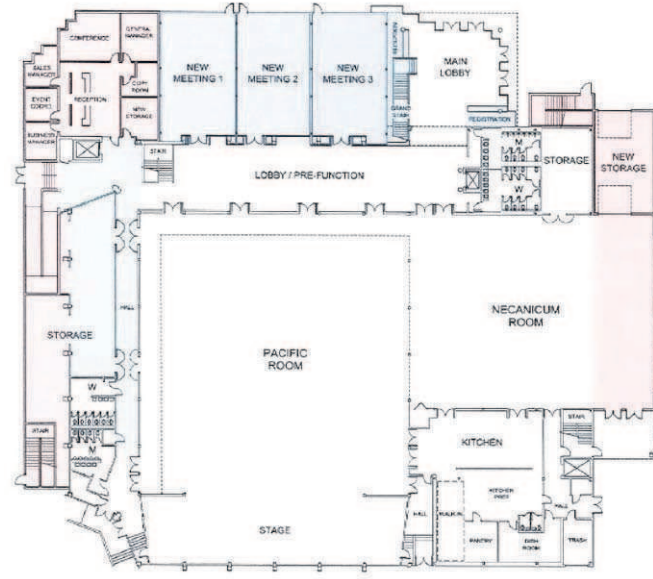


# 'We need this renovation,' says civic center head



STEELE ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS LLC

Proposed renovation plans for the main floor of the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

Center from Page 1A

"We need this renovation in order to stay competitive in order to satisfy our clients needs and maintain our contribution to the economic stability of our community," Vandenberg said.

## Meeting the need

The Necanicum Room would get 40 percent additional space, and room for meal functions would be up 40 percent. The Riverview rooms to the east would increase from 1,846 square feet to 3,408.

Architect Scott Steele, who prepared the 33-page renovation and expansion plan, showed councilors proposed enlarged meeting rooms, additional storage, administrative area, lobby and staircase alterations.

Goals are to bump out the existing Necanicum Room, support larger events, improve meeting spaces and bring in renovations under \$15 million.

According to Vandenberg, "a lot of groups try to squeeze into the center and they try to make it fit, but reality is, it doesn't fit. It doesn't satisfy the needs of these groups."

## Councilors upbeat

Councilors proved receptive to the proposal.

Randy Frank praised it as "very well done."

Mayor Don Larson described it as one of the best presentations brought before the council. "This is amazing," Larson said. "Unbelievable."

Last year, a request for a 40,000-square-foot renovation from Vandenberg and the convention center stalled when

business owners objected to tax increases to fund renovations. That project would have doubled the size of the convention center and added a multistory 500-space parking structure.

Steele said the building would remain functional and operational during construction, "a little tricky, but it can be done."

## No sales tax

The preliminary design estimate stands at \$14.6 million, with "healthy contingencies," he added.

He said it was "premature" to discuss how the project would be paid for. Last year's proposal sought a combination of lodging and sales taxes, including a tax in Seaside's Business Improvement District.

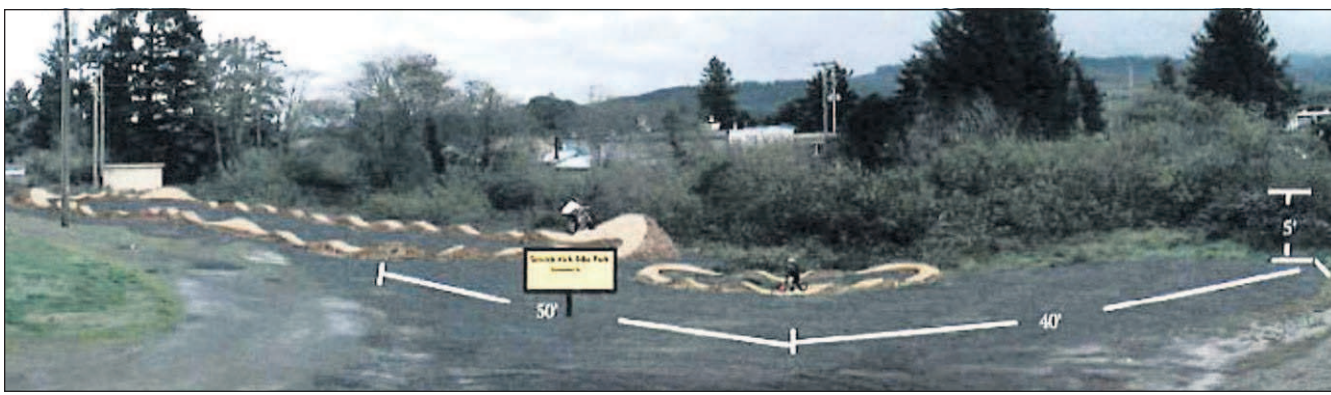
Next steps, Vandenberg

said, will be to "take the project on the road," with residents and civic groups.

"I'm not asking you to approve the project tonight," Vandenberg said. "I'd like you to consider the project. To take it on the road, the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary, the hotel owners, giving it some public opinion and hear and see. It's their downtown, as well."

A workshop with the City Council and the convention center could take place in two months, at which time the center could provide a final proposal within 30 days. "At that point I would come back to you and ask for you to finance this project," Vandenberg said.

He and the team at the Visitors Bureau hope to attract "generations of people to come into Seaside," he added.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Proposed design of the BMX track as prepared by the North Coast Trail Alliance.

# Bike track coming to Cartwright Park?

## Track would host both young and experienced BMX riders

By Nancy McCarthy  
For Seaside Signal

For kids and adults who say there's nothing to do in Seaside, it's time to take the mountain bikes out of the garage.

A local group of bike riders proposes to build a BMX pump track in Cartwright Park. The 100-foot by 200-foot track would consist of a small area for children and a larger area for adults and more experienced riders.

Plans for the proposed track were outlined by local residents Chris Quackenbush, Morgan Soller and Steven Blakesley, members of the newly formed North Coast Trail Association, at the Seaside City Council Monday, March 28.

If approved, the North Coast Trail Association would build the track on vacant land north of the park's boat ramp and behind the Seaside School District Administration Building. The oblong tracks, placed outside the riparian zone, would consist of natural soils built up into berms and hills to challenge the riders.

Materials, supplies and labor to build the tracks will be donated; at least two association members operate construction companies. Landscaping will be done by the Seaside Kiwanis. Construction could begin this spring.

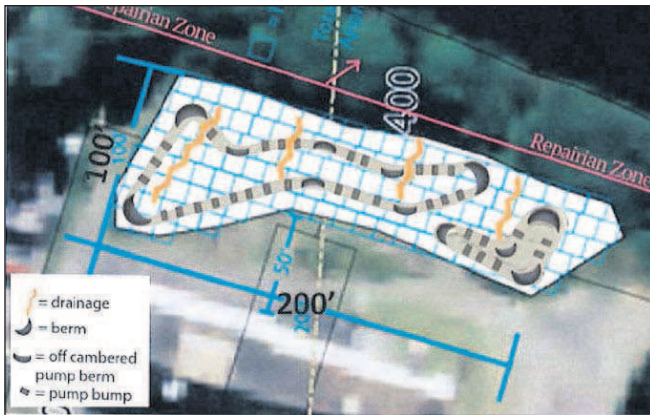
Organized last July, the North Coast Trail Association consists of 24 members, many of whom are local surfers. The association's goals are to maintain area bike trails and become involved in community projects that support biking, Quackenbush said. The group "adopted" the Gnat Creek Trail, east of Astoria, through a partnership with the state Department of Forestry.

Pump tracks provide something for families to do while increasing their phys-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A BMX bike track in use. The proposed track in Seaside would have a similar design, proponents say.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Another view of the proposed design of the BMX track as prepared by the North Coast Trail Alliance.

ical activity, said Blakesley, who is the health promotion specialist for Clatsop County. Bike riding is popular among visitors to Oregon, he added: More than 4.5 million visitors rode bikes while in the state in 2014.

Oregon's mountain bikers brought in \$2.3 million revenue in 2014, Blakesley said. Overnight biking visitors spend eight times more than day travelers, he said.

Although several city councilors appeared to support the track, the council won't take formal action on the proposal until the Planning Commission considers it. Councilor Tita Montero noted that the track would be easy to reach by much of the community since it would be built in an existing city park.

In other business, the council:

- Approved a recommendation by the city traffic advisory committee to complete the design of a new Avenue U Bridge and have it ready when

asked to provide funds. The school district is the field's primary user.

- Heard a report about the dryer at the city's wastewater treatment plant. Although several repairs have had to be made on the dryer, which the city purchased used, the dryer is running now, said Tony Biamont, wastewater collections supervisor. Treated sewage put through the dryer comes out in fine particles, which enables the city to reduce the yardage and weight of the material taken to a dump in McMinnville by more than 92 percent. The reduction means the city could save thousands of dollars annually, Biamont said.

- Heard a request by Angela Fairless for the public to attend a screening of "Paper Tigers," a documentary about how Lincoln High School in Walla Walla, Washington developed a program for students going through trauma. The free screening begins at 6 p.m. at the Liberty Theatre in Astoria. It will be followed by a panel discussion. Doors open at 5 p.m. with food and information.

- Heard a proposal by John Dunzer that Pacific Power construct a biomass-fired electrical generation power plant near Main Line Road and an extension of Avenue F in Seaside. Energy supplied by the plant could operate Providence Seaside Hospital as well as several city and school facilities, Dunzer said.

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