

**Committee of the Whole Meeting
Regular Rescheduled
City Hall
1707 St Johns Avenue,
Highland Park, IL 60035
December 15, 2025
5:00 PM
Agenda**

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- 1. Emails with Unlimited Information.** Individuals may email the City an unlimited number of words at cityhp@cityhpil.com. Emails will be forwarded to the City Council if requested. All emails received will be acknowledged.
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I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Approval of Minutes

- A. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Committee of the Whole Held on November 24, 2025
- B. Approval of the Minutes of the Closed Session of the Regular Meeting of the Committee of the Whole held on November 24, 2025

IV. Scheduled Business

- A. Highland Park Community Foundation Annual Report 2025
- B. Place of Remembrance Update & Budget Determination
- C. Discussion of Proposed New Land Use – Champions Point

V. Other Matters

VI. Closed Session

VII. Adjournment

Staff Report



Meeting Date: December 15, 2025

Staff Contact: Ashley Palbitska, Assistant to the City Manager/Deputy City Clerk

Department: City Manager's Office

Title: Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Committee of the Whole Held on November 24, 2025

Recommendation:

For the City Council's approval are the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Committee of the Whole held on September 25, 2025.

Attachments:

1. MIN COTW 11-24-2025

**MINUTES OF A OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF THE CITY OF
HIGHLAND PARK**

MEETING DATE: November 24, 2025

MEETING LOCATION: City Hall
1707 St Johns Avenue, Highland Park, IL 60035

I. Call to Order

At 5:30 PM, Mayor Rotering called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call:

Present: Mayor Rotering, Councilmembers Center, Bruckman, Ross, Tapia, Lidawer, Blumberg

Absent: None

Staff Present: City Manager Neukirch, Director of Public Works Bannon, Community Development Director Fontane, Assistant City Manager Jason, Finance Director McCaulou, Fire Chief Schrage, Assistant City Manager Taub, Commander Curran, Communications Manager Bennett, Assistant to the City Manager Palbitska, Finance Executive Assistant Icasiano

Also Present: Deputy Corporation Counsel Passman

II. Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Committee of the Whole Held on November 10, 2025

Councilmember Lidawer moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Committee of the Whole Held on November 10, 2025. Councilmember Bruckman seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, the Mayor declared the motion Passed (7 - 0).

MOVER:	Councilmember Lidawer
SECONDER:	Councilmember Bruckman
AYES:	Mayor Rotering, Councilmembers Center, Bruckman, Ross, Tapia, Lidawer, Blumberg
NAYS:	None

III. Scheduled Business

A. Utility Billing Leak Adjustment Policy
City Manager Neukirch provided opening comments.

Finance Executive Assistant Icasiano presented an overview on the City's Utility Billing Leak Adjustment Policy and procedures for utility billing adjustments. She presented new considerations for policy consideration. Public Works Director Bannon provided additional insight on the policy considerations.

The Council and Staff discussed the appreciation for the time and effort that was spent on this subject matter. They discussed items to eliminate and keep as part of the policy. They discussed the appeals process, how it allows for homeowners to work with the City and the due diligence staff takes at reviewing each request submitted. They discussed how the policy overall recognizes human error and encourages repair, not just allowing the problem to continue without action. They discussed the history of the policy, as well as the time limit or frequency of requests for adjustments that was introduced in 2018 that was not part of the policy previously.

A majority of the Council was in favor of the policy and recommendations.

IV. Closed Session

Councilmember Blumberg moved the Committee to close its meeting to the public, pursuant to the following cited section of the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2(c)), for the purposes of, (i) security (5 ILCS 120/2(C)(8)); and (ii) purchase or lease of property (5 ILCS 120/2(C)(5)). Councilmember Lidawer seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, the Mayor declared the motion passed unanimously.

At 6:02 PM, the Committee recessed the public portion of the meeting to meet in Closed Session.

At 6:46 PM, Mayor Rotering reconvened the open session of the Committee of the Whole meeting.

Present: Mayor Rotering, Councilmembers Center, Bruckman, Ross, Tapia, Lidawer, Blumberg

Absent: None

Staff Present: City Manager Neukirch, Fire Chief Schrage, Assistant to the City Manager Palbitska

Also Present: Deputy Corporation Counsel Passman

V. Adjournment

Councilmember Lidawer moved to adjourn the Committee of the Whole meeting. Councilmember Tapia seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, Mayor Rotering declared the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee of the Whole adjourned its meeting at 6:46 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley Palbitska
Assistant to the City Manager/Deputy City Clerk

Staff Report



Meeting Date: December 15, 2025

Staff Contact: Ashley Palbitska, Assistant to the City Manager/Deputy City Clerk

Department: City Manager's Office

Title: Approval of the Minutes of the Closed Session of the Regular Meeting of the Committee of the Whole held on November 24, 2025

Recommendation:

For the City Council's approval are the minutes of the Closed Session of the Regular Meeting of the Committee of the Whole held on November 24, 2025.

Attachments:

1. MIN CWCS 11-24-2025

Staff Report



Meeting Date: December 15, 2025
Staff Contact: Erin Jason, Assistant City Manager
Department: City Manager's Office

Title: Highland Park Community Foundation Annual Report 2025

Recommendation:

Highland Park Community Foundation (HPCF) Vice Chair Eric Ephraim, Secretary Jon Levy, and Executive Director Terri Olian will present highlights of the HPCF Annual Report.

Policy Consideration:

Background

In 2018, the City undertook a review of the City’s Purchase of Service grant program and a Grant Agreement was subsequently approved with the Highland Park Community Foundation (HPCF) to administer the City’s grant making program.

The City budgeted \$300,000 in fiscal year 2025 to the Community Foundation to support nonprofit agencies serving the Highland Park area. A total of 64 grants were issued totaling \$1,012,240 this past year. Included in the agenda packet is a list of all 2025 grant recipients and the services provided by the respective recipients. The Grant Agreement requires HPCF to provide the City with an annual report on or before December 31 that identifies the recipients of the City grant funding and the amount provided to each recipient. In accordance with the Grant Agreement, HPCF has provided the City with an Annual Report as required for 2025.

Core Priorities:

Fiscal Stability

The City’s FY2025 budget includes \$300,000 for HPCF’s 2025 grant making program. The total contribution amount to be provided by the City is based in part on the revenue received by the City from Ravinia Festival in 2025. The City’s contribution to the HPCF program is likewise budgeted at \$300,000 in the FY2026 Budget in line item 1110100.62100 *Council Activities & Programming*.

Vibrancy

The HPCF Community Foundation grant program supports a number of diverse events, organizations, and activities which contribute to the quality of life in Highland Park and attract

outside interest in the community. Examples of awardees include Focus on the Arts, the Highland Park Strings, HPHS - National Hispanic Institute, Keshet, Pilgrim Chamber Players, and Heart of the City which represent a fraction of grant recipients that provide enrichment, education, and exposure to opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages, means, and abilities.

Attachments:

1. HPCF 2025 Annual Grant Recipients - Public Doc

Highland Park Community Foundation 2025 Annual Grant Recipients - 64 Grants Totaling \$1,012,240

112 Education Foundation	Supports and enriches the educational opportunities for North Shore School District 112 students through a variety of programming including a robotics program, which is supported by HPCF funding
A Safe Place	Serves victims of domestic and human trafficking as well as their children through counseling, legal advocacy, safe housing, safety planning, crisis intervention, and other supportive services
Art Impact Project	Provides arts programming for children and adults to enhance emotional wellness through creative expression
Arts of Life	Provides opportunities for artists with intellectual and developmental disabilities to expand their creative practices and strengthen their leadership abilities and social-emotional skills
Big Brothers Big Sisters	Serves Highland Park and Highwood youth through one-to-one mentoring to improve outcomes related to academic achievement, risky behaviors, and social-emotional competency
Bitter Jester Foundation for the Arts	Produces an annual summer music competition for youth bands and solo artists that provides mentoring, educational feedback, peer networking, and media exposure for all participants
Blessings in a Backpack HP	Provides food for the weekends for District 112 students who qualify for free or reduced priced lunch
Cancer Wellness Center	Offers a range of support services, free-of-charge, to support the mental health and emotional well-being of individuals and families impacted by cancer
Center for Enriched Living	Delivers programs for youth and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, which provide enrichment, connection, and opportunity to help them lead meaningful, self-directed lives
Collaborative Community Housing Initiative (CCHI)	Provides opportunities for adults with disabilities through a variety of programs and by the creation of inclusive housing in HP for adults with disabilities to live independently in a shared living environment
College Bound Opportunities	Through its mentorship program, helps low-income, first-generation college students successfully enter and graduate from college to achieve success in life
Community – The Anti-Drug Coalition	Strives to prevent youth drug and alcohol use in the communities served by our high school district through direct programming, extracurricular student activities, and drug prevention media campaigns
Community Partners for Affordable Housing	A full-service nonprofit affordable housing organization that helps individuals, single parents, individuals with disabilities, families, and seniors secure affordable housing and addresses a variety of housing-related needs
Curt's Café	Improves outcomes for youth ages 15-24 living in at-risk situations through work and life skills training
Direct Giving Lab	Bridges the minimum living-wage gap through unrestricted direct cash giving to low-income households
East on Central Association	Nurtures the arts community by giving local artists, writers, and poets a platform - including the publication of an annual journal - on which to share their work and engage with the community
Erie Family Health Centers	Provides healthcare and wraparound services for all, with a focus on serving low-income people of all ages
Family Focus Highland Park	Promotes the well-being of children through programs that support and strengthen families, including a home visiting program, an early childhood dual language program, and a Doula Service program in Highland Park
Family Service of Glencoe	Meets individual and family needs through a comprehensive range of counseling and other support services
Focus on the Arts	Produces a biennial, two-day/three-night Fine Arts Festival featuring workshops, masterclasses, and performances for HPHS students and three free community events featuring music, theater, art, and dance
Glenkirk	Provides services and opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to foster community integration, healthy lifestyles, and improved quality of life
GPF Foundation	Provides recreational substance use harm reduction education for youth, parents, educators, and the community
Gratitude Generation	Instills gratitude into future generations through education and service; HPCF funding supports g2's partnership with Northern IL Food Bank to distribute personal care kits to people needing food assistance
Heart of the City	Provides after-school soccer programming for D112 students that allows them to develop their skills around social-emotional learning, communication, problem-solving, decision-making, and conflict resolution
Highland Park After Prom	Hosts a free supervised party for all HPHS Seniors to reduce the risks associated with post-prom festivities
Highland Park Community Early Learning Center	Provides year-round affordable, quality, licensed childcare and early education for children ages 2-5 from moderate to low-income Highland Park and Highwood families
Highland Park Historical Society	Identifies, collects, and preserves records and artifacts that document the history and traditions of Highland Park and serves as a source for information about our community's past
Highland Park Public Library	Provides services and programs for all residents to enjoy, including family-friendly music programs, free of charge, which HPCF funding supports
Highland Park Strings	Annually, presents free classical music concerts, free of charge, for the general public
Highwood Library & Community Center	Offers traditional library services as well as comprehensive programming for children and adults that address literacy needs, educational disparities, health access, and social service needs of underserved residents
Housing Opportunity Development Corporation	Builds and manages affordable housing; is now partnering with CCHI to provide specialized property management and services for the residents in CCHI's inclusive housing building in Highland Park

HPHS - Estudiante to Student Mentor Program	Partners middle school students with high-achieving Latino high school students, who serve as positive academic and social role models, to foster a sense of connection and belonging in the community
HPHS - Homework Club	Offers free after school content-specific tutoring for HPHS students, regardless of income
HPHS - National Hispanic Institute	A week-long intensive summer program, designed to build leadership skills, motivate, and encourage college attendance as well as a mindset to return to the community and serve as a positive role model
JCFS Chicago-Response for Teens	HPCF funding supports the counseling and support services Response provides for students at the Drop-In Center at HPHS and workshops for teens and families in our community
Jewish Council for Youth Services – Lutz Family Center	Provides year-round early childhood education for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years, nurturing each child's growth while also supporting the well-being of the entire family
Josselyn	Provides quality, affordable mental healthcare for children through seniors, including low-income and marginalized residents more at-risk to mental health challenges due to social determinants of health
Keeping Families Covered	Provides diapers and other hygiene products at no cost to low-income or poverty level families
Keshet	HPCF funding supports Keshet's adult services for individuals with disabilities living in our community, which are provided through Keshet's adult day, residential, social, and recreational programs
Kids Rank	Provides programming for military children and their families by bridging networks of military families, schools, military commands, and government/nonprofit/civilian service providers
Midwest Young Artists Conservatory	Offers high quality music education and performance opportunities for K to 12th graders, which include bi-monthly Saturday ensemble performances that are open to the public
Mothers Trust Foundation	Provides immediate assistance to low-income children and families to assist with their most basic needs, including clothing, stable housing, and health-related needs
Music Institute of Chicago	HPCF funding supports early childhood music education, music and movement, and music classes for babies, toddlers, and pre-schoolers from low- and moderate-income Highland Park and Highwood families
North Shore School District 112 – Service Learning	HPCF funding supports scholarships for low-income students in NSSD 112's dual language program so they can participate in a capstone service-learning trip
North Suburban Legal Aid Clinic	Offers free, accessible legal services in the areas of domestic violence, housing, and immigration
Northern Illinois Food Bank	Through a mobile food pantry in Highwood, provides access to nutritious food for Highland Park and Highwood residents who face food insecurity
North Suburban Special Recreation Association	HPCF funding supports NSSRA's year-round day program for individuals with disabilities who are 22 years and older and living in our community
OMNI Youth Services	Leads a Teen Peer Support Group at Highwood Library & Community Center to support teen mental health
Operation Warm	Provides new winter coats and shoes to low-income children living in Highland Park and Highwood
Parks Foundation of Highland Park	Serves low-income Highwood children through its Foundation Youth Initiative, which HPCF funding supports, and low-income Highland Park residents of all ages through its SMILE Grants-in-Aid program
Partners in Aging	Serves older adults, with a primary focus on low- to moderate-income, living alone, or experiencing barriers to aging in place, so they can have fuller lives and live more independently at home
Pilgrim Chamber Players	Presents chamber music performances for the public and outreach concerts for young children and seniors
Roberti Community House	Distributes food and educates at-risk youth, adults, and seniors to increase their access to and knowledge about health and wellness
SalT: Service and Learning Together	Provides groceries and personal items on a regular basis to Highland Park-Highwood families who are food insecure and financially at-risk as well as weekly tutoring and activities for children in the families
The Art Center Highland Park	Makes art accessible to everyone in our community through multi-tiered day and evening programming that accommodates youth and adults of all ages, backgrounds, and needs
The Record North Shore	An independent nonprofit local newsroom that produces public-service journalism on multiple platforms
Time to Dance	Offers a regular schedule of over 30 dance classes per month in ballet, modern, tap, Latin dance, and fitness dance for adults 50 and older and provides outreach programs at local senior living facilities
Tri-Con Child Care Center	Offers year-round, high-quality day care and education enrichment for children ages 3-6 from low- to moderate-income families, and acts as a community liaison when support is needed for siblings & parents
United Way of Lake County	HPCF funding supports UWLC 211, a free, multi-lingual, confidential, 24/7 information and referral helpline connecting people to help in times of disaster, personal crisis, or daily challenge
Uptown Music Theater of Highland Park	Produces educational and enriching theater in Highland Park that residents can attend or take part in — on stage, in design, in the orchestra, on crew, and more
Willow House	Provides education and support for children and families grieving the loss of a parent, sibling, or child
Working Together	Implements programs that benefit and support Latino children ages 3-14 through tutoring and enrichment opportunities and their parents through business, parenting, educational, and cultural classes
Youth Services	Provides mental health programs and wrap around services, ranging from early intervention to crisis response, for children and adolescents who struggle with various behavioral or mental health issues
Zacharias Sexual Abuse Center	Provides free and immediate crisis intervention and support services, prevention education programs, and advocacy services for survivors of sexual assault and abuse, their children, and significant others

Staff Report



Meeting Date: December 15, 2025

Staff Contact: Ghida Neukirch, City Manager
Emily Taub, Assistant City Manager
Jazmin Alejandro, Social Services Specialist

Department: City Manager's Office

Title: Place of Remembrance Update & Budget Determination
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Recommendation:

Review of the current status of the preliminary agreement for design services, including cost and indemnity language, as well as discussion pertaining to a preliminary budget for the place of remembrance.

Policy Consideration:

Background

In 2023 the City Council established a Working Group to guide the planning process for the permanent place of remembrance for the Highland Park shooting. The place of remembrance will have three primary objectives:

- Create an accessible public place for reflection, remembrance, and solace;
- Pay tribute to the memories of Katie Goldstein, Irina McCarthy, Kevin Michael McCarthy, Jacki Lovi Sundheim, Stephen Straus, Nicolas Toledo, and Eduardo Uvaldo;
- Honor the community’s resiliency, especially those who were injured.

The Working Group has been meeting regularly since November of 2023. The Working Group, with input from the public and notably, victims, brainstormed and settled on a list of possible locations. In keeping with the commitment to public engagement throughout the process, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued in 2024 for a consultant to assist in gathering community feedback on the proposed locations. In conjunction with the Working Group’s feedback, the City entered into an agreement to work with the consulting firm Do Tank. Following extensive community engagement, Do Tank produced a Location Feedback Report and recommended two separate locations: a prominent, primary location in the Rose Garden and a second, more subtle, location in Port Clinton Plaza.

Following the location recommendation, the Working Group issued a Request For Qualifications (RFQ) from experienced architects, artists, designers, and design teams to create these meaningful and lasting places of remembrance. Responses were narrowed to four shortlisted finalist firms based on their combination of experience and public engagement. Shortlisted firms were invited to provide 3-5 concept designs and renderings for the primary and secondary place of remembrance and then interviewed by the Working Group. The Working Group carefully evaluated the RFQ responses, interview responses, and concept designs. The Working Group gave significant weight to each firm's incorporation of trauma-informed community engagement as well as feedback from the public, including victims, during the evaluation process. After careful review and consideration of all submittals and interviews with the top candidates, the Working Group recommended the City enter into an agreement with SWA Group (SWA) as the design firm on this project. Following deliberations at the October 6, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting, the City Council supported moving forward with SWA.

Preliminary Agreement for Design Services

The City requested SWA submit a formal proposal for services. Following discussions with SWA, it is strongly recommended that the project be split into two phases. The scope of these phases are proposed as follows:

- Phase 1
 - Project Administration
 - Listening, Discovery, and Community Engagement
 - Schematic Design
- Phase 2
 - Design Development
 - Construction Documentation
 - Construction Administration

The costs associated with Phase 2 will be very difficult to determine until a design has been finalized as the exact needs and scope will vary considerably depending upon the final design. A full proposal for Phase 2 services will be provided upon confirmation of design concept.

There are two significant components of the agreement with SWA, cost and indemnity language.

Cost

The Phase 1 proposal cost is \$355,000 plus up to an estimated 10% (\$35,500) in reimbursable costs. Reimbursable costs could include copies of documents, travel, postage/shipping, and special printings.

The City requested a preliminary estimate for Phase 2 costs. SWA provided a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) estimate. ROM is an early-stage cost projection designed to provide a high-level guess of what a project might cost. ROM costs typically fall within a wide accuracy range of -25% to +75%. The estimate provided by SWA is \$700,000 – \$1,250,000 for Phase 2 costs. The final determination on Phase 2 costs would be made after a design is approved.

These cost estimates are for design and document preparation only and do not include the building costs.

Indemnity Language

Simultaneously with receiving the project proposal, the City has been working with SWA on the language of a Professional Services Agreement. Agreement has been reached on the language of the Professional Services Agreement with the exception of the indemnity language; specifically whether or not indemnity provided to the City by SWA is limited to negligent acts, errors, or omissions by SWA. City staff and corporation counsel continue to work with SWA to find a mutually agreeable solution. Updates will be provided at the Committee of the Whole meeting.

Preliminary Budget for the Place of Remembrance

It is recommended that a preliminary budget for the place of remembrance be established to help guide the design process and scope of the project.

For context, the following is a chart of other communities and organizations affected by mass violence events and information on their memorials or memorial planning. It is important to note that the scope of the memorials varies greatly, which affects the design and building cost. The costs noted in the chart below are for building only, not design.

City/Town	Cost	Similarities to HP Shooting	Injured/Deceased	Time Frame
Newton, CT 12/14/2012	\$3.7 million	Shooting occurred in a school setting	26 were killed and 2 were injured	10 years
Waukesha, WI 11/21/2021	\$1.35 million	Incident occurred outdoors at a parade	6 were killed and 62 were injured	3 years
Oklahoma City, OK 04/19/1995	\$29.1 million (\$55 million in 2023)	Bombing occurred at a government location	168 were killed and 500 were injured	5 years
Aurora, CO 7/20/2012	\$200K	Shooting occurred in a theatre	13 were killed and 70 were injured	6 years
Littleton, CO 4/20/1999	\$2.2 million	Shooting occurred in a school setting	20 were killed and more than 20 were injured	8 years
DeKalb, IL 2/14/2008	Approx.: \$201K	Shooting occurred in a school setting	6 were killed and 17 were injured	1 year and 8 months
Las Vegas, NV 10/1/2017	Anticipating \$30 million	Shooting occurred in a concert venue	60 were killed and more than 700 injured	Anticipating 10 years
El Paso, TX 8/3/2019	Approx.: \$630k	Shooting occurred at a department store	23 were killed and more than 25 were injured	5 years
Monterey, CA 1/21/2023	Preliminary project budget of \$250k	Shooting occurred in a ballroom studio	11 were killed and more than 10 were injured	Ongoing
East Lansing, MI 2/13/2023	Anticipating \$3.2 million	Shooting occurred in a school setting	4 were killed and 5 others were injured	Anticipating 3 years

Current Budget

The City has \$1,000,000 in funding set aside for this project, inclusive of design and build. Of the \$1M, \$500,000 is included in the Fiscal Year 2026 budget and \$500,000 included in the capital plan for Fiscal Year 2027.

Fundraising

The Working Group discussed the possibility and potential approach to fundraising on May 1, 2024. The consensus of the working group was that it is important to make donation opportunities feasible for those who want to contribute, but ultimately not to be aggressive in fundraising. Feedback from the Working Group has been shared following every meeting with the City Council. The City's fundraising approach can be revisited as the project progresses at the discretion of the City Council.

Request for Direction

Council feedback is requested on moving forward with SWA or exploring alternative options. Additionally, Council direction is requested regarding a preliminary budget for the place of remembrance.

Core Priorities:

Fiscal Stability

The budget for the design phases is anticipated to be anywhere from \$700,000 — \$1,250,000 depending upon the scope of the project. The construction estimate is unknown at this point, however, feedback from the City Council will help guide the overall project cost. The City currently has \$1,000,000 budgeted for all phases of this project.

Infrastructure Investment

The permanent place of remembrance will incorporate a primary installation at the Rose Garden, and a subtle secondary installation at Port Clinton Plaza, each a significant infrastructure undertaking given the presence of existing structures at or adjacent to the site. The working group and staff will work with the project managers to define the scope of each installation with extensive feedback from victims and the public. The firm will take the City's commitment to environmentally sustainable practices into consideration as they develop and refine the project work plan.

Attachments:

1. SWA Design Proposal

swa

November 3, 2025
Rev: November 17, 2025

www.swagroup.com

Gerdo P Aquino
Thomas Balsley
Dhaval Barbhaya
Kinder Baumgardner
Matt Baumgarten
Natalia Beard
René Bihan
Zane Busbee
Shuyi Chang
Richard Crockett
Ning Deng
Marco Esposito
Ying-Yu Hung
Bill Hynes
Jeremy Klemic
Abdallah Labib
Hui-Li Lee
Steven Lee
Margaret Leonard
Chih-Wei Lin
Scott McCready
Charles S McDaniel
Sean O'Malley
Timothy Peterson
Haifeng Ren
Rhett Rentrop
Michael Robinson
R Joseph Runco
Stephen Rydzon
Todd Strawn
David P Thompson
James Vick
John L Wong
Jack Wu
Shuntaro Yahiro
Ji Hyun Yoo
Peiwen Yu
Yang Zhang
Xiao Zheng

City of Highland Park
1707 St. Johns Ave
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

Attn: Emily Taub, Assistant City Manager
Re: Highland Park Place of Remembrance
HDKT502

Dear Ms. Taub,

We are pleased to submit the following proposal for Professional Services in connection with the project referenced above.

This Agreement is by and between SWA Group (SWA), a California corporation, and the City of Highland Park (the Client), Illinois.

SWA shall provide professional services on the project referenced above, the extent of which is indicated on the attached drawing entitled Exhibit A. The project includes two sites which may be generally described as "Port Clinton Plaza" and "The Rose Garden."

APPROACH AND UNDERSTANDING

The scope of this Project is the design of a public Place of Remembrance for the Victims of the tragic events of 7/4/2022. The Place of Remembrance will be designed across two sites in downtown Highland Park: The Rose Garden and Port Clinton Plaza. SWA and Sub-Consultants will provide Project Administration; Listening, Discovery, and Community Engagement; and Schematic Design services. Design Development, Construction Documentation, and Construction Administration are not included but are considered in this proposal for purposes of ROM fee estimates and project schedule. A full proposal for these services will be provided upon confirmation of design concept by the following Community Engagement.

The scope outlined assumes a kickoff date in November of 2025, and a goal for completed project construction prior to July 4, 2027. The Project and Project Team will follow Trauma-Informed guidelines established following Kickoff to ensure a safe and welcoming process and outcome for community members. Our understanding is that the City of Highland Park will administer the Project through the Place of Remembrance Working Group unless otherwise communicated.

I. SCOPE OF SERVICES

- A. SWA will provide Design Consultation for the following items:
 1. Project programming and vision.
 2. Entitlement process.
 3. Public outreach strategy.

swa

4. Workshops/Stakeholder Meetings/Charrettes.

B. SWA will provide concept and schematic design, as later described, for the following scope items:

1. Preparation of conceptual grading plan indicating the grading design through use of contours and/or spot elevations.
2. Coordination with the civil engineer to maintain the aesthetic and surface function on the engineered grading and water quality plans.
3. Pedestrian pavements. Based on the site conditions, it is assumed that no vehicular pavements, parking facilities, or bicycle routes are part of this project scope.
4. Landscape walls, steps, railings and related site elements not a part of the buildings, if any.
5. Fences, trellises, shade structures, decks and fixed seating devices, if any.
6. Site furnishings including benches, tables, umbrellas, planter pots, trash receptacles, bike racks and drinking fountains, if any.
7. Siting, sizing, location of ornamental pools and fountains.
 - a. Structural, mechanical, and electrical engineering services are not included in the scope at this time.
8. Planting.
9. Landscape soils management.
10. Coordination of site graphics.
11. Coordination of site artwork.

C. Sub-consultants Contracted to SWA:

SWA will manage the following consultants. The Scope of their work outlined below and included in Exhibit B.

1. WSP Engineering: Civil Engineering, Lighting Design, Structural Engineering, MEP Engineering, Surveying, Geotechnical Engineering
2. All Together: Community Outreach & Engagement, and External Communications.

D. Limitations of SWA Scope of Work

1. The contribution of SWA to the project shall be limited to areas of design and aesthetics and SWA does not assume responsibility for the work of others in the production of construction documents or the sufficiency thereof necessary to the execution of the work.
2. Design of Scope Items shall not include structural provisions for support of such items in the structure of the building; penetrations of the structure of the building for structural, mechanical, electrical or plumbing connections; actual connection to structural, mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems of the building (other than point-of-connection in planters for irrigation); waterproofing of the structure or protective covering of that waterproofing; or waterproofing of penetrations of the structure.

E. Sub-consultants Not Contracted to SWA

If required, SWA will retain and direct the services of the following professional consultants. Fees for such services are not included in this contract and shall be the subject of future agreements.

1. Structure, recirculation systems and lighting of ornamental pools and fountains.
2. Site lighting selection, attachment detailing, layout circuitry and photometric analysis.
3. Fountain design details, MEP, lighting and programmed effects.
4. LEED, green building, sustainability consultant.
5. Lighting design.
6. Engineering services (MEP, geo-tech, environmental).
7. Soils consultant.
8. Hydrology, water systems.
9. Industrial design.
10. Graphic design, wayfinding, signage, communications, website design, multi-media.
11. Architecture and site architecture.
12. Cost estimating (opinion of probable cost).
13. Post-occupancy evaluation.
14. Professional renderings/perspectives or animations.
15. Coordination of site utilities.
16. Arborist, horticultural consultants.

II. PROCEDURE

A. Project Administration

SWA will provide Project Administration services, including Project Kickoff, establishment of Trauma-Informed Guidelines, Project Schedule and Schedule Updates, and Bi-weekly OA/OAC meeting agendas and summaries. SWA will facilitate communication between the Client and the Design Team.

1. Project Kickoff Meeting; Agenda + Summary (virtual)
2. Project Schedule; Schedule Updates as Required
3. Initial Site Walk; Itinerary + Summary (In person)
4. Virtual Bi-Weekly OA/OAC Meetings; Agenda + Minutes (10)
5. Internal Design Team Coordination Meetings (10)
6. Project Communications and notes

B. Listening, Discovery & Engagement

SWA and All Together (Engagement Sub-Consultant) will support the City of Highland Park in facilitating a thorough Listening, Discovery, & Engagement process which builds consensus through diverse opportunities for input and co-creation. The Community Engagement Plan will establish a Digital Engagement Platform as well as a schedule and outlines for Stakeholder and Community Meetings. The Design Team and Client will produce a shared External Communications Document to ensure coordinated outreach.

This phase will also address physical assessments of the two sites, including a Civil Site Survey and Existing Conditions Analysis.

1. Existing Conditions Analysis and Report
2. External Communications Document
3. Community Engagement Plan
4. Stakeholder Meeting Outlines & Materials (12) In Person
5. Community Meeting Outlines & Materials (2) In Person

C. Concept Refinement & Schematic Design

In parallel with Community Engagement, SWA will develop Concept Refinements which build upon initial Concepts for both sites. Concepts will be explored with the community and the Working Group with the goal of building consensus. An Approved Concept will be developed to a Schematic Design level.

1. Concept Refinements – Up to 2 Rounds of Concept Revisions
 - a. Illustrative Plans
 - b. Perspective Renders (5 per concept)
 - c. Site Analysis Diagrams
 - d. Material and Planting Palettes
2. Schematic Design Package (Preferred Concept)
 - a. Site Layout and Materials
 - b. Tree Preservation Plan
 - c. Preliminary Planting Design
 - d. Schematic Site Sections
 - e. Schematic Design of Site Features
 - f. Environmental Graphic Concepts for Memorial Features
3. Historic Preservation Committee
 - a. Package Development and Submission
 - b. Presentation to Plan and Design Commission as required
 - c. Revisions and responses to Schematic Design based on Plan and Design Commission Review and Comment
4. ROM Opinion of Probable Cost

III. DEVELOPMENT BUDGETS

- A. As part of Schematic Design Phase, a proposed landscape construction budget for all items of work under the Scope of Services shall be established and approved.
- B. **This budget shall be revised and approved at the completion of Design Development Phase and Construction Documentation Phase (DD and CD not included in this scope).**

IV. DESIGN APPROVAL

Emily Taub has been designated as the person responsible for design direction to SWA for this project and has the authority for design approval. In the event that the design, as approved by Emily Taub is rejected by others, and re-design is required, such re-design services shall be compensated as Additional Services.

V. MEETINGS AND SITE VISITS

- A. This proposal includes Professional Service time for up to fifteen (15) in-person meetings, including Project Kickoff and Engagement Meetings/Events, up to ten (10) virtual online OAC meetings for coordination or presentations with the Client, agencies, consultants or the Owner, as outlined above in II.A and II.B, and up to ten (10) virtual online meetings for internal design team coordination.
- B. Additional meetings or site visits, if required, shall be provided as Additional Services. Travel expenses shall be billed as Reimbursable Costs.

VI. EXCLUSIONS TO SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Client shall provide the following information or services as required for performance of the work. SWA assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of such information or services and shall not be liable for error or omissions therein. Should SWA be required to provide services in obtaining or coordinating compilation of this information, such services shall be charged as Additional Services.

- 1. Arborist Assessment of existing trees.
- 2. Existing site engineering and utility base information.
- 3. Engineering other than that provided within the Scope of Services.
- 4. Site environmental studies and documentation.
- 5. Interior planting design.
- 6. Waterproofing design.
- 7. BIM/REVIT or similar.
- 8. LEED documentation preparation and analyses.
- 9. Expediting, code, zoning consultant.
- 10. Any item not specifically addressed in this proposal.

VII. FEES AND TERMS

Services described above shall be provided for the fixed sum of Three Hundred and Fifty-Five Thousand (\$355,000) Dollars, not including reimbursable expenses and those excluded services, in accordance with the terms and conditions in Appendix A attached hereto and which is incorporated and made part of this Agreement by reference. Estimated fees for future phases not included in this proposal are included in Exhibit C.

We estimate the following fee breakdown by Task for Phase 1:

Task	Fee	Meetings	Duration
SWA Prime: Project Administration	\$40,000	12	22 weeks
SWA Prime: Listening, Discovery & Engagement	\$40,000	14	22 weeks
SWA Prime: Concept Refinement & Schematic Design	\$70,000	10	18 weeks
WSP: ALTA Survey Estimate	\$40,000		
WSP: Civil, Structural, Lighting, MEP	\$77,000		
All Together: Engagement and Outreach	\$88,000		
<hr/>			
Fee Total	\$355,000		

We estimate the cost of Reimbursable Costs as identified in Appendix A will not exceed \$10% without further authorization from the Client.

We would be pleased to answer questions you may have or to clarify the various points above.

If this proposal meets with your approval, please sign below and return one copy for our files.

Sincerely yours,

SWA Group



Rene Bihan, Managing Principal
Contracting Agent
Landscape Architect, CA License #3682

Accepted: City of Highland Park

By: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

Date: _____

RB/dc/bw

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In order to expedite invoicing, please indicate the following:

Billing Address:

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

Attention: _____

Your reference name/number:

Your Purchase Order or Contract Number reference for invoicing:

APPENDIX A

Appended to and part of Agreement for Professional Services between SWA Group (SWA) and AP+I (the Client), dated October 15, 2025.

FEES FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Services outlined under the Scope of Services shall be provided for the fixed sum stipulated in the Agreement for Professional Services.

REIMBURSABLE COSTS

The following costs shall be reimbursed at cost plus ten percent (10%) and are not included in the Fee for Professional Services:

- A. Cost of copies of drawings, specifications, reports and cost estimates; xerography and photographic reproduction of drawings and other documents furnished or prepared in connection with the work of this contract.
- B. Cost of commercial carrier and public transportation, lodging, car rental and parking, subsistence and out-of-pocket expenses. Private automobile travel at the IRS-allowable rate at the time of traveling. International flights shall be business class.
- C. Cost of postage and shipping expenses other than first class mail.
- D. Special renderings, special process printing, special equipment, special printed reports or publications, maps and documents, requested by the Client and approved in writing.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Provided SWA has been paid per this agreement, Additional Services may be provided on a time basis computed by the number of hours spend in connection with the referenced project. The following are committed to this project:

	Rate / Hour
Daniel Cunningham	\$220
Ben Waldo	\$171
Olivia Pinner	\$136

Other principals, if used on this project, have rates ranging from \$200 to \$352 an hour. These rates are applicable for six months from the date of the Agreement for Professional Services, but may be increased subsequently without written notice.

Current staff rates range between \$90 and \$210.

Additional Services are any services not included within the contract scope and include but are not limited to:

- A. Making planning surveys, feasibility studies, and special analyses of the Client's needs to clarify requirements for project programming.
- B. Master planning.
- C. Site planning.
- D. Preparation of technical sections of specifications in other than Construction Specifications Institute (CSI) format.
- E. Revisions and changes in drawings, specifications or other documents when such revisions are inconsistent with approvals or instructions previously given by the Client; required by the enactment or revision of codes, laws or

regulations subsequent to the preparation of such documents; or the preparation of alternates or deductive change orders requested by the Client.

- F. Repackaging or modifications to plans due to changes by other consultants following completion of SWA's 100% construction documents.
- G. Plan preparation for and construction observation of portions of a project let on a segregated bid basis or to be phased during construction.
- H. Services with respect to replacement of any work damaged during construction.
- I. Services required as a result of the default or insolvency of contractor.
- J. Preparation of as-built drawings, record drawings or of measured drawings of existing conditions.
- K. Providing prolonged construction observation should the construction time be substantially extended through no fault of SWA.
- L. Providing services if, in Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) projects, the construction budget for SWA scope items is reduced through no fault of SWA.
- M. Providing services if, in "fast-track" projects, revisions to design or construction documents are required because of prior construction commitments or changes required in the construction process or phasing outside the control of SWA.
- N. Cost of review as to form of lenders documents, certifications and consents to assignment requested of SWA during the term of this Agreement.
- O. Fees for additional consultants not included in SWA's Basic Services and retained with the approval of the Client.
- P. In-house professional photography or drone photography.
- Q. 3D printing.

END

EXHIBIT A - PROJECT SCOPE AREAS

**Project scope areas outlined below are approximate based on RFQ. Precise extents will be confirmed with City of Highland Park based on Topographic Boundary Survey to be performed as part of this work.*





Highland Park Approach and Scope

October 28, 2025. draft.

Engagement Philosophy & Approach

All Together will provide comprehensive community engagement services for the Highland Park Place of Remembrance project. The approach will be trauma-informed and tiered, honoring the diverse experiences of those impacted by the July 4, 2022 tragedy.

Throughout all engagement activities, All Together will:

- Create psychologically safe spaces for participation
- Offer multiple modes of participation (in-person, virtual, written)
- Respect individual comfort levels and boundaries
- Maintain strict confidentiality protocols
- Work collaboratively with City staff and mental health professionals
- Provide clear communication about how input will be used

Our engagement strategy recognizes that healing and remembrance are processes, not destinations, and centers the voices of victims' families, survivors, and the broader Highland Park community throughout the design journey:

Tier 1 (Heart)

Identified as **victims, survivors**, their **friends and family**, and the **HP Remembrance Committee**. In an intimate setting, Tier I will be allowed to share their experiences, hope for a memorial, and be engaged throughout the process for feedback and approval.

- Most intimate level of engagement
- One-on-one conversations in homes or virtually
- Led by City staff with All Together support
- Multiple touchpoints throughout the process
- Highest level of sensitivity and confidentiality

Tier 2 (Home)

Identified as **residents, local businesses nearest to the event + future memorial site, wraparound services, first responders, City Council**, and **other community partners** who would benefit from sharing their experiences, opinions, and feedback on the final memorial.

- Small focus group settings (up to 12 participants)
- Facilitated discussions in safe, controlled environments

- Opportunity to share experiences and input on design themes
- All Together facilitation with social work support available

Tier 3 (Healing)

Identified as **residents, key community stakeholders, managing members of public space** (Parks, Public Works, etc), and **visitors**.

- Public workshops (open house format)
- Community pop-up events
- Digital surveys
- Inclusive participation opportunities for all residents

Our team will work closely with the City to review and refine these tiers and develop a comprehensive engagement strategy early in the process.

Engagement & Communications Scope

PHASE ONE: Concepting & Schematic Design

November 2025 - February 2026

Task 1.1: Project Kickoff (November 2025)

Meet with the City of Highland Park and Highland Park Remembrance Committee to discuss the project scope and timeline. During this meeting, we will discuss the tiered approach to engagement, strategy for public outreach and media relations, and ongoing engagement for design approval and refinement process. This meeting will also provide an opportunity to review findings from previous community engagement work that has already been completed, ensuring we build upon the foundation that has been established rather than starting from scratch.

Task 1.2: Tour (November 2025)

Tour Port Clinton and Rose Garden sites with Highland Park Remembrance Team and City of Highland Park, Project Team to better understand the location and impact areas firsthand.

Task 1.3: Public Engagement & Communications Strategy (November - December 2025)

Develop a comprehensive Engagement Strategy document that will serve as our roadmap throughout the project, which will include :

- Detailed timeline and milestones
- Recruitment protocols for each tier
- Trauma-informed guidelines
- Communications plan, including talking points and FAQs

Work closely with the City of Highland Park, HP Remembrance Committee, and the broader Project Team to determine the media and outreach strategy that will be used throughout the entire process. This communications and PR strategy work involves:

- Working with City Marketing Team and Communications manager on press releases, interviews, media relations site visits, or social media campaigns, or extended stories about the HP Remembrance Project.
- Reviewing project timeline, gauge approach for public communications and media relations, decide on public outreach and touchpoints during design and construction process.

Task 1.4: Design Templates (November - December 2025)

Building off the existing Highland Park Remembrance brand and Highland Park Strong Campaign, we'll develop a project identity for the design, construction, and opening of the two memorial sites. In this we'll work to design invitations to engagement, presentation, social media templates, flyer templates, and any other marketing templates needed for the project term.

Task 1.5: Tier 1 & 2 Listening Sessions (January - February 2026)

Design structure, agenda, and format for 8-12 discovery discussions for Tier 1 and Tier 2 Engagement Groups. These conversations could occur virtually or in person, depending on the needs and desires of the group. Collaborate with the City of Highland Park and HP Remembrance Team to assemble a contact list of potential attendees. Manage outreach to attendees and RSVPs.

Task 1.6: Tier 1 & 2 What We Heard Presentation (February 2026)

Compile all feedback and assemble a comprehensive list of key themes and considerations that emerged from our conversations with Tier 1 and Tier 2 stakeholders. Present these findings to the City of Highland Park and HP Remembrance Committee through a virtual meeting format, providing an opportunity to gather additional feedback and input on our interpretation of what we heard. This meeting serves as an important validation checkpoint, ensuring that our synthesis accurately reflects the community's input and that we haven't missed important nuances in the feedback.

Task 1.7: Survey & Event Marketing Collateral (February - April 2026)

Develop promotional materials, including email, print and social media collateral.

Task 1.8: Community Outreach Survey (February - April 2026)

Expanding on work that has already been completed, we'll work with the project team to draft and refine questions and activities for the surveys to Target Tier 3 Audience and understand what people want in a Memorial and collect their stories. Ensure that any community survey is engaging, accessible, and short in length. Surveys will be distributed through communications pushes, at public events, and within the public realm. Public realm installations could include sidewalk and storefront decals, as well as signage at key transit locations.

The survey will be distributed through the workshop, pop-ups, City communications channels, and social media to maximize reach.

Task 1.9: Pop-Up Events (2) and Public Workshop #1 (March - April 2026)

Host community-facing events including one workshop and two pop-ups designed to present refined concept designs and receive interactive feedback. The pop-up events should align with existing community events that naturally draw a diverse cross-section of residents, allowing us to meet people where they already are rather than asking them to come to yet another meeting. The workshop will use an open house format with interactive stations, while the pop-ups will mix active engagement activities with passive information displays.

Both formats will gather feedback on:

- Memorial values and themes
- Site opportunities and constraints
- Reaction to preliminary design frameworks
- Individual memories and reflections

Pop-ups should align with existing community events that draw a diverse cross-section of residents throughout the city. Locations could include: Port Clinton Plaza, library, community centers, farmers market, etc.

Task 1.10: Phase 1 Engagement Summary (April - May, 2026)

Develop a comprehensive analysis of all input gathered across all three tiers of engagement. This analysis involves integrating themes from Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 engagement to identify where there is consensus and where there are tensions or competing priorities.

We will develop clear design recommendations based on this synthesis and prepare presentations for both the Working Group and City Council.

PHASE TWO: Design Development

May - August 2026

Task 2.1: Tier 1 & 2: Listening Sessions / Event (May-June, 2026)

Host a second round of listening sessions and/or event(s) for Tier 1 and Tier 2 Engagement Groups to:

- Present refined design concepts and demonstrate how Phase 1 input influenced design
- Gather detailed feedback on specific design elements
- Discuss site-specific considerations

Gathering feedback on the schematic design direction at this stage is critical, and we will coordinate carefully with City staff to determine the most appropriate presentation format for each family or survivor, respecting their individual needs and comfort levels.

Task 2.2: Survey & Event Marketing Collateral (May-July, 2026)

Develop promotional materials, including email, print, and social media collateral.

Task 2.3: Community Outreach Survey 2 (June-July, 2026)

Launch second survey with questions about design elements, materials, and accessibility features, seeking detailed feedback that can inform final design decisions. The survey will be distributed through the workshop, pop-ups, City communications channels, and social media to maximize reach.

Task 2.4: Pop-Up Events (2) (June-July, 2026)

Host another round of community-facing events (workshop and pop-ups) to present refined concept design(s) and receive interactive feedback on:

- Design elements and materials
- Accessibility features
- Integration with existing sites
- Names/text considerations
- Programming and activation ideas

Task 2.4: Phase 2 Engagement Summary (August, 2026)

This analysis will assess how effectively the design refinement process incorporated community feedback and will provide final recommendations for the schematic design. Presentation preparation for both the Working Group and City Council will distill complex feedback into clear, actionable recommendations.

Task 2.5: What We Heard Marketing Collateral (August, 2026)

Develop promotional materials, including email, print and social media collateral.

Potential Scope TBD

PHASE THREE: Construction & Implementation

October 2026 - July 2027

Task 3.1: Outreach & Updates (October - November, 2026)

As construction begins or requires design approval, we manage outreach and updates with Tier 1 and Tier 2 in coordination with the City and Highland Park Remembrance Group. For Tier 3, we'll develop marketing and campaign materials to share updates on the design and construction process with the community through social media, newsletters, and media relations.

Task 3.2: Coordinate Support for Local Businesses for Impact During Construction (October 2026 - July 2027)

We'll work within the .5-mile radius of construction to connect with businesses or the general public that may be impacted by the construction. This will include potential signage, consulting with the City of Highland Park on increased marketing support for businesses, and/or hosting quarterly merchant meetings to keep communication lines open.

Task 3.3: Groundbreaking Ceremony & Activation (August 2026 - October 2026)

At the start of Construction or Groundbreaking, we'll work with the City of Highland Park to host an event that shares the memorial's story with the general public and local media and allows Tier 1 participants to join in the process. This may be one event spread among the two locations of Port Clinton and the Rose Garden, or two events held at two separate times.

Task 3.4: Ribbon Cutting Ceremony & Activation (May 2027 - July 2027)

In the lead-up to the end of construction and the ribbon-cutting (ideally at the July 4, 2027 event), we'll work with the City of Highland Park, Highland Park Remembrance Working Group, and Tier 1 to plan the ribbon-cutting ceremony and build awareness of the unveiling among local community members and media. This event may also be spread among the two locations of Port Clinton and the Rose Garden.



November 3rd , 2025

Ben Waldo, PLA, ASLA, LAI

Associate Principal

SWA

Re: Highland Park Place of Remembrance

Revision: DRAFT - 01

Dear Ben:

WSP USA Buildings INC. (WSP) respectfully submits this proposal to provide professional engineering services as described below. We are excited to support the design of this memorial.

I. PROJECT SCOPE

WSP understands that there will be two phases within the overall design process. Phase One will be used to define the design intent and focus the design efforts of phase two. WSP will provide engineering support related to Civil/drainage, MEP/FP, AV/IT/Security, Structural, and lighting for Phased One. The design information in Phase One (Schematic Design) will be used to define the scope and fee for Phase Two consisting of Design Development, Construction Documentation, and Permitting phases.

II. SCOPE OF SERVICES

A. PHASE 1 – SCHEMATIC DESIGN

1. Services: WSP will provide engineer support services to develop the schematic design for SMEP/FP, AV/IT/Sec and Site Civil engineering services
 - a. Participate in design team web conference
 - b. Provide feedback on design concepts to SWA resulting in a narrative and diagrams describing topography and drainage in coordination with SWA for pricing purposes.
 - c. Coordinate power requirements based on program description defined by SWA.
 - d. Develop and coordinate schematic design concepts for site lighting – this includes concepts sketches using photoshop or equal for visualization purposes. Photometrics are excluded at this phase. Backgrounds provided by SWA. WSP will power fixtures as needed within electrical and civil scope.
 - e. Provide narrative and diagrams describing the MEP services to support comfort stations and other structures as needed.
 - f. Provide conceptual description of structured canopy and trellis features proposed in the design submission. This study is intended to inform design strategies and assist in assessing the cost impact of these features.
 - g. Procure subconsultants to preform Alta/Topographic/Boundary Survey and Percolation Test for the site.
 - h. Procure subconsultants to perform Geotechnical study of the site. The scope and cost of this survey will be informed by the extent of canopies and trellises.

- i. Develop Low Voltage narrative describing basic IT/AV/ and security elements and strategies as well as supporting infrastructure services needed or provided in the public realm of the project.
- j. Coordinate planting depth and location of below grade storm water detention tanks on site as needed.
- k. Coordinate irrigation support for pumps and power as defined by irrigation specialist/SWA.
- l. WSP will coordinate and subcontract ALTA/Topographic/Boundary surveys and geotechnical investigation. NOTE: Additional geotechnical survey work may be required if the Canopy option is selected. This is reflected as a fee range in the Fee table below.

B. PHASED 2 - DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

- 1. Services: WSP will provide engineer support services to develop the schematic design for Structure, MEP/FP, AV/IT/Sec and Site Civil engineering services
 - a. Participate in design team web conference calls as weekly.
 - b. Participate in client meetings bimonthly.
 - c. Develop MEP and lighting systems for the comfort station and associated bathrooms.
 - d. Develop structural solutions for the comfort stations and associated bathrooms, as well as advise on site structural issues related to the location of the buildings/canopy/trellis in relationship to the below grade storm water management tanks and lighting poles.
 - e. Coordinate electrical service needs and distribution across the site to support the park activities including outlets, lighting, irrigation pumps and associated low voltage equipment.
 - f. WSP will host two lighting design workshops with design teams to support the coordination and selection of exterior lighting elements and fixtures. This will include coordination with Dark Sky design requirements and includes two photometric models.
 - g. WSP will host two AV/IT and Security workshops with client and design teams to support the coordination and selection of low voltage systems. This includes coordination with bedrock security systems and protocols to inform location and type of security systems.
 - h. Coordinate site drainage and site topography coordinate with the design team to inform site civil drawings. Coordinate with the site wade storm water management strategy and retention tanks located on site.
 - i. Support Value Engineering phase based on costing information provided by others.
- 2. Deliverables:
 - a. Expand and update Schematic Design, Basis of Design document to capture design decisions during DD. This will be submitted at 50% Design Development. Subsequent development will be captured on drawings and specifications only.
 - b. Provide 50% and 100% design development drawings and outline specifications for Structural, Lighting, MEP, AV/IT/Sec, and Civil sets and sections. Drawings will be submitted as PDFs with supporting Revit and AutoCAD Civil files.

C. CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

- 1. Services: WSP will provide engineering services to advance the Design Development for Structure, Lighting, MEP/FP, AV/IT/Sec and Site Civil engineering services to CD level.
 - a. Participate in design team web conference calls as weekly.
 - b. Participate in client meetings bimonthly (web conference)
 - c. Participate in two in person page turn sessions with the design team at major milestones.
 - d. Specify, schedule, document, and coordinate MEP and lighting systems for the comfort station and associated bathrooms. This includes fixture selection, equipment selection, controls, and locations.

- e. Document structural systems for the comfort stations and associated bathrooms. Finalize structural systems and foundations for the buildings and associated site structures such as canopy and trellises.
 - f. Specify, schedule, document and coordinate the electrical connections and distribution across the site to meet electrical needs for selected equipment defined during Design Development.
 - g. WSP will host two lighting workshops to finalize and coordinate final fixture sections, locations, and controls.
 - h. WSP will coordinate lighting fixture locations, types, and controls with SWA and WSP electrical teams. The lighting fixtures will be scheduled and located on Electrical drawings. Mounting details will reside in Landscape drawings.
 - i. WSP will host two AV/IT and Security workshops with client and design teams to finalize AV/IT and Security hardware, and locations. This effort will incorporate existing Bedrock standards where applicable.
 - j. Finalize the selection of low voltage systems including non-specialized Audi Visual equipment (i.e. speakers, TV screens), WAPs and related basic IT infrastructure, and security hardware (i.e. CCTV, card keys for comfort stations). This includes coordination with Highland Park security/police systems standards and protocols to inform location and type of security systems.
 - k. Documentation and specification of site drainage and site topography as per Landscape design. Coordinate with streetscape design of the overall Gratton Innovation district where applicable.
 - l. Coordinate with the site wide storm water management strategy and retention tanks located on site where applicable.
2. Deliverables:
- a. Provide 50% and 100% Construction Documentation drawings and specifications for Structural, Lighting, MEP, AV/IT/Sec, and civil sets. Drawings will be submitted as PDFs with supporting Revit and AutoCAD Civil files. PDF drawing files will be stamped by Illinois SE and/or PE for permitting.
 - b. Respond to Permit comments from the city of Highland Park and support the permit process.

D. CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION

- 1. Services: WSP will provide engineering services to During Construction covering Structure, Lighting, MEP/FP, AV/IT/Sec and Site Civil engineering services to CD level.
 - a. Monthly site visits with written reports. These site visits will be carried out by one WSP representative from the Chicago office.
 - b. Review and respond to RFI's and submittal within 10 working days of receipt.
 - c. Oversee lighting aiming during one nighttime site visit.
 - d. Conduct two punch list and close out walk throughs.

III. EXCLUSIONS:

- A. Construction administration and bid review support. WSP can provide this as an additional service upon request.
- B. Demolition services and related environmental engineering.
- C. Mobility and accessibility planning and studies. WSP can provide this as an additional service upon request.
- D. Irrigation design. It is understood this will be provide by others including pump and UV light specifications to define power requirements.
- E. LEED certification, documentation, consulting and support. WSP can provide this as an additional service upon request.
- F. Water feature design – this is assumed to be provided by others under sperate contract.
- G. Playground and exercise equipment – this is assumed to be provided by others under sperate contract.

IV. ADDITIONAL SERVICES AVAIABLE UPON REQEUST.

- A. Solar (Radiance) and wind (CFD) modeling for thermal comfort and pedestrian safety studies.
- B. Photometric modeling for permitting approvals. WSP will perform photometric modeling for design purposes as part of the base scope of service. If additional photometric modeling is needed for review and approval by Highland Park as part of the permitting process, this will be done as an additional service.
- C. Traffic and pedestrian flow modeling
- D. LEED consulting
- E. Acoustic monitoring and modeling

V. COMPENSATION

A. BASIC SERVICES

Compensation for the services identified above shall be on a lump sum basis as follows and in accordance with the terms in this document:

	Civil Engineering		Lighting Design		Structural Engineering		MEP + AV/IT Security
	WSP		WSP		WSP		WSP
Phase 1 SD	\$25,000		\$32,000		\$8,000		\$12,000
Phase 2 DD	\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000		\$55,000
Phase 2 CD	\$40,000		\$35,000		\$38,000		\$75,000
Phase 2 CA	\$40,000		\$35,000		\$38,000		\$75,000
Canopy			\$8000		\$30,000		
Sub TOTAL	\$130,000		\$135,000		\$109,000		\$217,000
Survey estimate	\$40,000						
Geotech estimate					\$25,000 - \$40,000		
TOTAL	\$170,000		\$135,000		\$109,000 (25,000 - 40,000)		\$217,000

NOTE. Fees for Phase two, Canopy, Survey and Geotech are estimates based on available information and are provided for budgeting purposes only. After the completion of Phase One, phase two fees will be reissued based on agreed upon design and scope parameters developed during Phase One.

B. HOURLY RATES

Below is our hourly-rate billing schedule, effective through December 31, 2025:

Classification	Hourly Billing Rate (US\$)
Executive Vice President	\$ 350
Senior Vice President	\$ 310
Vice President	\$ 250
Senior Associate	\$ 235
Associate / Senior Engineer	\$ 210
Engineer	\$ 180
Design Engineer / Designer	\$ 155
BIM Specialist / Manager	\$ 210
BIM Operator	\$ 130
Tech / Admin	\$ 125

C. REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

Travel including milage, pre-approved air travel, hotel, and lodging will be reimbursed.

II. CLOSING

WSP USA Buildings, Inc. appreciates the opportunity to work with SWA on this project. If you have any questions regarding this proposal, please do not hesitate to call. If the terms of this proposal is satisfactory, please indicate your acceptance of such by sending a contract or signing and returning one copy to our office as soon as possible so that we may proceed with the work.

Sincerely,



Matt Herman
Senior Vice President

AUTHORIZED BY:

SWA

Name

Date

	Estimated Fee Range*
Project Administration	30,000-40,000
Geotechnical Report	25,000-40,000
Outreach and Engagement	25,000-50,000
Design Development (DD)	160,000-320,000
Construction Documentation (CD)	260,000-400,000
Construction Administration (CA)	200,000-400,000
Range Total:	700,000-1,250,000

*Fee estimates represent a range of design requirements based on potential outcomes for approved concept design in Phase 1. Fees are based on estimates from SWA and subconsultants WSP and All Together, but also include potential for additional sub consultants such as a water feature designer and/or architect. Precise fees for future phases will be proposed based on Phase 1 in coordination with City of Highland Park.

EXHIBIT C - Phase 2 Fee Estimates

Staff Report

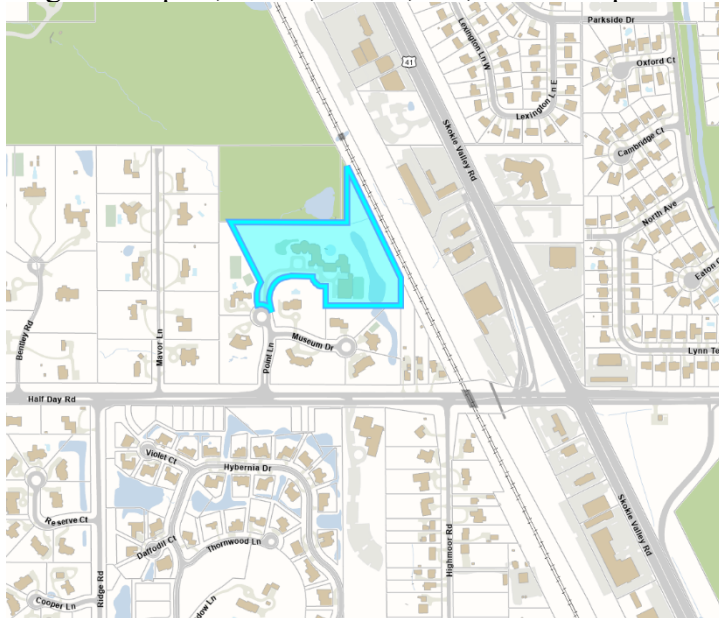


Meeting Date: December 15, 2025
Staff Contact: Karl Burhop, Senior Planner
Department: Community Development Department

Title: Discussion of Proposed New Land Use – Champions Point

Recommendation:

Staff requests policy feedback and direction regarding a proposal for a new type of land use. **Background.** Mr. John Cooper, representing Champions Point LLC, owner of the property 2700 Point Lane (the “Owner”, & the “Property”) proposes a new land use for his Property at this location (see the following location map). He proposes use of the single family home as a tourist destination offering individuals the opportunity to tour the property and take advantage of the various amenities on site. Considerations pertaining to the use include but are not limited to neighbor impact, traffic, access, use, hours of operations and noise control.



Policy Consideration:

Whether the proposed use should be formally considered through a Zoning Text Amendment to allow as a new use to the Table of Allowable Uses in Sec. 150.490. The Applicant requests a

property tour use as a conditional use. This land use is not allowed per Sec. 150.490.

The proposal includes connection to and drop-off at the Heller Nature Center, with parking to be off-site (to be determined location by the Owner). Such arrangements, if any, require Park District approval independent of the City Council and the land use regulation matters discussed here. The City Manager informed the Park District and shared the attached presentation for their information.

Summary

Highlights of the Proposal.

Please see **Attachment A.** for the Owner’s proposal. Key takeaways from the Owner’s proposal include the following:

- A property tour with the following limitations:
 1. May to October Peak-Season: 8 am to 7 pm with final tours departing at 5:30 pm.
 2. November to April Off-Season: 8 am to 5 pm with final tours departing at 3:30 pm.
 3. Request to host six private evening gatherings per year, primarily as fundraisers for non-profit organizations, outside regular operating hours and concluding by 11:00 pm.
- Off-site parking (to be determined) with shuttle-bus to the Heller Nature Center for drop-off and pick-up.
- Walking access from Heller Nature Center to the Property utilizing nature trails and a proposed approximately 120-foot path extension to get to the Property.
- Use of Property and facility for up to 24 days per year for local community benefit, ensuring that local youth programs and civic groups, such as the City of Highland Park and the Park District, can use the environment for enrichment.
 1. Applicant provides in more detail about related program offerings in proposal (see **Attachment A**).

Minimizing Impact on Point Lane and Museum Drive Neighborhood.

- The Owner emphasizes
 1. That access will be via Heller Nature Center with shuttles taking patrons from an off-site parking area to drop-off and pick-up at the Heller Nature Center. Patrons will then access the Property over the Heller Nature Center property.
 2. Minimal new construction - identified a 120-foot path connecting the Property to the Heller Nature Center.
- Owner projects overall nuisance traffic to the site will be reduced, as the site will be open for tours.
 1. Owner indicates the iconic “23” gate will be removed from the entrance and relocated to the interior of the property. The front gate will be replaced with a similar, unmarked gate, eliminating the desire for visitors to queue or stop.
- Owner commits to no after-hours events, except the six events stated earlier, nor any

residential rentals or fractional sales.

Other Matters to Note:

The proposal details job creation and taxes on tickets as economic incentive for the City, as well as economic spinoff the use would bring through purchases by patrons within the City, and mentions the possibility of revenue sharing with the Park District.

Upon cursory review staff offer the following comments and questions about the proposed use. Specifically,

- Will the proposed use:
 1. Be used as an events venue, for conferences, seminars, or similar?
 2. How many special events would be considered per week/month/year?
 3. Where will off-site parking be located?
 4. How will deliveries be managed?
 5. Consideration of service to people with disabilities that may not be able to traverse the suggested path through Heller;
 6. The proposal uses the phrase ‘phased growth’ – what is meant by that, and are any changes or expansions proposed for the use or structures?
 7. How many patrons are expected per day?
- The proposed use constitutes a change in occupancy that will require a building code compliance review.

Public Comment.

See **Attachment B** for public comment that has been submitted.

No formal notice is required for information items on the Agenda for discussion at the Committee of the Whole, however, the City Manager did notify key stakeholders who previously to be kept apprised of the possible land use consideration that this matter would be on the Agenda. Moreover, the City asked the owner to reach out to his neighbors as well.

Next Steps.

Policy discussion by the Council is requested. If there is an interest to entertain a more comprehensive plan review, the item would be placed on the next City Council agenda for further policy consideration and possible referral to the Plan & Design Commission. The Council may also choose to take no action which effectively ends discussion or further consideration of the matter.

In the alternative, the City Council may initiate a Zoning Text Amendment in its sole and absolute discretion.^[1] If the City Council finds it appropriate to formally consider this land use proposal, it should direct staff to draft a referral to the Plan and Design Commission directing it to hold a public hearing to formally consider a Zoning Text Amendment(s), and make a

recommendation to the City Council for final action.

[1] Important Note: Zoning Text Amendments cannot be initiated by residents or property owners.

Core Priorities:

Fiscal Stability

Public Safety

Economic Development

Infrastructure Investment

Environmental Sustainability

Vibrancy

Attachments:

1. Attachment A - Champions Point Presentation on Proposal
2. Attachment B - Public Comment



CHAMPIONS POINT

EXPERIENCE GREATNESS

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A wide-angle photograph of a pond in a lush forest. The pond is filled with lily pads and several pink flowers. The water is dark and reflects the surrounding greenery. The shoreline is composed of large, grey rocks. The background is a dense forest of tall trees with green leaves.

CHAMPIONS POINT: THE EXPERIENCE

CHAMPIONS POINT: THE EXPERIENCE

Champions Point is **a unique destination designed to inspire personal transformation** by inviting individuals to tap into their own inner greatness.

Leveraging the tangible authenticity of a genuine, architecturally significant estate, the property offers an immersive experience and a connection to bespoke, intentional design that reflects a championship lifestyle.

This setting serves as a dynamic center of empowerment, moving beyond static exhibits to become a living platform where patrons realize their untapped potential and encounter the emotional weight of a space that has witnessed the honing of discipline and the celebration of victories.

Central to this mission is the "**Experience Greatness**" program, which reinforces success principles through themes such as Mindset, Action, and Service.

The facility is deeply committed to community building, providing access and mentorship to youth from all economic backgrounds while strengthening local ties through donated facility usage.

Ultimately, Champions Point reinforces the principles of excellence through sustained outreach, prompting every visitor to nurture and truly Experience Greatness within themselves.

HOW THE EXPERIENCE COMES TO LIFE

Champions Point will be fundamentally designed as a dynamic cultural institution where architecture, sports, and philanthropy will converge to deliver an immersive, multi-sensory experience focused entirely on personal transformation.

Moving decisively beyond static exhibits, the property will be a living platform dedicated to guiding every patron to realize their untapped potential and actively **Experience Greatness** from within.

Through the purposeful integration of design, the estate's commissioned art, custom features, and world-class athletic amenities will be leveraged as experiential teaching tools.

Narrative art and rhythmic soundscapes will tell powerful stories of discipline and success. At the same time, cutting-edge technology, such as AR/VR, will be repurposed not for mere viewing but for personal application, allowing visitors to engage in interactive goal-setting and symbolically "set their own future legacy" within the inspirational space.

Crucially, the estate will transform into "**living classrooms**" during dedicated community days, utilizing the court and gym for interactive challenges—such as high-pressure simulation drills and consistency labs—to translate abstract success principles (Mindset, Action, Service) into tangible, real-world skills. The modular program will teach universal success principles practiced by outstanding individuals into an actionable blueprint for youth. This approach will convert abstract principles into tangible, real-world skills, enabling students to commit to a purpose and understand that routine and commitment are the foundation for achieving lifelong personal greatness.

This innovative and deeply engaging approach will ensure the inspiration is accessible to all, providing sustained guidance and directly reinforcing the principles of excellence necessary to cultivate the greatness everyone possesses.

A photograph of a lush green landscape. In the foreground, there are several tall stalks of purple flowers. Behind them is a well-maintained green lawn. In the background, there is a large, dense tree with vibrant green leaves, and further back, a line of trees under a bright sky. A chain-link fence is visible on the right side of the image.

WORKING WITH NON PROFITS AND YOUTH PROGRAMS

WORKING WITH NON PROFITS AND YOUTH PROGRAMS

Champions Legacy, a newly formed 501(c)(3), is focused on fostering direct, sustained youth empowerment, leveraging the inspirational Champions Point facility and the proprietary “Experience Greatness” program to promote long-term personal development. Our primary focus is partnering with existing youth-focused non-profit organizations to ensure widespread and impactful access.

- **TARGETED ACCESS & COMMUNITY COMMITMENT**

The Foundation will provide extensive, targeted access to the inspirational facility. This includes dedicating 24 days per year for local community benefit, ensuring that local youth programs and civic groups, such as the City of Highland Park and the Park District, can use the environment for enrichment. Crucially, dedicated time will be allocated to sessions, tours, and motivational events specifically targeting disadvantaged youth from the broader Chicago area, providing critical life guidance on topics such as education and positive decision-making.

- **CURRICULUM INTEGRATION & MENTORSHIP NETWORK**

The core of our impact lies in the “**Experience Greatness**” program. We will actively partner with established national and local youth organizations (such as Boys & Girls Clubs or YMCA) to implement a modular approach, ensuring core champions' principles like Mindset, Execution, and Service are consistently reinforced throughout a young person's development. This outreach extends beyond the property: Foundation staff will serve as guest speakers, delivering free curriculum modules in schools and for local non-profits. Most importantly, the Foundation will create a sustained support system through ongoing outreach and digital platforms, serving as a long-term support line and mentorship network to reinforce success principles long after a youth's initial visit. The facility itself will serve as a venue for healthy pursuits and teamwork exercises, using sports as a powerful metaphor for life skills.

BENEFITS FOR YOUTH PROGRAMS

Champions Legacy will provide local and regional youth programs with an exceptional and sustained platform for student empowerment, leveraging a world-class facility and a comprehensive curriculum.

ACCESS TO AN EXCLUSIVE, INSPIRATIONAL VENUE

Youth programs will gain free, dedicated access to the inspirational Champions Point estate, a resource typical programs cannot offer. Students will experience a masterpiece property that serves as a tangible case study in discipline and success, enhancing learning from the outset. Programs can also utilize the home's amenities—such as the basketball court, pool, and workout facilities—to facilitate motivational, healthy leisure pursuits.

STRUCTURED CURRICULUM AND LONG-TERM MENTORSHIP

Youth programs will access a professional, ready-made program designed for long-term impact. They will integrate the **Experience Greatness** pillars (Mindset, Execution, Service) into their activities, strengthening their educational offerings. This is supplemented by a crucial long-term support system and outreach efforts to provide ongoing mentorship, reinforce success principles, and offer access to our network of champions and youth speakers who deliver high-impact messages on critical topics such as accountability and perseverance.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT

The curriculum and location offer unique opportunities for nature and community-focused learning. Programs will utilize adjacent nature parks for sustainability and climate responsibility education, broadening the program's scope. Additionally, the on-site sports facilities will be used to easily incorporate teamwork exercises, teaching essential collaboration and leadership skills as a metaphor for life.



WORKING WITH THE PARK DISTRICT

WORKING WITH THE PARK DISTRICT:

Champions Point views the adjacent Heller Nature Center as a foundational partner and aims to create a symbiotic relationship by providing substantial financial, logistical, and programmatic support to the Park District.

COOPERATIVE ACCESS

The patron access plan is fully integrated with the Nature Center to promote appreciation for the natural world and healthy pursuits. Champions Point customers will be transported by shuttle to the Center, which will serve as the initial gateway. Patrons will be encouraged to walk existing nature trails to reach the property, requiring only a minimal 120-foot extension of an existing trail to minimize environmental disruption. To support safety, we are prepared to fund minimal, guided lighting near dusk and offer complete insurance indemnification to the Center for customer liability on the trails.

PROGRAMMATIC ALIGNMENT

Champions Point proposes to create a symbiotic relationship with Heller Nature Center, enhancing its existing educational programs while integrating the principles of the Experience Greatness Curriculum.

Our educational mission is designed to amplify the Park District's goals. We propose integrating program modules, taught using the natural environment of the Center, to reinforce environmental stewardship. Furthermore, the project will fund the maintenance and preservation of the natural areas on the Champions Point property, creating a natural corridor that enhances the adjacent Heller grounds.

BENEFITS FOR THE PARK DISTRICT

The partnership will provide Heller Nature Center with long-term financial security and logistical support, enabling the Park District to focus on core programming. This includes a Dedicated Revenue Stream, in which the Park District receives a portion of ticket sales as a consistent, unrestricted funding source.

Champions Point is committed to Zero-Cost Operational Support, covering all expenses related to the partnership, including shuttle operations, maintenance, snow removal, and the upkeep of access trails. Furthermore, project funds will ensure Enhanced Landscaping and Preservation of natural areas on the Champions Point property, creating a highly maintained natural buffer that enhances the overall environmental quality adjacent to the Heller grounds.

ALIGNMENT WITH PARK DISTRICT MISSION

The strategy directly supports the Park District's core mission to enrich community life through healthy leisure and appreciation of nature.

By using the Heller Nature Center as the gateway, the plan promotes greater appreciation of nature and encourages patrons to walk the existing trails. Programmatic Integration will occur through modules such as an Eco-Responsibility module, which will be taught collaboratively with Heller, using the natural environment as a living laboratory for youth education on sustainability.

The commitment to off-site parking minimizes environmental impact by avoiding new road construction and high vehicle traffic near the park. Finally, as a gesture of collaboration, we propose donating the use of the property for the Park District's 9th Annual Champions Celebration in 2027.



COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

"Community use" for Champions Point refers to the dedicated, free-of-charge access provided to local community groups, specifically the City of Highland Park, the Park District, and youth from the broader Chicagoland area, to utilize the facility and its amenities for civic engagement, recreation, and educational programs. This commitment ensures the inspirational environment directly supports local enrichment and non-profit youth development initiatives. The primary goal of community use is to partner with schools and non-profit youth organizations to get students onto the property for programming centered around the "*Experience Greatness*" theme.

Community use will deliver high-impact programming through strategic partnerships centered on the **Experience Greatness** theme.

CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

Modular 'Greatness' Workshops might be introduced to utilize the property's unique spaces (e.g., the gym or study) and to host sessions based on program pillars (e.g., Mindset), applying abstract concepts like discipline to physical challenges (e.g., the "Consistency Challenge"). The facility might also host regular Speaker Sessions in which network members (champions, professionals) deliver inspirational talks on Action and Accountability. Furthermore, Eco-Responsibility Field Trips will partner with science classes, using the adjacent nature areas as a living classroom for sustainability and environmental stewardship education.

HEALTHY PURSUITS & TEAM BUILDING

The sports facilities might host Sports-as-Metaphor Days for local youth teams, incorporating drills and teamwork exercises to teach collaboration and resilience under pressure, directly linking physical action to life skills. The property also serves as a Safe Space for after-school programs, allowing youth to host meetings, study sessions, or engage in healthy leisure using the pool and workout facilities.

CREATIVE & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Dedicated meeting days might be offered for Civic Youth Councils and student government groups to inspire excellence in civic service within an aspirational setting.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

To foster a thriving local economy, we will produce and distribute a comprehensive Highland Park Community Guide to our customers, actively encouraging their patronage of local businesses—including restaurants, arts and entertainment venues, hotels, and essential services. This initiative is designed to immediately inject revenue into the community, support a vibrant local culture, and significantly broaden the local tax base. The full economic contribution and benefit of this direct community engagement will be quantified and documented through a detailed economic impact and feasibility study.

COMMITMENT TO NEIGHBORHOOD INTEGRITY AND PRIVACY

Preserving the safety, security, peacefulness, and privacy of the seven residential families within the Point Lane and Museum Drive neighborhood is a top priority for Champions Point. Residents moved into this two-block area as early as 1991 and as recently as August 2024, seeking a peaceful, low-traffic environment surrounded by nature. Our operational plan is specifically designed to eliminate disruptive traffic and provide robust privacy measures.

TRAFFIC ELIMINATION AND NOISE CONTROL

Our core access plan ensures that the fundamental quality of life for residents is protected:

- **Zero Visitor Traffic:** Our ingress/egress plan uses off-site parking and shuttle buses to the Heller Nature Center, ensuring no visitor vehicle traffic on Point Lane or Museum Drive.
- **Reduced Overall Traffic:** The existing nuisance traffic—which we documented as over 100 vehicles passing the gate on peak days, with many stopping for photos—will be dramatically reduced by an estimated 50+ cars per day.
- **Gate Relocation:** The iconic “23” gate will be removed from the entrance and relocated to the interior of the property. The front gate will be replaced with a similar, unmarked gate, eliminating the desire for visitors to queue or stop on the street, including at all hours of the night.
- **No After-Hours Use:** No public after-hours events (parties, etc.) will be permitted to ensure absolute peace for all neighbors during evenings.
- **Commitment to Residential Use:** This property use allows Champions Point to legally commit to no residential rentals and no fractional-share sales, guaranteeing that neighbors will not experience traffic, noise, or disturbance associated with transient occupancy.
- **Evening Private Events (Limited Use):** Champions Point will request approval to host 6 private evening gatherings per year, primarily as fundraisers for non-profit organizations, outside regular operating hours. All events must conclude by 11:00 PM (off-property deadline). For safety and accessibility (ADA needs), all guests must be transported onto and off the property via dedicated shuttle buses, as walking through adjacent natural areas after dark is impractical. Any outdoor speaking or music will be strictly managed to maintain respectable noise levels.

PRIVACY, SECURITY, AND HOURS OF OPERATION

To address the immediate needs of adjacent neighbors, we are proposing specific property modifications and security enhancements:

- **Privacy Fencing and Landscaping:** To address privacy concerns, we request zoning relief to permit the construction of a 6-foot-tall privacy fence between the Champions Point property (2700 Point Lane) and any adjacent neighbors. Alternatively, for neighbors who prefer a natural barrier, we could plant one or two rows of dense, 8-foot-tall pine trees near the property lines. These solutions ensure visitors cannot see into, and neighbors cannot see, the touring patrons.
- **Enhanced Security:** We would provide additional security for the neighborhood, including monitoring the local street loop, should neighbors desire this extra measure of protection.
- **Hours of Operation:** Operations will be strictly limited to daytime hours. Peak season (May–October) hours are 8:00 AM – 7:00 PM, with final tours departing at 5:30 PM. Off-season hours (November–April) would be reduced to 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM, with final tours departing at 3:30 PM.



OUR COMMITMENT & THE ASK

THE ASK

THE CHAMPIONS POINT ACCESS AND CAPACITY PROPOSAL

The core request to the City of Highland Park and the Park District involves a meticulously planned visitor access strategy designed to mitigate local traffic concerns while integrating the experience with the natural environment. This comprehensive plan outlines the operational flow necessary to support the Champions Point concepts.

THE ACCESS PLAN: TRAFFIC MITIGATION AND HELLER GATEWAY

Our strategy ensures that there will be no visitor vehicle traffic on the local public roadways leading to the property, directly addressing the primary concern of residents:

Offsite Parking and Shuttle System: We will utilize offsite parking outside of the immediate residential area. From there, we will implement a shuttle bus transport system.

ADA accessibility: The plan is to request permission to operate an ADA-accessible shuttle service for patrons with special needs. This service would include direct property drop-off and pick-up, with specific, limited tour times designated to control the frequency of buses and mitigate neighbor concerns about additional shuttle traffic.

Heller Nature Center as Gateway: We seek approval to utilize a designated area within the Heller Nature Center as the drop-off and pick-up point for patrons. This is vital for transferring visitors from the shuttles to the park's walking system, resulting in a minimal, manageable logistical footprint.

Nature-Integrated Walking Access: To transition patrons to the tour entrance, we require the Park District's permission for visitors to walk along existing trails within the Heller Nature Center, encouraging nature appreciation and aligning with the Park District's mission.

Minimal Trail Extension: To complete the connection without significant environmental disruption, we request permission to construct a new, approximately 120-foot-long walking path. This short extension would connect the existing Heller trail network directly to the northwest corner of the Champions Point property entrance, ensuring seamless and non-intrusive access.

THE ASK (CONT)

Zoning Amendment Request: To legally support this project, we will formally request that the City amend the R2 Residential Zoning Code (a "text amendment") to explicitly permit a property tour as a special use. After this amendment, we will submit a formal application for a new special-use permit for the Champions Point property.

Staff access: We request that employees be permitted to come onto the property in two shuttle buses and leave in two shuttle buses daily.

CAPACITY, PROPORTIONAL BENEFIT, AND PHASED GROWTH

- **Proportional Benefit Framework:** The ability of Champions Point to deliver its extensive promises - including a portion of ticket sales share for the Park District, tax revenue for the City, and the full funding of the 'Experience Greatness' program - is directly proportional to the patron volume. A more successful operation ensures that more resources are available to reduce the tax burden, enhance local facilities, and empower youth.

This overall approach enables the City and Park District to approve a safe and manageable start for this program while preserving the *long-term vision* of maximizing the economic and philanthropic benefits for the entire community.



thank you

Champions Point LLC (C) 2025

Burhop, Karl

Subject: FW: Heller Nature Center / Champions Point

From: kimberly Markus <>

Sent: Tuesday, December 9, 2025 1:17 PM

To: Neukirch, Ghida <gneukirch@cityhpil.com>; Fontane, Joel <jfontane@cityhpil.com>

Subject: Heller Nature Center / Champions Point

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Good afternoon,

I would like to begin by requesting that my concerns be shared with the City Council prior to the December 15th meeting.

It has recently been brought to my attention that the owner of Champions Point is actively seeking new ways to commercialize his residential property and is now involving the Heller Nature Preserve. As a neighbor to both the residence and the preserve, I am deeply concerned about the use of Heller Nature Center as an access route for private tours and events associated with the Champions Point residence. A nature preserve exists to safeguard fragile ecosystems, not to facilitate the monetization of private property. This proposal makes it abundantly clear that Mr. Cooper does not understand the magnitude of destruction his plan will cause to Heller Nature Preserve, and that is profoundly alarming.

The environmental consequences of routing commercial activities through a protected preserve are immediate and severe. Increased foot and vehicle traffic damages native vegetation, compacts soil, and accelerates erosion in areas never intended for high-impact use. Each disturbance weakens the habitat structure that countless species rely on for nesting, feeding, shelter, and migration. Once these systems are disrupted, they can take decades to recover—if they recover at all.

Equally concerning is the harm to wildlife. The animals that inhabit the preserve depend on stable, undisturbed habitats. Noise, movement, and human intrusion cause chronic stress, disrupt essential behaviors, and drive sensitive species away from their home ranges. Nesting birds may abandon their young. Nocturnal animals may be forced into dangerous daylight movement, and this does not even take into account the harm and light pollution that would be caused by the proposed “minimal, guided lighting.” Larger mammals, already pressured by shrinking habitat, face increased risk of injury or road mortality as human activity pushes them into conflict. These impacts are not hypothetical; they are observable, predictable, and irreversible once set in motion.

The introduction of invasive species presents another serious and often overlooked threat. Visitors and vehicles inadvertently carry invasive plant seeds into the preserve, where they can take hold and quickly outcompete native vegetation. This single disruption can collapse entire ecological relationships, affecting pollinators, soil health, and food availability for wildlife. The cost and labor required to reverse these invasions are enormous, and even then, success is far from guaranteed.

The Heller Nature Center was established to protect this delicate ecosystem and the wildlife that depends on it. Allowing private commercial activity to use it as an access corridor is a direct violation of that purpose. The preserve's limited staff and resources are not equipped to manage the damage, monitor increased activity, or enforce boundaries against misuse. Every hour and dollar diverted from conservation to mitigate these impacts represents a loss to the public and to the environment we rely on.

I want to emphasize that I take this matter extremely seriously, and I am fully prepared to initiate a community outreach effort to protect the Heller Nature Center from this proposed action. As a courtesy, I have not copied the Lake County Audubon Society, Openlands, Friends of the Parks, Sierra Club, Illinois Environmental Council, or the Natural Resources Defense Council on this email, but doing so will be my next step should this issue continue without immediate and appropriate intervention.

As a member of this community and a neighbor deeply connected to this land, I urge immediate action to prevent any use of the nature preserve that might bring its very purpose to harm. The environmental and wildlife consequences are too great, too far-reaching, and too permanent to ignore. Our preserves must remain sanctuaries, safe from commercial interests, excessive traffic, and inappropriate use.

Protecting the Heller Nature Center is not optional; it is an urgent responsibility. I respectfully ask that your office intervene to uphold the preserve's intended purpose, enforce the protections already in place, and ensure that no private entity is allowed to compromise the ecological integrity of this vital natural resource.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this critical issue. I am available at any time to discuss this matter further or to provide additional observations from the neighboring community.

Kim Markus