



Legislation Text

File #: PC 16-088, Version: 1

Willamette Falls Legacy Project Whitewater Park Proposal Recommendation

RECOMMENDED ACTION (Motion):

Staff recommends the City Commission review the staff report and provide direction to project staff and the Oregon City members of the Willamette Falls Legacy Project Partners Group.

BACKGROUND:

An independent proposal to incorporate a professional-caliber whitewater channel into riverwalk design has been brought forward by a group of enthusiastic supporters, demonstrating the power of Willamette Falls to capture peoples' imagination. Building a manmade whitewater park at Willamette Falls is an exciting concept that still has many hurdles to clear to demonstrate its viability.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) clarified the three scenarios originally presented, taking into consideration direction from the Partners Group to avoid delays or additional costs to the riverwalk project - as well as Oregon City's desire to keep the door open for a whitewater park. In all scenarios, the riverwalk design process will investigate opportunities for water access for kayakers, such as portage trails and put-ins.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) recommends proceeding on time and budget with the riverwalk project with the whitewater park as a parallel but separate project with no added cost to the Legacy Project (Scenario #2). Under this recommendation, the Partners may consider future integration of a whitewater channel if an alignment that fits successfully into the riverwalk is identified, and if a whitewater park proves to be a legally, technically and financially viable project. The TAC recommendation is based on direction from the Partners Group and their governing bodies, recent conversations with We Love Clean Rivers, and discussions with Falls Legacy LLC.

As a reminder the scenarios include:

Scenario 1: Combines the whitewater park and riverwalk together, and the whitewater park becomes part of the public project. This scenario has been ruled out due to lack of funding and delays that could put the riverwalk project funding in jeopardy.

Scenario 2: Keeps the riverwalk and whitewater park projects separate, but parallel. The riverwalk can move forward, and We Love Clean Rivers can continue whitewater park feasibility investigations. If feasibility studies show that a whitewater park is viable, then the Partners could consider integrating it into the riverwalk in the future. There is no deadline for feasibility work; integration is possible at any phase, but with varying costs.

Scenario 3: If feasibility studies show that a whitewater park is not viable, then scenario 3 would proceed with only the riverwalk.