

Children's Museum of Skagit County Relocation

Project Location: **Burlington, WA**

Project Area: **15,462 SF**

Project Cost: **~\$800,000**

They say, "third time's a charm." And hopefully for the Children's Museum of Skagit County, this third move will prove to be the final and best one. The design team has been working with the Museum since its inception in 2000. We provided pro-bono services to design the first location in downtown Mount Vernon, which proved to be so successful that they quickly ran out of space. Needing to expand and reach a more diverse population, the Museum moved to the Cascade Mall in 2008, which our firm also designed. When the Mall's fate to close became apparent in 2018, the museum was faced with finding a new home once again. Seizing the opportunity, they looked for a space that could afford a wider, larger audience, and provide more exploration and learning.

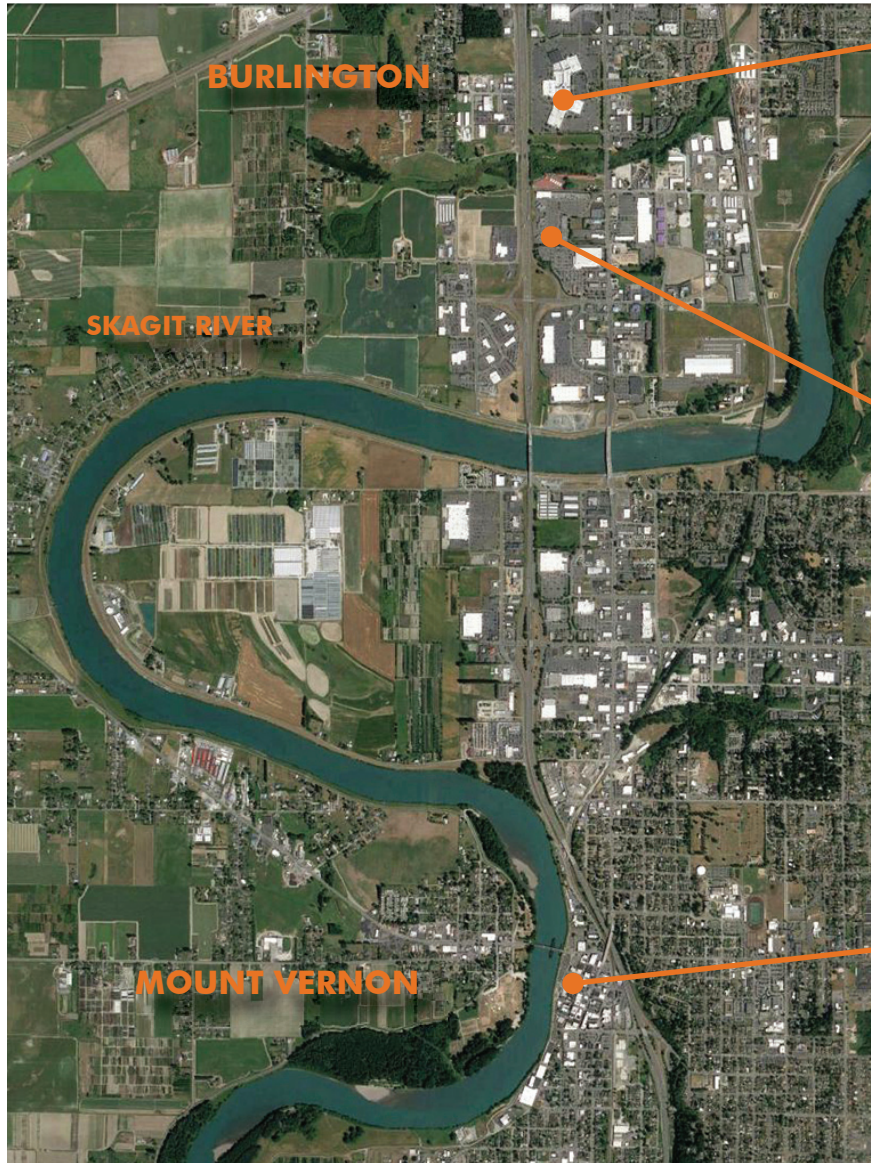
In an effort to keep the existing museum open as long as possible, the design strategy involved phasing the project so that classrooms and resource rooms could be opened first, and then the main exhibits could be shut down and moved into the new space. In the summer of 2019, the museum opened to over 5,000 visitors. Memberships have increased 150% since the new museum opened, providing essential services for families throughout the region.

The majority of the existing exhibits were carefully re-imagined, relocated, and reconstructed in the new space. New exhibits include a Train Station, and the "Main Street" that hosts a Bank, a Dentist Office, a Doctor's Office, a Design Studio, a Grocery Store, and a Construction Site. The Classroom is primarily used for the museum's Pre-School and the Party Room has become a popular spot for birthday party rentals. The Family Resource Center, funded by a local non-profit, affords parents the help and support they need. The museum also serves an important function as a designated location for Supervised Visitations for non-custodial parents. The Event and Large Motor Skills area is used by the Pre-School, museum visitors, and for rentals.

Accessibility for children and adults to the exhibits and supervision are key priority design features, second only to providing opportunities for children to have fun, explore, learn, grow, and develop their motor skills. A focus on making things as real as possible has been a theme throughout, so that children learn in real-world environments. And another common theme through all three museums is the use of circles of color, which create a fun, organizing design element that show up in the windows, window graphics, furniture, and finishes.

"...the team ... created inspirational spaces for children and families that invite them to imagine, create, explore, invent and investigate, along with endless opportunities for fun! ...As one museum member recently wrote: "The museum is the most important resource for the Valley's kids and I can't wait until you're back up and running again. We look forward to that day." That sentiment echoes many messages I have received since our mid-March closure [due to COVID-19].", says the museum's Executive Director.

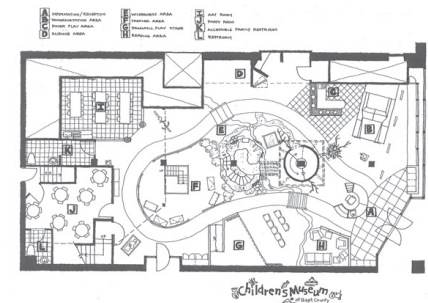
EVOLUTION OF THE MUSEUM



SECOND LOCATION
CASCADE MALL



THIRD AND NEWEST LOCATION
THE OUTLET SHOPPES AT BURLINGTON

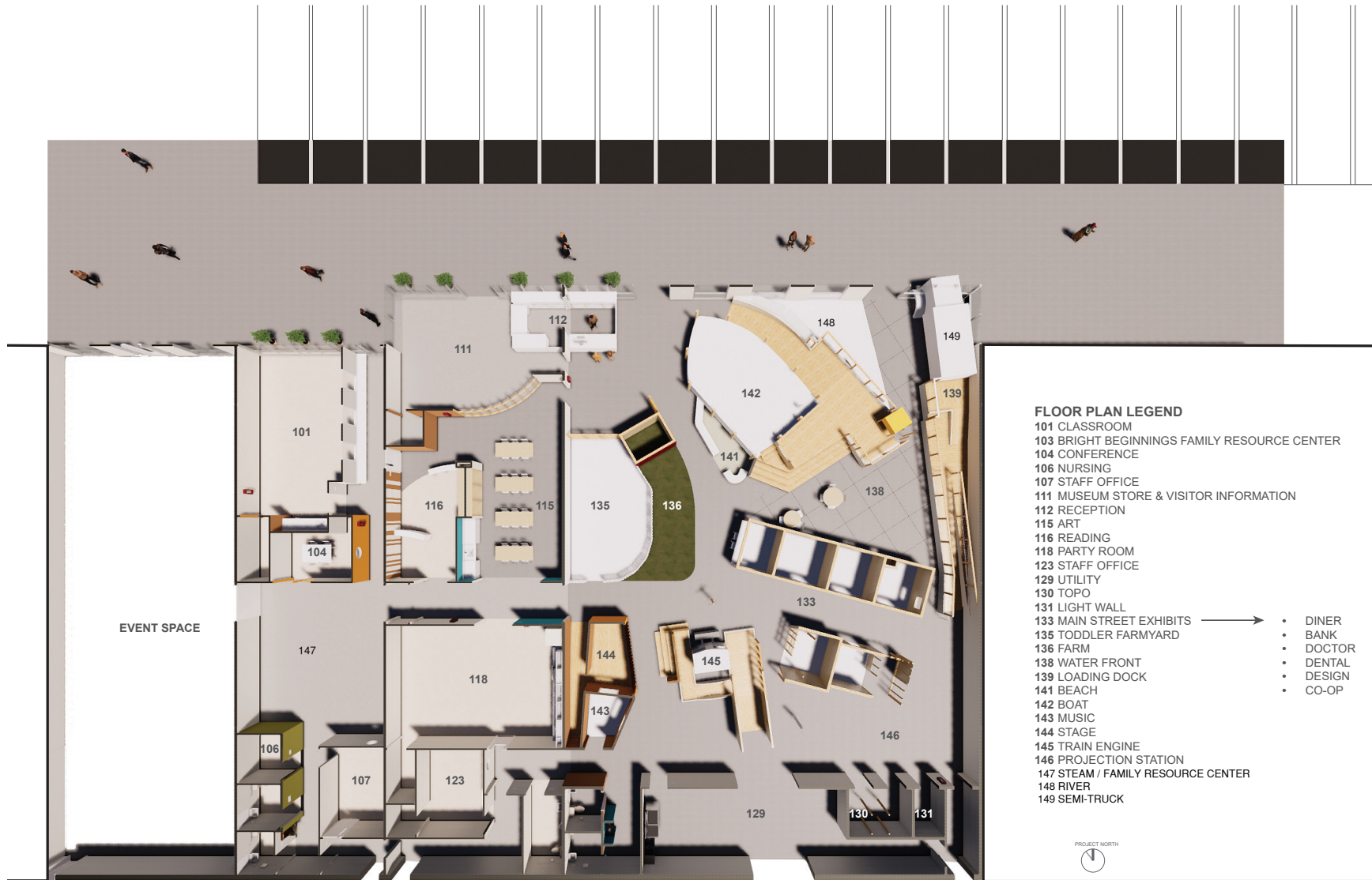


ORIGINAL MUSEUM
MAIN STREET MOUNT VERNON

SITE PLAN



FLOOR PLAN



EXTERIOR DESIGN



RELOCATED SIGN

MAIN EXHIBIT SPACE

MAIN ENTRY / STORE

SECURE
CLASSROOM ENTRY
WITH ONE-WAY
VIEW GRAPHICS ON
WINDOW

STORE / REGISTRATION



THE CURVED TRANSLUCENT WALL WAS RELOCATED FROM THE OLD MUSEUM AND ALLOWS LIGHT TO PENETRATE INTO THE ART ROOM

TUGBOAT / RIVER / FARMER'S MARKET



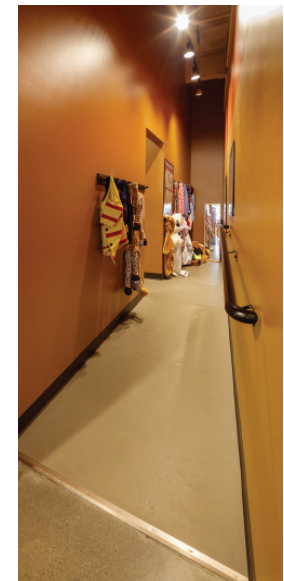
THE TUGBOAT IS THE CENTRAL FEATURE OF THE "RIVER/WATERFRONT" EXHIBIT. THE RIVER HAS RUNNING WATER AND EXHIBITS WHICH TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT STREAM LIFE AND CONSERVATION.



TODDLER FARM YARD / THEATER / MUSIC STUDIO



THE FARM YARD IS A SAFE, ENCLOSED AREA FOR THE SMALLEST TODDLERS. THE RAMP UP TO THE THEATER STAGE SERVES AS THE DRESSING ROOM FOR IMAGINATIVE PERFORMANCES.



TRUCK / CRANE / FREIGHT DOCK



FUTURE CRANE OPERATORS AND TRUCK DRIVERS GET TO DREAM IN THE "WORKING WATERFRONT" EXHIBITS. THE CRANE IS OPERATIONAL; THE RAMP PROVIDES ACCESS TO THE TRUCK CAB.

MAIN STREET / DINER



THE DINER IS ONE OF MUSEUM GO-ERS FAVORITE EXHIBITS AND HAS BEEN IN ALL THREE MUSEUMS. KIDS CAN PLAY AT THE COUNTER, OUTDOOR SEATING, AND THE TAKEAWAY WINDOW.

MAIN STREET / DOCTOR / DENTIST / BANK



THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE, DENTIST OFFICE, AND BANK
OVERLOOK THE WATERFRONT AND GIVE CHILDREN A
CHANCE TO ROLE PLAY IN REAL WORLD PROFESSIONS.



MAIN STREET / DESIGN FIRM / CONSTRUCTION SITE



THE DESIGN FIRM HAS GRAPHIC AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN MATERIALS TO PEAK INTEREST AND THE CONSTRUCTION ZONE ILLUSTRATES A WORK IN PROGRESS WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR KIDS TO "BUILD" IMAGINATIVELY

TRAIN STATION



HEAD UP THE TUNNEL RAMP TO THE PLATFORM AND CABOOSE, WHERE CONDUCTORS ARE ABLE TO DRIVE THE FUTURE OVERHEAD MODEL TRAIN. THE PLATFORM WALL DOUBLES AS THEATER SEATING.



ART ROOM



CREATIVITY IS LIMITLESS IN THE OPEN ART ROOM, STOCKED WITH SUPPLIES AND WALLS FOR DISPLAY



READING ROOM



TREE OF LIFE
SPANS FROM
READING ROOM
INTO STORE/ENTRY

"STEAM" ROOM / FAMILY RESOURCE ROOM



SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ART, AND MATH ACTIVITIES ARE FEATURED IN THIS ACTIVE FAMILY SUPPORT SPACE.

CLASSROOM



THE PRE-SCHOOL CLASSROOM HAS A SECURE ENTRANCE, ONE-WAY GLAZING, AND FAMILY VIEWING FROM THE HALL. ACTIVITIES INCLUDE YOGA, READING TIME, GAMES, AND ACTIVE LEARNING.

PARTY ROOM / EVENT SPACE



THE EVENT SPACE SERVES AS A LARGE MOTOR SKILLS AREA WHERE EXHIBITS CAN BE CHANGED EASILY. IT AND THE PARTY ROOM ARE RENTED FREQUENTLY.

AROUND THE TOWN



THE INTENT IS TO PROVIDE LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE AND LEARN, FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES AND THEIR CARE GIVERS AS WELL.

