

Cascade's Future Community Conversation

*Public Summary: What We Heard and What Comes Next
August 24, 2026 Community Conversation*

Thank you, Cascade

Thank you to the residents, businesses, community organizations, volunteers, and regional partners who participated in the Cascade Community Conversation. The discussion focused on the future role of the Cascade Chamber of Commerce, the traditions the community values, and what can realistically be sustained with available funding, volunteers, and Board capacity.

Important: The meeting gathered ideas and perspectives. It was not a vote, and no final decision was made about the future of Thunder Mountain Days, the parade, or fireworks.

What we heard

Support local businesses and the local economy. Participants want the Chamber to strengthen business relationships, communication, networking, workforce readiness, tourism promotion, and year-round economic opportunity.

Protect valued traditions. The Fourth of July parade was repeatedly identified as worth preserving. Fireworks received both support and concern because of their rapidly increasing cost and the burden placed on a small organization and volunteer base.

Share responsibility. Participants suggested committees, partnerships, sponsorships, direct volunteer recruitment, contracted event support, and clearer roles for the Chamber, City, businesses, civic organizations, and residents.

Match commitments to real capacity. Community interest alone does not provide the funding, people, contracts, insurance, public-safety coordination, or accountable leadership required to produce an event.

Continue mission-aligned opportunities. The Chamber is also advancing workforce and career-pathways work intended to support employers, students, job seekers, and the broader Valley County economy.

The financial reality

The current Fourth of July funding model is not sustainable. In 2026, the fireworks display and launch cost \$30,000, while related fundraising produced \$18,581.04 in net revenue. The \$11,418.96 gap had to be covered from Chamber reserves, reducing funds available for normal operations and business services.

The Chamber also needs a membership retention and recruitment strategy with monthly goals to stabilize operating revenue and help repay the \$11,418.96 money-market withdrawal. Membership growth must complement—not replace—event-specific sponsorships and fundraising.

2026 fireworks measure	Amount
Display and launch cost	\$30,000.00
Net fundraising revenue	\$18,581.04
Amount covered from reserves	\$11,418.96

Questions the Board must answer

Is producing Thunder Mountain Days an appropriate core role for the Chamber of Commerce?

Which activities should the Chamber lead, support with partners, help promote, transfer to another willing owner, redesign, or pause?

Should a separate community celebrations committee or organization be formed with its own leadership, budget, volunteers, and accountability?

How can community and tourism benefits be funded fairly, while membership retention and recruitment strengthen monthly operations and reserve repayment?

What amount must be raised—and by what firm deadline—before the community commits to future fireworks?

What happens next

The Board will evaluate the parade and fireworks separately, choose a sustainable event structure, and establish financial and volunteer requirements. It will also set monthly goals for renewals, new members, lapsed-member outreach, and unrestricted revenue. Future fireworks should be committed only after event funding and responsible ownership are confirmed by a firm deadline.

How the community can help

Community members can volunteer for a defined role, assist with sponsorships or fundraising, join a celebrations committee, connect potential partners, renew Chamber membership, or encourage an eligible business or organization to join. Future updates will explain decisions and specific ways to help.