



Highland Bridge – University of St. Thomas Ballfields

Highland District Council Community Development
Committee

October 18, 2022



**Current Development Proposal:
UST Sports Facilities**

HIGHLAND *Bridge* F6 – Gateway District



Figure 3 - City Illustrative Plan from 2017

- A similar sport/recreational use of this area on the Ford site was envisioned during the Master Plan development and adoption process (pre-Ryan) due to interest from several private groups at that time.
- The City CNPC strongly supported the inclusion of recreational field space on the redeveloped Ford site in a memo to the PC in 2017 and identified the southeast corner as the best location for the fields (see image to the left for the concept at that time).
- The Master Plan (pg. 139) states that recreational fields would be best located in the southeast corner of the site to minimize any negative impacts of activity and lights on residential properties.
 - This reference is to publicly owned recreational fields, however, the general development type would be the same with privately owned recreational fields.



Previous Development Proposal

Ryan Development Plan

- 1.50 ac Mica Park
- 110 Units Affordable Housing
- 100,000 SF Office

CP Rail Parcels (AUAR analysis)

- 55 Residential Units
- 100,000 SF Office

Total Development

- 1.50 ac Mica Park
- 110 Units Affordable Housing
- 100,000 SF Office
- 55 Units Residential
- 100,000 SF Office

Current Development Proposal

Ryan Development Plan

- 1.50 ac Mica Park
- 110 Units Affordable Housing
- 100,000 SF Office

UST Program

- 1.16 ac Parkland Dedication
- Baseball field
- Softball field
- Parking
- Practice Facility

- Sports Facilities classified as civic/institutional uses
- Civic and Institutional uses, including colleges/universities, are permitted uses in the F6 District. Non-commercial recreation is also permitted.

Difference

Additions

- 1.16 ac additional parkland
- Baseball field
- Softball field
- Parking
- Practice Facility
- Civic/institutional uses

Subtractions

- 55 Residential Units
- 100,000 SF Office

Color Key:
Program Unchanged
Program Subtraction
Program Addition



- 1. Redevelopment of CP Rail Site:** Identifies a productive use for CP Rail Site, placing very low tax land that has sat unused for a decade into a community supporting use. Without a market-identified use, this site will continue to remain vacant and unutilized.
- 2. Master Plan:** Identifies civic and institutional uses as a requested use for the gateway zoning district. Proposed uses of new development are allowed within the current zoning district.
- 3. Event Frequency:** Event-focused traffic, ~50 times per year for UST baseball/softball. Maximum capacity events occurring less frequently. Other anticipated traffic for community use events such as youth sports, etc.
- 4. Traffic:** The Ford Site AUAR for the CP Rail Parcel anticipated 55 housing units (~70 cars on site with multiple trips per day) and 100,000 SF of office (500 cars entering/exiting twice per day). The UST plan would decrease day-to-day traffic by ~50% when compared to those assumptions.
- 5. Mica Park:** Maintains original size near the same location.
- 6. Affordable Housing:** Maintains current planned locations on site as per original Ryan development plan.
- 7. Ford Spur:** A viable development opportunity for the CP Rail site unlocks the potential for a future Ford Spur multimodal transit connection, enhancing trail and transit options and future possibilities.
- 8. Taxes:** CP Rail currently pays very minimal taxes related to their parcel (~\$5k/year in assessments). UST utilized property will be tax exempt and anticipated to be similar land square footage to current CP Rail parcel.



1. **Maintaining original Block 33 affordable housing program:** Allows for the development of 110 affordable housing units per the original redevelopment agreement plan.
2. **Maintaining original Block 34 office program:** Allows for the potential development of 100,000 sf light office per the original redevelopment agreement plan.
3. **Parkland:** Maintaining 1.5 acres of Mica park, plus adding additional 1.16 acres for CP Rail Parkland Dedication
4. **Existing TIF District:** Maintains net tax capacity of existing TIF District set up per Ryan's Redevelopment Agreement with City of St Paul.
5. **CP Rail Taxes:** Maintains status quo of CP Rail site in terms of tax contribution. CP Rail pays less than \$5k/year in assessments only. UST is tax exempt.



Community Benefits

Highland Bridge: UST Ballfields



1. **Redevelopment of CP Rail Site:** Providing a market identified use, allowing for cleaning up the site and bringing quality facilities and investment to the property, which otherwise will remain vacant and unutilized.
2. **Community Facility Use:** Creation of quality facilities that could be used for youth and community ballfield use, entertainment, gathering spaces and parking.
3. **Job Creation:** Creation of ~200-250 construction jobs, ~5 daily new jobs on site; an additional ~20 jobs during baseball/softball event season, depending on the levels of events.
4. **Master Plan Alignment:** Identifies options for meeting institutional uses desired in the Master Plan
5. **Economic Development:** Supporting local retail and restaurants with visitors to the area for event attendance.
6. **Enhanced Parkland:** The addition of public parkland or parkland dedication fees per CP Rail park dedication.
7. **Multimodal Transportation:** Unlocks the potential for a future Ford Spur connection, enhancing trail and transit connections. Expanding pedestrian and bike connections through the site and allowing the possibility of future multimodal ped/bike/transit corridor to the east.
8. **Improved Water Quality:** Improving stormwater quality and management on a currently unmanaged site, decreasing flow rate to Hidden Falls Park and improving on-site wetland conditions.
9. **Sustainability:** LEED Silver per UST standards.



Key Approvals and Milestones

Highland Bridge: UST Ballfields

^{HIGHLAND}*Bridge* UST Ballfields – Key Approvals



City Approvals

- AUAR Update – Started May 2022, Will be revised per updated UST plan. Completion TBD.
- Master Plan Amendments – Process TBD, likely to begin application towards end of 2022/early 2023.
- Parkland Dedication – Process TBD, likely to begin towards end of 2022/early 2023.
- Redevelopment Agreement Modifications – Unknown if required. Process TBD.
- Zoning Applications – Process TBD, will occur after progress on the above items.

Other Approvals

- Airport Overlay Approvals – Timing TBD
- Wetland Approvals – Timing TBD



Community Engagement

Highland Bridge: UST Ballfields



Community Meetings- Past

- [Highland District Council Community Development Committee January 18, 2022](#)
- [Highland District Council Community Development Committee February 15, 2022](#)
- [Highland District Council Community Development Committee May 17, 2022](#)
- Highland Business Association Lunch and Learn June 13, 2022
- [Highland District Council Community Development Committee June 21, 2022](#)
- [Highland District Council Community Development Committee July 19, 2022](#)
- [Community Meeting August 22, 2022](#)

Community Meetings- Potential Future

- Highland District Council Community Development Committee November 15, 2022 6:30 pm
- Highland District Council Community Development Committee January 17, 2023 6:30 pm
- Community Meeting December/January- Details TBD.

City Public Hearings

- Master Plan Amendments – TBD
- Parkland Dedication – TBD
- Zoning Applications – TBD
- AUAR Update – TBD



Amy McDonough, Chief of Staff, University of St.
Thomas

amcdonough@stthomas.edu

Maureen Michalski, Ryan Companies

Maureen.Michalski@ryancompanies.com