

Looking To The Future

...is the most ambitious of the three Park Plaza conceptual plans. This plan reinvents usage of the entire site; focusing on creating new patterns of movement taking you to new destinations throughout the location. The circle - representing the idea of infinite possibilities - is the design element used repeatedly in this plan.

At the corner of Russell and Highway 14, the area honoring Armed Services Veterans will be enhanced with a grouping of vertical columnar basalt standing stones behind a low basalt bowl water feature. Parts of the existing stonework will be kept along the sidewalk in front of the new pathway and flanking the plaza entrances. The walls allow for the maintaining of several benches facing the sidewalk and streetscape. In the sidewalk that runs along the front of the plaza, two of Stevenson's Wayfinding pavement markers will point to the destinations and amenities within the site.

As you enter the main plaza at street level, you are greeted by three monumental rusted steel and stone totems/columns that will have laser cut-out designs lit softly from within. The "totems" will speak to the beauty and natural elements of the Gorge, as well as honor the historical industrial mill town beginnings of Stevenson. They will act as beacons for the plaza and the downtown business district and will be the first of several public art pieces on the site. Just to the east of the totems, there is a water bottle refilling station that will serve human and four-legged plaza guests, as well as farmer's market vendors.

Just to the north, a flush fountain is located with mosaic pavement art that is punctuated by a columnar basalt bowl water feature set inside a compass design pointing to the four directions. The flush fountain would be on in the summer months for children (of all ages) to play in.

For the winter months and cooler evenings, there are two gas fire pits available for use; one circular and central to the plaza nestled into a rocky hillside, and one that anchors the shaded outdoor eating area on the east end of the plaza. The shaded area is backed by a basalt wall with a laser cut corten steel center focal. The plaza has multiple built-in benches and movable tables & chairs planned throughout to encourage outdoor eating and support programmed community events of all kinds.



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At the northeast end of the main plaza, there is a structure built into the hillside housing ADA accessible public restrooms and a large storage/ mechanical room. A staircase with two circular landings leads you up to a larger rooftop terrace that sits over the restroom structure. As you walk up the staircase you'll be able to stop and linger on the landings which overlook a natural waterfall and creek water feature. The pavement leading up to the upper terrace will be imprinted with critter tracks. Deer tracks will dominate - leading you to a small landscaped circle featuring tall columnar basalt touch stones and a deer sculpture made from reclaimed rusted steel. The hillside and area to the north east of the upper terrace will be landscaped with native evergreen trees and plantings creating a wooded shaded area.

At the west end of the Park Plaza, the "Woodland Stage" is elevated a few steps up from the main plaza level. Its backdrop is the community Christmas tree, set in a landscaped area of native plantings and large stones. The circular stage paved area will have scaled up imprinted leaves from native tree species as an added decorative detail and learning opportunity. Tiered seating just to the north of the elevated performance area provides an area for viewing events. The main plaza area and the additional grassy area to the north of the pathway will also have nice views of the stage.

As you begin on the path from street level, you can first access the Woodland Stage. Go further along the pathway and you will eventually reach the "East Wind Round-About" punctuated by Stevenson's third Kinetic public art piece celebrating the powerful Gorge winds. The path then leads you to the upper "Courthouse Outlook Plaza". The pathway has level resting points at 40' intervals (per ADA), marked by large boulders etched with modern petroglyphs inspired by Columbia River Gorge native rock art. The flag remains in its current location but takes on greater importance as it is surrounded with a circular pavement design and becomes a focal for the upper plaza. The Outlook Plaza is sunken several steps down from the level of the building and has several benches, movable tables and chairs; a place to hang out, eat lunch, take a coffee break and enjoy the view. From that level you travel up to an expanded plaza area surrounding the Skamania County Courthouse featuring the Historic Petrified Sequoia monument honoring Armed Services Veterans. The monument remains in its original location but the plaza has been expanded around it making it a more prominent feature. The Upper plaza supports additional seating and a new interpretive sign that speaks to the architectural history of the current Courthouse as well as the history of the site.

All of these upper areas over look the grassy hillside and large street level plaza. The various outdoor rooms created throughout the site coupled with the sounds of the water feature should provide a welcome relief from the traffic sounds of Highway 14.

