

Update on Nelson Park Splash Pad

The Splash Pad project at Nelson Park in Eagle Bend has been an enthusiastic dream of the community for the past 3 ½ years. Beginning with an idea from a member of the EBFD Auxiliary, it took off with the help of the entire Fire Department Auxiliary & EBDC. Letters of support were mailed, fundraisers held big & small, and community members and businesses generously contributed. The committee, as of January 2026, has risen almost \$100,000! We are very proud to be close to achieving our goal for the equipment portion. The main issue is that additional costs for a water runoff system originally were not known.

Background:

- Fall 2022, original information presented by supplier indicated it would only be \$75,000.
- Winter 2023, discovered actual costs \$150,000-\$250,000 for equipment alone.
- THEN learned wastewater required separate septic tank then one presently at Nelson Park, cost. \$150-\$175,000.
- Committee sought a different designer presently working with past almost 3 years.
- Even with newer company, the **original** project costs are just under \$400,000.00 including the separate water system.
- We applied consecutively for 2 very large DNR Outdoor Recreation Grants, both denied.
- Received \$5000 Community Round-up Grant with a deadline for spending, so we purchased a safer underlayment for current playground equipment area.
- December 2025, committee met with Ashley Walker/Commercial Recreation Company to explore smaller design, hydraulic splash pad, with timed button sprayer ground jets.
 - Cost around \$125,000.
 - According to the City of Eagle Bend we would still need separate septic/water runoff to the tune of \$150,000. Total project cost around \$275,000.
 - Did consider upgrading playground equipment instead.
 - Funds raised for the splashpad project **MUST** be used for this project only!! This is the legal decision of the funds.
 - The City Engineer, City Maintenance Supervisor and Recreation Specialists are meeting to discuss alternate water system options.

Several are asking when is this ever going to happen?? Meeting financial goals, setbacks of not receiving grants, not having a grant writer, has been challenging. It is a slow, progressive process, but yet undeterred thanks to a dedicated committee and community support.

Improving the City of Eagle Bend & our rural surrounding communities for entire families to enjoy, continues to be our priority!! We will continue to seek grants with the help of Commercial Recreation Specialists.

The City of Eagle Bend hopes to pursue updates to Nelson Park, including *possible* paved parking lot, water to the Lions Club Shelter (with EB Lions contributing), etc. This would then improve our chance of future DNR Outdoor Recreation or other grants.

Please continue to support this project to bring a splash pad! Thank you for your unending patience, support of our numerous fundraisers and financial contributions.

~Sharon Notch, on behalf of EBFD Auxiliary & EB Development Corporation