Newell Farm Park

MASTER PLAN

June 2026

Town of Berthoud

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Stakeholder Interviews

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Project Introduction

Project Overview

Located just 1.5 miles east of town along Highway 56 and County Line Road 1, the historic 13-acre Newell Farm is poised to become a cultural anchor for the region. The Town of Berthoud acquired the property in 2023 with a bold vision: to transform it into a premier destination featuring a unique outdoor amphitheater and an indoor performing arts center. These core venues will be complemented by park amenities designed to foster community connection, celebrate cultural engagement, and ensure long-term environmental and financial sustainability.

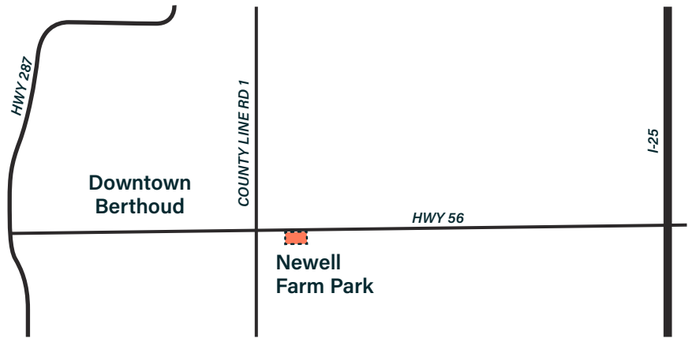
Currently, the property is split between active agricultural leases on the east side and a homestead with several historic structures on the west—the latter already hosting the Annual Newell Farm Concert on its existing outdoor stage. Development of the site respects both its heritage and legal frameworks, adhering to an active Use and Occupancy Agreement alongside a Restrictive Covenant Agreement.

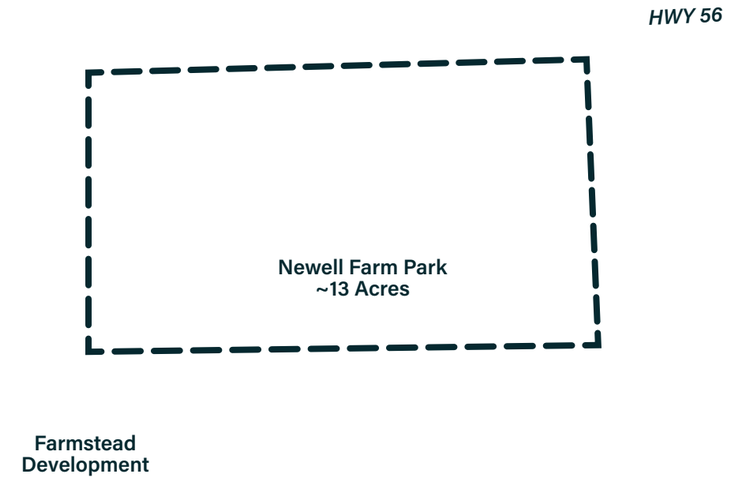
To bring this vision to life, a comprehensive master planning process launched in late 2025. This collaborative effort included on-site kick-off meetings, stakeholder interviews, and the evaluation of alternative concepts, culminating in a preferred final design and Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) pricing. Progress was closely coordinated throughout with regular updates provided to both the Board of Trustees and the Parks, Open Space, Recreation, and Trails (PORT) Committee.



Above, view of the farmstead from Highway 56.

Left, aerial of the existing Newell Farm Park site with a rendering overlay of the future Farmstead Development.





Site History

Built circa 1879—a year before the town of Berthoud itself was officially founded—the Newell farmhouse carries a deep legacy of community connection. Its original owners, Ernest and Rose Newell, lived on the land from 1905 to 1957, where they farmed and raised sheep. Ernie was not just a farmer but a dedicated local historian, becoming integral to the Berthoud community by writing volumes documenting the lives and times of residents in Berthoud and the Little Thompson Valley.

Decades later, one of the property's most recent owners, Sarah Lincoln, recognized the farmstead's unique potential as a musical gathering place. In 2002, she launched the Farm Concert with a modest stage set upon the shaded lawn. Following an overwhelmingly positive community response, it became an annual tradition. Sarah later married Butch Hause, a record producer and sound engineer whose expertise propelled the concert's success. Today, the Farm Concert is a highly anticipated, sold-out event held every year on the last Sunday in August, showcasing both national and regional talent.

Driven by a vision to turn the property into **a living history park and entertainment venue**, Sarah and Butch sold the land to the Town of Berthoud in 2023. The property was placed under a restrictive covenant agreement and can only be used for public recreation and parks purposes.











Clockwise from top left:

Farmstead, 1993.
Ernest and Rose Newell, early 1900s.
Haywagon stage at the inaugural Farm Concert.
Butch Hause and Sarah Lincoln.
Farm Concert at the existing amphitheater.

Source: www.newellfarm.org

Newell Farm Park Vision

Top Priorities

Park and amphitheater priorities were developed early in the process through initial discussions with the Town staff, the Newell Farm residents Butch and Sarah, and stakeholder interviews to guide the project vision and programming details.

- **Develop a 1,500-person amphitheater** integrated within a passive, naturalistic park setting.
- Include the infrastructure required to **support national touring talent**.
- Support the concept of a **soft-surface parking lot**.
- Potential to **partner with a nonprofit organization** to manage bookings.
- Locating **horseshoes, bocce courts, and a children's play structure** near the amphitheater is acceptable.
- **Plumbed restrooms for performers** are a priority.
- **Retain the existing stage** for smaller-scale performances.
- **Utilize bike parking and other transportation options** to reduce the parking needs.
- **Keep the farm feel** and make the project unique to Berthoud.



Amphitheater:

- **Family-Friendly**
- **Impeccable Sound**
- **Provide Shade**
- **Maintain Visual Cues and Rural Identity**

Park Program

The desired park program for Newell Farm Park is for a family friendly park focused on passive recreation with a rural identity. The concept assumes that the park functions independent of the amphitheater and is open during the Town of Berthoud standard park operating hours, including the lawn in the amphitheater area. A small permanent parking lot for daily use is included, but parking for events in the amphitheater is on a mown field. Passive uses such as trails, hammocks, and benches occupy much of the site while the more active amenities such as nature play, fire pit, and horseshoes are located near the amphitheater.

Proposed Program and Amenities

- 1.5-2-acre native parking lot (mowed for events) ~ size TBD
- (2) Individual picnic shelters
- Natural area
- Trails throughout the site
- Public art
- Horseshoe pits
- Nature based playground
- Amphitheater ~ 1,500-person (¾ acre)
- Green room
- BBQ grills
- Benches
- Fire pit
- Hammocks
- Moveable seating
- Drinking fountains
- Portable restroom enclosure ~ assumes port-o-lets are brought in for concerts
- Tree, shrub, grass, and perennial planting
- Food and beverage ~ parking and hook-ups for food trucks

Required Improvements

- Electricity
- Irrigation
- Security lighting
- Trash receptacles
- Water service
- Bike racks
- Landscaping

















Amphitheater Precedents

A preliminary review of nearby existing amphitheaters was completed to evaluate potential benchmarks of facilities/programs with Town staff. Facility size, orientation, access requirements, parking, and lighting & sound were some of the main elements reviewed.















What We Heard

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews to deepen the program understanding and establish goals and priorities were conducted with both members of the Berthoud community and operations personnel at nearby similar facilities. These interviews were held through a series of online meetings with discussion focused on operations, stage & sound, amphitheater, and support facilities. In addition to guiding design refinements, the stakeholder interviews were also an opportunity to build excitement for the project within the community.

Key Takeaways

Operations

- Aim to sell out every show ~ national acts require infrastructure.
- 6-20 shows a year is average ~ at least one free show each season.
- Clear and direct access to the loading and stage area is important.
- Employee tasks to run an amphitheater are not typical of town staff.
- Offer a range of programming ~ touring acts and cultural experiences.
- Volunteers can be a great resource for staffing help.

Stage & Sound

- A larger stage allows for a variety of programming.
- Hire out sound and lighting ~ investing in a permanent truss, rigging, speakers, and lighting helps lower the cost per show.
- Sound complaints happen ~ check sound levels at the property edge and consider sound attenuation walls, cut-off time, and using landforms.
- Include an abundance of power, especially for lighting.
- Keep the existing Newell Farm stage as a secondary smaller option.

Amphitheater (Experience)

- Grass surface performs well ~ design a gentle slope.
- Consider somewhere to take shelter in inclement weather.
- Include shade.
- Chair seating, blanket seating, and dancing must co-exist.

Amphitheater (Design Considerations)

- Amphitheater capacity varies from 600 to 2,200.
- General admission seating.
- Consider the view behind the stage ~ can't be distracting.
- South and north facing amphitheaters can be successful ~ preference for north/northeast.

Support Facilities

- Consider play elements or other features to entertain children.
- Consider the location for the merchandising tent ~ needs power and Wi-Fi.
- Food and beverage is nice to have.
  - *BYOB (Bring Your Own Beer/Beverage) is a good option.*
  - *Food trucks are great, but make sure there are enough. They can be unreliable.*
  - *Alcohol can generate revenue.*
- Port-O-Lets are being used, plumbed restrooms are the preference ~ especially for the talent.
- A green room is a needed amenity.
- Parking is the largest concern ~ make sure there is enough.
- Consider emergency access and procedures including a first aid tent.
- Consider climate-controlled storage for the talent.

Concept Development

Concept Development Overview

Three different site layout and design alternatives were developed to explore uses, programmatic relationships, circulation, parking, and maintaining the uses on Parcel 1 (the farmhouse, granary/music studio, cistern, and trees).

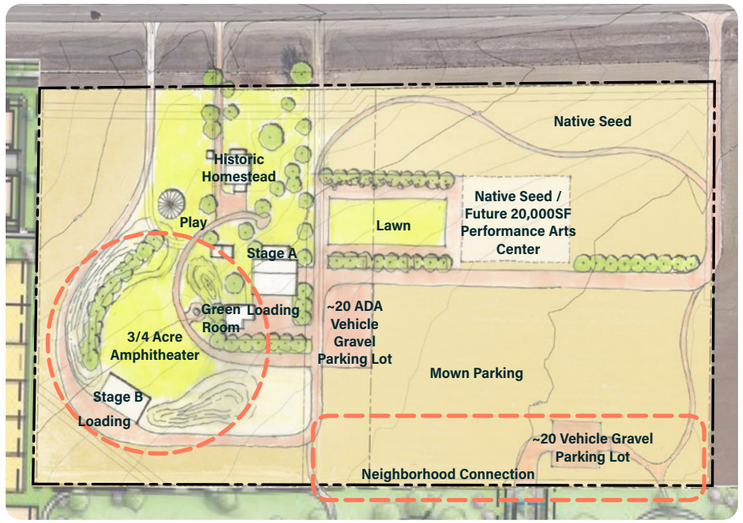
The three alternatives were discussed with Town staff, and shared with the Board of Trustees and PORT Committee. Through this process a preferred plan was developed. The preferred plan is a hybrid concept consisting of elements from all three concepts and includes the desired features:

- Round-Shaped Amphitheater
- Connections to adjacent Neighborhood (dead-end parking lot & trails)
- Shared back-of-house & infrastructure between stages
- Large vehicular & pedestrian loops
- Rounded tree /picnic allee and shade

Alternatives

Alternative 1

Round Amphitheater
Connections to Neighborhood



Pros

- Access loop avoids historic homestead.
- Loading zone is separated from the general public.
- Vehicular roads/loading areas can be used for large loop trail when concerts are not taking place.
- Play occurs within existing trees.

Cons

- Acoustic and visual bleed to the adjacent homes.
- Sound directed from Stage B to Stage A (conflicting uses).
- Attendees travel through back of house from parking to performance space.

Alternative 2

Shared Back-Of-House and Infrastructure



Pros

- Shared infrastructure/performance space for both stages.
- Minimizes acoustic bleed from one stage to the other.
- As visitors enter, they are welcomed by the farmstead.
- Future connection between Performance Arts Center and the Amphitheater.
- Shifts sound to the center of the site.

Cons

- Could require a future curb cut along 56th and road connection for Performance Arts Center. (Not shown in current configuration.)

Alternative 3

Vehicular Circulation
Trails



Pros

- Future performing arts could be practice field or other use in interim.
- Proposed improvements are separated from the homestead, including site entry.
- Larger buffer.
- Centralized play/food areas link stages.

Cons

- Vehicles are parked behind the stage.
- Distance between the two stages requires more infrastructure.
- Restrooms required at Stage B location.

Preferred Concept

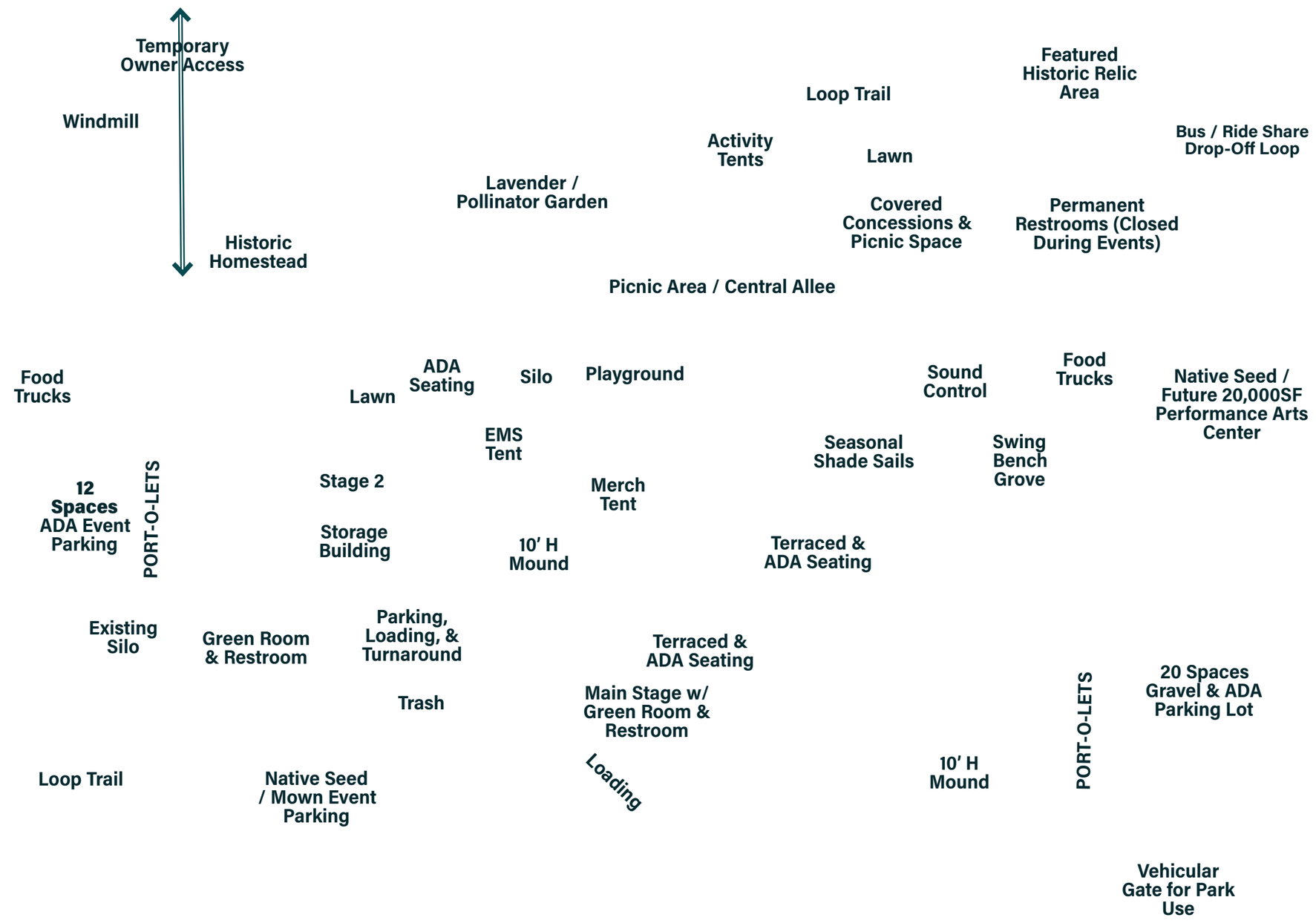
Final Preferred Concept

- Visitors are welcomed by historic homestead from West Entry
- Shared infrastructure for both stages with loading zone separated from the general public
- Vehicular roads and crusher fines paths can be used for 0.5 mi loop trail when concerts not taking place
- Earthen mounds frame the amphitheater to minimize acoustic bleed between stages & to neighboring homes
- Earthen mounds and planting at the the west, south, and east property lines help screen parking from adjacent future residences during performances
- Future connection between Performance Arts Center and stages with picnic allee
- Over 580 10'x20' Parking Spaces using mown native areas
- 32 accessible parking spaces
- Golf cart parking
- Potential Shade Sails



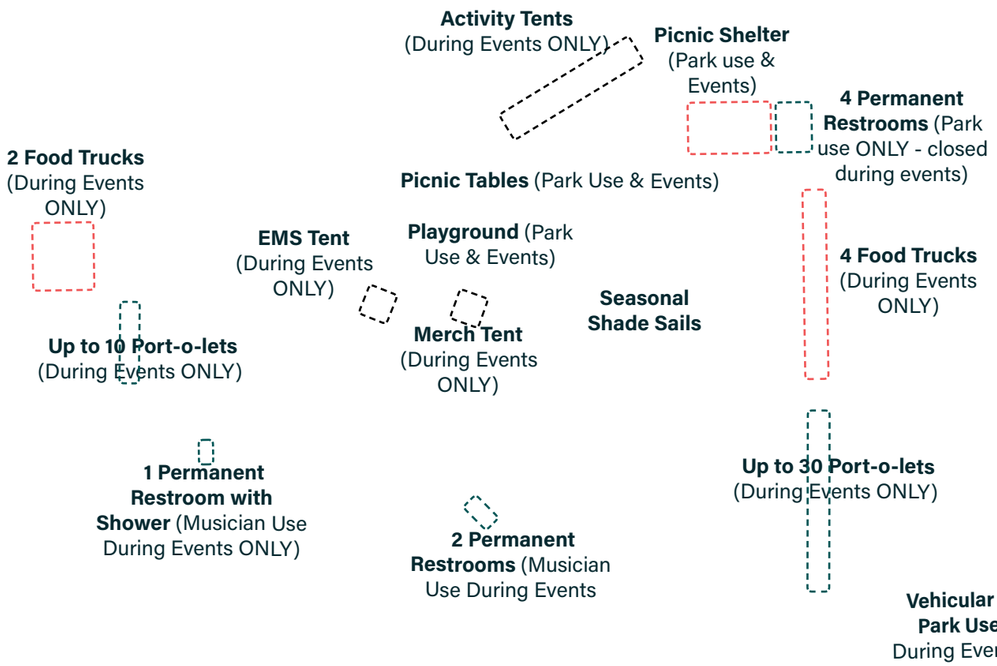
Final Preferred Concept Enlargement

- Shade sails over the upper half of the amphitheater
- Merchandise and EMS tents
- Activity tents in the northern lawn area
- Covered concessions and picnic space
- Permanent restrooms (closed during events)
- Pollinator garden
- Parking for up to six food trucks with hook-ups
- Space for port-o-lets during events
- Passive space and play flank stages
- Play centered between stages - includes a signature silo tower
- Main Stage
  - (2) Restrooms
  - Green Room
  - Climate controlled storage
- Stage 2
  - Refurbished Stage 2
  - Maintain existing Green Room (separate structure from stage)
- Loading Area
  - Parking for twelve vehicles and one tour bus
  - EMS access + parking
  - Screened trash storage



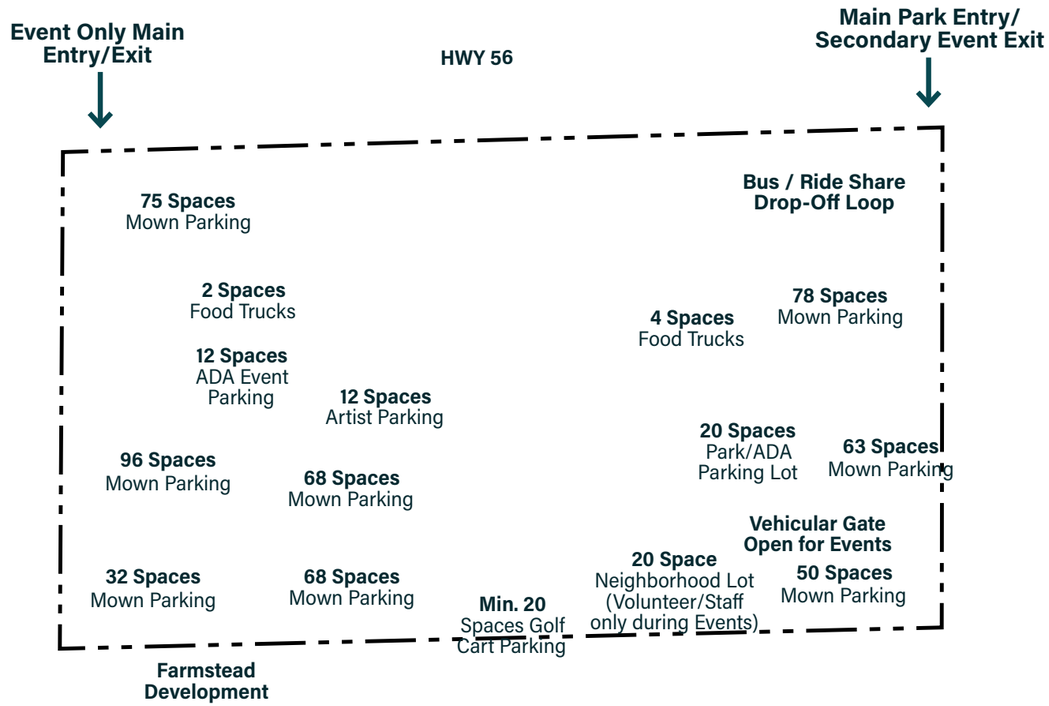
Temporary Uses & Amenities

Newell Farm Park functions as both a daily park and a periodic event space. To not overburden the park, many of the event amenities can be temporally erected to meet the needs of any given event.



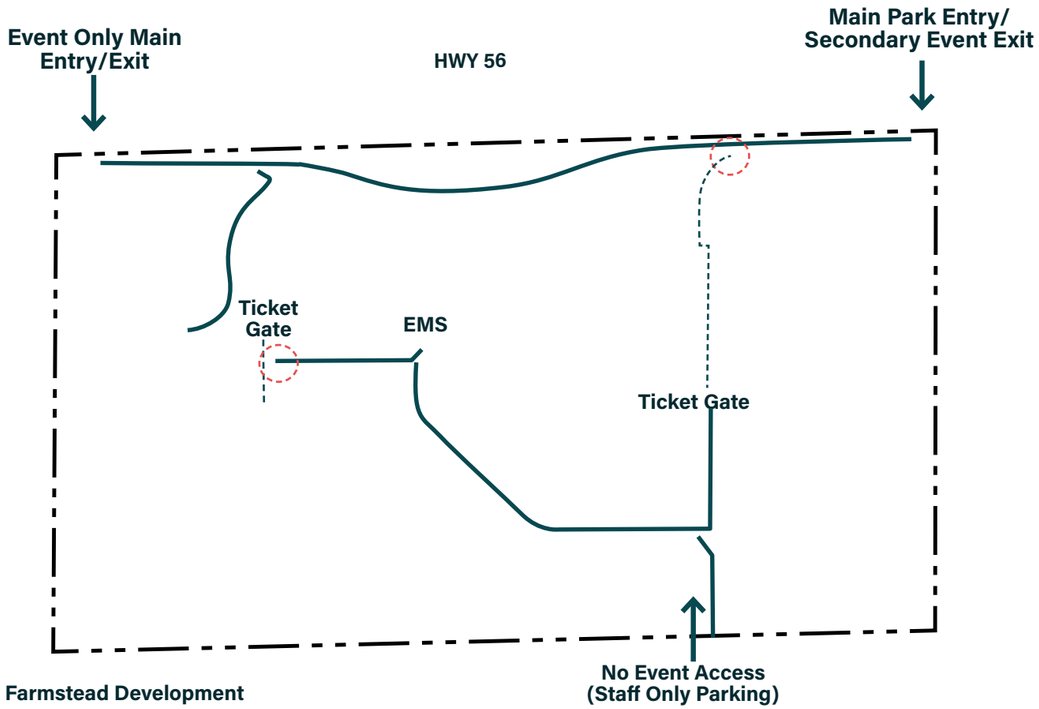
Event Parking Areas

***582 TOTAL SPACES** (MINIMUM)*
Assumes 10' x 20' stalls and 24'-wide drive aisles, not including golf cart, artist, or food truck parking spaces.



Event Security

Permanent fencing will be used to shape spaces and limit access. During an event, additional fencing can be added to limit access to the stage and amphitheater areas.





Permanent Fencing



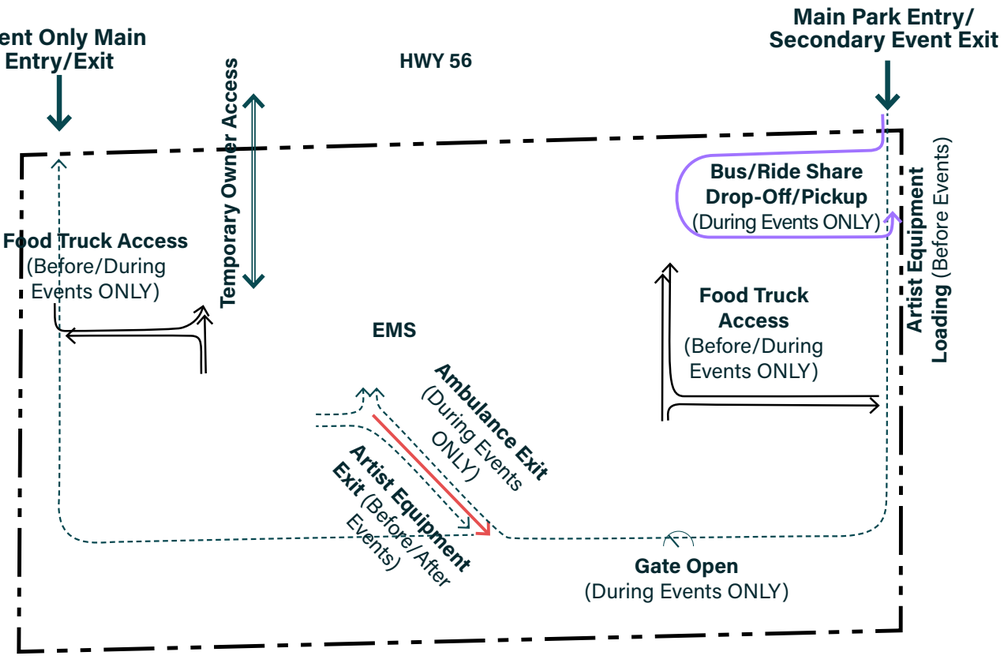
Temporary Fencing

LEGEND

- Permanent Fencing
- Temporary Fencing
- Gate Location
- Temporary Gate Location
- Property Line

Event Site Access

Temporary vehicular paths are accounted for to ensure smooth site access for ride shares, food trucks, EMS, and artists.



LEGEND

- Event/Park Access
- Artist Equipment Access
- Food Truck Access
- Emergency Access
- Temporary Owner Access
- Ride Share Access
- Property Line

Opinion of Probable Cost

What is the Cost?

Site Preparation and Earthwork — $510,000
- Surveying
- Site and Soil Prep
- Demolition
- Traffic Control

Utilities — $1,600,000
- Storm Utilities
- Electrical for the Structures and Irrigation
- Water and Sanitary Sewer
- Site Lighting
- Stage Lighting & Sound

Pavements, Walks, and Walls — $875,000
- Concrete and Crusher Fines Trails and Walks
- Concrete Parking Lots

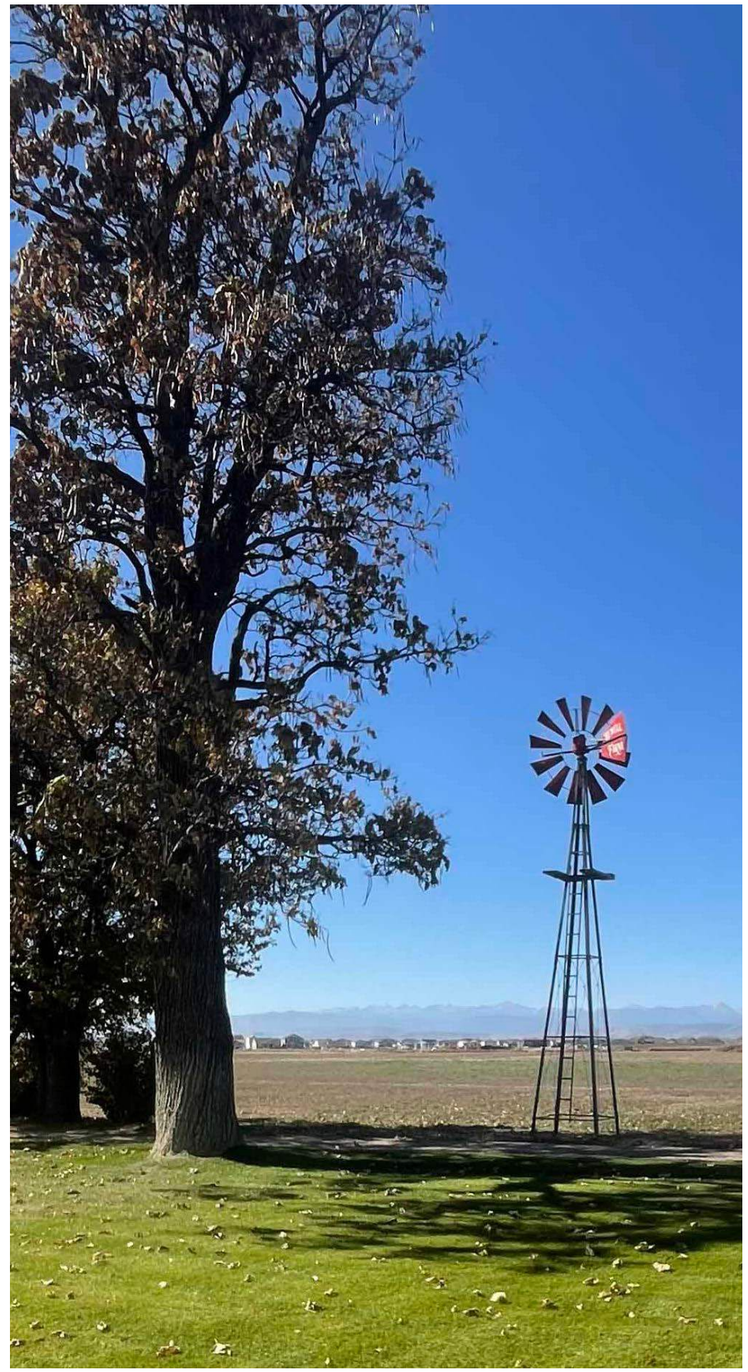
Landscape — $2,400,000
- Lawn
- Native Seed (assumes native seed throughout the site)
- Trees, Shrubs, and Grasses

Irrigation — $500,000
- Irrigation Throughout the Site

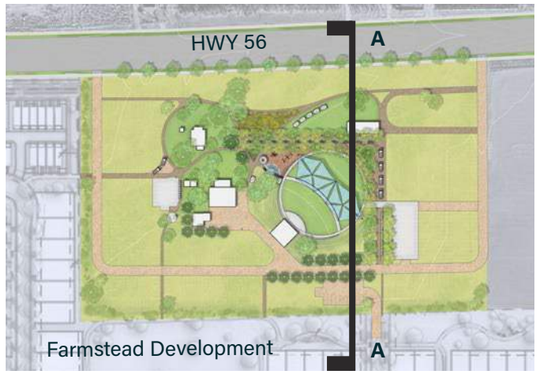
Site Furnishings + Play — $1,250,000
- Bicycle Racks
- Tables, Benches, Trash, Recycling, and Pet Waste Stations
- Nature Play + Silo Tower

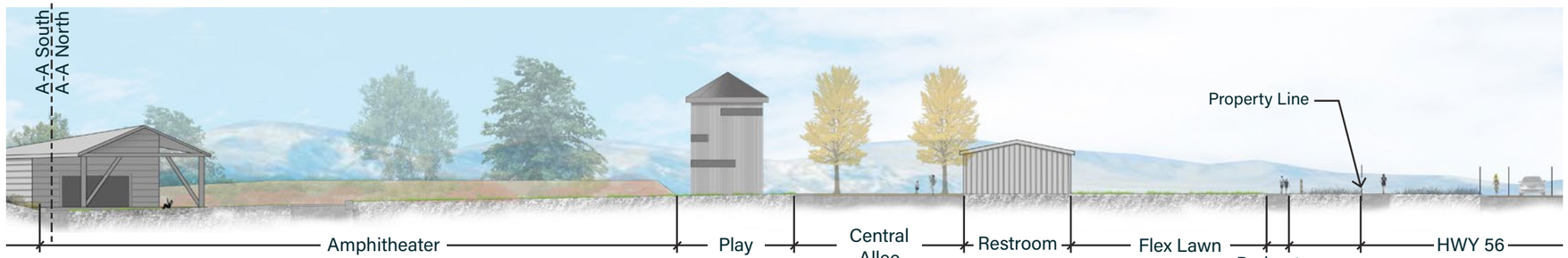
Structures — $4,000,000
- Stage 1 - (stage, (2) restrooms, green room, storage)
- Improvements to Stage 2
- Picnic Shelter and Restrooms
- Shade Sails

Hard Costs Total:	**$11,135,000**
Contingency (15%):	**$1,670,250**
Grand Total:	**$12,805,250**

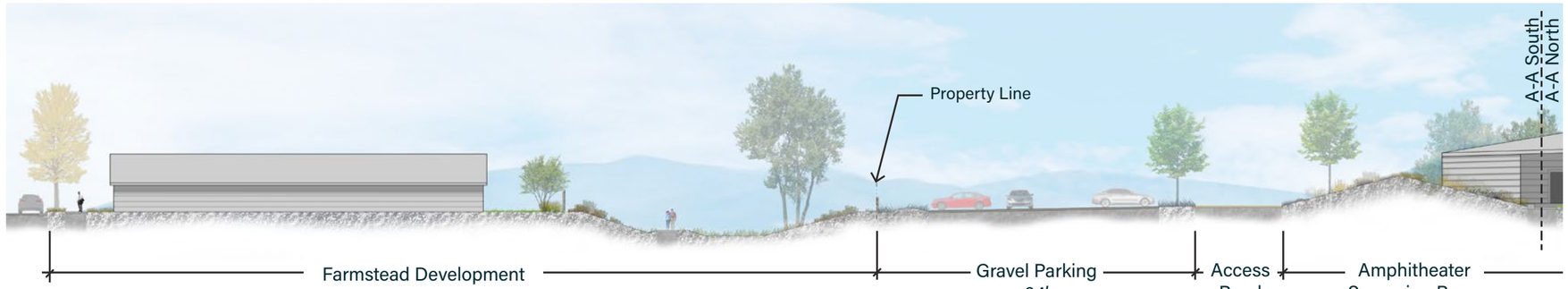


Preferred Concept ~ Section

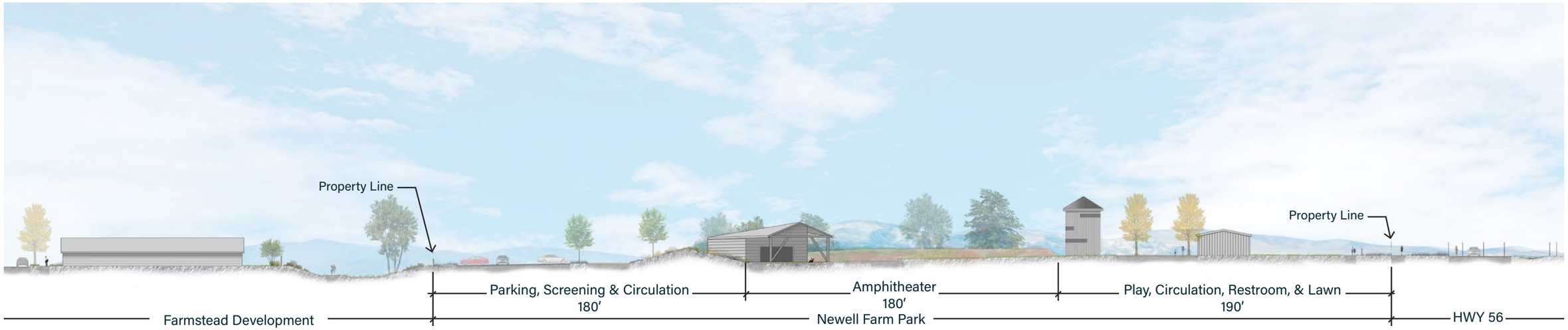




Section A-A | North N.T.S.
*Shade Sails not shown in section



Section A-A | South N.T.S.
*Shade Sails not shown in section



Section A-A | N.T.S.
*Shade Sails not shown in section

Precedent Images

































Precedent Images













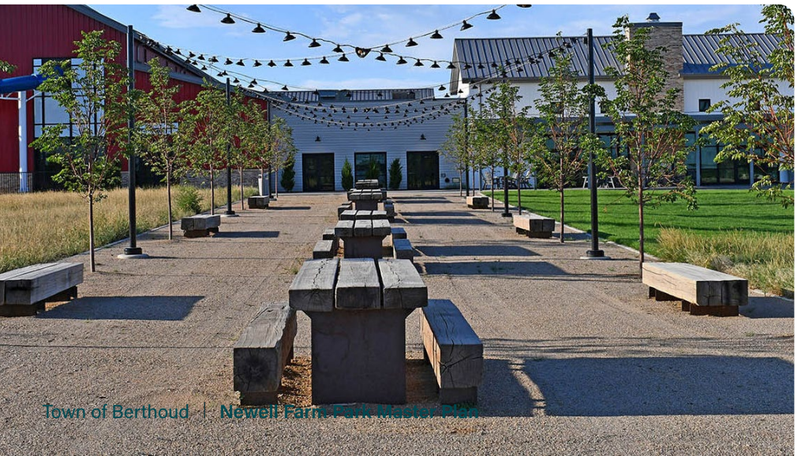












Perspective View

Aerial View Looking West - Early Evening During an Event









