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McCALL, ID – The vision for a lakefront performing arts and community center in McCall is one crucial step closer to reality. The non-profit Ponderosa Center has secured enough privately donated funds to acquire the .83 acre land parcel where the 29,800 square foot structure will be built.

The current owners of the land, the Carey family of McCall, are benefactors of the Ponderosa Center and are excited to see the project take this important leap forward.

"We have owned this property for nearly 30 years and have always debated its best use. We wanted it to be something that could be enjoyed by everyone in our community, but struggled to define what that could be," says David Carey. "When we were approached by the Ponderosa Center years ago, it became clear to the family that this could be the ideal use. A beautiful building for so many folks to enjoy year-round, downtown and looking at Payette Lake. Not sure what could be better than that."

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"This project would not be possible without the ongoing generosity of the Carey family, both in this beautiful piece of land, and in the gift of time to raise the funds needed," Ponderosa Center President Chet Wood said. "It has been a true community effort to bring us to this point. From public input on the design and function of the center to the private donations – both large and small."



The 29,800 square foot building will feature unparalleled views of Payette Lake

The group's plan is to build a multi-level, multi-functional facility beside McCall's lakefront Legacy Park. The 29,800 square foot building will feature unparalleled views of Payette Lake and have many features of a traditional Performing Arts Center, but its flexible design will also allow it to be used for classes, community and school events and conventions.

The center was designed with the input of the public and key community partners like the [McCall Music Society](#). The center will also be home to the [McCall Ski Heritage Foundation's](#) exhibits.

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The land site where the Ponderosa Center expects to build is slightly different than what was originally planned for in the earlier designs. The current landowners recently acquired the corner lot adjacent to their property, which will now be part of the parcel transferred to the Ponderosa Center. That will allow the building to be shifted 35 yards to the east, closer to Pine Street, which will provide more space for parking and access for the community and other local businesses.

"We had been hoping to consolidate the parcels in this area for quite some time," Wood said. "It was perfect timing for the corner lot to become available right as we hit our fundraising goal to secure the land."

The new build site will require minimal updates to the existing designs of the center. All building costs will be covered by private donations, with no tax dollars used in the Ponderosa Center's construction. At this point, the 501(c)(3) non-profit has raised more than \$2 million for programs, events and the capital campaign to fund this land purchase. The goal of the Ponderosa Center's continued fundraising and grant efforts is to secure an additional \$25 million to complete construction and provide for initial operating costs.

Through the generosity of the Ludwig and Carey families, the Ponderosa Center has already been using the site during the summers to host a free outdoor summer concert series called "Tuesdays at the Terrace" and to provide a venue for other local groups and organizations to host a wide variety of events, ranging from musical performances to movie premieres to brew festivals and cornhole tournaments.

"We're excited for what comes next," Wood said. "One of the most gratifying things about the Ponderosa Center's evolution is that we have been able to offer community programming and see the positive impact from that for several years now as we work toward the long-term vision."

To learn more about the Ponderosa Center vision, visit www.ponderosacenter.org.