



City of Stevenson

Leana Kinley, City Administrator

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To: Skamania County Commissioners and Stevenson City Council
From: Leana Kinley, City Administrator
RE: Courthouse Park Plaza – Project Update
Date: August 21, 2024

Executive Summary:

The City of Stevenson and Skamania County have been working together cooperatively on the Courthouse Park Plaza project for many years. The City received a grant from the Department of Commerce to move the project forward from conceptual designs to engineered construction plans for a shovel-ready project. In August 2023 the City contracted with Understory Architecture, LLC to fulfill this milestone. After the completion of a second county-wide survey, where there were restrictions on the number of entries by IP address, most people still support the project.

The website with information on the project is: <https://www.ci.stevenson.wa.us/planning/project/park-plaza>.

Overview of Items:

Project background and timeline as of April 2024:

A copy of the Open House documents are included for information on the project background and latest design. The results from the second survey are also included.

Concerns:

1. Maintenance and liability of the lawn which is not part of the developed plaza. The current contract assumed the entire area was to be developed (based on initial design). Options:
 - Revise the agreement to only apply to the developed/improved area or to a reduced area.
 - City responsible for all of it.
 - Other options...
2. Liability associated with Splash Pad
 - a. Still waiting on input from risk insurance. Articles found online regarding risk are attached.
3. WSDOT Input –
 - a. Email thread with Gary Albrecht, Deputy Director WSDOT Southwest Region attached.
4. Parking Impact
 - a. Studies done in 2021 and 2023 suggest there is enough parking and any parking problems are localized/time-limited. A copy of the presentation on the study is attached.
5. Project cost and sources

Construction - Current Design \$4.3M, Budget Goal \$3.2M

On-Hand Cash available:	\$50,000	BNSF Grant
	\$1,000,000	Stevenson Lodging Tax Reserves (TAC)
	\$50,000	Stevenson Downtown Association Project Res.

Funding Opportunities:	\$3,400,000	Direct Federal Legislation Request
	\$????	Stevenson Downtown Association Fundraising
<i>Ongoing Funding-</i>		
Maintenance	\$52,000	Estimate from Parks Plan 50% General, 50% TAC
Reserves	\$5,000-???	Depends on the final design and equipment needs

*Average General Fund Parks expense the last 10 years is \$64,000. 2024 budget is \$70,000

Cost Cutting Options: (latest design and cost estimate attached)

- Remove the Splash Pad (fifth most important amenity)
 - Decreases final design costs by \$52k (amendment costs from \$350k to \$298k).
 - Decreases Property Insurance Coverage (for repairs to equipment damage) by \$3,000
 - Decreases maintenance costs by \$7,000
- Remove the bathroom (most important amenity)
 - Decreases Property Insurance Coverage (for repairs to equipment damage) by \$1,000
 - Decreases maintenance costs by \$32,000

Next Steps/Timeline to move the project forward:

- Discuss changes to the interlocal agreement as requested by the Skamania County Commissioners letter of July 9, 2024 (attached).
- Finalize the design with approval from Skamania County Commissioners and City of Stevenson Council (section 7.2 of the agreement).
- Extend contract with Understory Landscaping, LLC for phase 2 of design to complete Commerce grant requirements. Phase 1 determined the design of the project to scope phase 2, which provides shovel-ready designs and more concrete cost estimates.
- Establish ordinance for Stevenson Council approval to meet contractual obligations ensuring the Plaza will not be used for sleeping or camping (section 4.6).
- Determine policy regarding use of the plaza for events as outlined in the contract (section 4.8).
- Establish reserve amount for the Courthouse Park Plaza according to the contract after the design is finalized (section 4.10).
- Continue to pursue funding opportunities. Federal requests are due in Spring of 2025.
- Complete shovel-ready designs and bid packet.
 - Department of Commerce grant will need to be extended past the 6/30/25 deadline to receive the \$147k and will need strong confirmation of the city's intent to move forward based on the recent inaction on the consultant contract.
- Finalize funding, bid and construct the Plaza.

Action Needed:

Consensus on final design or direction on changes to be made.

Consensus on changes to the Interlocal Agreement to be brought back to each governing body for formal approval.