

**City of Oak Ridge
Recreation and Parks Advisory Board**

Considerations for Development of a New Pavilion on the Oak Ridge Waterfront

Background

At the first meeting of the Oak Ridge Recreation and Parks Advisory Board in April, the City Manager challenged to Board to provide recommendations for the development of a new pavilion on the city waterfront. The Board has invested considerable time and energy, both working together as a Board and as individuals, to understand:

- the history and current status of the waterfront, including several onsite meetings and site inspections;
- the history of the site and its development since being made available to the City by TVA;
- the current condition and needs of the existing facilities;
- the extensive planning and public involvement that led to the 2009 Oak Ridge Waterfront Development Plan.

In order to translate the 2009 waterfront plan into a more specific, actionable strategy for development of a pavilion by the City, the Board has analyzed a host of considerations that will ultimately not only define the look and feel of the pavilion, but that will set the stage for the eventual look and feel of the entire central waterfront area around the marina and recreational facilities.

Assumptions for Pavilion Development Planning

- 1) Any recommendation of proposal for the pavilion must pass the basic test of being in the best interest of the City as a whole – fiscally, operationally, and from the perspective of the overall welfare of the citizens of Oak Ridge.
 - a. To that end, the Board recognizes that it must provide a recommendation with a sound business case so that the City Manager, City Council, and citizens can appreciate the balance of the financial costs invested relative to the community benefits gained.
- 2) The Oak Ridge Waterfront Development Plan (2009) is to be used ‘as a tool to guide the City in future improvements of the waterfront area (per City of Oak Ridge Resolution 12-113-09, 14 December 2009). As a guide, concepts can be modified to reflect current realities of citizen expressions of need, development opportunities, and the ability to fund both the capital improvement and the ongoing City maintenance and operations obligations resulting from the improvements.

- 3) As the first significant new development in the central area of the waterfront, a new pavilion will establish the tone and ambiance of future development:
 - a. A pavilion of plain, purely functional design will result in similar design and development of additional facilities (both public and potentially private, such as a restaurant, concessions, amphitheater, etc.) in the future.
 - b. Conversely, a more elegant, stately pavilion design will encourage comparable design and investment in future facility development, thereby opening a broader range of opportunities for attracting quality private investment (e.g., a restaurant, concessionaire, etc.).
 - c. All pavilion structure options considered can be accommodated within available funding provided by the \$140,000 donation from UT-Battelle – recognizing that a simple design would allow construction of a marginally larger facility than if it were of a more sophisticated design.
- 4) Because the City has access to donated private funds for construction available, there is a desire to act expeditiously (with due diligence) to achieve a community return on investment from those contributed funds. As a result, a goal is to develop a pavilion facility independent of separate and extensive additional near-term site infrastructure improvements for which capital financing is not currently in place. Therefore:
 - a. The design and development of restroom facilities sufficiently large for the groups that will be accommodated by the size of the pavilion, including necessary new water and sewer line infrastructure, will be addressed separately as part of future waterfront development planning.
- 5) The Board recognizes and acknowledges the importance of developing infrastructure that is environmentally sensitive and sustainable. The impact of the existence and use of the structure, as well as the impact of its ongoing maintenance should be minimized to the extent reasonable.
- 6) In developing recommendations to the City Manager and Council, the Board would like to obtain citizen and stakeholder input to help guide its thinking regarding the pavilion.
 - a. Given the diversity of the citizenry and stakeholders, it is recognized that not every party's wishes or preferences can be accommodated; however, given its charge by City Council, the Board will endeavor to use its expertise to balance the knowledge it gains through its research, deliberations, and public input to balance the needs of all stakeholders in a way that maximizes the ultimate value of the pavilion and surrounding waterfront infrastructure to the community.

Board Conclusions To Date

- 1) The design for the pavilion area site plan should embrace the following guiding principles:
 - a. The site should accommodate a pavilion that is a signature waterfront facility that will set the tone for high quality additional development of the waterfront park in the future. The pavilion should be located in the area to the north of the existing parking lot; it should be capable of accommodating large gatherings (minimally 150 people), as well as supportive of community supported events such as rowing regattas.
 - b. The site should continue to accommodate opportunities for children's recreation (e.g., playground, splash pad, and open green space).
 - c. The site should accommodate an approximately 50% expansion of the existing parking capacity through a combination of improvement of the layout and configuration of the existing lot, as well as through the construction of additional surface parking area.
 - d. The site plan should balance the highest and best use of the site in consideration of the value of existing infrastructure.
 - e. The site plan should seek to maximize, to the extent practical based on physical and financial constraints, the environmental sustainability of the infrastructure, including consideration of:
 - i. recycled materials;
 - ii. pervious paving;
 - iii. low energy lighting (e.g., LED);
 - iv. reduction of heat islands (e.g., planting shade trees, high albedo surfaces, etc.);
 - v. possible locations for placement of solar panels.

- 2) The Board evaluated the options for location of the pavilion in the central waterfront area:
 - a. Areas considered:
 - i. To the north of the existing parking lot in the area of the existing playground (the general area recommended by the 2009 waterfront plan);
 - ii. On the peninsula (current parking area) that forms the marina embayment;
 - iii. In the area of the current restaurant (on the presumption that a new restaurant structure could be constructed with private financing in an area directly east and closer to the waterfront).
 - b. Following development of a detailed set of pros and cons for each location, the Board concluded that the general area around the existing playground would maximize the value of the pavilion to all community stakeholders.

- 3) The Board developed a set of design selection criteria to help weigh the relative merits of competing features, styles, and costs. The criteria were divided into three categories – cost, functionality, and aesthetics – which like the legs on a three-legged stool, were treated with equal importance.

- 4) While the waterfront development plan suggested a pavilion of rustic appearance (with exposed wood beams, etc.), the Board concluded that in order to maintain a 'new facility' look for many years, it needs to be constructed of materials that are more sustainable without high cost maintenance to clean and re-finish.
 - a. In discussion with City staff, the cost and manpower capacity to perform the facility maintenance and operations over 40-50 years is a critical consideration. A new facility will look good at the completion of construction, but it will deteriorate in appearance and functionality if it is prohibitively expensive to maintain.
 - b. The small existing pavilion on the waterfront is largely of wood construction. As such:
 - i. it cannot readily be washed down (e.g., sprayed with a pressure washer to remove mold, spider webs, etc.);
 - ii. In order to maintain a quality appearance, the wood structure needs to be re-finished with wood preservatives every 2-3 years.

Hence, in order to maintain a facility several times larger than the existing pavilion with a 'like new' appearance for many years, the Board concluded that a metal structure design that can easily be washed down 1-2 times per year, and that has no periodic refinishing requirements would provide higher financial value for the City.

- 5) In order to facilitate public input on the style of the pavilion, four general design approaches were selected – spanning the range from a more purely functional design to a design that is functional and that creates a more signature community statement.
 - a. The range of options in the attachment identifies basic features that each option would have in common, as well as features and perceived advantages of each option within the range.

Public Input

The Board is interested in receiving public input prior to making a final recommendation to the City Manager and City Council. While all areas associated with selection of a pavilion concept design are open for input, two primary areas that the Board would like input on include:

- 1) Pavilion Design Selection Criteria
- 2) The public input that went into the 2009 Waterfront Development Plan suggested that a pavilion to accommodate 'large' groups was necessary. But, how large a group should the City try to accommodate?
 - a. The current pavilion is approximately 20'x40' (800 sf) and has three tables.

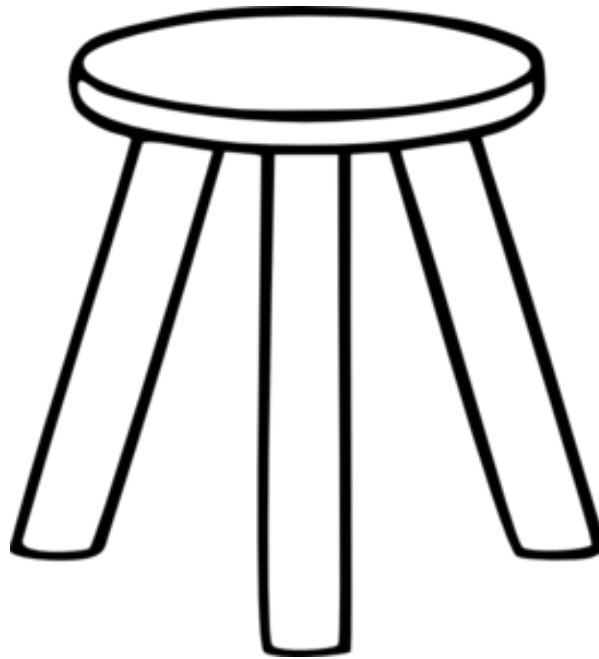
- b. One can foresee small family reunions, weddings, or company picnics with 100-150 people; but would a pavilion with a 300-person capacity be used sufficiently often to warrant the construction and operating cost of something that large?
- 3) The architectural tone and ambiance for the waterfront park that the community would like:
- a. Does the community prefer a modest park setting that comfortably blends in with more typically rural county parks;
 - i. Under this scenario, the park blends into the community background without attracting attention to itself.
 - b. Does the community prefer a park that is more of a community focal point – a landmark that commands attention, and competes with upscale communities like Farragut that use parks to draw people to live and recreate in the community.
 - i. Under this scenario, the park becomes a ‘face of Oak Ridge’ – something that can be used on Chamber of Commerce business and residential recruiting brochures, and Convention and Visitors Bureau brochures to make a statement about ‘why you want to come to Oak Ridge.’
 - ii. This style pavilion and park setting contributes to a re-branding of Oak Ridge by sending a message that the city is more than a retirement community with old nuclear plants – that it’s a progressive town that’s open and inviting to all generations interested in making Oak Ridge their home.

Pavilion Design Selection Criteria Considered

...the three-legged stool

Cost:

- Maximizes return on UT-B contribution to City.
- Minimizes additional City capital requirements.
- Minimizes the annual maintenance and operations upkeep cost.



Aesthetics:

- Attractive to nearby residents.
- Attractive & inviting to users.
- Makes a statement that will drive appropriate design of future City and/or commercial development along the waterfront.

Functionality:

For Users:

- Right sized and shaped.
- Secure and safe (consistent with fostering the 'Not in Our Town' campaign).
- Inviting and easy to use.
- Comfortable environment (air flow, temperature).
- Accommodates appropriate furniture and space use configurations.
- Low stress (ease of access, view of surroundings for 'visual control' of users).

For Maintenance & Ops:

- Sturdy construction to hold up well to reasonable wear & tear, and environmental damage.
- Low maintenance/long life materials.
- Easy to keep clean (both daily clean-up, as well as longer-term monthly/annual 'washdown' cleaning).

Pavilion Standard Features

- Metal frame and roof construction for ease of maintenance and long-term sustainable appearance.
- Concrete pad and apron
 - A preferred design would be to extend the apron 10'-12' outside the roof line to create seating opportunities in the sun for use on cooler days.
- Typical 10-yr warranty on structure and paint
- Paint scheme colors to be determined later*, with the goals to:
 - create a consistent appearance and theme for structures along the waterfront;
 - be environmentally sensitive so as not to create a garish appearance in the park setting.

*colors in attached photos are typical of examples in other communities.

*Note: All following images are examples of designs and color schemes from other communities and are approximate ideas of what an Oak Ridge pavilion may look like (not necessarily the exact appearance of a final Oak Ridge structure.

Functional Style Pavilion

Features:

- Approximate size of 40'x80' (3200 sf)
- Could accommodate ~50 tables (~300 people)

Advantage:

- Allows for construction of largest possible size facility with maximum seating/group size





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Stylish Pavilion

Features:

- Adds a second clerestory-style roof.
- Approximate size of 40'x60' (2400 sf)
- Could accommodate ~ 35 tables (~200 people) including apron

Advantages:

- Provides a more attractive facility that still allows for a sizable group.
- The clerestory roof provides a natural draft ventilation that prevents heat build-up under the roof – keeping users more comfortable in the summer.





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Signature 'Destination' Pavilion

Features:

- Hexagonal shape (vs rectangle)
- Approximate size of 55' across (2300 sf).
- Could accommodate ~30-35 tables (~200 people) including apron

Advantages:

- Hexagonal shape provides more of a 'picnic in the round' atmosphere.
- Provides the most architecturally significant structure with a more elegant ambiance.
- Creates a signature look for the Oak Ridge waterfront that distinguishes the City from most surrounding communities, and places it with upscale communities.
- Sets the tone for a higher level of quality in subsequent facility construction (either Public or private development).





Multi-shelter Pavilion

Features:

- Three separate shelter structures ~25'x25' (~625sf each; ~1900 sf total)
- Could accommodate ~8 tables each (~50 people each; ~150 people total)

Advantage:

- Provides opportunity for multiple smaller groups (albeit less ideal for larger groups).



