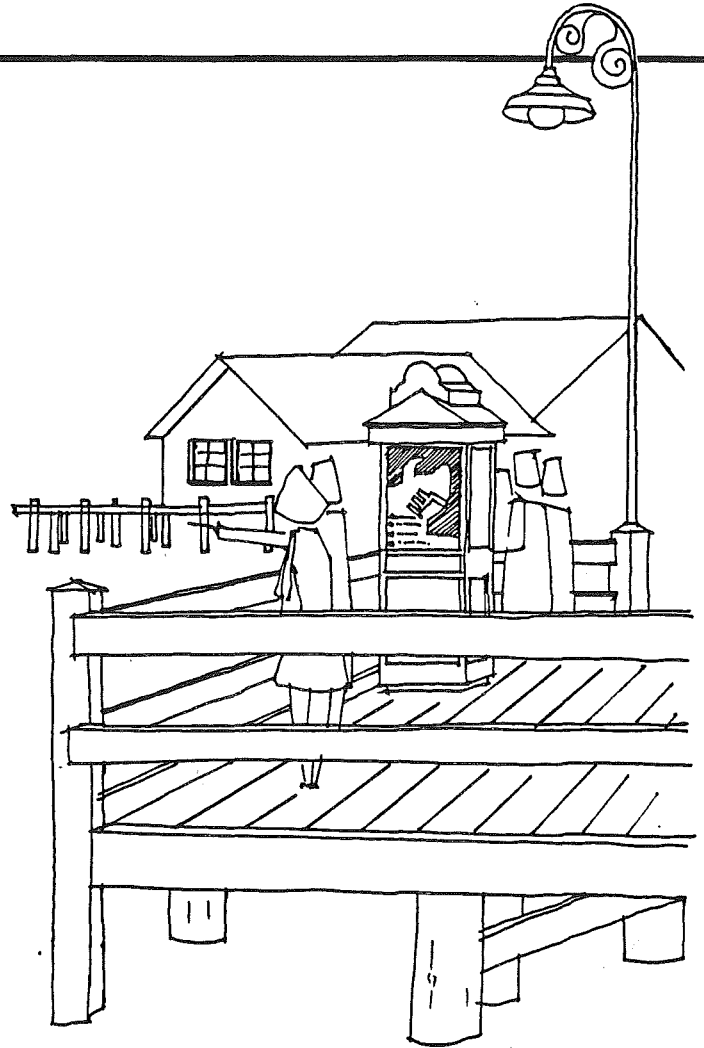

WATERFRONT INTERPRETATION: A COMMUNITY PLANNING GUIDE



Extension/Sea Grant Program
Oregon State University



1987

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WATERFRONT INTERPRETATION: A COMMUNITY PLANNING GUIDE

prepared for the

Oregon Department of Land Conservation Development

by

Extension/Sea Grant Program
Oregon State University

and

Marine Resource Management Program
College of Oceanography
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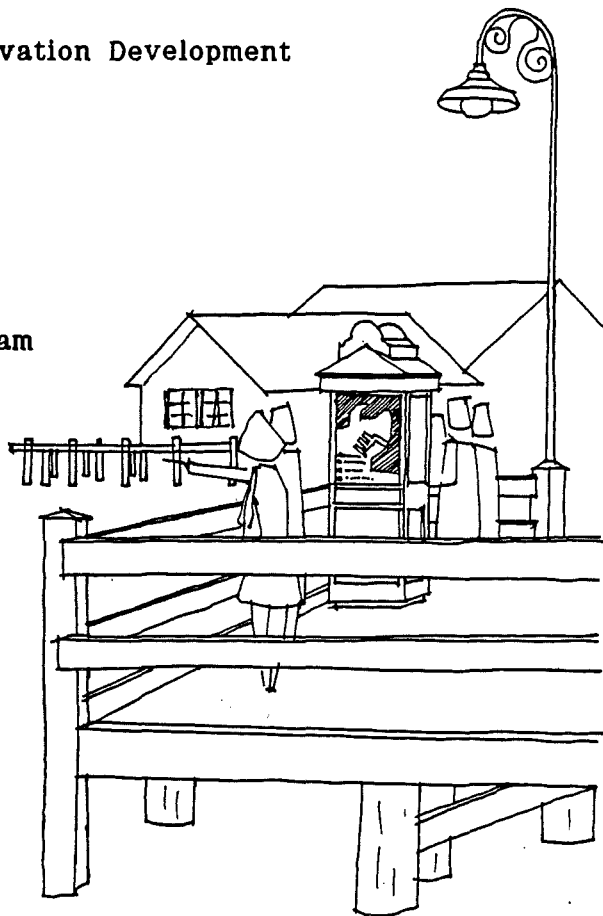
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September 30, 1987

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Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Preface and acknowledgements | v |
| Part I: Principles and Planning for Waterfront Interpretation | |
| The Changing Waterfront | 2 |
| The Role and Meaning of Public Access | 5 |
| Waterfront Interpretation Defined | 8 |
| Interpretation Principles | 10 |
| Developing the Interpretative Plan | 11 |
| Part II Interpretation Techniques | |
| Interpretation Techniques | 24 |
| Types of Media | 25 |
| Architectural Design | 26 |
| Indoor Exhibit Areas | 27 |
| Outdoor Exhibits and Kiosks | 28 |
| Self-guided Trails | 29 |
| Brochures or Leaflets | 30 |
| Audiovisual Programs | 31 |
| Administrative signs and publications | 32 |
| Designing Interpretive Exhibits | 33 |
| Writing and Editing Text | 36 |
| Selecting Materials for Exhibits | 39 |
| Constructing Exhibit Shelters | 40 |
| Constructing Trails and Walkways | 41 |
| Need More Help? | 42 |
| Appendix A--Additional Resources | A-1 |
| Appendix B--Umpqua Riverfornt Interpretative Program: A Framework | B-1 |

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many communities along the coast and inland on rivers are focusing on the waterfront as an important part of overall community revitalization. Waterfronts are becoming more accessible to residents and visitors. New boat launches are being constructed, along with fishing piers, waterfront walks and trails. However, an often overlooked part of the "access" picture is the interpretive component--the part that explains the meaning and relationship of the things we see along the waterfront.

Helping communities develop plans for improved "interpretive access" is what this guide is about. It won't get your interpretive exhibits constructed, but it will explain how you and your fellow waterfront enthusiasts can go about doing so. Part I is a primer on developing public access for the waterfront, with primary emphasis on the role that interpretation can play. Principles are outlined as well as a step-by-step planning process that will help you get organized to begin an interpretive program for your waterfront. Part II describes and gives examples of interpretation techniques, with emphasis on developing interpretive exhibits. Appendix A will help you find more information and Appendix B is the "framework plan" developed at the Reedsport waterfront interpretation workshop. It is an example of how one community is getting started with its waterfront interpretive program.

I am indebted to Ann Breen and Dick Rigby of The Waterfront Center in Washington D.C. for introducing me to the concept of interpretation as an integral part of public access in their book *Caution Working Waterfront/The Impact of Change on Marine Enterprises*. That concept provided the inspiration for this guide book.

Many people contributed directly to this project. Bill Hevlin, Sue Fritzke and Dave Palazzi were able research assistants, collecting interpretation material from around the country, evaluating its usefulness for our project and using it to develop early drafts of several sections. Sandy Ridlington of OSU Sea Grant Communications provided excellent editorial assistance--any remaining errors are mine. Kimo Kimokeo, Don Giles, Marty Giles, Kathy Dunn Grapel, Bob Bailey, Mike Graybill, Bill Hevlin, Kathleen Heide and Dave Myhrum made up the resource team for the waterfront interpretation workshops in Reedsport and Seaside, Oregon. Dave, a landscape architect and graphic artist, is also responsible for the excellent illustrations in this guide. Thanks to you all. Thanks also to the people of both Reedsport and Seaside--you were great hosts and collaborators. Also deserving of special recognition is Dick Kuehner, recreation planner for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. While Dick was not able to participate directly, his *Interpretation Design Guidelines* was a principal resource in organizing Part II of this guide.

This project was funded by the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development and Oregon Sea Grant. Their support is gratefully acknowledged.

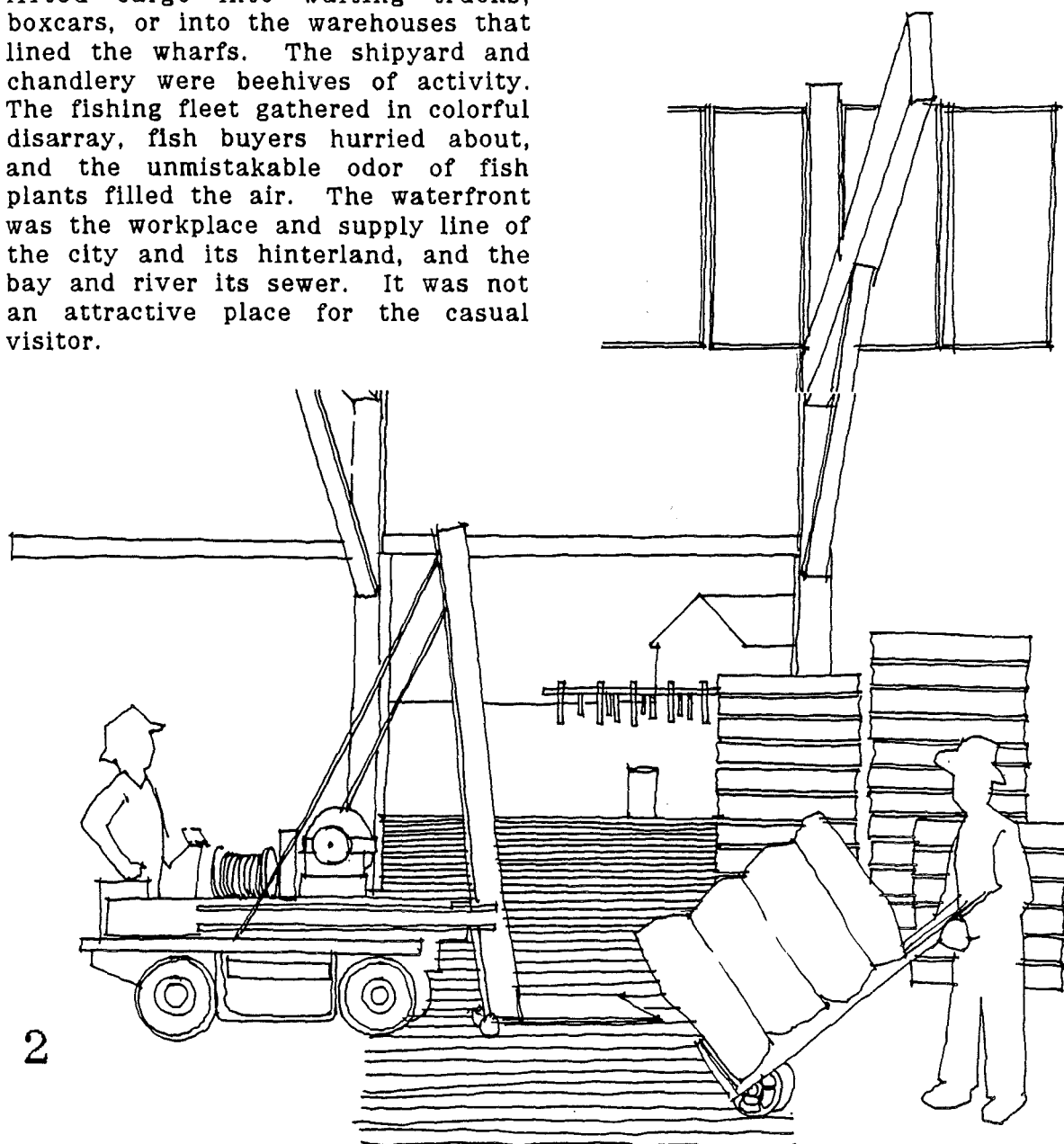
James W. Good

Part I:
Principles and Planning
for
Waterfront Interpretation

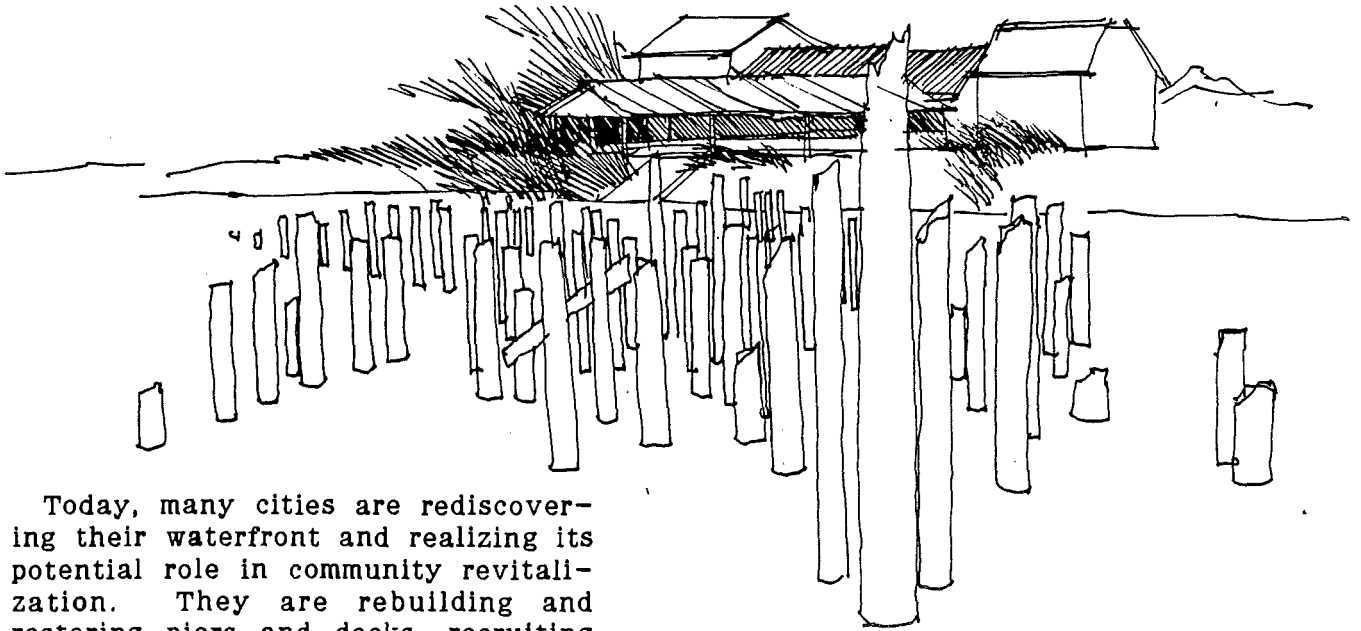
THE CHANGING WATERFRONT

The waterfront is changing! The stories vary from city to city but the themes are the same. Years ago, the waterfront adjacent to the central core of our cities was a vital workplace. Steamships called at the dock, dropping general cargo, passengers and exotic goods from foreign ports-of-call. Longshoremen lifted cargo into waiting trucks, boxcars, or into the warehouses that lined the wharfs. The shipyard and chandlery were beehives of activity. The fishing fleet gathered in colorful disarray, fish buyers hurried about, and the unmistakable odor of fish plants filled the air. The waterfront was the workplace and supply line of the city and its hinterland, and the bay and river its sewer. It was not an attractive place for the casual visitor.

Since the 1950s, dramatic changes have taken place along the waterfront, driven largely by technological advances in the handling and transportation of goods. Ports abandoned the urban waterfront, moving to outlying areas where larger ships could dock, and where space

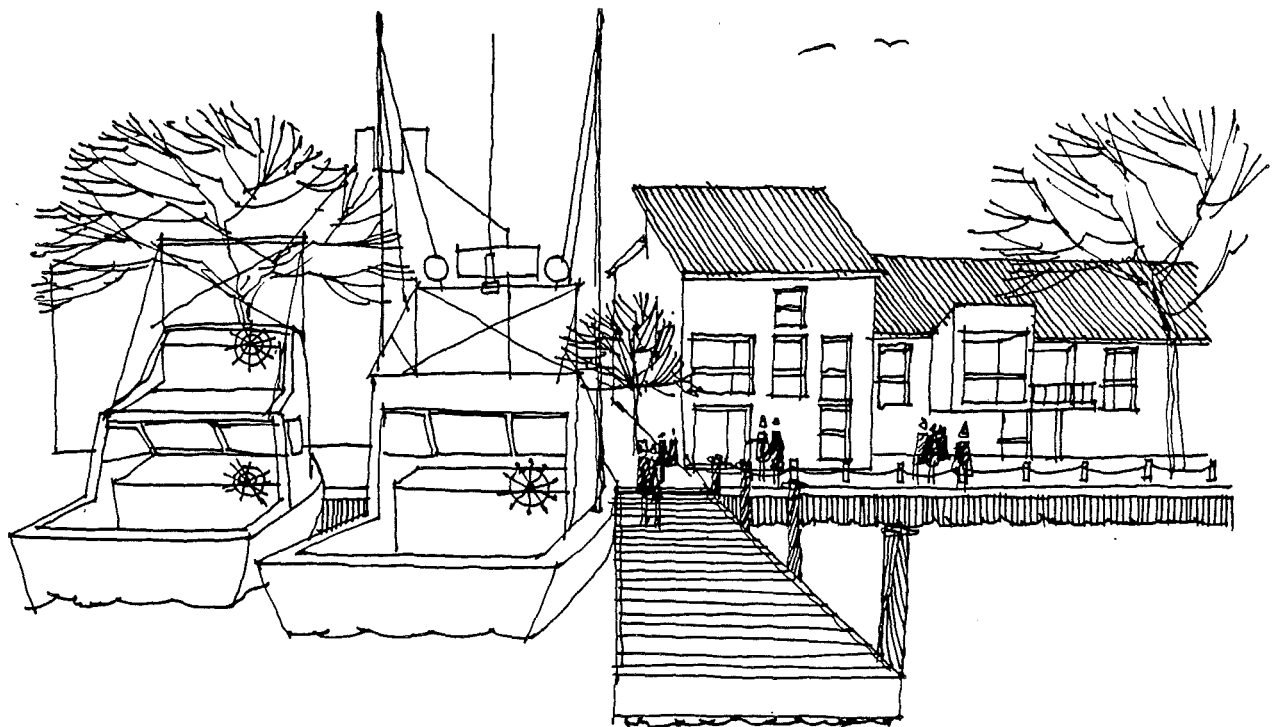


could be found for containers, distribution centers, and auxiliary industries. Sometimes the fishing fleet and processors left as well, moving to better serviced, less congested boat basins. The few marine businesses that remained were often marginal, but able to survive with low rent and taxes. The urban waterfront in many cities declined and became underused, misused and decayed.



Today, many cities are rediscovering their waterfront and realizing its potential role in community revitalization. They are rebuilding and restoring piers and docks, recruiting new businesses and providing public access for visitors and new opportunities for recreation. Large cities like Boston, Baltimore and Seattle have led the way in what has become a waterfront renaissance. Waterfront parks, promenades, public aquariums, hotels, condominiums and shopping centers have replaced abandoned warehouses and decaying piers. Growing residential use of the city center and increasing tourism have created a demand to get to the waterfront. People are organizing festivals and celebrations focusing on the waterfront. They are coming to fish, swim or boat in cleaned up bays and rivers, or just to walk and absorb past and present culture.

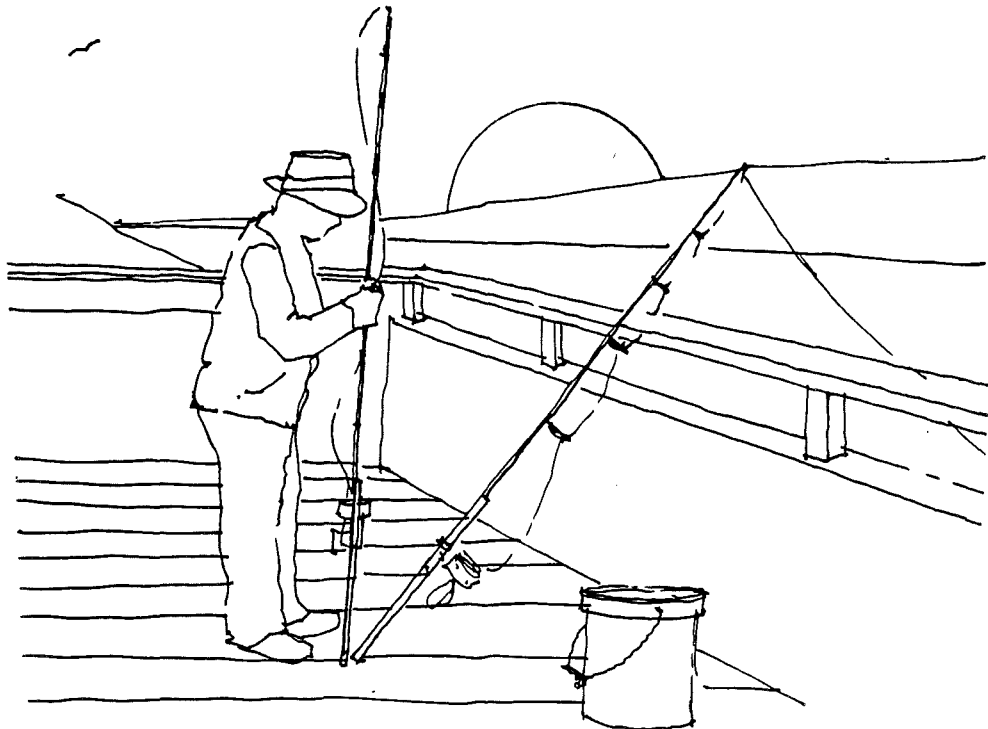
Smaller communities have also shown a great deal of interest in revitalizing and redeveloping their waterfronts. Part of this interest stems from a desire to develop more attractive and unique visitor facilities, including street-end parks, fishing piers, interpretive areas and retail businesses. Interest in local maritime heritage is increasing. For many of these communities, however, the waterfront is still an important workplace and maintaining marine enterprises is a prime concern. These small marine industries and businesses are not always compatible with increased visitor use. Congestion, safety hazards, competing interests and conflicts over waterfront use can result. Avoiding these conflicts while providing safe, attractive public access is sometimes an elusive goal.

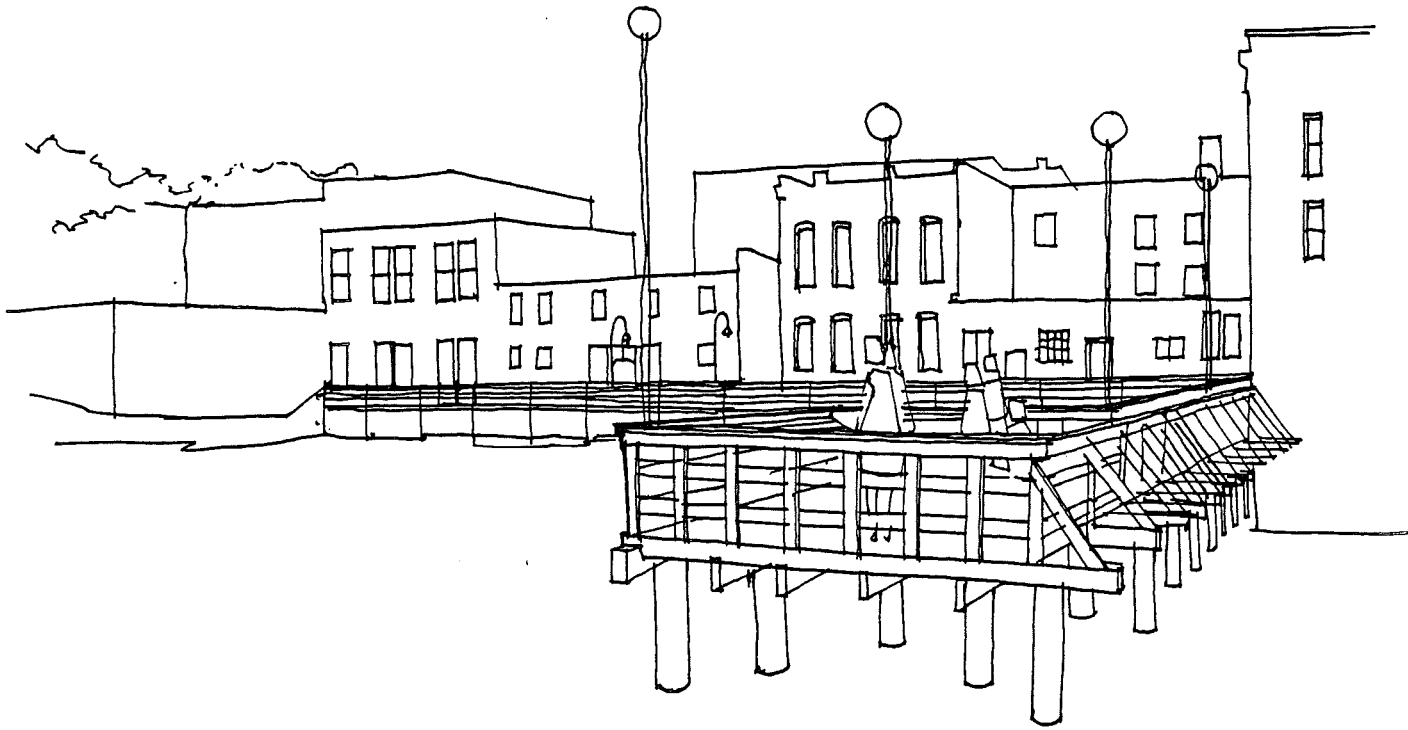


THE ROLE AND MEANING OF PUBLIC ACCESS

Public access is a key feature of waterfront revitalization. People want to get to the water's edge. They want to experience and understand the sights, sounds and even smells of the waterfront. What do we mean by "public access"? As defined here it, has three elements: physical, visual and interpretive.

◆ **PHYSICAL ACCESS**--to be able launch a canoe or motorboat, throw in a fishing line or crab pot, or just hang your feet in the water. Examples of physical access include fishing piers, boat launches and transient moorage areas where you can tie up your boat for a while and go shopping or eat dinner. Physical access puts you in direct contact with the water or allows you to go out on it.



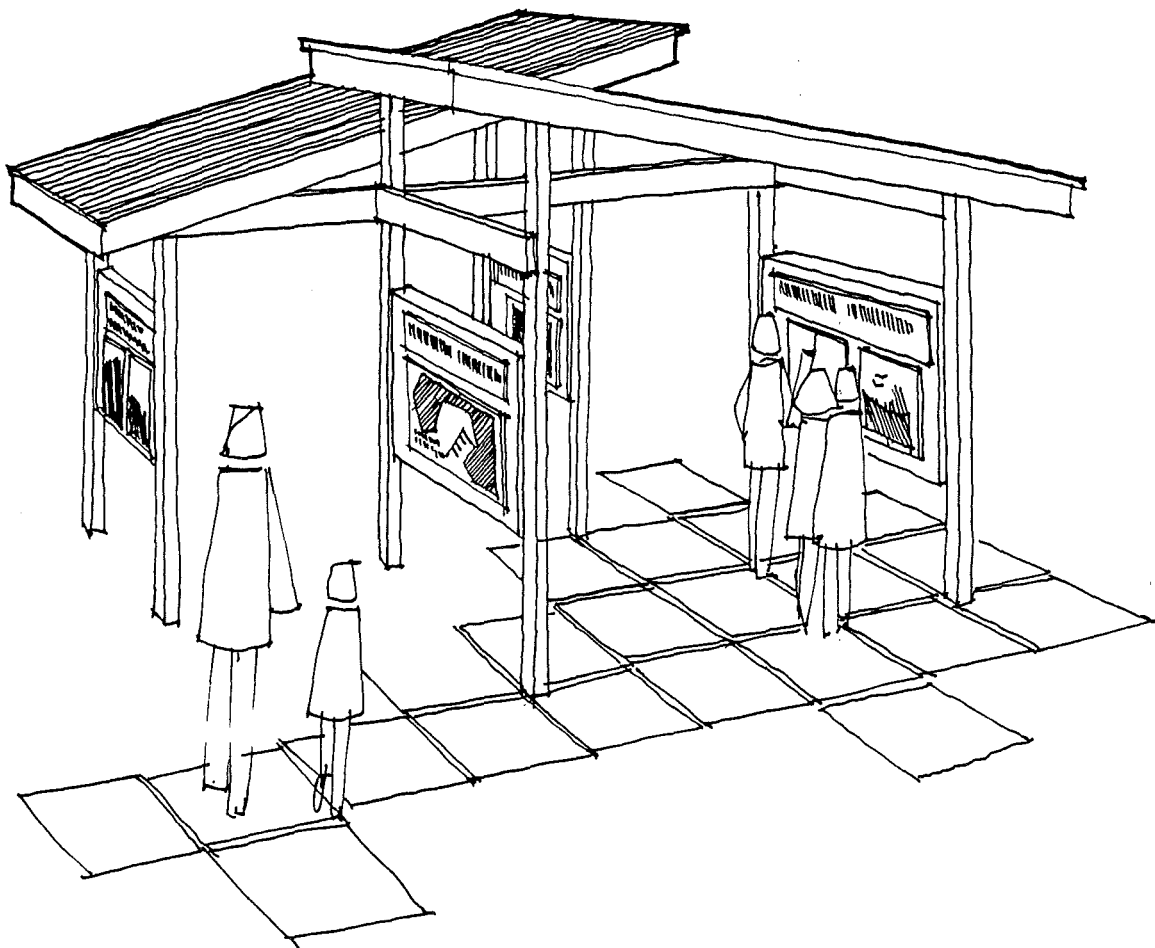


◆ **VISUAL ACCESS**--to be able see what's going on at the waterfront. Working waterfronts are particularly interesting places: longshoremen sort logs alongside waiting ships, and cranes hoist them into the holds; deckhands busily clean the day's catch from the recreational charter boat trip; sparks fly from the welder's torch in the boat repair yard; fishermen unload their catch from the trawler. These sights and sounds of the working waterfront attract people, despite the dirt and safety hazards. Providing places for viewing--observation decks, towers and overlooks--gives people the opportunity to see ports in operation, tugs at work, boats being constructed or repaired, fish being landed and other interesting activities along the working waterfront. At the same time, safety and liability concerns are lessened by physical separation from the activities themselves. Visual access is often as important a part of public access as direct physical access.

◆ **INTERPRETIVE ACCESS**--to be able to understand the variety of sights, sounds and smells at the waterfront that are often mysterious to the out-of-town visitor and sometimes to the long-time resident as well. The most obvious resources for interpretation are the ongoing work and activities--the present culture. "What kind of boat is that?" visitors will ask, or "What are those big cranes for?" Waterfront history is another resource, an often hidden but fascinating subject for interpretation that can enhance understanding of and appreciation for the urban waterfront. Did the old piling support a thriving cannery or busy wharf? Who built the waterfront dikes that protect the city? When did the old, boarded-up customs

house go out of business? Elements of the natural environment are also evident on the urban waterfront. Sea gulls, diving ducks, seals and sea lions, occasional killer whales, remnant or restored wetlands, algae and barnacles on old piling all offer opportunities for environmental interpretation.

The concept of public access thus has these three interacting components: physical, visual and interpretative. This is the context for "waterfront interpretation" as presented in this handbook. Used in creative ways, these three components of public access give visitors the opportunity to experience the unique character and resources of small and large waterfront communities alike.



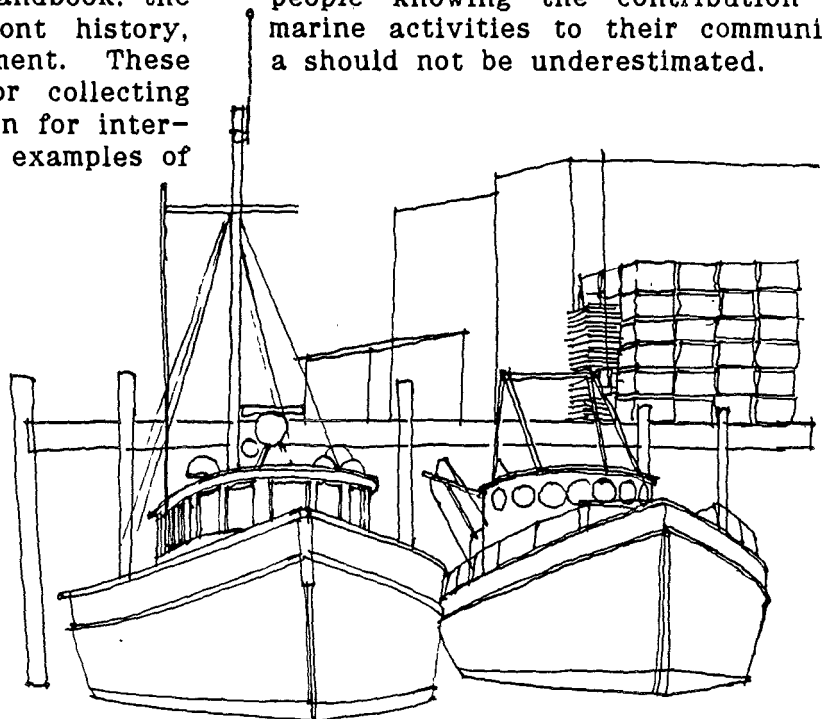
WATERFRONT INTERPRETATION DEFINED

Just what is interpretation? Very simply, interpretation means "to explain, to give meaning to, to make clear". In a waterfront setting, the definition of interpretation can be expanded:

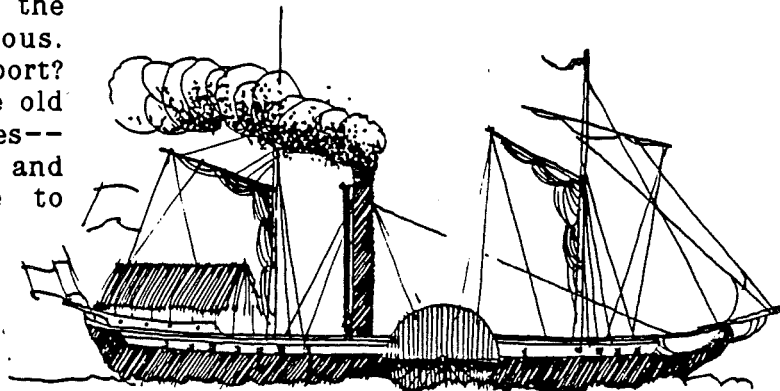
Waterfront interpretation is an educational activity designed to reveal both meanings and relationships, about and between the present culture and the historical past, the water and the land, and the many features of the human and natural environment. Interpretation unlocks the mysteries inherent in the many sights, sounds and smells of the waterfront that people otherwise might not experience.

Within this definition are the three general themes or topics for waterfront interpretation that are discussed throughout this handbook: the present culture, waterfront history, and the natural environment. These are useful categories for collecting and organizing information for interpretation. Following are examples of each:

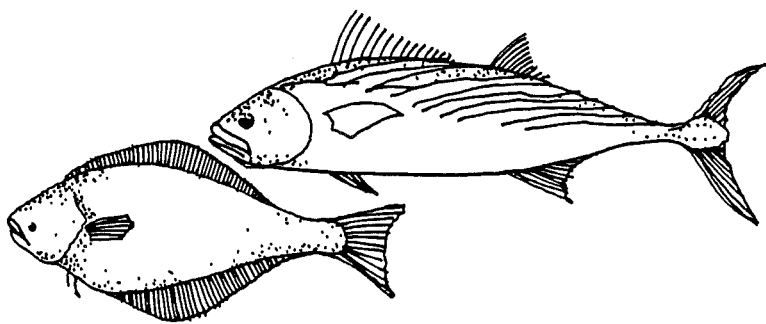
◆ **PRESENT CULTURE**--the work and activities people are engaged in today on the waterfront, and the ships, boats, equipment and materials they use to do their work. Explanations of log handling, container operations, identification of ship types and flags, a discussion about "flags of convenience," and information on the importance of Pacific Rim trade to the region's economy would be relevant topics at the port. At the commercial fishing dock, identification of boat types, what fish they fish for and the importance of various fisheries today can be related to historical fishing activity. Even aspects of fishery management can be discussed. In a similar fashion, charter boat operations, boat building and repair, fish processing and other aspects of the working waterfront can be explained to a curious public. These curious onlookers are also the voting public; the importance of people knowing the contribution of marine activities to their community should not be underestimated.



◆ WATERFRONT HISTORY--the maritime heritage of urban waterfronts, often like buried treasure--hidden and worth seeking. In many smaller communities, remnants of the past are readily observable along the waterfront, but often mysterious. The old piling--what did it support? The boarded-up buildings and the old structures with "modern" facades--what was their original purpose and how did that purpose evolve to present-day use?



◆ NATURAL ENVIRONMENT--the ubiquitous sea birds and wildlife found along the waterfront, and the remnants of their habitats. Nowhere do the natural and human-built environments come into closer play than along the urban waterfront, presenting a great opportunity for environmental education. Shrieking gulls, elegant great blue herons wading in the shallows, unnumbered shorebirds darting along the beach and barking seals and sea lions make the waterfront come alive, creating interest and excitement. Marine life also present opportunities for explaining management conflicts, such as problems with marine debris pollution, or the conflict between marine mammals and salmon fisheries. Remnant marshes and mudflats offer opportunities for describing the role these environments play in the ecology of the estuary. Management of wetlands and plans to protect and develop the region can also be explained.



INTERPRETATION PRINCIPLES

A review of the literature on the subject of environmental interpretation suggests some basic principles and considerations for communities undertaking an interpretation program. These principles provide an important foundation for developing an interpretation plan.

Principle 1--Keep it simple.

People have a limited capacity to absorb information, especially during the leisure time associated with "visiting" the waterfront. Psychologists tell us to limit the information presented to between three and seven basic concepts. Most interpretive displays are viewed only 15% to 64% of the total time required to read or listen to the total message presented. Usually the longer the message the shorter the viewing period.

Principle 2--Be accurate.

Effective interpretation is based on solid, accurate information. Accurate information can assist visitors in developing a new perception of their environmental experience. It also lends credibility and conveys a sense of authenticity.

Principle 3--Know your audience.

Interpretation must relate to an individual's experience, personality and interests. Know your intended audience and tailor your interpreta-

tion accordingly. Otherwise, there is little chance that the meaning or relationships you want to convey will be communicated. With a diverse audience like you find at the waterfront, use a variety of approaches.

Principle 4--Involve your audience.

People learn best from first-hand experience. Becoming personally involved has a much greater impact on the learning process than passive, observational experience. Again, psychologists report that people remember approximately 10% of what they hear, 30% of what they read, and 80% of what they do with their own hands. Children in particular learn best by doing things, especially through imitation; they generally find little satisfaction with just being told or shown. Fantasy is another powerful and far-reaching mode of interpretation for children, one that gives them the chance to use their active imaginations.

Principle 5--Challenge your audience.

People learn most when they themselves must acquire information, think about it, and relate it to other information. For example, an interpretive display might point out where to look for certain species of wildlife at the waterfront and note various characteristics and behaviors to observe. Making these associations reinforces the learning experience.

DEVELOPING THE INTERPRETIVE PLAN

Here's a recipe to help you get started with the interpretation plan. Ready to begin? Keep in mind that there are many possible approaches and that a list of interpretation guides is available in the Appendix A. What's suited to a given community is best decided by that community. But it is handy to have some basic steps in mind.

Part II of this guide gives details about techniques to help your planning committee produce professional interpretive signs, exhibits, pamphlets and walkways. It will be valuable for you to refer to this material as you proceed through the following planning steps.

Step 1. Get yourselves organized.

Where is your community now with regard to waterfront revitalization planning? Does the comprehensive plan address public access on the waterfront? Are there waterfront parks, boardwalks, trails and other access points in place now? Have any attempts been made to provide interpretation? Does the city, port or downtown association have a waterfront committee?

Because interpretation is a specialized and often overlooked part of public access planning, you may be starting from scratch. Organize your waterfront interpretation committee, and identify the core of local experts and interested individuals.

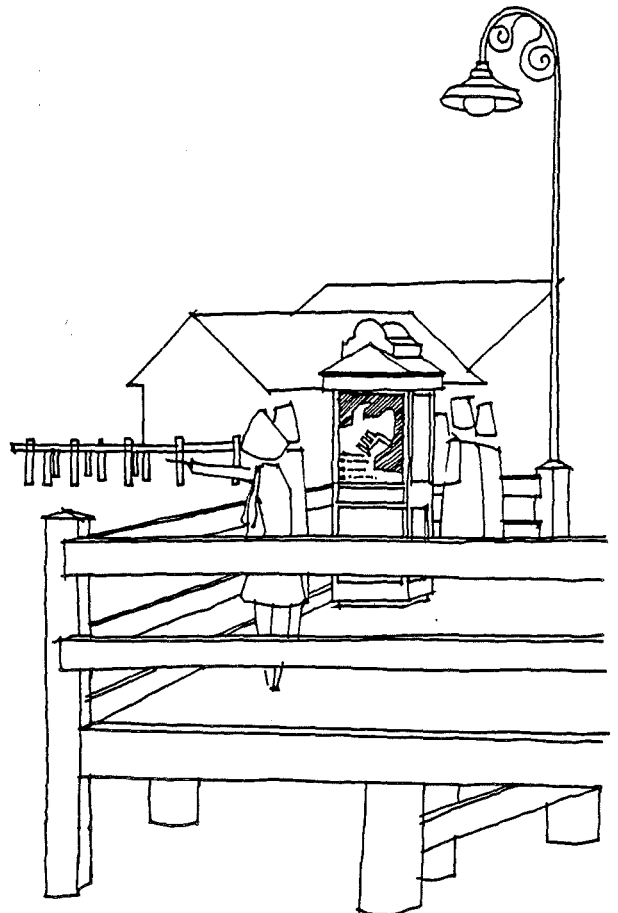
- 1 GET YOURSELVES ORGANIZED
- 2 DECIDE WHERE YOU'RE GOING
- 3 FIND OUT WHAT YOU HAVE
- 4 BUILD THE PLAN FRAMEWORK
- 5 FILL IN THE DETAILS FOR EACH SITE
- 6 COMMIT THE PLAN TO WRITING AND GET IT APPROVED
- 7 MAKE THE PLAN HAPPEN.

Following are ideas for who might serve on your waterfront committee:

- ◆ architects and landscape architects
- ◆ civil engineers and contractors
- ◆ historians and oldtimers
- ◆ naturalists
- ◆ downtown business people
- ◆ waterfront property owners
- ◆ artists
- ◆ school teachers
- ◆ extension agents
- ◆ city planners and managers
- ◆ port managers
- ◆ interpretation specialists

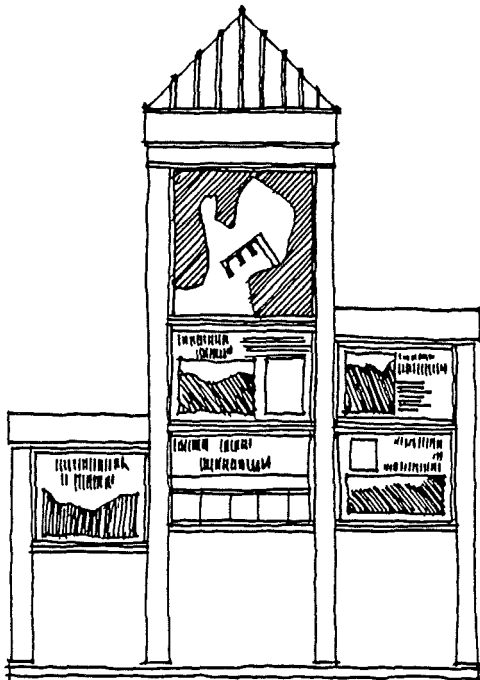
Some or all of these resource people may be available in your community and willing to lend their expertise. The group you organize should be large enough to cover the waterfront, but small enough to be manageable.

Outside consultants may be a valuable addition to the interpretation planning committee, but they generally cost money and the same expertise may be available on a volunteer basis. Whatever the specifics of the organization, remember that the people in the community are a valuable resource for waterfront public access and interpretation planning. Allowing citizens to develop their own plan for waterfront interpretation creates a sense of pride and sharing within the community and with visitors.



A community workshop is a good way to get started with a waterfront interpretation plan. By going through a simple planning process such as that outlined here, a group of knowledgeable local people and interpretation specialists can establish goals, begin an inventory of resources for interpretation and make decisions on themes and exhibits.

Another means of organizing community interest to promote waterfront interpretation is establish a non-profit organization. An example is "Waterfront Awareness", a private non-profit group in Seattle that has developed an interpretive center at Pier 57, as well as programs and tours for the public (see sidebar). The public education program at Oregon State University's Hatfield Marine Science Center is another example of public interpretation programs; the summer "Seatauqua" program there offers short courses, films, lectures, and dock and estuary walks each summer.



SEATTLE'S "WATERFRONT AWARENESS"

Organized in 1981 by a group of maritime professionals and community volunteers, Waterfront Awareness has worked to provide information and educational experiences for the public about past, present and future marine activities in the Seattle and the Puget Sound region.

The group has established the "Water Link", an interpretative exhibit and viewpoint at Pier 57 in Seattle's Waterfront Park. Its exhibits include Prologue, a photographic journey through 150 years of Puget Sound history, Harborwatch, a full-scale pilot house overlooking Elliot Bay that offers actual sights and sounds of vessel traffic as it happens, Northwest Maritime Innovations, explaining important developments in ocean science, fisheries and shipping, Working Waterfront, an audiovisual tour of the high tech cargo handling activities produced by the Port of Seattle, and Wharfside, an exploratory environment that gives young people the opportunity for a hands on understanding of maritime work in a playful setting.

Water Link is evolving into a Maritime Center, a major new attraction that will educate and entertain visitors of all ages to Seattle's waterfront.

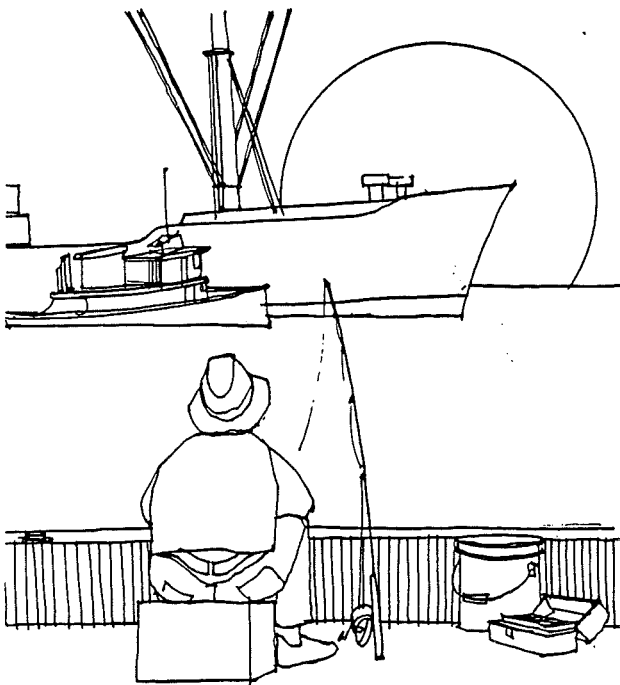
For information, write:

Waterfront Awareness
2342 34th Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98144

Step 2. Decide where you're going.

Once the waterfront public access committee is organized, members should identify the goals for the project and determine how interpretation fits into these goals. The goals of interpretation should be developed in conjunction with the community's concerns. Interpretation can often be used as a management tool because it can control people's behavior by helping them understand the appropriate activities for an area. Interpretation fosters public awareness and respect about the historic and present activities of the waterfront and how they have shaped today's community. Following are the steps in establishing goals:

- ◆ Define the purpose of the waterfront project. For example, is it to bring more tourism into the area, or to make the waterfront more accessible to the community citizens? By understanding the specific objectives of the project, you can design more effective interpretation.



2 DECIDE WHERE YOU'RE GOING

- ◆ Identify the audiences you want to reach. Local citizens may be interested in more historic aspects of their waterfront (things that they remember), whereas visitors from out-of-town may be more interested in the sea lions or the boat-building enterprise. The audience should be identified and categorized into different user groups. It is extremely important to target the community itself so that local people will support the waterfront project. Some mechanism for community involvement should be used to insure that what the community thinks is most important about their waterfront is preserved and communicated.

- ◆ Outline some basic messages or themes that appear to be of interest to your citizenry or are important management ideas that need to be addressed. These messages will depend on your projected audience and on the purpose of your waterfront project. Define the primary and secondary messages that are most important in achieving the goals you have outlined. By identifying these goals during the planning stage, you can save a lot of time and wasted effort later on!

- ◆ Keep cost in mind at all stages of interpretive planning. While you shouldn't let it limit your creativity, it should temper your expectations. Remember that a series of effective exhibit panels is a whole lot more meaningful than a multimedia-equipped visitor center that never got built! Be realistic, but don't limit your possibilities at the outset. One aspect of goal-setting, however, should deal with developing your funding sources.

Step 3. Find out what resources you have to interpret.

Resources as they are referred to here are the sights, sounds and heritage of the waterfront. Their interpretation gives new insight and meaning to local residents and visitors alike. Following are some of the questions to be addressed:

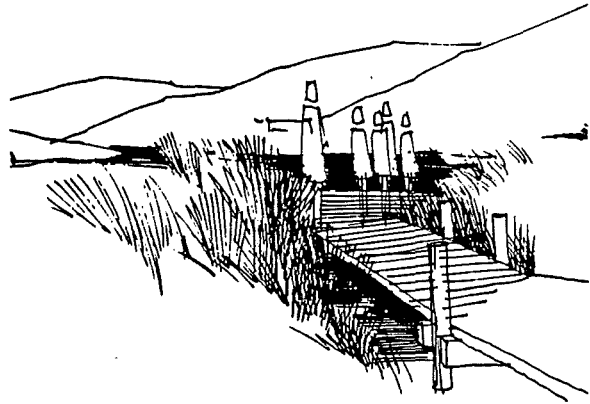
◆ What physical locations along the waterfront lend themselves to improved public access and interpretive displays or activities? Are these public access sites proposed, under construction or in place? Catalog these sites and possible linkages between them for future trails and walkways.

◆ What is the maritime and cultural heritage of the waterfront? Did sailing ships dock here? Where did the fishing fleet dock? What ethnic groups played roles in the development of the waterfront? Are there any oldtimers around willing to give an oral history of waterfront life in the old days?

◆ What is happening on the waterfront today? How does the modern fishing fleet operate and of what importance is it to the community? What repairs are taking place in the shipyard? What kind of fish do the charter boats go after? Ask yourself similar questions about the waterfront culture you observe today.

◆ What elements of the natural environment make the waterfront an interesting place? Do rare, threatened or endangered species of birds frequent the area or are there common species with interesting habits and characteristics? Are there remnant swamps, marshes or sloughs adjacent to developed areas where people can learn about the estuary or river at their front door?

3 FIND OUT WHAT YOU HAVE



An excellent way to get the inventory process started is to organize and take a "waterfront walk" with people from the community, local experts and resource people with interpretation experience. Many times it is difficult to appreciate what resources exist when you are sitting inside an office. By walking along and experiencing the waterfront with a group of people, you get the benefit of the "brainstorming effect." This group process can be an exciting and valuable experience because it reveals the full potential of each area and often identifies subjects that would otherwise have been overlooked.

The waterfront walk is just a start. The inventory will also require additional research, especially for historical topics. The local historical society is an excellent resource, along with oldtimers in the community. Topics identified for possible exhibits will also need to be researched to ensure accuracy. This can wait until interpretation topics are better defined, but enough information should be collected at this point to decide what stories you want to tell.

Step 4. Outline the plan and build the framework.

After initial goals have been developed and inventory information has been gathered, you must make a number of decisions about the overall framework for the interpretive plan. You must define the planning area, identify interpretive themes and identify principal interpretation sites and linkages. Again, a group process is often an effective way to go about this, using the resource inventory and personal knowledge as a base.

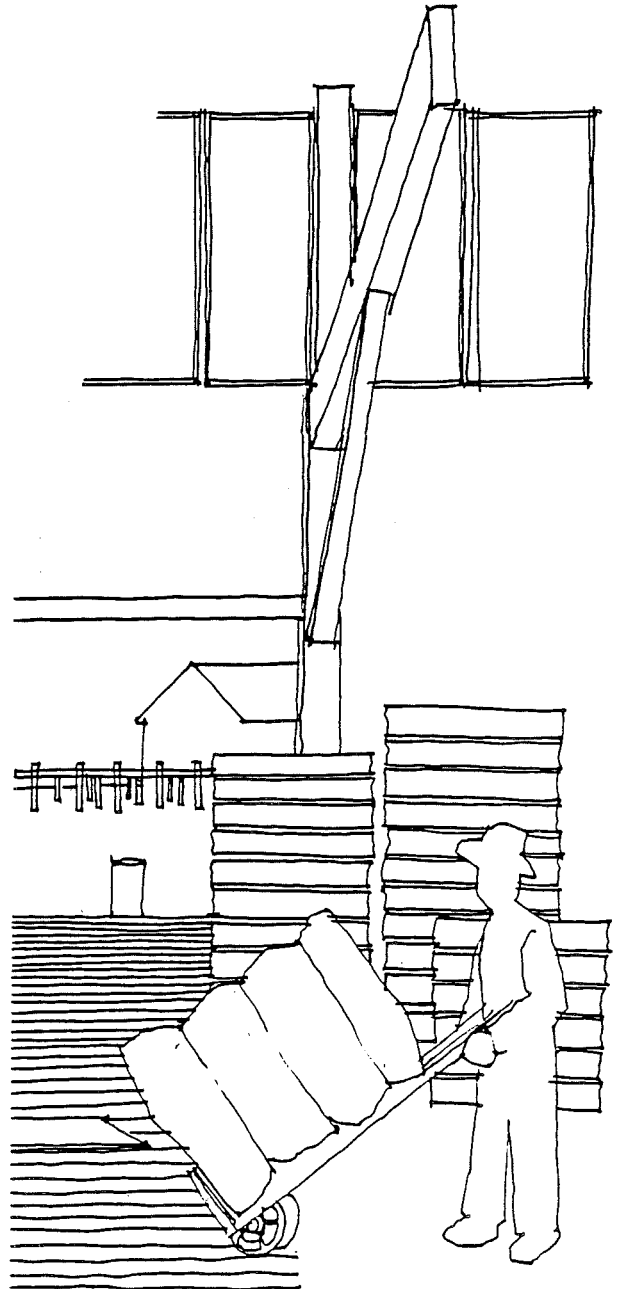
◆ **Define the Planning Area**

The geographic area for interpretation must be explicitly defined. Often, this is simply a function of the area or areas for which physical or visual access is provided. You may want to divide the waterfront into smaller interpretation planning areas and give existing or soon-to-be developed sites more detailed attention in the interpretation plan.

◆ **Select Interpretive Themes**

Develop the themes for interpretation of your waterfront. Themes are the stories you want to tell about the waterfront, its history and role in development of the community, its importance as an economic resource today, and its meaning to the community in an abstract or aesthetic sense--in other words, how the river, bay and estuary define the community. Themes are the messages you want to communicate to local residents as well as visitors; they are the ideas that integrate interpretive sites all along the waterfront and lead to development of the cultural, historical and environmental exhibits that convey the unique, authentic and connected character of the area.

4 BUILD THE PLAN FRAMEWORK



◆ Select Specific Interpretive Sites

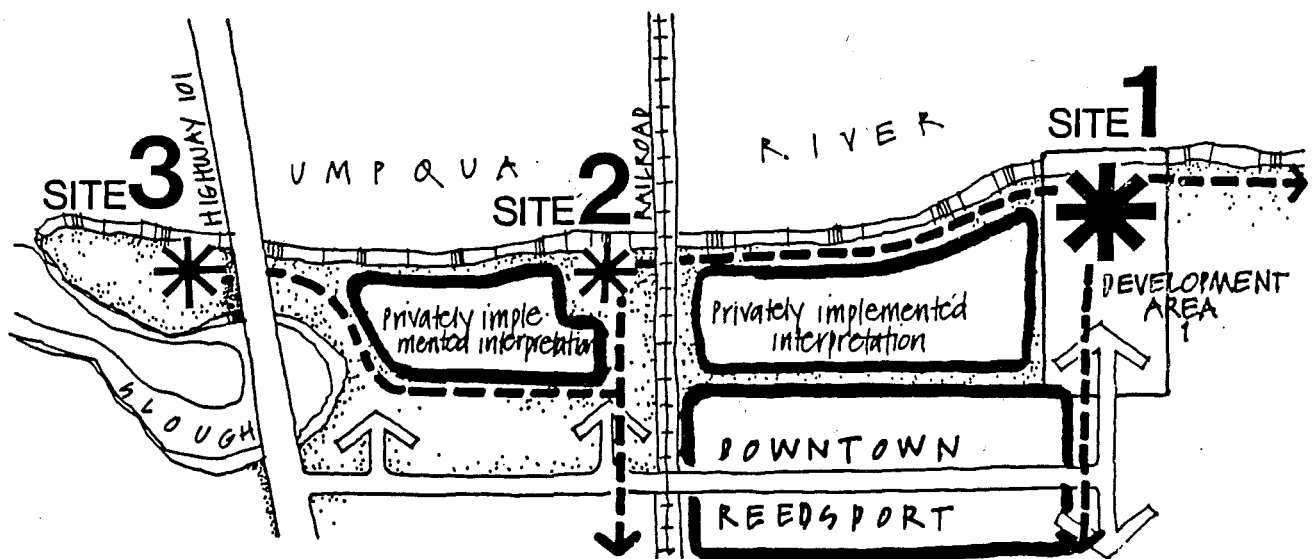
The best sites for interpretation usually are clear once the waterfront walk and inventory are completed. Different ideas will emerge from a group process, however. Sorting these ideas out will produce a better product. Already developed public access sites are the most obvious candidates, but undeveloped sites sometimes have an advantage in that they can be designed from the ground (or water) up. Planners supporting the group should be prepared with information about property ownership, land use controls and other constraints that will influence selection and linkage of sites. Involvement of major property owners in the plan development process is also a good way to get a realistic assessment of these issues. The most available sites are generally ones in public ownership, such as street ends and port property. An "anchor" site may also be desirable, one where major facilities are available, including a visitor or interpretive center. Anchor sites may also be more modest, with a simple outdoor kiosk display.

◆ Decide on Linkages Between Interpretive Sites

Physical links between interpretive sites need to be defined, or a decision needs to be made not to link sites because of physical or other constraints. A waterfront trail between interpretive sites is a common and effective approach. Maps can be used to guide visitors.

Use of a consistent design or architectural style is another way of linking sites, though more subtle. Subject matter linkages should also be considered at this point, at least in general terms. Often these techniques are used together to provide strong connections between public access and interpretation sites.

The "product" of this step is an interpretive plan framework--a general guide that can be evaluated by the community, and then used as a prospectus for seeking grant or community funds to develop more detailed plans for each interpretive site.

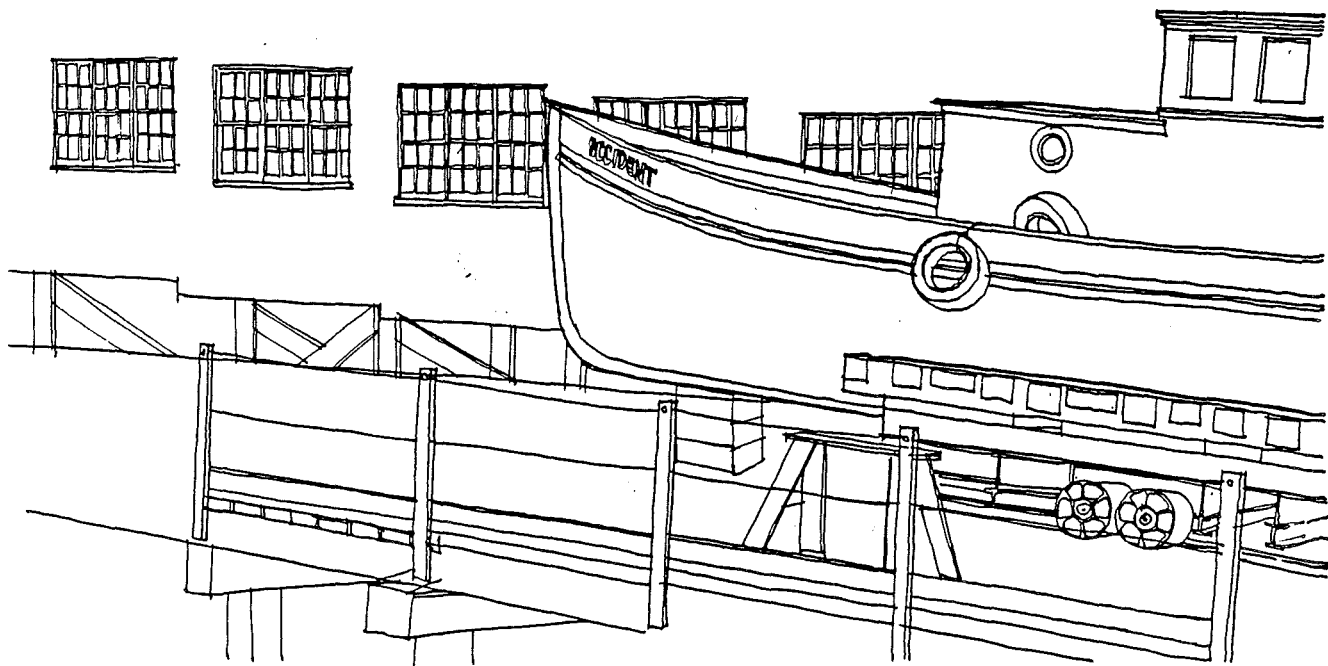
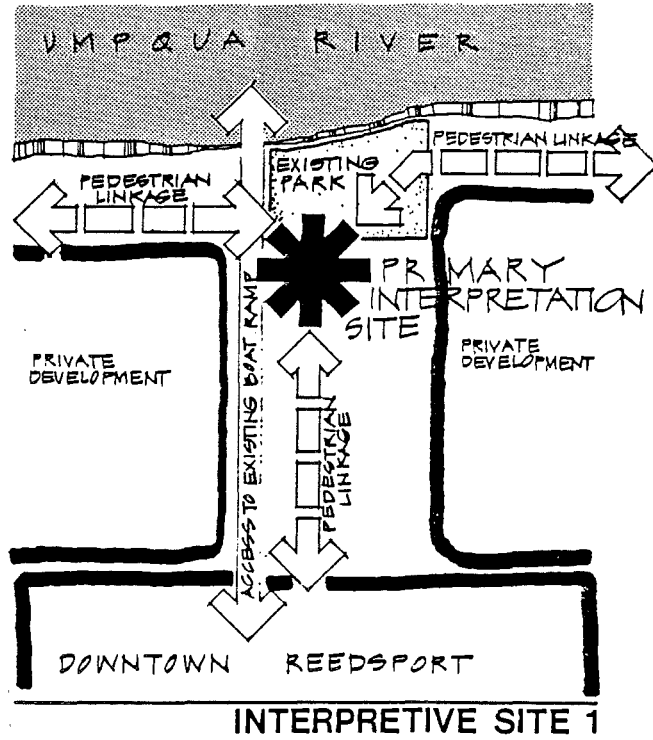


CONCEPTUAL INTERPRETATION PLAN

Step 5. Fill in the details for each interpretive site.

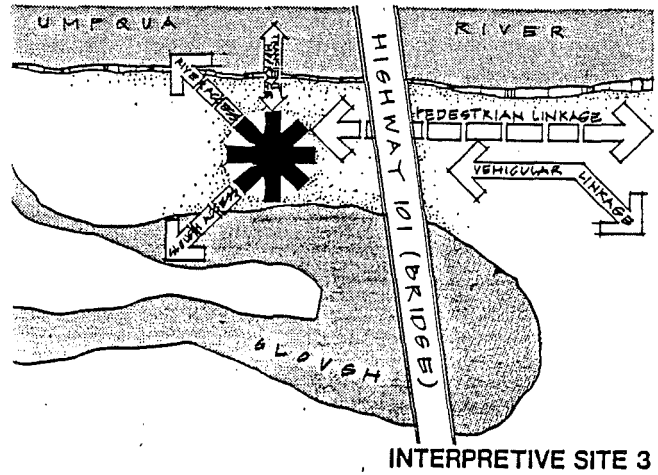
For each site that has been identified for interpretation, review all the applicable information from the resource inventory. What are the cultural, historical and natural resources, or other unique features visible from this site that have interpretation potential? How do these resources relate to the overall themes identified in Step 4? What type of access exists at present (piers, wharfs, park, docks, etc.), and are there plans to improve physical or visual access? If new facilities are planned, will they allow for interpretation of desired resources? What is the situation regarding access to the site itself, parking, hazards and safety concerns, linkages to other sites? What additional research is needed on each topic of interest?

5 FILL IN THE DETAILS FOR EACH SITE.

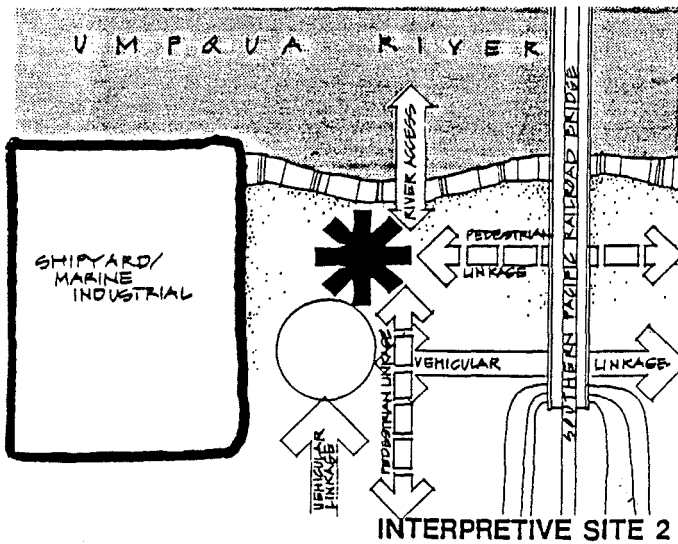


Considering the resources for interpretation and the themes for the waterfront, select specific exhibit topics for interpretation and the media to be used to convey the information. Exhibits may be indoor or outdoor and use any combination of signs, interactive media, publications and audio-visual techniques. Details on development of interpretive signs, graphics, text, brochures and audiovisual information are presented in Part II. Exhibits themselves come in many forms, from simple signs, to elaborate indoor multimedia programs. Initial costs, maintenance requirements and costs and vulnerability to vandalism are important factors that need to be considered in making decisions on the types of construction, materials and exact location of exhibits.

involved in this process. Local experts, such as naturalists and local historians, can help verify written information and graphics to ensure accuracy and authenticity.



INTERPRETIVE SITE 3



INTERPRETIVE SITE 2

Once exhibit topics are selected and site logistics worked out, detailed considerations of graphic design and text development begins. Primers on these topics are in Part II. If a professional interpreter is not already involved, this is a good place to bring one in. Interpretation specialists can take the overall plan, themes and exhibit topics outlined by the group and translate them into graphics and text. Keep the group

Step 6. Commit the plan to writing and get it approved.

If you haven't started yet, its time to commit the waterfront interpretive plan to writing. Include the process used to develop the plan, the goals, the planning area, the themes, the individual sites and site layouts, the resources at each site that are to be interpreted, the graphics and text for individual exhibits, the types of exhibits and materials used to construct them, and the budget. Use graphic illustrations as much as possible to communicate your ideas. "Interpret your interpretation plan for its reviewers.

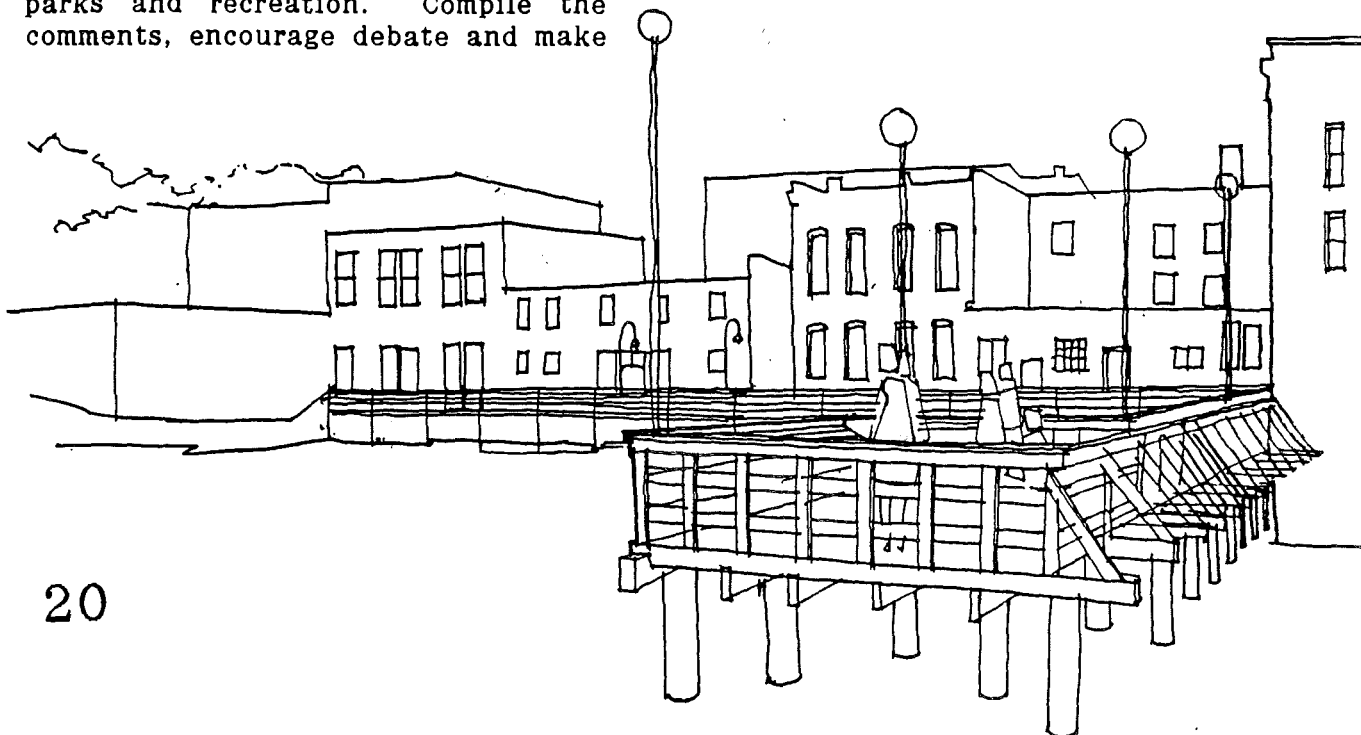
Submit the plan for review and critique by both local people and outside interpretation specialists. People not involved in the process can offer a fresh perspective on what may not have been considered. Specialists are particularly valuable in reviewing the details of the proposed exhibits. Involve the local planning commission, the city council and the port commission in the review. Seek opinions and any needed approvals of county, state and federal agencies as well, particularly those involved in parks and recreation. Compile the comments, encourage debate and make

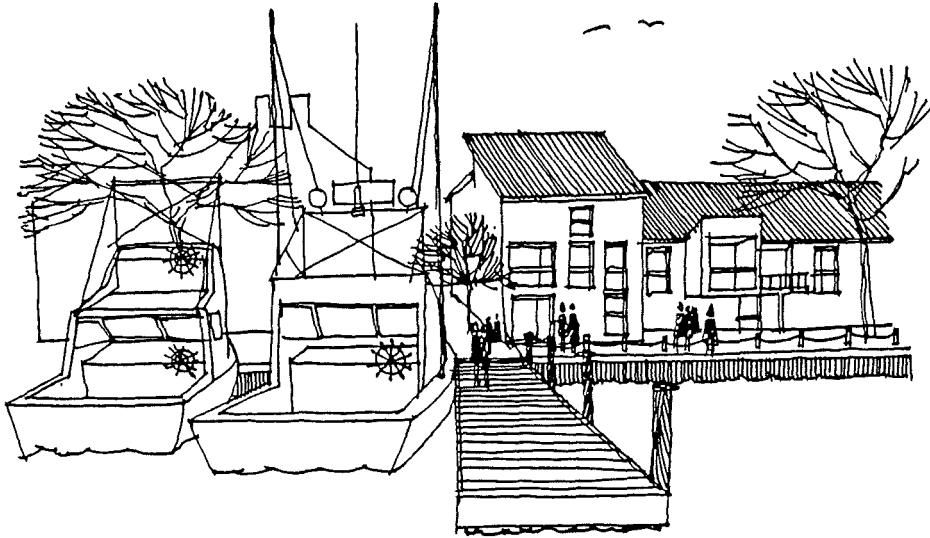
6

COMMIT THE PLAN TO WRITING AND GET IT APPROVED.

appropriate changes in the final waterfront interpretation plan. Conduct a well-publicized public meeting to arouse the interest and support of the wider public in the community. In writing the plan and in its review, you should address the following questions:

- ◆ Is the plan compatible with future waterfront development plans, management objectives, and local, state and federal waterway permit regulations?
- ◆ Are the plan's goals and interpretive themes clearly stated?
- ◆ Are the topics selected for interpretation the best ones?
- ◆ Are the interpretive media selected the best ones?
- ◆ Can the plan be implemented with available funding?





Step 7. Make the plan happen!

Making the waterfront interpretation plan a reality on the ground will depend on many factors, but a principal issue is money--for final design, for construction, for installation and for maintenance. If your interpretive exhibits are part of a larger plan to construct major new waterfront facilities or to improve public access at an existing site, they may well be dependent on funding for the entire project. In many cases, however, construction and installation of the interpretive displays may proceed on their own. Cities and ports have funding mechanisms available to support development of interpretive displays. Grants from state and federal agencies and from private foundations are other potential sources of funding for interpretive displays. In Oregon, for example, the Department of Land Conservation and Development provides grants for improving public access and encourages the use of interpretive displays (Section 306A Coastal Zone Management grants).

Include implementation as a separate section in the interpretive plan; it should contain your time schedule for facility and program

7 MAKE THE PLAN HAPPEN.

development, estimated costs, potential sources of funding, contracting procedures, and a plan for maintenance and update. The time schedule should be a function of the complexity of the overall project and be designed to insure a logical, coordinated sequence of actions. A five- to ten-year time frame is often used. Depreciation and inflation effects of both capital and operation/maintenance costs should also be considered.

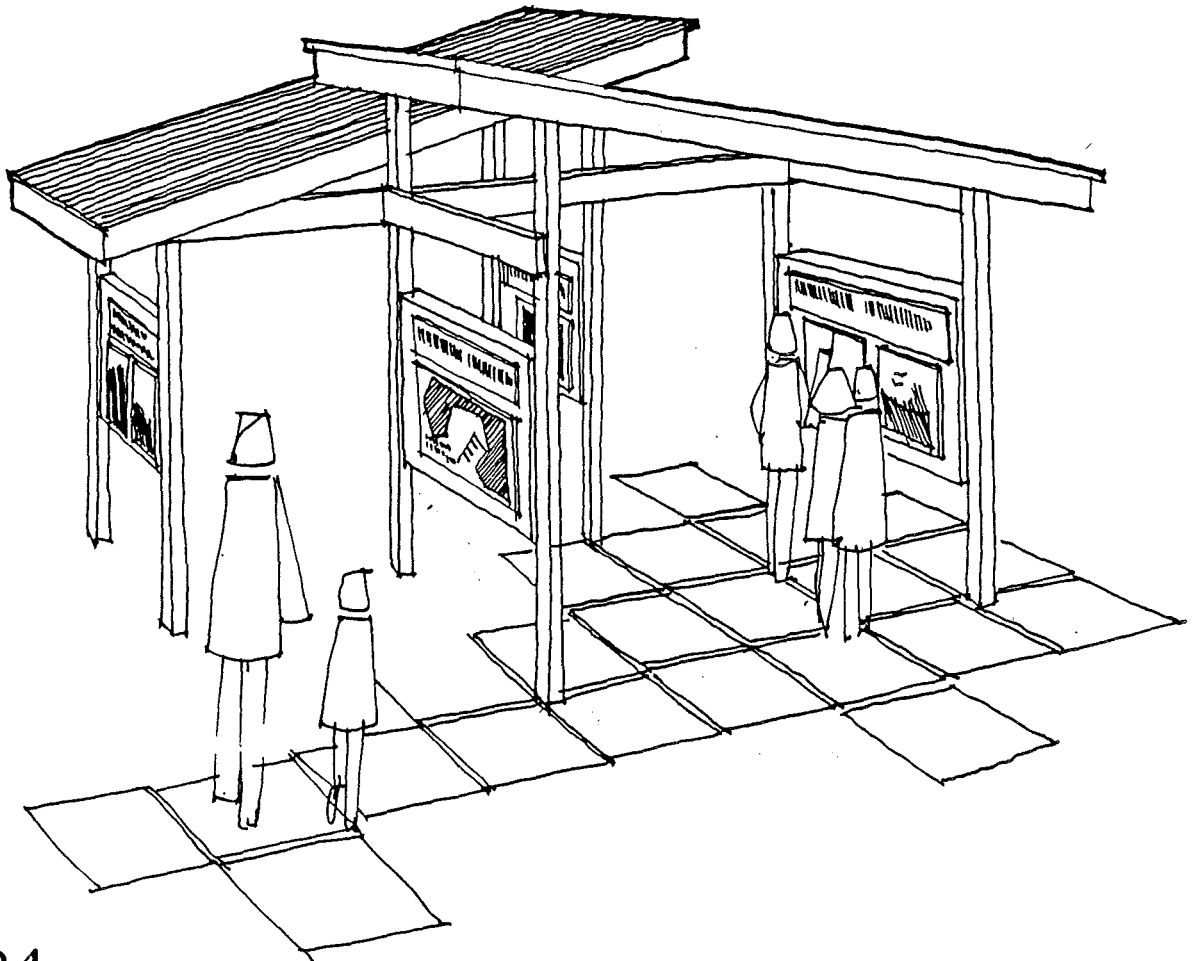
Provide for periodic evaluation and update of interpretive displays and exhibits. Evaluation includes measuring the effect of your interpretive program on visitors and the impact visitors have on the resources. Your overall goals and specific objectives provide a basis for evaluation. Evaluation techniques include observations, questionnaires, written tests, casual conversations and other solicited and unsolicited feedback.

Part II:

Interpretation Techniques

INTERPRETATION TECHNIQUES

What comes to mind when you think of interpretation? For most people it is exhibits or displays with pictures, explanatory text, diagrams, maps and such. While it's true that exhibits are one of the principal ways to interpret the environment around us, they are not the only way and often not the best way. What are some of the techniques for interpreting waterfront historical, cultural and environmental resources, and how are they designed and executed? That's the subject of this part of the planning guide.

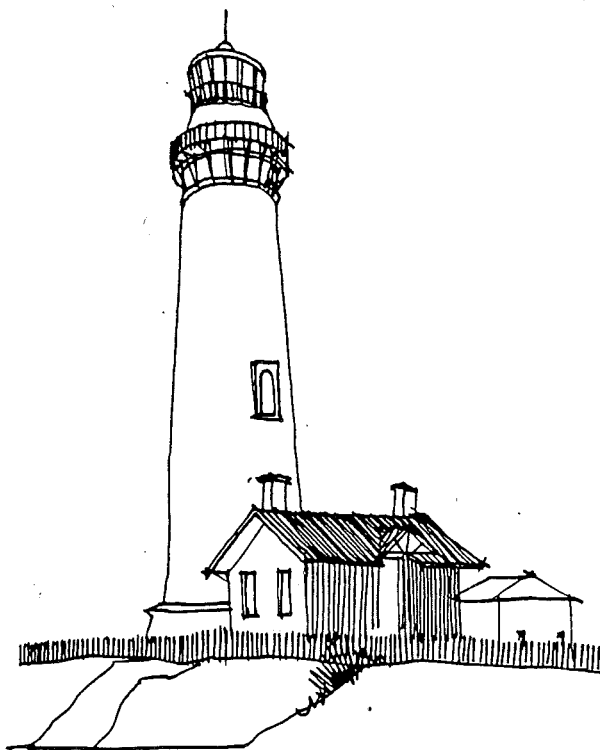


TYPES OF MEDIA

There are a variety of media from which to choose for interpreting waterfront resources. The best one or combination depends on a number of factors--your objective, your audience, the specific topic, the physical environment, the financial resources you have available and so on. No one type of media fits every need or situation, so when deciding, be clear about your selection criteria.

Media used for interpretation are generally divided into two types. Active media involve the use of people as interpreters. Guided tours along the working waterfront or nature walks with a naturalist are examples. Walking tours are a wonderful way to learn about the waterfront environment first hand. Guides can answer your questions--static displays cannot. Such tours and walks are often used as a seasonal or periodic adjunct to passive media, the second type. Passive media discussed here include (1) architectural design, (2) indoor exhibit areas, (3) outdoor exhibits or kiosks, (4) self-guided trails, (5) brochures or leaflets, (6) audiovisual programs, and (7) administrative signs and brochures. These have several advantages and disadvantages when compared to active media. Passive media generally cost less to purchase, operate and maintain; they serve visitors at all times and are consistent in their presentation; they are not coercive--visitors can proceed at

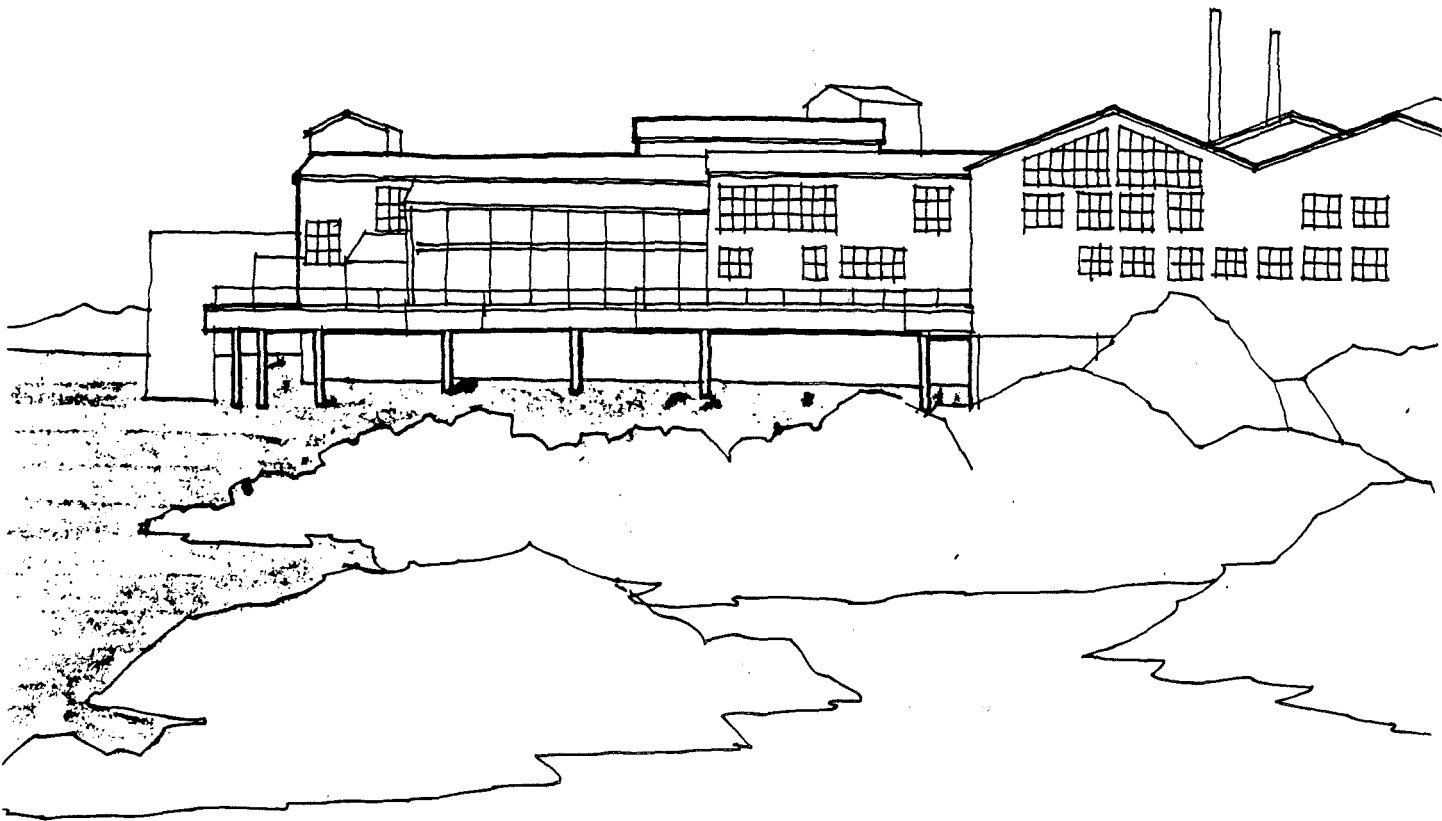
their own pace and pick up as much or as little as they want. On the other hand, interpretive guides can answer questions, add personal anecdotes, give demonstrations and involve visitors in a personal way. Following are considerations for selecting appropriate types of interpretive media for the waterfront.



ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

While not an interpretive medium in the traditional sense, architectural design is a subtle but powerful way to interpret the character of the waterfront, especially its history. The lines, shapes and materials used to design and construct piers, docks, viewing platforms, visitor centers, commercial buildings, kiosks and even lighting create "atmosphere," a sense of place, and a feeling for culture and heritage. At the same time, these structures can be modern and convenient. Whether the focus is on the past or future, the interpretive role assigned to architectural design

should be a conscious decision that relates to the overall goal and themes for revitalization. The Monterey Aquarium in California is a brilliant example of this. Located on the historic "cannery row" of John Steinbeck fame, the world-renowned, modern aquarium is designed to evoke images of the old industrial sardine canneries of the 1920s. It works well. The Columbia River Maritime Museum in Astoria, Oregon, is another example; its sweeping roof lines convey an image of the great ocean waves that took so many ships to the bottom at the Columbia River bar.



INDOOR EXHIBIT AREAS

Indoor exhibits are effective media for interpretation in visitor centers or in office reception areas. They can vary in complexity and cost from simple, inexpensive, entryway exhibits to multimedia, integrated, special-purpose exhibits that are the focal point of visitor centers. Following are considerations involved in making decisions about indoor exhibits:

◆ Indoor exhibits shield visitors from bad weather, a very important consideration in the Pacific Northwest. The exhibits themselves don't have to be weatherproofed either, reducing cost and providing more design flexibility. At the same time, however, indoor exhibits mean visitors are separated from the resources being interpreted.

◆ Security is more easily provided and there is less likelihood of vandalism, especially if the facility is staffed. At the same time, this means added operating expense.

◆ Audiovisual programs and animated displays can be used more readily indoors, out of the weather. Such exhibits require continued maintenance. Out-of-order exhibits kill the interpretive message and leave a negative impression with the visitor.

◆ "Too many" separate exhibits can cause an information overload, especially for the casual visitor. When designing the facility and planning traffic flow, allow for alternative routes--a fast track for the casual visitor and a more in-depth one for those seeking more information.

◆ Consider staffing. Will paid staff be needed and are there volunteers? What sort of training will be needed? Staff can answer visitors' questions and personalize their visit. Supervision and cost are important questions.



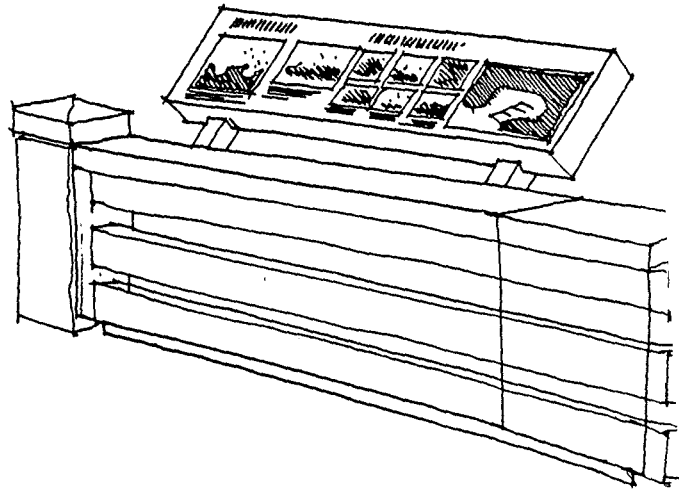
OUTDOOR EXHIBITS AND KIOSKS

Outdoor exhibits have many of the characteristics of their indoor counterparts, though there are some significant differences. Following are factors to consider for outdoor exhibits or kiosks.

◆ Outdoor exhibits can relate directly to the environment being interpreted and thus are often more challenging and stimulating for visitors. On the other hand, the resource being interpreted (e.g., ships, fishing boats, birds) might not be present all the time.

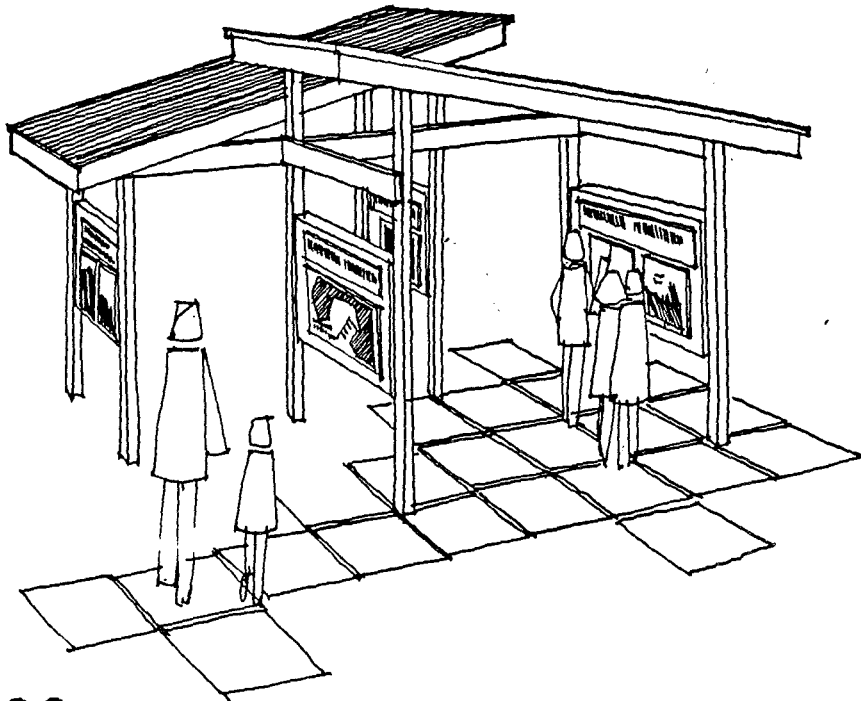
◆ Outdoor exhibits are more convenient for visitors' schedules--they are always "open."

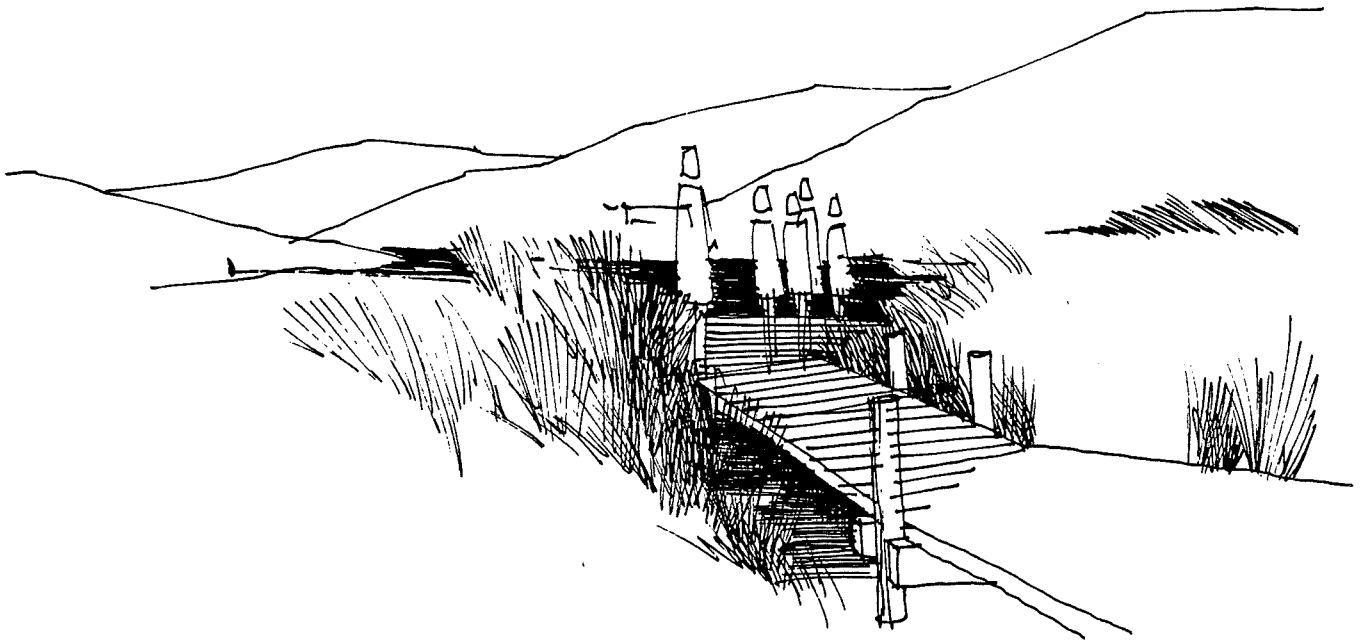
◆ Materials used outdoors must be weatherproof and vandal-resistant--fiberglass, metal photos, embedded designs, etc. These limit design flexibility and are relatively expensive. Quality design and good maintenance, however, seem to draw respect and deter vandalism.



◆ Kiosks provide some shelter from the weather, but should be open enough to allow interaction with the environment. Centrally located at major visitor contact points, kiosks can be very useful for orienting visitors to the area. Brochures and leaflets can be used to supplement displays but need to be restocked regularly.

◆ Important interpretive topics can be introduced in three to ten panels at most. Remember the principle, "keep it simple." Provide brochures or maps to supplement exhibits if more detail is needed.





SELF-GUIDED TRAILS

Self-guided trails or walking tours are similar to and in fact often incorporate exhibit signs. Exhibit signs along trails can show examples and expand on themes and concepts introduced to visitors at central contact points. Maps and brochures available at a central visitor area may be used to guide visitors to points of interest along the waterfront. Following are some general considerations for self-guided trails and tours.

◆ Trails or guided tours may focus on a specific theme that ties together points along the waterfront, such as "workers on the waterfront" or "the living estuary." Other trails may be more random, focusing on the unique character of each interpretive site, rather than trying to link all sites through a common theme.

◆ Waterfront walks or trails can perform several functions, linking access points or parks, interpreting resources or just providing places for leisurely walks in an aesthetically pleasing environment.

◆ Subtle, simple exhibits that don't intrude on the observable character of the waterfront are effective along trails. Certain resource sites may warrant the opposite approach of developing a topic in depth.

◆ Audience attention on a trail or walking tour is partly a function of how well the interpretation is designed and illustrated. An important question is how well the exhibit relates to what the visitor is actually seeing at that location.

BROCHURES AND LEAFLETS

Brochures and leaflets perform a variety of interpretive functions. They orient visitors to the opportunities for recreation, water access, shopping or eating. Brochures can expand on interpretive exhibit topics relating to the history and character of the waterfront or to the importance of marine industry, commerce or fishing to the community. Longer publications can supplement educational programs for youth. Their roles are many. Following are some considerations for brochures, leaflets and longer publications:

◆ It is wise to include information in leaflets or brochures that visitors are likely to forget (e.g., maps, routes and procedures). Brochures also offer the opportunity to provide more depth. Some redundancy between brochures and static exhibits will reinforce the interpretive message.

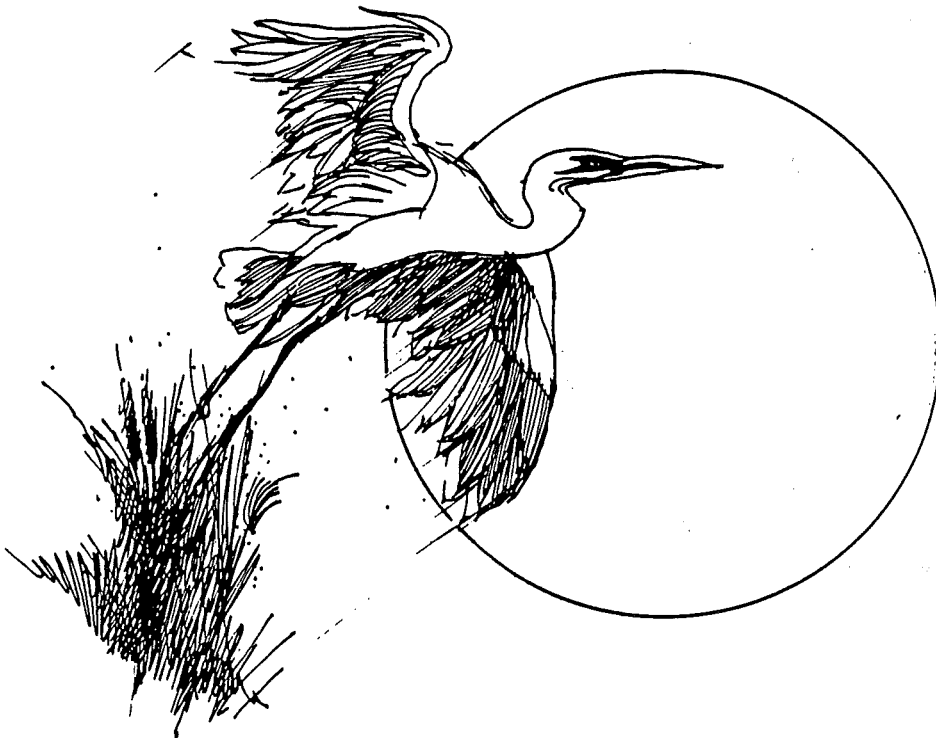
◆ Leaflets are "interpretive" if they help visitors understand what they might actually see along the waterfront. They should challenge and stimulate visitors to probe and investigate. For example, illustrations of different types of fishing boats will challenge the visitor to accurately identify a boat just leaving the dock.

◆ Coordination of text and illustration style between static exhibits and brochures or leaflets creates the impression of a well-thought-out design and presentation. People like that. It also helps the visitor link information presented through different media.



AUDIOVISUAL PROGRAMS

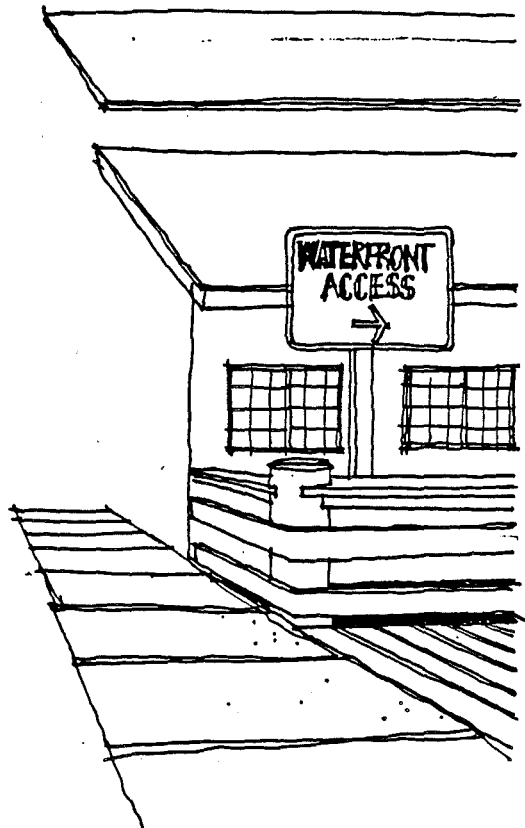
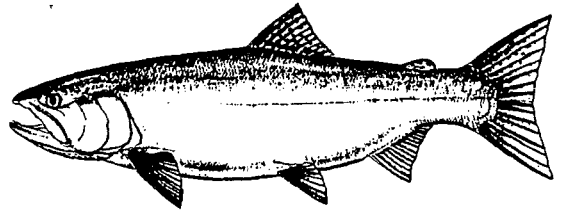
Audiovisual programs--slide shows, films and videotapes--can be used to interpret waterfront resources and have the advantage of being mobile. You can take the waterfront program with you. Audiovisual programs can be used in both staffed and unstaffed areas, but require back-up equipment and regular monitoring to assure they are working well. This type of interpretation also provides opportunities for dramatization, storytelling by oldtimers and the use of sound to create images. This is particularly useful for historical themes and seasonal or periodic events, like fish runs or ship launchings. However, because of their high maintenance requirement, audiovisual programs tend to be expensive. This is generally true--as the quality and complexity of the interpretive media used increase, so does the cost.



ADMINISTRATIVE SIGNS AND PUBLICATIONS

There are usually a variety of directions, rules and regulations you need or want to communicate to waterfront visitors. Safety and liability issues at public access points are often the first priority for city government officials. Controlling traffic flow and access are good ways to limit exposure to liability and promote safety. Use them first. When written messages and signs are needed, be clear but be positive. Long lists of "don'ts" can discourage visitors and kill the interpretive messages you are trying to make. Locate these types of messages in places where everyone has the opportunity to see and read them, and make sure they don't blend in too well. They should be consistent in coloration, size and style, in order to create a form of identity to the visitor. International signs are a good example of this. They are recognizable from a good distance away, despite their small size, and they communicate effectively.

Sometimes cautionary messages and warnings can carry an educational message too. For example, danger signs regarding hazardous tidal or river currents can explain tides or changes in river flow. Emphasize the warning with a positive learning experience.



DESIGNING INTERPRETIVE EXHIBITS

- 1 SELECT TOPICS
- 2 COLLECT INFORMATION
- 3 NARROW SUBTOPICS
- 4 SELECT CONTRACTOR
- 5 CRITIQUE FIRST DRAFT
- 6 CONTRACTOR REVISIONS
- 7 FINAL REVIEW
- 8 EXHIBIT PRODUCTION
- 9 EVALUATION

A well-designed interpretive exhibit placed in the right location attracts attention. Quality design and construction say that this exhibit is a professional piece of work worth reading. All aspects of exhibit design and execution are important--the artwork and graphics, the written content and presentation, the materials used, and the siting and construction. This section will help you on each of these aspects of exhibit development.

In Part I of this guide, the planning process includes the selection of primary topics for interpretive exhibits. Here we explain how to design and produce an interpretive exhibit panel for one of these topics.

1--Select the exhibit topic. The example illustrated here is an "orientation to the waterfront" exhibit for the hypothetical community of Bayport.

2--Ask yourself and others what is important and most interesting. What is it about the Bayport waterfront that visitors would want to know about. Some questions about this example might include

◆ What is there to see and do along this waterfront? Where can the visitor gain physical or visual access to the water?

◆ Are there other interpretive exhibits located along or planned for the waterfront? Where are these located with respect to the primary exhibit site and how far do I need to walk? Is there a marked trail?

◆ What is the "working waterfront" character of the Bayport waterfront? What is most notable and what is important but hidden? Where do the fishermen catch their fish? Is the charterboat good here? Is there an important shipyard? What fish are processed here?

◆ What is the history of this waterfront--when did it get started and why? Where were the old canneries and shipyards? Are vestiges of them still visible? How has the role of the bay changed over the years?

◆ How does the Bayport waterfront relate to the larger estuary? Are there accessible natural areas close by? What birds and wildlife can you readily see here? How do people and wildlife interact? Who decides if and how new industries locate on the bay?

3--Condense your answers into three to five subtopics. Consider these and similar questions you have about the waterfront and region as a whole. For example, you might focus one topic on history, another on the present marine industry along the waterfront, and one on the variety of waterfront sites and access points, using an orientation map. Or you may want to have subtopics that depict various points in historical development up to the present. Whatever your theme, develop a narrative and proposed graphics for each of these subtopics. These can be organized and sent to potential commercial exhibit contractors in a "request for proposals."

4--Select an interpretive design contractor. Have him or her refine the conceptual graphics and copy your waterfront group has developed. Provide relevant photographs, too. An alternative to hiring an outside contractor is to recruit and use volunteer services of professionals in the community--artists, writers, landscape architects, designers and historians.

5--Critique the contractor's rendition of the proposed exhibit and suggest modifications. Bring together your team of local experts to thoroughly evaluate the contractor's work. Include a few new people to provide a fresh perspective. Are the desired messages being conveyed? Is the orientation map accurate with respect to public access points, street names and other points of interest? Is the design pleasing and informative? Are administrative and safety messages direct and well-presented?

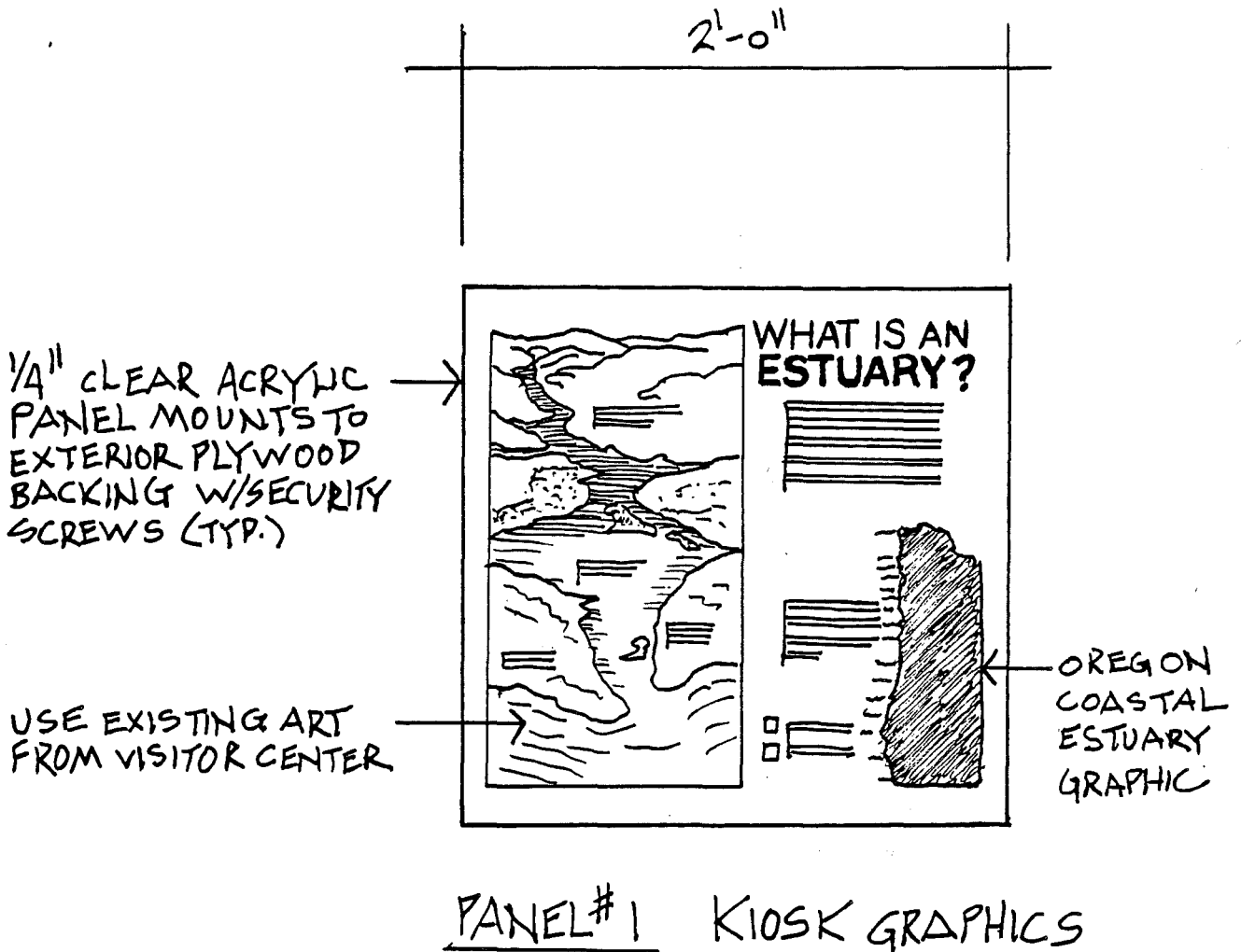
6--Have the contractor refine the graphics and text material based on the critique and additional research. This critique and revision process should continue until all agree that the exhibit graphics and text are clear, concise and accurate; that the information they contain is relevant and adequately orients the visitor to the area; and that it is attractive and well-presented.



7--Have the waterfront interpretation committee make a final review of the exhibit graphics and text. Focus on color, type style, layout and overall visual impact. Remember that the relationship of artwork to text is a key factor at this point. Even excellent artwork and interesting text can be ruined by poor layout. Investment in several drawing board layouts is small when compared to the cost of the completed exhibit.

8--The contractor produces and installs the final exhibit. The orientation of an exhibit on the site and its size should be determined by its location and by the distances from which it will normally be read. The shape of an exhibit sign is also important--make it attractive but unobtrusive. Avoid novel forms--they quickly become outdated.

9--Develop and keep a file of evaluation comments and problems that develop. This will be invaluable in the future when you update the exhibit.



WRITING AND EDITING EXHIBIT TEXT

Writing for interpretive exhibits is a lot like writing for a newspaper. The readers are intelligent people, but generally are unfamiliar with technical terms and jargon. To hold the reader's attention, the writing must be easy to understand and enjoyable. Following are some tips that will help you write and edit text for exhibits. Most of the tips apply equally to writing for other interpretive media, such as brochures, leaflets and audiovisual programs.

◆ Write in a conversational, second-person style, not in the more formal third person style. In other words, write to the visitor rather than about some other visitor. For example, write "You will enjoy a walk along fishermen's dock" instead of "Visitors enjoy taking a walk along fishermen's dock."

◆ Weed out unnecessary words. For example, say "The estuary supports more than 100,000 wintering black brant" instead of "One of the principal functions of the estuary is to provide wintering habitat to more than 100,000 black brant."

◆ Cover the "five W's" for each topic--the who, what, where, when and why or how. Include this information in the first few sentences. These messages will be lost if buried near the end of the text.

◆ Leave out technical terms or define them. For example, many people might not know their starboard (right) from their port (left). Also, avoid the use of bureaucratic and loaded words like "planning process" and "multiple-use," unless they are critical to the story. If so, define them.

◆ Avoid the passive voice and replace the verb "to be" with an active verb. For example, say "Seals and sea lions rest on estuary sand flats" rather than "Sand flats have been found to be important resting areas for seals and sea lions."

◆ Write at the ninth grade level. Form simple sentences with simple words. Use the local newspaper or the Reader's Digest as a guide. If you are really not sure about your exhibit text, try estimating its approximate grade level using the "estimating readability" graph.

Who?

What?

Where?

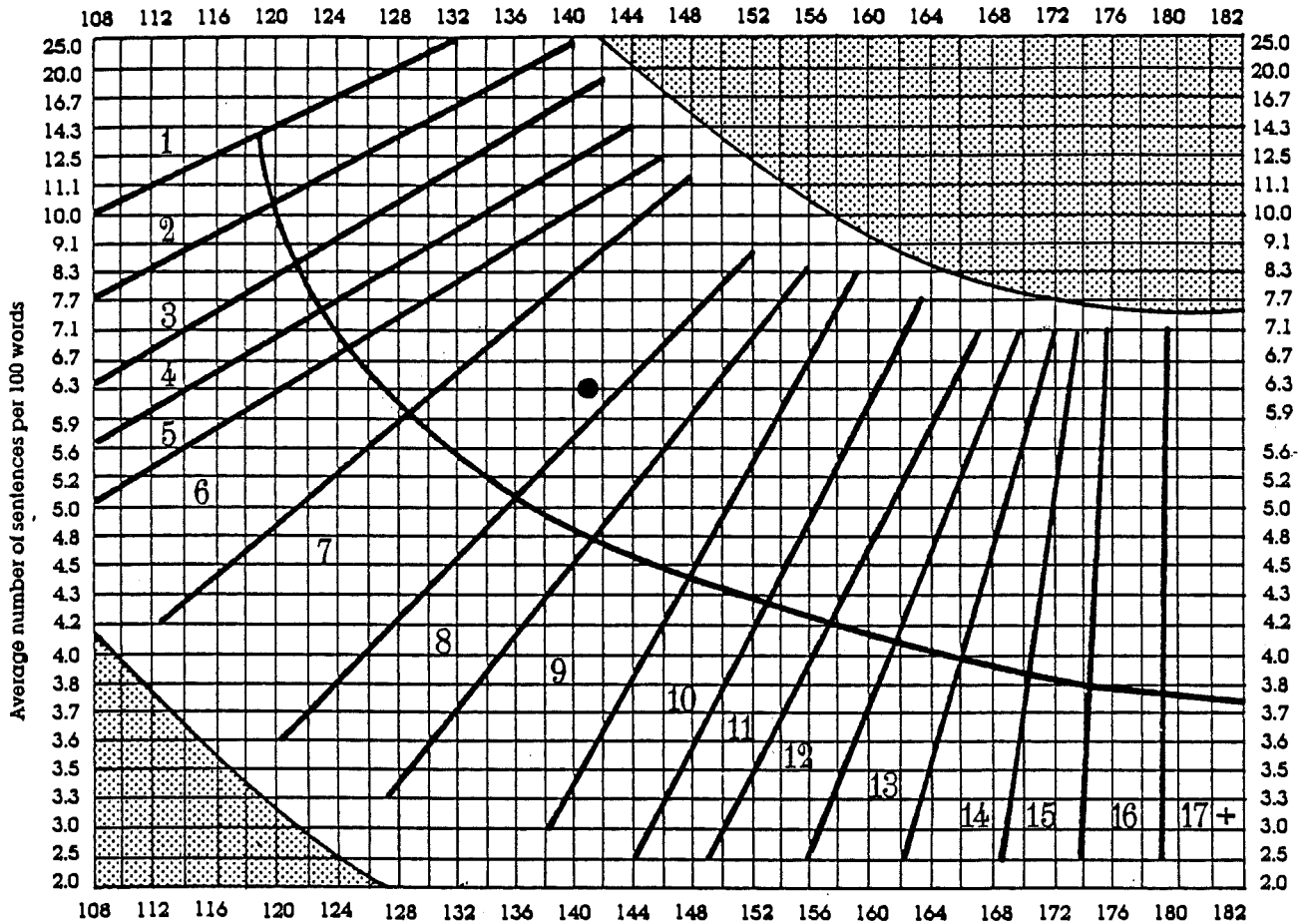
When?

Why?

GRAPH FOR ESTIMATING READABILITY — EXTENDED

by Edward Fry, Rutgers University Reading Center, New Brunswick, J.I. 08904

Average number of syllables per 100 words



APPROXIMATE GRADE LEVEL

DIRECTIONS: Randomly select 3 one hundred word passages from a book or an article. Plot average number of syllables and average number of sentences per 100 words on graph to determine the grade level of the material. Choose more passages per book if great variability is observed and conclude that the book has uneven readability. Few books will fall in gray area but when they do grade level scores are invalid.

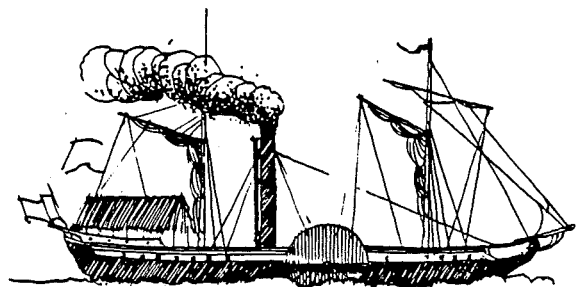
Count proper nouns, numerals and initializations as words. Count a syllable for each symbol. For example, "1945" is 1 word and 4 syllables and "IRA" is 1 word and 3 syllables.

EXAMPLE:

| | SYLLABLES | SENTENCES |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| 1st Hundred Words | 124 | 6.6 |
| 2nd Hundred Words | 141 | 5.5 |
| 3rd Hundred Words | 158 | 6.8 |
| AVERAGE | 141 | 6.3 |
| READABILITY 7th GRADE (see dot plotted on graph) | | |

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For further information and validity data see the *Journal of Reading* December, 1977.



◆ Use headlines and subheadings for your text. Readers can skim and still get the essence of your exhibit message, and often, you can stimulate them to read on. For example

"Charterboats catch salmon, rockfish and halibut" vs. "Charterboats"

"Bayport Slough was once 'mainstreet'" vs. "History"

"Why are salmon declining?" vs. "Salmon are declining"

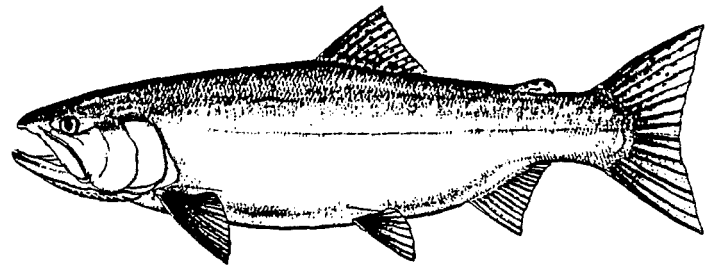
"What kind of fishing boat is that?" vs. "Types of fishing boats"

◆ Thoroughly caption photos and illustrations. Follow the suggestions for headlines and subheadings above; make each caption a miniature story.

"Bayport as it appeared in 1886" vs. "Historical Bayport"

"Great flood of 1922 destroyed downtown Bayport" vs. "1922 Flood"

"Salt marshes--important to fish and wildlife" vs. "Salt marsh benefits"



Adult coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*)

How the written text fits into the exhibit is also an important consideration. Even if well written, text by itself looks dull and uninteresting. The use of color and graphic illustrations cuts down the need for lengthy explanations, and gives the exhibit visual appeal and clarity. This especially attracts children. Following are some additional tips that make signs easy to read:

◆ Use text styles, type and contrasts appropriate to the area.

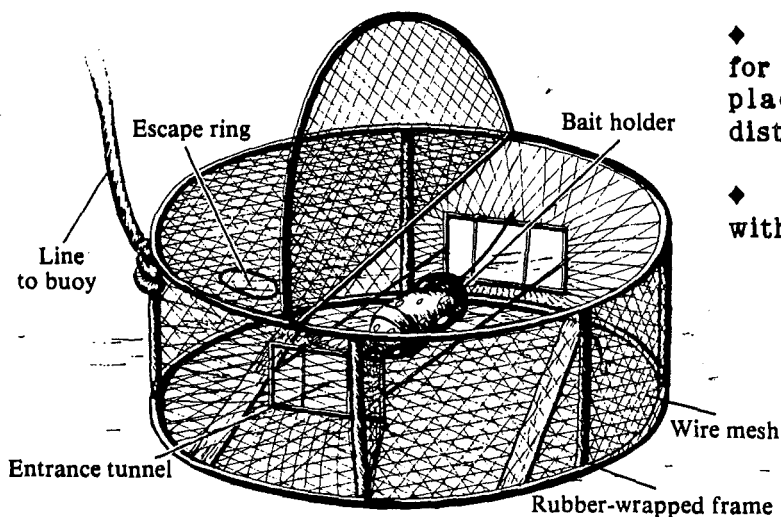
◆ Select letter sizes that are in proportion to the distances from which the signs or displays will normally be read.

◆ Use adequate spacing between letters.

◆ Use upper and lower case letters for sentences as well as proper and place names; this style is more distinct than all upper case.

◆ Break text into short paragraphs with extra space between them.

Crab pot



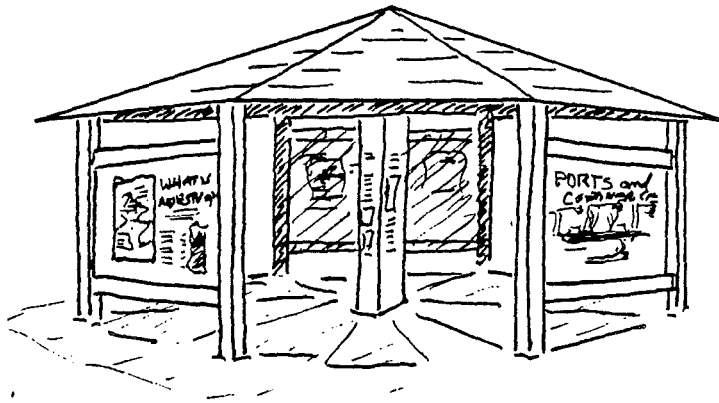
SELECTING MATERIALS FOR EXHIBITS

The selection of materials for an exhibit panel and its supporting structure are important considerations. An exhibit should not dominate a site nor should it obstruct the view of the resource being interpreted. If possible, use materials that blend in with the natural environment. Exposure to weather and possible vandalism are important factors. Remember that high quality exhibits generate respect and reduce vandalism.



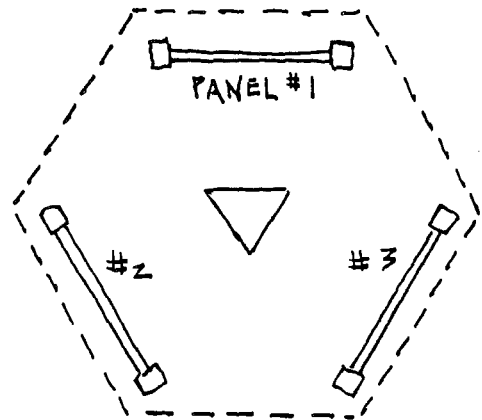
A variety of materials can be used to construct exhibits. Metals are extremely durable and work well outdoors, but they are also expensive and have limited potential for graphics and use of color. Casting on anodized aluminum is the most expensive, followed by painting on anodized aluminum. Salt spray will corrode most metals and some paints; alternative materials should be considered if this is a major factor. Plastics offer much greater artistic freedom than metal, but are more susceptible to vandalism and deterioration. Wood is an inexpensive and effective sign material, but again is susceptible to vandalism and deterioration. Consider all the factors--compatibility with the surroundings, cost, weather conditions, potential for vandalism and ease of maintenance or replacement. Duplicate signs should always be made initially, in case the possibility of damage from the harsh environment or vandalism is underestimated. Finally, seek professional advice for selecting materials for exhibit construction. Even the best exhibit design will not be successful if it is poorly executed.

CONSTRUCTING EXHIBIT SHELTERS



KIOSK DESIGN

SHELTER



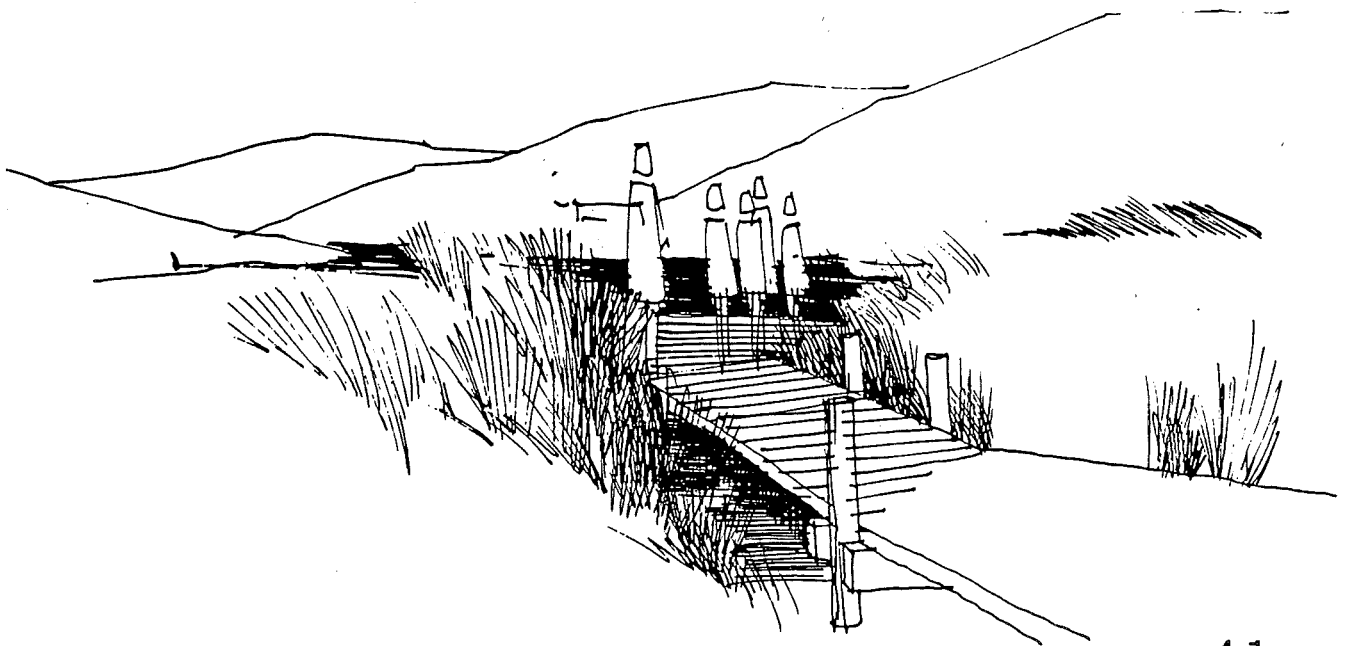
In some exposed areas, shelters from wind, sun and rain should be constructed for the convenience and protection of visitors. These structures can vary from simple roof-covered kiosks to more elaborate structures. An exhibit shelter needs a well-drained surface where visitors can gather and view the exhibits. Display panels should be oriented so that the information presented is in the shade during most of the day. A structure primarily for wind and rain protection should be oriented with

regard to the prevailing wind and weather during the visitor season. Exhibit panels should be placed at convenient viewing height for most adults (5 feet is the average eye level). If the display panels are mounted horizontally, tilting them approximately 15 degrees enhances viewing from a standing position. Some provision for viewing by children should be incorporated into the design--steps or benches for example.

CONSTRUCTING TRAILS AND WALKWAYS

If your exhibit depends on a waterfront walk or trail, there are additional construction considerations. Trails should be built to high standards--this is as important to the success of the trail as the quality of its interpretive displays. A trail must be wide enough to accommodate the expected visitor load, and hazardous or unduly difficult sections must be avoided where possible. Otherwise, safety devices such as guard rails or handrails must be installed. Insofar as is possible, construct the trail so as not to diminish the aesthetic character of the area. Trails devoted exclusively to interpretation should be kept short, preferably no more than one-half mile. Short trails are especially successful where the length of visitor stay is expected to be short. Longer trails sometimes dissuade people, wasting the interpretive effort. Signs posted at the beginning should state the purpose of

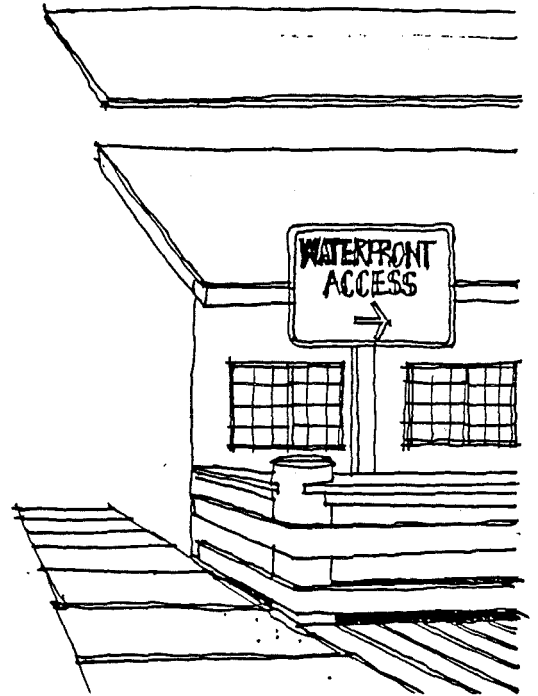
the trail, its length, terrain and approximate walking time. Additional rules or information about bicycling, skating and wheelchair access should also be included. Visitors like loop trails. A waterfront walk might include a swing through the downtown or adjacent historic district. Along the trail, space interpretive signs fairly evenly and in locations where there is no question as to what is being interpreted. Benches are excellent ways to provide for breaks and to encourage reflection. Interpretive signs should be located so that they can be read with ease, and the height of the sign should not require visitors to stoop, stretch or otherwise exert themselves. The angle of the reading surface of a sign or label should be about 90 degrees to the reader's line of sight. Signs should always be on their own pedestals--never attach them to trees or other natural features.



NEED MORE HELP ?

Interpretation of waterfront resources--historical, cultural and environmental--is an opportunity for communities to share their world with the visitor. It is an opportunity to entertain, to teach and to learn. This community planning guide will help you begin the process of developing a waterfront interpretation plan. Assistance is available from state and federal agencies, from educational institutions and from the private sector.

Communities interested in waterfront revitalization workshops focused on public access planning, tourism, interpretation or any related subject are encouraged to contact the Oregon State University Extension Service. Write or call



Waterfront Revitalization Project
Extension Oceanography, Ballard 330
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97331
503/754-3771

APPENDIX A--ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

SELECTED INTERPRETATION SPECIALISTS:

Though by no means a complete listing, the following interpretation specialists can give you advice, information and limited assistance. Some are even available for hire for complete interpretation services, though inclusion on this list in no manner constitutes an endorsement.

Sue Fritzke, Environmental
Interpretation Specialist
Department of Geography
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97331
503/754-3141

Sallie Jacobsen, Planning Coordinator
Oregon State Parks and Recreation
Region II Office
3600 E. Third Street
Tillamook, OR 97141
503/842-5501

Don Giles, Marine Recreation
Specialist
OSU Hatfield Marine Science Center
Newport, OR 97365
503/867-3011

Kimo Kimoeko, Director
Cape Perpetua Visitor Center
USFS-Siuslaw National Forest
Yachats, OR
503/547-3289

Marty Giles, Marine Education
Specialist
OSU Clatsop County Extension Office
336 Industry, P.O. Box 207
Astoria, OR 97103
503/325-8573

Dick Kuehner, Recreation Planner
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
500 N.E. Multnomah Street
Portland, OR 97232
503/231-6176

Jim Good, Coastal Resources
Specialist
Extension Oceanography-Ballard 330
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97331
503/754-3771

Linda Newberry, Environmental
Interpretation Specialist
P.O. Box 816
Cannon Beach, OR 97110
503/436-1909

Bob Tobias, President
Promotion Products, Inc.
503 S.E. Yamhill
Portland, OR 97214
503/234-0901

SELECTED INTERPRETATION PUBLICATIONS:

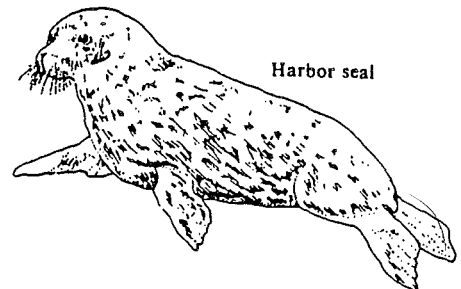
The following publications were referred to extensively in preparing the waterfront interpretation guide. They are available on short term loan from Oregon State University Extension Oceanography, Ballard Extension Hall 330, Corvallis, OR 97331 or can be ordered directly by writing the address listed in the citation.

Kuehner, Richard. 1984. Interpretive Design Guidelines. An excellent guide to developing exhibit and brochure graphics and text. Available from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 500 N.E. Multnomah Street, Portland, OR 97232. 503/231-6176

Hanna, John W. 1975. Interpretive Skills for Environmental Communicators, 2nd Edition. A compilation of selected readings from experts in the field of environmental interpretation. Department of Recreation and Parks, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843

Paskowski, Michael. 1983. Interpretive Planning Handbook. An excellent guide to planning and media from the National Park Service, Harpers Ferry Center, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425

Zube, Ervin. 1976. Visitor Center Design Evaluation. IME Report No. R-76-5. A technical study of National Park Service visitor centers, useful to communities planning major visitor centers for their waterfront. Write to Ervin Zube, Director, Institute for Man and Environment, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA



SELECTED PUBLICATIONS ON WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION

Available from: The Waterfront Center, 1536 44 Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20007

202/337-0356

Caution: Working Waterfront/The Impact of Change on Marine Enterprises

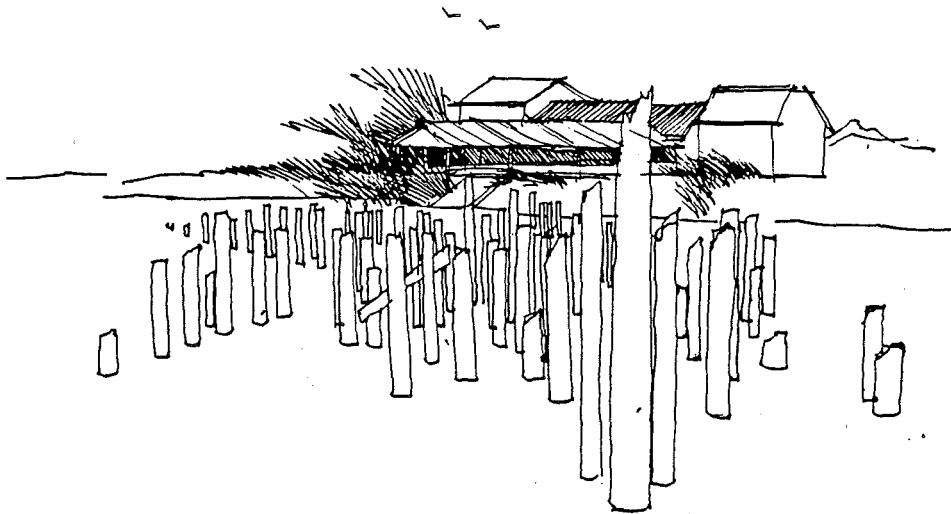
Fishing Piers: What Cities Can Do

Waterfront World - a national newsletter on all aspects of waterfront revitalization.

Improving Your Waterfront: A Practical Guide. 1980. NOAA-Office of Ocean and Coastal Resources Management, 1825 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20235 202/673-5115

A Citizens' Primer for Waterfront Revitalization. An excellent guide to grass roots waterfront activism. Available from the Sierra Club, 228 E. 45th Street, New York, NY 10017

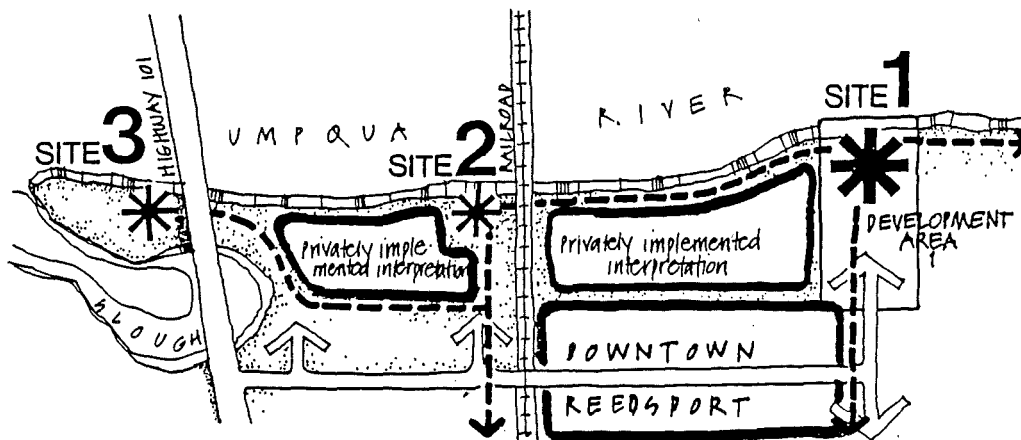
Waterfront Revitalization/Plans and Projects in Six Washington Cities. 1981. WSG 81-4. A study prepared by Washington Sea Grant, University of Washington, 3716 Brooklyn Avenue, N.E., Seattle, WA 98105





APPENDIX B--UMPQUA RIVERFRONT INTERPRETATIVE PROGRAM: A FRAMEWORK

As part of this Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development waterfront interpretation project, the Oregon State University (OSU) Extension/Sea Grant Program organized and conducted a one-day interpretation planning workshop for Reedsport on September 21, 1987. The workshop involved a team of interpretation specialists and a group of local citizens involved in the riverfront project. The product of this workshop is the "framework plan" included in this appendix. A secondary purpose of the workshop was to evaluate the waterfront interpretation planning guidelines developed and presented in this guide book. The interpretative program is still being reviewed by the people of Reedsport for incorporation into their waterfront revitalization plan.



CONCEPTUAL INTERPRETATION PLAN

UMPQUA RIVERFRONT INTERPRETATION: A FRAMEWORK

I. INTRODUCTION

The Umpqua Riverfront Interpretative Program is being developed by the City of Reedsport as a integral part of its riverfront revitalization plan. One of the principal strategies being used by Reedsport to promote private investment in commercial, retail and recreational development along the riverfront is the improvement of public access. Public access, however, is more than just providing boat ramps, docks and observation areas. An equally important but often overlooked dimension of public access is interpretation. By integrating the physical, visual and interpretative components of public access to the river, the city is seeking to recapture the unique and authentic character of Reedsport as a waterfront community.

Initial assistance on development of the interpretative program is being provided by the Oregon State University (OSU) Extension/Sea Grant Program, as part of a federally-funded coastal zone management project with the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. OSU organized and conducted a one-day interpretation planning workshop on September 21, 1987, which involved a team of interpretation specialists and a group of local citizens involved in the riverfront project (agenda attached). The product of this workshop is this "plan framework". A secondary purpose of the workshop was to evaluate the waterfront interpretation planning guidelines being developed by OSU as part of their coastal zone management project.

II. PLANNING PROCESS

OSU's draft guidelines "Waterfront Interpretation: a Community Planning Guide" provides a step-by-step process for preparing an interpretation plan. Steps in the overall process include (1) getting organized, (2) establishing goals for interpretation, (3) inventorying resources, (4) developing the plan framework and (5) detailed planning individual sites. A community workshop similar to that held for Reedsport is one of the methods suggested for getting organized and developing a plan framework. The September 21st workshop was a compressed version of the process designed for intensive interaction between a team of specialists and representatives of the community.

The interpretive program framework outlined below will be the basis for development of the detailed riverfront interpretative program for Reedsport. The framework includes preliminary goals for the program, interpretative themes for the project area and for individual sites, a definition of the planning area and principal sites, suggested linkages among sites and detailed concept plans for each of the principal sites.

III. GOALS OF THE INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM

1. To foster among both local residents and visitors an understanding and appreciation of the natural and cultural environment and how they interact.
2. To foster an understanding and appreciation for the maritime heritage of the Reedsport area.
3. To develop an active volunteer program that involves the community in the waterfront redevelopment and interpretation program; to help foster a sense of ownership and responsibility.
4. To promote the use of the waterfront as an important community gathering place.
5. To direct people to the important places and manage their activities where appropriate.
6. To understand and communicate the unique, authentic character of Reedsport's Umpqua riverfront.

IV. THEMES FOR INTERPRETATION

Interpretative themes are the waterfront "story lines", the ideas that illustrate the interplay between people and the water environment through time. Themes lead to the development of interpretation that conveys the unique character of the area. Following are general themes for interpretation of the Umpqua waterfront at Reedsport:

1. The Working River and Riverfront. The historic development of the local economy, the evolution of transportation, the role of trade, the timber industry, the abundant fisheries, shipbuilding and the working river today.
2. The Dynamic River. The ebb and flow of the tides, the routine and catastrophic floods, and the ever-changing estuary and river.
3. The River of Life. The river as a special place and respite for people, from the native Americans to early settlers to the city dweller of today.

V. INTERPRETATION PLANNING AREA AND SITES

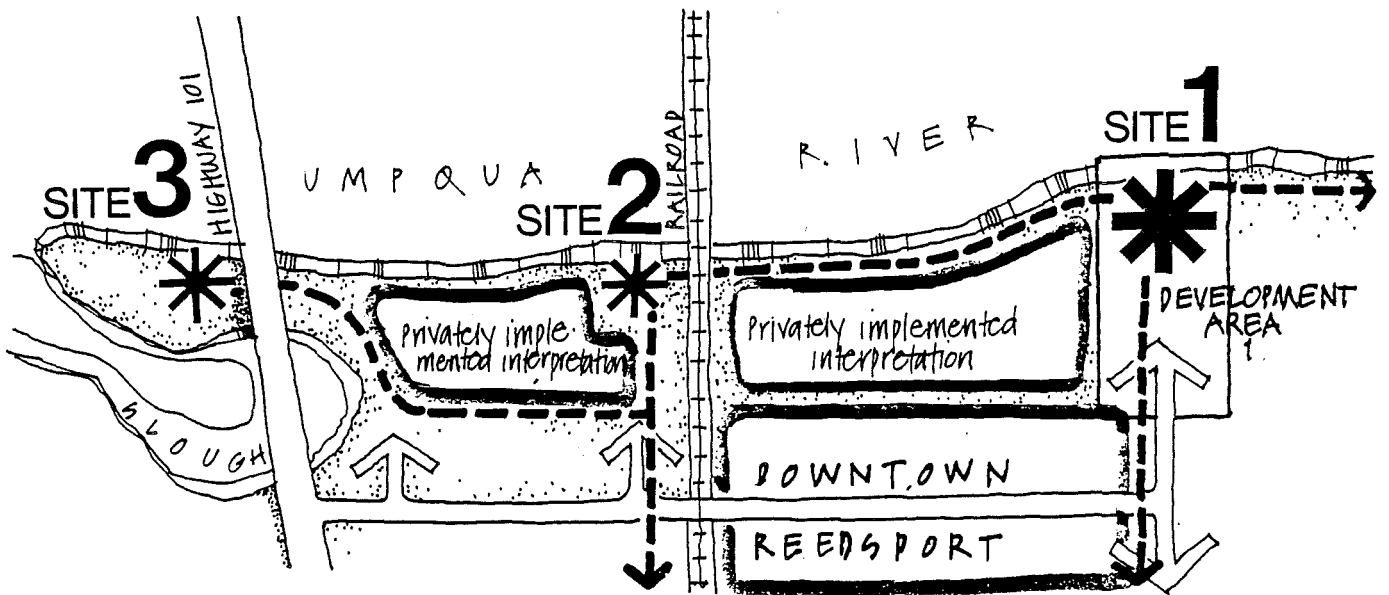
The area covered by this framework plan extends from Development Area 1 in the Umpqua Riverfront Revitalization Plan west to McIntosh Slough immediately west of the Highway 101 bridge. Three principal interpretation sites are identified and illustrated in the concept plan (Figure 1).

Interpretation Site 1 is located at Development Area 1, the anchor site for the entire Umpqua riverfront project. Interpretation at this site will focus on the region as a whole as well as the resources at this particular site.

Interpretation Site 2 is between the shipyard and railroad bridge, where an elevated viewing platform will be located. Interpretation will focus on water-oriented industrial activity.

Interpretation Site 3 is under the Highway 101 bridge, where a park and area for environmental interpretation is proposed, focusing on the river and adjacent McIntosh Slough estuary.

The plan calls for physically linking Sites 1 and 2 by a boardwalk extending along the water side of future private commercial development. At present, no linear connection along the immediate shoreline is planned between these two sites and Site 3 because of the intervening shipyard. Foot access to Site 3 from the east along the back of the shipyard and separate vehicle access from Highway 101 is envisioned. All three sites should have transient moorage to allow small boat access by water. Along the shoreline, maps and signage at each site should be used to provide orientation and linkage.

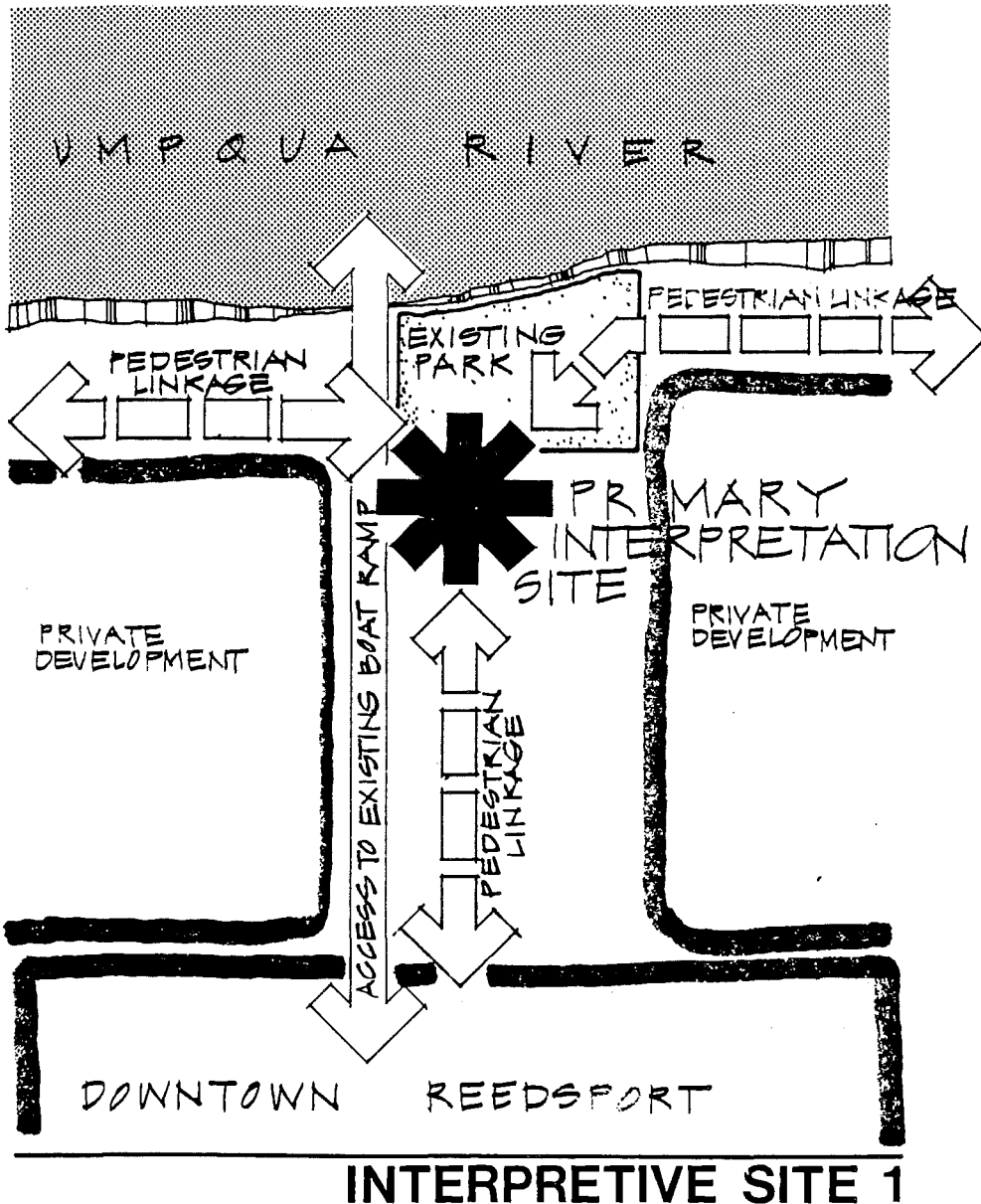


CONCEPTUAL INTERPRETATION PLAN

VI. DETAILED SITE CONCEPT PLANS

1. Interpretation Site 1

This site is Development Site 1 in the Umpqua Riverfront Revitalization Plan, and is the initial redevelopment site along the Reedsport waterfront. The city's first priority has been to acquire land needed to provide improved public access. This site will be the "anchor site" in the interpretative plan, with a planned visitor center that would provide an orientation to and overview of the entire region. The emphasis at this site will be public access, including a new boat launch (already in place), pedestrian access from the downtown designed to attract townspeople. There will also be additional room for restaurants and commercial services, and substantial parking for visitors.



The principal physical constraint to redevelopment at this site is the concrete dike that separates the waterfront from the downtown area. The plan calls for "removal" of this constraint by building a boardwalk up and over the dike and screening it with vegetation. In this manner, new development at this site will be raised above the 500-year flood level. The boardwalk will extend over the river, and provide a continuous access corridor along the river, eventually extending westward to the shipyard. Buildings would be set well back from the water's edge.

This raised boardwalk approach to construction has a historic basis, being the basic technique used during early development of the city. Interpretation of the history of the area will thus start with basic design and construction considerations. New structures will also incorporate design features that evoke a sense of history.

a. Regional Orientation

This site will provide a regional orientation to the Umpqua basin: the estuary region and its variety of attractions (Dunes NRA, Dean's Creek Elk Preserve, Winchester Bay, etc.) as well as the local Reedsport area, emphasizing the waterfront. The focus will be on how people and the environment have interacted over time to create the cultural landscape we find today.

b. The Working River Theme

Interpretation will focus on the lower Umpqua as a working river and the only "highway" in the early days of settlement. Oceangoing ships travelled as far up river as Scottsburg, and loaded wood products and manufactured goods at Reedsport. There was a great diversity of activities along the waterfront--lumber mills, furniture companies, window/sash makers and later, oil companies. Boat houses, net-drying racks and canneries dotted the waterfront, and a wide variety of boats, tugs and ferries could be found here. Rainbow Slough, a water highway into the heart of old town Reedsport, came off the river at this site. The river was the community's lifeline and workplace. Reedsport was a watertown. Remnants of that past can still be found--the west part of the Bohemia building is a remnant from early development; the old dance hall; old piling line the waterfront and artifacts of bygone eras are still present. Following are some specific ideas for interpretation:

1. Replicas of historic boats--ferries, gillnetters, ships, etc., and exhibits showing examples of working these vessels.
2. River tours on the Antarctic research vessel Hero and other vessels.
3. The role of the river in transportation and how that changed with the coming of the railroad and later the highways.
4. The relationship of past to present Reedsport in a geographic context.

5. The role of the river in the logging industry--transportation to the mill, storage in the water (why), and export via ships.
6. The gillnet fishery and canneries and their role in development and trade in the area.
7. The ethnic groups and the different roles they played in the community.

c. The Dynamic River Theme

Reedsport was a village built on the marsh along Rainbow Slough. Life in this waterfront community was governed by the pulse of the river--the daily ebb and flow of the tides, the variable river flow and periodic floods, and the seasonal migrations of salmon. These dynamics lend themselves to interpretation. Following are some specific examples:

1. The great flood of 1964 and its legacy, the sea wall, using the entrance to the boardwalk as it rises over the sea wall.
2. The ebb and flow of the tides and tidal currents.
3. The salmon and other fishery resources of the Umpqua--historical and present day resources.

d. The River of Life Theme

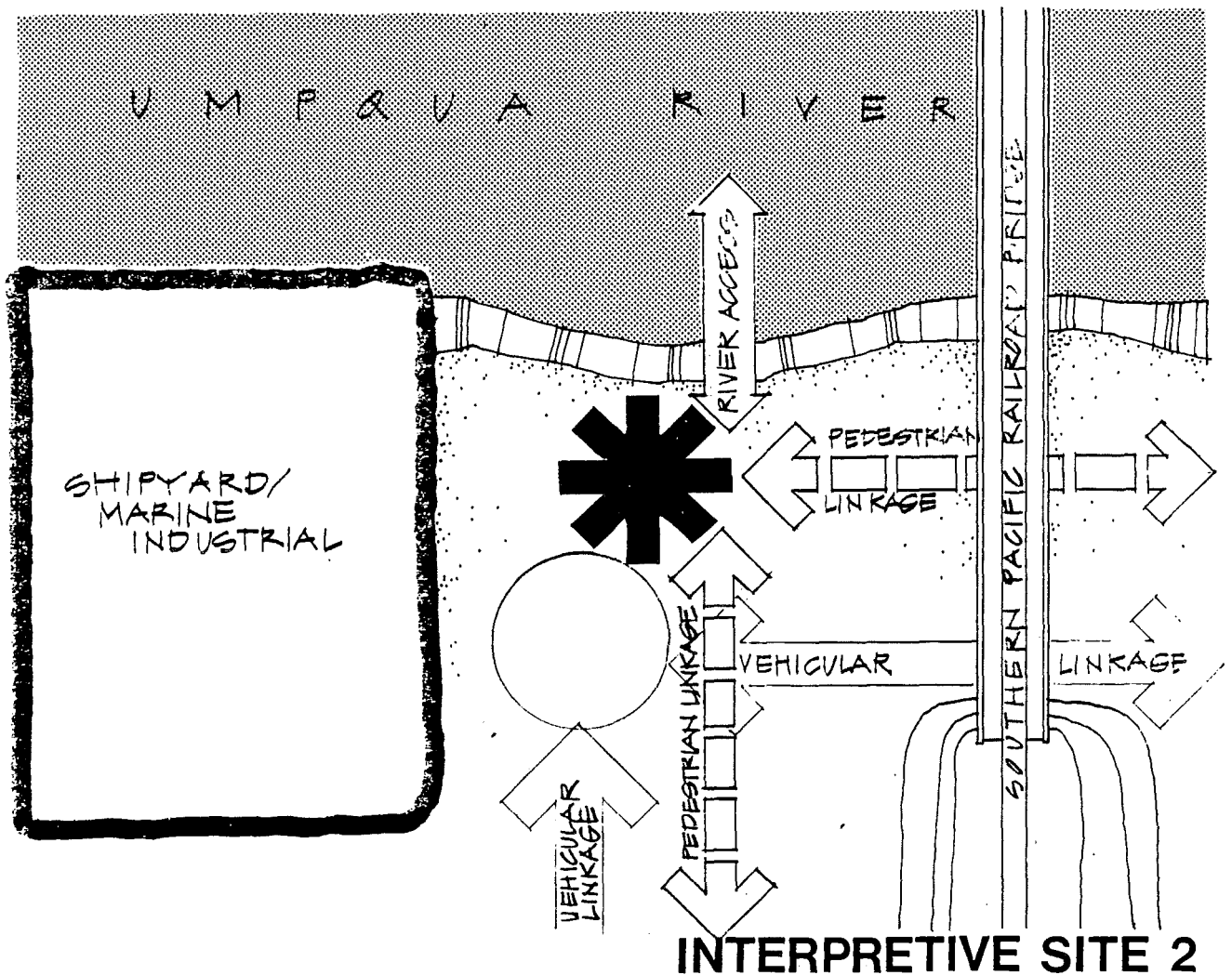
The river has been more than a workplace and highway to the people of the region. Today especially, the river is a place that attracts people looking for solitude, renewal and relaxation. It appeals to the aesthetic nature of people.

2. Interpretation Site 2

This site, adjacent to a busy ship repair facility and the railroad bridge, offers a variety of industry-oriented interpretation opportunities (Figure 3). The shipyard is one of the principal marine industries in the community. Its repair contracts for Coast Guard and Navy vessels give Reedsport the opportunity to host hundreds of crew members each year. The access to the shipyard would be visual, with a viewing platform overlooking the area. The old bridge tender house, located immediately to the east of the shipyard, is envisioned as the "gateway" to this site. The observation area would also provide excellent views of both the Highway 101 and the railroad bridges, and of the river in general. Linear connection to Site 1 on the east would be via a boardwalk winding along the shoreline. Following are some specific ideas for interpretation, focusing on the working river theme:

- a. An orientation to shipyards in general, including the specialty here, the materials and activities going on in the yard, and the workers and their trades and skills.
- b. The importance of the shipyard to the local economy, why it is located here, the value of ship repair contracts, the ship crew payrolls and multiplier effects.

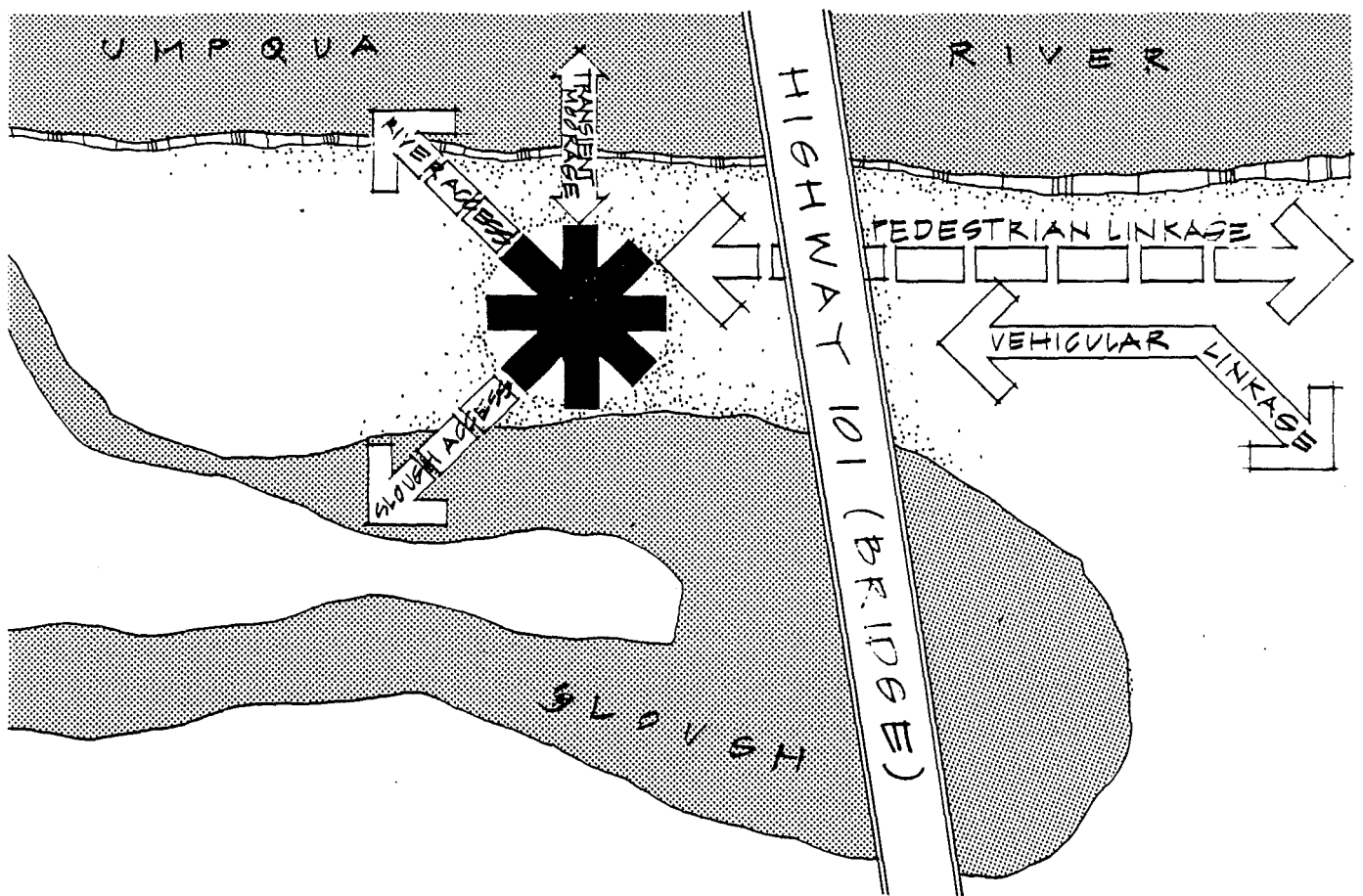
- c. The types of ships, their crews and the role they play in the community.
- d. The U.S. Highway 101 bridge and the railroad swing bridge; their history, operation, and role in development of the community and its economy.
- e. The river as it relates to activities in the area--the channel depth, dredging, the river gravel mining upriver and related barge traffic.



3. Interpretation Site 3

Located directly under Highway 101 bridge, this site is proposed as a park and environmental interpretation area, focusing on the river and adjacent McIntosh Slough estuary area, as well as the bridge itself, which evokes cathedral-like images (Figure 4). The vegetation surrounding this site provides visual and noise buffers that make it particularly attractive as compared to other areas adjacent to McIntosh Slough. Following are some specific interpretation opportunities:

- a. A sophisticated interpretation of the estuary as an ecosystem, including the interaction of ocean and river waters, tides, food webs drawing on the natural laboratory represented by McIntosh Slough.
- b. The human development and management of the estuary, drawing on the adjacent river and McIntosh Slough, the development pressing in on all sides, and plans for the future.
- c. The island across the river and views up and down river.
- d. The bridge, its builders, its history and its role in a changing community.



INTERPRETIVE SITE 3

VII. TECHNIQUES FOR INTERPRETATION

In an area with as rich a history and diverse an environment as Reedsport, the opportunities for interpretation of places, people and events are many. The topics suggested here are examples and represent an initial inventory. Additional work will need to be done to identify and select specific topics for interpretation, the concepts, ideas and anecdotes to be presented and the specific interpretative techniques to be used. A key issue in evaluating method of presentation has to do with audiences. One goal of this interpretative program is to involve local people, suggesting a personal informal approach. Exhibits and displays, self-guided trails, brochures and publications, as well as school curricula would provide additional impact. The extent to which these media will be developed depends on the audience, the issue to be interpreted and the financial resources available. The OSU guidelines provide more information on these techniques.

VIII. WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?

This framework plan represents an important beginning for Reedsport's Umpqua Riverfront Interpretative Program. A nucleus has been created around which the community can build. Following are specific tasks that will help that process along:

1. Using the workshop team as a nucleus, organize a local group to develop and nurture the riverfront interpretative program. The group should be separate but complimentary to the economic development forum. The program is sufficiently important and specialized part of waterfront revitalization to demand a life of its own. It should involve representatives of governmental units (city, port, county and state), owners or operators of waterfront businesses and industry (e.g., the shipyard), local historians--the oldtimers and the students of history, members of the International Oceanographic Hero Foundation and local school teachers and students.
2. Develop strategies for involving the wider community in the interpretative program. An example might be to establish a riverfront awareness program that promotes a better understanding of the river environment, the water-based history of Reedsport, the role that the river plays in the community today and plans for the future--the plan for revitalization. Strengthening ties with the Hero Foundation will benefit both projects.
3. Develop a process to research, analyze and select issues and topics for interpretation, and the alternative techniques and methods of presentation. Criteria for evaluating techniques include costs of construction and maintenance, the particular topic of issue, vulnerability to vandalism, and the needed organizational support. Advantages and disadvantages of the various techniques are outlined in the OSU planning guide.

4. Prepare detailed plans and design interpretation facilities and programs, employing the services of experienced professionals for exhibits, displays and visitor facilities to ensure quality and long term value.

5. Develop and implement a time schedule and funding strategy for the Umpqua Riverfront Interpretative Program.

The Reedsport Waterfront Interpretation Workshop and preparation of this report was supported with funds from the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resources Management under the Coastal Zone Management Act (Section 306), through the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development.

REEDSPORT WATERFRONT INTERPRETATION WORKSHOP

Monday September 21, 1987
Reedsport Public Library, 495 Fir Street
9:00 a.m. - 5 p.m.

WORKSHOP PURPOSE

Assist Reedsport with preparation of a plan for interpretation of waterfront historic, cultural and natural resources, consistent with their overall waterfront revitalization plan for "Reedsport Wharf".

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. Develop a draft waterfront interpretation plan, with goals, themes, and general site plans with suggested exhibits. Exhibit ideas will include suggestions for graphics and design, and a text outline. Linkages between sites will be also be suggested.
2. Focus immediate attention on providing an interpretive component for Reedsport's 306A Application for land acquisition in Development Area 1 of their plan.
3. Evaluate the waterfront interpretation guidelines being developed by OSU Extension/Sea Grant for coastal waterfront communities like Reedsport.

WORKSHOP PROCESS

Step 1. Initial presentations and discussion (at the Library):

- ◆ Interpretation on the waterfront -- perspectives on theory and practice (Interpretation Resource Team).
- ◆ The Reedsport Waterfront Revitalization Plan (Local Resource Team)
- ◆ Discussion, Questions and Interaction
- ◆ Set forth overall goals for the Reedsport waterfront interpretation project (e.g., to foster an appreciation for present-day waterfront activities and what they contribute to the community; to develop an appreciation of the historical role the waterfront played in community development; to help attract people to the waterfront, including return visitors; etc.)

Box Lunch - on the waterfront (provided by the City of Reedsport)

Step 2. The Waterfront Walk - we will conduct an "inventory" of resources for interpretation. We will identify sites for improved public access and interpretation, and identify potential historical, cultural and environmental resources for interpretation. Inventory forms will be provided for everyone on the walk.

Step 3. Development of an interpretation plan framework (reconvene at Library):

THIS WILL BE A GROUP PROCESS

In view of the inventory:

- ◆ Reevaluate goals suggested earlier
- ◆ Define overall planning area for interpretative exhibits (map) and linkage of sites, if any
- ◆ Define overall interpretative themes for the area
- ◆ Select principal interpretive sites (with alternatives)
- ◆ Develop plan for each site: (1) evaluate themes as they relate to the sites, (2) select specific exhibit topics, (3) outline content of exhibits (graphics, text), (4) suggest interrelationships of exhibits (e.g., parallel to waterfront along boardwalk; under a central kiosk; in an indoor facility; etc.), (5) select materials/construction techniques, (6) evaluate potential for use of brochures and leaflets, guided tours, etc. as interpretative techniques.

PRODUCTS

1. A framework plan for waterfront interpretation. OSU will prepare a report on the results of the Reedsport workshop. It will include as much detail as possible, but additional work will need to be done by the city's interpretation contractor, e.g., development of detailed text, graphics and design, and selection of specific materials/construction techniques.
2. A supplement to Reedsport's 306A application for the site.
3. An evaluation of the OSU planning process.

POST-WORKSHOP EVALUATION OF SEASIDE INTERPRETATION PLAN

The OSU waterfront team will evaluate the detailed plans developed by the city as a followup service, if desired.

WATERFRONT INTERPRETATION TEAM MEMBERS:

Jim Good, E/SG Coastal Resources Specialist
Bill Hevlin, E/SG Coastal Resources Assistant
Bob Bailey, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
Kathy Grapel, USFS, Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area
Kimo Kimoeko, USFS, Cape Perpetua Visitor Center
Mike Graybill, South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve
David Myhrum, Illustrator/landscape architect

The Oregon State University Extension Service educates Oregonians by delivering research-based, objective information to help them solve problems, develop leadership, and manage resources wisely.

The Extension/Sea Grant Program provides education, training, and technical assistance to people with ocean-related needs and interests. Major efforts are concentrated in the areas of fisheries and wildlife, marine engineering, food science and technology, economics, business, resource management, education, and recreation.
