



## PRAHA OUTDOOR PERFORMANCE STAGE

Nov. 20, 2023

TO: New Prague City Council/Staff

FM: Praha Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS) Committee

CC: Jonathan Nelsen (Bolton & Menk)

RE: Update on 2023 POPS Progress

Good day. In preface to the POPS presentation Nov. 20 at the New Prague City Council meeting, following is a brief update on our progress during 2023. The POPS Committee is a group of about 20 community/business/school/service organization leaders organized to raise money PRIVATELY to build an outdoor performance facility. The committee is operated through a new non-profit created almost a year ago – The Forward New Prague Foundation. It is a 501c3 tax-exempt organization. Officers are Den Gardner, chair; Karen Steinhoff, vice-chair; Bruce Wolf, treasurer.

Following is a summary update:

- Three-year pledges (to be paid between 2023 and the end of 2025) have reached approximately \$790,000 in year one, which began in earnest late 2022. The goal is to raise \$1 million by the end of 2025 (or sooner). The fundraising goal for 2023 was \$500,000. It is clear that the community desires a facility like this.
- There are more than 20+ athletic facilities/fields in this community that are in some way publicly supported. There aren't any for the fine arts in New Prague. The POPS Committee believes this should be a high priority for families throughout the New Prague area.
- Donations are being received or will be received by the end of 2025. Some donors are donating each of three years – 2023 through 2025. Some have already provided their donation and others are waiting until 2025 to provide their funding.
- **Our mission is: "To build a multi-purpose outdoor performance facility to celebrate the arts and other community gatherings from music to theatre to dance to visual arts and much more."** This would include family movie nights (with a large screen, complete with popcorn)!

- In working with city staff the past year, the three sites the city suggests it would provide are:
  - Memorial Park (by the volleyball courts)
  - City Center (old mill pond/creamery site)
  - Sliding Hill Skate Park (not to interfere with the current sliding hill)
- Bolton & Menk has completed a study/report on the three sites and Jonathan Nelsen of Bolton & Menk will present the findings to the council at the Nov. 20 meeting. As you know, the New Prague Park Board has submitted that study to you. It recommended City Center as its preferred location and allocation of some funding to further study this area. The Bolton & Menk study ranked Memorial Park the highest in its selected list of criteria used for its evaluation. And the majority of the POPS Leadership Team preferred the Memorial Park location. Both the City Center and Sliding Hill Skate Park did have some support as the number one choice.
- Based on our 18 months of research with other venues in various cities, it appears approximately one-half acre is needed for the facility and seating for 500 people, with the ability to expand, is recommended by the POPS Committee.
- With the success of fundraising thus far, it is estimated that **construction could begin as early as the spring of 2025 if all the appropriate decisions are made.** We are hopeful the city council can give us some indication about its timeline to make a decision. If we are as successful in raising funds in 2024 as 2023, it is likely we will be near 90% of our goal by the end of 2024. We do NOT want to lose the momentum we have for our project.
- It is also important to note from our research of other facilities of this type that the \$1 million goal to build POPS does NOT factor in items that may be provided for the building on a pro bono basis (e.g., excavation, discounted pricing on materials, significant discount on labor charges, etc.) This likely will reduce the cost of the facility.
- We also recognize these are uncharted waters with the private/public informal partnership. We know decisions need to be made regarding how the bidding process will be determined, what needs to be done collaboratively to understand each of our roles.
- We have been asked many times about possible grants. We have one grant thus far from the Mayo Foundation. It has been suggested to us that grants may be available AFTER we select a location. Since the three locations are in both Scott and LeSueur counties, we are holding off on additional grant applications.

The POPS Committee is using a four-step process in being successful:

- PASSION to convince people of the importance of this effort for the community overall,
- DEDICATION to meet the needs of New Prague families for decades to come,
- DILIGENCE to untiringly pursue every avenue to meet our goals, and
- PERSISTENCE as we encourage all community leaders to step up and support POPS!

More than 60+ individual businesses/families/individuals, service organizations and others have supported POPS thus far. Our theme of "It's Time!" has resonated with the community. Together, we can accomplish anything. We hope you share our enthusiasm for uniting with us to make our community even better for our families.

The End



## A sampling of donations thus far (Nov. 3, 2023 -- \$5,000+/V9):

- \$100,000 Pledged (Den & Sandy Gardner/Gardner & Gardner Communications)
- \$99,999 (The Broz/Chris & Nichole Davis Family)
- \$75,000 Pledged (Minnwest Bank--New Prague)
- \$75,000 Pledged (Mike/Kay Wilcox)
- \$50,000 Pledged (Brusseau Investments/Lisa and Shannon Brusseau)
- \$50,000 Pledged (CHART)
- \$30,000 Pledged (Dan/Dara Bishop/Wells Fargo Advisors)
- \$30,000 Pledged (Palmer/Susan Welcome)\* Palmer Welcome Auto – incl. raffle tix sales – see below)
- \$25,000 Pledged (New Prague Chamber)
- \$25,000 Pledged (New Prague Fire Relief Association)
- \$25,000 Pledged (Brad/Kytyn Schoenbauer)
- \$25,000 Pledged (Dr. Jon/Kate Colling)
- \$22,500 Pledged (Scott Equipment Company)
- \$15,000 Pledged (Bevcomm)
- \$15,000 Pledged (Dr. Steve Kivi)
- \$12,000 Pledged (New Prague Rotary) + national Rotary grant TBD
- \$10,000 Pledged (Jerry/Mary Walerius)
- \$10,000 Pledged (Pat/Margaret Sullivan)
- \$7,500 Pledged (Tupy Insurance)
- \$6,615 Secured (2023 Silent Auction Net Revenue)
- \$5,125 Pledged (Bruce/Becky Wolf)
- \$5,000 Pledged (New Prague Park Board)
- \$5,000 Pledged (Tom/Megan Vanasek)
- \$5,000 Pledged (Choate and Company – McDonald's/New Prague)
- \$5,000 Pledged (State Farm Insurance/Molly McGillen)
- \$5,000 Pledged (Matt and Maggie Goldade)
- \$5,000 Pledged (Mayo Foundation)
- \$46,050 Pledged (100 FOR 100K contributors/other donations, t-shirt sales) – 38 groups
- Media packages for space ad and radio spots with NP Times and KCHK Radio -- \$5,000
- Eric Brever – pro bono legal time for POPS/Forward New Prague Foundation -- \$5,000

**TOTAL -- \$789,790 Minus \$5,500 = net donations of \$783,810.\*\***

\*SUV Value = \$20,000 donation, plus \$10,000 cash from Palmer/Susan Welcome. Actual raffle tickets sold = \$14,500. Need to subtract \$20,000 - \$14,500 = \$5,500 short of value of donation. Need to subtract that from \$784,790 for net donations.

\*\*Total amount does **NOT** include value of media packages and attorney pro bono fees. Also does not include other pro bono offerings, including excavation and utilities work during project execution.

## COMPANIES TO-BE-DETERMINED

Ameriprise – Kyle Kuehner

CSSW – Chris Clausen

ACE Hardware – Donnie Simon, etc.

First Bank & Trust—Eric Krogman

Marv Deutsch Construction – pro bono excavation

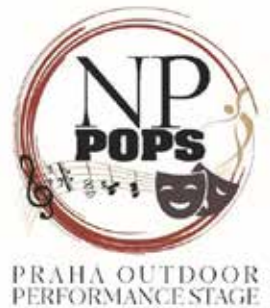
NP Municipal Utilities – pro bono utilities time. Dan Bishop, Chair

Tim and Jane Dittberner

# PRAHA OUTDOOR PERFORMANCE STAGE SITE FEASIBILITY STUDY



NEW PRAGUE AREA  
ARTS COUNCIL



*Draft: July 2023*



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## IN COLLABORATION WITH:

The New Prague Area Arts Council,  
POPS Location Feasibility/Design Sub-  
Committee, and the City of New Prague

## SPECIAL THANKS TO:

The community participants who  
provided feedback to help define the final  
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City of New Prague**

## PREPARED BY:

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## POPS LEADERSHIP TEAM:

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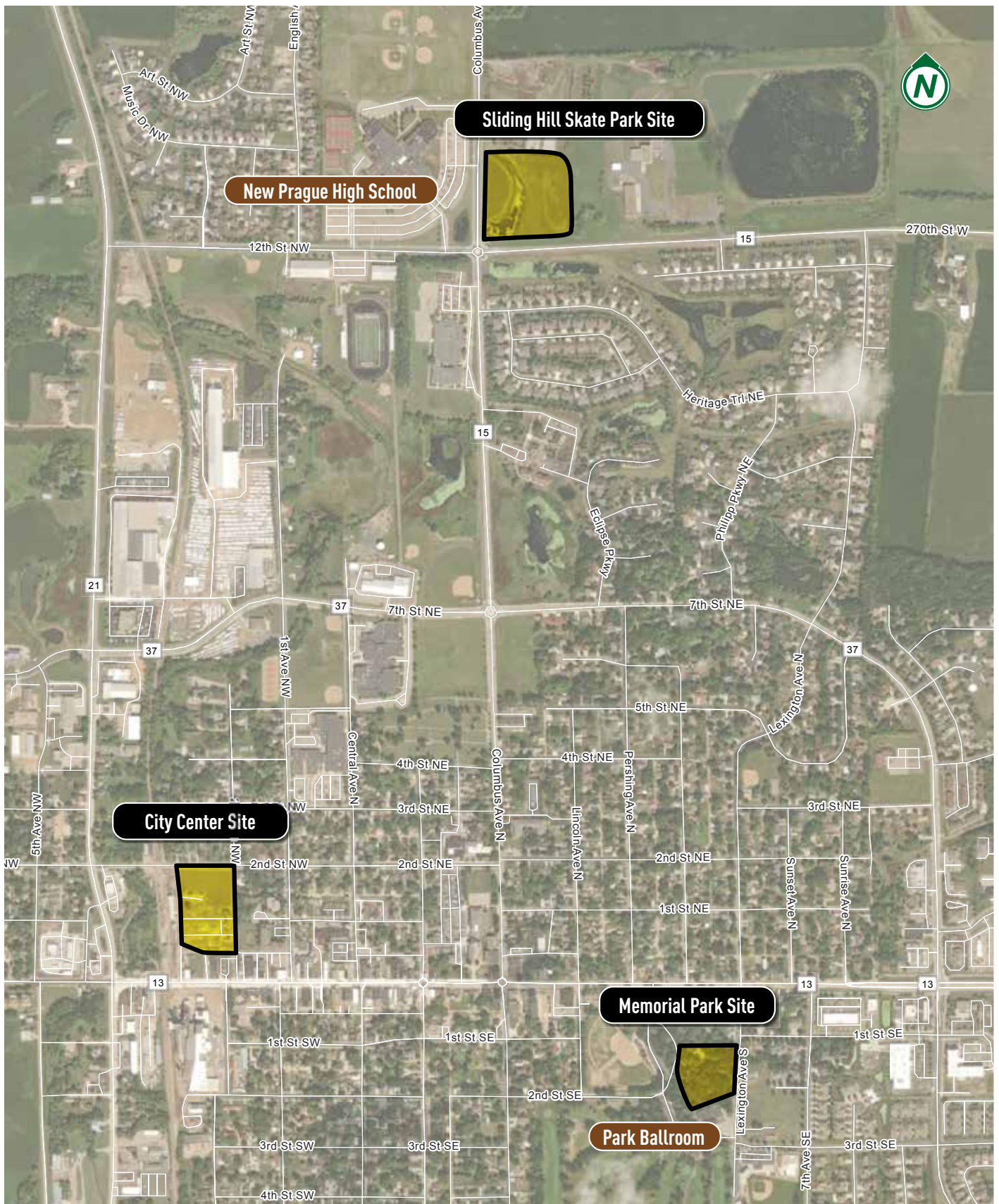
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Jonathan Nelsen, PLA - Landscape Architect  
Kendell Hillis - GIS Specialist

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**Location Map: Three potential POPS facility sites and their respective locations in the community.**



# 01 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

## Introduction

Amphitheaters and performance spaces, like other park and civic infrastructure projects, have the ability to add new dimensions to our communities, and bring people of all ages and backgrounds together for entertainment, recreation, and general interaction. With the POPS project, the New Prague Area Arts Council, in conjunction with the city of New Prague, aims to fill this void in the city's park offerings, and ultimately define the location, and type of facility that should be constructed in the community.

New Prague is a community of approximately 8,500 residents, situated in both Scott and Le Sueur counties, southwest of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. The city has a robust park system, a vibrant arts community, and continues to see growth and demand for new amenities.

Throughout the history of New Prague, the idea of an amphitheater or performance space has been hinted at, including a 1901 New Prague Times article that stated "There seems to be now a general movement among some of our best citizens that New Prague is large enough to own a park. We would like to see our people select a nice plat of ground where some nice shade trees could be planted and then have a place where people could congregate on hot evenings and Sunday. We could also have a nice bandstand in the center and our band boys could occasionally give us a toon." Additionally, a 2004 Memorial Park master plan included a bandshell, though the project ultimately went to referendum and did not move forward.

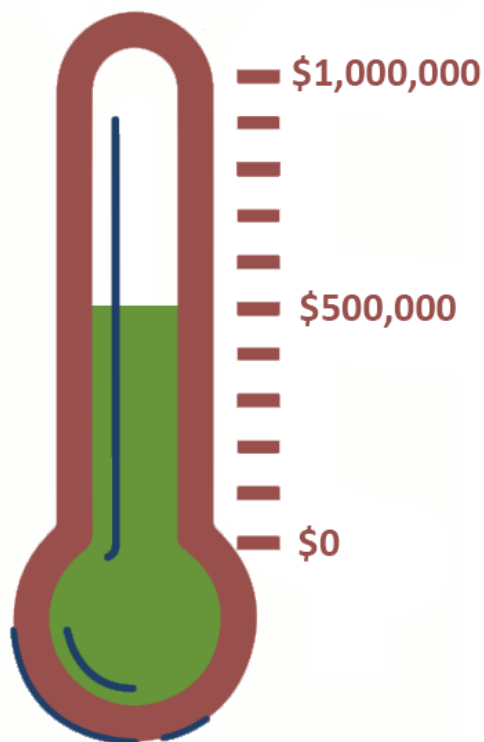
## Background

The Praha Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS) Committee, in conjunction with the City of New Prague, have been actively working to fundraise, identify a site, and facilitate construction of a performance facility to serve the community since April of 2022. With the mission "to build a multi-purpose outdoor performance facility to celebrate the arts and other community gatherings – from music to theatre to dance to visual arts and much more," the group aims to fill a gap in the city's parks and events offerings. According to the committee, primary reasons for undertaking this effort include but are not limited to:

- To complete a long-standing need of New Prague to provide this type of venue for community use. Creating outdoor arts events in New Prague with a tent/canopy is not a long-term solution.
- To collaborate with the city, school, community organizations, other community leaders and arts' groups to build a venue the community can be proud of; and to show the importance of meeting the needs of the community together.
- To provide a venue for family entertainment throughout the year.
- To create a facility that is a showcase for the southwest metro area that shines a positive light on the City of New Prague.

To date, the organization has successfully established an active committee, coordinated with City staff to identify potential sites, and initiated a fundraising campaign that has generated in excess of \$500,000 toward an ultimate goal of \$1,000,000+.

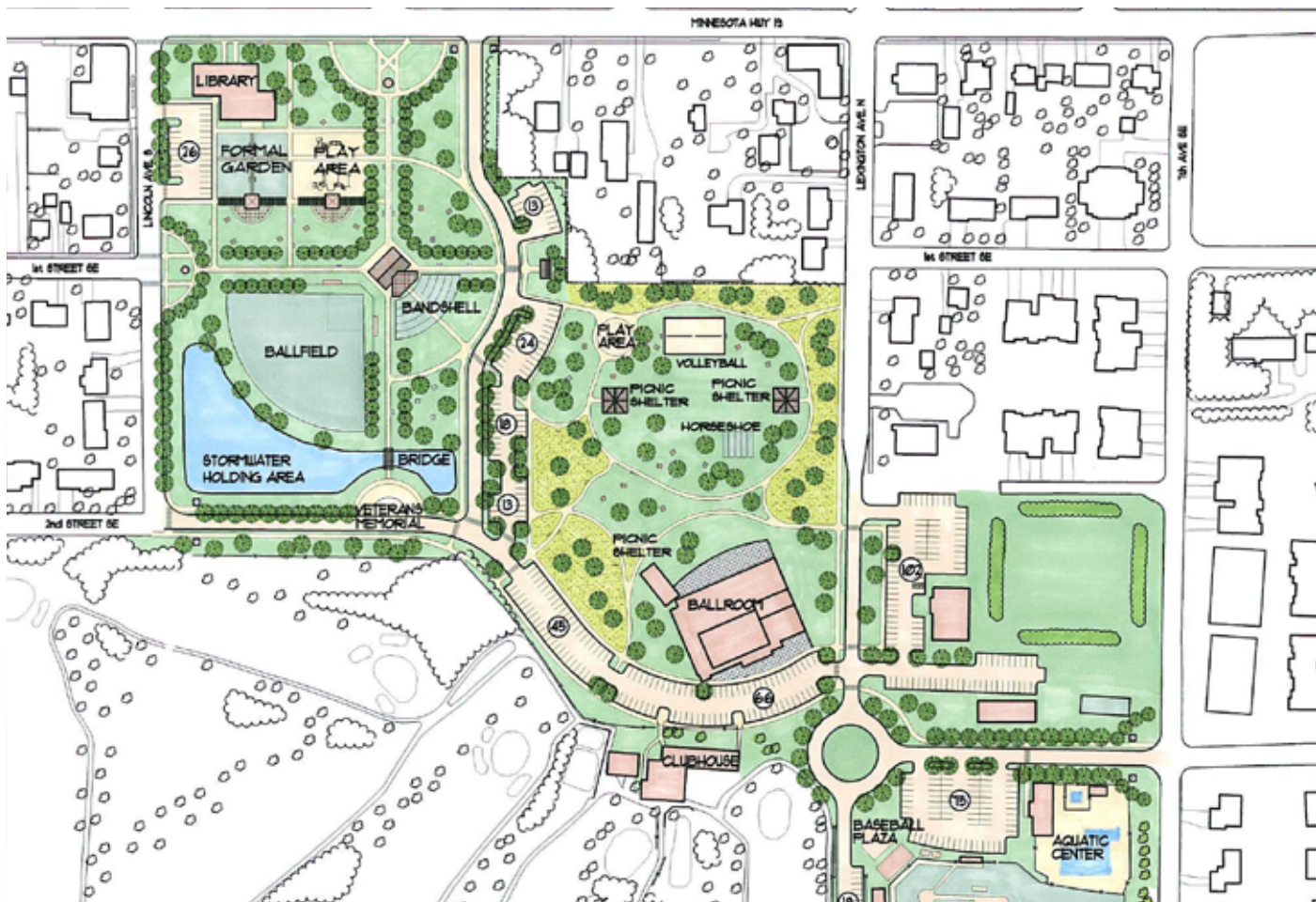




*Fundraising mark as of July 2023.*

In addition to this work, the committee and associated POPS Location/Feasibility/Design Subcommittee have studied and completed initial evaluation of the three sites under consideration. The results of this initial analysis will be included in the findings section of this report, along with additional analysis work completed by the subcommittee and Bolton & Menk.

In 2023, Bolton & Menk was selected through a competitive RFP process to assist the POPS subcommittee with the site analysis and selection process. The goal of this process is to provide a comprehensive review of the three sites under consideration, develop scoring criteria for the selection, and ultimately provide a recommendation for adoption by the POPS Committee, City Council, the Park Board, and the community as a whole.



*Portion of Master Plan figure for Memorial Park completed in 2004 showing a proposed bandshell.*

## 02 THE PROCESS

The site analysis/site selection process was developed to assist the POPS Committee, City and public in understanding issues and opportunities associated with facility development at each site and provide a method of comparison and ranking of the three sites. To aid in this process, several tasks were undertaken including:

- Project Kickoff Meeting
- Review of Existing Documentation
- Site Inventory/Field Review
- Site Selection Matrix
- Massing Studies/Site Concepts
- Preliminary Cost Estimation
- Preliminary Site Rankings

Each of these tasks are described in more detail within this section of the report.

### **Project Kickoff Meeting:**

Held on Wednesday, March 29th, the kickoff meeting was an opportunity to assemble the committee, City representatives, and the consultant team to discuss project goals, objectives, key milestones, and outline the overall planning process.

### **Review of Existing Documentation:**

As part of this project, several existing documents were reviewed to help inform the process. These documents, from previous POPS committee efforts and various development projects, included:

- Initial site analysis work completed by the Committee in 2022
- City Center Site Documentation including as-builts, site surveys, and potential site development concepts.
- Sliding Hill Skate Park site plans completed in 2006
- Memorial Park master plan from 1921, and revised master plan concept completed in 2004

### **01 PROJECT KICKOFF**

### **02 REVIEW OF EXISTING INFO**

### **03 SITE REVIEW**

### **04 ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **05 REVIEW & WRAP-UP**

-Park Avenue Street & Utility Improvements from 2010.

-Park Ballroom Lease Agreement

### **Site Inventory/Field Review:**

An initial site visit by members of the POPS committee, City staff, and the Bolton & Menk project team was conducted on Monday April 17th. The assembled group visited each of the three sites, starting at the Sliding Hill Skate Park site, followed by City Center (Central Park), and lastly Memorial Park.



At each location, the group discussed specific opportunities and constraints of each site, the general character and ambiance, utilities and infrastructure, and other items. A summary of the discussions and observations gathered during the site visit/inventory is included in the appendix of this report.

#### **Site Selection Matrix:**

Developed as an opportunity to gather feedback from committee members on the three sites under consideration, the site selection matrix included 11 categories. For each category and for all three sites, committee members were asked to provide general notes and assign a rank from 1-5.

Information collected through the Matrix exercise provided the consultant team

with a more thorough understanding of the committee's measure of suitability for site development based on key criteria. Rankings and feedback collected through this exercise are available in the appendix of this report.

#### **Massing Studies/Site Concepts:**

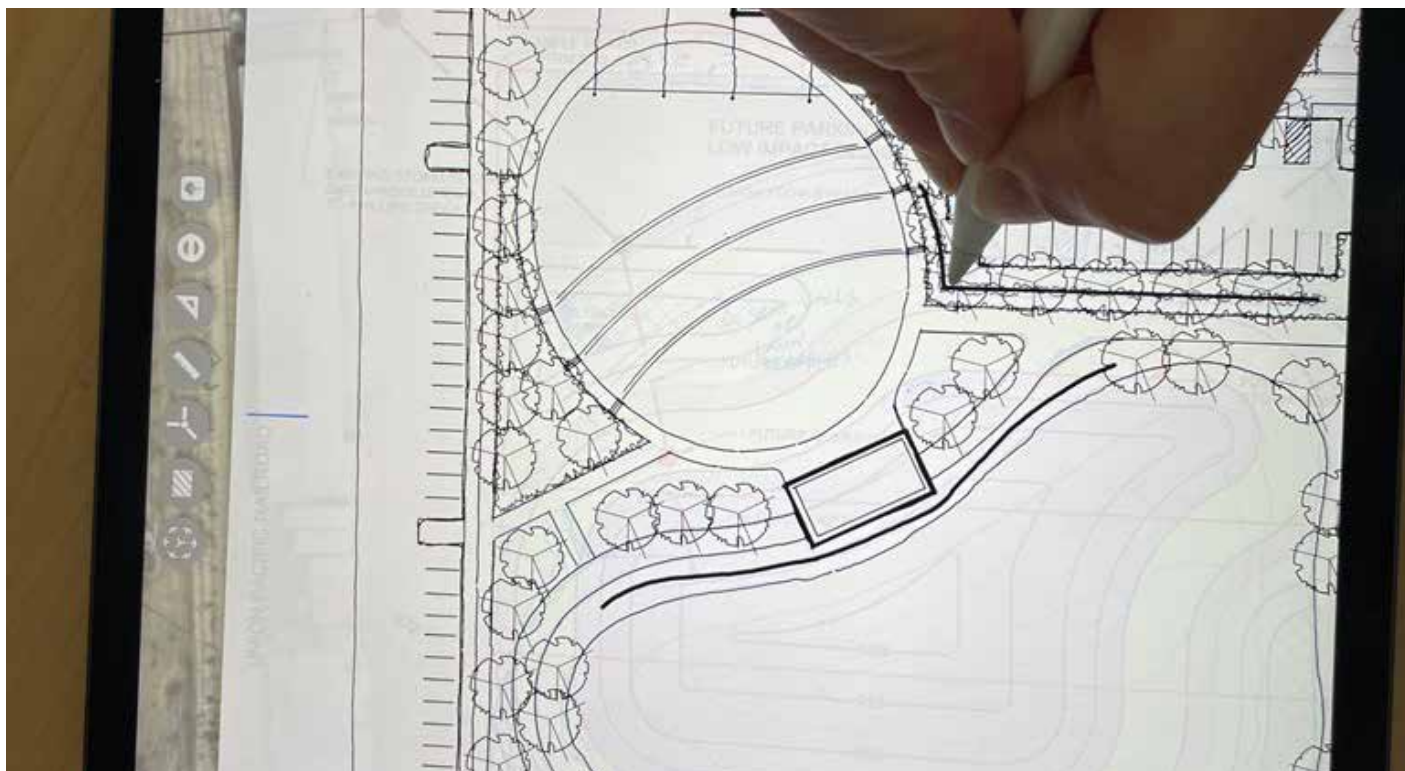
Bolton & Menk developed two unique site concept/massing diagrams for each of the three sites under consideration. These diagrams are conceptual in nature and are intended to provide a general understanding of potential site development configurations, and convey information including:

The type of facility possible within the defined site (i.e. flat lawn event space, terraced seating, combination of both, etc. )

Size/capacity of a potential facility. To



***Site inventory/field review meeting held on-site April 17, 2023.***



***Massing Study/Site Concepts were generated for each site.***

quantify capacity numbers, terraced or linear seating concepts utilized a measure of 2.5 linear feet per individual, and open lawn or hillside concepts utilized a measure of 20 square feet per individual.

Opportunities for site circulation, parking and access. Consideration was given to ensure any concepts could accommodate ADA access, circulate people throughout the space, and provide vehicular access to proximity of the stage for loading/unloading equipment and maintenance.

Opportunities for support facilities, multi-use spaces, etc.

### **Preliminary Cost Estimates:**

For each of the three sites, a cost estimate was developed for one of the two generated site concept figures. These cost estimates are intended to provide planning level costs for budgetary and fundraising purposes. Site development costs were generated based on the best spatial

information available during the planning process (Generally the City's GIS).

### **Site Rankings:**

Each of the three potential sites identified by the City and committee present unique opportunities and limitations to the development of the POPS facility. To assist in comparing the three sites, a series of scoring criteria were established to provide a consistent scoring measure. These measures take into account geographic, physical, economic, and aesthetic characteristics of the sites. Descriptions of these criteria are provided in this section, followed by a summary table showing the sites and their respective scoring. For more detailed information on each site and a discussion of their individual characteristics based on the criteria, refer to the Sites section of this report.





*Site 1: Sliding Hill Skate Park*



*Site 2: City Center*



## 03 THE SITES

The proposed POPS facility is a collaborative project between the New Prague Area Arts Council, POPS Committee and the City of New Prague. While the project will be developed through private fundraising efforts, the three sites under consideration are all on City owned property. Upon completion of construction, it is the intention that the City will also maintain the facility. The three sites under consideration include:

- Sliding Hill Skate Park Site
- City Center Site
- Memorial Park Site

Each of these three sites offer unique challenges and opportunities related to

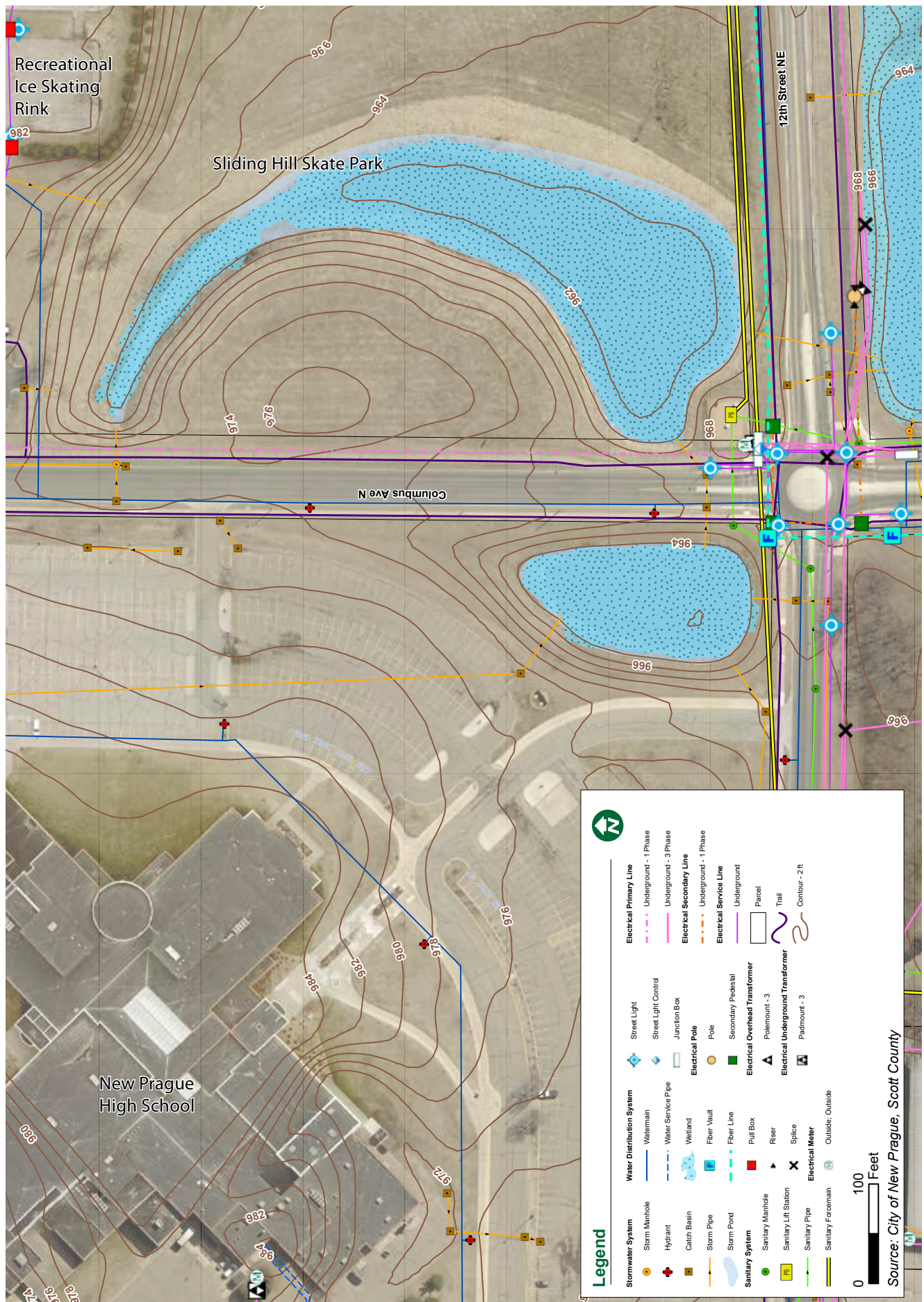
development, including varying topography, access to utilities, vegetative characteristics, surrounding land uses, among others. This section of the report provides a summary of each of the three sites under consideration, and their associated characteristics.

**Section 6 (The Rankings)** of this report provides a summary of the ranking criteria established to assist with prioritizing the sites for development. This section provides a discussion of each of the sites relative to each of these ranking criteria and provides a score for each from 1-5. These scores are further summarized in Section 6.



**Site 3: Memorial Park**





Site inventory map of Sliding Hill Skate Park site.

# SLIDING HILL SKATE PARK

**Property ID:** PID #: 24.118.0010

## **Property Description:**

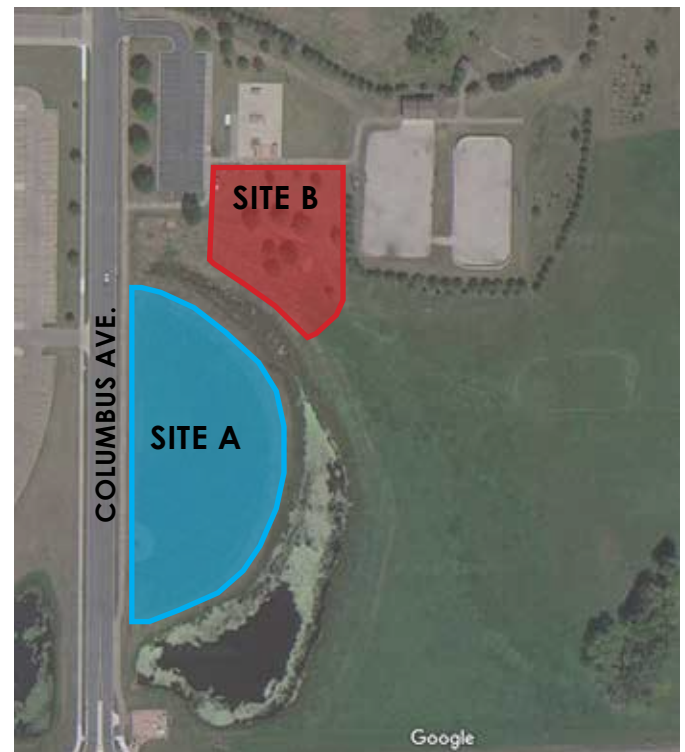
The Sliding Hill Skate Park at 1501 Columbus Avenue is situated on the northern edge of the city limits, directly across from New Prague High School. The park is incorporated into a city owned parcel of approximately 86 acres that includes the park and its amenities, and the city's water treatment plant and supporting infrastructure. In total, the parks uses, including unprogrammed open space, encompass approximately 20 acres of the parcel. Currently developed park amenities include the following:

- Recreational Ice Skating Rink
- Hockey Rink
- Warming House
- Sledding Hill
- Skatepark
- Parking Lot
- Archery Range
- Portable Toilet & Enclosure
- Trails

The site is quite expansive and largely exposed to the elements, lacking mature tree cover. Wind at this location during the site visit was strong. Wind in New Prague is predominantly from the south between May and November, when most programming of the facility would occur. The topography on the site is varying, and includes several flat terraced areas, a stormwater treatment facility, and a large hill utilized for sledding.

Generally, there are several locations within the park boundaries that would satisfy the space requirements of a performance stage. During the on-site visit, the two areas shown were identified for potential development of the project, including the flat lawn space to the west of the stormwater pond (adjacent to Columbus Avenue), and the lawn and

hillside in the vicinity of the skatepark, hockey rink, and stormwater pond. As a general rule, any development of the proposed performance stage project would not interfere with existing park uses including the sledding hill itself. Refer to section 05 of the report for additional information related to the concepts generated for the facility on the site.



**Potential development areas**

## **SITE RANKING CRITERIA SPECIFICS:**

### **On-Site Parking (Overall Score: 3/5):**

The Sliding Hill Skate Park currently includes an off-street parking lot with 41 parking stalls, including 1 ADA accessible stall. The lot is in close proximity to both of the potential development sites at the park identified for the performance stage facility. Given the size of the park, there is an opportunity to develop additional off-street parking in the future should the stage be located there. It's anticipated that based on the park's location in the community, parking would be important for the stage facility in this location. As such, additional on-site parking may be warranted.



**Off-Site Parking: (Overall Score: 5/5):**

Currently on-street parking is not allowed along Columbus Avenue along the Sliding Hill skate Parks extents. The high school directly across the street does have ample parking during off-school hours to facilitate patrons attending events at a POPS facility, though an agreement would likely need to be formalized with POPS and the school to ensure allowable use. One consideration with use of the schools parking lots should be safe passage of pedestrians across Columbus Avenue, which may require construction of a pedestrian crossing facility or other safety accommodations during events.

**Utilities (Overall Score: 4/5):**

The Sliding Hill Skate Park site is well serviced by utilities necessary for the development of the performance stage. These needs would primarily be electrical and water. 1 Phase power, which is anticipated to meet any potential electrical needs related to the facility, is available via an underground line running along the east side of Columbus Avenue. 3 Phase power is also available in the proximity of the 12th Street/Columbus Avenue intersection.

If it is determined that water is needed on-site, a watermain currently runs along the west side of Columbus Avenue, and into the Sliding Hill Skate Park site south of the existing parking lot, extending to the ice rinks and to a fire hydrant.

It is anticipated that any stormwater infrastructure associated with the POPS facility at this location could utilize the existing pond as an outflow. BMP's such as bio retention basins could be incorporated into the overall design as well.

Currently, sanitary service is not available north of 12th Street along Columbus Avenue. It is not anticipated that the development of

the POPS facility would require permanent restroom facilities, nor is it the policy of the parks department to install new permanent restroom facilities in City parks.

**Restroom Proximity (Overall Score: 2/5):**

The sliding Hill Skate Park site currently includes one portable toilet in a fenced enclosure near the existing parking lot. As noted in the utility section, sanitary service is currently not available north of 12th Street, though at some point it may be extended to service future development.

**Topography (Overall Score: 2/5):**

The Sliding Hill Skate Park site's topography includes flat terraces, sloping hillsides, and constructed stormwater ponds. The top of the sledding hill, the highest point on site, is at elevation 1014. The lowest point on site in the graded pond area is 962, a total change of 52'.

As mentioned, two areas on site were identified for potential performance stage development. The first location, the lawn space along Columbus Avenue, is generally flat at an approximate elevation of 974. This area would have limited capacity to provide any sort of terracing, and would generally require a flat performance lawn type facility.

The second location, between the parking lot and stormwater pond, includes a flat lawn space at the top, and a sloping hillside with an overall elevation change of approximately 12'. This area would allow for development of a hardscape terraced seating area. Due to space constraints in the area, retaining walls and other infrastructure may be required.

**Existing Vegetation (Overall Score: 3/5):**

The site is generally clear of any vegetation conflicts, with both areas identified for

potential development being largely mown lawn, with some taller grasses. Tree plantings that have been completed on the site do not conflict with the proposed development locations. The native vegetation around the stormwater pond, in conjunction with the existing tree plantings provide a nice setting for the facility. Trees on site are generally small and will take time (~10 years) to mature to a size that provides a useful shade canopy. Similarly, any trees planted to mitigate wind, sound or sun will also take time to mature to a useful size.

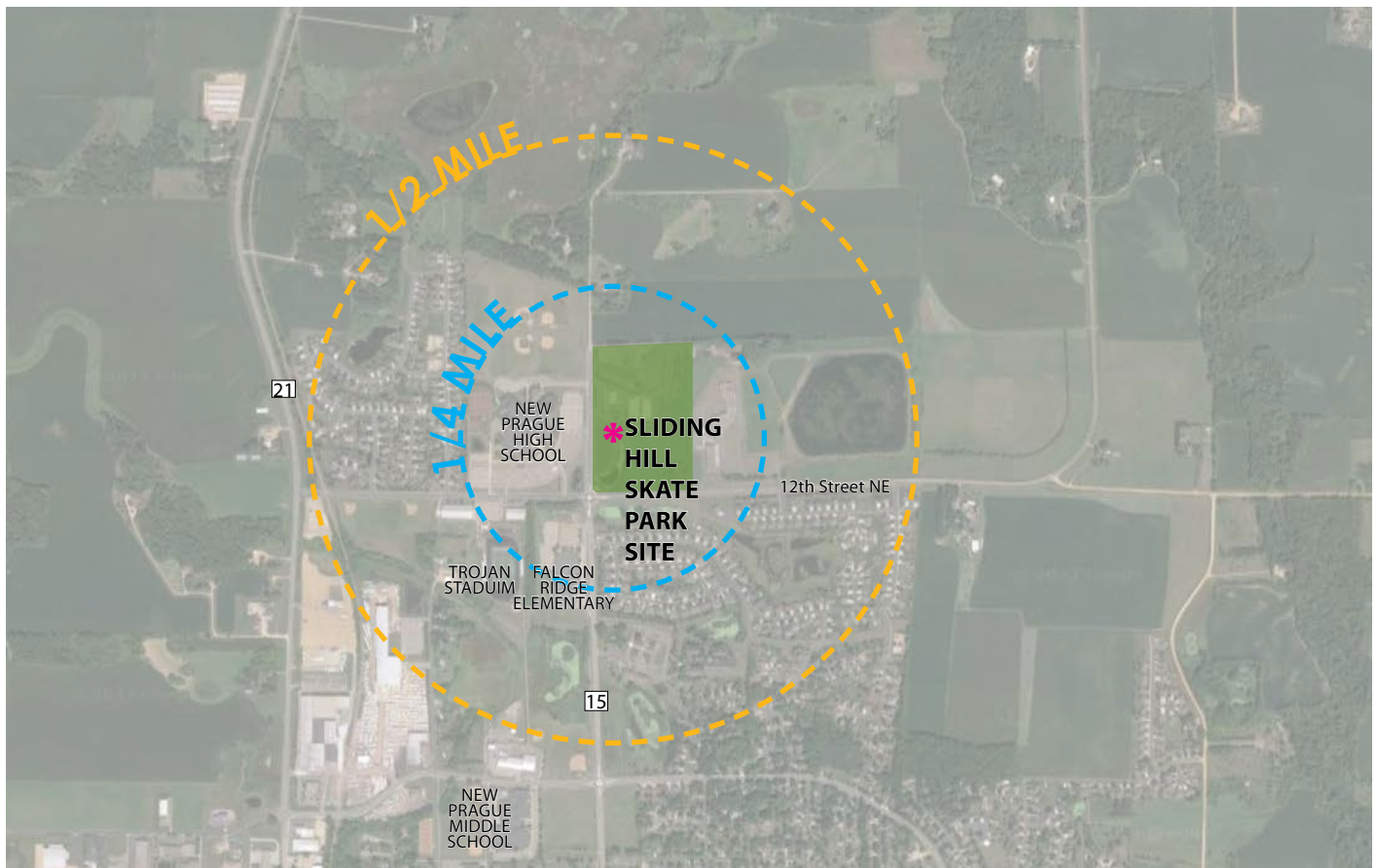
#### **Adjacent Land Use/Noise Conflicts (Overall Score: 4/5):**

The Sliding Hill Skate Park is bounded to the north by undeveloped agricultural land, to the east by the City's water treatment plant, to the south by single family residential, and to the west by New Prague High School. Generally, these uses are compatible with

park development and use of the POPS facility. The High School will typically not be in session during POPS usage. The land to the north may eventually be developed, so planning for a future facility should anticipate and be designed to mitigate impacts. The residential properties to the south are a fair distance away from identified sites for potential POPS development, and additional screening should be included.

#### **Accessibility, Proximity and Community Context (Overall Score: 2/5):**

The Sliding Hill Skate Park is situated on the northern edge of the community, which generally puts the location out of walkable (1/4 mile) range for many residents. As such, primary access for many patrons is vehicular (car). The City's greenway trail system includes portions of trail connection along Columbus Avenue, supporting some community access via off-street connections for bikes and



**Location of Sliding Hill Skate Park site in relation to the community and supporting uses.**

pedestrians. The greenway system is a work in progress, and does include gaps, which may limit some residents from an off street connection.

The proposed development sites within the Sliding Hill Skate Park site could both accommodate ADA access, through the construction of sidewalks, trails and ramps.

#### **Proximity to Supporting Uses/Businesses (Overall Score: 1/5):**

Generally, there are no businesses in the area of the Sliding Hill Skate Park to provide support to the venue. Complimentary businesses including convenience stores, restaurants, bars, grocery stores, etc. are all over 1 mile from the site, outside of a comfortable walking window, and largely requiring access from the site by vehicle.

#### **Supporting Park Amenities (Overall Score: 2/5):**

The park includes several existing amenities, but generally these facilities do not act in support of the performance stage use. The hockey and pleasure ice rinks, warming house and sledding hill are generally limited to winter use. The Archery range may pose a risk to concert goers, or likewise, children and patrons may pose a risk to range users. The skatepark may be useful to patrons of the performance stage, but proximity of the use to the proposed development locations on site may present challenges associated with noise. Generally, these facilities could see frequent use during the same time periods in the spring, summer and fall. The existing parking lot could be utilized by patrons attending the performance stage, but would limit use for users of other facilities, and the portable toilets as well, could be utilized by all park and performance stage users.

#### **Size/Capacity (Overall Score: 5/5):**

There are two areas identified for proposed development of the performance stage at the Sliding Hill Skate Park. The first, along Columbus Avenue, is approximately 1.5 acres in size, and offers ample space for a facility that supports the attendance capacity identified (Generally 500, but 1,000+ at times). The second, on the slope between the pond, skatepark and skating rink, is approximately 0.65 acres in size. Attendance numbers in this location are anticipated to be lower than the ideal size of 1,000 patrons. Due to the general size of the overall park, and ability of the site along Columbus Avenue to support large audiences, this site is well suited for the performance stage based on this criteria.



**Skatepark**



**Sledding Hill**



**Archery Range**



**Hockey Rink/Pleasure Skating Rink**

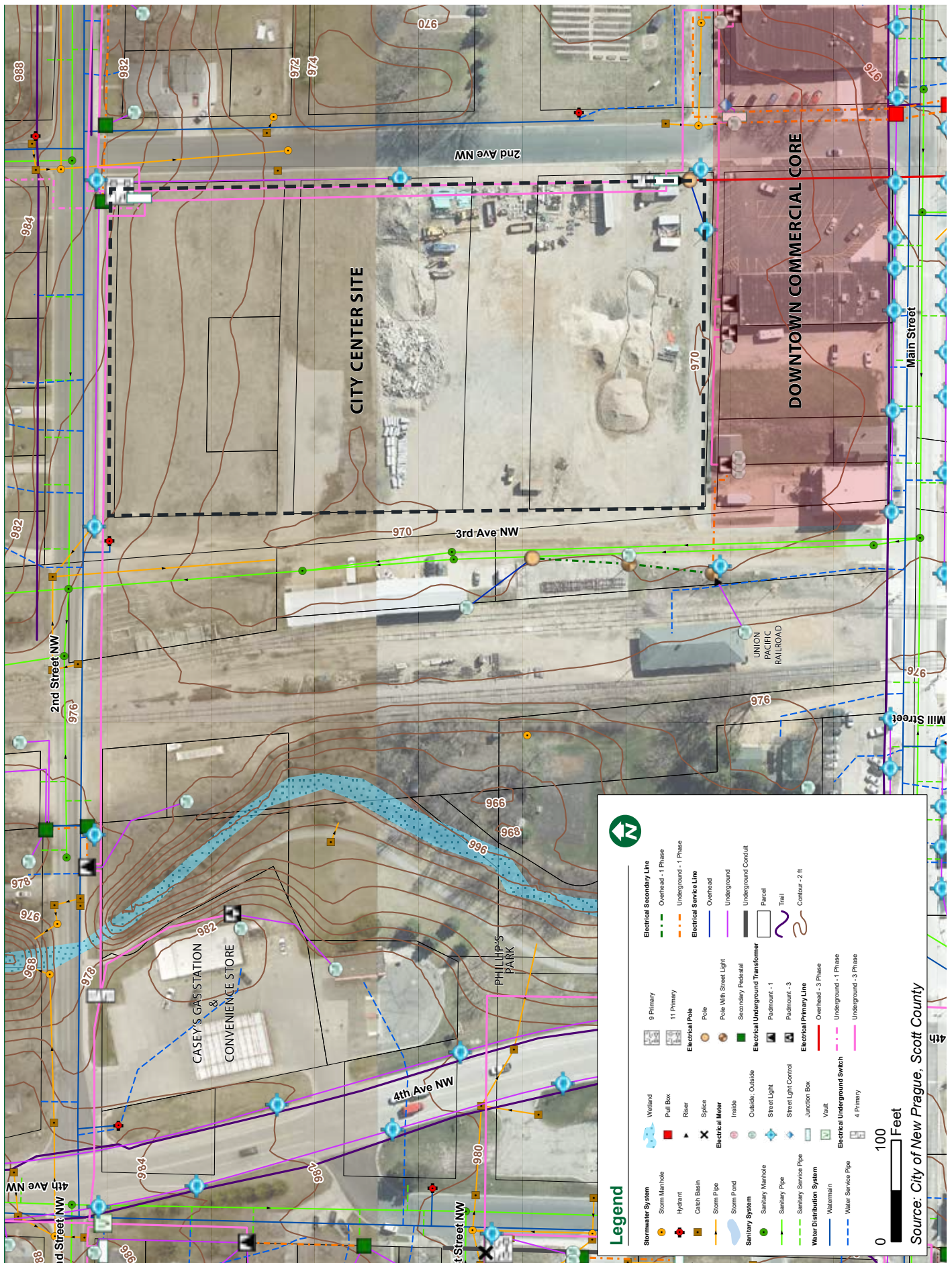


**Warming House**



**Restroom Enclosure & Electrical Cabinets**





Site inventory map of City Center site.

## CITY CENTER SITE

**Property ID:** PID # 24.003.0300, 24.003.0290, 24.003.0210, 24.003.0310.

### Property Description:

The City Center site is the old mill pond/creamery site situated on the west end of downtown New Prague at the intersection of 2nd Street and 2nd Avenue. The overall property is comprised of a conglomeration of City owned parcels totaling approximately 4.3 acres, which the City actively intends to redevelop. As such, any performance space would need to be carefully coordinated and likely constructed in conjunction with the overall development effort.

Preliminary concept plans for the site identify a mixed use building construction on the north portion of the site that would potentially include a new City Hall facility with high density residential use above, a large stormwater pond on the southern portion of the site, and greenspace between. Several parking lots are also identified in support of the proposed facilities. Based on a separately completed housing study, there is a need for high density residential development to support housing demand in the area, and this site could likely assist in fulfilling that need.

The City Center site is largely a blank slate. All prior structures constructed on site have been removed. A geotechnical review of the site has been conducted including soil borings. Based on this information, the northern half of the site is well suited for building development. The south portion of the site was historically a pond that was filled in, and fill material in this area is generally not conducive to building construction, or would require significant mitigation to support building construction.

## SITE RANKING CRITERIA SPECIFICS:

### On-Site Parking (Overall Score: 3/5):

The city center site is currently undeveloped, with portions used as a gravel parking lot. Depending on construction of the performance stage and overall development of the site, the gravel lot may be used temporarily for parking needs. A preliminary concept plan for the site includes several off-street parking lots that would accommodate approximately 100 vehicles. It is anticipated that these lots could be used for events at the POPS in the long term. While they may not meet all parking needs for the facility, they would offset any parking needs off site or on adjacent streets.

### Off-Site Parking: (Overall Score: 1/5):

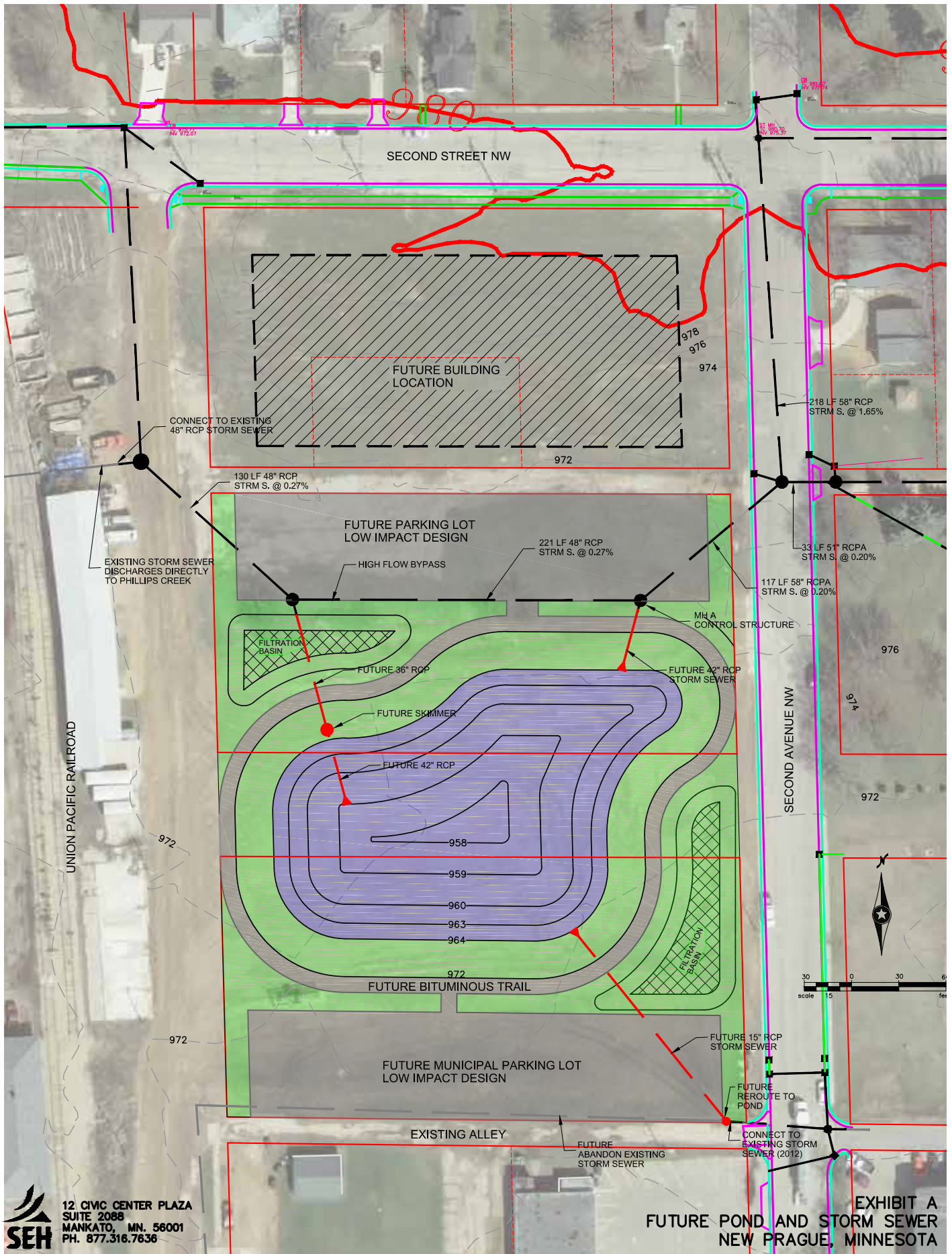
Off-site parking at the City Center facility is generally limited to on-street parking on adjacent roadways, including single family residential neighborhoods, and the City's downtown. Parking for events, especially in the downtown, may restrict parking for other patrons of businesses in the area, and is generally not desirable in residential areas. City staff have indicated that 2nd Street NW is a state aid route and on-street parking may be restricted along the City Center sites extents.

### Utilities (Overall Score: 5/5):

The City Center site is well serviced by utilities necessary for the development of the performance stage and supporting facilities. Primary overhead 3 phase power currently extends to the SE corner of the site from the south, and underground 3 phase runs along the east and north extents of the site.

A watermain runs along 2nd Street NW on the north side of the site, with a hydrant situated in the northwest corner of the site.





City Center site from previous development plans



While a permanent restroom facility is not anticipated on-site, sanitary sewer runs along the western edge of the site along 3rd Avenue NW.

**Restroom Proximity (Overall Score: 1/5):**

There are currently no permanent public restroom facilities in proximity of the City Center site. As such, patrons would need to utilize restroom facilities in private businesses, or portable toilets would need to be provided for events. It is possible that future development on the site could integrate a restroom facility that could be utilized by the public during events at the POPS facility, though this would need to be coordinated with the overall development project.

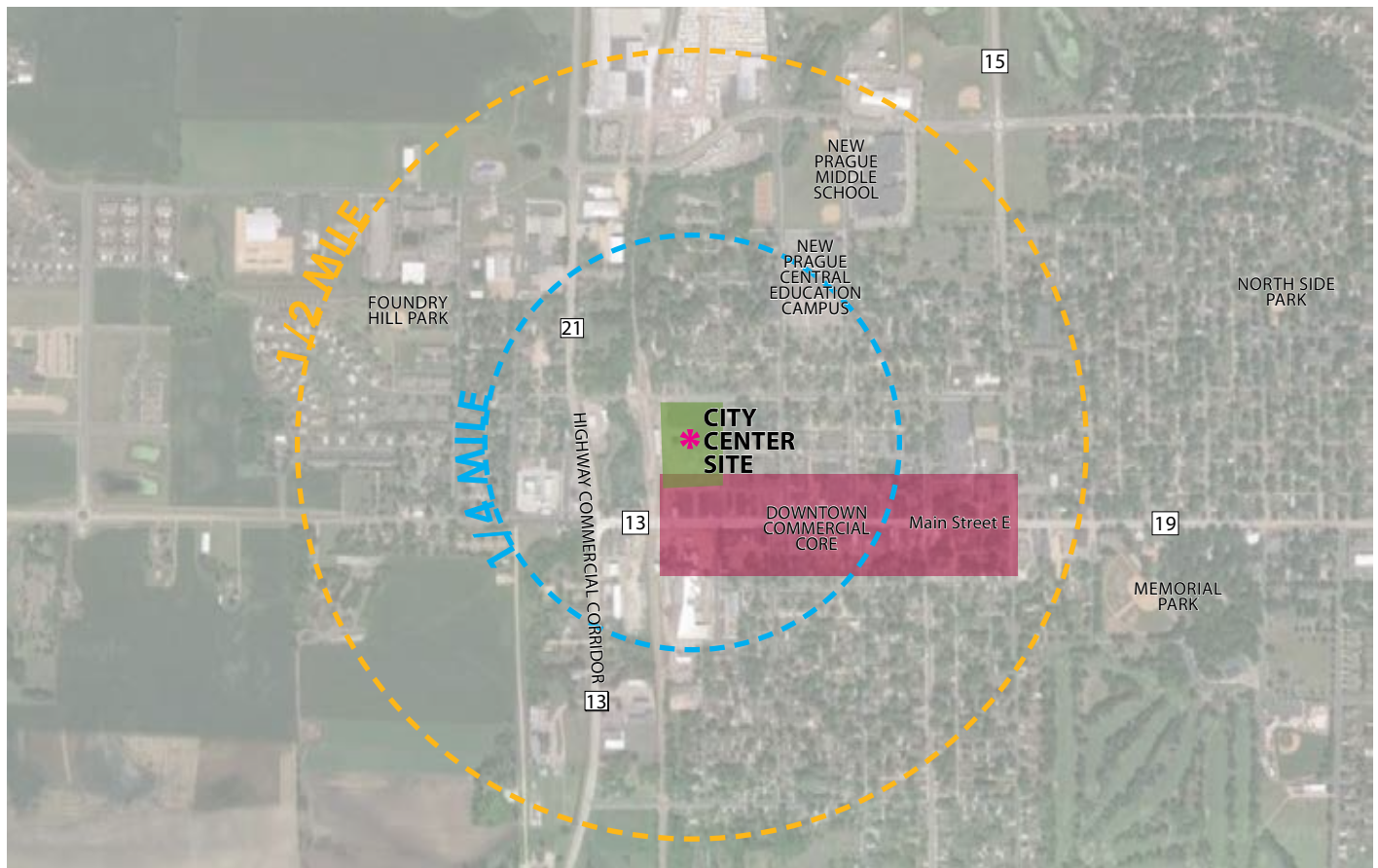
**Topography (Overall Score: 2/5):**

The City Center site is relatively flat, generally sloping from north to south from a high point in the northeast corner of approximately 980,

to a low point on the southern property line of approximately 970. This slope is generally conducive to the development of the performance stage facility, but that facility would ultimately need to be designed in conjunction with surrounding development. Based on previously completed analysis, the northern portion of the site where much of the topography occurs is the primary location identified for building development, largely eliminating potential for a terraced seating approach to the facility.

**Existing Vegetation (Overall Score: 1/5):**

The site is currently void of any vegetation beyond mown lawn. As such, tree removals or impacts to other ecosystems would largely not be impacted, though the site is generally not providing any benefits in this regard currently. Generally, tree plantings around the facility are beneficial to provide shade, mitigate sound, and provide visual buffers



**Location of City Center (Central Park) site in relation to the community and supporting uses.**

from surrounding areas. Trees planted as part of the project would likely take 10+ years to reach a functional size in this regard, so timing and overall functionality of landscaping should be considered.

**Adjacent Land Use/Noise Conflicts (Overall Score: 2/5):**

The City Center Site is bordered on the north by low density residential, the east by low density and high density residential, the south by commercial businesses along Main Street, and to the west by the railroad and associated uses. Generally, train traffic through the city is infrequent, but does occur, so consideration should be given to this possibility. Residential uses on the north and east should be considered and opportunities to mitigate noise pollution considered. Overall development on the site, and orientation of the facility are two factors that could assist in minimizing impacts to these surrounding residents.

**Accessibility, Proximity and Community Context (Overall Score: 4/5):**

The City Center site is situated centrally within the community, in close proximity to the City's downtown, several city parks, and a large number of residences. Access is available by car, bicycle, and on foot. A sidewalk is present along 2nd Street NW, connecting the site to the surrounding neighborhoods, and businesses. With the site's gentle slope and limited topography, ADA access would be easily achievable within the performance space and throughout the site with supporting trail and sidewalk networks.

**Proximity to Supporting Uses/Businesses (Overall Score: 5/5):**

The City Center site is well situated on the west end of downtown New Prague. This location would allow patrons to easily patronize local downtown businesses including shops, bars and restaurants. Caseys General Store is

within walking distance to the west allowing people to easily get beverages and snacks for events as well.

**Supporting Park Amenities (Overall Score: 1/5):**

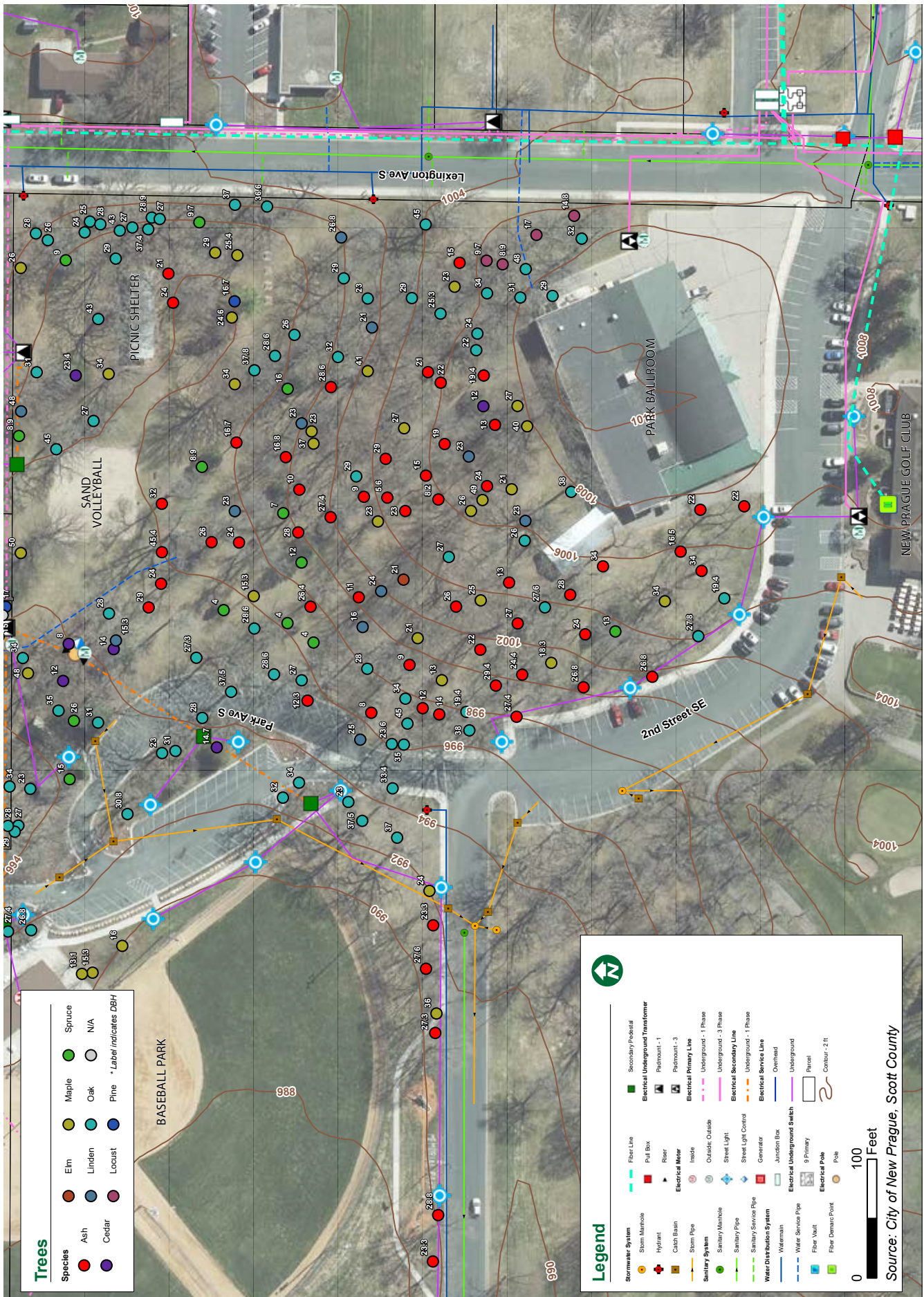
The site does not currently include any supporting amenities.

**Size/Capacity (Overall Score: 5/5):**

The City Center site offers opportunities for development of a facility of an appropriate size to meet the needs as identified by the POPS committee, and to facilitate community functions. Ultimately, it is anticipated the facility would need to be designed in conjunction with the surrounding development to ensure a seamless and cohesive design, with building and stormwater design playing a key role in the configuration and orientation of the performance stage facility.

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Site inventory map of Memorial Park site.



# MEMORIAL PARK

**Property ID: PID # 23.999.0090**

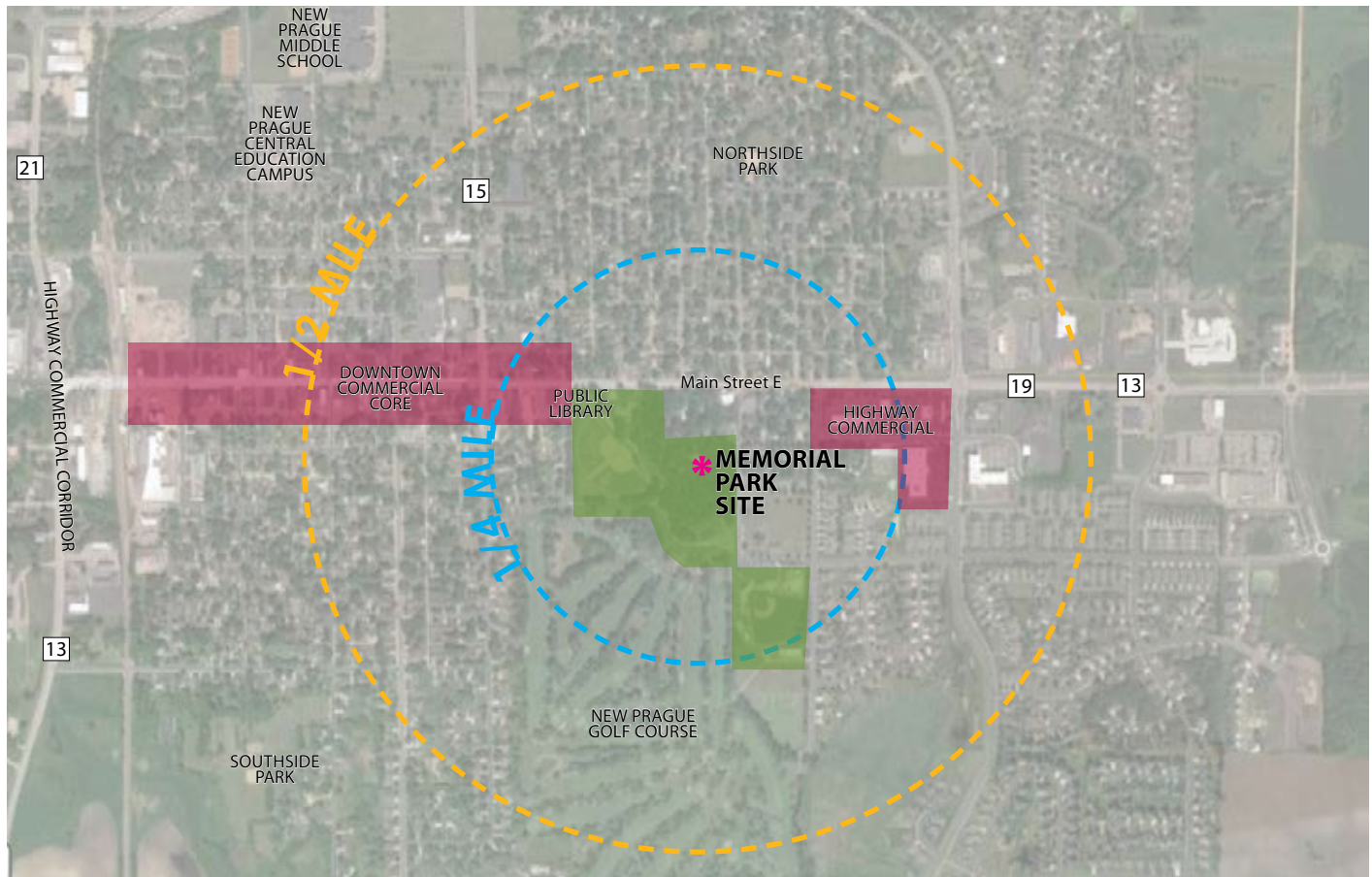
## Property Description:

The Memorial Park site is situated in the northeast corner of Memorial Park, just north of the Park Ballroom building. The park was originally established in 1921, when the City purchased 15 acres of property for recreation. At the time, a master plan was completed, and the park was dubbed “New Prague Park”. While the parks configuration varies from the 1921 plan, the intent is generally maintained, with similar uses and programming. An updated master plan for the park was completed in 2004 and identified a potential bandshell structure west of Park Street. Ultimately this updated plan was voted down in a referendum.

A large portion of the park is generally flat,

with some rolling topography, including the site identified for the POPS facility. Today, the park encompasses approximately 62 total acres including the park and golf course, with an additional 14 adjacent acres where Memorial Park Baseball Field is situated.

The Park is centrally located in the community on the east end of downtown and is in close proximity to more recent commercial development to the east. The park includes a number of other amenities that provide both opportunities and challenges relative to the development of the performance stage. Most notably, concerns have been expressed related to availability of parking and congestion in the area based on overall park programming on performance stage event days.



**Location of Memorial Park site in relation to the community and supporting uses.**

## SITE RANKING CRITERIA SPECIFICS:

### **On-Site Parking (Overall Score: 1/5):**

Memorial Park includes several small off-street parking lots that could be utilized for events. These lots are shared among all park users, so depending on programming of the parks amenities, there could be parking shortages. While the inclusion of on-site parking is not a top priority for many, especially given the amount of off-site parking generally available in proximity to the three sites, it is an important consideration for those with disabilities and older residents who may have mobility impairments.

### **Off-Site Parking: (Overall Score: 3/5):**

Off-site but in close proximity to the proposed performance stage location, the baseball stadium and ballroom provide additional parking opportunities for performance stage patrons. On-street parking is generally available throughout the surrounding area with no major parking restrictions in place. Due to the site's central location and proximity to community residents, we anticipate lower parking demand compared to the other sites under consideration.

### **Utilities (Overall Score: 5/5):**

The Memorial Park site is well serviced by utilities. Underground electrical lines are in close proximity to the site including a 3-phase line running down the east side of Lexington Avenue, and a 1-phase secondary line running through the park just west of the proposed POPS site. Water is also in close proximity with watermain running underneath Lexington Ave S, and under 2nd Street E to the west. Additionally, a water service line extends from the north into the proposed POPS site to the location of a former building. While the park has an existing restroom building near the playground, sanitary pipe is also present under Lexington Ave S, with several service lines

extending to the park boundary.

### **Restroom Proximity (Overall Score: 4/5):**

Permanent public restroom facilities are available within walking distance of the proposed development area adjacent to Park Street and the Memorial Park playground. Additional portable toilets could be brought to the site for events as needed.

### **Topography (Overall Score: 5/5):**

The Memorial Park site includes portions of flat lawn space and a hillside that generally slopes from south to north, with the Park Ballroom situated at the top of the slope to the south. Total grade change on the slope is approximately 12 feet over a distance of 300 feet (approximate slope of 4%) from an elevation of 1008 near the Ballroom, down to 996 near the sand volleyball courts. This gentle slope would allow for the development of a sloped/terraced facility of ample size to satisfy the needs of the POPS facility.

### **Existing Vegetation (Overall Score: 3/5):**

Memorial Park is a beautiful and well-established park that includes large mature overstory tree plantings throughout the park and proposed development area. Trees are well distributed throughout the project area, and include various species including Oak, Maple, Ash, Cedar, and others. During discussions with the committee, feedback provided identified Oak and Maple trees as high priority for preservation over other species, and that Ash Trees, due to EAB, could/should be removed. Beyond the mature tree cover, vegetation in the project area is limited to mown grass. Ultimately development will impact the tree canopy but could be done strategically to minimize such impacts. New trees could also be planted to supplement the existing tree canopy and fill gaps generated by the



project.

**Adjacent Land Use/Noise Conflicts (Overall Score: 2/5):**

The Memorial Park site is bordered on the south and east by single family residential use, the north by the Park Ballroom, and the west by additional park facilities. Consideration will need to be given to orientation of the facility, hours of events, and other mitigation measures to minimize impacts on neighboring residents. The Park Ballroom hosts events that may overlap with events at the performance stage facility. Additionally, the ballfield and other park uses could bring outside noise and congestion to the area.

**Accessibility, Proximity and Community Context (Overall Score: 5/5):**

The Memorial Park site is centrally situated within the community, in close proximity to the City's downtown, and a large number of residences. Access is available by car, bicycle, and on foot. Sidewalk connections are generally available throughout the park and extend into surrounding neighborhoods and the City's downtown. With the site's gentle slope, ADA access would be achievable within the performance space and throughout the site with supporting trail and sidewalk networks.

**Proximity to Supporting Uses/Businesses (Overall Score: 4/5):**

Memorial Park and the proposed development area are near many downtown businesses including bars and restaurants. Hy-Vee is a few blocks east of the site, and several other restaurants and convenience stores are just east of the location. The Public Library is also within walking distance of the site in the northwest corner of the park.

**Supporting Park Amenities (Overall Score: 5/5):**

Memorial Park is a well-established community park with an abundance of supporting amenities. Near the proposed development site are several large picnic shelters, horseshoe pits, and sand volleyball courts. A short walk from the site is a public restroom facility, and generously sized playground. Additional amenities at the park include two baseball fields, Memorial Park baseball stadium, several parking lots, and the Public Library. Many of these uses cater to youth who can be entertained nearby while parents attend functions at the performance stage.

**Size/Capacity (Overall Score: 5/5):**

Memorial Park is a large and well-established park with ample space available for the development of the performance stage. Based on the proposed development area, there would likely be impacts to either an existing picnic shelter or sand volleyball courts. The existing hillside could be used in the interim as seating for patrons and could be modified into a more formal spectator area as funding becomes available. It is anticipated this location could easily accommodate gatherings of 1,000+ for large events.



*Memorial Park Ballfield*



*Picnic Shelter*



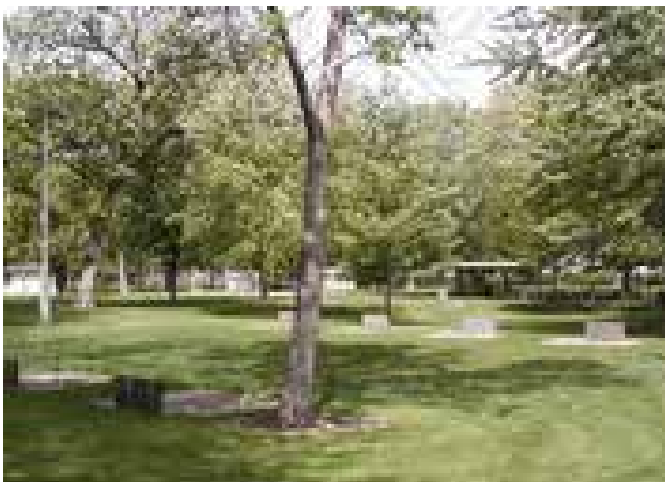
*Playground*



*Sand Volleyball Courts*



*Restrooms & Picnic Shelter*



*Horseshoe Pits*

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***Buffalo Sturgis Park Bandshell Image & Site Plan, Buffalo, Minnesota***

## 04 PRECEDENT PROJECTS

Prior to development of site concepts, several existing performance space projects were reviewed to better understand key components such as proportions, potential configurations, and general site impacts. While there is a general understanding that the type of facility desired by POPS would include a sloping lawn space for patrons, and that the first phase of the project likely will focus primarily on the performance stage itself, site constraints and existing topography ultimately drove the concept designs. Facilities reviewed included the following:

- Buffalo Sturgis Park Bandshell
- Shakopee Huber Park Amphitheater
- New Ulm German Park Amphitheater
- Marshalltown West End Park Performance Lawn

A summary of each project and associated imagery is provided for reference in this section of the report.

### **Buffalo Sturgis Park Bandshell:**

The Sturgis park bandshell is a multi use performance space within Sturgis Park, situated in close proximity to the City's downtown, with Buffalo Lake as its backdrop. The bandshell itself is a robust construction with three fully enclosed sides measuring approximate 45'x35' in size. The spectator area of the venue is comprised of terraced lawn seating areas, with terraces intended to easily allow patrons to set up lawn chairs, and slopes allowing for blankets. ADA accessible routes are interwoven into the venue to allow easy access for patrons.

### **Shakopee Huber Amphitheater:**

The Huber Amphitheater, located in Huber

Park, is a multi use park facility situated in close proximity to downtown Shakopee on the shores of the Minnesota River. The amphitheater includes a hardscape spectator area near the stage, several cast stone seating terraces with lawn between, and a large, open, sloped lawn for overflow seating behind. If these areas fill to capacity, spectators can spill into adjacent areas around the park for viewing. The stage structure itself is a large prefabricated steel structure on a raised concrete stage, with dimensions of approximately. 45'x40'. A central staircase and meandering trail system provide pedestrian and vehicular access throughout the space.

### **German Park Amphitheater:**

The German Park amphitheater, situated in German Park within the city's downtown core, is a concrete construction hard surface amphitheater with a capacity of approximately 500 patrons. Seating consists of cast stone terrace seat walls, with concrete surfacing between. The seating area was designed to integrate into the park's existing hillside, and allows performers to use either the flat, uncovered stage area at the base, or the bandshell directly behind. The City has indicated that the design of the bandshell is not very useful due to the stages height, and the thick railing around the perimeter, so often performers use the flat uncovered stage area instead. The stage area is approximately 50'x25', and the bandshell approximately 35'x35'. Vehicular access is available via a paved parking lot turnaround directly adjacent to the stage, and stairs, sidewalks and trails provide ADA access throughout the facility.

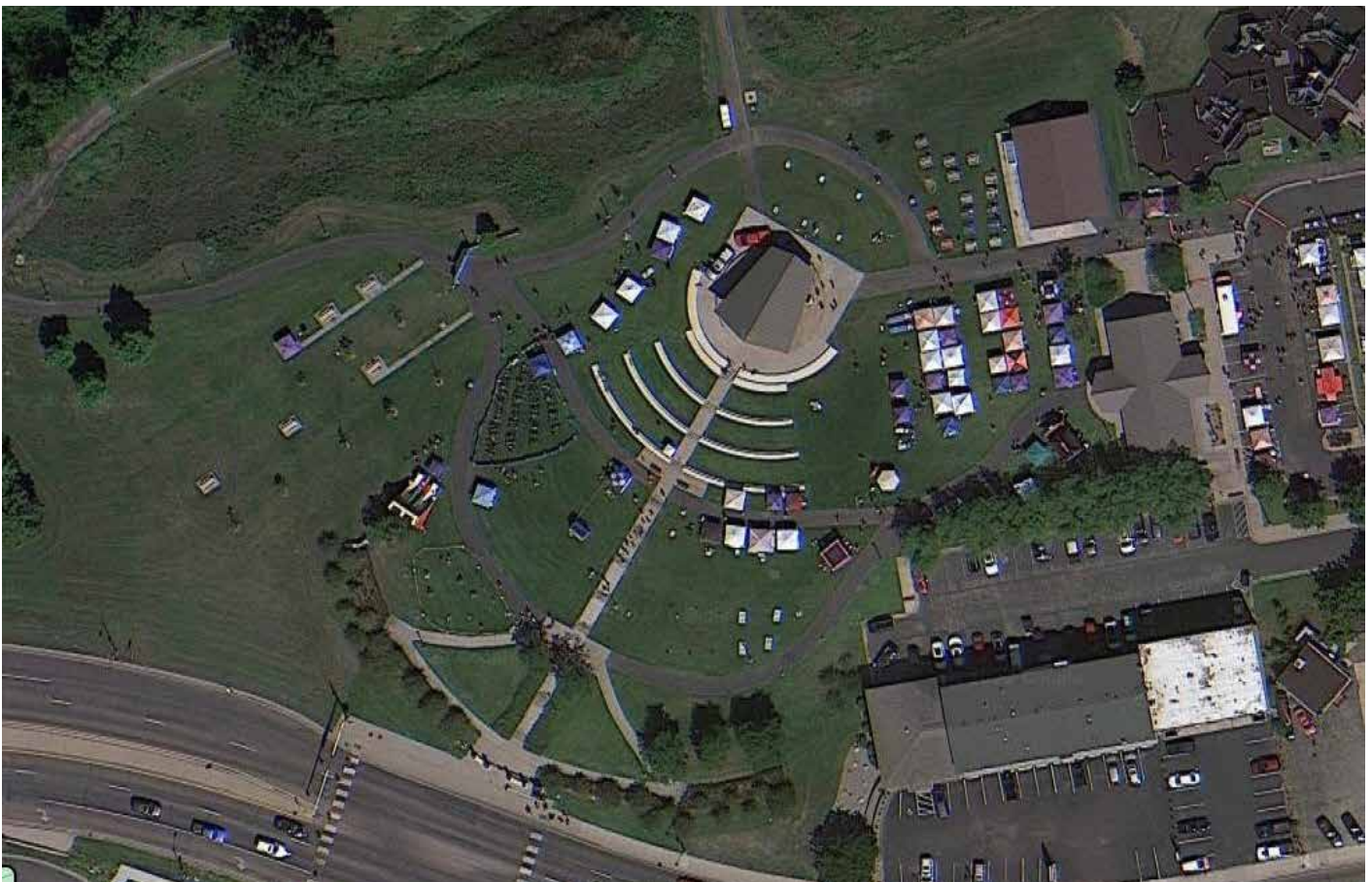
### **Marshalltown West End Park:**

The West End Park Performance Lawn is



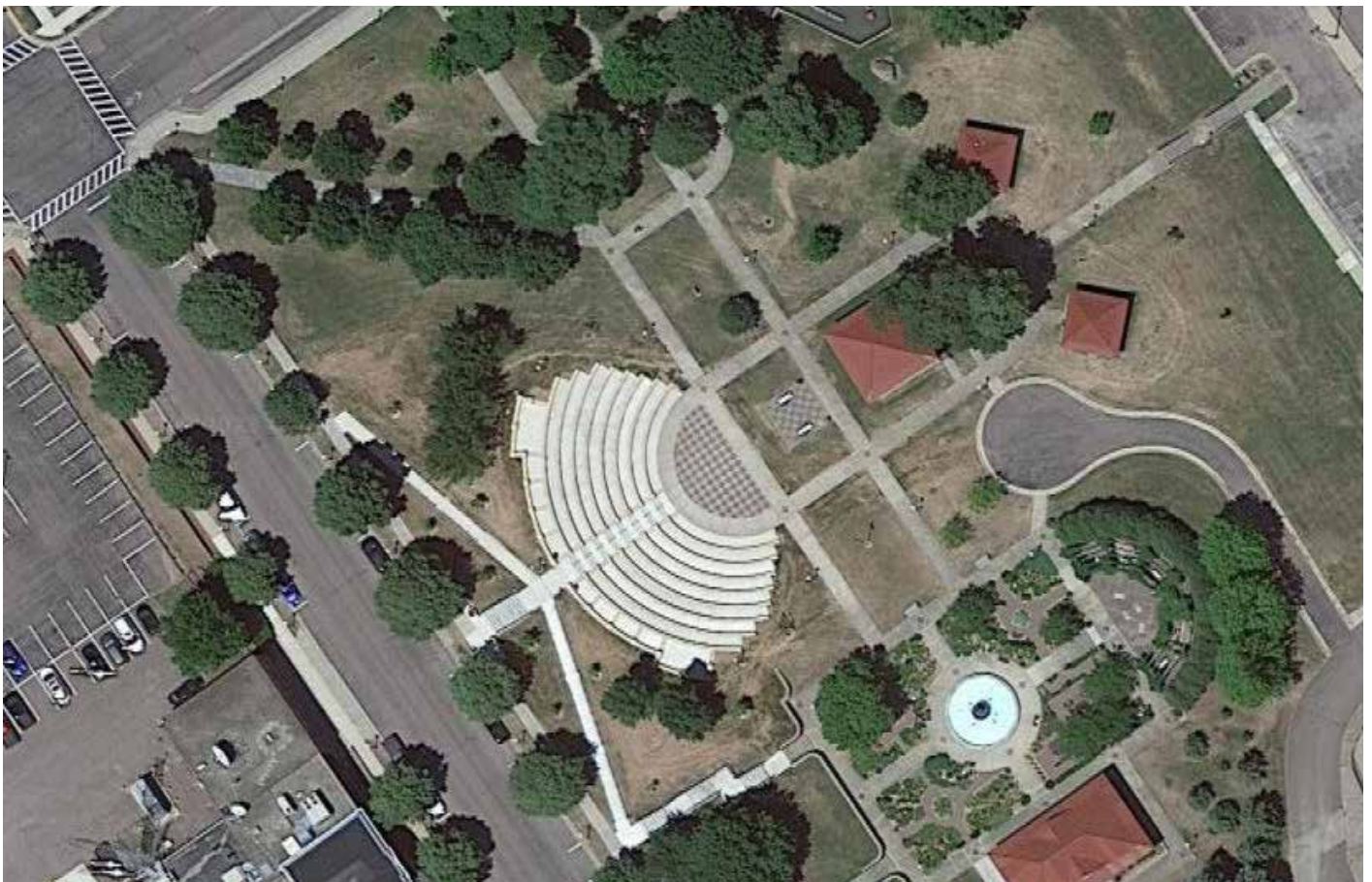
situated in the aptly named West End Park, on the west end of Marshalltown, Iowa. The site is generally situated within a residential neighborhood, and directly adjacent to single family and multi family homes, and Franklin Elementary School. The performance lawn has an approximate capacity of 600 patrons, though spectators often find seating in other

areas of the park offering views of the stage. The stage itself is a prefabricated structure of steel and timber, fully open on the sides, on an elevated concrete stage, and measures approximately 30'x25'. The lawn includes a circulating sidewalk around the perimeter, allowing ADA access throughout the site.



*Shakopee Huber Park Amphitheater Image & Site Plan, Shakopee, Minnesota*





***German Park Amphitheater Image & Site Plan, New Ulm, Minnesota***





**West End Park Performance Lawn, Marshalltown, Iowa**

## 05 THE CONCEPTS

For each of the three sites under consideration, Bolton & Menk developed two unique site concept/massing diagrams. These diagrams are conceptual and are intended to provide a general understanding of potential site development configurations, and convey information including:

- The type of facility possible within the defined site (i.e. flat lawn event space, terraced seating, combination of both, etc.)
- Size/capacity of a potential facility. To quantify capacity numbers, terraced or linear seating concepts utilized a measure of 2.5 linear feet per individual, and open lawn or hillside concepts utilized a measure of 20 square feet per spectator.
- Opportunities for site circulation, parking and access. Consideration was given to ensure any generated concepts could accommodate ADA access, circulate people throughout the space, and provide vehicular access to proximity of the stage for loading/unloading of equipment and maintenance purposes.
- Opportunities for supporting facilities, multi-use spaces, etc. We understand that a performance space is utilized in targeted periods for special events. As such, if effectively designed, the space may serve multiple purposes and user groups.

Concepts generated as part of this task adhere (to the extent possible) to the criteria identified by the committee in the RFP process that are presented in the introduction/background section of this report, and as follows:

- The attendee area should be large enough to accommodate 500+ people, with possible

expansion to a larger number for special events.

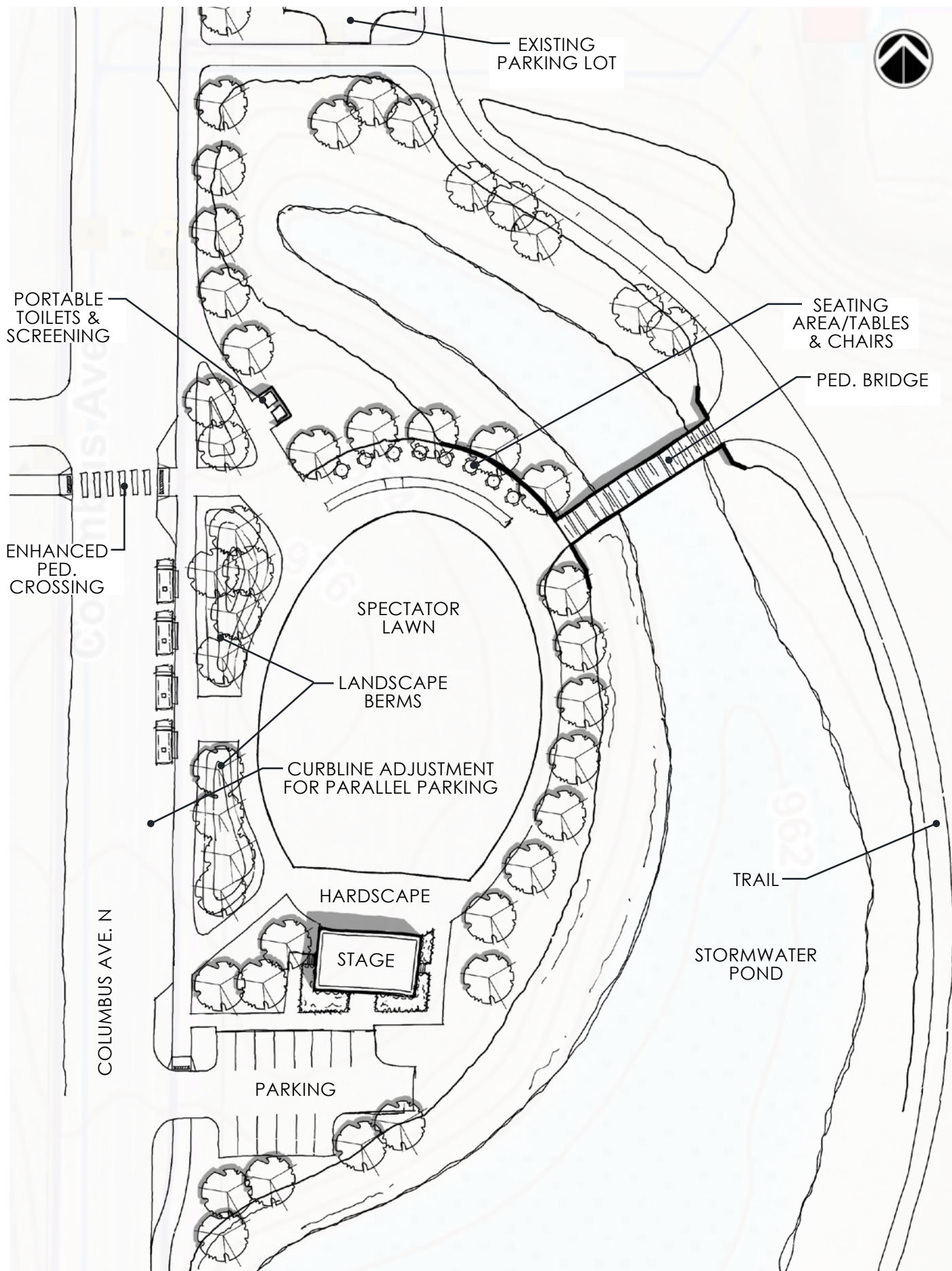
- Primary use of the facility will be for music, dance and theatre presentations.
- Goal is a facility enclosed on three sides, with possibility for storage, depending on money raised.
- Current plans call for an open-seating, grassy area where attendees will bring chairs, blankets, etc., to view the events. It may be graded. A completely structured amphitheater (with seating, etc.) is possible, but not in the first phase of this project.
- The structured performing space should be able to accommodate a group size that would include a community band (25+), large choirs, other bands, theatre groups (including musicals with large ensembles), dance teams, etc.
- Access to water, sewer and electricity (all utilities) needs to be considered.
- Parking, sidewalks/walkways/trails also should be considered.

While these concepts provide a glimpse of possible development patterns on the site, and the size and type of facility the site will support, these plans are purely conceptual, and a comprehensive design process would need to be undertaken upon completion of the site selection study to determine a final facility configuration.

### Cost Estimates

In addition to the two massing concepts generated for each site, one preliminary cost estimate was also developed for each of the three sites. These high level cost estimates are intended to aid in future planning and fundraising efforts. Additional information on these estimates is available in section 02-The Process, of this report.





**Sliding Hill Skate Park Site Plan Concept A**

# SLIDING HILL SKATE PARK CONCEPTS

## Concept A

Concept A for the Sliding Hill Skate Park is focused on development of the 1.5 acre lawn space along Columbus Avenue west of the stormwater pond. This area is generally flat, consisting of mown lawn, with an overall topographic change of +/- 2'. As such, this space generally supports development of a flat-event-lawn-type-facility. As shown in the concept sketch, the lawn area supports an audience of approximately 900 patrons, while hardscape near the stage area would support an addition 100-150 patrons.

Beyond the event lawn itself, the concept explores the addition of a secondary off-street parking lot south of the stage facility, providing an additional 14-15 parking stalls, and direct access to the stage for loading/unloading/staging for events. The concept also shows modifications to the eastern curb line along Columbus Avenue to accommodate parallel parking, providing additional parking for events, and explores the addition of a pedestrian crossing on Columbus Avenue to allow patrons parking at the high school to more safely traverse the roadway and get to events.

Circulation on site is provided via several sidewalk connections to the existing Columbus Avenue trail/greenway. The event lawn would be wrapped with sidewalk facilities offering opportunities for multiple uses including farmer's markets/art fairs, and other gatherings. The concept shows a pedestrian bridge across the existing stormwater pond to allow further connections throughout the site and the parks other amenities.

As the site is largely open to the elements,

including strong winds, landscaping would play an important role in the development of the space. The concept sketch shows several landscaped berms separating the performance stage and open lawn space from Columbus Avenue, and significant tree plantings throughout the area. Evergreen trees would aid with visual and audible screening, while overstory trees would be essential to providing patrons with relief from the sun. We anticipate these tree plantings could take upwards of 10 years to mature to an effective scale.

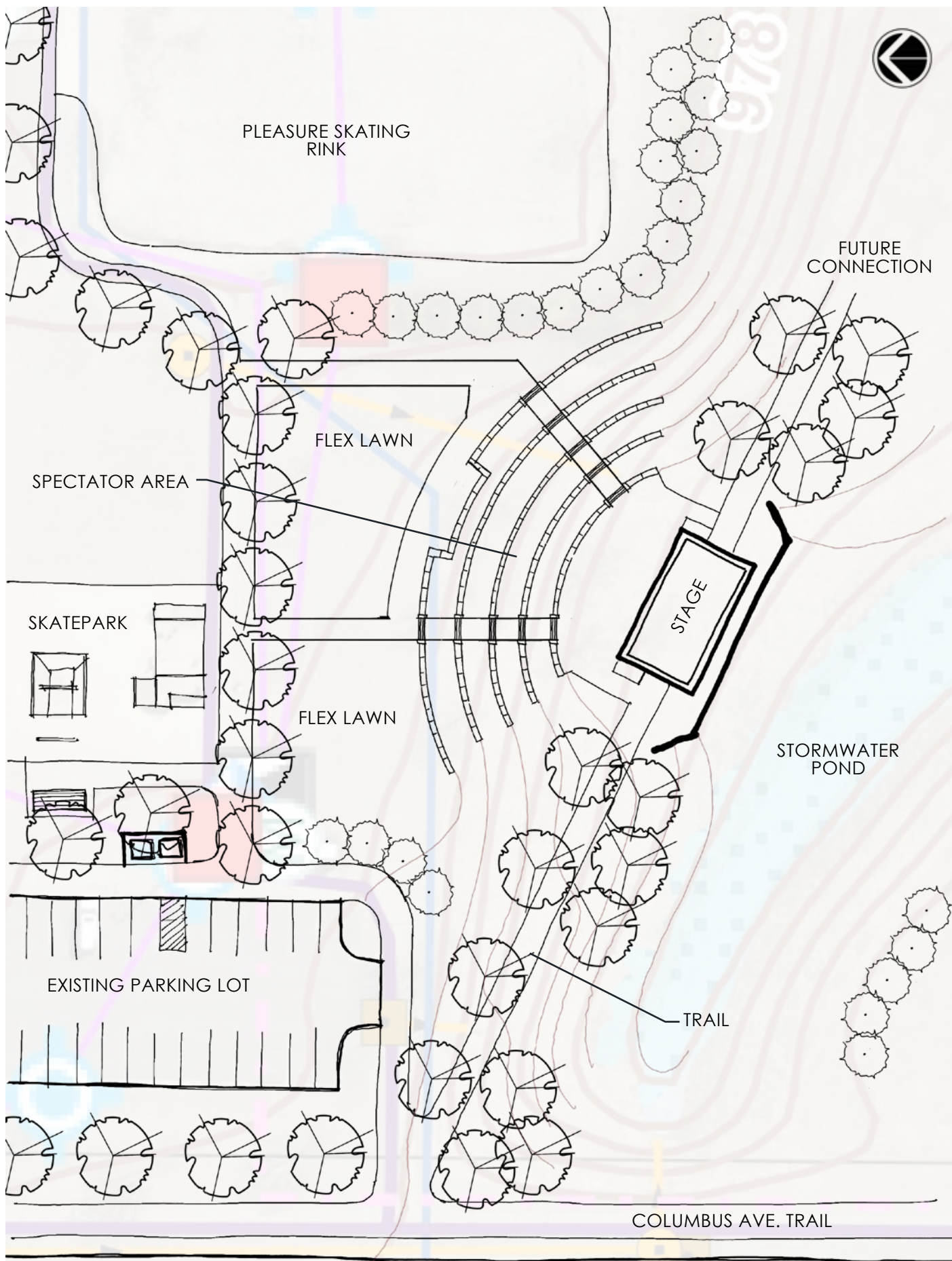
## Concept B

Concept B for the Sliding Hill Skate Park focuses on utilizing land situated between the existing parking lot and skatepark, the storm water pond, and the hockey rink. This area includes both a portion of flat lawn space, and a hillside with an overall elevation change of approximately 12'. Due to the significant changes in topography, and the relatively narrow construction envelope, any performance space development in this area is anticipated to be stone or concrete wall construction, and more in line with a traditional amphitheater type installation.

The performance stage itself would be situated adjacent to the storm water pond, facing northeast. To accommodate the stage, a wall may be necessary on the backside to retain and provide a suitable building pad. Consideration should be given for potential impacts to the pond and its current functionality. If impacts are necessary in this area, expansion of the pond may be necessary in other locations.

The spectator area of the performance stage as noted, is anticipated to be hard edge seat walls, with concrete or paver terraces between. Based on preliminary takeoffs, we anticipate this facility would support an





**Sliding Hill Skate Park Site Plan Concept B**



audience size of approximately 600 patrons.

The concept includes two staircases traversing the seating walls, with sidewalks leading from the park facilities to the north, through a flatter lawn gathering and seating area, down to the performance stage. A direct trail connection is proposed to bring

users, maintenance, and equipment vehicles to the stage from the existing trail along Columbus Avenue. This proposed trail could ultimately terminate at the stage, or extend through or around the stage to provide a recreational trail facility linking users further into the park grounds.

### Sliding Hill Skate Park - Concept Plan A - Preliminary Engineer's Estimate

Item No.	Item	Estimated Quantity	Unit	Unit Price	Total Price	Notes
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#### Phase 1: POPS Stage

1	MOBILIZATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$88,000.00	\$88,000.00	~10% of Construction Costs
2	STAGE STRUCTURE	1	LUMP SUM	\$750,000.00	\$750,000.00	Foundation, Structure, Stairs/Ramps, A/V Equipment, and Other Essential Items
3	ELECTRICAL UTILITIES	1	LUMP SUM	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	Assumes use of existing transformer, panel in performance stage structure, conduit + wiring
4	EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL	1	LUMP SUM	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	Silt Fence, Inlet Protection, Rock Construction Entrance, etc.
5	SITE GRADING & PREPARATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	Earthwork, Excavation for subbase and foundation
6	4" CONCRETE WALK	800	SQ FT	\$9.00	\$7,200.00	Concrete Walk from Parking Lot to Stage and Stage Access
7	PARKING LOT	1	LUMP SUM	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	Bituminous Parking Lot, Curb + Gutter, Striping
8	STORM SEWER	1	LUMP SUM	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	For Parking Lot
9	SITE RESTORATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00	Topsoil + Seeding

Subtotal \$969,700.00

20% Contingency \$193,940.00

**Phase 1 Project Total \$1,163,640.00**

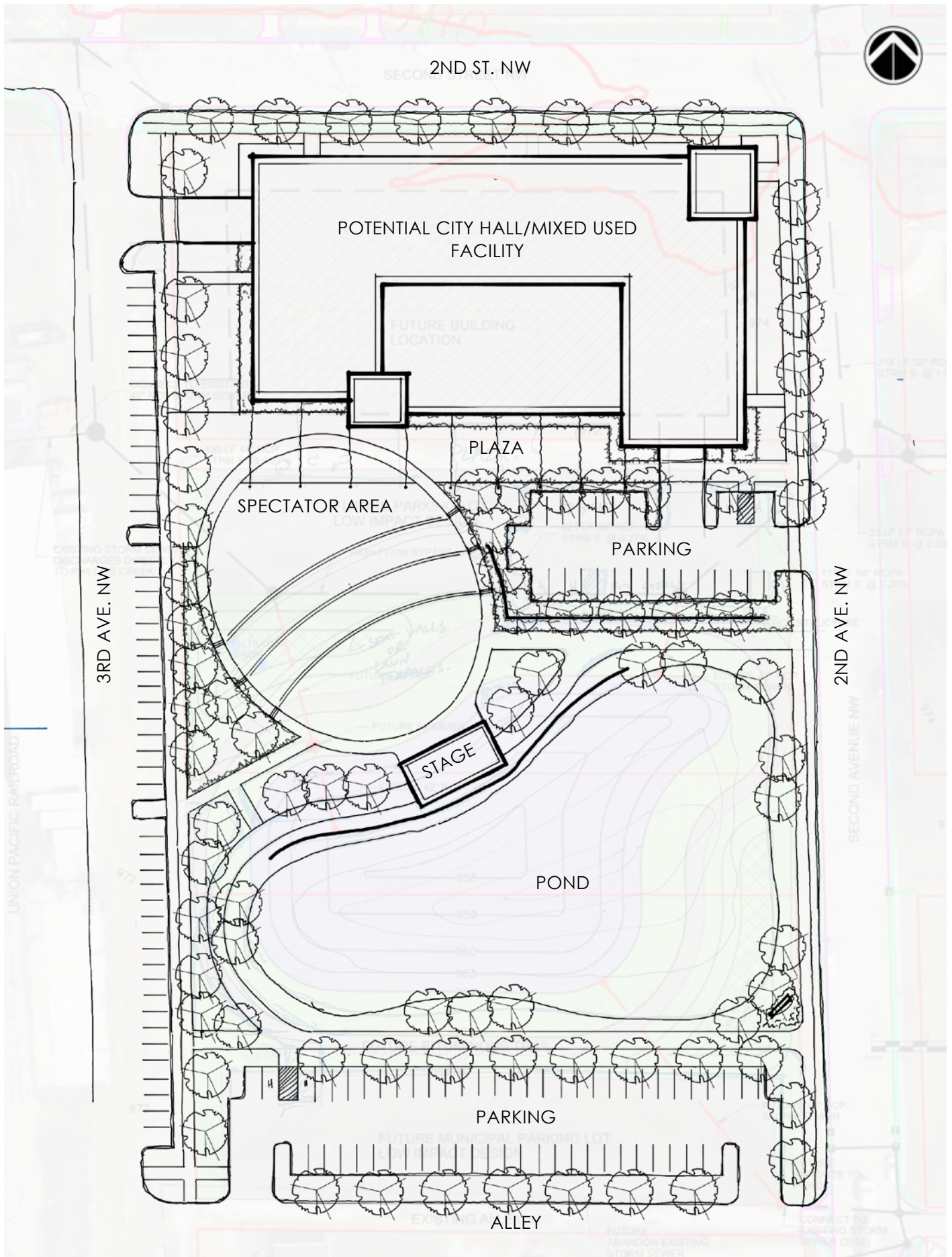
#### Phase 2: Site Development

1	MOBILIZATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$37,000.00	\$37,000.00	~10% of Construction Costs
2	EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL	1	LUMP SUM	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00	Silt Fence, Inlet Protection, Rock Construction Entrance, etc.
3	SITE GRADING & PREPARATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	Earthwork, Excavation for subbase and foundation
4	4" CONCRETE WALK	14500	SQ FT	\$9.00	\$130,500.00	Includes all Concrete Walk Not Accessed By Vehicles
5	BITUMINOUS TRAIL	3200	SQ FT	\$8.00	\$25,600.00	Trail East of Pond, Connection from Bridge to Existing Parking Lot
6	RETAINING WALL	1	LUMP SUM	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	Retaining Wall Adjacent to Pond
7	PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE	1	LUMP SUM	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	Pedestrian Bridge Crossing @ Detention Pond
8	PORTABLE TOILET ENCLOSURE	1	LUMP SUM	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00	Trex Screen Fence, 8' Height for 2 Portable Toilets
9	OVERSTORY TREE - 2.5" CAL. B&B	45	EACH	\$700.00	\$31,500.00	Trees Around Site for Shade and Screening
10	SITE RESTORATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	Topsoil + Seeding

Subtotal \$404,100.00

20% Contingency \$80,820.00

**Phase 1 Project Total \$484,920.00**



**City Center (Central Park) Site Plan Concept A**

# CITY CENTER SITE CONCEPTS

## Concept A

Concept A for the City Center site assumes construction of a mixed-use building on the north portion of the site, and a large stormwater pond facility on the south side of the site, as identified in concept plans generated by the City for the property. Based on this plan, the performance stage facility takes place along the western edge of the site and aims to work in conjunction with what has been discussed in meetings as a potential City Hall and medium-high density residential complex. Positioning in this area of the site buffers adjacent single family residential to the north and east from impacts of the facility and provides a parklike setting for nearby residents when performances are not occurring. Based on the frequency and timing of trains traveling through the community, we anticipate minimal disruptions from train traffic, but it is a possibility.

The spectator area for the facility would be large enough to accommodate crowds of approximately 1,000 patrons between open lawn seating, stone seat walls, and hardscape plaza type areas. The stone walls could be strategically used to define space, and provide elevation for better viewing, making the space comfortable for smaller events and audiences, as well as larger audiences.

Access to the stage for equipment would be via the sites trail system, allowing vehicles to drive through the stage itself for ease of access. If not desired, a trail could be routed behind the stage to accommodate drop off of equipment as well.

Parking would be provided in public parking lots constructed in conjunction with the

redevelopment project. It is anticipated that public restroom facilities could be integrated into the adjacent building.

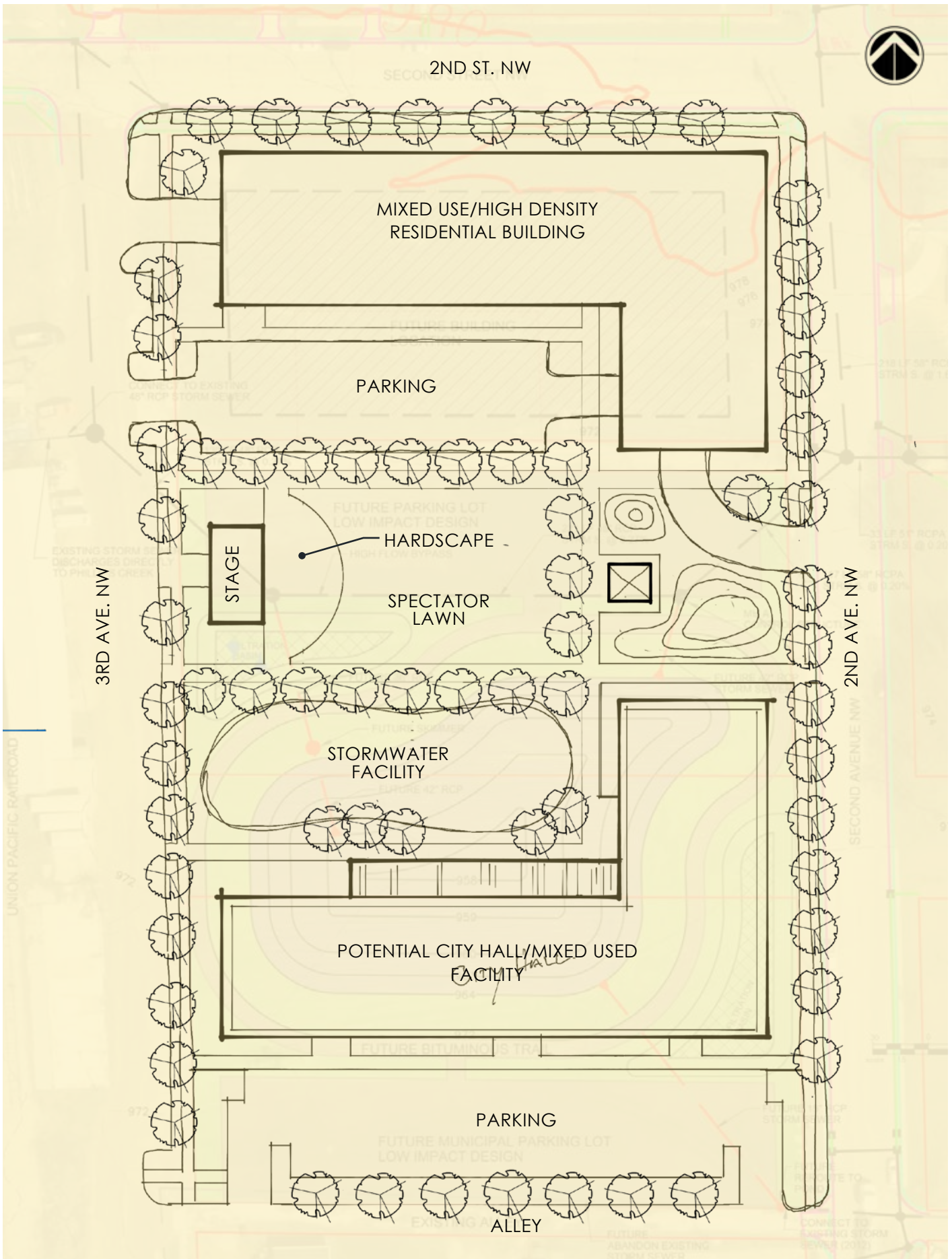
## Concept B

Concept B for the City Center site explores opportunities for more extensive development of the City Center site by constructing a second mixed use or high-density residential building (2 total buildings). The concept generally configures the site to include a mixed-use building on the south end of the site that would include potential relocation of City Hall, with high density residential units above, and a dedicated high density or mixed use building on the north end. Beyond the buildings themselves, supporting infrastructure including parking lots and green space would anchor the development.

In this development concept, the performance space would take the form of an event lawn, with the stage situated along the western edge of the site, and lawn running east/west in orientation between the two building envelopes. When not in use for events, this area could also serve as a community gathering space, and open flexible lawn space. Sidewalks would provide circulation through the site, and connections to the building development projects.

Similar to Concept A, due to the level of site modifications required to accommodate construction of the various components, construction of the performance lawn would likely need to occur in conjunction with the development of at least one phase of the overall development plan. Additionally, based on feedback from City staff, it is anticipated that significant soil mitigation efforts would need to be undertaken on the southern portion of the site to support any future building construction, and due to the extensive development, underground stormwater facilities would need to be





**City Center (Central Park) Site Plan Concept B**

considered in the areas of the performance lawn and parking lots.

### City Center - Concept Plan A - Preliminary Engineer's Estimate

Item No.	Item	Estimated Quantity	Unit	Unit Price	Total Price	Notes
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#### Phase 1: POPS Stage

1	MOBILIZATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$85,000.00	\$85,000.00	~10% of Construction Costs
2	STAGE STRUCTURE	1	LUMP SUM	\$750,000.00	\$750,000.00	Foundation, Structure, Stairs/Ramps, A/V Equipment, and Other Essential Items
3	ELECTRICAL UTILITIES	1	LUMP SUM	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	Assumes use of existing transformer, panel in performance stage structure, conduit + wiring
4	EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL	1	LUMP SUM	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	Silt Fence, Inlet Protection, Rock Construction Entrance, etc.
5	SITE GRADING & PREPARATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	Earthwork, Excavation for subbase and foundation
6	RETAINING WALL	1	LUMP SUM	\$40,000.00	\$40,000.00	Retaining Wall Between Pond and Stage
7	BITUMINOUS TRAIL	1600	SQ FT	\$8.00	\$12,800.00	Trail/Vehicular Access to Stage
8	SITE RESTORATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	Topsoil + Seeding

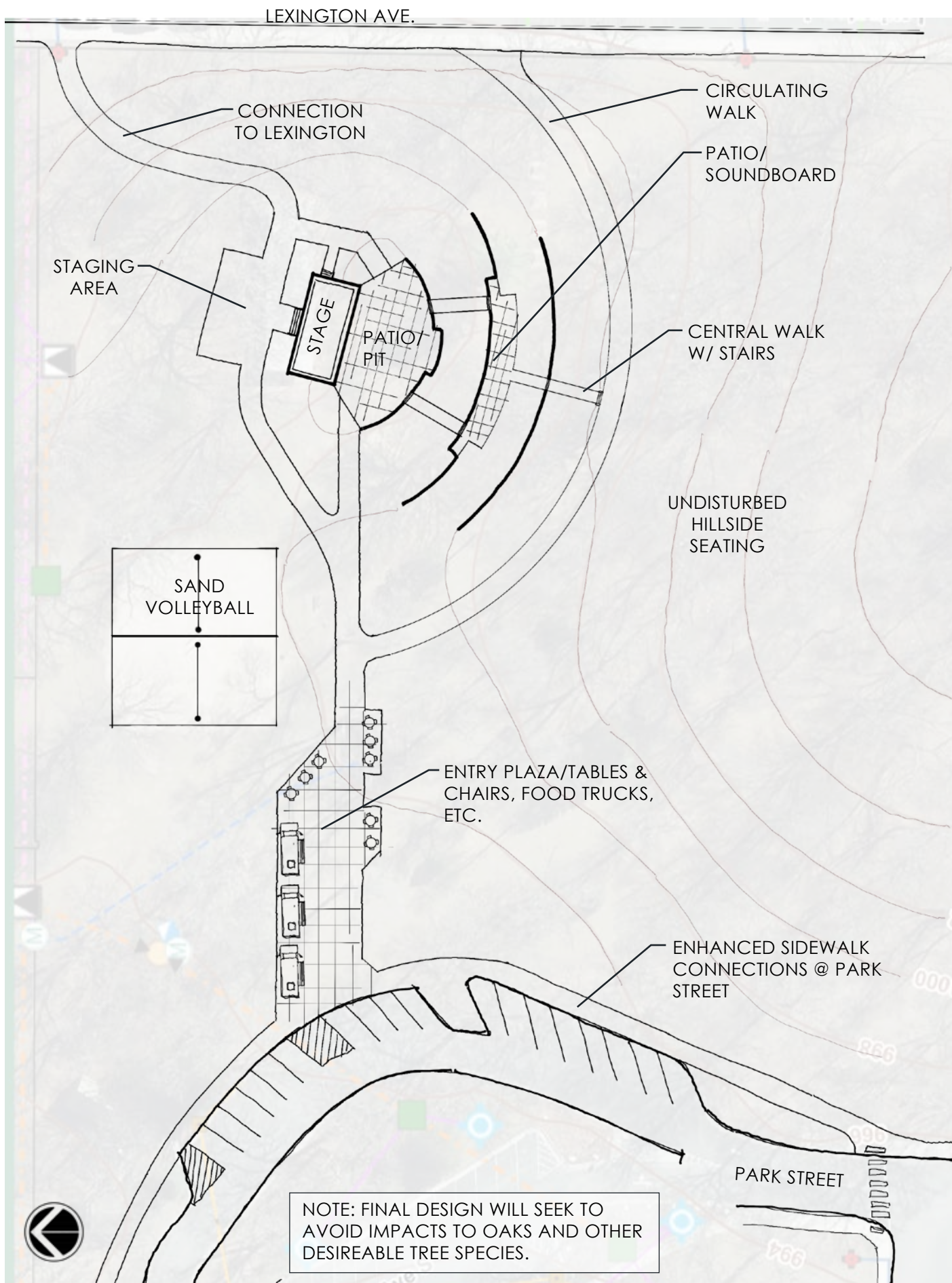
Subtotal                    \$925,800.00  
20% Contingency            \$185,160.00  
**Phase 1 Project Total      \$1,110,960.00**

#### Phase 2: Site Development

1	MOBILIZATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$29,000.00	\$29,000.00	~10% of Construction Costs
2	EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL	1	LUMP SUM	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	Silt Fence, Inlet Protection, Rock Construction Entrance, etc.
3	REMOVAL OF EXISTING TREES	1	LUMP SUM	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00	Selective Tree Removals (Focused on Ash Trees, Other Species Minimized)
4	SITE GRADING & PREPARATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	Earthwork, Excavation for subbase and foundation
6	4" CONCRETE WALK	7000	SQ FT	\$9.00	\$63,000.00	Includes all Concrete Walk Not Accessed By Vehicles
7	CONCRETE STAIRS	190	SQ FT	\$90.00	\$17,100.00	Includes Stairs & Foundations
8	LIMESTONE BLOCK SEAT WALL	460	LIN FT	\$300.00	\$138,000.00	Includes Limestone Block, Aggregate Base & Installation
9	HANDRAILS	50	LIN FT	\$150.00	\$7,500.00	@ Stairs
10	RETAINING WALL	1	LUMP SUM	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	Miscellaneous Walls (Near Parking Lot)
11	OVERSTORY TREE - 2.5" CAL. B&B	20	EACH	\$700.00	\$14,000.00	
12	SITE RESTORATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00	Topsoil + Seeding

Subtotal                    \$326,100.00  
20% Contingency            \$65,220.00  
**Phase 1 Project Total      \$391,320.00**





**Memorial Park Site Plan Concept A**



# MEMORIAL PARK CONCEPTS

## Concept A

Concept A positions the performance stage in the location of the current shade structure in the NE corner of the park near Lexington Ave. S, and utilizes the existing wooded hillside for the development of the audience seating area. The concept explores opportunities to provide pedestrian and vehicular access through the site, and integrates with the existing topography to the extent possible.

Pedestrian access is provided through the site in the form of a primary walkway connecting from Lexington Ave S, passing adjacent to the performance stage, and extending to the parking lot along Park Street. Access to the seating areas is provided through secondary sidewalk connections and a central staircase through the audience area.

The primary trail connection through the site would be approximately 12' wide to accommodate vehicular access, allowing for deliveries of equipment to the site. A flexible plaza space on the west end of the walk could be designed to accommodate food trucks, bike parking, and general gathering space.

The seating area for the performance space could be maintained as is in the interim, until funding is available to further develop the space, but the concept assumes future construction of several terraces of stone seating walls, with lawn terraces between, and a sloping hillside generally conforming to the existing grade extending up to the ballroom facility.

One potential drawback to this concept is the orientation as it relates to sound and

acoustics. With the positioning of the stage, sound would be directed to the southwest in the direction of the Park Ballroom, which could cause indiscriminate sound reflections.

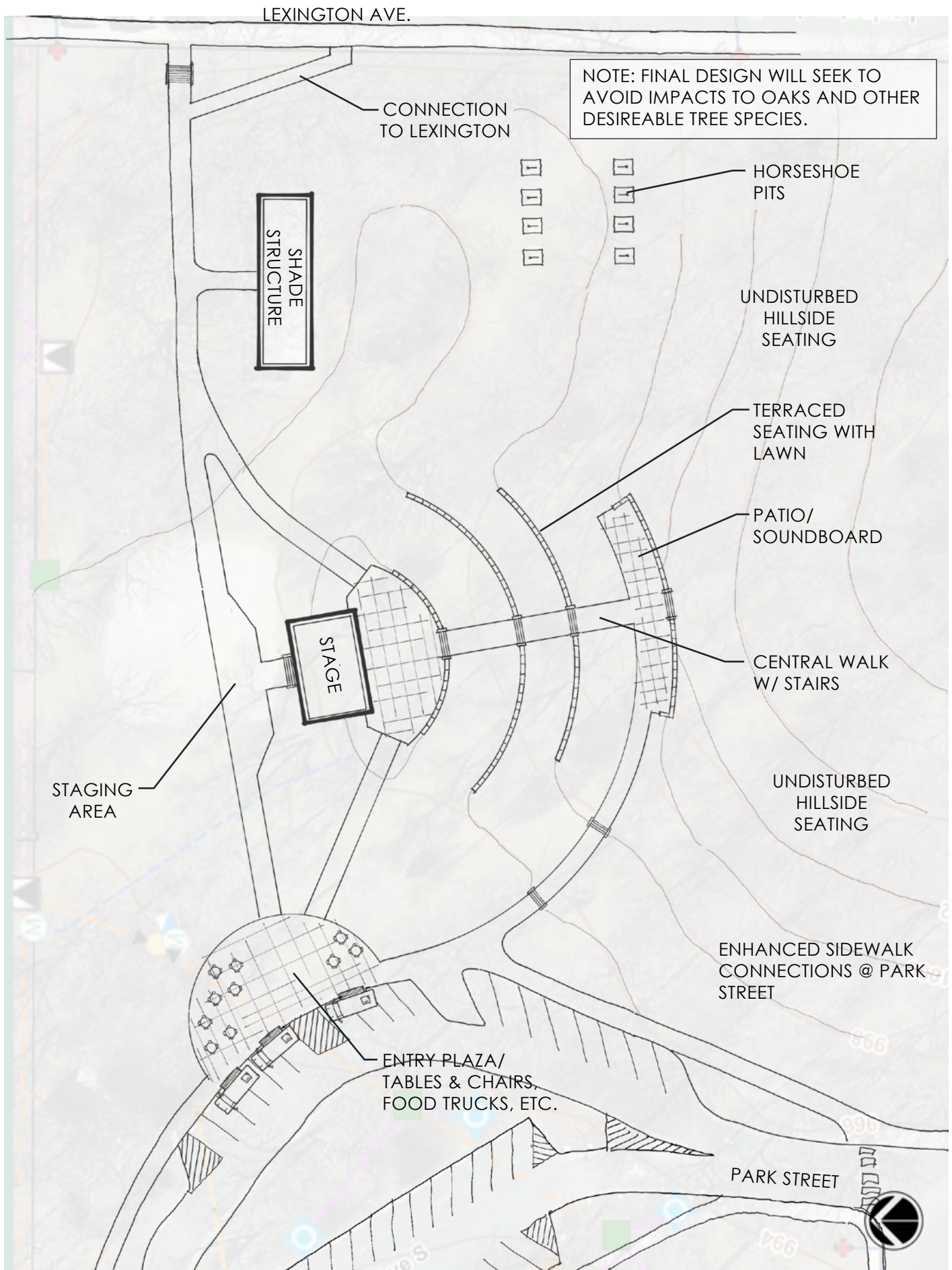
## Concept B

Concept B, similar to Concept A, utilizes the existing hillside for the audience seating area of the performance stage. This concept maintains the existing shade structure in place, but would likely require removal and relocation of the two existing sand volleyball courts. While concept A integrates the seating area into a natural bowl shape of topography on the hillside, concept B is generally centered on a ridge line. As such, this concept may require more extensive grading and shaping of the hillside in the long term. This process may ultimately be more costly, and more impactful to the existing tree canopy.

Site circulation with Concept B would generally conform to the overall site design of Concept A, though connections to adjacent amenities (i.e. Park Ballroom, parking lot, etc.) would vary slightly. Vehicular access with this concept would be accomplished through a widened sidewalk connection between Park Street and the Performance Stage.

Whereas concept A would direct some sound toward the ballroom, leading to potential sound quality concerns, this concept would direct sound to the southeast, largely avoiding sound reflection off any building structures.

Ultimately, if the Memorial Park site is selected for development of the performance stage, the design will need to consider removal of existing amenities, mature trees, extent of earthwork, and sound quality, which are all key considerations to a successful performance stage project.



**Memorial Park Site Plan Concept B**



## Memorial Park - Concept Plan A - Preliminary Engineer's Estimate

Item No.	Item	Estimated Quantity	Unit	Unit Price	Total Price	Notes
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### Phase 1: POPS Stage

1	MOBILIZATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$83,000.00	\$83,000.00	~10% of Construction Costs
2	REMOVAL OF EXISTING PICNIC SHELTER + CONCRETE SLAB	1	LUMP SUM	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	
3	REMOVAL OF EXISTING TREES	1	LUMP SUM	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	Selective Tree Removals (Focused on Ash Trees, Other Species Minimized)
4	STAGE STRUCTURE	1	LUMP SUM	\$750,000.00	\$750,000.00	Foundation, Structure, Stairs/Ramps, A/V Equipment, and Other Essential Items
5	ELECTRICAL UTILITIES	1	LUMP SUM	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	Assumes use of existing transformer, panel in performance stage structure, conduit + wiring
6	EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL	1	LUMP SUM	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	Silt Fence, Inlet Protection, Rock Construction Entrance, etc.
7	SITE GRADING & PREPARATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	Site Earthwork, Excavation for subbase and foundation
8	6" CONCRETE WALK	1500	SQ FT	\$12.00	\$18,000.00	Concrete Walk Connection from Park Street to Stage, ~10' Wide Sidewalk + Staging Area
9	SITE RESTORATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	Topsoil + Seeding

Subtotal \$909,000.00

20% Contingency \$181,800.00

**Phase 1 Project Total \$1,090,800.00**

### Phase 2: Site Development

1	MOBILIZATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$33,000.00	\$33,000.00	~10% of Construction Costs
2	EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL	1	LUMP SUM	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	
3	REMOVAL OF EXISTING TREES	1	LUMP SUM	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00	Selective Tree Removals (Focused on Ash Trees, Other Species Minimized)
4	SITE GRADING & PREPARATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	Earthwork, Excavation for subbase and foundation
5	6" CONCRETE WALK	5000	SQ FT	\$12.00	\$60,000.00	Includes Plaza Concrete Walk
6	4" CONCRETE WALK	8000	SQ FT	\$9.00	\$72,000.00	Includes all Concrete Walk Not Accessed By Vehicles
7	CONCRETE STAIRS	170	SQ FT	\$90.00	\$15,300.00	Includes Stairs & Foundations
8	LIMESTONE BLOCK SEAT WALL	380	LIN FT	\$300.00	\$114,000.00	Includes Limestone Block, Aggregate Base & Installation
9	HANDRAILS	40	LIN FT	\$150.00	\$6,000.00	@ Stairs
10	ELECTRICAL SYSTEM	1	LUMP SUM	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	Power/Communications for Soundboard, Other Electrical Needs
12	SITE RESTORATION	1	LUMP SUM	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00	

Subtotal \$363,300.00

20% Contingency \$72,660.00

**Phase 2 Project Total \$435,960.00**

## 06 *the rankings*

Each of the three potential sites identified by the City and committee present unique opportunities and limitations to the development of the POPS facility. To assist in comparing the three sites, a series of ranking criteria were established to provide a consistent scoring measure. These measures take into account geographic, physical, economic, and aesthetic characteristics of the sites. A summary and descriptions of these criteria are provided in this section, followed by a summary table showing the sites and their respective scoring.

Scores are provided from 1-5 for each criteria (5 being best suited, 1 being least suited). As such, the site with the highest total score is ultimately the site most suited for development of the POPS facility. For more detailed information on the individual sites, and a discussion of their individual characteristics based on the criteria, refer to the Sites section of this report.

### **RANKING CRITERIA:**

**On Site Parking:** Is there on site parking available? If not, could the site support the development of dedicated parking for the facility?

**Off Site Parking:** Is there additional parking available in the area of the site that could support parking needs for the POPS facility? This could include on-street parking, public parking lots, or private lots that have a high likelihood of availability for special events.

**Utilities:** Is the site currently serviced, or is service available in the immediate vicinity of the site for electrical, water, and sanitary sewer systems?

**Public Restroom Proximity:** Are there currently public restrooms available in proximity to the proposed POPS facility site? While we are aware the City does not plan to develop new restroom facilities at City parks that are currently lacking these facilities, it is advantageous to the POPS development if there are already facilities in proximity.

**Topography:** Does the topography of the site lend itself to the development of a performance space as desired by the POPS committee? Our understanding is that there is a desire for the facility to include some topography in the viewing area, but that a performance lawn type venue, while not as desirable, would still be considered as a potential outcome.

**Existing Vegetation:** What is the character and vegetation present on the site currently? Are there vegetative elements that make the site unique, provide benefit to facility users, or may conflict with the development of a performance space?

### **Accessibility/Proximity/Community**

**Context:** Is the site centrally located in the community and easily accessible to the greatest number of patrons inside and outside the community? Generally, event goers will utilize multiple modes of transit to arrive at a performance venue. As such, various methods of access are considered beneficial and warrant higher consideration.

**Adjacent Land Use/Noise Conflicts:** Are the land uses adjacent to the proposed site complimentary to the development of a performance space use? Commercial land uses generally tend to see benefit from development of civic spaces for example, while residential uses may consider a performance space and associated noise a



nuisance.

### Proximity of supporting Commercial/

**Businesses:** Event goers will typically patronize nearby businesses including bars, restaurants, convenience stores, etc. Generally, it is considered beneficial for the performance venue to be in proximity of these uses. While it is anticipated the venue could support food trucks and other vendors, brick and mortar locations are important.

**Supporting Park Amenities:** Are there other amenities available at the performance space location that can act in conjunction with the venue and provide recreational and entertainment value to users? Generally, uses like playgrounds, picnic shelters, sport courts and athletic fields can be used by patrons and children while events are occurring at the venue.

**Size/Capacity:** Does the site accommodate a facility of appropriate size based on the

criteria identified by the POPS committee? Anticipated gathering sizes of 500+ are routinely expected, with occasional need for crowds of 1,000+.

### RANKING RESULTS:

Based on the criteria established as part of this analysis process, the three sites under consideration have been ranked as follows:

1. **Memorial Park-Overall Score: 42**
2. Sliding Hill Skate Park-Overall Score: 33
3. City Center (Central Park)-Overall Score: 30

These rankings were completed based on the expertise and experience of the consultant team, in conjunction with feedback provided by the committee during the review process. We recognize that there is some subjectivity to the ranking of these sites. Ultimately, any of the three sites could be developed to support a performance facility that would meet the needs of the POPS committee and community.

CATEGORY	SLIDING HILL SKATE PARK	CITY CENTER (CENTRAL PARK)	MEMORIAL PARK
ON SITE PARKING	3	3	1
OFF SITE PARKING	5	1	3
UTILITIES	4	5	5
RESTROOM PROXIMITY	2	1	4
TOPOGRAPHY	2	2	5
EXISTING VEGETATION	3	1	3
ADJACENT LAND USE/NOISE CONFLICTS	4	2	2
ACCESSIBILITY/PROXIMITY/COMMUNITY CONTEXT	2	4	5
PROXIMITY OF SUPPORTING BUSINESSES/USES	1	5	4
SUPPORTING PARK AMENITIES	2	1	5
SIZE/CAPACITY	5	5	5
TOTAL	33	30	42



**Sept. 1, 2023**

**TO: Park Board/Ken Ondich/Kyra Chapman**

**FM: Praha Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS) Leadership Team**

**RE: Bolton & Menk Report and Upcoming Sept. 12 Presentation**

Good day. Following is the official summary of the work to date by the all-volunteer Praha Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS) Committee. We believe this will be helpful for you in your discussions at our presentation to you, tentatively set for Sept. 12.

Please note that city staff members Ken Ondich and Kyra Chapman (and city administrator Josh Tetzlaff) have been continually apprised and updated on the work of the POPS Committee. Ken and Kyra have also attended some of the meetings held in the past year.

Overall, the POPS Committee and Leadership Team has met several times in-person or by zoom in the past 10+ months.

We hope this re-cap is helpful. We will let the actual site feasibility study by Bolton & Menk speak for itself (and be presented by Jonathan Nelsen). A copy will be made available to you prior to the Sept. 12 meeting. I understand you have been sent an email with the study and that it will also accompany this document as preparation for the Sept. 12 meeting.

At the end of this document are separate comments in an addendum from two members of the POPS Leadership Team – Steve Frost and Jon Colling.

## **SUMMARY OF POPS ORGANIZATION SINCE OCTOBER 2022**

As a quick refresher, the effort to create a committee to build POPS (which will be used for performances of all kinds, movies, community/church gatherings and such) started about 18 months ago through the New Prague Area Arts Council, a non-profit organization designed to promote and support the arts in the area. From this group, the POPS Committee was organized. From that group, a POPS Leadership Team was formed.

The official kick-off was in October of 2022 with a reception for the community at Giesenbrau Bier Co. Since that time, several sub-committees have been at work raising money, working on site selection, informing the community about the project and putting the legal information together to create a non-profit organization to manage the project. The intent of the arts council was to turn over the project to this non-profit organization at the appropriate time.

That non-profit is called the Forward New Prague Foundation, now with IRS authorization as a tax-exempt entity. Money gathered for POPS sits in two banks in the community. Thus far, approximately \$525,000 has been pledged/raised of its \$1 million goal. The goal is to raise the remaining \$475,000 by the end of 2025. The officers of the Forward New Prague Foundation are:

- Den Gardner, Chair
- Karen Steinhoff, Vice-Chair
- Bruce Wolf, Treasurer



### **Chronological Work by POPS Committee:**

- Kick-off October 2022
- Several meetings by POPS Committee/Leadership Team/POPS Sub-Committees through winter and spring and summer.
- Request for Proposal in early 2023 to select a firm to do an independent site analysis. Bolton & Menk chosen after presentations by three firms.
- City staff, POPS committee members, Bolton & Menk personnel and others visited the three sites under consideration in April.
- Bolton & Menk completed site study for approval to POPS group in July.
- The Location Feasibility/Design Sub-Committee voted to approve the Bolton & Menk report and send it to the POPS Leadership Team.
- POPS Committee held a public meeting in late July at Giesenbrau to present and discuss the findings of the report by Bolton & Menk. More than 50 attended.
- The POPS Leadership Team met and approved the Bolton & Menk report.

## **WHAT WE KNOW TODAY**

The POPS Committee mission is:

- ***“To build a multi-purpose outdoor performance facility to celebrate the arts and other community gatherings from music to theatre to dance to visual arts and much more.”***

We are aware that:

- ***We are a volunteer, independent group of New Prague citizens interested in building POPS. We know that we are not an official body of the city or any other group. We do not have the authority to select the site. We are presenting the findings of the Bolton & Menk report, knowing that the city, which is providing the land and will maintain the facility, will have the final say on where the POPS is built.***

**We all want POPS built in New Prague.**

Please also recall that:

- The POPS Committee paid for an approximately \$20,000 study by Bolton & Menk to do an independent study of the three sites on which the POPS structure could be built – all publicly owned properties of the city – Memorial Park, City Center and the Sliding Hill Skate Park. The Park Board many months ago allocated \$5,000 to assist our volunteer committee with the payment of this study. We thank them for their generosity.
- The POPS Location Feasibility/Design Sub-Committee was the lead group in working with Bolton & Menk on the site study. Members of this sub-committee are:

- Steve Frost, sub-committee lead
- Pat Sullivan
- Joe Barten
- Larry Pint
- Eddie Shimota
- Karen Steinhoff
- Stef Tupy
- Kay Wilcox
- Den Gardner

This sub-committee voted unanimously to approve the report as prepared by Bolton & Menk and send it to the POPS Leadership Team for review.

- The 15-person POPS Leadership Team (see members below) voted 12 in favor of the study by Bolton & Menk, two opposed and one abstention. Regarding the site rankings, Memorial Park was the clear number one choice by Bolton & Menk, based on its criteria, with the other two sites pretty much equal in rankings.

The POPS Leadership Team consists of:

- Den Gardner, Chair
- Karen Steinhoff, Vice-Chair
- Bruce, Wolf, Treasurer
- Sandi Loxton, Secretary
- Andy Beckius
- Tony Buthe
- Pastor Ben Hilding
- Gina Fadden
- Shannon Brusseau
- Lisa Brusseau
- Jon Colling
- Joe Barten
- Brooke Sticha
- Larry Pint
- Steve Frost

Reasons for the majority favorable vote included:

- The location is centrally located in an entertainment area already created, with a large playground, golf course, Park Ballroom, etc., in the area. This makes it a family-rich location.

- The area fits nicely for the crowds expected at the facility – 500+. The landscape also works well for people who will be bringing lawn chairs and blankets to events.
- It provides shade from the many trees in the area. We are aware that some ash and/or oak trees may be removed in the next couple years because of disease).
- There is ample street and lot parking in the area, knowing on rare occasions there may be a POPS event, golf tournament and an event in the Park Ballroom at the same time.
- The land is already being utilized as a public place. The other sites, especially City Center, could be areas someday privately owned, with opportunities for taxes to be gathered from the land. That is not the case with Memorial Park. We are unaware, nor should we be, of any plans at Sliding Hill Skate Park regarding future use as private land.
- The acoustics for performers and attendees has not yet been evaluated by an expert. This will be addressed as we move forward. This is noted so the Park Board understands acoustics are important in the overall process and will be considered by the POPS group.

The 12-2-1 favorable vote for the Bolton & Menk study also resulted in several questions about the Memorial Park site. They included:

- The number of potential trees to possibly be lost at Memorial Park. The Leadership Team is aware that some of the ash and oak trees may be removed because they are diseased. We know you are aware of this through your board.
- Is there adequate parking?
- The subjectivity of the criteria used in the Bolton & Menk rankings. Please review the study for more specific information.
- Will the public continue to have feedback through this process (which we assume is yes).
- How the lack of shade at the other two sites will affect attendance and the cost for shade barriers (estimated by Bolton & Menk at \$300-\$500,000).
- What is the city's thought process on the future of the City Center land/timing for development.
- Also included is an addendum to the official summary with comments from some of the POPS Leadership Team. These were prepared independently of the POPS Leadership Team and are intended to provide additional information from some POPS Leadership Team members. They are personal comments and information to you.

## CONCLUSION

One thing that's clear throughout the past 18 months: Wherever POPS is built, people want it and believe, like the POPS theme – "It's Time!" – to have one in New Prague. There are 20+ publicly provided sports facilities/fields in New Prague. There are zero fine arts facilities publicly provided.

Our progress has been steady and the reaction of businesses, individuals and community groups has been tremendous. As chair of this group, I am very thankful for the wonderful work of all those who have given their time or talent or treasure to this effort. We know we have a long way to go to reach our financial goals. But the POPS PDDP Formula – Persistence, Dedication, Diligence and Passion – will carry the day and provide great family entertainment for decades for our residents.



## **Compilation of City Staff Comments / Concerns – September 2023**

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### **Police Department:**

Regarding Memorial Park: A few thoughts that come to me on first glance are parking, restrooms, and the limitation of public use due to events. The area can get congested when there is a bb game, event at the ballroom, and the golf course traffic during the warm months.

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### **Utilities Department:**

I can agree with most of the comments made in regard to the issues with having it located in the Memorial park area but I think it would work if need be. I think the better location might be the area East of the high school. We would be able to get electricity to that area without issue and for the most part they would have an open slate as to how they want to layout the facility. I would not support them building in the city center area without having a concept plan of that whole area and that is a way off. I think the city center area has some great potential and would hate to have it disturbed by some ill planned ideas.

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### **Building Department:**

I think mostly what we (Building) would be interested in would be ADA approved accessible routes and bathrooms.

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### **Public Works/Parks Department:**

Public works concerns about the band shelter in Memorial Park.

1. Cutting 100-year-old trees
  2. Picnic shelter and volleyball court being moved and no plans for the new location. City should not be responsible to pay for this.
  3. The only park in New Prague that has the wildlife and nature feel. On top of that located down town for everybody to enjoy.
- 

### **Planning Department:**

Most of the resident comments/complaints had concerns on parking, noise and impact on trees specifically about the Memorial Park site. It would seem that the City Center site is very premature for consideration at this time as the entire block really needs a master plan for redevelopment/development which could be a few years away and the impetus for this (the updating of the Comprehensive Plan) will not be completed until early 2024 at the earliest. Sliding Hill Skate Park would best accommodate the facility with minimal issues. Sliding Hill Skate Park

is adjacent to the High School's large parking lot, which can accommodate large crowds (pending School District approval for lot use during events) Compared to the other two sites, Sliding Hill Skate Park, is further away from residential properties and is truly a site ready for development immediately. Although Planning staff supports the Sliding Hill location at this point, any of the three locations could potentially be a good spot but they all come with their unique challenges. All sites have the question of how will site prep be paid for and any selected location probably should be reviewed as a "conditional use" to ensure that mitigating conditions are put in place to address concerns such as parking, noise, etc.

## **Compilation of Concerns about POPS Feasibility Study – 9/5/23**

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### **1. Steve Frost Letter Dated 8/23/23**

8-23-23

TO: New Prague Park Board

#### **Cautions and Considerations Regarding the POPS Feasibility Study**

##### **Why risk hurting Memorial Park with POPS when there is a feasible alternate available?**

Do Not use the BM Feasibility Study as the sole guide in decisions about the best site for POPS.

The numerical rankings in the Feasibility Study are flawed (and not necessarily how the community would rank the various criteria).

Location and orientation of the POPS is very important.

If a shelter and/or softball courts are removed, where will they be replaced? This would not be an issue if City Center is chosen for the POPS.

Request for additional public input is ongoing.

#### **MEMORIAL PARK CHARACTER**

The pastoral character of Memorial Park may be at risk if the POPS is built there.

The value of all the trees in the park should not be understated.

#### **TREES, SHADE, AND GREEN SPACE**

Comfort for the performers and the audiences is a goal.

##### **Memorial Park:**

Cutting down trees to make room for the POPS is not the only issue.

Traffic and site compaction can be detrimental to existing trees.

Proposed hard surface walks and paths removes 14,500 sq. ft. of lawn green space.

##### **City Center Site:**

Planting of trees and landscaping will increase our green space.

Shade possibilities for the City Center Site can be addressed without removing trees.

#### **PARKING**

Parking is a major issue for some.

Just because others don't see parking congestion as a problem, we should not be dismissive. All need to be heard. I believe we need to acknowledge the issue, address it, and not just dismiss it.

Is Remote Parking and use of shuttle golf carts a solution?



Are additional parking options adjacent to or close to the chosen site possible?  
Balance parking convenience with loss of possible green space.

#### COST ESTIMATES

Planning level cost estimates to be used during the process of site evaluation were requested for each site.

Preliminary site development costs in the study are marginal and not consistent. However, comparisons of all three sites in the study indicate that they are all within the general same order of magnitude in costs depending which costs are anticipated and included. Costs at one site are often offset by savings in a different feature.

To get a better handle on possible costs the POPS Project needs to have more information to better understand the long-range plans of the city for the City Center site, and what level the City would be financially involved in site development.

How will it all happen and who will be responsible for what. "Where?" is the question at hand as we seek to help you find where the POPS can best serve the community. We request guidance from the city in just how we should proceed, and what the POPS committee can do to help move the project forward.

**"Ultimately, if the Memorial Park site is selected for development of the performance stage, the design will need to consider removal of existing amenities, mature trees, extent of earthwork, and sound quality, which are all key considerations to a successful performance stage project." B&M**

Why cut down trees?

Why possibly endanger other trees with soil compaction.

Why incur expense of moving the volleyball courts or picnic shelter?

Why pave over 14,500 sq. ft. of grassy area for walks and paths?

Why increase vehicle congestion?

Why crowd in another amenity into an already comfortable, pastoral park setting?

Why risk an established mature park?

Another site is available and feasible.

I want to help with the development of the City Center site for the POPS to accommodate community needs and retain the beautiful Memorial Park (and not jeopardize it).

Respectfully,

Stephen G. Frost

952-758-4949

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## **2. Steve Frost Letter Dated 8/17/23**

17 August 2023

TO: POPS Leadership Team, POPS Committee, NP Park Board, NP City Staff, NP City Council

FROM: Steve Frost, POPS Location Feasibility/Design Sub-committee Lead

RE: New Prague POPS Site Feasibility Study

**We can have our cake and eat it too, but not if we have now gone and spoiled the cake. sgf**

Bolton & Menk is the independent firm hired to analyze the three sites proposed for the New Prague Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS), using their professional experience. As lead of the POPS Location Feasibility/Design Subcommittee, and member of the POPS Leadership Team, I wanted to share my personal thoughts about B&M's ranking of the Memorial Park site as their number one spot for the POPS venue. This is not reflective of the subcommittee I led, as you are all aware that we voted unanimously at the subcommittee's Tuesday July 18<sup>th</sup> meeting to recommend the B&M report to the POPS Committee Leadership Team for consideration. **Again, these are my personal thoughts.**

Important decisions will be made by the POPS Committee, the NP Park Board, and the NP City Council in the coming days and weeks concerning the siting of the proposed Praha Outdoor Performance Stage.

I present to you my perspective on things to consider, and to discourage you from voting to move Memorial Park forward as the site for the POPS project. In my personal opinion, Memorial Park is not the best site on which to build the POPS.

Following the Bolton & Menk's site ranking and feasibility study presentation on Wednesday July 26<sup>th</sup> this is a time to provide comments on the project and where it might be built. I am swayed and encouraged by points made by the public at that meeting and the days following. As Den Gardner said in Vol. 1, Number 5 of the New Prague Pops Post, "I'll reserve judgment until we get all the facts." Since early in the POPS project I've actively been helping, and here are my comments and concerns for you to consider or reconsider.

Ranking of the three proposed sites by B&M is hoped to be objective, but Bolton & Menk point out and recognize that there is subjectivity in their ranking of the sites. They provided a comprehensive review of the three sites and provided their recommendation. They conclude their feasibility study:

**"Ultimately, any of the three sites could be developed to support a performance facility that would meet the needs of the POPS committee and community."**

Early in the process of working on details of how to proceed on an outdoor performance facility (OPF) we were strongly advised by a former city council member that "the study needs to ensure the site will be in the public's best interest in the long-term." I believe that POPS in the Memorial Park site does not meet New Prague's long-term interests. I was initially an advocate of the Sliding Hill site, but now believe the City Center site option is the best for the community.

Challenges and opportunities exist for each site. City Center site is a blank slate upon which we can write. I believe the POPS can serve as a catalyst for the rehabilitation of the west end of downtown.

Please consider that Memorial Park's positive amenities can be viewed to help model how the City Center site can be improved. Then in a few years we'd have a rejuvenated west end AND Memorial Park. It is an opportunity.

B&M is not there to make the decision. We are. I've tried to be open minded regarding all comments regarding selection of a site for the POPS. The recommendation from the POPS Location/Design Subcommittee was sent by the full subcommittee to the full POPS Committee to act on. The subcommittee is not there to make the decision for the full POPS Committee. There are members of the subcommittee who prefer different sites for their top choice. We can use the B&M feasibility study to guide us. I submit to you that the POPS Location/ Design Subcommittee is not looking for a rubber stamp to their work. The subcommittee is moving the B&M feasibility study to the full POPS Committee for a considered evaluation. I present to you some points regarding why I believe Memorial Park is not the best option for New Prague.

#### **PLEASE CONSIDER:**

Early guiding criteria (9/12/22) (provided to B&M) were re-expressed by the public at the 7-26-23 public meeting: the Outdoor Performance Facility (OPF) should not be crowded in, should not sacrifice mature trees, and should not jeopardize other park features or amenities. I don't believe these criteria are met with the Memorial Park site.

"Ultimately development will impact the tree canopy." B&M

Eleven criteria were chosen by B&M for the feasibility study. Weighting of criteria may give a more balanced look at how our community would rank the sites. My personal experience with promoting POPS indicates that noise, parking and prohibition of disturbing trees have a very high weight and continue to be voiced by my neighbors and the community.

I believe parking needs to be addressed to relieve congestion and competition for space with the Park Ballroom and golf club. Ignoring it will only exacerbate a problem I believe exists even without a POPS in the park.

"Acoustics will need to be carefully considered in the placement of the OPF." Bolton & Menk recognize there could be concerns with quality of sound. Optimization for visual and sound quality have been stated criteria since very early in the process. In my opinion the POPS in Memorial Park will not "take advantage of any view or vista" but will interrupt and obscure the open pastoral view that is an asset for the park.

Proximity of habitations is acknowledged as a sensitive criterion and the Memorial Park site is an established park with habitations immediately adjacent to it. Neighbors to the park (including the Frosts) will be the most negatively affected by the siting of the POPS in Memorial Park.



“Consideration will need to be given to orientation of the facility, hours of events, and other mitigation measures to minimize impact on neighboring residents.” B&M  
Whichever site is selected, the neighboring residents should be polled to get their direct input so their fears and concerns can be expressed, and possibly be addressed in the design of the POPS.

Planning level cost estimates in the feasibility study are very preliminary for each of the sites. Notably missing for Memorial Park are costs involved for new tree plantings, and site-specific site preparation costs like picnic shelter (and/or volleyball courts) removal and cost to replace elsewhere.

One of B&M Memorial Park concepts suggests it “may require more extensive grading and shaping of the hillside in the long term. This process may ultimately be more costly, and more impactful to the existing tree canopy.”

We need to be mindful of Bolton & Menk’s summary statement:

**“Ultimately, if the Memorial Park site is selected for development of the performance stage, the design will need to consider removal of existing amenities, mature trees, extent of earthwork, and sound quality, which are all key considerations to a successful performance stage project.” B&M**

The selected site needs to be in the public’s best interest in the long-term. I don’t believe Memorial Park satisfies that criterion. I think the City Center site can.

You can find Bolton & Menk’s full feasibility study at [nppops.org](http://nppops.org) if you wish to see the quoted items in context with the report.

**If it’s not broken don’t fix it. Memorial Park’s appeal may become broken by crowding in a POPS facility.**

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen G. Frost  
POPS Location Feasibility/Design Sub-Committee Lead  
104 Lexington Ave. S.  
New Prague, MN 56071

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### **3. Dr. Jon Colling E-mail Dated 8/24/23**

From: "Main Street Dental" <[drjon@bevcomm.net](mailto:drjon@bevcomm.net)>  
Sent: Thursday, August 24, 2023 4:54:30 PM  
Subject: Re: Caveats to POPS Feasibility Study

Hello to all,

Attached are some additional points related to the POPS site feasibility study.

I am forwarding these caveats/insights and further information as requested to do at our POPS committee meeting.

As Steve's comments were very thorough and a good representation of most of the "dissenting opinions", I tried not to duplicate his thoughts too much.

Most of my comments provide a little more background into best practice management of urban forestry as described in DNR and MNDOT publications, as well as extension service documents. This will be especially important in deciding whether the Memorial park site is the right place and if it is ultimately selected, what must be done if conservation of the oak stand is a goal. (I've shared some links in the document to the most applicable sections for our purposes.) Thank you,

Dr. Jon Colling

### **Additional Caveats and insights regarding the POPS site selection.**

- While the study conducted by Bolton and Menk had a lot of good information to compare relative suitability of the three sites studied, there are some weaknesses inherent in its results.
  - Scoring criteria—all criteria were given the same weight and then totaled for a final score. This would be fair if all were equally “important”, but this is not the case. Which criteria are “more important” than others is certain open to individual opinion, however the most commonly mentioned item of concern at the public meeting and by many committee members as well in conversations with members of the general the public was the existing tree population at the Memorial Park site.
  - Because the scoring criteria don’t weigh different areas differently, they are of more value when looked at categorically and used to compare/contrast the sites. A grand total number can easily cause distortion of the study’s findings.
- **Memorial Park Site**
  - Conservation of trees was a huge concern with regards to this site, especially at the public meeting. It was also an important aspect to the majority of the committee. If this site is selected, it is crucial to preserve its trees as much as possible.
  - Minnesota DNR best practices for urban forestry related to construction delineate specific steps that need to be taken in such a project to prevent unwanted tree loss. Source: “*Conserving Wooded Areas in Developing Communities*”  
[https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/urban/bmps\\_chapter4.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/urban/bmps_chapter4.pdf)
    - These best management practices require very specifics steps be taken to minimize impact of nearby construction projects including:
      - Identification of trees to be preserved
      - Cordoning off the identified trees to their drip line diameters, thereby preventing traffic over root networks or excavation damage during construction.

- No trenching in root areas (deeper tunneling can be possible if necessary)
- Compaction and extensive impermeable coverage can be equally as damaging as excavating through roots and must be avoided. These types of damage/interference may take longer (5-6 years) to kill trees, but have great potential to do so over time.
  - Compaction (as little as several passes over shallow roots) can disrupt the symbiotic mycorrhizae that are responsible for quality root absorption.
  - Excavation or trenching that damages >20% of lateral roots is risky and 40% is highly likely to kill trees.
- Oak trees have shallow root systems (most roots <12"-18") and can extend to a 90 ft. radius in every direction. This places Oak trees in the "very sensitive" category as it relates to tolerance to root damage.
  - Source: "*Preventing Construction Damage to Trees*"  
<https://extension.missouri.edu/publications/g6885>

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#### **4. Random comments from Czech Out New Prague on 8/3/23:**

Paul Busch from the Ballroom/Legion – regarding site at Memorial Park, noted concerns with parking being a huge problem if too many events occur at one time such as baseball game, golf, event at the ballroom and softball games and maybe even a picnic shelter event. Thinks it's just too many things going on at Memorial Park.

Other comments from unidentified attendees about a Memorial Park location include: parking and accessibility issues, loss of trees being a concern, noise concerns.

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#### **5. Mary Frost E-mail Dated 8/23/23**

**From:** Mary Frost <mbbfrost@earthlink.net>

**Sent:** Wednesday, August 23, 2023 1:51 PM

**Subject:** Placement of POPS

Since the Park Board is the next entity on the journey to find a site for POPS, I am directing this letter to you, as the POPS committee has had its meeting to send the process on.

I am writing this with concerns regarding the placement of the POPS in Memorial Park. Using this site is short-sighted.

- This pastoral park is a gem for New Prague. There is no other park like it, nor will there ever be, given the stately old growth trees that canopy this park. **The oaks in this park are centuries old and should be protected rather than further stressed. There is no area in this park where a structure can be placed that will NOT impact the oaks.** It



is used by many for weddings, funerals, family reunions, family picnics, volleyball players, strollers and walkers, very young children who play in the sand of the volleyball courts (and always return it to flat condition).

- Removal of ANY trees will forever change this park. There is even a question now if *non-diseased ash* need to be removed or if they can be treated as I have been told that there is now an effective agent toxic to the emerald ash borer damage.
- Construction equipment and materials brought in will further stress the existing oaks (especially in trees already stressed because of the recent drought years) and this could cause the demise of trees left standing after the POPS is completed. *Case in point: 2 mature old oaks were recently removed from a private residence after the owner had an addition constructed to his/her home. The heavy equipment and construction materials causing compaction for the roots led to the death of the oaks.*
- This area is already overused. Parking is heavy for the ball fields, the Park Ballroom, the Golf Club, and the park itself.
- Global warming is at our front door! Trees are suffering globally – fires destroying them in record numbers and adding to the toxic environment. It is insanity that we would *consciously* remove them for construction of a concrete structure!
- Removing trees for a structure that will be used perhaps 6 months of the year is a travesty. We need to be stewards of the earth, limiting our carbon footprint, not adding to it. This is not the time to be removing carbon-absorbing canopy trees and further stressing the trees that will be left.
- The west end of town is, quite frankly, an eye-sore for anyone coming into New Prague from the west! A vacant, boarded up mill, a large empty gravel lot, a railroad seldom used: these do nothing to encourage people to want to spend any time in this town.
- The city center site, especially, allows us to be forward thinking, adding green spaces and trees and shrubs that will go a long way to beautify an area very much in need of the same. Even the sliding hill site would benefit from added trees and landscaping.
- I have been told, that part of the reason why city center is not desirable is that the city moves too slowly. It behooves us to do this right and not *rush* the wrong solution but look at the future of New Prague.

Finally, an anecdotal story: While I realize the following is not grounded in “research”, “science”, or “data”, sometimes children are much more sentient than we give them credit for. I had two boys, ages 8 and 10 with me. Without telegraphing my feelings at all, I merely told them casually that there could be a bandshell in the park, thinking perhaps they might see it through different eyes as a great place to play in Memorial Park. Their reaction was immediate and strong and they both replied, “WHAT? WHAT? NO WAY! They can’t do that – that park is sacred! All the trees and the quiet grass areas? You can’t put a BUILDING in there!! And what about the volleyball players – what would they do and where would they be able to play?” Their concerns were expressed for all the “giant trees”. It appears that the younger generation is able to see what their world will be if we don’t do something now to protect what we have. It behooves us to carefully consider what our actions will have for our children and grandchildren and not further impact negatively the environment in which we live. I feel that placing this structure in Memorial Park WILL do that.

Those in my generation could be accused of creating the “mess” that we are in right now regarding the state of our earth. We have left the environment in a sorry state for the younger generations to try to clean up and repair the damage that has been done. When my children and grandchildren ask me what I have done to either atone for or improve the environment that they will inherit, I want to be able to say I tried very hard to make a difference and give them an accounting of what I have done. I am trying to make just a little bit of difference in the little corner of the world that we call New Prague. I plead with you to join me in that commitment by saying no to putting this structure in Memorial Park.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Frost

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#### **6. Mary Frost E-mail Dated 8/4/23**

From: Steve Frost <bruzekfh@comcast.net>  
Sent: Friday, August 4, 2023 10:30 AM  
To: NewPraguePOPS@gmail.com  
Cc: Ken Ondich <kondich@ci.new-prague.mn.us>; Bruce Wolf <bwolf5771@gmail.com>; Duane Jirik <djirik@ci.new-prague.mn.us>; Maggie Bass <MBass@ci.new-prague.mn.us>  
Subject: POPS

Dear POPS committee,

I am writing in regard to the recent meeting and now the front page article that appeared in the August 3, 2023 issue of the NP Times regarding the choice listing Memorial Park as the best option for the outdoor stage.

I don't know if my husband being the lead on one of the committees constitutes a “conflict of interest” but so be it. I am writing to voice my extreme disappointment and aversion to having Memorial Park as the best site for the outdoor stage. Memorial Park is the ONLY park in New Prague that has a pastoral, peaceful setting. It has been the site of family reunions, weddings, funerals, and quiet camping for the MS 150 bike riders. There is no other park in New Prague like it. It's ancient, stately trees have been the source of comfort, shade, and peace. It is one of the selling points for visitors to New Prague. When someone at the meeting questioned if the volleyball courts and picnic shelter would be replaced, the answer was that “it was likely”. It is also realistic to expect that trees will need to be removed to make this happen and it was questioned what that process would do to the remaining trees. I see all this as a travesty!

I will admit to you that as a property owner abutting the park (one of many), I cherish the backyard that I have created and the privacy and solitude that it provides. That privacy is affected only when the volleyball courts are used but the users of the courts have been respectful and the impact has been minimal. They do not play loud music and their play is limited in time. The thought of loud music 6, 8, or ? times during the summer months is alarming to the peace of the park and the neighborhood.

The west end of town (City Center) could use something that is appealing and draws visitors in. Placing the outdoor stage there and creating green space with trees and shrubs would serve both to beautify the area, bring the music closer to downtown, and reduce overuse of Memorial Park with events. With climate change knocking on the front door, it seems to me that we should be stewards of our earth, creating more green spaces instead of removing trees that are so necessary in reducing the carbon footprint of our earth. Creating a green space in the creation of this outdoor stage would be a plus for the environment - removing trees and altering a pastoral setting is a negative for the environment. We need to be progressive in our thinking and not limiting - to care about the environment in our world is imperative. To consider the things that are going to make New Prague a desirable stopping point on one's travels is also imperative. The west end of town could use this green space.

Please do not take one of the gems of New Prague for this outdoor stage!!!

With respect,  
Mary Frost

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# Site Map

