

SOUTH KING COUNTY

Will Federal Way arts center anchor large plaza?

Many hurdles remain before city builds auditorium

STEVE MAYNARD; The News Tribune

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A Federal Way property owner unveiled grand plans Tuesday night for a massive mixed-used development that would include land for a performing arts center.

Brian Park, owner of Pal-Do World International Mart in Federal Way, presented the City Council with one option for the arts center the city hopes to build. Park's consultant, Spencer Alpert, displayed drawings for a proposed Pal-Do World Village in downtown Federal Way.

Alpert said Park would donate land for the arts venue in exchange for the city locating it in the first phase of Park's development, along with a conference center and hotel. Later phases call for towers of condominiums and apartments reaching as high as 30 stories with retail stores at the ground level.

Park's proposal is in the preliminary stage. He owns only seven of the 11 acres he wants to develop.

Also Tuesday night, the council took a step toward designing the performing arts center but put off selecting a site for the proposed \$40 million building.

The council unanimously accepted \$500,000 in design money approved by the Legislature. But the panel decided to wait to have a development agreement in hand before choosing a site for further study. That agreement would set aside land specifically for a 700-seat performing arts center.

"We have to have a firm deal before we spend the money," said Mayor Jack Dovey.

Federal Way is the state's eighth-largest city with a population of 87,390, but it has no sizable civic auditorium.

The council's vote to accept the state's design money clears the way for arts groups to apply for grants for the project. But after the decision, council member Eric Faison cautioned, "By doing this, we have not committed to build a performing arts center."

The council authorized City Manager Neal Beets to negotiate for potential sites with landowners. After that, the council would decide whether to approve an agreement and select a site to study.

Alpert said it would take six months for his Pal-Do World group to formulate a development agreement with the city.

Besides Pal-Do World, another potential site is a five-acre parcel at Truman High School owned by the Federal Way School District. Council member Mike Park said sites at The Commons at Federal Way and Gateway Center in the downtown area also are possibilities.

But so far, Faison said, Brian Park has submitted the only proposal with retail and residential space that could generate tax revenue, which would help offset the costs of a performing arts center.

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