

# Meeting Summary: Live Online Concept Design Presentation and Q&A May 16, 2024

The Elliott Bay Connections (EBC) project team hosted [a live online presentation and Q&A](#) on May 16, 2024, to share the concept design with the community and answer questions. There were 82 attendees, not including the panelists. Below are the questions received at this meeting, organized by theme.

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## Community Engagement

### **How many attended tonight? Is there an engagement goal?**

There were 82 meeting attendees at the live online presentation and Q&A on May 16, 2024. The goal of the event was to share high-level information about the concept design, including its features, amenities, layout and results from early public input, as well as to hear questions and concerns from community members, stakeholders, and potential park users to ensure the design meets community needs and preferences.

### **Do you have additional plans for outreach on this project?**

Yes, public outreach will continue throughout the life of the project. The EBC project team will share the final concept design later this year and provide regular updates about construction and access. For updates, please sign up for [the EBC mailing list](#) or visit [www.elliottbayconnections.org](http://www.elliottbayconnections.org).

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Greenway Trail

### **Will there be benches along the walking path?**

Yes, the concept design includes provisions for seating.

### **What will be used to separate the BNSF railroad tracks from the bicycle and pedestrian trail on the east side of Alaskan Way?**

In alignment with railway safety standards, the greenway trail will be separated from the BNSF railroad tracks by fencing. Wherever possible, landscaping will be added along the fencing to maintain a lush green environment and reduce noise.

### **In the past, there has been a Seattle Waterfront shuttle in the summer running along Alaskan Way. Are there any integration plans with this?**

Friends of Waterfront Park, Seattle Historic Waterfront Association and Alliance for Pioneer Square recently announced that daily service of the seasonal [free Waterfront Shuttle](#) 2024 will start on Friday of Memorial Day weekend (May 24) and end after Labor Day (September 2). This shuttle operates outside of the EBC project boundaries.

### **Will any historical markers be added along the greenway trail? If not, is there the potential for these to be added in the future?**

Opportunities for interpretive signage will be explored in collaboration with our public partners as part of the overall wayfinding and signage plan for the EBC project.

## **Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Park Improvements**

### **Is there a possibility of adding more entry and exit points to the parks?**

There are no plans to build additional park entrances or exits as part of the EBC project. The EBC project will add new wayfinding and signage to make it easier to find existing entrances and exits, transit connections and park amenities like restrooms and concessions.

### **What are the changes envisioned for welcoming children to the parks?**

The current EBC concept design includes kid-friendly nature exploration areas as well as public amenities like restrooms and concessions that will make the park more welcoming to children.

### **What dog-friendly features are planned as part of the park improvements?**

The City of Seattle's Shoreline Code does not permit the establishment of dog parks in Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks. Following feedback from the public, we are exploring ways to ensure the parks and greenway trail are dog friendly.

### **Will you be keeping the exercise equipment near the Rose Garden or adding similar features elsewhere?**

The EBC project will replace the existing exercise equipment with new equipment.

### **The soft surface alongside the pedestrian paths in the parks sounds great, but what is the maintenance profile for this?**

Ease of maintenance and durability will be key criteria for the final selection of materials throughout greenway trail and parks.

### **Are there any plans to change the design of the trash cans currently located in the parks? The current open design can sometimes lead to litter on the ground around them.**

New trash cans are part of the EBC project's planned improvements. Ease of use and maintainability will be key criteria for the final selection of all park amenities.

### **Are there plans to highlight the King County Wastewater facilities located in Myrtle Edwards Park and educate parkgoers about their usage?**

The EBC project team is working closely with King County and will develop an interpretive signage program in collaboration with public agency partners.

## **Beach and Shoreline Improvements**

### **During the renovation of North Beach are there any plans to add formal stairs or a ramp?**

A key goal of the Elliott Bay Connections project is to improve access to the water in its natural setting. The project concept design proposes to create a gentler, more gradual, connection between the park and beaches and bring accessible paths as close to the beach access points as possible.

### **Will there be a spot dedicated to putting in canoes, paddleboard and kayaks?**

To improve beach access and habitat, the EBC project will expand the two beach coves in Myrtle Edwards Park. These two beach coves will be more welcoming to canoes, paddleboards and kayaks.

### **Does the design team anticipate shoreline fill?**

The EBC project seeks to enhance, restore and expand shoreline habitat. The project proposes to remove areas of existing rock armor and install intertidal and backshore habitat including habitat gravel and beach sand. Existing riprap will be replaced and repaired to the minimum extent necessary to protect the proposed beaches. All in-water work will be reviewed and approved by applicable regulatory agencies.

### **Will the new design allow for the natural accumulation of logs (other than creosote poles and lumber) at the two beaches in Myrtle Edwards Park?**

It is reasonable to expect logs to continue to accumulate at the improved beaches in Myrtle Edwards Park.

## **Environment and Habitat**

### **How is the overall design addressing rising sea levels now and in the future?**

The design team has conducted a project specific coastal analysis including a sea level rise projection analysis. Some of the measures being explored include raising the grade in low-lying areas to prevent flooding during storms, adding native plants along the shoreline and improving shoreline paths and drainage to prevent erosion.

**What are the plans for storm surge? After it rains, some sections of the current pedestrian path develop puddles, which make the paths wet and slippery. Are there mitigation plans to avoid this in the future?**

The EBC concept design includes improvements to address existing ponding on pathways. These improvements may include repaving and regrading paths, improving drainage and introducing rain gardens to increase rainwater absorption in planted areas.

**How will the landscape design address shoreline habitat for birds and fish?**

The landscape design will enhance shoreline habitat for birds, fish and pollinators by incorporating varied native plantings including shrubs, trees and meadows. Additionally, improving the shoreline to create a more salmon-friendly habitat is one of the primary goals of the proposed improvements to the two beach coves in Myrtle Edwards Park. These improvements include more gradually sloped beaches, shoreline plantings and anchored driftwood. The project will be seeking Salmon Safe certification, which is granted by a third-party environmental program, [salmonsafe.org](https://salmonsafe.org).

**Are all the trees and plantings going to be native?**

New trees and plantings will include many native species to support aquatic, pollinator and other habitat needs and provide an authentic sense of place. Plantings will be selected to provide a range of benefits throughout all seasons.

Within shoreline zones in the park, 100% of plantings will be native, per the City of Seattle's shoreline code. To further support tree canopy along the greenway and in areas outside of the shoreline zone, the design may add a limited number of locally adapted shade trees.

**Some of the current trees in the parks are drought stressed. Will irrigation be included as part of the park improvements?**

Yes, the EBC project includes irrigation as a park improvement. Irrigation is just one way the EBC project will support the health of new and existing trees and plantings.

## Restrooms and Concession

### **Will another restroom be added as part of this project?**

A new public amenities building, with multiple new all-gender restrooms, will be located just north of the grain terminal in Centennial Park.

### **Who will operate the concessions? What will the hours of operation be?**

Plans for the concession opportunity and operations will be announced in the future.

### **Why build the new restroom and concession facility on the north end of the parks rather than in the gravel area on the southern portion which receives more visitors?**

The building's new location is further south than its existing location. The EBC design team selected this location based on several factors, including the availability of water, sewer and electrical utilities.

### **Is there a possibility of adding a second public restroom further south, along the greenway trail or on Alaskan Way?**

Adding a public restroom along the greenway trail is not feasible due to the lack of suitable space in this area.

Just south of the greenway trail along Alaskan Way near the Seattle Aquarium, the Office of the Waterfront & Civic Projects is adding a [new public restroom](#). There is also an existing public restroom just north of the future greenway trail in the Olympic Sculpture Park PACCAR Pavilion.

### **Will the fishing concessions by the fishing pier reopen?**

The existing concessions and restroom buildings in Centennial Park has been closed for several years and will not reopen. The EBC project is designing a new concessions and restroom building located just south of the current location, near the grain terminal. The new building will open with the rest of the project in Summer 2026, ahead of Seattle hosting the FIFA Men's World Cup.

### **How will the concession building be secured during off-hours?**

The concession building design and the operations and maintenance plan will take into account building security.

## Safety

### **What are the plans for ensuring the safety of all park users?**

The overarching goal of the EBC project in Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks is to foster connection, by improving park safety, access and sense of welcome. Specific improvements to address these goals include repairing and realigning pathways, lighting the bike trail, and adding new wayfinding, signs and markings.

### **How are the safety concerns expressed initially from citizen feedback being addressed?**

In the survey responses received in September, many people commented on bike and pedestrian conflicts. The concept design prioritizes measures to address these concerns, such as repairing and realigning pathways, lighting the bike trail, and adding new wayfinding, signs and markings.

### **What provisions will be included to ensure that rental scooters will be kept separate from pathways where people are walking?**

New signs and markings will be installed to clearly indicate which trails are designated for bicyclists and people on scooters and which paths are for pedestrians.

### **How will you improve safety in locations where pedestrians and bicyclists cross?**

The bike and pedestrian paths will be kept separate and widened throughout Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks. The addition of new signage, trail markings and lighting will improve safety, especially in areas where cyclists and pedestrians cross.

### **Could the bike trail have a softer turn by the grain terminal?**

The EBC design team is currently exploring options to soften the curve of the bicycle trail in this area.

### **The worst pedestrian and bicyclist conflicts are along the pocket beach in the Olympic Sculpture Park where space is tight. Can you better separate pedestrians and bicyclists by widening and separating these paths?**

The EBC project is dedicated to the restoration and improvement of Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks. The Seattle Art Museum (SAM) owns and manages the Olympic Sculpture Park.

## Public Art

**Will new public art be added along the greenway trail or in the parks as part of the Elliott Bay Connections project? If not, is there the potential for additional public art to be added in the future?**

The focus for public art in the EBC project is on restoring the existing public artworks in Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks. There are two existing public art installations in Myrtle Edwards Park and a totem pole in Centennial Park.

**What aesthetic changes will the Port of Seattle and Louis Dreyfus make to the Grain silos and Grain Terminal?**

The EBC project team is currently exploring the possibility of light projections on the grain terminal, in collaboration with the Port of Seattle and the Louis Dreyfus Company, which operates the terminal.

## Park Programming and Activation

**Can events or programs be hosted in these locations once construction is complete? Who will be activating these spaces?**

The City of Seattle and Port of Seattle will continue to own and manage these parks and will be responsible for activity permits, programming and partnerships as they are today.

**Is the new park landscaping designed to withstand large public gatherings and events?**

The City of Seattle and Port of Seattle will continue to own and manage these parks and will be responsible for activity permits, programming and partnerships, as they are today. The EBC project's park concept design reflects the extraordinary experience of green landscape meeting the Salish Sea by restoring and enhancing lawns, plantings, and tree canopy and adding native species that flourish in maritime conditions.

**The park and its facilities currently close at dusk, will the hours be extended after the proposed improvements are complete?**

The City of Seattle and Port of Seattle will continue to own and manage these parks and will determine the operating hours.



## Maintenance and Operations

### **How is park maintenance being funded? Is there an ongoing maintenance budget?**

The donors to the Elliott Bay Connections have pledged support for operations and maintenance for the first decade after completion. Establishing the operational sustainability of these parks in collaboration with public agency partners is an important part of the design process for the EBC project team.

### **What are the plans to maintain the improvements made as part of the Elliott Bay Connections project so they can be enjoyed for decades to come?**

As part of the design process, the EBC project team will explore the maintenance requirements of their design so the public sector can sustainably and responsibly manage the improvements for decades to come.

### **Will community members be invited to help plant or maintain some of the new spaces?**

As part of operations and maintenance planning, consideration will be given to potential opportunities for volunteer participation.

## Construction

### **Has a general contractor been selected at this time?**

A Seattle-based general contractor, Sellen Construction, has been selected for the project.

### **Have you selected a landscape installation company for the new landscaping and trees?**

The general contractor for the EBC project, Sellen Construction, has not yet selected subcontractors.

### **Will the park stay open during construction?**

Construction will be phased in order to prioritize public access and reopen the parks and paths ahead of Seattle hosting the FIFA Men's World Cup in 2026. The EBC team will provide regular updates about construction and access. To stay informed, sign up for [the EBC mailing list](#) or visit [www.elliottbayconnections.org](http://www.elliottbayconnections.org).

### **Will the bike and pedestrian paths through the parks be closed during construction? Will alternate routes be provided?**

Pedestrian and bicyclist access through the parks will be maintained during construction with temporary detours as needed.

### **How will you minimize construction impacts along the greenway trail? Will you maintain access to the residential and commercial garages along Alaskan Way?**

The EBC team is committed to maintaining access for neighborhood residents and businesses during construction and will provide regular updates throughout construction. To stay informed, sign up for [the EBC mailing list](#) or visit [www.elliottbayconnections.org](http://www.elliottbayconnections.org).

## Fishing Access

### **Is the restoration of the existing fishing pier at Pier 86 still part of the proposed park improvements?**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is currently designing the replacement of the fishing pier and seeking up to \$20M from the State of Washington to fund the replacement in coordination with the Port of Seattle. The EBC project team will continue to collaborate with them as the designs of both projects advance.

### **Where can I find more information about the refurbishment of the existing fishing pier?**

Please contact the [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) for more information about the future of the Fishing Pier at Centennial Park.

### **Is there a plan to allow for shoreline or deep-water fishing since the current pier is not accessible?**

Shoreline fishing is not permitted in Myrtle Edwards or Centennial Parks.