



**NOTICE OF OPEN WORK SESSION
OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
NORTH KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI,**

**June 1, 2021
6:00 PM**

As a precautionary measure during the Covid-19 Pandemic, this meeting will be held virtually, with the Mayor, City Council members and City staff joining the meeting through an on-line platform.

The tentative agenda of this meeting includes:

1. Call Meeting to Order

2. Town Square Concepts 

The City has discussed making improvements to the Bob Bledsoe Town Square for a few years. In May 2019, the City conducted a work session to discuss possible improvements to Town Square. Based on feedback provided by Council at that work session, the City budgeted \$200,000 to undertake basic improvements in FY 2020. That project was placed on hold in March 2020 at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and then was removed from the FY 2021 budget by the City Council during the budgeting process. As it prepares the Proposed FY 2022 Budget, staff seeks discussion and guidance from the City Council as to its vision for Town Square.

3. Adjournment

This open work session of the City Council of the City of North Kansas City, Missouri, has been duly called pursuant to the provisions of Section 2.04.030 of the Code of the City of North Kansas City, Missouri, by the undersigned Mayor of the City of North Kansas City, Missouri.

DONE this 28th day of May 2021, at 5:00 p.m.



Bryant DeLong, *Mayor*

Representatives of the news media may obtain copies of this notice by contacting:

Crystal Doss, City Clerk, City Hall
2010 Howell Street
North Kansas City, Missouri 64116
Telephone No. (816) 274-6000

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council
City Administrator

FROM: Sara Copeland, AICP, Community Development Director

DATE: June 1, 2021

RE: Town Square Concepts

The Bob Bledsoe Town Square is the open space located in the interior of the block between Armour Road, Erie Street, 18th Avenue, and Swift Street. This open space is accessed by two alley-like connections to Erie. A smaller open space adjacent to Swift Street is owned by Northtown Devco; NT has expressed interest in conveying this area to the City for use as part of Town Square. There is also a breezeway between Chappell's and Jersey Boyz that provides access to Town Square from Armour Road; the breezeway is part of the Jersey Boyz property owned by Northtown Devco.



Bob Bledsoe Town Square was the original home for the Friday in the Park concerts; these concerts eventually outgrew this space and moved to Macken Park. There was previously a fountain located in the center of Town Square that was removed after it became a maintenance problem. Today, the area is primarily used by nearby workers taking breaks and is largely underutilized. The north side of Town Square provides dumpster access for several businesses, and that access will continue to be necessary. The City has occasionally received inquiries from businesses interested in either renting the space for special events such as a festival or for an extension of an existing adjacent business, such as patio seating.

The City has discussed making improvements to Town Square for a few years. In May 2019, the City conducted a work session to discuss possible improvements to Town Square. Based on feedback provided by Council at that work session, the City budgeted \$200,000 to undertake basic improvements in FY 2020. That project was placed on hold in March 2020 at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and then was removed from the FY 2021 budget by the City Council during the budgeting process.

The City's Master Plan recognizes the importance of open space as an integral part of the community. These spaces help the NKC community live healthy, engaged, and positive lives. Families want more walkable communities with engaging public spaces that encourage social interaction between all types of people. A robust network of diverse open spaces ensures community benefit by enhancing the community health and wellness. Master Plan policies encourage pocket parks and plazas such as Town Square to accommodate as many different users as possible, according to neighborhood needs, to incorporate environmentally friendly features, and to involve community interest and participation in the planning and maintenance process.

As part of their work on the Downtown Streetscape project, staff asked Confluence to provide some conceptual ideas for re-activating Town Square as a downtown amenity. These concepts were intended to illustrate possibilities for space and help define options. They also illustrate the five main topics on which staff needs direction in order to determine next steps for Town Square. These topics are presented below. Feedback on these five topics will assist staff in determining next steps for investments in and use of Town Square.

Active or Passive Space?

Active space is space designed and built for activity, such as sports fields, playgrounds, or other active uses. Passive space may be designed and used for conservation, nature, seating, or unstructured activity. While Town Square is small, it can still host a variety of active or passive uses. Also, because Town Square is easily divided into two spaces – the main area in the center of the block and the area adjacent to Swift – Town Square could also host both active and passive uses.

Programming and Events?

Town Square was previously used for programmed activities when it hosted the Friday concert series. Programming could include a wide variety of events, including organized and hosted by the City or organized and hosted by outside groups using the space through a rental or license agreement. Knowing how important it is for the space to be used for programming helps to inform design of the space.

Vendor space?

While vendors might be related to programming, vendors might also use the space independently of programmed events. Vendors might include both adjacent businesses using the space as an extension of their business, such as restaurant patio seating (Chappell's in particular has expressed interest in this), or new vendors operating in new facilities added to the space, such as a food stall or movie projector. Please note that current ordinance prohibits serving alcohol within Town Square.

Use of this space by a vendor might have further implications for public use of the space. Some vendors may ask for exclusive use of the space, such as during a weekend festival, or exclusive rights for a particular activity, such as all food service in Town Square. How does the Council feel about the exclusive use of public space for private benefit? Knowing any limits on the use of the space by a vendor is helpful for planning and future operations.

Wow or Lowkey?

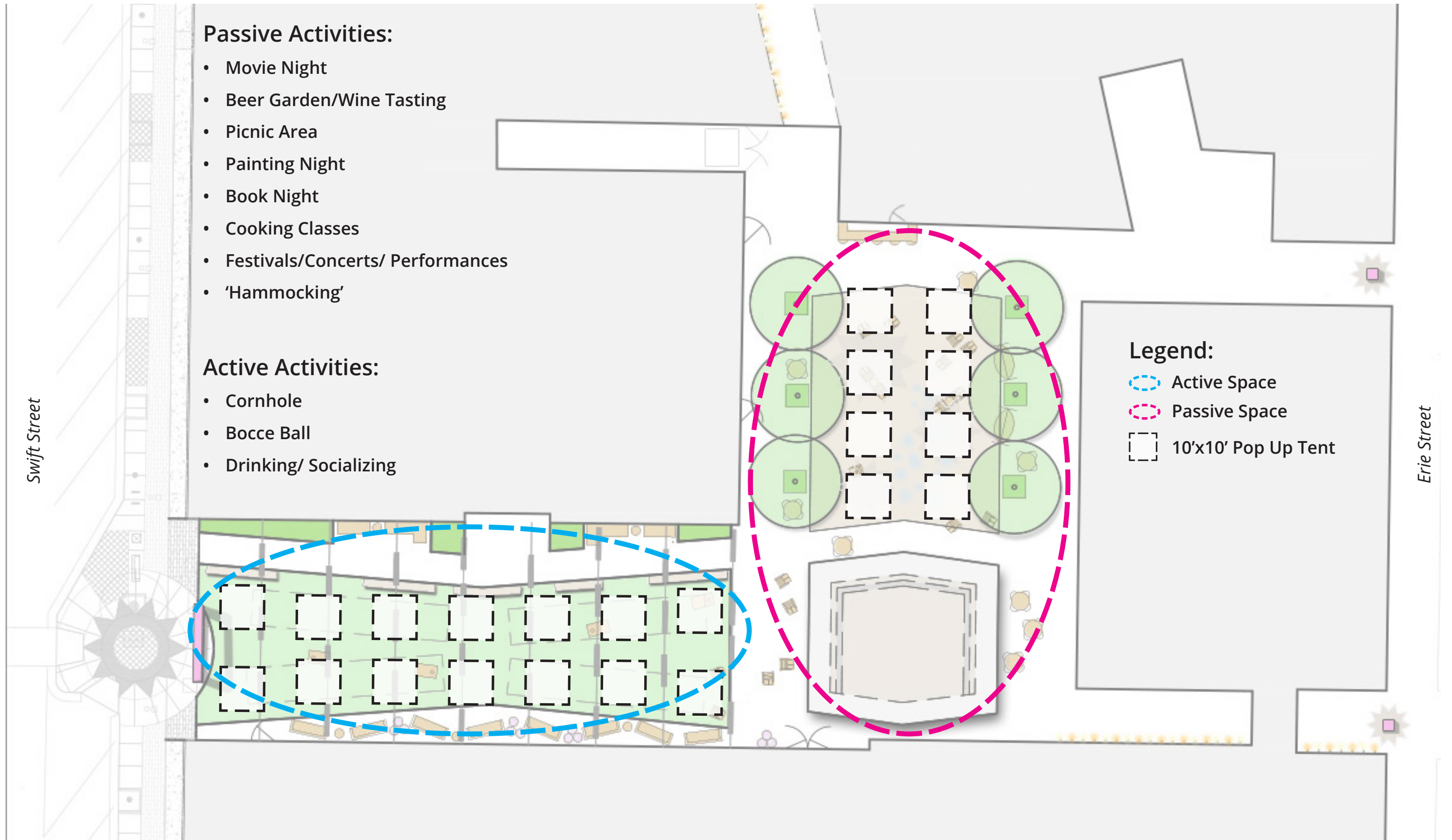
While Town Square is clearly in need of some basic repair and modernization, the resulting space could be a lowkey destination that primarily serves those already in NKC or in downtown, or a higher profile space that is more attractive to visitors. A sense of how much "wow" to include in Town Square helps calibrate the overall plan.

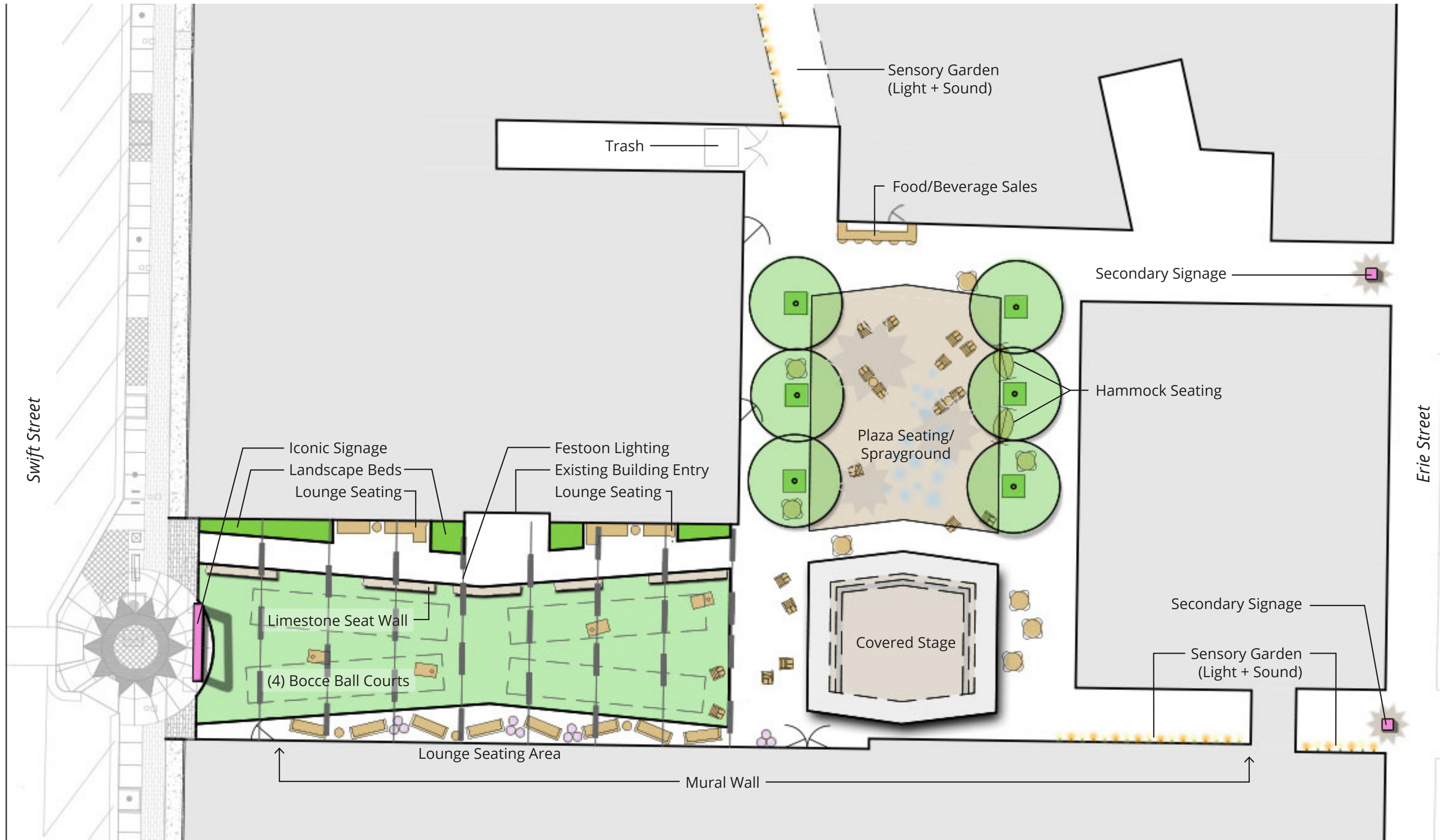
Now or Later?

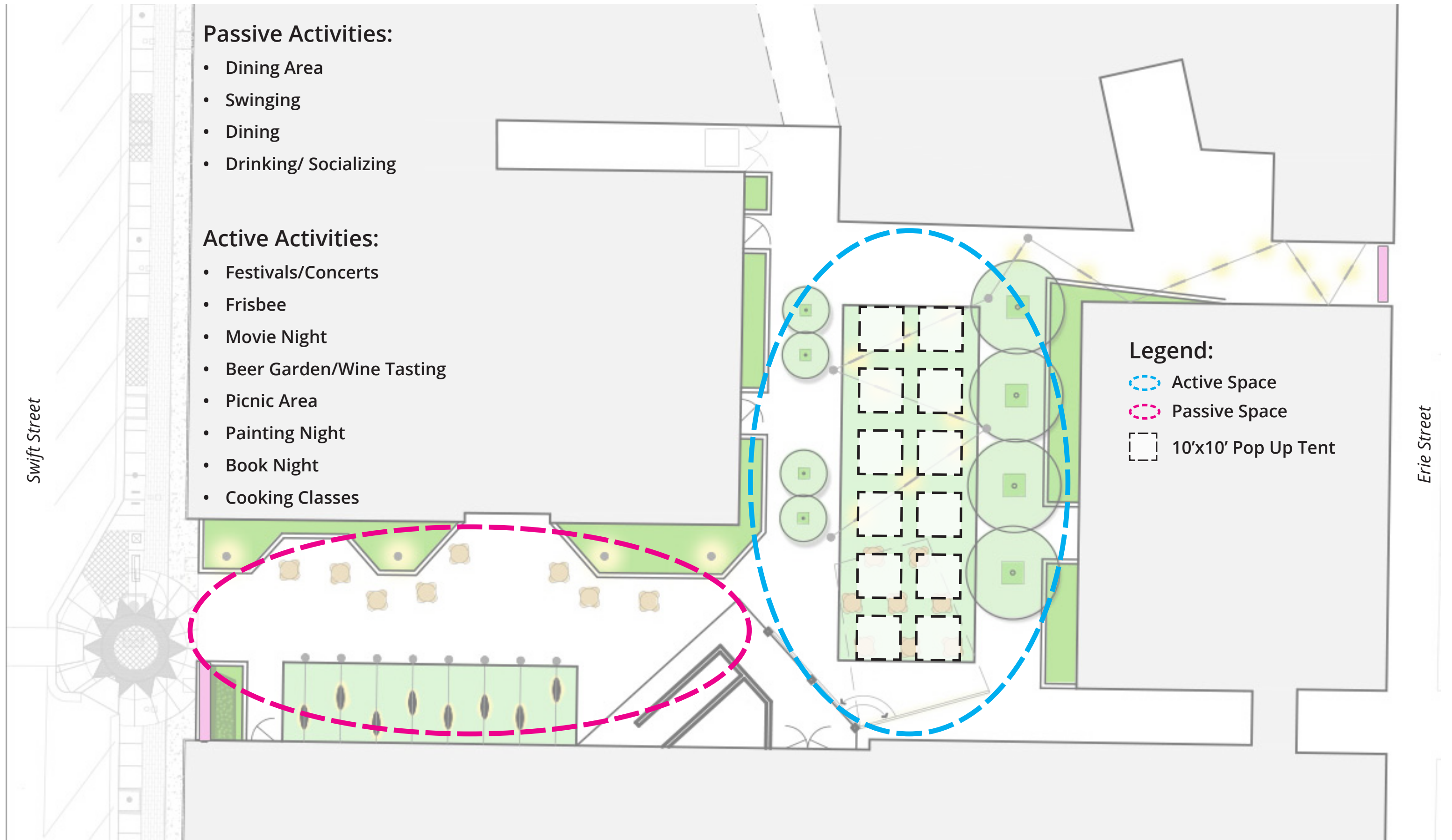
As with many larger capital projects, any improvements to Town Square could be planned as one larger project or two or more phases. Phasing the project could be done based on the natural divisions of the space or as basic improvements with upgrades over time. Council direction on whether to complete work immediately as a single phase or over time provides important direction to staff on how to budget and plan for this space.

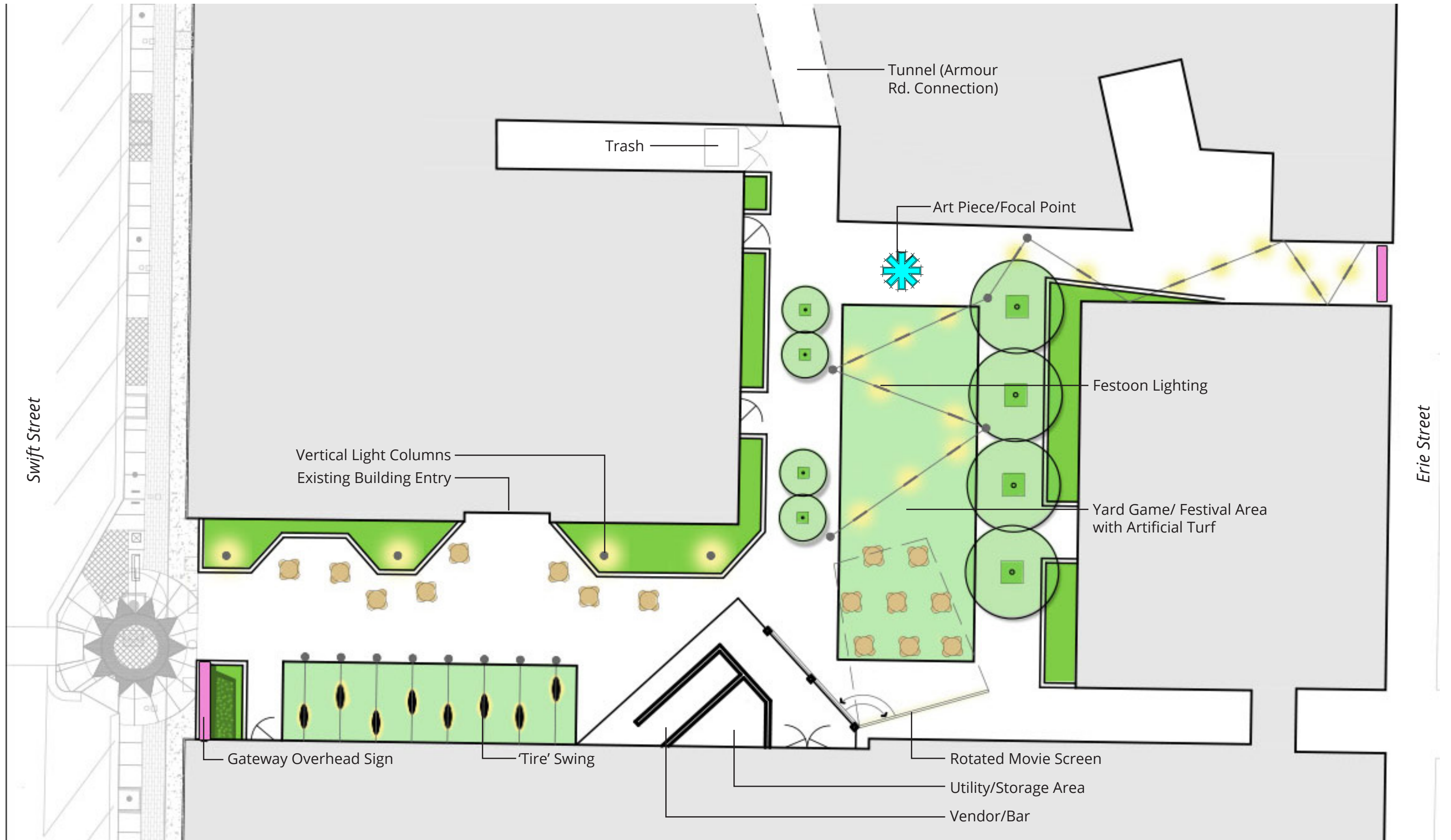












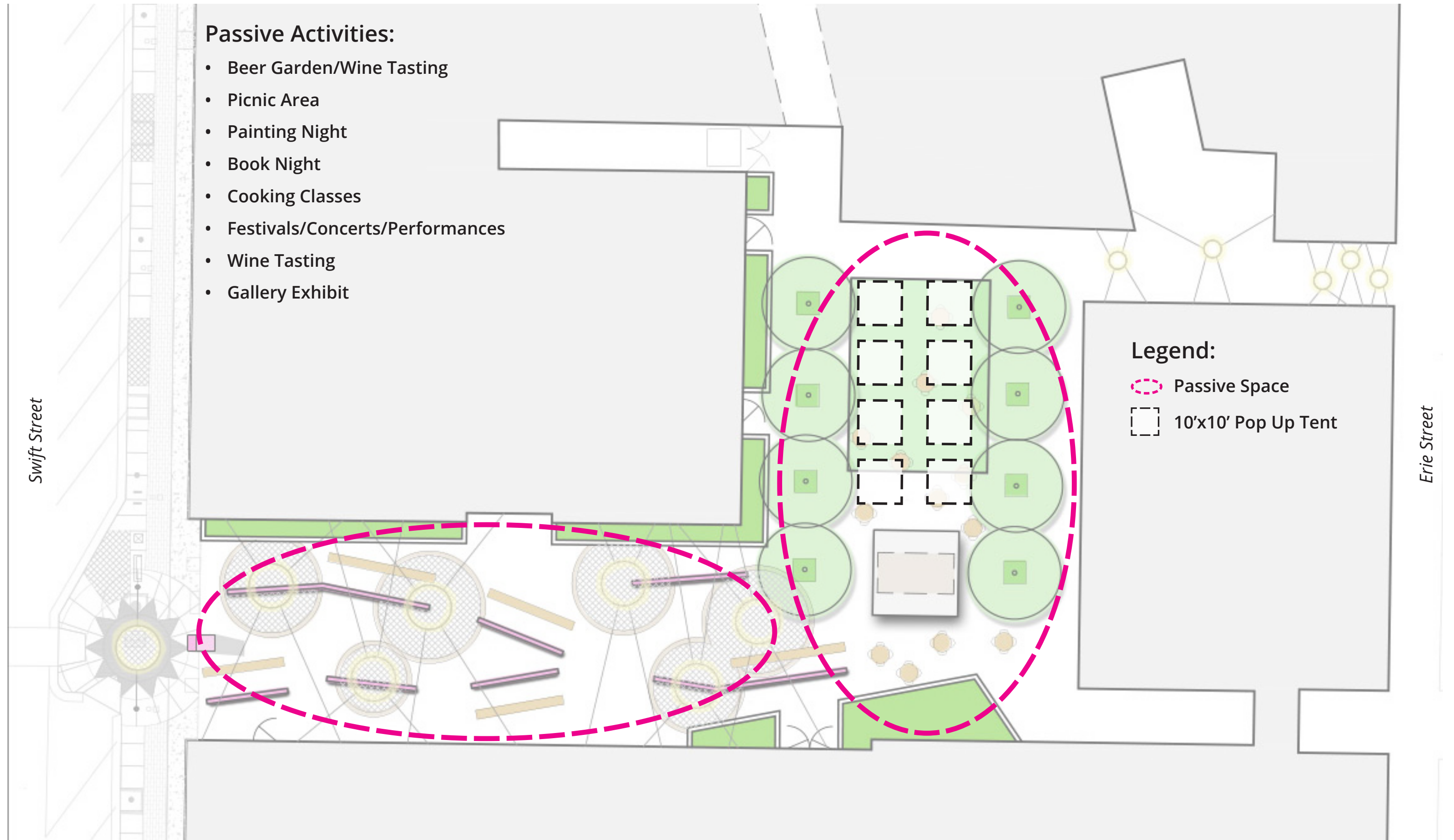


Passive Activities:

- Beer Garden/Wine Tasting
- Picnic Area
- Painting Night
- Book Night
- Cooking Classes
- Festivals/Concerts/Performances
- Wine Tasting
- Gallery Exhibit

Legend:

-  Passive Space
-  10'x10' Pop Up Tent





Minutes of the North Kansas City, Missouri Work Session of June 1, 2021

The City Council met in a Work Session on Tuesday, June 1, 2021, via an on-line platform at 6:00 p.m. As a precautionary measure during the Covid-19 Pandemic, this meeting was held virtually, with the Mayor, City Council members and City staff joining the meeting through an on-line platform.

The following were present:

Mayor: Bryant DeLong
Councilmembers: Wesley Graves
Anthony Saper
Jesse Smith – Absent
Lisa Tull
Zachary Clevenger
Adam Roberts
Amie Clarke
Ana Pellumbi

Staff Present: Eric Berlin, City Administrator
Kim Nakahodo, Assistant City Administrator
Casey Campbell, Human Resources Manager
Nick Hawkins, Finance Manager
Stephen Roberts, IT Manager
Tom Barzee, City Counselor
Crystal Doss, City Clerk

Mayor DeLong called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

City Administrator Eric Berlin stated that the topic of tonight's Work Session would be Town Square Concepts. The City has discussed making improvements to the Bob Bledsoe Town Square for a few years. In May 2019, the City conducted a work session to discuss possible improvements to Town Square. Based on feedback provided by Council at that work session, the City budgeted \$200,000 to undertake basic improvements in FY 2020. That project was placed on hold in March 2020 at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and then was removed from the FY 2021 budget by the City Council during the budgeting process. As it prepares the Proposed FY 2022 Budget, staff seeks discussion and guidance from the City Council as to its vision for Town Square.

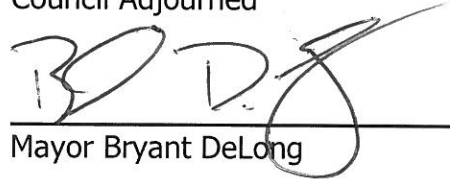
Town Square Concepts

Discussion ensued. Councilmembers provided their thoughts about the future use of this space, which staff will use for budgeting and planning purposes for further discussion with the Council.

Mayor DeLong declared the meeting adjourned at 6:51 PM.

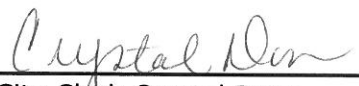
Adjournment

Council Adjourned



Mayor Bryant DeLong

Attest:



City Clerk Crystal Doss

Approved this 15th day of June 2021