

Crescent City seeking more funding for Beachfront Park

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Weeks after receiving a \$5 million grant to help renovate Beachfront Park, the city council from Crescent City voted unanimously to apply for another grant to move forward the full rebuild of the park.

The council voted to apply for the Rural Recreation and Tourism grant as part of Prop. 68. The city received the first grant through the State Parks Program grant program, also support by Prop. 68.

City Manager Eric Weir said work the city did previously led to the successful application the first time around, saying have a master plan for Beachfront Park likely made the difference in receiving funding.

"The statewide grant was very competitive," Weir said. "We were one of the few places to get a grant. We're going to fund the bike park, we're going to fund the expansion of Kids Town, it's going to fund the Tolowa Cultural Experience, it's going to fund the past culture piece and the one-mile loop."

While the grant will make a big difference, it is just the beginning. Weir said the fully renovate the 35-acre park will cost between \$25 and \$30 million.

"It did not fund the waterfront plaza and it did not fund the amphitheater," he said. "When it's all said and done, Beachfront Park will be transformed."

Bridget Lacy, the city's grants coordinator and economic development coordinator, said if the city gets the second grant, the money would be used to build the amphitheater and waterfront plaza. Both elements will benefit the local community and could also be seen as a tourism and economic development draw.

"We have already seen an increase in tourism due to COVID, and we know people are looking for more space and connecting to the outdoors," Lacy said. "The amphitheater will provide the culture and entertainment piece visitors may be more accustomed to in big cities and give them a reason to extend their stay. Being able to provide a view of the ocean from the area will provide a more unique experience for visitors, setting our venue apart from others in the area."

While the amphitheater will be used to host plays and concerts, the waterfront plaza will be ideal for community events such as the Fourth of July with room for food trucks and other vendors.

"The ability to offer food and crafts at the location will make the plaza a great finish line for events such as disc golf tournaments, the tsunami run, zombie run and triathlon," Weir said. "Ultimately, the goal of the two new features will be to make Crescent City a destination location for outdoor tourism."

After hearing from staff, the city council enthusiastically supported applying for the grant.

"It's a great opportunity for the city to get additional monies were already going to be spending at the park and provide a great park for our citizens and tourists," Mayor Jason Greenough said.

Weir said the application process will be highly competitive, but he feels Crescent City should fare well.

"We feel we're going to have a strong application," Weir said. "It's going to be very competitive. This round only has \$23 million, and we're asking for \$3 million of it."

Councilman Blake Inscore then made a motion to apply for the grant and Mayor Pro Tem Isaiah Wright seconded. The vote passed unanimously.