



## CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

### Committee of the Whole Agenda Communication

**Meeting Date:** September 12, 2022

**Prepared By:** Jim Snider, City Administrator  
Jon Oliphant, AICP, Planning & Development Director

**Agenda Item:** City 223 Property Conceptual Development and Future Good Neighbor Days Site

**Explanation:** The City of Washington purchased 223 acres at the intersection of US 24, Nofsinger Road, and W. Cruger Road in 2013. IDOT provided funding for the completion of Phase I and II engineering to eventually realign Nofsinger between Santa Fe Road and W. Cruger and to connect Nofsinger with Dallas Road. That work is complete and has been approved by IDOT. Funding has been sought to assist with the projected \$6.56 million cost for its construction. A future US 24 and Wellington intersection has been approved by IDOT, though that would only be connected upon development demand.

A benefactor who grew up in Washington has indicated interest in constructing an amphitheater on part of the property to honor his deceased wife. A conceptual site plan completed by the benefactor's engineer and architect showing the possible siting of it within the northeast quadrant of the property is attached. It should be noted that a feasibility study has not been done to determine what an appropriate size would be and its construction, operations, and maintenance costs. Staff would strongly urge that this be completed before proceeding further. But it is encouraging that someone is interested in making such a substantial private investment. Such a project would figure to spur spin-off development. Additional infrastructure within the property will need to be installed in order to facilitate any development. A rough cost for internal roads, water, and sanitary sewer is \$10 million depending on their exact location and scale. A funding source(s) would need to be identified for that assuming it would not be covered entirely by private means.

Additionally, discussion needs to be considered for a future permanent Good Neighbor Days (GND) site. It has been held near the intersection of Business Route 24 and Mt. Vernon for more than 15 years. That site will likely no longer be available for use in the future and a new location needs to be determined soon, hopefully one that can be a long-term fit. The ideal site would have 10-12 acres to provide adequate space for the carnival, parking, and other associated festival operations. Temporary electrical service and a water connection are also necessary. Because the festival is only held one week per year, there should be some flexibility to use the site for other uses when not utilized for GND. The 223 property offers an abundance of land, proximity to a major east-west thoroughfare (US 24) to more efficiently move visitor traffic, and the potential to co-locate uses. There are very few possible GND locations that meet these desired criteria while also minimizing any potential impacts on existing residents.

**Fiscal Impact:** It is anticipated that the City will need to contribute some, but not all, of any infrastructure cost for any realistic potential for development on the 223 site. The remainder would likely be spread between state/federal and private sources. Should there be interest in developing an amphitheater on part of the property, it is unknown what the short- and long-term City expenses would be. That would need to be more specifically identified through a feasibility study. The City's current farm lease expires at the end of 2022 and carries a mutual one-year extension.

**Action Requested:** Staff seeks feedback both on the conceptual use of the 223 property and potential locations for the GND site. The feedback can then be used to determine next steps on the viability of both.



Site Plan