

# Council still favors same ramp site

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Members of the Rapid City Common Council voted Wednesday afternoon to continue trying to build a parking ramp on the site they picked several months ago.

The council decided last spring to build the ramp along the south side of St. Joseph Streets, from Sixth Street east to the Schneider Music Building. But when offers were made to landowners along that street this month, two rejected the city's offer and one sought more money.

The St. Joseph Street ramp would have cost more than its \$1 million budget to begin with, but if the council has to pay more for the land, it could go even further over budget. Contingency funds and a \$150,000 donation offered by a downtown business would have covered the \$1.28 million estimated cost of the 240-space ramp. But the donation has been withdrawn.

The purpose of Wednesday's parking ramp committee meeting was to discuss the council's options for money and another site.

About 20 members of the Downtown Association attended. They urged the council to stick with the St. Joseph Street site and continue negotiating with the landowners for the land.

Members voted to have the city staff look into other funding possibilities, including metering city parking lots or imposing a special parking assessment on downtown businesses.

The city could go to court to condemn the land for the ramp, but several council members prefer to negotiate with the landowners to try to avoid the time and cost of condemnation proceedings.