

Staff Report

File #: 18-433**Version:** 1**Date:** 9/24/2018**Item #:** 2.a.

TO: Mayor and City Council**THROUGH:** Steve Powers, City Manager**FROM:** Peter Fernandez, PE, Public Works Director**SUBJECT:**

Work Session on update to Riverfront Park Master Plan.

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

ISSUE:

City Council Work Session on the update to the Riverfront Park Master Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

Information only.

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND:

The 26-acre Riverfront Park, Salem's premier urban event park, is located in the heart of downtown Salem and adjacent to the Willamette River. The most recent master plan for Riverfront Park was in 2001. Individual park master plans are intended to guide the park management and development for the next 20 years. A park master plan update is necessary due to many changes that have taken place in the park since the 2001 master plan. These include the acquisition in 2015 of a 3.8-acre property formerly owned by Boise Cascade at the southeast corner of the park; the opening of the Peter Courtney Minto Island pedestrian bridge; operation of a seasonal winter ice rink; and a proposed new covered stage and performance area amphitheater.

Developing the Riverfront Park Master Plan involved significant public outreach and engagement. Three public planning meetings and two online surveys were conducted between January 2018 and September 2018. The City's website was updated throughout the process and people could sign up for email reminders and updates. All neighborhood associations were notified of public meetings and the online surveys and the CANDO Neighborhood Association and the Downtown Advisory Board

were given presentations about the master plan schedule and process. In addition, the Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board assigned a liaison to the project and the board was kept apprised throughout the process. The board will make its official recommendation on October 11, 2018. The master plan will go to Council on November 13, 2018.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

The proposed Riverfront Park Master Plan includes several new or improved amenities to the park, including:

- A new covered performance stage and grassy sloped amphitheater;
- Two new restrooms: one near the pavilion at Court Street and the other at the south end of the park near the amphitheater and the future Pringle Creek trail;
- Expanded parking in the south lot with approximately 55-60 new parking spaces;
- An elevated seating plaza behind the covered performance stage, overlooking the river and Peter Courtney Minto Island Bridge;
- A floating boardwalk at the mouth of the Willamette Slough;
- An enhanced arrival plaza, suitable for temporary food carts or as a gathering area;
- An enhanced playground with shaded seating area and nature play features of mound, slide, and boulders;
- Enhancements to the existing amphitheater that include scattered trees and covered picnic areas and a labyrinth paving pattern on the stage. The existing Riverfront Park Amphitheater can continue to be used for smaller events even after the new covered platform stage is completed;
- An expanded dock for additional non-motorized water craft to provide river access, and a proposed kayak rental vendor kiosk at the top of the slope;
- A relocated and expanded Parks Operations maintenance yard;
- An enhanced riparian area along the Willamette River and Pringle Creek;
- An opportunity for future trail connection across Pringle Creek to the south; and
- Three new park "gateways" at Union Street, Court Street, and Pringle Creek park entrances. These gateways will provide visual links between downtown and the park for increased visibility.

In addition to the new and improved amenities, the master plan maintains the open spaces of the North Meadow and South Meadow and retains the open views to the Willamette River and the open grassy meadows. Implementation of the master plan will occur over a 20-year timeframe and is dependent on funding.

Robert D. Chandler, PhD, PE
Assistant Public Works Director

Attachment:

1. Riverfront Park Master Plan Figure