

Media contacts:

- Sage Wilson, Office of the Mayor, [sage.wilson@seattle.gov](mailto:sage.wilson@seattle.gov), 206-889-0277
- Katherine Fountain, Port of Seattle, [Fountain.K@portseattle.org](mailto:Fountain.K@portseattle.org), 206-787-3071
- James Sido, Director of Media Relations and Issues Management, Downtown Seattle Association, [JamesS@downtownseattle.org](mailto:JamesS@downtownseattle.org), 206-484-9921
- Emily Crawford, Elliott Bay Connections, Principal, Luminosity PR, [emily@luminositypr.com](mailto:emily@luminositypr.com), 206-880-3977

**City of Seattle and Port of Seattle Celebrate Elliott Bay Connections (EBC),  
Visionary Public-Private Partnership to Connect and Revitalize Parks on the Elliott Bay  
Waterfront**

**Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks re-open to public with new plantings and  
improvements funded entirely by private philanthropy**

*New greenway connecting Waterfront Park to Olympic Sculpture Park constructed by  
EBC opened to the public April 21*

*Ribbon cutting marks 50 acres of free parks and public space connected for three and half miles  
on Elliott Bay shoreline in heart of Seattle*

SEATTLE – June 05, 2026 – Yesterday, Mayor Katie B. Wilson joined Port of Seattle Commission Secretary Sam Cho, philanthropist Melinda French Gates, Chairman of the Suquamish Tribe Leonard Forsman and Chairman of the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe Donny Stevenson, Expedia Group CEO Ariane Gorin, Seattle City Council President Joy Hollingsworth, City Councilmember Bob Kettle, Friends of Waterfront Seattle President and CEO Joy Shigaki, and Downtown Seattle Association CEO & President Jon Scholes, in a ceremonial ribbon cutting in Myrtle Edwards Park to celebrate the completion of Elliott Bay Connections (EBC) and the reopening of Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks after extensive revitalization, restoration and new plantings.

EBC, a public-private partnership funded entirely by private philanthropy, undertook the revitalization work in Myrtle Edwards and Centennial parks and constructed a new greenway on Alaskan Way connecting Waterfront Park to Olympic Sculpture Park. The greenway previously opened to the public on April 21, 2026.

“The Elliott Bay waterfront has long been a favorite gathering place for Seattleites. Thanks to this unique public private partnership between the City, the Port, and generous philanthropic support, Seattle now has refreshed, more accessible parks for everyone to enjoy just in time for our long and beautiful summer days,” said Seattle Mayor Katie B. Wilson.

Announced in 2023, Elliott Bay Connections committed to completing work before the first FIFA World Cup match in 2026. EBC began with extensive community engagement and collaboration with the Port of Seattle and the City of Seattle, including Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) and Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). The public was invited to comment on designs at key design milestones. Construction of the new greenway began in February 2025

and was completed in 14 months. Planting and construction of park improvements in Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks began in March 2025 with the parks re-opening 15 months later June 4, 2026.

All work was undertaken at no cost to the taxpayers. Philanthropists Melinda French Gates and MacKenzie Scott, The Diller-Von Furstenberg Family Foundation, and Expedia Group are the donors to the EBC project.

The Port of Seattle owns Centennial Park. The City of Seattle owns Myrtle Edwards Park (SPR) and the greenway (SDOT). The Downtown Seattle Association (DSA) serves as the implementation partner for EBC.

“The completion of Elliott Bay Connections (EBC) shows that with strong vision and partnerships, Seattle can maintain connections to our working waterfront, while taking advantage of the beautiful green spaces in between. The Port is excited for visitors to experience the new unified greenway experience and all of the new amenities and shoreline access in EBC. We’re especially excited for the new haʔali amenities building (haʔali means “the good place”) within Centennial Park, including beloved local Scandinavian coffee shop Café Hagen which will open this summer.”

The new greenway constructed by EBC on the east side of Alaskan Way enables people to travel along a green path nearly a mile from the northern end of Waterfront Park at Pier 62 to the Olympic Sculpture Park. The greenway replaced obsolete trolley tracks and existing sidewalks with a multi-use trail designed for people of all ages and abilities walking, biking and rolling. Providing more than two and a half acres of new public space, the greenway includes more than 15,000 new shrubs and perennials, native and street-hardy trees as well as benches, lighting and signage.

“I’ve always believed that the most beautiful spaces in a city should belong to everyone,” said Melinda French Gates. “Walking along the waterfront, you can see what’s possible when communities and civic leaders come together to invest in shared spaces. I’m grateful to the many partners who helped bring this project to life—and excited to see it become a special part of Seattle.”

The public has long expressed a desire for more places to touch the water and more natural green space along the Elliott Bay waterfront. Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks together comprise 16 acres of waterfront public space with exceptional views of the Olympic Mountains, Mount Rainier and the Salish Sea. During EBC community engagement, participants’ requests for improvements in these parks included restrooms, food and beverage concession, and other updated amenities.

“Seattle’s waterfront is one of our city’s greatest public treasures, and these improvements to Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks create more opportunities for people to connect with nature, gather with community, and experience Elliott Bay in new ways,” said Joy Hollingsworth, City of Seattle Council President. “The public asked for more access to the water, more green

space, and amenities that make these parks welcoming and accessible for everyone — and the Elliott Bay Connections project delivers on that vision. From expanded beach coves and improved trails to the new children’s exploration area, restrooms, and café, these parks will serve residents and visitors alike for generations to come.”

With the re-opening of Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks, parkgoers will enjoy:

- Dramatic expansion of Myrtle Edwards Park beach coves
- A new children’s exploration area
- New amenities building with restrooms and Café Hagan, concessionaire
- Improved pedestrian paths with shoulder path for runners
- Improved bike trail with lighting, bike racks and repair stations
- Comprehensive new system of wayfinding and interpretive signage
- All new places to sit, including picnic tables and benches
- Accessibility features and accessible paths to areas throughout the parks, including beaches, rose garden, children’s exploration area, and more

“As a global travel company based in Seattle, we’re proud to support the city and waterfront we call home,” said Ariane Gorin, CEO of Expedia Group. “Our headquarters sits on Elliott Bay, so we see every day how special this waterfront is to our local community and visitors. As Seattle prepares to welcome the world for the World Cup, investments like this help ensure the waterfront remains vibrant, accessible, and enjoyable for everyone who comes to experience the city.”

Close to 75,000 new shrubs and plants, mostly native species, have been planted throughout the parks creating beautiful natural landscapes as they grow. New native trees are providing shade. Freshly planted meadows offer habitats for bees, and other pollinators and re-seeded lawn areas will provide places for parkgoers to relax and enjoy sunsets.

“The Elliott Bay Connections project is a key component of the generational transformation of our Waterfront. I want to thank the donors for their partnership and generous support. Crucially, the parks’ restoration is not just an upgrade but rather a comprehensive effort to include Native community input, especially artistic elements, and native plants alongside our beloved evergreens,” said Seattle City Councilmember Bob Kettle. “This world-class park project has made Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks vital green space, not just for the Waterfront and neighboring communities, but for the whole of the city.”

The EBC project worked in partnership with the Tribes to honor and foreground Indigenous culture.

“The Suquamish Tribe is excited to help celebrate the re-opening of Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks with the City and Port of Seattle and the Elliott Bay Connections project. We are pleased with the consultation and partnership that have been part of the EBC project from its inception,” said Leonard Forsman, Chairman of the Suquamish Tribe. “The Suquamish Culture Committee suggested the name ha?hali in Lushootseed for the new park building

designed by Alfred Waugh (Chipewyan). This name means ‘the good place.’ The transformation of the waterfront into a good place of reflection, recreation and learning is important for residents and visitors who access our ancestral waters, now known as Elliott Bay, where we still harvest salmon and other marine foods today.”

- First Nation architect Alfred Waugh (Chipewyan), principal of the British Columbia-based firm Formline Architecture + Urbanism designed the new amenities building in Centennial Park.
- haʔhali is the name for the new amenities building. This Lushootseed word translates as “The Good Place” and was selected by the Suquamish Tribe Language Committee.
- The Coast Salish lunar calendar includes 13 Moons, which signal changes in weather, animal migrations, and food. These moons and their stories are depicted on carved boulders throughout the parks, each surrounded by plantings which represent the season of the individual moon. Valerie Segrest (Muckleshoot) selected the plantings and initiated this 13 Moon story walk. The text was developed by Segrest in collaboration with the Muckleshoot Language Committee. The art illustrating each moon was designed by Anabel Baker (Samish).

“The Seattle waterfront shoreline hosted a string of villages ancestral to the Muckleshoot people prior to the treaties of Medicine Creek and Point Elliott. We are so pleased to see how the Elliott Bay Connections project honored our presence here with plantings, and the story of the 13 Moons which we know so well,” said Donny Stevenson, Chairman of the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe. “EBC, the Port of Seattle and the City of Seattle worked with us in true partnership on this important waterfront parks project.”

With today’s parks reopening, and the opening of Waterfront Park in 2025, Seattle now enjoys 50 acres of extraordinary parks and public spaces as public space accessible to all along three and half miles along the Elliott Bay waterfront in the heart of the city.

“Friends of Waterfront Park has long championed a waterfront that brings people and communities together — a place rooted in connection, access, joy, and belonging. Elliott Bay Connections helps strengthen that vision by creating more opportunities for people to gather, experience these revitalized public spaces, and enjoy the natural beauty of Seattle’s shoreline together, further cementing the waterfront as one of Seattle’s great public gathering places,” said Joy Shigaki, President and CEO of Friends of Waterfront Park (Friends).

“With the completion of the Elliott Bay Connections project, downtown Seattle now has a connected waterfront experience unlike anything we’ve had in our city’s history. These improvements will dramatically change how Seattleites use the downtown waterfront. The generous investments of private donors and the work of some terrific Seattle firms have transformed these spaces into areas to linger, recreate and enjoy, taking some of our amazing natural assets to another level with an impact that will be felt for generations to come,” said Downtown Seattle Association President & CEO Jon Scholes.

The newly connected Elliott Bay waterfront includes landmarks such as Waterfront Park, the

Seattle Aquarium, Pike Place Market, Olympic Sculpture Park and the Beach at Expedia Group.

- Waterfront Park is a 20-acre vibrant public park with lush gardens, open spaces, public artworks, and elevated views of Elliott Bay. Serving as Seattle's front porch and a welcoming gateway for residents, visitors, and families, the park has been rebuilt and transformed by the City of Seattle's Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects into a gracious space for gathering, recreation and play, cultural activities, and community programming.
- The Seattle Aquarium is a marine conservation organization working to regenerate the health of Earth's one ocean and is the region's premier resource for hands-on marine experiences and conservation education.
- Pike Place Market, located in the heart of downtown near the waterfront, is one of the oldest continuously operating public markets in the country.
- The new greenway from Waterfront Park to the Olympic Sculpture Park, totaling more than two and a half acres.
- The Olympic Sculpture Park brings large-scale art to Seattle's waterfront. Spanning meadow, forest, and shoreline, the park offers a free, open-air experience shaped by light, weather, and season, revealing fresh perspectives with each visit.
- Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks together offer 16 acres of native plantings, pollinator meadows and newly seeded lawns; newly accessible beach coves and paths.
- Situated just south of Smith Cove and adjacent to Centennial Park, The Beach at Expedia Group is a contemporary public landscape of more than two and a half acres, featuring native plantings, driftwood and seating. Expedia Group donated the waterfront land to the city of Seattle, with the intention to create public access to the beach, while also connecting to the city's downtown. Visitors can also take in an iconic view of Mount Rainier from the beach.

The Downtown Seattle Association (DSA) will continue to serve as the implementation partner for the EBC project following the re-opening of these parks and public spaces. DSA has a track record of partnership and stewardship of vital parks and public spaces in the heart of Seattle. Uplift Northwest will provide daily cleaning and custodial care. Consistent with commitments made at the announcement of EBC in 2023, private philanthropy is underwriting the initial costs of caring for the plantings, maintaining these public spaces and ensuring that the new landscapes are established. The DSA will collaborate closely with the City of Seattle and the Port of Seattle during this period of establishment to ensure that these parks are well cared for, well maintained and safe for all visitors.

For more information about the EBC project, plantings and improvements in the parks and photographs go to the EBC website: [www.elliottbayconnections.org](http://www.elliottbayconnections.org)

[Elliott Bay Connections Media Library](#)

Park websites:

- [Myrtle Edwards Park | Parks](#)
- [Centennial Park | Port of Seattle](#)

## **What people are saying:**

### **Zak Andersen, Chief of Staff and VP Communications, BNSF Railway**

“BNSF is proud to have been a partner to help deliver this wonderful project to the Seattle community. BNSF has a long history in Seattle, and we are honored to have been able to participate in its execution.”

### **Rebecca Bear, President and CEO, Seattle Parks Foundation**

“Seattle is known as the Emerald City because we have such beautiful parks with great views and stunning landscapes. The newly reopened Myrtle Edwards and Centennial parks elevate this experience and will be an asset to our city for decades to come. Seattle Parks Foundation is grateful to the donors, and the public agencies who worked to get this spectacular project done in record time.”

### **Maria Beck, Owner, Café Hagen**

“We are delighted and honored to support the newly restored and revitalized Centennial Park and work with incredible partners such as the Port of Seattle, Elliott Bay Connections and the City of Seattle. The Café Hagen’s ha?hali (“good place”) amenities space will serve as a welcoming spot and a hidden oasis for the park community and visitors to relax, connect, and socialize through our homemade pastry, snacks, and drinks selections while enjoying incredible views of the new park and the Elliott Bay.”

### **Lee Lambert, Executive Director, Cascade Bicycle Club**

“The upgraded path through Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks is smoother, safer, and genuinely enjoyable — a transformed experience that welcomes all types of riders to discover the breathtaking beauty of the Seattle waterfront by bike. Whether you’re a seasoned commuter or a family out for a Sunday ride, this path was designed with everyone in mind. And the connectivity it unlocks is remarkable: this is a vital link in a network that stretches from West Seattle all the way across the region — through the Ship Canal Trail, onto the Burke-Gilman, and out the Sammamish River Trail to the Eastside. We are grateful to the philanthropists, the City of Seattle, and the Port of Seattle for their commitment to making Seattle’s bike network safer, more comfortable, and more connected for everyone who rides their bike.”

### **Rachel Ligtenberg, Executive Director, Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority**

“We are thrilled to see Myrtle Edwards and Centennial Parks reopen—these are key connections for our Belltown neighbors and the waterfront and help link people to Pike Place Market. As the soul of Seattle, the Market has always been about connection, and this makes it easier for locals to experience that every day.”

### **Meg McCann, President & CEO, Seattle Aquarium**

“The reopening of these parks strengthens the connection to Seattle’s waterfront and celebrates the beauty of our natural marine environment. We look forward to welcoming the community to experience this firsthand at Pocket Beach and along the waterfront with our free public

programs like Beach Naturalist explorations.”

**Gordon Padelford, Executive Director, Seattle Street Alliance**

“We’re excited to see the revitalization of the Elliott Bay Trail, one of the most popular multi-use trails in Washington State! Trails and parks like this not only connect people walking, biking, scooting, and rolling to where they need to go, but enhance our quality of life, increase our health, and ground us in a sense of place. We encourage all Seattleites and visitors to go explore and experience the trail that now stretches from Interbay to Alki along the beautiful Elliott Bay.”

**Rep. Julia Reed (WA-36)**

“Nothing defines Seattle like its coastline and with Elliott Bay Connections completing, so many more people will have access to this beautiful area. I’m grateful to the public private partnership that made this transformation possible.”

**Scott Stulen, Director & CEO, Seattle Art Museum**

“We are proud to be part of this effort to make our downtown and waterfront areas more accessible, vibrant, and welcoming for our community and out-of-town visitors, while expanding opportunities to engage with art, nature, and the shoreline.”