

Walk Tacoma 2021: Waterfront Walk Tour



Stop 1: The Puyallup Tribe

Tacoma is not the first city to grow along what we know as Commencement Bay. For thousands of years, the people that we know as the Puyallup Tribe lived along the shores of the south sound and the Puyallup River. In fact, their main village was located at the head of Commencement Bay 200 years ago, spreading across five locations from today's downtown Tacoma across East Tacoma.



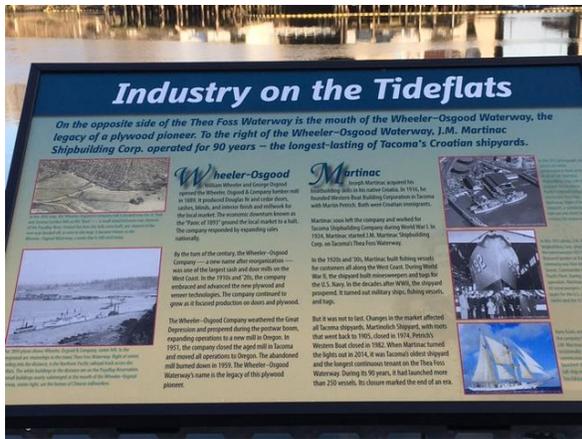
Stop 2: Foss Waterway Public Amphitheater

When the City and its partners took on the cleanup of the Tacoma Waterfront Superfund site, the Tacoma Planning Commission started with the first of a series of planning efforts, resulting in the 1990 Thea Foss Waterway Design and Development Plan. This amphitheater was part of the public access design that came out of the community planning meetings.



Stop 3: History

In 1895 the place where we are standing was a grain warehouse. The entire area was largely industrial and was comprised of businesses that leveraged the abundant resources and capabilities of the northwest. The Northern Pacific Railway, which owned much of Commencement Bay's south shore, created the Thea Foss Waterway by damming one arm of the Puyallup River.



Stop 4: Industry

The Tacoma Tideflats have been a focal point for shipping and industry since the late 1800s. This economic driver of Tacoma has provided living wage jobs for thousands of workers in that time. Our abundance of timber, a deepwater port, and the Northern Pacific Railroad set the stage for the growth of Tacoma.



Stop 5: Murray Morgan Bridge

We are now at the famous Murray Morgan Bridge. This bridge is of historical significance, both for its structure and for the events that have taken place on its storied surface. The bridge connects downtown with the Tideflats, spanning the Thea Foss Waterway, originally known as the City Waterway, and is a particularly high vertical lift bridge, designed by famous firm Waddell and Harrington. The bridge replaced a more traditional metal truss swing bridge, portions of which remain at the

western bank of the waterway, quite amazing considering the bridge has been gone for over 100 years.



Stop 6: Foss Waterway Seaport Museum

We are ending our tour here at the Foss Waterway Seaport Museum which brings the amazing history of Tacoma and its waterfront to life. Here you can learn about the creative boat types designed and built in the Tacoma area from the steamboats of the Mosquito Fleet to the tugboats, fishing boats and Navy vessels to the private yachts and canoes. The Seaport exhibits and displays will delight kids and adults of all ages. Highlights include historic wooden boats, humpback whale skeletons, and history of the Puyallup people

and their connections to the waterways. This restored warehouse is not only beautiful to see, it preserves and teaches the important history of Tacoma and its dependence on and connection to our beautiful waterfront!