

LEWIS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC FACILITIES PROJECT PROPOSAL

Date: 8/26/2015	Lewis County #
Applicant: City of Chehalis for Discover! Children's Museum	Address: 350 N Market Blvd.
Contact Name: Merlin MacReynold, City Manager	City, State, Zip: Chehalis, WA 98532
County: Lewis	Phone: 360-345-1042
Signature & Position of person authorizing submittal:  , City Manager	Fax/Email: 360-748-0651 / mmacreynold@ci.chehalis.wa.us
Project Title: Discover! Children's Museum	
Project Type: (specify your current need)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering. <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure development. <input type="checkbox"/> Building construction.	The project consists of the design, engineering, and construction of the Discover! Children's Museum, including classrooms for Reliable Enterprises to operate their Head Start and In-Tot early childhood learning programs.
Total project cost: \$4.2 million (construction / first year operating costs).	Is your request a funding gap? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Amount raised to date: \$450,000 firmly committed; \$750,000 in-kind estimated for facility/exhibits.	What are you requesting now?: \$300,000 in 2016
Is this a phased in Project? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If yes, how many phases and how many years? ___ phases ___ years
Is this a Loan <input type="checkbox"/> or a Grant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> request?	

1. Briefly describe your project. When did you start work on it? Who is involved? What is the scope of the project? (Use provided space only.) The idea of a children's museum in Lewis County began in 2009. The Chehalis Community Renaissance Team partnered with the original visioners to form an advisory committee. Input and information was gathered from the public and from existing children's museums in like communities. An 11-month (originally planned for six months) pilot museum was opened in 2013 to determine the feasibility of a permanent museum. The overwhelmingly successful pilot data showed that a permanent museum could sustain itself. The non-profit Discover! Children's Museum Board was formed to oversee construction of a permanent facility.

2. How does the project satisfy, in whole or in part, your economic diversification strategy? Economic Development: It is estimated that 3 to 6 jobs will be created over five years. Area business activity will increase as was substantiated by several businesses located near the pilot museum during its operation. This type of facility adds to the amenities and quality of life that makes a community more attractive to both existing and potential residents and businesses. **Tourism:** Although no advertising was undertaken during the pilot operation, statistics showed that Discover! served 15,000 paid guests from 72 zip codes statewide, and 35-40% of visitors did not plan to visit the museum when they started their day. For these reasons, a highly visible and heavily traveled location has been selected on city-owned land that will provide both an outdoor exhibit area and public park space on an adjoining greenspace. **Early Childhood Education** is Discover!'s primary focus. We will partner with Reliable Enterprises to provide Head Start and In-Tot programs, and work to be a facility to plant early STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) seeds of interest as STEM has become more and more emphasized in the schools.

3. Is this project a documented county wide priority? No, but the Chehalis Renaissance Plan is included in the Southwest Washington Economic Development Commission's comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS). The Discover! project will be included in the next update of the city's comprehensive plan as the city views the museum as an anchor for the long term economic development strategy for the area where the museum will be located. The city council has strongly endorsed the use of this land for Discover!. Yes, it ranks (1st, 2nd, etc.) in our county wide prioritization process.

4. Summarize efforts taken to date regarding the project in terms of specific steps/studies and dates of action, where appropriate. (Use provided space only.)

A. Is this project part of a plan (capital facilities, growth management, business, etc.)? The project is included in the 2009 Chehalis Renaissance Plan, which is included in the city's comprehensive plan.

B. What engineering reports and feasibility studies have been prepared, and when? SEPA for site completed approx. 2006; Marketing/Feasibility Study March 2011; Pilot Museum Feb to Dec 2013; Site Plan May 2014; Geotechnical Report for Site May 2014; Pilot Report Oct 2014; Conceptual Facility Planning Feb 2015.

5. Summarize efforts you've taken to date regarding the project in terms of: (Give specific files and dates of adoption where appropriate. (Use provided space only.)

A. Have you secured funds for this project from local, state or federal programs or foundations? Specify sources including local match and dollar amounts. If there are conditions attached to any of these secured funding sources, please specify. Discover! is seeking about 1/3 (\$1.25 million) from the local community and about 2/3 (\$2.95 million) from major foundations. Discover! has retained the services of Public Affairs Research Consultants (PARC) to identify 24+ private/public (non-governmental) foundations. Three large governmental grantors have also been identified and one application has been submitted to-date. Local commitments of cash, totaling \$450,000 have been pledged. In-kind commitments of good/services, totaling \$750,000 are expected based upon the Discover! pilot experience and other projects completed by Discover! board members.

B. Are there other efforts you have made that are unique to this project? Discover! will be the only children's museum between Olympia and Portland. In speaking with other museums, we found that our firm focus on early childhood learning is unique. Discover! plans to partner with Reliable Enterprises' Head Start program to provide a pre-school that is available to both those who qualify for Head Start and those who are able to pay; this is a hybrid program that our local Head Start was recently granted. Reliable will also locate their In-Tot program in Discover!, which serves children with developmental delays ages birth to three years. The rent charges from Reliable will provide important revenue to Discover! Discover! will be an area resource for public/private schools, pre-schools, and organizations serving children with special needs, as we were during the pilot. Discover! will provide the only early learning facility with a STEM emphasis, as well. Discover! admission prices will be affordable to the local community to assure widespread access by our citizens.

What are the anticipated outcomes of this project in terms of the criteria identified below? Quantify information where possible. (If a section does not apply, make it "N/A".)

How many full-time, permanent jobs will this project create or retain?	Retain? 0, as it is new	Create in 1-3 years? 3	Create in 3-5 years? Perhaps another 2-3
What is the size of the population that will benefit by these infrastructure improvements?	Discover! will be located in Chehalis. The March 2011 Feasibility Study projects the service region to cover South Thurston County to Cowlitz County, and from Pacific County to East Lewis County. Within this demographic area are approximately 200,000 people, 160,000 of which are in family groups.		
How will this project improve local infrastructure capacity?	There are few local infrastructure aspects more important than education. It is estimated by local educators that 25-30% of students who enter Kindergarten in our community are not prepared in terms of numbers, shapes, colors, letters and socialization. Discover! will directly impact this on a large scale, as well as provide a high quality pre-school as noted above.		
How many businesses do you plan on serving with this project?	The impact of this project will not directly serve other businesses; however, visitors from outside the area often patronize other local attractions, motels, restaurants, outlet malls, grocery stores, gas stations, etc. Several nearby businesses reported an increase in customers during operation of the pilot museum.		
How many months will the work on this project take complete?	Discover! will be built in 2017 and will take 6 to 9 months for the site work, building construction and classroom and exhibit construction.		

6. Are there other factors significant to this project that we should be aware of, such as emergency declaration, bird in hand industry, volunteer efforts, etc.? (Use provided space only.)

STEM – There is no facility/program in the area to serve a large number of students to help plant the seeds of the value of STEM-related education.

Head Start/In-Tot – The Board of Reliable Enterprises will partner because they judge that Head Start and In-Tot at Discover! will provide a superior learning experience for their students. They have 25 years' experience behind this judgment.

Volunteer Efforts – Thousands of hours have been dedicated to the ultimate construction of Discover! through board meetings, construction and operation of the pilot museum, and attendance at festivals and events to educate the public about the project. It should be noted that during operation of the pilot, volunteers logged about 1,165 hours.

7. What quantifiable outcomes are you going to track to measure the success of this project? (Use provided space only.)

Attendance – overall, return visits, and zip codes. **Participation** by local school educators and their students. **Participation** by local community groups, service providers (such as Valley View Health Center) and industry groups (such as local dentists) to broaden the audiences they serve. **Surveys of experience** - Individual / field trips. **Attendance** – pre-school. **Longitudinal surveys** to determine if the public/private schools in our community can discern a measurable difference in the preparedness of young students for Kindergarten due to attendance at Discover!