

# Downtown Seawalk | Overstreet Park to Gold Creek *Juneau, Alaska*



*Context:* Based on Juneau's Long Range Waterfront Plan, the Downtown Seawalk Bridge to Gold Creek segment incorporates tidal pools, high-tide features, extensive landscaping and wildlife enhancement at the mouth of Gold Creek, and a park as the northern terminus.



*Context:* At the base of the Juneau Douglas Bridge, the iconic whale sculpture emerges at Overstreet Park and serves as a gateway where the Downtown Seawalk provides a touchpoint to the Gastineau Channel.



*Context:* Juneau's disconnected waterfront before the completion of the Seawalk project. The island is beginning to emerge as an important touchpoint.



*Sensitivity to Water:* An elevated seawalk connects Overstreet Park's urban plaza, across a vegetated intertidal habitat island, and over to salmon-bearing Gold Creek. Note the establishment of the transplanted alkali grass, an important salt marsh plant.



*Sensitivity to Water:* The island design provides a stable base for pedestrian access and connection to the pile-supported Seawalk while adapting to changing conditions of the tides and weather.



*Sensitivity to Water:* The Seawalk is a transition point providing a gateway to the water and green space. Features at Overstreet Park include an active recreation zone, fishing pier, picnic shelters, a wave plaza, and the iconic whale sculpture setting.



**Civic Contribution:** The Seawalk's continuous pedestrian route along downtown is a calmer, safer alternative to the overcrowded sidewalks and crosswalks on Egan Drive, which is often dominated by vehicles.



*Civic Contribution:* Before the Seawalk, it wasn't easy or safe for people to reach the water. New touchpoints and gathering places provide various ways to safely access and experience the water and views.



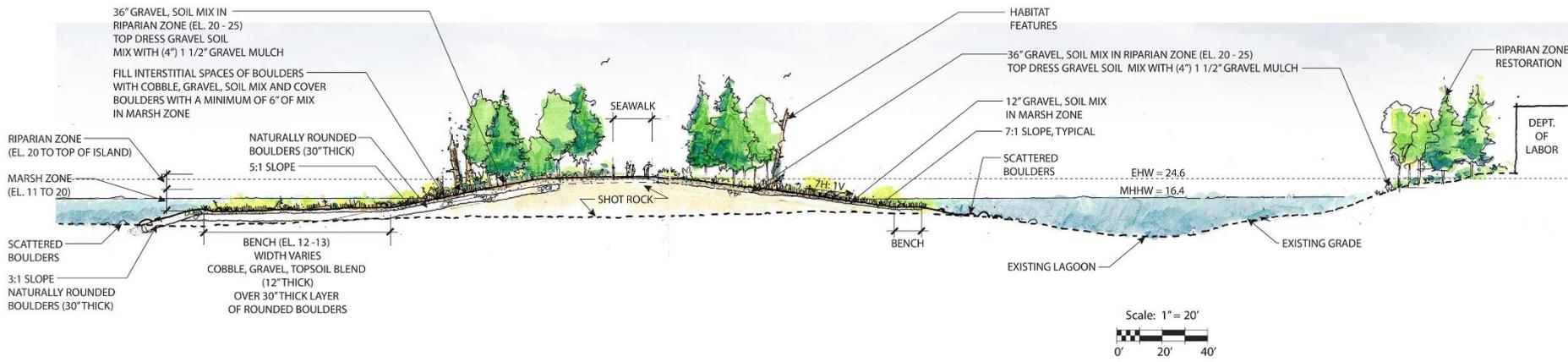
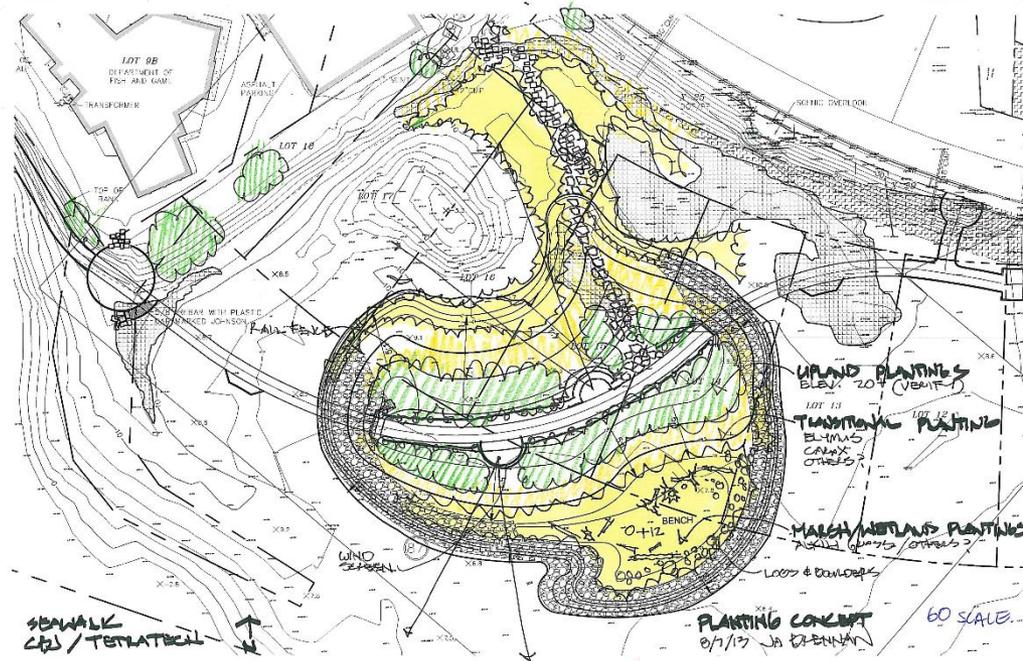
*Civic Contribution:* The design establishes stronger and safer pedestrian-oriented connections to Juneau's waterfront from downtown and the cruise ship terminal. Nodes along the Seawalk create waterfront gathering opportunities for the community.



*Quality and Harmony of Design:* The art and plaza with the infinity pool immerse onlookers. The design, with proper scale and wind orientation, limits spray impact and water loss.



*Quality and Harmony of Design:* The multi-use plaza around the commissioned sculpture is used for civic events including the “Solstice Celebration: A Return to the Light,” a free yoga event.



**Environmental Contribution:** Shoreline views are framed through riparian vegetation that overhangs the intertidal area, enhancing food production for salmonids, birds, and mammals. A variety of substrate materials and ecotone maximize ecological value.



*Environmental Contribution:* The design of the island and other shoreline areas incorporated habitat enhancement within the intertidal and riparian zone, and restored habitat lost to filling from the development of the Gold Creek delta.



*Enrichment:* The project included four improved access points to the tidelands – three rockery steps and one stairway. With this improved access, more visitors and locals are using the beaches than ever.



*Enrichment:* New picnic shelters provide a place for locals and visitors to relax, gather with others, and enjoy the natural beauty of the Gastineau Channel. A glass panel blocks the chilly Juneau wind.





*Degree of Difficulty:* The combination of large-scale civil work, intertidal pile-driving, concrete and finish work, numerous building trades, extensive plantings, and the whale fountain required the Juneau contractor to assemble a team with unique specialties.



*Degree of Difficulty* : The design team was responsible for dividing and scheduling the work to facilitate construction as cost-effectively as possible. One example is the use of the island to stage the intertidal pile-driving work.



*Degree of Difficulty:* The exposed waterfront site required a complex design based on topographic surveys, plant and wildlife surveys, coastal engineering analysis, and functional analysis of the proposed and existing wetlands. Under construction are the intertidal habitat bench and tide pools.



Designed for all seasons, the Seawalk provides windows to the Gastineau Channel while connecting the Juneau community with a safe and accessible route along the shore.