
Florence Urban Renewal Agency

Memorandum

To: Florence Urban Renewal Board
From: Megan Messmer, City Project Manager
Date: December 27, 2017

ReVision Florence Progress Update

Progress on ReVision Florence is moving forward at a rapid pace. We are nearing the completion of the design. I wanted to provide an update on various aspects of the project. We will review the following:

- Lane County IGA
- 90% Design Submission
- Project Timeline
- ROW Administration
- Public Outreach



Lane County Funding Request

Details of the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Lane County for their \$1.2 million contribution will be reviewed in the previous agenda item. For further information, view the memo titled ReVision Florence IGA with Lane County.

90% Design Submission

Murraysmith submitted 90% Advanced Plans for ReVision Florence to ODOT on October 31st. These plans included civil engineering, streetscaping elements, mobility considerations, construction plan and schedule, updated estimates, risk assessment, geotechnical information, gateway designs, and the transportation management plans. ODOT is currently reviewing the submission for comments. Murraysmith, ODOT, and City staff met on November 16th to review this design phase and what is needed to get to the final design submission. That meeting went well and we are moving forward.

The cost estimate from the advanced plans remains at just under \$7 million in total, which includes the design work done to date. With the provision for ODOT awarding a contract up to 10% higher than the engineering estimate, we are near the approximate \$7.4 million as the high cost.

We are working with ODOT on how to bid the Highway 126 section of ReVision Florence as an additive alternate bid. We will be requesting an exception to allow this separate bid so that the go ahead can be determined after the estimates are submitted. They do not often do this type of bidding, but they do have a process that requires additional review time. Based on our current timelines, we are able to work the alternate bidding within our time restraints.

Project Timeline

The timeline has been updated with the 90% design submission. We are scheduled for the following milestone dates:

- Bid Opening – June 7, 2018
- Notice to Proceed – August 3, 2018
- Project Construction
 - Stage 1: Curb, Driveway & Sidewalk West Side – August 6, 2018 through October 30, 2018
 - Stage 2: Curb, Driveway & Sidewalk East Side – October 31, 2018 through January 29, 2019
 - Stage 3: Median Island Construction – January 30, 2019 through February 5, 2019
 - Stage 4: Planning, Lighting and Signage – January 30, 2019 through March 1, 2019
- Mainline Paving Following ReVision – Beginning March 3, 2019

Right of Way Administration

We are proceeding with the Right of Way (ROW) Administration via the subconsultant Epic Land Solutions. There are 45 total property files along the project area that we will either be obtaining permanent easements, temporary construction easements, or both. Easements will be obtained by the City of Florence, on behalf of Urban Renewal. Offers for these easements are based on property appraisals that were conducted by Epic. As of the meeting date, all property owners had been made an initial offer for their easements with the total of all offers at approximately \$126,000. We currently have eight signed offers and we will begin recording these with the title company. The total estimate for ROW acquisition costs (land value, title insurance, legal, and contingency costs) were estimated at \$283,567. Once all the files are processed, we will provide an update on the total ROW acquisition actual versus estimate costs.

Public Outreach

Based on the current timeline, we will be planning to begin our outreach in spring of 2018. We want to time in with the outreach we are doing for other City projects. We will be focusing on public outreach for the City Hall addition and remodel in late December and early January as City Hall staff moves, public

contact location changes, and meeting locations chance to the FEC. We will be working with the Chamber of Florence, the Downtown Revitalization Team, our local media, Rotary, and other community groups to spread the word to business owners and community owners on what to expect during construction and with the project.

You may have noticed that there was an informal poll of sorts on Facebook recently regarding the gateway design. This was done by a citizen in a community group where he altered the gateway design to remove the gateway feature and added more trees. The informal poll did not provide context on what the project was, the location the image was depicting, or that it was not an official poll. Staff have been monitoring the comments on that Facebook post and our responses to the overarching themes are below.

1. **The design should reflect the Siuslaw River Bridge.** – There were varied responses on whether people liked the gateway features or how they should look. A recurring theme was that they should draw on the architecture of the Siuslaw River Bridge. As we have discussed, the current design was based on the Art Deco period of the Bridge. We will include this in our public outreach.
2. **Why does the City only focus on Old Town?** – As mentioned previously, this post did not include any context for the project. Staff worked to let commenters know the extent of the project and the area that it will include. ReVision Florence focuses on the City’s gateways and the main street corridors. One of the goals is to expand the experience of Old Town up to the Highway areas. Also, since FURA is funding this project, the geographic area is limited to the FURA district boundaries. The question of why we don’t focus on areas north of the Highway 126 intersection is one we have received throughout the design process and is due to the FURA boundaries.
3. **The City should be funding other projects instead.** – There were several comments stating that the City should be funding other projects instead of the gateways. ReVision Florence is a Florence Urban Renewal Agency (FURA) project, which has its own budget and revenue source through tax increment. FURA also has its own Board of Directors, separate from the City Council. As you know, FURA funds are limited to funding projects that were outlined in the voter-approved Urban Renewal Plan. ReVision Florence encompasses many of the projects that were included in that Plan, including undergrounding utilities, sidewalks, public art, landscaping, and highway beautification. Other funding sources are also restricted to certain elements.

To the right is a breakdown of the funding sources for ReVision Florence. This project is one that is a collaborative effort with FURA, the City of Florence, ODOT, and Lane County.

Entity	Amount
FURA	\$ 3,000,000
City (Stormwater Fund)	250,000
ODOT (ADA & Sidewalks)	2,550,000
Lane County (Transient Room Tax)	1,200,000
Total	\$ 7,000,000

The City's contribution is from the Stormwater Fund for stormwater improvements. ODOT funds are for ADA improvements that they are mandated to make and funding for sidewalk improvements. Lane County's portion is from transient room tax (TRT) or hotel tax. By state law, TRT can only be spent on tourism related expenditures. Lane County's contribution is limited to such elements as the gateways, plazas, pedestrian elements, and other tourism related items. The funds from these three entities are from restricted sources and therefore could not be used on items such as housing. The funds from FURA are limited to items found in the Urban Renewal Plan that was approved by voters with the creation of the Agency.

Some of the items that commenters suggested needed funding instead included:

- a. Affordable Housing – The housing issue is one that is being worked on throughout the State of Oregon. Even though it is not just a Florence problem, we are doing some things locally to try to alleviate some of the hurdles that have been suggested in Florence. The City Council has initiated a review of our two chapters in our Comprehensive Plan that address housing and economic issues. The Housing and Economic Opportunities Project (HEOP) has a citizen advisory committee that is working with staff and our consultants to ensure there is sufficient land for these uses for the next 20 years. The study will help the City determine how to prioritize its resources to promote needed housing and jobs for the community.
- b. Job Growth – The City's Economic Development Committee has been working on this issue in conjunction with the City Council on their goal of promoting Economic Development. The Pacific View Business Park has had several properties sell over the past year that will produce new jobs for our area. They continue to perform outreach to potential businesses and our State partners to enhance job growth in Florence.
- c. Fixing Old Buildings – We hear this comment often from people. They are concerned with the condition of some of the buildings along Highway 101. While these are privately owned buildings, the City is working on updating our development codes through the HEOP process to encourage potential redevelopment. FURA has also conducted an economic and market analysis of the Urban Renewal area that is available to the public. This analysis included several catalyst nodes and potential opportunities for redevelopment at those sites. In addition to the analysis, the FURA project also included future program ideas to promote redevelopment in the district. One of those suggestions was to proceed with another round of façade improvement grants. This is on the list for future FURA projects.

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- d. Create an Amphitheater at the Old Ball Fields – Urban Renewal has discussed this possibility in the past. As you know, the old football field, baseball field, and bus barn are privately owned. While this could be a FURA project, the funding sources from our partners would not be available for a parks project such as an amphitheater. This is also not on the FURA Work Plan that was adopted.
4. **Highway 101 needs paving.** – ODOT will follow our project by repaving this section of Highway 101. They haven't paved this area in over 30 years, and probably won't again for another 30 years. The timing for our project has been coordinated with ODOT; their project has actually been delayed so we could do the street scape project first. ReVision Florence provides us the opportunity to widen the sidewalks, improve access, add landscaping, add designated bike lanes and parking, improve safety through sidewalk and street light upgrades, and have the ability to incorporate decorative flower baskets and banners on the highway. The plazas and gateways will allow people to know they are in Florence and that they want to stop here. It also provides the opportunity to underground utilities, as well as for our newest fiber provider to lay the fiber in the open trenches.
5. **Highway 101 is neglected and needs décor.** – When down in Historic Old Town, you will notice lights and decorations throughout the month of December. Old Town is primarily decorated by volunteers through donated time and funds. The City supports the Holiday Festival Tree Lighting by placing lights at the Interpretive Center. We have received several questions this holiday season regarding the lack of festive lighting and décor along Highway 101.

The Highway is an ODOT facility and we do not currently have the room on the sides of the Highway to include these items. The light poles are owned by CLPUD with limitations on what can be attached to them. The old decorations, that many people reference, were no longer safe to hang and were retired. Many of the decorations you do see are the result of generous donations, including the flower baskets on display in Old Town. There are plans to enhance this corridor year-round though. ReVision Florence is an Urban Renewal project that will add new sidewalks, landscaping, plazas, lighting, and art to Highways 101 and 126. These updated features will allow for holiday lighting, banners, décor, and flower baskets to be hung from the new street lights and landscaping.

As we design our public outreach program, both for citizens and for business owners, we will keep the comments and questions received to date in mind. We will incorporate that information and any other inquiries we receive into the items to be distributed.