

November 7, 2014

OVERVIEW

After several years of public engagement and technical exploration, the Mirror Pond Ad Hoc Committee is proposing a concept for the future of Mirror Pond for public input. The concept detailed in this summary satisfies stakeholders who wish to retain Mirror Pond and those who wish to see a more free-flowing river with enhanced wildlife habitat. This concept, called the Mirror Pond and Downtown Redevelopment Concept also offers a vision for the renewal of a critical area in Bend's downtown core, with opportunities for new parks, restaurants and mixed-use development. The concept will not increase taxes and would be funded and managed by a partnership between the City of Bend, Bend Park and Recreation District, PacifiCorp and the private sector.

UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

- Mirror Pond is a collector for sediment flowing through the Deschutes River, which backs up into the pond behind Newport Avenue Dam, owned by PacifiCorp. This sediment build-up, if left alone, would eventually create a wetland, picturesque views would be diminished and river recreation would be impacted.
- The pond was last dredged in 1984 to remove sediment. In recent years, a need to address the sediment build-up became increasingly acute.
- Stakeholders have been divided on the best way to address sediment build-up, leading to an extensive community-wide debate on the future of Mirror Pond.
- Factors influencing the debate include:
 - The PacifiCorp-owned dam is 100 years old and no longer produces adequate power to justify continued corporate investment.
 - When dredging last occurred in 1984 there were fewer regulatory requirements. Today, regulatory requirements make dredging challenging and more costly.
 - The dam is in poor condition; repairs will be costly.

- The land under the pond is owned by a family trust of one of the founding families of Bend. Two local citizens have an option to purchase the land in order to help shepherd a solution.
- Neither the City of Bend nor the Park and Recreation District (BPRD) have ownership of the pond.
- BPRD owns approximately 60% of land adjacent to Mirror Pond between Newport and Galveston Avenues.

DEVELOPING A SOLUTION

- The Mirror Pond Steering Committee was created to oversee the development of a series of scenarios to address the sediment build-up in Mirror Pond.
- A Mirror Pond Technical Advisory committee provided scientific input and data from which to base the alternative scenarios.
- Scientifically based illustrations were developed to depict the scenarios.
- The scenarios were taken to the public for input.
- Community meetings and on-line surveys resulted in input from over 4,000 people.
- Community input indicated a division between those who preferred the river to flow in a more natural-like manner versus those who preferred the current look of the pond be maintained.
- While respondent first choice interests were divided between keeping the pond and returning the river to a natural-like path, there was a second choice scenario that satisfied most respondents. It maintained the pond while improving wildlife habitat and providing fish passage.
- Results also indicated seven community interests that were shared respondents, including:
 - Maintaining the historic character and picturesque appeal of Mirror Pond.
 - Maintaining or improving public spaces.
 - Enhancing natural habitat.
 - Providing fish passage.
 - Reducing the quantity of sediment deposited in the river/pond.
 - Reducing the frequency that the pond needs to be dredged.
 - Identifying funding with minimal burden on taxpayers.
- Following extensive community input, the Mirror Pond Ad Hoc Committee, made up of representatives from the City of Bend, Bend Park and Recreation District and citizens, was tasked with reviewing public input and working with PacifiCorp regarding the future of the dam and exploring possible solutions that would address shared community values. The Mirror Pond and Downtown Riverfront Redevelopment concept resulted from this work.

THE MIRROR POND AND DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The Mirror Pond Ad Hoc Committee is proposing for community consideration a project that preserves Mirror Pond, allows for a more free-flowing river, creates wildlife habitat and will encourage dynamic riverfront mixed-use development in downtown Bend.

Concept Outcomes

- PacifiCorp would divest from their power production interests at the site by relinquishing ownership of the dam and moving the substation to another Bend location. A sub-committee of the Mirror Pond Ad Hoc Committee is currently in communication with PacifiCorp regarding this scenario.
- PacifiCorp would gift the dam to a public entity (City and/or Park District) who would then oversee conversion of the dam into a water impoundment constructed as a series of pools and riffles in the river. This new impoundment would cause a rise in the river water level behind it, resulting in the preservation of Mirror Pond near its average historic level.
- The new pools and riffles would provide fish passage where none exist today.
- The banks along the river would be reshaped to help to reduce sediment buildup and enhance habitat.
- Pacific Park, the two Mirror Pond parking lots, and PacifiCorp's powerhouse, parking lot and substation would be repurposed into new mixed use development including public spaces, plazas, restaurants, small businesses, housing and public parking.
- Private property owners in the area would see value in redevelopment as a means to enhance their investments and support the community's economic vitality.
- The Deschutes River Trail would wind through downtown Bend, connecting people to parks, schools and business.
- A public-private partnership involving the City of Bend, Park District, PacifiCorp and private sector interests would lead and fund redevelopment.
 - The Park District's role would include selling what is now Pacific Park and using the funds generated to create a new Pacific Park near what is now the substation, improving the Deschutes River Trail through Bend's urban core, and creating new public places.
 - The City's role would include encouraging development on what are now the two Mirror Pond parking lots, updating storm water systems, and building a new parking structure. Funds would be generated by a combination of proceeds from land sales/rent, the formation of an urban renewal district, and/or development fees.
 - PacifiCorp's role would be to divest in the dam and substation.
 - Private development's role would be to invest in new mixed use development, including retail, commercial/office and housing.

NEXT STEPS

The Mirror Pond Ad Hoc committee is inviting the community to give input on the Mirror Pond and Downtown Redevelopment Concept. Should the concept receive widespread support, an independent consortium would be formed to oversee a development plan. The City and Park District would lead the elements of the project on public lands and make improvements to the dam and pond.

PUBLIC INPUT

A public input period on the proposed concept will be open from November 2014 to January 2015. The public may offer input through the following opportunities:

- The Mirror Pond website - www.mirrorpondbend.com
- Public meetings – dates/locations TBD
- Other outreach opportunities to be advertised through TV, radio, news and social media.

Illustration of the Mirror Pond and Downtown Redevelopment Concept

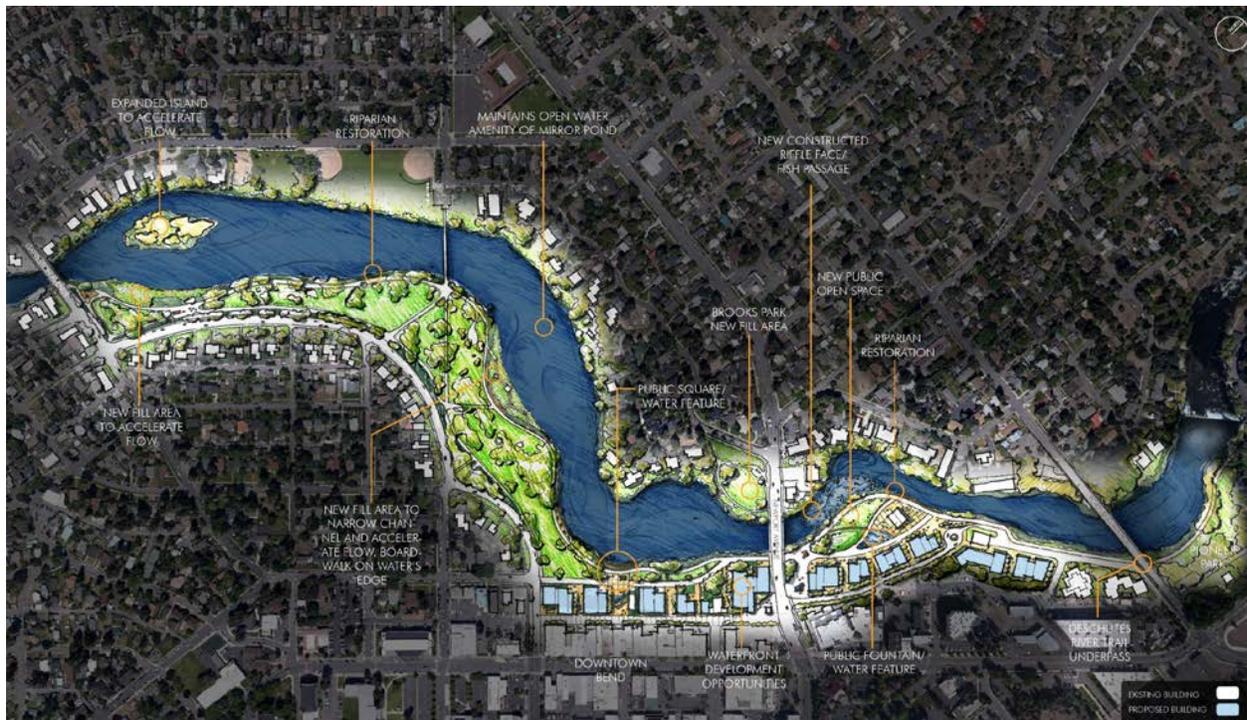




Illustration of the Mirror Pond and Downtown Redevelopment Concept

Features include:

- Buildings indicated in blue are envisioned for redevelopment along the river.
- New public space exists where the dam and substation currently exist.
- Conversion of the dam into an impoundment, constructed of a series of new pools and riffles that preserve Mirror Pond and provides fish passage.
- The historic powerhouse is repurposed into a restaurant or other business.
- Brooks Park is expanded, narrowing the river channel.
- The Deschutes River Trail connects new development with downtown.
- Public plazas and viewsapes maintain connection with the riverfront.
- The banks along the river provide habitat for nature.

Your opinion matters. Please go to the Mirror Pond website and share your perspective.

Go to www.mirrorpondbend.com