



Official Report Cascades Ad Hoc Committee

Funding the Renovations of the Cascades

The County of Jackson, Michigan



Executive Summary

Construction of The Cascades was built in the early spring of 1930. Its first display to the public was on May 10, 1932. The falls are 500 feet in length, a vertical length of 64 feet, and a width of 60 feet. There are 6 fountains and 16 falls illuminated by colored electric lights. The Cascades is the centerpiece of a widely used park and is a monument, a work of public art, and a gathering place to celebrate holidays and to enjoy entertainment.

Through a budget appropriation from the Jackson County Board of Commissioners, a pre-engineering report was commissioned by the Parks Commission to prepare a concept and budget estimate for a renovation of all the essential elements of the Cascades. Though many of the individual elements have been replaced or repaired, no major renovation to the facility has occurred since the park was opened in 1932.

The report concluded that all electrical elements, nearly all major mechanical system elements, and at least 20% of the concrete work must be replaced. Demolition of the amphitheater with a replacement plaza and associated structures would be ideal. The total estimate for all improvements is \$9,550,000.

The Cascades Ad Hoc Committee was formed by the Jackson County Board of Commissioners on September 17, 2013 to investigate and recommend financing options for funding the Cascades renovation. The following document represents the work of the Ad Hoc Committee and the associated community discussions .

In summary, the Ad Hoc Committee recommends a multi-faceted and broad based approach to fund the Cascades renovation. The committee believes that significant funds can be raised from foundations in and outside Jackson County, businesses, institutions, county funds, and state and federal grants.

The project should be phased into smaller pieces for the purpose of funding and timing. The committee prefers to begin with the demolition of the amphitheater wall. While this does not impact the mechanical and electrical elements that are at risk, the committee believes that this will increase the probability that the project gets donations at an accelerated rate. According to the engineers, the demolition can be accomplished for under \$500,000. From the committee's meetings, we believe that this could be funded fairly quickly between private donations and county funds.



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Process

The Ad Hoc Committee

The Cascades Ad Hoc Committee met for the first time on October 29, 2013. As a group they met a total of four times, formally wrapping up the process on January 16, 2014. The group has reviewed this official report individually and endorses the findings herein.

Between meetings, members of the committee met with community businesses, foundations, legislators, other governmental organizations, and the Sparks family. These visits were extremely helpful in assisting the committee on how to conduct a campaign. They were instrumental in this ad hoc committee's findings.

Ad Hoc Committee

David Elwell, Chair & County Commissioner

Julie Alexander, County Commissioner

Derek Dobies, City Councilperson

Steve Duke, Director of Region 2 Planning

Pete Jancek, Blackman Township Supervisor

John Polaczyk, County Commissioner

Michael Way, Parks Commission Chair

Foundations

Members of the committee met with Consumers Foundation, Jackson Community Foundation, Weatherwax Foundation, Frank and Irene Meyers Foundation, and the Hancock Foundation. We explained to their representatives the goal of the ad hoc committee, a little about the Cascades renovation project, and then asked for their feedback on how they would recommend going about a large capital campaign such as this. We received invaluable feedback from these organizations about how to accomplish the fundraising, what the perception amongst the foundation community has been, and other ideas about marketing and branding. This was by no means an exhaustive list of foundations in the Jackson Community.

Legislators

Several members of the committee met with State Representatives Earl Poleski and Mike Shirkey, State Senator Bruce Caswell, and staff to Congressman Tim Walberg. In addition to providing valuable suggestions, the legislators were able to provide leads to the committee for governmental and non-governmental funding opportunities.

Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs

Members of the committee spoke with the director of the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) regarding their Capital Grant Program. The mission of MCACA is to encourage,



initiate and facilitate an enriched artistic, cultural and creative environment in Michigan. MCACA has a number of grant programs for operational support, project support, and capital improvements.

The demolition of the wall around the amphitheater will not compete well in their grant program, but phases of the construction that involve the delivery of music and entertainment, like the sound, hydraulics, and electric components of the project may be competitive. We were told that the County should be a regular applicant for their

programming funds to help with some of the performances that occur at the falls. According to their website, "The Capital Improvement grant category provides funding assistance to Michigan nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and municipalities for the expansion, renovation or construction of cultural facilities; upgrade of equipment and furnishing to provide a competitive and up-to-date environment; equipment and instrument acquisitions that are integral to the implementation of events and services."

The Capital Grant program deadline is October 1st of each year. Last year they received 88 eligible grants and made awards to 45 of the applicants for a total of \$1.782 million. The director suggested that the County consider working with legislators to request end of the year surplus appropriations from the State of Michigan.

Sparks Family

Two members of the committee met with Sparry Sparks, grandson of William "Cap" Sparks, who built the Cascades. Mr. Sparks attended several of the committee meetings and has a great interest in seeing the edifice his grandfather built continue on operating for generations to come. He had made plans to approach the community to build an endowment fund for the Cascades.

After a delightful conversation about the falls, we asked Mr. Sparks how he would feel about approaching the community together to go after renovation funds and an endowment fund. We suggested that it may look something like having 95% of a donors funds going to the renovation and 5% to an endowment fund for long term maintenance. Mr. Sparks was agreeable to this suggestion and thought that would work best so that we were not approaching the same individuals and organizations.



Campaign

Meeting with local foundations, legislators, state government, and the Sparks family helped the committee form a vision for how the campaign should be designed, what might be successful, and how to approach the community.

Possibilities

As it currently stands, the Cascades is a marvelous centerpiece of an amazing community park. While the summer entertainment is only between the end of May and the beginning of September, the Cascades is the centerpiece of a park that is used nearly year round. With its winding trails, playgrounds, baseball diamonds, lagoons, and golf, the Cascades is the very centerpiece and focus of this park. The Cascades is nostalgic for many Jackson residents who attended the summer water and music shows, watched the fireworks over the top of the hill, watched a Civil War Muster battle on the backside, or sled down the hill with their kids or grandkids.

The Park is an economic engine from many different viewpoints. It brings visitors from neighboring counties, other communities, and other states who use local business establishments while they are in Jackson. As a local landmark it defines our community to many outsiders. A web search of Jackson Michigan images is sure to produce many pictures of the Cascades. With a little bit of an effort the Cascades could define this community to a greater extent, which may be preferable to the things that outsiders may perceive as defining this community.

Figure 1 - Renovation Concept



Figure 2 - Original Design Circa 1931





The campaign for renovation of the Cascades should emphasize the expanded possibilities of the facility under the new design. The new design, which is actually a return to the original concept, opens up the possibilities for use such as weddings, graduations, social events, and water recreation. The new design incorporates scalable seating that is adaptable to the

Figure 3 - Splash Pad Concept at Base of Falls

activity. The larger more open design is reminiscent of the original base of the falls as designed by Cap Sparks.

Currently, activity at the Cascades is mostly an evening entertainment, largely due to the physical constraints of the facility. With the new design it is possible that the facility can be opened up during the day. New splash pads at the base of the falls could be enjoyed by many children and families during the day. The open park concept creates opportunities for school field trips, and social gatherings.



With the new open concept the parks staff will need to look at security in a different way. Technology will play a big role in being able to monitor the grounds without adding staff to the park. The committee and the community have voiced their disapproval of the fence and barbed wire surrounding the fountain. Something more decorative is desired, but will likely be less effective against vandals. Conspicuously mounted security cameras will deter many would be wrong doers.

Funding Sources

Through the ad hoc committee meetings and meetings with other groups and individuals, the committee has identified the following funding sources in the box to the right. The

Funding Sources

- School Penny Drive
- Public Citizen Donations
- Individual Donors
- Other Governmental Funding
- Private Donations through Local Institutions
- Foundations
- Non-Local Non-Governmental Institutions
- County General Fund
- County-Wide Millage



committee proposes a broad based fund raising effort that relies on public monies as a last resort.

School Penny Drive

Penny drives will not produce a significant funding source, but fund raisers who met with the committee recommended this as a first step for the purpose of informing the public about the intentions to renovate the falls. Penny drives are frequently conducted in collaboration with schools. Each child is challenged to bring in loose change from homes. A flyer explaining the purpose and intent of the request is sent home with kids, parents send their change back to school with the kids, and it is collected. A penny drive makes families aware of the goal and helps to garner support from the public throughout the county.



Public Citizen Donations

There are many citizens in our community who are passionate about the Cascades. It is the belief of the committee that many individual citizens will voluntarily contribute to the effort. Specifically, the committee suggests that staff take advantage of any public event at the park to request voluntary contributions. At Cascade Wednesday family nights, weekend shows, and band shell concert events staff and partners should use the opportunity to request a donation from attendees.



Another suggestion for private citizen donations is to request a donation of \$1 per round at the Cascades Golf Course to be used toward the renovation. Follow up calls could then be made to donors who may be interested in donating larger amounts to the project.

Individual Donors

The committee believes there are many successful individuals with resources who have roots or ties to Jackson who may be willing to make substantial donations to the Cascades renovation.



Other Governmental Funding

Through the committee's research, several other governmental funding possibilities are available such as the National Park Service Grant. This project may qualify for other federal funding sources.

The committee discussed the value of pursuing designation on the National Historic Registry. Several members of the committee worked together to investigate the ramifications of that decision. We found that this designation is required for some federal funding sources, but using federal money invokes additional costs that may increase the costs prohibitively. Some non-governmental organizations that fund projects like these, however, require the designation. In these cases the designation would be valuable, but without the additional stringent requirements.

Private Donations from Local Institutions

Local institutions should play a part in the Cascades renovation whether through a foundation arm or through direct giving. The committee believes that prominent and large businesses and institutions of higher learning within and outside Jackson can play a large role in funding the Cascades renovations.

Foundations

The committee spoke with many local foundations who expressed a desire to be a part of the fund raising effort. We believe there is wide spread support at least at some level of the local foundation community for the Cascades project. We also believe there are foundations outside of Jackson whose missions align closely with the Cascades purpose and function.

County General Fund & Carryover

It is possible the County could award general fund dollars towards the Cascades project either through direct budget appropriations, or through end of the year surpluses. As the county has cut or held expenses for 6 consecutive years, the amount available at year end has been greatly reduced. It is reasonable to expect that some level of funding may be available at each year end to contribute to the project.

It is also possible the County may be able to absorb some level of debt service payment within its existing budget without an offsetting millage. Further analysis would be needed to determine what level of debt service the County could take on with its current financial obligations and priorities.

Countywide Recreation Millage

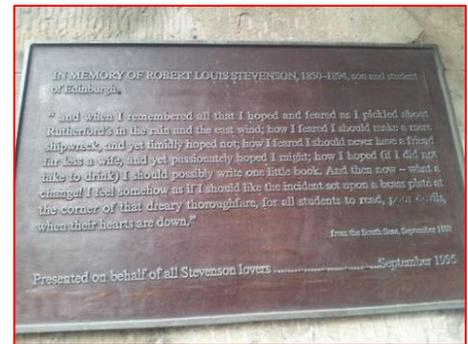
The ad hoc committee was very reticent to support a millage for the purpose of supporting the entire Cascades project. The general agreement of the ad hoc committee was that a millage should only be



considered as a last resort to fill a remaining gap. If the county were to consider a millage, the best time to do so, would be upon the expiration of the jail millage in 2016-2017. For consideration, would be whether to do a recreation millage or a millage specifically for the Cascades.

Recognition

One of the roles of the County Board of Commissioners working with the designers will be finding opportunities and ways to recognize those who contribute to the Cascades renovation project, whether that be through naming associated buildings, donor walls, pavers, or plaques. While recognition is not important to all donors, it is to some. There are many ways in which the new design can incorporate some recognition pieces without jeopardizing the credibility or name of the original designers and builders.



Running the Campaign

A strong person or organization is needed to carry a campaign of this magnitude. The committee supported the idea that it needed to be the primary role and objective of either an individual or organization outside the existing county staff whose sole purpose was to pursue funding for the Cascades renovation. The committee did not attempt to set bounds on what that would like. It could be a hired individual, an experienced volunteer, a non-profit organization, or a hired consultant. This person or group should be experienced in fund raising. A familiarity with the community would be strongly desired.

Funding Strategy

As one of our legislators remarked that it is important for someone to make a logical connection between why each of the potential funders should participate in this project and what level of funding makes the most sense in relationship to their connection with the park or the community. The ad hoc committee supported this idea, but did not believe it was within their scope to conduct this exercise. A facilitated stake holder exercise would be an effective means of accomplishing that task.

What the ad hoc committee did agree to, was that the funding needed to have a broad base of participation from all of the sources identified on page 7. There is a need and an opportunity for each



one of those sources to participate in this project for the good of the community and their own organizations.

The Approach - Immediate and Long-Term

As discussed earlier, the long-term maintenance of the Cascades must be addressed in conjunction with the funding of the renovation. It is the feeling of the committee that to do otherwise would be irresponsible of the County.

A combined effort with the Sparks family to obtain renovation funds while building the endowment fund for maintenance was the method supported by the committee to accomplish both goals. This would mean approaching donors with the Sparks family and helping the community and donors understand that they will be accomplishing both purposes in donating to this project.

Project Phasing

Project phasing was of considerable importance to the ad hoc committee. The Spicer Group, who prepared the pre-engineering on the renovation, was extraordinarily helpful in working with the committee on project phasing.

Addressing Needs versus Gaining Support

Certainly the most pressing need of the falls is to complete renovations of the mechanical and electrical components that operate the falls. The existing assets are fully depreciated and are through ingenuity kept running from year to year.

On the other hand, there was a belief on the ad hoc committee's part that a significant obstacle to more widespread support was the existence of the wall surrounding the amphitheater and it's inhibiting of the sight lines at Cascades. Overwhelmingly, the committee believes that taking down the wall will increase the buy-in and support for the entire renovation.

The foundation community repeatedly

Figure 4 Proposed Project Phasing

Cascades Construction Phasing		
Phase	Work Scope	Estimate
1	Remove Wall	\$500,000
2	Phase I Electrical and Mechanical	\$1,790,000
3	Structural Improvements	\$1,300,000
4	Phase II Electrical and Mechanical	\$2,490,000
5	Public Plaza	\$2,100,000
6	New Buildings	\$1,350,000
Total		\$9,530,000



told us that the project was too big and needed to be broken up in to pieces. So with the recommendations from the foundation community and the desire to accelerate the demolition of the wall, the committee asked the Spicer Group to consider breaking up the project into phases and to consider the possibility of moving the demolition to the front of the project phasing. The risk of moving this to the front is that the mechanical and electrical components may not last until funding for that phase of the project is obtained and spent.

The Spicer Group reported back to the committee multiple times, but eventually came back with a recommendation and plan for breaking down the components of the project into six phases and to move the wall demolition to the front. Furthermore they broke down the cost projections to match the phasing proposal.

Recommended Phasing

Phase 1

The ad hoc committee supported the Spicer Group's recommended phasing plan shown on the previous page to begin with the wall removal. This phase is estimated to cost approximately \$500,000. This would remove the fixed seating in the amphitheater, which would be replaced with grass sod. A decorative fencing would be installed of which some would be permanent and some would be temporary but reusable after the final phase to its permanent location.

This presents some challenges for programming, but they are not insurmountable. Some of the scalable seating may need to be moved up in the process to provide for handicap and seating for the elderly. Others could bring lawn chairs and blankets for programmatic seating.

Phase 2

The second phase of the Cascades would be replacement of the essential mechanical and electrical components of the facility. For purposes of project phasing the engineers divided the mechanical and electrical components into the essential elements and the non-essential elements. To understand it better, the essential elements are mostly the things the public does not see, such as the hydraulics and electrical chases. The non-essential elements do not threaten the functioning of the facility on a long term basis. They include the fountain heads, lights, and other accessories on the top of the facility.





Phases 3-6

Phases three through six would occur in the order prescribed above. The structural elements in Phase 3 include the cement walls, walkways, balustrades, and pools that need replacing. The non-essential mechanical and electrical components would be done in Phase 4 followed by the plaza replacement and the new buildings surrounding the plaza.

Phasing Changes

The order is very logical in its planning; however funding opportunities may have an impact on the order of completion. If donors wanted to specifically fund one phase of the project over another, the County should consider proceeding where funds are available.

Engineering

The ad hoc committee recommends fronting the engineering. In the phase breakdown on page 11, engineering costs are spread across the phases. The committee believes it would be most valuable to conduct all of the engineering at once. Final design costs alone would range between \$450,000 and \$800,000.

Timing

The engineer's advised the ad hoc committee that all construction could occur between programming seasons so as not to disrupt the use and revenues from the Cascades. Careful timing of the engineering, fund raising, and work phases will be required to insure efficient delivery.

Respectfully submitted to the Jackson County Board of Commissioners by the Cascades Ad Hoc Committee.



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RENOVATION PHASE I CASCADE FALLS JACKSON, MI

- WALL DEMOLITION
- NEW DECORATIVE FENCE
- REMOVAL OF PAVING, SEATING, EARTH TO LEVEL, THE AREA FOR VIEWING TO THE FOUNTAIN



230 S. Washington Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48607
(989) 754-4717
www.spicergroup.com

DATE: December 4, 2013

Job # 118624SG2012

Aerial Source: Bing Maps





Breakdown of Costs of Demolition Phase

PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF COST
CASCADE FALLS
JACKSON, MICHIGAN

Item No.	Estimated Quantity	Unit	Description	Unit Price*	Amount
1.	2,500	Sq. Yds.	Pavement Demolition (approx. 85' x 260')	\$35.50	\$88,750.00
2.	4,300	Cu. Ft.	Wall & Seat Demolition	\$26.00	\$111,800.00
3.	3,500	Cu. Yds.	Earthwork Demolition & Rough Grading (approx. 90' x 300' area, average depth 3.5')	\$9.50	\$33,250.00
4.	1	Lump Sum	Protection of Ex. Structures & Trees	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
5.	1	Lump Sum	Utility Allowance	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
6.	1	Lump Sum	Traffic Control	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
7.	27,000	Sq. Ft.	Finish Grading & Site Restoration w/ Sod	\$0.75	\$20,250.00
8.	450	L.F.	Decorative Fence, 6' height	\$65.00	\$29,250.00
Subtotal Construction Cost					\$308,300.00
Contingency					\$61,700.00
Survey (topographical / limited boundary)					\$5,000.00
Final Design					\$25,900.00
Bidding					\$3,200.00
Construction Administration and Inspection					\$18,500.00
Total Preliminary Estimate of Cost					\$422,600.00