

# **CONTEXT STATEMENT**

## **THE CENTRAL WATERFRONT**

PREPARED FOR: THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM  
DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS, CITY OF SEATTLE

November 2006

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## **THE CENTRAL WATERFRONT**

### **CONTEXT STATEMENT for THE 2006 SURVEY AND INVENTORY**

#### **Central Waterfront Neighborhood Boundaries and Definitions**

For this study, the Central Waterfront neighborhood covers the waterfront from Battery Street to Columbia Street, and in the east-west direction, from the waterfront to the west side of First Avenue. In addition, it covers a northern area from Battery Street to Broad Street, and in the east-west direction, from Elliott Bay to the west side of Elliott Avenue. In contrast, in many studies, the Central Waterfront refers only to the actual waterfront, usually from around Clay Street to roughly Pier 48 and only extends to the east side of Alaskan Way. This study therefore includes the western edge of Belltown and the corresponding western edge of Downtown. Since it is already an historic district, the Pike Place Market Historic District was not specifically surveyed. Although Alaskan Way and the present shoreline were only built up beginning in the 1890s, the waterfront's earliest inhabitants, the Native Americans, have long been familiar with this area, the original shoreline and its vicinity.

#### **Native Peoples**

There had been Duwamish encampments along or near Elliott Bay, long before the arrival of the Pioneers in the early 1850s. In fact, the name "Duwamish" is derived from that people's original name for themselves, "duwAHBSH," which means "inside people," and referred to the protected location of their settlements inside the waters of Elliott Bay.<sup>1</sup>

The cultural traditions of the Duwamish and other coastal Salish tribes were based on reverence for the natural elements and on the change of seasons. One of their primary activities was fishing. They devised what were, at the time, sophisticated fishing techniques, which included nets, weirs and hook and line. They constructed longhouses, which operated as gathering places and were used for important social ceremonies. These included marriages, healing ceremonies, dancing and singing and traditional storytelling, based on tribal legends.<sup>2</sup>

One of the early encampments was a winter village, known as Djicjila'letc, located roughly at the intersection of First Avenue South and Yesler Way. Although technically located within the Pioneer Square Historic District and slightly to the south of the Central Waterfront, it has a strong relation to the development of the waterfront. The original site consisted of a low isthmus that connected high ground to the north with an island to the south, set along a tidal marsh to the east. A path crossing the isthmus gave the location its name, Djicjila'letc (dje-djee-lah-letsh), which in Lushootseed means "little crossing-over place." In this location, the Duwamish are supposed to have built eight, large longhouses, each about 60 feet by 120 feet. One of the most sizeable villages along Elliott Bay, it once had a population of as many as 200 people. Among the modern Duwamish, the site is still sometimes known as Djicjila'letc.<sup>3</sup>

Located farther north, at the foot of Bell Street, on what is known as the Belltown Ravine, was another Duwamish encampment, known as Ba'qbaqwab, which means "little prairies." Ba'qbaqwab may have been considered an entrance to the real "prairies," which extended between Queen Anne Hill and the former Denny Hill, and included the site of the present Seattle Center.<sup>4</sup> In use long before the arrival of the pioneers, the area had the advantage of being located close to the Sound and to a local spring. Ba'qbaqwab was known for its salal berries and is supposed to have been the site of two longhouses. Based on the accounts of pioneer settlers such as Sophie Frye Bass and Abbie Denny-Lindsey, by around the 1860s, the longhouses were not in evidence, but there were modest beach structures. The pioneer presence also caused further changes in the existence of the Duwamish, who had also established a burial ground at located at the foot Seneca Street.<sup>5</sup>

After the incorporation of the town of Seattle, centered around Djicjila'letc (and the future Pioneer Square Historic District), an ordinance, published in the Seattle Gazette on February 7, 1865, prohibited Native Americans from camping on "any street, highway, lane or alley or any vacant lot in the town of Seattle." According to David Buerge, it is likely that many Duwamish living at Djicjila'letc moved north to Ba'qbaqwab and that, as a result, the population of the northern encampment swelled. Since, as a result of the ordinance, the burial ground at Seneca Street would also have been off limits, it is probable that another cemetery was established, possibly slightly north of Ba'qbaqwab. (Evidence of a Native American burial site was discovered in 1912 and in

the 1990s during the excavation for construction of the Bell Harbor Conference Center). In addition, although Chief Seattle died at Suquamish in 1866, for a brief period before his death, he may have lived at Ba'qbaqwab among the exiles from Djicjila'letc.<sup>6</sup>

Chief Seattle's daughter, Princess Angeline, is also associated with the early waterfront. Although the exact location of her beach shack has not been determined, a variety of photos from the 1890s indicate that it was most probably located between Pike and Pine Streets along the shoreline.<sup>7</sup> By the 1880s and 1890s, the Duwamish also camped on Ballast Island, a mound created from the ballast and other material dumped by ships. The island was located at the foot of Washington Street, near the original Ocean Dock.<sup>8</sup> By the end of the 1890s, the Native American encampments along the waterfront were gone. Ballast Island was first planked over, as part of the continuation of Railroad Avenue, south of Yesler Way. Shortly after, it was dredged.<sup>9</sup>

Subtle vestiges of the Native American presence remained, however, and often played an important role in the subsequent development of Seattle. As early as the mid-1870s, a federal topographical map indicated a trail which ran from the Belltown Ravine, the site of Ba'qbaqwab to South Lake Union. An important trail, built by the Native Americans, it was noted in an 1878 interview by William N. Bell, the subsequent owner of what became Belltown and the Denny Triangle. In fact, early on, after the pioneers had staked their claims in 1853, tribesmen had informed both Bell and Carson Boren of the trail's existence. The trail continued to be important in linking the waterfront and Belltown to South Lake Union and the Denny Triangle. It also represents an interesting connection between the original Native American culture, its view of the land and the later development of Seattle.<sup>10</sup>

What became the heart of the original town of Seattle was in the general location of the present Pioneer Square Historic District (up to King Street). By the early 1850s, David Maynard, Henry Yesler and Carson Boren owned land in this area. Henry Yesler is credited for the first landfill project along the original shoreline. In 1853, Yesler built the city's first sawmill on marshy land located roughly at today's First Avenue and Yesler Way. The western portion of the mill was supported on pilings and was augmented by what became Yesler's Wharf, which extended into Elliott Bay. This somewhat makeshift and ever expanding structure was Seattle's first pier. Yesler

created additional support for the mill and wharf, as well as new land mass for further expansion, by dumping ballast, sawdust and other detritus created by his mill, onto the marsh and surrounding shore.<sup>11</sup> By 1859, when Yesler extended the wharf further into Elliott Bay, it was still the only wharf along the shoreline. He made the next addition to the north end of the wharf structure in 1875, this time to provide space for large bins for coal brought from the Renton and Talbot coal companies. Yesler subsequently not only extended the pier even further into Elliott Bay, but he also added more buildings. Although by 1882, there were certainly other wharfs, the seemingly ever-expanding Yesler's Wharf was considered the center of commerce in the Puget Sound.<sup>12</sup> At that time, the shoreline itself, particularly from about Pike Street to Cherry Street, did not extend much beyond First Avenue.<sup>13</sup>

North of the original heart of the city, William Bell, Arthur and David Denny, Carson Boren and Thomas Mercer and their families also staked their claims. The Bell claim encompassed the northern portion of the present central waterfront area, from the present Denny Way to Bell Street and included First Avenue. To the south of Bell's claim, the rest was mainly the property of Arthur A. Denny. A small southern portion, located roughly between Marion and Columbia and south to Cherry Street, belonged for a time to Carson Boren, although his actual claim extended farther south.<sup>14</sup> Of course, all of these claims ran much farther east than First Avenue. In any case, Arthur A. Denny and William Bell played significant roles in the early development of the larger central waterfront and First Avenue area.

### **Arthur A. Denny**

Although Arthur Denny made many contributions to the development of Seattle and died in 1899 a very wealthy man, his personality and even his achievements are usually not described as being particularly colorful. Even Clarence Bagley oddly truncates his account of Arthur Denny's life and does not discuss, for instance, Denny's early survey work for the future site of Seattle. The son of Robert Denny, a Kentucky volunteer in the War of 1812, Arthur Armstrong Denny was born near Salem, Indiana in 1822. He worked as a surveyor in Knox County, Illinois during the 1840s, before making the trip west with other pioneers, in April 1851, from Cherry Grove, Illinois to Oregon. On November 8, 1851, the schooner *Exact* began the five day voyage, which carried Arthur Denny and

the rest of the Denny Party, which included Denny, Terry, Boren and Low families, to what became known as Alki.<sup>15</sup>

Much has been made of Arthur Denny's somewhat ascetic and cautious personality, but he was considered the leader of the Denny Party. He also led the survey expedition, during which, using his wife's clothesline and a horseshoe, he first sounded Elliott Bay's shores and established the site for the future town of Seattle. His William Bell and Carson Boren and his brother, David Denny also participated in this important expedition and staked claims north of the future town in 1852.<sup>16</sup>

Arthur A. Denny's larger land claim, located due north of the original heart of Seattle, later became the center of present day downtown Seattle, but at the time, it was not considered all that desirable. Within this claim, he donated "Denny's Knoll" for the original site of the Territorial University, later the University of Washington, in 1861. Denny also became a politician. He was elected to the first session of the Washington State legislature and served as a member of Congress. Denny was involved in a wide array of business activities and became the vice president of the Dexter Horton Bank. While his brother David Denny took more risks, but eventually lost a fortune in trolley line investments, Arthur Denny is generally credited, especially by Clarence Bagley, for his judiciousness and keen business sense. He was responsible for platting a good part of Seattle up to Broadway, sometimes in tandem with other early pioneers.<sup>17</sup>

### **William and Sarah Bell – the Bell Family and Personal Reverses**

His associate, William Nathaniel Bell was the son of Susan Meacham, who was from Vermont and of Jesse Bell, a North Carolina native, who moved to Illinois in 1811. Born on a farm near Edwardsville, Illinois in 1817, Bell was thirty four years old when he arrived with his wife, the former Sarah Ann Peter, at Alki in the winter of 1851. The couple also brought their four daughters, after whom Bell later named several Seattle streets, including Olive and Virginia Streets. A son, Austin Americus Bell, was born in 1854 and was the second pioneer child to be born in Seattle.<sup>18</sup> The lives of the Bell family members, including their personal reverses, partially explain the manner in which Belltown developed and is also relevant to the larger central waterfront.

Once the Bells had staked their claim in April of 1852, William Bell built a log cabin located on a low bluff overlooking Elliott Bay and roughly between what are today Battery and Bell Streets. According to Mary McLaughlan, a direct descendant of Bell's daughter Laura Keziah Bell, in order to build the cabin, Bell first symbolically felled a tree. He then cut it into lengths, which he then notched and used to build the structure's "foundation."<sup>19</sup>

The lives of the Bell Family, and for that matter, those of most of the other pioneers, were soon seriously upset by the Battle of Seattle of 1856. The Battle of Seattle was a one day battle which took place in Seattle between Native American tribes and local pioneers. It was part of a larger set of clashes, which had been occurring for months, mainly in southern King County, between the end of 1855 and early 1856. Native American tribes were dissatisfied with a series of treaties made between them and the U. S. Government. In treaties such as the Point Elliott Treaty, tribes had typically agreed to cede their lands in return for cash and access to traditional hunting and fishing grounds; however, they had begun to question many of the provisions of these treaties, which the U. S. Congress took a long time to ratify.<sup>20</sup>

According to most accounts, on January, 1856, Chief Seattle and his daughter, Princess Angeline, warned the pioneers of the imminent attack. Most of the Seattle pioneers, as well as refugees from south King County, found safe haven in a blockhouse, located on what is now First Avenue and Cherry St, in the present-day Pioneer Square Historic District. Although artillery fire from the U. S. Navy sloop, Decatur, stationed nearby in Elliott Bay, soon put an end to the attack, the Bell's house, built on the site of the original log cabin, burnt down.<sup>21</sup>

Although prior to the one day battle, Bell had actually moved with his family to a house he shared with the Holgate Family at Second and Cherry (within C. D. Boren's claim), the destruction of his house during the battle made a profound impression on him.<sup>22</sup> In a letter written to Arthur Denny two days after the Battle, William Bell seemed convinced that the attacking tribes would return: "The Indians we suppose are back near the lake (Washington) where they must be from 500 to 1000 strong and say they will give us three months siege.." In fact, later attacks, which were rare, also turned out to be very minor.<sup>23</sup>

Another serious challenge was Sarah Bell's ill health. Even before the Battle of Seattle, the Bell daughters had been caring for their mother, who had tuberculosis. The combination of reverses convinced the family to move away from their claim to Napa, California, soon after the battle.<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, Sarah Bell only survived until June 27 of 1856. Bell returned for a time to the Seattle area in the 1860s, in order to plat his land, but he did not permanently return to his claim until 1870.<sup>25</sup> Upon his return to Seattle in 1870, Bell found that his land was very valuable. He sold a number of his lots, although he seems to have kept the bulk of his original claim.<sup>26</sup> He is credited by Clarence Bagley for his generosity and his civic engagement upon his return to Seattle.<sup>27</sup>

In 1883, William Bell built the Bell Hotel, later renamed the Bellevue Hotel, on the east side of Front Street, now called First Avenue (and located across the street from the eastern edge of our study area). It was located just north of the site of the future Austin Bell Building, later commissioned during the late 1880s by his son, Austin Bell. For the time, the Bell Hotel was a somewhat grand building, with a mansard roof and a central tower, which faced west along First Avenue.<sup>28</sup> Around 1875, Bell also built what turned out to be the last of the Bell Family homes, also located on the east side of First Avenue, between Bell and Battery Streets and south of the future Austin A. Bell building. A photo from around the mid-1880s shows a simple clapboard sided house, with Italianate bays and other decorative detailing.<sup>29</sup> William Bell mostly remained in Seattle from 1870 until his death in 1887, although he apparently traveled to Illinois in 1872 to marry Lucy Gamble, his wife's sister.<sup>30</sup> He was subject to fits of depression and by the early 1880s, was an invalid.<sup>31</sup>

Meanwhile, Austin Bell, who was about two years old, when his mother, Sarah Bell died, had remained in California for most the decade between 1877 and 1887. Upon William Bell's death, Austin returned to Seattle to administer the properties he had inherited. The former I. O. O. F. Hall, designed by the architecture firm of Boone and Meeker, was completed in 1889. Austin Bell also commissioned Elmer Fisher to design the building now known as the "Austin A. Bell Building," but never saw its completion. Although Austin Bell was very financially successful, he was apparently afraid that he had inherited his father's mental problems and took his life in April of 1889. Eva Bell, Austin's wife, supervised the construction of the building, which upon its completion, was inscribed with the following: "Austin A. Bell, 1889."<sup>32</sup>

### **General Appearance of the town before the Great Fire and the Question of the Railroads**

By the late 1880s, despite the relative sophistication of a few buildings, including the brick and stone Austin A. Bell Building, the Frye Opera House at Front and Marion Streets and the Yesler-Leary Building on Yesler Way, most of the buildings, houses or commercial buildings, were simple wood structures, with perhaps a modest amount of Victorian detailing. Yesler's Wharf was, by far, one of the largest and most important piers and the waterfront was becoming an important transportation hub.<sup>33</sup>

Throughout the 1860s and most of the early 1870s, along with other cities, such as Olympia, Tacoma, Steilacoom, Mukilteo and Port Townsend, Seattle vied to become the terminus for the Northern Pacific Railway's transcontinental service. After many years of anticipation, in 1873, Arthur Denny received a telegram announcing that Tacoma had been chosen as the Northern Pacific terminus. Although at the time, this was perceived as a great setback, Seattle compensated for it in a variety of ways. It first set out to build its own railway, the Seattle and Walla Walla, although ultimately, in large part because of the Northern Pacific's lack of cooperation, service was inefficient.<sup>34</sup>

In 1887, the Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern tracks were completed along a very uneven path, which followed the shoreline. The odd shape of the track was known as the "Ramshorn." The Seattle Lake Shore and Eastern depot was built near the foot of Columbia Street, on Western Avenue. It later served for a time as Seattle's official train depot. The line itself was purchased by the Northern Pacific during the early 1890s. During the same period, James J. Hill's Great Northern Railway became Seattle's second transcontinental line. By 1893, the tracks still stopped at Smith Cove, north of the central waterfront, but the Great Northern was granted a right of way along the central waterfront from the north of the city to the southern tideflats. In order to create space for both the Great Northern, as well as the Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern's "ramshorn" track arrangement, Railroad Avenue was given a width of 120 feet. Its eastern boundary was set outside the high tide line, which meant that the avenue was located in the water.<sup>35</sup>

Because Seattle was not originally chosen as the terminus for the Northern Pacific Railroad, its economy began to rely more heavily on independently owned steamers and schooners, later in the

1890s, dubbed the “mosquito fleet.”<sup>36</sup> As early as 1853, ocean-going vessels were transporting lumber from Seattle to San Francisco. By 1854, there were four lines of packets, which mainly transported lumber. Seattle was already considered a major Western commercial center. By 1880, exports shipped from the Seattle region included not only lumber and coal, but also grain and wheat and other products. While Tacoma had something of an advantage, because it had finally been chosen as the Northern Pacific Terminus, Seattle continued to fight hard and to retain its lead as the major commercial hub on the Puget Sound. By 1888, Seattle had developed a much larger system of steamers, as well as sailing vessels, which mainly transported goods to and from Seattle and around the Puget Sound. The sizes of the actual shipments also increased dramatically from what they had been in 1880. In addition, in December 1888, the City of Seattle, the first ferry steamer to run from Seattle to West Seattle, made her initial voyage. Other steamers were subsequently added to the fleet. While in early June of 1889, the harbor continued to thrive, occurrences on land challenged the city and the harbor’s well-being and economy.<sup>37</sup>

### **The Great Fire of 1889 - Development in the 1890s of the Bell and A. A. Denny Lands**

On June 6, 1889, a fire started in a cabinet shop on First Avenue and Madison Street. Based on historian Clarence Bagley’s description, the fire was at first concentrated on First Avenue around Madison, Marion and Columbia Streets; but it soon spread, both north and south, igniting about thirty blocks of the heart of Seattle. Along First Avenue, the fire spread as far north as Spring Street. Along the waterfront, it obliterated all the waterfront structures until Union Street, including Yesler’s Wharf, but spared the Schwabacher Dock. The rebuilding of what became known shortly after the fire as the “burnt district,” now the Pioneer Square Historic District, has been well documented.<sup>38</sup> It is mainly relevant here, because of its effect on the Bell and A. A. Denny properties, as well as on the harbor.

After the Great Fire, much energy was put into the rebuilding of Seattle’s center in brick, stone and terra cotta. As a result, Belltown was not developed to any great extent, and for some time. Even before the Panic of 1893, the Austin A. Bell Building became known as “Bell’s Folly.”<sup>39</sup> Outside of the block developed by members of the Bell Family, by the 1890s, most of the buildings on the Bell lands continued to be simple, wood frame buildings, many with pitched roofs. Some were multi-story and combined utilitarian functions with lodgings above. There were also many individual

houses and “cabins.” On the west side of First Avenue, one of the few buildings of brick and stone was the Hull Building, also designed by Elmer Fisher and completed in 1890. It still stands on the northwest corner of First Avenue and Battery Street, (slightly outside the study area).<sup>40</sup>

Augustus Koch’s famous map, “Seattle and Environs,” from 1891 and Sanborn Maps from 1893 give a fairly good sense of the post-fire physical layout of the Bell and A. A. Denny lands and their vicinity. Moving toward the waterfront, there were several streets parallel to Front Street. Within the Central waterfront area, West Street, now Western Avenue, was already a long street, which ran from as far north as Depot Street, now Denny Way, south to past Columbia Street. Another street, was Water Street (which was later transformed into Elliott Avenue). As the name “Water Street” indicates, it ran close to the water, from Lake Street, now Broad Street, to Bell Street. In general, a variety of docks, usually set perpendicular to the shoreline, were already built out into the water. The railroad tracks of both the Seattle Lake Shore and Eastern Railroad and the Great Northern Railroad were mostly set out on the water between the docks or near the shore. This was the case of the Seattle Lake Shore and Eastern Railroad, particularly from Virginia Street and points north. In the late 1880s, the Great Northern tracks only ran from Smith Cove to points north. In addition, south of Jackson Street, a whole series of tracks were built, many well away from the shoreline, with several crossing the Sound to points west or farther south.<sup>41</sup>

On Sanborn maps from 1893, north of Blanchard Street, few businesses are called out. Between Vine and Wall Streets, the Green Ehrlich Gross Shingle Mill was located on the water and the Seattle Siding Mill stood south of Wall Street, between the railroad tracks and Water Street. There was also a coal bunker, located north of Cedar Street, east of the railroad tracks.

South of Blanchard Street, maps indicate considerably more business activity along the waterfront, as well as along West and Front Streets (Western and First Avenues). Because the Great Fire of 1889 spread north on Front Street as far as Spring Street, everything below Spring St, particularly on Front Street, changed considerably after the late 1880s.<sup>42</sup> The Schwabacher Dock and “Warehouse No.1”, located near the foot of Union St survived the fire, while neighboring piers to the south did not. Directly across the railroad tracks from this warehouse, was a second smaller warehouse, Schwabacher Warehouse No.2., as well as a larger Schwabacher Brothers building. This

last building or, most likely, a successor building, designed by Saunders and Lawton in 1910, still stands (1414 Alaskan Way). On the water, south of the Schwabacher Dock, was the much smaller fire boat wharf.

Near the foot of Seneca Street, was a pier, where Ainsworth and Dunn's first "Fish, Hay and Feed" warehouse was located. Moving south, close to the foot of Spring Street, was the Harbor Master's dock and further to the south, Towles and Peters Boat House. Near the foot of Madison Street, there was a coal bunker and then another narrow fire boat pier. At the foot of Marion St, a warehouse for the "G. G. Willey Cement Lime and Plaster" adjoined the distinctively shaped West Seattle Ferry Dock, which in turn was located next to the "Coleman Dock Warehouse," (spelled here "Coleman," and not "Colman"), which included a waiting room, marked on the map. Near the foot of Columbia St, "Coleman's Boat House on Float" was sited near "Budlong's Boat House."

In these 1890s maps, businesses identified along West Street suggest fishing related businesses were not yet as important as they would be in later years. Several warehouses, however, were used to store "hay grain and feed." Off of Seneca Street, for instance, Atkinson and Zerwech, as well as Harkness and Hibbard, both had such businesses. The "Seattle Feed Mill" was located off of University Street, with the "Teamsters Feed Stable" nearby. Between University and Union, stood the Lilli Bogardus Hay and Feed Warehouse and the Washington Produce Hay Feed Warehouse. On the west side of the street, between Madison and Marion, there were Commission houses, as well as another grain and feed business.

More industrial uses were also housed along West Street. Diamond Ice Storage, which beginning in 1894 would play an early role in creating electricity in Seattle, owned a building on the southwest corner of Union and West Streets. A successor building, originally built for Diamond Ice Storage, still exists, although it has been significantly altered. On the block to south, were Vulcan Iron Works and the McLellan Machine and Blacksmith Shop. Between Marion and Columbia Streets, other businesses included the "Griffin Chemical Company," the "Washington Shoe Manufacturing Company," and a wholesale grocery.

Front Street, (now First Avenue), particularly from Pike to Columbia Streets, was generally less industrial and included many hotels and lodging houses. On the west side of the street, from Pike to Union streets alone, there were the “Palmer House Lodgings,” the YMCA gymnasium, and the “Weed House Lodgings.” Between Union and University Streets, was the “Post Edwards Building – Vendome Furnished Rooms.” A good portion of this building, originally designed by architect William E. Boone and completed in 1890, is still extant. Now the home of the “Lusty Lady” movie theater, the interior of the building was also later altered by engineer/ architect Henry Bittman. The block to the south, from University to Seneca Streets, also contained the “Arlington Hotel – Rooms,” not to be confused with the later Arlington Hotel, built subsequently one block to the south.

Located on the northwest corner of Front and University Street, the Gilmore and Kirkman Building, (later called the Arlington Hotel or the Arlington Victoria), since demolished, was another imposing building. It was distinguished by its repeated bays, consisting of paired arched openings, and by a corner turret. Completed in 1890, it was designed by the architectural partnership of Fisher and Clark, and then by Elmer Fisher.<sup>43</sup> A “wholesale plumbers supplies” business was located on the northwest corner of Front and Madison Streets. Behind it, closer to the alley to the west, was the “Seattle Brass Foundry.” A “Grand Hotel,” which appears to be on the site of the later Grand Pacific Hotel, was located on the block between Madison and Marion Streets. At the southern end of the Marion-Columbia Street block, stood the Puget Sound Savings Bank with an assay office at the basement level.

### **The Tidelands – Setting the Stage for their Development**

By the early 1890s, despite the Great Fire, First and Western Avenues, as well as the shoreline, clearly had a fair amount of business activity. Farther west, the tidelands, lands covered by water at high tide and exposed at low tide, were in great demand. Particularly during the late 1880s, large numbers of “tideland jumpers” scrambled to appropriate portions of the tidelands for themselves, while upland owners considered that the tideland properties belonged to them. Some citizens, such as Henry Yesler, had already built on the tidelands. In addition, over the years, railroad companies had been sold public land along the waterfront. Crowds of people competed with each other for the right to portions of the tidelands, making all sorts of “improvements,” from building docks to

cultivating oysters. In fact, until the declaration of statehood in 1889, the official stance of the U. S. Government was that it was holding the tidelands in trust for the future state and that all such activities were illegal.<sup>44</sup>

In July 1889, the Washington State Constitutional Convention officially established Washington as a state. The issue of the tidelands, both its ownership and future development, was a major and controversial topic. While railroad interests and other “private” owners lobbied for the right to private ownership and free enterprise, there was also a powerful lobby in favor of the public ownership of the tidelands.

The Convention delegates agreed to a compromise measure in which the state affirmed its ownership of the tidelands; however, those who owned or claimed ownership of tideland properties would be able to substantiate these claims, by applying to the courts. Article XV of the state Constitution also provided for a Harbor Lines Commission, which would create state-owned public harbors for incorporated cities and towns. It also established that the area “lying between any harbor line and the line of ordinary high tide, and within not less than fifty feet nor more than six hundred feet..” would not be “sold or granted by the state nor its right to control the same relinquished, but such an area shall be forever reserved for landings, wharves and streets and other conveniences of navigation and commerce.”<sup>45</sup>

Subsequently, the state legislature also passed a law, which provided for the sale of tidelands, located along the shorelines of towns or municipalities and therefore considered outside the Harbor Commission’s jurisdiction. In this case, upland owners had the first option to buy the lands, unless it was proven beyond a doubt that those presently occupying the lands had made significant improvements to them. While the Harbor Commission, as originally established, was disbanded in 1893, the Board of State Land Commissioners officially established Seattle’s harbor lines in 1894. This set the stage for the development and reclamation of the tidelands, not only south of Yesler Way, but along the central waterfront.<sup>46</sup>

### **Virgil Bogue – R. H. Thomson and the Waterfront**

During the 1890s, both Virgil Bogue and R. H. Thomson made important recommendations concerning the development of Seattle’s waterfront. Virgil Bogue, a nationally known civil engineer and city planner, was later to produce the Bogue Plan for the Municipal Plans Commission. At a public hearing of the Harbor Commission in 1890, Bogue made the suggestion that a public authority be created to administer each port in the state. Although resisted at first, primarily by railroad interests, this last recommendation set the stage for the future creation of the Port of Seattle. In 1895, a proposal by Bogue included a suggestion that the railroads adopt a common sized track along Railroad Avenue. He also recommended that they do away with separate switchings and crossings. Unfortunately these more concrete recommendations, based on his engineering and expertise planning and his past position as the Vice President of the Union Pacific Railroad, seem to have been mostly ignored.<sup>47</sup>

Another important player was Reginald Heber Thomson. He first arrived in Seattle in 1881 and became City Engineer in 1892.<sup>48</sup> Thomson and Assistant City Engineer George Cotterill were responsible for the 1897 Tidelands Replat that also required that all the waterfront piers would be rebuilt based on a new northeast-southwest alignment. In addition, piers, located north of Yesler Way, would be renumbered, beginning with “Pier 1.” Thomson is best known, however, for his energetic regrading of Seattle’s topography.<sup>49</sup>

### **The Denny Regrade’s Effect on First Avenue and its Environs – Seattle’s Growth**

Although there were a variety of warehouses, hotels and lodging houses established on Western and First Avenue by the early 1890s, City Engineer Thomson’s regrading efforts caused far reaching changes to the area. Thomson believed that Seattle’s many hills, and particularly Denny Hill, were a severe deterrent to transportation throughout the city and to Seattle’s development as a major metropolis. He called for the removal of Denny Hill and the regrading of major streets. The Denny Regrade took place in several phases from 1898 to 1930. Thomson’s autobiography documents the earlier phases of the regrading of Denny Hill and of neighboring thoroughfares. Others players were involved in the last phase of the Regrade, which took place during the late 1920s.

Thomson's regrading of First Avenue from Pike Street to Denny Way in 1898, as well the regrading of Second Avenue from Yesler Way to Denny Way, beginning in 1903, had an immediate impact. Between the First Avenue and Second Avenue regrades, there was also a time lag. As a result, there are a number of photographs, which date from around 1903 or even 1904, showing Front Street/First Avenue, bordered on its eastern flank by what appear to be raised blocks, with buildings sitting on top of them.<sup>50</sup> The regrading of 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue from Yesler Way to Pine Streets, begun in late 1905, had a more general effect: it improved access from First and Second Avenues to other parts of the city. The regrading of Pike and Pine Streets in 1902 further facilitated transportation from the waterfront and First Avenue to Capitol Hill along these streets. In addition, between 1907 and 1910, there was significant regrading of areas north and south of Denny Way, so that general access from the waterfront area and First Avenue to points north would be easier.<sup>51</sup>

Tying in with the Denny Regrade was Seattle's explosive physical growth, which occurred particularly from the 1900s to the early 1910s. The coming of the railroads and the Klondike Gold Rush, beginning in 1897, are credited with this economic and physical growth: in 1907, Seattle annexed six towns, including Ballard, and in 1910, annexed Georgetown. The Alaska Yukon Exposition of 1909, on the site of the future new University of Washington campus, also emphasized the importance of the new city.<sup>52</sup>

### **The Railroads, the Great Northern Tunnel and the Waterfront**

Seattle's economic growth would, in turn, become an impetus to modify certain elements of the physical waterfront, although it was a controversial subject. Powerful railroad entrepreneurs, who had a national reputation, as well as City Engineer Thomson, played important roles. By the late 1890s, the depot at Columbia Street was very run-down. According to most accounts, James J. Hill, then the owner of the Great Northern Railway, had originally wanted to replace it with a new depot, also located on the waterfront. R. H. Thomson is credited with convincing Hill to shelve the idea, although other citizens were still urging him to build. By 1899, Hill was not as interested in constructing a depot along the waterfront and even resisted it with comments like: "He is a wise farmer who develops his farm before he builds a palace on it."

During the same period, Charles Mellon, the president of the Northern Pacific Railroad, had been quietly buying property between Washington and University Streets along the waterfront. He envisioned an elegant depot there and circulated a perspective drawing of the proposed building, which was displayed in Seattle storefronts.<sup>53</sup>

As the Seattle City Council was about to grant several street vacations that would allow Charles Mellon to build his vision, James J. Hill sprung into action, arriving in Seattle, (by special train), soon enough to change the tide of opinion. He objected that a depot along the waterfront would mean additional tracks on Railroad Avenue and terrible congestion. He stood firmly against the siting of a depot along the waterfront, but opined that a new depot could be built “on the south side at some point at or near King Street.” True to his own words, between 1904 and 1906, Hill built King Street Station, on reclaimed tideflats at Third Avenue between Jackson and King Streets.<sup>54</sup> A second station, Union Station, was constructed close by, also on reclaimed tideflats, between 1910 and 1911 for Edward Henry Harriman’s Oregon-Washington Railway, a subsidiary of his Union Pacific. By the completion of Union Station, Hill and Harriman had agreed to collaborate and share tracks between Seattle and Portland.<sup>55</sup>

Before Hill could even complete King Street Station, however, City Engineer Thomson also prevailed upon him to build the Great Northern Tunnel. This ran from the southern portal, at Fourth Avenue South and South Washington Street, close to King Street Station, to a northern portal at Elliott Avenue between Stewart and Virginia Streets. The tunnel was complete by the end of 1905, but was not used until the completion of King Street Station in May of 1906. It ensured a direct connection to the waterfront, but helped free Railroad Avenue from excessive and additional congestion.<sup>56</sup> Given how congested Railroad Avenue ultimately became by the 1930s, Thomson’s insights served the waterfront well.

### **The Waterfront - Development between the 1900s and the 1910s (and after)**

R. H. Thomson, of course, was also responsible for the new northeast-southwest alignment for piers constructed along the central waterfront. The 1900s saw major building activity there. In fact, the historical piers that remain today originally date from this period. All of the piers were renumbered during World War II. In general, with slight variations, in plan, most of the piers were long

parallelograms. The pier sheds themselves had a similar footprint and a heavy timber interior structure, often with distinctive truss work. They were often characterized by a gable end on the east and west elevations - or possibly a curved false front - monitor roofs, as well as wood siding. Following is a discussion of the major piers found on the waterfront in the 1900s and subsequent development until the 1910s, with some reference to later events. The brief survey will begin with several docks constructed south of the official central waterfront and progress north, stopping at the former Pier 14, now Pier 70

### Piers A, B and C

Based on the “periscope map” of Seattle from 1903, by then, most of the new docks were complete. South of the central waterfront and Yesler Way, the Ocean Dock, located roughly between Main and Washington Streets, consisted of two piers, Pier A and Pier B (later Pier 48), adjoined to the south by Pier C, known as the City Dock. Previously Pier A had been located between Main and Washington Streets and Pier B between Jackson and Main Streets. Completed in 1901, the new piers were owned by the Pacific Coast Company, the successor firm to the Oregon Improvement Company, which had gone bankrupt in 1895.

The new Pier A and the slip between Piers A and B were sited at the former location of Ballast Island, which was partially dredged. A remaining portion of Ballast Island was used to support a brick railroad station for the Columbia and Puget Sound Railroad, also owned by the Pacific Coast Company and completed later in 1905. According to a Seattle Post-Intelligencer article from August 18, 1901, “Improvements Along Seattle’s Waterfront,” the City Dock was primarily used for vessels going to and from Alaska. Based on the 1903 map, it adjoined a three story warehouse building, used at the time by Lilly Bogardus, which sold hay and feed. According to a 1908 Baist map, this warehouse subsequently operated as the Pacific Coast Company Mill and Warehouse. By 1914, Eyre Storage was the prime tenant. To the north, the Bellingham Bay line ran from Pier A.<sup>57</sup>

### Piers 1 and 2

Farther to the north, between Washington and Yesler streets, several lines, the Port Angeles Victoria Line, the Vancouver Line and the Alaska Steam Ship Company ran from Pier 1. The Whatcom Line, the “LaConner T. & T Company” line and the Port Orchard Line ran from Pier 2.

Piers 1 and 2, completed by the Northern Pacific Railroad by at least 1904, replaced the final version of Yesler's Wharf, which was razed in 1901. As part of the construction of Piers 1 and 2, the railroad company removed the extensive fill, which had been part of the development of Yesler's Wharf.<sup>58</sup>

Despite the construction of the King Street Station, by 1908, there were two railroad stations in the vicinity. Located between Piers A and B, the small depot was completed in 1905 for the Columbia and Puget Sound Railroad, which was owned by the Pacific Coast Company. In addition, the old "Union Depot," described as a "freight house" on the 1908 Baist Map, still stood on Western Avenue and Columbia Street.<sup>59</sup>

#### Colman Dock until 1912

At the foot of Columbia Street, James Colman built the Colman Dock, which was rebuilt several times. Based on the 1903 "Periscopic Map" and Sanborn Maps from 1904-1905, as well as photos by Asahel Curtis from 1906, the building at this time was a double shed and each shed had a pitched roof. The building also presented a box-like office and storefront area along Railroad Avenue, somewhat in the manner of Pier 6/ 57. In 1905, a ship's chandler was located in the northern office and there was a fish shop, slightly to the south of the chandler's office. Located near the south end of the two story office space, at least in 1906, were the offices of Frank H. Folsom, who advertised himself or his wares as "electrical contractor, telegraph poles, piles, spars and lumber."<sup>60</sup>

In 1908, James Colman extended his pier west to a length of 705 feet. He also embellished it, not only by adding a gracious domed waiting room, but also by constructing on its northwest corner a tall and distinctive clock tower, which had a clock on the face of each of its four elevations. Colman Dock thus became a showpiece dock, ready for the many visitors who would arrive in Seattle the following year during the Alaska Yukon Exposition. It was also the port of call for the many steamers of the mosquito fleet.<sup>61</sup>

In May 1912, this version of the Colman Dock was destroyed, when the steamer Alameda crashed into it, toppling the distinctive clock tower into the water and revealing the western portion of the domed passenger waiting room. As a result of the Alameda mishap, the regular passenger loading

dock for the “Flyer,” a rapid steamer service which took passengers to and from Tacoma, was also destroyed. A few weeks later, a gangplank used as a temporary loading area gave out under the weight of a group of passengers, causing injury to fifty eight people and killing two.<sup>62</sup>

#### West Seattle Dock, the Flyer Dock and the Fire House

While the Colman Dock was the port of call for the Mosquito fleet, the West Seattle Ferry Dock, which had already been established ten years before, continued to provide regular service. Alongside and north of the West Seattle Ferry Dock was the official Flyer Dock. “Fly the Flyer” was one of the official mottoes of the service. For its time, the Flyer’s speed was legendary, with a running time of 1 hour and forty minutes for the trip from Seattle to Tacoma. Beginning in the 1890s, the service ran for over twenty years. Just to the north, on a narrow pier, was Fire House, No. 5. The second fire house built on this site, it was completed in early 1903. It doubled as a lookout for the harbor master. During the early 1900s, its only fireboat was the *Snoqualmie*, but in 1909, the *Duwamish* became part of the fire boat fleet. Like Colman Dock, the fire house was rebuilt several times. The 1903 building was replaced by a two-story Tudor Revival building in 1917.<sup>63</sup>

#### The Grand Trunk Pacific Dock, first built in 1910

By 1910, the Grand Trunk Dock, designed by Blackwell and Baker, stood north of the Colman Dock, in the location of the old Flyer Dock. It was an imposing structure, which like the Colman Dock (the 1908 to 1912 version), had a distinctive tower. The Grand Trunk Pacific Company operated luxurious steamers destined for Seattle, Vancouver, Victoria and other Northwest locations. A dramatic fire destroyed the first Grand Trunk Dock in 1914. Subsequently rebuilt, it was finally demolished in 1964 to create a waiting area for automobiles boarding the Washington State Ferries at Colman Dock.<sup>64</sup>

#### Piers 3, 4, 5 and 6 (now Piers 54, 55, 56 and 57)

North of the Fire House No. 5, Piers 3, 4, 5 and 6, renumbered during World War II as Piers 54, 55, 56 and 57, are among the few piers built in the 1900s, which endure to this day. Pier 3, the second of the piers constructed by the Northern Pacific, was completed in 1900. Its first tenants were Galbraith and Bacon, who stored and sold grain, hay, as well as building materials. The pier also

became the port of call for the Kitsap Transportation Company fleet, run by Walter Galbraith, the son of James Galbraith, one of the original tenants.

Pier 4 was, in fact, the first of the piers constructed by the Northern Pacific. It was initially completed in 1900, but then collapsed, somewhat dramatically, the following year. Rebuilt in 1902, the pier became the home of the Arlington Dock Company, a shipping agent for steamships carrying passengers from West Coast cities to Alaska, Asia and Europe. It was an important center of transportation and was often crowded with passengers on their way to Alaska.

Pier 5, completed in 1900, also by the Northern Pacific, is somewhat famous because it is where the steamer Spokane, carrying President Theodore Roosevelt, docked on May 23, 1903. Early on, the dock was known as one of two Arlington Docks. It is best known, however, as the base of operations for the Frank Waterhouse Company, already one of the major steamship lines during the 1900s. The company's vessels ranged to a wide variety of locations all over the globe, including the Yukon, Alaska, Hawaii, the Mediterranean, Russia and Asia. The firm lasted until 1920, and then, despite its initial and long success, went bankrupt.

Pier 6, now Pier 57, was erected in 1902. The pier was altered soon after in 1903, when it was lengthened. It was built for the John B. Agen Company. Agen's Alaska Butter and Cream Company took up most of the pier shed, which mainly operated as a cold storage warehouse. A two story box-like portion of the building, located on the eastern side of the pier shed and facing Railroad Avenue, was occupied by a combination of offices and retail. In 1909, the Chicago Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway Company, known commonly as the "C. M. & St P. Ry Co.," and then as the Milwaukee Railroad, took over the pier. Subsequently, the pier was known as the Milwaukee Pier. The John B. Agen Company stayed in the neighborhood, moving to Western Avenue. The company commissioned architect John Graham to design a large cold storage warehouse, which is located off of Seneca Street, between Alaskan Way and Western Avenue (1203 Western Avenue). Completed in 1910, the "warehouse for John B. Agen & Company" became known as the Olympic Warehouse and Cold Storage and is on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>65</sup>

The Schwabacher Dock (Pier 7, later Pier 58)

Located north of the four historical piers 3, 4, 5 and 6, the Schwabacher Pier, known as Pier 7, survived the Great Fire of 1889. On August 31 1896, thanks to arrangements made by James J. Hill, the ship the Miike Maru docked here, establishing future trade relations between Seattle and Japan. In 1897, the ship Portland, carrying “a ton of gold,” docked at the slip between the Schwabacher Pier and the Pike Street Pier.<sup>66</sup> This marked the beginning of the Klondike Gold Rush. Seattle newspapers and the Seattle Chamber of Commerce continued to promote the city as a point of departure for the Yukon and Alaska and as a place where all the necessary provisions could be obtained.<sup>67</sup> Schwabacher Brothers, which had operated in Seattle since the late 1860s, became one of the major outfitters.<sup>68</sup> As a result, by the late 1890s, it was able to enlarge its warehouse on the pier. It sited the enlarged pier to conform to the new required northeast-southwest alignment and also moved it over slightly, to the south and west.<sup>69</sup>

The Schwabacher Dock survived until the 1950s. Photos from the late 1890s and early 1900s indicate that the pier shed had a pitched roof, no monitor lights and a curved false front on the east and west elevations. In this early period, the east elevation also had what looked like a two story house-like structure with a hipped roof, which appears to have served as an entry. This appendage was later removed. Fairly close by, to the north, was the Pike Street Pier.<sup>70</sup>

#### The Pike Street Pier (Pier 8 , now Pier 59)

The Pike Street Pier was initially constructed by Ainsworth and Dunn, owners of Seattle Fish, in 1896. Ainsworth and Dunn’s “Fish, Hay and Feed” business had previously been located in a waterfront warehouse at the foot of Seneca St. In 1897, City Engineer R. H. Thomson and George Cotterill, Assistant City Engineer, made the northeast-southwest alignment the rule for pier construction. As a result, the present pier was rebuilt to conform to the alignment and was completed in 1904. Ainsworth and Dunn continued to be involved in both fish processing and trade, as well as the storage and sale of feed and grain. Not long after the completion of the Pike St Pier, another grain dealer, Willis Robinson, whose business relied on the transport of hay from the Skagit Valley by sternwheeler, became a major tenant. During the same period, a second tenant was the Northwestern Steamship Company. “W. W. Robinson” was painted on the pier shed until 1909 and the pier was also identified on a Baist map of 1908 as “W. W. Robinson Pike St Wharf.” Ainsworth

and Dunn conducted business in Seattle from a second pier completed in 1902, Pier 14 (now Pier 70), but eventually moved their entire operation to Blaine, Washington.

By 1912, the pier's main tenant (and owner) was Dodwell Dock and Warehouse Company, a steamship agent. The pier was known as the Dodwell Dock until 1915. In 1916, the Pacific Net and Twine Company, an important supplier of marine and fishing supplies, took over the pier. The company also commissioned John Graham (Sr.) to design a warehouse for them, completed in 1918. (The building still stands at 51 University St).<sup>71</sup>

#### The Fish and Salt Docks

These two stubby piers, known as the Fish and Salt Docks, were sited between the foot of Pike and Pine Streets. According to Paul Dorpat, these were some of the first piers built north of Pike Street. Renamed Piers 60 and 61, they housed the Whiz Fish Company and the Palace Fish Company in the mid-1940s, when they were purchased by the Port of Seattle. In 1975, they were demolished to provide the site for the Seattle Aquarium.<sup>72</sup>

#### The Gaffney and the Virginia Docks (Piers 9 and 10, later Piers 62 and 63)

The Gaffney Dock was completed around 1902. It was named for Mary Gaffney, who was apparently the owner and received rent checks from tenants, but little else seems to be known about her. Based on a Baist Map of 1908, this dock mainly served the Alaska Commercial Company Steamers.

Sited nearby was Pier 10, known by 1908 as the Holden Dock, but also more generally known as the Virginia Street Dock. In the 1910s, one of the Virginia Street dock's main tenants was Northwest Fisheries, which canned and distributed Alaskan red salmon. The pier itself was designed by architect Max Umbrecht and completed in 1906. In the same year, the western apron was enlarged and in the 1920s, the pier shed itself was enlarged over the extended apron. A Virginia Street overpass also connected the dock to a warehouse, located on the other side of Railroad Avenue. Historic photos show the overpass emblazoned with large letters, proclaiming the overpass the property of the "Virginia Dock and Warehouse Company."

In the 1980s, the former Gaffney Dock and Virginia Dock pier sheds were demolished and the site was used into the 1990s for the “summer concerts on the pier.”<sup>73</sup> Around 2000, there were ideas afloat, (one of several alternative proposals), to build the main part of the new aquarium on this site, but the idea was shelved, after local activist and citizens’ objections.

#### Pier D and Oriental Dock (Lenora Street Piers)

Closer to the foot of Virginia St, Pier D was built and owned by the Pacific Coast Company. In the 1900s, it was located alongside the Pacific Coast Company’s “Oriental Dock,” located at the foot of Lenora Street. This dock was set parallel to the shoreline, rather than at the prescribed northeast-southwest angle.

A Sanborn Map of 1905 and a 1904 “Bird’s Eye View of Seattle” rendering both suggest that these two docks essentially formed one dock. In 1904-1905, the longer warehouse was occupied by the United Warehouse Company, which also owned several warehouses, located on the other side of Railroad Avenue. A Baist Map from 1908 shows that the Oriental Dock’s main tenant was then the American Hawaiian Steamship Company. In any case, by the 1920s, the two docks were replaced by two finger piers, set in the standard northeast-southwest alignment. They have since been demolished.<sup>74</sup>

#### Galbraith Bacon Dock at Wall St and Booth Fisheries Dock (later Piers 67 and 68)

North of the Oriental Dock, was the Wall Street Pier, also known as the Galbraith Bacon Dock. Not long after moving their business to Pier 3 (now Pier 54), James Galbraith and Cecil Bacon established themselves at the Wall Street Pier. The company dealt in wholesale grain, hay, plaster and other building materials. The pier shed of the Wall Street Dock appears to have been mainly used to store building materials, while warehouses across Railroad Avenue were used for hay storage. The Wall Street Dock barely escaped damage by the June 10, 1910 fire that started off Elliott Bay and swept east across Railroad Avenue, destroying the entire block bounded by Railroad Avenue, Elliott Avenue, Battery and Wall Streets, including the Galbraith and Bacon storehouse, as well as the Glenorchy Hotel, located on Western Avenue, north of Wall Street.<sup>75</sup>

Located alongside the Wall Street Pier, was a short pier, whose main tenant in 1905 to the early 1910s was the Chlopek Fish Company. As with many of the waterfront piers, there was a corresponding warehouse across Railroad Avenue, in this case used for cold storage and smoking of fish. From about the mid-1910s, the pier was associated with Booth Fisheries, in fact a new name for the Chlopek Fish Company.<sup>76</sup> Booth Fisheries continued to own warehouses across Railroad Avenue. The northern of two buildings, which now have the official address of 2501 Elliott Avenue, was built in 1911. (It is currently known as Vine Street Storage). Booth Fisheries operated it as a fish processing and smoking plant. A 1930s photo shows that there was an open metal skyway, which was attached at the second level of the western elevation of the building and probably connected with this pier. In 1914, Booth Fisheries also built the “Cannery Cottages,” to house its workers on the east side of Elliott Avenue.

The former Booth Fisheries and Galbraith Bacon Docks, renamed Piers 67 and 68, were demolished in 1962, to create a site for the Edgewater Inn.<sup>77</sup>

#### Piers 13 and 14 (now 69 and 70)

Pier 13, located roughly between Vine and Clay Street, was built by the Roslyn Coal and Coke Company and completed in 1900. Across Railroad Avenue, the company also had at least one warehouse. This smaller building was demolished and replaced in 1916 by the first wing of the American Can Company Building. By the 1930s, the American Can Company had built an overpass from the warehouse to a newly constructed version of Pier 13.<sup>78</sup> In the 1990s, Pier 13/ 69 was completely remodeled to serve as the headquarters for the Victoria Clipper.

Pier 14 was built by Ainsworth and Dunn, which founded the Seattle Fish Company, an important fish processing and trading company. Their company also sold grain and feed. Ainsworth and Dunn also built Pier 8, now Pier 59. Directly across Railroad Avenue from Pier 14, in 1902, the company constructed a brick warehouse as additional storage at 2801 Elliott Avenue, (now the Old Spaghetti Factory). By 1905, Pier 14’s main tenant was the Puget Sound Wharf and Warehouse Company and the same name was associated with the warehouse. By 1912, the dock’s main tenant was the American and Hawaiian Steamship Company and by 1920, it was operated by the Dodwell Dock and Warehouse Company. As early as 1896, Ainsworth and Dunn had canning operations in both

Seattle and Blaine, Washington. Although Ainsworth and Dunn ultimately moved their entire operation to Blaine, the partnership and later the Dunn Family retained ownership of Pier 14 to the late 1970s.<sup>79</sup>

### The Seawall, 1911-1916

Outside of the construction of the piers themselves, perhaps the most important work was the construction of the seawall between Washington and Madison Streets. This occurred between 1911 and 1915. This first section of the seawall originally consisted of concrete gravity retaining walls, built at the ends of Washington, Yesler and Madison Streets. A structural sidewalk, supported on pilings, was constructed between the seawall sections.<sup>80</sup> As it did during the same period along the tidelands and from First to Fifth Avenues, engineering, and specifically the reworking of topography, played an important role in the areas east of the waterfront.

### **Elliott and Western Avenues – Development from the 1900s to the 1910s (and after)**

While the waterfront was being developed, Elliott Avenue, (originally Water St), had very uneven topography in several areas. In association with the extensive regrading efforts of the Denny Regrade, Elliott Avenue was also altered and regraded between 1910 and 1913. The depressed area near Bell Street, known as Belltown Ravine, was filled in: from Bell to Battery Streets, a new grade, 50 feet above the old grade established in 1889, was created for Elliott Avenue. Elliott Avenue was now extended at a relatively smooth new grade, from Battery Street to join with Western Avenue between Lenora Street and Virginia Streets, a configuration that remains today.<sup>81</sup>

In general, particularly south of Virginia Street, the area east of Railroad Avenue to Post Alley was often described as the “entrails of the city.” Western Avenue acted as its main “boulevard.” Roughly south of Spring Street, a “Commission District” of produce wholesalers developed. These middle men bought produce from farmers on a “commission basis.” Once a farmer had brought his produce to the wholesaler and the produce was sold, the wholesaler paid the farmer a “commission,” a percentage of his own profits. The wholesalers had a reputation for dishonesty, often paying farmers for only a very small portion of the produce they were actually able to sell. Some, for example, in order to inflate prices, purposely dumped good produce into the Puget Sound. As a result, in 1907, the Pike Place Market, located between Virginia and Pike Streets, was

founded to allow producers to sell to consumers, without the intervention of the Western Avenue middle men. Not only did this change the lives of the farmers, but it physically altered a central portion of the area east of Railroad Avenue.

Right after the Fire of 1889, most of the buildings in the Commission District were makeshift structures, often corrugated iron warehouses or metal and wood sheds. By the late 1900s, Western Avenue, the Commission's District's main thoroughfare, was still a noisy, planked street. It was crowded with teams of horses, often matched in color and size, haggling wholesalers and farmers, and piles of boxes of vegetables and fruit.<sup>82</sup>

From the 1900s to the 1910s, the "Commission District" gradually became more upscale. In the end, Western Avenue acquired many notable buildings. Although both significantly altered, the former Carstens Building, now the Commuter Building at 815 Western Avenue and the former Mutual Creamery Building at 809 Western Avenue, (only half of which is left), were completed in 1906. Still standing on the west side of Western Avenue, they have classical detailing and are distinguished by wide, overhanging cornices. Continuing the line of buildings, south on the western side of the avenue and across Columbia Street, are the Polson Building and 611 Western Avenue, both designed by the architecture firm of Saunders and Lawton and completed in 1910 (these two buildings are technically part of the present Pioneer Square Historic District).<sup>83</sup>

Moving north to the block bounded by Railroad Avenue, Western Avenue, Marion and Madison Streets, the **Maritime Building**, also originally known as the **Pacific Warehouse Building**, was completed in 1910. It was designed by architect E. W. Houghton and still stands at 911 Western Avenue. The longer façade on Western Avenue consists of fifteen "interwoven" bays, distinguished by entrances adorned with mosaic, (although this decoration appears to have been added later).<sup>84</sup>

Across Western Avenue, on the block between Madison and Marion Streets, and perhaps more emblematic of the Commission District's original role, the **National Building** was built between 1904 and 1905. Designed by the architecture firm of Kingsley and Anderson, it was built by the Northern Pacific Railroad to serve the produce trade. Even before its completion, the National Produce Company leased forty percent of the building space. The National Building became the

main center for the National Produce Company, one of the West Coast's largest grocery wholesalers. The company remained in the building until 1930. The building is still standing and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>85</sup>

On the west side of the Western, on the southern half of block between Seneca and University Streets, the **Agen Warehouse** was built in 1910. Now on the National Register of Historic Places, and more commonly known as the Olympic Cold Storage Warehouse, it was designed by architect John Graham. It was built to house John Agen's Alaska Butter and Cream Company, which was previously housed on Pier 6 (Pier 57), built in 1902.<sup>86</sup> John Graham also designed the building, which takes up the northern portion of the same block, as a **warehouse for the Pacific Net and Twine Company** (51 University St), completed in 1918. Beginning in the 1920s, the building was owned and named after by the Pacific Marine Supply Company. This company was formed, when Pacific Twine and Net merged with the Marine Supply Company, which was then located on Pier 1. More recently, the building has been associated with Immunex.<sup>87</sup>

Across Union Street, the **steam plant's** main buildings, although since considerably altered, were built in 1895 and 1918. The mid-block 1895 building originally belonged to the Mutual Light and Heating Company, which had been organized in 1894 by the Diamond Ice Company. The **Diamond Ice Company** was located until the 1930s in the building directly to the north (now Shurgard Storage). In 1904, when Seattle Tacoma Power Company purchased the Mutual Light & Heat Company, eleven generators were added to the plant. These coal fired generators allowed service to the area north of Madison Street.

In 1911, under the presidency of Jacob Furth, the Puget Sound Traction Light and Power Company, owned by Stone and Webster, acquired five Seattle area electric companies, including the Seattle Tacoma Power Company, which, by then, owned this plant. Under Puget Sound Traction Light and Power, the taller 1918 building, designed by Stone and Webster, was added. As part of these alterations, Stone and Webster introduced a then pioneering technique, based on the burning of pulverized coal. Along with the Old and New Post Plants at Columbia Street (Pioneer Square), this plant is now part of the Seattle Steam Company, first formed in 1951. The Seattle Steam Company still provides steam to downtown Seattle and neighboring areas, from Blanchard Street to

the north and King Street to the south, as well as high pressure service to First Hill, especially to hospitals.<sup>88</sup>

Moving north, mid-block between Union and Pike Streets, was the **Schwabacher Warehouse**. According to records, this particular building most probably replaced an earlier Schwabacher Warehouse, which stood at this location in 1893. The present building appears to have been originally designed by Saunders and Lawton in 1910; however, significant changes were subsequently made by architect Louis Mendel and completed in 1917. The design of main eastern façade relies on a variety of brick corbelling, used in subtle configurations as ornament and to mark bay divisions. Based on extant drawings, it is primarily the work of Mendel.<sup>89</sup>

Across the street, on the east side of Western Avenue, the **U.S. Immigration Building**, which is still located south of the Pike Place Market, was completed in 1915. Designed by Bebb and Gould, it was the regional headquarters for the Federal Immigration Service from 1916 to 1931. It operated as an immigration station for thousands of newcomers, who sought entry into the United States.<sup>90</sup>

Moving north of the Pike Place Market, the **Armory**, completed in 1909, was sited on the eastern portion of the block bounded by Elliott and Western Avenues and Virginia and Lenora Streets. It was a large brick pile, distinguished by its turrets and crenellated parapet walls. Located close to SR 99, it was demolished in 1968.<sup>91</sup>

North of this site, located mid-block, on the east side of Western Avenue, between Lenora and Blanchard Streets, is two story brick building, with a typically Victorian main elevation. This façade is marked by a raised central triangular parapet, segmental arched openings, as well as brick horizontal and vertical elements, which delineate bays and level changes. Based on extant records, the building dates from 1902; the Victorian façade composition, however, suggests that the building could be about ten years older. The building was later a garage and at least by the 1930s was known as the “**Armory Garage**,” but it initially served as a livery stable, of which there were a fair number, both in Seattle and along Western Avenue in the 1900s.<sup>92</sup>

On the block north, between Blanchard and Bell Streets, there were, in fact, at least two livery stables on the east side of Western Avenue. The most distinguished of the two and fairly imposing for a former livery stable, the **Union Livery Stable**, (2200 Western Avenue), is still located at the northeast corner of Western and Blanchard. It is a four story brick clad building, with a raised parapet on Western Avenue, marked by a terra cotta representation of a horse. It was completed in 1908, not long after the neighboring Pike Place Market opened.

Moving up to the block between Bell and Battery Streets, there was the brick Empire Laundry Building, which is still standing. Typical of warehouse buildings of the period, it was completed in 1908. Adjacent to it, is a three story frame building from 1908. One of the last of the utilitarian wood buildings in Belltown, this building early on served as the **Bon Marche Stables**. At that time, it was located on the same block as a lumber company. By the 1930s, the building's main tenant was the Compton Lumber Company, after which the building, currently known as the **Compton Building**, is named.

By the 1910s, the blocks north of Broad Street included other lumber businesses, cement works and a large area between Elliott and Western Avenues and Broad and Bay Streets, owned by the Union Oil Company.<sup>93</sup> In general, although more upscale by the 1910s, Elliott and Western Avenues still served as a backdrop for First Avenue.

### **First Avenue - Development from the 1900s to the 1910s (and after)**

Already by the 1890s, First Avenue was already the location of numerous hotels, which served the burgeoning Seattle population. With the completion of the first phases of the Denny Regrade, several substantial buildings, which are still standing, were built between the 1900s and 1910s. The hotels tended to serve a less upscale clientele, but are of real architectural merit. On the northwest corner of First Avenue and Bell Street, for instance, the three-story brick clad **Oregon Hotel** was completed in 1902 (2301 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue). Its exterior is characterized by storefront at the ground floor level on First Avenue, pairs of arched window openings on the upper levels, as well as simple and elegant ornamental brick detailing.

Mid-block, but still on the northern portion of the block between Bell and Blanchard Streets, the **Hotel Grace**, later known as the **Hotel Utah**, was completed in 1909 (2225 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue). Within the same block, another hotel, known at least by the 1930s as the **Hotel Scargo**, was completed between 1910 and 1911. It is a typical commercial hotel building with storefronts at the first level, but it stands out because of the elegant English Georgian Revival design of its façade (2205 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue).<sup>94</sup>

On the same block, adjoining the Hotel Scargo and on the northwest corner of First Avenue and Blanchard Street, the **Martin Block** was built by owner Martin Paup between 1910 and 1911. The present building is also known by the name of its historic hotel, located on its upper floors, the **Hotel Lewiston**. The building stands on the site of a previous frame commercial/hotel building, also built by Paup around 1895. The frame building had included a tavern, a general store and a bakery on the ground level, as well as a hotel rooms on its second floor. The present building, designed by engineer and contractor George Dietrich, included similar functions. Its saloon, the Queen City Tavern, now the Queen City Grill, was described by Martin Paup's grandson as the "longest continuously operating union bar" in Seattle.<sup>95</sup>

On the Northwest corner of First Avenue and Lenora Street, not far from the northern end of the Pike Place Market, a Romanesque Revival commercial and hotel building was completed in 1903. Known early on as the **Young Hotel**, but also called the "Densimore" on a 1912 Baist Map, the building contained within its storefront level a saloon, which operated until Prohibition. The building was designed by the architecture firm of Elliott and West and is now known as the **Guiry Building**, in honor of John J. Guiry, who served as the manager of the hotel from 1926 and after. Adjoining this building to the north and sharing a party wall, a second commercial and hotel building, designed by architect Andrew McBean, was completed in 1907. Known as the **Mystic Hotel**, according to a 1912 Baist Map, it has mainly been known as the **Schillestad Building**. Both buildings, now commonly known as the Guiry-Schillestad Building(s), are listed jointly as the "Young Hotel and Schillestad Buildings" on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>96</sup>

By the time of the Pike Place Market's creation, the line of hotels continued south along First Avenue, past the Market. Previously existing hotels were even incorporated within the Market. At

least by 1912, south of the Market, on the western side of First Avenue, the line of hotels was mostly uninterrupted until Marion Street. There the **Colman Building**, built by James Colman, took up the entire block from Marion to Columbia Streets. The Colman Building's first two stories, designed by architect Stephen Meany, were completed by 1893, the year of the economic Panic, while the upper floors were completed in 1904, according to designs by August Tidemand.<sup>97</sup> The building represents the connection between 1890s Seattle and the subsequent growth of First Avenue and of the larger city.

Many of these hotels have since been lost; however, from Seneca to Madison Streets, several showpiece hotel buildings, all landmarks, remain. Although the level of design is often very high, these hotels were usually built to serve miners, sailors and other transient workers. On the southeast corner of First Avenue and Seneca Street, the **Colonial Hotel** was completed in 1901. It was designed by architect Max Umbrecht, who arrived in Seattle in 1900 and became an important early Seattle architect. The buff brick building stands out because of its signature central window bays which each include a Palladian window, its segmented flat arched window openings and terra cotta detailing (1119-1123 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue).<sup>98</sup> The Colonial Hotel was built as an addition to the 1890s Richardsonian Romanesque **Pacific Grand Hotel**, located to the south of it. Although this building seems more typical of the early 1890s and may, in fact be the "Grand Hotel" shown on the 1893 Sanborn Map, most sources give a completion date of 1898.<sup>99</sup>

To the south, the block from Spring to Madison Streets is taken up by the former **Hotel Cecil, the Beebe Building and the Globe Hotel**. The three distinct but harmonious Renaissance Eclectic hotel buildings were designed by Max Umbrecht and completed in 1901. Despite the elegance of their design, they too are supposed to have initially catered to sailors, miners and businessmen. On the other hand, the Globe Building, (now the Alexis Hotel), was built for James W. Clise, one of Seattle's most important businessmen. From 1901 to 1917, he maintained several related businesses there, including the Globe Investment Company, the Globe Navigation Company, the Globe Construction Company, as well as the Washington Trust Company. The Hotel Cecil closed in 1910 and reopened in 1921. It was combined with the Beebe Building and renamed the **New Arlington Hotel**, which opened in located one block north, began to serve a more upscale clientele. This also

coincides with the period during which the center of downtown had definitely moved north from the Pioneer Square area.<sup>100</sup>

Along the western flank of First Avenue, between the southern boundary of the Pike Place Market and Seneca Street, there is now a gap in the line of historical hotels and buildings. Nevertheless, there is some continuity between Belltown and the areas south of Union Street. As buildings and particularly hotels were built along First Avenue between the 1900s and the 1910s, politics would continue to play a role in the development of this area and particularly of the waterfront.

### **Waterfront Politics and the Port of Seattle**

During the 1900s and 1910s, especially in Seattle, many citizens, including a mix of Wobblies (IWW), Populists and more moderate reformers, were increasingly alarmed by the power that private entrepreneurs, and especially railroad magnates such as James J. Hill, wielded along the waterfront and around the City. In 1905, the railroads were put under state control.<sup>101</sup> While the members of the IWW (International Workers of the World) pursued the radical restructuring of the social and economic system, the slightly less radical Populists campaigned for the government ownership of the railroads and for free silver. The Populists had even captured the Washington State House and the governorship in the 1897 elections, but subsequently did not have much clout.<sup>102</sup>

A still more moderate group, the Municipal Ownership League, pushed a political agenda based on municipal ownership, prohibition, labor reform and women's suffrage. Led by George F. Cotterill, the League's ranks included powerful professional men, who had a commitment to social and economic reform. George Cotterill, who had begun his career in Seattle working for City Engineer R. H. Thomson, would hold many important positions: State Senator, Mayor of Seattle, Highway Commissioner and Port Commissioner. In 1906, the League organized the Municipal Ownership Party and in 1907 changed its name to the City Party. Although opposed by the Seattle Economic League, a powerful party of wealthy businessmen, the City Party began to achieve some success at the end of the 1900s. Their hard work set the climate for the 1911 county-wide vote on the creation of the Port of Seattle.<sup>103</sup>

In September of 1911, King County residents voted for the creation of the Port of Seattle. Although the Port of Seattle did not immediately acquire the wharves and related waterfront properties, its creation marked a turning point in both Seattle and in the United States. The Port of Seattle was the first municipal corporation, devoted to the administration and commercial development of a port, but was independent of other established government bodies.<sup>104</sup>

The first Port Commissioners were Hiram Chittenden, the designer of the Lake Washington Canal, Robert Bridges, a former Populist and coal miner and a well-known union activist, and C. E. Remsberg, a former bank manager in Fremont, who speculated in real estate in the northern part of the Seattle. King County voters had supported the creation of the Port by a margin of three to one and the three commissioners had also won handily. Nevertheless, the opponents of the Port's creation and of the notion of municipal ownership, mainly private dock and wharf owners, would continue to wage a fight against it. A number of controversies developed between the supporters of the Port and their opponents. One of the most important of these controversies concerned the Bogue Plan and Harbor Island.<sup>105</sup>

### **The Bogue Plan and The Waterfront**

By 1911, the Denny Regrade had already significantly flattened the topography of a major part of the city and the Port of Seattle had been approved by King County voters. The Municipal Plans Commission, also created with the consent of Seattle voters in 1910, hired Virgil Bogue to provide a new comprehensive plan for Seattle's downtown. In 1911, Bogue produced a master plan, which, among other proposals, suggested the relocation of Seattle's downtown business district to the intersection of Blanchard Street and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. A typical "City Beautiful Plan," the design proposed a new "Civic Center," which would consist of an elliptical grouping of Beaux Arts buildings, including a train station and ferry terminal on South Lake Union.<sup>106</sup>

The plan also made important suggestions concerning the larger waterfront, which Bogue described in this document as the "Port of Seattle." The plans for the greater waterfront alone cover a large area and are fairly detailed. As part of his study, Bogue listed what he considered to be the Port of Seattle's constituent districts: the West Seattle District, Harbor Island, the Duwamish Waterway, the Central Waterfront, the Ballard District, Lake Washington, West Side District, Lake

Washington, Renton District and Lake Washington, East Side District. His considerations concerning the Central Waterfront and neighboring areas, although mostly not implemented, are notable and historically relevant.<sup>107</sup>

Bogue defined the Central Waterfront as running from Mercer Street to as far south as Massachusetts Avenue. One of his goals was to alleviate the congestion around the Madison Street slip. At that time, located close to the Grand Pacific Trunk Dock, the Fire Boat Pier and the Colman Dock, the Madison slip was crowded with fireboats, ferries and steamers. His solution was the demolition of Piers 3 and 4 and their replacement by a major “Public Dock”, which would serve the Mosquito Fleet and include a ferry slip. A great believer in the efficacy of motor boats, he suggested small motorboat landings at the foot of Seneca, Madison and Marion Streets, that is, on either side of the proposed “Public Dock” and also between the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Colman Docks.<sup>108</sup>

To the north, off of Mercer Street, a larger “Motor Boat Marina” would include a recreation pier, a public ferry pier and several fireboat slips. As an alternative to the Motorboat Marina fireboat slips, he proposed a public slip with a fire station and a fireboat berth at Massachusetts Street. Bogue also proposed that a grand boulevard, built close to Broad St, would tie the new “Civic Center” to the waterfront. A major pier, designed as a formal gateway to the city, would be located on the western end of the boulevard. In addition, Harrison Street would connect easily to the proposed transportation hub, located on South Lake Union. He also suggested that additional fill be used to create a new area of the central waterfront, west of the existing Railroad Avenue, a far-reaching notion, although never implemented. His plan for the area near Smith Cove included the dredging of Smith Cove itself, the possible establishment of a terminal for cargo vessels there, as well as cargo handling facilities, warehouses and long coal docks.<sup>109</sup>

Although not technically part of the Central Waterfront, Harbor Island was also a focus of the Bogue Plan. In fact, one of Bogue’s most ambitious ideas was to create Harbor Island as a major port terminal with seven piers of about 1500 feet in length, ferry service, street railways, warehouses, factory lofts and other backup facilities. He had based his design for Harbor Island on

the famed Bush Terminals of New York City. He also warned that failure to implement the Harbor Island design might have deleterious consequences for Seattle in the years to come.<sup>110</sup>

Although the Bogue Plan was rejected by voters in 1912, the Harbor Island terminal scheme had the backing of many business people. Some backers, like Colonel Blethen of the Seattle Times, were even opposed to the notion of municipal ownership and to the Bogue Plan. Although Seattle voters initially approved all of the bond measures related to the Harbor Island plans in March of 1912, the Pacific Terminal Company, the New York firm responsible for the Harbor Island project, appears to have become involved in a variety of underhanded dealings. It ultimately was not able to raise the money to post a construction bond to build the project. In 1913, Seattle voters rejected the Harbor Island project.<sup>111</sup>

Until the late 1910s, wealthy private interests allied with the owners of waterfront property, including the railroads, as well the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, would continue to attack the Port. They even attempted to do away with it, but the Port prevailed. Although the Bogue Plan had failed, it energized the Port to implement several needed projects.<sup>112</sup>

### **The Building of the Bell Street Pier – Economic Developments and World War I**

The Bogue Plan had underlined the need for a public dock on the Central Waterfront and one that would better serve the Mosquito Fleet. Ground was broken for the construction of a public dock, the Bell Street Wharf, along with an adjoining warehouse, in 1914. The long four-story warehouse had repeated bays, consisting, at the upper floors, of rows of double-hung windows, over the typical high ground floor level. It initially provided storage, including cold storage and some office space. It later mainly served as an office building for the Port. Since there was also demand for a park along the waterfront, a park, complete with a salt water pool, a play area for children and a solarium, was built in 1915. At the outset, it was mainly used by housewives, who dropped their children off at the park, while they shopped at the Pike Place Market; but by the 1920s, the park had developed an unsavory reputation and was closed.<sup>113</sup>

By 1915, Seattle, as a port, was suddenly economically successful and by 1918, Seattle was an established and prosperous international port. The dominant port on the West Coast by the end of

the 1910s, its facilities attracted commerce away from San Francisco. With the resignation of Commissioner Robert Bridges in 1919, the Port of Seattle would no longer fit its previous and somewhat radical image. It developed increasing ties with the business community that once shunned it. By 1915, spurred by the United States' impending involvement in World War I, ship building became a new and major industry. Many new workers arrived to work in the Seattle shipyards. They tended to occupy the many hotels along First Avenue and near the waterfront in the Pioneer Square area.<sup>114</sup>

Although there was a brief and slight economic downturn for the Port at the close of World War I, by 1920, it was again very prosperous and the leading international American port. One of the factors in its success was increased trade with Japan and, in particular, the import of soybean oil, used at this time for a variety of industrial uses, and later the import of raw silk.<sup>115</sup> This probably coincides with I. F. Laucks' invention of "Lauxein," a waterproof glue made from soybeans and chiefly used by the Pacific Northwest plywood industry. Laucks invented the glue in 1923, which he continued to improve. At least by the 1930s, he had relocated his business to a warehouse at 2801 Elliott Avenue, located between Broad and Clay Streets (now the Old Spaghetti Factory).<sup>116</sup> While few new buildings, which remain, were added after the 1910s, economics and the creation of new industries changed the general waterfront area, including Western Avenue and First Avenue.

Specific planning efforts would address some of the changes which had occurred since the building of the piers, the creation of the Port of Seattle and the construction of many fine and utilitarian buildings along Western and First Avenues .

### **The Zoning Ordinance of 1923 and the 1920s**

By the 1920s, Seattle's downtown center had moved north from the Pioneer Square area, south of Bogue's proposed Civic Center, to an area located around the Metropolitan Tract.<sup>117</sup> In order to formalize its development, in July 1923, Seattle passed its first zoning ordinance. The ordinance was amended several times shortly thereafter and finally approved as amended by the mayor on September 25, 1923. Harland Bartholomew from St. Louis led the Zoning Commission's effort to create the 1923 ordinance, while other distinguished contributors included the architect James E. Blackwell, A. H. Dimock, who served as City Engineer, as well as C.B. and Joseph Blethen.<sup>118</sup>

The ordinance created six zones or “Use Districts”: the First Residence District, the Second Residence District, the Business District, the Commercial District, the Manufacturing District and the Industrial District.<sup>119</sup> Based on accompanying maps, First Avenue up to the western flank of Western Avenue was located within the “Commercial District.” Everything along the western side of Western Avenue up to and including the central waterfront was located within the “First Manufacturing District.”<sup>120</sup>

The commercial designation allowed a greater variety of uses than in the primary part of downtown, located within the “Business District.” Downtown was then projected for the area located roughly between 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenues and between Union Street and Yesler Way. The business district could include residences, apartment buildings, stores, offices, banks, restaurants, service stations, police or fire stations, printing establishments, telephone exchanges, theaters, dance halls and the like, retail stores, automobile salesrooms or storerooms, garages, hand laundries and establishments that did clothes cleaning and pressing.<sup>121</sup>

First Avenue and the eastern flank of Western Avenue, as part of the commercial district, could include any of the above uses. In addition, it could include “any trade, industry, or use,” except for a huge list of industrial uses, which ran from “Airplane manufacture,” “Acid manufacture,” and “Automobile manufacture” to “Dog Pound,” “Kelp reduction and the extraction of its by-products,” to “Tar roofing or tar waterproofing manufacture,” “Yeast plants,” and anything prohibited in the “Manufacturing District.” In the First Manufacturing District, anything that might emit “dangerous, unwholesome, foul, nauseous or offensive gases or fumes” was prohibited. To name a few examples of these materials or processes, these included the production of cement, lime, glue, potash, or fertilizer, and chlorine, hydrochloric, nitric, or sulphuric acid manufacturing.<sup>122</sup>

The new code officially established the waterfront and the western side of Western Avenue as a zone of light manufacturing, while the eastern side of Western and First Avenue could incorporate non-residential uses, for example, furniture workshops, which were found in several ground floors on First Avenue, particularly in Belltown.

Few buildings that still remain were actually built along the waterfront on Western Avenue or the western flank of First Avenue in the 1920s. On First Avenue, architect and engineer James Blackwell designed a one story commercial building, located at 2121 First Avenue and completed in 1926. It is distinguished by the geometric arch-like forms on its rug brick façade and related window tracery. Another structure is the second phase of the American Can Building at 2601 Elliott Avenue. It was completed in 1925. Slightly outside this study area, at the foot of Washington Street, the Washington Street Boat Landing, designed by D. R. Huntington, was built in 1920 for the harbor master and to provide cover for foreign seamen, as they arrived in the harbor.<sup>123</sup>

During the 1920s, the piers were not significantly altered, although tenants did change. For instance, Colman Dock's main tenants continued to be steamer companies, including the Puget Sound Navigation Company and the Merchants' Transportation Company. The Grand Trunk Dock was first the terminus for the Grand Trunk Pacific Steamship Company and then for the Pacific Steamship Company. Pier 3 continued to be used by the Kitsap County Transportation Company. Piers 4 and 5 served the Royal Mail Steam Pack Company, the East Asiatic Steamship Company and Cosmos Line. Pier 6 was used by the Osaka Shoshen Kaisha and the Hamburg America Line. The main tenant of Pier 7, the Schwabacher Dock, (now demolished), was the Humboldt Steamship Company. Pier 8 (now Pier 59) was taken over by Seattle Pacific Marine Supply, formed by the merger of the Pacific Net and Twine Company and the Marine Supply Company. The new company also took over 51 University St, located between Western Avenue and Alaskan Way, as its headquarters.

Piers 9 and 10, (later Piers 60 and 61, now demolished), housed W. R. Grace and Company, Charles Nelson Company, the Matson Navigation Company, as well as Northwest Fisheries. Pier 14 (now Pier 70) was operated by the Dodwell Dock and Warehouse Company, and housed the Northland Steamship Company, as well as the Blue Funnel Line.<sup>124</sup>

As a port, Seattle continued to thrive, although some critics complained that its high wharf rates made it less competitive than San Francisco and were driving away Asian trade. On the other hand, in 1927, the Seattle Times boasted that during that year the port of Seattle had handled "30,000,000 tons of freight," and that 308 liners had sailed from Seattle to Asia.<sup>125</sup>

On land, the last phase of the Denny Regrade was begun in 1928. Although it mainly affected the Denny Triangle and South Lake Union area, it facilitated transportation from the waterfront environs and First Avenue to the eastern side of the city. New transportation related developments also played an important role.

At the end of the 1920s, the railroad tracks along Railroad Avenue, which had previously taken up 113 feet of the avenue's width, were reduced to two tracks on each side of a new area for motor vehicles. The motor car became popular in Seattle, with auto rows developing first in the Pike-Pine corridor near Broadway (Capitol Hill) and then along Westlake Avenue, mainly north of Denny Way, by the mid-1920s.<sup>126</sup> By 1928, there were reportedly 129,000 cars on Seattle's streets. By the the 1930s, this would cause a new kind of congestion along Railroad Avenue.<sup>127</sup>

1929 was the last prosperous year for the Port before the Great Depression. At that time, the Port of Seattle owned a few properties along the waterfront, including its own railroad tracks and buildings, warehouses and piers, mostly at Smith Cove and Hanford Street; on the central waterfront, it owned the Bell Street Pier and its adjoining warehouse. Despite the Depression, the Port continued to acquire waterfront properties after 1929 and during the Depression.<sup>128</sup>

### **Changes in the 1930s**

Railroad Avenue to First Avenue developed along the lines of the 1923 Zoning Ordinance. Between the 1920s and the 1930s, with the popularity of the motor car, a number of former livery stables along Western Avenue, including the Union Livery Stable (2200 Western Avenue) and the appropriately renamed "Armory Garage," (2114 Western) became garages. Photographs from the period also clearly show that automobiles were already creating intense traffic along Railroad Avenue and were often even parked across railroad tracks.<sup>129</sup>

Along the waterfront, the Kalakala, a refurbished and redesigned former San Francisco bay ferry once known as the Peralta, made its first voyage as a Black Ball Line ferry from Colman Dock in 1935. In its new incarnation, the ferry had a striking streamline exterior. In 1938, the Colman Dock was also rebuilt, (for the third time), this time in the Art Deco style. Its main east facade included

large Art Deco lettering, which proudly proclaimed the Black Ball Line's ownership of the dock. The Black Ball Line owned the dock until 1951, when it sold it to Washington State Ferries.<sup>130</sup>

Between 1929 and 1935, Pier 3 (Pier 54) operated as the general headquarters and landing dock for the Gorst Air Transport "air ferry" service, which consisted of Keystone-Loening amphibian planes. The air ferries were known for their speedy trips from the Seattle dock to Bremerton.<sup>131</sup> Pier 4 (Pier 55) had ceased to be involved in shipping and was taken over by the Fisheries Supply Company in 1938. The company remained there until the 1980s.<sup>132</sup> During the 1930s, Pier 5 (Pier 56) was the dock for the Shepard Line Intercoastal Service and the Northland Transportation Company.<sup>133</sup> Pier 6 (Pier 57) although still known as the Milwaukee Pier No. 6, was also known as the McCormick Terminal. In 1938, as documented by a photographer for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, it was the site of a labor dispute, involving a large group of seamen. Pier 7 (Pier 58), the Schwabacher Dock, was the terminus of the Alaska Transportation Company until the 1940s. Pier 8 (Pier 59) had been taken over by Pacific Marine Supply in the 1920s, who occupied it in the 1930s.

Farther north, Pier 13 (Pier 69) was rebuilt for the American Can Company in 1931. The pier shed was used to store aluminum for can production. By this time, there was also an overpass, between the American Can Company Building located on the east side of Alaskan Way and the pier. Pier 14 (Pier 70) was the terminus for the Northland Steamship Line and the Blue Funnel Line.<sup>134</sup>

### The Seawall

Probably the most important occurrence was the construction of the seawall. Although, between 1911 and 1916, a seawall was constructed from South Washington to Madison Streets, the rest of the central waterfront did not have a seawall. After much opposition from Governor Roland H. Hartley, in 1931, an engineering survey and report by City Engineer Melvin Sylliasen revealed the run-down condition of the wood planking, paving and trestles associated with Railroad Avenue and the serious need for a seawall. Manson Construction and Engineering Company constructed the seawall, using an innovative construction method, involving precast concrete sections. The seawall, which runs from Madison Street north to Bay Street, was built between 1934 and 1936. Since the 1930s, sections of the seawall, particularly around the Colman Dock and the late Schwabacher and the Bell Street Piers, have been rebuilt, although it has never been rebuilt in its entirety.<sup>135</sup>

During the construction of the seawall, much thought was given to the renaming of Railroad Avenue. There were a number of exciting name suggestions, including “Portarea,” “Hatoba,” translated from the Japanese as “landing place,” “Matrima,” and apparently a big favorite, “Cosmos Quay.” None of these, or even any of the more conventional names, such as Commerce Way or Puget Way, was picked. In 1935, Railroad Avenue’s new official name became “Alaskan Way.”<sup>136</sup>

### **Trends in the 1940s and 1950s**

While the number of railroad tracks had been reduced by the end of the 1920s, Alaskan Way had not yet been properly paved. In 1940, under Mayor Arthur Langlie, this goal was fulfilled. Western Avenue was also rehabilitated and street car tracks were removed from it by 1943.

The 1940s (to 1945) coincide with the United States’ involvement in World War II. Beginning in the early 1940s, Seattle’s shipyards produced a large number of warships and destroyers, particularly at Harbor Island. The U. S. Army’s Port of Embarkation was located at Piers 36 to 39. During the war, both troops and war related shipments passed through the Port of Embarkation and this was predictably considered the busiest part of the waterfront. Twenty nine shipyards were operating in Seattle, but none were located on the central waterfront. Sadly, by 1942, Japanese Americans were being interned. Their trips to camps first in California and then inland to Idaho or the Midwest often began from Seattle on trains waiting in front of Colman Dock.<sup>137</sup>

It was during this time that the piers on the waterfront were renumbered, according to the current numbering system. For example, on the central waterfront, Piers 3, 4, 5, and 6 became Piers 54, 55, 56 and 57; Pier 8 became Pier 59, Pier 13 became Pier 69 and Pier 14 became Pier 70. Since that time, other piers have been demolished, so once again, the numbering system may no longer seem rational.<sup>138</sup>

During World War II, fork-lifts and pallets began to be used to move cargo. Transportation and cargo and freight hauling methods began to change. After World War II, trucks were used increasingly and competed successfully with the railroads. Larger cargo ship vessels required

special equipment, which was not available on the older central waterfront piers. In addition, the higher costs of land in downtown, general traffic congestion problems, and the sudden water depth, close to the shoreline, were cited as factors that made the central waterfront piers comparatively more difficult to use. From a functional standpoint, the piers along the central waterfront were seen as old-fashioned, as well as inconvenient.<sup>139</sup>

After the end of the war, in 1946, E. H. Savage, the President of the Port Commission, stated that the central waterfront belonged “to the Gold Rush period.” He proposed demolishing piers from Lenora to Madison Streets, as well as several near the foot of Yesler Way. In their stead, he proposed “modern reinforced concrete structures, providing longitudinal mooring parallel to Alaskan Way.” He saw the dock running parallel to the waterfront as appropriate for “large ocean-going vessels, which might some day be taking on cargo at the foot of the principal downtown streets.” A year later, Port General Manager Col. Lamport referred to a similar scheme, although he gave a longer length for the dock, describing it as a “quay type wharf that will have a length of 3,000 feet.” The proposed schemes were shelved.<sup>140</sup>

By the early 1950s, established shipping lines began to discover the efficacy of large scale containers to move cargo, although containerization in Seattle only became really important in the early 1970s. In the meantime, throughout the 1950s, Seattle as a port was in a decline, in comparison to other West Coast ports. While the Port of Seattle owned most of the docks and piers by 1959, the Port of Seattle’s other holdings outside of the Central Waterfront were more profitable. Despite the 1940s proposals, there was less incentive to upgrade or alter the central waterfront piers, in order to create additional profits.<sup>141</sup>

Few major changes were made to Elliott, Western or First Avenues and few buildings were added. Workers involved in shipbuilding and other waterfront related businesses found that work was now not always stable. They were members of often vocal unions, such as the I. L. W. U, whose president, Harry Bridges, had initially opposed United States’ involvement in World War II.<sup>142</sup> Built vestiges of the 1940s and 1950s and of union activity include two buildings, which, however, no longer serve as union halls. 2333 Western Avenue, located off of Battery St, was designed by Young and Richardson for the Marine Firemen’s Union and completed in 1948. 55 Bell Street,

located between Elliott and Western Avenues, was originally designed in 1957 by architect Thomas Albert Smith, as a union hall for the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots.<sup>143</sup>

By far, the most important construction project in the 1950s was the Alaskan Way Viaduct, or its “first part,” which was completed in 1953. The Battery Street Tunnel, which tied it to Aurora, was opened as “Seafair Lane” on July 25, 1954 and the Spokane Street extension was completed in September of 1959.<sup>144</sup> The Alaskan Way Viaduct, needless to say, had a strong impact on the waterfront, setting up a partial physical barrier, as well as a visual barrier, between the waterfront and the eastern edge of Alaskan Way and everything behind it.

During the 1960s, following the completion of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and its related extensions, a variety of design plans, some radical, sought to develop the central waterfront. These plans were partially spurred by the Seattle World’s Fair of 1962. At the beginning of the 1960s, the only permanent known tourist attractions were: the “Ye Old Curiosity Shop,” which had been located on the waterfront since the 1890s and Ivar Haglund’s “Acre of Clams,” opened in 1938. Almost all the proposed plans were now based on the explicit goal of developing the waterfront as a tourist attraction and a very profitable real estate venture. Although mostly unbuilt, they nevertheless had an impact on the central waterfront and its environs.<sup>145</sup>

### **Design and Controversy in the 1960s**

One of the first of these unbuilt projects was entitled “Seattle Piers” and was proposed in 1961. It envisioned a sea circus and a major aquarium, a 150 unit motel, a convention center, a swimming arena and fifty shops, located at the old Yesler Dock site and Piers 51 and 52, which would be demolished.<sup>146</sup>

Not long after, in 1962, the Port of Seattle produced a “20 Year Plan for the Central Waterfront,” supported by five local civic organizations: the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, the Central Association of Seattle, the Financial District Association, the Citizens’ Port Committee and the Municipal League. The development was to consist of eighteen blocks along the waterfront, from Bell to King Streets. The plan, which demolished all the piers, proposed “tourist facilities, a world trade center, a transportation terminal, parking facilities and high rise apartments.” An artist’s

rendering showed an extensive number of highrises, that would have blocked views of the waterfront and cut it off even more completely from the east side of Alaskan Way and downtown. Despite the predictions of a contemporary Seattle Times article from May 18, 1962, suggesting that the City Council would most likely approve the project, thankfully it was never built.<sup>147</sup>

In 1965, John Graham and Company, who a year later would propose a plan demolishing a good portion of the present Pioneer Square Historic District, produced a Technical Report on the Central Waterfront Development. Based on the drawn plan, it appeared to demolish all or most of the piers, or at least the pier sheds, from Yesler Way to at least Pike Street, with the exception of Colman Dock and possibly Pier 54, the site of Ivar's. The pier sheds of Piers 56 to 61 were definitely demolished.

In the words of one of its proponents, the new development would include: “a substantial marine aquarium, more restaurants, import shops, a marina for pleasure and fishing boats and a big city park. There would be a heliport, facilities for hydrofoil boats, a couple of motels, probably an office building, marine-supply stores, maybe three to five historical ships and a maritime museum...” In general, the drawn plan showed a fair amount of surface parking on the piers or close to the waterfront. Piers 51 and 52 would be mostly given over to parking spaces, with only small buildings on them; although the written text also suggests that Piers 51 and 52 could be a good site “for one of the motels.” There would also be major surface parking at the foot of University Street. One of the more interesting parts of the report, however, was a suggestion for the relocation of the railroad tracks and of Alaskan Way itself, east of the viaduct.<sup>148</sup>

Many in the Seattle design community, including the Seattle Design Commission, disliked the Alaskan Way Viaduct intensely. The Seattle Design Commission, and especially architect Ibsen Nelsen, concurred with San Francisco architect George Rockrise who described the viaduct as a “major built-in problem.” In 1968, the Commission hired Rockrise to produce several urban design schemes for the central waterfront. George Rockrise's report included three design proposals that did away with the viaduct altogether, “possibly by 1990,” and showed a mix of shops, offices, apartments and hotels. A fourth plan included a very wide waterfront plaza and terraced park. It would partially cover the viaduct and also extend fairly far into the water, while the piers and other

existing waterfront features would be removed. Rockrise's suggestions sparked heated debates, which essentially boiled down to the notion that the plans either went too far or not far enough. None of them were implemented.<sup>149</sup>

While First Avenue and Western Avenues remained relatively untouched, the larger radical waterfront schemes of the 1960s, although mostly unbuilt, provided a host of visions, as well as a further incentive to develop the central waterfront as a tourist attraction, or “entertainment crescent.”<sup>150</sup>

### **Renovation and Development in the 1970s and 1980s**

Beginning in the mid to late 1960s into the 1980s, owners of many central waterfront piers renovated them. Colman Dock, the Washington State Ferries Terminal, was rebuilt in 1966. In general, the central waterfront, particularly around Colman Dock and from Piers 54 to 59, filled with restaurants, fish houses, gift, import and curio shops, amusement arcades and the like.

In 1966, Ivar Haglund purchased Pier 54 from Washington Fish and Oyster Company. Small modifications and additions had already been made to the pier shed, particularly at the southeast corner, first occupied by Haglund's restaurant in the 1940s. Additional changes were made to that corner in the late 1960s, with a new “wind screen” of aluminum frame and tempered glass added around the separate exterior seating area to the south. In 1983-1984, the Bumgardner Partnership, a well-known local Seattle architecture firm, further renovated the exterior of Pier 54 to its present appearance.<sup>151</sup>

Pier 55 was first remodeled in 1945, with structural changes by engineer Melvin Sylliasen, the former City Engineer, who had produced the 1931 study concerning Railroad Avenue. The pier shed was again renovated in the 1960s. Like many of the central waterfront pier sheds, particularly Piers 54 to 57, Pier 55 became a multi-use building with a variety of shops and restaurants, which catered primarily to tourists. It was also renovated in the 1990s.

Pier 56, once a transportation center for steamers carrying passengers and shipments to Alaska, Asia and Europe, was renovated, based on drawings from 1969. It became the home of Trident

Imports. The store sold everything from rattan furniture from Southeast Asia to imported chocolate wafers from Belgium. It remained on Pier 56 for many years. Ted Griffin's Seattle Marine Aquarium, famous for its display of Namu, the killer whale, was located on the western end of the pier from 1962, the year of the Seattle World's Fair, to 1976. As early as 1960, a restaurant, the Cove, was already in the pier shed and there is still a restaurant at the ground level. In 2000, Mithun, the architecture, landscape and urban design firm, completed the renovation of Pier 56 and took over the pier shed's impressive second floor space.

The Milwaukee Railroad Company owned Pier 57, once known as the Milwaukee Pier, at least until 1957. During the 1960s, the Port of Seattle owned Pier 57. It cut holes into its deck, for visitors, who might want to fish from them. In 1971, the City of Seattle, which was interested in renovating it, bought the pier. The renovation was partially made possible by a Forward Thrust Bond, which Seattle voters approved in 1968. Work on the renovation of Pier 57, designed by the Bumgardner Partnership, was completed in 1974; although, as early as 1972, Jean Fraley & Associates produced drawings for "Pirates Plunder," a ground level gift shop, which remains to this day. Forward Thrust also provided initial funding for the design and construction of the neighboring park, which became Waterfront Park and for the 1977 Seattle Aquarium.

There had been many visions for a park along the central waterfront. As early as 1903, in their report to the City Council concerning Seattle's parks system, the Olmsted Brothers had suggested a "Harborview Park," located possibly between Battery and Blanchard Streets. While the renovation of Pier 57 was being designed, the Bumgardner Partnership designed Waterfront Park, completed in 1974. The hardscape park extends between Piers 57 and 59 and over a portion of the site of the late Pier 58, once the Schwabacher Wharf. The pier shed and most of the pier had been demolished by 1952.

The Bumgardner Partnership also renovated Pier 59, as part of the 1977 Seattle Aquarium. The Alaskan Way façade, including its characteristic curved shape, was changed minimally, while more alterations were made to the north, south and west facades. The new portion of the Aquarium, designed by the architecture firm of Bassetti and Associates, was built on the former site of Pier 60.

The 1977 Seattle Aquarium won an architectural award and became famous for its marine exhibits. Across Alaskan Way, the Pike Street Hillclimb, completed in 1977, tied together the waterfront, Western Avenue, the Pike Place Market and First Avenue. Slightly north of the central waterfront, Myrtle Edwards Park was completed in 1976. A new electric trolley system, consisting of old trolley cars from Melbourne, Australia, was completed along the waterfront in 1982. Introduced by Councilman George Benson, it initially ran from Broad Street to Main Street. By 1990, the lines were extended east into the Pioneer Square area, to the edge of the International District.<sup>152</sup>

East of the waterfront and Alaskan Way, between the 1970s and the 1980s, a large number of the historical buildings, that have already been described here, were renovated. Several are either listed on the National Register or are City of Seattle landmarks. On the National Register, they are: at 1400 Western Avenue, the former U. S. Immigration Building, designed by Bebb and Gould and completed in 1915; at 1119 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, the Colonial Building and the Grand Pacific (1902), created landmarks thanks to the same nomination; at 1007 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and its vicinity, the Hotel Cecil, the Beebe and the Globe Buildings, all designed by Max Umbrecht; at 1008 Western Avenue, the National Building (1905); at 801 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, the Colman Building (1900); at 901 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, the Old Federal Building (1932). The City landmarks are: the Empire Laundry (1908), the Guiry Building and the Schillestad Building, commonly known as the Guiry-Schillestad Building (1901), 1201 Western Avenue (1910). Along the waterfront, Pier 59 was made a City landmark.

By the 1970s, First Avenue, in particular, continued to be very run-down. Many bars and taverns, considered decrepit by some and colorful by others, lined First Avenue. By the early 1980s, Cornerstone Development had bought up many properties on First Avenue, as well as several on Western Avenue, and renovated them. These included the former Colonial and Grand Pacific Hotels, as well as the original Hotel Cecil, Beebe Building and the former Globe Building. The cleaning and renovation of these elegant buildings permanently changed this portion of First Avenue. The new Watermark Tower was also built at the northwest corner of First Avenue and Spring Street. All of these historic buildings were also listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as was the National Building, which was also renovated around the same time. Cornerstone also renovated the former Pacific Marine Supply Company Warehouse, now associated with

Immunex, at 51 University Street in 1980. Shortly after, beginning in 1983, further changes were made to the building and mainly for Immunex.

Buildings that were not official landmarks were also restored in the 1970s and 1980s. 2815 Elliott Avenue was restored by 1974 to house a restaurant, the Old Spaghetti Factory, which is still there today. 2601 Elliott Way, the former American Can Building, was first renovated in 1976. 2225 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, whose last name before renovation was the Apex Hotel, was remodeled in 1982. The Martin Block/ Hotel Lewiston, at 2201 First Avenue, was restored in 1980. Behind it, on Western Avenue, the former Union Livery Stable was renovated as early as 1978. Many of these renovations occurred by the mid-1980s, although the former Hotel Oregon was renovated by John Graham and Associates in 1988 and work on 1201 Western Avenue, the former Agen Warehouse/ Olympic Cold Storage, appears to have been completed as late as 1997.<sup>153</sup>

### **The mid-1980s to Today**

In addition to the changes that occurred on First Avenue because of Cornerstone's renovation of historic buildings from Seneca to Madison Streets, Harbor Properties' projects have had a far-reaching effect on First Avenue. These include the South Arcade, south of the Pike Place Market's historic buildings, as well as the Harbor Steps, located to each side of a grand stair on Union Street.<sup>154</sup> The historic Erickson Building was demolished to accommodate the north side of this project, which was completed in 2000. Except for the Tolia Building, the remains of the former Hotel Vendome, new development spreads south from Pike St to the north side of Seneca Street, with no interruption. Meanwhile the western side of Western Avenue has maintained many of its original buildings. The avenue also retains notable historical facades on its eastern flank. Western Avenue certainly no longer represents the "entrails of the city."

Along the central waterfront, so far, the most major construction has been new residential development and a hotel on the east side of Alaskan Way, as well as the replacement of the old Bell Pier and warehouse by the new Bell Harbor Pier and Conference Center. The pier sheds of Piers 62 and 63, the former Gaffney and Virginia Docks, were demolished in the mid-1980s and a new temporary venue for concerts was created. Around the end of the 1990s, a controversy emerged over the siting of the new future aquarium. Several alternative plans emerged, with some suggesting

the demolition of Pier 59, others the actual relocation of Pier 59 and others suggesting that the new aquarium be located on the former Pier 62 and 63 site. There were many vocal objections to these proposals. Pier 59 has since been made a City Landmark and instead has been renovated once again, as part of an altered Aquarium design.

Other controversies involve the Alaskan Way Viaduct. After the Nisqually Earthquake of February 2001, it became obvious that the Alaskan Way Viaduct was unsound and that the seawall was in very poor condition. The loose soil, which the seawall is holding back and on which the viaduct sits, has a tendency to liquefy, particularly as a result of earthquakes. As presently constructed and in the event of an earthquake, liquefaction of the soils would cause further unstable conditions for the viaduct and the seawall itself is very unlikely to withstand the soil pressure, associated with liquefaction of these loose fill soils.<sup>155</sup>

Until most recently, the number of options for replacing the viaduct had been reduced to three:

1. demolition of the viaduct and replacement by an underground tunnel, which would run most of the length of the central waterfront, (tying in to the north with the Battery St tunnel). Along the waterfront, the tunnel's west wall would replace the seawall.
2. rebuilding a viaduct above ground, although the new version would be wider; rebuilding of the seawall
3. demolition of the viaduct and not rebuilding.

As this writing, another version of the first option is being urged by the mayor of Seattle, while Governor Gregoire is talking about a rebuild option or diverting funds for work on the 520 Bridge.<sup>156</sup> Whatever decisions and designs related to the Alaskan are finally implemented, will, needless to say, have a profound impact on the context for the historical piers 54, 55, 56, 57 and 59.

The issue of the Alaskan Way Viaduct has been discussed at length since 2001. Engineers from WSDOT have given many informational lectures, while citizens and politicians have proffered their opinions and held countless meetings and lectures. Design charrettes, including CityDesign's two-day workshop in 2004, (which attracted about 300 participants), have also produced a new set of interesting visions for the central waterfront. Many of these stress the importance of the shoreline's ecosystem; while a few seem more akin to the more traditional development schemes, urging such amenities as large hotel blocks, located directly on the waterfront.<sup>157</sup>

It is hoped that future plans, however visionary or mundane, take into account the rich history of the waterfront and that the historic piers, as well as the remaining historic buildings, especially along Western and First Avenue, are sensitively preserved.

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