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GRAND AVENUE TRAVERSE: UNITING ACCESSIBILITY, UTILITIES AND ECONOMY INTO A NEW EXPERIENCE

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The new Everett Grand Avenue Pedestrian Bridge in Everett, Washington is a unique piece of public infrastructure that will provide a vital new pedestrian and utility link between the city of Everett and its growing waterfront district. Through its innovative design, the bridge allows pedestrians and sewer and water utilities to cross 24m tall steep hillside, rail lines, and a state highway within its 85m long span. The project serves as a case study in integrating accessible pathways on bridges over steep sites while providing a series of unique scenic outlooks and experiential moments.

The new design integrates a sequence of pathways with a sloped truss structural span, eliminating the need for an uphill elevator and saving significant costs. The resulting design enhances the pedestrian experience through a whimsical play of space, light, and structure. Featuring walking paths above, around, and within weathered-steel truss, the pedestrian ramps intertwine with intermediate stairs and the structural truss, creating a playful sequence of spaces along the pathway. A ribbon of parametrically designed aluminum panels accompanies the pedestrian, serving triple duty as safety rails, lighting reflectors, and a unique wayfinding visual element. The pathway landings and bridge structure present dramatic views to the west, framing Whidbey Island, the waterfront, and the Olympic Mountains beyond.

By embracing a creative, pragmatic approach, the bridge design addresses both functional and aesthetic demands, weaving playful urban infrastructure into the city life and becoming a catalyst for continued community revitalization. The Grand Avenue Park Bridge is finishing construction and will be open in March of 2020. Photographs of the finished structure and additional lessons learned from the design, construction and commissioning will be shared in the proposed paper and presentation.