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SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION ILLUSTRATION/STEPHANIE BOWER

Lake Union Park could be draw for Seattle tourists

Great parks make great cities. Chicago has Millennium Park, Vancouver has Stanley Park and New York has Central Park.

In the geographic center of Seattle, on the shores of Lake Union, a major new park will soon join these ranks. Destined to be a major attraction for the growing South Lake Union neighborhood, the city and the region, Lake Union Park will open public access to the lake, connect the surrounding neighborhoods and celebrate the region's rich cultural and maritime heritage.

For visitors arriving in Seattle, Lake Union Park will become a "must see" not only because of its location near downtown, but for its many unique features.

Imagine boarding the new South Lake Union Streetcar in downtown Seattle and arriving at 12 acres of green space on the shores of Lake Union.

The park will have acres of landscaped lawns and tree groves for relaxing, a 300-foot-long fountain for children (of all ages) to play in, wildlife viewing platforms, a lakeside boardwalk and paths to stroll along, and terraced steps down to the lake to enjoy the view.

PROJECT UPDATE



Todd Burley



across the pedestrian bridge on the west side of the park, people can see native canoe carving at the United Indians of All Tribes' Northwest Canoe Center. They could even launch a canoe or kayak of their own at the restored beach.

Lake Union Park began as a dream of the Olmsted firm over 100 years ago, when it identified the southern shores of Lake Union as a prime location for a large public park.

In 2000, the city of Seattle purchased the last five acres of this property from

Families visiting Lake Union Park will be able to learn maritime crafts at The Center for Wooden Boats or rent a miniature sailboat for racing on the new model boat pond.

A History Trail will tell the stories of Lake Union's maritime, cultural and industrial past, including the maiden flight of the first plane that Bill Boeing helped build. And

the Navy, including the historic Naval Reserve Building (the Armory).

In 2003, Seattle Parks Foundation took on the challenge to raise \$20 million to develop the property into a world-class waterfront park. Seattle Parks and Recreation is managing Lake Union Park's construction, the initial phase of which is under way.

The final phase of the park is scheduled for completion in 2010.

Hargreaves Associates of San Francisco, with assistance from Mithun in Seattle, designed a park that emphasizes the city's connection to the lake and provides a public gathering space in a dense and rapidly growing neighborhood. With an estimated 16,000 new employees and 8,000 new households moving into South Lake Union, Lake Union Park will soon become the back yard of the neighborhood and a major attraction for the city.

The park is situated near the cultural core of Seattle. Visitors can walk or bike to the Seattle Center or the new Olympic Sculpture Park, take the new South Lake Union Streetcar to Westlake Center, and take a summer water taxi from neighborhoods around Lake Union.

A pedestrian and bicycle trail connects the park to Fremont along the western shore of the lake, and the future Lake Union Loop Trail will ring the entire lake. Travelers can even fly into the park via Kenmore Air, which is on its western edge.

Area businesses recognize the value of a major urban park in South Lake Union. Steve Engstrom, co-owner of Athletic Supply, says, "Lake Union Park will be a tremendous economic draw for small businesses in the neighborhood."

So far, more than 70 businesses and organizations have shown financial support for the park, including a \$10 million contribution from Vulcan Real Estate — the largest in history for a Seattle public park.

Businesses, foundations and individuals have contributed more than \$17.3 million to date for Lake Union Park. The campaign to fund the final phase is under way, with \$2.7 million to go by the end of the year.

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