

POST FALLS — The **Post Falls Urban Renewal** Agency is planning for a successful 2021 as several districts intend to close, and two new projects — including another downtown development — are in the works.

Since the last downtown urban renewal district closed in 2018, Post Falls leadership has begun looking at more ways to centralize and improve the area. Though the city center master plan is still unfinished, PFURA Executive Director Diane Fountain believes it will inspire a spark of energy and business development in the area.

"We've seen the Republic Kitchen and Taphouse, Roger's Ice Cream and Burgers, and the Sawmill Grille move in, so it's starting to develop," Fountain said. "With the Post Falls Brewing Company, we are getting more movement and activity in that area, so we are hoping the district will feed off that and turn into the walkable downtown area the city wants."

When the previous downtown district was taking off, it was limited by the 2008 economic downturn, slowing the ability of the PFURA to bring in new development.

However, as the agency and city head into 2021, growth is not only likely but evident. Potentially coming to the downtown district, Fountain said, is a medical facility looking to locate in the Landings area. More commercial, retail and residential project planners have also expressed interest.

"There hasn't been any slowdown here with COVID, and our districts are just booming," Fountain said.

In preparation for developing the district, Welsh Comer, an engineering company located in Coeur d'Alene, is updating the 2005 city center master plan with over 100 public comments received through an online outreach program.

"We got great responses from the public, and we have a positive direction where it's pointing and where we are heading toward," Post Falls Community Development Director Bob Seale said. "We're still in the process of preparing it for the final feasibility study, but that should be ready soon."

The final plan will be presented to the PFURA and Post Falls City Council sometime in February, Fountain said, and if approved, could be formed as quickly as of late spring or early summer.

The agency now has four districts open, almost all anticipated to close by the end of 2022. The Expo District, which was created in 2001, intends to conclude development this year after stimulated industrial and manufacturing expansion into the region.

The Center Point, East Post Falls, and Tullamore districts are expected to close in 2022, leaving only the Post Falls Technology District open.

In addition to the Downtown District, PFURA is also hoping to create another URD on Pleasant View, geared toward industrial uses and area enhancement.

"We see a ton of interest in the area, and if we can get that infrastructure to bring in more businesses, that will be the key to success for the city of Post Falls and the Urban Renewal Agency," Fountain said. "We want to keep our operations going for the city of Post Falls and the taxpayers."

CITATION (AGLC STYLE)

MADISON HARDY, Staff Writer, 'Downtown PF redevelopment an urban renewal target', *Coeur d'Alene Press, The* (online), 26 Jan 2021 <<https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=NRNB&docref=news/18044C0F3B0EF520>>