

Front Street Park Master Plan introduced to City residents

March 1, 2023



The Bigshots at City Hall came out in full force to present for community review the most comprehensive description of the City's future Front Street Park plan, a \$40 million project destined to shape the future of Crescent City, attract tourists, new businesses, and create new jobs and services to be enjoyed by tourists and community residents alike.

City Manager Eric Weir spearheaded the enthusiastic presentation, joined by senior members of his staff, including new public works director David Yeager, and Assistant City engineer Andrew Leighton, and managers and engineers of the various design firms and consultants who created the park plan, including representatives from Greenworks, SeaRanch and Abatti Engineering and Design. Important members of the business community were also present, including Stacey Harbour from Potter Real Estate Group

There are so many features to this future park that it would be difficult to present them in the space allowed for this article. However, the key features are:

A new transportation center in the library parking lot, across from the park. Here the city's public transportation vehicles will begin their various destination throughout the city and beyond.

A reimagined cultural center at the current site of the Chamber of Commerce building and Visitor's Center. It has been proposed to bring into this facility the headquarters of both the State and Federal Park, thereby giving residents and visitors a one-stop location to learn more about the most popular visitor destinations and the local business community. The cultural center will undertake to provide a much more comprehensive presentation of Del Norte County's cultural history, including its tribal origins, the lumber, mining, ranching and fishing industries, and, of course, our Tsunami.

Farmer's Market is expected to return to the Library parking lot across the street.

City Hall will eventually be relocated into the old Bank of America building across the street from the post office, just one block north of the Front Street Park.

The California Coastal Trail will continue to meander at the water's edge along the south boundary of the park, and take hikers, bikers, joggers from the sea level park, past the 2nd Street Pier and Jetty, then up and around to higher ground at Battery Point, where visitors can enjoy the iconic Battery Point Lighthouse and Museum. The trail will continue on to Point St. George, an unspoiled coastal wildlife habitat that has remained much the same as it was thousands of years ago.

After a return hike from Point St. George, tired hikers will be able to quench their thirst at the Sea Quake craft brewery across the street from the park.

Features of the park that will remain are a larger improved versions of the Kid Town playground area, the marine mammal recovery center, the Dog Park, picnic areas and shelters, soccer fields the indoor swimming pool, and other recreational facilities. Proposed new features will include an open-air amphetheater with room for as many as 500 blankets for concert-goers, along with smaller music and performing arts venues.

A bicycle park, disc golf course, sculpture garden, sister city monument, the Point of Honor military veteran's monument, and my favorite: a one-mile jogging track that features a one-half-mile shortcut for tired old runners like me who can benefit from the shorter distance to the same destination. Lush and lavish landscaping and gardens will replace many of the old trees that have reached the end of their life cycles. A Tent City will be provided for sidewalk vendors and exhibitors to "set up shop" for the benefit of hungry and souvenir seeking tourists.

The city-owned RV park will remain at the mouth of Elk Creek at the east end of the park, which will be improved into an ecological estuary where the Creek meets the ocean. And our city-owned wastewater treatment plant at the west end of the park will continue to provide its fragrance until a solution to that problem is identified. Rumors of a "Do Not Flush" order on important tourist drawing holidays have not been confirmed.

And overhead arched curb-to-curb entry sign will be located on Front Street within view of the Highway 101 "S curves" to lure visitors into the park and downtown areas.

It is hard not to be excited about this project. It is not easy to comprehend how important this expanded park facility will enhance the entire community and provide much needed sports, recreation, and entertainment

opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

A full color artist's rendering of the park Master Plan is presented elsewhere in this issue of the Triplicate, and available for viewing on the Crescent City website.