

◆CORONATION PARK

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In January of 1913, it was announced that the winning plans for the new Coronation Park had been selected and that work on the project would begin first thing in the Spring. The newspaper carried a detailed description of the elaborate plans for the area that would one day become known as Riverside Park.

The winner of the contest was Kamloops resident J. Ducksbery who won over some very stiff out-of-town competition. This appears to be Ducksbery's only claim to fame in Kamloops history. Whether he left town, died or simply receded into obscurity is not mentioned in Archives records.

Although his park is still with us, today's version is quite unlike the grandiose design Ducksbery had envisioned. His enthusiastic description in the January 17, 1913 Sentinel newspaper follows. See how many features you recognise.

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The plan shows the principal entrance to the park at the southeast corner of the site in Lorne Street where the old hospital stood, nearly opposite the end of Third Avenue. It thus provides easy access from the business centre of the City.

An ornamental iron palisading and gates with substantial brick piers would be fixed to the street frontage which is about 110 feet wide (33.5 meters). From the entrance, a roadway 50 feet wide (15.2 meters) runs at right angles to Lorne Street to the proposed Exhibition Building which is situated on the northeast corner of the site.

The building is 100 by 60 feet (30.5 by 18.3 meters), two storeys in height, built of brick, and in the Italian Renaissance style of architecture. It is set on a terrace raised some seven feet (2.1 meters) above the ground and approached by a wide flight of steps.

The principal façade of the building faces west and is centred on a grand promenade boulevard 50 feet wide (15.2 meters), which runs the whole length of the park from east to west.

In the centre of the boulevard is an ornamental fountain, the spray of which falls into a large basin 20 feet (6.1 meters) in diameter at the base. At each of the four corners of the basin would be fixed a sanitary drinking fount, the whole being on a platform raised two steps above the ground level.

Trees would, of course, be planted along both sides of the boulevard and entrance roadway, and a fine view would be obtained looking east along the boulevard with the proposed building at the end, the river on the left and the mountains in the background.

At the junction of the boulevard and main entrance roadway, advantage has been taken of a natural depression in the ground to form a flower garden which would be laid out with beds and walks. In the centre would be fixed a small

spray fountain. It is suggested to plant trees and rhododendrons and similar shrubs around this part and thus make it a sheltered, shady corner.

On the centre of the south boundary, a site is shown for a proposed palm house, where palms and other tropical plants could be cultivated. Behind this would be an aviary or natural history specimen building where birds and small animals could be kept, as at Stanley Park, Vancouver, and other places.

These buildings would also be on a terrace raised above the ground. A portion is set aside as a children's park and would be supplied with swings and other apparatus for juvenile amusements.

The river frontage is treated as an explanade with a concrete retaining wall, with steps leading down to the beach opposite the end of Second Avenue. A semi-circular bay is thrown out to form the City wharf.

Walks and paths are shown crossing the large spaces intended to be cultivated as a greensward. The designer advises the liberal planting of additional trees and shrubs of various species over the whole of the park area. Such trees should be kept clear of branches for a height of about eight feet (2.4 meters) above the ground surface.

Scattered about the park are shown rustic shelters. A plentiful supply of seats would be necessary.

The recreation ground is not interfered with, as the area is at present very limited for such games as baseball, lacrosse, football, and cricket. But shade trees are proposed on the west and south sides.

A suggestion is made to swing around the grandstand so as to be directly opposite the north end of the baseball pitch.

Signed,

J. Ducksbery.

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