

Seattle Waterfront: What's new and what's planned for family fun

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4-5 minutes



Revitalizing the Waterfront Photo credit Waterfront Seattle

Equipped with a renewed membership at the Seattle Aquarium, our family is ready for some urban fun at the waterfront this spring and summer.

As a lifelong Seattleite, it's hard to put into words how excited I am about the redevelopment of this iconic section of downtown

Seattle. The extensive project is nothing short of visionary. Its many parts are outlined on a map [here](#).

[**Read also:** [A day out on the Seattle waterfront with kids](#)]

Revitalizing Waterfront Park

The creation of the new waterfront is a huge undertaking scheduled for completion in 2025, and it promises to reshape and improve our experience of the city.

The waterfront is transforming into a place that is green, accessible and family-friendly. The new seawall, which was completed in 2017, went a long way to restore the function of Elliott Bay's natural shoreline environment. Light-penetrating sidewalks on top allow rays of sunshine to filter down into the water, supporting sealife below. Grooves and nooks promote algae growth. Rock beds in the bay floor allow fish to hide and forage. What's really exciting is that these design elements have worked, with juvenile salmon migration counts way up since 2017.

A vision for the future Seattle waterfront, including swings by the promenade. (Image courtesy of city of Seattle and James Corner

Field Operations)

Improvements and additions

For more family friendly things to do, news, events and travel, sign up for Seattle's Child newsletters

There have been other improvements to the marine habitat along the intertidal zone. In 2019 the city constructed a new beach immediately south of Colman Dock, north of Pier 48. Known to some as Habitat Beach, and designed for children to explore, this special new intertidal area will likely open to the public by summer 2023.

Several projects will improve walkability to the waterfront from Pike Place Market and other areas downtown with new bridges, elevators and ramps (check out these upcoming projects: Marion Street Bridge, Overlook Walk and Union Street Pedestrian Bridge). A car-free promenade will extend along the length of the waterfront, featuring expansive green spaces and a continuous bike path extending all the way to Ballard.

The waterfront will be car-free, pedestrian friendly and very green.
(Photo credit Waterfront Seattle)

What's new: Pier 58

The Pier 58 rebuild (that's beginning later this year) will include an 18-foot jellyfish-shaped climbing structure, a slide with rolling tentacles, tall kelp-inspired poles, as well as many other climbing and swinging features. The public restrooms on the park promenade across from Pier 58 will be plush and family-friendly (think granite countertops, fresh flowers and a full-time attendant!).

Seattle Aquarium is set for a major expansion as the Seattle waterfront is redesigned. (LMN Architects)

Education for the kids (and adults too!)

Learning opportunities will abound at the new waterfront, including a major expansion of the Seattle Aquarium. A Native museum at Colman Dock will help reconnect the waterfront to its native history and culture. All this, and the first-class views of our beloved Puget Sound and Olympic Mountains.

Pier 62 already is playing host to family-friendly events, including a Waterfront Block Party in summer 2021. (Photo credit: Erik Holsather)

What's new: Pier 62 is open now!

Now is a great time to head down to check all this out because a major section of the park has recently opened to the public. Pier 62, located immediately North of Seattle Aquarium, is already hosting an exciting lineup of family-friendly events. The nonprofit organization Friends of Waterfront Seattle funds the cultural and art events, activities and park programs at Pier 62, and the whole schedule can be found [here](#).

We've already spent one of many spring days on the waterfront exploring all the changes, while observing the transformation that is yet to come. With concepts of sustainability and environmental responsibility at the forefront of this project, we're eager to see the final product that will keep this busy industrial region safe for the community, tourism, and families.

