Arts & Entertainment Facility; Community & Engagement Plan

March 19, 2026

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Community & Regional Entertainment Facilities



Key Takeaways

- Staff has identified the City-owned “Parkside” property as a potential site for a mixed-use development anchored by an Arts & Entertainment facility.
- Council is scheduled to vote on a Land Hold request at the March 24, 2026 business meeting.
- A communication and engagement plan is being developed to ensure community concerns and aspirations are incorporated throughout the process.
- Early community input will help shape the right partnerships through a request for qualifications. These partnerships should ensure the project fits the site and respects nearby historic and cultural areas like The Block.
- Securing an additional partner will be critical to the project’s financial viability.

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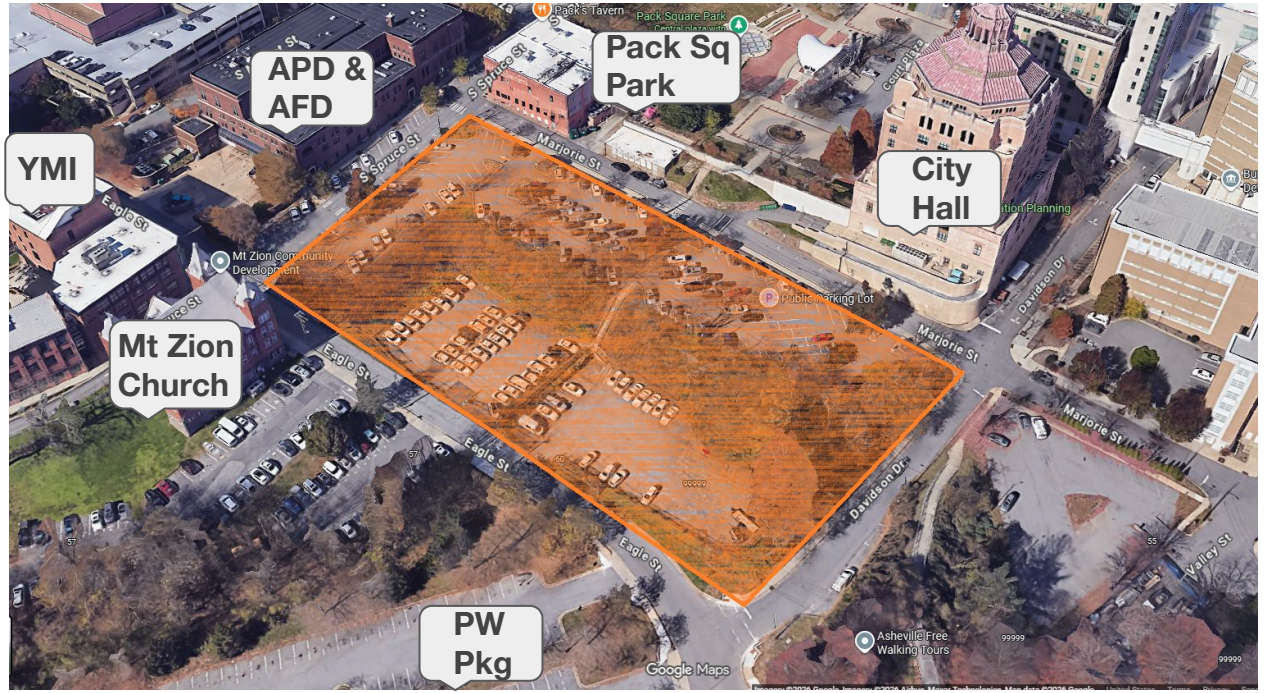
Brief History

- Community interest in replacing or modernizing the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium (TWA) dates back to the 1980s.
- Multiple efforts to renovate or replace TWA over the past 20+ years have been unsuccessful.
- Analysis indicates that the level of restoration required for TWA is less cost-effective long term than constructing a new facility.
- Post-Helene, Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant opportunities allowed for timely public-private development partnership exploration with ATG Entertainment
- The City-owned “Parkside” site has been considered for mixed-use development multiple times since the 1980s.
    - Making the “Parkside” an identified property as a potential site for redevelopment.

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The Site

Seven total parcels, totalling ~2.43 acres



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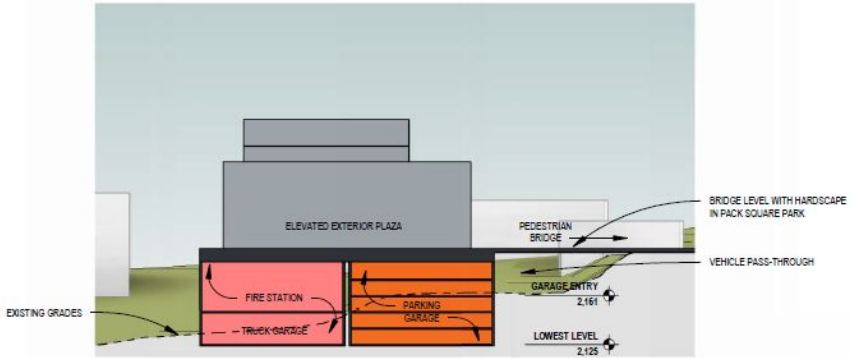
Potential Space Use (site massing)

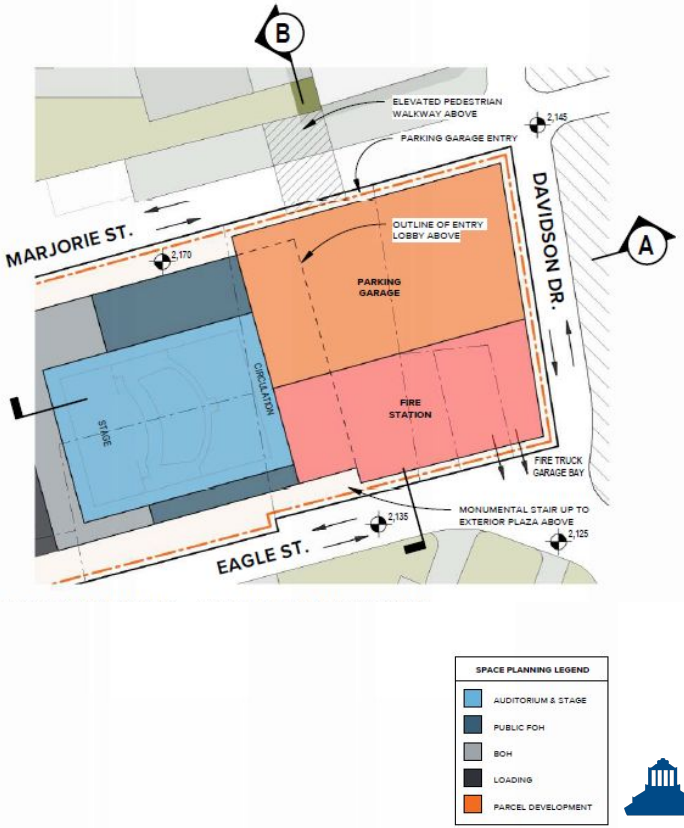
- 300+ space parking garage
- Space for a public safety station (Fire)
- ~2,500 seat main performance hall
- Rehearsal / education center spaces
- Workforce development workshop & footprint

Concept Site Massing *Drafted Spring 2024



Concept 1A





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Potential Space Use (site massing)

- Opportunity with additional developers
  - Retail
  - Gallery
  - Restaurant
  - Museum
  - Educational
  - Community
  - Other…….

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Next Steps



Continuing Engagement Next Steps

- Update information & FAQs posted to project page
  - Encourage those interested in this project to sign up for updates on the project page.
- Incorporate community feedback to inform a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for additional development partner(s).

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Initial Engagement Phasing Plan

- Phase 1: Spring/summer 2026
  - Stakeholders
  - Information share & receive feedback
  - Inform future RFQ (to be issued summer 2026)
- Phase 2: (if applicable)
  - Stakeholders (with additional partner scope)
  - Public input (surveys, meetings etc.)
- Throughout the Project:
  - Continuation of Information sharing and public engagement opportunities

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Identified Initial Stakeholder Groups

- Arts AVL
- Asheville Downtown Association / ADID
- Asheville Independent Restaurants
- Asheville Symphony
- The Block Collaborative
- Chamber of Commerce / Economic Development Coalition
- Eagle Market Street Development Corp.
- East End / Valley Street neighborhood
- Explore Asheville
- LEAF
- Mt Zion Church
- People's Place AVL
- YMI

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C&E Phase 1 Objectives

- Project status update
  - Where we are, and what we are requesting input on at this time
- Identify concerns and excitements
  - Top items these groups like/love about the site.
  - Top priorities and concerns these groups have about the site.
- Feedback will be utilized to create parameters
- Utilize identified feedback from stakeholders to inform content of RFQ to be issued to solicit additional development partner(s) in the project

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Feedback & Input

- What we will do with the input received today:
  - Input will be used to finalize the Communication & Engagement Plan.
- Request of the Economy Recovery Board:
  - What stakeholder groups are missing from this list?
  - What are you hearing from the community?
  - Where do you get your news?
    - Do you follow City socials, sign up for newsletters? What platforms is the City missing in communications?

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