

**City of Seattle**



**Director  
Seattle Center**

**Confirmation Packet  
August 1, 2023**

**Marshall Foster**



August 1, 2023

The Honorable Debora Juarez  
President, Seattle City Council  
Seattle City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Council President Juarez:

It is my pleasure to transmit to the City Council the following confirmation packet for my appointment of Marshall Foster as the Director of the Seattle Center.

The materials in this packet are divided into two sections:

**A. Marshall Foster**

This section contains Mr. Foster's appointment and oath of office forms, his resume, and the press release announcing his selection.

**B. Background Check**

This section contains the report on Mr. Foster's background check.

Marshall Foster has been an integral and invaluable part of our City government for over 15 years, both spearheading major public projects and bringing communities together to help shape neighborhood planning processes. His well-earned reputation precedes his nomination today, in that I know every Councilmember has had benefited from their engagement with him on recent efforts around the redevelopment of Memorial Stadium and the return of Bumbershoot, to the creation of our new downtown waterfront, to strategizing for how best to manage and shape neighborhood growth.

Prior to this year, Marshall Foster helped create the City's Waterfront Seattle Program, serving as Director of the City's Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects (OWCP) since 2014. OWCP is now building 20 acres of new parks and public spaces to serve Seattle and the region as part of an innovative civic partnership with \$781 million in funding from the City and State, Downtown property owners, and major philanthropic partners. He also served as the City's Designated Representative to Sound Transit 3 during a critical phase of decision-making in 2022. Prior, he served as the City's Planning Director where he oversaw plans for South Lake Union's expansion, along with community plans for the Rainier Valley, Capitol Hill, the University District, and Northgate.

Following Robert Nellams' well-earned retirement earlier this year, I appointed Marshall as Interim Director of Seattle Center while our Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR) launched a competitive search process. We convened a committee of local arts, business, and philanthropic leaders to inform the recruitment process and recommend finalists for my consideration, which included representatives from Seattle Center resident organizations, the Seattle Center Foundation, and the Uptown Alliance. SDHR conducted surveys of Seattle Center employees and stakeholders, which were used to inform the selection process and guide the assessment of applicants. Ultimately, the search committee narrowed the candidates to four, and I and members of my leadership team had the opportunity to meet with each of finalists. I ultimately concluded that Marshall Foster was the clear

choice to help guide our Seattle Center into the future. He brings resourcefulness, bold vision, a collaborative nature, and a deep care for the people of Seattle.

I trust that after reviewing Mr. Foster's application materials, meeting with him, and following Councilmember Lewis's diligent Public Assets & Homelessness Committee review, you will affirm what you've already learned in your years of working with him: that Marshall is perfectly suited to the role of permanent Director of Seattle Center. I trust he'll help to chart a new course for the organization, bring a keen focus to the financial sustainability of Seattle Center, lead on much-needed improvements to its infrastructure (like a renewed Memorial Stadium), and support Seattle Center staff so they feel as integral to the life of the campus as the much-loved International Fountain.

If you have any questions about the attached materials or need additional information, Deputy Mayor Tim Burgess would welcome hearing from you. I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce A. Harrell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "B".

Bruce A. Harrell  
Mayor of Seattle

**SECTION**

**A**



**City of Seattle**

Mayor Bruce Harrell

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June 21, 2023

Marshall Foster  
Seattle, WA  
Transmitted via e-mail

Dear Marshall,

It gives me great pleasure to appoint you to the position of Director of the Seattle Center at an annual salary of \$249,328.

Your appointment as Director is subject to City Council confirmation; therefore, you will need to attend the Council's confirmation hearings. Once confirmed by the City Council, you serve at the pleasure of the Mayor and your initial term is for four years.

Your contingent offer letter provided employment information related to the terms of your employment, benefits, vacation, holiday and sick leave.

I look forward to working with you in your role as Director and wish you success. We have much work ahead of us, and I am confident that the Seattle Center will thrive under your leadership.

Sincerely,


A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce A. Harrell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bruce A. Harrell  
Mayor of Seattle

cc: Seattle Department of Human Resources file



# City of Seattle Department Head Notice of Appointment

<b>Appointee Name:</b> <i>Marshall Foster</i>	
<b>City Department Name:</b> <i>Seattle Center</i>	<b>Position Title:</b> <i>Director</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Appointment</b> OR <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reappointment</b>	<b>City Council Confirmation required?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Appointing Authority:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> City Council <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mayor <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <i>Fill in appointing authority</i>	<b>Term of Position: *</b> Council Confirmation <b>to</b> <i>9/1/2027</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Serving remaining term of a vacant position</i>
<b>Background:</b> Marshall Foster has been an integral and invaluable part of our City government for over 15 years, both spearheading major public projects and bringing communities together to help shape neighborhood planning processes. His well-earned reputation precedes his nomination today, in that I know every Councilmember has had benefited from their engagement with him on recent efforts around the redevelopment of Memorial Stadium and the return of Bumbershoot, to the creation of our new downtown waterfront, to strategizing for how best to manage and shape neighborhood growth.  Prior to this year, Marshall Foster helped create the City’s Waterfront Seattle Program, serving as Director of the City’s Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects (OWCP) since 2014. OWCP is now building 20 acres of new parks and public spaces to serve Seattle and the region as part of an innovative civic partnership with \$781 million in funding from the City and State, Downtown property owners, and major philanthropic partners. He also served as the City’s Designated Representative to Sound Transit 3 during a critical phase of decision-making in 2022. Prior, he served as the City’s Planning Director where he oversaw plans for South Lake Union’s expansion, along with community plans for the Rainier Valley, Capitol Hill, the University District, and Northgate.	
<b>Authorizing Signature:</b>  <b>Date Signed:</b> August 1, 2023	<b>Appointing Signatory:</b> <i>Bruce A. Harrell</i> <i>Mayor of Seattle</i>

\*Term begin and end date is fixed and tied to the position and not the appointment date.



CITY OF SEATTLE ▪ STATE OF WASHINGTON  
OATH OF OFFICE

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State of Washington

County of King

I, Marshall Foster, swear or affirm that I possess all of the qualifications prescribed in the Seattle City Charter and the Seattle Municipal Code for the position of Director of the Seattle Center; that I will support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Washington, and the Charter and Ordinances of The City of Seattle; and that I will faithfully conduct myself as Director of the Seattle Center.

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Marshall Foster

Subscribed and sworn to before me

this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

[Seal]

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Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

# Marshall Foster

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## PROFILE

- **A leader in civic place-making and partnerships** – developing shared vision for civic initiatives and projects, with a focus on building partnerships across sectors and aligning diverse interests toward a common goal.
- **An experienced manager and developer of urban public spaces** – leading diverse teams in developing and operating complex parks and cultural spaces, working with civic, business and elected leaders to build public support for projects that are ultimately approved, funded and built.
- **A creative thinker and strategist** – driving innovation across multiple disciplines including parks and public space management, the performing arts, urban design and architecture, real estate strategy and infrastructure financing.

## RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

### **Interim Director, Seattle Center; January 2023 – Present**

Overseeing all aspects of the operations and management of the 74-acre Seattle Center campus, including a \$58M annual budget and 230 FTE. Taking immediate steps to address critical infrastructure issues on campus, completing agreements for the return of major summer festivals to support the Mayor’s downtown activation efforts, and leading completion of plans for Seattle Center to take over maintenance and operations of Seattle’s new Waterfront Park starting in July 2023. Supported Seattle Center in publishing a joint Request for Proposals with the Seattle School District to transform Memorial Stadium into a multi-use sports and entertainment facility.

### **Director, Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects, City of Seattle, WA; November 2014 – January 2023**

Led creation of the City’s [Waterfront Seattle Program](#), which is now building 20 acres of new parks and public spaces to serve Seattle and the Puget Sound region. Responsible for a staff of 25 and a \$850M capital budget, reporting to the Mayor. Managed all aspects of design and engineering, project management, and construction. Led community planning, engineering and entitlements, working with WSDOT, SDOT, King County Metro and the Port of Seattle. Established a funding partnership including \$193M in State funding, a \$160M assessment of surrounding properties, and \$110M in private philanthropy. Helped to establish and develop the “Friends of Waterfront Seattle” which provides free public programming of the waterfront in partnership with the City.

Led negotiations on behalf of the Mayor for creation of Seattle’s new Climate Pledge Arena, a \$1.1B city-owned sports and music venue that is privately funded and operated.



**City Planning Director, Dept. of Planning and Development, City of Seattle, WA;  
November 2009 – November 2014**

Led Seattle's comprehensive and regional planning, urban design, land use policy, community development, and the work of the Seattle Design and Planning Commissions. Responsible for a staff of 35 and a \$6.4M annual budget. Created the South Lake Union Urban Design Framework which has led to more than 12M SF of new commercial development and 3,500+ new housing units since 2011. Completed a Master Plan for redevelopment of the Yesler Terrace area, and urban design frameworks for the Mt. Baker, Othello and Beacon Hill light rail station areas. Negotiated agreements with Sound Transit for mixed-income transit-oriented development around Seattle's Capitol Hill and Othello stations. Represented the City in negotiating private-sector development projects, including Amazon's Denny Triangle campus, the WA State Convention Center Expansion, and WSDOT's Colman Dock replacement.

**Manager, Office of Policy and Management, City of Seattle, WA;  
July 2007 – November 2009**

Oversaw key projects for the Mayor in parks and South Lake Union. Key projects included early land use planning for South Lake Union, negotiating agreements for MOHAI's move to the Armory in Lake Union Park, and several new sports facilities at Magnuson Park.

**Director of City Greening Initiatives; City of San Francisco, CA; June 2005 – July 2006**

Led sustainable development initiatives for the Mayor. Responsibilities included overseeing the Mayor's sustainability investments and sustainable development policy; coordinating interdepartmental sustainability programs; developing regulatory and financial strategies to enable key development projects and improve city operations, working with community leaders, department heads and the city's Board of Supervisors.

**Downtown Planning Manager, City of San Francisco, CA; February 2002 – June 2005**

Led neighborhood planning for the Rincon Hill, Transbay, and Mid-Market areas. Completed design and rezoning for more than 11,000 new housing units. Developed high-rise building typologies, negotiated impact fees to fund streets and parks, and drafted new urban form controls to ensure new towers would enhance the city's skyline and waterfront.

**EDUCATION AND RECOGNITION**

M.C.P., College of Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley, May 2000

B.A. Magna Cum Laude, Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont, May 1997

2020 Honorary Member, American Institute of Architects (AIA), Seattle Chapter

2018 Seattle's Most Influential People, Seattle Magazine

2017 ASLA National Award for Urban Design, Waterfront Seattle

2013 ASLA National Award for Master Planning, Waterfront Seattle

2013 APA National Awards for Urban Design, Waterfront Seattle

2006 AIA SF Chapter Award for Urban Design Excellence, Rincon Hill Plan

2004 AIA California Award for Urban Design Excellence, Transbay Plan

2000 UC Berkeley CED Alumni Award for Professional Promise

Member, APA, ULI, UW Professionals Council, Lambda Alpha International Society for the Advancement of Land Economics

## Press Release

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# Mayor Harrell to Appoint Experienced Civic Leader Marshall Foster to be Next Director of the Seattle Center

by [Jamie Housen](#) on June 22, 2023

*Following a national search informed by the Seattle Center community and staff, waterfront leader Marshall Foster will serve as the next Director, bringing deep experience in place-making and civic partnerships.*

**Seattle** – Today, Mayor Bruce Harrell announced that he has selected Marshall Foster to serve as the next permanent director of the [Seattle Center](#). Having served as the City’s long-standing Director of the City’s Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects, Foster brings decades of experience in leading complex civic partnerships and bringing large-scale urban projects to life in Seattle.

“Seattle Center is the cultural heart of our city and the region, bringing together an incredible collection of organizations, artists, and community partners to create memorable events and experiences that deliver vitality, culture, and a sense of belonging to our city,” **said Mayor Harrell**. “As the next permanent director of the Seattle Center, Marshall Foster shares our **One Seattle** vision and values and has the hands-on leadership experience to help the Center grow into the future. Working with Marshall we will expand the Center’s role as host to communities from every walk of life, create new opportunities to support our youth and emerging artists, and continue to build strong civic partnerships so that the Center remains a welcoming, vibrant place for everyone in our city.”

Foster has been serving as the Interim Director of Seattle Center since January, overseeing operations and management of the 74-acre Seattle Center campus, including a \$58M annual budget. In the last six months, Foster has led efforts to help bring back summer programming and events on campus and has prepared the Seattle Center for its new role managing Waterfront Park. He has also worked with City leadership to advance a partnership with Seattle Public Schools to redevelop Memorial Stadium with a new multi-use sports stadium to serve students and the larger community.

Prior to this year, Foster helped create the City's [Waterfront Seattle Program](#), serving as Director of the City's Office of the Waterfront and Civic Projects (OWCP) since 2014. OWCP is now building 20 acres of new parks and public spaces to serve Seattle and the region as part of an innovative civic partnership with \$781M in funding from the City and State, Downtown property owners, and major philanthropic partners. Foster has also served as the City's Designated Representative to Sound Transit 3.

Prior to these roles, he served as the City's Planning Director where he oversaw plans for South Lake Union's expansion, along with community plans for the Rainier Valley, Capitol Hill, the University District, and Northgate.

"Seattle Center is a remarkable, one-of-a-kind place – it brings people together from across our community in ways we need now more than ever." **said Foster.** "Looking ahead, this is an important moment to re-invest in the people and organizations that make Seattle Center successful, and to chart a bold path forward that grows our mission and leverages partnerships to expand how Seattle Center serves our community."

An 8-member [search committee](#) representing a diverse range of organizations and partners at Seattle Center was formed this spring to inform the search process for the next permanent director. This process included outreach efforts to Seattle Center resident organizations, community partners, and staff to understand the values and experience they wanted to see elevated in the next director.

These engagement efforts showed that the next director would need to both steward the Center's long-standing values, mission, and commitment to equity while also building new collaborations and partnerships that can grow the Center's ability to deliver exceptional events and experiences for the community.

Foster will continue to serve as Interim Director until confirmed by the City Council.



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### What People Are Saying

**Andrew J. Lewis, Councilmember, District 7; Chair of Public Assets & Homelessness Committee**

“Marshall Foster is one of the most capable problem solvers in local government. There is no better candidate to navigate the Seattle Center through this exciting period of transformation with Memorial Stadium, the return of Bumbershoot, and our legacy building waterfront.”

**Robert Nellams, Retired Seattle Center Director**

“It does my heart good to know Mayor Harrell has selected someone who can take Seattle Center to a bigger and better place. Marshall has the vision, knowledge, leadership and passion to make Seattle Center the heartbeat of our city.”

**Sung Yang, Board President, Seattle Center Foundation; Principal, Pacific Public Affairs; Chair, Seattle Center Director Search Committee**

“Marshall has successfully tackled some of the largest projects in the history of our city, including the redevelopment of the Central Waterfront and Sound Transit’s West Seattle

Ballard Link Extension project. A dedicated public servant, he is excellent at managing and delivering large and complex projects and knows how to bring different constituencies together to build vibrant and exciting spaces for all to enjoy. He is the proven leader we need at this moment as we work towards the next exciting phase of development and transformation of our beloved Seattle Center.”

**Joy Shigaki, President & CEO, Friends of Waterfront Seattle**

“Marshall is a seasoned City leader who has demonstrated his deep commitment and care for Seattle and its residents. His delivery of complex civic projects including the soon to be completed Waterfront Park highlights his passion for the city which will extend to the Seattle Center. He will provide the vision, partnerships, and shared leadership for the Seattle Center alongside the talented staff, rich resident organizations, and community partners who make it a dynamic part of the city’s cultural fabric.”

**Jeffrey Herrmann, Managing Director, Seattle Rep**

“I am thrilled with Marshall’s appointment as the Director of Seattle Center. He has been a great partner to Seattle Rep and every other organization on the Seattle Center campus during his time as Interim Director and, prior to that, as Director of the Office of the Waterfront and Special Projects. The Committee was, of course, very impressed with his deep experience, his success in leading complex projects to completion, and his extensive network of local relationships. But what really came shining through was his intuitive understanding of what makes Seattle Center singular and unique in our region and his expansive, optimistic vision for its future and that of its many resident organizations. I couldn’t be more thrilled with the Mayor’s selection, and I look forward to working with him to move Seattle Center forward at such a transformative time in our city and state.”

[About Seattle Center](#)

Connect to the extraordinary at Seattle Center, an active civic, arts, and family gathering place in the core of our city and region. Seattle Center’s 74-acre campus, centered around the International Fountain, is part of the Uptown Arts & Cultural District and home to Climate Pledge Arena; more than 30 cultural, educational, sports, and entertainment organizations; and a broad range of public and community programs. In everything it does, Seattle Center’s mission is to create exceptional events, experiences, and environments which delight and inspire the human spirit to build stronger communities.

In 2023 Seattle Center is expanding its role to provide maintenance and public safety services for Seattle’s new Waterfront Park, a series of new public spaces on Seattle’s downtown waterfront between Pioneer Square and the Seattle Aquarium. Seattle Center will support managing these new waterfront public spaces in partnership with the non-profit Friends of

Waterfront Seattle, which offers the community a range of recreational and cultural programming.

Thanks to the support of Official Seattle Center Partners – Alaska Airlines, The Climate Pledge, Coors Light, Pepsi, Premera Blue Cross, Symetra, T-Mobile, and WaFd Bank – Seattle Center is the #1 arts and entertainment destination in the Pacific Northwest with 12 million annual visitors, generating \$1.864 billion in business activity and more than \$631 million in labor income annually. [www.seattlecenter.com](http://www.seattlecenter.com)

## **SECTION**

**B**



# City of Seattle

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## Seattle Department of Human Resources

Kimberly Loving, Director

**June 21, 2023**

TO: Pam Inch – Senior Executive Recruiter SDHR

FROM: Annie Nguyen - Seattle Department of Human Resources

SUBJECT: Background check for Marshall Lee Foster

The Seattle Department of Human Resources has received a copy of **Marshall Lee Foster's** background check provided by Global Screening Solutions. There were no findings that would impact their employment eligibility.

Cc: Personnel File

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Seattle Department of Human Resources

Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Suite 5500, PO Box 34028, Seattle, WA 98124-4028  
(206) 684-7999 • TTY:7-1-1 Fax: (206) 684-4157 • Employment Website: [www.seattle.gov/jobs](http://www.seattle.gov/jobs)

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