



City of Oregon City

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Staff Report

File Number: 16-390

Agenda Date: 6/27/2016

Status: Agenda Ready

To: Planning Commission

Agenda #: 4a.

From: Christina Robertson-Gardiner

File Type: Presentation

SUBJECT:

Willamette Falls Legacy Project: Update on the Riverwalk Design Process and the Development Strategy as well as Upcoming Community Engagement Opportunities

RECOMMENDED ACTION (Motion):

No action is required at this time.

BACKGROUND:

This is the first of many work sessions planned to ensure that the Planning Commission stays fully up to date with the Development Strategy and the Riverwalk design process. As the Willamette Falls Legacy Project (www.rediscoverthefalls.com) enters its fourth year, a growing cascade of stakeholders, supporters and interested residents have much to be enthusiastic about. Design is now underway for a public **Riverwalk** that will allow visitors to experience the falls for themselves, while acting as a catalyst to transform the former paper mill site. In addition, the public is embarking on a shared **Development Strategy** for the site with the property owner, Falls Legacy LLC.

The riverwalk is being designed by Snøhetta, Mayer/Reed and DIALOG, the world-class design collective chosen last year from among more than a dozen highly competitive proposals. The same design collective is also working with the development strategy team, because it is so important for riverwalk design and the development strategy to be considered in tandem. The projects [four core values](#) will continue to be the foundation for all work on the riverwalk and development strategy. Designers will also consider the ideas and aspirations of thousands of people who have shared them over the course of many community events and surveys. This community input will help guide the design collective as it explores design opportunities that respect the diverse context and unique history of the site, and capture authentic and meaningful experiences that are true to this special place. It will also help us identify the main points of interest, concerns that may need to be addressed, and areas where the community may have conflicting points of view. This will allow the team to actively resolve contradiction as part of the process.

The development strategy for the overall 22-acre project site is a public-private effort. Falls Legacy LLC and the Willamette Falls Legacy Project partners have agreed that work on the development strategy should be completed concurrently and carefully integrated with the riverwalk design. While we believe Willamette Falls is poised to emerge as a national landmark, there are significant challenges to overcome at the site, including inadequate

infrastructure and local market conditions. The next necessary step to spur private investment at Willamette Falls is eliminating some of these challenges. The goal is to take a multitude of factors into consideration in producing a strategy for development, streets, utilities, parking, open spaces and interim uses - with the construction of a world-class public riverwalk as a catalyst for private development.

Continued opportunities for public involvement are being planned this summer and fall, including a booth at Oregon City's First City Celebration <https://downtownoregoncity.org/firstcity/> on Saturday, July 23, 2016.

BUDGET IMPACT:

Amount:

FY(s):

Funding Source: