

DOWNTOWN PLAZA FAQs

How is the project being funded?

An increase in the O'Fallon Hotel/Motel Tax is being used so that O'Fallon visitors, not O'Fallon residents, will pay for the Downtown Plaza and other projects that are part of the Destination O'Fallon initiative. O'Fallon families and businesses will experience the benefits of additional amenities without having to pay for it through property taxes.

How are you going to get permission from the railroad to do this?

All infrastructure shown will be on City-owned property and we do not need permission from the railroad to proceed.

What about the homes directly south of the project?

City staff members have spoken with the owners of the homes across the street from this project and are aware of their concerns. Thoughtful design and good management will resolve most of their issues and we will continue to work with them to ensure this project is compatible with their homes.

What will happen to the scale house?

The scale house is a locally designated landmark, although there is nothing historic about its current location as it has already been moved several times. The Historic Preservation Commission is exploring potential locations and the design team is looking into the possibility of incorporating it into the site.

What will happen to the Santa event?

The community has made it clear that children love meeting with Santa in O'Fallon. The event is a beloved tradition, however, the current structure sits unused 360 days a year and blocks visibility into this key area. If a multi-season pavilion is built as proposed, the Santa event can continue on in the pavilion, which will be more comfortable and inviting for visitors. The City is currently exploring options for relocating and reusing the structure.

How will this project affect parking?

The City has conducted three parking counts and the highest number of cars ever observed parking in this area was 28, which occurred at peak hours shortly after the opening of Peel Pizza. This number is lower than one might expect presumably due to poor lighting and

visibility, lack of striping and signage, and general unattractiveness. The concept site plan shown provides 56 spaces and will alleviate all the problems mentioned previously.

Why not just host all events at the community park?

Creating an additional space to hold community events does not in any way prevent events from occurring at Community Park. In order to host more events overall, which seems to be the desire of the community, it is to the City's advantage to be able to offer options. A downtown site has a different atmosphere than a park and it also has the added advantage of having a paved surface, so visitors don't need to worry about walking through muddy fields. Downtown festivals also help downtown businesses by providing more customers and foot traffic in the area. Events at Community Park can and will continue and that area is able to accommodate larger scale events that might not be appropriate for downtown.

What happens if the railroad line becomes a trail someday?

The rail line is currently out of use, but can be reactivated at any time. Therefore, for time being, we're assuming the train will start running again and are planning for buffering/screening to lessen the noise and disturbance. However, if the line is officially abandoned someday, the possibility of making that right of way a trail could become a reality. With the way the open plaza area is situated, we believe it will be easy to add a small spur to connect any future trail to this area. It could be a wonderful stopping point for trail users and draw visitors to our downtown.