

Northville Downs Central Park: Public Use Analysis



provided via email after the meeting
packet was distributed

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Team Members

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Sub Team Members

- ◇ Kathy Spillane, Sustainability Team/Chairperson
- ◇ Thom Barry, Planning Commissioner
- ◇ John Carter, City Council
- ◇ Mark Gasche, Director, Northville Parks & Recreation
- ◇ Dave Gutman, Chairman, Sustainability Team
- ◇ Bob Hoida, Principal, OX Studio
- ◇ AnnaMaryLee Vollick, Planning Commissioner
- ◇ Lori Ward, Director DDA



Study Group Focus

- ❑ Better understand the original proposed design, scope of work, and use intentions of Developer
- ❑ Provide a list of preliminary issues and opportunities
- ❑ Work with the City, DDA, Parks & Recreation to better understand:
 - Preliminary project, operation and maintenance costs of proposed spaces and activities
 - Operational management options and responsibilities of involved parties

Public Space Research

William Whyte
1917-1999



- Sociologist and Urban Designer
- Studied Parks and Plazas in New York City during the 1980's

SWA Group



The Field Guide to Urban Plazas

Jan Gehl

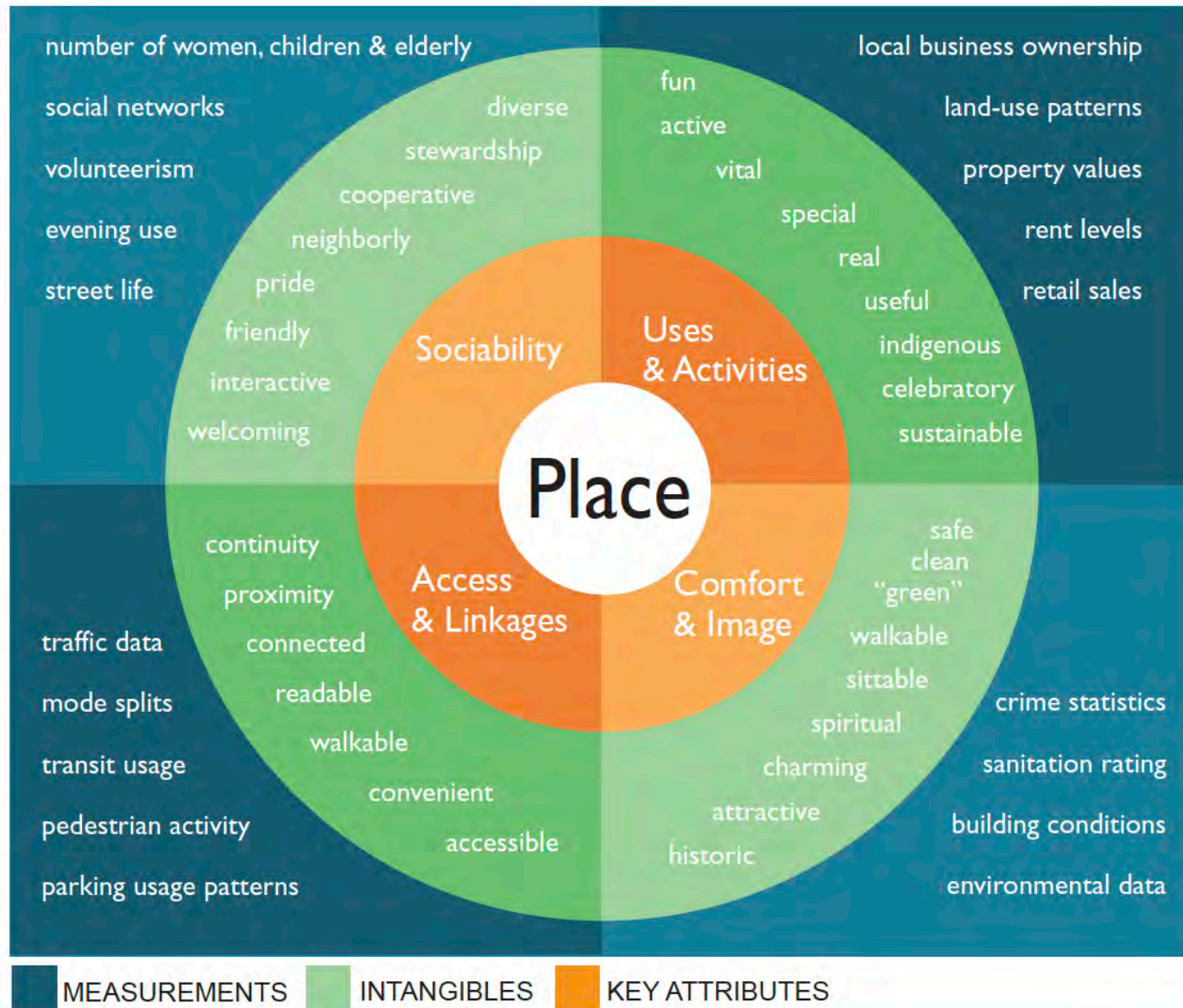


Life Between
buildings
1971

Details are included in Appendix

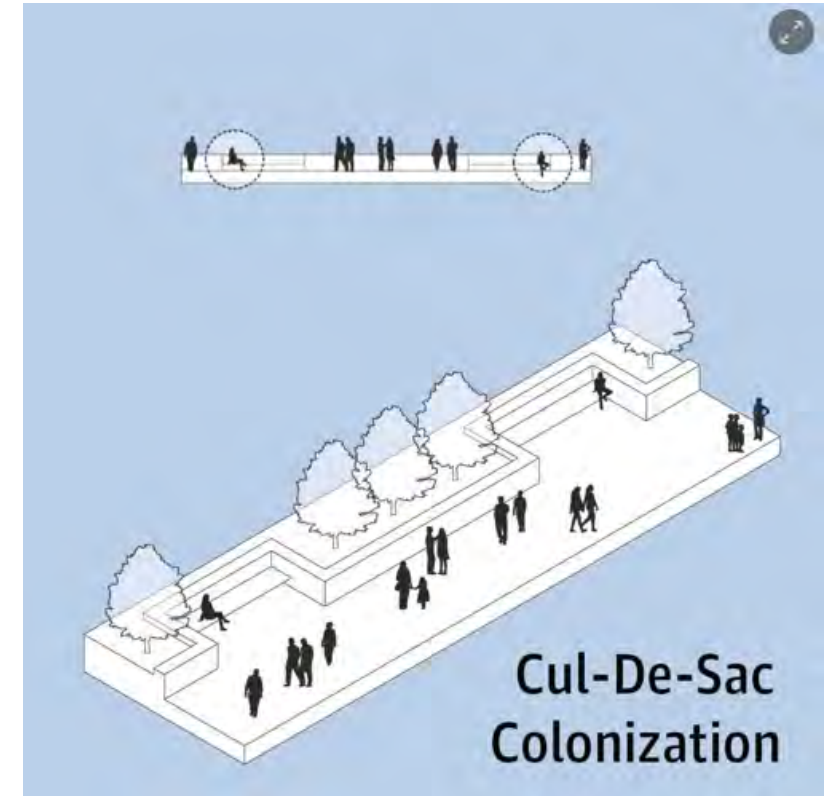
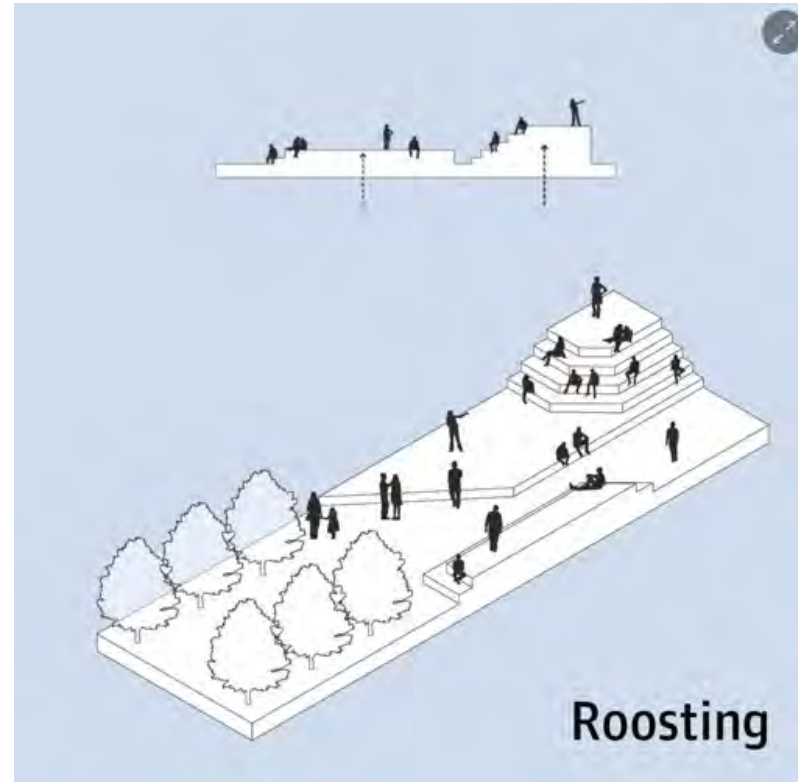
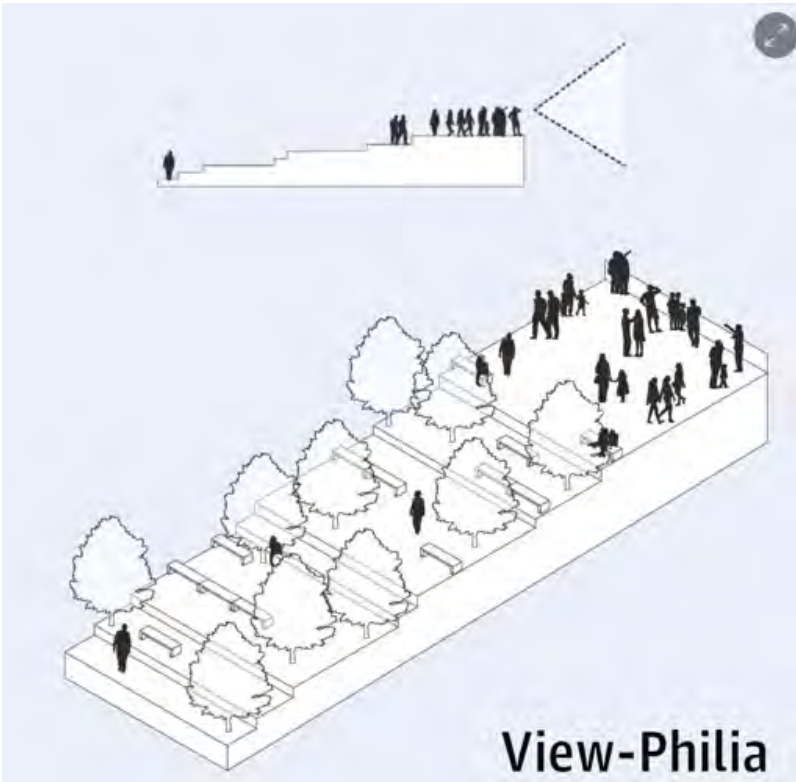


Project for Public Space



- Uses & Activities
- Access & Linkages
- Comfort & Image
- Sociability

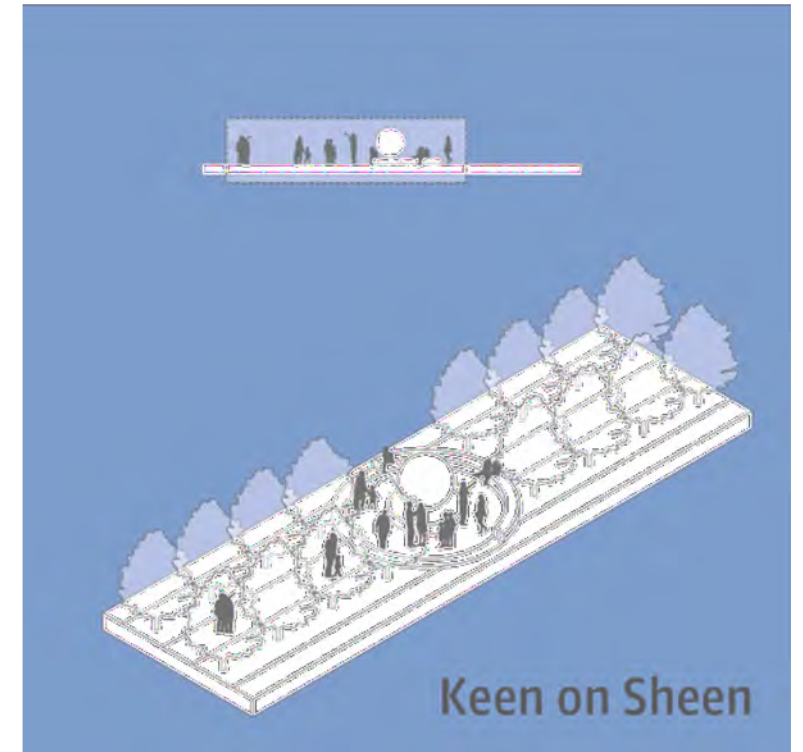
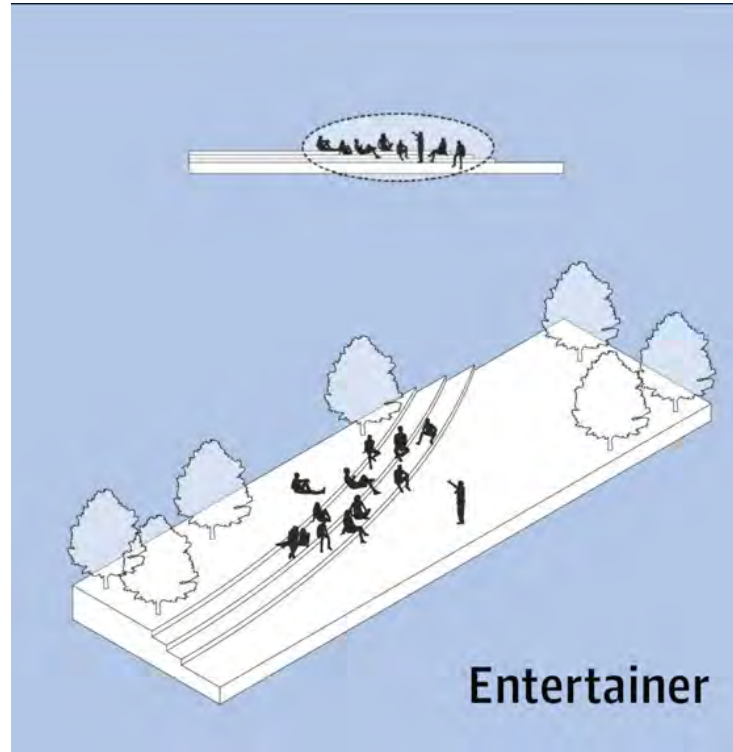
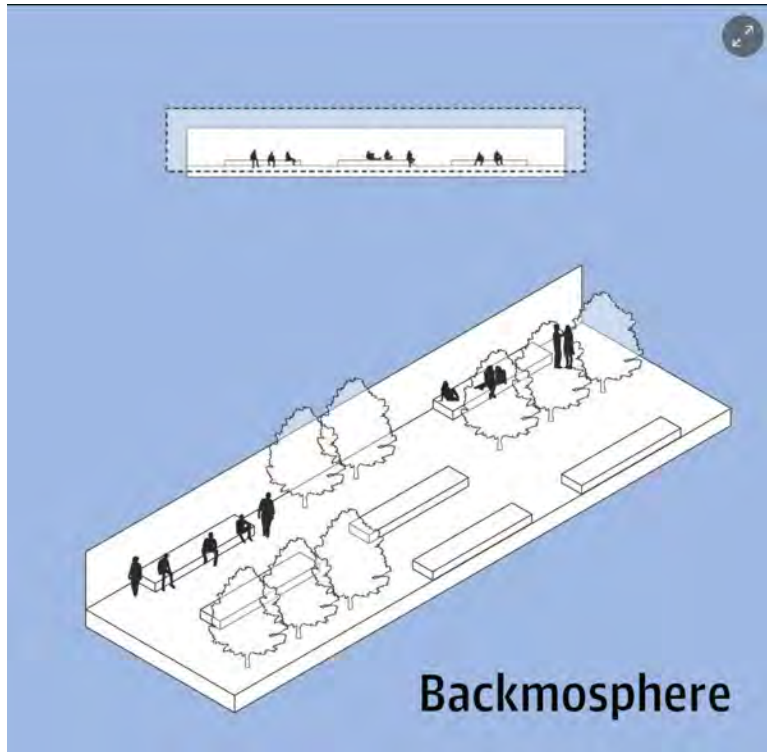
Public Space Research: SWA Group



❑ 24 Categories of observed behaviors with explanations

<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/gallery/2019/aug/01/lizarding-and-flex-allure-how-do-you-use-your-city-plaza-in-pictures-field-guide>

Public Space Research: SWA Group



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“Central Park” Space Could Achieve the Following ...



- ☐ Serve as a space for gathering/socializing
- ☐ Provide a sense of ownership and use for all residents
- ☐ Integrate and connect Northville neighborhoods
- ☐ Relieve potential future burden on Town Square
- ☐ Meet current and future needs

Evaluation: Uses & Activities



- ☐ Reviewed more than 20 events that currently occur in the City of Northville
- ☐ Gathered data on sponsors, timing, physical requirements
- ☐ Assessed feasibility of locating events in Central Park



- ☐ Central Park not necessary for most currently scheduled events
- ☐ Music and movie events were considered feasible



Analysis of Existing Events



Event (Include description if not intuitive)	Sponsor	Month & Days of Week	Event Time Span	Revenue Source?	Physical Space Requirements	Other	Is Central Park Feasible? Why/Why Not?
Farmers' Market	Chamber of Commerce	May – October Thursdays	8 am – 3pm	Funding for Chamber	Vendor parking close to vendor display area	Unloading, set up occurs at 4 am. Noise disturbance to residential areas.	No. Not enough hard surface and parking.
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Uses & Activities: Findings/Recommendations



**Provide
infrastructure/
utilities for
current & future
uses**

**Locations for
food & beverage
trucks & kiosks**

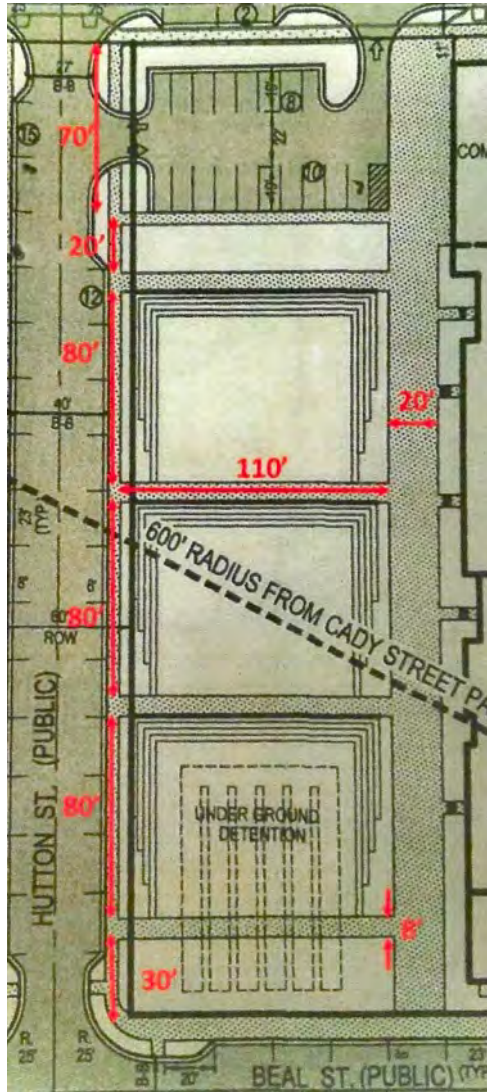
**Furnishings
that are
harmonious
with
downtown**

**Consider
seasonal
amenities &
programming**

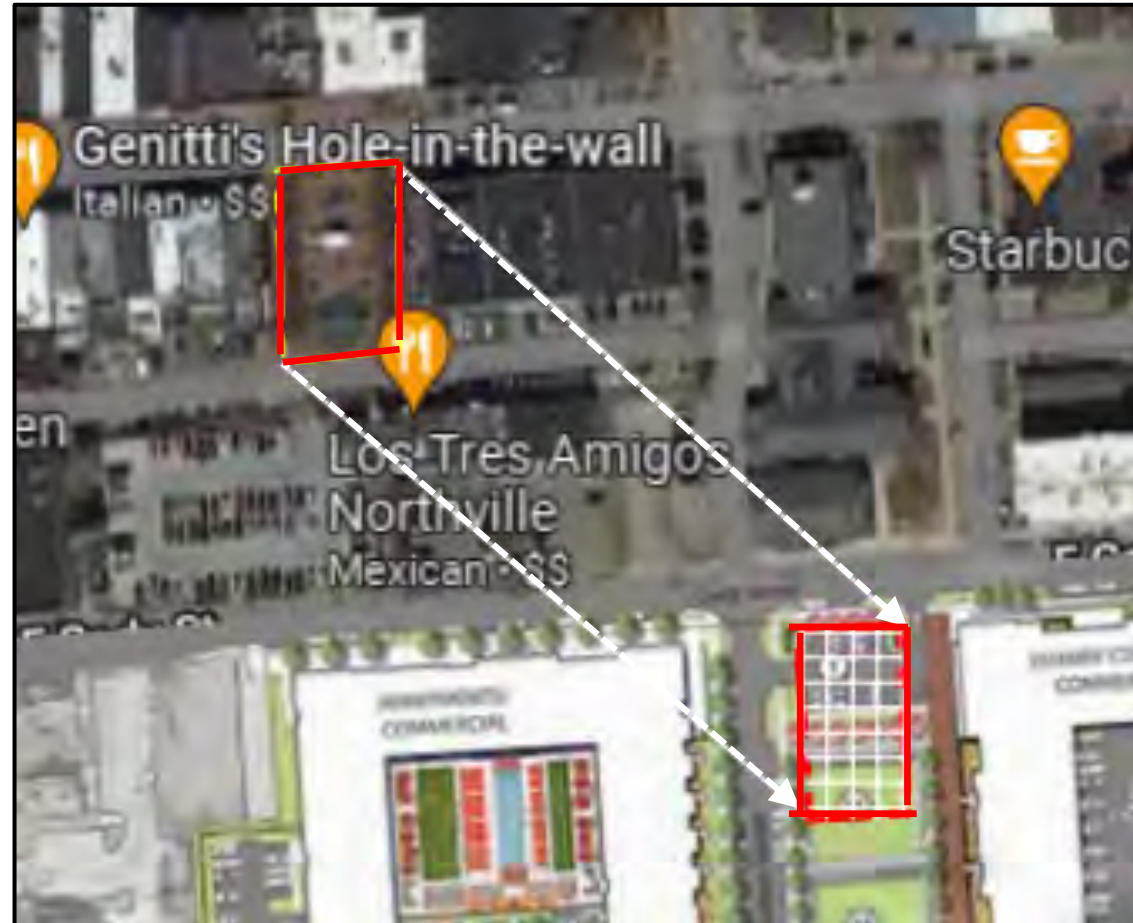
Central Park Layout



Dimensions



Comparison of park size to Town Square



Central Park Evaluation Comments



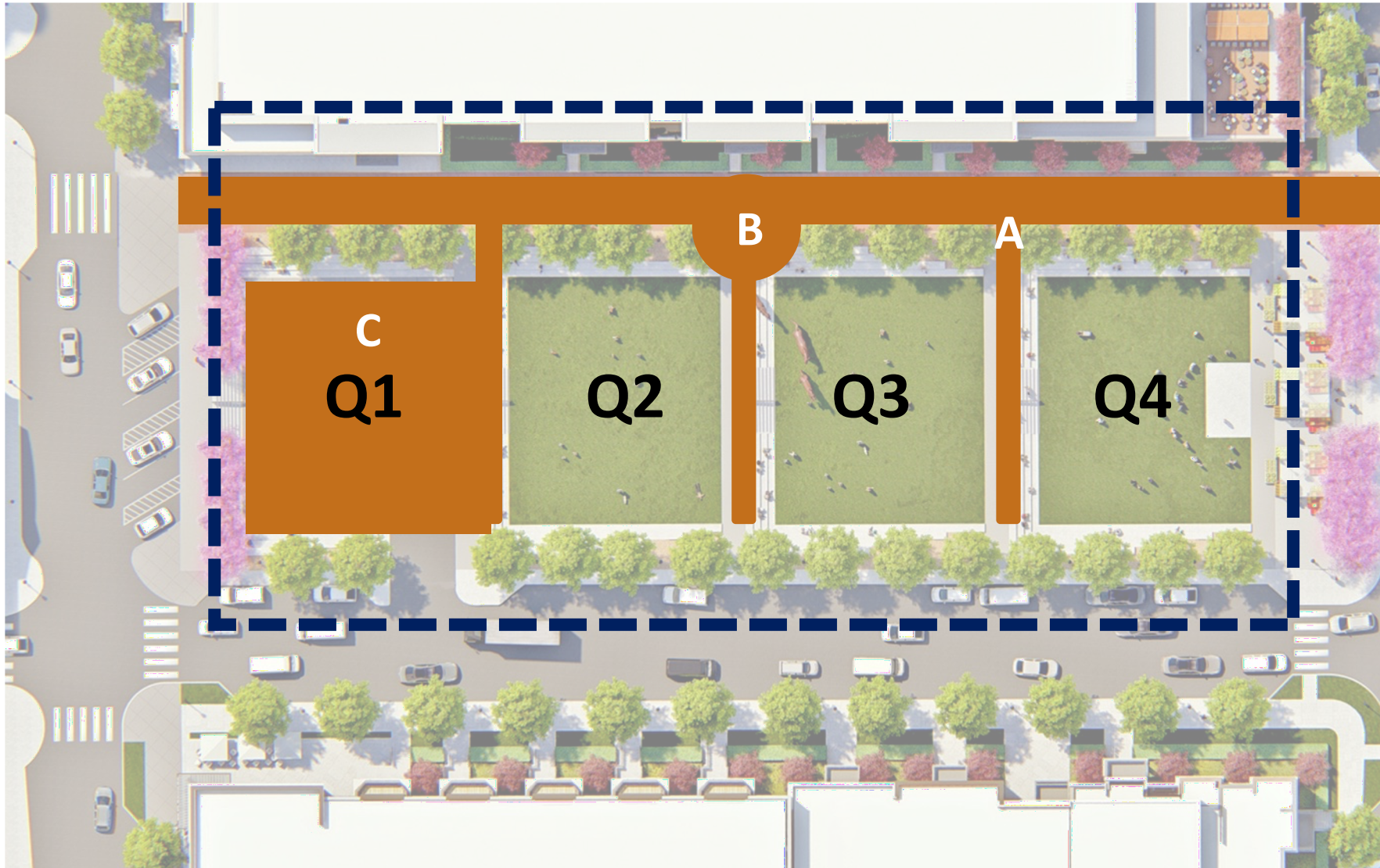
POSITIVES

- Well-placed to connect spaces to Central Business District & DDA
- Replaced north parking area with public plaza
- Some elements create a civic identity (common lighting, street banners) – this identity can be strengthened
- Southern hardscape can accommodate seating for food truck rallies

CONCERNS

- Repetitive. Outwardly oriented
- Linear promenade could be better integrated into the design
- Lacks variety of gathering space types and scale (sunny/shady, large scale/intimate)
- Lacks adequate hardscape for flexibility of uses
- Safety and maintenance of steps

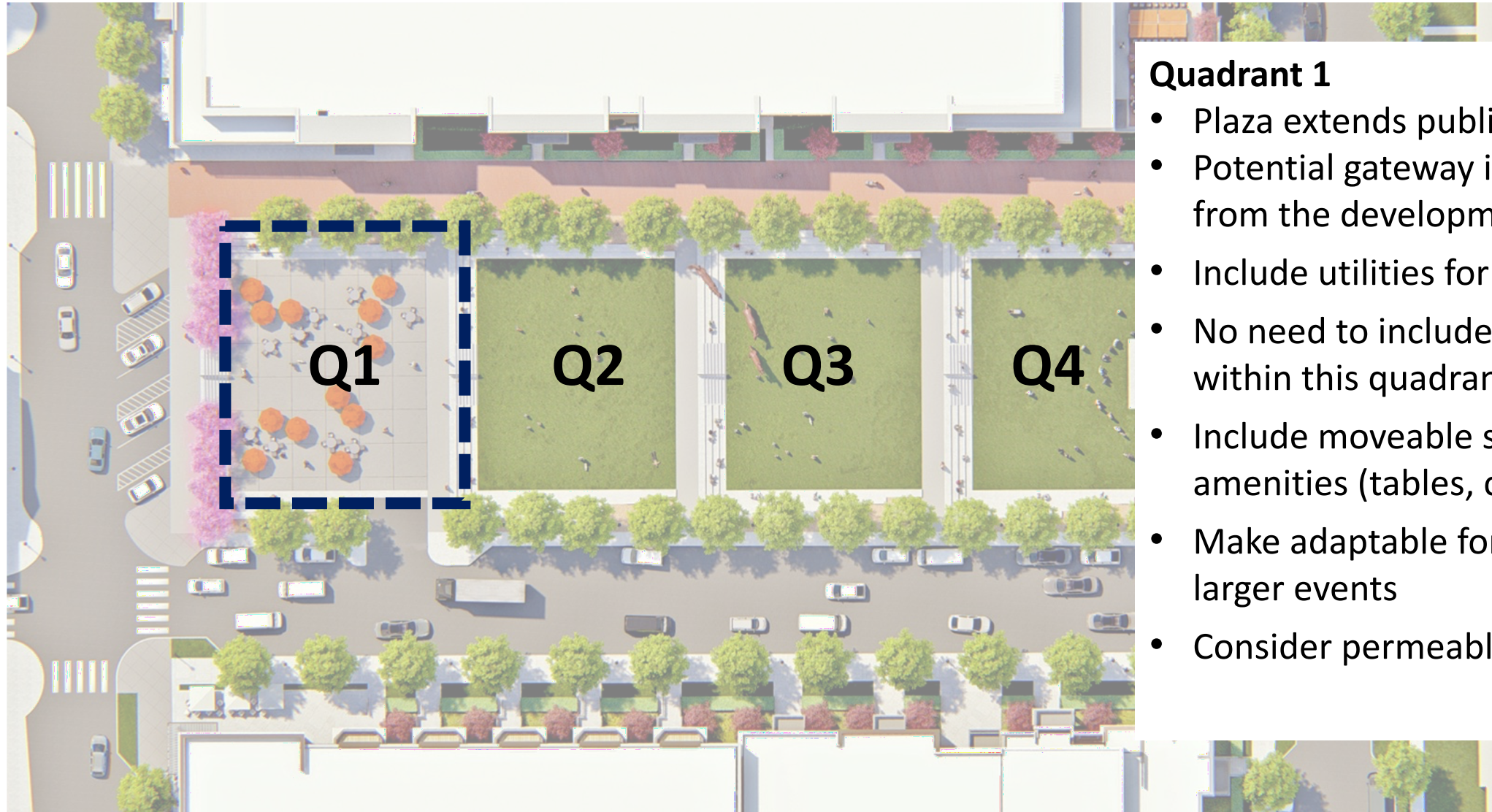
Evaluation: Promenade



Promenade could identify as part of the park vs. private walkway...

- A. Visually connect with the park using common materiality (pavers, materials, lights etc.)
- B. Create connections to park at key locations with material flow, shapes, usage, etc.
- C. Potential integration into plaza

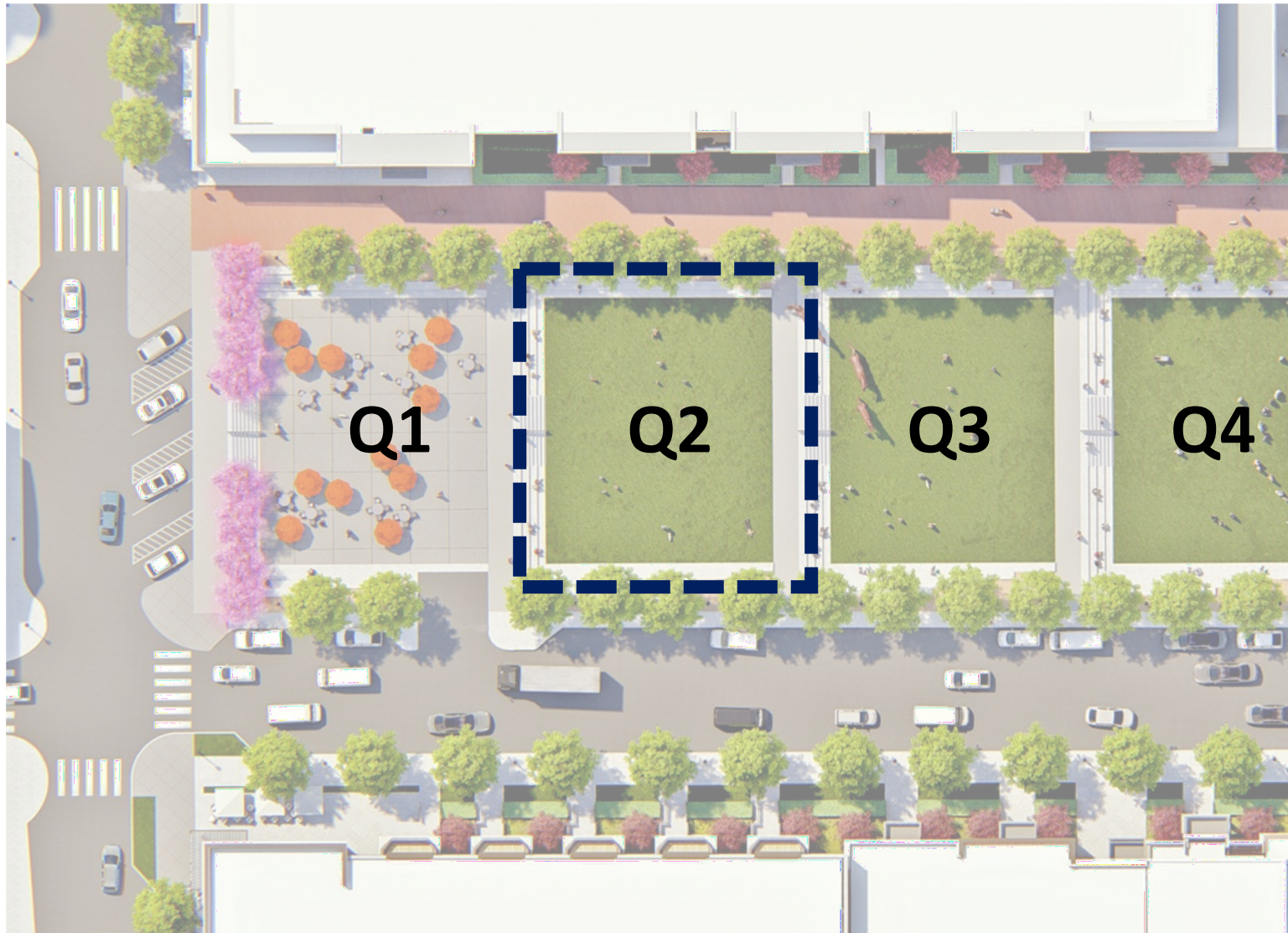
Recommendations



Quadrant 1

- Plaza extends public area
- Potential gateway into downtown from the development
- Include utilities for food trucks
- No need to include seating steps within this quadrant
- Include moveable seating and amenities (tables, chairs, umbrellas)
- Make adaptable for use with Q2 for larger events
- Consider permeable pavement/pavers

Recommendations

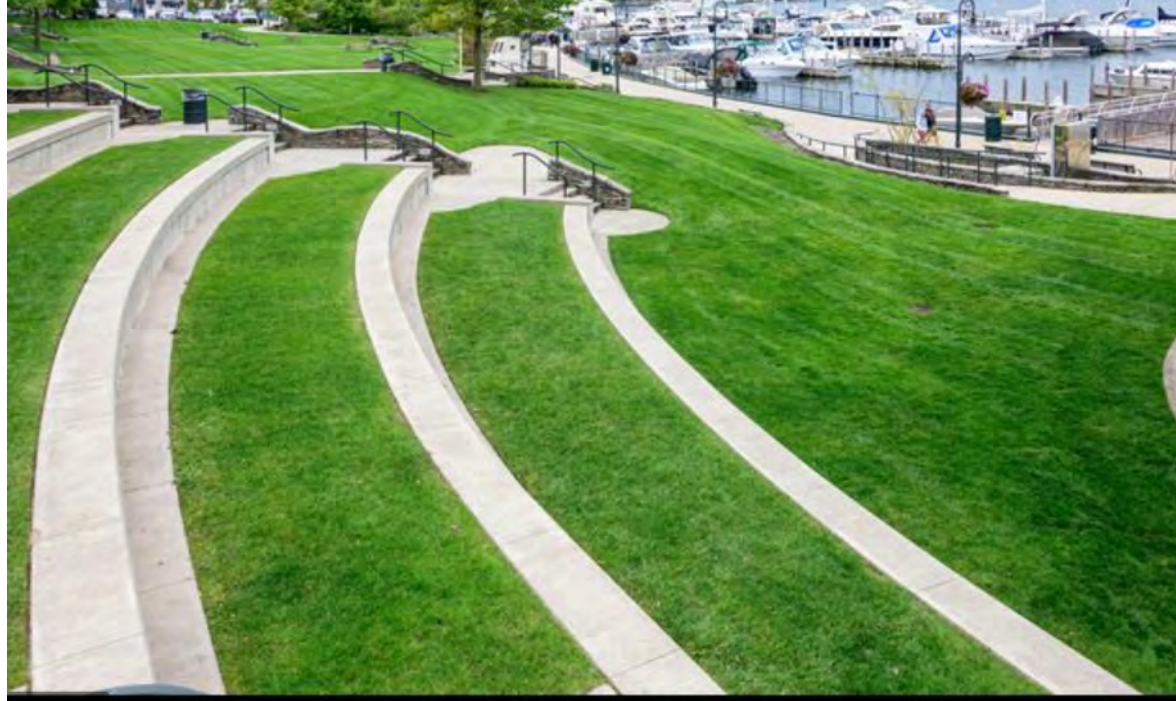


Quadrant 2

- Equip this space for events and performances
- Link to Q1 for combined functions
- This space could be considered for winter activities (e.g., ice rink)
- Add hard surface/plaza area
- Include utilities (water, sewer, electric service)
- Space can be used for rows of chairs, performance style
- Perimeter seat wall makes sense here, functions as ancillary seating
- There is a need for storage space

Alternatives to Concrete Seating

Charlevoix seating area



- + Safer for children
- + Allows for lawn chair seating
- + Irrigation improves appearance
- + Increases pervious surface
- + Maintainable per Parks & Rec
- Reduces usable space in quadrant

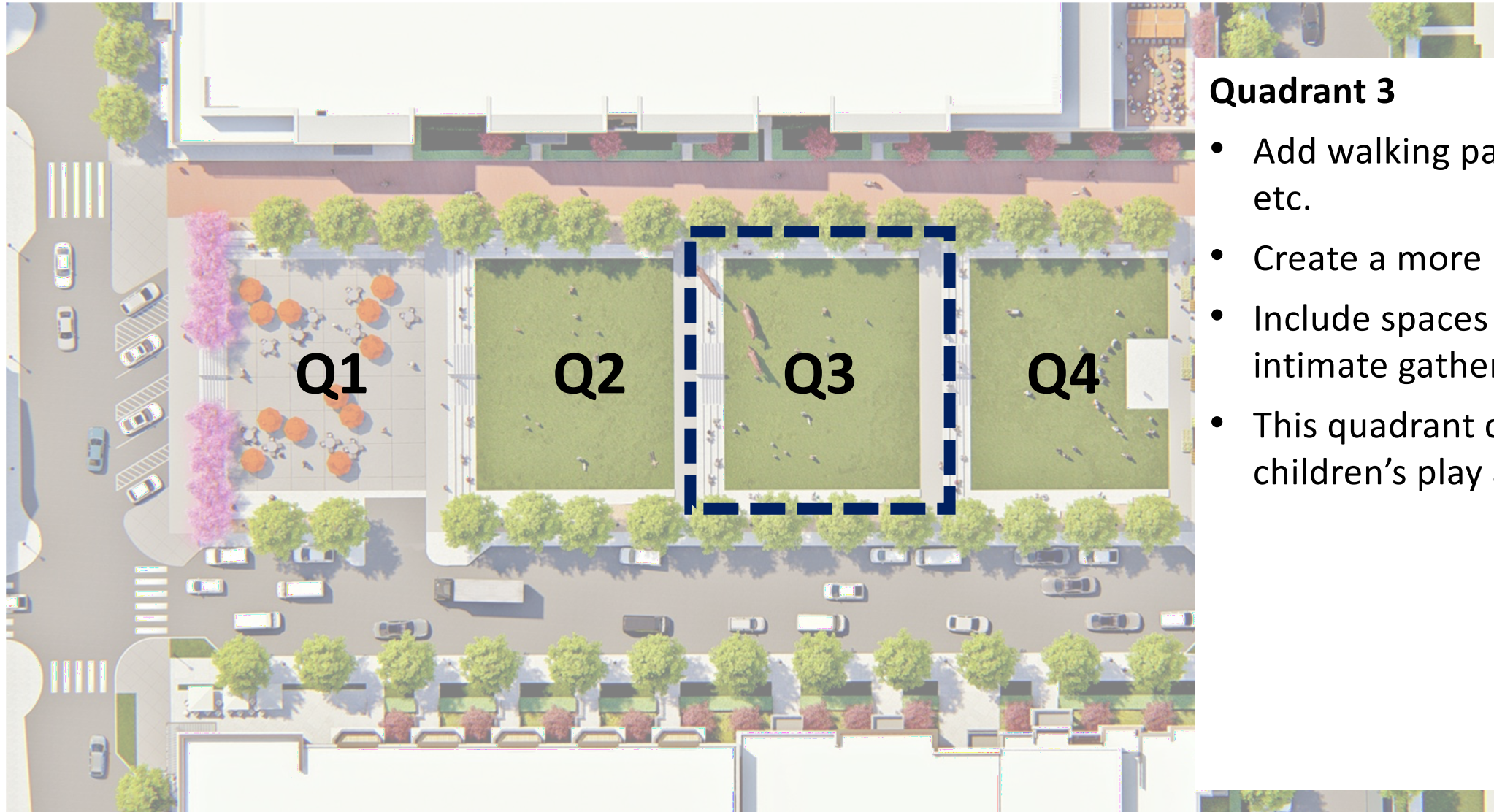
Possible Options: Ice Rink



City of Farmington, adjacent to the
Farmers' Market Structure

- Requires hard surface
- Refrigeration system
- Maintenance plan for smoothing ice
- Electrical, water
- Festoon lighting
- Public/Private partnerships

Recommendations



Quadrant 3

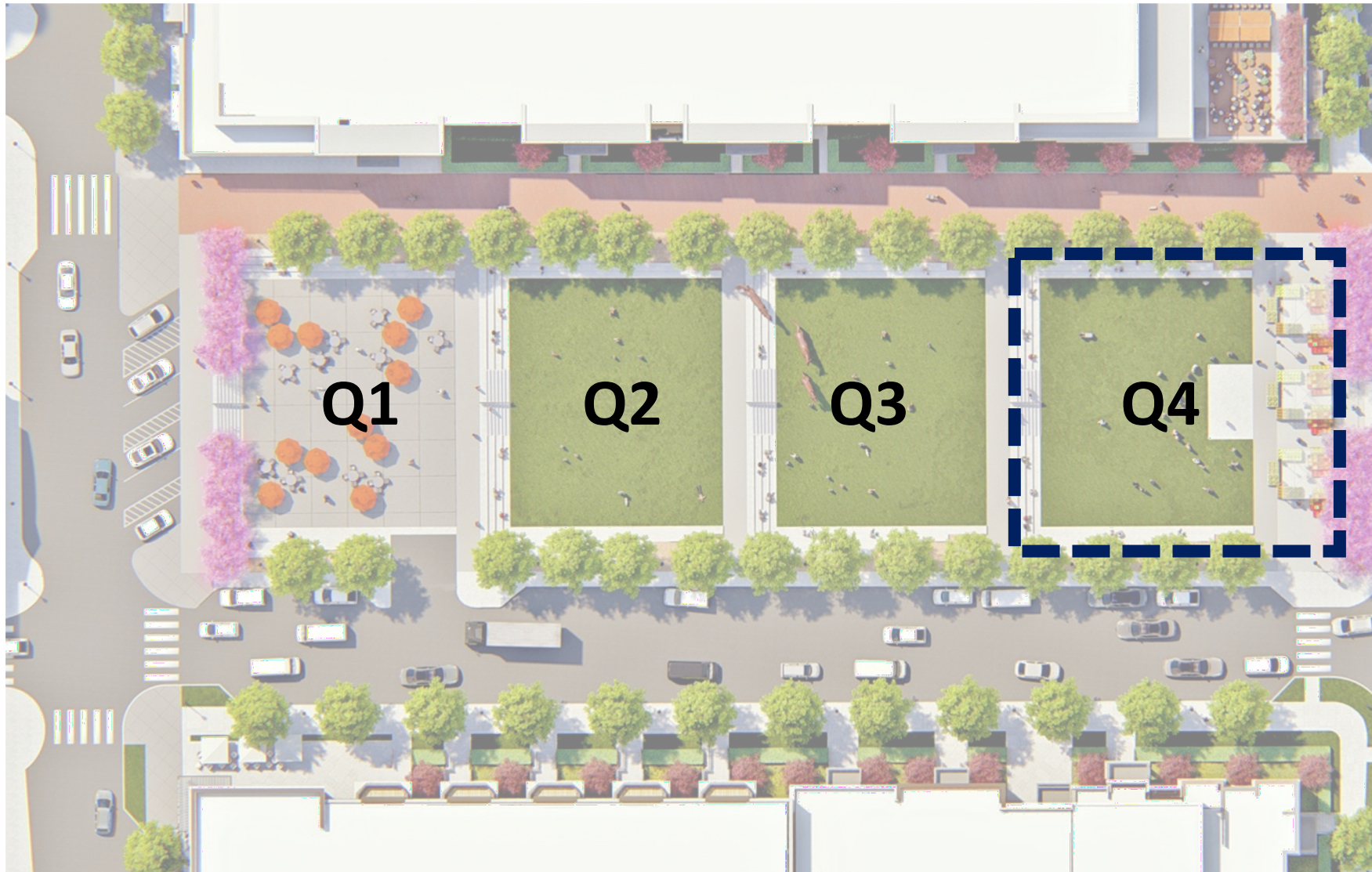
- Add walking paths, garden spaces, etc.
- Create a more park-like setting
- Include spaces for smaller more intimate gatherings
- This quadrant could include children's play areas

Natural slopes



Open green space behind City Hall (adjacent to Library) gradually slopes beneath sidewalk grade

Recommendations



Quadrant 4

- Can remain as open space, (i.e., lawn)
- Stormwater detention limits future use (i.e., structures or large planting)
- South plaza can remain for small events, programming
- Equip with utilities for events, picnic tables, etc.
- Suggest elimination of seat walls and steps, create natural slopes down to lawn
- Consider adding utilities for food trucks

Creating Atmosphere



LED Light Sculptures



Decorative tree lighting



Banners



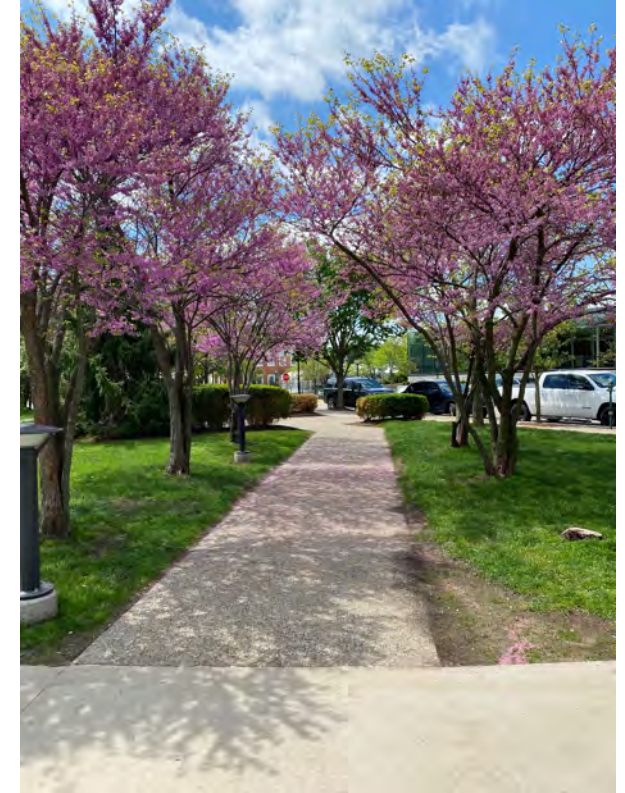
GFI receptacles located
at the top of the pole



Festoon lighting
(electric/poles)



Repurpose Northville
Downs artifacts



Using landscape (versus
only man-made)

Possible Options: Artwork & Exercise

Public Art



- Expensive up front, but low cost to maintain
- Benefits all year long
- Secondary seating is a positive feature

Adult Exercise Equipment



- + Moderate upkeep
- + Extended use even during colder months
- + Longer duration of stay
- Apartment and condos have fitness centers

Possible Options: Water Features

Splash Pad



- Type 1. Pump recirculates water. More expensive to build, less expensive to maintain
- Type 2. Continuous water use
- Limited use (Memorial Day – Labor Day)
- Noise in residential area

Fountain



- + Tranquility
- + Distinctiveness
- + Draws people in for photo opportunities
- Expensive to construct and maintain
- Chemicals
- Vandalism (Town square: Bubbles, Fish, Dye)

Thank you!

Q&A

Next Steps



Appendix

1. Public Space Research
2. Operations & Maintenance
3. Evaluations
4. Uses and Activities – Potential Amenities and Infrastructure
5. Possible Options

NINE STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING GREAT PARKS

1. Use transit as a catalyst for attracting visitors
2. Make management of the park a central concern
3. Develop strategies to attract people during different seasons
4. Acquire diverse funding sources
5. Design the park layout for flexibility
6. Consider both the "inner park" and the "outer park"
7. Provide amenities for the different groups of people using the park
8. Create attractions and destinations throughout the park
9. Create an identity and image for the park

Public Space Research: William Whyte

3 Most Important Design Factors

Location

- Along street with heavy density & high pedestrian flow

Street Plaza/Park Relationship

- Should facilitate impulse use
- Clear sight lines – users can see in and out
- Use of beckoning devices (trees, stairs, artwork) that draw people in

Sitting

- Once users are drawn in, they are held by seating
- Seating must be socially comfortable, whether alone, in groups or pairs and physically comfortable

Other less important factors

- Food, sun, shade, trees, water, aesthetics
- Triangulation: Some object or event that draws & holds people



Public Space Research: Jan Gehl

Popular zones for staying are found:

- Along the edges of a space. (Provides the best opportunity for surveying it.)
- In half shade
- In sunny areas in locations that experience cold winters
- Near supports (on corners, in gateways, near columns, trees, streetlamps, bollards.
- In parks and open grass areas, people find it difficult to sit on grass if there is nothing to sit next to

Sitting places where one's back is protected are preferred to less precisely defined places

Common Elements to Create Civic Identity



CITY OF NORTHVILLE *Secondary Streets Design Standards*

July 25, 2018

Specifications for:

- Raised Beds
- Trees/Grates
- Streetlights
- Benches
- Trash Receptacles
- Planters
- Tables & Chairs
- Fencing
- Bollard
- Drinking Fountain
- Bike Racks
- Sidewalks
- Furnishing Frequency

Daily/Weekly

- Snow removal
- Grass cutting
- Healthy grass
- Trash removal
- Dog waste receptacles
- Landscaping

Challenges

- Parks & Rec has limited resources
- Central Park stairs would be low priority
- No snow removal for seating

Events

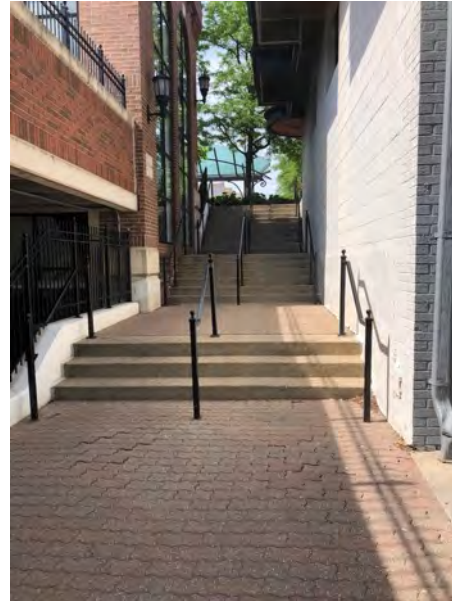
- Event permitting
- Temporary stage set-up
- Weekend waste removal



Evaluation: Access & Linkages



Hutton St.



Staircase to Town Square



Numerous parking lots
along Cady St.



Sidewalk condition

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Analysis of Existing Events



Event (Include description if not intuitive)	Sponsor	Month & Days of Week	Event Time Span	Revenue Source?	Physical Space Requirements	Other	Is Central Park Feasible? Why/Why Not?
<u>Dancin'</u> in the Ville	DDA, MJ Diamond, Arthur Murray	June – August Wednesday nights	6:30 – 8pm	Private sponsorship	Requires hard surface for dancing	Held in Town Square	Maybe. Sponsor driven event.
NHS Jazz Band Performance	NHS	Memorial weekend	F 7 – 9 pm	Part of DDA Music is Main & Cen	10 folding chairs on green or hard surface	Kids are off for summer. Limited avail.	Yes
Movie in the Park	Parks & Recreation	June, July, Aug 2 nd Fri.	5 hrs. ea. event	community sponsors	Space with reduced lighting	Ford Field, MP, Maybury	Yes
Tunes on Tuesday	Parks & Recreation	Tue June, July, Aug	1.5 hrs. ea. Tues.	DDA, community sponsors	Need a stage w/roof and seating ??	Held in Town Square	Yes, with a stage and seating
4 th of July Parade	Chamber of Commerce	July 4 th	<u>3 hrs</u>	Community sponsors	Streets Open		No
Northville Garden Walk	Country Garden Club	July 13		Primary fundraiser		Space is used for ticket sales and vending	Possibly

Analysis of Existing Events



Event (Include description if not intuitive)	Sponsor	Month & Days of Week	Event Time Span	Revenue Source?	Physical Space Requirements	Other	Is Central Park Feasible? Why/Why Not?
Family Fun Campout @ Maybury Park	Parks & Recreation	July, Aug 1 <u>wkd. ea</u>		No		Water, shelter for severe weather, restrooms	No – need camping area and park activities
Buy Michigan Now Festival	Catalyst Company	1 st weekend in August F-SU	Varies	Sponsors	Vendor Areas Would require street closures		No. Not big enough
Northville Food & Wine Festival	Street Marketing	August – 2 nd wknd.	F - SA	Private <u>for Profit</u> event	Would require street closure		Possibly
Heritage Festival	Chamber of Commerce	3 rd weekend in Sept.	F-SU	Fundraiser for Chamber	Would require Street Closures	Multiple venues	Not big enough
Halloween Hysteria	Mill Race Village	Oct. 16	1:00 – 5:00 pm	Revenue for MRV			No
Holiday Fun on the Farm	Maybury Farm			Revenue for Farm			No, need a farm

Analysis of Existing Events



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Skeletons are Alive	DDA	Month of October	Every Day	Outside Sponsors	Maximum ability to spread out	Ind. Sponsor Skeletons	No.
Chili Cook Off	DDA	2 nd weekend in Sept.	SA	Sponsors and DDA	Booths around downtown and Town Square	Water	Need access to kitchens
Holiday to Remember	DDA	Event – first 3 <u>wkd</u> in December	Varies	Sponsors and DDA	Activities spread out around the downtown	Level ground for the horses	Probably not.

Possible Options

Food Trucks



Passive Recreation



- + Multiple types:
Volleyball, badminton,
frisbee throwing
- + Doesn't require
programming
- + BYI equipment

Classes



Parks & Rec, other instructors