3

Vision

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Visual Simulation of Meydenbauer Bay Park's Entry Plaza Looking West from the Intersection of 100th Avenue and Main Street

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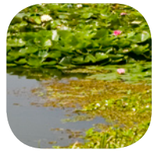
Ⓐ *Figure 3.0-1: Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan*

CHAPTER 3: VISION

Implementation of the Plan will reestablish Bellevue as a waterfront city by strengthening the connections between the City Center, Old Bellevue with its historic main street, and the Lake Washington shoreline. A visit to the waterfront, with its new signature public park, will be memorable. People will be attracted year round by the variety of uses and thoughtfully designed places that respect the setting, express community environmental values, and support a range of both active and passive activities. The waterfront and park are planned to be both a respite within the city and a connection between the city and the lake. The park will be a pedestrian place that encourages contemplation, socializing, and recreation. It will welcome visitors who arrive by boat, car, bus, and bicycle or on foot. When surrounding properties within the project study area are redeveloped in accordance with proposed policy and regulatory changes, they will provide new and inviting pedestrian connections and outdoor spaces that complement park uses. New development within the park and study area will address water quality issues and high-flow impacts from creeks and shoreline development through the promotion of Low-Impact Development (LID) (for example, the use of rain gardens), on-site stormwater detention for new and redeveloped projects, and control of point sources that discharge directly into the lake.



3.1 Connections

Waterfront Connections

The Bellevue Waterfront once supported a ferry, and whaling, fishing, and ship building industry. As the City urbanized and expanded, the City Center shifted north, and the historic water-oriented uses were replaced by residential and recreational boating uses that don't relate to Bellevue's downtown. The Plan proposes to reconnect the lake to the urban center and Old Bellevue and thereby reestablish Bellevue as a waterfront city.

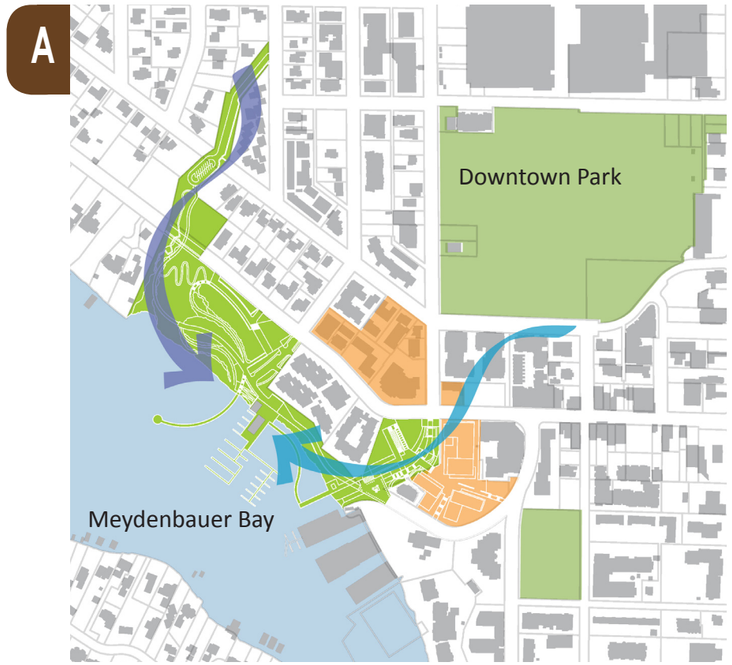
Throughout the planning process, a range of design strategies for strengthening the physical, visual, and land use connections was discussed. Strategies included pulling the more urban character of downtown toward the shoreline, or the character of the shoreline, park, or historic buildings toward the town. There were many discussions about the appropriate form, character, and scale of the public spaces, streets, and structures. Ultimately, the Plan proposes park zones and a variety of connection strategies informed by the context, scale, and character of the immediately surrounding uses.

Neighborhood Connections

The neighborhoods surrounding the proposed park are comprised of traditional medium- to large-lot single-family subdivisions to the west and north, transitioning to more diverse and urban multi-family midrise and mixed-use neighborhoods closer to Main Street. Connections to the west and north/central residential neighborhoods will be enhanced through the improvement of trail and pathway connections. A new green space and community activity building located adjacent to Lake Washington Boulevard will serve as a new gathering space and grand viewing terrace, creating a stronger connection for neighborhoods to the north. Relocation of active uses including the beach and playground will ensure that the west end of the park remains more passive and quiet. Streetscape improvements including landscape pathways and bicycle accommodations along Meydenbauer Way SE will improve connections to Wildwood Park and the Old Bellevue neighborhood. The Plan envisions the redevelopment of the upland parcels to include higher density residential infill west of 100th Avenue NE and mixed-use redevelopment south of Main Street, with a series of interconnecting pathways and public spaces capturing views and providing stronger connections.

Downtown Park & Old Bellevue Connections

The 100th Avenue SE street right-of-way in combination with the publicly owned kite parcel (the current site of the Bayvue Village Apartments) is planned to provide a dramatic connection from the intersection of Main Street to the waterfront, including a new street-level entry plaza with art and fountains, terraced overlooks, and an elevated pier that extends to the shoreline and provides expansive views of the lake. A covered open-air structure will encourage year-round visitation and house an elevator to access parking below the plaza. The pier rests upon and extends beyond an enclosed building space that could provide storage for canoes or kayaks.



Streetscape improvements for the 100th Avenue NE street right-of-way begin adjacent to Downtown Park and are proposed to include enhanced planting, paving, lighting, and water features. South of Main Street, the Plan proposes to convert the 100th Avenue SE street right-of-way to a pedestrian corridor with a grand staircase punctuated by intermediate terraces with art, lush landscaping, and continuation of the iconic linear water feature.

A *Figure 3.1-1: Early Park Connection Concept Diagram*

Natural Stream
Urban Stream
Park Parcels
Upland Parcels

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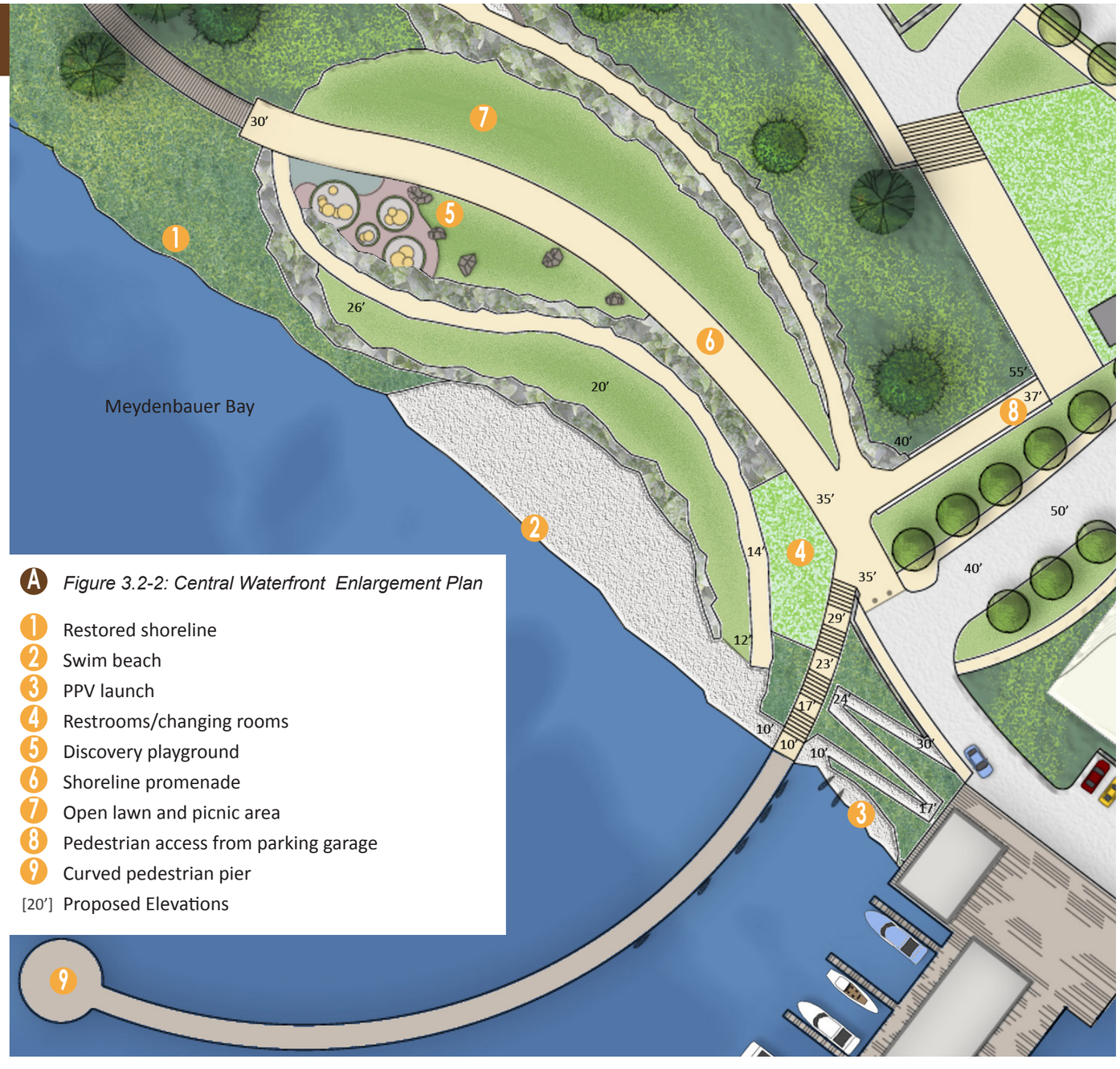
3.2 Public Park Zones

Ravine

The west end of the park, located in a forested ravine setting, is currently developed as an intimate neighborhood park with restrooms, a play area, a public pier, and beach located near the outfall of a storm drain. The Plan proposes to relocate these recreational uses in order to daylight and restore the native stream that currently flows through a drainage pipe with an outfall that discharges directly into the lake near the swim area. Native vegetation will be retained and managed to remove invasive plants and promote the succession of native species. Ecological functions will be restored and stormwater cleansed before it reaches the bay. Existing parking, located upstream, will be retained to support community access. In this zone, the shoreline promenade connects to a slightly elevated bridge from which visitors overlook, but are restricted from entering, the restored creek and landscape. The existing wetland located along the shoreline at the north end of Meydenbauer Beach Park will be relocated and modified to a more natural state near the mouth of the daylighted stream.

A *Figure 3.2-1: Ravine Enlargement Plan*

1. Partially daylighted stream with adjacent trails
2. Ravine enhancements (retain and enhance forested areas; remove invasive plants)
3. Retain existing parking (28 spaces) and entry road
4. Footbridge over daylighted stream



A *Figure 3.2-2: Central Waterfront Enlargement Plan*

1. Restored shoreline
2. Swim beach
3. PPV launch
4. Restrooms/changing rooms
5. Discovery playground
6. Shoreline promenade
7. Open lawn and picnic area
8. Pedestrian access from parking garage
9. Curved pedestrian pier

[20′] Proposed Elevations

Central Waterfront

Land in the central waterfront zone has been acquired for park expansion. Homes remain occupied by previous owners or tenants prior to park development. The Plan proposes a new and larger beach, a new restroom and changing facility, a custom designed playground with elements that encourage creative and unstructured play, and a shoreline promenade connecting the ravine to the marina. The distinguishing and memorable feature of this zone is the curved overwater boardwalk that provides new connections over the water, moorage for people-propelled vessels (PPVs) such as canoes and kayaks, and definition of the swim area and new views of the lake, shoreline, and beach. The proposed waterfront will balance shoreline and water-dependent uses with ecological concerns. All of the small public and private accessory piers and shoreline armoring within this zone will be removed to promote improved near-shore habitat contiguous with the mouth of the daylighted stream. The shoreline area north of the new beach will be restored to a more natural state with gradual slopes and native vegetation.

Lake

Both land and water contribute to a memorable waterfront park experience. The lake is a point of arrival and host to a range of activities including swimming, water play, and moorage. Meydenbauer Bay is small, and the Plan carefully locates new facilities to provide recreational and visual access, promote safety, protect the shoreline, encourage restoration of fish habitat, and improve water quality. Resource management strategies along the water's edge vary depending on the use. Overwater walks and docks are located and designed to improve access and yet control and limit access points to encourage reestablishment of riparian vegetation and shoreline habitat.

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1. Expanded Pier 1
2. Removal of Piers 2 and 3
3. Whaling Building and Ice House remain
4. Short-term parking and drop-off area (8 spaces)
5. Floating boardwalk with transient moorage
6. Restore shoreline
7. Shoreline promenade
8. Elevated viewpoint with access to lower boardwalk

[20'] Proposed Elevations

Marina

Meydenbauer Bay has a unique existing and historical waterfront that could provide a number of opportunities for the community to celebrate the rich heritage of the bay. Originally, the shoreline of Meydenbauer Bay was undeveloped. Throughout the early 1910s, and prior to the construction of the I-90 and 520 bridges, transportation between Seattle and Bellevue was by ferry. The Leschi ferry began operating in 1913 and ran through 1950 (HistoryLink.org 2008). Following the opening of the Lake Washington Ship Canal in 1917, the American Pacific Whaling Company wintered their whaling boats at Meydenbauer Bay to keep them out of the salt water (HistoryLink.org 2008). Two original buildings remain at the marina today: the Whaling Building and the Ice House (Eastside Heritage Center 2007). Meydenbauer Bay has been the location of pristine shoreline habitat, public access, ferry transportation, and public and private vessel moorage. To date, the City has worked to maintain a number of these elements in Meydenbauer Bay, and the Plan envisions opportunities to enhance many of them.

The park will continue to provide long-term and transient moorage with fewer ecological impacts. Modifications to the marina will follow the Clean Marina Certification program guidelines. The waterfront and the marina will provide facilities to support canoeing, kayaking, and sailing. The amount of long-term moorage will be reduced and reconfigured to open up views of the bay, reduce shading of the shoreline, and allow for shoreline restoration and habitat improvement. Pier 1 will be expanded to the south to increase capacity of Pier 1 to 38-48 long-term moorage slips. Fourteen designated transient moorage slips will be provided either on Pier 1 or next to the floating boardwalk. The Whaling Building will be preserved and adapted for community use, such as education or interpretive uses.

A sewage pump-out facility will be incorporated on Pier 1. The exact location of the facility, to be determined during detailed design phases, will need to consider adequate water depth and navigable channel width for boat access.

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Hillside

The park hillside zone is located adjacent to and above the central waterfront. Currently the site of nine City-owned single-family homes, this zone offers expansive views and the opportunity to develop trail connections and unique sites for sunbathing, picnicking, interpretation, and education. A play area will be integrated into an attractive rock outcrop that serves as an informal classroom and extension of the sunning lawn area, which will be a distinguishing landscape feature. New parkland adjacent to Lake Washington Boulevard provides an opportunity to continue the Olmstead legacy of regional waterfront parkways. The Plan proposes an attractive streetscape with a vehicle pull-off, short-term parking, scenic overlooks, an upland green space, and a new approximately 8,000 sf community activity building with structured parking below. New trails and an elevator associated with the new community activity building will enhance connections and access between the upland terrace and the water. Pedestrians exiting the parking garage will find themselves close to the elevation of the proposed shoreline promenade and public beach. Storage space is envisioned in the lower level of the activity building to support park and marina programs. The proposed activity building and adjacent site development are envisioned to include best practices for sustainable sites and buildings.

The activity building program uses will relate to the adjacent family-oriented outdoor spaces. Educational activities will cover topics such as boating, swimming, and bay and lake ecology. This space will be used to support a series of organized programs throughout the park, such as summer day-camps, and will provide opportunities to enjoy the park in inclement weather.

A *Figure 3.2-4: Hillside Enlargement Plan*

1 Outdoor classroom

2 Enhanced hillside woodland

3 Grand viewing terrace with vehicle pull-off

4 Activity building with parking below

5 Parallel parking

6 Parking garage vehicular entrance

[20'] Proposed Elevations

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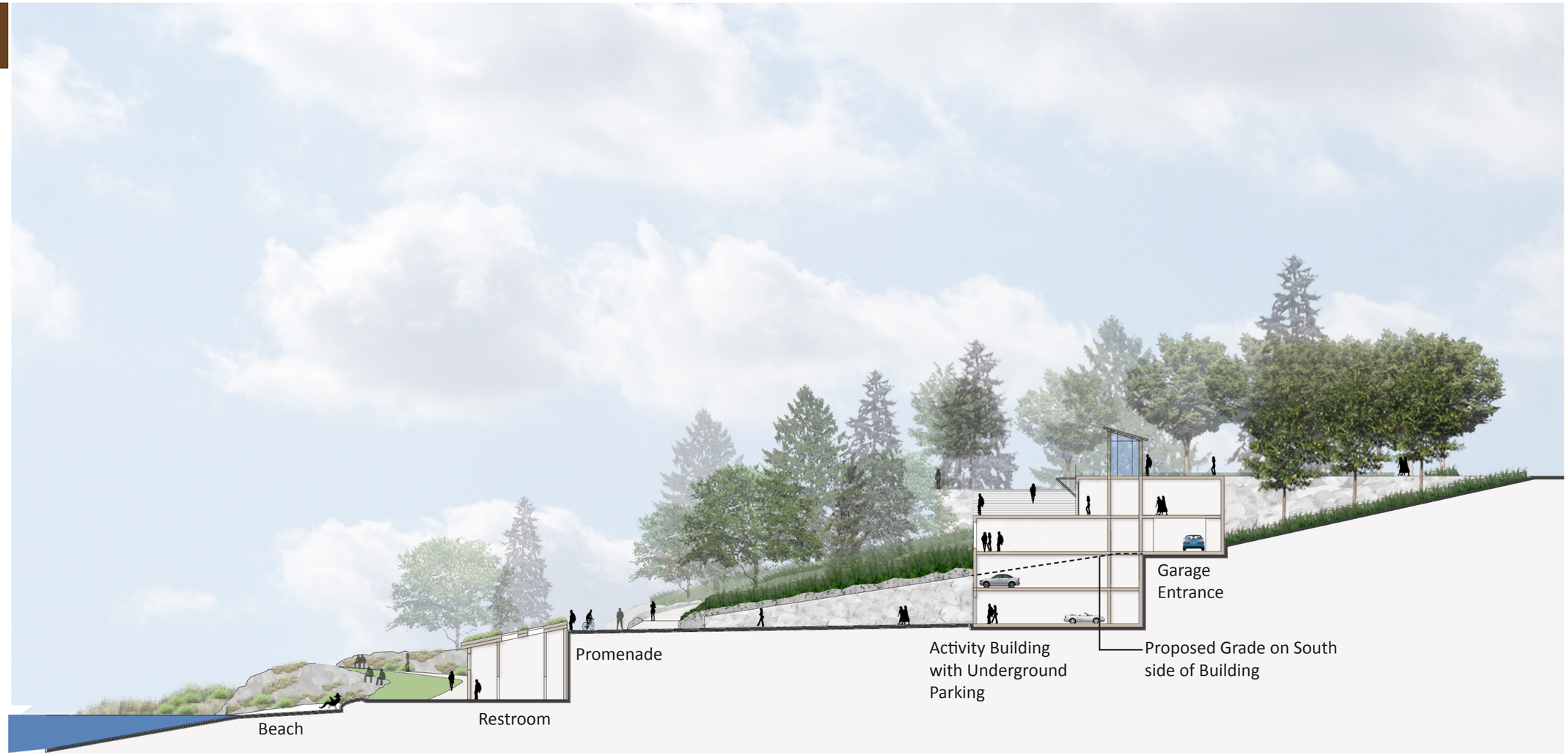

A *Figure 3.2-5: Section/Elevation A-A' Hillside and Central Waterfront Zones*

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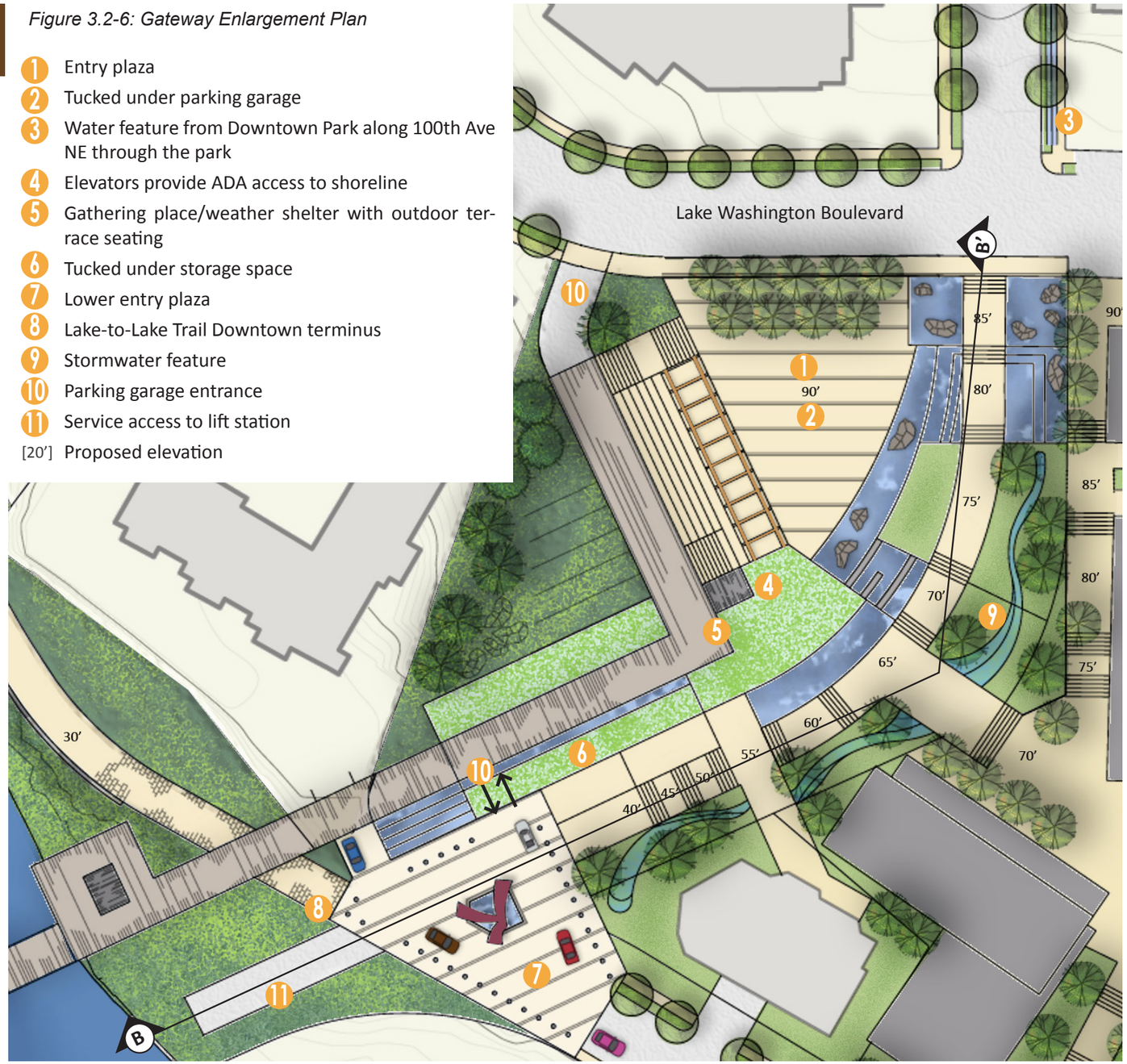
Figure 3.2-6: Gateway Enlargement Plan

1. Entry plaza
2. Tucked under parking garage
3. Water feature from Downtown Park along 100th Ave NE through the park
4. Elevators provide ADA access to shoreline
5. Gathering place/weather shelter with outdoor terrace seating
6. Tucked under storage space
7. Lower entry plaza
8. Lake-to-Lake Trail Downtown terminus
9. Stormwater feature
10. Parking garage entrance
11. Service access to lift station

[20′] Proposed elevation



Gateway

In 2007, the City of Bellevue acquired a kite-shaped parcel of land located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Main Street and 100th Avenue. With this purchase the City gained a tremendous opportunity to develop a dramatic public space and strong connection from the City's waterfront marina to Main Street and Downtown Park; a connection celebrating views, improving accessibility, and introducing engaging uses and activities. Treatment of this kite-shaped, steeply sloping parcel was the most discussed park zone during the master planning process. Several alternative designs were explored and evaluated. Ultimately, the Plan recommends the development of a series of dynamic public spaces with layers of activities and uses. A street level entry plaza with engaging art, landscaping, and water features serves as a gateway to the park as well as a terminus of Old Bellevue's Main Street. Structured parking will be located underground beneath the entry plaza. 100th Avenue SE will be transformed into a pedestrian place with a wide stairway and generous viewing terraces framed by memorable water features and terminating in a lower entry plaza at the water's edge. The lower entry plaza will be designed to be safely shared by people and cars. A new structure tucked into the hillside will provide small boat storage and provide a rooftop public gathering space. This linear park will connect to an elevated pier that extends to the water's edge, providing new views of Lake Washington, Seattle, and the bay. The grade transitions between the street level entry plaza and the shoreline include elevators as well as an exterior route with stairs, terraced seating, and a sheltered overlook.

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A *Figure 3.2-7: Section/Elevation B-B' Gateway Zone*

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Figure 3.2-8a: Visual Simulation of Meydenbauer Bay Park's Entry Plaza at the Gateway Zone

Figure 3.2-8b: Photo Looking West from the Intersection of 100th Avenue and Main Street

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A *Figure 3.2-9a: Visual Simulation of Meydenbauer Bay Park's Lower Entry Plaza at the Gateway Zone*

B *Figure 3.2-9b: Photo Looking Northeast from the Western Terminus of Meydenbauer Way SE*

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3.3 Properties Adjacent to Public Park Lands

Uplands

The Plan addresses two distinct upland areas: the "Upper Block," which is surrounded by NE 1st Street, 100th Avenue NE, Lake Washington Boulevard NE, and 99th Avenue NE; and "South of Main," which lies along 100th Avenue SE/Bellevue Place SE, generally between Main Street and Meydenbauer Way SE. Both areas include medium density multi-family residential. South of Main includes a mix of commercial, retail, and residential uses. Properties in the Upper Block contain two-to five-story apartments, condominiums, and office buildings. These areas have been identified as prime for infill and redevelopment with inherent opportunities to improve the pedestrian environment, views, and pedestrian connections between Main Street and Meydenbauer Bay. The Plan illustrates a conceptual land use plan developed by Sasaki Associates in collaboration with the Steering Committee in 2007.

The Plan recommends redevelopment of portions of the uplands to provide an improved pedestrian environment, a transition between the new waterfront park and the downtown, and other public amenities. Redevelopment will also facilitate more graceful pedestrian connections from Old Bellevue and other nearby neighborhoods to the shoreline. The Plan envisions land use to be largely residential with small-scale commercial and pedestrian-oriented retail south of Main Street to provide neighborhood services and activate the pedestrian connection to the waterfront.

A *Figure 3.3-1: South of Main Enlargement Plan*

1 Parking garage entrance
2 Informal seating
3 Water feature
4 Street level retail
5 Pedestrian plaza
6 Terraced seating
7 Wildwood Park connection
[20'] Proposed elevation

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A *Figure 3.3-2a: Visual Simulation of Meydenbauer Bay Park from Meydenbauer Bay*

B *Figure 3.3-2b: Photo Looking Northeast from Meydenbauer Bay*

(Note: These photo simulations provide representative views of the alternatives from properties across the bay and are not intended to depict the view from any specific property.)

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B

Yacht Club

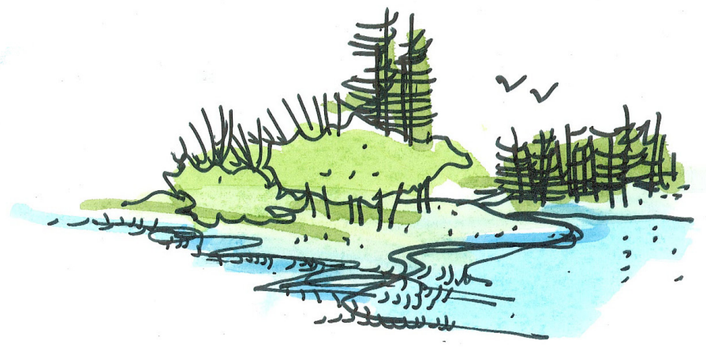
The Meydenbauer Bay Yacht Club borders the South of Main sub area to the southwest, and the City's marina abuts the Club's marina at the shoreline. This privately owned property includes facilities and operates programs that are compatible with and complement the Plan vision, such as the Youth Sailing program. No changes are proposed.

Neighborhoods

Preservation of the existing residential neighborhood character of areas located along both sides of Lake Washington Boulevard, east of the existing Meydenbauer Beach Park, and west of 101st Avenue NE is a priority. Connections between these neighborhoods, Wildwood Park, and the new waterfront park will be enhanced through the improvement of streetscapes, pathways, and upland green spaces.

A *Figure 3.3-3: Youth Sailing Programs*

B *Figure 3.3-4: Meydenbauer Bay Yacht Club*



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