



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Preliminary Civic Center Park Site Plan Concepts Are In! Public Input Session at Howe Arena on Thursday, August 13 at 3:30 p.m.

Traverse City, MI – As part of the master site planning process for Grand Traverse County's Civic Center Park, over 1,700 surveys have been completed, with focus groups held this past June. Design firm Beckett and Raeder, Inc. (BRI) was hired by Grand Traverse County Parks and Recreation earlier this year to develop a master site plan for the park because, according to Parks and Recreation Director Kristine Erickson, “it needs a plan to make this beloved park the best it can be to serve our community well for years to come.”

On Thursday, August 13, between 3:30 and 5 p.m., three preliminary Civic Center Park master site plan concepts will be unveiled by BRI in Howe Arena at Civic Center Park during a public input session, “and everyone is invited to see them,” said Erickson.

Although owned by the county, the Civic Center is located in the heart of Traverse City at 1213 W. Civic Center Drive. Erickson says the park is heavily used, and anecdotally receives “at least” one million visitors each year. Former site of the county’s fairgrounds, today the property features lush green spaces, a walking track, a playground, an indoor swimming pool, an outdoor amphitheater, a skate park, a pavilion, ball fields, a basketball court, a walking/jogging path, and more. Erickson explained that a lack of signage, traffic flow and parking challenges, and an aging infrastructure prompted the County Parks and Recreation Commission to begin a master site planning process for the park.

The Parks Director has not yet seen the concepts, but says she is “excited to finally arrive at this big turning point” in the planning process. The next step, she explained, is to refine the concepts based on community input, then post the concepts on line for the community to vote on a favorite.

Park users of all ages are invited to stop by Thursday’s public input session. Social distancing will be enforced during the session, and all are asked to wear masks. Erickson explained that the session will be run like an open house, and the public may drop in any time between 3:30 and 5 p.m. to view the conceptual plans and offer opinions and suggestions. BRI will facilitate the input session, then present the concepts again that evening to the Parks and Recreation Commission during its regular meeting at 5:30 p.m., also in Howe Arena.

During its regular meeting scheduled to be held on September 10, 2020, Parks and Recreation Commissioners will select a final master site plan for the Civic Center. Once a final plan has been chosen, park projects will be prioritized, and funding through donations and grants will be sought as each project is assigned a cost and a schedule. “It could take years to complete every project in the final plan,” said the Director, “but there will be a blueprint – a new map – to bring our Civic Center into the future.”

Stay up to date throughout the Civic Center Park master site planning process by visiting the website at www.gtciviccentersiteplan.org.

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