

Thompson Elk Fountain Restoration & Main Street Redesign Feasibility Study



Photograph dated 1900

Introduction

After many months of discussion with the city over the future of the Thompson Elk Statue, the Portland Parks Foundation secured a generous private contribution to develop a feasibility study to rehabilitate and return the Thompson Elk Fountain to its historic home in SW Main Street.

On May 11, 2022, the Portland City Council passed a resolution to "fully restore and return the Thompson Elk Fountain to its original condition and location to the extent feasible."

What follows is tour of our process and our plan for how to do it.

Project Advisory Committee (PAC)



Jessica Engeman, Meritus Historic Development, former Portland Landmarks Commissioner Governor appointee to the Oregon Historic Assessment Review Committee



Jeff Joslin Retired, Deputy City Planning Director, San Francisco, overseeing historic preservation programs; oversaw Portland's Design Commission and Historic Landmarks Commission for 15 years.



James McGrath Senior Principal and Director of Partnerships at Nelson\Nygaard and Vice President at Perkins & Will.



Suzanne Bishop: Board member, Portland Parks Foundation



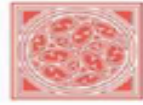
Steve Dotterer Retired principal planner BPS Chief Transportation Planner, PBOT; boardmember, Architectural Heritage Center and Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation



Kim Knox is a Partner and Senior Project Manager at Shiels Obletz Johnsen. Kim's focus has been on advancing projects that are community driven and historically mindful, such as the Oregon Rail Heritage Center, Oregon Coast Aquarium, Barbara Walker Crossing, and the Gordon House designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Jeff Hawthorne, OMF
Gabe Graff, PBOT
Keith Lachowicz, RACC
Lauren McGuire, PP&R
David O'Longaigh, Water
Brandon Spencer-Hartle, BDS
Hillary Borrud, BDS



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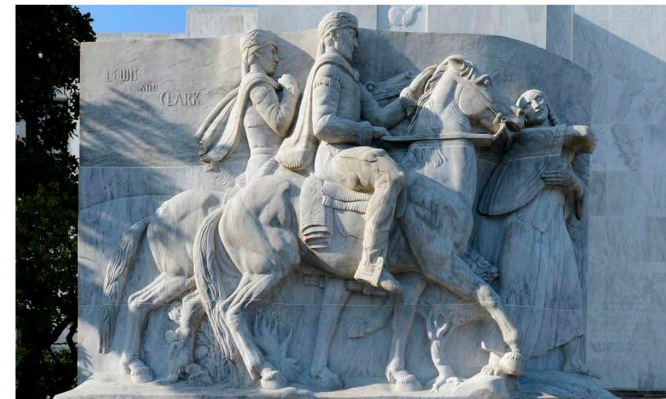
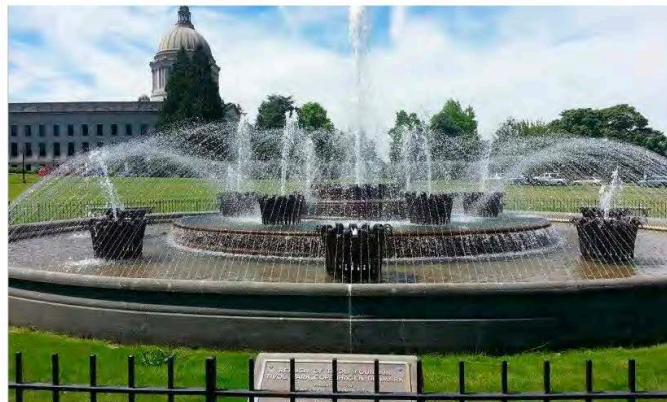
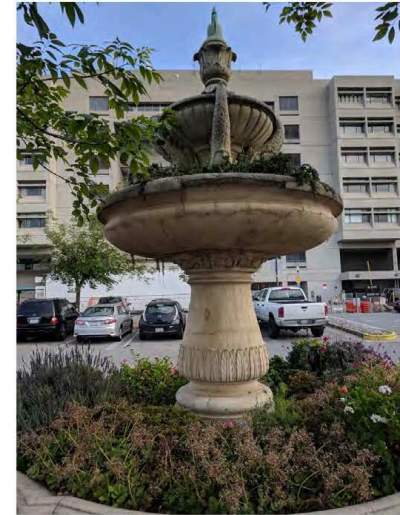
Design Team

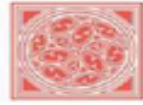
PPF Solicited proposals from qualified teams. The Project Advisory Committee unanimously selected Architectural Resource Group and MIG landscape architecture and urban design

ARG

Projects have included:

- City of Portland: Portland City Hall reroof
- State of Washington: Capitol Campus Conservator (since 2015)
- San Francisco General Hospital Campus Fountain
- State of Oregon Capital: Friedlander Statues Conservation





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MIG

Projects have included:

- City of Seattle: Bell Street Park
- Burbank Water & Power EcoCampus
- City of Long Beach Transit Mall



History

PPF also hired two historians to investigate the Elk Fountain's patron, sculptor, and architect and Fountain's social history

Consulting historians



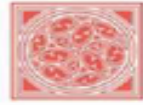
Keith Eggner

Marion D. Ross Distinguished Professor of Architectural History, UO Editor Emeritus, Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians



Milo Reed

Vice chair, Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries; Multnomah County Librarian and developer of “Our Story: Portland Through an African-American Lens” digital archive; Vanport Mosaic



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Design Objectives

- Restore and reinstall Fountain in Original Location
- Seismically stabilize statue and add recirculating pump
- Provide major enhancements to PBOT Plan to provide clearer, safer movement of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicle
- Improve access to the fountain, particularly for disabled
- Create a sense of place through materials and connections to Chapman and Lownsdale Squares

Other Objectives

- Position restoration as a unifying civic gesture
- Possibly pair public investment with wide-reaching crowd-sourced philanthropic campaign

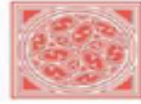


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ARG performed an in-depth survey of Elk Fountain's pieces that survived, assessing their condition and making 3D scans to model reassembly.





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The full inventory can be found [here](#).

STONE REPAIR SCHEDULE

GENERAL NOTES:

1. Assume stainless steel threaded rod anchor (1/2" dia) embedded in epoxy to anchor stone components to each other. Assume 4 per stone piece.
2. Clean all stone w/ low pressure hot water wash. Positive cleaning at all areas of cuprous discoloration.
3. Provide type II mortar at all joint locations.
4. All new stainless components to match existing in stone type, and match exact configuration and profile of existing pieces.
5. Assume (2) coats of maintenance STI (semiconductive coating) at all basin surfaces.
6. Provide new stainless steel drains as noted in floor plan.

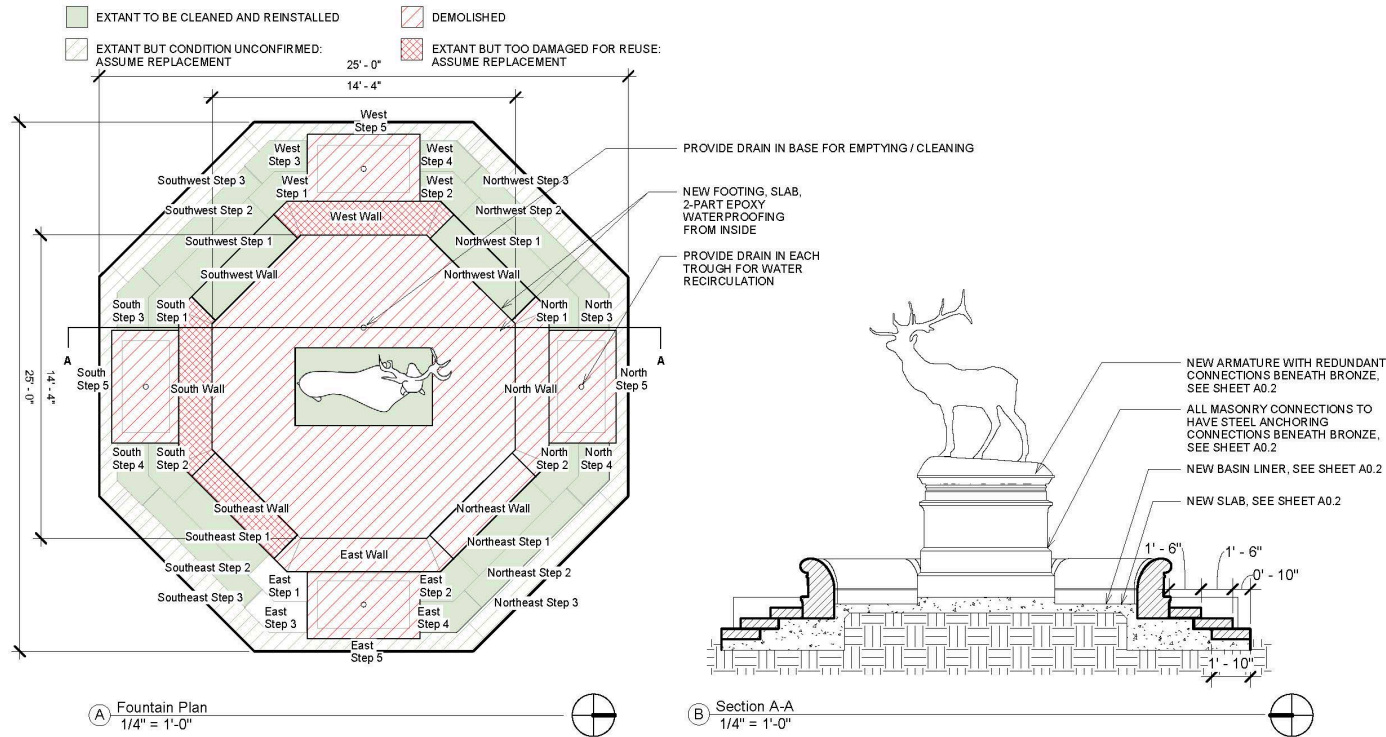
LEGEND:

- Piece Missing (Red)
- Piece Extant (Green)

SCHEDULE
Schematic: Installation Plan

Elk Fountain Reinstallation
Portland Park Foundation
11/07/22
A0.8
MIG

Carefully following the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation, ARG developed a reassembly schematic design, preserving as much original material as is possible.



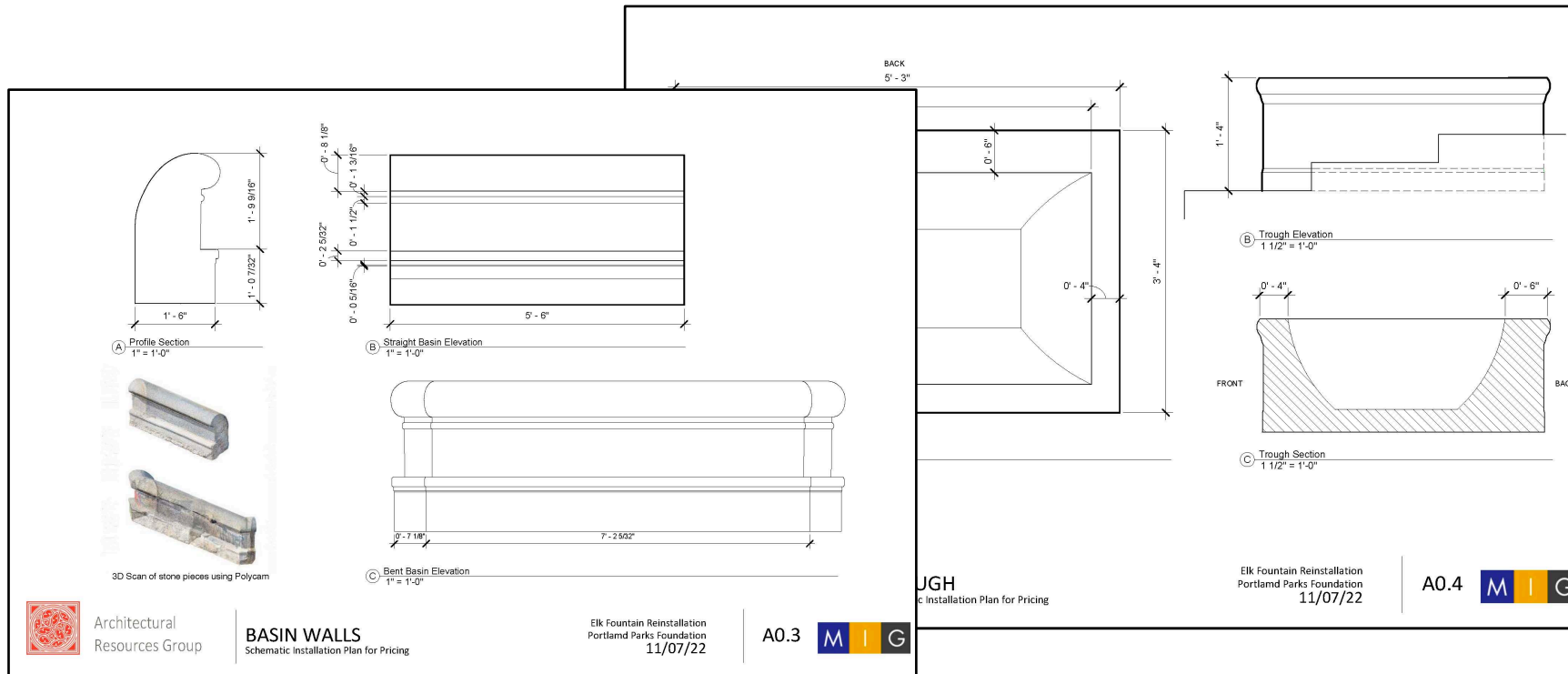
PLAN & SECTION
Schematic Installation Plan for Pricing

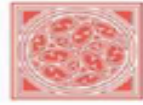
Elk Fountain Reinstallation
Portland Parks Foundation
11/07/22

A0.1



ARG also developed drawings for those pieces that might need to be entirely refabricated under a worse-case scenario.



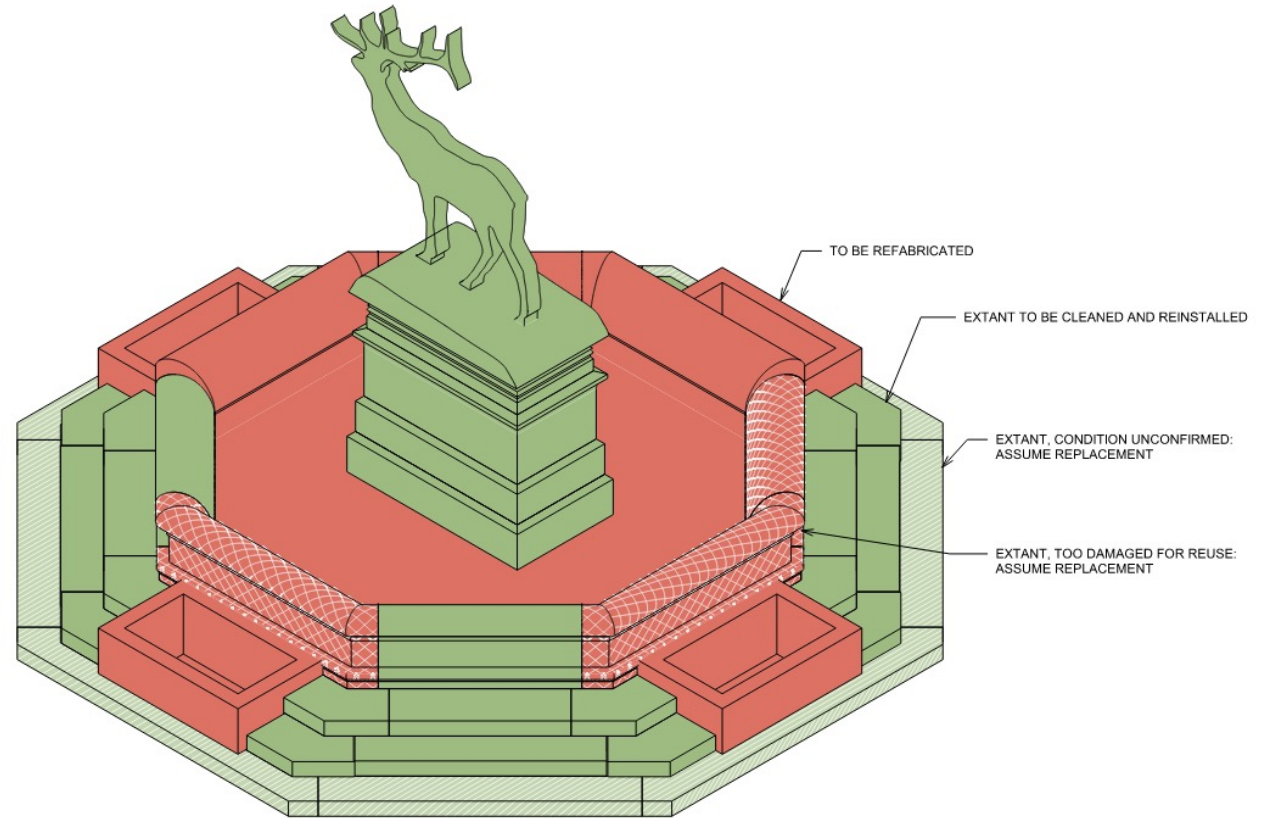


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The rehabilitation has only been developed to "30 percent schematic design" with much to be determined in later phases. But under worse case scenario, 18 new stone pieces (denoted in orange) out of 50 total pieces would need to be refabricated, and a new fountain slab would be needed.

Per SI Standards for Restoration #6:
Deteriorated features from the restoration period will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials.



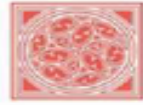
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The actual bronze Elk statue historically had been secured to its base by a single bolt. The design provides for a more resilient connection.

Also, per City Council's mandate, the Elk Fountain would be retrofitted with a recirculating pump to conserve water.





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Rehabilitation and Return Construction Cost Estimate

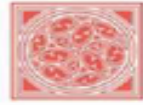
Reinstall Fountain with New Recirculating Pump

- Rehabilitate historic fountain
- Pump mechanism / vault
- Lighting improvements

2023 Total Cost: \$1,199,004 Construction Cost
+ \$119,900 Soft Costs = **\$1,319,904**



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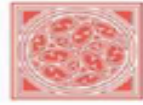
Construction Cost Estimate

Key items

Site Improvements	\$118,166
Site Development (stone work)	\$898,966 (with 50% contingency)
Fountain and water supply	\$84,000
Electrical	\$24,700
Site Preparation	\$118,000



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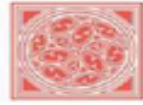


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Main Street Preferred Alternative





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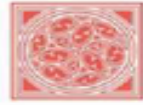
Streetscape Priorities: Preferred Alternative

- Signals safe zones for bicyclists, pedestrians and vehicles with permanent materials echoing historic character
- Flexibility for maintenance vehicle access
- Durable, low-maintenance materials
- Offers clear entry options for pedestrians and the disabled
- Offers clear exit options for cyclists

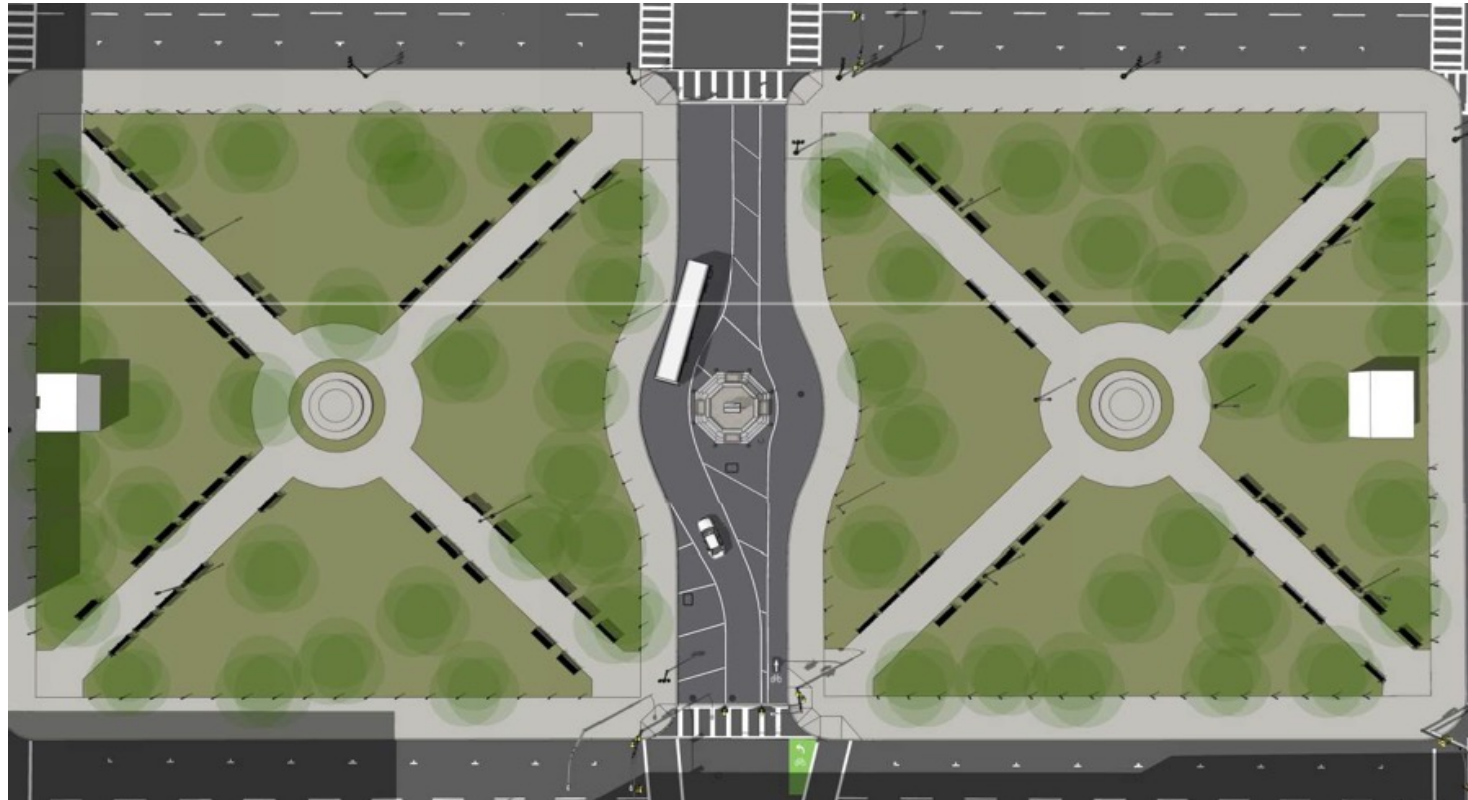
Bottom line: create a safer, more welcoming place for people to enjoy the fountain



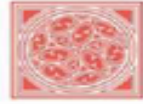
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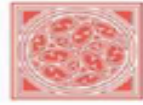
Current street plan with recent PBOT restriping



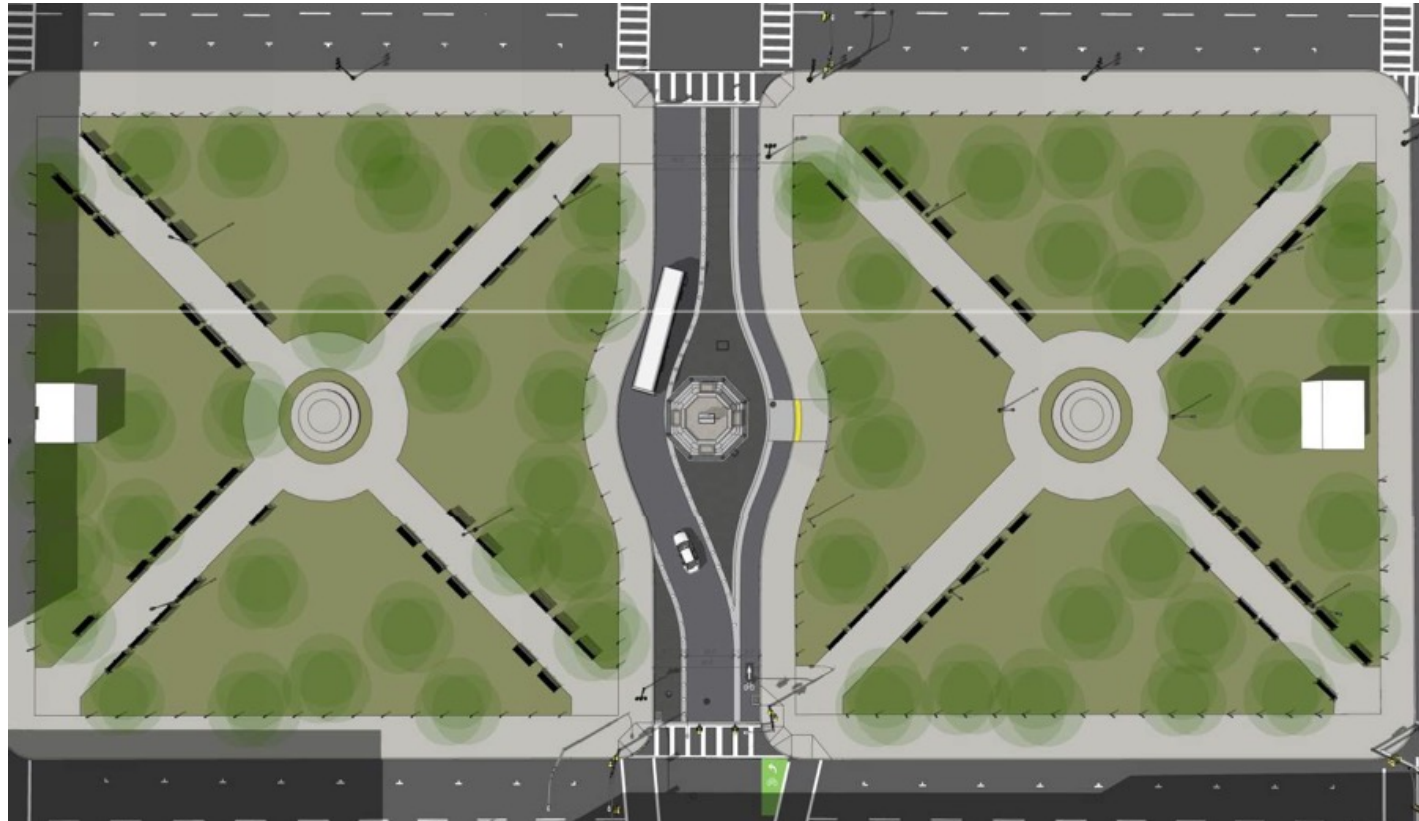
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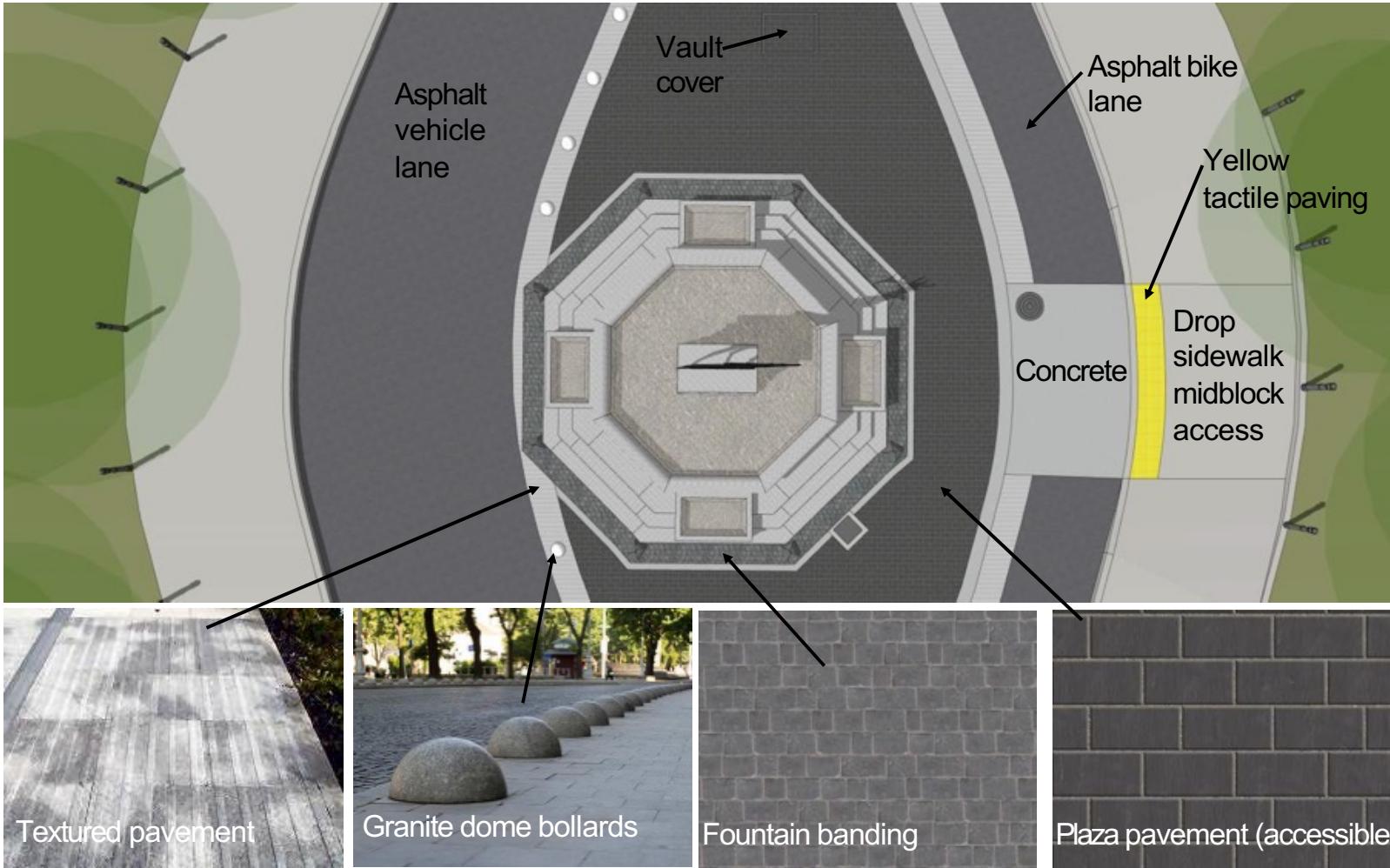
Ground view of street restriping completed in August, 2022



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Preferred Alternative



Material palette



Preferred Alternative (*looking west from 3rd Ave.*)



Preferred Alternative (*looking west from 3rd Ave.*)



Preferred Alternative *(looking south from Main Street sidewalk)*



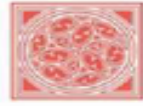
Preferred Alternative (*looking east from 4th Ave.*)



Preferred Alternative *(looking north from Main Street sidewalk)*



Preferred Alternative (*looking east from fountain*)



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Preferred Alternative Cost Estimate

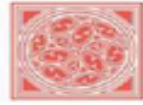
Preferred Safety Street Improvements (only)

- Asphalt vehicular and bike lanes
- Paved pedestrian / elk-viewing area
- Dome bollards for separation
- Flush pavement band / Textured pavement band / asphalt bike lane

2023 Total Cost: \$583,732 + \$58,373 = **\$642,105**



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Total Construction Cost Estimate

Reinstall Fountain with New Recirculating Pump

- Rehabilitate historic fountain
- Pump mechanism / vault
- Lighting improvements

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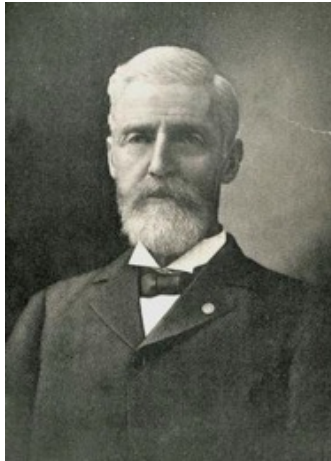
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2023 Total Cost \$1,961,010



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History

David P. Thompson

- A rags-to-riches sheep herder to surveyor, banker, real estate developer and politician who served as Portland's mayor, 1879-82
- An abolitionist who stood against Chinese exclusionary laws
- Donated the elk fountain as a "monument to the Oregon Humane Society" which he cofounded and chaired.



The Thompson Elk Fountain

- Has long been a beloved civic symbol
- Originally commissioned to honor the Oregon Humane Society
- By its proximity to the government campus and, historically, near a labor temple, the elk has stood at the center in protests since it was christened—more than 30 documented times
- The destruction was not a targeted act of vandalism, but more the result of collateral damage in high emotions of the 2020 protests



A sample of the historic protests

01.22.1912 “Jobless Men to Hold Big Parade Sunday”

01.28.1912- “1500 Exhorted to Organized Revolt 05.23.1924

**“Class Struggle in Capitalistic Production” 08.21.1927 IWW
protest the execution of Sacco & Vanzetti**

07.11.1931 The American Guardian Minute Men stage mass protest

09.28.1931 Veterans Parade to protest financial hardship

08.01.1932 Communists hold an anti-war demonstration

03.22.1975 Protest of police killing of Rickey Johnson

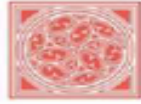
05.18.1979 Portland Tenants Union celebrate court win

03.29.1983 “Sick-out’ by volunteers at Metro Crisis Intervention

“You can get into any kind of argument at Lownsdale Square. In the olden days the Roman, shrewd judges of human nature, provided a forum as a safety valve for their population. In London Hyde park is the place where the public airs its views and grievances. In New York and other large American cities they have spots set aside for public debate. Portland’s safety valve is in Lownsdale Square and here they come to blow off pressure.”

**Listening Post column,
Oregonian on July 17th**

1921



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Our hopes

- Keep the focus forward and positive
- Reinforce that the Elk Statue and Fountain were commissioned to honor the Oregon Humane Society
- We want to do much more than “put it back”
- This forward-looking, safer, more welcoming design is a gesture of healing and inclusion
- Acknowledge the long, diverse history of free speech and protest near and around the fountain
- Create a wide-reaching community campaign to welcome the renewed Thompson Elk Fountain return to its historic home



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