

# Developer wants City to buy property for a park

By Jim Cornelius  
Editor in Chief

Nick Veroske thinks the property he owns at the corner of Oak Street and Cascade Avenue would make a great park — and he wants the City of Sisters to use Urban Renewal District funds to purchase it.

In a July 20 letter to the members of Sisters Urban Renewal Agency (members of the city council), Veroske stated:

“A prominently visible park right as travelers enter Downtown after the drive from the I-5 corridor would act as a magnet to motivate a traveler ready to stretch their legs and enjoy a refreshment to stop. The logical progression is then to walk, shop and spend. In addition, this location is easily walkable from the future ‘Sisters Woodlands’ 250 to 300 workforce housing units proposed for the 31 acres of the Forest Service land. As such, it will act as a magnet to draw those residents into downtown.”

Veroske, President of Willamette Equities, Inc. of Portland, said the property has a commercial value of \$1.24 million. He has dropped the price to \$800,000. He told *The Nugget* that he would like to see the City purchase the property and develop it as a “town square” park, a project that is contemplated in the City’s urban renewal plan.

The City has scheduled a workshop for Wednesday, August 26, to revise that plan, and draft revisions include removal of the town square park.

City Manager Cory Misley told *The Nugget* that the proposed removal of the park from the urban renewal plan is not connected to Veroske’s proposal.

“That plan was adopted in 2003, and at that point there was a couplet on the table and a lot of things that are no more,” he said. “Fir Street Park didn’t exist at that time.”

Misley said that the City is not interested in pursuing Veroske’s proposal for a park at the Cascade/Oak location.

“We didn’t do an analysis per se,” he said. “But we don’t think spending three-quarters-of-a-million dollars on that property is the right path forward.”

The property has

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# Reading program pivots to deliver services

As schools across the state plan for the coming year in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, nonprofit and community partners, including children’s literacy nonprofit SMART Reading, are adapting their services to meet the changing needs of our state’s children, families and communities.

Research suggests that students will enter the 2020-21 school year with only two-thirds of the typical gains in reading from the previous year.

“With students facing staggering learning losses, reading support will be more critical than ever,” says Jennifer Zardinejad, SMART’s central area manager. “This could have a profound, long-term impact on kids and communities. As we have been for nearly 30 years, SMART Reading is poised to continue empowering kids for reading and learning success through providing access to books for students to keep and reading practice.”

While SMART Reading typically spends the summer preparing to bring more than 5,000 community volunteers into schools for one-on-one

reading sessions with over 11,000 pre-K through third-grade students across Oregon, physical distancing and other pandemic-related considerations make in-person reading impossible in the 2020-21 school year.

In response to the changing landscape, the organization has developed two new delivery models that align with safety guidelines from local school districts and the Oregon Department of Education, including:

- **Book distribution:** Educators, researchers and families affirm that access to books is a crucial way to support children’s literacy. SMART Reading distributed over 33,000 books after schools closed in March, and the organization is building upon those learnings to expand book distribution in 2020-21. Students will continue to have access to new, high-quality, diverse titles from a variety of book publishers that align with SMART’s guidelines.

- **Virtual reading:** SMART Reading will offer virtual reading sessions, both live and pre-recorded, where volunteers can read books with children and help

foster a love of reading. The organization is working on the implementation details, factoring in legalities and security considerations, and incorporating feedback along the way from educators and families.

“We’re committed to working with our school and community partners to continue ensuring young readers in Central Oregon have the support they need to become strong, confident readers,” said Zardinejad.

SMART Reading plans to engage current volunteers in supporting both program delivery models, but is not currently seeking new volunteers. The organization encourages those interested in supporting young readers to help raise awareness about the importance of this work, or consider making a

financial gift to help provide books and virtual reading opportunities.

To learn more about SMART Reading’s plans for 2020-21, visit [www.SMARTReading.org/covid-19-program-adaptations](http://www.SMARTReading.org/covid-19-program-adaptations).



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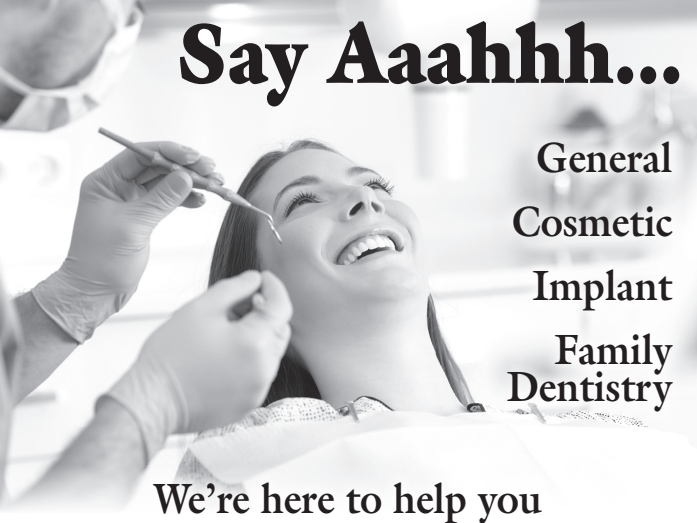


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**AUG 27 THUR** **Paulina Springs Books Virtual Event Books In Common Regional Literary Event Series with Daniel Matthews & Valerie Trouet** 6:30 p.m. For more information call 541-549-0866 or go to [BooksInCommonNW.com](http://BooksInCommonNW.com)

**The Suttle Lodge Thursday on the Deck Summer Wine Series** Seatings every 30 minutes from 1 to 4 p.m. Wine paired with small-plates from the chef. Reservations required at [www.thesuttlelodge.com/happenings](http://www.thesuttlelodge.com/happenings).

**Food Cart Garden at Eurosports Trivia Night** Session 1: 5:30 to 6:15; Session 2: 6:30 to 7:15. Family-friendly trivia. Socially-distant. Free. For additional information call Eurosports at 541-549-2471.

**AUG 28 FRI** **Hardtails Bar & Grill Live Music with Matt Borden and the MFB** 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Free. No cover! For more information call 541-549-6114 or go to [hardtailsoregon.com](http://hardtailsoregon.com).

**Food Cart Garden at Eurosports Friday Car Show** 5-6:30 p.m. Bring your cool or vintage car for the free Friday car show. For more information call Eurosports at 541-549-2471.

**AUG 29 SAT** **Hardtails Bar & Grill Live Music with Unchained** 7:45 to 10 p.m. Tickets online at [www.bendticket.com](http://www.bendticket.com). For more information call 541-549-6114 or go to [hardtailsoregon.com](http://hardtailsoregon.com).

**High Desert Museum Virtual High Desert Rendezvous** 6:30 p.m. Program, live auction, raffle. Register today at [highdesertmuseum.org/hdr](http://highdesertmuseum.org/hdr).

**AUG 30 SUN** **Fir Street Park Sisters Farmers Market** 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Every Sunday: fresh local produce and more. Pre-order and details at [sistersfarmersmarket.com](http://sistersfarmersmarket.com).

**SEPT 1 TUES** **Paulina Springs Books Virtual Event Books In Common Regional Literary Event Series with Vanessa Veselka & Peter Geye** 6:30 p.m. For more information call 541-549-0866 or go to [BooksInCommonNW.com](http://BooksInCommonNW.com).

**SEPT 3 THUR** **Paulina Springs Books Virtual Event Books In Common Regional Literary Event Series with Jane Kirkpatrick & Greg Nokes** 6:30 p.m. For more info call 541-549-0866 or go to [BooksInCommonNW.com](http://BooksInCommonNW.com).

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Events Calendar listings are free to advertisers.  
Submit items by 5 p.m. Fridays to [lisa@nuggetnews.com](mailto:lisa@nuggetnews.com)