

8/7/2017

Honorable Members of the  
West Allis Common Council  
7525 W. Greenfield Avenue  
West Allis WI 53214

RE: Status Report and Financial Plan Recommendations  
for Completion of Centennial Plaza Project

Dear Common Council Members:

This letter is to bring the Common Council up to date on the status of the Centennial Plaza Project, including certain financial recommendations that we feel are necessary to complete this last piece of our overall 2006 Centennial Celebration activities and to express the Committee's sincere appreciation for the Common Council's support of these activities.

First, we would like to provide the Common Council a summary from a historical standpoint of what was accomplished last year. As you know, a formal committee and subcommittees were created to coordinate and conduct all events, activities and projects (a complete list of activities is attached). The major activities included a parade, a festival, and a fabulous fireworks presentation, as well as open houses, senior activities, school programs, historical occasions, art/cultural fairs, and health events. In addition to these three major events and the other activities outlined in the attachment, the permanent remembrance of the City's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday is to be the reconstruction of the City Hall courtyard into a Centennial Plaza.

Second, in order to provide the Common Council a reminder of the original financial plan for the entire efforts, we would like to outline the details of what was included in each aspect of the Centennial activities. The original goal, which still remains, is for everything to be paid for by private donations through our overall fundraising efforts. To date, approximately \$565,000 has been donated and/or pledged toward the original goal and budget of \$575,000 (\$75,000 for parade, festival, and fireworks, and \$500,000 for the Centennial Plaza; only approximately \$55,000 was spent for the parade, festival, and fireworks, leaving a remaining balance in funds received and pledged of \$510,000 for the Centennial Plaza construction). Unfortunately, our original

preliminary estimate of \$500,000 for the Centennial Plaza has increased to \$935,000, leaving a balance of \$425,000 yet to be raised from additional private donations and contributions.

This latest cost of \$935,000 for construction is based on actual construction bids of \$861,399 received and opened on May 10, 2007. In addition to that amount, \$64,747 was paid to Ruekert & Mielke for the design, architectural, and construction bid services. With adding a possible 10% contingency amount of \$78,309 and other related costs of \$11,000 for the placement of educational and historical arts pieces and recognition plaques, the total comes to approximately \$935,000 (see attached financial report).

It should be noted that the \$425,000 of remaining needed funds is the worst-case scenario. City Engineering staff is currently reviewing the bid for some possible savings, and the Centennial Fund Raising Committee hopes to further reduce costs. In addition, and more importantly, if the City purchases the materials directly for the contractor, approximately \$22,000 can be saved on the sales tax expenses. Further, if the project is managed carefully and thoroughly, none of the \$78,000 contingency amount may need to be spent. These latter two items alone could save \$100,000 of the remaining amount of \$425,000 needed, thus reducing the needed amount to \$325,000.

A color rendering of the final design of the Plaza that was used on the basis for the formal bid is attached. The bid is ready to be awarded with construction to be done this summer and fall of 2007.

In order to allow the Centennial Plaza project to proceed as scheduled, the Centennial Fund Raising Committee has several financial recommendations that we ask the Common Council to approve. They are as follows:

1. Authorize the continuation of the Centennial Fund Raising Committee to continue to raise the remaining needed funds of approximately \$325,000 to \$425,000 over the next two to three years (2007-2009).
2. Contribute a second \$50,000 from City reserves toward the fundraising effort (the City had previously provided one \$50,000 contribution in early 2006 to match a same amount from WAMH/Aurora).
3. Borrow the final amount needed in the range of \$275,000 to \$375,000 funds from the City's Land & Building Fund to allow construction of the Centennial Plaza to proceed with the 2007 summer/fall construction schedule. Admittedly, the total \$275,000 to \$375,000 is a lot of money. However, the City has a long history of planning ahead for major capital financial projects by setting aside 50% of the needed funds before the project begins and borrowing/bonding for the remaining 50% of the project costs. As a reminder, for this

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project (other than the first \$50,000 and possibly the second \$50,000), the City has not had to set aside the first 50%. The funds in hand (over \$500,000) have come from contributions from the business community and generous citizens of West Allis. And, in regard to the second 50%, the City will not have to borrow/bond for these funds because adequate amounts are available in the City's Land & Building Fund; this will save some interest costs.

4. Advance the necessary funds for the remaining pledged amounts (\$93,750) that have not yet been actually paid. (Upon payment, these amounts will be repaid to the City.)

We appreciate the Common Council's consideration of our request. We strongly feel that the goal of raising the additional \$275,000 to \$375,000 funds over the next year or two is reasonable, particularly in light of the fact that approximately \$565,000 was raised in the past year or two. Fund raising efforts will continue with the community and businesses to solicit the remaining needed contributions. In addition, future fund raising efforts will focus on private foundations to give, a group not previously asked. While the Fund Raising Committee will work diligently, we recognize the fact, as we hope you do, that ultimately the private fund raising goal may not be attained. Should this occur after the Committee's extensive efforts, we hope that the Council would step forward and provide any remaining funds as a final contribution by the City to the Centennial Plaza.

This project remains the one permanent, lasting tribute to this great City and its first 100 years. The Plaza's future use by many individuals and groups throughout the community will be long term, extensive, and varied. It will be a testimonial and memorial for all of West Allis and something that all can recognize and be proud.

Sincerely,

Jeannette Bell,  
Mayor

Wayne B. Clark,  
Chairperson, Centennial  
Celebration Executive Committee

Joyce O'Donnell,  
President, West Allis Community  
Improvement Foundation, Inc.