

COMMISSION AGENDA

Item No: 4C

Meeting: 06/11/18

DATE: May 30, 2018
TO: Port Commission
FROM: John Wolfe, Chief Executive Officer
Sponsor: Evette Mason, Government Affairs Manager
Presenter: Norm Gollub, Exec.Dir., Foss Waterway Development Authority
SUBJECT: Briefing on Foss Waterway Parks Initiative

A. PURPOSE OF GENERAL BRIEFING

Norm Gollub, Executive Director of the Foss Waterway Development Authority (FWDA), will provide a presentation on the “Parks on the Foss” initiative to construct two new parks along the Thea Foss Waterway. No action is requested of the Commission at this time.

B. BACKGROUND

The Foss Waterway Development Authority (FWDA) is the agency charged by the City of Tacoma to manage and develop the lands along the 1.5-mile Thea Foss Waterway shoreline. Since 1996, the FWDA has been the primary steward of the downtown waterfront and guides its growth.

The agency has been involved in multiple public-private partnerships to address environmental issues, construct the public esplanade, and develop residential, office and commercial projects that benefit Tacoma. Today, museums, residential developments, restaurants, marinas and other businesses line much of the west shoreline where industrial activities once stood. The partially completed pedestrian walkway along the shoreline that borders these developments attracts people to this waterfront neighborhood to enjoy water views and access marina activities.

The first park to be constructed in 2020 on a $\frac{3}{4}$ acres site centrally located on Dock Street between the Murray Morgan Bridge and the 15th Street Bridge is Melanie Jan LaPlant Dressel Park. This will be only the second children’s play park constructed along Tacoma’s shoreline. There is currently a small play park located at Point Ruston. This new park will provide amenities for families with children as well as older age groups to connect with the water. Construction cost for this park is \$3.041 million dollars.

Waterway Park at the head of the Thea Foss Waterway along the eastern shoreline on a four-acre site will be a regional rowing and paddling facility as well as a neighborhood park for the Dome District.

It will provide storage and launching for all types of human-powered watercraft and is planned to be constructed in 2022 at a cost of \$8.5 million dollars. This park will encourage individuals and groups to engage with the water.

The feasibility study conducted in 2017 for both parks indicated that Central Park (shown below) should be constructed first due to its lesser cost and scale. Those participating from the private sector in the study indicated that public sector agencies commitment must be an integral part of both parks before private donations would be made and cited the Port of Tacoma as one of the agencies. Both parks are components of the FWDA adopted 2012 Master Redevelopment Strategy and will further the completion of the Foss Waterway vision.



Site Workshop | Stephanie Bower, Architectural Illustration

C. NEXT STEPS

The FWDA is currently seeking public and private funding partnerships for the proposed Melanie Jan LaPlant Dressel park facility. If the Commission elects to support this project, staff suggests making advance payments to the City Public Access Fund fee-in-lieu program per the 2013 Interlocal Agreement Authorizing a Flexible Approach to Shoreline Public Access Provision between the City of Tacoma and the Port of Tacoma. The Port's contribution would be dedicated to this project and the deposited funds would be credits against future payments for shoreline permits requiring public access.

Funds would be budgeted through the Port's annual budget process, and the contributions would initially be accounted for as a pre-paid balance sheet. In future years when the fee-in-lieu credits are used, the costs would be recognized as an operating expense or depreciation, depending upon the nature of the projects with which they are associated.