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Town aims to add parking as Visitor Center transit facility parking structure design continues

The Town of Estes Park continues design work for the proposed Estes Park Transit Facility Parking Structure, which is anticipated to be constructed in 2016 at the Estes Park Visitor Center parking lot south of the Big Thompson River. The Estes Park Transit Facility Parking Structure will increase parking availability in the downtown area, reduce emissions in the Estes Valley and Rocky Mountain National Park, and support the Visitor Center as a hub for transit systems. A recent community meeting resulted in refinements to the design of the facility, and the public review process will continue with a development review by the Estes Valley Planning Commission and a variance review by the Board of Adjustment later this summer. Community members are encouraged to view the current design information and provide feedback at www.estes.org/transitfacilityparkingstructure, or in Room 100 of Town Hall, 170 MacGregor Ave.

“The Town is keenly focused on the design and construction of this facility in order to augment parking availability for guests as soon as possible, possibly in 2016,” stated Public Works Director Greg Muhonen. “We understand the importance of considering other parking projects in the heart of downtown. While the Town is receptive to all opportunities and partnerships to add further parking downtown, our focus at this time is bringing the Visitor Center transit and parking structure to fruition for the community.” This project is currently funded by approximately \$3.9 million in grants from the Federal Transit Administration, Federal Highway Administration, CDOT and Rocky Mountain National Park. Grant funding is specifically designated for this structure to be located at the Estes Park Visitor Center. The Town has budgeted a matching contribution of \$1.7 million from its Community Reinvestment Fund. No additional parking projects are funded at this time.

An initial phase of the project with 98 new spaces on two levels is currently funded, and two additional levels will be possible if more funding becomes available. A total of 296 new parking spaces could be achieved in a future four-level structure. The first phase, a two-level design, will result in an upper deck approximately level with U.S. 36 adjacent to the structure. When the full four-level structure is funded, the height above the level of U.S. 36 will be similar to that of a two-story home. View corridors to the Continental Divide, Lumpy Ridge and the Stanley Hotel will be maintained except for a momentary lapse in view for westbound motorists as they pass the structure on U.S. 36.

Based on public input received to date, the facility is being designed to complement its natural surroundings and the adjacent Estes Park Visitor Center with earth tone materials, heavy timber accents at entry and exit points, electric car-charging stations, viewing areas at stairway landings, landscaping and seasonal planter accents, and seasonal event flags to provide guests with a sense of arrival. Details are available at www.estes.org/transitfacilityparkingstructure. Once the Town has received necessary approvals from partner agencies, as well as approval of the development, the project could be bid late in 2015. Construction could extend thru the summer of 2016.

For more information, please visit www.estes.org/transitfacilityparkingstructure or contact the Public Works Department at 970-577-3587. To receive Town news and/or meeting agendas in your email inbox, please subscribe at www.estes.org. More Town news is available at www.facebook.com/townofestespark and www.twitter.com/townofestespark.

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