The bustling seaport town of Friday Harbor is the commercial center of the San Juan Islands archipelago. Situated at the island’s waterfront and a few short blocks from the Washington State Ferry Terminal in this pleasant, walkable community is Spring Street Landing—a hub for locals and visitors featuring tourist attractions as well as places for dining and merriment.

The original building, located on a parcel owned by the Port of Friday Harbor, burned down in a fire in 2013, displacing some of the island’s most viable businesses, including the beloved restaurant, Downriggers. The Port immediately initiated a process to rebuild and expand the capacity of the site to support economic activity and to better implement connectivity along the shore’s edge. The new building was sited on the same location, but became larger and included rentable lower-level spaces that were closer to the shoreline. The design consisted of a 9,045 sf commercial/retail/office space with a 600 sf restaurant mezzanine. In addition to Downriggers, Spring Street Landing hosts yacht, boat, and kayak rental businesses; whale watching tour businesses; and several cafes. The building, along with the addition of a plaza above at street level, creates an inviting ambiance where people can stop to dine alfresco or relax and admire the view of the harbor and Salish Sea beyond. A portion of the original former parking lot below is now a waterfront esplanade designed by the landscape architects and connects to this area of downtown Friday Harbor.

The project siting and subsequent permits were obtained by an initial design firm that was unable to meet Port budget and insurance coverages. Our design drew upon those standards by adhering to historic preservation and height and area zoning requirements from the Town of Friday Harbor, including maintaining a particular scale, materials selection, signage, and view corridors. The design incorporates numerous sustainable features such as daylighting, access to transit, on-site bicycle and shower facilities for tenants, low-flow plumbing fixtures, collection of recyclables and construction waste management, generous daylighting of interior spaces, and low-impact building materials. In addition, an environmental cleanup of the site took place prior to the construction of Spring Street Landing, enabling a reconstruction of the deteriorated seawall.

The design of Downriggers maximized the available water views in the indoor/outdoor dining areas and includes flexible warm, inviting spaces. Efficient space planning enabled clear circulation for wait staff in the restaurant and supports productivity in the kitchen. Lower-level retail spaces were designed to be flexible and right-sized to accommodate future, unknown tenants.
LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

What better spot for Spring Street Landing than amid some of Friday Harbor’s most popular attractions.
EAST AND SOUTH ELEVATIONS

EAST ELEVATION

SOUTH ELEVATION
FLOOR PLANS MAXIMIZE THE WATERFRONT LOCATION

LOWER RETAIL LEVEL

UPPER RESTAURANT LEVEL
COMMUNITY HEART

The welcoming entrance to the popular, family-owned Downriggers restaurant draws in the public and meets the criteria of the historic preservation board in scale and materials.
REGIONAL DESIGN

Drawing on traditional Pacific Northwest style, the wood interiors create a warm and inviting place for patrons to dine.
VIEWS GALORE

Diners at Downriggers can take in views of the harbor and esplanade and the myriad activities of this lively neighborhood.
ISLAND LIFE

Small retail businesses to the south open onto the esplanade and are easily accessible to visitors looking to book a day trip on the water.
SUPPORTING LOCAL ECONOMY

The pedestrian-friendly project is a popular destination bringing the right balance of commercial/retail/dining spaces.
AL FRESCO DINING

The plaza has multiple uses and invites people to stay for a while.
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The Washington State Ferry is a stone’s throw from Spring Street Landing.
Reconstruction of the seawall protects the waterfront and provides the foundation for Spring Street Landing on the beautiful Salish Sea.