



City of Bellingham WASHINGTON

WATERFRONT ConnectionsPlan

SEPTEMBER 2008

WATERFRONT ConnectionsPlan

Cover Photos:

Row, Row, Row

Photo by Rosie Sabaric, Essence of Bellingham 2008

Exploring With Dad

Photo by Audrey Sowers, Essence of Bellingham 2008

The steamship Kulshan at Citizens Dock.

Historical Photo by Clyde Banks, Whatcom Museum #1997.1.1

- **Honor our community's needs:** The new waterfront neighborhood will belong to all of us, not just some of us. All voices must be heard, and the best ideas applied to create the broadest benefit for the whole community.
- **Create a unique neighborhood:** We want a neighborhood that looks and feels like Bellingham, not a generic urban development that could be located anywhere.

An area of considerable discussion is how our new waterfront neighborhood will connect to Bellingham's downtown. The Port's proposal, which has been extensively studied, includes a street grid that turns at an angle from the existing downtown street grid. Port and City officials have agreed to conduct further study of how the waterfront might be developed using the traditional street grid, so that new waterfront streets are built along the same lines and angles as Bellingham's existing streets. This plan provides us all with an opportunity to study the differences.

WHY IS STREET DIRECTION IMPORTANT?

Why does the direction of the streets matter? Because the location of the streets – together with parks and trails – will form the very fabric of this new neighborhood. Street locations will determine building locations: where buildings can and cannot be built, where historical structures must be torn down or where they might be renovated.

Street locations also will establish essential connections between downtown and the waterfront, and determine how and whether Bellingham Bay and the islands can be seen from the rest of downtown. The streets help determine how the neighborhood looks and feels.

We want to make sure that both street patterns are equally and fully examined, so that our community can weigh the pros and cons of each and make wise, informed decisions about our new neighborhood. I am asking for the community's help with this step. This document also offers other ideas, such as transportation-related strategies, ways to create great "people-places," and a phasing plan to help make this work affordable for our community.

I remain grateful to Port of Bellingham leaders and staff, who took the first step forward to secure this property for the communities they serve. I have every confidence that in the end, City and Port officials will adopt a plan that reflects our community's deepest values, and seamlessly connects our past, present and future.

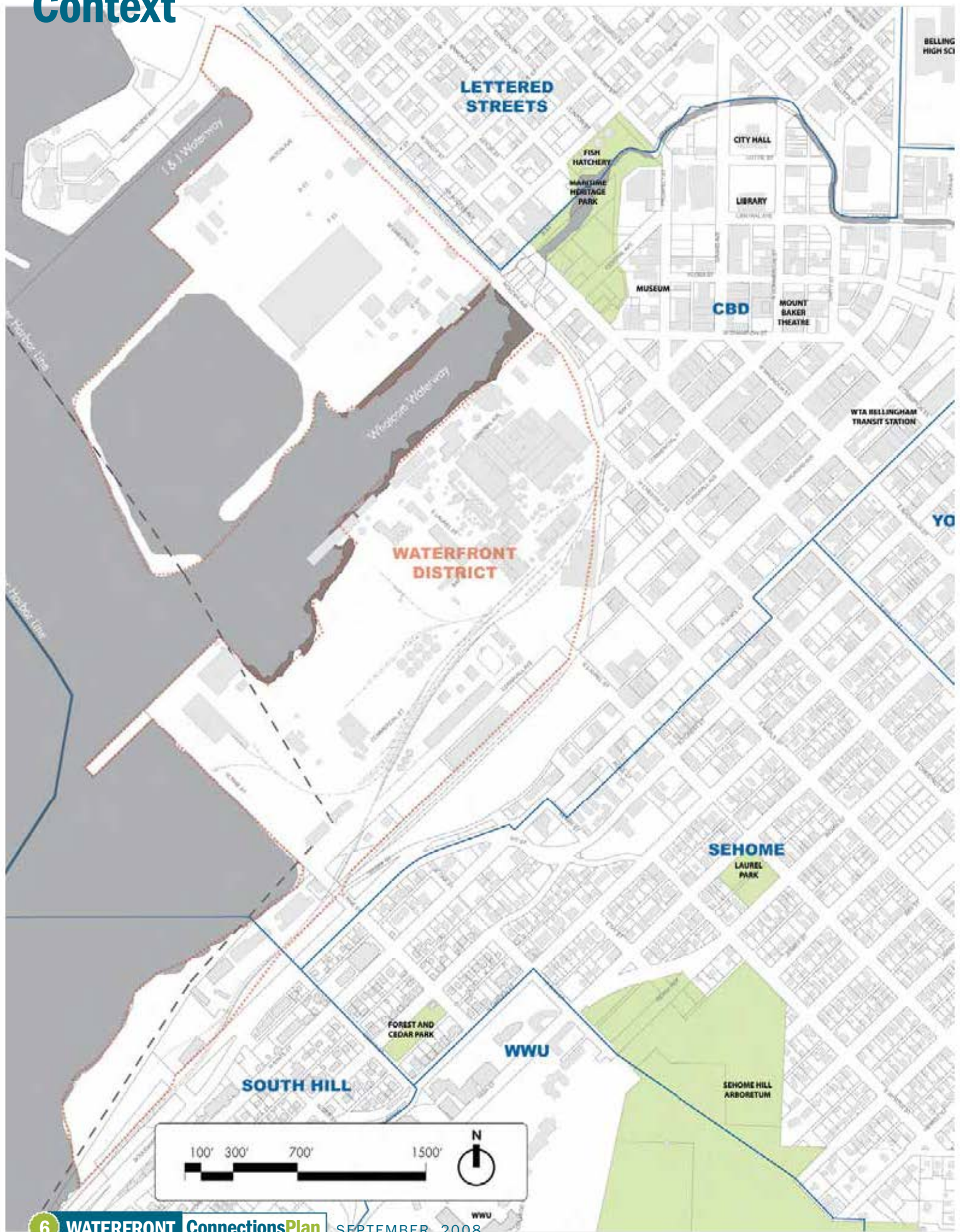
Sincerely,

Mayor Dan Pike

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Context



Introduction

The purpose of this document is to present a preliminary plan, the Waterfront Connections Plan, that illustrates a traditional grid of streets and blocks that align with the adjacent downtown and neighborhood street network. This traditional grid plan is in contrast to the “Rotated Grid” plan proposed by the Port. As these two plans are studied in the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) and discussed and debated within the larger community, the best features of both will likely emerge and inform the development of a Waterfront Master Plan.

The Port proposal and the Waterfront Connections Plan have much in common, from a commitment to Triple Bottom Line principles to at least 33 acres of parks and open space.

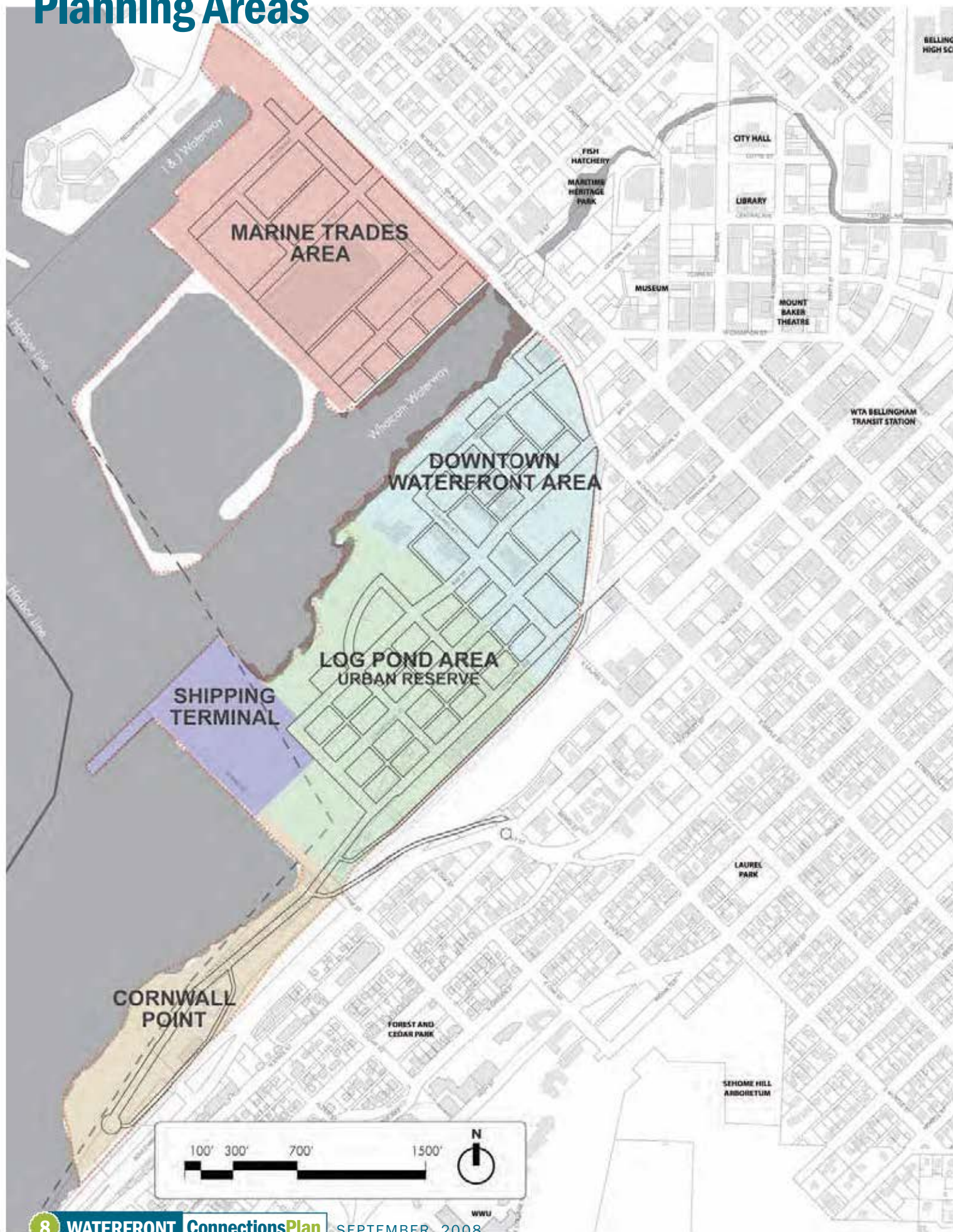
However, the differences that distinguish the Waterfront Connections Plan include:

- Consistent view corridors from downtown, across the site, to the water and from the Waterfront District into downtown,
- Bridges and crossings connecting directly to the existing grid with a minimum need for the use of eminent domain,
- A street network that embraces Bellingham and the iconic historic structures on the site,
- A public link along the northwest edge of Whatcom Waterway, connecting Whatcom Creek to the Bay on both sides of the Waterway,
- Building heights that respect views from downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, while supporting economically viable development,
- A strategic plan for parking and transit that meets future demand through flexible transportation demand management,
- A clearly defined phasing plan which links infrastructure and land use with off-site roadway capacities,
- An urban reserve area, preserved for future development, beyond the planning period and probably near term absorption rates.

This plan builds on a level of infrastructure that honors the community’s priorities: Reinforce the inherent qualities of each place on the waterfront, restore the health of land and water, improve waterfront access, and promote a healthy and dynamic waterfront economy. Using these guiding principles, the Waterfront Connections Plan embeds the Waterfront District within the City and fulfills the vision of connecting Bellingham to the Bay.



Planning Areas



Planning Areas

This plan proposes the creation of five distinct areas which are fully integrated, yet may be planned and developed independently. These areas are distinguished by land uses and development phasing.

MARINE TRADES AREA is characterized by predominately marine-related and marine-dependent uses with mixed uses, including housing along the southeast edge, utilizing the restoration of Whatcom Waterway as a public amenity and an opportunity for more intense development.

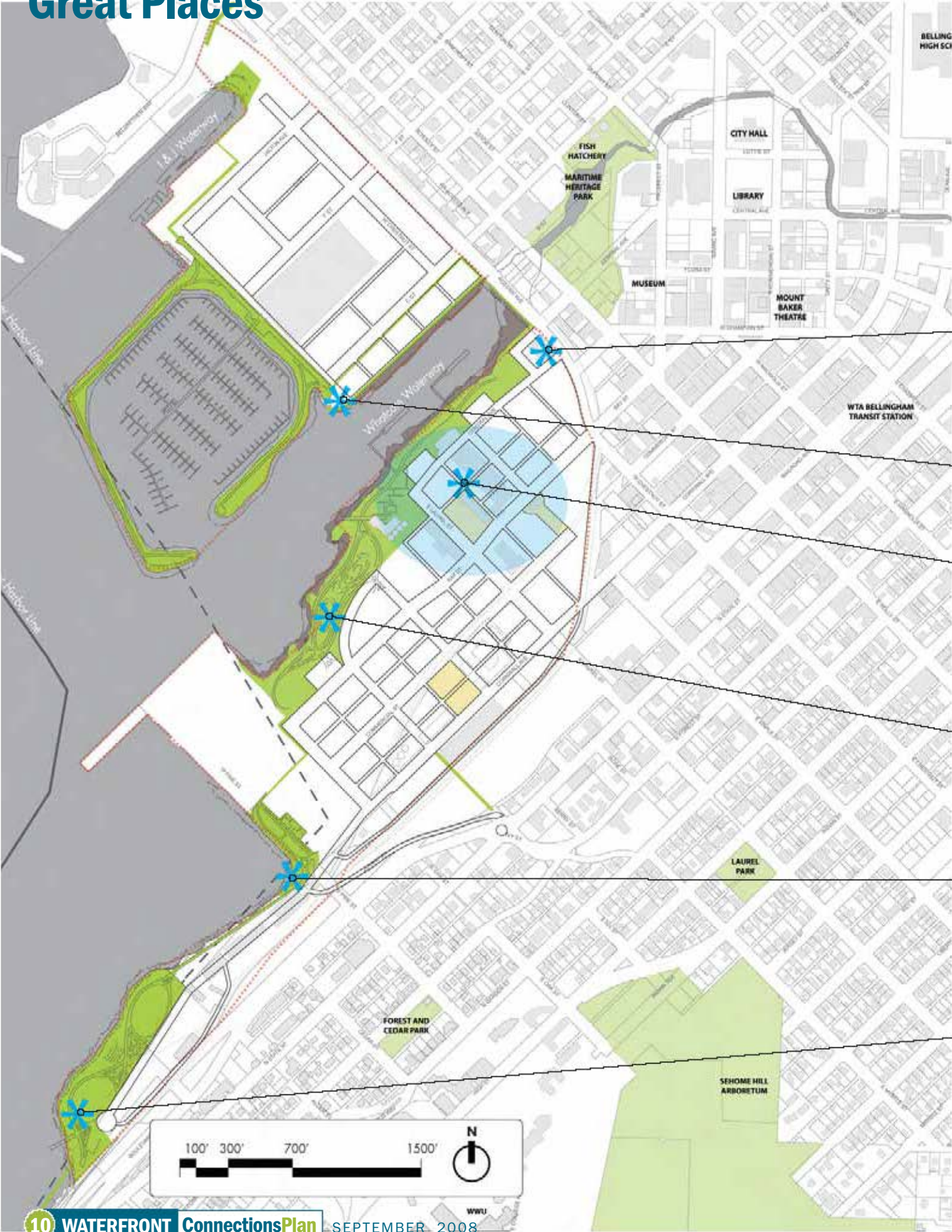
DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT AREA is the focus area for first phase development with a strong emphasis on the historic district, the intensity of public access and parks along the shoreline, and the connections, both physical and visual, between downtown and the Waterfront District.

LOG POND AREA is planned to be placed into urban reserve status so that development is focused closer to the City and phased with the infrastructure. This will provide time to assess the future of PSE's generation plant. It is not assumed that the land in this area will not be used at all, but that uses would be relatively temporary and that structures and development would not preclude re-development in the future, particularly the layout of streets and building pads. This reserve may also be an opportunity site for one or more currently unknown major economic development activities for corporate headquarters, research and development or clean sustainable manufacturing.

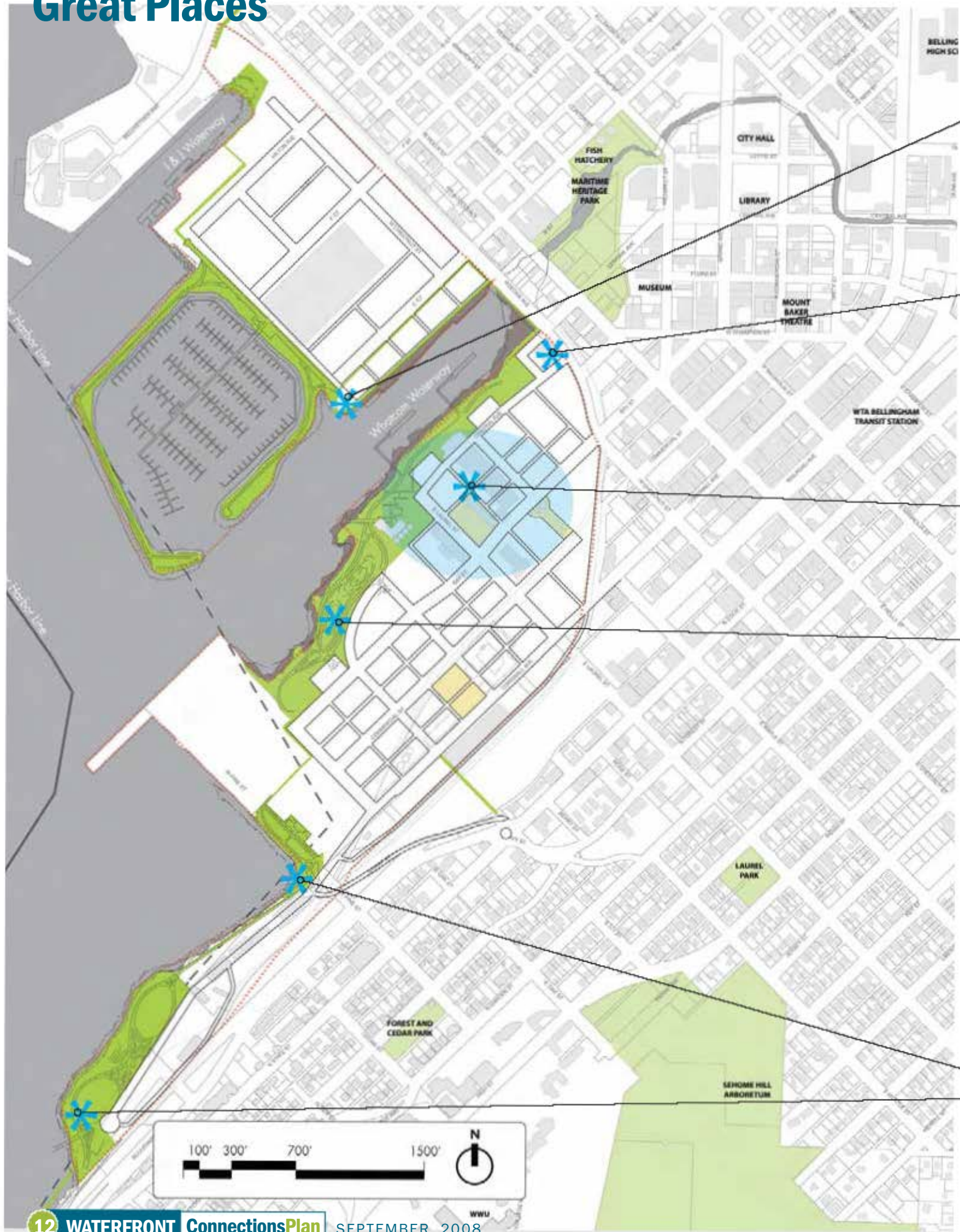
SHIPPING TERMINAL will be maintained as described in the Port's proposal and available for multiple marine-related industries and research facilities.

CORNWALL POINT will be available for development as described in the Port's proposal.

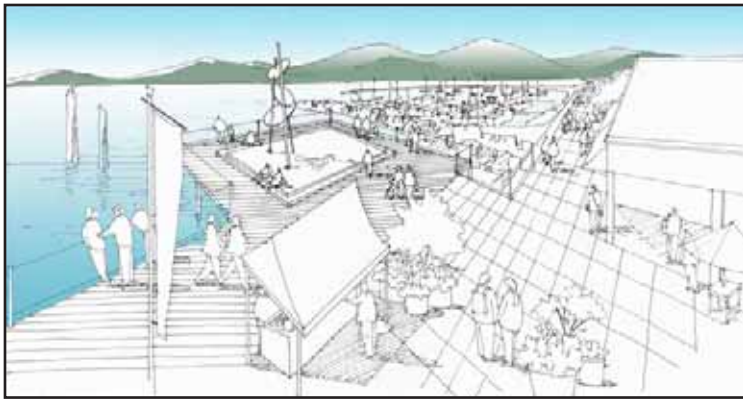
Great Places



Great Places



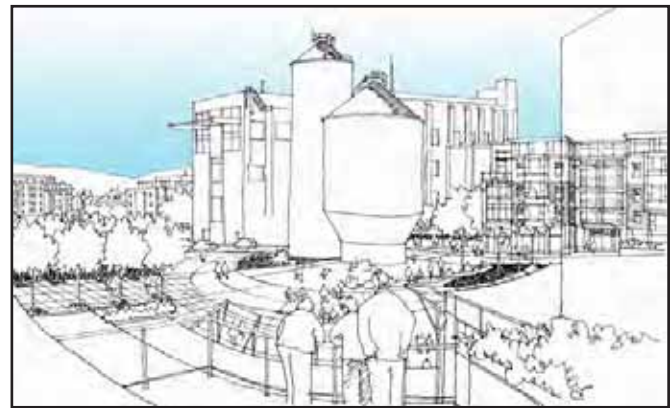
WHATCOM WATERWAY OVERLOOK



GRANARY ESPLANADE



HISTORIC DISTRICT



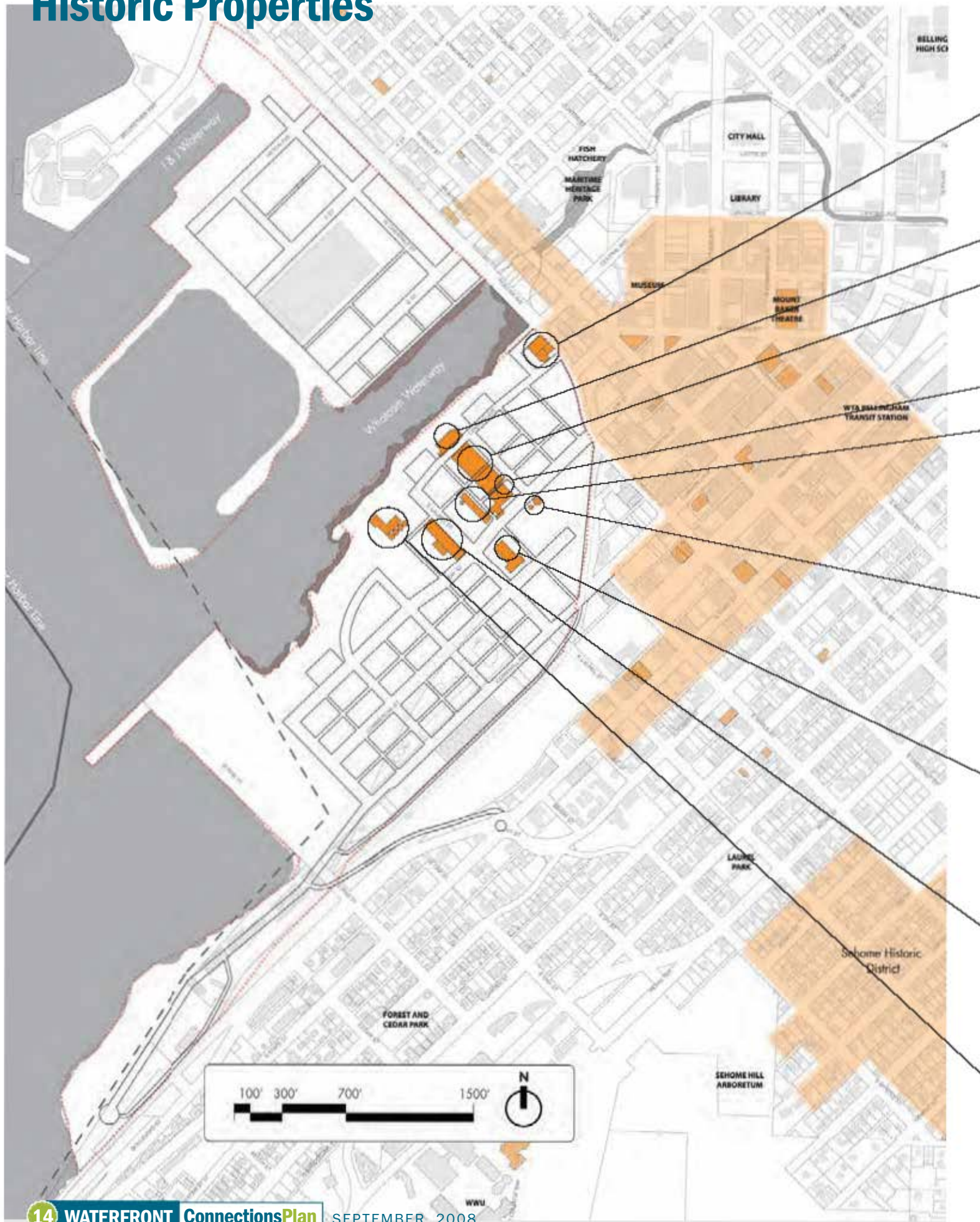
LOG POND PARK



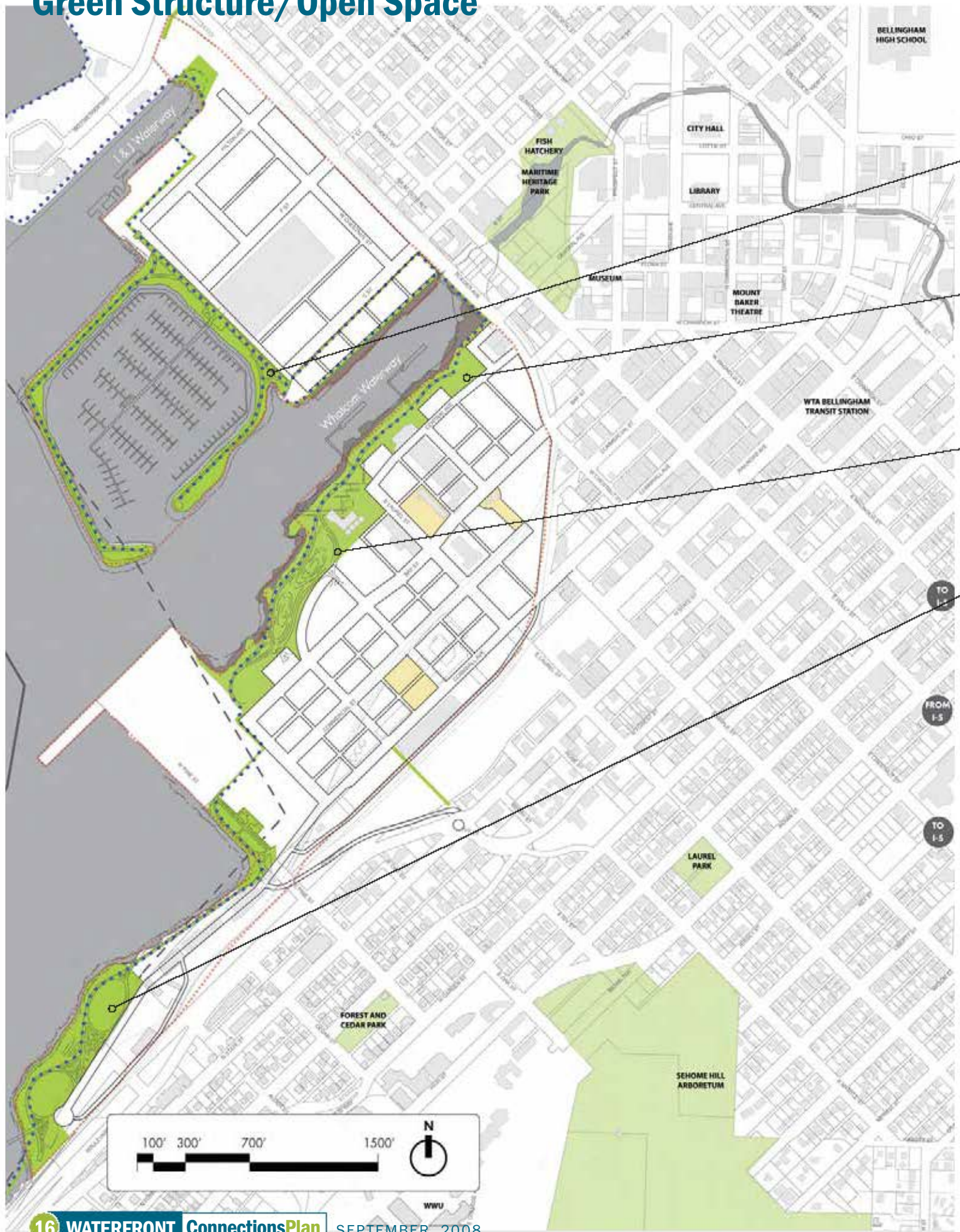
CORNWALL COVE AND CORNWALL POINT AND BOARDWALK



Historic Properties



Green Structure/Open Space



Green Structure/Open Space

The Waterfront District is defined by its parks and open spaces. The Waterfront Connection Plan closely resembles the Port's proposal except for a few key differences.

Marine Trades Area: 10.6 Acres

There will be an additional 20' wide public promenade along the northwest edge of Whatcom Waterway, accessible from both Roeder and the Marine Causeway. The Waterfront Connections Plan moves the Boat launch Area from the end of C Street to the end of Hilton Avenue, providing fewer interruptions along the public trail system and providing a more protected launch area for trailer-able boats.

Downtown Waterfront: 6.7 Acres

The Waterfront Connections Plan provides a more generous park along the southeast edge of Whatcom Waterway in conjunction with the traditional grid. This provides a stronger separation between private development and public park space. The interior park blocks are removed in exchange for open space around the historic buildings, supporting the heritage of the industrial waterfront.

Log Pond Area: 6.7 Acres


The Waterfront Connections Plan reflects park and open space similar to that shown in the Port's proposal except for a more centralized open space that may be privately developed in lieu of park blocks.

Cornwall Point: 10.3 Acres

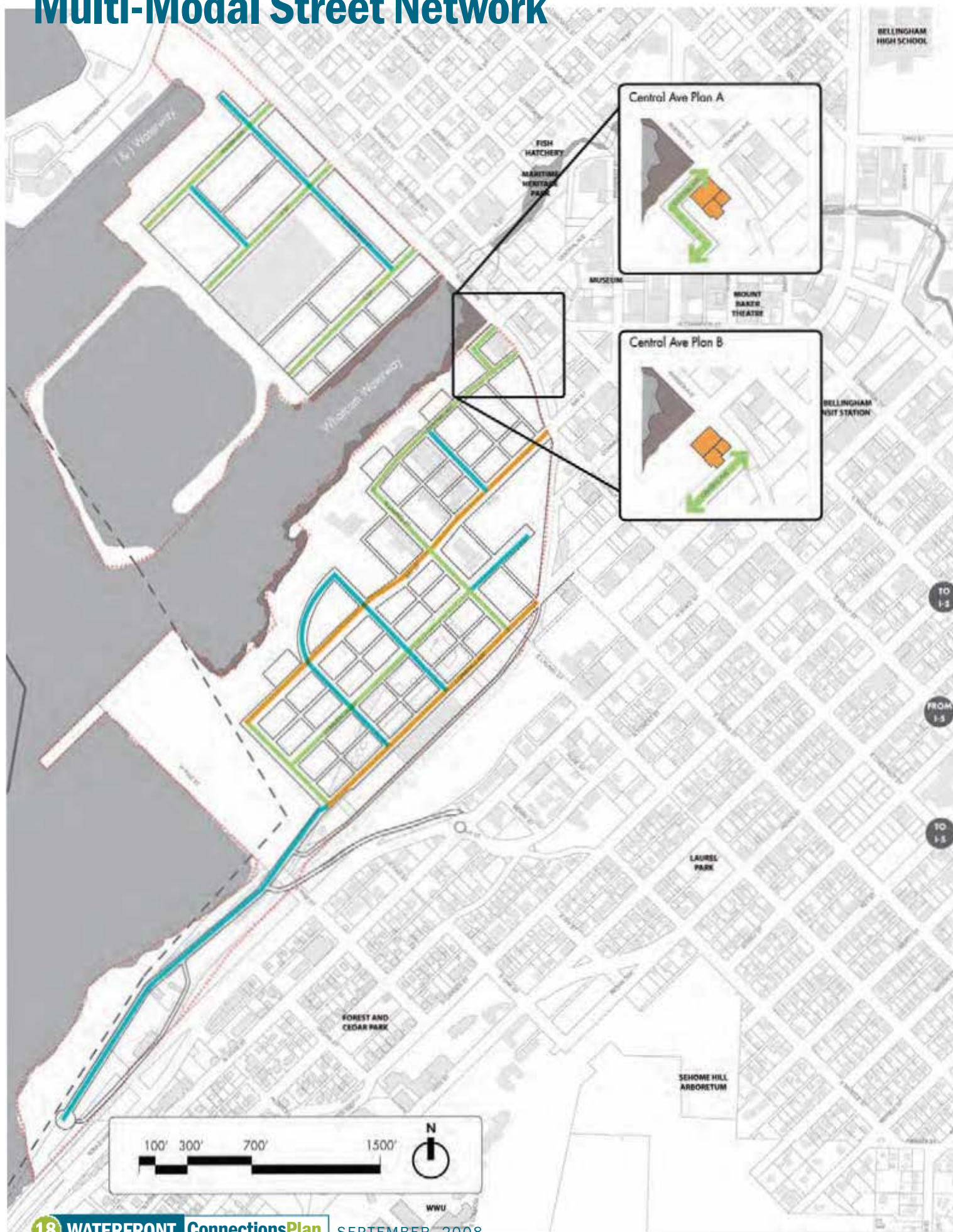
Park and open spaces in the Cornwall Point Area will be maintained according to the Port's proposal.

Total: 34.3 Acres

LEGEND

 Publicly Developed Parks	 Privately Developed Parks
 Existing Parks	 Trails

Multi-Modal Street Network



Multi-Modal Street Type Designation System

Streets are one of the most important differences in the Waterfront Connections Plan. By making clear cost-efficient connections to the downtown street network, the Waterfront Connections Plan provides clarity of wayfinding, inherent view protection on existing corridors, and practical infrastructure decisions.

The project area's streets are broadly categorized into three functions for roadways – arterial streets, collector streets, and local streets – which are part of the traditional classification system used by federal, state, and local agencies. Alleys and mid-block connections are part of this system.

These street classifications are intended to accommodate acceptable levels of roadway volume-to-capacity, and intersection delay-based, level of service (LOS). It responds to the square footage of development, built in several phases along with site infrastructure, including the primary street network.

- **Arterial:** 3 lanes (one lane each way with a center turn lane/median)
- **Collector:** 2 lanes (one lane each way)
- **Local:** 2 lanes (one lane each way)

All streets will accommodate cyclists in either a designated bike lane, or, on slower speed streets in a generous shared lane with vehicles.

All streets will have sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, and street parking.

Curb cuts will be minimized to provide a high quality pedestrian environment.

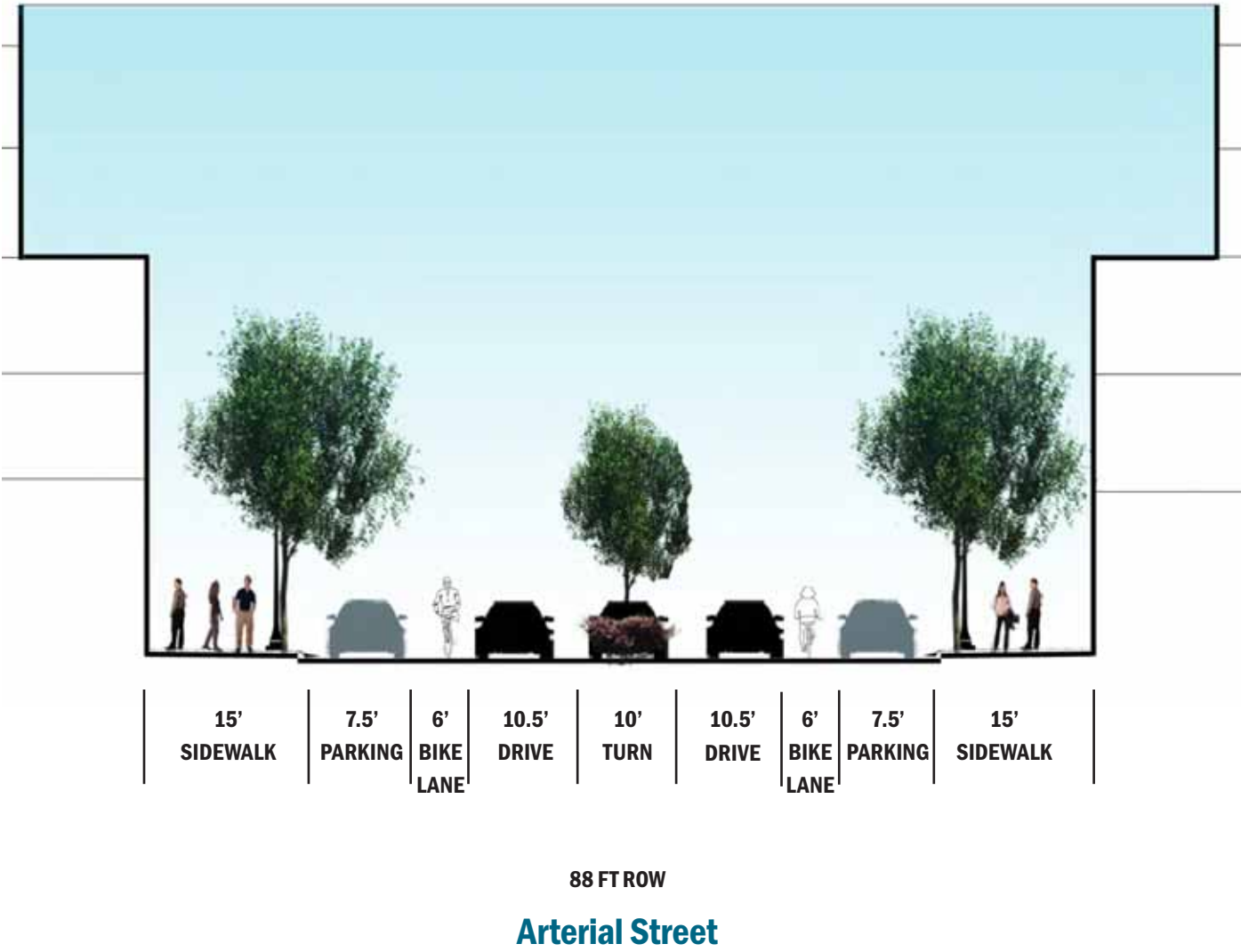
In the next phase, this functional classification system will be augmented with several street typologies to address a street's relationship to adjacent land uses, and level of multi-modal accommodation. These could include: Main Street, Mixed-Use Streets, Residential Streets and Commercial Streets. These typologies will allow the City to more precisely characterize a street – or segment of a street – using terms such as “mixed-use arterial” or “residential collector.”

Note that there are alternatives for connecting Central Ave to Roeder on either side of a preserved and/or renovated Granary Building. This would allow the City flexibility in making this important connection either via the existing over-water structure or in the future, connecting on the southeast side of the Granary and maintaining the northwest side for non-motorized users and public open space.

LEGEND

- 
- A legend showing three street types with corresponding colored lines: Arterial (orange), Local (teal), and Collector (green). Each type is preceded by a short horizontal line of its respective color.
- Arterial
 - Local
 - Collector

Multi-Modal Street Network

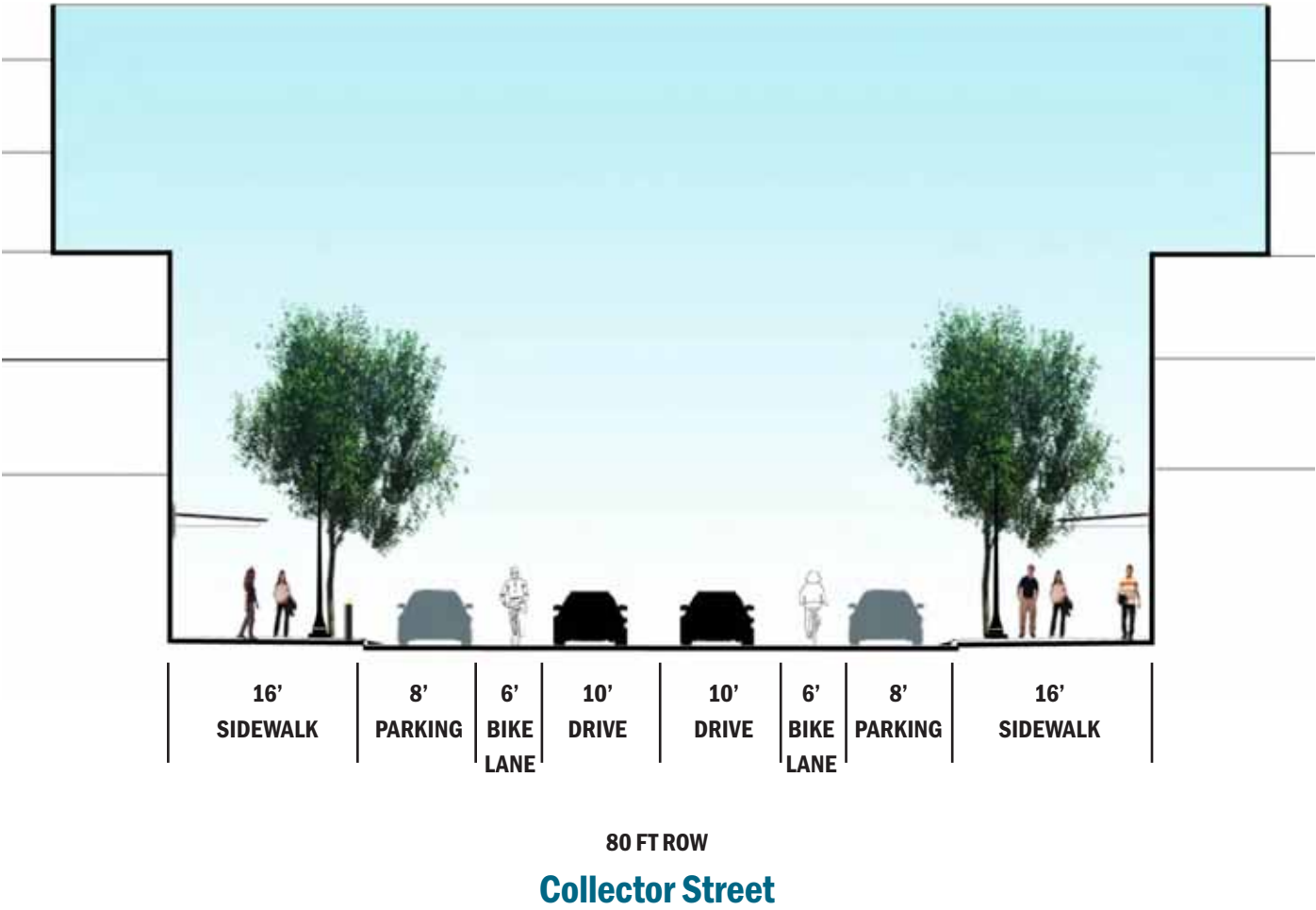


Arterial Streets

Arterials will carry the highest capacity of traffic in the Waterfront District. They will accommodate delivery trucks and transit, provide wide sidewalks, parking, and bike lanes. Arterials will have two drive lanes and a center turn lane that can be landscaped between channelized left turns. Arterials will have on-street parking but that may be removed for transit stops. All intersections will have pedestrian bulb-outs to provide shorter crossings, street furniture, and pedestrian-scaled lighting.

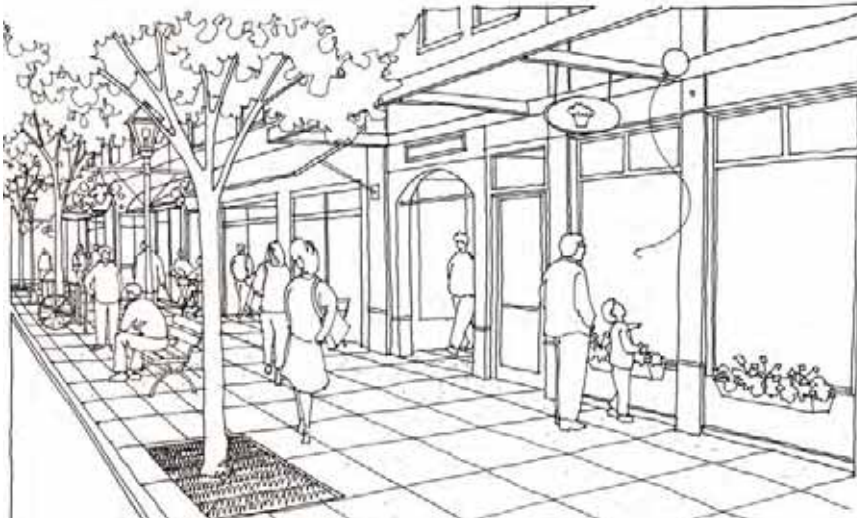


Multi-Modal Street Network

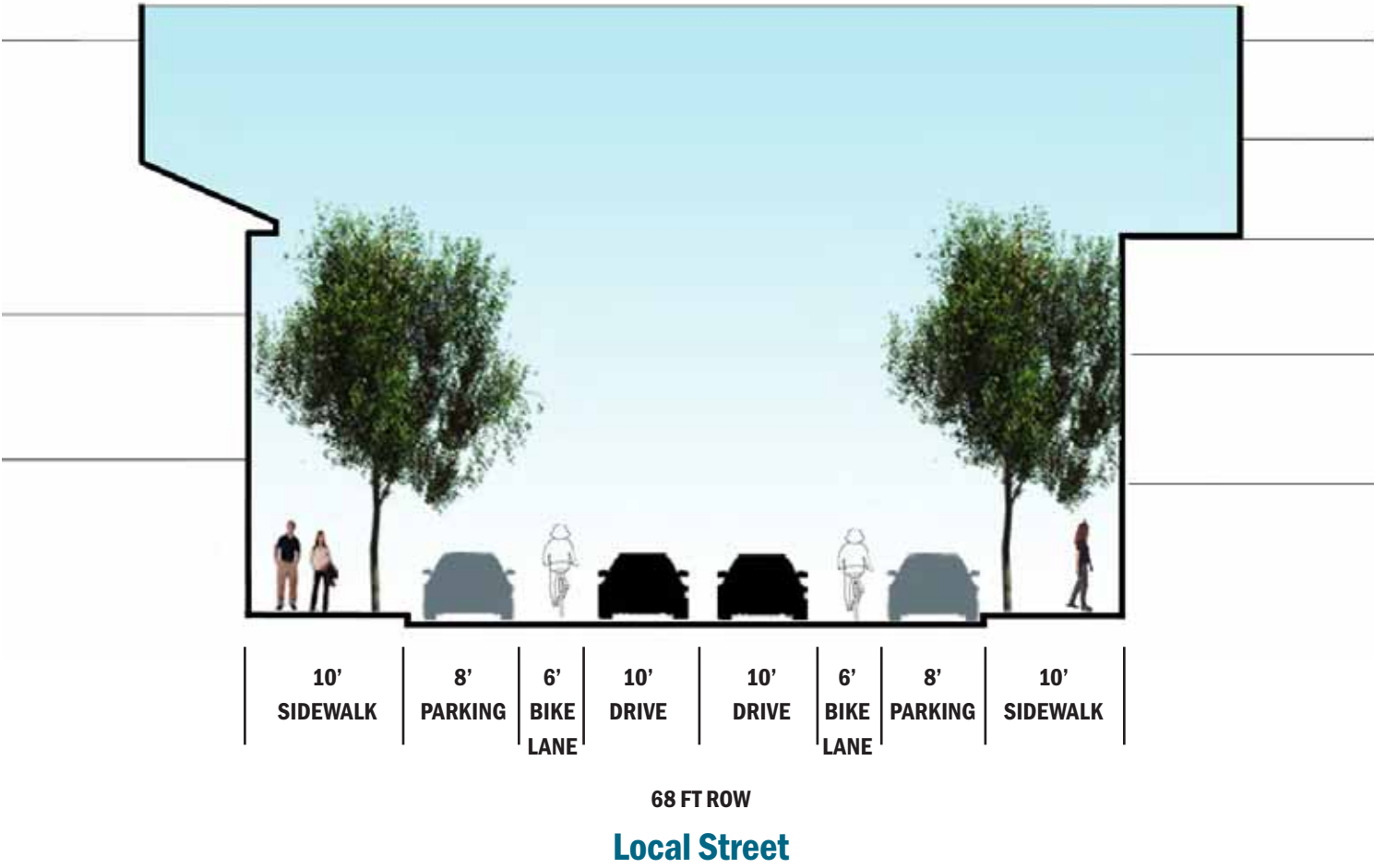


Collector Streets

Collector Streets will serve the highest intensity retail and mixed land uses and are designed to promote walking, bicycling, and transit within an attractive landscaped corridor. On-street parking is provided to serve adjacent retail land uses. An amenity zone with trees and street lights is required, along with wide sidewalks, street furniture (benches, trash receptacles, etc.), to accommodate outdoor cafes, plazas and other public spaces.



Multi-Modal Street Network



Local Streets

These streets balance transportation choices without sacrificing auto mobility. Local streets emphasize walking, bicycling and access over auto mobility. The objective is to slow vehicular traffic to improve safety and accessibility for other modes. Local streets may have curb bulb-outs at intersections as well as potential mid-block crossings.

Relationship of Streets to Stormwater

Because virtually all of the stormwater will not be infiltrated into the ground, the street network provides a great opportunity to build a stormwater system which serves to not only convey stormwater but also to create habitat and a public amenity. The streets described in this section may be modified to include surface stormwater amenities in the next generation of planning.



Views

1st Draft Views of The Grid

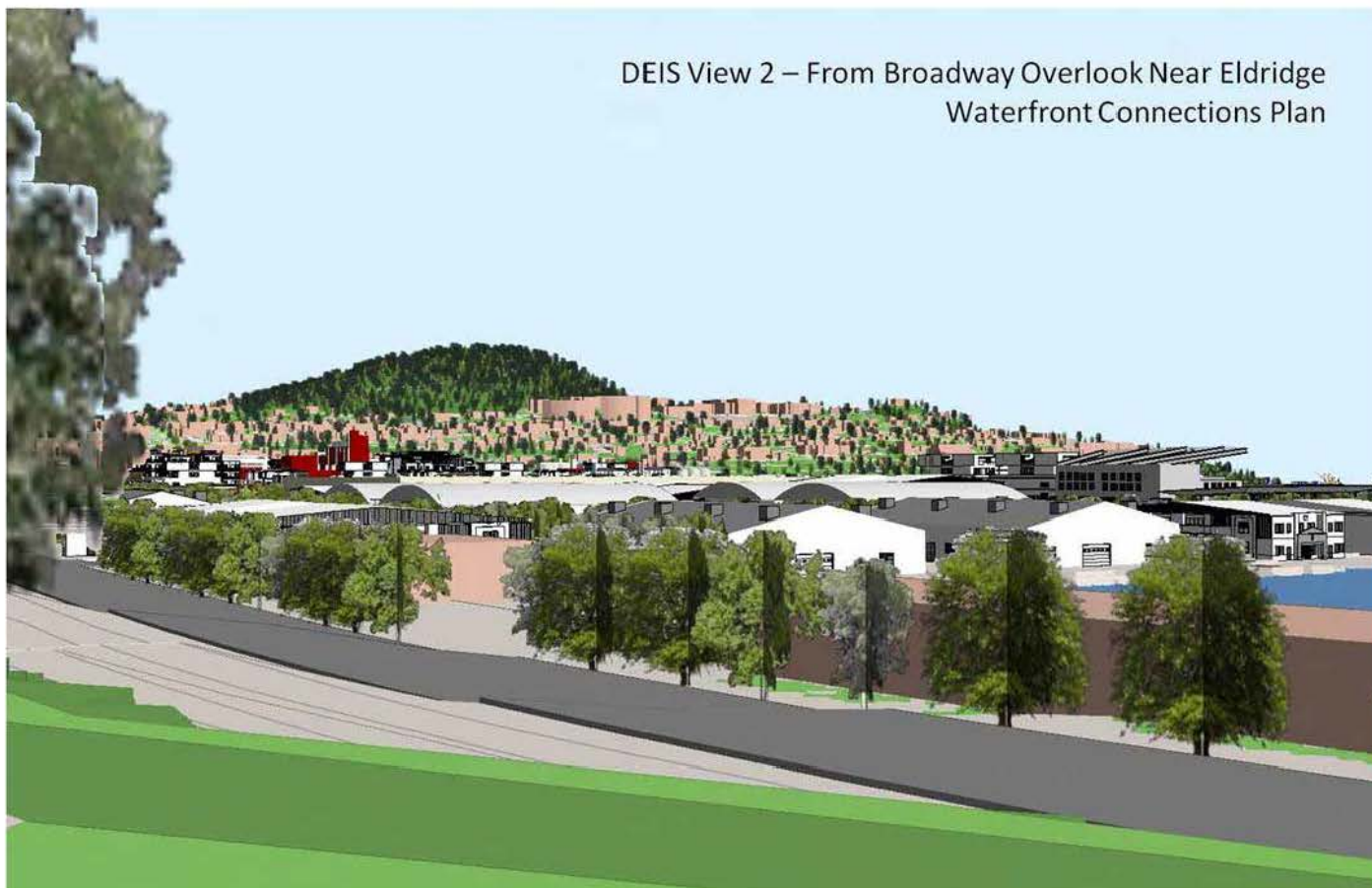
Selected DEIS Views
Waterfront Connections Plan
September, 2008



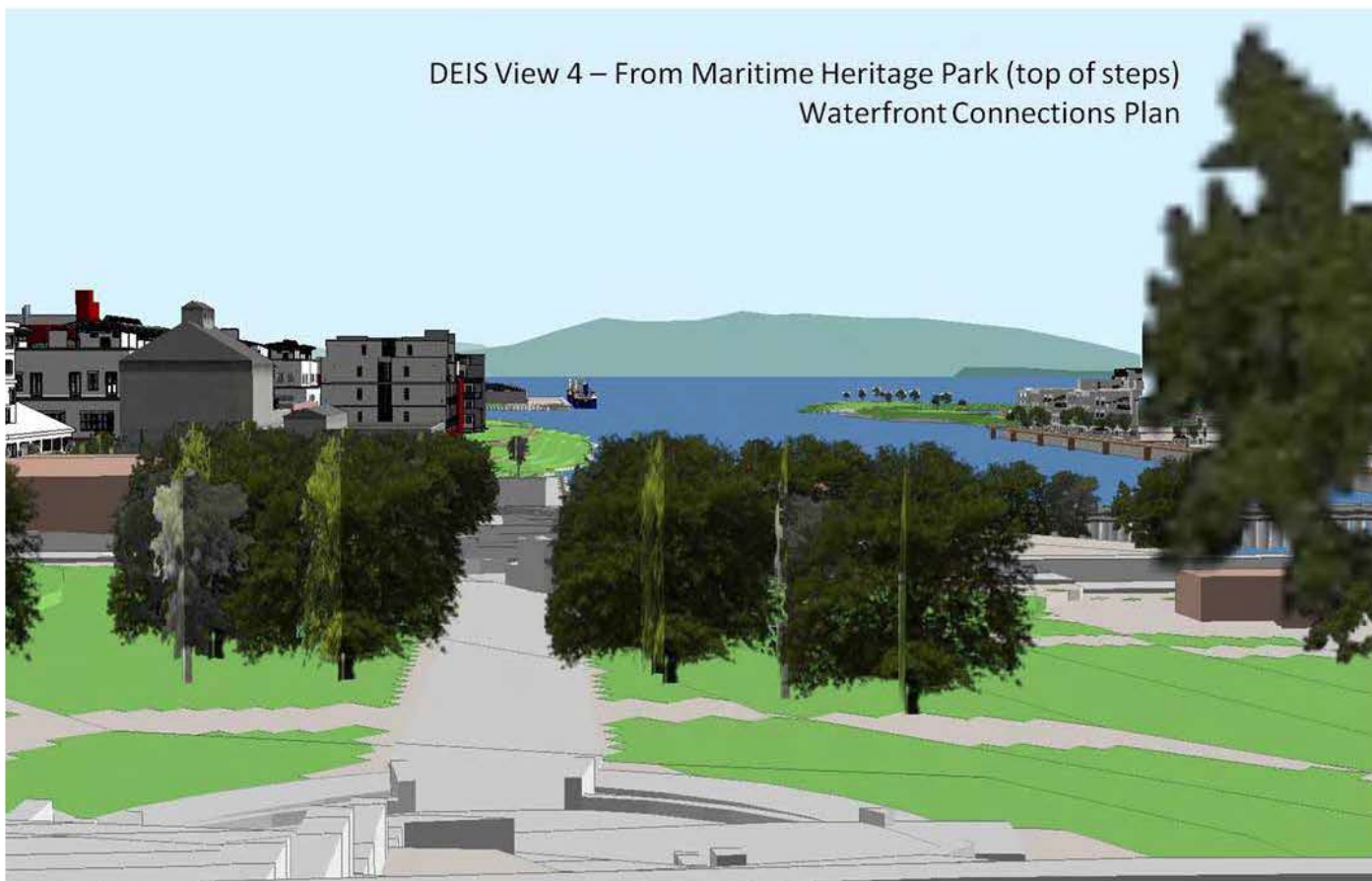
DEIS View 1 – From Bellwether Park
Waterfront Connections Plan



DEIS View 2 – From Broadway Overlook Near Eldridge
Waterfront Connections Plan



DEIS View 4 – From Maritime Heritage Park (top of steps)
Waterfront Connections Plan

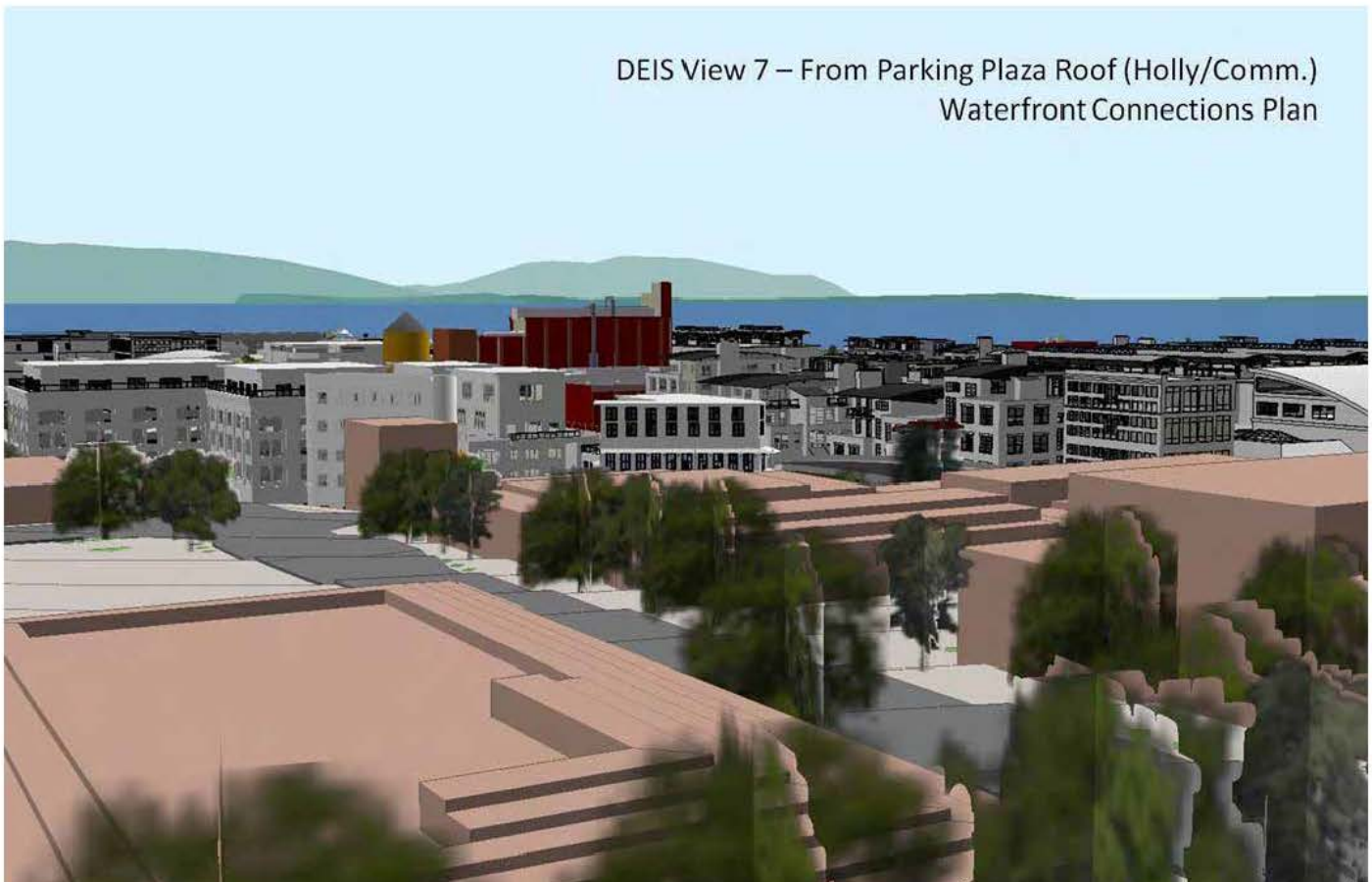


Views

DEIS View 5 – From Docks
Waterfront Connections Plan



DEIS View 7 – From Parking Plaza Roof (Holly/Comm.)
Waterfront Connections Plan

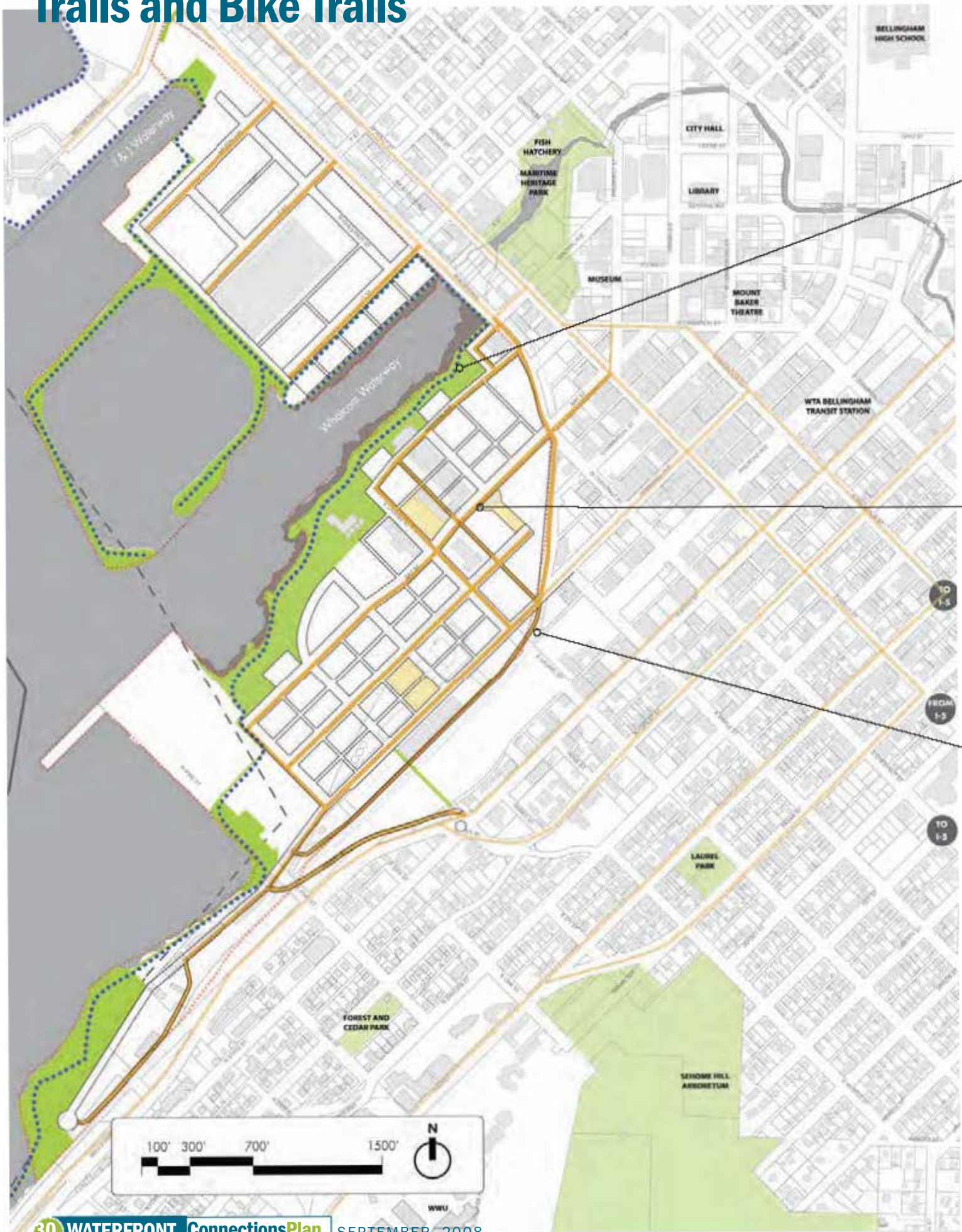


DEIS View 11 – From WWU Viking Union Building
Waterfront Connections Plan



Looking Towards Downtown on
Bay Street Arterial – Approaching Bridge

Trails and Bike Trails





EXAMPLE OF A MULTI-MODAL TRAIL ALONG WATERFRONT EDGE.

Bike routes on the waterfront have to serve the needs of all bikers.

People who commute to work by bike need access to a protected high-speed bike corridor, such as the proposed bike trail along the railroad right-of-way.

Those who want to bike down to the waterfront neighborhood to meet their friends for a latte and scone need convenient access.

Lastly, future cyclists need safe paths to learn on -- and to be able to accompany Mom and Dad on their Saturday morning shoreline jog.



ON-STREET BIKE LANES, WHERE CYCLISTS ARE AN INTEGRATED PART OF TRAFFIC.



BIKE TRAIL ALONG RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY

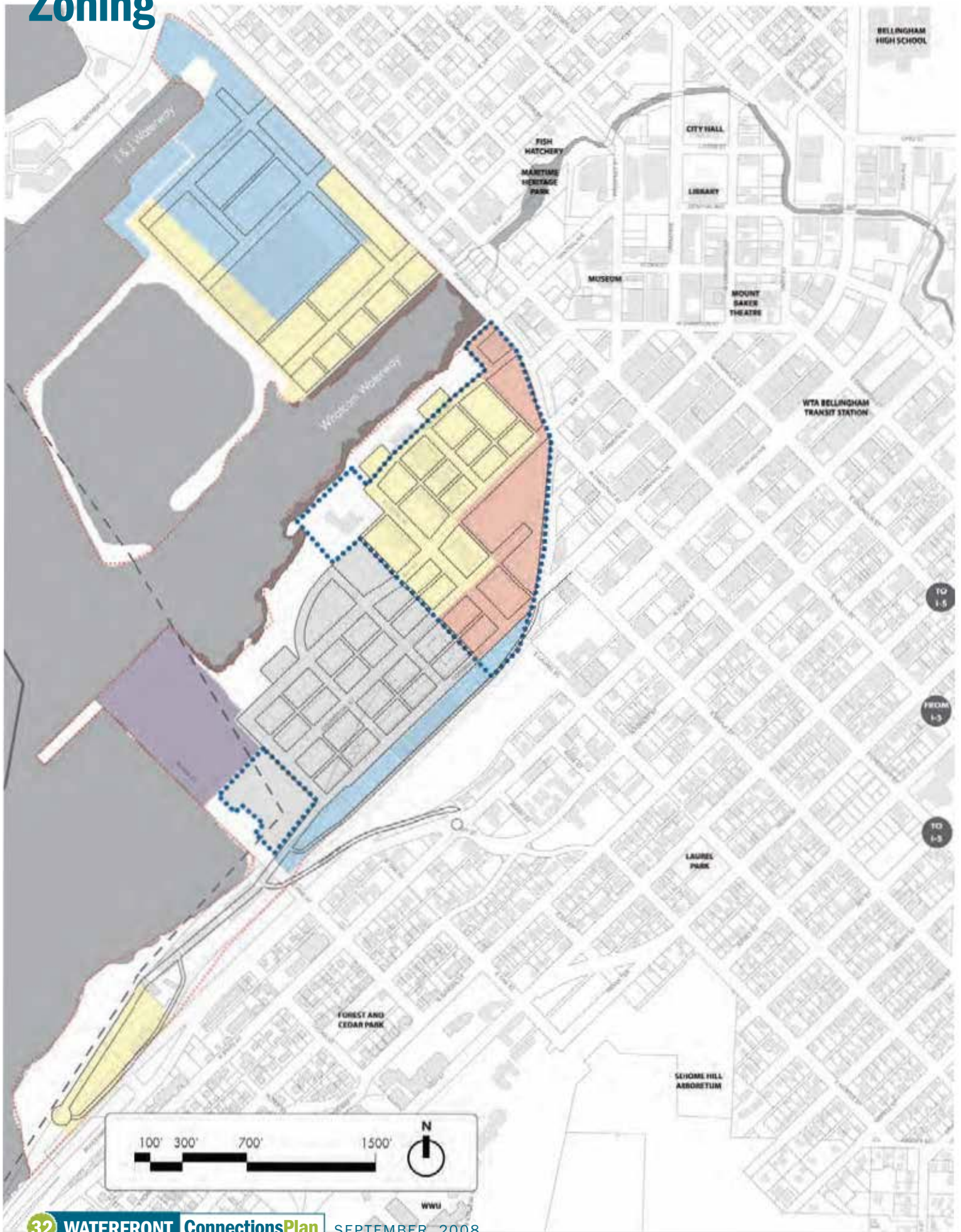
In communities across the world, there is a growing need and responsibility to provide options that give people the opportunity to bike—to bike more often, to bike to more places, and to feel safe while doing so. The benefits of riding a bicycle—whether for utilitarian or recreational purposes—can be expressed in terms of improved environmental and personal health, reduced traffic congestion, enhanced quality of life, economic rewards, as well as others.

-US Department of Transportation

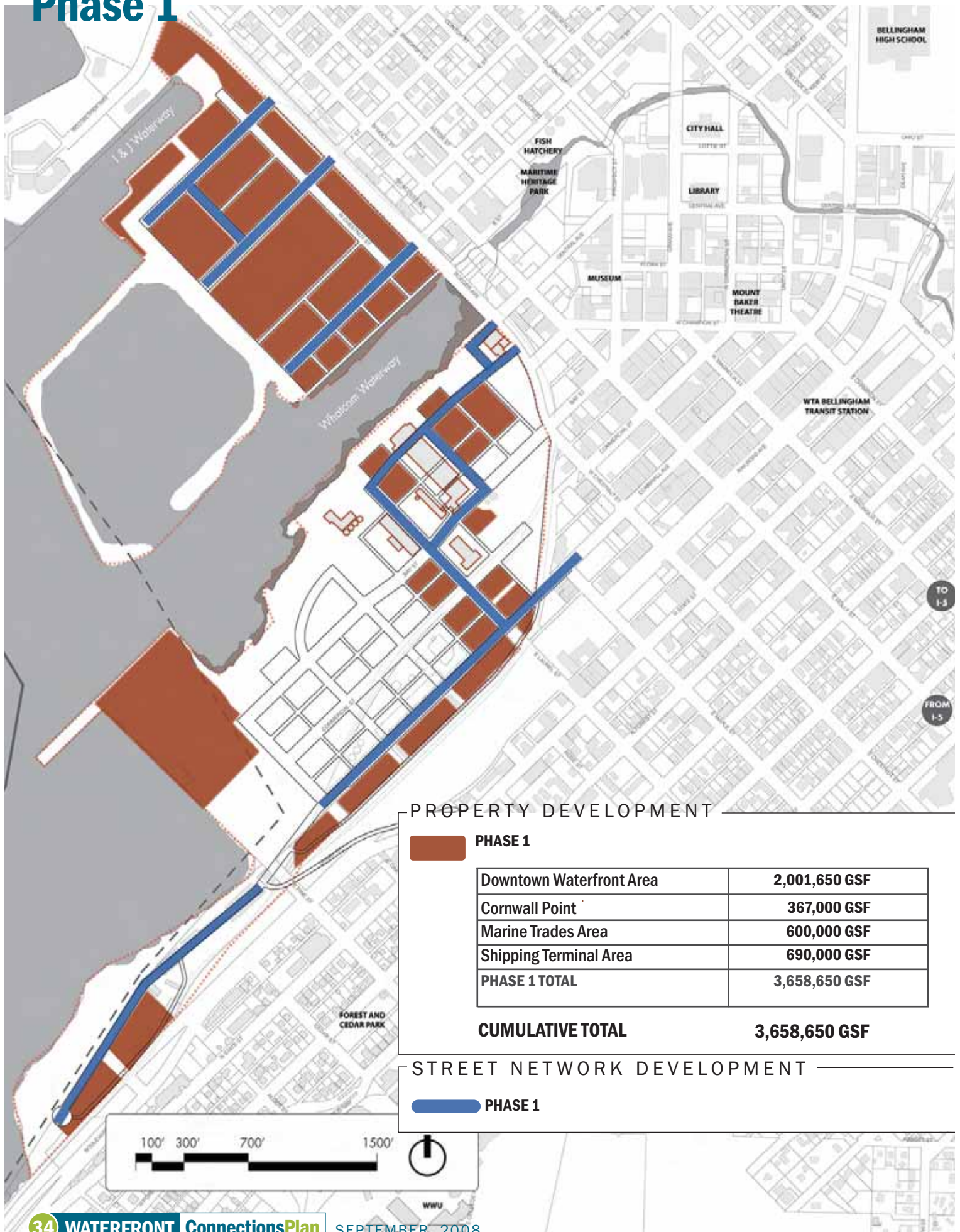
LEGEND

- Bike Trails On-site
- Bike Trails Off-site
- Multi-Modal Trails

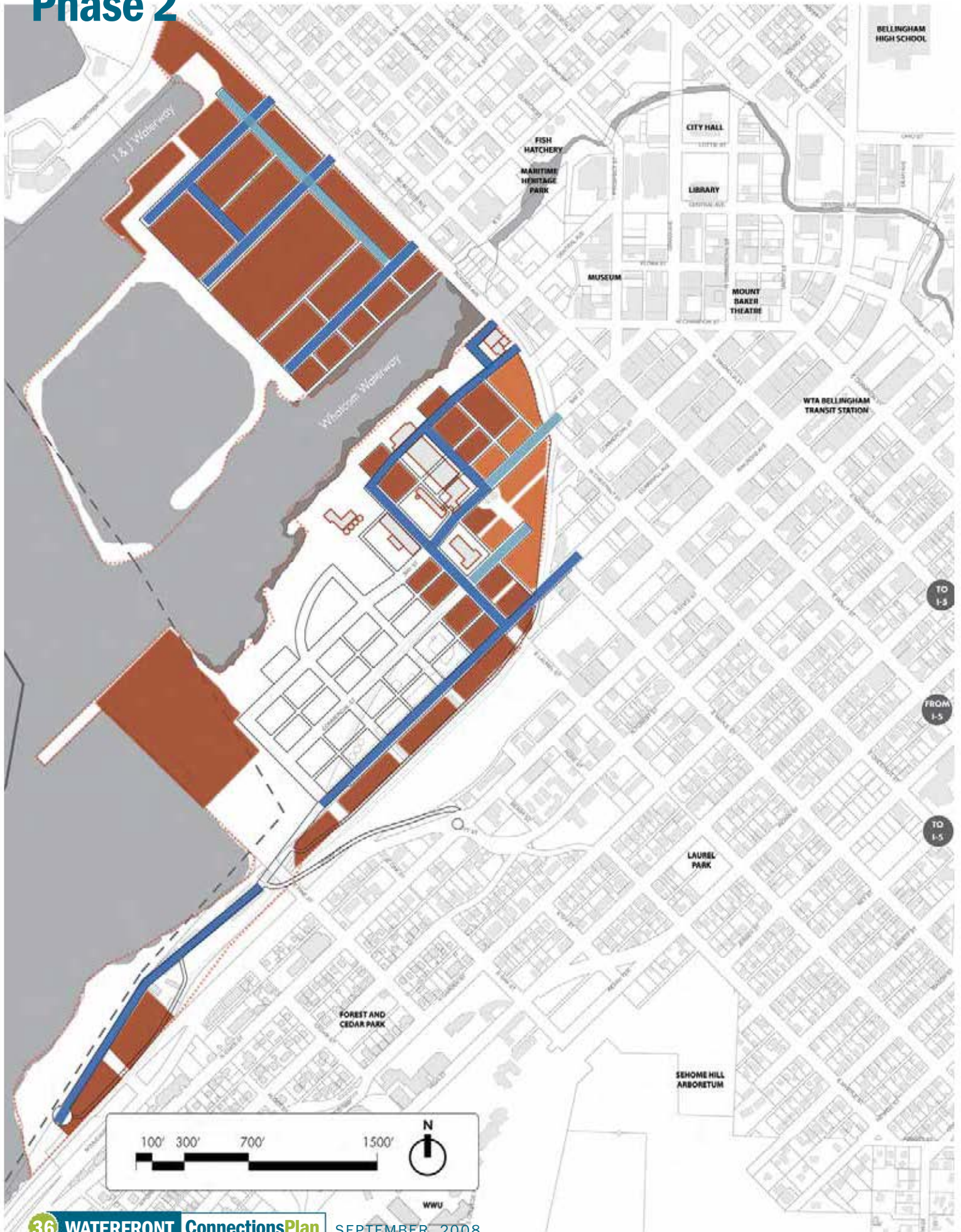
Zoning



Phase 1



Phase 2



Phase 2

- Marine Trades Area: Phase 2 would add connector streets to the grid including Chestnut Street. This would provide connections sufficient to allow and additional 400,000 gsf additional development within the area for a full build out of 1,000,000 gsf.
- Downtown Waterfront Area: Phase 2 adds a fourth connection from the site to the existing Downtown street network, with a new ramp at Bay Street. This would allow direct access into the site, and complete a physical and visual relationship between the Historic District and Downtown.

These connections will provide the transportation network needed to support the additional 1,095,000 gsf of development.

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

 **PHASE 1** **3,658,650 GSF**

 **PHASE 2**

Downtown Waterfront Area	695,000 GSF
Marine Trades Area	400,000 GSF
PHASE 2 TOTAL	1,095,000 GSF

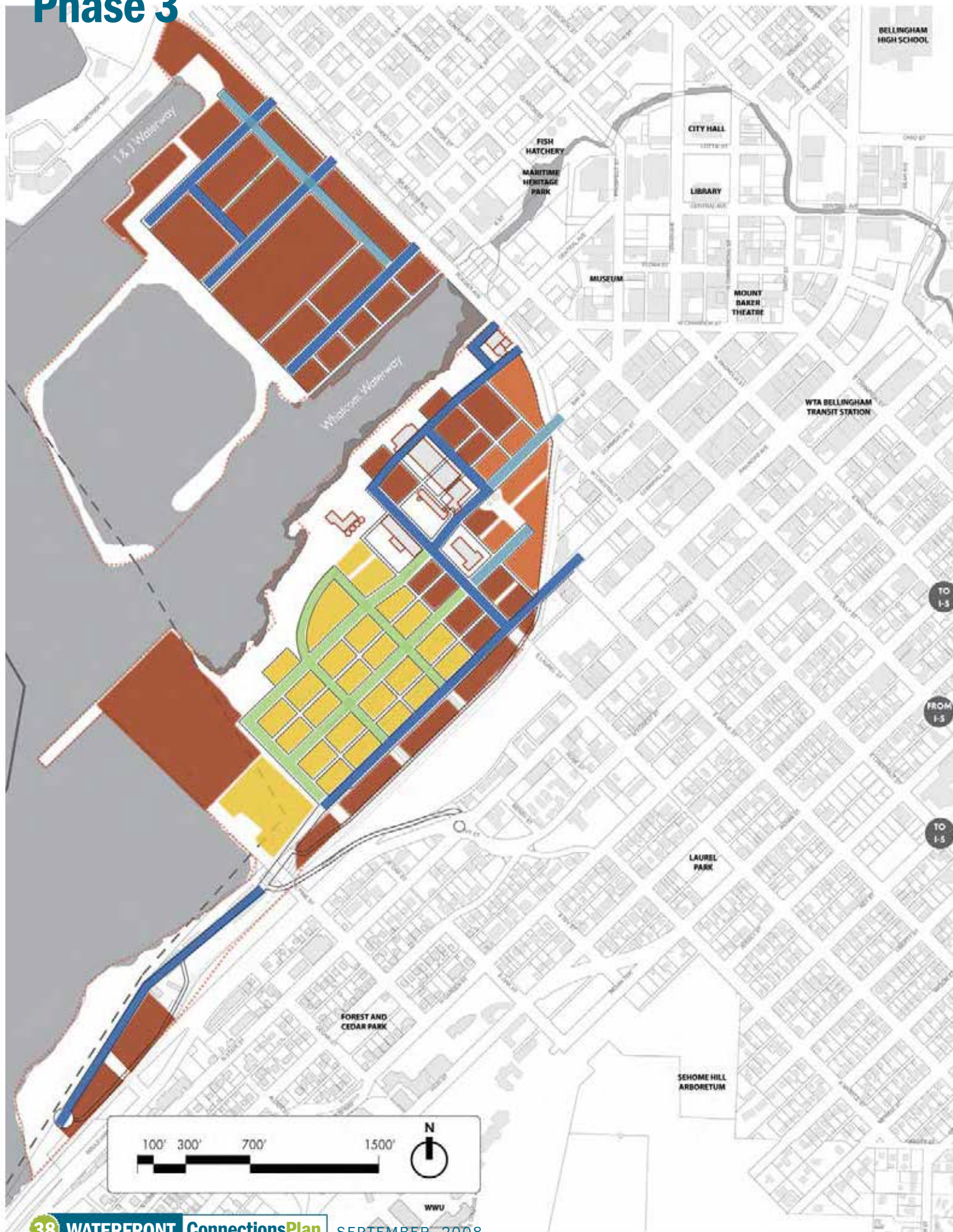
CUMULATIVE TOTAL **4,753,650 GSF**

STREET NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

 **PHASE 1**

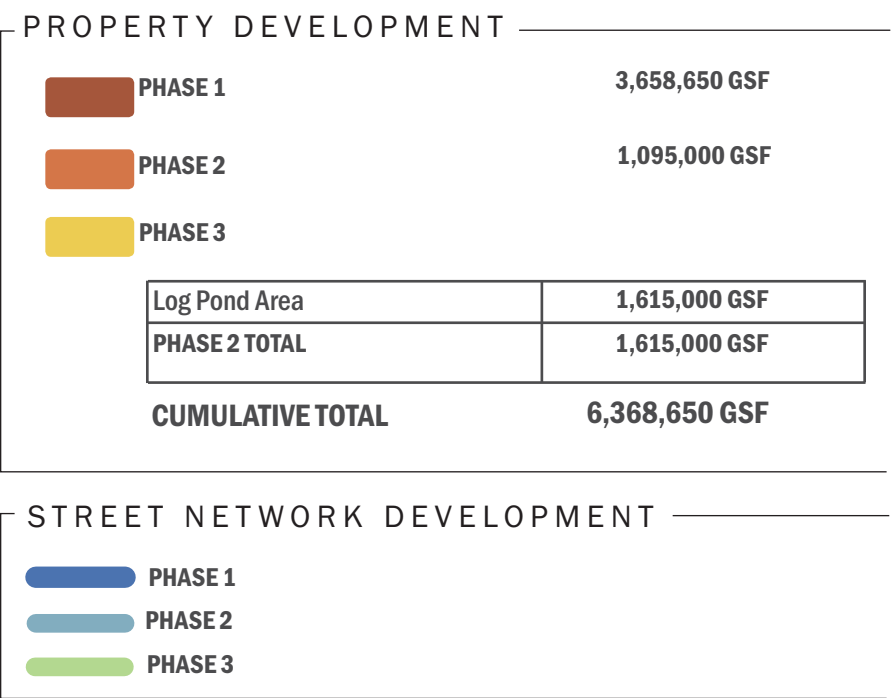
 **PHASE 2**

Phase 3



Phase 3

- Log Pond Area: This phase would provide the street network to support the development of the Urban Reserve Zone, a total of 1,615,000 gsf in additional future development. This will require one additional egress/ingress point. Additional infrastructure might be required to support the log pond area, depending on the trip rates and absorption in Phases 1 and 2.



Cost and Phasing

Waterfront Connections Proposal (WCP) Cost Estimates (*millions*)

PLANNING ELEMENT	2006 FRAME-WORK PLAN 6.0 MSF	2008 PORT PROPOSAL 6.0 MSF	2008 WCP PHASE 1 + PHASE 2 4.8 MSF	WCP PHASE 1 3.7 MSF	WCP PHASE 2 1.1 MSF	WCP PHASE 3 1.6 MSF
Roads and Bridges	\$119	\$99	\$64	\$49	\$15	TBD
Utilities	\$22	\$40	\$28	\$23	\$5	TBD
Parks and Trails	\$56	\$59	\$54	\$30	\$24	TBD
TOTAL	\$197	\$198¹	\$146	\$102	\$44	TBD²
RR relocation	included (up to \$5 only)	Not included	included (\$12)	included (\$12)	n/a	n/a

¹ Port Proposal V1.0, June 10, 2008, page 104

² Preliminary studies suggest WCP Phase 3 Total < \$17

Notes: Sales tax not shown / Square foot density represents total densities: existing 2008 density + new development / Costs include a multiplier of 1.835 x construction cost / Costs are in 2008 dollars / RR relocation cost of \$12 million included in Waterfront Connections Plan Phase 1 Roads and Bridges / Costs based on KPFF unit costs, Transpo cost estimates, DEA cost estimates

Phasing and Delivery

While the cost estimates above are critical for long-term planning, they do not adequately speak to the first steps to take on a project of this magnitude. Moreover, these are enormous density targets for a community of our size, and will not be met for decades. The City believes that Phase 1 will be best and most successfully implemented if it is further broken down into manageable, fiscally conservative steps. As such, the City proposes the following Step One:

STEP ONE			
Elements*	Cost	Delivers...	Benefits
C Street, Central, Cornwall, Wharf, Hilton	\$33 -36 Includes: Roads (\$13-16), Utilities (\$13), Parks (\$7) RR relocation: not included ²	2.9 MSF 2.1 MSF S of Waterway 0.8 MSF N of Waterway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable & financially prudent Allows 2.9 MSF of density Can be done in the near-term (within 5-7 years)

¹Element details:

Improvements to C Street
 Improvements to Wharf / State
 Connect Central to Cornwall by Laurel
 Build connection at Roeder
 Improvements to Hilton

²Cost of RR relocation + Cornwall Bridge = \$26 million

Next Steps

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION TIMELINE

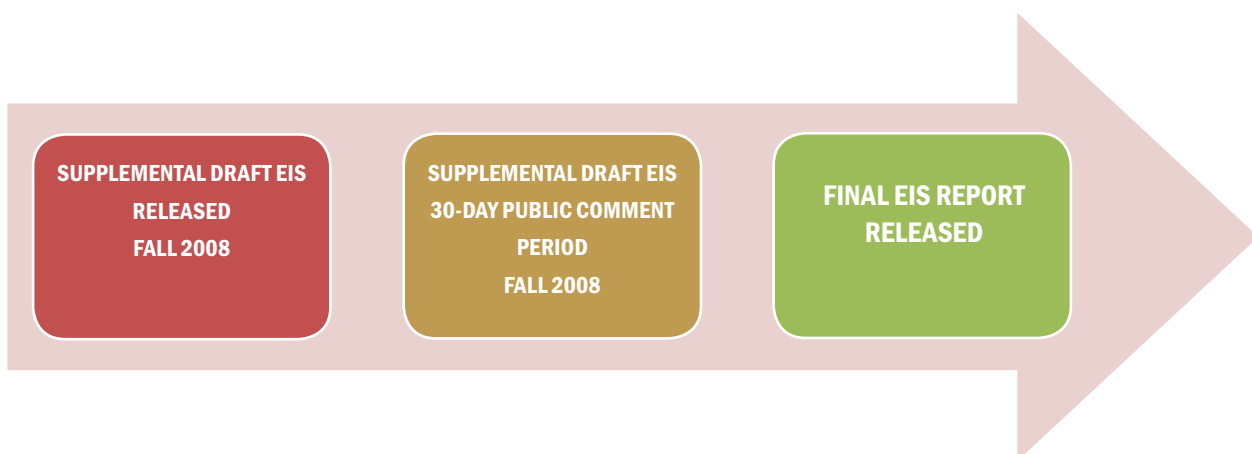


WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT: PROPOSED TIMELINE



EIS PROCESS

(PORT OF BELLINGHAM LEAD AGENCY)



Appendix A

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MEMORANDUM

To: Mike Stoner

From: Tim Stewart *TMS*



Re: Proposed SEIS Assumptions August 18, 2008

Date: August 25, 2008

The purpose of this memorandum is to respond to your request for confirmation of the proposed assumptions for the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) that you provided to Sati and I at our meeting with you and Sylvia on August 18th.

There are 14 Project Elements containing assumptions which will be used in the preparation of the SEIS. The elements, with the Port's proposed assumption to be used in the rotated grid and our comments and/or suggestions regarding modifications for the traditional grid are as follows:

1. **Building Square Feet in 2026:** Port: 6 Million Square Feet (MSF) total with 1.69 MSF North of the Waterway. No change or comment.
2. **2026 Mix of Uses.** Port: 3.3 MSF Jobs, 2.3 MSF Housing, .4 MSF Goods/Services. No change or comment.
3. **Building Square feet in 2016.** Port: 2.7 MSF Total, 1.3 MSF North of Waterway. City Comment: TRANSP0 has indicated that a total of 2.2 MSF (.6 north of the waterway and 1.6 south of the waterway) could be accommodated with the existing three connections to the site (Central, Cornwall and Wharf). We believe this constraint should establish the limits on the first phase of development. Since the SEIS will only consider two phases (2016 and 2026) we believe the 2016 Building Square Feet should be established by this limit and suggest 2.2 MSF be used for the study of both grids.
4. **2016 Mix of Uses.** Port: 1.5 MSF Jobs, 1.0 MSF Housing, .1 MSF Goods/Services. City Comment: consistent with #3 we suggest: 1.20 MSF Jobs, 1 MSF housing (North: .4 MSF Jobs, .2 Housing; South: .8 Jobs, .8 Housing).
5. **Floor to Area Ratio (FAR).** Port: 3-5 Downtown, 2-4 other areas. City Comment: Based upon an analysis of the land area to build-out at 6 MSF, these ratios are very high. Examples: the Marine Trades area contains 51.35 acres of land and a proposal for 1.69 MSF of development, which yields a Gross FAR of .75. The gross FAR for the entire site, after reduction for parks (33 acres), yields an FAR of .93. And the Net FAR for the entire site, after deductions for parks and an allowance for roads (at 33%) yields an FAR of only 1.39. If an FAR of 5 were applied to the gross land area of "Downtown" 4.9 MSF would result, yet the planned development is only for 1.27 MSF. Our planning must be internally consistent. We suggest that if FAR is used an assumption input for the SEIS, it

must be calibrated with more realistic ratios of land area and building area. FAR is typically used as a regulatory constraint and the City will expect to utilize FAR as part of the code package for the Waterfront District. Our preference would be to utilize total development size as measured in SF for all assumptions and not deal with FAR as an input into the SEIS.

6. **Maximum Building Height.** Port: 100-200 feet. City Comment: As with the FAR, this appears higher than needed to attain 6 MSF. Preliminary studies of the Traditional Grid indicate that all of the 6 MSF can be accommodated across the entire site within a height at or below 75'. We propose a height limit of 75' except within the Shoreline jurisdiction where we propose 50'. However, we anticipate that there will as many as six sites for tall buildings in excess of 120' included in the Master Plan. The impact of these taller structures will be studied under the Port's alternative. The actual delineation of these sites will occur during the next evolution of the Master Plan as view analysis is conducted during community review.
7. **Acres of Parks:** Port: 33 acres. No change or comments.
8. **Road Construction Phasing:** See attached maps. Phase I Improvements are shown in Dark Blue; Phase II improvements in Light Blue. Phase I includes the relocation of the Railroad and the reconstruction of the Cornwall Bridge and alternative locations for Central. Off-site improvements for Phase I include both improvements to C Street and Traffic Improvements to the Wharf/State intersection. Total development for Phase I will be 2.2 MSF with 600,000 SF north of the Waterway and 1.2 MSF south of the Waterway.
9. **Street Elevation and Construction Technique:** Port: 6-10' fill. City: 3-10 feet of fill for the traditional grid.
10. **OLD GP Building Status:** Port: Assume potential demolition of all buildings. City: Assume the potential retention of all historic properties.
11. **Stormwater Strategy:** Port: LID Techniques. City: LID and LEED ND.
12. **Acres Impervious:** Port: Per DEIS Alternative 2. City: 100% impervious for the traditional grid.
13. **View Corridors.** Port: Streets, parks and limited height view corridors. City Comment: For the study of the traditional grid, we suggest a base height of 75' with opportunities for 5-6 taller buildings, likely along the base of the bluff, with specific sites to be determined as an outcome of view analysis.
14. **Shoreline Height/Setbacks.** No change or comment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. Please give me a call at 360.778.8358 if you have any questions.

Cc: Mayor Pike
Sati Mookherjee
Joan Hoisington
Dick McKinley

PHASE 1

BELLINGHAM
HIGH SCHOOL



PHASE 2

BELLINGHAM
HIGH SCHOOL



WATERFRONT Connections Plan

MARINE TRADES
AREA

DOWNTOWN
WATERFRONT AREA

CITY HALL

1001 1ST ST

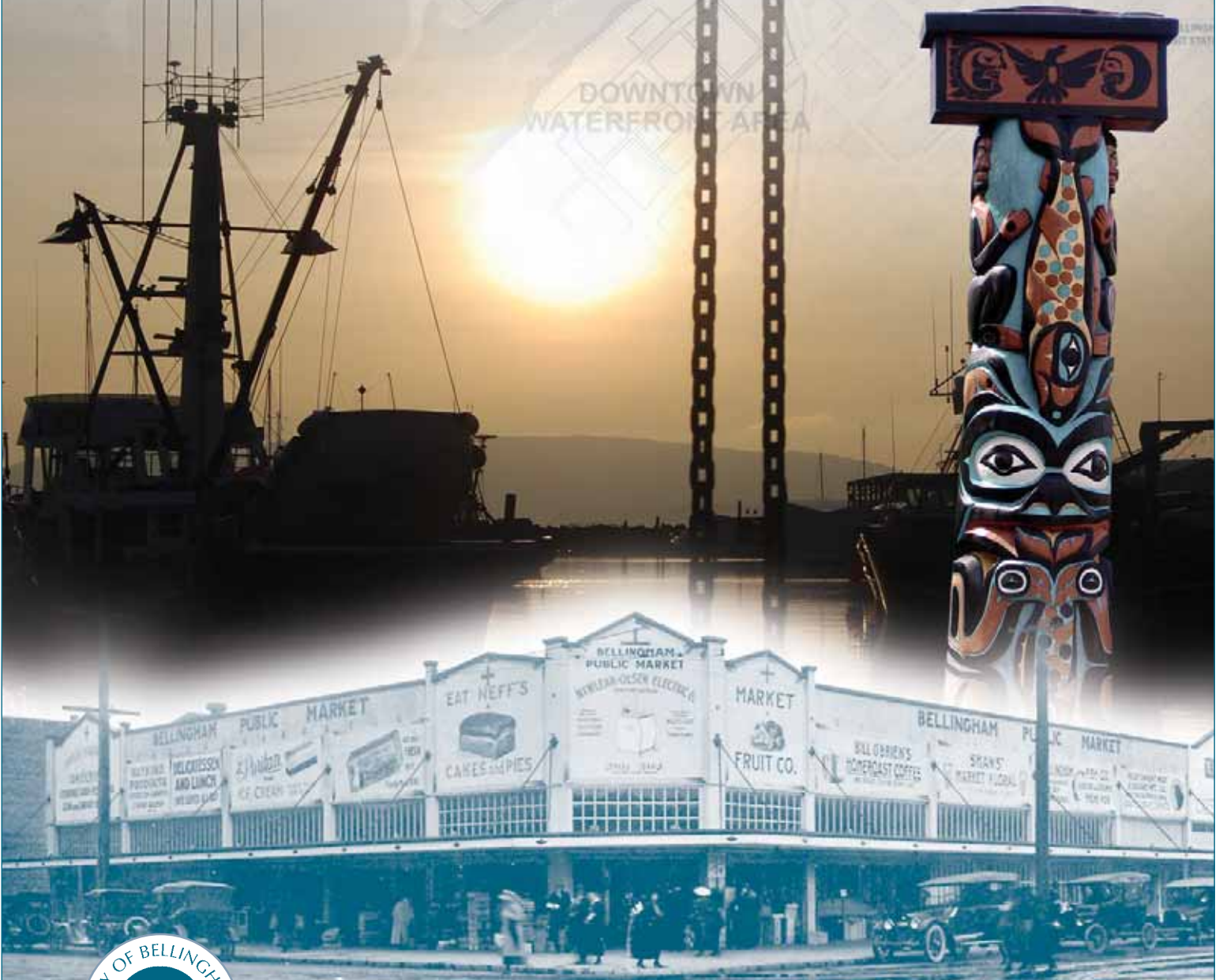
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MUSEUM

MOUNT
BAKER
THEATRE

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