



# LAND USE COMMISSION

Wednesday, September 6, 2023 | 7:00 P.M.  
James C. Lytle City Council Chambers, Second Floor  
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue

## AGENDA

Those wishing to make public comments at the Land Use Commission meeting may submit written comments in advance or sign up to provide public comment in-person during the meeting by calling/texting 847-448-4311 or completing the Land Use Commission meeting online comment form available by clicking [here](#), or visiting the Land Use Commission webpage, <https://www.cityofevanston.org/government/boards-commissions-and-committees/land-use-commission>, clicking on How You Can Participate, then clicking on Public Comment Form. Community members may watch the Land Use Commission meeting online at [www.cityofevanston.org/channel16](http://www.cityofevanston.org/channel16) or on Cable Channel 16.

- I. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM
- II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: July 12, 2023
- III. NEW BUSINESS

**A. Public Hearing: Special Use for a Planned Development | 1501 Central Street | 23PLND-0035**

Northwestern University requests a Special Use for a Planned Development to demolish the existing Ryan Field stadium and ancillary maintenance building to construct a new 116 ft. tall stadium with a 35,000 spectator capacity in the U2 University Athletics Facilities District. The applicant is requesting the following site development allowances: 1) 1,408 total parking spaces (515 on-site, 893 in parking lot within 1,000 ft.) where 4,364 are required for the principal uses on the zoning lot, 2) A landscape strip of less than 35 ft. (specifically, 16 ft. 3 in. at closest point at the north-south and east-west property lines at the northeast corner of the lot) where 35 ft. is required when abutting a residential district, and 3) Open parking area with a 6 ft. 10 in. interior side yard setback where 15 ft. is required. The Land Use Commission is the recommending body for this case and the City Council is the determining body in accordance with Section 6-3-5-8 of the Evanston Zoning Code and Ordinance 92-O-21. PINs: 05-35-310-015-0000,

*Order & Agenda Items are subject to change. Information about the Land Use Commission is available at: <https://www.cityofevanston.org/government/boards-commissions-and-committees/land-use-commission>. Questions can be directed to Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner, at [mmjones@cityofevanston.org](mailto:mmjones@cityofevanston.org) or 847-448-4311. The City of Evanston is committed to making all public meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. Any citizen needing mobility or communications access assistance should contact 847-866-2919 (Voice) or 847-866-5095 (TYY). Requests for access assistance must be made 48 hours (two working days) in advance. Requests received with less than 48 hours (two working days) advance notice will be attempted using best efforts, but cannot be guaranteed.*

*La ciudad de Evanston está obligada a hacer accesibles todas las reuniones públicas a las personas minusválidas o las quines no hablan inglés. Si usted necesita ayuda, favor de ponerse en contacto con la Oficina de Administración del Centro a 847/866-2916 (voz) o 847/448-8052 (TDD).*

5-35-310-020-0000, 5-35-318-015-0000, 5-35-310-007-0000, 5-35-310-019-0000, 5-35-310-022-0000 and 5-35-310-008-0000.

**B. Public Hearing: Zoning Text Amendment | U2 University Athletic Facilities District | 23PLND-0010**

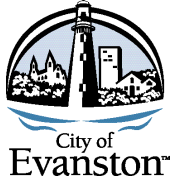
Northwestern University requests a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, Section 6-15-7-2 Permitted Uses, to modify the list of permitted uses in the U2 University Athletics Facilities District and conditions required for public facing concerts. No changes are proposed to the U2 district boundaries. The Land Use Commission is the recommending body for this case and the City Council is the determining body in accordance with Section 6-3-4-6 of the Evanston Zoning Code and Ordinance 92-O-21.

**IV. COMMUNICATION**

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The Evanston Land Use Commission will hold a regularly scheduled meeting **on Wednesday, September 13, 2023, at 7:00 pm**, in the James C. Lytle Council Chambers in the Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center.



**MEETING MINUTES**

**LAND USE COMMISSION**

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

7:00 PM

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, James C. Lytle City Council Chambers

Members Present: Myrna Arevalo, George Halik, John Hewko, Brian Johnson, Jeanne Lindwall, Kiril Mirintchev, Max Puchtel, Kristine Westerberg, and Matt Rodgers

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Deputy City Attorney Alexandra Ruggie, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner Meagan Jones, and Zoning Administrator Melissa Klotz

Presiding Member: Matt Rodgers

---

**SPECIAL NOTE: Due to a Tornado Warning for the area the meeting was not held in Council Chambers and therefore there is no audio-visual recording.**

**Call to Order**

Chair Rodgers opened the meeting at 7:13 PM. A roll call was then done and a quorum was determined to be present.

**Approval of May 24, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Lindwall made a motion to approve the Land Use Commission meeting minutes from May 24, 2023. Seconded by Commissioner Westerberg. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed 6-0 with three abstentions.

**Old Business**

**A. Public Hearing: Special Uses | 1806-1808 Dempster Street | 23ZMJV-0028**

Danielle Dean, lessee, requests Special Use Permits for two independent businesses, an existing Convenience Store at 1806 Dempster Street, Dempster Snack Shop, currently in operation with approved Special Use Ordinance 120-O-21, and a new Type 2 Restaurant at 1808 Dempster Street, Windy City Flavors, in the B1 Business District (City Code Sections 6-9-2-2.5, 6-9-2-3). The Land Use Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council, the determining body for this case per City Code Section 6-3-5-8. PIN: 10-24-200-007-0000

Mr. Dean provided an overview of the use of the spaces and the intent to sell snacks such as nachos and hot dogs along with the existing store. There will be no dine-in seating.

### Commissioner Questions

Chair Rodgers asked for clarification of the proposed business hours. Mr. Dean responded 11 AM to 7PM for food with a possible extension until 9 PM on weekdays and 11 AM to 11 PM on weekends. Ms. Klotz clarified that typical restaurant hours are until 11 PM but constraints were placed on the business due to previous violations. Currently there are no violations.

Chair Rodgers asked about the number of employees and Mr. Dean responded that the employees will be family.

Commissioner Halik asked if Mr. Dean was aware of staff recommendations. Chair Rodgers then reviewed each of the fifteen staff recommendations detailed in the packet.

Mr. Dean said he is registering his food truck and has been using it as a catering truck.

Commissioner Lindwall inquired about the inside space and Mr. Dean responded with additional detail and that the snack shop is in the best location.

Commissioner Puchtel asked why they were reviewing an operating snack shop with an existing Special Use Permit. Ms. Klotz responded that it was due to the extent of violations of the existing permit and this new application enables the Health Department to enforce regulations. The goal is to achieve two successful businesses.

Chair Rodgers asks for final statements. There was none.

### Deliberations

Commissioner Lindwall commented that it was good to hear that the violations have been corrected and the direction on hours of operation needs to be finalized. Commissioner Halik stated that the hours suggested by Ms. Klotz seem fine based on other businesses. Commissioner Westerberg asked if the approval of hours could be conditioned based on no further violations. Chair Rodgers recommended that it be addressed as a permit violation procedure.

The Chair reviewed the Standards for Special Use (Section 6-3-5-10).

1. Is one of the listed special uses for the zoning district in which the property lies: The standard is met as convenience stores and Type 2 restaurants are both permitted in the zoning district.

2. Complies with the purposes and the policies of the Comprehensive General Plan and the Zoning ordinance: The standard is met as it is in a business district where businesses are expected to take place and grow.
3. Does not cause a negative cumulative effect in combination with existing special uses or as a category of land use: The standard is met with the correction of health violations and with adherence to the staff recommendations. It is not anticipated to be a problem.
4. Does not interfere with or diminish the value of property in the neighborhood: The standard is met because having a business instead of an empty storefront is better for the neighborhood. No testimony that will create issues has been heard.
5. Is adequately served by public facilities and services: The standard is met as nothing new is being brought in and the property is adequately served.
6. Does not cause undue traffic congestion: The standard is met because traffic is assumed to be pedestrian and not vehicular.
7. Preserves significant historical and architectural resources: The standard is met as there is no historic or architectural significance to the building or property and no changes to the façade are proposed.
8. Preserves significant natural and environmental resources: The standard is met as there is no historic or architectural significance to the property and no changes to the façade are proposed.
9. Complies with all other applicable regulations of the district in which it is located and other applicable ordinances, except to the extent such regulations have been modified through the planned development process or the grant of a variation: The standard is met as the applicant will comply with other applicable regulations. The recommendations are within the Special Use Permit and the applicant will work with the Health Department.

Chair Rodgers asked for Commissioner comments on the standards. There were none.

**Commissioner Puchtel made a motion to recommend approval for two Special Use Permits to the Planning & Development Committee of the City Council, for the property located at 1806-1808 Dempster Street, zoning case number 23ZMJV-0028, with the following conditions:**

1. Hours of operation shall not exceed 7am - 11pm, 7 days a week, at both businesses.
2. Entry to both businesses shall remain open/unlocked during regular business hours and shall not use buzzer entry.
3. The outdoor cooking of food is strictly prohibited, whether for customers or employees.
4. Use of the public sidewalk and right-of-way area for unlicensed block parties, events, and loitering is prohibited.
5. Sustainability measures are required including recycling for employees and customers, and use of recyclable or compostable to-go containers.
6. A food truck shall not operate in relation to either business without an approved license from the Health Department.

7. No food truck that is related to either business shall park in violation of City Ordinances, including being prohibited from parking on residential streets, within 100 feet of another restaurant, or on residential streets where commercial vehicle parking is prohibited.
8. One dumpster is required for refuse rather than two, due to the limited space behind the building. The dumpster shall not overflow. A separate dumpster shall exist for the residential use at the property.
9. Re-review of the special use approval by staff may occur after six months of operation, at which time conditions may be reevaluated, reduced, or expanded.
10. Windows must remain clear and not blocked by shelves or unapproved signage.
11. Reflective coverings are not allowed on any windows or doors.
12. The convenience store shall not handle or sell unpackaged food.
13. The special uses may be deemed invalid if any of the following issues occur: recurrence of any previous Health Code violation cited at the property, substantial verified violations of the Property Maintenance Code occur, substantial police activity occurs at the property, if the property is deemed a nuisance premise under the Evanston City Code, and/or if conditions of this special use ordinance are not adhered to.
14. Substantial compliance with the documents and testimony on record.
15. Recordation of the special use ordinance with the Cook County Recorder of Deeds is required prior to operation.

**Second by Commissioner Lindwall. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed, 9-0.**

Chair Rodgers called for a five-minute recess. The commission then returned to its regular business at 7:45 PM.

### **New Business**

#### **A. Public Hearing: Major Variation | 2017 Jackson Avenue | 23ZMJV-0037**

John Cleary of TEMP Capital Inc., property owner, requests a Major Variation to construct a 4-story, 24 dwelling-unit residential building with 25 parking spaces. The applicant requests a density variation to allow 20 dwelling units where 14 dwelling units are allowed (Section 6-8-4-7) as well as 4 bonus units, for a total of 24 dwelling units in the R5 Residential District. The Land Use Commission is the determining body for this case in accordance with Section 6-3-8-10 of the Evanston Zoning Code. PINs: 10-13-204-022-0000, 10-13-204-023-0000.

John Cleary, owner, reviewed the property surroundings, nearby transit access, and the variation requests. He stated that the main reason for the variation requests is because of the required street extension for Jackson Avenue. Additional units are being requested to cover the cost of the street extension. He noted that he cannot use the street property in the density calculations, and they are only asking for one variance.

Jack Stone, architect, said all the zoning bulk requirements are being complied with. Their request is to establish more density within the building volume. The residential

units have exterior spaces. The facade has various layers, attempting to enhance the streetscape with parkways, trees, and curbs to foster a more walkable neighborhood.

Mr. Cleary said he has listened to the neighborhood including meeting with the alderman and the neighborhood group. He stated that their main concern was to not build five stories.

### Commissioner Questions

Chair Rodgers asked about unit size and rents. Mr. Cleary responded that the smallest unit is a one (1) bedroom up to 600 square feet and a (2) bedroom up to 1,000 square feet. There is a rooftop deck and 25 parking spaces.

Chair Rodgers inquired about utilities. Mr. Cleary replied that a water main crosses Jackson Avenue, the sewage line would need to be extended, and he assumed electric service is in the alley. He has engaged a civil engineer, obtained existing utility maps, and is willing to invest in these services.

Commissioner Halik complimented the building architecture and noted that it adds two bedrooms units which is currently lacking in Evanston. He asked about the mural on the ground floor. Mr. Cleary was asked by staff to increase the windows or break up the ground floor facade. Mr. Stone said that a mural on the building is something that can be studied.

Mr. Cleary confirmed Commissioner Lindwall's question regarding access to the parking garage, which is off the north/south alley from Foster Avenue through the rear of the building.

Commissioner Mirintchev asked if he owned the land to the northeast of the parcel and Mr. Cleary responded yes. He had considered but withdrew developing the whole property which requires a longer expensive Planned Development process, and he is not a large developer. He may in the future come back with additional parcels. The current different zoning makes it more challenging. Commissioner Mirintchev stated that it is well planned and agrees with his reasoning.

Commissioner Puchtel inquired about the affordable units. Mr. Cleary stated both units have outdoor spaces and that affordable units must be maintained in a balance of type, size, and location.

Mr. Cleary confirmed adherence with the condition that Jackson Avenue be built to standard and deeded to City within one (1) year of approval of the Special Use. Ms. Klotz added that Public Works will not accept the street if it is not built to standard and that the applicant would have to maintain the street if it was not accepted.

Chair Rodgers asks for final statements.



Mr. Stone thanked Commissioner Mirintchev for his advice throughout the process.

### Deliberations

Commissioner Mirintchev appreciated the well-designed building that fits within setback and height regulations. He expressed concern about what may happen with the other property. Overall, he thought it was a great addition to the neighborhood.

Chair Rodgers also appreciated a development with few variations. It is an attractive building with the bird friendly ordinance likely being met. It meets affordable housing goals, and those units will have an outdoor space. He liked the mural idea or something to be done to make sure the ground floor is not a solid wall.

Commissioner Lindwall thought the additional requested density is appropriate given the need to construct a street.

Commissioner Halik suggested moving the walk one foot west to increase the size of the one 9-foot dimension on a two-bedroom unit (10-foot is minimum).

The Chair reviewed the Standards for Major Variations (Section 6-3-8-12.E).

1. The requested variation will not have a substantial adverse impact on the use, enjoyment or property values of adjoining properties: The standard is met because it is being built in a field making use of vacant space with a new street being constructed and utilities extended improving the surrounding properties.
2. The requested variation is in keeping with the intent of the zoning ordinance: The standard meets the highest and best use for the location. The empty field is not providing a benefit.
3. The alleged hardship or practical difficulty is peculiar to the property: The standard is met as the lack of infrastructure creates a hardship for the property.
4. The property owner would suffer a particular hardship or practical difficulty as distinguished from a mere inconvenience if the strict letter of the regulations were to be carried out: The standard is met because if size of the building was restricted, it would create a burden due to need to bring additional infrastructure and utilities which is a hardship not faced by typical buildings being constructed.
5. a. The purpose of the variation is not based exclusively upon a desire to extract additional income from the property, or  
b. While the grant of a variation will result in additional income to the applicant and while the applicant for the variation may not have demonstrated that the application is not based exclusively upon a desire to extract additional income from the property, the Land Use Commission or the City Council, depending on final jurisdiction under Section 6-3-8-2, has found that public benefits to the surrounding neighborhood and the City as a whole will be derived from approval of the variation, that include, but are not limited to, any of the standards of Section 6-3-6-3 of the Zoning Code: The standard is met as the addition of



infrastructure is not getting additional income and the affordable units are a benefit.

6. The alleged difficulty or hardship has not been created by any person having an interest in the property: The standard is met as it is an old railroad property that was never developed.
7. The requested variation requires the least deviation from the applicable regulation among the feasible options identified before the Land Use Commission issues its decision or recommendation to the City Council regarding said variation: The standard is met with one variation and that variation is sensible due to additional infrastructure cost incurred.

Chair Rodgers asked for Commissioner comments on the standards. There were none.

**Commissioner Halik made a motion to recommend approval of the Major Variation to the Planning & Development Committee of the City Council, for the property located at 2017 Jackson Avenue, zoning case number 23ZMJV-0037, with the staff recommended conditions as follows:**

1. To construct the proposed Jackson Avenue extension to City-standards and deed the street and streetscape over to the City as public right-of-way within one year of building occupancy (FCO).
2. Develop a façade treatment for the ground floor wall to avoid solid wall (mural, material change, etc.)

**Second by Commissioner Halik. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried, 9-0.**

**B. Public Hearing: Major Variations | 1404 Judson Avenue | 23ZMJV-0041**

Errol Kirsch, architect and applicant on behalf of the property owner, requests the following Major Zoning Variations to expand a non-conforming structure as it relates to bulk (Code Section 6-6-5-2): 1) a rear-yard setback of 3.75' where 30' is required and the existing legally non-conforming condition is 2.75' (Code Section 6-8-2-8 (A) 4); and 2) building lot coverage of 33.25% where 30% is the maximum permitted and 31% is the existing legally non-conforming condition (Code Section 6-8-2-7). The Land Use Commission is the determining body for the proposed zoning relief in accordance with Code Section 2-19-4 (E). PIN: 11-18-415-020-0000.

This case was not heard at this meeting and will be re-noticed for a future meeting date to be determined.

**Communications**

Staff briefed commissioners that the City Council approved a contract with HDR to rewrite the City's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code.

Staff received various comments on the Omnibus Text Amendment and responded to questions regarding the Comprehensive Plan.

**Adjournment**

Commissioner Westerberg motioned to adjourn, Commissioner Puchtel seconded, and the motion carried, 9-0.

Adjourned 8:26 PM.

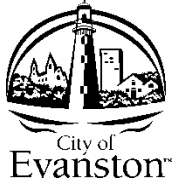
The next meeting of the Evanston Land Use Commission is a Special Meeting to be held on **Wednesday, July 26, 2023, at 7:00 PM, in the James C. Lytle Council Chambers in the Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Amy Ahner, AICP, Planning Consultant

Reviewed by,  
Meagan Jones, AICP, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner

# **LAND USE COMMISSION**

23PLND-0035  
1501 Central Street  
Planned Development



# Memorandum

To: Chair and Members of the Land Use Commission

From: Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner

CC: Sarah Flax, Director of Community Development  
Elizabeth Williams, Planning Manager

Subject: Special Use for a Planned Development  
1501 Central Street | 23PLND-0035

Date: August 23, 2023

## **Request**

---

Northwestern University requests a Special Use for a Planned Development to demolish the existing Ryan Field stadium and ancillary maintenance building to construct a new 116 ft. tall stadium with a 35,000 spectator capacity in the U2 District. The applicant is requesting the following site development allowances:

1. 1,408 total parking spaces (515 on-site, 893 in parking lot within 1,000 ft.) where 4,364 are required for the principal uses on the zoning lot.
2. A landscape strip of less than 35 ft. (specifically, 16 ft. 3 in. at closest point at the north-south and east-west property lines at the northeast corner of the lot) where 35 ft. is required when abutting a residential district.
3. Open parking area with a 6 ft. 10 in. interior side yard setback where 15 ft. is required.

The Land Use Commission is the recommending body for this case in accordance with Section 6-3-5-8 of the Evanston Zoning Code and Ordinance 92-O-21. PINs: 05-35-310-015-0000, 5-35-310-020-0000, 5-35-318-015-0000, 5-35-310-007-0000, 5-35-310-019-0000, 5-35-310-022-0000 and 5-35-310-008-0000.

## **Notice**

The Application has been filed in conformance with applicable procedural and public notice requirements including publication in the Evanston Review on August 3, 2023 and August 10, 2023 as well as the Sun-Times on August 3, 2023 and August 21, 2023.

## **General Information**

---

**Applicant/Owner:** Northwestern University  
2020 Ridge Avenue  
Evanston, IL 60201

**PINs:** 05-35-310-015-0000, 5-35-310-020-0000,  
5-35-318-015-0000, 5-35-310-007-0000,  
5-35-310-019-0000, 5-35-310-022-0000 and  
5-35-310-008-0000.

## **Analysis**

---

### Existing & Surrounding Conditions

The site, 1501 Central Street, is approximately 29.7 acres (1,293,359.2 s.f.) located on the north side of Central Street, just east of Ashland Avenue and south of Isabella Street, the border between Evanston and the Village of Wilmette. The lot is rectangular with 785.75 feet of frontage along Central Street. It currently consists of Ryan Field, Welsh-Ryan Arena, Drysdale Field, Rocky Miller Park, Trienens (Athletic) Performance Center and Anderson Hall along with parking east, south and west of Ryan Field.

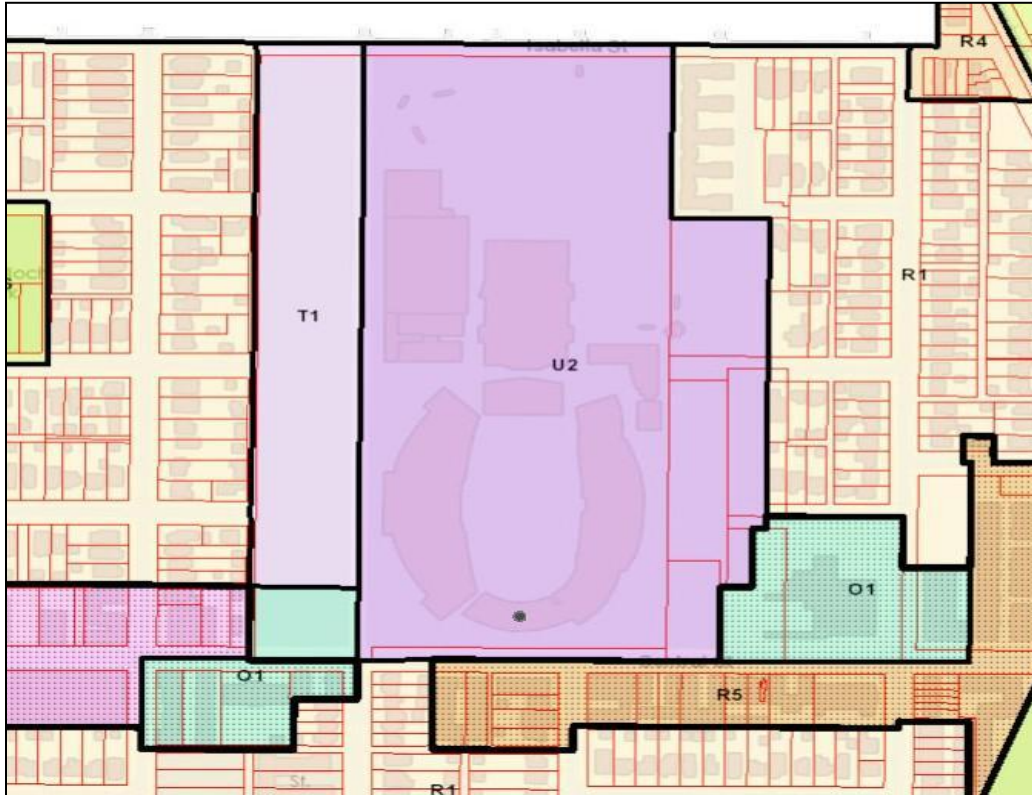


*1501 Central Street - aerial*

Immediately to the north of the subject property are single-family homes in the Village of Wilmette. Immediately west across Ashland Avenue is Northwestern University's parking lot, the south end of which is leased by the City of Evanston (99 parking spaces), and single family homes further west just across the adjacent alley. South across Central Street are several multi-family buildings including two with ground floor commercial, and single-family homes. To the immediate east of the site are single-family

homes, a multi-family building at Isabella and Evanston Hospital offices at Central Street.

The existing land use pattern in the block area includes a mix of various types of residential along with some commercial and institutional (hospital) uses.



Zoning map

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses	Zoning Districts	Land Use
<b>North</b>	(Wilmette) R1 Districts	Single-family homes
<b>South</b>	R1- Single Family Residential R5 – General Residential O1 - Office oCSC- Central Street Corridor Overlay	Multi-family, Single-family homes, Commercial (Campus Gear)
<b>East</b>	R1- Single Family Residential O1 – Office	Single-family, Multi-family, Hospital Offices
<b>West</b>	T1- Transitional Campus District	Parking lot, Single Family, Commercial

	O1 – Office R1- Single Family Residential B1a - Business oCSC - Central Street Corridor Overlay	
--	---	--

### Project Summary

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing stadium and ancillary maintenance building to construct a new open air 35,000 spectator capacity stadium with on-site parking (515 spaces), new maintenance enclosure and ancillary structures. The stadium is ovular shaped with a canopied open roof, oriented to face northwest/southeast, and consists of the following levels:

- Event Level
- Main Concourse
- Founders Level
- Upper Concourse
- Patio Level
- Press Level

### Site Design & Access

The Event Level is below-grade and includes three loading berths and 20 parking spaces accessible from a ramp off of Central Street. This level provides direct field access and consists of team locker rooms, mechanical and telecom spaces, training rooms, kitchen, and some suite/club spaces among other items. General seating for spectators is located on the Main Concourse, Upper Concourse and Press Levels with access to the smaller Patio Level for concessions and restrooms and assumed limited access to the Founders Level. There are various controlled entry points into the stadium, the main entry from the east parking lot is located on the northeast side of the proposed stadium.

For passenger vehicles, two access points are proposed to the on-site parking, one off of Central Street near the southeast corner of the site, the other off of Isabella Street near the northeast corner of the site. For commercial vehicles, one access point to the three required long loading berths (12x50 feet) below grade is proposed at the south end of the site off of Central Street. Truck turning diagrams are provided in the attached development plans. Staff notes that targeted coordination will need to occur to ensure there are no potential conflicts between the loading berths and parked vehicles in this area and should be outlined in the Traffic Management Plan.

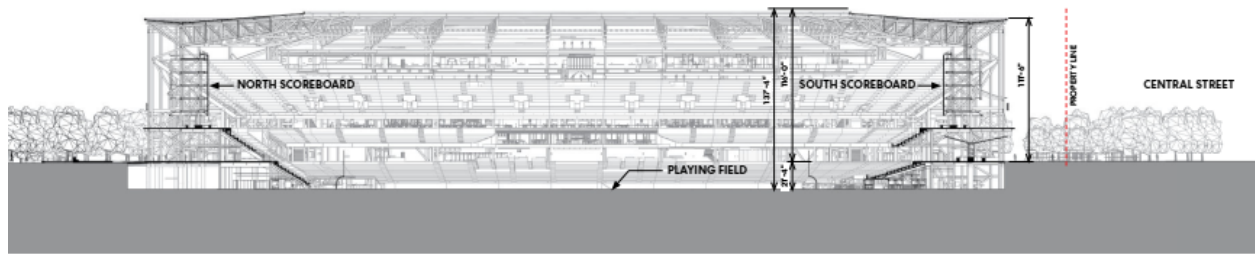
A new mechanical enclosure will replace the existing one at approximately the same location northeast of the stadium. Staff recommends a condition be considered to require the mechanical enclosure to be designed with sound attenuating material to mitigate any noise impacts. Plaza space is located on the southwest corner of the site



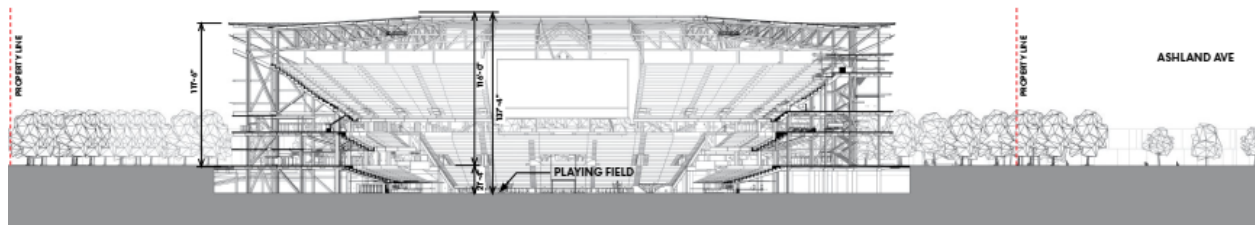
near the corner of Central Street and Ashland Avenue. Additional plaza space consisting of a bandshell and ancillary structures proposed for food sales are located west and north of the stadium. Emergency vehicles will have a clearance around the stadium, with a 20 ft. wide lane for medical emergency vehicles and fire lane widths of 24 ft. and 26 ft. which have been reviewed by the Fire Department. These lanes have access to/from Central Street and Ashland Avenue.

### Bulk & Height

The building is proposed at the south end of the site with a northwest/southeast orientation. The field is located approximately 21 ft. 4 in. below grade with an overall height of the building from grade to the top of the canopy of 116 ft.. Per Section 6-15-7-8, the maximum height for university buildings is 125 ft. provided that in cases the required side or rear yards adjacent to or across a street or alley from an R1, R2 or R3 district shall be increased in width or depth by 2 ft. for each additional foot of building height above 35 ft. As noted above, the development site is adjacent to the R1 district to the east. Since the proposed height is 81 ft. above 35 ft., the minimum setback is 177 ft. ( $15 + \{81 \times 2\} = 177$ ). The proposed interior side yard setback of the building from the east property line is approximately 181 ft. which includes the required landscape strip.



SITE SECTION - NORTH/SOUTH



SITE SECTION - EAST/WEST

### North/South & East/West Site Sections

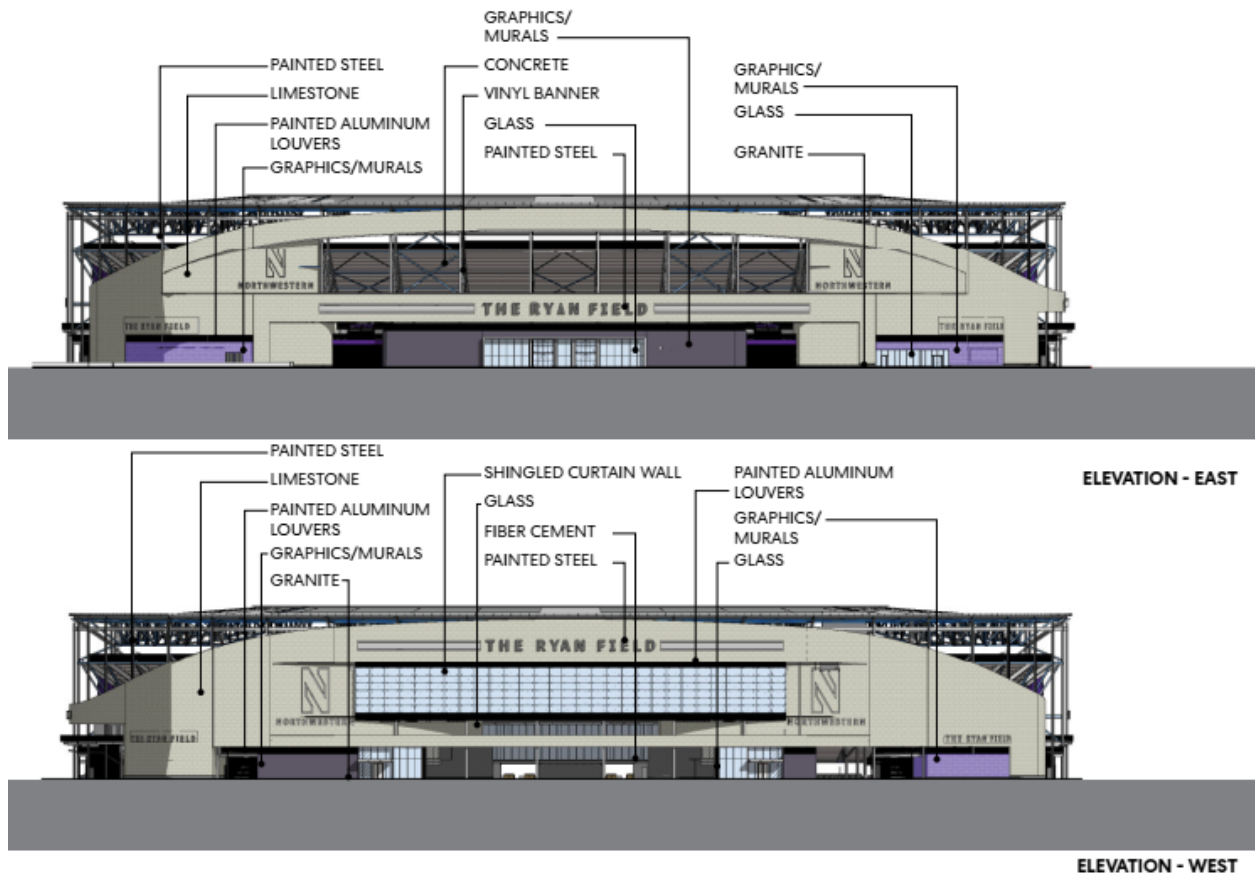
### Architecture & Landscaping

The proposed exterior building materials include:

- Limestone
- Concrete

- Granite
- Painted Steel
- Painted Aluminum Louvers
- Perforated Metal
- Glass
- Shingled Curtain Wall
- Graphics/Murals

In addition to the proposed materials and design as illustrated below and on the attached elevations and renderings, the proposed building will be required to provide bird-friendly design elements per Ordinance 83-O-22 at the time of building permit application. The canopy design over the seating bowl provides some mitigation of light and sound pollution from the uses within the stadium. That being stated, a fully enclosed roof or dome over the field would provide additional mitigation of that pollution to the surrounding uses. Though a full roof or dome may require additional height to be added to the stadium, this could be a possible trade-off to further reduce impacts of sound and light from games and other proposed events.



**Building Materials**

The applicant will be providing the required 35 ft. wide landscape strip for the majority of the east interior side yard, which is adjacent to the R1 district, with the exception of a

small area near the northeast corner of the lot where a site development allowance is being requested for a 16 ft. 3 in. wide landscape strip to accommodate an existing TV broadcast cabinet. This landscape strip will integrate bio-infiltration swales to support the proposed development's stormwater management system. Shade trees are proposed along Central Street and Ashland Avenue as well as north of the stadium between the stadium and Welsh-Ryan Arena. Ornamental shrubs are scattered through the proposed plaza area and new play areas are proposed near the southeast and southwest corners of the building. A tree protection, preservation and replacement plan is provided as part of the attached plans.

### Environmental Impacts

Given the proposed below-grade event level of the stadium, the need to provide a new storm sewer to the Northshore Channel, and concerns raised by residents and staff of the possible effects of this development, staff requested additional information regarding groundwater management strategies for groundwater withdrawal at the proposed stadium and a general environmental assessment of the impact these strategies will have on the neighborhoods around the stadium. The applicant provided information that included explaining the installation of a passive subsurface drainage system designed for the event level slab, confirmation that a geotechnical site exploration has been completed and a Subsurface Exploration and Geotechnical Engineering Report has been completed, and assurances that there will be no impact to the groundwater of the surrounding neighborhood areas nor to the existing vegetation.

The design of the project aligns with the University's goals to ensure existing facilities, new construction, and campus infrastructure are resilient, reliable, accessible, and sustainable. The project is pursuing a LEED Gold Certification and will implement new design features to improve the sustainability of the site. Detailed responses to questions asked of the applicant are within the Response to the 7.31.23 Staff Review Letter which is attached. Staff notes that the project would be required to meet both City engineering and Public Works requirements and Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) requirements. In addition, staff has suggested several conditions for the Land Use Commission's consideration to ensure the proposed project aligns with the City's current and climate and sustainability goals.

### Transportation & Mobility

#### *On-Site & Off-Site Parking*

The applicant proposes 1,408 total parking spaces, including 515 on-site (with 20 below grade parking spaces) and 893 parking spaces in the existing parking lot across the street from the site (within 1,000 ft. of the subject property) where 4,364 stalls are required for the principal uses on the lot (Ryan Field, Welsh-Ryan Arena, Drysdale Field and Rocky Miller Park).

Section 6-16-2-6 of the Zoning Code defers to the Illinois Accessibility Code, as amended, which requires nine (9) accessible parking stalls. 18 accessible parking stalls are proposed on the adjacent parking lot and 4 are proposed below grade for a proposed total of 22 new accessible parking spaces. 18 accessible parking spaces exist

on the parking lot across the street from the stadium.

In addition to the above-required parking stalls, the applicant is required per Section 4-2-2, Table 406.2.7.2 of Title 4 –Building Regulations of City Code to provide infrastructure for electric vehicles in the following ratio on the lot to be developed:

- 10% EV-Installed → 49 stalls
- 40% EV-Capable → 197 stalls

### *Loading*

The proposed stadium requires three (3) on-site long loading berths (12x50 ft). The proposed development meets this requirement with the three berths proposed below grade with access off of Central Street. The applicant has indicated they anticipate deliveries and trucks used for events will utilize the below grade area to load and unload equipment as it has direct access to the playing field. Staff suggests a condition be added that deliveries and trucks used for events to load and unload equipment be limited to the below grade area to mitigate impacts to the surrounding area.

In addition to the required below grade loading, the applicant is also proposing to designate a pick-up/drop-off area for Transportation Network Companies (TNC's), such as Uber or Lyft. Prior to events it is assumed that those vehicles will drop-off passengers primarily along Central Street near Ryan Field; however, post events, a designated area will be established at Canal Shores Lot #1 and Haven Middle School's parking lot with the assistance of a geofence, a digital boundary restricting where TNC vehicles are able to pick-up and drop-off, and designated locations that will be communicated to drivers and passengers through the TNC's mobile apps.

### *Traffic and Circulation*

The applicant submitted a Traffic Impact Study dated April 2023 and revised August 14, 2023, conducted by Kimley-Horn to analyze possible effects the proposed development may have on traffic in the area, specifically as it relates to proposed concert uses. The study noted that the proposed stadium has a capacity that is 12,000 fewer spectators than the existing stadium and that capacity decreases further for concert events to 28,500 spectators. The site itself is considered a Transit Oriented Development served by multiple public transportation lines. For train service, the CTA elevated light-rail Purple Line Davis Street stop and the Union Pacific North Metra stop are both within walking distance at transit stations approximately one quarter-mile from the subject property. Stops for CTA bus route #201 (which operates between the Howard Red Line Station along Ridge Road, Church Street, Sheridan Road, and Central Street to Old Orchard Shopping Center in Skokie) are located just south of the site. Additionally, the site is near designated bike routes on Isabella Avenue, Asbury Avenue, Lincoln Street and Green Bay Road. On-street parking is available on both sides of Central Street and the east side of Ashland Avenue. However, as part of suggested mitigation measures, the study does recommend that the parking be restricted on both sides of Central Street and that traffic be restricted to one way on Ashland Avenue during game days and events. Limited parking is also available on Isabella Street and there is restricted parking on the north side of Isabella (no parking 2 hours before to 2 hours after football games).

The traffic study evaluated pre-event and post-event peak hours (6:00PM to 7:00PM and 10:00PM to 11:00PM respectively) on a typical weekday evening and Saturday evening to cover the possible range of concert event dates. The analysis took into account lane configurations and routing, on-street parking restrictions, traffic controls and active management of nearby intersections by Evanston Police as is typically done for football games. It also anticipated use of parking spaces at the on-site parking lots as well as off-site parking spaces at surface lots and garages on Northwestern’s campus (1,613), Downtown garages (3,583), Canal Shores (850) and Commuter parking spaces on Poplar Street (200). It is anticipated that shuttle buses will be used to get people to and from the campus and downtown parking areas, similar to what is currently done for football games. Targeted efforts need to be enumerated as to how visitors will be encouraged to use the downtown parking and directed to shuttle service to and from the site. Additionally, staff has called attention to the fact that the Canal Shores parking is heavily dependent on weather conditions, as the surface is grass and not the standard hard surface required for parking spaces. Inclement weather conditions could render that parking option unusable. This raises concerns regarding the amount of consistently available parking spaces.

The study anticipates the following mode split for transportation to and from the stadium for concert events:

**Table 6. Estimated Concert Transportation Mode Share**

Travel Mode	Percent Share
Automobile + Park	52%
CTA (Purple Line)	30%
Metra	10%
Taxi / TNC	5%
Limo / Black Car	1%
Party Bus / Trolley	1%
Pedestrian / Bicycle	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Additionally, the study found that the proposed mix of on-site and off-site parking areas and use of different modes of transportation distributes the anticipated traffic and mitigates impact to the immediate surrounding area as do existing and proposed parking restrictions on the residential streets surrounding the stadium. It also found that current traffic volumes during evening concert peak hours are lower than volumes during typical weekday afternoon peak periods, resulting in additional capacity available to accommodate event traffic. Table 13 summarizes the existing and capacity analysis that results for the weekday and weekend (Saturday) pre-event and post-event peak hours expressed in terms of level of service (LOS). Levels of service range from A to F with LOS A as the highest (best traffic flow and least delay), LOS E as saturated or at-capacity conditions, and LOS F as the lowest (oversaturated conditions). The

analysis indicates intersections including Green Bay Road / Central Street, Green Bay Road / McCormick Boulevard, and Central Street / Ashland Avenue will experience the most impact to LOS and will be temporarily reduced below LOS D which is the typically the minimum level of service accepted by jurisdictional agencies in Northeastern Illinois.

Staff notes that, although a level of service “D” is acknowledged as being a generally accepted standard for jurisdictional agencies in northeastern Illinois, this decrease in the level of service on surrounding streets presents significant concern to staff. Possible decreases to a level of E or F need to be mitigated. As such, staff recommends the applicant propose additional mitigation measures prior to City Council consideration in addition to those outlined both in the impact study and corresponding peer review be included as conditions should the proposed development be approved. Additionally, as requested, the Traffic Management Plan shall be revisited on a regular basis to assist in correcting negative impacts that may be created.

The study suggests that partnerships with CTA and Metra could incentivize transit use which would also be in a better position to supplement shuttles for downtown parkers, ultimately reducing vehicle trips in the area for events. It also recommends using the same event measures currently utilized for football games days for pre and post event traffic management, including but not limited to: access and parking restrictions in surrounding neighborhoods, reorienting traffic flow on certain streets, use of shuttles to main campus and downtown parking garages, and use of police to help direct traffic.

City staff consulted with Interwest to conduct a review of the submitted Traffic Impact Study. The peer review provided comments (also attached) including limiting concert capacity to the number that has been stated (28,500), inclusion of wayfinding signage as the applicant’s expense, confirmation that the baseline scenario for evaluating impacts includes manual controls used for football games, inclusion of on-site transit information kiosks, requiring off-site parking for employees, confirmation that the level of service (LOS) provided incorporates recommended mitigation measures, identifying and integrating mitigation measures to ensure pedestrian safety and enhance connections and linkages to transit, and explaining how the proposed project aligns with the City’s Multi-Modal Transportation Plan.

In addition to these comments, Interwest suggested the following mitigation measures:

1. Implement specific roadway improvements where necessary, feasible and practical.
2. Identify and design mitigation measures to enhance pedestrian safety.
3. Enhance connections and linkages to transit.
4. Include on-site transit information kiosks.
5. Provide off-site parking for employees.
6. Ensure ongoing compliance with the City of Evanston Multi-Modal Transportation Plan.

The applicant responded to these comments and recommendations in their response to the most recent staff review letter dated July 31, 2023 and has submitted an outline of

the Traffic Management Plan which is attached to this staff report. This plan is intended to mitigate impacts associated with full capacity game day events.

#### Environmental Assessment Review (Sound Study)

The applicant provided an environmental assessment review conducted by Wrightson, Johnson, Haddon & Williams Inc., updated August 2, 2023 to analyze the anticipated sound produced by concert events at the proposed stadium (attached). Henderson Engineers conducted a series of environmental sound measurements at and around the Ryan Field property. Measurements were conducted during football game day and non-game daytimes to identify environmental sound levels and establish current sound levels experienced in the surrounding residential areas. Long term and spot sound measurements were conducted at various points surrounding the stadium and in the surrounding neighborhood.

For concerts, it was assumed that stage placement would be at the south end of the stadium, as the presence of other buildings north of it provide some level of sound mitigation (note: the applicant submitted a statement with an alternative placement on the north end, attached as part of the revised assessment review). Projected sound measurements showed as compared with a non-game day daytime activity ambient sound levels between 50-65 dBA and game-day activity ambient sound of 70-80 dBA, notably for a period of time that extends beyond just the football game itself. Concerts are projected to create sound levels at approximately 55-75 dBA and 85-95 dBC; dBA levels will reach similar peak levels to those measured for game day activities at the existing stadium. Levels associated with concerts, while elevated, are expected to occur for shorter aggregate periods of time than football game day activities, though they may be more consistent during that period. With added sound mitigation measures the sound levels are projected to drop to 60 and 65 dBA range.

Generally, the study found “While not eliminating sound emanating completely from the new stadium, the new stadium design elements [distributed house sound system, canopy above the seating area with sound reducing characteristics, and enclosures and walls around the seating bowl that help reduce sound emissions to the community] will be helpful in reducing sound in the neighboring communities when compared to the open nature of the current stadium with a cluster sound system” and expected that combined with lower stadium capacity, there will ultimately be less sound exposure to the residential properties surrounding the stadium compared to what is currently experienced.

City staff consulted with Interwest to conduct a review of the submitted Environmental Assessment Review (attached) which provided comments including but not limited to: adding definitions and a decibel (dBA) chart to provide context for different decibel levels, the need of the study to quantify sound levels once it reaches residential properties and the reduction as it goes to those properties, inclusion of ground-borne vibrations generated from construction and associated uses, listing of sensitive receptors/land uses within the area that may be affected, explanation of how how sound absorbing materials will be used throughout the structure, use of loudspeakers on the



site, how the proposed project and associated operations will comply with City Code as it relates to prohibited noises and inclusion of the Engineer's model inputs and outputs as an appendix.

In addition to these comments, Interwest suggested the following mitigation measures:

1. Limit the duration of full-capacity events, i.e., seven consecutive hours.
2. Design the PA system so that it does not exceed a Lmax of 70 dBA at the neighboring noise sensitive land uses, i.e., residences. This would require the installation of a distributing sound system with highly directional and carefully aimed loudspeakers around the bleachers and field. The distance between the loudspeakers and the coverage area should be minimized to reduce spill to the community. In addition, the PA system output volume should be regulated by an audio processor with the ability to limit the audio output levels (e.g. compressor/limiter).
3. Parking structures located within 200 feet of any residential use shall be constructed with a solid wall fronting the residences and utilize textured surfaces on garage floors and ramps to minimize tire squeal.
4. Utilize sound-absorbing materials on the exterior of stadium structures where appropriate and effective to reduce noise levels at adjacent off-site sensitive receptors.
5. Implement the Best Management Practices (BMP) listed in the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce traffic generated noise.
6. Locate the loading dock and trash/recycling areas for the stadium in the subterranean level, which will preclude noise from this source at exterior locations.

#### Proposed Public Benefits

Northwestern has proposed the following items as public benefits which will continue to be refined:

1. Local minority and women-owned business hiring and contracting efforts for construction jobs, which the University will report transparently;
2. Marketing and advertising support to the Central Street Business Association, among others;
3. Efforts to establish advance concert ticket presale windows for Evanston residents;
4. New space that will be open to the public from 7:00am – 9:00pm, subject to ordinary restrictions and periodic closures;
5. An annual, on-site signature City event; and
6. Free seasonal festivals and community movie nights.

Staff notes that the currently proposed public benefits list is limited and does not provide the tangible items that are typically seen for planned developments. As specified in the attached Northwestern's Letter of Intent (LOI) for the Memorandum of Understanding, final public benefits associated with the redevelopment of Ryan Field, including additional financial contributions by the University, remain under consideration and will be finalized prior to submission of this application for City Council review. Finalized

public benefits will be part of the ordinance for the project, should it receive Council approval.

Additional public benefits that could be considered include but are not limited to the following:

1. Environmental considerations: replacement of storm sewer east of the site
2. Inclusion of Evanston businesses, with emphasis on Central Street Businesses, within vendor areas of the stadium.
3. Deploy a right-sized zero emissions shuttle service for events.
4. Deconstruct existing buildings and reuse materials onsite.
5. Build an all-electric Net Zero Ryan Field or draft a 2040 “Net Zero Ryan Field” Implementation Plan.
6. Offset all vehicular tailpipe emissions related to construction and spectator attendance in perpetuity.
7. Offset all building energy emissions with additional local investment in renewable energy.
8. Preserve existing trees and contribute to the City’s tree health, maintenance, and planting efforts.
9. Contribute to the City’s Sustainability Fund.
10. Deploy two additional Divvy bikeshare stations.

Compliance with the Zoning Ordinance

The U2 University Athletic Facilities District is intended to permit the utilization of university facilities within the district in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding development, which is predominantly residential.

The applicant is requesting a Special Use for a Planned Development in the U2 District to construct a 35,000 spectator capacity stadium with ancillary structures and on-site parking spaces. The following site development allowances are being requested:

<b>Base zoning, allowable Planned Development site development allowance</b>			
	<b>Base Requirements</b>	<b>Site Development Allowance (SDA)</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
<b>Parking Spaces</b>	4,364	None	1,408 (515 on-site, 893 on parking lot w/in 1,000 ft.)
<b>Landscape Strip</b>	35 ft. (adjacent to residential districts)	None	16 ft. 3 in. at closest point

<b>Side Yard Setback (open parking)</b>	15 ft.	None	6 ft. 10 in.
---	--------	------	--------------

Compliance with the Comprehensive Plan

The proposal generally complies with the Evanston Comprehensive General Plan with regards to use. The following goals, objectives and actions within the Comprehensive Plan should also be considered:

- *Support the growth and evolution of institutions while recognizing that they are part of their mostly residential surroundings; Assure that institutional development enhances surrounding neighborhoods as well as the economic development of Evanston (Chapter 6, p56).* The Comprehensive Plan recognizes that it is inevitable that some institutions will renovate, enlarge, or reduce in scale their operations in the future and that the City should support that growth and evolution so long as the growth does not have an adverse impact upon the residentially-zoned adjacent neighborhoods. The existing stadium has been in use since the 1920's, surrounded by residential uses. Constructing a more modern stadium that will decrease the number of spectators at the site, mitigate the noise from current and proposed uses, and provide new landscape plaza space will create a more inviting space and attract spectators and residents that will patronize local businesses. That being said, the increased activity will impact the surrounding areas in terms of increased traffic and noise. The traffic Management Plan and various suggested mitigation measures are critical to lessening the impact and will need to be enforced and revisited on an ongoing basis.
- *Recognize the benefits of mixing residential, commercial, and institutional uses in neighborhoods; Minimize the adverse effects of such circumstances as traffic and parking congestion or incompatible hours of operation as part of City technical assistance or zoning/site plan review of businesses and institutions proposing expansion or relocation to sites adjacent to residential areas. (Part 1, Ch. 2, Objective, pg. 25):* The proposed stadium will be replacing the existing stadium at a smaller capacity with expected football game days and associated traffic. The introduction of a number of concerts presents concerns to both staff and residents with regards to traffic management, parking and sound. Using mitigation efforts currently employed during football game days, expanding upon efforts to promote multi-modal travel use, and implementing suggested mitigation

efforts to reduce sound impacts on surrounding neighborhoods is imperative.

- *Encourage new developments to complement existing street and sidewalk patterns (Part I, Ch. 2, Policies/Actions, pgs. 25-26):* The proposed development increases the landscape areas within the site and street trees along Central Street and Ashland Avenue where there is currently an over-abundance of hardscape areas and parking. The new plaza area will lessen the impact of the new stadium from a pedestrian perspective and be a more inviting, interactive space for the overall community.

### Compliance with the Design Guidelines for Planned Developments

The Design Guidelines for Planned Developments speak largely to buildings and sites used for residential, office and retail uses; construction of a stadium was likely not the type of development the guidelines contemplated. That being said, there are still some measures that can be applied to the proposed development. Building materials, as stated above vary and include, concrete, limestone, granite, glass and painted steel and metal among other materials. The proposed canopy will aid in reducing sound and light pollution from the interior of the stadium. Though, as previously stated, the sound and light pollution created by the stadium remains of great concern to staff and residents and a full roof or dome could help to further mitigate those impacts. The new oval shaped stadium provides additional landscaped open space that does not currently exist and which will provide a less harsh pedestrian experience along Central Street and Ashland Avenue. The required 35 ft. landscape strip will be installed and provide a buffer between existing single family homes east of the site and the parking lot that will run along the east side of the lot where there currently either is none or a very narrow one exists.

Site circulation is fairly controlled with entry into the below-grade loading off of Central Street and access to the east parking lot off of Central Street and Isabella Street. Landscaped islands with shade trees are provided throughout the parking lot. Lighting within the east parking lot is proposed to match what currently exists. Emergency vehicle access will be provided off of Central Street, and Ashland Avenue as needed, through the parking lot with enough space provided around the perimeter of the stadium for both emergency medical vehicles and fire truck access. As noted above pedestrian entry into the stadium is provided at multiple points.

### Staff Project Review Discussion

Staff met on May 30, 2023 to discuss the project prior to compiling several review letters to the applicant. During discussions a number of comments were shared and concerns raised including:

- Parking/traffic concerns- depending on Canal Shores for parking since inclement weather would render it unusable, confirmation of a location for uber/lyft pick-up and drop-off, effects on truck routes and truck turning concerns, the need for a Traffic Management Plan that could be used for various events at the site.
- Fire - confirming hydrant placement, emphasizing that below grade fire truck access is not preferred, possibility of including similar fire suppression system as is in Welsh-Ryan Arena.

- Public Works - the need for details on a storm sewer to the Northshore Channel if MWRD allows, confirmation of a future water main replacement on Ashland Avenue and the need for Ashland Avenue to be upgraded after construction.
- Landscaping - using raised curbs for new trees instead of tree grates and using mulch at the base, confirming a tree preservation and replacement plan.
- Sustainability - requiring a pre-check list for LEED certification, possibilities of including solar panels in the parking area
- Possibility of limiting the number of events that can occur on the site at the same time.

Additional comments and questions were provided in subsequent staff review letters which were provided to the applicant and made available on the City's Proposed Projects page.

Should the Land Use Commission recommend approval of the requested planned development and associated zoning relief, staff suggests the following conditions be considered as part of the recommendation:

1. A Traffic Management Plan shall be finalized prior to the completion of demolition and shall be reviewed administratively on an annual basis.
2. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Evanston and Northwestern University shall be approved that includes but is not limited to the following:
  - Use and reimbursement of City services for events.
  - Prohibition of tailgating for concert events.
  - Coordination meetings for events.
  - Security Plan
  - Sustainability Plan
  - Traffic Management Plan
  - Concert Operations Plan
  - Advance Notice of Concerts
  - Alcohol Controls
  - Public Benefits
  - Community Input
3. Implementation of mitigation measures at the University's expense suggested within the Environmental Assessment Review and subsequent Peer Review, including but not limited to:
  - Maintain use of best practice design elements proposed for the stadium including, utilization of a distributed house sound system within the seating bowl that limits noise levels to 70 DBH at the property line, providing additional canopy or roof/dome above the seating areas that incorporates adequate sound reduction characteristics, and use of enclosures and walls that help reduce sound emissions to the surrounding community.
  - Add vertical barriers around the concourse areas or other openings in the stadium. Barriers can be permanent or retractable. Utilization of sound-absorbing materials on the exterior of stadium structures where

appropriate and effective shall also be incorporated into the building design.

- Limit concert events to use of the stadium's PA system. The PA system shall be designed so that it does not exceed a Lmax of 70 dBA at the neighboring noise sensitive land uses, i.e., residences. This would require the installation of a distributing sound system with highly directional and carefully aimed loudspeakers around the bleachers and field. The distance between the loudspeakers and the coverage area should be minimized to reduce spill to the community. In addition, the PA system output volume should be regulated by an audio processor with the ability to limit the audio output levels (e.g. compressor/limiter).
  - Install sound monitoring devices in and around the stadium- in the stadium seating bowl (typically at the mix position), on the stadium property, and/or within the surrounding residential areas.
  - Implement the Best Management Practices (BMP) listed in the Transportation Management Plan (TMP) to reduce traffic generated noise.
4. The applicant shall propose additional traffic & pedestrian mitigation measures that increase pre and post event LOS prior to City Council consideration.
  5. Implementation of mitigation measures at the applicant's cost suggested within the Traffic Impact Study and subsequent Peer Review, including but not limited to:
    - Implement specific roadway improvements where necessary, feasible and practical, including:
      - Identify and design mitigation measures to enhance pedestrian safety.
      - Enhance connections and linkages to transit.
      - Include on-site transit information kiosks.
      - Provide off-site parking for employees.
      - Ensure ongoing compliance with the City of Evanston Multi-Modal Transportation Plan.
  6. Use of the bandshell in the plaza shall comply with all City Codes relating to noise.
  7. Truck traffic and deliveries used for events to load and unload equipment shall be limited to the below grade area.
  8. That the development complies with Chapter 4-13, Floodplain Regulations, of the Evanston City Code and the Watershed Management Ordinance of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, prior to the issuance of any building permits;
  9. That the development complies with the City's bird-friendly design requirements per Ordinance 83-O-22 and Green Building Ordinance 82-O-22 prior to the issuance of any building permits;
  10. That the development complies with the City's electric vehicle parking requirements per §4-2-2, Table 406.2.7.2 of the City Code prior to the issuance of any building permits;
  11. That the applicant repair any damage done to public right-of-ways as a result of construction on site.

12. That the applicant sign and agrees to a Construction Management Plan (CMP) with the City of Evanston prior to the issuance of any building or demolition permits. The CMP must include but is not limited to the following: water and sewer utility connections, construction staging plan, on-street and on-site construction parking restrictions, hours of operation, a plan including cross-sections showing pedestrian access around the site with the use of curb ramps, signage and/or striping, if necessary, foundation survey of surrounding structures including weekly reporting of seismographs for the duration of construction, submittal of environmental testing report prior to construction, visibility diagram for all construction site access points, a proposed schedule for street opening for utility connections with cross-section details, and project updates via monthly newsletter and project website.
13. That the applicant must record the approving ordinance with the Cook County Clerk's Office.
14. A Ryan Field Sustainability Plan that includes both "Construction" and "Operations" with either an all-electric net zero building or a pathway to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040.
  - a. "Construction"
    - i. Provide plan for deconstruction (not demolition) of the existing structure
    - ii. Provide plan for onsite materials reuse
    - iii. Use low-carbon steel and low-carbon concrete
    - iv. Calculate embodied carbon
    - v. Conduct feasibility study of greywater digester for food prep waste in concession areas
    - vi. Collaborate with ComEd on full building electrification, EV charging, and available incentives
    - vii. Conduct new feasibility study of solar PV or solar parking canopies
  - b. "Operations"
    - i. Plan a path towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions that primarily addresses emissions from the building's energy usage by 2040
    - ii. Include food waste diversion services within the Stadium Complex.
    - iii. Include reusable food and beverage wares and the needed infrastructure.
    - iv. Provide litter management plans for parking lot and neighboring areas
    - v. Install hand dryers in restrooms

### **Standards for Approval**

Prior to making a recommendation of approval, approval with conditions, or denial of any Special Use for a Planned Development, the LUC must review the request against



the following standards: 1) Standards for Special Uses (Section 6-3-5-10) 2) Standards for Planned Developments (Section 6-3-6-9) and 3) and General Conditions, Site Controls, and Standards for Planned Developments in the Special Purpose and Overlay Districts (Section 6-15-1-9). As the Commission makes its findings, it may also consider how the requested planned development provides public benefits, as listed in Section 6-3-6-3.

For the Land Use Commission to recommend that the City Council grant a Special Use, the Land Use Commission must find that the proposed Special Use:

- A. Is one of the special uses specifically listed in the zoning ordinance;
- B. Is in keeping with purposes and policies of the adopted comprehensive general plan and the zoning ordinance as amended from time to time;
- C. Will not cause a negative cumulative effect, when its effect is considered in conjunction with the cumulative effect of various special uses of all types on the immediate neighborhood and the effect of the proposed type of special use upon the City as a whole;
- D. Does not interfere with or diminish the value of property in the neighborhood;
- E. Can be adequately served by public facilities and services;
- F. Does not cause undue traffic congestion;
- G. Preserves significant historical and architectural resources;
- H. Preserves significant natural and environmental features; and
- I. Complies with all other applicable regulations of the district in which it is located and other applicable ordinances, except to the extent such regulations have been modified through the planned development process or the grant of a variation.

For the Land Use Commission to recommend that the City Council grant a Special Use for the Planned Development with the requested Site Development Allowances, the Land Use Commission must find:

- A. The requested Site Development Allowance(s) will not have a substantial adverse impact on the use, enjoyment or property values of adjoining properties that is beyond a reasonable expectation given the scope of the applicable Site Development Allowance(s) of the Planned Development location.
- B. The proposed development is compatible with the overall character of existing development in the immediate vicinity of the subject property.
- C. The development site circulation is designed in a safe and logical manner to mitigate potential hazards for pedestrians and vehicles at the site and in the immediate surrounding area.
- D. The proposed development aligns with the current and future climate and sustainability goals of the City.
- E. Public benefits that are appropriate to the surrounding neighborhood and the City as a whole will be derived from the approval of the requested site development allowance(s).

For the Land Use Commission to recommend that the City Council grant a Special Use for the Planned Development with the requested Site Development Allowances in the U2 University Athletic Facilities District, the Land Use Commission must find:

A. General Conditions

1. Each planned development shall be compatible with surrounding development and not be of such a nature in height, bulk, or scale as to exercise any influence contrary to the purpose and intent of the Zoning Ordinance as set forth in Section 6-1-2, "Purpose and Intent."

If the proposed planned development is for a property listed as an Evanston landmark, or for property located within a historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places or for property located within a historic district so designated by the Evanston Preservation Commission, the planned development shall be compatible with the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation" as set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.

2. Each planned development shall be compatible with and implement the adopted Comprehensive General Plan, as amended, the Plan for Downtown Evanston, any adopted land use or urban design plan specific to the area, this Zoning Ordinance, and any other pertinent City planning and development policies, particularly in terms of: (a) Land use (b) Land use intensity (c) Housing (d) Preservation (e) Environmental (f) Traffic impact and parking (g) Impact on schools, public services and facilities (h) Essential character of the downtown district, the surrounding residential neighborhoods, and abutting residential lots (i) Neighborhood planning (j) Conservation of the taxable value of land and buildings throughout the City, and retention of taxable land on tax rolls.
3. Each planned development shall be completed within two (2) years of the issuance of the special use permit for the planned development. If extensive or staged development is approved as part of the planned development, however, the two (2) year requirement may be extended to provide for a more reasonable time schedule. The expanded time schedule shall be adopted as part of the planned development and so noted on the special use permit for a planned development.
4. No special use permit for a planned development shall be valid for a period longer than one (1) year unless a building permit is issued and construction is actually begun within that period and is diligently pursued to completion. The City Council may, however, for good cause shown, extend the one (1) year period for such time as it shall determine, without further hearing before the Land Use Commission. The City Council may, at its sole discretion, place conditions on the extension in order to assure that the planned development is diligently pursued to its completion.

5. All landscaping treatment within the planned development shall be provided in accordance with the requirements set forth in Chapter 17, "Landscaping and Screening," and shown on the required landscape plan that shall be submitted as part of the planned development application.
- B. Site Controls and Standards. The following site controls and standards are established to provide a regulatory framework that will promote excellence in site design. Their establishment is not intended to restrict or inhibit the Design and Project Review Committee or the applicant from applying other site design principles and standards that may be applicable to the planned development being proposed and that may be found in or interpolated from the Plan for Downtown Evanston, and the City's Manual of Design Guidelines or in common use by design professionals.
1. For all boundaries of the planned development not immediately abutting a dedicated and improved public street, there shall be provided a transition landscaped strip a width of at least the following:  
...  
(e) U2:           Thirty-five (35) feet.  
  
The transitional landscape strip shall consist of vegetative screening, fencing, or decorative walls in accordance with the Manual of Design Guidelines and Chapter 17, "Landscaping and Screening." The transition landscaped strip and its treatment shall be depicted on the required landscape plan and submitted as part of the planned development application. Residential planned developments shall provide a transition landscape strip of the type noted above in this Subsection (B)1 of at least eight (8) feet in width.
  2. Walkways developed for a planned development shall form a logical, safe and convenient system for pedestrian access to all project facilities and off-site destinations likely to attract substantial pedestrian traffic. Pedestrian ways shall not be used by other automotive traffic.
  3. The location, construction and operation of parking, loading areas, and service areas, shall be designed to avoid adverse effects on residential uses within or adjoining the development and, where possible, provide additional parking beyond that required for the planned development to service the downtown district in which it is located.
  4. Principal vehicular access points shall be designed to permit smooth traffic flow with controlled turning movements and minimum hazards to vehicular or pedestrian traffic. If the planned development employs local streets within the development, said streets shall not be connected to streets

outside the development in such a way as to encourage their use by through traffic.

5. The planned development shall provide, if possible, for underground installation of utilities (including electricity and telephone) both in public ways and private extensions thereof. Provisions shall be made for acceptable design and construction of stormwater facilities including grading, gutter, piping, treatment of turf, and maintenance of facilities.
6. For every planned development there shall be provided a market feasibility statement that shall indicate the consumer market areas for all uses proposed in the development, the population potential of the area or areas to be served by the uses proposed and other pertinent information concerning the need or demand for such uses of land.
7. For every planned development involving twenty (20) or more dwelling units or forty thousand (40,000) square feet in gross area, there shall be provided a traffic circulation impact study that shall show the effect of all proposed uses upon adjacent and nearby roads and highways. The study also shall show the amount and direction of anticipated traffic flow and clearly describe what road improvements and traffic control improvements might become necessary as result of the construction of the proposed development.
8. The Zoning Administrator may, at his discretion, require of the applicant additional studies or impact analyses when he determines that a reasonable need for such investigation is indicated.

Finally, in relation to Standard 6-3-6-9(E), below are examples of “the public benefits to the surrounding neighborhood and the City as a whole that are intended to be derived from the approval of planned developments, [which] include, but are not limited to:”

- A. Preservation and enhancement of desirable site characteristics and open space.
- B. A pattern of development which preserves natural vegetation, topographic and geologic features.
- C. Preservation and enhancement of historic and natural resources that significantly contribute to the character of the City.
- D. Use of design, landscape, or architectural features to create a pleasing environment or other special development features.
- E. Provision of a variety of housing types in accordance with the City's housing goals.
- F. Elimination of blighted structures or incompatible uses through redevelopment or rehabilitation.
- G. Business, commercial, and manufacturing development to enhance the local economy and strengthen the tax base.

- H. The efficient use of the land resulting in more economic networks of utilities, streets, schools, public grounds, buildings, and other facilities.
- I. The substantial incorporation of generally recognized sustainable design practices and/or building materials to promote energy conservation and improve environmental quality, such as level gold or higher LEED (leadership in energy and environmental design) certification.

### **Action by the Commission**

After making findings of fact as to whether or not the requested Special Use for a Planned Development with Site Development Allowances meets or does not meet the aforementioned standards, the Land Use Commission may make a recommendation or recommendations to the Planning & Development Committee of the City Council to approve, approve with conditions, or deny the zoning relief as requested.

### **Attachments**

1. [Original Planned Development Application](#)
  - [Project Narrative](#)
  - [Statement of Compliance](#)
  - [Response to 12.8.22 Staff Review Letter](#)
2. Development Plans dated 8.15.23
  - [P1 - Site Plan-Elevations-Materials-Bird Friendly Measures](#)
  - [P2 - Renderings-Photos of Existing](#)
  - [P3 - Signage Plan](#)
  - [P4 - Site Structures](#)
  - [P5 - Area Plan-Loading-Access-Circulation Diagram](#)
  - [P6 - Utilities-Drainage-Topography-Soil Conditions](#)
  - [P7 - Landscape Plan](#)
  - [P8 - Fences-Walls-Lighting](#)
  - [P9 - Shadow Diagrams](#)
  - [P10 - Pedestrian Path](#)
3. [Staff Review Letter Dated 7.31.23 with Interwest Peer Review](#)
4. [Applicant Response to 7.31.23 Staff Review Letter](#)
5. [Traffic Impact Study](#)
6. [Traffic Management Plan Outline](#)
7. [Environmental Assessment Review Report](#)
8. [Okrent Kiesiel Evaluation Report](#)
9. [Draft Letter of Intent \(LOI\) for future Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#)
10. [Applicant Submitted Press Summary](#)
11. [Applicant Submitted Petition in Support](#)
12. [Economic Impact Study](#)
13. [Public Comments Received as of August 31, 2023](#)

# **LAND USE COMMISSION**

23PLND-0010

Text Amendment

Permitted Uses in the U2 University Athletic  
Facilities District



# Memorandum

To: Chair and Members of the Land Use Commission

From: Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner

CC: Sarah Flax, Director of Community Development  
Elizabeth Williams, Planning Manager

Subject: Zoning Text Amendment, U2 University Athletic Facilities District,  
23PLND-0010

Date: September 6, 2023

## **Request**

---

Northwestern University requests a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, Section 6-15-7-2 Permitted Uses, to modify the list of permitted uses in the U2 University Athletic Facilities District and conditions required for public facing concerts. No changes are proposed to the U2 district boundaries. The Land Use Commission is the recommending body for this case in accordance with Section 6-3-4-6 of the Evanston Zoning Code and Ordinance 92-O-21.

## **Notice**

---

The Application has been filed in conformance with applicable procedural and public notice requirements including publication in the Evanston Review on August 3, 2023 and August 10, 2023 as well as the Sun-Times on August 3, 2023 and August 21, 2023.

## **General Information**

---

**Applicant:** Northwestern University  
2020 Ridge Avenue  
Evanston, IL 60201

## **Analysis**

---

### Background

Per the City's Zoning Ordinance, the U2 University Athletic Facilities District "is intended to permit the utilization of university facilities within the district in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding development, which is predominantly residential."

The U2 District is currently applied north of Central Street to the City limits, between Ashland Avenue to the west and University property west of Asbury Avenue to the east.

This zoning district encompasses Ryan Field, Drysdale Field, Miller Park, Welsh-Ryan Arena, Trienens (Athletic) Performance Center and Anderson Hall.

The Zoning Ordinance lists permitted uses in the U2 District in Subsection 6-15-7-2. *Permitted Uses:*

The following uses shall be permitted in the U2 district:  
Business or vocational school.

Fieldhouse.

Indoor recreational facility (college and university).

Outdoor recreational facility (college and university).

Parking lot (college and university).

Playground.

Stadium.

The following uses shall be considered permitted uses when conducted in association with the above permitted uses:

- Intramural and intercollegiate sports and athletic events and practice therefor.
- Local, regional and State elementary and high school athletic events and practice therefor.
- Band playing and practice in connection with the above events.
- Commencement, convocation and graduation exercises.
- University-sponsored lecture, speakers, musical performances and other cultural events held within an enclosed building provided that attendance is limited to ten thousand (10,000) or less.
- Luncheons and dinners and dining room facilities in a stadium provided that attendance is limited to the seating capacity of the facilities.
- Accessory uses to the above permitted uses, including administrative and faculty offices, classroom, auditoriums, athletic facilities and parking spaces.
- Off-street parking for hospital employees and for university students and employees.

Temporary event (provided they are of a community or cultural nature and further provided they meet the conditions listed below):

This Subsection provides standards to ensure that temporary uses shall not impose an undue adverse effect on neighboring streets or property.

Community and cultural events of a nonprofit nature intended primarily for residents of the City and amateur athletic events shall be permitted provided that the following conditions are met:

- 1) Sponsors of the temporary event obtain a certificate of zoning



compliance pursuant to [Section 6-4-8-2](#) of this Title.

- 2) Attendance at such events is limited to ten thousand (10,000) persons or less.
- 3) Adequate university parking is available and is provided to all persons attending the event.
- 4) Private security is provided for those parking areas utilized.
- 5) Adequate provision of traffic-control devices at no City expense, including personnel, shall be provided to ensure the free flow of traffic and the security and safety of said traffic flow.
- 6) Live animals used in conjunction with any event may only be stored within a completely enclosed building.
- 7) No more than seven (7) such events shall be held in any calendar year in any one facility, and each such event shall not exceed five (5) consecutive days in duration.
- 8) Lighting associated with such events shall be directed away from adjacent residences.
- 9) Tractor trailers may not remain running while parked on the public street or in off-street parking areas.

A Text Amendment to this Section of the Zoning Code was approved on November 11, 2019, by ordinance 135-O-19, pertaining to community and cultural events. This text amendment permitted Northwestern University to host national events on a trial basis within Welsh-Ryan Arena, which has a capacity of approximately 7,039 spectators. The provisions within that text amendment were approved on a sunset basis which expired on December 31, 2021 and no longer apply. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, no events were held during that trial period.

Proposal

Northwestern is requesting the text amendment to clarify the types of community events permitted and to allow for up to 6 public-facing, full-capacity concerts. This represents a reduction from their original request of up to 10 public-facing concerts. Specifically, the applicant is requesting the following changes:

Current Language	Proposed Language	Explanation
The following uses shall be considered permitted uses when conducted in association with the above permitted uses:	<i>Eliminate language</i>	Remove ambiguity about what uses are “conducted in association with an above permitted use” and allow for use of facilities in the U2 district by the community.
Intramural and intercollegiate sports and athletic events and practice therefor.	Intramural, intercollegiate or amateur sports and athletic events and practice therefor.	Clarify that other amateur sports events are allowed in addition to high school or college athletics, such as Olympic trials or competitions, 7 on 7 football games, college pro

		days/combines and Special Olympics events.
Band playing and practice in connection with the above events.	Band playing and practice in connection with another permitted use.	Clarify that band playing and practice is allowed in connection with any other permitted use, not simply the ones listed above.
<i>New Section</i>	Outdoor lectures, speakers, non-musical festivals, social events and other community or cultural events, and musical performances in conjunction or associated with the foregoing (which shall require loudspeaker permits from the City for any noise amplification), hosted by the University or City and designed for the University or local community, provided that the capacity for such events is no greater than 7,500, and no more than 60 days of programming occurs annually. Such events shall not include any outdoor plaza rentals to organizations not affiliated with the University or City.	Add a new section allowing for smaller community events in the U2 District that are sponsored by the University or City, intended primarily to allow for the use of the new Ryan Field plazas by the community.
Luncheons and dinners and dining room facilities in a stadium provided that attendance is limited to the seating capacity of the facilities.	Banquet halls, including breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, meeting and dining room facilities, provided that attendance is limited to the capacity of the specific facilities.	Allow for other dining/private event uses, including philanthropic events, weddings, birthdays, etc.
Off-street parking for hospital employees and for university students and employees.	Off-street parking for hospital employees and for university students, employees, guests and invitees.	Add "guests and invitees" as allowed in the off-street parking.

<p>Temporary event (provided they are of a community or cultural nature and further provided they meet the conditions listed below):</p> <p>Community and cultural events of a nonprofit nature intended primarily for residents of the City and amateur athletic events shall be permitted provided that the following conditions are met:</p> <p>Sponsors of the temporary event shall obtain a certificate of zoning compliance pursuant to Section 6-4-8-2 of this Title.</p>	<p>Public-facing concerts (provided they meet the conditions listed below):</p>	<p>Clarify and simplify the type of capacity events that are allowed and eliminate the requirement of a certificate of zoning compliance, as required operationally in order to book acts in advance. Note: The requirement of coordinating meetings with City staff will be included in an MOU between Evanston and Northwestern.</p>
<p>Attendance at such events is limited to ten thousand (10,000) persons or less.</p>	<p>Attendance at such events is limited to the capacity of the facility.</p>	<p>Allow for events up to the capacity of the respective facility.</p>
<p>Adequate university parking is available and is provided to all persons attending the event.</p>	<p>A coordinated Transportation Management Plan shall be submitted to the City Manager or its designee.</p>	<p>Provides for required parking to be governed by the approved Planned Development and a Traffic Management Plan that will cover utilization of off-site parking, alternate modes of transportation, the provision for closure of streets and other topics.</p>
<p>Private security is provided for those parking areas utilized.</p>	<p>Private security is provided for University-owned parking areas utilized.</p>	<p>Clarify that private security is only required for University-owned parking areas (or as established by the Traffic Management Plan).</p>
<p>Adequate provision of traffic-control devices at no City expense including personnel, shall be provided to ensure the free flow of traffic and the security and safety of said traffic flow</p>	<p>Reasonable provision of multi-modal traffic-control devices at no City expense including personnel, shall be provided to ensure the free flow of pedestrian, bike and vehicular traffic and the security and safety of said traffic flow.</p>	<p>Enhance requirement to include “multi-modal” traffic control, including pedestrian and bicycle traffic.</p>

No more than seven (7) such events shall be held in any calendar year in any one facility, and each such event shall not exceed five (5) consecutive days in duration.	There shall be no more than six (6) total days of such events in any calendar year within the U2 district, excluding setup and takedown. Such events shall not occur on the same date as other full-capacity events at the stadium or fieldhouse.	Establish the number of permitted events as 6 total across the entire district. Prohibit two full-capacity events occurring simultaneously at Ryan Field and Welsh-Ryan Arena.
Tractor trailers may not remain running while parked on the public street or in off-street parking areas.	Vehicles may only idle in approved designated areas on private property.	Expand "tractor trailers" to all vehicles and allow for idling on private property but only in designated areas. Note: Idling on public streets is restricted by Evanston idling code.
<i>New Section</i>	Concert music may be amplified during the hours of 10:00 a.m. through 10:00 p.m. on Sundays through Thursdays (subject to the following), and during the hours of 10:00 a.m. through 10:15 p.m. on Fridays, Saturdays and days preceding national holidays and legal school holidays enumerated in 105 ILCS 5/24-2, as permitted for special events pursuant to Section 9-5-20 and any associated required permits shall be issued.	Add event hours more restrictive than proposed noise ordinances and common practice to be restricted after 10:00 pm on school nights and 10:15 pm other nights.
<i>New Section</i>	Any uses not outlined herein shall require approval by the City's Special Events Committee.	Clarify involvement of the City's Special Events Committee.

Traffic and Sound Impacts

Concerns have been raised and discussed regarding the traffic management and sound created from hosting the increased events at Ryan Field. Northwestern anticipates that concert events will largely take place on the weekends but some may be scheduled during weekday evenings. Both a traffic impact study and environmental sound assessment were submitted and are summarized below in relation to Northwestern University's proposed planned development for a new Ryan Field stadium.

*Traffic Impact Study*

The applicant submitted a Traffic Impact Study dated April 2023 and revised August 14, 2023, conducted by Kimley-Horn to analyze possible effects the proposed development may have on traffic in the area, specifically as it relates to proposed concert uses. The

study noted that the proposed stadium has a capacity that is 12,000 fewer spectators than the existing stadium and that capacity decreases further for concert events to 28,500 spectators.

The applicant submitted a Traffic Impact Study dated April 2023 and revised August 14, 2023, conducted by Kimley-Horn to analyze possible effects the proposed development may have on traffic in the area, specifically as it relates to proposed concert uses. The study noted that the proposed stadium has a capacity that is 12,000 fewer spectators than the existing stadium and that capacity decreases further for concert events to 28,500 spectators. The site itself is considered a Transit Oriented Development served by multiple public transportation lines. For train service, the CTA elevated light-rail Purple Line Davis Street stop and the Union Pacific North Metra stop are both within walking distance at transit stations approximately one quarter-mile from the subject property. Stops for CTA bus route #201 (which operates between the Howard Red Line Station along Ridge Road, Church Street, Sheridan Road, and Central Street to Old Orchard Shopping Center in Skokie) are located just south of the site. Additionally, the site is near designated bike routes on Isabella Avenue, Asbury Avenue, Lincoln Street and Green Bay Road. On-street parking is available on both sides of Central Street and the east side of Ashland Avenue. However, as part of suggested mitigation measures, the study does recommend that the parking be restricted on both sides of Central Street and that traffic be restricted to one way on Ashland Avenue during game days and events. Limited parking is also available on Isabella Street and there is restricted parking on the north side of Isabella (no parking 2 hours before to 2 hours after football games).

The traffic study evaluated pre-event and post-event peak hours (6:00PM to 7:00PM and 10:00PM to 11:00PM respectively) on a typical weekday evening and Saturday evening to cover the possible range of concert event dates. The analysis took into account lane configurations and routing, on-street parking restrictions, traffic controls and active management of nearby intersections by Evanston Police as is typically done for football games. It also anticipated use of parking spaces at the on-site parking lots as well as off-site parking spaces at surface lots and garages on Northwestern's campus (1,613), Downtown garages (3,583), Canal Shores (850) and Commuter parking spaces on Poplar Street (200). It is anticipated that shuttle buses will be used to get people to and from the campus and downtown parking areas, similar to what is currently done for football games. Targeted efforts need to be enumerated as to how visitors will be encouraged to use the downtown parking and directed to shuttle service to and from the site. Additionally, staff has called attention to the fact that the Canal Shores parking is heavily dependent on weather conditions, as the surface is grass and not the standard hard surface required for parking spaces. Inclement weather conditions could render that parking option unusable. This raises concerns regarding the amount of consistently available parking spaces.

Additionally, the study found that the proposed mix of on-site and off-site parking areas and use of different modes of transportation distributes the anticipated traffic and mitigates impact to the immediate surrounding area as do existing and proposed parking restrictions on the residential streets surrounding the stadium. It also found that current traffic volumes during evening concert peak hours are lower than volumes during typical weekday afternoon peak periods, resulting in additional capacity available to accommodate event traffic. Table 13 summarizes the existing and capacity analysis

that results for the weekday and weekend (Saturday) pre-event and post-event peak hours expressed in terms of level of service (LOS). Levels of service range from A to F with LOS A as the highest (best traffic flow and least delay), LOS E as saturated or at-capacity conditions, and LOS F as the lowest (oversaturated conditions). The analysis indicates intersections including Green Bay Road / Central Street, Green Bay Road / McCormick Boulevard, and Central Street / Ashland Avenue will experience the most impact to LOS and will be temporarily reduced below LOS D which is the typically the minimum level of service accepted by jurisdictional agencies in Northeastern Illinois. Staff notes that, although a level of service “D” is acknowledged as being a generally accepted standard for jurisdictional agencies in northeastern Illinois, this decrease in the level of service on surrounding streets presents significant concern to staff. Possible decreases to a level of E or F need to be mitigated. As such, staff recommends the applicant propose additional mitigation measures prior to City Council consideration in addition to those outlined both in the impact study and corresponding peer review be included as conditions should the proposed development be approved. Additionally, as requested, the Traffic Management Plan shall be revisited on a regular basis to assist in correcting negative impacts that may be created.

The study suggests that partnerships with CTA and Metra could incentivize transit use which would also be in a better position to supplement shuttles for downtown parkers, ultimately reducing vehicle trips in the area for events. It also recommends using the same event measures currently utilized for football games days for pre and post event traffic management, including but not limited to: access and parking restrictions in surrounding neighborhoods, reorienting traffic flow on certain streets, use of shuttles to main campus and downtown parking garages, and use of police to help direct traffic.

City staff consulted with Interwest to conduct a peer review of the submitted Traffic Impact Study. The peer review provided comments (attached within staff memorandum for the Planned Development) including limiting concert capacity to the number that has been stated (28,500), inclusion of wayfinding signage as the applicant’s expense, confirmation that the baseline scenario for evaluating impacts includes manual controls used for football games, inclusion of on-site transit information kiosks, requiring off-site parking for employees, confirmation that the level of service (LOS) provided incorporates recommended mitigation measures, identifying and integrating mitigation measures to ensure pedestrian safety and enhance connections and linkages to transit, and explaining how the proposed project aligns with the City’s Multi-Modal Transportation Plan.

Staff notes that, although a level of service “D” is acknowledged as being a generally accepted standard for jurisdictional agencies in northeastern Illinois, this decrease in the level of service on surrounding streets presents significant concern to staff. Possible decreases to a level of E or F need to be mitigated. As such, staff recommends the applicant propose additional mitigation measures prior to City Council consideration in addition to those outlined both in the impact study and corresponding peer review be included as conditions with the associated planned development application should that proposed development be approved. Additionally, as requested, the Traffic Management Plan shall be revisited on a regular basis to assist in correcting negative impacts that may be created from the additional uses.

### *Environmental Sound Assessment*

The applicant provided an environmental assessment review conducted by Wrightson, Johnson, Haddon & Williams Inc., updated August 2, 2023 to analyze the anticipated sound produced by concert events at the proposed stadium (attached). Henderson Engineers conducted a series of environmental sound measurements at and around the Ryan Field property. Measurements were conducted during football game day and non-game daytimes to identify environmental sound levels and establish current sound levels experienced in the surrounding residential areas. Long term and spot sound measurements were conducted at various points surrounding the stadium and in the surrounding neighborhood.

The applicant provided an environmental assessment review conducted by Wrightson, Johnson, Haddon & Williams Inc., updated August 2, 2023 to analyze the anticipated sound produced by concert events at the proposed stadium (attached). Henderson Engineers conducted a series of environmental sound measurements at and around the Ryan Field property. Measurements were conducted during football game day and non-game daytimes to identify environmental sound levels and establish current sound levels experienced in the surrounding residential areas. Long term and spot sound measurements were conducted at various points surrounding the stadium and in the surrounding neighborhood.

For concerts, it was assumed that stage placement would be placed at the south end of the stadium, as the presence of other buildings north of it provide some level of sound mitigation (note: the applicant submitted a statement with an alternative placement on the north end, attached as part of the revised assessment review). Projected sound measurements showed as compared with a non-game day daytime activity ambient sound levels between 50-65 dBA and game-day activity ambient sound of 70-80 dBA, notably for a period of time that extends beyond just the football game itself. Concerts are projected to create sound levels at approximately 55-75 dBA and 85-95 dBC; dBA levels will reach similar peak levels to those measured for game day activities at the existing stadium. Levels associated with concerts, while elevated, are expected to occur for shorter aggregate periods of time than football game day activities, though they may be more consistent during that period. With added sound mitigation measures the sound levels are projected to drop to 60 and 65 dBA range.

Generally, the study found “While not eliminating sound emanating completely from the new stadium, the new stadium design elements [distributed house sound system, canopy above the seating area with sound reducing characteristics, and enclosures and walls around the seating bowl that help reduce sound emissions to the community] will be helpful in reducing sound in the neighboring communities when compared to the open nature of the current stadium with a cluster sound system” and expected that combined with lower stadium capacity, there will ultimately be less sound exposure to the residential properties surrounding the stadium compared to what is currently experienced.

City staff consulted with Interwest to conduct a review of the submitted Environmental Assessment Review (attached) which provided comments including but not limited to: adding definitions and a decibel (dBA) chart to provide context for different decibel levels, the need of the study to quantify sound levels once it reaches residential

properties and the reduction as it goes to those properties, inclusion of groundbourne vibrations generated from construction and associated uses, listing of sensitive receptors/land uses within the area that may be affected, explanation of how how sound absorbing materials will be used throughout the structure, use of loudspeakers on the site, how the proposed project and associated operations will comply with City Code as it relates to prohibited noises and inclusion of the Engineer's model inputs and outputs as an appendix.

In addition to these comments, Interwest suggested the following mitigation measures:

1. Limit the duration of full-capacity events, i.e., seven consecutive hours.
2. Design the PA system so that it does not exceed a Lmax of 70 dBA at the neighboring noise sensitive land uses, i.e., residences. This would require the installation of a distributing sound system with highly directional and carefully aimed loudspeakers around the bleachers and field. The distance between the loudspeakers and the coverage area should be minimized to reduce spill to the community. In addition, the PA system output volume should be regulated by an audio processor with the ability to limit the audio output levels (e.g. compressor/limiter).
3. Parking structures located within 200 feet of any residential use shall be constructed with a solid wall fronting the residences and utilize textured surfaces on garage floors and ramps to minimize tire squeal.
4. Utilize sound-absorbing materials on the exterior of stadium structures where appropriate and effective to reduce noise levels at adjacent off-site sensitive receptors.
5. Implement the Best Management Practices (BMP) listed in the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce traffic generated noise.
6. Locate the loading dock and trash/recycling areas for the stadium in the subterranean level, which will preclude noise from this source at exterior locations.

### Economic Impact

As part of the Text Amendment application, the applicant provided an Economic Impact Study, which is linked in the attachments below. This analysis measured the effects of direct, indirect, and induced business volume as well as the government tax revenue impacts of rebuilding Ryan Field as well as impacts of operating the stadium and hosting Northwestern football games and other special events. The study projected significant economic impact during construction of the stadium and an increase in the economic impact of football and gameday visitors. The addition of concerts and other special events on site are projected to also contribute to new annual economic impact to the City.

The City has consulted with C.H. Johnson Consulting, Inc. to conduct its own Economic Impact Study which is due to be completed this month.

### **Department Findings**

With regard to this proposed change to the U2 District, staff does acknowledge that this text amendment presents a possible opportunity to increase community facing events, especially within the plaza space. Currently, in addition to game days, University-sponsored lecture, speakers, musical performances and other cultural events



held within an enclosed building with an attendance limited to 10,000 or less is currently a permitted use. Additionally, temporary events that are of a community or cultural nature are permitted with a number of conditions attached related to maximum number of attendees, restrictions on the number of days the event can take place, adequate parking being available, security measures and other items. A limit of 7 events currently may also take place over the course of 5 days for each event which can create significant impact to the surrounding neighborhood. This being noted, opening up additional events to up to 28,500 attendees at Ryan Field and having up to 7,500 attendees at outdoor events up to 60 total days throughout the year is a significant increase in attendees, which as noted above results in a number of concerns for City staff related to parking, traffic circulation, level of service of surrounding streets and intersections, and sound attenuation for the surrounding community.

Patrons of the events permitted through this text amendment may likely frequent other businesses in the surrounding area and encourage additional foot traffic for Evanston's businesses, especially along Central Street and downtown where additional parking is available and accessible through proposed shuttle service for event days (and currently exists for game days). It is critical that the traffic management plan that is put in place is detailed and reviewed on a consistent basis in order to adjust for any traffic needs and mitigate traffic circulation or parking issues that may arise from the increase in visitors to the buildings on the site.

Should the Commission vote to recommend approval of the text amendment, staff suggests the following revisions or conditions to what is proposed:

1. That spectator capacity at the concerts within Ryan Field be limited to 28,500.
2. Should capacity be proposed to exceed 28,500 within Ryan Field, a revised Traffic Impact Study shall be submitted for review prior to scheduling of said event.
3. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Evanston and Northwestern University shall be approved that includes but is not limited to the following:
  - Use and reimbursement of City services for events.
  - Prohibition of tailgating for concert events.
  - Coordination meetings for events.
  - Security Plan
  - Sustainability Plan
  - Traffic Management Plan
  - Concert Operations Plan
  - Advance Notice of Concerts
  - Alcohol Controls
  - Community Input
4. Limit concert events to use of the stadium's PA system. The PA system shall be designed so that it does not exceed a L<sub>max</sub> of 70 dBA at the neighboring noise sensitive land uses, i.e., residences. This would require the installation of a distributing sound system with highly directional and carefully aimed loudspeakers around the bleachers and field. The distance between the loudspeakers and the coverage area should be minimized to reduce spill to the community. In addition, the

- PA system output volume should be regulated by an audio processor with the ability to limit the audio output levels (e.g. compressor/limiter).
5. Install sound monitoring devices in and around the stadium- in the stadium seating bowl (typically at the mix position), on the stadium property, and/or within the surrounding residential areas.
  6. Truck traffic and deliveries used for events to load and unload equipment shall be limited to the below grade area.
  7. The Traffic Management Plan is reviewed and updated administratively between the City and the University on an annual basis and when changes to events are proposed.
  8. Limit concert duration and days to those enumerated within the proposed amendment. Set-up and take-down for said concerts shall be conducted in such a manner that trucks are utilized in the below-grade area and active take-down after concerts shall be limited to 2 hours after evening concert completion. All set-up and take-down activities shall follow regulations enumerated in City Code section 9-5-20 and Section 10-4-18.

### **Standards for Approval - Zoning Text Amendment**

---

Below is the language from Section 6-3-4-5 of the Zoning Code, to assist the Land Use Commission in making their findings of fact and recommendation to the City Council regarding the proposed text amendment.

*The wisdom of amending the text of the Zoning Ordinance or the Zoning Map is a matter committed to the sound legislative discretion of the City Council and is not controlled by any one standard. In making their determination, however, the City Council should, in determining whether to adopt or deny, or to adopt some modification of the Land Use Commission's recommendation consider, among other factors, the following:*

- A. *Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive General Plan, as adopted and amended from time to time by the City Council.*
- B. *Whether the proposed amendment is compatible with the overall character of existing development in the immediate vicinity of the subject property.*
- C. *Whether the proposed amendment will have an adverse effect on the value of adjacent properties.*
- D. *The adequacy of public facilities and services.*

### **Action by the Commission**

---

After making findings of fact as to whether or not the proposed text amendment meets the aforementioned standards, the Land Use Commission may make a recommendation or recommendations to the Planning & Development Committee of the City Council to approve, approve with modifications, or deny the proposed text amendment. The Commission must first consider and make a motion on the proposed text amendment prior to considering zoning case 23PLND-0010. The Land Use Commission is the recommending body and the City Council is the determining body pursuant to Section 6-3-4-6 of the Evanston City Code.

## **Attachments**

---

1. Applicable Zoning Code Excerpt - Section 6-15-7-2
2. **(Current)** Zoning Text Amendment Request - **8.18.23**
  - [Revised Application Information](#)
  - [Text Amendment Language](#)
3. [Original Zoning Text Amendment Application](#) -**1.27.23**
  - [Supplemental Application Information](#)
  - [Proposed Text Amendment Language](#)
  - [Concert Transportation Management Overview](#)
4. Revised Zoning Text Amendment Request - **5.3.23**
  - [Revised Application Information](#)
  - [Proposed Text Amendment Language](#)
5. Revised Zoning Text Amendment Request - **8.14.23**
  - [Revised Application Information](#)
  - [Proposed Text Amendment Language](#)
6. [Economic Impact Study](#)
7. [Traffic Impact Study](#)
8. [Environmental Assessment Review](#)

## 6-15-7-2. - PERMITTED USES.

The following uses shall be permitted in the U2 district:

Business or vocational school.

Fieldhouse.

Indoor recreational facility (college and university).

Outdoor recreational facility (college and university).

Parking lot (college and university).

Playground.

Stadium.

The following uses shall be considered permitted uses when conducted in association with the above permitted uses:

- Intramural and intercollegiate sports and athletic events and practice therefor.
- Local, regional and State elementary and high school athletic events and practice therefor.
- Band playing and practice in connection with the above events.
- Commencement, convocation and graduation exercises.
- University-sponsored lecture, speakers, musical performances and other cultural events held within an enclosed building provided that attendance is limited to ten thousand (10,000) or less.
- Luncheons and dinners and dining room facilities in a stadium provided that attendance is limited to the seating capacity of the facilities.
- Accessory uses to the above permitted uses, including administrative and faculty offices, classroom, auditoriums, athletic facilities and parking spaces.
- Off-street parking for hospital employees and for university students and employees.

Temporary event (provided they are of a community or cultural nature and further provided they meet the conditions listed below):

This Subsection provides standards to ensure that temporary uses shall not impose an undue adverse effect on neighboring streets or property.

Community and cultural events of a nonprofit nature intended primarily for residents of the City and amateur athletic events shall be permitted provided that the following conditions are met:

- 1) Sponsors of the temporary event obtain a certificate of zoning compliance pursuant to Section 6-4-8-2 of this Title.
- 2) Attendance at such events is limited to ten thousand (10,000) persons or less.
- 3) Adequate university parking is available and is provided to all persons attending the event.
- 4) Private security is provided for those parking areas utilized.
- 5) Adequate provision of traffic-control devices at no City expense, including personnel, shall be provided to ensure the free flow of traffic and the security and safety of said traffic flow.
- 6) Live animals used in conjunction with any event may only be stored within a completely enclosed building.
- 7) No more than seven (7) such events shall be held in any calendar year in any one facility, and each such event shall not exceed five (5) consecutive days in duration.
- 8) Lighting associated with such events shall be directed away from adjacent residences.
- 9) Tractor trailers may not remain running while parked on the public street or in off-street parking areas.

(Ord. 108-0-98; Ord. No. 3-O-14, § 26, 2-10-2014)