



HUMAN-POWERED  
WATERCRAFT STORAGE  
(FORMER BATHHOUSE)

NEW RESTROOMS

NEW SHELTERHOUSE

NEW PLAY AREA

HISTORIC SHELTER

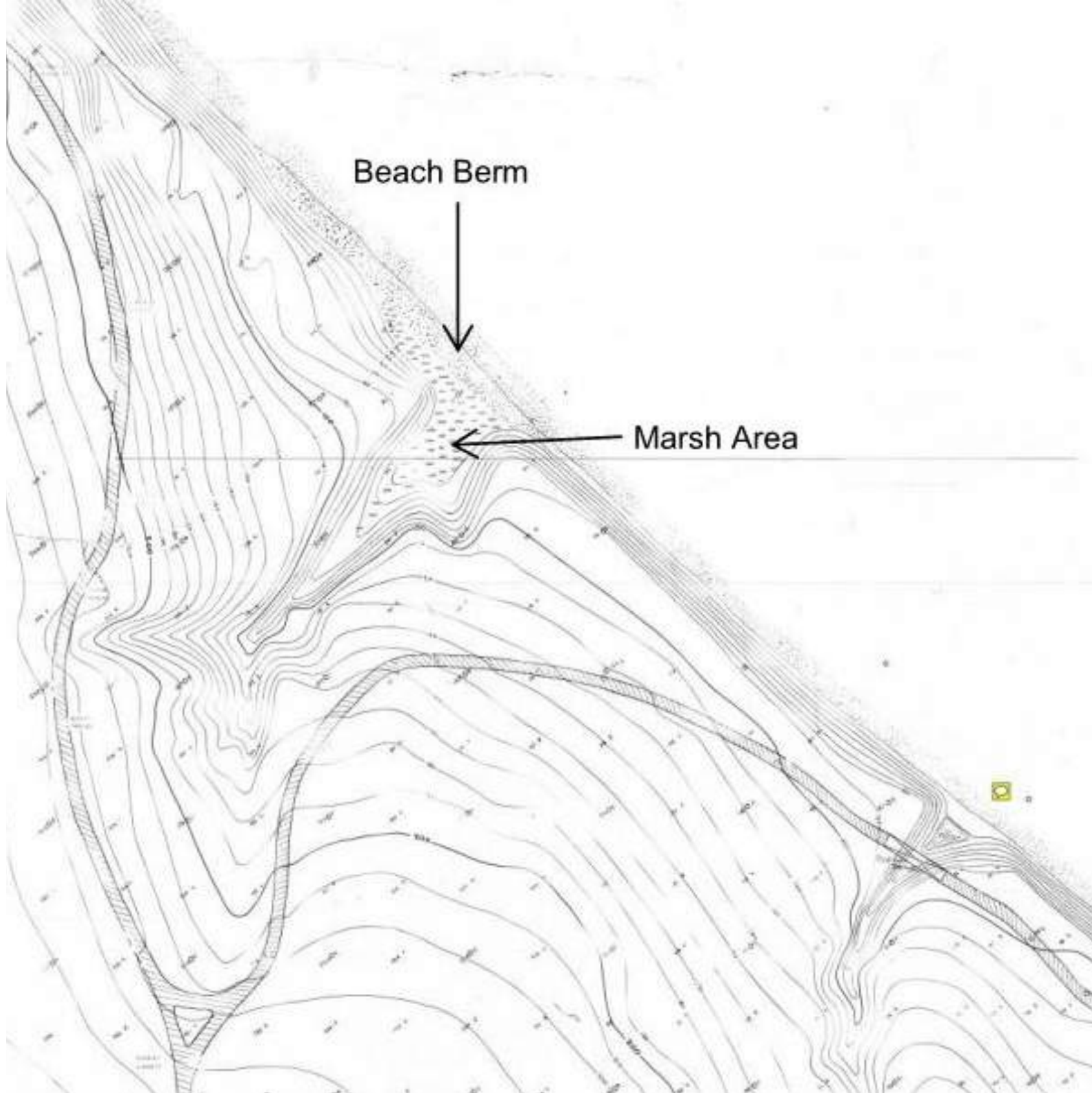
FORMER BULKHEAD  
AND BOAT RAMP

Site Plan: the 8-acre project integrates sea-level rise resilience, while incorporating a range of new amenities and improving beach access for the entire community.



With panoramic views of Puget Sound, Owen Beach is nestled into Point Defiance Park, a 760-acre historic landscape with remnant old growth and a variety of cultural facilities.

# HISTORIC SITE AND USE



Since time immemorial, the beach has been a culturally significant gathering place for the Puyallup peoples. 150 years of incremental development has changed its character and ecological function, but its role as a community gathering place remains much the same.

# APPLIED SLR PROJECTIONS

## BASIS OF DESIGN SCENARIO

\*This projection excludes wave run-up impact.

\*\*All projections are based on most recent data available and subject to change.

- 5.84' Mean Higher High Water (existing)
- 2.5' SLR projection @ 2090 & 20% probability
- + 3.6' FEMA Flood storm surge
- 11.94' aggregate sea elevation at storm event



The design team worked with the Washington Sea Grant and Climate Impacts Group to evaluate anticipated sea level rise and its impacts on site infrastructure. New opportunities for program development were opened up by responding aggressively to these climate challenges.



The renovation of Owen Beach dramatically improved accessibility throughout the site, while incorporating a more diverse range of gathering and recreational opportunities, as well as new facilities such as restrooms, a community shelterhouse, and indoor watercraft storage.



Holding the new shelterhouse and restroom facilities close to the hillside kept the sweeping views of Puget Sound at the focus of the reconfigured arrival sequence.



The new shelterhouse overlooks a backbeach landscape that has been enhanced with a variety of native Puget Sound prairie plants to support wildlife habitat, while gravel mulch and sculptural driftwood seamlessly extend the shoreline character of the existing beach.



Regardless of mobility, everyone can access and enjoy the entire site. Where beach gravel may be a physical limitation, ramps to the beach help bring people closer to the water where they can picnic with friends or launch a kayak.





A diverse mix of seating and gathering spaces are incorporated throughout the park, all geared toward making the beach experience more accessible. A central stair and plinth reach into the new beach, offering all the action without sandy shoes.



Between the wooded hillside and the driftwood-strewn beach, the site is filled with opportunities for unstructured, nature-based play and exploration while the new play area complements the shoreline setting.



The wooden play sculpture celebrates the region's most iconic megafauna, the critically endangered southern resident orca. The small-gravel beach is spawning habitat for forage fish that support Chinook salmon, which are essential to the orcas' survival.



Shoreline habitat is enhanced by providing structural diversity and substantially increasing planting area with regionally native species that support invertebrates. Optional stormwater management treat runoff from 96,000-sf of pollution-generating surfaces to ensure higher water quality along the sensitive shore.



Sitting at one end of a multi-modal trail, Owen Beach remains a secluded destination park that attracts visitors from the entire region.



Although the renovation project added new amenities and facilities to the historic park, the historic beach remained the focal point throughout. The design leaves ample space for people to enjoy water access, while also improving shoreline habitat for non-human visitors.



Owen Beach has always been a place where people come to connect with the forest, the water and each other. It now serves the community as that place but is even more accessible, safe and fun for all.