

A-3 | Create a Downtown Pocket Park

DRI Funding Request/Total Project Cost

\$250,000/\$280,000

Project Description

Located in downtown Cortland and surrounded by structures, the 2,200 SF park will provide an oasis from the bustle of downtown and a protected area for families and children to gather and relax. The park will include landscaping, seating, and can be used for a small event space, play areas for children, places to relax and meet friends, and take lunch breaks. With the addition of downtown Wi-Fi, the pocket park will also provide a space to hold meetings and work.

Project Location/Address

Vacant lot between 10 Main Street (Community Restaurant) and 16 Main Street (Pawn Boss)

Sponsor

City of Cortland

Strategies

- Invest in downtown destinations for residents, workers, and visitors, and to attract new businesses and residents;
- Create strong gateways, wayfinding and complete streets to strengthen connections between destinations and amenities and to make the downtown inviting and accessible to all;
- Create an identity that will appeal to current and future generations;
- Support and strengthen the local arts and culture community and attractions; and
- Foster cultural venues, public events, sports events and recreational opportunities.
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Public Support

The pocket park has the support of Mayor Tobin, the Cortland Youth Bureau, and the general public. Input during the DRI application process indicated a desire among the public to provide quality open spaces for families within the downtown area.

Project Ownership

City of Cortland



Rendering of proposed pocket park

Project Partners

City of Cortland Youth Bureau, DPW, and others as deemed necessary.

Capacity

The City of Cortland Youth Bureau has a successful history of park renovations and development in Cortland. Recent examples include: Wickwire Pool Renovations (\$1.2 million), Dexter Park Improvements, Beaudry Park Community Building and Testa Park Development (\$2 million).

Project Budget

\$280,000 – includes \$30,000 in-kind services. Figures presented are an estimated breakdown:

- Site prep (demolition, grading, etc.) - \$32,560
- Landscape - \$54,940
- Hardscape and drainage - \$87,500
- Site furnishings and lighting - \$43,750
- Soft costs (survey, design, etc.) - \$26,250
- Contingency (including unforeseen conditions) – \$35,000

Funding Sources

DRI funding will be the primary funding source. In-kind services from the city of Cortland Park Maintenance, Water Department and DPW are expected to be between 10-15% of the project cost, depending on the ultimate design.

Feasibility and Cost Justification

A research team from the University of Pennsylvania’s Perelman School of Medicine has found that neighborhoods where vacant lots have been converted into small parks are associated with reduced crime. The community investment will foster a sense of ownership, which, in turn, creates a strong incentive for residents to protect and preserve their park. Pocket park improvements are often quick and tangible actions for elected officials and citizens, which can work in concert with other issues such as reducing graffiti, traffic management and increase main street activities.



Rendering of proposed pocket park

Regulatory Requirements

The right-of-way must be secured by the City of Cortland Law Department. Building permits will be needed if lighting upgrades are needed. The Historic Review Commission, police, and fire safety representatives will be consulted.

Timeframe for Implementation and Project Readiness

Total project timeframe will be approximately 32-34 months.

- Contract with engineering firm – 6 months;
- Engineer final design – 10 months;
- Common council and permit approvals – 12 months;
- Construction – 4-6 months.

Project Reporting

The City of Cortland Youth Bureau (manages the city parks) will report on the project development and give quarterly updates to monitor progress against the timeline. Upon completion, Youth Bureau will report on facility usage and data relating to the park upgrades including attendance and maintenance records.



Existing pocket park