

RIVER CITY RENAISSANCE PROJECT – FAQs

What is the River City Renaissance Project?

The Renaissance Project is designed to enhance Mason City's Downtown area with the addition of a Multi-Purpose Arena, Performing Arts Pavilion, Hotel, Skywalk, The Music Man Square renovation into conference space, and construction of a new museum.

What are Mason City citizens voting on in November?

Voters will decide if the City should enter into a long term lease agreement with Southbridge Mall to construct the Multi-Purpose Arena and lease the facility for a 20-year period, plus four 5-year options, with a total construction and lease cost of approximately \$18 million. The referendum must receive a 60% YES vote to be approved.

How much will this project cost?

Approximately \$33 million. Hotel = \$15 million; The Music Man Square Renovation = \$1 million; New Museum = \$750,000; Skywalk = \$1.5 million; Performing Arts Pavilion = \$1.65 million; Multi-Purpose Arena = \$12.55 million

How will Mason City taxpayers be affected?

There will be no increase in property taxes. Other forms of funding have been put in place to ensure there is little to no impact on taxpayers.

Where will the funding come from?

The funding for the project will come from a variety of sources including State Funding (Iowa Reinvestment District), Tax Increment Funding (TIF), Local Option Sales Tax (LOST), Cerro Gordo County, and private donations from Mason City Youth Hockey and others.

Is there a need for a project of this kind in Mason City?

Mason City lacks the facilities to host large conferences. Since 2010, Visit Mason City has tracked more than \$4 million lost in visitor spending because we couldn't host these groups. Additionally, the Mason City Municipal Band and various outdoor festivals are in need of a space for performances (Performing Arts Pavilion), and the Multi-Purpose Arena will offer a variety events to attract people to our regional hub. With increased traffic and amenities to Mason City, hotel space will be needed for the additional visitors.

When will the project break ground, and when is it expected to be completed?

Hotel construction is expected to begin in Fall 2017; Arena construction to begin in Spring 2018; Project is estimated to be completed in April 2019.

Who will manage the arena?

The City will hire a full-time arena director to manage part-time staff. The Parks & Rec Department will be responsible for operations. Mason City Youth Hockey will maintain the ice sheet during their sub-lease. The City will be responsible for maintenance and repairs inside the facility and the Mall will be responsible for external maintenance.

What types of events will be held in the arena?

Concerts, Shows, Conventions, Exhibits, Sales Events, Basketball Camps/Tournaments and Sporting Events will all have a space in the arena. For six months out of the year, the facility will host an ice rink for hockey and figure skating.

What will happen to The Music Man Square?

The Mason City Foundation (The Music Man Square) is excited about the potential of the renovated facility. The Streetscape and event rooms will remain the same at the current facility; the museum will be moved to a new building and that vacant space will be renovated into the conference ballroom.

Is there a separate vote item for the conference center on the November ballot?

Currently the only referendum item is for the City to lease the arena from the mall.

Will the hotel/conference center still be built if the arena is turned down?

The project is a packaged deal. If the Arena does not pass, without the \$10 million from the state, no other components will be fulfilled.

Where will all of these people park?

Approximately 855 spaces will remain in the mall parking lot after the hotel is built. There is also a city lot to the west of the proposed Multi-Purpose Arena. If an additional parking structure needs to be built in the future to accommodate more vehicles, the city already has parking ramp plans prepared that were completed as an early part of the project.