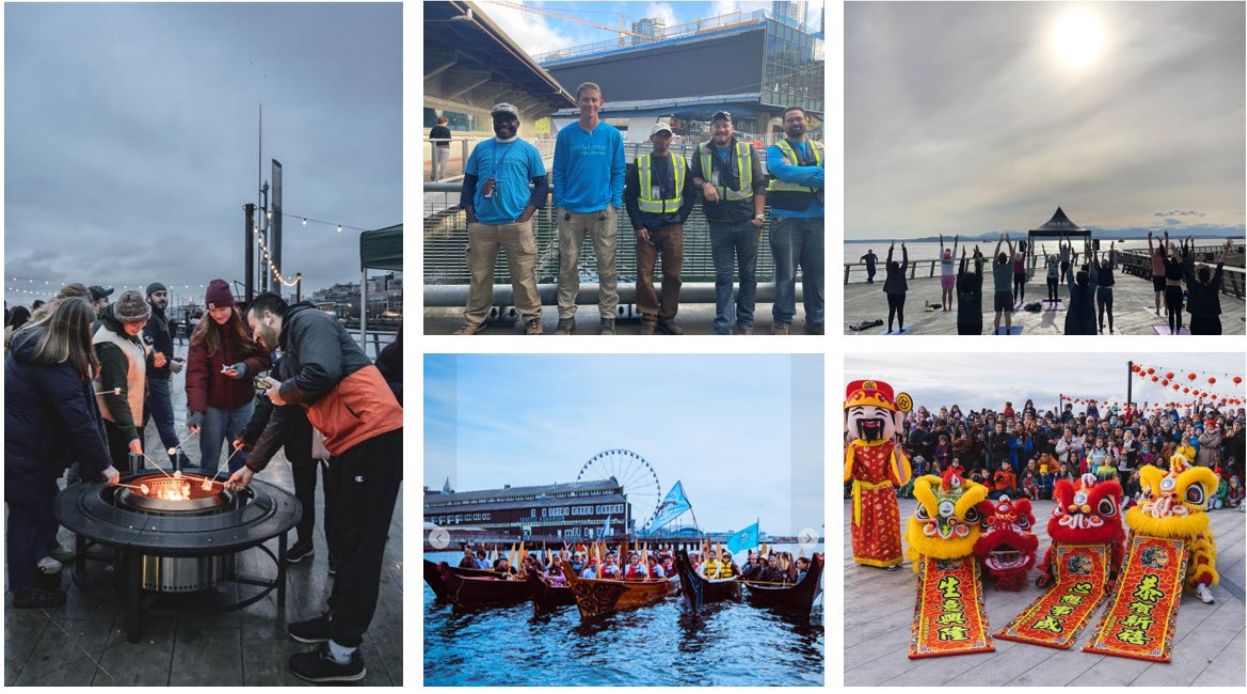


Central Waterfront Oversight Committee

Waterfront Park Operations Annual Report

September 2021 – September 2023



City of Seattle
Central Waterfront Oversight Committee

seattlecenter
— AT WATERFRONT PARK

June 2024

CENTRAL WATERFRONT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The Central Waterfront Oversight Committee (CWOC) was established in 2019 by [City Council Ordinance 125761](#) [PDF]. The committee's role is to advise and provide feedback to the City and Friends of Waterfront Seattle (Friends) on the ongoing operations and maintenance of Waterfront Park and Public Spaces, which began in 2020 with the Pier 62 Pilot O&M License Agreement followed by an Operations Agreement in 2023. The committee's oversight work includes maintenance, public safety, outreach, communications, partnerships, and programming and activation.

Committee Chair

Gerry Johnson, At-Large

Committee Members

Donny Stevenson, At-Large (Environmental)

Katie Garrow, At-Large (Labor)

Ashraf Hasham, At-Large

Eric R. Howard, At-Large

Michelle Rusk, LID Residential Tenant

Jim Rowe, LID Commercial Tenant

Craig Schafer, LID Hotel Property Owner

Emily Hooper-George, LID Condominium Owner

Edward M. Leigh, LID Residential Apartment Property Owner

Geri Poor, LID Office Property Owner

Shawn Jackson, LID property on or within one block of Pike/Pine Street owner

Brett Phillips, LID Commercial/Retail Property Owner

Mary Bacarella, Pike Place Market Public Development Authority (Permanent)

Robert W. Davidson, Seattle Aquarium Society (Permanent)

Jon Scholes, Downtown Seattle Association/Metropolitan Improvement District (Permanent)

Bob C. Donegan, Seattle Historic Waterfront Association (Permanent)

Lisa Dixon Howard, Alliance for Pioneer Square (Permanent)

Ex-Officio Members

Angie Brady, Interim Director, Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects

AP Diaz Superintendent, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Seattle Police Department

Greg Spotts, Director, Seattle Department of Transportation

Staff

Tiffani Melake, Waterfront Operations Manager, Seattle Center

Website

<https://waterfrontseattle.org/get-involved/central-waterfront-oversight-committee>

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It's an exciting time for Seattleites, as we continue to watch the daily changes and construction progress on our Waterfront. It truly is amazing to see the City's new urban park take shape. Over the last two years, Union Street Pedestrian Bridge and Habitat Beach opened to the public. The remainder of the park will be completed and opened to the public throughout 2024-2025, including two new major public spaces, Overlook Walk and Pier 58.

In 2020, the city entered a License Agreement with Friends of Waterfront Seattle to pilot the partnership model for park operations at a small scale, limited to Pier 62. Our committee provided several recommendations to the City in our 2021 Annual Report to ensure successful park operations, which the City has spent the last two years implementing.

The following are the recommendations we put forward, to which the city responded as outlined below:

- **Hire a dedicated waterfront team, with the right culture to be successful**
- **Allocate public safety resources to the waterfront**
- **Procure and implement a waterfront asset management system**

Hire a dedicated waterfront team, with the right culture to be successful

In January 2022, the City made the decision to change the lead city department for Waterfront Park operations from Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) to Seattle Center (CEN). This change allows SPR to focus on its core mission of operating a citywide parks system, while leaning into CEN's experience operating civic spaces like the new Waterfront Park which include intensive programming and events, maintenance, and public safety needs. July 2023 was identified as the targeted operations transition date and CEN began an onboarding process with SPR and Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects (OWCP).

In January 2023, City Council passed [Ordinance 126755](#), which delegated certain Waterfront Operations to CEN as the primary operating Department from SPR. The allocated Seattle Park District (MPD) funds for Waterfront Park operations were also transferred to CEN to deliver on the city's commitments to a high-quality park user experience and maintenance of the park.

CEN undertook a major hiring effort and hired 15 Public Safety personnel and 6 Operations and Maintenance personnel in the first 6 months of 2023. This team successfully began operations on July 1st, 2023, and as more portions of the waterfront are completed, park operations will continue to expand to ensure adequate resources to operate and maintain the park.

Allocate public safety resources to the waterfront

Following our recommendations, in Fall 2022, the Seattle Park District Board voted and approved an increase to the MPD funds starting January 2025, to include financial support for the Emergency Services Unit (ESU) city staff to provide public safety on the waterfront. In partnership and support of the public safety shift of responsibilities, Friends committed \$5.4M over six years to financially contribute to the staffing cost for the ESU.

Friends continues to provide outreach services to those in need or experiencing crises on the waterfront, and park ambassadors to provide customer service to park patrons.

Procure and implement a waterfront asset management system

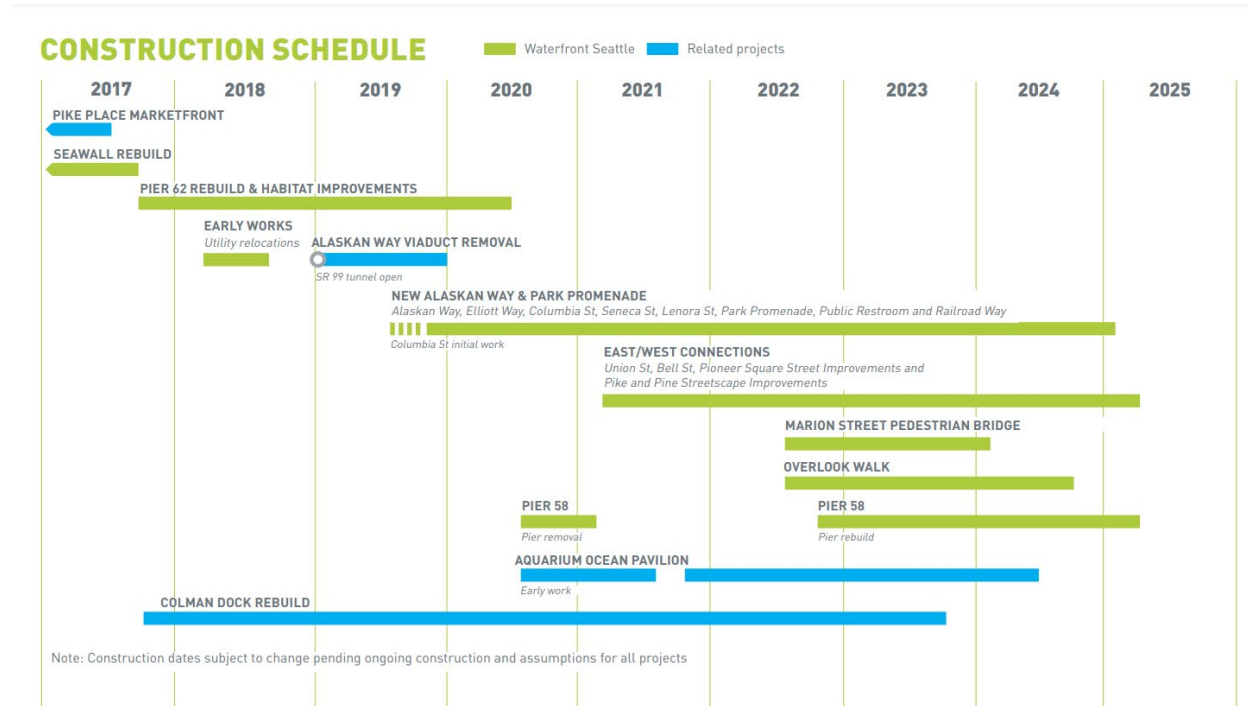
Oversight of the park's performance is a key responsibility of the CWOC and includes reporting to the Mayor/Council on an annual basis. Since waterfront park includes multiple jurisdictions, it was key to implement an asset management system tailored to Waterfront Park and under the management of the Waterfront Park Operations team at Seattle Center.

In 2023, CEN and OWCP developed a version of Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) for the waterfront which integrates with CEN's financial systems and vendors. The CWOC will receive annual or as needed information from this system.

In addition to the work described as an outcome of our last report, the CWOC has been instrumental in developing key decisions that have been finalized and implemented. This document summarizes key decisions and work that is imperative to successful park operations at the waterfront as well as outlines committee work for the next year.

PARK COMPLETION IS NEAR

With over a decade of outreach, design, and construction, [Waterfront Seattle](#) is nearing completion on Seattle’s central waterfront!



Key park public spaces that will be open by year end of 2024 are:

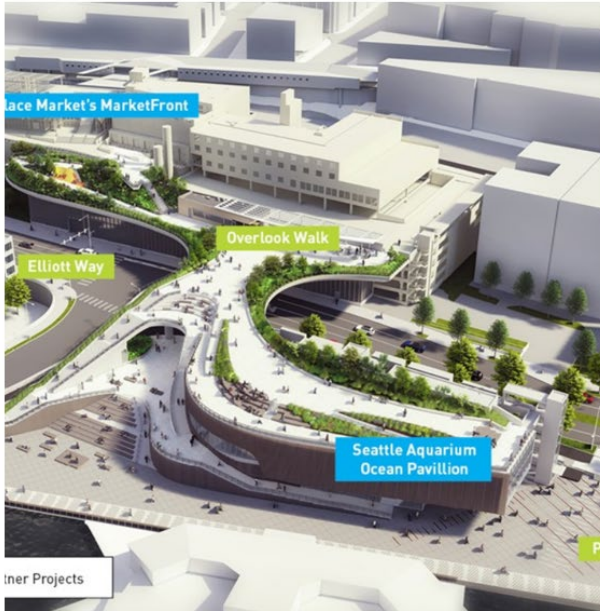
The Park Promenade is the core to the new waterfront, connecting Pier 62 and Overlook Walk on the north end to Railroad Way on the south end by the stadiums. Along the promenade will be park features such as gardens, benches, water fountains, bike racks, receptacles, swings, and wayfinding.



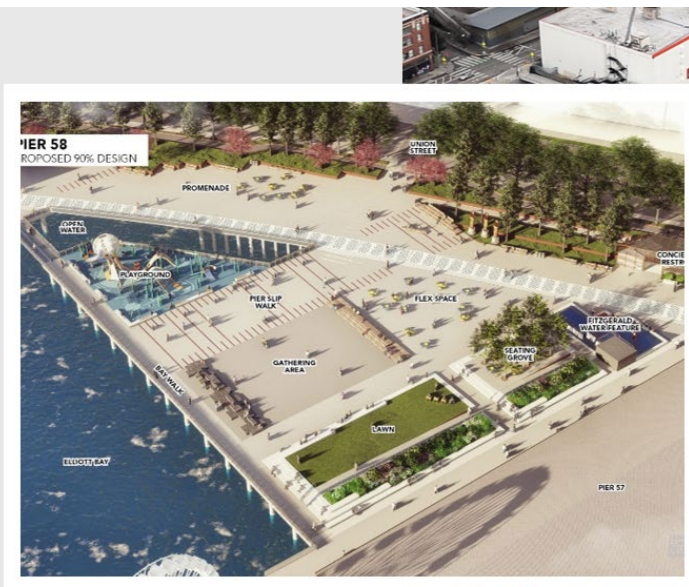
Railroad Way Plazas are a new pedestrian connection from the central waterfront to the stadiums. These spaces will allow flexible programming in partnership with the CEN, Friends, and the Stadium District. Construction of the project is led by WSDOT in coordination with OWCP and was opened to the public in 2024.



The Overlook Walk is an elevated public park that will connect the Pike Place Market to the front steps of the newly redeveloped waterfront, and creates a new scenic view of Elliott Bay, the Olympics and Mount Rainier. The park space will include a play area, a café, and landscaping. It is anticipated to open by year end 2024.



Pier 58, formerly known as Waterfront Park, has been redesigned with flexibility, families, and programming at the forefront. This urban public space will feature the rebuilt FitzGerald fountain, a new jellyfish playground, lawn space, and a large area for gathering, playing, events, and programs. Construction is anticipated to be completed in early 2025.



PLANNING FOR PARK OPERATIONS

Waterfront Park Rules

In 2022, the CWOC worked with SPR, OWCP, CEN, and Friends to establish rules to govern the waterfront. Throughout the License Agreement term issues were tracked to help develop park rules. The rules for the park are 90% already existing park/campus rules, with 10% new rules pertaining to water and promenade safety.

The CWOC hosted SPR's public meeting for comments on rulemaking as outlined in Ordinance 125768 and SMC 18.1. Rules were submitted to the City Clerk's office and became official in July 2023. The CWOC has the option to provide recommendations to the city in the future if any changes are warranted.

Interdepartmental Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between SPR and CEN

SPR and CEN executed an MOA between the two Departments which outlined the roles and responsibilities for each Departments through December 31st, 2028. This agreement delegates the authority to CEN to operate the park using MPD funding and enforce waterfront park rules and followed Ordinance 136755.

SPR will remain engaged with asset management and reporting to the Seattle Park District Board. CEN will take the primary role of overseeing the Central Waterfront Oversight Committee and park performance.

Management Agreement with Friends of Waterfront Seattle

In the 2019 Ordinance, the City Council outlined terms for a future Waterfront Park Management Agreement, which was to be executed by the end of the License Agreement term with Friends. This agreement allows Friends to hold a park use permit for Waterfront Park and operate as the primary partner for park operations with the City.

We had the opportunity throughout the term of the License Agreement to assess the public/private partnership model between the City and Friends and incorporate changes into the Management Agreement.

A 6-year Operations Management Agreement was executed in 2023 between CEN, SPR, and Friends, which aligns with the current MPD funding cycle, and the MOA between CEN and SPR for Park Operations. The new Agreement allows for one year of full park operations before developing the next agreement, to allow for any substantial changes from lessons learned in the first 6 years.

Final Park Performance Standard

The first charge of the CWOC was to develop a Performance Standard that would serve as the tool for the CWOC to evaluate park performance on an ongoing basis. This work started in Q1 2020, when the City contracted with ETM Associates, Inc., a firm known for its urban park and maintenance management expertise.

We spent two years reviewing operations at other world class destination parks across the country. The CWOC developed sub-committees that focused on maintenance, programming/activation, and public safety. Executives from the Hudson River, Seattle Center, and Klyde Warren Park met with us to discuss what works well, and what they wish they could change in their park operations.

The Performance Standard was finalized in Q3 2022 and will be implemented in Q1 2024 for us to evaluate Pier 62, Habitat Beach, Union St. Bridge and the East Sidewalks. Areas of evaluation will expand as portions of the park are completed and opened to the public.

Waterfront Operations Building Acquisition

The City acquired the Bakun building in Q2 2023 to serve as a central location for Waterfront Park Operations, ensuring key field staff, management and public safety staff have a permanent workspace on the waterfront and can build a strong team culture. The City is also working in partnership with the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe to develop a Tribal Interpretive Center in the building.

This space will be essential for the City to provide timely and responsive maintenance and public safety and currently does not have a target date for opening as it undergoes seismic evaluation with the city's Finance and Administrative Services team.

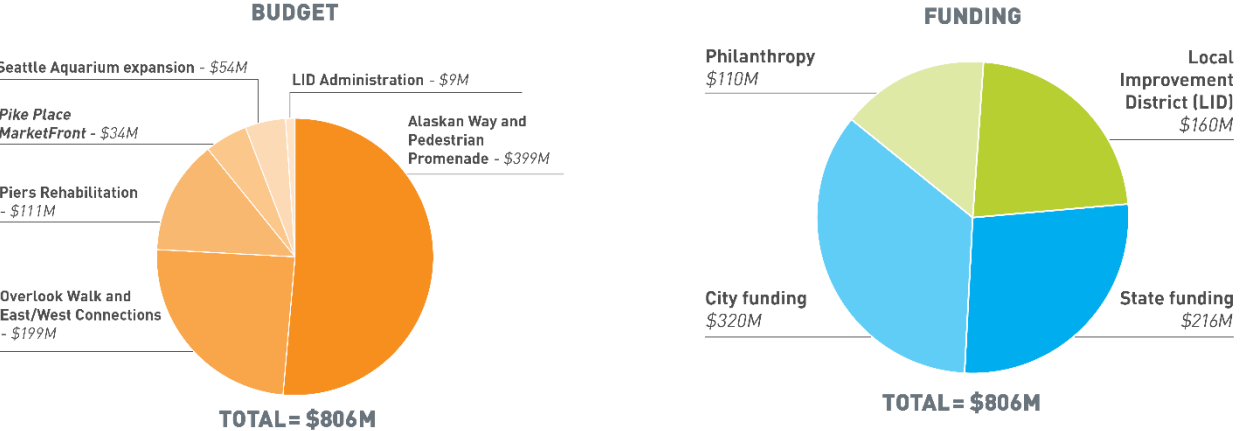
CWOC Legislation

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CWOC requested to extend original expiration term dates an additional year. The request was approved in 2021 and formalized in 2023 with legislation that reset terms for each position on the committee, as well as adding three positions: Port of Seattle (permanent), Seattle Center (ex-officio), and Friends of Waterfront Seattle (ex-officio).

BUDGET

Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects (OWCP)

OWCP remains the lead Department on the design and construction of the central waterfront. The total project costs are \$806M and is funded through four primary sources: Philanthropy, the LID, City funding, and funding from WSDOT.



Project #	Project Title	Actuals Spent thru 12.31.2023	Total Budget
MC-PR-21007	Waterfront Piers Rehab	\$76,297,184	\$111,167,000
MC-TR-C072	Central Waterfront Alaskan Way Main Corridor	\$330,565,670	\$399,355,000
MC-TR-C073	Overlook Walk & East/West Connections	\$113,467,307	\$199,525,745
MC-TR-C062	Pike/Pine Protected Bike Lane *(Waterfront element of larger PBL project)	\$5,065,939	\$10,000,000

Friends of Waterfront Seattle

Friends continues to raise money towards its fundraising goals for the redevelopment of the Waterfront. It also funds daily programming and activation, which includes special events and will continue to raise money after project completion to support park operations.

	<u>Annual Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
4010 · Contributions	\$30,091,000.00
Total 4070 · Program Income	220,000.00
4090 · Interest and Other Income	250,000.00
Total Income	<u>30,561,000.00</u>
Gross Profit	\$30,561,000.00

Expense	
Total 5000 · Staffing	4,076,532.83
Total 5200 · Professional Fees	420,390.00
Total 5300 · Fundraising Expenses	368,500.00
Total 5400 · Office & Overhead	459,825.00
6470.04 · Seattle Center Team	945,000.00
Total 6100 · Marketing & Communications	195,000.00
Total 6200 · Community Impact	85,500.00
Total 6300 · Park Programming	<u>580,000.00</u>
Total 6400 · Park Operations	<u>361,092.00</u>
Total Expense	<u><u>7,491,839.83</u></u>
Net Ordinary Income	\$23,069,160.17
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
Shuttle Service Grants	<u>500,000.00</u>
Other Expense	
6321.09 · Shuttle Program Expenses	500,000.00
Total 7850 · Capital Expenses	750,000.00
7860 · Grant Expenses	
7899 · Capital Payments to City	<u>20,000,000.00</u>
Total Other Expense	<u><u>21,250,000.00</u></u>
Net Other Income	<u><u>-20,750,000.00</u></u>
Net Income	<u><u>\$2,319,160.17</u></u>

Seattle Center Waterfront Operations

The waterfront operations transferred from SPR to CEN in July 2023, and there are several space developments and large-scale capital equipment/fleet purchasing that were not able to be completed in 2023 but are needed in 2024 to successfully implement park operations. As a result the 2023 Waterfront Seattle Park District (MPD) funds were underspent by \$1.7M and were carried forward in 2024 to cover Seattle Center waterfront operation expenditures. This includes development of the SR99/Atlantic storage space, the Overlook Walk maintenance space, water fountains, and electrical capacity change orders.

Seattle Center is working with City Fleets to procure its permanent fleet and has been renting vehicles and equipment while we continue to work through the purchasing process for equipment and fleet. This funding was originally anticipated to be used in 2023 and will now be spent in 2024 to align with purchasing.

July-December 2023				
REVISED BUDGET	YTD EXPENSES	AVAILABLE BLANCE	PERCENT USED	\$ VARIANCE
\$4,109,059	\$2,322,657	\$1,786,401	56.5%	(1,786,401)

SEATTLE CENTER AT WATERFRONT PARK

July 1st, 2023 was a big day for Waterfront Park Operations! The newly dedicated Waterfront Operations team, along with ESU started and Habitat Beach opened to the public.



Staff have a daily presence in the park and respond in the field to tasks that arise. If a work order is submitted to the administrative team, a work order is created and assigned to staff and the team will respond and close out the work order.

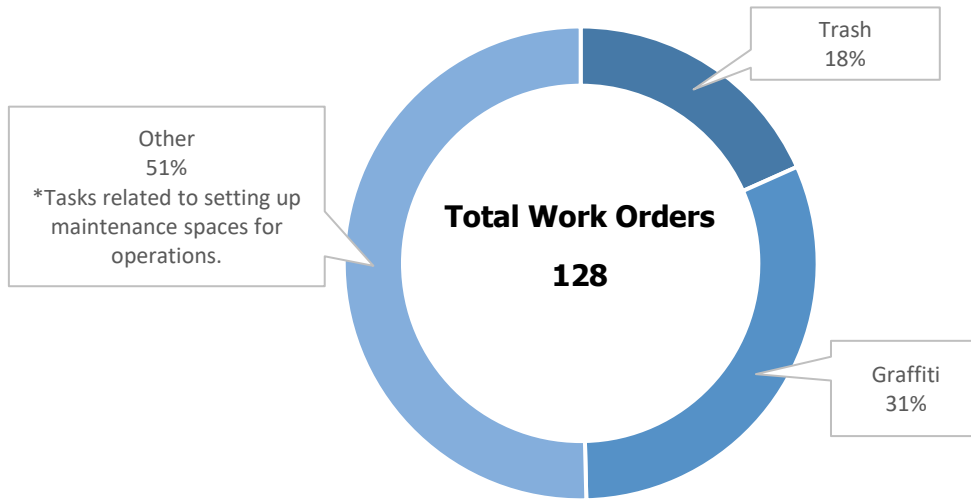
SPR is engaged for any asset damage or warranties that require their attention. CEN continues to work with OWCP on portions of the park that are installed but not yet turned over from the contractor.



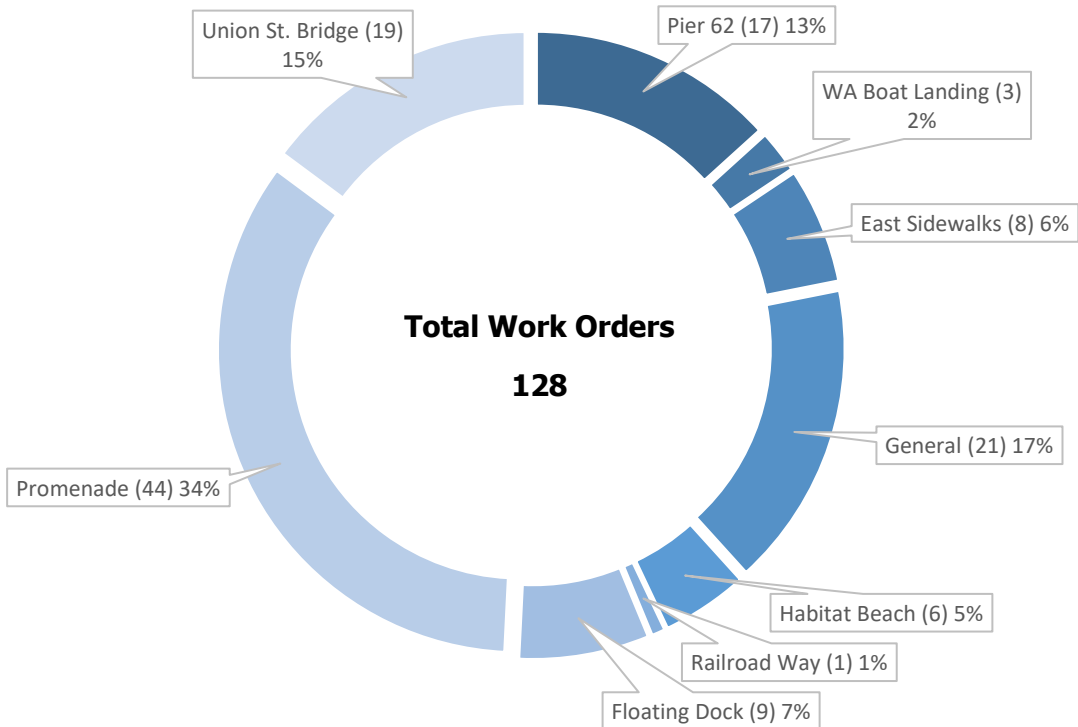
CENTRAL WATERFRONT MAINTENANCE - WORK ORDERS

(Addressed by Seattle Center Staff)

SEATTLE CENTER WORK ORDERS: BY TASK JULY-DECEMBER 2023



SEATTLE CENTER WORK ORDERS: BY LOCATION JULY-DECEMBER 2023



FRIENDS OF WATERFRONT SEATTLE

Programming and activation

In 2022, Friends put on more than 150 events and activations with an attendance near 82,000. This included partnership with 41 organizations and 177 artists and performers. Friends has continued its commitment to inclusion and equity as it works with community and provide programming at Pier 62.

For the 2023 calendar year, Friends facilitated 107 activations in Waterfront Park, including:

- 40 one-time and multi-session programs;
- 4 art installations;
- 2 rental events;
- 1 virtual program.

Attendance totaled 69,819 event attendees, not counting passive engagement with the art installations. 86 programs and events had person of color (POC) representation among program partners, and 11 had Indigenous representation. Nearly all o of programs and events were free to the public, with exceptions being a pilot rental event and Friends’ inaugural ‘Pier Party’ fundraising event.

Park Visitation at Pier 62 by month:

Month	Visitors 2023	Visitors 2022	YOY Change
January	22,407	12,032	86%
February	14,747	11,854	24%
March	28,736	22,940	25%
April	26,638	26,883	-1%
May	44,455	31,607	41%
June	41,223	43,791	-6%
July	61,279	70,593	-13%
August	57,651	64,176	-10%
September	47,927	45,957	4%
October	31,928	27,854	15%
November	27,895	17,025	64%
December	8,719	9,832	-11%
Total	413,604	384,543	8%

Table 1: Number of visitors to Pier 62 per month as recorded by an automated people counter, with year-over-year percent change.

Observational Surveys

In additional to continual visitation numbers, Friends staff conducted eight observation surveys aimed to capture estimated/observed age, sex, general activity, and movement of visitors. Surveys were conducted on non-event days throughout the year, on a mix of weekdays and weekend days.

A comparison of age and sex from the observational surveys to US Census data for the City of Seattle shows close parity between park visitors and the general population. Among park visitors, adults (18-64 years) and males were over-represented.

Table 2: Visitor Demographics by Estimated Age

Estimated Age	Number Observed	Percent of Total	Census Estimate	Difference
Under 5 years	47	3.5%	4.4%	-0.9%
5-17 years	135	6.6%	9.6%	-3.0%
18 to 64 years	1,044	77.9%	73.2%	4.7%
65 years and over	162	12.1%	12.8%	-0.7%

Table 2: Count and percent of total visitors to Pier 62 by estimated age during observational surveys, with comparison to US Census data for the City of Seattle.

Table 3: Visitor Demographics by Observed Sex

Observed Sex	Number Observed	Percent of Total	Census Estimate	Difference
Female	566	43.7%	48.9%	-5.2%
Male	719	55.6%	51.1%	4.5%
Unclear Sex	9	0.7%	n/a	

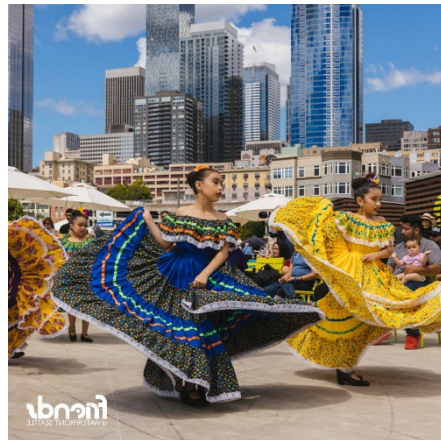
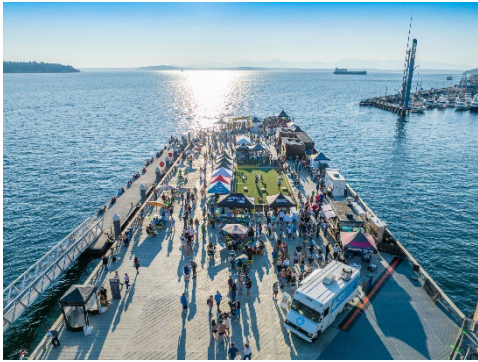
Table 3: Count and percent of total visitors to Pier 62 by observed sex during observational surveys, with comparison to US Census data for the City of Seattle. Excludes those under 5 years of age.

Visitors to Pier 62 engaged in a variety of activities, including: eating and drinking, playing games, fishing, engaging in wheel sports, playing soccer, visiting the floating dock, walking dogs, reading, taking photographs, jogging, and using the restroom.

Demographics Collected from Guest Experience Survey

From the sample of 606 Guest Experience Surveys collected from people likely to have participated in a program on Pier 62:

- over half (53%) identified as BIPOC;
- over half (62%) speak English only;
- the most represented age range was 25-34 (31%);
- four out of 25 (16%) indicated they have a disability;
- 67% hold a bachelor’s degree or higher;
- most (61%) identify as female;
- 22% identify as LGBTQIA.



Molly Moon's coming soon!

On behalf of the City, Friends issued a Request for Proposal in 2023 for a concessionaire in the Washington Street Boat Landing (WSBL). The City, Pioneer Square Alliance, Friends, and community partners engaged in a public selection process with Molly Moon's ice cream being chosen to occupy the WSBL.

Molly Moon's has been working in partnership with Friends and the City on preparing the space to be ready to serve up the first scoop of ice cream!



PUBLIC SAFETY

In partnership, the City and Friends provide the following resources to help provide a safe and welcoming experience for all.

- Friends contracts with a service provider to make contact and offer resources to those experiencing crisis, distress, or homelessness
- Friends employs park ambassadors to provide customer service and public engagement with park users
- CEN expanded its Emergency Services Unit (ESU) from campus to the waterfront and has the ability to enforce park rules.
- Seattle Police Department responds to life threatening or emergency situations

As Seattle Center expanded its ESU from Campus to Waterfront Park, 15 ESU officers were hired and trained to provide 24/7 coverage at Waterfront Park. The team rotates through 3 shifts daily and works closely with key partners and stakeholders.

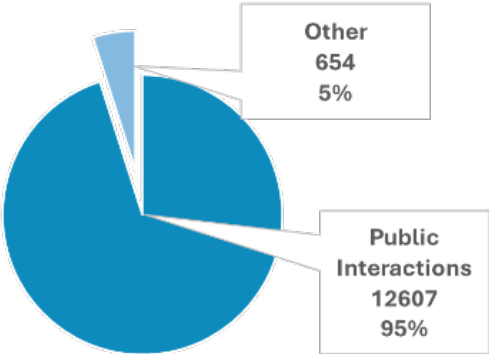
While still in the early stages of park operations, ESU’s presence on the waterfront has made a positive impact. In the first 6 months ESU had over 13,000 public interactions, ranging from casual conversations with the public to enforcement of park rules.



Seattle Center’s ESU Team – day shift

Outlined below are the areas that ESU responded to most frequently.

ESU Interactions - July-Dec 2023



Incidents	Count	%
Alarms/Safety	13	0%
Property Damage	27	0%
Business Response	14	0%
Unlicensed Vendors	30	0%
Medical Emergencies	44	0%
Vehicle Violations	95	1%
Disturbances	119	1%
Smoking	116	1%
Controlled Substances	99	1%
Intoxication/Open Containers	97	1%
Public Interactions	12607	95%
Total	13261	100%

Friends Partnership with ETS REACH

Reach is one of the most impactful partnerships Friends has. Their organization provides outreach and social services to those experiencing a need along the waterfront. This is a critical tier in the joint public safety model with Friends and the City and the first resource deployed to assist others.

Top 10 Issue Codes

1. Clothing/Hygiene
2. Engagement & Rapport Building
3. Food
4. Identification
5. Medication Assisted Treatment
6. Public Safety
7. Recovery Support
8. Safer Substance Abuse
9. Shelter & Temporary Housing
10. Unsheltered Survival

Month	2023 Total Encounters
January	102
February	39
March	46
April	41
May	45
June	38
July	52
August	51
September	47
October	40
November	41
December	40
Total	582



RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

There have been substantial changes to the operations structure since our last report and we want to take the opportunity to thank the elected leaders for their steadfast support as we continue to bring Seattle’s “Waterfront for All” vision to life.

Thank you to Seattle Parks and Recreation

We want to extend our sincerest appreciation and thanks to Seattle Parks and Recreation. We appreciate their participation as part of the larger effort in shaping the vision for our new waterfront park. Parks will continue to play a valuable role in supporting Seattle Center in ongoing operations.

Recommendation: Funding for SDOT Landscaping Responsibilities

We are recommending that the City allocate dedicated ongoing funds for the SDOT portions of the landscaping to the central waterfront improvements and transfer responsibility and funding to Seattle Center, excluding the Pike/Pine Corridor. The Committee will be sending a formal proposal to City elected officials outlining this specific request.

Next Steps: Reappointment and Recruitment

In December 2023, [ORD 126983](#) established new CWOC appointment terms which requires all committee members that wish to continue to serve, to be reappointed in 2024. We currently have 4 vacancies and will work with the Mayor’s Office/Council on reappointments, recruitment, and new appointments.

Next Steps: Implement the Performance Standard

The Waterfront team has developed an integrated application to start park inspections in Q1 2024. We will conduct four park inspections annually, one each quarter, which is one tool used to evaluate park performance. Training sessions for the CWOC will be rolled out throughout the year to help committee members prepare to analyze data from the City and Friends, along with park inspections, using the Performance Standard criteria.

The Performance Standard has a notification and course corrective period for performance, and we will have the opportunity to reevaluate any areas, as needed. Any recommended adjustments will be summarized for the Mayor/Council in the next annual report.

2024 is a big year for the Waterfront! Our focus this year will be the implementation of the Waterfront Performance Standard and celebrating the park opening events as a city. We are committed to a welcoming, high-quality park user experience and will continue to advocate for the success of Waterfront Park.