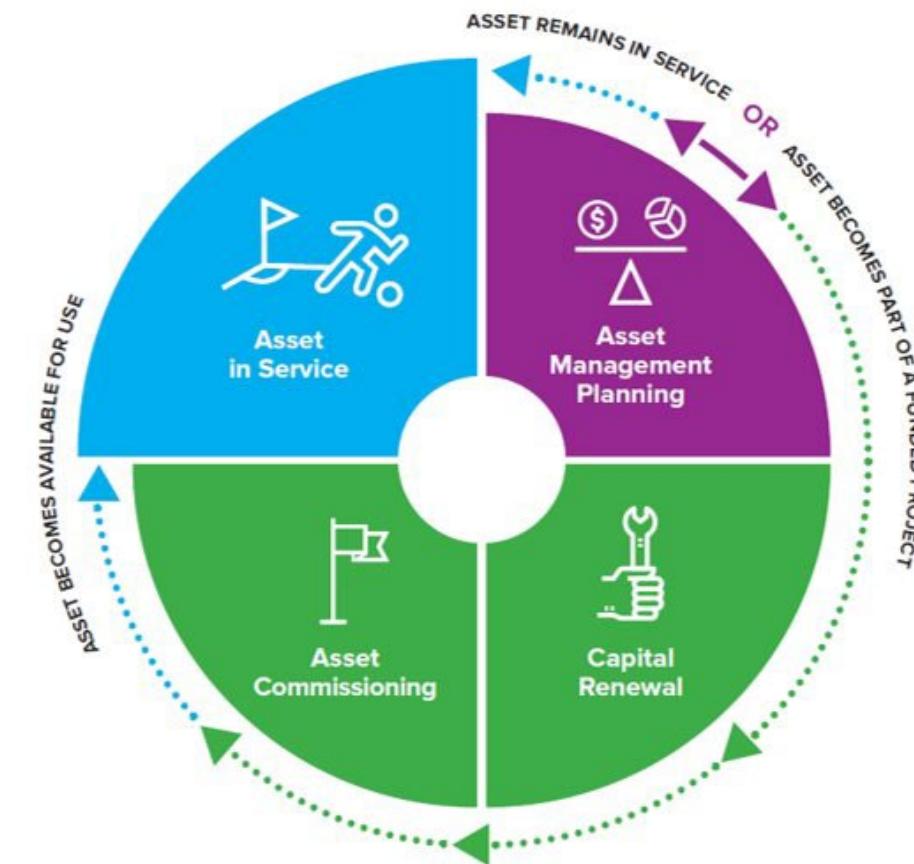
1st Cycle: 2015 to 2020

2nd (Current) Cycle: 2023 to 2028



REQUIRED REPORTING

1. Classifications for each asset.
2. Inventory of each asset class.
3. Life cycle for each asset class.
4. Costs for renovation work
5. **Metrics to inform prioritization.**



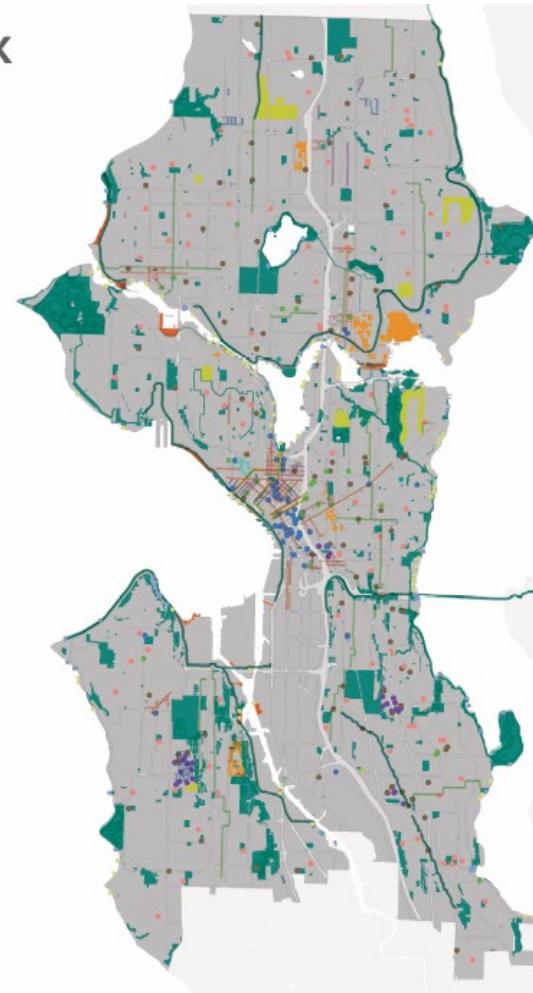
DETERMINING PRIORITY



OUTSIDE CITYWIDE

SEATTLE'S PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK

- Seattle Parks and Recreation
- Seattle Center
- Port of Seattle and Army Corps of Engineers parks
- SPU public space
- Seattle Housing Authority parks
- Public schoolyards
- Campus green spaces
- Cemeteries and private golf courses
- P-Patches
- Shoreline street ends
- Boat launches and ramps
- Privately Owned Public Space (POPS)
- Parklets, Streateries and Pavement to Parks
- Green stormwater infrastructure in the right of way
- Regional Trail
- Local Trail (at least 1 mile long)
- Neighborhood Greenway
- Green Street
- Streetscape Concept Plan
- Urban Marked Trail
- Other ROW



Incredible spaces & lots of them!

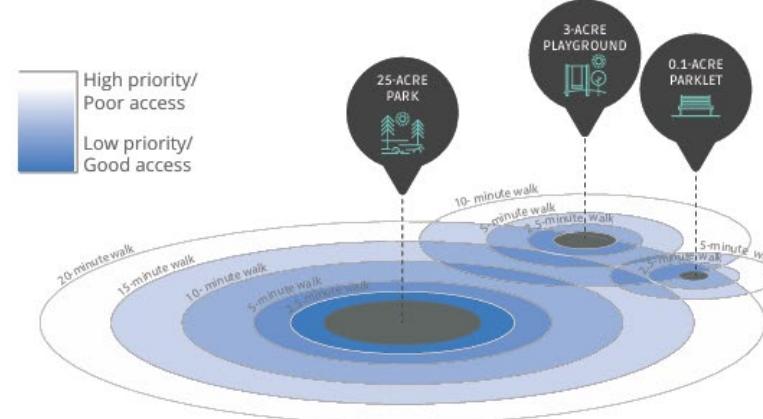
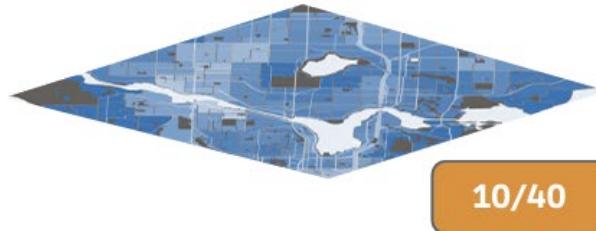
BUT

1. Inequitable distribution
2. Underutilized
3. Fragmented

OUTSIDE CITYWIDE ACCESS ANALYSIS

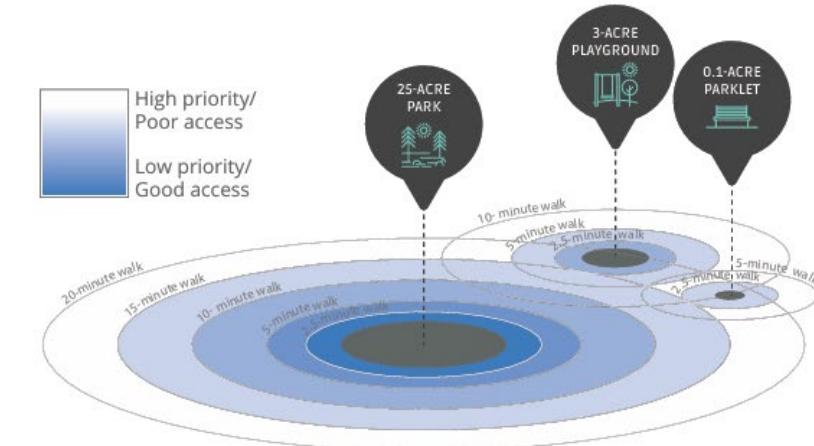
Analysis 1: Variety

Variety of nearby public spaces



Analysis 2: Best Opportunity

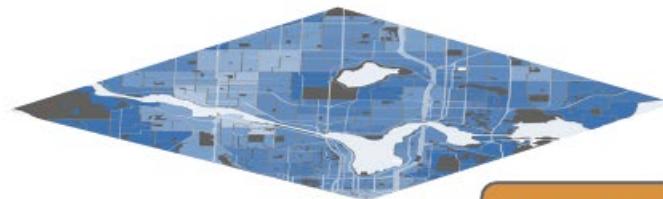
Largest nearby public space



OUTSIDE CITYWIDE ANALYSIS

Analysis 3: Access to Amenities

Access to amenities within nearby public spaces

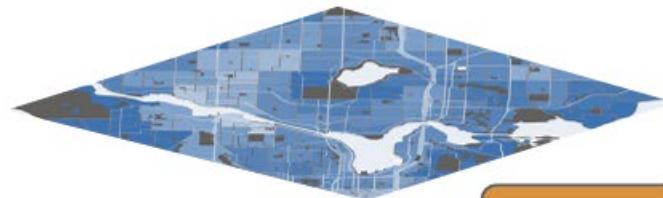


20/40

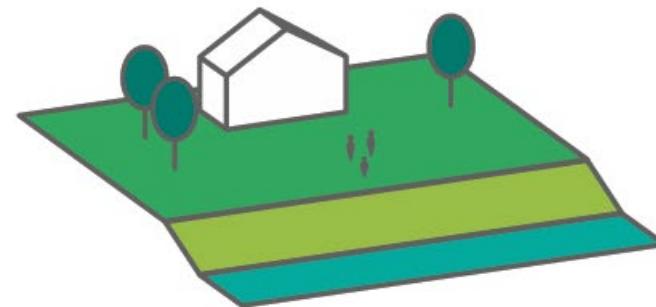


Private Open Space

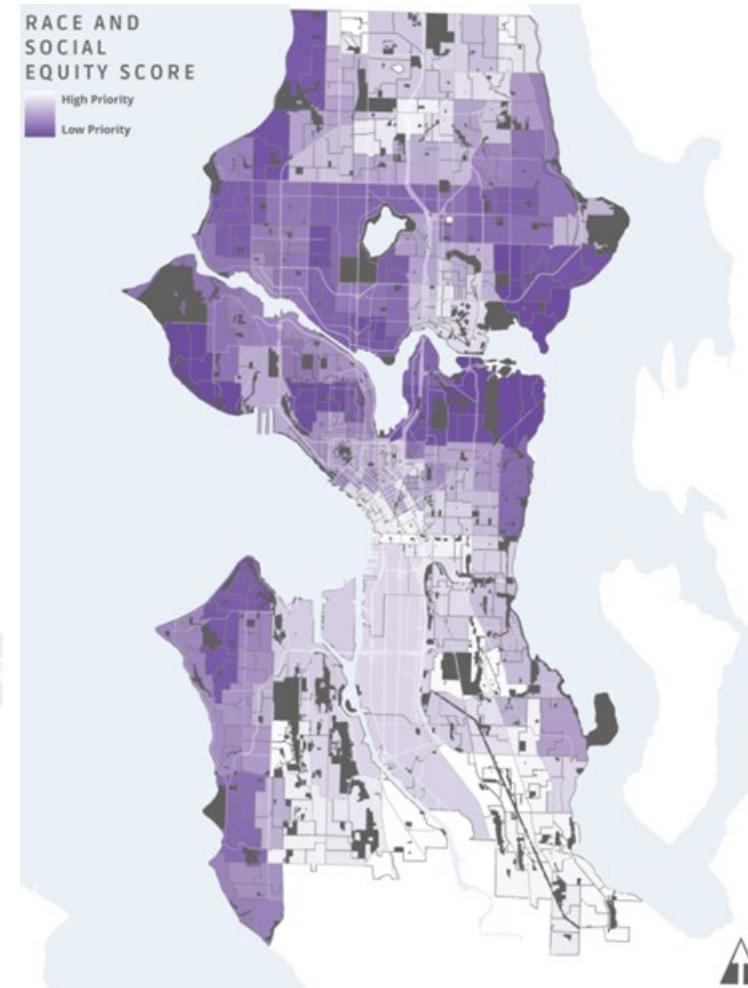
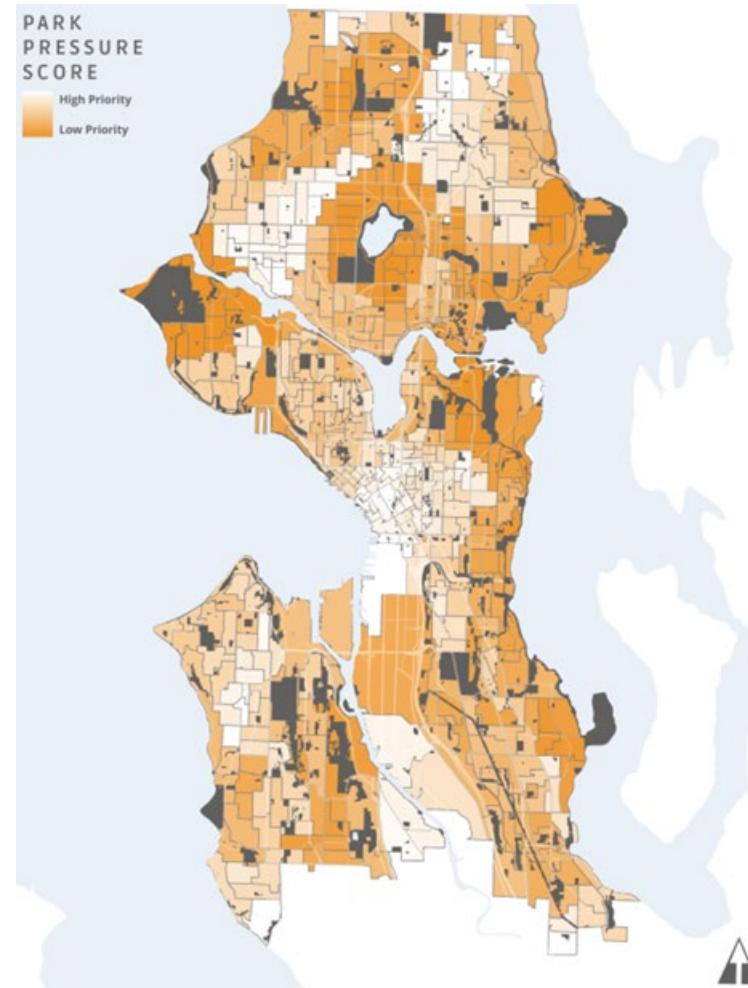
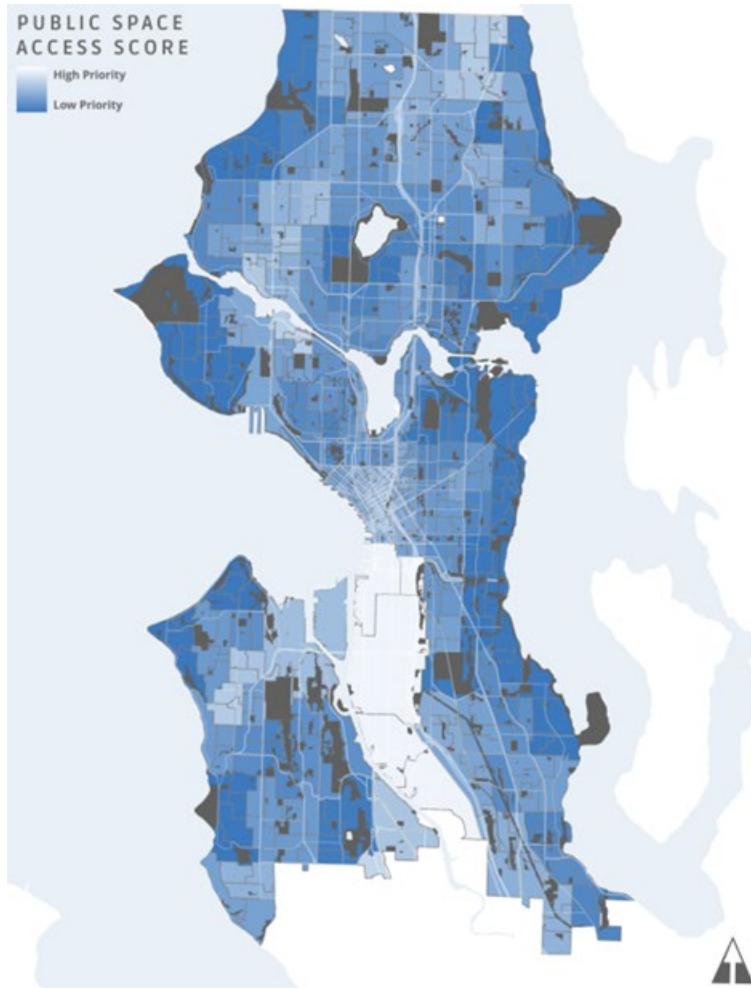
Views and lot size of single family properties



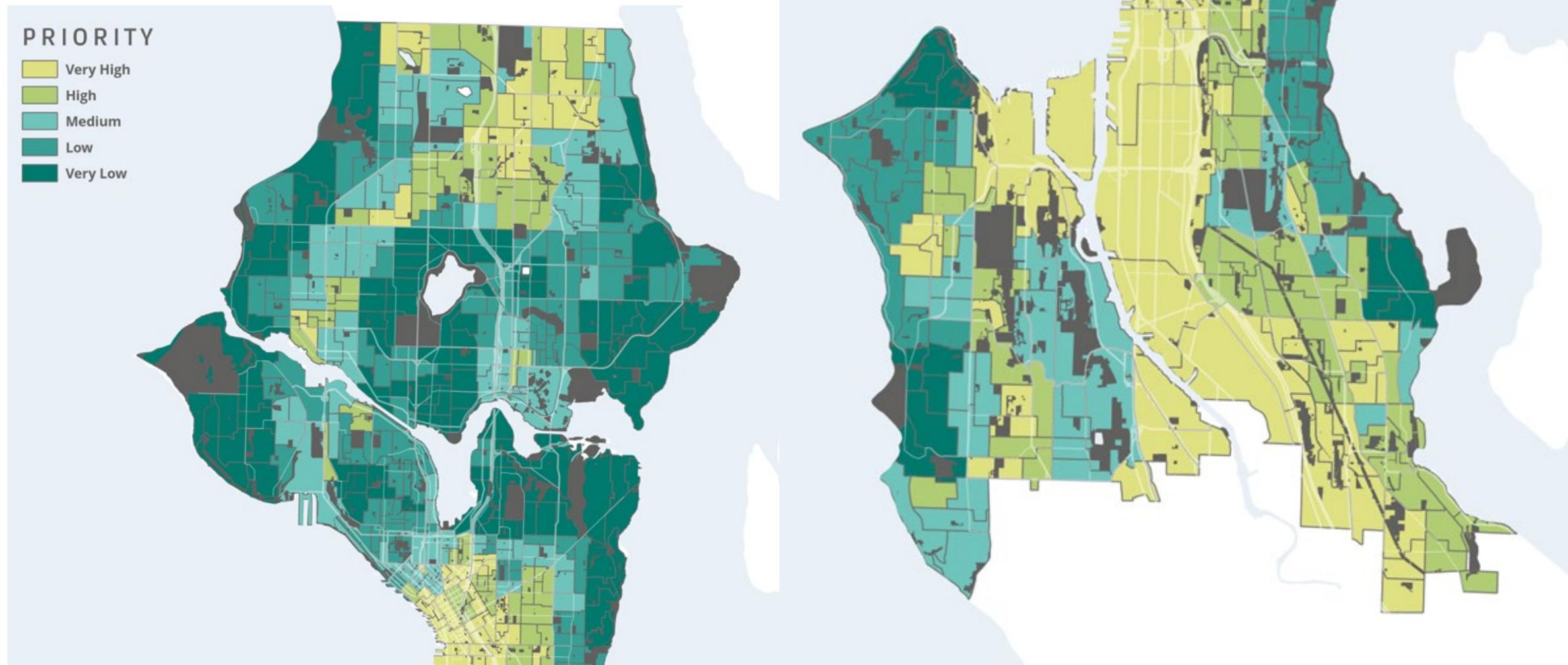
Bonus*



OUTSIDE CITYWIDE PRIORITY DATA



OUTSIDE CITYWIDE PRIORITY AREAS



DETERMINING PRIORITY



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

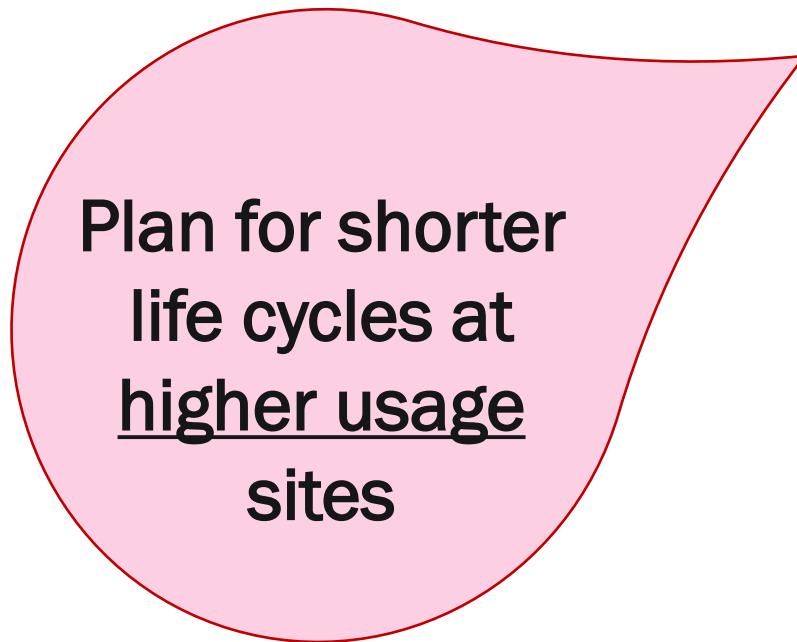
District	Name	Type	# of Courts	Material	RES Priority Level	2016 Condition Assessment	2016 Renovate Ranking	Recommended Priority	Year Const.	Last Restoration	Next Restoration	Planned Restoration	Restoration Cost (per full size court)	Last Renovation	Next Renovation	Planned Renovation	Renovation Cost
2	Brighton Playfield	Basketball	1.00	Asphalt	Yes	Highest	7	39	1933	1996	2003		\$ 75,000	20		\$ 225,000	
2	Jefferson Park	Basketball	1.00	Asphalt	Yes	Highest	30	13	2005	2011	2018		\$ 75,000	20		\$ 225,000	
2	John C. Little Sr. Park (ATT?)	Basketball	2.00	Asphalt	Yes	Highest	31	46	1971		7		\$ 150,000	20		\$ 450,000	
1	EC Hughes Playground	Basketball	1.50	Asphalt	No	Middle	19	43	1999		7		\$ 112,500	20		\$ 337,500	
7	Ella Bailey Playground	Basketball	1.00	Asphalt	Yes	Middle	20	57		2006	2013		\$ 75,000	20		\$ 225,000	
2	Lakewood Playground	Basketball	0.50	Asphalt	Yes	Middle	35	31			7		\$ 37,500	20		\$ 112,500	
2	Bradner Gardens Park	Basketball	1.00	Asphalt	No	2nd Highest	6	9	1976	1998	2005		\$ 75,000	20		\$ 225,000	
7	Cascade Playground	Basketball	0.50	Asphalt	No	2nd Highest	11	36	1936	2005	2012		\$ 37,500	20		\$ 112,500	
3	Colman Playground	Basketball	2.00	Concrete	Yes	2nd Highest	14	28		1997	2004		\$ 150,000	40		\$ 450,000	
1	Delridge Playfield	Basketball	1.00	Asphalt	Yes	2nd Highest	16										
1	Georgetown Playfield	Basketball	1.00	Concrete	No	2nd Highest	22										
5	Greenwood Park	Basketball	1.00	Asphalt	Yes	2nd Highest	26										
5	Maple Leaf Reservoir Park	Basketball	1.00	Concrete	Yes	2nd Highest	39										
2	Maple Wood Playfield	Basketball	0.50	Asphalt	Yes	2nd Highest	40										
6	Gilman Playground	Basketball	0.50	Asphalt	No	2nd Lowest	23										
1	Hiawatha Playfield	Basketball	0.50	Asphalt	No	2nd Lowest	27										
7	Kerry Park	Basketball	0.50	Concrete	No	2nd Lowest	33										
6	B.F. Day Playground	Basketball	1.00	Concrete	Yes	Lowest	2										
4	Bryant Neighborhood Playground	Basketball	0.50	Asphalt	Yes	Lowest	8										
4	Pathways Park (Burke-Gilman PG)	Basketball	1.00	Concrete	Yes	Lowest	9										
4	Dahl Playfield	Basketball	0.50	Concrete	No	Lowest	15										
7	East Queen Anne Playground	Basketball	0.50	Asphalt	No	Lowest	18										
6	Golden Gardens Park	Basketball	0.50	Asphalt	No	Lowest	24										
6	Loyal Heights Playfield	Basketball	0.50	Asphalt	Yes	Lowest	36										
3	Madrona Park	Basketball	1.00	Concrete	Yes	Lowest	37										



CHALLENGES

1. Completing/updating inventories.
2. Ownership of data.
3. Communicating complex process to public.
4. New sports (pickleball)
5. Politics

OPPORTUNITY: USAGE





DUWAMISH RIVER PARKS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY



PORT OF SEATTLE



DEVELOPMENT HISTORY



Courtesy Seattle Municipal Archives (735)



SHORELINE MANAGEMENT ACT (SMA)



1935, Pier 57



1958



Courtesy Seattle Municipal Archives 9532 & 57682



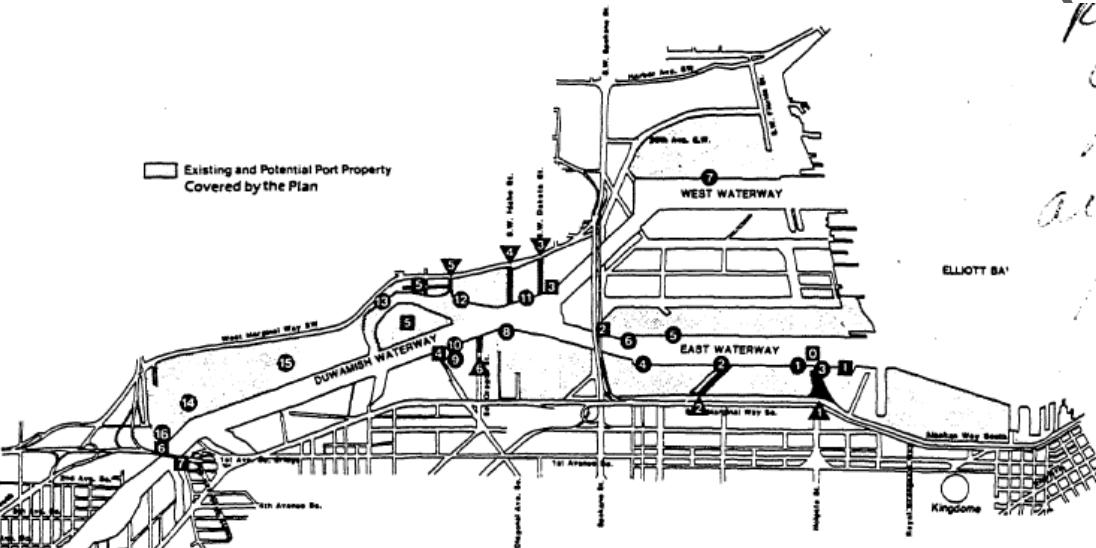
PUBLIC ACCESS POLICY PLAN FOR THE DUWAMISH WATERWAY (1984)

APA
WA

■ PUBLIC ACCESS SITES

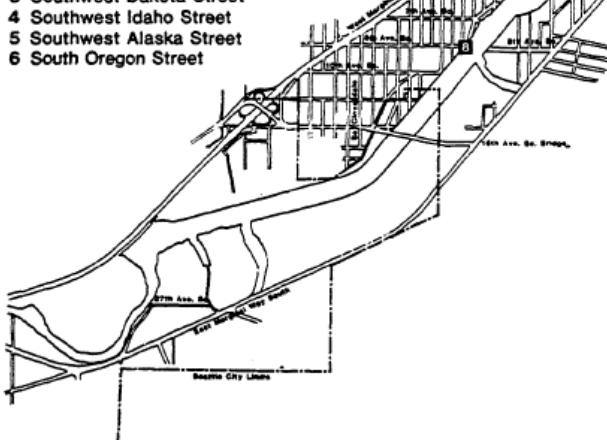
- 0 Alaskan Way South Interim
- 1 T-30/GATX Boat Ramp
- 2 T-18/Pioneer
- 3 T-105 Viewpoint
- 4 Diagonal Way South
- 5 T-107/Kellogg Island
- 6 T-115 Viewpoint
- 7 1st Avenue South Boat Ramp
- 8 South Portland/8th Avenue South

Existing and Potential Port Property Covered by the Plan



▲ POTENTIAL STREET VACATIONS

- 1 Alaskan Way South
- 2 South Forest Street
- 3 Southwest Dakota Street
- 4 Southwest Idaho Street
- 5 Southwest Alaska Street
- 6 South Oregon Street



● POTENTIAL PORT DEVELOPMENT

- 1 T-30, P-32
- 2 T-30, P-27
- 3 T-30, GATX
- 4 T-25
- 5 T-18, South Apron
- 6 T-18, Pioneer
- 7 T-5
- 8 T-106
- 9 T-108, Yard
- 10 T-108, Berth
- 11 T-105, Phases I & II
- 12 T-107, Seaboard
- 13 T-107, South End
- 14 T-115, Maintenance
- 15 T-115, Kaiser
- 16 T-115, South End

DEVELOP CONTAINER YARD, BERTH • INSTALL CRANES
 VACATE STREET • FILL, DEVELOP YARD • INSTALL CRANES
 VACATE STREET • DEVELOP CONTAINER YARD, BERTH • INSTALL CRANES
 DEMO BUILDING • IMPROVE YARD AREA
 DEMO TRANSIT SHED • REHAB APRON
 DEMO STRUCTURES • CONSTRUCT CONTAINER YARD
 DEMO TRANSIT SHED • REBUILD APRON • INSTALL CRANES
 CONSTRUCT BERTH AND SITE PREPARATION
 VACATE STREET • RAISE TO GRADE • PROVIDE SITE WORK
 CONSTRUCT BERTH AT PIER WITH MOORAGE DOLPHINS
 VACATE STREETS • NEW CONSTRUCTION • CROWLEY IMPROVEMENTS
 VACATE STREET • FILL, CONSTRUCT YARD, BERTH
 DEVELOP FOR COMMERCIAL USE
 MAINTAIN EXISTING IMPROVEMENTS • EXPAND CONTAINER YARD
 DEVELOP YARD AREA
 CONSTRUCT BARGE BERTH • IMPROVE SITE

 POTENTIAL PORT DEVELOPMENT & PUBLIC ACCESS SITES

FIGURE 1

0 1 2 3000'



h apus Village Park



sbəqʷaʔ Park



HARBORFRONT PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN (1988)

The Public Project

Working Pier Apron.....	1
Transit Shed.....	2
Fish Processing / Retail	3
Conference Center and Maritime Museum.....	4
Bell Street Bridge	5
Public Plaza.....	6
Restaurant / Retail	7
Short-Stay Moorage.....	8
Esplanade.....	9
Lenora Bridge.....	10

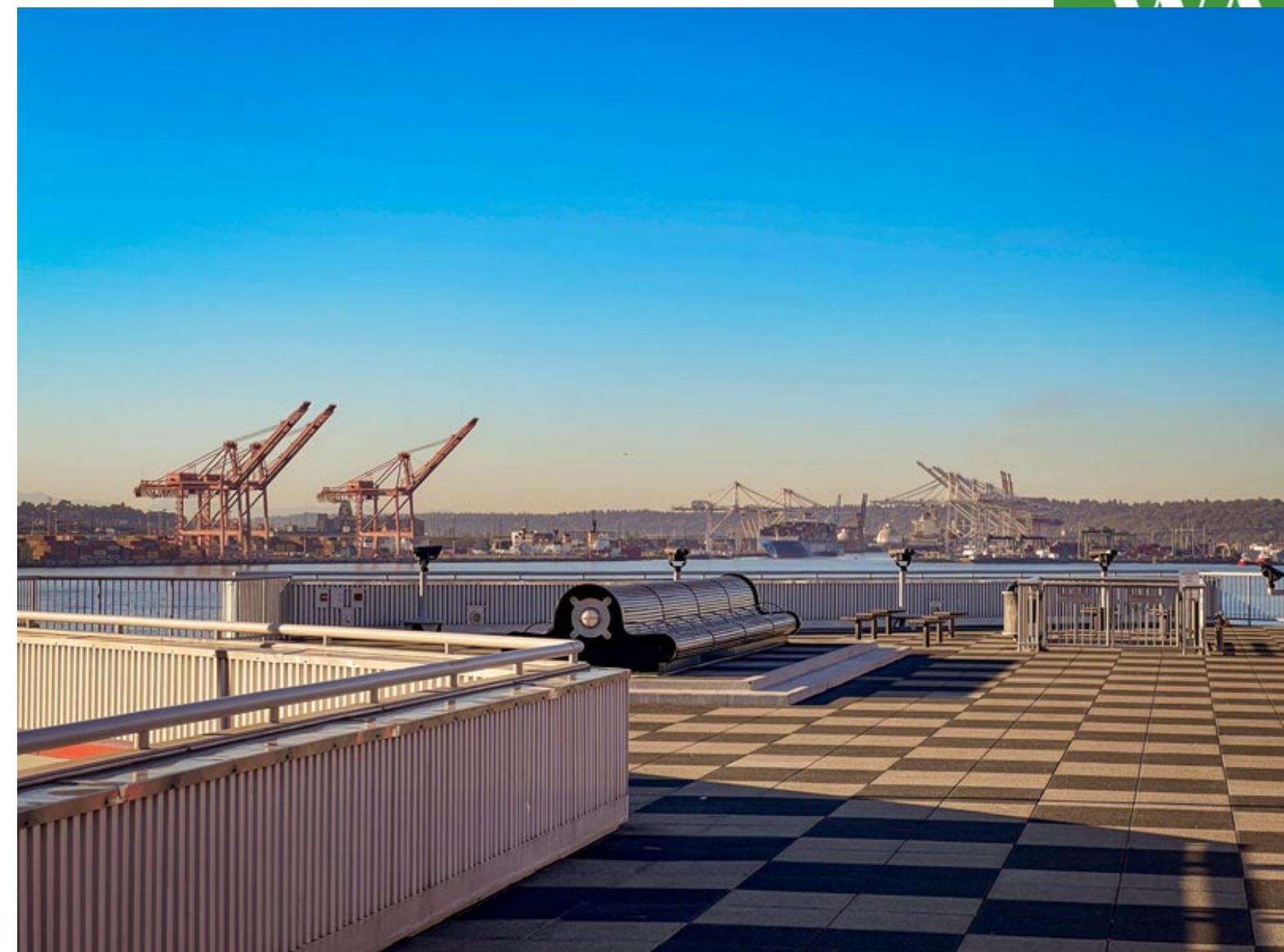
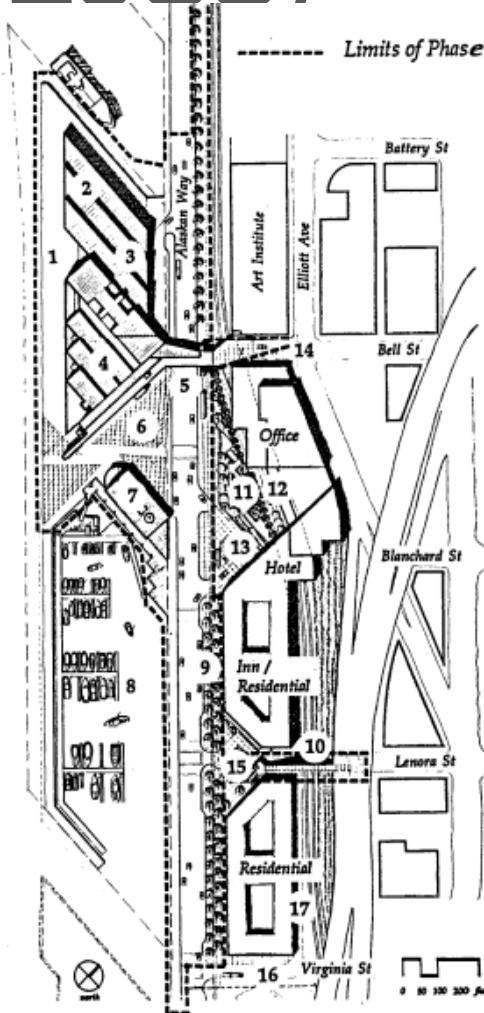
The Private Project

The North Block Office, Hotel, Inn/Residential	
Hillclimb.....	11
Concourse.....	12
Blanchard Motor Court.....	13

The South Block Residential	
---------------------------------------	--

Developer Improvements

Bell Street Motor Court.....	14
Lenora Plaza.....	15
Virginia Access Drive.....	16
Service Drive.....	17



PORT PARK SYSTEM & HABITAT SITES

Discover
Seattle's hidden
gems

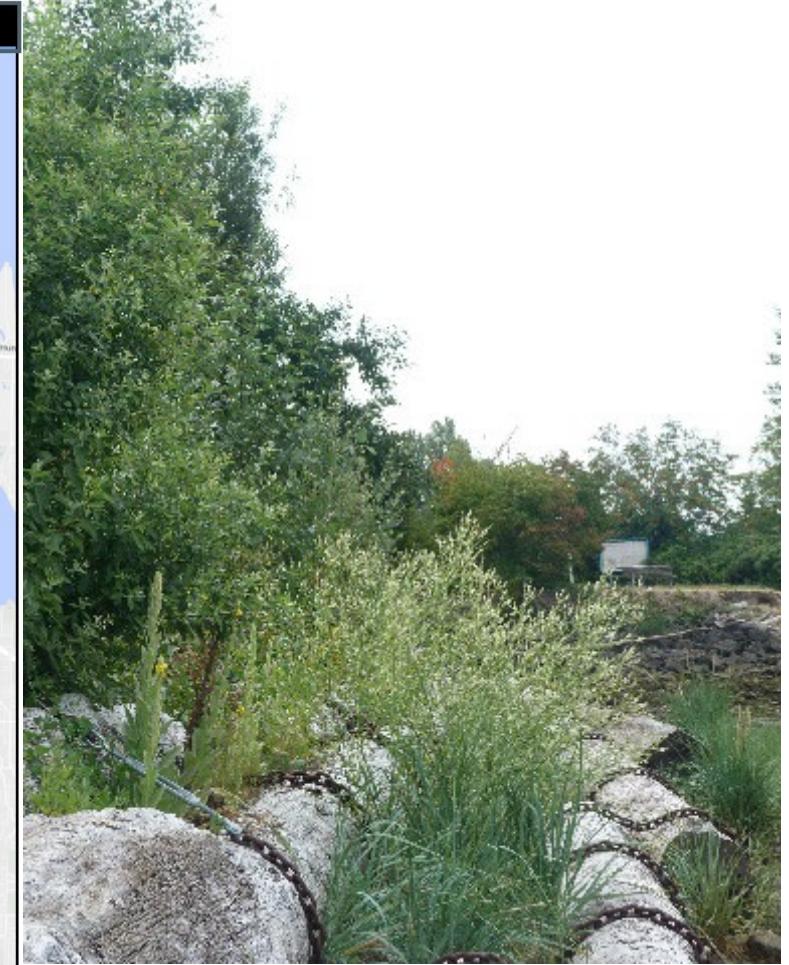
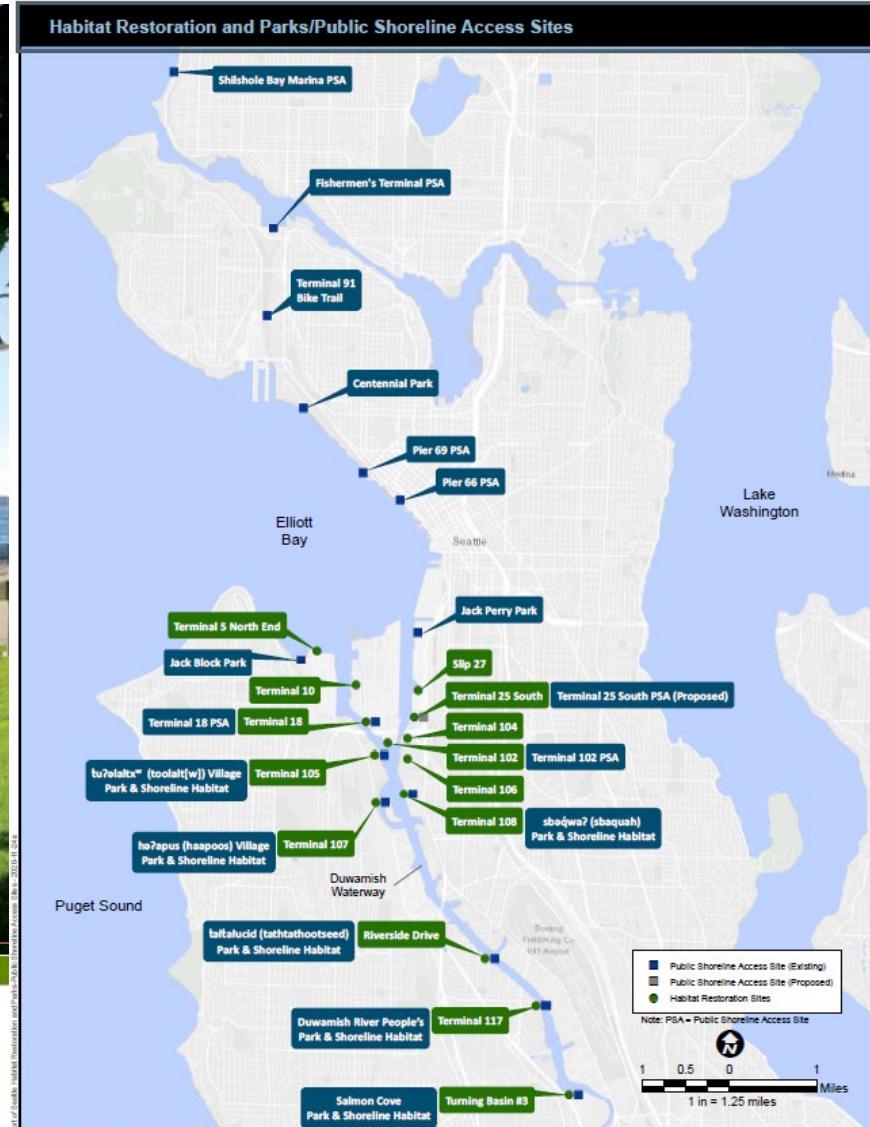
Port of Seattle
Parks & Shorelines Access Guide



10/2/2025



Where a sustainable world is headed.



Sloped riparian veg and earth
anchor, T108

VIEWING THE PARKS AS A SYSTEM



Duwamish Valley & Port of Seattle Access and Mobility Study

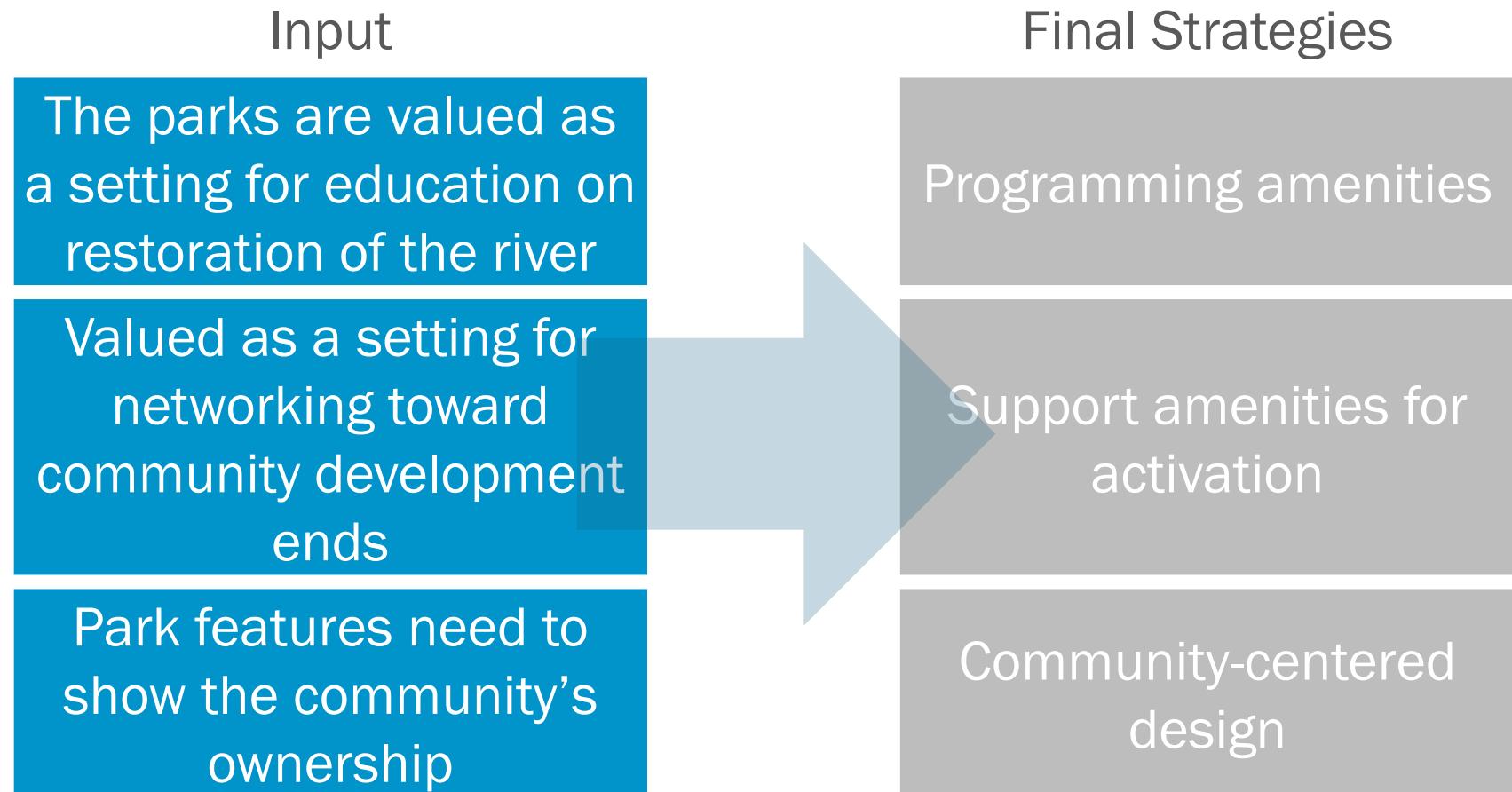
Port Community Action Team

Presented by: Avery Brown, Jake Bookwalter, Rich Brown



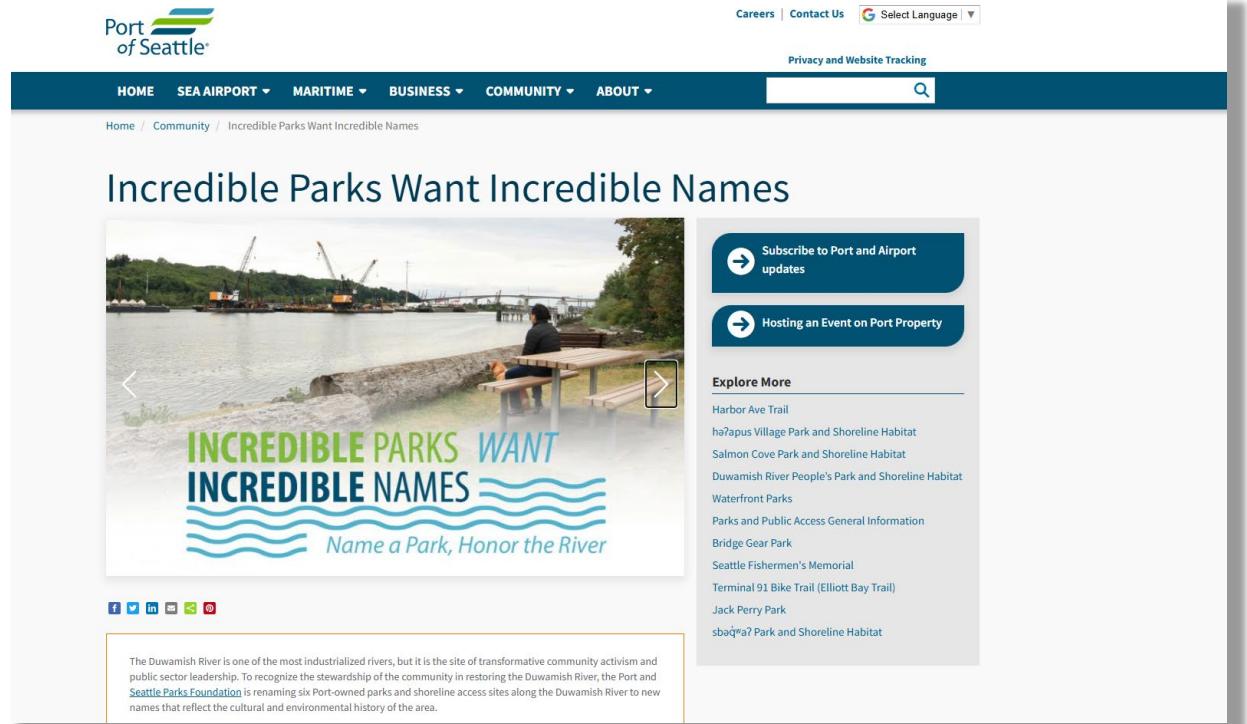
- Interns recording usage patterns
- Youth-led study on access to the parks

DOMINANT THEMES FROM COMMUNITY



RE-NAMING CAMPAIGN, 2020

- Partnership of the Port and Seattle Parks Foundation
- Off-the-charts engagement levels
 - Over 3,300 name nominations
 - In spite of (because of?) COVID lockdowns.



The screenshot shows the Port of Seattle website with a dark blue header. The header includes the Port of Seattle logo, a search bar, and links for Careers, Contact Us, Select Language, Privacy and Website Tracking, and a search icon. The main content area features a large image of a person sitting on a bench by a river with industrial cranes in the background. Overlaid on the image is the text 'INCREDIBLE PARKS WANT INCREDIBLE NAMES' in green and blue, with 'Name a Park, Honor the River' in blue below it. Below the image is a box with social media icons (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram) and a paragraph about the Duwamish River renaming campaign. To the right, there are two buttons: 'Subscribe to Port and Airport updates' and 'Hosting an Event on Port Property'. A sidebar on the right lists various park and shoreline access sites.

Careers | Contact Us | Select Language | Privacy and Website Tracking

HOME SEA AIRPORT ▾ MARITIME ▾ BUSINESS ▾ COMMUNITY ▾ ABOUT ▾

Home / Community / Incredible Parks Want Incredible Names

Incredible Parks Want Incredible Names

INCREDIBLE PARKS WANT INCREDIBLE NAMES

Name a Park, Honor the River

The Duwamish River is one of the most industrialized rivers, but it is the site of transformative community activism and public sector leadership. To recognize the stewardship of the community in restoring the Duwamish River, the Port and Seattle Parks Foundation is renaming six Port-owned parks and shoreline access sites along the Duwamish River to new names that reflect the cultural and environmental history of the area.

Subscribe to Port and Airport updates

Hosting an Event on Port Property

Explore More

- Harbor Ave Trail
- haʔaʔus Village Park and Shoreline Habitat
- Salmon Cove Park and Shoreline Habitat
- Duwamish River People's Park and Shoreline Habitat
- Waterfront Parks
- Parks and Public Access General Information
- Bridge Gear Park
- Seattle Fishermen's Memorial
- Terminal 91 Bike Trail (Elliott Bay Trail)
- Jack Perry Park
- sbəq̓əʔ Park and Shoreline Habitat

OPPORTUNITY UNDER SMA – RE-ASSIGNMENT OF PARK MITIGATION SITE

- Site 1: high income neighborhood
- Site 2: environmental justice neighborhood
- “Threading a needle” between Port’s mission and SMA compliance



RIVER ACCESS PADDLE PROGRAM



- Kayak-based education on river restoration topics
- Targets Duwamish Valley BIPOC youth
- Adopted strategy will
 - Eliminate barriers to growth
 - Facilitate networking

COMMUNITY INFORMATION BOARD

- Numerous groups working to inspire youth about community development
- Information boards in the parks as a “window” to these efforts



BUILDING A BRAND FOR THE SYSTEM

- Parks as a storytelling tool
 - Environmental education
 - Environmental justice
 - Climate change adaptation



THANK YOU!!