

**DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 17, 2026**

Minutes

Mayor Amorose Groomes called the Tuesday, February 17, 2026 work session to order at 6:00 p.m.

Council members present: Ms. Alutto, Mayor Amorose Groomes, Vice Mayor De Rosa, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Keeler, Ms. Kramb and Dr. Lam.

Staff present: Ms. O'Callaghan, Mr. Hartmann, Mr. Barker, Chief Paez, Ms. Willis, Ms. Rauch, Mr. Will, Ms. Gischel, Ms. Ritzler, Mr. Earman, Mr. Rubino, Mr. Gracia, Ms. Blake, Mr. Ament, Ms. Hunter and Mr. Jiang.

Also present via Zoom: Martin Zogran and Felicia Jiang, Sasaki.

Ms. Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Premier Athletic and Recreation Campus Update – Vision and Framework

Mr. Will welcomed Council and introduced Felicia Jiang and Martin Zogran from Sasaki, who were joining virtually from their offices in Boston. Mr. Will expressed excitement about sharing the progress made on Council's goal to create a premier athletic and recreation campus. He outlined the evening's agenda, which included providing background and Mr. Zogran and his team sharing updates on guiding principles, program elements, and concept refinements. He mentioned there would be a preview of the approach for the State of the City address, discussion of next steps, and two discussion questions to solicit Council's feedback.

Mr. Will provided background on the project, explaining that in July of the previous year, the City engaged Sasaki to conduct a visioning and framework exercise. He emphasized they did not start from scratch but built upon the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Hunden Study, and other documents, along with stakeholder input to establish project alignment. The team explored big ideas and different conceptual alternatives while considering the thoroughfare network and larger plays within the West Innovation District, along with the West Innovation District integrated implementation strategy. The team had previously presented three concepts to Council during their retreat, and the next phase would involve developing more detailed work building upon this vision and framework.

Mr. Will reminded Council of the three different concepts previously shared, along with the vision, guiding principles, and considered program, which collectively comprised what they called the vision and framework. He noted this was not just about the concept or layout, but the entire suite of materials. The concepts included different ideas for indoor and outdoor athletics, amenities, ways to improve connectivity and layout, thinking about the Signature Trail, and integrating these elements into different concepts.

Since the retreat, Mr. Will reported that the team had been incorporating Council's feedback. Additionally, staff met with the SportsOhio Steering Committee following the City Council retreat to share a similar presentation and gather their feedback and guidance. He noted there was significant consensus and support from all members for Option 2, the Central Park concept, which aligned with

what staff heard from Council during the retreat. The steering committee appreciated the hub concept centralizing the amenities, liked the strategies about hybrid fields, reusing some indoor facilities, and thinking about this as a phased implementation approach. They were particularly interested in balancing tournament and local uses of field and indoor spaces.

Mr. Will shared specific feedback from the steering committee, including their appreciation for keeping the woods and adding amenities, which would create a unique and nice experience. They felt that adding a new indoor facility closer to the university's new Phase 3 extension could serve as a gateway for the entire park, and that nicer architecture there could elevate the simple buildings currently at SportsOhio. He characterized this as really good feedback from the group, which served as a valuable sounding board.

Mr. Zogran from Sasaki introduced Felicia Zhang, a project manager and senior planner at Sasaki, who would begin their presentation by reviewing what they heard from the City Council retreat. Ms. Jiang summarized the feedback received from the November City Council retreat, which was also validated by the SportsOhio Steering Committee. She noted that safety and family-friendly activities, as well as accessibility, were important considerations that had been elevated in their guiding principles. The team received confirmation on the total number of outdoor fields and their types, which were maintained in the plan. However, she acknowledged that further work was needed to determine the exact number and size of indoor facilities needed, which would happen in future phases.

Ms. Jiang reported that based on feedback, the performing arts center had been removed from the preferred plan as Council indicated it should be separate from the park. There was desire for a satellite community fitness recreation center, which was being considered on the east side of the park. Further discussion was required regarding the Shepherd's Excavating site, as the City was considering developing a new maintenance facility there. The first option for University Boulevard had been reflected in the preferred plan based on feedback, including placement of the larger indoor facility facing University Boulevard. Regarding golf facilities, based on feedback, they decided to keep the existing footprints of both the par 3 course and driving range while providing enhancements to the facilities.

Ms. Jiang addressed concerns about the linear layout of soccer fields in Option 2, which was the preferred option, noting that concerns about it creating too long of a walk have been addressed by including a pedestrian promenade that unifies the fields. Finally, regarding questions about the need to maintain the existing wooded area within the Darree Field side of the plan, this has been maintained in the preferred plan. This decision was supported by analysis from the city forester, which revealed that both woodlots were moderate to high-quality habitats with minimal invasive species, providing valuable ecological function, wildlife habitat, and other benefits such as stormwater management and carbon storage. For these reasons, it was recommended to preserve these areas as much as possible.

Ms. Jiang then reiterated the vision statement for the park:

a premier athletic destination that connects community, drives economic development, and delivers a uniquely Dublin experience through thoughtful design, functional excellence, environmental stewardship, and programming that serves both local recreation needs and regional tournament aspirations.

She also reviewed the seven guiding principles, which were crafted with feedback from City Council and other stakeholders, as follows:

Game Day and Every Day

Balance the excitement of tournament-scale events with everyday community and recreation use by providing something for everyone, not just athletes, but also parents, siblings, grandparents, other spectators and all members of the community. Design adaptable, flexible and multi-use spaces that support year-round, multi-sport and multi-generational use.

Experience Driven, Community Inspired

Deliver a unique and memorable experience for athletes, families and visitors by creating a place that is distinctly Dublin; high-quality, welcoming and reflective of the community's character and culture.

Smart Layout, Safe and Family-Friendly Design

A well-organized layout enhances both functionality and user experience; design for a safe, family-friendly environment that accommodates large crowds and everyday use with clear circulation, intuitive hierarchy and effective wayfinding.

Connected and Accessible for All

Improve connectivity, ensure mobility for all ages and abilities and make it easier to walk and bike by enhancing walks and paths within program areas and throughout the entire campus. Extend connections to greater Dublin and help facilitate the city's broader street network. Establish the Signature Trail as a central spine for mobility to further strengthen connectivity across Cosgray Road, creating a seamless, accessible network for all users.

Design with Nature

Celebrate nature as a unifying feature and make sustainability a focal point by growing Dublin's tree canopy, protecting native plantings, supporting the local ecology and considering sustainability at every scale—from systems-level strategies such as stormwater, water reus, and solar energy to finer-grain pollinator meadows, raingardens, water refilling stations and recycling and compost receptacles.

Financial Sustainability

Balance community needs with funding capacity and long-term viability by building partnerships, strategic and phased improvements, leveraging existing facilities, efficient operations, and building-in revenue-generating opportunities like concessions, equipment rentals, and retail.

Rooted in the District

Position the campus as an integral element of the West Innovation District and the greater Dublin community by building land-use synergies with hospitality, wellness, sports medicine and mixed-use development. Foster partnerships with district and community stakeholders to activate adjacent parcels, amplify economic and community impact and support innovation.

Based on feedback received, they had elevated "safety and family-friendly design" in the third principle, as well as accessibility in the fourth principle regarding "connected and accessible for all".

Mr. Zogran continued the presentation, discussing how they had been attentive to numerous studies and ensured alignment with their recommendations. Through stakeholder interviews with many City Council members, they incorporated the best recommendations that aligned with specific programmatic components related to fields as well as more community-based components. He emphasized they were aligning with past work completed.

Mr. Zogran outlined the big categories for different programs, with outdoor athletics being the primary thrust of program components for the Darree Field site, complemented by indoor athletics, opportunities for passive recreation, active recreation, and supporting facilities. He detailed the outdoor athletics program, which included 18 full-size outdoor soccer fields available for lacrosse as well; eight larger diamonds and eight youth diamonds; and maintaining, keeping, and upgrading the Miracle League field and playground. For indoor pieces, which would be determined through existing and proposed new facilities, uses would include soccer, basketball, volleyball, and other uses, along with the existing use of The Chiller at SportsOhio.

Other uses considered in the categories of active and passive recreation ranged from golf offerings, adventure play or ropes courses, and community fitness. Passive opportunities included the dog park, playgrounds, nature play, walking and bicycle trails, the signature trail, and maintaining the "Going, Going, Gone" public art installation. To support all of this, Mr. Zogran noted the robust need for parking to provide access to facilities on both sides of Cosgray Road; a visitor center of approximately 5,000 square feet; and a series of community hubs where people could gather before moving to specific venues and where those not engaged in tournament activities could meet and have opportunities for food and beverage. These would be supported by restrooms, shelters, and concessions providing shade, relief, and water bottle/charging stations, all maintained through a maintenance facility shown on the plan.

Mr. Zogran reviewed the three options presented at the retreat, labeled as renovating exactly what exists today and growing from that framework, the Central Park concept with an inside-outside condition specifically on the Darree Field site, and the green corridors idea. The consensus was that with some improvements, the Central Park scheme offered the flexibility, arrangement, and legibility for the plan to move forward into a more refined version.



The team had worked with City of Dublin staff and steering committee members to give form to what this program would look like for both sides of Cosgray Road. Mr. Zogran described the circulation patterns, highlighting the clearly defined loop road on the Darree Field site and access from University Boulevard all the way over on the east side, creating an intentional entry sequence moving through two roundabouts at University Boulevard and Cosgray Road. He emphasized the importance of pedestrian movement through the paths, with the Signature Trail shown in purple providing both an expedient and pleasurable experience. The trail would have twists and turns on the Darree Field site, circumnavigating wooded areas and the "Going, Going, Gone" installation, while following a waterway as it crosses Cosgray Road from west to east along existing and future stormwater ponds. He noted the opportunity for either a bridge or tunnel connection across Cosgray Road but emphasized that the entire series of walkable and bikeable paths was integral to the overall configuration and design of the premier athletic recreational complex.

Mr. Zogran explained the land planning principles, particularly for the Darree Field site. Turf fields would be located to the north, preserving, maintaining, and improving existing turf fields into smaller clusters of two to three fields. These could be turfed and lighted in the short term as relatively early actions to improve functionality and availability for communities and tournaments. South of that, youth diamonds would be clustered in the west, with hybrid fields allowing for both soccer and baseball/softball in the southeast corner. On the SportsOhio side, many existing facilities would remain and be reused, with ongoing discussions about indoor facility placement while keeping options open. The golf facility would be maintained mostly as it exists today but with improvements

and updates for both the par 3 golf and driving range. The open space framework featured a naturalistic core contrasting with expanses of fields both to the north and south. This central path would stretch from the SportsOhio area on the east with a community hub, potentially including a new building facing University Boulevard, across Cosgray Road, to join with "Going, Going, Gone" and the tournament hub building on the west side through the Forest Park area to the Miracle League field and beyond.

Mr. Zogran detailed the SportsOhio site plan, noting that buildings shown in white were existing structures. The composition and placement of indoor facilities would be determined in future phases, but these could be complemented by three or four smaller or larger buildings. One facing University Boulevard would create a gateway moment, with potentially one or two adjacent to Cosgray Road north and south of The Chiller. One facility to the north could potentially include outdoor courts for pickleball, with another facility just to the south. These would be relatively large, simple buildings complementing existing structures while providing an opportunity to refresh the SportsOhio side more broadly. The East Community Hub would offer potential for day-to-day uses for residents with easy access and plentiful parking, centered by a pavilion, potentially an ice loop, looking onto an existing stormwater pond, all linked by the Signature Trail shown in purple. On the west side, the Darree Field reconfiguration, soccer and lacrosse fields would remain in the northern part of the site, except for the championship field, which would be rotated 90 degrees to create a more public-facing venue with bleachers. To the south and southeast, collections of hybrid fields would be connected by hub areas shown in yellow and smaller pavilions for amenities. The plan preserved the legibility of the central loop with parking as an intermediate zone before reaching the fields, following the recommended sequence from sports facilities companies. This allowed for gating, easy access, and ability to reach concessions, restrooms, and shady areas. The plan showed increased tree canopy between fields to provide shade and comfort immediately adjacent to fields. The central forest park would offer varied experiences, both densely wooded and allowing variety as the Signature Trail winds through. The plan had been significantly updated from the City Council retreat to show detail, road expansion projects, and development opportunities. One component that emerged was the potential to use Shepherd Excavation buildings for park headquarters and maintenance, reusing or adaptively reusing existing structures as Council desired.

Mr. Will thanked the Sasaki team and turned the discussion over to Mr. Earman. Mr. Earman emphasized the importance of following guidance from the master plan and Hunden Study. He confirmed that their plan was consistent with both documents, increasing the supply of athletic fields, planning for future demand and population growth, providing multiple-use flexible field changes, and expanding capacity for leagues and tournaments. Mr. Earman noted that while the number of fields prescribed in the concept plan was consistent with capacity needs to alleviate any issues, they had not yet studied exactly how programming would follow. They wanted to work with local youth athletic organizations to ensure scheduling and programming accommodated both recreational leagues and tournaments without too much interruption.

Mr. Earman discussed improving field quality and reliability, noting that current fields were all-natural grass. With turfing, they could essentially double the amount of use without resting the fields, extending the season and daily use into the evenings, providing significantly more opportunities. The plan supported sports tourism and economic impact as demonstrated in the Hunden Study, particularly with tournaments. The strategic land acquisition met strategies in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Staff had reviewed both studies to ensure they accommodated all recommendations and felt confident this would achieve both.

Mr. Will then previewed the State of the City address for early March, where they plan to share the vision statement, guiding principles, and conceptual layout plan, along with four renderings currently in process to build excitement. They will share an aerial view of SportsOhio; a fly-over of the University Boulevard future extension; a zoom-in on Darree Fields showing additional recreation space and sense of place; a zoom-in to one of the hybrid fields showing multifunctional space and placemaking for tournaments and families; and a zoom-in of the community hub on the SportsOhio side as a year-round destination place, more accessible on the east side versus potentially busier tournament times on the west.

Mr. Zogran added that these renderings were currently in process, with early versions shared with the City. They were working to convey the qualitative experience of the overall planning and design, showing day-to-day use for families, shade structures and trees providing shade, and year-round availability and programming activities with the Signature Trail connecting everything throughout the park. He expressed excitement about how plans were shaping up.

Mr. Will outlined next steps, seeking Council feedback to complete this phase of work and bring back a vision and framework for Council to adopt or accept. They would then draft an RFP for creation of a master plan with additional layers of detail including civil engineering, stormwater, a business model, and more detailed utilization of fields and indoor spaces, while continuing to explore partnerships and initial implementation steps. He thanked Council for allowing the update and introduced two discussion questions: whether Council supported the updates to the guiding principles and concept establishing the vision for the park, and whether they had thoughts for the team on next steps.

Mr. Keeler began the discussion, inquiring about the championship field utilization, expressing concern that if used only two or three times annually, it would be wasteful of what might be the most expensive field. He hoped it would be multipurpose and thought would be given to maximize its utilization. Mr. Keeler indicated he found the phasing of the project helpful and wants to see how different elements could take shape over one, three, five, and ten-year periods. He raised questions about the Shepherd Excavating site timeline, noting lack of immediate access because of the business operating there. He asked about the vision for three new indoor facilities on the east campus, seeing them as perfect phasing opportunities given their expense. He would like to understand the phasing of the roadway network, particularly the Rings Road extension, for accessibility and ease of facility access.

Mr. Keeler asked about the Cosgray Road modernization design, whether it was four lanes or two lanes. Mr. Will clarified it was currently a two-lane rural route without pedestrian facilities, and the vision in Envision Dublin and the thoroughfare and park plan envisioned a four-lane roadway with pedestrian facilities. Mr. Keeler inquired about the pedestrian crossing design, wondering if it would be a HAWK signal, overhead bridge, or tunnel under Cosgray Road. He shared miscellaneous thoughts, questioning the need for a bark park on the east campus given the dog park on the west campus. He was initially skeptical about the inclusion of mini golf, given the existing driving range and par 3 course, but reconsidered for families with younger children who might need more activities like paddle boats. Regarding future lighting, he emphasized being careful about light emission from the facility, suggesting lower lumen lights or diffusers. Mr. Keeler confirmed he supported the updates and guiding principles.

Vice Mayor De Rosa thanked the team for their work. She asked about her recollection from the retreat that the west side would not be solely sports-related but would integrate other types of facilities or buildings as economic generators for sustainability. She was surprised not to see

integration of non-sports elements, expressing concern about price tags and the need for integration rather than separation of sports and economic development uses.

Mr. Will acknowledged missing this point, explaining that on the SportsOhio eastern side, the City purchased property not only for parks and recreation but for the University connection important to the thoroughfare network. Working with WIDIIS, EMH&T and others, they determined an alignment splitting where former outdoor soccer fields were and creating a 12-acre site east of University Boulevard that could be used for economic development, currently zoned ID-1 for office research.

Vice Mayor De Rosa clarified she meant integrating uses on the west side of University Boulevard, not creating separate sports and economic zones. She emphasized concerns about financing and the need to attract partners. She felt the current labeling of buildings as "field sports building" was too limiting if they wanted partners interested in health or other uses. Mr. Will acknowledged that adding business components to the program and using more flexible terminology would help attract partnerships. Vice Mayor De Rosa pushed for less literal labeling to attract innovative partnerships needed for funding. She requested information to understand anticipated visitor volumes given the configuration, wanting Council to understand traffic flow implications. She noted that financial sustainability in the guiding principles seemed focused only on concessions and equipment rentals, which would not sufficiently fund the facility. She emphasized the need to explicitly state desires for larger business economic partners. She reiterated the importance of designing to attract partners through both physical design and articulation of opportunities.

Dr. Lam agreed with the business opportunity discussion, noting the design was basically created to attract tournaments as big revenue generators. He had attended many volleyball, soccer, and baseball tournaments and believed the design would attract these big tournaments. He supported the updates, particularly liking the Central Park idea, Signature Trail spine, and wooded area. He believed the wooded area with amenities and Signature Trail would differentiate Dublin from other regional athletic facilities. He appreciated the hub model with east and west hubs. Dr. Lam addressed specific sports considerations, supporting Mr. Keeler's championship tournament field comments, noting these are used frequently at tournaments of all sizes and would differentiate Dublin. Regarding what would make the facility premier, he emphasized amenities around fields including seating and shading. Based on research of fastest-growing sports, he suggested increasing pickleball courts beyond the planned 8-10, given the large number of tournaments occurring nationally. He noted volleyball as another fast-growing sport. Having attended tournaments with thousands of participants and 50-60 courts, he suggests increasing the number from 8-10 to at least 12 courts to attract smaller tournaments.

Dr. Lam expressed enthusiasm for the inclusion of cricket facilities, noting Dublin's large cricket league, popular primarily among Indian and South Asian groups. He felt this aligned with Dublin positioning itself as a global city of choice, reflecting diversity. Currently, there are no regional tournament facilities, which presents an opportunity for Dublin. He loved the hybrid field design accommodating lacrosse, cricket, flag football and other sports. He acknowledged the need for more thought on traffic flow patterns and parking, noting 60-70 spaces per field seems good but noted the needs for drop-off areas, bus parking, shuttle space, and micromobility parking.

Mr. Will responded that micromobility and other mobility options would definitely be accommodated, with specific locations for bike racks and similar amenities detailed in the next phase. They wanted to highlight the bike and pedestrian network to encourage alternative transportation. Mr. Earman addressed cricket specifically, noting the very high regional demand but lack of resources. Dublin has two clubs - Columbus Cricket Club at Emerald Fields and Dublin Cricket Club at Darree Fields. Staff worked closely with them on program development and residency requirements to ensure

Dublin residents were accommodated, with low percentages of non-residents participating. Mr. Earman noted cricket requires a large geography, making it difficult to accommodate, but they continue working with both clubs. He emphasized the flexibility built into many of the fields to accommodate changing trends driven by Olympics and cyclical interests and believe they have accomplished flexibility in the conceptual field spaces while they want to take a deeper dive to ensure maximum accommodation.

Ms. Johnson expressed excitement about the beautiful designs and what this could mean for the community, thanking staff and existing Council members for their vision and prioritization. She raised concerns about transportation capacity, noting ODOT surveys showed the SR 161 corridor probably could not support all planned WID uses. With 60-70 parking spaces per outdoor field, a soccer tournament alone would add 1,000-1,200 cars. She questioned whether SR 161 or Cosgray Road in its current two-lane country road condition could handle this, emphasizing the need to think beyond the field experience to avoid the angst of families running late who cannot reach fields. She stressed looking closely at Cosgray Road expansion plans, especially if accelerating tournament modeling at Darree Fields east and west of Cosgray, suggesting the Cosgray Road expansion timing was critical to phasing. Without proper access, tournament organizers would not return.

Ms. Johnson then raised environmental concerns, as it is Council's responsibility to consider everything, especially given operational environmental risks in the West Innovation District. She referenced the Title V permit issued by the Federal EPA allowing 95 diesel generators at the data center campus south of 161. This permit acknowledged the location as a major source of air pollution when generators run, producing particulate and gaseous emissions. She believed this operational risk must be considered in planning. Additionally, during Winter Storm Fern, the Department of Energy allowed PJM to run these diesel generators to stabilize the grid. As regional energy supply and demand issues grow, such certificates might be issued more frequently, particularly during winter storms or summer heat when tourism would peak.

Ms. Johnson saw monthly testing of 95 diesel generators as conflicting with the beautiful sports and recreation campus vision. She encouraged the steering committee to consider emergency planning if generators came online during tournaments, including potential air quality monitors. While acknowledging these were questions without immediate answers, she emphasized they were important considerations for families using these facilities. She concluded by praising the beautiful design and expressing confidence the team would consider these comments moving forward.

Mr. Will thanked her for the transportation comments. The plan contemplated multiple access points to distribute traffic, plus the University Boulevard Phase 3 connection and a new connection from there to Darree Fields crossing Cosgray; this will help disperse traffic beyond a total reliance on Cosgray Road. The next phase would consider timing and steps to address these concerns.

Ms. Krumb expressed support for the revisions with minor suggestions. She recommended the signature building on the east end west side of University Boulevard should front the street rather than having parking between the building and street, especially if it included offices. She agreed with Vice Mayor De Rosa about making building labels more generic to show support for other businesses. She felt the facility seemed underparked, hoping the 60-70 spots per field were specific to proximity on each side, not total for both sides. She had difficulty seeing exact numbers but felt parking seemed low overall. She noted buses would take up significant parking and suggested a dedicated bus parking near the championship field or generally, as many teams would bring buses. Ms. Krumb emphasized roadways needed to precede tournaments, requiring University Boulevard and Cosgray Road completion before handling tournaments. She advocated for including a

pedestrian tunnel under Cosgray Road during road design rather than attempting it later, requesting cost estimates. Looking forward to the business model, she recalled discussions about having sponsors for individual fields, with businesses potentially paying for construction and/or maintenance in exchange for advertising. She emphasized sponsorships and naming rights as fair game for funding, especially for the championship field.

Ms. Alutto thanked everyone for the good work, noting significant progress from inception. She supported the changes made, agreeing the area did not need two dog parks. She emphasized the need for bus parking locations. Looking at the northwest corner, she asked about the yellow and orange circle. Mr. Zogran explained it was a gathering area after parking, typically with a gate to a series of fields, including concessions, restrooms, and shade structures, with circular pathways providing access to fields where teams meet before and after games. Sports facilities companies requested spaces for teams to gather, with yellow highlighted areas serving this purpose.

Ms. Alutto confirmed the yellow and orange were paths and emphasized ensuring each field had at least partial ADA-accessible paths for grandparents with walkers to reach every field. While seeing many accessible paths, she noted some spots might be difficult for those with mobility issues and wanted detailed planning to address this. She agreed with colleagues about additional phasing details including traffic, Cosgray Road timing, pedestrian crossing methods, and sponsorship planning, noting these conversations were already beginning. She wanted more detailed understanding of phasing timing and next steps. As a parent, she emphasized permanent and temporary signage needs, with temporary signage critical for tournament flow when people need clear directional guidance. She absolutely agreed about the economic development piece regarding building names and language moving forward.

Mayor Amorose Groomes echoed colleagues' comments about the progress made. She believed they had previously agreed for the building to front University Boulevard and did not understand why it came back differently, emphasizing its importance as an economic development driver. She saw opportunities in the other two new buildings and potentially the East Community Hub, questioning whether it was new or an addition to existing buildings. The two buildings on Cosgray also presented opportunities. She expressed ongoing concerns about using nearly a quarter of the center for Forest Park, seeing parking challenges in the Darree Fields Loop. She questioned having a roadway network there without much on it, suggesting possible on-street or head-in parking to mitigate direct shoots through, as people heading to far sides of the loop could create dangerous situations. She looked forward to seeing lighting design and programs, expecting them to be sensitive but appropriate. She was interested in championship field seating capacity, noting high schools seeking tournament facilities when their own fields conflict with other sports. She wanted to ensure appropriate seating to compete for these activities, potentially working with OHSAA. With championship fields for both baseball and soccer/football/lacrosse, teams travel with large numbers which could fill hotel rooms. She concluded that they continue inching closer to an outstanding facility significant in the region.

Mr. Will addressed the woods comment, noting this was discussed at the retreat. Since then, Sasaki and the city forester examined the woods quality, finding them to be fairly large canopy stands in the city, over 100 years old, providing significant ecological value. Compared to what was north (data centers) and potentially south (residential) of the area, these 65-plus foot tall trees helped screen areas north of the park from areas south, adding value by breaking up both the park and the WID. Mayor Amorose Groomes asked if they had a tree survey. Mr. Will explained they had conducted a qualitative assessment rather than individual tree survey, with the next step being a detailed tree survey to understand exactly where the best trees were located and what was not prime, which would inform where clearing might occur, where woods might be shaved, or where trails would go.

Regarding sponsorship comments, Mr. Will shared that team members and consultants at SFC liked this plan because they saw sponsorship opportunities for different areas, creating naming rights possibilities that would contribute to financial sustainability and viability from the framework level. Ms. Blake added that at the last Council meeting, Ms. O'Callaghan gave a staff update about the citywide sponsorship strategy RFP, with responses due in early March. This covered not just this area but parks and amenities citywide. SFC would be part of conversations to ensure alignment, avoiding duplicate sponsor pursuits. There were differences between three-day activation sponsors versus long-term partnerships, potentially combining interests in events like the Dublin Irish Festival with longer-term banners or naming rights. Council would be engaged in this process.

Mr. Zogran asked for clarification, summarizing that he heard three important next steps: the importance of thorough phasing for both infrastructure and facilities; secondly, the importance of thorough traffic assessment, counts, and understanding parking supply for cars, buses, and micromobility; and thirdly, opportunities for sponsorship and economic investment. He felt these were excellent comments, with other more detailed pieces to be addressed in part two of the endeavor.

Ms. O'Callaghan suggested that given concerns about tournaments, capacity, parking, and traffic, it might be helpful to inventory existing tournaments at Darree Fields that have occurred for many years. Comparing these with additional tournament capacity envisioned in this master plan would help determine actual capacity and provide a feel for additional traffic, since significant large tournaments have been occurring there for years. Council members agreed this would be helpful. Ms. Kramb added it would help with general parking planning, recalling that at the Avery Fields south fields, parking was always full with people finding spots in the grass for just four ball diamonds. She noted the challenge of hour-long games with overlapping arrivals and departures, suggesting they learn from those experiences to ensure adequate parking.

Ms. Johnson suggested benchmarking against other Ohio tournaments like Westchester's huge soccer tournament as a regional comparison for team numbers and field counts.

Mr. Will expressed gratitude for the feedback given and thanked Mr. Zogran and Ms. Jiang for joining the discussion virtually.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.



Presiding Officer - Mayor



Clerk of Council