



To: Plan Commission

From: Daniel Ritter, AICP, Community Development Director

Date: August 13, 2026

Re: 20590 - 20660 City Center Blvd (Crest Hill City Hall and Crest Hill Commons) Preliminary and Final Plat of Subdivision; Special Use for Outdoor Recreational Plaza and Public Park/ Playground (Case # SU-26-7-8-1); and Multiple Variations Requested from the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance (Case # V-26-6-8-1)

Project Details

Project:	Preliminary and Final Plat of Subdivision; Special Use for Outdoor Recreation (Plaza/Park) referred to as Crest Hill Commons and Public Park/ Playground, and multiple variations requested from the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance
Applicant:	City of Crest Hill
Requests:	Special approvals from the City of Crest Hill Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances to subdivide the subject property into four (4) lots; a special use permit for an outdoor recreational plaza and public park/ playground with multiple variations from Table 2 Zoning Districts and Standards for non-residential uses in the B-3 Business Service District, and Section 8.3-8 Permitted Obstructions in Yards of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance. No specific site improvements are proposed in this application, but it will allow for a future public City Center Plaza to be developed with the Lockport Township Park District owning a separate playground lot.
Location:	20590, 20600, 20650, and 20660 City Center Blvd (the "Subject Property")

Site Details

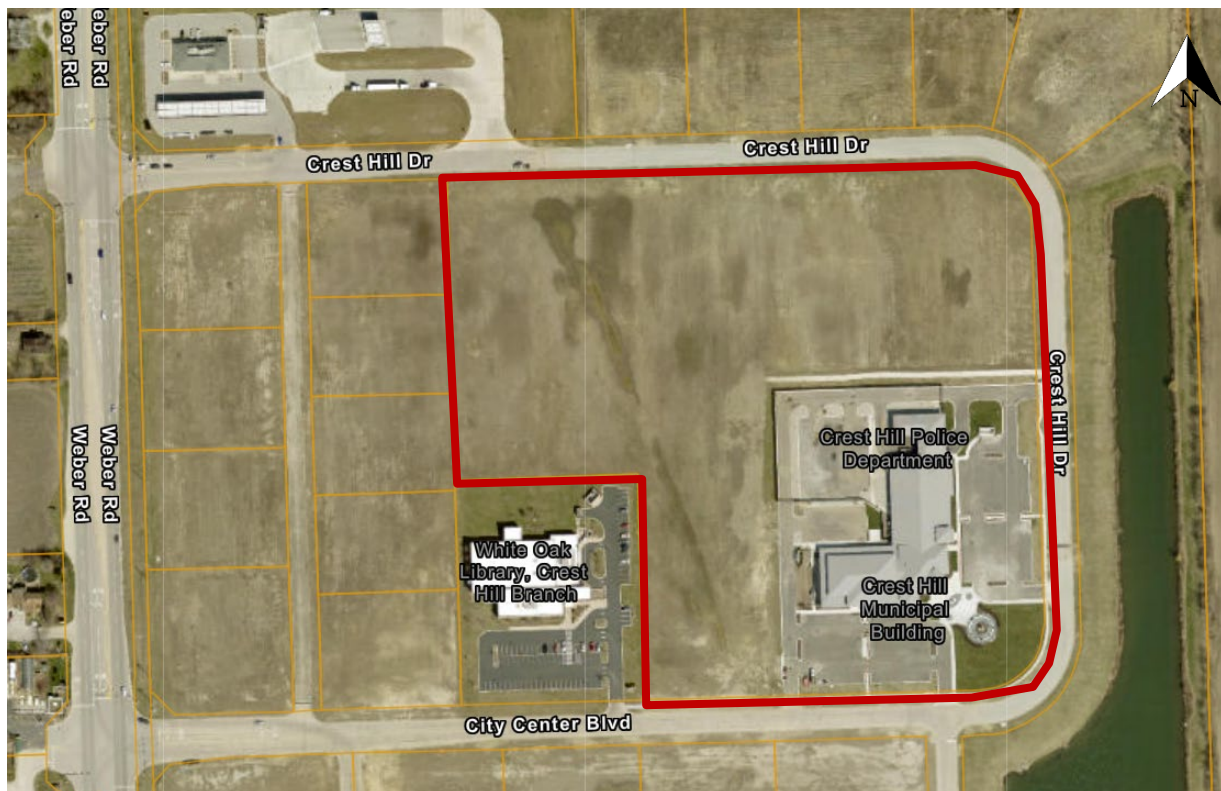
Lot Size:	Approximately 19.33 acres
Existing Zoning:	B-3, Business Service District
Existing Improvements:	Crest Hill City Hall and Police Station (Future Lot 2) and Vacant Land (Lots 1, 3, 4)

Surrounding Zoning and Land Use Summary

	Land Use	Comp Plan	Zoning
Subject Parcel	City Offices and Public Plaza	Commercial	B-3
North	Vacant Land	Commercial	B-3
South	Vacant Land and Menards Store	Commercial	B-3
East	Vacant Land & Prison Property	Commercial/ Prison	B-3 / M-1
West	White Oak Public Library & Vacant Land	Commercial	B-3

Exhibits

- Exhibit C – Application for Development 2026-7-17
- Exhibit D – Legal Description of Subject Property
- Exhibit E – Final Plat of Subdivision Prepared by Robinson Engineering LTD. 2026-07-09

Figure 1: 20590 - 20660 Civic Center Blvd (the Subject Property) Existing Conditions

Application Background

The subject property consists of a 19.33-acre parcel located at 20590–20600 City Center Boulevard, currently occupied by the City of Crest Hill's City Hall and Police Department, which opened in 2023. The property also includes multiple public parking lots, a secured police vehicle storage area, and the Veterans and Police Memorial. The remainder of the site is vacant and available for future development. The entire property is owned by the City of Crest Hill.

The area was originally planned for large-scale commercial development following the construction of Menards in 2007 and remained under Menards' ownership for several years. However, the Great Recession and subsequent shifts in the retail market significantly reduced demand for commercial development within the area. In response, the City established a long-term vision to transform the site into a true civic and community center that will integrate municipal services, public gathering spaces, complementary commercial development, and the potential for future residential uses.

The first phase of this vision was realized with the construction of the White Oak Library District's Crest Hill Branch in 2013, followed by the completion of the new City Hall and Police Department in 2023. Together, these public facilities established the foundation for a centralized civic campus serving residents and visitors alike. Following the completion of City Hall, planning efforts shifted toward creating a public plaza that will physically and functionally connect these civic destinations while providing a dedicated community gathering space. The proposed plaza is intended to accommodate a wide variety of public events and recreational activities, including Winter Fest, Easter Egg Hunts, farmers and artisan markets, concerts, library programming, family activities, and other community celebrations.

In 2023, the City Council approved the initial conceptual design for the public plaza. To further advance the project, the City entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the Lockport Township Park District (LTPD) in 2024 through Resolution No. 1250. The agreement provides for the Park District to own and construct an inclusive playground that will serve as a key component of the overall plaza development. Establishing separate ownership of the playground parcel eliminates potential legal, insurance, maintenance, and grant administration complications that can arise if the land remained under City ownership and was leased to the Lockport Township Park District. The initial naming of the project and public space is Crest Hill Commons. The new lots will be addressed as 20650 (Plaza) and 20660 (Playground) City Center Blvd. Due to engineering considerations, usability timing, and funding availability, the overall plaza development is planned in two phases:

Phase 1 will establish the foundational infrastructure necessary for the site to function as a public gathering space. Improvements include new driveway access, a parking lot connecting City Hall and the library, the inclusive playground, pedestrian walkways, underground electrical and utility infrastructure, initial landscaping, benches, site grading, and seeding. Completing these improvements first will allow the plaza to begin serving the community while the primary lawn and gathering areas become established.

Phase 2 will complete the vision for the civic plaza and is anticipated to include a bandshell or performance stage, additional walkways, enhanced landscaping, decorative lighting, sound systems, shade structures, bicycle parking, public art opportunities, and other amenities that will support year-round programming and community events. The overall design is intended to seamlessly integrate the City Hall and Library campuses into a unified civic destination that functions as the City's central gathering place.

Project Request Summary

To facilitate implementation of the project, the City is requesting approval to subdivide the existing 19.33-acre parcel into four separate lots. The subdivision will create individual lots for the existing City Hall, the public plaza, the inclusive playground, and the remaining developable property while preserving coordinated access through shared access and utility easements. The application also includes a request for a Special Use Permit to allow the public plaza and outdoor entertainment venue and a public park/ playground, together with several zoning variations necessary to accommodate the proposed subdivision and unique site design.

Although no site improvements are being proposed and approved as part of this application, conceptual plans for the overall plaza and Phase 1 improvements have been submitted to illustrate the intended layout and long-term vision. Because the inclusive playground will be located within the larger public plaza while being owned and maintained by a separate governmental agency, the project presents a unique circumstance that is not specifically contemplated by the City's land development regulations. The proposed lot configuration, combined with reciprocal access easements and the fact that both property owners are public taxing bodies working cooperatively under an approved Intergovernmental Agreement, provides sufficient justification for the requested subdivision design and associated zoning relief.

Following approval of the Final Plat of Subdivision, Special Use Permit, and requested zoning variations by the City Council, ownership of the playground parcel will subsequently be conveyed to the Lockport Township Park District in accordance with the approved Intergovernmental Agreement. Any future construction of the public plaza will remain subject to final City Council approval of the detailed site plans.

Figure 2: City Center Overall - Conceptual Plan



Figure 3: Crest Hill Commons - Conceptual Overall Plaza Plan

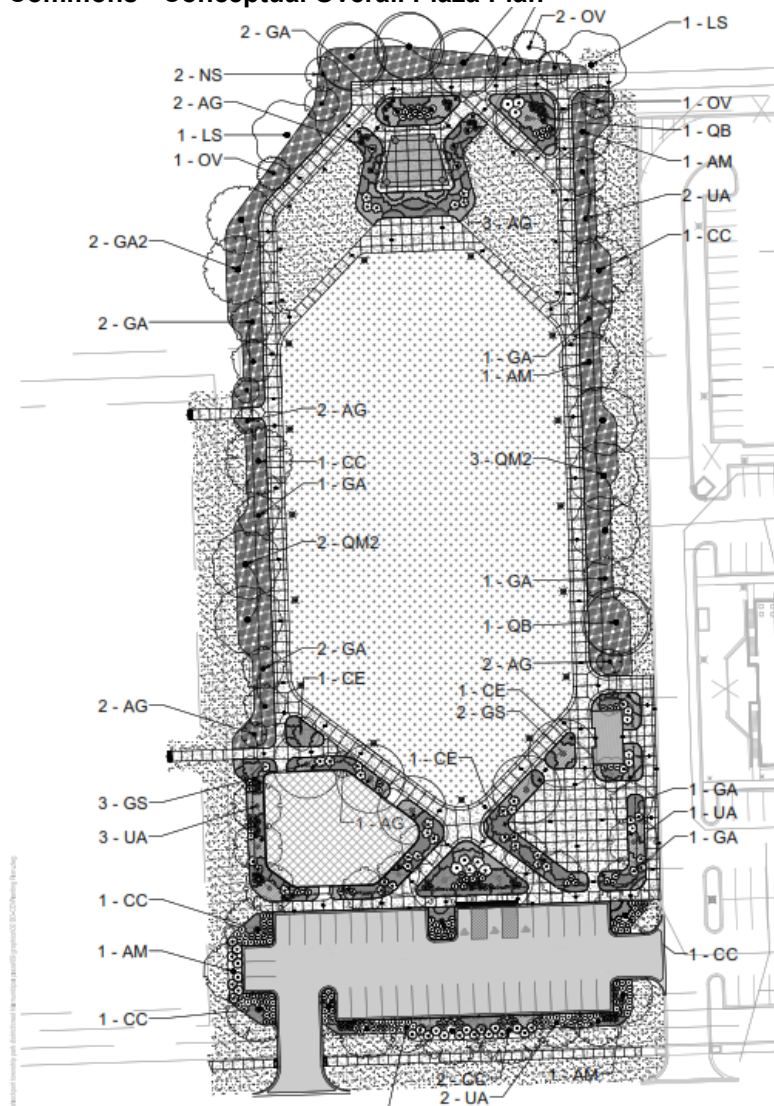


Figure 4: Crest Hill Commons - Conceptual Phase 1 Plaza Plan



Summary of Requested Petitions

To subdivide the subject property into four (4) lots and allow for the development of a public plaza, the City seeks approval of the following petitions:

- (i) Preliminary and Final Plat of Subdivision to subdivide the subject property into four (4) lots.
- (ii) SU-26-7-8-1: Special Use for an outdoor entertainment plaza and public park/ playground in the B-3 Business Service District.
- (iii) V-26-6-8-1:
 - 1. Three variations from Table 2 Zoning Districts and Standards for Non-Residential Uses of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance in the B-3 Business Service District that decrease the minimum required lot area from 1 acre to 0.131 acres (Lot 4, proposed park/playground); all setbacks to 0 feet; and lot coverage permitted up to 100%.
 - 2. Variations from Section 8.3-8 Permitted Obstructions in Yards, of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance that allow open fencing to be located in required front and side yard setbacks and recreational structures and accessory structures in required front, side, and rear yard setbacks on all lots.

Staff Analysis

Overall, staff believes the Subject Property presents a unique circumstance within the B-3 Business Service District due to its physical characteristics, surrounding land uses, and the significant public benefit the proposed development will provide. The combined size, configuration, and location of the four parcels limit their suitability for traditional commercial development while making the site ideally suited for a centralized public gathering space that complements and connects the existing Public Library and City Hall campus.

The proposed City Center Plaza directly advances the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan by establishing a centralized community gathering space capable of accommodating both everyday public use and a variety of planned community events. The development will create an inviting civic destination that enhances community identity, expands recreational and social opportunities, and provides a welcoming venue for residents and visitors alike.

In addition to the broad public benefit, the project is expected to generate positive economic impacts for the surrounding area. The addition of a high-quality public plaza, park amenities, and community events will attract visitors throughout the year, increasing activity within the City Center and encouraging patronage of nearby businesses. Continued public investment in the area will further strengthen the City Center as a destination, enhance the attractiveness of surrounding properties, and help stimulate additional private redevelopment and investment over time.

Staff reviewed the proposed development and re-subdivision of the Subject Property with respect to the applicable City regulations. The Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance classifies Outdoor Recreational and Entertainment Facilities as Special Use in the B-3 Business Service District. To subdivide the Subject Property into four (4) lots and develop Lots 3 and 4 as a public park/playground and City Plaza both proposed park/ playground and public plaza must be formally established as a special use in the B-3 Business Service District , and the above-mentioned variations are required from the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance to address the non-conformities associated with the property's proposed specific physical characteristics. No site improvements are proposed in this application.

Special Use Approval Standards and Findings

Section 12.7-2 of the Zoning Ordinance states the Plan Commission shall recommend, and the City Council shall grant a special use only when it shall have been determined, and recorded in writing, that all of the following standards are complied with. Staff has drafted the following findings of fact identified in bold italic font. These drafted findings may be modified or changed as the Plan Commission deems fit and based upon any specific findings from the public hearing before their adoption.

1. That the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the special use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or general welfare.
The proposed public plaza is intended to provide a safe, accessible, and well-maintained public gathering space that promotes community engagement, recreation, and civic activities. As a municipally owned and operated facility, the plaza will be designed and maintained in accordance with all applicable building, accessibility, life safety, and engineering standards. The project includes pedestrian walkways, lighting, landscaping, seating areas, and other site amenities that enhance public safety and usability. The proposed use is expected to be inclusive and improve the general welfare of the community by creating a centralized location for public events, informal gatherings, and civic functions while enhancing the quality of life for residents.
2. That the special use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.
The proposed public plaza is compatible with the surrounding governmental, institutional, commercial, and residential uses. The development will complement the existing City Hall and Library by creating an attractive civic space that encourages public activity and strengthens the City's municipal campus. The project will replace vacant land with high-quality public improvements, landscaping, and amenities that are expected to enhance the appearance of the area and contribute positively to surrounding property values. The proposed use will not negatively impact neighboring properties and is anticipated to encourage additional investment in the surrounding area.
3. That the establishment of the special use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.
The proposed public plaza is consistent with the City's long-range planning objectives and will serve as an anchor for future redevelopment within the City Center. The project activates currently underutilized property while complementing existing public facilities and encouraging additional commercial and mixed-use investment nearby. The proposed use will not restrict future development opportunities on adjacent properties and is expected to support continued revitalization consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the intent of the B-3 zoning district.
4. That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and/or other necessary facilities have been or are being provided.
The subject property is currently served by existing public infrastructure, including municipal water, sanitary sewer, stormwater management facilities, roadways, sidewalks, and public utilities. The property is part of the recently developed City Hall campus, where the necessary infrastructure has already been constructed to support

public facilities. Any additional utility connections or site improvements required for the plaza will be reviewed and completed in accordance with applicable City engineering standards. Staff finds that adequate public facilities exist to serve the proposed development.

5. That adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.

The proposed public plaza will utilize the existing access drives and parking facilities serving the City Hall and Library campus, which were designed to accommodate public use. The development is not expected to generate significant daily traffic beyond existing conditions. While occasional special events can temporarily increase traffic volumes, the City's existing roadway network, along with permanent and temporary parking facilities, is adequate to accommodate these events. The City also has the ability to implement temporary traffic management measures, directional signage, and event coordination when necessary to ensure safe and efficient vehicle and pedestrian circulation.

6. That special use shall in all other respects conform to the applicable regulations of this Ordinance and other applicable City regulations, except as such regulations
7. in each instance be modified by the City Council pursuant to the recommendation of the Plan Commission.

The proposed public plaza has been reviewed for compliance with the applicable provisions of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance and other City regulations. The development will comply with all applicable building, engineering, accessibility, landscaping, stormwater management, and permitting requirements. The requested Special Use is appropriate for the site and is consistent with the purpose and intent of the zoning ordinance. Staff finds that the proposal satisfies the applicable review standards and that any modifications approved through the Special Use process will remain consistent with the public interest and the City's adopted planning goals.

Variation Approval Standards and Findings

Section 12.6-2 of the Zoning Ordinance states the Plan Commission shall recommend, and the City Council shall grant a variation only when it shall have been determined, and recorded in writing, that all of the following standards are complied with. Staff has drafted the following findings of fact identified in bold italic font. These drafted findings may be modified or changed as the Plan Commission deems fit and based upon any specific findings from the public hearing before their adoption.

1. That the property in question cannot yield a reasonable return if permitted to be used only under the conditions allowed by the regulations in that zone.

The subject property is uniquely situated within the City's municipal campus and is intended to function as a public gathering space serving City Hall, the Library, and the surrounding community. Strict application of the zoning regulations prevents the development of the plaza as designed and significantly limits the property's ability to fulfill its intended public purpose. The requested variations will allow the City to develop the property in a manner that creates a functional, accessible, and attractive civic space while maximizing the public benefit of the site. Staff finds that the requested relief is necessary to allow the property to achieve its intended use as a public amenity consistent with the City's long-term planning objectives.

2. That the plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances.
The need for the requested variations results from the unique characteristics of the subject property and its planned role within the City's civic campus. The property is directly adjacent to the recently constructed City Hall, the Library, and other municipal improvements and was specifically identified as the location for a centralized public gathering space. The property's size, configuration, location, and relationship to the surrounding public facilities create circumstances that are not generally applicable to other properties within the B-3 zoning district. These unique conditions necessitate the requested variations to accommodate the design and functionality of the proposed public plaza.
3. That the variation, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.
The proposed variation will not alter the essential character of the surrounding area. Rather, the public plaza will enhance the City's civic center by transforming underutilized municipal property into an attractive, publicly accessible gathering space featuring landscaping, seating, pedestrian amenities, and event space. The plaza is compatible with the surrounding governmental, institutional, commercial, and residential uses and is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, which identifies the City Center as a focal point for community activity. Staff finds that the proposed variation will improve the appearance, functionality, and overall character of the area while providing a lasting public benefit.

In addition, Section 12.6-2 of the Zoning Ordinance further suggests that the Plan Commission supplement the above standards by taking into consideration the extent to which the facts listed on Exhibit A have been established by the evidence presented during the public hearing process and further support the approval of the Applicant's requests.

Staff Recommendation

Based on the review of the application, the submitted plans, and the findings outlined in this report, Staff finds that the proposed Plat of Subdivision, Special Use Permit and requested Variations satisfy the applicable review standards of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance.

The proposed City Center Plaza represents a significant public investment that will transform underutilized municipal property into a vibrant civic gathering space serving residents, businesses, and visitors. The project is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and advances its vision of creating a centralized destination for community events, recreation, public ceremonies, and civic engagement. The plaza will complement the existing City Hall and Library campus, enhance the visual character of the City Center, and provide long-term economic and quality-of-life benefits for the community.

Therefore, Staff recommends that the Plan Commission recommend approval to the City Council of the requested Plat of Subdivision, Special Use Permit, and requested Variations for the proposed Crest Hill Commons plaza and public park/playground, subject to the plans submitted.

Recommended Motion

Based on the findings reflected in this staff report, the Staff recommends the following motion:

The Plan Commission recommends City Council conditional approval of the Preliminary and Final Plat of Subdivision to subdivide the subject property into four (4) lots; a Special Use for an outdoor entertainment plaza known as Crest Hill Commons, multiple variations from Table 2 Zoning Districts and Standards for Non-Residential uses in the B-3 Business Service District, and Section 8.3-8 Permitted Obstructions in Yards of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance; subject to the project being implemented in substantial conformance with the application documents referenced in the August 13, 2026, Plan Commission Staff Report for petitions under Case # SU-26-7-8-1, and Case # V-26-6-8-1.

Exhibit A**Supplemental Variation Approval Facts to Consider Per Zoning Ordinance Section 12.6-2**

1. *That the particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical condition of the specific property involved will result in a particular hardship upon the owner, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, if the strict letter of the regulations were carried out.*
2. *The conditions upon which the petition for a variation is based are unique to the property owner for which the variation is sought and are not applicable, generally, to the other property within the same zoning classification.*
3. *That the alleged difficulty or hardship is caused by the Ordinance and has not been created by any person presently having an interest in the property.*
4. *That the proposed variation will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property or substantially increase congestion in the public streets or increase the danger of fire, or endanger the public safety, or substantially diminish or impair property values within the adjacent neighborhood.*
5. *That the variation does not permit a use otherwise excluded from the particular zone except for uses authorized by the Plan Commission, subject to the approval of the City Council, as "similar and compatible uses."*
6. *That the variation granted is the minimum adjustment necessary for the reasonable use of the land.*
7. *That the granting of any variation is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance, and will not be injurious to the neighborhood, be detrimental to the public welfare, alter the essential character of the locality, or be in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan for development of the City.*
8. *That, for reasons fully set forth in the recommendations of the Plan Commission, and the report of the City Council, the aforesaid circumstances or conditions are such that the strict application of the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance deprives the applicant of any reasonable use of his land. Mere loss in value shall not justify a variation; there must be a deprivation of beneficial use of land.*

Exhibit B

Supplemental Special Use Approval Facts to Consider Per Zoning Ordinance Section 12.7-6

1. *That the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the special use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or general welfare.*
2. *That the special use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.*
3. *That the establishment of the special use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.*
4. *That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and/or other necessary facilities have been or are being provided.*
5. *That adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.*
6. *That special use shall in all other respects conform to the applicable regulations of this Ordinance and other applicable City regulations, except as such regulations may in each instance be modified by the City Council pursuant to the recommendation of the Plan Commission.*

Exhibit C
Application For Development (2 Pages)

City of Crest Hill Development Handbook

Appendix C



Application for Development

For Office Use Only: Case Number: _____

Project Name: City Center Plaza and ParkOwner: City of Crest Hill Correspondence To: Daniel RitterStreet address: 20600 City Center Street address: 20600 City Center BlvdCity, St., Zip: Crest Hill, IL 60403 City, St., Zip: Crest Hill, IL 60403Phone: 815-741-5107 Phone: _____Email: dr.itter@cityofcresthill.com Email: _____Property Address: _____ Property Information: _____
 Street address: 20650 City Center Blvd Lot Width: ~929'City, St., Zip: Crest Hill, IL 60403 Lot Depth: ~701'PIN: 11-04-29-302-013-0000 Total Area: 19.325 acres

*Submit an electronic version of the legal description only in a Word document to:

buildingdepartment@cityofcresthill.comExisting Zoning: B-3 Existing Land Use: VacantRequested Zoning: B-3 Proposed Land Use: Public Plaza/Park**Adjoining Properties Zoning and Uses:**North of Property: Vacant B-3South of Property: Vacant/Menards B-3East of Property: Vacant/Stateville M-1West of Property: Public Library B-3

Purpose Statement (intended use and approval sought): _____

City of Crest Hill Development Handbook

Appendix C

Development Request: Please check all that apply and describe:

☐ Rezoning: _____

☒ Special Use: Outdoor Rec. Park

☒ Variance: Lot Bulk Standards

☐ Planned Unit Development: _____

☐ Annexation: _____

☒ Plat: Final Plat of Subdivision - 4 lots

☐ Other: _____

Contact Information – If not yet known, please indicate as TBD. Check those parties in which copies of all correspondences should be forwarded.

☐ Civil Engineer: Robinson Eng. Phone: _____

Company: _____ Email: _____

☐ Contractor: _____ Phone: _____

Company: _____ Email: _____

☐ Architect: _____ Phone: _____

Company: _____ Email: _____

☐ Builder: _____ Phone: _____

Company: _____ Email: _____

I agree to be present (in person or by counsel) when the Plan Commission and City Council hear this development request.

[Signature]
Signature of the Applicant

7/17/2026
Date

If you (the applicant) are not the owner of record, please provide the owner's signature.

[Signature]
Signature of the Owner

7/17/26
Date

Exhibit D
Legal Description

PERMANENT INDEX NO: 11-04-29-302-013-0000

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: LOT 40 IN WEBER FARM CROSSINGS OF CREST HILL PHASE TWO, BEING A SUBDIVISION OF PART OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 29, TOWNSHIP 36 NORTH, RANGE 10 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED JUNE 29, 2011, AS DOCUMENT NO. R2011-060527, SITUATED IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

Exhibit E

Final Plat of Subdivision – City Center and Park Subdivision dated 7/9/26