2023

Gratitude Report

Friends of Waterfront Park

We've rebranded: new look, new name, same Friends!
More than 25 years ago, a vision took root in our city—a vision of what was possible if we replaced the old double-decker highway on the waterfront with a new park. As we anticipate Waterfront Park’s grand opening, this vision is in our sightlines, a testament to the audacity, innovation, passion, and dedication it took to reach this point. This world-class, 20-acre public space will seamlessly reconnect Pike Place Market, the Seattle Aquarium, downtown, and the surrounding neighborhoods after more than 65 years. Waterfront Park will be a place to honor the stories of the First Peoples of this land. It will provide breathtaking views of the Salish Sea, foster connections to nature amidst 250,000 plants and 1,000 trees, and provide space for quiet reflection, joyful play, and being in community.

Reflecting on the past year, we are filled with pride at what we have achieved together. We raised over $42 million in 2023 for the Campaign for Waterfront Park, bringing us to 83.5% of our $170 million target. We forged a new partnership with Seattle Center, solidified through a joint operating agreement, that will be instrumental in ensuring a positive park experience. The agreement calls for us to invest over $5 million in our humane public safety approach, underscoring our commitment to creating a safe and welcoming environment for all visitors. After three years of piloting free community-centric public programs, we welcomed our 1 millionth visitor to the new Pier 62 since it opened in 2020. Furthermore, we have strategically reorganized and established a five-year financial model to ensure the long-term sustainability of our organization to support our park now and into the future.

On top of all that, with the park’s grand opening less than a year away, we have embraced a new name—Friends of Waterfront Park—and new branding to reflect the exciting new phase we have entered.

Our collaboration with neighbors and community partners culminated in the finalization of our Cultural Masterplan, a guiding document for a vibrant, inclusive, and cherished public space for all Seattle residents. All of these accomplishments and more were achieved through our partnership with the City of Seattle, community organizations, donors, our board of directors, residents, institutions, volunteers, and businesses. To all of you, we extend our deepest gratitude.

Friends of Waterfront Park is advancing a new model of nonprofit leadership in our city. Through a dynamic public-private partnership, we are providing organizational leadership to raise essential philanthropic resources to manage, program, and steward this new public space for generations to come. Building on more than a decade of groundwork, 2023 offered just a glimpse of what’s to come as Waterfront Park moves from one acre on Pier 62 to a full 20 acres, welcoming an estimated 15 million visitors annually.

Here’s to continuing to do audacious things together.

In gratitude,

Joy Shigaki
President & CEO
Friends of Waterfront Park
## 2023 Highlights

### Pier 62 at Waterfront Park

- **413,604** Visitors in 2023, totaling 1.3 million visitors since 2020.

### 2023 Guest Experience Survey

- **94%** Park visitor satisfaction
- **99%** Event attendee satisfaction
- **53%** People of color
- **29%** Speak a language other than English
- **15%** People with disabilities

### Fundraising

- **$42M** Raised for the Campaign for Waterfront Park (83.5% complete)

### Audience and Reach

- **43%** Social media follower growth since 2022
- **282%** Increase in donors since 2022

### Public Safety

- **$100K** Invested in Evergreen Treatment Services’ REACH program
- **$5M** Invested in our joint operating partnership with Seattle Center to support 24/7/365 public safety efforts along the waterfront

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In partnership with Seattle Historic Waterfront Association, Friends relaunched the free downtown Waterfront Shuttle, providing over 14,000 free rides last year.

Rita Sabbage

We had a record number of furry friends at the park last year, including this good boy dressed to impress at the Lunar New Year celebration.

Adam Lu

The 2023 Waterfront Block Party was the first parkwide event. Mark your calendars for even more fun at the 2024 Waterfront Block Party on August 30th!

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Adam Lu
After over 25 years of effort by the City of Seattle and a coalition of countless individuals and organizations, 2025 will be the year to experience Waterfront Park’s full 20 acres—connecting downtown’s shoreline to nature, to the city, and to one another.

The Beginning

The Alaskan Way Viaduct, a double-decker highway, spanned our entire downtown shoreline for over 65 years, dividing our waterfront from downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods and cutting our city’s connection to the Salish Sea. With its removal in 2019, the work of reconnecting our city to the water finally began.

“With the removal of the viaduct, we had the opportunity to reclaim and reconnect downtown Seattle to our waterfront. What’s resulted is a new, uniquely beautiful place for people of all walks of life to enjoy.”

ANGELA BRADY, DIRECTOR OFFICE OF THE WATERFRONT AND CIVIC PROJECTS CITY OF SEATTLE

VIEWS OF TRAFFIC AND THE CONCRETE VIADUCT HAVE GIVEN WAY TO INCREDIBLE SIGHTLINES TO THE SALISH SEA, THE PUGET SOUND, AND THE MOUNTAINS BEYOND.

IMAGE BY FIELD OPERATIONS, COURTESY OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE
An Extension of Our Natural World
What sets Seattle apart from so many other major cities is our connection to nature. We are a city of mountain views, lakes, rivers, coastlines, and forests, with wildlife of all kinds at our doorstep. Waterfront Park will become an extension of our natural world into our urban environment as we’ve never experienced before.

A Sense of Place and Culture
Along the length of the park, visitors will find benches made from reclaimed old growth cedar, swings, and public artworks that tie Waterfront Park to nature, culture, and a sense of place.

Promenade
From north to south, stretching from Overlook Walk to Railroad Way and the stadiums, the mile-long park promenade will serve as the backbone of Waterfront Park, connecting the large open spaces of Overlook Walk, Pier 62, Pier 58, and Pioneer Square Habitat Beach. This new linear park will consist of a boardwalk and promenade, plantings and trees, and a winding, protected bike path—offering visitors, commuters, and families a safe and beautiful place to move, rest, and take in the views.

An Opportunity to Connect
Overlook Walk, perhaps the park’s most visible feature and most ambitious engineering feat, will serve as both a pedestrian connector from Pike Place Market to the waterfront and a beautiful green space. Connected to Overlook Walk, the Seattle Aquarium’s new Ocean Pavilion will house over 3,500 plants and animals and will be open to the public this summer.

2025 and Beyond
Waterfront Park will be a celebration of the landscapes, natural beauty, and communities that make Seattle special. It will be a new kind of civic space that connects us more deeply to each other and to the Salish Sea. We can’t wait to show it to you.
Over the past three years, Friends has been working with hundreds of community partners to develop public programming on Pier 62, with the goal of ensuring that everyone who visits the park feels like they belong. Last year, those efforts coalesced around a co-created Cultural Masterplan—a guiding document that outlines our commitment to fostering inclusivity, equity, and cultural vibrancy throughout our work.

The Cultural Masterplan is grounded in authentic commitment to racial equity and to ensuring that the park will reflect community values and ignite positive change for Seattle and the people who call it home. Perhaps just as important as the document itself is the process that was used to create it. Friends partnered with Third Way Creative to facilitate a series of conversations across the city, involving 142 people in 11 roundtable sessions that centered Indigenous perspectives and community voices. The process engaged a diverse group of individuals in their own neighborhoods to explore ideas for events, art, food, and vending.

When the full park opens in 2025, this framework will position Friends alongside the community and serve as a roadmap to a culturally revitalized waterfront for generations to come.

**The Cultural Masterplan Pillars**

- **Belonging**
  Waterfront Park should reflect the full breadth and diversity of Seattle and its rich cultures, a place where stories are shared, history is interrogated, and curiosity is explored.

- **Land Stewardship**
  Connection to the land, water, and mountains is essential to the character of Waterfront Park, which nurtures and sustains the land as well as those who continue to care for it.

- **Healing and Sustenance**
  Waterfront Park is a space that can bring people together across differences to reflect on and address harms of both the recent and historic past.

- **Living Culturally**
  Waterfront Park should feel like an immersive cultural experience, one that amplifies Seattle’s authentic stories to the city and the world.

- **Neighborhood Reciprocity**
  Waterfront Park should be a space that all Seattle residents feel an authentic connection to; this means building and maintaining meaningful relationships with communities and neighborhoods throughout the city.
The $170 million comprehensive Campaign for Waterfront Park is the largest fundraising effort for public space in Seattle’s history. Friends ended the year with record numbers, raising $42 million from 483 generous donors and bringing the campaign to 83.5% of its goal. We are humbled by the incredible outpouring of community support and are grateful to every single donor, partner, and volunteer whose name you see listed in this report.

The work of Friends is always done in partnership, and fundraising is no exception. We warmly invite everyone to be part of the Campaign for Waterfront Park. Philanthropic partners at all levels are helping to support the final year of park construction and ensure that this new civic space is welcoming, safe, and activated for the community well into the future.

The Campaign for Waterfront Park experienced a magical moment last December when donors Jim and Gaye Pigott stepped in to help with a generous second gift.

In late 2023, many early campaign donors were making second gifts to leverage a $10 million matching challenge by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Friends board chair Maggie Walker checked in with Jim and Gaye to see if they might be willing to do the same. At this point, Friends had raised $6.3 million toward the challenge goal and had a balance of $3.7 million to raise by calendar year-end.

Within minutes, Maggie received a brief, jaw-dropping reply, indicating that Jim and Gaye would send a check to close out the match. “Keep up the good work and Merry Christmas,” Jim wrote.

The Pigotts are passionate supporters of Waterfront Park, making a generous personal gift in 2020 and encouraging significant investments from both the Norcliffe Foundation and the Moccasin Lake Foundation. “Waterfront Park is the most transformative project for our city since the 1962 World’s Fair,” Jim says. “The impact of this effort cannot be understated, and we are so pleased to be part of such a positive change for our city.”
In 2023, we partnered with over 1,400 institutions, organizations, agencies, and businesses. From fundraising to programming, public safety to community engagement, partnerships are at the center of everything we do. We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone on the following list.

Board of Directors
Mary Bass
Carol Binder
Kerla Brollo
Tom Byers
Chris DeVore
Leonard Forsman
Kevin Geiger
Olive Goh
Paul Goldsmith
Patrick Gordon
Mike Halperin
Sandra Jackson-Omunt
Falona Joy
Martha Kongsgaard
Den Kelly
Lori Metcalf
John Neilson
Joanne Nordstrom
Stuart Rolfe
Keyley Rushton
Ryan Smith
Jill Stain
Hilaine Tahoe
Leslie Towers
Maggie Walker
Brad Wilkinson
Charlie Williams

Campaign Steering Committee
Kevin Geiger
Gina Gold
Patrick Gordon
Jodi Green
Mike Halperin
Martha Kongsgaard
Connie LaRue
Keyley Rushton
Julie Stein
Maggie Walker

Community Partners
Individuals, organizations, and businesses that work with Waterfront Park and engage Seattle’s diverse communities.

From Hope Avenue Massage Chair to Z Jones / Omega, we celebrate and appreciate the support of United Airlines, Amazon, and many others. We are grateful for the partnership and trust of City of Seattle, Seattle Office of Economic Development, Seattle Arts Commission, Seattle Office of Finance and Administrative Services, Seattle Office of Sustainability, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Seattle Office of Immigrant and Multicultural Affairs, Renton, South Seattle College, South King Metroparks Program, and more.

Friends of Waterfront Park
Jessica Hernandez
Karen Hall
Jessica-Jane-Wagner
Elizabet Hayce
Mercedes Luna
Melanie Montgomery
Jordon Ramirez
Istith White Hawk
Edina Wyena

Cultural MasterParticipatn
Individuals who contributed their voices and perspectives to co-create our Cultural Masterplan:

Jessica Lynes
Jody Levin
Ciera Leciel
Afua Kouyate
Theresa Kouo
Brianna Klein
King Khazm
Domonique Juleon
Kathy Hsieh
Matt Hooks
Erik Guttridge
Deja’Nay Gilliam
Kathy Fife
Jordan Erdahl
Trevor Dykstra
Bob Donegan
Kelsey Donahue
Kimberly Deriana
Andrew Constantino
Akemi Boyd
Carol Binder
Blessing Beam
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People who contributed their time to the project:

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Participants

Cultural Masterplan

Edna Wyena
Ixtli White Hawk
Mercedes Luna
Tim Lehman
Jessica Hernandez
Gina Corpuz

Friends of Waterfront Park

Kitty Wu
Tierra Taylor
Reese Tanimura
Tom Smith
Savannah Smith
Deane Sienega
Rey Rosario
Barbara Rodriguez
Ivelisse Rodriguez

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Heaven Tahmooze
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Eric Artz
Ric & Kaylene Anderson
Geoff Anderson
Tiffany Andersen
Lisa Anastos
Margaret & Jim Allison
Dina Alhadeff

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The Charles & Barbara
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2023 Financials

TOTAL $33,960,483

74%

8%

9%
Friends of Waterfront Park is the nonprofit organization responsible for fundraising, programming, stewarding and activating Waterfront Park now and into the future.

LEARN ABOUT OUR NEW BRAND → wpsea.org/rebrand

WEB waterfrontparkseattle.org
SOCIALS wpsea.org/socials

READ OUR GRATITUDE REPORT ONLINE → wpsea.org/gratitude