

Date: January 23, 2024

Honorable Mayor and Council Members

Author and title: Nola Mitchell, Associate Engineer

Title: **Authorize West River Street Park (C1817) to Advertise for Construction Bid**

Jen Callaway, Town Manager

Recommended Action: Authorize Town staff to advertise the West River Street Park Project (C1817) for construction bids for construction in summer 2024.

Discussion:

The West River Street Park project (referred to as the Park in this report) is located at 10257 West River Street, immediately west of the West River Street/Mill Street intersection across from the Flyers Station and Truckee Tire. The project would regrade the existing vacant site to provide a tiered park with passive recreation features, such as picnic benches, seating, landscaping, pathways, and views of the Truckee River. The Park would be accessed via West River Street or the new bridge across the Truckee River that connects to the Truckee River Legacy Trail, which is to be constructed this summer. The project location is shown in Figure 1 and a current rendering of the Park is shown in Figure 2.

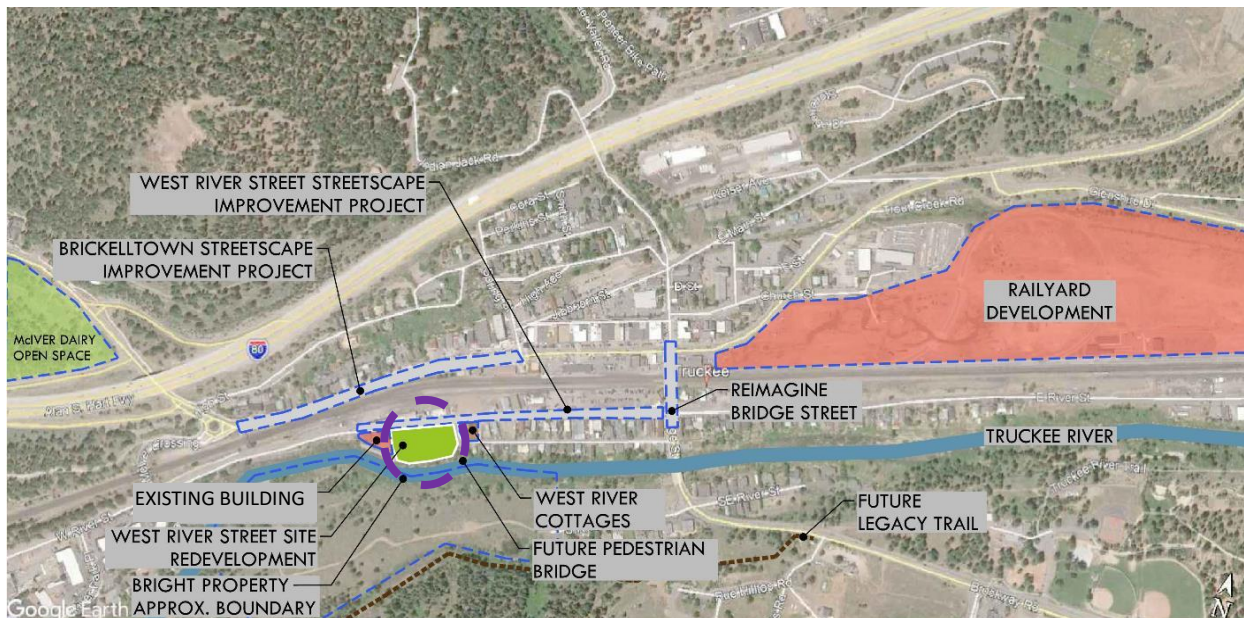


Figure 1: West River Park Location

A park on the Truckee River in this vicinity has been conceptualized by the community for decades and initial layouts were first developed through public workshops in 2010 and 2011, resulting in the development of the West River Site Redevelopment Feasibility Study. This study, which included a robust community input process, recommended a combination of public park and river-oriented commercial

development to activate this space and provide a catalyst for riverfront redevelopment. A summary of meetings dates/topics is included below for reference.

- 2010: Request for Proposals for a West River Site Redevelopment Feasibility Study was authorized
- 2010: BMS Design Group was awarded contract for the West River Site Redevelopment Feasibility Study
- 2010-2011: 3 public workshops were held
- 2011: The West River Site Redevelopment Feasibility Study was accepted
- 2011: The initial Request for Interest for developers was issued and no proposals were submitted
- 2016: Town Council directed staff to initiate public outreach
- 2016-2017: Community outreach was conducted
- 2017: A second Request for Interest for developers was issued
- 2019: Melton Design Group, Inc (MDG) was awarded the park design contract
- 2020: A virtual public meeting was held
- 2020: Master Plan Concept (30%) Design was approved by Town Council
- 2020 (March): An amendment to the MDG contract was approved by Town Council
- 2020 (October): A design update presentation was conducted
- 2021: Town Council approval of parallel parking and Class 2 bike lanes
- 2022: A special Town Council meeting to walk West River Street was held
- 2023 (February): An amendment to MDG contract was approved by Town Council
- 2023 (November): The Planning Commission approved the development permit, use permit, and sign permit for the park
- 2024 (January): A Community Meeting was held at Town Hall to discuss the project and answer questions

While future commercial development is still being contemplated adjacent to the proposed park, that development would need to be reviewed and approved through a process separate from the Park project. To be clear, the approval to move forward requested at this time is only for the construction of the park.

Design Updates

The Town Council approved the Park master plan concept in 2020 and staff has been working with the consultant team, led by Melton Design Group, Inc (MDG), to finalize the plans, specifications, and cost estimates.

In February 2023, Council members reaffirmed, by majority, the intention to proceed with completing the Park design and moving forward with the concept of the Park and future flanking commercial development. However, during this discussion, the Council expressed concerns with the Park relying on future adjacent commercial development for restrooms. Staff has determined that the Park needs to provide either separate restrooms (independent of commercial development) or restrooms associated with commercial development. Therefore, MDG has designed a restroom on the northeast side of the Park on West River Street with two all-gender stalls, a water fountain and water bottle filler, and automatic locks (Attachment B). Staff plan to include the restrooms in the construction bid as an additive alternate, which means the Town has flexibility to decide whether or not to include them in the awarded construction contract.

Finally, at the February 14, 2023 Town Council meeting, Council discussed the possibility that future commercial may not evolve as desired, as this is dependent on a variety of factors outside of the Town's control. Therefore, as a back-up, Council requested a conceptual alternative park design assuming no commercial development occurs in the adjacent areas, which is provided in Attachment A (Commercial Lot Alternative Concept) and includes native plants and paths.

With the land use approvals acquired and designs complete, staff are prepared to advertise the construction project for bids so that construction can occur this coming summer.



Figure 1: West River Park Rendering

Planning Commission Review and Public Engagement Efforts

On November 21, 2023, the Planning Commission reviewed and approved the use permit, development permit, and sign permit for the Park (Attachment C Approval Letter) with 54 conditions of approval. A link to the Planning Commission’s staff report and approval resolution is also provided below. As a part of the Planning Commission review process, a number of public comments were provided by residents of the surrounding neighborhood areas, including Riverside Drive and Foxmead Lane. Many of the comments expressed concern over the impacts associated with the potential future development sites, as well as the impact of parking and snow storage. In response to these concerns, the Planning Commission added three conditions of approval. These conditions and the staff responses are as follows:

1. Condition of Approval #52: The Planning Commission recommends that the Town Council direct staff to prepare a comprehensive snow storage plan.

Based on the location of the park, the Development Code requires the site to provide snow storage areas equal at least 50 percent of the “total parking and driveway area.” A snow storage plan for the Park was not included in the Planning Commission submittal because the project does not have an onsite parking lot. However, in response to Condition of Approval #52, a snow storage plan for the Park was created (Attachment D) to identify snow storage area locations for pedestrian paths equal to 50% of the impervious area proposed by the park, placing snow storage as close to the source as possible. However, since the Park is mostly open space, there is ample additional room for snow storage for the pedestrian paths beyond that shown in Attachment D, as shown on Attachment E (orange highlighted areas).

Another concern expressed by residents along Riverside Drive is that the park would impact the snow storage or removal operations associated with Riverside Drive. Some of the snow removed from Riverside Drive is currently placed on the eastern side of the Park, in the top red highlighted area shown in Attachment E. The Park project would not impact the Town’s ability to store snow at this location. Future development on the site may impact this snow storage area, but there is

an additional area located southeast of the bridge abutment that could be used for snow storage in this potential future case (lower red highlighted area). However, as this area is smaller, it is likely it would be used for temporary storage in combination with an off-haul operation.

- 2. Condition of Approval #53: The Planning Commission recommends that the Town Council consider the adequacy of parking and its impacts on the surrounding residential neighborhoods.**

The Park is centrally located in the downtown area, which will promote walking and biking to the park, especially with the completion of the West River Streetscape and Legacy Trail Phase 4A projects (both planned to be completed this coming summer). While the parking analysis prepared for the park indicated the six parking spaces originally proposed in the Planning Commission submittal was adequate to accommodate those that drive to the Park, staff has since revised the design to construct three additional spaces, for a total of nine parallel parking spaces along West River Street. The Town also owns an easement on the north side of West River Street behind the Flyers and Tire Shop buildings, which could be used to develop over 100 parking spaces in the future. Staff believe the proposed nine spaces is adequate to serve the Park in the short term and future commercial development on the site would require additional parking spaces to be constructed on the north side of West River Street.

- 3. Condition of Approval #54: The Planning Commission recommends that the Town Council implement heightened parking enforcement and increased signage on Riverside Drive, Mill Street and Foxmead Lane.**

As discussed above, staff believe the nine proposed parking spaces is adequate to serve the Park. Given the limited availability and difficult access to parking on Riverside Drive and long distance and unfavorable walking route to Foxmead Lane, parking impacts to these roadways is expected to be minimal. In addition, given the Park has the primary frontage along Mill Street, staff would not recommend prohibiting park patrons from parking along Mill Street so long as the travel way is not blocked. Staff also believe it would be premature to increase parking enforcement and signage without understanding where the impacts, if any, occur.

The comments received at the Planning Commission meeting, as well as comments and questions received by Town staff subsequent to the Planning Commission meeting suggested the community had additional questions and concerns and that there was some misinformation circulating related to the Park and future plans for the site. As such, Town staff conducted a Community Meeting on January 8, 2024 at Town Hall to discuss the project and answer public questions. To notify the public of the meeting, a postcard was mailed to property owners near the Park, flyers were distributed to the Donner Creek Mobile Home Park residents in Spanish, e-notify emails were sent twice, the Town of Truckee website announced the meeting, and social media posts announced the meeting. The Community Meeting resulted in approximately 30 in-person attendees (excluding staff) and 40 online attendees. The meeting also offered a slideshow presentation with live Spanish translation and interpreters for the presenters. A copy of the staff presentation is provided in Attachment F and a recording of the Community Meeting over Zoom is available in English or Spanish here: [West River Street Park Community Meeting - Zoom](#). Staff answered questions about the Park, including questions regarding the Request for Interest process that selected the potential future commercial developers of areas adjacent to the Park, the Park design and intended use, snow removal, and parking. The public was encouraged to submit questions before the Community Meeting so they could be addressed during the presentations. A list of the questions from the November 21, 2023 Planning Commission meeting and the questions submitted before the Community Meeting are in Attachment G. These questions were answered during the Community Meeting presentation and/or conversation that happened at the meeting. Some additional information that responds to comments received is below, although additional information was provided in the staff presentation:

- Environmental impacts
 - Previous studies have not identified significant biological resources on the site and the project will create native riparian and other native vegetated areas that will improve overall natural habitat.
 - The site does not currently contain stormwater treatment. The proposed project will include stormwater treatment and Low Impact Development (LID) features, none of which currently exist on the site.
- Lighting Impacts – Lighting would need to conform to the Dark Sky ordinance and all lighting will be controlled by timers so it can be adjusted as needed.
- Noise Impacts – The site is not currently planned to host events and the site use will need to conform to Development Code noise standards.
- Maintenance – The site will be maintained by Town of Truckee Facilities staff, including restroom maintenance, trash pick-up, landscaping, and snow removal.
- Safety and Security – As discussed above, the park will include lighting. The improvements and potential future development will increase use of the area, resulting in more “eyes” on the park, and potentially increasing overall security. Law enforcement in the park will fall under the jurisdiction of the Truckee Police Department.
- Traffic Impacts – While the park will generate more traffic, impacts are expected to be minimal because of the park size and pedestrian and bicycle accessibility.
- Future Development Review – Any additional development that is proposed on the site will require a separate development review. The level of environmental analysis, CEQA review, and future traffic analysis that will be required will depend on the project that is ultimately proposed.
- Land Ownership – there is confusion as to the ownership of the land. Staff clarified that the Town owns the land and that no land transfer has occurred for the potential future commercial sites. Sale of the land for the commercial sites is a separate process that would involve a purchase and sale agreement between the Town and the commercial developers.
- Commercial Developer Selection process – Town staff has clarified that the process to select developers for the future commercial develops occurred in 2017 with the issuance of a Request for Information. The process included a site walk through in which 12 interested parties participated. The Town managed and led this process with no outside consulting support. As a result of the process, two proposals were received. The proposals received met the intention of complementary river uses and the selection committee directed staff to begin conversations with both respondents.

The Park design, specifications, and engineer’s estimate are complete, although minor edits may still be made before advertising the construction contract. The draft 100% plan set can be viewed in Exhibit A of the Planning Commission agenda here: [Item 7.2 - West River Street Park \(laserfiche.com\)](#). Attachment H is a plan view of the most current Park design.

Staff recommends that Council authorize staff to advertise the West River Street Park construction project for bid in early February 2024.

Priority:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Climate and Greenhouse Gas Reduction | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Investment | <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency and Wildfire Preparedness | <input type="checkbox"/> Core Service |

Fiscal Impact: The current approved FY 23/24 budget for the Park construction (C1817) is \$3,740,700. Based on current estimates, the approved budget is adequate, although the actual contract cost will not be known until bids are opened.

Public Communication: In addition to the Planning Commission meeting on November 21, 2023 and Community Meeting on January 8, 2024 (and associated outreach and advertisements), the West River Park has been under development for over a decade and since 2011 there have been at least 16 public meetings or workshops in addition to a community survey, as summarized in the January 8, 2024 presentation.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Commercial Lot Alternative Concept

Attachment B – Park Restrooms

Attachment C – Approval Letter

Link to Planning Commission Staff Report: [Item 7.2 - West River Street Park \(laserfiche.com\)](#)

Link to Planning Commission Approval Resolution 2023-17: [Resolution 2023-17 - West River Street Park \(laserfiche.com\)](#)

Attachment D – Snow Storage Plan

Attachment E – Snow Storage Plan Riverside Drive

Attachment F – Community Meeting Presentation

Attachment G – Public Comments for Community Meeting

Attachment H – West River Street Park Plan