

PROJECT UPDATE

Ponderosa Center

McCall's Ponderosa Center Secures New Location in the Heart of McCall

Landmark agreement with Simplot establishes year-round home for arts, education and community

McCall, Idaho — The Ponderosa Center, McCall's long-anticipated year-round destination for arts, education and community gathering, has secured a landmark agreement to locate the Center on Simplot-owned land in the heart of McCall. The agreement with Simplot marks a major milestone in the organization's long-standing effort to bring a dedicated community hub to the region.

The Ponderosa Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to create a welcoming space for learning, creativity and connection, with a focus on expanding access to music, arts and educational opportunities across the West Central Mountains.

The vision for the Ponderosa Center began with earlier concepts for a larger, 30,000-square-foot facility on the shores of Payette Lake. As planning progressed, organizers recognized an opportunity to carry that vision forward in a way that is more accessible, more flexible and more achievable for the community.

The newly designed 14,900-square-foot facility is scaled for phased construction, allowing the organization to align building plans with fundraising progress and begin serving the community sooner. Plans include a welcome center, a performing arts space with flexible seating for 350 to 400 people, and a multipurpose innovation lab and meeting space.

The new site offers a highly visible and accessible location within the McCall city limits. The two-acre parcel where the Ponderosa Center will be located is part of an 11-acre holding bordering the McCall Post Office and the Marketplace off Deinhard Lane. This location offers numerous parking options, is accessible from existing paths and a transit stop.

Designed with the future in mind, the agreement allows room for thoughtful expansion as the community grows, ensuring the Ponderosa Center can serve residents and visitors for generations to come.

"This location is everything we hoped for and more," said Janell Strosnider, president of the Ponderosa Center. "Being situated in the heart of McCall, next to the Marketplace, means the Ponderosa Center will be a natural gathering place for everyone in our community —

from longtime locals to first-time visitors. We are deeply grateful to Simplot for sharing our vision.”

A Vibrant Hub for the Entire Community

The Ponderosa Center is envisioned as a cultural and civic cornerstone for McCall. Three anchor partners are expected to call the Center home, creating a dynamic, year-round presence:

McCall Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau: The Chamber will operate from the Center, providing day-to-day presence and helping activate the space year-round.

McCall Music Society: Live performances throughout the year will bring both world-class and regional talent to McCall, offering audiences an intimate, purpose-built venue for the arts.

McCall Ski Heritage Foundation: Interactive exhibits will celebrate McCall’s rich ski history, offering engaging, hands-on experiences that honor the community’s mountain heritage.

“The Ponderosa Center represents a transformative opportunity for McCall,” said Sheila Francis, Executive Director McCall Area Chamber & Visitors Bureau. “Bringing the Chamber, Music Society and Ski Heritage Foundation together in a central, accessible location will create a place where community and culture come together in every season.”

Built for McCall’s Future

The Ponderosa Center agreement reflects a shared commitment to McCall’s long-term vitality. The site has been selected with flexibility in mind, allowing for future expansion as community needs evolve. Additional planning and development details will be announced in the coming months. Community members are encouraged to stay engaged as the project moves forward.

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About the Ponderosa Center

The Ponderosa Center will be a year-round arts, education and community gathering space located in McCall, Idaho. Anchored by the McCall Chamber of Commerce, McCall Music Society and McCall Ski Heritage Foundation, the Center will focus on enriching the cultural and civic life of McCall and the greater West Central Mountain region.

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