
*COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE
COMMISSION MEETING*

September 21, 2001

Columbia River Gorge Commission Office, White Salmon, Washington

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Kenn Adcock	Doug Crow
Don Dunn	Walt Loehrke
Joe Palena	Dave Robertson*
Kathy Sheehan*	Anne Squier
Wayne Wooster	

* Attended by phone

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED

Michael Farrow

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Dan Harkenrider	Jim Luce
Joyce Reinig	

STAFF PRESENT

Martha Bennett, Executive Director
Bob McIntyre, Administrative Assistant

MEETING AGENDA

1. Roll Call
2. Economic Grant Certification Requests
3. Adjournment

1. Roll Call

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss certification of two economic grant requests that were to be discussed at the September 11, 2001 meeting, which was cancelled. The meeting began at approximately 2:00 p.m. Roll was called.

2. Economic Grant Certification Requests

Martha Bennett provided background information on the certification number S01-0071 (see attachment A). Skamania county requests a \$50,000 National Scenic Area economic development grant to install new sidewalks, seating and information kiosks along the lower Court House lawn to provide a gathering space for vendors, visitors and local residents. The Commission discussed the certification and unanimously voted to certify the grant request.

Martha Bennett provided background information on certification number S01-0072 (see attachment B). Lori Henderson requests an \$84,150 to buy out Rhoni Cochran's interest in the Spar Tree Inn, an established business in Stevenson, Washington.

The Commissioners discussed the certification. Some Commissioners expressed ambivalence about certifying a loan request to primarily buy out a partner. One component of the loan is consolidation of a previous loan. It was pointed out that the debt consolidation was necessary to get the payments of the loan into a manageable range. The Commissioners generally agreed that the loan is consistent with the purposes of the Act and Management Plan, and the loan would save jobs in the Stevenson area, and this is in keeping with the spirit of the Act. The Commissioners voted unanimously to certify that loan.

3. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Minutes taken by Bob McIntyre

Date of Adoption: November 13, 2001

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

TO: Columbia River Gorge Commission

FROM: Martha Bennett, Executive Director
Gary Pagenstecher, Planner

DATE: August 28, 2001

SUBJECT: Economic Development Grant Request: -- FILE NO: S01-0071

APPLICANT: Skamania County

BACKGROUND:

Section 11(c)(1) of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act (P.L. 99-663), and Commission Rule 350-120, require the Commission to certify that all activities undertaken under a National Scenic Area economic development grant and/or loan are consistent with the purposes of the Act, the Management Plan, and a land use ordinance adopted pursuant to the Act. Commission Rule 350-120-030 requires the Commission's Executive Director to prepare a report and recommendation on each certification request received by the Commission. This is the Executive Director's Report for certification request S01-0071. The request will be heard at the September 11, 2001 Commission meeting at the Gorge Discovery Center in The Dalles, Oregon.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Skamania County is requesting a \$50,000 National Scenic Area economic development grant to install new sidewalks, seating, and information kiosks along the lower Court House lawn to provide a gathering space for vendors, visitors, and local residents.

The total project cost is \$75,000. The Washington Investment Board grant will be matched by \$25,000 from Skamania County through the Rural Counties Tax Abatement Program.

The Washington Investment Board gave preliminary approval of the grant request at its August 16, 2001 meeting.

CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATION:

Consistency with the Purposes of the National Scenic Area Act

The purposes of the Act are to: 1) protect and provide for the enhancement of the scenic, cultural, recreational, and natural resources of the Columbia River Gorge, and 2) to protect and support the economy of the Columbia River Gorge area by encouraging growth to occur in existing urban areas and by allowing future economic development in a manner that is consistent with the protection of the resources of the Gorge.

The proposed sidewalk extension, seating, and kiosk project coincides with a larger downtown revitalization effort that includes resurfacing S.R. 14, replacement of the existing sidewalks, landscaping the Rock Creek Drive and S.R. 14 intersection, and adoption of downtown design codes and standards. The project would enhance the scenic character of Washington State Route 14 as it passes through the Stevenson downtown. The subject grant would not affect cultural, natural, or recreation resources, consistent with the first purpose of the Scenic Area Act.

The City of Stevenson is located in the Stevenson Urban Area. The proposed infrastructure project would support the economy of the Gorge by encouraging growth in existing Urban Areas and by allowing future economic development in a manner that is consistent with the protection of the resources of the Gorge, consistent with the second purpose of the Scenic Area Act.

Section 11(c)(2) of the Scenic Area Act states that economic development funds may not be used to relocate a business from one community to another. Section 11(c)(3) of the Scenic Area Act states that economic development funds are not to be used for program administration. The proposed grant is consistent with these sections of the Scenic Area Act.

Section 11(c)(4) of the Scenic Area Act states that economic development funds are to be used "only in counties which have in effect land use ordinances found consistent by the Commission and concurred on by the Secretary." The proposed grant would be used in Skamania County, which has in effect ordinances found consistent by the Commission and concurred on by the Secretary.

Conclusion: The subject grant is consistent with both purposes of the Scenic Area Act.

Consistency with the Management Plan

The subject grant will be used in the Stevenson Urban Area, and therefore is not subject to Management Plan land use and resource protection guidelines.

Management Plan economic development policies (Management Plan, Economic Development, Goals, pg. III-53 - III-54) support the strategies in the *Economic*

Development Plan 1999 Update, written by the two states. Within the *1999 Update* the *Washington Economic Vitality Plan* includes five strategies. Strategy 2: Tourism and Retail Development focuses on revitalizing downtown centers to strengthen their ability to capture visitor and local retail dollars. The subject grant would be used for activities consistent with this strategy.

Conclusion: The subject grant is consistent with applicable provisions of the Management Plan.

Consistency with Land Use Ordinances

The subject grant will be used in the Stevenson Urban Area, and therefore is not subject to a land use ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION:

The subject grant request, S01-0071, from Skamania County, is recommended for certification.



DIRECTOR'S REPORT (REVISED)

TO: Columbia River Gorge Commission

FROM: Martha Bennett, Executive Director
Gary Pagenstecher, Planner

DATE: September 4, 2001

SUBJECT: Economic Development Loan Request: -- FILE NO: S01-0072

APPLICANT: Lori Henderson dba Spar Tree Inn

BACKGROUND:

Section 11(c)(1) of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act (P.L. 99-663), and Commission Rule 350-120, require the Commission to certify that all activities undertaken under a National Scenic Area economic development Loan and/or loan are consistent with the purposes of the Act, the Management Plan, and a land use ordinance adopted pursuant to the Act. Commission Rule 350-120-030 requires the Commission's Executive Director to prepare a report and recommendation on each certification request received by the Commission. This is the Executive Director's Report for certification request S01-0072. The request will be heard at the September 11, 2001 Commission meeting at the Gorge Discovery Center in The Dalles, Oregon.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Lori Henderson is requesting a ~~\$30,600~~ \$84,150 (plus fees) National Scenic Area economic development loan. ~~under the Skamania County Micro Loan Fund (The Micro Loan Fund was established in 1994 under a Scenic Area economic development grant to the Skamania County Economic Development Council).~~ The private business development loan would be used to buy out Rhoni Cochran's interest in the Henderson-Cochran Partnership, which currently owns the Spar Tree Inn. The Spar Tree Inn is a restaurant and lounge that has been an established business for more than 20 years in Stevenson, Washington.

The Partnership bought the Spar Tree Inn in 1996 and made improvements with an initial \$30,000 Scenic Area loan (under the Micro Loan Fund, established in 1994 under a Scenic Area economic development grant to the Skamania County Economic Development Council). Subsequently, in February 2000, after the initial loan was paid off, the Commission certified an additional \$30,000 loan (Micro loan Fund), used by the partnership to consolidate debt and provide working capital.

The Washington Investment Board approved the subject loan request at its August 16, 2001 meeting.

CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATION:

Consistency with the Purposes of the National Scenic Area Act

The purposes of the Act are to: 1) protect and provide for the enhancement of the scenic, cultural, recreational, and natural resources of the Columbia River Gorge, and 2) to protect and support the economy of the Columbia River Gorge area by encouraging growth to occur in existing urban areas and by allowing future economic development in a manner that is consistent with the protection of the resources of the Gorge.

The proposed partner buy out of an existing business in Stevenson would not affect scenic, cultural, natural or recreation resources of the Columbia River Gorge, consistent with the first purpose of the Scenic Area Act.

The Spar Tree is located in the Stevenson Urban Area. The proposed partner buy out of an existing business in Stevenson would support the economy of the Gorge in an existing Urban Area, consistent with the second purpose of the Scenic Area Act.

Section 11(c)(2) of the Scenic Area Act states that economic development funds may not be used to relocate a business from one community to another. Section 11(c)(3) of the Scenic Area Act states that economic development funds are not to be used for program administration. The subject loan request is consistent with these sections of the Scenic Area Act.

Section 11(c)(4) of the Scenic Area Act states that economic development funds are to be used "only in counties which have in effect land use ordinances found consistent by the Commission and concurred on by the Secretary." The proposed loan would be used in Skamania County, which has in effect ordinances found consistent by the Commission and concurred on by the Secretary.

Conclusion: The subject loan is consistent with both purposes of the Scenic Area Act.

Consistency with the Management Plan

The subject Loan will be used in the Stevenson Urban Area, and therefore is not subject to Management Plan land use and resource protection guidelines.

Management Plan economic development policies (Management Plan, Economic Development, Goals, pg. III-53 - III-54) support the strategies in the *Economic Development Plan 1999 Update*, written by the two states. Within the *1999 Update* the *Washington Economic Vitality Plan* includes five strategies. Strategy 2: Tourism and Retail Development focuses on revitalizing downtown centers to strengthen their ability to capture visitor and local retail dollars. The subject loan would be used for activities consistent with this strategy.

Conclusion: The subject loan is consistent with applicable provisions of the Management Plan.

Consistency with Land Use Ordinances

The subject loan will be used in the Stevenson Urban Area, and therefore is not subject to a land use ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION:

The subject loan request, S01-0072, from Lori Henderson, is recommended for certification.

