Meydenbauer Bay

PARK AND LAND USE PLAN

Steering Committee Recommendation

November 2009

Meydenbauer Bay
PARK AND LAND USE PLAN

November 19, 2009

The Honorable Mayor Grant Degginger
Members of the Bellevue City Council
450 110th Avenue NE
Bellevue, WA 98004

RE: Steering Committee Recommendation – Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan

Dear Mayor Degginger and City Council members:

On behalf of the Meydenbauer Bay Steering Committee, consisting of co-chairs Doug Leigh and Iris Tocher, and members Stefanie Beighle, Hal Ferris, Betina Finley, Merle Keeney, Marcelle Lynde, Bob MacMillan, David Schooler, Tom Tanaka, Stu Vander Hoek, and Rich Wagner, we are pleased to transmit to the City Council the committee's recommendation for the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan (Plan). The Council is presented with an extraordinary opportunity to create a unique and memorable experience for future generations of Bellevue residents. We believe the Plan recommended by the committee fulfills the vision embodied in the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan and Parks & Open Space System Plan, and provides a strategy for the delivery of a spectacular public asset that capitalizes on the community's patient and steadfast pursuit of this vision. The committee thanks the Council for the clear and comprehensive guidance provided in our Steering Committee Charge and the project's Planning Principles, which enabled us to develop a Plan that is both visionary and respectful of its unique setting.

The steering committee's recommendation for the proposed Plan, and for specific aspects of the Plan, is presented below. In addition, the committee identifies several concerns for you to consider regarding existing conditions that were raised repeatedly in public comment. While it was not the committee's charge to address these concerns which exist with or without the proposed Plan, the concerns provide context for the Plan. Recognizing and addressing these concerns may help to narrow focus to the Plan itself. The committee discusses these concerns in the "Broader Issues" section that follows the steering committee recommendation.

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Recommendation

A. The steering committee recommends adoption of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan, as identified and evaluated by the Final EIS as the "preferred alternative", as summarized below, and as presented in the Draft Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan dated November, 2009.

The Plan envisions an extraordinary community-wide public asset. The new waterfront park will be a pedestrian place that encourages contemplation, socializing, and recreation; welcoming visitors who arrive by boats, car, bus and bicycle or on foot. People will be attracted year around by the variety of uses and thoughtfully designed places that respect the setting, express the community's environmental values, and support a range of both active and passive activities. Public access to the waterfront will be greatly increased for viewing, swimming, wading, boating, and walking on fixed and floating piers. The Plan provides a variety of opportunities upland of the shoreline as well, including picnicking, informal play, walking, and viewing. Two public gathering spaces are included to ensure that the park enjoys year-round use. The park moves from its most natural at the west end, maintaining and improving the ecology of the ravine in the existing Meydenbauer Beach Park, and culminates in an urban connection in the entry plaza at 100th Ave SE and Main Street.

The Plan improves the ecology of the site. Daylighting a native creek and enhancing the native vegetation will facilitate improved habitat and water quality. Removing and relocating the recreation pier will maximize tranquil enjoyment and interpretive opportunities in the ravine, the most natural zone of the park. Much of the existing shoreline, 800 lineal feet of the park's 1250 foot shoreline, will be softened and restored. Along with shoreline restoration, natural and engineered storm water treatment facilities, and significant reduction in impervious surface will improve water quality. Reduction of over-water coverage by nearly 35%, and use of current standards and best management practices for new over water piers and floats, will improve fish habitat.

The Plan concentrates active recreation such as swimming, play areas, picnicking, and the activity building in the central portion of the new park. The activity building will provide year-round opportunities for recreation and viewing regardless of weather. The marina is adjacent to the central recreation area, but is across 99th Ave NE. Short term parking for marina users and accessible parking stalls are located at the marina. The promenade, which parallels the shoreline, provides a pedestrian connection at the foot of the slope that avoids conflicts with cars.

Through reconfiguration of the piers, the Plan balances the desire to continue long term moorage with the goals of providing public access and restoring the shoreline, as well as with the funding requirement to provide at least 14 slips of transient moorage. The marina maintains opportunities for long term moorage on an expanded Pier 1 and removes Piers 2 and 3. The boating community is broadened with the addition of the transient moorage slips and canoe and kayak rental, launch, and tie up. Additionally, flexible pro-

A *Figure 2.5-1: Example of Park Activities*

B *Figure 2.5-2: Example of Park Activities*

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gramming proposed for the historic Whaling Building on Pier 1 will include maritime, historic, and cultural activities that augment boating activities. Over-water structures connect the marina with the adjacent uses on both sides. On the west, the curved pedestrian pier separates the swim beach from boats and on its east side, accommodates canoe and kayak tie ups. A floating boardwalk connects Pier 1 near the Whaling Building to a pedestrian pier at the foot of the entry plaza where Pier 3 is currently located. The south side of the floating boardwalk provides moorage for transient boaters, and the east side of the pedestrian pier is kept free of boaters in consideration of the Meydenbauer Bay Yacht Club's youth sailing program which operates from their westernmost pier. The area between the promenade and the floating boardwalk will provide an excellent opportunity for contiguous shoreline restoration and shallow water habitat.

At the new park's east end, the Plan calls for an entry plaza that connects the park and Meydenbauer Bay to Wildwood Park, Old Bellevue, Downtown Park, and adjacent neighborhoods. The Plan calls for closing 100th Ave SE/SE Bellevue Place to vehicle traffic and using the steep grade of the right-of-way to develop a series of plazas, walkways, grand stairways, and public spaces with water features and public art. The street level plaza at 100th Ave and Main St provides pedestrians and visitors with wide open views of the Bay, the boats, Pickle and Groat Points, Lake Washington, and Seattle. Below the plaza is space for structured parking. Midway down the slope a gathering space which will invite viewing and visiting during inclement weather. An elevator from the garage will facilitate ADA access to the gathering space, and an elevated pier will stretch from the gathering space to the shoreline, ultimately ending with access to the pedestrian pier and floating boardwalk.

The Plan suggests modest changes to land use in the adjacent upland areas, providing the opportunity for corridors that visually open up the waterfront from Downtown Park and facilitate pedestrian movement to the waterfront, Old Bellevue, and Wildwood Park. The land use concepts pertain to two geographic subareas within the study area, lying upland of the waterfront area. The two subareas are identified as "Upper Block" and "South of Main".

In the Upper Block, redevelopment of aging property incentivized by increasing allowable density is intended to provide improved streetscapes and pedestrian amenities, and recognize existing densities that commonly exceed current zoning allowances. In the area South of Main, coordinated redevelopment of several parcels is intended to result in public spaces and pedestrian connections through the block, helping connect the new waterfront park with Old Bellevue and also with Wildwood Park. It also envisions shared underground parking accessed both from Main Street and 101st Avenue SE.

A *Figure 2.5-3: Example of Restored Shoreline (EDAW AECOM)*

B *Figure 2.5-4: Improved Streetscape along Main Street/Lake Washington Boulevard Connects to New Entry Plaza.*

B. The committee recommends the closure of 100th Avenue SE/SE Bellevue Place to vehicles, to provide a gateway to the new park and connections to Old Bellevue, Downtown Park, Wildwood Park, and adjacent neighborhoods. Recognizing that the EIS transportation analysis and conclusions were based in part on the assumption that it would be completed within the analysis time horizon (year 2020), and that it could have positive effects in terms of relieving traffic congestion on Main Street, the committee also recommends that the NE 2nd Street improvement project (CIP Plan No. PW-R-150) be completed prior to the closure.

The Plan recommends 100th Avenue SE/SE Bellevue Place be closed to vehicle traffic and the right-of-way incorporated into the primary pedestrian access which begins at the entry plaza, and through a series of terraces, walkways, stairways, and public spaces with water features and public art connects the waterfront and the new park to Main Street and Downtown Park. This aspect of the plan has been very controversial among area residents. The committee evaluated options that would keep the road open for general vehicle use, but concluded that the closure greatly benefits the park user's experience and the park's connectivity, and advances the pedestrian priority promoted by Planning Principle No. 5:

"The park and its connections should be places that can be enjoyed by pedestrians without fear of conflicts with automobiles. Where vehicle drives or parking areas are necessary, they should be designed and located to promote a "pedestrian first" message."

Before reaching consensus on this aspect of the plan, the committee insisted on and received detailed transportation analysis. A preliminary analysis of the effects of road closure was provided to the committee by the project consultants in October 2008. That analysis indicated that the road closure would not lead to any unmitigatable adverse impacts. More detailed quantitative analysis was provided in the Environmental Impact Statement which confirmed that no significant adverse impacts would result from road closure. Even so, the committee feels that addressing overall traffic management in the area is important. Specifically, the committee believes that completion of the NE 2nd Street improvement project is vital to accommodate the closure of 100th Ave SE/SE Bellevue Place, as that project will help relieve congestion on Main Street. The committee made sure that the Plan includes options for all properties in the immediate vicinity, particularly the Ten Thousand Meydenbauer Condominium, to have continued adequate access for residents, guests, and services (including emergency services).

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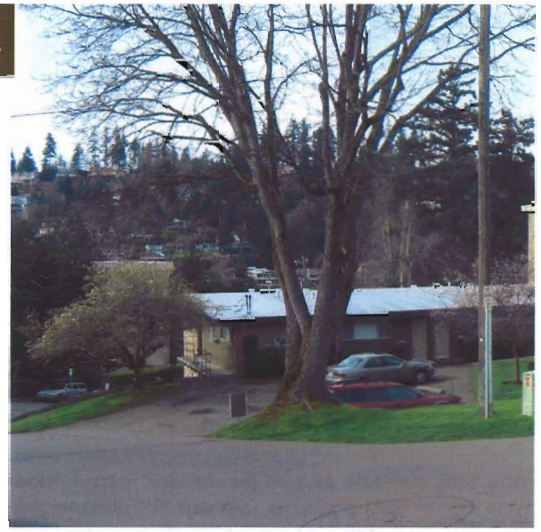

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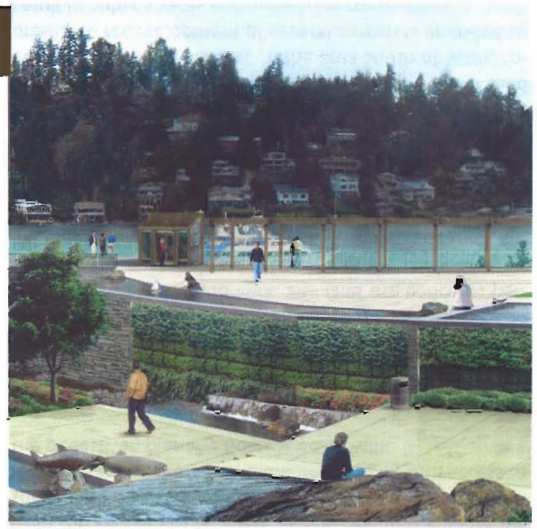

A *Figure 2.5-5: View of 100th Avenue SE*

B *Figure 2.5-6: Simulation of Improved Pedestrian Access to Waterfront along 100th Avenue Corridor*

A *Figure 2.5-7: Reconfigured Marina - Expanded Pier 1*

C. The committee recommends reconfiguration of the marina, removing Piers 2 and 3, and expanding Pier 1 (alternatively Pier 2 could be shortened to remove its connection to the shoreline and connected to Pier 1 as a finger pier).

The committee recognizes that this will reduce long term moorage from 87 slips to a range of 38 to 48 slips, but it will allow a balance of several interests, including:

- Provide at least 14 transient moorage slips required by a funding source obligation (in addition to the 38 to 48 leasable slips);
- Increase the spectrum of Bellevue boaters served by the park, by providing opportunities for transient moorage and people powered vessels such as canoes and kayaks;
- Allow for removal of the hardened shoreline and restoration to improve fish habitat and water quality;
- Improve overwater experiences for non-boaters; and
- New overwater structures to be designed and constructed with be more compatible with the bay and fish populations.

Several concerns were raised by the public with respect to transient moorage. While there was some objection to the provision of any transient moorage, most people understood that provision of at least 14 moorage slips is a requirement of a funding source used to purchase the marina. Also, some public comments suggested locating the transient moorage northwest of Pier 1. However, the transient moorage requirement must be met on the properties which the funds helped purchase, i.e., the Yacht Basin and/or Meydenbauer Marina, now collectively known as the Bellevue Marina at Meydenbauer Bay. Therefore, suggestions to locate the transient moorage northwest of Pier 1 would not meet this requirement. The floating boardwalk provides a logical location for transient moorage, with convenient access to both park facilities and downtown amenities, while providing separation of transient moorage from long-term moorage.

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A *Figure 2.5-8: Example of Public Pedestrian Pier (EDAW AECOM)*

D. The committee recommends multiple and varied opportunities for the public to access the shoreline and provide connectivity within the project area.

Several means of providing public access to and through the park, and to and over the water were evaluated by the EIS and the steering committee. In the Upper Block, redevelopment of aging property incentivized by increasing allowed density is intended to provide improved streetscapes and pedestrian amenities. This can help improve not only the immediate pedestrian environment, but also strengthen the connection from adjacent neighborhoods to the waterfront. A water feature extending from Downtown Park to the waterfront will provide a powerful visual connection and invitation to explore both parks. In the area South of Main, coordinated redevelopment of several parcels is intended to result in public spaces and pedestrian connections through the block, helping connect the new waterfront park with Wildwood Park.

In the new park itself, the committee's recommendation provides a range of opportunities for pedestrian movement. Key public access elements include:

- An elevated viewing platform, extending from the entry plaza at Main St and 100th Ave to the shoreline edge, provides visitors with spectacular views of the bay. It passes over both the Vue Condominium driveway entrance and a new shoreline promenade, at an elevation that ensures proper clearance for emergency service vehicles below. Visitors could use an elevator to descend from the platform to the shoreline. This provides an accessible route that responds to the site's steep topography.
- A public pedestrian pier located at the base of the elevated viewing platform connects with a meandering floating boardwalk that runs roughly parallel to the shoreline, connecting at its western terminus to Pier 1. The floating boardwalk serves several purposes: It provides required moorage for transient boaters, offers the non-boating public an opportunity to get out over the water, expands the "real estate" of this narrow part of the park, and moves some of the pedestrian and boating activity farther from adjacent condominium residents.
- A curved pedestrian pier located west of the marina arcs out toward the lake and provides added opportunity for pedestrians to walkout over the water and enjoy striking views of the bay and the mountains beyond, the Bellevue skyline, and the new park itself. This pier also provides tie-up space for canoes and kayaks, and physically separates the swim beach from boating areas.
- A hand launch path is provided for canoes and kayaks, located between the curved pedestrian pier and Pier 1.
- A shoreline promenade provides a continuous walkway along most of the shoreline. It will be designed to accommodate emergency service vehicles for access to and through the park, and for providing emergency services to adjacent residences.

E. The committee recommends that the elevated walkway beginning mid-slope below the entry plaza and terminating in an elevated viewing platform be designed to maximize and enhance views of the water and distant vistas; be of an appropriate scale that is compatible with its surroundings; extend to the shoreline edge and connect to the floating boardwalk; and be as light and transparent as possible.

The committee feels this platform is an important park feature, and one which will contribute to a remarkable and memorable shoreline experience capitalizing on the spectacular view opportunities offered by the bay. The committee recognizes that members of the public have concerns regarding the visual mass of the elevated viewing platform. The success of this feature will depend in part on its final design which will be determined at the project level. It is important that this feature be of a very high quality of design, consistent with Planning Principle 7, Superior Design, which states:

"The park should be reinforced, communicated, and celebrated through high quality urban design, landscape architecture, building design, and streetscape treatment, not only within the park itself but also throughout nearby public spaces and park connections. The plan should reflect a high standard of excellence."

Design elements to consider for this element might include:

- A "step-down" prior to reaching the shoreline edge (while still providing necessary clearance for emergency vehicles and driveway access to the Vue Condominiums);
- A staircase in place of an elevator;
- Relocating the elevator structure northward, further from the shoreline edge.

F. The committee recommends that the expanded Pier 1 maintain as many long-term moorage slips as possible, after providing for pedestrian access to the water, shoreline restoration, and at least 14 transient moorage slips.

The committee recognizes that the floating boardwalk between the pedestrian pier and Pier 1 will be designed and located as necessary to comply with regulations in effect at the time of its construction, including the City's updated Shoreline Master Program. Should those regulations require locating that boardwalk farther away from the shoreline, the design of Pier 1 and its moorage capacity could be affected. Therefore, the committee recommends that, if adjustments to the boardwalk are necessary, they should occur in a manner that maintains as many long term moorage slips as possible, and still provides pedestrian access to and over the water, allows shoreline restoration, and at least 14 transient boat slips as required by funding sources.

A *Figure 2.5-9: Elevated Viewing Platform Provides Unobstructed Views of the Bay.*

B *Figure 2.5-10: Bellevue Marina Pier 1*

G. The Committee recommends that Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code amendments be drafted to implement the modest land use changes included in the Plan and described below.

The purpose of the land use study was to explore market-based land use incentives and zoning standards that would support redevelopment and encourage through-block public corridors for views of, or pedestrian access toward, the water. The committee held six meetings focusing on land use in the upland area to understand how much incentive would be necessary to encourage redevelopment and public corridors and spaces, and to evaluate what level of incentive would be acceptable.

Planning Principle 3, Complementary Land Use, provides that:

"Urban design and land uses in the upland area adjacent to the park should be pedestrian-oriented and serve the broader community to make the transition from the upland to the shoreline seamless, enjoyable, inviting and compelling. They should draw the pedestrian toward the water, convey a sense of excitement, and provide an interactive experience between the waterfront and upland area"

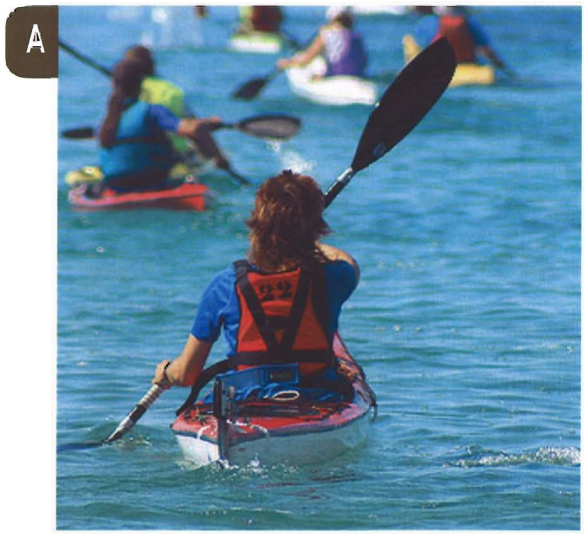
Ultimately, in the Upper Block the Committee reached two critical conclusions. First, due to topography and the location of nearby buildings, opportunities for ground-level views of the bay from NE 1st Street were limited at best. Second, the development intensity necessary to persuade property owners to redevelop properties and create a significant view and pedestrian corridor was so great in the context of the current market that it would result in buildings having much greater bulk and height than those on surrounding properties. The Steering Committee determined that such buildings would be unacceptable in this location and would provide too little public benefit.

Additionally, aging apartment structures in the Upper Block exceed current density limits, reducing the potential for incentives to encourage redevelopment. Recognizing this as well as the committee's resolve to maintain existing height limitations, the recommended plan incorporates incentives not for the purpose of creating through block corridors, but to help improve the edge treatment along public walkways through implementing the following concepts:

- Incentivize redevelopment of existing structures to provide public benefits.
- Incentives should maintain existing height limits and existing allowable uses.
- Redevelopment should achieve improved architecture and pedestrian amenities (consistent sidewalk system, landscaping, surface treatments, benches, signage, public art).
- Incentives to consider include increased density (to approximately 60 dwelling units per acre – control through FAR), modest relaxation of coverage and setback development standards to accommodate the increased density, and reduced parking requirements.

There are three parcels in the subarea South of Main that will likely redevelop in the foreseeable future. The Chevron Station and Meydenbauer Apartments are privately owned, and the east Bayvue Village Apartments parcel is owned by the City of Bellevue. To encourage coordinated redevelopment among all three property owners, the recommended plan incorporates the following concepts:

- Facilitate coordinated redevelopment to provide public benefits.
- Incorporate 100th Avenue SE into the pedestrian connection from Main Street; close road to vehicles but ensure emergency and service vehicle access to adjacent properties.
- Change the character of Meydenbauer Way SE to be more "pedestrian friendly", by emphasizing pedestrians but still providing access for vehicle use, access, and parking.
- Redevelopment should promote shared underground parking with access from Main Street and 101st Avenue SE, provide pedestrian connection to Wildwood Park, and use water as unifying theme and to strengthen connections.
- Incentives to consider include increased density (to approximately 60 dwelling units per acre – control through FAR) on multi-family parcels, southerly expansion of retail uses east of 100th Avenue SE, modify development standards to accommodate the increased density, and parking controls (maximum limits).
- Incentives should maintain existing height limits on all parcels.



A *Figure 2.5-11: Rental of People Powered Vessels (PPVs)*

H. The committee recommends that commercial uses west of 100th Ave SE and within the park be limited to vendors, leased moorage, and rental of people powered vessels (PPVs) such as canoes and kayaks. The committee also recommends the following commercial uses for the Upper Block and the South of Main subareas:

- In both upland areas, continue to allow commercial uses where allowed by existing zoning (i.e., in the DNTN and O districts)
- In the South of Main area, allow limited retail expansion south of the Chevron site (east of 100th Ave SE).

The committee considered various alternatives which evaluated commercial uses within the proposed park boundaries west of 100th Ave SE, including vendor kiosks, café', leased moorage, and rental of people powered vessels (PPVs) such as canoes and kayaks. After considerable discussion, the committee concluded that west of 100th Ave SE, only limited commercial activities are appropriate within the park as similar opportunities are found in close proximity along Main Street. The recommended Plan includes up to six temporary vendors to provide food, non-alcoholic beverages, and/or items for use in the park, but cautions that vendors should use portable rather than fixed carts or kiosks, be located where impacts on neighboring residential properties are minimized, and be restricted to certain hours of operation. The recommended Plan reflects the committee's decision not to include a café. These recommendations are intended to minimize commercial activity within the park to help maintain the tranquility of surrounding residents while still providing water-oriented activities and basic conveniences for park users.

I. The committee recommends that sufficient on-site parking be provided to meet the demands of a typical day's use at the park.

Meeting the parking demand of a typical day's use will help avoid spillover parking in surrounding neighborhoods. The peak parking demand on a typical day is estimated to be 149 stalls, based on a review of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking Generation manual, the City of Bellevue Land Use Code, and estimates prepared by Perteet, Inc. The recommended plan provides parking for approximately 156 vehicles in a combination of surface parking areas and underground structures, exceeding the peak demand by a small amount. The existing parking lot in the west ravine that now serves the existing Meydenbauer Beach Park would be retained as part of the on-site supply. In addition, 10 short-term parking spaces are included in a vehicle pullout along Lake Washington Boulevard, and 8 short-term and accessible spaces are provided near Pier 1. An additional 8 surface stalls, not included in the on-site 156 stall total, would be located along the west side of 99th Ave NE (in the right-of-way) in close proximity to the swim beach and Pier 1.

The majority of the parking is provided by two underground structures. One is located west of 99th Ave NE, south of Lake Washington Boulevard, and would be integrated with the activity building proposed at that location. Access would be from 99th Ave NE. The other is located west of 100th Ave SE, south of Lake Washington Boulevard, and would be located below the entry plaza. Access to this structure could be provided by both Lake Washington Boulevard from above and Meydenbauer Way SE from below.

Placing much of the parking below grade helps reinforce the pedestrian character of the park, minimize view impacts, and maximize above-grade areas for park purposes. The plan includes construction of a primary pedestrian entry and waterfront connection consisting of plazas, walkways, and stairs that create below grade space that can be captured for parking development southwest of 100th Ave SE and Lake Washington Boulevard.

J. The Committee recommends that buildings and structures in the park be limited to park uses and be designed to take advantage of the project area steep slope to avoid interrupting views, provide accessibility, and maximize available open space for park use.

The committee considered and discussed a variety of buildings or structures for the park, including a 4,000 to 8,000 sf activity building; 3,000 sf environmental education center; 3,000 sf café; enclosed (or enclosable) space on the parcel at the west of 100th Ave SE/south of lake Washington Blvd; retained Whaling building for use as a historic/cultural maritime center; retained ice House for harbormaster residence and support, storage or marina office space; and restrooms in appropriate locations.

- The committee supports an activity building of up to 8,000 sf in size, but recommends that the building footprint be limited to 4,000 sf. The activity building provides opportunities for enjoying programmed and unprogrammed activities during all kinds of weather, has the flexibility to accommodate a variety of activities, and increases viewing opportunities.
- The recommended Plan retains the Whaling Building and Ice House, recognizing the heritage and importance of Meydenbauer Bay in Bellevue's history, and providing opportunities for maritime, cultural and historical activities, public art and interpretive programming. Support for this concept was evidenced by both public comment and non-profit organizations who might offer such activities.
- The Plan calls for removal of the existing restroom building at Meydenbauer Beach Park, and the provision of a new restroom building in convenient proximity to the relocated swim beach, given that the existing restroom would be separated from the park activity area and swim beach by the daylighted stream. Other restrooms would be provided in the activity building, and at the marina.
- The Plan also includes some enclosed or enclosable gathering space in the entry plaza at Main Street and 100th Avenue SE to allow enjoyment of the views during inclement weather.

The committee first favored an environmental education center, in response to Planning Principle No. 8 Environmental Stewardship, but eventually chose to incorporate environmental activities in a multi-purpose activity building and the park features themselves. Contributing to that decision was our conclusion that a single purpose environmental education center in the park would replicate the new Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center. Nor does the Plan include a café, because of the park's proximity to Main Street restaurants and cafes.

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A *Figure 2.5-12: Lewis Creek Community Center (Miller Hull)*

B *Figure 2.5-13: Whaling Boats Docked in Meydenbauer Bay, Bellevue, ca. 1925 (Image Courtesy Eastside Heritage Center, L 85.39.2)*

K. The Committee recommends that the culverted stream in the existing park's northwest ravine be daylighted from Lake Washington Boulevard to the shoreline.

The committee proposes that only the lower portion (from Lake Washington Boulevard to the shoreline) be daylighted. The EIS evaluated both an alternative that daylighted the entire stream from the park entry to the shoreline, and the alternative that evaluated a partial daylighting, and concluded that little added environmental benefit would be gained by daylighting the upper portion. The committee feels that the limited additional benefit would not justify displacing the existing parking lot in the ravine.

Daylighting the stream will require the removal and relocation of the existing swim beach, swim beach pier, restroom, and play area. These uses are accommodated in the committee's recommended plan, in a more centralized location near other active recreation uses. The removal/relocation of these features and the daylighting of the lower portion of the stream contribute to the park's transition from a more natural character at its northwest end to a more urban character at its southeast end, and present an opportunity to introduce a stormwater feature with potential environmental and/or educational benefits.

Broader Issues

The committee grappled with many challenging issues throughout the course of our work. Some of these issues are specific to the recommended plan or to alternatives that were discussed as part of the process, and were summarized earlier in this Recommendation.

However, several concerns were raised repeatedly throughout the planning process addressing existing issues that extend beyond the scope of the committee's work. While it was not the committee's charge to address these larger concerns, they do provide some context for the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan. These concerns exist with or without the proposed project. The committee offers some actions for the City to consider in response to the concerns listed below. Recognizing and addressing these existing issues may help ease concerns related to the narrower focus of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan.

A. Traffic. There was a great deal of concern expressed about traffic congestion in and near the Downtown, particularly along Main Street. Turning movements to and from Main Street, especially left-turn movements, are reported as often difficult due to vehicle volumes and queues. Limited sight distance at some intersections compounds the difficulty and increases the chance of accidents. Pedestrian crossings and bicycle travel must compete with vehicles. The committee was urged to address these existing issues and ensure that they will not worsen as a result of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan. Although the EIS concludes that the plan creates no significant unavoidable adverse traffic impacts, the committee recognizes the concerns raised by the public regarding existing traffic conditions and encourages the City to continue working toward solutions for existing and future area congestion.

B. Parking. Limited parking exists in and near Old Bellevue. This reinforces the importance of the new park providing enough parking to meet its typical demand. It also suggests that opportunities be explored for shared or centralized structured parking to help meet growing Downtown parking demand. An underground parking structure in Downtown Park was often suggested as a location for such a structure. Other public facilities in the area might offer similar opportunities.

C. Water quality. Many comments were received with respect to aquatic vegetation (e.g., milfoil) and sedimentation in Meydenbauer Bay.

1. **Aquatic Vegetation.** The City currently controls aquatic vegetation at the Bellevue Marina, and coordinates the timing and type of treatment to the extent possible with the adjacent Meydenbauer Bay Yacht Club. This is expected to continue when the new park is completed. However, it is possible that a more comprehensive approach involving most or all shoreline property owners on Meydenbauer Bay, including the City, would improve coordination and effectiveness of vegetation removal measures.

2. **Sedimentation.** Concern was heard about sedimentation in the bay, particularly near storm water outfalls and the mouth of Meydenbauer Creek. The EIS concluded that the proposal would not cause long-term sedimentation impacts, but that does not address concerns about the present conditions. The City could work with the shoreline property owners to evaluate this situation and help develop an appropriate course of action.

D. **Bay enforcement.** The committee heard several complaints about undesirable activity in the bay itself and its negative effects in terms of noise, rude or disrespectful behavior, and lack of compliance with the "No Wake" zone. There was a desire voiced for increased patrolling and enforcement of on-water and in-water activities in the bay, as well as requests to extend the No Wake zone out as far as possible toward the mouth of the bay.

A *Figure 2.5-14: Example of a Footbridge over Restored Wetlands (EDAW AECOM)*

Summary of Recommended Plan Concepts

The recommended Plan incorporates the following concepts that are important to the committee. Some of these Plan concepts originate in and respond directly to the planning principles, others were in response to public comment, and some emerged through committee discussion and review of data, studies, and information requested of city consultants and staff.

- The Plan serves the broad interests of the community at large, and recognizes that the park will be a community-wide asset.
- The Plan is guided by, and is consistent with, the Council-approved Planning Principles.
- The Plan is designed to coordinate with other plans, including the Parks and Open Space System Plan, the Lake-to-Lake Trail, Art Walk, downtown circulator, and Pedestrian & Bicycle Plan.
- The Plan emphasizes environmental stewardship, including stream, wetland and shoreline restoration and enhancement, incorporation of stormwater treatment in project design, minimizing impervious surfaces, and pursuing LEED or similar certification for new structures. Implementing the plan will result in visible ecological benefit.
- The Plan seeks to improve streetscapes throughout the study area, including connections to adjacent neighborhoods, Downtown Park, Wildwood Park, and Old Bellevue, to enhance character, continuity, and wayfinding.
- The Plan ensures appropriate vehicle, pedestrian, and emergency and service access to adjacent residential properties.
- The Plan incentivizes redevelopment of aging structures and coordinated redevelopment to provide public benefits, such as improved streetscapes, public spaces, pedestrian connections, and shared parking.
- The Park transitions from a more natural character (at its northwest end) to a more urban character (at its southeast end).
- The Plan improves the ecology of the site.
- The Plan increases public access to and over the water through careful redevelopment and restoration.
- The park provides a wide variety of user experiences, including on-water, in-water, and near-water recreation, viewing opportunities, and both indoor and outdoor activities.
- The Plan maintains flexibility of on-site programs and structures.
- The Plan fulfills requirements of funding sources used for the purchase of park parcels, including transient moorage quantity and location requirements, impervious surface limitations, and public access to the shoreline.
- The Plan maintains and expands boating opportunities to include a different mix of boat users – long term and transient moorage as well as people powered vessels (PPVs) such as canoes and kayaks.
- The Plan limits commercial uses to the east side of 100th Ave SE, except for temporary or seasonal vendors with moveable or portable carts, PPV rental, and leased moorage.
- The Plan takes advantage of steep topography to minimize the visual impact of structures and provide public views of the water.
- The Plan uses water features to create a strong elemental connection between Downtown Park and Meydenbauer Bay.
- The Plan provides sufficient parking on-site to meet typical park demand.

Conclusion

As the Council is aware, the steering committee developed this Plan over a period of two and one-half years. We held twenty-one public meetings and six public open houses and workshops, attended two public hearings related to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and received and considered a significant volume of oral and written comment from the public. Guided by our Steering Committee Charge and Planning Principles, the committee worked through many issues and ultimately identified a preferred alternative. The preferred alternative was evaluated in the Final EIS and serves as the basis for the Draft Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan. The result is a Plan that weds a unique and memorable waterfront park for all Bellevue residents with the surrounding neighborhoods through pedestrian improvements and modest land use changes, providing connectivity between Downtown Park, Wildwood Park, Meydenbauer Bay, Old Bellevue and downtown.

It has been a privilege to serve as co-chairs of this committee and to work with our dedicated and knowledgeable committee members. The combination of expertise and perspectives represented on the committee helped ensure a Plan that is responsive to our Charge and the Planning Principles. We look forward to seeing the Plan become reality in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Doug Leigh
Committee Co-Chair

Iris Tocher
Committee Co-Chair