



AGENDA REPORT

City Council Meeting

TODAY'S DATE: June 23, 2026

MEETING DATE: July 1, 2026

TO: Mayor Grimm, Sandpoint City Council

FROM: Jason Welker, Planning & Community Development Director

SUBJECT: City Beach RV Park and Parking Lot Design Concepts: Council Direction on Preferred Basis of Design

Executive Summary

The City is advancing design work for two closely related improvements at City Beach: renovation of the City Beach RV Park and redesign of the adjacent City Beach parking lot. The RV Park renovation is funded primarily through a \$950,000 Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation RV Fund grant, which will cover approximately 95% of the RV Park renovation cost, with the remaining balance funded through the City's Parks Capital Improvement Fund. Separately, the City budgeted \$100,000 in local funding this year for the HMH/MTLA design team to prepare design drawings for an improved City Beach parking lot, which will bring that concept to a 35% design in time for submission with grant applications in winter 2026/2027.

The parking lot design effort is intended to address long-standing access, circulation, safety, and stormwater deficiencies in the City Beach parking area. The design principles include separating vehicle-only parking from boat trailer parking, improving boat launch circulation, improving pedestrian connectivity between parking areas and the beach, improving stormwater treatment and landscaping, bringing trees into the parking field, maintaining or increasing the total number of vehicle parking stalls, and doubling dedicated boat trailer parking from the current 10 spaces to 20 spaces.

The design team has prepared two concepts for Council consideration:

Concept A: Turnaround Centric emphasizes a more substantial turnaround and drop-off function within City Beach while still increasing standard vehicle parking above existing conditions and doubling boat trailer parking.

Concept B: Extended Parking emphasizes higher overall parking capacity and includes additional tent camping opportunities while still providing the core RV Park, boat trailer, circulation, landscaping, and pedestrian improvements.

Staff is requesting Council direction on which concept should serve as the preferred basis of design for the next phase of work. Council's direction will allow the design team to proceed efficiently with detailed engineering, refinement of layout and amenities, cost estimating, permitting review, phasing analysis, and preparation of construction documents for the RV Park renovation and future parking lot improvements.

Background

Sandpoint City Beach is one of the City's most important public waterfront assets, providing access to Lake Pend Oreille, Sand Creek, the public beach, boat launch facilities, marina access, picnic and open space areas, and other recreation amenities. The City Beach RV Park is located immediately adjacent to the main City Beach parking lot and has historically served as a small waterfront RV campground.

The City acquired the City Beach RV Park in 2020 through a land swap with the owners of the Edgewater Hotel. The facility currently includes 23 RV sites and is regularly booked during the summer season, generally from Memorial Day through Labor Day. The RV Park generates more than \$100,000 per year for the City's Parks Improvement Fund. Since taking ownership, the City has not made substantial capital improvements to the RV Park.

In 2025, the City was awarded a \$950,000 Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation RV Fund grant to renovate the RV Park. The grant is specific to RV Park improvements. The City is providing the required local match through the Parks Capital Improvement Fund. The RV Park project is being designed to modernize aging infrastructure, improve site circulation, harden RV pads and internal travel ways, upgrade utilities, provide accessible amenities, and add a new restroom and shower facility.

In parallel with the RV Park renovation, the City also budgeted \$100,000 in additional local funding for the HMM/MTLA design team to prepare design drawings for a future reconstruction of the adjacent City Beach parking lot. The parking lot construction phase is not fully funded at this time, but the design work will position the City to pursue future grants, identify phasing options, and use future parking revenue or other capital sources to implement improvements over time.

The RV Park and parking lot are being studied together because the two facilities share access, circulation, utilities, stormwater considerations, and visitor use patterns. Design decisions in one area directly affect the functionality of the other. A coordinated design is intended to produce a more efficient and safer long-term layout for all users, including beachgoers, boaters, RV Park guests, pedestrians, cyclists, transit or shuttle users, maintenance staff, and emergency responders.

Project Objectives

The project is intended to achieve the following objectives:

1. Renovate and modernize the City Beach RV Park.
2. Replace or upgrade aging water, sewer, electrical, and related utility infrastructure.
3. Improve internal RV Park circulation and site functionality.
4. Provide a new restroom and shower facility.
5. Improve ADA accessibility and non-motorized boat access.
6. Improve boat launch maneuvering, preparation, and pullout areas.
7. Separate vehicle-only parking from boat trailer parking.
8. Double dedicated boat trailer parking from 10 spaces to 20 spaces.
9. Maintain or increase the number of available vehicle parking stalls.
10. Improve pedestrian connectivity between parking areas, the RV Park, the boat launch, and the beach.
11. Improve stormwater treatment through better grading, landscaping, and tree planting.
12. Incorporate landscape areas and tree canopy into the parking field consistent with City code.
13. Provide a convenient drop-off area near the park entrance that could also support future SPOT bus service or group drop-off needs.
14. Develop a layout that can be phased and implemented as funding becomes available.

15. Establish a preferred basis of design for the next phase of engineering and cost estimating.

Design and Public Engagement Process

The two concepts before Council were developed through an iterative design process involving City staff, the HMH/MTLA consultant team, a subcommittee of the Parks and Recreation Commission, the broader Parks and Recreation Commission, and the public.

The design team evaluated existing site conditions, including RV Park layout, utility needs, parking lot geometry, boat launch circulation, pedestrian access, stormwater constraints, code requirements, and the relationship between the RV Park, parking lot, beach, marina, and boat launch.

A subcommittee of the Parks and Recreation Commission worked closely with staff and the design team to review early design assumptions, identify key functional priorities, and refine the concepts. The broader Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed the concepts at its June meeting and provided additional feedback.

The City also gathered community input through an online survey and a public engagement activity at the June 27 Farmers Market. The engagement materials introduced the project background, funding sources, project design principles, and opportunities for public comment. Community members were invited to review the concepts, ask questions, and provide comments on issues such as parking, boat launch access, pedestrian safety, RV Park amenities, waterfront access, landscaping, stormwater, and overall park functionality.

The survey results available as of June 23, 2026 show that respondents ranked Concept B ahead of Concept A when asked to identify their preferred concept. However, the written comments reflect a broader and more nuanced set of community priorities. Many respondents supported the additional parking supply, improved traffic flow, improved boat launch maneuvering, added landscaping and tree canopy, and separation of boat trailer parking from standard vehicle parking. Other respondents expressed support for the stronger drop-off and turnaround function shown in Concept A, especially near the beach and snack shack area.

Staff recommends that Council consider both the ranked preference and the written comments together. The ranking question suggests greater community support for Concept B, while the comments indicate that several specific elements of Concept A, especially the drop-off function, turnaround, and circulation benefits, remain important to a number of respondents and may be worth carrying forward where feasible.

Community Survey Summary

The City received survey input on the two City Beach RV Park and parking lot concepts as of June 23, 2026. The survey asked participants to rank their preferred concept and provide open-ended comments on what works, what does not work, what may be missing, and what would improve access to City Beach compared to the current parking situation.

Overall Concept Preference

Survey respondents ranked **Concept B** as the preferred concept over **Concept A**. Concept B appears to have drawn support primarily because it provides the highest total number of standard vehicle parking stalls, retains the target of 20 dedicated boat trailer stalls, includes the same number of RV sites as Concept A, and adds 3 to 4 tent camping sites. Respondents who favored Concept B frequently emphasized that parking supply at City Beach is already constrained during peak summer periods and that additional parking would help maintain public access to the beach, boat launch, marina, and nearby amenities.

Concept A also received support, particularly from respondents who favored the stronger turnaround and drop-off function, improved arrival sequence, and perceived traffic flow benefits. Several comments

specifically noted support for the drop-off area, roundabout/turnaround concept, and improved RV or boat circulation.

Themes from Comments on What Works

The most common positive themes included:

1. **More parking capacity.** Many respondents identified additional standard parking as a major benefit, particularly during peak summer use, events, and busy beach days. Several comments specifically favored Concept B because it provides more parking.
2. **Improved boat launch and trailer circulation.** Respondents generally supported separating boat trailers from standard vehicle parking and improving the boat launch prep, pullout, and maneuvering areas. Some comments noted that the current boat launch area is difficult to maneuver and that designated trailer parking is a needed improvement.
3. **Improved RV Park circulation and amenities.** Several respondents supported the redesigned RV Park layout, improved flow, new restroom and shower facilities, and upgraded RV Park amenities. Some respondents who use the RV Park expressed appreciation that the City is investing in the facility.
4. **More trees, landscaping, and green space.** Many comments supported adding trees, shade, and landscaped areas within the parking lot. Respondents noted that additional tree canopy would improve the user experience and help soften the appearance of the parking area.
5. **Drop-off and transit/shuttle function.** Some respondents supported the proposed drop-off area, especially near the beach or snack shack area, and noted that improved drop-off could help families, seniors, and users carrying coolers, beach equipment, or small children. Several comments also mentioned shuttle service, SPOT bus access, or reducing the need to drive directly into the core beach area.
6. **Improved pedestrian access and safety.** Respondents supported clearer pedestrian connections and better separation between vehicles, trailers, and people walking to the beach.

Themes from Comments on What Does Not Work or May Be Missing

The most common concerns included:

1. **Concern about paid parking and local access.** Several respondents used the survey to object to paid parking, express concern that locals are being priced out of City Beach, or request that residents not be charged for access. These comments are broader than the design choice before Council but are relevant to overall public perception of the project.
2. **Boat trailer design concerns.** Some respondents expressed concern that the trailer parking design may be difficult to use. Multiple comments suggested that pull-through trailer spaces would be preferable and that the design should ensure adequate length and maneuvering room for truck-and-trailer combinations.
3. **Concern about roundabouts or turnaround geometry.** While some respondents liked the roundabout/turnaround elements, others expressed concern that roundabouts could create conflicts for RVs, boat trailers, or drivers unfamiliar with the layout. Comments suggested that the design team should carefully test turning movements for large RVs, boat trailers, emergency vehicles, and maintenance vehicles.
4. **Need for dog-friendly amenities.** Several respondents requested dog-friendly areas or amenities. Concept B includes a dog park/RV amenities area, which appears to respond to this theme.
5. **Need for play, shade, and family amenities.** Some respondents suggested shade near the beach, improved play areas for children, bike parking, scooter parking, or other family-oriented amenities.

6. **Drop-off location concerns.** Some respondents preferred a drop-off closer to the beach or snack shack, while others believed users will continue to drop off near the hotel or beach regardless of the designated location. Several comments suggest the final design should make the intended drop-off intuitive and convenient enough that it will actually be used.
7. **Pedestrian crossing and safety improvements.** Respondents suggested stronger pedestrian safety treatments, including crossings, traffic calming, or warning features where pedestrians move between parking areas and the beach.
8. **Desire for broader or additional public input.** Some respondents expressed concern that the process should include more public input or that the survey should not be the only source of community feedback. Staff notes that the survey is one component of the public engagement record, along with Parks and Recreation Commission review, subcommittee input, staff/design team analysis, and the June 27 Farmers Market engagement activity.

Comments on Improving Access to City Beach

When asked what would improve access to City Beach compared to the current parking situation, respondents suggested a mix of operational and design strategies. These included:

- Mini-shuttle or shuttle service from downtown parking areas to City Beach.
- Traffic calming and one-way circulation within the parking loop.
- More green space and shade.
- A clearer and more official drop-off/pick-up location.
- Limiting or revising paid parking, particularly for residents or locals.
- Charging out-of-state users differently than local users.
- Parking farther away and shuttling users into the beach area.

These comments indicate that parking lot design alone will not address every access concern at City Beach. Final design should be coordinated with parking management, signage, wayfinding, possible shuttle or transit options, pedestrian access improvements, and clear communication about resident permit options and paid parking rules.

Staff Interpretation of Survey Input

Both concepts meet the core objectives established for the project. Concept A and Concept B each provide 18 RV sites, 20 boat trailer stalls, restroom and shower facilities, van camping, EV charging, improved boat launch maneuvering, ADA and non-motorized boat parking, landscape improvements, and a bus stop/beach drop-off area.

The most significant distinction is the balance between circulation/drop-off function and parking yield.

Concept A provides a stronger turnaround and drop-off configuration. This may be advantageous for families, seniors, visitors with mobility limitations, shuttle or future SPOT bus service, special events, and general park circulation. Concept A may also provide a more legible and comfortable arrival sequence into City Beach. The tradeoff is that Concept A provides fewer standard stalls than Concept B, although it still exceeds the target of 300 standard stalls.

Concept B provides the highest standard parking count, with approximately 333 standard stalls. It also includes 3 to 4 tent camp sites, which may broaden camping opportunities and provide additional low-impact overnight recreation options. The tradeoff is that the internal turnaround/drop-off function is less prominent than in Concept A.

Community survey results as of June 23, 2026 show that respondents ranked Concept B ahead of Concept A. Written comments indicate that the preference for Concept B is largely tied to additional parking supply, improved circulation, and the desire to maintain convenient public access to City Beach during peak season. At the same time, several comments supported elements of Concept A, particularly the stronger drop-off and turnaround function.

Based on the survey input, staff believes Concept B is the stronger candidate for the preferred basis of design if Council’s priority is to maximize parking supply while still achieving the RV Park, boat launch, pedestrian, landscaping, and stormwater objectives. However, staff also recommends that Council direct the design team to carry forward and further evaluate key functional elements from Concept A where feasible, especially drop-off convenience, intuitive turnaround geometry, and safe pedestrian access.

Regardless of which concept Council selects, staff recommends that Council authorize continued refinement of several details during the next phase of design:

1. Final ADA stall placement and accessible routes.
2. Pedestrian crossings and connections from parking areas to the beach.
3. Boat launch queuing, prep, pullout, and trailer circulation.
4. Trailer stall length, turning templates, and feasibility of pull-through trailer parking where possible.
5. Stormwater treatment areas and landscape islands.
6. Tree placement, species selection, and long-term canopy performance.
7. RV Park utility layout and service connections.
8. Restroom/shower building location, size, and construction type.
9. Dog-friendly amenities and family-oriented support amenities.
10. Phasing between RV Park construction and future parking lot reconstruction.
11. Construction cost estimates and value engineering.
12. Permitting requirements and agency coordination.
13. Opportunities for public art, signage, and wayfinding.
14. Operations, maintenance, snow storage, and event management considerations.

Concept Comparison

Design Element	Existing / Target	Concept A: Turnaround Centric	Concept B: Extended Parking
<i>Standard vehicle parking</i>	Existing: 278 standard + 9 ADA; Target: 300	309 standard stalls	333 standard stalls
<i>Boat trailer parking</i>	Existing: 10; Target: 20	20 trailer stalls	20 trailer stalls
<i>RV sites</i>	Existing: 23; Target: 16–18	18 RV sites	18 RV sites
<i>70-foot RV sites</i>	N/A	9	10
<i>55-foot RV sites</i>	N/A	9	8
<i>Van camping</i>	N/A	2 spaces	2 spaces
<i>Tent camping</i>	N/A	Not included	3–4 sites
<i>Restroom/showers</i>	Project objective	Included	Included

<i>Bus stop / beach drop-off</i>	Project objective	Included	Included
<i>Primary circulation emphasis</i>	N/A	Turnaround/drop-off function	Extended parking supply
<i>Boat launch maneuvering</i>	Project objective	Included	Included
<i>ADA / non-motorized boat parking</i>	Project objective	Included	Included
<i>Landscaping / tree planting</i>	Code and project objective	Included	Included
<i>Parking lot landscape compliance</i>	Required	Designed to meet requirement	Designed to meet requirement

Code and Design Considerations

Both concepts have been developed to account for Sandpoint Municipal Code parking lot landscape requirements, including minimum parking area landscaping, proximity of parking spaces to landscaped areas, required tree planting, and canopy coverage. Both concepts show approximately 15,000 square feet of landscape area within the parking lot, exceeding the minimum landscape area identified on the concept plans.

The concept sheets identify that both concepts can satisfy the minimum 10% parking area landscaping requirement without losing parking stalls specifically to meet that requirement. However, the concept sheets also note that full compliance with mature parking lot canopy coverage requirements may affect the final stall count as detailed design proceeds, with Concept A identifying up to 20 stalls potentially affected and Concept B identifying up to 25 stalls potentially affected.

Both concepts also identify the need for 8 ADA stalls based on the 301 to 400 parking stall range, with an approximate parking supply effect of 12 stalls when accounting for stall and access aisle space. ADA stall placement, accessible routes, grading, and final compliance will be refined during the next phase of design.

Funding and Fiscal Impact

The RV Park renovation is funded primarily by a \$950,000 Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation RV Fund grant. The grant is intended for RV Park improvements and represents approximately 95% of the RV Park renovation funding. The balance of the RV Park renovation is funded through the Parks Capital Improvement Fund.

The City also budgeted \$100,000 in local funding for design of the City Beach parking lot improvements. This design work is intended to advance the parking lot to a level of design sufficient to establish a preferred layout, evaluate costs, coordinate utilities and stormwater concepts, support grant applications, and prepare for future implementation.

Council's action on July 1 does not award a construction contract for the parking lot and does not obligate the City to construct the full parking lot improvement project at this time. Rather, Council direction will establish the preferred basis of design so that the design team can continue refining the project and staff can evaluate funding and phasing options.

The RV Park renovation is expected to proceed on a more defined grant-funded schedule. Parking lot reconstruction will depend on future Council appropriations, grants, paid parking revenue, or other available funding sources.

Policy Considerations

Council's decision is primarily a policy direction regarding how the City should balance several competing but compatible objectives at City Beach:

- Parking supply versus arrival/drop-off function.
- Vehicle access versus pedestrian comfort and safety.
- RV Park revenue and modernization versus broader waterfront public access.
- Boat launch functionality versus general park parking demand.
- Near-term grant-funded RV Park improvements versus longer-term parking lot reconstruction.
- Maintaining the park's open, waterfront character while adding necessary infrastructure.
- Maximizing current parking capacity while meeting landscaping, stormwater, and urban forestry objectives.

Both concepts represent a substantial improvement over existing conditions. Both concepts modernize the RV Park, improve the parking lot layout, double boat trailer parking, address boat launch maneuvering, add landscape and stormwater improvements, and improve pedestrian connections. The choice before Council is therefore not whether to proceed with improvements, but which design emphasis should guide the next phase of work.

Requested Council Direction

Staff requests that Council select one of the two concepts as the preferred basis of design. Council may also identify specific elements from the non-selected concept that should be further evaluated or incorporated where feasible.

Council direction should answer the following question:

Which concept should the City direct the design team to advance as the preferred basis of design for the City Beach RV Park renovation and parking lot improvement project?

Clear direction at this stage will allow staff and the design team to proceed with the next phase of work, including engineering refinement, cost estimating, phasing, permitting, and preparation of design documents.

Alternatives

Council may take one of the following actions:

1. Direct staff to advance Concept A as the preferred basis of design.
2. Direct staff to advance Concept B as the preferred basis of design.
3. Direct staff to advance a modified concept based on specific Council direction.
4. Request additional information and defer direction to a future meeting.