



Downtown Gathering Space

Shell Rock boasts an impressive lineup of community activities throughout the year. Currently, part of Washington Street is blocked off periodically for local seasonal festivals, including Shell Rock's annual 4th of July festival. This section of the street is also the site of the Christmas tree and village in the winter. The steering committee expressed interest in permanently closing a half block of Washington Street between Holley Park and the Boyd Building. Alley access and driveways on the west side of Washington Street would remain accessible. Permanent closure would mean designing the space for year-round activities with space for a stage, outdoor seating, festoon lighting, and even a permanent location to plant an evergreen tree for the Christmas tree lighting. Pathways have been created to connect with the existing sidewalk in Holley Park, as well as to the north facing entrance to the Boyd Building. These pathways to and from the gathering space provide pedestrian-friendly circulation to the existing infrastructure. Existing pedestrian routes along Cherry Street and Washington Street are maintained and not impacted by the public gathering space.

The closure of this street was a hot topic during the design workshop with many residents opposed to this change. All the participants loved the idea of an outdoor community gathering space but the location was the issue. Some residents did not like the idea of having to use an alternative route either one block north or one block south of Washington Street to reach their destinations. Parking was also a concern. The closure would eliminate several parking locations close to the Boyd Building rear entrance. The design team is recommending ensuring there are designated handicapped accessible stalls at the front entrance and marking the parking spaces available at the rear of the building.

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View from Cherry Street toward Holley Park and Boyd Building



The street closure is shown in red in the above graphic



Proposed gathering space could include a permanent or portable stage with a variety of seating options

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