



**City of Missoula, Montana**  
**Item to be Referred to City Council Committee**

**Committee:** Parks and Conservation

**Item:** Marshall Mountain Park: Master Planning Contract

**Date:** February

**Sponsor(s):** Nathan McLeod

**Prepared by:** Nathan McLeod

**Ward(s) Affected:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Ward 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Ward 4
<input type="checkbox"/> Ward 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Ward 5
<input type="checkbox"/> Ward 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Ward 6
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Wards	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

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**Action Required:**

Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign a contract with SE Group for the Master Planning of Marshall Mountain Park in the amount not to exceed \$130,000.00

**Recommended Motion(s):**

I move the City Council: Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign a contract with SE Group for the Master Planning of Marshall Mountain Park in the amount not to exceed \$130,000.00

**Timeline:**

Referral to committee:	February 28, 2022
Committee discussion:	March 2, 2022
Council action (or sets hearing):	March 7, 2022
Public Hearing (if required):	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>
Deadline:	<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>

**Background and Alternatives Explored:**

The Marshall Mountain project area is comprised of two distinct parcels. The Marshall Mountain base area (approx. 160 acres) and the Marshall Mountain Five Valleys Land Trust Parcel (approx. 160 acres). These two parcels, plus a special-use permit across approximately 100 acres of USFS land, composed the entirety of the former Marshall Mountain Ski Area. Izzy Dog, LLC recently purchased the base area, and in 2014, the Five Valleys Lands Trust parcel was donated to FVLT by The Nature Conservancy to hold for future transfer to a public entity.

The former Marshall Mountain Ski Area closed in 2002. Since 2002, several public/private collaborations evolved and failed to purchase the Base Area property for use as a community recreation area. This sustained community interest in public acquisition of Marshall Mountain, plus the designation of Marshall Mountain as an Open Space Cornerstone in the 2019 City/County Open Space Plan, demonstrate strong public interest in the property. Additionally, the 2018 Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails county-wide survey found that 71% of households surveyed supported public acquisition of the former ski area.

The non-profit Izzy Dog, LLC owns the Marshall Mountain Base Area Property and is providing the Missoula community with a unique opportunity to preserve Marshall Mountain and build a mountain-based recreation area that residents can readily access and enjoy. It is now up to the many community partners to secure this area for future generations.

The City of Missoula is currently leasing the 160-acre Base Area Property from Izzy Dog, LLC for the next ~18 months for \$10.00. At the end of the lease period, the City of Missoula will have the option to purchase the Marshall Mountain Base Area Property for \$1,850,000. Additionally, Five Valleys Lands Land Trust has agreed to transfer their 160ac. parcel to the City, should the City acquire the base parcel. The exact details of this transaction are to be negotiated. Marshall Mountain land acquisition(s) will be subject to the standard City and County open space acquisition processes, including an extensive public process with multiple opportunities for citizen engagement, culminating with final decisions by local elected officials.

The citizen engagement process began in November 2021 with a series of targeted, facilitated stakeholder meetings, and an online public survey to develop a shared community vision for the park. 93 individuals representing a dozens of organizations in and around the greater Missoula area participated in the stakeholder meetings. There were over 3,600 visits to the Marshall Mountain engage Missoula website and 1,338 people took the online survey. This level of public input far exceeded any other project ever posted to the City's Engage Missoula Website.

The shared community vision provides the overarching goals for Marshall Mountain. It is a high-level "blue sky" vision for the future of Marshall Mountain, created by the area residents. The community vision includes values, fundamental principles, and beliefs that will be used to guide the future of Marshall Mountain Park. The Draft community vision can be found at [www.engagemissoula.com/marshall-mountain-recreation-area](http://www.engagemissoula.com/marshall-mountain-recreation-area)

The master plan for Marshall Mountain will be shaped and guided by the shared community vision. The master plan will be conceptual in nature but will include enough detail to begin implementation if and once the property is acquired by the City of Missoula. A feasibility study and operational business plan will be part of the master plan to ensure that the proposed program is physically and financially feasible, and to determine the best structure for operating and maintaining Marshall Mountain into the future.

#### **Financial Implications:**

A non-profit group "Friends of Marshall Mountain" is leading the fundraising efforts to acquire and build Marshall Mountain Park. A clear vision of the roll Marshall Mountain will serve nearby communities and how the property will be developed is critically important to the fundraising partners. Following a public RFQ/RFP process, SE Group was selected as the most qualified team to lead the master planning process.

The attached Contract and Scope of Work outlines the process, deliverables, and timeline for completion of this master plan. The contract is for an amount not to exceed \$130,000. Several additional "optional" items are included that can be added to the contract at a later date (if needed and/or funded) but are not recommended to be included at this time.

This contract will initially be paid for out of the Conservation Lands Management Program's "Emergency Restoration and Acquisition fund" which was established and funded through implementation of the 2018 Conservation & Stewardship Mill Levy. It is expected that, all

expenses paid by the City of Missoula for this master planning contract will be reimbursed by the fundraising efforts of the Friends of Marshall Mountain group.

**Links to external websites:**

[www.engagemissoula.com/marshall-mountain-recreation-area](http://www.engagemissoula.com/marshall-mountain-recreation-area)