



AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: November 13, 2023

SUBJECT: Camping Feasibility Study Final Report

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

On May 1, 2023 the County contracted with ECONorthwest to conduct a Camping Feasibility Study with a final report to be delivered by November 15, 2023. The study was focused on the feasibility of the development of private or public RV parks and campgrounds on for recreational purposes, along with support amenities and infrastructure, in three areas of Deschutes County. The three areas included in the study were Thompson Road, Drafter Road (La Pine), and Crooked River Ranch.

The scope of work included:

- 1. Conducting a preliminary site analysis, engineering, and environmental assessment.** Environmental Science Associates (ESA) led efforts on conducting preliminary site analysis, engineering, and environmental assessments for the priority sites. ESA analyzed the proposed sites for development strengths and constraints including zoning, comprehensive plan, and other site development regulations, impact on environment, infrastructure needs and availability, rights of way and easements, and possible abutter concerns.
- 2. Developing conceptual RV Park and campground operational and finance plans.** ECONorthwest drafted a preliminary development program for each priority site. The preliminary development program included the number of campsites by type, site facilities and amenities, and a rough estimate of the area and location of the campground on the site. To assess the financial feasibility of a new campground(s) a market feasibility and financial feasibility study was conducted that included pro formas for each of the 3 sites.
- 3. Planning the organizational structure.** To develop the RV park and campground organizational structure, ECONorthwest utilized its past work as well as updating with RV campground industry research to understand current development and permitting costs, management, and operational labor costs, short- and long-term capital needs, and costs that vary season to season. ECONorthwest researched and identified local, state and federal grant or other financial opportunities for development and/or operations. To identify RV park organizational considerations, constraints, and factors, a comprehensive

literature review, in tandem with interviews with industry leaders and insiders, and stakeholders was performed. The information gathered from these efforts ensured an operational framework that incorporated up-to-date and effective business RV operations guidelines that will be resilient to industry forecasted trends and expected industry changes.

- 4. Submitting a Final Report and Executive Summary.** ECONorthwest and ESA developed a report that consolidated all project efforts into a single document. The executive summary highlighted key findings and processes and procedures that are most pertinent on a site-by-site basis.

ECONorthwest will present a summary of the Final Report and be available to answer any questions. The full report is included in the Board's meeting materials.

BUDGET IMPACTS:

The contract for ECONorthwest is paid for out of the Park Acquisition and Development Fund. The contract was approved for \$99,580. To date, \$89,690.68 has been paid in Fiscal Year 2024. The remaining \$9,889.32 is expected to be invoiced and paid in Fiscal Year 2024.

ATTENDANCE:

Jen Patterson, Deschutes County, Strategic Initiatives Manager

Mark Buckley, ECONorthwest, Partner/Senior Economist

Alicia Milligan, ECONorthwest, Project Manager