



Board of Education

Work Session Presentation

November 22, 2021



“Hudson is no recent development. It has taken almost 200 years to acquire its beauty and stature.”

– Anna Lee, 1962



Our Mission

The mission of Hudson Heritage Association is to preserve and enhance the aesthetic appeal, the uniqueness of Hudson, and the historic character of the buildings, streetscape and architecture of the Western Reserve Community of Hudson.

1962 The Brewster Store (1839) building was saved from demolition.

HHA filed Articles of Incorporation with the Secretary of State.

1963 Village Council enacts historic preservation legislation. The Hudson **Architectural and Historic Board of Review** is established.

1973 The **Hudson Historic District** is successfully nominated and placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

1974 Western Reserve Academy's Campus was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

1983 The Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) **proposal to widen Route 91 was halted** through Village Council and HHA lobbying efforts.

2016 HHA rallied community support to protect the historic **1927 School Building** on Oviatt Street from demolition after the Hudson City School District announced Facilities Master Plan options to the community.



2016

- **HCSD Master Facility Plan** (Silver, White & Blue Plans).
- Proposed tear-down of the 1927 Building
- Community conversations with HCSD/HHA

2017

- April 20. Final Feasibility Study Report issued by WRL/DLR Group. Adaptive reuse options.
- November, HCSD Bond Issue and Master Facility Plan supported by the community.

2018

- September 18, **First 1927 Building Study Committee meeting**, includes members of HCSD, BoE, City, HCF and HHA

2019

- February. HHA's Kathy Russell completes 1927 Hudson High School National Registration Nomination, with extensive research, history and documentation
- May 15, Christopher Bach joins 1927 Building Study Committee, as HHA's new president.
- October 28. BoE Meeting Presentation

2020

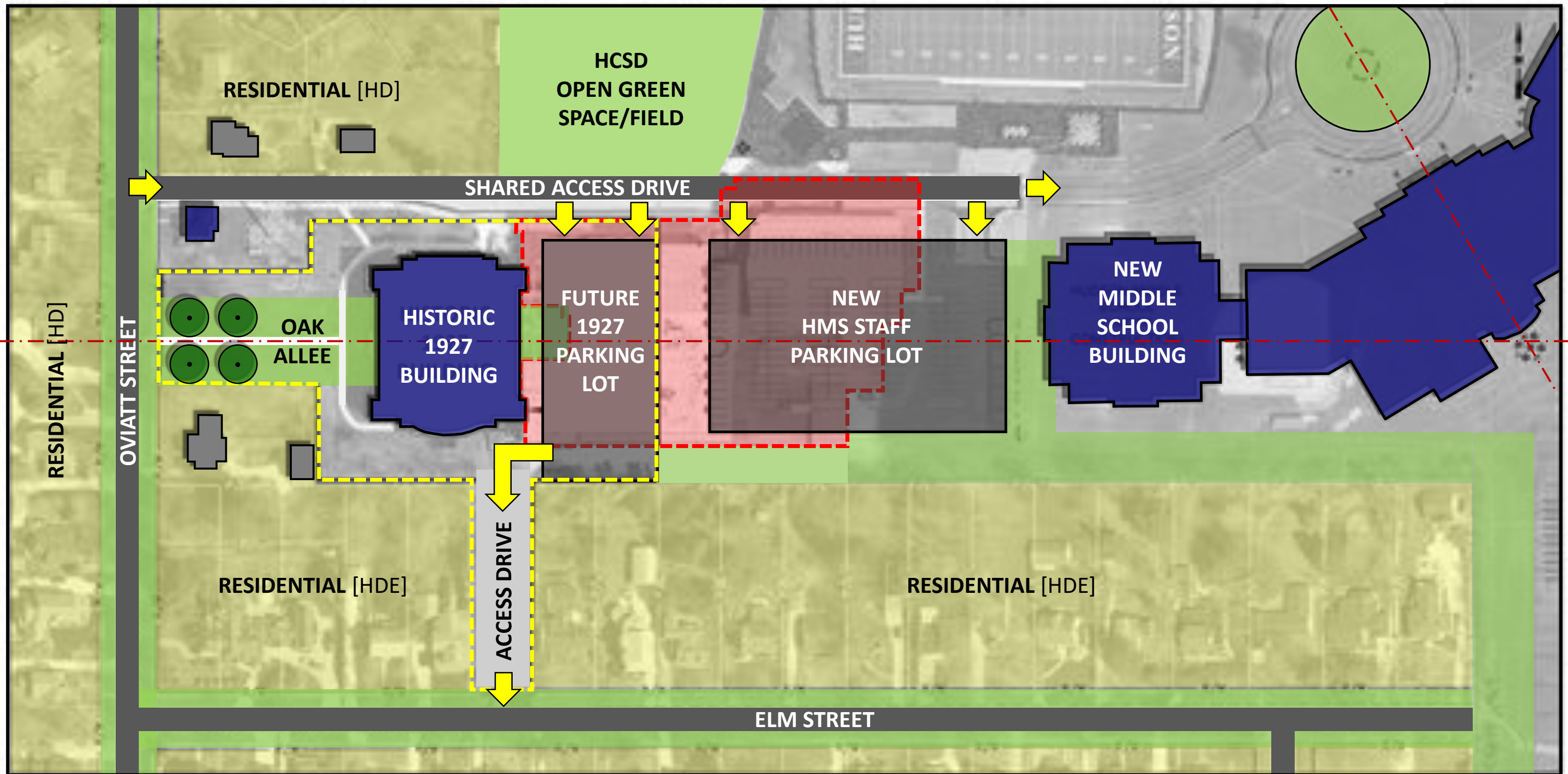
- January 9, **HCSD Request for Proposal** (RFP) issued to real estate development firms.
- March 20, **HHA RFP Response/Submittal for a Cultural Arts Center** Feasibility Study
- October, HHA receives consultant proposals

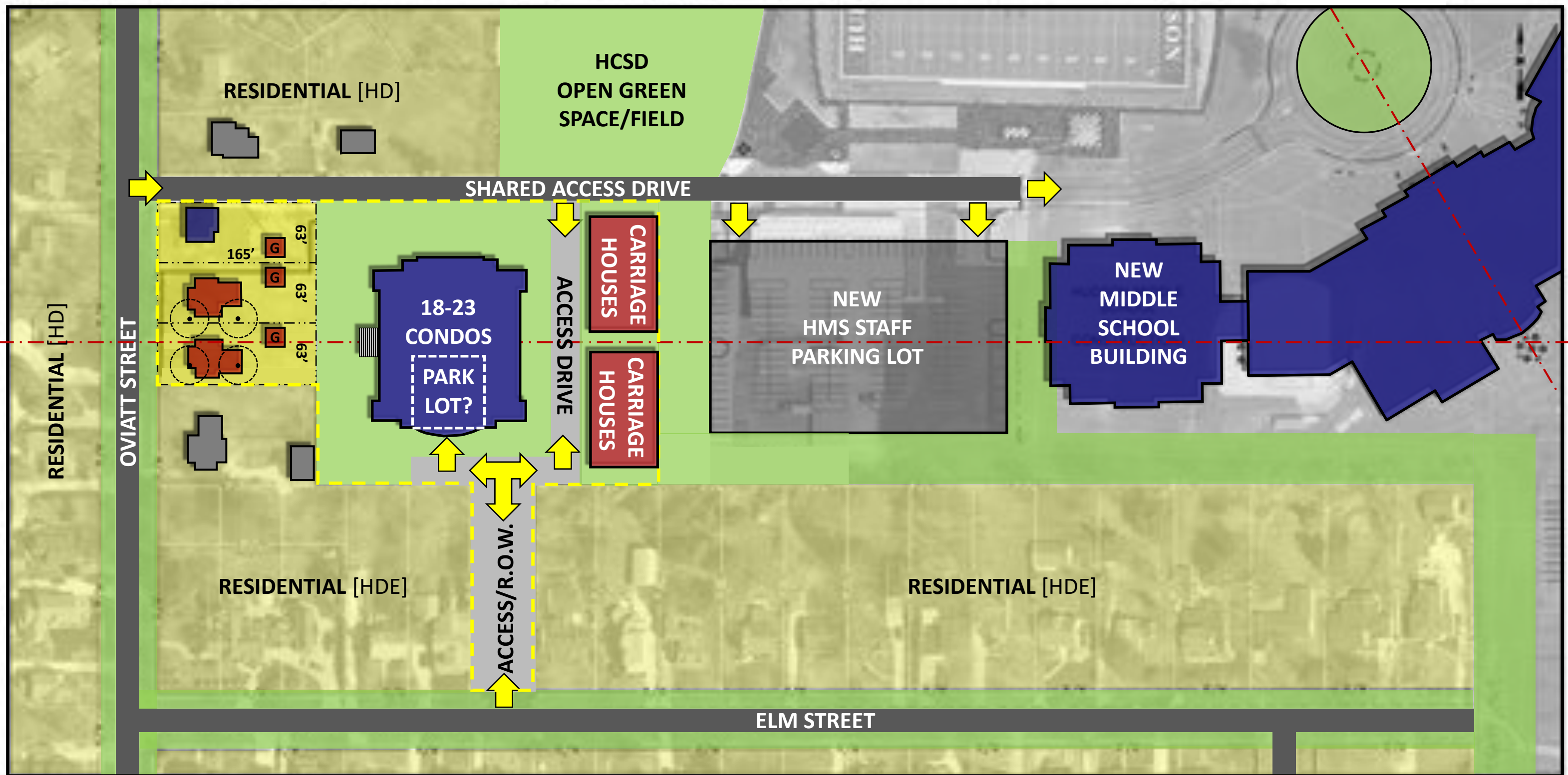
2021

- May, HHA completes Feasibility Study Needs Assessment Report (Part I) with Webb Management Services
- Summer, HCSD/BoE, Liberty, DLR Group, HHA meetings and discussions, HHA proposes three planning options



- March 13, 2020, **COVID-19 pandemic** closes City of Hudson and Hudson City Schools public functions and operations.
- On March 20, 2020, HHA responded to the HCSD's **Request for Proposal (RFP)** and submitted a proposal to the Hudson Board of Education, recommending the adaptive reuse of the 1927 Middle School Building as a **Cultural Arts Center**. HHA's submitted proposal was the only one received by HCSD.
- The initiative came with the endorsement of Hudson Community Foundation, Western Reserve Academy and other foundations and institutions in Hudson.
- The proposal would secure the building and theater for **public use by community organizations and our schools** for years to come.
- June 17, 1927 Building Study Committee reconvenes after 6-months, to review HHA RFP proposal and determine next-steps.
- August 12, HCSD/HHA Zoom Meeting to discuss HHA RFP proposal. Liberty Development Co. contacts HCSD.
- September, HHA Board establishes a "1927 Building Ad Hoc Committee" and issues RFP to nationally-recognized firms for cultural arts center feasibility study scope of work.
- October 13, **HCSD/HHA first meeting with Liberty Development** to review/discuss plans
- November 5, **Liberty presents to HHA Board**
- November 9, **HHA Board issues three "conditions" of support** to HCSD/Liberty plan.





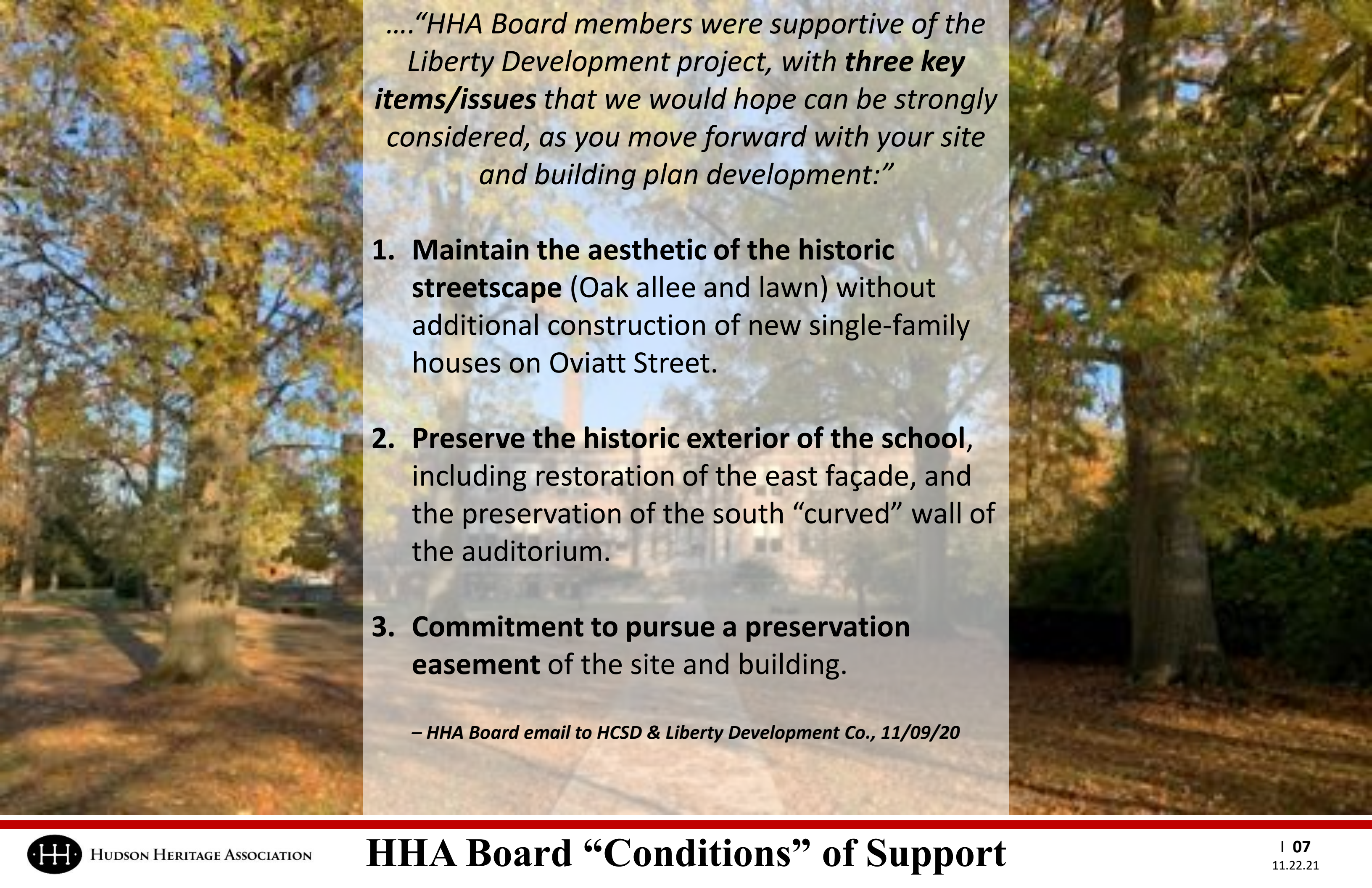
Site Plan Concept

- Eliminate west lawn and century-old Oak trees along Oviatt St.
- Restoration of 77 Oviatt St. house, with new garage addition
- Subdivide 1927 Building Lawn into three separate residential lots
- Add two (2) additional single-family homes along Oviatt Street
- Use Elm Street Right-of-Way for site access drive/parking access
- Reconstruct historic Grand Stair at west elevation

1927 Building & Townhouse Concept

- Adaptive reuse of the building with 18-23 "For Sale" condominiums
- Retain the exterior massing and architectural elements of the 1927 Building
- Existing auditorium space possibility used for additional parking, open to the exterior, with vehicular access off Elm Street. Questionable whether "curved" façade remains
- Development of (8) "Carriage Houses" townhouse units with parking to the east of the 1927 Building (new construction)





....“HHA Board members were supportive of the Liberty Development project, with **three key items/issues** that we would hope can be strongly considered, as you move forward with your site and building plan development:”

1. **Maintain the aesthetic of the historic streetscape** (Oak allee and lawn) without additional construction of new single-family houses on Oviatt Street.
2. **Preserve the historic exterior of the school**, including restoration of the east façade, and the preservation of the south “curved” wall of the auditorium.
3. **Commitment to pursue a preservation easement** of the site and building.

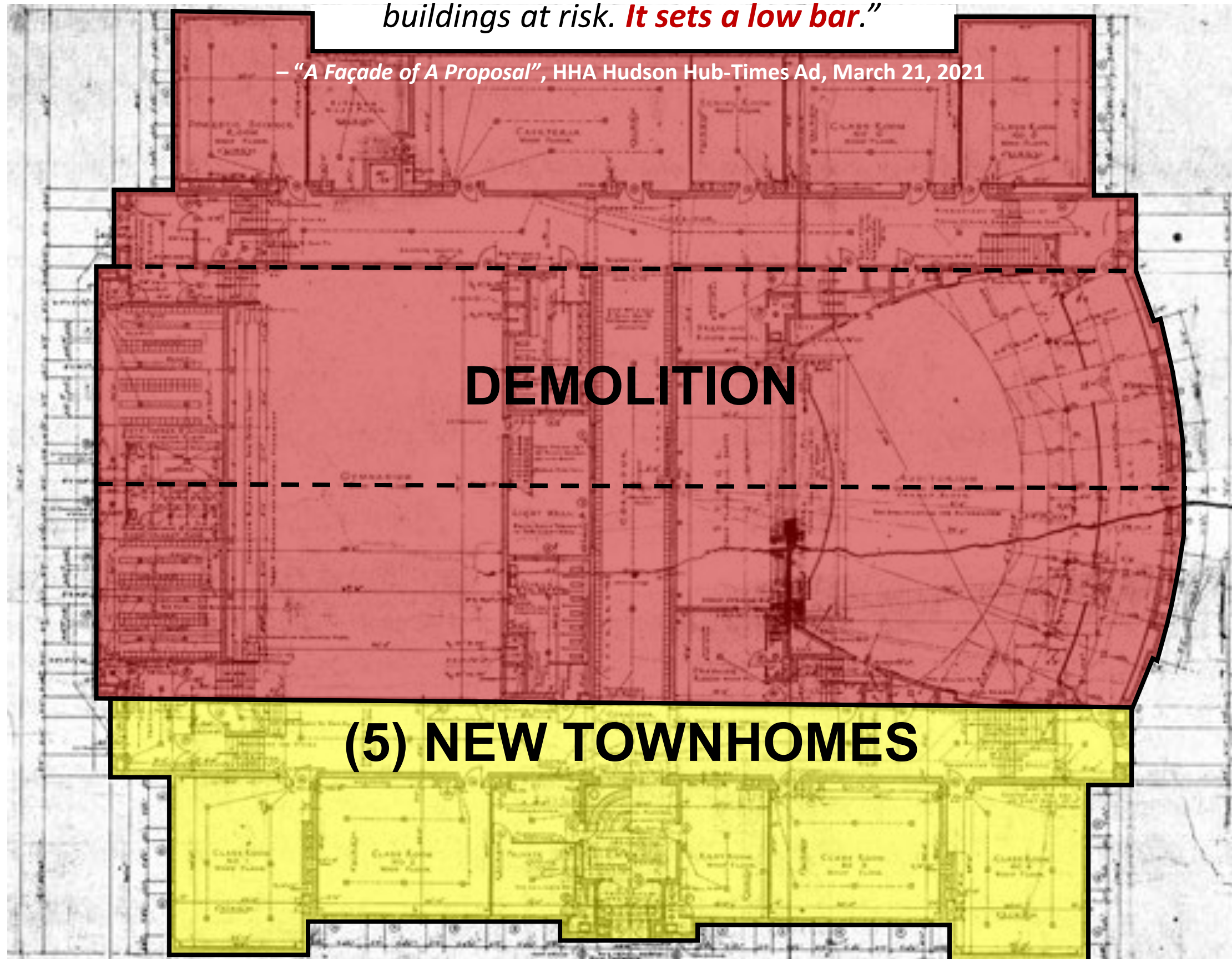
– HHA Board email to HCSD & Liberty Development Co., 11/09/20



**14 Units Total – NO Rezoning – NO New houses on Oviatt
Saywell House Rehabbed - Lawn Area Protected**

“Preserving only the façade would **set a precedent** that could, over time, put many of Hudson’s most important homes and buildings at risk. **It sets a low bar.**”

– “A Façade of A Proposal”, HHA Hudson Hub-Times Ad, March 21, 2021



Qualifications

- Banking and project references and history
- Detailed, specific timeline that identifies dates of completion for key milestones such as the pre-development agreement, site plan, design and construction documents, cost estimates, preliminary budget, projected sales prices, and sell-out timeline
- Project completion guarantees
- **Experience in façade preservation**
- Proposed general contract terms

Other Considerations:

- **Preservation Easement:** Any sale of the property should include an agreement that permanently protects the building's historic character.
- **Conservation Easement:** The sale of the property should include an agreement that permanently limits the use of the open space from Oviatt Street to the front façade of the 1927 Building and protects the historic oak alley.
- Competitive bidding on the sale of the property
- **Façade damage risk**
- Willingness of the developer to provide financial / completion guarantees that ensure that the project will be finished.

HUDSON HERITAGE ASSOCIATION PROPOSAL





building creativity

1. Introduction & Brief

Webb Mgmt is a management consulting practice for the development and operation of cultural facilities. The firm was established in 1997 and has since completed more than 450 projects for public and private sector clients in the United States, Canada and other countries.

We have been asked by the Hudson Heritage Association (HHA) to undertake a study that considers the feasibility of a community arts center in the City of Hudson, and in particular, the idea of renovating the 1927 High School Building (1927 Building) for this purpose. The Needs Assessment considers the case for new community arts facilities in Hudson in terms of four key issues:

- **THE MARKET:** Who lives, works and plays in Hudson? And what does that tell us about market propensity to support cultural, educational and community events there?
- **FACILITY SUPPLY:** What is the supply of cultural, educational and community facilities in and near Hudson? Are there gaps in that inventory that these new and renovated facilities might fill?
- **USER DEMAND:** What is the demand for cultural, educational and community space on the part of potential facility users, in particular, the local community arts groups and those offering programs for seniors and children in Hudson?
- **BENEFITS & IMPACTS:** Finally, where does the City of Hudson and the surrounding region want to be in the future, and how might investing in these facilities help to advance those goals?

This report starts with an overview of the broader forces and trends affecting community arts facilities today. Then, a detailed analysis of the four key issues informs the market opportunities for a new community arts facility in Hudson.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a substantial impact on this work and all of us involved. In an effort to conduct this study safely while still collecting the relevant information necessary to inform our analysis, we conducted 27 private, confidential Zoom-based interviews with members of the arts, education, government and business communities. Additionally, an online survey was issued through various channels in the community and received nearly 900 responses. These forms of community input are vital to this study and informed many aspects of our research and analysis.

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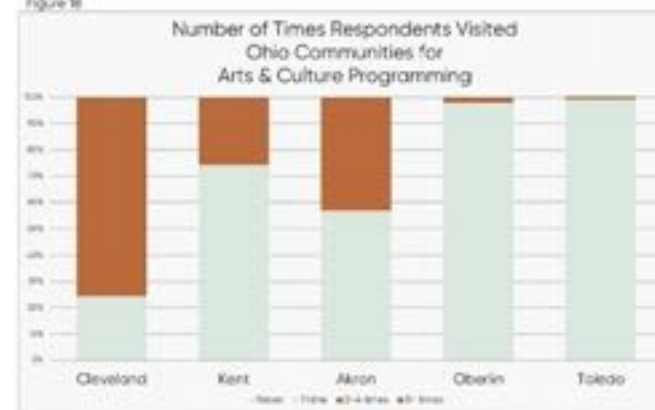


building creativity

senior program, while 50 percent have participated in a summer program.

- When asked where they participated in these types of events in Hudson, Concert on the Green garnered the most responses, 70 percent, while 69 and 50 percent of respondents attended events at the Hudson Library and First & Main Green, respectively. The Hudson High School was the only other facility that was selected by over 50 percent of respondents.
- Only 47 percent of respondents attended an arts program or event at Barlow Community Center. This is surprising considering the Hudson Players and ACT regularly perform at in the Theater and the multi-purpose rooms are intended to serve as program spaces for the arts, among other community uses.
- The remaining facilities, including the churches, other Hudson City Schools buildings, City Hall and the Western Reserve Academy welcomed less than 30 percent of respondents for arts and culture programs.
- Of those facilities surveyed, 70+ percent of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied in the Concert on the Green Bandshells, Hudson Library and Hudson High School facilities. Less than 4 percent of respondents were 'Not at all Satisfied' by those facilities. Conversely, 10 percent of respondents were 'Not at all Satisfied' by the Barlow Community Center and only 18 percent were very satisfied.
- Nearly 90 percent of respondents participated or attended an arts and culture program outside of Hudson prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Of those respondents, 75 percent visited Cleveland, 33 percent visited Akron and 25 percent visited Kent at least twice a year.

Figure 18



25

Conclusions

1. Strong demographic characteristics suggest a **high propensity to participate in the arts**.
2. Market area lacks a high-quality stage or program space for the arts.
3. Limited user demand for the auditorium by local groups, but the possibility to book regional/national tours.
4. Opportunity to offer a wide range of arts classes to youth, adults and seniors.

Recommendations

1. Focus on **simple and affordable program spaces**.
2. **Activate program spaces with active arts programs** for children and seniors, partnering with existing groups when appropriate.
3. **Defer significant investment** in auditorium until demand for space warrants it.
4. Guide all space developments with the **vision of a community living room**.

Next Steps – The Business Plan (Part II)

The next phase of work is a business plan, to advise on how the recommended facility should be programmed, operated and financially sustained. It will include:

- Recommendations on governance & operations
- A programming plan for the for five years of operations
- A pro-forma operating budget for the pre-opening year and then the first five operating years
- Develop funding strategies to sustain the facility
- Federal and State Historic Tax Credit investigation
- An economic impact analysis
- A critical path plan to help advance the project





Hudson Heritage Association Goals

1. **Stop the insensitive development** proposed by Liberty Development that seeks to demolish three-quarters of the historic building
 - This is not historic preservation
 - Sets a low bar in Hudson for the future
 - Current concept contradicts even what Liberty Development said in the early discussions
2. Place a **one-year moratorium** on the demolition of the 1927 Building
3. HHA is prepared to **assume building maintenance and operational costs**, security, etc. at no risk/expense to HCSD or tax-payers.
4. Development of **Business Plan** (Feasibility Study Part II) that includes the following Options:

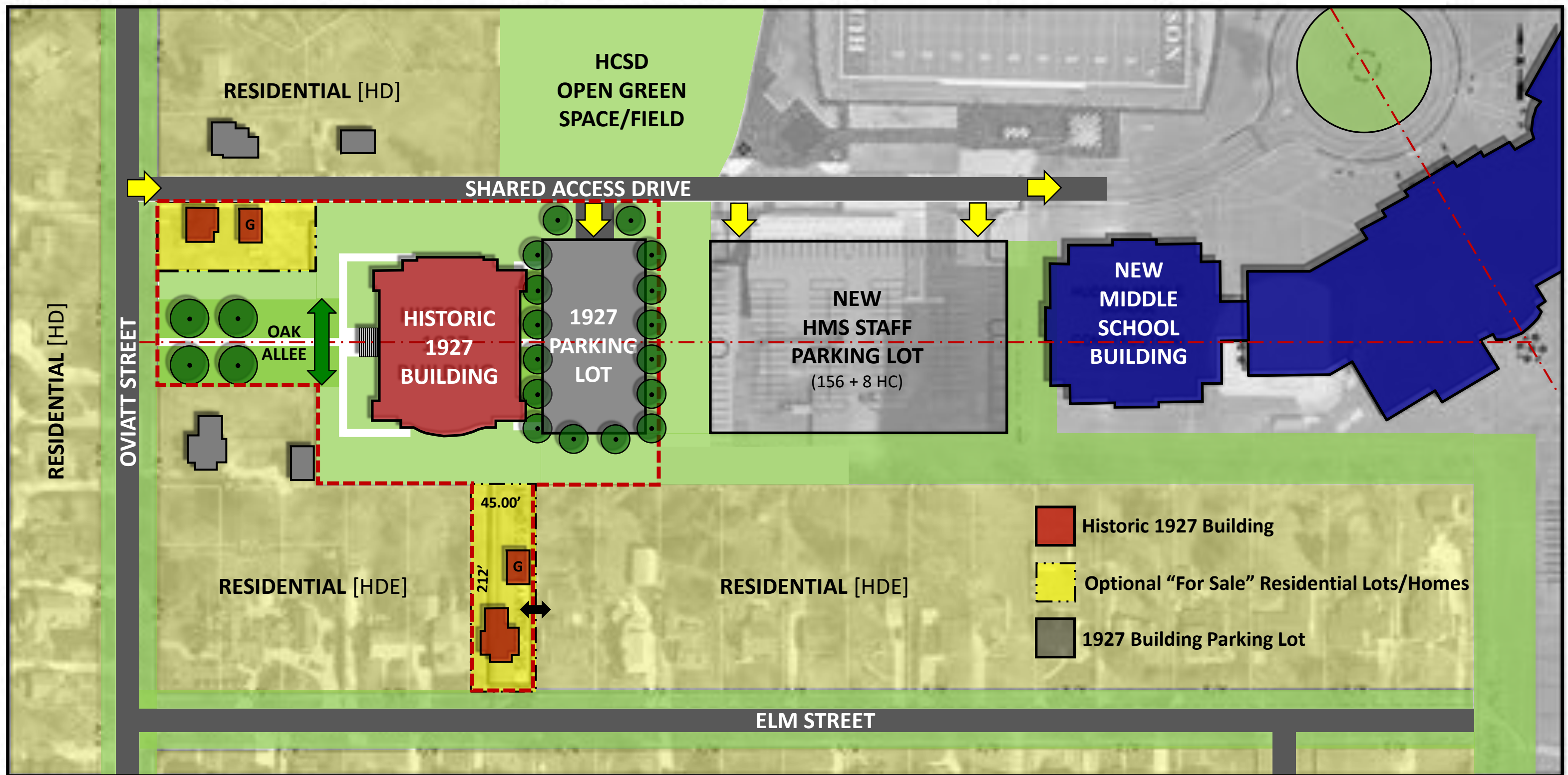




Option A: Community / Cultural Arts Center

- a. Explore the financial viability to use the 1927 Building as a community / cultural arts center
- b. Explore and develop potential partnerships
- c. Solicit interest from preservation-minded developers for the building's adaptive reuse.
- d. Evaluate the use of historic tax credits to help fund the project.
- e. Community consensus-building and workshops with community, foundations, organizations, institutions, and government.
- f. Benefits to the community as an educational and cultural facility for events, lectures, recitals, and performances.
- g. Its location in the heart of our city would contribute to economic vitality of the downtown business district.

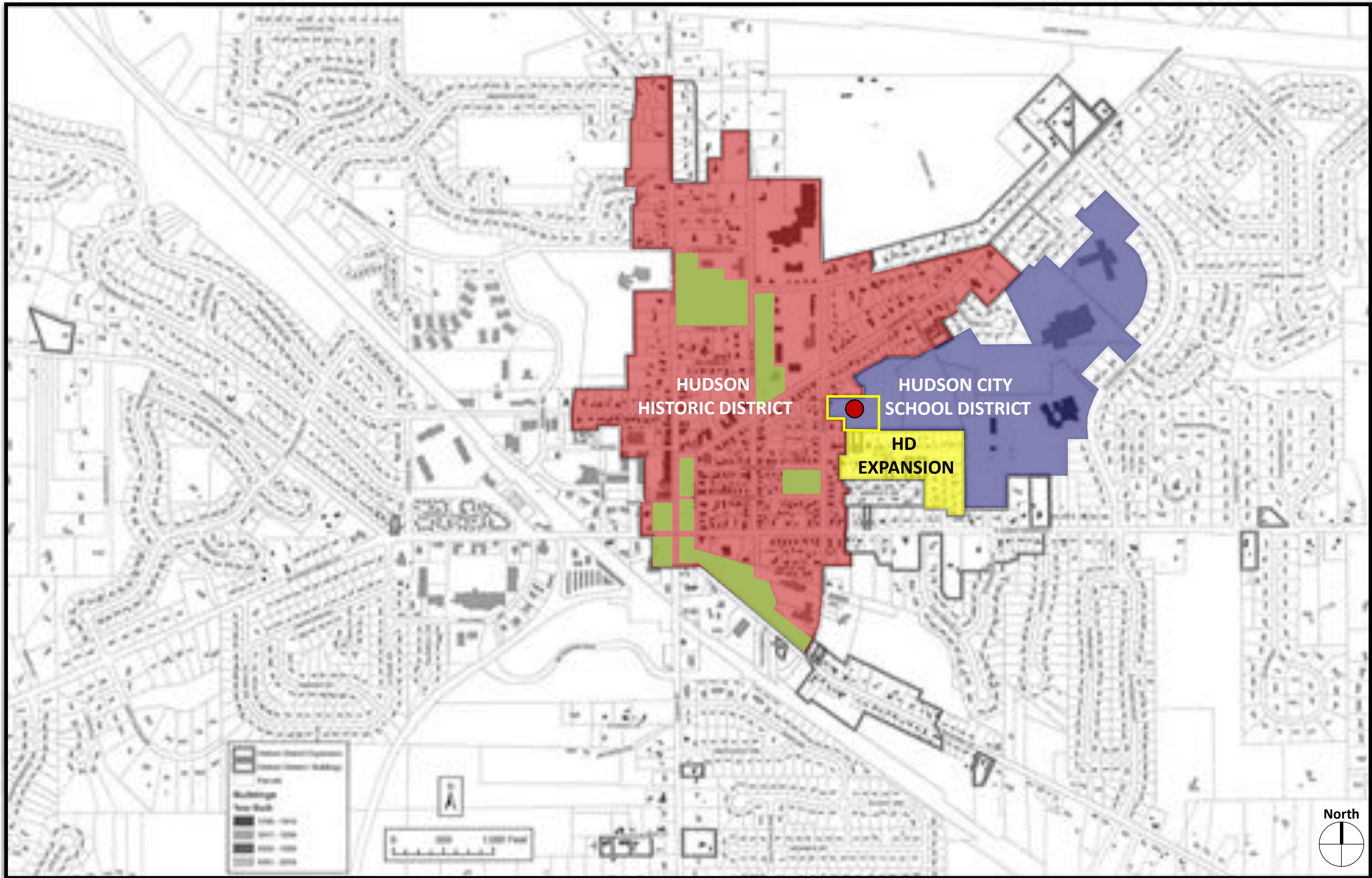




Site Plan Opportunities & Goals

- Preserve front lawn, Oak allee and view corridor along Oviatt Street
- Restoration of Saywell House, with new garage addition
- Study house and garage option for Elm Street lot (TBD)
- Minimize on site vehicular drives/circulation
- New access drive and parking lot to the east to accommodate





National Register & Historic District Expansion



MYTH:

- **The 1927 Building is in poor condition and needs extensive repair.**

FACT:

- Used for education (grades 3, 4 & 5) up until June 2021
- Current Condition: “The 1927 Building is generally in very good condition and well-maintained.” (HCSD RFP, January 2020)
- “The overall structure seems to be in adequate shape and has provided a robust and safe structure since 1927. (WRL 2016 Feasibility Study)

MYTH:

- **The community/cultural arts center will compete with Barlow Community Center (BCC).**

FACT:

- Maintenance/operating costs and program uses could potentially shift-over to the 1927 Building, allowing City to redevelop BCC property.

MYTH:

- **The community/cultural arts center will create more traffic in the neighborhood.**

FACT:

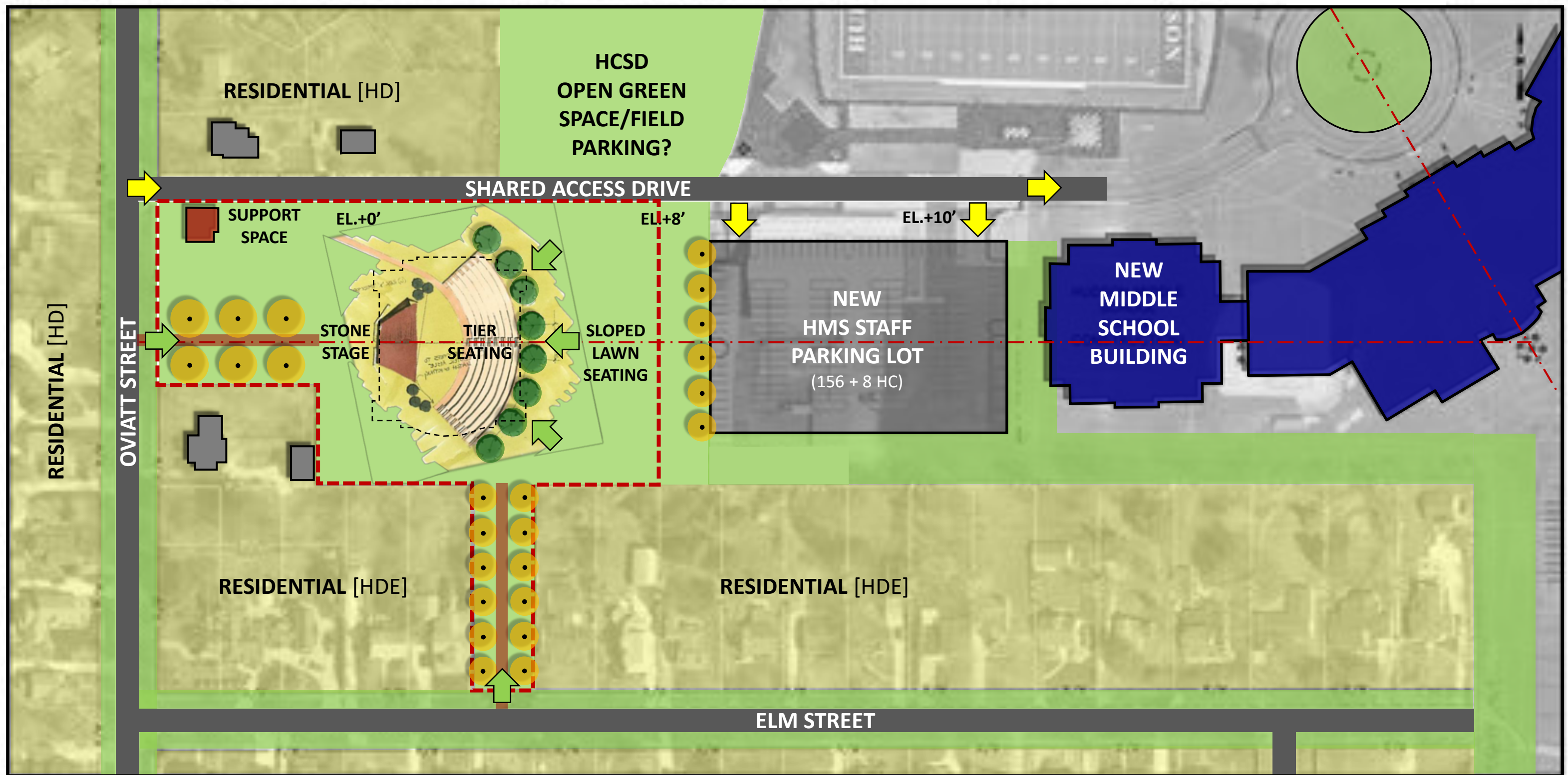
- The community/cultural arts center uses and functions would be no different from the school uses, programs, performances, and sporting events that have occur in the building/property for the last 94-years.
- With the demolition of the Elementary School (2009) on Oviatt Street, traffic has already been greatly reduced in the neighborhood.





Option B: Outdoor Learning Center / Cultural Amphitheatre

- a. Demolition of 1927 Building
- b. Explore the feasibility of an outdoor learning / cultural amphitheater center if a financially viable and acceptable adaptive reuse for the 1927 Building cannot be found.
- c. The property would continue to serve the community and be part of the legacy of Hudson's educational system.

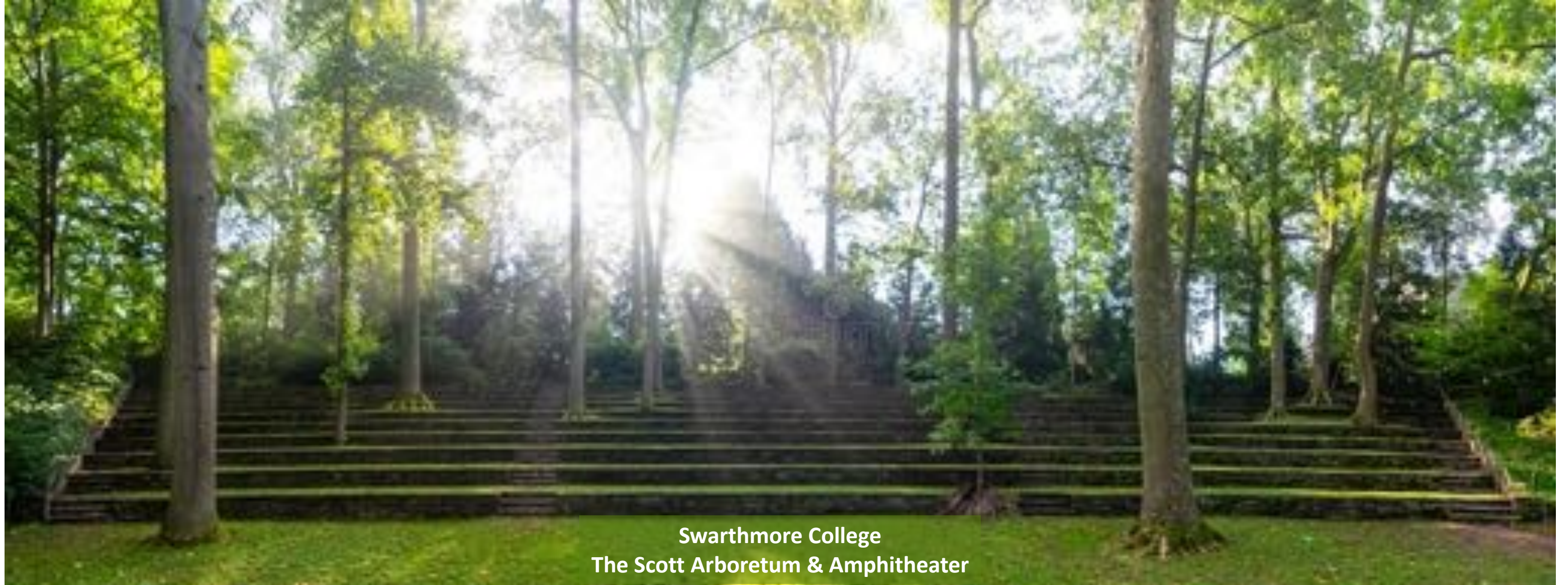


Site Plan Opportunities & Goals

- Preserve front lawn, Oak allée along Oviatt Street
- Restoration of Saywell House for amphitheater support space – ticketing, concessions, restroom, storage, etc.
- Retain Elm Street Right-of-Way for community pedestrian access
- Explore shared-use parking with HCSD staff parking lot (for evening and weekend events)
- New outdoor amphitheater (within footprint of 1927 Bldg.) with stage, tier seating and sloped lawn seating
- Initiate extensive tree and landscape planting program

Option B: Outdoor Education/Learning Amphitheater



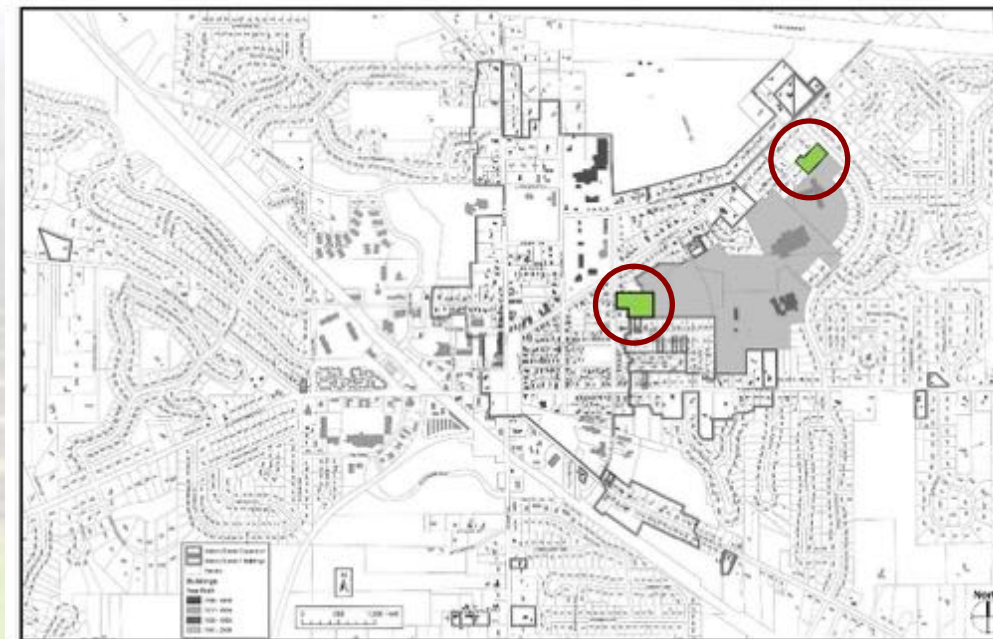


Swarthmore College
The Scott Arboretum & Amphitheater



Outdoor Amphitheater Features

- **Built within the footprint of the existing 1927 Building** and natural slope of the property, the amphitheater is minimally and elegantly formed entirely of natural materials – stone terraced walls, grass, trees, etc.
- The amphitheater would consist of a series of tiers, each about 18"-24" tall and about 7' to 8' wide, with a gentle sloping lawn to the east for seating.
- **Architectural features from the historic 1927 Building's** stonework of pilasters, urns, balustrades, entablature, etc. would be salvaged and integrated into the amphitheater design.
- **Arboretum Opportunity** – a green oasis uniquely situated on the HCSD campus and accessible to the surrounding neighborhood and community
- **Saywell House restored** and used for support space (tickets, concessions, restroom, equip. storage, etc.)



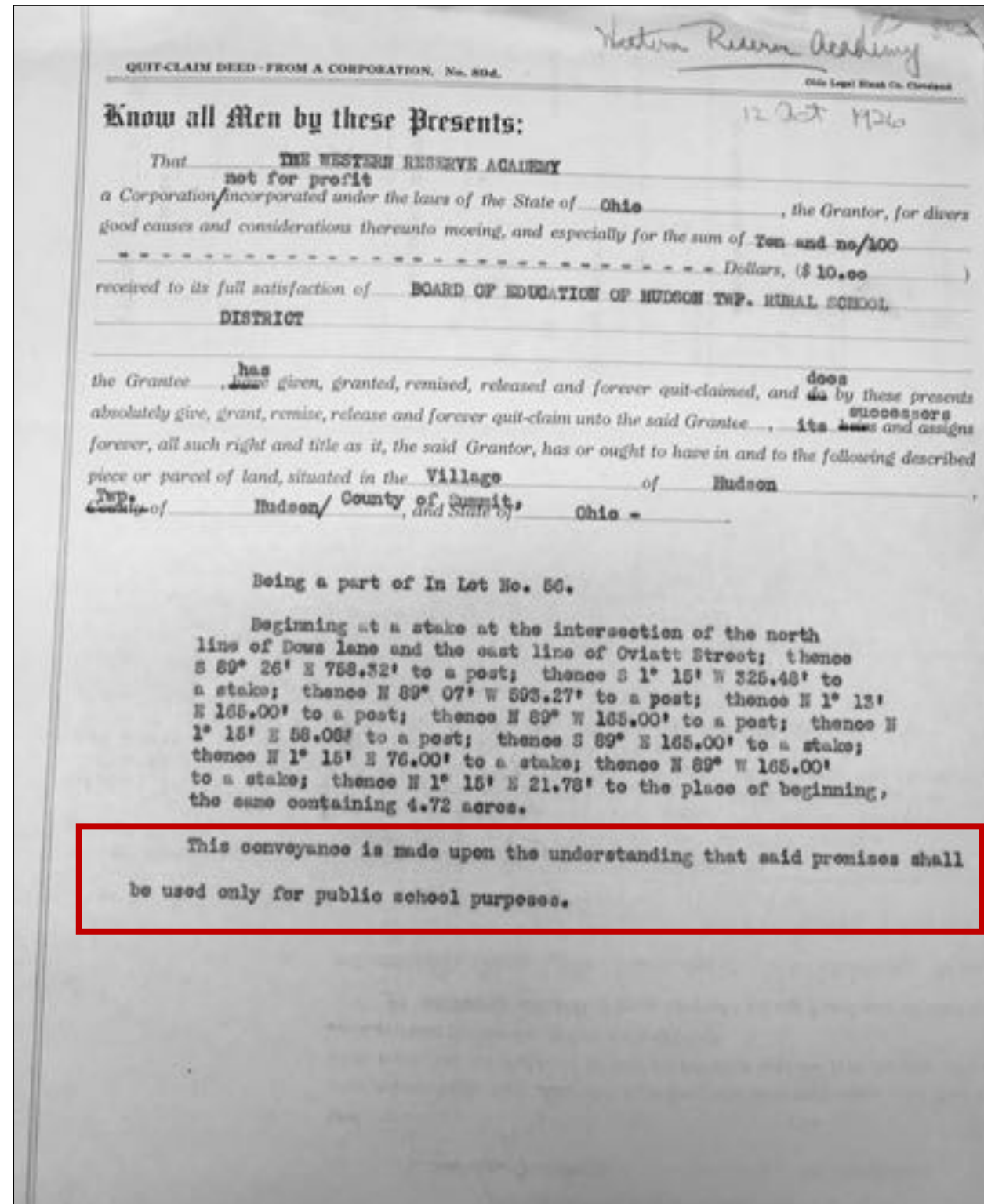
Outdoor Amphitheater Uses & Benefits

- **Outdoor education and learning space**, shared and used by the Hudson City Schools and community organizations.
- Used as HCSD outdoor classroom and gathering space for educational activities and lessons.
- Creates opportunities for expanded learning/lesson programming that will be **accessible to students of all ages**, as well as the community.
- Opportunity to **provide educational, cultural and health programming** to residents year-round.
- Creates more **collaboration amongst existing arts groups** and different types of performances.
- A **outdoor destination for students, residents and the community** to come together.
- Home to school commencement and events each year



“This conveyance is made upon the understanding that said premises shall be used only for public school purposes.”

– The Western Reserve Academy Conveyance to the Board of Education of Hudson Township Rural School District
October 12, 1926



1926 – Deed Restriction

Transfer of five-acre parcel from Western Reserve Academy to the Hudson Board of Education stipulating that: *“This conveyance is made upon the understanding that said premises be used only for public school purposes.”*

1927- 2021:

Educational venue for over 90 years.

The 1927 Building has stood proudly in the heart of our town for 94 years. It has served tens of thousands of students. Many of its graduates have remained or returned to Hudson to see their own children walk its halls.

Taxpayer Support:

Hudson’s residents paid to build the school and to maintain it for nearly a century. We all share ownership of this one-of-kind asset.

Preserving a Legacy

