



Completed in spring 2019, Meydenbauer Bay Park is the first phase of the City of Bellevue's 30-year vision to re-establish itself as a waterfront city, connecting its downtown to the Lake Washington shoreline.



The park is located a half mile from downtown Bellevue. Multiple properties were acquired and eight homes were removed for Phase 1 park development. Future phases will expand the public waterfront and strengthen the pedestrian connection to downtown.



Women and children wading in Meydenbauer Bay, ca. 1912
Eastside Heritage Center



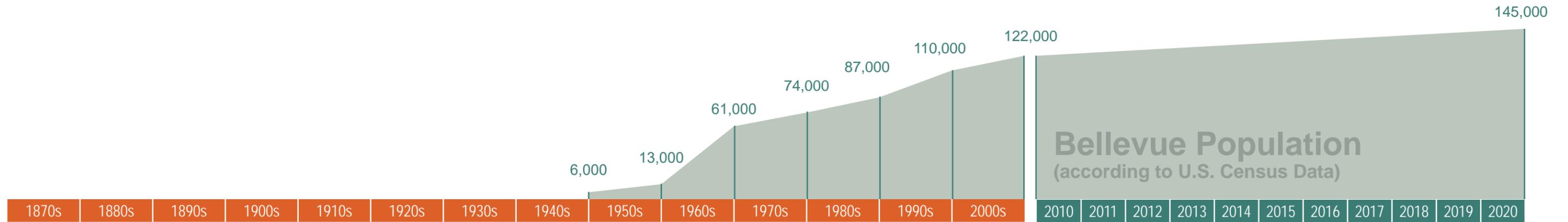
American Pacific Whaling Company dock in Bellevue, ca. 1925
Eastside Heritage Center



Project site, 2008



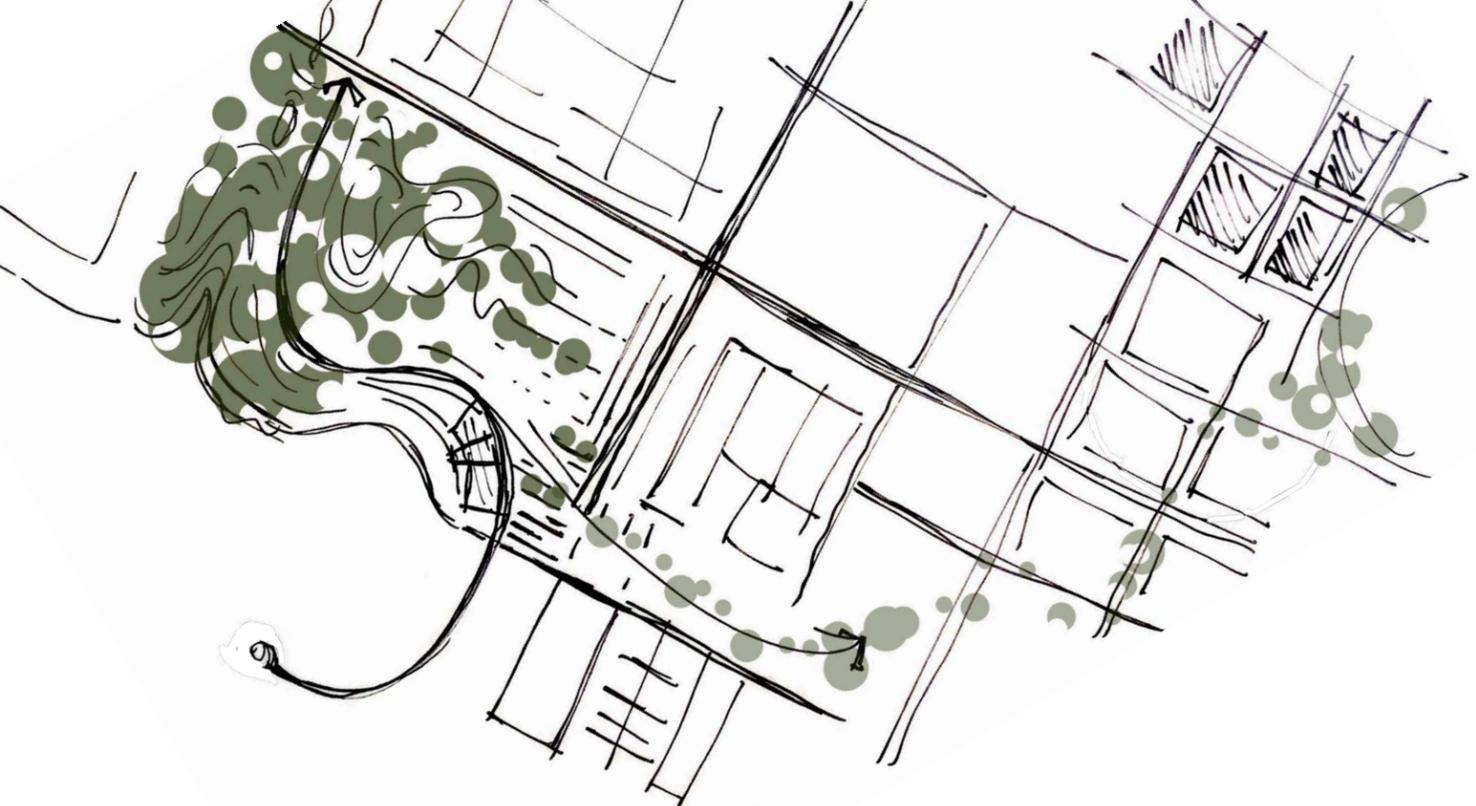
Meydenbauer Bay Park, 2019



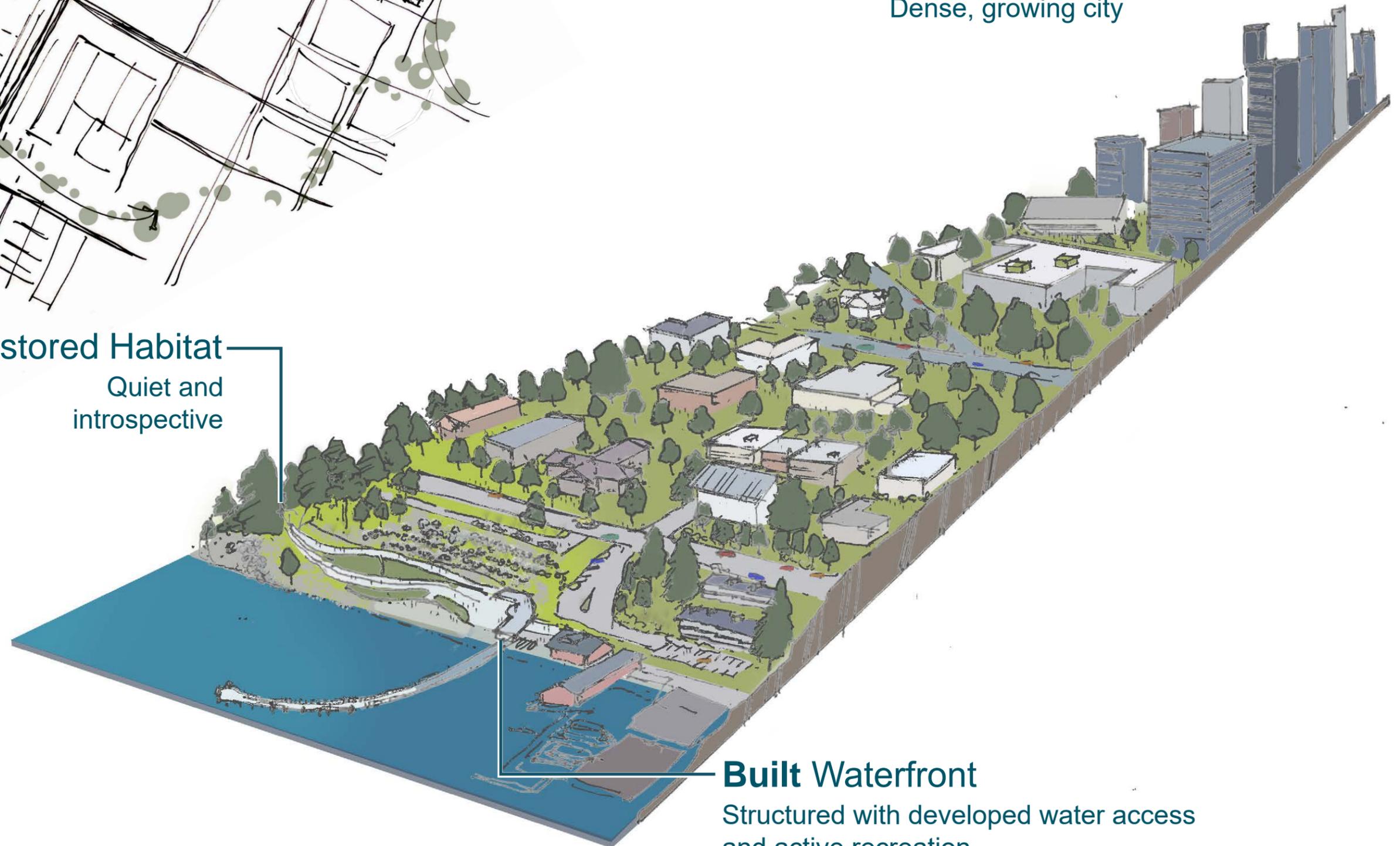
Bellevue Population
(according to U.S. Census Data)

<p>1869 William Meydenbauer pulls his boat ashore, on the shoreline now known as Meydenbauer Bay, to found Bellevue</p>	<p>1917 US Army Corps of Engineers officially opens the Hiram M. Chittenden locks in Ballard</p>	<p>1919–1941 American Pacific Whaling Company operates its headquarters from Meydenbauer Bay</p>	<p>1941 On December 7th, Pearl Harbor is attacked and, soon after, the US enters World War II</p>	<p>1987 The City envisions connecting its urban center to a public waterfront to restore it as a waterfront city; land acquisition begins</p>	<p>1997 The American Pacific Whaling Company founder's grandson sells the marina to the City</p>	<p>2010 The City completes the final Environmental Impact Statement for the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan and the Meydenbauer Bay Park Master Plan</p>	<p>2012 The City begins removing private residences and docks in the Phase 1 project area</p>	<p>2014 Phase 1 design begins</p>	<p>2017 Phase 1 construction begins</p>	<p>2019 On March 16, Meydenbauer Bay Park Phase 1 Opening Ceremony</p>	<p>Future phases will expand the park and strengthen pedestrian connection to downtown</p>
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Bellevue was first settled on Meydenbauer Bay, and this historical significance inspired the City's vision for the park. The landscape architect collaborated with three local artists to interpret the site's cultural and natural history.



Downtown Bellevue
Dense, growing city



Natural, Restored Habitat
Quiet and introspective

Built Waterfront
Structured with developed water access and active recreation

A natural-to-built gradient extends from the restored ravine to the built waterfront with the Beach House, beach, and pier, informing material selection and design interventions. A second gradient from the built waterfront extends to the dense downtown.

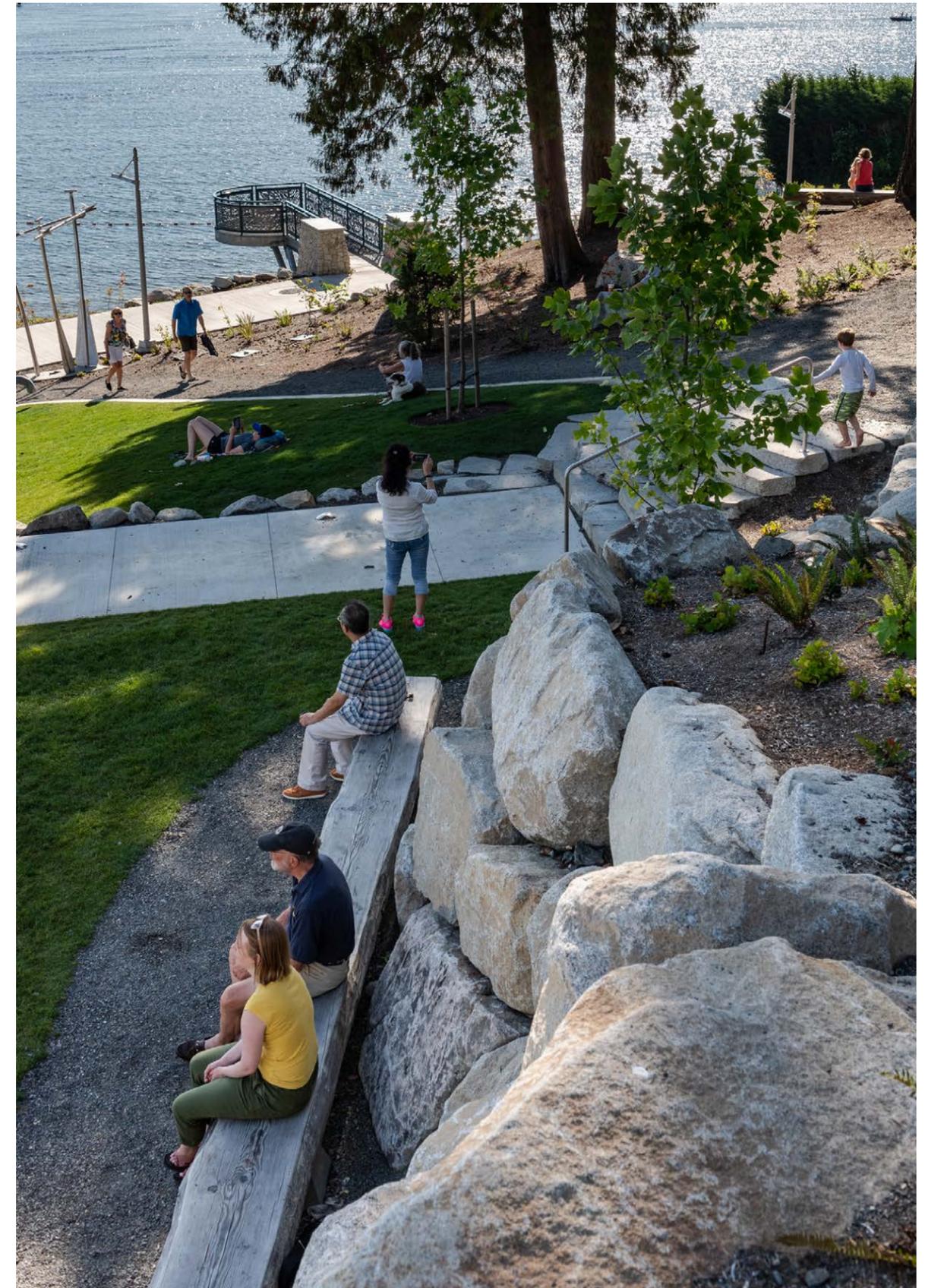
- 1 Restored ravine with daylighted stream channel
- 2 Restored and expanded nearshore
- 3 Outdoor classroom
- 4 Hillside granite and planted terrace
- 5 Small viewing area
- 6 Stormwater conveyance
- 7 Parking terrace
- 8 Play area
- 9 Swim beach
- 10 Beach house with rooftop viewing deck
- 11 Non-motorized boat launch
- 12 Seasonal swim float
- 13 Accessible non-motorized boat launch
- 14 Pedestrian pier



The park design honors the City's 30-year acquisition and master planning effort. The design is structured along a graceful promenade that arches past a quiet ravine, open lawn terraces, a swim beach and Beach House, ending on an overwater pier.



Several pathways spur off the promenade, reaching up to Lake Washington Boulevard and down to the beach. The sweeping gesture of the pathways and flat, terraced lawn areas reflect a complex grading design spanning 80 feet of elevation.



The park offers landscape spaces of different scales, each providing the opportunity to sit and enjoy the views. As users walk down the slope, they discover small viewing areas at the ends of narrow paths and tucked into the boulders.



Complex concrete retaining wall design—adorned with the park’s name, vines, and grasses—and extensive site grading offer a dramatic backdrop. The walls cut into the steep hillside to provide a flat, sandy place to soak up the sun.



The new pier's steel trestle, gangway, and concrete float arc 400 feet over the lake. At night, integrated guardrail lighting invites visitors to the terminus to view the park's lighting design and a glimpse of the lights from downtown.



Boaters launch from the beach or the wheelchair-accessible float and explore the park and surrounding shoreline. Here the Beach House has been humbly built into the steep hillside, so it does not out-compete the historic Whaling Building, behind.



Curvilinear concrete walls characterize the park's southern shoreline, juxtaposing the soft shoreline landscape and its urban context with the use of bright red *Parthenocissus quinquefolia* on a smooth, grey concrete wall.



An outdoor classroom is tucked into a steep hillside. Local Cascade boulders are the face of an engineered wall system that tackles the significant vertical grade change. Over time, plants will mature and partially obscure and soften the boulders.



A 300-foot-long restored stream channel (left) replaces a buried stormwater pipe, improving water quality and habitat. An open, cobble-lined channel (right) infiltrates and conveys treated stormwater from the new parking area to the lake.



Two viewing platforms cantilever over the restored ravine and shoreline, providing users an opportunity to witness the ecological change over time. A Pacific Northwest artist created laser-cut metal guardrail panels inspired by Northwest Coast carving traditions.



The park offers an experience for everyone, at every season: a quiet, forested ravine on a fall morning, a generous beach on a hot summer day, a wide promenade on a warm evening, an overwater pier with panoramic views anytime.