

High Point Park: On Top of the Triangle

a proposal for public space in the sky

The roof of the former US Steel building in downtown Pittsburgh is currently the largest, highest flat space in the world. Despite the lack of obstructions, however, the view of the city is currently invisible from the center due to the expanse. Inspired by this inability, the park has two distinct areas of focus.

Visitors enter the park through an observation and multi-purpose indoor space. The single room is designed to be flexible in programming to plan for all-season observation, private parties or future development into restaurant, gift shop or other use. A glass curtain-wall faces views to the northside, downtown, and southside. To get closer to the view, there is an observation promenade outside the glass. Both of these spaces lift gazes outwards at the city.

The promenade nudges the viewer towards the amphitheater in the center of the roof. It is a space that lets the view fade away in favor of a focus on the immediate area, on the experience of being in a park in the middle of the sky. Allowing both for more formalized performances and casual habitation, this exterior space is also an ecological tool for managing stormwater in rainwater garden and cistern systems, as well as reducing heat gain inside the building. It is a park that caters to out-of-towners and gives city residents a reason to come back.

