

Supplemental Budget Request

Status: Pending

Parks & Recreation

Suppl ID # 4663 Fund 373 Cost Center 373200 Originator: Rod Lamb

Expenditure Type: One-Time Year 2 2024 Add'l FTE Add'l Space Priority 1

Name of Request: Lake Whatcom Trailhead Improvements

X



4/16/2024

Department Head Signature (Required on Hard Copy Submission)

Date

| Costs: | Object | Object Description | Amount Requested |
|--------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| | 6190 | Direct Billing Rate | \$11,500 |
| | 6630 | Professional Services | \$60,000 |
| | 8301.324 | Operating Transfer In | (\$71,500) |
| | Request Total | | \$0 |

1a. Description of request:

Parks is requesting additional funding to complete preliminary design and public outreach for trailhead improvements at Lake Whatcom Park. Funding for this project was originally authorized by ORD2021-015, and subsequently amended by ORD2023-020. This request seeks additional funding to cover additional consultant fees that are needed to include trail improvements for the Hertz Trail, and public outreach to solicit comments from the community regarding desired improvements, environmental protection and recreational access. This supplemental budget request also includes funds for direct billing for parks staff time to administer and manage the project which must be charged directly to the project.

1b. Primary customers:

Whatcom County residents and Visitors to Lake Whatcom Park are the primary customers of this effort.

2. Problem to be solved:

Lake Whatcom Park is one of the most popular and most visited recreational facilities in the county, with visitor counts in 2023 exceeding 184,000. Monthly visitation is high year-round but can be especially high during the warm summer months when residents are seeking places to cool off during extended periods of extreme heat that are becoming increasingly more common. Because of the limited capacity of existing parking, visitors are frequently forced to park along the roadside of North Shore Road which causes traffic congestion for nearby residents and potentially unsafe conditions for both vehicles and pedestrians.

3a. Options / Advantages:

Attendance records show that visitor counts have increased nearly 400% from ten years ago and peaked to 480% in 2020 during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. As the county population continues to expand, visitation is expected to continue to increase. Expanding the capacity of the trailhead, and parking facilities is critically important to protect user safety, and protect water quality in the sensitive Lake Whatcom watershed.

The other option would be to maintain the existing service level of the trailhead however, that option would ultimately lead to increased roadside parking along North Shore Road putting park visitors, nearby neighbors and the traveling public at increased safety risk.

3b. Cost savings:

This proposal will not result in a cost savings to Whatcom County.

4a. Outcomes:

The result of this effort will include a preliminary design that will have been shaped by community input, a construction cost estimate, and implementation schedule.

4b. Measures:

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Measures of success will include documented community comments, public meeting attendance records, preliminary plans and design details, a construction cost estimate and project implementation schedule.

5a. Other Departments/Agencies:

Planning & Development Services, and Health and Community Services will be responsible for environmental and regulatory permit review and approvals. Additionally, Public Works be responsible for review and approval of Right-of-Way Encroachment permitting.

5b. Name the person in charge of implementation and what they are responsible for:

Specific staff assignments are unknown at this time.

6. Funding Source:

REET 2