

Exhibit and Interpretive Planning 2024-2026



**MARITIME
WASHINGTON**
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Shaped by Sea & Story

Generously funded by an inaugural grant from [Maritime Washington National Heritage Area](#)



A Strategic Vision for the Log House Museum

In 2023, the **Southwest Seattle Historical Society** began strategic planning to guide organizational decision making. The plan identified several strategic goals, including a goal to install a permanent, interactive exhibition at the Log House Museum that would inspire diverse visitors to learn about the history of the Duwamish Peninsula.

In 2024, SWSHS received an inaugural grant from [Maritime Washington National Heritage Area](#) to pursue planning for the exhibit.

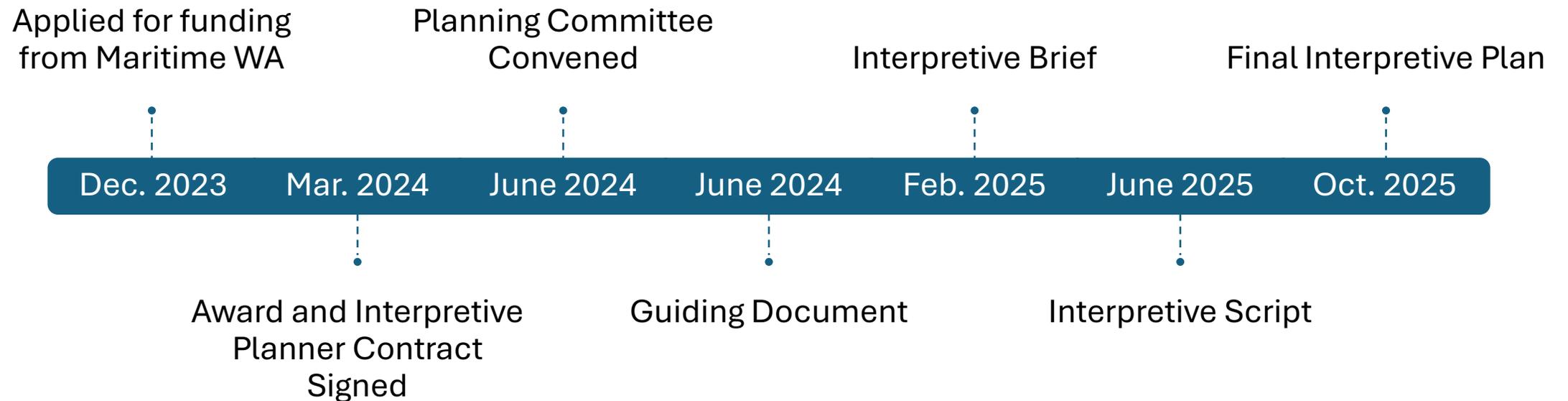
SWSHS completed Interpretive Planning in October 2025. The plan envisions an interactive exhibit that connects the stories SWSHS tells to visitors' own **waterfront experiences**, prioritizes the display of **artifacts**, and highlights stories of placemaking by **diverse communities** across the Duwamish Peninsula.

The initiative includes a self-funded marketing campaign supported by **Electric Butter Marketing, Hanson Graphic Design, and WebCami**, and a Native Plant Garden refresh.

This document describes the Interpretive Planning process and identifies the exhibit goals, objectives, and themes. The last page includes details on sponsorship opportunities. Contact elizabeth@loghousemuseum.org to learn more.

The exhibit will open in July of 2026.

Interpretive Planning



Next Steps



Fall/Winter 2025: Preproduction and fundraising



Winter 2026: Roll out new website and logo



Spring 2026: Install new plants in the Native Plant Garden, purchasing and production, testing



June 2026: Installation



July 2026: Grand Opening

Interpretive Planning Advisors

SWSHS is grateful for the support of the many individuals who have participated as invaluable advisors for this project.

- Elizabeth Rudrud, SWSHS Executive Director
- Kathy Duncan, SWSHS President
- Alex Gradwohl, Maritime Washington National Heritage Area
- Clay Eals, Journalist, Historian
- Judy Bentley, Historian, Author
- Jason Plourde, SWSHS Vice President
- Heidi Bohan, Duwamish Tribe
- Nancy Sackman, Duwamish Tribe
- Kristina Pearson, Duwamish Tribe
- Sharon Leishman, Duwamish Alive Coalition
- Lorraine McConaghy, MOHAI
- Peder Nelson, Museum of Flight
- Keith Bacon, SWSHS DEAI Advisory Committee Member,
- Felix Solomon, Lummi Tribe
- Ralph Bennett, Haida Carver
- Leonard Forsman, Suquamish Tribe
- Stephanie Trudel, Suquamish Tribe
- Marta Heath, Suquamish Tribe
- SWSHS Board of Trustees



Exhibit Designer Chris Fiala Erlich

Past Projects Include:



šnpəšqʷáwšəxʷ: We Are Still Here

Greater Leavenworth Museum

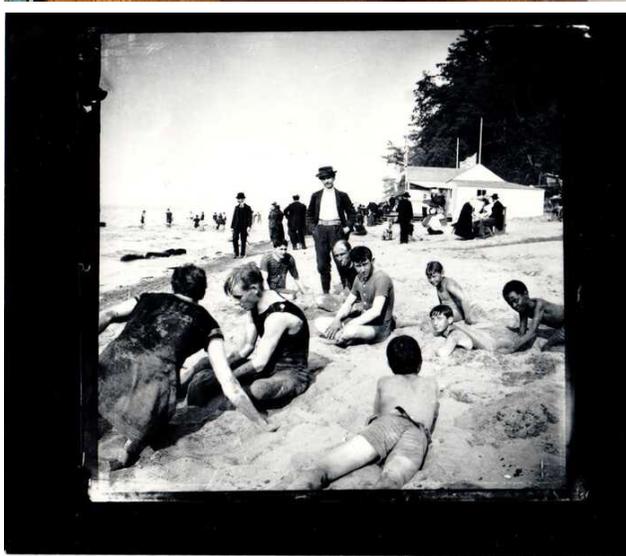


Puyallup Tribal Museum



Bison antiquus
Orcas Island
Historical Museums

www.chriserlich.com



The Big Idea

- “The stories of the people of the Duwamish Peninsula reflect a dynamic relationship to its home waters”
- Connects the exhibit to visitors’ own waterfront experiences
- Prioritizes display of artifacts
- Extends interpretation to the exterior of museum
- Shares stories of placemaking by diverse communities across the Duwamish Peninsula

Outcomes and Audiences

- To transform how people experience the Log House Museum
- To become a regional attraction
- To serve as a 'Ranger Station' and drive tourism to sites of interest across the Duwamish Peninsula
- Allow residents of the Duwamish Peninsula to see themselves in the exhibits
- Answers questions from visitors to Alki Beach and newer residents of the Duwamish Peninsula



Design Elements

- Everything freestanding (as much as possible) to allow for flexibility
- Mix of interpretive media, display elements, and finishes
- Color palette inspired by wood, sea, and land



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sbaq^wabqs' | Alki

- Alki is part of the traditional lands of the Duwamish, Suquamish and Muckleshoot
- Landing of the 1851 Colonial Settlement as a turning point
- Alki Beach as a site of recreation and community gathering
- Artifact Highlights: Luna Park Cash Register (loan from John Bennett), Statue of Liberty

Log House Museum

- This building was as a home before it became a museum
- Relationship to the Fir Lodge
- Interpretive Highlight: “This Place Matters” campaign
- Play table includes Lincoln Logs, canoe and Plank House/Longhouse activity



STORIES



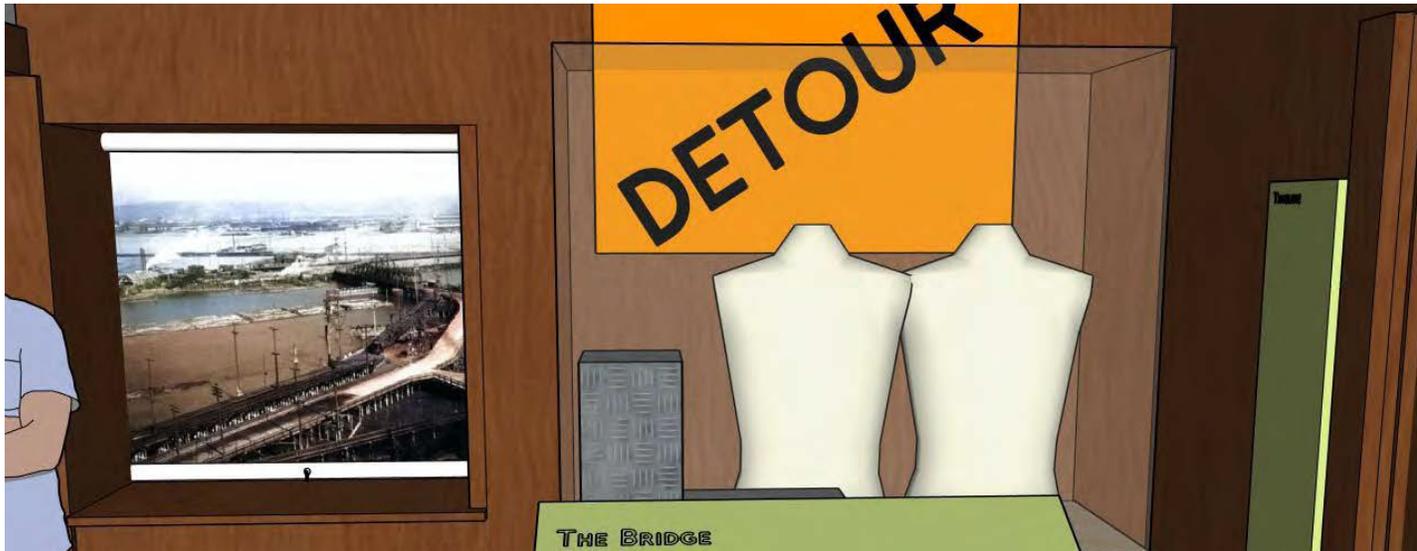
Duwamish Peninsula Stories

- Choose your own adventure – interactive video map
- Includes geologic and natural history
- The peninsula is a network of diverse communities
- Showcases SWSHS’s oral histories
- Serves as a “Ranger Station” to drive tourism across the Duwamish Peninsula

Artifact Corner

- Highlights the unique, exhibits West Seattle culture, displays artifacts from diverse neighborhoods
- Allows for a rotation of artifacts and temporary displays
- Interactive Highlight: Music of the Duwamish Peninsula listening station





Bridging the Gap

- Water as barrier and connector
- Bridge as a vital link
- Development of the Peninsula from streetcars to light rail
- Artifact highlights: canoe and ship models, West Seattle Bridge Detour Sign (2020, courtesy Mike Shaughnessy), piece from the 1978 bridge collision



Exterior Exhibits

- New, prominent Log House/Fir Lodge signage
- Updated interpretation of the Totem Pole
- New Native Plant signage
- Exterior exhibits including Alki Natatoriums and the history of how people got to Alki over time
- Native Plant Garden Refresh