

FEDERAL STREET PLAZA COMMITTEE AGENDA

AGENDA

FEDERAL STREET PLAZA AD HOC COMMITTEE WORK SESSION

FEBRUARY 26, 2025 AT 5:30 PM

CITY HALL - 313 COURT STREET

VIA ZOOM

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84700681779?pwd=wzPFo5IoCT9vRgZGcYfui0UAU2Sub5.1>

Meeting ID: 847 0068 1779

Passcode: 165113

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of January 29, 2025 Minutes

5. CONSULTANT PRESENTATION
6. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION
7. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION
8. COMMITTEE DIRECTION
9. ADJOURNMENT

This meeting conducted Via ZOOM

Prepared by/
Amie Ell, City Clerk

Summary of Public Comments

Federal Street Plaza

The following summaries input received during the 2.12.24 Public Open House, online comments, and emails provided by the public.

Key Themes:

- **Activities and Interactive Features:**
 - Water features (e.g., splash pads): strong emphasis, preference for the style shown in scheme B.
 - Ambient running water
 - Misters for hot weather
 - Ice-skating in winter
 - Chess/board game tables
 - Interactive installations: shuffleboard, bocce ball, ping pong, RC car races, labyrinths...
 - Kinetic sculpture, not murals.
 - Some suggested incorporating heritage murals and improving the facades of surrounding buildings.
 - Use the Craig Building wall for interactive games: wall ball, climbing, etc.
- **Plaza Amenities and Infrastructure:**
 - Emphasis on shade through both canopies and trees
 - Drinking fountains, including for dogs
 - Bike repair kiosk.
 - Seating with back support.
 - Swing benches.
 - Full circle tree seating.
 - Utility hookups for food vendors
 - Adirondack chairs, etc. movable furniture
 - Like shade but not a fan of the arbor structures
 - Dark sky compatible lighting
 - River City scheme is broken into two “rooms” by shade structures; seems easier for varied group sizes to find spaces and occupy on a day-to-day basis.
 - A welcoming transitional space between the plaza and surrounding areas.
- **Greenery and Natural Elements:**
 - More planting and seasonal blooming
 - Shade trees with seating
 - Basalt seating
 - Drought-tolerant and native plants
 - Visual screening from traffic on 2nd St.
 - Consider areas of lawn, grass pavers, or turf rather than concrete pavement to reduce heat island effect.
- **Materials and Character:**
 - Scheme A was preferred by some for its clean, modern look and structural solidity.
 - Scheme B was favored for its tiered seating, shade features, and flexible community spaces.
 - Use of local, natural materials like basalt and pine
 - Preference for real basalt over concrete/abstractions of nature
 - Less concrete and less paving overall.
 - Concerns about the heat absorption of concrete.

- More vibrant, colorful materials vs. typical “industrial gray.”
 - Historic brick from the Tony’s Bldg. available for use
 - Fishing-platform-inspired canopy structures
 - River pattern in the paving
 - Organic forms like shown in the Basalt scheme.
 - More “Instagrammable” spaces to attract visitors.
- **Community Programming:**
 - Community art projects
 1. Native art
 2. Student art – Collaboration with school district
 3. Rotating installations
 - Performance art: Theater, live music
 - Community events: Happy hours, picnics, trivia nights, dance nights, yoga classes, farmer’s markets.
 - Multi-generational programming.
 - Community gardens.
 - Plaza should support/encourage visitors to engage with local businesses.
- **Safety and Accessibility:**
 - ADA-accessible restrooms
 - Senior-friendly seating
 - Bollards at 2nd St. and 1st St. for pedestrian safety
 - Ample lighting throughout
 - Mitigation of drug use and other safety concerns at fountains and planting beds. Given the camping along 1st St., undesirable use of the plaza will be a critical issue to manage.
 - Discussed safety benefits of relocating the restroom in Transportation Building.
- **Event and Performance Spaces:**
 - Power and water hookups for vendors and events.
 - Mix of preferences between pop-up vendor spaces and dedicated areas for food trucks, stages, and other event infrastructure.
 - Support for flexible event spaces and vendor stalls.
 - Stage near Transportation Building may provide good acoustics.
 - Consider locating a stage near 2nd St. facing north.
 - Expand canopy shown in Basalt Scheme near Transportation Bldg. as a stage.
 - Movable furniture that can be brought out for events.
 - Some respondents felt that neither design fully accommodated large events or gatherings.
 - Concerns were raised about the lack of an amphitheater, tiered seating, or clear sightlines for performances and public speakers.
 - Suggestions included reconfiguring spaces to allow for a central performance area or adding terraced seating.
 - Concerns about reductions in usable space for the Cherry Festival with the new plaza, and desire to collaborate on solutions.
- **Transit and Access:**
 - Evaluate parking impacts to downtown.
 - A significant number of respondents raised concerns about the loss of parking spaces, especially in a congested area.
 - Specific concerns were expressed about parking for nearby businesses and tenants.
 - Some suggested a no-parking zone on 2nd Street or the need for a parking plan to address event-driven congestion.
 - Accommodate sufficient truck access for businesses along the alley, including on 1st St.

- Provide space for a future transit stop.
- Better integration with public transit, including additional bus shelters that complement the plaza design.
- **Management and Maintenance:**
 - Concerns that fabric canopies will be less durable than fixed arbors.
 - Movable furniture requires management/security.
 - Irrigation critical for tree and plant survival
 - Permeable surfaces are for better drainage.
 - Significant concern about city's ability to manage the space day and night and to keep active.
 - Reach out to community orgs and local businesses to sponsor amenities i.e. the arbors, seating, or fountain.
 - Plan for long term management and maintenance costs.
 - Concerns about the fee structure for use of event spaces and potential conflicts with other local event venues if plaza events are free.
- **Transportation Building Uses:**
 - Visitor's center including for people arriving via the Gorge trail.
 - Concessions
 - Check-out for recreation equipment, like ping-pong or bocce
 - Storage for equipment and furnishings
 - Art gallery
- **Compatibility and Future Planning:**
 - Design compatibility with a potential future train station.
 - Preservation of historical agreements related to the veterans' museum.
 - Consider ways to extend the plaza to 2nd and 3rd street blocks, like Portland's Park Blocks

1.15.25 Committee Input and Direction

- Proceed with Scheme A – River City with modifications.
- Use of wood is good.
- Trees and seating together are preferred.
- Seeking a prominent element to light up (i.e., shade structures)
- Fountain style of Scheme B with rocks and seating is preferred.
- Generally, the basalt features were very well received.
- Include water bottle filling station, maybe dog dish at the water fountain.
- Debate over shade canopies – tensile look interesting and maybe provide better shade, but arbors are more durable and have a sense of permanence.
 - Request to see cost options for both.
- Terraced seating in Scheme A could be made of basalt or concrete modules.
- Prefer the paving pattern in Scheme A given it is inviting and flows into the plaza.
- Some concerns about basalt in the fountain obstructing circulation or events
- Evaluate using fishing platforms as inspiration for shade structures. Seek other local, historic structures as inspiration.
- Bike hub is in preferred location providing good balance of being visible and not overpowering the plaza.
- Examine a variety of lighting concepts. Consider period lighting.
- Consider temporary umbrellas or other shade until trees grow and provide canopy.
- The Ned Kahn style art wall could provide visual interest.

Walker Macy Recommendations for Design Refinement:

1. Use the River City scheme as a basis of design.
2. Incorporate elements from the Basalt scheme like the basalt seating, organic forms, where appropriate
3. Consider the relationship of future fermentation hub at Tony's Lot and the plaza as part of the final conceptual design.
4. Incorporate 1.15.25 Committee Direction
5. Determine with committee how to prioritize and incorporate community input.

Recommendations for the Committee:

1. Reach out to community organizations like the high school art program, the college, etc. to gauge interest in collaboration for installations and programming.
2. Reach out to community organizations who may be interested in sponsoring parts of the project like the shade structures, benches, and the fountain.
3. Evaluate the City's ability to manage the various uses discussed, both programmatic and security/maintenance, and assess what is realistic to provide.
4. Discuss uses for the Transportation Building that support the plaza's goals as a community gathering space and gateway to The Dalles.