

Council Communication

December 16, 2014, Business Meeting

Council Direction to Proceed with Downtown Plaza Beautification Projects

FROM:

Ann Seltzer, management analyst, Administration seltzera@ashland.or.us

SUMMARY

At the September 2, 2014, City Council meeting, the Downtown Beautification Improvement ad hoc Committee presented its recommendations for beautification projects for the current budget cycle using transient occupancy tax money that has been set aside in the budget for qualifying capital projects. Two of the recommended projects involved improvements to the Plaza. On October 21, the Council voted to defer the Plaza improvements until a study session could be held to discuss developing a master plan for the Plaza. At the December 2, 2014, study session, the Council discussed a master plan process for the Plaza and decided to wait for the recommendation of the Downtown Parking and Circulation ad hoc Committee. Council directed staff to bring the beautification committee's recommendations for the Plaza back to the Council for deliberation.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

The Downtown Beautification Improvement ad hoc Committee recommends two Plaza projects:

- 1) Add three free-standing planters with irrigation, additional plants in the landscape beds with decorative fencing at the curb to protect the plants from pedestrian traffic. *Committee Rationale:* The free standing planters when filled with flowers will provide color to the Plaza and create a visual separation from the Plaza to the street at the south end across from City Hall. The additional plants in the landscape areas will eventually increase the greenery in the Plaza and the fencing will protect the plants and discourage pedestrians from walking through the landscaped areas. The Committee voted to allocate \$15,000 for this project.
- 2) Replace pavers located within the half circle of the Plaza. *Committee Rationale:* Initially the committee was interested in replacing random pavers to visually interrupt the existing pavers. After learning that random replacement could compromise the other pavers, much like cutting a hole in a piece of fabric, it was suggested that replacing the section within the half circle would have the least impact on the rest of the pavers and provide a visual break of the existing pavers. The committee voted to allocate \$15,000 for this project.

COUNCIL GOALS SUPPORTED:

#14 Encourage and/or develop public spaces that build community and promote interaction.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

Implementation of the proposed projects will use funds generated from the transient occupancy tax and allocated for "other City projects that qualify" for the current budget cycle.



STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUESTED ACTION:

Staffs recommends initiating the intermediate procurement process (AMC.2.50.100) using a written solicitation to obtain quotes, bids or proposals for landscape architectural design services for these projects with final design approval by Council.

SUGGESTED MOTION:

I move to direct staff to move forward solicit bids for these projects using the intermediate procurement process with final design approval by Council.

ATTACHMENTS:

[Minutes September 2, 2014 City Council Meeting](#)

[Minutes October 21, 2014 City Council Meeting](#)

[Minutes December 1, 2014 City Council Study Session](#)

