



City of Winston-Salem City Council
Council Agenda Item Summary

Title	Public Hearing and Consideration of Items Related to the Long Term Lease of City Park Land in Support of the Downtown Amphitheater
City Council Committee	Finance Committee
Staff Lead (Presenter)	Aaron King, ACM

Agenda Item Summary

Recommended Council Action	Resolution Approval
Suggested Motion Options	I recommend approval of the resolution authorizing the long term lease of City owned park land under the upset bid procedure.
Strategic Focus Area	Livable Community
Strategic Plan Objective	LC4: Providing Regional and Community Programs and Amenities
Anticipated Fiscal Impact	Fiscal Impact Anticipated: See Analysis in Summary

Summary of Information

In September 2025, City Council approved a five year lease for the use of approximately one acre of park land located within Crystal Towers Park at the rate of \$12 annually. The agreement included the option for two, one-year extensions. The park land was needed to support the artist’s village that would be associated with the amphitheater proposed directly across Sixth Street. The amphitheater itself is proposed to be built on privately owned land and does not include any City participation.

As plans for the downtown amphitheater have progressed, the need to secure a long term lease on the acre of park land has emerged. WS Amphitheatre, LLC has submitted a proposal to the City requesting to lease the acre of park land for a period of 30 years. The intended use of the park land would remain the location of the artist’s village. The proposed terms of the 30 year lease are as follows:

- \$1,000/month for the first five years of the lease
- Years six through thirty would increase annually, commensurate with the Consumer Price Index (CPI)
- At the conclusion of the thirty year lease or the operation of the amphitheater ceases (whichever comes first), the property would be cleared of structures and associated improvements and restored to green space unless an alternative arrangement is agreed upon mutually by both parties.

- Lessee further guarantees that a minimum of five (5) jobs shall be created and maintained as a result of the operations of the Large Outdoor Entertainment Venue facilitated by the lease.

The 30 year lease described above requires two actions by City Council. First, a resolution dated November 19, 2001 requires that public hearings be held by the City-County Planning Board and City Council prior to the sale or long term lease of City owned park property. The subject 30 year lease was presented to the Recreation and Parks Commission on May 12, 2026. The City-County Planning Board held a public hearing on this matter on May 28, 2026. No one spoke in opposition to the request and the Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the requested long term lease. A public hearing has been advertised and scheduled for City Council's June 15th meeting.

Second, since the requested lease term is longer than ten years, the General Statutes require it to follow the same upset bid process used for the sale of City owned land. As such, the developer has provided the required 5% deposit. If City Council approves this item at its June 15th meeting, staff would publish the required legal advertisement to officially start the initial ten day upset bid process. If no competing bids are received, the City Manager would be authorized to execute the lease per the terms described above.

Analysis of Fiscal Impact

As stated above, the proposed lease terms would require a lease payment of \$1,000/month for the first five years of the agreement. Years six through thirty would increase annually based on CPI.

Attachments



Vision: To be a premier city in the region providing world-class amenities while retaining a sense of charm and hospitality
Mission: To provide impactful services that enhance the quality of life for current and future generations
Values: Teamwork * Responsibility * Respect * Integrity * Customer Service

- Resolution approving the long term lease of City park land and authorizing the upset bid process
- Lease proposal from WS Amphitheatre, LLC
- Staff report from Planning Board

Committee Action	FC 6/9/2026
For:	Against:
Remarks: Unanimous Approved	