



Legislation Text

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**CITY OF SEATTLE**  
**RESOLUTION \_\_\_\_\_**

A RESOLUTION relating to the Office of the Waterfront and the Department of Parks and Recreation; approving the Seattle Aquarium Society's Master Plan for the purpose of allowing the advancement of the design of a potential on land Aquarium expansion, so that sufficient information is available for environmental review, and directing the Office and the Department to coordinate environmental review of the Aquarium expansion with the Seattle Aquarium Society.

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle (City) owns the Seattle Aquarium, located on Piers 59 and 60; and

WHEREAS, via an agreement with the Department of Parks and Recreation (Parks), the Seattle Aquarium Society (SEAS) operates and maintains the Aquarium; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes the importance of maintaining the Aquarium's national and regional standing as a platform for scientific research, marine conservation education, civic engagement, and tourism; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, the City adopted Resolution 29423, approving a Master Plan for the Aquarium that recommended replacing the existing Aquarium with a new over water facility in the area of Pier 62/63, north of the existing Aquarium, and developing a new park in the area of Pier 59 and Waterfront Park; and

WHEREAS, since the time of adoption of Resolution 29423, the City Council has approved a series of resolutions and ordinances stating principles related to future Aquarium development, including the principle stated in Resolution 31080, adopted in 2008, that Aquarium development should be consistent with the Central Waterfront Master Plan in effect at the time of the proposed development; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, the City passed Ordinance 123205, which authorized Parks to enter into an agreement with SEAS to operate and manage the Aquarium; and the Operations and Management Agreement, so

authorized, required SEAS to prepare a Master Plan for approval of the City Council by Resolution, with such Master Plan to be consistent with City waterfront planning; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, the City adopted Resolution 31399, which endorsed the Concept Design and Framework Plan for the Central Waterfront, and recognized a Strategic Plan and Funding Plan for implementing the Concept Design; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the City passed Ordinance 124121, which authorized Parks to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SEAS that contemplated the construction of a new over water South Wing expansion, renovations to Piers 59 and 60, and construction of a new structure on the Aquarium Plaza and partially under the base of the Overlook Walk included in the Concept Design; and

WHEREAS, the City and SEAS have worked closely to consider Aquarium expansion, including a possible new Aquarium building to be developed at the location of Building C partially under the base of the Overlook Walk (Overlook Walk Location); and

WHEREAS, working with affected stakeholders, SEAS has prepared a Master Plan as described in Section 16.1 of the Operations and Management Agreement authorized by Ordinance 123205 (SEAS Master Plan), to guide future actions related to Aquarium development; and

WHEREAS, the SEAS Master Plan addresses the two over water locations for the Aquarium expansion identified in prior City and SEAS planning and environmental review documents, as well as the concept of an Aquarium expansion on land at the Overlook Walk Location; and

WHEREAS, the City and SEAS recognize that an on land expansion would likely have fewer public view impacts from Waterfront Park, may cost less to construct, and could pose fewer regulatory challenges than previously considered over water locations for potential expansion; and

WHEREAS, approval of the SEAS Master Plan indicates support for furthering the design of the potential Aquarium expansion at the Overlook Walk Location in order to facilitate environmental review; and

WHEREAS, SEAS acknowledges responsibility for providing any necessary information and analysis to the

Office of the Waterfront in conjunction with any coordinated environmental review; and

WHEREAS, the City affirms its commitment to provide appropriate funding for Aquarium expansion and currently has programmed \$34 million in its Capital Improvement Program; and

WHEREAS, the Office of the Waterfront and Parks understand that SEAS may request to advance the schedule of the current funding arrangement, as set forth in the MOU authorized by Ordinance 124121, and support taking steps to try to facilitate such a request, if necessary; and

WHEREAS, the Office of the Waterfront, Parks, and SEAS are committed to continuing coordination related to the Aquarium expansion and may, at some future date, request authorization to amend or supersede the MOU authorized by Ordinance 124121, to further such coordination; NOW, THEREFORE,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE MAYOR CONCURRING, THAT:**

Section 1. The Seattle Aquarium Society (SEAS) Master Plan.

A. The SEAS Master Plan, which is attached as Attachment A to this Resolution, fulfills the requirement of the Operations and Management Agreement authorized by Ordinance 123205 that a Master Plan be prepared by SEAS.

B. The SEAS Master Plan appropriately considers several locations for expansion, including both of the over water options considered in prior planning, either to the south or north of the existing Aquarium, as well as expansion on land at the location of Building C partially under the base of the Overlook Walk (Overlook Walk Location), along with a potential future phase involving the renovation and expansion of Piers 59 and 60.

C. The City of Seattle (City) approves the SEAS Master Plan for the purposes described below:

1. In consideration of the mutual goals of the City and SEAS to increase Aquarium visitor capacity in a way that best complements the City's overall vision for the waterfront and is consistent with the City's central waterfront planning, the City supports further review and analysis, including environmental

review, of a potential on land Aquarium expansion at the Overlook Walk Location.

2. City support for the Overlook Walk Location is intended to allow SEAS to advance the design of a potential on land Aquarium expansion at the Overlook Walk Location to a schematic level, so that sufficient information is available for environmental review.

3. The City and SEAS acknowledge that the Overlook Walk Location is subject to review and potential mitigation under various laws, including the State Environmental Policy Act and Seattle's SEPA Rules, Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.05 (collectively "SEPA"). The City may not take any action within the meaning of SEPA except as authorized by law, and nothing in this Resolution is intended to limit the City's substantive SEPA authority. No final decision on whether to allow an on land Aquarium expansion at the Overlook Walk Location shall be made by the City until environmental review of the proposal is completed.

D. The Office of the Waterfront and the Department of Parks and Recreation are directed to coordinate environmental review of the Overlook Walk Location with SEAS.

Adopted by the City Council the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President \_\_\_\_\_ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

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Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Filed by me this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

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Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)

Attachment A: Seattle Aquarium Master Plan for Expansion