



# Bellingham Waterfront District

Relevant Precedents Report • June 20, 2017

WALKER | MACY  
ALDRICHPEARS ASSOCIATES





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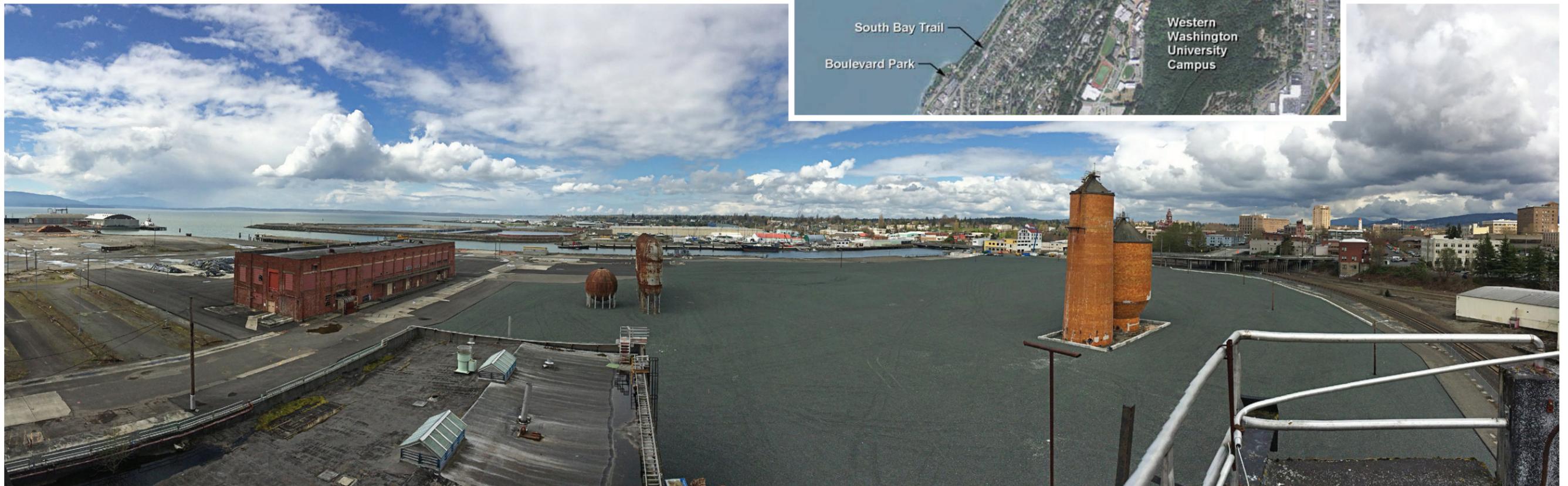
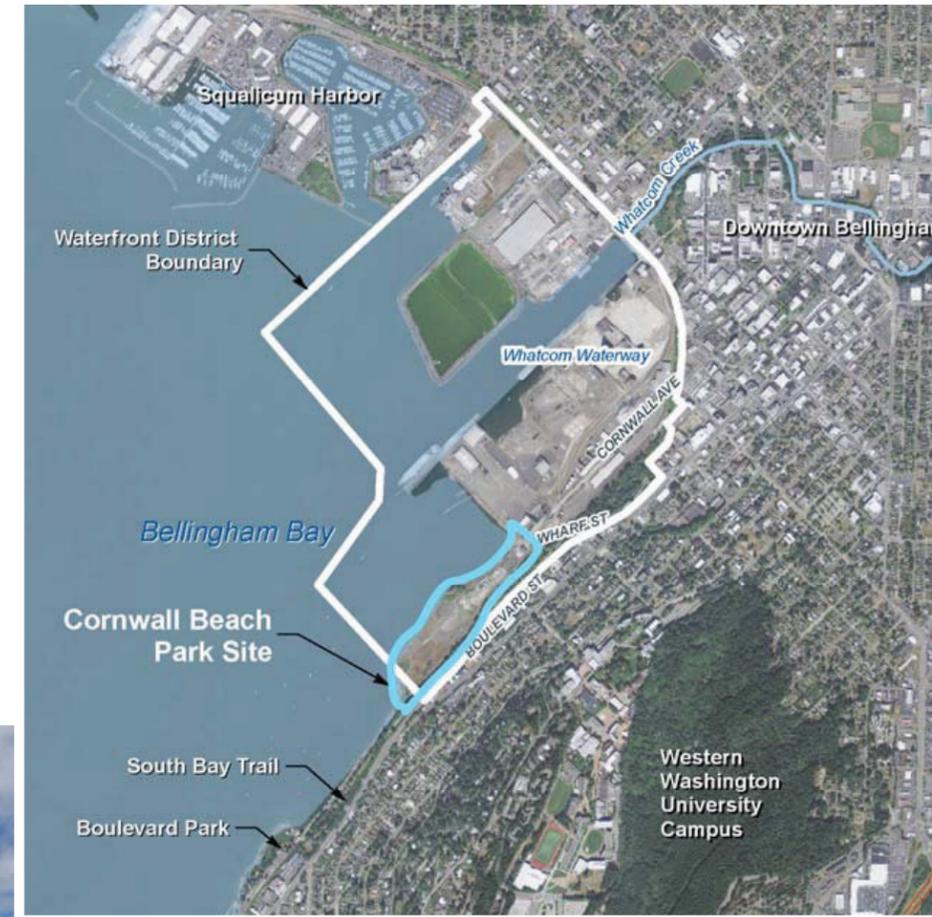
## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

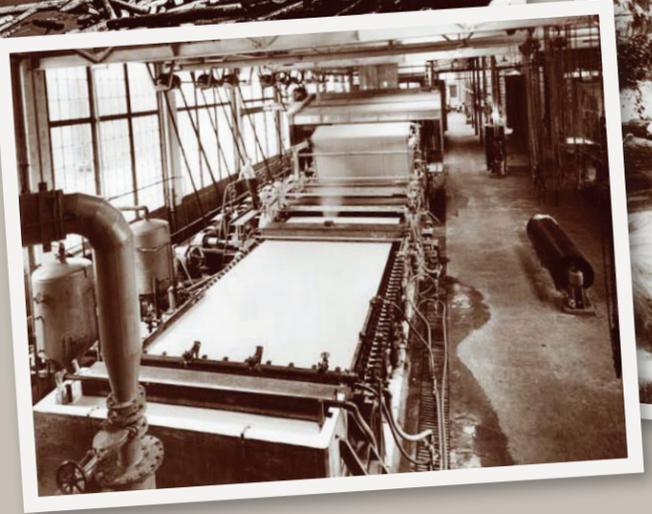
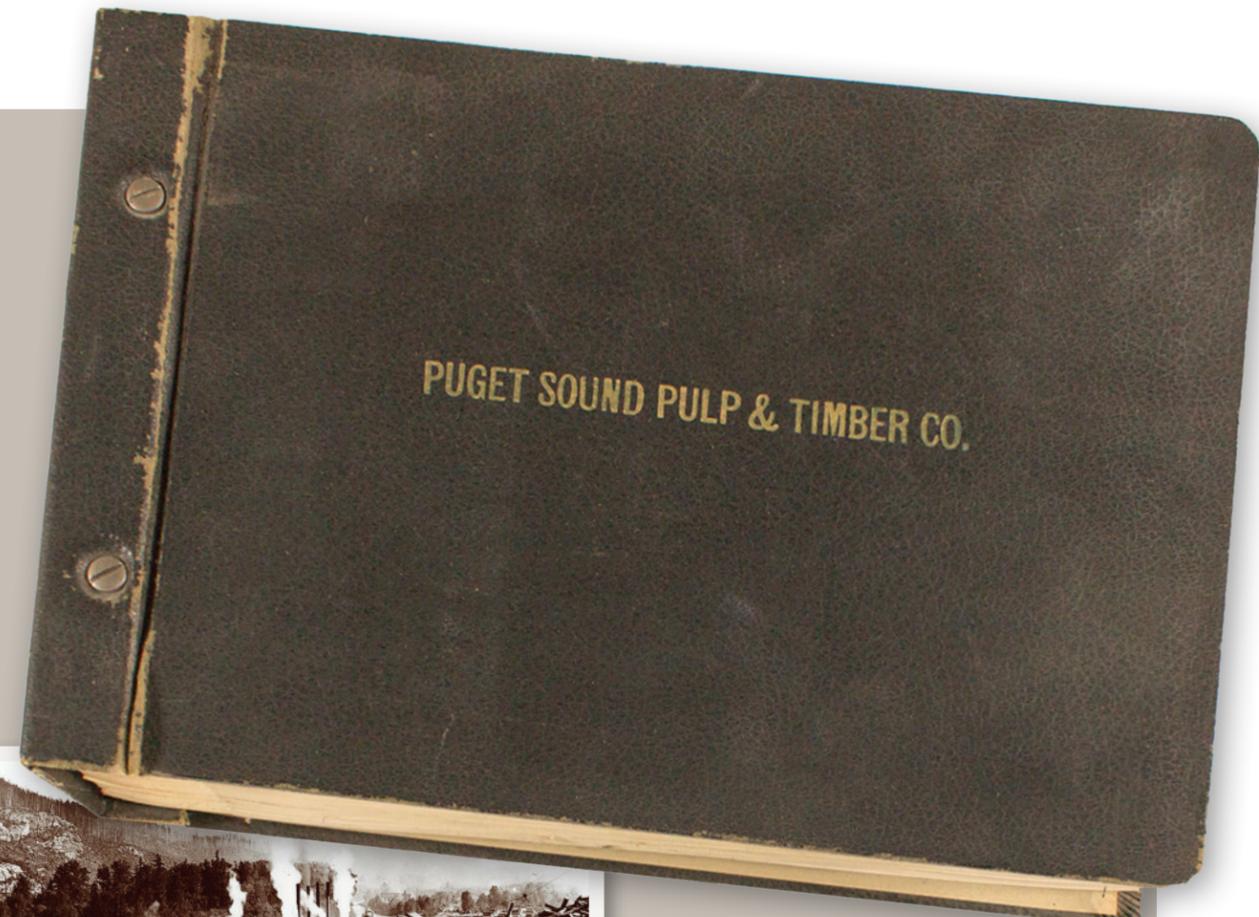
The Port and City of Bellingham are in the process of redeveloping Bellingham's Waterfront District, the former site of a pulp, paper and chemical mill, into an innovative mixed-use neighborhood. An important goal of the project is to find dynamic, engaging ways of reusing and interpreting artifacts salvaged from the pulp and paper mill to tell the story of Bellingham's industrial waterfront.

Industrial artifacts, structures and landscapes have been interpreted in effective, and often surprising ways, all over the world. Whether using text and graphic panels, interactive elements, immersive installations, or public art, there are many possible techniques for exploring this richly layered history. The following descriptions of possible interpretive techniques is intended to prompt a discussion of what the specific vision for the Bellingham Waterfront District Heritage Trail might be, and how it might be integrated into the development of the entire

site. The report outlines a diversity of techniques from various projects; most, but not all, involve interpretation of industrial facilities.

As noted in the Review of Historic Resources at the end of this document, the kinds of stories we decide to focus on will ultimately shape the media and techniques we use. Budget, durability and longevity will also be critical factors in deciding how best to tell these stories. Feedback on this document will help to identify the interpretive focus for the site and the most appropriate interpretive methods.





## 2.0 TEXT AND GRAPHIC PANELS

### 2.1 Traditional Approach

Traditional panels on posts are a simple, cost-effective interpretive technique. The design approach is often developed to stand out on its own, using materials, color palettes and graphics that make it clear for visitors that “this is where the information is”. Many visitors expect and seek out interpretation in this form, making these exhibit elements highly accessible.

#### Traditional, but Contemporary in Design

Although this is a more traditional approach to interpretation at post-industrial sites, it does not mean that the design cannot be innovative and attractive. Panels are no longer a simple, and often dry presentation of text and a few photos. A number of design elements can create engaging, visually striking panels:

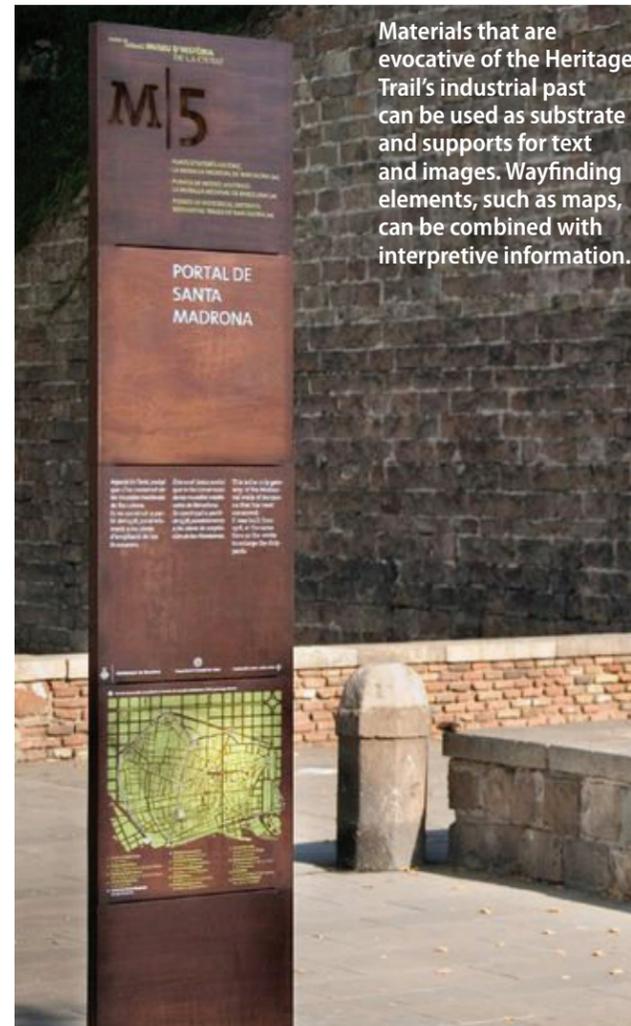
- The materials and design of the physical supports reinforce the industrial history of the site.
- Dramatic images including photos, drawings and graphics draw visitors’ attention.
- Info graphics deliver factual information in compelling ways.
- Artifacts may be incorporated directly into a traditional panel.

#### Design for Site Conditions

Ultimately the design of these panels, and other interpretive elements must consider demanding physical conditions including weather, vandalism and theft.

#### Wayfinding System

Panels can easily be incorporated with the wayfinding program that has been identified as a desired element for the site. Visitors will be drawn to specific points along the Heritage Trail to orient themselves, plan a route and gain interpretive information at the same time. A newly developed graphics / branding program for the site can also be strongly conveyed through the use of interpretive panels.



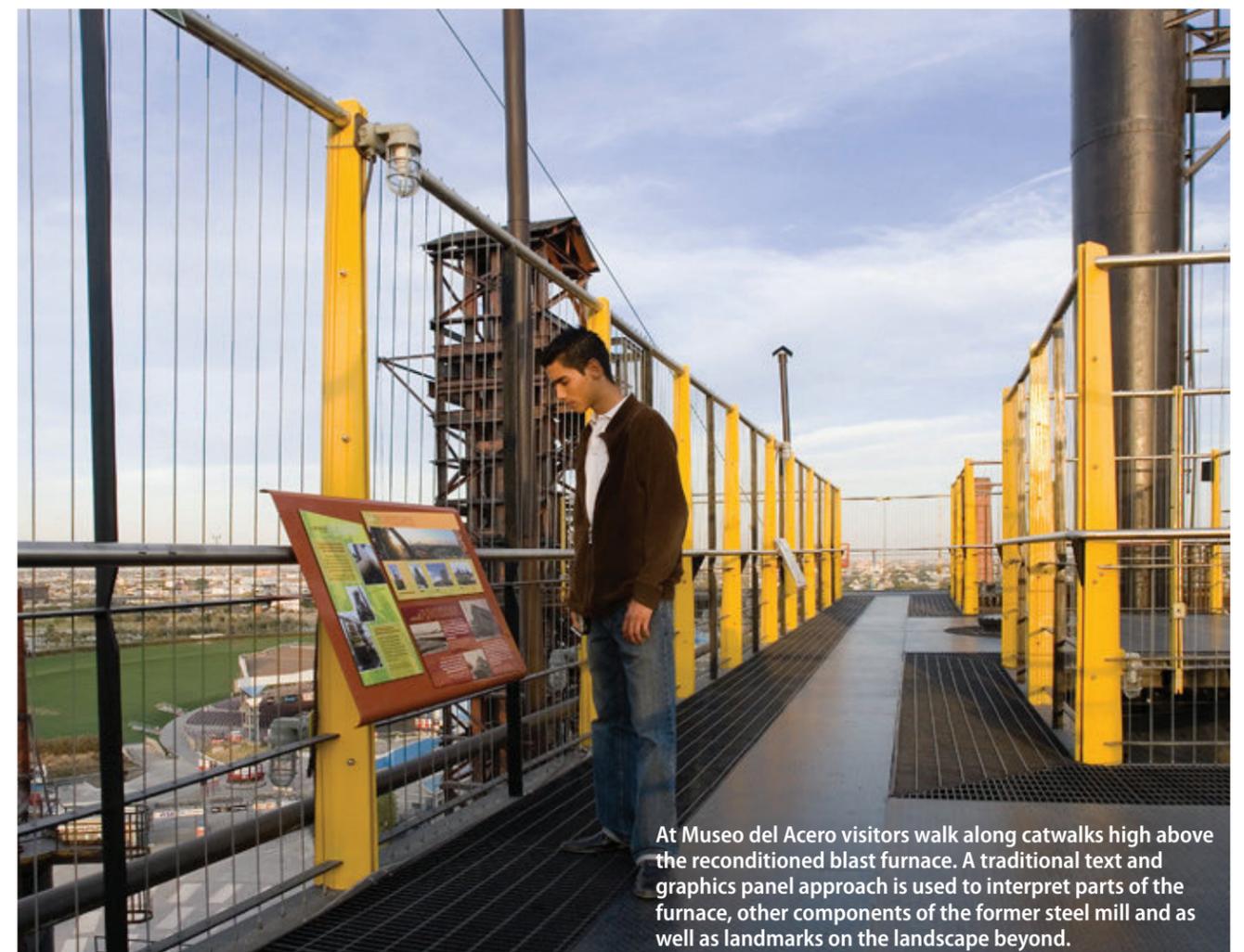
Materials that are evocative of the Heritage Trail’s industrial past can be used as substrate and supports for text and images. Wayfinding elements, such as maps, can be combined with interpretive information.



Combinations of different materials can bring interpretive depth beyond typical text and graphic panels. Artifacts or modeled props can be incorporated into unique support structures.



Small and simple, yet effective, variations on traditional interpretive panels can encourage visitors to focus on a specific artifact, event or natural phenomenon.



At Museo del Acero visitors walk along catwalks high above the reconditioned blast furnace. A traditional text and graphics panel approach is used to interpret parts of the furnace, other components of the former steel mill and as well as landmarks on the landscape beyond.



Text and graphic panels can be combined with two- and three-dimensional cutouts and models to create a richer illustration of processes, equipment, etc.



The design of structural supports for interpretive panels can accentuate the industrial heritage of the Heritage Trail site.



A simple graphic panel, in this case with a site map, can become a whimsical and attractive method of delivering directions or interpretation. In this example from Denmark, the sense of discovery through wayfinding is reinforced by pouring over unfolded maps that are actually made from steel panels.



The surprising placement of interpretive panels encourages visitors to look around and to focus on artifacts and features that they might have missed otherwise.







Digital displays can be used to provide unusual and unexpected interpretation. Recent advances have made such technology relatively inexpensive and durable.



Every surface provides an opportunity to incorporate interpretation along the Heritage Trail.



Many of the required site elements, such as street furnishings, lighting, tree grates, etc., can provide opportunities for site interpretation without substantial impact on budget.





Signage, including interpretive panels, can be integrated into natural features along the Heritage Trail; water features, planting zones, bio swales, etc.

**LEFT Britannia Mine Museum, Britannia Beach, BC, Canada**

Britannia was once home to the largest copper mine in the British Commonwealth and the heart of a thriving town until it closed in the 1970s amid environmental concerns. Today, the mine is a model of environmental remediation. Rehabilitated buildings, exhibits and stories speak of the future as much as they do the past.

Here, AldrichPears Associates used a traditional approach to text panels and outdoor kiosks to seamlessly integrate interpretation with the wayfinding system, helping visitors navigate the site and plan their visit. In addition to these more modest techniques, a planned sound and light show will also recreate the activity and noise that historically filled the mill site.



Even the smallest site design elements can provide interpretation, wayfinding and orientation opportunities.

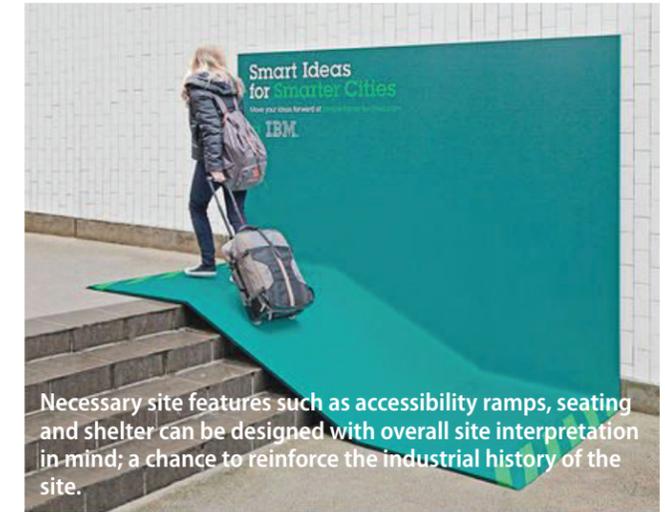




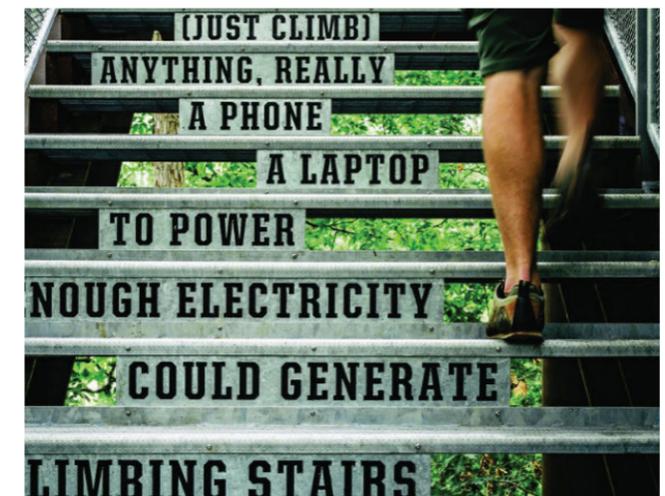
Building facades, both historic and contemporary, can be used to provide interpretive information as well as reinforce the overall concept of industrial heritage.



Facades of both existing and new buildings can be designed to reinforce the site's references to industrial heritage. Perforated metal is evocative of the mill and equipment that once stood on this land, and the perforations can provide dramatic imagery.



Necessary site features such as accessibility ramps, seating and shelter can be designed with overall site interpretation in mind; a chance to reinforce the industrial history of the site.



### 2.3 Models

Detailed, sculptural models are popular with visitors of all ages. They can provide unique representations of what the Heritage Trail site looked like when fully operational.

#### Outdoor Models

Positioned properly on the site, with remaining landmarks clearly visible for comparison, models can help visitors understand the scale and complexity of buildings long gone. They can also provide a tactile, physical point of interaction. Cast metal models are weather and vandal resistant.

#### Indoor Models

Models located indoors can provide highly detailed representations of the buildings and equipment that once stood on the site. Through the use of screen-based programs the processes within those buildings can be animated and explained. Lighting effects can animate a static model. Digital interfaces such as augmented reality can take the interpretation of a physical model to dramatic new levels.





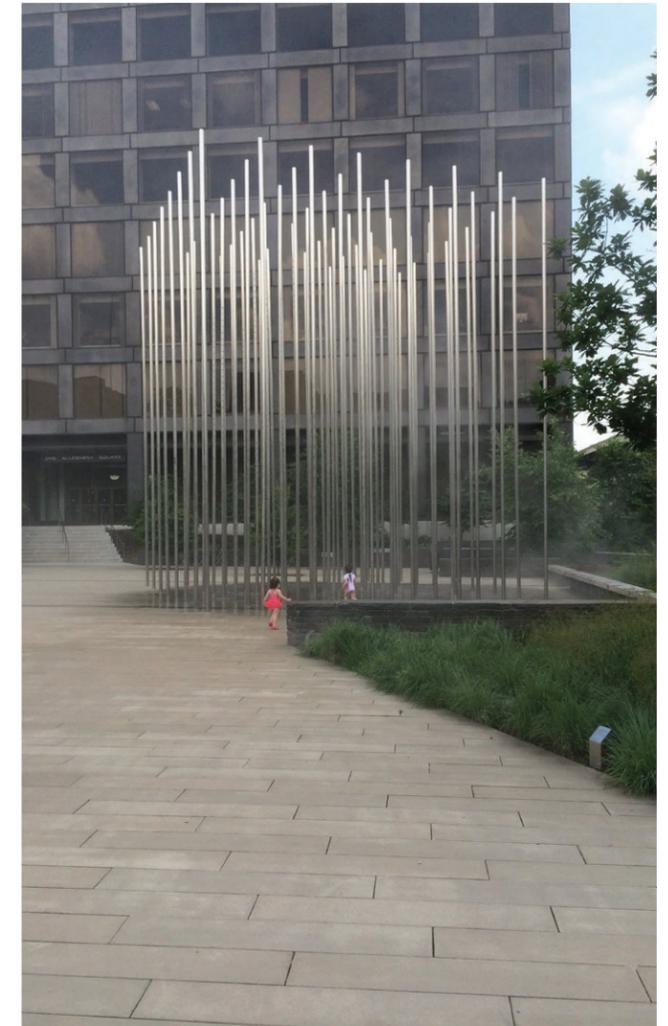




Water play or other types of full body experiences are powerful attractions for young visitors as they experience the mill's processes hands-on. The movement of goods and materials across the site in the past could be replicated in this type of full body experience.



Interactives can be sophisticated combinations of techniques. Here, visitors 'operate' an electric arc furnace using a screen-based program that activates a physical model with powerful audio effects.



### 3.2 Screen-based Programs

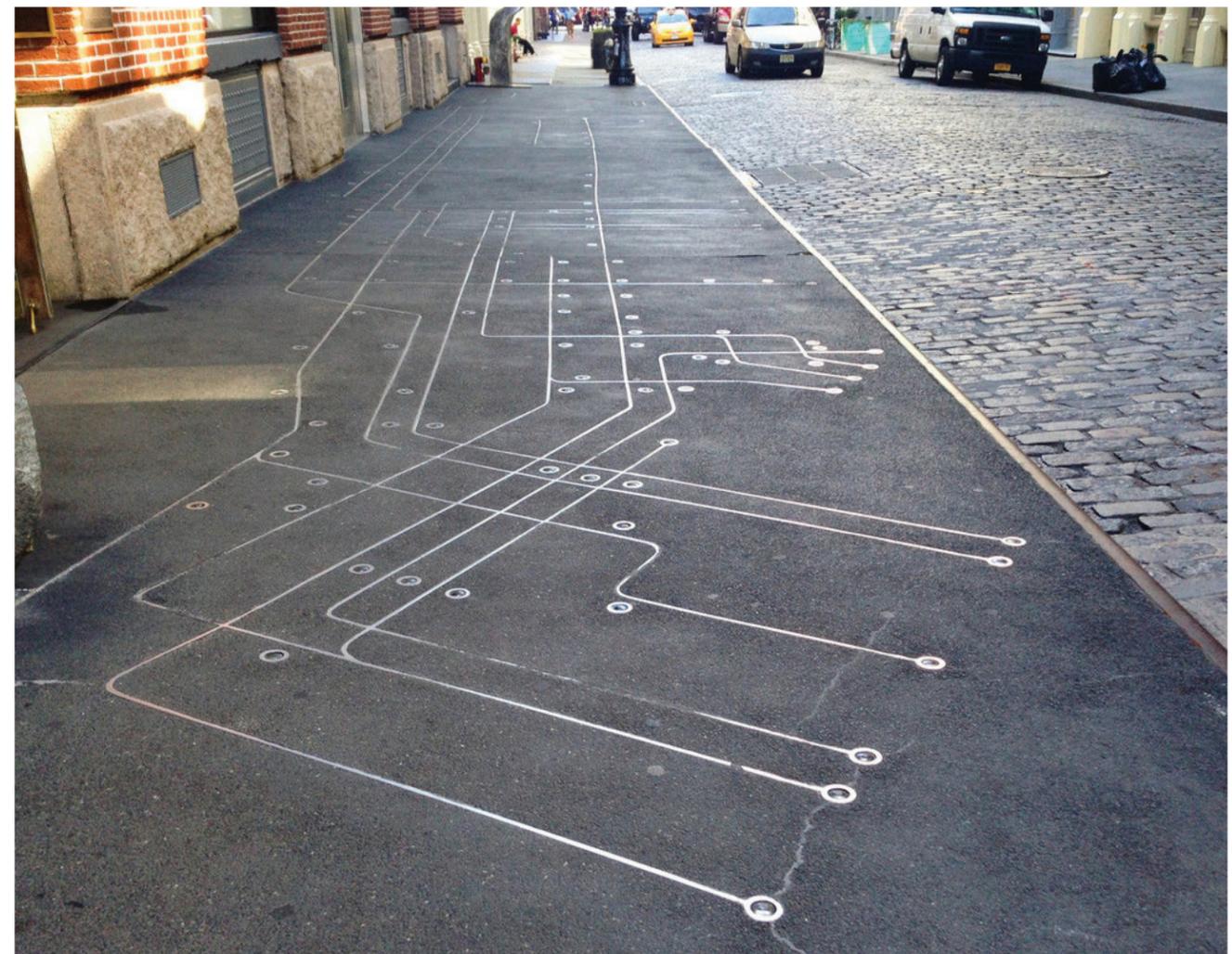
The use of certain screen-based techniques may be considered for interpretation along the Heritage Trail. The advantage of using this approach is the presentation of multiple levels and quantities of information. These programs could include existing video and film footage of the mill process, the site in operation, as well as Bellingham through the decades. First person accounts from the community of workers and others impacted by the mill can be powerful storytelling tools.

#### Situating Screen-Based Programs

Typically audio-visual equipment would be placed indoors for reasons of security and protection from the elements. In addition, ambient lighting conditions have to be considered. A space within one of the historical buildings used for interpretation would be a perfect scenario for this technique. However, monitors can be very effective if mounted in a small, freestanding kiosk or incorporated in to the side of a building if considerations are made for light levels, weather and vandal protection.

#### Maintenance is Key

One of the greatest challenges with any screen-based program is the ability to maintain equipment and/or software. If this responsibility cannot be met then screen-based programs may prove to be impractical for the Heritage Trail.

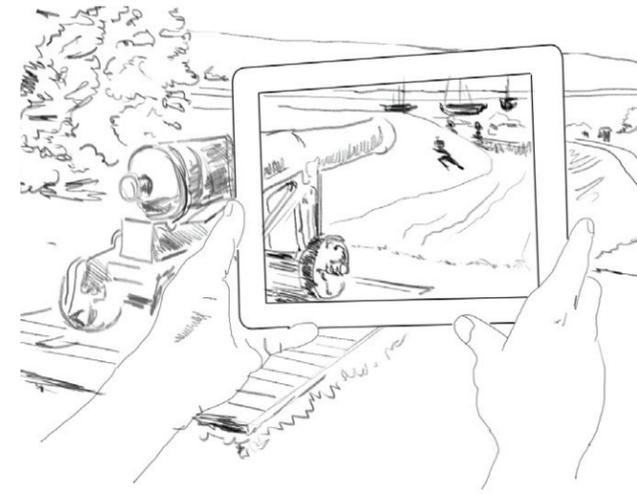
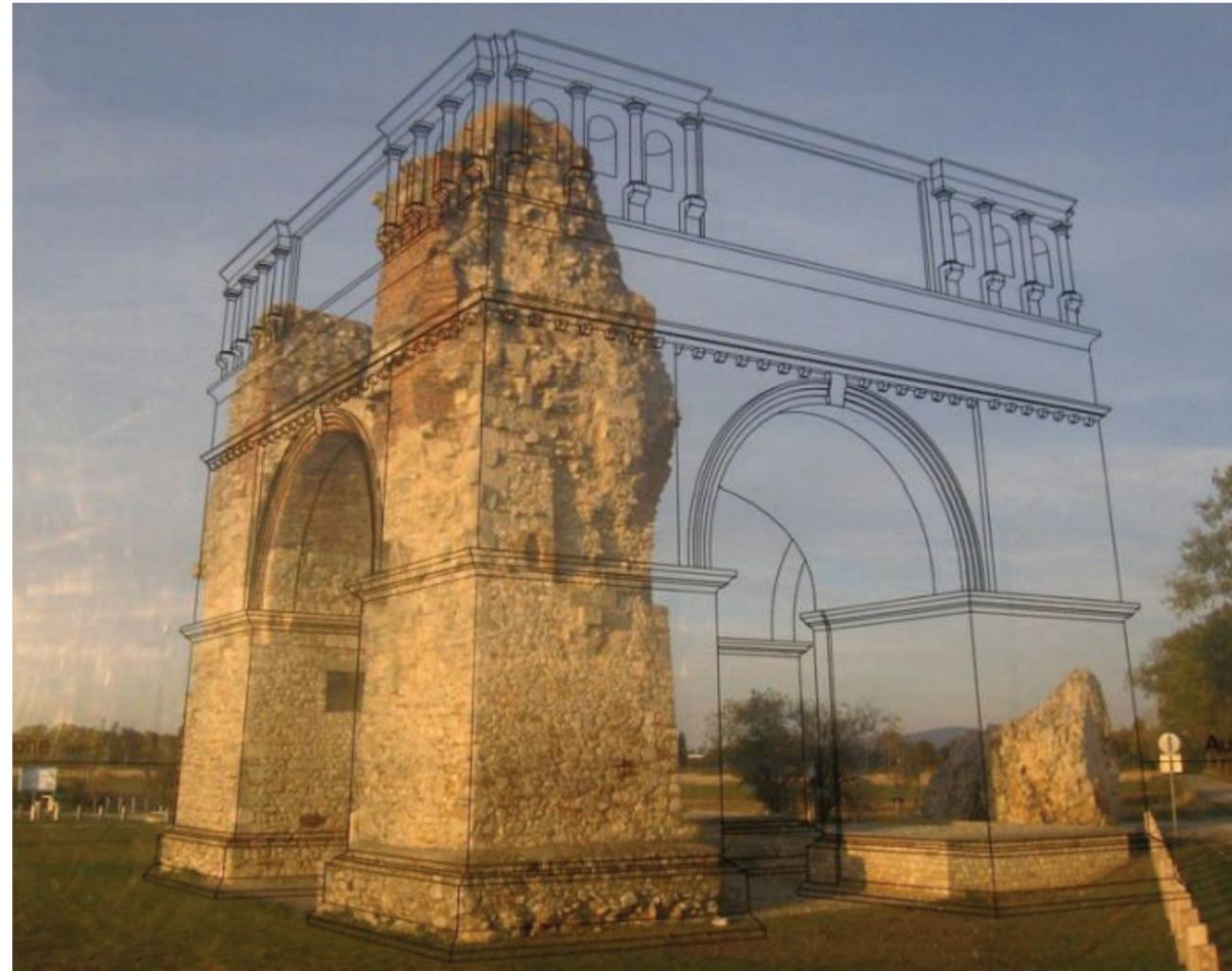


### 3.3 Handheld Devices

Screen-based programs may also include a variety of programs such as apps for mobile devices. These programs can be relatively simple techniques for the delivery of still images, film or video footage and audio. More advanced use of the technology could feature augmented reality, allowing visitors to visualize the waterfront and mill in full operation. One great advantage of this technology is the minimal maintenance requirements once in place.

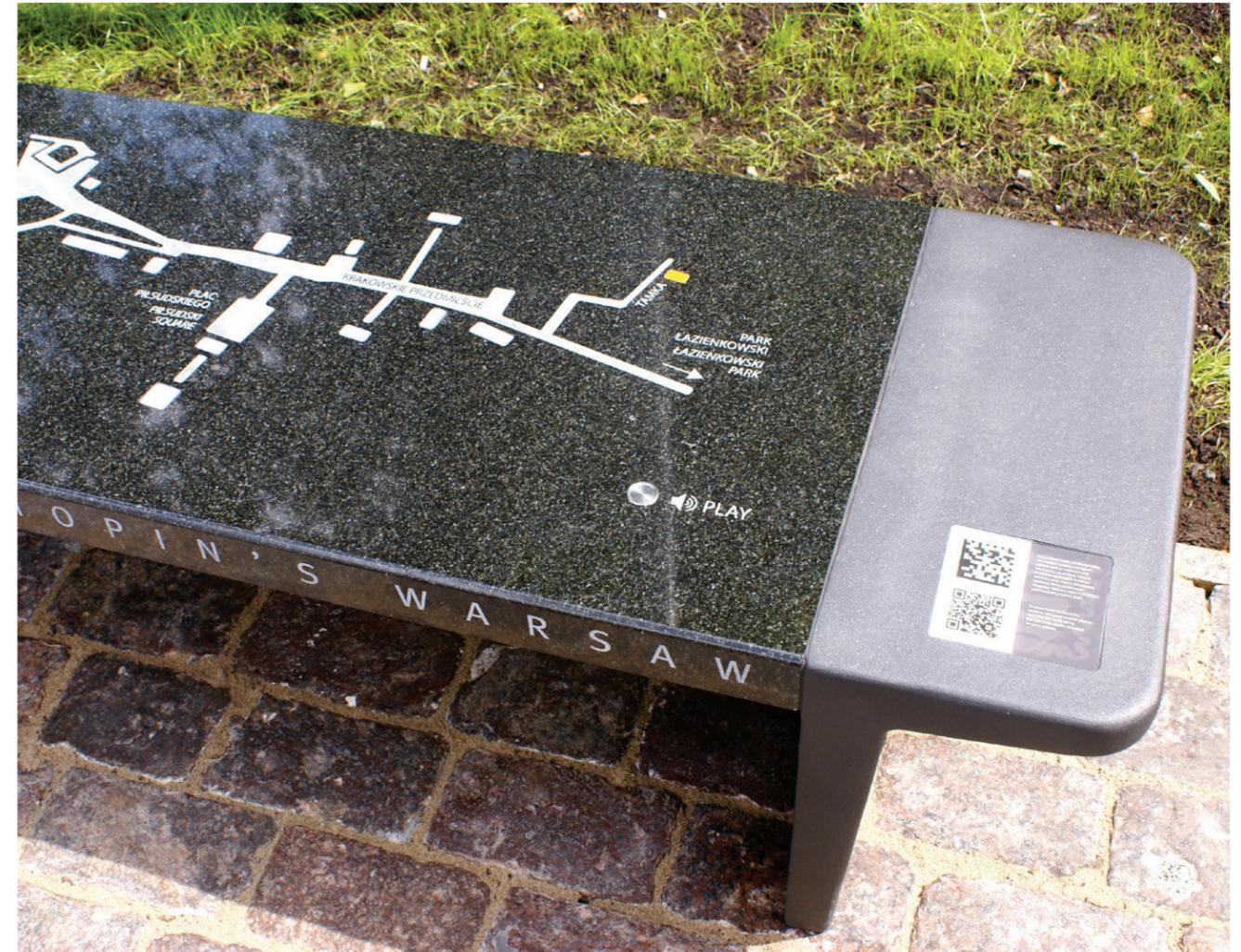
#### Augmented Reality

Augmented reality captures visitors' imaginations by overlaying content on a real-world view, rather than beside it. At the Waterfront District site, visitors could use their own handheld devices to view still images of the building that once housed the Digester Tanks or animations of the log chipper at work. Such apps have been used in combination with more traditional text and graphics panels to great effect.



### 3.4 Audio Programs

Recent advancements in audio technology have provided compelling and unique interpretive opportunities. Audio stations can be incorporated into graphic panels or even benches which serve as wayfinding, interpretation and relaxation stations. Additional levels of information, first person accounts and even sound effects can add to the visitor experience. These program may be used in indoor or outdoor locations.

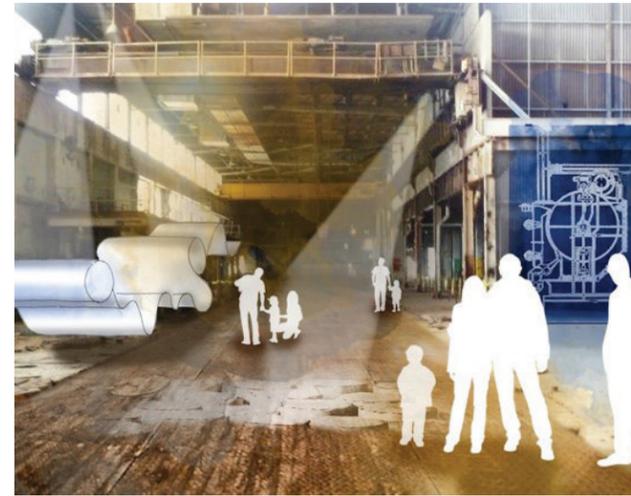


#### 4.0 IMMERSIVE INSTALLATIONS

If an area within one of the historical buildings on site can be made available, a small immersive experience could be provided. Lighting, sound and special effects can be combined to create a dramatic and immersive technique for telling stories about the mill and the people who worked there. In addition to helping to tell integral stories of the site, a theatrical experience could become a major visitor draw. For example, the Fairbanks-Morse scale, once used to weigh ethyl alcohol before distribution from the Alcohol Plant, could become part of a relatively compact, but powerful visitor experience.

#### The Challenges

This immersive approach probably has the highest capital investment of all the techniques described in this document. It also would require staffing which, combined with budget commitments, may make immersive programming impractical for the Heritage Trail. Alternatively, a unique and high profile immersive visitor experience may provide a unique opportunity for a potential sponsor.

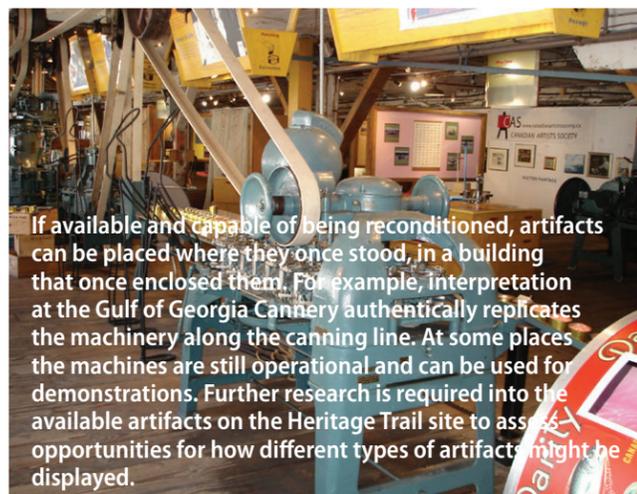


#### BELOW Gulf of Georgia Cannery, Richmond, BC, Canada

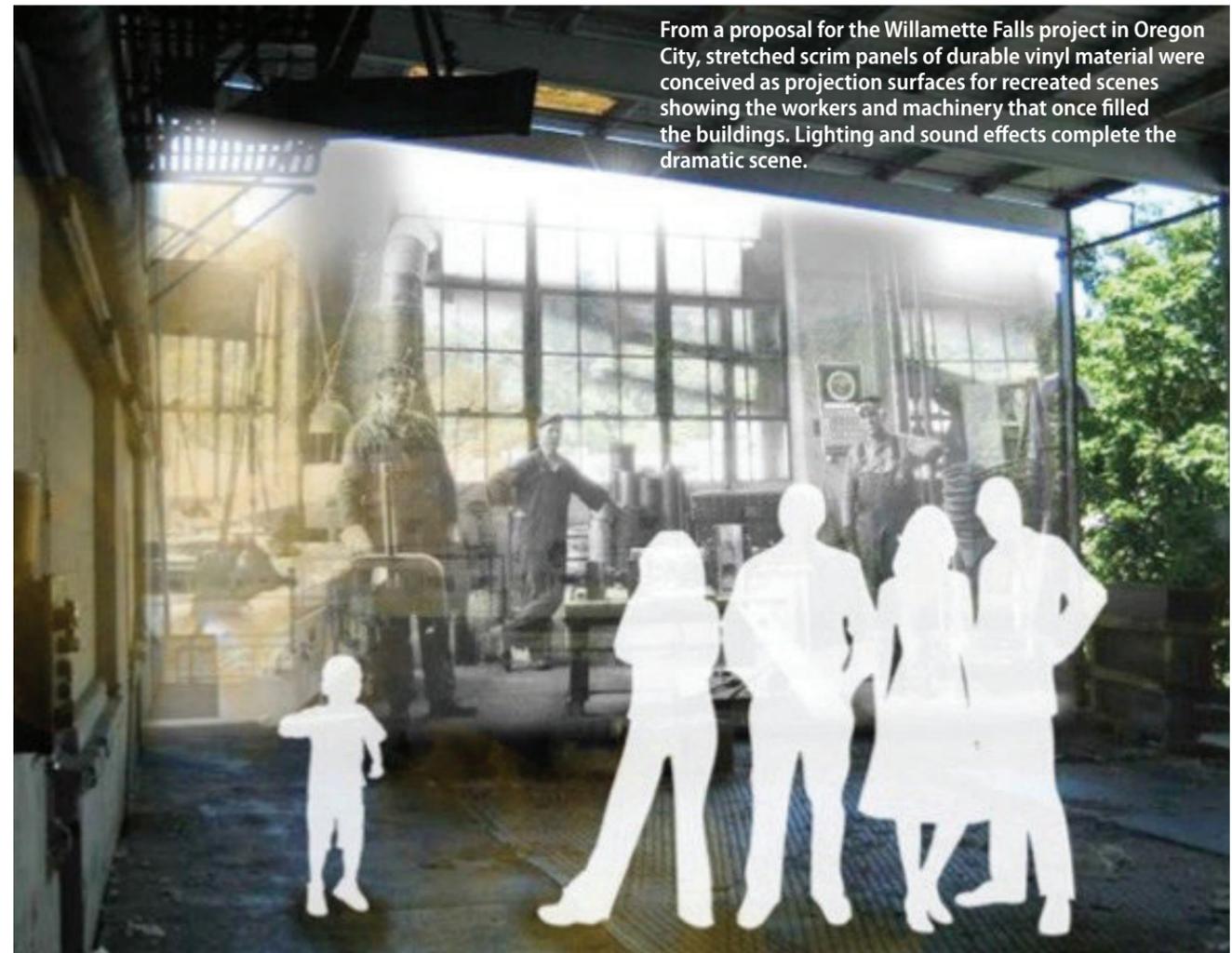
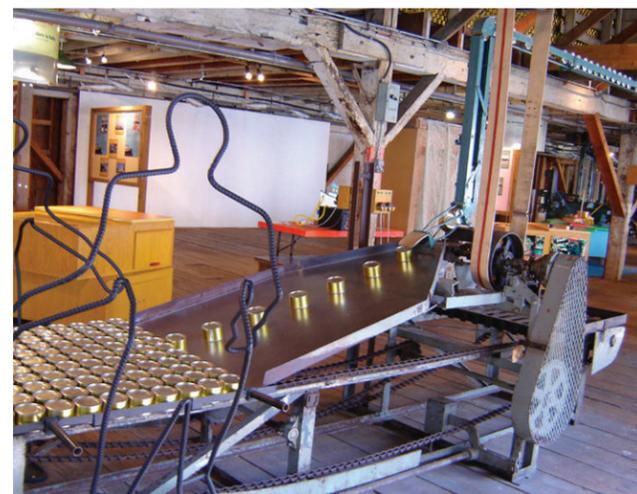
The Cannery is a renovated collection of buildings that represent a once-dominant fishing industry on the Fraser River. The focus of the interpretation is on the canning line, using industrial artifacts that have been reconditioned and configured much as they were when the cannery was in operation.

As visitors walk through the buildings, graphics and some screen-based exhibits describe the process,

the people involved and an overview of commercial fishing in Canada. Mannequins and reproduced props and models are used to provide a sense of being in that same building 75 years ago.



If available and capable of being reconditioned, artifacts can be placed where they once stood, in a building that once enclosed them. For example, interpretation at the Gulf of Georgia Cannery authentically replicates the machinery along the canning line. At some places the machines are still operational and can be used for demonstrations. Further research is required into the available artifacts on the Heritage Trail site to assess opportunities for how different types of artifacts might be displayed.



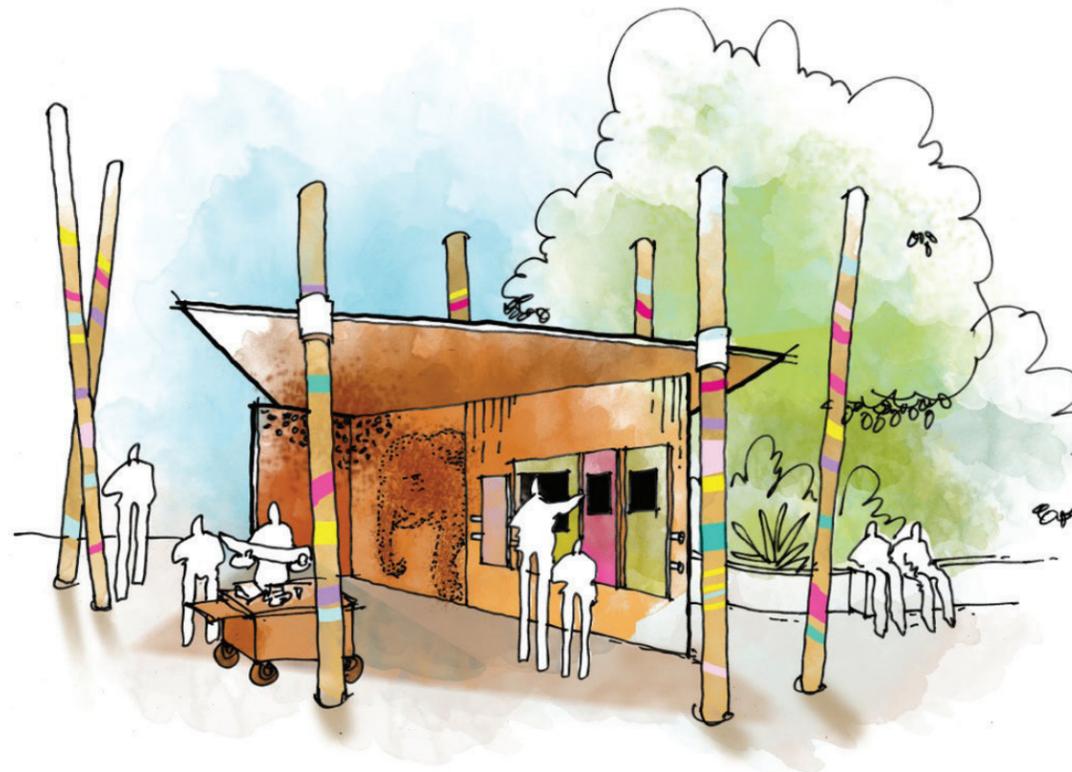
From a proposal for the Willamette Falls project in Oregon City, stretched scrim panels of durable vinyl material were conceived as projection surfaces for recreated scenes showing the workers and machinery that once filled the buildings. Lighting and sound effects complete the dramatic scene.

## 5.0 OUTDOOR KIOSKS

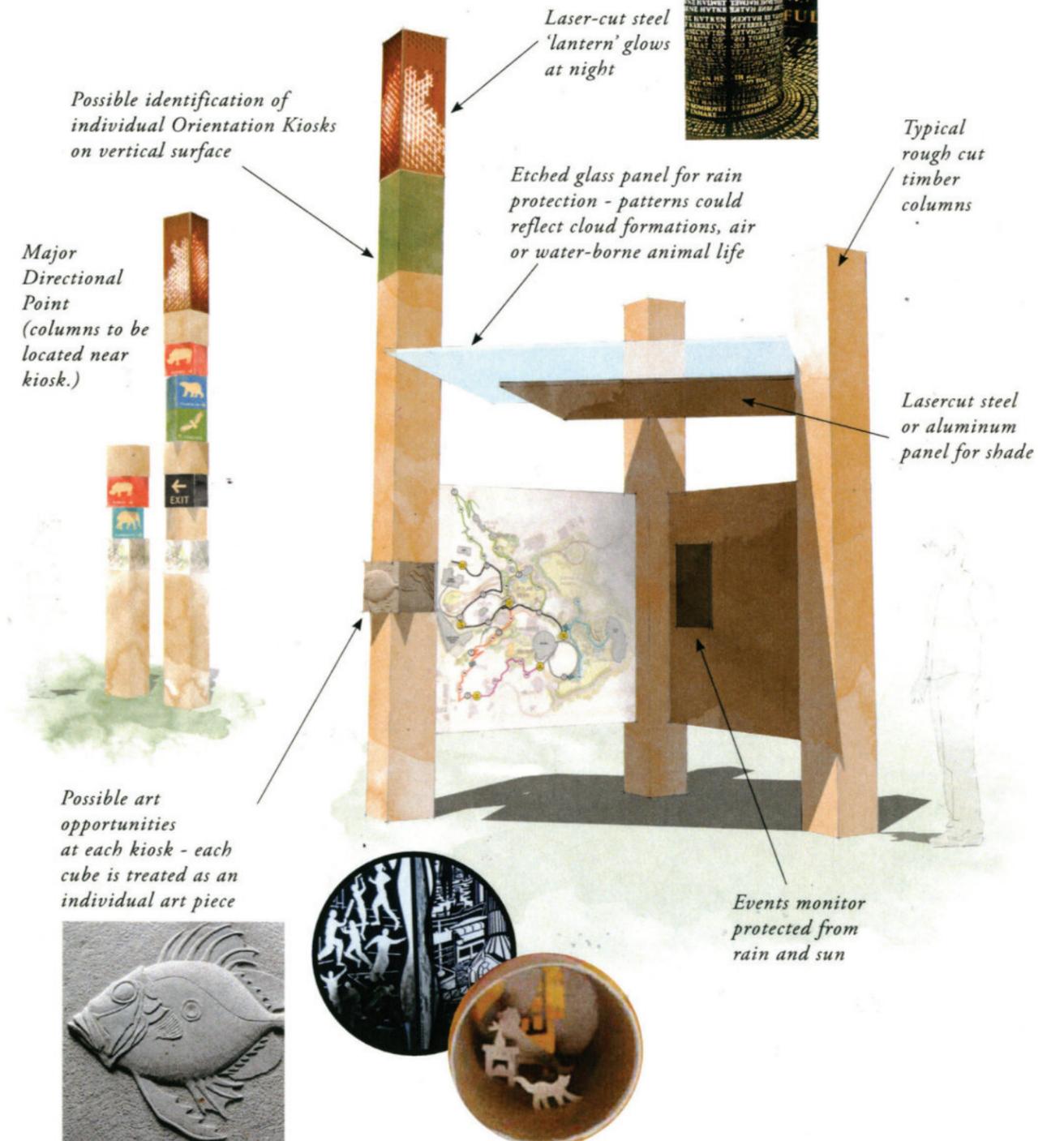
At the Bellingham Waterfront District site outdoor kiosks may act as interpretive nodes for visitors exploring the large, complex site and waterfront walkway. Within a kiosk a visitor may discover a map of the area, a monitor with interpretive programming, graphic panels, or touchable models of the current or historical site. As mentioned in previous sections, they can also provide shelter for certain types of exhibits such as monitors and mechanical interactives.

### As Part of a Wayfinding Program

In addition to providing shelter for certain exhibits and for visitors, kiosks may function as part of a wayfinding and orientation program and provide information on upcoming special events or future development at the site. The design of the kiosk itself, as a unique piece of architectural design, can reinforce the design approach for the overall look and feel of the Heritage Trail 'brand'.



Three timber columns support a metal and glass canopy above the monitor and Zoo site map. The angled canopy provides a larger coverage area for weather protection.





Kiosks can take on unique forms. This example in London doesn't provide shelter, but it does provide site maps and interpretation via AV programs and models housed within.



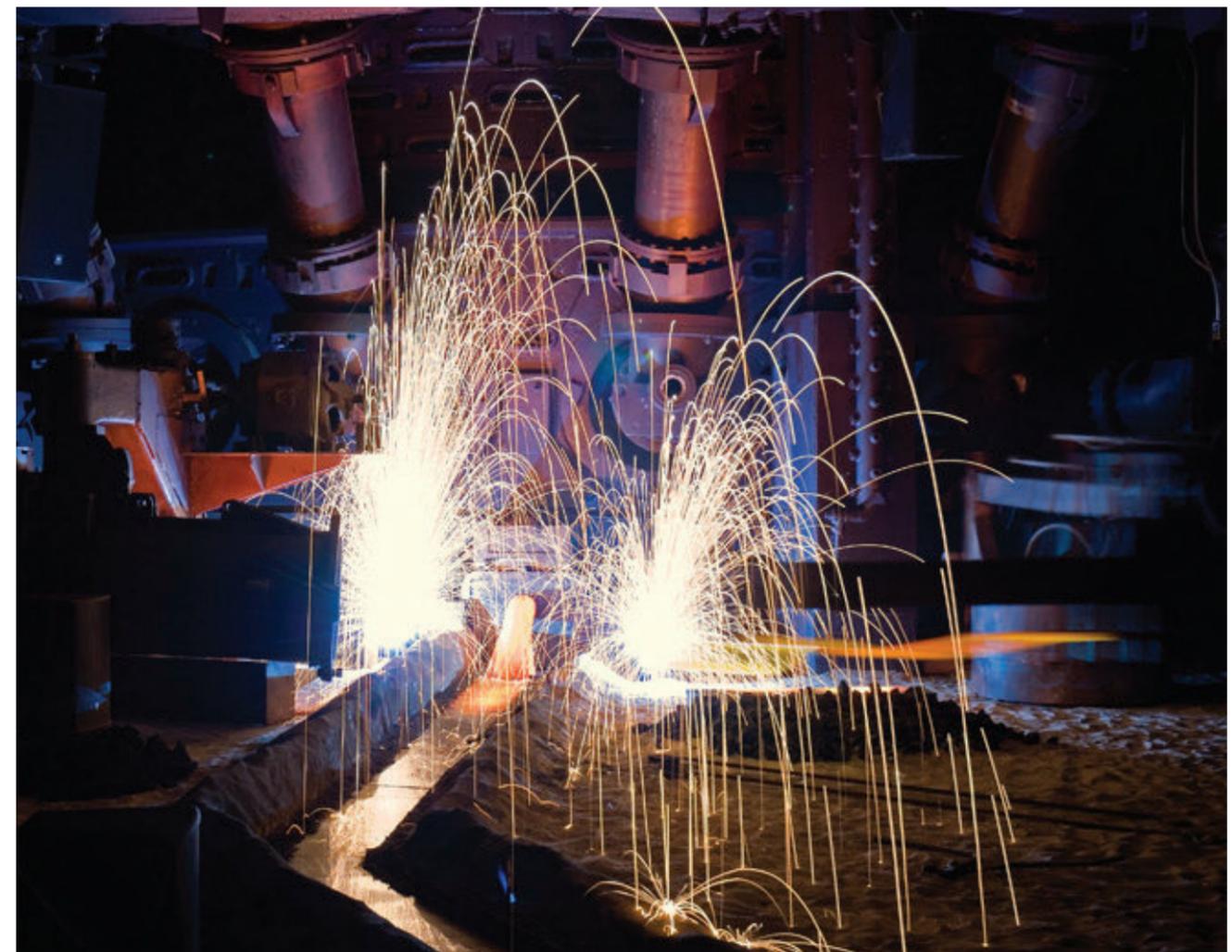
Outdoor kiosks at the Britannia Mine Museum provide a node for visitors to find interpretive and wayfinding information as well as protection from the elements. These nodes become landmarks for visitors navigating through large and potentially complicated sites.







The image of the Museo blast furnace is impressive during the day, but becomes even more powerful and dramatic when illuminated at night. Lighting is varied by season and to highlight special events being hosted by the museum



**THIS PAGE Museo del Acero Horno<sub>3</sub>, Monterrey, Mexico**

Blast Furnace No. 3 dominates Monterrey's skyline, a symbol of the community's steel industry and the heart of the city's popular Parque Fundidora. Interpretation at the site focuses on the historical significance of steelmaking to Monterrey while motivating younger visitors to explore the applied and theoretical sciences foundational to the industry.

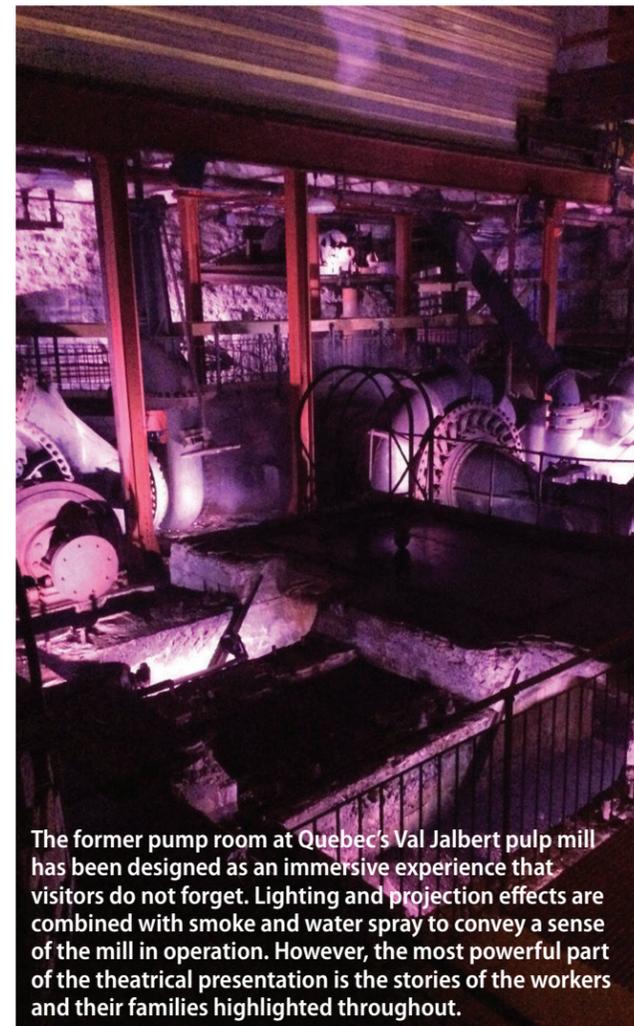
AldrichPears Associates designed an innovative, multi-gallery visitor experience for Museo. As visitors tour the Museo site they encounter a variety of techniques that explain the process of steel making, the components of the mill and the stories of a community that was built around a single industrial facility. In addition to mechanical science interactives and graphic panels, a multimedia, Furnace Show, uses light, sound, projections and special fire effects to recreate the sheer energy and power of the central blast furnace.



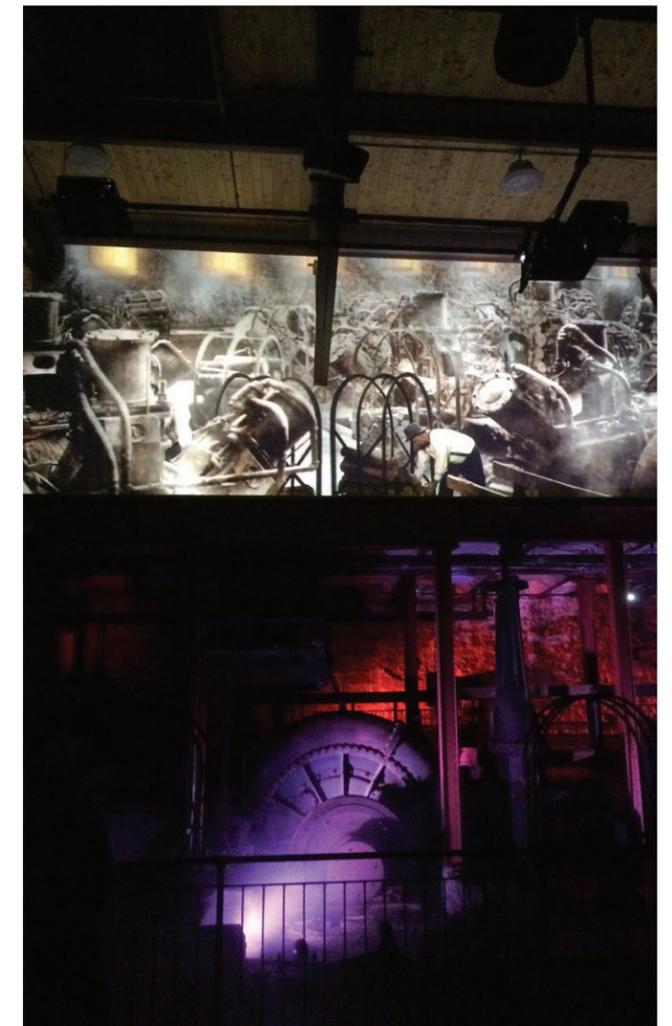
**Val-Jalbert Company Town, Quebec, Canada**

Val Jalbert is a unique tourist attraction in eastern Quebec. Originally it was the site of a pulp mill and associated town, comprising over 50 buildings. It became a ghost town after the mill closed in 1927 but the mill and many buildings have been restored. Visitors come for a day or for overnight stays in the village.

The Val Jalbert development uses a wide variety of interpretation techniques, including traditional text and graphic panels located around the site, an immersive audiovisual presentation that uses projection and special effects to bring the pump room to life as well as to tell stories about the community. The approach to interpretation is subtle, so as not to conflict with the accurately restored buildings and equipment.



The former pump room at Quebec's Val Jalbert pulp mill has been designed as an immersive experience that visitors do not forget. Lighting and projection effects are combined with smoke and water spray to convey a sense of the mill in operation. However, the most powerful part of the theatrical presentation is the stories of the workers and their families highlighted throughout.

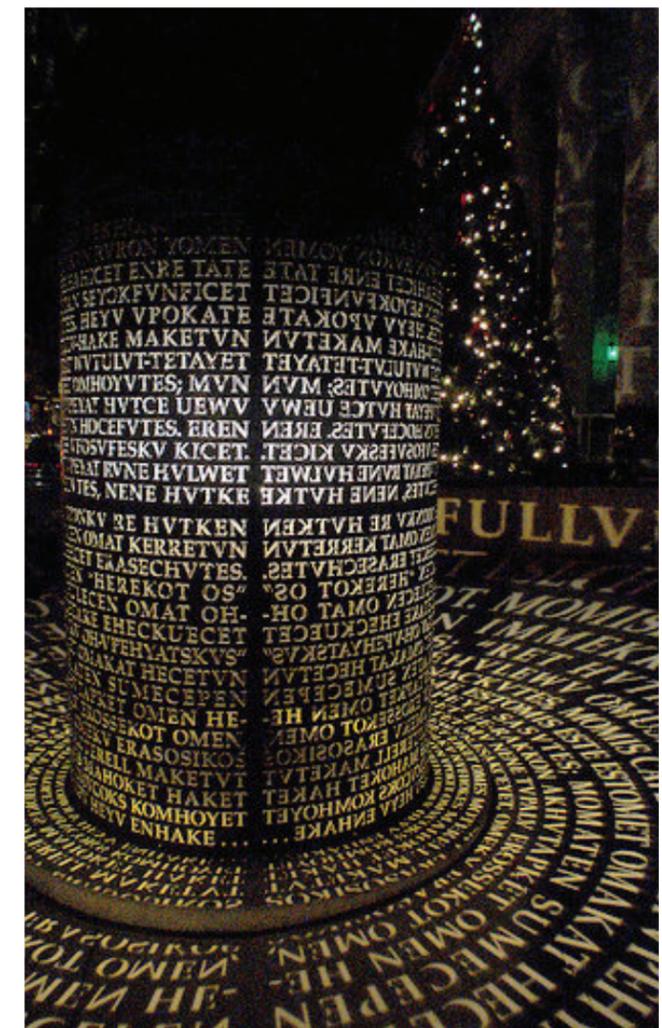


## 7.0 PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

Potentially, public art could provide visually engaging, thematic elements for the Heritage Trail. Such a program may focus on the visual arts, but it may also include other media. If some of the interpretation techniques described in previous sections are adopted, there may be opportunities for animation, audio, and other media. Generally public art at the site would provide:

- Unique, creative perspectives on the mill site and its history. Guidelines for public art installations should call for artwork to relate to the site, either historically or currently.
- An important link to, and promotion of, community artists.
- Opportunities for integration inside buildings and outdoors. Potential locations would be identified as part of the Heritage Trail Concept document.
- Excellent photo opportunities to complement engaging, informative visitor experiences at the Heritage Trail site.

It should be noted that more information on existing public art programs and funding is needed to determine the extent to which it could be integrated into Heritage Trail interpretation.







## 8.0 NEXT STEPS

Upon submitting this report on June 19, 2017, AldrichPears Associates will have completed Tasks 2 and 3 included in our scope of work. Feedback on this document will help to provide direction and focus for the forthcoming Heritage Trail Concept.

In particular, we are seeking feedback on the following elements of our work:

- Storyline. Which interpretive approach outlined in the Review of Historic Resources document makes the most sense of the goals and objectives for the site? This is critical in providing direction for our research and our design approach.
- Maintenance/staffing capacity. A number of the interpretive techniques in this document rely on maintenance and/or staffing beyond a more typical approach of providing panels. What is the capacity of the City of Bellingham to maintain AV exhibits, mechanical interactives etc.? Will there be dedicated staff onsite?
- Budget allocations. Which interpretive techniques described in this document would the team like to pursue in the design phase? After the design team receives feedback we can begin to provide preliminary costing information and budget allocations.

### Next steps include:

- Scheduling a 'Go To Meeting' with the City of Bellingham team to:
  - » Answer any outstanding questions.
  - » Receive feedback that will direct work in the subsequent task.
  - » Identify a date to deliver Task 4, Heritage Trail Concept document.

## APPENDIX

# Review of Historic Resources

## 1.0 RESOURCES

## 2.0 PRELIMINARY SUBJECT LIST

## 3.0 POTENTIAL INTEPRETIVE APPROACHES

## 4.0 NEXT STEPS

## INTRODUCTION

The document provides an overview of the existing resources that will be used in developing the Heritage Trail Concept for the Bellingham Waterfront District. Building on this, it outlines preliminary topics to be explored, describes possible approaches to content and identifies areas for further research.

The goal of this document is to provide context for the project and build a foundation on which to develop the “site story” in collaboration with the City of Bellingham team—one that will benefit and inform both the interpretive content and design work.

## 1.0 RESOURCES

### HUMAN RESOURCES

The following people are knowledgeable about the history of the Waterfront District and can help in identifying its most compelling stories:

- **Jeff Jewel**, Archivist/Historian, Whatcom Museum
  - Jeff is extremely knowledgeable about the general history of Bellingham and the Waterfront District. He will be an invaluable asset in locating visual materials to support stories.
- **Michael Sullivan**, Principal/Historian, Artifacts Consulting, Inc.
  - A historian of the Pacific Northwest, Michael is an excellent source for stories related to the Waterfront District.
- **Katie Franks**, Historic Preservation Planner, City of Bellingham
  - Katie is involved in producing the forthcoming Cultural Heritage Tourism Plan and collecting an inventory of cultural and heritage assets. Through this process she has also built relationships with local Lummi and Nooksack communities.
- **Mike Hogan**, Public Affairs Administrator, Port of Bellingham
  - As a longtime Port employee, Mike has a deep knowledge of the Port’s history at the site and its current environmental sustainability work as well as general knowledge of the industrial history of the waterfront.
- **John Reid**, Architect, Robinson McIlwaine (RMI) Architects
  - An architect involved in aspects of the redevelopment work, John is familiar with some of the stories of the site and has some connections to Lummi stakeholders.

### PAST PLANS & REPORTS

The following plans and reports provide valuable background information on the project including the historical context of the site, planning work done to date, and artifact information.

#### Plans & Presentations

- The Waterfront District Sub-Area Plan, Port of Bellingham and City of Bellingham, 2013
- Cornwall Beach Park Master Plan Report, City of Bellingham Parks and Recreation Department, October 2014
- The Bellingham Waterfront – Harcourt Presentation to the Port of Bellingham, October 2016
- An Evergreen Approach to Cultural Heritage Tourism – Presentation, Hargrove International, March 2017
- Harcourt Vision Site Plan

#### Surveys of Artifacts & Historic Buildings

- Waterfront Industrial Artifacts Map
- Georgia Pacific Due Diligence Existing Building Assessment, RMC Architects, September 2004
- Cultural Resources Assessment for the New Whatcom Redevelopment Project, December 2007: <https://www.portofbellingham.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/341>
- Waterfront District Adaptive Reuse Assessment, December 2009
- Salvage-Reuse Plan for the Bellingham Waterfront District Redevelopment Project, March 2014
- Updated Salvage and Reuse Inventory, 2016
- New Whatcom Redevelopment Project EIS, Historic Property Resources Technical Report, Port of Bellingham, December 2007: <https://www.portofbellingham.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/340>
- New Whatcom Redevelopment Project Draft EIS, Section 3.11 Historic and Cultural Resources, January 2008
- Historic American Building Survey – Georgia-Pacific Pulp and Tissue Mill: Barking/Chipping Plant and Chip Storage Bins (site photographs and historical significance)

#### KEY ARTIFACTS & SITE FEATURES

There are a number of intriguing, large-scale industrial artifacts and historic buildings at the Waterfront District site with high interpretive

value. All are owned by the Port of Bellingham. They are identified by name below with a short description of their significance.

- **Log Roller** – A large piece of industrial equipment used to bring logs from the millside log pond onto an inclined chain belt and system of conveyors to begin the pulping process. From here logs would be moved to the debarker and chipper.
- **Whole Log Chipper and Fairbanks Morse Motor**, ca. 1946. – The log chipper was built by Sumner Iron Works in Everett, Washington. At the time it was the largest log chipper in the world. The disc is made of 10” steel and the cutting force generated by the 1500 horsepower motor turned a 40” diameter log into wood chips at speed greater than a foot per second. It used millions of gallons of water from Lake Whatcom to process the logs.
- **Digester Tanks**, ca. 1930s/40s – Six steel-riveted digester tanks are representative of the early days of the pulp making process. Each tank was filled with wet wood chips and sulphurous acid and steam was injected into the digester tank to speed up the cooking process. Each tank could produce 22 tons of pulp every eight hours. These tanks were covered by an outer building structure until last year. *A consideration:* There is value in keeping these existing digester tanks together and intact rather than splitting them up across the site; they have become iconic in Bellingham and have great visual appeal.
- **Pulp Storage Towers**, ca. 1974, 1976 – The two, terra-cotta clad, cylindrical Pulp Storage Towers are 75 and 100 feet tall respectively, and 20 feet in diameter. The towers were built to store bleached and unbleached pulp.
- **Hatches** – Hand-decorated hatches created by a Georgia Pacific employee. More research required around their purpose and context.
- **Board Mill Building**, ca. 1946 – The building initially functioned to produce paperboard for shoeboxes, cake boxes, etc. using recycled paper and a small amount of cellulose fiber. Eventually it would be incorporated into the Georgia Pacific facility where it was used as a machine shop. This building has potential adaptive reuse, which is being actively considered by the site.
- **Alcohol Plant, 1945** – The Alcohol Plant is an un-reinforced brick

structure that was part of the Puget Sound Pulp & Timber Company mill. The plant was constructed using United States Government funds in support of the US Army and was the first commercial distillery in the US to produce ethyl alcohol from wood sugars. This laboratory grew to become one of the largest of its type in the world developing chemical products which included vanilla favoring, animal feeds, cosmetics, medicines, vinegar, and a wide variety of industrial solvents. The historic portion of the building has potential for adaptive reuse.

- **Fairbanks-Morse Scale** – The Fairbanks-Morse scale is part of the assembly associated with Receiving Scale Tank No. 1 within the Alcohol Plant. The use of this analog scale to measure the weight of liquid in a large storage tank was an important step in the production and distribution of ethyl alcohol at the plant.
- **Chip Conveyor / Digester Feed Chutes** – The chip conveyor was used to transfer chips from outside the now-demolished Digester Building into the chip bins. Digester Feed Chutes were used to transfer wood chips from the chip bins into two of the digesters.
- **The Granary Building, ca. 1928** – This building functioned as an egg production and distribution center for the Whatcom County's Egg and Poultry Co-Operative Association and was used by small farmers until the early 1960's. The building is being adaptively reused as retail/office space by the Port's private development partner and is scheduled to open to the public in 2017.
- **Assorted signs and notices** – Each building contains a wide variety of posted signs and notices, most related to worker safety.
- **Wastewater Treatment Lagoon** This feature is situated across the waterway from the log roller. It is not active anymore but is still used to treat stormwater and speaks to efforts towards sustainability.

*Note that a thorough inventory of small-scale artifacts can be found in the Updated Salvage and Reuse Inventory, 2016.*

#### DIGITAL RESOURCES

As we have begun our research the team has identified a number of helpful resources available online:

#### Photo Archives

- **Whatcom Museum Photo Archives:**
  - Select collections are digitized and available for viewing online.
  - <http://whatcommuseum.org/collections/research/photo-archives/>
- **Center for Pacific Northwest Studies Photo Database:**
  - This database provides links to over 2500 digital images held by the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies at Western Washington University.
  - [https://library.wvu.edu/hr/photo\\_cat\\_cpnws](https://library.wvu.edu/hr/photo_cat_cpnws)
- **Washington State Archives Digital Collections:**
  - Digital collections from the state archives.
  - <https://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov/>

#### Oral Histories

- **Waterfront Oral History Project records:**
  - A selection of transcripts from interviews conducted in 2006 with employees of the Georgia-Pacific Corporation pulp mill in Bellingham formerly owned and operated by Puget Sound Pulp & Timber Company.
  - <http://content.wvu.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/waterfront>

#### Bellingham History

- **Downtown Bellingham Historic Tour:**
  - An interactive tour of downtown Bellingham.
  - <http://www.iqmap.org/storymaps/map-journal/cob/index.html?appid=c36de675c0154899accf20641f432d86&webmap=f2ca764b299349cfa48a06039f2fa036>
- **Port of Bellingham website:**
  - A brief history of Bellingham's waterfront.
  - <http://www.portofbellingham.com/index.aspx?NID=126>
- **Bellingham Centennial Curriculum Project:**
  - Drawn from the archives of Western Washington University's Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, these

primary sources include photographs, maps, and documents that provide a firsthand sense of life in Bellingham a century ago.

- o <http://heritageresources.omeka.net/exhibits/show/centennial/intro>

- **Historic Preservation Bellingham website:**

- o This site, maintained by the City of Bellingham, includes interactive maps, historic photographs of Bellingham, and historic resources surveys.
- o <https://www.cob.org/services/planning/historic>

#### *Tribal History*

- **Nooksack Indian Tribe website:**

- o History from the Nooksack tribal website.
- o <http://nooksacktribe.org/about/>

- **American Indian Responses to Environmental Challenges – Lummi Nation:**

- o An online exhibit produced by the National museum of the American Indian.
- o <http://nmai.si.edu/environment/lummi/People.aspx>

#### KEY ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

- **Georgia-Pacific Collection at the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies at Western Washington University:**

- o The Georgia-Pacific Corporation donated 21 linear feet of company records to the center related to the pulp and tissue mill. The collection includes primarily publications, annual reports, and public relations materials but also includes numerous photographs and slides documenting equipment and buildings, personnel, and events dating from 1926 through 2000.

- **Port of Bellingham Archives:**

- o This is the Port's collection of photographs and archival materials. Items of note include photographs documenting the construction of Puget Sound Pulp and Timber Company in 1937 as well as booklets showing the process by which "Puget Pulp" was made through the 1940s (ex. Puget Sound Pulp & Timber Company, "Making Puget Pulp: History of Wood Pulp Making, Pictorial Tour of the Puget Sound Plan, Summary

of the World Pulp Industry " Bellingham, WA: Puget Sound Pulp & Timber Company, 1941).

#### RESEARCH MATERIALS

This is a preliminary list of other items referenced in past plans and documentation that may be useful for developing the storyline at the Waterfront District site. Efforts will be made to obtain copies of relevant items in the coming stages of research.

- "Alcohol Plant at Puget Sound Pulp & Timber Co." Pulp & Paper. June 1945: 1-8.
- Hitchman, James H. The Port of Bellingham, 1920-1970. Bellingham: Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Western Washington State College, 1972.
- Jeffcott, Percival Robert. Nooksack Tales and Trails Being a Collection of Stories and Historical Events Connected with the Most Northwest County in the United States-Whatcom County: and Depicting in Popular Style, the Pioneer Days of the Formative Years Between 1848 and 1895. Ferndale, WA: Sedro-Woolley Courier-Times, 1949.
- "Making Puget Sound - History of Pulp Making." 1957: 13-29.
- Photographic Views of New Whatcom, Washington. New Whatcom, Washington: Hegg Studio, 1891.
- "Roots – A Short History of Georgia-Pacific's Growth." Atlanta, Georgia: Georgia Pacific Corporation, 1994.
- Roth, Lottie., ed. History of Whatcom County. Chicago: Pioneer Historical Publication, 1926.
- "71 Years in Whatcom County: Georgia-Pacific's Bellingham Operations." Bellingham, Washington: Georgia Pacific newsprint publication. Feb. 1996: 7-10.
- "Stewardship First." Northwest Pulp & Paper. 1992: 12-13.
- "The Bellingham Bay Country: Whatcom County, Washington." Daily Reveille. 1889.
- "Wood Preparation: An Original Technique – A New Modern Plant." Pulp & Paper. vol. 21, 11. Oct. 1947: 32-46.

#### 2.0 PRELIMINARY SUBJECT LIST

After our preliminary review of the existing documentation, a number of potential subjects have emerged:

## 2.1 Early Whatcom Waterway History

- First Peoples
  - Lummi and Nooksack use of and relationship to the site
- Early industries
  - Early sawmill and lumber industry (Roeder and Peabody)
- Transportation gateway
  - Changes to the waterway to make it navigable by larger ships
    - § 1880s Washington Colony wharf
    - § 1900s federal dredging
    - § 1913 steamship terminal
  - Planning the waterfront
    - § 1920 creation of Port Authority

## 2.2 Pulp and Paper Industry

- How and why here
- Establishment of first pulp mills, Puget Sound Pulp and Timber Company, Georgia Pacific
- Pulp-making process – from logs to “Puget pulp” and products
  - Efficiencies, using pulp-process byproducts
  - Diversification, adjustments to market demands
- Historical building features, equipment
- Contribution of industry to development of Bellingham
- Innovative technologies (firsts, largests, etc.)

## 2.3 Current Uses of the Site

- Work of the Port
  - Environmental rehabilitation
- Adaptive reuse of buildings
- Becoming a mixed-use area; process, role of community

## 3.0 POTENTIAL INTERPRETIVE APPROACHES

How these subjects will be explored and in how much detail depends on the messages and themes we choose to prioritize. In other words, creating the “site story” begins with identifying our interpretive approach, and the big ideas we would like visitors to take away with them. The

following are potential starting points for shaping and guiding the story:

### *From Pulp to Paper*

As outlined in the RFQ, a main interpretive goal of the site is to “illustrate the process by which whole logs were transformed into paper products on Bellingham’s downtown waterfront.” This approach would narrow in on the industrial processes that made this transformation possible. It would provide a focused experience, bringing visitors on a physical and conceptual journey through the pulp-making process that defined Bellingham’s waterfront for decades. Artifacts would be the star of the show—helping to highlight the incredible power and ingenuity required by this industry.

### *The Changing Waterfront*

The story of the waterfront could also be told from a broader perspective—exploring the earliest Nooksack and Lummi winter camps here, telling the site’s industrial history, and looking at the present and future of the site as it relates to mixed-use developments and the current work being done by the Port of Bellingham. The focus would be on change over time, helping to connect the past to the current developments on the water’s edge. Note: Collaborating with Lummi and Nooksack leaders will require a commitment to early planning. Ample time must be provided for them to communicate their stories and interpretive goals.

### *People at the Heart of the Story*

Finally, a third approach might bring the focus on to the people who have been connected to the site through time. Here, personal accounts would help populate the site, bringing its history to life. The culture and the community surrounding the pulp mill would be explored through the rich archives of oral histories from Georgia-Pacific employees. Potentially drawing on interviews with First Peoples, visitors could engage with the cultural history of the site through personal anecdotes and memories. Note: Collaborating with Lummi and Nooksack leaders will require a commitment to early planning. Ample time must be provided for them to communicate their stories and interpretive goals.

## 4.0 NEXT STEPS

Moving forward, the interpretive approach for the site will need to be confirmed via feedback from the City of Bellingham team. Choosing a focus for content will help us to select the design techniques that will most appropriately tell the site's stories.

In terms of research, our next steps will be to connect with the human resources listed at the beginning of this document, working together to identify the most compelling and engaging stories. Additionally, if our interpretive approach involves telling the story of the area's First People, primary research will be required related to the Lummi and Nooksack's current and historical connections to the site.





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