

# South Lake Union: A Neighborhood of Opportunity



**South Lake Union represents an opportunity as great for the region as the day that Bill Boeing decided to build airplanes and Bill Gates decided to write software. We must seize the moment — this chance — to build a great neighborhood that is accessible to all.**

**Mayor Greg Nickels, October 2006**



### Laying Tracks

Mayor Greg Nickels and Senator Patty Murray laying tracks for the Seattle streetcar

After years as a “forgotten neighborhood” next to Downtown Seattle, South Lake Union is undergoing a renaissance. Partnerships between the South Lake Union neighborhood and the City are forging a new direction for the neighborhood, and is transforming South Lake Union into a community to live, work and play.

South Lake Union has long been an area where residents both lived and worked. Native Americans lived along the edge of the lake before settlers moved into the area. They fished, hunted and gathered plants and berries in the South Lake Union area, but disbanded their encampment in the 1870s, when a windstorm destroyed their longhouse.

### Coming Soon to South Lake Union

- The Seattle Streetcar connecting South Lake Union to the heart of downtown will start running late 2007.
- Mercer Street will be a direct route with lanes in both directions from I-5 to Dexter Avenue by 2010. Bicycle lanes will be connected, sidewalks added and Valley Street narrowed to a pedestrian-friendly street.
- A natural drainage project is currently being designed that will use plants to clean water flowing from Capitol Hill through South Lake Union to Lake Union.

- Construction is underway on a new headquarters building for Group Health; 700 employees will move into the neighborhood. Approximately 900 employees will be moving into the second phase of UW Medicine’s research facilities, also under construction.

- The Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI) is studying the Armory in Lake Union Park as a potential new home.
- Lake Union Park improvements have begun. The park will become a regional gathering place, and a place for residents and employees of the neighborhood to access the water.



South end of Lake Union, 1885

**before 1870** Native American settlement at south end of Maman Hartshu, or Texas Chuck (meaning Little Lake)

**1870-1930** Industrial and residential communities grew up together

**1880** South Lake Union annexed into Seattle

**1930-1960** I-5 and SR 99 split off neighborhood from adjoining communities

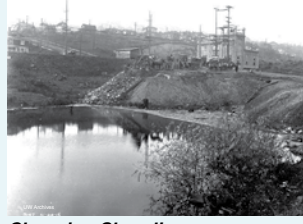
**1930-1990** Industrial uses encouraged; housing discouraged

**1990s** Seattle Commons initiative provides a new vision of South Lake Union as a mixed-use community

**2000s** Work underway to create a dense mixed-use community



**Denny Regrade** The last phase of the Denny Regrade leveled a substantial hill that once stood between Downtown and Lake Union.



**Changing Shoreline** Sawdust from the Western Mill and other industrial waste was used to fill in Lake Union’s southern shoreline.



Center for Woodson Board Street Green



### SLU Exhibit Credits

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