

The New Winn Park:

The revitalization and reactivation of Winn Park in Midtown, Sacramento offers a unique opportunity to provide a permanent and historically rooted community environment to the surrounding area. This underutilized park has the distinct advantage of having a historical landmark at its heart.

We would like to present the idea for a community beer garden, food truck plaza and eating area, small dog park, improved playground, as well as other park amenities (refer to figures on board). With upwards of 60 craft breweries in Sacramento, there is no doubt that there has been an explosion of interest in craft beer. We feel that activating the space in the historic fire department building will allow regional brewers to showcase their skills and provide a place that can be uniquely “Sacramento,” while building off of ideas that have been successful in many cities nationwide (figures 1 & 2). We envision brightening up the interior, while still allowing the historical elements to shine; perhaps even bringing the dispatch panels and black box circuits back to life via a beer tap wall behind the bar.

Sacramento is host to many beer festivals and events, and the newly repurposed Winn Park and tap room would be the perfect place to host these events. Along with the tap room, an expansive deck, outdoor seating area, and band venue are proposed. This space allows users to enjoy the park, the Sacramento weather, as well as serves to contain alcohol usage within a prescribed area.

At any good beer festival there is always an accompaniment of food trucks to serve the eager (and hungry) attendees. This essential programmatic inclusion will allow for local food trucks to park on the site, while at the same time alleviating traffic concerns and continuing to serve the symbiotic relationship between food trucks and craft beer. This combination is successful all over the country, and already within the central valley, as evidenced by such events as SactoMoFo, Gather Oak Park, and Saturday Nights at the Barn (figure 9). By allowing a semi-permanent location for food trucks to dock, will automatically create an influx of park visitors. This increase will undoubtedly enhance safety, inspire community, and bring in patrons flocking to Midtown and other Sacramento businesses.

At the onset of any outdoor event involving beer and food trucks the strollers, children, dogs and leashes are invariably brought out. We propose to upgrade the existing play area and provide a small dog park, to enhance the user experience (figures 8 & 10). Increasingly, venues such as this are becoming more and more dog friendly, and by providing a sanctuary for our furry friends, we create the opportunity for community interaction and continuous usage. The playground and dog park are both visible from the deck, allowing patrons to keep an eye on what is precious to them. The main entrances for both of these elements are located facing towards the park entrances to welcome visitors to the park. This allows for users to “choose their own adventure,” or

enjoy all the provided park elements in one visit. We feel that these main elements, the playground, dog park, taproom, and food truck area all speak to the demographics and users of Midtown. Therefore, the new Winn Park provides something for everyone, from the foodie to the dog owner to the young family, or any combination!

The largest and most eye-catching improvement to the site is the proposed raised deck that encompasses the historic building. The wooden deck, a subtle callback to the carpenter days of the Park's namesake, Major General Albert Maver Winn, will be the heart of activity in the space. This deck will have outdoor seating for those enjoying the beer garden, as well as for those soaking in the tunes from local musicians playing on the stage. Piers jut from the deck providing interaction points to the dog park and playground. Mom can grab a beer while dad and children play, yet still being able to keep an eye on everyone for safety. Playful kids and dogs have a visual connection on the ground level, while still maintaining a safe barrier. The deck also boasts amphitheater-style seating with easy access to the open area where users can picnic, play corn hole, bocce ball, or just lay out and catch some sun. A large plaza with a splash pad for the kids to cool off on those hot summer days can also serve as a venue for small farmers markets, and events similar to "Chalk it Up."

We feel these proposed changes to the park will bring in users, activate the space, and promote community engagement and interaction through the various elements of the park. These elements are also not particularly difficult to implement. Many cities around the country have "Pop-Up" container beer gardens and food trucks in parking lots. A dog park does not need to be especially elaborate, and site seating can be as simple as a wooden bench with overhead string lights. Our proposal pushes these ideas a bit further, but at its core Winn Park has great opportunity to become a destination in Midtown. The potential for 60+ breweries, countless food trucks, playful dogs, and laughing children will make this park a hotspot and have something for everyone.