Park and Development Interface Discussion

MPRB has created this document to inform the UHT Park Community Advisory Committee discussion about how the adjacent development and the park may interact. For each topic we have provided the background information, followed by some key considerations, followed by the questions for CAC members and public participants. Important graphics are embedded in the document with full size copies of the graphics provided at the end of the document for reference.

Topic 1: Park event/gathering space and music venue event/gathering space

Background

There is a clear desire for the UHT space to support small and local performances and programs. Community members have made this request for both the park and the music venue. Given how close these two spaces are, it is important to understand how each might function and impact the other. The descriptions below are intended to help frame up the considerations and decisions as much as possible.

Consideration 1.1: If both the venue and the park space offer community event spaces there is some overlap in services. Each space is large enough to accommodate community events and each may have some pros and cons.

For the Park Board, local events, such as festivals in the parks, tend to be 1000 people or less. Some events are Park Board run, such as Owamni and the Monarch Festival. Such events are free to enter but may sell food and products or have ticketed attractions within the event. Other events are held by outside organizations that pay the park for permits and staff time associated with event and traffic management. Because the park is public, closing off public access and charging for tickets is typically not allowed. If organizations are seeking to use an event as a fundraiser, the organization might sell tickets within an event for food/booths, etc. but usually cannot sell tickets to get into an event. Small event areas are provided in all three draft park concepts. An area for larger events (appx 1500 – 2500 people) have been included in the draft concepts A and C. Both areas are near the river, have an open perimeter, and would include a platform (for stages or screens), a paved area, and a lawn. Initially the spaces will be more basic and multi-purpose, but if desired could later be more elaborately built for certain types of events like the Lake Harriet Bandshell. Concept B has a much smaller performance area (around 250). This type of performance area would have much less overlap with the venue and could be used for official performances but also for large family type gatherings.

Graphics 1, 2, and 3: Park concepts A, B, and C with event areas identified
The outdoor music performance venue proposed by First Avenue (venue) plans to offer space for local programming. The plan is for the venue to have 30 – 40 ticketed (pay to enter) events per year (a combination of First Ave shows, performing arts shows, as well as facility rental). On days when the venue is not being used for ticketed events, it would be available for approximately 40 days of local programming. The UHT CPC considered three venue layouts on February 22, 2020 and tentatively recommended Option C (included in your packet). The venue lawn and box seats will accommodate 7000-10,000 people but could also support smaller events. There is additional plaza space near the public entrance, restrooms, and food vendor areas. Any permanent or temporary fencing (or other solution) to secure the perimeter of the venue during events has not yet been designed. The lawn will likely be sloped with the elevated end high enough to allow for bathrooms to be tucked under the back of the lawn.

Local organizations could use the space; funding to support events, artists, etc. would be separate. One possible source of funds is a $3 per ticket fee that First Ave is proposing to charge for the ticketed events, which would go into a fund to invest back into the North Minneapolis community. The funds might go to a number of different community priorities and the process to determine how they are allocated is ongoing. Proposed ownership of the venue, as recommended by the City and CPC, is for a newly created entity that would be a combination of First Ave and a Northside community entity. This combined ownership would make decisions about community/local programming and what the terms of that programming would be.

Graphic 4: Venue Draft Diagram showing lawn location and venue location map showing venue (parcel 3) in context of the entire site

Consideration 1.2: MPRB may find it difficult to regularly activate and program a larger community event space at UHT for multiple reasons

For some events the Park Board will pay artists to perform. Most performances in parks are associated with the annual Music and Movies series each year. Artists volunteer to perform for the Music and Movies series. Each year the Park Board gets applications from performers and sponsors that cover the staff and equipment costs for events. We do not know how secure the funding streams for larger local
programs could be at the UHT site on park land. In addition, because many artists volunteer to perform at the Music and Movies series, this model generally offers publicity, but not income, to artists.

There is a large public park event space planned at Boom Island as part of the Central Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan in Northeast Minneapolis just north of downtown. Boom Island may have several advantages over the UHT for an event space with parking, access, and more space for separation from nearby residential areas.

When investing in event space at Upper Harbor, the Park Board needs to consider construction/capital costs, demand or frequency of use for such a space, potential overlap of services with the venue and other impacts of hosting events in parks adjacent to residential areas. There may be conflicts with event noise and activity and the residential areas planned directly to the north of the main UHT park area. Neighbors near event spaces such as the Lake Harriet Bandshell, as well as from events in neighborhood parks, express a lot of concern to the Park Board about noise.

**Consideration 1.3: It may be challenging to have a large community event at the park if any significantly sized event is also occurring at the venue**

The peak demand for events in the parks is evenings and weekends and spring through fall. These times are also likely to be when the venue will host ticketed or community events.

It would be possible to hold two events, one at the venue and one in the park. However, the sound will likely carry from one space to the other; simultaneous performances would not be advised. Events could be complementary, such as a market in the park along with a performance at the venue. There will be opportunities for collaboration. However, both the venue and the park are large enough to accommodate both a typical local event and adjacent market or vendors without needing to use both spaces.

Transportation and parking are also important considerations for any large public gatherings at the park, venue or both. Preparing and loading for large shows at the venue should not significantly impact park use as the plan is for large trucks and buses to load from 33rd Avenue through a service access on the railroad side of the venue parcel. The venue would typically need a Travel Demand Management Plan (Travel Plan) and an Event Management Plan to address traffic control for larger events. All parties understand the need for access to remain open to the public park. Some traffic/access will be allowed through to other development as well, such as residential. Ride shares and drop offs for venue events are likely to drop passengers and circle around in a location before crossing the railroad tracks and getting to the park area. Additional traffic in the area due to venue events may impact the experience of getting to the park, but actual access will remain open. The tentative plan is for most venue parking to be offsite and attendees will be shuttled to the performances. Some venue attendees may be able to park in the back of the business / light industrial areas to the south (parcels 4 + 5). Event attendees will also access the site via other modes – walk, bike, and transit.

Because the standard park space cannot accommodate significant parking for larger events in the park (would be atypical to provide parking lots for maximum use) drivers for park events would likely seek parking on streets in the industrial area and neighboring residential areas. If MPRB was hosting a local event and there was a smaller local event also at the venue, the two event holders might jointly
coordinate an Event Management Plan. For most Park Board events, there is not a special transportation plan; the need depends on the size and location of the event. If MPRB needed to provide shuttle transportation and offsite parking arrangements for a local event, it would add cost to holding the event.

*Graphic 5: Diagram of circulation routes and phasing*

It is possible that the Park Board will not know the timing or details of the venue development at the time that the first phase of the park is built. Depending on your answers below, we can recommend what should be in the first phase of work, and how we build in flexibility.

**Question 1.1:** Are the considerations listed above the right considerations when assessing the size and function of an event area in the park?

**Question 1.2:** If the music venue was available for community events for up to 40 days per year as planned by the City/First Avenue, is there still value for the Park Board to offer an additional space for performance events? If so, how can the two spaces be planned so that they complement each other, rather than duplicate offerings?

**Question 1.3:** The majority of the event space in the park concepts is provided by a large lawn that can also support field sports, picnics, casual activities, and more. Would a larger, open gathering space (such as the lawn shown in Concept C) still have value for the park users regardless of event use? Or would this space be better devoted to multiple smaller spaces, more natural areas, or other park amenities?
Topic 2: Adjacent development impacts on the park

With any real estate development plan, there may be changes over time. The City’s Coordinated Plan for redevelopment will be a land use plan that further refines the development parcel boundaries, uses and programming, the park boundary, the parkway alignment and reconstruction of Dowling Ave and 33rd Ave N into the site (parkway, bike/ped trails to be fully engineered in the next phase of infrastructure planning). The plan will also address implementation and phasing of public infrastructure (streets, park, trails) and private development. While some changes may occur, the general land uses for each development parcel will be identified by the Coordinated Plan.

- Parcel 1: North of the park, parcels 1A and 1B are proposed for mixed-use residential-commercial developments, as the parcels are too narrow to accommodate other land uses. The active uses of the developments will face the park and parkway so that the park is not lined with garages or driveways. Parcel 1B (directly north of the park) is proposed for attainable housing (at rents affordable to North Minneapolis) with commercial space on the ground floor. The farthest north Parcel (1A) is proposed for senior housing.
- Parcel 3: The music venue is proposed on Parcel 3, which is directly south of the main park area.
- Parcels 4 & 5: Further south on the site on Parcels 4 and 5 the proposed uses include business office space or production and processing (described at the 2/22/20 and 3/11/2020 CPC meetings). The parkway between 33rd Avenue South and the boundary of parcels 3 and 4 may be constructed in a later phase due to the availability of funding from the City and MPRB.
- Parcels 6 & 7: Along Dowling Avenue, the City and developer are recommending public facing spaces, such as community organizations or commercial spaces, along the ground floor as much as possible. These two parcels will likely have a mix of uses, including residential, commercial and/or community HUB uses.

While the CPC has not finalized the development plan, it is anticipated that the development will be built out over multiple years.

*Graphic 6: Phase 1 Development Parcels (expanded detail available on website, link below)*
Question 2.1: The Park Board could potentially have indoor space in the first floor of the Parcel 1B development which is directly north of the main park area. There is potentially cost savings in sharing a building, rather than having a separate park building. There is enough space to accommodate any likely park needs, such as a lobby, public multipurpose room(s) and restrooms, public kitchen for general use, events, and classes, staff office and storage, as well as potential space for a partner. (A partner might be a vendor or complementary non-profit or agency). Having multiple partners with overlapping spaces can expand hours that the building is open to the public. Some of the indoor park spaces, such as reservable rooms, might also serve nearby residents.

Would you feel differently about MPRB sharing this building depending upon any of the Parcel 1 variables? If the affordability of the proposed residential units changed?

Question 2.2: With the music venue on Parcel 3 there will be sound from the venue during shows – similar to being near other outdoor performance areas. The venue will need to comply with sound requirements established by applicable government regulations and any direction set by the environmental review (Alternative Urban Areawide Review, AUAR). There also may be people queuing outside of the venue before shows.
We have heard both concerns about sound from events and people queuing in the park but also that both offer opportunities. Some people have suggested that park users might listen to concerts, or that markets could serve people in line for shows. Do you have any recommendations about what park features and designs should be near the venue? Should these features be prioritized in the first phase(s) of construction if the venue development is delayed?

*Graphic 8: List of 10 program experiences found in each concept*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connect with the river</th>
<th>Learning and education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>View, walk, sit by water, touch water, access with watercraft,</td>
<td>Outdoor classroom, educational signage, learning programs for food, river, culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold large event</td>
<td>Visitor support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festivals, music, performances, pow wows, movies neighborhood socials</td>
<td>Drink water, shelter from weather, find bathrooms, staff support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold small gatherings, events</td>
<td>Intergenerational play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family gatherings, picnics, art shows, classes</td>
<td>Playground, pop up games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy, enjoy, harvest food</td>
<td>Winter activities, shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grow food, learn to grow, harvest, cook, purchase food, markets</td>
<td>Ice skate, sled, winter programs, warm events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relax in nature</td>
<td>Movement and exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet places to walk, sit, view river, read</td>
<td>Activity and sport areas, fitness classes, play, run and bike</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Question 2.3: Any further thoughts on positive park and development interface or how the park design might vary based on the land uses around it?*
**Topic 3: Access and Parking for park users**

There will be vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access along Dowling Avenue to the park as part of the Phase 1 infrastructure improvements / reconstruction. 33rd Avenue to the south is likely to be open for access and the parkway connected to Dowling Avenue once development on Parcel 4 happens. In the future there also is a planned access route in from the north.

Although the Event Management Plan for the venue is not complete, the intention is to plan for drop offs so that the parkway can remain open and to have parking off site with shuttles to bring people to the venue. Park users should be able to get to the park at any time, including during a large event at the music venue. The general area will have activity related to the venue and there may be congestion, but vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access along Dowling Avenue to the park is planned to stay open.

At times the Park Board closes parkways for events in various parts of the City. Often times such events are walks, runs, or bike rides, sometimes the parkway itself is used for tents and activities. One, or both lanes of a parkway might be blocked off to vehicles, although the trails remain open.

**Graphic 12: Circulation Routes and Phasing (same one)**

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**Question 3.1:** Previously the CAC listed some concerns to the City’s CPC Committee regarding congestion. Do you feel that maintaining vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access along Dowling Avenue to the park needs to be a priority of an Event Management Plan? Do you have any other recommendations to the City's Committee regarding the importance of access to the park?

Do you have any recommendations to the Park Board and City regarding parkway closures for events?
Many people during engagement requested an actual parking lot rather than on-street, or parallel, parking (regardless of number of parking spaces). With a drive lane and parking buffers needed, a parking space in a lot takes up 3 - 4 times the amount of space as an on-street parking space. Each concept includes 22 parking spaces within the park, but each has a different layout. Any layout can work with any concept; each takes up a different amount of space. We can add or subtract spaces from any design. The current plan has an approximate total of 60 parking spaces in the park and on the parkway, with about 40 in the first phase. An event would be the largest draw; standards are 2.75 people per vehicle, which means that the park and street parking alone supports use by approximately 220 people. Others might use alternative transportation; larger events would likely have parking spilling over onto nearby streets.

**Graphic 9:** Concept A Parking Arrangement: Off street parking lot removes people from the on-street parking experience and provides a place to turn around but takes up more space and adds more pavement.

**Graphic 10:** Concept B Parking Arrangement: 90 Degree on street parking spaces are an efficient and familiar way to park with some protection from street traffic. This design is not recommended where bikes and pedestrians may travel behind parked cars on the road.

**Graphic 11:** Concept B Parking Arrangement: Back in angled parking is an efficient way to park with some protection from street traffic. This design is considered an optimal way to handle street parking but is not familiar to most people.
### Table comparison of park acreages, facilities, and parking spaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park</th>
<th>Area of park served by parking</th>
<th>General Amenities</th>
<th>Parking Stall Numbers</th>
<th>Parking Stalls Per Acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minnehaha Regional Park</td>
<td>16.47 Acres (of 167.24 total Acres)</td>
<td>Pavillion, playgrounds, picnic areas</td>
<td>105 (mixed surface and street parking stalls)</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Harriet Regional Park</td>
<td>9.57 Acres (of 470.07 total Acres)</td>
<td>Band shell, restrooms, pavillion (with restaurant), playground, boat launch</td>
<td>128 surface parking stalls (does not include street parking)</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Mississippi Regional Park</td>
<td>25.39 Acres (of 67.2 total Acres)</td>
<td>Interpretive center, picnic pavilions, playground, splash pad, boat launches</td>
<td>112 surface parking stalls (29 are at Carl W. Kroening Interpretive center)</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theodore Wirth Regional Park</td>
<td>24.91 Acres (of 740.29 total Acres)</td>
<td>Beach, beach pavilion, playground, trails</td>
<td>53 surface parking stalls</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Commons</td>
<td>25.48 Acres</td>
<td>Recreation center, water park, playground, field sports</td>
<td>79 surface parking stalls</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folwell Park</td>
<td>26.98 Acres</td>
<td>Recreation center, playground, field sports</td>
<td>63 surface parking stalls</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farview Park</td>
<td>20.98 Acres</td>
<td>Recreation center, wading pool, playground, field sports</td>
<td>38 surface parking stalls</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UHT Regional Park</td>
<td>6.3 Acres (of 19.5 total Acres)</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
<td>22 surface parking stalls (street parking would add approximately another 25-38 spaces)</td>
<td>3.5 spaces in a lot, 6.35 incl street parking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 3.2:** Do you prefer one of the parking layouts shown? Which one best balances community use and space required? Does the amount of parking offered based on assumptions about park use make sense?

**Question 3.3:** Is it important to keep public parking at the park open for park users, and not allow venue users to occupy park spaces? If so, likely a mechanism of control or monitoring would need to be put in place during large shows. Any advice on doing so in a way that is friendly to park users.
CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE C: THE RIVERFRONT PORCH | PHASE 02
First Avenue and LSE Architects continue working closely with the development team on the shared vision and integration of the CPAC into the larger Coordinated Plan. The next phase of detailed CPAC planning, design, and community engagement will commence pending the results 2020 legislative bonding session.
Location: Parcel Boundaries

Graphic 4.2
The Coordinated Plan: Phase 1 (2021-2024)

- **200** Estimated Business Park Job Capacity
- **127,000** Sq. Ft. of Business Park Area
- **$750K-1M** Annual revenue to community entity generated by ticketed events
- **600** Estimated Residents
- **245** Affordable Housing Rental Units
- **159** Rental units (65% of total) affordable for 30-50% AMI
- **$143M** Estimated Development Cost

Temporary Event Parking
Temporary Green Space
Parcel 1b: Family Housing with Active Ground Floor

- **Total Affordable Rental Units**: 75
- **Perpetually Affordable Townhomes**: 15
- **2- & 3-bedroom units**: 50 units (65% of total) affordable for 30-50% AMI
- **Total Housing Development Cost**: $26m
- **15,000 Sq. Ft. Ground Floor Commercial/Community Space**: $2.4m
- **Affordable Housing Feasibility Gap**: $2.4m
- **Ground Floor Commercial Additional Development Cost**: $5.2m
- **View from the River**
Ten Key Program Experiences

**Connect with the river**
View, walk, sit by water, touch water, access with watercraft,

**Hold large event**
Festivals, music, performances, pow wows, movies neighborhood socials

**Hold small gatherings, events**
Family gatherings, picnics, art shows, classes

**Buy, enjoy, harvest food**
Grow food, learn to grow, harvest, cook, purchase food, markets

**Relax in nature**
Quiet places to walk, sit, view river, read

**Learning and education**
Outdoor classroom, educational signage, learning programs for food, river, culture

**Visitor support**
Drink water, shelter from weather, find bathrooms, staff support

**Intergenerational play**
Playground, pop up games

**Winter activities, shelter**
Ice skate, sled, winter programs, warm events

**Movement and exercise**
Activity and sport areas, fitness classes, play, run and bike
CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE A: PARKING ARRANGEMENT

CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE B: PARKING ARRANGEMENT

CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE C: PARKING ARRANGEMENT