

Forecasting the Future

THE DUWAMISH WATERWAY RENAISSANCE

*Redefining an aged industrial neighborhood
as one of Seattle's next "hot" spots*



2020
VISION



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“Take a close look at one of Seattle’s last bastions of blue collar. Today’s Georgetown, South Park or Sodo could be tomorrow’s Fremont.” - Paysha Stockton, Seattle Times

Seattle’s Industrial Hybrid

Long the industrial heart of the city, the Lower Duwamish Waterway starts at the southern end of Seattle’s Elliott Bay, passes through South Park and becomes the Green River in the Kent Valley. As early as 1890, an agricultural community was thriving. By 1906, the river was straightened and dredged to accommodate industries such as boat manufacturing and repair, marine operations, and airplane parts manufacturing. More recently, major players such as Boeing, Delta Marine (a yacht builder with 350 employees), and SeaMar Clinic (a community health care organization with 400 employees), are thriving there. Today, the South Park neighborhood boasts some of the most diverse and youngest residents in Seattle (average age 31) consisting of Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, African American and Caucasian populations. Looking forward, South Park is primed for continued growth, providing skilled workers and affordable housing.

Many comparisons have been made between today’s South Park and the Fremont of yester-year. Both are primarily industrial, host blue-

collar workers and residents, and feature extraordinary recreational opportunities. While Fremont has lost nearly all vestiges of its industrial past, South Park is positioned to retain much of its industrial flavor, even as the population and zoning within it change. Most likely, South Park will develop into a hybrid allowing industrial, commercial and residential zoning to co-exist in a youthful, diverse neighborhood that accommodates local work force, vibrant retail shops, nearby higher education, community healthcare and the arts. The reasons for this renaissance are as diverse as the population and businesses it attracts. The EPA’s superfund efforts, transportation improvements, and planned development are all likely to play large roles.

EPA’s Superfund Efforts

The US Environmental Protection Agency has listed the Lower Duwamish Waterway – a five-mile stretch through South Seattle – as a federal Superfund site. Cleanup will be completed by 2020 in accordance with the goals of the Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition. The Coalition envisions a future wherein “South Seattle residents will be able to crab in the river without risks to their family’s health, that endangered salmon will be able to recover without PCBs or other toxic body burdens, and that the banks of the Duwamish will be a welcoming and risk-free place for our children and their children to wade, fish and play.” While the federal government’s Superfund cleanup will not directly cause these changes, it will encourage a new wave of de-

velopment that is already partially underway along the long-polluted Duwamish Valley.

Ease in Transportation Congestion

Primary truck routes through South Park are Highway 509, Highway 99 and West Marginal Way. Goods moving from the Port of Seattle to elsewhere in the region (and country) generally travel on one of these roads, and they are the lifeblood of the region’s industrial businesses. As our region anticipates increased congestion and the loss of the Alaskan Way Viaduct in 2012, freight will be unable to go north without excessive delay. Instead, freight will move east through Seattle or south through South Park requiring both local and state government to enhance road capacity and accessibility. One result of these improvements is that they will bring an influx of new jobs, money, and services to the communities they surround, especially South Park.

SOUTH PARK BRIDGE

The new South Park/14th Avenue Bridge, scheduled for completion in 2012, will create a massive commerce link from East Marginal Way directly to Highway 99. This critical link will carry over 10 million tons of freight per year, making it one of the key factors in the neighborhood’s growth of small supply businesses, clean energy companies, green manufacturers, trucking services, distribution centers, hospitality and service firms.

HIGHWAY 509

By 2015, Washington State Department of Transportation plans to connect Highway 509 (the current westernmost north-south route from Seattle) to I-5. This project already has \$85 million appropriated from the State Legislature and will allow freight loaded at the Port of Seattle to be trucked directly to I-5, vastly improving movement along this corridor. Businesses likely to spring up along Highway 509 include hotels, restaurants, services, food stores, apartments, maintenance and repair facilities, and accompanying small businesses.

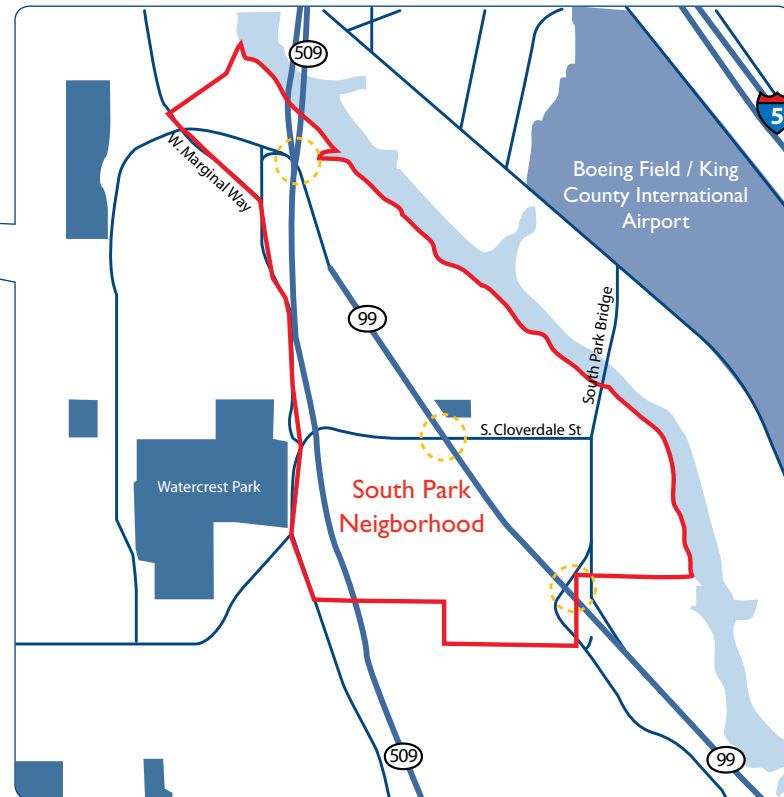
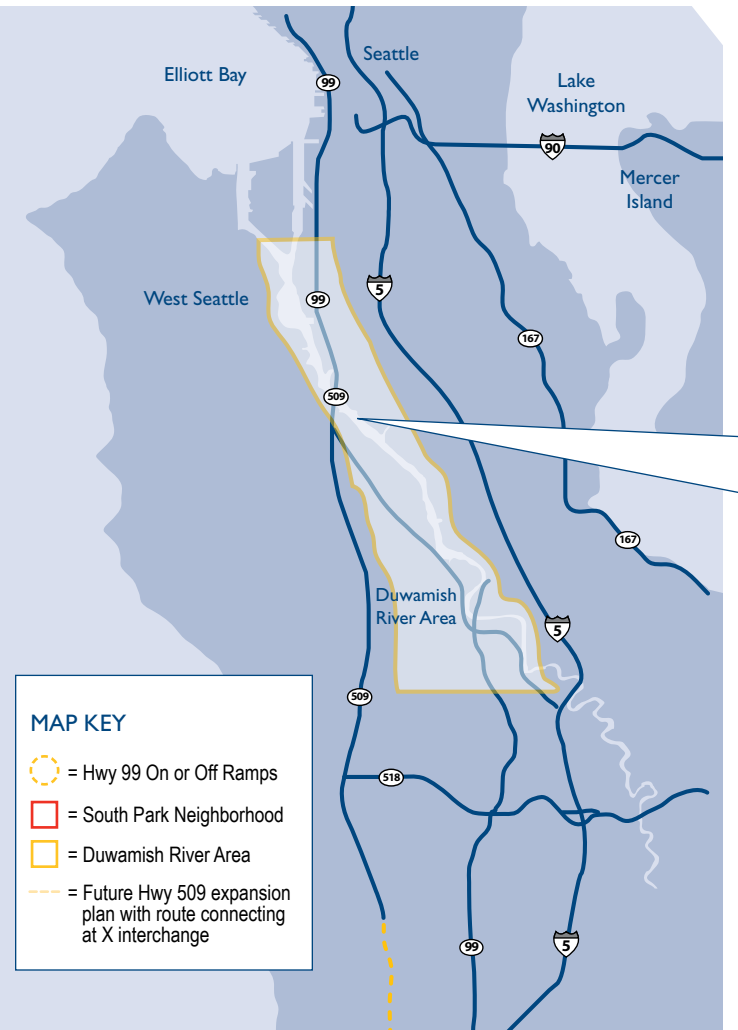
HIGHWAY 99

Highway 99 has two access points through South Park connecting to I-5. No other neighborhood in the city can boast of so many ingress and egress routes. The south end will become the main route away from the Port of Seattle and the industrial areas of SODO, Georgetown and SeaTac Airport. Growth will include services, housing, repair stations, food, and entertainment. The most significant growth, however, will be in Port-related jobs which will benefit from the offloading and barging of goods from the Port through South Park. This will create high paying jobs in maritime manufacturing, electronics, and clean manufacturing – industries that are anxious to take advantage of close-in suppliers and proximity to the newly expanded SeaTac Airport.

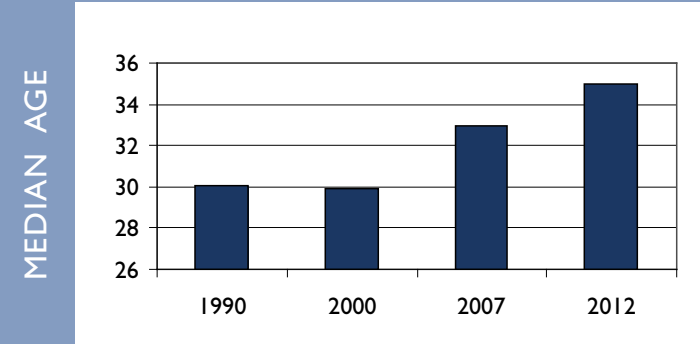
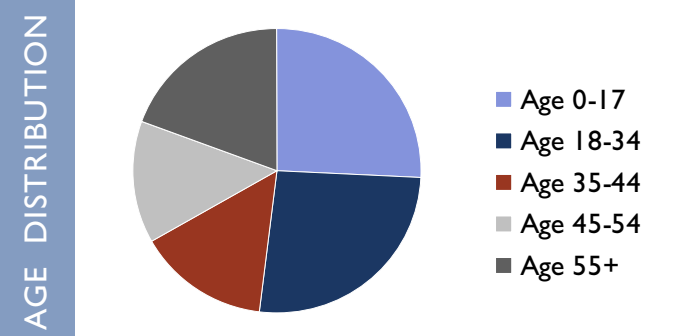
Development & Diversity

With multifamily developments cropping up and professional and medical services occupying new commercial space, the South Park of the future will be less dominated by the industrial core of its past. Existing annexation plans to the City of Seattle show a lively South Park downtown with a “South of the Border” flavor that will be complemented by wide sidewalks and tree-lined streets.

According to the Puget Sound Regional Council’s “Destination 2030 Update,” the central Puget Sound’s regional population is expected to exceed 4.1 million by 2020, representing a 1.2% growth over the upcoming decade. Thanks to affordable land, housing and plentiful jobs with short commutes, growth for South Park and the surrounding Duwamish Waterway area is expected to expand by an astonishing 30%! Already under construction is Senior Housing Association Group (SHAG)’s 499 unit, mixed-use apartment complex and community center at Olson Place SW. Based upon the City’s anticipated growth of 1.7 million and employment growth of 2.1% by 2020, it is



SOUTHPARK AREA DEMOGRAPHICS



TOP DUWAMISH AREA EMPLOYERS

COMPANY NAME	INDUSTRY
Boeing	Aviation Engineering & Manufacturing
Delta Marine	Yacht Builders
First Student	Public & Private School Bus Transportation
Gary Merlino	Heavy Construction
Gear Works	Industrial Gears for heavy equipment
MV Transportation	Transportation Management Company
Rascals Casino	Entertainment
Sea Mar	Community Health Clinics
Selland Auto Transport	Ships & Transports Automobiles
Simplex Grinnell	Security & Alarm Systems
Starline Luxury Coaches	Private Motor Coaches, Management/sales/Service

possible that at least 2-3 more large multifamily projects will join this SHAG project to provide housing in South Park.

Retail serving these residents will consist of a variety of big-box and small boutiques. New construction includes the mixed-use development of Burien Town Square consisting of 40,600 SF of retail along with a Performance Theatre, a new public park, and 307 live/work residential units. In addition, there is a planned 250-room hotel. These projects will serve as a catalyst for similar mixed-use projects.

Also weighing in on South Park's future is its inevitable annexation into one of the surrounding cities. As the largest portion of unincorporated land in King County, several cities are eager to claim it. The most plausible result would be South Park's annexation into the City of Seattle. This possibility causes some uncertainty in the business community as business owners would be required to pay Business & Occupancy taxes and to pay for new city services. Despite higher taxes though, the City of Seattle is friendly to industry and South Park's annexation could result in a new paradigm of citizens working and living in harmony.

This would be especially true if the anticipated 8,000 new jobs are added to South Park by 2020 as the Greater Duwamish Manufacturing & Industrial Center Plan predicts. Given that traditional manufacturing remains an important component of Seattle's high-tech economy and South Park's central location between the Port of Seattle, SeaTac Airport and major highways, a majority of these new jobs will continue to appeal to the industrial sector. In fact, the industrial

employment sector typically generates more economic impact than other types of businesses. For example, the wage multiplier for water transportation jobs is 2.80 compared to job multipliers in the service sector of 1.30.

However, unlike the "blue collar" industrial jobs of the past, we are likely to see an influx of "green collar" jobs in industries such as environmental research and consulting. Additionally, food packaging, wholesale distributing, publishing and training industries are thriving and growing in South Park. Young entrepreneurs, microbrewers, glass and stone artisans, health care providers and building materials manufacturers are drawn to the area because of its recent renaissance and affordable real estate. In fact, several well-known large-scale project artists are already well established in South Park. Whether an incarnate of Fremont or not, one thing is for sure: South Park's renaissance has begun and when finished, this hybrid neighborhood may indeed redefine the next "hot" spot to live, work and play.



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