



HISTORY & NATURE CENTER

BREWERY PARK AT TUMWATER FALLS

OVERVIEW

In 2020, the Olympia Tumwater Foundation, a non-profit since 1950, launched a planning and funding process for a new interpretive and education facility to better serve the public at Brewery Park at Tumwater Falls. The foundation, which receives no city, state, or federal funds for park operations, created this urban oasis in 1962 as a gift to the community. **Our goal is to break ground in 2025 and open the History & Nature Center to the public in 2026.**

Brewery Park at Tumwater Falls welcomes over 250,000 visitors per year and has never charged an admission fee. Visitors can walk the half-mile looped trail through the river canyon, enjoy a picnic above the upper falls, and each autumn watch salmon migrate to a state-operated fish hatchery in the park. The educational impact of the park is limited by lack of an appropriate facility to complement and highlight the park's historical and environmental importance.

PURPOSE

Inspired by Salish longhouses, the new History & Nature Center will maximize its ability to produce a sustainable income by doubling up on program spaces. One large meeting area will serve as the learning center, telling the stories of the site's history from the early significance as a gathering location for multiple Salish tribes, to the industrial use of the falls by early settlers and the beautiful Brewery Park. This same area will also serve as an event space accommodating 100 guests at a broad range of community functions. The learning center will also feature the park's environmental value to the region via exhibits and laboratories to provide education about the ecology of the Deschutes River and the impact of human activities on water quality, climate change and ecosystems.

Brewery Park at Tumwater Falls is an ideal location to create an immersive outdoor learning experience that enriches STEM knowledge for youth. **The foundation's History & Nature Center, in partnership with WDFW, will lend itself well to education programs that give children a hands-on experiential learning opportunity, both inside the facility and in a real-world environment.**

*Contact John Freedman, Executive Director, for more information.
360.943.2550 or otf@olytumfoundation.org*



COSTS & BENEFITS

We estimate building costs of under \$5 million, which also includes expenditures for architectural, engineering, and exhibit design fees.

An analysis by the Thurston Economic Development Council showed that the Brewery Park History and Nature Center will create 24 full time jobs and produce over \$7.3 million in economic impact to Thurston County during the construction period. An additional \$342,000 in state and local taxes will also be generated. The park's economic benefit to the community is valued at over \$1 million per year.

Visitation has greatly increased at Tumwater Falls with the expansion of the WDFW salmon hatchery and the construction of the Deschutes Valley Trail, an ADA-compliant walking and bicycling trail sponsored by the City of Tumwater. Both projects were made possible by generous easements from the Olympia Tumwater Foundation.

Creation of the History and Nature Center will complement these new developments and make the park an even more compelling tourist draw and valuable resource to the Thurston County community and the state of Washington.





Rendering by Thomas Architecture Studios showing a cultural and historical education space in the interior of the History & Nature Center.



Rendering by Thomas Architecture Studios showing an exterior view of the History & Nature Center (right) and adjacent office and maintenance building (left) as seen when entering the park.