

Grant will allow Beachfront Park upgrade

December 17, 2021



A \$5 million grant from The Statewide Park Program will make a significant portion of Crescent City's Beachfront Park project possible. An exuberant Eric Wier, Crescent City's city manager, took to social media recently and shouted out the infamous words of Jerry McGuire "Show me the money."

"The state is telling us, we will show you the money, we will show you \$5 million, and in return we will be able to build this park," Wier said. The funding will allow for the construction of a bike park, will double the size of the current KidTown, create an ADA-compliant one-mile loop and new entryway, as well as a cultural interpretive trail encompassing the east side of the park.

"A lot of credit in our award needs to go to Holly Wendt (Crescent City's former city recreation director), and the community who came out and supported this project," Wier told The Triplicate. "Without the community, we would not have received this award. One important acknowledgement is to the Tolowa Dee Ni Nation and Elk Valley Rancheria for their hard work and engagement on our cultural interpretive area. It is another key component of why we have five million reasons to celebrate this holiday season." As part of the same project, Piece by Piece Pottery, a local company that draws in the talents of high-risk youth to create tile-based projects, also received \$10,000 from the city to create a tile mural. That project will highlight Crescent City's relationship with Rikuzentakta, Japan, which took root in 2013 after a group of Del Norte High School

students restored a small boat that washed ashore in 2011 due to Japan's devastating earthquake two years prior. Though the \$5 million funding under the grant is short of the \$8.5 million originally requested, "another grant application is right on the heels of this that we feel we will be able to put a strong application in, and that application is due in about a month," Wier said. The remaining gap of about \$3.5 million would be used to fund a large amphitheater and waterfront plaza. According to Wier, the project's final design will be approved next year, and construction will likely start in the spring of 2023 with an anticipated completion date in the Fall of 2024. Other grants are also being pursued. Clean California Grant Program Years of illegal dumping and naturally occurring vegetation growth on property near Crescent City's cemetery has been a consistent problem, but a grant to clean up and turn the basin into a casual walking trail is being pursued. The city council recently voted to give Chico-based GreenDot Transportation up to \$12,000 to apply for a Clean California Grant - a program managed through Caltrans. Though Caltrans allows communities to apply for up to \$5 million under the grant, Wier said it's unlikely they would request more than "several hundred thousand." In October, the Del Norte Solid Waste Management Authority, Mission Possible, the Del Norte Veterans from War and local Boy Scouts troops performed a community cleanup at the site, resulting in the removal of 5,000 pounds of debris. Fencing was also installed to curtail illegal dumping. However, Wier said he believes dumping of items and vagrant activity will continue if the area isn't redeveloped. The Clean California Grant Program application will be submitted in February. If funds are received, the project would start immediately in order to meet a June 30, 2024, Caltrans- imposed project deadline.

Second Phase of Front Street Improvements

A recent request for \$17 million under the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity discretionary grant program proved unsuccessful for Crescent City, but Wier stated that an engineering contract will go before the council soon to get "this phase of Front Street in a construction-ready form," he said.

"Completing the remainder of Front Street is a top priority for the city," Wier said. "Staff estimates to complete just the street portion of the project is between \$7 million to \$10 million, depending on the scope of work. If you include the street improvements connecting Front Street to A Street near the Oceanfront Lodge, the project is well over \$15 million."

"The one thing that I am sure of will get this project funded is partnering together, persistence and determination," Wier said. "Fortunately for us, those attributes are what our community has demonstrated time and time again." Wier added that he believes the recently-passed \$1 trillion infrastructure bill will also bring federal dollars to Crescent City. "I cannot state it enough - how critical it is to have the resources from Measure S and other transportation funding so that we can put the city in a position to leverage these smaller funds into the millions of dollars we need to complete this project," Wier said. "The city council and staff understand how important completing Front Street is to the community, and we are dedicated to seeing this project become a reality."

