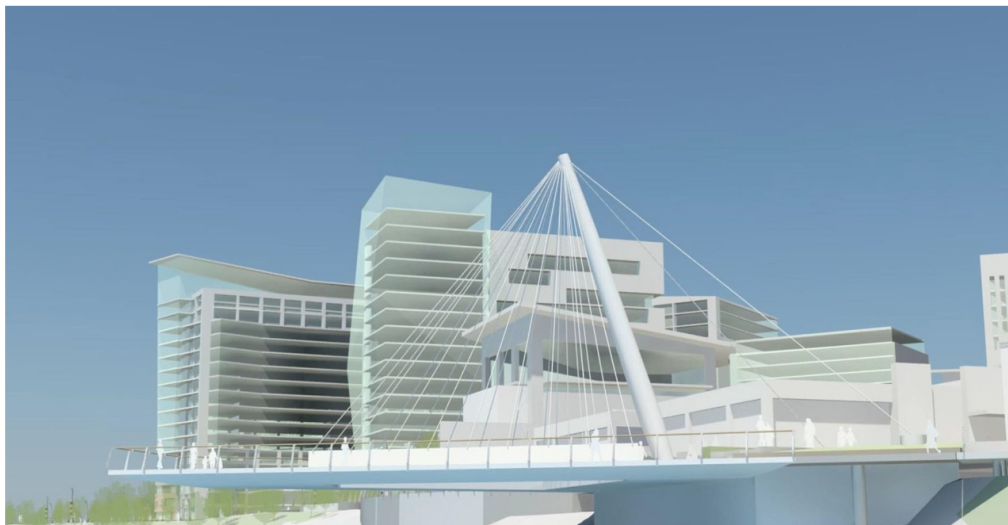


# Five blocks of proposal for waterfront unveiled

Council also hears plans for new park, trail, pier

By [Amy Fischer](#), Columbian City Government Reporter

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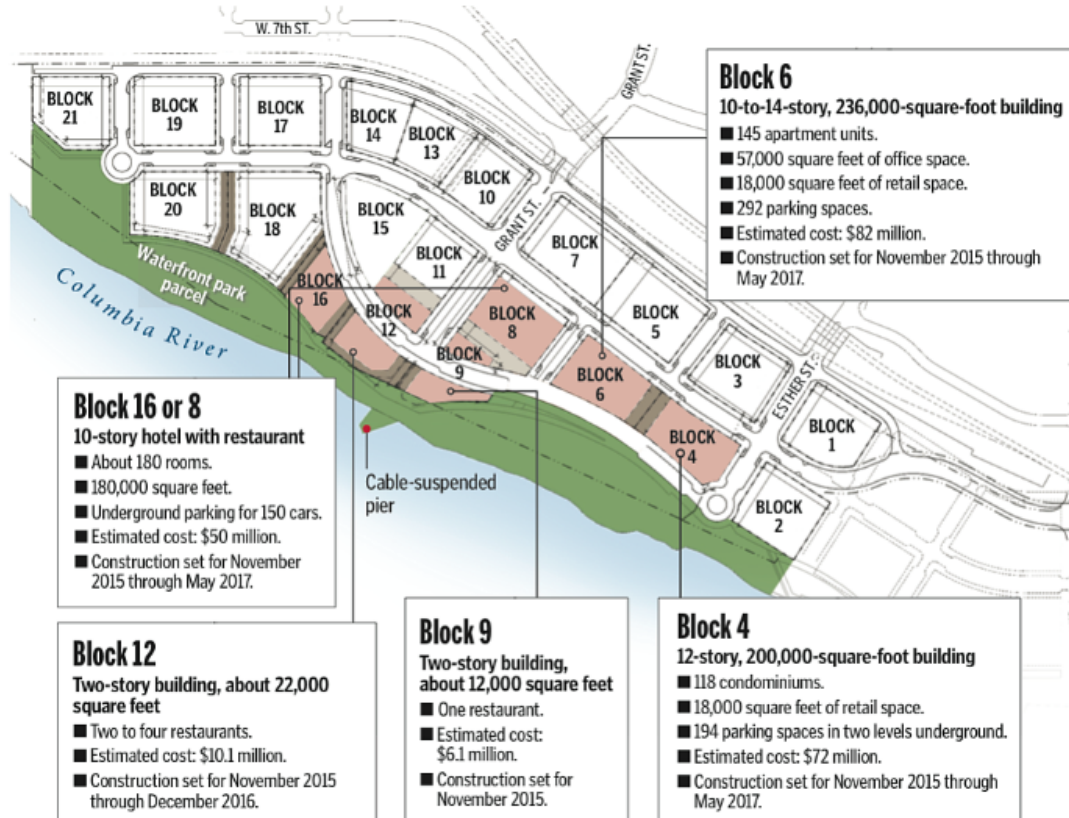
Graphic courtesy of Larry Kirkland As part of the Vancouver waterfront project, the city plans to build a dramatic, cable-suspended pier that would jut over the Columbia River without pilings to support it. The 60-foot main cable-stay pole would be illuminated at night.



Courtesy of Larry Kirkland A suspended pier on Vancouver's waterfront would have a surface 19 to 20 feet above the Columbia River.

## Plans for the Vancouver waterfront

Gramor Development Inc. has released plans for the first phase of the waterfront project.



SOURCE: City of Vancouver

The Columbian

Plans for the Vancouver waterfront, unveiled March 3, 2015.

The central feature of Vancouver's new waterfront park likely will be a futuristic, triangular pier that juts 90 feet over the Columbia River, a dock so modern it will be suspended from cables rather than supported by pilings.

The dramatic pier, along with the 7.2-acre park and a \$1.3 billion residential and commercial development sprawling 21 city blocks, will be a "game-changer" for Vancouver and Southwest Washington, predicts Vancouver Mayor Tim Leavitt.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that we have. We've recaptured our waterfront," he said at Monday's City Council workshop.

Project plans, in the works for more than a decade, are coming into sharper focus as the city and developers hash out details for designs, parking, financing and construction. Dirt work begins this fall, and buildings should begin to rise in spring 2016.

Barry Cain, president of Tualatin, Ore.-based Gramor Development, unveiled the first phase of his company's portion of the private/public partnership on Monday. It encompasses five blocks and will include condominiums, a hotel, restaurants, office and retail space and parking facilities (see map and breakout).

“We see this as being a premier development for the Northwest, not just for Vancouver,” he said.

Cain did not name the hotel or indicate what restaurants might locate in the buildings, other than to say there would be a full range of eateries “so people can come down there for just about anything.”

The project will open up 32 acres of formerly industrial waterfront that has been off-limits to the public for 100 years, said Parks and Recreation Director Julie Hannon. The park’s half-mile trail along the river will connect to the 5-mile-long Waterfront Renaissance Trail. At the west end, people will be able to fish off a floating dock, which will be wheelchair-accessible, as will the rest of the \$17 million park.

The city has lined up \$7 million in grants for the park, planning to make up the balance with additional grants, private donations and other potential funding sources, Hannon said. She anticipates the park will open to the public sometime in 2017.

Council members raved about the pier design concept by internationally acclaimed artist Larry Kirkland, whose public art can be found around the world, including a 200-foot-long Columbia River-themed installation in Concourse C of the Portland International Airport. In a nod to the area’s heritage, Kirkland, an Oregon State University graduate, took a contemporary approach with the pier’s look, aiming to echo the patterns of the river’s cranes, industry and bridges, Hannon said.

The initial rough cost estimate for the pier is \$4.5 million, about \$1.5 million more than the traditional pier originally listed in the waterfront master plan. But the council loved the new concept, which councilman Bill Turlay deemed “gorgeous.” The design also has been reviewed by the Parks and Recreation advisory board, city neighborhood park liaisons, with a positive reaction overall, Hannon said.

People do ask about the possibility of boats’ hitting the pier, but it would be the same height as a bulky, traditional pier with pilings, she said, noting, “They’re equally easy to hit.”