



Visitor Experience Plan

GYROSCOPE INC





“We are the only region in Oregon that doesn’t have this resource. We are going to fix that gap.”

*–Kenady Wilson,
Board President*

acknowledgements

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Image: CICO

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executive summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Children's Museum of Central Oregon

In an increasingly complex world, a Children's Museum is a place where children and their families can experience the world through hands-on play and exploration in surroundings designed just for them. At the Children's Museum of Central Oregon (CMCO), visitors will step into a rich and immersive environment of STEAM-based exhibits and programming that is firmly grounded in the local habitats and history of Bend and Central Oregon.

As the only region in Oregon without a Children's Museum, CMCO will become a much needed quality of life resource for informal, hands-on family learning. With a deep commitment to diversity, access, and inclusion, CMCO will be a community connector across the region and a place where visitors feel safe, seen, and accepted.

We invite you to dive into this Visitor Experience Plan and share our vision of a world-class children's museum for a world-class city.

mission:

To inspire curiosity and creativity through hands-on STEAM experiences.

vision:

We envision a Central Oregon community where all children have access to hands-on learning and play that enriches their development.

project at a glance

A world-class children's museum that will inspire curiosity and creativity through hands-on learning for all children.

- **Organization:** 501c(3) non-profit corporation
- **Location:** Bend, Oregon
- **Exhibits Program:** 24,000sf indoor + 6,000sf outdoor
- **Core Audience:** Central Oregon families
- **Conceptual Framework:** *Wild Ideas, Wild Connections*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

community connector

The visitor experience process was heavily influenced by community voices. In addition to three rounds of interviews with members of city leadership, educators, and local families, CMCO held a community forum and organized multi-lingual surveys to capture a wide array of ideas, thoughts, and perspectives.

Community input helped to identify the need to bridge the geographic and economic divides in the Central Oregon region. To address this need, CMCO will be a unifier of Central Oregon communities and a resource for education and cultural enrichment that provides children of all means and abilities the knowledge and skills to succeed.

“CMCO should be of service to the community in ways that are effective and needed.”

–Zarah Wahlberg, Board Secretary



Conceptual Rendering: Fantastic Forest

CMCO will embrace the diversity of our community by:

- Structuring the museum as a welcoming hub with inclusive entry
- Community representation and a sense of belonging through staffing, exhibits, programs, and events
- Continuing outreach through the mobile CMCO Community Connections Lab

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Conceptual Rendering:
Buttes, Chutes, and Thundereggs

key strategies to inspire curiosity and creativity

Children experience the world through hands-on play and their growing minds need a wide range of tactile experiences to engage in and explore the natural world. CMCO strategies shape an inclusive and creative institutional landscape and ensure that experiences will immerse audiences of divergent abilities, backgrounds, and interests.

SCIENCE AROUND US

Visitors engage in real-world experiences with familiar entry points.

THINKING WITH YOUR BODY

Visitors use their hands and tools to explore materials, create, and make sense of the world.

CREATIVE AGENCY

Visitors are embolden to impact the space, take risks, and persist through challenges.

PLAY TOGETHER, LEARN TOGETHER

Visitors build community through sharing ideas and working collaboratively.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

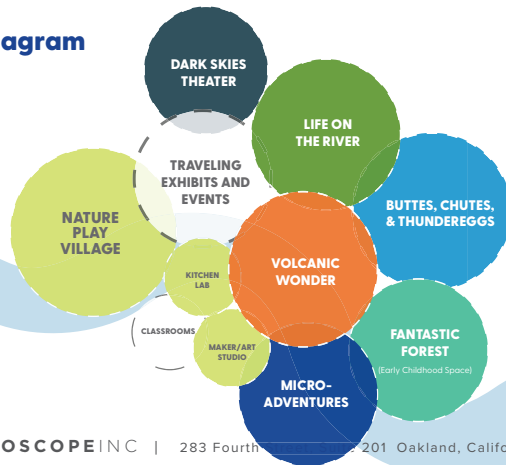
wild ideas wild connections

conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is the big idea that weaves the development and design aspects of the project together into a visitor experience that is unique, cohesive, and compelling. *Wild ideas, Wild Connections* is an embodiment of the active culture of Central Oregon and highlights the harmony between people and place.

Grounded in the outdoors and the environment, the zones developed for Visitor Experience Plan highlight unexpected connections and create opportunities to forge new ones. Visitors will climb into a volcano, go on micro-adventures through the Cascades, float an inner tube down the Deschutes, and find their inner rockhound in a lava tube. Through these creative learning and play experiences, children will hone their understanding of STEAM concepts and their natural environment while connecting to the community.

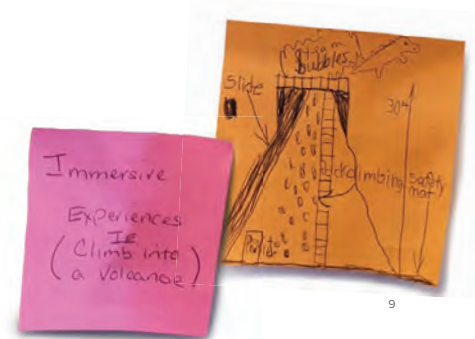
Zone Diagram



“People from Central Oregon have a symbiotic relationship with the environment, we’re all together.”

–Peter McCaffrey, Developer

Community Exhibit Ideas



background & context

- **About CMCO**
- **Community & Stakeholder Findings**
- **Regional Context**
- **The Need**
- **Impact**

1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

about CMCO

United under a vision to provide hands-on, STEAM-focused learning experiences that would benefit their community both culturally and economically, a group of enthusiastic parents and professionals came together in 2015 to form the Children's Museum of Central Oregon (CMCO). Since then, CMCO has been a learning institution and a museum without walls offering interactive educational experiences through summer camps, free pop-up museum events, festivals, and community fundraisers.

In collaboration with Gyroscope Inc., a museum planning and design firm, the team is on the path to permanently establish a cornerstone of creative, accessible STEAM learning and play in Bend. As the only region in the state without a children's museum, CMCO aims to be a resource for families and schools in Central Oregon, providing opportunities for play and learning experiences and programs otherwise unavailable.

mission: To inspire curiosity and creativity through hands-on STEAM experiences.

vision: We envision a Central Oregon community where all children have access to hands-on learning and play that enriches their development.



1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

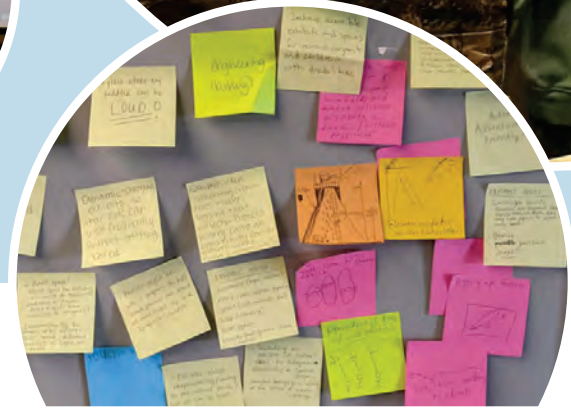
community voices

To kick off the visitor experience process, CMCO and Gyroscope Inc. conducted three rounds of interviews with project stakeholders. These included members of city leadership, educators, and local families.

They shared the needs and aspirations of their communities, their hopes for the Museum, and their unique perspectives and stories. These conversations inspired new ideas, informed CMCO's planning, and deepened its understanding of the community that it serves. Above all, they reaffirmed the dedication to creating a children's museum that serves as a vital resource for all families and all communities in the region.

Who we talked to:

- Local Families
- Potential Partners
- Community-Focused Nonprofits
- Educational Organizations
- Municipal Organizations



1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

community voices

CMCO asked its community stakeholders to describe Central Oregon in one word. Together, their answers paint a picture of an active and adventurous region with awe-inspiring natural beauty.



I. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Volcanoes, Lava Tubes, Buttes

regional context

Central Oregon is comprised of Deschutes, Crook, and Jefferson counties. Bend and Central Oregon have grown exponentially over the past decade with over 15% of residents being under the age of 14. Families and individuals visit and relocate here from major technology, art and science-oriented cities like Portland, Seattle, Denver, L.A., and the Bay Area.

The natural landscape is a key part of the Central Oregon's identity. The unique geology and geography include ancient lava flows, mountain peaks, vast forests, and an arid high desert. Famous for its wondrous and expansive beauty, the region is a mecca for year-round outdoor adventures.

“It should be grounded in the outdoors and the environment.”

—Melanie Kebler, Bend Mayor



1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

community context



Image: Wikimedia Commons

INTERCONNECTION BETWEEN PEOPLE & NATURE

High value is placed on family and community in this growing population. Surrounded by vast and unique natural wonders, Central Oregonians have an inherent love of the outdoors and kinship with the natural environment.



Image: Ingorithand

ACTIVE & ADVENTUROUS

World famous for winter and summer adventuresports, the outdoor playground attracts locals and tourists alike. Many partake in mountain biking, skiing, snowboarding, hiking, and rafting.



ISOLATED & DIVIDED

Stakeholder interviews provided insight into the natural and man-made separations in the region. The Cascades and high desert create natural separation from within the state itself and communities of the region are divided by the river and highway.



“Challenge to engage people in things that make the community feel together.”

-Scott Douglass, Entrepreneur

Images: Flickr, Ken West, Photos

1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

community need



Image: CMCO

'GO-TO' PLACE FOR INFORMAL, HANDS-ON FAMILY LEARNING

The Central Oregon region is hungry for a resource for interdisciplinary engagement in all aspects of STEAM including awareness of career opportunities.



Image: The Father's Group

ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY CONNECTOR FOR CENTRAL OREGON

Often seeing itself as an isolated community, there is a call for bringing together diverse communities in the region as well as embracing the interconnection between people, culture, and environment.



Image: Kimberly Teichow

QUALITY OF LIFE RESOURCE & A FAMILY-FOCUSED AMENITY

Whether its respite from the weather, or providing after-school programs and camps, community members identified wanting more resources for families of all shapes, sizes, and needs (physical, sensory, or neurodiverse).

1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

impact

We envision a Central Oregon community where all children have access to hands-on learning and play that enriches their development. In our pursuit of achieving our vision, the long-term objectives also include:

Fostering curiosity, creativity, confidence and a love of learning

Strengthening community ecosystem of learning

Complimenting the network of museums, art organizations and schools

Feeding the STEAM pipeline for teachers, workers, schools, universities and businesses

Adding quality to life including cultural and educational offerings

Being a catalyst for economic development



planning criteria

- **Opportunity for Leadership**
- **Audience**
- **Potential Partners**
- **Key Learning Strategies**
- **Experience Types**
- **Threads**

2. PLANNING CRITERIA

opportunity for leadership: community connector

Leadership opportunities emerge from areas in which a museum intends to build value that will benefit its audience, itself, or its community. CMCO will add quality of life enrichment and be a community resource for Central Oregon families. Bridging the geographic, and economic gaps, CMCO will be a unifier of Central Oregon communities by creating an environment where visitors feel safe, seen, and accepted.

CMCO will be a community connector through:

- Structuring the museum as a welcoming hub
- Encouraging of visitor contribution
- Representing the communities in the staffing, exhibits, events, outreach, etc.
- Ongoing outreach, CMCO Community Connection Lab
- Providing inclusive entry



“Human learning is socially constructed: we come to understand the world through our interactions with others. Feeling part of a community of learners is a powerful motivator.”

– Camille Farrington, *Design for Belonging*

2. PLANNING CRITERIA

Image: Kimberly Teichow

diversity equity access inclusion



Image: Kristen Hezardick



Image: Julius Constantine Motol

We value all people and welcome the similarities and differences that emerge through race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion, mental and physical ability, nation of origin and citizenship status. We strive to embrace the diversity of our community by attracting and retaining staff, board members, and guests who reflect our region. We are committed to eliminating barriers to inclusion and equity, and we see a diverse workforce as a key step toward this goal. We will actively recruit, hire, promote, and retain a diverse workforce—one that welcomes and engages people from every background.

We believe that our society grows more inclusive as families play together and learn from each other. By bringing

people together through the allure of play, we will create community connections and provide experiences that reflect and engage diverse cultures and groups.

We believe all children should have access to learning and choose to put extra effort toward achieving equitable outcomes to ALL children and their families. We strive to live our values every day; however, we acknowledge that we are human and therefore imperfect. We seek input from our community and promise to listen and accept when we fall short of our goals. We promise to demonstrate an honest and open effort to learn, understand, and improve.

2. PLANNING CRITERIA

audience

The Museum must serve a broad base of visitors through exhibits, programs and events:

- Children (0- 12) year and their caregivers
- Families
- Locals and tourists
- After school programs and camps
- School trips and home schooling families
- Teens – both learning and volunteer
- Adults, seniors, teachers, professionals as life-long learners
- Evening and special events
- Sensory friendly



2. PLANNING CRITERIA

potential partners

Fostering partnerships is at the forefront of achieving CMCO's goal of becoming a community connector. The planning team is already working closely with other nonprofit organizations in the community to assess the early childhood educational needs in Central Oregon and to craft a strategy that best serves community members as they grow and move forward.

- Boys & Girls Club
- Juntos Aprendemos
- Vamonos Outside
- Head-start - little wonders
- Center for the Arts
- Visit Bend
- Central Oregon STEM Hub
- Family Access Network (FAN)
- Kid Center (kids at risk)
- Father's Group
- Community of the Blind
- Indigenous Communities
- High Desert Museum Library
- Deschutes Children's Foundation
- Hearts Unknown Education
- Scalehouse
- Camp Fire Central Oregon



Image: The Father's Group

The Father's Group



Image: Vamonos Outside

Vámonos Outside



Image: Boy and Girls Club of Bend

Boys and Girls Club

2. PLANNING CRITERIA

key learning strategies

Key Learning Strategies are ways that the Museum's audience learns. These strategies help create coherence across the Museum, strengthen its learning value, and serve as a guide for CMCO when creating experiences, environments, and exhibits.



Image: Messy Art Lab SF

SCIENCE AROUND US

Explore world around you and uncover the everyday WOW in your own backyard! By engaging in real-world experiences with familiar entry points, visitors learn how to interact with the environment and hone in on a stronger sense of place. By magnifying the STEAM connections and concepts of Central Oregon's life, culture, environment, and future, visitors develop stronger ties to community and appreciation for the natural world.



Image: Monstium

THINKING WITH YOUR BODY

Run, jump, stretch, and roll! If you are moving you are learning! When children and adults explore and navigate through small and large, high and low spaces, they develop awareness of their body's capacities, strengths, and physical risk. As visitors use their hands, work with tools, and explore materials, they are thinking, creating, and making sense of the world.

2. PLANNING CRITERIA

key learning strategies



Image: BADM

CREATIVE AGENCY

You have the power to create! Taking ownership over their own learning and focusing on personal fascination with content, aesthetics, and strategies, leads to an impetus for life-long learning in individuals. Visitors, both children and adults, are emboldened to impact the space, take risks, persist through challenges, and celebrate failure as part of the learning process.



© Gyroscope, Inc.

PLAY TOGETHER, LEARN TOGETHER

Cultivate community and a culture of curiosity! Bringing people together through shared activities nurtures relationships. Visitors partake in community building through sharing ideas, working collaboratively, making new friends, linking generations, and engaging families from diverse backgrounds.

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE

experience types

Experience types are a set of varied experiences whose qualities reflect CMCO's diverse needs and goals. Each experience type has a physical space associated with it.

Most exhibits reflect more than one type and each zone includes the full set of experience types. By providing a variety of experiences, the Museum invites visitor engagement across a wide spectrum of learning styles and entry points.

INVESTIGATION STATION

Visitors tap into their own innate curiosities through open-ended exploration and experimentation.

WHIMSICAL WOW (ICONIC)

The iconic "you have to go see" big wow that serves as a share-worthy anchor point for visitors as they take their experience back into the world.

ROOM FOR IMAGINATION

Visitors invent and act out characters, scenarios, and stories with inspiration from costumes, props, and immersive themed environments.

CREATIVE COLLABORATION

Visitors come together to collaborate and create their own exhibit experiences in a group setting. The environment continuously evolves, changes, and grows.

DISTRIBUTED EARLY CHILDHOOD

Scaffolded experiences give access to the youngest visitors and their caregivers.

QUIET SPACE

Special places to enjoy quiet time, low sensory experiences, or respite from over-stimulation.

visitor experience

- **Conceptual Framework**
- **Zones and Adjacencies**
- **Overview of Zones**
- **Conceptual Renderings**

Conceptual Framework

wild ideas wild connections



Image: Pexels.com



Image: Creative Machines



Image: Corbis/Getty



Image: Monstam

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE

wild ideas wild connections

At the Children's Museum of Central Oregon, visitors will jump into a world of adventure and unencumbered exploration of creativity, process, and ways of thinking.

Grounded in the outdoors and the environment, wild ideas are nurtured by exploring unexpected connections and creating new ones. Relationships are cultivated through the energetic interplay of perspectives, ideas, and disciplines.

Wild ideas, Wild Connections is an embodiment of the active culture of Central Oregon and highlights the harmony between people and place.

Opportunities:

- Celebrates creativity, process & active learning
- Inherently interdisciplinary (STEAM)
- Place-based (Central Oregon)
- Inspires adventure and curiosity
- Cultivates relationships (People-Nature, People-People, Art-Science, Cause-Effect, etc.)
- Sense of gathering



Image: Louisiana Children's Museum



Image: Bob's Displays



Image: Timbery



Image: Museums Victoria

Conceptual Framework

The big idea that helps weave together a cohesive visitor experience that is unique and compelling. It serves as a tool for designing, deciding, and communicating.

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE

zones & adjacencies

Zones are distinct spaces within the museum. Each zone contains a variety of interactive exhibits linked by a common theme, and each has its own unique character and flavor. The zones work together to provide a dynamic visitor experience and reinforce the conceptual framework.

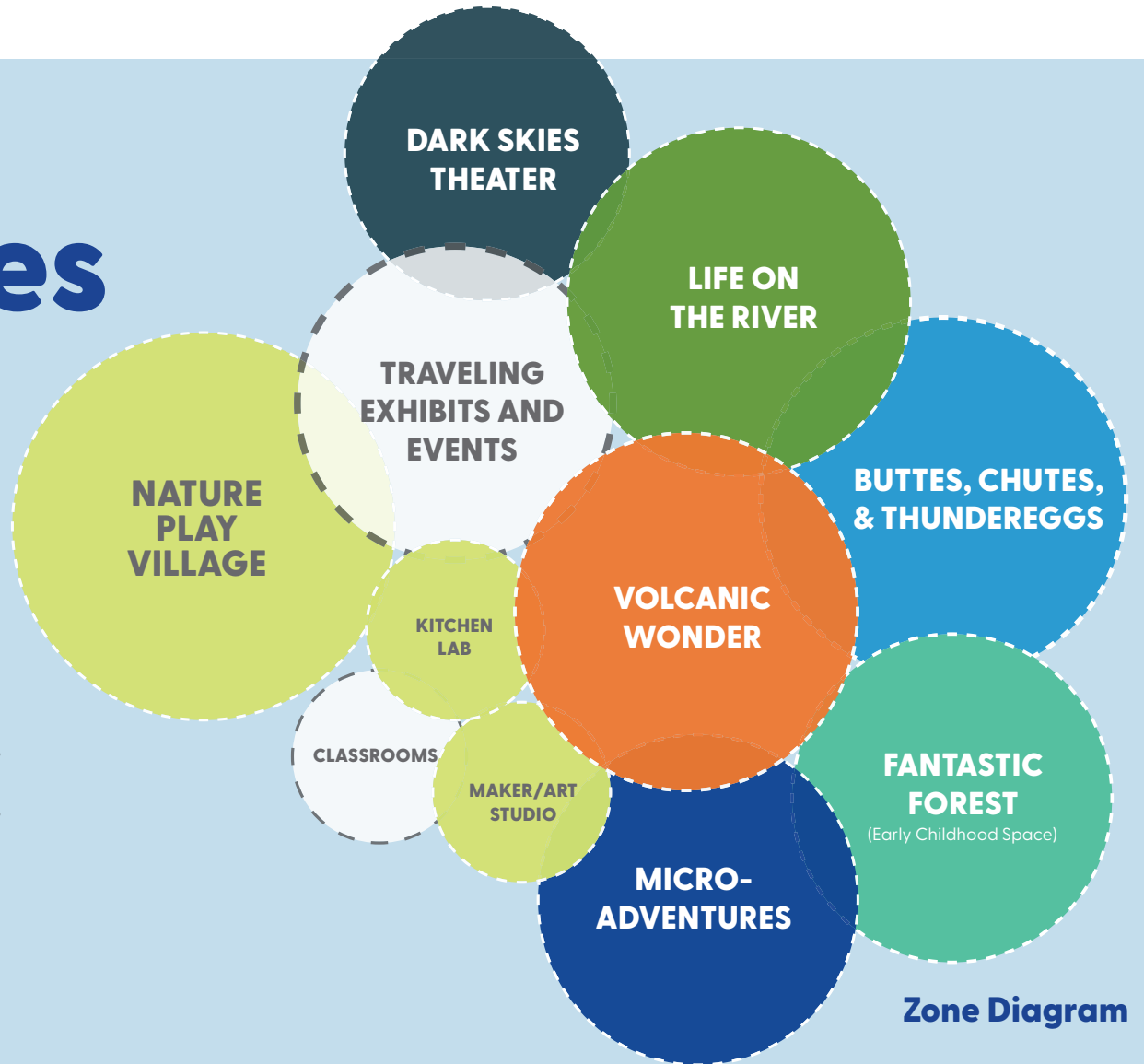
DESIGN REFERENCES



Photos of existing projects in this document are not a literal depiction of the future exhibits. Rather, they convey the intended look, feel, interactivity, or emotional impact of a future exhibit. Taken together, they paint a picture of the CMCO visitor experience.



Look out for this symbol throughout the visitor experience plan for our placed-based inspirations.

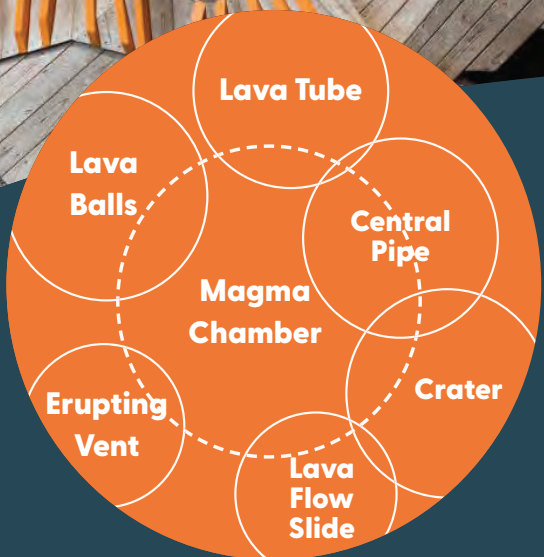


4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



volcanic wonder

Erupt with joy as you climb, slide, and crawl inside this immersive volcano experience! Visitors of all abilities can use gross-motor exploration to challenge themselves, navigate through space, and create adventures inside and around a cinder cone. You won't get burned jumping into this icon of Central Oregon.



CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF CENTRAL OREGON - VISITOR EXPERIENCE PLAN
Volcanic Wonder Conceptual Rendering



4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



LAVA TUBE

- You're pretty high up. Can you make it to the other end of the lava tube?
- Looping tubes provide challenge of being suspended over thin air.



ERUPTING VENT

- Mimicking one of the many branching pipes, visitors can make the vent erupt with mist.
- Push down together to launch a cloud ring up to the ceiling, creating something extraordinary as a team.



MAGMA CHAMBER

- Scoot, shuffle, and crawl through the heart of the volcano! This special space promotes different ways of maneuvering your body through a unique environment.
- Flowing landscape evokes movement, chutes, caves with unexpected forms that can be climbed over and under.



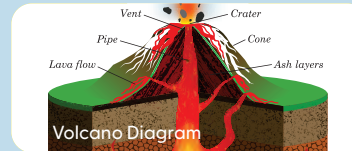
The Sisters reach of the Cascade arc contains at least 466 volcanoes that erupted within the past one million years.



Three Sisters



Lava Tube Formation



Volcano Diagram

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



CRATER

- You reached the pinnacle!! How's the view?
- Look out and down from this raised gathering space at the top of the climber.
- This accessible 'high' experience connects Vent, stair and slide with staff access to 2nd floor.



LAVA FLOW SLIDE

- Visitors are flowing out of the 2-story slide like laval
- The Crater and the top of the slide are accessible from the building 2nd floor to allow ADA access.
- Slides provide an immediate boost of activity, are great for brain development, and provide an accessible full-body experience. Sliding can help improve a child's balance as they process their location as they slide.

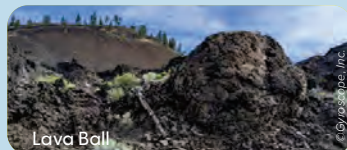


LAVA BALLS

- Climb through the path of these great balls of fire to discover the vibrant surprises awaiting inside!
- This network of dark gray spheres contains vibrant interiors for visitors to discover and navigate through.
- This feature provides an element of discovery and special spaces visitors to hangout.



Lava balls are chunks of molten rock that rolled through the lava flow and grew in size just like a snowball rolling downhill.



4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



CENTRAL PIPE

- Visitors rise like lava as they ascend the central Magma Chamber to the Crater lookout high above.
- A switch-back climbing tower poses vertical navigation challenges.

CAREGIVER ROUTES

- Adjacent and parallel routes for caregivers allow for groups and families to stay together as they traverse the climber experience at their own pace and abilities.



WAYS OF MOVING, WAYS OF THINKING

- The body is a tool for learning. Multiple ways to move encourage different ways of thinking and problem solving with your body.



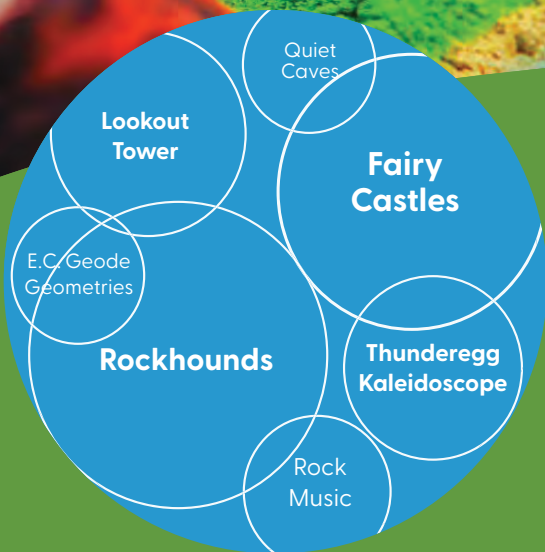
Most are of the 466 volcanoes in The Sisters reach are small single-eruption volcanic vents, though there are a few are low shields and stratocones such as Broken Top.



4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



Image: iStockBox



buttes, chutes & thundereggs

Dig deep into the wonder and science of Central Oregon's unique geology. In this zone, you will unearth your inner "Rockhound" and discover the wonder of millions of years of volcanic power. Make your observations from the top of the Lava Butte Lookout or deep inside a lava tube. Explore the science from above, below, and all around.

Buttes, Chutes, and Thundereggs Conceptual Rendering



4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



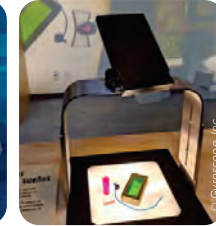
Kaleidoscope, Laura Buckley



MOC



Image: Shuang



© Gyroscope, Inc.



Musiv

THUNDEREGG KALEIDOSCOPE

- Create your own mesmerizing geological structure inside a giant walk-in kaleidoscope!
- Turn the LED lights to change the colors, shapes, and patterns.
- In this immersive experience, you shape your own magical world.

FAIRY CASTLES

- You can finally play with the fairy castle sand found in lava tubes!
- Use light projection over an undulating playscape. Moveable seating allows visitor to manipulate and inhabit their creations.
- This activity has multiple entry points for imaginative play.

ICE FORMATIONS

- You won't freeze your hands on these touchable ice crystals!
- These inflatable shapes each have sensors that let visitors control sounds and light through pushing and pulling the shapes.
- This interactive music system supports developmental play and multi-sensory therapy.



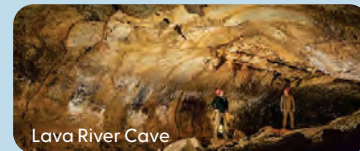
The thunderegg is Oregon's State rock. They are found in flows of rhyolite lava and come in a variety of colors.



Opened thunderegg



Fairy Castles aka sand gardens



Lava River Cave



Ice formations inside cave

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



ROCKHOUNDS

- As one of the best places to find crystals, minerals, and volcanic glass, geology rocks hard in Central Oregon.
- In collaborative sharing stations, groups of visitors can investigate real rocks with space to draw, analyze, measure, and catalogue together.
- Hands-on exploration is supported by video microscope, sorting bins, specimens, field guides, and books.
- Visitors move and shape the landscape in augmented reality sandboxes to play with lava flow.
- Programmatic area allows for supervised Rockhound tool usage.

GEODE GEOMETRIES

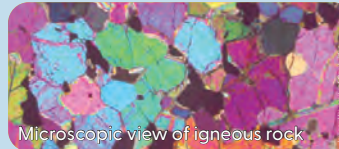
- The littles can rock on, too!
- This Early-Childhood focused area gives younger visitors a chance to explore shapes and patterns in age-appropriate activities.



"Rockhounds" is the term given to amateur geologist. It is popular hobby among Central Oregonians.



Rockhounds at Glass Butte



Microscopic view of igneous rock

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



LOOKOUT TOWER

- You are on fire spotter duty. What do you see up there?
- Role play being fire spotters at Lava Butte. Explore mapping, weather, fire control, communication, and general living.
- Visitors hone in observation skills, use scientific tools, and learn about the life of a National Forest fire lookout.

ROCK MUSIC

- We need music to rock out! Visitors explore the sounds of rocks through melodic percussion and physical programming.
- Playable lithophone (stone xylophone) from volcanic rocks and circular looper with sampled sounds from the lava fields provide high and low-tech musical experiences.

QUIET CAVES

- Take a break from rocking out in these cozy pods.



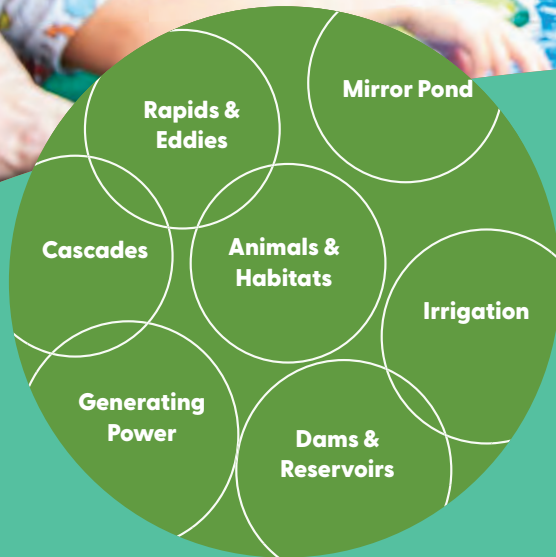
An Oregon invention! William Bushnell Osborne Jr. invented the "firefinder." This tool helps foresters estimate the location of fire from the lookout tower.



4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



life on the river



In this water gallery, visitors engage with engineering, building, and river-focused storymaking. Play with the ebb and flow of the Central Oregon watershed as you dive into the interconnection of everything that relies on the river for life.

Life on the River Conceptual Rendering



4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



Image: Boss Displays



© Gyroscope, Inc.



Image: Boss Displays



Image: Image

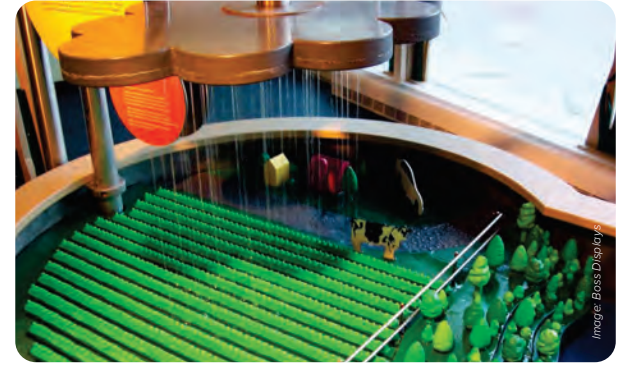


Image: Boss Displays



Image: Discovery Gateway

DAMS AND RESERVOIRS

- Where did the water go?
- Explore dams, gates, flumes, and the porosity of materials.
- Water supply education is coupled with place-based historical tie-in to Tumalo Dam.

GENERATING POWER

- Harness the power of hydroelectric energy.
- Use reservoirs and turbine propellers to explore potential and kinetic energy.
- Connection to local renewable energy lessons, the Old Mill, and Low Impact Hydropower (Juniper Ridge Hydro-Electric, run-of-the-river).

IRRIGATION

- Your crops need water but not too much!
- Build, repair, and replace canal systems to pull water from the river to farm fields.
- Visitors learn about responsible water usage in agriculture through cause and effect of displacing water.



Now a historic landmark, Tumalo Dam was a failed project as 90% of the volume of the reservoir was swallowed through the porous lava rock.



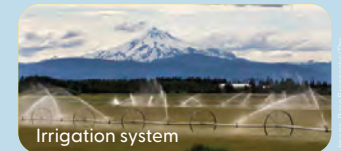
Tumalo Dam



Old Mill of the past



Old Mill District today



Irrigation system

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE

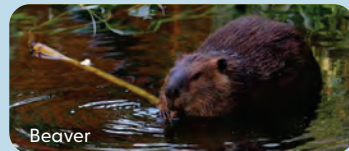


ANIMALS AND HABITATS

- Spot the spotted frog and build your own beaver dam. Go fly fishing or be a fish yourself!
- Loose parts encourage imaginary play and storytelling around homes and habitats of iconic river residents like beavers, trout, and osprey.
- Flexible platforms and changeable elements allow for diverse stories centered on the Central Oregon watershed.
- Pop-up in an under water bubble for a different perspective to life beneath the river.
- Visitors engage in open-ended investigation as an entry point into earth sciences.
- Exposure to local science and themes of conservation promotes stewardship of the natural world.



The beaver is the official state animal of Oregon. They are known as nature's engineers and important for erosion control.



Beaver



Osprey



Deschutes River

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



CASCADES

- The Cascades are the source of the Deschutes River. In our water table, they are also the source of non-stop fun!
- Stand inside the mountain to get a view of the rushing waterfall above you.
- Accessible entry for visitors creates opportunities for all to experience the awe of natural phenomena.



RAPIDS AND EDDIES

- Can your mini tube, raft, or canoe make it through the rapids!?
- Create an obstacle course with the gates and barriers. Navigate your vessel through the currents.
- Visitors create challenges that affect the ebb and flow of the river.



MIRROR POND

- Take a moment to reflect in the Mirror Pond.
- Visitors can calmly play with and view the reflections of the water against light.
- Quiet space provides opportunities for water play for a younger audience and those with sensory sensitivities.



Tubing down the Deschutes is a favorite recreational activity of locals and tourists alike.



Tumalo Falls



Tubing



Rapids



Mirror Pond

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE

“A lot of our families are in need. They don’t have funds to engage in other activities like going to Mt. Bachelor.”
-Bess Goggins, Boys and Girls Club

Snowball

Circuit
Training

Trials & Trails

Catching Air

microadventures

“small and achievable, for normal people with real lives”

You don’t have to drive up to Mt. Bachelor to bike, ski, and enjoy the outdoor playground that is Central Oregon. In this gallery, visitors will take on scaled-down adventures into physics, engineering, and earth sciences. Race your friends down the backcountry ball-run trails, snowboard in an air column, and watch out for the snowball avalanche!

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



SNOWBALL

- It's a winter wonderland of physics and engineering!
- Visitors use 'snowballs' to explore cause and effect systems (screws, vacuums, conveyors, funnels, etc.) with a central goal of filling the snowball tower at the top of the mountain and creating an avalanche.
- Visitors will learn about avalanche science and the local weather technology.
- Moveable pieces on a magnetic wall can be manipulated to create ball - run trails.
- These collaborative and creative experiences allow for inclusive entry points for all to enjoy the local adventure sports.

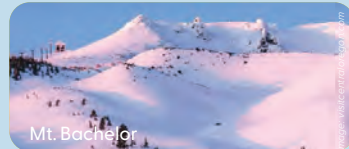


SNOWCAT

- I want to drive!
- In this imaginative play opportunity, take the helm or ride with a buddy in these iconic snow vehicles.



Mt. Bachelor has since grown to be one of the largest ski resorts in the U.S.



Mt. Bachelor



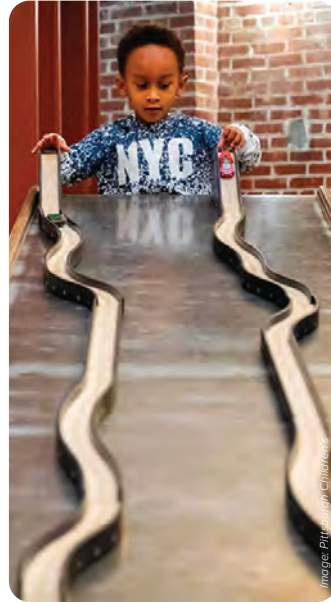
CO Avalanche Center technology

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



CATCHING AIR

- Experiment with how to 'ride' air flow.
- Use mini-boards in a Bernoulli blower to explore physics of boarding in powder, kayaking, etc.
- Place-based loose parts allow for iterative exploration focused around uplift and drag while connecting to local aviation and recreation.



TRIALS AND TRAILS

- Visitors gamify adventure sport using magnetic arcade systems like pinball. Modular components allow for creative combinations of trails and challenges.
- Combining open-ended play with arcade-like adventure allows for accessible engagement with a myriad of outdoors activities.



CIRCUIT TRAINING

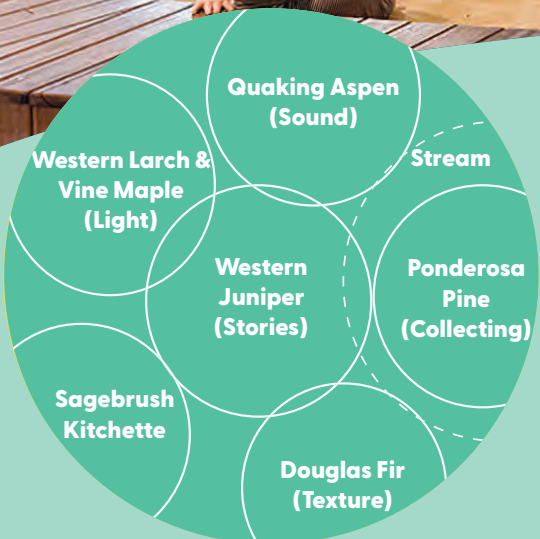
- Visitors engage circuits through the familiar entry point of bike lights and components.
- This exhibit creates a place-based connection to local bike culture and provides a quiet space for visitors to tinker.



The Central Oregon landscape allows for an amazing variety of both winter and summer adventure sports.



4-VISITOR EXPERIENCE



fantastic forest

EARLY CHILDHOOD SPACE (BIRTH - 3 YEARS OLD)

Stroll through this multisensory magical forest specially tailored for the youngest Oregonians and their caregivers. Gather under the Juniper or climb into the Ponderosa treehouse. Explore each of the featured native trees to discover their unique sensory offerings.

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF CENTRAL OREGON - VISITOR EXPERIENCE PLAN
Fantastic Forest Conceptual Rendering



4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



WESTERN JUNIPER (STORIES)

- Gather under the cozy canopy of juniper branches to share stories and connect with fellow caregivers.
- The circular gathering place provides a space for programs as well as a safe area for pre-walkers to explore independently.

PONDEROSA PINE (COLLECTING)

- Climb into the treehouse and help the critters collect the pinecones.
- Inside the Treehouse visitors collect 'pine cones' (balls) and use chutes and ramps to explore cause and effect.
- Sorting, classifying, and categorizing objects helps build visual perception, memory, and thinking skills.



Ponderosa Pine has deep furrows in the bark and often smells like butterscotch or vanilla.



4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



DOUGLAS FIR (TEXTURE)

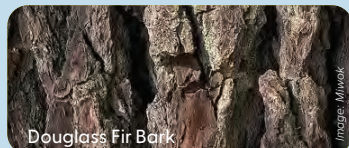
- Touch the fluffy moss, bumpy bark, and squishy mushrooms!
- This platform (nicknamed “Doug”) offers multi-faceted sensory play. Visitors can crawl through the inside tunnel of the fallen tree and see their reflection in the mirror base. On the exterior, soft textures and Velcro fungus, moss, and wood patterns offer tactile stimuli.
- Physical contact with different objects helps children make sense of world and supports kinesthetic learning.

WESTERN LARCH & VINE MAPLE (LIGHT)

- Leaves change colors, why can't you?!
- Play with colored lights to change the color of the room. Watch maple leaves' shadows float in the air column.
- Visual sensory stimulation aid hand-eye coordination and development of cognition and recognition.



Bark of mature Douglas Fir trees is dark brown and deeply grooved.



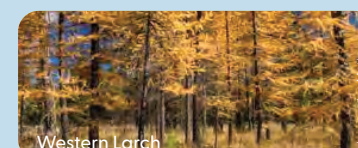
Douglas Fir Bark



Douglas Fir



Vine Maple



Western Larch

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



QUAKING ASPEN (SOUND)

- Dance and shake with excitement as you move along to the music of the Aspens.
- Visitors can make music with a variety of shaking sound makers. Canopy scrims above and below create an immersive and fort-like aspen tree adventure.



POND & STREAM

- Bounce, scooch, and roll on this squishy pond-like waterbed.
- Hear the splash of the water beneath you as you engage your whole body in this multisensory experience.



Quaking Aspen get their names from their leaves that appear to shake and tremble in the wind.



Quaking Aspen

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



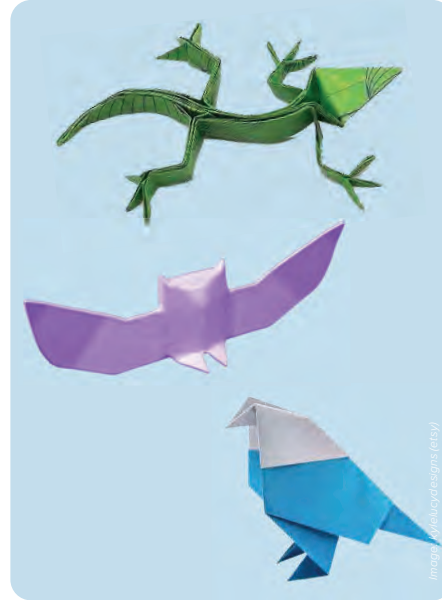
SMELLS

- Engage your olfactory sense and take a closer sniff!
- Scents are housed in smell boxes and dispersed throughout the zone for a smell-based scavenger hunt.



SOUNDSCAPES

- Bathe in the sounds of the forest.
- Pods and enclosed areas create special places for a quiet moment.



FANTASTIC ANIMALS

- Artful animals created by visitors and artists support community contributions to the project and conversations about the importance of ecosystems.



SAGEBRUSH KITCHENETTE

- Kitchenette provides much needed amenities for feeding, snacks, and other needs.



Western skinks are a common sighting in Central Oregon. These blue-tailed lizards live in juniper shrub lands and coniferous forests.





Image: Muscobox Village

nature play village

Sticks, stones, and mud...

Imagination thrives as visitors role play in this village nestled in the woods. Visit the Food Truck to grab a slice of pretend pine needle pizza, create music from nature at the Stage, and design a branch fort at the Construction Site. Connecting with the great outdoors is at the core of this experience, providing visitors with a “wild” space to safely explore part of what makes Central Oregon unique. Make sure to visit the Green House to grow your green thumb skills.

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



CONSTRUCTION SITE



FOOD TRUCK & MARKET



STAGE & MUSIC



GREENHOUSE

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



Image: Phoenix Children's Museum



Image: Thinkery



Image: NISE Network

art & maker studio

Celebrate failure, mess-making, and collaborating with new friends

Let the creativity flow and the problem-solving persevere! Collaborate with others to make a packing tape lava tube to crawl through, engineer a mini kayak to float in Life On The River, or compose a portrait out of flowers. This art studio and maker space is dedicated to open-ended exploration. Children take ownership of their creative and innovative thinking through STEAM challenges, building together, crafting, and art.

Visitor's work is prominently displayed to share with and inspire others. Programming includes daily activities, special classes, camps, and school field trips.

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



kitchen lab

The science behind food

It is time to get cookin'. Visitors are brought together to explore the world of food in this multi-sensory lab space. This real kitchen environment includes sinks, tools, and equipment to investigate and understand the science behind the everyday food we grow, cook, and eat. Make connections to the plants growing in the Greenhouse outside and develop an understanding of where our food comes from.

Kitchen Lab is programmed for open-ended daily activities, school trips, special events, and classes.

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE

A photograph of a woman with long blonde hair, wearing a red and black striped sweater, lifting a young child into the air. The child is wearing a pink polka-dot dress and black shoes. They are in a theater setting with colorful stage lighting (red, blue, green) and other people in the background. A large dark teal curved shape is overlaid at the bottom of the image, containing the title and text.

dark skies theater

There is always something new in the Dark Skies Theater. This flexible, black-box theater is a much needed community resource! The Museum partners with local organizations to connect community through performing arts, special events, pop-up planetarium experiences, laser light shows, and more. Offering retractable theater seating and open space, the Dark Skies Theater is a place for creativity to run free.

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



traveling exhibits and events

An adaptable space offering a host of opportunities. Rotating temporary and traveling exhibits allows the Museum to share ever-changing experiences. Rent the space for special events, such as weddings, corporate retreats, and galas. This space will provide flexible infrastructure such as light tracks, power, and data to accommodate the changing layouts needed for this multi-purpose area.

4. VISITOR EXPERIENCE



community connection lab

Mobile museum experience

Children's Museum of Central Oregon takes it on the road! Core to CMCO's mission is creating hands-on play and learning that serves all of Central Oregon. The Community Connection Lab gives CMCO a chance to test out ideas, learn how to best support Central Oregon, and become a trusted community connector and resource. Community engagement is extended through outreach by hosting pop-up experiences at festivals, community events, and in partnership with other mission-aligned organizations.

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