

December 2, 2025

Oak Harbor moves forward on major waterfront remaking

By [SHAWNA GAMACHE](#)
Associate Editor

The city of Oak Harbor is looking for an engineering and planning consulting to complete an infrastructure master plan as part of a major waterfront remaking in the works there.

Oak Harbor wants to transform its sleepy waterfront at the north end of Whidbey Island between Deception Pass and Fort Ebey state parks into a “vibrant, livable urban waterfront village.”



Planning and concept renderings by Dahlin Group Architects [\[enlarge\]](#)

The city's Town Center concept at Waterfront West reimagines the space next to its 28-acre Windjammer Park.

The city's vision includes redeveloping two contaminated city-owned parcels at 1081 and 1091 S.W. Pioneer Way, along with its surrounding 600-plus acre Waterfront District, into a walkable, mixed-use area including protected green space, public art and community recreation.

A [notice of the city's request for proposals](#) for engineering and planning ran in the DJC on Oct. 18. The contract includes developing the infrastructure master plan as well as utility and transportation comprehensive plan updates, and the city said it may hire more than one firm to complete different sections of the work. Proposals are due by 4 p.m. on Dec. 16.

Oak Harbor's waterfront revisioning has been in the works in various forms since at least 1990, and momentum appears to be building behind the current effort.

The Oak Harbor City Council unanimously approved a new action plan in September for downtown waterfront redevelopment. That follows area comprehensive plans stating the city of around 24,000 near Naval Air Station Whidbey Island should accommodate most of Island County's housing and job growth, preserving farmlands, open spaces and forests elsewhere on the island.

A study is underway on the Waterfront District, an approximate triangle formed by state Route 20, Midway Boulevard, and the existing waterfront. The city also conducted economic analysis, market feasibility studies and community visioning workshops with the nonprofit Center for Creative Land Recycling.

Farallon Consulting is completing a remedial investigation and feasibility study for the contaminated parcels on Southwest Pioneer Way the city bought in 2023, funded with part of a



\$200,000 grant from the state

[\[enlarge\]](#)

Department of Ecology. Dahlin Group is also working on integrated planning and concept renderings, also funded by the state Ecology grant.

Plans include environmental restoration and development of two city-owned parcels on Southwest Pioneer Way.

The city's Public Works Director Steve Schuller said the redevelopment is an exciting step forward for Oak Harbor.

“We must attract hundreds of millions of dollars, mostly in private investments, to allow our community to replace decades of existing aging infrastructure or continue to experience further protracted, and costly decay of our older city center impacting the whole city,” Schuller said on the city's project website.

Schuller added that the effort preserves the “beautiful open spaces that make Whidbey Island unique,” and gives “younger generations an enduring master plan they will build upon long into the future.”

Shawna Gamache can be reached by [email](#) or by phone at (206) 219-6518.

Related Stories:

- [Oak Harbor RFP for plan updates](#) 11-17-2025